



## Commission ok's 80 mph in 10 counties

— pages 3, 8

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## On the cover:

Joe Robledo, Sign Shop supervisor in the Odessa District, has been working overtime to turn out 80-mph speed limit signs to post on Interstate 10 and I-20 in West Texas. The Texas Transportation Commission approved the 5 mph increase at its regular meeting on May 25. Robledo turned out 52 signs for the maintenance sections in Iraan, Fort Stockton, Balmorhea, Monahans, and Ward County.

TxDOT photo by PIO Glen Larum

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## Straight Talk

# Celebrating the interstate: 50 years

By Mike Behrens  
Executive Director



Mike Behrens

A few years after he signed the congressional act authorizing the interstate system, President Dwight Eisenhower said that more than anything the United States had done since the end of World War II "this...would change the face of America."

And it has done just that. The interstate system, 50 years old this June, created a way of life that some, too young to remember a time without it, may now take for granted. That's a sure sign of just how much a part of our lives this grid of highways that links Americans has become.

TxDOT employees contributed mightily to the effort that has led to the greatest economic expansion in this country. For instance, in 1961 the first interstate signs, based on a design submitted to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) by Richard Oliver, former supervisor of traffic engineering in the Corpus Christi District, went up on I-35 near Hillsboro.

In 1963, the commission approved an innovation long since taken for granted — signs placed in business and shopping districts as well as airports directing motorists to the nearest interstates. The same year, Texas led the nation in the number of interstate miles then opened to traffic — 1,134

When it was all said and done, Texas totaled 3,233.45 interstate miles — the most of any state.

Among the many benefits to Texas the interstate system has brought are:

■ Improved safety. The Texas Transportation Institute estimates that the interstate system in Texas has saved 18,000 lives and prevented 1.1 million injuries.

■ Economic prosperity. TTI has calculated that the interstate system in Texas has contributed some \$2.8 trillion to our state's economy.

It connected homes and the work place. It changed the way we move freight and the way people travel. It brought increased foreign trade.

■ Time saved. If you draw an imaginary line connecting Dallas, Houston and San Antonio, travelers inside that triangle are saved an extra 60 million hours a year in travel time because of the interstate system. That saves about \$2 billion annually.

The Trans-Texas Corridor will transform Texas like the interstate system changed the entire United States.

We are already making transportation history as we move forward. Fifty years from now, chances are that another TxDOT employee will be writing about yet another life-changing transportation system: the Trans-Texas Corridor. Another celebration will be in order.★

# Speed limit increases in parts of West Texas

## Commissioners approve 80 mph along I-10 & I-20 in 10 counties

**By Mike Cox**  
Editor

Texas has become the first state in the nation with an 80 mph speed limit on a small segment of its vast highway system.

By unanimous vote, the Transportation Commission voted at its May 25 meeting to set a daytime 80 mph speed limit for 521 interstate miles in rural West Texas.

The increased speed limit will apply to 432 miles of I-10 in Kerr, Kimble, Sutton, Crockett, Pecos, Reeves, Jeff Davis, Culberson and Hudspeth counties and 89 miles on I-20 in Ward and Reeves counties. That amounts to less than one percent of the state's nearly 80,000-mile highway system.

The new speed limit applies only for passenger vehicles and light trucks. Eighteen-wheelers and other large trucks will still have a 70 mph daytime limit along these segments. All vehicles will be limited to 65 mph at night.

Commissioners approved the minute order allowing for the speed limit increase on the basis of HB 2257, passed during the last regular session by the 79th Legislature. The segments getting the higher speed limit were selected on the basis of traffic engineering studies.

"We think it's important for Texans and out-of-state visitors to understand that TxDOT's goal is to set speed limits in accordance with state law and to have limits

that motorists respect and obey," said Carlos Lopez, Traffic Operations Division director.

The speed limit change comes in some of the most remote, least-traveled areas of the state. The highest average daily traffic count is in Hudspeth County, where 19,000 vehicles a day use I-10. That equates to only 16 vehicles a minute. The lowest count is 3,700 ADT, which amounts to 3 vehicles a minute.

Lopez said that the interstate segments are set close to the 85th percentile speed of what surveys show that motorists are currently driving, which means it will likely have little impact on motorists using these roadways.

"Crash records show that when the speed limit in these areas increased to 75 mph in 2001, the number of traffic deaths on those segments decreased," Lopez said. "Motorists can prevent crashes by practicing safe driving habits. They should obey speed limits, use safety belts properly, pay attention to traffic and never drink and drive."

For most of the state, the maximum speed limit remains 70 mph. But some 1,700 miles of highway across the state have 75 mph speed limits based on action by the 77th Legislature allowing higher speed limits in counties with population densities of less than 15 people per square mile.

The 70 mph limit has been in effect since late 1995.

The 80 mph speed limits went into effect as soon as TxDOT maintenance crews placed new signage along the affected interstate segments. 🗳️

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**More speed-limit facts, Page 8.**

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## West Texas media voice support for 80 mph

**By Glen Larum**  
Odessa District PIO

In West Texas, the operative words are time and distance.

There are 544 miles of Interstate 10 between El Paso and San Antonio; 268 miles of Interstate 20 between El Paso and Odessa-Midland. That's an average 7.5 hours and four hours, respectively, for motorists making those trips.

So, it's no surprise that the editorial boards of the El Paso Times and the Midland Reporter Telegram offered cautious support to the proposal — introduced by a West Texas legislator, state Rep. Pete Gallego of Alpine and passed by both houses — to increase the speed limit on a large slice of those highways to 80 mph.

After noting the safety issues and the increased gasoline consumption issues raised by critics of the proposal, an El Paso editorial writer opined, "It would be a wise

decision to adopt the faster speed limit on I-10 and I-20 in those West Texas counties. They are mainly long stretches of open road."

Most West Texas counties already have a speed limit of 75 mph, and a TxDOT survey indicates that many West Texas drivers think that isn't fast enough. Some 85 percent already were driving up to 79 mph, the survey showed.

In fact, an anonymous RV driver interviewed by a MSN television news reporter at a gas station along I-10 would like to see a bigger change. "I think it's great. I came from El Paso and I've been driving all day. I wish it (the speed limit) was 90."

The Times called the speed-limit increase "a logical move," citing Transportation Commissioner Ted Houghton's comment referring to Germany's high-speed highway: "I love it. It'll be the Texas autobahn." 🗳️

# TxDOT in the news

TxDOT often makes news. Here are some highlights, summarized from media reports in recent weeks.

■ TxDOT announced a study area associated with I-35 as the preferred route for the Trans-Texas Corridor. The 4,300-page draft environmental impact statement narrows the corridor's potential area for location to a 10-mile wide, 521-mile path from Gainesville on the Red River to Laredo on the Rio Grande and will be 1,200 feet wide. (Dallas Morning News – 4/4/06)

■ TxDOT asked private investors for ideas on funding the 1,600-mile I-69, part of which would connect the Rio Grande Valley to northeast Texas. Officials suggest I-69 may become part of the Trans-Texas Corridor on the model of the I-35 portion of the corridor. TxDOT gave investors until June 7 to submit ideas. (Corpus Christi Caller-Times – 4/10/06)

■ TxDOT announced the Collin County Committee on Aging will receive \$80,640 of \$7 million in federal funding designated for 39 operators in Texas who provide transportation in rural areas and cities with populations less than 50,000. TxDOT uses the money to enhance access of people in non-urbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services and

recreation. (McKinney Courier Gazette, 4/10/06)

■ The eight-mile U.S. 259 bypass around Kilgore opened April 11 to public celebration. The two-lane, 70 mph roadway has no yields or stops its entire length and features improvements such as a sound barrier wall and 10-foot shoulders for future expansion. (Longview News Journal – 4/12/06)

■ The Texas Transportation Commission on April 27 awarded \$9.2 million to build a second causeway to South Padre Island. The project includes money for an environmental assessment and traffic and revenue analysis of the two potential routes for the new causeway. The commission also approved \$12.4 million for an environmental assessment concerning purchase of right of way and movement of rail facilities in Cameron County and Brownsville. It's estimated assessments will take two years for the causeway and a year for the rail relocation. (Valley Morning Star – 4/28/06)

■ The Texas Department of Transportation has planned three projects with a goal of improving traffic flow along FM 359 north of U.S. 90A. Project costs are estimated to be \$41.8 million, and when completed, FM 359 will be widened from two to four lanes from U.S. 90A to FM 723, with an overpass at the railroad crossing north of U.S. 90A.

(Houston Chronicle – 5/2/06)

■ The Northeast Texas Regional Mobility Authority was granted \$12 million in toll equity, which will be put toward engineering design work and to expedite completion of Loop 49's third phase. Tyler's Metropolitan Planning Organization has already pledged \$70 million toward completion of the highway. By fall 2009, all segments of Loop 49 should be complete, allowing local residents to use the toll road now being built between Texas highways 155 and 110. (Tyler Morning Telegraph – 5/3/06)

■ The Texas Department of Transportation released a schedule of more than 50 public hearings on the Trans-Texas Corridor project. The hearings, which begin in mid-July and continue for five weeks, will give residents a chance to ask questions and register opinions about the massive transportation project. (KWTX, Waco – May 23, 2006)

■ The Texas Transportation Commission approved a \$133 million pass-through finance agreement with Hays County for highway improvements on three county roads. The projects will cost approximately \$20 million more to be paid by the county. In pass-through funding TxDOT reimburses a portion of the costs for developing and constructing road improvements financed by local governments. (Austin American Statesman – 5/26/06)★

# Going to the motor movies

by Mike Cox

Bill Powell's story in our April issue, "For a song, hit the highway," evidently struck a chord with at least a couple of TxDOT employees.

Powell got two e-mails from folks with suggested additions to the list of road songs mentioning Cadillacs.

From Anthony Cochran, a planner in the Beaumont District: "I just read the April 2006 Transportation News and enjoyed your article. But you forgot to mention another song about a Cadillac: 'Cadillac Ranch' by Bruce Springsteen, which was recorded sometime in the 70s/80s."

Bruce Hale, an engineering assistant in the Odessa Area office, wrote: "Did you forget the song about the psychedelic Cadillac? Where Johnny Cash picks it up from the factory 'One Piece at a Time.'"

Flattery being the impetus for imitation, to tweak a cliché, Powell has written a follow-up story in this issue on road movies, from Bob Hope and Bing Crosby's films to what may be the ultimate road movie, "The Wizard of Oz."

## Gasoline: Truly a liquid asset

*Warning: The following is only meant to make you smile. It should not be taken seriously.*

One of those e-mails created by someone with too much time on their hands landed in my home inbox the other day: "Gasoline costs more than beer...Drink, don't drive."

Again, just a joke. In reality, hard to see any humor in the cost of fuel these days.

## Click It or Ticket

If you don't know someone

## Letter from the editor

who's been in a traffic crash, you don't get out much.

While attending a recent out-of-the-office meeting, I heard the chairperson announce that someone most of us knew had been hurt in a wreck a few days before. In broad daylight, a suspected drunk driver ran a red light and T-boned the woman's vehicle. Suffering two broken ribs, a bad cut on her head and a bruise that covered half of her face, the woman spent a couple of days in the hospital. Still, she counted herself as lucky, crediting her seat belt with saving her life.

On May 22, TxDOT and the Department of Public Safety teamed up to promote seat belt usage. Since the first "Click It or Ticket" campaign in 2002, seat belt compliance in Texas has increased from 76 to nearly 90 percent.

That's the good news. The bad news is that teenage drivers buckle up only half as often as adults, and pickup drivers also are less inclined to click it.

Anyone who thinks seat belts are either uncool or uncomfortable just needs to talk to someone saved by the belt.

## Update: Texas Challenge

Pages 6 and 7 this month outline the challenges of increased population, fewer transportation dollars and growing traffic congestion. If you think you have already read this summary of TxDOT's role in solving that challenge, you may be behind the times. This is an updated version, and we encourage you to review it again. It's what we're all about.★

# TNotes

■ **Hurricane Eunice:** On Tuesday, May 2, Hurricane Eunice, a Category 5, was bearing down on Corpus Christi. This most severe of hurricanes was threatening the entire Texas Coast, causing millions to flee for dryer and safer ground. On Friday, the hurricane hit as predicted, but no one was injured and nothing was damaged on this sunny, cloud-free day.

Hurricane Eunice wasn't real. Rather, it was the star in the state's largest hurricane preparedness exercise that included TxDOT and 29 other state agencies. At the request of Gov. Rick Perry, state and local entities participated in a mock hurricane drill, a run-through of how things might be — and what needs to be fixed — this summer if even one of the many hurricanes predicted for the Gulf region hits.

Scott Alley, support branch manager in the Maintenance Division, says the four-day drill accomplished its mission. "It was a very successful exercise that demonstrated how far we have come since (Hurricane) Katrina, and how far we have yet to go."

■ **Pollution solution:** Some 3,082 employees signed up in May to help reduce air pollution by car pooling, brown-bagging their lunches and making sure their vehicles are in top working condition.

TxDOT's Clean Air Plan (CAP) is part of the statewide Drive Clean Across Texas campaign aimed at motivating motorists to change their driving habits to reduce pollution by driving less, maintaining their vehicles, avoiding unnecessary idling, buying energy efficient vehicles, and driving the speed limit. TxDOT's internal effort runs from May 1 through Sept. 30.

For more information:  
<http://crossroads.org/env/CAP/CAPhome.htm>.

— Judith Curtis, associate editor

# The Texas Transpo

## Texans have a problem

The Texas transportation system has not kept pace with the needs of a rapidly increasing population.

## Over the past 25 years in Texas...

Our population increased **57%**.

Our use of our roads grew **95%**.

State road capacity grew only **8%**.

Congress transferred **\$7 billion** in Texas gas tax payments to other states.

The state moved **\$10.8 billion** in transportation funds to other uses.

## Over the next 25 years in Texas ...

Our population will increase an additional **64%**.

Our use of our roads will increase an additional **214%**.

State road capacity will grow only an additional **6%**.

Congress will transfer **an additional \$7.5 billion** in Texas gas tax payments to other states.

The state will use an additional **\$13.5 billion** in transportation funds for other pressing needs.

## Texas mobility needs are significant

Planners have identified \$188 billion in needed projects to achieve an acceptable level of mobility by 2030. We estimate that only \$102 billion will be available to meet those needs. We are left with a significant funding gap of \$86 billion if we are to adequately meet the state's future transportation mobility challenges.

## Texans can't wait on Congress

**During the past 25 years, federal leadership has distributed transportation funds with little regard for population shifts among states.** Although the Interstate Highway System was essentially completed by the late 1980s, Congress has continued to transfer massive amounts of federal transportation funds from high-growth states to low-growth states. The federal government has transferred more than \$7 billion in federal gas taxes paid by Texans to other states' transportation needs. **Texas will never see that money.**

Congress currently transfers up to 13% of every Texas federal gas-tax dollar to other states. To generate enough cash to expand our transportation system as needed, those transfers would have to end. At the same time, Texas would have to receive transfers from other states equal to 80% of our federal gas-tax payments or essentially a 180% return on our federal gas-tax payments over the next 25 years. That doesn't include maintenance and other costs. Congress is not going to take federal transportation funds away from 49 other states to help Texas.

**Congress is not going to solve our problem.**

## Texas funding resources are stretched

The state gas tax only pays for 43% of our current state transportation budget. To generate enough cash to expand our transportation system as needed over the next 25 years, the state gas tax would have to be increased by 600% to \$1.40 per gallon. The prospect of a gas tax increase is unlikely. **The state gas tax alone is not going to solve our problem.**

## Why Texans need a new approach

We can't count on Congress or state government to restore the funds already transferred to other purposes. Those funds are gone. Given other challenges in federal and state government, we also cannot expect leaders to take funds away from other areas of government or raise taxes in the future to address our problem. Texans need to look beyond our traditional resources to find new solutions to meet the Texas transportation challenge.

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Source: TxDOT Government & Business Enterprises Division, May 2006

# Transportation Challenge

## TxDOT has a plan

The TxDOT Plan calls for faster completion of transportation projects with additional money to get the job done right.

## The TxDOT plan is focused on 5 goals

1. Reduce congestion.
2. Enhance safety.
3. Expand economic opportunity.
4. Improve air quality.
5. Increase the value of transportation assets.

## The TxDOT Plan is based on 4 strategies

1. **We will use all financial options to build transportation projects.** The governor and the legislature have authorized new revenue tools, including safety bonds, the Texas Mobility Fund, toll equity, and toll debt, to build postponed projects. TxDOT is using these new revenue tools and leveraging existing tax collections using public debt to build projects sooner at a lower cost. TxDOT is inviting the private sector to participate in financing our transportation projects. TxDOT is matching private-sector capital with public-sector capital to pay for long-term solutions.
2. **We will empower local and regional leaders to solve local and regional transportation problems.** New financial options at the local and regional level include the use of pass-through toll financing, the creation of regional mobility authorities, and the stability of the Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan. To protect the public's interest, TxDOT is connecting measurable results with defined authority to plan and approve transportation projects. TxDOT is separating planning and execution of local projects, regional projects, and state projects. TxDOT is reaching out to local and regional leaders to be our partners in this effort.
3. **We will increase competitive pressure to drive down the cost of transportation projects.** The comprehensive development agreement project-delivery method is being used to encourage cost-effective solutions to long-term transportation problems. TxDOT is implementing processes to encourage more competition among companies that already do business with the department. With new financial options available, TxDOT is inviting firms to relocate to Texas and compete for TxDOT projects.
4. **We will demand consumer-driven decisions that respond to traditional market forces.** New mobility opportunities are found through the Rail Relocation Fund, optional toll lanes and toll roads, and consumer-friendly commuter-rail systems. TxDOT is making its asset-investment decisions based on short-term, mid-term, and long-term solutions. TxDOT is considering transportation solutions other than roads and highways. TxDOT is giving consumers a choice.

## The TxDOT plan is the future of transportation

**Consumers drive our decisions.** The public must remain engaged in shaping transportation opportunities by identifying needs and taking advantage of transportation options. Consumer choices will determine our success.

**Business resources outline the options.** The private sector must step forward to bring its talents, ideas, and financial resources to the table. We won't solve this problem alone; public-private partnerships are essential.

**Local and regional leaders partner with TxDOT.** The TxDOT Plan requires strong and consistent commitment and leadership from local and regional officials. Our future depends on effective leadership and bold action. The entire TxDOT organization is committed to the success of this plan. It is our present and our future and we are moving forward. **Texas moves forward.** 🌟

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Note: For more information please visit [www.dot.state.tx.us/txdotnews/trans\\_challenges.pdf](http://www.dot.state.tx.us/txdotnews/trans_challenges.pdf)

## — EAP — FOR YOUR BENEFIT

TxDOT's Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

### Confidential Information, Referral and Crisis Intervention for You and Your Family provided through Alliance Work Partners

- Phone: 866-34TxDOT (866-348-9368) — toll-free
- Online: [www.alliancewp.com](http://www.alliancewp.com)
- TxDOT policy:  
<http://crossroads/org/hrd/Benefits/eap/0home.asp>

We handle life's stresses in a number of ways, and usually we cope quite well. Sometimes, however, things can get out of hand and may disrupt our work, our lives and the lives of those around us. Your EAP can help you and your immediate family members

deal with life's stresses and the variety of personal problems that can develop from them.

Relationship problems, depression or anxiety, grief and bereavement, child and elder care, work stress, anger, legal and financial issues, weight loss, smoking cessation, problems with alcohol and other drugs, and more — you don't have to continue to suffer.

EAP counselors can help ease the burden and improve your quality of life. Alliance Work Partners are professionals with a single purpose — helping people face these and other situations.

**Need them? — Call them**  
**Your EAP: Alliance Work Partners**

## About the 80 mph speed limit

- The 80 mph speed limits applies to cars and small trucks, and only during daylight hours.
- The maximum nighttime speed remains at 65 mph for all vehicles.
- Speed limits for 18-wheelers/large trucks remains 70 mph during the day, 65 mph at night.
- HB 2257 passed in 2005 called for an increase in speed limits on portions of rural interstate highways in Texas.
- Affected counties: Crockett, Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Kerr, Kimble, Pecos, Reeves, Sutton and Ward.
- Location: 432 miles on I-10 and 89 miles on I-20.

## Maximum Texas speed limits over the years

1907	18 mph
1919	25 mph
1923	35 mph
1928	45 mph
1941	60 mph
1942-1945	35 mph
1945	60 mph
1963	70 mph
1974	55 mph
1987	65 mph (rural interstates only)
1995	70 mph
2001	75 mph (counties with less than 15 person per square mile population density)
2006	80 mph (in 10 rural interstates only)

# Now playing: On the road, Hollywood style

**By Bill Powell**

TxDOT Public Information Office

Some of the best movies in Hollywood history have been road pictures.

The beauty of these movies is the unpredictability of what will happen. A lot of road movies start with things dull and boring until someone hollers, "Road trip!"

Anyone who has seen Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and Dorothy Lamour in one of the seven "Road to..." wherever movies knows how humorous the twists and turns in the road can be.

Favorites range from older classics to the newest road adventures at your local theater.

One early classic is "It Happened One Night."

Claudette Colbert stars as a runaway heiress on a cross-country trip with co-star Clark Gable. The funniest moment comes when Colbert hitchhikes by exposing her leg in as seductive a way as could be done in 1934.

The 1940 movie "The Grapes of Wrath" chronicles the Depression-era migration of the Joad family to California from Oklahoma. The journey from their drought-ravaged farm is for economic opportunity, although practically any reason is good enough to justify leaving Oklahoma.

Police chases or running from the law are a staple of many road pictures.

"The Blues Brothers" starring John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd are on a "mission from God" raising money to save an orphanage. They find lots of trouble along the way. Police cars, with sirens howling, end up hot on their heels toward the end of the 1980 movie.

"Thelma and Louise," from 1991 stars Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis as women fleeing the cops after shooting a would-be attacker.

"Duel" (1971) is one of the first Steven Spielberg-directed pictures and may be one of the first pictures showing the dangers of road rage. Dennis Weaver stars as a man running from a killer truck driver throughout the movie.

Perhaps the most violent road movie is "Death

Race 2000."

The movie shows how dim a view someone had of the future 25 years away. Sylvester Stallone and David Carradine play rival cross-country drivers who race for speed but also get points for running pedestrians down.

The movie tagline says it all

—"In the year 2000 hit and run driving is no longer a felony, it's the national sport!"

Cars, pickups and buses are the most common mode of transportation in road films. But sometimes other modes of travel are featured.

"Easy Rider" is a classic released in 1969 starring Peter Fonda, Jack Nicholson and Dennis Hopper searching for America on motorcycles.

The slowest moving road picture would have to be "The Straight Story" starring Richard Farnsworth as a man on a trip through the Midwest on a lawnmower.

The ultimate road picture according to movie critics is "The Wizard of Oz." Based on the book by L. Frank Baum the various songs, movies and even a Broadway play prove the enduring popularity of the trip on the Yellow Brick Road to see the wizard.

The latest road picture is "RV" starring Robin Williams, who takes his dysfunctional family on a trip to Colorado in the biggest recreational vehicle imaginable. This could be the most successful effort to date showing anything can happen and what Murphy's Law looks like on wheels.

Whether "RV" will become a classic is anyone's guess but it again proves road pictures are less about the destination than how the characters got there. 🚗

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**The beauty of these movies**

**is the unpredictability of**

**what will happen. A lot of**

**road movies start with**

**things dull and boring until**

**someone hollers, "Road trip!"**

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— Bill Powell



## Service awards / April 2006

### Abilene

20 years — James L. Hill, Jack M. Talley  
10 years — Jeffery L. Lay, Michael A. Martinez, Nancy K. Wilson

### Amarillo

30 years — Charles E. Smith  
20 years — Johnny L. Ritchardson Jr.  
10 years — Donald Pesch  
5 years — Homer C. Bursell Jr., Kimberly M. Hay, Nathan D. Prater

### Atlanta

20 years — David A. Dalrymple  
10 years — Jesse Procella  
5 years — Dennis W. Whatley, Ricky J. Wright

### Austin

25 years — Rhonda R. Stiewert  
20 years — Gary Armijo, Alan D. Hudson  
15 years — Eddie S. Flores, Johnny L. Goertz  
10 years — Shannon D. Franklin  
5 years — Eduardo M. Calzoncit, Clinton R. Dowdy, Dwaine E. Oneil

### Beaumont

25 years — Stanley R. Schaefer  
15 years — Patricia D. Spears  
5 years — Terry W. Blanton

### Brownwood

25 years — Tamara K. Cope, Gary T. Humes  
20 years — Douglas L. Feist  
15 years — Tina R. Crelia, Kelley A. Hamrick, Morris C. Williams  
10 years — Melissa K. Ferguson  
5 years — Renee D. Blisard, Lena J. Wright

### Bryan

35 years — Brenda O. King  
25 years — Terry D. Newton, Sandra D. Perry  
10 years — Sharon E. Palasota  
5 years — James D. Hargrove

### Childress

20 years — Royce B. Burrows, Clayton S. Martin

### Corpus Christi

15 years — James A. Kay, Jones H. Lansford, Oscar G. Shaw Jr.  
10 years — Soledad A. Gracia  
5 years — Roberto R. Gutierrez

### Dallas

25 years — Terry W. Mayo, Connielynn M. Seals  
15 years — Eric R. Enstrom, Kerry E. Lively, John D. Nguyen, Glenn D. Williams  
10 years — Eugene H. Carruth, James W. Halbrooks, Robert E. Hill, Joe L. Ramirez  
5 years — Rickey W. Braddy, Gina R. Garcia, Donald W. Garland, Robert D. Lambert, Scott E. Liden, Jonathan W. Roddy

### El Paso

35 years — Dennis J. Evans  
15 years — Pedro Morales Jr.

### Fort Worth

25 years — Terry L. Graves, James H. Parker

Jr., Johnette K. Williams  
20 years — Ray E. Shelby  
10 years — Paul O. Rivera  
5 years — William C. Boothe, Lance M. Krause, David C. O'Neal, Tuanh T. Pham

### Houston

25 years — Sheryl J. Bookman, Jose A. Garza, Brenda E. McKinney  
20 years — David L. Cubine, Bulmaro Davila, Willie C. Henderson, Gary L. Ray  
15 years — Richard E. Wahrenberger  
10 years — Kevin E. Braun

### Laredo

10 years — Eloy Juarez III

### Lubbock

25 years — Louis Carr, Michael C. Payton  
20 years — Kelly L. Comer  
10 years — Jose M. Garza  
5 years — Randell D. Weems

### Lufkin

20 years — Frederick T. Hampton  
10 years — Jerry K. Jasper, Roy W. Roberts Jr.  
5 years — Marjorie Gandy, Cynthia F. Luna  
5 years — Norman W. Dean, Said H. Haj—khalil, Suzanne M. Johnson, Lisa M. Martinez, Rhonda K. Roberts, Arkadiy Shafranskiy, Darlene D. Taylor

### Odessa

25 years — Jimmie Hernandez, Raul J. Rubio  
20 years — Tammie S. Folger, Richard L. Underwood  
15 years — Hector J. Aguirre Luna  
10 years — Brian K. Davis

### Paris

20 years — Randy K. Floyd, Stephen Vanderslice  
10 years — David A. Blouin, Patsy A. Taylor, Clint A. Traylor  
5 years — Jerry G. Chapman, Jason W. Hewitt, Steven W. Hughes

### Pharr

35 years — Maximo Mendiola Jr.  
20 years — Agapito A. Moreno  
5 years — Reuben D. Garza, Stella M. Loreda

### San Angelo

25 years — James W. Clayton  
5 years — Philip B. Leach, Courtney B. Strube

### San Antonio

40 years — Darla A. Laughter, Bryan W. Mitchell, Robert G. Pena  
20 years — Rogelio Chavarria, Patrick T. Downey, Dave H. Gregory, Thomas Obiedo, Rene R. Ortega  
10 years — Beau B. Buchanan  
5 years — Joe A. Hoyt

### Tyler

20 years — Dodd E. Vinson  
5 years — David A. Ivins

### Waco

25 years — Walter R. Lenart

20 years — Don L. Miller  
10 years — Kenneth R. Burke

### Yoakum

20 years — Tammi G. Cook  
5 years — Clinton D. Novak, Jeffery W. Vinklarek

### Wichita Falls

20 years — Paul E. Wenzel  
10 years — Cymantha M. Cato, Donna H. Taylor

### Administration

5 years — Richard F. Williamson

### Audit

20 years — Dorothy J. Farnish  
5 years — Douglas J. Wilson

### Aviation

5 years — Keith D. Snodgrass

### Bridge

25 years — Mark P. McClelland  
20 years — Brian D. Merrill  
5 years — Robert T. Castaneda

### Construction

15 years — Johnnie S. Miller  
10 years — Debra V. Robinson, Corey J. Schwarz

### Design

20 years — Barrie D. Cogburn, Bill R. Kirwin Jr.

### Environmental Affairs

10 years — George T. Dempsey, Nancy A. Kenmotsu

### General Services

40 years — Larry G. Williams  
20 years — Steve Burleson Jr., Maurice B. Estrada, Patricia A. Harris, Betty L. Hernandez

### Human Resources

15 years — Pamla B. Moore  
10 years — Mark D. Siemens  
5 years — Gaye D. Hill

### Maintenance

20 years, Monica L. Merrill

### Motor Carrier

10 years — Drake S. Kirk

### Motor Vehicle

5 years — Kenneth D. McDonald, Eva L. Velasquez

### Transportation Planning & Programming

10 years — Kimberly K. Parris

### Travel

15 years — Lori K. Moffatt

### Vehicle Titles & Registration

25 years — Debra R. Jolly, Dalia S. Torres  
20 years — Dewitt E. Juul, Judy S. Kent  
15 years — Elizabeth A. Pierce  
10 years — Joe M. Stevens



## Exit Ramp ( ) = service years/month of retirement

### DISTRICTS

#### Abilene

Don L Lunday (37/March)  
Melvin L Norris (36/March)  
Eliazar M Saucedo (36/March)  
Reynoldo S Ramos (28/March)  
Norman A Whitworth (20/February)

#### Austin

David B McHugh (32/March)

#### Beaumont

Donna R Jayroe (21/February)

#### Dallas

Kenneth D Byrd (20/March)

#### El Paso

Dennis J Evans (35/March)  
Francisco Gonzales (30/March)  
Thomas R Mangrem (27/February)

#### Fort Worth

Walter A McKinney, Jr (15/February)

#### Houston

Nicolas Saucedo, Jr (36/February)  
Mathew M Esters (26/March)

#### Lubbock

Gerald R Sturdivant (28/March)

#### San Angelo

Johnny S Guadarrama (29/March)

#### Tyler

Billy R Bailey (25/February)

#### Waco

Marrion E Land (29/March)

#### Wichita Falls

Melton A Demoss (28/March)  
Karen R Spencer (15/February)  
Billy H Pendegrass (12/February)  
Darleen A Dieringer (19/March)

### DIVISIONS

#### Information Systems

Frank A Williams III (22/March)

#### Motor Vehicle

Raymond S Grant (11/February)

#### Travel

Brenda A Moum (12/February)  
Charles T McGregor (5/February)  
Patricia R McGregor (5/February)

#### Vehicle Titles & Registration

Penelope B Perkins (12/March)

## Forum previews state's future

The first-ever Texas Transportation Forum, scheduled for June 8-9 at the Hilton Hotel in Austin, will bring together hundreds from local, state and federal governments, from universities and the transportation industry to observe the achievements of the past and to envision the future.

The Texas Department of Transportation, the Associated General Contractors of Texas, the Texas Good Roads Transportation Association, and the Texas Transportation Institute are sponsoring the two-day gathering.

The forum, hosting panelists and individual speakers, will observe the interstate highway system's 50th anniversary, and will look ahead to the challenges facing transportation visionaries and planners for the next half century.

Participants will look at the strategies seen as leading Texas into a new era of infrastructure development.

Among the scheduled speakers are Gov. Rick Perry; TxDOT

Executive Director Michael W. Behrens; Harold Linnenkohl, president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials; Steve Massie, senior VP of Associated General Contractors of America; Eugene McCormick, president of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association; and Pat Jones, executive director of the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association.

Panelists will discuss topics ranging from "The Road to Economic Opportunity" to "The National Tolling Conversation" and "The Future of Road Building." Other panels will review "The Future of Transportation Financing," "Regional Mobility Authorities," "Aviation, Rail, and Public Transportation," "State and Federal Legislation," "Leveraging Existing Infrastructure," and "Texas Corridors."

More information:  
[www.texastransportationforum.com](http://www.texastransportationforum.com)

# Calendar

## 2006

### June

- 31-6/2 Transportation Planning Conference, Corpus Christi, TPP
- 5 CDA Workshop, New York City
- 5-7 Research Management Committee Meeting, Austin, RTI
- 5-9 Internal Audit Conference, Austin, AUD
- 8-9 1st Annual Texas Transportation Forum, Austin, GBE
- 12-14 Human Resources and Civil Rights Conference, Austin
- 14-15 ATPA Board Mtg., and 2007 Grant Review, Austin, ATPA
- 19 Emancipation Day\*\*
- 26-28 Design and Bridge Conference, San Antonio, DES
- 29 Commission Meeting, Austin

### July

- 4 Independence Day\*
- 18 Research Oversight Committee Mtg., Austin, RTI
- 27 Commission Meeting, El Paso

### August

- 24 Commission Meeting, Austin
- 27 LBJ's Birthday

### September

- 4 Labor Day\*
- 10 AASHTO Standing Committee on Rail Transport., SA, TPP
- 12-14 Environmental Coordinators Conference, Austin, ENV
- 23-24 Rosh Hashanah
- 28 Commission Meeting, Austin

### October

- 2 Yom Kippur\*\*\*
- 3-4 General Services Division Conference, Austin, GSD
- 10-11 Transportation Short Course, College Station
- 19 ATPA Board Meeting, Austin, ATPA
- 26 Commission Meeting, Denton

### November

- 6-9 Research Management Committee Mtg., Arlington, RTI
- 11 Veteran's Day
- 16 Commission Meeting, Austin
- 23-24 Thanksgiving\*

### December

- 12 Research Oversight Committee Meeting, Austin, RTI
- 14 Commission Meeting, Austin
- 24 Christmas Eve Day
- 25 Christmas Day\*
- 26 Day after Christmas\*

\* = all agencies closed

\*\* = skeleton crew holiday

\*\*\* = optional holiday (in lieu of any state holiday where a skeleton crew is required)

The complete TxDOT Calendar is on the intranet at <http://crossroads.org/pio/articles/calendar.htm>

# backtracks



Long before the coffee craze swept through cities around the country, on just about every street corner there were the mom-and-pop coffee shops. The question is where and when was this shop in operation? If you have more information about this picture, contact Anne Cook at (512) 486-5838 or by e-mail at [acook@dot.state.tx.us](mailto:acook@dot.state.tx.us)



The backtracks photo in the last issue of *Transportation News* was identified by Al Klement, a TxDOT retiree. Located in Hudspeth County near mile marker 99 on Interstate 10, this photo of the roadside park was taken when it was U.S. Highway 90. Martin Horst, Corpus Christi Area Engineer, confirmed Al's suggestion. 🌟



## Looking Back

*"Personnel on the sixth, seventh and eighth floors and in the Penthouse (at the Greer Building in Austin) were shaken by a mild earthquake April 9. The tremor reached from Kansas south as far as Austin with its heaviest shocks felt in Oklahoma. Employees on the lower floors did not feel the quake, but a distinct vibration was felt on the upper floors."*

— from **Highway News**,  
Texas Highway Department newsletter, April 1952



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Austin, Texas 78701

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