Transcript of the Testimony of

Committee Meeting

Date:
May 21, 2019

Case:
BORDER TRADE ADVISORY
BORDER TRADE ADVISORY

COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, May 21, 2019

Texas Department of Transportation - Greer Building
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
APPEARANCES:

Meeting Moderators:
1. DAVID WHITLEY, Secretary of State and Chair, Border Trade Advisory Committee
2. CAROLINE MAYS, TxDOT

Panel Members/Speakers:
3. MARC WILLIAMS, TxDOT
4. BRIAN BARTH, TxDOT Director of Project Planning and Development
5. PETER SMITH, TxDOT
6. RAFAEL ALDRETE, Texas A&M Transportation Institute
7. THE HONORABLE PETE SAENZ, Mayor, City of Laredo
8. RIGOBERTO VILLAREAL, City of McAllen Superintendent of Bridges
9. LISA LOTTUS-OTWAY, Center for Transportation Research at UT Austin
10. JOSUE GARCIA, JR., Cameron County International Bridge System
11. JOHN B. LOVE, III, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Midland, President of the Texas Municipal League
12. MARGA A. LOPEZ, Progreso International Bridge Director
13. GABRIEL GONZALEZ, City of Harlingen Summit
14. JOHN B. LOVE, III, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Midland, President of the Texas Municipal League
15. MARGA A. LOPEZ, Progreso International Bridge Director
16. GABRIEL GONZALEZ, City of Harlingen Summit
17. LINDSAY MULLINS, BNSF Railway, State Government Affairs, President of the Texas Railway Association
18. DONALD LUDLOW, CPCS
19. STEPHANIE WHITE, HDR
20. ALEJANDRO SOLIS, Project Manager for the Border Transportation Master Plan
21. TIM JUAREZ, TxDOT
22. JOE ESPARZA, Deputy Secretary of State

APPEARANCES (Continued):

TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2019, AUSTIN TEXAS
9:00 a.m.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Good morning everyone. It is 9:00 o’clock, and I call the first Border Trade Advisory Committee meeting of 2019 to order. I’ve been watching way too much of the legislature lately. I’m not going to ask anybody to call the roll, but I’m going to ask to just go around the table very quickly so you can introduce yourselves.

Caroline’s also going to pass around a sign-in sheet, and that’s how we will determine who is and who is not here. So we’ll start with you, Caroline.

MS. MAYS: Good morning everybody. Most of you know me. I’m Caroline Mays with TxDOT, and I help with the Border Trade Advisory Committee. So I want to welcome all of you here to this meeting. And as always, thank you for being here, and look forward to a great dialogue this morning. Thank you.

MR. WILLIAMS: Good morning, Marc Williams with TxDOT. Welcome, Secretary. Pleased to have you here. And thank you-all for joining us this morning.

Look forward to a good discussion today.

MR. BARTH: Brian Barth with TxDOT, director of project planning and development.
1 County Commissioner for Precinct 3 in El Paso County.
2 MR. GALEAZZI: Good morning.
3 Dante Galeazzi, Texas International Produce Association.
4 MR. LUDLOW: Donald Ludlow with CPCS. Part of the consulting team supporting the border transportation master plan.
5 of the consulting team supporting the border transportation master plan.
6 MS. WHITE: My name is Stephanie White. I also work for HDR, and I'm part of the consulting team.
7 MR. SOLIS: Alejandro Solis. I'm the project manager for the border transportation master plan on behalf of the consulting team with HDR.
8 MR. JUAREZ: Good morning. I'm Tim Juarez with TxDOT. I'm the manager for international trade and border planning, and the TxDOT's project manager for the development of the border master plan.
9 MR. ESARZA: Good morning. Joe Esparza, Deputy Secretary of State.
10 MR. GONZALEZ: Buenos dias, Secretary.
11 Good morning. Guillermo Gonzalez, the State of Coahuila. Thank you.
12 SECRETARY WHITLEY: And I'm David Whitley, Texas Secretary of State. A quorum is present. You -- you must have received the summary of minutes from the meeting in Laredo. And everybody was saying, you know, "I'm here with Tim." And everybody was, like, "Oh, my gosh. How many people did Tim bring with him?"
13 I know that we have excellent partners at TxDOT. Thank you, Caroline, for everything that you're doing. You're as dedicated a public servant as I've ever been around, and you're to be commended for how hard you've worked on BTAC. It's an honor for me to be able to work with you.
14 Tim -- I'm with Tim. I -- I went to this meeting in Laredo. And everybody was saying, you know, "I'm here with Tim." And everybody was, like, "Oh, my gosh. How many people did Tim bring with him?"
15 But he's got such a following. He's got a magnetic personality. I can't think of anyone better to go around on the listening tours than you, Tim. So thank you for what you're doing. Marc, you've been a friend for a long time. Thank you for your support. And I -- I do want to recognize my staff.
16 Is there a second? Any objection? Hearing none, the minutes are adopted.

1 the City of Pharr.
2 MR. GIESBRECHT: Good morning.
3 Thank you guys for coming. For those of you who don't know me -- I've met most of you -- but over time, I hope to come to know each of you very, very well. And I want you-all to know how important it is to me that we achieve some tangible results out of this committee.
4 I know that we have excellent partners at TxDOT. Thank you, Caroline, for everything that you're doing. You're as dedicated a public servant as I've ever been around, and you're to be commended for how hard you've worked on BTAC. It's an honor for me to be able to work with you.
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7 Joe already introduced himself. Sam Taylor's in the room. Pete Saenz also with TxDOT.
8 MR. ALDRETE: Rafael Aldrete with Texas A&M Transportation Institute.
9 MR. SAENZ: Good morning. Pete Saenz, Mayor of Laredo, Texas. Also the current chair of the MPO for Laredo.
10 MR. VILLAREAL: Rigo Villareal, City of McAllen, superintendent of bridges for the international bridges.
11 MS. LOFTUS: Lisa Loftus-Otway with the Center for Transportation Research at UT Austin.
12 MR. GARCIA: Good morning. My name is Josue Garcia. I'm with Cameron County International Bridge System.
13 MR. LOVE: Good Morning. I am John B. Love, Ill. I'm the mayor pro tem for the City of Midland, president of the Texas Municipal League, and vice chair of the MPR. I had to write it down.
14 MS. LOPEZ: Good morning. Marga Lopez, vice chair of the MPR. I had to write it down.
15 MS. MULLINS: Hi. I'm Lindsay Mullins. City of El Paso International Bridges.
16 MR. STRESOW: Good morning. Paul Stresow, with Texas-Pacifico Transportation.
17 MR. MEADOR: Good morning. Stan Meador with El Paso MPO.
19 MR. VALE: Good morning. Sam Vale, with IBC Bank, Laredo.
20 MR. PONTON: And I'm Rod Ponton, Precidio County attorney.
21 MR. PONTON: And I'm Rod Ponton, Presidio Authority.
22 Gabriel Gonzalez representing Mayor Boswell from the Progreso International Bridge director.
23 MR. JUAREZ: Good morning. I'm with Tim. I -- I went to this meeting in Laredo. And everybody was saying, you know, "I'm here with Tim." And everybody was, like, "Oh, my gosh. How many people did Tim bring with him?"
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25 Cynthia Garza-Reyes, Director of External Affairs for the City of Pharr.
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<td>1. back trying to keep me out of trouble, unsuccessfully.</td>
<td>In McAllen, I received a personal tour of</td>
<td>1. the RGV MPO is coming to fruition. It's my</td>
<td>1. In McAllen, I received a personal tour of</td>
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<td>2. And I've got David Zapata, who runs my Texas/Mexico</td>
<td>the Anzalduas International Bridge. The first secretary</td>
<td>2. understanding it's on the governor's desk. I'm</td>
<td>2. the Anzalduas International Bridge. The first secretary</td>
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<td>3. office behind me. Adam Bitter, who's my general</td>
<td>of state to do so. Rigo, thank you so much for your</td>
<td>3. extremely optimistic that he's going to sign it.</td>
<td>3. of state to do so. Rigo, thank you so much for your</td>
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<td>4. counsel, also tries to keep me out of trouble,</td>
<td>friendship and -- and for helping me through this</td>
<td>4. This is an incredible opportunity for the</td>
<td>4. friendship and -- and for helping me through this</td>
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<td>5. unsuccessfully.</td>
<td>process. I learned a lot at your bridge. And that was</td>
<td>5. RGV. And some of you have already heard this -- and for</td>
<td>5. process. I learned a lot at your bridge. And that was</td>
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<td>6. And Keta Caballero, who runs our border</td>
<td>actually my first trip into Mexico as secretary of</td>
<td>6. those of you who have, I apologize -- but I've deep</td>
<td>6. actually my first trip into Mexico as secretary of</td>
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<td>7. affairs division, who most of you know very, very well.</td>
<td>state. I didn't even know I was going to go across the</td>
<td>7. roots in the Valley. My -- my mom was born there; her</td>
<td>7. state. I didn't even know I was going to go across the</td>
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<td>8. They are all godsend for me, as serve my eyes and</td>
<td>border.</td>
<td>8. mother was born there. And my -- actually, my</td>
<td>8. border.</td>
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<td>9. ears on the ground when I can't be in places, and even</td>
<td>And I joined Mayor Saenz in Laredo in the</td>
<td>9. greatgrandmother was registrar at PanAm for 26 years.</td>
<td>9. greatgrandmother was registrar at PanAm for 26 years.</td>
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<td>10. when I can be. So thank you, guys.</td>
<td>George Washington birthday celebration. And the -- the</td>
<td>10. And so the Valley is very important to me. It's very</td>
<td>10. And so the Valley is very important to me. It's very</td>
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<td>11. I just want to quickly recognize -- is</td>
<td>abrazo ceremony on the international bridge is one that</td>
<td>11. important to my family. I have deep roots there.</td>
<td>11. important to my family. I have deep roots there.</td>
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<td>12. Jorge here from the counsel general's office? I think</td>
<td>12. I will never ever forget. It taught me that we have</td>
<td>12. But from my experience over the last few</td>
<td>12. But from my experience over the last few</td>
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<td>13. he was going to be. You know, our counsel general in</td>
<td>more in common with Mexico than we do differences. And</td>
<td>13. weeks, all the way out to El Paso, met with Mayor Margo,</td>
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<td>14. Austin is -- is now departing. Carlos Gonzalez</td>
<td>13. I thank you for hosting me. I thank you for your</td>
<td>14. Judge Samaniego, Jon Barela -- Commissioner, thank you</td>
<td>14. Judge Samaniego, Jon Barela -- Commissioner, thank you</td>
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<td>15. Gutierrez. And he's been a huge friend of mine over the</td>
<td>friendship.</td>
<td>15. for being here. And Weslaco to learn about unique</td>
<td>15. for being here. And Weslaco to learn about unique</td>
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<td>16. years. And we're -- and we're losing a true public</td>
<td>16. I've been back to Laredo since then and</td>
<td>16. challenges and opportunities.</td>
<td>16. challenges and opportunities.</td>
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<td>17. servant to California, of all places. But I'd be remiss</td>
<td>17. went to a triple BXG meeting to meet with international</td>
<td>17. I can't say enough how important it is that</td>
<td>17. I can't say enough how important it is that</td>
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<td>18. if I did not recognize how important he has been to my</td>
<td>officials. Gerry and -- and all four bridges that day,</td>
<td>18. the RGV MPO is coming to fruition. It's my</td>
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<td>19. growth process as -- as secretary, and -- and how well</td>
<td>19. even -- even the rail bridge. And that was integral to</td>
<td>19. understanding it's on the governor's desk. I'm</td>
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<td>20. he's communicated some of the priorities that Texas has</td>
<td>my -- to my education.</td>
<td>20. this is an incredible opportunity for the</td>
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<td>21. with our number one trading partner.</td>
<td>21. I've been fortunate enough to visit with --</td>
<td>21. RGV. And some of you have already heard this -- and for</td>
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<td>22. Undersecretary, thank you for being here.</td>
<td>22. with leaders in Edinburg, Harlingen. Gabriel, thank you</td>
<td>22. those of you who have, I apologize -- but I've deep</td>
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<td>23. MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you.</td>
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<td>24. SECRETARY WHITLEY: The -- the State of</td>
<td>24. challenges and opportunities.</td>
<td>24. mother was born there. And my -- actually, my</td>
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<td>25. Coahuila is -- is a -- is a true friend of ours. And</td>
<td>25. I can't say enough how important it is that</td>
<td>25. 9 greatgrandmother was registrar at PanAm for 26 years.</td>
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2 here to make sure that you can succeed. But I know that
3 the master plan's not due until 2020, at the end of
4 2020.
5 And I think that there's some things that
6 we can achieve between now and then, because we know
7 that the wait times are getting longer. Even if we
8 didn't have a crisis on the border, a humanitarian
9 crisis that has now turned into an economic crisis, even
10 if he didn't have that, the wait times could have been
11 improved.
12 And so I'm here to help you guys. I'm here
13 to provide air cover to you to try to help achieve
14 exactly what you guys want to achieve at your ports of
15 entry, at your border crossings.
16 So as we progress through today's meeting,
17 I want you guys to keep in mind just three main things:
18 How have the changes in wait times affected you? What
19 are some of the solutions you think would help in the
20 intermediate term, immediately? What -- what can I do?
21 What can you do? What can TxDOT do? Whether
22 that's what -- what sort of resources we can dedicate to
23 actually achieving some tangible results to take care of
24 that low-hanging fruit right now and get some things
25 down. And then, how can we, at the State level, more

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| 1 you-all to know that you have a friend in Austin. I am
| 2 here to make sure that you can succeed. But I know that
| 3 the master plan's not due until 2020, at the end of
| 4 2020.
| 5 And I think that there's some things that
| 6 we can achieve between now and then, because we know
| 7 that the wait times are getting longer. Even if we
| 8 didn't have a crisis on the border, a humanitarian
| 9 crisis that has now turned into an economic crisis, even
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| 1 effectively communicate this information to the entities
| 2 that can make a difference to -- that can make a
| 3 difference, whether that's in Mexico or in
| 4 Washington, D.C.
| 5 I look forward to hearing from all of you.
| 6 Thank you again for being here. There's -- there's no
| 7 question that -- I wouldn't be here today
| 8 professionally were it not for some very key mentors of
| 9 mine. And one of them just walked in. It's former
| 10 Secretary of State Rolando Pablos. Thank you for being
| 11 here Secretary Pablos. You are -- you -- you are a true
| 12 friend. And I know that -- I'll take the pointers from
| 13 you after this meeting so I can improve how I'm -- how
| 14 I'm governing the meeting. I know you've done a bunch
| 15 of them.
| 16 But, Caroline, I -- I want to make sure
| 17 that we get done everything that we need to get done in
| 18 this meeting. The minutes have been adopted. So what's
| 19 next?
| 20 MS. MAYS: Okay. Secretary Pablos, can you
| 21 introduce yourself? I know everybody knows you. And
| 22 you can sit at the table. Don't be shy.
| 23 SECRETARY PABLOS: No, no. I'm good.
| 24 Rolando Pablos, former Secretary of State, former chair
| 25 of this wonderful committee. Thank you for inviting me,
1. whether you're a bridge owner or you are part of the
2. community at the border, you know, facilitating that.
3. And we can see -- we have Mexican
4. representation on the committee. That speaks to
5. building and sustaining that relationship over time.
6. We've had -- at last year we had pretty much all the
7. Mexican states represented, you know, at the BTAC
8. meetings, and we need to continue that.
9. You hear a lot when we get into the border
10. master plan, you know, how we have, you know, been kind
11. of fostering those relationships, building them,
12. strengthening those relationships as we move forward.
13. And the next slide really just shows you
14. BTAC members. And, you know, as you can see here, we
15. have 33 members on the committee. And right now we have
16. several new members, and those members will be
17. reappointed or appointed by commission sometimes -- you
18. know, in August to make sure that, you know, as you see
19. members with asterisks on there, if you're one of those
20. people, you need to be appointed -- you know, by -- by
21. commission, but you can still sit in the meetings.
22. And as you can see, you know, great
23. representation. Some of the members are statutorily
24. required, others are not -- are not statutorily
25. required. We have railroads. That is not statutorily

1. required but, you know, in discussions with leadership
2. at TxDOT and the Secretary of State, you know, those,
3. you know, those stakeholders were added because we
4. really needed to make sure that we have a list of
5. stakeholders at the table that reflect the movement of
6. goods and the movement of people across the border. And
7. the railroads play a big part of that.
8. The trucking association wasn't part of
9. that, you know, so now they are. Because, again, a lot
10. of trade moves by trucks. So we wanted to make sure
11. that we have representation from the trucking community
12. that moves the bulk of the trade, you know, across the
13. border.
14. So this slide really shows one -- you know,
15. BTAC had four meetings last year. And with that several
16. things -- three key things that really BTAC helped, you
17. know, address or work on. One was the continuation of
18. the border strategic blueprint.
19. As you-all recall, we started that effort,
20. I think, late 2016 or early 2017. And that was really
21. the first time BTAC, as a group, developed kind of
22. strategic vision for -- for border and for addressing
23. border issues. And you-all were in a lot of exercises
24. that I'll talk about later, you know, identifying not
25. just, you know, developing a mission and vision that

1. BTAC had never developed before. And then also helping
2. identify issues, but also identifying recommendations,
3. and I'll talk about that in a few slides.
4. And then, you know, a key component of what
5. you-all did last year was really help guide the
6. development as we started the development of the
7. Texas/Mexico border master plan that Tim and the
8. consultant team will cover later.
9. And that was you -- you-all were very
10. instrumental. And you see some of the, you know, kind
11. of fruit of your labor, your input, how it's guided,
12. what we've done to date since December meeting.
13. Then the other one I mentioned already
14. earlier. You-all have been very instrumental, one, with
15. the relationships you already have on the Mexican side.
16. But we've had, you know, great participation, not just
17. in the BTAC meetings but also in our efforts from the
18. Mexican state, but also from the Mexican government.
19. You hear a lot of some of the work we've
20. done since then engaging the federal -- the Mexican
21. federal government, engaging the Mexican states, but
22. also engaging the stakeholders, private sector
23. stakeholders, in Mexico as part of the border master
24. plan development. But a lot of that is really because
25. of the relationships you guys have built with those

1. stakeholders over time that has allowed us to, one, have
2. access to those stakeholders, but also to continue those
3. relationships.
4. So kind of just a quick reminder on the
5. blueprint. You know -- and I want to kind of underscore
6. this, because this is the framework that's guiding the
7. development of the border master plan, really what
8. you-all did in 2017 and 2018 in developing the strategic
9. blueprint.
10. As I mentioned earlier, this was really the
11. first effort that outlined a single vision for the
12. border.
13. You know, I think a while back, you know,
14. we had issues whereby, you know, one region has, you
15. know, its own vision, the other has its own vision. One
16. of it was we had three border master plans. We had, you
17. know, RGV border master plan. We had the Laredo region
18. border master plan. We had El Paso.
19. But when we looked at those border master
20. plans, there was really no single vision and no single
21. mission when we talked about the Texas/Mexico border.
22. So one of the things with developing the
23. blueprint was one Texas, one border with one vision,
24. with one mission, with a set of objectives -- goals and
25. objectives that will help, one, tell a better border
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<td>1 you know, congestion issues. All those things that</td>
<td>1 you, know, that's really the blueprint, and</td>
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<td>2 we're hearing over and over again, you know, that are</td>
<td>3 as you can see here, the vision that you-all helped</td>
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<td>3 very, very consistent.</td>
<td>4 develop.</td>
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<td>4 So I think, you know, personally I feel</td>
<td>5 And you see this vision and the mission</td>
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<td>5 that you-all have been really a great group to help us</td>
<td>6 carried into the border master plan that we'll talk</td>
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<td>6 identify issues that now we're more or less, you know,</td>
<td>7 about later on how we're taking this as the framework</td>
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<td>7 validating by going out to the stakeholders. You know,</td>
<td>8 for what we use as the vision and mission for the</td>
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<td>8 some new issues are emerging, but for the most part, a</td>
<td>9 border, you know, transportation master plan.</td>
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<td>9 lot of issues you guys have identified here have come to</td>
<td>10 So one of the key elements of what you-all</td>
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<td>10 bear in some of the discussions already.</td>
<td>11 did, as I mentioned earlier, you can see you helped</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>12 develop the mission, vision, goals and objectives from</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>13 scratch. We didn't have that; now we have that.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>14 You helped identify border issues and</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>15 challenges. And it's very consistent with what we've</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>16 heard, you know, when we've gone out in the border</td>
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<td>17 communities, not just this time with the border master</td>
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<td>18 plan development, but we went down for the -- for the --</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>19 you know, for the frameability plan. We heard the same</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>20 issues that you guys brought up here. So I think the</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>21 message is very consistent. You see some of those</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>22 themes that you -- you-all identified about a year and a</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>23 half ago, really carried on into the border master plan.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>24 But you also developed recommendations.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>25 And, again, some of those recommendations pretty much</td>
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<td>1 emerging as we speak to the border communities, we speak</td>
<td>1 with the border master plan, we kind of tabled those and</td>
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<td>2 to the stakeholders along the border, some of those are</td>
<td>2 felt that it was necessary to kind of push this towards</td>
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<td>3 emerging as well.</td>
<td>3 the border master plan. Because we felt that we had</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>4 enough foundation to kind of table that effort as the</td>
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<td>5 So I think there’s a lot of themes that are</td>
<td>5 border master plan picked up steam.</td>
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<td>6 going -- you're going to hear from beyond what's kind of</td>
<td>6 And then kind of the last element of what</td>
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<td>7 reflected in what we're hearing from the broader</td>
<td>7 you-all did really last year -- you know, and you hear a</td>
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<td>8 stakeholder groups in -- in the border region.</td>
<td>8 lot more from Tim and the consulting team here is</td>
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<td>9 And, quickly, this is kind of some of the</td>
<td>9 helping us guide and provide input to the border master</td>
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<td>10 -- you know, the goals that you-all identified and some</td>
<td>10 plan development.</td>
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<td>11 of the challenges you-all have identified. And I won't</td>
<td>11 Some of the inner-shore work was developing</td>
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<td>12 go into details, but I wanted to show you kind of the</td>
<td>12 the scope of work. You helped to clarify the scope of</td>
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<td>13 extent of your engagement and the discussions that have</td>
<td>13 work, you helped provide more input and give us some</td>
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<td>14 happened at BTAC that really is feeding the border</td>
<td>14 direction on, you know, some of the key things that you</td>
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<td>15 master plan development, and to show kind of the</td>
<td>15 felt that we needed to do with some areas where you felt</td>
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<td>16 crosswalk between your efforts and what we're hearing</td>
<td>16 that, you know, we needed some improvement.</td>
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<td>17 from the border stakeholders, but also what will</td>
<td>17 You know, we provided a schedule, an</td>
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<td>18 translate one into the border master plan. Because</td>
<td>18 approach. And I remember some of the discussions we had</td>
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<td>19 we're going to look at, you know, the crosswalk between</td>
<td>19 was, you know, 22 months, that's a long time. So we</td>
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<td>20 what we're hearing from the border master plan, and then</td>
<td>20 tried to be aggressive in our schedule. And you see a</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 crosswalk it to what we're hearing from you-all, that</td>
<td>21 lot of that today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 what we've heard from you consistently, some of the</td>
<td>22 You know, somebody asked me earlier today,</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 issues the Secretary talked about, border delays, border</td>
<td>23 “Are we still keeping that aggressive schedule?” Yes.</td>
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<td>24 wait-time issues. We heard that. You know, we hear</td>
<td>24 You know, our goal is to keep moving as fast as we can,</td>
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<td>25 that over and over again, and some of the issues you've</td>
<td>25 even in the absence of not having BTAC meeting since</td>
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1. December, we've done a lot of work that you see today because of the guidance you had given us.
2. Stakeholder engagement, a big component of that in the December meeting. You-all provided us input on, one, we had -- we had a draft list of stakeholders, which we're missing. And, also, you helped us on the strategies. So, you know, what you felt were the best strategies.
3. I remember Sam telling us we needed to go to Mexico City to visit with the new administration, and we did. And you hear, you know, some of those discussions today as well.
4. But, again, it's from coming to you-all with some of the ideas we have, and you-all providing us with those inputs.
5. We talked a little bit about preliminary goals, the draft goals and objectives. So we'll talk about that today again. And as I mentioned earlier, your work on the blueprint with identifying the mission, vision, goals and objectives of the -- of the blueprint is really being pushed into the development of the border master plan.
6. And then finally, looking kind of ahead, kind of what to expect this year and next year. We wanted to give you kind of a snapshot of that. We mentioned last year that this year will be fairly intense, because we need your input and your guidance as we develop the border master plan.
7. So this kind of months -- and hopefully we'll have some dates shortly to provide you on when we anticipate having meetings with -- with you-all this year and next year. And really the intent of these meetings are to be more work session-type where you're providing us input, you're providing us guidance.
8. We're going to be throwing a lot of information at you. Some of that were involved in the frameability plan, it can get intense. We're going to expect you to review documents. We're going to expect you to provide us input. And, you know -- so just kind of giving you a heads up that, you know, we look forward to engaging you a lot more as we develop the border master plan. And the border master plan is really your plan. And we're facilitating that with your input. You-all, you know, live at the border, know the border, do business there, so you know what the issues are on the border, and helping us, you know, identify those issues and -- and challenges, but also strategies and solutions as we move forward it's going to be critical.

1. So with that, Secretary, I conclude my presentation. And I open it up for any comments or questions from the -- from the committee.
2. SECRETARY WHITLEY: Any comments or questions for Caroline?
3. Thank you, Caroline. That was very good.
4. One thing I -- I do want to note, just looking at this meeting schedule, I have appreciated getting out into the field and -- and seeing you guys in your communities, but I don't want to be bound by going out there if it doesn't make sense for you.
5. So I want to be open to -- to be a little bit more flexible on where these meeting dates are -- or where the meeting locations are, because it's more helpful for you to come to Austin, I want to do that.
6. If you think it's helpful to be in your communities, I'll meet you wherever you are. So these are just ideas. Obviously, we're -- we're open to feedback, so please let Caroline know. Next on the agenda is the discussion of the master plan. And with that, I'll hand it over to Tim.
7. MR. JUAREZ: Okay. Good morning, Secretary Whitley, Deputy Executive Director Marc Williams, Border Trade Advisory Committee members, I'm Tim Juarez. I am the manager for TxDOT's International Trade and Border Planning group. And I am also TxDOT's project manager for the development of the Texas/Mexico border transportation master plan.
8. I would like to introduce our project team that has the Texas/Mexico border transportation master plan.
9. We have Alejandro Solis, who is the project manager with the consultant team of HDR. We also have Stephanie White, who is the project lead for public involvement and stakeholder engagement. And then we also have Donald Ludlow, who is the project lead for data collection/analysis as we go forward with border master plan.
10. So if you would refer to your presentation, which has the Texas/Mexico border transportation master plan. The second slide, I just want to give you an overview of what we will be discussing today.
11. I'm going to provide you a brief overview of how we got to the development of border master plan.
12. We will also note the activities that have occurred with the project development team and with your assistance as we went out to the regions since the December 12th BTAC meeting.
We're going to give you an assessment of what we heard regarding round one stakeholder engagement, as well as allow you the ability to give us an input regarding the refinement of goals and objectives for border master plan development. We're going to talk about our next steps regarding data collection and how it's going to be imperative that we utilize your assistant, your governmental entities, to provide us the information that you have collected.

And then we're going to talk about the corridor analysis component, both from a designation aspect and then a needs aspect as well. And then, of course, we will always receive closing remarks from you. We would like to thank our TxDOT district public information officers, as well as your government entities, to help us get the information out regarding the development of border master plan. And in particular, when we were coming to your respective regions and hosting that meeting.

We believe in partnering with you. That led to the successful attendance at the three meetings that we had throughout the three regions. So we want to thank you for that.

I would like to note that because this is not only a presentation, it will be a discussion, and we're also seeking your input. So we will request if you have your smartphones or your iPads, that you please make sure that you have WiFi connectivity, because there is going to be a component -- actually, two components, where we're going to seek your much-needed input and guidance in the ASPA. And we will note to you when we go through that effort. So on the -- oh, did I go back? Okay. So on the next slide, we would really like to thank the Border Trade Advisory Committee, because it is through these meetings and through your input that, as we discuss the scope of work for border master plan development, your input was very critical in helping us get to what we believe will be the final product.

Please keep in mind that there will be the opportunity to shape border master plan as we go through the effort of the development process, because any time we do scenario planning, there's some additional outcomes that we may not have considered that we will present to you and you will have the opportunity to provide us some information.

The overall approach in development and the timeline, as Caroline noted, we definitely heard your response that 22, 24 months was too long. So our approach is that we're going to look at it from a long, medium, and short-term time frame. And as Secretary of State Whitley noted, those items that are low-hanging fruit that we can implement today for the efficient movement of people and goods, we will therefore do that with your guidance. We're going to talk about what the input you received to us from a stakeholder engagement aspect, and how we applied that in the three regions. And I think the analytics from that will pretty much tell the story of what we heard in round one.

And then, of course, we had the discussion regarding about the goals and objectives, which we will have some refinement from you today as well. So we want to be able to focus on how we refine the scope of work for border master plan. Essentially, there are four phases regarding the development.

We're going to look at binational study and data collection, which we're part -- part in the component right now. We're also going to look from a phase two aspect, of how we're going to gather input and corridor analysis assessment.

And then in phase three, we're going to look at building the binational consensus on transportation resiliency, transportation solutions.

And then, of course, phase four we'll look at the recommendations that have been coming up through the development of the border master plan, and then how we do the prioritization of the corridors and projects to actual implementation and final phase of the plan.

On the next slide -- this is probably easier to read than what we call the development pinwheel. But this is essentially the phases as I think the analytics from that will pretty much tell the story of what we heard in round one.

Previously identified, as well as the time frame associated with the development of those phases. Right now we're at the start of phase two, where we're going to look at gathering input and the initial steps of corridor analysis, which we will run through, but were within that April/May time frame.

What we also want to note for you based on the information we received from you is what the focus of the border master plan is, and then the approaches we're going to take in development of the border master plan.

So we would just like to remind you this is a binational plan. We are looking at it from various molds. So it's going to be multimodal. It's going to
be looking at the aspect from an international trade perspective. So we will have defined corridors, which we'll present our preliminary aspect to you today. But keep in mind that in the border master plan we are looking at all 28 ports of entry. We're looking at the support facilities for those POEs, not only CBP and GC -- GSA, but Aduanas as well on the Mexican side. And then the final component being those international trade corridors from a multimodal aspect. We have identified, essentially, five spheres of influence in which we will do the development of border master plan and then the analytics associated with that. So sphere one is essentially about 60 miles both north and south of the border, taking into account what we identified as those immediate impacts to the port of entries. Sphere two is really looking at it from a population and good aspect centers. So we're going to be looking at, for example, the energy sector in West Texas, the Toyota plants in San Antonio, the port of Corpus Christi. And then, of course, on the Mexican side, looking at Monterrey and other industrial sites. Sphere three is looking at the five border states. So not only the state of Texas, but we will also be doing our analysis of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas, because we want to make sure that connectivity of the partners that are utilizing your port of entry from a business aspect. And then sphere four is looking at it for the U.S. and Mexico. And then sphere five, taking into U.S. MCA. And so we think we have a very good coverage based on the guidance you provided to us. So how do we get there in the border master plan? Since this is really an update and an enhancement of what we did in 2012 and 2013, we are utilizing the previous plans. So through your effort, we have established what we are referring to as Binational Regional Steering Committees. So they're inclusive of El Paso, Santa Teresa, and the state of Chihuahua. And then also Laredo, Coahuila -- Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas. And then we have the Rio Grande Valley and the state of Tamaulipas. We are looking at it from a policy aspect, as well as a technical component when we go through the development. You play a very key role in this aspect of the development of the border master plans, because it is the Binational Regional Steering Committees that you helped us identify committee members to, who will then report their recommendation or findings to BTAC. As represented in this particular chart, you note that we are having a very proactive stakeholder engagement that is binationally, both public and private sector. We want to be able to have those listening sessions from the users of the system so that we're able to truly capture the true efficiencies and hindrance of their effort to get those goods and products through the port of entries. We want to be able to do stakeholder interviews, such as the produce association, such as the Texas Trucking Association, the users on the ground. And so those surveys and getting their input is going to be critical to our analytics of the data aspect. But this is a true representation of how we feel development of border master plan will really enhance the aspect from a true regional component making its way up from -- to the completion of one regional border master plan. So how do we get there? This table essentially identifies the three major key components of committee roles and responsibilities -- responsibilities for the development of border master plan. You see first is the Border Trade Advisory Committee. Your participation and guidance is going to be very critical, especially at the decision points. There are going to be opportunities where we will have chapters that -- or components draft final for your review and guidance to help us mark those up so that we know we're headed in the right direction. As, again, we're going to ask for your continued assistance in ensuring that we are reaching out to both the public and private sector as we are seeking stakeholder engagement. As Caroline noted, we're just the facilitators of the development of the plan. You're the implementators. You live on the border, you're the bridge owners. We want to make sure that whatever comes out as a product for the plan, you're able to apply and utilize for your respective POE. The next one is the Binational Regional Steering Committees. We have three of them. In round one we had a very successful meeting with the regional steering committee folks. And you will hear the results of that in today's presentation.
1 administration. There was a new administration at the
time. We know -- we knew that some of the topics were
going to be carried over, and we know that there were
going to be some changes into policies.
4 So what we did is we started setting up
6 meetings with them. And in January, around the end of
7 January, we met with one staffer from the president's
8 office of the new administration. We met with three
9 undersecretaries of the new administration. Two of them
10 within SCT and another one with SRE, which is the
11 minister of foreign affairs. And we met with six
12 general directors, which for those of you who are more
13 familiar with the Mexican government structure, they are
14 the -- almost like the model agencies within the federal
15 government, so we met with six of those.
16 And the idea was to present to them the
17 border transportation master plan, get their buy-in, and
18 also request their help to move this forward over the
19 next, you know, 18 to 24 months.
20 We got great responses from them.
21 Everybody was -- was on board. I'm going to fill you in
22 on the details of it a little bit more. But we didn't
23 stop there. We said, you know what, since we're in
24 Mexico City, let's try and widen the net. Let's go
25 beyond that.

1 presentation. And then, hopefully, you've had the
2 opportunity to connect to WiFi for the interactive
3 component.
4 Alejandro.
5 MR. SOLIS: Thank you, Tim. And -- so are
6 you guys ready for download of all the information that
7 we collected over the past five months or so of working
8 on these?
9 It's -- it's going to be a little bit too
10 much, but we want to dissect it for you, and we want to
11 really get your feedback. So it's going to be a little
12 bit more interactive. I'm going to start sitting down
13 now, and then I'm going to stand up, and then Stephanie
14 will follow. And we're -- we just want to keep it a bit
15 more dynamic than the traditional format. So sorry,
16 Mr. Secretary, for breaking the protocol there. But we
17 want to make it more -- more, you know, engaging for
18 you.
19 So as Tim mentioned, and Caroline said, we
20 want to give you a brief overview of what we did since
21 December. And I'm going to start with that, and then
22 we're going to go diving into all of the details of --
23 of the first slides that I'm going to present.
24 We heard you in December that you said you
25 -- guys need to touch base with the Mexican
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<td>side, but we also wanted to talk to the users of the</td>
<td>And what we have on the next slide -- and</td>
<td>In this case, we're just reporting what we</td>
<td>border. We need to really go down to other states in</td>
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<td>system. You know, the users of the border.</td>
<td>I'm on slide number 13 for those of who you are</td>
<td>heard from them, we're not necessarily agreeing with</td>
<td>the main land, in the heartland of Mexico, which is</td>
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<td>And we realized that in Mexico City there's</td>
<td>following the printed version. What we have here, it's</td>
<td>everything. This is just for your guys' knowledge of</td>
<td>3 where the production takes place. You know, like</td>
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<td>a big conglomerate of stakeholder associations, private</td>
<td>a couple of slides that actually just summarize</td>
<td>5 how is the topic of border being perceived on the</td>
<td>4 Guanajuato that has a huge manufacturing, you know,</td>
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<td>stakeholders associations, that are just</td>
<td>everything we've heard from the public, the private</td>
<td>6 Mexican side by the users?</td>
<td>5 sector. And Mexico City, itself, that actually ships a</td>
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<td>representation-wise based there.</td>
<td>sector, and the experts, subject matter experts, that we</td>
<td>7 When it comes to the binational focus --</td>
<td>6 lot of the things that cross through Laredo and other</td>
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<td>So we met with different groups. And you</td>
<td>visited as part of the Mexico City trips or the</td>
<td>8 and we also heard some key considerations from them.</td>
<td>ports of entry.</td>
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<td>can see there in the -- in that slide we met with the</td>
<td>movement of goods and people across the border that are</td>
<td>9 One of the things that the new administration is</td>
<td>8 So we also need to circle back with those</td>
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<td>trucking and rail associations of Mexico. These are all</td>
<td>not necessarily trucking or rail. So it's all of the</td>
<td>10 focusing on more is the southern border of Mexico, not</td>
<td>9 states that are not necessarily at the border, to get</td>
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<td>associations that represent that -- that particular</td>
<td>brokers and all of the cargo owners, et cetera.</td>
<td>so much the northern border of Mexico.</td>
<td>10 their input for this -- for the border master plan.</td>
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<td>mode.</td>
<td>So we wanted to ask them, what are the</td>
<td>12 That is a shift that was very clear from --</td>
<td>11 Then we also asked them about success</td>
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<td>We also had dialogs with experts in the</td>
<td>issues? What are the needs? What are the challenges?</td>
<td>13 from the agencies. There is -- there is, of course,</td>
<td>12 stories. We said, &quot;Okay. What have you guys -- what do</td>
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<td>energy sector to learn a little bit more about what's</td>
<td>What are the opportunities you see to get an initial</td>
<td>14 interest in developing the northern border from an</td>
<td>13 you consider success stories? What can be replicated</td>
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<td>happening in Mexico. We know there's a big boom for --</td>
<td>screening of how these topics are -- are perceived on</td>
<td>15 economic development perspective, but clearly the focus</td>
<td>elsewhere?&quot; And they gave us three examples -- three</td>
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<td>for, you know -- in terms of energy in Mexico.</td>
<td>the Mexican side?</td>
<td>is on the south of Mexico.</td>
<td>very clear examples.</td>
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<td>And then we also met with other associ- --</td>
<td></td>
<td>17 There's a -- there's almost like a movement</td>
<td>16 One of them is joint inspections; the other</td>
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<td>other types of stakeholders that are involved in the</td>
<td></td>
<td>of economic -- a boom of economic activity on the</td>
<td>17 one is the pre-clearance program; and then the</td>
</tr>
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<td>movement of goods and people across the border that are</td>
<td></td>
<td>northern border in Mexico related to oil and gas. And</td>
<td>18 electronic manifest, which our understanding is that</td>
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<td>not necessarily trucking or rail. So it's all of the</td>
<td></td>
<td>it's expected to continue growing over the next few</td>
<td>19 it's being deployed more on the Mexican side than the</td>
</tr>
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<td>brokers and all of the cargo owners, et cetera.</td>
<td></td>
<td>years. So that's something that we need to be aware to</td>
<td>20 U.S. side. So -- but for them, these are three things</td>
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<td>So we wanted to ask them, what are the</td>
<td></td>
<td>capture for -- in our future scenarios.</td>
<td>21 that could be replicated elsewhere to be able to make</td>
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<td>issues? What are the needs? What are the challenges?</td>
<td></td>
<td>And then the third part that we also heard</td>
<td>22 the movement of people and goods more efficient.</td>
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<td>What are the opportunities you see to get an initial</td>
<td></td>
<td>is that not necessarily everything that crosses the</td>
<td>23 We also asked them about what do they see</td>
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<td>screening of how these topics are -- are perceived on</td>
<td></td>
<td>border between Mexico and Texas is produced on the</td>
<td>24 in terms of the future for the border and Mexico in</td>
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<td>the Mexican side?</td>
<td></td>
<td>system. You know, the users of the border.</td>
<td>25 general. What -- what should we start including in our</td>
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The -- the fact of treating certain regions as an -- as an
an actual system, not as individual pieces. And they --
they made a -- the point of joint management centers or
joint traffic centers, which is an idea that is also not
new, but it's something -- it was interesting to hear
from the Mexican perspective.
And the -- the last one is one that's still
being debated in Mexico, but they -- they mentioned the
use of private funds or private capital to be able to
fund some of these projects. But subject to a much
larger and political discussion in Mexico about how to
deal with P3s.
It seemed that the -- before -- before the
current administration, there was a big push for P3s.
It seems that in this case, it's going to be reverted.
And they're still trying to decide what's -- what's
going to be the final outcome.
So those sort of three things they gave us
in terms of ideas. And then when it comes to the
insides, when -- more related to what our work is
related to, they -- everybody provided full support and
cooperation for the development of the plan.
We actually requested -- and this is very
important, and I think it's important for those members
on the -- of BTAC that know about these, we requested
that the border master plan be included both in the
national plan of Mexico, the national development plan,
and also the secretarial plan for SCT, which means that
once you're included in those two documents, then the
funding can flow to those projects.
It's a priority, basically, for the
agencies to be included in those documents. So we
requested that. They're still working on those
documents, so it -- they're not going to be out for
maybe another month or so, but we've made the formal
request.
We heard a lot from the Mexicans that they really don’t look at Texas and Mexico as two different regions; they look at the border region as one region because you have a lot going on from, you know, socioeconomic where you have families on both sides. But the trade, you know, we hear a lot about we really make things together, you know. Especially in the automotive sector whereby parts are crossing multiple times before they are actually, you know, put in a car. And then the other one is, a lot of people either live on one side of the border and work on the other side of the border.

El Paso, we heard a lot about students that live in Mexico and come to school in -- in El Paso. So really to summarize is, they -- Mexicans feel that having that will help validate their participation in the process.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Okay. Thanks.

MR. SOLIS: Yeah. And the -- the final conclusion that we got in terms of the processes that SCT was very welcoming of the idea. It actually makes them start -- try -- they're going to try to use the border master plan as a -- as a springboard into developing regional policies for the northern border, which is not something they do.

Right now they address the border on a -- on a -- as -- you know, one -- on a case-by-case basis, basically. But with this effort, when we explained to them what we wanted to do, they said this is a really good blueprint for a regional policy that they would try to follow in the future. So I guess we rattled the nest pretty -- pretty hardly there and -- and we got really good responses.

So -- and with that, I want to pass it on to the key component, which is the stakeholder engagement, that Stephanie will facilitate for us.

MS. WHITE: Thank you. I want to make sure that everyone can hear me. I think I’ll walk around a little bit. And I’m getting a no in the back. Okay.

So I will -- if there’s a handheld mic --
35· Thirty-five people have participated. We'll wait maybe
24· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · So I'll give it a second.
23· you-all want to participate, please join in as well.
22· folks around the table. · So the folks in the back, if
21· · · · · · · · MR. WILLIAMS: -- too, that the audience
20· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Yes.
19· · · · · · · · MR. WILLIAMS: · -- that the audience
18· · · · · · · · (Discussion off the record.)
17· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
16· · · · · · · · MS. MAYS: · Yeah.
15· · · · · · · · MS. MAYS: · And this one, you could do
14· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · You can even type them in
13· · · · · · · · Can you scroll down for me, Kelli? · Or up.
12· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · So duplicate
11· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
10· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
9· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
8· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
7· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
6· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
5· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
4· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
3· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
2· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come
1· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: · Okay. · Who needs a little help? · I'll come

1· will ask you for a code, a meeting code. And that
2· code -- yep. It's not in your book so you'll have to
3· listen along. Tell me -- raise your hand if you're
4· already on menti.com. Most everybody. We'll wait for
5· this group over here. Once you get there, then the code
6· is 818859. And when you get there, then the code
7· something that says "On a scale of 1 to 10, how well are
8· the regions' ports of entry operating today?"
9· Okay. Who needs a little help? I'll come
10· help you. There you go. You're on it. So you need to
11· go...
12· (Discussion off the record.)
13· MS. WHITE: · Okay. · I can see already 20
14· of you -- have given us some information. So far
15· on a scale of 1 to 10, you believe your ports of entry
16· are just about average. Oh, it's sinking a little.
17· 4.9.
18· MR. WILLIAMS: · Let me just point out --
19· MS. WHITE: · Yes.
20· MR. WILLIAMS: · -- too, that the audience
21· can participate as well, so it's not just limited to
22· folks around the table. So the folks in the back, if
23· you-all want to participate, please join in as well.
24· MS. WHITE: · So I'll give it a second.
25· Thirty-five people have participated. We'll wait maybe
Air quality, we heard a lot about air quality, particularly in Ciudad Juarez or in the El Paso region.

You're welcome to continue answering this question. We'll save them all and it will become a matter of -- of your minutes, your record. But I'd like to move on to the next question, if you're ready.

Here's the question. "What changes in economic sectors" -- so those are things like manufacturing, agriculture, energy. "What changes do you see occurring along the border, including supply chain activities?"

Autonomous trucks, energy. So duties, technology adoption, increased use of -- of more technology. Yeah. An increase in refrigerated goods. A couple of you have talked about energy trade. So that's the oil and gas pipelines. More pipelines.

Can you scroll for me, Kelli? Value-added labor source, better traffic controls at ports, wind farms. We heard a lot about the increase in the wind energy industry, especially when we were in the Valley.

Food safety. More oil and gas and wind.

Technology and automation. Increase of fresh produce.

Border growth. I would imagine that's population probably. Whose was that? Connected and automated trucks. Technology disruption, energy development, drone movements of goods. That's the first time I've heard that one actually. Pre-approved truck crossings, solar farms, water shortages. Also, that's a new one.

We didn't hear that in the border region. Tourism, an increase in tourism. Grade separations. More energy, more produce, and cold storage. Restrictions and new tariffs on Mexican fresh produce.

So would any of you like to offer additional commentary or insights to some of the contributions that you've made? Or a question?

Yes. I'll take yours first.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes. May -- maybe a statement or a question is that the -- even though we see a large amount of investment in the ports of entry, the fact is that three MSAs on the border continue being the poorest MSAs in the country. So the question is, how can we consider, as we grow infrastructure, to add value as trade -- trade goes through what I think is a passthrough region in the Valley?

MS. WHITE: Great. So that's an -- acknowledging that the -- the large statistical areas, the MSAs along the border region. And it -- there's an element of poverty in that area, and it's a passthrough region. Yes.

MR. ALVAREZ: Yes. Pete Alvarez from the TxDOT Pharr district. We continue seeing improvements as far as import and exports through the port of Brownsville and the port of Harlingen when it comes to oil and gas. But we're also seeing that on the Mexican side where a lot of wind farm components, if you will, are being delivered to Mexico and then coming across into the U.S., it seems to be a shorter route for them. So these type of exchanges are causing additional delays.

MS. WHITE: So a little more insight on delays. Other feedback or contribution? Anybody at the table?

MS. MAYS: I would say BTAC, you're very quiet today. So this is unlike you. And we really want to hear from you. This is meant to get your feedback from what we heard from the stakeholder meetings.

Any reactions? Don't make me pick on people.

1. MR. SCHWEBEL: Can I make an observation about that?
2. MS. WHITE: Yes, please.
3. MR. SCHWEBEL: Because one of the things that I've been hearing --
4. THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. Who is that? Gerry --
5. MR. JUAREZ: Gerry Schwebel.
6. THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.
7. MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry Schwebel. I'm sorry. -- is as a result of -- of some of these challenges that we've had with our -- our ports of entry that other means of transportation have -- and, I guess, positive signs, the rail, air and our ports of entry. And, therefore, the question would be is that if those shifts -- as a result of these recent events on the -- on our ports of entry -- will become permanent or they'll become short-term.
8. In other words, if a supplier and the supply chain may have gone through using trucks that now had never used rail or had used limited rail, now because they're -- because of the challenges at our ports of entry with delays, they opted to go rail or they opted to go air, so now that -- that option is -- becomes more viable, which may be a positive thing for them. But at the same time, what does that -- how does that impact our infrastructure planning, our road -- our highway planning or our rail planning or our airport planning, et cetera, in the changing modes as a result of what I just said.
9. I think it's something we've got to keep in -- in our minds. And we have -- we have more dialogue and more discussion from our rail friends. And I don't think we have any air -- airport -- you know, border airport presence here. But maybe to the mayors, they can also contribute some of that as well.
10. MS. WHITE: Gerry, that -- that's a comment I liked that phrase. I think our -- the border regions were talking about that. They never quite used that phrase, I think, the way that you succinctly did.
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<td>him, actually. Yeah. So we're talking about how manufacturing and everything is coming down to all our regions. But what we are forgetting is the skilled workforce that's needed. And it's something that I know all our regions continue to talk about, but it's different in terms of when we're actually doing it. So some of the things that we're doing in the Rio Grande Valley is trying to create that skilled workforce with our high school students that are already enrolled in dual enrollment college credit classes that then creates a filtering effect that can potentially go into our manufacturing companies, our produce companies, whether it's cyber security, whether it's, you know, more of the certificate-based-type programs. So we're -- we're not only partnering with our community colleges, but we're also partnering with our -- our universities within our regions. And, of course, with workforce commission as well. And Commissioner Julian Alvarez has been a great advocate for our area and really helping us and assisting us in finding those ways to bridge that gap, because that's something we all need to do, not only in the Valley, but in the other regions as well. MS. WHITE: Thank you. So somebody just contributed a decrease in pedestrian traffic. I'd like to hear from you. I don't know who did -- who submitted that. One of the things we heard loud and clear in the border region is that pedestrian traffic is actually increasing. And there is a -- a want, a desire, a need for it to be smoother and faster. We heard a lot about split families. Maybe there is a set of grandparents on one side of the border and someone caring for them is living on the U.S. side and makes the crossing every day. We heard about border wait times that range anywhere from two hours on a good day or sometimes 45 minutes, depending on how you get across and which border crossing you're using, to six or seven hours during some of the humanitarian crisis days. It gets -- it really impedes the -- a way of life, as well as trade along the border. Anything else you'd like to talk about a little bit? MR. JAIME: Yes, over here. MS. WHITE: Yes, please. Sorry. Where are you? Yes. MR. JAIME: Yeah. Along the lines of rail activity. Increase rail activity. Obviously, for -- for cities like Laredo, longer trains means wait times.</td>
<td>1 for the people at intersections. So that presents challenges. And we need great separation structures to -- to accommodate that. MS. WHITE: Okay. I'm going to move to the next question. I -- I will come back to a lot of this. You will see it reflected in a lot of the feedback that we got in the -- in the border regions. Some of it is unique to you, but some of it is the same. Here's the next question. &quot;What should be done to improve and resolve transportation issues at the border crossing and in the border region? What solutions do you have?&quot; More investment dollars. We heard that a lot. More CBP agents. That's a really interesting topic. We took Secretary Whitley's ad- -- his -- his lead and visited many of the ports of entry as well. It's our goal to visit all 28. And we heard a really interesting story from the agents that are actually manning those facilities, as well as the people using them. We'll talk about that in a bit. More technology, more staff, an increase -- so staffing is a huge solution from your perspective. Many of you are saying that. Adequate funding, there it is again. More</td>
<td>1 technology. Interesting. Consolidation of federal and state inspections. We heard about that as well. Particularly in the Valley and the -- and Laredo. Fast lanes. So a specialization of lane -- lane use maybe. Get the master plan done. We're working really hard on that. Experiencing inspections, improve access to and from the crossing. So who's is that? Is that about the transportation network? Who just submitted that? Yes, sir. Can you speak and give us your name? MR. CALVO: Yeah. This is Eduardo Calvo with El Paso MPO. Yeah. We -- we complain a lot about the inspection process itself at the port of entry. But access to and from the ports of entry is also very important. I mean, it's -- you can have all the technology and -- you know, at the inspection point itself, but if it takes forever for vehicles, trucks, and all that to get to the ports. So local infrastructure is also one of the big challenges. MS. WHITE: Yes. Thank you. Educate non-border elected officials. We're also working on that as well. Would anyone like to add a comment about that in terms of the particular</td>
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·1· topics?
·2· Yes, sir. Go ahead.
·3· MR. LOVE: Non-border --
·4· MS. WHITE: Can you turn that on, tell us
·5· who you are, John?
·6· MR. LOVE: John Love, Midland, Texas, as a
·7· non-border elected official, we need lots of education.
·8· Lots.
·9· MS. WHITE: The good news is, we have 65
·10· slides today. We're going to get a good start.
·11· Federal and state coordination. That was a
·12· key one. We also heard the increase in binational
·13· coordination as well.
·14· Are there other topics you want to talk
·15· about? So this is a less popular question. We only
·16· have 53 suggestions from you. On a previous slide, I
·17· think we were upwards of 70. So what's missing from a
·18· solutions perspective?
·19· You told me about technology; dollars;
·20· coordination; more staffing; an improvement in the
·21· connected networks, the transportation networks;
·22· awareness; more capacity; process improvements.
·23· Okay. Are you ready -- do I have one more
·24· before I move to the next one? Okay. I'm going to
·25· toggle back actually to the -- the PowerPoint

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1 presentation, but do not put your phones away. Do turn
2 your ringers off, but don't put them away because we'll
3 come back and we'll have another -- another quiz or
4 opportunity for input a little bit later.
5 So I have lost my clicker. I think it's
6 probably right there. The next -- about I -- I think
7 maybe 9 slides, maybe 12, really dig in to some of the
8 nuances we heard in each region.
9 And there's a method to the madness.
10 There's a little bit of duplication of information. But
11 as I mentioned before, we tried to organize it in
12 different ways so that you could compare and contrast
13 the things we heard.
14 So we're going to start in order of -- of
15 where we visited. We went to the Valley first. On the
16 left you can see this was actually from the stakeholder
17 workshop in Pharr.
18 And I really -- I like the -- the capture.
19 They talked about rapid growth of traffic. It's
20 something that you just talked about as well. But,
21 also, they -- they talked about how the ports were
22 space-constrained.
23 This is important from a planning
24 perspective, but we also heard a lot about it from
25 the -- from the CBP agents at those ports.

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1 We had very good participation in our
2 stakeholder workshops from CBP. And they talk about
3 they're -- they're not only resource constrained, but
4 they're space -- physically space constrained in the
5 infrastructure of the ports of entry themselves. So
6 there is a lot of pressure that they're dealing with as
7 well that the public doesn't always see. So I think
8 there's a need of education in a lot of different facets
9 in this border area.
10 So I just wanted you to see what our
11 participation rates looked like. You can see from left
12 to right, at the BNRSC we had 51 people. That's about
13 the right size of -- of these Binational Regional
14 Steering Committee meetings; they hover around 50
15 people.
16 At the stakeholder workshop, we had a total
17 of 43. And at the public meeting, 22. What we found
18 when we hosted these public meetings is that the media
19 was really, really interested. We had great media
20 coverage and presence at all of these public meetings.
21 You can see the U.S. and -- and Mexican split as well of
22 attendance.
23 So issues and challenges, as well as
24 opportunities, we asked the public and the stakeholders
25 and the regional steering committees the very same

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1 questions that we asked you.
2 Yes, sir. Gerry.
3 MR. SCHWEBEL: Could you clarify just
4 for -- especially for the new members -- the difference
5 between the three meetings? The BNRSC --
6 MS. WHITE: Yes, sir.
7 MR. SCHWEBEL: -- stakeholders, and public?
8 MS. WHITE: Yes.
9 MR. SCHWEBEL: And the makeup of those
10 three groups --
11 MS. WHITE: Yes. In fact, I'm going to go
12 backwards in our slide presentation. Kelli, can you
13 take me to the organization chart that was in Tim's
14 slide deck? It's probably slide 7 or 8.
15 Thank you for that question. It's 7. So
16 if you go -- flip back in your books to slide 7. I'm
17 going to spend a minute and talk about -- this is a --
18 we call it a -- the organization chart. I sometimes
19 think it looks like a robot. But for our purposes, it's
20 the -- it's the org chart.
21 And you can see you're right in the heart
of that. That circle in the middle is the Border Trade
Advisory Committee. And then just south, or just to the
3
bottom of that, you can see the makeup of those three
4
regional steering committees, and they represent the
5
regions.
6
And so those are -- they're port operators,
7
they're MPOs, they're cities and counties. So we tried
8
hard -- there -- it's almost like a policy group, if you
9
will, as well as there were key users represented on
10
those lists. And they're binational as well. So we
11
have those same organizations on the invitation list
12
from the Mexican communities as well.
13
And the goal of those groups is actually to
14
reach consensus inside of itself. So you kind
15
of -- you can see the circular nature of the three
16
groups that are working to find consensus. But even
17
inside themselves, they'll be working on -- on finding
18
consensus as well.
19
So those are the Binational Regional
20
Steering Committees. They are set to meet every other
21
month. And they'll function almost exactly like this
22
group here.
23
But the goal of that is they'll then feed
24
that information back up to you in this group. And
25
you'll -- as Tim said, we'll bring draft materials here

1
don't part of the BNRSC. They attended the stakeholder
2
meetings, but they were not part of the actual
3
decision-making process.
4

MS. WHITE: So to Caroline's point, would
5
you raise your hand if you got a "save the date" for the
6
next BNRSC? All of you should have. So we'll go back
7
and check our records. We only have -- only five people
8
received that. So check -- be watching your e-mail. It
9
will come from a TxDOT e-mail address, and you'll get a
10
calendar appointment, actually, next week. We're set to
11
send those out -- it might even be later on this week --
12
with the date and time of the -- the BNRSCs in your
13
regions.
14
So that's the first answer to your
15
question. You also asked me about stakeholder. So if
16
you look on your -- on your map, there are four blue
17
boxes that are to the left and to the right of the
18
Border Trade Advisory Committee medallion. Those
19
represent public meetings. And we're set to do at least
20
four public meetings across the region or the border --
21
the border region itself.
22
This was our first set. So those are
23
publicly noticed meetings. In many cases, they were
24
tweets in El Paso, because we found that that's actually
25
broadcast live on Facebook. We did the -- the meeting

1
did a lot of social media pushes. There were live
2
tweets in El Paso, because we found that that's actually
3
the way that border region is communicating, especially
4
in Mexico. They're doing -- their -- their
5
communication method is not e-mail and it's not direct
6
mail, it's actually social media.
7
You can see also then below the public
8
meetings box the industry and large employer focus
9
groups, as well as then just to the right of it the
10
stakeholder interviews and the stakeholder listening
11
sessions.
12
I would tell you that we -- we called it a
13
workshop. It was probably a combination of the
14
stakeholder listening sessions and a little bit of
15
stakeholder interview and -- and almost focus group, but
16
they were big.
17
We had the -- some of the best
18
participation at the stakeholder workshops. That's a
19
motivated group that has a lot of detailed insight.
20
How did I do? Did I answer your question?
21
Okay.
22
MR. SCHWEBEL: You clarified it, because
23
there was confusion.
24
MS. WHITE: Yeah.
25
SECRETARY WHITLEY: Yeah, there was.
1. MS. WHITE: I think they're -- make --
2. we'll get into a roll and a cycle. I think it will
3. become clearer over time, but the -- the membership of
4. those groups is a little gray. So we had people attend
5. the public meeting and the stakeholder workshop and the
6. BNRSCs. And the more the merrier, I think, in my
7. opinion.
8. Can you move us forward, please, Kelli?
9. So we were talking about what we heard from
10. the public in the -- the Rio Grande, Tamaulipas region.
11. They -- again, you'll see at every one of these slides a
12. set of issues and a set of opportunities.
13. They talked about the very same things that
14. you did. Long wait times, additional connectivity once
15. the commercial traffic crosses. So it was -- you called
16. it that regional connectivity or getting to and from, I
17. think, the crossings. You may have said that, Eduardo.
18. A shortage of personnel. Some of the
19. infrastructure itself is outdated. That actually has to
20. do with the wear and tear of the crossings, as well as
21. the facilities on either side. A lot of that we heard
22. from the CBP agents as well. And this need -- this idea
23. of additional coordination between the -- the nations.
24. Again, that's something that you said.
25. For opportunities, we heard this word

1. "security" a lot in different ways and in different
2. places. This particular comment was about security in
3. the nation of Mexico itself. Once we got to El Paso, we
4. began to hear about security on the bridge, on the
5. crossings as well. Opportunities for efficiency,
6. technology. They said the very same things that you
7. did.
8. Can you advance my slide?
9. At the stakeholder workshop, we heard
10. that -- the same things. They talked about heavier
11. scrutiny or a diversity of scrutiny at different --
12. different crossings.
13. And so some of these crossings are
14. garnering reputations that they're either a lot easier
15. to cross with trade or truck traffic or a lot harder.
16. And people are -- industry is choosing one over the
17. other based on that.
18. Of course, we heard about -- this was
19. interesting. So the stakeholders talked to us about
20. excessive wait times for bicyclists and pedestrians.
21. It was really interesting. You'll see
22. again in -- in El Paso, the stakeholders were also again
23. concerned about the pedestrian experience on the bridge,
24. which is not part of their business.
25. So I think there's a very -- a -- reflected

1. a very communal interest, I think, in everybody who is
2. living and working in the border region.
3. More technology, produce capacity. The
4. need to increase produce capacity and including cold
5. storage inspection facilities. We heard this everywhere
6. we went.
7. I'm going to move through these slides a
8. little quickly. If you'd like to -- to pause and you
9. want me to answer a question or you'd like to ask one of
10. me, feel free to raise your hand.
11. MS. MAYS: Stephanie?
12. MS. WHITE: Yes.
13. MS. MAYS: Can I just make a quick comment?
14. On -- on this slide, one of the comments was on the need
15. to address oversize/overweight.
16. MS. WHITE: Yes.
17. MS. MAYS: And I wanted to bring that
18. specifically because a couple things. Pete mentioned
19. the increase in energy trade, but also manufacturing of
20. all the wind blades are now taking place in Mexico one
21. way -- and the Valley. We heard that, you know, I think
22. two or three plants are opening, or just opened, south
23. of the border, and they're bringing all of that through
24. our ports of entry.
25. Also, the manufacturing that supports the

1. energy sector. We were in Del Rio/Acuna last year, and
2. all the big tanks that they use to store the crude is
3. produced in Mexico and trucked into the U.S.
4. And when we went through the border
5. crossing, they actually had to cut the top to allow
6. these big things to come through, so that's part of the
7. overweight -- oversize/overweight challenge we're seeing
8. at the border.
9. And some of the comments we heard, too, is
10. the time it takes to clear an oversize/overweight load
11. to cross the border. Sometimes it could be several days
12. before they're cleared by the local entities so that
13. they can go back and forth to move the
14. oversize/overweight.
15. So with the energy trade, some of it has to
16. do with, you know, the big rigs that come into the ports
17. in Mexico, and then they bring them into the U.S., and
18. vice versa, whereby they have to get special permits.
19. So that was an issue that we heard, I
20. think, pretty much all throughout the meetings about
21. oversize/overweight issues.
22. MS. WHITE: While we're still on this
23. slide, you can see the last bullet on the left, the
24. restrictions to expand footprint of the border
25. crossings. In this region in particular, they're
surrounded by neighborhoods. Like, across the street and it's -- and it's a -- it's a neighborhood. I think even the mayor might live there or sit there or -- elected officials living very -- very, very close to -- to some of these areas.

Okay. Let's move to the next slide. Here is what we heard from the Binational Regional Steering Committee in the Rio Grande Valley/Tamaulipas region. They talked about the issues and challenges. Multiple inspections. So you get inspected at the border and then you get inspected a little bit -- a little bit further into the U.S.

Limited ability to expand. There it is again. That theme of the need to expand but the total inability to do so.

There's the overweight vehicles again. In this case, it was really about how they're taxing the local roadways, the systems, as these -- this transportation is working to get from the crossing itself into the larger transportation network.

And you'll see in a few other slides we heard about loops, bypasses. How can we get to San Antonio faster? We heard a lot about that from that specific theme.

Again, here in the Binational Regional Steering Committee I've moved to opportunities. You can see this idea in Midway. The need to prioritize the movement of people. Here they talked about a dedicated bus crossing.

You'll see a little bit later we had an idea for a binational Uber service. You talked a little bit about the smooth expedited movement of people. That came up as an opportunistic theme quite a bit.

Here's the first time that we actually heard about bicycle transportation. You can see in the opportunities on the left, second bullet down, there -- this community actually was working on a binational cycling network. So you literally could pick up your rent-a-bike on one end and ride across and drop it off on the other end. It's the only place that we heard about that, but it was interesting.

Okay. I'm just going to click through these so I can get to all the regions. Go ahead, John.

Mr. Love: Sorry. John Love, Midland, Texas. Need synchronized traffic signals for better air quality. Does that have to do with just idling trucks?

Ms. White: Yes.

Mr. Love: Okay.

Ms. White: Yes. And what's interesting is, you'll see -- you talked about air quality in your

feedback. It came up consistently, regardless of region. There were a couple that are dealing with it maybe more acutely than others. But air traffic -- air quality due to idling truck traffic, whether it's on the bridge itself or into the -- the network, is having a considerable impact.

Other questions?

So this last one is a summary slide. It summarizes everything that we have talked about thus far. I'm going to skip it. If you want me to come back, I can. But I really -- whoa. I turned myself off.

I want to talk about the next region.

Laredo, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and the Tamaulipas region.

You'll see the participation again for the Binational Regional Steering Committee. It hovers around 50. In this case, it was 43.

There's a whopper of a number in the stakeholder workshops category. 168 individuals participated in -- in these workshops. I want you to know we had two. We had one in Eagle Pass and we also had one in Laredo. So that number is twice the size as it would normally be. And we did that for a couple of reasons and got phenomenal feedback in both locations, which we'll tell you about.

1 steering committee I've moved to opportunities. You can see this idea in midway. The need to prioritize the movement of people. Here they talked about a dedicated bus crossing.

5 You'll see a little bit later we had an idea for a binational Uber service. You talked a little bit about the smooth expedited movement of people. That came up as an opportunistic theme quite a bit.

9 Here's the first time that we actually heard about bicycle transportation. You can see in the opportunities on the left, second bullet down, there -- this community actually was working on a binational cycling network. So you literally could pick up your rent-a-bike on one end and ride across and drop it off on the other end. It's the only place that we heard about that, but it was interesting.

17 Okay. I'm just going to click through these so I can get to all the regions. Go ahead, John.

19 Mr. Love: Sorry. John Love, Midland, Texas. Need synchronized traffic signals for better air quality. Does that have to do with just idling trucks?

22 Ms. White: Yes.

23 Mr. Love: Okay.

24 Ms. White: Yes. And what's interesting is, you'll see -- you talked about air quality in your

25 feedback. It came up consistently, regardless of region. There were a couple that are dealing with it maybe more acutely than others. But air traffic -- air quality due to idling truck traffic, whether it's on the bridge itself or into the -- the network, is having a considerable impact.

7 Other questions?

8 So this last one is a summary slide. It summarizes everything that we have talked about thus far. I'm going to skip it. If you want me to come back, I can. But I really -- whoa. I turned myself off.

13 I want to talk about the next region.

14 Laredo, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and the Tamaulipas region.

15 You'll see the participation again for the Binational Regional Steering Committee. It hovers around 50. In this case, it was 43.

18 There's a whopper of a number in the stakeholder workshops category. 168 individuals participated in -- in these workshops. I want you to know we had two. We had one in Eagle Pass and we also had one in Laredo. So that number is twice the size as it would normally be. And we did that for a couple of reasons and got phenomenal feedback in both locations, which we'll tell you about.
1 they approach inspection, we heard about that a lot.
2 Again, this is due a little bit to the space constraints
3 and the ability to make a wide turn. And in doing so,
4 you end up blocking pedestrian/vehicle traffic, which
5 slows down the wait time for that particular mover.
6 Rail creates congestion through downtown
7 areas. That was unique actually to this location.
8 Also, the inadequate connectivity between the regional
9 border -- between the border crossings. That was a
10 really interesting one as well. So the -- the west/east
11 connections as well as the north/south connections.
12 Opportunities, again, the -- the public was talking
13 about eliminating those secondary inspections.
14 Realtime traffic awareness. Now, this is
15 the first time that there's a piece of input talking
16 about the need for increased communication. Some
17 regions in areas are doing a great job of that; some of
18 them are not. That's a place where I think we can do a
19 lot of education as well.
20 In some places we heard that the Mexican
21 radio stations were actually superior at providing this
22 kind of information, but there wasn't a counter on the
23 U.S. It's a really interesting dynamic in this area.
24 This -- this last bullet, the opportunity
25 to increase partnership --

1 MR. JUAREZ: Stephanie, we have a question.
2 MS. WHITE: Yes. Go ahead.
3 MS. MULLINS: Quickly. The HAZMAT traffic
4 comment, is that multiple modes? I'm Lindsay with BNSF,
5 by the way. Mullins.
6 MS. WHITE: Thank you. Say it again.
7 MS. MULLINS: Lindsay --
8 MS. WHITE: HAZMAT traffic.
9 MS. MULLINS: The HAZMAT traffic through
10 downtown Laredo and Eagle Pass, was that multiple
11 transportation modes, both rail and truck, or
12 specifically -- I mean, did they identify the mode?
13 MS. WHITE: Yeah. This comment was about
14 truck traffic, but in this location it's both. Other
15 comments or questions?
16 I want to take a minute and talk about this
17 bullet. The opportunity to increase a partnership
18 CBP. There's some tension between the CBP and users of
19 the crossings, whether they're the public -- members of
20 the public or they're in a stakeholder work group or
21 they're -- they're an agency. And I think there's a lot
22 of misinformation or lack of information. We heard both
23 sides of that story, but this theme -- this theme -- and
24 it's really a theme of tension, came up everywhere we
25 were. And I just wanted to note that for you. And it

1 will be probably a part of our education process moving
2 forward.
3 Laredo stakeholder workshop. So you'll see
4 two slides. This is from Laredo and the next one will
5 be from Eagle Pass. This is the first time that the
6 stakeholders were very up-front about the increase in
7 costs to them while they -- the wait times are
8 increasing.
9 They're actually doing some really creative
10 things. They're doing everything they can to make it
11 work in their own books. Right? But the costs to their
12 business are increasing. And they were -- this was the
13 first time we actually heard that out loud.
14 We had limited options to cross the border.
15 Again, there are 28 ports of entry. That's it. There
16 just are. And in some cases in each region -- each
17 region is thinking about theirs collectively as a set,
18 which makes it even -- even more limiting.
19 We heard about CBP staffing. This is the
20 first time that we heard about the need to allow truck
21 traffic flow 24 hours a day. It was a lively discussion
22 between CBP and the industries. Right?
23 I think in some cases they've tried to do
24 that. We're piloting it in other areas, and maybe we
25 just don't have it quite figured out yet, but it came
Again, this insufficient personnel from a CBP perspective. And we heard a lot about the -- the humanitarian crisis. When that's happening, the -- these ports of entries that are already perceived to have short -- be short-staffed become even shorter. Staffed when they send their agents to other places along the border to help deal with some of these crises. So it exacerbates the -- the issue.

On the right, the opportunities. This -- this idea that we could do more with what we have before we start building more infrastructure came out loud and clear. Better air -- here's the first time, Gerry, that we really heard about airports. And it came out loud and clear in Eagle Pass. They are even talking about it, the need for a better airport in that particular location. Here's refrigerated facilities again. And then capacity leading to and from the border crossings. Here's what we heard from the Binational Regional Steering Committee in the Laredo, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and the Tamaulipas region. Same things that we actually heard everywhere.

In this case, we heard from them -- this is the first and only time that we had a group talk about emergency response. And they're struggling to provide response on the crossing infrastructure itself. And that -- that was actually interested and unique to them. There's the lack of infrastructure personnel. This idea, the second-to-the-last bullet, often -- well, I think this came from a user. That there are four entry points available, but half of them are shut down often. So we're not using it to its full extent, at least the physical infrastructure. And then, again, the hours of operation expansion. I love this -- to -- the bottom bullet on the opportunities column, we need to think as one region, not as two countries. We heard this everywhere we went. It is not just unique to this particular BNRSC, as well as a lot of gratitude that we were actively working and engaging as broadly as we were. More warehouses, a data-driven process. And then not only did we have this need to increase -- or make it easier to get to San Antonio, but also a rail linkage to Houston.

Do you have a comment? Go ahead.

Mrs. Jaime: That's what my question was going to be about. Are they talking about freight or passenger?
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<td>1 case, this was our public meeting where you can see we had 64 people. This was our most well-attended public meeting, including -- you can see the picture to the lower left. That round table is all students from UTEP. 5 It's really interesting. We had a professor actually assign them a public meeting as a field trip to one of his engineering classes. And they gave us extraordinary input. In fact, some of them showed up a little bit later at a couple of our other meetings as well. 9 Again, the stakeholder workshop, 73, and -- and the BNRSC. Again, it's a little bit larger than 50, but it's kind of in that sweet spot area. Very large stakeholder groups in -- in all three regions. 14 So the public talked about safety. This has come up again and again. In a minute we're going to ask you a little bit about the difference between safety and security as it relates to the goals for this particular study. 18 Heavy student crossing, I mentioned that already. This is where they asked for -- you might see it a little bit later. They asked for a dedicated student foot bridge, I think. 23 Again, here's this idea of commercial traffic blocking personal vehicles. Congestion, it came up again and again and again. Here's multimodal connectivity at border crossings. It's a theme that you brought up as well today. 3 From an opportunities perspective, in this particular place we heard a lot about bike lanes as well. So it is a theme that -- that came up a couple of times. And it's certainly included in our study. 7 Bus services, so binational bus services. 8 This idea of separating modes came up again. Parking solutions, we heard some really interesting stories about people coming across the border for the weekend maybe and parking their car in a church parking lot, so much so that there's not actually parking space for the churchgoers on Sunday. So this real heavy usage of all the facilities that people can find to help them expedite their movement in whatever way. 16 Okay. Let's move then into the stakeholder workshops. So not only is wait time an issue, but this particular workshop talked about the growing wait time, the growing issue. And, again, they were stewards of the pedestrian and bicycle crossings as well. So it's neat to see this theme show up on almost all of the stakeholder workshop pages. 23 Again, insufficient staffing. Insufficient hours of operation. Again, they are asking for more -- more -- 24/7 usage. From an opportunity's perspective, 1 this idea of balancing national security and efficiency of the border. It was very well said and it was maybe the most succinctly that someone said that at a workshop, but it happened in the Laredo region. 4 And then this -- this need to increase communication. Also, again, that stewardship of the pedestrian experience. 8 On the particular day that we were visiting at -- there had been a rainstorm the day before. So they're literally, like, putting up tents and umbrellas and rain shelters on the crossings because they're on them for so long, the pedestrians are. 12 From the BNRSCs, the binational regional steering committee, there isn't -- let me just pull out the things. This one -- funding came up, just like it did for you today, funding of this infrastructure. 17 They -- they talked a little bit about how maybe the crossings in their region were lagging behind the efficiency of ports of entry on -- on other border -- border crossings. We'll certainly dig into that a little bit more as we get further into our study. 20 Opportunities, here's -- rail came up quite a bit. You can see in the second bullet more collaboration. And then this -- the theme in Laredo was that -- the collaboration with the local colleges and universities. 22 UTEP actually hosted our BNRSC and our stakeholder workshops as an indication of that collaboration and partnership. 5 Here's your summary slide. From common 6 themes, I'm going to go through these relatively quickly. It's really just another way of looking at all the data that we've already gone through together. 9 This one is interesting, though. These are -- this is a way of looking at it by region type. 10 So you can see safety was a big deal to the members of the public. They were typically people who were crossing on foot or by bicycle, and this came up everywhere we went. 14 Separation of -- of modes. You can see that the BNRSCs all talked about lack of infrastructure. 16 And that's comprehensive. That's at the crossing, that's in the local community, that's in terms of needing bypasses or loops to get to the highway and interstate systems. 19 And then you can see the themes of 22 opportunities. And those you can -- you can drill in, but technology came up a lot. You can see that in the -- the stakeholder workshops. And then this idea of expanding hours -- hours of operation.</td>
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<td>1. But I think I -- I would end maybe this slide with a strong desire and willingness to work together. You see that at the bottom of the -- the BNRSCs. We heard that again everywhere we went. Okay. I'm going to skip through these. It's another summary slide. You're welcome to, as I said, use it in your own materials with your constituents if you like. It's a great way to help explain what we heard and saw. More commonalities, a lot of this was specific to the ports of entry. Here's a picture from the Laredo public meeting on the 22nd, so towards the end of April. This is really interesting. So this slide, there were some -- some big ideas that came out and were distinct or unique to some of the areas we were in. You -- so you can see at the top from Laredo, the rule on number of driving hours for truckers is impacting operations. There's a different perception of interaction with CBP officials. That came out loud and clear in the Valley. And it's what I talked -- there's that ten- -- there are natural tension between those groups that I think is an area -- a clear area for opportunity that we heard from these groups. We got build a double-decker bridge in El Paso. This idea for expanding the buffer zone. A binational Uber service. Some really outside-of-the-box themes that I think we'll continue to hear as we move forward. So that is the stakeholder -- my briefing. I've -- maybe can't even call it brief, but that's what we heard. Do you have a question that you'd like to ask me? Or a follow-up on a theme before I turn it over to my colleague, Donald Ludlow? Okay. All right. We're going to -- don't put your phones away, because we'll have another quiz. MR. LUDLOW: All right. How's everybody doing? Anybody need to stand up for just a second? There's no shame in doing that if you want to stand up and stretch for just a second. Okay. I think -- MS. WHITE: I think we're all doing good. If you-all are good -- MR. LUDLOW: We'll keep going. SECRETARY WHITLEY: All right. Let's push through. MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Let's keep going. Okay. So goals and objectives. As -- as you know, we spent quite a bit of time out talking about goals and objectives --</td>
<td>1. UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You turned your slide off. 2. 3. MS. WHITE: Yeah. 4. MR. LUDLOW: I turned my slide off. Okay. 5. MS. WHITE: It's on the bottom. 6. MR. LUDLOW: Oh, she's got it. Okay. She turned it off on purpose because we're bringing up something else. Okay. So we spent quite a bit of time talking about goals and objectives out in the field. And the reason for that is that goals and objectives underpin prioritization. So, ultimately, the structure of the goals and objectives informs the performance measures and the data that we use to help rank projects and policies and other things as we move into the border transportation master plan. So this is really important for the framework, the guts of the plan actually, is underpinned by the goals and objectives that we have. But one important step that we need to talk about before we go into the goals and objectives -- and you'll need to warm your phones back up in just a second, because we're going to be doing some -- some polling on goals and objectives. We're going to have you rank goals and objectives for us, and then compare them to what happened out in the field. But before that, everybody should have in their packet a one-page handout that is very much a roll-up-your-sleeves kind of situation. As most of you know, if you've ever been involved in a strategic planning exercise in the past, before you get to goals and objectives, you really need to have a vision and a mission that you're -- that you're working toward. A vision statement is supposed to be a short description of what you envision the future to hold. What do we want the border transportation system to look like and to operate like in the future? What we've done here on this page, and it's still a work in progress, is we've taken the blueprint vision and mission and we've made two important adaptations in draft form. One, we've tried to integrate passenger movement into the language. And, two, we've tried to make it even more clearly binational and multimodal in nature. So what I'd like to do is put you on the spot here for just a moment. Some of you have already made some recommendations to me. Dante, who is sitting</td>
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1 next to me over there, already passed me his markups
2 very proactively a few minutes ago. And I really
3 appreciate that.
4 But what we'd like to do is if you have --
5 Kelli here, who is a very talented realtime editor, will
6 be able to adapt this for us if you have any
7 recommendations on any of the changes.
8 Now, the blue text is text from the
9 blueprint. Okay? So you've already developed that.
10 You've already approved it. The red are the additions
11 that we're preliminarily proposing. Okay? Not set in
12 stone, this is just a starting point.
13 So with that, does anybody have any
14 questions on the vision? I'm going to -- I'll just read
15 it so you can hear how it flows. The -- the vision that
16 we're looking at for the BTMP adapted from the blueprint
17 is to "Collaboratively foster integrated and efficient
18 binational transportation mobility of people and goods
19 across the Texas/Mexico border, and to promote economic
20 development that benefits the binational Texas/Mexico
21 border region, Texas, and the United States and Mexico."
22 And we can certainly edit that as you see fit.
23 MS. WHITE: I see a lot of edits as I've
24 been walking around the table. You might call for them
25 when you're ready.

1 MR. MEADOR: Okay. I'm ready. We're
2 ready. Kelli's ready. And if we have too many, what
3 we'll have to do is gather them from you, collect them
4 from you, consolidate them, and then get this out by
5 e-mail to the group.
6 MS. MAYS: Yeah. Donald, you might want to
7 point out that the red is the new information we've
8 added. And on the vision, the key here we added the
9 movement of people.
10 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah.
11 MS. MAYS: Previously the blueprint only
12 talked about goods. But for the intent of the border
13 master plan, we're looking at both the movement of
14 people and goods.
15 MR. LUDLOW: Okay.
16 MS. WHITE: Are you ready? Go ahead.
17 MR. MEADOR: Well, this is just a typo.
18 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. Can I have
19 the name?
20 MR. MEADOR: Stan Meador, Texas-Pacifico.
21 In the mission.
22 MR. LUDLOW: We got it already. The -- the
23 double A.
24 MR. MEADOR: The A.
25 MR. LUDLOW: It's out.

1 MR. MEADOR: A strike and a comma after
2 "strategies."
3 MR. LUDLOW: Yep. Thank you. Anything on
4 vision?
5 MR. MEADOR: It's -- sorry.
6 MR. LUDLOW: Oh, that's fine. We're --
7 we'll take it. Okay.
8 MR. SCHWEBEL: Could I -- could you
9 consider looking at -- when you're looking at the
10 vision, "Transportation mobility of people, goods, and
11 services." And when I look at services, you know, and
12 I'm thinking about the future --
13 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah.
14 MR. SCHWEBEL: -- in regards to, you know,
15 data -- data transfer, infrastructure at our ports of
16 entry, you know -- you know, other services that are not
17 integrated into a boo- -- but actually the use of our
18 infrastructure for our border. I'm just --
19 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. Well, let's -- let's
20 open that up to the group. Does there -- is there any
21 reaction to that?
22 SECRETARY WHITLEY: I think that's a good
23 idea, especially considering the updates to the U.S. MCA
24 to -- to add services in there --
25 MR. SCHWEBEL: I think it's --

1 SECRETARY WHITLEY: -- taking into account
2 all the -- all the updates. I think it's a good idea.
3 And there may be some more updates, too, and --
4 depending on what the timeline is of actually adopting
5 this and voting on it as a committee. I'm sure there
6 will be some updates between now and the next meeting so
7 that everybody's just not on the spot.
8 MR. LUDLOW: I got you. Okay. So are
9 there any other comments on vision?
10 MR. SOLIS: Donald.
11 MR. LUDLOW: If -- if not --
12 MR. GALEAZZI: I -- I'm sorry.
13 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. Please.
14 MR. GALEAZZI: This is Dante Galeazzi. I
15 have -- just looking at the word "foster" and "vision,"
16 maybe consider using the word "create" instead, because
17 I think what we're trying to do here is actually build
18 or create something that -- that drives these
19 innovations. Right?
20 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Great. Thank you. Any
21 other comments? Okay. I think what we'd like to do on
22 "vision" then, we will take that into consideration and
23 we will make -- we will make some edits and then
24 circulate that back out for consideration by -- by the
25 committee. And I think we're going to go ahead for
the -- for the sake of time and do that with "mission"
1 as well.
2
3 SECRETARY WHITLEY: Great.
4
5 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. So if you have edits,
6 mark them up, please put your name and contact
7 information on them and then provide them to Tim or a
8 member of the team. We'll collate everything, and then
9 in the future we'll get that back out to you as this
10 evolves.
11
12 Okay. Very good. So we're ready to move
13 on. Like the vision and the mission, the goals of the
14 border transportation master plan reflect the goals of
15 the blueprint. Right?
16
17 Similarly the -- we have made some slight
18 adaptions in order to reflect the bimodal -- the
19 multimodal nature of the plan, and also the fact that
20 we're focusing on people and goods in the plan. So this
21 is -- this is where we're at to date.
22
23 What we did out in the BNSRCs is we spent
24 some time walking through the goals with the members of
25 those committees, and then we did some interactive
26 voting on these.
27
28 Now, ultimately you need to recognize that
29 what -- the next step in the development of the goals is
30 the development of objectives. And the objectives are
31 action items that help achieve any given goal.
32
33 And so that's -- that's a future meeting we
34 will be going through those. We want to get the goals
35 to the point where we have consensus on them and have
36 some idea of how we want to prioritize them.
37
38 With the goals, we want to make sure that
39 we're making -- we want to make sure that the goals that
40 are of the greatest importance to you are reflected most
41 prominently in the plan, and in the way that projects
42 and policies are prioritized.
43
44 So we're going to shift over to Mentimeter
45 again, and we're going to ask you a couple of questions.
46 So is everybody ready? And, again, raise your hand if
47 you need any help getting back online. Our roving
48 experts will help facilitate any technology here.
49
50 So first question, "What is the most
51 important goal for the BTMP?" And please refer to your
52 slide deck if you need to look at those specifically.
53 And we'll let this run its course for a couple of
54 moments. Ten, eleven.
55
56 Stephanie, should we get to that magic 35
57 before we stop?
58
59 MS. WHITE: Yes.
60
61 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Once we hit 35, we'll
62 move on. So just to give you a little preview, we're
63 going to do this with you, and then we're going to show
64 you the results of how the BNSRCs did the same ranking,
65 and we'll -- we'll compare those and we'll see where
66 we're at. Are we stuck on 34?
67
68 MS. WHITE: I think you're good.
69
70 MR. LUDLOW: I think we're good. I think
71 we're going to stop. Wow, we just jumped to 36. Okay.
72 So mobility and reliability and economic competitiveness
73 seem to be the top two. That's very reflective of what
74 we have heard out in the regions, but we'll show you the
75 statistics in a couple of minutes, so thank you very
76 much.
77
78 Next. So you've ranked the first -- the
79 most important goal. What's the second most important
80 goal for the BTMP?
81
82 Okay. Very similar to what we saw on the
83 first. So we may ultimately end up with those top two.
84 Okay. I think we're going to move on in just a moment.
85 Okay. Third, and your final question for
86 this segment. On goal number one, should we add the
87 word "security" after safety? So it says "safety and
88 security"? And there's a reason for this.
89
90 MS. WHITE: And I also just wanted you to
91 note you -- back on your slides -- do you mind if I just
92 borrow yours for a second? In your slide deck, slide
93 40, these are the draft BTMP goals that Donald reviewed.
94 And what we're asking right now is the top goal right
95 now as written just says "safety."
96
97 Thanks so much.
98
99 We're asking you if we should include
100 "security." So if it should read "safety and security."
101
102 We're getting quite a bit of yeses.
103
104 Go ahead, Donald.
105
106 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. The reason for that is
107 that when we -- Caroline, were you going to say
109
110 Okay. The reason for that is when we were
111 out in the field, we heard this repeatedly that -- that
112 this was a necessary addition; especially we heard this
113 most prominently in the El Paso region where the idea
114 was that safety and security at border crossings was --
115 was key.
116
117 MS. WHITE: And it -- it's about human
118 security. It's actually not about the security of
119 goods. What we were hearing was human security. Go
120 ahead. Were you going to speak?
121
122 SECRETARY WHITLEY: No. I -- I think it's
123 important that we keep in mind what -- what our end goal
124 will be with the actual plan. Are we going to walk
125 around and hit people in the face with it in D.C.? And
126
127 So we're going to stop. Wow, we just jumped to 36. Okay.
so -- and we actually want a seat at the table. We should very carefully consider what wording we're using. And those might be very good words to use and they might not be very good words to use. So I think we do need to be extremely strategic about what words we include in the final plan, whatever the end product is.

MR. LUDLOW: So with -- with that, Secretary, are there any comments or -- or thoughts about the use of that word? I know we voted on it, but are there comments or considerations that anybody would like to make?

MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry -- Gerry Schwebel. What -- one of the things that we've been using in some of the other organizations that we participate in in regards to trade is -- is just the term of secure trade. Okay. Whether it's by rail or by truck or by different modes of transportation, we're all looking for secure trade, you know, because at the end of the day, you want it to get from point to point without any disruptions. It's -- and I think that's the way we've been using -- tying in more for the security word itself.

MR. STRESOW: Safe and secure.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Safe and secure.

So I think what I'm hearing you ask us to do is that top row that right now says "safety," we had some commentary on it doesn't say very much yet. So somewhere in there, we'll find a way to -- to acknowledge what the public and the stakeholders told us in the border region, and we'll bring that back to you for your thoughts and suggestions a little bit later.

Okay.

MR. MEADOR: And if I may, to the Secretary's point, I mean, I think it -- it might also be important on how that's defined in the -- in the right-hand column of this, right, because this is -- that first statement under "safety" right now, to me, doesn't really say very much. And so how that gets defined in the context of either word or both words together, I think how you define those characteristics -- or those words would be, to your point, very important.

MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Yes.

MS. MAYS: Can I just remind members, please state your name and your organization so the transcriber can correctly reflect your comments. Thank you.

MR. MEADOR: My apologies. Stan Meador, Texas-Pacifico.

MS. GARZA-REYES: Cynthia Garza-Reyes, City of Pharr. I think it's -- it's really important to go off of what the Secretary said, because if we do want to take this to a federal level, we have to be very careful in terms of how we're mentioning "security," the crossing of pedestrians, because of our political environment right now.

And we literally just had that discussion at our bridge with a member of Congress and his office, of how border trade is getting linked with immigration reform. And it's important for us that we keep that separated because there's no insight for, one, when it comes to immigration reform, but border trade needs to continue moving because of the movement of trade. And so we do have to be very careful of how we're defining that if we want to move it to another level.

MS. WHITE: I think maybe what I'm hearing is that you're clearly honoring what the -- the stakeholders and the public was telling -- you understand what they were asking for when we met with them in -- in the region. But you're calling on us to be very careful about how we address this. And if you would -- Kelli, would you toggle back to the slide? And it's the slide that lists all the goals and objectives.

So I think what I'm hearing you ask us to do is that top row that right now says "safety," we had some commentary on it doesn't say very much yet. So somewhere in there, we'll find a way to -- to acknowledge what the public and the stakeholders told us in the border region, and we'll bring that back to you for your thoughts and suggestions a little bit later.

Is that okay, Donald?

MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, that's fine.

MS. WHITE: Okay.

MR. LUDLOW: Okay, that's fine.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: That's great. And just keeping in mind that it -- this is binational as well.

MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, absolutely.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: We're not just talking about D.C., we're also talking about Mexico City and -- and our state partners as well.

MR. LUDLOW: Absolutely. No. We really appreciate everyone's comments on that.

MR. SOLIS: And one comment that I was going to mention there, Donald, is that in -- in Spanish or the way it's used in Mexico, "safety" and "security" are used as one single word normally.

So when you go to SCT and you try to explain to them the difference between safety and security, it's -- it's a little bit hard to -- to put it in Spanish. There's really no two words that capture safety and security. So I -- we'll take that recommendation and we'll -- we'll circle it back with everybody.

MR. LUDLOW: Absolutely. Okay.
25· could be reactive, keeping somebody safe after they get
24· saying is, security is kind of proactive, and safety
23· · · · · · · · SECRETARY WHITLEY: So, Luis, what you're
22· · · · · · · · MR. BAZAN: That's kind of what I read
21· · · · · · · · MS. WHITE: Sam, would you -- do you mind
20· asking your question in --
19· MR. VALE: Sam Vale. I'd like to have a
18· Spanish language example of what you're saying.
17· MR. SOLIS: Oh, I mean, the -- the problem
16· is there is not -- when I was working in SCT and we were
15· overseeing binational trade topics, we would always say
14· mirrors your voting today with mobility and reliability
13· you to take a quick look at the results of the voting
12· input. I think we're ready to move on, if you are.
11· MR. BAZAN: If I may. Luis Bazan, Pharr
10· International Bridge. So I think what happens here with
9· Gonzalez's project on Highway 40 in Mexico right now
8· security, I'm thinking more like Representative
7· MR. SAENZ: Could we define -- sorry. What
6· is safety and what is security? I think I know but, you
5· know, that is the difference in your mind?
4· MR. SOLIS: So the -- the safety part, it's
3· what's reflected there. You know, that it's about the
2· crashes, accidents, et cetera. Security is more --
1· MR. SAENZ: More mechanical, more --
1 25· update on where we're at and where we're going.
24· working on right now. In a moment we'll give you an
23· behind the sequencing of the activities that we're
22· it. We just wanted you to see some of the thinking
21· · · · · · · · Each of these has a number of steps behind
20· of the data, and there's the reporting.
19· data collection. And we're already in the midst of that. There's
18· data collection. And this dovetails very nicely with
17· · · · · · · · We want to move into a discussion about
16· · · · · · · · MR. VALE: And that's cargo and everything
15· together.
14· MR. SOLIS: Correct.
13· MR. BAZAN: If I may. Luis Bazan, Pharr
12· -- and -- and --
11· "seguridad" and -- and secur- -- no -- and --
10· the part that there is no distinction. "Seguridad" in
9· Mexico for SCT purposes it's crashes plus security. So
8· it's one single concept.
7· MR. VALE: And that's cargo and everything
6· together.
5· MR. SOLIS: More mechanical, more security.
4· personnel, the people that are moving along that
3· transportation, you know, the -- the trucks, the
2· and he's talking about providing security for the
1· in an accident or EMS.
1 25· Page 114
24· Page 115
23· Page 116
22· Page 117
21· COMPANY MEETING
20· Pages 114 to 117
21· May 21, 2019
20· Kim Tindall and Associates, LLC 16414 San Pedro, Suite 900 San Antonio, Texas 78232
21· 210-697-3400
20· 210-697-3408
When we think about data collection, it's not just the empirical data that we're collecting. We're collecting plans and studies, including any plans that you have collected or that your constituents have collected or developed over the past number of years that may be instrumental in informing the way that we develop this plan. We are taking a very broad approach and bringing together sources from many different agencies and companies. We won't use all of the data necessarily as we develop a prioritization approach, because we need to ultimately use data that are uniform and that are consistent for the entire border region. And that's a little bit of a challenge. There's some serious data gaps that we have to overcome in certain circumstances. But I just wanted you to have an idea here when we say "data," we're really talking about anything that informs the development of the plan, including the studies, the qualitative and the quantitative data.

Okay. So the actual approach. We're -- we're talking to local government agencies. We're scouring websites. We are soliciting information from all participants in the study.

In a moment I'll show you the questionnaire that we have developed that is now live. And the Spanish version will be live very shortly that allows not just the empirical data that we're collecting. But we're working across all levels of government. We've been meeting with data stakeholders both in Mexico and in the U.S., including associations, and using interviews and meetings and questionnaires to pull together data resources the best we can. This is a screenshot of the data collection questionnaire. It is now live. And when you have the -- with the linked PDF of the presentation, that link is in there, but we will also send out this link to the BTAC and to all members of the BNSRC and other members who've participated.

It's essentially a survey monkey online tool. It's very easy to take. We've customized the questionnaire not to take a lot of time, but it does provide the opportunity to anybody who would like to submit a plan, a study, or another data source to do so. And we want this to be as democratic as possible. We have the monumental task of bringing it all together, sorting through it, and narrowing down what we need. But even if there's something that we're not using, we will be developing an inventory of all of the information that's submitted that will be available for future planning use. As we've been working through the data, we've already started to see some gaps. And many of you know about these gaps already. They're gaps with respect to the directionality of the movements, stronger data on northbound than southbound in many circumstances. There are gaps in terms of how detailed the data is, how well it links across the border, and even consistency.

We're going to continue to go through those. And in our subsequent meetings, we will need your assistance and help as we vet with you some of our strategies to overcome those gaps. A couple of quick examples. Frequently data and -- on cell phone movements, drops at the border. We're trying to overcome that by linking both cell phone data and LBS data. Whether you know it or not, you have location-based services data that's collected on your app. So we're trying to use those kinds of data to create a more fluid understanding of movements across the border. That's just one example. Another is using consistent land-use data for both the U.S. and Mexico so that we can identify the activity clusters of people, shopping, retail, and manufacturing on both sides so we have a common taxonomy.

As we move forward with data, there's really four main steps. We're going to continue to collect an inventory, we'll analyze and validate, identify the gaps, and work with you to disclose the gap-closing strategies and see if there are any other ideas.

Your main role going forward, we would love for you to participate in the data collection questionnaire. There's the link. And, also, if you know of any other entities, agencies, or people who possess data who you think -- or studies -- who you think would be valuable for the development of the master plan, please approach us, please let us know, we would love to do that.

MR. LOVE: Excuse me. You said there's the link, but I can't click on this.

MR. LUDLOW: I know.

MR. LOVE: Can you --

MR. LUDLOW: We'll send that out to you.

MR. LOVE: I tried, but...

MR. LUDLOW: Yes. Yes. Thank you very much. Yeah. You can. You can click, but it will --

nothing will happen. Yes. We have a technology.
disconnect we need to overcome.

Anyway. Thank you very much. I'm going to
turn this over to Alejandro.

MR. SOLIS: Thank you, Donald. And so we
have another section of about 12 slides or so, but I'm
going to go very briefly through them because we have
done in -- in the 2012 BTAC, and we just validated today.
So the -- the key that I want to convey to
you as part of these corridor analysis is it's another
one of the tasks we're going to start deploying very
soon.

Just like the data collection that we
already started, we started to do the analysis of the
corridors. And what this means is, we're going to
identify the corridors that are going to become the
actual unit of analysis for our plan.

In our plan, we -- Tim mentioned in the
beginning, we're -- we're looking at through origins and
through destinations of movement of people and goods, so
that means a corridor and all of the components that
make up that corridor, including the port of entry, the
port of -- port of entries or port facilities, and the
transportation network linking those ports of entries to
the actual final destinations.

So what we want to run by you is the
methodology of doing that so we can safely say that you
guys have seen and have -- have us moving in the right
direction.

So what you see there, it's a -- quite, you
know, big workflow or -- or chart that shows us what we
want to do.

So we broke up the corridor analysis piece
into two big components. The first component is the
corridor designation. So we need to first look at which
are the corridors we're going to be studying and
identify them as study corridors. And then after that,
we're going to conduct a needs assessment on those
corridors.

So what you see here is the first stage of
that, which is, how do we designate a corridor? So we
have four steps there. First we need to produce a plan
of how we're going to do it, which is, basically, a
summary of the work we will conduct. Then we need to
define which are the areas of influence, which we just
did in -- in the 2012 BTAC, and we just validated today.

We need to develop the criteria that we're going to be
using to actually define those corridors, and then we
actually need to start populating that criteria, which
is the face of describing those corridors.

So for each one of those corridors, we're
going to have a set of indicators that we're going to
say, okay, these are the ones that are going to be
helping us to put them into that designation of a
study -- study corridor. And then at the end of the
day, we're going to have the set of those corridors. So
that's kind of the -- the big picture methodology that
we want to use.

The development of the -- of the criteria
will come back to you and show it to you, but -- but
that is -- you know, we will use a set of -- of
performance metrics and criteria that we're going to be
using for the designation of these corridors.

And then I'm going to skip a lot. You
know, these maps, you have them there. This is a very
preliminary inventory of the assets that we have found
through the different corridors and through different
publications. So these are a preliminary list of
corridors that we'll be looking at, very preliminary.

We need to vet it with the regions at the regional
steering committee and with you guys after we collect
more information, but so you have it there.

The -- the next part that I want to show is
this one. Once we collect all of the information, we're
going to start building the future scenarios for those
corridors. So not only how they look today, but how
they look in the future. So a lot of the information
you provided us on how -- how does the future look at
the border, we're going to be using it there.

And then we're going to designate those
corridors using the criteria. And then we're going to
move in the needs assessment subcomponent. And the
needs assessment, it's basically looking at another
set -- we're going to do strengths, weaknesses,
opportunities, and threats analysis for each one of
these corridors. We're going to identify the trends and
the specific, you know, conditions that those corridors
are going to have in the future so that we can later
identify the needs that the corridors will have in the
future that it's then going to help us identify the
solutions to breaking the bottlenecks or to enhance the
movement of people, of goods through those corridors.

So it's basically -- it's -- it's a
traditional needs assessment, you know, exercise that we
would conduct here.

But, again, we want to run it by you, make
sure that we're on the right track so that we can start
engaging all of the stakeholders with this goal of
creating the designation of the corridors and the -- the
needs assessment report.
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<td>1</td>
<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: So, Alejandro --</td>
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<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: And, then, how is the</td>
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<td>MR. SOLIS: Yes.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>steering committee, the regional steering</td>
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<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: -- just real quick.</td>
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<td>committees, how is their input and data going to be presented to</td>
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<td>This is a -- a -- May. So we're more than halfway</td>
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<td>this committee? Is it going to be through you guys? Or</td>
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<td>through May through October timeline --</td>
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<td>are we going to have presentations set up at future</td>
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<td>MR. SOLIS: Correct.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>meetings? Or is that to be determined?</td>
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<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: -- to do all this --</td>
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<td>MR. SOLIS: Well, I --</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>MR. SOLIS: Correct.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>MS. MAYS: Okay. Can I respond to that,</td>
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<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: -- correct?</td>
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<td>Secretary?</td>
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<td>MR. SOLIS: Correct.</td>
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<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: Yes.</td>
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<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: And they're -- and</td>
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<td>MR. SOLIS: The intent of the regional</td>
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<td>then -- and then part of the input is -- is gathering</td>
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<td>steering committees is to provide kind of first line of</td>
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<td>input from our Mexican partners as well for their --</td>
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<td>defense. We're taking, you know, criteria that we're</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>MR. SOLIS: That is correct.</td>
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<td>using to designate the corridors, and then the</td>
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<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: -- for their corridors?</td>
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<td>preliminary analysis that we're doing on those corridors</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Some of which may not even be on those maps. Right?</td>
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<td>to them, and then, you know, we'll vet it with them and</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>MR. SOLIS: That is correct.</td>
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<td>then we'll come back and present it to BTAC and say,</td>
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<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: They -- they get to</td>
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<td>&quot;Look, through BNRSC, we have presented this to them.</td>
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<td>weigh in and say, &quot;These are important to us&quot;?</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>This is, you know, kind of the results.&quot; And then we'll</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>MR. SOLIS: Exactly. We --</td>
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<td>come and present it to BTAC. And then you-all have a</td>
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<td>SECRETARY WHITLEY: Or they could be</td>
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<td>chance to weigh in on the -- one, the criteria for</td>
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<td>corridors on the Mexican side that are important to the</td>
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<td>developing the corridors, but on the corridors</td>
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<td>MR. SOLIS: Correct. And also present and</td>
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<td>So what is presented today, this is just a</td>
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<td>future. There might be some corridors that are coming</td>
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<td>first cut on the strategy, the framework, not even going</td>
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1. SECRETARY WHITLEY: So, Alejandro --
2. MR. SOLIS: Yes.
3. SECRETARY WHITLEY: -- just real quick.
4. This is a -- a -- May. So we're more than halfway through May through October timeline --
5. MR. SOLIS: Correct.
6. SECRETARY WHITLEY: -- to do all this --
7. MR. SOLIS: Correct.
8. SECRETARY WHITLEY: -- correct?
9. MR. SOLIS: Correct. And also present and future. There might be some corridors that are coming up, and we need to identify those as future corridors.

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1. MR. SOLIS: -- and then we'll come back.
2. SECRETARY WHITLEY: -- the link that we were looking at? Or is this another -- is that another data collection process?
3. MR. SOLIS: That is the starting point.
4. The link is the starting point, then we're going to start putting the information into the specific corridors that we see lining up. But we also need information from the BNRSCs and the stakeholders and the Mexican partners to see which are the corridors that they have.
5. There's -- on the -- on the Mexican side, there's a few studies that look at corridors, multimodal corridors. So we need to do the same sweeping of -- of studies on the U.S. side, and then try to align them, and then vet those with the steering committees and the different stakeholders.
6. So it's -- it's gathering input first, putting it into the -- the format that they can look at, and then have them validated.

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1. SECRETARY WHITLEY: And, then, how is the steering committee, the regional steering committees, how is their input and data going to be presented to this committee? Is it going to be through you guys? Or are we going to have presentations set up at future meetings? Or is that to be determined?
2. MR. SOLIS: Well, I --
3. MS. MAYS: Okay. Can I respond to that, Secretary?
4. SECRETARY WHITLEY: Yes.
5. MR. SOLIS: The intent of the regional steering committees is to provide kind of first line of defense. We're taking, you know, criteria that we're using to designate the corridors, and then the preliminary analysis that we're doing on those corridors to them, and then, you know, we'll vet it with them and then we'll come back and present it to BTAC and say, "Look, through BNRSC, we have presented this to them. This is, you know, kind of the results." And then we'll come and present it to BTAC. And then you-all have a chance to weigh in on the -- one, the criteria for developing the corridors, but on the corridors themselves.
6. So what is presented today, this is just a first cut on the strategy, the framework, not even going to the data collection effort. The data will feed into the analysis of designating the corridors.
7. SECRETARY WHITLEY: Okay. And then once we're -- once we're past this data collection and analysis phase, we'll get some goals and objectives and start pushing through to get the final plan?
8. MR. SOLIS: That is correct.
9. SECRETARY WHITLEY: Okay.
10. MR. SOLIS: So in parallel, we'll work with the goals and objectives so that then we can create the prioritization process that we will apply to the corridors we then identify here, and then come up with the solutions for them, yes.
11. SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you.
12. MS. WHITE: I might actually add, Alejandro, if you don't mind.
13. MR. SOLIS: Yes.
14. MS. WHITE: We -- as we're putting together the agendas for the next round of BNRSCs, we actually are getting ready to -- to vet some objectives at that stage. So we're moving as fast as we can towards that end.
15. MR. SOLIS: Correct. So any additional comments? And -- so these are the -- sort of the individual steps. We're going to do the SWOT analysis,
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| 1. we'll do the trends and issues, and then identify the needs.<br>2. So it's basically -- again, the methodology is what we're interested in, making sure that we're getting right, not right now, so that we can proceed along those lines.<br>3. So any -- any other particular comment on the methodology for the corridor analysis or the data collection?<br>4. No. Okay. So after that, I'm going to pass it on to Tim.<br>5. MR. JUAREZ: Okay. So we definitely appreciate your time today. We definitely appreciate your input. As we noted, there's going to be many, many opportunities for you to do so, especially as we develop the various components on development of border master plan.<br>6. So what are we -- what are we doing next?<br>7. Where do we go? We want to be able to give you an idea what the next three months look like. So there is going to be that data component. We are going to be collecting the data. We want to begin to analyze what you have or will provide to us in the survey element.<br>8. And then how do we go about filling in the necessary gaps?<br>9. We want to be able to start identifying these binational supply chains through various methods, but you would help set the basis for that.<br>10. In addition, we're going to do the refinement, the identification designation of corridors. We want to be able to know, based on input you provided us, based that we've heard from the Binational Regional Steering Committees, what are those corridors? What do they look like? And then how do we develop preliminary corridor-level performance metrics that we can then bring back to you to comment on and analyze?<br>11. We're also going to continue the refinement of the goals and objectives. We want to make sure that those goals and objectives are in alignment for border master plan as you are offering that information to us. And we definitely want to be in sync with you.<br>12. As Secretary of State Whitley noted, as we go with border master plan development, there's going to be the opportunity to refine it to make sure that we are in key with what you're asking us and wishing us to do.<br>13. Then and we're going to be developing a very high-level framework for the prioritization of not only those corridors but projects as well.<br>14. Keep in mind is that when we identify those trade corridors, we're also going to lead to a data-driven evaluated criteria prioritization of projects that the various entities can then, therefore, go forward and implement. Not just TxDOT, but the cities, the counties, the RMAs, and even on the Mexican side as well.<br>15. So we already have scheduled the next round of the Binational Regional Steering Committee. We are making our commitment to you to shorten the time frame on the development of border master plan.<br>16. So the next rounds of meetings will be held on June 3rd, 4th, and 5th. So in Laredo we will be at Laredo College on the 3rd. And the meeting time is from 1:30 to 4:30 in the afternoon.<br>17. Then we will go over to the Rio Grande Valley. And we appreciate Mission assisting us with the hosting of that meeting. And that meeting will be held on Tuesday from 9 to 12.<br>18. And then we'll jet over to El Paso, where El Paso Convention Center and the City will be hosting us on a meeting on Wednesday from 9 to 12.<br>19. Hopefully you have received "hold the dates." There are many of you who have indicated from BTAC you did not get those. We're going to scrub our invitation lists again. You may get it a couple of times, you may get it three times, but the goal is to ensure that you do actually get the invite to those meetings.<br>20. So that's pretty much is the wrap-up. As Secretary of State Whitley, we appreciate the opportunity to present, and well close there for any comments.<br>21. SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you, Tim. And I -- I want, Sam -- I want each of you to -- to have the opportunity to weigh in. On your last note about the e-mail addresses, Tim, if -- if the members of this committee are not getting invites to these meetings, it's a huge logistical challenge that we need to overcome now.<br>22. In the same way, if members of this committee are also being expected to weigh in on this data analysis and data input process, we need to make sure that -- that everybody at the table and in the audience has an opportunity to do that. And if -- if we're not getting them the -- the correct RSVP links or anything like that, we need to just make sure we get on top of that sooner rather than later, so we don't get behind on data analysis.<br>23. But go ahead, Sam, if you want to weigh in.<br>24. MR. VALE: And Sam Vale. Mr. Secretary and -- and the whole group, you're doing an excellent job.
However, I want to comment, as we move forward toward the end of what you were referring to in terms of selection of projects, so forth and so on, I think that the methodology that we do that, and the way we proceed updating it going forward, are as important as anything else we can do.

Because we don't need to get back into what we did the last time where it was, like, so many people voted one way, so many people voted another way. It has to be something stand-alone that works with the state and the federal entities involved. And so you have to update it.

An example is, if somebody makes a -- a project for certain activities and then five plants close and somewhere else five plants open, that's going to affect what's going to happen going into the future. It can be any number of activities that are going to affect it.

So I think the methodology that we develop is probably going to be more important than the actual conclusions on the first level, because they're going to be modified year in and year out as we move forward. And if we have to start from scratch again, then we -- we did something wrong. We need to have a way to allow that into it. And that's a challenge to

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you, Sam.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Jerry Schwebel. I have a couple of observations, if I could. And one of the things that -- that I think we -- we should make a standing responsibility of this committee is what John alluded to earlier in regards to constant education about the border through our public officials.

I think that's -- that's the -- that should be a given, that we have such -- you know, at the local, at the state level, even at the federal level, that is something that we always have to -- in other words, we don't -- we don't finish this plan, put it -- put it on a shelf and it becomes a -- we have to continue to reinforce it to make it better. And -- and I think it's going to be something that -- I would like to make it a standing responsibility.

Second point I want to make is that in the categories of organizations or -- that are part of the -- the regional committees. There is a new border czar for Mexico, Pedro Romero, at the national level on the Mexican side.

And I don't know if you all have reached out to -- to Pedro, and -- and he becomes a critical person in regards to the new administration of Mexico, to keep him in the loop as well.

You -- you address the Pacific ports in your presentation, Alejandro, which I'm glad to see, but you left out -- I guess you tied in Manzanillo with Lazaro Cardenas?

MR. SOLIS: No. I think Lazaro Cardenas is further down, I believe.

MR. SCHWEBEL: You don't have Lazaro Cardenas at the Pacific port. You have Manzanillo/Michoacan that connect to Texas.

MR. SOLIS: Correct. Those -- oh, I'm sorry. Yes. In those maps were the ones that were reported to us. It's not comprehensive; it's a very preliminary inventory, yes.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Okay. So you would -- you would definitely include it -- those other ports?

MR. SOLIS: Yes.

MR. SCHWEBEL: The Pacific ports?

Another element is, how are we going to tie in our blueprint with the joint working commission and the BBBX crossings committees and the role that we play?

How is that going to work so that we don't become -- step on each other's toes and, you know, say, "Well,

the staff and you -- your insight, Mr. Secretary, and -- and everybody else. Thank you.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Yeah.

MR. JUAREZ: So we've been working actively engaged in the development of border master plan with the U.S./Mexico joint working committee. So every time they hold their biannual meetings, our project is on the agenda to make sure that we are bringing them up to date on where we are in our process.

We want to make sure that the representatives of SCT and SRE are included in this overall process, and they're also -- been invited and participating at the Binational Regional Steering Committees for all three regions.

Regarding BBBXG, the Binational Bridges and Border Crossing Group, we are taking into account the prioritization, especially from the Mexican side on where they're looking at making investments regarding those border crossings.

So from a project level assessment, that's the information we're bringing in from BBBXG. Part of our effort -- and Secretary of State Whitley -- many of you were at the Laredo east BBBXG meeting. It's that project level that we'll start accounting for in that short, medium, and long-term component of border master
plan, but that's how and why we're actively engaged at
2 JWC and BBBXG.
3 MR. SCHWEBEL: Once again, this is
4 Gerry Schwebel again. I think that's -- that's good.
5 And I will close with just one -- one new element, I
6 think.
7 There's a new dimension that we have not --
8 most of us that have been involved on the border issues
9 for so long, and that is the -- the potential threat of
10 any border shutdown in regards to keeping in the back of
11 our mind a strategy of what -- where we would get
12 involved in shifting any movement of -- of trade not so
13 much that we're going to say where -- which port of
14 entry it's going to be, but also to understand that --
15 that whatever issue is, whether it's -- whether it's,
16 you know, a national disaster or a political disaster,
17 whichever way you want to look at it, that -- that
18 you -- if you begin to -- to shift gears that -- that --
19 of course, the state should be engaged and involved and
20 -- and so -- in understanding clearly that if we're
21 going to make any potential shift of -- of a shutdown of
22 any -- whether it's El Paso, Laredo, or -- or change,
23 that those shifts, you know -- at least we have a -- I
24 won't say a -- a disas ter plan or an alternative plan,
25 but at least we need to kind of keep it at the back of

1 our minds where -- how we're going to react, instead of
2 thinking that just the trade committee's going to make
3 that decision.
4 You know, we've always said that trade
5 flows like a river, the path of least resistance, but it
6 may create problems for the state if all of a sudden you
7 shift all the movement, mobility to one particular
8 port -- another port versus other ports. And that
9 creates chaos for highways. You know, like we -- we use
10 the analogy, if there's a hurricane in Houston, we don't
11 shut down the whole state, you know. We -- and so if
12 we -- if we have an issue in one port of entry, we don't
13 shut down the whole state either, you know.
14 So I just think in the back of our mind and
15 thinking ahead, that we -- we've got to -- we've got to
16 be cognizant of the -- the political waves that may be
17 out there as well.
18 SECRETARY WHITLEY: That's a good point.
19 Thank you, Gerry. I -- I agree with you.
20 Anybody else?
21 MR. LOVE: I do.
22 SECRETARY WHITLEY: Go ahead.
23 MR. LOVE: I have just three comments.
24 One, I wanted to comment -- John Love, Midland, Texas.
25 With -- thank you, Gerry, for commenting about local

1 officials. There's a couple things that we can do.
2 Just simply information pieces that are provided to
3 Texas Municipal Legal, I am president -- current
4 president of the Texas Municipal League. We can get
5 those information pieces out at our annual convention.
6 We have an annual elected officials conference. And
7 then we have a -- newly elected conferences on a regular
8 basis for the new incoming elected officials. And just
9 information pieces put in their package, I think, would
10 go a long way.
11 Second, I am extremely glad to see on the
12 future meetings that we possibly will have a meeting in
13 Midland/Odessa. And I say that because I'm from
14 Midland/Odessa. And I know why I'm here, but I think
15 some of you may not know why I'm here. Same thing with
16 Mr. Tommy Taylor with Fasken, he's from Midland as well.
17 So understanding the oil and gas industry and how it
18 affects border issues, I think, is extremely important.
19 Lastly, the safety/security thing was
20 driving me crazy, and I had to take a stab at it. And
21 to me, safety is making sure infrastructure and systems
22 are harmless to users; while security is making sure
23 infrastructure and systems are protected from
24 externalities.
25 SECRETARY WHITLEY: That's deep. Thank

1 you.
2 MR. VALE: That's a loving statement.
3 SECRETARY WHITLEY: Go ahead.
4 MR. CALVO: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Just
5 a couple comments on the global side --
6 MS. MAYS: State your name, please. State
7 your name.
8 SECRETARY WHITLEY: Will you please just
9 state your name for the record.
10 MR. CALVO: Eduardo Calvo with El Paso MPO.
11 There's a lot of stuff going on right now at the -- at
12 the global stage. And -- and, you know, certainly
13 with -- with all the stuff going on with China and all
14 that, that's a huge opportunity for us and -- and the
15 border.
16 However, if we don't fix, you know, what's
17 going on right now, you know, in -- with the current
18 situation and -- and all our, you know, more chronic
19 problems, we will not be able to take advantage of those
20 opportunities. That's one thing.
21 Second thing. More at the local level for
22 us in -- in the El Paso area, I know Tim is aware that
23 the state of New Mexico is beginning their border master
24 plan with the State of Chihuahua. And that's very
25 important for us to make sure that we coordinate, you
MR. MEADOR: Thank you.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: We look forward to it.

Mr. Meador, Stan.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you.

Mr. Meador, Stan Meador, Texas-Pacifico. Just wanted to take a quick moment to update the group on the Presidio bridge and crossing there that's underway.

My boss and colleagues are in Presidio today meeting with CBP and -- and officials from the Mexican side talking about some of the joint inspection and some of the processes that -- that are yet to be implemented.

But in terms of physical infrastructure, the -- the project on the Mexican side has been completed and been -- the project -- construction company turned over a hundred percent completed project to Ferromex about two weeks ago.

And we are, I think, by the end of June, probably -- maybe early July, mid-July at the latest, we'll have the construction on the U.S. side completed.

And those two will be tied together. So exciting times there and looking forward to having you out soon, and any others that -- that can join us. I'm sure there will be some celebratory meetings out there before too long with some picture taking, so...

SECRETARY WHITLEY: We look forward to it.

MR. MEADOR: Thank you.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you.

MR. GARCIA: Mr. Secretary, Josue Garcia with Cameron County. You know, Steven Cavia [PHONETIC] talks about starting with the end in mind. You know, I think that the work that we're doing here -- you know, I hear what Sam is saying about not doing the same mistakes, but I think we've -- we've cleared that bath.

I think the work that's ahead of us is the most important work. And I see, you know, the good things and the discussions that are going on both on the floor and, you know, at -- off -- off -- what's the word I'm looking for? Not in the meetings but aside from the meetings. So those are some of the good things that I see happening.

And, of course, we have to take into consideration, you know, kind of like what Gerry was talking about, you know, you can't lose sight of the fact that everything that is happening around us. And we have to take -- but, you know, if you want to take things right, you know, I think the approach we're taking is the right one, because we want to make sure we get -- the foundation is there. And once you build that foundation and gather all the information, then we can spring forward and -- you know, and make a big impact in whatever -- wherever the funding is coming from, we're going to be set. Thank you.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you.

All right. Go ahead. Oh, absolutely.

Thank you for joining us. It's -- a new addition to the meeting after we started from Nuevo Leon Director Noe Garza Flores. Thank you for joining us. Go ahead.

MR. FLORES: (Speaking Spanish.)

MR. ZAPATA: Do you mind if I translate for you?

MR. ZAPATA: Do you mind if I translate for you?

MR. FLORES: Oh, okay. Thank you.

And on behalf of the government of Nuevo Leon, to thank Secretary of State, TxDOT for being here today, and to say hello to Mayor Saenz.

It's not the first meeting that I -- that I attend to. And I'm glad to be in the same meeting with experts on the topics -- on this topic. Being responsible for the development of the northern region in Nuevo Leon where we -- where we have Point of Columbia, where -- what I'm trying to propose is to put the idea forward that Point of Columbia shouldn't be just an alternative, but to be able to be so -- to you said -- to what it was really build for both -- from both -- both governments, and in consequence to have -- to be able to be used completely.

Mr. Flores, TxDOT. You know, the -- the port of entry and -- and Ivan's facility at -- at Santa Theresa, the new intermodal, that generates a lot of traffic into the Texas highways and -- and I-10. So just to make sure that -- that we coordinate that. Thank you.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you.

Go ahead, Cindy.

MS. GARZA-REYES: Cynthia Garza-Reyes, City of Pharr. I think at the same time, one thing that we just need to be cognizant of is, in order to continue mobility and to be vital in the movement of trade when it comes to the cities and to the ports of entry, we can't lose sight of funding. And funding is very hard to get for those of you that have to look for it.

And so some of these -- a lot of these projects end up being stalled for years because of funding. And so we need to be proactive in making sure that not only our regions, but the state and on the national level, know the importance of port of entry funding.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Agreed.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: We look forward to it.

MR. MEADOR: Thank you.
1 side. Yeah, Pete Saenz, Mayor. I'm sorry.
2 Yeah. The Columbia bridge on the U.S. side
3 is owned by the city of Laredo. We've been promoting
4 more usage. And the key is -- is what the gentleman
5 claims. We need to have a road from La Gloria to
6 Columbia. We had a -- a toll road, as you-all know,
7 that -- that exited Columbia and actually, yeah,
8 intersected 35. That toll was done away with, thank you
9 to TxDOT, precisely for that to -- to incentivize, bring
10 in more traffic, more freight, into the U.S. But --
11 but, obviously, the missing link is that -- is that
12 road. And so whatever we can do to utilize that bridge
13 fully is -- you know, would be appreciated.
14 Thank you, sir.
15 SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you.
16 Anybody else have any closing comments?
17 I'll just go through a few if nobody else has any. Tim,
18 thank you. That was a very in-depth update as to what
19 you guys have accomplished since December, and it's
20 significant.
21 And I think this committee has a lot of
22 work in front of us. But it's -- but it's nice to be
23 able to sit together and conceptualize kind of what
24 our -- what our future looks like.
25 Alejandro, Stephanie, thank you so much for

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1 30 -- 36 percent capacity. I know -- I understand that
2 you -- it requires us investment from the Mexican
3 government. And if -- and since we're talking about
4 this master plan between the U.S. and Mexico, to include
5 the highway La Gloria, Columbia, but that -- and that
6 way to request from the Mexican government that the
7 construction on -- on their end of this very important
8 highway for -- for them. And -- and this way it will
9 alleviate the problems in Laredo on bridge 3.
10 And with no further -- with no further
11 comments, I end then. And I thank -- thank everyone for
12 having me here.
13 SECRETARY WHITLEY: Mr. Undersecretary.
14 MR. UNDERSECRETARY: (Speaking Spanish.)
15 Since we're talking Spanish now, I just
16 want to briefly comment that in Coahuila we are excited
17 in the graphics that we -- that we see presented, that
18 we see that our bridges in Acuna and Piedras Negras
19 are -- are connected to what is being proposed as the
20 core -- port of plans corridor.
21 We think that that's -- that's the avenue
22 for -- a great avenue of development for Coahuila and --
23 and connected -- on connectivity with the U.S.
24 And if you allow me on the topics of the
25 definition of "security." In Mexico, we -- we focus on

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1 the -- on the perspective of insecurity, refering to
2 the harm that individuals can -- can receive.
3 And in -- there's no definition of valuing
4 the level of security of -- of the highway, of the
5 construction, on the Mexican side.
6 When we talk about the growth itself, they
7 just refer to the road as a dangerous road.
8 MR. ZAPATA: And he just thanks everyone
9 for your attention.
10 SECRETARY WHITLEY: Thank you,
11 Undersecretary. Please give our best to Governor
12 Riquelme.
13 MR. FLORES: Okay.
14 SECRETARY WHITLEY: And, Director, please
15 give our best to Governor Rodriguez. Thank you for
16 attending. It's very nice to have you here. Your input
17 is essential to the success of the master plan, so thank
18 you so much for coming.
19 MR. SAENZ: Mr. Secretary, can I just
20 say --
21 SECRETARY WHITLEY: Sure.
22 MR. SAENZ: -- in a follow-up just briefly.
23 Thank you. (Speaking Spanish.) Thank you. And I
24 concur and echo what -- what the gentleman said. You
25 know, the Columbia bridge, as you know, is on the U.S.
 are going to be spent in your local communities from the federal government. And I want you guys to be able to count on me as a resource.

We've recorded a PSA for the Census Bureau. And I'm the go-between between the Census Bureau and state agencies, and trying to get to those hard to count populations. I know a lot of them reside and interface with you and your organizations.

So, please, if you have any input for me on things that I need to be focusing on in terms of getting a complete count on the census, let me know. This won't be the last time we talk about it, but please just keep that in the back of your mind or the front of your mind, and just let me know right now.

And then lastly, and -- and I'll conclude with this. I want there to be some real tangible results from each committee meeting and from the master plan. And I think that one way to be able to achieve that is that in the end it will be the Transportation Commission that has the ultimate authority to do something with this plan.

We all, in our individual roles, will be able to interface at various levels in state and federal government, which is very effective, but it's really up to the commission.

And after this meeting, I'll -- I'll be working on -- on a letter to send to the chairman of TxDOT kind of summarizing what we've discussed today, and asking them just to give us enough air cover -- as a committee, asking them to focus what resources they can on some tangible results that we can achieve up to the point of actually adopting the master plan as a committee.

So does anybody else have anything they'd like to say before we wrap it up?

Okay.

MS. MAYS: Next meeting.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: It's -- it is noon right now. Our next meeting is going to be determined.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. Date to be determined.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: Date to be determined.

MS. MAYS: Yeah.

SECRETARY WHITLEY: And Caroline will be in touch. It's noon. This meeting is adjourned.

(The proceedings concluded at 12:00 p.m.)
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