

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

8:06 a.m.
Thursday,
December 3, 2020

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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

ON THE RECORD REPORTING
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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 SECY. HUGHS: Good morning, everyone. We're
3 going to go ahead and call this meeting to order. It
4 looks like we've doubled the number of participants since
5 8:00, so thank you for being patient with us as we give
6 our friends a few minutes to join us here this morning.

7 I am Texas Secretary of State Ruth Hughs, and I
8 want to thank you for joining us via videoconference for
9 our ninth Border Trade Advisory Committee meeting of the
10 year. I hope everyone had a safe and restful Thanksgiving
11 holiday.

12 As always, it's an honor to serve as chair of
13 this important committee, and I'd like to begin by
14 thanking our partners at TxDOT, starting with recognizing
15 our distinguished Commissioners, Alvin New and Laura Ryan,
16 for their service. Thank you for joining us today.

17 I'm not sure if they're on the call yet, but I
18 know they always participate and will be with us and are
19 following this work very closely, and I very much
20 appreciate their support and participation. And thank you
21 to both of you for your commitment and ensuring that
22 Texas's trade relationship with Mexico grows even
23 stronger.

24 The instrumental work of this committee would
25 also not be possible without the tireless efforts of

1 Caroline Mays and her team at TxDOT, and I thank them for
2 their work in helping to plan and ensure that our meetings
3 are run smoothly and that the plan moves forward
4 accordingly. We're beyond fortunate to have y'all as
5 partners and we appreciate your continued support and
6 service to the people of Texas.

7 As you know, the ongoing mission of this
8 committee is to work collaboratively to help create a
9 positive and lasting impact for our border communities
10 through the completion of the Border Transportation Master
11 Plan, and members of this committee have provided
12 invaluable feedback towards this plan.

13 This committee has discussed the unique
14 challenges that COVID-19 has presented to cross-border
15 trade that led to mutually agreed upon travel restrictions
16 between the U.S. and Mexico. These restrictions have
17 affected traffic as well as supplier operations, but this
18 committee has continued working, and has suggested greater
19 and continued collaboration with Mexican state and federal
20 partners in order to address these challenges.

21 We've also discussed the challenges of current
22 and needed infrastructure, expressed concern over
23 potential impacts to the supply chain and the
24 manufacturing industry and retail sectors as a result of
25 the increased wait times at the border, and we've stressed

1 the importance for us to make our efforts better known to
2 the public.

3 We've highlighted and welcomed the announcement
4 that TxDOT has acquired access to the Texas Transportation
5 Institute data, TTI, to help measure border crossing wait
6 times, supplementing the existing methodology used by CBP.

7 This development has helped us to more accurately
8 estimate the economic impact of wait times and better
9 convey its significance in our plan.

10 As the year comes to a close and we near the
11 completion of our Border Transportation Master Plan, it is
12 imperative that we continue to generate invaluable
13 feedback to help complete this plan. We need each and
14 every committee member to be fully engaged and actively
15 participating in the committee discussions to help TxDOT
16 and HDR further revise the plan and the executive summary
17 to ensure that both are an accurate reflection of our
18 state and your area's needs.

19 Your specific input and feedback on topics
20 discussed and presented during and after this meeting are
21 key to drafting a plan that correctly addresses the needs
22 of our border areas, and ensures your community is well
23 represented and that your projects are included and
24 considered in the final plan. Now, more than ever, if you
25 have not provided prior feedback, it is vital that you do

1 so now and speak up to share the needs and concerns of
2 your communities. The completion of this plan is nearing
3 at the end of this month, and your feedback is invaluable
4 and will have an immense positive impact in helping to
5 draft and present its final version.

6 I want to take a moment to recognize the
7 representatives from each of our four Mexican border
8 states who are again joining us today: Anna Alvarez,
9 Binational Affairs Coordinator from the Ministry of
10 Economic Development of Chihuahua; Guillermo Gonzalez, the
11 Undersecretary of Infrastructure and Roads from the
12 Ministry of Transportation of Coahuila; from Nuevo León,
13 Noé Garza, the CODEFRONT Director, and Manuel Farías, the
14 General Coordinator of Promotion and Projects, CODEFRONT
15 for Nuevo Leon; and from Tamaulipas, Carlos García
16 González, Secretary of Economic Development in Tamaulipas,
17 and Ernesto Gonzalez, Director of Foreign Commerce of
18 Tamaulipas.

19 We also have the pleasure of welcoming to our
20 meeting representatives from the Mexican Federal
21 Government: Erika García, the Director of Intermodal
22 Projects at Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes,
23 SCT; and of course, Consul General of Mexico here in
24 Austin, Pablo Marentes, as well as Jorge Salcido, the
25 Consul for Political and Economic Affairs who represent

1 the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2 Welcome, everyone, and thank you all for your
3 continued commitment in helping to create a brighter
4 future for all on both sides of the border.

5 Please keep in mind that although the plan is
6 almost fully completed and this is the last scheduled BTAC
7 meeting of the year, the work of the committee is not
8 done. We will continue meeting next year to further our
9 discussions about how to best use the completed version of
10 the Border Master Plan to pursue assistance and resources
11 to complete the projects listed in it, and I'm sure many
12 other related issues.

13 In fact, as another step in that process,
14 Caroline and I will be briefing the TxDOT Commission about
15 the Border Master Plan, using the executive summary as a
16 reference. We will begin a discussion with the
17 commissioners that will eventually lead to them voting for
18 approval of the plan at a future meeting.

19 This meeting will take place next Thursday,
20 December 10, if you would like to mark your calendars. On
21 December 10, we don't have the agenda yet, but the meeting
22 will start at 10:00 and our presentation about the plan we
23 believe will take place at around 11:00 a.m.

24 Our TxDOT friends will be sharing the
25 information to join that meeting virtually once it is

1 ready, and we invite you and really encourage you and ask
2 that you join this meeting, and during the related public
3 comment section please speak up and take the opportunity
4 to highlight the importance of approving the plan and how
5 it benefits the border region and our entire state. So
6 that is a bit of homework or a request. If you're able to
7 participate and provide public comment next week, that
8 will be very helpful to our efforts.

9 As you all know, it's taken years to get to
10 this point, and although not a final one, it marks an
11 important transition point in the work of our committee.
12 I commend TxDOT and HDR for all their efforts to
13 successfully get us here and thank all the BTAC members
14 for their consistent engagement in our meetings and
15 discussions. Members, your participation on behalf of
16 your region gives this plan a voice that truly represents
17 the needs of your communities.

18 Thank you all for allowing me the time to
19 provide this introduction. I think we are ready to finish
20 up this plan, and with that, I now will turn it over to
21 Caroline Mays.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. MAYS: Thank you very much, Secretary, for
24 those opening remarks. And again, welcome BTAC members
25 this morning. Appreciate everybody being here today.

1 So I have a couple of TxDOT leadership on the
2 line and I see Commissioner Ryan. Commissioner Ryan,
3 would you like to say hello to BTAC?

4 COMMISSIONER RYAN: Good morning, everyone.
5 Happy to be here again, I appreciate -- and I just want to
6 express that I truly appreciate the time and the
7 commitment that the committee has made, Secretary Hughs,
8 also under your leadership to better the plan that we
9 have.

10 I'm looking forward to the presentation next
11 week and looking forward to moving everything forward.
12 But mainly just want to say good morning and that I am
13 appreciative of all the work that's gone into this, and we
14 will work hard on our end to put it into action.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. MAYS: Thank you very much, Commissioner
17 Ryan.

18 I don't see Commissioner New, unless he called
19 in. But we'll go to Marc Williams. Marc is our Deputy
20 Executive Director. Do you want to say a few words to
21 BTAC?

22 MR. WILLIAMS: Only just to echo what
23 Commissioner Ryan said and to just thank you and all of
24 the members of the committee and Secretary Hughs for your
25 continued great work. There's a lot of terrific

1 information in this plan and looking forward to carrying
2 it with the Commission in the days ahead.

3 So thank you all very much.

4 MS. MAYS: Thank you.

5 And Brian -- our chief, Brian Barth.

6 MR. BARTH: Thanks, Caroline. I'll just echo
7 everybody else's comments. I really appreciate the work
8 of the many and I too am looking forward to the discussion
9 next week with the Commission and future potential
10 adoption of this master plan.

11 So thanks, Caroline.

12 MS. MAYS: Thank you very much.

13 And last but not least, the person that
14 supports us and makes this happen, Jessica Butler, our
15 division director. Jessica.

16 MS. BUTLER: Thank you, Caroline. Good
17 morning, everyone. I also will consistently echo
18 everyone's comments. I'm grateful to everyone for their
19 time and their efforts and all their energy on this work
20 and look forward to the next steps.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. MAYS: Thank you very much, Jessica.

23 Secretary, we'll go into the roll call. I
24 think we have a good crowd with the BTAC members, so do a
25 roll call now.

1 Francisco, you're handling that? We're doing
2 it a little bit different, so we have actually all of you
3 online and we can see who is here and who's not, so
4 Francisco, are you the one doing it?

5 MR. HAGERT: Good morning. I'm going to do it,
6 Caroline.

7 Good morning, Secretary of State Hughs, TxDOT
8 leadership and distinguished members of the committee. My
9 name is Eduardo Hagert and I'm going to be conducting the
10 roll call this morning, so I'm going to start.

11 Rafael Aldrete?

12 MR. ALDRETE: Good morning. Rafael Aldrete
13 present.

14 MR. HAGERT: Jon Barela?

15 MR. BARELA: Good morning, everyone. Present.

16 MR. HAGERT: Luis Bazán, or someone
17 representing the Pharr International Bridge?

18 (No response.)

19 MR. HAGERT: Eduardo Calvo?

20 MR. CALVO: Good morning. Eduardo Calvo is
21 here.

22 MR. HAGERT: Eduardo Campirano?

23 (No response.)

24 MR. HAGERT: Andrew Canon?

25 MR. CANON: Good morning. I am here.

1 MR. ROSAS: Excuse me. Francisco Rosas
2 present. Thank you.

3 MR. HAGERT: Francisco Rosas from where?

4 MR. ROSAS: I am from Escayen [phonetic] in
5 Mexico.

6 MR. HAGERT: Oh, okay.

7 Sergio Contreras?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. HAGERT: David Coronado?

10 MR. CORONADO: Good morning, everybody. I'm
11 here, David is here. Thank you.

12 MR. HAGERT: John Esparza.

13 MR. ESPARZA: Good morning. John Esparza here.

14 MR. HAGERT: Juan Antonio Flores?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. HAGERT: Dante Galeazzi?

17 (No response.)

18 MR. HAGERT: Josue Garcia?

19 MR. GARCIA: Good morning. Present.

20 MR. HAGERT: Cynthia Garza-Reyes?

21 MS. GARZA-REYES: Good morning. Present.

22 MR. HAGERT: Jake Giesbrecht?

23 MS. MAYS: Jake is not here. He sent an email
24 that he won't be able to attend.

25 MR. HAGERT: Jane Harkins?

1 (No response.)

2 MR. HAGERT: Ivan Jaime, or someone
3 representing Union Pacific Rail?

4 MS. MAYS: Tyson, are you on?

5 MR. MUELLER: Good morning. I'll be on for a
6 couple of hours here.

7 MS. MAYS: Thank you.

8 MR. HAGERT: Lisa Loftus-Otway?

9 MS. LOFTUS-OTWAY: I'm here. Good morning,
10 everyone. Good morning, Secretary.

11 MR. HAGERT: Marga Lopez?

12 MS. LOPEZ: Good morning, everyone.

13 MR. HAGERT: Bruno Lozano?

14 MR. WOJNOWSKI: This is Matt Wojnowski, city
15 manager of Del Rio, on behalf of Mayor Lozano.

16 MR. HAGERT: Stan Meador?

17 MR. MEADOR: Present. Good morning, y'all.
18 Thank you.

19 MR. HAGERT: Juan Olaguibel?

20 MR. OLAGUIBEL: Good morning, everyone.
21 Present.

22 MR. HAGERT: So somehow we missed Juan but we
23 need to mark him present for the Anzalduas Hidalgo Bridge,
24 so that's an additional member, Kelli.

25 Vincent Perez?

1 MR. LANDEROS: Good morning. This is Jose
2 Landeros with El Paso County on behalf of the commissioner
3 this morning.

4 MR. HAGERT: Jesus Reyna?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. HAGERT: Pete Saenz?

7 MAYOR SAENZ: Good morning, everyone. Yes,
8 here present.

9 MR. HAGERT: Gerry Schwebel?

10 MR. SCHWEBEL: Good morning. Buenos días.
11 Present.

12 MR. HAGERT: Megan Shea?

13 MS. SHEA: Good morning, everyone. I'm on.

14 MR. HAGERT: Luis Sifuentes, or someone
15 representing the City of Eagle Pass?

16 (No response.)

17 MR. HAGERT: Tommy Taylor?

18 (No response.)

19 MR. HAGERT: Sam Vale?

20 MR. VALE: Yes, present.

21 MR. HAGERT: Cameron Walker?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. HAGERT: Warren Erdman?

24 MR. ERDMAN: Good morning. Warren Erdman
25 present.

1 MR. HAGERT: How many members, Kelli? We have
2 quorum.

3 MS. MAYS: Okay.

4 MR. VALE: Whoever is in control, I'm having
5 trouble muting my mic.

6 MS. MAYS: Okay. Secretary, we'll turn it over
7 to you for the next agenda item.

8 SECY. HUGHS: Wonderful.

9 Well, Sam, since your mic is not muted, I may
10 take this opportunity to ask if everyone has had a chance
11 to review the minutes. Are there any questions or
12 comments on the minutes before I entertain a motion?

13 MR. VALE: No, but I'll defer to Gerry
14 Schwebel. He's more detailed than I am.

15 SECY. HUGHS: All right. Any comments,
16 concerns?

17 MR. SCHWEBEL: I make a motion that we approve
18 the minutes as presented.

19 SECY. HUGHS: Thank you, Gerry. Good morning.

20 I have a motion to approve the minutes. Is
21 there a second?

22 MR. CANON: Second.

23 SECY. HUGHS: I think Andrew Canon seconded the
24 motion. Is that right?

25 MR. CANON: Yes, ma'am.

1 SECY. HUGHS: Thank you. Good morning.

2 All right. There's been a motion and a second
3 to pass the minutes. Any objection?

4 (No response.)

5 SECY. HUGHS: Hearing no objection, the minutes
6 are passed and approved. Thank you.

7 Caroline.

8 MS. MAYS: Thank you, Secretary, and thank the
9 BTAC members for being here. We'll walk through the
10 agenda quickly and then we'll jump into the discussion
11 this morning.

12 As you can see from the agenda online, we are
13 going to be having continued discussion on the executive
14 summary. As you'll recall, the last meeting we did have a
15 lot of discussion with you on the executive summary and
16 you provided us a lot of feedback then, so we're going to
17 continue that today. And then also we'll do a quick walk-
18 through on what we plan on presenting to the Commission,
19 the PowerPoint.

20 And then, you know, one of the other main
21 things that we will be discussing with you today is really
22 the next steps and implementation. As Secretary talked
23 about, we heard from a lot of you on kind of what next, to
24 start thinking about that right now. The plan is not done
25 yet. We still have, you know, time ahead of us to refine

1 the plan before it's finalized, but at the same time,
2 really start talking about kind of what's next from you
3 all's point of view.

4 So we have some questions and things,
5 interactive session we have planned for you and during
6 that time talking about next steps and implementation.
7 And then, of course, you know, we will go to open
8 discussion, and then adjourn the meeting today.

9 So with that, I'll turn it over to Giacomo to
10 provide a quick recap of the last meeting.

11 SPEAKER: Can you please increase the font so
12 we can read? Thank you.

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

16 I'd like to give a recap of the last BTAC
17 meeting on November 12. I'll be focusing on the comments
18 we received during that meeting, but unlike previous
19 recaps, the consulting team will discuss how we've
20 responded to them after I'm done.

21 The last BTAC meeting had three goals. First,
22 we needed to present the BTMP executive summary; second,
23 we needed to discuss the BTMP presentation to the Texas
24 Transportation Commission; and third, we needed to do a
25 walk-through of the draft of the final BTMP report.

1 Next slide, please.

2 During last month's meeting we presented the
3 draft of the executive summary for the BTMP. Please note
4 that the page numbers I'll be referencing are based on the
5 November version of the summary, and due to the revisions
6 we made in response to the comments we received, don't
7 match the page numbers in the current version.

8 Starting with the top of the report, we heard
9 that there needed to be more narrative and explanation
10 without being too wordy. We were told that we need to
11 highlight the fact that most costs are related to
12 corridors and not border crossings, and that we needed to
13 make this distinction as part of the effort to stay
14 focused on how we roll out the BTMP to the public.

15 We were asked to involve the consul generals on
16 both sides so that they could be more engaged throughout
17 the entire Texas-Mexico Border to disseminate the
18 message. We were asked to highlight that the plan starts
19 at the border but benefits the entire state and beyond.
20 We heard that it would be important to articulate where
21 the BTMP planning phase ends and the implementation phase
22 begins.

23 We heard that we needed to include the IH-37
24 corridor from San Antonio to Corpus Christi, the IH-69E
25 corridor to Cameron County, the IH-69C corridor to Hidalgo

1 County, as well as the IH-12 corridor from Harlingen to
2 Mission and to Port of Brownsville. We received a
3 suggestion to improve the map by adding an additional
4 green arrow along the IH-10 corridor.

5 We were asked to include -- let's see, are we
6 on the second slide of this? Okay, go to that one,
7 please.

8 We were asked to include the phrase "quality of
9 life" at the end of the summary's opening paragraph, and
10 we received a recommendation to change the tense of
11 certain elements from future tense to present tense.

12 Pages 2 and 3 addressed why the border matters
13 and the BTMP goals, and we were asked to include 2020
14 numbers, if they're available before publishing.

15 We heard that the discussion about unified
16 cargo processing presented in the executive summary is
17 fair and accurate and that these are high priority
18 facilities for the railroads.

19 We were asked to change the heading on the
20 right-hand side of page 2 from 26 highway crossings to 26
21 border crossings and we were asked about the discrepancy
22 between the 26 crossings and the subheading noting 29 of
23 39 crossings.

24 We got a suggestion to include the word
25 "community" in the description of the stewardship goal and

1 we were asked to rename the goal to "Stewardship and
2 Sustainability."

3 We were asked about the figure showing 7
4 million jobs and whether the number was low compared to
5 other sources.

6 We also received a suggestion to include
7 disruptors related to cross-border trade and the
8 misalignment of protocols to the description of the cross-
9 border resiliency goal. We were also asked to start the
10 description of that goal with wording like "eliminate,
11 reduce or mitigate."

12 Pages 4 and 5 addressed stakeholder engagement,
13 and we heard that the executive summary could benefit from
14 additional written content. We also heard that this
15 section is the most important in the summary because it
16 shows how widespread stakeholder participation has been
17 and that participants represented a cross-section of all
18 stakeholders.

19 Pages 6 and 7 addressed population, income, and
20 employment trends for the Texas-Mexico Border past,
21 present and future. And we heard that some BTAC members
22 were surprised by the employment block shown for the RGV,
23 and we were asked if those numbers matched what's being
24 presented in the chapters.

25 Pages 8 through 11 addressed trends for moving

1 people and goods for the Texas-Mexico Border past, present
2 and future. On pages 8 and 9 we received a suggestion
3 that we make a distinction about the types of buses that
4 cross the border, whether they're local, regional, or
5 long-distance.

6 If we can go to the next slide, please.

7 And we also heard that we should also include
8 an explanation about why the volume of crossings declined
9 after 9/11.

10 On pages 10 and 11 we heard that we should
11 revise a moving goods bar chart or create a different
12 scale for commercial vehicles since their numbers dwarfed
13 the others to the point of illegibility. We also received
14 a comment that page 10 was the most important in the
15 summary because it showed the large amount of trade that
16 crosses the border every day. We were told that we need
17 to tell the story about trade and the associated jobs for
18 workers on both sides of the border.

19 We were asked to clarify whether the Hidalgo
20 port of entry is the same as the Pharr port of entry, and
21 we were also asked to clarify that border crossings and
22 ports of entry aren't necessarily the same thing.

23 Pages 12 and 13 addressed trade trends and
24 supply chains for the Texas-Mexico Border past, present
25 and future, and we didn't collect any input during the

1 last BTAC meeting on these pages.

2 Pages 14 and 15 addressed cross-border supply
3 chains and we heard that the information on cross-border
4 supply chains was detailed, comprehensive and cogent. And
5 we were asked to consider choosing the top five supply
6 chains as a representative sample.

7 Pages 16 and 17 addressed the designated
8 network and we heard appreciation that the designated
9 network map showed how non-interstate highways enhance
10 accessibility to the interstate system. We also heard
11 that the map was valuable because it showed connections
12 between the interior of Mexico and Texas, which is
13 valuable for long-term planning efforts considering cargo
14 origins and destinations. We got a recommendation to
15 update the map title to "Texas-Mexico Multimodal System"
16 and a recommendation to move the map up in the executive
17 summary.

18 Regarding the north-south movement element on
19 page 16, we were asked for clarification about the pairing
20 of Interstate 10 and Mexico 45, as well as Interstate 35
21 and Mexico 85, and why we're showing Interstate 69
22 connecting to Laredo instead of Interstate 35.

23 Pages 18 and 19 addressed Texas-Mexico Border
24 issues and needs and we were asked about including
25 information on the value of border crossing delays that

1 were presented in a separate report that IBC Bank
2 commissioned.

3 We heard that we need to include staffing
4 shortages as an issue or need. We were asked how we could
5 include information related to the environment and the
6 community impacts of health issues that affect people and
7 trade.

8 Pages 20 and 21 addressed current and future
9 crossing times, and we heard appreciation for using INRIX
10 data to create the graphics showing current and forecast
11 crossing times. We were asked if the graphics were
12 showing actual hours. We heard that the message the
13 graphics conveyed is powerful because they showed what
14 will happen if nothing is done, and we also heard that the
15 summary was missing an explanation that the forecasts
16 are unconstrained.

17 Next slide, please.

18 On pages 22 and 23 we addressed the impact of
19 border delays and the economic importance of the Texas-
20 Mexico Border, and we were asked how the BTMP figures
21 compare to the number in the IBC-commissioned report
22 mentioned earlier, and that we should explain any
23 differences. We were also asked to confirm the locations
24 of the pictures in the summary and that all of them were
25 in Texas.

1 We heard that the key message needs to be how
2 important the border is at the state and national levels
3 in addition to the local level. We also heard that many
4 people don't understand the border's larger importance and
5 that the BTMP needs to deliver the message correctly.
6 Specifically, people need to know that what happens at the
7 border affects many regions far from the border. In
8 response to that comment, we heard that that particular
9 message should be at the top of the summary.

10 Pages 24 through 29 addressed policy, program
11 and project recommendations. And we heard a
12 recommendation that Mexico consider creating a donation
13 program similar to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection
14 program, as well as other public-private partnerships to
15 help expedite the development of border crossing
16 infrastructure and improve operations.

17 We heard about the need for better border wait
18 time data generated by programs like BCIS because
19 additional data will provide insight into the actual
20 amounts of delay.

21 We received an observation that the estimated
22 project costs for all three regions was nearly identical,
23 and we got a recommendation to review the project list
24 again to ensure the estimated costs are accurate.

25 We were asked to include a pie chart showing

1 the percentage of projects that are funded and unfunded
2 and whether funded projects are partially or fully
3 funded. We heard that including this information would
4 highlight the need versus available resources at the local
5 level. We also heard that it would be helpful to show
6 which Mexican projects are funded and their progress to
7 date. We heard that knowing that information could affect
8 priorities on the Texas side of the border and that it
9 would help avoid asymmetrical connectivity.

10 We were asked to confirm that we'd included the
11 final list of projects from the State of Tamaulipas,
12 including Bridge Number 5 in Laredo.

13 Pages 30 and 31 addressed the implementation
14 plan, and we heard that every region in the state is
15 looking for funding, but that if the border regions have
16 good data then they can raise the priority of some of the
17 projects in the BTMP. We also heard about the need to
18 scrub the entire project list and the total project costs
19 because the BTMP sends a message that there are priorities
20 for investment and not a generic wish list.

21 We were told that the executive summary needs
22 to articulate that there are huge needs along the border,
23 but that the regions are aware that they will not receive
24 funding for everything. Projects have different
25 priorities and different impacts, so the regions will be

1 requesting funds for the key projects that benefit the
2 state and the nation.

3 The last page, page 32, included the call to
4 action, and we were asked to reemphasize the benefits of
5 planning and investing in the border regions to close the
6 loop on the narrative.

7 If we could go to the next slide, please.

8 Finally, a discussion about the executive
9 summary. You may recall we did a very quick walk-through
10 of the final draft report, but we did not collect any
11 additional comments on the chapters during the last
12 meeting.

13 And so with that, I'll conclude the recap and
14 turn the meeting back over to Caroline Mays and Secretary
15 Hughs.

16 MS. MAYS: Thank you, Giacomo, for that
17 comprehensive summary.

18 So we will actually now go into the executive
19 summary. If you recall, the last BTAC we did kind of a
20 page-turn, and this morning we're going to do some more
21 and show you what additions we have added to address the
22 comments that Giacomo just went through.

23 So I'll turn it over to Donald to lead the
24 discussion.

25 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you very much,

1 Caroline.

2 This is Donald Ludlow of CPCS with the HDR
3 team. I'll walk you through visually some of the changes
4 that were made to the executive summary, also giving you
5 an opportunity to see the updates in a visual way.

6 So on this first page, let me point out a
7 couple of things. At the top of the page, Giacomo
8 mentioned that we had changed the tense to reflect the
9 comments. We've also added the arrow to indicate the
10 trade flow to Veracruz, and also the connection up into
11 Canada, Calgary and Edmonton, which is reflective of some
12 of the Ports-to-Plains economic connections. We also at
13 the bottom moved the text box down just to promote the
14 visual appeal of the page.

15 Before I move on, are there any other questions
16 or comments on page 1?

17 MR. VALE: This is Sam.

18 When you put the final report together, can you
19 have some maps that are folded so that they can open up
20 and be bigger to look at?

21 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. Thanks for that suggestion,
22 Sam. I think we can certainly look at that. Now, are you
23 talking about the final report or the executive summary,
24 which one are you thinking?

25 MR. VALE: Well, anything that we're using for

1 educational processes.

2 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. I think that's a good --
3 there may be a -- sorry. Go ahead, Caroline.

4 MS. MAYS: I'd say yeah, definitely we can do
5 that. We've done similar for other projects. I remember
6 for Ports to Plains some of those requests were made as
7 well, so we'll do that. Not a problem.

8 MR. VALE: Okay.

9 MR. LUDLOW: Thanks. Any other thoughts on
10 this first page?

11 (No response.)

12 MR. LUDLOW: All right. Let's advance to the
13 next two pages.

14 Oh, sorry. Go ahead.

15 MR. CONTRERAS: This is Sergio from the RGV
16 Partnership.

17 In relation to what Sam mentioned and Caroline,
18 are the maps to include connectivity alongside both sides
19 of the border?

20 MR. LUDLOW: Correct. I mean, the general aim
21 of this map is to indicate some of the broader corridor
22 and economic connections. It's not completely
23 comprehensive, it's just showing some of the major flows.

24 MR. CONTRERAS: Thank you.

25 MR. VALE: I think -- this is Sam. I think we

1 need to be showing what -- that we have the need for
2 roadways paralleling the border so that trucking companies
3 and others can reposition equipment from one port to
4 another because that makes it much more efficient.
5 Because they may have equipment in Brownsville that they
6 need in Laredo, or vice versa, so all of these things need
7 to be looked at, all the way up to El Paso.

8 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you, Sam. We'll take
9 that into consideration as well.

10 SPEAKER: Is it possible to increase the
11 font -- I'm sorry -- a little bit bigger, the slides.

12 MR. LUDLOW: Kelli or Hannah, are we able to go
13 to kind of full screen on that view? A little bit more
14 there.

15 SPEAKER: Much better. Thank you.

16 MR. LUDLOW: All right. So we'll start with
17 page 2. Here we changed this format so that the blue
18 boxes answer the question: Why does the Texas-Mexico
19 Border matter? And made a few other strategic changes.

20 So you see each of the blue boxes makes a point
21 about why the border matters, which is something we wanted
22 to make -- an argument that we wanted to make right up
23 front. In addition, you'll see in line with some of
24 Giacomo's comment and summary, we changed "vehicular" to
25 "roadway" to avoid confusion. We added a note right here

1 on the rail border crossings, included those.

2 Under the providing benefit across North
3 America, we corrected the GDP impact to not only show
4 commercial vehicles but total GDP impact. Also, moved the
5 designated transportation network to the front of the
6 executive summary, so we'll go over to that page with the
7 map on it in a moment, so that that's one of the things
8 that people can see immediately.

9 You'll also note at the bottom that we added
10 foreign trade zones. This was a comment that we heard
11 this week from the BNSRC committees that we needed to make
12 sure to include the foreign trade zones as well.

13 Are there any comments on page 2?

14 MR. WOJNOWSKI: Yes. This is Matt with City of
15 Del Rio.

16 In the blue boxes, all of them start with "It"
17 so I think for redundancy I'd just take off the "It" and
18 why does the Texas-Mexico Border matter, just say: longest
19 international border, supports a growing population,
20 provides -- it might be a minor thing but I would
21 just -- my preference would be to remove the word "It" on
22 those blue boxes.

23 And then lastly, on 29, you have "roadway
24 border crossing," and probably put an S at the end of
25 crossing so it will say rail crossings, seaports, the

1 plural.

2 Minor things, but just wanted to point it out.

3 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you very much, Matt. All
4 right.

5 So let's move over to page 3. Are there any
6 other comments on page 2?

7 MAYOR SAENZ: Yes. This is Mayor Saenz.

8 At the last meeting that we had with the Texas-
9 Mexico folks, I brought up the issue of the impact of
10 tourism, especially along the border. You know, our
11 economy in Laredo is easily 50-60 percent driven by the
12 Mexican shoppers.

13 Is that something that we can show or at least,
14 you know, indicate some way?

15 MR. LUDLOW: Yes, certainly. And we appreciate
16 your comment at the BNSRC meeting, Mayor Saenz, just a
17 couple of days ago on that.

18 So Caroline, did you have any response to
19 that? I think that the team is working right now to kind
20 of include some language that indicates especially the
21 economic impact of that, both tourism and the daily cross-
22 border flows between the border communities.

23 MS. MAYS: No. Absolutely. And I think that
24 is really why I think Mayor Saenz's point is we should
25 incorporate that in here, why the border matters. You

1 have the daily, you know, not just commute but tourists
2 going back and forth, so I think let's try to see if we
3 can incorporate that here.

4 MR. VALE: This is Sam.

5 Remember, a lot of the products that are sold
6 in border stores are not manufactured on the border, they
7 come from different points in the United States or Canada.

8 MR. LUDLOW: Good point. Thank you for those
9 suggestions. That provides, I think, further support to
10 this argument, why does the border matter. And so we'll
11 integrate those.

12 Are there any further comments on page 2,
13 before we move over to this map? We'll blow the map up
14 and talk about this for a moment.

15 (No response.)

16 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Kelli, if you can kind of
17 zoom in on the map, that would be great.

18 So this map has undergone a few changes. First
19 of all, we've renamed it at the top to the "Multimodal
20 Transportation Network" instead of the "Designated
21 Network" just to make that more clear and readable. And
22 then as we mentioned previously, there have been a few
23 changes here.

24 There was a section of I-20 that's been
25 highlighted which was not highlighted previously in West

1 Texas. Also, the connection between the Port of Veracruz
2 and Mexico City has been highlighted as well.

3 And just wanted to see if there are any other
4 questions. One of the questions I would ask of the BTAC
5 is, based on your earlier comments about wanting to make
6 some maps more prominent, is this a candidate map that you
7 think could potentially be expanded? Just given the fact
8 that it really is focused on explaining the multimodal
9 network.

10 MR. VALE: I would say yes. And we have to
11 remember that when we talk about some of these things from
12 the Texas side, there's a similar process that goes on on
13 the Mexican side. So that all ought to be taken into
14 consideration with the skilled people that you have from
15 the Mexican side.

16 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, sure. Thanks, Sam, and we
17 do very much appreciate the comments from the Mexican
18 partners, including recent comments from SCT about some of
19 the changes to the map.

20 MR. MEADOR: Donald, this is Stan Meador with
21 Texas Pacifico.

22 And thinking about kind of after publication of
23 the paper document -- and if this exists, excuse my
24 ignorance already -- but I'm thinking of kind of an
25 interactive type map that's, you know, something that

1 could be referenced in the report to go online where you
2 can get a lot more detail than what you can put on a
3 paper, printed version of something. Where you could
4 scroll over and have more detail about rail crossings,
5 about any kind of level of detail that can't be crammed
6 into a map on a piece of paper.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Stan, that's a great idea and
8 something that's very technically feasible to do.

9 Caroline, did you have any comment about that
10 as something that we may want to add in the next few weeks
11 to the portfolio of materials?

12 MS. MAYS: Yeah, certainly. You know, in the
13 end product of the plan, because all of this is going to
14 be online, so certainly, Stan, we can work on that.
15 Because, again, the map has a lot of information, and an
16 interactive one I think would be very, very helpful. So
17 we'll work on figuring that out and make sure that it's
18 incorporated as part of the final product.

19 MR. MEADOR: Yeah, I know that's no big deal,
20 right. Just do an interactive map real quick. Come on,
21 Caroline.

22 (General laughter.)

23 MR. MEADOR: That could be a massive
24 undertaking, I realize, but I think it could be very rich
25 in detail, that you can't get --

1 MR. VALE: That's an excellent idea and also
2 build in updates.

3 MR. MEADOR: Yeah, it's easy to update.
4 Exactly.

5 MR. LUDLOW: Stan, you joke that it may not be
6 that easy, but we do have a very comprehensive set of
7 binational multimodal data that's been assembled for this
8 project, so we have a good platform to start from and we
9 can make it pretty accessible.

10 A note here, Jake -- excuse me -- Pete
11 Sepulveda says the map does not show interstate I-69 to
12 the Port of Brownsville, so perhaps we need to look at
13 that again just to make sure that we have made that
14 prominent.

15 MS. MAYS: Yeah, I think it does but -- because
16 there are the border crossing symbols on top of it, so I
17 think it does. We'll double check.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. All right. Are there any
19 other comments or questions at this point?

20 (No response.)

21 MR. LUDLOW: All right. Thanks, Stan, Pete,
22 Sam, others for your insights on this part of the
23 executive summary.

24 I think we'll move on to the next set of pages
25 and walk you through some of the changes there.

1 So this section is on the economic importance
2 of the border, and one thing is we moved this page up
3 toward the front of the executive summary. Previously
4 this page came after border crossing times.

5 But we've restructured this page so that the
6 GDP impacts of the people and the goods movement are at
7 the center of the page, both the vertical charts are added
8 and we've also added commercial vehicle and rail car
9 volume trends at the bottom -- if you scroll down there
10 just a little bit, Kelli -- since these are important
11 trends to highlight at the beginning of the executive
12 summary.

13 So again, the big change here is just the
14 sequencing, that this economic argument was promoted up
15 toward the front. It's just a few pages in when the
16 reader starts to see this. We've also added additional
17 narrative under both of these bar charts that you see
18 right here. And the idea there is to summarize the state
19 of the current GDP and job impacts and future impacts in
20 2050, so there's a narrative talking about just those
21 economic relationships and importance there.

22 So we hope that's satisfactory and meets the
23 aims of the BTAC, your comments previously in terms of
24 sequencing this and getting this argument up toward the
25 front.

1 Are there any comments or reactions to the
2 changes we've made on 4?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. LUDLOW: All right. We'll move ahead
5 then. We'll go to page 5, and page 5 is really about the
6 goals.

7 We've reformatted this page to the dark blue
8 color. We added also the purpose of the BTMP to this page
9 instead of on page 1, just to kind of synchronize that.
10 We also made a few changes to the goals based on some of
11 the feedback that we received previously, and Giacomo
12 mentioned this idea of sustainable funding is now included
13 in the description. It also includes financing.

14 We've included some verbiage on cross-border
15 resiliency so the description states "system disruptions"
16 instead of "disasters." "Stewardship" was retitled to
17 "stewardship and sustainability" and the description
18 emphasizes community as well as environmental or agency
19 resources.

20 So I know we had a very rich discussion about
21 the goals last time and wanted to make sure that that was
22 reflected in the new wording here. We tried to keep it
23 streamlined and simple so it's easy to absorb but reflects
24 the suggestions of the BTAC.

25 So are there any other comments or questions

1 here?

2 Kelli, could you zoom out just a little bit so
3 we can see. I know some people said it was too small but
4 just so we could see that full page. There we go. So
5 this is kind of the full page for you right here.

6 Actually, I'm seeing a comment from Jake from
7 Presidio and this is based on the previous page, so we
8 could just flip back there really quickly to cover this.
9 He said on page 1 of the map it says Chihuahua City and
10 Camargo, Chihuahua, are not connected to Presidio, Texas.

11 So let's note that, and Jake, we can talk to you offline
12 as well just to make sure that we're showing some of those
13 connections that need to be made to highlight Presidio's
14 place on the West Texas border. So thank you for that.

15 All right. Let's proceed. So if there are no
16 questions on 4 and 5, we will advance to pages 5 and 6
17 where we go through the stakeholder engagement.

18 And there were not a lot of changes to this
19 particular section. The main thing I wanted to highlight
20 here was that this page was refined, page 6, to list each
21 of the different stakeholder groups, how they were
22 engaged, how many meetings were held with each group.

23 Previously this section elaborated much more
24 detail on the BTAC, the BNSRC and the Secretary of State
25 and SCT engagement, but it didn't cover all of these

1 groups that are now listed. So that was the
2 recommendation that we heard from you last time and we
3 hope that this more succinctly summarizes who, what, when,
4 where, why, and kind of how much in more detail.

5 Are there any comments on this page? Again,
6 these are not dramatic changes on this page, I think just
7 clarifying comments. And there were no changes, at least
8 that I've flagged here, on page 7. Page 7 again is the
9 map showing involvement, a summary, kind of this bar chart
10 here showing involvement by group.

11 (No response.)

12 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. We will proceed. So the
13 next set of pages, pages 8 and 9, are about the Texas
14 border past, present, and future. The main takeaway here,
15 we reformatted these two pages.

16 Previously there was only one sentence included
17 for population, employment, and median income, and more
18 room was dedicated to the graph. So in response to your
19 comments, a narrative of the changes were added to allow
20 the readers to understand both the terms visually and
21 through text.

22 So essentially, this used to be more graphic
23 heavy and now there's a bit more visual and a bit more
24 narrative to really tell the story of these key trends in
25 the U.S. and Mexico and in the regions.

1 Any comments or feedback here?

2 (No response.)

3 MR. LUDLOW: Caroline, is there anything else
4 you or your team would like to point out on any of the
5 changes we've made through page 9, or should we proceed?

6 MS. MAYS: I think the main thing was that we
7 needed a little bit more information on each of these
8 socioeconomic indicators and I think we provided that, and
9 so hopefully that addresses our comments from the last
10 BTAC meeting. But if there are no further comments, we
11 can move to the next one.

12 MR. LUDLOW: Okay, let's move ahead.

13 So similarly, these two pages, and this is
14 again on the Texas-Mexico Border past, present, and future
15 where we structured previously the three people-movement
16 modes were included on one chart without text narrative
17 explaining the trends. So we've added narrative based on
18 the chapters that explain the significance of the border
19 for movements of people and how these trends have changed
20 for each mode.

21 We also emphasized the types of buses in the
22 region, that bike and pedestrian movements have increased
23 especially as POV, personal vehicle border crossing times
24 have increased, and that personal vehicles have declined
25 from '96 to '19, and that the border is important for

1 daily crossings for access to daycare facilities, schools,
2 hospitals, retail, employment, and also tourism and
3 recreational activities.

4 Another key change is we've added some
5 additional footnotes at the bottom to indicate the
6 definitions of personal vehicles and port of entry.
7 Wanted to make that clear. There was a question about
8 that previously.

9 On the map in the upper righthand corner, we've
10 separated on the maps the regions and narrative explaining
11 the trends in each region in the text so that there's
12 information on people movements, growth in people
13 movements, and analysis for each region.

14 So I think if there are no questions, we can
15 advance to the next page where this continues. It moves
16 into the Laredo region and then also the Rio Grande Valley
17 region. So essentially these next two pages, 12 and 13,
18 are in the same format as the previous two. So it's
19 altogether a four-page deeper dive of those people
20 movement trends, influences, drivers, connections and
21 daily life.

22 I'll pause for a moment. Gerry mentioned that
23 we also need to include educational cross-border
24 crossers. So thank you, Gerry. We'll make sure to do
25 that. I know that's really important in most of the

1 border communities.

2 Are there any other questions or comments here
3 on this series?

4 (No response.)

5 MR. LUDLOW: All right. We will move ahead.
6 So continuing here we switch to moving goods past,
7 present, and future.

8 Previously these graphs were combined to one
9 graph, and due to differences in scale, each mode was
10 separated in its own graph. So we've also made some
11 additional narrative changes below that go into some
12 detail to explain some of these. So hopefully this is
13 more clear in terms of providing those past, present, and
14 future trends for each of the distinctive modes.

15 You'll see also, we added a sentence on the
16 importance of airports and the contributions of foreign
17 trade zones. That's at the bottom of page 14. That was
18 another ask by BTAC previously.

19 If we scroll to the top of page 15, to the blue
20 box, just wanted to note that although the commercial
21 vehicle and railcar growth trends were moved to the
22 beginning of the executive summary, we did add a text box
23 here providing the overall Texas-Mexico Border-wide trends
24 for both of these modes prior to providing the general
25 regional breakdowns.

1 So you'll see that on page 15 and then on pages
2 16 and 17, as we move to those in a moment, we've mirrored
3 the same approach that we took to the people movements,
4 where there are regional breakdowns describing the key
5 trends by major mode.

6 One last note here, similar to the people
7 movement sections, we've also amplified the narrative.
8 And I guess a question for this group is whether there's
9 anything else that we should consider adding to these
10 pages.

11 As we look at pages 16 and 17, please note that
12 they mirror the same kind of format and approach as 14 and
13 15 and as the people movement sections. But I think a key
14 question for BTAC is whether there are any other key
15 messages on the goods movement side that we need to
16 consider adding. I'll pause for a moment and see if there
17 are any suggestions.

18 MR. CALVO: Hey, Donald, this is Eduardo in El
19 Paso.

20 MR. LUDLOW: Hey, Eduardo.

21 MR. CALVO: I believe on page 14 where we have
22 the individual graphs, I don't see a reference saying that
23 these are in constant dollars, and if there is, I don't
24 see it firm.

25 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you. And that was a

1 question that we have about a few other dollar figures and
2 we will make sure to provide that note and that
3 consistency.

4 MR. CALVO: Okay. Thank you.

5 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you very much.

6 Anything else on this section on goods movement
7 past, present and future?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. LUDLOW: All right, let's move on. So the
10 next pages 18 and 19 go into more depth, this time on
11 supply chains.

12 So one of the comments that we're still
13 addressing here is making sure that we change Mexico
14 instead of "municipalities" to "municipios," so that
15 hasn't been changed yet but we will. We also added the
16 starting and ending values to the second sentence under
17 Border Trade Trends. We were asked previously to
18 demonstrate that growth in the narrative.

19 On the graph we corrected the starting year to
20 1994 to be able to show the impact of NAFTA trade.
21 Previously it was showing '96. We also removed the top
22 region border crossing text boxes that were previously on
23 this page and instead provided a paragraph on the economic
24 impact of trade.

25 In the map on the top right of page 19, we

1 exchanged the International Trade Values map with the GDP
2 map to show the significance of border trade on every
3 state in the U.S. and Mexico. This is also something
4 that's featured prominently in the Transportation
5 Commission presentation. And accordingly, we also added a
6 narrative to this page reflecting some of those deep trade
7 connections with the GDP impact on Mexican and U.S.
8 interior states.

9 So Kelli, Hannah, if you scroll down a little
10 bit there on this page, some of those key statistics
11 indicating connections to the interior states as well.

12 Are there any questions or comments on this
13 supply chain and economic connections section?

14 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry.

15 Just a general comment, and I don't know where
16 on this page we could highlight the fact for purposes of
17 the reader to remind everyone that Mexico is Texas's
18 number one trading partner. So why are we working on all
19 this stuff, because we want to keep Texas as the number
20 one exporting state in the country and the importance of
21 Mexico to the State of Texas.

22 And I don't know how we could, I guess,
23 highlight it more where it would say it. It's understood
24 for this committee, but I don't know -- for the other
25 readers, you know, for people to remind everybody why are

1 we doing all of this stuff, you know.

2 MS. MAYS: Well, that's a great point, Gerry,
3 certainly, because this is the biggest story to tell. And
4 I think -- I don't know if we have -- in line with
5 Gerry's, maybe, Donald, we can add number one trading
6 partner but also, you know, some language on the USMCA.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Right. No, I think that's a very
8 appropriate place for us to talk in more depth about USMCA
9 and its foundational importance and connections on the
10 supply chain side.

11 MR. TRUBAN: Just a thought on that too, if you
12 want to mention number two and number three trading
13 partners and the magnitude of difference between how it
14 drops off, number two state and number three state might
15 be interesting.

16 MR. LUDLOW: Right. Thank you. And who was
17 that who just made that comment?

18 MR. TRUBAN: I'm sorry. It's Paul Truban from
19 TxDOT.

20 MR. LUDLOW: Oh, thanks, Paul.

21 MR. VALE: This is Sam.

22 One thing I would caution us against is trying
23 to make it unimportant to be from California, Arizona, or
24 New Mexico, because that puts our federal officials into
25 conflict.

1 MR. LUDLOW: Okay.

2 MR. VALE: It's fair to say we're more
3 important, not to say they're not important. And then the
4 other states that I believe have been brought up, Michigan
5 and others, that have huge impact on what we do on the
6 border.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Very good. Thank you for those
8 comments.

9 Are there any others at this point?

10 (No response.)

11 MR. LUDLOW: All right. Why don't we move on
12 to the next two pages, 20 and 21, which basically break
13 down some of the key supply chains in more detail.

14 We moved the top three supply chains to the top
15 of the twelve supply chains instead of to the left. So
16 this was just some spatial rearrangement to make this more
17 visually appealing, but the top three obviously are high
18 tech, motor vehicle and machinery.

19 The map illustrates some of those connections
20 between some of these key supply chains. And also, we had
21 a fairly intense bar graph showing the trends and instead
22 converted that to a line graph and simplified it to
23 illustrate some of the growth that's expected in the
24 future, and really exponential growth on the high tech
25 side. Obviously, the other supply chains are growing

1 quickly as well.

2 And then we moved some of the text boxes below.
3 We had some additional space due to some of the changes by
4 removing that massive graph and simplifying it to the
5 trend lines to provide some additional narrative at the
6 bottom. We think this reads a lot better and tells a
7 story that's a lot easier to comprehend than the previous
8 version.

9 Any comments or reactions here to those
10 changes?

11 MR. WOJNOWSKI: This is Matt with Del Rio.

12 I think on the high tech, that comment there at
13 the bottom in the middle, I don't know if it would be more
14 prominent if it was the first thing mentioned or the last
15 thing. Just an idea. Thanks.

16 MR. LUDLOW: Go ahead, Caroline.

17 MS. MAYS: I was just confirming, Kelli got it.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Got it. Okay. Thank you, Matt.

19 Anything else?

20 MR. SCHWEBEL: I'm trying to understand -- this
21 is Gerry. Going back to the question earlier about high
22 tech, what are you referring to high tech?

23 MR. LUDLOW: Well, I'll start out there, and
24 Alejandro could potentially chime in. But this is kind of
25 the grouping of computer processing instruments and other

1 components related to high technology, so really it's kind
2 of the hardware, Gerry, that is being produced on a cross-
3 border kind of binational basis.

4 MR. SCHWEBEL: Okay.

5 MR. LUDLOW: So it's fueling a lot of other
6 industries, some of it's components that fuel other
7 industries.

8 MS. MAYS: It includes electronics as well, and
9 you know, high volume manufacturing.

10 MR. SCHWEBEL: So when you talk about durable
11 goods, it's the hardware stuff, not so much the digital
12 trade as --

13 MS. MAYS: No.

14 MR. SCHWEBEL: I got you. Thank you.

15 MR. LUDLOW: This is tangible goods.

16 MS. MAYS: Tangible, yup.

17 MR. SCHWEBEL: Tangible. Thank you.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you, Gerry, for
19 asking for that clarification.

20 The next part of the executive summary really
21 moves into the issues and needs. So up to this point the
22 first 21 pages have been background. They've been setting
23 the stage, they've been describing current conditions,
24 some of the key industries, the economic conditions, and
25 the remainder of the executive summary focuses on the

1 border issues, needs, projects, programs, policies.

2 So this first part, there haven't been
3 significant changes here. There's been some formatting
4 changes. Really, we removed multimodal from the cross-
5 cutting theme just based on some comments from
6 stakeholders and TxDOT, streamlined this a little bit.

7 On the next page, on 23, we changed the format
8 of this page by shortening and simplifying the text in
9 multiple places, while keeping the original intent. So
10 they're now in the green color scheme instead of orange
11 bolded text.

12 So these are mostly visual and formatting
13 changes that were made to highlight the key performance
14 issues and needs and overall issues and needs, including
15 cross-cutting themes. So, again, not a lot of substantive
16 changes here, mostly formatting and visual changes to this
17 layout.

18 Any comments or questions here?

19 (No response.)

20 MR. LUDLOW: Okay, let's move on. So the next
21 series of pages really address the crossing times.

22 Obviously there's a number of different
23 performance metrics that are contained in the chapters,
24 but due to the high interest in the crossing times, this
25 was something that is featured prominently in the

1 executive summary, and the focus -- and a lot of what
2 happened here, the changes that were made here was to add
3 a paragraph narrative on how north- and southbound times
4 compare and also to add the number of commercial motor
5 vehicle crossings northbound to justify why the times have
6 increased.

7 So there's a bit more information here. A lot
8 of individuals have asked for additional clarification.
9 We think that the paragraph and the footnotes help provide
10 some better context, so this is more easily understandable
11 and also so that it's contextualized given the number of
12 crossings in the future.

13 So on the left-hand side you see the time in
14 hours, and on the right-hand side you see the annual
15 number of crossings, so that it makes maybe more intuitive
16 sense that if there's a significant increase in crossings
17 there may also be a significant increase in that crossing
18 time, not always a one-to-one relationship but typically
19 some correlation there.

20 Are there questions or comments about this
21 slide? Obviously -- excuse me -- this set of pages as
22 well as those that continue, you know, there's a lot to
23 absorb. And we made a similar set of changes on the
24 following pages as well.

25 MS. MAYS: I think the really big difference

1 was we heard from a lot of you that we were presenting
2 kind of a one-sided story on the crossing times or border
3 delays, but we're not really presenting kind of why and
4 you know, the volumes, to really show a correlation
5 between how it's going to grow in terms of volume in the
6 crossings, the truck crossings.

7 So let's just take Mayor Saenz, if we take
8 Laredo, World Trade Bridge, does the growth in the volumes
9 match up with, you know, the possible projected growth in
10 wait time. So that's the story, that we had to add the
11 volume that is here on your right-hand side. So when
12 somebody is looking at this, you know, there's some
13 comparative perspective that they can see.

14 And again, this is kind of do-nothing on the
15 wait times, but when you look at the volumes, it's going
16 to grow regardless of whether the wait times are what it
17 is today or will be in the future. The volumes are going
18 to continue to grow. So that's the attempt we're trying
19 to do here to provide that perspective.

20 And I think we had comment on this yesterday
21 when we met with RGV, and then others, I think Laredo,
22 there were comments in Laredo as well.

23 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry. My comment, and
24 you've already the question in some respects, but it was,
25 as we looked at the harder-colored versus the shaded

1 areas, if you just took that model when you look at that,
2 Pharr is really the one that has the most needs right now
3 based on that current scenario, versus the shaded area
4 which, of course, with no activity would definitely, you
5 know, far exceed the 13-hour deal.

6 But I just want to make sure that we did not
7 mix apples and oranges between, I guess, clarification
8 whether they're BCIS or BTS numbers versus INRIX numbers
9 in comparisons. That's always worth clarification.

10 But the whole issue of saying northbound
11 crossing times are 30 minutes on average, but that's when
12 the bridgehead -- they come on to the bridge. You know,
13 we're talking about delays, the long lines up to two
14 hours, and I know that we've had that discussion. You
15 know, and are working, but we need to make sure we don't
16 get any confusion in what we present to this.

17 To me these are very critical charts to present
18 our arguments. You know, some other committee members
19 have any opinions on that?

20 MS. MAYS: And Donald, maybe you guys can talk
21 a little bit about on the commercial vehicle side we do
22 have, you know, not on all of them we'll have BCIS, but
23 you know, we also did use INRIX data. This doesn't
24 reflect CBP data.

25 So Donald, if you guys want to talk a little to

1 Gerry's point?

2 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, Gerry, maybe that needs to
3 be clarified further. At the bottom we have a footnote
4 that says BCIS and INRIX data 2019 and BTMP queuing models
5 were used, and the southbound border crossing time
6 information was unavailable due to data limitations.

7 So that comes on some of the subsequent pages
8 we have now included southbound, at least for current
9 crossing times, for the first time. So I don't know if
10 that's clear enough, but I think that we continue to hear
11 from this group and from other groups that there's a need
12 for greater clarification to confirm that we are not using
13 the CBP wait times, that this is crossing time. So
14 essentially for every crossing where BCIS is available,
15 that's what was used; when BCIS was not available, the
16 INRIX approach was used, including for southbound.

17 So it seems like we need to work on that
18 messaging to make that more clear for those who are really
19 familiar with the border region, and I'm hesitant to use
20 the CBP wait times because they're only reflecting part of
21 the total crossing time. I think that clarification may
22 need to be made more apparent.

23 Does that make sense, Gerry?

24 MR. SCHWEBEL: Yeah. Just important -- keeping
25 in mind who the readers are going to be of this report,

1 you know, at all levels. You know, if you look at, like I
2 said, well, what's 30 minutes. Sounds like it's nothing,
3 you know, but it is if there are another 50 or 100 trucks
4 behind you.

5 MR. LUDLOW: Right. And obviously these pages
6 are focused on average crossing times. The 90th
7 percentile are obviously a lot higher, and there's
8 information on those in the report in the chapters
9 themselves.

10 So it sounds like we need to work on this
11 messaging a bit more on the narrative here to make this
12 more clear, where did the data come from, what do they
13 mean. You know, just making sure that this speaks more
14 clearly and succinctly to both the people who understand
15 border operations as well as lay readers. So it seems
16 like we've got a little work to do on this page.

17 MR. BROUWEN: Good morning. Fred Brouwen,
18 director of operations, City of Pharr, the Pharr Bridge.

19 Definitely this is very good for us, but
20 definitely we need to show the worst case scenario and the
21 best case scenario by adding the projects. As you know,
22 each city, each entity has projects.

23 We do have a \$40 million project right now
24 underway inside the import lot, just to remind everyone,
25 and we're working to build a second spot. But definitely

1 we need to have a best case scenario -- I mean, the worst
2 and the best, including the projects. That way you could
3 have a better knowledge of our operation for the next 30
4 years.

5 Definitely we need to have another scenario
6 with projects that each city, each region is working on --
7 on their bridge, on the city. That way we can give more
8 understanding of the next 20-30 years on the wait times.
9 Because with this, you're going to confuse people, whoever
10 you're going to present to, or it's going to divert
11 investors to go somewhere else.

12 MS. MAYS: If I may, you know, certainly, Fred,
13 your comments are well taken. What we're trying to paint
14 the picture here is, again, Donald mentioned average
15 crossing times, and I think we need to add the word
16 "average" here. Because when we were doing this analysis,
17 we didn't have the projects, you know, to be able to run
18 the analysis.

19 So what we did here, we just took as it is
20 today, what that would look like in the future, you know,
21 with the do-nothing. And of course, that's really what
22 you're talking about is, I think that's kind of the next
23 step in the implementation when we're going to go back and
24 say, okay, now that we have all of the projects
25 identified, if they were all implemented, this is what it

1 would be. This is what would change.

2 But unfortunately, when we were doing this
3 analysis for the purpose of the Border Master Plan, the
4 plan right now, we did not have -- we're still working
5 through the projects. But certainly I think this shows
6 you what it is today, the 2019 crossing times. That's
7 your average actual today, and then we're kind of painting
8 a picture in the future.

9 So what you're asking for is kind of in the
10 middle whereby you put the projects in, and then you kind
11 of see what that would look like. And I think that's an
12 exercise that, you know, can certainly be a follow-up.
13 Once we get all the projects in, we can look at that and
14 see what that looks like and share that back with the
15 committee.

16 MR. BROUWEN: Exactly. Just like you started
17 right now to make a comment, this is without any
18 projects. Definitely with good projects, the scenario
19 will change.

20 MS. MAYS: Yeah, absolutely. It will be
21 somewhere, like I say, in the middle. So we have the
22 actual today, we have 2050, and then with the projects it
23 will kind of be kind of a middle scenario.

24 MR. BROUWEN: Exactly.

25 MAYOR SAENZ: Caroline, this is Mayor Saenz.

1 May I say something here?

2 MS. MAYS: Yes, go ahead, Mayor.

3 MAYOR SAENZ: Yes. We also tend to forget that
4 what contributes to delays is not necessarily border
5 crossing times obviously over the bridges but also the
6 border patrol stations, the inspection stations that we
7 have away from the bridges, but also so important for
8 northbound traffic going more internally. So we need to
9 some way footnote that or, you know, that's all part of
10 the process here.

11 MS. MAYS: Yes. There's a lot of variable kind
12 of causes to the delays, and again, this is some of the
13 things we didn't do a lot of analysis on the causes, but I
14 think that's something that we do have as one of the
15 programs to come back and look into and understand, what
16 are some of the main causes of border wait time delays.

17 Like you mentioned border patrol, a lot of
18 discussion about staffing and other things, you know. In
19 border crossings where you have multiple modes, people,
20 trucks, bicyclists, there's a lot of conflicts created
21 there and some of that creates the delay and, you know,
22 expands the crossing times.

23 And the challenge is border crossing by border
24 crossing. Not any one or two border crossings are
25 alike. So that's going to be kind of an exercise that we

1 work with you all bridge owners, border crossing owners to
2 furnish that understanding better. Because otherwise we
3 can make broad assumptions, like you mentioned, you know
4 that for sure but is that the same in other regions
5 throughout the border region.

6 So certainly, we'll look at that.

7 MAYOR SAENZ: But my point was at the 29-mile
8 marker we have a border patrol check station and all the
9 traffic is forced to stop there and again be checked, and
10 that's really the point I was trying to make. Thank you.

11 MR. VALE: And Caroline, this is Sam.

12 The mayor is correct and so are the prior
13 comments, but we kind of have to separate infrastructure
14 versus federal regulatory processes. Because you can have
15 the widest highway and still have a regulatory process
16 that's more cumbersome.

17 So we always want to support the unification of
18 the processes between Mexico and the U.S. And that's
19 something that is not directly a TxDOT thing, but it is
20 something that affects the infrastructure of TxDOT.

21 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Sam.

22 Caroline, I think we have a few comments to
23 catch up on in the chat box here. Sito mentioned, how do
24 the politics of security influence crossing times, so I
25 think that we've mentioned that, and you know, I think

1 that we have that in the narrative in a couple of places
2 in the reports, but we just need to maybe make that more
3 clear here.

4 We do have some white space on this page and
5 the subsequent pages where we can include some additional
6 clarifying notes and narrative. We had planned to maybe
7 describe some of the broader changes here.

8 One other possibility that maybe also partially
9 addresses Fred's points is possibly having a text box that
10 foreshadows the policies, programs, and projects as
11 solutions to these projected wait times, making that tie
12 into the rest of the executive summary. So there's, I
13 think, several different things we could consider doing
14 here to improve that and to improve this flow.

15 Then finally, Jake mentions in Presidio
16 northbound it is going to get a lot worse because we do
17 not have two booths, so that every truck has to go to
18 secondary. I'm not sure, Alejandro, if you or Chris
19 wanted to comment on that. I know that we were discussing
20 that internally.

21 MR. SOLIS: I think this goes back to kind of,
22 what is the current infrastructure at each one of the
23 border crossings and that's what we are assuming for these
24 future queues. So anything that would improve on that is
25 really not considered, so if there is a specific way that

1 a border crossing operates, that is what we are assuming
2 for the future. That will, of course, change with the
3 recommendations, but at this point, for the purposes of
4 our Border Master Plan we assume the current operating
5 conditions into the future.

6 MR. VALE: And the monkey in the woodpile is
7 federal regulations can be interpreted with some
8 flexibility or considerable flexibility by the director of
9 the ports, both on the Mexican and the U.S. side.

10 MR. LUDLOW: Okay.

11 MR. VALE: And that's something we can't
12 control, but we need to be able to work on those issues.
13 Maybe the private sector and the local communities would
14 have a greater role there, but it's still something that
15 affects TxDOT infrastructure.

16 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you, Sam. What I'd
17 like to do next, if there are no other further comments,
18 is just walk relatively quickly through the next few
19 slides since they are largely showing similar information
20 and trends.

21 So 26-27 indicate the southbound side and we do
22 not have this forecast for the future due to some data
23 limitations and assumptions, but we are indicating the
24 southbound wait times. And I think per the comments that
25 we received yesterday in our conversation from RGV,

1 including from Sam, I think the idea here is to highlight
2 the fact that these are export flows, and make the
3 distinction that on the inbound, the northbound, those are
4 import flows and these are export flows in the narrative
5 to make that more clear.

6 Does that sound reasonable, Sam, based on what
7 you mentioned yesterday?

8 MR. VALE: Yes. We need to have people know
9 that because they have different operations. An exporter
10 is more interested in the southbound.

11 MR. LUDLOW: Very good, clearly.

12 Cynthia, were you going to say something?

13 MS. GARZA REYES: Actually, I did have a quick
14 question when we were talking about the data and it coming
15 from BCIS and INRIX. In terms of accuracy, how does that
16 compare to what CBP has that we can't get a hold of?

17 Is it -- would you say that it's pretty much
18 the same? I'm just curious about the accuracy.

19 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, Cynthia, that's a good
20 question. I'll try to explain it really simply. We do
21 have all of the data from CBP. They were generous in
22 providing us with basically their observed wait times.

23 But what CBP is doing is they're measuring --
24 and they've got a methodology that they've used for a very
25 long time and it's very consistent -- but they measure the

1 visual queue of the traffic approaching the CBP station.
2 They're not measuring the full crossing time, meaning
3 they're not also measuring the time a vehicle might enter
4 the queue north- or southbound to not only go through CBP,
5 but to go through SOT [phonetic] or subsequent processing.

6 I hope that makes sense. So CBP is measuring a
7 part. They're measuring the wait time for CBP inspection,
8 but they're not measuring the full crossing time, which
9 the BCIS data and/or the INRIX data do. So these crossing
10 times are longer, but they are consistent and
11 statistically valid, although in some cases we have fewer
12 observations from the INRIX data than the BCIS data.

13 I hope that helps.

14 MS. GARZA REYES: Yes. That actually is very
15 helpful because, again, as we continue talking about other
16 stakeholders that aren't familiar with this, I was just
17 thinking could they have the same possible question in
18 terms of accuracy, and if we could somehow put that in the
19 footnote that would probably be very beneficial to those
20 outside of Texas.

21 MR. LUDLOW: Right. It sounds like there's
22 some continued discussion and need to clarify the
23 differences between the CBP data and the data that we're
24 showing here just to make sure it's clear.

25 MR. VALE: And Cynthia, this is Sam.

1 One of the things that we all need from the
2 ports of entry side is to know the exact time that
3 something enters the import lot, and what time that truck
4 gets out of the import lot because that is easier to
5 measure and it's very accurate. It would be a through-put
6 time.

7 CBP does have a goal of trying to reduce their
8 through-put times, but those vary depending on who's on
9 duty and how they operate. But those are critical things
10 for the ports of entry.

11 MS. GARZA REYES: Completely agree.

12 MR. LUDLOW: Very good. Again, thank you for
13 the continued comments. This discussion is really helpful
14 to the team.

15 Obviously this section of the executive summary
16 needs additional clarification in the narrative. It's
17 already undergone quite a few changes since we last spoke
18 but needs to evolve further. The next couple of slides --

19 MR. CONTRERAS: I have a question on this as
20 well.

21 MR. LUDLOW: Sure.

22 MR. CONTRERAS: Thank you for this. And this
23 may be to Caroline as well. This is Sergio again at the
24 Partnership.

25 So we've seen the number of entities that

1 placed comments or messaging on to the entire report
2 itself, and now that we're talking about wait times, do
3 you have a sense of how much input has come in from
4 industry themselves? Such as, in this case, outbound wait
5 times. You know, we get that from CBP. We get that from
6 the ports, but how much -- and not only in wait times but
7 overall in the whole report, do you have matrix that shows
8 20 percent of the following came from industry
9 themselves? Do y'all have that, do we have that?

10 MS. MAYS: Stephanie shared a little bit
11 earlier -- I think, Donald, if you will go back to the
12 stakeholder engagement page -- we have had unprecedented
13 input from industry throughout this plan development.
14 Tremendous -- a lot of the BNSRC, we had stakeholder
15 workshops targeted primarily to private sector. We've
16 held meetings in Mexico with private sector, before COVID,
17 engaging them.

18 So I can assure you we've had tremendous input
19 from the private sector in Mexico. You know, we have all
20 the three Mexican states -- four Mexican states that have
21 been involved and helping us engage industry there on a --

22 MR. CONTRERAS: Great. Thank you.

23 MS. MAYS: So absolutely.

24 MR. CONTRERAS: Thank you. Yes, and I meant
25 private sector specifically, yes. Thank you.

1 MS. MAYS: It's private sector, yes.

2 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you very much.

3 Again, great comments.

4 So the last two slides here, or the last two
5 pages on the crossing times, are highlighting people,
6 average personal vehicle crossing times, both northbound
7 and then the number of movements now and in the future to
8 compare and contrast against the changing crossing
9 times. So it's a close analog to the information that was
10 presented on commercial vehicles.

11 The next two slides contain the same
12 information, the next two pages for southbound. Again, no
13 forecast for southbound but current average wait times for
14 personal vehicles for southbound are available right here,
15 which this group and others have asked for inclusion.

16 Are there any additional questions or comments
17 about this crossing times section? And again, some of
18 this is brand new. We intend to integrate some additional
19 narrative and clarifying notes following your comments
20 today over these four pages.

21 MR. GARCIA: This is Josue here at Cameron
22 County.

23 I think the same applies here to the POVs as
24 the commercial projects going on within the different
25 bridge systems, including ours, so that would be nice.

1 And thank you, Caroline, for including that on the
2 commercial, and this will reciprocate here on the POVs as
3 well. Thanks.

4 MS. MAYS: You're welcome. Thank you for your
5 comments. I think you brought it up last time that we
6 need to make sure we focus on the POVs as well, so thank
7 you.

8 MR. CALVO: Hey, Donald, this is Eduardo. I
9 think I made this comment also at the BNSRC here. I
10 understand that the forecasts are unconstrained and there
11 is really no equilibrium reached between the different
12 border crossings. Right?

13 So I think it's in slide 24 for the commercial
14 vehicles, where you're showing the Pharr-Reynosa Bridge at
15 13 hours while the other bridges are exactly -- other
16 bridges have a forecasted four hours and so on, you
17 know. Maybe the note about that these are individual
18 forecasts.

19 In other words, that there is no regional
20 equilibrium, you know, reached on this. Not sure how you
21 guys want to address that, but I think it's important to
22 mention that because someone who sees that draft may
23 think, well, 13 hours and the other ones are only four
24 hours.

25 MS. MAYS: Yeah, and Donald, you guys can kind

1 of comment on that, these individual border crossings, and
2 maybe, you know -- we tried to color code it by region so
3 it can be easier to read, but maybe specifically focus on
4 border crossings and not make it kind of regional. So
5 that people don't think, like you said, you know, reading
6 that, somehow they're all interrelated.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Yeah, thanks, Caroline, and
8 thanks, Eduardo. We will definitely make a note about the
9 equilibrium.

10 Chris or Alejandro, I don't know if you wanted
11 to add anything further there, but I think the key point
12 there is that these are individual unconstrained forecasts
13 by specific crossing. And as we move into implementation,
14 TxDOT will be examining some of those equilibrium effects
15 of projects.

16 Chris or Alejandro, did you have any further
17 comments in response to Eduardo?

18 MR. SOLIS: No. I think that you got it
19 right. I mean, we just need to explain that there is
20 really no equilibrium beyond the border crossing
21 forecasts.

22 We're not reassigning flows, we're not doing
23 any of those things. But we'll find a way to craft it in
24 kind of more layman's terms in these stages.

25 MR. VALE: Well, you have -- this is Sam.

1 You have to remember that this also is a factor
2 with the volumes. You know, the bigger the port is, the
3 more volumes they have and the infrastructure at some
4 point cannot be expanded, then that is where you have the
5 problems.

6 Pharr has got some great plans for expansion;
7 that's going to change a lot of stuff. But if I remember
8 correctly, that 13-hour is in 2050, that's not today.

9 MR. SOLIS: And it is in a do-nothing
10 situation. Correct. If nothing is done between now and
11 2050, that's what would happen. Correct.

12 MR. BROUWEN: Alejandro, did you base it on the
13 crossings for each bridge exactly?

14 MR. SOLIS: The forecasting was done at the
15 individual border crossing level. And again, it doesn't
16 consider any reassignment to any kind of neighboring
17 border crossings, nothing of that sort. It was a very
18 simple forecasting process.

19 MS. GARZA REYES: Is there -- and I know that
20 obviously the current coordination tells you if it's 2019
21 or 2050 numbers, but is there a way to maybe emphasize
22 that a little bit more? Because honestly, the first time
23 I looked at it, I jumped to the 13-hour and I thought,
24 wait a minute.

25 I had to take a double look and make sure that

1 that was 2050. So if there is maybe a way for everyone
2 just to emphasize that that is the 2050 projection and not
3 current.

4 MS. MAYS: Yes. And I think, you know, we will
5 go back to the drawing board a little bit on this draft
6 and figure out, the consultant team figure out how best to
7 reflect -- yeah, because you're not the only one,
8 Cynthia. We've had other people comment.

9 I think yesterday you made similar comment and
10 others have, so we're going to figure out how to best
11 display this. It's very important to display it at 2019
12 so people can see today and then really, you know, the
13 2050 one. if there's a way we can do that, so we're going
14 to try to figure that out so it's clear. Because if
15 somebody is going to look at this for the first time and
16 they can't discern what is 2019 versus 2050, it's going to
17 be challenging.

18 SECY. HUGHS: And Caroline, at the risk of this
19 not being the one we were talking about the other day, is
20 this where we were just seeing in addition to times adding
21 volume numbers to create a better picture? It's not just
22 that there's a wait, it's just that there's such a growth
23 in volume.

24 MS. MAYS: Yes, Secretary. We added, if you
25 look on the right-hand side, we added the crossing

1 volumes, and it has commercial vehicles.

2 SECY. HUGHS: Okay. It's probably just me, for
3 the other slides on the left I could zoom and this one I
4 can't, and so they look like very tiny. Oh, here we go.
5 It's user error. Okay, now I can see it. Thank you.

6 I see you added it, but it isn't one chart.
7 It's two separate charts.

8 MS. MAYS: Yes, exactly, because the measures
9 are different. You know, the volumes, we're looking at
10 trucks crossing, and then the wait time is in hours. So
11 we can't really blend the two together, so that's why we
12 put it side by side. So at least the reader can see, you
13 know, some of the things causing the wait time is the
14 volume increasing, that's just part of it.

15 SECY. HUGHS: Sure. So for the committee
16 members, it was only the first chart before so now we have
17 the two charts. I guess I was hoping -- I can appreciate
18 why you can't really blend it.

19 You'd have to take the time to recognize, okay,
20 well, here are the hours that it takes and then also to
21 appreciate the volume. So that helps but it sounds like
22 we're still not -- it's a challenge because it's a lot of
23 information, but I'm hearing that we need to do what we
24 can to make it even clearer. So thank you for those
25 efforts.

1 MS. MAYS: Yes, certainly.

2 MR. VALE: And we have to remember who our
3 audience is, because these are ways to justify
4 funding. These are not ways to try to get somebody to
5 locate in your community. We're using these to justify
6 additional funding, so I guess you can say some people
7 would wish to have those numbers.

8 MR. CALVO: And Caroline and Donald, this is
9 Eduardo again.

10 You know, I love these charts. I mean, I think
11 they're great. I think all we're saying here is that we
12 may just need to tweak them to make the clarifications of
13 what it is that we're showing, but I think the charts are
14 great. I mean, I love, you know, the way that we're
15 conveying the information here. Just a matter of tweaking
16 it, but these are excellent.

17 MS. MAYS: Thank you, Eduardo.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, thank you, Eduardo. I think
19 we're dealing with some of the most electrifying material
20 in the document and it's just really a function of being
21 able to package it and provide the supporting narrative
22 that enables the readers to understand it in the
23 appropriate context.

24 I think that's what a lot of our comments have
25 been about today and that's going to be our challenge, the

1 TxDOT team internally, working on that over the next
2 couple of days.

3 All right. If there are no other comments
4 here, I think we need to move on, especially for the sake
5 of time. So in the next portion of the executive summary
6 I'm just going to summarize some of the changes we've
7 made.

8 This next slide really summarizes the economic
9 impact of the border delays, and we've added the GDP
10 impact of the border delays for all border crossings based
11 on your feedback, including a sentence specifically on the
12 2019 border delays. We've also reemphasized that this is
13 under a no-build scenario and that the GDP impacts, these
14 huge GDP impacts, are no-build but could be alleviated
15 through the proper constellation of configuration of
16 policies, programs and projects.

17 We added a paragraph, if you scroll down a
18 little bit at the bottom -- excuse me -- actually not on
19 this page. Sorry about that.

20 So are there any comments or questions on the
21 economic impact?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. LUDLOW: Okay, let's move on. So the next
24 series of pages are about the recommendations, and the
25 first thing that we mention here is that we reformatted

1 these two pages to the dark blue and green color scheme.
2 Previously they were green and orange.

3 We removed them from boxes -- previously they'd
4 been in kind of a tabular format -- to improve the
5 legibility and we've added sentences related to the need
6 for both public and private funds. We see that's
7 prominent here at the bottom of the recommendations
8 introduction area.

9 So again, this is the 22 policy
10 recommendations. The subsequent pages will go into
11 program and the project recommendations.

12 Any comments or questions here?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. LUDLOW: I think this is relatively
15 straightforward, so let's move on to the program
16 recommendations.

17 Sorry, I think we're getting some feedback
18 here. Can you just make sure everyone mutes? Thank you
19 very much.

20 So a few highlighted changes here. We have
21 corrected the number of projects, so of course this first
22 page 36 is focused on the program recommendations and we
23 changed the text box here to explain the purpose of the
24 programs. Previously this provided the percentage of high
25 impact projects, but we wanted to really note the

1 importance of the programs. And specifically at the
2 bottom here under connectivity noted that the driver
3 training programs are an example of regional connectivity
4 in the region for the studies.

5 Another point here moving over to project
6 recommendations, we corrected the number of projects based
7 on new stakeholder inputs. This has continued to evolve
8 as we've continued to receive additional changes to
9 projects. We also changed the project funding status to a
10 pie chart and added a narrative. Previously this was a
11 table.

12 The intent here is to show really kind of the
13 difference of funded versus unfunded, that about three-
14 quarters of the projects identified remain unfunded. And
15 then partially-funded is \$2 billion and fully-funded is
16 about \$5 billion.

17 So are there any questions or comments on these
18 two pages where we summarize program recommendations and
19 project recommendations?

20 MR. WOJNOWSKI: Yes. This is Matt with the
21 City of Del Rio.

22 There's a lot of numbers here, the 182 and
23 649. I think there should be a statement to show where
24 they can find all 182 or 649 of these so that people would
25 know where to reference or find those.

1 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you, Matt. And this
2 is a comment that's come up in the last few days in the
3 BNSRC meetings.

4 There will be appendices that contain these in
5 detail and actual references to the chapter. If this an
6 electronic document, perhaps the best way to provide this
7 is through a link, but we will take that into
8 consideration.

9 MR. WOJNOWSKI: Thank you.

10 MR. LUDLOW: Caroline, anything to add?

11 MS. MAYS: No, no.

12 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Anything else on these two
13 pages?

14 (No response.)

15 MR. LUDLOW: All right. So let's move on to
16 the next few remaining pages. The next two pages provide
17 breakdowns and then largely these next few pages take into
18 account the comments and suggestions that we received from
19 BTAC and from others.

20 We tried to include percentages whenever
21 possible and pie charts to kind of summarize the
22 breakdowns by different types of projects, by funding
23 availability and by impact. We have tried to make sure
24 that this is provided at a regional level with the correct
25 color coding to be able to tell those regional

1 differences.

2 Any comments or questions here? Again, a lot
3 of this is formatting and not necessarily substantive
4 changes, but really just better storytelling and more
5 regional focus.

6 (Pause.)

7 All right.

8 MR. CALVO: Donald, this is Eduardo in El Paso.

9 Just a comment that the numbers that you're
10 showing, at least for the El Paso region, are not the
11 very, very latest. As you know, yesterday afternoon we
12 were still tweaking our project list and all that, so I
13 just want to make sure that, you know, the new numbers
14 will be reflected by the time we take this to the
15 Commission.

16 MR. LUDLOW: Absolutely, Eduardo. This is a
17 snapshot as of, I think, 10:00 or 11:00 a.m. yesterday
18 morning --

19 MR. CALVO: Right.

20 MR. LUDLOW: -- and this is already in the
21 process of being updated from the additional information
22 that you provided yesterday. So this continues to evolve.

23 Thank you for your note. The latest iteration
24 will be reflective of the latest numbers.

25 MR. CALVO: Excellent. Thank you.

1 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Well, let's keep moving
2 then. So the next series is about the implementation
3 plan.

4 Really the main comment here was adding
5 percentages based on stakeholder feedback. We also
6 removed the table for implementation time frame by impact
7 level due to space constraints. We reformatted the
8 unfunded projects by implementation timeline to improve
9 legibility. So again, mostly formatting here, stylistic
10 improvements for readability and digestability.

11 MR. WOJNOWSKI: This is Matt again in Del Rio.

12 On the arrow you have short term, medium on the
13 left-hand side and long term on the right. I would rotate
14 those pie charts to have the short term and medium term on
15 the left-hand side and the long term on the right. Same
16 thing with your labels there below the pie charts, if that
17 makes sense.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Good call. Thanks, Matt. We will
19 improve our consistency in that kind of visual
20 sequencing. That's very helpful.

21 Anything else on these two pages?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. LUDLOW: All right, let's move ahead. So
24 this is the final page of the executive summary.

25 This is where we have restructured the call for

1 action to include three main themes: strengthening Texas-
2 Mexico partnerships; engaging BTAC in implementation; and
3 pivoting stakeholders from planning to implementation, and
4 made a few slight changes to kind of the overall look and
5 feel. The question for this group is really whether this
6 messaging is correct for the call for action. Are these
7 the three areas?

8 This is what we heard from you last time and we
9 tried to synthesize it in a way that was simple and
10 direct, but is there a different set of messaging? Is
11 this complete and appropriate for the call for action, the
12 call for mobilization? Any thoughts or comments here?

13 Caroline, did you have any specific follow-up
14 questions for the BTAC on this call for action?

15 MS. MAYS: No, but I think, Donald, after we
16 have the discussion on implementation later, I think we
17 might have this section --

18 MR. LUDLOW: Evolve?

19 MS. MAYS: Yeah, evolve. So I would probably
20 just table that until after that discussion.

21 MR. LUDLOW: Okay, very good.

22 So last call for comments here. We really
23 appreciate your advice today. From our perspective, this
24 is moving in the right direction. And I think we've
25 mostly got some significant work to do to make sure that

1 we get the messaging and the narrative correct around the
2 crossing times. Very much appreciate it.

3 Caroline, are we ready to move on, or
4 Secretary, are we ready to move on to our next part of the
5 agenda?

6 MS. MAYS: If we have any comments from BTAC.

7 And Secretary, do you want to take a break
8 now? I know we don't have a break till 10:15, maybe take
9 the break now and come back at 10:15 and then the next
10 agenda item?

11 SECY. HUGHS: That's fine with me. It depends
12 on how the team feels. I'm happy to do that. It makes
13 sense to not stop in the middle of one, so if this is a
14 good break time, let's just all agree to check back in at
15 10:10. Would that work?

16 MS. MAYS: Yes, awesome.

17 SECY. HUGHS: Okay. See you soon. Thank you.

18 MS. MAYS: Yeah, let's take a break.

19 SECY. HUGHS: Okay. Thank you.

20 (Whereupon, at 9:58 a.m., a brief recess was
21 taken.)

22 SECY. HUGHS: Okay. Welcome back, everyone.
23 Hope you had an opportunity to have a little morning
24 break, whether it was a stretch or a snack or just
25 catching up on other emails, and at this time we will go

1 on and continue with the presentation.

2 Caroline.

3 MS. MAYS: Thank you, Secretary. And welcome
4 back, BTAC members.

5 The next agenda item is really we're going to
6 do a quick walk-through on what we plan on presenting to
7 Commission. As Secretary mentioned earlier, next Thursday
8 during the regular Commission meeting we'll be presenting
9 the Border Transportation Master Plan to the Commission as
10 a discussion item.

11 This allows the Commission to, one, we inform
12 them and provide them with a status update on the work
13 effort of the plan, and also talk about the key findings
14 and then allow Commission to ask questions and provide
15 feedback. So that's the intent of this.

16 We're not going to go into a lot of details,
17 but we want -- and again, you heard some of this already
18 at the last meeting, but more the message, what are the
19 key messages on some of these key areas. Some of it
20 you've already discussed in the executive summary.

21 So I will turn it over to Donald.

22 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you, Caroline.

23 So we're going to -- what we'll do is, I'll
24 just walk you at a very high level through a few series of
25 slides. We'll pause after each section just briefly to

1 make sure that we understand any key messages that need to
2 be conveyed to the Commission. So this is not meant to be
3 an in-depth page turn, rather a higher level exercise
4 where we just walk through this Transportation Commission
5 presentation which does contain a lot of the same content
6 as the executive summary, just sequenced a bit differently
7 for the Commission.

8 So let's go ahead and get started. The first
9 slide should look familiar, it sets the stage for the
10 master plan, demonstrates the overall connections. The
11 next slide summarizes the purpose and goals of the plan.

12 The following slide provides an overview of the
13 Texas-Mexico Border, including top ports of entry, some of
14 the key statistics that anchor the region. And the fourth
15 slide, which is the next one in this first sequence,
16 contains the map overview of the region and the key
17 statistics about the system.

18 So this is intended to introduce the plan, to
19 walk through the goals, the overview, and to set the stage
20 for building into some of the additional information on
21 the economic importance and the project recommendations.

22 Are there any key messages, as you've glanced
23 through this quickly, granted, and as we were walking
24 through the executive summary material, that you think
25 needs to be elevated in this overview section?

1 MR. ZAPATA: Donald, this is David Zapata, SOS
2 office.

3 MR. LUDLOW: Sure.

4 MR. ZAPATA: I just wanted to say a quick
5 comment and just for the members' consideration. I will
6 request if you guys have any questions, just like Donald
7 said, to please comments, questions, please send them over
8 this review because those will be very, very helpful for
9 both Caroline and Secretary's preparation for presentation
10 to the Commission.

11 So keep that in mind as we move forward. And
12 if you have any comments or questions over these next few
13 slides, please share them with us, because we can make
14 note of that and that way we'll make a much better
15 presentation for the Commission next week. So I just
16 wanted to put that in for everyone's consideration. Thank
17 you.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Sure. Thank you, David.

19 All right. Well, if we don't have any
20 immediate questions, let's go into the next section. The
21 next section is two slides, and it explains the economic
22 importance of the border, summarizing the importance of
23 people movements, including the GDP impact of people
24 movements, and also the next slide is the GDP impact of
25 goods movements.

1 We heard earlier from Mayor Saenz. I think it
2 may be helpful for the Secretary of State and TxDOT to
3 consider Mayor Saenz's point earlier on the people
4 movement, on emphasizing tourism, as well as some of the
5 other things we pointed out.

6 Are there any other key messages that should be
7 elevated to the Commission on the economic importance of
8 border movement for people or for goods?

9 (No response.)

10 SECY. HUGHS: Secretary or Caroline, are there
11 any specific prompts here or should we keep moving?

12 MS. MAYS: Donald, I think we can keep
13 moving. But I think to David Zapata's point, BTAC, this
14 is your chance to help us with the narrative, so that's
15 what we're asking for here. But you can continue moving
16 forward if there are no comments, Donald.

17 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you.

18 So the next two slides are focused on the
19 stakeholder involvement in the development of the plan,
20 and you've seen this graphic before. This basically
21 demonstrates the organization of the stakeholder
22 involvement and provides some key statistics about the
23 numbers of different groups involved and the number of
24 meetings and the extent of that engagement. I think this
25 is also a key place to really emphasize the point that

1 came up earlier about the private sector involvement in
2 the development of the plan.

3 The following slide presents the map of the
4 United States, demonstrating the extent of U.S. and Mexico
5 involvement and another opportunity to emphasize the broad
6 binational cooperation.

7 Any comments on the stakeholder portion?

8 MR. ZAPATA: Donald, this is David again.

9 Just one question on the previous slide.

10 MR. LUDLOW: Sure.

11 MR. ZAPATA: Just for clarity, I saw it listed
12 five meetings with border states. Just for clarity, we
13 only have four border states, so does that refer to a
14 meeting -- we had a meeting twice in one border state, or
15 is that referring to something else?

16 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. Stephanie or Alejandro, do
17 you have any clarification on that point from David?

18 MR. SOLIS: You're right, David. We're listing
19 twice the meetings with Tamaulipas. We had two meetings
20 with them and one with the rest of the border states.

21 MR. ZAPATA: Got it.

22 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you.

23 MR. VALE: Did you meet twice with Tamaulipas,
24 both in the Valley and in Laredo, so that's four meetings,
25 two and two?

1 MS. MAYS: No. We had -- there were kind of
2 several meetings that were going on. There was one that
3 we had the Secretary of State facilitating those meetings
4 but prior to that -- we had met with Tamaulipas prior to
5 that on the project information prior to the meeting we
6 had with the Secretary of State.

7 So that's why it shows five meetings, because
8 we had an additional meeting with Tamaulipas.

9 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thanks, David. Thank you,
10 Sam.

11 The next series of slides in the Transportation
12 Commission presentation present the past, present, and
13 future socioeconomic indicators: climate, population and
14 income, and making some of the key points about the
15 dynamic nature of the border region.

16 The next slides go into detail --

17 MS. MAYS: Donald, there are comments in the
18 chat box. I think it was on the economic -- Gerry has
19 comments, I think it was on the economic influence of the
20 border.

21 It says that it's important for Secretary Hughs
22 to emphasize how border communities are economically
23 dependent on each other. Most of us say that we are one
24 community in two countries. So that's, I think, a
25 previous slide.

1 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Thank you very much. I
2 think Gerry is providing you and the Secretary with some
3 good talking points, Caroline.

4 MS. MAYS: Yes.

5 MR. LUDLOW: And it goes on to
6 elaborate that -- this goes to the point that the border
7 closures or limitations for any reason hurt the movement
8 of people and eventually goods, getting back to Mayor
9 Saenz's comment. So thank you for those great talking
10 points. I'm sure that's very helpful.

11 All right, moving forward here, slides 19 and
12 20 are about moving people. They summarize the recent
13 trends, including the increase in bicycle and pedestrian
14 crossings, the decrease in personal vehicle crossings.
15 Slide 20 summarizes the future outlook for all the modes
16 for buses -- actually, let's go to the next slide,
17 please -- so summarizes the future for all modes on the
18 passenger side.

19 Similarly, slides 21 and 22 summarize the
20 recent and future trajectory for goods movement,
21 indicating the 112 percent recent growth in commercial
22 vehicles, the high predicted growth in the future.
23 Similarly on the next slide, the trend line for rail, the
24 tremendous growth recently, continued significant growth
25 into the future.

1 And then the last slide in this series, on the
2 next slide, provides this economic snapshot which we
3 summarized in the executive summary with the connections,
4 deep connections to the GDP of states both along the two
5 countries' respective borders as well as in the interior
6 of both nations.

7 So just quickly, that concludes the background
8 slides that Caroline and the Secretary will go into more
9 detail on the border past, present, and future on
10 socioeconomics, people and on goods movement.

11 Are there any themes or points that need to be
12 elevated or that the BTAC would like to suggest for
13 inclusion here?

14 MR. VALE: This is Sam. I think it's very
15 important that we've got to look at the areas between
16 major points that the infrastructure, the highways are
17 going to be affecting. They will be beneficial even if,
18 say, a rural community couldn't justify it on its own but
19 by being on a corridor, they will get improved
20 transportation infrastructure.

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

22 Caroline, does that make sense?

23 MS. MAYS: Yes, absolutely. And again, that's
24 part of the narrative.

25 MR. VALE: What you've got is you've got a lot

1 of legislators that represent those areas and so they have
2 to be understanding this.

3 MS. MAYS: Yes.

4 MR. SCHWEBEL: I was also going to add -- this
5 is Gerry Schwebel -- and I know we had the discussion in a
6 couple of the BNSRC meetings, and I don't know if we're
7 going to incorporate that somewhere in this
8 presentation. We kind of, we didn't forget or fail to
9 include, but how we track the containers, the tonnage and
10 we talked about Houston, as an example, that they have the
11 super tankers.

12 All these seaports are going to be doing all
13 this dredging to accommodate super tankers to come in.
14 That means more containers coming in from Texas ports, as
15 well as containers coming in from Mexican ports that
16 connect to the corridor and that lead to Texas.

17 So I just want to make sure we don't forget to
18 kind of present that picture that we're not just talking
19 about trucks, we're talking about containers that are on
20 railcars and containers that actually do get on trucks as
21 well as an increase in volume of future flow of trade and
22 transportation challenges.

23 MS. MAYS: Yeah, and then, Gerry, we did hear
24 you loud and clear the other day and what the team is
25 doing, they're trying to uncover that. The challenge is

1 that the way the data is collected and presented -- on the
2 maritime side they use TEUs, but on the border crossing
3 side they use railcars and they use the trucks and then
4 they use tonnage.

5 And so that's kind of the challenge there to
6 try to marry the two, because the way they are collected
7 and it kind of looks like they're a little bit
8 different. Because a container comes from the Port of
9 Houston and it gets to a railcar that crosses the border
10 or vice versa, it becomes a railcar, a rail container.
11 And then if it's on a truck, that is just counted as a
12 truck and instead of TEUs now it becomes kind of tonnage
13 and then value.

14 So that's kind of the thing there. So the team
15 is trying to see if that's even feasible but chances are
16 it will not be feasible.

17 For instance, Port of Brownsville, there's a
18 lot of trucks and containers that come through the Port of
19 Brownsville. But you know, it gets on a truck, but once
20 it gets on a truck it's no longer a TEU when it crosses
21 the border. So that's the difference there.

22 But we're looking into it and seeing if there's
23 something that can be done, but we'll let you know.

24 MR. SCHWEBEL: Thank you, Caroline. I think it
25 goes to my point and I think to Sam's point that

1 eventually when we're looking at going out there and
2 lobbying for whatever, whether it's local level or county
3 or even at the state level or even at the federal level,
4 that we make our representatives aware or the key
5 committee members aware that, hey, this plan goes beyond
6 just trucks and railcars. It goes to the total volume and
7 weight. A crane that is probably -- people do not
8 understand and clearly all of these other factors that are
9 involved.

10 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you very much.

11 MR. VALE: It's called the economy. It's based
12 on that.

13 MR. GARCIA: This is Josue. And you know, I
14 think this presentation is to the TxDOT commissioners so
15 it needs to be understood by them, which I know that they
16 do, but you know, it needs to resonate in how they accept
17 this proposal.

18 MS. MAYS: Yes. And, you know, quickly to
19 Gerry's point, I know we have our railroad friends here
20 from BNSF or UP and also KCS, you guys kind of want to
21 maybe comment a little bit about, you know, the railcar
22 component. I know you guys do some maritime stuff as
23 well. I don't want to put you guys on the spot.

24 MR. ERDMAN: Well, Caroline, this is Warren
25 Erdman at Kansas City Southern.

1 I think the way you describe it is accurate.
2 Certainly we move a lot of containers over the border and
3 I believe the way it's been referred to and described is
4 accurate. I don't know if there might be a specific
5 question that you'd like answered.

6 MS. MAYS: No. It was just to Gerry's comment
7 about TEUs, you know, talked about earlier from the
8 maritime perspective that's how they track the movement of
9 cargo. But I was telling him that once it gets, let's
10 say, from the Port of Houston and it goes on rail, you
11 know, it's measured or tracked differently than maritime
12 does once it gets on rail. So I think that's what I was
13 asking.

14 MR. SCHWEBEL: I was just going to say, I think
15 it's ironic that as I speak Warren's train is going by my
16 office right now with double stacking containers, you
17 know. That's two containers on top of one railcar.

18 But all I'm saying is that if you count the
19 number of railcars but if it's got two containers on it, a
20 double stack, or if you've got a truck that's got a Bobcat
21 on it, you know. That's what I'm saying is, it's a
22 constant education of our readers, what we're trying to --
23 the message that we're trying to convey. As Sam said,
24 it's just the total economy moves through Texas. There's
25 just no other way of describing it.

1 MS. MAYS: Gerry, the double stack, that's
2 counted. Both of those are counted -- and my railroad
3 friends can attest to that. Both of those are counted.

4 MR. ERDMAN: Yes.

5 MS. MAYS: Okay. Donald, we can keep moving.

6 MR. LUDLOW: All right, let's keep moving.

7 So the next section introduces the issues and
8 needs. You've seen all of this before. I think this
9 summarizes it well. The following two slides present the
10 border crossing times, and we've had extensive discussion
11 today about this, and I think the proposal would be to
12 make sure that the changes that we'd make in the executive
13 summary are reflected here.

14 The next slide summarizes the impact of border
15 delays and congestion economically, and this is also
16 consistent with the executive summary, making the point
17 that really if nothing is done this has a dramatic
18 negative impact. But if the policy, program and project
19 recommendations are implemented and advanced, this story
20 could be different, very different, and the economic
21 competitiveness could be maintained and enhanced.

22 Are there any questions or comments on this
23 kind of introductory section to the issues and the needs,
24 highlighting the wait times, especially the crossing
25 times, and their impact?

1 (No response.)

2 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. I think we went into this
3 in some detail today, so why don't we move to the policy
4 recommendations section.

5 So this first slide introduces the key policy
6 recommendations by category. The next slide introduces
7 select program recommendations. Of course, there's the
8 full 182, but these are the ones that we've discussed with
9 you and the other BNSRC committees as the ones to really
10 highlight.

11 Are there any questions or comments or
12 suggestions on the way to present this or any key messages
13 for policy or program recommendations before we move into
14 projects?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. Moving into the project
17 recommendations.

18 MS. MAYS: Donald, I think what I'll ask BTAC
19 is, there's a lot of policy recommendations. What would,
20 you know, they want us to hone in in the message to the
21 Commission? If I were to ask out of the 22, you know,
22 what are your top three or five?

23 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. Can we back up one slide?

24 MS. MAYS: On the policies. Same with programs
25 as well. You know, what are kind of like your top three

1 or five, you know, from your perspective, or at least the
2 top two of each of these.

3 We have system policies, we have border
4 crossings and we have corridors. If there were two on
5 each of these that you absolutely would like the
6 Commission to hear or look into and think that maybe they
7 have a role to play in, what would they be?

8 MR. VALE: But Caroline, it has to be what
9 would affect the greatest number of people in the
10 legislature so that they can provide the funds to the
11 recommendations of the TxDOT Commission. That is, to me,
12 the most important thing that we do.

13 MS. MAYS: Okay. What would that be? So let's
14 just take corridors where TxDOT has a role to play. We
15 have several here. We have system capacity operations, we
16 have connectivity, of course, the last mile of our
17 roadways, you know, connectivity between border crossings
18 and regions. There's roadway safety, you know. So of
19 those, which ones would you like if you were to pick, you
20 know, what to emphasize?

21 MR. VALE: I think the -- well, the corridors
22 affect everything. They affect all the people in Texas.
23 They affect the crossing points, the ports of entry, all
24 of that. If you have to highlight something for the State
25 of Texas economy, it's going to be driven by corridors.

1 MS. MAYS: I agree, I totally agree. So that's
2 why I'm trying to pin you guys on how do we frame that.

3 MR. SCHWEBEL: You know, my recommendation
4 would be that we start off with economic competitiveness,
5 mobility reliability, and Texas-Mexico
6 coordination/collaboration.

7 MR. VALE: That's a good way to put it. It's
8 still a corridor.

9 MS. MAYS: Gerry, that's on the system-wide
10 policies, so now let's do border crossing and corridor.
11 The border crossings, which two or three?

12 MR. SCHWEBEL: Mobility and safety, perhaps
13 security because security is such a critical issue on
14 mobility, good or bad.

15 MS. MAYS: Okay. You guys talking about border
16 wait times, is that something that we want to highlight?
17 A lot of discussion on border delays, border wait times.
18 That's --

19 MR. ZAPATA: Caroline, this is David. I guess
20 I'm curious to see whether members may agree the
21 importance of mobility reliability, operational
22 efficiency, will that cover the importance of processes at
23 the border that influence the crossing time?

24 MS. MAYS: Yeah. That's the same thing I was
25 trying to ask and turn them on since we had a lively

1 discussion on border delays and border wait times.

2 MR. SCHWEBEL: I'm just saying that mobility
3 reliability, that I would add operational
4 efficiency/system capacity.

5 MS. MAYS: Okay. Any other thoughts from any
6 other members?

7 MAYOR SAENZ: Caroline, this is Mayor Saenz. I
8 agree with all of that, but ultimately I think it's the
9 cost to the consumer, the inefficiencies, the lack of
10 fluidity will eventually cost someone their time and as
11 far as the goods, simply because it's taking too long to
12 be transported. But I think it's reflected somewhere in
13 there. I just want to make that point that, you know,
14 ultimately the consumer pays for all of this.

15 MS. MAYS: Yes. Okay, great.

16 Donald, you want to go to the programs?

17 MR. LUDLOW: Sure. Let's go to the programs
18 next and discuss this similarly. Is there anything that
19 really jumps to the surface here in terms of the key
20 programs that should be emphasized?

21 And again, the programs are a step below the
22 policies in terms of their depth. These are kind of
23 specific actions typically requiring partnerships to be
24 able to advance specific initiatives. Is there anything
25 in here?

1 For example, we heard a lot about assessing
2 connectivity issues, especially connecting border
3 crossings within the United States and in Mexico. Is
4 there anything else in here or is this list largely
5 reflective of the things that are already priorities?

6 MR. VALE: You know, when you're talking about
7 trucks, I think you need to get John Esparza to tell us a
8 lot, or at least to share what are the things that are
9 affecting the industry that create additional costs to the
10 consumers, that kind of stuff, and the same thing with the
11 railroads.

12 MR. ESPARZA: Sam, thank you. And I'll share,
13 you know, we've spent quite a bit of time ensuring that
14 there's a lot of those inclusions in there. And based on
15 what we've discussed so far, I feel pretty confident that
16 we've got a number of those items -- and I know there's a
17 number of other folks on this group as well that might
18 even identify other areas that we haven't.

19 But I'm impressed with the thoroughness of how
20 we've gone through and executed -- not just on the
21 recommendations but very diligently found a lot of items
22 that are impacting everybody and certainly for the
23 trucking industry as well.

24 MR. LUDLOW: Okay, great. Any other thoughts
25 or comments here? I appreciate your comments too, John.

1 MR. SCHWEBEL: This is Gerry. Under programs
2 and border crossings, I'm just wondering if -- I like to
3 inform and educate stakeholders, but I want to make sure
4 that when we're talking about the stakeholders, you know,
5 all stakeholders, because you've got private and public
6 stakeholders. You know, it's a constant education of our
7 public city council members and the MPOs and counties.

8 You know, it's a constant education. We in the
9 private sectors have to make sure that they're also
10 informed, because a lot of decisions are made at the local
11 and county level as well that feed up to the state, and
12 vice versa. I don't know if we can distinguish that, and
13 I welcome input from others.

14 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah -- sorry, go ahead, Caroline.

15 MS. MAYS: No, I was just going to say
16 absolutely, Gerry. I think the whole stakeholder
17 engagement -- and you said all stakeholders.

18 If you all remember, maybe almost three years
19 ago when you guys were doing the blueprint, that was a key
20 area that you guys identified as a key strategic area that
21 we really need to focus on. And I think with the Border
22 Master Plan, it still continues to highlight that. That's
23 a key area that needs to be addressed, and there's kind of
24 several areas.

25 You know, engaging the public sector in terms

1 of investing in the border crossing and engaging the
2 private sector as well, but also the kind of educational
3 piece, educating all users and way beyond the border. So
4 this is like kind of a big area that I think we need to
5 explore more on how best to do that education but also to
6 facilitate better decision-making, you know, through
7 education and awareness.

8 MR. VALE: You know, Caroline, once the TxDOT
9 Commission has approved the master plan, whatever it is
10 that they approve, I think that we can spend an entire
11 meeting trying to go over the different types of
12 educational efforts, because they are so multi-faceted and
13 they touch so many industries from contractors to trucking
14 companies to the mom-and-pop stores. All of those are
15 affected by how we educate both the state and federal
16 entities and work through our friends on the primary
17 source of revenue which is the federal government.

18 MS. MAYS: No, absolutely, because you're
19 right. And that's why I said this is a much broader issue
20 that I think it's going to be part of what BTAC moves
21 forward with helping us facilitate.

22 Because you have got the users of the system
23 both on the people side but also on the trade side, then
24 you've got the infrastructure providers -- a lot of you
25 are infrastructure providers, us and federal level. But

1 then there's the regulatory piece, and you have people
2 that are regulating or making policies on the border that
3 have to be educated and also engaged in those. And then
4 there's just the outsiders -- you know, when I say
5 outsiders, the people that don't live at the border that
6 are not really involved in the border and how that
7 impacts -- if I'm in Iowa, you know, how the Texas-Mexico
8 Border impacts me.

9 So a lot of that will come into play, you're
10 absolutely right. It's very complex. It's very multi-
11 faceted, and it will be interesting to see, you know, how
12 BTAC and all the other stakeholders, you know, help us to
13 facilitate that key issue. And then also, it relates to
14 collaboration and the coordination that Gerry mentioned
15 earlier, as well.

16 MR. VALE: The players on the legislative side
17 are constantly changing, so it's not like we're repeating
18 ourselves. Many times, it's new. I can remember a little
19 over a year ago, Caroline, you and Gerry and several of us
20 were testifying before a House committee meeting in
21 Laredo.

22 They were clueless as to what we're talking
23 about here. We can talk to each other pretty well. They
24 had no idea about what we're talking about.

25 MS. MAYS: Yeah. And again, I think that's

1 what we all have to work collectively to be proactive in
2 educating the different facets of, you know, the
3 stakeholders that we're going to be targeting.

4 Okay. Any other comments from BTAC on the
5 programs?

6 (No response.)

7 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. The next three slides
8 summarize the project recommendations, and we'll go on to
9 those just for a moment each. This one summarizes total
10 project recommendations, the next one is by time frame,
11 and the last one is by geography and time frame.

12 So are there any key points here that the BTAC
13 would like to make, any key messages that need to really
14 rise to the surface on the project recommendations,
15 besides the fact that there's more -- around three-
16 quarters of them are unfunded?

17 (No response.)

18 MR. LUDLOW: All right. So going once. If
19 not, we'll move to this last piece, and this is a segue
20 into our final discussion which we will lead into in just
21 a moment.

22 But the idea here is, what are the key points
23 for advancing the Border Master Plan and advancing border
24 transportation infrastructure in general, and again, we
25 mentioned this in the executive summary: strengthening

1 the partnerships, engaging BTAC in implementation of
2 recommendations, pivoting stakeholders from planning to
3 implementation.

4 MR. CALVO: Hey, Donald, this is Eduardo
5 here. I think this goes to the same comment that I made
6 for the last page of the executive summary.

7 If this is the last slide, you know, this
8 really should be -- this is a punchline, and especially if
9 we are presenting this to the Commission, and really the
10 Commission in this case, you know, they deal mostly with
11 funding for projects. Right?

12 So for this particular audience, I think we
13 need a stronger message to say that whether it's a program
14 or a project, at the end of the day we need funding. And
15 you know, for all the reasons that we have explained and
16 all that, the importance of the border and all the trade
17 and the movement of people and goods and all that, but at
18 the end of the day it's funding.

19 So should we have a stronger punchline saying,
20 hey, at the end of the day, you guys need to put money
21 into the border projects?

22 MR. LUDLOW: I think that's a really good
23 point, Eduardo. Do others have any similar reaction?

24 MR. VALE: I would say that he is 150 percent
25 correct.

1 (Simultaneous discussion.)

2 MR. CORONADO: -- this is David. Sorry -- I
3 think that he is absolutely right. I think that that
4 probably has to made, that statement, right at the onset,
5 you know, from the very beginning about the needs that we
6 have in the border communities, perhaps not towards the
7 end. Right? Just lead with that. I think, you know,
8 drive the message across from the get-go.

9 MR. VALE: And it affects every part of Texas.

10 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. So lead with the funding
11 gap that's affecting not only the border region but every
12 part of Texas and close with that same thought and then
13 backing it up with the key story that's in the Border
14 Master Plan. Right?

15 MR. SCHWEBEL: I ditto everyone's comments. I
16 compare this to an opportunity at the very end for the
17 Secretary. To use an analogy, this is a Gordon Gekko
18 moment where you can tell the story that trade, you know,
19 is good -- like what he said, greed is good -- well, trade
20 is good, efficiency of supply chains is good for Texas and
21 for the entire region, North America region. So this is
22 an opportunity for a powerful message.

23 MR. CALVO: And again, those statements here in
24 this slide, I mean, they're -- it's not that they're
25 inaccurate, but, you know, words like strengthening,

1 engaging, pivoting -- like no, show me the money. Yeah, I
2 mean, just phrase it in a nice way. Right?

3 But, you know, after all these strong arguments
4 that were made to them and great data that we're showing
5 about the border reports and all that, you know, the
6 punchline seems a little too vanilla.

7 MR. ALDRETE: Maybe investing, using the word
8 "investing" because maybe that is what is needed.

9 MR. VALE: Money talks, the rest walk.

10 MS. MAYS: So Eduardo, certainly what I think
11 you're suggesting, I think all of you are suggesting is,
12 one, we need to add a funding component here and however
13 those suggestions are put out, kind of in language --
14 because the funding is not just TxDOT. So I think a
15 commitment from all stakeholders to fund and implement the
16 recommendations that are being laid out in the plan. So
17 something to that effect, because broadly the funding is
18 not just TxDOT.

19 You all have, you know, projects that you're
20 funding, the feds on both sides and other stakeholders on
21 both sides, so I think the funding component needs to be a
22 little bit broader, so kind of a commitment to that is a
23 key statement that I think hopefully gets to you guys'
24 point that we need to add that element in this closing
25 slide.

1 MR. CALVO: Yes, and it goes to the point,
2 Caroline, that we were discussing earlier, too, that, you
3 know, we've got multiple audiences. Right? But this one
4 specifically is for the Commission, so I believe -- I'm
5 thinking that the message to the Commission has to be more
6 on funding.

7 Now, if this presentation is prepared for
8 perhaps a member of Congress or more to the federal
9 agencies, yeah, clearly it's funding but maybe it's more
10 geared also towards the policies and help us get CBP put
11 more agents so that we have more inspection booths open
12 and stuff like that. But this one, I think, for the
13 Commission, I think it's more specific on, you know, the
14 message is, we need funding.

15 MR. ERDMAN: Caroline, this is Warren Erdman
16 with Kansas City Southern. I strongly support this
17 suggestion for adding a funding element to the conclusion
18 page.

19 I would just share with everyone that yesterday
20 I was involved in a U.S. Chamber of Commerce meeting where
21 we were discussing their outreach to the Biden
22 administration transition, and in the process of that
23 outreach there was a lot of conversation about a
24 bipartisan infrastructure funding program to come early in
25 the Biden administration, which would be the single

1 biggest source of funding, and that coupled with private
2 sector funding of projects, much as Kansas City Southern
3 is privately funding its own project, it seems to me that
4 there has to be an element of funding from multiple
5 sources -- as, Caroline, you described earlier -- in this
6 closing page.

7 MS. MAYS: Okay. No. Thanks for those
8 comments. And I think, absolutely, that's what I was
9 trying to get at, that especially to implement all the
10 recommendations out of this Border Master Plan, it's going
11 to require a commitment from everybody, all the project
12 sponsors that were identified in the plan. And certainly
13 TxDOT, the Commission knows that on the roadway side,
14 that's where TxDOT has jurisdiction and plays a role in
15 it.

16 So, you know, any other thoughts? Otherwise,
17 we can go back and kind of craft that message and
18 definitely be able to include another bullet in here on
19 that.

20 MR. ERDMAN: I think it's important to say
21 federal, state, local and private funding sources.

22 MS. MAYS: Yes, absolutely. Because you have a
23 lot of entities involved in this business of providing
24 infrastructure, you know, and operating and maintaining
25 the system. So yeah, it's a full gamut of things, so I

1 think, yes, we will add that.

2 Okay. Any other comments? Donald, do we have
3 anything in the chat box? I don't think so. Okay, we can
4 move on, Donald.

5 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, thank you. This has all
6 been very helpful.

7 So I think, unless there are any other closing
8 comments, I think we're going to skip this next part and
9 move into the discussion of implementation.

10 MS. MAYS: Yes.

11 MR. LUDLOW: All right, sounds good.

12 So during this portion of our discussion today
13 we will be using Mentimeter, so if you have not logged on
14 already, you may want to do that. Go to www.menti.com,
15 and the code is there, 431446.

16 And we're going to ask a series of questions to
17 try to really have a discussion today about where we need
18 to go with implementation, what TxDOT and its partners in
19 the U.S. and Mexico need to do next. So we've been
20 talking a lot today about the messaging of the plan, key
21 findings, key take-aways. The discussion right now is
22 intended to really focus on what are the most important
23 next steps? What are the things that need to happen next?

24 I wanted to start with a question about mainly
25 one thing about this master plan --

1 MS. MAYS: Donald.

2 MR. LUDLOW: Go ahead, Caroline.

3 MS. MAYS: If we can pause a second, I wanted
4 to give Secretary Hughs a chance to -- I know that she's
5 spoken a little bit about this, you know, kind of her
6 vision on this.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Absolutely.

8 MS. MAYS: Secretary.

9 SECY. HUGHS: All right, Caroline. Are you
10 asking me to weigh in on what we should highlight?

11 MS. MAYS: Yeah, kind of your vision, because I
12 know you and I have talked about this kind of, what next
13 in terms of once the plan is done. Kind of what does that
14 look like, and taking it to the next level, to kind of
15 give folks the context for that.

16 SECY. HUGHS: Sure. Well, I mean, obviously,
17 you know, we've talked about how this group, the work that
18 we do starting in the new year will be important to
19 identify how to best approach highlighting this to
20 policymakers and business leaders. But my vision is that
21 we will hopefully travel and reach out and really have
22 meetings with these key stakeholders to make sure that the
23 plan is in front of them, is very specifically pointed out
24 and addressed, because sometimes just receiving a copy
25 doesn't quite get us where we need to be.

1 And I think it will be very important to get
2 business leaders, everyone else at the table. So as soon
3 as we're able to travel, or if not, then continuing to do
4 meetings like the ones we've had with the governors in the
5 Mexican states and other policymakers I think will be key.

6 But I don't know if you're wanting me to share
7 more specifics than that at this point, but I think having
8 some kind of a group within this group that continues with
9 the work, much like these meetings that you've been having
10 regionally to put the report together, I think just as
11 important we need to make sure we have those meetings
12 after the report is concluded.

13 And to Sam's point and some of the other
14 comments that were made, the legislators whose
15 constituents will be impacted by this, whether they're
16 along the border or not, I think it's very important that
17 that story be told as well.

18 MS. MAYS: Thank you so much, Secretary, for
19 those insights. And certainly that's in line with what
20 we're trying to present today or have a discussion is,
21 we're nearing the completion of the plan and kind of what
22 next, to start thinking about how we go about advancing or
23 realizing the recommendations of the plan that you all
24 have talked a lot about. How do you move this from a plan
25 to actual tangible actionable items and time frames for

1 doing that? So that's what we're trying to do here, and
2 Donald will lead this discussion.

3 Donald, please go ahead. And we'll expand the
4 interactive, so you can do Menti but also you can do like
5 we've done before, verbal comments as well. Thank you.
6 Donald, you might be on mute.

7 MR. LUDLOW: I was on mute. Thank you.

8 So this is an opportunity, if there's one
9 thing, you know, if you were in Washington, D.C., Austin,
10 Mexico City, Chihuahua, what's the one thing you would
11 want policy or business leaders in the U.S. and Mexico to
12 know about the Border Master Plan, about the challenges
13 that we're facing? So we'll give everyone a moment here
14 to kind of jump in.

15 So economic competitiveness and connectivity on
16 the border; the wait times; opportunities for social and
17 intellectual intercultural development; community ties;
18 efficiency; funding, so show me the money, as Eduardo
19 said; dedicated commitment to increasing and improving
20 streams of revenue, so again more on the money.

21 Are there other thoughts or comments here? The
22 reason why we wanted to ask this question first is because
23 some of the subsequent questions are really focused on the
24 actions needed to implement what's in the Border Master
25 Plan, so just wanted to highlight some of the things you

1 thought were most important. Well-coordinated investment
2 efforts.

3 So some of the key themes here: funding,
4 coordination, efficiency, overcoming some of the
5 impediments on the wait times and really making sure that
6 the border story is told, which is what's highlighted in
7 the yellow box. Scale and importance of the border. And
8 again, this also helps us go back and make sure we're
9 integrating any key messages in the executive summary and
10 the Transportation Commission PowerPoint as well.

11 Very good. Alejandro, did you have any follow-
12 up questions you wanted to ask here to prompt any more
13 discussion?

14 MR. SOLIS: No. I think that it revolves
15 around the topics that we heard from the committee earlier
16 today. It's about the economy, the importance of the
17 border, telling that story, and then, of course, backing
18 it up with the funding that is needed. So I think that
19 that is kind of the overarching topic here.

20 MR. LUDLOW: Okay.

21 MS. MAYS: Yeah. And again, really here we're
22 looking for this broad, you know, statement from committee
23 members so we can again articulate the message moving
24 forward, you know, as Secretary mentioned, really
25 communicating this later, but also now as we get to the

1 final stages of the plan.

2 Questions are going to be asked, you know, what
3 is the ask, you know, policymakers, or even like the
4 Commission, what's the ask for the Commission. So I think
5 some of the statements can help. Sam, to your point,
6 what's the ask of the legislators and being able to
7 articulate a lot of things you guys are highlighting right
8 now, it's really, really helpful, tremendously helpful.

9 MR. LUDLOW: Very good. All of this is
10 important and helps us frame this going forward. Is there
11 anything else? Secretary Hughs, do you have anything else
12 to add before we move on to the next one?

13 SECY. HUGHS: I don't. Thank you.

14 MR. LUDLOW: All right. So short-term
15 investments need to address current needs. So we're going
16 to get into the short-term investments here in just a
17 moment.

18 So we first talked about what's the most
19 important thing you would tell somebody, including a
20 business or a policy leader, about what we've done, about
21 what BTAC has done in developing this Border Master Plan.
22 Let's think ahead into the future just a little bit, not
23 too far ahead in the future, but let's maybe think about
24 2025-2026.

25 Let's say that we've had five years to work on

1 BTMP recommendations. Putting on your thinking caps, your
2 creative visioning here, what should the border
3 transportation system ideally look like in five years?
4 What are the conditions and outcomes that we would want to
5 see now and just a few years down the road?

6 And in a moment, we're going to back into some
7 of those actions, but wanted you to kind of envision what
8 does it look like? What are its characteristics in five
9 years ideally if we all collectively have done a good job
10 in implementing this and making the key arguments for the
11 things that are needed?

12 So we've got sustainability, best managed and
13 operated border infrastructure that increases through-put,
14 better fluidity. Great. This is all excellent. We're
15 looking for some of these kind of aspirational visions of
16 what ideally would support commerce and people movement
17 the best in the future. Modern, efficient, well-
18 connected, dignified.

19 And if anybody would like to elaborate on their
20 comments, that would be fantastic as well.

21 MR. SOLIS: Donald, what I was going to suggest
22 is maybe if operating, really more the sustainability.
23 Sustainability has many different aspects, so if there's
24 any one in particular that you guys would like to
25 highlight, I think that would be very useful for our

1 purposes.

2 MR. CALVO: Donald, this is Eduardo. It seems
3 like, you know, five years is like tomorrow. I mean, five
4 years is a very, very short period of time, so I think the
5 question really for five years is, you know, what are the
6 things that we can do right now that can give us a big
7 benefit in the short term. Right?

8 Because if we're thinking about, you know, big
9 infrastructure projects, you know, like build a new bridge
10 or expand a bridge, you know, those projects take so long
11 to develop and build and all that, so that's beyond the
12 five years. So I'm thinking that the answer to the
13 question has to do more with over a short term it should
14 be more like, you know, make sure that all the inspection
15 booths are open, you know, that we implement better
16 coordinated strategies to make the inspections of people
17 and trucks and stuff and planes and all that, make it
18 faster, like with technology.

19 What are some of the things that we can
20 implement relatively quickly? There's a lot of technology
21 that already exists today but it's more the political will
22 of the federal agencies on both sides to implement them.

23 And maybe I'm not, you know, catching or
24 hearing the question, but I don't necessarily see the
25 infrastructure in five years because, again, it takes so

1 long to develop these projects. However, for the same
2 reason that it takes so long we have to get them funded
3 today because the lead time is long.

4 So maybe one of the things that we need to see
5 over the next five years is a sustainable funding
6 mechanism that allows us to start developing those
7 projects.

8 MR. VALE: You know, Eduardo, this is Sam. One
9 of the things that a lot of people seem to pass over too
10 often is that the greatest delays are not caused by
11 infrastructure but rather the federal process on both
12 sides.

13 If you put a number to them, you'll see how
14 much that is relative to the infrastructure. Of course
15 you need more infrastructure but you need more efficient
16 federal processes. That's why things like unified cargo
17 processing, all of those simplifications in working
18 together, thinking of the border as one border but one
19 port also, both sides need to work as one.

20 MS. MAYS: Yeah. And so if I can go back to
21 Eduardo's comments, and I think, Donald, what he's asking
22 for is maybe we might come to cover that in the next set
23 of questions, in terms of, you know, what are some of this
24 low-hanging fruit that can be done to effect change or
25 improve the border in the next five years.

1 MR. LUDLOW: Right. And I think maybe this
2 question, if we added the words: After implementing the
3 short-term BTMP recommendations, what should the border
4 transportation system ideally look like in five years? So
5 yeah, this is very much focused on what could be done in
6 the near term.

7 We have another question later on about the far
8 longer term future. I think many of these questions are
9 in line with that, including some of these comments
10 including related to improving the management and
11 technology and funding for the border region.

12 And Eduardo, if you wanted to add anything on
13 operations, keeping lanes open, those kinds of things,
14 those are all really important too, but we will be getting
15 into that in a little bit more detail in the subsequent
16 slides.

17 The take-away here, as I look at this, is that
18 a lot of these comments are related to making improvements
19 to efficiency, fluidity, funding, connectivity, you know,
20 in the near term, within the bounds of what TxDOT and its
21 partners are able to do under a short time period.

22 Are there other comments or questions here, or
23 thoughts?

24 (No response.)

25 MR. LUDLOW: Alejandro prompted whoever said

1 "sustainable" to elaborate. If anybody would like to
2 elaborate on any of these, "sustainable" or "dignified," I
3 think that would be very helpful if you're willing to
4 chime in.

5 MS. MAYS: There's a comment from Pete that
6 operation improvements by federal agencies generally cost
7 a lot less than building roadway infrastructure. So
8 certainly in the short term focusing on some of those
9 operational improvements, process improvements that Sam
10 continues to highlight is important, as well as, you know,
11 just management of existing infrastructure to maximize the
12 capacity that we have.

13 So this is some of the things to think of in
14 short term. I think some of it is highlighted here,
15 Donald.

16 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, I think the comment in the
17 top middle highlighted with the yellow border is in line
18 with Pete's comment: best managed and operated border
19 infrastructure that increases through-put supports
20 continued economic competitiveness. So I think a lot of
21 this in the near term vision is really about a border that
22 operates well, really well.

23 MR. VALE: And then define what that actually
24 means. That's a big, big powerful statement but you're
25 going to have to break it down underneath somewhere of

1 what does that really mean: best managed and operated
2 border infrastructure. Well, that's a complicated
3 statement right there. It's correct, but it's
4 complicated.

5 MS. MAYS: Yeah, certainly. This again gives
6 us ideas of what the thought process of the committee is.

7 Donald, for interests of time, let's move to
8 the other questions because I think we still have a lot
9 more to get.

10 MR. LUDLOW: Very good. Thank you for the
11 feedback on this first one. So let's move ahead to the
12 next.

13 So here we have the opportunity to do some
14 ranking and we're going to start with the policies. We
15 did a little bit of this before, and there's three
16 questions on policies.

17 The first one is kind of ranking the system-
18 wide policies, and thank you, Kelli or Hannah, for putting
19 that up. This kind of puts it into context. So we've got
20 our system-wide policies, we've got our border crossing
21 policies, and our corridor policies, and just wanted to
22 get your idea in terms of ranking those for
23 implementation, how should these be --

24 MR. VALE: Well, I don't like the word ranking.
25 I would say some other word than ranking.

1 MS. MAYS: Prioritized.

2 MR. VALE: Prioritized, okay.

3 MS. MAYS: So really the goal is here is to
4 gauge you all in terms of priority, you know, in terms of
5 implementation, what are some of the things that bubble
6 up. So we want to get kind of an idea as we start moving
7 into implementation mode to see which areas of this policy
8 recommendations we should really focus on, and then kind
9 of peeling the onion and engaging you come next year and
10 engaging the border stakeholders, as we mentioned earlier,
11 both public and private.

12 So we just wanted to get that. And we're going
13 to ask the BNSRCs and others kind of similar things so we
14 can, again, start, you know, framing and focusing on some
15 of the key priority areas.

16 So Donald, we opened the Menti?

17 MR. LUDLOW: Yes, it should be available,
18 should be able to input. And maybe we could move the
19 other graph -- this slide off, so we can see the --

20 MS. MAYS: And then again, I failed to mention
21 earlier, the Menti is exclusively for BTAC members. If
22 you're not a member, please do not participate in the
23 Menti, because again, it's the committee input that is
24 required right now. If your name wasn't called and you're
25 not on the committee, please do not do that. Thank you.

1 MR. LUDLOW: All right. Well, we appreciate
2 you providing input here. This looks like it's changing
3 dynamically.

4 MS. MAYS: Yeah. We still need a few more
5 minutes, we only have five now. So if we have -- I think
6 we had over 20 committee members present, so looking for
7 everybody to participate, every single one of you.

8 This is crucial to hear from you all. We've
9 got seven. We still have a lot of you that haven't
10 participated yet.

11 MR. VALE: Do we pick more than one?

12 MS. MAYS: Yeah, you should be able to
13 prioritize it.

14 MR. VALE: Okay.

15 MS. MAYS: If your number one -- you can only
16 pick one number one or one number two, so you've got to go
17 down the list and pick your number one through number
18 eight -- to nine. So might need a little bit more time to
19 allow committee members to go one by one and pick what the
20 rankings -- you know, what their priority areas are.

21 MR. VALE: What if you like the ones that are
22 there?

23 MS. MAYS: That's fine. Then you just pick
24 that as your number one and they stay the way they are.
25 Again, this is just to help us see where you guys' thought

1 processes are in terms of priority areas to focus on.
2 These are policy areas, and certainly you're seeing on the
3 competitiveness, cross-border resiliency popping up
4 because of COVID. We're living COVID today.

5 But also collaboration continues to be the
6 number one issue. So this is consistent with what we had
7 before, but at least we wanted to have this kind of
8 documented so that we have a framework or basis for when
9 we start moving forward with implementing or advancing the
10 recommendations of the plan. We have a place to start.

11 We're about 12. We're still missing a couple of
12 you, so we'll give you another minute or two, committee
13 members. There's a lot of you present, please
14 participate. We've got 13, still missing a lot.

15 (Pause.)

16 SECY. HUGHS: Caroline, will you remind me if I
17 get a vote?

18 MS. MAYS: Yeah, in this case you can. Yeah,
19 you can. This is, again, just dialogue. Yes, Secretary,
20 absolutely.

21 Sam, you're laughing.

22 MR. SCHWEBEL: That's the one that counts the
23 most.

24 MR. VALE: I was going to say, you really can't
25 say no.

1 (General laughter.)

2 MS. MAYS: Okay, Donald, maybe another 30
3 seconds, then we'll move to the next question. But if you
4 want to kind of summarize this, and I think it's fairly
5 consistent with what we've heard throughout the BTMP
6 process.

7 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, absolutely. So we had some
8 early vacillation between coordination, collaboration,
9 cooperation, and a few other issues, including economic
10 competitiveness. But ultimately, it's this idea of
11 continued collaboration that is at the top of the heap for
12 system-wide policies in the near term.

13 Cross-border resiliency, technologies, economic
14 competitiveness are all really critical. And this largely
15 reflects the kind of ranking that the BTAC has done in the
16 past on the weighting for some of the prioritization and
17 goal-setting as well. So we appreciate this.

18 I think we probably need to move on.

19 MS. MAYS: Yes. Thank you.

20 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you. So the next question
21 is similar. This one is basically for the most important
22 priorities to implement for the short term for border
23 crossing policies, so specifically related to border
24 crossing, and there aren't as many in this particular
25 category so this may not take quite as much time. Please

1 go ahead and vote on your preferences here.

2 MS. MAYS: And then similar to the other one,
3 you know, your priority one, two, three and four on just
4 this. Again, very specific to border crossings.

5 (Pause.)

6 MS. MAYS: Still need more of you. I think the
7 last one we had 14 or 15 so we're getting the numbers
8 up. Good job.

9 SECY. HUGHS: Do we want to talk about, maybe
10 while we're thinking about it, you know, to the extent
11 that you've identified that maybe the order present might
12 be the way to go -- kind of how that conclusion was
13 reached or talk a little bit more about operational
14 efficiency versus system capacity. Safety and security is
15 always a challenge to put further down the road, but then
16 in terms of efficiencies in moving things, it makes sense
17 that it does fall lower down in the categories.

18 But I wonder if a little discussion about that
19 might be a little helpful while we wait for more people to
20 weigh in.

21 MS. MAYS: Yeah, absolutely, we can open it up
22 to BTAC members to weigh in on this. But I think the
23 story is a little bit consistent with what we've heard,
24 you know, so far that operational efficiency is more
25 what's happening kind of on the federal compound but also

1 on the corridors as well or highways.

2 And then, you know, system capacity, there's a
3 lot of discussions about expanding existing border
4 crossings, building new ones. And of course, funding
5 becomes part of the whole equation. So it's kind of
6 interesting now, funding has jumped to number two.

7 So anybody wants to comment broadly here, as
8 Secretary mentioned?

9 MR. VALE: Operational efficiency is clearly
10 extremely important -- the hardest thing to control, but
11 it's the most important.

12 MR. ERDMAN: I would add to that that over a
13 five-year horizon it's pretty hard to do meaningful
14 capacity increases unless you're focused on operational
15 efficiency. So in that short time frame, operational
16 efficiency has to be the focus, and over a longer time
17 frame, increasing capacity, and of course, safety and
18 security goes with all of these.

19 MS. MAYS: Yes. Awesome. That's great. Any
20 other comments?

21 MR. LUDLOW: Great. It seems like we're
22 getting to a certain equilibrium point here like we did
23 last time. We've reached 15, so I think we'll go ahead
24 and move on to the next one.

25 And so this is a similar set of

1 prioritization. This time it's focused on corridors. So
2 thinking about anywhere from the last mile section of the
3 corridor out to the longer-distance multimodal corridors
4 that you saw on some of the maps today connecting Texas
5 and Mexico.

6 And one of the questions here, one of the
7 categories is first-to-last mile connectivity versus maybe
8 border crossings and regional connectivity. You have the
9 opportunity to kind of differentiate a little bit
10 depending on your view from the ground.

11 Alejandro, did you want to add anything else
12 here to this discussion or make any notes about any of the
13 policies that are proposed here?

14 MR. SOLIS: Not really, Donald. I think that
15 we'll see how the voting goes and then we can try to look
16 at that once we get a few more hits.

17 MR. LUDLOW: So again, it looks like mobility
18 reliability from the operational standpoint is favored, so
19 far, as kind of the top priority.

20 The policy on connectivity border regions and
21 crossings, this has come up many times in our discussions,
22 and the reference here is to not only connecting U.S. and
23 Mexico but also connecting crossings within the U.S. and
24 within Mexico. That's at least what we had interpreted
25 and intended. Part of that was due to the need for

1 greater resiliency and redundancy, the ability to be able
2 to shift between crossings when needed.

3 Caroline, do you have anything else to add here
4 as the group continues to --

5 MS. MAYS: No. This is, again, consistent with
6 what we've heard. I think this validates a lot of things,
7 so it's really kind of great to hear. Again, open up for
8 any verbal comments if anybody wants to make comments
9 here.

10 We're about 12. We're kind of missing a couple
11 of you, so please, if you can up the number a little bit,
12 that would be great. I think we're at 15 or 17, so we're
13 missing about three people at least. So if you can please
14 provide that.

15 But you know, for the most part, I think it's
16 consistent. Any comments from anybody?

17 I know, Sam, you talked a lot about
18 connectivity between border crossings in the event of some
19 type of disruption. We saw that very clearly when Laredo
20 World Trade a couple of years ago had the tornado hit it,
21 and we needed connectivity to and access to Colombia
22 Bridge.

23 So again, we have real life examples of why
24 that is so important, and like Donald mentioned, both on
25 the Mexican side but also on the Texas side -- U.S. side.

1 SECY. HUGHS: Caroline, this is Ruth Hughs.
2 You know, I think, it was Ed that made the point earlier
3 about whatever order these are in, safety and security are
4 underlying any of the others being able to move forward,
5 and I worry too that sometimes safety and security are
6 oftentimes politically charged in terms of those words and
7 that may not need its own section.

8 So I say that just as a thought or maybe
9 conversation about whether it needs to be maybe embedded
10 in some of these other areas rather than have its own
11 distinct prioritization.

12 MR. VALE: I think that's an excellent point --
13 this is Sam -- and primarily because safety and security,
14 to me safety is like how safe is the infrastructure.
15 Security, I think, can be interpreted in a lot of
16 different ways.

17 And so to me safety is always -- well, we all
18 have to deal with OSHA. We all have to follow the
19 regulations. So that to me is a safety issue in the way
20 we're operating. The security, I think that means protect
21 us from something.

22 MR. ERDMAN: I strongly support the Secretary's
23 observation because safety and security are improved with
24 all of these actions.

25 MS. MAYS: Yeah. So I'll give you guys a

1 little bit of a different twist. You know, TxDOT and both
2 at the federal level, safety is always considered the key
3 core element of our work efforts, although they are
4 embedded in others, but generally highlighted.

5 We have FMCSA on the call today and generally
6 they look at that from a safety perspective. They have
7 the metrics on the safety side. We at TxDOT, safety is
8 one of our core, you know, objectives or strategic goals
9 that we look at it on crashes on our highway system and to
10 be able to address that.

11 I know Commissioner Ryan is here, she's our
12 safety commissioner, and we look at that mission here how
13 we can, you know, reduce crashes and fatalities on our
14 roadways. Railroads as well focus specifically on safety.

15 So that's why we have it highlighted by itself,
16 because we have requirements on the federal side, you
17 know, and the state side to really hone in to safety and
18 see how we address that. You know, on the highway side,
19 there's specific funding just for safety that we have to
20 make sure that we implement those projects and measure the
21 effectiveness of those projects to address safety issues,
22 safety hot spots, et cetera. So that's the only reason
23 that we have it separated here.

24 But yes, if you improve mobility and
25 reliability, if you improve last mile, certainly you're

1 impacting safety and you're improving safety. Because if
2 you go and remove, you know, stoplights and stop signs, et
3 cetera, and widen the roadway, put shoulders, you're
4 improving connectivity, but also you're indirectly or
5 directly improving safety.

6 MR. LUDLOW: All right. Well, Caroline, I
7 think we may be -- was there another comment or question?

8 MR. GARCIA: This is Josue.

9 I think that a lot of the other remaining
10 issues that we talked about was the security and the
11 safety on the Mexican side as commercial and POVs make
12 their way to the border. I think in our earlier
13 discussions when we first started this out, I think that
14 was something that really came out and I think that's why
15 that's there and I think it's very important that we
16 highlight that.

17 MS. MAYS: Absolutely. So thank you.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah. So we have a series of
19 three more here before we get into projects, and these are
20 focused on critical programs. And of course, there were
21 182 programs, and if there's a program that we have not
22 listed, we simply have listed some of the key programs
23 that the BTAC and others have mentioned continuously.

24 So this first piece is about, what are the most
25 critical programs to implement in the short term focused

1 on border crossings. And we're getting into more
2 specifics here, instead of saying mobility and
3 reliability, we're saying expand the use of technology,
4 inform and educate stakeholders on funding
5 opportunities. So these are more tactical in nature than
6 the higher-level policies.

7 So this is an opportunity to prioritize these,
8 and if there's another key program that is perhaps from
9 the list of 182 in the chapter or something else that
10 comes to mind, you can certainly put that in the available
11 space at the bottom. So let's see how this plays out as
12 well.

13 So again, I'll just kind of repeat the ones
14 we're considering right now for border crossing
15 programs. The ones that came up consistently were:
16 expanding the use of technology; informing and enabling
17 the stakeholders on funding and financing; studies to
18 separate commercial passenger and other modal conflicts;
19 and expanding the use of expedited inspection programs.

20 MS. MAYS: Yeah, and again, Donald, I want to
21 make clear to BTAC this was just representative, you know,
22 programs for border crossings, so please feel free to add
23 additional here. We're not saying that this it because we
24 have issues with border delays. That's a key issue. Yes,
25 we talked about expedited inspection but addressing border

1 delays is something that we heard over and over again,
2 especially when it comes to border crossings.

3 You know, Sam, you guys have talked a lot
4 about, you know, hours for border operations and all the
5 other things. Again, unlike the policies where we
6 actually have specifics, this is just a representative
7 sample, and you know, really wanted to kind of gauge you
8 guys on this one.

9 These are not the key ones. I just want to
10 kind of make clear that these are just samples of the
11 programs at this point.

12 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you for clarifying that
13 some, Caroline.

14 And I also mistakenly indicated that you could
15 add an additional program on Mentimeter but that is not
16 possible. If there's something else you think is
17 important, you can click on the category for "Other" and
18 then add a comment in the comment box here on Webex.

19 So Gerry, for example, says, Under "other" for
20 this slide, I would go back to an earlier comment about
21 processing. We have various examples of interrupters or
22 external factors that impact the process that creates
23 border delays.

24 Jake asks, Is it expand or expedite for number
25 2? And it's kind of a play on words here, Jake. The

1 language is close. It's "expand the use of expedited
2 inspection programs." In other words, make those
3 expedited inspection programs more widely available for
4 both commercial vehicles and rail, the supporting
5 facilities and other infrastructure and technology that's
6 needed to do that programmatic infrastructure.

7 I hope that helps.

8 MS. MAYS: Yeah, and I think, Gerry, that's
9 like expanding, you know, UCP use at border crossings,
10 joint inspections. Even with, for instance, Laredo, at
11 the airport, they do have kind of that joint U.S.-Mexico
12 inspection of air cargo and passengers. So this is some
13 of the things that that's getting to.

14 But again, we want to emphasize this is just a
15 sample, so there are many other critical policy
16 recommendations that relate to border crossings that has
17 been discussed and you guys have brought it up.

18 MR. LUDLOW: Very good. Caroline, how many
19 more would you like us to have here before we move on?

20 MS. MAYS: We have about ten so give another 30
21 seconds to make sure we get in a few more, but if not,
22 then we can move on.

23 (Pause.)

24 MR. LUDLOW: All right. Why don't we move on.
25 So again, this is an opportunity to provide some

1 prioritization for corridor programs, and again, these are
2 a sample.

3 And the four that were most commonly cited
4 were: multimodal integrated corridor and connectivity
5 studies, basically understanding the kinds of improvements
6 that need to take place on those specific corridors;
7 improving connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists,
8 especially given the massive increase in the number of
9 pedestrians and bicycles using the border crossings;
10 support a better allocation of funds to designated
11 corridors; and educating and training users of the border
12 crossings and corridors on the practices and regulations,
13 and this was related to helping carriers, drivers and
14 others essentially become better users of the border, to
15 be prepared for what they would need to experience as they
16 went through the processing.

17 MR. VALE: You know, I might comment on one
18 thing here, and that is I don't think there's a single
19 corridor that was established ten years or more ago that
20 has been completed completely into Canada or Mexico.

21 MS. MAYS: Sam, I'm not sure if it's the last
22 ten years, but I can tell you that I-35 is probably the
23 best example. That connects with MX-85 in Mexico, and
24 then in Canada the 401 connects with I-35 somewhere up
25 north.

1 MR. VALE: In every one -- I've seen breaks in
2 every one, not just some of the smaller breaks but every
3 one that doesn't have a nonstop kind of corridor. Now,
4 that may have changed in the last six months or a year,
5 but the last time I was up, they all had some kind of a
6 break, including 35.

7 MS. GARZA-REYES: And it's always going to be
8 difficult to get to that because of funding. We just have
9 to continue -- I know, Sam, you do a very good job of
10 really enforcing that. As much as we want to change all
11 these things, if we can't sustain funding, these projects,
12 everything is going to continue just sitting on the shelf.

13 MR. VALE: Correct.

14 MS. MAYS: Yeah, and I think to those points,
15 Cynthia and Sam, I think we showed in the executive
16 summary the kind of continental U.S. and Mexico map and
17 showed some of the key corridors, highway corridors
18 connecting ports like Matzatlán, Topolobambo, all the way
19 to our border crossings. And then connecting all the way
20 at points north, rail as well, and then including our
21 ports. And then the first map, we showed kind of a
22 conceptual map showing kind of how all of that radiates.

23 And I think that's really the message we're
24 trying to make here is that, you know, for border trade to
25 continue, you need these corridors to move things through

1 the border crossings. And they have to be connected,
2 because if you have one side of the border well-connected
3 by either highway or rail and the other side is not, that
4 border crossing is certainly going to be underutilized,
5 and we talked a lot about that.

6 And the ones that are kind of almost
7 overutilized, it's because they have great rail, great
8 highway connections and it provides the ability of
9 transporting those goods efficiently. Yes, you've got
10 kind of choke points in the system, whether it's at the
11 border crossing or in the urban areas.

12 So I think that's really kind of what we're
13 trying to do here is to paint that picture that we need to
14 invest in this corridor so it can be seamless, that
15 there's no breaks. I-69 is an example of that. It's a
16 corridor but it's not all interstate, you know, so
17 again --

18 MR. VALE: And two-thirds of the consumer
19 market in the United States is east of a line from Laredo
20 straight north.

21 MS. MAYS: Absolutely.

22 MR. LUDLOW: All right. So I think we've come
23 to a stabilization point. Let's do this last one and
24 maybe we can do this one relatively quickly and move on to
25 the projects.

1 But in this last category, this is a catch-
2 all. So these are programs related to short-term
3 improvements on both borders and corridors, so this is for
4 the crossings and the corridors.

5 And again, the category is: explore mechanisms
6 to facilitate Texas-Mexico collaboration, coordination,
7 and cooperation -- a lot of that obviously has happened
8 during this process, and what's extending that in the
9 future; looking at stakeholder groups, specific kind of
10 working groups potentially or regional groups to explore
11 specific issues; addressing/assessing connectivity issues
12 between the specific corridors; and developing systems to
13 collect and analyze real-time traffic information.

14 So again, this is a sample, this is not
15 completely comprehensive, but these are some of the areas
16 that continue to rise to the surface. So we'll take some
17 input on this for maybe the next minute.

18 (Pause.)

19 MR. LUDLOW: Are there any questions or
20 comments about any of the areas, or anything that we're
21 missing here?

22 MS. MAYS: We have some more coming in, Donald,
23 so --

24 MR. LUDLOW: Okay.

25 MS. MAYS: I believe people are commenting.

1 Sam, do you have something to say?

2 (Pause.)

3 MR. VALE: Caroline, I would point out that I
4 learned something from California a couple of days ago,
5 that they set up some chat calls on a daily schedule for
6 people. A small group of people, particularly the federal
7 agencies and then a few private sectors.

8 They're very inefficient, but they're the only
9 thing that allows them more rapid exchange of ideas in
10 ways to improve border crossings.

11 MS. MAYS: So they do this on a daily basis?

12 MR. VALE: Yes. They schedule it but it's not
13 always the same person, but somebody from that entity.
14 And they're very inefficient. Sometimes they don't have
15 enough people, sometimes they do, but it's best they found
16 yet.

17 MS. MAYS: Okay. Yeah, we'll follow up with
18 you on that, certainly as we go into advancing the plan
19 recommendations and see what are the best practices out
20 there being used in other places.

21 MR. VALE: Between Alta Mesa and Tijuana. They
22 have a system.

23 MS. MAYS: Okay.

24 MR. LUDLOW: Very good.

25 MS. MAYS: Donald, want to move on?

1 MR. LUDLOW: Yeah, let's move on. Thank you
2 very much for your comments here.

3 Now, this next question is a bit more open-
4 ended. We simply wanted to put this out there. And I
5 know many of you have contributed -- most of you have
6 contributed input to the project list that you've
7 developed of the 652 projects.

8 And we wanted to take some input from the BTAC
9 members about which projects they're familiar with that
10 they believe are most important for implementation, short-
11 term projects in the next one to five years. And again,
12 these may be more operationally focused, they may be
13 smaller projects, they may be things that are already
14 funded and moving along, but wanted to provide the
15 opportunity here on kind of an open-ended basis to do
16 this.

17 And obviously many of you are representing a
18 specific area or region, and so feel free to input the
19 project or general category of projects that you think is
20 most important over the short term.

21 Caroline or Alejandro, did you want to
22 elaborate on that, or add anything else?

23 MS. MAYS: No. I think that's fine. Broadly,
24 you can talk about areas or you can talk about specific
25 projects. I think that's appropriate here because we're

1 trying to balance kind of broader, you know, border-wide
2 issue areas or projects that address those issue areas,
3 like border wait times or specific projects. We see I-69
4 here, you know, and other items specific either to your
5 region.

6 And again, we're looking at both sides of the
7 border, not just Texas, so our Mexican counterparts,
8 please chime in to this discussion. I failed to mention
9 earlier that this is not one-sided. We want a balanced
10 input here.

11 MR. VALE: It still comes down to the federal
12 agencies exchanging and cooperating with each other on
13 each side of the border. That's the biggest problem we've
14 got.

15 MR. LUDLOW: Thank you.

16 MS. MAYS: Absolutely. We're seeing a lot of
17 comments on corridors. Anything on the border side?

18 (Pause.)

19 MR. LUDLOW: All right. Someone reported to me
20 that they had lost audio. Can everyone still hear me?

21 MR. SOLIS: I think that was Caroline,
22 Donald. I think she was in the middle of a sentence and
23 then she lost audio, but I think her comment was there's a
24 lot of --

25 MS. MAYS: I'm back, Alejandro, yeah. I just

1 lost audio on my phone, so I'm using the computer now.

2 Yeah, a lot of comments here, and certainly
3 great to see BCS system being here and other great
4 comments. Again, this is also going to help Secretary and
5 I on some of the things to the Commission. You know, what
6 are the kind of short-term priorities, low-hanging fruit,
7 to address the immediate needs.

8 This plan is a long-range plan that has both
9 short-, medium- and long-term strategies that have been
10 outlined, but you know, for the short term, what can be
11 accomplished? And I think this is why this question and
12 what we're thinking about is that we are less concerned
13 with what are some of the things that can be done, you
14 know, in the short term as we move forward with
15 implementing or working through the bigger, you know, much
16 longer-term strategies and all that. So this is great
17 part of input.

18 Anybody like to elaborate quickly? I know
19 we're running short on time, but this is great input.

20 MR. CALVO: Hey, Caroline, this is Eduardo
21 here.

22 Yes, this question, you know, it's interesting
23 to see the answers and all that, but projects are much
24 more local than programs and policies. Right? So I'm
25 sure that you're going to start hearing a lot of -- you

1 know, of course, here in El Paso we're going to be
2 emphasizing for our projects over here related to, you
3 know, on the Texas side related to I-10, 375, you know,
4 the parallel corridors and all that.

5 I mean, our situation here, in addition to all
6 of the important stuff that crosses from Ciudad Juarez,
7 from the maquilas, the high value stuff and all that, you
8 know, we've got all the stuff that comes into Texas from
9 the West Coast by truck, right? So I think, you know,
10 this question could also be a little misleading in the
11 sense that, you know, the priorities -- because that's
12 what you asked. Right? But again, you're going to find a
13 lot more, you know, localized opinions.

14 MS. MAYS: Yeah, and that's absolutely fine.
15 Like here we see a lot of specific projects, I-10,
16 certainly, you know, in El Paso and west Texas. We see
17 here Laredo, I-59, Ports-to-Plains, I-27 and all those,
18 which is fine, you know, to be able to do that. Because
19 the Texas border region is vast and it's different, and I
20 think we've tried to articulate that.

21 So I think, you know, we can discern from the
22 comments here which ones are regional-specific and which
23 ones are kind of broader, for instance BTSF [phonetic].
24 That's more of a border-wide need and things that we need
25 to look at from a border-wide perspective, so I think

1 there's a balance here.

2 That's what Donald mentioned earlier, that each
3 of you are from some region and have your local regional
4 perspective, and it's okay to articulate that here. But
5 then also the broader border crossing, you know, issue
6 border-wide to synchronize border crossing times on both
7 sides, that will apply to the entire, you know, border
8 region. We have a mixed bag in here, which is -- I think
9 it's okay.

10 MR. LUDLOW: Great. So, Caroline, this is a
11 great list and, you know, I guess we do have a couple more
12 questions on Mentimeter but I know we're running out of
13 time. What would you like to do? Should we at least put
14 this one up here?

15 MS. MAYS: Yeah, let's do that to kind of see
16 the thought process.

17 MR. LUDLOW: So this question was, what are the
18 top three potential threats or challenges to implementing
19 the BTMP, either the policies, programs, or projects, what
20 are those broad threats? And I think we've heard a number
21 of them from you today.

22 We did have one other question after this was
23 how to confront or how to overcome those threats, and we
24 may not have time to get into a lot of detail on that, but
25 this is an area that we thought was really important to

1 hear from you.

2 So lack of funding, that's one that we've heard
3 a number of times today. Are there other institutional
4 external threats or challenges to implementation? So
5 messaging, we've heard a lot today about education and the
6 need to really -- you know, I think maybe it was Sam or
7 somebody else said we're really good about talking to
8 ourselves about this stuff, but maybe not so good about
9 talking to other people. So lack of coordination with
10 partners. Okay, coordination of data. I don't know if
11 anybody wanted to elaborate on the data side, but --

12 MR. VALE: I think it's convincing the
13 legislature through the TxDOT Commission how these things
14 really benefit everybody. They're not just good for my
15 town or my county, they're good for the whole state. That
16 is the only way you can sell these things.

17 MR. LUDLOW: Okay, and I think we've heard loud
18 and clear today that there is some additional effort
19 that's needed on the part of BTAC, TxDOT, the Secretary of
20 State's Office in terms of educating and next steps and
21 mobilizing and SCT and the other partners working together
22 to do that. So the story area is really, really
23 important.

24 These are all very helpful. Telling the story
25 again. It seems like we're getting some consistent

1 threats here, funding, story-telling, education, data.

2 Caroline, did you have anything you wanted to
3 add here? How much further would you and the Secretary
4 like to go? I know we're running up against the hour and
5 I think we needed a few minutes to summarize and provide
6 your closing comments.

7 MS. MAYS: Donald, how many more questions do
8 you have, one more?

9 MR. LUDLOW: There's just one more and that one
10 more question is about -- I mean, there were two more but
11 the second one is about the long-term vision that I think
12 we've been -- you know, I don't know that we have time to
13 go into that today.

14 But I think the next question is on how to
15 overcome these threats, ideas on how to overcome these,
16 and that may be important for us to go to, in just a
17 moment.

18 MS. MAYS: Secretary, are you okay with that?
19 Maybe we might run about fifteen minutes, five minutes
20 late. And BTAC members okay, so at least we can go into
21 the last question?

22 SECY. HUGHS: Sure. I do have another meeting
23 so we can try to go a little longer but if I could maybe
24 just briefly provide my closing comments now, in case I
25 have to jump off.

1 MS. MAYS: Yeah, absolutely.

2 SECY. HUGHS: And for that I would just mostly
3 indicate that I'm incredibly grateful and impressed, as
4 always, with the engagement of this group and the feedback
5 that we've received. And I just want to remind everyone
6 if you're able to provide public comment next week on
7 December 10 between -- sometime after 11:00, we assume
8 that we'll be done with our presentation and the public is
9 able to weigh in remotely during the TxDOT Commission
10 meeting.

11 We would very much appreciate that additional
12 support as we provide the plan. I know it's always going
13 to be important to hear from all of you especially because
14 of your own individual leadership roles along the border
15 and in your communities.

16 So thank you again for all the tremendous work
17 that you do, and I won't further delay since I know we're
18 running late, but look forward to next week and then, of
19 course, continuing the discussion next year as well. And
20 of course, as always, after today's meeting when you've
21 had a chance to review this in more detail or you reflect
22 on it, please feel free to continue to follow up and reach
23 out if you think of anything else.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. VALE: Thanks, Secretary Hughs. I think if

1 we could have a whole meeting just discussing the
2 educational program that we need to implement.

3 SECY. HUGHS: I agree.

4 MS. MAYS: Okay. Thank you very much,
5 Secretary, we appreciate it. And maybe in your absence,
6 David can close the meeting once we do the last question.

7 So Donald, would you like to go to the next
8 question?

9 MR. LUDLOW: Let's go to the next one. So
10 you've listed many, over 16 challenges and threats. A lot
11 of them were in line with funding, education, data,
12 coordination, focus.

13 What are your ideas on how these challenges can
14 be overcome? Are there tools, resources or partnerships
15 that are most helpful? How do we counter these threats?

16 Sam has already said we've got to mobilize
17 ourselves to have kind of a unified vision for educating
18 and a plan to educate. That's one. Are there other ways,
19 other mitigating actions that we can take together to
20 overcome some of these threats?

21 MR. SOLIS: And Donald, Joanne Cisneros
22 contributed something on the chat box, even though she's
23 not a BTAC member. She has an idea about a strong media
24 outreach to kind of -- part of this education but also
25 part of the kind of news information, et cetera. So I

1 think that's just something to put out there.

2 MR. LUDLOW: Okay. So media strategy,
3 education strategy, we'll add that to the list. Somebody
4 has also said better collaboration and coordination.

5 MS. MAYS: Thank you for that comment.

6 MR. CALVARIO: Francisco Calvario from SCT.
7 Good morning, everyone.

8 MS. MAYS: Hi, Francisco.

9 MR. CALVARIO: Hi, Caroline.

10 In Mexico, Erika and myself, mainly, are
11 working with all the Mexican agencies, SAT, SRE, et
12 cetera, both in the operation of the bridges and the
13 crossing points between Texas and Mexico, so we are very
14 interested in the coordination and collaboration with you.

15 Obviously, we may be the most frequent, maybe, to achieve
16 these goals, but we agree with all the comments that we
17 are seeing on the Menti site about collaboration,
18 coordination, funding, et cetera.

19 And obviously, our port of entry are the very
20 important part of the supply chains, so in the way that we
21 can understand that we are part of the supply chains for
22 medicines, foods, other goods, I think we can achieve more
23 best results in this Border Master Plan.

24 MS. MAYS: Yeah. Thank you very much,
25 Francisco, for those comments, and really the

1 collaboration. You know, you guys have been great
2 partners with us from day one and we really appreciate
3 that.

4 But I think it's that continued collaboration
5 with you all, with the federal agencies, state agencies,
6 private sector and all the other partners -- I think, you
7 know, that is one way to accomplish all of this. And
8 again, Francisco, thank you all for your commitment and
9 really being alongside us, you know, the last two years
10 but also even before that through [inaudible] and other
11 organizations, so thank you.

12 MR. CALVARIO: Okay, sure. You're welcome.

13 MR. LUDLOW: And Caroline, this is, again, very
14 rich feedback. I'm very appreciative. A lot for TxDOT
15 and the partners to digest.

16 These comments are really highlighting the
17 continued importance of storytelling, coordination, the
18 messaging, really important. And I think these dovetail
19 nicely into the threats that were outlined earlier. You
20 know, I think these are -- hopefully this is very helpful
21 to you and Secretary Hughs as well as you get ready for
22 the meeting next week.

23 MS. MAYS: Absolutely, this has been great.
24 Really I'm very pleased with the discussion and dialogue
25 and the input today, and especially this portion. Because

1 we've kind of been talking about the time but now it's
2 time to start thinking moving forward what we're thinking,
3 so really appreciate that. I know we've taken a lot of
4 folks' time and we will definitely continue some of this
5 dialogue moving forward.

6 There are things that definitely come next year
7 you all will have to help us kind of start going into a
8 little bit more detail than what we're doing now. But
9 this is good. It's a lot to digest and a lot to kind of
10 think about and hopefully bring back to you at later
11 meetings, in terms of how we move forward with
12 implementation.

13 So with that, really in closing, Secretary
14 already did her closing remarks. We're going to
15 Commission next week, and you know, our next meeting on
16 this task is going to be competitive, so stay tuned for
17 the date. We're working with Secretary Hughs on the date
18 for that meeting.

19 I know in previous meetings we've mentioned
20 that we'd go to the Commission in January for the plan
21 adoption, and right now that has now been officially
22 postponed to February, because we need to come back with
23 public comment here. And if we try to go to the
24 Commission in January, we would not have enough time to do
25 that.

1 So, you know, we're looking at the public
2 comment period ending sometime in January and then having
3 the plan -- you know, presenting the plan to Commission
4 for adoption in February. So that's kind of the loosey-
5 goosey timeline that we have right now.

6 But again, I just want to thank each and every
7 one of you for your participation today. Like always,
8 please send us any comments you may have. We still have
9 the executive summary that we're looking for comments
10 on.

11 There's a lot of edits that went into that.
12 Take time to review that and provide us with your
13 comments. I think that probably may be the most immediate
14 need that we have from you for your feedback.

15 The Commission PowerPoint, if you have any
16 ideas beyond what you shared with us today, please feel
17 free to send us an email on that. And then definitely the
18 final report, I mentioned the BNSRC meetings, and I
19 mentioned that. Please do review the document, and if you
20 can't review the entire document and the chapters, just
21 focus on those and provide us your feedback so that we
22 can, you know, at least get into the next final draft that
23 is represented your perspective.

24 As Eduardo Calvo mentioned, the project list,
25 we're working on that. We're cleaning that up and it's

1 still a work in progress, but I think we're making
2 progress on it.

3 So with that really I want to wish everybody
4 safe holidays, wishing all you guys a very merry Christmas
5 and happy holidays.

6 And I'll open it up for any final comments
7 before David with the Secretary of State's Office makes a
8 motion to adjourn. Any comments from the committee
9 members, any last words?

10 MR. GARCIA: Thank you, Caroline. This is
11 Josue.

12 MS. MAYS: Okay. Appreciate it.

13 David.

14 MR. ZAPATA: Thank you, everyone, for your
15 time. Great meeting. With that, is there a motion to
16 adjourn?

17 MR. GARCIA: So moved. This is Josue.

18 MS. MAYS: Josue so moved.

19 MR. ZAPATA: Is there a second?

20 MR. CANON: Second. Andrew.

21 MR. ZAPATA: Got it.

22 MS. MAYS: Okay. So, yeah, David, it's 12:08.

23 MR. ZAPATA: Well, great. We'll adjourn the
24 meeting. Thank you all for your time. Like Caroline
25 said, if we don't see you again, happy holidays.

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(Whereupon, at 12:08 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.)

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

/s/ Nancy H. King

12/11/2020

Certified Electronic Reporter

Date

No. CER/CET-153