



US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study Stakeholder Meeting #2 Meeting Notes

Date: April 26, 2018
Time: 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Location: Refugio County Courthouse
Courtroom
808 Commerce St.
Refugio, Texas 78377

Purpose: To discuss and receive feedback from attendees on the conceptual route options

Attendees: See sign-in sheets
(stakeholder working group, public and staff)

Discussion:

1. Welcome, Safety Briefing and Opening Remarks

Judge Robert Blaschke, Refugio County

Robert Isassi, P.E., TxDOT Corpus Christi District

Judge Blaschke opened the meeting and facilitated introductions among the group. He welcomed the group. He recognized the difficult situations created by Hurricane Harvey, emphasized the need to address increasing traffic on US 77, and discussed his personal account of seeing an increasing number of trucks.

The Judge introduced Robert Isassi from the District Office, originally from Corpus Christi, and has been with TxDOT since 1999. Robert introduced himself as the TxDOT Area Engineer and encouraged attendees to reach out to him if they have any questions.

2. Review of Stakeholder Meeting #1 (May 31, 2017)

Dustin Elliott, P.E., HNTB

Dustin provided a recap on the results of the previous stakeholder meeting and noted that everything is still subject to change. TxDOT is still determining the best way to fit the community's needs into the federally mandated I-69. He noted that at the first meeting, TxDOT brought a few things including a map showing US 77 as it is today along with preliminary project purpose and need.

Dustin went on to review the revised purpose and need based on the feedback received in the previous stakeholder meeting. There were 4 additional needs identified: (1) access to emergency services/hospital; (2) buses to access schools; (3) access to businesses and economic hubs (particularly for trucks entering/exiting the farming co-op in Woodsboro

during peak harvest from mid-June to August); and (4) a way to maintain economic viability (concern about small towns being bypassed and losing business).

3. Evaluation of Conceptual Route Options

Dustin Elliott, P.E., HNTB

Dustin continued on to review the conceptual route options and how they each performed when evaluated according to the purpose and need. Future truck traffic is anticipated to continue to increase along the US 77 corridor.

Dustin introduced the three high-level route options (west, central and east). The routes were determined with minimization of impacts to floodplains and access in mind. The plan for the section through Woodsboro would remain the same throughout all the route options. The existing northbound lanes would become northbound frontage roads and each cross street would get a grade separated overpass.

The west route option, going south to north, splits off of existing US 77 north at the weigh station and heads west of Refugio. A higher speed access lane to existing Business US 77 will create seamless access. As it crosses the river, it parallels the downtown route. The west route created more opportunities for interchanges and access points and creates the opportunity to interchange with US 183, providing the most direct path for the hurricane evacuation route.

The central route option has a lot more impacts. The ROW has been centered on existing ROW, absorbing roughly half of a block on either side. It was noted that impacts to the church verses downtown must be weighed. He noted, 'after looking at the central option, we reduced width of the typical section and introduced elevated mainlanes to minimize impacts but there are still extensive impacts'.

The east route option goes into more rural land and is the shortest of the routes. The curve is designed to accommodate a railroad crossing overpass. This route option will have impacts on nearby farmland. The east route would only provide potential access to Refugio south of town, at FM 774, and at the north end with a potential future connection to an extension of Commerce Street.

Dustin continued on by explaining that the impacts to traffic flow are similar for all route options; however, the west route option is more attractive to through truck traffic from Corpus based on the modeling. The west and central route options provide direct access to hurricane evacuation routes. Additionally, according to local fire department, if there was a release of contaminants, it would be preferable for it to occur on the west side of town due to prevailing winds. The west route option provides the most access, and is fully within the city of Refugio's ETJ.

Questions/Answers

- Do any of these projects prevent the upgrade of US 77 to interstate standards to be designated as I-69?
Dustin responded saying no, that all of the route options would work towards achieving that goal.
- What is the time line for expanding to the end of the county?
Dustin responded saying the team did not know at this time, this study is only looking at US 77 from Woodsboro to Refugio.
- Concerns about various other projects in the area. There is a brick wall at an intersection off of US 183 that people keep hitting. In 2011 TxDOT put in the traffic lights - the lights are still dysfunctional and we are seeing back up. How can we trust you with this history? Why do we need this? We have a proposal to do I-37. I want to see how much pressure there is on that facility. Where are the figures coming from?
Dustin thanked the stakeholder for the feedback and stated that he couldn't speak to the issues outside of this project, and the District noted the concerns.
- Regarding the west option, do you know the amount of traffic that we'd be pulling off?
Dustin replied that it would be approximately 10,000 cars per day.
- When will we get funds?
Dustin replied that they have not identified the funds yet, but as TxDOT moves forward they will do so later in the project development process as it gets closer to final design.
- With the routes, how will you develop I-69?
Dustin explained that all three routes would help develop I-69 and assist in bringing US 77 up to interstate standards which will help the process of re-designing the facility to be part of I-69 regardless of the option ultimately selected.
- Limits of study when expanding down to end of county?
The team responded that they would be looking at limits through the city first and would look at the limits to the end of the county later.
- One-way frontage roads are shown, are two-way frontage roads an option?
The team commented that two-way frontage roads are not an option due to safety issues. Later in the design phase of the project, turnarounds and access points will be considered and planned.

4. Route Option Group Exercise

Dustin Elliott, P.E., HNTB

Mitzi Ellison, Nancy Ledbetter & Associates

Breakout into stakeholder working group discussion with project staff making notes of discussion points regarding route options. Subjects noted included:

- There is no way to go central and not hit the church or park
- Noted construction on US 77 backs up to Woodsboro and a construction staging plan would be necessary
- Noted constructability concerns through town
- Central route option brings about personal property concerns, could take fire station out and the chamber could be impacted
- Noted truck traffic is the biggest impact
- Noted connection points west and south of town are desired by the group
- Final design – TxDOT will work with landowners to discuss and plan turnarounds and access points as needed
- (3 overpasses) thru Woodsboro
- Traffic signals will be evaluated in future phases

Questions/Answers

- Would a central route improve evacuations?
The team responded no. Traffic would utilize frontage roads through town going through similar conditions as they do today.
- What is the timeline to construction?
There is no set timeline – currently in the planning phase, will next move to the environmental studies and then design. TxDOT will look for funding in design.
- Regarding the need due to I-69 traffic - where are the trucks coming?
Trucks are coming from the south ports of entry moving north toward Houston.
- How will the options intersect SH 202?
None of the options will not go out to SH 202. SH 202 intersection would remain north of US 77 on US 183.
- How do you get a sound wall?
Noise impacts and the need for sound walls would be investigated in the environmental portion of project development. Studies may be done to determine if sound walls are needed for mitigation.
- Construction over floodplains and water flowing in wrong direction are concerns, how will those be addressed?
Floodplains and drainage will be studied in depth during environmental study and will be evaluated through FEMA floodplain analysis.

- How will the project handle historic structures, like the Catholic Church?
Historic structures are protected by state and federal regulations and efforts to avoid those properties is the priority option. Minimizing impacts in the next option and mitigating is a last option if the structures cannot be avoided. With the three route options avoidance is reasonable.
- Will you need borrow pits?
We have not analyzed the need at this time, but it is possible.
- What will happen to the weigh stations?
Weigh stations will need to be moved to be between frontage and mainlanes to DPS standards. We anticipate the existing weigh station being replaced and approximate locations are shown on the maps of the routes.

5. Public Open House Planning

Amy Redmond, TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming Division

Amy Redmond thanked everyone for their input and went over what needs to be done now that the second stakeholder meeting is finished. The next step for this study is hosting the open house which is expected in mid-June. The team is looking at several locations including the community center and the fairgrounds.

Amy asked the group if there are any big events in June that might conflict with the open house. The committee commented:

- Tuesdays are not good days as they are city council meetings
- Judge is out the week of June 12-15
- Later meetings are better (suggested 6 pm)
- Use the Victoria Advocate and the Refugio News for display ads
- Add Bayside and Austell info to get the word out

6. Wrap Up/Adjourn

Judge Robert Blaschke, Refugio County

Judge Blaschke provided closing remarks thanking everyone for their input. He noted the importance of the project and the value of the groups' participation in the process.

Attachments

- **Sign-in Sheets (stakeholders, public and staff)**
- **Handouts**
 - **Agenda**
 - **Purpose and Need Statement**
 - **Route Option Evaluation Matrix**
 - **Map: US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study – Woodsboro**
 - **Map: US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study – Potential Routes**
 - **Map: US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study – West Route Option**
 - **Map: US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study – Central Route Option**
 - **Map: US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study – East Route Option**
 - **Typical Sections**
- **Photos**



US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study Attachments

April 26, 2018

Sign-in Sheets



SIGN-IN SHEET
 US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study
 Stakeholder Working Group Meeting
 Thursday, April 26, 2018
 4 to 6 p.m.
 Refugio County Courthouse



Driven by Texans

Name	Affiliation	Address	Phone Number	Email Address	Initials
Brenda Belasquez	Manager, Fast Break	PO Box 839, Woodsboro, Texas 78393			
Robert Blaschke	Judge, Refugio County	808 Commerce, Room 104, Refugio, Texas 78377			RB
Gary Bourland	Commissioner, Pct. #3, Refugio County	808 Commerce, Room 104, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Steve Connor	Manager, H.E.B., Refugio Store	206 S. Alamo Street, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Enrique Diaz	Police Chief, Town of Refugio	601 Commerce Street, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Wanda Dukes	Mayor, Town of Refugio	PO Box 1020, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Juanita Freudiger	Manager, Refugio Travel Center	PO Box 1057, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Melissa Gonzales	Superintendent, Refugio ISD	212 W. Vance Street, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Pinky Gonzales	Sheriff, Refugio County	PO Box 1022, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Mario Hernandez	Manager, Stripes, Refugio Store	108 N. Alamo Street, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Wes Holmstrom	Cox Holmstrom	PO Box 1023, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Lee Lewis	O'Connor-Braman	PO Box 400, Victoria, Texas 77902			
Amanda Mendoza	Manager, Woodforest Bank	PO Box 203, Refugio, Texas 78377			AM
Irene Mugerza	President, Refugio County Chamber of Commerce	301 N. Alamo Street, Refugio, Texas 78377			I
Don Pullin	Fire Chief, Refugio Volunteer Fire Department	PO Box 398, Refugio, Texas 78377			
Dr. J. Tim Rainey		PO Box 1044, Refugio, Texas 78377			JTR
Lee Riemenschneider	Fire Chief, Woodsboro Volunteer Fire Department	PO Box 702, Woodsboro, Texas 78393			LR
Kay Roach <i>Richard Sanchez</i>	Mayor, Town of Woodsboro	PO Box 632, Woodsboro, Texas 78393			RS
Andy Rooke	F.B. Rooke and Sons	PO Box 7, Woodsboro, Texas 78393			ARR
Janice Sykora	Superintendent, Woodsboro ISD	PO Box 770, Woodsboro, Texas 78393			
Hoss Whitt	Refugio County Memorial Hospital	107 Swift Street, Refugio, Texas 78377			H
Roxann Wiginton	Woodsboro Farmer's Co-Op	PO Box 693, Woodsboro, Texas 78393			



PUBLIC SIGN-IN SHEET
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 Stakeholder Working Group Meeting
 Thursday, April 26, 2018
 4 to 6 p.m.
 Refugio County Courthouse



Name	Affiliation	Email Address
[Handwritten Signature]	HUSEMAN	[Redacted]
Mina Bonam	Travel Center	[Redacted]
Alice Rae Huseman	Rancher Landowner	[Redacted]
LAVE JARVIS	Huseman McKinnon Ranch	[Redacted]
Roger Paulsen	Paulsen Farms	[Redacted]
Cy BAUER	Ranch	[Redacted]
TIM DELANEY	Press	[Redacted]
AL DUCITT	D Forks Ranch	[Redacted]
Irene Muquerra	Refugio Co. TX	[Redacted]
Johnny Cisneros	Johnny Cisneros 20@gmail.com	[Redacted]
Stanley Tuttle		[Redacted]
Ken Dahl	Bayside	[Redacted]
Teddy Bellows	Refugio	[Redacted]
LUIS BUENTELLO	U.S. CONGRESS	[Redacted]
JD KENNEDY	U.S. CONGRESS	[Redacted]
VAN HUSEMAN	CITIZEN	[Redacted]

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Refugio County Courthouse



Name	Affiliation	Email Address
JL Schleich	ci	[REDACTED]
Hugh Gregory	CITIZEN	
Claude Freeman	Citizen	
Aron Espejel	KATV-TV	
RICHARD SANCHEZ	City of Woodslow	

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STAFF SIGN-IN SHEET
 US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study
 Stakeholder Working Group Meeting
 Thursday, April 26, 2018
 4 to 6 p.m.
 Refugio County Courthouse



Name	Organization	Email Address	Initials
Roger Beall, P.E.	TxDOT – Transportation Planning & Programming		RAB
Chris Caron, P.E.	TxDOT – Corpus Christi District		
Rickey Dailey	TxDOT – Corpus Christi District		
Dustin Elliott, P.E.	HNTB		DE
Mitzi Ellison	NLA		ME
Robert Isassi, P.E.	TxDOT – Corpus Christi District		RI
Steve Linhart, AICP	TxDOT – Transportation Planning & Programming		SL
Amy Redmond	TxDOT – Transportation Planning & Programming		AR
Rafael Riojas, P.E.	HNTB		RR
Paula Sales-Evans, P.E.	TxDOT – Corpus Christi District		
Will Smithson	HNTB		
Elizabeth Vermillion	HNTB		
Victor Vourcos, P.E.	TxDOT – Corpus Christi District		VEV
Sean Wray	HNTB		

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Handouts

AGENDA

US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study
Stakeholder Working Group Meeting
Thursday, April 26, 2018
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Refugio County Courthouse

1. Welcome, Safety Briefing and Opening Remarks – *Judge Robert Blaschke, Refugio County and Robert Isassi, P.E., TxDOT Corpus Christi District*
2. Review of Stakeholder Meeting #1 (May 31, 2017) – *Dustin Elliott, P.E., HNTB*
Handout: Purpose and Need Statement
3. Evaluation of Conceptual Route Options – *Dustin Elliott, P.E., HNTB*
Handouts: 11" x 17" of each route option; Typical section graphics; route option matrix
4. Route Option Group Exercise – *Dustin Elliott, P.E., HNTB; Mitzi Ellison, Nancy Ledbetter & Associates; Amy Redmond, TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming Division*
5. Public Open House Planning - *Amy Redmond, TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming Division*
6. Wrap Up/Adjourn - *Judge Robert Blaschke, Refugio County*

US 77 WOODSBORO/REFUGIO ROUTE STUDY

CORPUS CHRISTI DISTRICT

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

Project Purpose

Provide a continuous access controlled facility that

- meets interstate design standards;
- improves safety for local and through traffic; and
- improves mobility and connectivity.

Project Needs

- Section 1105(e) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991¹¹, as amended, designates High Priority Corridor 18, which includes US 77 from the Rio Grande River to I-37 at Corpus Christi and then to Victoria as future parts of the Interstate system. US 77 through Woodsboro and Refugio does not meet interstate design standards.
- As noted in the Texas Freight Mobility Plan (TFMP) (November 2017), Texas' interstates handle the majority of truck traffic, due to their connectivity to major population centers, businesses, logistics centers, marine ports, military installations, international and domestic gateways and inland ports. As such, all of the interstate highways in Texas, including the entire I-69 system in Texas, is included on the Texas Highway Freight Network.

Additional needs identified by the stakeholder working group at the May 2017 meeting

- Access to emergency services/hospital
- Buses to access schools
- Access to businesses and economic hubs (particularly for trucks entering/exiting the Woodsboro Farmers Cooperative facility in Woodsboro, especially during peak harvest from mid-June to August)
- Maintain economic viability (concern about small towns being bypassed and losing business)

Refined Purpose and Need Statement

The need and purpose of the US 77 Woodsboro / Refugio Route Study is to identify US 77 route options that would provide a continuous access-controlled facility that meets interstate standards for future I-69E route designation; improve safety for local through traffic; improve mobility, access, and connectivity; and enhance economic vitality.

¹ The Act authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to add segments of the corridors to the Interstate System when certain criteria are met. In essence, once a section of US 77 meets interstate standards and connects to an existing interstate, TxDOT will then begin the process of designating it as Interstate 69 East (I-69E).

Last Updated: 23 April 2018

US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study

Route Options Purpose and Need Matrix

Route Option Performance Based On Purpose and Need			
Purpose and Need Objectives	East Route	West Route	Central Route
Safety			
Direct access to hurricane evacuation route (most efficient)	★	★★★	★★
Proximity to hospital/emergency response	★	★★★	★★
Hazardous materials route Prevailing winds are from East to West - An alignment west of Refugio would decrease the risk of exposure to airborne hazardous materials to the business district in the event of a hazardous materials incident on the Relief Route.	★	★★★	★★
Reduction in through truck traffic in Refugio business district	★★★	★★★	★
Economic Development Potential			
Access Points	★	★★★	★
Provides development opportunities within the Extra Territorial Jurisdiction - resulting in potential increase in sales/property tax revenues.	★	★★★	★
Business Displacement	★★	★★	★
Mobility			
Reduction in through truck traffic in Refugio business district	★★★	★★★	★★
Access Points (highest number of)	★★	★★★	★
Interchange w/highways (highest # connection to other facilities)	★	★★★	★★
Improved mobility on local streets	★	★★★	★★
Environmental			
GLO Coastal Management Zone (no impacts)	★	★★★	★★★
Prime Farmland Soil (least impacts)	★	★	★★★
National Wetland Acres	★★	★	★★★
Residential Displacements	★★	★	★★
Business Displacements	★★	★★	★
Estimated Construction Cost			
No Build = \$0, East Route = \$466M, West Route = \$583M, Central Route = \$543M	★★★	★	★★
Right of Way Impacts			
Total Acreage	★★	★★	★★
Parcels Traversed	★★	★★	★

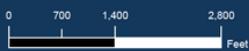
★	Low Performing
★★	Moderately Performing
★★★	High Performing



US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study - Woodsboro

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bridge Deck | *Mission | Petroleum Pipeline Station | Railroad Crossing |
| Pavement | Museum | Wastewater Treatment | *Fennessey Ranch |
| Right-of-Way | Woodsboro Co-op | RCRAInfo Site - Transporter | NHD Waterbody |
| Fire Station | Woodsboro Co-op | Air Emissions - Stationary Source | NWI Wetlands |
| Sheriff | Historical Marker | Active Brownfield | GLO Coastal Management Zone |
| Hospital | Cemetery | Solid Waste Processor | Water Body |
| Refugio County Courthouse - NRHP | Airport / Landing Strip | Closed Landfill | 100-Year Floodplain |
| School | | Inactive Landfill | Extraterritorial Jurisdiction |
| | | | Park |
| | | | Stream |

*Our Lady of Refuge Mission and Church; **Fennessey Ranch is a private partner in the Texas Nature Conservancy (INC), sponsored Coastal Prairie Conservation Initiative; Aerial Photo: Source: TxDOT, 2015-2017; City Limits - 2010 Census; ETJ - 1/2 mile from city limits (TX Local Gov. Code, Title 2, Subtitle C, Ch. 42, Subchapter A, Sec. 42.021, Extent of Extraterritorial Jurisdiction); Hammet - EPA and TCEQ, 2017

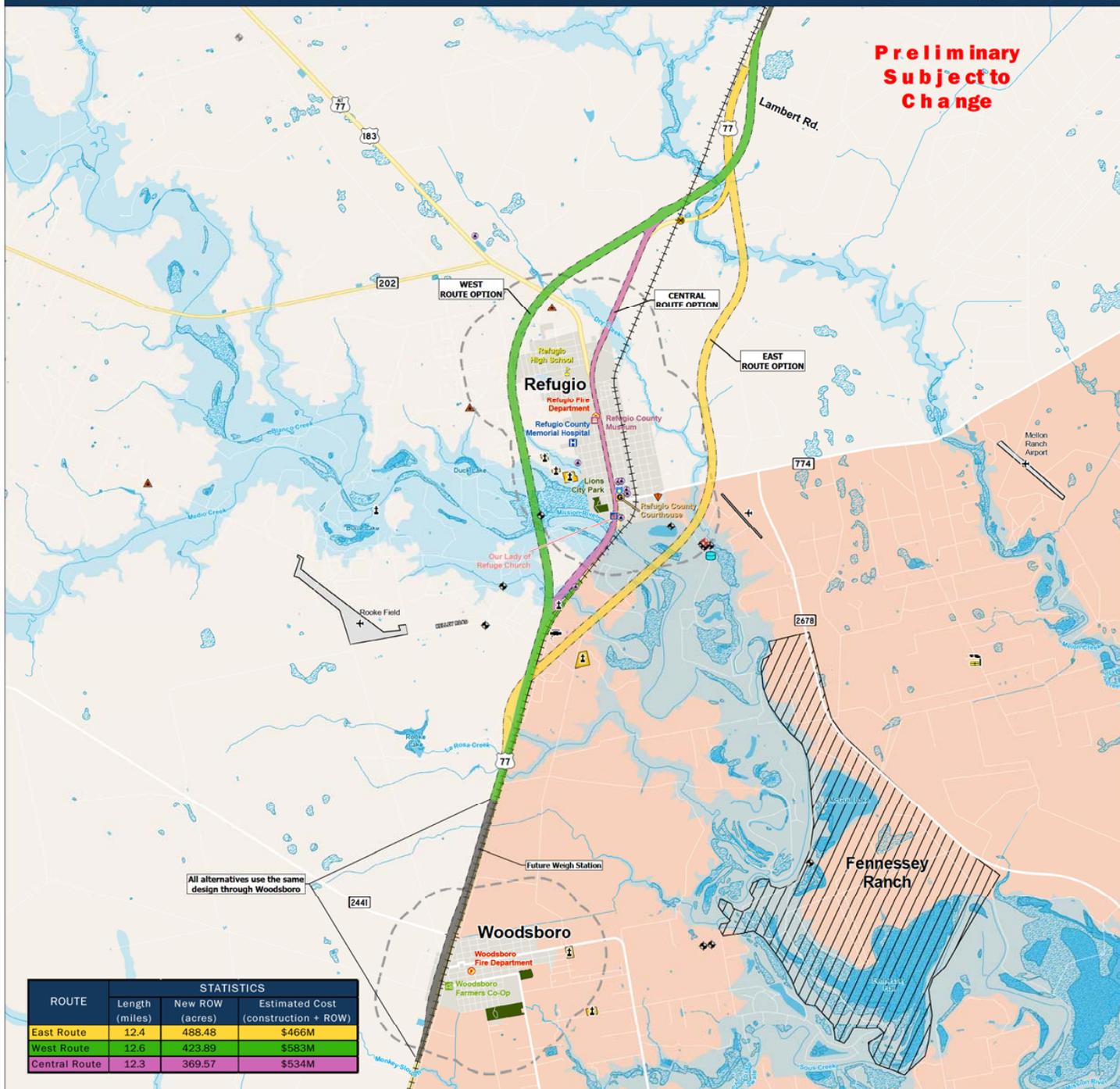


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 April 26, 2018

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**Preliminary
Subject to
Change**

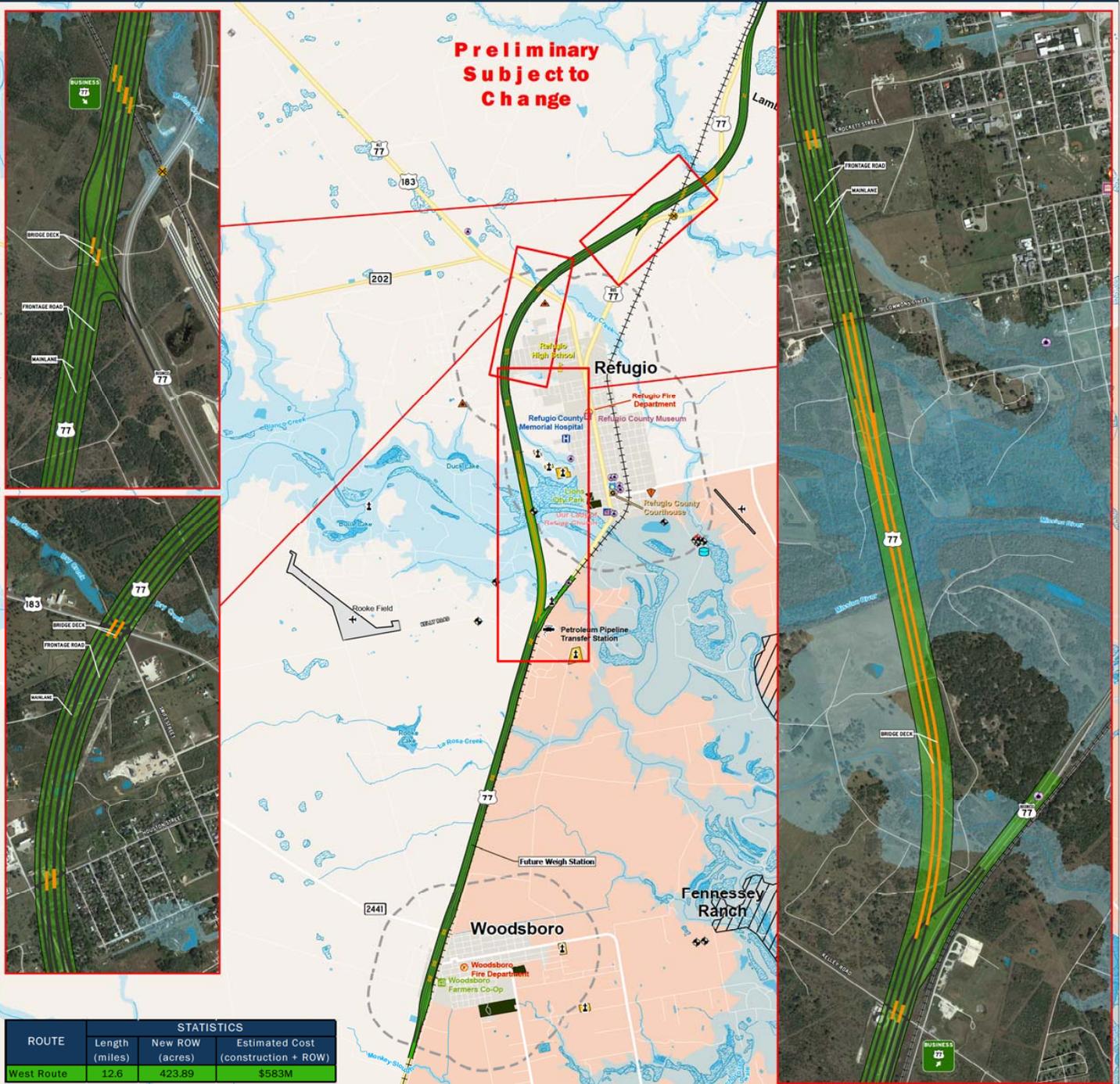


ROUTE	STATISTICS		
	Length (miles)	New ROW (acres)	Estimated Cost (construction + ROW)
East Route	12.4	488.48	\$466M
West Route	12.6	423.89	\$583M
Central Route	12.3	369.57	\$534M

US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study - Potential Routes

- East Route
- West Route
- Central Route
- Shared by all 3
- *Mission
- Museum
- Woodsboro Co-op
- Fire Station
- Historical Marker
- Cemetery
- Hospital
- Airport / Landing Strip
- Refugio County Courthouse - NRHP
- School
- **Fennessey Ranch
- Petroleum Pipeline Station
- Wastewater Treatment
- RCRA Info Site - Transporter
- Air Emissions - Stationary Source
- Active Brownfield
- Solid Waste Processor
- Closed Landfill
- Inactive Landfill
- Stream
- NHD Waterbody
- NWI Wetlands
- GLO Coastal Management Zone
- Water Body
- 100-Year Floodplain
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Park

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US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study - West Route Option

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bridge Deck | *Mission | **Fennessey Ranch | Stream |
| Pavement | Museum | Petroleum Pipeline Station | NHDWaterbody |
| Right-of-Way | Woodsboro Co-op | Wastewater Treatment | NWI Wetlands |
| Fire Station | Historical Marker | RCRAInfo Site - Transporter | GLO Coastal Management Zone |
| Sheriff | Air Emissions - Stationary Source | Active Brownfield | Water Body |
| Hospital | Cemetery | Solid Waste Processor | 100-Year Floodplain |
| Refugio County Courthouse - NRHP | Airport / Landing Strip | Closed Landfill | Extraterritorial Jurisdiction |
| School | Railroad Crossing | Inactive Landfill | Park |

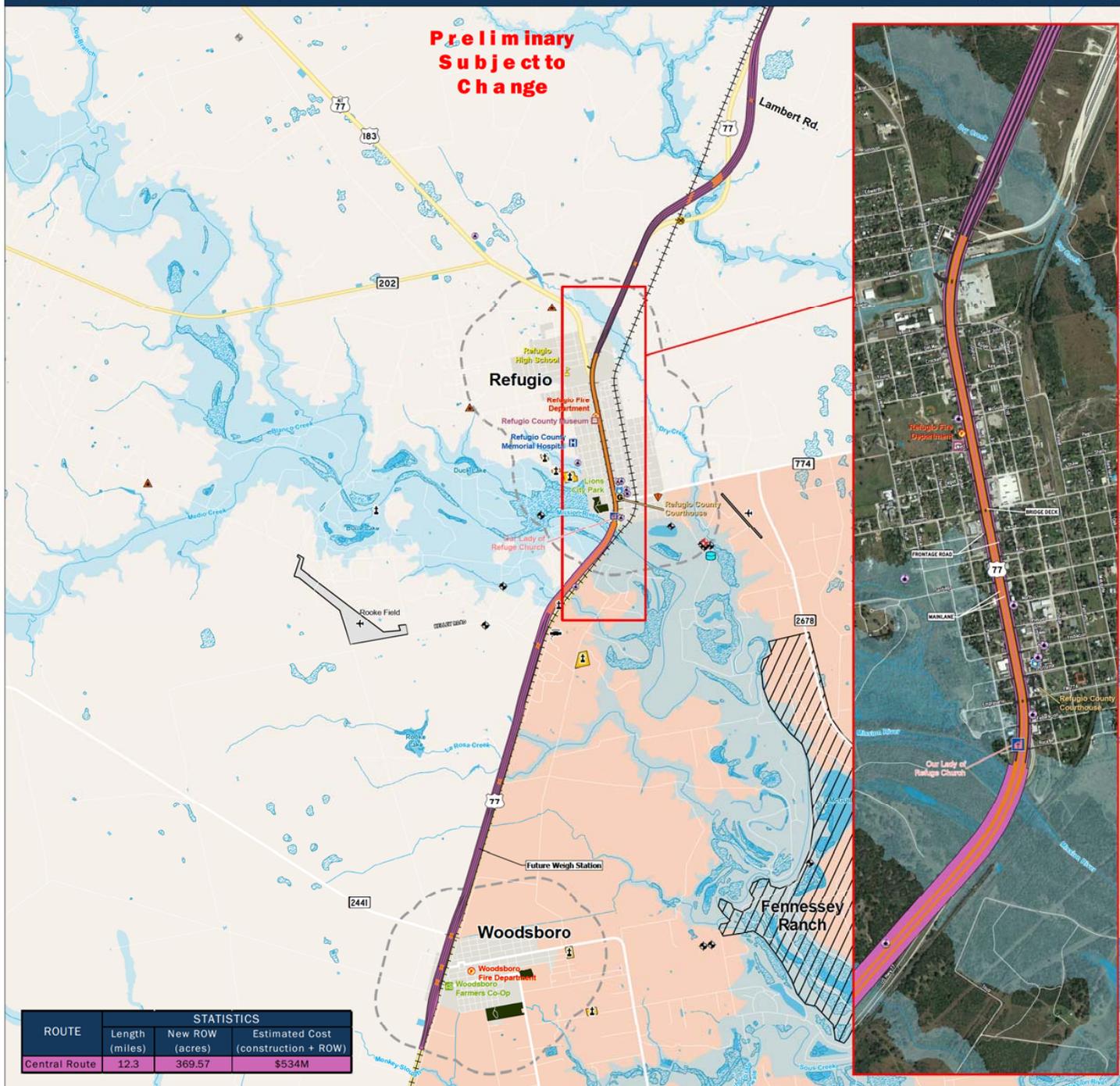
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US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study - Central Route Option

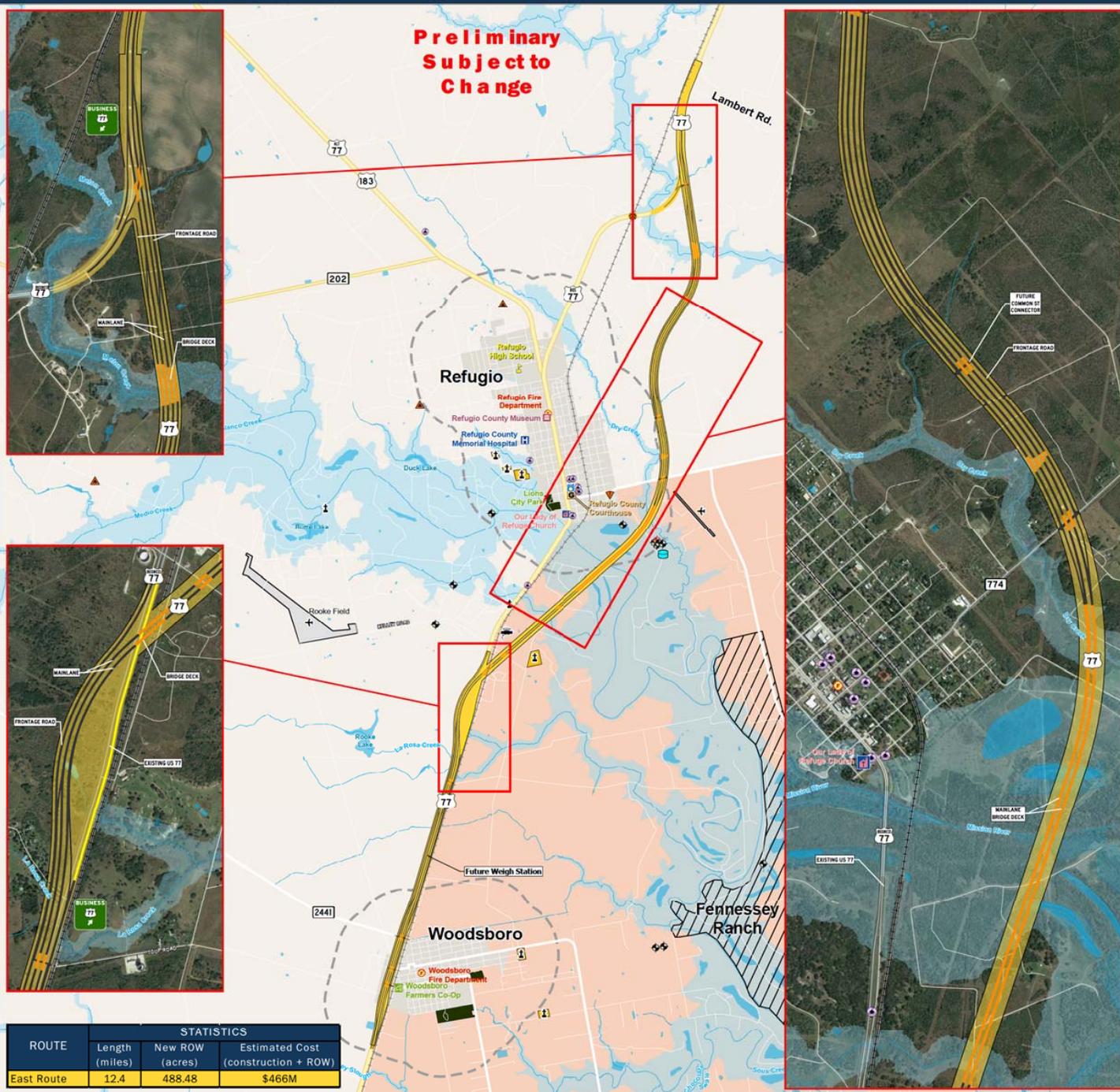
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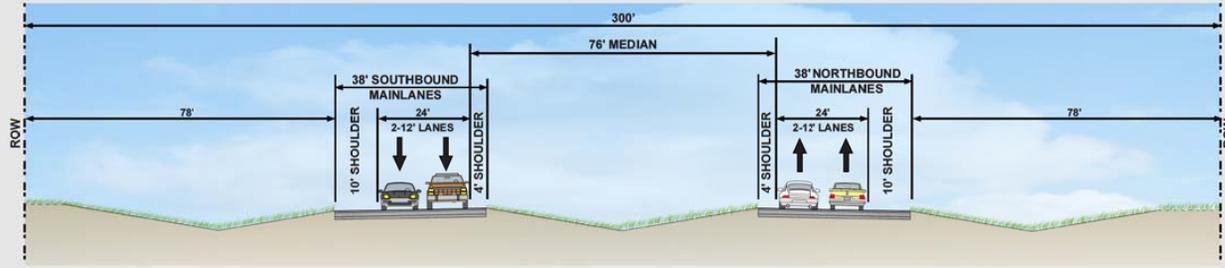
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 Accuracy is limited to the validity of available
 data as of December 31, 2016.

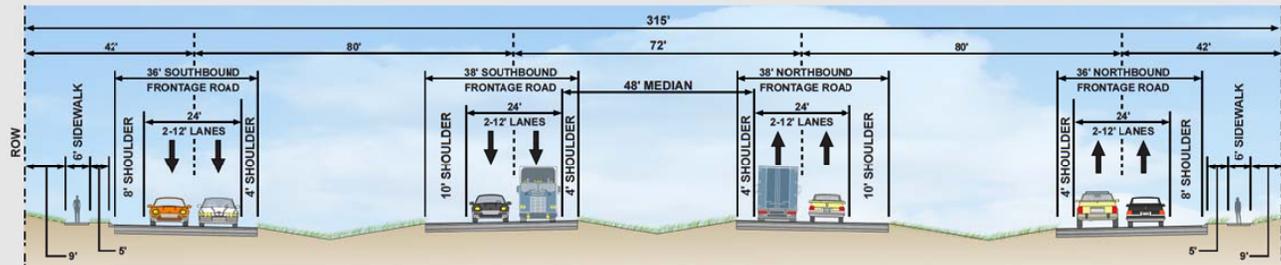




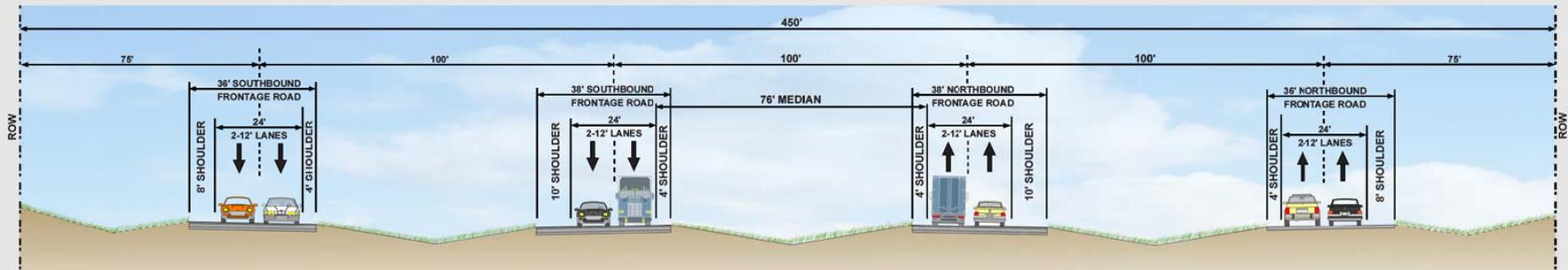
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



PROPOSED US 77 WITHOUT FRONTAGE ROADS



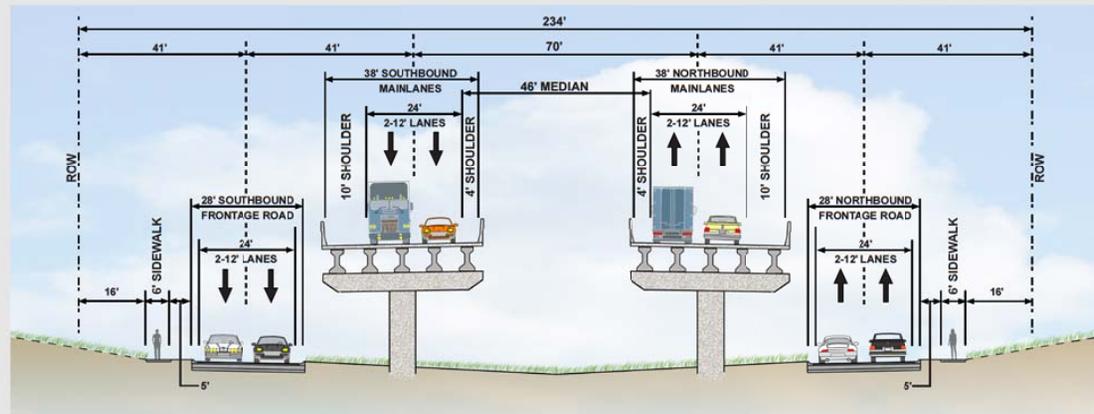
PROPOSED US 77 DEVELOPED



PROPOSED US 77 UNDEVELOPED



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



PROPOSED US 77 - DEVELOPED

Photos

US 77 Woodsboro/Refugio Route Study
Stakeholder Working Group Meeting
Thursday, April 26, 2018



