



# SH 249 IN GRIMES COUNTY

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Open House  
April 3, 2014

## Purpose of Meeting Today:

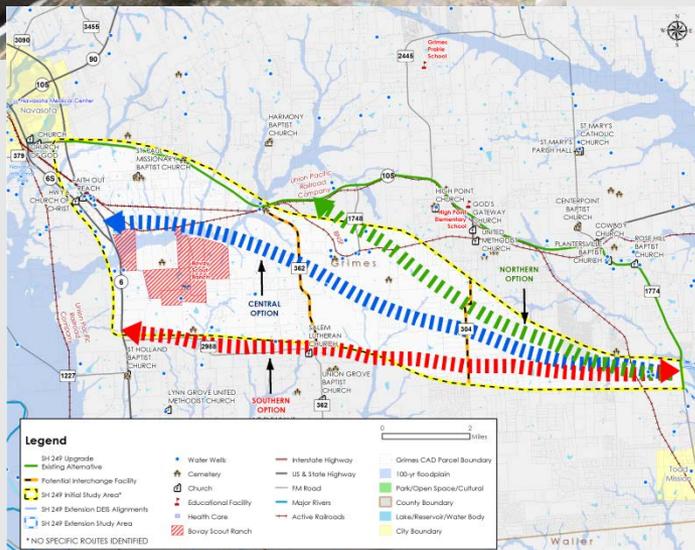
- Review the purpose and need for the SH 249 Grimes County project
- Review the proposed project and alternatives
- Discuss frequently asked questions and next steps
- Provide comments and feedback about the alternatives

**Your feedback is appreciated.**

# SH 249 Grimes County Project

- SH 249 is a north-south highway located in southeast Texas, currently extending approximately 27 miles from Interstate Highway (IH) 45 in northern Harris County to Farm-to-Market (FM) 1774 in Pinehurst in southwestern Montgomery County.
- This SH 249 project focuses improvements between Todd Mission and Navasota.
- Proposed tolled construction of a two-lane roadway with a passing lane in alternating directions and shoulders within a right-of-way that would accommodate future widening to a four-lane divided highway.

# Working Group



- Four working group meetings with TxDOT in Spring and Summer 2013
- Determined goals and objectives
- Identified and refined study area
- Developed Recommendation Report

# Why Extend SH 249 to SH 105?

## Purpose and Need

### IMPROVE SAFETY

- Crash rates on FM 1774 and SH 105 exceed statewide average

### ADDRESS TRAFFIC GROWTH

- Traffic has increased 274% on FM 1774 and 197% on SH 105 since 1980

### IMPROVE REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

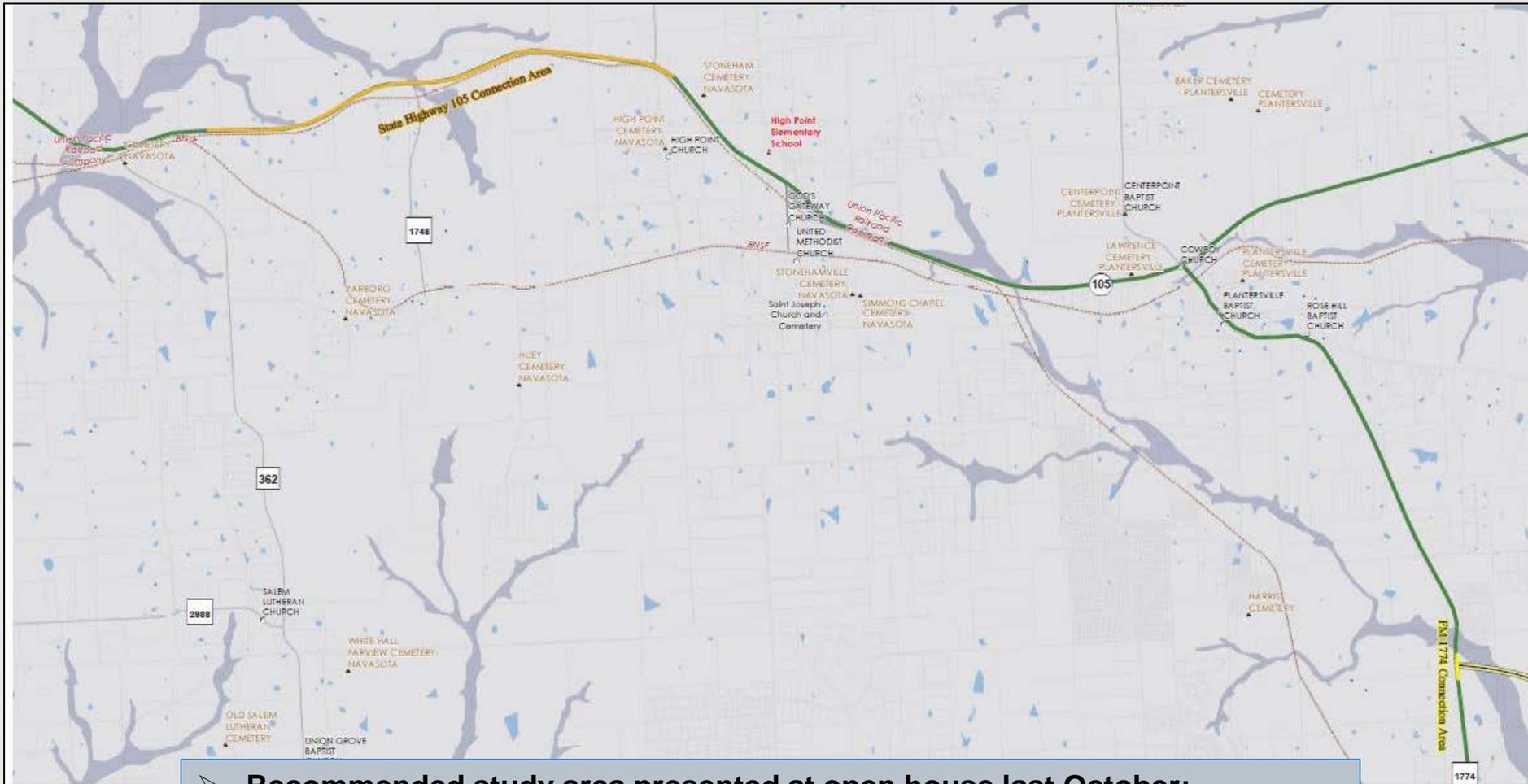
- Provide transportation system continuity to surrounding area

### ADDRESS EVACUATION NEEDS

- Increase evacuation capacity during emergencies

*More information on purpose and need can be found in the SH 249 Working Group Recommendations Report, available on [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov)*

# Recommended Study Area



- Recommended study area presented at open house last October; more than 230 people attended, and we received more than 40 comments.
- Additional environmental constraints were identified and routes were recommended.
- Based on this input, we began evaluating potential alternatives.

## Criteria for identifying possible alternatives:

- Potential relocation, Right-of-Way (ROW)
- Estimated construction cost
- Length of proposed roadway
- Distance from SH 105 intersection to SH 6
- Impacted property
- Major roadway, railroad and pipeline crossings
- Community effects (i.e. isolated neighborhoods)
- Environmental issues  
(wetlands, animal habitat, floodplains)

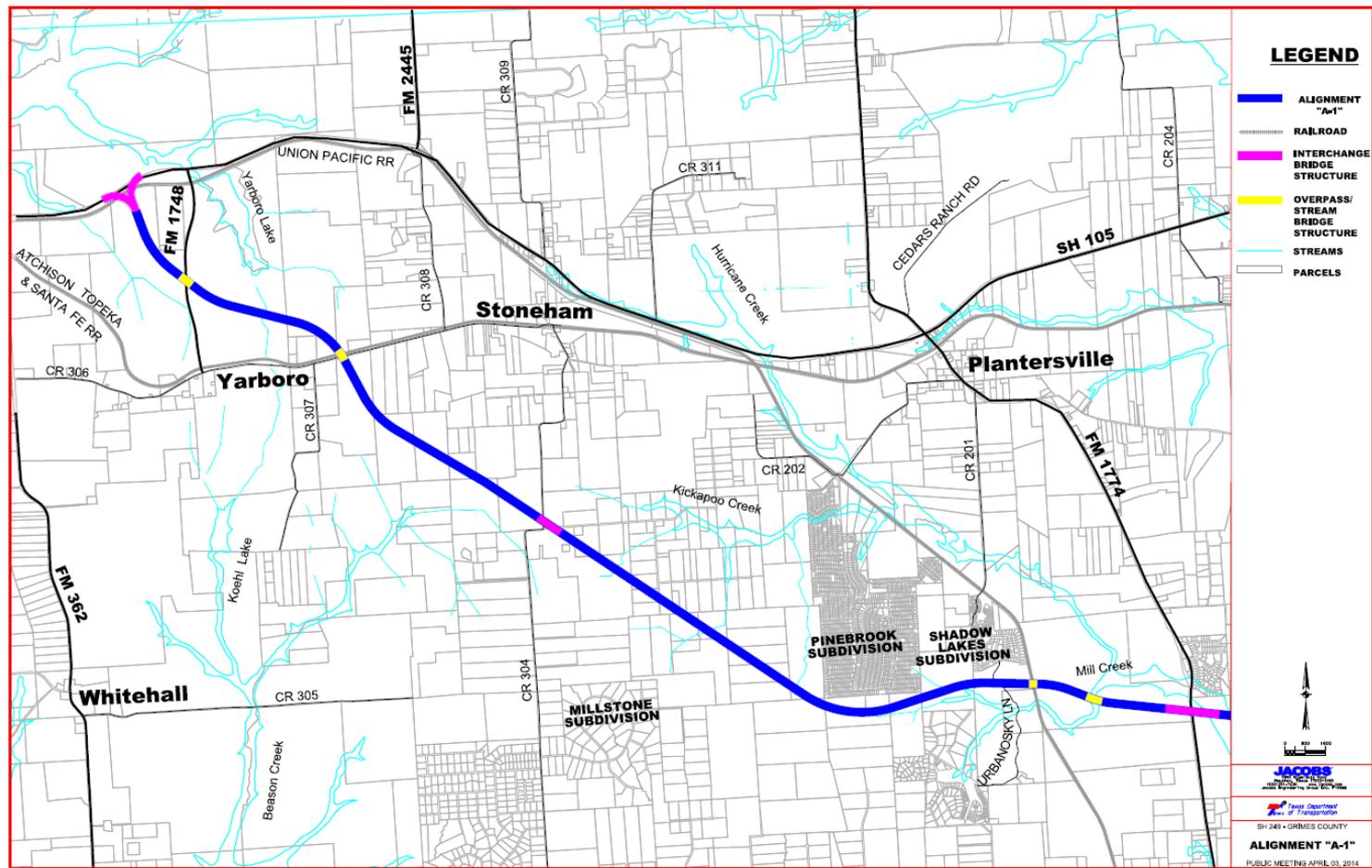
*Each alternative was also ranked against the purpose and need.*

## Why not upgrade FM 1774?

- Upgrading FM 1774 would not fully meet the project purpose and need. Improving FM 1774 alone would not:
  - Meet safety considerations due to multiple entry points and turning movements
  - Support future traffic growth and congestion relief
  - Improve regional connections
  - Address evacuation needs
- Low community access
- Crosses the greatest amount of floodplains
- Requires 18 relocations

**This alternative does not meet the purpose and needs, and was dropped from consideration early in the evaluation process**

# SH 249 Alternatives: A1 Alignment (New Location)



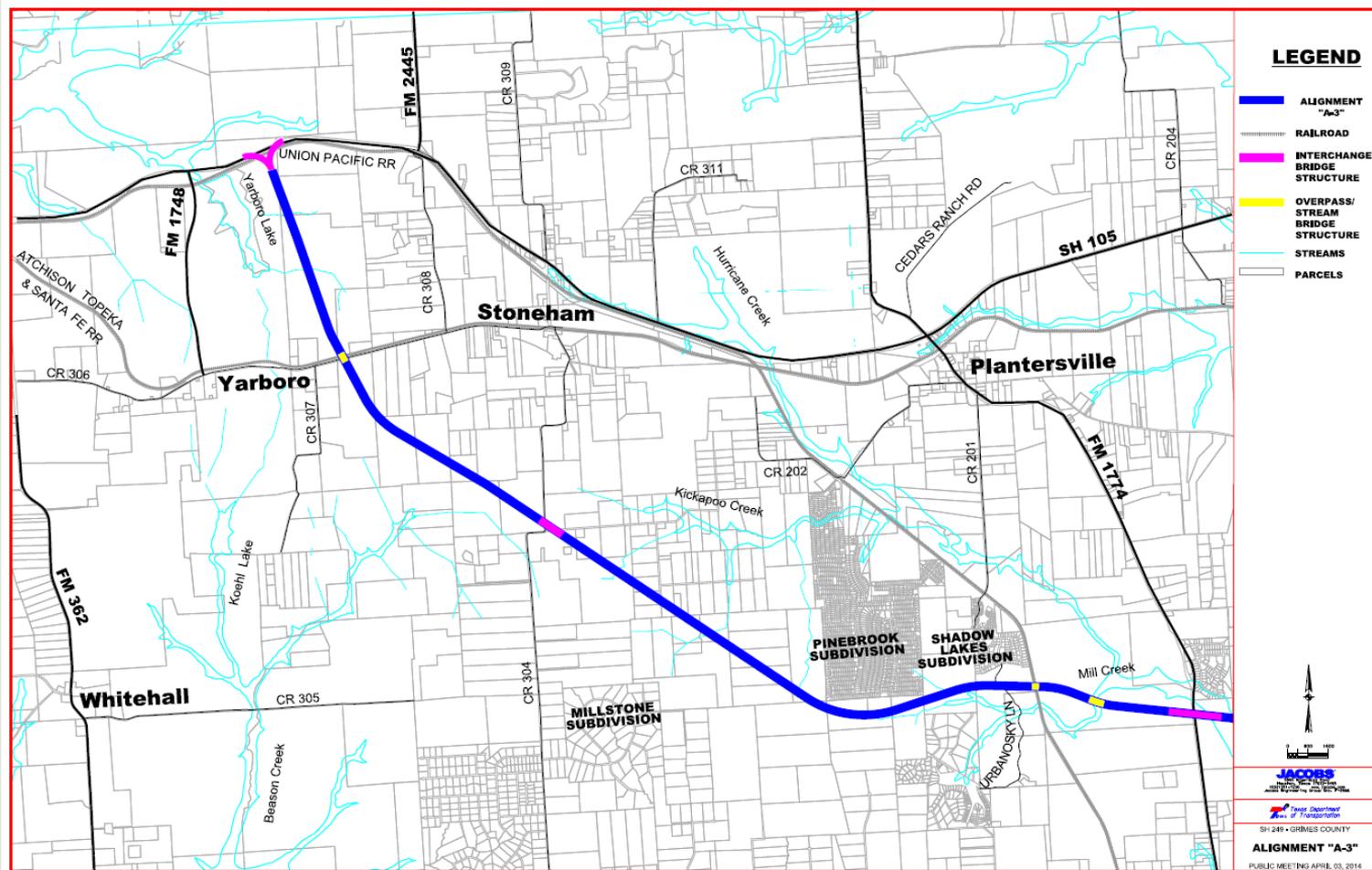
## Pros:

- Meets the purpose and need
- Closely follows the pipeline alignment, intersects SH 105 closest to SH 6
- Fewest stream crossings
- No relocations required

## Cons:

- Impacts highest number of properties, wetland crossings
- Roadway realignments required for intersection with CR 304
- More complicated mid-access points

# SH 249 Alternatives: A3 Alignment (New Location)



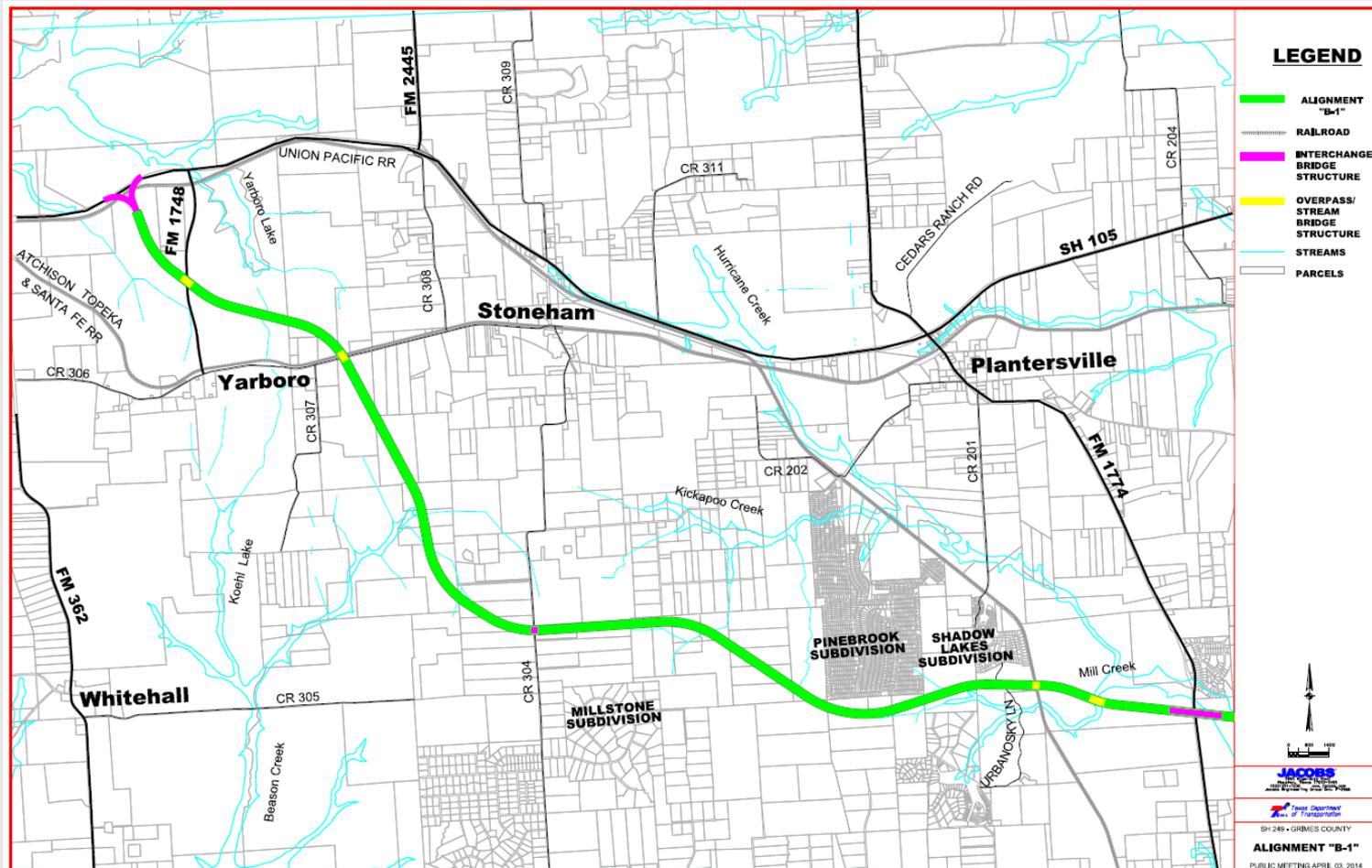
## Pros:

- Meets the purpose and need
- Requires least amount of ROW, no relocations
- Fewest major roadway crossings
- Lowest construction cost and shortest alignment

## Cons:

- Roadway realignments required for intersection with CR 304/Greenwood Road
- Intersects SH 105 farther from SH 6 in Navasota
- More complicated mid-access points

# SH 249 Alternatives: B1 Alignment (New Location)



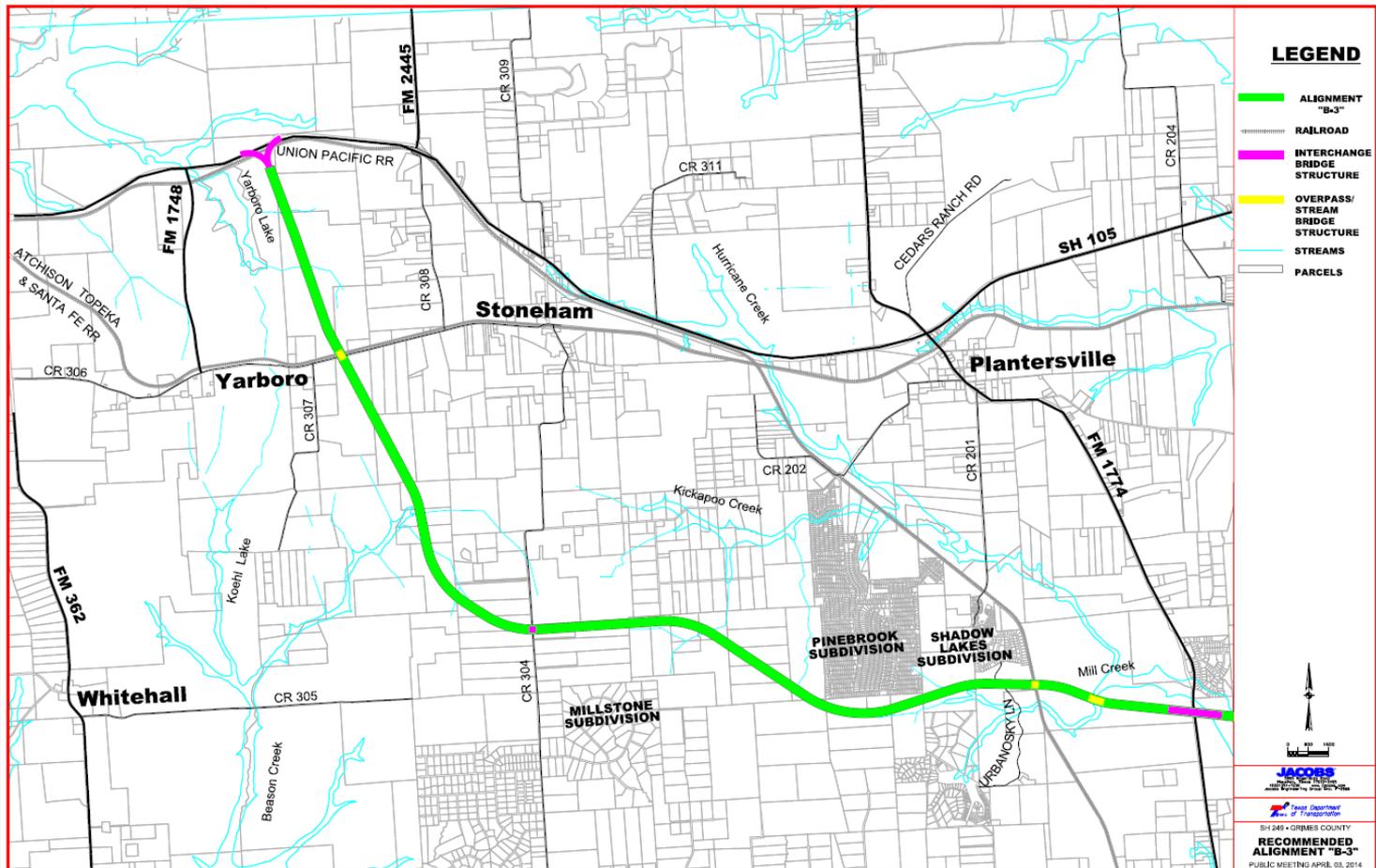
## Pros:

- Meets the purpose and need
- Least complicated mid-point access, parallels property lines east of CR 304
- No relocations
- Intersects SH 105 closest to SH 6

## Cons:

- Third longest alignment
- Third highest estimated construction cost

# SH 249 Alternatives: B3 Alignment (New Location)



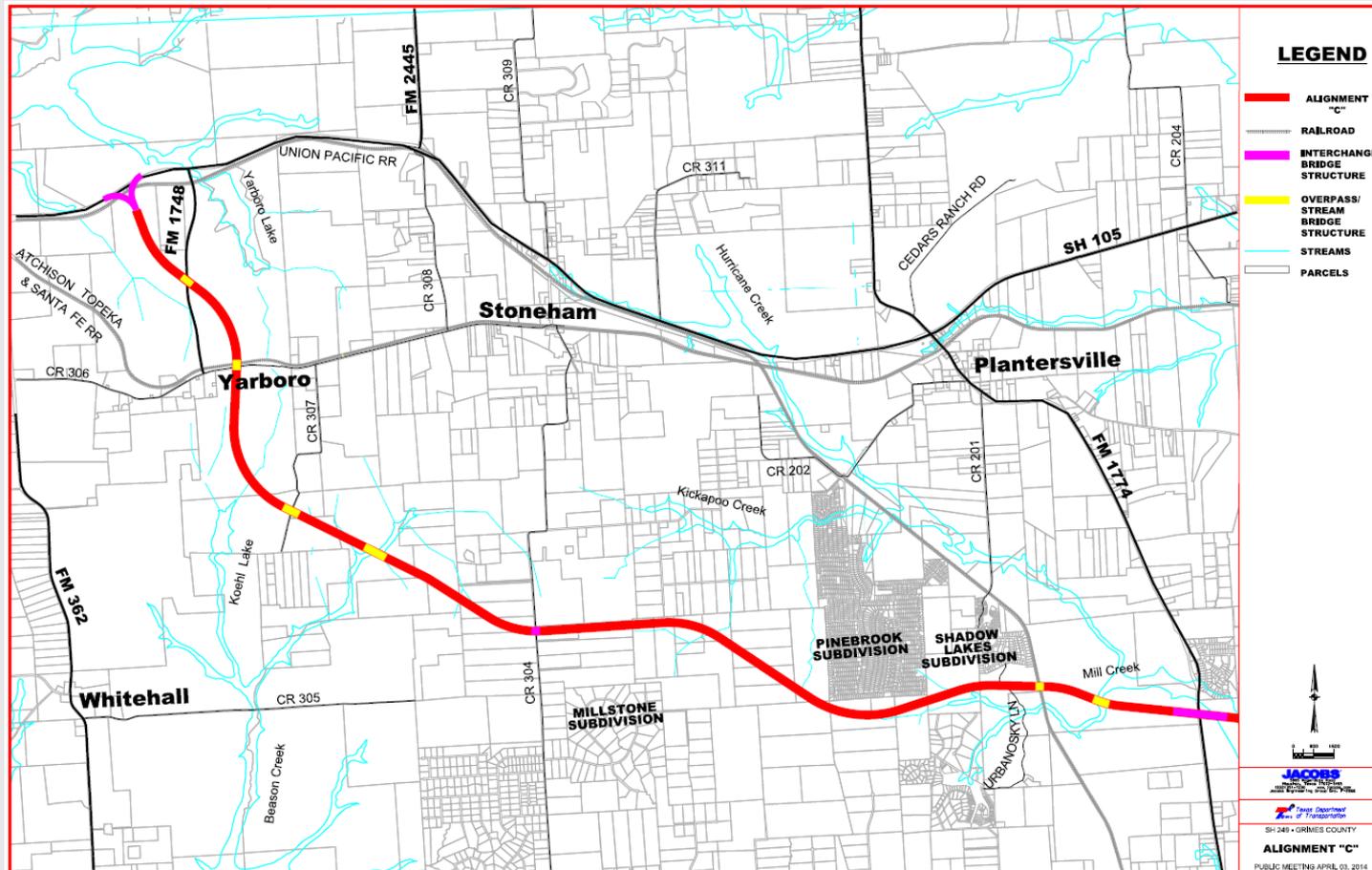
## Pros:

- Meets the purpose and need
- Second lowest construction cost and ROW required, second shortest alignment
- Simplified crossing of CR 304 and least complicated mid-point access
- No relocations

## Cons:

- Intersects SH 105 farther from SH 6

# SH 249 Alternatives: C1 Alignment (New Location)



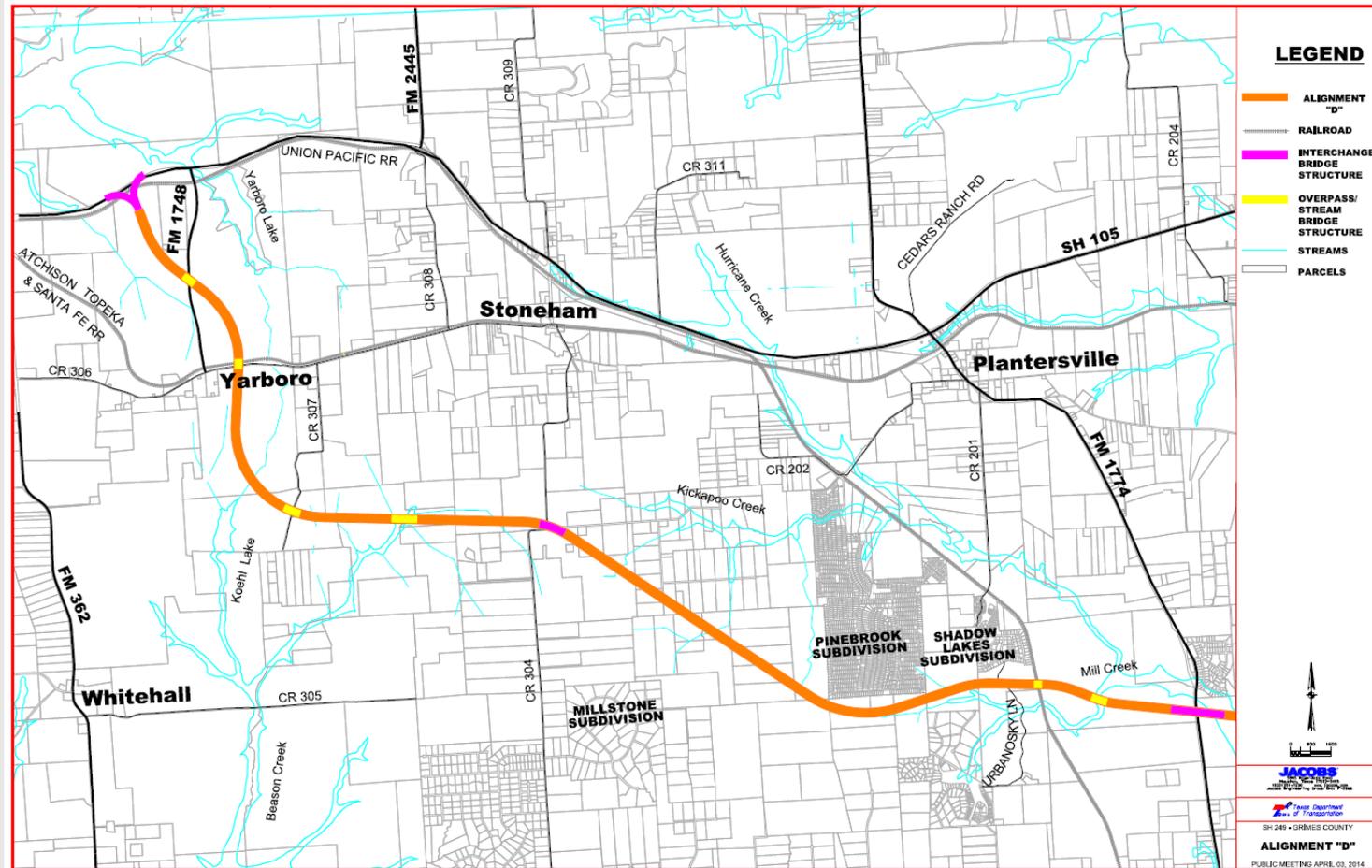
## Pros:

- Meets the purpose and need
- Least complicated mid-point access, and impacts fewest number of properties
- Parallels property lines east of CR 304; simplified crossing
- No relocations required

## Cons:

- Second highest construction cost and ROW required; second longest alignment
- Highest amount of roadway crossings
- Second most creek crossings – crossing most flood plains and wetland crossings

# SH 249 Alternatives: D1 Alignment (New Location)



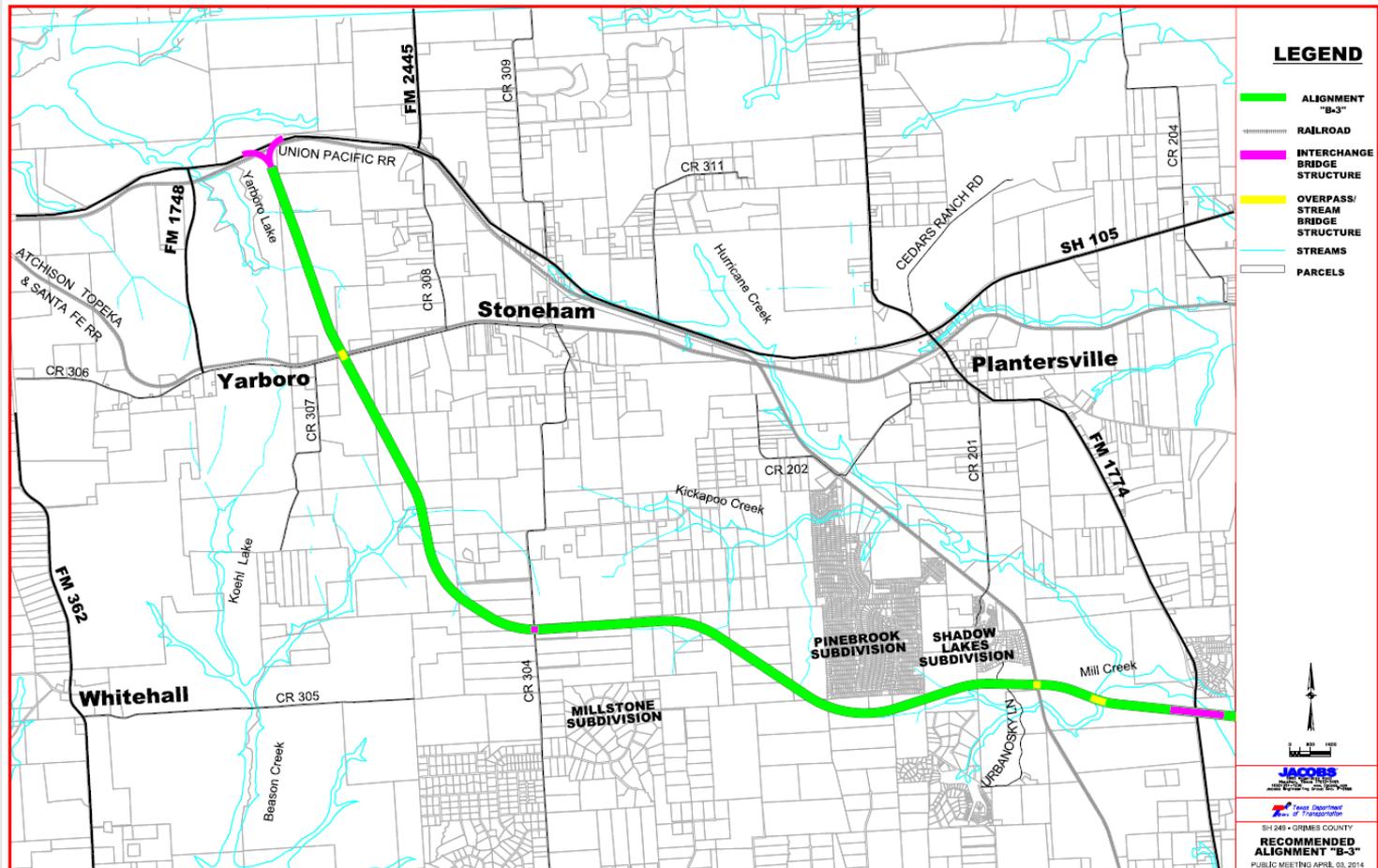
## Pros:

- Meets the purpose and need
- Impacts fewest number of properties
- Intersects SH 105 closest to SH 6
- No relocations required

## Cons:

- Highest construction cost and longest alignment
- 304/Greenwood Road intersection requires realignments
- Most creek crossings and wetland crossings

# SH 249 Recommended Alternative: B3 (New Location)



## Key Considerations:

- Meets the purpose and need
- No relocations required
- Second shortest alignment and second lowest ROW required
- Simple crossing of CR 304
- Least complicated mid-point access

# Frequently Asked Questions

- **Would the proposed SH 249 be tolled?**  
*Yes.*
- **I heard emergency access is not feasible with toll roads – is that true?**  
*By law, emergency vehicles have access to toll roads.*
- **Would SH 249 be a four-lane super highway?**  
*SH 249 will be a two-lane highway, with shoulders that will accommodate future expansion when needed.*
- **What would be the general commute times?**  
*SH 249 would be a controlled-access highway with a high speed limit. General commute times to SH 6 would be less than along FM 1774/SH 105.*
- **When would the route be constructed?**  
*Construction is anticipated to begin in 2015.*
- **What is the construction cost of this project?**  
*Preliminary estimates indicate the cost of constructing a two-lane roadway is approximately \$87 million.*
- **Was “no build” an option for this project?**  
*No build is also being evaluated, and is a standard alternative we always review.*



# Project Schedule\*

## Ongoing Public Involvement

Initial  
Public  
Outreach

March  
2013

Environmental  
Study  
Launched

December 2013

Environmental  
Document  
Developed

2013 – 2014

Public  
Hearing

Mid 2014

Environmental  
Decision  
Anticipated

Late 2014

Construction  
2015

\* This project schedule and dates are preliminary and subject to change.

# How Can I Be Involved?

## 1. Share your comment or ask your question tonight:

- Write your comments on the comment card
- To speak your comment, fill out a speaker card and hand to a TxDOT representative
- When your name is called – proceed to a microphone, or raise your hand for microphone assistance

## 2. Or, submit your comments after the meeting:

- To be part of the official summary of tonight's meeting, written comments must be submitted tonight or **before April 18, 2014**

## 3. After April 18, 2014, written comments will be reviewed by TxDOT:

- Although written comments submitted after April 18, 2014 will not be part of tonight's official meeting summary, *all written comments* are reviewed by TxDOT

## Contact Information

- Email: ([Bob.Appleton@txdot.gov](mailto:Bob.Appleton@txdot.gov))
- Web: [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov) (search "SH 249")
- Phone: (979) 778-9707
- Mail:

TxDOT Bryan District  
2591 N. Earl Rudder Freeway  
Bryan, TX 77803

# Questions?

