Texas Department of Transportation

Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan

Executive Summary

July 2025

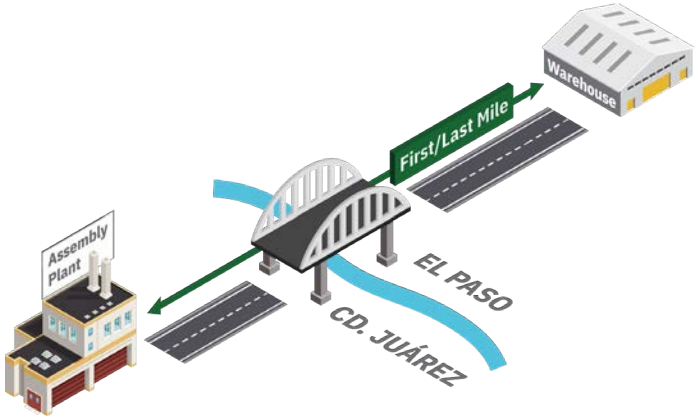
Contents

1 Plan Overview

The Texas-Mexico Border Region (study area) serves as a critical gateway linking the United States (U.S.) and Mexico, fostering robust trade, innovation, and cultural exchange. In 2021, the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT's) Border Transportation Master Plan (BTMP) established a long-range vision for infrastructure improvements and recommended a comprehensive set of connectivity studies to address key regional transportation needs. Specifically, the BTMP identified the following three interconnected factors for analysis:

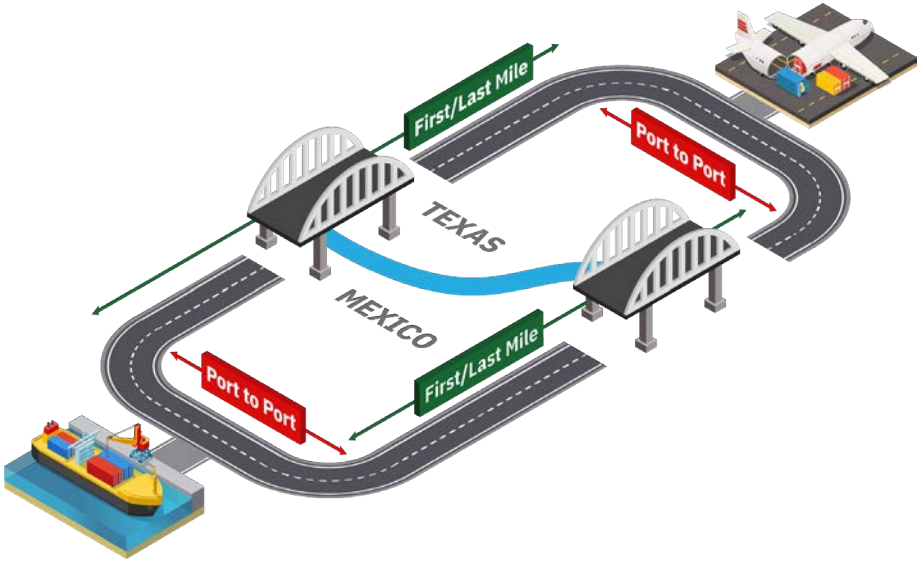
1 First & Last Mile Connectivity

Analyzes immediate roadway connections at border crossings that serve as initial origins or destinations for cross-border movement of people and goods. This component specifically examines short, local trips—for example, northbound or southbound shipments between assembly plants in Ciudad Juárez and warehouses or distribution centers in El Paso.



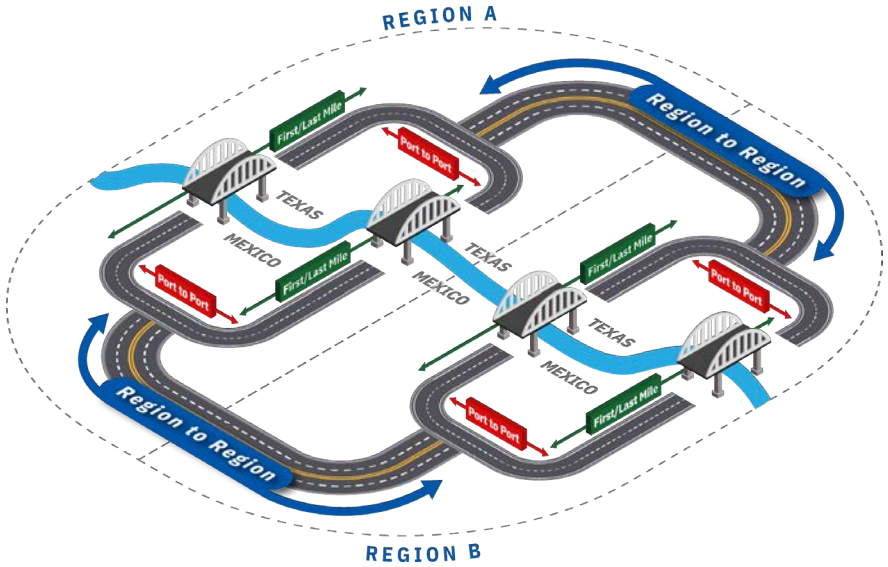
2 Port-to-Port Connectivity

Building upon first and last mile connectivity, this study assesses intra-regional trips and focuses on connections between border crossings and ports within each border region. It evaluates key freight corridors linking international shipment hubs such as warehouses, intermodal transfer points, maritime and inland ports, railyards, and airports.



3 Region-to-Region Connectivity

Evaluates long-distance inter-regional connections between border regions in Texas and Mexico. The analysis centers on the Regional Border Connectivity Network (RBCN) — a subset of Texas's multimodal transportation system — critical for efficiently moving goods and people throughout the region. The RBCN is separated into three subregions: West, Central, and South.

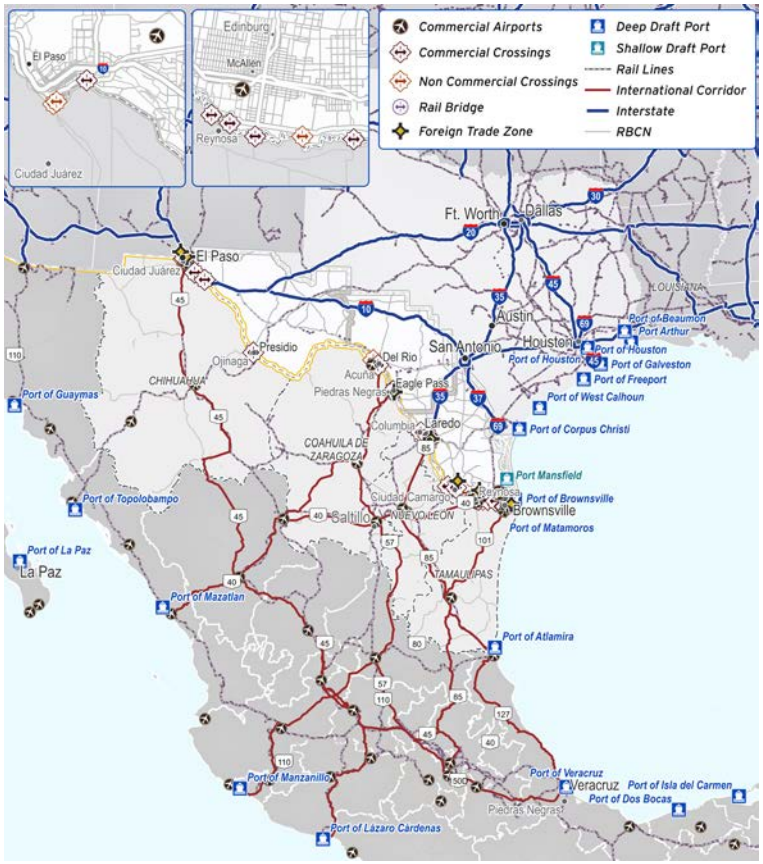


The West, Central, and South border regions each encompass portions of multiple TxDOT districts. These regions were not defined based on district boundaries, but rather on the functional relationships among key origins and destinations within approximately 100 miles of the Texas-Mexico border. Each region reflects a cluster of border-crossing activity hubs that are connected by shared supply chains and primary freight corridors.

This regional structure supports the assessment of region-to-region connectivity by highlighting how well current corridors align with actual freight movement. It also helps identify capacity limitations and connectivity gaps that may not be apparent when using administrative boundaries alone.

Purpose

Despite ongoing investments, aging infrastructure and limited adoption of advanced customs technologies continue to create connectivity challenges. In addition, shifting global supply chains and rising freight volumes are increasing strain on roads, rail lines, and ports of entry. The purpose of this Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan is to comprehensively evaluate these challenges and propose targeted improvements. By clearly defining the role, requirements, and importance of the first and last mile, port-to-port, and region-to-region connectivity studies, TxDOT is equipped with a data-informed roadmap to enhance safety, mobility, efficiency, infrastructure preparedness, and economic vitality in the Texas-Mexico Border Region.



The Texas-Mexico Border Region is supported by an extensive network of highways, railroads, border crossing facilities, foreign trade zones, ports, airports and international corridors that enable cross-border trade and mobility

Background & Context

The Texas-Mexico Border Region spans 1,254 miles—about 64% of the U.S.–Mexico boundary—and serves as a critical corridor for the movement of goods and people across North America. This plan focuses on a 100-mile zone on both sides of the border, encompassing Texas's West, Central, and South subregions referred to as the Texas Border Region, and parts of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas referred to as the Mexico Border Region.

Although transportation and warehousing employment in the region has grown by 22% over the past decade, capacity constraints remain. Roughly 29% of the population faces economic and extreme weather vulnerabilities, especially among historically underserved Hispanic, Latino, and tribal communities. Challenges such as automobile dependency, limited broadband, and projected border delays of over 202 million person-hours annually by 2050 underscore the need for targeted improvements.

This plan provides a framework for understanding how people and goods move through the region and where strategic investments can yield the greatest impact. With rapid population growth, dynamic trade activity, and large-scale infrastructure projects underway, the region is poised for transformation. While issues like high poverty, limited digital access, and unreliable connectivity persist, they also present opportunities for innovative multimodal transportation solutions.

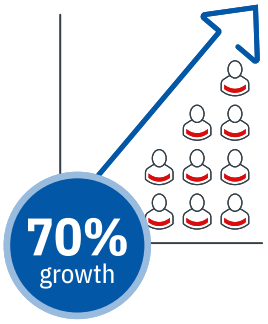
Economic activity is accelerating, especially in trade-related sectors. Stimulated by the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), border communities are experiencing industrial growth and increasing flows of freight and people. These demographic, economic, and policy trends highlight the urgent need for coordinated, future-ready transportation investments to enhance connectivity, strengthen trade, and unlock the region's full potential.

The Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan Study Area Encompasses:

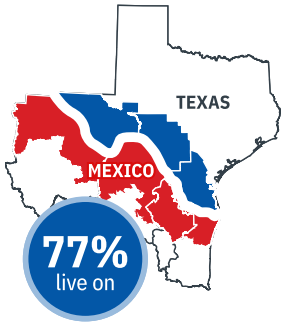
- **35** Border Crossings
- **43** Texas Counties
- **99** Mexican Municipalities
- **13.6** Million Residents

Since the 2021 BTMP, several factors have intensified connectivity challenges and put added pressure on the Texas-Mexico Border Region's transportation infrastructure.

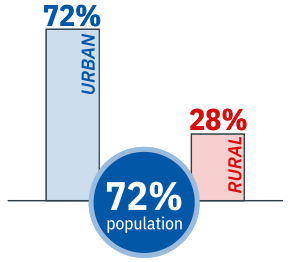
Texas-Mexico Border Region Supports a Growing Population



1990 to 2019



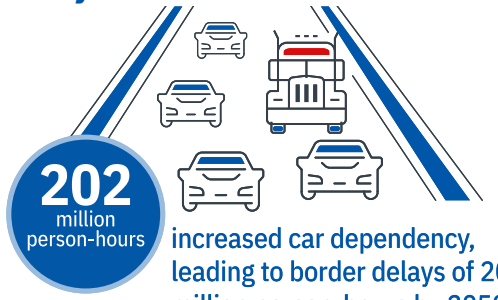
Mexican side of the border



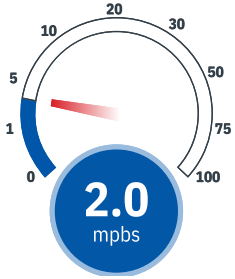
in study area resides in El Paso/Juárez, Monterrey, Brownsville/Matamoros

There is a Growing Need for Transportation Connectivity

vulnerable to economic or environmental hardship

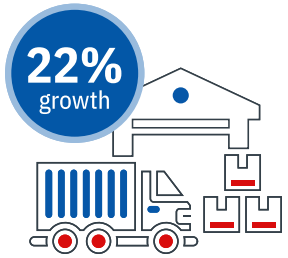


increased car dependency, leading to border delays of 202 million person-hours by 2050

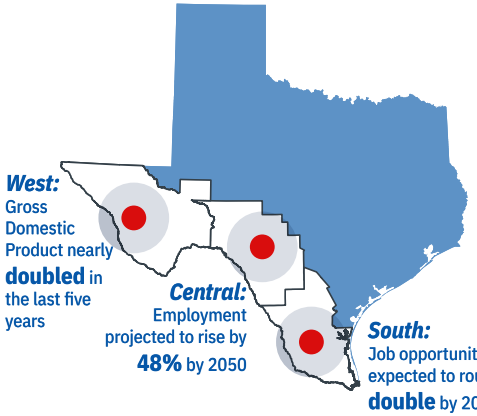


Limited high-speed internet across many counties & cities hinders participation in planning progress

Emerging Economic Opportunities



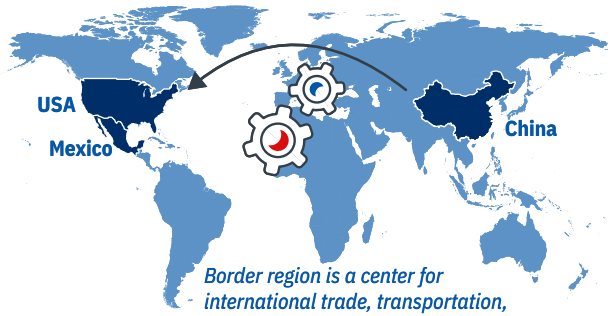
in transportation & warehouse industry jobs in last decade



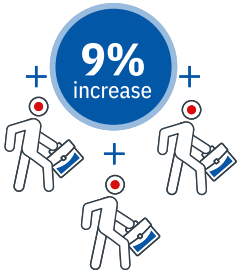
West: Gross Domestic Product nearly **doubled** in the last five years

Central: Employment projected to rise by **48%** by 2050

South: Job opportunities expected to roughly **double** by 2050



Border region is a center for international trade, transportation, and warehousing



in total jobs from 2010 - 2021 in Texas Border Region

Nearshoring

Nearshoring is a strategy in which companies relocate production and services closer to their primary markets, often to reduce transportation costs and mitigate global supply chain risks.

- Nearshoring in the Mexico Border Region has surged due to the USMCA.
- Foreign direct investment (FDI) linked to nearshoring grew by 47% in the first nine months of 2023.

Major Infrastructure Investments

- The **Ports-to-Plains Corridor** provides the efficient transportation of goods and people from Mexico, through west Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, and ultimately Canada and the Pacific Northwest.
- The **I-27** corridor between Laredo and Raton, New Mexico is designated as a Future Interstate Highway.

Goals & Objectives

Goals of the Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan aim to enhance transportation efficiency, reliability and connectivity between border regions, while also boosting economic competitiveness and ensuring safety and security. Key objectives include modernizing and maintaining transportation assets, protecting the environment and strengthening cross-border resilience.

MOBILITY & RELIABILITY

Provide options for efficient and reliable transportation between regions

ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Enhance economic linkages between border regions to boost regional competitiveness and support growth in trade values while balancing both the positive and negative impacts of regional border connectivity projects

SAFETY & SECURITY

Improve travel safety between and within border regions

CROSS-BORDER RESILIENCY

Increase interconnectivity between border regions to provide resiliency in the event of disruptions

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

Develop the RBCN to direct funding toward projects that improve border connectivity

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Engage binational stakeholder groups and border region travelers to identify needs and guide future implementation

ASSET PRESERVATION

Maintain, preserve, and modernize assets on the RBCN

STEWARDSHIP & SUSTAINABILITY

Leverage border connectivity investments to protect and enhance the environment in border regions

TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Leverage technology for safer and more efficient movement of people and goods across the border and between border regions

Approach & Data Sources

The Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan relies on a structured approach that incorporates a robust literature review, detailed data analysis and stakeholder outreach.

The following flow chart summarizes the approach and methodology used to identify and develop the projects, policy and program considerations presented in this plan.

Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan Approach & Methodology

Data Collection & Literature Review

Developed a 'Material Review Matrix' using key plans.

Utilized telematics and traffic count data and travel demand models.

Analysis of Existing & Forecasted Conditions

Evaluated current performance metrics using historical and predictive data.

Assessment of Identified Needs

Analyzed existing conditions using current and forecasted data to pinpoint where performance is lagging.

Assessment of Unmet Needs

Scored and categorized unmet needs based on stakeholder feedback, criticality and comparisons to ongoing projects.

Project, Policy & Program Considerations

Formulated short-, medium- and long-term project, policy and program strategies for enhancing border connectivity across first and last mile, port-to-port and region-to-region levels.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder input was gathered through regular TxDOT District meetings, workshops and targeted interviews with agency and industry members.

Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was a key component of the Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan. Throughout the effort, binational stakeholders provided input to validate data accuracy and identify needs, challenges, and potential solutions. These included topics such as network reliability, roadway amenities, operational improvements, enhanced capacity, and support for the region's growing economy. This engagement occurred through a series of meetings, binational workshops, and targeted interviews with agency and industry members, detailed next:

TxDOT District Meetings

Two of three rounds of virtual meetings were held with El Paso, Laredo and Pharr TxDOT Districts in 2024 to introduce the plan, review existing conditions and gather feedback on goals and preliminary needs. Meetings in February, May and September were scheduled ahead of binational workshops.

Stakeholder Workshops

TxDOT held two rounds of binational workshops in six border cities (i.e., El Paso, Presidio, Del Rio, Laredo, McAllen and Eagle Pass) in the study area. There were over 200 attendees from both public and private sector groups that attended both in-person events.

Agency & Industry Interviews

As a follow-up to the regional binational stakeholder workshops held in May, one-on-one interviews were conducted with five participants who had additional data or detailed information to share that was not available during the workshops.

These virtual interviews took place in August 2024 and included agency and industry representatives from both sides of the border.

Border Trade Advisory Committee (BTAC)

The BTAC played an instrumental role in guiding the development of the Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan.

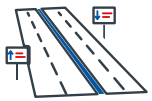
Plan updates were presented to BTAC during its second quarterly meeting in April 2024 and again at the fourth quarterly meeting in November 2024.

2 Existing Conditions

First & Last Mile Connectivity

The first and last mile analysis included assessments of traffic conditions and a review of the number of crossings available by mode. It also examined the count of northbound crossings, as well as the number of transit services and airports identified in the region.

CORRIDORS



18 (242 mi) corridors in Texas

29 (294 mi) corridors in Mexico

TRAFFIC

3.3k hours of bottleneck in Texas

8.4k weighted AADT in Mexico

35k weighted AADT in Texas

NUMBER OF TEXAS-MEXICO CROSSINGS

15 crossings process trucks

28 crossings process personal vehicles

22 crossings process pedestrians

18 crossings process buses

6 crossings process rail

2023 NORTHBOUND BORDER CROSSINGS PER MODE

5.3 m trucks

35.1 m personal vehicles

16.2 m pedestrians

65 k buses

1 m rail containers

TRANSIT SERVICE

8 transit service providers

AIRPORTS

8 airports in Texas

5 airports in Mexico

Representative existing conditions observed across the Texas Border Region include:

1. Congestion on the U.S. side of the border is often influenced by the number of lanes open at international crossings, which directly affects wait times and vehicle queuing on first and last mile corridors.
2. Crash hotspots along first and last mile corridors are predominantly located at intersections, including several within downtown areas.
3. At-grade rail crossings continue to disrupt vehicle traffic in the Texas Border Region, particularly when trains stop for crew changes.
4. Public transit services face challenges related to limited infrastructure, funding, support services, technology and available expertise.
5. Lack of interoperability among service providers—such as oversize/overweight corridor permitting and unified cargo processing—contributes to inefficiencies in freight movement along the border.

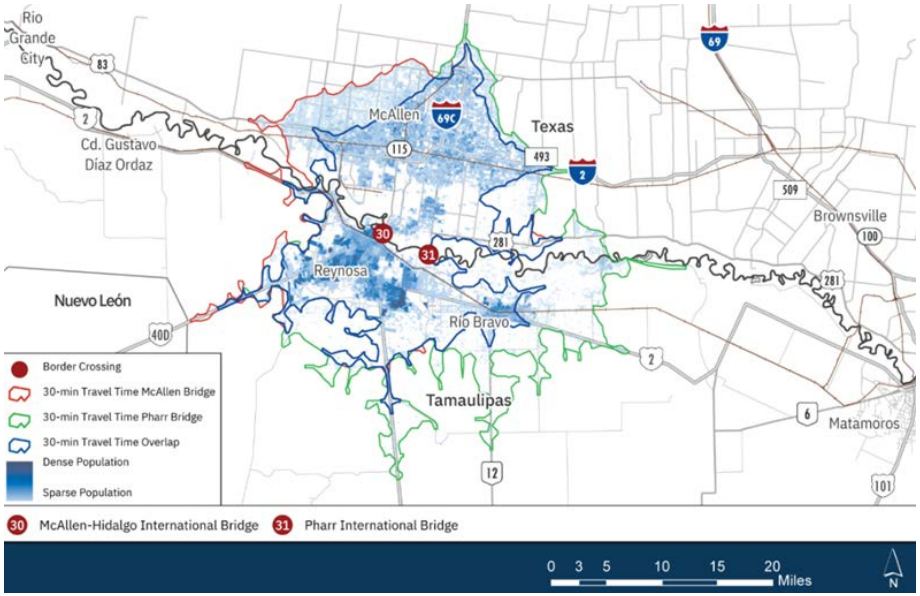
Port-to-Port Connectivity

Alternative Crossing Analysis

Local Population Catchment

The local population catchment analysis evaluated the total reachable population within a 30-minute drive from both sides of the Texas-Mexico border.

For example, the figure in this section shows the overlap between the McAllen-Hidalgo International and Pharr International bridges. The 30-minute local population catchment score measures how well alternative crossings can serve an area if a nearby crossing is closed.



Adjacent Crossing Population Coverage Analysis Example

Diversion Routes, Wait Times & Volumes

Each international crossing was assessed to identify viable alternatives in the event of a closure. This included locating the nearest options for processing personally owned vehicles (POVs), buses or commercial motor vehicles (CMVs); evaluating potential routes and their characteristics, such as the number of lanes and type of highway; and determining the total number of processing lanes and average wait times for each vehicle type throughout the day.

For example, if the Colombia Solidarity Bridge were to close, POVs would be diverted to the Gateway to the Americas or Juárez-Lincoln Bridge, while CMVs would be rerouted to the World Trade Bridge.

The analysis used three indicators:

Maximum distance to nearest alternative:
The distance to the nearest viable alternative crossing.

Minimum lanes to nearest alternative:
The minimum number of two-way lanes to the nearest viable alternative crossing.

Ratio of alternative/current maximum processing lanes:
The number of processing lanes available at the alternative crossing divided by the number of lanes at the closed crossing.

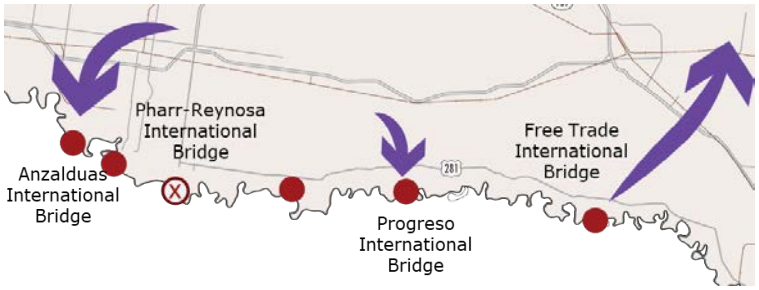
International Bridge Closure Analysis – Case Studies

Several international bridge closures along the Texas-Mexico border have occurred in recent years. During these closures, there was a shift in traffic patterns as POVs and CMVs were forced to detour to neighboring crossings. Three case studies were conducted to analyze traffic patterns for these closures that occurred from 2021 to 2023.

Case Study 1: Del Rio International Bridge in the Laredo District

- **Closure Period:** Sept. 16–25, 2021
- **Reason for Closure:** Migrant crisis.
- **Traffic Diversion:** To Eagle Pass International Bridge (crosses only POVs) and to Camino Real International Bridge (crosses POVs and CMVs).
- **Traffic Impact:** Increased traffic on US 277.

Case Study 2: Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge in the Pharr District



- **Closure Period:** April 11–13, 2022
- **Reason for Closure:** Organized protest and blockade by truck drivers.
- **Traffic Diversion:** Southbound trips to Anzalduas International Bridge and Progreso International Bridge. Northbound trips to Free Trade International Bridge and FM 509.
- **Traffic Impact:** Overall decrease in crossings in the region.

Case Study 3: Bridge of the Americas in the El Paso District

- **Closure Period:** Sept. 18–Oct. 10, 2023
- **Reason for Closure:** Surge in migrants.
- **Traffic Diversion:** To Santa Teresa crossing (New Mexico), the Ysleta-Zaragoza International Bridge, and the Tornillo-Guadalupe International Bridge.
- **Traffic Impact:** Increased traffic on I-10 East from downtown El Paso to access the Ysleta-Zaragoza International Bridge. Increased traffic on I-10 West coming from northbound traffic crossing at Santa Teresa.

Crossing-to-Maritime Port Connectivity Analysis

In 2024, Texas waterborne trade amounted to $413.3 billion , including $144.1 billion in imports and $269.2 billion in exports. Mexico was Texas's second-largest trading partner in terms of waterborne trade value after China at $36.2 billion. Major waterborne commodities traded between Texas and Mexico in 2024 include mineral fuel and oil at $26.7 billion, organic chemicals at $4.5 billion, and vehicles and parts (except railway) at $3.6 billion.

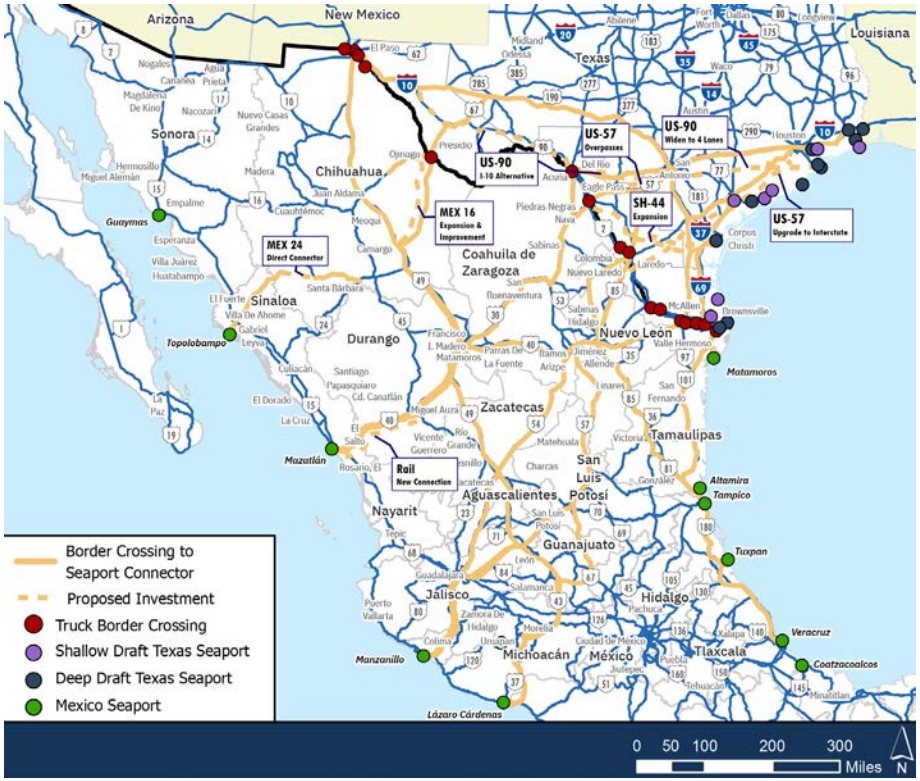
Import from Mexico to Texas

Mineral Fuel and Oil	Vehicles and Parts (Except Railway)	Articles of Iron/Steel	Organic Chemicals	Iron and Steel
$ 9.4 B	**$ 3.6 B**	**$ 232.7 M**	**$ 97.3 M**	**$ 52.9 M**

Export from Texas to Mexico

Mineral Fuel and Oil	Organic Chemicals	Nuclear Machinery	Iron and Steel	Beverages
$ 17.3 B	**$ 4.4 B**	**$ 17.3 M**	**$ 242.8 M**	**$ 121.3 M**

The Texas maritime system includes 11 deep-draft ports, nine shallow-draft ports, and the 379-mile-long Texas segment of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). Texas ports are interconnected by the GIWW, a shallow-draft channel that links intrastate barge traffic with ocean-going vessels and handles both domestic and foreign trade. Major commodities handled by each of Texas's major deep-draft ports include crude oil, petroleum products, chemicals, liquefied natural gas (LNG), agricultural products, containerized cargo, military cargo, steel, vehicles and forest products.



Corridors linking the international crossings to maritime ports

Region-to-Region Connectivity

The RBCN, a subset of the Texas Border Region multimodal network, is crucial for the movement of goods and people within, to and throughout the study area. As part of the Region-to-Region connectivity analysis, existing conditions of the RBCN are detailed in the following sections.

The current economic patterns coupled with the year-over-year growth trends highlight that without strategic investments in the region's transportation system, the current network cannot adequately support the transport of goods between the ports at interstate speeds.

Economy

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

$125B TEXAS Border Region makes up **7%** of state's GDP

$194B MEXICO Border Region

U.S.-MEXICO TRADE

Over **70%** of trade between the nations passes through the **TEXAS** border

+57.7% TEXAS Border Region

+52.1% MEXICO Border Region

GDP Growth 2017-2022

Commercial motor vehicle activity is a major driver of annual traffic growth in the Texas-Mexico Border Region, exceeding truck traffic levels seen elsewhere in the state.

FREIGHT in the Regional Border Connectivity Network

$158.5B in commodities traveled via freight truck

18.8% increase in value of commodities 2019-2022

113.5 *million tons* of freight traveled by truck

Traffic

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (VMT)

66M TOTAL VMT Regional Border Connectivity Network daily travel demand

13.6M COMMERCIAL Motor Vehicle (CMV) VMT makes up **20.5%** of total VMT

versus **11%** Texas state average

TRIPS

78K CMV inter-regional trips within **Texas** border region (6 months)

Texas-Mexico BORDER CROSSINGS

32M PASSENGER vehicles from Mexico into Texas (6 months)

5.2M CMV crossings 2019-2023 *showing a* **15.5%** increase

The current condition of roadways in the Texas Border Region significantly influences the movement of goods, impacting safety, traffic flow and the overall condition of the transportation network. The region's growth is expected to place increasing pressure on the existing highway infrastructure.

Texas Border Region Infrastructure

DESIGNATION

84% of lane mileage in RBCN is designated as **RURAL FACILITIES**

CROSS SECTION

2-LANE highway design makes up

69% **CENTRAL** region roads

57% **SOUTH** region roads

63% **WEST** region roads

A large portion of the RBCN cross-section is insufficient for facilitating the safe movement of high volumes of commercial vehicles within and between regions

SAFETY

RBCN 5-YR **Crash**

TOTAL 2019-2023

194,661

178,755 Passenger Vehicle

15,906 Commercial Vehicle

8% of all crashes include a commercial vehicle

CLASSIFICATION

81% of RBCN is functionally classified as **NON-EXPRESSWAY** Arterial or Collector

55% VEHICULAR **DEMAND** occurs on **Arterial/Collector System**

ACCESS CONTROL

RBCN with ***NO*** Access Control

	Central	*South*	*West*
RURAL	81%	83%	76%
URBAN	100%	65%	42%

Very limited number of access control facilities, potentially contributing to the number and frequency of observed crashes

BRIDGE CONDITION

Structurally Deficient **2**

0 CENTRAL
0 SOUTH
2 WEST

Functionally Obsolete **130**

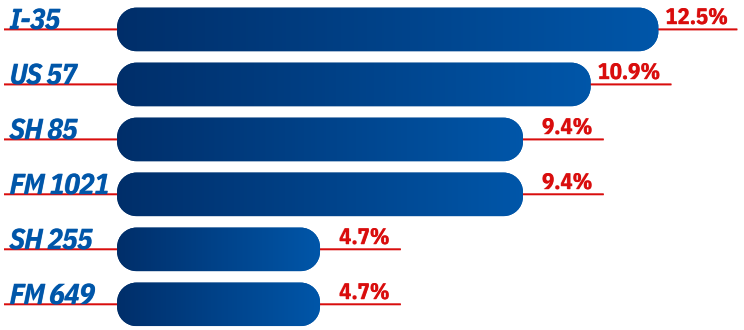
30 CENTRAL
5 SOUTH
95 WEST

1,898 total bridges

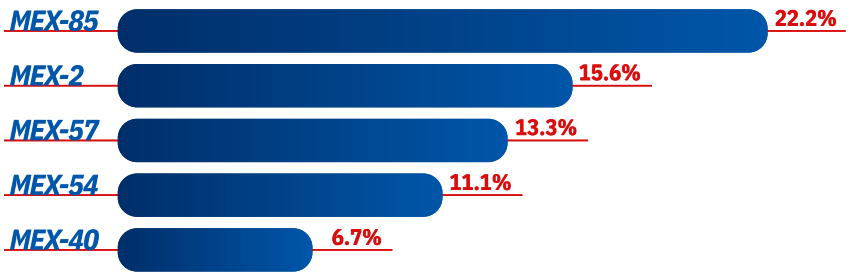
428 CENTRAL
553 SOUTH
917 WEST

Regional stakeholders confirmed that the highway segments most severely impacted by these issues include:

Most Mentioned Texas Roadways:



Most Mentioned Mexico Roadways:



3 Challenges & Needs

Texas-Mexico Border Region connectivity needs include addressing mobility and access challenges along first and last mile corridors, as well as enhancing connectivity between key regions and critical transportation nodes such as ports of entry, airports and maritime ports. Addressing these needs will streamline passenger and freight movement, reduce congestion and ensure a seamless integration of the various modes of transport across the border region. The Connectivity WebApp provides a detailed visual of the insights obtained during the stakeholder interviews, workshops and post-workshop interviews.

First & Last Mile Connectivity Needs

Highway Connectivity

- Almost all crossings experience stop-and-go traffic speeds, some of which create congestion and back-up in surrounding areas and connecting roadways.
- Roadway capacity needs to be increased to accommodate current and projected growth in POV and CMV volumes.
- Need to address road use conflicts by different users, including for residential, commercial and industrial purposes.
- Lack of readily available truck parking near border crossings which contributes to congestion and queuing which impact emergency services.
- Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staffing shortages impact border crossing throughput which results in queue spillovers and traffic congestion on roadways.
- Need for further investigation and mitigation of crash hotspots on roads connecting to crossings in Texas and Mexico.
- Need for operational interconnectivity, construction and maintenance of roadways to accommodate oversize/overweight operations and inspection.

Rail Connectivity

- Minimizing at-grade crossings at major intersections is necessary to ensure the mobility and safety of traffic, especially at night, and to reduce noise from horns when crossing an intersection.
- Need for the Unified Cargo Processing (UCP) program to facilitate joint cargo inspections.
- Currently, every train that crosses into Mexico or comes from Mexico must stop in the middle of the bridge and change crews, reducing efficiency. International crews would add capacity and increase the speed of cross-border rail movements.
- Need investments in rail tracks to improve train speeds and accommodate heavier loads.

Transit Connectivity

- There are limited transit options to and from border crossings. In some locations, pedestrians walk 30 minutes to a bus stop or need to cross major highways.
- Infrastructure challenges such as discontinuous and deteriorated sidewalks as well as no shelters or benches at bus stops.
- Like passenger and freight vehicles, bus services are impacted by roadway congestion, which in turn affects schedules and reliability.
- Trains blocking at-grade crossings delay buses and lead to costly reroutes and service disruptions.
- The current funding structure does not account for Mexican residents' use of transit services, even though cross-border travelers make up the majority of transit ridership.

Pedestrian and Bike Connectivity

- There is a lack of dedicated bike lanes for cyclists to cross international bridges.
- Infrastructure challenges such as discontinuous or deteriorated sidewalks create safety concerns for pedestrians or cyclists.
- Existing facilities may not be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.

Port-to-Port Connectivity Needs

Crossing-to-Crossing

- Improved connectivity is needed between Roma and SH 16, a key route for trucks traveling to the interstate.
- Funding is needed for a new interchange at the overpass located at Vallecillo Road from FM 1472 (Mines Road) to I-35 Southbound Frontage Road.

Crossing-to-Maritime

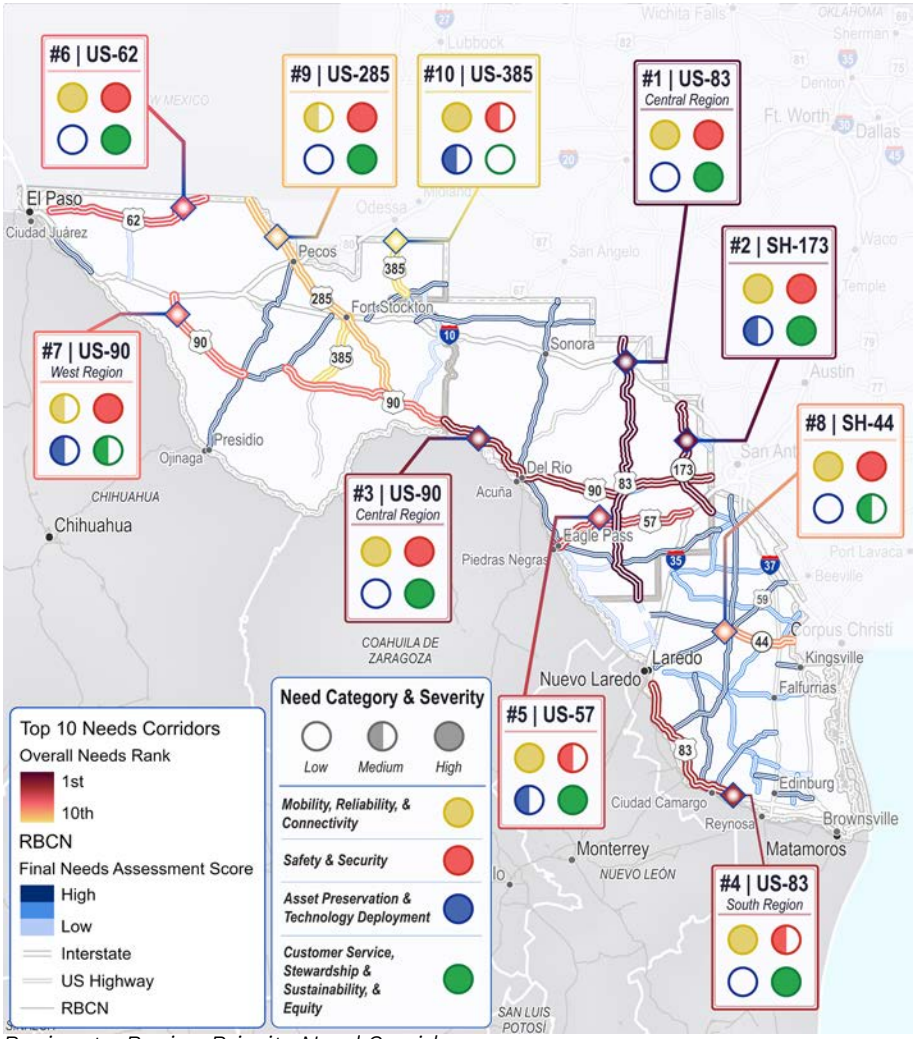
- Need for infrastructure investments to increase connectivity for manufacturers in Del Rio.
- Need to connect I-2 to Port of Corpus Christi.
- Need to expand US 59 to a 4-lane divided roadway from Laredo to Goliad then to Port of Houston to relieve pressure on I-35 and I-10 to Houston.
- Need to connect SL 20 to US 59 in Laredo.
- Need for additional overweight corridors connecting to Port of Brownsville and Port of Harlingen.
- Need for improvements on US 90, which is considered by stakeholders as dangerous, too narrow with no lane dividers and is experiencing increased truck traffic.

Region-to-Region Connectivity Needs

Region-to-region connectivity needs fall into five key areas that shape corridor-level performance. These categories combine quantitative data with stakeholder insights to evaluate corridor functionality and pinpoint those requiring the most improvement.

Region-to-Region Need Categories

- Safety & Security
- Mobility, Reliability, & Connectivity
- Asset Preservation & Technology Deployment
- Economic Competitiveness, Cross-Border Resiliency, & Sustainable Funding
- Customer Service, Stewardship, & Sustainability



Region-to-Region Priority Need Corridors

West Region Connectivity Current & Future Needs

US 90, US 62, US 385 and US 285 are high-need corridors in both the border region-wide and regional analyses. However, SH 17, identified as high-need in the border region-wide scoring, is classified as medium-need in the regional analysis, reflecting the localized prioritization approach.

Safety & Security

- Improve truck safety on US 62, US 285 near Pecos, areas with low bridge clearance and at-grade crossings in El Paso.
- Create a transportation system that is resilient to extreme heat and severe drought.

Mobility, Reliability, & Connectivity

- Address traffic congestion on US 385 and US 62.
- Improve services for buses, trains and cyclists.
- Increase capacity on US 62, SH 349 and RM 1111 to address worsening congestion.
- Mitigate truck route congestion to prevent the avoidance of the most efficient freight corridors by 2050.

Asset Preservation & Technology Deployment

- Expand technology upgrades like digital signs, electric vehicle (EV) support and cameras to corridors that do not yet have them.
- Address height restrictions on US 67 and US 90, which limit the ability to expand in response to increased traffic.
- Expand coverage of traffic cameras and other Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) infrastructure.

Economic Competitiveness, Cross-Border Resiliency, & Sustainable Funding

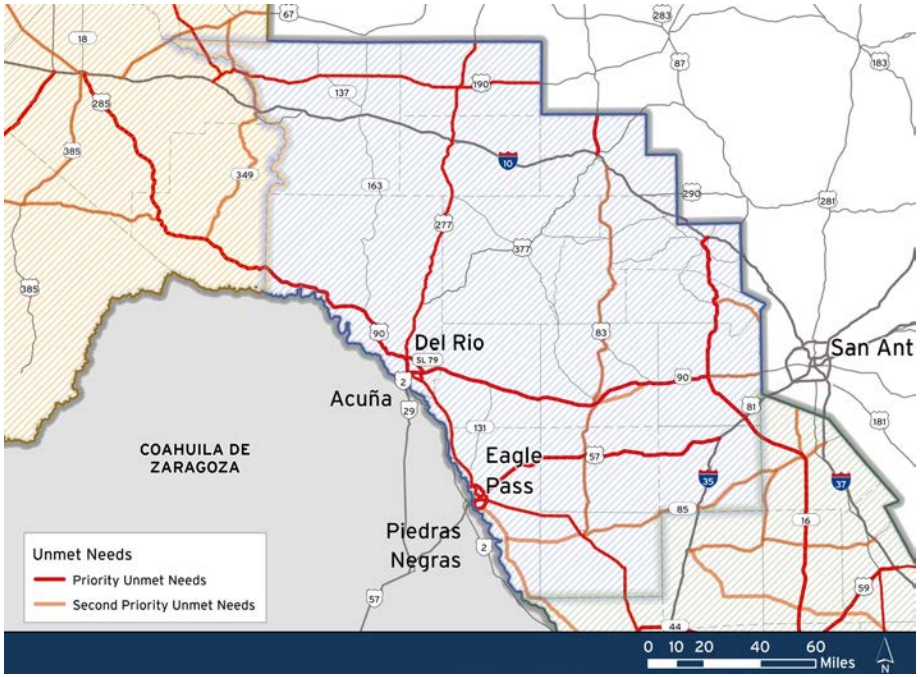
- Support the recovery of key industries such as high-tech products, motor vehicles and industrial machinery supply chains through new site development.
- Ensure the RBCN is not disabled so that it doesn't have a debilitating impact on national economic security, trade flows and quality of life.

Customer Service, Stewardship, & Sustainability

- Increase route accessibility to cultural sites in the West Region to support tourism.
- Expand EV charging infrastructure to meet future demand.

Central Region Connectivity Current & Future Needs

A notable difference between the regional and border-wide analyses is the reclassification of US 190 and US 277. In the regional analysis, US 190 from Schleicher County to Crockett County and US 277 from FM 2644 to Eagle Pass are identified as medium-need corridors, whereas both were classified as high-need in the border region-wide analysis. This highlights the impact of localized prioritization on scoring outcomes.



Safety & Security

- Reduce crash rates on high-risk corridors such as SH 16, US 277, US 57, SL 79 and US 90.
- Improve communication with truck drivers regarding low-clearance bridges.
- Conduct comprehensive safety assessments and implement targeted improvements to mitigate future risks.

Mobility, Reliability, & Connectivity

- Address congestion and delays across key corridors.
- Expand lane capacity in select areas, as approximately 69% of lane mileage consists of two or fewer lanes.
- Enhance multimodal connectivity along North-South corridors.
- Improve infrastructure to accommodate increasing congestion between Eagle Pass, Del Rio and San Antonio, where key corridors are expected to experience significant increases in traffic volume.

Asset Preservation & Technology Deployment

- Upgrade ITS infrastructure to improve traffic management and mobility.
- Implement technology and engineering solutions to alleviate congestion and improve travel times.
- Adopt a proactive pavement maintenance strategy to preserve the region's currently good road conditions.

Economic Competitiveness, Cross-Border Resiliency, & Sustainable Funding

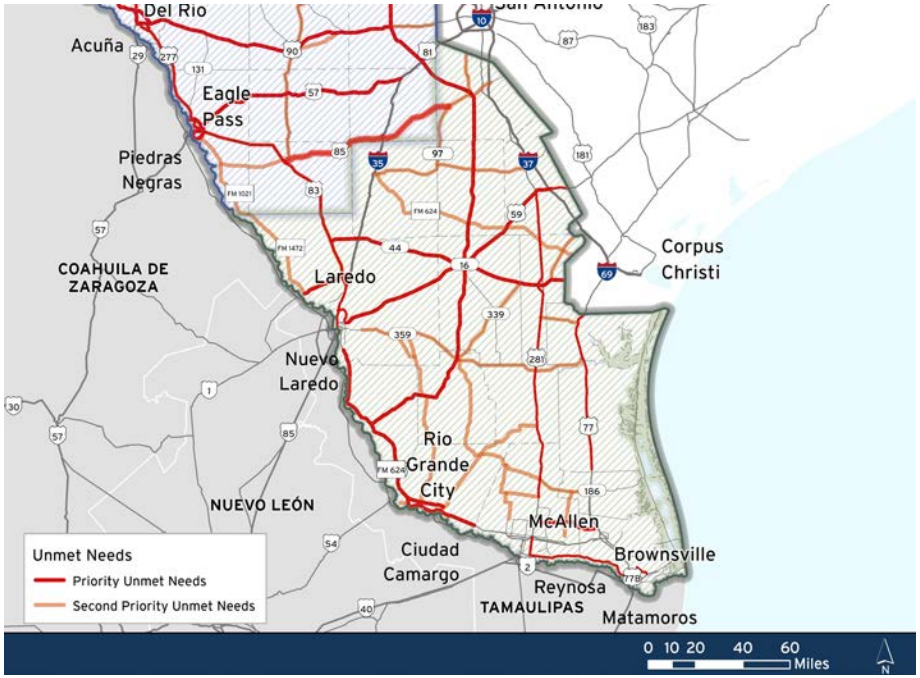
- Support the recovery of key industries—including high-tech products, motor vehicles and industrial machinery supply chains—through new site development.
- Ensure the RBCN remains operational to prevent disruptions to national economic security, trade flows and quality of life.

Customer Service, Stewardship, & Sustainability

- Improve accessibility to EV charging infrastructure along the I-10 and SL 79 corridors.
- Invest in housing, traffic congestion relief and equitable infrastructure improvements in Val Verde and Maverick counties, which have the highest concentration of transportation and warehousing jobs.

South Region Connectivity Current & Future Needs

In the South Region, US 83 and SH 16 continue to be high need corridors in both regional and study area-wide needs scoring analyses. In the regional scoring analysis, some new corridors are identified as high need as opposed to the results from the Texas Border Region analysis that identified them as medium need. Those corridors are SH 97, US 59, SH 44 from SH 16 to US 83, US 83 from Laredo to the Webb County border and FM 64.



Safety & Security

- Address safety concerns with targeted measures, particularly focusing on crash hotspots around McAllen and general speeding issues.
- Mitigate safety risks in the South Region through future programs and improved driving conditions.

Mobility, Reliability, & Connectivity

- Reduce congestion on segments with high traffic volumes, particularly along US 83.
- Close multimodal connectivity gaps to enhance regional mobility.
- Evaluate the economic impact of the projected traffic volume increase in the region by 2050.

Asset Preservation & Technology Deployment

- Address limited shoulder-width issues which are particularly prevalent in the South Region.
- Incorporate technology solutions to efficiently alleviate congestion and improve travel times.
- Adopt a proactive pavement maintenance strategy to preserve the region's currently good road condition.

Economic Competitiveness, Cross-Border Resiliency, & Sustainable Funding

- Support the recovery of key industries—such as high-tech products, motor vehicles and industrial machinery manufacturing—through new site development.
- Ensure the RBCN remains operational to prevent negative impacts on national economic security, trade flows and quality of life.

Customer Service, Stewardship, & Sustainability

- Expand and enhance EV charging infrastructure in the South Region, which currently has the strongest network across the border region.
- Plan for future capacity needs in Webb, Hidalgo, Cameron and Atascosa counties to accommodate the relatively high concentrations of transportation and warehousing jobs.

4 Strategic Stakeholder Findings

The Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan identified infrastructure projects to tackle immediate connectivity challenges by working closely with local communities, industry representatives and public agencies. The plan also provides program and policy steps to ensure inclusive engagement, help secure funding, and guide investment decisions. Together, these findings provide TxDOT and its partners a strategic roadmap to consider opportunities to strengthen connectivity, boost economic vitality, and improve the overall transportation experience across the Texas-Mexico Border Region.

First & Last Mile Connectivity Considerations

El Paso Border Region

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES/CROSSINGS

» Invest in additional processing lanes and National Customs Agency (ANAM) and CBP staff.

HIGHWAYS

» Prioritize congestion relief and safety improvements on major connectors, including SL 375, I-10 and US 54.

TRANSIT

» Improve connectivity, better transit options and service times.

» Provide safe access to bus stops from bridges.

» Provide bus rapid transit (BRT) service to international bridges and integrate metropolitan and rural transit service into a seamless fare system.

» Support cost-effective and equitable Transit-Oriented Developments.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

» Provide shaded sidewalks on bridges and improve sidewalks from bridges to transit stops and other first mile destinations.

» Add lighting on international bridges.

» Provide dedicated bicycle lanes for cyclists on, from and to the international bridges.

FREIGHT RAIL

» Expand hours of rail operation.

» Prioritize safety improvements at at-grade crossings, particularly at Zaragoza Road and near the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center campus.

» Support the development of the West Rail Bypass Project, located south of Samalayuca and connecting to Santa Teresa.

Presidio Border Region

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES/CROSSINGS

» Implement exit booth for trucks on US 67.

PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PARKING FOR TRANSMIGRANTS

» Build United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspection facilities and hire USDA inspectors to process agricultural trade.

» Establish a Foreign-Trade Zone (FTZ) in the region.

HIGHWAYS

» Prioritize investment in truck-related infrastructure on US 67, such as adding parking, increasing bridge capacity and accommodating oversize and overweight loads.

» Investment in safety and roadway visibility improvements on US 67.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
» Add shaded sidewalk on bridge and implement planned bike lane with striped buffer on US 67 within the town.

FREIGHT RAIL
» Rail bridge will be operational in 2025. Plan for additional capacity and future funding as need arises.

Del Rio / Eagle Pass Border Region

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES/CROSSINGS
» Reconstruct Lake Amistad Dam.

» Construct new international bridge (i.e., Acuña II International Bridge).

» Expand the Camino Real International Bridge (i.e., two CMV lanes and four POV lanes).

» Implement Paisano Program to allow 24-hour operations at the Eagle Pass POE.

» Increase Lake Amistad Dam Crossing hours of operation.

HIGHWAYS
» Invest in capacity and safety of major connectors (e.g., SH 239, US 377, US 277, US 57, and US 90).

» Invest in FM 1589 connecting to Puerto Verde.

» Build SL 480 connecting to US 57 and US 277.

TRANSIT
» Invest in better infrastructure, additional funding, additional support services, technology improvements, and expertise to support public transportation.

» Invest in internet infrastructure to enhance the security systems on the buses, fare and payment systems, and driver tablets.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
» Provide dedicated bike lanes on international bridges.

» Invest in better bicycle infrastructure, sidewalks, and shelters or benches at bus stops.

FREIGHT RAIL
» Eliminate at-grade crossings.

Laredo Border Region

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES/CROSSINGS
» Implement CBP hours to be 24/7 for CMVs.

» Extend SENTRI lanes at Gateway to the Americas to process motorcycles.

HIGHWAYS
» Add additional connectors between FM 1472 (Mines Road) and I-35.

» Address capacity issues on I-35 (e.g., Mile Marker 8, downtown, Checkpoint); Improve FM 1472 (Mines Road) (capacity and safety).

» Add westbound overpass for trucks to merge on FM 1472 from World Trade Bridge (Laredo Bridge IV).

» Add connector between US 59 and SH 359.

» Expand SH 255 connecting Colombia Solidarity Bridge to I-35.

» Continue Loop 20/Quatro Vientos to tie with Laredo Outer Loop.

» Construct Laredo Outer Loop to serve future Laredo Bridge 4/5.

TRANSIT
» Increase bus service reliability and frequency.

» Provide additional funding to support transit operations.

» Conduct micro-transit feasibility study.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
» Obtain better pedestrian and bicycle data.

» Improve sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure.

FREIGHT RAIL
» Eliminate or reduce 14 at-grade crossings in downtown Laredo.

Lower Rio Grande Valley Border Region

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES/CROSSINGS
» Extend commercial zone to include Zapata County.

» Increase CBP staffing to address congestion, stop and go traffic on most connectors to international bridges.

» Add capacity/facilities to support an increase in southbound inspections.

» Add CMV-only lanes at existing border crossings.

- Restore Roma-Ciudad Miguel Alemán International Suspension Bridge.
- Replace Gateway International Bridge.
- Expand Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates.

HIGHWAYS
- Provide truck parking.
- Invest in connectors to international bridges, such as the Roma–Ciudad Miguel Alemán International Bridge and the Anzalduas International Bridge.
- Prioritize the International Bridge Trade Corridor (IBTC).
- Prioritize East Loop International Trade Corridor Project.

TRANSIT
- Increase bus service frequency.
- Provide wayfinding signs.
- Provide additional funding to support transit operations.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
- Improve sidewalks.
- Improve wayfinding signs.
- Invest in park-and-ride facilities.
- Invest in regional pedestrian/bicycle trail network.

Programs & Policies

Optimize border processing & operations to reduce congestion.

Investing in border processing facilities and additional CBP staff could significantly improve travel time reliability—potentially more than highway upgrades alone. Stakeholders also pointed to underused infrastructure, such as closed processing lanes and limited operating hours, as barriers to cross-border trade and travel.

Port-to-Port Connectivity Considerations

Port-to-Maritime

EL PASO BORDER REGION
- Invest in alternatives to I-10 since snowstorms and sandstorms have required trucking companies to use alternative routes.
- Invest in US 90 as an alternative to I-10 to link El Paso to Port Houston.

DEL RIO / EAGLE PASS BORDER REGION
- Expand SH 44 to connect the Port of Corpus to the future I-27 (via US 83 and US 277), I-35, I-69W, I-69C and I-64E.
- Extend I-27 to Del Rio.
- Increase capacity on US 277 to eliminate safety concerns of oil and gas carriers.
- Upgrade US 90 to four lanes or higher and build a relief route around Castroville and around downtown Uvalde.
- Build overpasses on US 57 from Eagle Pass to San Antonio to remove traffic conflicts.
- Expand US 57 to bypass downtown San Antonio and connect to SH 130 and I-10.

LAREDO BORDER REGION
- Expand and upgrade US 59 to interstate standards to connect Laredo to maritime ports in Texas.
- Prioritize expansion of US 59 from Laredo to Goliath to a 4-lane divided road to relieve pressure on I-35 and I-10 to Houston.
- Add connector between US 59 and SH 359 to improve connectivity and safety between Houston and Laredo.
- Expand SH 44 to connect the Port of Corpus Christi to I-69W, I-64C, US 59 and I-35.

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY BORDER REGION
- Build out US 77 (future I-69E) to interstate standards between Corpus Christi and Brownsville.

- Increase capacity (i.e., number of lanes) on US 281 (future I-69C) to enhance connectivity between I-2 and the Port of Corpus Christi.
- Establish oversize/overweight network by connecting the heavy weight corridors in Cameron County (i.e., Port of Brownsville and Port of Harlingen overweight corridors) with the overweight corridors in Hidalgo County.
- Need additional overweight corridors in Hidalgo and Cameron counties.
- Future East loop project from I-69E (relief route connecting to Veterans International Bridge) is a high priority. East Loop starts at the intersection of I-69E and East University Boulevard north of the Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates heading east and connects to SH 4 south of the Port of Brownsville.

Port-to-Port

EL PASO BORDER REGION

- Add connector from NM 136 (just north of Santa Teresa) to I-10.
- Build El Paso Outer Loop to connect with Tornillo-Guadalupe to facilitate CMV processing.
- Expand capacity of SH 20 southeast of El Paso (parallel to I-10) to accommodate traffic diversion during I-10 widening.

PRESIDIO BORDER REGION

- Improve (capacity and safety) US 90 as some stretches are considered narrow and unsafe. Also add rest stops or bathrooms along US 90.
- Address two railroad crossings with low bridge clearance: one at Alpine (13'7") and one just south of Van Horn (14'3") which force trucks to use SH 17 north of Marfa to access I-10.
- Improve safety and attractiveness of US 67 from Marfa to Presidio with additional service stations and garages. Improve the current condition of the segment which is narrow, dark, and dangerous to drive at night. Widen the highway and illuminate to help mitigate the issue.

DEL RIO / EAGLE PASS BORDER REGION

- Upgrade Eagle Pass Rd/Old Mines Rd to increase connectivity.
- Increase southbound capacity of US 57 (4-lanes).
- Upgrade US 377 section (part of future I-27).
- Trucks experience long waiting times on SH 480. Bottlenecks around the checkpoints.
- Need ITS Improvements (signage and radar) and dedicated truck lanes.
- Upgrade US 90 to four lanes.
- Extend I-27 to Del Rio.
- Need to improve safety on US 90, which is narrow, undivided, and has seen increased truck traffic.

LAREDO BORDER REGION

- Top priority is Mines Road (FM 1472) as it suffers the most serious congestion between truck crossings.
- Add connectors to I-35 to alleviate traffic on FM 1472 (Mines Road). Add connectors to I-35 to alleviate traffic on FM 1472 (Mines Road).
- Build Outer Loop to connect I-35 to US 83 and the future Laredo Bridge 4/5. A connection from US 83 to Loop 20 is also needed.

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY BORDER REGION

- If CMV processing lanes are introduced at the Donna-Rio Bravo International Bridge, connectivity along the S FM 493 (D Salinas International Boulevard) would need improvements along with connectivity into the planned projects at SH 495/SH 68 and/or the IBTC.
- Build bypass to the north of Rio Grande City and Roma (to/from the US 83).
- Implement additional overweight corridors connecting to Port of Brownsville and Port of Harlingen. Connect the overweight corridors in Cameron County with those in Hidalgo County.
- Connect SH 16 with US 83 via FM 755 to San Antonio.
- Add highway capacity to accommodate overweight loads at Roma-Ciudad Miquel Aleman International Bridge.
- Build connection between SH 68 and FM 493.
- Extend SL 195 to FM 650 to connect to industrial park to bypass City of Roma.

Programs & Policies

Allow ocean going containers (53 feet) handled at Texas ports to be transported to Mexico.

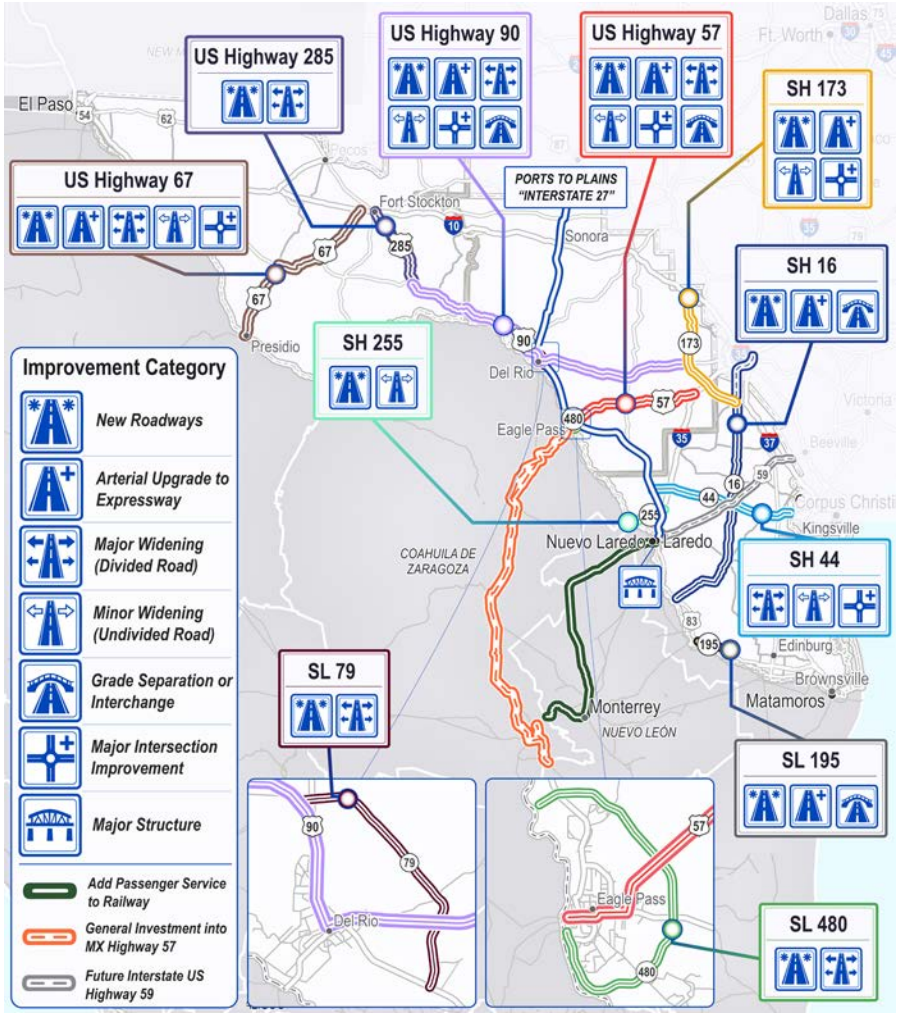
Enabling the movement of 53-foot containers directly between maritime ports and destinations in Mexico would reduce supply chain costs for shippers and brokers. This approach minimizes or eliminates the need for transloading.

Interoperability of oversize / overweight permits.

Officials recommend establishing an oversize and overweight network to connect the corridors in Cameron County—serving the Port of Brownsville and Port of Harlingen—with those in Hidalgo County.

Region-to-Region Connectivity Considerations

The Plan identifies 15 priority corridors for early-phase investment to strengthen region-to-region connectivity. Of these, 11 include specific considerations; four future Interstates (Ports to Plains and the I-69 segments on US 59, US 77, and US 281) are excluded as they are already designated and advancing through separate efforts. The Plan also incorporates corridors from Plan Mexico, highlighting targeted improvements within the Mexico Border Region. Together, these coordinated investments support a binational strategy to enhance connectivity and promote economic growth.



Region-to-Region Connectivity Considerations

Beyond specific corridor projects, a set of core concepts is proposed for the entire RBCN, ensuring a consistent, system-wide approach. These concepts apply not only to the 15 priority corridors but also to the rest of the RBCN, emphasizing high-quality travel amenities, operational enhancements and safety measures. Organized into short-, medium- and long-term buckets to guide initial prioritization, these considerations—supported by recent corridor studies and stakeholder input—provide an actionable roadmap to strengthen connectivity across the Texas-Mexico Border Region.

Physical Improvement Project Concepts

SHORT TERM 1-4 years

- Horizontal Curve Warning Signs
- Chevrons
- Advisory Speed Limit Signs
- Vertical Grade Signs
- Curve Blocks View Signs
- Shoulder/Centerline Rumble Strips
- Passing Lane Ahead & Lane Ends Merge Left Signs
- No Passing Zone Signs
- Advanced Warning Signs for Railroad Crossings
- Flashing Beacons for Railroad Crossings

MEDIUM TERM 5-10 years

- Design/Application of Barrier Systems
- Adding/Extending Guardrails
- Guardrail End Treatments
- Flashing Beacon Signs
- Sequential Dynamic Curve Warning Signs
- Adequate Sight Distances
- Lighting at Intersections
- Raised Pavement Markers
- Safer Slopes & Turnouts
- Superelevation Improvements
- High Friction Surface Treatments
- Dynamic Speed Feedback System
- Left Turn Lanes to Existing Rest Areas
- Highway Rail Grade Crossing Safety System

LONG TERM 11+ years

- Widen Shoulders from 4 or 6 to 10 feet
- Construct Texas Super 2 Sections
- Grade Separations at Highway-Rail Crossings
- Relief Routes

Technology Solution Project Concepts

SHORT TERM 1-4 years

- Automated Visibility Warning Systems
- Bicycle Safety Systems
- Pedestrian Safety Systems
- Road Geometry Warning Systems
- Speed Warning Systems
- Work Zone Safety Systems
- Site Management During Rockslides
- Dynamic Message Signs (DMS)
- Incident Management Support Trucks
- Traffic Incident Management Trainings
- Establish Corridor Coordination Groups

MEDIUM TERM 5-10 years

- Animal Warning Systems
- Vehicle Detection Systems
- Planned Special Event Management Systems
- Smartphone Applications for First Responders
- Integrated Traveler Information Systems

LONG TERM 11+ years

- Highway-Rail Crossing Safety Systems
- Traffic Management Variable Speed Limits (VSL)
- Next Generation 911
- Integrated Weather Monitoring/Prediction Systems
- Power & Communication
- Traffic Surveillance Cameras
- Port of Entry Smart Parking & Other ITS Projects

Programs & Policies

The following policy and program considerations aim to ensure a cohesive, effective approach to region-to-region connectivity by aligning strategies, securing resources and fostering cross-sector collaboration. Together, these considerations offer a strong framework to implement key projects, address coordination and funding needs, and build a more resilient and equitable transportation network—one that supports economic growth and quality of life along the Texas-Mexico border.

Leverage the *2024 Texas Highway Trunk System Study*.

Build on considerations from the recently completed *2024 Texas Highway Trunk System Study* which reviewed the trunk system criteria, policies, and procedures; assessed trunk system designations; and engaged stakeholders and planning partners to obtain input and concurrence to criteria and system designations.

Enhance highway safety & mobility through the development of modern transit stops.

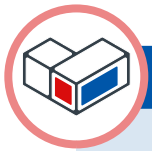
Develop enhanced rest stops along key corridors to reduce driver fatigue, support freight efficiency and incentivize travel on underused routes.

Leverage the existing Bi-national Regional Stakeholder Working Groups (BRSWG) structure for connectivity-focused collaboration.

Use the existing BRSWG to implement integrated corridor management and streamline coordination. This will allow for more immediate coordination across agencies and jurisdictions without duplicating organizational efforts.

Conduct a study of key industry transportation needs to identify & prioritize freight improvements, programs, & policies.

Undertake focused studies to pinpoint critical infrastructure improvements for key industries like manufacturing, high-tech and other sectors relying on efficient cross-border trade. This ensures infrastructure enhancements are prioritized where they count most.



Focus on cornerstone projects.

Identify and expedite “cornerstone” projects that drive broader benefits across related initiatives, such as transit expansion, safety improvements, active transportation improvements and overall connectivity.

5 Call to Action

The Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan serves as a strategic roadmap to strengthen connectivity, support economic growth and enhance the transportation system through targeted infrastructure projects, programs and policies.

This roadmap calls for immediate and long-term actions that when executed demonstrate the commitment of TxDOT and its public agency partners in Texas and Mexico to collaborate and provide the transportation system that people and businesses need now and in the future.

The infrastructure, economic connections, and the flows of people and goods between the U.S. and Mexico have developed and changed over time. The proximity of the U.S. and Mexico alone creates a baseline level of economic connectivity and resulting infrastructure, but the depth and breadth of the connections demonstrate decades of collaboration between people, businesses, and governments. Similarly, today's public and private decisions and investments affect the future of people and freight moving across the Texas-Mexico border. It is with this backdrop that the Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan acts as a call to action, uniting diverse stakeholders in a shared mission to transform the border region's mobility landscape and enable future growth and connections.

This plan, along with other Texas-Mexico strategic collaboration, demonstrates the commitment to integrated growth in the border region through the implementation of projects, programs and policies that develop infrastructure to support both current and future growth in the border region.

Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan

Executive Summary

July 2025

Texas Department of Transportation