

UPDATE ON I-69 SEGMENT COMMITTEE PROGRESS AND FUTURE WORK

DESCRIPTION

This presentation provides an overview of the work and progress of the I-69 Segment Committees, the current facilities along the I-69 corridor, and future construction on these roads.

ISSUES

- Review the technical work and progress of the five I-69 Segment Committees including cost estimates for improvements identified by the committee members and their preliminary priority projects.
- Receive an update from the I-69 Segment Committee chairs on the how the Segment Committee process is working in their area and also a brief overview of their committee's work.
- Review of the current controlled access facilities along the I-69 corridor and planned funded construction for controlled access along the corridor.
- Overview of the future activities of the Advisory and Segment Committees

REFERENCES

None.

DESIRED RESULTS


Update and inform the Transportation Commission on the work and progress of the I-69 Segment Committees, their future activities and the state of the existing I-69 corridor program roads.

FURTHER ACTIONS

None is required, however, agency staff would benefit from any suggestions by the Commission regarding future activities for the I-69 citizen committees and their public involvement efforts.

OTHER


Segment committees should have preliminary recommendation ready for public input in the late spring time frame and will be conducting public involvement at this time. The Corridor Advisory Committee will be reviewing the Segment Committees' preliminary priorities and existing controlled access facilities in preparation for compiling corridor-wide priorities and recommendations.







I-69 Presentation


Presented by: John Barton, P.E., Assistant Executive Director for Engineering Operations

November 18, 2010

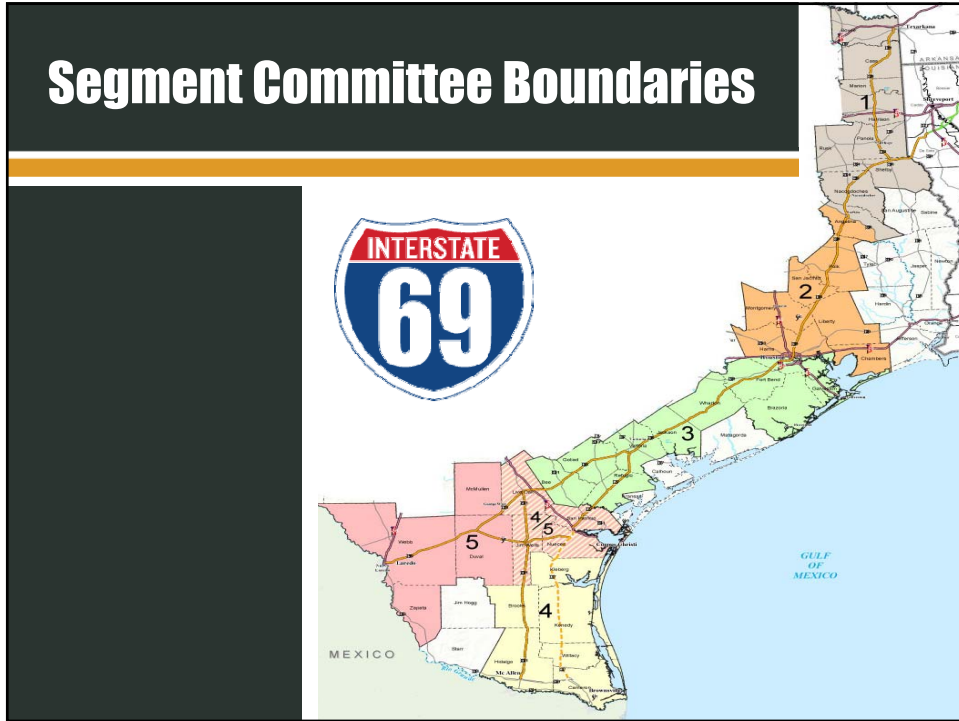


I-69 Moving People and Goods



-  **Connects border crossings**
-  **Connects inland and sea ports**
-  **Important route for timber industry**
-  **Vital hurricane evacuation route**



Segment Committee Boundaries



Current Transportation Challenges

-  **Safety and congestion**
-  **Accommodating new growth**
-  **Being competitive for new development**



Current Transportation Challenges (cont'd)

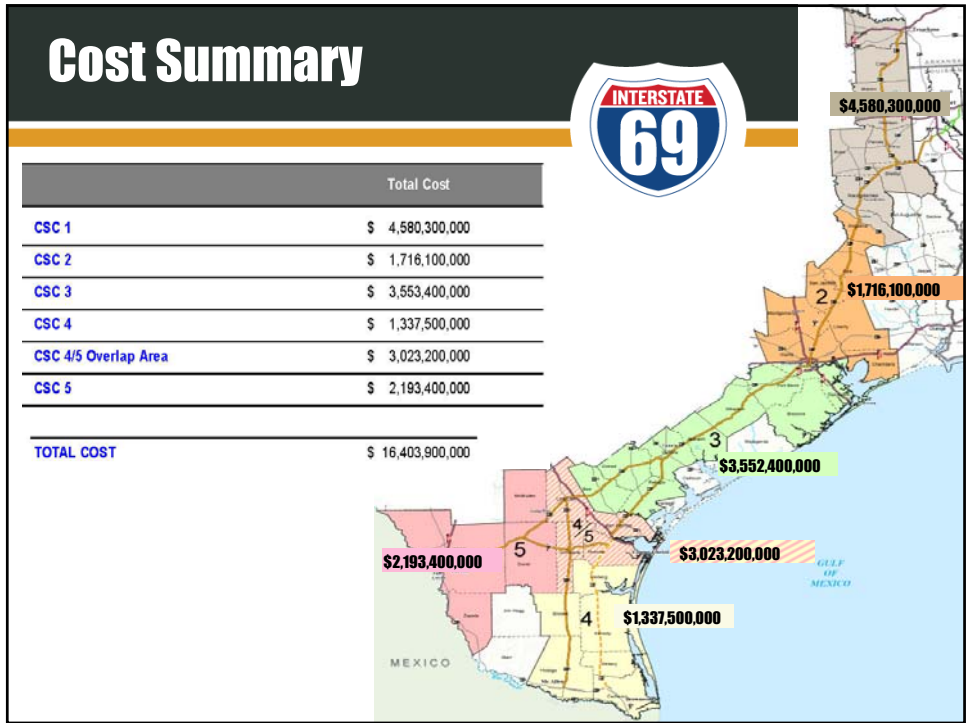
- **Adequate crossings for farmers and ranchers**
- **At-grade rail crossings**
- **Drainage and elevation of roads, especially during hurricane evacuations**



I-69 Segment Committee Activities

- **Identify roads that:**
 - **Serve as I-69**
 - **Connect to I-69**
 - **Provide improved access to I-69**
- **Identify environmental planning features**
- **Identify roadway improvements**





I-69 Segment Committee

- Segment One – Jerry Sparks, Texarkana**
- Segment Two – Jim Wehmeier, Lufkin/Angelina County Economic Development Corp.**
- Segment Three – Mayor Domingo Montalvo, Wharton**
- Segment Four – Joe Phillips, Hidalgo County**
- Segment Five – Judge Terry Simpson, San Patricio County**

Current Controlled Access Areas



U.S. 59

Texarkana, Carthage, Nacogdoches, Lufkin, Wharton, El Campo, Edna. Montgomery, Harris and Fort Bend counties to Rosenberg



U.S. 77

Victoria, Refugio, Sinton, Robstown, Kingsville. Harlingen to Brownsville



U.S. 281

Alice, Edinburg and Mc Allen



Current and Future Construction



U.S. 59

San Jacinto, Montgomery, Fort Bend, Cass, Angelina counties



U.S. 77

San Patricio and Willacy counties



U.S. 281

Brooks and Jim Wells counties



Next Steps

- **Advisory Committee meets in December to study existing facilities**
- **Segment Committees compile preliminary plans**
- **Segment Committees receive public input on preliminary plans**



Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 1

Table 1 – CSC 1 Committee Members (November 2010)

<u>Member</u>	<u>Appointing Entity</u>
David Anderson	Panola County
Richard Anderson	Harrison County
Bob Barton	Rusk County
Rick Campbell	Shelby County
William Cork	Red River Redevelopment Authority
Joe English	Nacogdoches County
Stephen J. Frost	Cass County
James Greer	Marshall Chamber of Commerce
William Holley	City of Tenaha
Jerry Huffman	Angelina County
Jim Jeffers	City of Nacogdoches
Joe David Lee	City of Jefferson
Brad McCaleb	Texarkana MPO
Michael Meador	Texas Farm Bureau
Philip M. Medford	City of Lufkin
Robert Murray	Bowie County
Karen Owen	Longview MPO
Phil Parker	Marion County
Jerry Sparks*	City of Texarkana
Charles Thomas	City of Carthage
Charles Wilcox	City of Atlanta

* Committee Chair

CSC 1 Update Information

Using the topics outlined below, members of CSC 1 reported the following information on the current progress of committee efforts.

How the Segment Committee process has worked

The members of CSC 1 are dedicated volunteers representing communities along U.S. 59 and U.S. 84. These volunteers have provided valuable input into the process of developing a corridor. The committee has met to discuss possible routing of I-69, identify opportunities for use of existing rights of way, and to provide information on local conditions, such as cemeteries and other sites that need to be avoided. Members have also talked about other roads that need to be improved to allow the transportation system to work better.

“Overall, the process has worked fairly well, given the complexity of a corridor of this magnitude.” - CSC 1 Member

Committee meetings have been held at different locations within the CSC 1 area and scheduled at times that allow for committee input. The discussions have been open and candid, addressing a number of issues related to I-69 and helping the overall committee process.

What has been working well

CSC 1 members appreciate the efforts of TxDOT staff in seeking committee member input and distributing meeting materials efficiently. Summaries of what has been accomplished at previous meetings are provided before the meetings and committee members are updated prior to beginning new tasks. Members of CSC 1 have benefited from the use of mapping and aerial photography which provides members with better reference to familiar places and features on the corridor.

A committee member notes that having an experienced, concise facilitator at the helm is important to keep the process moving forward and makes for efficient use of the committee members’ time. The meetings allow for frank, open dialogue between the CSC participants, TxDOT staff, and facilitators. Candid comments from the TxDOT staff are greatly appreciated and the cooperation and involvement of local officials has also been useful.

What can be improved

CSC 1 members report that it would be beneficial to have more public involvement and community participation. It may be useful for TxDOT and the committee to provide more information to news media about the I-69 planning effort so that the public can have an opportunity to participate. Committee members would also like more time to provide feedback or complete surveys prior to meetings. Finally, while the mapping has been a helpful tool, committee members would like the roadway maps to include larger sections of the counties so members can get a better, overall view of their area.

Tasks completed by the Segment Committee

The Segment Committee has spent a lot of time discussing transportation problems and issues in their area. The committee has also designated planning corridors that use as much of existing U.S. 59 as possible and, when necessary, follow relief routes or shifts in alignment to accommodate environmental features. Throughout this process, the committee has reviewed conceptual interstate layouts and identified route segments that could potentially be upgraded to interstate standards.

Committee members have also addressed a number of local issues by identifying communities where relief routes should be considered as well as access points and interchange locations. The committee has also suggested locations where shifts in alignment might be studied and noted right of way limitations along the corridor.

While the committee is close to having a recommended route in rural areas where existing highways could be

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 1

upgraded to I-69, there is still work to do to address relief routes around a number of communities and to provide adequate connections between the relief routes and the upgraded highway segments.

Helpful Segment Committee activities and exercises

Viewing maps with footprints over-laid on top of existing roads being considered for upgrade has been helpful during the conceptual interstate layout exercise because this allowed members to see and understand the impact of converting existing roads to interstates. Members also report that opportunities to meet with other communities along the planned corridor to gather and coordinate information has been helpful. Group discussions among local committee members and feedback from the facilitator and staff has been beneficial.

Potential future activities and exercises

A future activity that would be of use for the committee is receiving brief updates on how the other CSCs are progressing because such an update would allow the committee to obtain a comprehensive view of the overall project. Receiving specific information about funding and technical information such as which corridor segments have the highest traffic and truck volumes, highest congestion levels, and best connectivity to existing interstates would also benefit the committee's work. Committee members would also like an opportunity to host public involvement activities to gain input from members of their communities.

Major challenges and key issues related to developing Interstate 69 with Segment 1

CSC 1 members maintain that the lack of funding has historically been and will continue to be a challenge for the I-69 project. Members recommend that public education should be a sustained effort going forward to maintain public support for the project.

“Funding is the primary challenge at this point. Exact routes can be developed through planning and study of corridors.” - CSC 1 Member

Committee members also cite a number of local project development challenges for the project. Along some portions of the U.S. 59 and U.S. 84 corridors, right of way is very constrained with parallel railroads, churches, cemeteries and well sites. Other local issues that present challenges for the corridor include effectively dealing with rail and highway freight, improving at-grade rail crossings, identifying locations for alternate routes, the right of way acquisition process, and preserving right of way for future corridor improvements. Addressing relief routes for large

communities like Marshall will be particularly challenging for I-69.

Committee members, engaging the public and their communities in the Segment Committee process

Members of CSC 1 report that they regularly speak with members of their communities about I-69 and the committee's activities. Members of CSC 1 include community leaders, such as city council members and business owners who regularly speak with their mayors, city councils, county commissions and metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) about the committee's activities. Some members have had specific discussions with land and business owners along the corridor relative to potential right of way needs for future highway expansion. In Texarkana, the MPO Policy and Technical Committees are discussing a potential segment of I-69 that could connect to I-30 and I-49 in the area. Finally, members of the committee have provided information to local newspapers about the work of CSC 1.

Additional helpful public engagement and involvement activities

CSC 1 members recommend public or town hall meetings so the committee and TxDOT can work together to educate the public on the I-69 project, including the most feasible route identified by the committee. Members would also like to have additional media coverage with local newspapers, radio and television stations to further educate the public and engage communities in their area.

“Public engagement is good for any project. We've had members who have offered to meet with neighborhoods in an effort to hear concerns about the corridor study area.” - CSC 1 Member

Preliminary CSC 1 Prioritization

CSC 1 members have prepared a preliminary list of project priorities as a “snap shot” of current conditions which reflect interim priorities at this stage of the CSC process. The priorities are subject to change through further work of and review by the CSC. These results are not a commitment by TxDOT to advance projects as currently ordered. The priorities may change in the future based on additional input, environmental approvals, and funding availability.

To develop the initial priorities, committee members independently ranked the top five sections in their respective segment. The initial priorities were collectively discussed by the committee and members were afforded opportunities to submit a revised ranking of their

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 1

preliminary priorities based upon the results of the discussion. The current CSC 1 priority sections are shown in **Figure 2**.

Priority sections focused on relief routes for communities such as the U.S. 59 and U.S. 84 corridors in the vicinity of Garrison, Timpson, Teneha and Joaquin. Additional priorities included U.S. 59 relief routes for Marshall, Texarkana, and Nacogdoches. Specifically, the following sections are currently noted as preliminary priorities for CSC 1:

- U.S. 59 Relief Route at Garrison, Timpson, and Teneha
- U.S. 59 Relief Route at Marshall
- U.S. 59 Relief Route at Texarkana
- U.S. 59 Relief Route at Nacogdoches
- U.S. 84 Relief Route at Teneha and Joaquin

In addition to these sections noted above and other roadway sections along U.S. 59 and U.S. 84, several committee members also noted priorities that include development of the freight shuttle and multi-modal connections along the corridor. Members also requested consideration be given to local safety improvements that could be developed more quickly as smaller projects.

Prioritization Rationale

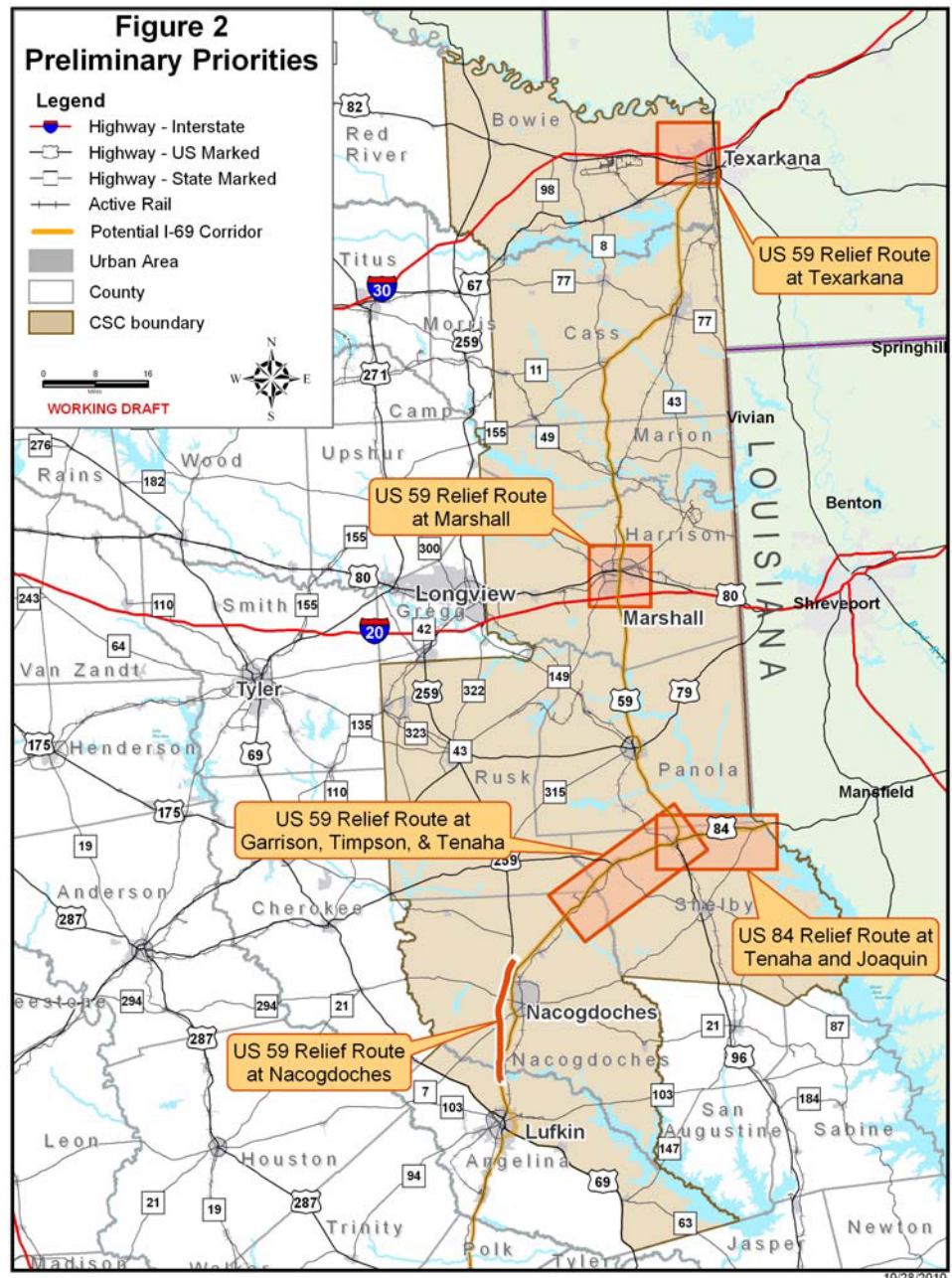
In establishing preliminary priorities, CSC 1 members note a number of factors that they consider as rationale for selecting their priority segments. Rationale mentioned most often by committee members includes:

- Serves High Traffic and Truck Volumes
- Serves Expected Traffic Growth
- Addresses Safety Concerns
- Improves Travel Times
- Provides for Multi-modal Connections (Air, Sea, Rail)

Next Steps

As previously noted the current priorities are preliminary and will be refined as the committee continues its efforts. Upcoming work of CSC 1 is anticipated to include the following activities:

- Reviewing order of magnitude cost estimates and funding opportunities
- Identifying limits of potential projects, and refining the CSC project priorities
- Discussing and planning public involvement activities



Interim Update Report

Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 2



The Texas Transportation Commission created the Interstate 69 (I-69) Corridor Advisory Committee and Corridor Segment Committees to assist the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in the transportation planning process of the I-69 Corridor. Both sets of committees will provide a locally focused, citizen driven basis of planning along the corridor.

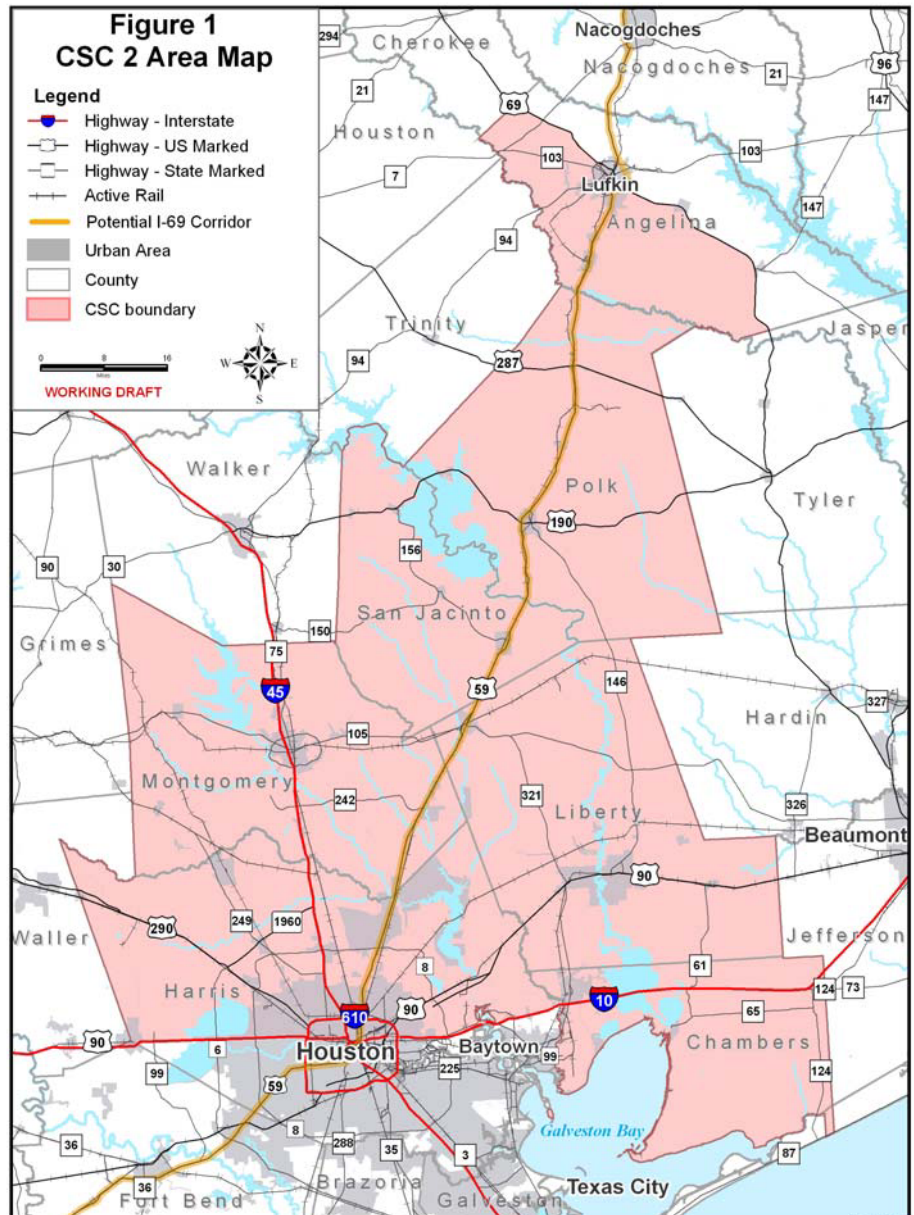
I-69 Advisory Committee: The I-69 Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) was created by Minute Order 111294 on March 27, 2008 for the purpose of facilitating and achieving consensus among affected communities and interested parties on desired transportation improvements along the I-69 Corridor. The Advisory Committee studied the future needs of the I-69 Corridor and published their findings and recommendations in *A Citizen's Report on the Current and Future Needs of the I-69 Corridor 2008*.

I-69 Segment Committee 2: I-69 Corridor Segment Committee 2 (CSC 2) is one of five Segment Committees created by Minute Order 111527 on September 25, 2008 for the purpose of providing input and recommendations on the designated routes of the I-69 Corridor in their areas. The Segment Committees are composed of members representing cities, counties, metropolitan planning organizations, ports, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and the Texas Farm Bureau along the I-69 Corridor. The Segment Committees continue to meet and study environmental planning features and plan the best route for their communities. The Segment Committees will report their findings, advice and recommendations to the Texas Transportation Commission and TxDOT's Executive Director.

The area included in CSC 2 is shown in **Figure 1** and includes the counties of Angelina, Chambers, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, Polk, and San Jacinto. CSC 2 encompasses the U.S. 59 route through southeast Texas. Members of the committee currently include those individuals listed in **Table 1**.

Interim Committee Update

In September 2010, TxDOT's Executive Director, Amadeo Saenz, spoke with the Chairs of the I-69 Segment Committees about how the process is going, asked that each committee compile an update on their progress and work, and asked that the CSCs identify projects that they currently see as priorities in their areas. This information would be used to update the Texas Transportation Commission on the progress of the CSCs thus far.



Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee

Table 1 – CSC 2 Committee Members (November 2010)

<u>Member</u>	<u>Appointing Entity</u>
Don Brandon	Chambers County
Bill Brown	City of Diboll
Spencer Chambers	Port of Houston Authority
Andy Dill	Montgomery County
Ed Emmett	Harris County
Clarke Evans	City of Livingston
Phil Fitzgerald	Liberty County
Jerry Huffman	Angelina County
Kim Icenhower	Fort Bend County
Michael Jacobs, Jr.	City of Splendor
Ashby Johnson	Houston Galveston Area Council
Lloyd Kirkham	City of Cleveland
Michael Kramer	City of Houston
Sydney Murphy	Polk County Economic & Industrial Development Corp.
Tom Paben	Texas Farm Bureau
Mandy Risinger	City of Corrigan
Jay Snook	Polk County
Douglas W. Spruill	City of Humble
Jim Wehmeier*	Lufkin/Angelina Economic Development Corp.
Royce Wells	San Jacinto County
TBA	City of Shepherd

* Committee Chair

CSC 2 Update Information

Using the topics outlined below, members of CSC 2 reported the following information on the current progress of committee efforts.

How the Segment Committee process has worked

The committee members involved appreciate the opportunity to have a voice regarding the location and design of I-69. Committee members report they have received useful information that helps them better understand how their specific area of interest relates to neighboring communities and to the overall proposed I-69 system. Members appreciate the preparation and the level of information provided for the committee meetings. The meeting materials have been distributed via e-mail which allows attendees the opportunity to review past meeting notes and discussion items as well as understand the meeting objectives.

Participation has been enthusiastic and engaging and the meeting venues, which rotate from city to city, have been conducive to pleasant and productive meetings. The discussion and work of the committee has been very beneficial. Although there has not been consensus on every item, the group has worked together to iron out

various issues and members have received valuable feedback through the meetings.

What has been working well

The workshop planning activities allowed committee members to view maps of the entire roadway in their Segment which gave them the opportunity to provide feedback in their particular areas of interest, and also see the needs of other sections of the corridor. The aerial maps used in these activities allow the committee members to more easily understand the issues and process associated with upgrading routes to interstate standards. As a result, the project is not following a “one size fits all” approach, which is positive and important with the different types of project areas along the corridor.

The regular quarterly meetings held by the committee are helpful in maintaining local interest in the project. Having a regular moderator at the meetings provides consistency and knowledge of the project, and keeps the meetings on topic. The moderator and TxDOT staff are committed to gathering stakeholder input, guiding discussion and answering questions from the members. Between meetings, committee members are also provided information through e-mail distributions that keep them informed of current events related to I-69 at the state and federal levels and other relevant news items. This information keeps members engaged, answers questions and minimizes speculation.

“TxDOT has demonstrated a sincere interest and commitment to gathering stakeholder input and guiding discussions through the segment committee process.” - CSC 2 Member

What can be improved

Members would like more information on funding so they can better understand what can be accomplished on the corridor in the future. Members also suggest having more geographically specific meetings for stakeholders so there can be more detailed discussions that pertain to each area. Advanced notice of the meeting agenda would be helpful for members to allow them to engage in preparatory activities to enhance awareness of the goals for the upcoming meeting. Some members would also like to receive more official correspondence from TxDOT on I-69 and department activities.

Additionally, members would like to see better attendance, more involvement, and more communication with the public. Some members requested more technical discussions to address issues such as hazardous materials, emergency evacuation, route-deviation, and traffic flow. Finally, members suggest providing opportunities for input from Segment Committee

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee

members and other stakeholders who are not able to attend meetings.

Tasks completed by the Segment Committee

The Segment Committee has effectively brought together many critical stakeholders along the proposed I-69 route to discuss their visions and goals of transportation needs and how I-69 might proceed through each region. This committee has been involved in a general planning process that has included members identifying specific routes that should be upgraded to interstate standards as part of I-69, as well as identifying routes and facilities that should connect to I-69. The committee has also identified other transportation facilities, such as rail, transit and airports that if developed, upgraded or connected, would complement the movement of freight trucks and passenger vehicles in the I-69 Corridor.

The committee has pinpointed specific constraints or problems such as right-of-way, natural barriers, land use, relief routes, control of access, and traffic collection. CSC 2 has discussed relief routes, needs for access roads and interchanges, and reviewed potential areas of development. Each representative has been able to voice concerns of their constituents along the corridor, while also building an awareness of the corridor as a whole. Importantly, CSC 2 members have confirmed U.S. 59 as the preferred route for upgrade to I-69.

Helpful Segment Committee activities and exercises

Bringing together the various stakeholders has been a good way to initiate discussion from the overall Texas portion of the I-69 project down to the local considerations. Small group exercises, such as reviewing conceptual interstate layout maps and schematic drawings, were noted by members as being particularly helpful. The availability of TxDOT staff to answer questions regarding cost of construction, width of right-of-way, and feasibility of route deviation has helped put the project into perspective.

Potential future activities and exercises

Committee members would like to have public involvement activities to gain input from the community. In addition, the members would like to receive information about funding opportunities and better understand the cost for building I-69 within their areas. Members would also like to consider the possibility of having sub-committee meetings to address specific topics in areas like Houston and to work with local communities to develop design details and regional aesthetics. Some members would like to expand the committee's efforts to identify additional improvements to the local roadway network that support the corridor and would also like to identify roadways that enhance access to the corridor.

Continuing discussions on future development and regional transportation goals related to I-69 is another desire of the committee members.

Major challenges and key issues related to developing Interstate 69 with Segment 2

Funding for upgrading the existing roadways to an interstate is consistently mentioned by CSC 2 members as being the major challenge related to developing I-69. Additionally, members feel that upgrading existing routes, like U.S. 59, to I-69 will present challenges in areas that do not have sufficient capacity or area to expand the roadway. Other challenges cited by committee members include environmental concerns, access needs, and achieving local support. Finally, members communicate that the lengthy timeline for developing I-69 is also a challenge.

Committee members, engaging the public and their communities in the Segment Committee process

Members of CSC 2 are speaking with members of their communities about I-69 and the activities of the committee. Specifically, members have provided updates on I-69 to economic development and chamber of commerce boards, government leaders and transportation committees in their local areas. Other members have specifically invited representatives from their communities to attend CSC meetings. One member notes they are engaged with elected officials on policy issues related to I-69 and mentioned communicating with the public through publications and industry associations.

"The Advisory Committee and Segment Committees have been successful in identifying and engaging critical stakeholders in the process of determining potential routes for the corridor and prioritizing projects." - CSC 2 Member

Additional helpful public engagement and involvement activities

CSC 2 members again emphasized that public meetings and open house sessions would be helpful activities for engaging the public. Members would also like to work with TxDOT to get additional media coverage with local papers, radio and television stations and suggested that posting additional information to the TxDOT website for the public to review could be helpful.

Preliminary CSC 2 Prioritization

CSC 2 members prepared a preliminary list of project priorities as a "snap shot" of current conditions which reflect interim priorities at this stage of the CSC process. The priorities are subject to change through further work

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee

of and review by the CSC. These results are not a commitment by TxDOT to advance priorities as currently ordered. The priorities may be changed in the future based on additional input, environmental approvals, and funding availability.

To develop the initial priorities, committee members independently ranked the top five sections in their respective segment. The initial priorities were collectively discussed by the committee and members were afforded opportunities to submit a revised ranking of their preliminary priorities based upon the results of the discussion. The current CSC 2 priority sections are shown in **Figure 2**.

Three priority sections focused on relief routes for the Corrigan, Diboll/Lufkin and Houston, areas. Two additional priorities of the committee were to upgrade U.S. 59 from north of the Liberty county line to Cleveland and from Shepherd to Livingston. Specifically, the following sections are currently noted as preliminary priorities for CSC 2:

- U.S. 59 Relief Route at Corrigan
- Upgrade U.S. 59 from Liberty County Line to Cleveland
- Upgrade U.S. 59 from Shepherd to Livingston
- U.S. 59 Relief Route at Diboll/Lufkin
- U.S. 59 Relief Route at Houston

Collectively, the committee emphasizes a desire to see sections of U.S. 59 that may currently meet interstate standard in the Houston area be designated as an interstate highway and consider this to be an immediate priority for TxDOT and the Federal Highway Administration.

Representatives from the Houston area have noted that U.S. 59 has insufficient capacity within the Houston urban area to accommodate today's traffic demands. To help address capacity needs, some CSC 2 members have recommended an additional alignment to the south and east of Houston that would relieve U.S. 59 traffic and also serve the ports along the coast.

Prioritization Rationale

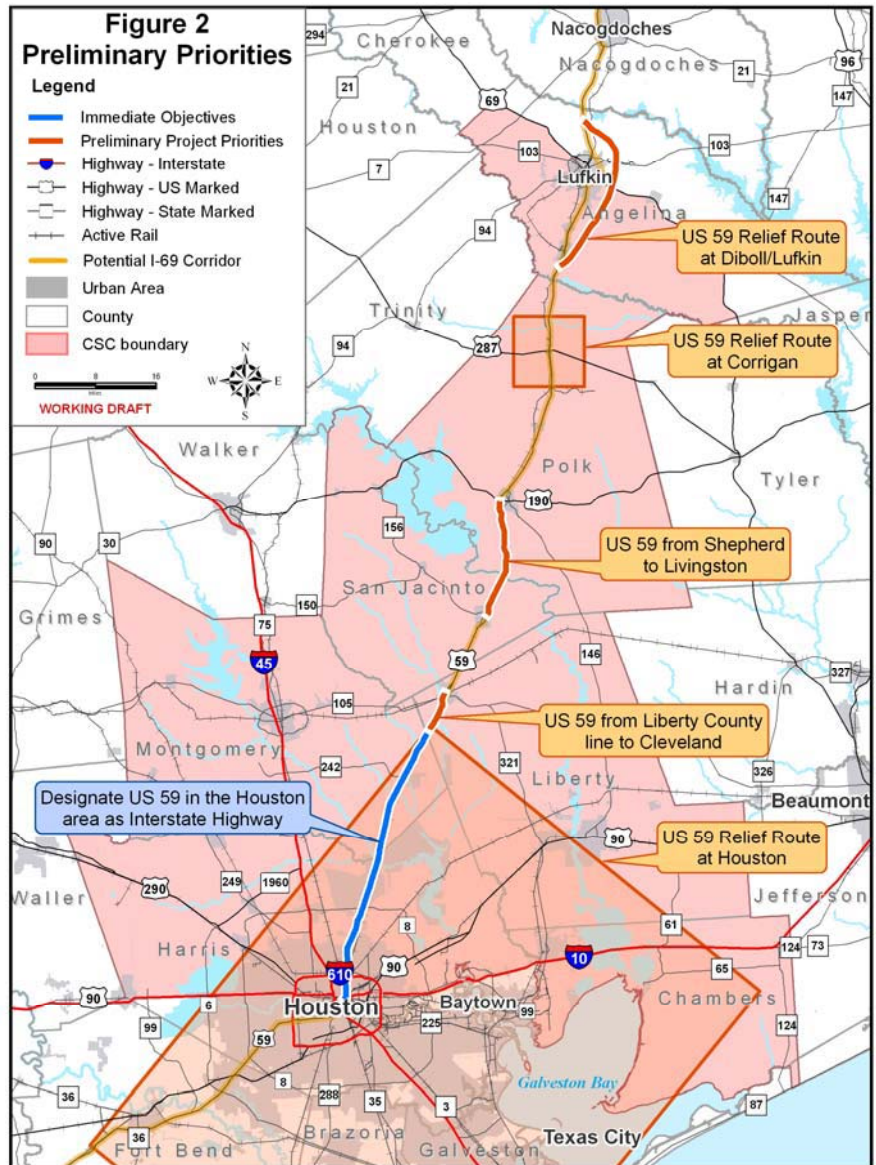
In establishing preliminary priorities, CSC 2 members note a number of factors that they consider as rationale for selecting their priority segments. Rationale mentioned most often by committee members includes:

- Serves High Traffic and Truck Volumes
- Addresses Safety Concerns
- Improves Travel Times
- Supports Economic Growth

Next Steps

As previously noted, the current priorities are preliminary and will be refined as the committee continues its efforts. Upcoming work of CSC 2 is anticipated to include the following activities:

- Reviewing order of magnitude cost estimates and funding opportunities
- Identifying limits of potential projects, and refining the CSC project priorities
- Discussing and planning public involvement activities





November 1, 2010

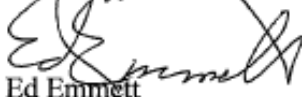
Ms. Doise Miers
Legislative Analyst
125 E. 11th Street
Government and Public Affairs Division
Texas Department of Transportation
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Resolution Supporting the Development of I-69 Including Study of a Relief Route
Around the Houston Region

Dear Ms. Miers,

As a member of the I-69 Corridor Segment 2 and 3 Committees, I request the addition of the recommendations found in the enclosed resolution passed by the Houston-Galveston Transportation Policy Council in the upcoming segment committee reports to the Texas Transportation Commission.

Sincerely,



Ed Emmett
County Judge

EME/rz

Attachments

Cc: Ms. Patricia Waskowiak, I-69 CSC #3 Member
Mr. Ashby Johnson, I-69 CSC #2 Member
Mr. Lane Ward, I-69 CSC #3 Member
Ms. Kim Icenhower, I-69 CSC #2 Member
Mr. Alan Clark, I-69 Statewide CAC Member
Mr. Jim Gonzales, I-69 Statewide CAC Member
Mr. Jim Edmonds, I-69 Statewide CAC Member



Resolution

2010-06

EXPRESSING THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL'S (TPC) SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE I-69 CORRIDOR IN THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON REGION AND THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF TEXAS.

WHEREAS, the Houston-Galveston region is forecasted to add 3.1 million people and almost double vehicle miles traveled by 2035; and,

WHEREAS, providing for the safe and efficient movement of goods throughout the region is an increasingly urgent matter; and,

WHEREAS, the Texas Transportation Commission through the Texas Department of Transportation is planning for the development of the I-69 Corridor to alleviate congestion and accommodate the forecasted growth in truck traffic in the region and state;

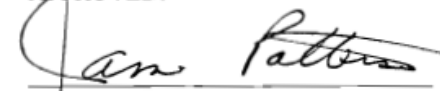
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL FOR THE HOUSTON – GALVESTON TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA THAT THE COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE I-69 CORRIDOR IN THE REGION AND THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF TEXAS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL SUPPORTS, AS A PRIORITY, THE COMPLETION OF US 59 TO INTERSTATE STANDARDS.
2. THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL URGES THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION TO EVALUATE AN I-69 RELIEF ROUTE THAT SERVES THE PORTS ALONG THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AREAS OF THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA.
3. THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL URGES THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION TO COOPERATIVELY PLAN AND WORK WITH THE COUNCIL AS A PARTNER ON DEVELOPMENT OF I-69 CORRIDOR WITHIN THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT A FINAL AND ADOPTED COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION BE TRANSMITTED TO THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 29th day of October 2010, at a regularly called meeting of the Transportation Policy Council.

APPROVED:


James Patterson, Chairman
Transportation Policy Council

ATTEST:


Tom Reid, Secretary
Transportation Policy Council

The resolution provided on the following page was passed by the City of Livingston and submitted to the Corridor Segment Committee for consideration by the committee members.

RESOLUTION NO. 503

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LIVINGSTON, TEXAS
SUPPORTING THE EXISTING U.S. 59 CORRIDOR TO BE
USED AS THE I-69 FOOTPRINT WITHIN THE CITY OF
LIVINGSTON, TEXAS**

WHEREAS, the City of Livingston recognizes the importance of transportation for a prosperous economy and the need for efficiency in routing transportation to promote growth within the City of Livingston and Polk County, and

WHEREAS, I-69 presents an opportunity for our community and countless others along the corridor because it will spur economic development by serving as a direct interregional and international trade route and by providing mobility for communities underserved by existing interstates, and

WHEREAS, discussion has occurred in recent I-69 Corridor Segment Committee 2 meetings concerning the need for a north/south bypass around Livingston on the east side to be designated as a relief route for the proposed I-69 interstate Corridor Program,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LIVINGSTON, TEXAS THAT the members of the City Council of the City of Livingston support the existing US 59 footprint for the I-69 corridor through Livingston but do not support a north/south bypass around Livingston on the east side as an I-69 relief route.

RESOLVED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Livingston, Texas on this the 10th day of August, 2010.

SIGNED:



CLARKE EVANS, Mayor

ATTEST:



ELLIE MONTEAUX, City Secretary

Interim Update Report

Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 3



The Texas Transportation Commission created the Interstate 69 (I-69) Corridor Advisory Committee and Corridor Segment Committees to assist the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in the transportation planning process of the I-69 Corridor. Both sets of committees will provide a locally focused, citizen driven basis of planning along the corridor.

I-69 Advisory Committee: The I-69 Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) was created by Minute Order 111294 on March 27, 2008 for the purpose of facilitating and achieving consensus among affected communities and interested parties on desired transportation improvements along the I-69 Corridor. The Advisory Committee studied the future needs of the I-69 Corridor and published their findings and recommendations in *A Citizen's Report on the Current and Future Needs of the I-69 Corridor 2008*.

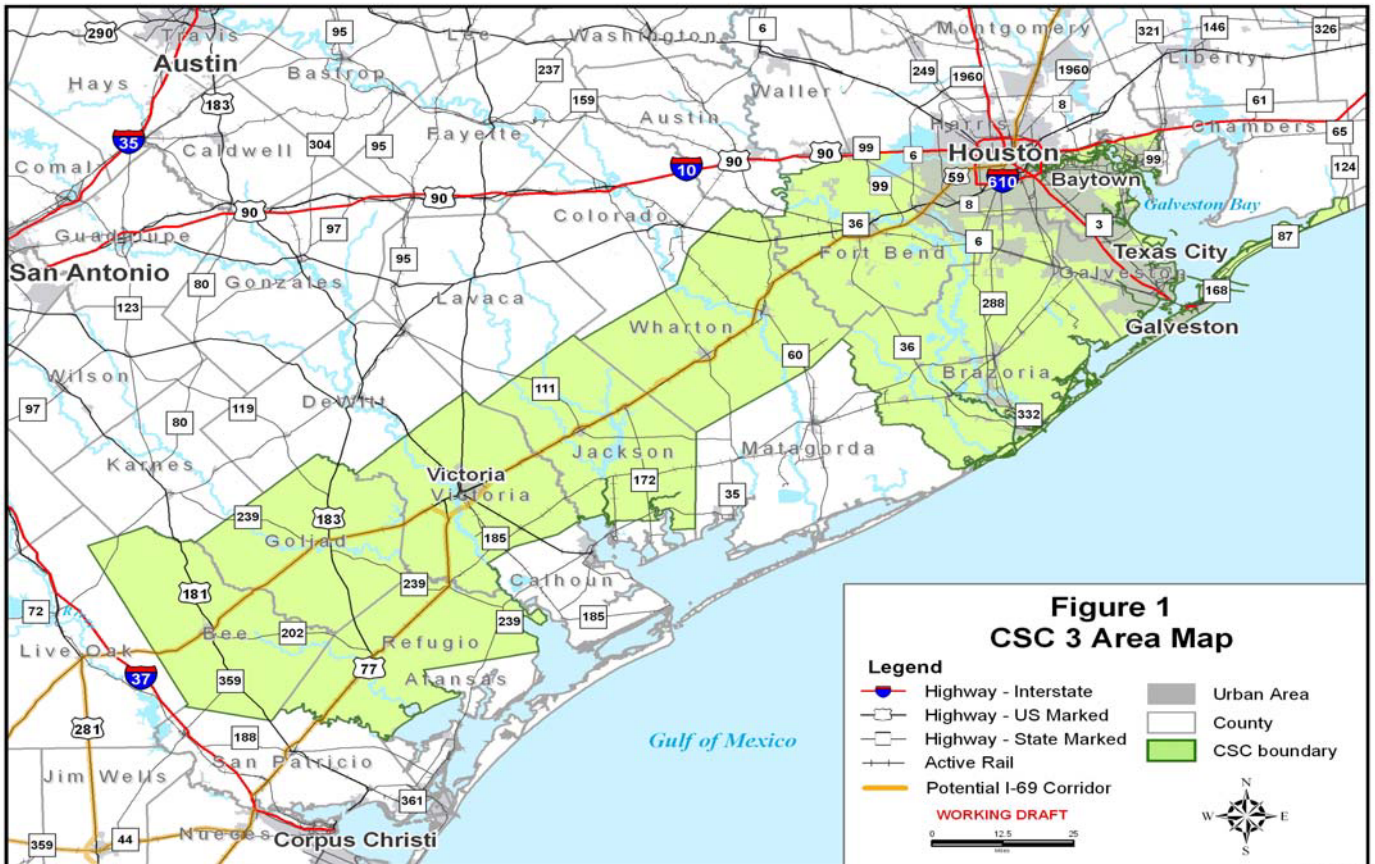
I-69 Segment Committee 3: I-69 Corridor Segment Committee 3 (CSC 3) is one of five Segment Committees created by Minute Order 111527 on September 25, 2008 for the purpose of providing input and recommendations on the designated routes of the I-69 Corridor in their areas. The Segment Committees are composed of members representing cities, counties, metropolitan planning

organizations, ports, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and the Texas Farm Bureau along the I-69 Corridor. The Segment Committees continue to meet and study environmental planning features and plan the best route for their communities. The Segment Committees will report their findings, advice and recommendations to the Texas Transportation Commission and TxDOT's Executive Director.

The area included in CSC 3 is shown in **Figure 1** and includes the counties of Bee, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Goliad, Harris, Jackson, Refugio, Victoria and Wharton. CSC 3 encompasses portions of the U.S. 59 and U.S. 77 routes. Members of the committee currently include those individuals listed in **Table 1**.

Interim Committee Update

In September 2010, TxDOT's Executive Director, Amadeo Saenz, spoke with the Chairs of the I-69 Segment Committees about how the process is going, asked that each committee compile an update on their progress and work, and asked that the CSCs identify projects that they currently see as priorities in their areas. This information would be used to update the Texas Transportation Commission on the progress of the CSCs thus far.



Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 3

**Table 1 – CSC 3 Committee Members
(November 2010)**

<u>Member</u>	<u>Appointing Entity</u>
Leonard T. Anzaldua	Refugio County
Spencer Chambers	Port of Houston Authority
Ed Emmett	Harris County
Laura Fischer	Bee County
Mike Fitzgerald, P.E.	Galveston County
D. Dale Fowler	City of Victoria
Stephen Gertson	Texas Farm Bureau
Joe D. Hermes	City of Edna
Ray Jaso	City of Refugio
E. J. "Joe" King	Brazoria County
Michael Kramer	City of Houston
Santiago Martinez	City of Beeville
Ray Miller	Victoria MPO
Domingo Montalvo, Jr.*	City of Wharton
John W. Murrile	Wharton County
Donald R. Pozzi	Victoria County
Tony Rigdon	Port of Victoria
Phillip Spenrath	City of El Campo
Harrison Stafford, II	Jackson County
Ric Tinney	City of Goliad
Lane Ward	Fort Bend County
Patricia Waskowiak	Houston-Galveston Area Council
TBA	Goliad County

* Committee Chair

CSC 3 Update Information

Using the topics outlined below, members of CSC 3 reported the following information on the current progress of committee efforts.

How the Segment Committee process has worked

CSC 3 members report that the committee process has worked well, with one member calling it outstanding. Meetings are held in various communities along the I-69 corridor which allows local leaders from these various communities to voice their concerns and provide vital information on the development of I-69 in their area. Members add that the process has been successful in identifying and engaging critical stakeholders who have assisted the committee determine potential routes for the corridor; this stakeholder input has also been instrumental in the committee prioritizing projects. Stakeholder feedback has also allowed members to highlight specific issues in their community that may be positively or negatively affected by an interstate. Segment Committee members have appreciated TxDOT staff's help in soliciting feedback from communities and stakeholders which has allowed the committee to identify priorities for small communities and larger regions such as the Houston metropolitan area or areas of concern.

What has been working well

CSC 3 members appreciate the efforts of TxDOT staff in seeking committee member input and distributing meeting materials efficiently. The format and flow of meetings works well and efforts by TxDOT staff to keep committee members

informed through e-mail updates and news articles are helpful, as is providing information in advance of meetings. Members believe that the meetings and work of the committee have given needs of both urban and rural areas fair consideration. All sides have been heard, various issues been considered and members recognize that the information that is shared is 'immensely important'. Finally, members of CSC 3 have benefited from the use of aerial photography and maps that reference familiar locations along the corridor.

What can be improved

At times, CSC 3 members feel they do not always have a clear understanding of where the committee process is headed or what the final product is intended to be. Providing members with a periodic schedule and milestone would be beneficial. Members add that the travel involved to attend committee meetings is difficult, and can prevent members from attending meetings so committee members who can not attend meetings should be afforded an opportunity to provide input that is shared with the committee.

"TxDOT has demonstrated a sincere interest and commitment to gathering stakeholder input and guiding discussions through the segment committee process."
- CSC 3 Member

CSC 3 members acknowledge the challenge of having a committee with rural and urban areas with very different needs. Some members feel the committee could work quicker and accomplish more with smaller groups that have more common interests. Others add that addressing route options around the Houston area and engaging other interests, such as the ports, is an important future task that the committee should resolve with TxDOT and other local agencies.

Tasks completed by the Segment Committee

CSC 3 has provided input on transportation problems and challenges and identified transportation facilities that should be considered when developing the I-69 Corridor program. The committee reviewed conceptual interstate layouts along the U.S. 59 and U.S. 77 corridors to identify obstacles, constraints, preferences and other issues. The right-of-way requirements and constraints were discussed by the committee and adjustments were made to the conceptual interstate layouts as the committee indicated areas where relief routes, grade separations and interchanges should be considered. The conceptual interstate layout exercise allowed committee members to identify environmental planning features that may pose a conflict in potential upgrades.

To date, the CSC 3 members confirm that U.S. 59 should be designated as an I-69 Corridor facility. The committee has not yet decided if U.S. 77 through Victoria and Refugio counties should be part of the I-69 Corridor. However, the committee has concluded that the segment of the Grand Parkway in Fort Bend County is not a practical I-69 option.

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 3

Helpful Segment Committee activities and exercises

Members of CSC 3 report that reviewing maps with footprints over-laid on top of existing roads being considered for upgrade has been helpful during the conceptual interstate layout exercise because this allowed members to see and understand the impact of converting existing roads to interstates. A member has noted the ‘pictures are worth a thousand words.’ CSC 3 members add that brief updates from corridor representatives on new developments (business, roadway, etc.), environmental constraints, and understanding of transportation and infrastructure goals for communities in the region has also been of benefit to the committee’s progress.

Potential future activities and exercises

CSC 3 members would like continued discussions on future development along the corridor, regional transportation goals, and how they are connected to I-69 development. It would be helpful to committee members to have a document that details the improvements that have been proposed along the corridor and cost estimates for such improvements. Additionally, members would like to have a timeline or Gantt chart to help them better understand scope and progress of the project.

Potential future activities suggested by CSC 3 members include holding subcommittee meetings for larger demographic areas, in particular the Houston area. Suggested activities include touring the Port of Houston so committee members outside of Harris County can learn about its impact on the transportation system and the future I-69 Corridor. Other members recommend a potential joint meeting with all Segment Committees or at least Segment Committees directly adjacent to CSC 3.

Major challenges and key issues related to developing Interstate 69 with Segment 3

Lack of funding and overcoming the public perception of I-69 being associated with the former Trans-Texas Corridor is a major challenge. Members recommend that if tolls are required, up-front, clear communication with the public is vital in educating the public of roadway financing. Members also note a major challenge will be acquiring land for relief routes for communities and small towns along the route. It is important that future routes strive to stay on existing right of way and not take additional farm land or disturb existing businesses along the roadway.

Finally, some members see that committee consensus on having a connection of U.S. 77 from Victoria to Corpus Christi through the Refugio area is needed. These members feel not having this connection could defeat the purpose of I-69.

“The key issue is funding. Given TxDOT’s most recent revenue projections for transportation, prospects for major construction in the corridor seem uncertain.” - CSC 3 Member

Committee members, engaging the public and their communities in the Segment Committee process

Members of CSC 3 report that they speak with members of their communities about I-69 and the committee’s activities. Specifically, these conversations in the Houston region have served to develop ideas for routing an I-69 route around the south and east sides of Houston to better serve Gulf Coast ports. Members also report on CSC meetings to economic development and chamber of commerce boards, government leaders and transportation committees in their local areas; CSC members invite these groups to Segment Committee meetings. Finally, some members have had specific discussions with land and business owners along the corridor relative to potential right of way needs for future highway expansion.

Additional helpful public engagement and involvement activities

CSC 3 members communicate that continued discussions of I-69 with the public will need to be done carefully and in a manner that continues to reiterate that it is different from past project concepts. Goals and objectives of this new citizen lead planning effort need to be clearly defined and easily explained to the public. Future public meetings and open house sessions are recommended by CSC 3 members so CSC 3 members and TxDOT can work together to educate the public on the committee’s recommended plans and the development timeframe for the project.

Preliminary CSC 3 Prioritization

CSC 3 members have prepared a preliminary list of project priorities as a “snap shot” of current conditions and to reflect interim priorities at this stage of the CSC process. The priorities are subject to change through further work of and review by the CSC. These results are not a commitment by TxDOT to advance projects as currently ordered. The priorities may change in the future based on additional input, environmental approvals, and funding availability.

To develop the initial priorities, committee members independently ranked their top five sections in their respective segment. The initial priorities were collectively discussed by the committee and members were afforded opportunities to submit a revised ranking of their preliminary priorities based upon the results of the discussion. The current CSC 3 priority sections are shown in **Figure 2**. These priorities largely focus on the portion of U.S. 59 between Victoria and Houston and include the following sections:

- Upgrade U.S. 59 from north of Wharton to south of Rosenberg
- Upgrade U.S. 59 from U.S. 77 to north of Victoria
- Upgrade U.S. 59 from south of El Campo to south of Wharton

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 3

- Upgrade U.S. 59 from south of Wharton to north of Wharton
- U.S. 59 Relief Route at Houston

Collectively, the committee emphasizes a desire to see sections of U.S. 59 that may currently meet interstate standard in the Houston area be designated as an interstate highway and consider this to be an immediate priority for TxDOT and the Federal Highway Administration. CSC 3 members from Fort Bend County have noted that despite having current freeway design standards that may meet most interstate standards, a section of U.S. 59 between Rosenberg and SH 99 is in need of an upgrade to meet capacity needs.

Representatives from the Houston area have noted that U.S. 59 has insufficient capacity within the Houston urban area to accommodate today's traffic demands. To help address capacity needs, some CSC 3 members have recommended an additional alignment to the south and east of Houston that would relieve U.S. 59 traffic and also serve the ports along the coast.

Prioritization Rationale

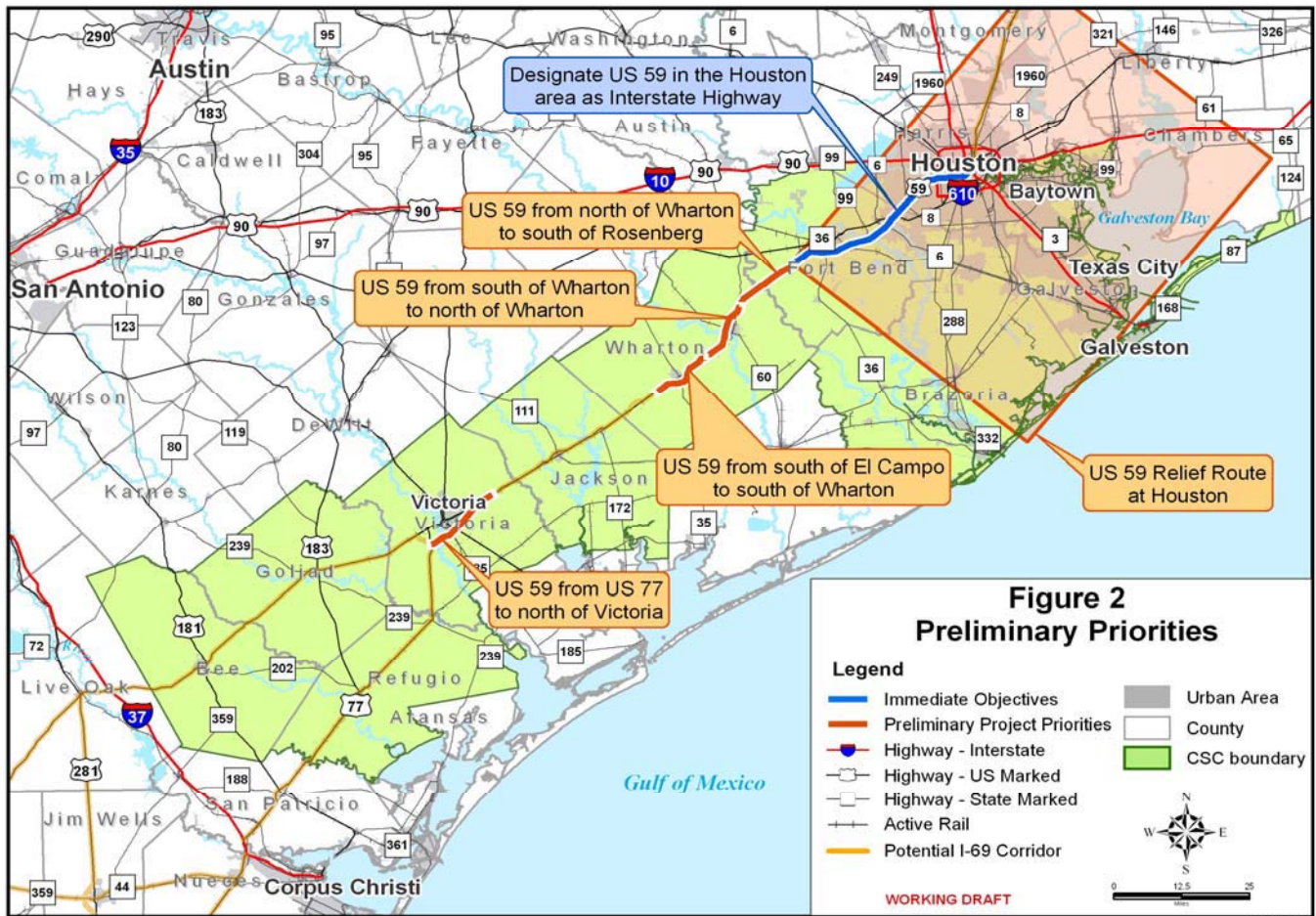
In establishing preliminary priorities, CSC 3 members noted a number of factors that they consider as rationale for selecting their priority segments. Rationale mentioned most often by committee members includes:

- Serves High Traffic and Truck Volumes
- Serves Traffic Growth
- Addresses Safety Concerns
- Improves Travel Times
- Supports Economic Growth

Next Steps

As previously noted, the current priorities are preliminary and will be refined as the committee continues its efforts. Upcoming work of CSC 3 is anticipated to include the following activities:

- Reviewing order of magnitude cost estimates and funding opportunities
- Identifying limits of potential projects, and refining the CSC project priorities
- Discussing and planning public involvement activities





November 1, 2010

Ms. Doise Miers
Legislative Analyst
125 E. 11th Street
Government and Public Affairs Division
Texas Department of Transportation
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Resolution Supporting the Development of I-69 Including Study of a Relief Route
Around the Houston Region

Dear Ms. Miers,

As a member of the I-69 Corridor Segment 2 and 3 Committees, I request the addition of the recommendations found in the enclosed resolution passed by the Houston-Galveston Transportation Policy Council in the upcoming segment committee reports to the Texas Transportation Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Emmett", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Ed Emmett
County Judge

EME/rz

Attachments

Cc: Ms. Patricia Waskowiak, I-69 CSC #3 Member
Mr. Ashby Johnson, I-69 CSC #2 Member
Mr. Lane Ward, I-69 CSC #3 Member
Ms. Kim Icenhower, I-69 CSC #2 Member
Mr. Alan Clark, I-69 Statewide CAC Member
Mr. Jim Gonzales, I-69 Statewide CAC Member
Mr. Jim Edmonds, I-69 Statewide CAC Member



Resolution

2010-06

EXPRESSING THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL'S (TPC) SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE I-69 CORRIDOR IN THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON REGION AND THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF TEXAS.

WHEREAS, the Houston-Galveston region is forecasted to add 3.1 million people and almost double vehicle miles traveled by 2035; and,

WHEREAS, providing for the safe and efficient movement of goods throughout the region is an increasingly urgent matter; and,

WHEREAS, the Texas Transportation Commission through the Texas Department of Transportation is planning for the development of the I-69 Corridor to alleviate congestion and accommodate the forecasted growth in truck traffic in the region and state;

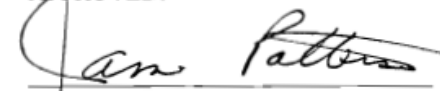
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL FOR THE HOUSTON – GALVESTON TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA THAT THE COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE I-69 CORRIDOR IN THE REGION AND THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF TEXAS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL SUPPORTS, AS A PRIORITY, THE COMPLETION OF US 59 TO INTERSTATE STANDARDS.
2. THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL URGES THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION TO EVALUATE AN I-69 RELIEF ROUTE THAT SERVES THE PORTS ALONG THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AREAS OF THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA.
3. THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL URGES THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION TO COOPERATIVELY PLAN AND WORK WITH THE COUNCIL AS A PARTNER ON DEVELOPMENT OF I-69 CORRIDOR WITHIN THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT A FINAL AND ADOPTED COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION BE TRANSMITTED TO THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 29th day of October 2010, at a regularly called meeting of the Transportation Policy Council.

APPROVED:


James Patterson, Chairman
Transportation Policy Council

ATTEST:


Tom Reid, Secretary
Transportation Policy Council

Interim Update Report

Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 4



The Texas Transportation Commission created the Interstate 69 (I-69) Corridor Advisory Committee and Corridor Segment Committees to assist the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in the transportation planning process of the I-69 Corridor. Both sets of committees provide a locally focused, citizen driven basis of planning along the corridor.

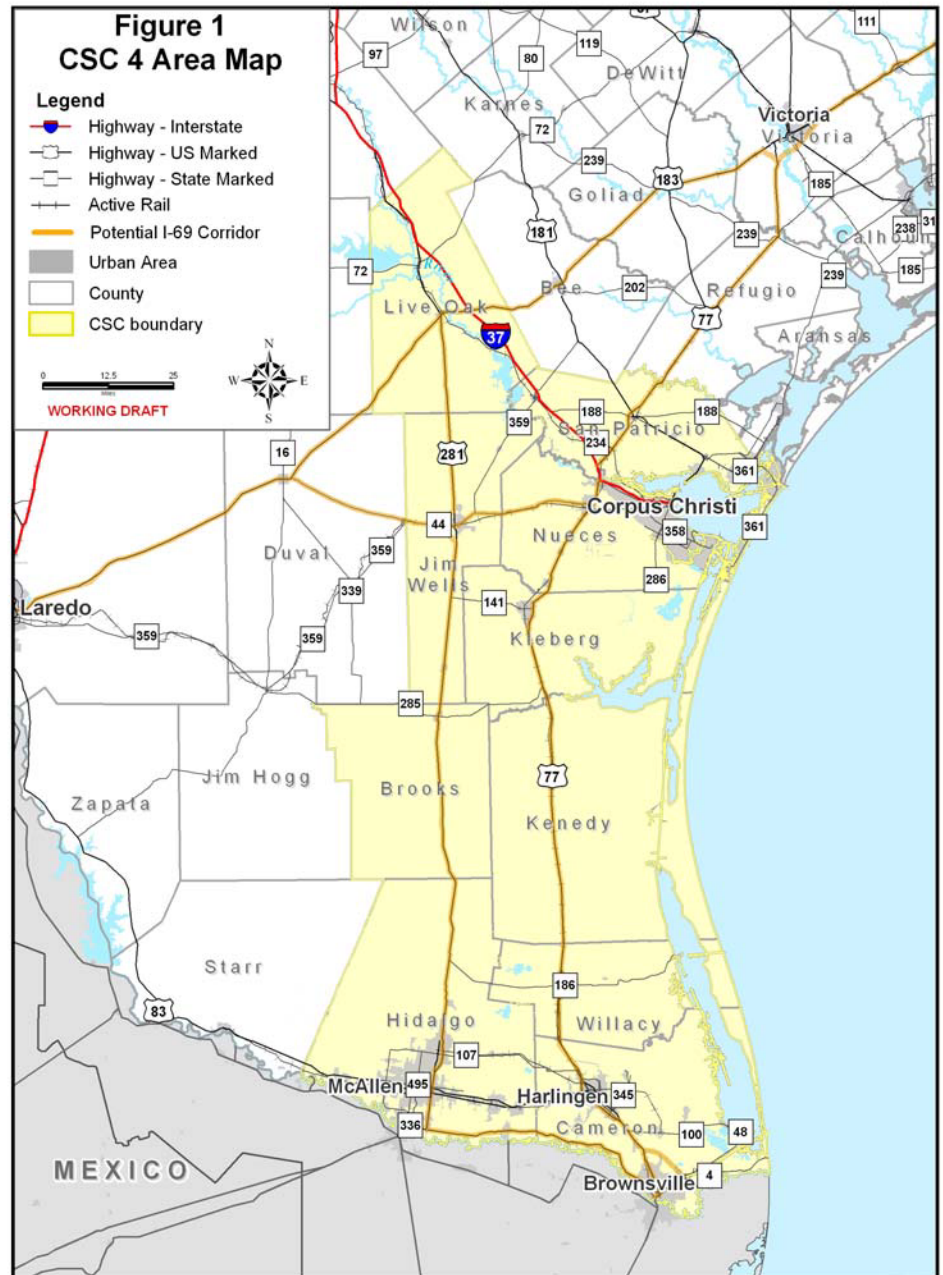
I-69 Advisory Committee: The I-69 Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) was created by Minute Order 111294 on March 27, 2008 for the purpose of facilitating and achieving consensus among affected communities and interested parties on desired transportation improvements along the I-69 Corridor. The Advisory Committee studied the future needs of the I-69 Corridor and published their findings and recommendations in *A Citizen's Report on the Current and Future Needs of the I-69 Corridor 2008*.

I-69 Segment Committee 4: I-69 Corridor Segment Committee 4 (CSC 4) is one of five Segment Committees created by Minute Order 111527 on September 25, 2008 for the purpose of providing input and recommendations on the designated routes of the I-69 Corridor in their areas. The CSCs are composed of members representing cities, counties, metropolitan planning organizations, ports, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and the Texas Farm Bureau along the I-69 Corridor. The Segment Committees continue to meet and study environmental planning features and plan the best route for their communities. The CSCs will report their findings, advice and recommendations to the Texas Transportation Commission and TxDOT's Executive Director.

The area included in CSC 4 is shown in **Figure 1** and includes the counties of Brooks, Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, Nueces, San Patricio, and Willacy. CSC 4 encompasses portions of the U.S. 59, U.S. 77, U.S. 281 and SH 44 routes. Members of the committee currently include those individuals listed in **Table 1**.

Interim Committee Update

In September 2010, TxDOT's Executive Director, Amadeo Saenz, spoke with the Chairs of the I-69 Segment Committees about how the process is going, asked that each committee compile an update on their progress and work, and asked that the CSCs identify projects that they currently see as priorities in their areas. This information would be used to update the Texas Transportation Commission on the progress of the CSCs thus far.



Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee

**Table 1 – CSC 4 Committee Members
(November 2010)**

<u>Member</u>	<u>Appointing Entity</u>
Frank Brogan	Port of Corpus Christi
Roy Cantu	Kleberg Co.
Charlie Cardenas	City of Corpus Christi
Ralph Coker	Nueces Co.
Susan Durham	Jim Wells Co.
Teclo J. Garcia	City of McAllen
Angie Garza	Hidalgo County MPO
Eddy Hernandez	Brownsville MPO
Jim Huff	Live Oak Co.
Wesley Jacobs	City of Falfurrias
Alan Johnson	City of Harlingen
Stanley Laskowski	City of Kingsville
Pat Liston*	Harlingen-San Benito MPO
Sergio T. Lopez	Port of Brownsville
Troy Nedbalek	Texas Farm Bureau
Tom Niskala	Corpus Christi MPO
Joseph F. Phillips	Hidalgo Co.
Raul M. Ramirez	Brooks Co.
Daniel O. Rios	Lower Rio Grande Partnership
Terry Simpson	San Patricio Co.
Edna Tamayo	Cameron Co.
Louis E. Turcotte, III	Kenedy Co.
TBD	Willacy Co.

* Committee Chair

CSC 4 Update Information

Using the topics outlined below, members of CSC 4 reported the following information on the current progress of committee efforts.

How the Segment Committee process has worked

CSC 4 members report that the meetings are conducted in a manner that will ensure a comprehensive plan is produced. The meetings offer informative discussion regarding various aspects of the conceptual interstate. Segment Committee members have examined specific routes and identified upgrades to these routes. In examining routes throughout the corridor, benefits of making connections to border crossings, ports and airports were discussed by the committee. Members also report that individual committee members have been given the opportunity to express their concerns and advise TxDOT of unique local issues, adding that steady progress has been made through the hard work of the committee. CSC members are meeting with communities and other local organizations outside of the CSC meetings which is important when preparing for the next meeting.

What has been working well

CSC 4 members note that TxDOT works hard to make sure all methods of communication are available to committee members to achieve success. Discussions have gone well and TxDOT has been responsive to the items needed by the committee or those that require discussion. Members add

that the back and forth dialogue between members of the committee is also a beneficial part of the meetings. CSC 4 members see the committee's work in identifying needs and corridor issues as working well and feel that incorporating committee member recommendations into conceptual interstate layout maps was a useful exercise.

What can be improved

CSC 4 members acknowledge that having more information on funding would be helpful to understand what can be accomplished on the corridor in the future. Members suggest that, in some cases, committee meetings can be improved by minimizing time spent repeating issues. It may help for the committee to limit repeated discussion of issues that have been examined by the committee in previous meetings. Setting limits for continued discussion may help expedite committee work. Members indicate the CSC's ability to provide meaningful input could also be improved with more frequent meetings or with meetings that involve smaller groups of committee members who share common issues.

Tasks completed by the Segment Committee

CSC 4 members note that the committee has reviewed the highways within their segment and indicated important locations on the maps. This effort will help TxDOT potentially plan corridor improvements to allow for efficient access. Members appreciate that TxDOT has responded to their requests to consider modifications of preliminary plans recommended along the corridor.

A member reports that a major accomplishment of the committee is narrowing the preliminary route of I-69 to primarily use existing roadways. Members have reviewed these proposed routes to determine where there may be potential issues and to propose ideas to mitigate those issues with corridor options like overpasses, relief routes or modified interstate cross-sections. The committee is working to ensure that the segment transitions successively with the other segments.

Helpful Segment Committee activities and exercises

CSC 4 members report that listening to other members' needs and hearing other viewpoints is a beneficial activity. Viewing maps with footprints over-laid on top of existing roads being considered for upgrade has been helpful during the conceptual interstate layout exercise because this allowed members to see and understand the impact of converting existing roads to interstates. Small group exercises and meetings were cited by members as being particularly helpful.

Potential future activities and exercises

Committee members noted that it would be useful to continue holding small group sessions and beginning public involvement activities in order to obtain input from other members of their communities. Receiving information about funding opportunities and understanding the cost for building

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee

I-69 within their areas were also identified as important additional activities for the committee. Members would also like to receive information on the status of construction activities.

Major challenges and key issues related to developing Interstate 69 with Segment 4

CSC 4 members believe that, as much as possible, future highway construction should utilize existing rights-of-way. Such actions are the best way to minimize impacts on property owners and potentially minimize facility costs. Members consistently recognize that money to finance the project is a major challenge related to developing I-69.

Members pointed out that a major challenge to I-69's development is the manner in which it may be implemented through or around communities. Engaging members of affected communities now was recommended as a way to avoid conflicts that may slow future development. In particular, the need to explain and plan with residents of Premont, Odem, and Refugio was cited as a critical effort that should be undertaken as quickly as possible.

Committee members, engaging the public and their communities in the Segment Committee process

Members of CSC 4 are representatives of their local areas and see it as an important duty to keep their communities informed so the Segment Committee members speak with various groups in their area, including city councils, chambers of commerce and commissioners courts, about I-69 to give these groups updates on the progress of the Segment Committee and manage expectations of the progress of the corridor. In meeting with these groups, members encourage individuals to inform others in their community about the work and activities of the Segment Committee and of the future planning activities for I-69. Committee members have also sponsored smaller meetings in their local areas to discuss I-69 and some members provide information on the Segment Committee meetings for local newspapers.

Additional helpful public engagement and involvement activities

CSC 4 members note that they would like to have open house sessions for the public and would like additional media coverage with local papers, radio and television stations. It will be important that these public involvement efforts include railroads and stakeholders who may be impacted by and have information relevant in the development of an I-69 Corridor Program.

Preliminary CSC 4 Prioritization

CSC 4 members prepared a preliminary list of project priorities as a "snap shot" of current conditions which reflect interim priorities at this stage of the CSC process. The priorities are subject to change through further work of and review by the CSC. These results are not a commitment by

TxDOT to advance projects as currently ordered. The priorities may change in the future based on additional input, environmental approvals, and funding availability.

To develop the initial priorities, committee members independently ranked their top sections. The initial priorities were collectively discussed by the committee and members were afforded opportunities to submit a revised ranking of their preliminary priorities based upon the results of the discussion.

Some members of CSC 4 and 5 are concerned that the committees have fewer members representing the U.S. 281 corridor than the U.S. 77 corridor. Subsequently, members of CSC 4 agreed to identify the top four priorities for each of these corridors.

The CSC 4 members also stress that the Rio Grande Valley has historically been underserved by the existing transportation network in Texas and has missed out on economic opportunity and growth even though it is one of the larger population centers in the state. Members agree that upgrading both U.S. 77 and U.S. 281 to interstate quality is the ultimate priority goal for the region and members emphasize that the work be done in a parallel time frame.

The current CSC 4 priority sections are shown in **Figure 2**. Specifically, the following sections are currently noted as preliminary priorities for CSC 4:

U.S. 77 Priorities

- Upgrade from south of Lyford to Willacy/Kenedy County line
- Relief Route at Riviera
- Upgrade from Willacy/Kenedy County line to south of Riviera
- Upgrade from north of Riviera to south of Driscoll

U.S. 281 Priorities

- Relief Route to serve U.S. 59 and U.S. 281 at George West
- Upgrade from north of McAllen to south of Falfurrias
- Relief Route at Premont
- Upgrade from Brooks/Jim Wells County line to south of Premont

Collectively, the committee emphasizes a desire to see all sections of U.S. 77 and U.S. 281 that may currently meet interstate standard be designated as interstate highways and consider this to be an immediate objective for TxDOT and the Federal Highway Administration.

Additionally, committee members note the need to accelerate environmental study efforts along additional portions of these two corridors because in gaining environmental clearance, construction can begin once funding is available.

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee

Prioritization Rationale

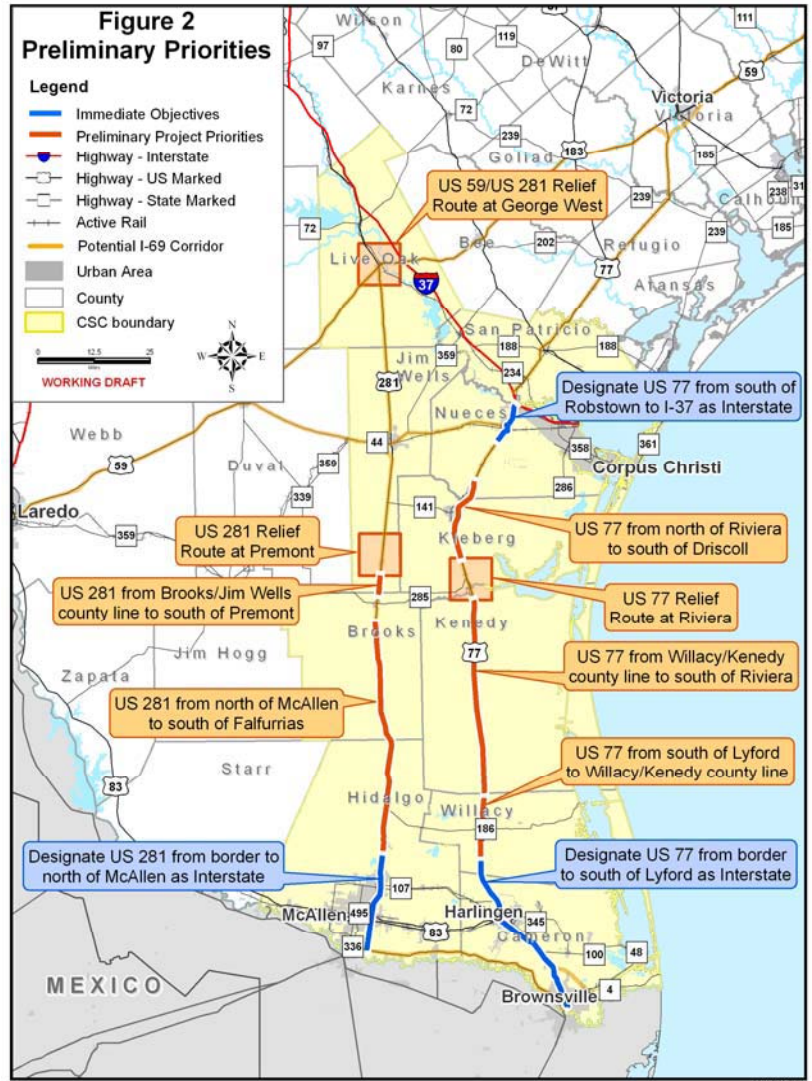
In establishing preliminary priorities, CSC 4 members noted a number of factors that they consider as rationale for selecting their priority segments. Rationale mentioned most often by committee members includes:

- Serves High Traffic and Truck Volumes
- Provides Emergency Evacuation
- Addresses Safety Concerns
- Improves Travel Times
- Provides Multi-modal Connections (Air, Sea, Rail)
- Serves International Border Crossings
- Serves Industrial and Intermodal Service
- Community Support
- Potential Alternative Funding Sources
- Connection with the new Sea Highway (Port of Brownsville, TX to Port of Manatee, FL)

Next Steps

As previously noted, the current priorities are preliminary and may be refined as the committee continues its efforts. Upcoming work of CSC 4 is anticipated to include the following activities:

- Reviewing order of magnitude cost estimates and funding opportunities
- Identifying limits of potential projects, and refining the CSC project priorities
- Discussing and planning public involvement activities



Interim Update Report

Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee 5



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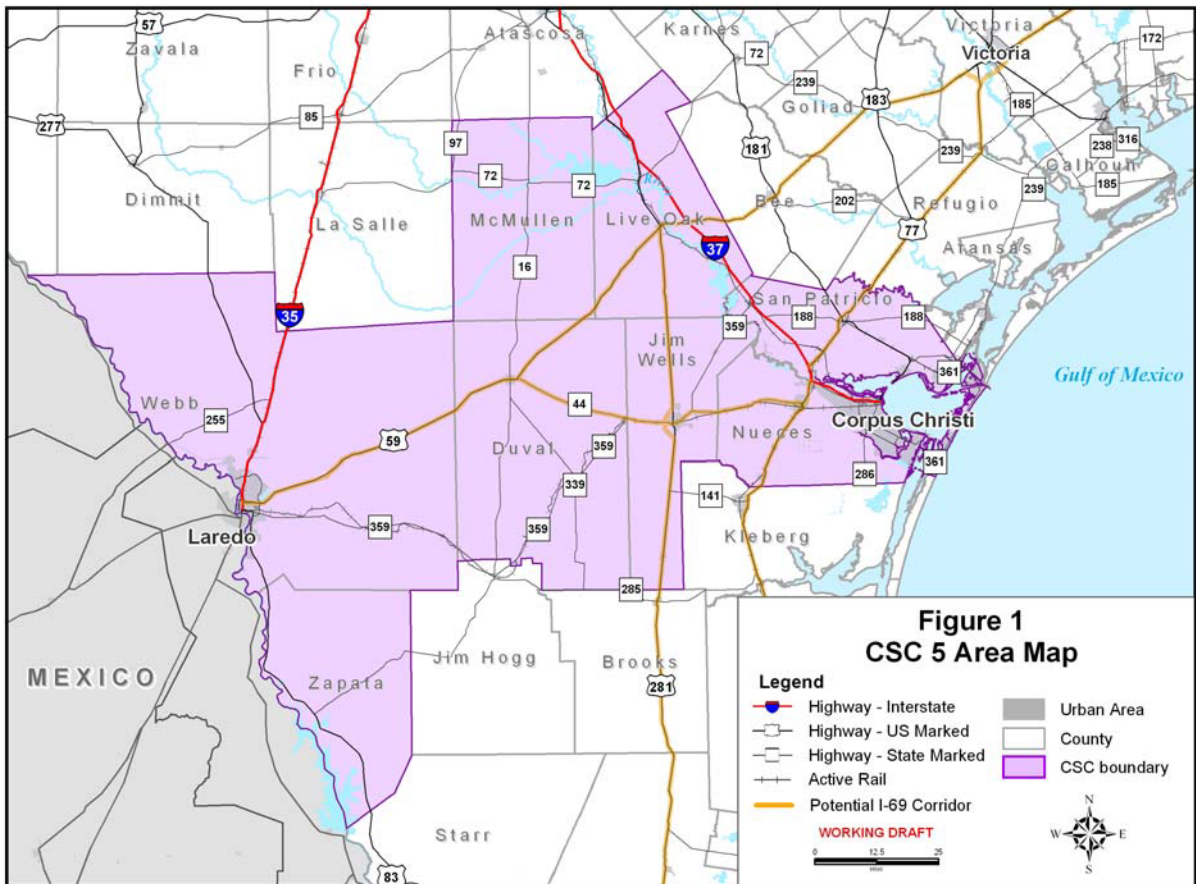
I-69 Segment Committee 5: I-69 Corridor Segment Committee 5 (CSC 5) is one of five Segment Committees created by Minute Order 111527 on September 25, 2008 for the purpose of providing input and recommendations on the designated routes of the I-69 Corridor in their areas. The Segment Committees are composed of members representing cities, counties, metropolitan planning

organizations, ports, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and the Texas Farm Bureau along the I-69 Corridor. The Segment Committees continue to meet and study environmental planning features and plan the best route for their communities. The Segment Committees will report their findings, advice and recommendations to the Texas Transportation Commission and TxDOT's Executive Director.

The area included in CSC 5 is shown in **Figure 1** and includes the counties of Duval, Jim Wells, Live Oak, McMullen, Nueces, San Patricio, Webb, and Zapata. CSC 5 encompasses portions of the U.S. 59, U.S. 77, U.S. 281 and SH 44 routes. Members of the committee currently include those individuals listed in **Table 1**.

Interim Committee Update

In September 2010, TxDOT's Executive Director, Amadeo Saenz, spoke with the Chairs of the I-69 Segment Committees about how the process is going, asked that each committee compile an update on their progress and work, and asked that the CSCs identify projects that they currently see as priorities in their areas. This information would be used to update the Texas Transportation Commission on the progress of the CSCs thus far.



Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee

**Table 1 – CSC 5 Committee Members
(November 2010)**

<u>Member</u>	<u>Appointing Entity</u>
David Ainsworth, Sr.	Corpus Christi MPO
Richard Borchard	Port of Corpus Christi
Arnoldo Cantu	City of Freer
Tim Clower	Nueces County
Ray De Los Santos	City of Alice
Roberto Elizondo	Duval County
Rosalva Guerra	Zapata County
Jim Huff	Live Oak County
Pearson Knolle	Texas Farm Bureau
Nelda Martinez	City of Corpus Christi
Josephine Miller	San Patricio Economic Development Corporation
Rodrigo Ramon, Jr.	City of Robstown
L. Arnold Saenz	Jim Wells County
Sandy Sanders	Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce
Keith Selman	City of Laredo & Laredo Urban Transportation Study Webb County
Terry Simpson*	San Patricio County
Sylvia Steele	City of George West
TBA	McMullen County
TBA	Port of Laredo

* Committee Chair

CSC 5 Update Information

Using the topics outlined below, members of CSC 5 reported the following information on the current progress of committee efforts.

How the Segment Committee process has worked

CSC 5 members report that the meetings have been productive with good presenters and knowledgeable participants. A lot of data has been collected that is specific to local conditions. Information about project engineering and development requirements has been shared which lets the committee know what is possible or must be included.

CSC 5 members add that their segment has come a long way in understanding their role and have worked well with Segment 4, with whom they regularly meet. They also indicated that the committee process has been working well.

What has been working well

CSC 5 members communicate that the use of aerial and project mapping and dividing into working groups during meetings is helpful, along with the opportunity to listen and have information flow both ways between committee

members and TxDOT. Additionally, members report that having combined meetings with CSC 4 and 5 is beneficial and appreciate the attendance of railroad and trucking industry representatives at committee meetings so information useful in planning can be shared. The CSC meetings are open to the public and CSC members feel the open meetings and allowing opportunities for public input are beneficial to the process. The CSC members agree that the CSC coordination effort has worked well and that they have accomplished a lot in identifying the transportation problems to be solved as well as the transportation facilities, important destinations, and planning features to consider when developing an I-69 Corridor Program.

What can be improved

CSC 5 members acknowledge that having more information on funding would be helpful in order for them to best understand what can be accomplished on the corridor in the future. Members would also like to spend less time repeating issues from previous meetings and on technical matters, such as design and alignment details, that cannot be resolved at this stage of the project development process. The CSC's ability to provide meaningful input could be improved if TxDOT provided further clarification on what can be recommended from an engineering perspective as part of the effort to develop a viable and cost effective I-69 Corridor Program. In locations where relief routes are recommended by the committee, committee members feel it would be helpful to have preliminary alignments for these relief routes.

Tasks completed by the Segment Committee

CSC 5 members have reviewed the highways within their segments and collected information about local traffic patterns and issues such as emergency vehicle access. Committee members have also identified choke points, needed relief routes, additional roads and connecting facilities that should be considered, along with problem areas or environmental issues to consider with project planning. Some members communicate that sections of the corridor are very rural and isolated, and applying full federal interstate standards throughout these areas seems to be an unnecessary expense.

Helpful Segment Committee activities and exercises

Members of CSC 5 report that listening to other members discuss their needs is a beneficial activity which has prompted them to think about their own issues. Viewing maps with footprints over-laid on top of existing roads being considered for upgrade has been helpful during the conceptual interstate layout exercise because this allowed members to see and understand the impact of converting existing roads to interstates. Small group exercises, such as reviewing conceptual interstate layout maps, have been particularly helpful to the members. Committee members add that small group meetings involving TxDOT staff and committee members from specific local areas within the segment are also beneficial.

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee

Potential future activities and exercises

Committee members want to have public involvement activities to gain input from members of their communities on their preliminary plans and ideas for I-69 and would like information about funding to better understand the cost for building I-69 in their communities.

Major challenges and key issues related to developing I-69 with Segment 5

Funding for upgrading the existing roadways to an interstate is consistently mentioned by CSC 5 members as being the major challenge related to developing I-69. Additionally, some members see routes around small towns such as Odem and Refugio as a challenge for future corridor planning. Preserving right of way for future corridor improvements was also cited as a challenge for developing I-69.

Committee members, engaging the public and their communities in the Segment Committee process

Members of CSC 5 report that they have spoken with individuals in their communities about I-69 and their committee's activities. Specifically, members provide reports on CSC 5 activities to economic development and chamber of commerce boards, government leaders and transportation committees in their local areas. Other members have specifically invited members of their communities to attend CSC meetings, including trucking and rail industry representatives. It was acknowledged by CSC members that meeting with local organizations outside of CSC meetings is important when preparing for future Segment Committee meetings. The CSC members agreed that this localized CSC outreach should continue over the course of developing an I-69 Corridor Program.

Additional helpful public engagement and involvement activities

CSC 5 members recommend having public meetings, open house sessions or other public outreach activities. Members would also like additional media coverage with local papers, radio and television stations.

Preliminary CSC 5 Prioritization

CSC 5 members prepared a preliminary list of project priorities as a "snap shot" of current conditions which reflect interim priorities at this stage of the CSC process. The priorities are subject to change through further work of and review by the CSC. These results are not a commitment by TxDOT to advance priorities as currently ordered. The priorities may be changed in the future based on additional input, environmental approvals, and funding availability.

To develop the initial priorities, committee members independently ranked their top sections. The initial priorities were collectively discussed by the committee and members were afforded opportunities to submit a revised ranking of

their preliminary priorities based upon the results of the discussion.

The current CSC 5 priority sections are shown in **Figure 2**. Most priority sections focused on relief routes for Freer, Alice (SH 44), Odem and San Diego, along with projects on U.S. 59 from the border to east of Laredo. Specifically, the following sections are currently noted as preliminary priorities for CSC 5:

- U.S. 59/SH 44 Relief Route at Freer
- SH 44 Relief Route at Alice
- U.S. 59 upgrade and connector from the border to east of Laredo
- SH 44 Relief Route at San Diego
- U.S. 77 Relief Route at Odem

Prioritization Rationale

In establishing their preliminary priorities, CSC 5 members noted a number of factors they consider as rationale for selecting their priority segments. Rationale mentioned most often by committee members includes:

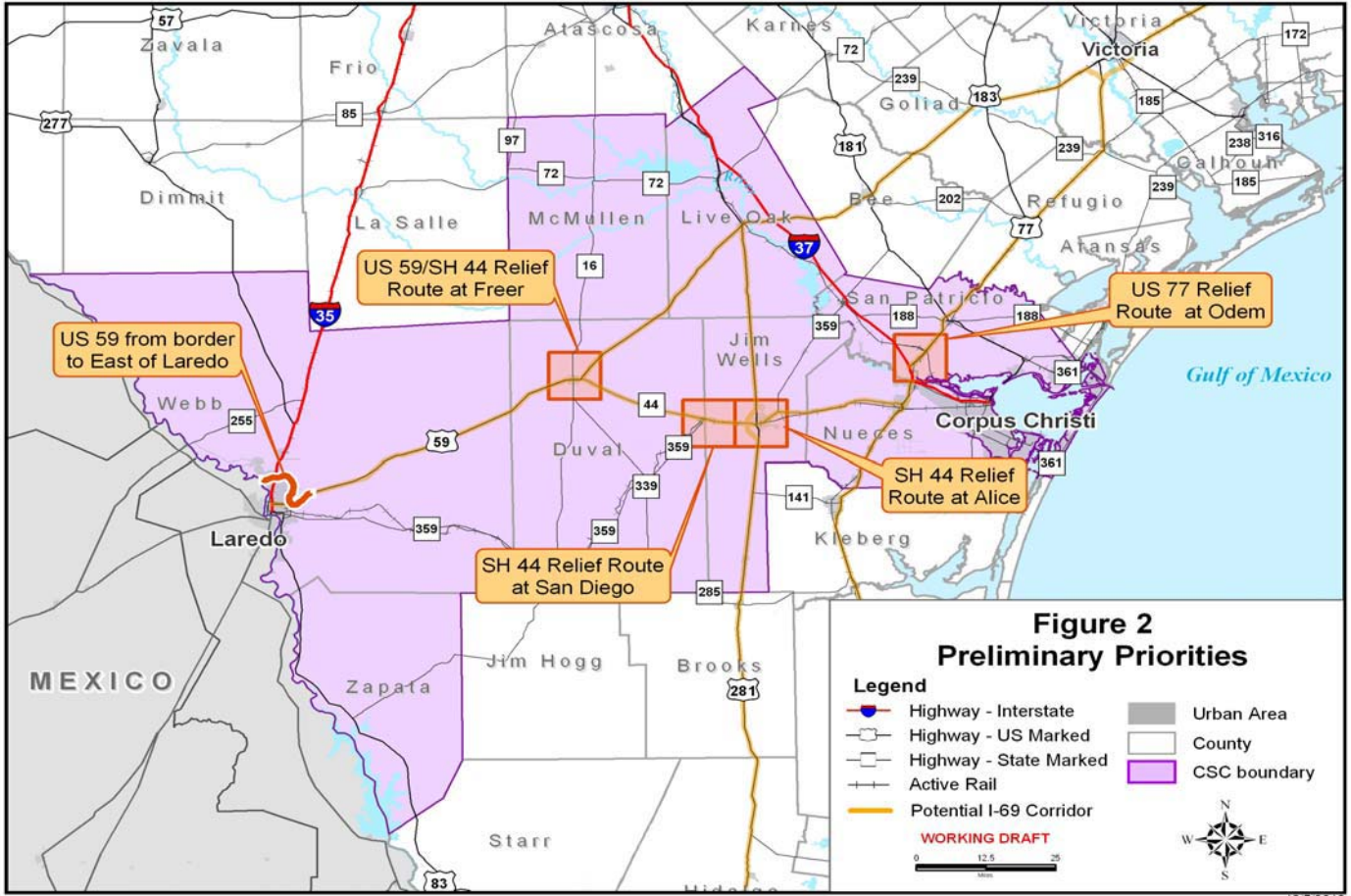
- Serves High Truck Volumes
- Improves Travel Times
- Multi-modal Connections (Air, Sea, Rail)
- Supports Economic Growth
- Addresses Safety Concerns
- Available Room to Expand Highway
- Serves High Traffic Volumes
- Serves Emergency Evacuation

Next Steps

As previously noted, the current priorities are preliminary and may be refined as the committee continues its efforts. Upcoming work of CSC 5 is anticipated to include the following activities:

- Reviewing order of magnitude cost estimates and funding opportunities
- Identifying limits of potential projects, and refining the CSC project priorities
- Discussing and planning public involvement activities

Interim Update Report—Interstate 69 Corridor Segment Committee





Upgrading Existing Highways to Interstate Standard



Communities Working Together as an Alliance to Encourage Cooperation and Seek Solutions Since 1994

Alliance for I-69 Texas

November 2010

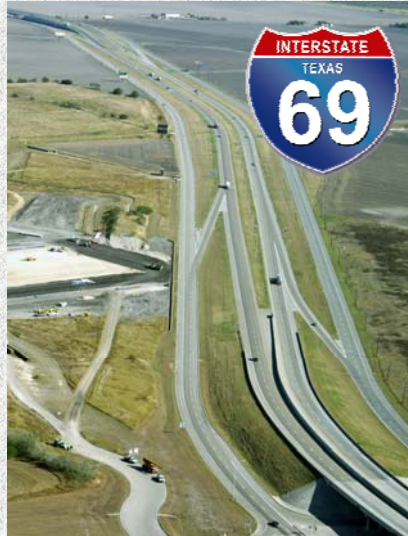
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Completing Interstate 69



www.I69texas.org 2

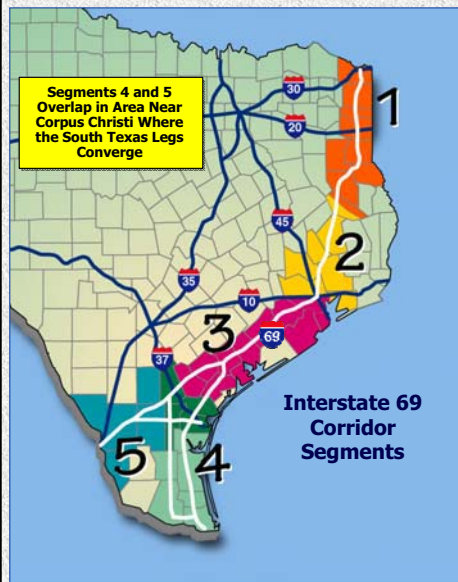
Recommended Strategies



Completed US 77 freeway section near Corpus Christi

1. Get I-69 designation and signage on every section of the route that currently meets interstate highway standard
2. Complete the rest of Interstate 69 as efficiently and expeditiously as possible

Development of an I-69 Master Plan



- The Alliance requests that TxDOT continue to commit the resources necessary to complete the Master Development Plan based on the work being done by the Segment Committees and the Advisory Committee
 - Incorporate the work of the 5 Segment Committees into a connected plan
 - Utilize existing right-of-way to the greatest extent possible along US 77, US 281 and US 59
 - Specify the minimum upgrades required to meet interstate standard
 - Support the committees with technical input from the District Engineers
 - Advance locally identified priority project components through environmental, design, financial and construction

