TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BORDER TRADE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING

OPEN MEETING VIA TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALL
PURSUANT TO GOVERNOR'S MARCH 16, 2020
TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN OPEN MEETING PROVISIONS

Thursday,
September 10, 2020
8:00 a.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

RUTH R. HUGHS, Chair
RAFAEL M. ALDRETE
JULIAN ALVAREZ III
JON BARELA
LUIS ALFREDO BAZÁN (absent)
EDUARDO CALVO
EDUARDO A. CAMPIRANO (absent)
ANDREW CANON
SERGIO CONTRERAS
DAVID A. CORONADO
WARREN ERDMAN
JOHN ESPARZA
JUAN ANTONIO FLORES (absent)
DANTE GALEAZZI (absent)
JOSUE GARCIA, JR. (absent)
CYNTHIA GARZA-REYES (absent)
JAIME GIESBRECHT
JAYNE HARKINS (absent)
IVAN JAIME
LISA LOFTUS-OTWAY
MARGA LOPEZ (absent)
BRUNO LOZANO
STAN MEADOR (absent)
JUAN OLAGUIBEL (absent)
VINCENT PEREZ
JESUS REYNA (absent)
PETE SAENZ
GERARDO "GERRY" SCHWEBEL
MEGAN SHEA
TOMMY TAYLOR (absent)
SAM VALE
CAMERON WALKER

ON THE RECORD REPORTING
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SECRETARY HUGHES: Well then, let me go ahead and get this started. It's great to hear and see your wonderful faces and voices, and I appreciate everybody's participation in this extremely important effort. So good morning.

I am Texas Secretary of State Ruth Hughes. Thank you for joining us via videoconference for what is now our sixth Border Trade Advisory Committee meeting of the year, and the first of this fall, if you will. I hope everyone has been staying safe and healthy since we last met.

As always, it's an honor to serve as Chair of this important Committee, and it's my seventh meeting as Secretary and the Committee's sixth of 2020. The instrumental work of this Committee would not be possible without the tireless efforts of Caroline Mays and her team at TxDOT.

So as always, I want to thank them for helping in planning this and ensuring that our meetings run smoothly and that the plan moves forward accordingly. We are so fortunate to have you all as partners and we appreciate your continued support and service to the people of Texas.

I also wanted to recognize our distinguished
Commissioners Alvin New and Laura Ryan for their service and their participation in this group. I want to thank you for joining us today, and for your enduring commitment to serve and make sure that Texas's trade relationship with Mexico grows even stronger.

As you know, the ongoing mission of this Committee is to work collaboratively to help create a positive and lasting impact on our border communities through the implementation of the Border Transportation Master Plan.

Over the course of the summer, in the past three meetings, members of the Committee have provided invaluable feedback towards this plan. We've discussed the unique challenges that COVID has presented to cross-border trade because of mutually agreed-upon travel restrictions between the U.S. and Mexico that have affected traffic, as well as supplier operations. And we suggested greater collaboration with Mexican state and federal partners in order to address them.

We've also discussed challenges of current and needed infrastructure, expressed concern over potential impacts to the supply chain in the manufacturing industry and the retail sectors as a result of the increased wait times at the border, and we've heard from you all the stressed need to make our efforts better known to the
To ensure that we continue to generate invaluable feedback today and make progress in completing this plan, we need each and every one of you to fully engage and actively participate in the Committee discussions that help TxDOT and HDR develop the plan. Your specific input and feedback on the topics that we discuss during these meetings, and that are presented during and after the meeting, are key to drafting a plan that truly addresses the needs of our border areas.

At this time, I also want to recognize representatives from each of our four Mexican border states who are joining us today. Ana Alvarez, Binational Affairs Coordinator from the Ministry of Economic Development of Chihuahua; Guillermo Gonzalez, Undersecretary of Infrastructure and Roads from the Ministry of Transportation of Coahuila; from Nuevo Leon, Millie Garcia, CODEFRONT Director; and Manuel Farias, General Coordinator of Promotion and Projects, CODEFRONT, from Nuevo Leon; and from Tamaulipas, Carlos García González, Secretary of Economic Development in Tamaulipas.

We also have the pleasure of welcoming to our meeting representatives from the Mexican federal government, Ericka Garcia, Director at Internal Projects in Secretaria de Comunicaciones y Transportes, SCT, and of
course, our Consul General in Mexico, Pablo Marentes, who
is always with us, and Jorge Salcido, Counsel for
Political and Economic Affairs, who represent the Mexican
Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Is there anyone on the call from Mexico that I
have failed to recognize?  (Speaking Spanish.)

MR. ANDRADE:  Thanks very much.  Buenos días.
Mi nombre es Salvador Monroy, la Secretaria tambien de
Comunicaciones y Transportes, en la direccion general de
autotransporte federal -- international affairs for the
Mexican Federal Motor Carrier Transportation
Administration.

Thanks very much for this opportunity to be --
to join here.

SECRETARY HUGHS:  Thank you for identifying
yourself and for joining us today.  We very much
appreciate your participation.

Just yesterday I participated in the sixth
annual Mexico Gas Summit, which highlighted the positive
economic impact of the energy exchange that occurs between
Texas and Mexico, specifically.  The event stressed the
importance of our strong relationship with Mexico, not
only as it pertains to energy, but also through the many
areas where we collaborate with our Mexican friends and
partners for the mutual benefit of our communities.
At this time, I also want to take a moment to recognize a dear friend, Texas Workforce Commissioner Julian Alvarez, whose time with us on this Committee ended in August after his term expired. And I also, you know, want to recognize the tremendous work he's doing at TWC.

Commissioner Alvarez has been a steadfast supporter for our state's border communities, and I want to thank him for his service and everything he's done to serve the people of Texas. I have no doubt his successor, who is joining us today, Sergio Contreras, CEO of the Rio Grande Valley Partnership, will make sure that South Texas continues to be well-represented.

I also want to recognize, joining us today for the first time as official members, are: Ivan Jaime out of San Antonio from Union Pacific Rail; Juan Olaguibel from McAllen, and Superintendent of Bridges in that area; Mayor Luis Sifuentes from Eagle Pass; Cameron Walker, who is very punctual -- thank you. Yourself and Mayor Sifuentes, I know, are some of the first faces I saw this morning -- from Midland with the Permian Basin Metropolitan Planning Organization; and Megan Shea from Dallas-Ft. Worth with BNSF Railway.

They were all recently appointed to serve on this Committee and please join me in welcoming them and making them feel welcome. Hopefully, we'll have the
opportunity to all meet in person again in the future here soon.

I also want to recognize Mayor Saenz from Laredo, Mayor Lozano from Del Rio, Eduardo Campirano, the CEO of the Port of Brownsville, Thomas Taylor from Midland with Fasken Oil and Ranch, and Andrew Canon from Edinburg, an Executive Director of Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization, who were just reappointed and are such valuable members of this group. And I appreciate all of you and all the work you do and the commitment that you have to this organization.

So congratulations on your new terms on this Committee. I want to thank and congratulate all of you. Thank you for your willingness to serve your communities and your state, and we look forward to working alongside you.

Welcome everyone. Thank you for working with us to help create a brighter future for all on both sides of the border. I want you to thank you for allowing me this time to provide introductions.

And with that, I will turn it back over to Caroline. Thank you.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. Good morning. Thanks. Thank you, Secretary. I know I see Commissioner Ryan on the call. Commissioner Ryan, do you want to say a few words
this morning?

(No response.)

MS. MAYS: I know she was having some audio issues. So we'll go to -- I don't see -- Commissioner New, are you on?

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Are you -- I'm sorry, Caroline, this is --

MS. MAYS: Oh, good morning.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: I'm sorry. I am having challenges this morning. That is absolutely, 100 percent correct. Thank you for your patience. But no.

Good morning, Secretary Hughes and everybody on the line. I just wanted to again thank you for allowing me to be a part of this meeting and the Committee.

Truly an honor to continue to listen and learn and the benefits to both Mexico and the state of Texas are immense. And however we can help, we will certainly stand by and ready to do that.

So thank you again for all that all of you do.

MS. MAYS: Thank you, Commissioner Ryan. And Commissioner New, are you on?

(No response.)

MS. MAYS: Probably not. With that, I know we have TxDOT leadership on here. Brian, would you like to say a few words?
MR. BARTH: Yeah. Thanks, Caroline. I just really appreciate the Advisory Committee and all you do helping us with this Master Plan along the border. And as you all know, it drives the decisions that TxDOT and our Commission makes as far as investments along the border.

So I really appreciate the help. And I'm looking forward to the discussion today on the draft Master Plan. Thank you.

MS. MAYS: Okay. Okay. Thank you very much, Brian. With that, I want to also -- Rebecca and I, we have a lot of TxDOT district leadership on the line today, and they will also be presenting during the regional priorities from the three border districts.

So I just want to recognize them as well, and many others. So with that, Secretary, we'll go to the roll call, and you know, get, you know, roll call for the members on the line this morning.

MR. HAGERT: Good morning, Secretary of State Hughes, Commissioner Ryan, TxDOT leadership, and distinguished members of the Committee. My name is Eduardo Hagert, and I will be conducting the roll call this morning.

So I will begin. Rafael Aldrete?

MR. ALDRETE: Good morning. Rafael Aldrete with TTI here.
MR. HAGERT: Jon Barela?

MR. BARELA: Good morning, everyone. Good morning, Madame Secretary and colleagues. I'm here.

MR. HAGERT: Luis Bazán?

(No response.)

MR. HAGERT: Someone representing the Pharr Port of Entry?

(No response.)

MR. HAGERT: Eduardo Calvo?

MR. CALVO: I'm here.

MR. HAGERT: Eduardo Campirano?

(No response.)

MR. HAGERT: Someone representing Port of Brownsville?

(No response.)

MR. HAGERT: Andrew Canon?

MR. CANON: Good morning. I'm here.

MR. HAGERT: Sergio Contreras?

MR. CONTRERAS: Good morning. I'm on.

MR. HAGERT: David Coronado?


MR. HAGERT: John Esparza?

MR. ESPARZA: Good morning. John Esparza, Texas Trucking.
MR. HAGERT: Juan Antonio Flores?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Someone representing the Port of San Antonio?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Dante Galeazzi?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Someone representing the Texas Produce Association?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Josue Garcia?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Someone representing Veterans -- [audio skip] Ports of Entry?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Cynthia Garza Reyes?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Someone representing Pharr Economic Development?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Jake Giesbrecht?
MR. GIESBRECHT: Yes. Good morning, Eduardo. I'm here.
MR. HAGERT: Jane Harkins?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Ivan Jaime?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Someone representing Union Pacific?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Lisa Loftus-Otway?
MS. LOFTUS-OTWAY: Good morning, Secretary and everyone. I'm here. And Eduardo --
MR. MOLLER: Good morning. Ted Moller [phonetic] is here for Union Pacific.
MR. HAGERT: Okay.
MR. MOLLER: Thank you.
MR. HAGERT: Marga Lopez?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Mayor Bruno Lozano?
MAYOR LOZANO: Good morning, Secretary. I'm present, alongside my proxy Matt Wojnowski, City Manager of Del Rio.
MR. HAGERT: Stan Meador?
(No response.)
MR. HAGERT: Juan Olaguibel?
MR. OLAGUIBEL: Good morning. I'm here.
MR. HAGERT: Commissioner Vince Perez?
COMMISSIONER PEREZ: Good morning. Present.
MR. HAGERT: Jesus Reyna?
MR. HAGERT: Mayor Pete Saenz?
(No response.)

MR. HAGERT: Gerry Schwebel?

MR. SCHWEBEL: Present. Right here.

MR. HAGERT: Megan Shea?

MS. SHEA: Good morning. Megan Shea’s on.

MR. HAGERT: Mayor Luis Sifuentes?

MAYOR SIFUENTES: Good morning.

MR. HAGERT: Tommy Taylor?
(No response.)

MR. HAGERT: Sam Vale?

MR. VALE: Present.

MR. HAGERT: Cameron Walker?

MR. WALKER: Present. Good morning.

MR. HAGERT: And we have someone representing Kansas City Southern.

MR. ERDMAN: This is Warren Erdman. Here.

MR. HAGERT: Good. Four, five, six, seven -- we have got quorum.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. Okay. [audio skip] for that and welcome, and you know, if you intend [audio skip] participation. So Secretary, we will turn to -- can you all put the agenda? We're going to walk through the agenda real quick before the next agenda item.
SECRETARY HUGHS: Okay. Would you like me to take a vote on the minutes, or do you want to go through the agenda first?

MS. MAYS: Yeah. Let me go through the agenda, so -- and then we'll do the minutes. So I just want to walk through the agenda real quick. The next agenda item is adoption of the minutes.

Since we have a quorum, we can take action. And then we will start with giving you a recap of the last meeting, but I think we're going a little bit more beyond the last meeting.

We have, you know, some revisions to Chapter 6 and 7 that is going to be of interest to you all. So we'll give you a little bit more in-depth changes and information there, and then talk a little bit about, you know, the other chapters and what we've heard and some of the questions you had. And I will address those.

And then we'll go to the 8:45. We're presenting to you Chapter 9, which is the new chapter that you haven't seen. That primarily is on the extent of stakeholder engagement that has been conducted, and continues to be conducted, to facilitate the development of the Border Master Plan, including BTAC.

It will be -- you know, you guys are going to be amazed how many meetings you already had and will
continue to have until this plan is done. As you know, the last few months, you've been meeting monthly to help with really crafting the Border Master Plan and your input has been valuable there.

So we'll talk about that, the BNRCs and other stakeholder engagements we've done. And then we'll talk more about Chapter 8. We'll provide you a little bit more new information on Chapter 8.

And as you know, that chapter is primarily talking about data findings, the strategies that includes projects, policies, programs, and you know, how we've evaluated that. So we'll talk a little bit about what we presented before and what is new now.

Then a big chunk of this meeting is going to be the discussion of the regional priorities, where each of the three regions will have a chance to have a discussion, and communicate from your own perspective, from your own words, you know, what does your project, you know, look like?

What are your regional priorities? What would you like us to reflect in the plan? So I think that's going to be a really critical component as we move into really starting to refine the project recommendations in Chapter 10.

If you recall, at the last meeting we talked
extensively on the policy recommendations, talked
extensively on the program recommendations. And today, a
big focus of the discussion in Chapter 10 is really
talking about the project recommendations, and then going
into an implementation plan.

    I'll tell you right now, we've done a lot of
work to just give you -- there's still a lot of
information coming. So what we'll present on the projects
is preliminary information, and we'll continue to work
with you all, including our Mexican counterparts, on
refining that project list, so we can give you a much more
refined, you know, project list, but also the project
recommendations.

    So I wanted to kind of walk through that, give
you a quick overview there of what to expect. And then,
as customary, we'll have open discussions in future
meetings as well. So with that, Secretary, I'll turn it
over to you for the adoption of minutes.

    Thank you.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Thank you, Caroline. And
just to be very specific, for the benefit of the group,
could you go over the chapters that we'll be reviewing by
PowerPoint only this week? They'll get the completed
chapters next week, and then we hope to hear from them
when they have the opportunity to review the chapters,
even before we have another meeting.

Because we understand you won't have those specific chapters today, but you'll have the PowerPoints so we can have a discussion about it. And then we hope to hear back from you after you've had a chance to review the chapters.

But I don't recall offhand. Which chapters are those?

MS. MAYS: Yes. Thank you, Secretary, for the reminder. So today, we have a PowerPoint presentation, and I'll take responsibility. I apologize. I didn't get a chance to send that out to you, but we will.

Probably even during the meeting, we'll send that to you so you have the PowerPoint. Today we'll be presenting Chapters 8, 9, 10, and 11. And our goal is to send you those draft chapters sometime next week so you can see and review it in its entirety.

We might send a staggered chapter: Once we get one finished, we'll send it to you. And the goal there is for you all to review the chapters and provide us feedback before the next meeting on those four chapters, and those are really critical chapters.

I think, you know, we've talked about 10 and 11 really being the meat of this plan as, you know, we want to make sure that we're reflecting, you know, the project
recommendations and then the implementation plan and strategy. Some -- I already mentioned some of that earlier during our chit-chat before the meeting started.

But we'll send that to you, and we'll have follow-up with you as well to get your feedback. Because the next meeting in October, we are wanting to come to you with a full first-draft plan.

So you know, you see every chapter in its entirety for the entire plan. So that's the goal, and that's why we will send the chapters to you, and then follow up with you. Because we really need to get, you know, all of the chapters in, so we can send you a full document.

So Secretary, we will definitely, you know, keep BTAC engaged, you know, in between meetings, this go-around, because it's so crucial.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Thank you for that, Caroline. You all are so great about sending information as soon as it's available, and I just didn't want members looking for chapters or wondering if they had missed it. So I just wanted to be clear so we're all on the same page about what you have and what you'll be seeing today.

And if we can email the PowerPoint during the meeting, that's great. But I know you will be presenting it step by step, so we will all experience it and go
through it in detail. And hopefully, that will also help us to have a lively and meaningful discussion, understanding that we can always follow up when we've had the benefit of seeing the full chapters.

So thank you for that. And with that, I am so pleased to say, we have a quorum, and hopefully, you have all received -- I know, the minutes were emailed from the August 6 meeting. And so if you've had a chance to review the minutes, are there any questions or comments on the minutes from August 6?

Any corrections?

(No response.)

SECRETARY HUGHS: All right. So with that, I will entertain a motion to adopt the minutes. If you'll please identify yourself by name when you move? Thank you.

MR. CALVO: Motion to approve. This is Eduardo Calvo.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Thank you, Eduardo. Do I have a second?

MR. VALE: Second. Sam Vale.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Wonderful. By silence, I will assume everyone is in agreement. Any objections?

(No response.)

SECRETARY HUGHS: All right. The motion
passes. The minutes of August 6, 2020 are adopted. Thank you. Thank you, Caroline. I'll turn it back over to you.

Are you still with us, Caroline?

MS. MAYS: Yes. Sorry.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Were you --

MS. MAYS: Mute.

SECRETARY HUGHS: -- going through the PowerPoint?

MS. MAYS: Yes, exactly. Sorry. Yeah. You would think, after six months of being on, you know, virtual meetings that we would figure out how to unmute and mute ourselves. But that said, thank you.

Our next agenda item is a recap, and that will be led by Giacomo, and then also the consultant team, on some of the key items, changes in the data and analysis.

So Giacomo, please go ahead.

MR. YAQUINTO: Okay. Good morning, everyone. This is Giacomo Yaquinto with the Texas Department of Transportation. Thank y'all for joining us this morning.

I'd like to give a recap of our last BTAC meeting on August 6.

I'll be focusing on the comments we received and how we've responded. When I'm done, I'll turn things over to the consulting team so that they can provide an update on border crossing time data, as well as how the
updated data affected Chapter 6, Future Forecasts for the Texas-Mexico Border Region, and Chapter 7, Economic Importance of the Texas-Mexico Border.

The last BTAC meeting had five goals. First, we needed to provide a final look at where we landed on Chapter 7. Second, we wanted to present an overview of Chapter 8. Third, we needed to present Chapter 9. Four, to present an overview of Chapter 10.

And finally, we needed to present a preliminary look at Chapter 11. As you may recall, we tabled the Chapter 9 discussion. So we'll be looking at that today.

Next slide, please.

Chapter 7, Economic Importance of the Texas-Mexico Border, describes the border's economic importance now and in the future. It identifies the impacts for the U.S. and Mexican economies from the movement of people and goods through the border, and quantifies the opportunities lost because of congestion and delays at the border crossings. The chapter builds on Chapter 3, and the mid-level forecasts presented in Chapter 6.

During the last meeting, we were asked how to reduce negative impacts to the economic status of the border region, and if the government can avoid an economic collapse due to COVID-19. We responded that the role of the BTMP is in part to identify investments that will
support the border region, as well as plans and policies that will increase the efficient use of infrastructure along the border.

We explained that the work completed to date shows that we cannot continue under the status quo, especially regarding goods movement, since it is expected to grow significantly between now and 2050. We said that the BTMP will provide a roadmap for systematically addressing infrastructure and operational issues related to border crossings, and the corridors connected to the crossings, and that it will provide information on how Texas, the United States and Mexico can position themselves to address disruptions, including issues related to COVID-19.

We were asked about the figures we presented for the cost of delays. We responded that the figures were the estimated impact of delay for commercial trucks crossing the border, but that they only accounted for the queue to the initial CBP inspection.

As I mentioned earlier, we've updated our crossing time data. And we've used the data to update elements like the cost of delay to better reflect the full cost, based on total crossing times, and our consulting team will touch on that soon.

We were asked about a comment that the
definition of an acceptable wait time is beyond the scope of this study, including a follow-up question asking how we define delay if there's no benchmark. We responded that delay is defined by the amount of time CBP officers are recording that people are waiting in the queue.

Any time spent in the queue is wait time and has an impact on the economy. We heard that delays add costs to international trade, but that they also impact local, vehicular, and pedestrian traffic, which contribute to shopping, employment, and other social interactions.

We acknowledged that the presentation did not emphasize local, vehicular and foot traffic enough, and we noted that the information is included in the full chapter. We explained that local, vehicular, and pedestrian traffic does contribute to shopping and employment opportunities, and that the impact on the regional economy is currently about $9 billion.

We were told that the economic impact analysis should account for any benefits realized from future interventions, instead of assuming that existing port conditions will remain the same through 2050. We noted that we're currently estimating economic impacts of the border under the demand forecast presented in Chapter 6, and that the estimated economic impacts of delays represent what could happen if there are no changes along
the border.

We noted that the goal is to be able to use the scenario to make the case for investment in physical and operational capacity along the border. We were asked if the impacts assume a no-build scenario, and if so, would it be more realistic to account for projects that are in the pipeline, such as the ongoing effort to build a new port of entry at Sunland Park, New Mexico.

We answered that the impacts presented are based upon the economic demand forecast from Chapter 6. The baseline for that analysis includes existing plus committed projects, but not any other proposed projects. We were asked to confirm that the analysis we presented was based on CBP's reported wait times, and we confirmed it.

In a follow-up comment, we heard concern that CBP data are not as representative of the total crossing time as the Border Crossing Information System, BCIS. We heard that although BCIS data are not available for all crossings, they're available for some, and that under-representing the crossing times will not help efforts to make improvements.

Our consulting team will explain how we're addressing these concerns in a moment. Finally, we were asked if we'd calculated the negative impact on cities
from increased border traffic and from heavy infrastructure, such as rail and roadways on community development.

We responded that we haven't calculated a negative economic impact, but this is a topic that needs to be addressed in the BTMP, since others have made similar comments. The BTMP team is looking for a way to incorporate this concern.

Next slide, please. In Chapter 8, Identification and Evaluation Strategies to Address Current and Future Needs, we explained how we'll identify key strategies that are consistent with policies, programs and projects to address current and future needs, how we'll organize the strategies in a way that assists stakeholders in linking them to identified needs in the present and future, and how we'll develop a framework to evaluate strategy in choosing criteria that reflect the BTMP goals.

We heard that we need to address health concerns, including the prevention of infections and COVID-19, because preserving health and safety at the ports of entry is critical. We responded that although the consideration of health issues was not initially included in the development of the BTMP, we'd be going back to include the topic, since it's important to
maintain resiliency along the entire border.

In a follow-up, we heard an example of how infectious disease can affect border operations. We were told that there's no clear policy allowing or forbidding people who test positive for COVID-19 into the Unified Cargo Processing Facilities.

We also heard that when inspectors tested positive for COVID-19, activities at one of the crossings were disrupted for a week. We heard that given the disjointed approach, each border crossing has had to develop its own sanitary protocols, and that bridge operators are more likely to close operations than to assume more risk.

We agreed that that this is an emerging need, and that it should be included in Chapter 5, Current and Future Needs Assessment, and carried through to Chapter 10, the Recommendations chapter. Next slide, please.

In Chapter 10, Recommendations, we provided a preliminary look at some of the key strategies for addressing the needs recognized in Chapter 5. We explained that strategies is the term we've used to encompass potential solutions that align with BTMP goals and to address identified current and future needs.

Consistent with standard planning efforts, we noted that the strategies have been broadly categorized as
policies, programs and projects. We heard that many things have happened since the BTMP development process started, and there are new policies to consider.

We heard that the border region must always adapt to changes by the two federal governments. We were asked about including the preparation of a disaster plan in the recommendations. We responded that a disaster management plan that outlines the response to disruptions is a major component of the resiliency recommendation.

We heard interest in programs and projects that lead to more local control, because high-level policies call for federal involvement. We responded that the team is looking for input on policies that address the issues raised in the development of the BTMP.

We heard that businesses plan for alternatives, even if their contingency planning is not called a disaster plan, and that this planning starts with knowing what could go wrong. We heard that once we understand what could go wrong, preparing for these events should go on continuously.

Otherwise, disruptions could be catastrophic and, without up-to-date local plans, could affect the entire state. We heard that an element that would help contingency planning efforts would be identifying alternatives available for the trade community, including
different ports of entry for crossing or somewhere to store goods.

These are all elements that we are looking to include in the Recommendations chapter. We heard that Chapter 21 of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, USMCA, requires the establishment of a Coordinating Council between the United States, Mexico and Canada that also includes private sector participation, and that it might be helpful for the BTMP to endorse implementation of Chapter 21.

We'll consider including the recommendation in Chapter 10. We were told there should be an ongoing process to update the BTMP as circumstances change. We responded that the BTMP won't do its job if it just sits on the shelf.

We explained that the project team will be developing an action-oriented implementation strategy, and that everyone will need to commit to a sustained effort to implement the BTMP, evaluate successes and identify what else needs to be done. We noted that there will be more discussions going forward about the BTMP's implementation.

We heard some concerns about the use of bridge toll revenues to fund non-bridge projects, and whether we could identify policies to restrict how those funds could be used. In a follow-up comment, we heard that bridge
revenues could be used to fund overtime to pay CBP officers, which keeps more lanes open, as well as to fund bridge and federal property improvements, and that similar programs could be set up throughout the border region on both sides.

We noted that this was a good suggestion and would be appropriate to include in the binational recommendations. We heard that it's important to consider local commitments when identifying the regional projects and priorities, and to make sure there are no contradictions with district priorities.

We noted that we'd be working with each of the regions on their priorities. We also noted that when the projects are run through the goal areas and weights, the results may not necessarily match up with the regional priorities, which could provide an opportunity to see if addressing cross-border movement of people and goods through a different lens might help validate regional priorities.

We were told that the list of projects and their priorities needs to tie into the information presented in Chapter 5 that identifies the needs for each region, and that the needs should align with the project list. We responded that the goal over the next several weeks was to develop a comprehensive list of projects for
each region, including long term projects that may not be in the plan.

We heard about the need for coordination with our Mexican stakeholders and concern about how the BTMP process would include detailed information from Mexican counterparts at the local level. We noted that our Mexican stakeholders are being engaged at the federal level and that representative of SCT have attended all the BTMP meetings. We also noted that state-level representatives have been involved, and that the dialogue about specific projects, as well as identifying Mexican priorities, will continue.

Finally, we heard a concern that the plan needs to be wrapped up in roughly six weeks and presented to the Texas Transportation Commission. We were asked if there's any leeway in the timeline for this, in a follow-up comment.

We heard about the need to complete the BTMP and then develop a process for updating it, since there's so much that cannot be predicted in advance. We responded that the process will drive the timeline, and that the dates presented are target dates.

We noted that it's important to provide sufficient time for everyone to offer the necessary input. At the same time, we noted that every project needs an
end date, and we reiterated that the reason to complete
the plan by December is that the Texas legislative session
begins in January. It will be beneficial to have a final
BTMP to present to State legislators.

Next slide. Next slide, please. Okay. So we
didn't receive any comments on the preliminary overview of
Chapter 11. With that, I'll turn the meeting over to the
consulting team, so that they can provide us an update on
changes we have made on border crossing time data.

MR. VALE: I'd like to make one comment on what
you've just said. This is Sam Vale.

MS. MAYS: Yes. Go ahead, Sam.

MR. VALE: Regarding the overtime, I want
everybody to know that El Paso, as well as all of the
bridges that are in the Laredo field office, which will be
from Del Rio to Brownsville, already have the ability to
not only pay for overtime, but to pay for full-time
equivalents in a contract with CBP, that you pay three
years, and then they hire them on full-time, and also
internships with approved entities like University of
Texas-Rio Grande Valley.

So those actually exist now. We did form a
separate nonprofit organization that was a 501(c)(3) in
order to be eligible. But both the City of El Paso and
all that area has that ability, and so does the South
Texas Assets Consortium, which is essentially the bridges in the Laredo field office.

        MS. MAYS: Okay. Thank you, Sam, for that. Appreciate it. Any other comments?
        MR. VALE: Uh-huh.
        MR. SCHWEBEL: Good morning. This is Gerry Schwebel. I guess you could start --
        MS. MAYS: Hello, Gerry.
        MR. SCHWEBEL: I don't think you can start a BTAC meeting without Vale or Schwebel saying something.

        SECRETARY HUGHS: And I'm so grateful.
        MR. SCHWEBEL: There is a new element that has popped up in regards to the impact in the last 30 days, and that is President Trump's proposal of potential user fees to pay for the border wall. And I don't know -- you know, we've been -- many of us have been working on user fees, fighting user fees for ports of entry.

        But I don't think it's going to go away. So I don't know how we can incorporate that. That's as bad as one of those outliers that are there, and I think we cannot ignore it.

        So somewhere down the line, we need to make sure that we get -- you know, fine-tune that, and see, if it goes into effect, what potential impact new user fees, as proposed, will be for us.
MS. MAYS: Yeah. Certainly, Gerry. Thanks for that information.

We will look for a way to incorporate that in the plan, you know, because again that adds, kind of, this layer of uncertainty. So it's just like what we've, kind of, done with COVID, some of this, you know, unforeseen, you know, issues or dynamics that could potentially impact the border moving forward.

So we can certainly follow up with you to get a little bit more details in that and figure out how we can craft that, and where we should be able to insert it in the plan as we move forward, before we finalize it. So thank you.

Any other comments from members?

(No response.)

MS. MAYS: If not, Donald?

MR. LUDLOW: Hello. Can you hear me okay?

MS. MAYS: Yes, we can hear you now. Thank you.

MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Great. Thank you. Yeah. I just wanted to briefly update the Committee on an important change to some of the underlying data that I know has been a major focus for Committee members over the last months, or even years.

Previously, we have been using border wait
times from CBP as our key metric for looking at the way in which border operations impact passenger, pedestrian, and commercial vehicle operations on the border. In the background, we've been looking at using some other types of data.

Clearly, the BCIS data that TTI has developed over time is a very powerful and useful tool because it measures the full crossing time. Or it has a better reflection of the whole crossing experience than the CBP time -- wait time did, which is calculated based off of the queue to just get through the CBP clearance, and not the entire border experience.

So working closely with TTI and utilizing the BCIS data, we've developed a hybrid data set that combines the BCIS with new data from INRIX. And INRIX is a provider of vehicle probe data, so this is GPS data from transponders. And it is also location-based service data from apps that people are using in their vehicles.

We went through a fairly innovative process to stitch that together so that we now have data that show crossing times from all crossings in both directions, northbound and southbound, for the entire Texas-Mexico border. The data are not perfect.

In some cases, we have much better sample size than others, depending on the border crossing. But based
on the feedback that we've received from the BTAC and also
from the BNSRCs and others who we've participated with, we
thought this was a very important change that we wanted to
show to you.

And what we're going to do is, Chris Williges, from the team who's been leading the forecasting, is going
walk you through some of the results, how this actually
looks and how the -- yes. And Matt asks TTI -- yes,
that's the Texas Transportation Institute.

So we'll be walking you through how this looks
and kind of the impact. I think you'll see that the
crossing times are more reflective of the total border
crossing experience than the CBP wait times, and this is
what we intend to use, and have been using for the
analytics over the last period of time to inform the -- a
project evaluation.

So are there any initial questions on what
we've done in this important change?

MR. VALE: This is Sam Vale. That's very good
news to hear that, and what we -- and among some of the
bridge owners, we're talking about taking that time, and
that's the overall time.

But then trying to break it down into time
spent waiting prior to the bridge, on the bridge, and more
importantly, to measure CBP, we would like to have the
import lot throughput time, which is basically the time
the truck is cleared into the import lot, and the time
that it is released from the import lot. So that that way
we can see what CBP's efficiency is at different times of
the day, as well as with the staffing levels that they
have.

So that's just a way to break it down, to start
looking at the smaller pieces that are -- that -- but for
the overall community and the state, it's the big picture
that you just described that's important.

MR. LUDLOW: Great. I'm glad to hear that,
Sam. And yes, the data that we're working with now, that
I fully expect to continue to get better in the future,
will allow for much more granularity to look at the
segments of that experience, as well as the total
experience.

And I think the hope here is that by using the
data that is more robust, we also have the ability, in the
future through the program recommendations in the Border
Master Plan, to be able to build up this data more
consistently, have potentially a much more border-wide
BCIS in the future.

So just wanted to mention that as well. And
Sam, you also mentioned that the -- you know, the
experience of being able to look at trucks. That's
completely possible. It's nuanced. We at one point did follow an anonymous Ryder rental truck back and forth across the border in the Laredo region, just as a way of validating some of our approach.

So it's very interesting, and this will continue to evolve and get better, and provide the State and its partners with a better way of measuring this in the future. Are there any other questions? If not, we'll have Chris walk us through the results, what this looks like.

(No response.)

MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Chris?

MR. WILLIGES: Hi. This is Chris Williges with HDR. What you see on the screen is a table that summarizes the results from the commercial vehicle analysis. And we compare the base year and the forecast wait times for what you saw on the July report, which were wait times, and the crossing time data that we've now updated to in the September report, which is in blue.

One other change I'd like to note as well is that, for the base year, we updated all of our forecast data and economic data to 2019. So everything shifted from 2017 to 2019. What you'll notice is that the 2019 crossing times for commercial vehicles are longer than the wait time, as you'd expect.
This is measuring the full experience that commercial vehicles have crossing the border. But what you'll also notice is that the forecasted wait times are considerably longer in 2050.

This reflects both the longer crossing times that we're measuring, compared to the wait times. And it also reflects another comment we received, which is when we looked at forecasting delays, we removed the operational constraints.

Previously, when we forecasted the future crossing times, we had allowed un-utilized lanes to be used. So at some crossings, there are lanes that were currently un-utilized. The problem with that is that does assume that CBP would staff those lanes.

And we've removed that assumption. So if lanes are currently not utilized today, they're not utilized in the future. And you can see the resulting crossing times.

The next slide shows a visualization of this, and I think this is a much better way to just see it. It compares the 2050 wait times that you previously saw with the new 2050 crossing times that are forecasted for the border.

This again is based on what Donald described, the TTI, the Texas Transportation Institute BCIS data, plus INRIX data. You can see that, for crossings...
throughout the border, we have much larger crossing times. In fact, the largest crossing time that we're forecasting is at Pharr-Reynosa, where we have a crossing time of over 14 hours. Remember that these are unconstrained demand, and we have assumed no improvements, and that's why you're seeing such larger crossing times. But this makes a very powerful argument for investment on the border, if you do nothing and you want to accommodate these demands. If you don't, you will have very large crossing times.

We also calculated crossing times for personal vehicles. And what this slide shows is, just like with the commercial vehicle, the base year wait times and crossing times as well as the forecasted wait times and crossing times. Now, in the September report, we're reporting just the crossing time data. As with the commercial vehicles, we updated the methodology to remove any of those operational considerations, where we had allowed un-utilized lanes to be used. You'll notice that the 2050 crossing times are considerably longer than they were reported previously, when we look at the crossing time data and we remove those operational constraints.

One other thing that you'll notice is that there are a few crossings for personal vehicles. For the
crossing time data, as measured by the GPS, it's actually shorter than the CBP wait time. This only happens in a few cases, but we chose to use the crossing time data as measured by the GPS, as this measures the whole experience. We decided not to use the CBP wait times.

And the next slide shows additional personal vehicle crossings. Sorry, we couldn't fit it all on one slide. But what you can see is, at the bottom, the weighted average crossing time across all of the personal vehicle crossings.

And you can see, overall, the crossing times in 2019 are longer than the average wait times we've reported previously in 2017, and that the forecasted crossing times are considerably longer than the wait times that we've reported previously. I want to show you too what the impact of this is for the overall economic analysis.

We looked at what the impact would be on person hours of delay for passenger vehicles, and also on vehicle hours of delay for commercial vehicles. You can see that the delays increase considerably from 2019 to 2050, overall, reflecting what you saw for each of the border crossings previously. And this trickles into the GDP impact, the impact on the economy.

The impact on the economy is much larger using the crossing time data. If we look just at the 2050
numbers, the impact grows from 1.2 billion for the wait
time data to 3.8 billion in 2050, using the crossing time
delay for personal vehicles.

For commercial vehicles, it grows from 30.9
billion to 115.6 billion. This is almost a four times
increase from what we had previously reported.

One other thing that we should note is that the
way that we calculated the impacts of the delays on the
border, when we use the crossing time data, is that
previously when we looked at the wait time data, we
compared the -- what would happen if we eliminated the
entire wait time at the CBP. We culled that delay.

Working with TTI, we developed a definition of
what -- while eliminating delay, we'd be looking at the
total crossing time. And in this case, what we did was,
we looked at the total crossing time, and compared that to
a minimum crossing time, which was measured by people who
are very statistically oriented, the 10th-percentile
crossing time, so very minimal crossing time.

And the difference between those were the
delays that people experience when they travel during more
well-traveled times of delay. And that's how we're
measuring the delays, and then the GDP impact of those
delays.

And just one last visual. On the next slide,
we show the GDP impact in 2050 from what we showed previously. Again, this is the impact on the economy of eliminating delays. Previously, we had shown a $1.8 billion impact in the base year of 2017.

Now, we're going to show a $2.2 billion impact in 2019. And then in the forecast year, the GDP impact of reducing the delays grew from 30.9 billion to 115.6 billion, using the crossing time data compared to the wait time data.

So I'll open it up to any questions. Hopefully this addresses some of the comments we've gotten about trying to capture a full user experience across the border.

MS. MAYS: Any questions from BTAC members on this?

MR. CORONADO: Yes. I do have a few questions. This is David Coronado with the City of El Paso. So I guess -- let me -- I guess this is something new that I have not heard before which is, I think, good news, right, for the entire border to use INRIX as a data source for wait times, for crossing times.

So I wanted to ask, you know, so what is the method of the data collection? How are you all combining it with CBP wait time data? You know, what's the way that you're doing that -- I guess, methodology behind it? And
then also, you know, is this available to every district in Texas, to be able to use this in the future?

And not just for the study, but in the future, for both -- is it for both northbound and southbound crossings, or is it just southbound? Like, can you just tell us a little more about the data itself?

MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, David. This is Donald. I can speak to some of the methodology, and then maybe, you know, Caroline or somebody can mention a potential future use. Yeah. The data, again, are collected from a sample that INRIX has.

They have -- they're collecting data from commercial vehicles through their GPS transponders, electronic logging devices, and also any kind of location-based services that drivers might be using. This is also true for passenger fleets.

So INRIX kind of aggregates that all together. From them, we obtain the raw data. And we used a process called trip chaining to basically identify the trips that were indeed starting in Mexico and ending in the United States or vice versa, so that we were capturing full cross-border trips, not just people moving in the general vicinity.

We isolated that down and developed some cordon lines. These are lines that enable us to know which parts
of the border crossing experience we're measuring from the
time-stamp perspective. We aggregated that to develop
the -- essentially, the average times.

I should mention that where there were BCIS
data, we used BCIS data. It's superior. It's collected
more consistently.

It's collected through RFID transponders, and
this is collected through a different means. So really,
this is a marriage of those two data sets, to provide a
more complete snapshot that is not perfect, that the
samples are very good for the same crossings that we have
BCIS data.

But they're not as strong for some of the
remote crossings. For example, in the Presidio area, I
believe we had somewhere in the neighborhood of 8- to 900
trips that we measured to be able to derive that crossing
time, which we said was much better than nothing. But at
the same time, it would have been much better to have
thousands and thousands of trips.

So I think it's a good starting point from that
perspective. I hope that answers some of your questions.
We do have southbound, because we were able to use the
same process to look at those trips going south, and in
general, the southbound times were consistent with our
previous hypotheses that the southbound crossing was
usually about half the time of the northbound crossing.

   So that's about all we know at this -- or
that's about all I think I have time to share. We do have
some more methodology that we can share with you, David.
There's a short memo that we've put together internally,
and perhaps, you know, Caroline or somebody else can
address the question in terms of sharing data in the
future.

   MR. CORONADO: Yeah, thank you. So yeah, I'd
be really interested in seeing if -- you know, we can talk
to you and to Caroline and her team about any future use
or application for this data.

   I think it's great. And if we can have it
available to any border community, it will help supplement
what we already have, with TTI, you know, with CBP.

   You know, I also want to see if there's any way
that this data from INRIX can also give us queuing -- for
the queue line -- right -- the information. For example,
database and applications on devices that are running, you
know, multiple -- you know, apps that are being collected
by INRIX.

   At the City of El Paso, we have right now
access to SafeGraph data that is essentially doing the
same thing, similar things to INRIX, you know, based on --
upon apps installed on cell phone devices, whether in
Juarez or El Paso, in this case, you know, for our region, not for entrance. But there's no wait time information. It's just trips.

And so with COVID, we have seen in the sample data -- we have seen a sharp decline, right, in those cross-border trips. And so you know, the more data we have, the better. We can sort of validate, you know, cross-reference and see the changes to trends, and over time, perhaps stop relying so much on CBP, right -- which is line-of-sight, based on surveys, you know, each trip is different, so it's not inconsistent.

So I would be really interested in talking to you all and to Caroline and her team about, you know, future use of this information. I think it's great.

MR. LUDLOW: Thanks, David. I think this is a step forward. It's -- again, it's not perfect, but it is a step forward, certainly.

MR. VALE: This is Sam Vale. We're doing some new stuff where we're -- actually, the bridges are -- those that we've been talking to, will be putting, and are -- have already put, because it doesn't violate any rules, cameras that are recording the trucks as they enter the entry booth at CBP, and then match it up when it goes out the gate the other side.

The next phase would be to try to separate the
type of cargo it is and to see, for example, the
difference between ag inspections and construction or non-
ag, and then try to break it down into more specific
pieces after that.

But basically, just get a throughput time that
you can come back to. Because we record those, and then
we have people go back and create Excel sheets as -- every
month about what the times to get from gate to gate.

MR. LUDLOW:  Great. Thank you, Sam, and thank
you, David. Caroline, I don't know if you have any other
follow-up here? Otherwise, I think we --

MS. MAYS:  Yeah.

MR. LUDLOW:  -- need to move into Chapter 9.

MS. MAYS:  Yeah. I will respond to David a
couple of things. The first, main thing is that, one,
this is the first time that I know of that we've used
INRIX data for border application and border analysis. So
this is, kind of, cutting-edge, and the consultant did a
really great job in trying to use what we had, you know,
to do that.

And certainly I think there's a lot of
opportunity that we're going to be exploring with this
data, including possibly, you know, having an increased
sample size on the border crossings. We saw there were,
you know, fewer sample size.
And to your question, is the data available to the districts? Yes. TxDOT has purchased or will continue purchase INRIX data, and we'll use it for other applications. Some of the information you see that TTI does on speeds, et cetera, the top 100, they do use INRIX data there.

We also use INRIX for a lot of our studies and analysis. So we do have it, you know, TxDOT-wide. So each of the three districts have access to that data, and we have some historic data from INRIX as well, because we've been using this for a few years.

So certainly in terms of sustainability over time, I think it's there, and it provides us with -- this is the first data source that we do have, both north and southbound. And that's something we've struggled with for a very long time in this process.

So yeah. So definitely, we can talk to you offline and discuss this. I think, again, there's a lot of opportunities there.

MR. CORONADO: Okay. Perfect. Thank you.

MR. CALVO: Okay. Caroline, this is Eduardo.

MS. MAYS: Yeah.

MR. CALVO: I just want to have one more question and comment on this, you know. I think this is a great step forward. Like you said, this is a -- just a
first step.

But this is much, much better and much more reliable, and I think, much more useful than the data that was created initially. So congratulations to you all.

But a question for Donald. You know, we know that the BCIS data is not available at every crossing, right? But where it is available, I think it takes care of the vast majority of the total number of trips, right.

Do you have an idea of what that percentage is?

And again, you know, the point I'm making is that, even though we have it for every bridge, but we have very good data for the vast majority of the northbound trips, so a level of confidence should be very high in these numbers.

Right?

MR. LUDLOW: Yes, it should be. It's very high with BCIS and it's very high when we have a sample size that's close to BCIS. It's actually around 90 percent, is what Chris Williges is saying.

And Chris can jump in here if we need to talk about it more. But we can provide further data to you, you know, further back-up on that, as well, Eduardo.

MR. CALVO: Okay. Great. Thank you. I mean, this is awesome, guys. Great job, man.

MR. LUDLOW: Thank you.

MS. MAYS: Well, thank you. We tried to turn
every stone that we could on these border delays, border
wait times, and explore every data source and some of
these, like I mentioned -- I know we're spending a lot of
time on this.

But it's important because, as you guys have
seen, the numbers change dramatically when we don't use
the CBP data. Because this is real data, real-time data,
that really provides a lot of information.

You talked about BCIS. We have seven crossings
instrumented with that. We're already looking at
expanding that to all the border crossings, so at least we
can have BCIS as well as INRIX as well to be able to
provide that information.

So we're going to continue to work on that, but
I think this right here, I'm happy to hear that you all
are, you know, comfortable with what we've done so far.
And we'll go back and refine the chapters that are
impacted by the border wait time, border delays data, and
then we'll resend those chapters out, so you guys can have
it as soon as we do that.

So thank you.

MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. Eduardo, point of
clarification. I mentioned, 90 percent. The BCIS, we
believe, is around a 90 percent sample. The INRIX is
lower, but it's helpful. It's closer to one to
12 percent.

Depends on the crossing. But it's again a very
good step forward. Just wanted to clarify that.

MR. CALVO: Great. Thanks, Donald.

MS. MAYS: Okay. Any other last questions

before we move to the next chapter?

(No response.)

MS. MAYS: Okay. Thank you guys very much,

BTAC members. We'll move to the next chapter. And

Stephanie, go ahead.

MS. WHITE: Caroline, can you hear me?

MS. MAYS: Yes, yes. Go ahead.

MS. WHITE: Excellent. My name is Stephanie

White. I was responsible for leading the stakeholder

engagement task for this project. So the chapter will be

quite comprehensive. So I wanted to take a minute and

walk through the purpose, key messages, and the supporting

messages.

You'll see examples of all of this, as we move

through some of the following slides. But first, from a

purpose perspective, I know most of you have been

significant participants in the program itself. So this

will be a review.

But as you know, it was a very comprehensive

program that was really designed to be proactive and
inclusive and binational, as well as bilingual. The goal of the chapter will be to demonstrate that we did that, that not only did we exceed or achieve our goals, but that, as you can see in the key messages column in the middle, that last bullet is, in my opinion, the heart of everything we did.

And we know, and we can prove, that stakeholder input shaped every aspect of the plan. It was unprecedented, both in the sheer size of it, both the size in terms of volume of people that were engaged. We'll show you some statistics about that in a minute.

But also it was unprecedented in terms of its geographic expansiveness or the area that it covered and in a minute, you'll see one of our very last slides. We'll show you that the border is important and of great interest to not just the people living in the border region itself, but way beyond, into both countries of the U.S. and Mexico as well.

And to that point, that middle bullet, we had really good and healthy, strong participation from both U.S. and Mexico -- Mexican stakeholders. What's important to note is, typically, when you have planning processes that go on for longer than a year, as is the case for this one, sometimes stakeholder participation begins to dwindle.
There's some fatigue in it, and I'll tell you that that has never -- that hasn't happened in this planning process, in spite of the pandemic. In fact, I would tell you that moving into the virtual realm, these Webex meetings actually gave us more opportunity to be more inclusive and engage more and more people.

So the participation didn't wane. You can see, that's the last bullet on the far left, the supporting messages. Interest, participation, and commitment not only increased, but it just really has continued to remain high.

You will see that the next slide is actually the framework, the binational stakeholder engagement framework that we used. You notice very well today we did it as a build so that you can see that your body, this group, the Border Trade Advisory Committee, is really the heart of everything that we did.

And we built a framework to surround the work of your group and this Committee. Next -- you can click the next build. So we -- when the framework is built, it will show not only how we engaged groups that were already -- that already existed before the BTMP, as well as some that we built specifically to support the BTMP, and those groups along the bottom, those are the BNRSCs, the binational regional steering committees, that we set.
up over the course of the project. And they became, kind of, the heart and soul of telling the border story and contributing both data and input on needs and challenges and opportunities and project and program prioritization.

All that is not only happening in this group, but it's also happening right -- like, almost in ground zero, if you will. Those boxes, then, to the left and right of the BTAC circle, the dial, those represent additional things we did.

So left to right, we worked hard to get to the public. You'll see in a minute our participation numbers from a purely public perspective are less than those from a stakeholder perspective, which is exactly what you would expect for a planning study of this magnitude.

We worked hard to reach out to large and small industries. So you can see focus groups, and then continuing to move right, those listening sessions and stakeholder interviews. If you'll click once more?

We also worked to really capture those existing committees, as I mentioned, not just BTAC, but the JWC and the BBBXG as well on the left. As well as the Internal Border Task Force, that's made up of some key owners inside of TxDOT itself.

And then you can see, if you click the next two times, all these things kind of work up towards this
pyramid of the Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Master Plan. The next slide is what -- sometimes we call, a measles chart.

It's pretty complex. I'm going to break it down for you. So you'll see this again in pieces. But this represents the total application of how we put that framework to work.

Across the top, you'll see the major phases or the milestones of the program: data collection; the designation and needs assessment of the multimodal corridor itself; in the orange, forecast and economic analysis; then in the red, identification of strategies and preliminary recommendations.

That's where we are today. And then finally, you can see, on the far right, in those grayed-out dots, we are not yet done with stakeholder engagement. The numbers you'll see in this slide deck will continue to be updated.

So the framework is final. That is what we did. The program is final, but the ultimate numbers are not. Kelly, you can click to the next slide.

Let's start with your group. So you can see, every slide following will take a stakeholder group or a target audience, or a committee in this case, and show how it not only -- in time, how it worked in time, but also
how it contributed to the plan.

So this -- you don't need me to tell me much about your group. I will say that this group has met 18 times or -- in total, and your work preceded mine. So you were -- in 2016, you were laying the foundation for everything that we've done and will be talking about today.

Next slide. So this next one talks about the BNRSCs, the binational regional steering committees. And for you today, I'll just tell you a few notable things. We had 21 meetings for this group, these bodies, and we divided them by region.

So if you divide that by three, that's kind of the reflection of what we did for the Rio Grande Valley, Laredo, and El Paso districts. We -- but we didn't call them that. We also included the Mexican states, to the south.

So the groups were El Paso/Santa Teresa/Chihuahua. That was the first region. Laredo/Coahuila/Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas. Tamaulipas found its way into the third group as well, so it was double-represented in that last group, the Rio Grande Valley and the Tamaulipas region.

We also held three of these meetings, as you will recall, in Mexico. So in the beginning, I talked
about how some of what we did was unprecedented, and that was a big one. We're going to talk about even more binational integration a little bit later in this presentation.

One last thing I would say while Kelly is clicking the slides. Those BNRSC groups were big. So a committee is usually, in a typically planning process -- a committee is, you know, 50 members, plus or minus. Those groups had more than 100 members, active members.

Each region had more than 100 active members, and we were able to make their time efficient and significant to the contribution of the program. We also dug a little bit deeper. So we worked really, really hard to get straight to the heart of the private industry stakeholders, and that's what this slide really represents.

We held 10 formal workshops with stakeholders. We also -- I'm going to highlight those bullets to the right, under statistics. So 10 workshops.

We also did one-on-one interviews with 127 stakeholders. You can also see that, in that, or in total, 577 private industry participants participated in the plan. And a good number of them were from Mexico.

So you can see the breakdown on the bottom of that slide. Next slide, please. This one is also, I
think, a piece of our unprecedented work from a planning perspective in the border region and for the border region.

We called it binational coordination. But really, this was meant to capture all the work we did with both nations. So you can see, on the right, the statistics. We took two trips to Mexico City to meet both with federal agencies and industry leaders.

We held two meetings with the Mexican Ambassador in Washington, D.C. As I mentioned before, we surveyed -- we did a lot of private industry surveying. And here, we've captured it again. We reached -- we tried really hard to touch those Mexican industries and those industrial stakeholders as well.

And you can see also, we -- here, we talk a little bit about those last two bullets, meetings with CBP and SAP, or SAP, at various ports of entry, as well as a very consistent check-in with FHWA and SCP. So this is -- was maybe a piece that was unseen but behaving consistently through the background.

In fact, there's some really neat components of this coming up as early as tomorrow. We'll talk about that in a minute. Next slide.

We also, as I mentioned, had public meetings. We did six of these. Actually -- we'll -- we have one
more set planned in December, and -- as well as a public comment period.

So this group were the public along the border region or in the communities that are impacted by this border region -- will have an opportunity to make one final contribution to the plan itself. We’ve had 232 participants in the public process, or what we consider the public process.

Next slide. This piece might also be -- have been unseen to this group. The Texas -- or the TxDOT Internal Border Task Force group is a body inside of TxDOT that always meets the day before these BTAC meetings.

They held eight of those meetings, and the participants included not only Caroline’s group -- so the Freight, International Trade and Connectivity section -- but also leadership from each of the three TxDOT border districts, El Paso, Pharr or RGV, sometimes called, and Laredo itself. So that group is also working behind the scenes.

And what's important about it, at least to say today, is that last bullet on the left, from a role perspective -- this group will really underpin the implementation of everything we set forth in this plan. So they were a critical body leading up to today, and will be moving forward as well.
Next slide. We did a lot of work to engage, as I mentioned, the BDC and the JWC. So those were regular check-ins with those bodies as they met over the course of the study.

Again, these were groups that already existed before our work on the actual plan began, and you all know these groups probably better than most. So I won't spend a lot of time on this, but I did want to mention, or at least almost pay homage to, the fact that we stitched in our work to the work of these two important bodies.

So here are some statistics that are important to note. These are individual people. I'll show you our data in two different ways. But you can see, kind of, along the bottom, BTAC binational coordination meetings, so those are the BNRSCs.

Actually, sorry. Those are the meetings with the individual nations. Then BNRSCs, public meetings and stakeholder workshops. The colors represent Mexican participants versus U.S. participants.

And you can see a pretty significant -- or that we worked hard to engage our Mexican counterparts and the stakeholders in the development of this plan, so it wasn't just formed and made by U.S. stakeholders. We really, really wanted not only the voice of the Mexican stakeholders, but the buy-in and the excitement, because
they'll be key parts of implementation of the plan as well.

Next slide. So that one showed individual people. This shows the net.

So every time one of you attended any number of our meetings, you were counted for each attendance, and that's what this represents. So you can see that the private sector stakeholders, just notably on this slide -- we -- again, it reflects that we did a really, really good job engaging our Mexican -- the Mexican users and the Mexican stakeholders of the project.

The next slide shows -- and this one is actually one of my favorites. It takes a minute to explain. And the question I always get is, why are you showing an image that shows something beyond the border region itself?

And here's why. As you all know, the border is vital to stakeholders well beyond the border region itself, and that's what it shows. So you can see the color gradation. The darker the color, the more intense the stakeholder participation in the plan, and you can see that in the bordering states and even the bordering counties of Texas.

But we also had participants, stakeholders, that were interested and participated in the plan to the
full northern and southern, as well as eastern and western
borders of the two nations of U.S. and Mexico as well.
And I just wanted you to see this, because it reflects
something you already know, and I think it also shows that
we did our job.

We gave them a way to participate and we
also -- I see your comment, Peter. I love this slide too.
We gave them a way to participate, but they did, and then
that's what I wanted to leave you with.

I have two more slides to talk through quickly,
and then I'd like to open it for comments. So this one, I
just -- I wanted to come back and talk about the work
we're doing behind the scenes from a binational
perspective. So since we last talked to this group, we've
met with the North American Development Bank, as well as
13 other groups, both in the U.S. and Mexico.

I'll give you a chance to look at this, maybe
just a couple of seconds, Kelly, so they can look at each
of those columns, and then we'll hit the next slide.

Okay. Next slide.

So this, on the left, is a summary, just to
really help you understand that we went to the regions.
We had seven binational stakeholder meetings with agencies
and groups in El Paso, 15 in the Laredo region, nine in
RGV. But the cool, exciting thing I want to tell you
about is on the right. Actually, it's all cool and exciting.

But tomorrow, representatives from TxDOT and the Office of the SOS will meet with the state of Tamaulipas. So we will have elevated beyond the industry stakeholders, and tomorrow we will start a series of our state delegation meetings.

So tomorrow is Tamaulipas. Chihuahua will be soon after, and Coahuila. These will happen. I think one of them is still being planned, but they'll happen within the next two to three weeks, and that -- it represents a really exciting milestone in the partnership of all four of these states.

So I'd love to hear from you. I don't know how much time you want to dedicate to Q and A. I don't have a formal poll for you. I really just would love to hear your feedback, your questions, and comments. And I think -- just go back to the slide.

I'd rather not use Menti. I'd rather hear from the BTAC members.

MS. MAYS: BTAC members, any comments, you know, questions? And what I want to underscore was what Stephanie mentioned, is that this had been very comprehensive and precedented. We've spent a lot of time trying to make sure that we are not leaving any voice not
heard in the Border Master Plan development.

   So I just kind of wanted to underscore that, and you all have seen that. So any comments?

MR. VALE: Yeah. This is Sam Vale. You guys have really done a great job. It finally is getting to the place, in all the years that we've been having these meetings, that we can really get some real substantive, and detailed information.

   So congratulations to everybody on the contract and state side.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. I mean, Sam, you've been one of our biggest advocates from the beginning. You engaged the Mexican side. You all -- you know, BTAC, you all have really helped us, you know, point us to the right people, to the, you know, right agencies, to be able to engage them with the relationships you have.

   So that helped a lot. So I -- you know, we'll take credit, but really I think you guys helped with that, and really our Mexican counterparts, they were very, very welcoming. We have actually three binational regional steering committee meetings, BNRCs, in Mexico.

   So -- and they were forthcoming. They welcomed us. They hosted the meetings. It was well-attended. So it's a collective effort, and really, a lot of credit to everybody on here and others.
MR. VALE: Well, I think, Caroline, you are going to finally be able to understand the difference between the funding and approval process, between the U.S. side of the Texas border and the Mexican side. That's critical information for when we plan international connections.

MS. MAYS: Yes, that's correct.

MR. WALKER: This is Cameron Walker, Permian Basin MPO. I'd just like to make a brief comment. I --

MS. MAYS: Yes, go ahead.

MR. WALKER: -- was very much impacted by the slide that Kelly just showed, with the beyond-the-border impact. And I wanted to let everyone know that parallels a recent study that Caroline and her team led in the Permian Basin, 22 Texas counties and two in New Mexico, a regional trade study.

And the impact of that -- the slides shown in the initial draft indicated the growth -- or the impact, rather, of the Permian Basin on the entire national North American hemisphere, and then, of course, internationally as well. So these parallel each other in a lot of ways. And it is important to let people know, it's not just within five, 10, 15 miles of the border. Where does this stuff go and end up? And Caroline, you've done a wonderful job on that 24-county freight study.
Just so everyone is aware, it's almost complete. And it's up to Caroline to comment if she wants to, but it's been a very good piece of work and I can see some parallel themes here.

Thank you.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. No. Thank you for those comments, and you know, Cameron -- and certainly, that's what we're trying to do -- connect the dot -- is that the spheres of influence, of whether it's the border or it's the Permian, goes beyond that region.

And really Permian showed that there's a lot of connection with the border, in terms of what's being made in Mexico that goes to support the energy sector development, but also what's being, you know, drilled, how it's, you know, transported to Mexico.

So I think what we're trying to do again is -- how do we link all of this together so it will show the big picture? So thank you for those comments. We'll continue to look for those linkages, so we can address the issues holistically.

But I think that slide -- you're right -- is to educate people that the border matters, not just the border or people in the border region. It's the entire nation, U.S. And I think Stephanie mentioned that she didn't include Canada, but there was also interest from
Canada as well.

So thank you.

MR. ANDRADE: Thank you. This is -- oh, I apologize. Go ahead, please.


MR. ANDRADE: Thanks very much, Caroline. I am Salvador Monroy from SCT in Mexico. And from the federal perspective of SCT through the participation of the general director and of fair motor transportation, during the various meetings and stages of preparation of the plan, and in particular, the preliminary list of policies and programs, they reflect the vision of cross-border motor transportation, in regard to its safety, security, operational functionality and competitiveness.

So congratulations on this, to the excellent approach to the border improvement.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. And Salvador, thank you for joining us. Good to see you virtually. We appreciate the partnership of SCT.

I know we visited with you all in Mexico City several times. You've been a great supporter of the plan but also a great partner. So great to see you.

And certainly, you know, we look forward to you all staying with us to the finish line, but also through the implementation. And so really want to thank you guys
for helping us really do that broad engagement in Mexico as well.

So appreciate it.

MR. ANDRADE: Thank you.

MS. MAYS: Any other comments?

MR. SCHWEBEL: Caroline, this is Gerry, Gerry Schwebel. Question in regards to Stephanie -- and agree with everyone's comments. Kudos to Stephanie and the team.

The meetings with Tamaulipas -- who are you all -- are you meeting with -- I understand -- are you meeting with government, state government officials? Because I see that, you know -- Mister -- our Tamaulipas economic development director for the state, Carlos García, is on the call as well.

Are you meeting with them or other folks in Tamaulipas? And if you are, is there anything that we can help at our end to help facilitate any of those meetings?

MS. WHITE: Great. I know there's quite a plan, Caroline. I'll let you answer that in detail.

MS. MAYS: Yes, yeah. And also, David from the Secretary's Office, can answer that, Secretary of State as well. So we are meeting primarily with the government officials for all the state meetings, and that's why you see there are secretaries, et cetera.
So David Zapata, can you comment a little bit on what -- who will be attending the meetings? I know we do have a good line-up of senior leadership from those government agencies.

MR. ZAPATA: Yes. Hi, everyone. This is David Zapata with the Texas Secretary of State's Office. Hi, Gerry. So yeah. For Tamaulipas, I guess, in general, as Stephanie mentioned, we are meeting with government officials from our border states.

But definitely what we -- our first meeting is with Tamaulipas. And we have the pleasure or -- the pleasure that we're going to be meeting with Secretary García, Secretary Carlos García from Economic Development, and his team.

Obviously, we have a big border with Tamaulipas, and we're definitely excited to hear what they want to talk to us about their own plans and projects for the area. And obviously, we will share our side as well, as to what -- you know, stuff that we've already talked about here, but that we can share with them more specifically as to how we can, both sides, work together.

And then so -- but again, it's going to be with Secretary García, who I believe may be also joining us here, but I don't want to put him on the spot, with his team of Eduardo Ernesto Gonzalez from Director of Foreign
Commerce, and another -- other officials from the -- his Infrastructure and Urban Projects team.

MS. MAYS: Okay. But Gerry, certainly, you know, if there's anything, we'll definitely reach out to you, you know, and certainly, we always appreciate your assistance. And like I mentioned, you guys' relationships with our Mexican counterparts and others is really crucial, and that has really helped open a lot of doors for us.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Well, you've got the right guy with Secretary García. He's -- he knows the border just as well as we do and has worked on all of these projects for many years. So I'm glad to see that he's a key person involved in these meetings.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. And he's been engaged in this process for -- from pretty much the beginning. So we appreciate his leadership, as well as his commitment to the process as well. Any comments from any of the other Committee members on the stakeholder engagement strategies?

(No response.)

MS. MAYS: Okay. If not, thank you, Stephanie. And we'll move to Chapter 8. And is Steve Decker doing this?

MR. DECKER: Yes, Caroline. This is Steve
Decker with HDR. How is everybody? Good morning.

Hopefully, everybody can hear me. We're going to talk about Chapter 8, but for now, this is one of the processes to identify and evaluate strategies.

While we are -- strategies do include policies, programs and projects, this discussion is really going to focus more on the project approach. And I know we've gone through a variety of the programs and policies in previous meetings.

So we want to outline the framework here in terms of the evaluation process -- in terms of, you know, identifying the solutions that meet future needs, and the needs analysis that you've seen previously in Chapter 5. And that's really what we're focused on in terms of how the projects, policies, programs meet those needs.

So there has been significant involvement with stakeholders through the various BNRSC meetings. Really significant discussions in the last two months, as we're compiling a more thorough assessment of the universe of projects across all modes.

So this framework -- just want to, you know, talk about it. Obviously, the framework is going to assess projects, programs, and policies. It's linked to the goals, the nine goals that we have established as part of the BTMP.
And there will be an analysis of the border crossings, as well as the corridors, and how that works region-wide or border-wide, as well as within the three border regions and the border crossings, as well as those corridors. So this is just the outline of the process.

And in later chapters, after our break, in Chapter 10 and 11, we're going to talk about the recommendations in Chapter 10. And then Chapter 11 is the implementation plan.

And just so you know, we are still compiling projects, working with the various stakeholders. We've received an tremendous amount of additional projects to add to our initial list. So the initial list here that we're presenting is preliminary, and probably -- I don't really know the number of additional projects, but it's probably going to be double the projects at least from the various regions.

So I just want to point that out, as we move through this analysis. So this is just preliminary and just shows the process. Next slide.

So as I talk about -- the current and future needs really drive this process in terms of, you know, identifying how these solutions meet those needs. We have defined this list and identified a list of programs, policies, and projects from a variety of sources.
So the main sources are existing plans and studies, and a lot of stakeholder input and feedback that we have conducted, in addition to the things that you know, Stephanie pointed out in Chapter 9. The process here really is linking these projects to the needs, as I talked about in Chapter 5 and by goal and category.

So the end result of this process, at least at this stage, before we get into implementation, is to evaluate the programs and projects into different tiers. And we call them high, medium, and low tiers, and I'll talk about that in a minute.

And of course, we are still working on, you know -- with the stakeholders on the, you know, getting additional information to support this. So we've talked about the policies and programs previously. You know, Gail and Camille and team have talked about the policies and programs, and how we're driving that.

But today, we really want to talk about the projects as part of the solution package. And these are very specific projects based on locations, geographic information, location information, and how those projects meet and satisfy or address needs across goal categories.

Kelly? So through the process of identifying this -- I call it a universe of potential policies, programs, and projects, like I said before, plans and
studies, you know, across the border region. I think we
looked at from 25 to 30 plans in our review, including
more in the last couple of months.

The stakeholder input has been critical. We've
conducted workshops with the BNRSC groups and subgroups
and also have identified projects through the BTMP
analysis.

The key to this whole process is to link the
goals, and to find metrics or criteria to represent the
objectives of those goals with the strategies, you know.
How they address those objectives based on the goals,
which -- it all feeds back to needs.

So I'd like to say a little bit about the data-
driven process. So in the needs analysis in Chapter 5, we
did a significant amount of geographic information system
and data analysis. And the majority of the nine goal
categories with multiple metrics are linked to those data
items and that geographic data.

So the location of, you know, accidents
across -- or crashes across different modes, trucks, cars,
and pedestrians, for example, or the location of
congestion. I'll talk about that in a little bit as well.

The process, while complicated, we're trying to make it
simple and transparent to understand how that data-driven
process works, to really identify what those projects --
how those projects rate within those tiers, high, medium, or low impact.

And that's how we're going to determine or at least identify how those projects -- what those impacts are across tiers in the border regions, border crossings and corridors. So just as -- we have a question about this?

I think we're using Mentimeter -- or not? We will have questions through this discussion, this -- Chapter 8, as well as 10 and 11. And Stephanie is going to drive this part of the process here in terms of any questions or comments you have, and we'd be happy to answer and respond to those comments.

(No response.)

MR. DECKER: If there are no comments now, I think we can move on. But please, let me know. We can field them during the presentation.

So in terms of the process for project evaluations, again, it's data-driven, stakeholder validation. We still have lots of work to go with the stakeholders to validate not only projects but the process. The measures again are going to be -- criteria is going to be supported by the goals, and then addressing each of the projects.

So certainly, it's a mix of mainly quantitative
data with some qualitative. We'll talk about defining these high, medium, and low tiers. Stakeholders are going to help drive the process. And then we're going to develop some scores, high, medium, and low, for each project, and put those in tiers to identify impact.

So this is a fairly complicated slide. We don't have to get into it in too much detail. So for the evaluations, we're looking at criteria or measures by border crossing. And then the next slide would be by corridor.

In this column to the left, it shows the goals, you know, mobility, reliability, safety, security, the nine goals. And the criteria basically are the sets of metrics we're using to assess, you know, high, medium, and low impact.

So you know, we don't have to go through each of these, but certainly, we're looking at total border crossing times for cars and trucks. Certainly, an issue that Chris and Donald talked about earlier, that we want to bring into it.

And crashes, we're looking at multimodal crashes, not just total, in addition to total. Certainly looking at asset conditions on international bridges and a variety of things when it comes to economics, including supply chain, gross domestic product impacts, you know,
how the projects support those, as Chris talked about earlier. There's good data on that.

So we went through, for each of the goals, several measures we're using in terms of criteria. And then the last column of the table represents the data in this data-driven approach that we're using -- focusing on.

And this slide shows corridor analysis, very similar evaluations with some differences. For example, asset condition with border crossings. This is going to be more pavement condition, bridge condition, and bridge vertical clearance standards on the transportation system.

So it's a little different. So there are some nuances between how we're measuring the corridors versus the border crossings, and then the data sources are very similar as well. But this is -- as you can note, this is very much data-driven.

Supporting this evaluation process, we worked with BTAC and the BNRSCs to define weights for each of the nine goal categories or nine goals. These are what we came up in the surveys we conducted during, I believe, the last meeting.

There's an average weight here for the whole -- for the border crossing across BTAC and the three BNRSC meetings. This is going to be used in the part of the process for each goal category by project to weight those,
based on the importance of the goal by you guys -- by the stakeholders.

So this just shows a summary of how a project would be scored. Each project would be scored either A, B or C, high, medium, or low impact, for each of the goals, based on those measures and criteria we talked about. We have a point scale here that could change, but we use 10 for A, 7.5 for B, and 5 for C, or low.

Then the weights -- the average weights applied here. And then we define the score based on those points and the weights, and the scale is 10 points. So this project would be a 7.29 project, this imaginary project.

And that's how all the projects are going to be scored through this process. With that said, I believe we're taking a break.

Or should I continue?

MS. MAYS: No. Actually, the next agenda item, Steve, is the regional discussions.

MR. DECKER: Okay. I'll hold off.

MS. MAYS: Okay. Secretary, our next agenda item is providing the regions with the opportunity to present on the regional priorities. And I think we have El Paso going first.

SECRETARY HUGHS: First? Let me ask, El Paso, do you feel that we're running up against the break time?
Do you want to take a quick break or are you ready to get started now?

MR. CALVO: This is Eduardo, Secretary. I'm okay, but it's up to you all. I'm not really sure how we are doing in terms of time, but it's up to you all. I'm okay.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Okay. So Caroline, do you want to go through this one and then take the break?

MS. MAYS: Yeah, yeah. Let's go through this and then take a break, and certainly, one, I don't want the regions to feel rushed.

We will make up time in the next two chapters, so we have built in some time there. We might take a short break after you all finish, and then come back to discuss those two chapters.

SECRETARY HUGHS: All right.

MS. MAYS: -- move forward.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Great. Then Eduardo, we'll hand it over to you, and thank you for putting this together. Looking forward to it.

MR. CALVO: All right. Thank you. Thank you very much, Secretary and BTAC members. This is a joint effort. You know, I put this together but, you know, David Coronado from the City and Tomas Trevino with the El Paso District and others, you know, helped a lot in
putting it together.

So again, you know, we are putting these priority projects and our priorities here, and we're also trying to frame it within the RMS 2020 which is the El Paso Regional Mobility Strategy that we developed. And somehow, it's a lot easier for us to come up with these priorities, because we already went through the process.

So next slide, please. So we're going to talk very briefly about the MPO region roadways first, within the RMS 2020 context. Some of the recent major investments that are going to put our priorities a little bit in context, show you also a binational, tri-state connectivity map that we recently [audio skip].

You know, I think it's very telling. It tells a lot of our -- a lot about our story here. Then I'll turn it over to David.

He'll talk about the City's international bridges projects. And then Tomas will close with the Presidio-Ojinaga, U.S. 67 corridor, which is outside, of course, of the El Paso MPO region, but it's also one of priorities for the El Paso district.

Next, please. Just some quick background on RMS 2020, the key features. This is a plan that we started about -- in May, about a year ago, more or less, and ended up with the Policy Board approving this plan in
December of last year.

But one of the highlights of that -- I really want to make sure everybody knows -- is that it was a very tough, but a very, you know, intense process, where we did look at all of the projects that we have here within the MPO region. And we went through a very thorough evaluation and prioritization process.

You see there some of the main features. We did use Decision Lens, which is a tool that TxDOT allowed us to use, and TxDOT uses also, to evaluate and prioritize projects internally. The fact that it's multimodal, multi-jurisdictional, and of course, for us, it's so important to look at the cross-border impacts and benefits of each individual project.

We looked at also multiple funding and financing sources, looking at innovative and traditional sources. And again, we were looking at the implementation target of five to seven years. Next slide, please.

So these are the top four priorities. Again, these are, obviously, more like regionally significant projects. The four projects that we identified, you see there on the map, what it -- some of the highlights here. In the map you see the border crossings, right -- going from left to right, Santa Teresa, which is New Mexico.

You see there, New Mexico 136 that leads from a
port of entry and then makes a right turn, and it connects to State Highway 178, Artcraft off in Texas. Well, all of that connection is tremendously important, because all that traffic goes onto I-10.

Then if we -- moving to the bottom, you see the -- another project on I-10, which is the Downtown 10 Project, or Segment 2 of the Reimagine I-10 Feasibility Study. That's our number-one priority project right now.

As you will see later on, you know, all of our movements here locally gravitate towards I-10, so -- including the movements through the -- our international border crossings.

So everything moves onto I-10, and so we -- there's been a lot of investments on other facilities, as you will see, leading to I-10. But right now, our top priority is to rebuild and improve I-10. So Segment 2, or the piece that goes through downtown, is our number-one priority.

And you see, it connects directly to the Bridge of the Americas there in the middle. Then moving to the east, we have Segment 3-A and B, which actually doesn't go all the way to Loop 375, but it's -- Segments A and B take us to the airport area.

Again, a tremendously important part of I-10 for us, that connects to the Bridge of the Americas. And
again, both Segment 2 and Segment 3, A and B, are not funded projects.

And then, finally, when we move to the top, you see the Borderland Expressway. This is another really cool project that -- it's not on I-10, but it supports the I-10 corridor, because it is a -- completes a bypass through El Paso, to the northern part of the metropolitan area. But it connects to New Mexico 404 and 213, as you can see there on the map.

So this is a really cool project, you know -- shows the coordination and collaboration with our neighbors in the state of New Mexico, who already have -- the improvements to 404 and 213 are already funded. So again, you know, we have included these projects in several presentations, and I know that Commissioners New and -- you know, have seen these presentations at the Texas Transportation Commission that we've made several times in person, and also virtually.

Next slide. Again, these are just quick snapshots of the individual projects, you know, the Keystone Project, the I-10 downtown segment. Again, the need -- in this case, this segment -- really, the pavement of bridge structures are in pretty bad shape, and I'm sure Tomas can give you a -- give us all a lot more details.

But it really is in bad shape, and it needs to
be, you know, rebuilt and -- you know, in the short term. Again, it also is a bottleneck. Currently, that piece is depressed and only has three lanes for direction.

There are four and five lanes on the opposite sides of downtown. So it really is a bottleneck. And of course, it connects to the I-10 -- connects into the Bridge of the Americas international crossing too. The estimate is about $750 million, and this project is currently not funded.

Next, please. Segment 3-A and 3-B is adjacent to Segment 2, but right there in the middle between where it says, "copia," that is the Bridge of the Americas. So you see that this segment of I-10 is adjacent to the spaghetti bowl that connects directly to the Bridge of the Americas.

Again, similar story. The pavement and bridges have reached their design life. There's also a need to redesign.

There's a lot of ramps, and there are a lot of operational issues. But it also provides access to one of the most important areas in our region, which is the Medical Center of the Americas.

It has -- you know, it houses a lot of, you know, start-ups, and it's also the gateway to the new medical school that opened up a few years ago, a new
dental school. So in terms of economic development and
cross-border movements, you know, this segment is also
tremendously important.

Next, please. So now, we go to Artcraft, which
is the one on the northwest part of El Paso. Again, this
is a very important project that improves the interchange
of I-10 and Artcraft. Again, as I've mentioned before,
this is a gateway to the state of New Mexico to the west.

It complements the investments that New Mexico
already made to 136. It's a gateway to the Union Pacific
intermodal facility out there in Santa Teresa, which is
again tremendously important for us. And so -- but again,
all of this traffic gravitates to I-10.

So again, I'm highlighting how important it is
to I-10. The cost, 193 million. This one was funded last
year by the Commission. So thank you very much,
Commissioners Ryan and New, for supporting this project in
last year's UTB -- actually, fiscal year '20 UTB.

Next, please. And then finally, the Borderland
Expressway. I already mentioned this collaboration with
the state of New Mexico. Again, it finishes that bypass
to the northern part of El Paso, and would allow through
trips that really have no business in El Paso to take an
alternate route, instead of taking I-10 through the
downtown area and the -- you know, where we have most
of -- the highest traffic volumes in the region, along I-10.

Next, please. So I wanted also to show you what we are currently doing in -- here in El Paso. This is a shot of Loop 375 between the Zaragoza port of entry, or the Zaragoza International Crossing to the left. And then right there in the middle, you see the Americas interchange, which is the interchange with I-10.

So currently, TxDOT is spending about $100 million in improvements to that piece of Loop 375. Of course, that is the gateway to the Zaragoza Bridge, and it also complemented what -- the project that you see there in yellow, which is a $12 million project that was sponsored by the City of El Paso, which provides a -- sort of, like, a back-door access to the Zaragoza International Bridge.

These two projects collectively, you know, improve tremendously the -- you know, the operations of that bridge. But again, knowing that the traffic eventually leads to I-10, you see the logic here of the I-10 and Americas interchange, where the region invested close to $200 million to build that fully directional interchange on I-10. Again, ultimately, all the traffic leads to I-10.

Next, please. And in this slide, we're showing
a project that is currently under construction, which
is -- it's called the I-10 Connect Project, that is
building a lot of improvements to -- a lot more
connections between the border highway and I-10 and U.S.
54. But more importantly, all of -- you know, all of
these lead also to I-110, which is the gateway to the
Bridge of the Americas.

So a lot of these improvements will benefit the
cross-border movement of both trucks and personal
vehicles. It's a $96 million project that is currently
under construction. Next, please.

And finally, this is a map that I mentioned
before that we received from IMIP, the Planning Institute
in Ciudad Juarez, which really puts into perspective the
binational, you know, perspective of our transportation
model, right. You see there in the middle the -- in light
blue, that is the river. So that's obviously the border.

But you see there in purple, starting in the
north, that's Loop 375 in El Paso. But as you go to the
south and you move then to the Zaragoza Crossing, which is
there, number two, that leads to the loop in Ciudad
Juarez.

We have major developments, you know, for new
industrial parks and all that. So that loop in purple
that you see there is tremendously important. What I'm,
again, going to highlight is that, you know, this is a real binational strategy that we're looking at here.

And of course, the crossings are the -- you know, sort of, like, our -- in a way, it's our choke point, but it's actually the connection between the two.

So again, the map also shows some of the priority projects in -- for Ciudad Juarez and the state of Chihuahua.

At the bottom, you see there the -- what's still pending, the Libramiento that would go from Samalayuca to the east, and leading to the Tornillo-Guadalupe Port of Entry. And then going to the west, you see also the rail bypass, which is an important project also, that the state of New Mexico is putting into their own border master plan.

That was a really cool feasibility study that was done to look at the -- build a bypass that would improve the movement of freight rail through our region. We know that's very, very constrained right now, physically, what we have -- what we have today.

So with that, the next slide. David, I'll turn it over to you.

MR. CORONADO: Okay. Thank you, Eduardo. Good morning, everybody. David Coronado with the City of El Paso Bridges. So we -- like Eduardo said, we’ve been working with this, with the original partners, these
priorities, you know, for years now.

    Before I go into the need of the projects and
the list and how we can help compound them, I want to give
you some background on our efforts in El Paso and Juarez.
So over the last five years, as we -- since we, our team,
joined Bridges, you know -- there was some restructuring
within the City to revamp the departments, to revamp our
efforts, change the focus of Bridges away from just a cash
cow into more of a investment opportunity, economic
development opportunities, you know, reinvestment back
into the infrastructure.

    Not only for the City-owned bridges, but the
other three as well:  Santa Teresa, the County, and BOTA.
And so working with the City and the other stakeholders,
we created a Bridges Steering Committee, similar to what
you stated for this, for this Border Master Plan, right.

    When I see your list of meetings I notice
you've held, I know the pain.  I know it takes a lot of
time to put to you all.  You know, similar with our group.

    We've had the committee for -- in place for
five years now.  It takes a lot of work, a lot of
manpower, a lot of hours, right, to keep the committee
dynamic, keep the discussions active, you know, talking
about projects, talking about, you know, issues with
processing, you know, trucks, the pandemic, the migration
There's all these events that happen that have an impact on crossings, totally outside of our control. So we have to adjust to it, right? And so the City can't do it alone. The MPO can't do it alone. The County can't do it alone.

And so working with this committee over the last five years, we've done a lot of work with the group. You know, we've had -- like I said, five years. We've only cancelled one meeting one month out of those five years, and that's when the Pope went to Juarez.

We just had to kind of -- it was on the same week. We had to. There was a lot of other issues, right -- security issues, things like that.

And so that just shows you how active our group is. Now, with the pandemic, now we have the meetings more often actually, perhaps every two weeks at times, as more events take place and unfold, and there's a requirement to coordinate.

And so anyway, so with the committee, we -- what we've done is -- back in '15 we visited every single port of entry, not only on the El Paso side, but also on the Juarez side, for all three modes, walked it through, rode in a bus, and actually, we were in a truck.

To actually see the process step by step, all
the stops, all the checks, the checkpoints. The -- we crossed and mapped every single crossing both ways, both directions for all three modes. Looked at wait times. Looked at other issues, you know, anything from a sidewalk crack to major renovation opportunities for expansion at the ports of entry.

And so we did that, and we created like a capital public program for all these bridges. Came up with more than 100 ideas for improvements and programs and projects to modernize the facilities, to improve the wait times, to improve throughput. And so all this done with the stakeholders.

So it's not just a City plan. It's a regional plan, both El Paso and Juarez. And so that's a little background of what we've done. You see some pictures there on the slide. Go to the next slide, our site visits.

Go to the next slide. So here, we have -- what we submitted to you all for consideration for this Border Master Plan is essentially four lists of regional needs for El Paso and Juarez, and these lists were created with all these stakeholders.

You know, not all of them are here. There's more than 20 of them on the group, including private sector stakeholders, las maquiladoras, transportistas. We
have INDEX. We have custom brokers. There's a lot of involvement aside from just the governmental agencies, you know, the bridge users.

And so the four lists are essentially the city of El Paso -- you know, our CIP for bridges that is totally city-funded from revenue from the tolls from the bridges. We have the Bridges Steering Committee projects and programs.

There's two separate lists. All of those are created and generated from those work sessions that we've had over the last five years at these sites at each of the bridges. So, again, with input of the office of the CBP, from Aduana, from all the stakeholders.

The third list is a list of the needs that the State of Chihuahua and the City of Juarez created for the projects in Juarez alone, and again, many of those are binational as well. And so this list right now that we have -- I want to make sure that I mention this -- is a preliminary list.

They are still vetting those projects within each of the agencies and ministries within the State of Chihuahua and the City of Juarez. So expect some revisions in the next couple of days or weeks from us, from the crew.

And then the last list is a list that was
compiled by CBP and GSA for local needs, you know, what are the most high-priority, high-impact needs that they have right now? You know, a huge one that they have on the list, there's a BOTA expansion and modernization effort.

They underwent a feasibility study at BOTA. Over the last couple of years, they completed it. And that project total is $500 million. A huge project to modernize the BOTA facility, CBP, to go along with I-10 Connect and the improvements in the area.

And so again -- so that's the four lists. And so right now -- go to the next slide -- I want to just highlight some of those high-priority impact projects that we're working on right now with the City and all the stakeholders, that are active and are being funded.

So the first one is an ITS project at BOTA Ysleta to work with the other improvements along the Loop, along Winn Road, along I-10 Connect. And so this is a project that TxDOT and the City are leading, working with the other stakeholders, with CBP, with TTI, to make sure that the new devices are connected with the BCIS system we have in place with EPPD, and we have a stakeholder with the City of Juarez.

And so it's an ITS program. We've developed and finished the cut-outs for the infrastructure, to be
able to have a way to connect the new improvements and 
have all the agencies interact and access that the data in 
real time. You know, traffic feeds, internet devices, 
weight collection devices, cameras, that alert travelers, 
you know, help the public, you know, and incidents, things 
like that.

And so this one is right now underway. We are 
working, like I said, with TxDOT and all these 
stakeholders to get this project completed over the next 
couple of years. And again, also this is going to help us 
with our ITS system at the City and help us at the City to 
integrate with (speaking Spanish), which is our 
counterpart on the Mexican side for the three bridges.

You know, we want to make sure that we allow 
the chance for users to have just one tag, one account, 
and be able to have that tag be compatible with both the 
City comm system and the comiso system. Not only the tag 
itsel, but also the traffic feeds, the wait time, uploads 
and devices, things like that.

We want to have those systems being compatible 
and integrated on both our systems, both our websites, to 
allow the public to access the information for all these 
border crossings before they get to the bridge, before 
they get stuck in the queue. So we go to the next slide.

The next one is essentially an ITS 2.0, to
complete the system city-wide. This is a future project that we want to pursue with the City and with all the stakeholders to add PDN, Paso del Norte, inside the bridges, to build off of the ITS improvement at BOTA and Zaragoza, but also include the downtown bridges, you know, which work as a system.

Right? There's substitutes of each other in many different ways throughout the day, and throughout, you know, different dynamics and events. And so again, similar concept. DMSs, CCTV cameras, weight collection devices, to complete the system in El Paso with ETI, with BCIS, to have both southbound and northbound wait time data, crossing data for vehicle and trucks, and pedestrians as well.

And again, this one is about 12, $15 million for the downtown bridges alone. And again, it will complete the ITS program city-wide. And if you could go to the next slide?

Another project, this is a big one for us. Similar to like I said, at BOTA, we want to do this same to conduct a study and project at Zaragoza and Ysleta. You know, here on the right, you see the facilities that are owned by multiple agencies. In red is the City, and blue is CBP and -- or GSA, and then in yellow is DPS on the US side.
On the Mexican side, we have Aduana. That was with presence of Fideicomiso. And so again, this one is trying to build off of all these improvements that Eduardo already mentioned. You know, we have the Bridges of America, we have a lot of projects on the Loop.

We have the new investments that the City is making with TxDOT from the IPS at BOTA and Zaragoza, and also Fideicomiso is by now undergoing the same project, working on the same project with the ITS system, the [indiscernible] system as well.

And so there's been a lot of investment over the last few years. Today, you know, it continues. I want to also reconfigure the entire facility on the Mexican side for trucks. Just three years ago, they finished -- four years ago, they finished in 2016.

So again, we want to take that next step, conduct a study, look at the needs, look at what we need to upgrade as far as the layout, the infrastructure, the lanes, the facilities, you know, the FMCSA, all the pieces.

So this is one that we want to pursue, high priority for us to take Zaragoza to the next level and we’ve unveiled all these improvements that we've made already with the stakeholders in El Paso and Juarez at this port.
And you know, the City of Juarez and El Paso, they’re both growing to the east. You know, we’re landlocked in many ways in the other parts of the city, but to the east, there’s a lot of opportunity; you know, a new investment.

And so Zaragoza and Ysleta-Zaragoza Port of Entry is one that we are kind of focused on for that expansion, and to be able to keep up with the growth. And the next slide. And this is my last. I’ll be turning it over to TxDOT.

So this is a new program that we implemented in 2019. I mentioned this a couple times in a few meetings. It’s a cross-border survey.

This is a program that the City is right now working on with Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Juarez and Tijuana to have a cross-border survey implemented on the Mexican side, interview pedestrians and people in vehicles as they cross into El Paso; not only Mexico residents, but also El Paso residents or U.S. residents, after they have gone to Juarez and they come back home.

So we have an entry survey for Mexican residents, and we have an exit survey for U.S. residents. We actually are going to present the findings of this survey that we have right now at City Council next week on Tuesday. So you know, I’d be happy to brief you all on
the results at the next BTAC meeting, if there's time.

A really, really interesting project. It's not only just a one-time snapshot in time. It's a year-long project. We have interviewers -- I'll talk about that right now, you know, Monday through Sunday, 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. at night, interviewing folks.

We have more than, you know, 10,000 surveys that we collected since October 2019 through the middle of March. So we have two solid orders of data that we have with this survey, talking about, you know, trip purpose, how much money they spent, where they went, origin, destination.

So there's a lot of information here that we don't have -- that we didn't have before, that doesn't exist, at least for a long period of time. Once COVID is over, there's a vaccine, the restrictions are lifted, you know, for international travel, we want to -- we're going to resume the project, hopefully, early next year. And then continue it, essentially in perpetuity, to always keep a pulse of what's happening at ports of entry, measure the economic impact of those crossings, not only for Juarez residents coming into El Paso, but also El Pasoans going to Juarez.

And so this is a really critical program for us to get information on what the region is experiencing at
the ports of entry. It will help us attract new flights to El Paso. It will help us attract businesses, retain business in El Paso.

So this is, again, critical for us, but I wanted to highlight today to you all that, you know, we can share with you the results at the next meeting, perhaps. And with that, I'll pass it over to TxDOT, Tomas.

Thank you.

MR. TREVINO: Thank you, David. For the record, Tomas Trevino, District Engineer, TxDOT-El Paso. I just wanted to make mention of our Presidio Port of Entry. We -- in February of this year, we concluded 162-mile corridor study for U.S. 67 that goes from Presidio to Fort Stockton.

This corridor study identified current and future needs for the 67 corridor. The port of entry at Presidio currently handles about 62 million tons of cargo a year with an economic value of about $151 billion. This is projected to increase to 142 million tons of cargo, with an economic value of about $390 billion by the year 2045.

Currently, we are building another international bridge at the city of Presidio. We also have a project to rehabilitate 72 miles of the Pacifico
Railroad from Presidio to Paisano Junction. We have a couple of safety projects on the U.S. 67 corridor to install rumble strips and passing lanes from -- two passing lane sections from Marfa to Presidio.

Current needs are safety-related. Future needs, of course, will also be safety-related along the U.S. 67 corridor for additional passing lanes throughout the route, and operational improvements through the communities of Presidio, Marfa and Alpine, all in an effort to get goods and cargo to the I-10 corridor at Fort Stockton and potentially onto the I-20 corridor, using State Highway 285 from Fort Stockton to I-20.

With that, I want to be mindful of everybody's time. So I'm going to pass it back to Eduardo to close us out.

MR. CALVO: Thank you, Tomas. Yeah. Just a couple of things that I failed to mention, but when I talked about the four priority projects within the MPO region, the total of those four projects adds up to $1.9 billion, of which 200 roughly has been funded.

So just on the three remaining priority projects, we are in $1.7 billion, more or less, of need. That is the top priority projects. If you add all the other projects that are in the region, you know, our need is, you know, a lot more than that, and that's something
that, you know, obviously, we need to quantify.

Finally, I know that State Representative Lina Ortega is on the line, and I think, Lina, you wanted to make some comments. So --

REP. ORTEGA: Good morning. And thank you, Eduardo. I will be brief, because I know that there is a time crunch here. But I really appreciate the opportunity just to add a little bit more. As a State Representative, I serve on the El Paso MPO, and I am currently the vice chair of the Policy Board.

And I want to echo what has been said and what has been presented in great detail and explanation. This community has some very specific projects that you have heard that are driven not only by safety needs, but by border growth.

And what's also important is that these projects will also help with economic development, not only in this community, but the state of Texas. The top priority that's very important to El Paso and greatly benefits the state of Texas is I-10. And so I want to thank you all for allowing me to actually sit in and to listen and to learn from everything that this great Committee has been doing.

Thank you, Eduardo, and I pass it back to you.

MR. CALVO: Thank you very much,
Representative. I think that's it for us, Caroline, if you want to move on. Thank you.

MS. MAYS: Yes, yeah. Thank you, Representative. Thank you, Eduardo, David and Tomas, for the great presentation for El Paso region. I will just give maybe a few seconds. Anybody want to ask questions of our El Paso delegation on what they have presented, you know, before we move to Laredo?

I know there was some comments or questions in the chat box, and I think those have been answered. Any other questions for them?

MR. BARELA: I do. This is Jon Barela. Very quickly, Madame Secretary and Caroline and colleagues. I just want to echo all of the comments and thank our team in El Paso that has worked so hard on these transportation plans.

I tell you that we are seeing an enormous amount of reshoring opportunities from China, and [audio interference] in our region and [audio interference] this horrible background noise is. But we are seeing incredible growth and reshoring opportunities, nearshoring opportunities from China, primarily, in light of a variety of global issues.

So this is going to be a thing to really -- for all of us to watch. I know we all are doing that already.
But tremendous opportunity in this time of crisis for our state and in all of our border communities.

But again, I want to thank Eduardo and David and Tomas and certainly Representative Ortega for their leadership. It really supplements what we're doing in terms of our business relocation and expansion opportunities, and we're very excited about those opportunities here in the next year or so.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. Jon, thank you for those comments. You know, we really appreciate it. Again, any last questions or comments for El Paso?

(No response.)

SECRETARY HUGHS: Okay. Thank you. Terrific presentation. It was very helpful for us. I've been looking forward to these regional presentations. Appreciate the time that went into it, and Representative Ortega [audio interference] tangible numbers of projects. It was very helpful to this work. So thank you for that effort and for that presentation and for your continued participation.

MR. CALVO: Okay. Thank you all.

MS. MAYS: Okay. Laredo? David, you're starting?

MR. SALAZAR: Yes, ma'am. Good morning, Caroline. Good morning, Secretary of State Hughes,
Commissioner Ryan and Commissioner New. We're going to take a different approach on our presentation.

I'm going to turn the floor over to opening comments from the Mayor of the city of Del Rio, Mayor Bruno; the Mayor of city of Eagle Pass, Mr. Sifuentes; of course, the Mayor of Laredo, Mayor Pete Saenz.

So I'm going to turn it over to them before we get to the presentation for opening comments, and then you can be able to hear from them once again, once we close the presentation, for closing comments. So Mayor Bruno, the floor is yours.

MAYOR LOZANO: Good morning, everybody. I'll try not to take up too much time. I just wanted to emphasize the importance of the Segment 3 portion of the Ports-to-Plains Feasibility Study. A lot of that information has been collected by -- from TxDOT and presented at the Advisory Committee.

So, many of the high-priority projects that were listed include relief routes around Del Rio, Eagle Pass and other communities between Eagle Pass and Laredo. I know that Laredo and Eagle Pass are also in the works of establishing another relief route directly from the World Trade Bridge, and I'll let those mayors talk on that project.

Also, something that I want to emphasize as far
as another project that's outside of the Ports-to-Plains Feasibility Study is the expansion of Highway 90 between Uvalde and Del Rio. It's currently a two-lane highway, and with the increased traffic coming to Del Rio north to the Permian Basin area for energy, it's become one of the highest priorities also for east and westbound traffic between Del Rio and San Antonio.

So although it's not going to be in Mr. Salazar's presentation, that's something that I did advise the recruiter regarding project prioritization. So that pretty much sums up in general what I wanted to emphasize, the Ports-to-Plains projects and the Highway 90 eastbound from Del Rio to Eagle Pass expansion project to a four-lane, divided highway.

And I'll give the floor to Mayor Sifuentes of Eagle Pass.

(Pause.)

MR. SALAZAR: I believe the Mayor is having issues trying to get on to voice his remarks. One --

MAYOR SIFUENTES: I'm on, David.

MR. SALAZAR: -- oh, there you are. I'm sorry, Mayor. Go ahead, sir.

MAYOR SIFUENTES: Sorry, sorry. I got interrupted right as you were calling. Hello, thanks, David. Great meeting going on. Great to be a part of it.
First one, so a lot of information I'm trying to soak in. It's more than I've been listening to.

But we've had great conversations with TxDOT, the Laredo district, David Salazar and his staff. We meet. We have phone conferences every other week and we address issues.

And we're looking for expansions to our bridge system, especially Camino Real, the entry and the exit, in and out of the port. And also -- looking also down the road to expand the bridge to add more lanes. And those are discussions we're having with them and thoughts we're thinking of to try to improve our mobility here.

And in discussions with Gerry and Dennis a couple days ago, you know, we're looking to also keep pushing that 1021 expansion to finish that road to help expedite I-27 also, the Ports-to-Plains. So just a few things going on, and we're in constant communication with David.

So we really appreciate that, David. You know, it's always difficult taking on a new transition, and you've been there, like, a year now, and I can say that we've had great relationships, and we continue to have those -- that working relationship to make improvements on our corridors.

Thank you to all.
(Pause.)

SECRETARY HUGHS:  David, you're muted.

MAYOR SAENZ:  David?

MR. SALAZAR:  Yes, sir, Mayor. Go ahead.

MAYOR SAENZ:  Okay. Thank you. Yeah. Thank you. Can you all hear me okay?

MR. SALAZAR:  Yes, sir.

SECRETARY HUGHS:  Yes.

MAYOR SAENZ:  Wonderful. Thank you. Madame Secretary, thank you for having us, and of course, the Commissioners Ryan and New, we appreciate all the help and assistance. You both in particular, but the other Commissioners as well, and of course, Caroline, and the entire TxDOT team that's behind all of this as well.

And of course, all the members, thank you for having us. And I know we're running short on time, and I'll be brief as well. We're very fortunate to have David Salazar as our District Engineer here in the Laredo district.

We have multiple projects moving on. As y'all can imagine, if y'all all visualize Port of Laredo, the city of Laredo, we have I-35 run through the middle, which is really the aorta for our country, and I guess one of the primary aortas. We have I-59 going east and now Ports-to-Plains, which we're trying to expand and very
much in favor of.

So we have multiple projects here on I-35. We need to expand those and alleviate the traffic that we have there too, but of course, we have our two major bridges, one in particular, the World Trade Bridge, on 1472.

We want to alleviate congestion there, and I think Mayor Bruno, you know, mentioned this. It would be great to have that relief -- the alternative relief route extending 1472, which is the Mines Road. We call it the Mines Road to Eagle Pass and Del Rio as part of the Ports-to-Plains project.

And I know it's being considered, and I believe it's moving forward as well. We have -- thank you so much to the Commissioners also on the monies that were sent last year. This -- that should complete that section of Loop 20 which will be converted to I-69 from International Boulevard down to U.S. 59, and that will be, you know, to interstate standards, obviously.

But we also need to complete that Loop 20 from that portion all the way south to connect to U.S. 83, which is Zapata Highway. So we need to have at least one complete loop, and that's something that we've been emphasizing as a community as well.

And of course, the outer loop alignment is also
very, very important for future development as well. And then we have the -- you know, the inner city that connects to our two bridges, commercial bridges, and to alleviate traffic within that area. And that's the Hachar-Reutlinger beltway which parallels I-35 on the west, and it connects to I-35 eventually at the nine-, 10-mile marker of I-35.

And then we have a master plan, a bridge master plan, that we've been working on, because we've got these commercial bridges, and we have two other bridges in the downtown area. But of course, as we've seen from the data presented, the numbers are just going to be exacerbated, so we need that fortified bridge on the south.

We need to know exactly how that's going to tie into the outer loop, and of course, the World Trade Bridge, the degree of expansion that may be required. And then we need to still emphasize the Colombia Bridge, which is underutilized.

And we need our Mexican counterparts also to do their part on the Mexican side to make that bridge, you know, even more viable. You know, it's important now, but it could be even more viable in the future.

With that, I thank you for listening. David Salazar, the engineer, will highlight these projects, or at least some of them. This would give you a pretty good...
idea as to what's happening here in Laredo.

Thank you very much, Madame Secretary, and we'll take any questions later. Thank you.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Thank you, Mayor. It's good to see you.

MR. SALAZAR: Thank you, Mayor Saenz, and Mayor Sifuentes, and Mayor Lozano. You made it a lot easier for me. I'll just get to throw up the maps. So great job.

So where is Laredo? So let's look at it. So Laredo is one of the major ports of entry for the U.S. right now and, I like to think, where the magic begins for IH-35.

Looking at our geographical location within the state of Texas, there's three -- it's a three-pronged solution for our mobility issues and congestion issues in the Laredo district, the first and foremost being the I-35 corridor. The other one would be the I-59/I-69 initiative headed east out of Laredo towards Houston and the ports. And of course, our Ports-to-Plains, which will run west of Laredo towards Del Rio and Eagle Pass, and continue up to the Panhandle of Texas, which is Interstate 27.

So we have three major freight corridors in our district that we are collaborating, working with our officials, our government, local governments, to try to bring some projects to alleviate some of the congestion
that we're seeing, as it comes into Laredo. So if you can move on to the next slide please?

I'm going to discuss some projects that have happened, some that are happening, and some that we hope to happen in the future. Next slide, please. So this project was just completed, U.S. 59, IH-35 – maintenance of Union Pacific and 35.

The importance of this project was that it comes from World Trade Bridge heading east on 69 towards Houston and 35. What this project did was, it eliminated an at-grade crossing, hence removing the dreaded red light that never seems to change on time.

So now vehicles coming out of World Trade Bridge, which is one of our busiest ports, can directly fly over 35 and get on 35 without coming to a complete halt, thus alleviating congestion coming over World Trade Bridge No. 4.

This project was recently completed at a cost of 26.5 million. It is part of the I-69 initiative. Next slide, please. Next slide.

And these projects are currently under construction. Again, this project was set in June 20 of this year. It's a $115 million project.

What this project does, it also alleviates the mobility and congestion that's being addressed at the
World Trade Bridge as traffic is coming across. Again, the biggest land port, averaging about 10,000 trucks a day crossing at World Trade Bridge.

So what this project is going to allow them to do is, basically, come on out east of the bridge towards 35 and continue up north and south. And it's going to alleviate traffic on the I-35 corridor where it's going to cross at that point.

We're really excited about this project. We're looking to get it started here before the end of the year, so we're really happy with this project. Again, it's something that we have planned for years to address the mobility and congestion issues of the World Trade Bridge facility.

Next slide, please. This project let in August 2020 of this year. It's a $14 million project. And again, it's addressing the congestion at the World Trade Bridge crossing.

This is going to take the current I-69 bridge, widen out to six lanes in each direction. It is going to allow for more traffic to flow through between the World Trade Bridge and towards the destination of 35 or 59.

As you can see by the bottom-half corner of that slide, World Trade Bridge is our busiest bridge, averaging peaks of about 13,000 ADT a day at some points,
trucks crossing our bridge. So you can imagine what that does to an intersection such as 35 and 69.

So this project, we're hoping, will alleviate a lot of that congestion that we've seen at this point.

Something to point out. North of the I-69 project that's highlighted in yellow, you will see Farm-to-Market Road 1472. The Mayor refers to it as Mines Road. That is basically at the northern portion of Laredo in a warehouse district.

On the other side of that, you see IH-35, which heads up towards San Antonio. Something interesting here is that Interstate 35 is currently carrying 55,000 average daily -- vehicles per day, with 44 percent trucks, in comparison to Farm-to-Market 1472 that is carrying 16,080 average daily vehicles, with 60 percent trucks.

So you can see the dilemma that we have in this region. And then a little bit further on in the presentation, I will present some solutions that we're presenting and some solutions that are happening now to help alleviate some of that congestion, basically, in the warehouse district of Laredo on the northern side of I-69.

Next slide. Something else that we are -- happening with the Ports-to-Plains corridor, and a project that is of great importance to us, is the connection between the city of Del Rio and the city of Eagle Pass on
This is the proposed route for the proposed Ports-to-Plains route. We are taking this two-lane highway and we're making it passing lanes there. We'll consider a super two-way, where we can have passing lanes.

So we are currently working on this project. It is under construction, and it's closely nearing completion. But again, this is part of the initiative to alleviate the traffic that matches in line with the directives of the Ports-to-Plains initiative.

Next slide, please. This is the city of Eagle Pass. As you approach it, another route that is directly connected to the Ports-to-Plains is the widening of U.S. 277.

It is near completion right now. It connects to the vital port of entry of the city of Eagle Pass, as well as the new 480 that passes around the city of Eagle Pass. So this project is also near completion.

We also have a local effort, in working with conjunction through a kind of funding options with the City of Eagle Pass, and that was the completion of upgrade intersection on U.S. 277, U.S. 57 intersection. U.S. 57 is a vital port for -- it's a vital route between Eagle Pass and the city of San Antonio. So this is a good effort with collaborative funding that we were able to
complete, with the assistance of the City of Eagle Pass.

Next slide. This is also some of our current projects with our current funding that we were able to work hand in hand with the elected officials and the city folks of the City of Del Rio and the County of Valverde and Del Rio. And this is their major port of entry, Bridge 1, for the City of Del Rio, basically, where their large warehouse district is.

So these projects, in a total of about $10 million, would help alleviate some of the traffic that they're seeing in their warehouse districts. And this is a great joint venture again with the City of Del Rio and the County of Valverde. That are -- some are completed and some are just going to be under construction.

Next slide. Next slide. So these are some upcoming projects that we have planned in the future for the Laredo district, and again, this is the I-35 corridor.

We mentioned the direct connections at the intersection of 69 and 35 at the World Trade Bridge. So we have a project considered for direct traffic three and that's going to let September 24.

This project is completely funded. What this is going to do: it's going to allow traffic heading on Loop 20 to head south, direct to 35. And it's also going to allow traffic headed from World Trade Bridge to head
south on 35, thus again eliminating an at-grade intersection. So it will help the flow of traffic coming out of the World Trade Bridge.

There is also a bridge re-pavement and widening of IH-35 at Uniroyal Interchange in northern in Laredo. This is where the growth of Laredo is headed to when it comes to the warehousing district. We've seen major growth there, so this project is going to help alleviate the congestion that we're seeing on 35 now.

And the other project that we have is a bridge re-pavement at Milepost 18. The importance of this project is that it's going to take 35 to six lanes in each direction. But more important, this is a future Ports-to-Plains route -- proposed route of 35 to 83, that will eventually head up to Del Rio.

So we have a plan. We have plans to widen 35 and do a flyover, so traffic will not have an at-grade crossing, and continue on up to Carrizo Springs, Eagle Pass and Del Rio. Total construction costs for these projects are in the amount of $220 million.

Again, a major corridor for Laredo, IH-35. So you can see the effort that would be put into 35 to help alleviate that. Next slide, please.

And again, on U.S. 69 in Laredo, this is within the city limits of the city of Laredo. On the northwest
portion, you'll see where World Trade Bridge comes in to 69. This is going to be the expansion of the current loop 69. It's going to encompass five interchanges, with six lanes of traffic in each direction with frontage
roads, again, alleviating traffic coming out of World Trade Bridge, down to 59, through I-69. That way routing traffic out of the World Trade Bridge directly towards Houston district and the third prong of our major corridors within the Laredo district.

Total construction costs for these projects is in the $200 million range, with three interchanges scheduled to let in 2022 and the remaining two scheduled to let in 2024. Next slide, please.

These are additional roadways that we have funded out of Laredo, and this is the extension of 359. The importance of the 359 project, on the bottom, highlighted in red there, is while we've seen growth in Laredo towards the north, when it comes to warehousing and economic development for businesses, the majority of the residents of the city of Laredo are seeing neighborhoods pop up on the 359 portion. And that's since the folks are traveling from 359 to come to work in the northern parts of Laredo. So what this 359 widening is going to do, it's
going to take it out to four lanes, divided highway, two miles out. But this is going to -- it's more of a safety concern for us because of the population growth that we're seeing in housing in this situation.

We are expanding that roadway, again, and it's going to tie into the outer -- both the outer loop. Basically, what was happening with this location here is that we're seeing that a lot of those folks are traveling north. So we're hoping to alleviate some of that congestion by the proposed outer loop and loop to 69 project.

Another project that has not been funded right now, that we are working on, is the I-35 Carrier and Tres Equis Bridge in the northern portion of Laredo. Again, that is to alleviate some of the traffic in the northern portion of our warehouse districts to help them widen out those bridge crossings.

And the other one will be Milepost 20 at the Border Patrol inspection checkpoint, where we are widening to six lanes of traffic, with a proposed plan to take 35 from the city limits of Laredo up into the San Antonio district two counties away, with six lanes of traffic all the way through. Next slide, please.

Here's some things that are happening that the Mayor alluded to, which was the outer loop, that currently
is estimated construction costs of $418 million dollars. We currently have a feasibility study, schematic environmental study. It is funded.

We do not have right-of-way construction funded for it. But the importance of this bridge, if you notice on the south side, is that we have the proposed future Bridge 5 that we’ve been in talks with our counterparts in Mexico.

This is an alternate route, again, for traffic that is coming into Nuevo Laredo, to take this outer loop and then to head up north towards that San Antonio or take the outer loop and head out east towards Houston. But again, I think this loop is going to service where we're seeing a lot of the housing development south of Laredo, and tied into where folks are going to work on a daily basis, which is the northern part of Laredo.

Total construction costs for this is $418 million. The importance of this, again, is to tie into the proposed Bridge 5 south of Laredo. Next slide, please.

Currently, this is something that we are looking to, that Mayor Saenz alluded to, which is the continuation of Loop 20, which is 59-I-69 south towards the proposed Bridge 5. We're currently under study -- studying this project right now, again, to alleviate some
of the traffic that we're seeing on the U.S. 83 route and help with the congestion issue of getting people from the south to the northern portions, so they can get to their work areas.

Next slide. This -- these are projects that are not funded, that are happening throughout out the city of Laredo, again, to alleviate the traffic on the Mines Road, F.M. 1472 to 35. And that is the upgrade of 3338, which runs from Colombia Toll Road to 1472.

It is an alternative route, a relief route. And we are proposing a five-lane highway on that to alleviate that congestion off the Mines Road to 35.

We're also proposing an 83 upgrade, which is from 35 toward Carrizo, with a four-lane divided. Again, this route is part of the Ports-to-Plains, so we want to go ahead and jump on it and start planning that.

The other project that we have is, again, the U.S. 59-I-69 route towards Houston that we're currently working. That funding we're currently looking at. Next slide, please.

This project is in the city of Eagle Pass. It has been designed and waiting. Environmental has been cleared. Right of way has been acquired. This is about a $97 million construction project.

It will, in essence, bring the Loop 480 in
Eagle Pass to closure. It is the last leg of that loop. In essence, folks will be coming in from 277 and be able to head to Del Rio.

The importance of this project: it is on the Ports-to-Plains route as well. So we're hoping to get funding for it soon. Next slide, please.

This is something that we're very proud of. This again, if you can recall, the Mines Road, 1472, that had the large amount of traffic, [indiscernible] and 35. This is a project that's coming to fruition, working with the RMA and local city officials with an estimated cost of $22 million.

We've been trying to get the funding. This is a great project. It is a relief route for 1472/35, currently under construction, with RMA and the City of Laredo.

Next slide. This project here is something that we're very proud of. It's called -- it is Hachar-Reuthinger Parkway, and this project is again tying in Mines Road to 35, alleviating a lot of the traffic from the housing districts, and heading out to 35.

But more important, it will connect -- where we're seeing a lot of the development right now on 35 when it comes to warehousing and on Mines Road, and know that in the future, once we open this roadway, it will
alleviate a lot of that 16,000 ADT off from Mines Road to help alleviate that congestion, and get them in and out of the ports toward the northern portion of the state, without having to come to the city limits of Laredo, thus reducing congestion at that point.

This is a $68.5 million project. What we're most proud of is that we are collaborating with the County of Webb and the City of Eagle Pass in a joint venture to come -- to bring this project which is scheduled to let in August '24, I believe.

Next, please. Ah, that was quicker than I thought. I kind of rushed through it. I know that everybody is edgy to get going with the next presentation from the Pharr district. I'll open it up for any questions at this time.

(No response.)

MR. SALAZAR: And if not, I would like to turn it over to the mayors, if they have any closing comments that they'd like to bring to the table before we turn the presentation over.

MAYOR SIFUENTES: David, if I may? Luis Sifuentes.

MR. SALAZAR: Yes, sir.

MAYOR SIFUENTES: Yeah. Just one thing that we've been discussing here in our community, and I don't
know if we can reach out to the government. But they're going to spend $75 million tearing down a fence, a border fence, to replace it with a somewhat uglier fence.

I mean, the fence we have right now is actually nice. And I just wondered if there's anything that we can do collaboratively to address our federal government in maybe allocating those resources to some of these projects that we're looking at.

And when I mentioned 1021 expansion, that is Old Mines Road over here. In our part, it's called 1021. So very important. And also, I forgot to mention -- also, the completion of our Loop 480 is another major thing that we've been discussing.

So hopefully, we can work on that. But more importantly, there's a lot of money the government's using right now, or proposing, especially in our area, that's going to start pretty soon, that -- complete removal of a fence to replace it with another fence, for a cost of 75 million, at least what we hear for now.

So monies that we could use for better purposes.

MR. SALAZAR: Thank you, Mayor. I appreciate your comments, and for reminding once again to mention the Loop 480 project. But again, thank you for your comments. I do appreciate that.
Mayor Saenz, any closing remarks?

MAYOR SAENZ: Yes. From my end, thank you very much for that presentation, David, and thank you all for having us as well, and allowing us the opportunity of highlighting our projects. And again, thank you, Madame Secretary, and to all concerned.

Appreciate it.

MR. SALAZAR: Mayor Lozano?

MAYOR LOZANO: Yes. I just want to reiterate what my other colleagues have said. I just want to thank TxDOT for their involvement in including our communities for this master plan, and I just want to thank everybody that's participating today.

Thank you so much.

MR. SALAZAR: Thank you. Caroline, I believe that is all that we have. I tried to be brief. I'll turn it over to you.

MS. MAYS: No. Thank you, David. Thank you, Mayor Saenz, Mayor Lozano, and Mayor Sifuentes. We really appreciate it. I know we're running short on time, but I want to, you know -- again, the focus is really to hear from the regions.

So this is important. Any questions from the other Committee members, other regions, for the Laredo delegation, before we move on?
(No response.)

MS. MAYS: Okay.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Caroline, while we wait for [audio skip], I do also want to thank the mayors. I want to thank David for that excellent presentation, and to the extent that we can be of any assistance with the federal government, I would highly encourage, if we could -- David Zapata is on the call. And he works personally with me in making sure that we advise the Governor's Office and the State and federal relations, and the individual they have working there in D.C.

He's constantly in communications in terms of Texas's interests or things that we are dealing with. And happy to try to convey a message if that is helpful. If you want to commit that to writing or send us an email, we can follow up with you afterwards and see if we can be of assistance in that area.

Thank you.

MR. ZAPATA: Secretary, Caroline, this is David Zapata. Just to follow up to that, I'll make sure to follow up with everyone that's spoken today to see what else we can do and to brief the Secretary about it to keep her updated as well.

MS. MAYS: Okay. Yeah. Thank you. And just before the border RGV region, there's questions about the
presentations, including the Border Master Plan presentation. We're going to package all of this and send it to everybody today.

So unfortunately, we didn't have all of it to be able to send out, but I will send every single presentation you're seeing here -- we'll send it later. So I just want to let everybody know.

So with that, Pete and Andrew and Sam, you take us to South Texas Rio Grande.

MR. VALE: We'll start with Pete.

MS. MAYS: Okay.

MR. ALVAREZ: Thank you, Sam. I put a note on the chart, if you could please -- the order was reversed here. The Pharr district will be presenting first. Then it will be the MPO, and we'll end with Starr County. Then open it up for questions.

So if you don't mind, please go to the long-range plan slide. Thank you. Appreciate that. So I do want to start off -- bear with me while I look at my notes here -- start off by saying, thank you to Secretary Hughs, Commissioners Laura Ryan and Alvin New, and the TxDOT administration, for allowing us an opportunity to present.

You all play a huge role in basically supporting BTAC in identifying the needs for the three border districts. We recognize the importance of freight
and trade, and you do too, but it starts here in -- along the border. Then it goes into Texas, and also moving to the rest of the nation.

So we are very blessed to be given an opportunity here in the RGV to have had some funding made available to us. And we will continue to work on major corridors, and our goal is to basically have projects shovel-ready. And we’re now allowing the TxDOT Commission, TxDOT administration, an opportunity to [audio skip], should that funding become available, for you to select some of the projects in our region.

That will not only help our region, it will help the state of Texas as a whole. Obviously, we are responsible -- it’s not just for highways. We are also responsible for waterways, railways and air.

And we will work -- continue to work with all of our partners to ensure that deep South Texas, here at the RGV in deep South Texas, we can basically provide the infrastructure that's needed. We are on the front lines here between Mexico and Texas.

It's very difficult to see in this particular map, but there are a whole bunch of little yellow dots along the river. Those are 14 ports of entry. And these ports of entry, obviously -- we don't have, for example, a World Trade Bridge, like in Laredo.
But we have multiple bridges that all serve a purpose to connect the northern part of Tamaulipas to the state of Texas. We want to recognize -- we have -- this is a great opportunity for us to work with all of our partners, whether it's the RGV MPO, the two RMAs, the water ports, rail companies, obviously, cities and counties -- we're all in it together.

Whether the projects are on-system or off-system, we are all working in partnership to ensure that the -- we identify, we plan, we develop, and ultimately construct the infrastructure that's needed for our great RGV.

A couple of things to note that may be interesting to the group. Some of you already know these facts, but we have approximately 1.5 million people here in the RGV. We have approximately one million in Hidalgo County, another 500,000 or so in Cameron County, and then the rest of the district.

But 1.5 million people in our region does present some challenges. I know that here recently with COVID, we don't have as much interaction, if you will, so the cross-commuter traffic. But on the southern side of the river, if you will, in the north side of Matamoros and communities in between, there's another 2.5 million people that's estimated.
So the entire region as a whole, that's separated but connected by the Rio Grande river, is approximately 4 million people. That does present some major challenges for us. Mainly, the area that is south of Interstate 2 -- I mean, I don't have the control of the mouse here, but Interstate 2 is the red line that runs east and west there.

South of that area, that's where our trade zones are at, multiple communities, Mission, McAllen, Pharr, along with -- all the way down to Brownsville. There's a lot of trade zones, and these trade zones basically receive, if you will, and/or export cargo into and from Mexico.

The challenge for us is, how do we get the traffic from the ports of entries to the interstate? So we have been working with our partners to identify these opportunities.

We look at, for example, the -- there are many F.M. roadways. F.M. 2061, Jackson Road, in the McAllen-Pharr area, is one example; F.M. 2557 to San Juan; F.M. 509, south of Harlingen, into Los Indios.

These roadways are F.M. roadways that were basically not built to handle the overweight traffic, and we do have a couple of overweight corridors in our region, both in Hidalgo and in Cameron County. But these F.M.
roadways were basically farm-to-market roads back in the day.

But today, they're serving as basically city streets. And what we are having issues and concerns with is the intermixing, if you will, of commercial vehicular traffic with the regular traffic.

And so as an example, there on F.M. 2061, there are three schools that are within that F.M. roadway corridor to get to the interstate. Same thing can be said on F.M. 2557, F.M. 907 in the Alamo area, where you have multiple schools intermixing, if you will, traffic with heavy commercial traffic.

So we will take a look at the long-range plans for the Pharr district. We're very proud of this map. In fact, we're in the process of updating it now that the 2021 UTP has been approved last month, in the month of August.

We're going to be in the process of updating this map to adequately reflect which projects have funding and which projects are lacking funding. And we will get that out to everyone, probably in the latter part of September, once the map has been updated.

I do want to recognize that we have several projects in construction. You know, two years ago our construction budget was right around 500 million. Today,
we are right at one billion dollars of total construction.

   We're very proud of that, because that basically says that here in the Pharr district, working with all of our partners, we're trying to build that infrastructure. Is one billion dollars in construction enough? Not in my opinion.

   I'm a little concerned that our population is expected to double by 2040. We have to build the adequate infrastructure to be able to handle a population of approximately 3 million people in 20 to 30 years. So that's going to be a little bit of a challenge for us. We will continue to work in partnership with our local elected officials and the leaders of the community to ensure that we're doing the right thing.

   I do want to also emphasize the importance of north-south, which is, if you look at Kenedy County and Brooks County, that's Interstate -- future Interstate I-69E and I-69C, or U.S. 37 and U.S. 281. Those are major corridors that lead in and out of the RGV.

   But also very important to us is the connection to Laredo, and that is U.S. 83, with the communities of Starr and Zapata County and up into Webb County and Laredo. We need to make sure that these major arteries, if you will, continue to be developed to ensure the movement of people and goods.
So north-south corridors are really, really important. But we think that one of the challenges that we're going to be facing is the opportunity to travel east and west. I mentioned earlier that we have 14 ports of entry.

South of I-2 -- I'm not sure if you all can see it, but U.S. 281 Military, that blue line that runs east and west on the river, that's going to play a major role. We're starting a feasibility study for that roadway to go to a four-lane, divided highway, and include, if you will, that mobility along the river in connecting all these trade zones, if you will, from Hidalgo into Cameron County.

Let's not forget about Starr County. They play a huge role over there, and Sam will presenting projects in Starr County in a little while. But it's really, really important that we have that east-west mobility to ensure that that happens.

Real quickly, we are working with Hidalgo County RMA. There's a project in green, south of Pharr there, that's called the 365 Tollway. That project scheduled to let in 2021. The importance of that project is it provides an overweight corridor to be able to get the commercial trucks to be able to utilize and separate that from regular vehicular traffic.
The challenge for us is going to be the next project, which is the IBTC. The IBTC is that blue project just east of Toll 365. International Bridge and Trade Corridor.

That project is the one that will provide direct north-south connectivity to the interstate. Once the traffic is on the interstate, they'll be free to go and -- if you will, through the community. So we're looking forward to working with Hidalgo RMA to make that happen.

Moving over to Cameron County, we have the U.S. 281 connector, and that is a project in blue there on the far-east side. That U.S. 281 connector basically will connect U.S. 281 Military to I-69E, and that is a direct line, if you will, into the Port of Brownsville, off State Highway 550, also known as Interstate 169. And so it's really, really important that we have that connectivity, if you will.

And at the very tip of Texas, down there in Brownsville, we have a project called East Loop. East Loop will connect the Port of Brownsville to the international bridges there in Brownsville, leading into Matamoros. These projects are all very, very important to ensure that we have that connectivity on the south side of Interstate 2 and I-69E.
Lastly, I do want to emphasize the importance of the I-69 connector. I-69 connector will connect I-69C/281 to I-69E/U.S. 77. And the goal here is to provide once again an opportunity to separate vehicular traffic from commercial-type traffic and allow alternatives to be able to move east-west and north and south through our area.

We look forward to developing these projects in conjunction with our partners. We will continue to have that goal, to have them shovel-ready. Once again, it is an opportunity for TxDOT Commission and TxDOT administration, for funding considerations for the future.

I believe the way we're set up is, we'll be making the presentations, and then we will take questions at the end of the presentation. So with that, I am going to pause, and I think we're going to go to Andrew Canon next.

He'll be presenting on behalf on the RGV MPO. Andrew is the Executive Director for the MPO. So with that, I will pass it on to Andrew.

Andrew?

MR. CANON: Thank you, Pete. Good morning, everyone. Yes. We appreciate the opportunity to give you a perspective of how everything is in the Rio Grande Valley. And we want to thank the Secretary and Caroline
Mays for all the efforts put into the Border Master Plan.

We also want to be sure to thank the Commissioners. There were a lot of good things said and commitments and support made to the RGV through the merger process. It took us a while to get through there. We just passed our one-year anniversary of being here.

So we're really excited to go through your projects with all of y'all today. So the projects that we're going to discuss is a little bit of what Pete just covered for you. They are on this priority map that we have for the area.

And I'll be discussing mostly the top-10 priority projects that we have for the RGV. And this is from a letter that we submitted, signed by our board, up to the Commission, through the UTP process. So next slide, please.

365 Toll, I think Pete talked a little bit about this. This is a very important project that we have for the region, providing some tollway support -- I mean, excuse me, some roadway support for our bridges, coming out of the Pharr area, heading west.

The project, as we sit today, is not fully funded. But we feel very confident that it will be very -- funded very soon, because as Pete said, we are scheduled to go to letting on this project very, very
soon. We have some commitments on it.

This is going to help us with safety, with commerce, with moving efficiently the products and goods that come across the border, either northbound or southbound. This is going to be a very important project for us as we move forward.

Next project, please -- or next screen. Sorry, slide. This is another one, very important for us as well, the IBTC, the International Bridge Trade Corridor. This corridor will provide connectivity from the Pharr Bridge.

Eventually, it will also provide connectivity from the Donna International Bridge and will provide a high-speed arterial to Interstate 2. Right now, the Pharr Bridge and the Donna Bridge do not have any direct access and connectivity to Interstate 2 without going through local streets.

So that means going by schools, a lot of housing developments, stop-lights, and such. So we're working on this. This has been a high-priority project for us, and we are happy that there is some Category 12 funding associated with this from the Commission on the previous UTP, and we appreciate that.

It's going to allow us to develop this project, and it will eventually connect up with what we are calling
State Highway 68. And I'll be showing you that in a little bit as well. Next slide, please.

The SPI second access. I can't even begin to stress how important this is for the region. As we work in an environment, as we know, where we have storms and other things that can happen out in the island area -- several months ago, we had simply a cable that was snapped or an error.

And I'm sure Pete could speak better upon that -- and it shut down the bridge for several hours, Queen Isabella, our only way on and off of the bridge. This is paramount for the region as we look to move people safely off of the island, whether it's just for pleasure or whether something is coming that we need to address, like a storm.

So this second access, we're working with the Cameron County RMA. We're hopeful that some funding will be identified for it. I think we're needing about $6- or $7 million to wrap up the environmental process on it.

It has a very expensive price tag. We're looking at about $700 million for construction. I know that the RMA and Pete Sepulveda over there are looking at alternatives to try see what we can do to bring that cost down, but we are looking for some partners and cooperation to get this project funded. It's much needed.
Next slide, please. The East Loop. This is a
great project that has a good price tag with it,
approximately about $25 million. But we have about 4.1
million of it funded at this time. It is an RMA project
that we're working cooperatively with them on.

And this is going to provide some additional
connection from the Port of Brownsville area, directly
over to I-69E in Brownsville. This is a much-needed
project, as we talk about freight movement and goods in
and out of the port, as well as a little bit of bragging
rights. Let's don't forget that the RGV has more modes of
transportation than anybody else in the state of Texas,
because we have space.

So as we're bringing in those goods to go over
to SpaceX, all of this will help facilitate the movement
of those goods, getting that equipment in here for one day
hopefully launching man to Mars. So we're excited about
that as well.

Next slide, please. State Highway 550, this is
a project that we have just finished getting fully funded.
This is a toll road facility that leads from I-69E
directly to the Port of Brownsville's front door. So
we're very excited about this.

It is a toll facility, but it is also tagged I-
169. So it provides an additional interstate facility for
us in the RGV, providing that connectivity. And we're also very happy that -- it's come to light to me -- the people down here going out to South Padre Island and the beach, that taking this facility will actually get you out to Port Isabel 17 to 20 minutes faster.

It's a raised expressway facility, except for the gap that's going to be completed. It is 70 miles an hour, all the way out there, and there's no stoplights. There's no congestion. It's a nice facility.

It goes up to State Highway 48, and then north into Port Isabel. So it is a quicker alternative. You just have to be willing to give up a couple of dollars, and of course, that always comes down to a time value of what is the value of your time to drive out to the island and back.

But more importantly, it is a great connector for us in the freight movement. We see a lot of windmills parts coming from out there in that area, because they are being manufactured out there.

So they're driving up that way and then connecting to the interstate facility to go all over. And of course, here in the northwest RGV area, we've got a great deal of those going up still. So we're pretty excited. Next slide, please.

The I-69 connector. This is one that we have
on this long-range map that you see from Pete. This project is going to end up being very paramount for us.

It will provide connectivity from I-69C to I-69E, and there, as you can see on the blow-up map that we have at the bottom, it will also provide connectivity to what we're calling the Outer Parkway Project. If you follow that Outer Parkway Project all the way around, it connects up to where we think that the second causeway will be going.

So as we talk about limited east-west movement and high-speed facilities, this will provide that to us. It does have an expensive price tag. Right now, we're looking at about $500 million, just for the portion that we have identified there.

The interesting fact is, if you look on the upper map, if you were to draw a line straight, you can see where it curves and connects to the loop. But if you were to try to draw a line straight west, it would provide great connectivity directly out to the Rio Grande City. This provides tremendous additional options for freight movement moving to and out of the Laredo area, as we have to be able to connect up to I-69 or even going over to the Port of Brownsville area, avoiding some of the congestion that we have off of Interstate 2.

So we're hopeful that this one will pick up
more momentum. I believe that this one is being in part
done in partnership with both RMAs, the Cameron County and
the Hidalgo County RMA, to try to move this project
forward. Next slide, please.

This is State Highway 68. This is a facility
that was brought to us through a vision that
Representative Armando Martinez had, several legislative
sessions ago. And we've all been moving forward on it.

TDOT has held with their consultants several
public meetings on this. The IBTC project that I showed
you previously, when it goes north it connects to
Interstate 2. I envision that we'll have an interchange
there in the future.

It will connect to this facility, providing a
bypass around the interchange that we have now at I-2 and
I-69C and provide direct connectivity to I-69C on the
north side of the Edinburg area. This will also be a part
of the Hidalgo County loop system that the RMA is working
on.

So this is an important project. It is
partially funded at the moment with about $184 million.
So we're very excited to see this one get moving forward.

Pete Alvarez and I have a monthly breakfast
meeting. We talk about this project often, because we're
very excited about the options of this. Because not only
for the movement of goods but going back to, when we think about safety.

This provides another alternative for us on providing connectivity when people are coming west into Hidalgo County to get away from the low-lying sea areas, to connect up to I-69C on evacuating the Valley, if that should be a need in the future. So we're very excited about the options that this facility will provide to us.

Next slide, please.

Interstate 69. We have some expansion going on there. It's actually on 281 North, going all the way up to the Hidalgo County-Brooks line. We're very excited. This is a $312 million project that's moving forward.

This is going to provide us more interstate facility, all the way up to the county line. So as we all know, that interstate badging is very important for business development and commerce. So we have -- we will have that going all the way up to the county line of Brooks County.

And of course, everyone is aware of the bypass that we have in Falfurrias now, or -- it's not really a bypass, but a flyover. And in Premont, the bypass is being worked on there and moving forward. So we're very excited to get I-69C moving forward, all the way to interstate facility, up to George West. So this is a
great project for us.

Next slide, please. There we go. Okay. I couldn't remember where we were. I do want to thank all of our planning partners who we work closely with. Like I said, TxDOT, Pete and his staff.

We really appreciate the guidance and the input that we get from them and the discussions. As well as the Cameron County and the Hidalgo County RMAs and all of our local governments, where most of these projects were shown to you. We're in partnership with both of those RMAs. So we're very excited.

Like Pete said, I think we're holding questions to the end. So now we've narrowed that down a little bit, I'm going to turn it over to Sam Vale, and Sam will give us a much smaller perspective on how things are going over in Starr County.

MR. VALE: Thank you very much, Andrew. We're very proud of you and the MPOs being unified. We're hoping for the future that the RMAs join you, and then ultimately the region. It would be perfect planning opportunities for TxDOT and for the region.

I'd like to emphasize -- you can go to the first slide, the next slide -- Pete Alvarez's comment about east-west. You're going to notice that a lot of the things that were talked about by both he and Andrew, and
what we're talking about, ultimately provide better east-west connectivity.

And essentially, we really need to get going north out from the western side of the RGV to Laredo, because there's a huge amount of repositioning of commercial equipment that goes on between Brownsville and Laredo. We think that this first project here is really something that was left over from 755 that was already completed.

Primarily, it was cut from the original project because of funding needs, and it was coordinated border infrastructure money being used. And there just wasn't going to be enough for this leg on the south side of U.S. 83.

The Industrial Foundation President Rose Benavidez has already secured 40 feet of that right-of-way to donate to TxDOT. There's another 50 to 60 feet that I think they would prefer to have to complete that road. So that's something that we would have an opportunity to work with in the future that would provide two different entries and exits from the Port of Rio Grande City.

The next slide would basically be the -- another east-west vision that -- it's State Loop 195. And it would really join 755 to the west side of Roma, which would take a lot of lights -- out of about 30-some-odd
lights between those two points on U.S. 83.

And we think that that would be very positive for the region, as well as traffic going from Laredo south. And I would point out that in Zapata, we feel that the District Engineer has made a good suggestion of how to connect that to the rest of it, because we think this is part of it.

Next slide. And then this slide here would be something very similar, because 755 is more in the area of downtown Rio Grande City. On the western side -- the eastern side of the county and the western side of Hidalgo, this would provide an access to 195, which would go around to U.S. 83 on the west side of Roma.

And within -- this is something that the Industrial Foundation has put -- they have a couple of different possible locations. But the concept here is that -- to try to get a connector that would dovetail with the loop that's already being prepared for La Joya that comes into the Penitas area.

So this would be the next way to go east and west. And then the -- finally, I think that what we want to emphasize is that we need to continue to be cognizant of the fact that Starr County is important to the people in Starr County, but it also going to be become a new puzzle in the middle between the Rio Grande Valley and the
And we really feel that our District Engineer has captured the knowledge there that he needs to, to include Zapata, which their primary projects are basically completion of U.S. 83, both toward Laredo and toward the Roma area. As well as having an access around to a northern parallel route that would be also something that would be beneficial, because they think that that will allow the Rio Grande Valley to grow an awful lot in between those two east-west routes.

And I think that I -- trying to wrap it up here. And I'd say that the most important thing is for all of us from El Paso to Brownsville to be in the legislative session promoting border trade infrastructure funds.

Thank you very much. And questions are available.

MR. ALVAREZ: So Caroline --

MS. MAYS: Yes?

MR. ALVAREZ: -- all of us are available to answer any questions that folks may have.

MS. MAYS: Yeah, absolutely. We'll open it up to questions. Thank you, Sam. Thank you, Andrew. Thank you, Pete, for giving, you know, awesome presentations.

Any questions from the Committee members to the
RGV delegations on their presentations?

(No response.)

MS. MAYS: Okay. Looks like no questions. I think there was a question asked about I-2, and I think that's been answered in the chat box.

That's the only thing I saw, a question that Gerry had asked. I don't see another question in the chat box or any comments.

So anything else, Pete, that you'd like to say to them, or Andrew, before we move to the next agenda item?

MR. ALVAREZ: I would just like to thank everyone in the BTAC. The role that you play in helping us work together in partnership, emphasizing the importance not only in the RGV, for Laredo and El Paso, all along the border.

We all have critical needs, needs so much greater than the funding that's available. So we need to ensure that we prioritize projects, we develop projects as we go, and keeping in mind that it's going to take a partnership in order to make that happen.

So once again, I appreciate your efforts, BTAC. Continue the great work, and we are here to assist in any way we can. Thanks for the opportunity.

MR. VALE: Caroline, just to say that this is
the best Border Trade Advisory Committee plan that I've seen, and I'm one of the original members of this thing. And I can tell you, I have never seen a plan this good. And -- with the vision of getting better.

MS. MAYS: Yes. [audio skip] A lot of it goes to you. Yeah. We've come a long way. If you remember, maybe, what -- three, four years ago, you know, I went to some of those previous border -- BTAC meetings before it was under me. And certainly, we've made a lot of progress, and a lot of testament to all of you, the members, the commitment you have. A quorum in every meeting.

Like today, we probably broke the record in attendance. And the participation, I think that's really what has been tremendous, you know. Thank you, you know. Especially you've been diligent and many of the members have been really diligent in participating in the meetings.

We can't hold the meetings if the members don't attend, you know, and then, of course, the leadership of Secretary Hughes has been, you know, great. And as Pete mentioned, it's a partnership. You all at the local level working with the district on a daily basis, working with binational stakeholders on a daily basis.

That's what makes this, you know, really a
great Committee to work with. I'm excited because you guys are excited. I just wanted to kind of outline that.

Secretary, I'll give you a chance --

SECRETARY HUGHS: Thank you, Caroline. I just want to echo all the compliments. I think everyone is doing such a wonderful job.

And I hope that everyone gains not only the knowledge from being able to hear your own presentations and hear from your own regions, but also better appreciation maybe of some of the other regions and some of those competing interests that I know TxDOT is working so hard to really bring together and to figure out the best way to coordinate the efforts across the border communities.

And so I'm pleased to say that, you know -- to hear that we'll have copies of these slides for each of the presentations later. And if you don't have questions or comments now, but something comes to mind, please know that this will be an ongoing conversation.

And now we've also determined that, based on time constraints, we're going to skip over the break that was worked into the agenda. But by all means, give yourself a few minutes when you need them. But I think, in the interest of time, we're going to plow forward.

And I thank everyone for these incredible
presentations and your leaderships in your communities.

MR. VALE: That's why we're all huge on Hughes.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. And thank you very much.

Before I go to the next slide, I'm going to try to be a little faster on that, but it's important. It will build onto what you guys have already discussed a lot. But I wanted to make one statement.

When we started the Border Master Plan process, if you all remember, there were three different Border Master Plans developed in the last go-around. When we started going with this Border Master Plan, you know, our, you know -- our emphasis was one Texas, one border, you know, but with different -- with three regions, and recognizing that.

And you can still hear a lot of themes in what was discussed among the three regions when I was listening on my -- the issues are the same. But you need each of the regions, and then the strategies will probably be the same, but in a way, unique as well.

If you're talking about east-west connections, you probably heard that from all the three border regions. You know, you guys talked about connectivity issues, congestion issues. All of those things, collaboration, all of it is kind of -- they are all common among the different border regions.
So I just wanted to stress that that's really what was underlying, you know, when we started this, and to see it unfold this way, it's really great. So thank you all, the three regions. I know you've put a lot of effort and time into, you know, putting this together, and we really appreciate that.

So in building on --

SECRETARY HUGHS: Caroline?

MS. MAYS: Yes?

SECRETARY HUGHS: I'm so sorry. I apologize for interrupting, but I think that it falls in so perfectly after the discussion on different regions. I want to make sure that I remind everyone on this call -- I'm sure they don't need a reminder -- that we're in the middle of something that only happens every 10 years, which is our Census.

And there is some discussion, I guess, in the courts about whether the deadline will be the end of September or not. But let's just assume it is, for purposes of trying to get the word out, to make sure that everyone in all of our communities across the state, and particularly the communities represented on this call, get the message about filling out the Census, that it's completely confidential.

And that, while Census-takers are going to
people's homes, I would imagine most of us would rather not get that knock at the door and would prefer to take advantage of calling or going online. So if you aren't already, or if there's materials at my office that can help you coordinate -- we've been working closely with the Census Bureau. We'd be happy to help you with that.

And I mention it in this BTAC meeting, because it does so greatly impact our infrastructure projects and many of our federal funding priorities that we talk about in this meeting. So I think I was remiss not to mention it in my opening comments, and I want to mention it now, that we really need all of you in this fight to help us get those counts.

Thank you.

MS. MAYS: Yes. Thank you, Secretary. And we rely a lot on the Census information, a lot of -- some of the information you saw earlier on when we were identifying needs, a lot of that comes from Census data. So certainly, that's a key component of where our data comes from.

So thank you for reminding folks of that. So we'll go into the draft recommendations, and we're really talking primarily of projects, and I won't bore you with this. Let's go to the next slide.

But a quick reminder on the recommendations.
We have, kind of, a three-pronged approach. We presented policies and programs the last two meetings.

I think we got a handle on that with, you know, a lot of your input on there. We'll talk a little bit how we'll restructure, then, later, if we have time. And then the projects and the project recommendations, a lot of what you guys talked about this morning.

So we'll focus a little bit on that, what information we've got to date, and what we're doing, and how it's starting to shape up. We'll show you that, and kind of, get your gut reaction on that. So go to the next slide. And here, really, you know, you've seen some of this information already before, so I won't spend a lot of time. Let's just go to the next slide.

Next slide. You know, actually, go to the next slide. So you know, some of the things that we've done is, really look at projects from a variety of lenses. You know, we're looking at it from the universal projects. Then we're looking at geography.

We're looking at border-related versus corridor. And then we're looking at each of the border crossings. And then we have, kind of, multiple ways that we're going to be looking at it.

So we wanted to, kind of, show you once this is all said and done, we're going to be dissecting this in
different pieces, you know, to allow you all to, kind of, look at it, you know, and also be able to help us, you know, refine this better. Next slide.

So to date, all the projects we have so far that we've been able to analyze -- and again, this is preliminary work in progress. So this slide here shows you that we have about 408 projects. And this is how it's, kind of, shaping up right now.

We have 119 projects related to border crossings, at about $3.2 billion. And then on the corridors -- again, this is highway, rail, and other corridor-related projects. But primarily, highway, we're looking at 289 projects with a price tag of about $19.5 billion.

And you know, I wanted to, kind of, add that this may not include KCS's. On the line, it talks about the KCS project. We don't have a project description on the KCS project. We don't have a price tag on that. And then we also don't have a price tag on some of the other, you know, new or proposed projects.

So this number is going to change once we get all that information inputted. And then also I wanted to highlight that we're still waiting for projects -- a complete project list from the Mexican partners on the federal level.
We see some of the information, especially projects that were in the national development plan, but we're waiting, you know, for a complete project list. So this is subject to change as well. As well as, I think, CBP, you know, information might still not be included here.

So next slide. So when we, kind of, broke this up by, you know -- by border-related projects, this is -- once we started putting it in different buckets from what I showed you earlier, the three points are 2 billion, 119 projects.

This is what it looks like when you start, kind of, dissecting it. Is it addressing connectivity issues, or you know, reliability, which is mostly congestion, border wait times, safety, security, asset management, all of those.

So we're starting to dissect this so you can, kind of, see what areas, again, tying this back to the goals of the Border Master Plan that were presented earlier, the needs that were presented earlier. So this is, kind of, showing you what that looks like, and we did a similar one. Next slide.

So the corridors, you know, are related projects where you see we've decided to dissect it to show you where -- how the pie is being sliced in terms of all
of these areas. This allows us and you all to see, you know, where, you know, the investments are and how we're addressing those goal areas that were identified by you all.

And certainly, you see a big component of this is on connectivity and reliability, but also a lot of safety projects. And you know, all the three regions talked a lot about that. So you see a significant number of projects addressing those three buckets, right now, what we have. Next slide.

The next couple slides is just by region. So we took a lot of information you gave us, and we, kind of, you know, again, assembled it. This one is El Paso, Santa Teresa. And this, El Paso, you all sent those projects, you know, from, you know, our neighboring state, you know, and this number, I think, you know, my people will probably correct me, and the consultant -- we did not include New Mexico here.

This is just what you guys have provided us. I actually -- you can see on your right-hand side, these are border-related projects. And you can see on the other side is the corridor-related projects. And when you total those up, you know, you're looking at a price tag of about $7.5 billion, you know, in terms of, you know, the total cost of the projects in that region.
Next slide. And this is Laredo. So Laredo, again, you know, you all presented a lot of information, and this is what it's looking like so far, what we have. And again, this doesn't include, you know, some of the, you know -- the border-related projects. For instance, in this one, Bridge 405, because we're waiting for, you know, the information to include. So I just wanted to, kind of, highlight that, that this will -- the numbers for Laredo will probably go up in the number of projects, but also in the price tag. But still you're looking at, you know, about, you know, $5 billion, you know, in funding, and you know, you're looking at over 100 projects in that region. Next slide.

And this is Rio Grande. Again, you know, this was presented. A lot of this was presented, but again, we just broke this up, like we did with the other regions. So you see, you know, the number of projects, border-related versus corridor-related, and then the costs as well. So RGV right now, you know, is showing, you know, a bigger price tag, but I think because we have -- a lot of the projects have actually costs associated with it, some of the other issues we're going to run in and some of the projects that are being submitted don't have costs or estimated costs associated with it.
So we'll work with you all to make sure that we have some type of cost estimate for all of these projects, because that's the only way we're going to be able to identify, one, what's funded, fully funded, what's partially funded, what is not funded. So we can identify the gap and what's needed, you know, to be able to realize the recommendations of the Border Master Plan.

So if you provided us projects that don't have an estimated cost, you know, please work with us so we can get that. And that is so, so important to be able to provide that. Next slide.

So you know, quickly, here is, you know -- you've seen kind of our thought process on how we're going to be packaging all this project information and in the recommendations, you know, and wanted to hear from you all, especially given the fact that you presented this information earlier, what your thought processes on that, you know, as we go back to refine this in the next -- you know, the next week.

MR. CALVO: Hey, Caroline, this is Eduardo. Yeah. I mean, I do have a lot of questions related on how the process is going to relate to the presentations that we all gave. Right? So, you know, with the dollar amounts and all that.

So can you expand a little bit on how the next
steps are going to be taken? I mean, the list, or you know -- what -- we sent you all a list. Then, you know, you worked on it.

Then, you know, you just briefly showed some of it for El Paso. But you know, I'd like to see the -- you know, the -- more of the details, and perhaps we do need to reconcile, you know, what we are identifying as priorities versus what you all have there.

MS. MAYS: Yes, absolutely. And what you see, we will show that -- what you're talking about in terms of priorities, you'll see that when we go into, one, on the implementation side, whether we're talking, short, medium, or long term.

But here in the project recommendations, you know, we will also look at high, medium and low priorities, and certainly reconcile that with you all. Because we don't want to show something low priority or medium priority when you guys -- that's your higher priority projects.

So there's going to be a lot of reconciling there. Like I mentioned, we are cleaning up and reconciling, integrating all the project lists, and then within the next few days, definitely going back to you to confirm the lists of projects you provided us, and then also the priorities, as well as the implementation
timeframes.

So show us, one, you know --

MR. CALVO: Okay.

MS. MAYS: -- the project list as complete, and then two, show us, you know -- help us understand the priorities. Yes, this is how we have ranked it, but show us what your priorities are.

And then the third one is the implementation plan. What is in the short term? What's in the mid-term? What's in the long term?

MR. CALVO: Okay. Thank you.

MS. MAYS: Any other comments or questions?

MR. CORONADO: Yeah. I've got a question. So you know, Giacomo mentioned this morning, when he started with the kick-off comments about how we don't want this plan to be sitting on a shelf. Right? It's going to have to be dynamic, and how does it get updated with the -- from the regions.

So just to give you some context also, what sort of our thinking right now is -- we have this CIP route with the City, which is approved by our City Council, and so that's what we submitted -- right -- for the plan.

At least on behalf of the City, those projects. But because of COVID, we've had year budget
impacts, not only to the City's general fund, but also to total revenue. And the City, you know, we’ve been impacted.

Our budget has been impacted. We've had to supplement, help offset some of those losses elsewhere with some of our funds in reserves, and so that has impacted our CIP, and we've put a pause to it for a time being as, you know, we move through this pandemic.

And so now that our new fiscal year has begun this month, you know, we're going to be looking at the CIP again regarding those projects. We’re aligning them, the phasing, the priorities, adding new ones that have come up since the last 12, 18 months.

And so the list that we gave you is an approved City Council list. But over the next couple of months, it's going to change. And so I know the list that I have right now is already outdated, and I want to modify it. But I would have to follow the process, right, with the City to do that.

And so how does that -- how do you perceive that looking like on your end once we have a new list in the next few months? You know, how -- what is that list going to be like between now and December, and also after December, once it’s completed?

MS. MAYS: Yeah. So David, certainly, you
brought up, you know, a couple things. One, yes, the intent from day one has been to develop a plan that doesn't sit on the shelf, that -- applying that -- you know, will be implemented by each of the respective, you know, entities that are involved in the Border Master Plan and the border process.

So that is paramount and continues to be what we will, you know, continue to push for. And then, in terms of the revenue impacts, et cetera, you know, that is something TxDOT is dealing with. That is something that our leadership is asking questions, and certainly, you know, impacting what we do too, as TxDOT, and every agency around the state and around the country, the impact of COVID.

But I think, really, moving forward with the plan is, you know, the project list. I don't think, you know -- whatever is provided, I don't think that will change. What will change is the implementation.

Some projects may have to be pushed further along, further to long term, instead of this -- you had initially determined there's no funding, that can be pushed to the long term. Or if there's a medium term, and there's not funding, we'll push to the long term.

So we might have a heavier long-term project list or bucket, you know, than we do with short term or
medium term. So that's kind of how I look at how that will change. And in the next few months, you know, this plan -- we still have probably about, you know, three months to really refine that project list as we move forward, so there's room to do that.

And then, of course, once the plan is completed, we plan on updating the project list every year, you know. So that if things are moved -- like, when we update our UTP -- UTP is adopted every year in August. So certainly, we would coincide any project revisions with that after the UTP.

We'd do that, but also reach out to the stakeholders to update your list as well, so we can stay current and relevant and allow for flexibility within that. Because we know the funding environment right now is going to be fluid and it might be fluid for a while.

MR. CORONADO: Okay. Right. Thank you. And I'll let you know, also on our end, we have the CIP and the projects that we are funding with our own budget. But thank you.

MS. MAYS: Okay, okay. Yeah. Thank you. And then again, you know, what we're interested in is all your project lists and then the timelines in very -- you know, and you guys let us know what you're comfortable with, moving forward.
You all will drive what's in the plan, the projects, the timelines, the funding. As I mentioned many times, there's no dedicated funding in the -- for the Border Master Plan to fund any of the projects. So we're really relying on you all to drive what that looks like.

MR. CORONADO: Okay.

MS. MAYS: Any other questions before we move quickly into the implementation plan? And I'll just walk through that fairly quickly. Again, this is just our preliminary look at this. Go ahead through this next slide, and skip.

Go to the next slide. Next slide. Actually, stop here for a second. We shared with you, kind of, the time frame. Go back one slide. The one with the timelines. Yes. So just wanted to focus on the graphics on the right-hand side.

When we talk about short term, that's one to four years, and for most of you, you know, that's the TIP years and UTP years. That's the, you know, projects that are, you know, fully funded and fairly ready to move forward.

Medium term, five to 10, and kind of, long term, anything 11 years plus. So that's what we're taking into the implementation time frame. Again, we're taking information you've given us to be able to craft and put
projects in those buckets.

So next slide. And keep going, keep going.

Next slide. Yes. So when we took -- no, stop. Next slide -- before. When we took all the projects we have so far, you know, this is what it looks like. The numbers here are not, you know, a little bit off.

It's more than 15 billion. But we took all the projects and we kind of started putting them in those buckets. And here, it shows the border infrastructure projects. And you see, you know, the number of projects in the short term, number of the projects in the medium term in terms of cost, but we're going to also be doing the numbers as well.

But this is, you know, just putting the cost estimates for the number of projects in those buckets. Next. And this is looking at -- so Eduardo, you asked earlier how we're doing that. So you give us projects and the priority ranking.

If these are high, medium, or low projects, what you guys presented today, and then let us know what bucket it goes in. Is it a short, medium, or long-term project? So here, we've taken what we've gotten so far, you know, and in terms of border projects, we have, you know -- we show that pretty much all the projects provided, you know, are in the high ranking.
And then you look at what's in short, medium, and long term. So then you look at that total number in the end. So that's how we plan on, you know, outlining this in the implementation plan.

And a little bit more detail -- we're being a little bit -- this is a high-level summary, but we'll be -- provide a lot more information. But we wanted to give you that. Same with the corridor.

We will do -- you know, provide how many projects are high, medium, and low, and then what time frame did it fall in? And as you see here, you have a pretty spread -- you have a lot of projects, high-priority projects that are in the short term.

I think you guys talked a lot about some of the ones that are ready to go, but you see a lot of medium and you see a lot of long-range projects. And here, you're looking at about $7 billion of long-range projects that are high-priority projects.

So those are some of the things you all need to, kind of, discuss and help us, you know, make sure those numbers are correct. Next slide. And this is border region related. And again, you know, here, just to show you, for each of the border regions, the number of projects you've given us so far in the different categories.
And in the corridor-related projects, we're going to break that out by mode. So it will have rail-specific projects. So we have, in Andrew's case, maritime-related projects. We will break those up, you know, on the corridor side.

And then, you know, we have the border-related projects. Again, a similar process here, high, medium, and low, and then what bucket do they fall in, in terms of implementation timeline. Next slide. And we do that for the other regions as well.

Again, we're just taking what you've provided us to date, and this is what, you know, it shows for Nuevo and Laredo regions. So next slide. And this is for RGV.

Again, similar process here, you know, to show how many projects and what bucket do they fall into in terms of priority. And then also what bucket do they fall in terms of medium -- long, short, and medium and long-term implementation timelines. Next slide.

So really, in a nutshell, you know, to answer the question, Eduardo, you had brought up is, that's how we plan on taking the project recommendations that are high, medium or low, and then take it through the implementation timeline, so short, medium, and long term.

So any questions or comments from BTAC?

(No response.)
MS. MAYS: No questions? We wore you out?

COMMISSIONER NEW: Caroline, just start arbitrarily taking money from one place to the other, and then you'll get people to start talking.

MS. MAYS: Yes, Commissioner.

MR. SCHWEBEL: I have a question.

MR. CANON: If you do that based upon who has more modes of transportation, I'm all in favor of that.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Seriously, Caroline, I have a question. In regards to the information that, you know, this great -- at one point are we going to -- are you expecting us to go to the local level, at the local level with our leadership, the MPO presentations or to the public outreach or to the RMAs?

I mean, we've all -- we've had a lot of the details, but at some point, all of this is going to boil down to, get our constituents and our leadership at the local level, at regional level, to go to the State Legislature and to identify all of these needs of funding.

So there has to be somewhere along the line a -- for lack of a better word -- a political strategy. Are we going to leave that to -- as a region on the border, or are we going to leave it to the individual -- I know you can't talk politics but --

MS. MAYS: Yeah.
MR. SCHWEBEL: -- to the individual, local communities? I don't know if it's something that the Secretary is willing to talk about. But I think there has to be some point where we almost have a border-wide strategy, or we leave it all to local strategies.

MS. MAYS: Yeah. And I'll let the Secretary speak to that. But what I'll say is, our role as TxDOT is, you know, to facilitate the development of this Border Master Plan, and have a document that you all, however you want to use it and take and use it, that's all up to you. This is a tool for you all to go do that, you know. So that's really why we're trying to make sure, one, we engage you all in the project identification, the recommendations and the strategies, and making sure you help us identify what's fully funded, what's partially funded, what's not funded, so we can have a really great package of information for you all to take and articulate the need, and then also use all the information that we analyzed earlier on when we showed the border wait times, you know, border crossing times, the impact of that, the delays, the economic impacts.

So that's all part of the story that you all can use to take, to do that. So I'll let Secretary of State answer, because some of it there is above my pay grade.
SECRETARY HUGHES: All right. So --

MR. VALE: We've only been approved two years of funding. So we don't have to fight about the future.

SECRETARY HUGHES: Well, sadly, I don't think we're going into the right session for opportunities for funding. But having said that, I think that the plan at the beginning is to have a roadmap.

And then, once we get closer to the legislative session, we'll look at what's being presented, what we have to work with for or fight for. Then we'll have to approach it at that point. I mean, certainly, we are a resource to the Legislature.

We don't necessarily direct or guide or -- of course, we don't lobby in any particular area. But we will be standing by this plan and the great work that was done by all the Committee and be a resource for questions that may come up, that the Legislature may have.

And TxDOT will be available as well in terms of, you know -- we're working together. We'll have this plan, and we'll stand by the plan. I'm not sure if that answers your question.

But it's probably something we need to address on all fronts at this point. I'm happy to talk about or coordinate how we can be helpful. I understand, you know, we are a neutral resource -- is our role at this point,
after the plan is completed.

MR. ZAPATA: Secretary, this is David Zapata.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Go ahead, David.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Go ahead, David.

MR. ZAPATA: Thank you. I'll just mention this, and I'll just mention as a reminder. Because I know that it's something that Caroline, Secretary Hughs, said that her team and the teams have to talk about.

So I don't want to get too far ahead of myself, but I know that we've talked about having a session for the next meeting, where we talk about how we're going to use the plan, how we're going to use -- Caroline, so -- to make sure that all the members know how the plan can be used, understanding the potential to use it, but also the limitations of how we can use it.

And I think that might be a good -- I'll -- I guess I'll offer the recommendation that that may be a good opportunity for, obviously, the members to make recommendations as to how we can expand that strategy of how the plan is going to be used once it's done.

So I just wanted to make that comment to try to prep ahead for the members. And again, I know that Caroline and both of our teams, Secretary Hughs and her team, have talked about having that kind of a session in a future meeting, hopefully October. Again, where we --
it's presented how the plan is going to be used once it's finished.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Thanks for that reminder, David. We've talked about implementation, and we just first are trying to finalize the plan. And then, of course, work with all of you in terms of implementation and how to best present it during the session.

So thanks for that, David.

MR. SCHWEBEL: Well, thank you, Secretary. This is Gerry again. I want to you point to you, and I've never been more proud to be from the border or from the state of Texas. I congratulate all of my colleagues on the Committee and your leadership.

As Sam said, this is exciting to see. Finally, finally we've got a united front to tell the story about the border. And how we take it from here on, in our own state, but all of North America, is up to us. So congratulations to all.

MS. MAYS: Okay. Thank you, Gerry. Any other comments from the Committee members? We're running short on time, and I wanted to run through a couple more slides quickly.

And again, as you know, we'll mention -- we still have, you know, a lot of work to do in the project recommendations and we'll be reaching out to you all with
any questions we may have. So be on, kind of, standby for
that, and we really appreciate the tremendous effort that,
you know, you all have spent time helping us with this to
date.

So next couple of slides, quickly. We've
presented this to you a lot, and what we did here when we
presented the policy recommendation and program
recommendation, we didn't break it by border crossings or
corridors.

So it made it seem like it was a little
simplistic. So what we've done, working with the
consultants is, we went and refined it and outlined
recommendations that are specific to border crossings and
then ones that are specific to corridors.

Next slide. We can keep going to -- keep
going. See program recommendations. I think we did
similar things. Just keep going. So we could show --
again, we're just showing -- keep going. Yeah. So --
keep going with this.

And here, really, all we did was -- on the
program recommendations, what we did is we, you know,
looked at -- in terms of, you know, one of the things you
had asked us, in terms of implementing this, what would
be, you know, high, medium or low priority. And we kind
of tried to do that.
And you will see that when we provide you with the refined drafts chapter on how we, kind of, were able to use the goal areas that it addresses. The more goal area -- you know, a recommendation address, of course, the higher it is, and also the recommendations address multiple goal areas.

So with that, next slide. Keep going. We can skip to -- yeah. Keep going. And Secretary, with that, I'll probably just go through this quickly.

The next BTAC meeting is October -- I think, October 22. And at that meeting, we hope to definitely have a full first draft of the final report.

To date, we've provided with Chapters 1 through 7, and we're hoping by next week to provide you with Chapters 8 through 11, the first draft of that. And then we will also be engaging you in between this BTAC meeting and the next meeting to work on those chapters, especially 10 and 11, the recommendations and the implementation strategies.

So look out. We'll be reaching out to you to make sure we refine that. So that's kind of the game plan. We're moving forward. Next slide. And there's been a lot of questions on project schedule, you know, when we plan on finishing this, and are we rushing?

You know, and we've made some refinements. I
think the last time, we -- you know, BTAC met. We
mentioned that we're hoping to go in front of the
Commission by October, and that has changed because we're
wanting the process to drive the timeline to the extent
possible, but also be realistic.

A lot of conversation earlier that we do have a
legislative session coming up in January. So as you see
here, we have BTAC meetings all the way ‘til December.
And right now, we're planning on going to Commission for
presentation and discussion in December, and then also
with a proposed approval date adoption of the plan in
January.

And as you can see, we also added dates for
when, you know, still -- we'll have you the draft
documents for your full review. When I say, draft
document, it's a full plan for your review, you know.
Before the next meeting and subsequent meetings, we'll
take iterations from you all looking at the document in
its entirety.

So this is the most -- latest and greatest
update to the schedule that I wanted to really share with
everybody, Secretary.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Great. Well, thank you. And
thank you for keeping us on time, Caroline. I appreciate
it.
I know that by having the regional presentations, it pushed some of the other chapter reviews. We had to accelerate through them, but at the same time, I thought they were so incredibly valuable and important.

So I really appreciate everyone's participation. As Caroline mentioned, you have Chapters 1 through 7, and then there will be new chapters coming next week. Please take the time to review them in detail, and to reach out.

Don't feel that you need to wait for the next meeting to reach out. In fact, you know, there will be other meetings in between. And the work will continue, full steam ahead, trying to meet this deadline that, thanks to all of the hard work of everyone on the Committee and TxDOT and all of the team, I think we're in good shape.

And I really appreciate everyone's commitment and dedication to this and look forward to seeing all of you in the next meeting. It's actually quite incredible, the work that's been done under such extraordinary circumstances that none of us could have predicted.

But I have enjoyed the benefit of at least having more participation through these virtual meetings, having our partners in Mexico in the conversation. And
we're continuing to have those meetings outside of these BTAC meetings.

So really looking forward to getting that additional information that we can bring into this conversation and continue to share with all of you. Thank you all for your time. Don't forget to fill out your Census, and to review the documents as they come in from Caroline and her team.

Thank you.

MS. MAYS: Okay. Thank you, Secretary. You can adjourn the meeting.

SECRETARY HUGHS: So at this time, do I have a motion to adjourn?

MR. GARCIA: So moved. This is Josue, in McAllen.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Thank you, Josue. Is there a second?

MR. CALVO: Second. This is Eduardo in El Paso.

SECRETARY HUGHS: Thank you, Eduardo. I have a motion to adjourn and a second. If anyone is opposed, please speak up. All right. With that, we are all in favor, and the motion -- this meeting is now adjourned.

Thank you all. Stay well.
(Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the Border Trade Advisory Committee was adjourned.)

I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

/s/ Nancy H. King 9/16/2020
Certified Electronic Reporter  Date
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