

7. MPO STRATEGIC HIGHWAY NETWORK (STRAHNET) CONCURRENCE

BACKGROUND

The Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) is a network of highways which are important to the United States' strategic defense policy, and which provide defense access, continuity and emergency capabilities for defense purposes.

To ensure that defense important roadways were being considered as part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) strategic plan, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 provided for the inclusion of STRAHNET and STRAHNET Connectors into the National Highway System (NHS). Federal oversight will help ensure optimum maintenance levels for the NHS, thus assuring that the roads can support a military deployment. (Sources: FHWA <https://highways.dot.gov/> and STRAHNET Atlas)

TxDOT and the Department of Defense (DoD) have been coordinating the addition of 14 existing roadway locations to the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) as part of the DoD's efforts to improve connectivity between Fort Bliss and Fort Cavazos and their designated seaports of embarkation in Port Beaumont and Port Arthur.

CURRENT SITUATION

Among the 14 routes in the State to be added to the STRAHNET, one route is within the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) 8-county region boundary, which is the northeast portion of SH 99 from IH 45 N to IH 10 E (see attached map). This 51.5-mile SH 99 roadway is a tolled Principal Arterial. This corridor provides an alternative route to bypass Houston downtown area for DoD's defense movement.

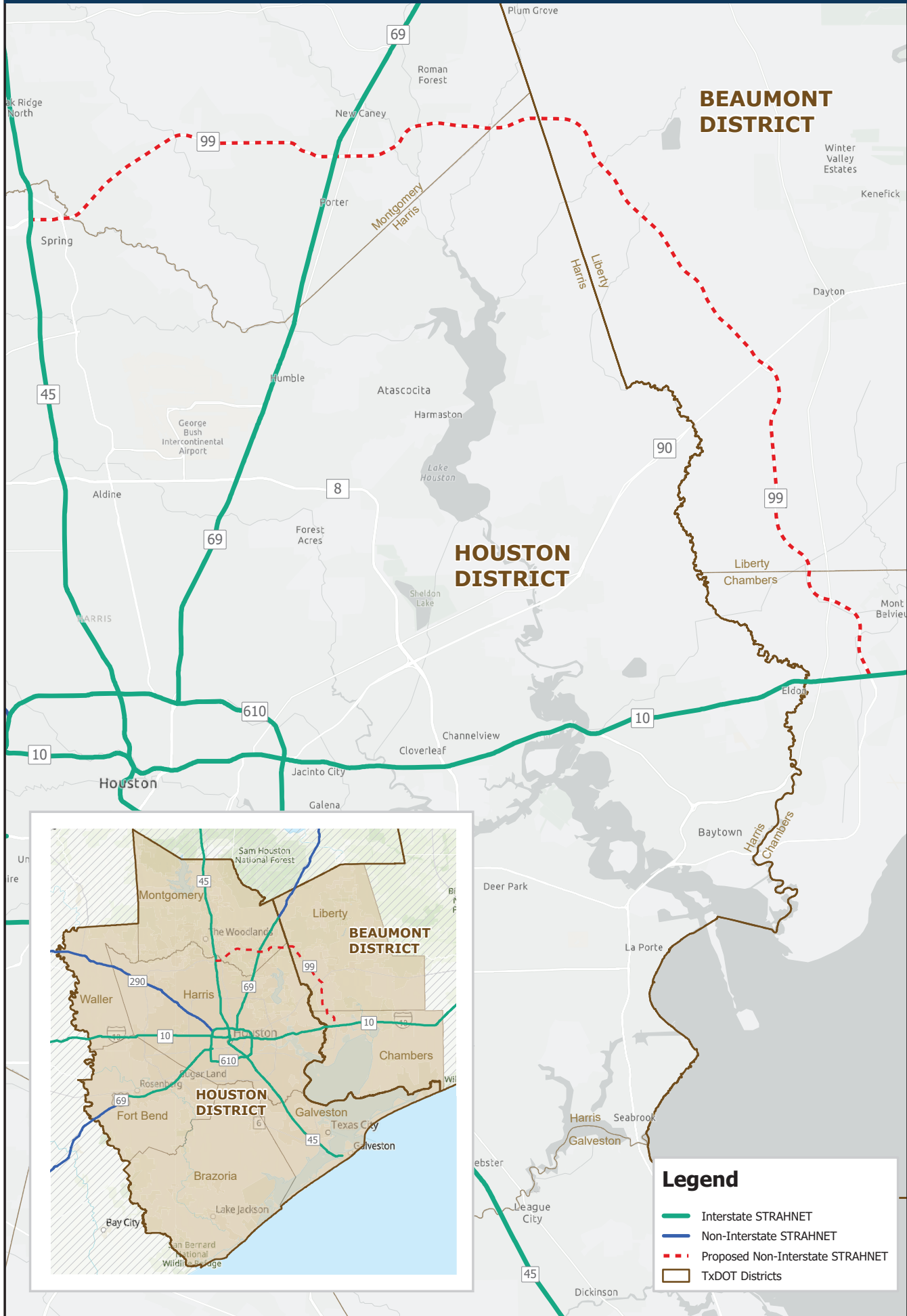
The proposed SH 99 crosses both TxDOT Houston District and TxDOT Beaumont District. This request is being submitted from both Districts together to the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) to concur and approve the SH 99 NE be added to the National Highway Network as a non-Interstate STRAHNET route. Concurrence is necessary for TxDOT to submit the recommendation to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for consideration. After their review, FHWA will forward the request to the DoD to officially have these routes added to the STRAHNET system.

The concurrence document is due November 19, 2024, for submission to FHWA by early December 2024. Staff has prepared Resolution 2024-36 to satisfy this request. The resolution is attached along with a listing of the roadway locations and a corresponding map of the Texas locations.

ACTION REQUESTED

Request recommendation for Transportation Policy Council approval.

Proposed SH 99 STRAHNET Location



BEAUMONT DISTRICT

HOUSTON DISTRICT

Legend

- Interstate STRAHNET
- Non-Interstate STRAHNET
- - - Proposed Non-Interstate STRAHNET
- TxDOT Districts





Resolution

NO. 2024-36

AUTHORIZING CONCURRENCE WITH THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S ADDITION OF EXISTING ROADWAY LOCATIONS TO THE STRATEGIC HIGHWAY NETWORK

WHEREAS, the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) is a network of highways which are important to the United States' strategic defense policy, and which provide defense access, continuity and emergency capabilities for defense purposes, and;

WHEREAS, the TxDOT and the Department of Defense (DoD) have been coordinating the addition of 17 existing roadway locations to STRAHNET as part of the DoD's efforts to improve connectivity between Fort Bliss and Fort Cavazos and their designated seaports of embarkation in Port Beaumont and Port Arthur, and;

WHEREAS, for the routes within an MPO boundary, TxDOT is requesting an approved document from the Transportation Policy Council acknowledging concurrence and approval of these locations, and;

WHEREAS, and whereas this document is necessary for TxDOT Projects and Programming Division to submit the recommendation to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for consideration.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL (TPC) FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA THAT CONCURRENCE IS GRANTED FOR THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S ADDITION OF THESE ROADWAY LOCATIONS TO THE STRATEGIC HIGHWAY NETWORK.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 15th day of November 2024, at a regularly called meeting of the Transportation Policy Council.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Hon. Justin Beckendorff, Chairman
Transportation Policy Council

Hon. Nancy Arnold, Secretary
Transportation Policy Council