

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

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

1:00 p.m.
Thursday,
November 12, 2020

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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

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SECY. HUGHS: Well, good afternoon, everyone. I know that we typically have our meetings in the morning and that there had been a Commission meeting this morning and lots of other obligations, so it looks like there are 93 people on this call.

We'll wait to see if we have a quorum and we'll wait, if we need to, until such time as we have one. But I want to thank all of you for joining us and for accommodating your schedule to be able to be with us this afternoon.

We are so grateful to be able to continue to have these Border Trade Advisory Committee meetings, albeit it virtually, but it's exciting that we get to do this and continue the great work that all of you are so instrumental in.

And so this is our third meeting of the fall, and I hope that we've all been staying safe and healthy since we last met. I know we're all concerned about our friends in El Paso and other parts where we are getting increased numbers, and so it really does highlight just the need to be evermore vigilant of ourselves, our family, our friends and our neighbors as we continue to also go on with our lives and try to have some sense of normalcy in the very abnormal situation that we find ourselves in.

1 It is such an honor to serve as chair of this
2 committee and very much looking forward to the discussion
3 today, but I do want to take a moment to mention since we
4 last met our nation and our state, of course, voted in the
5 2020 general election last week, and I want to commend
6 Texas voters for their participation despite those
7 challenges that we face with COVID-19.

8 The election here in Texas really was a
9 resounding success and the turnout among registered voters
10 was the highest that we've seen in 28 years of Texans
11 exercising their right to vote. I'm very grateful for the
12 tireless work of election officials, workers and
13 volunteers across the state who were able to successfully
14 operate thousands of county polling locations across Texas
15 on election day and ensure safe, free, and fair elections.

16 Now I want to shift back to our work here at
17 BTAC and thank all of our friends and partners at TxDOT,
18 starting, of course, with recognizing our distinguished
19 commissioners, Alvin New and Laura Ryan, for their service
20 and their commitment to this group. Thank you for joining
21 us and for making sure that Texas's trade relationship
22 with Mexico grows even stronger.

23 And of course, I want to recognize Caroline
24 Mays and her entire team, Ken, Giacomo, all of you that
25 help us; Loretta, everyone that helps and plans and

1 ensures that our meetings are run smoothly and that we
2 continue to move forward in progressing towards this final
3 plan as we near the end of 2020. We are so fortunate to
4 have y'all as partners, and we appreciate your continued
5 support and service to the people of Texas.

6 As you know, the ongoing mission of this
7 committee is to work collaboratively to help create a
8 positive and lasting impact for our border communities
9 through the completion of the Border Transportation Master
10 Plan.

11 Over the course of the past year members of
12 this committee have provided invaluable feedback towards
13 this plan. This committee has discussed unique challenges
14 that COVID-19 has presented to cross-border trade paused
15 by mutually-agreed-upon travel restrictions between the
16 U.S. and Mexico.

17 These restrictions have affected traffic as
18 well as the prior operations and the committee has
19 suggested greater and continued collaboration with Mexican
20 state and federal partners in order to address these
21 challenges.

22 We've also discussed the challenges of current
23 and needed infrastructure, expressed concern over
24 potential impacts to the supply chain and the
25 manufacturing industry and retail sector as a result of

1 increased wait times along the border, and stressed the
2 need for us to make our efforts better known to the
3 public.

4 And we've highlighted and welcomed the
5 announcement that TxDOT has acquired access to the Texas
6 Transportation Institute data to help measure border
7 crossing wait times, supplementing the existing
8 methodology used by CBP. This development has helped us
9 to more accurately estimate the exact amount of impact of
10 wait times and better convey the significance in our plan.

11 As the year comes to a close and we near the
12 completion of our Border Transportation Master Plan, it is
13 imperative that we continue to generate invaluable
14 feedback as a committee to help to complete this plan.

15 Today, as part of the overall presentation, we
16 will review an executive summary of the Border Master Plan
17 as it stands from TxDOT. We need everyone on this call,
18 every member of BTAC, to be fully engaged and actively
19 participate in the committee discussion to help TxDOT and
20 HGR further revise the plan and the executive summary to
21 ensure that both are an accurate reflection of our state
22 and your individual areas' needs.

23 Every single word in this document will matter,
24 and so it is important that we take this time this
25 afternoon and beyond as we go to the completion that we

1 really look at the words and the meaning and that everyone
2 is comfortable with this executive summary and with the
3 information that we'll have an opportunity to review and
4 comment on as the meeting progresses.

5 Your specific input and feedback on topics
6 discussed and presented during and after this meeting are
7 key to drafting a plan that correctly addresses the needs
8 of our border areas and ensures your community is well
9 represented and that your projects are included and
10 considered in the final plan.

11 Now more than ever, if you have not provided
12 prior feedback, it's vital that you do so now and speak up
13 to share the needs and concerns of your communities. Your
14 feedback is really valuable, it will have an immense
15 positive impact in helping to draft and present the final
16 version of this plan.

17 At this time I also want to recognize the
18 representatives from each of our four Mexican border
19 states who are again joining us today: Anna Alvarez,
20 Binational Affairs from the Ministry of Economic
21 Development of Chihuahua; Guillermo Gonzalez, the
22 Undersecretary of Infrastructure and Roads from the
23 Ministry of Transportation of Coahuila; from Nuevo León,
24 Noe Garza, the CodeFront Director; and Manuel Salias, the
25 General Coordinator of Promotion and Projects CodeFront

1 for Nuevo Laredo; and from Tamaulipas, Carlos Garcia
2 Gonzalez, Secretary of Economic Development in Tamaulipas,
3 and Ernesto Gonzalez, Director of Foreign Commerce of
4 Tamaulipas.

5 We also have the pleasure of welcoming to our
6 meeting representatives from the Mexican Federal
7 Government: Erika Garcia, the Director of International
8 Projects, Secretaria de Comunicaciones y Transportes; and
9 of course, our friend, Consul General of Mexico here in
10 Austin, Pablo Marentes, and Jorge Salcido, the Consul for
11 Political and Economic Affairs who represent the Mexican
12 Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

13 I know we have other friends joining us from
14 different entities in Mexico on today's call, and I
15 appreciate all of your interest and listening in and being
16 a part of this discussion.

17 We appreciate very much the in-depth
18 presentations that our Mexican border state partners
19 presented at our last meeting and conveying their needs
20 and projects to us as we work to complete a plan that
21 benefits both Texas and Mexico.

22 We are thankful for their unwavering
23 participation and engagement in all of our meetings. Our
24 collaboration and consistent communication strengthens our
25 state-to-state relationship and helps us to develop plans

1 and strategies that truly benefit our region, such as this
2 Border Master Plan.

3 So with that, I want to welcome everyone.
4 Thank you all for your continued commitment helping create
5 a brighter future for all on both sides of the border.
6 Thank you for allowing me this time to provide an
7 introduction. And with that, I will now turn it back over
8 to Caroline.

9 MS. MAYS: Thank you very much, Secretary, for
10 the opening remarks. Before we jump into the next agenda
11 item, I see Commissioner Ryan and Commissioner New on the
12 call.

13 Commissioner Ryan, any few words?

14 COMMISSIONER RYAN: Just quickly good
15 afternoon, and appreciate being a part of the group. A
16 lot of work that was done, and I'm excited about the final
17 product. So again, just here in support, anything we can
18 do specifically, please let me know. And if I don't get
19 another opportunity, I want to wish everyone a happy
20 Thanksgiving, and please be safe.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. MAYS: Thank you, Commissioner Ryan.

23 Commissioner New?

24 COMMISSIONER NEW: Hello. Just a pleasure to
25 be on the call and to listen and learn and try to use the

1 information to do our work. So thank you, everyone, for
2 all that you do in this, and I look forward to hearing the
3 feedback.

4 MS. MAYS: Thank you very much, Commissioner
5 New.

6 Roger, I see you on the line, so I'll call on
7 you since I don't see anybody else from administration.
8 Roger, you're on?

9 MR. BEALL: Yes. Thank you, Caroline, and
10 thank all of you for being on this call and your heavy
11 lifting and hard work so far, and we're almost to the goal
12 line, so appreciate everyone's hard efforts in this, and
13 like the Secretary of State has said, that we need to
14 finish this out strong and need everyone's comments and
15 input to make this a great plan.

16 MS. MAYS: Thank you, Roger.

17 Secretary, we'll move into the roll call, and,
18 Eduardo, you're going to handle that before we go to the
19 next agenda item. Thank you. Eduardo?

20 MR. ALMANZA: Hi, Caroline, this is Francisco.
21 I think Eduardo is having some connection issues, so I'll
22 take over the roll.

23 MS. MAYS: Okay, awesome. Thank you.

24 MR. ALMANZA: I'll begin with Secretary of
25 State Ruth Hughs.

1 SECY. HUGHS: Present.

2 MR. ALMANZA: Rafael Aldrete?

3 MR. ALDRETE: Present, here.

4 MR. ALMANZA: Thank you.

5 Jon Barela?

6 MR. BARELA: Present.

7 MR. ALMANZA: Luis Bazán?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. ALMANZA: Eduardo Calvo?

10 MR. CALVO: Present.

11 MR. ALMANZA: Eduardo Campirano?

12 (No response.)

13 MR. ALMANZA: Andrew Canon?

14 MS. MAYS: I don't see him.

15 MR. ALMANZA: I don't see him either.

16 Sergio Contreras?

17 (No response.)

18 MR. ALMANZA: David Coronado?

19 MR. CORONADO: I'm here.

20 MR. ALMANZA: John Esparza?

21 (No response.)

22 MR. ALMANZA: Juan Antonio Flores?

23 (No response.)

24 MR. ALMANZA: Dante Galeazzi?

25 (No response.)

1 MR. ALMANZA: Josue Garcia, Jr.?
2 MR. GARCIA: Good afternoon. Present.
3 MR. ALMANZA: I see Luis Diaz is here on behalf
4 of Andrew Canon.
5 Cynthia Gaza-Reyes?
6 MS. GAZA-REYES: Good afternoon. Present.
7 MR. ALMANZA: Jake Giesbrecht?
8 (No response.)
9 MR. ALMANZA: Ivan Jaime?
10 (No response.)
11 MR. ALMANZA: Lisa Loftus-Otway?
12 MS. LOFTUS-OTWAY: Here, present.
13 MR. ALMANZA: Good afternoon.
14 Marga Lopez?
15 (No response.)
16 MR. ALMANZA: Mayor Bruno Lozano?
17 MAYOR LOZANO: Present, here.
18 MR. ALMANZA: Stan Meador?
19 (No response.)
20 MR. ALMANZA: Commissioner Vincent Perez?
21 MR. PEREZ: Present.
22 MR. ALMANZA: Jesus Reyna?
23 MR. REINA: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm
24 present.
25 MR. ALMANZA: Mayor Pete Saenz?

1 (No response.)

2 MR. ALMANZA: Gerry Schwebel?

3 MR. SCHWEBEL: Present.

4 MR. ALMANZA: Megan Shea?

5 MS. SHEA: I'm on. Good afternoon.

6 MR. ALMANZA: Luis Sifuentes?

7 MAYOR SIFUENTES: I'm here, guys. Good
8 afternoon.

9 MR. ALMANZA: Tommy Taylor?

10 (No response.)

11 MR. ALMANZA: Sam Vale?

12 MR. VALE: Present.

13 MR. ALMANZA: Cameron Walker?

14 MR. WALKER: I'm here. Good afternoon.

15 MR. ALMANZA: And a representative from Kansas
16 City Southern?

17 MR. ERDMAN: Yes. This is Warren Erdman with
18 Kansas City Southern, present.

19 MR. ALMANZA: Okay. We have 16 members in
20 attendance, Caroline.

21 MS. MAYS: You have 16, I have 18, not
22 including SOS, so you're missing somebody.

23 Mr. ALMANZA: Okay. I see 18 with the
24 representatives.

25 MR. LOZANO: Sorry. This is Eduardo Lozano.

1 I'm here.

2 MR. ALMANZA: Thank you.

3 MS. MAYS: Thank you.

4 So, Secretary, I think we do have a quorum to
5 adopt the minutes.

6 SECY. HUGHS: Wonderful. So that being the
7 case, I don't know if we're moving to the agenda page, but
8 we'll go ahead if everyone has had an opportunity. I know
9 you've provided the minutes to the members and if everyone
10 has had an opportunity to read them, do we have any
11 questions or comments about the minutes?

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

14 SECY. HUGHS: Thank you, Eduardo.

15 I have a motion to approve the minutes. Does
16 anyone second that motion?

17 MR. WALKER: I will. This is Cameron Walker.

18 SECY. HUGHS: Thank you, Mr. Walker, appreciate
19 that.

20 So I have a motion and a second. Is anyone
21 opposed to passing the minutes at this time?

22 (No response.)

23 SECY. HUGHS: All right. By silence I will
24 assume everyone else is in favor, and so with that, the
25 minutes are passed. Thank you -- and approved.

1 MS. MAYS: Okay. Thank you, Secretary.

2 We'll go quickly over the agenda before we go
3 to our next agenda item.

4 Kelli, can we have the agenda?

5 As always, we have the agenda laid out. Today
6 it's a little bit more of a truncated agenda, but really
7 critically important, as the Secretary mentioned earlier.
8 We already did the minutes.

9 The next agenda item we'll give you an update,
10 a recap of the last meeting that was held last month, and
11 then we'll jump into the discussion of the Border Master
12 Plan, focusing primarily on the executive summary that you
13 received, and hopefully you had a chance to look at it,
14 and then also have a discussion on the presentation to the
15 Commission that will take place next month.

16 And then quickly we'll go over the full final
17 report. We did have a high-level discussion with you last
18 month, so we really want to give you a chance to add
19 anything or ask questions related to the full plan report,
20 as we're looking to put that out for public comment, you
21 know, as well.

22 So with that, Secretary, I'll turn it over to
23 Giacomo to give the recap of the last meeting. Thank you.

24 MR. YAQUINTO: Good afternoon, everyone. This
25 is Giacomo Yaquinto with the Texas Department of

1 Transportation. Thank y'all for joining us.

2 I'd like to give a recap of the last BTAC
3 meeting on October 22. I'll be focusing on the comments
4 we received and how we responded. When I'm done I'll turn
5 things back over to Carline Mays and Secretary Hughs.

6 The last BTAC meeting had three goals. First,
7 we needed to provide a final look at Chapter 11; second,
8 we needed to provide an overview of the BTMP final report;
9 and finally, we needed to present a preliminary look at
10 the BTMP executive summary and the presentation to the
11 Texas Transportation Commission.

12 Next slide, please.

13 At the start of last month's meeting we
14 presented an overview of Chapter 11, the Implementation
15 Plan, to outline the blueprint for implementing the
16 strategies identified in Chapter 10 in short, medium, and
17 long terms.

18 We were asked what we meant when we said that
19 any project seeking federal action must be included in the
20 BTMP. We explained that that was a CBP request related to
21 projects seeking federal action, especially those not
22 currently included in any plan, and we noted that local
23 projects that do not need federal or state action do not
24 need to be listed in the BTMP.

25 We were asked if there's a clear definition

1 between border crossing projects and corridor projects in
2 the chapters. We've noted that the distinction is based
3 on the physical location of a project, and we'll work to
4 clarify the two categories in the final report.

5 We also heard questions about the accuracy of
6 the project list, and on a related note we were asked if
7 we could share the project list. We responded that we
8 were updating the list with the latest revisions and that
9 we would present the final results during the next BTAC
10 meeting.

11 Toward that end, we presented updated project
12 numbers at the three BNRSC meetings last week. We sent
13 out the current draft of Appendix 10-D, the project list,
14 yesterday afternoon, and we'll see the revised project
15 numbers a little later today.

16 Next slide, please.

17 To facilitate the review of the final report
18 during the last meeting, we broke up the chapters into
19 four groups. We presented Chapters 1 through 3 in the
20 first group as part of the data overview. We didn't
21 receive any comments on these chapters.

22 Next slide, please.

23 We presented Chapters 4 and 5 as part of the
24 network designation and needs assessment overview. In
25 response to Chapter 4, Binational Multimodal

1 Transportation Network, we heard that we need to convey an
2 overview of how rail and highway networks connect at the
3 border, as well as some insight into what happens south of
4 the border. We responded that we will articulate the
5 vision for connectivity in the chapter, including the
6 Mexican plans that we saw during the last meeting that
7 outline the border states' goals to connect to the Texas-
8 Mexico border from both coasts of Mexico using multiple
9 modes.

10 In response to Chapter 5, Current and Future
11 Issues and Needs, we received two related comments. Both
12 explained that because Texas is such an important trade
13 platform for North America, border representatives and
14 advocates need information that can be used to better
15 educate elected officials on why funding POEs benefits all
16 of Texas and beyond, not just the border communities. We
17 responded that we'll highlight the need for improved
18 educational outreach in the chapter and in the executive
19 summary.

20 Next slide, please.

21 We presented Chapters 6 and 7 as part of the
22 forecast and economic analysis overview. In response to
23 Chapter 6, Future Forecast for the Texas-Mexico Border, we
24 were asked to clearly explain that the forecast is
25 unconstrained, meaning that it shows what will happen if

1 nothing is done. We responded that we'll clarify what we
2 mean by unconstrained forecast in the chapter.

3 We didn't receive any comments in response to
4 Chapter 7.

5 Next slide, please.

6 We presented Chapters 8, 9 and 10 as part of
7 the strategies identification and evaluation, stakeholder
8 engagement and recommendations overview. We didn't
9 receive any comments in response to Chapters 8 or 9.

10 In response to Chapter 10, Recommendations, we
11 were asked if we can include funding sources in the
12 chapter, specifically private versus public sources.

13 We responded that we're listing funding
14 information as it was provided to us by the project
15 sponsors, however, we will include a section summarizing
16 the funding sources reported to us.

17 We were also asked what funding definitions we
18 used. We responded that we'll include the definition of
19 funding categories used in the BTMP. There are three:
20 fully funded, partially funded, and unfunded.

21 Next slide, please.

22 In response to the preliminary overview of the
23 executive summary in the Texas Transportation Commission
24 presentation, we heard about the importance of considering
25 the different audiences that will see the executive

1 summary and how that might affect the message that needs
2 to be conveyed.

3 We also heard about the need to provide an
4 overview of the how the U.S. and Mexican highway and rail
5 systems connect at the border and how what is planned for
6 the Texas side of the border fits with activities on the
7 Mexican side of the border.

8 We heard that this would be a critical point to
9 make when the BTMP is presented to the commissioners. We
10 noted that we would look at how to incorporate that
11 information into the executive summary and the
12 presentation to the Commission.

13 That concludes the recap so I'll go ahead and
14 turn the meeting back over to Caroline Mays and Secretary
15 Hughs.

16 SECY. HUGHS: Thank you. We may have lost
17 Caroline temporarily but just wanted to see if there are
18 any comments from anyone in the group at this time based
19 on what was just presented before we got to the next
20 session.

21 MS. MAYS: Thank you, Secretary. I was double
22 muted. Sorry.

23 If there are no comments, we will move into the
24 next section, and I would like to kind of underscore and
25 preface what Secretary mentioned earlier, that really your

1 input to the executive summary is probably one of the most
2 critical roles each of you will play in terms of helping
3 us articulate and compress what you all have been working
4 for, some of you probably for more than two years, on this
5 plan and it boils down to this condensed version of the
6 plan.

7 So really the next, you know, 45 minutes, maybe
8 an hour or more is we're going to go through a turn-page
9 of the executive summary. This is what everybody will see
10 at the end of the day, so as Secretary mentioned, what
11 matters, graphics, the messaging, all of that we really
12 want to hear from you.

13 We've crafted a draft today and really want to
14 hear from you did we get it right, anything missing,
15 anything we needed to add or how we're couching things.
16 So want to spend a little bit of time on this. I know
17 sometimes we feel it's a little bit tedious but it will
18 pay off in the end by getting your input.

19 So with that, I'll turn it over to Donald to
20 lead the discussion.

21 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you very much, Caroline.
22 Can you hear me okay today?

23 MS. MAYS: Yes.

24 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Excellent. Yeah, we're
25 really excited to walk through this with you today. This

1 is a long time in coming, and this is a culmination of
2 your efforts and the efforts of the other stakeholders,
3 and this is really the tangible element that the general
4 public, the Commission -- and I recognize that we have two
5 commissioners on with us today -- as well as business and
6 political leaders will absorb in English and in Spanish in
7 Mexico and the United States and really is intended to
8 distill and convey the key findings of the Border Master
9 Plan.

10 So as Caroline mentioned, the idea today is to
11 do a page-turn. We hope to have great participation
12 today. Caroline and I may call on different members of
13 the BTAC to provide specific input on things.

14 The first thing I wanted to do before we
15 started was basically pause for a moment to see if there
16 was any general overall feedback. I know that this was
17 sent out to the BTAC by Caroline via the Dropbox link
18 ahead of the meeting and wanted to just pause and see if
19 there were any initial reactions, and then if not, then we
20 will go kind of on a page-by-page basis.

21 And as we do that, we'll be asking you some
22 questions about specifically some ways that we can improve
23 this and whether this is really conveying the most
24 impactful message.

25 So with that, are there any initial comments or

1 reactions as you absorb the executive summary?

2 MR. CALVO: Hey, Donald, this is Eduardo.

3 MR. LUDLOW: Thanks, Eduardo.

4 MR. CALVO: My initial reaction in looking at
5 this late last night was that, I mean, there's a lot of
6 information, a lot of graphic information, charts and maps
7 and all that, which is great, but even as an executive
8 summary, I'm assuming that there will be a little more
9 text. Right? Especially for somebody that is not
10 familiar with the border and all that, I think we need a
11 little text, not to make it, you know, extremely wordy
12 because then nobody will read it. Right?

13 MR. LUDLOW: Right.

14 MR. CALVO: But I think, you know, it requires
15 a little more guidance, more explanation of what the
16 charts mean and making the key points that need to be
17 made, you know, for each chapter or for each segment.
18 That's just my initial impression.

19 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Eduardo.

20 Caroline, were you going to ask him something?

21 MS. MAYS: No. I was just saying that that's a
22 great comment. That's what we want to hear from you, and
23 then I think later on we're going to ask for all those
24 graphics, you know, what should that key message be.

25 I think that's really the fundamental thing

1 here, so be thinking about that: of these graphics that
2 are in here, what should that key message or messages be.

3 But great comment overall, yes.

4 Any other comments from anybody else?

5 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry Schwebel. I do
6 have a comment. I just want to make sure that the rest of
7 the committee zoomed in on this. Most of us in the BTAC
8 are part of the border; that's why it's called Border
9 Trade Advisory Committee.

10 And I notice on page 27, and I've highlighted
11 this in the past, made this observation, where we talk
12 about 652 border-wide projects on that page 27, it's
13 important to highlight that border crossing projects are
14 only \$4.9 billion of 135, versus corridor projects.

15 And I think wherever we go tell the story, that
16 we need to make sure that people understand that this is
17 not just a border infrastructure improvement plan but it
18 encompasses the rest of Texas, and the majority of the
19 money is going to be corridors based on these, looking at
20 the whole list that we're going to discuss later on.

21 I think people need to keep that in focus when
22 we roll this thing out, because we probably will be the
23 ones that will be sharing at the local levels along the
24 border, and we want to make sure that we don't get
25 politics involved: Well, why did you have more for the

1 border than other parts?

2 I just want to make sure that we all stay
3 focused on how we go out there and roll this out there to
4 the public and that we have our talking points in order
5 whatever period of time we have to do this. Okay?
6 Especially when it comes to if any of us are involved at
7 the legislative side, you know, submitting recommendations
8 or talks or testimony.

9 MR. VALE: That's an extremely important point,
10 Gerry. That's a very important point that you're making.

11 MR. LUDLOW: So, Gerry, I agree that's an
12 important point. One kind of follow-up question, as we
13 are describing that difference between the border and the
14 corridors and making that a key argument that these
15 investments in the corridors are really to provide better
16 connectivity and seamless movement through the border, is
17 there any other nuance that you think would be helpful
18 here?

19 I mean, specifically I'm thinking that the
20 distinction between kind of these last-mile connectors
21 especially that are reaching the border that we've
22 identified throughout this process as being particularly
23 important, that those are still considered corridors, but
24 they are literally the corridors at the doorstep to the
25 border. I don't know if that's a particular argument or

1 point that you think we should try to emphasize further.

2 MR. VALE: Well, the corridors are used by
3 everybody in the state; they're not just used by stuff
4 going to and from the border, so part of what we have to
5 sell to the legislature is they benefit from the corridor
6 too.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you, Sam.

8 MR. SCHWEBEL: Yeah, that's the message, that's
9 why I'm bringing it up. Like I said, some of us, this is
10 not our first rodeo, and therefore, a lot of times it's
11 not just the information you want to share but how you say
12 it, how you present it, and who you present it to.

13 And the last thing we want is for the
14 conspiracy theorists and all the anti-everything people
15 grabbing ahold of a plan that we worked on for so long and
16 may not understand what we're doing and turning it against
17 us.

18 And so I think the FAQs will become key for all
19 of us in the BTAC and making sure that we relay it to our
20 local public officials and we educate them and then all
21 the way on up through Austin.

22 MR. VALE: Right now, Gerry, they have a huge
23 project being developed in Austin to widen the main
24 highway through north and south. That benefits the
25 border, it benefits Austin, it benefits the State of

1 Texas, so it's an everybody-win kind of deal.

2 MR. SCHWEBEL: Another point I thought I would
3 make is that I know that Consul General Marentes has been
4 on these calls, but I think it would be also -- and I know
5 that some of the other consul generals along the border
6 communities participated in the stakeholder meetings.

7 But I also think that we've got to include
8 them, perhaps get them more involved, the consul generals
9 of Mexico on the U.S. side, and vice versa, the consul
10 generals of the U.S. on the Mexican side, and making sure
11 that we share and that they are engaged from El Paso to
12 Brownsville.

13 We have in total, I think, eleven consulates in
14 Texas alone -- I may be wrong here, off by a couple -- but
15 along the border we know the consulates are key
16 information disseminators on both sides of the border, and
17 I think we should have probably gotten them more engaged
18 early on, and maybe some got more engaged than others, and
19 I know there have been some changes, but I just also make
20 that recommendation.

21 MR. LUDLOW: Great. Thank you very much.

22 MS. MAYS: Yes. Great comments, Gerry and
23 definitely Sam.

24 And while you were speaking, one of the things
25 that occurred to me is that really I think what is always

1 been missed when we talk about the border is the corridor
2 discussion.

3 Everybody jumps to think that the border is
4 just about the border crossings. To facilitate trade, to
5 facilitate the movement of people, you have to have the
6 corridors to be able to move it away from the border, so
7 that's really key.

8 And with what you just mentioned, it shows that
9 the needs of the corridors are far greater than just the
10 needs of the border crossings themselves. So I think that
11 a key message that came, you know, out of what you were
12 saying is we can't just talk about the physical border
13 crossings. That's one element of moving people and goods
14 across the border, but then there's the multimodal
15 corridors, rail, highway, pipelines and others, airports,
16 like we discussed last time, so thank you for those
17 comments.

18 Donald, would you like to continue?

19 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. So just kind of going once,
20 going twice, are there any other major overarching
21 comments, initial reactions before we go into the
22 page-turn?

23 MR. ZAPATA: Hey, Donald, this is David Zapata.

24 MR. LUDLOW: Hey, David. Yeah, sure, go ahead.

25 MR. ZAPATA: I was just going to piggyback on

1 what Sam and Gerry said and just kind of like make the
2 point. I do remember that during one of the economic
3 development importance of the border, just of the plan in
4 general, we mentioned how Dallas plays a role in kind of
5 like being the storage and kind of like where everything
6 spreads out from Texas to everywhere in the country.

7 So maybe there's a way we can just highlight
8 that obviously this plan starts at the border but it ends
9 up benefitting in that sense, like Gerry said, like the
10 whole state.

11 You know, like everything connects
12 ultimately -- when everyone of the border but everything
13 connects ultimately with the rest of the state through
14 this corridor. So again, maybe raise some of those points
15 that they mentioned may be easier to emphasize in the
16 summary with some of the graphics that you already have in
17 those previous chapters. I just wanted to at least
18 mention that.

19 And then for Gerry, he mentioned the other
20 consul generals in Mexico. I know that we have a pretty
21 good relationship with Consul Marentes, so we'll bring
22 that up in some of our future conversations with him to
23 see how we can work on that, you know, spreading out that
24 information as well through their office with their help.

25 MR. LUDLOW: Thanks, David. I particularly

1 like your suggestion on Dallas, just because I think
2 that's the kind of narrative that helps emphasize the
3 statewide connection and impact of the border.

4 And you are right, Dallas has become, in many
5 respects, the Chicago of the mid-south, really serving
6 this incredibly important distribution function, not only
7 for domestic trade but for international trade and linking
8 a lot of what flows through Texas and reaches the rest of
9 the country. So I think that's an important story to
10 convey.

11 And overall, I think the message from each of
12 you is that there needs to be a greater emphasis on
13 statewide importance of the projects and policies that are
14 being recommended.

15 Caroline, do you have anything else to add
16 before we jump right in here?

17 MS. MAYS: No, that's it. Go ahead.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. So Kelli, can you advance
19 us to our first page here?

20 So the way we're going to do this is we're
21 going to go to each page. I'm going to just briefly tell
22 you the general strategy for what is presented, and then
23 we're going to pause and just kind of see what you have,
24 and the team will make note of those comments, and then
25 that enables us to go back and quickly iterate revisions

1 to another version taking into account the things that
2 you're suggesting.

3 So as a reader opens this first page, of
4 course, there are visuals of the border, demonstrating
5 both rural and urban segments of the Texas-Mexico
6 connections, and the other thing that this initial piece
7 does is it quickly introduces kind of the purpose and
8 background of the plan, what it is, what it's intended to
9 do, and why it's important.

10 The other key part of this first page that you
11 open up is this map that illustrates through the broad
12 arrows some of the key corridors -- it's obviously not all
13 of them but some of the key corridors that connect the
14 three USMCA countries, and really emphasizing that this is
15 a holistic approach that takes into account this very
16 important and major part of this border between our
17 countries.

18 So this is intended to be visual, it's intended
19 to be introductory. Eduardo, I think this probably is one
20 of the parts where we do have some text that is
21 storytelling, and I think that that's something we'll look
22 to strengthen, since at this point this executive summary
23 is probably graphics heavy.

24 Are there any initial reactions to this
25 beginning, including the decision to kind of paint the

1 picture of the border and especially of this economic
2 connection to the rest of the country and the continent?

3 MR. SEPULVEDA: This is Pete Sepulveda.

4 My only comment, looking at the map, is that
5 you do not show I-37 going from San Antonio to Corpus, or
6 you do not show I-69E going to Cameron County or I-69C
7 going to Hidalgo County.

8 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Pete. We will take
9 that into consideration and get back to the cartographers
10 to emphasize at least some of the -- label some of the
11 connections there down into South Texas.

12 MR. SEPULVEDA: Now, then the other one is
13 Interstate 2 from Harlingen to Mission and from Interstate
14 2 in Harlingen to the Port of Brownsville you have
15 connectivity through I-69E and Interstate 169.

16 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Great. Thank you for those
17 comments.

18 Are there other comments about this initial
19 information that's presented?

20 MR. NEGRON: Yes. There was a little bit of
21 discussion at the last I think it was a BNRSC meeting
22 about the tension between quality of life and community
23 and the major infrastructure transportation systems as
24 conduits for commerce.

25 And I would suggest in the last sentence of the

1 first paragraph adding after "local economic
2 competitiveness," "and quality of life."

3 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Sito, great suggestion.
4 We will integrate that. And that also is reflective of
5 some of the key goals of the Border Master Plan, as well,
6 that are focused on stewardship and improving quality of
7 life in border communities.

8 Any other initial comments?

9 MR. ANDRADE: This is Salvador Monroy from SCT.
10 Maybe it's just a detail, but I think maybe it
11 would be better to speak in present, this plan identifies
12 transportation needs, not as a future topic because
13 actually it is doing so right now.

14 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. So, Salvador, you're
15 suggesting looking at changing the tense just a little
16 bit.

17 MR. ANDRADE: In case it doesn't move the whole
18 scope of the first paragraph that states that "we'll
19 identify transportation issues," and in fact, it is a
20 matter of something that has already done, so maybe it
21 could be in present, yes.

22 MR. LUDLOW: Okay.

23 MS. MAYS: Thank you, Salvador. I think,
24 Donald, what the first sentence says "will identify," what
25 Salvador is saying they were identified, so I think there

1 we need to change that from "will" to "the plan has
2 identified."

3 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you. You're exactly
4 right: We've all collectively done this work, it has
5 happened. Thank you, Salvador.

6 Any other comments on this first page?

7 MR. BARELA: Very quickly, this is Jon Barela,
8 here in El Paso.

9 It may seem a little esoteric, but the map
10 might have a stronger graphical image if we had those
11 green arrows also emanating to the I-10. There's a whole
12 lot of traffic that goes from at least our area to the
13 Port of LA, Long Beach, so that may be a stronger graphic
14 if you were able to get your cartographers to do that.

15 MR. LUDLOW: Thanks, Jon. Point well taken.

16 MS. MAYS: Yeah, and Jon, those edits are on
17 the way. I already pointed those out, so I just want to
18 make sure that, yes, it's on because we are missing -- if
19 we don't have that, I-10 east-west is really critical to
20 trade if you look at it because it's coming from El Paso
21 and going west, but also going east from El Paso as well.

22 MR. BARELA: Correct. Thank you.

23 MR. LUDLOW: Any other comments? These are
24 great comments, and you know, we'll not only reflect these
25 on the first page but throughout, and that's the general

1 approach here, so we really appreciate that. It's not
2 always easy doing something like this as a group, but I
3 think it's really important to have the consensus of this
4 group together.

5 All right. Well, let's move to our next page
6 then.

7 I'm sorry. Eduardo, did you have something to
8 say?

9 MR. CALVO: Well, Donald, this is still a very
10 generic comment that I was going to make regarding the
11 overall Border Master Plan, so you know, I'm still trying
12 to have a clear idea of where this border plan ends and
13 where perhaps the next phase of the border plan begins.
14 Right?

15 You know, I'm assuming that this Border Master
16 Plan ends with the identification of all these projects,
17 programs, and policies that have been compiled and that's
18 pretty much it. Right? There's not going to be a major
19 prioritization process as part of this Border Master Plan
20 version. Is that correct?

21 MS. MAYS: Yes. And I can answer that, Donald.

22 MR. LUDLOW: Okay.

23 MS. MAYS: Yes. What you see now is what the
24 plan has from Chapter 1 all the way to Chapter 11, so the
25 plan has identified projects, policies, and programs; the

1 plan has identified implementation plan on what timelines
2 you, the project sponsors, have provided for when those
3 projects would be implemented, and then the policy and
4 program recommendations are not necessarily a very strict
5 timeline there, but once that's compiled, the plan is
6 approved and adopted, then the implementation begins.

7 But when it comes to the project
8 implementation, each of the project sponsors will be
9 responsible for facilitating the implementation of their
10 programs. What we will do at TxDOT, we will continue to
11 help facilitate, through BTAC and other stakeholder
12 groups, the implementation of the policy recommendations,
13 the implementation of the program recommendations. Some
14 of the high-priority ones we'll continue to facilitate the
15 implementation of those.

16 So to your question, yes, the plan itself is
17 not an end, you now, what's done, then you pick up the
18 next phase, which is multi-pronged with several people
19 involved.

20 Does that answer your question?

21 MR. CALVO: Yeah, this is very helpful. So
22 maybe precisely what you just said, and of course, in a
23 condensed version, maybe that also needs to be part of
24 page 1, you know, so that the reader knows what this
25 document is and where it ends. Right?

1 So maybe a statement summarizing what you just
2 explained would be useful here at the very beginning of
3 the executive summary.

4 MS. MAYS: Okay. Yeah, we can do that. We
5 were trying to capture that in the last page of the
6 executive summary, Call to Action, so take a look at that
7 and see, you know, if it fits back there or it fits in the
8 first page.

9 Certainly one of the comments we've always made
10 very clear is that this plan is -- TxDOT is not the entity
11 that will implement everything about this plan. If
12 anything, our portion is very small because you have
13 binational, you've got Mexico, you've got Texas, you've
14 got U.S. Federal, state, local, regional, you know, all
15 involved in this process.

16 So you know, let us know if you'd rather see in
17 the first page or the last page -- again, just let us
18 know.

19 MR. CALVO: Great. Thank you.

20 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Eduardo.

21 Let's see, Kelli, can we advance to the next
22 page?

23 So as we kind of turn to this page, and we
24 framed most of the executive summary around answering FAQ-
25 style questions, so this first page is: Why does the

1 Texas-Mexico border matter? And again, it goes into
2 explaining this is a common border, it links U.S.-Mexico
3 trade, it sustains economic benefit and it is sustaining
4 and driving incredible population growth, and it is a
5 strategic national asset, both to the U.S. and Mexico.
6 And then, of course, some of the details are outlined.

7 Mainly the intent here is to explain clearly,
8 especially to somebody who may not be familiar with the
9 argument, that the border is absolutely critical to our
10 commerce, our international commerce in communities, to
11 orient them.

12 And then it moves into on the next fold the
13 goals of the BTMP and kind of noting those with icons,
14 very simple and straightforward. Obviously somebody would
15 need to sit and read this and kind of absorb it, but kind
16 of taking this all in, why does the border matter and what
17 are the goals of the plan. So that is the next bit of
18 content, and let's see if there any specific reactions or
19 suggestions from BTAC members.

20 And I know we may, like we did with our last
21 BNRSC, call on some of you just to kind of get your
22 feedback and general reaction, not only to those pages but
23 to the whole thing.

24 One person who immediately came to mind was
25 Jon. You commented a little bit earlier just in terms of

1 framing this from an economic perspective. Jon Barela, do
2 you have any specific comments on this part or anything
3 you've see so far?

4 MR. BARELA: No. I think it looks really good.
5 Thank you. The only very minor comment is by the time we
6 publish this, I hope to have 2020 numbers out about
7 U.S.-Mexico trade. I know we have 2019 numbers, I know
8 that's the latest we have, but we must might want, if we
9 have the latest numbers, to include that. But otherwise,
10 looks great.

11 MR. LUDLOW: All right. Thank you, Jon.

12 Are there any mayors on the BTAC who have any
13 comments up to this point?

14 MS. MAYS: I'm going to call on my friend Mayor
15 Lozano.

16 MAYOR LOZANO: Thank you.

17 MS. MAYS: Go ahead.

18 MAYOR LOZANO: I currently don't have any
19 additional comments right now. I just want to say that
20 this is an important segment. And I did hear some of the
21 earlier comments, but as of right now I don't. Thank you
22 all, though.

23 MR. LUDLOW: Okay, great.

24 MS. MAYS: Can I pick on a couple of people? I
25 know we have our railroad friends here, I know we have KCS

1 and UP and BNSF. From a rail perspective, what's the
2 message, why does the border matter? What would you want
3 people to know from your perspective?

4 MR. ERDMAN: this is Warren Erdman with Kansas
5 City Southern.

6 MS. MAYS: Yes. Welcome, Warren.

7 MR. ERDMAN: I believe in a later slide we talk
8 about the importance of a unified processing center for
9 rail border crossings, and that would clearly be a high
10 rail priority, and I thought it was presented fairly and
11 accurately.

12 MS. MAYS: That's great. Thank you.

13 Megan, any comments from BNSF?

14 (No response.)

15 MS. MAYS: If not, I see Tyson with UP
16 Railroad. Any comments?

17 (No response.)

18 MS. MAYS: No comments from Tyson? We can't
19 hear you.

20 Well, if not, Donald, we'll go back to the
21 mayor. I know the mayor of Eagle Pass is also on the
22 line, so we're going to call on some elected officials.
23 Mayor Sifuentes, why does the border matter from your
24 perspective?

25 If you're trying to speak, please unmute your

1 line, and if you're on the phone, I think you press star-
2 six, right, star-six to unmute your line.

3 (No response.)

4 MS. MAYS: Okay. Donald, we can keep moving.
5 I know Tyson is trying to talk, but he says he's having
6 issues with the connection.

7 MR. CORONADO: Hey, Caroline, this is David
8 Coronado, Bridge System of El Paso.

9 Do we want to change in the center of the page,
10 in the top center, do we want to change 26 highway
11 crossings to border crossings, or is that what you meant
12 to say?

13 MS. MAYS: It's border crossings, not highway
14 crossings.

15 MR. CORONADO: And then on the bottom left you
16 have 29 of the 49 are in Texas. Is it 29? I'm doing the
17 math here.

18 MS. MAYS: I think 29 is adding Santa Teresa.

19 MR. CORONADO: Right, but then you have the 26
20 border crossings plus the six rail crossings plus the
21 ferry, so is it 29? I don't know what went into that
22 number.

23 MS. MAYS: Yeah. We'll double-check that.

24 Alejandro and the team, can you help with that,
25 answer that right now?

1 MR. SOLIS: Yes, Caroline. So what we have is
2 the 26 highway crossings plus the two dams plus the one
3 ferry. That's the 29 that we're mentioning there. We
4 were not counting the rail crossings in the 29; those are
5 only for highway crossings.

6 MR. CORONADO: Okay.

7 MS. MAYS: We'll just make that clear in there,
8 and then also change that from high crossings to POEs.

9 MR. NEGRON: Another comment along the lines of
10 the first one that I made under stewardship, can you add
11 the word community, so "manage environmental, community,
12 and agency resources."

13 MR. ANDRADE: this is Salvador Monroy from SCT
14 again.

15 I was wondering for the same square to add, if
16 it is not too ambitious, stewardship and sustainability,
17 just for reflection could work, I don't know.

18 MS. MAYS: No. Actually, that's a great
19 comment. Yeah, somewhere we can add that.

20 BTAC members, any thoughts about that? Anybody
21 against it being added?

22 MAYOR LOZANO: I'm for the formality of
23 stewardship because it is a relationship for both sides
24 and that reflects what this is all about. This is Mayor
25 Lozano.

1 MS. MAYS: Donald.

2 MR. BARELA: Excuse me. This is Jon Barela.
3 Sorry to interrupt one more time.

4 On the economic forecast for the job growth, it
5 says "trade through Texas-Mexico borders support 7 million
6 jobs in both countries." I know you can use different dat
7 points and different sources, there have been some
8 estimates much higher than that and I'd certainly what to
9 be accurate. Where did we get that 7 million from?
10 Because, for example, the U.S. Chamber will say it's more
11 than that. There are some people who say that just in
12 Texas alone it's 3 million, so want to make sure we're
13 accurate and certainly the higher number the better, if
14 it's accurate.

15 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. Alejandro or Chris
16 Williges, do you have any reaction to Jon's suggestion.

17 (No response.)

18 MR. LUDLOW: Jon, we'll go back and take a
19 closer look at that too. Obviously, you know, use the
20 number that is the most all-encompassing with respect to
21 trade.

22 MR. BARELA: Okay, great. Thank you.

23 MR. LUDLOW: You're welcome.

24 Any other comments on this set of pages?

25 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry Schwebel. On the

1 What are the Goals page?

2 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah.

3 MR. SCHWEBEL: There's a section there on
4 cross-border resiliency, where it talks about -- you know
5 we had talked about continue operations after disasters
6 and emergency events. I think in general what we need to
7 look at is any disruptors related to cross-border trade.
8 You know, we may have bomb threats, we may have strike
9 blockades of our ports of entry. I don't know how we
10 could -- that would be the place to incorporate any of
11 those disruptions, including a misalignment of protocols
12 like we're having right now as a result of COVID. You
13 know, where do we put that? Or eliminate or reduce or
14 mitigate what I just described, it's under resiliency, I
15 don't know.

16 MS. MAYS: Yeah, I think it goes under
17 resiliency, and I like the fact that you brought up kind
18 of these what are called man-made disruptors, you know,
19 bomb threats, demonstrators -- because a couple of times,
20 you know, they demonstrated on the border on the Mexican
21 side mostly in the last couple of months that has
22 happened. How is that addressed. I think that's part of
23 the resiliency, and like you mentioned, the protocols, the
24 misalignment, how do you address that, so I think it might
25 fall under resiliency because that's how we're going to

1 create a resilient border, you know, crossing or resilient
2 systems and to understand that disruptors are not just
3 COVID or [INAUDIBLE], et cetera, you know.

4 So Donald, let's think about how we capture
5 what Gerry just raised.

6 MR. LUDLOW: I agree. We will work on some new
7 wording in this area and we may run that by you
8 specifically, if that's all right.

9 Okay. If there are no further comments -- and
10 this has been a great discussion, we really appreciate the
11 input so far. This just tightens things up ensures that
12 we're getting kind of more of a full consensus coverage
13 from the BTAC on the material.

14 Kelli, can we advance, or Hannah?

15 MS. MAYS: Yeah. And while we're advancing the
16 slide, I really want to encourage people, this is a BTAC,
17 Border Trade Advisory Committee member meeting, so the
18 comments are reserved for committee members. The general
19 public, you can type your comments in the chat box, so
20 only committee members can really unmute their phones and
21 speak up. We want to maintain the integrity of the
22 advisory committee. So just wanted to make that very
23 clear: if you're not a committee member that your name
24 wasn't called, you're not a part of the roster, please
25 provide your comments through the chat box. Thank you.

1 MR. LUDLOW: Thanks for that clarification,
2 Caroline.

3 So this next section really hits on how the
4 stakeholders were engaged and there's a bit of narrative
5 here to explain that this was an unprecedented process
6 involving over 2,500 stakeholders in both countries,
7 emphasizing the role of the different committees,
8 including BTAC, JWC, BBXG, talking about the monthly
9 meetings and intensified coordination between TxDOT and
10 SSFA and also our key Mexican border states, and the deep
11 involvement of our Mexican and Texas partners through the
12 process. It talks about the BNRSCs and then it illustrates
13 the regional differentiation in the BNRSCs, where those
14 are located, how they're comprised.

15 The next page walks through the stakeholder
16 input and highlights that it went well beyond the border
17 region, the Texas-Mexico border region, and extended well
18 into the United States and Mexico, involving and engaging
19 many different people and organizations from both
20 countries and illustrating that with a map. One of the
21 key messages here is that there were over 19,000
22 interactions with the different members of the groups that
23 participated throughout the process.

24 So again, this is the story of who helped
25 develop the plan, how they were engaged, and emphasizing

1 the geographic reach of that engagement.

2 Are there any questions or comments?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. LUDLOW: Maybe we can call on a couple of
5 our additional public officials who might not have
6 commented earlier. I don't know, Commissioner Perez, if
7 you have any comments so far?

8 MR. PEREZ: I don't have anything right now.

9 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you.

10 Is Mayor Saenz on the phone with us today? I
11 wondered if Mayor Saenz had any comments or a
12 representative from Laredo. Maybe Mayor Saenz is not with
13 us.

14 MR. SCHWEBEL: I don't think he is.

15 MR. LUDLOW: He's not on today, Gerry? Okay.

16 Jake from Presidio, do you have any comments so
17 far?

18 MS. MAYS: I don't remember seeing Jake on.

19 MR. LUDLOW: No Jake? Okay.

20 What about was Cynthia Garza-Reyes with us
21 today?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. LUDLOW: I may be maybe not calling on the
24 right people today.

25 What about Josue Garcia with Cameron County?

1 MR. GARCIA: Yes, Donald, this is Josue.

2 You know, I think I echo what Eduardo said at
3 the very beginning, and I think that as we look at the
4 stakeholder being engaged, as we look at the one
5 particular items of what made everything work, I think
6 this is a good representative of what happened. And like
7 someone said earlier, you know, we need to have a little
8 more meat, but then if you have too much then people won't
9 read it. So having said that, I think this looks good for
10 my eyes.

11 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Josue, we appreciate
12 that.

13 I think in the interest of time, unless there's
14 any other pressing comments, let's move on.

15 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry Schwebel. I've
16 got to say this because to me, this to me is the most
17 important page of this plan, where others are going to
18 evaluate funding, approvals, buy-in, support, you know,
19 this will dispel many of the other challenges because this
20 did include everybody and anybody who wanted to have
21 anything to say and we added even people who needed to be
22 at the table. So most of the other projects that have
23 gone before, all local, federal, state authorities,
24 always, well, so-and-so was not included, so-and-so was
25 not included, well, what does this other person say? This

1 to me it tells you that, look, all of these people,
2 everyone had a chance, everyone participated, we have a
3 cross-section of everything, and quite frankly, you know,
4 to me it's the most important message.

5 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you for that, Gerry.

6 And we'll get to a certain point a little bit
7 later where we talk about the sequence of the messages
8 that we have in here and whether we shift around anything
9 in terms of order, but that's much appreciated.

10 David, were you about to say something?

11 MR. ZAPATA: Yeah, and I hate to maybe call him
12 out, but I know that Stan Meador from Texas Pacific
13 mentioned in the chat that he was available so I know that
14 he lives in San Angelo but also is familiar with the
15 Presidio area, so I thought maybe giving him a chance if
16 he's around still in the meeting to say something about
17 the plan from that area's perspective.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Fantastic. Stan, if you are
19 available we'd love to hear from you either right now or
20 at any point during this discussion. Did you want to
21 provide any feedback right now, Stan?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. LUDLOW: Well, Stan, when you are ready,
24 let us know and we will listen to you and appreciate your
25 perspective.

1 Let's move on to the next page.

2 So this next page we start to get into some of
3 the statistical background and making sure that we have
4 enough material here, that we're telling the right story.

5 I'm actually going to go a little bit faster through some
6 of the next few pages, but this one is essentially
7 answering the question what are the population, employment
8 and income trends. And I think this group is quite
9 familiar with most of this material since it's been
10 presented multiple times. So are there any pressing
11 comments on this page?

12 MR. CALVO: Donald, this is Eduardo.

13 The only comment that I have, especially on
14 page 7, is again, I did not go back and check the data on
15 these tables versus what has been presented in prior
16 chapters, but I mean, the differences -- like for example
17 on the top horizontal bar chart that shows Texas-Mexico
18 employment by region, you know, the growth there in RGV in
19 2050 looks, I mean, super, it looks huge. Right? So my
20 initial reaction was like, okay, is this true. I mean, I
21 know that all the regions are growing. Right? So my
22 overall comment is just make sure, double check that the
23 numbers are consistent.

24 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you. We will do
25 that. We've used various sources, including forecasts.

1 So thank you, Eduardo, we will definitely look at those
2 things that seem extraordinary.

3 MR. CALVO: Right.

4 MR. LUDLOW: Any other comments on this page?
5 (No response.)

6 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Let's move to the next. So
7 after we go through the border population trends, we
8 really start to look at the trends for moving people and
9 goods, and again, this is all material that you've seen
10 before. These maps are broken out by specific POE by
11 region that kind of highlights the historic, current and
12 future flows. And the intent here was to make this local,
13 to make it real and to enable somebody to kind of look at
14 this and understand exactly those trends in the regions
15 for people and for goods.

16 Are there any comments or questions this page,
17 of course, beyond those which Eduardo had offered
18 previously?

19 MR. SCHWEBEL: Just an observation, in regards
20 to the buses, and I don't know if we have very much on the
21 bus traffic in the ports of entry. When you talk about
22 people on these buses, most of these buses are 30 to 36
23 seat buses. You know, what buses may mean to people, they
24 think it's just a bus crossing, or how could we elaborate
25 more expanding that these buses are taking people from

1 Mexico into the interior of the united States, will the
2 reader understand it?

3 MR. LUDLOW: I think the question you're
4 asking, Gerry, is will the reader understand why we've got
5 bus in here, why that's important, and it's not transit
6 bus per se but it is intercity bus, it's providing
7 connections. We'll note that and see if there is a
8 clarifying statement that we can make to tell that story a
9 bit better on this slide while maintaining economy in our
10 words.

11 MR. CORONADO: This is David Coronado. So I
12 think we discussed this a couple of months ago that some
13 of the crossings declined after 9/11, you know, and there
14 was a clear break in the way that people and good were
15 inspected and processes, you know, clearance
16 documentation, all that stuff, and I think that will help
17 explain the decline in crossings from 1990 to 2019. I
18 think we've got to say something about the fact that, you
19 know, 9/11 was a major shock to the system and that this
20 decline it's not because folks don't want to go back and
21 forth, it's just, you know, the state of the border
22 crossings.

23 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you, David. I think
24 those are great points you make. That's another point
25 that if we're adding some additional narrative, some short

1 narrative, this is what we're looking for from you is just
2 making sure that we are hitting some of those key
3 messages. Again, this is a balance between the graphics
4 and capturing the reader and providing that narrative, so
5 that's much appreciated.

6 The next two pages are essentially the same
7 thing except for goods movement so that was people
8 movement and then this is goods movement, so telling the
9 story in a very similar way, this time essentially
10 focusing on the multimodal network for goods and really at
11 the crossing level focusing on commercial vehicles and
12 rail cars.

13 So again, if there are any questions here, if
14 any of our friends from the railroads would like to
15 comment on this, this is the story that we're kind of
16 telling and showing significant projected growth across
17 the modes in the future.

18 MR. ERDMAN: I don't have anything to add to
19 what you presented here.

20 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Warren.

21 MR. WOJNOWSKI: This is Matt. Can you hear me?

22 MS. MAYS: Yes, we can hear you.

23 MR. WOJNOWSKI: My only comment is on the bar
24 graphs on the top left, CMV is huge to the left and then
25 all the ones to the right of it are so small. I don't

1 know if it would be beneficial to have two different ones
2 so you could actually see the difference between freight
3 rail, aviation, pipeline and marine time to have a bigger
4 scale to see the difference in that or if that's what
5 you're trying to show that all those ones to the right,
6 freight, aviation, pipeline and marine time are so small
7 compared to CMV. Does that kind of make sense?

8 MR. LUDLOW: Yes, thank you.

9 MR. WOJNOWSKI: That's all. Thank you.

10 MR. LUDLOW: Any other comments here?

11 MR. GARCIA: Donald, this is Josue.

12 Gerry said a few minutes ago, you know, about
13 the one slide that was most important to him. Well, to me
14 this is the most important, and I say this because here
15 we're talking about the goods, about the trade, and you
16 know, there's a billion dollars of trade that cross every
17 day so that's really telling the story of the border and
18 what we are looking for and why this plan came to be, you
19 know, past, present and future. And I think it's very
20 important that we tell the story about the trade and all
21 the jobs that we've talked about and what that makes
22 available not only to Texas but throughout the whole
23 United States and a lot of the Mexican states as well.

24 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you, Josue. We may
25 be able to add a couple of points there to tell that

1 story. It seems like for some of these paragraphs we're
2 just missing a few of these key points, and we appreciate
3 you pointing those out and getting those integrated.

4 Anything else here?

5 MR. BRROUWEN: This is Fred Brrouwen from the
6 City of Pharr Bridge Department. We have Hidalgo POE,
7 that's Pharr POE. Right?

8 MR. LUDLOW: Alejandro, can you clarify? I
9 believe so.

10 MR. SOLIS: Yes. So we're listing the POEs as
11 the aggregate of the border crossings, we're listing
12 basically by the CVP breakdown. But yes, it is included,
13 I believe, in that POE.

14 MR. BRROUWEN: In Hidalgo and you have buses,
15 crossing in buses, I know all the buses regularly cross
16 through Hidalgo Bridge. But when we talk about CMV,
17 that's Pharr, Texas, that's Pharr. You might want to put
18 Pharr-Hidalgo to distinguish that it's Pharr. You're
19 talking about Pharr. Right?

20 MR. SOLIS: Well, in this case I think we're
21 talking about border crossings that are included in
22 Hidalgo. It might be the case that only Pharr handles
23 CMV, so that's why the number is equal, but in reality,
24 again, we're using the nomenclature or the aggregation
25 that CVP lists as POEs and each POE can comprise one

1 border crossing or more, in most cases it is more than
2 one.

3 MR. BROUWEN: So the you're talking about
4 Hidalgo as included in Pharr? Because it is confusing.

5 MR. SOLIS: I need to double-check on why it's
6 exactly that way, but I can get back to you on that.

7 MR. BROUWEN: Thank you.

8 MR. LUDLOW: Unless there's anything else
9 pressing, let's move ahead to next.

10 Eduardo, did you have something else to say
11 here?

12 MR. CALVO: I was quickly just going to
13 emphasize that, I'm looking at a note that's already here,
14 but I think to that point I think it's important to
15 clarify that, you know, border crossings and ports of
16 entry are not necessarily the same thing. Right?

17 Just what you were explaining, but I mean, many
18 of us in the past used them interchangeably, which is
19 obviously not correct. Border crossings are individual
20 crossings; POEs could be aggregates, but I think it would
21 be important to make that definition somewhere so that the
22 reader understands what's going on.

23 MR. LUDLOW: Thanks, Eduardo. We've noted
24 that.

25 Caroline, did you have anything else to say or

1 are we going to move on here?

2 MS. MAYS: We can move on. Thank you.

3 MR. LUDLOW: Hannah, let's go to the next.

4 So continuing essentially the border goods
5 movement and trends, this one is really relating to the
6 supply chain, focusing on the expected 234 percent growth
7 in cross-border trade value and illustrating that with the
8 map, making a few key points in the boxes and really
9 showing the linkage between border trade and the rest of
10 the United States.

11 I guess we could potentially call this out but
12 Michigan is the second most reliant upon the border trade
13 by value after Texas, but showing those connections, and
14 also deep into Mexico.

15 Any comments or questions here?

16 (No response.)

17 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. I think we will continue to
18 move. Let's go to our next. Hannah, can you zoom out
19 just a little tiny bit here so we can see the top? Okay,
20 there we go. Thank you.

21 So again, we're going into more depth here.
22 These pages are intended to describe some of the key
23 supply chains that link the border, where they're at right
24 now, where they were in the past, and where they'll be in
25 the future, really showing massive changes in motor

1 vehicles, high technology and other commodities and
2 highlighting some of these.

3 This is all coming out of the forecasting that
4 the team did, and then some of the maps are really
5 illustrating some of the flows for the top three supply
6 chains.

7 And this, again, is to really illustrate and
8 make it more tangible which goods are most dependent upon
9 the border and then linking those back to this kind of
10 broader story about the dependency of the states in the
11 U.S. and Mexico for this cross-border flow.

12 There's a bit to absorb here. This is one
13 where you have to kind of grab a cup of coffee or
14 something, but there's a lot to enjoy. If you like
15 walking through more economist type graphs I feel like
16 it's a very --

17 Are there any comments or questions about this?

18 (No response.)

19 MR. LUDLOW: Caroline, did you have anything in
20 particular you wanted to ask the group here?

21 MS. MAYS: Not really, but I think, you know,
22 just want to make sure that, again, committee members,
23 this is your chance to mold the message, and I realize you
24 got this document fairly late, but overall have we
25 captured the message, especially in terms of supply

1 chains. I know that's something that the committee early
2 on really talked about and wanted to make sure it's
3 articulated.

4 And you know, Jon Barela, you can probably
5 explain this more, different regions have kind of unique
6 supply chains, El Paso, Laredo, and also the Rio Grande
7 Valley. Does this capture that?

8 MR. BARELA: Caroline, from my perspective --
9 this is Jon -- it sure does. I mean, I think Donald's
10 point was very well taken. It's kind of one of those you
11 need to sit back and relax and enjoy and drink a cup of
12 coffee or tea or something else.

13 It looks really comprehensive and quite
14 detailed and comprehensive, yet cogent, I might add. So
15 it looks good.

16 MS. MAYS: Okay. From the Laredo side, does
17 this capture -- and then also we have our Mexican friends
18 on the line, does this capture -- this is not a one side
19 of the coin, this is a two-sided coin, so I want to hear
20 from you all as well.

21 A lot of the comments being made here from your
22 perspective on the other side of the border, does this
23 represent well?

24 MR. LUDLOW: Carlos, anybody from our Mexican
25 friends who would like to comment here?

1 MS. MAYS: I know we have our friends from
2 CodeFront, but if not, Donald, we can move to the next
3 pages.

4 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Want to move on?

5 So the executive summary pivots at this point
6 from background and setting the stage to studying the
7 needs of the physical infrastructure, and really the rest
8 of this is dedicated to the physical infrastructure, it's
9 conditions and needs, and then we go into the projects and
10 policies.

11 So this first piece is about the designated
12 networks, what are these networks that we're talking
13 about, how do they function, it identifies the east-west
14 and north-south corridors, interstates, federal highways
15 in Mexico, and kind of quantifies it and puts it on a map.

16 This is a refreshed map that the team has put
17 together for this purpose, so I wanted you all to react to
18 this and see if there is anything that is missing or that
19 is jumping out of this that we may need to adjust.

20 I think the key here is that this is the
21 network that we're looking at, the multimodal network that
22 we're focusing on for the plan.

23 MAYOR LOZANO: This is Mayor Lozano, Del Rio,
24 Texas.

25 I just wanted to say that his network and the

1 way the map illustrates is important, because it's very
2 impactful to illustrate the U.S. interstates but also some
3 of the other components of that system that enhances the
4 accessibility to the interstate system.

5 And I think the way that this projects and
6 really illustrates the interior part of Mexico as it
7 connects into Texas is valuable, and it's very valuable
8 for long-term planning especially, . and the
9 interconnectivity that showcases where the cargo comes in
10 from and where it leads to. I just want to emphasize that
11 the map really does illustrate that.

12 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Mayor Lozano.

13 Are there any other comments from BTAC members
14 about the way this is depicted? Again, on some of these
15 pages it's, you know, grab a cup of coffee, chocolate,
16 whatever you happen to enjoy, and need to kind of take
17 this in. But the importance here is just really seeing
18 this overall connectivity.

19 MS. MAYS: And I wanted to add to Mayor
20 Lozano's point, I think building the network was really
21 informed by what our Mexican counterparts have
22 communicated and presented.

23 If you remember last month, a lot of the
24 presentations showed connecting the seaports -- let's say
25 Matzatlán, Altamira, and others, connecting those seaports

1 to the Texas-Mexico border crossings and beyond.

2 So I think that's really key to be able to
3 articulate that message that the connectivity is so
4 important, because everything is headed our way from
5 Mexico, and to understand that all of this needs to work
6 together, you know, for really when you look at the growth
7 that we're projecting of goods, if we don't, you know,
8 what's in our infrastructure in Texas or the U.S. when our
9 counterparts have very grand vision and plans, that could
10 become a bottleneck on our end.

11 So again, this is kind of an eye-opener that,
12 you know, we can't plan in a vacuum; we need to understand
13 what's going on on the Mexican side that can inform the
14 decisions that are made on the U.S. side or the Texas
15 side.

16 MR. LUDLOW: Great.

17 Erika Garcia, did you have any comments about
18 this?

19 (No response.)

20 MR. SCHWEBEL: Secretary, this is Gerry
21 Schwebel. We're missing the north-south corridors, if I
22 read it correctly here. You're putting I-10 and then
23 Highway 45, is that the Mexican Highway 45? Is that what
24 it is?

25 MR. LUDLOW: Alejandro, do you have any insight

1 on that?

2 MR. SOLIS: I believe it's 85, but let me
3 double-check.

4 MS. MAYS: Yes, MS85, the one coming to Laredo?

5 MR. SCHWEBEL: Yeah.

6 MS. MAYS: Yeah, that's 85.

7 MR. SCHWEBEL: So where is that?

8 MS. MAYS: It's in the middle of the map.

9 MR. SCHWEBEL: Yeah, but I'm talking about over
10 here in the column where it says five corridors and then
11 it says six corridors, and then there you see I-10/FH-45,
12 I-27/FH-57, I-35/FH-85 Brownsville, and then you have
13 Laredo I-69 which really Laredo is I-35/I-69, you know.
14 And then actually, the Pan American Highway, but that's
15 Mexico through the middle; it really starts in Laredo.

16 MS. MAYS: Okay. Kelli, you see where it says
17 I-35 Port of Brownsville, Laredo should be 69, that
18 should -- Laredo should be 35, and then that should be 69,
19 so I think we marked the highways up.

20 MR. SCHWEBEL: You know, Laredo has I-35, it
21 has I-69, and Mayor Bruno and Mayor Sifuentes and Mayor
22 Saenz over at I-27 as well.

23 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Gerry. We will take
24 care of moving those appropriately in the graphics.

25 Any other comments? And, Chris, you have

1 comments in the chat box as well, all very helpful.

2 So let's move, Kelli or Hannah.

3 Okay. So after introducing the infrastructure,
4 this next section moves into answering the question what
5 are the border issues and needs, and we've gone through
6 this, again, many times in the past and just very recently
7 through the last BTAC and BNRSC meetings.

8 But page 18 goes through the cross-cutting
9 themes and the associated needs, and then page 19 goes
10 into the specific system performance issues and needs.
11 And again, there's quite a bit to absorb here. We tried
12 to use text to call out some of the specific needs related
13 to each of these categories.

14 The idea is to, again, balance the
15 comprehensive view with what we have found with relatively
16 brief so this is digestable.

17 Any comments or questions here?

18 (No response.)

19 MR. LUDLOW: And, Caroline, in general, I think
20 with respect to the BTAC you're probably looking to get
21 comments back on this as well if they want to submit
22 written email comments to you in the coming days.
23 Correct?

24 MS. MAYS: Yeah, absolutely, but I think the
25 goal here is to just have an open discussion with the

1 committee members, everybody together to hear the
2 discussions from the committee.

3 So I don't want to throw the can down yet right
4 now; I would like to continue to engage BTAC on these to
5 make sure that, for instance, you have talked issues and
6 needs, you know, have we captured that right as the key
7 ones, did we miss anything, and how we state it.

8 And I really appreciate the conversation.
9 We're going to have to go back to the drawing board on
10 some of these things to make sure that we articulate it
11 better, so in this case any comments here on the needs and
12 the key issues, anyway, the top three?

13 MR. BARELA: Caroline, Jon Barela, and I'm
14 going to involve my good friend Gerry Schwebel on this
15 discussion.

16 He and I think his employer commissioned a
17 report that quantified in very stark terms the dollar
18 value of these delays, and, Gerry, I'm going to let you
19 weigh in on this, but there's definitely a dollar value
20 that was absolutely stark and that I would include
21 somewhere in the verbiage here. It's good research. I
22 think the Perryman Group did it, I think.

23 MR. SCHWEBEL: That's correct.

24 MR. BARELA: I would plug some of those numbers
25 in there on border delays. It was very stark, billions of

1 dollars are wasted each year. I forgot the exact number
2 but, Gerry, I was really impressed by that report. I
3 quoted quite a bit of it, you'd think I would know it off
4 the top of my head.

5 MR. SCHWEBEL: You're correct, Jon. This is
6 Gerry Schwebel again.

7 That report we commissioned shows both local
8 impact, dollar impact, state dollar impact, and national
9 dollar impact in regards to these delays at our crossings
10 and our ports of entry. I'll get that to you all; I have
11 it saved. Do I send it to you?

12 MS. MAYS: Yeah, Gerry, if you send it to me.
13 Thank you.

14 MR. SCHWEBEL: Thank you, Jon.

15 MR. ZAPATA: This is David. I think here we
16 also need to include as an issue or a need staffing
17 levels. I know the focus for this plan is construction
18 projects and infrastructure, but we can't manage it with
19 staffing shortages at all ports of entry.

20 MS. MAYS: That's important because, David,
21 that's goes into the operations and management of the
22 actual border crossings and definitely then the
23 infrastructure, so great point.

24 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry. Where do we have
25 in here environment and community impacts, COVID or other

1 health -- how about health. I mean, there's no border for
2 a virus, obviously, but shouldn't we be looking at
3 something in regard to a health scenario.

4 Up at the northern border they're doing a lot
5 of weird stuff up there at the northern border, I don't
6 want see it down here at the southern border, but you
7 know, should we be looking at what the future would look
8 like for health issues that impact the flow of people and
9 trade?

10 MS. MAYS: Yeah, certainly I think so because,
11 again, we're looking into the future. If you can
12 anticipate future needs based on kind of what we see now,
13 you know, what if another COVID happened, how would we
14 deal with that?

15 Is this time a one-time event or will it happen
16 again, or maybe in a different form, it might not be
17 COVID, it might be something else that we are not prepared
18 for.

19 But like you mentioned earlier, Gerry, do we
20 have protocols in place to be able to respond to any of
21 these disruptors. I think that's really the underlying
22 issue here. We cannot predict the disruptors, but are we
23 prepared?

24 MR. SCHWEBEL: Yeah. I mean, I was in a
25 meeting yesterday with all those Canadian border folks,

1 and they're making people get tested and come in with
2 their test results before they even come across the
3 border, and all kinds of stuff like that, or they test
4 them there at the border, you know, before they let them
5 into the country, or vice versa. I said, God help us if
6 we do that on the southern border, geez.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. These are great comments.
8 Are there any other issues that really you think need to
9 stand out?

10 We've got border delays; obviously that's the
11 one that comes up again and again. Gerry, thank you for
12 citing that report so in a couple of pages we'll highlight
13 the numbers that Chris Williges and his team calculated
14 for current and future possible delays, connectivity,
15 safety, pavement, the condition of the crossings.

16 Is there anything else that we really need to
17 highlight here? Anything that we're missing?

18 (No response.)

19 MR. LUDLOW: Caroline, can we move on?

20 MS. MAYS: Yeah, let's move on.

21 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. So we'll move to the next.

22 So the next couple of pages are really expanding on this
23 issue of the border crossing time delays, and here we're
24 looking at some of the changes that are forecast to occur
25 between now and 2050.

1 This is a very dramatic graphic showing these
2 flows and kind of what we're looking at by region, and
3 again, this is one where it takes some time to absorb it,
4 but it does comprehensively show the entire region and
5 what the average border crossing times are for personal
6 vehicles on the left and commercial vehicles on the right.

7 I know that this was something that was very
8 important to the BTAC to be able to account for these
9 crossing times, and again, this reflects on kind of the
10 hybrid use of using where it's available the TTI crossing
11 time data and then a process that we developed using the
12 INRIX data to cover the rest of the crossings for north
13 and south bound.

14 So are there any comments or questions to this?
15 Again, the story is that there is significant growth
16 forecast in the future.

17 MS. MAYS: Any comments from committee members?
18 If you were to make a 30-second elevator speech on this,
19 what would that be, have we captured it?

20 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry Schwebel again.
21 We've had plenty of discussions down here in Laredo and
22 Nuevo Laredo on the commercial traffic potential times for
23 crossings, and I know that -- I don't know if he's still
24 on. Jorge Lozano was on the meeting earlier.

25 But this is very a major eye-opener: If

1 nothing is done in our infrastructure, the effect of these
2 hours of crossing for commercial vehicles is the most
3 impactful thing that we are all worried about down here.
4 So again, making sure that the validity of the values in
5 the INRIX system versus the BTS are both there, but that
6 INRIX really created an eye-opener.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Gerry.

8 Anyone from the Rio Grande Valley or El Paso
9 would like to comment on this?

10 MR. BROUWEN: This is Fred again from the City
11 of Pharr Bridge Department.

12 On the hours, is this actual -- these are the
13 actual hours that we have that we're showing? I'm seeing
14 zero hours slowing to eight hours that we have to the
15 left, and then the right we have zero to 14 hours.

16 MR. LUDLOW: I believe so.

17 Alejandro, do you have any insight on that?

18 MR. SOLIS: Yeah. They're both northbound
19 total crossing times, and the ones on the left-hand side
20 correspond to passenger vehicles. The ones on the right-
21 hand side correspond to commercial vehicles or trucks.

22 MR. BROUWEN: This is the actual hours?

23 MR. SOLIS: It is actual hours of total border
24 crossing. This is kind of the change we made towards the
25 end of the study when we changed from delays to total

1 crossing times. These represent total crossing times.

2 MR. LUDLOW: In a no-build scenario where
3 nothing is done.

4 MR. SOLIS: Correct, with a no improvement into
5 the future scenario.

6 MR. BROUWEN: No projects.

7 MR. LUDLOW: No projects. Correct.

8 MS. MAYS: So for the rest of the committee,
9 what should the message be to summarize this? If you were
10 to take this in your own words, what would you say?

11 MAYOR LOZANO: This is Mayor Lozano, and I just
12 want to convey sort of the same sentiment, that this is
13 impactful because it really is visually impactful as far
14 as far as being to convey the message that if nothing is
15 done today, border crossings and commercial truck
16 crossings will be delayed, and it will further impact the
17 GDP for the state and the country.

18 And I think this really illustrates how time is
19 money, and this gives a clear message for all of us along
20 the border to convey that message to leadership to ensure
21 that investments are still coming to the border region and
22 that we have that solid unified message of how time delays
23 impact ultimately the GDP and trade.

24 I think this is a great illustration and very
25 eye-opening for all.

1 MS. MAYS: Thank you for those comments, Mayor
2 Lozano. Absolutely. Thank you.

3 MR. LUDLOW: All right. Well, why don't we
4 move on, and we're going to go into a bit more detail on
5 some of the actual delays.

6 Eduardo, did you have something to say?

7 MR. CALVO: Yeah. I know we've mentioned it
8 many times in the past, but I don't see a note here in the
9 executive summary that these forecasts are really
10 unconstrained. Right? I mean, they are [inaudible] and
11 all that, but at the same time, you know, somebody can
12 say, well, nobody is going to wait 14 hours to cross.
13 Right? I mean, no business, no truck is going to wait
14 that time. But to make sure that it's understood that
15 these forecasts are unconstrained.

16 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, I think that's really
17 important, Eduardo. Thank you.

18 Caroline?

19 MS. MAYS: I was just going to say, yes, we'll
20 definitely make sure we incorporate that into the
21 narrative.

22 MR. LUDLOW: Great. Okay, let's move on to the
23 next page.

24 So here we go into the impact of the delays,
25 and again, this page provides the current and future

1 estimate of the delays and the cost of delays associated
2 with the border delays going from 1.1- up to \$75 billion,
3 and also from Mexico the team estimated this for Mexico as
4 well, so that it's very much a Texas-Mexico binational
5 perspective.

6 Also, this illustrates the potential loss of
7 jobs and the delays specific to goods movement, so
8 obviously about \$68 million in economic productivity loss,
9 so going through each of those kinds of statistics, which
10 are very telling.

11 And then on the other side we answer the
12 question what is the economic impact importance of the
13 Texas-Mexico border and kind of showing that story as
14 well, the contributions to GDP both now and in the future,
15 I think tying that back to the whole issue if there
16 continue be border delays, if the crossing times grown, it
17 really does have just a reverberating economic impact in
18 both countries.

19 So is this telling the story adequately? These
20 are some eye-popping, eye-opening numbers again that under
21 the unconstrained scenario if nothing is done, that there
22 is a really significant impact.

23 MR. CALVO: Donald, a question here. These
24 numbers, how do they compare to the Perryman report that
25 Jon Barela and Gerry were mentioning a while ago? I mean,

1 I don't know if they have been compared yet or looked at
2 to see if they can complement each other, but this would
3 be the place to really compare them.

4 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. I'll defer to Alejandro or
5 perhaps Chris Williges to see if they've looked at it.

6 MR. SOLIS: Yeah. Thank you, Donald. We have
7 done a high level comparison of them. They are different,
8 our numbers are relatively lower than the Perryman report,
9 and there are methodological differences to what they are
10 calculating and what we are calculating and it has to do
11 with kind of value-added.

12 My understanding -- and Chris can correct me if
13 I'm wrong -- the Perryman report is using total values of
14 trade, whereas we are using only the value-added to impute
15 the cost, you know, not the whole value of the product
16 that moved, it was what really kind of is generated on
17 each side of the border.

18 So we're using slightly different methodology,
19 and that's why the numbers are different, but we're
20 focusing on our study used a more standard methodology
21 that relies on value-added created on each side of the
22 border to estimate the cost of those delays.

23 MR. CALVO: And, Alejandro, I think that's fine
24 as long as we can really explain the differences. Not to
25 say that one is more accurate or more correct than the

1 other. I mean, they're just, like you said, different
2 methodology, different assumptions, but I think it's
3 important to be ready to explain why they are different.

4 MR. SOLIS: Certainly. Thank you, Eduardo.

5 MS. MAYS: Yes. Certainly we'll do that.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Any other thoughts or comments on
8 the economic impact? If not, we'll pivot into
9 recommendations.

10 MR. WOJNOWSKI: This is Matt again from Del
11 Rio.

12 A minor thing, if the pictures on the left are
13 from actual places in Texas, which hopefully they are,
14 just maybe a note on where these pictures were taken.

15 MS. MAYS: Okay. We'll double-check and make
16 sure the pictures are from Texas. We have a lot of border
17 crossings, so we want to make sure it's one of ours.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. SOLIS: The top one on the top right,
20 that's El Paso looking into Juarez; bottom left, I don't
21 know.

22 MR. WOJNOWSKI: As we know, pictures are worth
23 a million words.

24 MS. MAYS: Absolutely. We'll do that.

25 So Donald, just wanted to say before we move I

1 really wanted to ask the committee on page 23, the
2 economic importance of the Texas-Mexico border, if we're
3 going to be confronted in the discussions, and I want to
4 make sure, one, you know, Eduardo, your point that we need
5 to add more narrative here is well taken in the entire
6 executive summary, but I'm looking for a 30-second
7 elevator speech on economic importance of the Texas-Mexico
8 border.

9 Gerry, Jon, Eduardo, all of you, if the
10 legislator asked you tomorrow, what would you tell them
11 that we need to include here in terms of a key message?

12 MR. CALVO: Show me the money.

13 (General laughter.)

14 MS. MAYS: You're showing them how much money
15 the border generates. Right?

16 MR. CALVO: I mean, kidding aside, I think this
17 is really one of the key messages. I'm not sure exactly
18 how to craft it but, again, showing -- I think Gerry was
19 talking about it very passionately at the last BTAC
20 meeting, and I agree, you know, this is the really the key
21 message, how important the border is not just for us here
22 locally but for the State of Texas and for the country.

23 MS. MAYS: Yeah. I think that's why I wanted
24 to kind of just hear from you all. You guys have talked
25 about this being a really key component of the plan. I

1 didn't want us to gloss over it.

2 Gerry, Sam, Jon, anybody else?

3 MR. SCHWEBEL: I'm sorry; I had to step out to
4 wash my hands.

5 And thank you, Eduardo, because this is what it
6 boils down to, again, how we deliver the message, you
7 know, the importance.

8 Let's face it, folks, you know, a lot of
9 people, none of them are on this call -- when I say this,
10 there's a lot of people who really don't pay attention to
11 the border because they don't understand it, they don't
12 want to understand it.

13 So we need to deliver that message correctly:
14 the role we play to everyone else, so this becomes the
15 most important element about how do we present the case of
16 the role of the border to other parts of the border
17 outside the length of the border.

18 So I like it, but the value of this becomes
19 increasingly more and more important for the overall
20 success of the plan.

21 MS. MAYS: Absolutely.

22 Anybody else? RGV, you guys have been a little
23 quiet.

24 MR. CALVO: Caroline, this is Eduardo again.
25 You know, just following the same train of thought, you

1 know, shouldn't this be page 1 of the executive summary?
2 I mean, even for, again, the executive summary you're
3 already summarizing, right, the humongous report, but
4 maybe this is page 1 of the executive summary.

5 You know, this is what we're going to tell you
6 why it is so important.

7 MR. SCHWEBEL: Good point, very good point, I
8 agree with Eduardo, yes, gotta be up there in the front.

9 MS. MAYS: Okay. Because I know if you
10 remember we had why does the border matter? So would you
11 all want this to be moved closer to that? Maybe we could
12 talk offline about it but look at the executive summary
13 kind of how we laid it right now.

14 Remember, I think it was one of the couple
15 first pages where we said why does the border matter.

16 MR. LUDLOW: You know what we may want to do,
17 Caroline, just an idea, is within that "why does the
18 border matter," take the top part and really emphasize
19 that economic connection on the first half of the page and
20 then perhaps leave this as more detail to kind of move the
21 storyline. That's just one possibility. But I think the
22 point is well taken that this needs to come right up at
23 the front.

24 MS. MAYS: Yes.

25 MR. LUDLOW: If somebody is saying why does the

1 border matter, well, right now we have a common border and
2 then we have U.S.-Mexico trade and those are important,
3 but maybe the very first thing is that it has this
4 incredible economic importance to both countries.

5 MS. MAYS: Yes. We'll go back to the drawing
6 board, Eduardo, and then see how we can better incorporate
7 it at least in the beginning.

8 MR. SCHWEBEL: The jobs message, yeah. That's
9 how we sold USMCA to other parts of the country, you know.

10 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. I think we'll move on then,
11 if there are no other questions or comments.

12 And let's move into recommendations, and we'll
13 spend our next 15 minutes on these particular parts of the
14 executive summary.

15 So the first part, what are the
16 recommendations. Over the next few pages the policy
17 recommendations, program recommendations and project
18 recommendations are presented.

19 We spent a lot of time with BTAC going through
20 these. Are there any here that really need to stand out?

21 Again, these are color-coded, but on page 24 system-wide
22 policies, so covering the entire system, these are cross-
23 cutting policies, then there's border policies and then
24 there are corridor policies.

25 Caroline, do you have anything specific that

1 you wanted the BTAC to think about on the policy side?

2 MS. MAYS: Again, you know, really
3 articulating, I think, the key message again. You know,
4 we crafted all of these policies that in a nutshell what
5 does that mean or how can we better communicate it here.

6 Why are these policies important or why should
7 anybody pay attention to the policies? Why are they
8 needed and why they should be implemented? I think that's
9 really what I'm looking for here from the committee. You
10 all helped craft this; a lot of it came from you all, from
11 your experience, from the analysis that has been done.

12 Any comments with this?

13 MR. CALVO: Caroline, I'm looking here at the
14 policy recommendations, and I apologize if I'm missing the
15 point here but I see a lot of, you know, at the policy
16 level stuff between Texas and Mexico, Texas and Mexico.

17 But a lot of the policies really involve the
18 federal governments. So I'm not sure if maybe we should
19 specify here, because I don't see language here that asks
20 the federal governments also to participate.

21 I mean, they are part of the policies. Right?

22 You know, that at the highest level policies, you know,
23 Washington, D.C. and Mexico City play a huge role. When
24 it comes to programs it's a little bit less, and when it
25 comes to projects, you know, it's more local. Right?

1 MS. MAYS: Yes.

2 MR. CALVO: But you have policy recommendations
3 maybe -- I'm looking at it right now for the first time,
4 and it seems like it's missing that flavor that we need to
5 involve the federal governments as well.

6 MS. MAYS: Yeah, absolutely. I think we might
7 have stated it if you read the first paragraph, but I
8 don't think it articulates the way you're wanting it
9 articulated, because it says, you know, this will require
10 active participation of federal, state, regional, local
11 and private partners to implement. They're talking about
12 the policies, but the actual description of the policies
13 in the executive summary doesn't state that.

14 But in the report -- Donald, correct me if I'm
15 wrong -- in the report it actually states federal, state,
16 local entities. Right, Donald?

17 MR. LUDLOW: Correct, Caroline. There is some
18 differentiation in the report, but for brevity's sake it
19 was more of a blanket statement up front that it requires
20 all of these different groups to be active, but it doesn't
21 specify on any given policy responsibility.

22 If there are some policies that really need to
23 be called out as something that's federal level, I think
24 we could consider doing that.

25 Eduardo, were there any that you thought really

1 need to be emphasized at the federal level? I think we're
2 just trying to find a way to adjust your point of view
3 here and to make sure there's that federal flavor, as you
4 mentioned.

5 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry Schwebel. Can we
6 strengthen what we discussed, I think at the last couple
7 of meetings, which would be the private sector funding.
8 You know, in the future there's going to be a lot more
9 private sector, private partnership, private funds, and
10 the federal and state governments really partnering to
11 allow and permit and open themselves up to allow, you
12 know, all of this growth and potential needs to include,
13 you know, thinking out of the box to allow this true
14 participation of the private sector.

15 I think we need to strengthen that messaging
16 that sometimes, you know, it takes more than the state or
17 the federal government to be looked at. But they also
18 need to look at us as the private sector to say, hey,
19 we're willing to put up, we're willing to do this. There
20 is a willingness if they'd just let us.

21 I don't know how you would redact that or you
22 would put it into words, but I think that for the future
23 we all recognize that there's not going to be enough money
24 out there for these billions of dollars of needs that we
25 have, and we're going to have really incorporate a model

1 for private funding of some of these projects.

2 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, thank you, Gerry. I think
3 we need to go back to the drawing board and see how we can
4 frame that in there better beyond the statement that we
5 have up at the front that introduces the different types
6 of projects.

7 If there's some additional language we need to
8 emphasize that this is not something addressing these
9 recommendations, it's not something that is going to be
10 possible with public dollars, public infrastructure
11 dollars alone, that there's a lot to be leveraged through
12 the private sector, not only for the infrastructure but
13 also to technology deployments and data improvement and
14 all of the other many things that are mentioned here.

15 MR. SCHWEBEL: I think our friends in Mexico
16 are ahead of us on this private funding for some of these
17 infrastructure projects, so we need to open ourselves up
18 too.

19 MS. MAYS: As Donald mentioned, we'll go back
20 and see how we can incorporate that message in there, and
21 I think, Gerry, if you have any thoughts, please send it
22 to us so we can incorporate that in the messaging.

23 MR. CORONADO: Hey, Caroline, I don't know if
24 here we can add -- I know that I brought it up early on
25 how at least in my opinion Mexico should have P3 programs

1 between the federal government and private entities or
2 local governments to be able to fund projects with private
3 funding, same as we do with CDC in the City of El Paso or
4 Laredo, I think for construction projects, things like
5 that.

6 MS. MAYS: Okay. Thank you for those comments.
7 Any other comments here?

8 MR. LUDLOW: I was just going to say, Caroline,
9 if there are no other comments, we can move on to our
10 program recommendations and start to get into projects.

11 MS. MAYS: Yes, go ahead.

12 MR. LUDLOW: Hannah, advance us, please.

13 So here we go through the program
14 recommendations. There are 182. This page essentially
15 outlines some of the key examples. We didn't include
16 everything, but we highlighted the need to expand
17 potential with the BCIS program so that we are indeed
18 having a comprehensive means of correcting consistent real
19 data in north- and southbound for all crossings, UCP
20 expansion, which Warren Erdman mentioned earlier, data
21 collection, traveler information apps and Mexican driver
22 training programs.

23 So again, there are 182 programs that we've
24 recommended ways to improve the operations and success of
25 border transportation, but we've only highlighted four of

1 them.

2 The question is are these the right four? Are
3 there other programs that you all have recommended or that
4 we have developed in the material that you would like to
5 see rise in opportunity to this page to state as limited
6 examples?

7 So if you had to go in to the legislature in
8 Austin and ask them and say, We need you to fund four
9 programs that are going to help us operate a more
10 effective border, are these the four?

11 And we're not prioritizing here, again. These
12 are examples that this is what would be most visible to
13 those who read the executive summary.

14 So are there any of our bridge operators here
15 on the line, members of BTAC, who might have an insight on
16 this, or would you like to validate this or suggest
17 something different?

18 Caroline, I don't know if there was somebody
19 specific you wanted us to call on here, and then we can
20 move on to projects.

21 MS. MAYS: I think Warren from KCS mentioned
22 the unified cargo processing for rail, and I think that's
23 an element that was included in the program
24 recommendations, you know, looking at unified cargo
25 processing for rail but also for the other border

1 crossings as one element.

2 And then, of course, the BCIS, we use that data
3 to do border wait times, that was one of the data we used.

4 Right now we only have it at seven border crossings, so
5 how do we expand that?

6 So those are some of the things in the program
7 recommendations, so I think I want to hear from the
8 committee if you had to pick, is this kind of
9 representative samples here in terms of program areas, you
10 know, to expand or some of the shorter term things we
11 could start doing, what would those be?

12 I know from TxDOT's side we are committed to
13 expanding the BCIS program throughout all the border
14 crossings. We don't have a timeline yet for doing that,
15 but we've seen the benefits of the data it's provided, but
16 also filling the gaps that we then have, including things
17 like INRIX data, we're working with INRIX on that.

18 So I want to hear from the committee on the
19 program side kind of your top two or three.

20 MR. ERDMAN: Well, Caroline, this is Warren
21 Erdman again, and I would just echo my earlier comment
22 that the language regarding rail congestion and the
23 unified cargo processing accurately describes what our top
24 priority would be, and so I really have nothing further to
25 add to that. I think you captured it very accurately.

1 MS. MAYS: Okay. That's great to hear.

2 MR. GARCIA: Caroline, this is Josue.

3 On the border delays obviously from talking as
4 a bridge, you know, those are extremely important to us as
5 far as everything we've talked about, and you know, the
6 BCIS expansion and everything that's coming into play.

7 I think anything that can shed light on the
8 amount of time that is spent -- I mean, in Cameron County
9 we have daily crossings of 10,000 cars. Imagine all of
10 10,000 cars, you know, 10,000 pedestrians coming daily as
11 well, but you know, cars sitting in line.

12 I mean, if you see any social media, anything
13 you see is always pointing to the fact that there's too
14 much traffic waiting in line.

15 MS. MAYS: Yes, absolutely. Thanks for the
16 comments.

17 MR. LUDLOW: Well, thank you very much,
18 everyone. That's really helpful. Thank you, Josue and
19 Warren, for those comments and helping validate this a bit
20 more.

21 On the project recommendation side, the next
22 few pages go into this in more detail. I'm including this
23 one, this first page is the introducing citing 652 border-
24 wide projects that have been identified and at a cost of
25 \$39 billion, estimated.

1 They are segmented by border crossing, corridor
2 in the U.S. and Mexico by cost, and total number of
3 projects and also prioritized. So this is really the
4 introduction. This is an eye-popping number.

5 As Gerry said earlier, there's no way that
6 there are enough dollars to fund all of these needs and
7 project recommendations. So this is the intro to this
8 piece on project recommendations, and then in a moment
9 we'll go to some of the subsequent pages that go into a
10 bit more detail.

11 Are there any initial comments on the project
12 recommendations? And if not, we'll move to the next two
13 pages where we go into a bit more detail describing by
14 region and by type.

15 (No response.)

16 MR. LUDLOW: Okay, Caroline, if nothing else
17 then we'll move to these next two pages to continue the
18 discussion.

19 MS. MAYS: Yes, absolutely.

20 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. So here we basically depict
21 the project distribution by priority and by region and
22 also by issue and need.

23 And again, this is information that you've seen
24 before. I think some of these latest pie charts that are
25 illustrating the allocation by issue and need for the

1 whole border by region are especially illustrative and
2 interesting. The allocation across these different
3 categories, safety, multimodal, connectivity, mobility and
4 reliability across the entire Texas-Mexico border, and
5 then again, breakdowns on the funding.

6 So this is a lot of information, it's organized
7 in a way that I think the intent here is to enable BTAC
8 members and others who are providing this information more
9 broadly to summarize how this looks across the whole
10 border and the specific needs in the regions.

11 So let's open this up. Are there specific
12 comments or reactions to this? I know this is a very
13 critically important kind of the real meat of the Border
14 Master Plan as we're getting into the actual
15 infrastructure projects that are needed.

16 MS. MAYS: Any comments on these pages? Key
17 message here? And I have some thoughts on it, but I'll
18 let you all chime in first.

19 MR. CALVO: Donald, Caroline, this is Eduardo.
20 You know, my initial reaction when I saw this, well,
21 first of all, we're still reviewing the project list, the
22 latest one that was attached as Appendix 10-D, or whatever
23 it's called, and there are still changes so these numbers
24 will probably jump.

25 I mean, these are by no means the final numbers

1 as needs for the El Paso region. So where they're going
2 to go up or down a little bit, that's probably going to
3 happen. Right? And I don't know if the other regions are
4 in the same situation where they're still reviewing the
5 list, but in our case I did some duplicates that we need
6 to clean up.

7 But overall I think if the numbers don't change
8 very much, it is so interesting that the dollar figures
9 for the three regions is almost identical, you know, \$13.1
10 billion -- well, \$13.2- for the Rio Grande Valley. That
11 was really interesting that they ended up being the same
12 dollar amounts.

13 MS. MAYS: Yeah, absolutely. And Eduardo, your
14 comment about the project list, this is as close as we
15 are; we're not saying that it's 100 percent. But I think
16 we're as close as we are now and certainly there's going
17 to be some tweaks.

18 But I think what we were looking for here is
19 the message, one that you just brought up that the dollar
20 value for each of the three regions are fairly close, so
21 that's very interesting.

22 But I think for me what is more interesting --
23 which is probably on every plan I've been involved in --
24 is that there are far more projects that are not funded
25 than projects that are fully funded.

1 We have a lot more projects that are either not
2 funded, partially funded, compared to projects that are
3 funded. And then you have far more projects on the
4 corridor side than you have on the border crossings.

5 So you know, just kind of looking at the
6 dynamic there, it's like we have this amount of need, but
7 if all of these come under high priority needs, then
8 they're unfunded right now.

9 So that's kind of where I wanted to jog you
10 all's thought process here: What should the message here
11 be? Yes, we have all of these graphs, we've got a lot of
12 government data, et cetera, but what should the message be
13 from you guys, from BTAC?

14 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry Schwebel, Caroline
15 and others. I think one of the things that I'd like to
16 see -- and I was looking at it in the appendix of the
17 projects that were listed here, and I also kind of saw
18 what was just highlighted, 13, 13, 13, gosh, people are
19 going to zero in on that very quickly, you know. Lucky
20 13, I don't know if it's lucky 13, or what it is, you
21 know.

22 But I think we need to really look at these
23 numbers and be able to support them, and I'm not
24 questioning the validation, but I think we need to go back
25 and just do a review.

1 I was looking at our list in the appendix, and
2 I don't know if we're going to get into that discussion or
3 not, but there may be some old data in there that we need
4 to go back and review for some of us in our respective
5 regions.

6 MS. MAYS: Yeah, absolutely, I agree we would
7 definitely do that, and I think the team has been working
8 nonstop to validate as much as we can with project
9 sponsors and eliminating duplicate projects and then also
10 making sure that the information being provided is the
11 most current information possible, because the unique
12 challenge and complexity of what this exercise was is that
13 we got a ton of projects sponsors from all levels, and
14 then we add the binational aspect, where we're getting
15 projects from our Mexican partners, so trying to bring all
16 of that and mesh it together was very interesting but also
17 very complex.

18 But definitely, like you mentioned, things boil
19 down to we just want to make sure we validate and make
20 sure that we check to make sure that whatever we're
21 providing here is the best -- might not be perfect but
22 this is the best that we've tried to put together.

23 MR. CORONADO: David Coronado.

24 And I'm with Eduardo, we need to go through the
25 list and just review one more time, and then we'll get

1 back to you on that.

2 But here I think it would be very helpful if we
3 can have one pie graph that essentially just shows the
4 percentage of projects that are funded against unfunded,
5 whether it's partially or fully funded, at least have that
6 breakdown just to show the need for resources that we have
7 at the local level.

8 MS. MAYS: Okay. That's a good comment. We
9 will do that. So a graph or a pie chart that shows the
10 priority projects that are fully funded, the ones that are
11 partially funded, and then the ones that are not funded.

12 MR. CORONADO: Yes.

13 MS. MAYS: Do you want that by region?

14 MR. CORONADO: I think in the summary just
15 total, I think, in my opinion. I mean, if you have space
16 it would be nice to have it by region, but at least total.

17 And the previous page at the top you have 652
18 in the text and then 650 in the infographic. So a minor
19 correction right there on page 27.

20 MS. MAYS: Okay. Got it. We'll double-check
21 those numbers.

22 MR. SCHWEBEL: I have a question. This is
23 Gerry Schwebel.

24 Would it help -- this is for our committee --
25 would it help the committee to also be made aware of those

1 projects on the Mexican side that are funded or completed
2 or at what stage they're at?

3 You know, we saw some good presentations the
4 last couple of weeks from our friends in Mexico, but if
5 we're trying to talk about connectivity and the success of
6 going out there, reaching out funding for this plan, that
7 the Mexican component is a critical element in regards to
8 prioritizing.

9 So if you have a project let's say on the
10 Mexican side that's fully funded but you don't have it on
11 the U.S. side, at all even on the map or on the plan, then
12 does that priority move it up for that or does it help?

13 I think it helps to have that data, and I don't
14 know if that data would be able to be provided by our
15 friends from Mexico, Chihuahua, Nuevo León, Coahuila,
16 Tamaulipas.

17 MS. MAYS: Yeah, Gerry, we do have all the
18 project information from our Mexican counterparts, and we
19 included the information, we tried to match it as we can
20 with the layout of how we reflect the projects, and we do
21 have information on that.

22 And I think -- Alejandro, am I wrong? I think
23 more projects on the Mexican side are not funded compared
24 to the projects on the U.S. Texas side. Right?

25 MR. SOLIS: Yes, that's correct, Caroline. The

1 majority of the projects on the Mexican side are unfunded.

2 They follow a slightly different funding process -- and
3 Erika can explain to us if she is around -- but normally
4 they are funded on an annual basis; they don't necessarily
5 fund it for the long term. So we have a handful of
6 projects in Mexico that are funded right now, the majority
7 of them are unfunded.

8 MS. MAYS: But the key there, Gerry, is that
9 their funding cycle is not like ours. For instance, at
10 TxDOT we have a 10-year UTP and you know kind of what
11 projects are funded, et cetera. But in Mexico, you know,
12 right now you have all these projects that are unfunded,
13 come next year a lot of them could be funded and the
14 dynamic could change.

15 And I think that's a unique thing that we
16 started discussing from the beginning, is that the
17 processes in Mexico compared to the processes in the U.S.
18 or Texas are slightly different, and this is one of them.
19 You know, how things are funded in Mexico is far
20 different than how things are funded in the United States.

21 MR. SCHWEBEL: All right. You know, for our
22 friends from Mexico I just want to make sure, you know,
23 we've learned a lot from the '80s and '90s to today on
24 these binational infrastructure projects that we don't
25 continue to make similar -- I won't call them mistakes,

1 but quite frankly, you heard me voice my concerns about in
2 the Laredo region, our Colombia Bridge, you know, we had
3 all the funding on the U.S. side but we haven't gotten the
4 project completed on the Mexican side to its full
5 capacity.

6 So I want to make sure we don't forget about --
7 we don't repeat some of those mistakes where it's used
8 against us, you know.

9 MR. GONZALEZ: This is Ernesto Gonzalez from
10 Tamaulipas. Can you hear me?

11 MS. MAYS: Yes, we can hear you, Ernesto. Go
12 ahead. Welcome.

13 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you. I didn't see the
14 final list of projects that Tamaulipas is working
15 currently, but also, I don't know if it's more as a need
16 but how the commercial area is growing, and we also
17 recommend for the Laredo region the 405.

18 Just a comment, because I didn't see that list,
19 but I'm thinking that we showed the projects that we are
20 working currently as needs for our future for all these
21 projects.

22 MR. CALVARIO: This is Francisco Calvario.

23 MS. MAYS: Yes, go ahead, Francisco.

24 MR. CALVARIO: Thank you, Caroline.

25 The majority of projects on the border is

1 financing by concession, so we need to negotiate with our
2 concessionaire to do that. So for example, at the
3 Colombia-Laredo Bridge, we are working with that with a
4 concession, because it's already to the end, the
5 concession, so we're working now on a modification to
6 enlarge the term of the concession for another 30 years,
7 as an example.

8 For example, in Ojinaga in Chihuahua, we are
9 also working with a concessionaire, but in this case it's
10 CAPUFE, and they are working on the second span of the
11 bridge.

12 So we are in the border, the majority of the
13 projects, bridges mainly, in this case are by concession.

14 The other projects like the Laredo Colombia, for example,
15 we are working on maybe a new concession or we are
16 exploring with the State of Nuevo Leon how is the best way
17 to build the Laredo Colombia. So it's unfunded because we
18 have not the clarity of the resources now, but we're
19 working on them.

20 MS. MAYS: Thank you, Francisco and Ernesto, on
21 your comments.

22 Gerry, does that address your comment?

23 MR. SCHWEBEL: Yes, it does. I just wanted to
24 make sure that we're all understanding. I think Ernesto
25 and Francisco have been such important contributors to

1 this plan, all of our friends from Mexico, Erika,
2 everybody, all of our states, and we've all continued to
3 work every day more. But so that we'd all understand both
4 sides of the border and even the Commission, you know.

5 Having listened to the meeting today, it's
6 important that we weigh in the message that the
7 commissioners also have to face in regards to our funding
8 limitations and looking at the overall picture of Texas
9 that everybody is asking for more money, but whether we
10 have more good data of what will raise the level of
11 priorities to some of these deals when we get to that
12 point that we understand clearly the connection between
13 the Mexican side to the U.S. side and we prioritize
14 accordingly.

15 SECY. HUGHS: Gerry, this is Ruth Hughs. I
16 just wanted to indicate that I completely, wholeheartedly
17 agree that it's going to be very important to have that
18 coordination and collaboration, and that's why we have had
19 the meetings, the separate meetings with each of the
20 Mexican states that we share a border with, and I would
21 say that one of the main take-aways is that they too need
22 to secure funding on their side.

23 And so these group efforts to identify these
24 priorities and to lay them out will hopefully be helpful
25 to both sides where we'll end up with a document that can

1 point to the need and point an interest in that
2 coordination and collaboration.

3 So I think Caroline and her team have done a
4 great job of gathering that information, and then we just
5 need to make sure it's reflected in our document, because
6 it not only helps us, but I think it is a tool that they
7 may also use with their own government to secure funding
8 on their side of things.

9 And I also agree with you, of course, on the
10 private-public partnerships. Hard to say how they're
11 specifically reflected in this plan, but certainly that
12 will be an important component to consider in terms of
13 projects going forward. So very good points and well
14 taken and hopefully will be reflected.

15 You know, as we read this document, if that
16 isn't a take-away that we end up with in terms of the
17 priorities on Mexican side from this data that's gathered,
18 then let's revisit that and talk about it, even if it's
19 not during one of our meetings, because we are at the
20 final stages.

21 So thank you.

22 MR. SCHWEBEL: Thank you, Secretary.

23 MR. CALVO: So Caroline, this is Eduardo. If I
24 could also make a couple of comments on this section here.

25 So you know, first of all, we definitely need

1 to scrub the list, and I know the numbers will change, but
2 what I think is very important is that we send a message
3 that, whatever the numbers end up being, that the key
4 message is to show that there are priorities; in other
5 words, that we're not just throwing everything on the wall
6 and see what sticks. No.

7 We are identifying the key priorities, and yes,
8 most of them are unfunded, but I think the message needs
9 to show that we've looked at it and that we have given it
10 a lot of thought and coming up with the top priorities.
11 Right?

12 I think that's somewhat a very generic comment,
13 but it has to be part of the main message, because if not,
14 people are going to see here decision-makers, the people
15 that make decisions on funding they're going to say, well,
16 these guys want everything, and very easy to blow us off.

17 So that's one thing.

18 But then the second thing really goes back to
19 the initial points I made about, you know -- and like
20 Secretary Hughs just mentioned, at some point this report
21 has to end somewhere. Right?

22 So I think it's important to find a really good
23 solid stopping point, and perhaps it's not perfect, but
24 maybe for the next stage that's when we can focus a little
25 more and identifying and getting more into the details of

1 the projects that have solid components on both sides.

2 Right?

3 You know, right now I guess we maybe identified
4 the priorities perhaps maybe at a higher level, not to
5 that level of detail, but then the next step will be let's
6 get into more into the details, more into the weeds, and
7 perhaps even more into project development. But at some
8 point, you know, we need to come to a good solid stopping
9 point. Right?

10 MS. MAYS: No, no, absolutely. You know,
11 again, this is a long-range plan with short and medium
12 time components, and certainly for that to be realized,
13 like you mentioned, you know, this is high level.

14 For the plan to be realized, when you go into
15 implementation, project development, doing a lot of the
16 coordination and that is where I think the rubber is going
17 to meet the road. You know, this is a roadmap, it's a
18 blueprint, it's not the end all, be all; it's a guiding
19 document for you all, for all of us, to collectively go
20 back and move our portions forward so we can, you know,
21 show progress on all of these projects that have been
22 identified whether they're funded or not funded but how
23 can we do that.

24 Some of them are just conceptual. Ernesto
25 mentioned 405; that's still conceptual at this point.

1 What will it take to develop that into a project, you
2 know. Or La Gloria, Francisco mentioned what will that
3 take.

4 So that's where the rubber meets the road,
5 that's kind of the next step beyond this plan. This plan
6 in the next few months is going to be done and what next,
7 you know, and really going to be a collective effort to
8 move that forward.

9 So try to articulate that in this plan that,
10 you know, this is a high level and then there's still
11 going to be a lot of things that need to be done. You
12 know that. For an MPO you've got the long-range plan, and
13 if you go to the TIPS and then you go to the project
14 development to realize, you know, implementing those
15 projects.

16 MR. CALVO: Excellent, great. Thank you.

17 MS. MAYS: You're welcome.

18 Any other comments from committee members? I
19 know it's an afternoon meeting, and we're running a little
20 bit behind, but wanted to make sure we don't short-change
21 anything.

22 (No response.)

23 MS. MAYS: If not, Donald, we can move to the
24 next pages.

25 MR. LUDLOW: Yes. Thank you, Caroline.

1 Let's advance to the last -- not the last two
2 pages; we have one more page after this which really has
3 kind of the charge for the future. But these two pages
4 segue from the projects and describing what's out there
5 into more of the implementation plan language.

6 And, Eduardo, your comments are well received
7 with respect to delineating better where this ends and
8 where future implementation begins, but this piece is
9 intended to really kind of identify some of those initial
10 steps on implementation, including which projects would be
11 implemented in the short, medium and long term.

12 And it presents that based on the
13 prioritization, based on time frame and funding status,
14 and then the country where those projects are identified.

15 So this a little further along toward what is most
16 feasible with respect to implementation given existing
17 funding levels and current, medium and long-term
18 feasibility and priority.

19 And I just wanted to see if Alejandro had
20 anything else to add on this particular section.

21 MR. SOLIS: No, Donald. I mean, I think that
22 the only information also worth highlighting is the
23 funding gap that you can see towards the right-hand side
24 of page 31.

25 We broke it down by term of the time frame,

1 short, medium and long term, so that you can see that even
2 in the short term there are some significant unfunded
3 projects. I think that would be one of the, I guess,
4 highlights of that page.

5 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. But the major goal here is
6 to really illustrate, based on this higher-level
7 assessment of all of the different projects, what is most
8 feasible and practical based on those parameters over the
9 next few years.

10 The question for this group is whether that's
11 the right message or whether this potentially needs to be
12 taken a little bit further; does this need to be
13 delineated differently.

14 And obviously, Eduardo, your earlier comment
15 about where does the plan stop, it needs an end and a
16 beginning. I think this is a natural place to kind of
17 indicate that, but we'd love to have your comments and
18 perceptions of what you're seeing here and how this kind
19 of sets up TxDOT and its partners and Mexican partners for
20 the next phases.

21 MR. CALVO: I think, Donald, what I said before
22 I think is important that in the executive summary and in
23 the report it has to be articulated clearly the need is
24 huge, right, but that all of us are aware that we're not
25 going to get funding for everything. Right?

1 I mean, we are prioritizing. and we understand
2 that there are different projects that have different
3 priorities and different impacts. Right? And whether the
4 number is \$9.2 billion or \$8.8-, you know, it doesn't
5 matter.

6 What really matters is the fact that the need
7 is huge and we're underfunded. In other words, not focus
8 too much on the exact detailed figure but it's more the
9 concept that there's a big need and there's a lack of
10 funding but we are prioritizing.

11 You know, what we're asking for is really
12 focusing on the key projects. Right? We don't have all
13 the answers after this report, but what we have right now
14 has a lot of analysis, it's well thought out, and this is
15 a realistic need, not only for us here on the border, but
16 like what we were saying earlier, for the State of Texas
17 and for the country.

18 MS. MAYS: Absolutely, Eduardo, point well
19 taken, you know, that yes there's a vast amount of needs,
20 but within that there are some clear priorities from the
21 border region on what those look like and really why those
22 are so critical.

23 So I think if you and others can help us
24 articulate that message -- because I think that's really
25 important. If somebody looks at the number and it's like,

1 oh, wow, this is so big, that's really a comprehensive
2 identification of all the needs, and then let's now look
3 at a realistic subset of that.

4 And I think we've been able to articulate in
5 the plan here by using -- you know, fitting the projects
6 through the lens of the goal areas and really looking and
7 really looking at how many goals those does this project
8 achieve, could achieve, and what could the potential
9 impacts be.

10 So I think, yes, you're absolutely right;
11 there's been some level of prioritization from that lens
12 as well, but also you all have prioritized these projects,
13 otherwise you won't be working on them.

14 Any other comments from committee members?
15 Otherwise, Donald, move to the next one.

16 MR. SOLIS: Donald, you are muted.

17 MR. LUDLOW: Oh, I'm very sorry. Hannah, can
18 you advance to the next? And could you potentially zoom
19 in for us a little bit here. The last page is obviously
20 one just we can blow this up a little bit.

21 So the last page is essentially a call for
22 action, and I think the team will be working on stylizing
23 this a little bit differently, but again, it's really kind
24 of reframing the message of the Border Master Plan that
25 it's critical for continued economic prosperity, talks

1 about the number of projects, policies and programs,
2 continues to emphasize the role of the BTAC in moving this
3 forward and that the BTAC will be guidance and oversight
4 as this plan is implemented moving into the future, really
5 mentions this pivot to the implementation mindset and
6 implementation phase, where there's much more of an
7 emphasis on working with the actual implementers, the
8 TxDOT districts, municipalities, municipios, estados, and
9 working together to take this to the next step of
10 realizing the projects, and then reemphasizing the
11 important critical nature of the stakeholders, federal,
12 state and regional partners.

13 So this is important, this the kind of take-
14 away, this is the charge; this is the what's-happening-
15 next part. And again, we've heard from several of you,
16 Eduardo most emphatically, about kind of articulating
17 where this plan ends, what begins next, this is the first
18 cut at that charge for the future.

19 So the question for you all, if you were
20 explaining this to someone, to potentially a policy-maker
21 or a business leader, a potential financing partner, is
22 this providing a clear message? What else do we need to
23 do?

24 I think you've given us some excellent ideas
25 that we can use to recast this a little bit today, but I

1 wanted to end here and see if there were any additional
2 comments on what this charge should say and look like as
3 we summarize the Border Master Plan.

4 Maybe I'll call on a couple of folks we haven't
5 heard from who I know are on the line: Rafael Aldrete and
6 potentially Lisa, just, you know, as partners and
7 collaborators with universities and research institutions
8 in Texas.

9 We haven't heard from you today. I just wanted
10 to see if you had any comment here as we moved into this,
11 and then we can certainly hear from other members of the
12 BTAC.

13 MR. ALDRETE: I don't have any specific
14 comments on this page. I put a comment in the chat box
15 just regarding the question on ports of entry versus
16 border crossings.

17 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you very much, Rafael.

18 Lisa, anything you'd like to add here as you've
19 taken all of this in?

20 MS. LOFTUS-OTWAY: I'm the same as Rafael, but
21 I think it's good to have a call to action to assist us in
22 moving forward. But you've done great work, and this is a
23 lot of information.

24 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, thank you, Lisa. Maybe this
25 really needs to be absorbed with a glass of wine rather

1 than hot chocolate; I'm not sure.

2 All right. Other comments or questions? Are
3 there other members of the BTAC who we haven't heard from
4 yet today who would like to chime in here and help us
5 understand whether we've framed this correctly?

6 (No response.)

7 MR. LUDLOW: Caroline or Secretary Hughs, were
8 there any particular members who you feel that need to
9 express some of their perspective here?

10 MS. MAYS: No. I think we got a lot of members
11 speaking up, and certainly at the end of this meeting
12 we're going to ask and urge the BTAC members to spend time
13 reviewing the executive summary, the draft that we sent
14 out, and providing us with some written comments, because
15 that's how we're going to improve this document and make
16 it a document that's yours.

17 This is your voice and voices for the border
18 community, and when I say it's not just BTAC, it's
19 everybody on this call, meaning our Mexican counterparts
20 as well. So you know, we've already gotten the call to
21 action on the executive summary is going to come later.

22 But we want to give people a few more minutes
23 to provide any additional comment on the executive summary
24 before we go to the next agenda item. I know we're
25 running a little bit late, but this was important to have

1 this very engaging dialogue, and you guys have given us a
2 lot of input.

3 Going once, any additional comments from those
4 of you who have not had a chance to speak?

5 MR. ZAPATA: Caroline, this is David Zapata.

6 MS. MAYS: Yes, David, go ahead.

7 MR. ZAPATA: I'll be brief. So just one quick
8 comment, I think it will be worth it to add to kind of
9 close the loop on the last page of the summary. On the
10 first two pages members pointed out that it was good to
11 emphasize and explain, make the point of why the plan and
12 investing in the border is good for the whole state.

13 It may be good to kind of reemphasize that
14 again as the plan closes on the summary to kind of like,
15 again, closing the loop on that argument to make sure that
16 it's not lost as we're doing the final pitch with the
17 summary. So just that small point.

18 MS. MAYS: That's a great point, yes. We'll do
19 that.

20 SECY. HUGHS: And, Caroline, just for everyone
21 on the call, you know, we certainly want to give you all
22 the opportunity to speak. We know there are some regions
23 that may or may not be as much in attendance this
24 afternoon. That could be why they're a little more
25 silent.

1 But if there are areas that are important to
2 you or comments that you're not comfortable making in this
3 more public forum, please by all means send an email, put
4 it in writing, share it with us, because all of your input
5 is incredibly important.

6 So we hope to see your best and brightest
7 ideas, corrections, comments. In addition to being shared
8 in this meeting, please feel free to submit them in
9 writing so that nothing is overlooked. Thank you.

10 MS. MAYS: Thank you for those comments,
11 Secretary.

12 MR. VALE: I have a question. This is Sam.

13 MS. MAYS: Yes.

14 MR. VALE: How will we -- once whatever is
15 approved by the Commission, how will we anticipate how to
16 be able to give information to the various legislatures?
17 And something going back to what Gerry had brought up, how
18 do we make sure that people know this is not just
19 something or the border; it's for the entire economic
20 development of the state and a lot of the country?

21 We're going to have to strategize that so that
22 we're all talking on the same page.

23 MS. MAYS: Yes, Sam. This critically
24 important. Several things, and I'll try to be short.
25 Certainly the plan is going to be done, and it will be

1 incumbent upon you all, BTAC members, to help with
2 educating folks and letting them know that this is not
3 just one -- it's the Texas-Mexico border plan, but the
4 significance for the entire country and all the states far
5 beyond Texas and into Canada.

6 So how do you do that? You all use the
7 information we're going to develop the executive summary,
8 you go meet with the legislators. That's a good tool to
9 educate.

10 But beyond that, I think what you're asking is
11 BTAC needs to have that dialogue and discussion probably
12 at the next meeting what that looks like from you all's
13 perspective, because one of the things I mentioned that
14 TxDOT certainly is pursuing funding to help with
15 implementation of some of the recommendations and the
16 strategies. I mentioned BCIS, so we're already working on
17 that, and hopefully we'll be executing a contract sometime
18 next year to be able to advance on these recommendations.

19 But beyond that, I think really this is
20 something that lends itself to open discussion at the next
21 BTAC meeting, and I'll turn it over to Secretary Hughs if
22 you want to make some comments and address Sam's comments.

23 SECY. HUGHS: Well, I agree. We'll be
24 discussing that once the plan is finalized, kind of
25 talking about how we present it to legislators.

1 I agree that strategically it's important that
2 we continue with the message, which is quite true that it
3 is a benefit to everyone in trade across the State of
4 Texas, across the country. We saw some of the earlier
5 graphics that kind of showed the traffic across the
6 country, so I think that's a message that we all agree we
7 need to continue to share.

8 But we will be presenting -- is it the 10th
9 that we'll go the Commission, Caroline?

10 MS. MAYS: Yes, we're tentatively on December
11 10th.

12 SECY. HUGHS: Right. So certainly we want to
13 have things as finalized and with input from all of you
14 shared as much as possible by that time when we go before
15 the Commission.

16 After that there will still be a period of
17 public comment, and then I think meetings after that will
18 be focused on the implementation portion of exactly how we
19 present this going forward.

20 I'm not sure that answered your question.

21 MR. VALE: Secretary, it's still in my mind
22 because the last time we had some presentation to House
23 committees in Laredo, Texas, we were totally floored by
24 the lack of understanding of the committee members.

25 If we don't even have the committee guys

1 educated, how will we work the whole rest of the
2 legislature?

3 SECY. HUGHS: Right. And that's where the plan
4 is something that will be in writing that we can turn to
5 and that can identify more cohesively what the priorities
6 are, what the impact is.

7 I think that's why the discussion today that
8 really talked about the impact beyond just the border is
9 critical and very well taken. I'm very glad that that is
10 going to be implemented in our executive summary as well
11 because, I agree, those are conversations we're going to
12 have to continue to have and continue to educate for those
13 who have not had the opportunity to spend the time and see
14 the impact directly that is experienced when you go to the
15 other side of the border.

16 You know, you see the trade and you see the
17 impact nationwide that it has. So I agree that that's
18 going to be an ongoing important point for all of us to
19 bring forward.

20 MR. VALE: Thank you.

21 MS. MAYS: And, Secretary, I wanted to add
22 that, for BTAC members, BTAC does not stop meeting after
23 the plan is approved. Your work actually becomes much
24 more intense, and I'm speaking from experience.

25 The Freight Advisory Committee continues to

1 help facilitate the implementation of the plan.
2 Commissioner New highlighted some of the work efforts that
3 the committee has been involved in the last two years or
4 so.

5 The plan was completed in 2018. They have
6 since advanced a lot of the recommendations in that plan.

7 So you know, BTAC is going to continue to meet; you all
8 are going to continue to help with strategizing but also
9 chipping away on some of these recommendations, moving
10 them forward come next year.

11 Any other comments from committee members
12 before we move on to the next agenda item?

13 MR. CALVO: Hey, Caroline, this is Eduardo.

14 So as you present this to the Commission, would
15 it be a good idea for you all to have some BTAC members as
16 well there to help you show and support the committee, or
17 how do you envision doing that? Actually, it's a question
18 for Secretary Hughs as well.

19 MS. MAYS: So Eduardo, you were at the
20 Commission meeting today. I presented on the Ports-to-
21 Plains Advisory Committee feasibility study. If you
22 remember, after my presentation there were several members
23 of the advisory committee that made comments, including
24 Mayor Lozano and Gerry that are on the call today.

25 So certainly, you know, those comments are

1 welcome, BTAC members. It's going to be virtual, but the
2 phone lines are open for BTAC members to provide their own
3 take and in their own words what the plan means and what
4 are the key messages in your own words. So yes, certainly
5 you can definitely participate.

6 MR. CALVO: Great.

7 MS. MAYS: Any other comments?

8 (No response.)

9 MS. MAYS: Secretary, if there are no other
10 comments, we'll move to the next agenda item fairly
11 quickly because we only have a half an hour.

12 And Alejandro and Donald, maybe we focus on
13 some of the key areas that maybe we need more input or
14 things that have changed instead of trying to get through
15 all 11 chapters, because we did that last meeting, because
16 we only have about half an hour.

17 MR. SOLIS: I think that's a good idea,
18 Caroline. So maybe we can just kind of pause on the
19 chapters and just say literally the key message of the
20 chapter and then move in that fashion just to make sure
21 that we're hitting all of them and make this a very
22 streamlined presentation.

23 So if everybody is okay with that, we can do
24 that, just really show one key message per chapter.

25 So, Donald, you want to get us started on that?

1 MR. LUDLOW: Sure. Thanks, Alejandro. And
2 this will be very brief. because I think we've covered
3 most of this in the presentation of the executive summary,
4 so if anything, it think we could maybe spend a little bit
5 more time on 10 and 11, Alejandro.

6 So again, this is what the whole final report
7 looks like. I think the thing to keep in mind is the
8 final report is sequenced in one way. but based on the
9 input we received today, the executive summary will be
10 sequenced in a way that really emphasizes some of the key
11 messages of the overall plan and doesn't necessarily
12 follow perfectly the material that's in the exact
13 chapters.

14 So we can move on, next slide. So again,
15 Chapter 1 was more or less an introduction to the region.

16 If we can move on now to Chapter 2, Alejandro.

17 MR. SOLIS: Sure. So in this one we talked
18 about the goals and objectives and the initiatives, and I
19 think that the key message here that we see on slide 53, I
20 think it is -- no, 54 -- is that it's a very complex
21 system, there's a lot of institutions that are involved.

22 We heard from you today that there needs to be
23 this coordination at will, so highlighted in the chapter
24 that lack of standardized mechanisms to have that
25 coordination happening, so that I think is the key message

1 of this chapter.

2 So we can go to Chapter 3, Donald.

3 MR. LUDLOW: So Chapter 3 takes us deeper into
4 the past and present of the border, and again, all of this
5 material is in the executive summary, but it's essentially
6 outlining those key themes and messages in significant
7 depth.

8 And we can go to Chapter 4.

9 MR. SOLIS: Sure. So here in Chapter 4 I think
10 there's only one slide, and what we want to highlight is
11 that this is the network that we collectively identified
12 as the network that supports the Texas-Mexico border.

13 We have a logic that we followed to do this;
14 the logic is based on the movement of people and goods,
15 and on the concept of integration, connectivity and
16 accessibility. That's in a nutshell Chapter 4.

17 So Donald.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Chapter 5 goes into current and
19 future issues and needs, which we discussed at length
20 today, if you recall.

21 Several full pages of the executive summary are
22 dedicated to this with your insight on some of the needs
23 that need to be most specifically highlighted in the
24 material and in the executive summary.

25 So in the interest of time, I think we'll move

1 on to Chapter 6. Chris.

2 MR. WILLIGES: Chapter 6 shows the future
3 forecast for the Texas-Mexico border, and if we go to the
4 next slide, it shows the key message, which is when we
5 get the forecast we expect demands grow tremendously,
6 particularly for freight where they'll triple, and this
7 will lead to delays at the border and greater congestion.

8 If we go on to Chapter 7. Chapter 7 we show
9 the economic importance of the border, and the key
10 messages here are that the border impacts the economies
11 well beyond the border and that by 2050 we expect the
12 impact to more than triple. In addition, the delays, if
13 not mitigated, represent very large missed opportunities
14 when it comes to the economy.

15 Chapter 8.

16 MR. SOLIS: Chapter 8, I think that the next
17 slide tells the whole story. It lays out the process to
18 identify and evaluate the recommendations of our plan, but
19 the key element here is that bottom kind of illustration
20 that says that the regional stakeholder workshops, and in
21 general the stakeholder input on the two sides of the
22 border was present throughout the entire process.

23 And that is the key element, and that's one of
24 the key differences that makes this plan that much more
25 comprehensive.

1 Chapter 9.

2 MS. WHITE: In fact, stakeholder engagement was
3 so present and prevalent throughout the entire process
4 that we are about to plan a tenth round, so I think the
5 key message in this entire chapter is probably here on
6 this slide, and it really is the comprehensive network of
7 stakeholder groups and the types of stakeholders that we
8 worked really hard to engage throughout the entire
9 planning process.

10 The last two slides in this chapter we talked
11 at length about, so that encapsulates the primary message,
12 I think, of Chapter 9.

13 MR. SOLIS: Donald.

14 MR. LUDLOW: Thanks, Alejandro.

15 So Chapter 10 goes through the recommendations,
16 policy, programs and projects, and again, we went into
17 some depth on this on our discussion of the executive
18 summary, and I think the key here is making sure that we
19 also have a feedback loop, which we will, between the
20 final chapters and any of the new information that you
21 have provided to us today, especially some of your
22 recommendations on policy and program and projects and the
23 way that we're framing those as we go forward.

24 Next I think we can go to Chapter 11.

25 MR. SOLIS: Yeah, thank you, Donald.

1 So one of the key changes in terms of the
2 previous BTAC is in this Chapter 11, a little bit still
3 into Chapter 10 that we saw, I think, in more detail in
4 the executive summary. But in Chapter 11 we left the
5 policy recommendations pretty much untouched, which is
6 what you see on this slide.

7 The next slide is the program recommendations,
8 which are also untouched. The main changes come on the
9 project side, because we have that big difference, we went
10 from 505 -- for those of you who were in the last BTAC, we
11 showed 505 projects and then in the BNRSCs we showed 657,
12 which is a slightly different number from this 652 that
13 you see here, because we made still another round of
14 revisions after the BNRSCs.

15 So this is the main change, this 652 projects
16 that you see on the screen, that cost, that breakdown by
17 the different time frames and cost.

18 And I think that the next two slides are the
19 highlight of this chapter, which is when we start
20 combining the time frames of the projects with their
21 impact, we see that there's a lot of high-impact projects
22 in the short term and in the mid term, and then on the
23 next slide we actually further dissect this into the
24 funding for the short, medium and long term projects.

25 So these are the two categories that really lay

1 out the implementation plan, and this goes back to what we
2 heard from the committee, and Eduardo in particular,
3 saying we are doing our job of prioritizing or evaluating
4 these projects, we look at them by time frame, by funding,
5 and then we just need to collate them on the two sides of
6 the border, which all of that information we have it also
7 in the chapter to make sure that we are aligning them
8 correctly so that the implementation of this plan can be
9 made successful in the future.

10 So that is basically the wrap-up of Chapter 11,
11 and here we'll open the discussion for general comments,
12 again, either from the executive summary material or from
13 what we've just presented in this very, very updating
14 fashion summary of the eleven chapters.

15 MS. MAYS: Yeah. So we'll open it up to BTAC
16 members, Secretary, to provide any comments, anything they
17 want to add. And then I would really, again, a couple of
18 days later is to stress that, please, BTAC members, review
19 the full report and also review the executive summary and
20 provide us with your input.

21 It's so, so very important. Spend some time
22 doing that. That would be tremendously helpful in us
23 being able to have a final report and a final plan.
24 Again, the presentation to the Commission is tentatively
25 scheduled for next month, so we're looking to get your

1 input on all of this, the executive summary, the final
2 report and some of you the project list because we need to
3 have the final project list out so that we can finalize
4 the document.

5 So we'll open it up for comments before we talk
6 about our next steps. Any comments? A lot of the
7 executive summary discussion really mirrored the chapters,
8 but I wanted to make sure to open it up.

9 (No response.)

10 MS. MAYS: Okay. It looks like there are no
11 comments, Secretary. We will move into next steps.

12 As you see on the slide, we are here in
13 November, we are meeting with you. We will not meet with
14 the BNRSCs in November. As we know, Thanksgiving is
15 coming up in about two weeks, so the next meetings we are
16 going to meet with BNRSCs is in early December, but we are
17 also looking to release the draft plan for public comment
18 to allow the general public to be able to review the
19 document and provide us with their input.

20 And then, like I mentioned, we do have a
21 meeting with you all in December, and then we will be in
22 front of the Texas Transportation Commission on December
23 10, presenting the study and the findings and the
24 recommendations that are coming from the plan, and then
25 with the hopes that by January of 2021 we will go back in

1 front of Commission to present the report for
2 consideration and adoption by the Commission. So that's
3 kind of where we are with next steps.

4 And then the next steps, the really kind of
5 action items that I have in front of me is we did send you
6 the executive summary, had a discussion today, very great
7 comments, and like I mentioned, we're going back to the
8 drawing board a little bit.

9 A key comment that was brought up is we have a
10 lot of graphics but not text to actually be able to
11 articulate the key messages in those graphics, so we're
12 going to go back to the drawing board. But for you, as
13 well, you do have homework to review the executive summary
14 and send us your comments by next Friday; that's Friday
15 the 20th.

16 The reason we do need your comments, because
17 we're using the executive summary to develop the
18 Commission presentation, so the sooner you can get us back
19 your comments, the better.

20 And then we also talked a little bit about a
21 draft project list, we did send that to you yesterday as
22 well, and looking to get your comments and feedback no
23 later than next Friday.

24 And then finally, the draft final report we're
25 also looking to get any comments you may have, any

1 additional comments you may have on those documents, so
2 next Friday is kind of the magical date that we really
3 would like you all to be able to provide us with your
4 feedback on some of the key documents so we can meet the
5 key milestones of the plan.

6 So with that, Secretary, I think we're on to
7 the final slide, and I'll turn the meeting back over to
8 you.

9 MR. ZAPATA: Secretary, I just wanted to make a
10 quick point, because I know that the list of projects
11 certainly is something that's very important to everyone,
12 but I think we kind of get in a cycle where sometimes they
13 send you their projects, and you, Caroline, don't get a
14 chance to print them or include them in the information,
15 and then they don't see them at the next meeting and then
16 they get worried.

17 Would it be helpful at all -- and this is a
18 suggestion -- maybe if you give them a date specifically
19 for them to review the list of projects and send you what
20 they think it's missing so that you actually have time to
21 include them and update the list that you present to them,
22 and that way hopefully we take care of them not maybe
23 seeing those projects in the list at the next meeting
24 because they were not submitted on time, or something like
25 that.

1 So I'd just like to make that suggestion; maybe
2 it helps with some of the concerns about the members that
3 some of them don't see the projects that they want on the
4 final list.

5 MS. MAYS: Absolutely. And I think really the
6 key thing here is that, you know, we can follow up with
7 the stakeholders to discuss project list discrepancies,
8 and certainly we'll probably start with El Paso just to
9 make sure instead of going back and forth, sometimes what
10 we'll find is that a meeting to just have a discussion
11 works wonders and we have things resolved during the
12 meeting instead of back and forth emails. So great point.

13 MR. CALVO: Yeah, Caroline, this is Eduardo. I
14 think that's a really good idea to have maybe call it a
15 workshop with, you know, TxDOT and the City of El Paso and
16 just scrub that list.

17 I think we're pretty close, but there are still
18 some major -- well, I mean, I found some duplicates that
19 are relatively high dollar value that will give you a
20 better number. But I think it's easier if we just find, I
21 don't know, an hour or an hour and a half window to do
22 that.

23 MS. MAYS: Yeah, absolutely.

24 MR. SCHWEBEL: And this is Gerry. I think that
25 ours as well in Laredo, we could take those projects right

1 now and scrub them with our colleagues here in this
2 region.

3 I'll meet with the mayor, I'll meet with the
4 judge and the other stakeholders that are key to this and
5 let us -- I guess the list that you sent us of these
6 projects right now is a starting point so that we can be
7 prepared to go to a workshop with, I guess, would be the
8 additional scrub that Eduardo is talking about, you know,
9 and be prepared and then maybe even weeding out or expand
10 on it.

11 Is that what you're thinking, Eduardo?

12 MR. CALVO: Yes, absolutely.

13 MR. SCHWEBEL: We're with you.

14 MS. MAYS: Yes, and I'll have my folks for the
15 respective regions to reach out to you all to set up maybe
16 time next week sometime so we can go over this because we
17 really need to get this finalized before Thanksgiving,
18 because like I said, this is feeding the Commission
19 presentation.

20 So Eduardo, Gerry, and others, we'll get in
21 touch with you next week to be able to sit down and have
22 those discussions.

23 MR. CALVO: Thank you.

24 MS. MAYS: Secretary.

25 SECY. HUGHS: Thank you, Caroline. So I'm glad

1 to hear that next week we'll have these workshops or try
2 to come up with a plan to have them, and then I think
3 having that scrubbed list before Thanksgiving will be very
4 important in making sure that all of the priorities are
5 accurately reflected and that we have time to put them
6 together before that meeting that we're going into on
7 December 10, understanding that we have Thanksgiving and
8 other challenges between now and then.

9 So thank you all for your willingness to do
10 that and to be even more available for more meetings
11 beyond this one with respect to those workshops. I think
12 that will be very helpful and will help expedite the
13 communication and then hopefully just the understanding of
14 having a good list.

15 So at this time I want to thank all of you for
16 your participation, also give everyone a chance if there
17 are any other comments that anyone would like to share,
18 let me just pause for a moment and allow for that.

19 (No response.)

20 SECY. HUGHS: Okay. Well, I really appreciate
21 having this opportunity and this time with all of you.
22 Your input is invaluable, and I know that we've all been
23 taking notes and really looking to make sure that these
24 things get integrated into the final master plan, so I
25 appreciate all of that input.

1 And at this time, if anyone would like to make
2 a motion, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

3 MR. VALE: So moved.

4 SECY. HUGHS: Thank you, Sam, for moving to
5 adjourn.

6 Do I have a second?

7 MR. GARCIA: Second.

8 SECY. HUGHS: Okay. Was that --

9 MR. GARCIA: Josue.

10 SECY. HUGHS: Very good. Thank you.

11 All right, then with a motion to adjourn and a
12 second, all in favor of adjourning stay silent, any in
13 opposition speak up.

14 (No response.)

15 SECY. HUGHS: All right. And with that, we
16 will now adjourn. Vaya con dios. Please be very careful
17 out there, and I look forward to our next communications,
18 which please do not hesitate to send an email, reach out,
19 share your comments and thoughts after this meeting and
20 next week after you've had more time with these documents.

21 Please note that we are actively following the progress
22 on this and we appreciate all of your time on it. Thank
23 you.

24 (Whereupon, at 4:19 p.m., the meeting was
25 adjourned.)

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MEETING OF: TxDOT Border Trade Advisory Committee
LOCATION: via telephone conference call
DATE: November 12, 2020

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages,
numbers 1 through 130, inclusive, are the true, accurate,
and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording
made by electronic recording by Nancy H. King before the
Texas Department of Transportation.

DATE: November 20, 2020

/s/ Nancy H. King
(Transcriber)

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