

Purchase of Right of Way

The existing roadway was not constructed in the center of the right of way (ROW). TxDOT has more ROW on the north side of the freeway than on the south side. Along the south side of SH 358, additional right of way would be needed near the new or relocated ramps in order to accomplish the proposed safety and operational improvements. Options C and D would also require right of way on the north side in some locations east of Everhart. The amount of right of way and exact locations would depend upon the option that is selected. TxDOT is working with the City of Corpus Christi – Department of Development Services to identify any building setback, parking, signage, landscape, driveway, and utility issues that would be associated with the additional right of way needs.

Cost

The costs for construction, ROW purchase, and utility adjustments associated with the project have not been totally determined and will vary depending on the option. (Initially, the construction cost of the project was estimated at \$19+ million, but Options C and D would require additional funding.) There is \$5.5 million available in 2006 to begin the initial phase of the proposed project. The MPO programmed this \$5.5 million in the Metropolitan Mobility Funds for what was called the “ramp project” on SH 358. The MPO Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) has identified it as a Category 2 project, which means additional funds would be available for the later phases.

Timing

Construction on the proposed project would follow a phased schedule partly because of when funding would become available. TxDOT would use the \$5.5 million from the MPO to begin a section in the 2006-2007 timeframe. While the exact area has not been determined, the north side area from Carroll to Everhart is the most likely. Work in this section could begin quickly since no ROW is required. (The ROW purchase process requires additional time.) Then, the next phase could begin in 2008-2009. A third phase is possible depending on the option selected for the area from Staples eastward. TxDOT plans to do more work on the phasing and funding issues throughout the summer.

TxDOT is sensitive to the need of maintaining business access and minimizing disruption. TxDOT will look at a range of approaches to determine the potential benefits and issues. These approaches include night/weekend construction, minimizing the number of ramps closed at one time, working on one section at a time, and contractor incentives and disincentives to encourage contractors to finish a job on time or possibly even ahead of schedule.



How to Participate

TxDOT is going through this public outreach phase to gain your feedback on the proposed improvements to SPID. We invite you to look at the plans, read the provided information and ask the project team any questions that come to mind. You are encouraged to write your thoughts on the comment cards provided or email us at SPID@corpuschristi-mpo.org. For the latest information on this project, you can also log onto www.CorpusChristi-MPO.org and click on SPID Safety Improvement and Congestion Management Project. TxDOT has not made a decision on which plan/option to pursue. Based on your input and further evaluation, TxDOT will develop detailed drawings on a preferred plan. In the late summer or early fall, public comment will be sought on the proposed preferred plan, and at least one additional meeting will be held to allow for public review and comment.



SH 358

South Padre Island Drive

Safety Improvement and Congestion Management Project

Project Description

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is proposing improvements to four miles of State Highway (SH) 358, also known as South Padre Island Drive (SPID), extending from Kostoryz Road potentially to Nile Drive. Several approaches are being considered, such as reversing some ramps, moving some exit ramps back, reworking other ramps, and adding auxiliary lanes. The proposed project would improve safety, increase mobility, and address congestion along SPID, which carries more traffic than any other roadway in the Corpus Christi area. TxDOT recognizes that SPID is a main transportation connector to one of the area’s primary economic centers and wants input from businesses, the public and local officials early in the project planning.



Background & Project History

The current “diamond” ramp design along SPID was the standard when the corridor was constructed decades ago. A different approach (“x ramp” design) has become the modern standard in urban Texas. As the SPID and south side area has become more urbanized and developed, the roadway has become more congested. Over the years, operational improvements have been made to the frontage roads, retaining walls, and signalization, but safety problems and congestion have increased. The Crosstown Interchange and Extension projects will help divert some traffic southward on SH 286, but in seven to ten years, it is predicted that the current level of congestion will return.

TxDOT asked Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) to analyze accidents along the corridor, basic improvement approaches, and their benefits. In 2004, TTI reported their results to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Corpus Christi City Council. They noted that 8 of the top 11 accident sites in the city were along this corridor. The major accident sites were between the exit ramps and the intersections except in the Staples to Airline area, where a significant number of accidents were occurring near both ramps. TTI estimated the annual economic cost of these accidents at \$28.4 million. TTI recommended that the TxDOT make ramp changes. TxDOT engaged Turner Collie and Braden (TCB) and Olivarri & Associates to develop a project plan.

What This Project Could Mean

- Improved safety
- No more yield signs on frontage roads
- Less congestion on frontage roads and at intersections
- Less back-up of vehicles on mainlanes

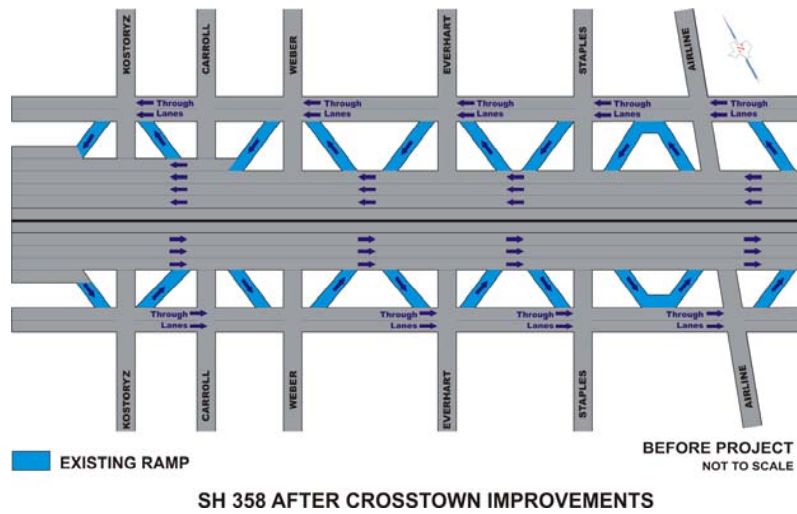
Project Goals

Improve Operations

Improve Safety

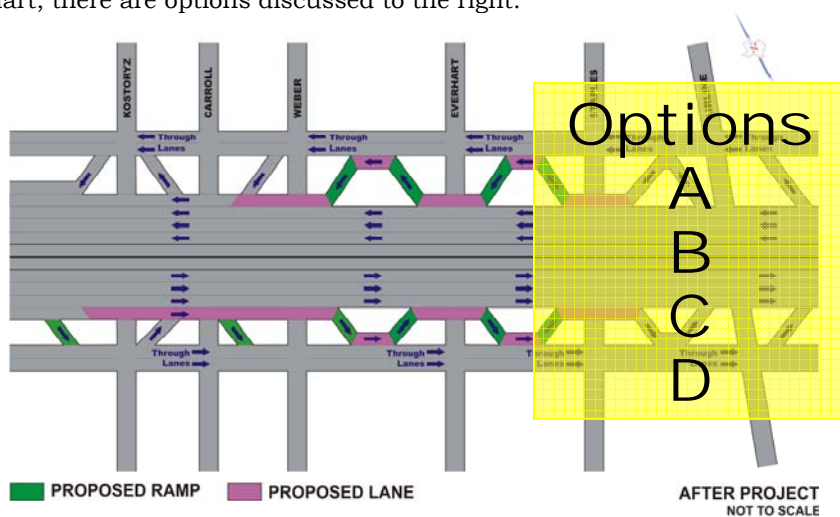
Address Congestion

Current Conditions



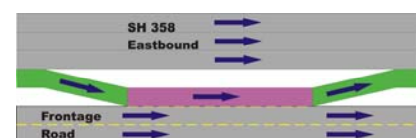
Proposed Improvements

The improvements from Kostoryz to east of Everhart would include changing ramps to an “x ramp configuration”, moving some exit ramps back, and reworking unchanged ramps to improve safety and address congestion. Right of way would need to be purchased on the south side in the areas near the relocated/new ramps. Business access should actually be improved, since exiting traffic would be able to access more businesses without going through an intersection. Thus, mobility would be improved at the intersections as well as on the frontage roads. The yield signs on the frontage road could be eliminated. There would be no change in the number of lanes at intersections. The project is designed to allow for an additional fourth mainlane in the future. From east of Everhart, there are options discussed to the right.



Concept of Added Auxiliary Lane Between Ramps

Auxiliary lanes would be added between the ramps on the main freeway as well as on the frontage roads. The graphic shows the concept of an auxiliary lane between the ramps on the frontage road. This lane will allow traffic to weave, thus improving safety and operations.



Options

The area from Staples eastward is more complicated because of the short distance between Staples and Airline. Several options have been developed for public comment. The chart below describes these options, some of the pros and cons of each, and the right of way (ROW) requirements.

PROPOSED RAMP (Green box) PROPOSED LANE (Purple box)

Options	(Not to Scale)	Description	Pros	Cons	ROW Needed
A Retain Ramps with Improvements		Both the exit and entrance ramps between Staples and Airline would remain open. Options A and B would be less costly than Options C and D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No major change in access to businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No improvement in safety No improvement of mobility on frontage roads Some issues unresolved in terms of adding fourth mainlane in the future from Staples eastward 	ROW at the ramps between Staples and Airline would still be needed to improve operations. Note that in this option, as well as the other three options, ROW would be needed on the south side from west of Kostoryz through Staples at the new or relocated ramps.
B Close Two Ramps		Between Staples and Airline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On south side – close entrance ramp On north side – close exit ramp Options A and B would be less costly than Options C and D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety would be improved Mobility on frontage road would improve with the elimination of weaving required by the two ramps in close proximity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease in mobility at intersections, which would increase delay Businesses in the immediate area would not be as accessible as in current conditions 	Same ROW requirements as Option A.
C Braided Ramps		Ramps would be braided with on-ramps over off-ramps in the Staples to Airline area. New off-ramp east of Everhart and new on-ramp west of Staples would have to be closer to intersections. Construction cost for Option C would be less than Option D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety would be improved Mobility on frontage road improved Mobility at intersections improved No major change in access to businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would require signals at the turnarounds between Staples and Airline 	Additional ROW would be required between Staples and Airline on the south side and on the north side. The amount of ROW needed could have a substantial effect on certain properties in the Staples to Airline area.
D Flyover with Braided Ramps		In addition to braiding of ramps with on-ramps over off-ramps, south side on-ramp and north side off-ramp would be flyover ramps with ramp traffic separated from mainlane traffic. The project would need to be extended to Nile and ramps from Airline to Nile redone in x-ramp configuration. This option would have the greatest construction cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety substantially improved from Kostoryz through Nile Mobility on frontage road improved Mobility at intersections improved No major change in access to businesses 		On the south side from Everhart east to Nile, ROW would be needed near relocated/new ramps and ROW would also be needed at the Airline intersection. On the north side, ROW would be needed near relocated/new ramps east of Everhart to Nile. ROW would also be needed at the Staples and Airline intersections.