Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition
Connecting U.S. Army Facilities and Texas Strategic Ports

Ports-To-Plains Conference
September 15, 2016

US 190 – BELL COUNTY, Texas
Polk County at the Crossroads

1993 - Alliance for I-69 Texas organized
2001 - Gulf Coast Strategic Alliance organized
2008 -
The Alliance for I-69 Texas was formed in 1993 by elected officials and economic development organizations.

All segments of route are represented in Alliance.

Have an executive director plus Washington and State Capitol representation.

Persistence has helped build support from lawmakers, governor, Transportation Commission and local communities.
The I-69 System in Texas

- One-third of Texas population lives in the 35 counties on the I-69 Routes
- Already a very important freight corridor and connecting route
- Includes some long rural sections through low population areas
- Connects population centers, seaports, distribution points, and border ports of entry
  - Houston Metro – 6.4 million
  - RG Valley & Laredo – 2.1 million
  - Mexico Rio Grande – 1.7 million
  - Corpus Christi Metro – 427,000
  - Texarkana Metro – 144,000
  - Victoria Metro – 122,000
Signed Sections

- Signed Miles
  - Rio Grande Valley – 120 (including I-169 and I-2 connector)
  - Corpus Christi – 7.8
  - Houston Area – 75
  - Texarkana – 3.5
  - Laredo – 1.4
  - TOTAL – 207 MILES

- 279 miles are in planning studies and environmental
- 128 miles are in final design and right-of-way acquisition
- 110 miles are constructed or under construction including projects in Fort Bend, Victoria, Nueces, Kleberg and Angelina Counties

Blue Represents Sections Now at Freeway Standard
2011: First I-69 Section Signed
2013: Sugar Land Signing Ceremony

HOUSTON/SUGAR LAND
2013: I-69E/I-2 Ceremony in Harlingen
2013: I-69C/I-2 Ceremony in Pharr
Texarkana Sign Unveiling - Sept. 2013
Laredo Sign Unveiling - Aug. 2014
I-69 Funding Program

- Since 2010 TxDOT has committed more than $1.5 billion to funding I-69 planning and projects
- 17 projects totaling $232 million funded from Prop 1
- Funding in place for a $287 million I-69/610 interchange rebuild in Houston
- Increased transportation funding is needed to ultimately connect dozens of individual I-69 projects

Alliance for I-69 Texas
I-69 In Texas is an Essential Freight Corridor

Existing Freight Generators In I-69 Counties

The national I-69 route passes through 8 states where more than 800 miles of interstate is now open to traffic.
Texas Ports – Land and Sea

50% of Total US Truck Trade With Mexico Passes Through South Texas Ports of Entry

TEXAS SEAPORTS
Important Export Centers for U.S. Manufacturing
**2016 Successful I-69 DC Fly-In**

- Leaders from 8 states along national I-69 corridor
- Texas Transportation Commissioner Austin and state DOT official from most other I-69 states
- Meetings with congressional leaders including Chairman Shuster
- Meetings with members of the I-69 Texas congressional delegation, Texas senators & Texas members on the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

*May 17-19, 2016*
Advancing I-69 in Texas

- Alliance for I-69 Texas helped initiate Advisory Committee and Segment Committee process
- The Committee has been reconstituted and the Alliance is well represented
- Renewed community based outreach efforts are underway to update recommended routes, timing and funding priorities
Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition

Connecting U.S. Army Facilities and Texas Strategic Ports
Linking Army Installations and Strategic Ports

Fort Bliss
- 33,000 Military Personnel

Fort Hood
- Equipment Readied For Deployment at Corpus Christi Strategic Port
- 40,000 Military Personnel

Fort Polk
- 8,500 Military Personnel Plus 8,000 in 10 Annual Training Rotations

Strategic Port of Beaumont
- Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition
Two of the Nation’s Largest Forts

FORT HOOD
- The largest single site employer in Texas
- $28 Billion annual economic impact for Texas
- 40,000 soldiers and 70,000 family members
- 6,000 DOD civilian personnel and 10,000 contract employees
- Home of III Corps, First Army Division West, 1st Cavalry Division and 16 other units including two airfields

FORT BLISS
- 33,000 military personnel and 40,000 family members
- Civilian workforce of more than 12,400
- More than 1.1 million acres with restricted air space, the only base where it is possible to live fire any weapon in the DOD inventory
- Home of 1st Armored Division, 32nd Army Air & Missile Defense Command, 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, the 402nd Field Artillery Brigade, other units and Briggs Army Airfield
Two Vital Army Depots

Corpus Christi

- CC Army Depot is the world’s largest repair facility for rotary wing aircraft and components
- 4,200 civilian personnel and 1,300 contractor employees
- Supports Black Hawk, Apache, Chinook, Kiowa, UAS Shadow, and Air Force Pave Hawk

Red River/TexAmericas

- Red River Army Depot provides vehicle maintenance support for the Army’ tactical wheeled vehicles – MRAPs and HUMVEEs
- Civilian workforce of more than 5,000
- 2,500 Guard and Reserve personnel
- TexAmericas Center is a civilian redevelopment of buildings and acreage on closed portions of the depot and the former Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant, creating a new multi-modal transportation center
Authorization for I-14 Portion of System

Congressional designation of the I-14 Corridor was part of the 2015 FAST Act

I-14 - Gulf Coast Strategic Highway System

- I-14 Central Texas Corridor (Congressionally Designated)
- Potential Additional I-14 System Routes
- 4-Lane Divided Feeder/Connectors

Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition, Inc.
Interstate 14 Begins Here

25 Miles of Existing Freeway from Copperas Cove to I-35 in Belton Is Now at Interstate Highway Standard

Routing shown east of Belton is conceptual. Final future interstate routing will be determined after public input and a formal environmental clearance process.
Fort Polk – Joint Readiness Training Center

- Largest employer in Louisiana other than state government with an annual economic impact of more than $1.5 billion
- 8,500 military personnel; 6,300 civilian and contract employees
- Home to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), the premier light infantry graduate certification program, with 10 rotations per year of 8,000 soldiers each coming from bases around the United States
Construction of LA 28 West Complete

- The 4-lane divided highway is now complete over the entire 50 miles between Alexandria and Leesville, home of Fort Polk.
- LA 28 route across Central Louisiana is important to Fort Polk and to enhancing national security efforts.
- The command general of Fort Polk has said the plan to tie Fort Polk to the interstate system is a plus with the Army.

Then Gov. Bobby Jindal and GCSHC representatives break ground on final LA 28 segment – 2009
Extending LA 28 to LA 8 & New River Bridge

LA8/LA 28 Extension To New Sabine River Bridge

Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition
Sabine River Bridge at Burr Ferry

- TxDOT has scheduled for funding in 2020
- Total estimate: Approximately $19 million for initial phase
- Design started in 2015
- Environmental clearance process is underway
- Have reviewed potential alignments but no decision has been made on final bridge alignment
- A single two-lane bridge will be added that can serve as part of an interstate facility in the future when a second bridge is added

Tucker Ferguson, P.E., TxDOT Beaumont District Engineer, provides Coalition with updates on bridge project
East-West Interstate Will Link Three North-South Interstates: I-35, I-45 & I-69

I-14 System Will Improve Evacuation Routes From Gulf Coast

Gulf Coast Strategic Highway System

Highlighted I-14 routes on existing highways are conceptual. Final future interstate routing will be determined after public input and a formal environmental clearance process.
An Expanded I-14 Route Serves Major Oil & Gas Producing Regions
Would Provide Routes Across Texas Outside Federal Air Quality Non-Attainment Areas

These Routes Also Have the Potential to Save Travel Time When Compared to Routes Through High Traffic Metro Areas

I-14 - Gulf Coast Strategic Highway System

- **Yellow**: I-14 Central Texas Corridor
- **Orange**: Potential Additional I-14 System Routes
- **Red**: 4-Lane Divided Feeders
- **Green**: I-37 / SH 130 / I-35 Feeder/Connectors

All future interstate routing shown is conceptual. Final routing will be determined after public input and a formal environmental clearance process.
Upgrading highways to interstate standard as I-14 through Central Texas and completion of I-69 will provide interstate highway links between the College Station campus and nine other campuses of the Texas A&M University System.
Total $1.35 Billion in Funded Projects

2013-2014 Data
Value of FAST Act, Propositions 1 & 7 to Coalition’s Highway System

- UTP reflects anticipated doubling of highway funding over next 10 years
- Need to support planning and environmental for specific projects
- Will work with TxDOT Districts and MPOs to identify and prioritize projects and get them into UTP
- TxDOT Districts on System
  - Beaumont
  - Lufkin
  - Bryan
  - Waco
  - Brownwood
  - Midland-Odessa
  - San Angelo
  - Odessa
  - Austin
  - San Antonio
  - Corpus Christi
  - Bryan-College Station
  - Corpus Christi
  - Beaumont-Port Arthur
Next Step - Coalition to Form Segment Committees

Segment Committees Will Be Organized By and Work As Part of the Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition

Proposed Coalition Planning Segments For Strategic Highway System

Includes Portions of 10 TxDOT Districts
I-14/I-69 Impact on Extension of I-27

- I-14 provides concurrent route for about 110 miles of the Ports-to-Plains route from Midland to San Angelo
  - Concurrent interstates exist around the country. Examples: I-10 and I-45 in Houston; I-69 and I-25 in Kentucky; I-69 and I-55 south of
- Improved connection to I-35 and I-45 corridors in Central Texas will increase traffic counts and raise priority of projects on I-14 and I-27 routes in West Texas
Lessons Learned: I-69 and I-14

- Tell your story
- Have a consistent champion for the I-27 vision
- Prepare yourself to persist in a generational effort
- Concentrate on local involvement and build political constituency for local projects
- Recognize money is not available for long rural projects and focus on smaller incremental priorities
- Focus on freight and safety
- Utilize the strength of your MPOs (Odessa-Midland and San Angelo) to build urban area projects that will eventually be a concurrent part of I-27 and I-14
Working Together

- Ports-to-Plains, the I-14/Gulf Coast Coalition plus cities and counties should present unified front working with TxDOT on planning and building overlapping upgrades and interstate projects between Midland and San Angelo.

- Nothing happens if there is not enough funding. Continue working with other transportation advocates for more highway funding in Washington and in your state capital.

- All of our organizations are part of the successful Transportation Advocates of Texas where Michael Reeves is board chairman-elect.