

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **First New Segment of I-27 Approved**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Texas Transportation Commission approved the expansion of the first new segment of Interstate 27 (I-27), marking a significant milestone in the development of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor. FHWA Administrator Shailen P. Bhatt approved the 4.2-mile addition between Lubbock and Lamesa as part of the existing 124 miles of I-27 in a letter early September 2024. Marc Williams, Executive Director of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).The

The letter stated, “We received the request from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to add a 4.2-mile segment from the existing terminus in Lubbock, Texas, to the new limits of U.S. Highway 87 access control located 0.1 mile north of County Road 7500, south of Lubbock. This segment is part of the High Priority Corridor 38 (Ports-to-Plains Corridor) that is a designated future part of the Interstate System by Section 1105(e)(5)(A) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, as amended.”

Upon approval, TxDOT moved forward with a Minute Order for consideration by the Texas Transportation Commission at the September 26, 2024, meeting. The Commission found that the designation would enhance traffic flow, improve public safety, and ensure continuity in the state highway system.

The new 4.2-mile segment of I-27 will run concurrently with U.S. Highway 87 from the current I-27 terminus in Lubbock to 0.1 mile north of County Road 7500. “This is a day the Ports-to-Plains Alliance has long awaited,” said Lauren Garduno, President and CEO of the Ports-to-Plains Alliance. “Thanks to the collaborative efforts of TxDOT, the Texas State Legislature, and Congress, we have reached this important milestone.”

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study, published in 2020, recommended the full upgrade of the corridor to interstate standards, and outlined the economic benefits. In 2022, President Biden signed the FY 2022 Omnibus Appropriations bill, designating the Ports-to-Plains Corridor in Texas and New Mexico as a future interstate. Earlier in 2023, Congress passed the I-27 Numbering Act, officially designating I-27 for future segments.

The next steps include an upcoming event for the installation of new I-27 signage and the continued execution of the I-27 System in Texas Implementation Plan, published in July 2024. The plan outlines short-term, mid-term, and long-term projects, including thirteen future interstate sections and seventeen city location studies.

### **Ports-to-Plains Alliance**

Ports-to-Plains is a grassroots alliance of over 200 communities and businesses, including alliance partners Heartland Expressway and Theodore Roosevelt Expressway, whose mission is to advocate for a robust international transportation infrastructure to promote economic security and prosperity throughout North America's energy and agricultural heartland including Mexico to Canada. Additional information on the Ports-to-Plains Alliance is available at <http://www.portstoplains.com/>.

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