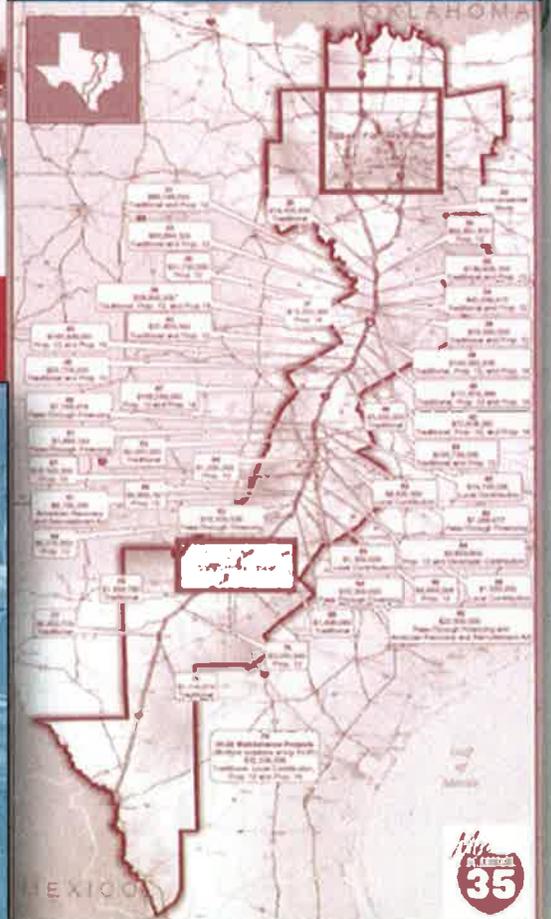


TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Trade Transportation Activities Report-2012



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Introduction

The Texas transportation system plays a critical role in the economic and social well-being of all Texans. It provides the basic infrastructure that supports our economy and quality of life. Our roads, rail, airports, and transit move people to and from work and school; move goods to and from Texas' manufacturers, distributors, businesses, and consumers; and move freight through Texas to destinations across the globe. Travel demand for people and goods is growing while the purchasing power of our fuel tax revenues is declining. These factors are likely to continue even as our transportation needs grow.

Due to the ever-increasing effects of expanded international trade and its impact on the economy, the transportation infrastructure, and the environment, the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT's) involvement in international activities continues to grow. Texas is the largest exporting state in the United States with total exports of \$251 billion in 2011. Mexico is by far Texas' largest trading partner with Texas exporting \$139 billion and importing \$174 billion in 2011. Hundreds of billions of dollars worth of additional exports and imports from other parts of the U.S. travel through Texas. Canada ranks as Texas' distant second largest trading partner. In addition, the North American Free Trade Agreement accelerates and expands the range and number of TxDOT's bi-national and multinational connections.

TxDOT's International Relations Office (IRO) supports efforts to improve transportation infrastructure along the border and internationally by means of facilitating coordinated planning and informational exchanges with various countries. It provides liaison and support to TxDOT district offices and divisions, and to other governmental entities, such as the Governor's Office and the Office of the Secretary of State. The IRO serves as TxDOT's representative on international committees and is responsible for compiling and reporting data related to TxDOT's international activities.

The large volume of commercial trade that crosses the Texas-Mexico border heightens the importance of the roles of the El Paso, Laredo, and Pharr Districts. These districts have long cooperated with transportation officials in neighboring Mexican states and they continue working closely with their counterparts on the border. The three border district engineers and other division directors are actively involved in many border-related projects. The IRO is working closely with the border districts, our Mexican counterparts, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on studies as part of the U.S.-Mexico Joint Working Committee's (JWC)

Work Plan. Border Wait Time Measurement studies by TxDOT and FHWA are currently underway in El Paso, Laredo, and Pharr using radio frequency identification technology to measure travel and wait times of commercial vehicles crossing the border. This project was a recommendation from the Border Trade Advisory Committee to incorporate technology, and the Cross-Border Infrastructure Report in 2006. Additionally, under the auspices of the JWC, TxDOT is developing bi-national Regional Border Master Plans in the Pharr, Laredo, and El Paso districts to coordinate planning and projects at land ports of entry (POE) and for transportation infrastructure serving those POEs. The process includes all stakeholders involved in the border crossing process on both sides of the border.

More information relating to TxDOT's interactions with Mexico can be found in the *2012 International Trade Corridor Plan*.

TxDOT also participates in the Border Technology Exchange Program, which works to improve the technical skills and knowledge of transportation planners on both side of the border through the exchange of technology and information. Program activities include training courses on value engineering, demonstration projects, personnel exchanges, workshops, conferences, site/field visits, videotapes, and documents, technology transfer centers, and maintenance seminars.

This report presents transportation improvement projects proposed in TxDOT's El Paso, Laredo, and Pharr Districts. They include pass-through financing, major corridor planning, Border Safety Inspection Facilities, freight rail studies, Intelligent Transportation Systems, feasibility studies, general aviation improvements, and public transportation regional coordinated planning. These projects will help TxDOT accomplish its mission and goals.

Border District Pass-Through Financing Projects

What is this program?

The Pass-Through Financing Program (PTFP) helps local areas by accelerating improvements in mobility and safety on the state highway system. Texas Transportation Code, §222.104(b) authorizes TxDOT to enter into agreements with public or private entities to pay those entities pass-through tolls as reimbursement for costs associated with planning, constructing, or operating of facilities on the state highway system. The amount of reimbursement is tied to a measure of actual usage of the facility.

Pass through payments are based on TxDOT's traffic projections for the facility. The number and frequency of payments are negotiated between TxDOT and the public or private entity. Total reimbursement is based on actual traffic counts and reflects TxDOT's estimated cost to construct the facility. Unless otherwise authorized by the Texas Transportation Commission (commission) and incorporated in the pass-through agreement, TxDOT's liability under a pass-through agreement is unaffected by cost overruns or under runs.

What projects are underway?

Numerous pass-through financing projects are under construction in the El Paso, Laredo, and Pharr Districts. These projects are detailed below.

El Paso District

Table 1 – El Paso District Pass-Through Financing Project Applications

Highway No.	Application Status	Pass-Through Amount	Length (miles)	Project Description
Spur 601	Agreement signed 8/30/2007	\$312,450,000	7.4	Design and construct Spur 601 from US 54 to Loop 375 in El Paso County

Laredo District**Table 2 – Laredo District Pass-Through Financing Project Applications**

Highway No.	Application Status	Pass-Through Amount	Length (miles)	Project Description
SL 79/Spur 317 (completed)	Approved	\$75,000,000	12.1	Construct new location loop around the east side of Del Rio.

Pharr District**Table 3 – Pharr District Pass-Through Financing Project Applications**

Highway No.	Application Status	Pass-Through Amount	Length (miles)	Project Description
SH 32 (East Loop)	Agreement with Cameron County RMA (executed)	\$34,500,000	9.5	Development and construction of a non-toll roadway from US 77/83 north of the Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates to SH 4 south of the Port of Brownsville
SH 365	In process of terminating the PTF agreement and executing one AFA for this project and US 281 (below)	\$70,000,000	24.5	Development and construction of a controlled-access toll roadway from FM 1016 to FM 3072
US 281	In process of terminating the PTF agreement and executing one AFA for this project and SH 365 (above)	\$7,355,735	2.0	Development and construction for the reconstruction and widening of US 281 from east of SP 600 to FM 2557, with a new overpass at San Juan Rd
SH 550 Direct Connectors	Executed contract with Cameron County RMA (project let in June 2012)	\$36,434,207	2.4	Development and construction of toll direct connectors and main lanes from US 77/83 to 0.38 miles east of Old Alice Road
US 83 La Joya Relief Route	Signatures pending with Hidalgo County RMA. Originally selected as a PTF project, but never negotiated. TxDOT is developing as a non-tolled, divided facility. Hidalgo County RMA may develop as a toll facility in the future.	\$34,500,000	8.3	Development and construction of a controlled access toll facility

Improvements to bring highways such as US 59, US 77, and US 281 up to Interstate standards provide safer and more efficient truck routes.



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Interstate Corridors and International Trade

How do Interstate corridors relate to international trade?

The Interstate 35 (IH35) corridor is a vital part of the international trade between Mexico and the United States. Current and future projects are being planned, designed, and built to enhance trade transportation between the two countries. While projects at, or in the immediate vicinity of, the international border have obvious impacts on international trade, other projects along IH35 also have impacts on international trade. Examples of projects are direct connectors with other major roads, lane additions, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) managed lanes, and reconstruction of interchanges. Those projects alleviate congestion and provide access, thus enhancing freight movement along the corridor.

I-35 (Texas/Oklahoma State Line to the Texas/Mexico Border)

Where and why?

I-35 extends from to the Texas/Oklahoma Border north of Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area through Central Texas, to the Texas/Mexico border at Laredo (Figure 1). Currently, efforts in the I-35 corridor focus on corridor-wide planning, project specific planning and project development, and construction.

The I-35 Planning Process

In 2007, the Texas Transportation Commission established the I-35 Corridor Advisory Committee bringing together a group of independent Texans interested in the future of the corridor. The Corridor Advisory Committee determined that more community involvement was needed in planning the corridor, and they developed a vision and guiding principles to help shape future planning efforts. The Texas Transportation Commission agreed that even more popular input was needed in the planning process, so they called for a citizen-directed planning effort and established I-35 Corridor Segment Committees to assist the Corridor Advisory Committee in 2009. Figure 2 shows the boundaries of each of the Segments.



Figure 1 - I-35 corridor and the connecting Interstate highway system

The Corridor Segment Committees' role is to bring forth community needs and transportation priorities for discussion, to develop potential solutions and seek public input, and to develop regional plans for I-35. The Corridor Segment Committee members include representatives from cities, counties, metropolitan planning organizations, port authorities, chambers of commerce, Texas Farm Bureau, and economic development corporations along the corridor. The four Corridor Segment Committees conducted a nearly 18-month long planning effort that included public outreach and workshops. The Corridor Segment Committees finalized their regional I-35 plans in November 2010 using input received at the public planning workshops held in September 2010.

The Corridor Advisory Committee, with representatives from each Corridor Segment Committee, met in December 2010 to consolidate the four regional I-35 plans into a single MY 35 Plan – a comprehensive statewide vision for the I-35 corridor. Multimodal and

comprehensive, the plan is based on community needs and shaped by Texas citizens. The MY 35 Plan contains prioritized road and rail solutions for the I-35 corridor that reflects the local needs of the I-35 communities.

The MY 35 Plan was presented to the Texas Transportation Commission in January 2011. The MY 35 Plan was then updated by the Corridor Advisory Committee in August 2011 and the updated version was presented to the Texas Transportation Commission in October 2011. The Corridor Advisory Committee continues to meet with local groups and stakeholders and plans to update the MY 35 Plan on a regular basis to reflect changes in the corridor.

A wide variety of individual projects, including lane additions and rebuilt interchanges, are currently underway along various segments of the I-35 corridor from Williamson County to the I-35E/I-35W split near Hillsboro. Project updates and overall corridor information can be found at <http://www.my35.org>.

One of the projects from the MY 35 Plan is the I-35 Managed Lanes proposed from SH 45SE northeast of Buda to I-10 in San Antonio. In the section of I-35 from Hubertus Road/FM 1103 in Schertz to US 281/IH 37 in downtown San Antonio, a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study is being conducted to evaluate proposed solutions, such as the addition of managed lanes. This study is a joint effort by TxDOT and Alamo RMA to update and utilize previous planning studies, such as a 1996 Major Investment Study and the MY 35 Plan, and re-engage the public in order to develop alternatives that could be further analyzed in an environmental process.

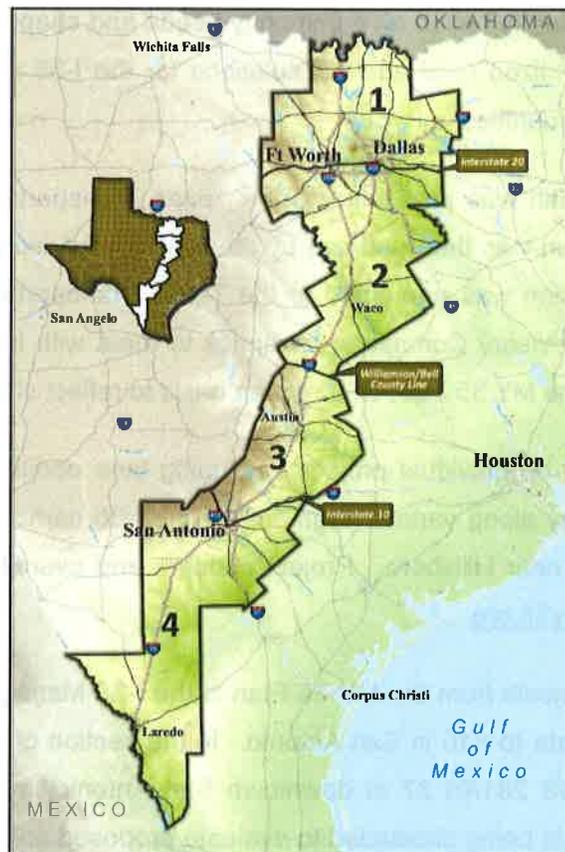


Figure 2 - My 35 planning area and I-35 Corridor Segment boundaries

What is being built and how?

In 2009, the department re-committed itself to better vehicle movement and improved safety through the Central Texas area by expanding I-35 to six lanes from San Antonio to the split in Hillsboro. Since that time, the Texas Transportation Commission has allocated funding for nearly all un-funded I-35 expansion projects, supplementing American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA or Stimulus) funds and Proposition 14 bonds with \$1 billion in Proposition 12 bonds. Once the entire expansion is complete in the next few years, the department will have invested about \$1.9 billion in state, federal, and local funding to improve highway mobility through Central Texas.

As of November 2011, construction on the corridor from north of the I-35E/I-35W split south to the Bell County-Williamson County Line has begun and many segments are complete. These projects will expand the corridor from four to six travel lanes, including continuous

frontage roads. These added capacity projects will improve the current traffic conditions by providing a safer, more efficient facility. The entire corridor in the TxDOT Waco District is expected to be completed with construction by 2017.

One aspect of the department's coordinated approach to addressing mobility concerns on I-35 is the use of innovative financing to add capacity and reconstruct heavily traveled highways in our state's metropolitan areas. Recognizing the need for innovative financing tools to deliver major infrastructure projects, the 82nd Texas Legislature included provisions in Senate Bill (SB) 1420 that authorize TxDOT to utilize design-build (D-B) procedures for up to three projects per year and initiate new Comprehensive Development Agreements (CDAs) for certain projects.

The I-35E managed lanes project in Dallas and Denton Counties from I-635 to US 380 is one of the projects authorized for CDA delivery by SB 1420. As currently envisioned, the I-35E managed lanes project would rebuild the entire 28-mile corridor and provide dynamically-priced managed lanes to keep traffic moving. TxDOT issued a Request for Information (RFI) for the I-35E managed lanes project in June 2011, and contingent upon availability of funding, construction is anticipated to start in 2013.

Another I-35 project that plans to utilize innovative financing, via D-B delivery, is the Dallas Horseshoe Project. The Dallas Horseshoe Project involves improvements to I-35E in Dallas County from north of Eight Street to the I-30/I-35E interchange as well as improvements to I-30. TxDOT issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Dallas Horseshoe Project in December 2011. A design-build contract was awarded in December 2012.

Additionally, under the existing LBJ CDA, which includes I-35E in Dallas County between Loop 12 and I-635 will see substantial improvements. As part of the LBJ project, managed lanes will be added to I-35E and direct connections will be added at the I-35E and I-635 interchange. The LBJ project is currently under construction and is anticipated to be complete in 2014.

The SH 130 toll road is now open from I-10, east of San Antonio, all the way to I-35, north of Georgetown. This facility provides an alternate north-south route, parallel to I-35. Toll Road 45 connects I-35 to SH 130 at a location south of Austin, providing an opportunity for traffic to bypass I-35 through Austin.

Another crucial piece of the overarching planning and development strategy for I-35 is the corridor's rail system. In October 2010, the state received \$34 million in TIGER II funding for improvements for Tower 55. Located beneath the interchange of Interstate 35 West (I-35W) and I-30, Tower 55 is one of the busiest at-grade rail intersections in the United States. The \$101 million project includes adding a new rail line, new bridges and other projects near and at the intersection of the BNSF and Union Pacific Railroad lines in Fort Worth. The project is designed to reduce train related traffic delays and congestion at railroad crossings at Tower 55. Project developers anticipate that this project will begin construction in mid-2012. Construction is anticipated to last two years.

I-69 (Northeast Texas to Mexico)

Interstate 69 (I-69) is a planned 1,600-mile national highway connecting Mexico, the United States and Canada. Eight states are involved in the project. In Texas, the highway/route will be developed in segments using existing facilities to the greatest extent possible.

Where and why?

The proposed I-69 in Texas extends from Texarkana and Joaquin to Laredo and the Lower Rio Grande Valley providing a connection to Mexico. Figure 3 presents the existing facilities proposed to be upgraded along I-69 and the Segment Committee Boundaries. These facilities include US 59, US 84, US 77, US 281, and SH 44 and represent roughly 1,000 miles of highways.

The I-69 planning process

Similar to the I-35 corridor, the Texas Transportation Commission recognized the need for a more "grassroots" planning effort. This process has been accomplished by moving away from the one-size-fits-all planning approach to a locally directed planning effort that uses citizen planners from communities along the proposed project. Two groups were established by the Commission for this purpose, the I-69 Advisory Committee spanning the entire route within Texas, and five I-69 Segment Committees who focus on more localized aspects of I-69.

The I-69 Advisory Committee was created in March of 2008 for the purpose of overseeing community input and planning for the entire I-69 Texas route. The Advisory Committee studied the future needs of I-69 and, in December 2008, published their findings and

recommendations in “A Citizens’ Report on the Current and Future Needs” of I-69. One of the most significant recommendations from this report is using existing facilities to the greatest extent possible for future Interstate improvements.

The I-69 Segment Committees were created in September of 2008 for the purpose of providing input and recommendations on the designated routes of I-69 in their specific areas, which are identified in Figure 3. The Segment Committees are composed of members representing cities, counties, metropolitan planning organizations, ports, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and the Texas Farm Bureau along the proposed I-69. The Segment Committees met and studied environmental planning features in planning the best improvement options for their communities.

In 2011, the Segment Committee members identified their preliminary project priorities, and began extensive public outreach effort that lasted about five months. The purpose of this outreach effort, led by the Segment Committee members, was to educate their local communities about I-69 and seek the public’s input on the Segment Committee work and preliminary priorities. This outreach effort included the members talking to various civic organizations, commissioners courts, city councils, tribal councils, participating in television interviews, and hosting open house meetings. There were 5,296 individuals reached through this effort and 439 comments received. The culmination of all the Segment Committees activities and their final recommendations and priorities were published in July 2012 and can be found at <http://www.txdot.gov/drivenbytexas/publications.htm> . Figure 4 provides an overall picture of the final project priorities recommended by the I-69 Segment Committees.

Currently, the Advisory Committee is reviewing the local-level needs and recommendations detailed in the Segment Committee reports. The Advisory Committee will develop a report that includes recommendations for the entire I-69 Texas route and to present their recommendations to the Texas Transportation Commission late in 2012. Results of these citizen-led planning efforts have already been and will continue to be used to develop projects deemed most critical. Any projects so identified will proceed forward through the normal environmental analyses and design efforts before any improvements are actually implemented.

Interstate Designation

One of the guiding principles of the Advisory Committee is “achieve interstate designation on existing suitable highways as quickly as possible.” TxDOT has identified several sections of existing highway that currently meet Interstate standards and is pursuing Interstate designation on these sections.

The first to receive designation and I-69 signing was a 6.2-mile section of US 77 from I-37 near Corpus Christi to SH 44 in Robstown. This section was dedicated in December 2011. The next section that received I-69 designation is a 35-mile stretch on US 59 in the Houston area from I-610 north to the Montgomery/Liberty county line. This was approved in July 2012. Other sections currently under review include additional portions US 59 in the Houston area, US 59 in Texarkana, and US 77 and US 281 in the Rio Grande Valley. In addition to the I-69 sections, TxDOT is pursuing the designation of US 83 in the Rio Grande Valley as an Interstate. This important facility connects US 77 and US 281 in South Texas.

What is being built?

Figure 5 summarizes the projects that are under construction or that TxDOT has allocated funding for project development work and future construction. This represents over \$626 million from various funding sources to continue the I-69 efforts. Many of these projects are included in the I-69 Segment Committee recommendations and reports, showing how the citizen-led planning effort results in funded project development for I-69 Texas.

I-69 designation on highway segments indicates the ongoing improvements and commitment to providing the best possible highway system.



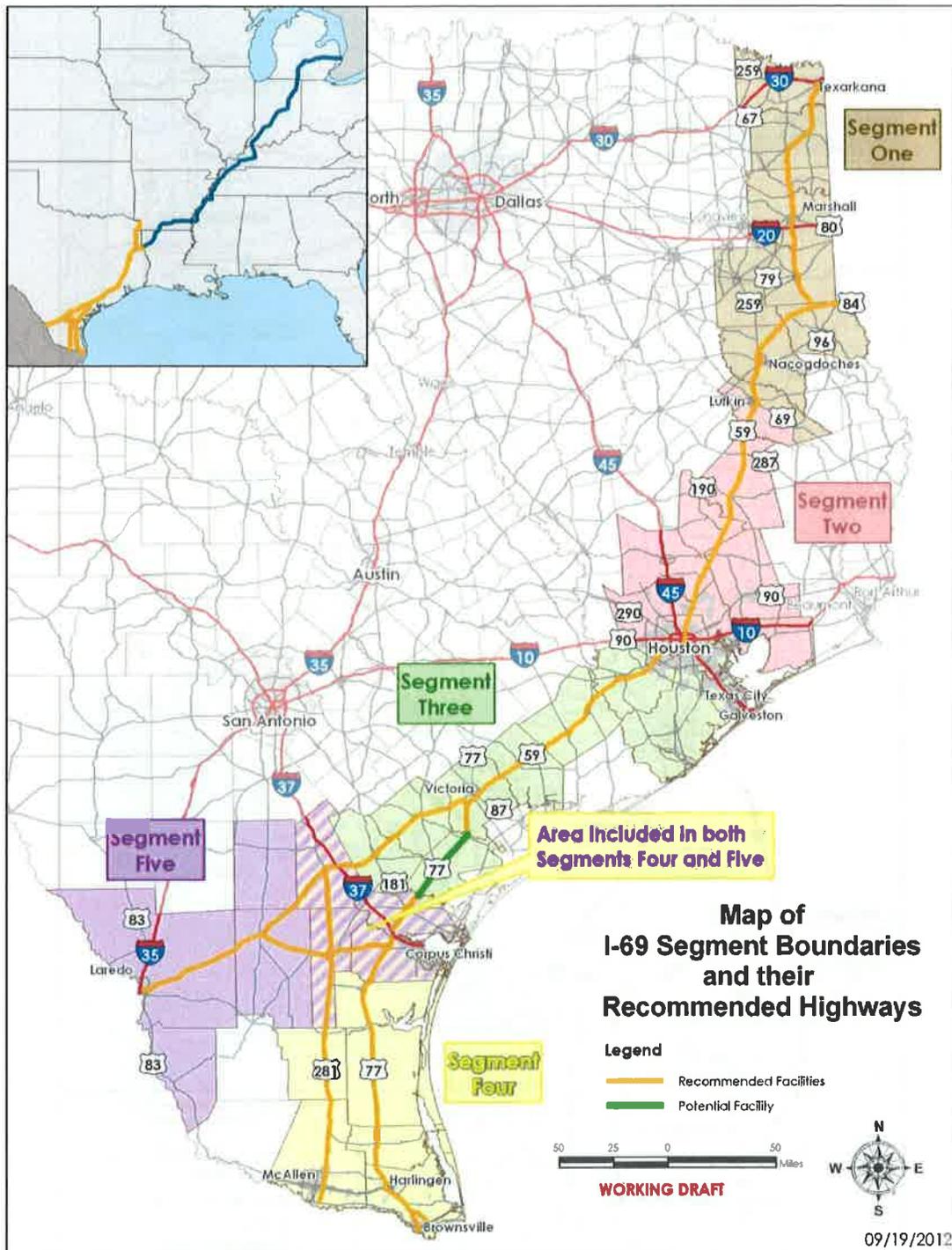


Figure 3 - I-69 in Texas and Segment Committees



Figure 4 - I-69 Segment Committees Priorities

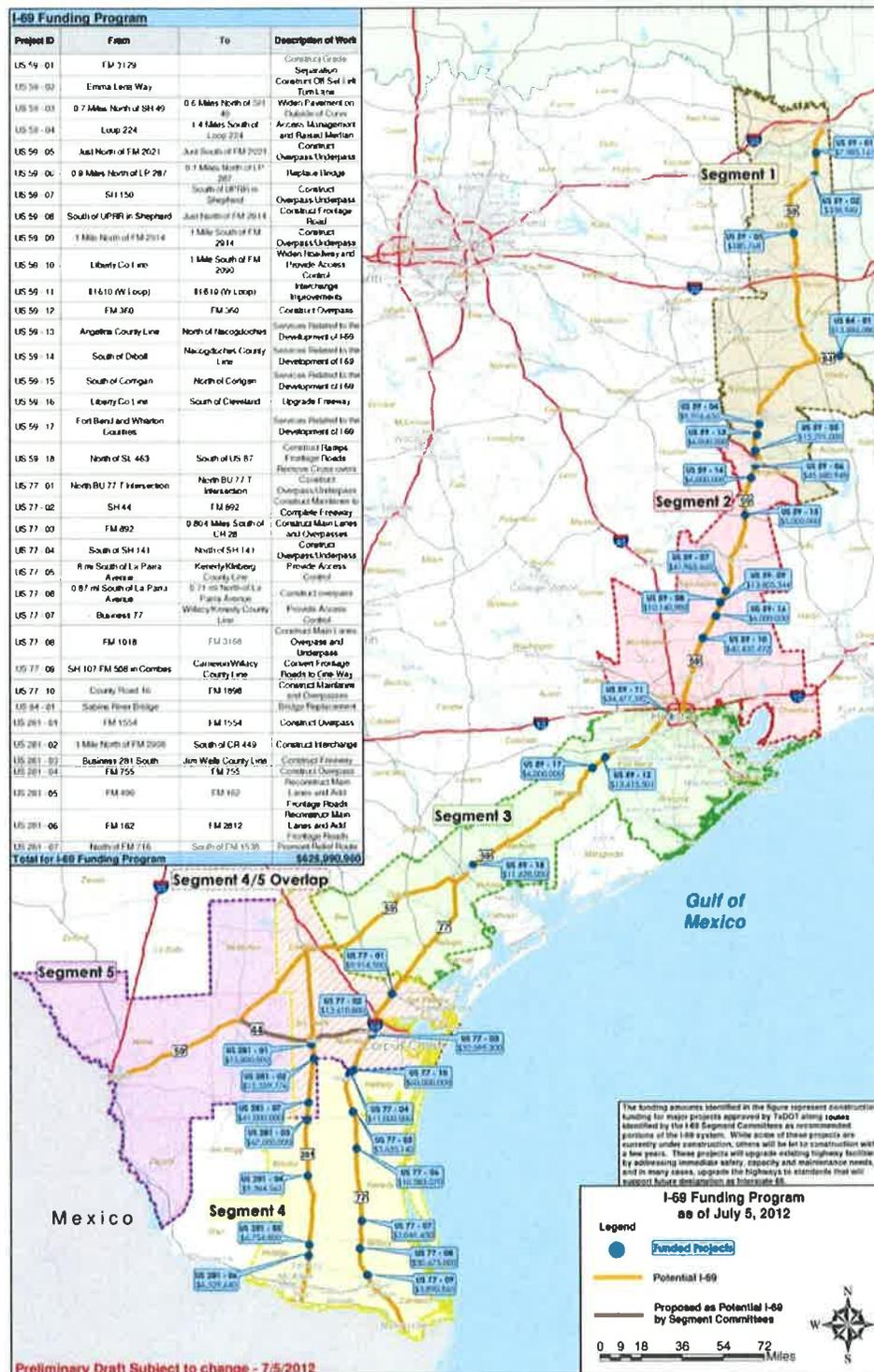


Figure 5 - I-69 Funding Program

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Freight Rail Activities

El Paso District

Presidio and Brewster Counties

South Orient Rail Line Rehabilitation (Including Odessa and San Angelo Districts)

The South Orient Rail Line (SORR), which is one of only seven rail gateways between the United States and Mexico, has the potential to relieve some of the congestion at other border crossings through the diversion of rail traffic to the gateway at Presidio/Ojinaga. The approximately 391-mile line extends from a few miles southwest of Coleman through San Angelo to Presidio at the Texas-Mexico border. It is owned by TxDOT but currently maintained and operated by Texas Pacific Transportation, Ltd. under a lease with the department. The SORR was the subject of an abandonment application when acquired by TxDOT and the infrastructure was severely deteriorated due to deferred maintenance by the prior owners.

TxDOT is using a phased approach to rehabilitate the line from San Angelo Junction (near Coleman) to San Angelo. Funding includes \$14.01 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), \$212,355 remaining from a 2004 Omnibus appropriation, \$910,000 in TXPF matching funds from 2004, \$4.6 million in TXPF funding from 2009, \$3 million in Texas General Revenue from the 2010-2011 budget, \$2 million provided by the Federal Railroad Administration in its 2010 Omnibus appropriation, and \$800,000 contributed by TXPF in 2011. TXPF has also agreed to complete an additional \$600,000 in other improvements.

Improvements over the last few years, and continuing currently, include the replacement of thousands of rail ties, hundreds of switches, dozens of at-grade crossings, numerous crossing signal systems, and bridge improvements. Construction began in 2009 and much of the work listed above has been completed.

TxDOT is also using a phased approach to develop additional projects to rehabilitate the line from San Angelo to Presidio. The scope of work for the various segments is under development, as are the required environmental clearances. TxDOT intends to have at least one project "shovel ready" at all times in order to apply for any available funding.

TxDOT continues developing a project to rebuild the fire-damaged international rail bridge at Presidio. This project involves the twin challenges of obtaining funding to reconstruct the bridge with fire-resistant concrete and steel, and addressing a request by the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) that a replacement bridge be constructed approximately 9 feet higher than the original structure for flood control purposes. The original structure was authorized by an Act of Congress before the Presidential Permitting process existed. The U.S. State Department has ruled that a Presidential Permit is not required to reconstruct this bridge, which negates any IBWC authority over design and construction. The IBWC could also present this request to the Army Corps of Engineers, who will have final approval of the project plans, but TxDOT believes there are other options to address flood control without raising the bridge.

Poor conditions on the South Orient Railroad have limited train speeds to 10 mph. Rail improvements, including new crossties, rails, switches, and sidings, allow for speeds up to 25 mph. Continued improvements will provide an alternative rail route for goods movement between Mexico and Texas. Without rehabilitation, the SORR could not support operational impact of moving hazardous materials in the volumes requested.



TxDOT has engaged the services of an engineering firm to perform an independent analysis of the flood control issue, IBWC's data, and bridge design requirements. The department hopes to have preliminary plans ready no later than February 2013. The rehabilitation of the SORR is necessary in order to continue operations and provide safe and efficient rail service to existing customers. New businesses, including some that require transportation of petroleum products, are in the process of locating along the line. Without rehabilitation, the SORR could not support operational impact of moving hazardous materials in the volumes requested. Rehabilitation of the line will facilitate

the shipment of hazardous materials and increase overall freight capacity. The number of railcars interchanged continues to increase. TXPF's traffic projections show freight volume almost doubling in 2012 and again in 2013. To protect the state's investment, TxDOT and TXPF amended the lease agreement to require TXPF to maintain rehabilitated sections of the line to the upgraded standard as long as the lease remains in effect. To improve safety and help prevent accidents, TxDOT is working with local media along the line on an awareness campaign to inform the public of increased freight volumes and train speeds. Detailed information regarding the rehabilitation is available on the Internet at: http://www.dot.state.tx.us/business/rail/south_orient.htm

El Paso County

El Paso Rail Relocation

Congestion and safety issues on the rail line between El Paso and Ciudad Juarez have required authorities in Ciudad Juarez to limit train operations across the border to the hours between midnight and 6:00 a.m. This problem has seriously hampered the efforts of the railroads involved to increase the transfer of goods through the El Paso rail port of entry.

Projects being considered to alleviate this problem include building a new rail port of entry approximately ten miles west of El Paso in the area of Santa Teresa, New Mexico, or creating a depressed rail channel similar to the Alameda Corridor in Los Angeles. Both of these would allow freight and vehicular traffic to move freely on a 24-hour basis and avoid grade-level roadway crossings that cause congestion and safety issues. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) included a \$14 million Congressional earmark to New Mexico that was intended to bolster efforts to relocate existing rail facilities in El Paso to New Mexico. The earmark was re-written to enable the State of New Mexico to fund roadway improvements leading to the new refueling facilities that will be built by Union Pacific Railroad in Strauss, New Mexico. Use of the earmark funds is overseen by the New Mexico Department of Transportation.

El Paso Freight Study

TxDOT's Rail Division is currently performing a freight rail study of the El Paso region. The study will evaluate current infrastructure and operational conditions and develop a set of near-term, mid-range, and long-term recommendations to improve freight rail mobility within El Paso. It will also assess the physical and financial viability of potential improvements, which

may include alternative or additional freight rail corridors, inland rail ports, and rail facility relocations within the El Paso region.

The study has two phases. Phase I established an inventory of the existing freight rail system, evaluated regional freight rail and port of entry operations, identified freight rail constraints, and identified freight rail and rail/roadway crossing safety issues. After Phase I was completed in summer 2011, Phase II was let. It entails evaluating alternative Rail System and/or Roadway network improvements within El Paso and modeling rail system improvement recommendations, which includes a cost-benefit analysis. Phase II is anticipated to be completed in February 2013.

Laredo District

Webb County

KCS Proposed Rail Bridge and Bypass

Kansas City Southern Railway (KCS) is currently developing a Presidential Bridge Permit application for a new international rail bridge east of Laredo. This would be part of an east loop bypass around the city of Laredo and would connect to KCS's TexMex line which runs from Laredo to Corpus Christi.

Rail relocation projects move railroad traffic away from urban centers, reducing the number of at-grade rail crossings on streets and highways, thus improving safety and goods movement efficiency.



Pharr District**Cameron County****West Rail Relocation**

Cameron County and the Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority, the City of Brownsville and Union Pacific Railroad are currently constructing a rail bypass around the west side of Brownsville. The "West Rail Project" consists of constructing a new rail line from the US 77/83 Expressway north of Brownsville to the Rio Grande. The project includes a new rail bridge over US 281 and an international railroad bridge over the Rio Grande. It will complete a rail loop around the city of Brownsville from the Port of Brownsville east of the city to the new international crossing west of the city. Financing for the project includes \$7,809,328 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, \$13,000,000 in Category 6, Railroad Grade Separations funding and approximately \$4,000,000 from a Federal Railroad Administration grant.

When completed, the West Rail Relocation Project will provide significant safety benefits by removing the rail system from the residential areas and downtown streets of Brownsville and Matamoros, eliminating 11 existing highway-rail grade crossings in Brownsville, and six highway-rail grade crossings in Matamoros. In addition, freight train transit time from Brownsville to Monterrey, Mexico will be cut by approximately two-and-one-half hours, congestion will be reduced, and a new highway corridor in the city of Brownsville will be available for development when the existing railroad corridor is abandoned.

Construction is progressing in Mexico and Texas.

Harlingen Railroad Relocation Projects

Two projects that will help relocate existing rail traffic and freight rail lines away from densely populated areas of Cameron County are moving forward. The first project entails expanding the Olmito Yard, which will allow Union Pacific and the Rio Valley Switching Company (RVSC) to relocate train switching and interchange operations from Harlingen to the expanded facility. The project will reduce the incidence of slow moving trains and blocked crossings through the City of Harlingen. In April 2010, Cameron County awarded a \$10,237,378 construction contract for the first phase of the project, which has been completed.

The second project, also located at the Olmito Yard, involves construction of a Repair-in-Place (RIP) Facility. The RIP Facility will provide a central location for railroad equipment maintenance crews to fuel, service, make running repairs and get power and rolling stock back into service as quickly as possible. Those activities currently take place at a wide variety of other locations, including densely-populated areas. In June 2011, Cameron County let a \$3.1 million project to complete the RIP Facility.

The two projects are part of a larger effort by the City of Harlingen, in conjunction with Cameron County and the Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority, to develop a rail relocation plan for the Harlingen-San Benito area in northern Cameron County. Effective relocation of the existing freight rail lines would improve freight rail operations to and from the U.S.-Mexico border and could boost efforts to achieve other important objectives. Those objectives include enhancing air quality in the area, improving the safety of the traveling public, reducing response time for emergency vehicles, minimizing or eliminating rail transport of hazardous material through populated areas, reducing traffic congestion and enhancing regional economic development.

The larger effort could include construction of seven overpasses at major highway-rail intersections, which would significantly reduce the number of vehicles crossing railroad lines. Planners are considering two basic alignments to bypass the cities of Harlingen and San Benito. The first alternative would involve reconstructing the former Southern Pacific line, known as the "Brownsville Branch," north of the Olmito Yard in Brownsville. That proposal, depending on its route, could eliminate between 52 and 83 highway-rail grade crossings.

Expanded rail yards, such as Union Pacific's Olmito facility near Harlingen, provide the ability for railroads to store rolling stock and build trains away from congested urban areas..



The second alternative would use portions of Union Pacific's Brownsville Subdivision, coupled with portions of the first alternative, to bypass San Benito, Harlingen, Rio Hondo, and Los Fresnos and eliminate 87 highway-rail grade crossings. The City of Harlingen, Cameron County, and the Cameron County RMA, with cooperation and input from Union Pacific Railroad and the RVSC continue to oversee development of the plan, as well as funding and associated environmental issues. A timetable for design and construction – as well as the funding sources – has yet to be determined. The project received \$9.48 million in appropriations through Federal Demonstration funds and SAFETEA-LU. Some of these funds were used on the Olmito Yard expansion and the Repair-In-Place (RIP) Facility projects described above.

Port of Brownsville Rail Yard Expansion Project

The Port of Brownsville is currently expanding its north rail yard. The Brownsville & Rio Grande International Railroad operates in the Port of Brownsville facilities, building trains and providing switching services for railroads such as Union Pacific.

Seaports, such as Brownsville and Corpus Christi, near the Mexico border provide additional modes of transportation for international goods movement.



Coordinated Border Infrastructure (CBI) Program

Funding for this program is intended to facilitate and expedite cross-border motor vehicle and cargo movements. Border crossing infrastructure, highway and safety enforcement facilities, electronic data exchange, and international coordination of transportation planning qualify for this program.

In October 2005, TxDOT convened a working group made up of representatives from the TxDOT district offices and MPOs within 100 miles of the Texas-Mexico border. This working group came to the consensus that the CBI funds should be used within 50 miles of border crossings and that funds should be distributed using the same criteria and formulas used by the FHWA.

The commission allocated \$200 million to the three border districts in March 2006. The amounts allocated per district are:

- El Paso District \$53,575,843
- Laredo District \$81,867,221
- Pharr District \$64,556,936

The 2012 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) redistributed the allocations as follows:

- El Paso District \$53,575,843
- Laredo District \$74,867,221 (+\$59,433,385 2010 CBI/Total \$134,300,606)
- Pharr District \$71,556,936

Per Minute Order # 110481, dated March 30, 2006, an additional \$49,856,235 was allocated to the Pharr District.

Because most of the border crossings are within metropolitan planning area boundaries, the districts are coordinating project selection with the MPOs. The following projects for each district either have already been completed, awarded, or could be awarded over the next few years.

Table 4 – El Paso District CBI Projects

Highway No.	Estimated Cost	CBI Funding	Project Description
Various (awarded)	\$3,601,901	\$3,601,901	Equip 30 commercial vehicles with GPS, real time communication and clean fuel technologies
I-10 (awarded)	\$146,000,000	\$15,000,000	Construct flyovers from I-10 to Loop 375 for all directional traffic
I-10 (awarded)	\$7,727,685	\$7,064,138	Interchange improvements at Schuster
New Location (awarded)	\$17,233,091	\$17,233,091	Construct two-lane undivided roadway from Fabens Port of Entry to I-10 with grade separated overpass (letting August 2012)
New Location	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	Preliminary Engineering, environmental and other studies leading to obtaining a Presidential Permit for a new international Port of Entry in Presidio County.
I-10 @ Loop 375 Interchange	\$16,000,000	\$1,990,000	Construct one direct connector from I-10 to Loop 375.
New Location	\$5,488,357	\$5,488,357	Roadway improvements to Pan American Drive and Winn Road (Zaragoza Port of Entry Access)

Table 5 – Laredo District CBI Projects

Highway No.	Estimated Cost	CBI Funding	Project Description
SL 20 (Project Development)	\$28,223,695	\$18,233,695	Widen to 6 lanes and construct an interchange at Spur 400 @ Loop 20
SL 20 North Expressway (Project Development Only)	\$3,369,804	\$3,500,000	Schematic, environmental, ROW surveying/mapping and PS&E to upgrade northern SL 20 to an expressway with grade separated main lanes (IH 35 to Havana)
SL 20 Central Expressway (Project Development Only)		\$3,500,000	Schematic, environmental, ROW surveying/mapping and PS&E to upgrade northern SL 20 to an expressway with grade separated main lanes (Havana to US 59)
SL 20 Extension (Complete)	\$13,934,517	\$686,265	Construction of the SL 20 7.25-mile extension as a new location 4-lane divided road in southern Laredo
SL 20 Extension Interchange (Under Construction)	\$10,675,342	\$2,093,191	Construction of a SL 20 extension interchange at the SH 359 intersection
IH 35 (Project Development)	\$40,000,000	\$16,000,000	Widen northbound and southbound main lanes to 3 lanes in each direction and add railroad grade separation.
CS – Laredo (Project)	\$1,774,924	\$1,774,924	Cielito Lindo city street extension to SL 20 in southern Laredo

Development)			
CS – Laredo (Project Development)	\$266,388	\$266,387	Los Presidente city street extension to SL 20 in southern Laredo
CS – Laredo (Project Development)	\$1,989,621	\$1,989,620	Southgate (Lomas del Sur) Blvd. city street extension to SL 20 in southern Laredo
VA – Laredo (Completed)	\$4,350,501	\$4,350,502	Reconstruct & overlay industrial park streets in northern Laredo
VA – Laredo (Completed)	\$2,985,744	\$2,985,744	Reconstruct & overlay industrial park streets in northern Laredo
VA – Laredo (Completed)	\$3,727,202	\$3,727,202	Reconstruct & overlay industrial park streets in northern Laredo
VA – Laredo (Completed)	\$3,384,477	\$2,992,500	Reconstruct & overlay industrial park streets in northern Laredo
CS – Laredo (Completed)	\$607,539	\$75,915	Reconstruct & overlay industrial park streets in northern Laredo
VA (Study Only)	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	Corridor study for the connection of FM 1021 and FM 1472 in Maverick and Webb Counties
CS – Laredo (Completed)	\$1,854,493	\$1,571,147	Reconstruct & overlay industrial park streets in northern Laredo
VA – Eagle Pass (Project development)	\$4,785,000	\$4,750,000	Upgrade Eagle Pass International Bridge II Port of Entry Facility
CS – Eagle Pass (Project Development)	\$3,000,000	\$2,360,552	Construct new roadway facility – Extension of Bob Rogers Drive in Eagle Pass
FM 1021 (Under Construction)	\$8,282,934	\$750,000	Construct railroad grade separation
CS – Del Rio (Design and ROW acquisition)	\$2,785,000	\$2,750,000	Construct a new 2-lane road – Qualia Drive Relief Route (City of Del Rio)
CS – Del Rio (Design and ROW acquisition)	\$3,720,000	\$3,720,000	Replace toll booths, gates, and ITS at the Del Rio/Ciudad Acuna International Bridge
CS – Del Rio (Design)	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	Rehabilitate existing Alderete Street roadway in Del Rio
VA – Val Verde County (Design)	\$3,780,000	\$3,750,000	Upgrade an existing 2-lane road – Frontera Road (Val Verde Co.)

Table 6 – Pharr District CBI Projects

Highway No.	Estimated Cost	CBI Funding	Project Description
International Bridge (awarded)	\$10,830,000	\$6,250,000	Improvements to Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates (Expansion)
International Bridge (on hold)	\$1,568,574	\$1,568,574	Improvements at Pharr/Reynosa International Bridge (Expansion)
International Bridge (awarded)	\$1,040,000	\$1,000,000	Improvements at Hidalgo International Bridge
FM 755 (under development)	\$9,250,000	\$1,380,000	Realign FM 755 to the east to improve safety and mobility and provide more direct connection to the Starr-Camargo International Bridge. Partial funding with CBI.
International Bridge (under development)	\$1,034,000	\$1,034,000	Install Intelligent Traffic Systems at Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge
South Parallel Corridor Phase I (under development)	\$6,800,000	\$3,131,498	New location 2-lane rural corridor from FM 509 to FM 1577
International Bridge (under development)	\$2,305,218	\$2,397,426	Construct additional northbound approach lanes and inspection booths at Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge
International Bridge (under development)	\$7,000,000	\$7,000,000	Construct southbound inspection station at Anzalduas International Bridge
International Bridge (under development)	\$4,900,148	\$5,300,000	Construct additional northbound passenger lanes and booths at Anzalduas International Bridge
SH 365 (under development)	\$139,000,000	\$5,600,000	Construct 4-lane controlled-access toll facility from FM 396 to US 281 (Military). Partial funding with CBI.
US 83 La Joya Relief Route (under development)	\$55,000,000	\$23,625,000	Construct new 4-lane divided rural facility. Partial funding with CBI.
US 83/US 281 Interchange (under development)	\$7,000,000	\$5,126,948	Interchange improvements. Partial funding with CBI.
South Parallel Corridor (Phase II) (under development)	\$10,300,000	\$2,298,565	New location 2-lane rural corridor from FM 509 to FM 732. Partial funding with CBI.
US 281 (Military) (under development)	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	Construct 4-lane rural highway from FM 3248 to FM 1421
US 83 Roma/Rio Grande City Relief Route Phase I	\$31,700,000	\$6,411,464	Construct new 4-lane divided rural highway from FM 755 to FM 3167

Table 7– Additional Economic Stimulus Projects (ARRA) in Pharr District

Highway No.	Estimated Cost	ARRA Funding	Project Description
US 83 @ FM 396 (awarded)	\$23,453,821	\$21,000,000	Construct overpasses at US83/FM 396 and FM 396/Trinity Ave with frontage roads south of US 83. Improves corridor to Anzalduas International Bridge
SH 550 (awarded)	\$34,161,741	\$34,161,741	Construct new location toll road from FM 3248 to SH 48

Regional mobility authorities can help finance toll roads, expediting infrastructure improvements that improve goods movement efficiency.



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Border Safety Inspection Facility Program

Border Safety Inspection Facility (BSIF)

The BSIF Program consists of temporary and permanent facilities at each of the eight locations noted below. TxDOT constructed temporary facilities to inspect and weigh commercial vehicles while permanent facilities are being developed and constructed. Each permanent BSIF, using ITS, will provide an efficient method of inspecting and weighing commercial vehicles entering the United States at the Texas-Mexico border. All eight permanent facilities are tentatively scheduled to be completed by the middle of 2014 pending availability of funds. The following sites are included in the BSIF Program:

- Bridge of the Americas, El Paso
- Ysleta-Zaragoza Bridge, Ysleta
- Camino Real International Bridge, Eagle Pass
- Laredo-Colombia Solidarity Bridge, Laredo
- World Trade Bridge, Laredo
- Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge on the Rise, Pharr
- Free Trade Bridge, Los Indios
- Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates, Brownsville

Due to limited funds for the Pharr District, construction has begun only on the permanent facility at Pharr-Reynosa, while the initial phases of the permanent facilities at Los Indios and Veterans Bridges are under project development.

Status of Temporary Border Safety Inspection Facilities

Temporary border safety inspection facilities are complete and operational at six of the eight locations. Two of the eight locations, Bridge of the Americas and Ysleta-Zaragoza Bridge, both in El Paso, now have permanent facilities. Therefore, the temporary facilities there have been removed.

Status of Permanent Border Safety Inspection Facilities**Bridge of the Americas, El Paso**

The permanent facility has been completed. Software system integration is underway.

Ysleta-Zaragoza Bridge, Ysleta

The permanent facility has been completed. Software system integration is underway.

Camino Real International Bridge, Eagle Pass

FHWA approved the Environmental Assessment as satisfactory for further processing in February 2007. A Findings of No Significant Impacts was issued by FHWA in October 2007. Due to the funding shortfall, the project is on hold until sufficient funding for right-of-way acquisition and construction is identified. The existing temporary BSIF will continue in operation until the permanent facility is constructed and fully operational.

Laredo-Colombia Solidarity Bridge, Laredo

A state environmental Finding of No Significant Impact was approved by FHWA in June 2009. Right-of-way acquisitions were completed and the project construction started in March 2010. As of October 2011, construction was estimated to be approximately 92% complete with an operational date of December 2012. After the permanent BSIF facility is fully operational, the temporary BSIF located at the intersection of FM 1472 and Spur 255 will be decommissioned and removed.

World Trade Bridge, Laredo

The site selection for the World Trade Bridge was re-evaluated in 2008 and a new location immediately adjacent to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) facility was identified. This site would include City of Laredo and private properties. Preliminary design and environmental studies on the Build Alternative are underway. However, due to funding shortfalls, work on the project is on hold until sufficient funding is identified for advanced engineering, final environmental studies, right-of-way acquisition, and construction is identified. The existing temporary BSIF, which is split between an area within the CBP facility and on Loop

20 adjacent to the CBP, will continue in operation until the permanent facility is constructed and operational.

Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge on the Rise, Pharr

Project was let in July 2011. Construction is underway and scheduled for completion in Summer 2013.

Free Trade Bridge, Los Indios

Based on limited funding, revising construction plans to include only initial phase of permanent facility. Master plan is complete and pending environmental clearance. Bids are anticipated in mid-FY 2014 after plans are finished, environmental clearance is obtained, and right-of-way is acquired. This initial phase will allow for removal of temporary facilities and discontinuation of leases.



Figure - 6.. Free Trade Bridge near Los Indios

Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates, Brownsville

Based on limited funding, revising construction plans to include only initial phase of permanent facility. Master plan is complete and pending environmental clearance. Bids are anticipated in mid-2014 after plans are finished, environmental clearance is obtained, and right-of-way is acquired. This initial phase will allow for removal of temporary facilities and termination of leases.

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Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) at Border Stations

TxDOT and DPS are working together to develop eight border safety inspection facilities along the border. TxDOT is assisting in the design and implementation of basic ITS components and systems for these sites, which includes the integration of ITS capabilities with weigh-in-motion equipment, support vehicle transponders, the Free and Secure Trade program and the ability to provide traffic management systems to direct commercial vehicles through the border safety inspection facilities. The first border safety inspection facility is currently installed and is undergoing system testing at the Bridge of the Americas (BOTA) in El Paso. Additional traffic management systems are being installed at BOTA. The second border safety inspection facility, at the Ysleta-Zaragoza Bridge in Ysleta, has been completed.

ITS have been implemented in both the El Paso and Laredo urban areas. The systems consist of a network of road sensors, high-tech dynamic message signs, computers, and cameras designed for freeway and incident management in these cities. This allows TxDOT and local jurisdictions to monitor and detect congestion and traffic incidents and alert motorists. It also allows motorists to divert to alternative routes where possible and allows these obstructions to be cleared faster. Although not directly related to cross-border transportation, these systems are used to alert motorists of delays and other border-related issues that may be occurring at border crossings and can also support border-related commercial vehicle operations.

The City of Pharr is developing a Transportation Management System Technology project for Pharr-Reynosa that is scheduled to be let in April 2014. This project will be funded with \$1,034,000 of Category 10/CBI and \$338,462 of Category 3/Local Funds.

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Feasibility Studies and Plans

Truck Lane Restriction Study for US 83, US 281, and US 77/83

Initiated by TTI, completed in February 2012, and presented to the Brownsville, Harlingen-San Benito, and Hidalgo County Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

Lower RGV-Tamaulipas Border Master Plan

Initiated by CTR in 2011 with expected completion of December 2012.

El Paso Regional Port of Entry Operations Plan

The Texas Turnpike Authority (TTA) Division of TxDOT performed a study within the El Paso MPO region of all existing international ports of entry, from Santa Teresa, New Mexico, to the Tornillo-Guadalupe in far-east El Paso County. The plan evaluated the operations of each existing POE as well as their combined operations as a system in order to develop and evaluate alternative operational scenarios. The key element of the study is extensive public involvement and outreach to ensure that all interested groups in the El Paso region were actively engaged in planning, development, and implementation of the Operations Plan. The final report, submitted in June 2011, provided immediate, short-term, and long-term recommendations to improve cross border mobility in the region.

The El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Policy Board approved the scope of work in February 2012 for the "El Paso/Santa Teresa-Chihuahua Border Master Plan." The bi-national group objectives are:

- Design a process that ensures the participation of everyone involved in port of entry projects and the transportation infrastructure for such projects.
- Increase the understanding of the planning processes for port of entry and transportation projects on both sides of the border.

Truck lane restrictions can provide a smoother flow of traffic in the inside lane when there are three or more lanes in each direction.



- Develop priorities and timelines for port of entry and related multi-modal transportation projects, including those for pedestrians, non-commercial vehicles, commercial vehicles and rail.
- Recommend a process that ensures coordination among federal, state, regional and local stakeholders on current and future port of entry and supporting transportation needs.

The first public outreach for the "El Paso/Santa Teresa-Chihuahua Border Master Plan" was held in July 2012.

General Aviation Capital Improvements

Listed below are general aviation improvement projects for local airports along the border. The projects listed expand the current capacity of each airport.

Laredo District

Del Rio International Airport

A taxiway and an apron were constructed between October 2011 and June 2012. The apron project included increased the previous apron space by 30% and included additional airplane tie-downs.

An additional general aviation lanes project began in October 2012 and will be completed by January 2013. This project will lengthen taxi lanes from 700' to 1,000' and widen them by 10 feet. An existing lane is also being improved. The overall project will bring the entire taxi lane up to industry standards.

Pharr District

Edinburg International Airport

About three years ago, the airport initiated a new taxiway "Bravo" project. Construction began in November 2012 and should be completed by February 2013, though the project contract extends into June 2013. The airport is also in the engineering phase of a new fueling facility. Construction may begin as early as February 2013 and will be a 180-day project. The new customs inspection facility is going out for bids in the near future.

Capacity improvements, such as new runways and taxiways, runway extensions, apron expansions, and new terminals, provide a better system of general aviation airports.



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Public Transportation Regional Coordinated Planning

TxDOT's Public Transportation Division contracts with entities in each of the state's planning regions including five that border with Mexico to oversee the development and implementation of regional coordinated public transportation plans. Although border-regions acknowledge that large numbers of people cross the U.S.-Mexico border for many reasons, these regions do not specifically address international trade in their coordinated regional plans. However, they often note in these plans that the funding mechanisms for public transportation, typically through local option sales tax and/or grants based on U.S. Census population, tend to overlook the impact of cross-border visitors on the local public transportation systems. Regions do involve Texas workforce agencies in their planning process, but do not specifically address international trade.

Each region completed a regional plan in 2006. TxDOT is funding an update of these plans in FY 2011-2012. These regional plans were developed to eliminate waste in the provision of public transportation services, generate efficiencies that will permit increased levels of service and further the area's efforts to reduce air pollution. These plans were mandated by the Texas Legislature in Transportation Code, Chapter 461, and by the United States Congress in SAFETEA-LU. For certain project categories, SAFETEA-LU specifically requires plans to address the coordination of human services and public transportation services.

Work continues on updating regional coordination plans throughout the state.

