



I-10 Texas Corridor Study West Working Group Meeting #4

Tuesday, May 9, 2023

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. MDT

Starlight Event Center

Attendees

County and City Representatives

- Gabriela Fraga – Executive Administrative Coordinator, El Paso County
- Joaquin Rodriguez – Transportation Planning Administrator, City of El Paso
- Samantha Garcia – City of El Paso
- Jesus Mendoza – Strategic Project Manager, City of El Paso – International Bridges Department
- Carlos Olmedo – Project Manager, City of El Paso – International Bridges Department
- Brian Lake – Operations Manager, City of El Paso – International Bridges Department
- Eddie Romero – Operations Manager, City of El Paso – International Bridges Department
- Paul Stresow – Director, City of El Paso – International Bridges Department
- Robert Tinajero – Assistant Director, City of El Paso – International Bridges Department
- Honorable Ivy Avalos – Mayor, City of Socorro

MPOs, COGs, and Other Transportation Agencies

- Eduardo Calvo – Executive Director, El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Harrison Plourde – Assistant Director, El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Cameron Walker – Executive Director, Permian Basin Metropolitan Planning Organization

NMDOT

- Andreas Linnan – Technical Support Engineer, NMDOT

Advocacy Organizations

- Natalia Littlefield – Vice President of Strategy, Borderplex Alliance

TxDOT

TxDOT Divisions

- Cary Karnstadt – I-10 Texas Corridor Study Project Development Manager, TPP Division

TxDOT Districts

- Raul Ortega, P.E. – TP&D Director, El Paso (ELP)

OUR VALUES: *People • Accountability • Trust • Honesty*

OUR MISSION: *Through collaboration and leadership, we deliver a safe, reliable, and integrated transportation system that enables the movement of people and goods.*

An Equal Opportunity Employer

- Tomas Trevino, P.E. – District Engineer, ELP
- Eddie Valtier, P.E. – Deputy District Engineer, ELP
- Jennifer Wright – Public Information Officer, ELP
- Marty Boyd – Director of Advanced Transportation Planning, ELP
- Robert Ornelas, P.E. – TP&D Director, Odessa (ODA)

I-10 Texas Corridor Study Consulting Team

- Brian Comer – I-10 Texas Corridor Study Project Manager, Associate Vice President, HNTB
- Will Smithson – Principal Planner, HNTB
- Kelsey Heavin – Public Involvement Manager, HNTB
- Lauren Read – Public Engagement & Communications Specialist II, HNTB (Via Teams)
- Noemi Herrera Rojas – Stakeholder Engagement, HNTB
- Jerry Leos, P.E. – Senior Technical Advisor, HNTB
- Valerie Diaz, P.E. – Engineer, HNTB
- Erin Perkins-Watry – President, Foresight
- Jefferson Grimes – Planning & Communications Technical Manager, Foresight
- Patricia Kelly – Planning & Communications Specialist, Foresight (Via Teams)

MEETING AGENDA

1. Study Recap and Status Update
2. Validate Guidelines and Programs
3. Prioritize Plans and Projects
4. Next Steps
5. Questions and Closing Remarks

A complete copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached.

Welcome, Introductions, and Safety Minute

Slides 1 - 3: Intro and Opening Remarks

The first slide presented initial information for participants to view as they entered the meeting. Brian Comer, I-10 Texas Corridor Study Project Development Manager, started the meeting by introducing himself and welcoming participants. Brian then introduced the TxDOT personnel in attendance.

Tomas Trevino, TxDOT El Paso District Engineer, welcomed the West Working Group participants and thanked everyone for attending. He said it is a great opportunity to work on such a meaningful and important project for West Texas and all of Texas. The meeting will be used to consider the future of this strategic highway and ensure concerns about congestion, connectivity, economic development, and more are addressed. Brian then asked the consultant team, then the working group participants to introduce themselves.

Slide 4: Safety Minute

Brian presented the safety minute on safe driving and speed.

Slide 5: Meeting Agenda and Purpose

Cary Karnstadt, I-10 Texas Corridor Study Project Development Manager, reviewed the meeting agenda. He stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and seek consensus from stakeholders, including the TxDOT Districts, on recommended implementation strategies that have been drafted from previous stakeholder input. Cary noted that a significant portion of the meeting would focus on reviewing the proposed guidelines and programs and discussing and prioritizing plans and projects.

Slide 6: Coffee Talk: Recent Developments

Participants were asked to provide input on the following “Coffee Talk” (interactive discussion) question:

What are some recent developments within the greater West Segment Region that may impact transportation needs along the I-10 Corridor?

Participants provided the following responses:

- A stakeholder remarked that there have recently been meetings regarding the Ports-to-Plains (I-27) and I-14 construction through San Angelo. The impact of Ports to Plains on the region will be significant. There is a southern leg on US 385 from Odessa which would be the main route to get to I-10.
- A participant stated there are no other options today for the west-to-east movement of people and goods. If any routes, such as I-70 in Colorado or I-20 in Texas are shut down because of weather, it is difficult to find an alternative route. Connectivity is important. What are some potential alternative routes that would be worth looking into?

- Another participant noted this area needs connectivity to/from all the ports of entry.
- A stakeholder emphasized the importance of US 90 to this area cannot be overstated. What are the easiest ways to connect to US 90? Route 62 is another option to consider as an alternative route.
- A participant stated that being involved in this I-10 Texas Corridor study is notable. Many important issues are being discussed that will impact the bi-state (Texas and New Mexico) and national conversation. One significant topic for the area is heavy truck traffic.

Study Recap and Status Update

Slides 7 - 9: Study Area Overview, Purpose, and Scope

Brian provided a recap of the I-10 Texas Corridor Study and the importance of I-10 to the nation and within Texas. He also discussed the nationwide importance of I-10 to critical freight links as well as its military importance as a national defense corridor. The West Segment of the corridor is approximately 330 miles long and spans six counties. Brian then highlighted the specific features and characteristics of the West Segment of I-10 and the purpose and scope of the study.

Slide 10: I-10 Texas Corridor Vision

Brian presented the vision statement for the I-10 Corridor as follows:

I-10 is an ever-improving lifeline corridor for Texas. It provides safe, reliable transportation from state line to state line. I-10 is accessible and well-maintained, connecting communities and supporting the national and state economies by efficiently moving people and goods throughout the state and beyond.

Slide 11: Goals for the I-10 Corridor

Brian shared the goals for the I-10 Corridor as follows:

- Enhance mobility to support safer, more efficient, and reliable travel along the I-10 corridor.
- Improve safety for passenger and freight travel on the I-10 corridor.
- Increase resiliency and connectivity between communities, borders, ports, and activity centers along I-10 and with other critical highways on the state roadway network.
- Maintain and preserve the I-10 corridor in a state of good repair.
- Invest in the I-10 corridor to support the state and national economies and increase opportunities for Texas' businesses, employees, and communities to grow and prosper.
- Preserve and protect the character, culture, history, values, and natural resources of the communities along the I-10 corridor.

- Provide a broad range of reliable, innovative, and multimodal transportation options and technologies along the I-10 corridor to meet diverse user needs and future demand.

Slide 12: I-10 Texas Corridor Study Status Update

Brian reviewed the study milestones. He noted that the study team has reviewed the existing conditions and identified needs and gaps. The team has also identified initial improvement strategies based on socio-economic and traffic analyses and input received from the stakeholder meetings and the public survey. He stated that high-level costs and potential funding sources have been developed for some of the proposed improvement strategies. Brian said that the potential economic impacts of the agreed-upon proposed transportation investments and improvement strategies will be analyzed and prioritized as part of the next phase. He noted that this fourth round of stakeholder engagement meetings was added to prioritize and develop consensus on the implementation strategies associated with study programs, plans, and projects.

Slide 13: Overview of Proposed Improvement Strategies

Brian gave an overview of proposed improvement strategies. He said the recommendations were broken down into four categories: guidelines, programs, plans, and projects. Brian provided a brief definition of each, as follows:

- Guidelines are broad recommendations to guide decisions on future corridor investments based on identified goals. Brian noted policies had been changed to guidelines after the last round of meetings to provide more flexibility.
- Programs are a set of related initiatives or investments designed to advance identified guidelines.
- Plans are broad or conceptual-level initiatives that require further study and refinement to advance identified guidelines.
- Projects are specific initiatives or infrastructure investments with defined geographic limits, scope, and costs to advance identified guidelines.

Slide 14: What We've Done Since Round 3

Brian reviewed the work of the study team since the third round of working group meetings:

- Reviewed and incorporated input from Working Group and Steering Committee meetings into proposed improvement strategies.
- Held project review meetings with TxDOT Districts to refine proposed plans and projects.
- Held coordination meetings with TxDOT Divisions to refine proposed guidelines and programs.

Slide 15: Connecting Texas

Brian reviewed the multimodal corridor slide to reinforce that TxDOT is addressing issues with multiple plans, studies, and strategies. He said the study team coordinated with TxDOT divisions to discuss the issues and how I-10 needs could be addressed through ongoing plans. Brian stated that the divisions discussed ongoing and upcoming initiatives with the study team. The study team also

received a summary of current plans and projects from the districts along the corridor. Many of the issues the stakeholders have raised during the previous I-10 Corridor meetings are being studied and addressed through some of these initiatives.

Slide 16: Coffee Talk: What are you most excited about for the future of I-10?

Participants were asked to provide input on the following “Coffee Talk” (interactive discussion) question:

What are you most excited about for the future of I-10?

Participants provided the following responses:

- One stakeholder remarked that there is an exciting opportunity to reduce congestion through greater integration of technology such as ITS.
- Another participant commented that this region is the largest producer of alternative energy and the movement of that infrastructure throughout West Texas depends heavily on I-10.
- A final comment was that there are increases in nearshoring which demands that the area have a reliable interstate.

Guideline and Program Priorities

Slides 18: Applicable Guidelines and Programs for Infrastructure

Brian provided an overview of the applicable guidelines and programs related to infrastructure projects on the corridor. Where feasible, the guidelines include incorporating key design and operational improvements into major projects, incorporating context-sensitive design and environmentally sustainable materials and practices into I-10 improvements, and working with adjacent segments to ensure appropriate project sequencing to minimize the impacts on safety and mobility.

Some of the infrastructure programs discussed include design upgrades, access management, ramp improvements, bridge improvement strategies, frontage road upgrades, and drainage improvements. Brian also mentioned potential Power Projection Platform route upgrades, such as replacing substandard and low-clearance bridges to accommodate major freight and military needs.

Slide 19: Applicable Guidelines and Programs for Technology and Communications

Brian reviewed the applicable technology and communications guidelines and programs. Where feasible, the applicable guidelines included incorporating the installation of broadband/fiber and smart technology equipment into major projects on the I-10 corridor, developing comprehensive statewide communication technologies to improve trip planning and incident management, and continuing to develop infrastructure to support vehicle technology (ADS/CDS).

Applicable technology and communications programs that were discussed include installing broadband/fiber backbone, ITS/DMS infrastructure improvements, advanced flooding warning systems, bridge clearance notifications, blocked rail crossing notification, Truck Parking Availability System and Weigh-in-Motion and Vehicle Classification expansion and upgrades, Smart Work Zones, signage improvements, and freight fuel alternatives.

Slide 20: Applicable Guidelines and Programs for Multimodal Passenger Travel

Brian provided an overview of the applicable guidelines for multimodal passenger travel. The applicable guidelines include overcoming funding and legislative policy barriers, encouraging the incorporation of multimodal improvements into larger projects, and supporting the development of multimodal capacity and connectivity improvements. As people move further out of inner cities, multi-county and multi-agency funding for bus transit will become more important.

Brian outlined the applicable multimodal programs for passenger transit. These include intercity bus transit, commuter transit, autonomous rural transit, the bicycle tourism network, and intercity passenger rail service. He noted the Amtrak 2035 plan service recommendation for upgrades to provide more frequent service.

Slide 21: Applicable Guidelines and Programs for Multimodal Freight

Brian provided a summary of the applicable multimodal freight travel guidelines for implementation on the I-10 corridor. He said the guidelines include standardizing and sharing freight data among states and partner agencies, identifying funding and legislative/policy opportunities to overcome freight transport barriers, and supporting last-mile freight connectivity options.

Brian outlined applicable multimodal programs to move freight on I-10, including freight data sharing (including TPAS, WIM/VC), border wait times, supporting private alternative freight delivery systems, freight transportation/land use connections, and freight mobility hubs. One example Brian highlighted was the freight shuttle concept in the El Paso area which will support the first and last-mile options. In meetings with the Strategic Planning Division and the Aviation Division, the study team found that TxDOT is looking at air mobility systems that provide options for moving freight. Private industry is also working on freight shuttle concepts. Stakeholders have brought up the importance of addressing access improvements and the infrastructure to support these systems.

Slide 22: Break

Plans and Projects

Slide 24: Applicable Connectivity Plans

Brian presented a slide summarizing the six phases of the project development process. He described how plans and projects move through development phases from concept to construction. Brian explained that there are several multi-segment I-10 projects for which portions are already in

the Unified Transportation Program (UTP), but there are also portions that have not yet been funded for construction. Others may currently be in the UTP as a planning or feasibility study, but specific project details (such as the number of lanes, route locations, etc.) have not been determined. Identifying these “gap” projects as being important for improving mobility, safety, or connectivity along I-10, will result in them being included in the I-10 Texas Corridor Implementation Plan for potential advancement to the next phase of project development. He asked participants to consider these phases as the team discussed proposed plans and projects for the I-10 Corridor.

Slides 25 - 26: West Segment Connectivity Plans: Prioritization Exercise

Brian presented a map showing applicable West Segment connectivity plans. The maps also indicated the parallel and connecting corridors that were identified from a resiliency standpoint. He informed participants that they would be broken up into smaller breakout groups to discuss the connecting and parallel routes along I-10. The groups were advised to consider the overarching desire to improve connectivity, mobility, and resiliency along the I-10 corridor. Brian explained that each participant would be provided three voting dots to correspond with their top three plans. After the group discussions, each would vote by placing their dots in the “priority” column of the plan to reflect those three priorities of mobility, connectivity, and resiliency. Space was provided for participants to add any connecting and parallel routes that were not identified on the maps.

Slides 27 - 29: Project Prioritization Exercise

Brian presented slides describing the gap projects identified in the West Segment. Brian noted that each project had been provided to the participants on a postcard. The postcards included details about each project’s limits, the current status, the estimated cost, and several anticipated benefits. The breakout groups were to review the project-specific information, consider the prioritization of each project in the context of I-10 through the region, and select the preferred time frame for advancing each project. The time frame options were short-term (less than five years), mid-term (from five to ten years), and long-term (more than ten years).

Brian then asked that the breakout groups keep in mind the following as they discussed the projects:

- Estimated Cost
- Project Sequencing
- Other Ongoing or Planned Projects
- Previous Stakeholder Input
- Segment and Corridor-wide Needs and Impacts

Brian reminded those present that during prior meetings, the top priorities were established as being:

- To reduce congestion

- To reduce crashes
- To increase maintenance

Participants broke out into groups to discuss and prioritize the plans and projects. The study team facilitated discussions within the groups, answering any questions that were asked about the plans or projects.

Slides 30 - 32: Prioritization Exercise Results

Brian reviewed the results of the plan and project prioritization exercises, showing how stakeholders prioritized plans and projects in the West Segment.

Plan Prioritization Results

Plan	Breakout Group #1	Breakout Group #2	Total Votes
US 62/US 180 Outer Loop FM 3380 to Borderland Expressway	7	5	12
RM 652 Connect 62/US 285		10	10
I-10 Extend Frontage Roads to Outer Loop	7		7
FM 1111 Upgrade from US 62 to I-10	4		4
US 90 Corridor Study (Statewide)	2	2	4
New Mexico (BHC) NM 273 to I-10	3		3
Alternative Route to Santa Teresa		3	3
I-10 Direct Connectors to Eastlake and Horizon (near Amazon)		2	2
I-10 Tornillo Frontage Roads		2	2
US 285/US 385 Fort Stockton Bypass (Odessa District)	1		1
SH 54 Expand Existing			

Project Prioritization Results

Facility	Project Score
W-1: SH 20 to I-10/US 85/Sunland Pk Interchange	Mid Term
W-2: Thorn (just north of SH 20) to Executive Center Blvd	Mid Term
W-3: Executive Center Blvd. to US 54/Copia St.	Short Term
W-4: US 54/Copia St.to US62 (Paisano Dr.)	Short Term

Facility	Project Score
W-5: US 62 (Paisano Dr.) to Airway Blvd.	Mid Term
W-6: Airway Blvd. to Yarbrough Dr.	Mid Term
W-7: Yarbrough Dr. to FM 659 (Zaragoza)	Mid Term
W-8: FM 659 (Zaragoza) to Eastlake Dr.	Mid Term
W-9: FM 1281 (Horizon) to FM 1110	Mid Term
W-10: FM 1110 (Clint) to FM 3380	Mid Term
W-11: Borderland Expressway/Loop 375 (Purple Heart Memorial Hwy) to FM 3255 (MLK Blvd)	Short Term
W-12: Border Highway East Extension/Loop 375 (Americas Hwy) to FM 3380 (MF Aguilera Rd)	Short Term

Brian asked if any results were surprising.

Stakeholder Input/Discussion

During the breakout discussion, one participant expressed surprise that the group prioritized W-3 as a mid-term priority. Especially considering W-4 was listed as a short-term priority, it would seem that W-3 should also be a short-term priority. Brian suggested the groups vote to see if a consensus could be reached on if W-3 should be prioritized as short or mid-term. The stakeholders voted to prioritize W-3 as a short-term project.

One of the breakout group participants wanted to convey that W-4 has significant impacts on local communities and the cultural priorities of the region.

The group also wanted to discuss W-12 and the fact that there are problems with development as it has wildlife, drainage, and right-of-way issues.

Slides 33 - 35: Overview of Proposed Plan Contents

Brian reviewed the proposed I-10 Corridor Plan contents. He noted that the plan will include the following:

- Emphasis on the local, statewide, and national importance of I-10
- Description of stakeholder engagement and planning process
- Overview of existing and forecasted socio-economic, traffic, and infrastructure conditions
- Description of identified needs and gaps

- List of prioritized guidelines, programs, plans, and projects

Brian asked participants if there were any key topics that they would like to highlight in the I-10 Texas Corridor Study Report for the West Segment.

Stakeholder Input/Discussion

The working group participants wanted to ensure that the report highlights the fact that I-10 through the region is a bi-state and bi-national corridor of statewide significance. The participants also raised the issue that I-10 in El Paso is a critical juncture for the movement of goods and services. Finally, the group discussed how to better communicate the importance of I-10 in El Paso to those who live there. The group stressed that the modernization of I-10, operations, safety, and continuous frontage roads are all issues that need to be addressed.

Next Steps

Slides 36 - 37: Next Steps

Brian provided an overview of the next steps and the upcoming schedule. He said following the Working Group meetings, the study team would incorporate the stakeholders' input into the plan. Later in the spring, the team will meet with the Steering Committee to review the stakeholder input and the draft plan. The study team will finalize and present the implementation plan in the early summer of 2023.

Questions & Closing Remarks

Slides 38 - 39: Questions & Closing Remarks

Cary said the information provided was extremely valuable and thanked the attendees for taking the time to participate.