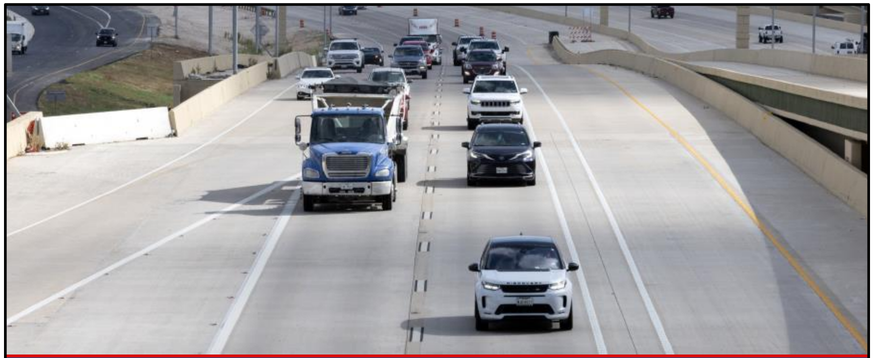


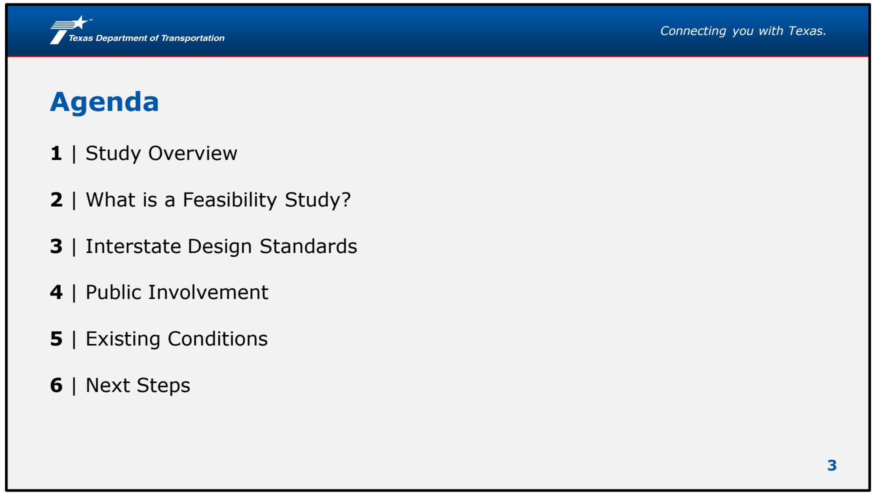
I-27 Feasibility Study from Amarillo to Dumas

Public Meeting

Dec. 4 & 5 2024

- The Texas Department of Transportation Amarillo District is pleased to welcome you to the first virtual Public Meeting for the I-27 Feasibility Study from Amarillo to Dumas. Your presence today underscores the importance of this initiative and your commitment to improving our transportation infrastructure.

- Before we proceed with our scheduled discussion, I want to take a moment for a safety minute. The study area extends from US 87/US 287 starting at State Loop 335 in Amarillo and ending at a logical terminus north of Dumas at US 287. From 2019 to 2023, there were 5,288 crashes in the study area. Of the 47 fatal crashes, the top two contributing factors were single-vehicle crashes (45% of fatalities) and head-on collisions (17% of fatalities). These insights are essential as we work toward TxDOT's goal to #EndTheStreakTX, which aims to reduce daily fatalities on Texas roads.



- Our agenda for today will begin with a study overview. Then, we will discuss what is a Feasibility Study, interstate design standards, and public involvement efforts. We will then present the study area’s existing conditions, including traffic and freight data.

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Goals of Today's Meeting

- Introduce the feasibility study
- Present study purpose, goals and schedule
- Provide an overview of:
  - Interstate design standards
  - The public involvement process
  - Existing conditions of the corridor

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  - Introduce the feasibility study
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  - Provide an overview of:
    - Interstate design standards
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    - Existing conditions of the corridor

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Study Overview

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- We will now provide an overview of the study.

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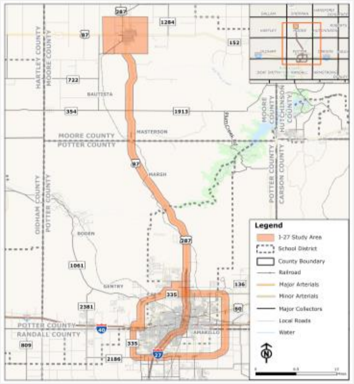
I-27 Feasibility Study from Amarillo to Dumas: Study Area

- **Counties**: Randall, Potter and Moore
- **Limits**: SL 335; Along US 87/US 287 from State Loop (SL) 335 in Amarillo to the logical terminus north of Dumas at US 287
- **Length**: 57 miles
- **Municipalities**: Amarillo and Dumas



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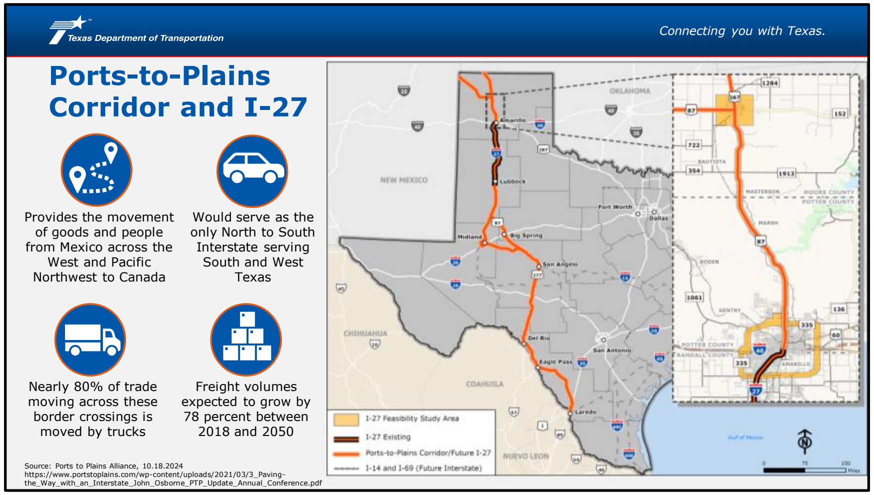
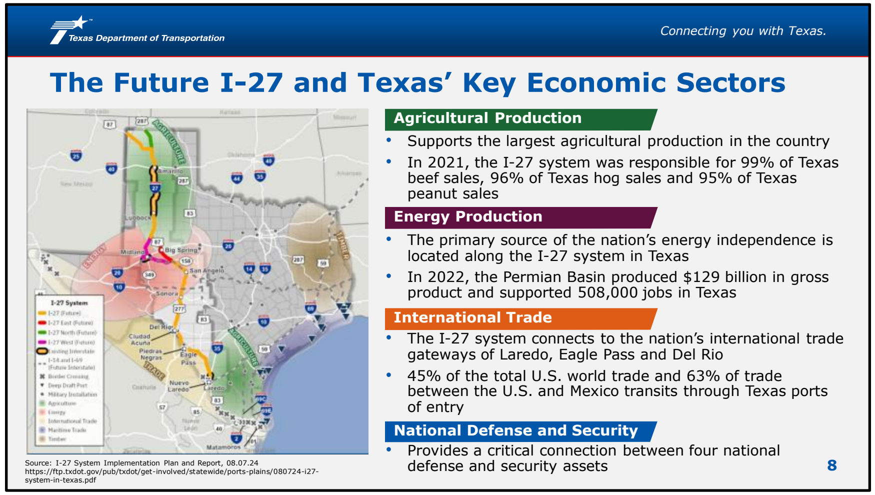
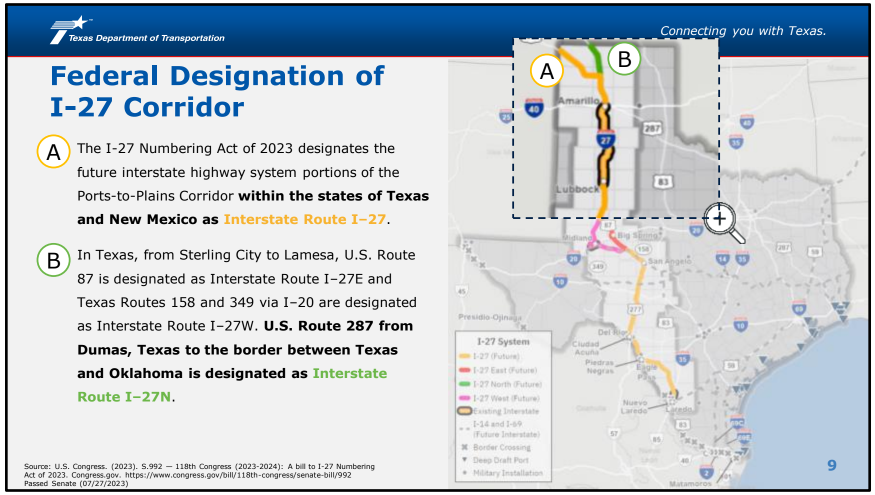
- The study area limits are from US 87/US 287 from I-27 and State Loop 335 in Amarillo to North of Dumas at US 287.
- The 57-mile corridor crosses through Randall, Potter, and Moore counties and the cities of Amarillo and Dumas.



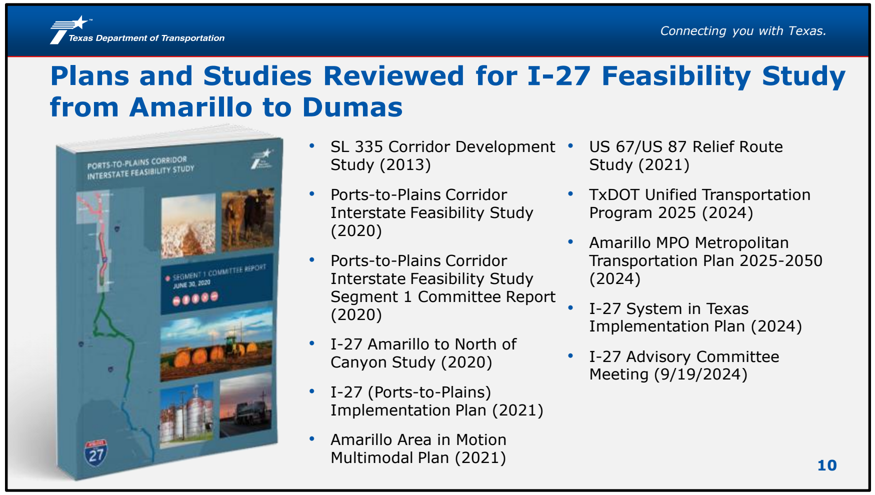
- The Ports-to-Plains corridor is synonymous with the future I-27 corridor from Mexico to Canada.
- This feasibility study is a direct recommendation as part of the Ports-to-Plains corridor interstate feasibility study, which was completed in 2020.
- From this study, it was suggested that US 87/US 287 be upgraded to interstate standards, becoming part of the designated I-27 to advance the goals of improving freight movement, enhancing economic development, enhancing safety, and increasing mobility.
- The Ports-to-Plains Corridor:
  - Would serve as the only North to South Interstate serving South and West Texas
  - Nearly 80% of trade moving across these (Texas/Mexico) border crossings would be moved by trucks
  - Freight volumes are expected to grow by 78 percent between 2018 and 2050 along this corridor.



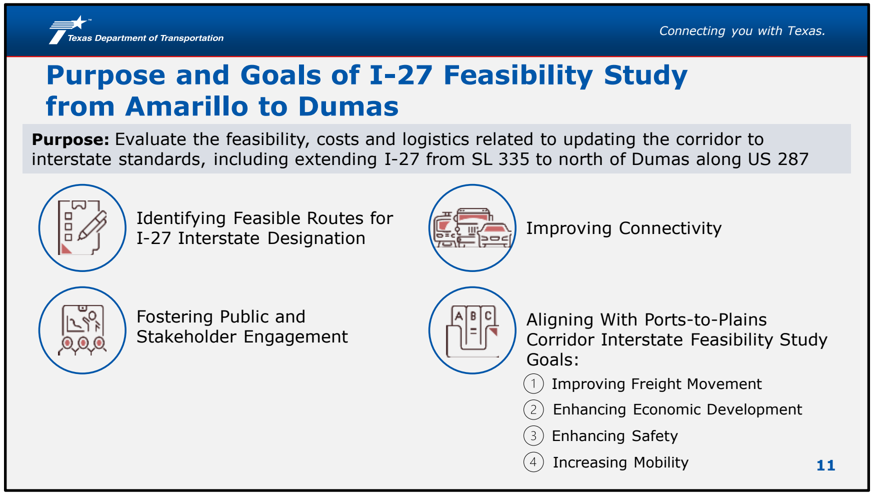
- I-27 supports the State's key economic sectors. The map shows the future I-27/Ports-to-Plains corridor in the state of Texas, starting at Laredo and ending at the Texas/Oklahoma, designated I-27 North, and Texas/New Mexico border, designated I-27.
  - For agricultural production, the future I-27 would support the largest agricultural production in the country
  - In 2022, the Permian Basin produced $129 billion in gross product and supported 508,000 jobs in Texas
  - The I-27 system connects to the nation's international trade gateways of Laredo, Eagle Pass, and Del Rio
    - 45% of the total U.S. world trade and 63% of trade between the U.S. and Mexico transits through Texas ports of entry
  - The I-27 system provides a critical connection between four national defense and security assets



- The I-27 Numbering Act of 2023 designates the future interstate highway system portions of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor within the states of Texas and New Mexico as Interstate Route I-27, shown in yellow. U.S. Route 287 from Dumas, Texas, to the border between Texas and Oklahoma is designated as Interstate Route I-27 North, shown in green.



- This slide lists reports and plans that informed the study purpose for the I-27 Feasibility Study. Through this review, common themes were identified and incorporated into the development of the goals and purpose of this study.
- The Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study and the Ports-to-Plains Implementation Plan were of utmost importance as direct contributors to the initiation of the I-27 Feasibility Study.



- The purpose of this study is to evaluate the feasibility, costs, and logistics related to creating a continuous flow of traffic and meeting interstate standards, including extending I-27 from SL 335 to a logical terminus north of Dumas along US 287.
- The goals of this study are
  - Identifying feasible routes for I-27 interstate designation
  - Fostering public and stakeholder engagement
  - Improving connectivity
  - And aligning with the Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility study goals

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What is a Feasibility Study?

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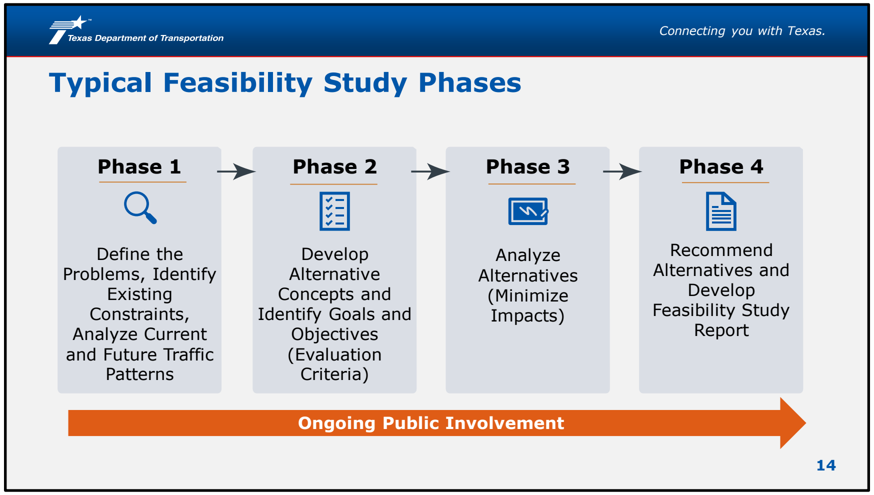
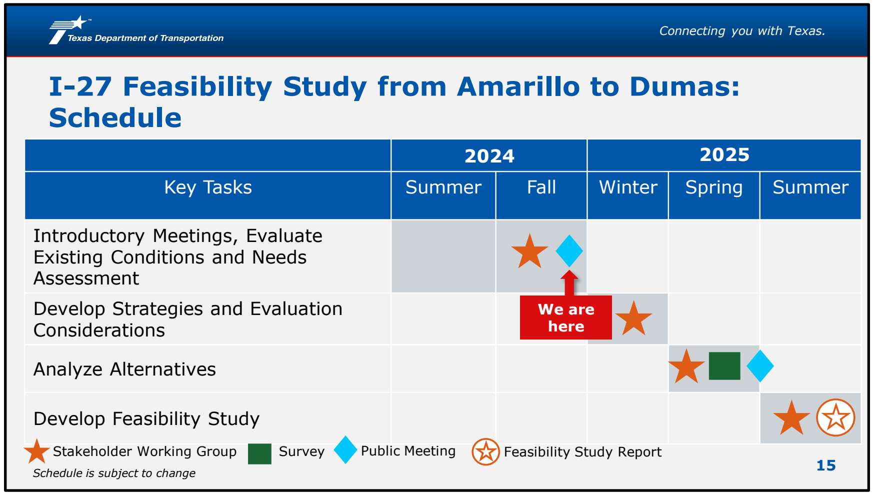
- We will now discuss what a feasibility study is.

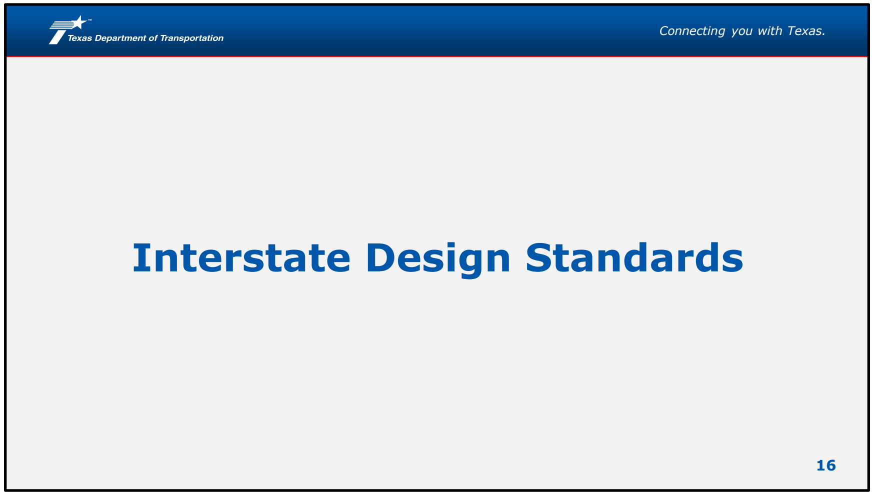
- A feasibility study is the initial step in the project development process.
- This type of study occurs during the initial planning phase and offers a comprehensive evaluation of the current and future conditions of the corridor.
- Upon completion of the feasibility study, the preliminary design phase will begin, which can last more than two years. This phase includes environmental reviews of selected alternatives, cost estimation, and public involvement.
- Following the preliminary design, the final design phase begins, which may extend over three years. Right-of-way determination and Federal Highway Administration authorization occur in this phase.
- The final phase of the project development process is construction, which may take more than five years to complete. Right-of-way acquisition is conducted in this phase.
- Upgrading US 87/US 287 to interstate standards will be a lengthy process with several stages ahead.
- Advancement from step to step in the project development process is contingent upon the outcome of the previous step and the availability of funding.



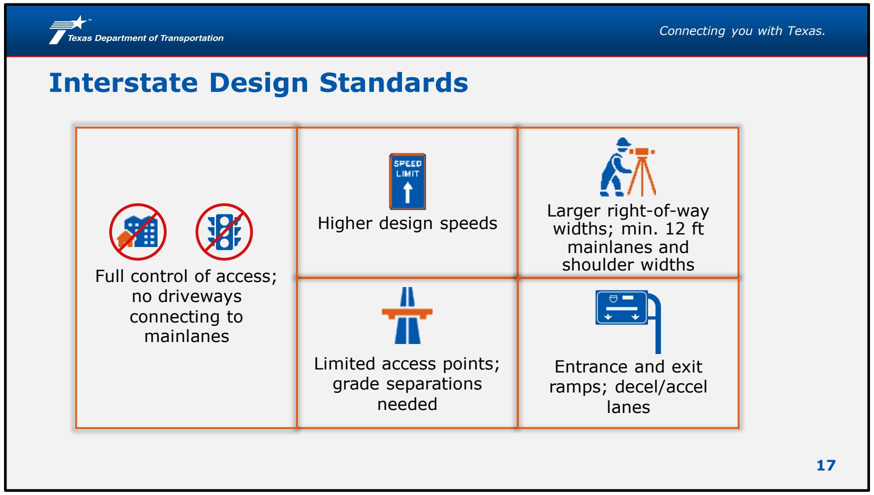
- A feasibility study is a multi-phase process that assesses whether a project is ready to move into preliminary design.
- The first phase involves defining the problem, identifying existing constraints, and analyzing current and future traffic patterns.
- In the second phase, alternative solutions are developed, and goals and objectives are established to serve as evaluation criteria.
- The third phase focuses on analyzing and refining the various alternatives.
- In the fourth phase, the recommended alternatives are presented in a Feasibility Study Report.
- Public engagement typically occurs throughout all phases of the study.



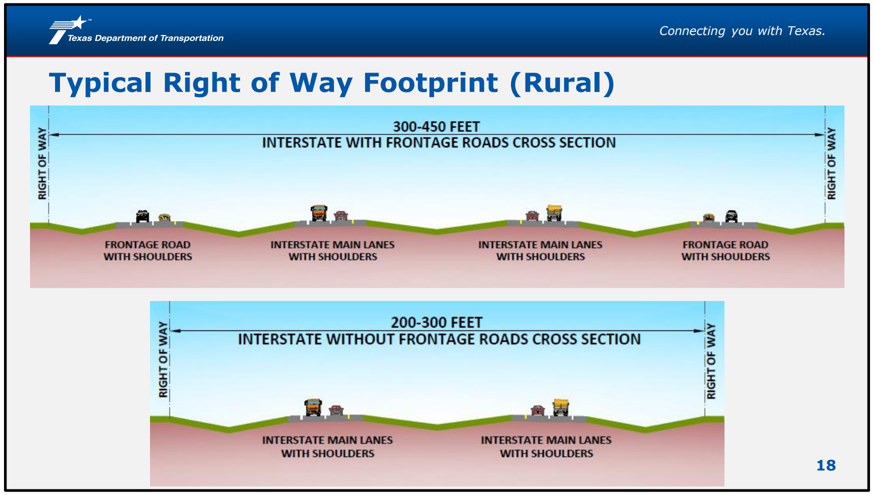
- The study has a variety of opportunities to engage the public.
  - Stakeholder working groups
  - Two public meetings
  - And a project website including an interactive comment map and future survey
- The anticipated completion of the feasibility study report is July 2025.



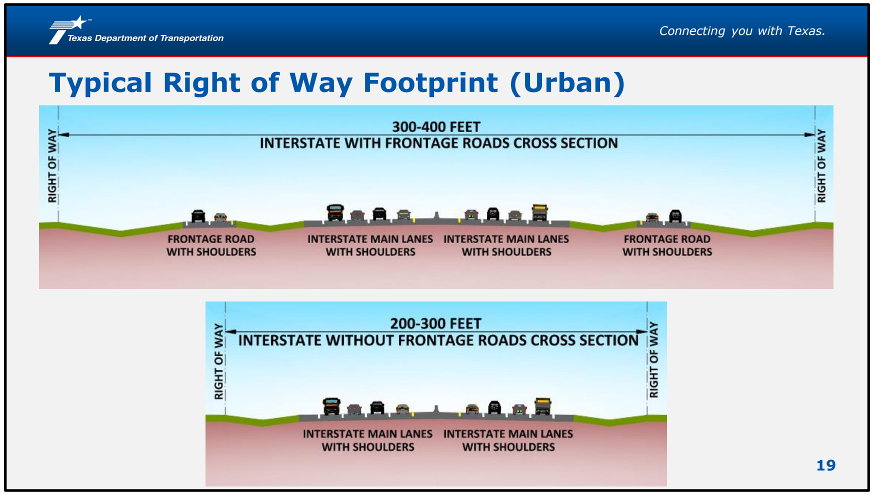
- We will now discuss interstate design standards.



- Interstate highways are subject to a uniform set of geometric and safety design standards throughout the country, established by the Federal Highway Administration and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.
- Design standards include:
  - Full control of access, requiring the need for frontage roads in urban and rural areas
  - No driveways connecting to mainlanes
  - No stop signs or traffic signals on mainlanes
  - Design speeds of 50+ MPH in urban and 70+ MPH for rural
  - Limited Access Points
  - Wider right of way (200-500 feet)
  - Vertical Clearance (18.5 feet or greater)
  - 12 feet or wider Lane widths
  - Entrance and exit ramps with acceleration and deceleration lanes

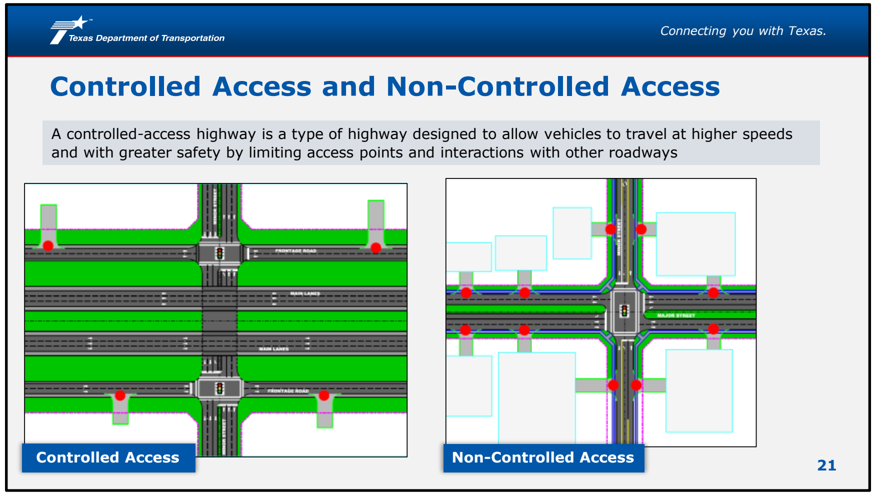


- This slide illustrates the proposed rural roadway (upgrading to interstate standards) with frontage roads.
- The proposed right-of-way varies from 200 feet to 300 feet with depressed medians and 4 lanes.



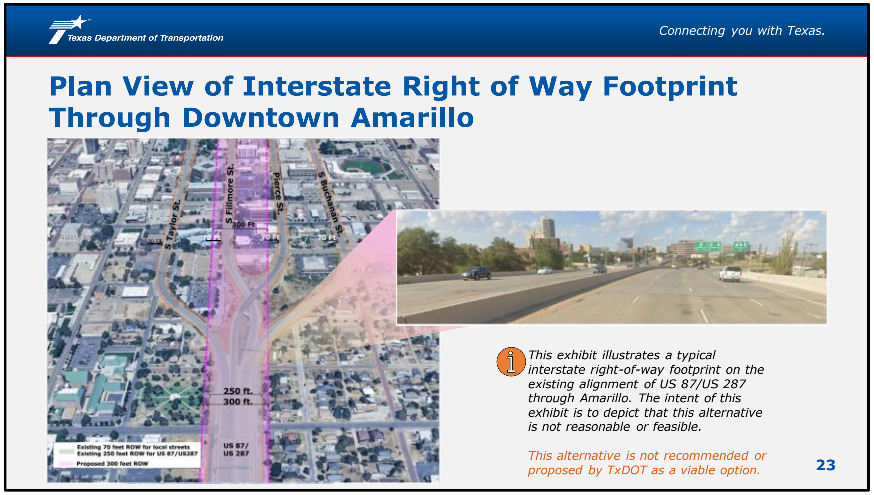
- This slide illustrates the proposed urban roadway (upgrading to interstate standards) with frontage roads.
- The proposed right of way varies from 200 feet to 300 feet with a median barrier.

- This slide illustrates a typical grade-separated interstate and arterial (local street) intersection.
- Notice how the proposed interstate goes above the existing arterial (local street) without stopping. Access to the local street is provided through frontage roads on both sides of the interstate mainlanes, with traffic signals and the option to make U-turns.



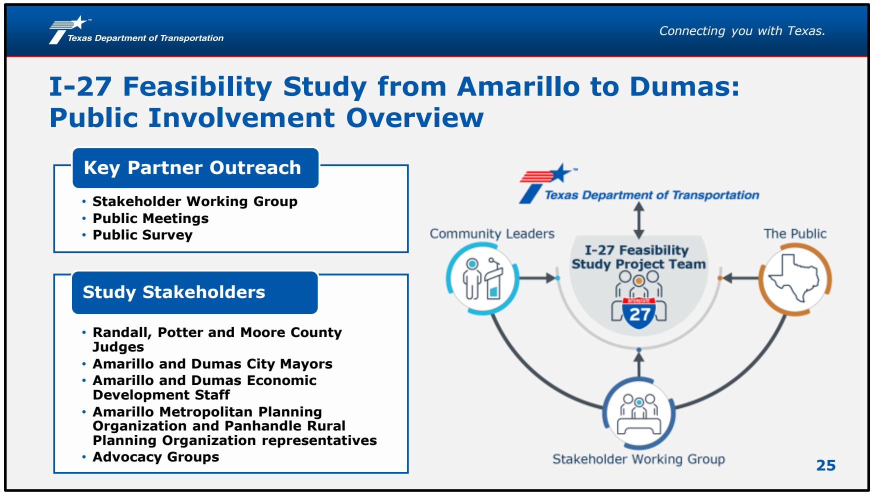
- This slide illustrates controlled access highways and non-controlled access roadways.
- For access-controlled highways:
  - Access to and from frontage roads is through entrance and exit ramps
  - Access to businesses is provided through frontage roads, with the access points depicted by red dots

- This slide illustrates the downtown section of Dumas at the US 87/US 287 and State Highway 152 intersection.
- The existing right of way width is 100 feet, shown in grey.
- The proposed 300 foot right of way, shown in purple, impacts all of the existing businesses and properties along the existing roadway.



- This slide illustrates Amarillo's downtown section with US 87/US 287 and one-way dispersal streets, South Taylor St., South Fillmore St., Pierce St., and South Buchanan St.
- The existing right of way width for these local streets is approximately 70 feet, and for the US 87/US 287 corridor, it is 250 feet, shown in grey.
- The proposed 300 foot right of way, shown in purple, impacts all of the existing businesses and properties along the existing roadways.

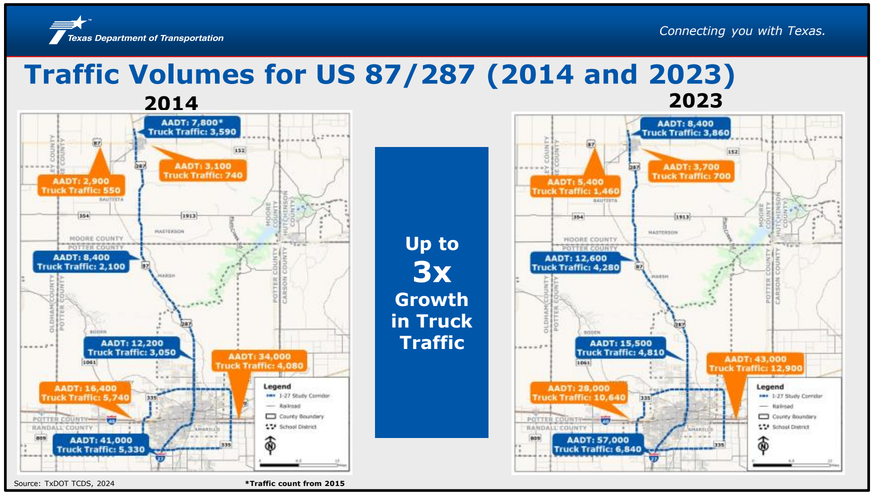
- We will now discuss the public involvement activities of this study.



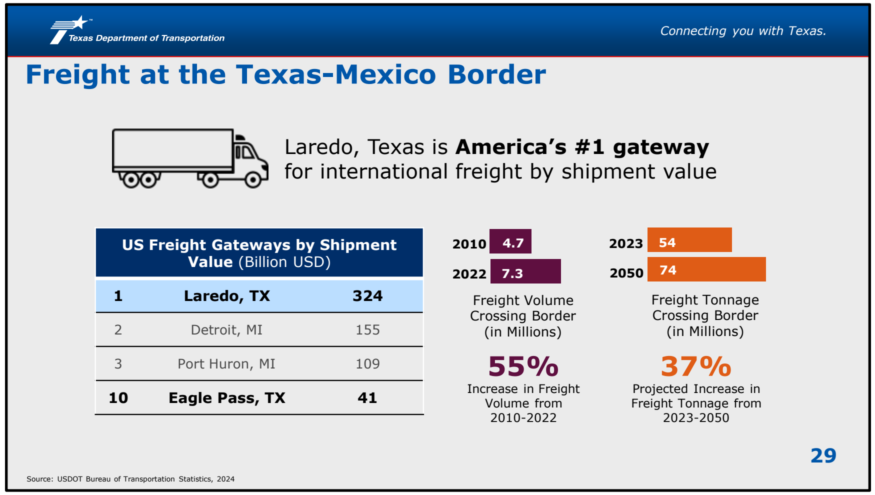
- This study will be supported by a stakeholder working group and public meetings hosted in both Amarillo and Dumas.
- The stakeholder working group consists of representatives from local agencies, government officials, and interest groups from Amarillo and Dumas, along with Randall, Potter, and Moore Counties.
- The study will provide opportunities for the public to provide feedback on:
  - Study goals and objectives
  - Existing conditions and constraints
  - Improvements needed
  - Mobility and safety issues
  - Preliminary typical sections and proposed connection locations
  - Additional considerations and recommendations for the study team

- A variety of public involvement activities have been held related to previous studies on the future of I-27 in the Amarillo District, which can provide insight into what to expect for this feasibility study.
- These studies include:
  - State loop 335 Feasibility Study
  - State loop 335 from FM 2590 to I-27 Study
  - Dumas Relief Route US 87/US 287
- Some of the common themes found through previous public involvement activities include:
  - General Agreement on the Need for Improvements
  - General Support for Study Proposals
  - Lack of Consensus: Differing opinions, especially on route alignments or alternatives
  - Specific Requests for Maintaining Local Infrastructure
  - Concerns About Property Impacts: Many participants expressed concerns about the effects on property, including property values and business
  - Safety Concerns: Safety, particularly related to heavy trucks and the curvature of roads or other design elements, was a common theme in multiple studies

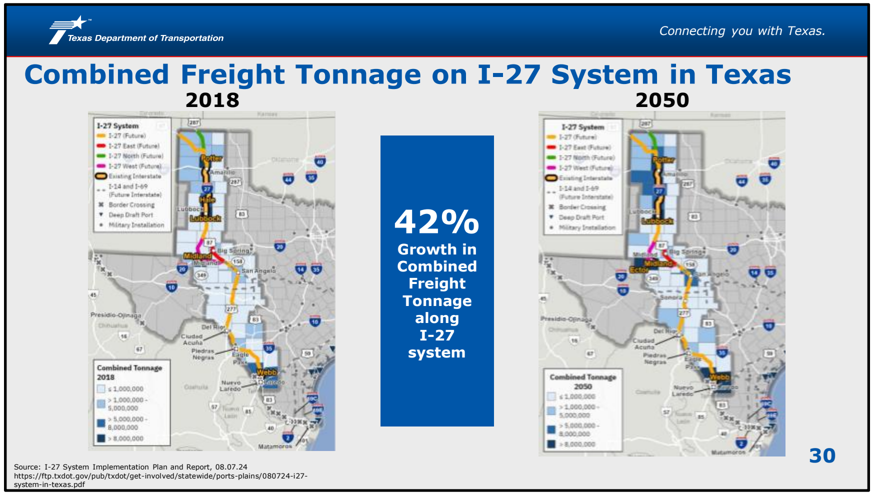
- We will now discuss the existing conditions for the study area, which include traffic volumes and freight trends.



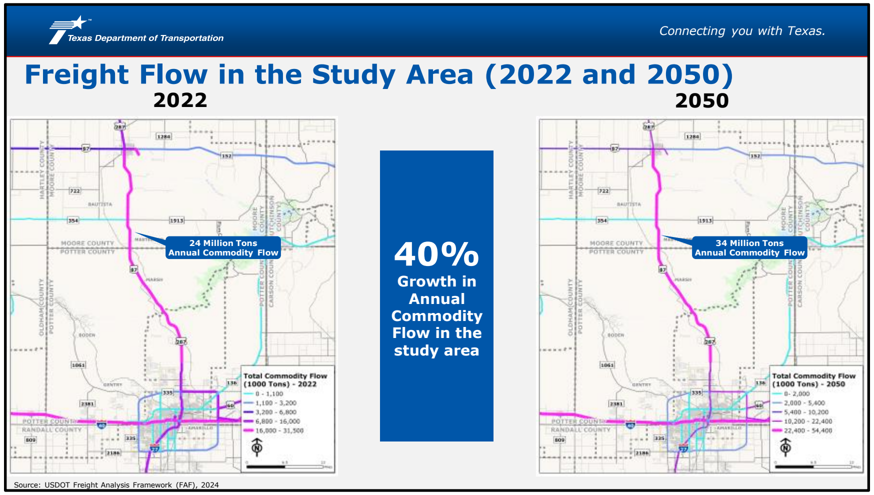
- Historical traffic data indicates a rise in overall traffic volumes in the study area from 2014 to 2023.
- Truck volumes have seen a substantial increase, tripling over this period.
- The most significant traffic growth over the past decade occurred in the areas to the west and south of the study area in Amarillo, as well as along the stretch between Amarillo and Dumas and the section west of Dumas.



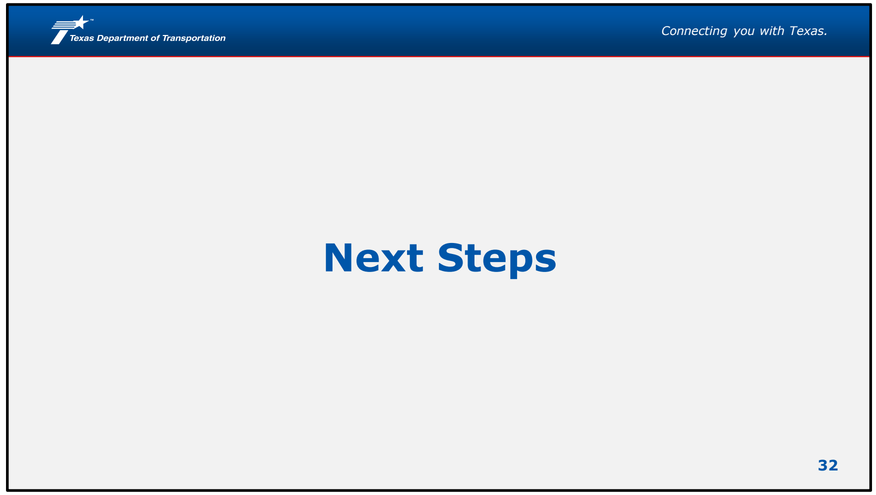
- Significant freight growth is anticipated at the Texas-Mexico border in the southern region, with the I-27 corridor, the primary north-south route, serving as the main pathway for this increased freight flow.
- In 2024, Laredo, Texas, holds the top position among U.S. gateways for international freight by shipment value, with Eagle Pass ranking 10th.
- In 2022, around 7.3 million trucks transported nearly 5 million loaded containers from Mexico into the U.S. through Texas ports, representing a 1.5x increase since 2010.
- By 2050, Texas is set to handle an additional 20 million tons of freight annually from Mexico.



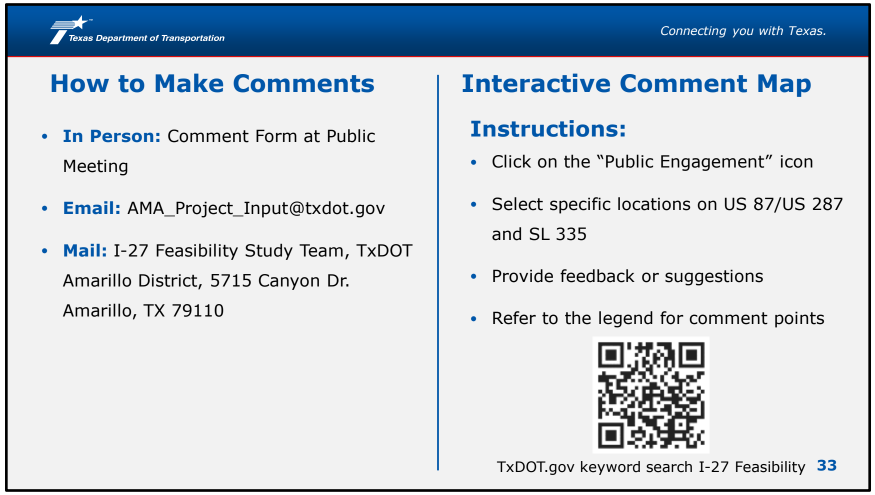
- Freight tonnage is the measurement of freight cargo carried.
- There were 41.9 million tons of freight moved within the 56-county region of the I-27 system in 2018.
- Freight movement along the I-27 system is projected to nearly double by 2050 and grow to 74 million tons of freight moved.
- Freight tonnages are higher in counties with urban areas, such as Potter, Lubbock, and Midland Counties, as well as in counties that border Mexico, like Webb County.
- While rural counties along the system have lower tonnage volumes, the I-27 system is key for connecting these counties to other markets.



- This slide illustrates the growth in freight flow within the study area.
- Freight flow is the movement of goods from one place to another.
- There is a projected 40% increase in annual commodity flow between 2022 and 2050.



- We will now go over how to make comments.



- The study team has developed an interactive map on Social Pinpoint, which can be accessed via the QR code or link below.
  - Once you navigate to the study website, click the public engagement icon to navigate to the interactive map to provide your questions, concerns and feedback
- Physical comment forms are also available, or you can provide feedback via email or mail.
- Please note, the comment period will remain open until December 20, 2024.