



# I-10 Texas Corridor Study Final Combined Meeting

Thursday, July 13, 2023  
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. CST  
Microsoft Teams

## Attendees

### *Counties*

- Honorable Peter Sakai – County Judge, Bexar County
- Honorable Jeff Branick – County Judge, Jefferson County
- Honorable Rob Kelly – County Judge, Kerr County
- Johnny Trahan – Commissioner, Orange County
- Charles Rogers – Emergency Management Coordinator, Colorado County
- Gabriela Fraga – Executive Administrative Coordinator, El Paso County
- Gibert Saldana – Public Works Planning & Development, El Paso County
- Stacy Slawinski – County Engineer, Fort Bend County
- Clay Forister – County Engineer, Guadalupe County
- Cynthia Coss – Director of Community Engagement, Office of Bexar County Judge Peter Sakai

### *Cities*

- Bob Ray – Mayor Pro Tem, City of Brazos Country
- Joel Hicks – Mayor Pro Tem, City of Cibolo
- Ralph Gutierrez – Mayor, City of Schertz
- Ivy Avalos – Mayor, City of Socorro
- Tamela Louvier – City Secretary, City of Flatonia
- David Tingle – Public Works Design Manager, City of Beaumont
- Samantha Garcia – Research Assistant, International Bridges Department - City of El Paso
- Jesus Mendoza – Strategic Project Manager, International Bridges Department - City of El Paso
- Joaquin Rodriguez – Project Manager, International Bridges Department - City of El Paso
- Paul Stresow – Director, International Bridges Department - City of El Paso
- Rachel Vargas – City of El Paso
- Patrick Nguyen – Senior Division Manager, Houston Public Works

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

- Mary K. Hamann – Assistant City Engineer, City of Seguin
- Melissa Reynolds – City Engineer, City of Seguin

#### *Regional Agencies*

- Diane Rath – Executive Director, Alamo Area COG (AACOG)
- Raymond Telles – Executive Director, Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority (CRRMA)
- William Lisska – Regional Planning Manager – Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)
- Eduardo Calvo – Executive Director, El Paso MPO (EPMPO)
- Harrison Plourde – Assistant Director, EPMPO
- Salvador Gonzalez-Ayala – Transportation Research & Development Manager, EPMPO
- Claudia Valles – Transportation Planner – EPMPO
- Michael Ada – Executive Director, Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission
- Alan Clark – Chief Strategy Officer, Metro Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO)
- Angie Thomason – President & CEO, Katy Area Economic Development Council
- Katie Milton Jordan – Kerr Economic Development Corporation
- Chester Jenke – President, Seguin Chamber of Commerce
- Ryan Hall – Airport Principal Planner, San Antonio Airport System
- Ellen Smyth – Executive Director, Sun Metro Mass Transit Department (Sun Metro)
- Charles Haile – Manager of Engineering, VIA Metropolitan Transit

#### *Military and Other Federal/State Agencies*

- Jamie Todt – SDDC Highways for National Defense
- Lewis Grimm – Task Order Manager, DOD SDDCTEA Power Projection Platform (PPP) Route Studies (EFLHD/FHWA)
- Sean Greszler – Community Planner, U.S. Airforce
- Harold Love – District 1 Engineering Support Manager, New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT)
- Joseph Moriarty – Technical & Freight Planning Supervisor Planning Division – NMDOT
- Andreas Linnan – Technical Support Engineer, NMDOT

#### *Ports and Port Authorities*

- Phyllis Saathoff – Executive Director & CEO – Port of Freeport
- Bruce Mann – Director of Freight Mobility, Port of Houston Authority

- Larry Kelley – Executive Director & CEO, Port of Port Arthur

#### *Advocacy Organizations*

- Robin Stallings – Executive Director, Bike Texas
- Ross Milloy – President, The Greater Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council
- Chad Burke – President, Economic Alliance – Houston Port Region
- Debra Richmond – Director of Strategic Initiatives, Permian Strategic Partnership (PSP)
- Honorable Ed Emmett – Texas Freight Advisory Committee Chair, Former Harris County Judge

#### *Businesses*

- Tyson Moeller – General Director Network Development, Union Pacific Railroad
- Gary Cole – President, U.S. Autologistics

#### *Other*

- Koushik Arunachalam – Vice President, Arcadis
- Virginia Sapkota – Lead Transportation Planner, Arcadis

#### ***TxDOT***

#### *Districts*

- Lisa Collins – TP&D Director, Beaumont District (BMT)
- Raul Ortega – TP&D Director, El Paso District (ELP)
- Eddie Valtier – Deputy Director, ELP
- Marty Boyd – Advanced Transportation Planning Director, ELP
- Jose Bocanegra – Planner, ELP
- Rebecca Reyes – Planner, ELP
- Eliza Paul – District Engineer, Houston (HOU)
- Catherine McCreight – Transportation Planning Director, HOU
- Brenda Bustillos – Deputy Program Manager, HOU
- Stephan Gage – Planner, HOU
- Shixin “David” Gao – Planner, HOU
- Robert Ornelas – TP&D Director, Odessa District (ODA)
- Gabriel Ramirez – Advanced Planning Engineer, ODA
- Chad Windham – Operations Director, ODA

- Scott Nelson – Transportation Engineer, San Antonio District (SAT)
- Becki Perkins – District Environmental Specialist, San Angelo District (SJT)
- Martin Horst – District Engineer, Yoakum District (YKM)
- Lucean Kuykendall – Public Information Officer, YKM

*Divisions*

- Humberto “Tito” Gonzalez – Director, TPP
- Lorena Echeverria De Misi – Manager, TPP Corridor Planning Branch
- Cary Karnstadt – I-10 Texas Corridor Study Project Development Manager, TPP
- Claudia Lagos Galindo – Manager, TPP International Trade and Border Planning Branch
- Curtis Jones – Project Development Manager, TPP Freight, Trade & Connectivity Section
- Amy Redmond – Public Involvement Specialist, TPP Public Involvement Section
- Geir Eilif Kalhagen – Director, Maritime Division
- Robert Travis – Director, Rail Division
- John Young – Environmental Specialist, Environmental Affairs Division

***I-10 Texas Corridor Study Consulting Team***

- John Tompkins – TPP Statewide Corridor Planning Contract Manager, HNTB
- 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
- Noemi Herrera Rojas – Public Involvement Support, HNTB
- Travis Norton – Project Manager, HNTB
- Erin Perkins-Watry – President, Foresight
- Jefferson Grimes – Planning & Communications Technical Manager, Foresight
- Patricia Kelly – Planning & Communications Specialist, Foresight

## **MEETING AGENDA**

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1. Welcome and Introductions
2. I-10 Texas Corridor Study Draft Implementation Plan
3. Call to Action and Next Steps
4. Questions and Closing Remarks

A complete copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached.

## **Welcome, Introductions, and Safety Minute**

### *Slides 1 - 2: Intro and Opening Remarks*

The first slide presented initial information for participants to view as they entered the meeting. Lorena Echeverria De Misi, Manager, TPP Corridor Planning Branch, started the meeting by introducing herself and welcoming participants to the Final Combined Meeting of the Steering Committee and Working Groups.

Lorena stated the meeting would be a combined meeting of the collective steering committee and working group members and thanked everyone for attending. She stressed that the input provided by the members has been very important to identify the critical issues and needs along the corridor and encouraged participants to continue to share ideas and thoughts. She commented that this committee is helping to shape the vision and propose solutions on this corridor, which is vital for statewide connectivity. It was noted that this meeting would focus on reviewing and validating the draft I-10 Texas Corridor Implementation Plan.

Lorena said she would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the working group chairs for the corridor study. Judge Rob Kelly from Kerr County has served as the Central Working Group chair, and Judge Jeff Branick has served as the East Working Group chair. She asked if either would like to make any remarks to begin the meeting. Judge Kelly said he was very excited about the unveiling of the Implementation Plan. It has been a long, arduous process to get to this point, and it is exciting to see the end product. Lorena then introduced Cary Karnstadt, the I-10 Texas Corridor Study Project Development Manager.

### *Slide 3: Safety Minute*

Cary presented the safety minute on emergency vehicle safety. He stated that in the previous round of stakeholder meetings, the study team heard a lot about safety issues. He shared that the Move Over or Slow Down law traditionally has required drivers to yield to police, fire, and emergency vehicles, and has been expanded over the years to provide the same protection for TxDOT work crews and other roadside workers. The Move Over or Slow Down law requires drivers to move over a lane or slow down to 20 mph below the posted speed limit when approaching emergency vehicles, law enforcement vehicles, tow trucks, utility service vehicles, TxDOT vehicles, or other highway construction or maintenance vehicles using visual signals or flashing lights activated on the roadside.

Cary reminded everyone that it is important to always think about safety and stay focused on the road.

- Slow down and follow posted speed limits. When workers are present, traffic fines could double.
- Resist the urge to talk, text, or do anything else that is distracting, especially in a work zone.

- Leave plenty of space between you and the car in front of you, and look out for flaggers and signage requiring you to slow, stop, or change lanes.
- Plan your trip beforehand to make sure you account for delays or detours.

#### *Slides 4 - 5: Roll Call and Introductions*

Cary then introduced Brian Comer, Project Manager for the HNTB I-10 Texas Corridor Study consultant team. Brian provided instructions on how to participate in the meeting and introduced Mentimeter.com (Menti) to the group. Menti is an interactive presentation tool that facilitates real-time participant responses to questions. Participants were then asked to use Menti to provide their names, organizations, and titles (Participants' names and organizations are noted in the attendee list above).

#### *Slide 6: Meeting Agenda and Purpose*

Cary reviewed the meeting agenda. He stated the purpose of the meeting was to review and validate the recommended implementation strategies that have been drafted from previous stakeholder input and to identify any additional corridor-wide priorities. Cary noted that a significant portion of the meeting would focus on reviewing the draft I-10 Texas Corridor Study Implementation Plan and discussing future action plans.

## **I-10 Texas Corridor Study Draft Implementation Plan**

#### *Slide 8: Implementation Plan Contents*

Brian presented a slide listing the chapters and the purpose of the I-10 Texas Corridor Study draft implementation plan. He noted that the study team is putting the finishing touches on the plan, and it will be sent to the steering committee and working group members to review after this meeting. He informed the group that during this meeting, the study team will walk through the chapters of the plan, providing the highlights of each. The draft I-10 Texas Corridor Study Implementation Plan includes a high-level executive summary and seven chapters, which will be covered throughout the meeting today. The plan:

- Emphasizes the local, statewide, national, and international importance of the I-10 corridor.
- Depicts the extensive stakeholder engagement and planning process.
- Provides an overview of existing and forecasted socio-economic, traffic, and infrastructure conditions.
- Identifies critical projects that have gaps in funding.
- Specifies and prioritizes recommended guidelines, programs, plans, and projects that guide future development of the I-10 corridor.

Brian said when the steering committee and working group members review the plan, they should focus on the following questions:

- Did the study team highlight the items most important to you? Does it confirm your priorities?
- Provide comments on the plan. Are there any key elements that were missed? If so, what are they?

## **Study Introduction**

*Slides 9-12*

### *Slide 9: Study Purpose and Scope*

Brian discussed how the draft plan opens with a study introduction that provides an overview of the I-10 Corridor and the purpose and outcomes of the I-10 Texas Corridor Study. He reminded everyone that the purpose of the study is to identify transportation needs and prioritize improvement strategies to improve safety, connectivity, and mobility along the I-10 corridor in Texas, which will help support the statewide and local economies. He stated the next few slides would provide an overview of the study introduction chapter.

### *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, multimodal, 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 presented 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 Process*

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 a variety of factors, including the input received from the second round of 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 noted that the study team has recently completed the economic analysis and the summarization of the planning process and outcomes.

#### *Slide 13: Coffee Talk: Revisiting the Importance of I-10*

Brian asked the steering committee and working group members to think about the expectations they had for I-10 two years ago when this study started. Considering all the information that has been exchanged during the study, how has it impacted their view of the importance and priorities of I-10?

Participants provided the following input:

- Judge Rob Kelly (Kerr County) stated that participating in this study has changed the way he looks at I-10. Now, when he drives along the corridor, he tends to think about the future and what will need to change. It's been challenging for him because it forces him to project ahead and anticipate the changes and needs. He also stated that the people of Kerr County are interested in when and where the expansions and improvements will begin. It is a popular topic locally.
- Eduardo Calvo (EPMPO) said a lot has happened since this study began. For example, all the pressure on the supply chain is something that reminds him of the importance of having a reliable and efficient corridor. It is especially true in the El Paso region, where cross-border trade depends on border crossings to transport people and goods.
  - Brian agreed and stated there was a lot of discussion about nearshoring at the Binational Workshop a few weeks ago. There are a lot of international investments being made on the Mexico side of the border, which is impacting and will continue to impact El Paso and I-10 as the only interstate corridor providing a connection from the border crossings to Texas and New Mexico.
- Bruce Mann (Port of Houston) stated there is tremendous growth going west from Houston to San Antonio, and he anticipates there will be some growth from San Antonio to El Paso. I-10 will continue to be traveled on by more vehicles. He said that emphasizes the importance of parallel routes such as US 90.

- Brian stated there are not a lot of east-west parallel routes to I-10 from a resiliency standpoint, and US 90 is key. He said it is very timely that TxDOT is currently doing a study on US 90.

## **Corridor Context**

### *Slides 14-25*

#### *Slide 14: Corridor Context*

Brian stated that after the study introduction, the plan establishes the context of the corridor by identifying and analyzing data pertaining to the environment of the corridor, which influences I-10 development. This includes an exhaustive analysis of socio-economic data. There is also a broad look at the multimodal connectivity opportunities and challenges throughout the corridor. The chapter also defines specific environmental characteristics such as parks, cultural and historic resources, and unique natural areas influenced by the corridor. He stated that the next few slides highlight the context and socioeconomic importance of I-10.

#### *Slide 15: I-10 Texas Corridor Statewide Context*

Brian provided a recap of the I-10 Texas Corridor Study and the importance of I-10 to the nation and within Texas. He discussed the nationwide importance of I-10 to critical freight links as well as its military importance as a national defense corridor. Brian reviewed the characteristics of the I-10 Texas Corridor, noting that the corridor spans 2,400 miles from California to Florida and 880 miles from the New Mexico state line to the Louisiana state line.

#### *Slide 16: West Segment Context*

Brian noted that the West Segment of the corridor is approximately 330 miles and includes six counties, a state border with New Mexico, and an international border with Mexico. He then highlighted the specific features and characteristics of the West Segment of I-10, such as the importance to the El Paso/Juarez Borderplex, which is the second largest bi-national urban area on the U.S./Mexico border with one international border crossing in neighboring New Mexico and five international border crossings in Texas. He also reminded the attendees that due to I-10's importance as a national priority defense corridor, the Department of Defense (DOD) commissioned a Power Projection Platform (PPP) study to identify needs related to moving military equipment from Fort Bliss on I-10 to the Port of Beaumont.

#### *Slide 17: Central Segment Context*

Brian reviewed the context of the Central Segment. He noted that the Central Segment of the corridor is approximately 307 miles long and spans eight counties. The Central Segment region is experiencing rapid population and employment growth driven by a significant increase in manufacturing, bioscience, technology, aerospace, and a robust tourism industry highlighted by several historic and cultural sites, including the Alamo. I-10 also travels through the Texas Hill

Country in this segment, providing an important connection to one of the state's prime natural tourism destinations.

- Diane Rath (AACOG) raised the point that the Central Segment has many military installations; for instance, the largest military installation in the Department of Defense is Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA), which has 11 locations, including JBSA Lackland. The Central Segment is also home to the Goodfellow in San Angelo.
  - Brian replied that the study team would review the information included in the plan and ensure that the installations are included, and the terminology is correct.

#### *Slide 18: East Segment Context*

Brian provided a recap of the East Segment of the corridor, stating it is 243 miles long and travels through ten counties. This segment includes some of the fastest-growing cities and counties in Texas and the nation due to rapidly growing industries, including but not limited to manufacturing, distribution, energy sector, and seaports. There continues to be dramatic growth in manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution facilities west of Houston, from Katy-Brookshire to Schulenburg. A significant amount of economic activity is generated from major maritime ports in the east. Port Houston is currently ranked the #1 port in the U.S. by tonnage.

#### *Slide 19: Socio-Economic Impact: Corridor Population (2050)*

Brian gave an overview of the population along the I-10 Corridor. He stated that I-10 Texas Corridor counties were home to 8.5 million residents in 2019 and will grow to 15 million residents by 2050. The majority of the West Segment population is located in and around El Paso (El Paso County) and is expected to grow by 50% from 869,000 in 2019 to 1.3 million in 2050. A majority of the Central Segment population is located in and around San Antonio (Bexar County) and is expected to grow by 80% from 2.1 million in 2019 to reach 3.8 million in 2050. The East Segment has the highest population and is expected to grow by 82% from 5.5 million in 2019 to 10 million residents in 2050.

#### *Slide 20: Socio-Economic Impact: Total Employment by County (2050)*

Brian presented a slide on the total employment by county. He stated that the I-10 Texas Corridor counties supported 4.1 million jobs in 2019 and are expected to add 2.8 million jobs between 2019 and 2050, a 70% increase. A vast majority, 95%, of the expected jobs along the corridor are anticipated to be in five counties: Harris, El Paso, Jefferson, Bexar, and Fort Bend.

#### *Slide 21: Socio-Economic Impact: Top Industries by County by GDP (2050)*

Brian provided a recap of the top industries by county. He said the I-10 Texas Corridor supports a diverse group of industries, many of which are freight-intensive industries such as manufacturing and oil and gas extraction. In 2019, the total GDP for counties along the I-10 Texas Corridor was \$647 billion, or 36% of Texas GDP. Brian highlighted the top industries by county. For example, in

the West Segment, El Paso and Culberson Counties have concentrations of manufacturing industries, while in the Permian Basin area, energy production is a major freight generator and employer. The Central Segment has a mix of many leading industries, such as finance and insurance in Bexar County, health care in Gillespie and Kerr Counties, and construction in Caldwell County. The East Segment is dominated by manufacturing, with this industry serving as the top contributor to GDP from Colorado County to Jefferson County.

*Slide 22: Socio-Economic Impact: Top Commodities by County and Truck Tonnage (2050)*

Brian presented a slide describing the top commodities by county and truck tonnage. He stated that 22% of Texas' freight tonnage and 25% of freight value will move through the I-10 Texas Corridor by 2050. Along the I-10 Corridor, it is anticipated that there will be a 103% increase in freight tonnage.

*Slide 23: Socio-Economic Impact: International Cross-Border Trade (2050)*

Brian reviewed the importance of the I-10 Corridor to international trade. He said the I-10 corridor's proximity and connections to maritime ports along the Gulf Coast and border crossings to Mexico make it vital to the nation's international trade. I-10 is the only east-west interstate in Texas that serves international border crossings. In 2019, cross-border trade within the I-10 Texas Corridor was \$160 billion and will increase to \$175 billion by 2050, accounting for 52% of the statewide total.

*Slide 24: Multimodal Connectivity*

Brian detailed how I-10 provides statewide connectivity and feeds into the port, air, freight, transit, and bike/pedestrian systems. He said that within Texas, the I-10 corridor provides critical connections to other major highways and routes, rail yards and rail lines, airports and other multimodal facilities, and ports and border crossings that serve critical needs for the statewide economy. With its connectivity to surrounding roadways, freight rail networks, airports, border crossings, and urban centers, I-10 is one of the state's most critical routes for freight connectivity.

*Slide 25: Environmental/Cultural Characteristics*

Brian described that a high-level environmental features analysis for the I-10 corridor was conducted to identify existing conditions and potential impacts on features in five resource categories: public parks and recreational facilities; wildlife refuges and management areas; military installations; landfills and Superfund sites; and cultural and historical resources. He noted a total of 46 park and recreation facilities, including 33 city-owned parks, four greenways/parkways, six county parks, two recreation centers, and one recreation area are immediately adjacent to the I-10 corridor.

## **Corridor Characteristics**

*Slides 26-32*

#### *Slide 26: I-10 Texas Corridor Characteristics*

Brian asked Will Smithson to present information related to the corridor characteristics. Will began by describing that the Corridor Characteristics chapter covers the quantitative data and inputs that were previously presented to the working group and steering committee members, including:

- Current and forecasted traffic conditions
- Current safety hotspots
- Current Design and maintenance conditions

#### *Slide 27: Traffic Conditions: Volumes*

Will reviewed the I-10 Corridor traffic volumes. He stated that most of the highest traffic volumes are in the urbanized areas, which aligns with the economic/demand side. Truck traffic currently accounts for 21% of all traffic. It is forecast that there will be a 74% increase in total traffic from 2019 to 2050. There is also forecast to be a 67% increase in commercial vehicle volume during the same time.

#### *Slide 28: Traffic Conditions: Levels of Service*

Will presented a slide about the Levels of Service (LOS) along the I-10 Corridor. This graphic shows that most of the I-10 corridor operates at acceptable levels of service. Both percentage and length of I-10 experiencing LOS D or worse are expected to increase significantly from 2019. Half of all the peak period travel will experience LOS D or worse, adding 30 miles of corridor operating below LOS D.

#### *Slide 29: Safety Conditions: Crash Frequency, Type, and Contributing Factors*

Will then showed a slide about the safety conditions along the I-10 corridor, focusing on the crash frequency, type, and contributing factors. He said that, as expected, the urban areas saw the largest number of crashes. He noted that in 2021, there were 21,808 crashes, with the top five contributing factors being: failure to control speed, changing lanes when unsure, driver inattention, failure to drive in a single lane, and unsafe speed.

#### *Slide 30: Design and Maintenance Conditions*

Will stated that although much of the pavement along I-10 is in good or better condition, there are areas where the frontage roads along I-10 are below good condition. As discussed in previous meetings, frontage roads play a role in providing alternative routing during interstate closure events. He also mentioned that commercial vehicles cause pavement damage exponentially more than passenger automobiles.

#### *Slide 31: Connectivity*

Will provided a recap of how better connectivity can be achieved. He discussed improvements to the I-10 Corridor and connecting corridors to better connect the military bases in the region (PPP). He

also examined expanding existing multimodal options, such as bus service and high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes. There are also opportunities to support freight mobility hubs, autonomous last-mile movements, and leverage intermodal connections. Finally, Will described the greater use of technology to increase connectivity.

#### *Slide 32: Previous Planning Studies and Current Programs*

Will presented a slide describing previous planning studies and current programs. He said 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. He stated that the divisions discussed ongoing and upcoming initiatives with the study team. The study team also met multiple times with the TxDOT districts to discuss current plans and projects 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. In addition to working with the districts and divisions, the study team has also worked with the military and local MPOs to review other projects and plans taking place along the corridor to provide the most comprehensive implementation plan possible.

#### *Slide 33: Menti Question: Confirmation of Corridor Context and Characteristics*

Brian asked the steering committee and working group members to answer the following question in Menti: Does the corridor context and characteristics content effectively highlight the importance of I-10 and support the need for corridor improvements?

Participants agreed that the corridor context and characteristics highlighted were comprehensive and very thorough. Participants provided some additional input:

- Covid and remote working may impact the growth and spread of population increases in the more rural areas.
- The corridor is important for national defense, as was pointed out.
- In addition to Fort Bliss, there are military installations in New Mexico, near El Paso, that use I-10, such as Wind Sand Missile Range.
- The content effectively highlights the mix of various uses of the corridor and their inherent interdependence.
- If anything, the content understates the national importance of I-10.

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

*Slides 34-41*

#### *Slide 34: Stakeholder and Public Engagement*

Erin Perkins-Watry provided an overview of the stakeholder engagement chapter of the Implementation Plan. She said the chapter includes a description of who was engaged in the study process, what that process entailed, and what we heard from stakeholders that influenced key elements of the plan. She also stated that following this meeting, the study team will finalize an appendix to accompany the Implementation Plan that will provide detailed documentation of all stakeholder engagement and public outreach efforts, including meeting presentations and notes.

#### *Slide 35: Stakeholder Engagement Process*

Erin presented a slide about the stakeholder engagement process. She described how stakeholder engagement was incorporated throughout the study process. This included four rounds of meetings with the I-10 steering committee, working groups, and TxDOT Districts. The study team also conducted meetings with TxDOT Divisions to discuss specific proposed guidelines and programs. Additionally, two rounds of meetings were held with the Binational Working Group, and a comprehensive statewide online public survey was conducted.

#### *Slide 36: I-10 Texas Corridor Study Public Survey Participation*

Erin provided a recap of the I-10 Texas Corridor Study Public Survey, which was held from July 27, 2022, to September 6, 2022, and was accessible through the link on the study webpage. It was available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. She thanked the stakeholders, as many were instrumental in helping get the word out about the survey. Other outreach also included TxDOT news releases, social media, and email announcements sent to advisory committees, chambers of commerce, elected officials, industry representatives, and other groups along the corridor. She said that 2,868 respondents took the survey and provided a total of 5,911 mapped comments. Respondents represented 401 zip codes across the three study area segments and beyond.

#### *Slide 37: What We Heard and How It Influenced the Plan*

Erin discussed how the input received through the stakeholder meetings and the public survey helped identify a vision, goals, and key considerations for the corridor, as well as challenges, priorities, and proposed improvements for addressing challenges in the future. For example, in the first round of steering committee and working group meetings, the study team noted that safety and mobility were the top two considerations across the corridor. These considerations and their rankings were referenced throughout the development and refinement of the plan and in the prioritization of proposed improvements.

#### *Slide 38: What We Heard: Corridor Challenges*

Erin detailed the input received on current or anticipated challenges along the corridor. Common themes were observed across all groups, with congestion and safety issues topping the lists at both a statewide and segment level. Other common challenges included truck-specific issues, such as increased truck traffic and lack of parking availability, as well as connectivity to ports and overall

freight movement challenges. The study team also heard the need for connectivity to other highways and communities, faster emergency response, and improved access for areas experiencing population and economic growth, as well as challenges with a lack of multimodal opportunities and connections, particularly in suburban and rural sections of the corridor. Erin said that the challenges highlighted in the public survey map-pinned comments were consistent with the statewide comments and input received from each of the working groups.

#### *Slide 39: What We Heard: Corridor Challenges*

Erin presented a slide depicting the most common issues noted in the public survey map pinned comments. She described that some of the common themes across all segments included:

- General safety and congestion
- Ramp, design, and operational issues
- Construction-related issues
- Pavement and general maintenance issues
- Access/connectivity issues and needs
- Truck traffic-related issues
- Additional capacity needed

#### *Slide 40: What We Heard: Corridor Priorities*

Erin revisited the exercise in the second round of meetings during which the working groups were asked to rank priorities in order of importance for both urban/suburban areas and rural areas. Safety was a higher priority for rural areas while enhancing mobility was a higher priority for urban areas.

#### *Slide 41: What We Heard: Corridor Priorities*

Erin noted that in the public survey, participants were asked to rank the top 3 most important priorities for the corridor. The most selected responses included “Reduce Congestion,” with 28%, “Reduce Crashes,” with 20%, and “Increased Maintenance.” These were closely followed by “Add Improved Frontage Roads” and “Improve I-10 Connectivity,” both with more than 11%. “Reduce Congestion” was selected as the number one priority for 42% of responses, which was more than twice as much as the second-most selected response, “Reduce Crashes.” These results are consistent with previous stakeholder feedback and were used in identifying initial prioritization criteria.

#### *Slide 42: Coffee Talk: Stakeholder Engagement*

Brian invited the steering committee and working group members to think about their experiences during the working group and steering committee meetings. He asked, “How do you feel about the

stakeholder engagement process? Do you feel like you were heard during the process and that your input was valued?”

Participants provided the following input:

- Judge Jeff Branick (Jefferson County) commented that he thought the stakeholder engagement process was successful. He highlighted the engagement on the local level as well as corridor-wide. He also praised the study team for their efforts to get the word out about the public survey and for getting nearly 3,000 respondents from across the 880-mile corridor.
- Melissa Reynolds (City of Seguin) replied that she has been impressed with the frequency of engagement and with the great feedback during the meetings.
- Paul Stresow (City of El Paso, International Bridges Department) said he felt the process was extremely productive, especially the in-person meetings where they were able to break out into smaller groups with collective ideas being shared and discussed.
- Alan Clark (METRO) stated he felt the study team did a great job capturing the thoughts and attitudes of the stakeholders. He thought the focus stayed on the issues of I-10 and the concerns of those traveling on it. He followed up by stating that the next step will be a very important one, in which the public engagement will need to be continued and expanded upon.

## **Proposed Improvements**

*Slides 43-51*

### *Slide 43: Overview of Proposed Improvement Strategies*

Brian provided 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. Guidelines were grouped into four categories: infrastructure, technology and communications, multimodal passenger travel, and multimodal freight.
- 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 44: Applicable Guidelines and Programs for Infrastructure*

Brian provided an overview of the applicable guidelines and programs related to infrastructure projects on the corridor. Key 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. These guidelines support identified programs to support I-10 Interstate Modernization. Wildlife crossings and early preservation of right-of-way were added to the plan after the last round of meetings,

*Slide 45: Applicable Guidelines and Programs for Technology and Communications*

Brian reviewed the applicable technology and communications guidelines and programs. Key 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).

*Slide 46: Applicable Guidelines and Programs for Multimodal Passenger Travel*

Brian provided an overview of the applicable guidelines for multimodal passenger travel. Key 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.

*Slide 47: Applicable Guidelines and Programs for Multimodal Freight*

Brian provided a summary of key multimodal freight travel guidelines for implementation on the I-10 corridor. He said the guidelines should 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.

*Slide 48: Proposed Improvements: Guidelines and Programs*

Brian detailed how the proposed guidelines and program improvements have been discussed through several rounds of meetings. He noted that when the members receive the draft plan to review, they will see additional details describing the program, actions, and related plans and initiatives that are already underway. The study team also included a high-level prioritization of these programs based on previous input received.

*Slide 49: Proposed Improvements: Project Development Phases Considered*

Brian reminded attendees that as the proposed plans and projects are discussed, it is important to keep in mind where these fall within TxDOT's project development process. All projects are taken from concept to construction through this process, should they be deemed feasible. The study team

is recommending several preliminary studies to analyze the feasibility of and options for improving certain alternative routes along the corridor. He also said the study team had identified several gap projects as important for improving mobility, safety, or connectivity along I-10.

*Slide 50: Proposed Improvements: Plans and Studies*

Brian provided an overview of proposed plans and studies that were identified by stakeholders. The connecting routes identified would provide critical connections to communities, serve as important resiliency corridors, and provide important alternatives to I-10. In total, 38 corridors are recommended for further study, analysis, and advancement.

*Slide 51: Proposed Improvements: Gap Projects*

Brian reviewed the prioritized list of gap projects identified during the study, which has undergone a technical analysis and needs assessment. The list of gap projects has also been refined based on input from the stakeholders and prioritized into short-, mid-, and long-term projects. He stated that through the I-10 Texas Corridor study process, 30 gap projects were identified for a total construction value of \$9.3 Billion.

*Slide 52: Coffee Talk: Proposed Improvements*

Brian asked the steering committee and working group members if the proposed improvements met their expectations based on discussions from the previous stakeholder meetings.

Participants provided the following input:

- Charles Rogers (Colorado County) asked how is the study team viewing US 90A, as part of US 90 or as a stand-alone project?
  - Brian responded that it is being viewed as a stand-alone project. It was discussed during a working group meeting in the east as a unique corridor.
  - Charles also stated that it is important to build the technology as the physical projects are built. Build them now and save money in the future, because the need will not disappear. The redundant systems are very important.
- Bruce Mann (Port of Houston) asked if the study team met with the Maritime Division. He said the division has some great information on the impacts on Texas ports.
  - Brian answered that yes, the study team met with the Maritime Division. One of the things they shared was that they are currently working on a wayfinding signage study.
- John Young (Environmental Affairs Division) noted that there are several federal grants available to address wildlife crossings, including the bridge investment programs.
  - Brian responded that the study team did include the federal funding opportunities in the plan.

- Judge Jeff Branick (Jefferson County) stated he thought the proposed improvement met expectations based on the previous meetings and the realities of funding constraints. He said that this process has provided him with new insight into how complicated the planning process for new transportation projects is.
- Eduardo Calvo (EPMPO) stated that it is important to keep the momentum going, and one way the stakeholders can do that is by supporting the projects and highlighting the importance of these projects to the public. Sometimes it seems like the loudest voices are those who oppose projects, and it's important to show the projects have supporters as well.
- Alan Clark (METRO) shared that it is important, as these solutions are being developed, to make sure they are communicated well to the public and to look at the adverse impacts of the projects because there is a perception of disproportionate impacts on some communities. He also stated that TxDOT should be involved in the implementation of multimodal solutions. He expressed that it would be helpful when thinking of solutions, thinking about how people can be kept off I-10 (by giving them other alternatives) is equally as impactful as thinking about how to move people on I-10.
- Alan also said he didn't think the impacts of climate change were discussed much in the study. Some of the issues that will need to be addressed, such as drainage issues and detention, have been discussed, but heat is a problem in a lot of areas. He encouraged the study team to give some thought to the negative impacts the types of temperatures being experienced statewide will have on the infrastructure.
- Finally, Alan urged the study team not to forget about collaborating with private or not-for-profit companies when addressing technology and communication solutions.
  - Brian concurred and said that there are a lot of third-party applications that have already been developed, and TxDOT and the districts have a lot of valuable information they could share.

## **Economic Impacts**

### *Slide 53: I-10 Texas Corridor Economic Impacts*

Brian presented a slide on the study of the I-10 corridor's economic impacts. He stated that an Economic Impact Analysis was completed that evaluated the impacts of the improvement projects on the region's economy and quantified the direct corridor user benefits of the improvements relative to their costs in a Benefit-Cost Analysis. He noted that the analysis indicated beneficial economic returns for the corridor investment.

- Bruce Mann (Port of Houston) stated that the \$6.9 billion in GDP is a good figure, but he also thinks it is important to say how much GDP would be lost if the investment isn't made.
  - Brian agreed that would be good information to share; however, there isn't currently a good way to calculate that within the USDOT system, which is where this information came from.

## **Implementation Plan**

### *Slide 54: I-10 Texas Corridor Implementation Plan*

Brian described how the project and plan recommendations will pass through TxDOT planning and project development stages to ultimately be delivered to the public. Successful implementation of the I-10 recommendations will require long-term tracking of corridor gap projects and plans, considering development status, estimated costs, funding, and regional priorities. He explained that projects will compete for funding through the 12 funding categories in the Unified Transportation Program (UTP), TxDOT's ten-year funding program, which is updated annually. If traditional funding is not sufficient to meet project needs, TxDOT and local agencies can partner to request discretionary funding opportunities through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

## **Call to Action and Next Steps**

### *Slides 55 - 57*

#### *Slide 56: I-10 Texas Corridor Study Call to Action*

Brian turned it over to Lorena Echeverria de Misi, Manager, Corridor Planning Branch, TPP Corridor Planning. She again thanked the steering committee and working group members for their time and feedback throughout the study. She said moving forward there is still some work to do. She reiterated that the members will soon receive a link to the plan. The study team is asking that they review the plan, provide any comments, and highlight what they think is most important and if any key elements have been overlooked. Lorena also reminded the participants that the UTP for 2024 is currently going through a public involvement process. The public comment period will be open through August 7<sup>th</sup>. She asked them to consider supporting the I-10 gap projects through the UTP process and to encourage their constituents to support the projects that are most important to their regions.

#### *Slide 57: I-10 Texas Corridor Study Next Steps*

Lorena provided an overview of the next steps. She said that based on the input the study team receives from the participants' review, the study team will address those comments and then finalize the implementation plan. She noted that she intends to present this report and the stakeholders' exceptional work at a future meeting of the Texas Transportation Commission. TxDOT will also periodically review and update the I-10 Texas Corridor Plan to ensure that it remains a vital contributor to future project and plan development.

## **Questions & Closing Remarks**

### *Slides 58 – 59: Questions & Closing Remarks*

Lorena thanked all the participants for their continued engagement and said before closing the meeting she would like to introduce Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, the director of the TPP Division. Tito introduced himself and stated he has been the TPP Division Director since November. He stressed

the importance of I-10 to the State of Texas, the people, and the economy. He stated he was happy to share some good news. As Lorena mentioned, the 2024 UTP is available for public comment. As the stakeholders look at the UTP, they should note the I-10 Corridor is looking at receiving an additional \$2.2 billion in funding. If this new draft UTP is approved by the Commission, then the funding for I-10 will be just under \$4 billion in the 10-year UTP. He emphasized that this demonstrates the level of commitment TxDOT has for I-10, which is an important corridor. He thanked everyone again for their commitment and turned it back over to Brian.

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