

September 12, 2022

□ FREIGHT PLAN PROGRESS

– Work on the new Texas Freight Mobility Plan is nearing completion and a final draft is expected to be reviewed and approved by the Freight Advisory Committee on October 5th. The I-69 Corridor in Texas already carries significant freight traffic and truck trips are projected to increase significantly over the next 25 years. A key part of the plan development process is using commodity flow data and trends to project likely tonnage and truck trip volumes by 2050. The committee directed the consultants modeling future truck traffic to assume that all 1,100 miles of Interstate 69 in Texas is complete and moving traffic by 2050, providing a north-south interstate freight route running roughly parallel to I-35. Projected future truck trips and tonnage form the basis for estimating future highway projects needed to serve goods movement. This data will play a role in the scoring process that guides which projects will be moved forward and which will have to wait for later funding.



I-69 Corridor Is A Busy Freight Route

□ **DEPARTING FRIENDS** – As more proof that time marches on, three TxDOT friends of I-69 retired in August. Retiring **Roger Beall** directed statewide corridor planning and guided the efforts of TxDOT's I-69 Advisory Committee. **Buddy Williams** retired as district engineer of the Atlanta District which includes the I-69 route in Northeast Texas. After 37 years, **Quincy Allen**, the former district engineer of the Houston District, retired from his post overseeing TxDOT districts statewide.

□ **US 59 BRIDGE** – The infrastructure bill (IIJA) passed by Congress last year includes numerous competitive federal grant programs including

the new Bridge Investment Program. The I-69 Alliance is supporting TxDOT's application for a \$14 million grant to fund replacement of the US 59 bridge over the San Antonio River just west of Goliad. This location is part of the I-69 West interstate corridor. The existing 2-lane bridge is in poor condition and will be replaced with a bridge that can better accommodate freight traffic and oversized loads that frequently use the crossing. The Alliance has urged TxDOT to apply for federal grant funding to accelerate I-69 Corridor projects.



Alliance Annual Meeting

□ **NOVEMBER 18TH ANNUAL MEETING** – Save the date. TxDOT Deputy Executive Director **Brandye Hendrickson** will be the keynote speaker at the Alliance Annual Meeting Luncheon at noon November 18th in Houston. She led the Indiana DOT, served as Acting Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration and was deputy executive director of AASHTO before joining TxDOT. Further details and the invitation will be emailed soon. Please email Jennifer Shepard (jenshepard.com) if your organization can take advantage of this opportunity to be an event sponsor.

□ **UTP KEEPS I-69 MOVING** – After much public input, the Transportation Commission finalized the 2023 UTP which includes more than \$6.5 billion in funding allocations for I-69 projects over the next decade. That includes progress on extending interstate lanes north from the Rio Grande Valley, south from Rosenberg and north from Cleveland. Major reconstruction of sections of I-69 in Houston are in the UTP.

□ **BORDER TRADE** – The Transportation Commission has appointed Alliance Board members to the state's Border Trade Advisory Committee. **Pete Sepulveda**, executive director of the Cameron County RMA, is a new member representing the Cameron County Bridge System. **Cynthia Garza-Reyes**, director of the Pharr EDC, was reappointed to a 3-year term.

PORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE – Alliance Board member **Sean Stibich**, Port of Victoria executive director, was appointed as a new member of the Port Authority Advisory Committee. Port of Houston Authority Executive Director **Roger Guenther** and Port of Corpus Christi Authority CEO **Sean Strawbridge** were reappointed to the committee.

Don Rodman -- I-69 Alliance / Don@TheRodmanCo.com (361) 877-0409