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Ports-to-Plains Study Finds Economic Benefits Across Manufacturing, Health Care, Retail, and Business Services

REMI projects that 90.7% of net additional employment from improved corridor mobility in 2080 would be outside transportation and warehousing

Improved highway connections along Future I-27 and the broader Ports-to-Plains corridor could support jobs in manufacturing, health care, retail, and business services across nine states, according to an October 2026 study by REMI Consulting. The findings show how lower transportation costs can benefit businesses that move goods and how those gains can reach the local businesses that serve workers and their families.

REMI projects that improved mobility could support 59,057 additional jobs across the nine-state region in 2080. Of that net employment gain, 90.7% is projected to occur outside transportation and warehousing. These estimates reflect the ongoing effects of improved mobility after corridor improvements are in use. The study evaluates employment supported by construction spending separately.

How the benefits reach different industries

Lower shipping costs can help manufacturers bring in materials and deliver finished products to more customers. When businesses expand production, they may buy more from suppliers, hire more workers, and increase their use of professional and technical services. As household income rises, spending on goods and services can support additional employment in retail, health care, restaurants, and lodging.

The mix of projected jobs varies by state. In Texas, the study projects 3,143 additional manufacturing jobs and 3,612 additional transportation and warehousing jobs in 2080. In Colorado, it projects 1,613 additional jobs in health care and social assistance. In Nebraska, it projects 278 additional jobs in professional, scientific, and technical services. Each figure reflects the modeled impact of improved mobility in 2080.

What this means for corridor communities

For rural communities, better highway connections can help existing businesses reach more suppliers and customers. Local road access, available industrial sites, utilities, and a trained workforce can help communities turn those connections into opportunities for business expansion and investment.

This is the fourth release in the Ports-to-Plains Alliance's economic impact series. Individual state releases will examine findings for Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming.

About the study

I_8❸and.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.

Media contact:
Joe Kiely
Vice President of Operations
Ports-to-Plains Alliance
719-740-2240
joe.kiely@portstoplains.com