



Working to Better Connect Texas Communities and Create Economic Opportunities

October 12, 2023

TIME TO MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND THE ALLIANCE ANNUAL MEETING – We will be hosting our 2023 Annual Meeting on Thursday, November 30th, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Houston.

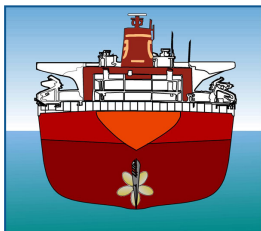
Alex Meade, one of the two new members of the Texas Transportation Commission appointed earlier this year, will be the keynote luncheon speaker. Commissioner Meade's career in economic development provides him with firsthand knowledge of the importance of infrastructure investment to economic growth. A native of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Meade resides in Mission and is executive vice president of Texas Regional Bank where he manages their public policy strategy and economic development outreach. He is the former city manager of Pharr and served as CEO of the Mission EDC.



Commissioner Alex Meade

Make your Annual Meeting reservations [HERE](#). If your organization would like to participate as an event sponsor please contact Alliance Executive Director Jennifer Shepard (Jennifer@jgshepard.com).

HISTORIC CHANGE FOR TEXAS SEAPORTS – The I-69 Corridor provides landside connectivity for all Texas seaports, helping extend their market reach. Texas ports operate as businesses and historically state funding has been modest. Some states have invested state funds in their seaports for decades. Texas has always recognized the need to improve sections of the state highway system serving waterborne shipping.



But funding for facilities on port property was provided by revenues from port operations and local taxpayers. Since 2015 TxDOT has funded \$180 million in landside connectivity projects near port entrances. The Legislature made an historic change this year allocating \$200 million in general revenue funds for port infrastructure. Based on recommendations from the Port Authority Advisory Committee, the TxDOT Commission in September allocated that funding to projects at 12 ports in grants ranging from \$1 million to \$36 million. All those

projects will begin in 2024. The Commission also approved \$40 million for near-port state highway projects through the Seaport Connectivity Program.

REFUGIO-WOODSBORO RELIEF ROUTE – Public meetings are scheduled in Refugio and Woodsboro to gather additional public input on development of a 13-mile section of future I-69E in Refugio County north of Corpus Christi. The \$463 million US 77 upgrade project has been allocated funding in the 2024 UTP for letting in the back half of the 10-year UTP. Route studies and environmental review are underway on the project which includes a major relief route on the east side of Refugio. Open house meetings will be at 4:30 p.m. on Oct. 25 in the Refugio County Expo Center and at 4:30 p.m. Oct. 26 at Woodsboro High School. An environmental decision is expected by mid-2024. Project development steps are continuing on a series of US 77/I-69E projects stretching north from the Nueces River to Odem, Sinton, Woodsboro and Refugio.

US 59 FEASIBILITY STUDY IN WEBB COUNTY – TxDOT is conducting a feasibility study for future improvement to interstate standard of a 21 mile section of US 59 east of Laredo. The study area extends from the Bob Bullock Loop east toward Freer. An in-person and virtual public meeting will be conducted at 5 p.m. on Oct. 19 at 5201 University Blvd in Laredo.



LAREDO INTERCHANGE PROGRESS – The interchange at I-69W and I-35 in Laredo will ultimately have eight direct connectors. Three are currently in service and the 4th and 5th are headed toward completion in the coming months. Shown here is recent construction on the connector from westbound I-69W to southbound I-35. Two more direct connects will come in the next phase.

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