

November 13, 2024

## Alliance Annual Meeting

❑ **TIME TO GET YOUR SPOT** – It is time to make plans to attend the I-69 Alliance 2024 Annual Meeting in Houston. The event will be Friday, December 6th, at the headquarters of the Greater Houston Partnership, Partnership Tower, 701 Avenidas de las Americas #900, located a block off of I-69 and across Rusk St. from the George Brown Convention Center.

Steven Alvis of Houston, one of the five members of the Texas Transportation Commission, will be our keynote speaker.

Register to attend at the Alliance website: [www.i69TexasAlliance.com](http://www.i69TexasAlliance.com). And if your organization would like to be an event sponsor, please contact Alliance Executive Director Jennifer Shepard ( [Jennifer@jgsheward.com](mailto:Jennifer@jgsheward.com) ). Board members will gather for a business meeting at 9 a.m. Networking begins at 11 a.m. and the luncheon program starts at noon.



I-69C/I-2 Interchange

❑ **I-69C/I-2 INTERCHANGE PROJECT NEARS COMPLETION** – Lanes are open to traffic and work will be coming to an end over the next few months after five years of construction on the sprawling interchange of I-69C and I-2 in Hidalgo County. The \$300 million design-build project includes expansion and modernization of main lanes and ramps in McAllen, Pharr and San Juan. I-2/US 83 is part of the I-69 System and the essential connector between I-69C/US 281 at Pharr and I-69E/US 77 at Harlingen in the border region. I-2 has been extended west of McAllen and Mission toward Starr County and in future decades it is proposed to be extended along the Rio Grande to connect to the I-69 West/US 59 leg of the system at Laredo.

❑ **WASHINGTON REPORT** – The current highway funding authorization bill, the 2021 IIJA, expires in 2026 and the coming year will be a year of transportation policy hearings and preparation for reauthorization. The current law is the largest in history. Major issues will be funding of the Highway Trust Fund and how electric vehicles can help fund federal highway programs.

❑ **START OF HOUSTON I-69 EXPANSION** – Chairman Sydney Murphy represented the Alliance at the well-attended October kickoff of the program to rebuild and expand I-69 through five miles of downtown Houston. With that event and the groundbreaking for the central portion of the reconstruction of I-35 through Central Austin, TxDOT has more than \$53 billion in construction projects underway. TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams notes that any other state would be challenged to deliver projects of that size. “We are doing two of them and delivering a lot of other work at the same time.” Commission Chairman Bruce Bugg called the ongoing construction efforts “nothing short of historic” and praised the TxDOT team for getting projects ready and moving them into construction.

TxDOT has set a target of awarding \$12.4 billion in new construction projects in FY 2025 which started Sept. 1. That includes I-69 Corridor projects already awarded in Houston and on US 77 in Kenedy County.

❑ **APPOINTMENTS** – TxDOT’s Border Trade Advisory Committee assists the department in addressing border transportation challenges. New members of the committee include Luis Diaz, Rio Grande Valley MPO; William Dietrich, Port of Brownsville; and Tecló Garcia, Mission EDC. Reappointments include Pete Sepulveda, Cameron County Bridge System, and Gerry Schwebel, IBC Bank. Garcia, Sepulveda and Schwebel are Alliance board members. Charlie Jenkins, CEO of the Port of Houston Authority, has been appointed to the TxDOT Port Advisory Committee, and Port Galveston CEO Rodger Rees has been reappointed.

❑ **ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED COUNTIES** – The FY 2025 list of counties that qualify as “economically disadvantaged” includes 27 of the 34 Texas counties on the I-69 System. TxDOT may adjust the minimum local matching funds requirements on highway projects in those counties. As interstate access is developed through these counties it will help attract new economic opportunities.

❑ **NEW ALLIANCE MAILING ADDRESS** – The I-69 Alliance has a new business mailing address: 101 N. Shoreline Blvd., Suite 500, Corpus Christi, Texas 78401. That is the address of Buckley & Associates, CPAs, which is now providing the Alliance with accounting services.

## Groundbreaking Ceremony for I-69 Projects in Downtown Houston



Transportation Commission Chairman Bruce Bugg leads the celebration of the start of the I-69/I-45 projects that will remake the freeway system in central Houston. Contracts for two of those projects have been awarded, a \$121 million drainage project following St. Emanuel St., and a \$695 million project to rebuild a section of I-69 freeway from SH 288 to near the intersection with I-45 on the south side of Downtown.



(Left) Groundbreaking site across I-69 from the George Brown Convention Center and Minute Maid Park.

(Right) Cheerleaders from Houston's Young Women's College Preparatory Academy and marching band members from Texas Southern University pump up the celebration volume.

[www.i69TexasAlliance.com](http://www.i69TexasAlliance.com)



Alliance for I-69 Texas

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