



Phase One Public Comment Summary

The Galveston-Houston Mobility Corridor Alternative Analysis public involvement process is designed to receive input to guide the study and build consensus

- Open Houses to engage and receive input the public
- Stakeholder Committee to engage Corridor stakeholders and interest groups
- Advisory Committee to work closely with appropriate agencies

The study is conducted in three phases. Each phase includes a round of consensus building to inform the Alternative Analysis. Each round is comprised of an Advisory Committee meeting, three public open houses along the Corridor, and a Stakeholder Committee meeting to receive and share important information to guide the study. For more information about the comprehensive Public Involvement Plan [READ MORE](#).

Open Houses

Open Houses were held September 22, 23 and 24, 2009 in Galveston, League City and in the East End of Houston with a goal of presenting to the public and receiving comment on the three transit alternatives considered feasible solutions to congestion along the IH 45 Corridor between Galveston and Houston. Overall Round One Open Houses had excellent attendance

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|--------------------|-------------------------------|----|
| ▪ South Corridor | Galveston | 70 |
| ▪ Central Corridor | League City | 95 |
| ▪ North Corridor | Houston East End Ripley House | 40 |

The meeting room was set up with display describing each of the three alternatives being proposed for analysis (Express Bus, Bus Rapid Transit, Commuter Rail). A comment form was given to each attendee and flip charts were station of by each alternative display for citizens to write comments. The comment form had four open-ended questions and a request for a ranking of comparison criteria:

1. What needs of the Galveston-Houston corridor do you think should be addressed in this study?
2. Please look over the project goals listed on the newsletter, page 2. What is your opinion of these goals? What are your goals for this project?
3. What is your opinion of the three alternatives, Express Bus, Bus Rapid Transit, and Commuter Rail being studied to address the congestion on IH 45?
4. Are there other alternatives that should be studied to reduce congestion on IH 45?
5. The final question was a ranking of the importance of nine criteria for comparison of three alternatives with space to suggest remaining criteria.

Phase One Public Comment Summary

Open House Comment Form and flip chart comments were compiled and summarized along with project website and emailed comments for Phase One prior to October 12th. Ninety comment forms, 32 website submitted comments, and five individual emails are reflected in the summary. Public comments on the needs of the Galveston-Houston Mobility Corridor and feedback on the Project Goals included a wide range of issues. The top ten issues mentioned are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 – Summary of Public Comments

Corridor Needs & Project Goals	Total
Improve Mobility	55
Advance Economic Development	30
Reduce Congestion	30
Expand Operation Hours	15
Reduce Emissions	13
Provide Transfers	12
Assist Evacuation	12
Reduce Fuel Consumption	10
Access to Destinations	10
Provide Maximum Cost Benefit	10

- Improved Mobility comments included issues such as efficient moving of people from Point A to Point B, increased transportation options and making it possible to get around without a car, impact on east-west mobility and mobility of non-drivers.
- Economic development comments included issues such as access to better employment, tourism, alternative benefit to economy, and potential for transit-oriented development.
- Reduced Congestion comments included reduction of traffic, lost man-hours during commute times, and alternative to automobile traffic.
- Expanded Operation Hours comments included a desire to use transit to access jobs outside the peak commute hours of service identified as well as wanting transit for shopping and entertainment.
- Environmental impacts comments included reduced emissions, reduced fuel consumption to address oil shortages and fuel prices.
- Transfers Needed and Access to Destinations comments included requests for connectivity to Houston METRO, requests for local intermodal transit options at transit centers to get to destinations such as Galveston beaches, Houston sporting events, shopping districts and theater district and Texas Medical Center.
- Assist Evacuation comments included the need for evacuating large numbers of people, particularly those that do not drive, and University of Texas Medical Branch patients and returning evacuees home.
- Cost Benefit of alternatives included keeping the cost of the project down and cost effectiveness of each alternative.

Importance of Criteria for Alternative Comparison

Individuals were asked to evaluate each criterion as Very Important, Important or Not Important. In the summary analysis each response was weighted with a numerical value of three, two or one, respectively. Table 2 shows the weighted ranking for each criterion in order from highest to lowest.

Table 2 Summary of Public Ranking

Criteria for Alternative Comparison	Total
Reducing traffic congestion	233
Convenience	182
Travel time savings	168
Emergency evacuation	165
Environmental impacts	161
Impact on businesses and neighborhoods	156
Cost to build	151
New land use development	139
Traffic disruption during construction	124

Other Alternatives

Other alternatives to reduce congestion on IH 45 that the public suggested included elevated rail, high speed rail, toll roads, ferry transportation, rail built in the center of IH 45, elevated or expanded roadway, exclusive tracks, triple tracks, connecting with statewide rail transit, Hwy 6 Commuter Rail, and developing land use policies that increase ability to work closer to home.

Alternative Preference

Comments included counting intentional and clear statements of support or opposition to each alternative. The count was as follows:

	Support	Opposition
▪ Commuter Rail	99	3
▪ Bus Rapid Transit	4	12
▪ Express Bus	6	11

More detailed responses to comments will be developed and made available in early November. The second phase of the study and corresponding open houses are expected to address various mode and alignment alternatives. These modes and alternatives will be presented and ranked by the public according to how each meets the purpose, need, and identified criteria. The third phase will focus on the adoption of a Locally Preferred Alternative, or a single alternative, based on mobility needs and the study criteria. Other options that will be identified could include a single technology and alignment, station locations, park & ride locations, and size and identification of bus connectors.