

June 17, 2024



Wharton Groundbreaking Ceremony

❑ **WHARTON RELIEF ROUTE** – Local officials celebrated the start of construction on the \$343 million Wharton Relief Route in May. Community leaders talked about the years of cooperation that helped move the project through the pre-construction process. Speakers included County Judge Phil Spenrath, State Rep. Stan Kitzman, Mayor Pro Tem Russell Machann, District Engineer Martin Horst and Area Engineer Ryan Simper. Right-of-way clearing is underway on the 7.8-mile project which includes replacement of the bridges over the Colorado River.

❑ **MARSHALL RELIEF ROUTE EA** – TxDOT has issued a draft environmental assessment on the first phase of the I-369 Marshall Relief Route. The project is currently scheduled for letting in the fall of 2027. The project has two connected components. The first is a 4.9-mile new location US 59 alignment running east of the Harrison County Airport. The second is reconstruction of 3 miles of Interstate 20 which runs on the south side of Marshall. The combined estimated cost is \$309 million. Additional sections of the relief route to the north and south will eventually carry through traffic around the city. Currently all US 59 traffic must travel through Marshall and a string of 11 traffic signals. The Marshall Relief Route was recommended as a high priority project by the I-69 Advisory Committee in 2012.



❑ **HOUSE INTERIM CHARGES** – Texas House Speaker Phelan has issued interim charges to the Transportation Committee. The committee is instructed to identify the state's most congested roadways and review state forecasts for future congestion and the likely impacts on economic activity. They are to evaluate current plans and consider the necessity of additional options to ensure economic development, congestion and safety goals are achieved in a timely manner "with reduced cost to public tax dollars." The committee will also look at the status of TxDOT seaport projects that received funding during the 2023 legislative session. All of the state's seaports are served by the I-69 System along the Texas Coast.

❑ **UTP REVEAL COMING SOON** – The Transportation Commission will get a look at the draft 2025 Unified Transportation Program updated list of future projects and recommended funding allocations next week. The UTP will allocate an estimated \$145 billion in project investments over the coming 10 years. The draft list will be published for public comment leading to a public hearing and a Commission vote on adoption on August 22nd.



❑ **NORTH WHARTON** - Bridge construction and pouring the concrete main lanes is progressing in Wharton County on 6.2 miles of freeway that will be one of the next sections of I-69 added to the Interstate Highway System. The \$169 million project, started in 2020, extends south from Kendleton to the north edge of Wharton and is scheduled for completion by August 2025.

❑ **CORPUS CHRISTI UPDATE** – Last week the Alliance presented an update on the status of I-69 development to a joint meeting of the San Antonio Mobility Coalition and the Corpus Christi Chamber. The presentation detailed the fact that more than 60 project on I-69 are making their way through the development process.