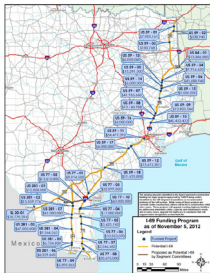




Alliance for I-69 Texas 2012 Progress Report



More Than \$635 Million in I-69 Projects Have Been Funded

The Texas Transportation Commission has programmed and funded 36 major upgrade projects on the I-69 Texas routes in the past few years. Funding comes to more than \$635 million. TxDOT has assembled a complete tracking list which includes major funded projects across the I-69 Texas system. Committed funding comes from voter approved Proposition 12 and Proposition 14 bonds and from traditional highway funding sources. I-69 in Texas is being developed as a series of upgrades of US 59, US 77, US 281, US 84 and Loop 20.



Alliance Celebrates Addition of 35 Miles in Houston Area

The Alliance for I-69 Texas, state highway officials and Houston area community leaders gathered in September to celebrate the addition of 35 miles of I-69 to the Interstate Highway System. The designated interstate highway section extends along US 59/Eastex Freeway from Loop 610 North past Bush Intercontinental Airport and on north to a point just beyond the Montgomery-Liberty County Line. Construction of the final piece of this freeway was completed in 2011. **Another 99 miles** of existing freeway is expected to be added to the system and signed as Interstate 69 in 2013. That includes portions of US 59 in **Texarkana**, US 77 from **Brownsville to Raymondville**, US 281 from **Pharr to Edinburg**, and US 59 from **Rosenberg to Houston's Loop 610 South**.



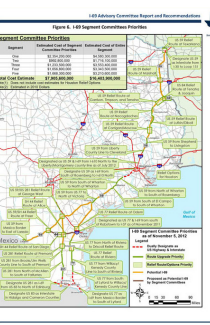
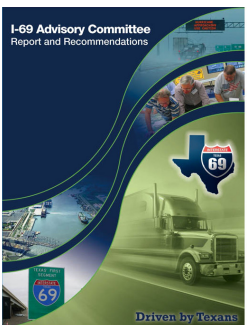
Federal Highway Bill Means More I-69 Designations

The new federal highway bill – called MAP-21 – removes the requirement that completed highway segments must be connected to an existing interstate highway before they can be added to the Interstate Highway System. The Alliance has been pushing hard for this change and it is an important milestone. It means that approximately 100 miles of I-69 routes that appear to already be at interstate standard can be evaluated and added to the system. This includes existing freeways in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.



Environmental Clearance Approved for US 77 Upgrades

Celebrations broke out in the Rio Grande Valley and South Texas on news in July that the Federal Highway Administration had issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (otherwise known as a FONSI) covering all upgrade projects on US 77 from Harlingen to Corpus Christi. The decision provides blanket environmental clearance for projects to transform the existing US 77 into Interstate 69 and link the Rio Grande Valley to the national Interstate Highway System. Projects in Kingsville, Robstown and Lyford are being constructed under separate environmental authorization.



I-69 Advisory Committee Final Report Completed

After five years of work and hundreds of hours of deliberation by the local members of five Segment Committees, the I-69 Advisory Committee presented its Final Report to the Texas Transportation Commission in December. The report includes the locally focused input and project prioritization recommendations of the Segment Committees. The Advisory Committee has urged TxDOT to aggressively seek interstate highway designation for completed sections utilizing the authority provided in Map-21. The committee calls for maximum use of existing highway footprints in development of I-69. The committee recommends initiating environmental and route studies that, when complete, will allow additional projects to move forward as funding becomes available. They also call for early projects to address existing safety, capacity and evacuation needs.

Alliance for I-69 Texas Plans for 2013

State Objectives:

1. Ensure that I-69 projects remain a high priority for the Texas Transportation Commission and TxDOT leadership.
2. Work with the I-69 Corridor Advisory Committee and I-69 Segment Committees to implement their planning priorities as detailed in their 2012 Report and Recommendations.
3. Work with TxDOT District Offices to identify upgrade projects that are likely to achieve environmental clearance within 36 months if started quickly.
4. Work with the District Engineers to avoid roadblocks or delays to completion of I-69 projects that have received funding.
5. The Texas Rural Transportation Plan, developed by TxDOT during 2012, includes specific I-69 projects for which funding has not been identified. The Alliance will work with the I-69 Segment Committees and Alliance members to see that those I-69 connectivity and safety projects in rural areas are included in TxDOT's priorities.
6. Work with other transportation allies such as the Transportation Advocates of Texas to develop local and statewide support for passage of new sustainable transportation funding.
7. Provide information and work to expand local community knowledge and support for I-69 upgrade projects.
8. Support Alliance members as they work with local governments, TxDOT and private sector firms to plan, finance and construct projects along the I-69 routes.

Federal Objectives:

1. Coordinate with TxDOT regarding development of a new highway reauthorization bill.
2. Work with members of the Texas congressional delegation and House and Senate committees to gain approval for a reauthorization bill.
3. Engage, energize and equip Texas' congressional delegation to strongly advocate for I-69 in Congress.
4. Work to protect issues of priority for the Alliance and protect policy gains achieved in MAP-21:
 - Funding flexibility
 - Innovative financing provisions
 - Expand current level of funding
 - 4 or 6 year bill rather than a short extension
 - Expedited environmental review
 - National Freight Program
 - TIFIA program
 - Expanded highway safety
 - Protect rate of return for donor states.
5. Work with TxDOT, AASHTO and FHWA to expand mileage eligible for I-69 designation.
6. Work to ensure I-69 is included in the National Freight Plan.



Alliance for I-69 Texas

For Additional Alliance Information Contact:

Judge John Thompson, Alliance Chairman - (936) 327-6813; john.thompson@co.polk.tx.us
Jennifer Shepard, Alliance Executive Director - (703) 580-4416; jshepard@i69texasalliance.com
Larry Meyers, Meyers & Associates - Washington Representative - (202) 484-2773; larry.meyers@meyersandassociates.com
Gary Bushell, Gary Bushell, LLP - Austin Representative - (512) 478-6661; gebushell@aol.com

www.i69TexasAlliance.com