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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BORDER TRADE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 20, 2024

The above-entitled Border Trade Advisory
Committee meeting was taken on the 20th day of February,
2024, before Angelina Ontiveros, Stenographic Notary
Public, reported by Stenographic means, at El Paso
Convention Center, Rio Grande Room, C St. El Paso,
Texas, 79901.

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A P P E A R A N C E S</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 BTAC COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:</p> <p>3 Texas Secretary of State Hon. Jane Nelson, Chair</p> <p>4 Rafael M. Alderete, Texas Transportation Institute</p> <p>5 Hon. Alvaro "Al" Arreola, Mayor, City of Del Rio</p> <p>6 Jon Barela, Borderplex Alliance</p> <p>7 Luis Alfredo Baza, Pharr International Bridge</p> <p>8 Eduardo Calvo, El Paso MPO</p> <p>9 Raquel Espinosa, Union Pacific Railroad</p> <p>10 Juan Antonio Flores, Port San Antonio</p> <p>11 Cynthia Garza-Reyes, Pharr Economic Development</p> <p>12 Corporation</p> <p>13 Jake Giesbrecht, Presidio International Port Authority</p> <p>14 Michael Stewart, Proxy for Maria-Elena Giner,</p> <p>15 International Boundary and Water Commission</p> <p>16 Iliana Holguin, Guadalupe-Tornillo Bridge</p> <p>17 Stan Meador, Texas Pacifico</p> <p>18 Kyle Morgan, CPKC Railway</p> <p>19 Gerardo Schwebel, International Bank of Commerce</p> <p>20 Roberto Tinajero, El Paso International Bridge System</p> <p>21 Hon. Victor Trevino, Mayor, City of Laredo</p> <p>22 Sam Vale, Starr-Camargo Bridge Company</p> <p>23 Cameron Walker, Permian Basin MPO</p> <p>24 Danny Magee, Proxy for Rolando Salinas, City of Eagle</p> <p>25 Pass</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A P P E A R A N C E S (continued)</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 Mildred Litchfield, Deputy Division Director TxDOT</p> <p>3 Sergio Vasquez, Border Program Manager, TxDOT</p> <p>4 Claudia Lagos Galindo, Int. Trade and Border Planning</p> <p>5 Branch Manager.</p> <p>6 Juan Carlos Villa, consultant</p> <p>7 Giacomo Yaquinto, Statewide Planning Branch Manager,</p> <p>8 TxDOT</p> <p>9 Sergio Colin, President, Index Ciudad Juarez, Mexico</p> <p>10 Tomas Trevino, District Engineer El Paso Distric, TxDOT</p> <p>11 David Stout, Commissioner</p> <p>12 Michael Banks</p> <p>13 David Stout</p> <p>14 Bobby Janecka</p> <p>15 Epigmenio Gonzalez</p> <p>16 Jake Giesbrecht</p> <p>17 Brandye Hendrickson</p> <p>18 Also Present (Remotely):</p> <p>19 Alvin New, Commissioner, Texas Transportation Commission</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A P P E A R A N C E S (continued)</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 ALSO PRESENT:</p> <p>3 Alejandro G. Meade III, Commissioner, Texas</p> <p>4 Transportation Commission</p> <p>5 Caroline A. Mays, Director, Planning and Modal Programs,</p> <p>6 TxDOT</p> <p>7 Hon. Oscar Leeser, Mayor, City of El Paso</p> <p>8 Hon. Ricardo A. Samaniego, Judge, El Paso County</p> <p>9 Hon. Cesar Blanco, Texas Senate Representative</p> <p>10 Hon. Evalina Ortega, Texas State Representative</p> <p>11 Hon. Claudia Ordaz, Texas State Representative</p> <p>12 Hon. Mauricio Ibarra Ponce De Leon, Mexican Consulate</p> <p>13 in El Paso, Texas</p> <p>14 Hon. Susan Harper, Consulate General of Canada in Dallas</p> <p>15 Hon. Sandra Shaddick, Consulate General of Canada in</p> <p>16 Monterrey</p> <p>17 Hon. Kent May, Deputy Principal Officer, General</p> <p>18 Consulate of the United States in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico</p> <p>19 Dr. Marco Gonzalez Valdez, Secretary of Regional and</p> <p>20 Agricultural Development of Nuevo Leon</p> <p>21 Lic. Claudio Bres Garza, Secretary of Economy of</p> <p>22 Coahuila</p> <p>23 Lic. Fernando Alba, Undersecretary of Innovation and</p> <p>24 Economic Development of Chihuahua</p> <p>25 Marvinina Cephas, Int. Trade and Border Planning</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I N D E X</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 Welcome and Introductions 6</p> <p>3</p> <p>4 Adoption of the November 9th, Meeting Minutes 36</p> <p>5</p> <p>6 Recap of the November 9th, BTAC Meeting 37</p> <p>7</p> <p>8 BTMP Project Progress Update 42</p> <p>9</p> <p>10 Connecting Texas 2050 92</p> <p>11</p> <p>12 Binational Private Sector & Regional Presentation 105</p> <p>13</p> <p>14 Mexico's Border States Presentation 136</p> <p>15</p> <p>16 Open Discussion- Future Meetings and Topics 146</p> <p>17</p> <p>18 Adjourn 151</p> <p>19</p> <p>20 Reporter Certificate 152</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S
2 (Reporter's time 8:43 a.m.)
3 SECRETARY NELSON: (Speaking foreign
4 language). I'm so excited to be able to return to the
5 border for our first meeting of the year.
6 As many of you, I hope already know, I'm
7 Jane Nelson, the 115th Secretary of State of Texas. And
8 I'm delighted to see all of you gathered here today in
9 El Paso, Texas.
10 I've been very pleased to see the progress
11 and improvement of our state border infrastructure over
12 the past few weeks. Trade, commerce, and cross-cultural
13 interaction shows how crucial it is to have an
14 up-to-date (indiscernible) in the supply chain to
15 function properly. Along with the advancement of
16 transportation in the infracture and expansion of
17 industries and agriculture, as well as the development
18 of technologies and markets, are all vital for
19 cross-border customers. (Speaking foreign language).
20 We have a lot to accomplish today. Let's
21 make sure that we utilize our time wisely and remain
22 focused on our objective.
23 However, I do want to take a moment to
24 recognize some distinguished guests on both sides of the
25 border who are in attendance. I know you want to

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1 applaud for everybody, but please hold your applause
2 until we finish.
3 We have Mayor Oscar Leeser. Thank you for
4 welcoming me with open arms to your beautiful city of
5 El Paso. I know we're all very excited. Thank you for
6 your hospitality. We truly do appreciate it.
7 And Commissioner Alvin New. Commissioner,
8 I appreciate you being here. I think every meeting that
9 I have been at (indiscernible) and we are all very happy
10 to be back here at the border and joining us.
11 Commissioner, thank you for joining us -- and I know you
12 and I have a meeting, like, tomorrow. Yes?
13 El Paso County Judge, Ricardo Samaniego,
14 over here. Thank you, Judge, for your hospitality.
15 It's been just wonderful.
16 County Commissioner Precinct 2, David
17 Stout, is here with us today. Thank you for being here.
18 County Commissioner Precinct 3 and BTAC member, Iliana
19 Holguin, is with us today. Thank you for coming.
20 We have a few elected officials from the
21 State of Texas here today. And representatives of the
22 United States officials who could not make it.
23 I'm never supposed to show favoritism, but
24 I have to tell you, sitting two down here from me is
25 State Senator from District 29, Cesar Blanco. Senator,

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1 thank you so much, not just for joining us today, but
2 for everything you do. El Paso is very blessed to have
3 you.
4 Texas State Representative from District
5 77, Lina Ortega. Oh, she's not here. She'll be joining
6 us later. I'm reading my notes. She'll be joining us
7 later.
8 Texas State Representative from District
9 79, Claudia Ordaz. Thank you. I saw her just a minute
10 ago right down here.
11 Commissioner Bobby Janecka of the Texas
12 Commission on Environmental Quality also joins us.
13 Welcome, Commissioner.
14 Let's see. Also Mike Banks, Border Czar
15 appointed by Governor Abbott. Thank you for being here.
16 I want to welcome Larry McManus, Business
17 and Community.
18 We also have the privilege today of
19 welcoming several international diplomats to our
20 meeting. Mexico's Consulate General in El Paso. From
21 Dallas, Susan Harper. Thank you for joining us today.
22 You down -- I don't think you've missed a meeting I've
23 been to.
24 We also welcome Kent May, Deputy Principal
25 Officer of the United States Consulate in Ciudad Juarez.

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1 We appreciate you for making the trip up.
2 I want to extend a special recognition to a
3 state official from Mexico who is present here with us,
4 Marco Gonzalez, Secretary of Regional and Agricultural
5 Development for the state of Nuevo Leon. And I also
6 understand that you may be a candidate soon. Okay.
7 Let's see. We have Brandye Hendrickson,
8 Deputy Executive Director of Planning Administration
9 with TxDOT. Okay. Yes. I saw her coming in. All
10 right.
11 I should have everybody else stand up and
12 be recognized 'cause you're all very important and I'd
13 love -- you need to meet each other. This is such a
14 wonderful group. But we're very eager to hear your
15 presentation later on today. I am so grateful to all of
16 our partners for their invaluable collaboration with the
17 State of Texas. Your unwavering commitment to our
18 shared goals is so commendable and we are hopeful that
19 our partnership will continue to flourish.
20 Before proceeding with attendance, I want
21 to thank the department of -- Texas Department of
22 Transportation for organizing this BTAC meeting in El
23 Paso. And additionally, I want to invite some of the
24 officials present here to make brief -- notice the word
25 "brief," statements to the committee. So please limit



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1 your remarks, just a minute or two, so we can stay on
2 schedule.

3 But first, our Mayor of El Paso.
4 Would you like to say a few words?
5 MAYOR LEESER: Absolutely.
6 SECRETARY NELSON: Never pass up on the
7 opportunity.
8 MAYOR LEESER: Well, I appreciate the 30
9 minutes you gave me so...
10 Good morning. Thank you for being here.
11 You know, it's -- when we talk about border trade,
12 border transportation, and (indiscernible) to be here,
13 it's so important that we talk about our partners. And
14 that's Mexico. And it's -- the trade, that comes
15 through our borders, it's incredible to see that without
16 unified transportation -- and it's funny 'cause I open
17 the book and the first thing it said here was "unified
18 transportation."
19 And I think people don't realize, a lot,
20 that what comes through the border here, doesn't stay
21 here. It goes all over the United States. So it's so
22 important that we work together -- continue to work
23 together. It's amazing to see the lineup you just read
24 out. The people that are here that care about, really,
25 not only El Paso, but the State, all the local elected

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1 officials, the state officials, and, of course, our
2 friends from Mexico.
3 Trade has always been the forefront of
4 El Paso, and it will always continue to be part of the
5 forefront. One of the things that it really -- you have
6 to be here to understand. And if you listen to
7 everything you read and listen to everything you see,
8 you would think that -- that it's a dangerous place.
9 It's not. El Paso is one of the safest cities in
10 America. And it will continue to be one of the safest
11 cities in America. We have such a great working
12 relationship with our partners. But, yet, as you see,
13 the asylum seekers coming across El Paso. El Paso has
14 done an incredible job of continuing to make sure that
15 people are treated with dignity. People are treated
16 with respect, and they have a roof over their head, and
17 they have a warm meal. You won't see people sleeping
18 out on the street. If they're sleeping out on the
19 streets it's 'cause they didn't want assistance. But
20 other than that, El Paso has done a good job.
21 So you see that all around the media, it's
22 not happening here. And, you know, I got to talk to
23 Mayor Trevino earlier yesterday. We had a great
24 meeting, and we talked about some of the things that
25 were going on in El Paso. Some of the things that are

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1 going on in Laredo. And you know what? No difference.
2 But yet, people that think they can go visit for ten
3 minutes, go away and figure out what's going on. They
4 don't. You have to live it. You have to breathe it.
5 You have to continue to be a part of it.
6 I was so happy to see that the Mayor and I,
7 really, we're talking the same language. And we feel
8 the same about people. But in El Paso, we've been very
9 successful, whether it's border trade, whether it's the
10 pandemic, whether it's part of the asylum seekers that
11 we provide a service for, we've learned that speaking
12 with one voice gets a lot accomplished. And I know that
13 I have my partner here next to me, Judge Samaniego. We
14 really have unified the voice of our community, and all
15 our state officials and local officials. And it shows
16 it's made a difference.
17 When El Paso was, at one point, the number
18 one affected city in the United States, and we were
19 losing lives, we changed that by unifying ourselves. So
20 you see this -- and I opened it up, I see, "Unified
21 Transportation," it fits into what we're about. To
22 unify our work, unify everything we do.
23 You know, the billions of dollars that
24 trade through our borders, we couldn't do it without the
25 assistance of the State. Madam Secretary, I really do

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1 want thank you for being here. And congratulate
2 everybody for what we do.
3 You know, we can point one finger and we'd
4 have to go all the way around the room and say that
5 everybody here has done it unified and together.
6 And, again, I'm very thankful that you
7 picked El Paso to have your first meeting. And
8 hopefully this will not be the last time, this year,
9 that we see you having meetings here, 'cause we
10 understand the border, we understand transportation, and
11 we understand people, and we understand that if you
12 treat people the way you always want to be treated,
13 you'll never be disappointed. And the City of El Paso,
14 our citizens, have the biggest hearts you'll ever see
15 because they believe that treating people with respect
16 is the only way to live.
17 So thank you, again, for being here. Thank
18 you for bringing the committee here to see that -- and I
19 do want to apologize when I say that El Paso is the best
20 city in the state. I knew somebody would take it, but
21 it really is the best city in the state. And it's
22 because of its people. And one thing we do have here,
23 that nobody in the whole state of Texas has, is we have
24 400 days in a row every year of sunshine. And I know no
25 one else can beat that.



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1 SECRETARY NELSON: El Paso is the "Sun
2 City."
3 MAYOR LEESER: So, again, thank you-all for
4 being here, and we look forward to learning from each
5 other and continue to grow and learn. So welcome to the
6 best city in Texas.
7 SECRETARY NELSON: And it is my pleasure to
8 introduce, there is no finer Senator in the State of
9 Texas than Senator Cesar Blanco.
10 Senator, do you have anything you want to
11 say?
12 SENATOR BLANCO: Yes. Thank you very much,
13 Madam Secretary. It's an honor to have you here in our
14 community.
15 As you all know, we had a -- I had the
16 pleasure of meeting so many of you last night at our
17 kick off reception, which was really nice. It was a
18 packed room. Lots of fun, lots of friends.
19 But for those of you who were not there
20 last night, (speaking foreign language) to the "Sun
21 City." Yes, we have a lot of sun. So get out there and
22 golf when you get a chance while you're here. But I
23 really want to express my gratitude to my dear friend,
24 Secretary Nelson, who's done such a phenomenal job. Not
25 only in this role, but her service to the State has been

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1 extremely beneficial for El Paso.
2 And it really speaks volumes about your
3 leadership, that you brought this meeting -- not to
4 Austin, you brought it to the border. Which is so
5 important. It's a big change, and we really appreciate
6 that. Especially among a room full of individuals from
7 Brownsville all the way up to El Paso. We all have a
8 common threat, you know. You're going to hear a lot
9 today about the needs along our border.
10 But the most important thing is that we're
11 focusing on bolstering our economy. That's why we're
12 here. We want to make sure that we got the
13 infrastructure to ensure that we are competitive as a
14 country.
15 Locally, our number one artery is I-10.
16 That is really what connects to our local ports of
17 entry. It is a critical artery for not just El Paso or
18 our region, but the entire state's economy. I want to
19 make sure that that's important that we mention.
20 The annual freight moved into, within, and
21 out of the I-10 corridor is valued at \$737 million.
22 It's created over 3 million jobs, and it's generated
23 over \$325 billion in gross state product.
24 But for those of us who live and work here
25 in El Paso, who travel through I-10 on a daily basis, we

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1 see paralysis. It paralyzes our trade, and our -- you
2 know, our costs on our economy are negatively impacted.
3 So -- and I'm glad my dear friend,
4 Commissioner Meade, is here, who I really got to give it
5 to. You've really been here since you took your role as
6 a commissioner in El Paso. This is probably your
7 fourth, fifth time. In fact, today is election day.
8 You might want to register to vote. But he has a good
9 understanding of how I-10 is outdated. And we really
10 need to fix that. And we really need to focus on the
11 infrastructure in our ports of entry because it's really
12 costing border trade in our regions.
13 So -- but, you know, we're going to hear a
14 lot of information from everyone today. El Paso's story
15 is not unique. We hear this from El Paso all the way
16 down to the border. I see my dear friend County Judge
17 from Presidio who can tell you stories from Presidio as
18 well. But our congestion, our long wait times at our
19 ports of entry are key indicators that we are already
20 falling behind.
21 So if we don't act, we're going to lose
22 upward of \$30 billion by 2050 in economic output. And
23 that's exactly why we've collaborated. That's exactly
24 why we developed this border transportation master form.
25 It's an incredible blueprint for the future of our

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1 region, for efficiency, for cross-border trade. So our
2 work here is very important.
3 Last session, the legislature secured
4 \$60 million under Rider 11 UB in the state budget.
5 Someone here knows a little bit about the state budget.
6 But we also created a new rider for BTMP projects under
7 11 C. But we still have a lot more work to do. We got
8 to make sure that there's a dedicated sustainable
9 funding stream for the border transportation master
10 plan. And that's our job. That's what we're going to
11 be focusing on.
12 I want to thank you so much, Madam
13 Secretary. Your leadership and your former experience
14 as chair of finance is going to put this entity in a
15 very well-positioned place. So we really look forward
16 to your leadership. We look forward to the
17 conversations that we have today. And we really
18 appreciate that you-all made this meeting happen here in
19 our border, in El Paso. Thank you.
20 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you, Senator.
21 You-all are blessed to have many strong voices. Not
22 just for El Paso, but for the entire border. And
23 there's another one sitting just a couple of people down
24 from you. Representative Ortega is here. I welcome
25 your comments as well.



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1 REPRESENTATIVE ORDAZ: I don't know where
 2 representative Ortega is --
 3 (Speaking simultaneously.)
 4 REPRESENTATIVE ORDAZ: Secretary, I'll make
 5 this quick. I just wanted to thank you, really, for
 6 your leadership. Just watching you as Chair of Finance,
 7 you just have this innate ability to really bring people
 8 together to talk about some really complex issues.
 9 Finance was definitely one of them, and you did a
 10 phenomenal job in that role. And so we're incredibly
 11 grateful to have you here with us.
 12 And as the Mayor said, I mean, unified
 13 voice is incredibly important. We're talking about --
 14 not only El Paso, but every community along the border.
 15 And to ensure that it's not just what -- when you turn
 16 on the TV, right, when you just -- you see CNN or Fox
 17 News, whatever, you watch and you're seeing what's
 18 happening in our border. There's so much more to that.
 19 Our people, our culture, the opportunity when it comes
 20 to trade. Mexico is our number one partner. And so
 21 there's so much opportunity when it comes to our border,
 22 that it's not just border security. There's so much
 23 opportunity when it comes to trade. Ensuring that we're
 24 expediting commerce, people faster, and ensuring that
 25 we're going to provide good paying jobs for working

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1 families across both sides of the border.
 2 And so Secretary -- or Senator -- I mean,
 3 the Senator's doing an incredible job, really, being a
 4 voice for El Paso. And Commissioner, thank you so much,
 5 also, for your leadership. You haven't missed a chance
 6 to come to El Paso, and we see it and we recognize it.
 7 And so we just really want to thank you. And thank
 8 everyone, really, in this room. You can see by how many
 9 people are here how important not only trade is,
 10 transportation, but just coming together as one unified
 11 voice to ensure that El Paso and border communities are
 12 really put on the map. So we really thank you, again,
 13 for hosting this meeting here in El Paso. We welcome
 14 you with open arms.
 15 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. And, again,
 16 I apologize. I was thinking that Representative Ortega
 17 wasn't here, and went right in. I want to reintroduce
 18 Representative Claudia Ordaz who does a fabulous job in
 19 Austin as well. You-all really do have strong voices,
 20 and you should be very, very proud of that.
 21 Let's see. Now, I want to recognize
 22 El Paso County Judge, Ricardo Samaniego.
 23 JUDGE SAMANIEGO: Thank you.
 24 SECRETARY NELSON: Yes.
 25 JUDGE SAMANIEGO: Madam Secretary, thank

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1 you so much for your kind words. We're so proud of our
 2 legislature. I mean, Senator Blanco and all the
 3 legislative delegation.
 4 You know, one of the things we know, for a
 5 fact, and the Mayor mentioned that, is collaboration
 6 really, really is what makes a big difference. And just
 7 the individuals here in this room, just incredible.
 8 Everybody that needs to be here, is here. And, you
 9 know, just to feel a little bit of the pressure for this
 10 meeting is that we're going to be talking about global
 11 competitiveness. And I think if we keep that in
 12 perspective, that we are talking about our ability to
 13 move trade through the entire country. And sometimes, I
 14 think, we forget that. And we're very proud to --
 15 Commissioner Holguin, sitting next to Commissioner
 16 Stout, we're so proud that you're on the committee
 17 itself. And I'm going to take a -- I'm going to steal
 18 your phrase, Susan, and that is, "if there's a border,
 19 there's two sides."
 20 And, you know, something as practical as
 21 that, makes such a big difference. That it's not one
 22 side or the other side or that we're trying to figure
 23 out things separately, but that we do this together.
 24 And that makes such a big difference. And we're so
 25 proud to have our -- Consul Ibarra -- here that has been

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1 such a partner in international trade. Anything
 2 international, he's been this great partner. So I do
 3 thank you.
 4 And I do -- you know, this is a very
 5 remarkable opportunity to all set the narratives that we
 6 hear so much about. I was telling several people that
 7 we met with about 18 Congress individuals here. And I
 8 couldn't move them away from drugs. I couldn't move
 9 them away from immigration. They just didn't want to
 10 talk about trade. As if trade is secondary, third, you
 11 know, somewhere -- you know, off the other -- just as --
 12 you know, they're all very important. But it was so
 13 hard for them to talk about trade because they see
 14 things from one side, you know, which is the United
 15 States. And, you know, forget the partnership that we
 16 have with Mexico.
 17 So we welcome you to the veteran's capital
 18 of the United States of America, here in El Paso. And
 19 we wish you -- you know, we want you to be here and be
 20 advocates for us. And this is -- like I said, we're
 21 always so privileged for individuals from other places
 22 from the state and from others places from the country,
 23 get to know us because I think this is very important to
 24 us, that we get the narrative straight. We're an
 25 amazing, amazing community. We have great, you know,



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1 individuals that fight every day for everything that we
 2 do here. And it's difficult that we have to be
 3 defending ourselves instead of showing how great this
 4 community is.
 5 So I ask you -- I hope that -- you know, we
 6 always say, "To know us is to love us." And we just
 7 wish that you were able to get to know El Paso a little
 8 bit more, and leave here as an advocate and ambassadors
 9 for our great community.
 10 So once again, we welcome you and we thank
 11 you for being here. And just -- I know it's going to be
 12 a very productive meeting. But once again, just keep
 13 that in mind, you know, international and global
 14 competitiveness. And if we keep those two as you
 15 discuss things, I think it's going to be just a great
 16 meeting.
 17 So once again, welcome to El Paso. On
 18 behalf of the Mayor, myself, thank you for being here
 19 with us. And thank you for choosing us to have this
 20 meeting here in El Paso, Texas. Thank you.
 21 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you, Judge. Thank
 22 you for your hospitality, and remarks well said. That
 23 is the goal of this committee. Thank you.
 24 And I understand Commissioner New is -- is
 25 virtually somewhere. We are ready to hear from

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1 Commissioner Alvin New, Texas Department of
 2 Transportation Commissioner, via satellite. Modern
 3 technology.
 4 MR. NEW: Good morning. The only thing I
 5 will share with the group is this is my -- you know,
 6 I've been involved in El Paso basically all my life. My
 7 uncle was at Fort Bliss. And then with Raytheon. So
 8 I've visited many times just to see my cousins and
 9 family. I remind you that Deputy Director Brian Barth
 10 grew up in El Paso. So TxDOT, at the highest levels,
 11 has very good knowledge of El Paso. And -- and then
 12 from there, I've been twice to visit El Paso as a
 13 Commissioner for Texas Transportation Commission. Other
 14 times with the Texas Tech Foundation board. And again
 15 many times personally. So I feel like I know the city
 16 very well. I have great memories of being in El Paso
 17 quite a few times.
 18 So I'll let you know that I also think it's
 19 very important that you're thinking about borderland
 20 expressway as you work your MP- -- APO processes in
 21 regional transportation planning processes. Because
 22 if -- when the time comes that -- that that little
 23 bottleneck on I-10 is dealt with near downtown, there's
 24 going to need to be a place that you send people. And
 25 so I just want to make sure that you're -- you know, you

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1 think through how you want to do transportation to make
 2 sure people don't end up in neighborhoods getting around
 3 that big construction project.
 4 But beyond that, I always listen in on the
 5 Border Trade Advisory council if I'm available, wherever
 6 I am, just because it's -- the border is important to
 7 me, and has been since I started with the commission.
 8 So I look forward to listening today and
 9 probably will have nothing else to say. It's -- you
 10 know, it's been good to listen to Representative Ortega
 11 because she's been tireless in her efforts and Senator
 12 Blanco has been tireless in his efforts. And so, you
 13 know, I really admire the group, and look forward to
 14 listening today. Thanks. Bye-bye.
 15 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you, Commissioner.
 16 And I want to recognize now another Texas Department of
 17 Transportation Commissioner, Alejandro "Alex" Meade, who
 18 I don't think (indiscernible) of this group.
 19 MR. MEADE: Well, good morning everybody.
 20 Is this thing on? Can you hear me? Okay. Good.
 21 Well, good morning. Secretary, thank you
 22 so much for continuing to invite me to these things. I
 23 do love the border. And Senator Blanco and Senator
 24 [sic] Ordaz, thank you so much for having me here in El
 25 Paso.

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1 You know, having -- having grown up on the
 2 border in [sic] the Brownsville-Matamoros border, I
 3 understand the border very well. I spent my entire
 4 career working on economic development up and down the
 5 border. And I was surprised to see, Secretary, when I
 6 joined TxDOT, one, I think the last time there was a
 7 TxDOT commissioner from the border was around 2015,
 8 which is (indiscernible) from here.
 9 But prior to that, I think, at least from
 10 my region, was 1994. Okay? It was over 30 years ago.
 11 And so it's neat to see that I -- you know, that I get
 12 to be in this position. But at the same time, though,
 13 because my background is in economic development, I was
 14 excited to see that House Bill 1, The General
 15 Appropriations Act, has transportation under Article
 16 VII, which is economic development. Not Article VI,
 17 which is infrastructure. It's Article VII, which is
 18 economic development. And that tells me a lot about how
 19 the state sees transportation. We are an economic
 20 development entity. And the border is a big economic
 21 driver, as we all know, and why we're here today.
 22 But without the border and without the
 23 investment along the border, the state of Texas cannot
 24 continue doing what it does. And so I'm excited to be
 25 in these conversations. I think the more we talk about



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1 these things, the more, you know, folks will understand
 2 it.
 3 But at the same time, the neat thing that's
 4 happening right now is that it's not just us talking
 5 about how important the border is. Because of
 6 nearshoring, we hear folks from other parts of the
 7 state, from other parts of the country, talk about why
 8 we need to invest in the border. And, us, you know
 9 we're always going to be seen as biased because we are
 10 from here. But when folks from outside of the region
 11 start talking about the border, it's a whole different
 12 deal. Right?
 13 And so I think we need to take advantage of
 14 that. And I think it's conversations in committees like
 15 this that allow us to capitalize on those conversations.
 16 And so thank you again for having me. And
 17 Secretary, also thank you again for hosting us.
 18 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you, Commissioner,
 19 for not just being here, but for all you do.
 20 And next I want to recognize Mexico's
 21 Consul General in El Paso, Mauricio Ibarra. There you
 22 are.
 23 MR. IBARRA: First of all, thank you for
 24 the -- for the invitation. I think it's really
 25 important to have these bilateral discussions on these

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1 subjects here, especially here in El Paso.
 2 Being the BTAC, a Border Trade Advisory
 3 Committee, I think it's really important that these
 4 issues like border infrastructure, transportation,
 5 waiting times at the border, I think that's always very
 6 important. Trade for this community is key, and
 7 everything that happens on one side of the border
 8 affects the other.
 9 So we -- we should really come to this
 10 common ground in terms of what we need to be doing to
 11 really promote and increase trade here in the region.
 12 This is a very binational region in the border,
 13 Secretary. And let me tell you that, yes, there are
 14 problems, as in many parts of the border. But the
 15 difference here is that they are resolved with
 16 tremendous collaboration with our partners. With the
 17 Mayor, with the Judge, with the Senator, with the
 18 commissioners, with everybody here. And never -- we
 19 never get chaos here in this part of the border. We
 20 solve that before. Problems, as always, but we try to
 21 deal with that. So my only -- my only -- I cannot stray
 22 (phonetic) enough to say that we really need to promote
 23 actions that foster and improve trade in the region, and
 24 avoid all these actions that probably -- you know, slow
 25 down trade that affects not only Mexico, but both sides.

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1 So thank you for coming and visit. This is
 2 great to have -- to have you here (indiscernible) and to
 3 have experts on how we can, exactly, move forward in the
 4 promotion of trade. Thank you.
 5 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. Thank you
 6 for being here. Thank you for your words.
 7 I want to now recognize Committee and
 8 Consul General in Dallas, Susan Harper, to say a few
 9 words.
 10 MS. HARPER: Good morning, (speaking
 11 foreign language.)
 12 First, I would like to say, Secretary, that
 13 I believe that it's your experience, both in the private
 14 sector and in the public sector, that gives you the
 15 leadership role here because I know that you have been
 16 involved in that trade yourself, personally, to Canada
 17 as well as Mexico and other parts of the world. And I
 18 think -- I think that's key to what we're doing here.
 19 I would also say that you cannot talk about
 20 trade crossing borders without acknowledging the
 21 importance of security. That's true in every border in
 22 the world, including another border a little bit north
 23 of here, that we tend to focus on more on the Canadian
 24 side. But it's important to acknowledge that because
 25 sometimes people need to hear that we recognize that

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1 when we're emphasizing trade. But we are emphasizing
 2 trade here because -- we are here because this is a key
 3 part of the North American trade border. And I think
 4 people at the last BTAC meeting heard -- for example,
 5 from CPKC, which does a rail from northern Canada to
 6 southern Mexico. And it's key to recognize road and
 7 rail are key to our kind of trade: Canadian, Mexico
 8 [sic], and American. And we need to look at all of
 9 those aspects.
 10 And, yes, ports and airports are important,
 11 but it's essential to the North America trade
 12 relationship that we look at the kinds of infrastructure
 13 that this group concentrates on. Because to borrow back
 14 from the judge, it's important to see that there are two
 15 sides to a border.
 16 Again, thank you for your leadership,
 17 Secretary, that my colleague who's the Canadian in
 18 Monterrey is also here because we need to keep working
 19 together on these issues.
 20 I would like to make sure that everybody
 21 has in their vocabulary another word, which is
 22 friendshoring. Not just reshoring or nearshoring, but
 23 friendshoring. Because it's not enough to be looking
 24 for business partners who are cost competitive and
 25 innovative, as our companies always do. They have to be



<p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p> <p>1 reliable and credible in the supply chains. And I don't 2 think there's a better example of friendshoring than the 3 USMCA or the CUSMA. 4 We -- we believe that it was negotiated at 5 a difficult time when a lot of people were not believing 6 in trade. And all three countries said it is in our 7 individual and collective interest to be building this 8 integrated economy because it makes us globally 9 competitive. I'm picking up on so many things that 10 others have made. 11 But that's why we're here, and that's why, 12 to pick up on another thing, we need to be at these 13 kinds of meetings. This is my fifth trip to the border, 14 second to El Paso. I will admit. It's a beautiful 15 city. And -- but because we need to be here to 16 understand it, to see how we can help build the trade, 17 it's the positive message that we need to take away to 18 our companies and our colleagues. To say, yes, it can 19 be improved, but we are building something that is 20 fundamentally necessary, essential to all three 21 economies. 22 So thank you again for inviting us to join 23 you in this key discussion. 24 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. And I think 25 it's very important that we remember that we've got two</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p> <p>1 competitiveness, as Sue and others have said, we really 2 need to focus -- we need to focus on our backyard. We 3 need to focus on North American competitiveness. And we 4 do that through infrastructure. We do that through 5 policies. And that's -- that's the magic, I think, of 6 what's going to happen today. So thank you. Thank you. 7 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. Thank you so 8 much for your words. 9 And I'm going to insert a little editorial 10 privilege comment here in listening to all this 11 conversation. 12 I think the work of this committee is so 13 important. And I think it's incumbent upon us to -- you 14 know, I've heard several of you mention, you know, 15 sometimes the negative on the news -- the attention to 16 the border is not what we would like. We need -- every 17 person in this room needs to be talking to the public. 18 The public needs to understand. They need to understand 19 those beautiful fruits and vegetables they get, a lot of 20 them came from the other side of the border. The -- the 21 washing machines they use, the refrigerators, the beer 22 they drink. I mean, I can go on and on. It needs to be 23 communicated to the public. To Jane Citizen and Joe 24 Six-Pack, and all the people sitting out there that, 25 maybe, turn on the television and see things that are</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p> <p>1 border neighbors. And you mentioned that Sandra 2 Shaddick, who is our Consul General in Monterrey, is 3 here. Would you like to say a word? 4 MS. SHADDICK: I'll be very brief. 5 First, I emphatically agree with everything 6 Susan just said. From -- from -- I guess my main 7 message here today would be this border really matters 8 to Canada, too. So a border does have two sides, but it 9 also has many, many stakeholders. And I work with 10 Canadian companies on the Mexican side of the border, 11 and we have, you know, an enormous concentration of 12 companies in Ciudad Juarez, all across Coahuila and 13 Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon. And this border matters. 14 So the privilege -- and really, Secretary 15 of State, thank you so much. I think it's vision -- it 16 speaks to your vision to include Canada, and that would 17 be Susan, normally. But it's even one step further to 18 include Canada on the other side of the border. It 19 speaks to the interconnected reality that we face every 20 day. 21 And then just the last thing I'll say, more 22 and more we're talking about nearshoring all of the time 23 in Monterrey. Literally, every single day. It's a very 24 exciting moment, not just for Monterrey, but for all of 25 North America. And as we talk about global</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p> <p>1 not so wonderful about the border. We need to be 2 talking about the wonderful things. And I think we need 3 to be doing that a lot more. I think that needs to be a 4 focus of every person in this room. 5 So I want to recognize now Caroline Mays, 6 the director of Planning and Modal Programs for Texas 7 Department of Transportation to conduct our roll call, 8 and we're going to go about our business. 9 MS. MAYS: Good morning. Good morning, 10 Secretary, and good morning all BTAC members, and all 11 our dignitaries and invited guests. 12 So I have the honor of, actually, passing 13 Claudia to do a roll call for BTAC members. 14 Please, Claudia, go ahead. 15 MS. LAGOS: Madam Secretary, we're going to 16 start. 17 So we have Rafael Aldrete? 18 MR. ALDRETE: Present. 19 MS. LAGOS: Arreola? 20 MR. ARREOLA: Here. 21 MS. LAGOS: Jon Barela? 22 MR. BARELA: Present. 23 MS. LAGOS: Luis Bazan? 24 MR. BAZAN: Present. 25 MS. LAGOS: Eduardo Calvo?</p>



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1 MR. CALVO: Present.
 2 MS. LAGOS: Eduardo Campirano? John
 3 Esparza?
 4 MS. LAGOS: Raquel Espinosa?
 5 MS. ESPINOSA: Here.
 6 MS. LAGOS: Juan Antonio Flores? Dante
 7 Galeazzi --
 8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hector Garza has a
 9 proxy.
 10 MS. LAGOS: Cynthia Garza-Reyes?
 11 MS. GARZA-REYES: Present.
 12 MS. LAGOS: Jake Giesbrecht?
 13 MR. GIESBRECHT: Present.
 14 MS. LAGOS: Maria-Elena Giner?
 15 MR. STEWART: Michael Stewart as proxy.
 16 MS. LAGOS: Iliana Holguin?
 17 MS. HOLGUIN: Good morning. Present.
 18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It would be good if
 19 everyone checks to see if they're muted.
 20 MS. LAGOS: Lisa Loftus? Marga Lopez?
 21 Stan Meador?
 22 MR. MEADOR: Present.
 23 MS. LAGOS: Daniel Mendoza? Jason Modglin?
 24 Kyle Morgan?
 25 MR. MORGAN: Present.

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1 MS. LAGOS: Juan Olaguibel? Rolando
 2 Salinas?
 3 MR. MAGEE: Daniel Magee sitting in for
 4 Eagle Pass proxy.
 5 MS. LAGOS: Gerry Schwebel?
 6 MR. SCHWEBEL: Present.
 7 MS. LAGOS: Pete Sepulveda? Daniel Silva?
 8 Roberto Tinajero?
 9 MR. TINAJERO: Present.
 10 MS. LAGOS: Victor Trevino?
 11 MR. TREVINO: Present.
 12 MS. LAGOS: Sam Vale?
 13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's here.
 14 (Speaking simultaneously.)
 15 MS. LAGOS: Cameron Walker?
 16 MR. WALKER: Present.
 17 MS. LAGOS: Carlos Yerena?
 18 Did I miss any of the members?
 19 MR. DIAZ: Luis Diaz, RGVMPO.
 20 MS. LAGOS: Thank you.
 21 Madam Secretary, we have the quorum.
 22 SECRETARY NELSON: Okay. The quorum is
 23 established.
 24 Now, I'm going to move the adoption of the
 25 minutes from the November 9th, 2023, meeting of the

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1 Border Trade Advisory Committee held in Austin. I hope
 2 everyone has reviewed those minutes.
 3 And I'll call for a motion to adopt the
 4 minutes?
 5 MR. CALVO: So move.
 6 SECRETARY NELSON: Eduardo Calvo. Okay.
 7 Moves that the minutes be adopted. Is there any
 8 objection -- wait. I need a second. Somebody second?
 9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.
 10 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. All those in
 11 favor of adoption of the minutes say aye?
 12 (Chorus of ayes.)
 13 SECRETARY NELSON: The minutes are adopted.
 14 Anybody oppose those?
 15 SECRETARY NELSON: The minutes of the
 16 November 9th meeting are adopted.
 17 Moving on, I want to recognize Marvina
 18 Cephas, International Trade and Border Planning
 19 Coordinator from the Texas Department of Transportation
 20 to provide a recap of our November 9th meeting.
 21 Marvina? She has to take a swig of water.
 22 MS. CEPHAS: Good morning again. We have
 23 Wi-Fi available for anyone who wants to use it. The
 24 password and the name will be up on the screen.
 25 SECRETARY NELSON: That's awful little.

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1 MS. CEPHAS: Can you please increase it?
 2 SECRETARY NELSON: Take a picture of it and
 3 blow it up. That's what you need to do.
 4 MS. CEPHAS: Thank you.
 5 SECRETARY NELSON: There we go. There we
 6 go. Thank you.
 7 MS. CEPHAS: Okay. I'm giving a brief
 8 recap of our last BTAC meeting held on
 9 November 9th, 2023. The last BTAC meeting had five
 10 (indiscernible).
 11 First, we provided an update on the
 12 Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Master Plan update.
 13 The Master Plan advancement of this study's
 14 recommendation in the border district BTMP projects.
 15 Second, we had presentations from the
 16 Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railway Operations, the
 17 Mexican border states with Texas on the regional
 18 infrastructure project, and the I-27 Ports-to-Plains
 19 Corridor analysis update.
 20 Lastly, we had an overview of House Bill
 21 4422 on border security to public safety, technology,
 22 and transportation infrastructure improvements.
 23 One: BTAC progress update. Ms. Claudia
 24 Lagos Galindo, manager of the International Trade and
 25 Border Planning Branch with TxDOT, provided updates



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1 regarding the advancement of the Texas-Mexico Border
 2 Transportation Master Plan.
 3 Epi Gonzalez, Pete Alvarez, and Raul Ortega
 4 brief members on the BTMP projects and funding
 5 allocations in the Laredo, Pharr, and El Paso Districts.
 6 The projects were categorized based on
 7 funding and indicated a priority as being given to
 8 projects that have alleviate [sic] congestions at the
 9 Texas-Mexico borders, and facilitate the movement of
 10 goods and people.
 11 Vanessa Perez recommended that a border
 12 district region be created since the TxDOT border
 13 districts are currently grouped with urban districts.
 14 She noted that Laredo, Pharr, and El Paso were different
 15 from the other urban districts due to their locations
 16 along the U.S.-Mexico border.
 17 Morris Libson mentioned that they have a
 18 second bridge in Del Rio, bridge two in Eagle Pass, and
 19 they are planning bridge three for Eagle Pass in
 20 Maverick County area. And said the area should receive
 21 some consideration in planning as days in anticipated
 22 increase in traffic that will be coming over the
 23 bridges.
 24 BTAC members offered comments and questions
 25 on the projects and priority levels.

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1 Two: Canadian Pacific Kansas City
 2 railroad. Mr. Cody [sic] Bullard gave a presentation on
 3 the unit merge Kansas City Southern railroad and Canada
 4 Pacific Railroad, which provided a first single line
 5 railroad from Mexico to the U.S. to Canada.
 6 Mr. Bullard mentioned that the network
 7 helped create an efficient regional supply chain
 8 facilitating via ensuring and improving the speed and
 9 safety of transporting goods while reducing road
 10 congestions.
 11 Eduardo Calvo asked about how to deal with
 12 challenges working with three different customs
 13 agencies.
 14 Mr. Bullard said they believe it's the
 15 railroad's responsibility to adapt and work with the
 16 requirements, and they strive to be a trusted partner
 17 with the agencies.
 18 Three: Texas border state presentation.
 19 Devorah Karren shared overview of the current
 20 nearshoring investment projects in Nuevo Leon. She
 21 described the benefits of the state's strategic
 22 positioning including the port Colombia-Laredo Bridge.
 23 Gerry Schwebel asked the status of the
 24 Colombia-Laredo road, its size, and when it would be
 25 completed.

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1 Ms. Karren said that it will be completed
 2 in January 2024. It will be a four-lane highway.
 3 Four: I-27 Ports-to-Plains Corridor.
 4 Ms. Lorena Echeverria de Misi and Cary
 5 Karnstadt provided an update on the I-27 Ports-to-Plains
 6 Corridor analysis. Ms. De Missi and Ms. Karnstadt
 7 explained that the study's findings were based on
 8 imports received in workshops, in listening sessions,
 9 with key border stakeholders in metropolitan
 10 organizations.
 11 In addition, they presented data regarding
 12 the forecast and group of the corridor.
 13 Eduardo Calvo asked if they have looked at
 14 connecting I-27 to I-10, and how it will benefit the
 15 ports in El Paso.
 16 Ms. De Missi said the development of the
 17 implementation plan considers such connections.
 18 Ms. Caroline Mays mentioned that they have
 19 some limitations as part of the I-27 destination due to
 20 legislation.
 21 Five: House Bill 4422.
 22 Sergio Vasquez gave an overview of the
 23 House Bill 4422, which directs TxDOT to conduct a study
 24 of (indiscernible) with other state and local agencies
 25 on public safety, border security, and transportation

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1 infrastructure from the Texas-Mexico border crossing
 2 onto the state's highway system.
 3 The study needs to ensure safe, efficient
 4 and seamless commercial motor vehicle connectivity that
 5 strengthens Operation Loan Star's efforts. The bill
 6 requires TxDOT to submit a report on the study's
 7 findings by December 1, 2024.
 8 Caroline Mays noted that the working group
 9 will need the help to know the right law enforcement
 10 agencies to be involved and asked of BTAC to consider
 11 how transportation can facilitate border security.
 12 Lastly, the committee held an open
 13 discussion regarding future meetings and topics.
 14 Gerry Schwebel suggested that BTAC submit a
 15 letter expressing support for the border infrastructure
 16 projects that has filed applications for presidential
 17 permits.
 18 Additionally, Stan Meador and Eduardo Calvo
 19 offered recommendations for future meetings. Secretary
 20 Nelson thanked BTAC members and guests for the
 21 participation in the meeting.
 22 This concludes the recap of the
 23 November 9th, 2023 BTAC meeting. Thank you.
 24 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you.
 25 Members, is there any questions or



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1 comments? Nope?

2 I now would like to recognize Claudia

3 Lagos, manager of the International Trade and Border

4 Planning Branch from the Texas Department of

5 Transportation, and consultant Juan Carlos Villa to

6 deliver progress updates on the -- we skipped one whole

7 part. I'm sorry. Hold that thought.

8 We're going to have Mildred Litchfield,

9 Deputy Division Director, and Sergio Vasquez, Border

10 Program manager, from the Texas Department of

11 Transportation provide status updates on the Unified

12 Transportation Program, and the Texas-Mexico Border

13 Transportation Master Plan.

14 I'll hand it over to Mildred, and then

15 we'll go from there.

16 MS. LITCHFIELD: Good morning, everyone.

17 I'm Mildred Litchfield. I'm the Deputy Division

18 Director for the Transportation Planning and Programming

19 Division. And thank you for having me here.

20 Prior to Sergio Vasquez giving an update on

21 the Border Transportation Master Plan projects, I'm just

22 going to give a quick overview of the Unified

23 Transportation Program. Let you know where we are with

24 the annual cycle and the future distribution of the UTP

25 categories.

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1 Next slide, please. All right. Perfect.

2 Now I have it figured out.

3 So what is the UTP? So many of you-all

4 know, but those that don't, the UTP is TxDOT's ten-year

5 plan that guides the development of transportation

6 projects across the state. And so a lot of people -- we

7 say this frequently, but those may ask, "Well, what do

8 you mean by guiding the development transportation

9 projects?"

10 And so UTP does this by forecasting a

11 ten -- having a ten-year forecast. And that projects

12 revenues for the next ten years. And those revenues are

13 distributed across 12 funding categories. Those

14 categories are associated with TxDOT strategic goals.

15 And these funds are then allocated to TxDOT's districts,

16 the Metropolitan Planning Organizations, as well as

17 other program managers throughout the state to identify

18 priority projects, and then to make sure that those

19 projects are developing within that next ten-year

20 period.

21 The goal is to ensure that we are

22 monitoring the portfolio of these projects, ensuring

23 that projects are developing, and letting within that

24 next ten-year period.

25 This UTP is an annual cycle. It starts

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1 every fall, where we get a new ten-year forecast, and

2 ends in August when the Commission adopts the UTP. It

3 can be updated more frequently based on future changes.

4 And so here's a preview of the UTP over the

5 years. And so you see on the far -- this is a

6 comparison of the annual forecast and the growth of UTP,

7 compared to the population growth. You'll see on the

8 far left-hand side, that's the UTP -- was estimated to

9 be about -- was about 29 billion in 2012. Compared to

10 population of approximately 26 million across the state.

11 Today, we have a population of

12 approximately 31 million, and a UTP exceeding

13 100 billion. The forecast according to UTP is

14 predominantly federal funds, traditional state highway

15 funds, Proposition 1, and Proposition 7.

16 For the '24 UTP, that was approximately

17 \$100 billion. 43 percent was federal funding, and

18 54 percent was state funding. It was the passing of

19 Proposition 1 and Proposition 7 that nearly doubled the

20 UTP, as you'll see the comparison of '26 to 2017.

21 UTP funding levels have stayed at about

22 75 billion between 2017 and 2022. And you'll see in the

23 '24 is when we reached the record breaking 100 billion

24 UTP.

25 The draft UTP for the 2025 period -- the

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1 ten-year 2025 period was presented to the Commission in

2 January. And it's anticipated to be about \$102 billion.

3 This actually represents a three-and-a-half times more

4 UTP funding since 2012. And the population has

5 increased an estimated 19 percent since that time.

6 And so going to today's UTP, that is

7 governing the portfolio is the 2024 UTP. The 2024 UTP

8 is approximately 106 billion, as mentioned, and it was

9 distributed across these 12 funding categories. And so

10 the Commission adopts the UTP in August every year, as

11 mentioned. And when they adopt the UTP, they approve

12 the amount of money that is available in the UTPs, the

13 106 billion, how the funding is distributed across the

14 state to these corresponding funding categories. And

15 for -- they also approve certain specific funding for

16 mobility projects in categories 2, 4, and 12.

17 It's also important to note that the border

18 regions of Texas see funding from all 12 categories.

19 And so these categories are managed by different TxDOT

20 Districts, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and

21 other program managers.

22 But additionally, there is funding specific

23 in Category 11, District Discretionary. And that --

24 those funds are specific to the border region. And the

25 2024 UTP dedicated 120 million to the border regions for



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1 the first two years of the UTP, fiscal years 2024 and
2 2025.

3 And so this is a slide that you saw last
4 November, the last meeting. And it's just brought --
5 again, to highlight the amount of funding that was
6 provided to the border regions. To the El Paso region,
7 to the -- the Laredo region, and also to the Pharr
8 region. Though this slide is broken down and
9 categorized by TxDOT districts, it is important to note
10 that we are recessing with the way the slides are
11 depicted for this UTP 'cause we do know that -- with the
12 recent house bill, that the districts have been
13 reclassified. And so we are looking to recategorize
14 this for the next presentation.

15 This is also a slide that you saw last
16 November, just to refresh your memories. That, as
17 mentioned, the UTP funding for districts has grown about
18 356 percent since the 2016 UTP. This growth in the
19 border districts outpaces the UTP overall growth, which
20 is actually 159 percentage in growth.

21 Though we are developing the 2025 UTP,
22 you'll see it's not listed here. It is still a little
23 too early to show how much allocation has been provided
24 to the TxDOT border districts because the UTP we're
25 currently on shows on a different slide.

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1 Developing project recommendations. We
2 have distributed the funds to the TxDOT districts, the
3 Metropolitan Planning Organizations for this next UTP
4 period, but we are still assessing statewide funding as
5 found in categories 4R, and categories 12 that will be
6 selected on projects.

7 And here's an overview of the typical
8 annual cycle for the UTP. So the 2025 UTP cycle, we are
9 here in February. And so many of you-all know that in
10 January, the Commission heard a presentation provided by
11 Tito Gonzalez, showing how we are planning to distribute
12 the funds to -- across the 12 funding categories.

13 And so though we are here in February, it's
14 important to recognize and understand that the UTP is an
15 annual cycle that actually never stops. And so as
16 mentioned, it begins in the fall. And every fall, we
17 receive the next forecast. And it is approved in August
18 by the Commission. But once we identify projects and
19 select projects, it is very important that TxDOT, the
20 TxDOT districts, the Metropolitan Planning
21 Organizations, and local stakeholders are working
22 collaboratively to continuously monitor the portfolio
23 projects to make sure those projects are developing, and
24 we're getting them ready to let within the next -- next
25 ten-year period.

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1 The cycle never stops. It is important to
2 constantly look at your priority projects, identify your
3 priority projects, ensuring we have the right fund --
4 the funding that we have, on the right projects, on
5 those priority projects, and that they are progressing
6 to development. And so all funding categories do
7 support project development. And it's important that
8 we're identifying which funding is going to priority
9 projects.

10 And so the slide also does show that though
11 we did present the Commission in January, the proposed
12 distribution to the 12 funding categories, we will --
13 again, right at this time, we are working with the TxDOT
14 districts to look at the priority projects for this 2025
15 UTP period. We are looking to identify which projects
16 will receive the funding that is approved by the
17 Commission for Categories 2, 4, and 12. But the
18 Commission does not approve the funding in all
19 categories. That's where it is important for local
20 stakeholders to work with your TxDOT districts as well
21 as your Metropolitan Planning Organizations to identify
22 the other categories of funding that will be approved on
23 the priority projects. And so continuously working and
24 communicating with your TxDOT districts, the
25 Metropolitan Planning Organizations, to ensure that we

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1 are applying those funds to your top priority projects
2 is key.

3 During this cycle, the Commission -- we are
4 working with them to look at which projects we
5 recommended for Categories 2, 4 and 12. We will then
6 have -- Tito will present to the Commission, again, in
7 June, and that is where the Commission will consider the
8 priority projects and the selection of the statewide
9 funds for Categories 2, 4, and 12 -- or for Category 12
10 and 4, and (indiscernible) with the projects
11 (indiscernible) with Category 2.

12 In -- we'll have that presentation in June,
13 and then we'll have our typical public involvement in
14 July. And that is where the public can make comments on
15 the projects that are recommended, as well as the
16 overall distribution of funds. And then following
17 public comment in July, that is where in August the
18 Commission will do -- recommend -- will do final
19 approval of the UTP. And so it is important that this
20 annual cycle, you never stop communicating with your
21 TxDOT districts and MPOs.

22 It's always important that we assess the
23 priorities and that we ensure that we are communicating
24 to make sure those projects are being developed and
25 funded.



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1 And so what was presented in January? This
 2 is the draft 2025 ten-year forecast that was distributed
 3 across the 12 funding categories. And so this slide
 4 provides an overview of the overall distribution. The
 5 ten-year forecast provided additional funding that
 6 provides funding across the ten-year period. This
 7 additional funding that you'll see in the middle column,
 8 is represented in the additional funds that's provided
 9 to UTP. As mentioned, the 2024 UTP was about \$100
 10 billion. This next UTP is approximately 102.6 billion.
 11 This estimated 102.6 billion coupled with
 12 the investments that were provided to develop projects,
 13 as well as routine maintenance contracts. All of that
 14 together shows an overall investment of approximately
 15 146 billion towards transportation.
 16 Following this January Commission meeting,
 17 the -- the state, the department, the planning division
 18 did distribute allocations to the TxDOT districts and
 19 MPOs, so they can further their planning for their
 20 projects within their region. And so they all have
 21 planning targets to help assess which projects and
 22 funding they have available for the next ten years. And
 23 this is where they continue to work with locals, and
 24 work collaboratively to identify projects and see where
 25 those funds that they manage and they organize for their

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1 portfolio, where they can be directed.
 2 And with that, that concludes my
 3 presentation. And Sergio Vasquez will now dive into
 4 details of the projects that are in the BTMP to see
 5 progress and where we're going with those projects.
 6 SECRETARY NELSON: Are there any questions
 7 before the next presentation? Gerry?
 8 MR. SCHWEBEL: Good morning, Madam
 9 Secretary, Gerry Schwebel for the record.
 10 Ms. Litchfield, that Category 3 funding
 11 that as -- you say is local funding, when you say it's
 12 "discretionary," whose discretion?
 13 MS. LITCHFIELD: So Category 12 is
 14 Commission discretion. Category 3 is the actual
 15 nontraditional funding. So it does include some local
 16 funding, but it also includes other funding that is not
 17 typically found in the state highway fund. And so the
 18 portions of it could be local funding, could include
 19 bonds and other proceeds. It also can include other
 20 types of funding as well. A Category 3 would include
 21 some revenues that are received outside the state
 22 highway fund. For instance, toll revenues are included
 23 with the -- would be included in Category 3 as well as
 24 other, like, federal loans.
 25 MR. SCHWEBEL: So is that something that's

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1 discussed at the MPO level?
 2 MS. LITCHFIELD: So the Category 3 funds,
 3 those would be funds that you-all would discuss, and
 4 then propose to be placed on projects within your local
 5 area.
 6 MR. SCHWEBEL: Okay. Thank you.
 7 SECRETARY NELSON: Other questions?
 8 Thank you.
 9 MR. VASQUEZ: Good morning. Can you guys
 10 hear me? Good morning. Thank you, Secretary Nelson;
 11 thank you for your time, BTAC members.
 12 My name is Sergio Vasquez. I'm the Border
 13 Program Manager with the Texas Department of
 14 Transportation. Today I want to provide an update of
 15 the Border Transportation Master Plan.
 16 As Ms. Cephaz mentioned, at the last Border
 17 Trade Advisory Committee meeting, we provided an update
 18 of the BTMP, the project status -- and I apologize in
 19 advance because the presentation is a little bit
 20 smaller. So I did print out the tabloids. You'll find
 21 them at the back of your agendas so you can follow along
 22 with it.
 23 But before we get started, I did want to
 24 start with off with a brief reintroduction of what the
 25 BTMP is.

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1 For those of you that do not know, the
 2 Border Transportation Master Plan was adopted by the
 3 Texas Transportation Commission in 2021. And what it
 4 did is it identified current and future transportation
 5 needs, challenges and opportunities for moving people
 6 and goods. All (indiscernible) policy, program, and
 7 projects recommendation to address such needs.
 8 So what came out of the BTMP? In 2021, the
 9 BTMP came up with 661 projects on the Texas-Mexico
 10 Border for a total estimated cost of 37.4 billion
 11 dollars. These projects were divided between Texas and
 12 Mexico. 559 projects are on the Texas U.S. side, with
 13 an estimated cost of 32.7 billion. And 102 projects are
 14 on the Mexican side, representing 4.7.
 15 As you can see in this slide, we divided
 16 them based on connectivity, asset preservation, safety,
 17 mobility and reliability, and multimodal.
 18 With that being said, it's been a couple of
 19 years since the BTMP was implemented, and the clean has
 20 been list -- the list has been clean. So right now, we
 21 stand at 641 total projects. There was some duplicates.
 22 So this list is accurate as of January 2024.
 23 As you can see, there's 539 projects in
 24 Texas. 300 of those 539 projects TxDOT is a sponsor
 25 for, and these are what these tabloids are going to be



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1 focusing on. During the last Border Trade Advisory
 2 Committee meeting when we provided an update, BTAC
 3 members mentioned that they would like to see a visual
 4 representation of what the status is of the projects,
 5 what has been constructed since the implementation of
 6 the program, what's currently being construction --
 7 constructed, what's being let and funded in the 2024
 8 UTP, and what's unfunded.

9 So with that being said, from the 300 TxDOT
 10 projects, we have 267 projects that are in
 11 implementation phase. That includes that they have
 12 either been finalized, construction is complete, or that
 13 they are fully funded, or they're in the 2024 UTP.
 14 Eight of them are canceled. And 25 need additional
 15 information that we're working on with the districts to
 16 be able to get those done. From the 267 that are in the
 17 implementation process, 43 have been completed and let,
 18 85 are funded in the 2024 UTP, and 139 are in the UTP
 19 and beyond 2024. What that means is that they are not
 20 fully funded.

21 With that being said, I do want to show an
 22 overview of the 300 projects that TxDOT is responsible
 23 for. As you can see on the first page of the
 24 tabloids -- it's going to be at the back of the folders.
 25 It should be at the very -- if you pick up the

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1 packages -- yeah. It's a big one. All right. Perfect.
 2 So first off, we start off by breaking down
 3 the districts. So as you can see, we have construction
 4 completed -- and we're also mapping them out. That way
 5 we can see exactly where the projects are at -- where
 6 the completed projects are at.

7 And first off -- we start off looking at
 8 the entire border region. So for the construction
 9 completed of the 300 projects, we have eight. One for
 10 El Paso, two Laredo, and five for Pharr. Under
 11 construction, we have 35 projects, fully funded on the
 12 2024 UTP. We have 85 projects that are fully funded and
 13 future projects that might have some funding, but that
 14 are not fully funded or might not have any funding at
 15 all, that's 139 projects.

16 So we still have quite a few projects that
 17 are not fully funded. And we do have a total of eight
 18 canceled projects. That gives a total of 275 projects.
 19 I mentioned early on that we have 300 TxDOT-sponsored
 20 projects. That's because those 25 projects that we
 21 still need additional information from, they're not
 22 being categorized yet. Until we get that information,
 23 that's when we'll be able to see if they've been
 24 completed, if they're under construction, or if they are
 25 future projects.

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1 With that being said, I'm going to start
 2 off with El Paso. This is where I want to apologize.
 3 Hopefully you guys have an access copy of the tabloids.
 4 Yes? Okay. Perfect.

5 So we start off -- and we start off with
 6 mapping -- first off, what's a completed project in the
 7 El Paso district? As you can see, I'm not going to go
 8 over them all, to be conscious of the time.

9 First off, we have one completed project in
 10 the El Paso district, which is CSJ:0167-01-117. And as
 11 you can see, the estimate cost of this project is
 12 \$1.7 million. It received the \$1.7 million, and it's
 13 fully funded. You will see that mapped on the lower
 14 left-hand side map on the green color.

15 Next, we identified the projects under
 16 construction. And for the El Paso district, we have a
 17 total of 14. You will see all 14 projects are mapped
 18 with the exception of two, and that's because there's no
 19 current (indiscernible) and we're working on getting
 20 those -- information there, but we do have the
 21 information of how much funding was allocated and if
 22 they're fully funded or not.

23 So what we did is we provided the project's
 24 description that was provided in the BTMP, what let year
 25 it occurred, what the CSJ is, what the limits are from,

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1 what was the estimated funding, how much was -- how much
 2 funding was actually provided, and if it's fully funded.
 3 On these projects under construction, they are fully
 4 funded.

5 Next, we -- on the blue color, we
 6 identified all the colors, all the projects that are
 7 funded in the 2024 UTP. As Mildred mentioned, they are
 8 working on the 2025 UTP. That's going to be, hopefully,
 9 approved by the Commission later on during the year.
 10 But this was just approved in August of 2023.

11 The projects listed here, they have been
 12 approved by Commission, and what this does is that it
 13 shows us what the future plans are on 2024 UTP in the El
 14 Paso District.

15 So the El Paso District has two new
 16 projects. Most of them are mapped. I believe all of
 17 them on this page, the first 17 projects, are mapped.
 18 As you can see, they're all on the left-hand side, and
 19 we provided the same information. We shared what was
 20 the estimated cost of funding, how much funding of
 21 categories was provided, and the funding status of it,
 22 which I do see all of it is full because they were fully
 23 funded on the 2024 UTP.

24 And lastly, we have the potential future
 25 projects. These are projects that are not funded. As I



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1 mentioned early on, we have, I believe, 139 projects in
 2 the BTMP that are not funded. And for the El Paso
 3 District, we have a total of 46 projects on the BTMP
 4 that are not fully funded. As Mildred mentioned, the
 5 2025 UTP is undergoing (indiscernible), and we just
 6 wanted to provide a visual of our presentation of what
 7 projects in the BTMP in this specific district still
 8 have an opportunity to be funded.

9 Last but not least, we also -- we have
 10 another page of potential future projects that are
 11 listed. The other side with additional projects that
 12 are not listed and mapped that way we can, kind of,
 13 provide a visual representation of exactly where these
 14 projects are in the region.

15 And then lastly, these are the projects --
 16 like I mentioned, we have 275 projects. El Paso
 17 District has 13 projects that we're working on with them
 18 to be able to get that additional information so that we
 19 can recategorize them as constructed, as fully funded,
 20 partially funded, or canceled projects. So that's why
 21 these projects are not listed on the overview of the
 22 El Paso District.

23 We also did the same thing for the Laredo
 24 District. The Laredo District, as well, has two
 25 completed projects. And they have a total of 13

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1 projects under construction. All projects are mapped
 2 with the exception of project number 13, and that's
 3 because of the (indiscernible) is currently available.
 4 And these maps are based on UTP data as of January 16th,
 5 2024.

6 Next item we have on the Laredo District:
 7 We also mapped the projects funded in the 2024 UTP. We
 8 started off by mapping out the first 13 projects in the
 9 district.

10 And then we go on to show the potential
 11 future projects into the Laredo region. The Laredo
 12 region has 53 projects that are not currently funded
 13 fully, and they are all mapped.

14 First off, we start off with the first 17
 15 projects. All 17 projects are mapped and listed on the
 16 sites and on the tabloids.

17 Next, we have an additional 15 projects
 18 that are not fully funded. We have an additional 15
 19 projects that list all the 15 projects that are not
 20 funded.

21 And lastly -- last but not least, we have
 22 two canceled projects with the Laredo District. I do
 23 want to point out that one of the canceled projects from
 24 the Laredo District is being canceled and replaced. So
 25 you will see that 0922-33-151. After speaking with the

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1 district, they are replacing that with a new CSJ, and
 2 you will see that note below.

3 We also did the same tabloids for Pharr.
 4 The Pharr District has a total of five completed
 5 projects -- they have a total five completed projects,
 6 eight projects under construction, 51 fully funded
 7 projects, and 40 future projects that are not fully
 8 funded.

9 As you can see, we start off with the same
 10 format as the other two districts. We start off with
 11 the completed projects, projects under construction,
 12 projects funded in the 2024 UTP.

13 We start off by listing 17 projects and
 14 mapped them. We continue on with the projects funded in
 15 the 2024 UTP, continue with the projects funded in the
 16 2024 UTP.

17 And then we move on. Under potential
 18 future projects are projects that are partially funded
 19 or not funded at all. We continue showing that.

20 And we finish off with the canceled
 21 projects and the projects that required additional
 22 information. We share the same information for all the
 23 projects. I wanted to be kind to the time, so I wanted
 24 to go a little fast on these, but I don't know if
 25 there's any questions or comments or concerns on the

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1 tabloids.

2 MR. GONZALEZ: Sergio, real quick -- good
 3 morning to everybody. Tito Gonzalez, director for
 4 Transportation Planning and Programming.

5 I just wanted to mention, I know it's a lot
 6 of information, right? But I think the main emphasis
 7 was to visualize so everybody can see the wealth of the
 8 projects that we're working on that have been
 9 constructed that are currently funding in the 2023 UTP,
 10 and all the wealth of future projects that we have to
 11 work on to get funded.

12 So I just wanted to mention that when you
 13 do see those projects that are in blue, that is their
 14 funding status as of 2024 UTP, but you'll see a column
 15 on there that talks about the let year. Right? So some
 16 of those let years may be out in '28, '29.

17 One of the things that we annually work
 18 on -- and the challenge is that those estimates continue
 19 to grow as prices continue to change and alter. So
 20 there's two things we have to look at. Right?

21 Every year we're looking at what was
 22 previously funded in the previous UTP. And then in
 23 addition to those other projects that are not funded.

24 So I just, kind of, wanted to help set that
 25 expectation 'cause every year we are looking at those



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1 that were previously fully funded to make sure that
 2 those estimates have not changed. And then also future
 3 projects that are in purple on the map. So that's
 4 really where you want to, hopefully, focus your
 5 attention on.

6 And as Mildred mentioned, work with your
 7 local stakeholders, work with your districts, work with
 8 your MPOs, so that you can prioritize those projects
 9 when we -- when the district submits those projects to
 10 complete for funding each year.

11 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. Very
 12 important to know. Go ahead.

13 MR. VASQUEZ: With that being said, I just
 14 wanted to briefly go over the -- the tabloids for the --
 15 everybody has a copy. By -- we are opened up for any
 16 comments, suggestions, or any (indiscernible) on this.
 17 Our contact information is there. You can contact
 18 myself or Claudia Lagos for this. But I'm open for --

19 MR. SCHWEBEL: Yes. I have a question,
 20 Madam Secretary.

21 Sergio -- and I think, maybe, also for you
 22 Tito. For the record, Gerry Schwebel.

23 Are we still abiding by the priorities that
 24 the BTMP imposed at the -- two years ago, high priority,
 25 immediate need, or is that criteria changing in any of

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1 these projects?

2 MR. GONZALEZ: Yeah. Sergio, you want to
 3 answer that? The way that I know, they are listed in
 4 the BTMP that way. Correct?

5 MS. MAYS: Tito --

6 SECRETARY NELSON: Caroline?

7 MS. MAYS: I can -- I can take that.

8 Yes, Gerry, those priorities are still
 9 valid. But again, the districts -- especially on the
 10 TxDOT projects, the districts are working on that to
 11 ensure that, one, those priorities continue to be. But
 12 also, there's other things that they have to consider on
 13 how quickly or how soon those projects move. So we have
 14 all the districts -- Pete is not here, but Epi, sitting
 15 next to you, from Laredo, and then we have Tomas, from
 16 here, generally looking at what can be moved forward,
 17 sooner or later, because, you know, during the project
 18 development, things can change, you know, right away,
 19 whatever. You know, and some fall behind.

20 But I have to tell you, the district did
 21 use the Border Master Plan priorities to really advance
 22 a lot of projects. That's why I was looking here. I
 23 was like, "Yeah, this is a lot of projects moving
 24 forward." And they're relentless about it. I know Epi
 25 has been very relentless on a lot of the stuff in

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1 Laredo, and really trying to move them as quickly as
 2 possible.

3 MR. SCHWEBEL: The reason I ask is -- Gerry
 4 Schwebel here -- the reason I asked is that for --
 5 exactly that reason. That two years ago we were
 6 thinking the scenario of the border was one. Scenario
 7 on the border today may be different in light of what's
 8 going on on the Mexican side of the border, that perhaps
 9 some of these projects become even more critical, and
 10 the need to accelerate some of these projects, that be
 11 the case.

12 MR. VASQUEZ: Right. As Caroline
 13 mentioned, right? So every year we go through that UTP
 14 cycle, right?

15 We basically go and relook at those
 16 priorities every year with the MPOs and the districts
 17 when they submit.

18 So even though the BTMP may not be updated
 19 every year, the districts and the MPOs are updating
 20 their priority list every single year when they submit
 21 projects at TxDOT for -- for competition for funding.
 22 So that is important.

23 SECRETARY NELSON: Any other questions?
 24 Comments? No? Okay.

25 MR. VASQUEZ: Perfect. Thank you.

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1 SECRETARY NELSON: Great. Thank you.

2 Now, I'd like to recognize Claudia Lagos,
 3 manager of the International Trade and Border Planning
 4 Branch from the Texas Department of Transportation.

5 That's okay. I'll speak slowly. And
 6 consultant Juan Carlos Villa to deliver progress updates
 7 on the Texas-Mexico Transportation Task Force, and the
 8 Commercial Vehicle Driver Training Program.

9 Both are part of the Border Transportation
 10 Master Plan advancing recommendations.

11 And I'm going to speak very slowly while
 12 Claudia makes her way to the microphone.

13 Perfect. Thank you. Go ahead.

14 MS. LAGOS: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

15 Good afternoon. My name is Claudia Lagos.
 16 I'm the International Trade and Border Planning Branch
 17 Manager with Texas Department of Transportation.

18 And today we would like to present, first,
 19 the Texas-Mexico Binational Task Force for Trade and
 20 Transportation. As probably you may remember, we
 21 mentioned and presented this effort probably a year and
 22 a half ago. But now, we would like to come and present
 23 it, like, the whole idea.

24 And the first thing that I would like to
 25 mention about this one is that this effort is part of



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1 the recommendations from the Border Master Plan. And as
 2 Sergio mentioned and explained us [sic] a little bit,
 3 the Border Master Plan is, kind of, the frame of
 4 everything that we do, and we are trying to advance all
 5 the recommendations that we got from the Border Master
 6 Plan.

7 So for this one, the recommendation was to
 8 implement a Texas-Mexico Task Force to provide a forum
 9 for a case in bilateral communication, coordination, and
 10 collaboration between Texas and Mexico on cross-border
 11 trade, transportation issues related to planning,
 12 programming, and implementation activity issues.

13 So the main idea for this one will be,
 14 like, to have a forum where we have -- like, really a
 15 call to action in terms of the initiatives that will be
 16 important, in a continuous effort between Texas and the
 17 four Mexican states, and probably the federal levels, if
 18 it's needed, on both sides. And I will have Juan Carlos
 19 Villa assisting me on explaining a little bit what we
 20 are proposing on this effort.

21 MR. VILLA: Thank you, Claudia. Thank you,
 22 everyone. My name is Juan Carlos Villa. I'm the
 23 program manager for the International Trade and Border
 24 Transportation Program at the Texas A&M Transportation
 25 Institute.

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1 And as we heard -- as we heard yesterday
 2 from Madam Secretary, and also from Senator Blanco, you
 3 know, the idea is to improve border trade, border
 4 transportation, and the economic viability of the two:
 5 Mexican and U.S. states. So with that goal, we are
 6 proposing this Texas-Mexico Binational Task Force for
 7 Trade and Transportation. It's a long name.

8 But anyway, the idea of this new group is
 9 to have a binational -- you know, different from what
 10 we're doing today at the BTAC. This will be a
 11 binational group and will have the objective of
 12 supporting the economic growth along the Texas-Mexico
 13 border.

14 The main pillars of this new group is to
 15 ensure the efficient and secure trade and transportation
 16 environment, will facilitate sustainable trade and
 17 transportation infrastructure initiatives, strengthen
 18 the supply chain competitiveness and resiliency, and
 19 promote innovation, communication, and data sharing.
 20 The idea is to have one group. We will be the
 21 binational committee. That's a high-level group, and
 22 then have specific binational technical working groups
 23 that will be developed according to specific priorities
 24 that will be set up by the initial group.

25 So the committee members, obviously, will

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1 be Texas and the four Mexican states. And as Claudia
 2 mentioned, if needed, we can bring on board the federal
 3 government for specific projects or specific initiatives
 4 that will be addressed. This will be cultured by a
 5 Texas member and one of the Mexican states, and will be,
 6 you know, rotated on an annual basis.

7 The members that we proposed, you know, are
 8 here in this table. On the left side, you can see the
 9 Texas members that include both public as well as
 10 private sector stakeholders. And on the Mexican side,
 11 same thing. You know, we try to, basically, have the
 12 same number of members that will be participating in
 13 this new group.

14 The idea is to, again, have this working
 15 group created, and then the -- on an as-needed basis.
 16 You know, that -- that way we don't have groups just
 17 getting together for the -- just for -- for discussing.
 18 But having the priorities set by the first group, and
 19 then this working group will be coming up with
 20 recommendations. And once the recommendation is done,
 21 you can create another one.

22 So again, this will be done -- at least to
 23 meet four times a year, and will be reporting back to
 24 the group on a regular basis. The idea is to have the
 25 kickoff meeting -- you know, one in Mexico, one in the

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1 U.S. side or the Texas side. I'm proposing to have the
 2 first meeting in Laredo during the first quarter of this
 3 year, and then moving forward with all the other
 4 meetings throughout the year.

5 The -- the activities that we are proposing
 6 to have before the meeting are shown here on the screen.
 7 For example, first, obtain the support from leadership
 8 at TxDOT, and then identify those members of the -- of
 9 the first group to be participating. Have meetings with
 10 them, and then discuss the criteria, especially for
 11 appointing members of the technical groups. You know,
 12 what will be the priorities of this -- that this group
 13 will take place. And then define the implementation
 14 strategies for this ongoing work and the communication
 15 that we are proposing.

16 The agenda is here on the screen. I will
 17 not go through it -- you know, in detail, but you can
 18 have it on your presentation. But these will be [sic]
 19 proposal for the agenda for the initial meeting.

20 And then finally, we have this -- the
 21 border activities following the meeting. You know, we
 22 just want to -- don't have a meeting, but for example,
 23 one of the things that we're proposing is to have this
 24 website where all the ideas, all the discussions that
 25 will take place, you know, will be posted on that -- on



<p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p> <p>1 that website.</p> <p>2 So with that, you know, again, we are open</p> <p>3 for comments, questions, and we can move to the next</p> <p>4 one.</p> <p>5 SECRETARY NELSON: I have a question.</p> <p>6 Will this group be reporting to the</p> <p>7 legislature?</p> <p>8 MS. MAYS: Secretary, I can answer that.</p> <p>9 So let me just give a 30-second history of this</p> <p>10 recommendation.</p> <p>11 Before the Border Master Plan, BTAC works</p> <p>12 on a border transportation blueprint. And that's where</p> <p>13 this recommendation actually came from. And it was</p> <p>14 carried to -- carried to the Border Transportation</p> <p>15 Master Plan. And it's really up to you and BTAC to</p> <p>16 decide who this group reports to because this is a BTAC</p> <p>17 recommendation.</p> <p>18 SECRETARY NELSON: Okay.</p> <p>19 MS. MAYS: Report to BTAC. That was one of</p> <p>20 the -- the whole --</p> <p>21 SECRETARY NELSON: So this group will</p> <p>22 report to us, and then we report to the legislature?</p> <p>23 MS. MAYS: Yes. Exactly. That was the --</p> <p>24 SECRETARY NELSON: It probably needs to</p> <p>25 be -- flowcharted out a little bit.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p> <p>1 Next, I want to recognize --</p> <p>2 MS. LAGOS: Madam, madam, we have the other</p> <p>3 one.</p> <p>4 SECRETARY NELSON: I'm so sorry. See, I</p> <p>5 keep rolling right ahead. Go ahead.</p> <p>6 MS. LAGOS: Thank you, thank you.</p> <p>7 SECRETARY NELSON: Yes.</p> <p>8 MS. LAGOS: So similar to this initiative,</p> <p>9 we, also, would like to present another initiative that</p> <p>10 we took as part of the recommendations from the Border</p> <p>11 Master Plan. And for this one, the recommendation was</p> <p>12 to develop and implement a Mexican driver training</p> <p>13 program that will reduce commercial safety citations and</p> <p>14 fines when Mexican trucks cross the border into Texas.</p> <p>15 So for this one, we are also presenting a</p> <p>16 program that we would like to take place. And Juan will</p> <p>17 also help me presenting this effort.</p> <p>18 MR. VILLA: Thank you, Claudia.</p> <p>19 Okay. So again, as Claudia mentioned, the</p> <p>20 idea is to develop this Commercial Vehicle Driver</p> <p>21 Training Program with the goals of increasing vehicle</p> <p>22 safety, compliance, and reducing the number of</p> <p>23 violations in out-of-service rates on the border,</p> <p>24 improve the cross-border efficient [sic] of Texas and</p> <p>25 ports of entry, and reducing disruptions in supply</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p> <p>1 MS. MAYS: Okay. Okay.</p> <p>2 SECRETARY NELSON: Gerry?</p> <p>3 MR. SCHWEBEL: Yes. If I could add --</p> <p>4 Gerry Schwebel again. I think one of the -- we can</p> <p>5 continue to add other -- other sectors, this is -- part</p> <p>6 of the discussion of the blueprint was we wanted to have</p> <p>7 some private -- public -- private partnerships here.</p> <p>8 So we have some private sector</p> <p>9 stakeholders. We have custom brokers that save -- U.S.</p> <p>10 custom brokers, you know, Mexican custom brokers,</p> <p>11 economic development, you know, organizations like</p> <p>12 Borderplex or (indiscernible) at the table of</p> <p>13 discussions as a working group in the task force. That</p> <p>14 was the idea that some of us had back then when we</p> <p>15 were -- create -- kind of create this task force.</p> <p>16 Correct Caroline?</p> <p>17 SECRETARY NELSON: Okay.</p> <p>18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's exactly</p> <p>19 right, Gerry.</p> <p>20 SECRETARY NELSON: Go ahead.</p> <p>21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just want to echo</p> <p>22 what Gerry said.</p> <p>23 SECRETARY NELSON: Any other questions?</p> <p>24 Comments?</p> <p>25 Thank you, thank you for your presentation.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 73</p> <p>1 chains.</p> <p>2 Similar to what I mentioned earlier, as we</p> <p>3 heard last night, the idea is to have a more competitive</p> <p>4 U.S. Texas-Mexico border. And again, the benefits are</p> <p>5 here shown in this slide. The -- the way we developed</p> <p>6 this program is in these four different activities.</p> <p>7 And first, we identified what has been done</p> <p>8 in Arizona. We took the idea from Arizona DOT. They</p> <p>9 developed this program more than ten years ago, and it</p> <p>10 has been very successful. We also developed the</p> <p>11 analysis of all the DPS and safety inspections at the</p> <p>12 border. We also analyzed data -- statistical</p> <p>13 information on the different inspections that DPS takes</p> <p>14 into account at the border. And then we developed a</p> <p>15 survey with the actual truckers throughout the border.</p> <p>16 So again, this is just a recap of what's</p> <p>17 being done in Arizona. Again, this program started in</p> <p>18 2016, and has been greatly successful. ADOT troopers go</p> <p>19 into Mexico, Hermosillo, and other locations to do this</p> <p>20 training. And the results [sic] is basically production</p> <p>21 in the number of out-of-service, the number of</p> <p>22 violations, and has been improving the -- the way the</p> <p>23 Arizona-Sonora traffic is conducted.</p> <p>24 The second activity we conducted is, you</p> <p>25 know, analyze this document that I'm showing on the</p>

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1 screen, which is a (indiscernible) for the inspections
 2 that CVSA has published. And again, this provides a
 3 very good idea of the inspections that they place, and
 4 it could be used as a basis for this curriculum that
 5 we're trying to develop.
 6 Then we analyzed the different statistics
 7 from DPS. You know, thanks to Captain Villarreal who
 8 provided this information. We analyzed all the 2022
 9 inspections at the border.
 10 And what we identified is basically that,
 11 first, there's important variations on the number of
 12 inspections that take place at the international
 13 crossings. For example, BOTA here in El Paso, and
 14 Veterans in Brownsville have the largest number of
 15 inspections compared to other crossings.
 16 For example, there's no BSIF at a border
 17 safety inspection facility -- at the World Trade Bridge,
 18 which is the largest crossing of the -- not only Texas,
 19 but also the U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canada border. And,
 20 obviously, there's no inspections there by DPS.
 21 So again, this gives you an idea of what's
 22 happening at the border in terms of inspections. We
 23 also analyze the auto services. And as you can see here
 24 in the chart, number of out-of-services is growing,
 25 especially for the vehicle part of the out-of-service

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1 while the number of inspections is going down. So
 2 again, there's this gap. So that's a problem.
 3 Then we also did this survey, you know --
 4 again, thanks here to Claudia and her contacts in
 5 Laredo. But, also, we went through -- to the Valley and
 6 here in El Paso and Juarez. And we had a survey --
 7 online survey with all the trucking companies. And it
 8 was interesting to find that these are the two key
 9 issues that they have.
 10 One of them is the lights. You know,
 11 the -- the -- all the different lights in the truck when
 12 the inspection is done.
 13 And the second one, on the left, is the
 14 brakes, brake systems. So, obviously, the idea is to
 15 focus the courses and the curriculum on these two
 16 issues. But, again, there's other ones that need to be
 17 analyzed and identified.
 18 So on the survey, we also came up with what
 19 are the key impacts. Obviously, the cost of -- of the
 20 repairs, the towing. There's a cost for the trucking
 21 companies, you know, with what's happening at the
 22 border.
 23 The other one is loss of time and delivery
 24 delays. Also, as we heard from -- from Madam Secretary,
 25 you know, supply chain is very important. So if a

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1 shipment has to be stopped for -- for hours or sometimes
 2 days because of different problems at the border, then
 3 that supply chain is going to be disrupted.
 4 The other issue is safety rating degrees.
 5 So they have to -- the truckers, if they have issues
 6 with the insurance, they have to pay an additional
 7 insurance.
 8 And finally, operation disruptions. So --
 9 and also we asked them, "So what are you" -- "what do
 10 you recommend?" We asked the truckers. And, again, the
 11 first thing was training, you know, which was, you know,
 12 interesting. They -- they're actually calling us to
 13 say, "Hey, when can we start this training?"
 14 So we are getting ready, and with working
 15 with Claudia and Caroline, we're putting together this
 16 program to be able to start the training as soon as
 17 possible. So this is the action plan that we're
 18 proposing. You know, meeting with the training --
 19 meeting internally to have the launch of this training,
 20 contract former DPS troopers, that they can help us
 21 train the trainer. And the idea here is to have this --
 22 this train the trainer is different to what's going on
 23 in Arizona, which is only one border crossing -- one
 24 major border crossing. Here we have a lot. We have
 25 more than 5 million trucks crossing Texas every year.

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1 And so, obviously, there's a lot of
 2 drivers. So the idea is to have train the trainers in
 3 the different regions, and then they can continue
 4 training all the other officials.
 5 Engage with the trucking institutions, and
 6 we have already done that. So they're ready. As I
 7 mentioned, they're calling us to see when can we start.
 8 Finalize the calendar and start as soon as possible with
 9 this training in -- probably Ojinaga.
 10 Here's the proposed schedule: Having six
 11 training courses, at least in 2024, and then 12 in 2025
 12 and so on.
 13 So again, this is just the proposal, that
 14 we would like to have your comments, and then we can,
 15 again, finalize the curriculum and start working on it.
 16 These are the -- some of the logistics that
 17 need to take place in the -- in the training. On the
 18 box here, you can see the number of drivers that we got
 19 from the different associations.
 20 So, again, it's much more than in the
 21 Sonora-Arizona crossing. So that way we can do the
 22 train the trainer.
 23 And, again, thank you. Any questions?
 24 Comments?
 25 SECRETARY NELSON: I saw several. So go



<p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p> <p>1 ahead, first.</p> <p>2 MR. MEADOR: Stan Meador here. Thank you.</p> <p>3 Is -- so -- what's happened in Arizona,</p> <p>4 and -- and -- this program is all voluntary from the</p> <p>5 truckers --</p> <p>6 MR. VILLA: That's correct.</p> <p>7 MR. MEADOR: As far as that goes, so this</p> <p>8 is just made available to promote it and then whoever</p> <p>9 shows up (speaking sotto voce).</p> <p>10 MR. VILLA: Yes. And I forgot to</p> <p>11 mention -- it's in the slides, but one of the things</p> <p>12 that came up on that program in Arizona-Sonora is that</p> <p>13 they have created a WhatsApp group with all the train-</p> <p>14 -- all the trainees, and they can communicate with the</p> <p>15 ADOT officers and say, "Hey, I have this braking</p> <p>16 problem, can you help me?"</p> <p>17 "Oh, yeah. Don't even show up. You need</p> <p>18 to fix it," or, "Come to the border. There won't be any</p> <p>19 problems."</p> <p>20 So that's been really helpful, and it's a</p> <p>21 very easy tool. You know, we are proposing, also, to</p> <p>22 develop something similar here or even a web-based tool</p> <p>23 that could be used by this trainer. But, again, it's no</p> <p>24 cost for the truckers, and it's voluntary, as you say.</p> <p>25 But you get -- sorry. You get a card once you take the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p> <p>1 that, whenever you speak, could you please tell your</p> <p>2 name and the organization that you represent for the</p> <p>3 record, please?</p> <p>4 MR. IBARRA: Mauricio Ibarra, Consular</p> <p>5 General of Mexico in El Paso.</p> <p>6 MS. LAGOS: Thank you.</p> <p>7 MR. VILLA: (Speaking foreign language)</p> <p>8 Mauricio.</p> <p>9 Yes. We do with -- have that information</p> <p>10 available. And, obviously, we only have this chart, but</p> <p>11 we can dig into the data and go into the details.</p> <p>12 And, again, as I mentioned in the</p> <p>13 presentation, it's -- it varies a lot between crossing</p> <p>14 to crossing, even within the regions. You know, we</p> <p>15 heard from the truckers in Brownsville, Matamoros,</p> <p>16 different stories from what we heard here.</p> <p>17 MR. IBARRA: I think that's important,</p> <p>18 precisely, for the training.</p> <p>19 MR. VILLA: Yes.</p> <p>20 MR. IBARRA: Perfect. Thank you.</p> <p>21 SECRETARY NELSON: Other questions? Yes,</p> <p>22 sir?</p> <p>23 Please state your name, please.</p> <p>24 MR. BARELA: Secretary, Jon Barela,</p> <p>25 Borderplex Alliance, El Paso.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p> <p>1 course, and that also helps, you know, to be able to --</p> <p>2 to have better inspections.</p> <p>3 MR. MEADOR: And the funding for this</p> <p>4 program?</p> <p>5 MR. VILLA: In this case it's from ADOT.</p> <p>6 MR. MEADOR: Yeah. But I mean, here, this</p> <p>7 would be dealt through TxDOT?</p> <p>8 SECRETARY NELSON: Follow up to that, if I</p> <p>9 might.</p> <p>10 Where does it -- is it appropriated in the</p> <p>11 current budget?</p> <p>12 MR. VILLA: No.</p> <p>13 SECRETARY NELSON: Okay. Go ahead.</p> <p>14 MR. IBARRA: Thank you.</p> <p>15 I think any prevention training program is</p> <p>16 great, but would you have the data of the types of</p> <p>17 violations, and the number of violations related to the</p> <p>18 number of inspections made by DPS?</p> <p>19 Because that would be important to know</p> <p>20 exactly what -- what the issue is, in case we need to</p> <p>21 address something.</p> <p>22 So I don't know if you have that data of</p> <p>23 number and the type of violations related to DPS</p> <p>24 inspections.</p> <p>25 MS. LAGOS: Before Juan continues answering</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 81</p> <p>1 Very quickly commenting, I think it's a</p> <p>2 tremendous idea. And I want to compliment staff for</p> <p>3 developing this -- those at TxDOT. I think it's well</p> <p>4 overdue. But we need to drive down those out-of-service</p> <p>5 rates. It will help the international commerce a great</p> <p>6 deal. So thank you for this presentation. I was very</p> <p>7 impressed by it. So hopefully it will get implemented,</p> <p>8 find the funds or certainly the staffing to get this</p> <p>9 done. Hopefully it will be great. Great deal of</p> <p>10 progress made on this issue. Thank you.</p> <p>11 SECRETARY NELSON: Other questions?</p> <p>12 Comments? Yes, sir?</p> <p>13 MR. CALVO: Eduardo Calvo, with the El Paso</p> <p>14 MPO. Couple of questions.</p> <p>15 The first one, you mentioned that the --</p> <p>16 there is no BSIF right now at World Trade Bridge and</p> <p>17 why -- why is that? It's the largest crossing. Right?</p> <p>18 (Speaking simultaneously.)</p> <p>19 SECRETARY NELSON: Other questions?</p> <p>20 MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry Schwebel here. Let me</p> <p>21 tell you, this is -- this is one -- one of the</p> <p>22 discussions that we've been having in regards to this</p> <p>23 program is that we need to get involved, proactive, just</p> <p>24 like we do have trusted shippers (indiscernible) we need</p> <p>25 to have trusted drivers that are also -- have some</p>

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1 degree of certification and training. You know, we --
 2 we get an inspection sticker in our vehicles for safety
 3 reasons in Texas. We want safe vehicles on the roads.
 4 Well, there's no difference than -- let's -- you know,
 5 for all vehicles that are on our highways here in Texas.
 6 So anything that's proactive from the --
 7 from the trucking companies, from the drivers on both
 8 sides of the border, we all need to cooperate with each
 9 other, making sure that we're all in unison in having
 10 these vehicles -- you know, have the proper, you know,
 11 safety guidelines.
 12 MR. CALVO: Right. But the question is,
 13 you know, there is no -- no inspection facility right
 14 now at the World Trade Bridge?
 15 And I guess a follow-up question for that
 16 is are there any more -- more incidents or accidents,
 17 you know, given that there's no DPS inspection of trucks
 18 at World Trade Bridge --
 19 (Speaking simultaneously.)
 20 MR. SCHWEBEL: Well, they may not have the
 21 inspection sticker, but that doesn't mean they don't
 22 stop them for inspection. They're stopping them. DPS
 23 will stop them. They can stop them anywhere, you
 24 know -- you know, up and down -- anywhere or any street
 25 or any (indiscernible) road. So it's -- just because

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1 there's no inspection facility, per se, physical,
 2 doesn't mean that they're not being stopped. They are
 3 being stopped.
 4 MR. CALVO: And if I may, Madam Secretary,
 5 can I do just a follow-up?
 6 SECRETARY NELSON: Sure.
 7 MR. CALVO: So the training, would it --
 8 would it make sense to adjust the training depending on
 9 the drive -- of the type of trip that the truckers are
 10 doing?
 11 For example, here, most of our crossings
 12 are drayage. You know, short-term -- or short distance,
 13 I'm sorry, originating in the maquilas in Juarez and
 14 delivering the load in El Paso, versus when you have
 15 longer distance trips. I mean, does the training change
 16 or...
 17 MR. VILLA: No. The -- what -- what I
 18 showed, Eduardo, is that there's different issues at
 19 different ports of entry. So the curriculum will be,
 20 you know, targeted to that particular training.
 21 Now, the drayage, of course, throughout the
 22 border, and it's the same. I mean, they're not going
 23 all the way to Guadalajara or Mexico City. They're
 24 coming from Nuevo Laredo to Laredo. But any way -- so
 25 that's going with the idea. To have -- tailor the

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1 training for that particular crossing based on the
 2 information that we got from DPS. And that way we can
 3 emphasize this specific -- you know, for example, the
 4 brakes or the lights. Probably in some -- some
 5 particular locations it's not a problem. But again, we
 6 need to go through the whole curriculum, but emphasize
 7 some of these topics.
 8 MR. CALVO: Thank you.
 9 SECRETARY NELSON: Go ahead.
 10 MS. GARZA-REYES: Cynthia Garza-Reyes, city
 11 of Pharr, to answer about BSFI facilities.
 12 I believe -- and correct me if I'm wrong,
 13 Secretary, but those were funded -- those buildings were
 14 funded by the legislature over 15 years ago. And I
 15 believe it was back then that they designated, at the
 16 time, where those facilitates were going. I know
 17 what -- Pharr was one of the first ones to get one. And
 18 it was always a big question of why Laredo hadn't had
 19 one. But those were funded by the legislature back in,
 20 I think, in 2011 or something like that. So just to
 21 clarify.
 22 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you.
 23 MR. TREVINO: Madam, I have a question.
 24 SECRETARY NELSON: Yes, sir. Go ahead.
 25 MR. TREVINO: Dr. Victor Trevino, Mayor for

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1 the City of Laredo. These are important topics, and we
 2 all know that inspections are important. It was
 3 attempted at the World Trade Bridge about two times, and
 4 there was a huge backlog of 18-wheelers. We crossed
 5 about -- maybe 18 -- 17,000 18-wheelers a day, back and
 6 forth, in the bridges of Laredo.
 7 So this was attempted to do a mechanical
 8 inspection on the -- on the 18-wheelers and it was
 9 really chaotic. But I do think that we do need to have
 10 some kind of inspection. Maybe a binational
 11 collaboration where they can become already inspected in
 12 that fashion and have inspection stickers just like
 13 we -- we collaborate with inspection of merchandise and
 14 Customs. I think we can have or create a binational
 15 entity that would give these inspections to the
 16 18-wheelers before they cross. That would be my -- my
 17 comment.
 18 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. Other -- go
 19 ahead. Let's hear first, then him.
 20 MR. ALDRETE: Rafael Aldrete with TTI.
 21 About two years ago, we conducted a study for the
 22 legislature dealing with the core location of federal
 23 and state's inspection facilities.
 24 And what I remember, we gathered from
 25 Laredo is that they [sic] used to be BS -- there used to



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1 be a facility, we think, in the federal compound where
 2 DPS was conducting inspections. That a tornado
 3 destroyed it. They didn't (indiscernible), but there
 4 hasn't been an agreement on going back into the federal
 5 lot. That's what we were told by DPS and the agency at
 6 the time of the study.

7 SECRETARY NELSON: You want to add?
 8 MR. STOUT: Yes. Thank you very much.
 9 David Stout, El Paso County Commissioner Precinct 2.
 10 Changing the subject a little bit, I was
 11 just wondering, I didn't see mention of -- in the
 12 presentation, looking at the environmental impact of --
 13 of cross-border trade and community impacts -- community
 14 health impacts. Is that something that's going to be
 15 looked at within -- within this group -- this subgroup
 16 as well, or is that something else -- going to be
 17 somewhere else?

18 MS. MAYS: Yeah. I'm going to --
 19 SECRETARY NELSON: Caroline?
 20 MS. MAYS: Yeah. I can -- I can answer
 21 that. This is specific on driver training and some of
 22 the challenges we've had.
 23 But to your point, the BTMP actually
 24 identified environmental and community impacts of
 25 those -- that's one of the areas that I didn't -- we've

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1 been talking with TC- (indiscernible) on see how we can
 2 collaborate with them to really start looking at that.
 3 But that's not something that we have looked at yet
 4 beyond the BTMP that was adopted in 2021.

5 MR. STOUT: Thank you.
 6 SECRETARY NELSON: Other questions?
 7 Comments? Go ahead.
 8 MR. VALE: Yes. Sam Vale from
 9 Starr-Camargo Bridge Company. There is also another
 10 element that a lot of us don't have access to, and that
 11 is information that the officers have that is
 12 confidentially provided to them.
 13 And so that, many times, is something else
 14 that makes it complicated, and we don't -- we don't know
 15 it. But because we work very closely with them, we have
 16 learned over the years that there are a lot of valid
 17 security questions for other reasons. So that, you
 18 can't train.

19 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. Good point.
 20 Am I missing --
 21 MS. ESPINOSA: Madam Secretary?
 22 SECRETARY NELSON: Raquel, go ahead.
 23 MS. ESPINOSA: Raquel Espinosa with Union
 24 Pacific.
 25 I guess I have a two-part question. And

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1 that would be, looking back at Arizona and their
 2 outcomes, what was the participation rate in terms of
 3 the number of drivers who went through the program, and
 4 the number of trucks that crossed through their border
 5 crossing? Number one and number two, did that reduce
 6 the number of citations and accidents?

7 MR. VILLA: Yes. Thank you for the
 8 question.
 9 Yes. We -- we do -- we do have the
 10 statistics, but there was a number of -- the amount of
 11 out-of-service trucks went down, and the number of
 12 participants continue to grow.
 13 I mean, these did -- actually during the
 14 pandemic, the courses were done online. The troopers
 15 were not traveling, obviously. But now it's back and
 16 safe. And what I show here on the screen was a picture
 17 just from December where they had a course in
 18 Hermosillo, and they continue to grow. Because again,
 19 the number of trips have been increasing, and the number
 20 of drivers wanting to be trained is increasing.

21 MS. ESPINOSA: Thank you.
 22 MS. MAYS: And Raquel, the numbers from
 23 Arizona is, like -- the out-of-service went down by 80
 24 percent -- you know, out of service. So it is so --
 25 tremendous benefits, that's why the program continues.

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1 And they [sic] actually going and doing this training in
 2 other states. We just want to, kind of, have our own
 3 and ensure -- because our -- we have a vast amount of
 4 border crossings. They've offered to come do the
 5 trainings here as well. So that's been really the
 6 biggest benefit is, you know, out-of-service went down
 7 tremendously, and it's been very successful.

8 SECRETARY NELSON: You have a follow-up
 9 question?
 10 MS. ESPINOSA: No. She answered it. I
 11 think Caroline answered it. I think it was how -- what
 12 were the outcomes in terms of the number of citations
 13 going down. And so Caroline answered that. And I think
 14 it's terrific. Anything you can do to streamline
 15 cross-border operations is good for everyone. Thank
 16 you.

17 SECRETARY NELSON: Go ahead.
 18 MR. VILLA: Sorry. Let me just -- I
 19 actually do have some numbers --
 20 (Speaking simultaneously.)
 21 SECRETARY NELSON: Please state your name
 22 for the record, please.
 23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm sorry. I'm
 24 sorry. He's already --
 25 MR. VILLA: Yeah. Let me just follow-up

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1 with your question. In 2017, there was 7 percent
 2 vehicle out of service. And in 2022, that number went
 3 down to .5 percent. So it's improved a lot.
 4 And as I mentioned on my presentation, we
 5 have been receiving calls after we did the survey from
 6 the trucking companies saying, "Hey, can you start
 7 tomorrow?" I said, "No. We're not ready yet."
 8 But again, there's -- there's a lot of
 9 needs -- I mean, most of these companies -- drayage
 10 companies are Mexican-based. And they're really looking
 11 forward to this particular course.
 12 MR. GARZA: Hector Garza with the Texas
 13 International Produce Association. I am wondering if we
 14 can have, also, some DPS training as well.
 15 Last week, we had some much-needed rain in
 16 the Valley, and the overweight trucks coming through
 17 were being stopped. It was drizzling. They were giving
 18 out citations, \$5,000 each truck.
 19 What -- what's going on? We -- you know,
 20 we did some asking around, and it turns out that because
 21 it was drizzling, that under the overweight permit,
 22 there's a section that says "under hazardous
 23 conditions" -- and it talks about rain, snow, sleet, you
 24 know, some -- I -- I can understand if it's some major
 25 condition where you can't be driving on the road. And

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1 of course, you know, being overweight, I can see how
 2 that can affect it. But if -- if it's not hazardous,
 3 you know, it's -- of course, it depends on what the --
 4 the DPS individual considers it to be hazardous, and
 5 then they go ahead and give that citation. But we
 6 really did not think that was necessary. Especially,
 7 you know, handing each truck \$5,000. You know, they
 8 could have told them, "Hey, you know, just get out of
 9 service for a while until conditions get better."
 10 But, you know, I don't know how that can be
 11 addressed to DPS, but it's definitely not something
 12 about (indiscernible).
 13 MR. VILLA: Yes. We will take that into
 14 account when we discuss with DPS the final version of
 15 the curriculum.
 16 SECRETARY NELSON: Okay. Go ahead. Jake?
 17 MR. GIESBRECHT: I've got a suggestion on
 18 this, the out of service -- this is Jake Giesbrecht from
 19 Presidio.
 20 On the -- do you have the out-of-service
 21 criteria handbooks or -- I don't see that in here. But
 22 that was really helpful for us 'cause if we could get --
 23 exactly what he's talking about, the rainy situation,
 24 the overweight situation. Are you going to do any
 25 criteria on there -- out-of-service criteria handbooks?

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1 Are you working on that also or no?
 2 MR. VILLA: Yes, Jake. And that's in this
 3 actual slide. There's this booklet that shows all -- I
 4 mean, it's about 200 pages. So basically the -- the
 5 criteria is there, very clear as specified.
 6 SECRETARY NELSON: Anybody else? No? I
 7 don't see any other questions.
 8 Okay. We're going to move on.
 9 Thank you very much.
 10 MR. VILLA: Thank you.
 11 SECRETARY NELSON: All right. Next, I
 12 would like to recognize Giacomo Yaquinto, Statewide
 13 Planning Manager from the Texas Department of
 14 Transportation, to present updates on the Statewide
 15 Long-Range Transportation Plan, Connecting Texas 2050.
 16 MR. YAQUINTO: All right. Good morning,
 17 Secretary Nelson, BTAC members. For those who don't
 18 know me, my name is Giacomo Yaquinto. I'm the Statewide
 19 Planning Branch Manager in the Transportation Planning
 20 and Programming division at TxDOT. And I'm also the
 21 TxDOT project manager on Connecting Texas 2050, the
 22 update to the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan.
 23 This morning I've got six, sort of, key
 24 areas that I'd like to highlight. We'll start with a
 25 look at our project schedule. From there, we'll look at

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1 the Connecting Texas 2050 vision statement. After that,
 2 we'll look at the Long-Range Transportation goals that
 3 we've identified. We'll walk through the strategies
 4 that we've identified to address the needs in the plan.
 5 And before we close out, we'll take a look at an
 6 overview of the plan draft and next steps.
 7 In terms of the project timeline or project
 8 schedule, the key milestone that we're working toward
 9 right now is really the initial plan presentation to
 10 Commission at the April commission meeting.
 11 As you-all may recall, I presented to BTAC
 12 in August. At the time we were preparing for our second
 13 round of stakeholder engagement, and we kicked that off
 14 in early October. And we wrapped that up in late
 15 December. And I mention that because since we wrapped
 16 that up, we have been working to develop the draft
 17 chapters for the plan. That's gone through an initial
 18 round of review as we prepare to share the initial draft
 19 with TxDOT administration later this week.
 20 After they've had an opportunity to review
 21 the draft, we'll be sharing it with a wider audience
 22 including additional divisions, TxDOT Districts, our
 23 joint executive steering committee, which, as a
 24 reminder, that's comprised of the committee chair of
 25 each of our advisory committees, federal partners, and



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1 commission support staff as well. They'll have an
 2 opportunity during the month of March to review the
 3 draft plan and provide comments. We'll go through an
 4 additional round of revision, again, in preparation for
 5 that next major milestone, which is the April 2024
 6 commission meeting.

7 Following the presentation to Commission,
 8 we will kick off a 30-day public comment period. That
 9 will wrap up in early June. And then we'll make any
 10 additional revisions to develop the final plan draft,
 11 which we will take back to Commission in July with a
 12 recommendation for adoption.

13 Next up, we've got the Connecting Texas
 14 2050 vision statement. For any of you who were involved
 15 in our fall round of engagement, you may have seen the
 16 original longer version of this statement. We did
 17 present that original draft to the joint executives
 18 steering committee during their first meeting. That was
 19 in August, throughout October, November, and December.
 20 We worked with stakeholders to get input to refine it
 21 and to condense it.

22 And so where we've landed on that is
 23 Connecting Texas 2050 will "create an innovative
 24 multimodal transportation system that safely and
 25 efficiently moves people and freight and supports future

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1 growth."
 2 And as I speak, if anyone has any questions
 3 or comments, please don't hesitate to stop me and chime
 4 in.

5 All right. Next up, we've got our
 6 Long-Range Transportation goals. As you look at this
 7 slide, you see we've identified three performance type
 8 goals: safety, preservation, and mobility. And three
 9 strategic type goals: connectivity, economic vitality,
 10 and stewardship.

11 We heard already this morning about
 12 economic vitality and the role that transportation
 13 infrastructure plays in supporting economic vitality.

14 Economic vitality is a new goal for the
 15 Long-Range plan and we felt that it was important to
 16 include it here as we work to help promote the
 17 recognition about the role that transportation
 18 infrastructure plays in economic vitality and to support
 19 the agency-wide effort toward them.

20 Next up, we'll take a look at strategies.
 21 Before we jump in, just to give you a bit of an overview
 22 on the strategies. So our spring round of engagement
 23 was really focused on working with stakeholders to
 24 identify the needs that we needed to consider in
 25 Connecting Texas 2050.

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1 In our fall round of engagement, we went
 2 back out, we had some draft strategies, and we were
 3 really interested in hearing from our stakeholders about
 4 the strategies that we should include to address those
 5 needs that they helped us identify earlier in the year.

6 The other thing that I'll mention here,
 7 that we want to emphasize in Connecting Texas 2050, is
 8 we are really working to link our strategies to our
 9 needs and to our goals. We think that linkage is going
 10 to be critical as we move forward toward implementing
 11 and achieving these goals as we look toward the future.

12 But in terms of the strategies themselves,
 13 I won't read through everything on this slide, but we do
 14 have eight strategy-themed categories. And so we've got
 15 safety and resilience, technology and innovation,
 16 freight infrastructure and intermodal connectivity,
 17 multimodal transportation system strategies,
 18 cross-border connectivity and operation strategies,
 19 workforce strategies, strategies to address the
 20 long-term planning process itself, and then strategies
 21 to enhance public and stakeholder collaboration and
 22 engagement.

23 Since this is the Border Trade Advisory
 24 Committee, we'll go slightly out of order and start with
 25 strategies looking to enhance cross-border connectivity

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1 and operations.

2 As you'll look at this slide -- and I'll
 3 pause here in just a minute to give you-all an
 4 opportunity to react. These strategies should all look
 5 very familiar. These are, essentially, coming directly
 6 from the policy program strategies that we developed in
 7 the Border Master Plan, again, that we sent to
 8 Commission for adoption in 2021.

9 But very quickly, I guess, as you look at
 10 this, are there any strategies that you think are
 11 missing? Is there anything you'd like us to highlight?

12 And I'll just wait a couple of seconds to
 13 see if anyone has a reaction to that.

14 SECRETARY NELSON: I'm not seeing anything.

15 Oh, there we go. Gerry, go ahead.

16 MR. YAQUINTO: Yes, sir.

17 MR. SCHWEBEL: I think if you look at
 18 that -- I think the fourth one that you're looking at, I
 19 think we really need to emphasize -- I think it's the
 20 fourth one. Right? Which is the one that talks about
 21 future infrastructure projects of our new border
 22 crossings?

23 I think the emphasis on those new border
 24 crossings is something that I think we should look at.
 25 All those private investments in our future border



<p style="text-align: right;">Page 98</p> <p>1 crossing as an additional option to enhancing our ports 2 of entry. Not just limited to government or public 3 sector, but also welcome some private sector engagement 4 in the future border crossings. 5 This is Gerry Schwebel, by the way, for the 6 record. 7 SECRETARY NELSON: Okay. Other thoughts? 8 MR. YAQUINTO: Okay. And we will keep 9 going. All right. So to look here, quickly, our seven 10 remaining strategy categories. 11 So when it comes to safety and resilience, 12 one of the strategies that we're recommending is that we 13 incorporate resilient design considerations into our 14 roadway design and bridge design manuals. 15 In terms of expanding the use of technology 16 and innovation, one of the strategies that we're 17 recommending is that we work to identify opportunities 18 to advance mobility technologies through partnerships 19 that enhance multimodal connectivity and system 20 reliability. 21 Looking -- let's see here, at our next 22 category, promoting freight infrastructure and 23 intermodal connectivity for a prosperous future. I 24 think an important strategy that we want to highlight 25 this morning is proactively integrating freight</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 100</p> <p>1 engage with the TxDOT advisory committees. We want to 2 look to identify opportunities for collaboration, and -- 3 and opportunities to assist with the overall 4 implementation element of Connecting Texas 2050 as we 5 enter that phase later this summer. 6 All right. Now, we'll take a look at the 7 draft plans. So as you look at the -- the overview 8 here, you see we've got nine chapters. This will be a 9 relatively short document. It should only be about 120 10 pages. We have tried to set it up so that each chapter 11 builds upon the previous chapter. But we wanted to -- 12 to develop the chapter so that if you can only read a 13 couple -- or maybe only one chapter, you can get the 14 information that you need and understand where you might 15 go if you want some additional information. 16 But Chapter 1, of course, is going to be 17 our introduction. That's where we're really going to 18 set the stage for what we cover in the plan. We also 19 provide some guidance for how you might use the plan 20 depending on what role you play in the community. So 21 whether you're a member of the public, a local elected 22 official, or you work for another state agency. 23 Chapter 2, we highlight all of the 24 collaboration and engagement efforts that have been part 25 of the planning process.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 99</p> <p>1 considerations into the planning and implementation of 2 future interstates. In particular, I-27 and I-69. Both 3 of which, we know, will be critical to moving goods to 4 and from the border. 5 In terms of optimizing investment in the 6 multimodal transportation system to accommodate future 7 growth, the strategy I'd like to highlight this morning 8 is facilitating the interoperability of transit services 9 across jurisdictional boundaries and service models. 10 In terms of supporting workforce, one of 11 the strategies that we want to highlight is a 12 TxDOT-supported strategy. So we want to support 13 partnerships with the business community to provide 14 transit services that meet workforce needs. 15 In terms of adapting the long-term planning 16 process, one of the key things that we're discussing as 17 we think about implementation is developing 18 district-level or regional Long-Range Transportation 19 plans. These will really give us an opportunity to 20 consider the unique needs, priorities, and 21 characteristics of various districts and regions. And 22 we think that will be a key tool going forward. 23 And then finally, in terms of enhancing 24 public and stakeholder collaboration and engagement, 25 really, what we want to do is continue our effort to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 101</p> <p>1 Chapter 3, we'll look at our goals, 2 objectives, and performance measures associated with the 3 Long-Range goals that we looked at earlier. 4 Chapter 4 is where we really start to 5 introduce the data component in the plan. So Chapter 4 6 we're looking at trends and scenarios. We're looking at 7 information related to demographics, the economy, our 8 resiliency. It's also where we cover the scenario 9 planning element that we produced as part of Connecting 10 Texas 2050. 11 Chapter 5 is our multimodal transportation 12 needs and system performance chapter. This one will be 13 the most data-driven chapter. And, again, this is where 14 you'll see those multimodal needs that our stakeholders 15 helped us identify during our spring round of 16 engagement. 17 Chapter 6, we identify our multimodal 18 corridors of statewide significance. And so we worked 19 very closely with our colleagues and the districts in 20 the modal divisions to identify these corridors. We 21 took them around during our fall round of engagement and 22 got additional feedback on the corridors from external 23 partner agencies as well as members of the public. 24 Chapter 7, we'll cover the strategies that 25 we just walked through. And I'll emphasize this</p>



<p style="text-align: right;">Page 102</p> <p>1 morning, we just looked at a highlight of the overall 2 collection of strategies. And so Chapter 7, you'll see 3 a much more detailed overview of how we recommend 4 addressing the needs. 5 Chapter 8 looks at our investment forecast. 6 And so we're looking toward 2050 to identify the funding 7 that we'll need to hit our 2050 performance targets. 8 And then Chapter 9 is really where we -- we 9 help to, sort of, close out by identifying some critical 10 next steps or key action items that we can kick off as 11 we move to implementation to really get started on the 12 right foot as we work toward achieving the goals, 13 looking out toward 2050. 14 And so in terms of next steps -- so, again, 15 I mentioned at the top of the presentation, we are in 16 the process of developing the draft plan. It's gone 17 through that preliminary round of review with colleagues 18 and several divisions. We are planning to submit the 19 full draft to administration later this week. Following 20 their review and input, we'll send the draft plan out 21 for that wider review in the month of March. Although 22 looking at the dates on this slide, I think we've moved 23 it back a week to March 11th. 24 Looking toward the April Commission 25 meeting, we do plan to meet with our joint executive</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 104</p> <p>1 SECRETARY NELSON: Gerry? 2 MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry Schwebel. I think 3 it'd be important for the board or MPOs all to submit 4 for the record public comment. Especially in light of 5 that Section E: "Enhancing cross-border connectivity 6 and operations." 7 I think the border cannot stay silent on 8 this -- on this initiative. And I would really 9 encourage that each of the MPOs from Brownsville all the 10 way up to El Paso, submit some kind of written comment. 11 And we have the leadership of some of the mayors here as 12 well. Because this is the -- this is the way -- this is 13 what, I think, the Commission needs to hear as we're 14 looking forward on these kind of ideas and these 15 projects. So I would make that recommendation. 16 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. 17 Other thoughts? Comments? Okay. Thank 18 you. 19 MR. YAQUINTO: All right. Thank you. 20 SECRETARY NELSON: Can I -- Giacomo, would 21 you mind coming back up here for just a second? It 22 might be me, but I'm looking at the presentation. 23 MR. YAQUINTO: Okay. 24 SECRETARY NELSON: And I'm looking at A, B, 25 C, D, F.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 103</p> <p>1 steering committee, at least one more time between now 2 and then. 3 And, again, that committee is comprised of 4 the committee chair of all of the TxDOT advisory 5 committees. We'll meet with them again following the 6 close of the public comment period in June. And that 7 will be in preparation for -- for submitting the final 8 draft to Commission in July. 9 We will have our public comment period. 10 Right now, we're scheduled to run the public comment 11 period between April 26th and June 3rd. Our public 12 hearing is tentatively scheduled for May 9th. That 13 event will be in person at TxDOT Austin Stassney Campus. 14 We also expect to have a couple of road show events 15 where we'll be out in different parts of the state in 16 support of the public comment period. 17 And again, as I mentioned at the very 18 beginning, our next major milestone is really that 19 initial presentation to Commission during the April 20 Commission meeting. And then we'll complete this 21 effort, hopefully, in July when we go back to Commission 22 with the final plan draft and a recommendation for 23 adoption. 24 But with that, I'll go ahead and pause and 25 see if anyone has any questions or comments.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 105</p> <p>1 MR. YAQUINTO: Okay. 2 SECRETARY NELSON: So E is on page 8. 3 MR. YAQUINTO: Yes. We went out of order 4 because that's the -- the border strategies. Yes. 5 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. Just wanted 6 to be sure. All right. Thank you. 7 MR. YAQUINTO: Yup. 8 SECRETARY NELSON: All right. So now we'll 9 recognize Sergio Colin, the President of INDEX in Ciudad 10 Juarez. Stan Meador, Vice President of sales and 11 marketing at Texas Pacifico Transportation. Eduardo 12 Calvo, Executive Director at the El Paso Metropolitan 13 Planning Organization. Tomas Trevino, El Paso District 14 Engineer from the Texas Department of Transportation, to 15 present on the industry perspective, new trends, new 16 projects and operations, and the international trade 17 impact to the region. Very important issues. 18 Gentlemen. 19 MR. COLIN: Secretary, thank you -- thank 20 you so much. I think this is the first participation 21 for INDEX Juarez in this committee. So I am very happy 22 and glad to hear that everybody here is focused on being 23 more efficient, and have a region with a lot of 24 commitments to be better at the border crossing. 25 So good morning everyone. Again, thanks</p>

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1 for this invitation. Today I will share some
 2 (indiscernible) about the current numbers in the
 3 industry.
 4 Normally in the industry, we have KPIs that
 5 show us what is -- what is the current status and what's
 6 going to be the future. So this information going [sic]
 7 to give you an idea how or what's going to happen in the
 8 future. But I can tell you in advance, that this
 9 presentation, at the beginning, were built for a
 10 Spanish -- in Spanish -- for presentation in Spanish. I
 11 apologize in advance for that. And also, if we combine
 12 that with my Spanglish, I'm sorry. I say in advance,
 13 I'm sorry. But don't -- please feel free to -- to ask
 14 anything regarding -- to the -- to the presentation.
 15 So before -- before we see the -- the
 16 numbers, I would like to share with you some INDEX
 17 background, and explain what is INDEX.
 18 Basically, it's a national leader
 19 association that represents more than 1,100 different
 20 companies, different corporations, that mostly are
 21 coming -- the capital of the investment coming from
 22 United States, from Canada, Europe, and Asia.
 23 For example, the main companies that we
 24 have in -- in Mexico is regarding -- to automotive.
 25 Mostly Ford, and some subsidiaries from GMC and

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1 Chrysler. So -- also we have a lot of companies like
 2 Johnson & Johnson from the healthcare segment, and many
 3 [sic] of that that comes from the U.S. corporations.
 4 Also from Canada. Just in Juarez, just crossing the
 5 border close to here, we have Bombardier Recreation
 6 Products, BRP, that is from Canada, and another more
 7 [sic].
 8 So IMMEX Industry represents that -- more
 9 than the 18 percent of the national employment, with
 10 more than 3 million employees around -- and direct --
 11 direct employees in the industry.
 12 So in coordination with INDEX National,
 13 that is the council, 18 local associations, we are in
 14 coordination with them through the old cities -- or the
 15 main cities in the country. Normally, INDEX promotes
 16 the old legal and best practices on [sic] the industry
 17 to operate in Mexico, plus the -- all security
 18 international mutual recognized certifications like
 19 CTPAT and EoA and another ones [sic].
 20 So before you tall [sic] about the new --
 21 maybe the new implementation about -- about the security
 22 and transportation. Believe me, we support that because
 23 in the end of the day, what we are trying to find is
 24 being more efficient, and keep the (indiscernible) lower
 25 cost.

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1 Regarding to that, I would like to share
 2 that the main states with more manufacturer industry
 3 investment is Baja California with 934. Nuevo Leon,
 4 that we have Marcos here, with 687 programs approved.
 5 Right after that, Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas.
 6 As you can see, Secretary and audience,
 7 basically the border -- the states and the border are
 8 the mains [sic] regarding to the manufacturer industry.
 9 And in next slide, we can see -- I'm sorry.
 10 I apologize. That is the chart.
 11 As you can see, that is just some -- why
 12 the border -- we have a lot of interest to be in touch
 13 with you in order to continue doing the business as we
 14 are doing today. And also, the main cities, the top
 15 high runners are Tijuana, Juarez, Apodaca, Reynosa, and
 16 Mexicali. They basically have the -- most of the
 17 percentage of the corporations or the companies
 18 producing in Mexico. I know that Guadalajara, El Bajio,
 19 and another places have another ones, but we are the
 20 top.
 21 And proof of that is that Juarez, Tijuana,
 22 Reynosa, are the top high runners about [sic] the
 23 employees. If you can see here, from that 3 million
 24 that we have total in the country, we have, like,
 25 320,000 just in Juarez, and close to 500,000 just in

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1 Chihuahua. So that is the reason why we -- we need to
 2 keep doing -- a pro-efficient (phonetic) in our -- in
 3 our logistics because we have many products here that we
 4 need to bring, just, right through Texas.
 5 Glad to hear that, Secretary, you mentioned
 6 yesterday that you are pretty familiar with the
 7 logistics, with the manufacturers around. So that is --
 8 that is good for us because it makes more easier to us
 9 to -- to just to try to -- sometimes ask for help in
 10 some cases that [sic] we are in trouble.
 11 But, now, in comparison (phonetic) to the
 12 previous year, we are not doing -- we are not receiving
 13 the full demand. As you can see, just on this example
 14 for Juarez, it's not good attendance. That -- the
 15 employment is decreasing. From 340,000 we decreased to
 16 316,000 in the end of the year. That means -- or, just,
 17 what I can try to mention or to show you is that, in
 18 general, we have a decrease in our production that is
 19 equal to the employment.
 20 So something important to remarks [sic]
 21 here is that the old industry in Mexico regarding to
 22 [sic] the foreign investment is considered, like, a call
 23 center. It's not a profit center. That means that we
 24 are totally (indiscernible) with the U.S. corporations.
 25 So as soon as we get production or we got -- yeah,



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1 production, we are exploiting the -- the total or the
 2 values or the real cost. But if we don't keep that
 3 lower cost -- standard cost, we will [sic] in trouble
 4 because we are competing with another [sic] countries,
 5 not cities, with another [sic] countries like at
 6 Thailand, like Vietnam, like India.
 7 So for us, everything that you are doing
 8 today here, that is focusing on being more efficient and
 9 be more competitive by default, it's going to give us
 10 more demand. We want to keep in good shape -- or a
 11 better shape, that is, today.
 12 Today, the industry in Mexico, as you can
 13 see in this chart, we have mostly in the automotive
 14 segment. Right after that, electric -- electronics, and
 15 health care. That is the most segment that we are
 16 handling in the country.
 17 As you can -- mention before, some of the
 18 companies that is doing refrigerators, washing machines,
 19 all that kind of things, we are doing just right 15
 20 minutes from here. One of the key here also that
 21 sometimes we forget is that the industry normally
 22 working just in time. And in the last years, normally
 23 the strategy to produce -- or for sales is that the old
 24 companies build to stock. Normally they produce the
 25 production where we'll stock today. The mixing between

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1 built to stock and make to order is changing.
 2 As you can normally try, any time that you
 3 are trying to buy something from Amazon, maybe you're
 4 going to receive the product tomorrow or after tomorrow.
 5 That means the times of the delivery time change. It's
 6 exactly the same for the industry. With the adjusting
 7 time, with the -- the kind of production that we have
 8 today. For example, for the old health care segment
 9 that we have all hospitals in Houston and Austin and
 10 Dallas. Just right here in Juarez, we have a lot of
 11 products that we are doing for them. So for us, it's
 12 very important to keep easy the border crossing and
 13 faster.
 14 So that is the reason why, also, we are so
 15 happy to be here today. Just putting some numbers, the
 16 total of the industry manufacturer in Mexico between
 17 January to November 2023, the total of the numbers were,
 18 like, four thousand -- I'm sorry, 484 thousand millions.
 19 Just for the (indiscernible) about normal means the
 20 imports for United States. About (indiscernible)
 21 similar -- similar amount. This is only numbers for the
 22 manufacturer industry. Here is not involved another --
 23 another segments.
 24 In the same period of time, for only
 25 Chihuahua state, that represented 12 percent of the

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1 total of the country in Mexico. The number represent,
 2 like, at \$58 thousand million. Chihuahua is considered,
 3 like, the first producer -- importer in Mexico. So that
 4 is the reason why we are very interested to keep
 5 maintaining the good relationship between Texas and
 6 Chihuahua.
 7 And for Juarez, in the same period of time,
 8 Juarez represent the 9 percent of the total of the
 9 national exports with \$46 thousand million. So after
 10 Laredo, Juarez-El Paso is the second most important for
 11 border crossing.
 12 So for us -- and again, for us it's very
 13 important to keep going in good shape in the border
 14 crossing.
 15 Just sharing some conclusions about the
 16 IMMEX, in the beginning -- and this morning somebody say
 17 that just we need to talk about nurturing, now we need
 18 to talk about the friendshoring. I think both together
 19 because the nearshoring for Mexico is not new. That --
 20 it start [sic] at the beginning in the 1960s, and we
 21 continue receiving a lot of investment. Just in the
 22 last month, we receive some announcements about the new
 23 10,000 employee -- employees for -- for one company from
 24 one Canadian company is going to be established in
 25 Juarez. And also we're open [sic] two factories. One

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1 from Germany, and one from U.S. So we continue to open
 2 new investment in Juarez and in Mexico.
 3 Texas normally receive the high volume of
 4 the commercial transactions in Mexico. So that is the
 5 reason why it's pretty important to keep an excellent
 6 border crossing. Not only what is exporting from
 7 Mexico, also something important is that everything that
 8 we are crossing from Juarez to Matamoros is staying in
 9 Texas. And from Texas it's shipping to somewhere. So
 10 the 55 percentage of the items that we are bringing from
 11 Mexico into the Texas, it stays in Texas. And the 98
 12 percent of the items that we are bringing from Mexico to
 13 Texas, we are selling from Texas. So it's pretty
 14 important to keep going in the good shape.
 15 So I think that's it from me. It's just to
 16 give a brief numbers from the industry. We know that
 17 mainly, you don't know about the industry and all these
 18 kind of details, but if somebody have a question, I'm
 19 welcome to answer.
 20 SECRETARY NELSON: Questions?
 21 MR. CALVO: Madam Secretary?
 22 SECRETARY NELSON: Yes, sir.
 23 MR. CALVO: This is Eduardo Calvo with the
 24 El Paso MPO.
 25 Sergio, the numbers that you were showing



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1 that employment in Juarez is coming down -- or came down
 2 in 2023. Do you have similar numbers for Chihuahua?
 3 Could it be that maybe some industry is
 4 relocating -- instead of Juarez, going down to Chihuahua
 5 and maybe there's a little equilibrium there?
 6 MR. COLIN: Unfortunately, no.
 7 Unfortunately, we're seeing same numbers around the
 8 country, with the exception of Apodaca. Apodaca have a
 9 (indiscernible) but most of these cities is a deficit
 10 about employment -- decrease. Attendance decreased,
 11 unfortunately. That is how we are measuring that our
 12 economy, our production is going a little down. Also
 13 something to remark, some products in Mexico -- that is
 14 produced in Mexico is seasonal products. So normally
 15 the attendance from October to January is normally slow.
 16 MR. CALVO: Thank you.
 17 MR. COLIN: Okay.
 18 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. Other
 19 questions? No.
 20 MR. COLIN: Thank you so much.
 21 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you for your
 22 presentation. Very informative. Go right ahead.
 23 MR. MEADOR: Okay. Thank you Madam
 24 Secretary, and appreciate the opportunity to be here
 25 this morning with everyone. My name is Stan Meador.

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1 I'm Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Texas
 2 Pacifico.
 3 And very quickly, and I'm going to put my
 4 timer on here, so I've got it running. Just wanted to
 5 give a quick overview of, kind of, who we are, where
 6 we've been, and most importantly, really, where we're
 7 going. Let me see. Here's the clicker.
 8 So Texas Pacifico belongs to the
 9 corporate -- falls within the corporate structure of
 10 Grupo Mexico. And in that company and the holding
 11 company, you have three divisions: mining, the
 12 transportation division, and, kind of, other -- it's
 13 called infrastructure on these slides. And just because
 14 of the time constraints we have this morning, I'm
 15 just -- I'll just, kind of, touch very quickly on the
 16 transportation part of it.
 17 There are five companies within that
 18 division of Grupo Mexico Transportes. And, of course,
 19 we're one of those. The big ones that more -- maybe
 20 better known around the country are Ferromex and
 21 Ferrosur. And then IMMEX, which is Intermodal Mexico,
 22 that handles more of the intermodal traffic for --
 23 for -- for them in Mexico. And then Texas Pacifico and
 24 the Florida East Coast over on the east coast of
 25 Florida.

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1 When we look at GMXT, you know, there's a
 2 -- covers a large portion of Mexico, for sure. And then
 3 the two states here in the U.S. that I mentioned. And I
 4 keep realizing I need to change the number eight Class
 5 1. That's changed now, as we were reminded in our last
 6 session with CPKC. But these are the -- you can see the
 7 map here of, kind of, the footprint of Ferromex in red,
 8 Ferrosur in green down there. And then the Texas
 9 Pacifico is the yellow line that's kind of small, but I
 10 think you can see that. And then there's also a
 11 interest within GMXT of the -- the rail ferry that runs
 12 between Coatzacoalcos and -- on the gulf coast of Mexico
 13 up to Mobile, Alabama. So that's also part of the
 14 overall footprint that GMXT has.
 15 When we dial in a little more specific
 16 to -- to Texas Pacifico and the rail line on which we
 17 operate, you know, compared to our -- our rail brother
 18 in both -- in the short line industry, which we find
 19 ourselves in, and in the Class 1, for sure. You know,
 20 we're in a very unique position in that the
 21 infrastructure and the assets on which we operate are
 22 owned by the state of Texas. And those -- that asset
 23 is -- is managed on a day-in-day-out basis by TxDOT
 24 through the rail division. So you could say that they
 25 are our landlords, essentially. And we operate under a

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1 long-term operating agreement that I'll talk about just
 2 to briefly -- in just a minute.
 3 Looking at the history of the line on which
 4 we operate, the vision of Arthur Stillwell in 1901 was
 5 to find -- you know, to create the shortest land route
 6 from the center of the United States to a Pacific port.
 7 So from Kansas City to the port of Topolobampo achieves
 8 that. And over the -- the -- you know, 120-plus years
 9 since then, there have been, you know, different
 10 iterations of how that -- that has worked or -- and
 11 sometimes better, and sometimes when you have a bridge
 12 out of service for 15 years, not quite so good. But
 13 we're working on fixing that.
 14 As you can see, the historical maps there
 15 of -- of the route and -- and we, you know, operate the
 16 portion from San Angelo Junction down to Presidio,
 17 Texas.
 18 In the early 90s, this line, specifically,
 19 on which we operate was at risk of being abandoned and
 20 scrapped, and there was a lot of concern by the business
 21 community in the -- in the -- in this region, as was the
 22 end -- we're still compared to the growth of the state
 23 of Texas. You know, we're not in a super high growth
 24 area. But nonetheless, we do serve an important part of
 25 the state. Certainly in -- in -- in ag terms, but even



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1 more than that, in terms of oil and gas sector. And so
 2 there was a lot of interest by locals in the region to
 3 make sure that we preserve the line because as we know,
 4 once a rail line gets picked up, it's almost never that
 5 it gets put back down and used again later on.
 6 And so that -- that's what started in 1991.
 7 And then in '99, the legislature approved funding to
 8 purchase the railroad. And in 2001, Texas Pacifico was
 9 created to operate on the line under long-term operating
 10 rights agreement. When we do get the bridge -- the
 11 bridge is built -- again, talk about that in a minute.
 12 But once we actually establish communication or -- or to
 13 interchange at Presidio, we'll connect clearly with --
 14 with Ferromex, our parent company. And then on the
 15 north and east terminals of the line, we connect with
 16 BNSF and with Fort Worth and Western. And the Fort
 17 Worth and Western end is another bridge carrier that
 18 connects us to Union Pacific, to CPKC and -- and really,
 19 all of the rest of North America.
 20 And you can see in the next slide here,
 21 just a little bit of a dialed-in map. A lot of these
 22 are small communities along -- along the route between
 23 San Angelo Junction and Presidio with 11 miles of
 24 trackage rights over the UP at Alpine and Paisano.
 25 Our office is -- is in San Angelo. We

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1 operate -- our main rail yard is in San Angelo. And
 2 then we also operate a rail yard in Fort Stockton as
 3 well.
 4 Looking at -- I always have to include this
 5 slide, but this tells a little bit of story. And this
 6 is kind of a bit of backwards looking from a -- from a
 7 business standpoint.
 8 In 2012 when -- when, you know, the
 9 horizontal drilling and the whole shell plate (phonetic)
 10 changed, and fracking became what it has become, the --
 11 the you know, this was a perfect case of being at the
 12 right place at the right time. And -- and for a little
 13 railroad that had been struggling since 2001 to -- to
 14 really get its legs, in 2012, things really took off.
 15 And I highlight this point. That one peak
 16 in the line there in 2018, unfortunately, the highest
 17 point, shows the -- that -- that month was May of 2018.
 18 And that's the highest volume month that Texas Pacifico
 19 has ever had in its -- in its entire history. That also
 20 happens to coincide with the month that I started in
 21 this job. And let me just tell you, for those of you
 22 that are half asleep, this is not the month that you
 23 want to say you started. Right? Because what you also
 24 notice is everything from there has been downhill. And
 25 just to give you -- to really, kind of, put that in

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1 perspective, we moved over 4,200 railcars of sand,
 2 alone, that month. This slide is just sand. Not our
 3 total volume, just sand. That month we moved over 4,200
 4 railcars. When you fast-forward to the little green
 5 flatline that represents 2020, for the entire 12 months
 6 that year, we moved less than 500 cars of sand.
 7 So for a railroad out in the middle of --
 8 you know, in the sticks of western Texas, you don't make
 9 up that kind of volume loss, really, ever. We do
 10 have -- we do have a solution for it, and -- but it's
 11 been -- it's been a really rough ride from 2018 when --
 12 when sand started. And that was really -- what drove
 13 that, of course, is the adoption of inbase (phonetic)
 14 and sand -- sand mines around Monahans and Hermit and,
 15 you know, near to -- just trucking sand to -- to
 16 drilling sites for completion since that time. And that
 17 has continued to -- to evolve. Just a real quick --
 18 without getting into too much detail here, but you --
 19 you can, kind of, see -- and if I put -- if I go back
 20 even further, that green -- the green there is minerals.
 21 That's where sand falls. And, you know, used to -- that
 22 almost encompassed the entire pie of the pie chart, and
 23 there wasn't much else. But you can, kind of, see how
 24 things -- and really what I want to demonstrate in this,
 25 there's, kind of, a lot to peel back here, but, you

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1 know, a few things.
 2 One, from an ag perspective, what we do
 3 move in ag is dryland farming. So in 2022, we had, you
 4 know, 50 railcars of ag that we moved from their grain
 5 season, when as this year, it will be over 1,000 cars.
 6 So we have a lot of vulnerabilities.
 7 And -- and that -- that makes it -- it makes it hard to
 8 forecast. It makes it hard, really, kind of, to operate
 9 and know where we're going.
 10 But certainly, what -- what I like about
 11 2024 and beyond is a much more balanced product set of
 12 what we'll be able to move. And that really -- yeah.
 13 That will really -- I'm going to just jump here -- give
 14 us a much more diverse product set going -- going
 15 forward once we can get the bridge unlocked, so to
 16 speak. This just demonstrates here, I had those a
 17 little bit out of order, I realize. But the
 18 infrastructure projects, I'm not going to go into those.
 19 But those really are the -- that's the underpinning.
 20 That did not include the rebuilding of the bridge, which
 21 we did in 2019. So the bridge was fully built in 2019.
 22 The side -- the Mexican side of the international rail
 23 bridge in Presidio was already complete when we started
 24 in January of 2019. So five years ago, that's really
 25 when it started. In August it was completed. And just

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1 for those of you who have heard us talk about this a
 2 time or two or for a few years, I had to put some slides
 3 here to show you that, really, it does exist. It is
 4 there. And we are ever closer to -- to getting that
 5 completed.
 6 As a point -- and I'll end on this note,
 7 you know, key to opening the bridge -- and really the
 8 last remaining parts for that to happen is the Customs
 9 and Border facility -- inspection station. Which a key
 10 piece of that is the NII equipment, the non-intrusive
 11 inspection or X-ray equipment. TxDOT executed an order
 12 on that in October, and that will be delivered later in
 13 the summer -- late summer this year is, kind of, the
 14 trajectory that it appears to be on. And then the
 15 letting for the construction itself of the -- of the CBP
 16 facilities will be on the March 5th letting.
 17 So fingers crossed on a successful letting
 18 and moving forward, straight into construction, and then
 19 ultimately into moving cross-border traffic.
 20 So I don't know that we have any time for
 21 questions right now, but I'm going to end on that note.
 22 And I will be available after the meeting is over for
 23 any comments or questions. And again, I appreciate the
 24 opportunity to be here this morning. Thank you.
 25 SECRETARY NELSON: Short questions?

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1 Comments? No.
 2 Thank you for the photos, too. I love
 3 them. Okay. Eduardo?
 4 MR. CALVO: All right. So again, my name
 5 is Eduardo Calvo, I'm the Executive Director of the El
 6 Paso MPO.
 7 This presentation, we're really, really
 8 excited to show it to you-all. This is the first time
 9 that we show some of these preliminary results of the
 10 study. But in case I run out of time, I really need to
 11 give a big shout-out -- a big thanks to -- first of all,
 12 to TCEQ, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.
 13 Commissioner Janecka, thank you for -- for that.
 14 This work was done with the Rider 7 grant.
 15 Also big shout-out to the -- to all the people that
 16 helped us do the work that you're going to see here,
 17 including CBP. For the first time, they allowed us to
 18 really get into the data collection for the individual
 19 border crossings that you will see here. And also
 20 Consul Ibarra -- well, that just stepped out. But he
 21 was also instrumental in helping us get the same access
 22 on the Mexican side with the Mexican aduana (phonetic).
 23 All right. So what we're going to talk
 24 about super quickly is, you know, the work that we did
 25 here, one of them is -- are these surveys that we

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1 conducted that are feeding our travel demand models.
 2 These are unique. We haven't been able to do these
 3 in -- in ever. And that allows us to do a lot more
 4 detailed information and analysis on our modeling. And
 5 then we'll -- we'll get into the modeling, both at the
 6 macro and the micro level. And you'll see some cool
 7 simulations here. But more importantly, what this --
 8 these tools are going to help us do.
 9 The MPO region, as you know, covers the
 10 El Paso County on the Texas side, but we also cover some
 11 pieces of southern New Mexico. We've got six IBCs,
 12 we're calling them International Border Crossings to
 13 make sure that we identify them as individual crossings.
 14 Starting in Santa Teresa on the west side,
 15 which is in the state of New Mexico, and then five
 16 within the El Paso County. We've got three and a half
 17 border crossings that have been commercial activity. I
 18 said three full ones, and a half with the
 19 Tornillo-Guadalupe which is (indiscernible) in
 20 transition. And it's one of the really interesting
 21 things that we're going to be exploring.
 22 All right. So Rider 7 is a -- is a grant
 23 that focuses on -- a program that focuses on ozone
 24 specifically, as one of the pollutants. Right? So
 25 we're not going to get into a lot of the details. But

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1 just keep in mind that ozone is made up of two
 2 pollutants, which is NOx and VOCs. And you'll see later
 3 on the tables that show that. But the combination of
 4 that is ozone.
 5 So the objective of this project and of
 6 this graph, was really to -- to look at ways that we can
 7 analyze and improve the -- the understanding of
 8 emissions at the international border crossings, but
 9 also within the binational context.
 10 So again, like I said, these intercept
 11 surveys that we did at the international border
 12 crossings are the first time that we're able to do them
 13 here. We did them all in the five crossings. We did
 14 not do them at Tornillo because at the time that we
 15 executed the surveys, the Tornillo crossing was not open
 16 for -- for commercial traffic. So these surveys began
 17 in December of 2022, and the -- covered the period of
 18 spring and summer of '23. And, of course, we did them
 19 for auto, pedestrians, and trucks.
 20 So these are just the instruments. As you
 21 can see, very detailed. So again, these were intercept
 22 surveys as the vehicles were entering the queue. On the
 23 Mexican side, we had people there with Colegio de la
 24 Frontera people that were actually conducting these. So
 25 for pedestrians, you'll see that instrument. For cars,



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1 you know, pretty detailed information. And for trucks
 2 as well. Right?
 3 So a lot of the really valuable information
 4 that we got from this is really the -- the better
 5 understanding of origin destination cross-border
 6 patterns. Right? So going northbound, most of the
 7 traffic originated in the industrial parts of Juarez, on
 8 the maquilas, and end up in El Paso with -- where they
 9 transload the cargo, and then that cargo is taken to
 10 wherever the final destination is. Right?
 11 So without getting into details, we really
 12 were asking information for all of the different trip
 13 purposes that we use and travel demand model. But also,
 14 on the commercial side of things, looking for
 15 information on what type of cargo these trucks were
 16 carrying. Right? So you see there some of the export
 17 codes that we differentiated.
 18 Very interesting here, about 85 percent
 19 (speaking foreign language) of the -- the total border
 20 crossing trips for -- for trucks, originate and stay
 21 within our region. Right?
 22 So that means that the remaining 15 percent
 23 really goes outside of our region, which means outside
 24 El Paso or outside of Juarez. So that's northbound.
 25 And this is southbound. We did the

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1 analysis, also, by commodity type. You know, we've been
 2 talking that in our area, in our region, we -- we really
 3 focus on the high value supply change. So a lot of the
 4 stuff that crosses is under a just-in-time schedule.
 5 So, you know, we can later on get into more detail on --
 6 on that. But here comes the really cool stuff.
 7 So how do we combine all that we know
 8 with -- about traffic, you know -- all the -- us, you
 9 know, geeks that look at the travel and traffic and all
 10 that. How do we look at the travel times, vehicle miles
 11 of travel, delay, and so on. But also, in this case,
 12 combine it with emissions. Right? There's a lot of
 13 conversation about, you know, all this traffic generates
 14 emissions, you know, harmful, obviously, to the
 15 environment.
 16 We used two sets of tools. At the macro
 17 level, we use our travel demand model that we use for
 18 all the -- you know, the usual stuff on the El Paso
 19 side. But now we combine it with a travel demand model
 20 on the Juarez side. Okay?
 21 So we have a true binational model. Here
 22 you see -- well, statistics of the combined Juarez and
 23 El Paso models. And here we -- you know, we show some
 24 of the results of the -- of the macro level. Right?
 25 You will see on the tables that, you know,

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1 we separate -- we're able to separate the VMT and all
 2 the statistics on the Juarez and on the El Paso side.
 3 But what is interesting is now that we -- we started
 4 running some scenarios. And this is a key for -- for
 5 this tool -- for this exercise. Now that we have a tool
 6 that allows us to see both Juarez and El Paso as one,
 7 you know, we're able to test different scenarios. Don't
 8 pay too much attention to the numbers here because, you
 9 know, these are just the preliminary runs. We're going
 10 to have to rerun everything now that we found some --
 11 some improvements to the model.
 12 Then at the micro level, this is where we
 13 look at the -- at the border crossings themselves.
 14 Right? So we used -- we developed different tools.
 15 So here, you probably can't see that well,
 16 but this is a simulation of the Ysleta-Zaragoza Port of
 17 Entry, where we're able to simulate -- microsimulate the
 18 movement of trucks and private vehicles as they move.
 19 Right?
 20 So we have the macro, and the now the
 21 connection between the two macro models are, obviously,
 22 the border crossings. Right? So this is -- tells us a
 23 lot about vehicle miles traveled, delay, et cetera. But
 24 this is another tool that we developed, which is --
 25 estimates the emissions at the micro level. So what you

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1 see there in black, those are the -- each individual
 2 truck that is crossing and the amount of emissions that
 3 they are, you know, emitting. Right? You know, the
 4 darker the color -- so you see in black, those are the
 5 trucks. You see the private vehicles in green. But
 6 this, again, tell us in real time what the emission
 7 levels are at each individual crossing.
 8 Again, this is the example just for
 9 Zaragoza. So we ran different scenarios again, and --
 10 to look at the -- at the micro level, and see what
 11 happens in each case under different improvements.
 12 Right?
 13 So the -- the different cases that you see
 14 there are some assumptions that we just initially ran.
 15 What if we do this -- for example, on the Bridge of the
 16 Americas, something that is really, you know, going on
 17 right now. What if we eliminate commercial traffic from
 18 the Bridge of the Americas. Right? So, yeah, you may
 19 take out emissions from trucks from that. But what
 20 happens at the regional level?
 21 So now, you know, we're able to look at
 22 that. When we combine the macro with the micro, we see
 23 that the overall impact, you know, is different. Right?
 24 You know, you may -- you may take out the problem in one
 25 of the crossings, but now we have the tools to answer



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1 what happens at the regional level. And, you know, one
 2 of the things that we see is that, yeah, if you
 3 eliminate trucks, for example, from the Bridge of the
 4 Americas, now those trucks have to go somewhere else.
 5 Right? So there's more vehicle miles of travel in
 6 those -- to the other -- to the other crossings. Right?
 7 So now -- but this again, gives us a better
 8 tool so that we can really estimate and analyze the
 9 different scenarios that are going to help us in looking
 10 at our crossings as a system. And that's one of the key
 11 things that we -- we now have the ability to look at the
 12 crossings as a system instead of looking at them
 13 individually. And not only that, but also the
 14 coordination that we need to -- to have on the Mexican
 15 side. You saw the presentation from -- from Sergio.
 16 What we're going to be doing in the
 17 future -- in the next couple of years is really
 18 developing a strategic plan that has to be in, you know,
 19 complete coordination on the Mexican side. We cannot do
 20 things on one side, it has to be -- you know, there has
 21 to be a corresponding action on the -- on the opposite
 22 side. Every border has two sides, as it's been said a
 23 couple of times.
 24 So, anyways -- so just a brief introduction
 25 on this work, and you're going to continue to see this

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1 as we develop our strategic plan with different
 2 scenarios.
 3 SECRETARY NELSON: Great information.
 4 Thank you. Questions? Comments?
 5 I would note that little conclusion that
 6 says: "Idling can add up to 25 percent of the emissions
 7 to those traveling" --
 8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.
 9 SECRETARY NELSON: Twenty-five percent.
 10 Wow. Noteworthy.
 11 Thoughts? Questions? Comments? Go ahead.
 12 MR. TREVINO: Good morning. My name is
 13 Tomas Trevino. I'm the El Paso district engineer.
 14 And I know we're running a little bit
 15 behind schedule. It's a shame because I had a really,
 16 really funny joke. But for the sake of time, I'm going
 17 to go ahead and skip that and get right to the -- the
 18 meat and potatoes.
 19 My presentation is simply about some of the
 20 projects that we have that directly impact our ports of
 21 entry here in the El Paso District.
 22 Just for an overview of the district
 23 itself, we are the largest geographical district in
 24 terms of land area, just a little bit under 22,000
 25 square miles. We have about 5,000 lane miles throughout

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1 the district, and seven international ports of entry.
 2 Currently, we have about a billion dollars
 3 under construction here at the district, and we'll have,
 4 by the end of the year, somewhere in the neighborhood of
 5 1.5 billion under construction. Some of the projects
 6 that we have under construction right now include our
 7 I-10 West project. This project goes from Mesa Street
 8 to the New Mexico state line. We're currently
 9 converting it from a four-lane divided to a six-lane
 10 freeway section. We have operational improvements at
 11 all our ramps, and the number of overpasses going in.
 12 Project was let in February of 2022 at a project cost of
 13 174 million. Anticipated completion date is about this
 14 time next year. So we are about a year ahead of
 15 schedule.
 16 Another port of entry, Ysleta-Zaragoza Port
 17 of Entry, we have no less than six projects, right
 18 adjacent to the port, all in an effort to facilitate
 19 trade. At a total project cost of 121 million. These
 20 include widenings of our Loop 375 roadway, and also some
 21 (indiscernible) ramps, some safety improvements as well.
 22 Finally a project that is completed is the
 23 I-10 Connect Project. Again, this impacted BOTTA, added
 24 connectivity from I-10 to Loop 375. Had a total project
 25 cost of about 96 million. And we wrapped that up last

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1 year.
 2 In addition to this, we just completed our
 3 additional bridge in Presidio. This project was about a
 4 \$7 million job. It added a southbound bridge parallel
 5 structure into Ojinaga. And we had a ribbon cutting in
 6 October of last year.
 7 And stay on your right. We are going to
 8 try and -- and let the rail inspection facility here
 9 next month.
 10 And we got more projects coming. As Sergio
 11 mentioned earlier, this is an overview of some of the
 12 projects we have here in the El Paso County, and some of
 13 the projects that we have in outlying counties.
 14 Currently, we are on pace to let a record
 15 number of projects for the El Paso District, somewhere
 16 in the neighborhood of 600 million. On top of that,
 17 we'll have about 80 million of local government
 18 projects. So we'll have a combined total letting for
 19 the district just a little bit shy of 700 million. And
 20 that is a record for the El Paso District. And we are
 21 looking to -- to continue to be aggressive in 2025 and
 22 the years after that.
 23 Some of the projects that let later this
 24 year are the last four miles of our I-10 West job. This
 25 goes -- our main lane widening on our current job in



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1 Vinton. This picks up where that ends. So we'll widen
 2 our main lanes from four to six from Vinton to the New
 3 Mexico state line matching the six-lane section that New
 4 Mexico has coming towards us. Total project cost on
 5 this is about 110 million. It's probably going to be a
 6 little bit above that, and we expect to let this in May
 7 of this year. It was a project that got accelerated,
 8 moved from next year to this year just -- just simply
 9 for the fact that it was ready and our folks here at the
 10 district got it ready to go.
 11 Another major project that we have that
 12 impacts the -- the port of Santa Teresa is the Artcraft
 13 Project. This project will let in July of this year
 14 with a total project cost of somewhere in the
 15 neighborhood of 210 million. And we'll have four direct
 16 connectors from I-10 to Artcraft. We'll also include
 17 two overpasses. One at Upper Valley Road and one at
 18 West Side Drive.
 19 We've got a couple of other major projects
 20 in the hopper. Downtown 10 being one of them.
 21 Currently, we have a 388 million out of a projected \$750
 22 million need. We are set for environmental clearance,
 23 hopefully, by the end of 2024.
 24 Another major project we're working on is
 25 the Borderland Express or State Spur 320. This is a

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1 three-phase project. Currently, we have let phase 1.
 2 And phase 1 is frontage roads that extend from Dyer to
 3 Railroad. It was let in April of last year with an \$18
 4 million cost, and it's currently under construction.
 5 Phase 2 goes from MLK to Railroad Drive.
 6 It has a project cost of -- associated with it of about
 7 163 million. We do not have any project funding for
 8 this yet, but we do have PSNE currently ongoing. We are
 9 probably at about 75 percent PSNE development with an
 10 available to let date of April 2025.
 11 Phase 3 is also being developed. We are
 12 about 30 percent PSNE development, and we are hoping to
 13 have this ready to -- to let or available to let by
 14 April of 2026. Borderland Express -- one quick mention,
 15 Borderland Express will allow us to take advantage of
 16 the Anthony Gap and hopefully move more freight traffic
 17 through the Anthony Gap from I-10 down through 375.
 18 Other major projects that we are studying
 19 that impact our ports of entry are our Border Highway
 20 East Project. And this -- this is analyzing
 21 interconnection between the Zaragoza Port of Entry and
 22 the Tornillo Port of Entry.
 23 Another one that we have takes us from
 24 Tornillo to U.S. 62/180, which -- which goes into
 25 Carlsbad. So we're, again, performing another corridor

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1 study there.
 2 And that is it. Hopefully we -- helped get
 3 us back on time.
 4 SECRETARY NELSON: Great. Questions?
 5 I'm going to stick around for that joke
 6 afterwards, though.
 7 MR. TREVINO: Okay. Thank you-all.
 8 SECRETARY NELSON: And for our last topic,
 9 we're going to hear presentations first from the Mexican
 10 border state of Nuevo Leon.
 11 The Chair would recognize Secretary Marco
 12 Gonzalez, who is Secretary of Regional and Agricultural
 13 Development for the state of Nuevo Leon. Secretary.
 14 MR. GONZALEZ VALDEZ: Hi. Good evening
 15 [sic] everyone. Thank you for being here present. I'm
 16 going to be very fast.
 17 First of all, I want to tell you that El
 18 Paso has strong memories for me. I'm a border kid. I
 19 was studying here in St. Joseph, and then I went to
 20 Cathedral High School here in El Paso. So it's good
 21 memories here. It's good to be back here.
 22 Second of all, I want to thank the State of
 23 Texas for always being so coordinated -- well
 24 coordinated with the state of Texas -- Nuevo Leon.
 25 Nuevo Leon is the Texas of Mexico, and we're planning to

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1 do everything that it takes to be the best companions
 2 and the best business partners.
 3 Also want to thank all my Laredo -- Port of
 4 Laredo crowd that is here. The Mayor, Gary [sic], all
 5 the public officials that are from the Port of Laredo,
 6 thank you for being here.
 7 The nearshoring is bringing a new way to
 8 see international trade. It's an opportunity for
 9 Mexico. It's an opportunity to see ourselves as equal
 10 partners, not as a maquiladora sector. What's happening
 11 right now in Mexico is going to last for 20 years, at
 12 least. So we're the number one partner of the U.S. and
 13 it's time we sit at the same table, and we talk at the
 14 same level, 'cause we're the same business partners and
 15 we're going to make both of us very rich, the U.S. and
 16 Mexico.
 17 Also, I want to thank Michael Banks, the
 18 drug Czar, the Texas Czar, migration Czar. We have been
 19 working with him. We have full collaboration with
 20 Governor Abbott. We have a checkpoint that I'm going to
 21 show you right now that we are willing to have Texas
 22 facilities installed there so we can start sharing
 23 information -- everything before it crosses the border.
 24 This is part of the organization that we're dealing with
 25 so we can make our border the safest.



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1 I'm going to continue just -- the
 2 picture -- show you how our border is changing.
 3 First of all, our new image. We're called
 4 Puerto Colombia-Laredo. And it's back to basics. In
 5 the U.S. side, it's Colombia Solidarity Laredo Bridge.
 6 So we just translated it. I don't know why it didn't
 7 happen 32 years. No one mentioned -- in the Mexican
 8 side, it used to say "Laredo." Now we put the name
 9 "Laredo."
 10 The next one, please.
 11 There was lack of infrastructure on the
 12 Mexican side. We didn't even have a Paisano office to
 13 give attention to the most value-added part of the
 14 population -- Mexican population that work in the state.
 15 The next, please.
 16 We didn't even have a parking lot.
 17 Practically, they parked on terrain. And now we have an
 18 office that could give them some attention.
 19 The next, please.
 20 The image, the new entrance, the new exit,
 21 it's a new image that we have in the port.
 22 The next, please.
 23 We're also having a housing complex. We
 24 have the opportunity to have a port of entry working
 25 24 hours. This housing complex can house more than

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1 1,000 employees. We're planning to have a facility that
 2 works 24 hours. Currently, it only works 12 hours a
 3 day. So we have to take advantage of that.
 4 The next one, please.
 5 This is a checkpoint I was talking about.
 6 It's less than one kilometer before the bridge. Here,
 7 we're going to be able to check everything before it
 8 crosses. And we can share that information, gladly,
 9 with CBP and the government of Texas.
 10 Next one, please.
 11 This is our state police facilities in
 12 Colombia. Before, two years ago, it only housed 35
 13 police officials. Now, it houses 350. They're
 14 permanent in the port. Also, with Guardia Nacional,
 15 it's around 125. And SEDENA, you add 50. We have more
 16 than 550 security elements guarding the port 24 hours a
 17 day.
 18 The next one, please.
 19 We're also making the expansion. The
 20 Gloria Colombia is a reality. We're opening in [sic]
 21 31st of March. Gary [sic], we are opening on the 31st
 22 of March. It's this month coming. And this is going to
 23 change the whole way, the Port of Laredo, the logistics,
 24 is managed. 'Cause this highway is going to facilitate
 25 and it's going to make the Port of Laredo even more

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1 attractive. So this is a reality. The state funded
 2 these projects. We're making the expansion on the main
 3 boulevard of the port from six to ten lanes 'cause we're
 4 preparing of [sic] everything that's going to cross
 5 through Colombia.
 6 The next one, please. Next one. Next one.
 7 This is going to be opening in less than a
 8 week. We're opening already; we're not waiting for the
 9 bridge expansion. We're doing that with the city of
 10 Laredo, which I want to thank Mayor Victor Trevino here
 11 that is helping us a lot to get the presidential permit
 12 approved this year. We have that law that was approved
 13 by Senator Cruz and Henry Cuellar. And we have to take
 14 advantage of that law. But we're not waiting for that
 15 presidential permit. We're doing the expansion of the
 16 bridge. We're expanding it already from seven to 13.
 17 They're opening in less than a week. So this is a
 18 reality.
 19 The next one, please.
 20 This is how the expansion is going to look.
 21 As you can see on the right-hand side, the toll booths
 22 are already going to be open. And we're basically
 23 seeing that the purple expansion of the bridge is
 24 basically -- we're going to expand it from eight to 16
 25 lanes. So that also -- we're working on that. I know

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1 that's going to take time, but our priority this year is
 2 to have the presidential permit.
 3 The next one, please.
 4 The highway. This is all the highway
 5 master plan that Governor Samuel Garcia is working on.
 6 A lot of them have already been opening. The Gloria
 7 Colombia is opening by the 31st of March. Also, Highway
 8 1 on the left-hand side is going to be a very attractive
 9 one. That one is also going to be another way to get to
 10 Colombia. So we're doing our homework, and we're very
 11 glad that we have Texas as our business partner.
 12 The next one, please.
 13 That's all that I have. If you have any
 14 questions, if you want to go -- and I can give you a
 15 personal tour in Colombia. Just to emphasize, with this
 16 opening, with the Gloria-Colombia, we're going to start
 17 guaranteeing mobility 24-hours. When I say that, is
 18 cargo is going to arrive in Colombia 2:00 a.m.,
 19 3:00 a.m., 6:00 a.m. The whole dimension of the
 20 logistics city that we have planned, that Caroline Mays
 21 was the one who gave me the idea, we have the
 22 opportunity to build it together. The logistic border
 23 city.
 24 So I'm very glad we're here, Secretary
 25 Jane. We're very happy to be working with you. Very



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1 happy to be working with Governor Abbott, and we will do
 2 anything that it takes to become more trustworthy and
 3 more business partners. Thank you.
 4 SECRETARY NELSON: Wonderful. Thank you
 5 for your presentation. Thank you for the visuals, too.
 6 It's really nice to see them.
 7 Any questions or comments? Yes, sir.
 8 MAYOR TREVINO: I do have a question,
 9 Mayor --
 10 SECRETARY NELSON: We need you to state
 11 your name, too.
 12 MAYOR TREVINO: Mayor Doctor Trevino, City
 13 of Laredo.
 14 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you.
 15 MAYOR TREVINO: I do have a question.
 16 On that checkpoint you have before the
 17 Colombia Bridge that's in the state of Nuevo Leon,
 18 because we have two states that coincide with Laredo.
 19 On the Nuevo Leon side, will you be able to
 20 have, like, the ability to check inspection stickers
 21 that would be placed on the Mexican side to facilitate
 22 the passing to the U.S. side in regards to inspection of
 23 vehicles?
 24 MR. GONZALEZ VALDEZ: Mayor, we can do this
 25 together. That checkpoint is for the City of Laredo,

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1 for the State of Texas. Anything that it [sics] needs
 2 to be done to make this checkpoint more -- more optimum,
 3 let's do it together. For the -- Samuel Garcia always
 4 says we have to work together and we will do it. So we
 5 will not be an obstacle. Anything that needs to be
 6 done, with CBP, the City of Laredo, and the State of
 7 Texas, we will do it -- gladly do it in teamwork.
 8 MAYOR TREVINO: All right. Thank you.
 9 SECRETARY NELSON: Wonderful. Other
 10 questions? Comments? Thank you so much.
 11 MR. GONZALEZ VALDEZ: Thank you.
 12 SECRETARY NELSON: And finally, we're going
 13 to hear from Violeta Padilla, the Binational Affairs
 14 Director of the State of Chihuahua. No? Yes?
 15 MS. PADILLA: It's just a (indiscernible).
 16 Do I have to go there or?
 17 SECRETARY NELSON: No. From right there.
 18 Just a couple of minutes. We wanted to recognize you
 19 and welcome you.
 20 MS. PADILLA: (Indiscernible) Hello,
 21 everybody. On behalf of the Secretary of Innovation --
 22 just here. I'm sorry.
 23 On behalf of the Secretary of Innovation
 24 and Economic Development, Ulises Fernandez and under
 25 Secretary Fernando Alba, I would like to thank you for

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1 the invitation. We are honored to be part of this
 2 committee.
 3 I would like to begin by expressing our
 4 strong commitment to enhancing the alternatives for
 5 border crossings, and bolstering border infrastructure
 6 in the El Paso, Ciudad Juarez, and Dona Ana region.
 7 Our primary aim is to elevate our
 8 competitive stance, and to cultivate robust binational
 9 collaboration. This collaboration is key to promoting
 10 development and connectivity at the borders. We have
 11 made significant progress in this respect as
 12 demonstrated by our work and strategy alliances with
 13 entities on both sides of the border such as INDEX,
 14 CODER, Municipio de Juarez, El Paso County, the El Paso
 15 Community Foundation, the City of El Paso, and both
 16 Consulates. Among other important stakeholders.
 17 We are proactively engaging in
 18 addressing -- share challenges and combining ideas to
 19 develop effective solutions.
 20 Last year in partnership with some -- with
 21 some of the stakeholders mentioned before, we celebrate
 22 the first launch of our first binational meeting
 23 focusing on the region's border-related infrastructure
 24 and cross-border issues.
 25 This gathering brought together over 150

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1 representatives from a variety of industry,
 2 nongovernmental organizations and governmental agencies.
 3 Sorry for my governmental pronunciation.
 4 A part of our strategy plan to strengthen
 5 border crossings include the inauguration of the new
 6 Samalayuca-Guadalupe-Tornillo highway last year.
 7 Moreover, Ciudad Juarez is actively
 8 examining (phonetic) potential infrastructure projects
 9 that will alleviate the traffic congestions leading to
 10 and from our international ports of entry.
 11 Additionally, Mexican customs has unveiled
 12 a master plan for the modernization of the San
 13 Jeronimo-Santa Teresa Port of Entry. This plan has been
 14 meticulously reviewed by a variety of international
 15 trade users. Which has enabled us to collect invaluable
 16 feedback and to refine the plan further.
 17 At present, we are engaged in ongoing
 18 discussions with the federal government -- Mexican
 19 federal government to review and potentially check the
 20 proposal informed by the feedback we have received. We
 21 recognize the significance of Chihuahua's involvement in
 22 these forums. Therefore, we are eager to continue being
 23 a proactive and strong partner with Texas and our fellow
 24 Mexican border states.
 25 Thank you for your attention, ma'am. I



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1 look forward to continue with our collaboration.
 2 Thank you.
 3 SECRETARY NELSON: Thank you. Thank you
 4 for being here with us.
 5 Before we open it up for our open
 6 discussion, I want to say that I am proud to announce
 7 that on behalf of this committee, I sent Secretary
 8 Blinken the support letter requested at our last BTAC
 9 meeting for the four international bridge projects. And
 10 this morning we got a response saying that he did
 11 receive the letter, and so full steam ahead.
 12 I hope that this letter will help in
 13 expediting the permitting process to increase trade and
 14 ultimately benefit all of us and primarily the state of
 15 Texas, of course. Action taken. Thank you, too.
 16 MR. SCHWEBEL: Madam Secretary?
 17 SECRETARY NELSON: Yes. Gerry.
 18 MR. SCHWEBEL: Gerry. I really -- I want
 19 to thank you, and I want to thank the members of the
 20 BTAC for this critical letter. The timing is just
 21 perfect.
 22 It's not just this -- this letter
 23 (indiscernible) focus on the four current projects, but
 24 I think it sets the precedent for all future projects
 25 for the border. That the importance of expediting the

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1 presidential permit process is critical to meet the
 2 demands of the growing trade. So I want to -- I want to
 3 thank you, your leadership, and the members of the
 4 committee, Carlos, for getting this letter out to the
 5 Secretary. I hope it does help.
 6 SECRETARY NELSON: I hope it does, too.
 7 MR. SCHWEBEL: We'll see -- we'll see what
 8 happens at the next -- 20, 60 days. You know, first 60
 9 days have gone by. As you know that's -- Senator Cruz,
 10 in a bipartisan effort, incorporated this into the
 11 National Defense Authorization Act. So it's one more
 12 step in trying to expedite the process. So we'll see
 13 what happens. And the process will continue. Hopefully
 14 by April 22nd, we'll get these four projects --
 15 SECRETARY NELSON: Yes.
 16 MR. SCHWEBEL: You know, with a permit.
 17 SECRETARY NELSON: Yes. And thank you for
 18 your involvement and persistence.
 19 I want to thank everyone for their
 20 excellent presentations today. I've -- we've made a lot
 21 of progress on some significant issues this internum,
 22 but there is work left to be done as we begin the year.
 23 Your hard work and dedication are so greatly
 24 appreciated.
 25 So at this point, I want to open up the

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1 floor for discussion. If there are any outstanding
 2 issues or comments or questions or feedback or thoughts
 3 about future topics for this committee to discuss at our
 4 next meeting. Any?
 5 Yes, Judge?
 6 JUDGE SAMANIEGO: Thank you. Ricardo
 7 Samaniego, El Paso County Judge. Just wanted to give a
 8 quick update on our efforts with Tornillo. You know,
 9 we've been the option a couple of times. We had those
 10 repli- -- duplicate inspections that held us back, and
 11 then the traffic went to Tornillo. And we're very
 12 successful up to about 727 semitrucks going through,
 13 which was important for us to see, you know, if we could
 14 handle that kind of traffic.
 15 BOTA, as you know, is sort of a little bit
 16 of the elephant in the room right now that we -- we're
 17 trying to do our best to give Tornillo that option as
 18 they go into construction. The GSA is looking at, you
 19 know, some very -- you know, almost \$800 million worth
 20 of modernization. And so we're trying to prepare the
 21 most that we can when that happens. It's not something
 22 that you -- we need to wait. And so we've been very
 23 assertive. Thanks to our economic director, Roberto
 24 Ransom. We've taken a trip, and we had other
 25 individuals that went to Chihuahua to INDEX, which is

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1 the largest maquiladora association in Chihuahua. And
 2 they were very open to seeing how they can -- we could
 3 get that traffic going in.
 4 When -- where things don't happen like
 5 options -- we had a protest -- or that option. We go
 6 down to very small numbers. And so by March 31st, they
 7 want to make a decision as to whether to continue to
 8 keep that open for commercial. And to us, it would be
 9 catastrophic because we also want to make sure that we
 10 try our best not to have any commercial -- I know
 11 Commissioner Stout and the other commissioners want to
 12 eliminate some of the -- the problems that we have with
 13 the -- in the environment through -- right through our
 14 both cities of Juarez and El Paso. And so we're trying
 15 our best to show that Tornillo is capable. It's one of
 16 the largest ports. And it's also -- it has the highest
 17 technology because it's one of the latest that was
 18 constructed.
 19 So, anyway, just wanted to see whatever
 20 support that we could get to continue. I know that Eric
 21 Fernandez, who's a Port Director, is really excited
 22 about what they can do, but very concerned that if they
 23 don't show more progress that it might be shut down.
 24 And like I said, I think it would be catastrophic for us
 25 not to continue to be prepared for GSA making -- you




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1 know when that construction starts, it's going to be
 2 extremely difficult. And we'd like to move that -- a
 3 lot of the traffic and, sort of, get ready when that
 4 happens.
 5 So, anyway, just wanted to see -- get your
 6 support as much as possible. I know MPO and Eduardo and
 7 everybody are trying to support the Tornillo Port of
 8 Entry.
 9 And so once again, just your support would
 10 be very valuable to us and what we need to see in the
 11 next years -- in the future for ports here in El Paso.
 12 So thank you.
 13 SECRETARY NELSON: Great. Thank you.
 14 Any other comments? Questions? Thoughts?
 15 Well, then I'm going to announce that the
 16 next BTAC meeting will take place on April 16th. Put it
 17 on your calendar.
 18 The Chair would like to recommend that we
 19 hold the next meeting in Brownsville, Texas. So put it
 20 on your calendars.
 21 Again, I want to express my gratitude to
 22 everyone. El Paso, thank you for your hospitality.
 23 TxDOT, great job preparing for the meeting. It was
 24 really productive.
 25 And with that, it is 12:01. I'd like a

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1 motion. Gerry, are you going to move that we adjourn
 2 this meeting?
 3 MR. SCHWEBEL: I so move.
 4 SECRETARY NELSON: Okay. And is there a
 5 second?
 6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second --
 7 (Speaking simultaneously.)
 8 SECRETARY NELSON: A hundred seconds right
 9 there. All in favor? Aye?
 10 (Chorus of ayes.)
 11 SECRETARY NELSON: Okay. No business
 12 (indiscernible) for the committee. We are going to
 13 stand in recess until our next meeting in Brownsville on
 14 the 16th.
 15 Thank you-all so much.
 16 (Proceedings concluded at 12:01 p.m.)
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1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION
 2 I, Angelina Ontiveros, Stenographic
 3 Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of
 4 Texas, before whom the meeting was taken, do hereby
 5 certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and
 6 correct record the minutes given; That said minutes were
 7 recorded stenographically by me and were thereafter
 8 produced by computer-aided transcription.
 9 I further certify that I am not a relative or
 10 employee of any party, nor financially interested in the
 11 action.
 12 Certified to by me this 12th of March 2024.
 13
 14 
 15
 16 Angelina Ontiveros
 17 Stenographic Notary Public
 18 Notary Public: 13413024-2
 19 Expires 1-06-27
 20 Firm No. 633
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