

Ports-to-Plains Segment 3 Committee Meeting #2

Summary

February 3, 2020, 8:30 a.m.

Laredo College

1 West End Washington St.

Laredo, Texas

Attendees

Segment Committee Member	Organization	Attendance
Mayor Ramsey Cantu	City of Eagle Pass	Not present
Sid Cauthorn	Ports-to-Plains Alliance	Present
Miguel Conchas	Laredo Chamber of Commerce	Present
Anna De La Garza	Eagle Pass International Bridge System	Present
Liliana Flores	Del Rio Port of Entry	Present
Nick Gallegos	Middle Rio Grande Development Council	Not Present
Melissa Huddleston	Laredo Motor Carriers Association	Not Present
Blanca Larson	Del Rio Chamber of Commerce	Not Present
Morris Libson	Eagle Pass Business and Economic Development Council	Not Present
Yvette Limon	Laredo International Bridge System	Present
Mayor Bruno Lozano	City of Del Rio	Present
Sandra Martinez	Eagle Pass Chamber of Commerce	Not Present
Leo Martinez	Del Rio Economic Development Corporation	Designee Present: Ori Fernandez, Director of Economic Development
Margie Montez	Del Rio International Bridge	Designee Present: Matt Wojnowski, City Manager
Judge Lewis G. Owens, Jr.	Val Verde County	Not Present
Judge Francisco G. Ponce	Dimmit County	Not Present
Mayor Pete Saenz	City of Laredo	Present
Judge David R. Saucedo	Maverick County	Not Present
Mayor Wayne Seiple	City of Carrizo Springs	Designee Present: Ronnie Guest, City Manager
Judge James Tullis Shahan	Kinney County	Not Present

Kirby Snideman	Laredo Urban Transportation Study (Metropolitan Planning Organization)	Present
Judge Tano E. Tijerina	Webb County	Not Present
Raul S. Villareal	Laredo Licensed U.S. Customs Brokers Association, Inc.	Not Present
Advisory Committee Leadership		
Mayor Dan Pope, Ports-to- Plains Advisory Committee Chairman	City of Lubbock	Present
Judge Stephen Smith, Ports-to- Plains Advisory Committee Vice Chairman	Sutton County	Not Present

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Caroline Mays	Krista Jeacopello
Commissioner Alvin New	Raul Leal
Roger Beall	Steve Linhart
Loretta Brown	Jose Emilio Ramos
Emily Clisby	Roberto Rodriguez
Tito Gonzalez	David Salazar
Eduardo Hagert	Akila Thamizharasan

Consultant Team

Wendy Travis	Garver	Audrey Koehler	WSP
Kirsten McCullough	Garver	Michael Penic	WSP
Tracy Michel	Garver	Rachel Lunceford	HG Consult
Mike Spayd	Garver	Lena Camarillo	PCI
Sean Wray	Garver	Colin McGahey	PCI
Joe Bryan	WSP	Hugo Tzintzun	PCI

Other Attendees

Hope Andrade	Andrade-Van de Putte
Homero Balderas	City of Eagle Pass
Carlos Castro	Ciudad Acuna (Mexico)
Ramon Chavez	City of Laredo
Robert Eads	City of Laredo
Geraldine Garcia	Andrade-Van de Putte
Jessica Hernandez	Congressman Cuellar
Duffy Hinkle	Ports-to-Plains Alliance
Cheri Huddleston	Hance Scarborough
Jaime Ganza Gomez	Ciudad Acuna (Mexico)
Joe Kiely	Port-to-Plains Alliance
Vanessa Rosales-Herrera	City of Eagle Pass
Leticia Van de Putte	Andrade-Van de Putte

Welcome

Commissioner Alvin New, of the Texas Transportation Commission, welcomed the attendees to the Segment #3 Committee meeting. He thanked them for making the time and the trip. He said it was a glorious day because of House Bill (HB) 1079. Laredo is the largest land port in the country and along with Del Rio and Eagle Pass ports, we need to tie them into westbound traffic. This is a good opportunity to set-up the bridge and tie it into Houston, California, San Francisco, and Seattle in a more productive way. Commissioner New said the opportunity is here if we can get it done; it will do great things for Laredo, Eagle Pass, and Del Rio. It's important even for the Eagle Ford Shale energy production area to get product to market. He told members he was not there as a committee member, but was there to support, listen, and learn.

Mayor Dan Pope of Lubbock welcomed members and said it was great to be in South Texas and that he had made a trip in December to better understand what goes on in Laredo. He commented that if the bridge system in Laredo was shut down today, we wouldn't be talking about the Corona virus, the conversation would be about the bridge because it's that important. Laredo, Eagle Pass, and Del Rio are so important, and it's great to start in Laredo and then head to Segment 2 and Segment 1. He then introduced Mayor Pete Saenz.

Mayor Pete Saenz of Laredo welcomed everyone to Laredo. He said that opening a trade corridor is advantageous. We have I-35 and I-69, but this corridor will bring business to the border areas, and connectivity is so important. Trade has been very good to Laredo in the last year. Medium household income has gone from \$35,000 to \$47,500 which is more than McAllen, the poverty rate has decreased from in the 30% to 26%. He noted that trade is good, and it provides opportunities. Laredo benefits from it, but it can help other communities too. He commented that we need to develop this corridor so it can bring more business opportunity to the area.

Caroline Mays, TxDOT Director of Freight, Trade and Connectivity thanked the committee members and the public for attending the meeting. She reviewed the agenda and guided them through the packets and handouts for the meeting.

Next, Segment #3 Committee Chair, Mayor Bruno Lozano of Del Rio thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and noted that by splitting the corridor among three segments, it recognizes that Segment 3 is a unique segment due to the ports of entry in Eagle Pass and Del Rio that will enhance the port of entry in Laredo. It's advantageous to shift traffic northbound to I-27, and it enhances the economy of Texas and of North America.

Commissioner New commented that there are other participants listening that support the effort. They include the TxDOT Laredo District Engineer, David Salazar, as well as other TxDOT staff. A former State Senator and former Transportation Commissioner Hope Andrade who is a 2019 Texas Transportation Hall of Honor inductee. He said that having been involved in Del Rio and Acuna, Mexico for 20 years for trade, he appreciates when ports are connected as it is good for Texas and the country.

Mayor Lozano thanked the City of Acuna (Mexico), the Ports-to-Plains Alliance, and everyone in the audience for attending the meeting.

Ms. Mays thanked Mayor Saenz and said that Laredo was always welcoming, and that Laredo College provided a great room.

Mr. Salazar noted that Mayor Saenz recently won the Road Hand Award from TxDOT for his support and leadership for the improvement of the state's transportation system.

Recap of Previous Segment Committee Meeting

Ms. Mays started the presentation by providing a recap of the first Segment #3 Committee meeting that was held November 4, 2019 in Del Rio. She reviewed HB 1079, study goals, and existing conditions. She also provided a summary of the first public meeting that was also held in Del Rio. She then updated members on the schedule and process.

Mayor Lozano informed the committee members that there was a public meeting that night as well, and that it was not too late to tell the public to attend the meeting. At the last meeting there was attendance from Webb County. It's a good opportunity to get perspective from the public. He noted the importance of getting citizens involved, and that they may see different issues. It's very important to get that crucial feedback to TxDOT.

Mayor Saenz noted a joint resolution that was signed in Eagle Pass and Del Rio that supports a Ports-to-Plains endeavor and will be signed by Laredo. A hardcopy will be brought to the meeting.

Forecasted Conditions

Population Forecast

Kirsten McCullough of the consultant team started the presentation by explaining today's meeting would focus on forecasted conditions projected to 2050. From 2020 to 2050, the overall corridor is expected to grow by 61%. Segment #3 population growth is projected to grow by 11% with increases in Dimmit and La Salle Counties. Overall corridor median household income is projected to grow by 161%. In Segment #3, it's projected to grow by 116%, with La Salle and Webb Counties having the highest projected growth.

Mayor Pope commented that as elected officials, we try to create environments where families can thrive. As the reports are developed this needs to be highlighted.

Mayor Pope also said it was surprising to see such a high population growth but a much lower employment number. He said we will need to dig deeper into why that number is lower.

Ms. McCullough stated that the team would research the reasons behind that lower employment number.

Overall corridor employment is projected to grow by 17% while Segment #3 employment is projected to grow by 15% with most being in Webb and La Salle Counties. Corridor employment by industry is projected to be government and trade, transportation and utilities. Segment #3 forecasted employment by industry is projected to be government, trade, transportation and utilities, natural resources and mining, and professional and business service. Corridor domestic product is expected

to grow by 69% while Segment #3 is projected to grow by 80% with the highest growth in Webb and Maverick Counties.

Mayor Pope stated as we get further into this data and when we talk about what an interstate does, these numbers will be different. These numbers don't take the interstate into consideration; it's based on today's data. The impact of the interstate would increase numbers.

Ms. McCullough agreed, and said the next step is going to be determining how the interstate would impact each segment.

Ms. McCullough ended the discussion with land use in the corridor and in Segment #3. Along the corridor, 76% of the land is considered developable while 57% is developable in Segment #3.

Mentimeter Question #1: What factors do you think are influencing future population, economic, and land use conditions?

There were 12 responses. The number of responses is in parentheses. They are summarized as: domestic and International trade, USMCA (5), job growth and availability (4), energy production (3), education and quality of life factors (1), support for growth from elected officials (1), and border security (1).

Mayor Lozano commented as far as quality of life and healthcare, he has talked to various constituents in Del Rio and healthcare is an issue. There is a lack of talent and opportunity. Growth of the area from an interstate could result in more people with different skillsets that could help. He also noted the ports of entry make Segment #3 unique. We really need to look at the big picture, and not treat this as just the City of Del Rio or the City of Laredo.

Matt Wojnowski, City Manager of Del Rio, stated Mayor Lozano hit the nail on the head. Segment #3 has ports and that will affect every other area along the corridor.

Mentimeter Question #2: Do you envision the local population, economy, and land use changing if improvements are made to the Ports-to-Plains Corridor? If so, where?

There were 16 responses. The number of responses is in parentheses. They are summarized as: segment 3 should see more development; job growth, population increase and quality of life improvements thus (4), yes, more economic development in the region and connection to international trade with Mexico (3), interstate development has helped to spur growth along its path with a need for support services and housing (3), educational opportunities will assist with workforce and job creation (2), and yes, increased international trade if port infrastructure is sufficient (1).

Miguel Conchas with the Laredo Chamber of Commerce commented he's seen growth in Webb County over the last two decades. The development of infrastructure attracts investment, and then you see growth in industries. Transportation will cause the area to grow.

Mayor Pope commented that cities like Waco, New Braunfels, and others have really grown along the I-35 corridor. There was an investment made in those communities, and a parallel can be drawn to those places.

Mr. Salazar commented there was no doubt that business and economy would grow. There is a need to prioritize those populations that are growing. We don't want to end up like I-35. We need to get funds appropriately to growing areas. I-35 is a prime example of what to do and what not to do. In essence, a big portion of this corridor will be coming from Laredo. Mr. Salazar noted he thinks we have the perfect opportunity moving forward to target those areas.

Mayor Lozano commented something unique to this segment was the connectivity to the sister city in Mexico, Acuna. Acuna connects to Mexico's southern ports, and if we grow I-27, investors are going to want to look to Del Rio and Eagle Pass because Laredo is already saturated. TxDOT doesn't control where international bridges go, but we can see where manufacturing goes and where exports and imports are going. What we see locally is that it passes inspection and then creates congestion in smaller cities because there are no additional roads to move it out. TxDOT must look at the radius just beyond I-27 and how it will affect the surrounding cities. We will see unique cargo and it impacts congestion, locally. Other states such as North Dakota have dealt with this as well. We will If we don't look at the bigger picture of I-27. We can't omit the fact we are minutes away from sister cities in Mexico and it will impact everyone.

Forecasted Traffic Conditions

Michael Penic of the consultant team continued the presentation by discussing traffic. He explained traffic counts and how the TxDOT travel demand model called the Statewide Analysis Model (SAM) is used for future traffic conditions. The team reviewed traffic growth scenarios that included No Build, 4-lane Divided Highway, and Interstate Highway. After applying the SAM to each scenario, it was found that growth in a 4-lane Divided Highway scenario was very similar to the No Build scenario. Urban mobility and reliability are an issue in both scenarios. For the Interstate Highway scenario, there was 100 to 200% growth in all three segments. Mr. Penic continued with data about current traffic volume on Texas rural interstates and Ports-to-Plains Corridor rural traffic volume as an interstate in 2050.

Mayor Pope asked if it would be safe to say an I-27 in west Texas would have traffic counts that would be comparable to rural interstates.

Mr. Penic said yes, it would.

Mr. Penic concluded with traffic forecasts in Segment #3 that included I-35 in Laredo, US 83 near Carrizo Springs, and US 277 north of Eagle Pass.

Mayor Lozano noted we don't see a lot of increase near Del Rio. Are trucks going to I-10? Why isn't there more growth there?

Mr. Penic responded that there is a lot of growth near Del Rio, but since it's so small to begin with, it doesn't show as dense on the map.

Mentimeter Question #3: What are the opportunities and challenges related to the difference in traffic volumes between the 4-lane divided and interstate options?

There were 10 responses. The number of responses is in parentheses. They are summarized as: Opportunities: safety and traffic flow (4), potential for business expansion (3), job growth (2), and expedite freight movement (3).

Challenges: increased congestion during construction and redevelopment in smaller communities (3), terrain, and funding and cost.

Mayor Lozano commented that a concern for cities like Carrizo Springs and Crystal City, is US 287 feeds into their towns, so they might lose out on that traffic. There is a bypass route challenge. There is talk of a diverted road for Eagle Pass and Del Rio, and depending on what data is, that could be a discussion.

Ms. Mays said that those types of recommendations will be the next steps, in terms of analysis. This traffic analysis was just for the corridor.

Mr. Conchas asked if the traffic counts included both commercial vehicles and cars. Mr. Penic said yes. Mr. Conchas said the volume of truck traffic is huge, and when you compare counts in the metro area and look at investment, cars are very different than trucks.

Mr. Penic replied the team will have truck traffic and statistics coming out the members could compare, and they will have safety data as well.

Freight Forecasts

Joe Bryan of the consultant team proceeded with freight forecasts. Total truck tonnage is projected to grow by 78% through 2050 along the corridor. Corridor truck traffic connects across the state and is forecast to grow broadly. He noted the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) trade deal was passed very recently, so the uncertainty of trade with Mexico is gone. Shipping across oceans is at a much higher cost, and the top recipient of sourcing change is Mexico.

Kirby Snideman with the Laredo Urban Transportation Study, asked if estimates include his (Joe's) judgement that trade with Mexico will increase.

Mr. Bryan responded it's not exactly judgement. All models are by economists. The data won't entirely capture the USMCA because of when the data was collected. Aggressive estimates would include more growth in Mexico.

Mr. Snideman commented these are conservative estimates. It will increase more.

Sid Cauthorn with the Ports-to-Plains Alliance asked what extent do you consider the infrastructure growth in Mexico.

Mr. Bryan said not much, we are looking more at a local level.

Mayor Lozano noted they meet with the Texas Border Trade Advisory Committee regarding international trade and they have these conversations in a different setting with Mexican representatives. We are getting that data.

Mr. Bryan continued the presentation with freight growth in Segment #3. Total truck tonnage in Segment #3 is projected to grow by 139%. There is huge growth forecasted in Webb County, followed by Maverick and Val Verde Counties. Inbound freight is projected to grow 155% in Segment #3. Outbound freight growth is projected to grow 153% in Segment #3. Inbound and outbound growth is highest in Segment #3 compared to the other segments. Truck trade growth is expected to grow in the corridor and Segment #3 as well.

Ms. Mays noted the growth was propelled by trade with Mexico. There is growth in manufacturing and agriculture. Overseas trading is coming to Mexican ports and then moving to the United States by multiple modes. USMCA could change things a lot.

Mr. Cauthorn asked if this was because the port of Los Angeles was hard to get through.

Ms. Mays replied there are a lot of U.S./China trade issues. Shipping to Mexico creates stability for them. The cost of transportation is cheaper going east where the populations centers are. Also, there is a lot of Asian trade coming through the Panama Canal. Companies are diversifying in terms of where they are shipping to.

Commissioner New commented Houston is gearing up to handle containers. The key is improvements in the Panama Canal. It allows southeast Asian trade to come through Panama and get closer to the east coast. Sixty-six percent of people in Texas live in the triangle (Houston-San Antonio-Dallas/Fort Worth). Sixty-six percent of people in the U.S. live east of the Mississippi River. Improvements at the Panama Canal have made a huge difference. It's a better location in terms of being closer to the East Coast of the U.S. and population. Brownsville is getting three LNG (liquefied natural gas) plants, bringing in more containers, and because of petrochemical plants, the economic boost allows them to spend money to upgrade and handle containers. They are putting themselves in a better place to handle trade.

Mr. Bryan also discussed the corridor supply chain network. The corridor trade network is extensive and is forecast to grow everywhere. Food and agriculture categories and energy/oil field products are forecast to remain the same in 2050.

Mentimeter Question #4: What are the opportunities and challenges related to the increase of freight within the corridor?

There were 10 responses. The number of responses is in parentheses. They are summarized as: Opportunities: economic development and employment growth (4), proper planning to decrease growing pains, and trade impacts.

Challenges: traffic congestion is inevitable (5), safety concerns with increased truck movement in small towns (3), lack of full interstate impedes freight movement, and proper planning to prepare labor force for transition.

-Break-

Planned and Programmed Projects

Akila Thamizharasan, TxDOT Corridor Planning Branch Manager started the presentation by defining planned and programmed projects. A planned project is a project identified in a TxDOT or Metropolitan Planning Organization Plan. A programmed project has been funded or partially funded. Within Segment #3, there are 21 miles of 4-lane divided or controlled access roadway. One mile of planned and programmed projects will be upgraded to 4-lane divided or better. Ms. Thamizharasan reviewed each planned and programmed project within Segment #3.

Identification of Gaps

Ms. Thamizharasan continued the presentation by identifying gaps. For this study, a gap in the corridor is where the existing roadway is not a 4-lane divided roadway or interstate. A gap is also where there are no projects that will upgrade the existing roadway to a 4-lane divided roadway or interstate. She reviewed known gaps within Segment #3.

Mayor Pope commented that Segment #3 is the shortest segment but contains about half of the total gaps for the entire corridor.

Next, a work session was conducted so that committee members could identify gaps within the Segment #3 corridor. The Gap maps were provided, and committee members were asked to draw or write opportunities, issues and strategies they would like to see proposed.

Preliminary Corridor Feasibility Analysis

The presentation continued with Ms. Thamizharasan explaining the definition of a feasibility analysis and how it's performed. She explained the difference between a 4-lane divided highway and an interstate with frontage roads. She also explained the feasibility analysis criteria that is detailed in HB 1079.

Next, Mr. Penic continued a discussion of the feasibility analysis and whether a Ports-to-Plains Corridor would relieve traffic condition and provide reliability, as freight traffic relies heavily on this.

Mayor Lozano commented that this shows beyond Texas, so this project has a potential to redefine interstates outside of Texas. That could compound I-27 once it's built.

Mayor Pope commented that when he visited the Laredo bridge, they showed where truck traffic goes across the country, and this map shows where they are going. In Oklahoma, to take US-287, about half is 4-lane divided. We need to provide an option to I-70 because I-70 to I-25 is a mess. The Colorado Department of Transportation has a lot of challenges with expanding that. It's a point that needs to be discussed.

Mr. Cauthorn commented that several years ago he looked at existing I-27 to Stratford to I-70 and looking at traffic that would go to the Midwest including Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and Detroit via I-70. It's a slightly longer route but more efficient because there is less truck traffic and therefore, fuel costs less. He asked whether that was accounted for in this analysis.

Mr. Penic responded that the model probably didn't account for congestion in other states. With the Ports-to-Plains corridor analysis, there is a reduction in traffic on the east-west route and more on the north-south. The patterns may look unusual, but they take those into account.

Next, Mr. Penic explained diversions. Modeling did not show any significant diversion from other routes with the 4-lane Divided Highway option versus the 2050 No Build. He discussed the diversions from the Interstate option and showed where anticipated diversions would be statewide and nationally. Statewide diversions were low to moderate from I-35 and I-45, and moderate from I-10 and I-20. Significant diversion occurred on US 385 south of Hartley, US 385 to US 62 between Odessa and Lubbock, and US 84 between Lubbock and I-20. Diversions in Segment #3 included US 57, US 90, US 83, and US 55. Moderate diversion occurs from I-35 north of US 83 to San Antonio.

Mr. Penic continued to discuss safety and mobility. He reviewed travel time savings in the corridor and within Segment #3. He also presented data on 2050 truck traffic not diverted by a 4-lane Divided Highway corridor and 2050 truck traffic diverted to a full interstate corridor and within Segment #3.

Roger Beall, TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming Division Deputy Director, commented that when talking about overweight and oversize trucks, the Federal Highway Administration doesn't allow overweight traffic on interstates, so there will be restrictions in place.

Review and Discussion of Report Chapters 1 and 2

Ms. Mays reviewed changes made to the Segment Committee Report outline before asking committee members for comments and questions on draft Chapters 1 (Introduction) and 2 (Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment).

Overall, the members would like to see more Segment #2 unique information added to Chapter 1. They want to show how Segment #2 stands out from the rest of the Corridor. In Chapter 2, they would like to see an emphasis on safety and more discussion about the Permian Basin and its statistics. All comments were noted during the meeting and are listed in the table below.

Ms. Mays extended the deadline for committee members to provide comments to TxDOT on the two draft chapters to February 14, 2020. All comments that were received during the meeting and by the Feb 14 deadline will be added to a comment matrix to ensure each was addressed.

Comments from Segment #3 Meeting

Comment	Commenter
Chapter 1 Comments	
We refer to west Texas, but we need to recognize both west Texas and south Texas	Mayor Pope
Need to capture the uniqueness of each segment	Mayor Pope
Need to mention port of Eagle Pass and port of Del Rio	Mayor Pope
Add Eagle Ford Shale and discuss natural gas in this segment	Mayor Pope
Extra space after plural counties	Mayor Pope
Graphic needs to be stretched out	Mayor Pope

Make the point that trade will be enhanced in south Texas to Mexico–how/what/why that need is.	Mayor Lozano
Emphasize connectivity to I-20, I-10, I-40, etc. How cargo moves and connects – tie to trade	Mayor Lozano
Use words such as “enhancing the trade network” bypass vision” use “enhance” or “alternate” (less time spent on road)	Mayor Lozano
Put Chair and Vice-Chair at the top of the table and check to make sure everything is alphabetical after that	Matt Wojnowski
Also put Laredo, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass mayors at the top of the table	Mayor Lozano
Highlight safety – low visibility, grade level on north bound road to Del Rio	Mayor Lozano
Mention that P2P is part of the National Freight Mobility System	Mayor Pope
Chapter 2 Comments	
More detail where border crossings are, and add a figure to show that (some border crossings are used more than others, would the development of this corridor change that)	Mayor Pope
This section discusses median household incomes and Segment #3 growth which is the lowest of the 3 segments- should probably show all 3 segments	Mayor Pope
Call out Eagle Ford Shale, mention the wind energy output, trim the development of wind energy, put dollar value to animal sales. Put detail anywhere you can	Mayor Pope
Use of the word “freeway” change those to “interstate highways” make consistent	Mayor Pope
Add how this corridor adds to security – military, customs, border patrol. It’s an opportunity to invest, connect two bases, connect sectors	Mayor Lozano
These show similar tonnage, not sure if graphic supports it, may want to add something to compare this area to state/national	Mayor Pope
2 crashes mentioned – specify that they are fatal	Mayor Pope
Truck percentages shown on 2.34 and 2.35, not on 2.36	David Salazar
Need to make sure we capture benefit system-wide. Taking traffic off other routes means longer life for the roadways. If there is a defined route, trucks likely use for reliability, safety and amenities	Mayor Pope

Open Discussion

Mayor Lozano commented that regarding the U.S Border Patrol facilities, right now there is single-lane traffic. If the Ports-to-Plains corridor is expanded, we need to make sure we have the proper areas for inspection facilities, but also think about working with federal agencies to make sure those projects are funded. The next point he noted was rest areas are important. Truck drivers drive northbound for 2-3 hours north of Del Rio, and there is a huge slow down passing customs. They need to have a rest stop in strategic locations along the segment. He also said the public needs to be informed of how long projects take. TxDOT needs to be informing them.

Ms. Mays said there is a statewide study occurring to look at the needs of rest facilities/truck parking. It can be part of the recommendations outside of what the bill requires.

Mr. Conchas said he was glad the topic of the Border Patrol was brought up. It is important especially in peak hours because trucks can back up for miles, and it holds up regular traffic.

Mr. Salazar said that everything takes teamwork. It takes the community coming together. He thanked TxDOT for leading the charge. He said it was a tremendous effort by Mayor Pope to come

from the Panhandle and can't say enough about Caroline. He thanked everyone for being at the meeting and providing input.

Mayor Lozano said we are having a paradigm shift in thinking in our communities. We are used to thinking independently and putting ourselves first. Now we are thinking more regionally and associating with communities we don't normally associate with. We need to empower citizens that we are becoming a region of energy, employment, trade, healthcare, commerce, and opportunity. We need to emphasize this with our other mayors. He thanked everyone for coming. This is empowering the state of Texas to be the best state to live in.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is proposed to be held Friday, April 3rd in Laredo. Mayor Lozano said we need to think about holding the meeting in Eagle Pass.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Action Items:

Schedule the next Segment Committee Meeting on Friday, April 3, 2020