BORDER TRADE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Texas-Mexico Border: Gateway to Texas and U.S. International Trade and Economic Competitiveness

December 7, 2016
8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Texas Southmost College - Arts Center, Gold Hall
80 Fort Brown
Brownsville, TX 78520
## Agenda

### 8–8:30AM  COFFEE AND NETWORKING

### 8:30–8:45AM  WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

**Welcome and introductions**
- Secretary of State Carlos H. Cascos

### 8:45–8:50AM  ADOPTION OF APRIL 21, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

**Committee adopts minutes from last meeting**
- Secretary of State Carlos H. Cascos

### 8:50–11:15AM  TEXAS-MEXICO BORDER STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION BLUEPRINT

**Discuss and get input on:** Texas Border Transportation Strategic Blueprint White Papers and Interim Report
- Michael Bomba, UNT
- Juan Carlos Villa, TTI
- Jolanda Prozzi, TTI

### 11:15–11:30AM  TEXAS-MEXICO BORDER TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE

**Provide a brief overview of the Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Master Plan and update.**
- Caroline Mays, TxDOT

### 11:30–11:45AM  BREAK

### 11:45–12:30PM  OVERVIEW OF BORDER CROSSING INSPECTION PRACTICES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

**Provide an overview of border crossing inspection practices and challenges**
- Officer Bradd Skinner, Assistant Director, Trade Operations, Laredo Field Office, CBP
- Joanne Cisneros, Division Administrator, Texas Division, FMCSA
- Major Chris Nordloh, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Coordinator, DPS
12:30–1:30PM  LUNCH SPEAKER
■ Alex Hinojosa, Deputy Managing Director, North American Development Bank

1:30–2PM  CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF MOVING GOODS ACROSS THE TEXAS-MEXICO BORDER IN THE VALLEY REGION
Provide an overview of challenges and opportunities of moving goods across the Texas-Mexico border
■ Bret Erickson, President and CEO, Texas International Produce Association
■ Russell L. Jones, President, R.L. Jones Customs Brokers
■ Ricardo Diaz, President, Grupo Castelo

2–2:30PM  LOCAL PERSPECTIVE ON STRATEGIES TO FACILITATE EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF TRADE ACROSS THE TEXAS-MEXICO BORDER
Provide an overview of strategies to facilitate efficient trade across the Texas-Mexico border
■ Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, City of Pharr International Bridge
■ Pete Sepulveda, Executive Director, Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority
■ Toribio Garza Jr., P.E., District Engineer, Pharr District, TxDOT

2:30–3PM  OPEN DISCUSSION – FUTURE MEETINGS AND TOPICS
■ Secretary of State Carlos H. Cascos, Chair

3PM  ADJOURN
■ Secretary of State Carlos H. Cascos, Chair

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING:
March, 2017 – Date and Location TBD

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2016  TEXAS SOUTHMOST COLLEGE  BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS
Bradd Skinner  
**Assistant Director, Trade Operations, Laredo Field Office, CBP**

In August 2015, Bradd Skinner joined the Laredo Field Office as Assistant Director. In this position, he is responsible for all trade-related matters from Brownsville to Del Rio, Texas. Mr. Skinner brings to the position the knowledge and expertise gained from more than 29 years of federal government experience. Previously, Mr. Skinner worked for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Policy as the DHS Attaché to Canada. Earlier in his career, Mr. Skinner served for five years as the Director of U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s Customs – Trade Partnership Against Terrorism program, commonly referred to as C-TPAT wherein he directed the efforts of 195 Supply Chain Security Specialists that travel throughout the world conducting supply chain validations in collaboration with 10,000 plus member companies which participate in the program. Mr. Skinner was also the Deputy CBP Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City where he was responsible for managing several trade and investigation programs.

Mr. Skinner attended Ohio Wesleyan University where he graduated with Honors with a degree in International Business and Spanish.

Joanne Cisneros  
**Division Administrator, Texas Division, FMCSA**

Joanne Cisneros began her work at the border in Laredo, Texas with the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service as a Border Patrol Agent. She later transferred to Salinas, California as a Senior Patrol Agent before transferring to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration in 1990.

Ms. Cisneros started with FMCSA as an investigator doing Safety and Compliance Reviews in the Southern California Division. During that time she was one of only seven FMCSA employees that spoke Spanish and helped to develop some of the first bilingual training aids that FMCSA produced. She was later promoted to Technical Program Manager for Region 9 (San Francisco) where she was charged with oversight of the CDL, size and weight and border programs for the seven states in that region. In 2002 she headed up the office responsible for processing the new OP-2 and OP-1MX applications for Mexican carriers wishing to operate in the United States.

In October of 2004, Ms. Cisneros accepted a lateral transfer to the Texas Division as the Assistant Division Administrator and in April 2007 she was promoted to Division Administrator.
Major Chris Nordloh  
**Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Coordinator, DPS**

Major Chris Nordloh is the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) Coordinator for the Texas Department of Public Safety, which is the lead CVE agency for the State of Texas. He has been with the DPS since 1996 and has been in Commercial Vehicle Enforcement since 1999. He has worked in El Paso, Falfurrias, Houston, Corpus Christi and is currently stationed at the DPS headquarters in Austin.

Major Nordloh is a graduate of the Northwestern School of Police Staff and Command. He is responsible for developing policies related to Commercial Vehicle Enforcement for DPS and local agencies, oversees the Motor Carrier Bureau and the Compliance Review and Safety Audit programs, and supervises the Schoolbus Safety and CVE Training Units. He is responsible for oversight of federal grants related to Commercial Vehicle Enforcement. Nordloh is responsible directly to the Chief of the Texas Highway Patrol Division and is his liaison to the field with respect to CVE operations. In addition, he is responsible for updating the Texas Administrative Code relating to commercial and Schoolbus vehicle regulations and enforcement.

Alex Hinojosa  
**Deputy Managing Director North American Development Bank**

With more than 29 years of senior management experience, Alex Hinojosa has extensive professional expertise in investment banking, the utility industry and municipal project financing. From 1984 to 2004, he served in a financial managerial role at the San Antonio Water System, in San Antonio, Texas, where his responsibilities included directing and overseeing the utility’s finances including long-range financial planning, accounting, project finance, budgeting and debt management, among other functions. His work in developing innovative financing instruments and rate structures received industry-wide recognition.

Mr. Hinojosa is also one of the founding faculty members of the Utility Management Institute of the North American Development Bank, instructing and facilitating in seminars on current management topics for cities and utilities in all 10 border states of Mexico and the United States since 1999.

Mr. Hinojosa holds a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from St. Mary’s University in San Antonio and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Texas at San Antonio. He has been a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) since 1983, and also has held securities licenses.

Bret Erickson  
**President and CEO, Texas International Produce Association**

Bret Erickson grew up in the Rio Grande Valley in McAllen, TX. He attended Texas Tech University where he obtained his B.S. in Agricultural & Applied Economics in 1997. Upon graduation, Bret returned to South Texas and went to work as an Agronomist for DuPont Pioneer Hi-Bred in Weslaco, TX where he was involved in the growing and shipping of seed corn for the Latin American market. In 2008, Bret relocated to Kauai, Hawaii where he served as the Plant Operations Manager for the Kekaha DuPont Pioneer foundation seed facility.

In July of 2012 Bret joined the Texas International Produce Association (TIPA) as President and CEO. In addition to his duties at TIPA, Bret also serves as Executive Vice President for the Texas Vegetable Association, Manager for the South Texas Onion Committee Federal Marketing Order and the Texas Produce Policy Council (TEXPAC). Bret was appointed by Secretary Vilsack to serve on the USDA Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Fruits and Vegetables (ATAC).
Russell Jones  
*President, R.L. Jones Customs Brokers*

For the past four decades Russ Jones has been the head of R.L. Jones Customs Brokers. During this time the company has expanded along with its sister companies operating in warehousing, freight forwarding, logistics, property management, and insurance services. R.L. Jones now has offices throughout California, Arizona and Texas.

Mr. Jones was elected three times to the Arizona State House of Representatives bringing his special expertise on Customs and border issues, along with transportation, agriculture and education. After leaving legislative office he continued in his primary professional activities and has been awarded, along with his wife Janet, the prestigious Philanthropists of the Year Award for untiring efforts to promote the arts and educational opportunities for all.

As an Army veteran and currently an officer in the Civil Air Patrol, Mr. Jones gives his attention to search and rescue missions, and other community endeavors such as his District Advisory position with the Boy Scouts of America.

Ricardo Díaz Miranda  
*President, Grupo Castelo*

Mr. Ricardo Miranda has more than 10 years of experience in air transportation with Mexicana Airlines, filling directive positions in different cities across the United States and Mexico. He has operated in Los Angeles, California, San Antonio, Texas, Portland, Oregon, Monterrey, Nuevo Leon and Mexico City.

In 2007 Mr. Miranda started a business in the international trade area with a Freight Transportation company operating in the border city of Reynosa. This business provides services of transfer (Export and Import of perishable products) and is certified through CTPAT, US DOT, TX DOT, and MX.

In 2012 Mr. Miranda founded a second company that offers refrigerated warehouse services in the city of Pharr, Texas.
Luis Alfredo Bazán
Bridge Director, City of Pharr International Bridge

Mr. Luis Bazán is the Bridge Director for the City of Pharr International Bridge, where he oversees the day-to-day operations of the toll bridge, as well as coordinates planning efforts for maximum efficiencies and streamlined inspection processes with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in the U.S. and the Servicio de Administración Tributaria (SAT) in Mexico. One of his biggest accomplishments to date is having signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CBP and the U.S. General Services Administration to develop new infrastructure projects inside the Pharr Port of Entry.

In December 2013, Mr. Bazán became the industrial development manager for the City of Pharr operating as liaison between Mexico and U.S. border industry professionals. He was president & CEO for the Pharr Chamber of Commerce from 2008 to 2013. Prior to working at the Pharr Chamber, Mr. Bazán was a transportation planner for the Hidalgo County Metropolitan Planning Organization (HCMPO).

Mr. Bazan began his career at the McAllen Chamber of Commerce from 2001 to 2005 as director of business development & governmental affairs. He received his bachelor’s degree in communication from the University of Texas Pan American in December 1999, with emphasis on organizational communication, public relations and marketing.

Pete Sepulveda Jr.
Executive Director, Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority

Mr. Pete Sepulveda Jr. is a graduate from Texas A&M University with a Bachelors of Business Administration degree with an emphasis in Finance.

For the last 17 years Mr. Sepulveda has held several positions with Cameron County including Director of Transportation and County Administrator. He has a strong transportation background having collaborated on highway, rail and bridge projects with TxDOT over the last two decades. Mr. Sepulveda has been involved with the permitting and construction of five international bridges between the U.S. and Mexico, including the first international rail bridge between the U.S. and Mexico in over 100 years.

Since 2005, aside from his duties as County Administrator, Mr. Sepulveda has served as the Executive Director of the Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority where he manages and directs their $1.9 Billion System of Projects. On March 11, 2015, District 38 State Representative Eddie Lucio III swore in Mr. Sepulveda as the 9th Cameron County Judge.

Toribio Garza Jr., P.E.
District Engineer, Pharr District, TxDOT

Toribio Garza Jr. is the Texas Department of Transportation District Engineer for the Pharr District. He has had a long and notable career at TxDOT.

Mr. Garza studied at Sam Houston State University and then the University of Texas-Austin where he graduated with an engineering degree in 1986. Shortly thereafter, he obtained employment as a young engineer designing projects for TxDOT. He takes great pride in having served as project engineer on the interchange in Calallen, near Corpus Christi that intersects Interstate 37 with Highway 77, a very critical transportation project in that region.

Mr. Garza transferred from Corpus Christi to the Rio Grande Valley in 1993. He later became director of maintenance for the Pharr District in 2000. On Sept. 15, 2001, the Queen Isabella Causeway collapsed, and he gained a great deal of experience while working on that operation. During this crisis Garza’s office implemented a number of emergency procedures including the assembly of temporary floatable docks to ferry people back and forth to the island, working closely with the U.S. Coast Guard to ensure safety.