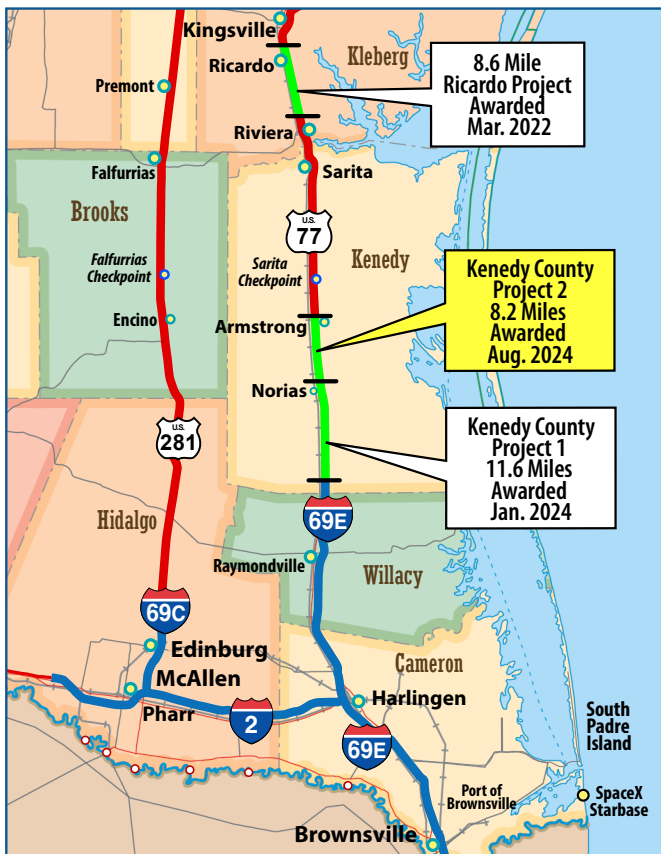




Working to Better Connect Texas Communities and Create Economic Opportunities

September 10, 2024

SECOND KENEDY COUNTY CONTRACT – Another interstate segment of the I-69 corridor that will eventually connect the Lower Rio Grande Valley to the national interstate system is now under contract. TxDOT awarded a \$126 million contract in August to convert 8 more miles of US 77 in Kenedy County to freeway. This project extends north from the 11.6 mile Kenedy project started recently. Together they cover 19.8 miles of the remaining 44 miles needed to cross Kenedy County and represent a \$317 million investment in I-69E. Funding has been allocated in the 10-year 2025 Unified Transportation Program for several additional projects needed to complete I-69E in Kenedy and Kleberg Counties. That includes the Riviera Relief Route that is expected to go to contract in the coming year.

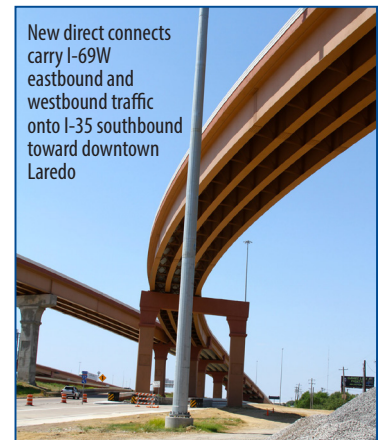


UTP ALLOCATES \$104 BILLION – The Transportation Commission has approved the FY 2025 UTP which allocates a decade of projected revenue to thousands of projects statewide. It provides \$104.2 billion for new construction including about \$13 billion for projects across the 1,140 miles of the I-69 System in Texas. It is also estimated that the department will be spending about \$35 billion in upfront development of future projects and \$9 billion on routine maintenance contracts for a 10-year total estimated at \$148 billion. Commissioner Steven Alvis pointed out that the Texas funding stream is the envy of every other state in the country and is the direct result of Texas voters approving

Props 1 and 7 a decade ago. Commissioner Alex Meade stressed how difficult it is for TxDOT to make the annual decisions on which projects to advance with construction funding. Commissioners pointed to the fact that the UTP includes more rural projects than in past years including sections of the I-69 System.

INFLATION ERODES BUYING POWER – The Highway Cost Index increased 7.7% in the past year, reducing the number of projects TxDOT can fund due to higher costs. In 2023 the state estimated it would have \$100 billion to spend on new construction in the coming decade. While the estimate this year grew to \$104 billion, inflation is expected to reduce the buying power by about \$3 billion over the life of the 10-year UTP. Despite rising construction costs, TxDOT has been deploying available funds at a record pace. In FY 2024, TxDOT awarded \$13.6 billion in 2,203 contracts, an average of \$1.13 billion a month in contracts (See graphic Page 2).

LAREDO RIBBON-CUTTING – Supporters of I-69 turned out in August for a ribbon-cutting celebrating the completion of two more interstate direct connection fly-overs at I-35 and I-69 West. Commissioner Meade noted the importance of the new connectors as true economic development assets. District Engineer Epi Gonzalez explained that the ramps make travel safer by reducing at-grade traffic conflict points.



ANNUAL MEETING REMINDER – The I-69 Alliance annual meeting will be held Friday, December 6th, at the headquarters of the Greater Houston Partnership near Minute Maid Park. Save the date and watch for more details coming soon.

DISTRICT ENGINEERS – Mike Walsh is the new TxDOT district engineer in Corpus Christi. He grew up in Corpus Christi and worked at the district from 2001 to 2013, then went to the Yoakum District. In 2022 he became deputy district engineer in Corpus Christi. Both districts in which he has worked include many miles of the I-69 corridor.



Mike Walsh

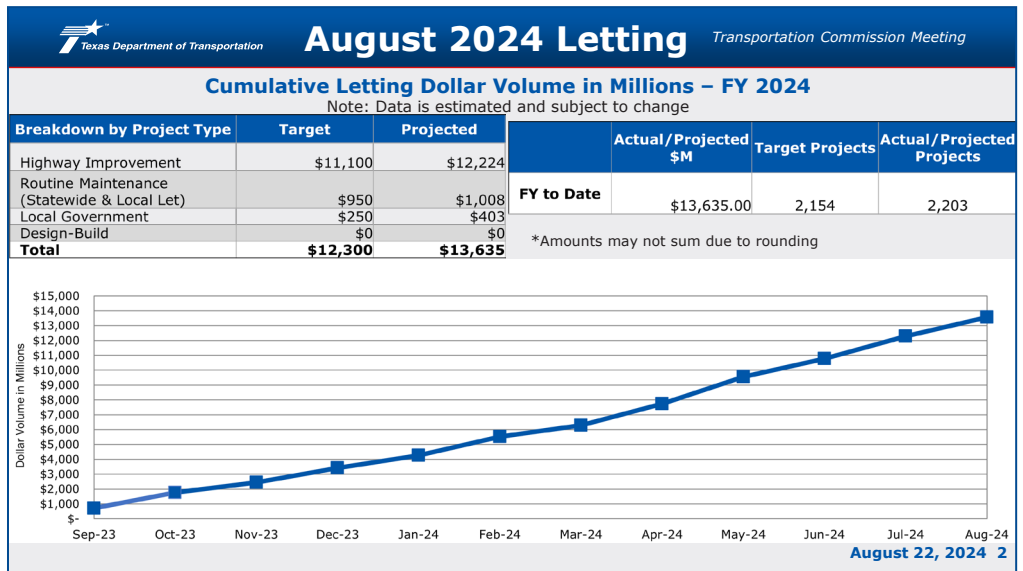
Houston District Engineer Eliza Paul has retired after 35 years, all in the Houston District. Yoakum District Engineer Martin Horst has retired after 38 years with TxDOT including assignments in Corpus Christi, Austin and El Paso before taking over the Yoakum District in 2021. (Ceremony photo Page 2)

Don Rodman -- I-69 Alliance / (361) 877-0409

TxDOT Laredo District Engineer Epi Gonzalez cuts the red ribbon marking the completion of two additional direct connectors at the I-35/I-69W interchange. He was joined by federal, state and local officials including Laredo RMA Chair Jed Brown, Laredo Mayor Victor Trevino, TxDOT Commissioner Alex Meade, Congressman Henry Cuellar, State Rep. Richard Raymond and City Council members Alyssa Cigarroa, Melissa Cigarroa, Tyler King, Vanessa Perez and Ruben Gutierrez. Three more direct connects remain to be constructed.



TxDOT is charged with preparing projects for construction and deploying available funds at an aggressive pace. In FY 2024 projects totaling \$13.6 billion were awarded, \$1.3 billion more than the department's lettings target for the year.



Transportation Commission members honor retiring Yoakum District Engineer Martin Horst (center with wife and family). Horst joined TxDOT in 1986 in Corpus Christi where he later served as area engineer, director of construction and deputy district engineer. The Yoakum District awarded more than \$1 billion in contracts in FY 2024 including the \$350 million Wharton Relief Route. Only the Dallas and Houston districts had higher award totals for the year.

