



Discussion of the possible need for a new roadway to connect with the far south side of Corpus Christi has occurred for decades. This roadway, or corridor, has been referred to by different names including the Southside Mobility Corridor and the South Loop. In the past, various possible routes were preliminarily identified, but none were analyzed in any detail.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) have teamed up with Nueces County, the City of Corpus Christi and San Patricio County to fund a \$1.4 million study that will determine the feasibility of a new corridor. This feasibility assessment will determine whether existing roadways are sufficient, need to be expanded or if a new corridor is needed. If a new corridor does appear beneficial, then the assessment will determine the type of transportation facility needed (for example, a freeway, parkway, major arterial, or other type of transportation corridor) and generally where it might be located. While a specific route may not be determined until another phase of study, this assessment will assist local governments and landowners in development and mobility planning.

While earlier discussions had focused mainly on the south side of the city of Corpus Christi and the city's adjacent ETJ (extra territorial jurisdiction), the potential need for additional connections to U.S. 77, I-37, San Patricio County and the North Padre Island area is recognized. Thus, the study area for this feasibility assessment has been expanded. The map on the reverse side indicates the preliminary study area. Connections to areas in Corpus Christi as well as other communities such as Petronila, Driscoll, Robstown, Odem, Edroy and Sinton will be considered.

Some of the possible benefits of the corridor include addressing future mobility needs, relief for SH 358 (South Padre Island Drive), an alternate evacuation route for North Padre Island, improved evacuation mobility for various areas, and a new or improved crossing of the Nueces River. The assessment will include an initial review of key environmental features and issues and determine if there are independent segments or pieces of the corridor that could be developed. Funding alternatives will be considered and a project management and implementation plan will be developed for feasible segments or projects.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization will fund 80 percent (\$1.12 million) of the feasibility project and local governments will fund 20 percent (\$280,000) over two years. Nueces County and the City of Corpus Christi are providing \$112,000 each and San Patricio County is providing \$56,000. The study is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2012.

HDR Engineering Inc. (HDR) heads a team consisting of Wilbur Smith Associates, Blanton & Associates and Olivarri & Associates. The HDR project manager for the assessment is Bob Leahey, P.E.

Public input will be a critical part of the assessment. There will be public meetings after initial assessment work is completed. Leah Olivarri of Olivarri & Associates leads this public involvement effort (361-884-5000 x21).

Additional information on the project will be available at www.corpuschristi-mpo.org with regular updates posted to this website. Tom Niskala, the MPO's Transportation Planning Director, can be reached at 361-884-0687.