

# Frequently Asked Questions

## I-69 System (I-369) Harrison County/Marshall Working Group and Route Study



### Why is this study being done?

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is sponsoring this study. US 59, the proposed I-369 route through Harrison County and Marshall, does not currently meet Interstate standards, e.g., local driveways and cross roads intersect the mainlanes. This study is being done to develop and evaluate options with the eventual goal of constructing, designating, and signing US 59 as I-369. Two broad options are under consideration:

- Upgrade of existing US 59 through Marshall to an Interstate highway (I-369), or
- Construction of I-369/US 59 on a new location and conversion of existing US 59 through Marshall to Business 59.

The proposed Interstate route option would address the transportation needs and challenges for the area identified by the I-69 Segment One Committee. These include:

- Keeping up with population and traffic growth in the area as it pertains to transportation facilities;
- Providing safer travel options for the area;
- Offering options for emergency evacuation routes; and
- Providing potential economic development opportunities through access to improved transportation facilities.

### How would I-369 benefit Harrison County, the Marshall Area community, and local citizens?

There are numerous benefits I-369 could provide including:

- *Serving Population and Traffic Growth* – Future population and traffic growth along the entire I-69 system route will require the capacity of a four-lane interstate freeway. I-369 would provide congestion relief within the City of Marshall and result in reduced travel times for businesses and local residents.
- *Providing Safer Travel* – Interstate highways are safer than two and four-lane roads. Along the I-69 route throughout Texas, fatal crashes on interstate quality freeways are less likely than on non-freeway type roads. I-369 would be a safer, Interstate quality highway, possibly resulting in fewer fatal crashes each year.
- *Maintaining and Improving Economic Competitiveness* – High quality transportation is necessary for Texas and its communities to compete for new industry and jobs, with service to Interstate highways being a selection factor for businesses considering establishing operations in a community. I-369 would provide access to the Harrison County airport and many local businesses and could serve as an alternate route for the high volume of associated freight truck traffic.

### What is the working group and who are the members?

TxDOT has convened a working group for this study to serve as a forum for identifying challenges and opportunities related to I-369 development. The I-69 System (I-369) Harrison County/Marshall Working Group is an entity of 15 volunteers consisting of city and county elected officials and technical staff, private business interests, and other community representatives. The working group is chaired by Harrison County Judge Hugh Taylor.

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### Why will this Interstate be designated I-369 not I-69?

US 59 north of Tenaha is intended to function as an Interstate spur. For this route, I-369 was approved as the Interstate spur designation by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

### How is an Interstate different than a U.S. Highway such as US 59?

An Interstate must have control of access—meaning that to enter or exit the mainlanes you must use ramps, such as the configuration on nearby I-20. In addition, there are numerous specific design criteria that an Interstate facility must meet. An Interstate would provide additional lanes and capacity for emergency evacuations such as hurricanes. An Interstate highway has safety features that undivided two- and four-lane highways do not have such as overpasses at crossroads, entrance and exits ramps, and shoulders. An Interstate may also support economic development because convenient Interstate access is a factor when businesses undergo site selection.

### What is the working group preliminary recommendation?

The working group preliminary recommendation would be the option that deviates from existing US 59 north of FM 2625, crosses I-20 just east of the city wastewater treatment plant, passes south of the airport, uses the Loop 390 alignment to north of Marshall, and then connects back to US 59 north of FM 1793. During the summer and fall, working group members will be making presentations to community and civic organizations to inform local citizens, gather feedback, and present the results of their outreach to TxDOT in late fall for the agency's consideration.

### If an option was dismissed from consideration during the route study and working group discussions, is it also eliminated from the environmental process?

No. The results of the route study and the recommendations of the working group will be open to review and comment during the environmental process. TxDOT has not determined when the environmental process would begin.

### If a new location alignment is chosen to be constructed with the eventual goal of becoming I-369, will existing US 59 through Marshall and parts of Harrison County be renamed "I-369 Business"?

No. It would be numbered as US 59. When the new location route becomes US 59, existing US 59 through Marshall would become Business 59. After the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and AASHTO approval of I-369, the new location route would be dually designated as I-369/US 59, and Business 59 would remain through Marshall.

### Will I-369 be tolled?

I-69 Texas is in the early planning stages so the manner in which it will be paid for has not been determined.

### What are the next steps?

Considering local citizen input, the working group will make final recommendations by the end of 2014 to guide TxDOT on I-369 project development in the Marshall area, including identification of an Interstate route option that will be studied in detail as part of the environmental process.

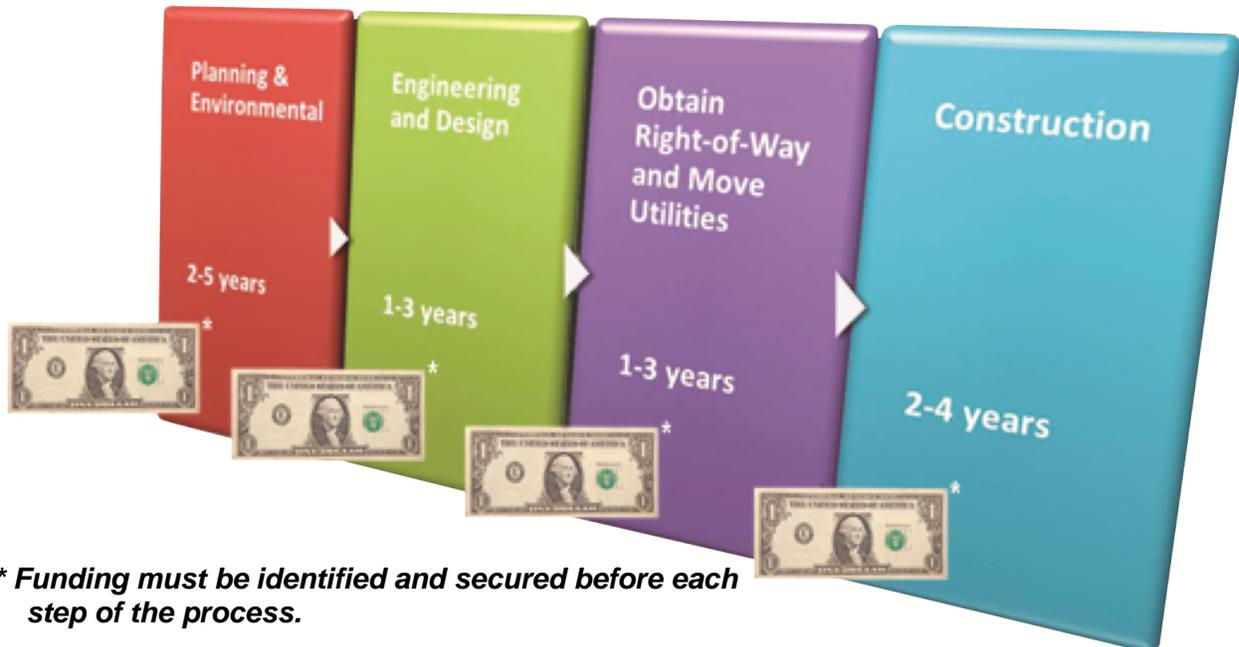
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### When will the project be constructed?

If approved by the Texas Transportation Commission for construction, I-369 in the Marshall area will most likely be developed as a series of construction projects that make up the entire route. The TxDOT graphic below shows estimated timelines for roadway projects. It's important to note that funding has to be made available before each step in this process can commence. At this time, no funding has been appropriated for project development beyond the current route study.



### How can I stay informed about the project and get involved in the process?

Information can be found at <http://www.txdot.gov/drivenbytexans/us59-harrison.htm>. In addition to the website, you can contact Deanne Simmons, TxDOT Atlanta District, at (903) 799-1308, or by email at [Deanne.Simmons@txdot.gov](mailto:Deanne.Simmons@txdot.gov). Comments are being accepted on the route study through November 7, 2014. Comments may be submitted by email to Deanne Simmons ([Deanne.Simmons@txdot.gov](mailto:Deanne.Simmons@txdot.gov)), through the study website link above, or by filling out a survey on the study (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/I369HarrisonCountyRouteStudy>). Comments and input may also be submitted through the mail:

*Mail to: TxDOT Atlanta District  
701 E Main Street  
Atlanta, Texas 75551  
Attn: Deanne Simmons, P.E.*

If you are interested in scheduling someone to present to your group, contact Deanne Simmons.