FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lower Transportation Costs Could Generate Lasting Growth Across the Ports-to-Plains Region

REMI study projects $15.77 billion in additional annual GDP in 2080 across nine states from improved corridor mobility

The economic contribution of Future I-27 and the broader Ports-to-Plains Interstate corridor could continue long after construction crews finish their work. An October 2026 REMI Consulting report projects that lower transportation costs and improved access could support lasting increases in production, investment, employment, and household spending across nine states.

The analysis estimates $15.77 billion in additional annual gross domestic product, $36.67 billion in additional annual economic output, and 59,057 additional jobs in 2080 from improved mobility. These findings cover Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming.

Across the 2055–2080 mobility period, the study projects $644.33 billion in cumulative additional economic output. That figure represents business production and sales accumulated over the period, rather than an annual impact or a measure of net financial return.

How transportation savings move through the economy

Transportation is part of the cost of doing business. Moving materials to a manufacturer, delivering agricultural products to a processor, or shipping finished goods to customers all require time and resources. Reducing those costs can strengthen a business's ability to compete and expand.

The REMI research team explains this process through the report's transportation-cost framework: lower input and delivery costs improve business conditions and support production. As businesses respond, their investment, purchases from suppliers, and demand for workers carry the effects into other industries. Additional household income then supports spending on goods and services throughout the regional economy.

The report was prepared by Principal Investigator Billy Leung, Project Manager Sean McCarthy, and Analyst Sea Kay Leung. Their analysis connects transportation savings with broader economic activity, showing how improved highway access can influence businesses and communities beyond the freight sector.

Benefits extend beyond transportation businesses

The study finds that 90.7% of the net additional employment projected for 2080 occurs outside transportation and warehousing.

Manufacturing, health care, retail, accommodation and food services, professional services, and other industries participate in the economic response. Some businesses benefit through lower shipping and production costs; others respond to increased business purchases and household spending.

All nine states record positive output and employment effects in 2080. The findings illustrate how improved corridor connections could support both industries serving national and international markets and businesses meeting everyday community needs.

Construction and mobility produce different economic effects

Construction generates economic activity through spending on labor, materials, equipment, engineering, and related services during project delivery.

The mobility findings describe a separate effect: the continuing contribution of lower transportation costs and improved access once corridor improvements are available for use. The $15.77 billion annual GDP estimate for 2080 and $644.33 billion cumulative output estimate for 2055–2080 are mobility impacts only. They do not include the report's separate construction impacts.

This distinction matters when evaluating the corridor's economic potential. Construction supports activity during development, while improved transportation performance provides a basis for continuing business growth.

Delivering the connections behind the projections

Realizing the modeled gains depends on delivering and maintaining the transportation improvements that produce the assumed cost savings.

The report recommends evaluating missing links and bottlenecks according to their effects on complete trips between businesses, suppliers, and markets. It also emphasizes coordinating projects across state boundaries and aligning corridor development with local road access, utilities, industrial-site readiness, and workforce availability.

For the Ports-to-Plains Alliance, the findings reinforce the importance of advancing a connected corridor that helps rural businesses reach larger markets and strengthens transportation connections across America's Heartland.

This release is part of the Alliance's series examining the corridor's economic potential. Individual releases will highlight findings for each of the nine states.

All monetary figures are expressed in constant 2025 dollars. Results are modeled estimates based on the study's assumptions. Annual employment represents additional jobs in the stated year; cumulative output combines economic activity across the full reporting period.

About the study

I_83and.Ports_to_Plains.Corridor.Economic.Impact, prepared by REMI Consulting in October 2026, examines a 2,049-mile corridor across nine states and presents construction and ongoing mobility impacts separately.

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