BORDER TRADE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 16, 2024

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MEETING PROCEEDINGS was taken in the above-styled on the 16th day of April, 2024, from 8:33 a.m. to 11:58 a.m., before Lauren L. Trueba, Shorthand Federal Reporter in and for the State of Texas, reporter by computerized stenotype pursuant to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the provisions stated on the record or attached hereto



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1	A P P E A R A N C E S PRESENT:	1 2	A P P E A R A N C E S (continued) ALSO PRESENT:
2	Texas Secretary of State Hon. Jane Nelson, Chair	3	
3	Alejandro "Alex" Meade III, Commissioner, Texas	4	Marty Boyd, Director of Advanced Transportation Planning at TxDot El Paso
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5	Transportation Commission	5	Raquel Espinosa, Union Pacific Railroad
6	Mr. Alvin New, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission	6	Jake Giesbrecht, Presidio International Port
7		7	Authority Edwards Colons El Boss MBO
8	Mrs. Caroline A. Mays, AICP Director, Planning and Modal Programs, TxDot	8	Eduardo Calvo, El Paso MPO
9 10	Hon. John Cowen Jr. Mayor, City of Brownsville	10	Jon Barela, Borderplex Alliance
11	Hon. Morgan LaMantia Senator, Texas Senate	11	Kathryn Lueders, Starbase General Manager Space X Gerry Schwebel, International Bank of Commerce
12	Hon. Judith Arrieta, Mexican General Consulate in	12	Claudia Lagos Galindo, Int. Trade and Border
13	Brownsville, Texas	13	Planning Branch Manager
14	Hon. Brianna Powers, United State General Consulate	14	Helen Ramirez, AICP City Manager
15	in Matamoros, Mexico	15	Kyle Morgan, CPKC Railway
16	Hon. Susan Harper, Consulate General of Canada in	16	Sam Vale, Starr-Camargo Bridge Company
17	Dallas	17	Mildred Litchfield, Deputy Division Director TxDot
18	Hon. Sandra Shaddick, Consulate General of Canada	18	Jason Modglin, Texas Aliiance of Energy Producers
19	in Monterrey	19	Rafael Aldrete, Texas Transportation Institute
20	Lic. Devorah Karen Ibarra, representing Secretary	20	Lisa Loftus Otway, Center of Transportation
21	of Regional and Agricultural Development of Nuevo Leon	21	Research, University of Texas at Austin
22	Lic. Fernando Alba, Undersecretary of Innovation	22	Daniel Silva, Rio Grande Valley Partnership
23	and Economic Development of Chihuahua	23	Marga Lopez, Progresso International Bridge
24	1	24	John Esparza, Texas Trucking Association
25		25	1 / 8
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1	APPEARANCES (continued)	1	APPEARANCES (continued)
2	Hon. Mayor Rolando Salinas, City of Eagle Pass	2	International Trade and Border Planning, TxDot
3	Juan Olaguibel, McAllen-Hidalgo-Anzalduas	3	Pedro Alvarez, District Engineer Pharr District,
4	International Bridge	4	TxDot
5	Carlos Yerena, Donna Port of Entry	5	Jolanda Prozzi, Consultant
6	Luis Alfredo Bazan, Pharr International Bridge	6	Paula Dowell, Consultant
7	Hon. Mayor Alvaro "Al" Arreola, City of Del Rio	7	Bobby Janeka
8	Juan Antonio Flores, Port San Antonio	8	Epi Gonzales
9	Dante Galeazzi, Texas Inernational Produce	9	Javier Romero,
10	Association	10	Frank Martinez
11	Cynthia Garza-Reyes, Pharr Economic Development	11	Alice Torres
12	Corporation	12	Christopher Saldon
13	Maria-Elena Giner, International Boundary and Water	13	Victoria Brewster
14	Commission	14	Steven Mcquagge
15	Iliana Holguin, Guadalupe-Tomillo Bridge	15	Jorge Ramon
16	Stan Meador, Texas Pacifico Transportation	16	Andrew Canon
17	Daniel Mendoza, BNSF Railway	17	Janie Lopez
18	Pete Sepulveda Jr., Cameron County Bridge System	18	Oscar Longoria
19	Roberto Tinajero, El Paso International Bridge	19	Humberto Gonzalez
20	System	20	Luis Diaz
21	Hon. Mayor Victor Trevino, City of Laredo	21	Ana Garcia
22	Cameron Walker, Permian Basin MPO	22	Dan Serna
23	Marvina Cephas, International Trade and Border	23	Luis Bazan
24 25	Planning Coordinator, TxDot Sergio Vasquez, Border Program Manager	24 25	Javier Salinas
۷ ر	sergio v asquez, border Program Manager	Z J	



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1	P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S	1	We encourage everyone I'd like to
2	Whereupon,	2	encourage everyone to wear orange on April 17th, which
3	8:33 a.m.	3	is Go Orange Day to raise awareness of work zone safety,
4	MS. NELSON: It is 8:33 a.m. this is the	4	in honor of the families of the victims of work zone
5	second Border Trade Advisory Committee Meeting of 2024	5	accidents. Thank you, Secretary.
6	and it will come to order. Because safety always comes	6	MS. NELSON: Thank you. I've got to
7	first, I would like to invite Francisco Almanza with the	7	remember to keep my finger on this button while I'm
8	International Treasury Board Planning Coordinator at the	8	talking.
9	Texas Department of Transportation to deliver a brief	9	Well, thank you for joining us today in
10	safety presentation before we get started.	10	Brownsville. I am Texas Secretary of State, Jane
11	MR. ALMANZA: Hi, everyone. Good morning.	11	Nelson. In my role I have been appointed by the
12	I'm Francisco Almanza with TxDot. Just a reminder	12	Governor to serve as the Border Commerce Coordinator,
13	before we begin the meeting, before speaking, please,	13	and I am delighted to see all of you here in
14	state your name for the court reporter. The microphones	14 15	Brownsville, Texas. A location that has long been
15 16	are push and hold to talk. So now on to the safety meeting. This is	16	recognized, and as a critical trade in cross-cultural
17	National Work Zone Awareness Week. It falls from	17	exchange. As we continue our discussions, I am
18	April 15th through April 19th. National Work Zone	18	confident we will uncover new insights and prospectives
19	Awareness Week serves as an important way to show	19	to help us better understand the conflicts dynamics at
20	TxDot's commitment to safety.	20	play in this ever evolving region.
21	Between 2019 and 2023, there were	21	We have a lot of on our plates today, so
22	approximately 725 work zone relaced crashes due to	22	please ensure that we use our time efficiently and
23	unattended driving. So let's all remember to protect	23	remain focused on our objectives. I'm not going to
24	the highway crews, drive slow, and pay extra attention	24	delay us on extended remarks. I will, however, remind
25	when driving.	25	everyone of the mission of the attack, to define and



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develop strategies to address Texas' Border Trade challenges, and to make recommendations to the transportation commission and to the Governor.

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Before we dive in, I want to take a moment to recognize some notable guests from, right here, both sides of the border, who are in attendance. I will ask you to hold your applause till the end.

First, Mayor John Cowen, thank you for your gracious hospitality and welcoming us to the wonderful, beautiful, City of Brownsville. We are thrilled to have our meeting here today.

Texas Transportation Commissioner, Alejandro "Alex" Meade. We appreciate -- I don't think you've missed a meeting as well. Thank you. He does a wonderful, beautiful job. Also, our Texas Transportation Commissioner, Alvin New, joins us as well. Thank you for being here with us, Commissioner. We are so grateful to have you here from the Transportation Commission.

In attendance today are elected officials of Texas. As well as distinguished representatives of the United States, officials who were regrettably unable to attend. First of all -- and it is so much fun to see her again, my good friend, Texas Senator, Morgan LaMantia. Thank you so much for being joining us, Senator. You are so blessed to represent this area in Texas. Thank you for being here with us.

I think -- okay. So representing the United States, Senator John Kline, Ana Garcia, Regional Director. Thank you for being here. Where's Ana?

MS. GARCIA: I'm right here.

MS. NELSON: Joshua Rojas, South Texas Regional Director is with us on behalf of the United States. Senator Ted Cruz, we have on behalf of Congressman, Vicente Gonzalez. We have Laura (Unintelligible.), Regional Director -- Regional District Director.

Thank you for coming, Mr. Bobby Janeka, of Texas Commission of Environmental Quality, also joins us. Welcome, Commissioner -- is that you I saw dancing that wonderful -- that was last night. That was last night. Let's see. Joe Esparza, Texas Workforce Counsel. I know him well.

Okay. And I want to take just a moment to thank the law enforcement here. I saw individuals from our custom border protection and certainly DPS and local law enforcement. I always want to take the opportunity to say thank you for protecting us and protecting our children and grandchildren. We are so grateful for all that you do.

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I want to welcome, Shirley Temple, International Trade Specialist from the Texas Economic Development Office. Thank you for joining us here today.

We also have some international diplomats joining us here today as well. Mexico's Consulate General in Brownsville, Judith Arrieta. Thank you. There she is. Good morning.

I want to welcome, Brianna Powers, United States General Consulate in Matamoros, Mexico. Thank you for making your trip. There we go. Canada's Consulate General in Dallas, Susan Harper, is here with us today. Susan, thank you for joining us, and also Sandra Shaddick, the Canadian Consulate General in Monterrey. Thank you for coming as well.

I also want to make a special recognition of the state officials of Mexico joining us here today, including, Fernando Alba, Undersecretary of Innovation and Economic Development for the State of Chihuahua. And Devorah Karren, Director International Relations, representing the State of Nuevo Leon. There she is.

I am so eager to hear your presentation later today, and I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all of our partners for their collaboration for the State of Texas. Your partnership has been a value to us, and we look forward to strengthening our relations.

Before proceeding in attendance, I would also like to thank the Texas Department of Transportation for organizing this meeting in Brownsville. And, additionally, I want to invite some of the elected officials here today to make a brief statement to this committee, and I would recognize first the Mayor of Brownsville, Mayor John Cowen. It's really been our pleasure to be here with you, Mayor.

MR. COWEN: Thank you, Secretary Nelson. Good morning, everyone. I am John Cowen, the Mayor of the City of Brownsville. I'd like to welcome everyone to our beautiful city. It's so great to have everyone. I'm honored to have you all here today.

We are at the forefront of an exciting chapter in regional collaboration, and strategic infrastructure development. Brownsville serves as a crucial part of South Texas, not just geographically, but as a deacon of growth and innovation. Our city will have discussions that will shape the future of our regions infrastructure.

I was mentioning to Secretary Nelson last night that I believe Brownsville is the only city, likely, in the country that has six modes of



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transportation, passenger, truck, rail, pipeline, deep water port, and now Space X, and I think that's a real important thing.

With the philosophy meeting we strive to collaborate with key regional partners to leverage our collected experience to enhance the creativity and efficiency of our transportation networks. This meeting is not jus an opportunity to share and work together as one, but as a platform to transport our share division into actual strategies that will benefit our communities for generations to come.

Together, let's ensure that Brownsville and the entire South Texas corridor remain at the cutting edge of trade and economic prosperity. Thank you once more for you presence and commitment here today. I look forward to the fruitful discussions and innovative ideas that will emerge in this assembly. Thank you once more and welcome to Brownsville.

MS. NELSON: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, again. Now, I want to recognize my good friend, Senator Morgan LaMantia.

MS. LAMANTIA: Thank you so much and good morning. It's wonderful and a privilege to be here among such outstanding leaders in our communities along our border. And thank you, Secretary Nelson, for your

leadership and bringing these meetings back to our border communities. It really helps highlight all the amazing names each of our communities is doing in our border. It helps change that narrative.

Thank you so much for that leadership, and I appreciate your leadership as we all work a secure and a more prosperous future for our border communities, and it's great the state has gotten so involved.

Recently, my team worked with task force on border health. So not only does the state have an investment in our economic globe all along the border, but also in the quality of life in our communities.

I can't think of a better group to facilitate our collaboration, and looking forward to hearing from many of you and our voted community leaders. Thank you for all the efforts and the growth of our border communities.

MS. NELSON: Thank you, Senator. Thank you for your hard work. Next I'd like to represent Texas Transportation Commissioner, Alvin New.

MR. NEW: Good morning. And thank you for your service on this committee. I'm mostly here to listen and take notes, and try to be a productive commissioner for all of Texas, but I do want to spend a little time on relationships and some important

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1 geography education. 2

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First, I saw Jorge Ramon from Del Rio, Texas. When I met him I was married in San Angelo 15 years ago, and he was working as the economic development, and we spent a lot of time in Acuna. (ph.) And then also I spent time in Acordeon (ph.), but anyway it's good to see you again. (Background noise from audience.)

And I (Background noise.) that's one of the wonderful things about public service, and one of the wonderful things about public service, is all the relationships you make and people you know over time, so it's good to see him.

And then the geography lesson. I was talking with Eduardo Calvo from El Paso last evening, and he said, I'm not floating down here, it's 1200 miles. So he decided that probably flying would be a better way to get here. In fact, you gave a pretty good education on New Mexico's use of water and Mexico's use of water and the challenges. But anyway, it's good to see you and your folks from El Paso, 1200 miles away.

Then the group from Presidio, did it know that it takes, like, 12 hours to drive here from Presidio and spend two hotel nights or, I think, one hotel night, but anyway they started -- and you

1 cannot -- you can just barely get her here from 2

Presidio, but it's good for them to be here and there.

3 Up ahead, another border crossing in the form of rail,

4 so that's exciting. There are 28 highway border

5 crossings between us and our neighbors, and then there's

22 of them from here to the Del Rio.

So this is a very busy part of the world in Mexico, and I'm glad to be here and learn from all of it and be part of this, so thank you for having us.

MS. NELSON: Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you again for all that you do. I want to recognize Texas Transportation and Commissioner, Alejandro "Alex" Meade.

MR. MEADE: Secretary, thank you. Good morning, everybody. You know, Secretary, I was born and raised in Brownsville. It's a great pleasure to be here with you guys today. In fact, I think, I'm the first TxDot Commissioner from Brownsville, so that makes it even more exciting.

This is also my 12th month as a TxDot Commissioner. In fact, the -- I got appointed in March that I sat on the text that I can tell you learned in on the State of Texas is so diverse. There is so many unique, you know, needs in every part of the state, but I will tell you the one thing that stood out to me the



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most as I traveled, and a lot of it has to do with the way border communities present themselves in Austin.

And this is, I think -- it hit me that when we request or when we ask for things in Austin, we usually start off with, I don't mean to bother you, you know, I don't mean to sound ungrateful -- and I start thinking about when my mom calls me.

You know, my mom calls me -- my mom is from Mexico. So she calls me and she says in Spanish, (Spanish speaking.) That's a cultural thing, right, and so I started to apply that. I noticed that culturally the border starts off that way. We don't mean to bother you, we don't want to, you know, be a nuisance to you, and when you start off that way it makes it easier to tell you, no, right.

Where as other parts of the state say, look, you need to give this to me. You need to help me, right. And I think that's the one thing that stood out to me the most, that we need to represent ourselves equally as the other cities. The bigger cities will tell us, we need this information, and they actually make us feel bad when we leave the office, even though (Unintelligible.) (Soto voce.)

And so let's change the way we present ourselves in our meanings. So long as the border is

strong shows the state of Texas, and, I think, we need to -- people -- we need to understand that, right. That the border is equally as important as the DFW, as Houston, Austin, San Antonio.

So when we go to Austin, when we go to DC, we start off by saying -- well, none of this, I don't want to bother you. No, I'm here to bother you, because we do need border resources. So I task you guys with that. Thank you all for coming here. I really appreciate you all being here. Thank you.

MS. NELSON: Thank you, Commissioner. Words of wisdom from a native of Brownsville. I appreciate it.

Now, I'll recognize Mexico's Consulate General in Brownsville, Judith Arrieta.

MS. ARRIETA: Thank you very much, Secretary Nelson. (Microphone issues.) In this border with Mexico, where the consulate has been established since 1849. So we were here starting with trade, and I am here to give you some little bit of that trade, and how we are such good partners.

Not only something that you already know that Mexico is the first partner of Texas, but how it has evolved recently and how we can make it strive even more.

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First of all, you know, very well, Mexico became the first partner of the U.S. with 800 billion dollars, but from that Texas and Mexico trade is 407 (ph.) so that is more than half. So Texas is spinning the hold of the U.S. trade -- Mexico U.S. trade.

Secondly, from this trade, Mexico is our main buyer. You know very well, cans, oil, chemicals. We are buying 80 percent of poultry (Speaker issues.) from Texas to Mexico. We are feeding us as well.

And mainly in these frontiers, this is exactly what Commissioner mentioned, there is an enormous convention going on. You make a product and you will certainly hear -- heard, but those projects have a challenge, which is work force.

We are happy to let you know that almost a million of tourists cross the ports of entry a day, and have given an enormous amount of jobs, and also they are caring to invest. We have an FDI in the heart of Texas that has given so many jobs. I want to be very brief, but also the solution workforce, we found migration. Mexico can be a part of the solution. We are a longstanding partner. We are here. We are neighbors and we will be with you.

MS. NELSON: Thank you so much, and I want to welcome Briana Powers, United States General

Consulate in Matamoros.

MS. POWERS: Good morning. Briana Powers. Thank you, Judith. You gave all the great stats. So our Consulate in Matamoros is a little bit older. We were opened in 1825 before the City of Matamoros. We will celebrate our 200th year anniversary next year. It's going to be a big deal, because we've spent the last year celebrating 200 years of diplomatic relations, including the United States and Mexico.

It just shows you how important this relationship is and how far we go back as friends, partners, and neighbors. I'm so happy. This is my Canadian (Unintelligible.), because as we know, this is not a bilateral thing. This is a hemisphere thing, and that's where we're going, because this relationship is growing. We're working together and all we want to do is break records for economic prosperity. So that means trades that work, that means our borders have to work, and all those crossings. So that's why I'm here and it's wonderful to be apart of this today. Thank you very much.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. And that was a wonderful introduction. Our next individual I'm going to recognize today is Consul General in Dallas, Susan Harper, to say a few words.



MS. HARPER: Thank you. Good morning. I'm going to be editing some of the comments earlier made, but I would like to first recognize, Secretary, your leadership. I think your background having an international component and public and private experience reflects the kind of tone we need for this committee, where we are working together to see what we can contribute.

And I think the fact that we have so many representatives, and that we've added ab evening reception where we could have that opportunity to informally connect with people. I know when we were working last night on some projects to bring forward to this committee.

Some tips that you have provided, for example, what we saw in Baltimore shows how important supply chains are, and how the butterfly effect -- one thing happening in Baltimore is going to effect the supply chains all over North America, and, we, as a group, I think, are trying to take those issues into account. So thank you for your leadership on that.

Secondly, as I mentioned to Mayor, this is my third trip in 15 months in my job -- my third trip to the Brownsville, McAllen area. The first trip was -- I came down with Canadian customs, Canadian law

enforcement, Canadian immigration.

There is very impressive CBP technology in this area, but just to underline that this kind of connection is going on, on many levels, because of the point that my American colleague just made. This is about North America, and in that context I'd like to point out that my colleague, Sandra Shaddick and I recently did a presentation (Inaudible.) Including people from Washington on the importance of the U.S. Mexico border to Canadian interests.

And unfortunately, for all of us, in my personal opinion, the five minute news gives people lots of information about the people issues, the migration issues. This group tries to focus on supply chain issues, and I don't think that they give enough consideration, and for us, that was the focus of our presentation. Most of it was on supply chains and people appreciated very much the kind of information we were able to bring back on a committee like that.

So thank you so much for including us. MS. NELSON: Thank you. And also from Canada we have Sandra Shaddick, Consul General in

Monterrey.MS. SHADDICK

MS. SHADDICK: Thank you, Secretary. Good morning. Ditto, to what Susan just said. It was

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remarkable to me the presentation that we gave to our interdepartmental committee. How unique it was to have two people from two different countries talk about the same border, and having not completely different perspectives, but different issues, different

priorities, and only by talking about it together, were we able to give that fuller perspective.

So I think -- and all that to say, we have learned so much from this committee, and thank you so much, Secretary of the State for inviting us, but particularly inviting me. I think I said this the last meeting, but the vision, again, to include that -- it's the one set beyond what we would normally occur to someone, you know, the norm. I'm really grateful for that, and this opportunity to visit.

For me, I'm based in Monterrey, I only know the Mexico side. I know the Mexico side of the border very well, but this opportunity to come to this wonderful City of Brownsville -- thank you, Mayor for showing me. The city is wonderful, and El Paso, and all the other borders that we visited. Thank you and I look forward to this discussion today.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. And thank you all for being valuable partners to Texas. I would now like to recognize, Caroline Mays, Director of Planning and

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Modal Programs for Texas Department of Transportation, who is going to conduct our role call this morning.

MS. MAYS: Good morning. And thank you very much, Secretary. Before I turn on the role call, I just wanted to say a few words. I want to, again, thank you for your position from this committee. We aways tend to get a big crowd, and, really, just to be excited about your commitment to border issues, working with TxDot and partnering with us to address border issues. It continues to be complex, but it will make a lot of progress.

I'm really excited about two of our commissioners here, and, really, we -- our staff appreciates their support. In what we do to highlight -- they highlight what they do to make policies, and making decisions here before you, makes a big difference in what they do. What they just mentioned to continue to highlight border issues.

So I really want to thank them for taking the time to be here, but I want to thank a lot of people, law enforcement, CBP. I appreciate you all being here. DPS -- and ambulance who were working with them on other efforts as well. So I just wanted to recognize that when we look at the border as a partnership, all of us have a role. You know, you all



5 group districts. Okay. We have a Pharr District here. 6 We have Laredo. We have El Paso. You know, again, with 7 TXDot, those three districts, they're the ones really 8 working with the border to identify transportation, 10 priorities. 11 And then ensuring that, like, 12 Commissioner Meade mentioned, Dallas, Fort Worth, 13 Houston, all of those areas have logistics as well. So 14 they're helping highlight infrastructure. That's really, 15 important for the border region, so I just want to thank 16 them for that, and then I want to thank wate that and many of my staff, and the rest of the 17 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 18 Claudia, and many of my staff, and the rest of the 19 folks, Francisco, Sergio. Did I miss anybody? 20 And it takes a village to do what we do. 21 Itell everybody, (Unintelligible) but what goes behind 22 it as a mini conference. When you all come here there's 23 a tot of (Unintelligible) appreciate your time. Fage 28 1 MR. CALVO: Present. 2 MS. LAGOS: Someone representing the Port 2 Grande Valley MPO. 3 of Brownsville? 4 (No response.) 5 MS. LAGOS: Someone representing Rio 6 Grande Valley MPO. 7 MR. DIAZ: Present. 8 MS. LAGOS: Dain Esparza. 9 MR. ESPARZA: Good morning. I'm here. 10 MS. LAGOS: Dain Esparza. 9 MR. SELAGOS: Dain Esparza. 11 MS. LAGOS: Suan Antonio Flores. 12 MS. LAGOS: Suan Antonio Flores. 13 (No response.) 14 MS. LAGOS: Synthia Garza-Reyes. 15 (No response.) 16 MS. LAGOS: Cynthia Garza-Reyes. 17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Unintelligible)— 18 Present. 19 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 19 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 20 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 21 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 22 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 23 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 24 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 25 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 26 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 27 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 28 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 29 MS. LAGOS: Maria-Elena Giner. 20 MS. LAGOS: Maria-El		Page 26		Page 27
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5 group districts. Ckay. We have a Pharr District here. 6 We have Laredo. We have El Paso. You know, again, with 7 TADot, those three districts, they're the ones really 8 working with the border to identify transportation, 10 infrastructure issues, and, you know, identify those 10 priorities. 11 And then ensuring that, like, 12 Commissioner Meade mentioned, Dallas, Fort Worth, 13 Houston, all of flose areas have logistics as well. So 14 they're helping highlight infrastructure. That's really 15 important for the border region, so I just want to thank 16 them for that, and then I want to thank my staff. We 17 have Tilo Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 18 them for that, and then I want to thank my staff. We 19 folks, Francisco, Sergio. Did I miss anybody? 20 And it takes a village to do what we do. 21 Itell everybody, (Unintelligible). but what goes behind 22 it as a mini conference. When you all come here there's 23 a lot of (Unintelligible). Synchronizing everybody's 24 sechedles, so it really takes a lot, and I really 25 sechedles, so it really takes a lot, and I really 26 (No response.) 27 MR. CALVO: Present. 28 MS. LAGOS: Sumcone representing fite Port 29 MS. LAGOS: Luis Diaz, representing Rio 20 Grande Valley MPO. 30 MR. DIAZ: Present. 31 MS. LAGOS: Buan Antonio Flores. 42 MS. LAGOS: Dante Galeazzi. 43 MS. LAGOS: Dante Galeazzi. 44 MS. LAGOS: Dante Galeazzi. 45 MS. LAGOS: Dante Galeazzi. 46 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 47 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 48 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 49 Present. 40 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 40 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 41 MS. LAGOS: Hand Squ. Jake Giesbrecht. 41 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Jake Giesbrecht. 41 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Daniel Silva. 41 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Daniel Silva. 42 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Daniel Silva. 43 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Daniel Silva. 44 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Daniel Silva. 45 Junier Lardon fithe border region, so I just want to thank in the fore call to claudia. 46 MS. LAGOS: Magnale Legeno.	3	So, Secretary, I just wanted to thank	3	
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7 TxDot, those three districts, they're the ones really working with the border to identify transportation, infrastructure issues, and, you know, identify those priorities. 10 priorities. 11 And then ensuring that, like. 12 Commissioner Meade mentioned, Dallas, Fort Worth, 12 they're helping highlight infrastructure. That's really they're helping highlight infrastructure. That's really they're helping highlight infrastructure. That's really they have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 16 Claudia, and many of my staff, and the rest of the 18 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 16 Claudia, and many of my staff, and the rest of the 18 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 16 feet have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 17 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 18 claudia. 17 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 18 claudia. 18 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 18 claudia. 19 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 19 folks, Francisco, Sergio, Did I miss anybody? 19 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 19 folks, Francisco, Sergio, Did I miss anybody? 19 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 19 folks, Francisco, Sergio, Did I miss anybody? 19 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 19 folks, Francisco, Sergio, Did I miss anybody? 19 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 19 folks, Francisco, Sergio, Did I miss anybody? 19 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 19 folks, Francisco, Sergio, Did I miss anybody? 19 have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and 19 folks, Francisco, Sergio, Did Imiss	5	group districts. Okay. We have a Pharr District here.	5	
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19 folks, Francisco, Sergio. Did I miss anybody? 20 And it takes a village to do what we do. 21 I tell everybody, (Unintelligible.) but what goes behind 22 it as a mini conference. When you all come here there's 23 a lot of (Unintelligible.) synchronizing everybody's 24 schedules, so it really takes a lot, and I really 25 appreciate your time. Page 28 Page 28 Page 28 MR. CALVO: Present. MS. LAGOS: Someone representing the Port of Brownsville? MS. LAGOS: Luis Diaz, representing Rio Grande Valley MPO. MR. DIAZ: Present. MR. LAGOS: Luis Diaz, representing Rio Grande Valley MPO. MR. LAGOS: John Esparza. MR. LAGOS: John Esparza. MS. LAGOS: John Esparza. MS. LAGOS: John Esparza. MR. MORGAN: Present. MR. OLAGUIEN: Present. MR. OLAGUIEN: Present. MR. OLAGOS: Rolando Salinas. MR. LAGOS: Cynthia Garza-Reyes. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing Jo	17	have Tito Gonzalez here (ph.) Mildred, and Andrew and	17	MR. ADRETE: Present.
19 folks, Francisco, Sergio. Did I miss anybody? 20 And it takes a village to do what we do. 21 I tell everybody, (Unintelligible.) but what goes behind 22 it as a mini conference. When you all come here there's 23 a lot of (Unintelligible.) synchronizing everybody's 24 schedules, so it really takes a lot, and I really 25 appreciate your time. Page 28 Page 28 Page 28 MR. CALVO: Present. MS. LAGOS: Someone representing the Port of Brownsville? MS. LAGOS: Luis Diaz, representing Rio Grande Valley MPO. MR. DIAZ: Present. MR. LAGOS: Luis Diaz, representing Rio Grande Valley MPO. MR. LAGOS: John Esparza. MR. LAGOS: John Esparza. MS. LAGOS: John Esparza. MS. LAGOS: John Esparza. MR. MORGAN: Present. MR. OLAGUIEN: Present. MR. OLAGUIEN: Present. MR. OLAGOS: Rolando Salinas. MR. LAGOS: Cynthia Garza-Reyes. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. MS. LAGOS: John Barla. AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm representing Jo	18	• ,	18	MS. LAGOS: Al Arreola.
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 Present. MS. LAGOS: Maria-Elena Giner. AUDIENCE MEMBER: Dan (Unintelligible.) I'm representing Pete Sepulveda. AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Inaudible.) MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Daniel Silva. 		_		
MS. LAGOS: Maria-Elena Giner. 22 I'm representing Pete Sepulveda. 23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Inaudible.) 24 I'm representing Pete Sepulveda. 25 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Daniel Silva.				-
AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Inaudible.) 23 MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Daniel Silva.				`
MS. LAGOS: Thank you. Iliana Holguin. 24 MR. SILVA: Good morning. Present.				· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
25 (No response.) 25 MS. LAGOS: Roberto Tinajero.		·		

	Page 30		Page 31
1	(No response.)	1	second?
2	MS. LAGOS: Victor Trevino.	2	MR. CALVO: Second.
3	MR. TREVINO: Present. Thank you.	3	MS. NELSON: Thank you very much. All in
4	MS. LAGOS: Sam Vale.	4	favor say, I.
5	(No response.)	5	COMMITTEE MEMBERS: I.
6	MS. LAGOS: Cameron Walker.	6	MS. NELSON: Okay. Is there anyone that
7	(No response.)	7	opposes no? Here are the minutes from the communities
8	MS. LAGOS: Carlos Yerena.	8	February 20th meeting are adopted.
9	MR. YERENA: Present.	9	Moving on, I want to recognize,
10	MS. LAGOS: Madam Secretary, we have	10	Marvina Cephas, International Trade and Border Planning
11	forum. (ph.)	11	Coordinator from the Texas Department of Transportation
12	MS. NELSON: Thank you. I will now move	12	to provide a recap of the February 20th meeting.
13	to the adoption of the minutes. On February 20, 2024	13	MS. CEPHAS: Good morning. My name is
14	meeting of the Border Trade Advisory Committee held in	14	Marvina Cephas. I'm the International Trade and Border
15	El Paso. I'm quite certain everyone has reviewed those	15	Planning Coordinator. I will give you a brief recap of
16	minutes, and we'll call for a motion to adopt the	16	our last meeting held on February 20, 2024, in El Paso,
17	minutes.	17	Texas. The last BTAC meeting had five main tags.
18	Please note that only BTAC members or	18	First, we provided an update on the
19	their designated representatives may make a motion or	19	Texas-Mexico border transportation master plan, and the
20	second it. After you make a motion or give a second,	20	events and it's status recommendations. Second, we had
21	please identify yourself, so it may be recorded in the	21	presentations and open discussions on connecting Texas
22	minutes. Is there a motion to adopt the minutes?	22	2050, the binational private sector of regional
23	MR. CALVO: Second. This is	23	presentations of manufacturing companies and
24	Eduardo Calvo.	24	transportation.
25	MS. NELSON: We have motion. Is there a	25	And lastly, Mexico's border states
	Page 32		Page 33
1	presentations. BTMP project update, Mildred Litchfield,	1	Several recommendation is to develop the
2	provided status updates on the transportation program.	2	commercial vehicle driver training program, which aims
3	A development of transportation projects across the	3	at vehicle safety and compliance, improve cross-border
4	state and a distribution of funds to address TxDot's	4	efficiency in Texas, and the port of entry and minimize
5	strategy force.	5	supply chain disruption. (Sotto voce.) to promotional
6	Ms. Litchfield hired (Inaudible.) for the	6	drivers will be different based on whether they are

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El Paso, Laredo, and Pharr districts. Sergio Vasquez (Inaudible.) Texas-Mexico border transportation master plan. Mr. Vasquez summarizes TxDot projects by all the regions, and categorize projects based on public allocation and region status. Very strongly, clarities (ph.) along the border may change as politics change.

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Eduardo Calvo (Inaudible.) Districts are prioritizing projects based on their local priorities as well. Two, BTMP advance recommendations. One, (Inaudible.) of two BTMP recommendations, but first is the establishment of Texas-Mexico binational task force for trade and transportation. To improve cross-border communication, coordination, and collaboration on trade and transportation issues.

The task force will have a high level count binational committee and tactical working groups seeking the possibilities of standard infrastructure, strengthen supply chain, competitiveness, and (Unintelligible.)

long-range drivers or short-range, or based on the border region.

One, explained that the training curriculum will be the same for all drivers, but regional emphasis could be included when delivering a training.

Secretary Nelson suggested that the location and reporting of this would need to be defined, and their recommendations to be provided to BTAC. And then BTAC will subsequently provide input to the legislator.

Three, (Unintelligible.) Texas 2050. (Unintelligible.) presented updates on the Texas 2050 transportation plan. (Unintelligible.) highlighted several key areas related to the plan, including the project schedule, regional statement, performance and strategies. Mr. (Unintelligible.) gave an overview of the draft and previews on future actions, including that the final draft would be presented to the transportation



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commission in July of 2024, and recommended for adoption for binational private sector and regional presentations.

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Several speakers deliver presentations on the manufacturing and transportation in the El Paso region. (Unintelligible.) on the stands of the manufacturing industry and emphasize the need for efficient border-crossings. Stan Meador described Texas Pacifico's history and their operations and future plans on the rail and roadway infrastructure.

Eduardo Calvo presented the El Paso metropolitan planning organization progress, and stressing the importance of development in collaboration with Texas -- in collaboration of Mexico. Excuse me. So outline several infrastructure projects in the El Paso region.

Five. Mexico's border states presentations. Secretary Marco Gonzalez, provided an update on the infrastructure improvements on the colonial breach, including a security check points, additional parking spaces, housing complex, and (Unintelligible.) extension. (Unintelligible.) expressed Chihuahuas commitment to enhance in border crossings and infrastructure projects. (Unintelligible.)

Lastly, the committee had an open discussion to guide a future meeting in (Unintelligible.) Secretary Nelson announced that she has sent a letter on behalf of BTAC to Secretary (Unintelligible.) -- in support of port international breach projects. (Unintelligible.) and express the importance of such efforts for future border projects. (Unintelligible.) updated on El Paso's (Unintelligible.) and asked for BTACs continuous support. Secretary Nelson thanks BTAC members for the participation in the meeting. This concludes the recap of February 20, 2024,

MS. NELSON: Thank you so much. Moving on. I want to recognize Marvina Cephas. Oh, that's you. Okay.

BTAC meeting. Thank you.

Now, I'm going to move on some more to our first presentation. I would like to recognize Sergio Vasquez, Border Program Manager from the Texas Department of Transportation, to deliver a progress update on the commercial vehicle driver training program, which is a part of the border transportation master plan advancing recommendation.

MR. VASQUEZ: Thank you, Secretary Nelson good morning, BTAC members. As mentioned in Marvina's recap, during the last border trade advisory committee

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meeting, TxDot introduced to the members a recommendation of BTMP, which is to create and implement a commercial vehicle driving training program. I want to provide a brief update of what TxDot has done since the previous meeting.

So a little recap of what vehicle training is. The goals for TxDot to Develop and implement a cross-border driver training program to increase commercial vehicle safety and compliance, reducing the number of violations and out-of-service-rates.

In addition, this training expects to improve cross-border efficiency at Texas Land Ports of Entry, reducing disruptions and delays of deliveries.

Some of the benefits that have been identified are that they will make Texas' roads safer. They will boost Texas's economy. They will help commerce move across the Texas-Mexico border, and help streamline the commercial vehicle cross-border process.

During the last meeting, the border trade advisory committee members directed TxDot to continue with the implementation of this driver's training, and TxDot was to provide an update of what we've done since.

Since the last border trade advisory committee meeting, TxDot had initially to present this commercial vehicle driver training with the Texas

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Department of Transportation, and for the commercial vehicle enforcement. There TxDot discussed the commercial vehicle driver training program, the concepts, and we gave DPS support in order for us to continue moving forward with the implementation of this commercial vehicle driving, and also for them to assist us, and them finding trainers throughout the program's life. That's an ongoing step.

In addition, TxDot secured the 2023 version of the commercial vehicle safety alliance and the auto search criteria for English and Spanish, and we'll be using that as we continue to develop the programs criteria and projective.

Some of the next steps in the next couple of months, in order for us to be able to implement this, TxDot will develop and finalize course curriculum with DPS. In fact, we expect to have that complete by June 2024. We will conduct a (Unintelligible.) in June 2024, and we will modify curriculum and material based on the feedback from the product program that will take place in June.

In addition to that, we expect to conduct the first training courses in July 2024 in Laredo or it's sister's city, Nuevo Laredo, and we will begin these training courses along the Texas-Mexico border on

Page 39 Page 38

1 July of 2024.

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And here on the slide I want to provide a brief outline -- timeline process. As I mentioned, we're in the process of developing course criteria with the Texas Department of Public Safety. We expect to have that completed by early June, and we will begin to have a pilot course on June 2024, getting initial feedback from the trainers and from DPS. We will modify the course as needed, and we will begin the first trainer training meeting on July 2024 and the first initial training course in August 2024, which will either take place in Laredo or Nuevo Laredo.

So this is going to ongoing. This is going to identify the drivers -- identify the trainers and drivers throughout the border. We expect to start in Nuevo Laredo and then start having one a month along the city cities.

With that, this concludes my recap -- my update on the commercial vehicle driver training and the progress TxDot has done since the last BTAC meeting. I'm open to any questions and give my contact information. Thank you.

MS. NELSON: Thank you for your presentation. Members, any questions or comments?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Ms. Secretary.

MS. NELSON: I'm sorry. Where are you? I see you. Go ahead.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just wanted to reiterate the (Sotto voce.) focusing on such an important topic for all of us. I think that's one of the things that we continue to hear over the years, is the lack of drivers out there in this space, and it could be argued most certainly.

But what's clear is we're seeing the amount of drivers coming into this space to try to fill that need, and not being as qualified as they one were, and we're paying particular attention to that and it's training such as this that will help us ensure that we're keeping our highways safe.

And not to mention the fact that we're some nineteen-hundred -- fifty -- some odds miles of Mexican border. We can ensure the Untied States that Texas being so much of that, 1250 plus. So it's a tremendous responsibility that we take on as an industry and as a wonderful partnership with all of the stakeholders in this room, not to mention across the entire state. So thank you for the focus on this.

MS. LAGOS: Thank you for pointing that out, too. I think one of the difficulties we face sometimes is making sure that people are well informed

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about projects like this. So thank you for pointing that out. Any other questions or comments?

MR. TREVINO: I do.

MS. NELSON: Mayor, go ahead and identify yourself for the record. I know who you are, but go

MR. TREVINO: Thank you. Dr. Victor Trevino, mayor for the City of Laredo. One of the things that we thought was of concern is during this training for truck drivers, we need to implement a contingency plan for when the computer systems go down, which we have had that experience in Laredo, and I think it was nationwide.

So at this point we had a multiple amount of 18-wheelers within our city that were staggered, because they wouldn't let them cross into the Mexican side. So we are developing a contingency plan to deal with this. We can't have 5,000 trucks in our city just parked all over the neighborhoods.

So we're developing in conjunction with the city, Nuevo Laredo, a contingency plan to allocate some areas for these 18-wheelers can park, because their bodegas or their patios are filled up. They cannot go and just park there because they are filled up to the max. So these are things that I think would be

important to incorporate in the truck driving training program.

MS. NELSON: That's a good point. MS. MAYS: I just had a question for Sergio. In the numbers interested in the, you know, (Unintelligible.) I know you mentioned Laredo and Nuevo Laredo. How do they get in touch with you all? I know (Unintelligible.) had mentioned interest, and (Unintelligible.) from Presidio. How do they get ahold of you to be in the cue?

MR. VASQUEZ: So as we continue to progress this curriculum and add some -- a little addition information, but we'll be reaching out to the BTAC members as we continue to finalize this curriculum. Right now we're working with DPS, but once we get that finalized with the members then I'll probably add a little more.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes. We are also creating a list of the stakeholders by each border town on both sides, and we are getting all of the industry, all of the trucking companies on both sides, and the idea is that we are going by them to participate on the training -- by each border town.

MS. NELSON: That is wonderful. Thank you. Any other questions or comments?



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MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry Schwebel. I want to coordinate to establish the records of some community colleges have up and down the border with their programs. Are we incorporating -- how are we coordinating that and DPS and those community colleges that all have ongoing programs. In Laredo we have Laredo College. We have other community colleges that already have programs, and they need support, you know, and, I guess, in working with DPS -- (Sotto voce.)

MR. VASQUEZ: So that's a good suggestion. Right now we're working with DPS. That's a suggestion we can bring up to the consultant team as we continue to do this curriculum to reach out to the universities, so that we can make sure we incorporate them and see what they already have.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Again, Gerry Schwebel. I think (Unintelligible) -- borders. Nuevo Laredo has it with (Unintelligible.) with the (Spanish speaking.) with the Mexican side as well, in coordinating (Unintelligible.) (Sotto voce.)

> MR. VASQUEZ: Yes, we will. Thank you. MS. NELSON: Excellent. Caroline.

MS. MAYS: Just to respond to Gerry, the main goal and purpose of this program is really training existing truck drivers from Mexico on DPS requirements,

FMSA, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration requirements, so that they are having less vehicles out of service when they come into the U.S.

So that's really the key goal, so we can help existing truck drivers coming from Mexico, primarily on the actual vehicles themselves. What's required on the U.S. and Texas side. What DPS will look for, so they are not being pulled over for a taillight or brakes or tires or those things.

So that's really what this is, but, I think, what you bring up is probably (Unintelligible.) the team needs to think about that. How do we integrate this into that driver training? Well, here in Texas, the U.S., and in Mexico, especially, because a lot of those trucks coming in are (Unintelligible.) trucks.

You know, so that's really the primary goal. You know, I think that's something that the consultant team will really take a look at. Okay. How do we evolve this once we're, kind of, at the first stage of how to train existing drivers.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. Any other questions or comments? Thank you.

23 MR. VASQUEZ: Thank you. 24

MS. NELSON: Now, I will recognize, again, Marvina Cephas, International Trade and Border Planning

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Coordinator, and consultant, Jolanda Prozzi, (Sotto Voce.) from the Texas Department of Transportation, to

provide status updates on the first and last mile

connectivity. Connectivity between border-crossings and connectivity between border region programs. So handing

it over to Marvina.

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MS. CEPHAS: Good morning, again. Marvina Cephas, International Trade and Border Planning Coordinator. So this morning I'm going to present on three updates from the 2021 border transportation master

The first two presentations will cover the first and last mile connectivity study. The second presentation will be the port to port connectivity study, and these studies are done by (Sotto voce.) And the last presentation will be the region to region connectivity study, which is being conducted by (Sotto voce.)

So the binational Texas-Mexico border transportation master plan was published in 2021. It included 177 recommendations from programs and studies of proximity, and increasing movements of booths (ph.) and people across the Texas/New Mexico-Mexico border.

The first and last mile connectivity study focuses on the connectivity challenges from the

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international border crossings. And the port to port connectivity studies focuses on the connectivity challenges between the international border crossings and the maritime ports.

So in a section of the presentation, I'm going to review the progress that we have made so far on the first and last mile connectivity study analysis. So as I mentioned earlier, the BTMP recommended a study that focuses on a multi-modal first and last mile connectivity challenges of the Texas/New Mexico-Mexico International border-crossings.

So after our initial analysis, we decided to extend our study to (Inaudible.) on the first and last mile. So we included the first and last leg of the transportation movement to and from the international border crossings. So we look at pedestrians, we look at bikes, rails, aviations, trucks, commercial vehicles, and then we look at passenger vehicles also.

So for this study we are identifying key links, we are identifying the gas and challenges, such as the (Unintelligible.) on those first and last transportation legs, serving the international border-crossings. As well as multi-modal connectivity challenges, transit terminals, airport proximities, and road proximities to and from the international



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border-crossings.

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So we engaged (Unintelligible.) context inputs for key questions identify (Unintelligible.) in connectivity. So on the next slide we show some of the questions that they explored from the stakeholders. And then, for highway they ask if there are any other bottlenecks that they have. Do they have any concerns over the analysis that we ran, and what other suggestions for improvement do they have to add.

For freight rail, we asked if there were any connectivity challenges to rail facilities, and then we also asked if there's a need for a short line railroads to serve industrial areas. For airports we asked, are there connectivity gaps. We asked what are the investment needs. For transit we asked what are the existing and planned transit serving cross-border pedestrians. We also asked if there was a need for park and ride facilities.

So for active transportation, we asked how many bus stations available within 30 minutes walking distance from the border crossings. It also asks if they are bike-ped friendly infrastructures from border crossing to bus stations.

Now, over the past few months we have also identified key transportation links, serving 30

international crossings on Texas/New Mexico-Mexico borders. And then we quantify all of the north highways performance indicators to inform the identification of border (Unintelligible.) and challenges on the transportation serving international border-crossings. And then we identify proposed investments on this key transportation leg, as included in TxDot's project tracker.

So the analysis and the information that we've gathered summarize into (Unintelligible.) That serves as input and was used to obtain stakeholder's input on schedule meetings that we had back in February with (Unintelligible.) The only remaining thing that we have to do in this study is to review and to follow verification of the information that we've collected, and we have scheduled meetings for the next month.

Okay. So as you see on this slide, the metric (Unintelligible.) of these last legs of the transportation system connected to the international crossings by trucks and people.

It also aims to inform the needs on additional capacity on these transportation legs. So we identified bottlenecks. We quantify the uses of the infrastructure, and we also explore speed.

For safety, safety remains as one of the

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most important things for TxDot in Texas. So the consultants quantify among the safety records, to understand the safety challenges on these last transportation legs serving all of the border-crossings.

So in terms of understanding the multimodal connectivity challenges on our highways, the consultant works with TxDot to identify the key modes in each of the border regions to include in this analysis. And then we review all of the different planning and legislative studies to identify connectivity challenges and gaps, as well as (Unintelligible.)

Also the content and context to understand multimodal connectivity challenges when obtained to the stakeholders, as I mentioned initially. So on this slide, it shows some of the stakeholder's agencies that we interviewed in (Unintelligible.) connectivity efforts.

We have BNSF Railway. We interviewed the City of El Paso, Sun Metro, El Metro Transit, El Paso Metro Planning Organization, Kansas City Southern Railway Company, Laredo and Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. We interviewed, Union Pacific Railroad, Valley Metro, Lower Rio Grande Valley MPO.

Then we did TxDot Laredo, El Paso, and

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1 Pharr Districts. And then we did TxDot rail division, 2

City of McAllen. We interviewed New Mexico DOT, City of

3 Laredo, and we also did the City of El Paso. So the

4 consultants developed a (Unintelligible.) for each of

5 the current international border-crossings, and it was

6 done from (Unintelligible.) to Brownsville.

So visualize the key highlights of the analysis and the stakeholder's inputs of team. So the tabloids will be accompanied by technical memorandum, and additional context once the study is completed.

In the next couple of slides I'm going to focus on Brownsville regions, since we (Unintelligible.) in Brownsville. So on this tabloid, it shows the peak traffic location identified on the first and last transportation leg in the Brownsville region. The data analysis shows the stop and go traffic from the (Unintelligible.) state highway serving to downtown bridges and connecting of Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates within the port of Brownsville.

On the second slide of the bottleneck, the slide will show the average annual daily traffic on the first and last transportation leg, serving the international crossings. It shows the high-traffic volume, and also the importance of using I-69 East in certain international border-crossings and also the

1 ports of Brownsville.

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On this slide, the data analysis the daily truck traffic falling on the first and last transportation leg, similar to the previous slides. It also shows high-traffic volumes, and therefore, the importance of using I-69 East in certain international border-crossings and also on the ports of Brownsville.

This data hotspot shows the analysis result of the data for Texas, and the accident data for the Mexican Government. The analysis shows that several crash hotspots along the I-69 was by far the biggest (Unintelligible.) crash hotspot along the State Highway 48 near the ports of Brownsville. And we are still conducting studies to find out why we have all these crashes.

On the next slide, it shows the list of (Unintelligible.) that's included in TxDot's project, and the planning legislative studies reviewed on the transportation leg analyzed. So one of the projects that was listed, was there was also mapped in the East Loop international trade (Unintelligible.) that will remain (Unintelligible.) in the international bridge, to Los Tomates, and to the ports of Brownsville, The East Loop International Trade Regions, congestions on I69 East, and State Highway 48 (Unintelligible.) from these two corridors.

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Next on the type of lists of challenges and proposed investments that we have identified to a review of many documents, in the interviews with all three (Unintelligible.) railroads that move cargo between Texas, the U.S., and Mexico. Our infrastructure investment has been emphasized to address connectivity. (Unintelligible.) pointed out that we should also have addressed these challenges through technology investments, policies, and process improvements, as well as operational improvements.

The Brownsville Matamoros Express Bridge is a very positive region for Brownsville for cross (Unintelligible.) traffic, because of the bridges proximity to Downtown Brownsville. One of the most (Unintelligible.) first routes operates along the same (Unintelligible.) stops two blocks away from the bridge. The bridge has a good transport productivity, but the sidewalks are (Unintelligible.) There is a general lack of (Unintelligible.)

So it was proposed on the multimodal corridor project at an estimated cost of \$8.9 million, which would address and identify the sidewalks and concerns and will also provide safety (Unintelligible.) So similar to the Brownsville Matamoros

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Express Bridge, we have the Gateway International Bridge, which is an important bridge also for

cross-border pedestrians and vehicle traffic, because of

the bridge, downtown locations and the access to

(Unintelligible.) commercial activities. So the

(Unintelligible.) bridge currently exceeds the capacity of the bridge.

\$130 million project (Unintelligible.) of the total replacement of the entire bridge structure, and increase the capacity of the bridge for both vehicles and pedestrian traffic.

Next, we compared two downtown bridges. The Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates has more cross for the pedestrian traffic. (ph.) The bridge does not have transit connectivity with the merits of (Unintelligible.) 30 minute walk from the bridge, and inadequate walk -- sidewalk infrastructure. So this bridge mostly serves personal vehicles and truck.

So this concludes the first part of my presentation for the first and last mile connectivity study. Now, moving on to the second study, which is the port to port connectivity. It focuses on the border-crossings to the maritime port connectivity.

MR. TREVINO: Ma'am, I do have a question. MS. NELSON: Thank you. Go ahead and

state your name again, please.

MR. TREVINO: Dr. Victor Trevino, Mayor for the City of Laredo. On your presentation on your first and last leg analysis, advanced recommendation for the multimodal improvement regarding safety hotspots.

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MS. CEPHAS: Okay.

MR. TREVINO: Is there any coordination or agreement of mechanical safety inspections from trucks coming from Mexico into the U.S. to standardize the inspection sticker status, so that we won't have any stops for, like, somebody mentioned a broken taillight, because that would delay the merchandise, and time is money for all these companies. So is there any plan to standardize any mechanical inspection or safety inspections for vehicles coming across into the United States?

MS. MAYS: I can answer that. That is not necessarily our role as TxDot. That would be DPS and Federal Motor and Carrier Administration, so we don't get into the vehicle inspection. What we're trying to facilitate, Mayor, with the training is to create awareness and educate on the Mexican side, but I think that's a question for DPS, and I'm not sure -- we don't have (Unintelligible.) here.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Unintelligible.)



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MS. MAYS: Yeah, FMCSA is DOT. They're the ones that -- when the federal compound -- they do the actual vehicle inspection. It typically has a different roll, so that is more for the FMCSA.

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MR. TREVINO: All right. I will redirect the question to the DOT. Thank you.

MR. SCHWEBEL: I also have a question. This is Gerry Schwebel. My question is on slide ten. When you talk about the multimodal connectivity stakeholder agency, that lists the expanded -- is there a reason why they don't have the RMA or the (Sotto voce.) included on this list, or can it be more specific to include all of the (Unintelligible.) importance up and down the border as well in this stakeholder engagement.

MS. CEPHAS: So we will continue to engage with the different stakeholders, but, initially, those are the first stakeholders that (Unintelligible.) and were able to sit and have conversations with them. We still have more stakeholder engagements that we need to do before the study is complete. So we will look into including it also, and the consultants are here, so.

MR. SCHWEBEL: (Unintelligible.) already done my RMAs so it goes hand-and-hand when working on the Texas side, so I don't want to leave anybody out in

this discussion.

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Thank you. Great suggestions. Thank you. Any other comments, folks? Let's move on.

MS. CEPHAS: Okay. So as I said, I'm going to move on to the port to port connectivity, which focuses on the border-crossings into the maritime ports. So the consultants gathered information as far as the analysis on the (Unintelligible.) They first analyzed the streetlight data to identify the volume or number of trucks that have crossed at the border-crossings to the Texas maritime ports.

The analysis revealed that there is a small percentage of trucks that cross at the main border, actually, (Unintelligible.) maritime ports. We are still analyzing and having meetings and coming up with new suggestions. So the (Unintelligible.) analysis ended up meeting with TxDot Maritime Division, so these are the consultants who will focus the study on four of the maritime ports. There will be the Port of Harlingen, the Port of Brownsville, Port Isabel, and Port Mansfield.

So our next step moving forward in conducting this study will characterize a trade that moves between the main border-crossings, the land border-crossings. And then we will analyze commodities

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and supply chains that impacted connectivity challenges between the border-crossings and these four ports.

Origin and destination and the modes that I use will

also identify the connectivity challenges. And then we

will look into the investments needs and strategies to address connectivity challenges.

So this concludes my presentation for the second study. We have just started and are open to any questions or suggestions.

MS. NELSON: Yes, go ahead.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you. My question is on the rails. Are you also looking at the rail connectivity -- the road rail?

MS. CEPHAS: The answer is, yes.

MS. NELSON: Wait. Say the answer again.

16 MS. CEPHAS: Yes.

17 MS. NELSON: Are you going to expand on

that?

MS. CEPHAS: Excuse me. We --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Let me rephrase the question. For example, we have the rail on the road and we're trying to connect them, and trying to build something (Sotto voce.)

MS. NELSON: Go ahead.

MS. PROZZI: Good morning or good

afternoon. My name is Jolanda Prozzi. I'm helping and

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2 supporting Marvina Cephas on this -- on these two

3 connectivity studies. So in short, the answer is, yes.

4 We are (Unintelligible.) multimodal connectivity, and we

5 have one (Unintelligible.) meetings that we are trying 6

to conduct in May, and we're coming to Presidio. (ph.)

So we will definitely go into some of the issues that we've identified in (Unintelligible.) (Sotto Voce.)

MS. NELSON: Yes, go ahead.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you, Secretary. 12 One question is for the manual breach. (ph.) Is it the 13 same (Unintelligible.) or it another one? And second,

14 on the rail connection, there is a Port of Matamoros 15 also for this multimodal trade, trucks, transportation.

I just wanted to know if you had those in mind?

MS. CEPHAS: Yes, we do.

MS. NELSON: Any other questionings? I have a question. Looking here at your slide 22 in the ports listed, Brownsville, Harlingen, Mansfield, Port

21 Isabel. Are there other ports included in the

22 discussion for Huston? Are there other ports that you 23

also had discussions with?

MS. CEPHAS: Yes, we listed a lot of ports and we had a discussion with TxDot Maritime, and then we



identified at least four ports that had traffic from the
 border-crossings or directly to (Sotto Voce.) For
 Huston, sometimes the trucks come in all loaded, and
 then (Unintelligible.) and transferred to Port of
 Houston. (ph.) So that's why we didn't include them.
 We're looking at trucks coming from the border and going
 straight into thew ports.

MS. NELSON: I see. Okay. Thank you.
MS. MAYS: Yeah, can I just add,
Secretary, we are definitely going to look at that list
and expand it, because I know Port of Corpus Christi,
our relationship with Laredo, (Unintelligible.) So,
yeah, e are going to add to the list, definitely, and we
are going to see based on the data some of the ports
that may have direct relationships with the
border-crossings.

MS. PROZZI: Yes, I just want to clarify that these ports we see in the data, and both the conversation (Unintelligible.) division that theres a dire movement between the land, border-crossing, and the port. And you can expect that because of the vicinity of these ports (ph.) in relation to the border, but that doesn't mean that they're the supply chains that moves trade between Mexico and the U.S. that involves the maritime ports.

So, hopefully, our next main thing we can report on our findings regarding the maritime ports in the supply chains that moves -- that facilitates between Mexico and Texas.

MS. NELSON: Wonderful. I think it's very important that we have that conversation. In fact, my recommendation later today will be to have our next meeting on the Port of Houston. The incident that happened recently in Boston -- Baltimore just certainly makes us all aware of how we need to be paying attention to how that kind of thing could have a huge impact on the supply chain. Thank you for pointing that out.

Any other questions? Okay. I don't see any others. Go ahead and continue.

MS. CEPHAS: So you just heard the first two presentations. Now, I'm going to move forward to the Region to Region Connectivity Study, and Ms. (Unintelligible.) will help us on east-west of the connectivity between eastern, central, and southern border regions. For this presentation I'm going to gook at the background and study approach, the regional border connectivity network assessment, and then scheduling our next step.

So I'm beginning with background and study approach. So the 2021 BTMP included a policy

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recommendation to provide multiple connectivity between border-crossings and border regions. The key issues of concerns are enhanced network redundancy, congestions in between border-crossings, support of future economic growth between Texas and Mexico.

The region to region connectivity study is advancing the recommendation, by identifying a regional border connectivity network, evaluating the statistics, and the needs along these routes, and developing recommendations. So this study will be informed by the National Stakeholder Engagement also. (ph.)

So the study is to identify strategies and recommendations (Unintelligible.) connectivity between border regions. To accomplish the study purpose, the study will focus on the following key issues. East-west connectivity between border regions, efficiency and directness of existing routes, multimodal supply chain connectivity, multimodal people connectivity, resiliency os statewide border network, safety and security, and innovative technologies and operational strategies.

So I'm going to move on now and have the consultant presented by Ms. Vice.

MS. DOWELL: Good morning. I'm Paula Dowell with HNTB, and so with the study goals for this region to region connectivity, we're focusing on,

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really, a lot of the goals that we're identifying as par of the border transportation master plan. Mobility, and reliability, about providing that option for efficient and safe, reliable transportation between those border regions.

For economic competitiveness, we want to boost the regional competitiveness and support that economic growth. You have a lot of rule regions in between those urban centers of activity. If you had better border connectivity, would you be able to grow those economies more.

And then we want safety and security, so we want to improve the travel safety between those border regions and the security, but at the same time making sure that we are enhancing the efficiency of that travel as well.

With connectivity, that's to increase the connectivity with both the movement of people and goods between the border regions. For cross-border resiliency, increase inter-connectivity between those border regions, and then that will also help to create a better and resilient border system across the whole border. Asset preservation, to maintain, preserve, and modernize assets on that border network.

And, finally, equity, to have the

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equitable distribution of both those positive impacts from all the cross-border activity, as well to mitigate any negative impacts to the local border communities.

So in terms of our study progress, we have been busy the last few moths, really, focusing on collecting the data, reviewing of a lot of the materials, including previous and ongoing study efforts, and identifying the network criteria. What part of that network do we really need to focus on for this?

We identified the study goals and objectives and then we've been developing and embedding that border connectivity network. Where we're at right now is really within this green area. We're using a lot of stakeholder input, and we'll talk more about how we're gathering that. Combing that with the technical analysis, to really look at the border connectivity, the network, the needs, and then those trends and the strategies going forward.

We will then use all of this in terms of our documentation. We'll have a final report where we're also going to produce these facts sheets, a lot of the tabloids that we followed earlier, and an executive summary. In terms of our stakeholder outreach, we've been providing the BTAC updates. We introduced a study back toward the end of 2023 and we're updating here.

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at the end, we want to really embed our recommendations and our strategies. We'll be going out to some public meetings.

What I want to do now is talk about some of the technical analysis that we really have had underway. So one of our first tasks was to identify what part of the region is really most critical for connecting these communities along the border. So we've identified what we'll call the regional border connectivity network, and we use a very data-driven approach to this, and where we're at now is really vague that's with the stakeholder. (ph.)

In terms of the data-driven, we wanted to look at, really, what is physically moving from the people and the goods. So we looked at both existing, but also the forecast of future passenger demand. We looked at existing and future forecast of freight and goods mobility demand. As well as some of the socioeconomic data, so in terms of population and employment. Where is that happening? Where are we forecasting that to happen?

And then looking for that connectivity. This is focused on the highway, but our study overall is going to be multimodal. So we're going to be doing the same sort of analysis looing at the rail connectivity.

We are also going to start our binational industry and agency stakeholder meetings. These are going to start in May, when we are setting up our binational regional steering committee meetings. We are also in conjunction with those and the meeting with the MPOs and the local officials in the communities along the border.

We are going to meet with Mexican Federal, State, and Local Officials. And then we also want to bring the business community into this. You'll hear from the shippers, the carriers, as well as the business associations. To not only understand how to divide national trade at the border-crossing themselves, but how you start to look at this whole region as a connective region, and as a connective network and a connected economy.

And then we mentioned the binational regional steering committee. We are getting those scheduled in May. So we are developing our invitation list, so you'll be getting more information over the next couple of weeks with regards to this meetings. We're having a district coordination meeting. We've already kicked this off with our TxDot districts. We will also be coming back to those districts prior to those binational regional steering committees. And then

So not only that north-south rail, but what do we have connecting the rail between the regions as we go east to west, and then west down to into the south region.

We also wanted to look at market access, because it's one thing to look at, you know, how people or goods are moving now, but what are the markets? What are they trying to access? So we looked at the -- we're going to be evaluating again the airport, the bus, and the rail access. The access to employment centers, to education centers, to those big regional medical centers, as well as some of the retail and the tourism aspects as well.

So we looked at all of that and based upon that, the network that you see outlined here, which is in the red color, that is our draft border regional connectivity network. So we wanted to get this group to really take a look at that, and provide us, kind of, your first initial opinions on that network, in terms of using that data-driven approach. These are the facilities that really scored the highest in terms of being important. Not only to move you today, but also when we remodel the future demand of the network.

So we'll pause here to see if there are any initial reactions or comments regarding this draft network.



MS. NELSON: Any comments?

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MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry Schwebel. Paula, one of the things that I've been following closely and have been aware of, is the designation of border counties as commercial zones for the movement of trucks that are going (Sotto voce.) Not just up and down the border, but even up toward -- and I mentioned this to (Unintelligible.) that we took it. I-69 or I-47 with its corridors go up more. Every county should get commercial zoning, because any gaps with any county is not a designated commercial zoning.

We should do it now and begin the process, because I know El Paso through some of it's designations when they were working on some projects in some of those areas not designated in those commercial zones. So there is an experience there. We just want to make sure that we don't leave any stone unturned, in making sure that all designated commercial zone, so we don't avoid doing all of this work and then finding out, hey, trucks can't go in there (Sotto voce.)

MS. DOWELL: Yeah, no, Gerry, thanks for bringing that up. I know you noted that as well at last weeks TxDot's meeting as well. So I jotted that down at something that we're going to be looking at here, and I know (Unintelligible.) looks at those along this network

as well.

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So in addition to that, and somewhat related, and this was brought up by (Unintelligible.) The U.S. DOT, they did announce in the federal register, they are seeking request information in the designation of the multimodal freight network. So I think it's a great opportunity for the members of the TxDot and the BTAC committees to really make sure that you're, you know, paying attention to the designation of that national system as well.

MS. NELSON: All right. Any other comments or questions? I see one. Okay.

MS. ESPINOSA: Madam Secretary, hi. Raquel Espinosa with Union Pacific. I appreciate being sent in about rail. I think it's important to note that when we look at connectivity, railroads do an excellent in terms of moving freight and heavy goods. It takes at least 300 trucks to move the same amount of freight as one train.

So we look at our corridors -- a lot of people get excited about passenger rail, and I'm not suggesting that's what was mentioned here, but I think it's just important to note that those of us that focus on freight, have to ensure that we have that capacity to support the state's needs moving forward, because it's a

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limited corridor.

And we want to be careful when we think about moving passengers on freight rail lines, that we don't displace freight from the rails to the roads. Again, railroads are heavily funded, and they maintain our own driveway, our own infrastructure. So I just wanted to share that. Thank you.

MS. NELSON: Thank you for sharing that. Any other questions?

MS. MAYS: Raquel, in relation to this -- Paula, quick question -- I can't see this far -that far, but does that include rail or does that include highways here?

MS. DOWELL: No, Caroline. This network right here is what is just the highway portion of it, but we are doing the same thing. We are doing reassessment from a multimodal prospective as well. It's just that we know that the rail network is not as a dense as the highway. So basically, all of the rail corridors are going to be included.

MS. MAYS: Okay. I just want to make sure that they look at that -- the rail corridors as well. I know most of the rail corridors go south, and (Unintelligible.) east-west, but they're looking at going on (Audience background noise.) And lastly,

(Unintelligible.) as we define the border master plan --

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1 2 60 miles? 3 MS. DOWELL: Yes, yes.

4 MS. MAYS: Yeah. Okay. 5 MS. NELSON: Anyone else? 6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. Go ahead.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Just a quick question. 9 This exercises and study that we are we doing on the 10 U.S., are we going to send a model on the Mexican side? 11 Are we allowed to do that? Is this committee allowed to 12 expand it's scope?

MS. NELSON: Jolanda -- Caroline.

MS. MAYS: Yeah, I can answer that. Yes, we can. We did that with the border master plan. We did study parts of the U.S. and the Mexican side. So, yes, we can do that. Paula, you may want to consider that to look and reciprocate on the Mexican side and that network as well.

MS. DOWELL: Yes. And, actually, just to answer that, we are including the Mexican network, and we are going to be talking with the Mexican stakeholders. One of the things that we know from all the work that we've been doing on the border, and talking with those who actually make the decisions on

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which crossing they're going to use, it does have a lot to do with the connectivity and the proximity of those.

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So if we're looking to have a more resilient system -- so if one crossing goes down for one reason or the other, we can switch to the other crossing. That ability to do that really depends upon this region to region connectivity on both sides of the boarder. So we will be looking at that as part of this effort.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah. Just real fast -the data that we're trying to capture on your side of the river will also be similar-type data. They will (Unintelligible.) a little bit. Does that make sense? MS. NELSON: Absolutely.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry Schwebel. I think it's important also, Paula, I think there's a very valid point. In Mexico they're friends with Tamaulipas, but they're creating logistic clusters to do their coordination of their infrastructure highway connectivity among their clusters of Mexico. They are all keeping up with us and Texas, so I think it's important, you know, that we identify those clusters and what they're planning on the Mexican side, because eventually it's all going to come through us.

MS. DOWELL: That's a great point.

MS. NELSON: All right. Thank you for that information. Thank you. Any other comments? All right. Go ahead.

MS. DOWELL: Okay. Great. So one of the things if we're looking at this region to region connectivity, we wanted to get a sense of how much demand is there for it now. And to what extent is the lack of efficient routing contributing our -- to maybe a lack of demand.

So here is just a diagram where we're showing regional goods mobility, and so this -- if you look at this network, just on the U.S. side of the border, the regional roadway network facilitates the movement of nearly 50 million tons of goods valued at over \$180 billion. This dries the economic growth of not only the border region, or Texas, but really the U.S. It's important to all of it.

So what we've done here is if you looking within the circles here, for example, if you take the RGV here, you have an almost 960,000 trips -- goods mobility trips, truck trips, that are circulating just within the RGV region.

And the same if you look at El Paso, if you look at Laredo. So the majority of these trips are within the urban areas, but if you start to look at the

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lines there, you can see between El Paso and Laredo about over 1,200 trips -- daily trips that are demanded in this area. If you start to look at Laredo to Eagle Pass, you get over 10,00,0, and then Eagle Pass to Del Rio, 5,800.

So the further these urban areas get from each other, the fewer the number the trips. But are there some economic development opportunities if we had more direct routes, if we had more safer routes and everything. Could we actually be growing the amount of traffic and demand, and thus the economic development opportunities.

So one of the things that we wanted to look at, was how do we evaluate the directness and the efficiency of the connectivity. So this is an example looking at region to region. Once again, you're seeing the route here, and the route that is in brown here is using truck GPS data from (Unintelligible.) we were able to map this trip, and this is the route that it actually took. So it went up to San Antonio and then in over and along I-10 and then up to El Paso.

So the observed length of that trip was 681 miles, and it took over 11 hours of travel time for that. If you look at the shortest route, which is in the purple line at the bottom, which hugs the border

more closely, that's 580 miles, and will take just over

2 nine hours. If you look at the fastest, it's 583 miles 3 and it would take just over nine hours. 4 So our next point is really understanding 5 and evaluating that shortest and fastest route, to look 6

at the needs. How does that look in terms of design? Is it actually designed to carry freight traffic? How is it in terms of safety? Are there safety issues? We know that safety is number one in the trucking industry and the private sector. So if they don't feel like it's a safe and secure route, then they won't take it even if it would save them time and money.

And so that's really what we're going to be doing is looking at these trips and assessing whether or not they're taking the shortest or the fastest route, and, if not, then why not. And are there some improvements that we can make that would allow them to take a more efficient route, saving both time and money and making the whole area more economically competitive.

So we're also going to be taking a look at -- I'm sorry.

MS. NELSON: Excuse me. One second. Go ahead, Gerry.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Thank you, Gerry Schwebel. This is where (Unintelligible.) all the way to the mayor



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of El Paso (ph.), every border community. This is very, very -- I believe eyeopening for every mayor -- Mayor Trevino, everyone talking amongst each other and saying, look at what the numbers are showing us, you know. And we've got the right TxDot commission right now to really looking at this.

MS. NELSON: You've got two listeners sitting right here. Anyone else? Any questions or comments or observations on this? Caroline.

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MS. MAYS: Yeah, I think, you know, to Gerry's point -- the biggest challenge we've had in the past, everybody thought that movement was all in all south, but with this data it's really showing that there's also movement east to west and it's growing. So the east-west connectivity is really, really critical, you know, to ensure a vibrant, not just border region, but also vibrant movement of people and goods as well. (Sotto voce.)

MS. NELSON: Continue.

MR. GIESBRECHT: This is Jake from Presidio. What I'm looking at is just Presidio. I'm not connected with Laredo, but one question that I have is how much do we look at (Unintelligible.) (Sotto voce.) Do we look at it or not, because one example, Presidio has in percentage, I think, is a high

of 73 (Static from speaker.) of all the ports on the Mexican side, and that's because, (Unintelligible.) (Sotto voce.)

MS. MAYS: I can answer that. Definitely, Jake. Paula is just showing this as an example. It's not exhausted. There's a (Unintelligible.) but certainly the team will take that into consideration and look at it again and provide feedback, provide -- you know, ask for that information and so we can provide that feedback.

MS. DOWELL: This is just one example of origin destination. We're going to be identifying all of the origins destinations that we're seeing for both people and goods. And then just start to really analyze those routes that are taken, but also the routes that are not being taken, and that's what we want to focus on. You know, are there some improvements along all of these routes that would benefit, you know, the region as a whole and then really develop in depth with a more robust, a more resilient, and a more economically competitive border region across the whole.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay. So you --(Issues with speakers.) MR. NEW: What I'm asking is when I see

the regional goods mobility that you showed in the slide

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before, it says El Paso and Laredo 1,236, is that 2 bidirectional or -- because it says the estimated truck 3 trips for six months. What I'm trying to understand is 4 could it have started in El Paso, it might have started 5 in El Paso and it's headed to Laredo or vice versa,

6 right. That number is bidirectional?

> MS. DOWELL: Yeah. So Commissioner, that's gonna be the total, but we are going to be breaking it down by direction. The other thing that we're going to do, too, is we're in the process of not only looking at those trips, but we're looking at any stops that they make -- any kind of truck stop. We're going to be overlaying (Unintelligible.) so we can start to really figure out what is happening with those trips. You know, where are they picking up and delivering, and that's going to really start to give us a lot more information about what's going on.

MS. NELSON: I'm seeing hands waiving right in front of me. Go ahead. Identify yourself, please.

MR. JANEKA: Bobby Janeka. Thank you so much. This is (Unintelligible.) She had a great question that I agreed with, and then that question got more enticing as the mentions of the (Unintelligible.) and the stocks as well. I'm struck by this analysis

comparing shortest to fastest routes versus observed routes.

Our agency, hopefully, could help peak into the emissions data on what the implicit impacts there are. And it strikes me that the shorter routes. the more efficient routes gives Texas a strong argument, were the federal governments most responsive these days, and that's to reduce impacts on emissions. I think we would be glad to (Sotto voce.) of those data's, but that's not me, that's our staff. (ph.)

MS. NELSON: Absolutely. And this is really, really informative, and I think continuing down this road take this information. I know that is a very good point. I think there was another question right there. Go ahead.

MR. CALVO: This is Eduardo Calvo the El Paso MPO. Paula, following up to Commissioner New's comment. Also trying to wrap my head around -- are these fully loaded? Are these empty? I think we need to get a little understanding, because the origin destination patterns are going to vary whether the load can get to El Paso and it's a loaded truck and once they deliver the goods to wherever they go, and then they will probably find a load and go somewhere else, right. So that's why you get a better understanding of, you

know, is this loaded or unloaded, and what drives those travel decisions on where to go.

MS. DOWELL: Absolutely, Eduardo. You know, in addition to this effort, we know that TxDot is also undertaking the implementation of the way and motion strategic plan, and whenever you start to combine that GPS data with information that you get from your way and motion, it starts to give you that kid of information.

So while we don't have it all put together for this specific effort, we will be pulling, like, oversize in the way in permitting data. We're going to be pulling way in motion data, and once we combine all of that we're going to be able to make some inferences, but there's some system where you can put together where you can trace the truck and combine that GPS data with the way in motion data, with oversize or overweight.

And then you can create a whole freight operation exchange. That's something we will be looking at as part of another effort, but you're on the right track there. There's a lot of technology out there that could be used or really give us a lot more visibility into this. It's a matter of connecting it all together.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. Go ahead, sir. MR. BAZAN: Good morning. Luis Bazan with

the Phar International Bridge. So along those lines when it comes to the stops are we also considering the hours the truck drivers have to rest? I know it's come up in conversations at our port, at our bridge with certain destinations with customers, and I don't think we've accounted for that. I haven't seen that in studies. So just to ensure we are accounting for those ten hours for every certain amount of hours driven.

MS. DOWELL: That's a great point, and that's another reason why if we can find these shortest and these fastest routes, that can take under that ten hour drive time. So that is another piece that makes it more competitive, right? If you can complete the trip within, you know, one day of drive time. Then you don't have to stay overnight to finish that last, you know, few miles of that leg of the trip. So once again, that greatly impacts the competitiveness of those moves and everything. So that's a very important part that we'll be integrating in.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: The only question I have in the previous slide is estimated truck trips. Is that the size of the sample for this analysis?

MS. DOWELL: I'm sorry is that the --AUDIENCE MEMBER: Is that the size of the sample that you had got for this analysis?

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MS. DOWELL: Yes, so what we've done is that we know that the data that we're using is just a sample of the trip. So we have a -- just at a preliminary level try to expand that based upon we're used a combination of the (Unintelligible.) data that gives us the volume. But then we also have the average annual daily truck traffic, and the classification counts from TxDot, which gives us a total truck count.

So we've used -- we've developed expansion factors based upon the difference of sample of trucks for that day, and then the count data for that day to try to expand that. So this is an approximation.

MS. NELSON: Thank you for the questions.

MS. DOWELL: I love this discussion.

MS. NELSON: I do too. Yes. Go ahead.

MS. DOWELL: Okay. So we're going to do a similar type of exercise in the passenger trips, and not surprisingly, we'll see that we have fewer of those long regional trips for passenger, because we know with just our own daily driving you're going to see a lot more within the regions. However, what we're seeing is that

Once again, if we had more multimodal opportunities and options and we had more reliant, more safe, and more efficient routes. Would we see an

there's not totally no demands.

increase of that, especially, with regards to some of our regional attractions. Whether that be educational opportunities, medical facilities, tourism. If we can increase the efficiency for travel of that, then it has the opportunity to, once again, increase the economic activity associated with it.

So in terms of our schedule and our next step, we kicked this off in late of 2023. So, again, we've been doing a lot of our financings, literature review, some initial stakeholder outreach, data collection, and analysis. We're getting right in that core part where we're finalizing some of the existing conditions. We're doing a profile of the whole region to understand not only the transportation aspect of it, but the economic aspect and the supply chain aspect of it.

So we are wrapping that up in May. We're coming out. We're going to be doing our second round TxDot District meetings. As well as our regional steering committees. This is where we're going to bet that network and get some additional input on that. We're going to start talking about some of the needs, the challenges, but what I really get excited about are the opportunities. and so we want to hear about that.

And them that will set us up for our next

phase of work, which is really going to be looking at the forecast conditions, what's the future going to bring. Looking at those key translate (Unintelligible.) and those key industry trends that impact those major supply chains. Then we're going to focus on what we're calling the unmet needs. So we know that there are a lot of projects that are already planned along the border, but we know that we're then going to focus on those key efficient region to region routes.

We're going to map what projects are currently planned, and then we're going to look at are there additional needs that are not currently being met, and there's no planned project to meet that. That's going to be our focus in working hand-in-hand with the MPOs, the locals, and the districts to figure out what we need to do to advance any additional investment and policies our programs ever needed to really leverage the full opportunities to our border region.

And then that will bring us to the end of 2025, where we'll be wrapping up the study and developing our recommendations and our strategies. We will, once again, bring out that draft material to the binational regional steering committee, the districts, and then have public meetings in the communities along the border.

So our immediate next step over the next 90 days, we're going to be completing our border region profile. We're going to forecast the future demand. We will access the needs on this regional border connectivity network. We're going to identify the impacts of the lack of connectivity as well. What are we missing out on? If this region had as much connectivity as some of the other regions within Texas, how would they have grown.

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And then we want to conduct our steering committee meetings, and then engage our TxDot Districts, as well as the Mexican stakeholders. So there's the information from Marvina and myself. Any other questions or comments?

MS. NELSON: Excellent presentation. Very informative. I see a question. Go ahead.

MR. CALVO: Again, this is Eduardo Calvo. Can you talk a little bit about how you're going to be forecasting future demands?

MS. DOWELL: Always look to Eduardo for the technical questions. So, obviously, we are going to be using travel demand modeling. So we will be using both the statewide analysis modal tool, but we're also going to be looking at the MPO (Unintelligible.) In addition to that, we want to look at scenarios, because

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we know with the travel demand models they, kind of, have a plank forecast of what employment, what population, and everything is going to be.

And that future demand is based upon that one point forecast. The one thing that we know about forecasting is where they are going to be right. Especially, when we're going out 30 years. So the other thing we want to do is look medium term and longterm. So we will be looking at a medium term forecast, like, a ten year, 2035, and then we will be looking out to 2050. We're going to be looking at the trends.

What are the major trends that are likely to impact goods with people mobility within this region, and we're going to develop some alternative scenarios. So it's not going to be one forecast to future demands, but it's going to be what's the plausible future forecast.

And then as we start to look at our recommendations and strategies, we'll be able to say, you know, is this something that is going to be needed no matter what the future looks like. If so, then that rises to a higher priority. It's going to be needed no matter what it looks like. Then there's going to be some things that may be dependent upon what forecast or what trend we call. So this way it will allow us to

Page 85 really develop a robust set of recommendations.

MS. NELSON: Thank you very much for your presentation.

MS. DOWELL: Thank you.

MS. NELSON: I will now like to recognize Sergio Vasquez, Border Program Manager from the Texas Department of Transportation to present a progress update on Texas House Bill 4422 relating to a study on enhancing border security, outcomes, and public safety, technological, and transportation infrastructure near Texas-Mexico border-crossings.

MR. VASQUEZ: Thank you, Secretary Nelson. Good morning, again. I'm Sergio Vasquez. And today I'm going to provide a brief update on House Bill 4422. I'm going to read -- in this presentation I'm going to provide brief update and recap of what House Bill 4422 is, what the project status of TxDot presentation is and mandated, the stakeholder and engagement update, and what are the next steps TxDot is going to continue to do over the next couple of months.

So a recap of what House Bill 4422 is. House Bill 4422 was passed during the 88 Legislative Session, and what it does is it directs, us, TxDot to conduct a study on public safety and transportation infrastructure on Texas-Mexico border-crossings to



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ensure safe, efficient, and streamlined commercial motor vehicle connectivity that amplifies Operation Lone Star efforts.

In addition, House Bill 4422 directs TxDot to conduct a study in consultation seven working groups specified in the bill. During the initial presentation of House Bill 4422, TxDot was in the process of creating a working bill, and I will go into detail as to who TxDot is working with further into the presentation.

In addition, the bill is specific to commercial motor vehicle performance, technologies, and network from the prospective and for the purposes of public safety and border security efficiency. How one can improve the other one more.

In addition, the studies department wants TxDot to submit recommendations for enhancement for transportation infrastructure, and road technology to the legislature governor's office and the Lieutenant Governor no later than December 1, 2024.

And a little overview of study contributors and roles and responsibilities. The bill directed TxDot to compose a study to oversee and facilitate coordination with partners. TxDot was working in consultation with DPS and The Texas Department of Public Safety, and the Texas Military

Department to help guide the study, and help ensure it's met when it comes to border safety and border security.

In addition, as I mentioned, the bill is specific as to who TxDot has to work with in coordination with. In order for us to do that, we create a working group. The working group is meeting every other month, and they are helping TxDot guide the study, advise us in current issues across the border, and ensuring recommendations to submit to the legislature.

In addition, TxDot is working with two consultant teams, WSP and HNTB. WSP is the leading overall technical and stakeholder engagement management, and leading the transportation and connectivity-focused tasks. HNTB is leading the border security and public safety-focused tasks, and they support WSP on the transportation focus.

When we first introduced this to the BTAC, TxDot was in the process of meeting the first working group, and selecting members to participate as the working group. TxDot has (Unintelligible.) with them. The last update that we provided to the BTAC members was in November, and we met with them in December and again in February.

We were in the process of completing the

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study guidelines. We were coordinating with this with the working group members and we finalized those. We

also completed study material, and we began stakeholder

4 engagements. I'll go more into detail in the

5 presentation as to who we have spoken to, but I want to 6 thank you for your presence. Most of the BTAC member

thank you for your presence. Most of the BTAC members that have been with us one-on-one. Some of you have

helped us create a round table for (Unintelligible.) districts. And we have also begun the transportation

group analysis.

So what's the project status since we last presented this in November? As I mentioned, this is a study component and work flow. TxDot has defined the study guidelines and parameters, and we're in the process of analyzing transportation routes and border security. We're identifying, classifying, and prioritizing threats along the border.

In addition, we're looking at the routes and public safety, assessing commercial motor vehicle and inspection and enforcement. This is what we're working closely with DPS and Texas Military Department. In addition, we are also analyzing the routes and connectivity, which includes analyzing current and future transportation routes.

Part of the recommendations that we need

to submit are finding alternative routes along the

border community for commercial motor vehicles. Once we

3 have completed that we will identify funding strategies

for the proposed enhancements. House Bill 4422 requires

5 TxDot to provide funding strategies for proposed

6 enhancements. House Bill 4422 requires TxDot to provide

public strategies to the recommendations that are

8 submitted. Once we complete that, we will submit the

9 final report by December 1, 2024, and we'll continue to

10 conduct stakeholder and working group implications

throughout the study.

So a little timeline of where we're at.

When we presented this, it was in the November meeting, and we were in the process of establishing the study guidelines. For the timeline, we are analyzing the current route analysis and the security technology analysis, and we conducted a stakeholder engagement workshop, and we completed our first round of interviews. We have to get the future route analysis and we expect to complete both of them by the end of May.

We will also begin conducting the funding strategies by April, and we'll begin the drafting on the report and the final report within mid-May, and we will continue to work on that until December 1, 2024.



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So a little bit about the House Bill engagement requirements and approach. As I mentioned early on, House Bill 4422 is specific as to who TxDot does work in coordination with. Some of the entities listed as Texas must work in consultation with the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Texas Military Department, the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, law enforcement agencies near the Texas-Mexico border. In this case, TxDot invited to participate as part of the working group, eight county judges, and sheriffs from police departments along the border.

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In addition, the bill requests to work with county governors and representatives. We invited all judges within the border community to have a commercial motor vehicle crossings. They also ask us to work with the transportation industry, and we invited four members from the transportation industry to participate. The Texas Trucking Association, the Laredo Motor Carriers Association, El Paso Mobility Coalition, and Parker and Company.

In addition, we identified the non-profit of public research and development organization. In this case, that was South Western Research Institute. (ph.) We've met with the working group twice. The first was to introduce the project and then to review

initial findings from across the region. We -- then the stakeholder engagement, we started in El Paso and made our east and ended in Brownsville. Our next meeting is this month, and we will continue meets from Laredo to the Rio Grande Valley regions.

And here's just a representation map of study guidelines. We're looking at 60 miles from each commercial motor vehicle crossing, that's listed in blue. And then the items listed in orange are commercial motor vehicle border crossings that we are looking at. And also, they represented it in one way to the working group, either through the transportation industry, county judge, sheriff, or local law enforcement.

In addition, we are selected to -- we have selected multiple Texas-Mexico international border-crossings to serve commericial vehicles. So we're looking at all CMV border-crossings along the Texas-Mexico border. We are looking at 14 CMV crossings, and through that have limited CMV crossings, and when we mention limited, it's those that only do (Sotto voce.)

Also, all working group members have been contacted for individual interviews. Most have participated and worked conducting additional ones to

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make sure that everyone is heard and spoken to. In addition to that, the working group, as mentioned, is meeting bi-monthly, and we are conducting one-on-one interviews, and we'll continue to meet with them throughout the duration of the study. The next meeting is in April and we will have another one in June, August, October, and November to finalize the recommendations.

Beyond the working group meetings, we have arranged both working group members one-on-one and additional stakeholders to understand commercial motor vehicle security safety and efficiency conditions and needs of the Texas-Mexico border. We have completed four weeks of in-person engagement. We have visited El Paso, Presidio, Laredo, and the RGV regions. These visits also included binational stakeholder meetings. We had one in Reynosa, Nuevo Laredo, Presidio, and we're hoping we can conduct one in Juarez within the next couple of weeks, but we've reached more than 80 stakeholders on the Mexican side.

And just an example as to the stakeholders engage today -- this is not exhausted list. I just want to demonstrate a little bit of what additional stakeholder engagement we're conducting. I also want to show a little more about the (Unintelligible.) local law

enforcement and the cooperation with the study.

So beyond one-on-one interviews, we collect stakeholder input and observations from site visits. Our observations as we visit each commercial motor vehicle crossings from each city, we are categorizing them, mapping them, and documenting them with the source of information. The example shown here is from the (Unintelligible.) observation, and it's the same in the Laredo District.

Next, we are also synthesizing stakeholder information, and this is an example of a site visit and interview with DPS, and this is actually at the Veterans Bridge here in Brownsville. So we visited this facility with DPS and put out this stakeholder engagement. We'll be coordinating this with DPS and visiting their special facilities and meeting one-on-one with the working group members of the cities, to show us a little bit about what technology they have, what's operational, what's not operational. And it's helping us connect our site visit and interview to the geographic and (Unintelligible.) we have about the transportation system.

In addition to that, we're also conducting data analysis. So we are showing a review of TxDot ITS infrastructure that was found at the border region, as



you can see, (Unintelligible.) I know there was mention about the west-east connectivity. So you can see here some of the gaps between Laredo and Eagle Pass, but this is just a data map that shows how TxDot has their ITS connectivity.

In addition to that, we're also driving around the city looking at most of the conditions. We have an example of picture of when we visited Laredo. The consultant team visited each region as we were conducting the stakeholder engagement, and some of them were identified. So we wanted to make sure we captured those needs and challenges as we continue to progress with the study.

And also we are developing profiles for each commercial motor vehicle crossing. I'm using Veterans Bridge as an example. We're conducting one for each commercial motor vehicle crossing. So as you can see, we're looking at the Northbound crossings from 2023 and 2022, and then the number of violations, and this is to include the DPS data as they provided.

So as you can see, we had 23,977 violations in 2023. We're categorizing them by the top five violations. How many violations came as a total, and how many of those came with violations or no violations, and what's the average for the past couple

of years, and what's the percentage rate of the number of inspections that led to out-of-service violations.

In addition we're also assessing what technology they have and what improvements we can do, and what are the routes that are being used from the commercial motor vehicle border inspection onto state highways.

With that being said, what are the next steps over this study to fulfill our engagement requirement of completing this by December 1, 2024. So we'll conduct a third working group meeting. We'll continue to draft the current route analysis technical memorandum that is in regard to the safety, security, and efficiency supporting Operation Lone Star. We'll continue to draft a security technology analysis technical memorandum, and we'll continue to conduct additional stakeholder engagement.

With that being said, I want to thank you all for your time and here's my contact information. Thank you, and heres my cop fact thank you.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. Questions or comments? Go ahead.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: This is a question I had a while ago, in regards to the safety (Unintelligible.) and the violations that you have seen, 23,977. And

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these violations are, brakes, lights, tires, miscellaneous vehicle inspections. Is it possible -- do we have any plan or any discussion in regards to getting a similar inspection before they cross the border, in conjunction with our Mexican (Sotto voce.) to standardize the mechanical inspections, where as they would have, like, an inspection sticker that would be recognized by both countries, and this would alleviate all these deficiencies that are encountered, and more so they would improve the safety.

Is there any plan or any discussion regarding this?

MS. MAYS: Mayor, again, some of that is beyond TxDot. What we're trying to do here is to facilitate that, and with this study, since it was legislated, we're going to -- actually, this is the first time it's legislated as per the recommendations. So we're going to actually aspire this by providing recommendations, and something like what you just mentioned. That could end up as a recommendation in this study that the legislators will consider, and then, you know, figure out how that is implemented. Because, again, border -- unfortunately, there are 37 different entities and agencies involved. Including, federal, state, local, (Unintelligible.) so it's very, very

complex, but, I think, with these issues, it translates to a lot of stuff.

And, really, with this study, what they're asking us to do is how can we improve border security safety, but also the transportation side f things. So I think that's one that I can assure you that will come out, but TxDot -- we cannot necessarily, you know, do some of the things (Sotto voce.) Federal partners here -- a lot of that lies within the jurisdiction on both the Mexican side and the U.S. side. So that's something you can definitely be (unintelligible.), Mayor, on talking to both sides.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes, thank you. And definitely we're seeing around 20,000 trucks cross back and forth at Laredo, so this is important that we address this, and I'll make every effort to follow it up. Thank you.

MS. NELSON: Perfect. Any other comments? AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just wanted to follow-up on the Mayor's question. It's a very profound one. I think that I've encountered (Unintelligible.) between U.S. and Mexican regulations on water, and I've seen -- I encourage this group to study to acknowledge that challenge, and at least bring it to the attention of the legislator to elevate. I think that's a

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conversation that the United States and Federal Counter Parts may need to say.

I'm optimistic, though. I've seen evidence where Mexico is willing to work on partnerships and projects, and set aside their standards, and perform at the U.S. level expectations. There's a water facility where U.S. funds have been going -- going back to continue the maintenance of that plant in Mexico, and they treat the water to a higher standard that is required in Mexico as part of the commitment to receive those U.S. funds. So I think there is successes that could bring that friction.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. And I'm going to remind everyone to state your name before speaking, Jon.

MR. BARELA: I'd like to mention, since the Mayor mentioned this earlier, the current system in place, and, I think, I saw a record on the slide earlier in the presentation. The commercial vehicle safety outlines -- in that recognition, from that partnership with Canada, Mexico, and the United States, is something that you're referencing. It's a sticker that has a certain level of inspection. When you get that sticker, they give it to you a limited time of effectively (Unintelligible.) (Sotto voce.)

This is a vehicle that's had a high level

of inspection in the last 30 to 60 days, and what we've seen in the industry is that it's a very valuable tool, but utilizing the technology is what we're talking about will collectively resolve some of our issues at the border in that technology space. I think there is several things that you're really also talking about, so that you can take one as existing, and expand on it. So I just wanted to make sure that is something that is in existence, but it affords us the opportunity to improve.

MS. NELSON: Yes. Thank you. Any other questions or comments?

I have a question, Sergio. Are there any members of BTAC on the working group -- anybody else in this room?

MR. VASQUEZ: Yes. So I know Mr. Esparza represents the Texas Trucking Association, Mr. Rafael Aldrete with TTI, Captain (Unintelligible.) who has been working on behalf of DPS, and, I know, the county judge from Presidio is also here present. I can't name them all --

MS. NELSON: It's not a pop quiz. Thank you and I'm delighted. Thank you to those who are serving. I think it's very important. Other questions?

MR. ESPARZA: One more thing to add. John Esparza with Texas Trucking Association. When I

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look at some of the efficiencies of the (Unintelligible.) that are down here, brakes, lights, these are all very common throughout the state and country. So we're not also looking to our law enforcement partners to see where are the issues. We are going to see some of the same things at our borders that we are seeing around the state.

As a matter of fact, I will even offer that the average of service -- the times that the (Unintelligible.) service percentage of the border is actually better than most of the areas of the state, and most certainly in very specific areas of the state. (Unintelligible.) our West Texas region and our oilfield, we actually see better equipment at our border than we might in some of these areas that I mentioned.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. We'd now like to recognize Pedro Alvarez, our District Engineer from Texas Department of Transportation, and Helen Ramirez, the City Manager of Brownsville to present on new projects and industry prospectives.

MR. ALVAREZ: Good morning. Thank you once again for the opportunity to present to you all. In TxDot we always start our meetings with the safety minute. Today, is kind of windy out there so hang on to your doors.

So really quickly I wanted to give you a brief overview of some of the things that are happening here in our district. You know, in Texas economy we heard from the consultants earlier, how big our economy is in the State of Texas. And one of the things that I think is really, really important for all of us to recognize is that as we move forward, you know, we care a lot about what's happening in the rest of the state, but we need to start focusing what's going on along the border, whether it's El Paso, Laredo, or the Pharr District up here in the valley.

Texas economy, I've head many stats, but many of the stats that I've heard is, we wold need the state's largest economy if we were our own nation. I challenge you to think about how much of that economy passes through our border districts. So we need to be focusing on that to provide us connectivity to not only the rest of the state, but to the rest of the nation.

So when we start thinking about connectivity, I start thinking about Commissioner New, Commissioner Meade, and the commissioners as a whole, looking at, not only, the Texas (Unintelligible.), looking at the metropolitan areas, but also looking at out border districts, and connecting our border districts to the rest of the state.

When you look at this map -- bear with me here. On U.S. 77 -- thank you, sir. So right here on U.S. 77, we have identified several projects, and this is party of the I-69 E leg, if you will. So we have projects that have already -- they are in green. So green means, go. They are ready to go. We are pushing forward. We are letting some of these projets already, and we will have some other projects ready in the summer.

Yellow means caution. So we have them partially funded, but we're going to deliver the project in the next year or so. Red usually means stop. Right now, we have not developed authority for this project, but we're working very closely with TPP and the rest of the administration to identify the opportunities to finish this segment. So all and all there's 48 miles here in U.S. 77. Of the 48, approximately, one-third or so will be in construction or has been completed, and we'll continue to develop these projects moving forward.

Here is U.S. 281 or I-69C. We have a project in green here that's ready to go. It's about \$160 million dollar project that we'll be pushing forward. In yellow, we have to connect to the Brooks, Hidalgo County line. That's about \$250 million dollars, approximately. We are having a small funding gap, but

we are ready to make that happen. Lastly, all the way up to Falfurrias, the remainder of the district line for 281, we're working to get statewide development authority as well.

Here is U.S. 83, which connects Laredo, which is up here just outside the map, down to the RGV. So the U.S. 83 border, we have several projects that are ongoing here as well. Some are in construction already. Here in Northern Starr and Southern Zapata County, you start seeing projects in green that are moving forward. We have identified a project here. We have a small funding gap that we'll work through.

Then we will work our way south and we will continue on to Starr County. This is U.S. 83 as well. This project is being developed -- I'm sorry. This is State Loop 195 -- that will basically work as a relief route for U.S. 83, and the very congested area between Roma, Escobares, and Rio Grande City. State Loop 195 is the U.S. 83 relief route. We have two segments already identified that are approved for us to move forward, and we have small funding gaps for the remainder.

What will that do? It will provide connectivity around this heavily urban exterior, and then back south towards U.S. 83. In Hidalgo County, we

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have the -- what is referred to as the Sullivan City, La Joya, and Penitas relief route. This is route is estimated to be completed by the end of May, which provide that relief for U.S. 83, and around it's communities, and it's a relief route, folks.

One of the things that we've been challenged with over the years is if it's a relief route or is it a bypass. My personal opinion, a bypass has a negative connotation. It is a relief route to provide relief for the congestion in these areas, and it allows for additional economic development opportunities along these new corridors.

Moving into Hidalgo County. Here are the I-2, I-69C interchange. This is the biggest project ever led in the valley, \$303 million dollars. This is project is anticipated to reach substantia completion by the end of the summer. That will provide that connectivity along I-2, and I-69C. So that's really important moving forward.

Down here is the 365 tollway working closely with our partners in Hidalgo County. This project is estimated to be completed in September of 2025, \$280 million dollar project. What's the importance on that project? Well, that will connect the ports of Anzalduas, McAllen, Hidalgo to Reynosa, and the

Pharr port of entry. That is really, really important, because that provides additional mobility, if you will, and connectivity along the southern part of our district for that trucking industry. we focus on freight and trade and will continue to push forward to develop that project.

IPTC is this project in here. As you can see it's in green. We were fortunate and blessed to receive \$150 million-dollars to basically make that project whole in the last 2024 UTP that was approved. That will add the Donna International Bridge and the Progresso International Bridge into the equation, if you will. So we'll have five international bridges that will be interconnected with 365 tollway all the way up to I-2, and then moving forward.

So I'm focusing on a lot of major jobs, but I'm focusing, but let me reassure you that there are a lot of projects, if you will, that are in green.

These are at a capacity projects. Projects that are going from two to four lanes, four to six lanes, and some cases, two to six lanes. Many of these are (Unintelligible.) projects to improve the safety, but also to help improve connectivity and mobility in our region.

In order to connect in the lower valley,

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to connect towards the lower valley, we have I-69 connector project. This will connect I-69C to I-69E. The importance of that project is we look at I-2, and I have shared with some folks in the past that I-2, here in this region, has over 160,000 average of daily traffic. What does that mean? Well, that's comparable to South Austin in the Buda area. In South Austin they have 150,000 average daily traffic.

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So this area of I-2 is -- some of us who drove in from Hidalgo County this morning, realize there is a lot of traffic out there. So we need to continue to find alternative routes. I-2 will continue to be the lifeline of the valley, if you will, to interconnect the east and west, but when you start to looking at alternative routes, I-69 connector is one of those, and then U.S. 281 Military to connect us from Pharr down to the Brownsville area. It's also very important to ensure that we have that connectivity.

Some of the projects that we are looking at here in the Brownsville area -- we have State Highway four. I think Space X will be making a presentation here in a little bit. We have Highway four improvements out here to Space X or Boca Chica. We also have State Highway 48 improvements. You know, there's \$18 billion-dollars being invested in LNG plants there

in that area. I'm sure Helen will have a little more information on that. So I won't steal her thunder, but there a lot of activity happening in and around the port of Brownsville, so we've identified these projects.

And then down here, we have the a project that we refer to as East Loop that's being developed currently by Cameron County, our partners, and that is really, really important to provide that access from the Port of Brownsville to the port of entry here, if you will. So as we move forward, it's about making sure that we help educate elected officials, communicate with them, work in collaboration with the local governments in partnering, so that we can keep this Texas economy moving forward.

So now a couple of projects here in the Brownsville area -- I'll go real quickly through this in the essence of time, and provide an opportunity for Q & A. So some of the projects we have ongoing in construction right now is State Highway Four, concrete paving -- here are the limits for that project. Bear with me as I try to follow my notes. And so this project, basically, we're rehabilitating the roadway from I69E, the interstate, to State Highway 48, \$20 million-dollar project. We're working to have the project completed in March of 2026.

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It's being broken up in three phases. There's so much traffic that we have to break it up in phases. Here are a couple of pictures, existing conditions, some of the construction -- I'll go through this fairly quickly. You have your handouts in your packet. Improving drainage whenever possible. State Highway 48, the concrete median. Here are the limits up for that project. Basically, from State Highway four down to FM 511. All you'll see is the contractor, expected completion date of May of 2024.

Existing condition -- this is what we have, and this is what we're proposing. Basically, to (Unintelligible.) median to improve safety in the area. State Highway four median, another project on State Highway four -- yeah, State Highway four is a major roadway here in the Brownsville area. Here are the project limits. Basically, \$50 million-dollar project from State Highway 48 down to FM 313.

Typical section -- We're going to be installing raised medians, and then the rehabilitation project on State Highway four. You know, this area have seen a lot of distress. There's a lot of equipment, there's a lot of material being called into the area.

We've identified three projects. One project is emergency contract. It's about to be wrapped Page 109

up. We have another project in May, and then a third project that will be letting in May of 2026. This particular project is \$40 million-dollar project that, basically, will rehabilitate the roadway from FM 1419 towards the east. It's a nine mile project. This is what it looks like it today, and we're going to basically rehabilitate the roadway and keep it together. And lastly, FM 3248, raise median project,

\$30 million-dollar job from I-69E down to FM 1847, and here is the existing edition -- what we're proposing is the raised medians.

I know I rushed through that, but I'm looking at our timeline. I did just want to reemphasize the importance of some of the challenges that we are facing. It takes collaboration. It takes communication, ensuring that, once again, our elected officials understand these challenges that we're facing.

I applaud the efforts of our TxDot commissioners, and them entertaining thoughts and ideas from the BTAC. At the end of the day, when we speak up, we have thee ability to help influence the direction we are going. Texas economy is huge. We got to keep that moving. We got to keep that moving. I think the governor challenged us to go to the fifth largest economy, if we are our own nation. So we are working

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our way to get there.

I'll pause and see if there are any questions that I will be able to answer.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. And I think you are very wise to point out that we are in the very presence of two commissioners here at our BTAC meeting. Questions, comments, thoughts? Okay. Continue.

MS. RAMIREZ: Good morning. Thank you for having me. My name is Helen Ramirez. We're so happy to host BTAC for the first time in history, so enjoy yourselves here. Also, we have wonderful (Unintelligible.) downtown if you ever get the opportunity (Sotto voce.) Thank you for being here.

I just want really want to talk about -there's a lot of information on one graphic, but the
regional economic growth that is happening in our region
and in Cameron County. We also look at Matamoros.
Matamoros is the sister city for the City of
Brownsville. When we look at our capture area with
regard to retail or economic development, we are a
population of almost 200,000. During our daytime, our
population exceeds that.

Also, if you look at Matamoros, which is about, you know, 800,000 population, we're probably looking at a capture area of over one million people,

1.2 million that come across our borders. Here we'll see is a couple of things. Let me go back. We have the Port of Brownsville, we have Space X. Pete talked about the LNG, which we'll go through on my next slide. \$25 billion-dollar in investment between two (Unintelligible.)

And also the (Unintelligible.) corporation has about a 723 acre piece of property that is available for economic development. Why is that important? Because it fronts on, what Pete just described, Interstate 169, right. So that's important. We have almost a mega-site, which there are very --a mega-site in the state of Texas is an area for industrial or economic development that is almost 1,000 acres. So those are becoming less and less. (Unintelligible.) we're seeing less and less of these large sites that can be a rail (Unintelligible.), but has a really great connectivity with the port.

So as I go through my presentation, I really want you to think of the connectivity between different roads of transportation. So with that, tentacles of the City of Brownsville actually extend to the gulf. When we look at our extra jurisdiction, our jurisdiction really goes all the way out to Port Isabel, and if you look at your map, there's a red line that

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really extends to -- which shows -- this here is the second causeway, which we were fortunate to have and nationally classified.

Why is that important, because they're really looking at this multimillion dollar project, and low and behold the alignment is within cities ETJ, Extra Territorial Jurisdiction. So we're very excited about that project, and what it does for safety and connectivity throughout the region.

We're going to talk about six modes. Yes, there is six modes. I would say anything that has to do with any of these modes in transportation, specifically, highway to be looking at the complete streets. I know that TxDot is going to be adopting the complete streets log.

The Port of Brownsville, starts with water. The maritime part is a 400,000 acre public land. It's the largest in the nation. It has (Unintelligible.)

(Issues with speakers.)

MS. RAMIREZ: We are foreign trade number zone 62, which is one of the top three in the nation for import, export. And also experimenting a wonderful with core of engineers as deepening of a channel of 42 feet to 52 feet (ph.) Now, why is that important? It's a

game changer with a capacity of the cargo ships that will be coming in.

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Once you think about the Port of Brownsville and have the opportunity to come and visit it, is that they not only do ship breaking, but they actually build ships. That's really cool -- hybrid ships. So they are one of the most clean types of ship building that you'll see in the nation and in the world is happening at the Port of Brownsville through (Unintelligible.) So we have very international companies that come through our port of Brownsville.

In fact, Space X itself has shipped product from Florida, to our coast, to star base. Rail -- I think there is a need for additional rail connectivity. You know, rail -- putting in new rail in any business park is expensive. So when we look at rail, that's one of the missing links for expansion opportunities with UPRR (ph.) that serves our area.

Highway is important. The East Loop project for us is critical. Pete mentioned it. \$100 million-dollar classification of that project -- it not only links the Port of Brownsville and that growth area, but also our airport. So we're looking at multiple ports. So -- and Space X is a space port, and so we look at the space port, the maritime port, the



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airport, and the border, right. I would really ask that when we look at international hubs of multimodal transportation, that we look at the multiple types of ports, which is Veterans Bridge, which links that.

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Why it's also important is not only because of truck traffic connectivity, but also is that this bypass road will allow our community to be safer, because right now they use international, which goes through some school areas and commercial areas. So from an environmental and safety prospective, we really need that project to be funded and be built.

(Unintelligible.) is also very important to our city. As you know, with the ability of (Unintelligible.) funding, we've been very fortunate to expand our network of trails. In fact, we were one of the few cities to do the rails to trails, when the (Unintelligible.) trail was opened. We're actually using those counters to actually track data, in terms it's very important to show our community and show you all that we're a very data-driven community.

So we're tracking that with the initiative that the (Unintelligible.) in being able to track the type of -- the amount of pedestrian and bike traffic through our trails. The rails to trails national organization is actually going to do a documentary and

come to Brownsville and film our bike riders, not only from Brownsville, but we're inviting Matamoros because they also have their own trail system. The question is, how can we expand and connect both trials through, possibly, the (Unintelligible.) bridge.

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Of course, we've heard much news. The government's office announced that this is one of the largest infrastructure projects in the State of Texas. In 2023 at a whopping \$18.4 billion. Texas LNG has also identified that they are going forward with the projects. They received their permits. That's another \$3.2 million. But if you're looking at job creation, and the construction of these LNGs are within a timeframe of three to five years.

What I see is, we don't -- while we believe that five or 6,000 employees will come (Unintelligible.) constructing the LNG, that Texas LNG will also have it's construction workers. So we're looking at possibly 7,000 workers, but I would say, you know, I would think that they would probably overlap within a ten year period. So when you're living in a location for ten years, and we're the largest city in Cameron County, is that they'll probably have more roots.

What we also see is the (Unintelligible.)

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historically have seen will come back. There's a

commitment to bring workers back that have left the Rio

Grande Valley. Also, the Space X commitment to bring

people with skills to Brownsville, so we're very excited

5 about what's going on. When you look at the economic 6

generation of the Rio Grande Valley, specifically, the

Port of Brownsville, Cameron County, this is the future.

So it's really important to be ahead with all of our

proper planning and construction and tax dollars.

And Space X, I'm not really going into this, because we have the General Manager of Star Base, but we wanted to really extend and, actually, we believe it's so important the types of jobs generated, not only in Brownsville and Cameron County, but as far as McAllen. So when we look at the east-west connectivity of our road system. We really look at the economic hub that's within this region, and really breaking in workers not willing to live here, but come from other communities, and really have them have an opportunity to stay here in Brownsville.

We also talked about work force. We have another population of about 30 (Unintelligible.), which allows for intergenerational workforce. So manufacturing, life manufacturing, advance manufacturing works really well for our city and the population that

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we live in. So in order to be successful, most cities, I think, in the 21st Century, what we've learned after Covid is that it's very critical to have a broad band connectivity. So in 2014, the city was actually the least connected city in the United States. That is not a ranking that we are proud of, but it was a ranking that we realized that we needed to change.

And through the American Rescue Plan Act Fund that we all received, we dedicated \$19.5 million-dollars towards the middle mile. The middle mile, broad band, and then through a public, private partnership leveraged that, and they were leveraged another \$70 million. So the \$19 million-dollar project, we finished almost hundred percent of the middle mile, which is the first time in a while. It was just interesting about this, it was meant to be a (Unintelligible.) So we really want 100 of the 100 underground. It's costing about \$30 to \$35, which is probably half of what people will pay or paying right now.

So for us it's just important to allow for options in a way that also takes into considering types of security, because it is a network that is sustainable because it is below the ground. It's about 48 inches below grade. Because of the wind storm requirements,

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it's very important to be able have a force of fiber connectivity that is resilient for the area that we live in. So this is due to expire, and there is a philosophy there that, you know, while our (Unintelligible.) feel the need to go into our urban core area.

Our first ring, which is our downtown, which is the ring that has the most businesses, small businesses, and the most residence, the most dense part of the city. While there's construction, that's what we need to build up is the foundation to be successful, and from there if we have good fiber and broad band, then you can integrate the best technology.

We know as government, state, local, and federal government that personnel is hard. It's hard to come by. Covid changed the way we work. There's a lot of work force that works from home, right. So they need that reliable connectivity. But also our law enforcement, how can we extend their tentacles with

So what we found is, and what our Police Chief, Felix Sauceda, who is also my assistant city manager, is downtown surveillance equipment, license plate recognition, crash-related software, which is CRIS, routes. You know, we track routes impacted by LNG. We look at mega-sites for congestion. You can see the heat map that we've developed. So all of that -we're very data-driven. That's the way we work with Border Patrol as well.

This will also help feed some of the data that TxDot needs for border technology and border surveillance and security. Cyber Security hosted a Cyber Security Regional Conference a couple of weeks ago, and may of our ISDs came, and cities came to really understand, you know, the approach that we're taking with security.

From a government aspect, we felt when the cities are being hacked -- the City of Long Beach, for example, they were hacked so badly that for weeks all they could do was answer phones. So those are the types of even our most technological-savvy cities in the nation are being hacked, and we really need to think of that security.

But with regard to vehicular crossings, we have about 3.5 million that crossed in the fiscal year of 2023, and 1.7 pedestrian crossings in 2023. So when we look at that 5.2 million crossings between vehicular and pedestrian, those keep increasing and we expect that the rate and the trend will just continue, and we need to be ready for that.

One of our biggest (Unintelligible.) are

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signalized intersections. The city has been behind the

2 time with regard to -- and we realized that with the RGV

3 MPOs, construction, management plan. Only 10 percent of

our 262 signals were synchronized. So we would get the

5 calls, you know, (Unintelligible.) with Boca Chica,

6 right. Boca Chica takes you to the port and Space X,

and so we really got a lot of calls -- thank you for

synchronizing that street. It was amazing, but -- and

we are fortunate that while the City of Brownsville

allocated it's own general funds or sales tax funds, and

the 1.25 million to advance that. TxDot also is a very

collaborated partner in giving us about 400,000.

We're going to have some more, because we really need that in order to be effective and for our own region -- it's a great way there, and you don't have the right-of-way and the capacity to widen your roads. This is a great way to get traffic through safely and effectively. So through, hopefully, (Unintelligible.) and other types of funding, we can actually reduce that \$6 million-dollar (Unintelligible.) that we have.

Lastly, the city is looking at becoming a 5G city, but, really, you know, what are we doing. You know, not only cellular connectivity through our trails where people feel comfortable, having that quality of life, knowing that they are going to use a cell phone

safely if they are going to walk our trails.

Monitoring safety traffic management for better traffic flow. License plate recognition and predictive analytics. What do we do with the data that we're collecting to predict and really identify the future of our traffic congestion.

That's all I have, but I'm really excited for the future of Brownsville and the region, and, you know, can we be a model for different borders surveillance and just safety in general in our region, and extend our knowledge to our partners as we really become active in how technology improves our economic safety and development in our border region. Thank you.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. Questions or comments?

Mr. Mayor, I think I would use this slide as a T-shirt. Brownsville, Texas, offers five major modes of international transportation. That would be a wonderful T-shirt.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry Schwebel. On your slide number seven, you talked about traffic management and safety enhancements. Item number six says mega-site locations and large truck locations. Can you clarify? Are you trying to identify where these trucks are being concentrated at for parking purposes or what is that

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for?

MS. RAMIREZ: I think that one of things that we're going to do is, first of all, tracking where they're going. Also we received North American (Unintelligible.) ramp to look at where is that traffic congestion, and identify parking areas. The approach we're taking is a public private partnership. We're actually working with the Port of Brownsville to identify possible property where truck traffic and other types of modes of vehicular traffic and employees can park.

And then also we're going to be surveying, and we hired (Unintelligible.) to do the study of bus traffic transit. So where are our employees coming from? Right now with these parking spaces at our airport, but we really want to be able to help with truck traffic as well, because some of them are illegally parking on our streets and in our industrial parts. So we really want to (Unintelligible.) TxDot and take a different approach, a public private approach in terms of working with companies and identifying, you know, where they would like to see a truck parking area or a vehicular parking area.

MS. NELSON: Any other questions?
MR. JANEKA: Bobby Janeka. I have one

other comment. I appreciate Ms. Ramirez highlighting the exciting(Unintelligible.) and a lot of the drivers continuing to bring them in. I want to highlight one more at the risk of (Unintelligible.) I hope this is an impolitic project. It's one that I'm excited about. I don't know if anyone else in this group is aware of the potential for it. The decommissioning of the U.S. enterprise, not the start of it, unfortunately. One day, but the United States is slowly trying to digest the decommissioning of radioactive nuclear carriers. It's the largest they've ever done. Submarines and cruisers have been taken care of.

The first carrier at (Unintelligible.)
Commission has eight reactors in it. It's a large project and something that the existing decommission process is not well suited for, and they noticed opportunities for a private sector partnership.
Brownsville is one of those three ports that will actually take us to a different place.

I say that's exciting for a variety of reasons, because it represents the future line of future decommission projects where every carrier, every (Unintelligible.) that our U.S. Navy utilizes, and would come through the corridor into Texas. And decommission recycle, is one of the benefits that I understand in

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Brownsville (Unintelligible.) brag about in putting a (Unintelligible.) It's not something that I hear from other stakeholders, but I know that sort of enterprise would touch -- no pun intended -- would touch lots of our sectors. So I wanted to highlight that as well.

MS. RAMIREZ: One last thing. When it comes to us, my understanding is that all (Unintelligible.) clean of certain reactors. So we're not -- I know it would be important that it would be clean by the time it gets, you know. When I go back to the roads of transportation, I always think when you think of Space X and (Unintelligible.) Space X is really looking at point to point travel. So we really look at that. We google that. Maybe going to Europe or going to Asia within an hour from Star Base.

So when we look at hubs or airport hubs, this can be it's own transportation in an actual transportation hub trough a vehicle that is not necessarily an airplane. I'm jus, kind of, like, throwing it out with what is the future of our region. It's more than what may meet our eye right now.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. These are exciting times. Any other questions or comments? All right. We are ready for our next

presentation. I would like to recognize

Kathryn Lueders, Starbase General Manager and Space X, who will present the companies perspective and it's impact on the region.

MS. LUEDERS: Okay. Give us a few minutes to do the switchover on the computer. I have a video that we're going to run off of my laptop.

First of all, I really, really, appreciate the opportunity. Helen was a good -- straight person for me to send to stage for the activity that we are planning. Obviously, this is a very, very critical time for us to be able to ensure that we've got the infrastructure and the place for our plans going forward. So we'll do the switch out.

While we're waiting and getting everything ready, I've been here for a little bit less than a year, and I'm always amazed -- every few weeks -- unfortunately, I don't get out of Starbase that often. There's always something going on. So this is a very, very exciting time in the area.

We have over -- and I'll talk about this a little more in a little bit, but we have, you know, over 2,000 employees that are from all over the Rio Grande Valley. People drive in all the way from McAllen, Harlingen, all areas, and 80 percent of our work force originated in the Rio Grande Valley. So the town here

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is super important, the transport here is very, very important, and, really, not only for getting our hardware across the border -- across the roads, but getting our people to and from work, and safely home again. That project is critical for us and for the safety of our personnel.

This is a (Unintelligible.) vehicle. Like Helen was talking about, we have a lot of use for this vehicle. We're really developing a brand new transportation capability. That is -- we are planning to not only to make space port our new launch location for being able to send people to the surface of the moon, but for us actually to be in a planetary species.

So Elon, is, you know, he's expecting us to do this in two or three years. It may take us a little bit longer, but we're avidly working towards us providing a transportation capability for this nation, and our world that will be opening up new opportunities for humankind.

Space X started pretty small, about 15 years ago, and right now we have three really critical facilities here in Texas. What's great about Starship is, you know, we build everything except for the engines themselves in the State of Texas. So we bring in, you know, big sheets of stainless steel on one

end of the star factory and starships come out on the other end. Engines are built in Hawthorne (ph.) But they are tested in McGregor, and we're very, very happy that we are building a capability here that has Rio Grande Valley hands all over it.

We don't do anything small. (Unintelligible.) was the largest transportation vehicle that had ever been built in the U.S., and the starship vehicle actually has twice the (Sotto voce.) Why do you need something that big? You need something that big to be able to carry large amounts of equipment, to be able to set up bases on the moon, to be able to go and have reasonable mission to be able to go to mars. It also provides the port to port solution that Helen was talking about.

Space X did start 15 years ago, just figuring out how to launch a (Unintelligible.) If you look at significantly, we've been working on some major significant milestones. First time we used a vehicle was in the 2015 timeframe. Huge, huge -- people don't realize how important it is to be able to accomplish the (Unintelligible.) ability, because it's what allows us to then turn around vehicles and fly again. It's really a game changer for us to be able to do the (Unintelligible.) missions that we want to communicate.

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Elon is hoping to have us also accomplishing that missions, to having close to 100 by the 2030 timeframe. It's really what we're going to need for the next round of missions.

So Starbase is also an ever changing base. When I came in there last May, we were just beginning to lay our foundation for our data factory, our one million square foot star factory, where I said before, we're bringing in raw materials on one end and having starships going out the other. It's also where we're doing our launches. We have a very unique launch capability. Normally, launch large (Unintelligible.) we're actually trying to, again, get the price of a launch down to a way that we're able to launch, have minimal refurbishment on a launchpad and the infrastructure, and then be able to turn around and get set for the next mission. This picture shows some of the critical people that contributed to us getting ready for the last mission.

Texas Impact -- so I already talked about the fact that we have, you know, over 2,500 personnel that goes down highway four every day, plus over 500 contractors that are helping support. We have construction in the (Unintelligible.) We have construction in the star factory area. We're building

another mega bay (ph.) And we're building a second pad. So all of that needs people and material and commodity to support all of these activities.

Right now we're in the process of everything that is uses, water, gas -- everything that is going down highway four, and we are work working on -- setting up and working with the public utility commission here to be working on the water pipeline, but we're also getting our utilities in place for us to be able to minimize some of that traffic. It's still -- Highway fours is still our major artery for our materials coming in and out. You can imagine having infrastructure needs to be able to support, so support is critical for us.

This is just a picture of where we're very proud of being apart of our community here, and support the community in different aspects, and feel part of the community as we serve in different ways in the Boca Chica area. I already told you -- did a little bit of a cheater alert there.

We have a 400 feet tall vehicle. Starship is the most powerful vehicle, 16 million pounds of thrust. We are working to have it be reusable. We, actually, last time tried to bring the booster back and the starship back, and it's part of our learning, where

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we rank our next mission, which is coming up in May. We'll continue to develop the capability for us to move forward to seeing a fully reusable vehicle. As I said, this is really part of our strategy to really provide the most cost effective launch capability. It really opens up the opportunities for the Starbase area to be an effective space for it.

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To do all of this you really have to try. People always say, flying in space is hard, and I can tell you that it is really, really, really, hard, as you know. It takes a lot of testing for us to, kind of, perfect and continue to grow and move the mission forward. The last of each of our missions have been successfully -- it pushed the envelope further and further for us to achieve our overall mission, and reusability to be able to bring those boosters back, and fly again from the coast here.

So we had -- this is our first flight test was last April. Our second test was in November, and then -- I have a video here. We couldn't get the sound for it. I'm really sad about that, because that would've been really impressive for in this room, but I just want you to be able to see a little video of -- and you can definitely feel this in your chest as you (Sotto voce.) I do want to emphasize to everybody that even

though you can feel it in your chest, it's not a structural load on homes or anything else. If that would have been the case, my house in (Unintelligible.) right now would be a problem outside of the Kennedy Space Center.

So one of things that we are going to have to do is continue to educate the area on what do launches do, what kind of environments do they invoke on the area, and make sure we have people that understand what a space port means to the area from an environments perspective.

I hope that at least some of you were able to watch this. It's just magnificent to me. You can see that all the engines are working. We made it to (Sotto voce.) We got to orbit. Separating -- when people say (Unintelligible.) we actually start the second stage, the starship portion of the engine before we separate. This just shows they are starting to learn how to maneuver the booster as it's coming in. People always say, well, you didn't get the booster back. Well, no other company gets any boosters back. Everybody doesn't realize that only the Falcon 9 -- the first launch vehicle ever that's gotten their booster back. So we've all gotten use to it, and I hope one day we are all going to get used to seeing starship boosters

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coming back along with the starships.

This is actually very amazing. I worked with NASA for 30 years, and we never, ever saw recovery of a vehicle coming back for reentry, because the (Unintelligible.) system never worked. So that picture -- I don't know if everyone is looking at that, but that was the first in a lifetime to ever be able to see that reentry actually through a communication system. So another little bit of a way to be able to push things forward.

So now we're moving out -- like I have been talking about. We're going to be ready to fly again in May. Our goal is to continue to improve our reliability and capabilities. Every single flight we're continuing to push the envelope further to be able to get to the missions of us, you know, becoming a space port, just like the launch in the returning of the (Unintelligible.) of the Falcon 9.

We continue to monitor (Unintelligible.) and sound levels in surrounding areas to ensure that we're understanding what is our overall impacting areas. And then this is, obviously, a collaboration working with the FA and our other agencies to ensure that we're synced up and moving forward.

We do really appreciate all the work that

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- 1 the community has done to support us. You know, coming
 - in Cameron County, City of Brownsville, City of
- 3 Harlingen, all the communities around us, the Port of
- Brownsville working with us. Port of Brownsville is a
- 5 major transport site. You know, we, one day, want to be
- 6 shipping starships. We actually still want Starbase to
- be the single place where we're building starships, but
- 8 we do have a dream one day to also be potentially be
- 9 launching them from the (Sotto voce.) to be able to have
- 10 a second launch site as we're moving forward, still
- 11 having Starbase as the primary launch site, but to be
- 12 able to do that you've got to have infrastructure. To
- 13 be able to, you know, transport these large vehicles
- 14
 - safely, bring them to the port, and be able to ship them out.

We understand that this area has been very important to us to provide us infrastructure, but we need to partner and continue to partner with both the State of Texas, Cameron County, all the local municipalities to make sure we are continuing to meet our goals, and continuing to have this being an extremely vibrant place to work and live.

I am very proud of the fact that we can now say that we can have people here in the RGV say, I am a rocket scientist, and I am launching rockets from

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the RGV. We're looking to have many, many more launches coming up. Thank you.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. And I will say, we are so proud to have Space X here in Texas, and I know Brownsville is very proud to have space as one of their modes of transportation.

Members, any questions?

MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry Schwebel. How do you move the parts to the Space X location?

MS. LUEDERS: So, actually, onsite we have our mobility transport, like, movers that actually move the rockets around on our site. There are (Unintelligible.) systems that move, but for our -- over the TxDot transports we actually have special carriers and transportation companies that come in and work with -- depending on whether it's commodity that we continually process. Right now we're working on moving in pieces of a launch pad that's currently at the board to be able to send it. Those are obviously very unique capabilities, so we have special transportation companies that are coming in with multi axle systems to be able to distribute the load, and that's -- we have unique configurations that we use for those specialty kind of transports.

MR. SCHWEBEL: More specifically, is it by

rail?

MS. LUEDERS: Oh, no, no, no. We obviously bring in on ship from Florida, but once they get here we're bringing it in over the roads. So you can understood how important that road is. That's why I'm talking about, if you see that one piece and then some day I hope some of you can come out to Starbase, but you'll see that Highway four is a major road for us. Everything goes in and out on Highway four.

MS. NELSON: Other questions or comments? Thank you, again, so much for your presentation.

All right. Now, I want to open the floor for discussion if there are any issues or comments or feedback or thoughts about future topics for the committee to discuss at our next meeting?

MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry Schwebel. I've got three items that I'd like for consideration for future meetings. I think we look to some of them in regards to, Mayor Trevino -- in regards to parking. I know TxDot and (Unintelligible.) the number of parking studies throughout the state of Texas, but I think it's particular that the truck traffic along the border, that we, perhaps, get an update on potential parking studies that are dedicated to the border region. (Unintelligible.)

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And the second topic that I would encourage and tie into that would be to get (Unintelligible.) To give us an update in regards to (Unintelligible.) certifications, or (Unintelligible.) programs. What the plans are for the ports of entry of the border, what plans are there to get more certifications, (Sotto voce.)

And then finally, I'd like to ask for an update for consideration for DPS to provide us with an update on the safety inspection checks along the border, the numbers, what the numbers look like in regards to stops or citations for the (Sotto voce.) and how we can come up with perhaps proactive programs to work together with the first responders on the (Unintelligible.) as well as (Unintelligible.) (Sotto voce.) Those are the three areas.

MS. NELSON: All worthy considerations. Any other recommendations?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have a suggestion. MS. NELSON: Will you state your name.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I think we've seen it in the news about the slowdown in demand of sales of (Sotto voce.) Last week I was talking to managers from major corporations (Unintelligible.) -- they were telling me that the one of their concerns is that the demand is (Unintelligible.) Next year is significantly low (ph.) the stock turnover, which regularly every month they have a turnover (Unintelligible.) And have to apply 65 percent, which (Unintelligible.) (Sotto voce.) This is not only something in demand of (Unintelligible.) vehicles, but maybe the demand on other vehicles too. So just to get some opinion, because I think it is in the news, but I think it would be good to get more opinions on that.

MS. NELSON: All right. any other thoughts? Yes, ma'am.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good morning. I would --

MS. NELSON: I'm sorry. Would you state your name.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah. I'm sorry. We have good news. (Unintelligible.) We will remain open officially to continue serving (Unintelligible.) The Chihuahua Government has been working closely with the (Unintelligible.) to promote the use of this (Unintelligible.) So we're having a good response. We also opened conversation with the federal government to have representatives from different federal institutions

in order to have a complete international trade service under (Sotto voce.) We will continue (Unintelligible.)

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MS. NELSON: Wonderful news. We like good news.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'd like to suggest that we pursue what we've been discussing about multimodal (Microphone is off.) -- excellent, but I know that there (Unintelligible.) and trucking people here, and I think it will be very useful to, sort of, have of that private sector prospective on what we're discussing, as well as the (Sotto voce.) Thank you.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. Any -- yes, ma'am.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you, Secretary. Probably another discussion would be all of the smart technology that is (Unintelligible.) and particular in Texas. How they are being installed, some of them are (Microphone is off.) -- how they are improving, and also the Mexican side is also having the technology operation (Unintelligible) -- of the future needs. Thank you.

MS. NELSON: Thank you. Absolutely. Any other thoughts. Yes, sir.

MR. CALVO: Eduardo Calvo. Just a couple of things of what Violetta just mentioned of the (Unintelligible.) -- of Guadalupe and what Marcelino said about (Unintelligible.) That's great. Great efforts in the combination of the State of Chihuahua

with El Paso County, but also a big shout out to the CBP folks in the El Paso region. They've been a tremendous partner, and they've done a lot of work to keep that port of entry open. So, you know, thanks to the CBP and your colleagues out there in the port of entry.

This second comment is more for the TxDot folks. Is there any plans for a formal update to the border transportation mass? I was just thinking, you know, we were developing that plan four years ago, right in the smack of the Pandemic when we were still learning how to work remotely and, you know, all those things. I think at this point in terms of having the up and down of demand and supply chain issues, are you looking at maybe updating the overall plan anytime soon?

MS. MAYS: Stay tuned. I think right now we have our (Unintelligible.) -- out, to tie in the consultants to help us with the border master plan. hopefully, you know, in the next six to eight months we should have a consultant on board, and hopefully start the process by the end of this year. To your point, we recognize that a lot of the data (Unintelligible) -- the data was pre-Covid. We tried to get it updated, but a lot has changed. So we are a little bit behind. Hopefully, by the next meeting we should be able to provide an update to all. So we will do that.

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MS. NELSON: Thank you. Okay. Good. Anybody else? All right.

Well, then I would like to recommend that this committee will hold it's next meeting in Houston, Texas, and we will talk about the ports. I would ask TxDot to send out the dates on that. (Unintelligible.) I'll ask TxDot to send out the details soon.

Any other business to come before this committee? Again, I want to express my sincere gratitude to our host city, Brownsville. Thank you so much. I want to thank the Texas Department of Transportation for all their hard wok. Commissioners, thank you for being here. Thank you all, members, for being here. Thank you to our presenters.

And with that, it is 11:58. Do I have a motion to from the members to adjourn? There you go. Has the motion been made and seconded? It has been made and seconded. Is anybody all in favor of adjourning this meeting say, I.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: I.

MS. NELSON: Meeting stands adjourned until our next meeting in Houston. Thank you all so much.

(Meeting concluded at 11:58 a.m.)

REPORTER CERTIFICATE

I, LAUREN L. TRUEBA, Federal Stenographic Shorthand Reporter, before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and correct record of the proceedings given; that said proceedings were taken by me stenographically and produced by computer-aided transcription.

I further certify that I am neither counsel for, related to any party, nor an employee of counsel, nor in any way interested in the outcome of this action.

As witness my hand and seal this 13th day

of May, 2024.

Lauren L. Trueba Federal Reporter Notary ID: 131689911

EXP: 09/11/2027



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