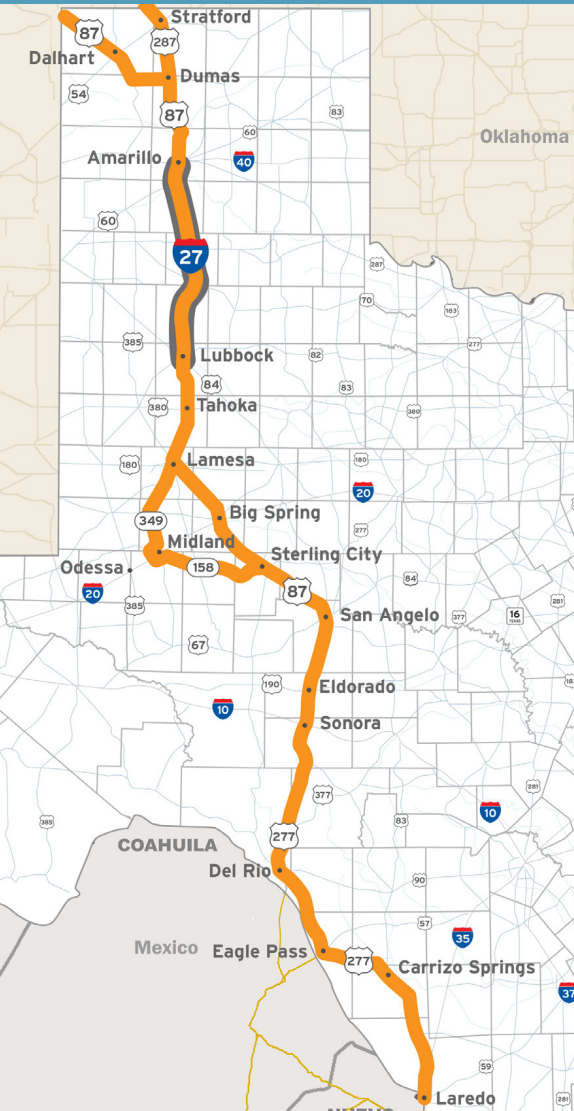


PORTS-to-PLAINS CORRIDOR INTERSTATE FEASIBILITY STUDY

(HOUSE BILL 1079)



ADVISORY COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OCTOBER 15, 2020

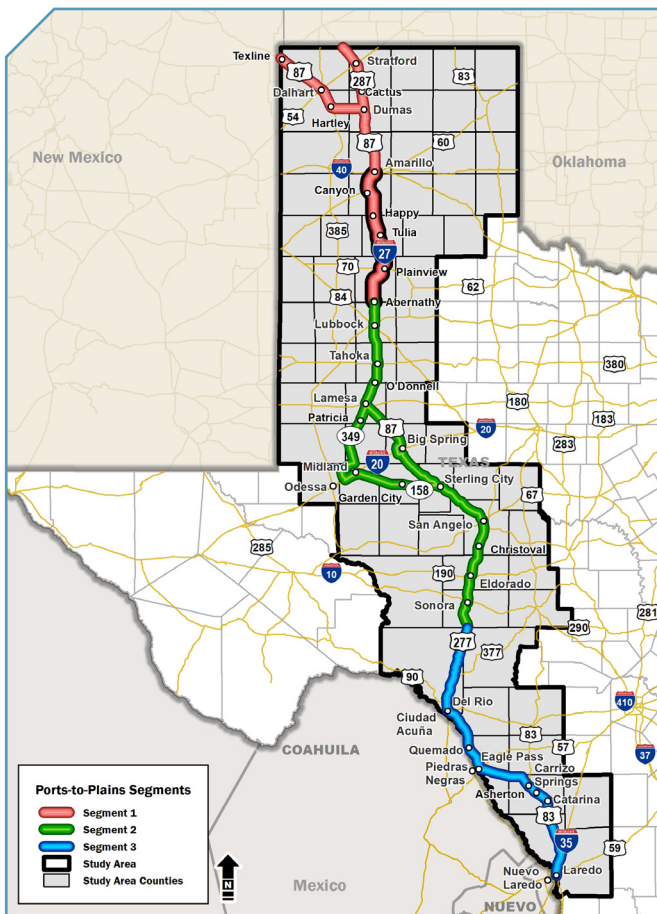




ADVISORY COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



PORTS-TO-PLAINS CORRIDOR INTERSTATE FEASIBILITY STUDY (HOUSE BILL 1079)



The Ports-to-Plains Corridor is an international, national and state significant transportation corridor that connects and integrates Texas' key economic engines of international trade, energy and agricultural production. The Corridor also plays a vital role in supporting the growing demographic and economic centers of South and West Texas. The Corridor functions as the only north-south corridor facilitating the movement of people and goods in South and West Texas and beyond. Upgrading the entire Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate will result in significant economic benefits and stimulate the economic prosperity of the region, the state of Texas and the nation.

Purpose of this Report

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor Advisory Committee Report provides the findings of the Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study and the recommendations and priorities of the committee for upgrading the Corridor to an interstate facility. The Advisory Committee Report meets the requirements outlined in House Bill (HB) 1079 signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott on June 10, 2019. Per HB 1079, TxDOT, in conjunction with the Ports-to-Plains Corridor Advisory Committee, established three Segment Committees to guide the Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study. The geographical segments for the Corridor are shown on the map.

Ports-to-Plains Corridor Overview



Traverses approximately 963 miles of primarily rural area in West and South Texas.



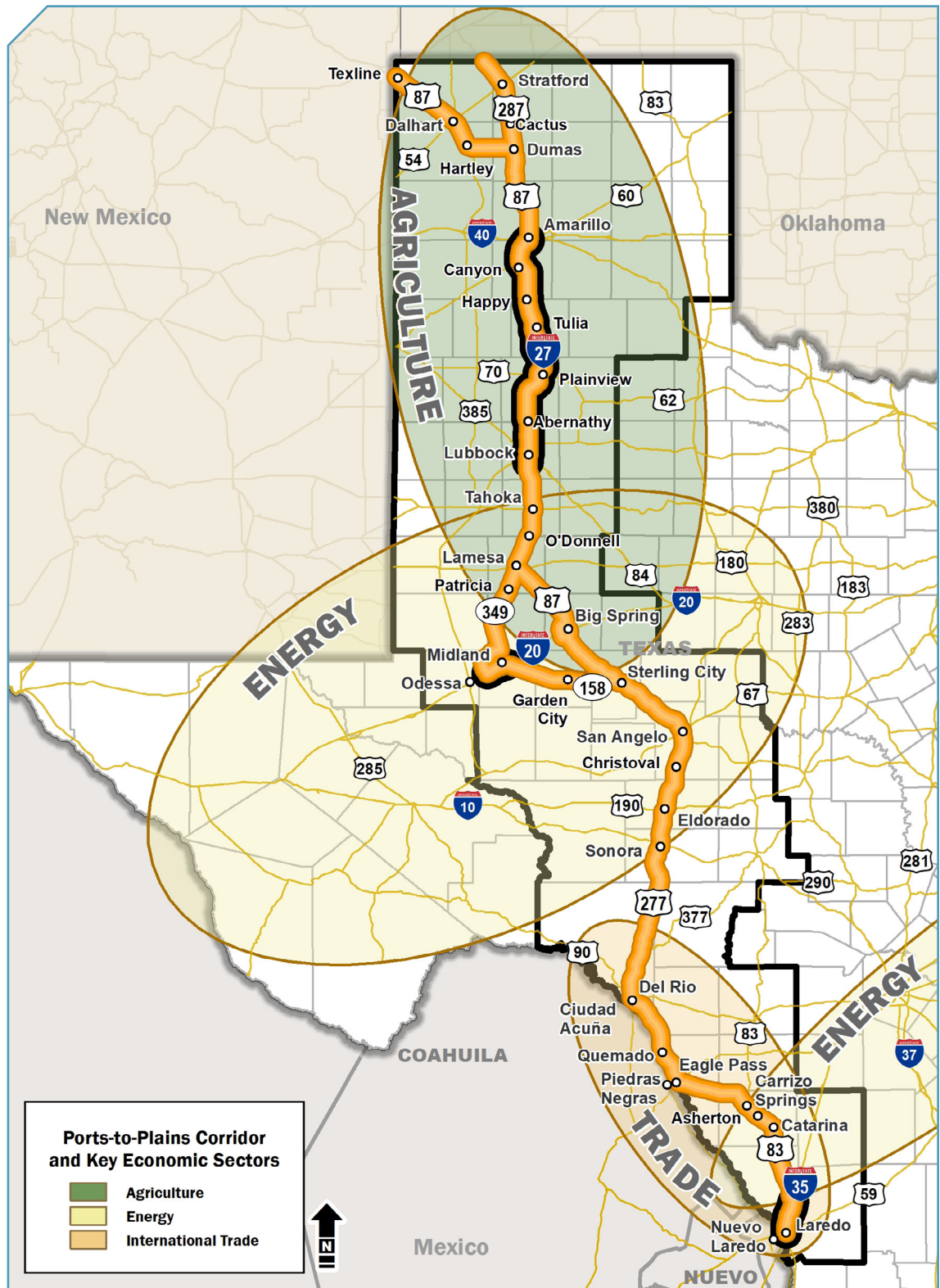
Designated by Congress as a High Priority Corridor on the National Highway System in 1998.



Spans 26 counties in Texas and is comprised of sections of Interstate 20 (I-20), Interstate 27 (I-27), Interstate 35 (I-35), US 83, US 87, US 277, US 287, State Highway 158, and State Highway 349.



Existing 124 miles of I-27 was authorized in 1968 and completed in 1992, more than 28 years ago.



Why is the Ports-to-Plains Corridor Important to Texas and the Nation?

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor is the only north-south transportation corridor that connects and integrates the nation's and Texas' most strategic economic engines of agriculture production, energy production and international trade.



Agriculture Production

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor supports the **largest agricultural production** in the country.

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor supports the production and export of agricultural products, generating approximately **\$11 billion** a year in agricultural product sales.¹

The production and export of quality agricultural products (crops, livestock, dairy, etc.) generates billions of dollars and **relies directly on highway networks for transport** of products to national and global markets through Texas seaports and border crossings.



Energy Production

The Corridor facilitates the transportation of supplies for development of energy products to refineries in the Texas Gulf and to border crossings and seaports for exports to global markets.

In April 2020, the **Permian Basin** accounted for over **39%** of U.S. crude oil production, up from slightly over 18 percent in 2013.²

In 2019, the **Permian Basin** contributed **\$9 billion** of the \$13.4 billion (67 percent) in the form of taxes in royalties to the state.³

In 2016, the **Eagle Ford Shale** contributed **\$3.1 billion** in state and local revenues.⁴

Wind is also a critical piece of the energy economy in South and West Texas. Much of that production comes from the counties along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor.



International Trade

The Corridor connects the state's and the nation's **strategic trade gateways of Laredo, Eagle Pass, and Del Rio** to destinations north, west and east. In 2019, these border crossings handled⁵

\$262 billion in trade

66% of Texas-Mexico cross-border trade

50% of U.S.-Mexico cross-border trade

¹United States Department of Agriculture, Census of Agriculture 2017.

²Calculated by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas from the U.S. Energy Information Agency, Drilling Productivity Report, July 13, 2020.

³Calculated by Permian Basin Petroleum Association Report Developed with the Texas Taxpayer and Research Association.

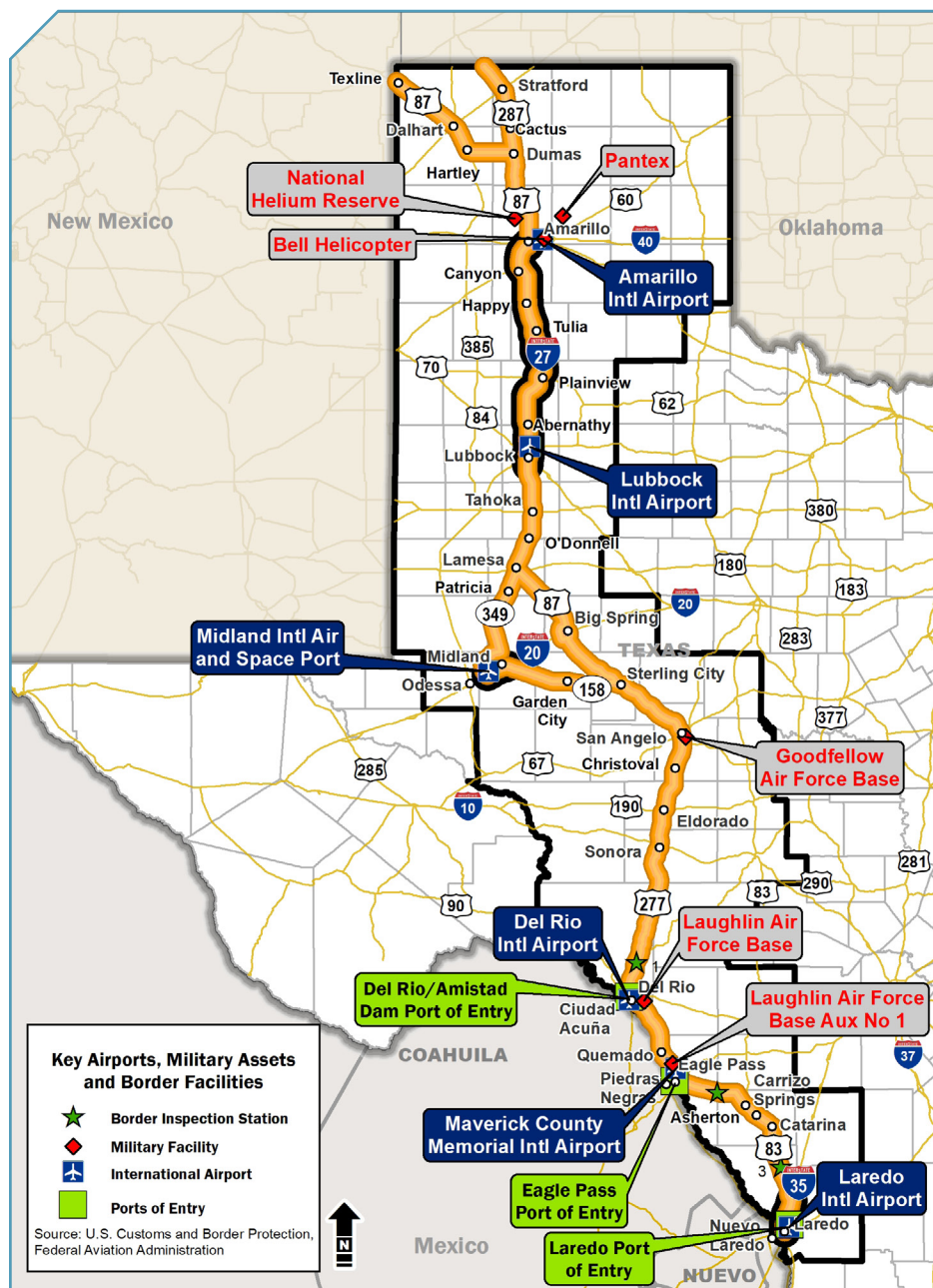
⁴Economic Impact of the Eagle Ford Shale - Business Opportunities and the New Normal, Scope of Study 2014-2016. Institute for Economic Development, Center for Community and Business Research, The University of Texas at San Antonio. June 2017.

⁵United States Customs and Border Patrol Truck Volumes by Bridge, 2009-2018 and Bureau of Transportation Statistics Transborder Freight Data 2006-2019.



National Defense and Security

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor plays a key role in the nation's defense, food, and energy security with several **military installations and border security and enforcement facilities** located along the Corridor.



Key National Defense and Security Assets Along the Corridor

Laughlin (Del Rio) Air Force Base

Conducts pilot training for fixed wing aircraft.

Goodfellow (San Angelo) Air Force Base

Conducts training installation educating airmen in fire emergency and intelligence professions.

Pantex (Northeast of Amarillo in Carson County)

United States Department of Energy's primary facility for the final assembly, dismantlement and maintenance of nuclear weapons.

Federal Helium Reserve

The United States Bureau of Land Management operates and maintains a helium storage reservoir, enrichment plant, and pipeline system near Amarillo (Cliffside Gas Field and Plant).

Bell Helicopter (Amarillo)

Military Aircraft Assembly and Delivery Center.

What are the Key Corridor Challenges?

Economic Development

- The existing 124 miles of I-27 was authorized in 1968 and completed in 1992, more than 28 years ago and prior to the North American Free Trade Agreement being ratified in 1994.
- The value of trade has changed since 1992. Trade through Laredo, Eagle Pass and Del Rio was \$25.1 billion in 1994. Today it is \$261.6 billion and is projected to be \$676 billion in 2050.
- Importing materials and equipment for extraction relies on the Ports-to-Plains Corridor for energy sector growth. The Corridor plays a critical role in the energy industry's ability to move energy products to market efficiently and stay competitive.
- The lack of an interstate in the Corridor will affect the ability to attract robust economic activity in the future.

Connectivity

- The nation's largest border crossing, its largest agricultural production, and the primary source of its energy independence are all located in this single part of Texas, which is not supported by an interstate facility.
- There are approximately 600 miles between I-35 in central Texas and I-25 in New Mexico; this is as far as a truck can drive in a full day's work, without a north-south interstate highway making it one of the longest gaps without interstate connectivity in the United States.
- There is no north-south interstate connecting Texas' agriculture and energy production to the three border crossings at Laredo, Eagle Pass and Del Rio.

Safety

- Between 2014 and 2018, there were 17,554 total crashes in the Corridor.
- The Corridor includes 350 miles of two-lane roadway and 95 miles of four-lane undivided roadway – these facilities have statewide crash rates that are 48% to 97% higher than statewide crash rates for interstate facilities.
- Crash rates for 227 miles of roadway segments within the Corridor, which includes 88 miles of two-lane facilities, exceed the respective statewide rate.

Access and Mobility

- The population of the Corridor in 1990 was 1.36 million. Today, it is 1.99 million and is projected to be 3.20 million in 2050. Most of this population is not within 25 miles of an interstate facility. San Angelo, without interstate access, is an example of an urbanized area that is farther than 25 miles from an interstate.
- Many of the 56 counties, cities, and communities along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor do not have access to an interstate, and this has created a barrier to economic opportunities and quality of life. Historically, access to an interstate has been credited with spurring national, state, regional, and local economic development growth.
- Eagle Pass and Del Rio are the only southern border crossings without direct access to an interstate highway, which has impacted their ability to attract cross-border related trade activities compared to Laredo.

Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study Charge, Study Goals, and Milestones

On June 10, 2019, Governor Greg Abbott signed HB 1079 into law, charging the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) with conducting an interstate feasibility study of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor, as defined by Section 225.069, Texas Transportation Code, from Laredo to the Oklahoma and New Mexico state lines in West Texas. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the feasibility of, and costs and logistical matters associated with improvements that create a continuous flow, four-lane divided highway that meets interstate standards to the extent possible, including improvements that extend I-27.

HB 1079 describes the composition of the Corridor Segment Committees, consisting of volunteers who may represent municipalities, counties, metropolitan planning organizations, ports, chambers of commerce, and economic development organizations along the segment.

The study considered eight goals, including an examination and determination of:



**Safety
and
Mobility**



**Traffic
congestion
relief**



**Freight
movement**



**Moving
energy
products
to market**



**Economic
impact**



**Interstate
upgrade
costs**



**Interstate
designation
areas**



**Potential
funding
sources**

August 29, 2019

1

**Texas
Transportation
Commission
Minute Order
Adopted**

June 30, 2020

2

**Segment Committee
Reports Submitted
to Advisory
Committee**

October 31, 2020

3

**Advisory
Committee Final
Recommendations
Submitted to
TxDOT**

January 1, 2021

4

**TxDOT Submits
Final Report to
Governor and
Legislature**

Milestones

Public Involvement and Stakeholder Engagement

The Advisory Committee

- Comprised of city mayors and county judges along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor.
- Guided the study and made recommendations to TxDOT by October 31, 2020 based on the Segment Committee reports.
- Met on a rotational basis in Lubbock and San Angelo. Between October 2019 and October 2020, met six times. Two meetings held in-person in Lubbock and San Angelo. Last four conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Segment Committees

- Members of three Segment Committees selected by Advisory Committee.
- Guided and provided input to the interstate feasibility study, developed recommendations, and addressed study goals.
- Each met five times during the study development to provide feedback on the analysis, findings, and recommendations.
- Final Reports submitted to the Advisory Committee on June 30, 2020.

Public Meetings

- Segment Committees held eight public meetings, including five in-person and three that were held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Received input on Corridor challenges, needs and findings of the analysis, and on the preliminary recommendations.
- Advisory Committee held two virtual public meetings to receive public input on their preliminary recommendations.



Advisory Committee Chair and Lubbock Mayor Dan Pope speaks on November 20, 2019



Advisory Committee Meeting on October 1, 2019 in Lubbock, Texas

Current and Future Conditions and Needs Assessment

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor Advisory Committee reviewed findings on current and forecasted conditions and analysis for the Corridor to determine future needs and challenges of the Corridor between 2020 and 2050. The future analysis presents the baseline condition, which includes the existing roadways in the Corridor, plus any currently planned and programmed projects by TxDOT or Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the Corridor. The baseline condition does not include upgrading the Corridor to an interstate.

What are the Population Trends in the Corridor?

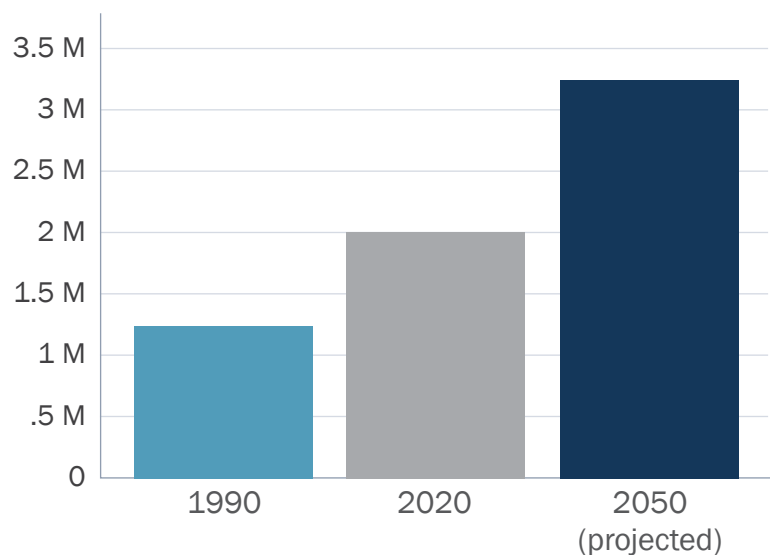


Population

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor experienced steady growth from 1990 to 2017, **growing from 1.36 million in 1990 to 1.81 million in 2017**, an increase of 33 percent.

From 2020 to 2050, the Corridor is **projected to grow 61 percent, adding over a million people**, from approximately 1.99 million in 2020 to 3.20 million in 2050.

Historical and Forecasted Population

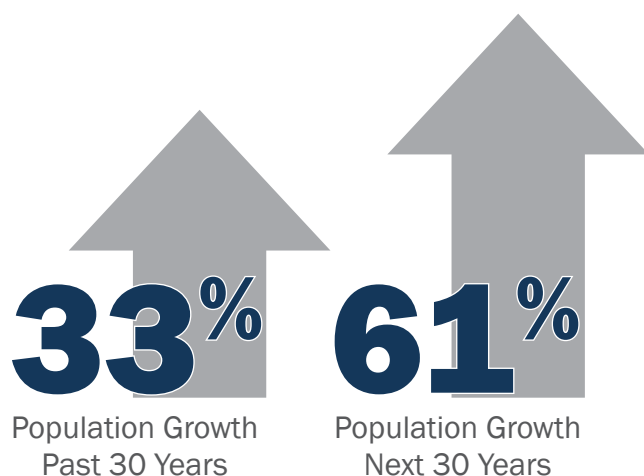


Source: U.S. Census (1990) and Texas Demographic Center (Projections Developed in 2018)



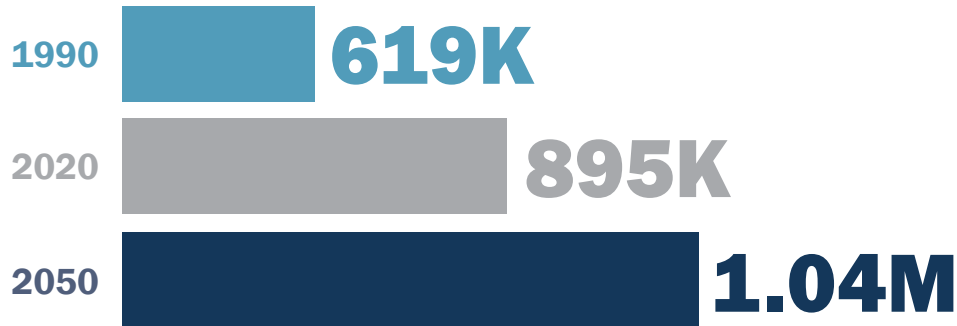
Andrews (352%) and Midland (206%) counties led the Corridor in projected population growth, potentially due to oil and gas continuing to play a prominent economic role in the Corridor.

Corridor Population Growth



What is the Current and Future Economic Outlook for the Corridor?

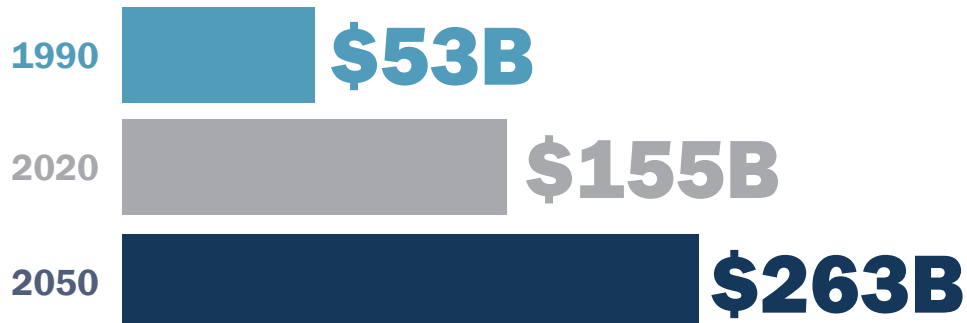
The economy of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor shows consistent growth.



Source: U.S. Census (1990) and Moody's Analytics (2020 and 2050 Projection Data)



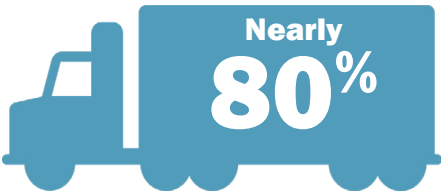
Source: U.S. Census (1990) and Moody's Analytics (2020 and 2050 Projection Data)



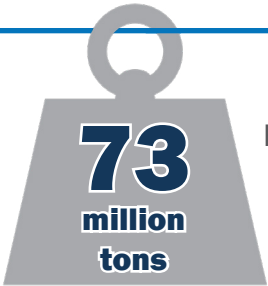
Source: Moody's Analytics (1990) and Moody's Analytics (2020 and 2050 Projection Data)

What is the Freight Flow and Tonnage in the Corridor?

Freight flow along the Corridor is generated by the **three international border crossings of Laredo, Eagle Pass and Del Rio**. The truck flows from these ports-of-entry reach all regions of the United States and into Canada. The lack of an interstate facility at Eagle Pass and Del Rio international border crossings limits their ability to attract business and be economically competitive.



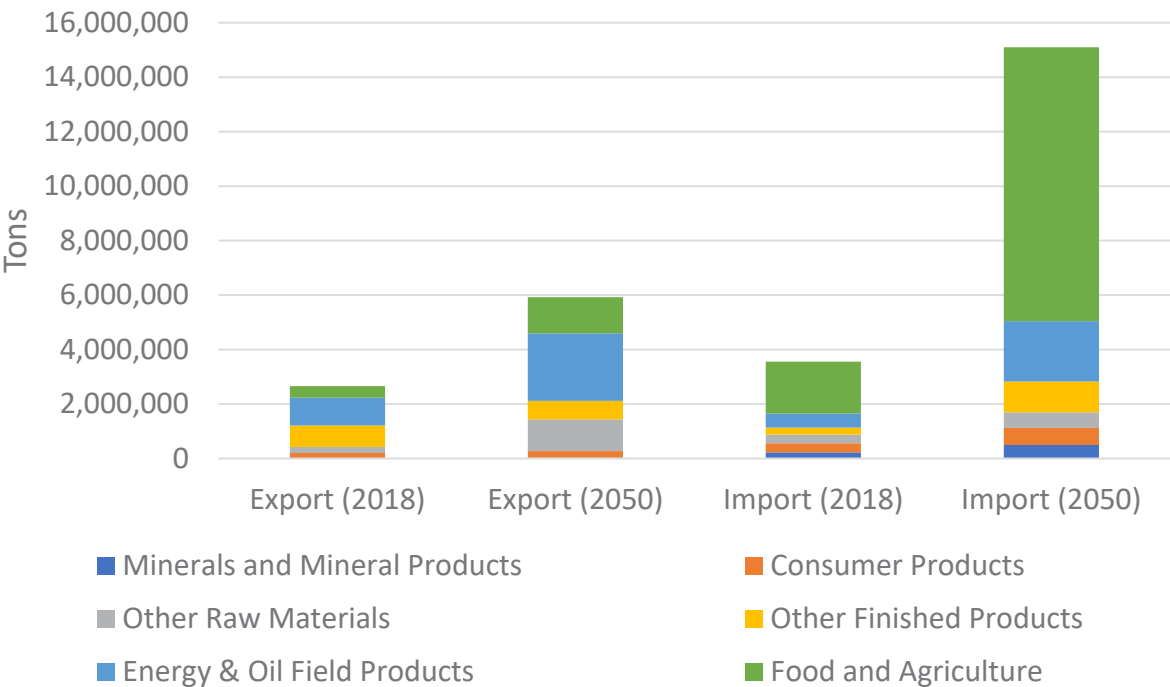
of trade moving across these border crossings is moved by trucks.



Freight volumes in the Ports-to-Plains Corridor are expected to **grow by 78 percent** between 2018 and 2050.

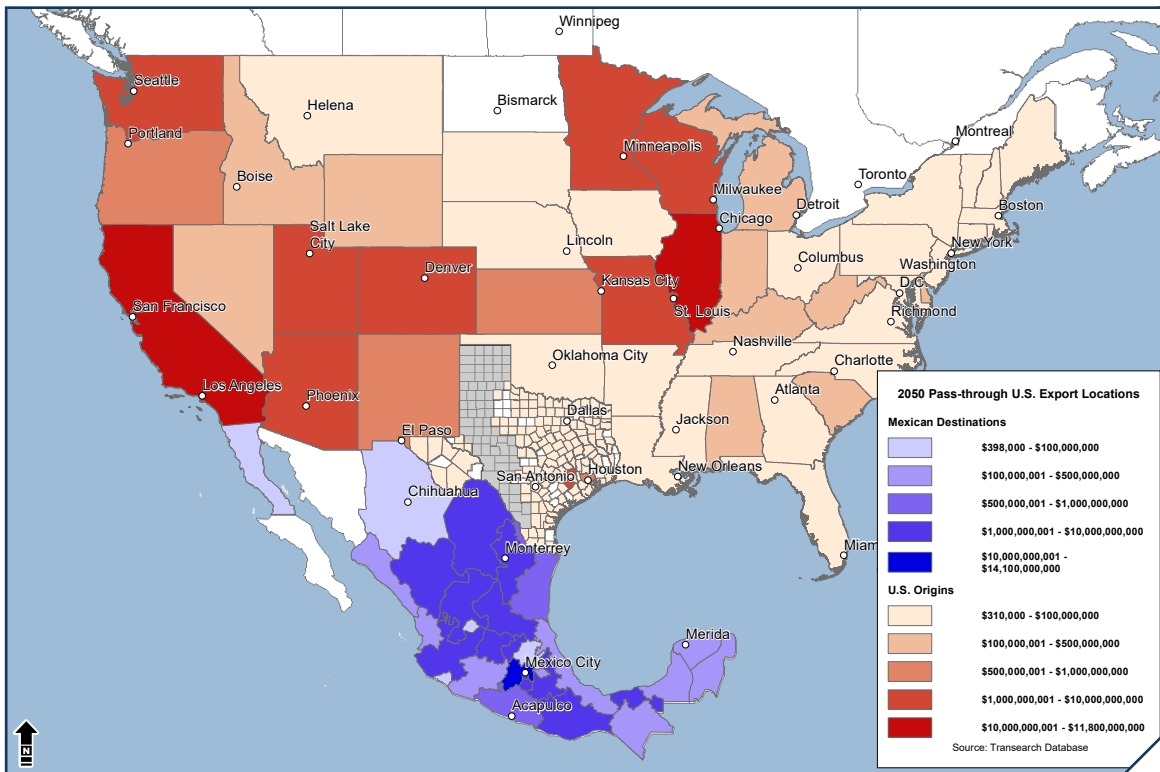
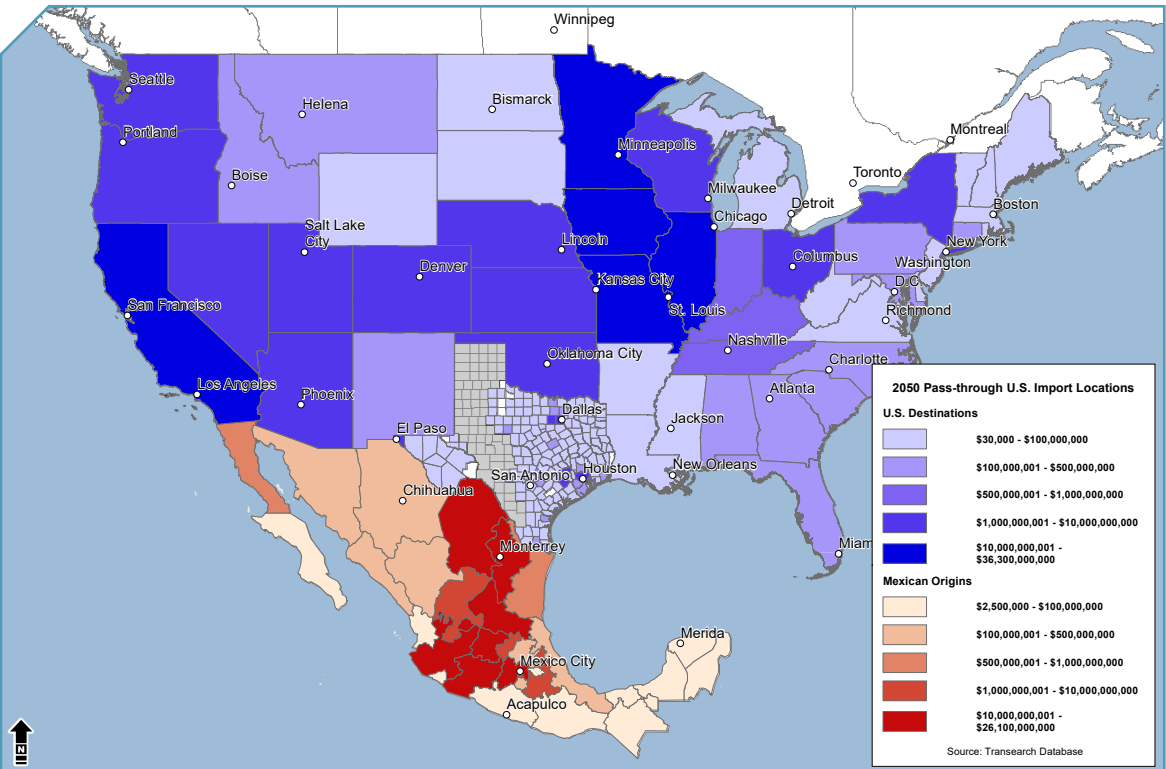
The total volume transported is **anticipated to reach 167 million tons** with the top locations generating new tonnage consisting of Laredo (Webb County), Midland/Odessa (Midland/Ector counties) and Lubbock (Lubbock County).

Commodity Export and Import Tonnage
(2018 and 2050)



Source: Transearch

\$138 billion worth of imports from Mexico will pass through the Ports-to-Plains Corridor in 2050, trucked to states other than Texas. California (\$36 billion) and Illinois (\$22 billion) are the two largest import beneficiaries. \$102 billion, or nearly three-quarters of the total imported value, will be bound to states west of the Mississippi River, with \$36 billion bound to states in the east.



\$53 billion worth of U.S. exports to Mexico will pass through the Ports-to-Plains Corridor in 2050, trucked from states other than Texas. California (\$12 billion) and Illinois (\$11 billion) are the two largest export beneficiaries. \$36 billion, or just over two-thirds of the total exported value, will come from states west of the Mississippi River, with \$17 billion coming from states in the east.

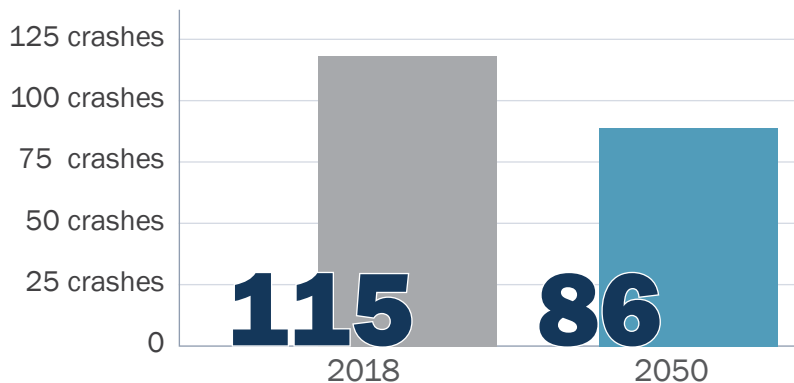
What are the Travel Times in the Corridor?*



Source: National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS)

What are the Safety Conditions in the Corridor?*

Average Crash Rate (2018 and 2050) (per 100 million vehicle miles traveled)



2014 - 2018 Crashes in the Corridor

- **17,554** total crashes
- **2,958** truck-related (17 percent)
- **242** fatal crashes (297 fatalities)

Source: TxDOT CRIS (Crash Records Information System)



Crash Rates: Two/Four-Lane Roadways & Interstate Facilities

The 963-mile Corridor includes **350 miles** of two-lane roadway and **95 miles** of four-lane undivided roadway.

These facilities have statewide crash rates that are **48% to 97% higher** than statewide crash rates for interstate facilities.

*The 2050 forecast is for the baseline, which includes the existing roadways in the Corridor plus any planned and programmed projects by TxDOT and the MPOs in the Corridor and does not include the interstate upgrade.

Corridor Interstate Feasibility Analysis and Findings

The baseline analysis assumes only currently planned and programmed projects are implemented along the Corridor by 2050.⁶

Baseline

Feasibility analysis

considered two options

Interstate Upgrade

The interstate upgrade analysis assumes improvements to provide a continuous-flow, fully access-controlled facility with a minimum of two lanes in each direction separated by a median within a typical 300- to 500-foot right-of-way.

EXTENDING I-27 IS ESSENTIAL TO:

- **Improve Connectivity, Safety, and Mobility**
- **Improve Travel Time and Reduce Travel Time Cost**
- **Improve Freight Movement**
- **Increase Access to Markets for Energy and Agricultural Products**
- **Alleviate Congestion and Improve Reliability**
- **Facilitate the Flow of Goods and International Trade**
- **Create Jobs and Economic Opportunities**
- **Increase and Expand the Local Tax Base and State Sales Tax Revenues**



Safety Findings

The Texas state crash rates indicate the interstate upgrade would have **15 to 25 percent fewer crashes** than a typical U.S. Highway and **35 percent fewer crashes** than a typical State Highway.

These findings indicate the interstate upgrade would lower crashes over the baseline.

Crash rates = the number of crashes per 100 million vehicle miles.

In 2050, the interstate upgrade estimated crash rate reduction Corridor-wide over the 2050 baseline

21%

Average annual economic benefit resulting from Corridor-wide crash reductions

\$450M

⁶As listed in TxDOT's FY 2020 Unified Transportation Program and the long-range transportation plans of the MPOs in the Corridor.



Traffic Congestion Relief Findings



The interstate upgrade would **result in relatively higher speeds** throughout the Ports-to-Plains Corridor when compared to the Corridor without the interstate.

The interstate will **reduce congestion on other facilities** in 2050 as compared to the baseline condition.

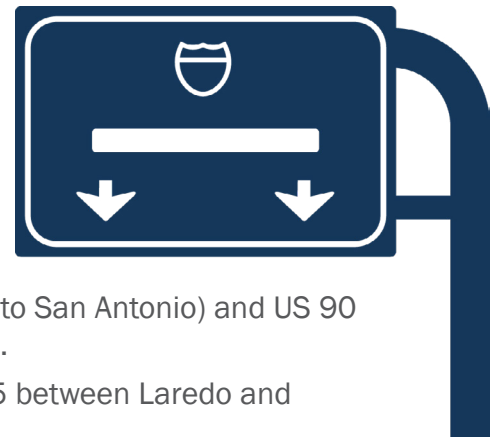
The interstate upgrade is anticipated to cause regional, statewide, national, and bi-national **traffic diversions from other corridors**.

The magnitude of diversion and growth is also a response from increases in foreign trade with industrial areas of Mexico, and international seaport trade that can more easily reach Gulf of Mexico ports due to the Panama Canal expansion.

Traffic would **divert from parallel and intersecting roadways** to take advantage of the improved travel time on the Ports-to-Plains Corridor.

Regional Diversions

- Trips from the US 57 (Eagle Pass to San Antonio) and US 90 (Del Rio to San Antonio) corridors.
- Trips from US 83, SH 55, and I-35 between Laredo and San Antonio.



Statewide Diversions

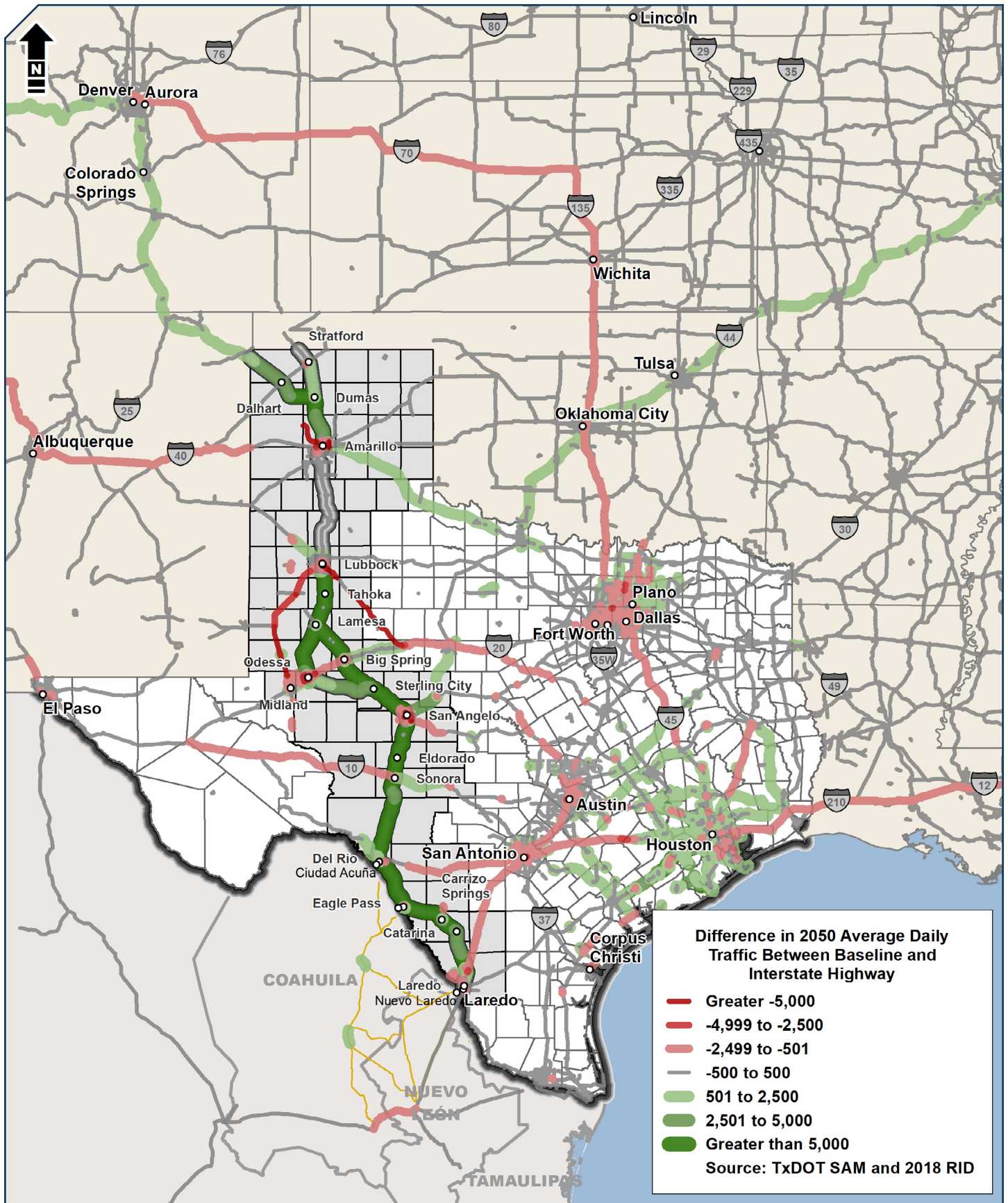
- Trips from US 385 south of Hartley, US 385 to US 62 between Odessa and Lubbock, and US 84 between Lubbock and I-20.
- Trips from I-35, Laredo to San Antonio.

National Diversions

- Trips from I-40, I-70, I-35, and I-10, and altering long-distance travel patterns between different regions of the United States and either Mexico or the Gulf of Mexico coast.
- Trips from the I-70/I-135/I-35 route (Denver to Dallas), favoring I-25 through New Mexico and connecting to US 87 in Texas.
- Trips from the Pacific Northwest across the Rockies toward Denver and southward to the Ports-to-Plains Corridor, with diversions from I-10 and I-40 to the west.
- Trips to I-44 from St. Louis, Missouri to Wichita Falls and continuing toward the Corridor, while diverting trips away from other east-west routes east of Texas, such as I-10.

Bi-National Diversions

- Trips between the Mexican states of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas south of Texas, the Rocky Mountain and Midwest states of New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri, and trips between the Gulf of Mexico coast toward the north Mountain and Pacific Northwest states.





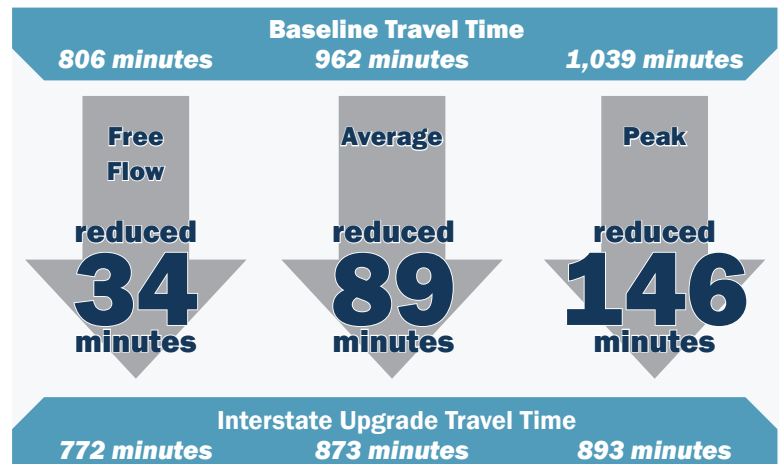
Mobility Findings

The interstate upgrade will provide a travel time benefit over the baseline due to **greater travel speed provided by full access control**.

The findings demonstrate the interstate upgrade would provide a travel time benefit over the existing facility.

Travel Time Savings = the amount of time saved due to upgrading the Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate.

The interstate upgrade would reduce Corridor travel time in 2050 over the baseline.

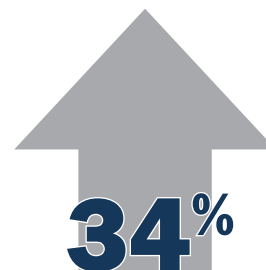


Freight Movement Findings

The interstate upgrade would **attract truck traffic from nearby parallel routes**, as well as national routes like I-10, I-35 from Laredo to San Antonio, and I-35 to I-70 from Dallas to Denver.

The interstate upgrade would also provide **improved access to international trade gateways** of Del Rio, Eagle Pass and Laredo.

Increase Corridor average daily truck traffic over 2050 baseline



Reduce average travel times across the Corridor



Energy and Agricultural Products to Market Findings

The **reduction in travel time, increased market access radius, and increase in route reliability** provided by the interstate upgrade will help the energy industry transport products to market.

The interstate upgrade would create a **fully access-controlled facility** for the entire Corridor with improved travel times and reliability for freight, including trucks transporting energy and agricultural products to market.

Provide a **safer and more reliable route for trucks** carrying energy and agricultural products to market when traveling through cities and small towns.

Determination of Areas Preferable and Suitable for Interstate Designation

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor is currently designated as a High Priority Corridor by a congressional act, but the route is not currently designated as interstate under a congressional act. The ways to obtain interstate designation include administrative and congressional paths.

Administrative Path

A State (or States) requests FHWA designation of a route as interstate by presenting a case for the Corridor to be designated as a logical addition to the Interstate System, coordinating with other States and with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), where appropriate, and making a commitment to complete the route to an interstate design level within 25 years and requests FHWA designation.

Congressional Path

The Corridor may be designated as a future part of the Interstate System by a congressional act.

The Segment Committee Reports analyzed the ways to obtain interstate designation. In their analysis, the Segment Committees concluded that although portions of the 963-mile Ports-to-Plains Corridor are already designated interstate (17 miles of I-35, 11 miles of I-20, and 124 miles of I-27), the remaining 811 miles of the Corridor are on U.S. and state highways.

These highways consist of generally two to four lanes, and have lower design speeds with smaller right-of-way widths that do not currently meet interstate standards or are suitable for interstate designation.

In their findings and recommendations to the Advisory Committee, the three Segment Committees concluded:

- TxDOT could submit a request to the FHWA for interstate designation in coordination with neighboring state agencies.
- The Advisory Committee could pursue a congressional act designating I-27.

Examination of Interstate Upgrade Costs

The estimated cost for upgrading the entire Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate facility is \$23.5 billion.

Of the 963 miles of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor, 811 miles are currently non-interstate.

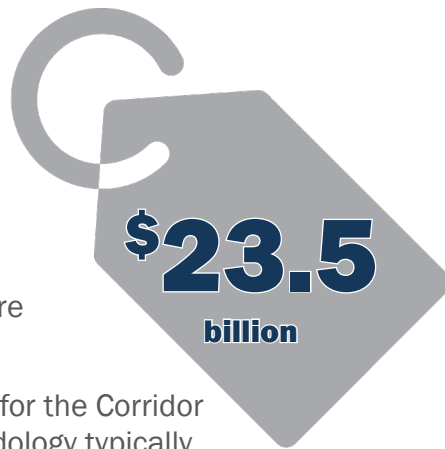
A planning level cost estimate for the Corridor was developed using a methodology typically used to develop costs during the Corridor feasibility stage.⁷

The methodology used planning-level software with available mapping data for the Corridor and assumptions developed in consultation with the TxDOT Laredo, Lubbock, Abilene, Odessa, San Angelo, and Amarillo Districts.

This cost estimate is preliminary for planning purposes only and may be updated based on more detailed right-of-way and design information during future stages of each project development along the Corridor.

The cost estimate was adjusted to account for planned and programmed projects and used 2020 dollars.

⁷Costs are preliminary for planning purposes only, subject to change. Costs are in 2020 dollars.



The planning-level cost estimates included these inputs and assumptions:

- A 75-mile per hour design speed and interstate standards for curves and grades.
- 2019 TxDOT District bid tabs to calculate prices for pavement, earthwork, and bridges for the TxDOT Laredo, Lubbock, Abilene, Odessa, San Angelo, and Amarillo Districts.
- Major utility relocations based on available mapping data, and minor utilities as a percentage of costs.
- Seeding, mulching, lighting, and traffic control as a percentage of costs based on similar projects.
- Frontage roads in all urban areas.
- Frontage roads for approximately 553 miles in rural areas.⁸
- Right-of-way costs as ten percent of the construction costs.
- Major utility relocation costs such as parallel pipelines, oil and gas wells, water wells, and parallel railroads.
- Full reconstruction of the Corridor.⁹

⁸The mileage was determined based in consultation with the TxDOT Districts on where frontage roads may be warranted in rural portions of the Corridor.

⁹Costs may be reduced if existing pavement can be used, contingent on the pavement condition and the ability to meet design speeds.



Economic Impact and Return on Investment

The interstate upgrade is essential to:

- **Improve connectivity, safety, and mobility**, including improving access to market for energy and agricultural products, and facilitating the efficient flow of goods and international trade.
- **Reduce travel time and costs** along the Corridor.
- **Create jobs**, new warehouses and distribution facilities, and other new businesses.
- **Expand the local tax base** (from the increase of employment and population as a result of the interstate upgrade).

Upgrading the Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate facility is **critically important to the economic prosperity and future growth** of the cities, counties and all communities along the Corridor, and of West and South Texas, the state, and the nation. The economic benefits described below would result from the interstate upgrade of the entire Corridor.



Ports-to-Plains Corridor Statewide Benefits

- **\$4.1 Billion** Total Annual Travel Cost Savings
- **22,110 Jobs** Total Increase in Employment
- **\$2.8 Billion** Total Annual Increase in GDP

Return on Investment

\$17.8B in GDP gains

The GDP gains are \$17.8B more than the upfront capital costs of \$23.5B, representing a return on investment of 76%.¹⁰

Benefit Cost Ratio

2.4¹¹



Create Permanent Jobs in the Corridor

- **+ 1,050** jobs in Food and Agriculture
- **+ 2,550** jobs in Warehousing and Distribution
- **+ 3,120** jobs in Energy
- **+10,990** jobs in other Industries
- **17,710** total jobs



Increase Average Annual GDP from the Interstate Upgrade in the Corridor

- **+\$80 million** in Food and Agriculture
- **+ \$450 million** in Warehousing and Distribution
- **+ \$400 million** in Energy
- **+\$1.27 billion** in Other Industries
- **\$2.2 billion** total



Average Annual Savings to Industries and Consumers

- **\$295 million** travel cost reduction in Food and Agriculture
- **\$365 million** in more direct Warehousing output
- **\$505 million** time and cost savings in Energy

These lower travel costs to transport goods and services will ultimately save consumers money as well.

Food and agriculture and energy/extraction are key industries in the Corridor in the TREDIS economic model. Warehousing and distribution was also a focus of the analysis since that industry is anticipated to be significantly impacted by the interstate upgrade.

¹⁰\$17.8B in GDP gains/\$23.5B in construction costs = 76%. The ROI calculation excludes operating and maintenance costs.

¹¹The cost-benefit ratio is calculated by dividing the total discounted benefits of \$66.6B by the total discounted capital and operations and maintenance costs of \$27.4B. Statewide economic benefits of the interstate upgrade accumulate to \$90.3B over 20 years of operations, which translates to \$66.6B when discounted using a 3% rate.

What are the Potential Funding Sources for an Interstate Upgrade?

Various potential funding sources would need to be explored from the local, state, and federal perspective to construct an interstate highway. The graphic below shows the sources of public funding. Potential private sources of funding include public-private partnerships and County Energy Transportation Reinvestment Zone opportunities.

Federal

- **Federal-Aid Highway Program**
Supports state highway systems
- **USDOT BUILD Grant Program**
Max award is \$25M. Projects should have significant local and/or regional impacts.
- **Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Grant Program**
Grant to rebuild aging infrastructure and may be used for up to 60% of project's eligible cost



Local

Metropolitan Planning Organizations

- Amarillo MPO
- Lubbock MPO
- San Angelo MPO
- Permian Basin MPO
- Laredo Webb County Area MPO



State of Texas

- **Proposition 1**
Tax-based to construct, maintain, or acquire ROW for public roadways
- **Proposition 7**
Tax-based to construct, maintain, or acquire ROW for public roadways; or repay bonds
- **State Infrastructure Bank**
At or below market rate loans for ROW acquisition, utility relocation, etc.
- **State Highway Fund**
Primary source of transportation funding for Texas
- **2019 Legislative Session**
SB 500 and HB 1 fund county roads in energy sectors. Grant process. Local match.



Advisory Committee's Project Recommendations

The Advisory Committee concurs with the Segment Committees to upgrade the entire Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate highway and **recommends twenty projects that would extend I-27 by upgrading 811 miles of the remaining non-interstate highway to an interstate standard.** The interstate upgrade projects identified would have to go through the project planning, development, and programming process prior to any construction to upgrade the Corridor to an interstate-level facility.

The Advisory Committee concurs with the Segment Committees and **recommends twenty-six relief route projects for cities along the Corridor.** The relief route projects are recommended around communities where upgrading the existing facility to interstate standards would not be feasible. The Advisory Committee concurs with the Segment #1 Committee's recommendation to make State Loop (SL) 335 in Amarillo a relief route for an interstate upgrade for Amarillo and to dually designate it as SL 335 and US 87 with the existing US 87 being re-designated by TxDOT as Business 87. The Committee supports the completion of the current San Angelo Northern Relief Route Study as a relief route for an interstate upgrade for San Angelo. The Committee also concurs with the Segment #3 Committee's recommendation on implementing relief route projects from Eagle Pass to Laredo as a single plan.

The Advisory Committee concurs with the Segment Committees and **recommends thirty-two safety and operational improvement projects** along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor. These projects compliment the interstate upgrade and are low-cost strategies to improve safety and operations along the existing Corridor. The types of safety and operational improvements are categorized into the following types of projects:

- Intersection improvements
- Grade separation projects
- Interchange projects
- Roadway improvements
- Border patrol check point improvements
- Overpass projects

Although the Advisory Committee's recommendations and implementation plan is not financially constrained, it serves as a blueprint for action that should be carried out through deliberate and concerted Corridor-wide project planning, development and programming to upgrade the Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate facility within the next 30 years.

Recommended Projects

20

Interstate Upgrade
Projects

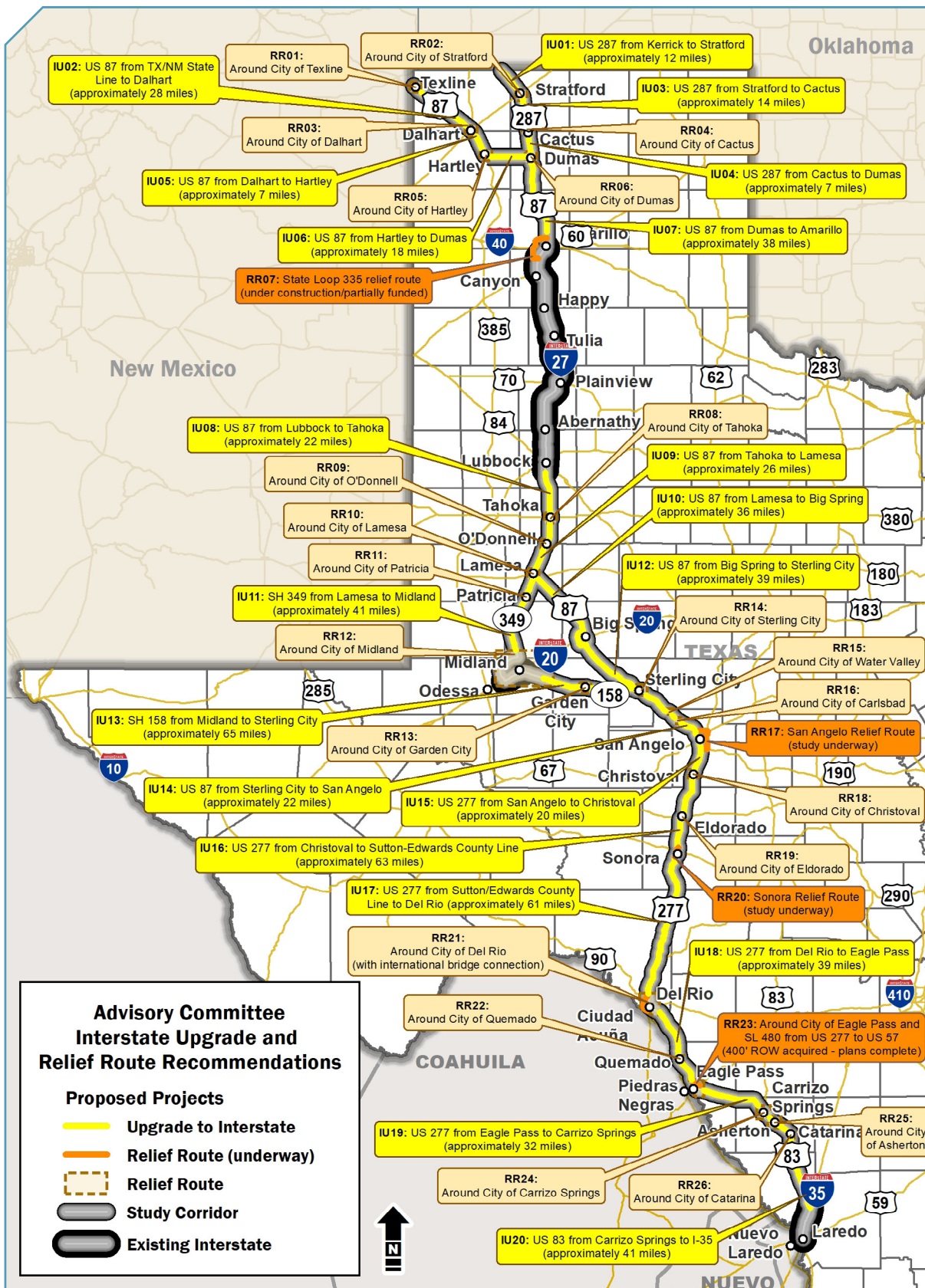
26

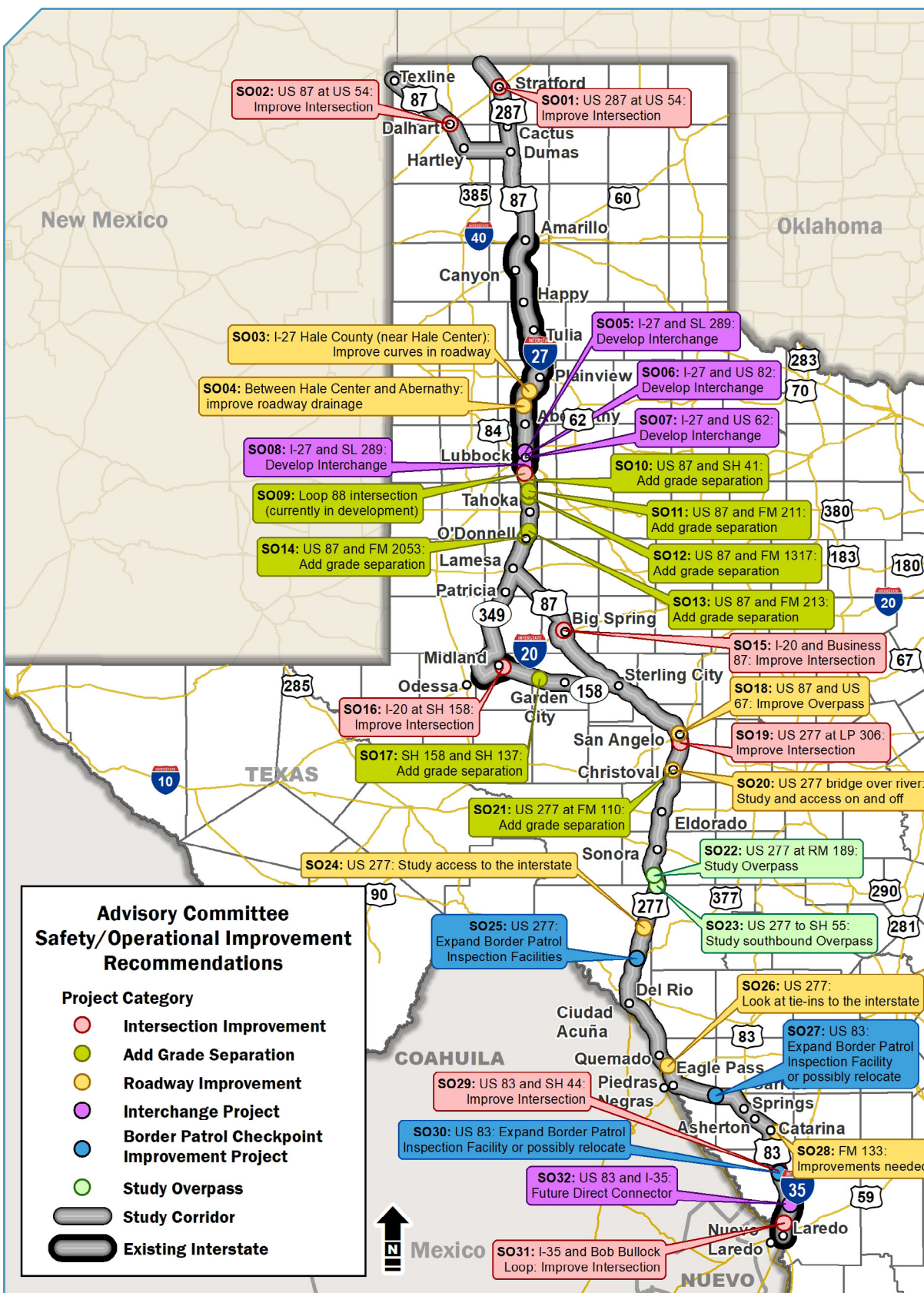
Relief Route Projects

32

Safety/Operational
Improvement Projects

Ports-to-Plains Corridor Advisory Committee





Advisory Committee’s Implementation Plan

The Advisory Committee outlines a practical and realistic implementation plan based on the recommendations of the three Segment Committees and input from the six TxDOT Districts along the Corridor.

The Advisory Committee understands that it will take TxDOT many years to complete these projects as they will go through several phases from planning, environmental analysis, right-of-way acquisition, design, engineering and construction.

Therefore, the Advisory Committee recommends a full upgrade of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate facility with **59 projects starting in the short-term (0-5 years), 13 mid-term (6-10 years), and 6 long-term (10+ years).**

The recommended projects are not prioritized. The implementation timeframes are the Advisory Committee’s recommendations for planning purposes. However, projects may be accelerated or decelerated based on funding opportunities and other resource allocations needed for implementation and construction.

		Interstate Upgrade Projects	Relief Route Projects	Safety / Operational Projects
59	Short-Term Projects	11	21	27
13	Mid-Term Projects	7	4	2
6	Long-Term Projects	2	1	3

Advisory Committee Policy Recommendations

Creation of an I-27 Corridor Advisory Committee

The Ports-to-Plains Advisory Committee recommends TxDOT establish an I-27 Corridor Advisory Committee. The Corridor Advisory Committee will be charged with providing advice and guidance to TxDOT on the implementation priorities of the interstate feasibility study project recommendations to upgrade the Corridor to an interstate facility and the interstate designation of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor in Texas. The Committee will also be responsible for engaging national, state, regional and local stakeholders on I-27 extension status and project development.

I-27 Corridor Implementation Strategy

The Advisory Committee recommends TxDOT develop a Ports-to-Plains Corridor improvements implementation strategy within six months of TxDOT's Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study Report submission to the Governor and State Legislature.

Detailed Project-Level Planning and Development Process

The Committee recommends TxDOT continues to further conduct detailed project-level planning and development to implement the project recommendations in this document. The activities should include:

- Developing detailed TxDOT District-level implementation plans outlining the project development process for each recommended project.
- Determining the specific location of items like frontage roads, bridges, and grade separations (over and underpasses) as

the planning and development process progresses.

- Planning for future connections and interchanges with the proposed interstate to other regional highways serving the region.

Complete Planned and Programmed Projects

The Advisory Committee recognized TxDOT has already begun the process of funding projects that will improve highways in the Ports-to-Plains Corridor by enhancing safety and mobility in the Corridor. The Advisory Committee endorses TxDOT's efforts to complete these projects already planned and programmed.

Proposal Requesting Interstate Designation

The Advisory Committee recommends TxDOT submit a proposal requesting designation of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor as a future interstate by FHWA that includes developing agreements with the New Mexico Department of Transportation, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, and Colorado Department of Transportation committing to the construction of the Corridor to interstate standards within 25 years that includes extending:

- US 287 for 190 miles through Oklahoma and Colorado, terminating at I-70 in Limon, Colorado, and
- US 87 for 90 miles through New Mexico, terminating at I-25 in Raton, New Mexico

Environmental Review and Public Input

The Advisory Committee recommends construction of any relief route undergo an extensive environmental process and require public input and comment.

Importance of Community Support

The Advisory Committee recognizes the importance of community support and has included a resolution supporting future interstate designation adopted by 72 communities, counties, organizations, and businesses along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor.

Advisory Committee Members



Dan Pope

Mayor, Committee Chair

City of Lubbock



Stephen H. Smith

Judge, Committee Vice-Chair

Sutton County

Ginger Nelson
Mayor
City of Amarillo

Jared Miller*
City Manager
City of Amarillo

Shannon Thomason
Mayor
City of Big Spring

Wayne Seiple
Mayor
City of Carrizo Springs

Phillip Hass
Mayor
City of Dalhart

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Mayor
City of Del Rio

Bob Brinkmann
Mayor
City of Dumas

Luis Sifuentes
Mayor
City of Eagle Pass

George Arispe
Mayor
City of Eldorado

Josh Stevens
Mayor
City of Lamesa

Pete Saenz
Mayor
City of Laredo

Patrick Payton
Mayor
City of Midland

David Turner
Mayor
City of Odessa

Brenda Gunter
Mayor
City of San Angelo

Wanda Shurley
Mayor
City of Sonora

Lane Horwood
Mayor
Sterling City

Ricky Reed
Mayor
City of Stratford

John Baker
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Hal Spain
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Coke County

Wesley Ritchey
Judge
Dallam County

Foy O'Brien
Judge
Dawson County

Francisco G. Ponce
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Dimmit County

Souli Asa Shanklin
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Edwards County

Kim Halfmann
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David B. Mull
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Hale County

Ronnie Gordon
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Hartley County

Kathryn Wiseman
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Howard County

James Tullis Shahan
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Curtis Parrish
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Mike Braddock
Judge
Lynn County

Bryan Cox
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Martin County

David R. Saucedo
Judge
Maverick County

Terry Johnson
Judge
Midland County

Johnnie "Rowdy" Rhoades
Judge
Moore County

Nancy Tanner
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Potter County

Ernie Houdashell
Judge
Randall County

Charlie Bradley
Judge
Schleicher County

Terri Beth Carter
Judge
Sherman County

Deborah Horwood
Judge
Sterling County

Harold Keeter
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Swisher County

Steve Floyd
Judge
Tom Green County

Lewis G. Owens Jr.
Judge
Val Verde County

Tano E. Tijerina
Judge
Webb County

*Jared Miller served as a designee for Ginger Nelson.

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