



# TxDOT Maritime Legislative Resource Guide

U.S. House District 22



## Ports in House District 22



## Projects in House District 22

### Port of Palacios

- South Harbor Bulkhead Reconstruction .....\$28.00 M
- Port of Palacios Channel Deepening and Widening  
Feasibility Study ..... \$3.00 M

**Total Project Cost..... \$31.00 Million**



Docks at Port of Palacios

## TxDOT Government Affairs

The TxDOT Government Affairs Division is responsible for TxDOT's interactions with state and federal elected officials.

- Educational Series
  - Texas Transportation Funding Brochure
- <https://www.txdot.gov/about/divisions/government-affairs-division.html>



## TxDOT Maritime Division Dashboard

The TxDOT Maritime Division Dashboard highlights the Texas maritime transportation system and TxDOT Maritime Division funding programs.

<https://www.txdot.gov/data-maps/maritime-divisions-project-dashboards.html>



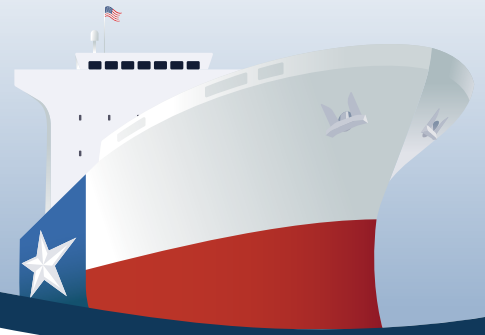
Texas Department of Transportation

[www.txdot.gov/about/divisions/maritime-division.html](http://www.txdot.gov/about/divisions/maritime-division.html)



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U.S. House District 22



**3** OF THE  
**TOP 10**

*Ports in the US*

**#1** Port Houston

**#3** Port of Corpus Christi

**#7** Port of Beaumont (2022)

## IMPACTS *of* TEXAS PORTS

*Port of Galveston*  
**1.49 Million**  
*Cruise Passengers in 2023*

*Port of Palacios*  
**Largest**  
*Shrimp Fleet in Texas*

*Texas Transportation Jobs (2023)*  
**2,518,000**

**\$713.9**  
**BILLION**

*Total  
Economic  
Value(2023)*

*Port of Beaumont*  
**#1**  
*Strategic  
Military  
Port in  
the US*

**28%**  
*of Texas GDP  
(2023)*



**\$403.61 BILLION**  
IN TRADE VALUE OVERALL  
ANNUALLY (2023)



**\$17.1 BILLION**  
TOTAL TAXES (2023)



**746.4 Million**  
TONS OF CARGO MOVED  
BY TEXAS PORTS (2023)



Port Authority Advisory Committee

# TEXAS PORT MISSION PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

89<sup>TH</sup> Legislative Session



## INTRODUCTION

In a state where the maritime industry accounts for more than 28% of the GDP<sup>1</sup>, the Texas economy is largely driven by commodity supply chains that move goods to and from the state. Inland markets across the state rely on a strong multimodal freight network to get their goods to the ports for export. Improving the port systems help Texas compete in the global market by ensuring that its inland export commodities continue to reach their destinations worldwide.

Texas seaports require continual maritime infrastructure, seaport connectivity, and ship channel improvements to meet the needs of our Texas's booming economy, as they are a crucial link in the supply chain. The projects identified in this plan represent the needs of Texas ports and their implementation will secure the State's continued economic growth.

## TOTAL PORT PROJECT NEEDS

**Total: \$9,157,244,256**



Maritime  
Infrastructure  
Projects

**\$3.11**  
BILLION



Seaport  
Connectivity  
Projects

**\$585**  
MILLION



Ship  
Channel  
Projects

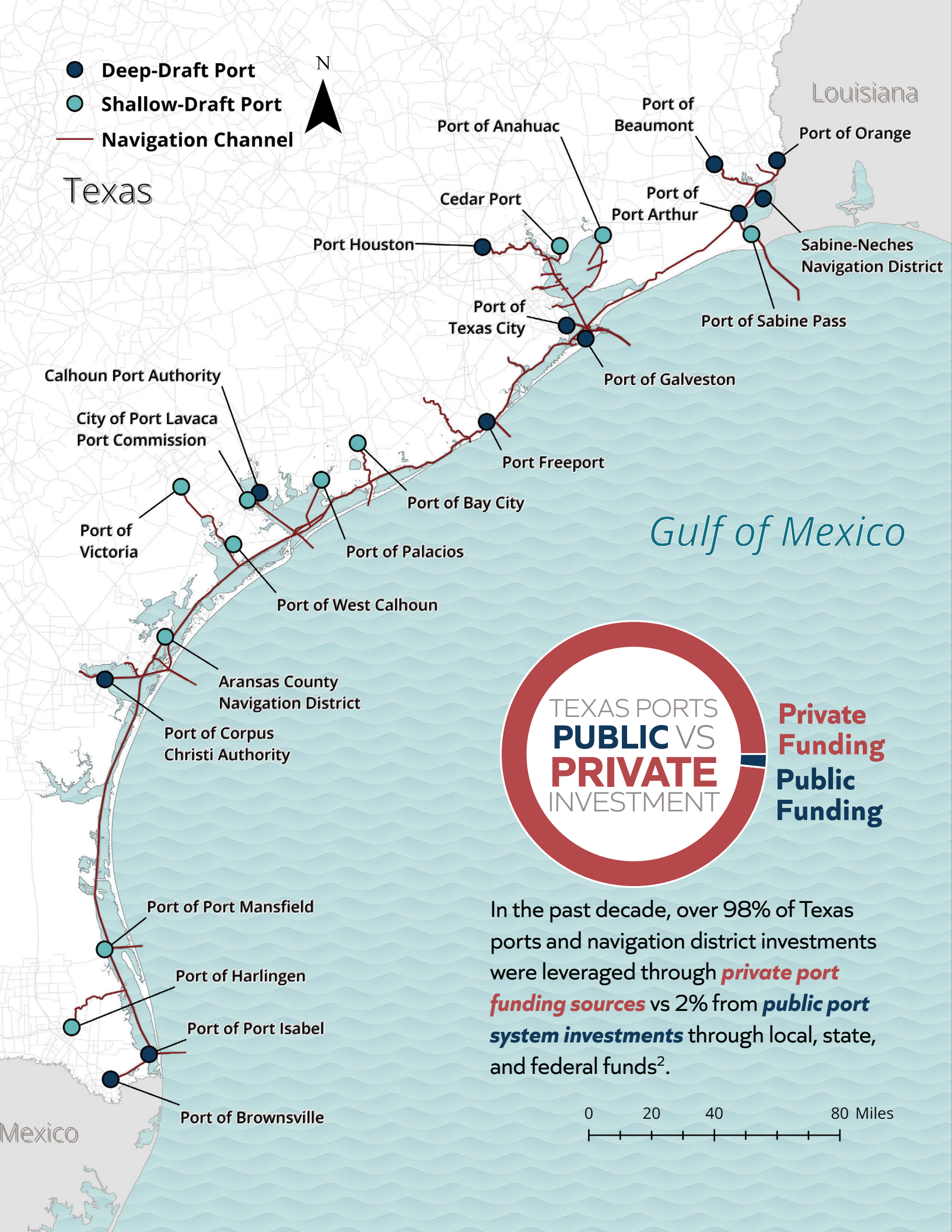
**\$5.46**  
BILLION

## Successes Since 88th Legislative Session

Following the 88th Legislature's historic **\$640 million** appropriation to Texas seaports, the Texas Transportation Commission awarded the funding to Texas seaport projects to help increase trade, improve safety, and provide a more robust supply chain for our state and the nation.

- Signed into law as the first funding of its kind in Texas, the Commission approved eligible port development and infrastructure projects for **\$200 million** in funding awards through the Maritime Infrastructure Program (MIP). TxDOT and recipient ports were successful in initiating the letting process for all projects selected for funding within the first year of the biennium.
- Additionally, the Texas Transportation Commission approved eligible state highway and other publicly accessible roadway projects for **\$40 million** in funding awards through the Seaport Connectivity Program (SCP).
- The 88th Legislature appropriated **\$400 million** in general revenue to fund the Ship Channel Improvement Revolving Fund (SCIRF). The entire \$400 million was approved for award to two ports.





## Maritime Infrastructure

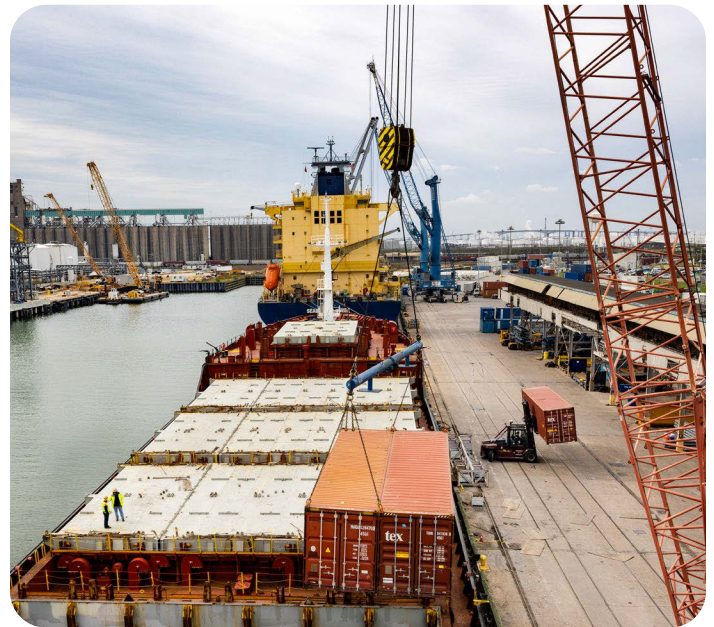
Maritime infrastructure addresses port facility and capital improvement needs. Port facilities, including things like storage yards, docks and wharves, entry gates, and interior roadway systems are the backbone of a port's operations. The port's interior infrastructure and equipment help to move workers and goods between vessels and other modes of transportation outside of the port. Investment in port infrastructure allows for ports to maintain efficient business operations, support continued growth of existing businesses, attract new clients, and adapt to ever-changing domestic and global economic conditions all while remaining economically viable and competitive. A port without functional, modern infrastructure will lose out on significant growth, job creation, and revenue generation, while a port that is able to continually invest in infrastructure improvements will actively contribute to the economic health of the region and the state, helping to improve the quality of life in the local area.

## Seaport Connectivity

Texas seaports have a robust intermodal transportation system connecting the state and the nation to domestic and foreign markets. A strong, viable network of road, rail, and pipeline connections to facilitate the movement of materials, goods, and personnel is key to the success of the state's port system. Transportation investments not only make individual ports more competitive, but also contribute to economic vibrancy generally, growing job opportunities, bringing resources to the state's coastal cities, and developing connections across regions.

## Ship Channels

Texas ship channels have a powerful impact on the Texas and U.S. economies and help transfer Texas's respected exports all over the world. As key features of the supply chain, these assets must be looked after to ensure that they meet future demands to continue economic success. An investment in ship channel improvements typically brings an immediate return-on-investment. As vessels have grown larger to enhance trade efficiency, there has been a need for deeper and wider channels to accommodate them to have access to the ports.



*Containers being off-loaded from a container ship at Port Houston*

# TEXAS PORT SYSTEMS



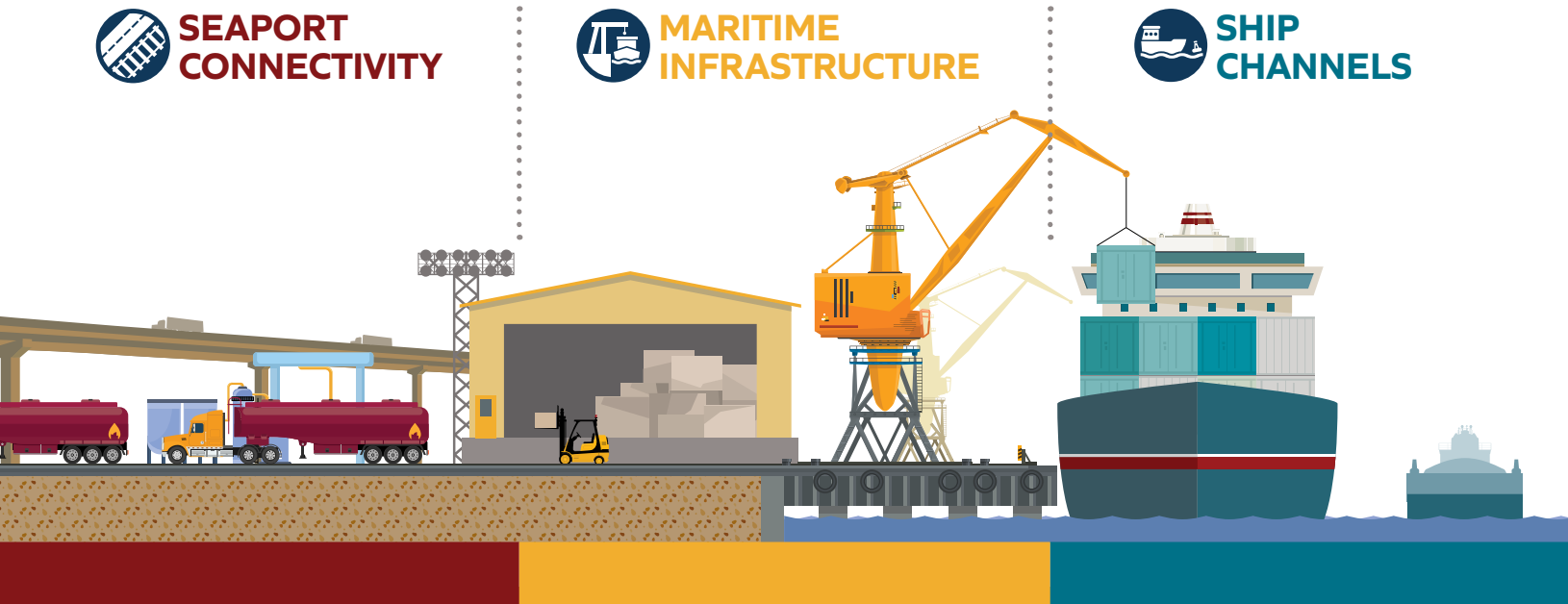
**SEAPORT  
CONNECTIVITY**



**MARITIME  
INFRASTRUCTURE**



**SHIP  
CHANNELS**





# MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE

The maritime infrastructure needs presented encompass a wide variety of projects or studies including waterway projects such as turning basins, connectivity projects such as internal roadway or railroad improvements, and port facilities projects such as bulkheads and storage facilities.

The maritime infrastructure projects presented in this plan include 82 projects, 78 capital projects and four studies, submitted by 17 ports whose total project cost is \$3.11 billion.

## Maritime Infrastructure Projects

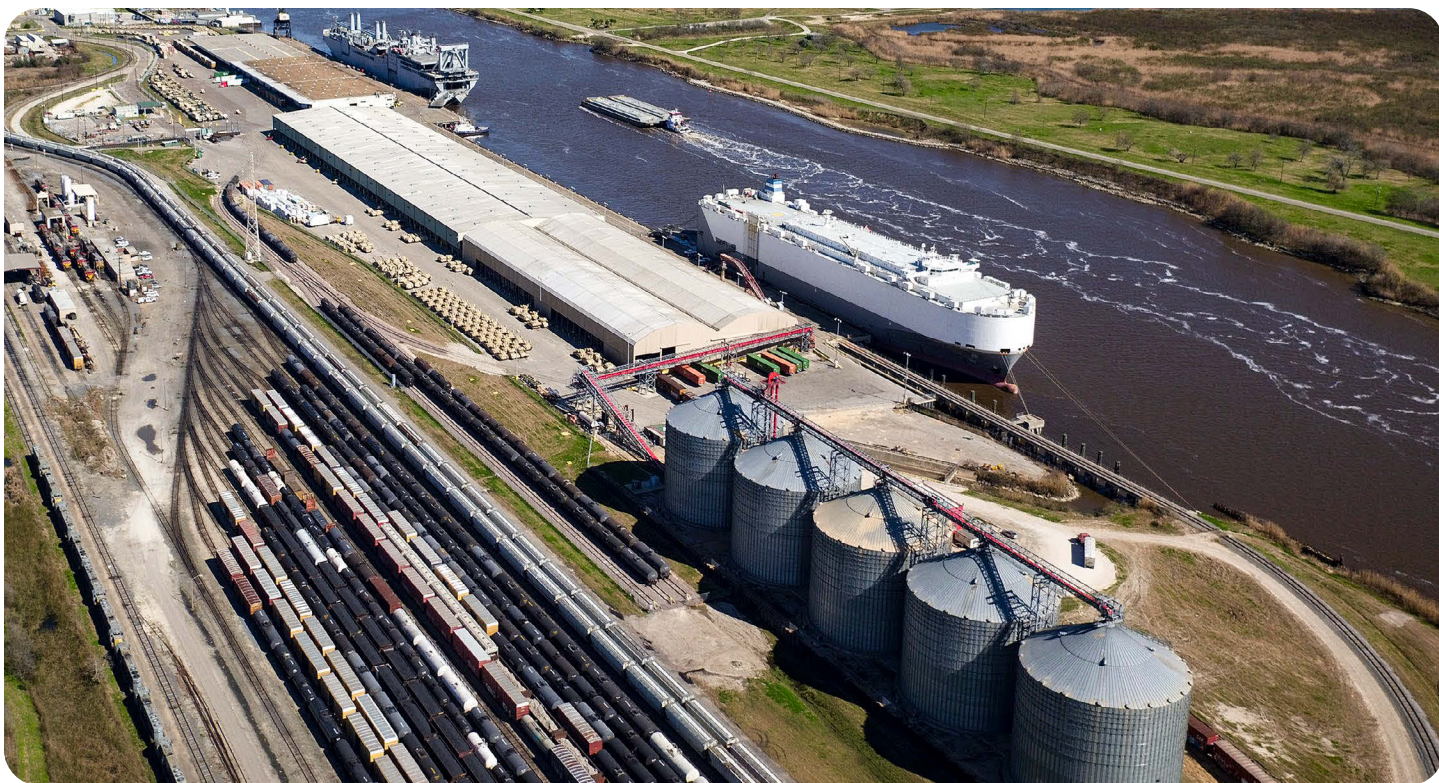
Project Types	# of Projects	Total Cost
Docks, Berths, and Wharfs*	31	\$1.12 Billion
Terminals	10	\$816.85 Million
Roadway/Railroad/Runway Improvements	10	\$325.07 Million
Building/Facilities	6	\$305.39 Million
Yards	8	\$221.07 Million
Bulkheads	11	\$216.20 Million
Other	6	\$103.70 Million
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>\$3.11 Billion</b>

*Costs provided by ports/navigation districts, \*Includes four studies*

*Construction progress on the Port Houston Barbours Cut Wharves; this project was funded in part by money allocated by the 88th Texas Legislature*







*Railyard near channel at Port of Port Arthur*

## SEAPORT CONNECTIVITY

The seaport connectivity needs include potential solutions to address safety issues, congestion, mobility deficiencies, or improvements between the interaction of vehicles, rail, and adjacent land use. Solutions targeting freight movement can provide regional benefits and benefits to general travel. Projects identified in this report were submitted by the ports and are developed at least to a conceptual level.

The seaport connectivity projects presented in this plan include 24 port-requested connectivity projects submitted by 10 ports and two projects submitted by one of the five coastal TxDOT Districts to address freight mobility at a regional scale. The total cost to implement these projects is estimated to be \$584.85 million.

### Seaport Connectivity Projects

Project Types	# of Projects	Total Cost
Roadway Improvements	16	\$448.11 Million
Bridge Replacements	2	\$68.15 Million
Entrance/Exit Gate	1	\$40.00 Million
Truck Staging and Queuing Areas	4	\$24.37 Million
Wayfinding and Accessibility	1	\$1.60 Million
Public Parking	1	\$1.50 Million
Pedestrian Improvements	1	\$1.12 Million
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>\$584.85 Million</b>

*Costs provided by ports/navigation districts*



*East Ostos Road at the Port of Brownsville*





Shrimping boats at the Port of Palacios



## SHIP CHANNELS

Receiving federal authorization for ship channel deepening and widening requires that a feasibility study first be completed to demonstrate that there are no negative environmental impacts resulting from the project and that the project is of national economic interest. Beyond just channel deepening and widening projects, other ship channel needs can include non-federal projects like dock deepening to match the deeper channel, areas for ship queuing while waiting for berthing space at the port or major alongside channel infrastructure improvements, like jetty structure improvements at the entrance channel.

Ship channel improvement projects are investments that are costly and time sensitive. Delays in funding and implementing projects can lead to missed opportunities for attracting tenants, increases in overall construction costs, operational and safety issues with vessels, and loss of returns on the overall investment.

### Ship Channel Projects

Project Types	# of Projects	Total Cost
Channel Deepening and Widening	8	\$4.96 Billion
Dock or Harbor Improvements	2	\$340.00 Million
Entrance Channel Jetties	1	\$90.00 Million
Other Dredging Needs	2	\$61.20 Million
Feasibility Study	4	\$11.56 Million
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>\$5.46 Billion</b>

*Costs provided by ports/navigation districts*

## PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

### FEASIBILITY STUDY INITIATION



- Section 203 of Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 1986 and amendments from recent WRDA issuances allow the non-federal sponsor to initiate the study through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) funding and participation require allocations in their annual Work Plan budget for the specific study

### FEASIBILITY STUDY



**3 YEARS**

**UP TO 10 YEARS**

- Evaluates proposed solutions and alternatives
- Identifies plan that maximizes National Economic Development (NED) benefits
- Culminates with a USACE-approved signed Chief's Report by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)



# Ship Channel Improvement Revolving Fund

In 2017, the 85th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 28, establishing the Ship Channel Improvement Revolving Fund (SCIRF). This creates a revolving loan program to help finance the modernization of ship channels. In 2023, the 88th Legislative Session appropriated \$400 million to fund the SCIRF.

- SCIRF-eligible projects must:
- Deepen or widen a ship channel
  - Be authorized by Congress
  - Meet any other standards set by the Texas Transportation Commission
  - Maintenance dredging is not qualified per current statute

## Federal Ship Channel Appropriations

Ship channels that have been authorized by the federal government for improvement or where the federal government has assumed maintenance responsibilities are dredged under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works program. However, ports act as non-federal sponsors of the projects and are responsible for funding a portion of the construction and maintenance costs.

The ship channel improvement projects presented in this plan include seven federally authorized deepening projects, representing a \$2.54 billion federal share and \$1.92 billion

local share, for a total estimated first cost of \$4.46 billion. These federally authorized projects are eligible to use SCIRF funds. Loan funds will be utilized to cover construction costs and will be paid back into the fund over time. Additionally, this plan reflects four projects in the feasibility study phase for future Congressional authorization, and five non-federal projects, which are ineligible for SCIRF funding according to the current statute. The total cost of all ship channel needs is estimated to be \$5.46 billion.

Some federal funding has already been appropriated to date for federally authorized channel improvement projects and feasibility studies. Through 2024, federal appropriations for ship channel improvement projects in this plan total approximately \$1.23 billion.

### Federal Appropriations for Texas Ship Channel Projects Through 2024

Project Name	Amount Appropriated
Brazos Island Harbor Channel Improvement	\$68.00 Million
Corpus Christi Ship Channel Improvement	\$405.68 Million
Freeport Harbor Channel Improvement	\$207.72 Million
Galveston Harbor Channel Extension	\$10.78 Million
Houston Ship Channel Expansion	\$172.72 Million
Matagorda Ship Channel Improvement	\$1.81 Million
Sabine-Neches Waterway Channel Improvement	\$367.00 Million
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1.23 Billion</b>

#### CONGRESSIONAL PROJECT AUTHORIZATION



2 YEARS

10+ YEARS

- An individual project requires Congressional authorization for construction through a signed bill or WRDA
- WRDAs have been issued as frequently as biennially or as infrequently as once a decade

#### PROJECT FUNDING, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION



PROJECT DEPENDENT

- A Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) provides a legally binding agreement between the federal government and non-federal sponsor for construction
- Be authorized and have funding allocated by Congress

# TEXAS PORTS

## IMPACT THE GLOBAL ECONOMY



### Annual Trade by Region<sup>3</sup>:

Canada & Mexico	South & Central America	Europe	Africa	Asia	Australia & Oceania
<b>\$50.77 B</b>	<b>\$67.44 B</b>	<b>\$123.27 B</b>	<b>\$9.77 B</b>	<b>\$150.01 B</b>	<b>\$2.34 B</b>
Exports: \$36.16 B Imports: \$14.62 B	Exports: \$49.76 B Imports: \$17.67 B	Exports: \$87.85 B Imports: \$35.42 B	Exports: \$7.94 B Imports: \$1.83 B	Exports: \$87.89 B Imports: \$62.12 B	Exports: \$1.72 B Imports: \$0.62 B

**\$403.61 billion in trade value overall annually\***

\$271.32 billion in exports and \$132.28 billion in imports

*\*Values in dollars for annual combined waterborne import and export trade value for Texas in 2023.*

Refer to the 89th Legislative Session Texas Port Mission Plan at <https://www.txdot.gov/projects/planning/maritime-port-planning.html> for references.





# PORT of BAY CITY

Port of Bay City Authority

Craig Hlavinka, Harbormaster

[www.portofbaycity.com](http://www.portofbaycity.com)



Energy



Break Bulk



Ro/Ro



Other

*The Port of Bay City is a mixed-use industrial and recreational port that manages the shallow draft Colorado River Channel. The Port has operated the Matagorda Harbor Marina near the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) since its opening in 1990. The port has approximately 150 acres of land for industrial development near its terminal situated roughly 15 miles inland, suitable to substantial tonnage industries traveling both inbound and outbound.*

## Port Priorities & Opportunities

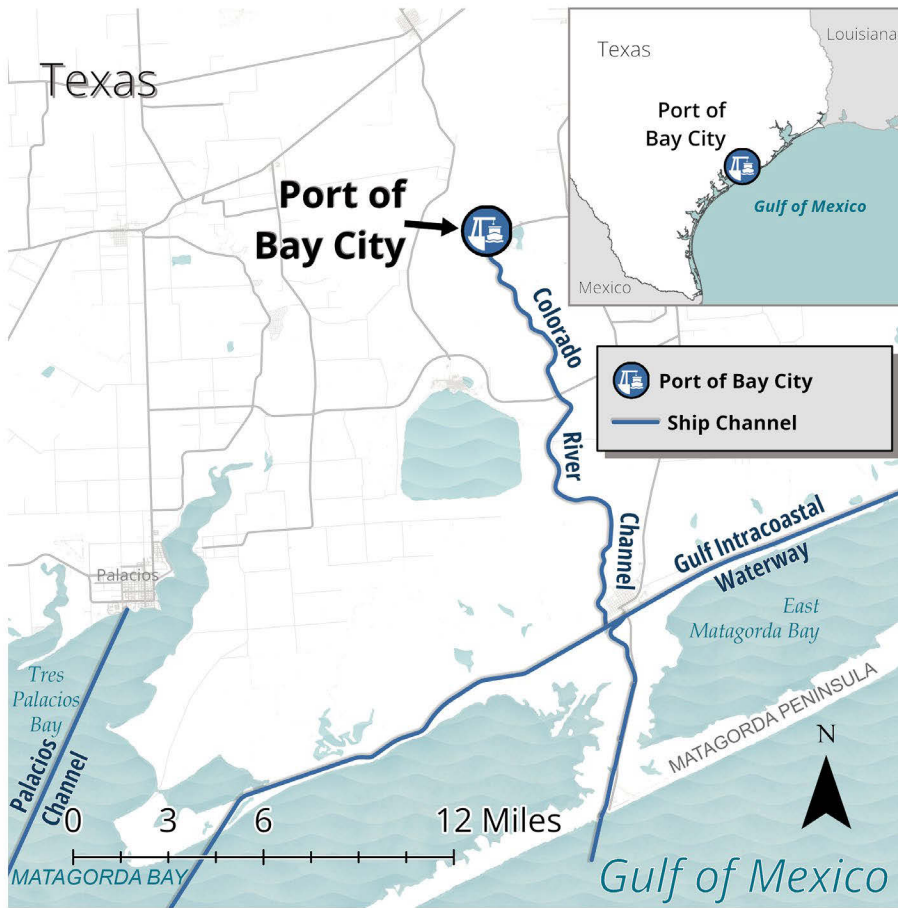
The Port of Bay City's evolution in recent years has been marked by strategic acquisitions and plans for expansion, notably by the port purchasing property near Matagorda initially for industrial use and later re-envisioned for a harbor expansion catering to pleasure crafts. While initial bond efforts for these projects did not materialize, these endeavors highlight the port's adaptive strategies and potential future directions. Addressing inland connectivity remains a priority for the port, with ongoing challenges such as traffic congestion around FM 3057 and FM 259. Proposed solutions include adding traffic signals and improving road infrastructure to support the expanding port operations and the increasing activity at adjacent industrial sites like Roehm America.



Matagorda Harbor on the Colorado River Entrance  
Photo credit: Port of Bay City

In terms of opportunities, the port is poised to significantly enhance its infrastructure and operational capacity. A \$9.6 million grant for development in the Colorado River area underscores the port's commitment to leveraging federal funds for strategic improvements. However, persistent issues such as shoaling in the Colorado River and the need for dredging to maintain navigational depths indicate critical areas for investment to ensure the port's efficiency and competitiveness. The exploration of new projects for container yards and truck queuing areas signifies a broad vision for the port's future development, focusing on expanding its capacity to accommodate growing trade and recreational demands.





## PORT FACILITIES

### DOCKS & WHARVES

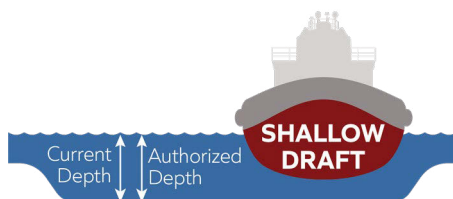
- Concrete terminal facility dock
- Liquid cargo dock
- Terminal shed with open floor space to handle cargo
- Matagorda Harbor

## SHIP CHANNEL

**Ship Channel Name:** Colorado River Channel

**Current Depth:** 12 ft

**Authorized Depth:** 12 ft



## INTERMODALITY

### ROAD

- Access to FM 3057

### RAIL

- Connections to BNSF and Union Pacific

### BARGE

- 15-mile sailing distance to GIWW (M-10, M-69)

### AIR

- 20 miles from Bay City Regional Airport

### PIPELINE

- Access to natural gas, oxygen, and nitrogen pipelines

# CARGO CONNECTIONS

## Top Commodities

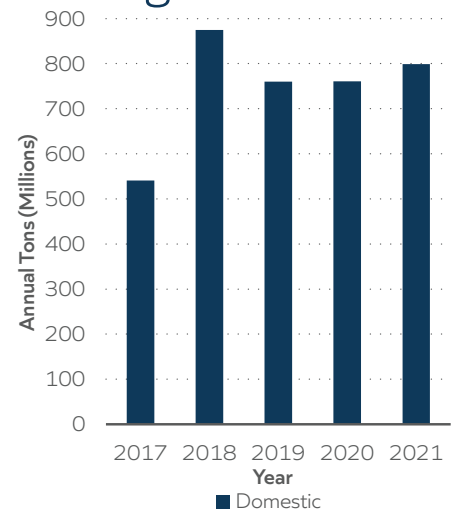
### EXPORTS

- Fertilizers and Chemicals
- Petroleum & Petroleum Products
- All Manufactured Equipment, Machinery, and Products

### IMPORTS

- Fertilizers and Chemicals
- Primary Manufactured Goods
- All Manufactured Equipment, Machinery, and Products
- Petroleum & Petroleum Products

## Tonnage

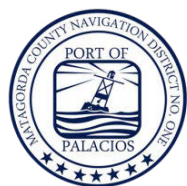


Tonnage data from USACE Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center, 2024



Port facilities  
Photo credit: Port of Bay City





# PORT of PALACIOS

## Matagorda County Navigation District No. 1

Victor Martinez Jr., Port Director

[www.portofpalacios.com](http://www.portofpalacios.com)



Commercial  
Fishing

*The Port of Palacios is a multi-use, shallow draft commercial and recreational port. Formed in 1940 to promote commercial and recreational fishing, the Port of Palacios maintains a navigable waterway while protecting the coastal environment. Shrimping has been a signature market in the Palacios region since 1922. The port also provides safe harbor for boats traversing the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to Palacios.*

## Port Priorities & Opportunities

At the Port of Palacios, the markets have remained focused on the leasing docks to its commercial shrimping fleet and servicing regional ferries, with an anticipated uptick in barge traffic to bring in heavy pre-fabricated components. The port has been grappling with connectivity issues, notably the constraints posed by narrow bridges on SH 35 and the need for wider roads to accommodate truck traffic.

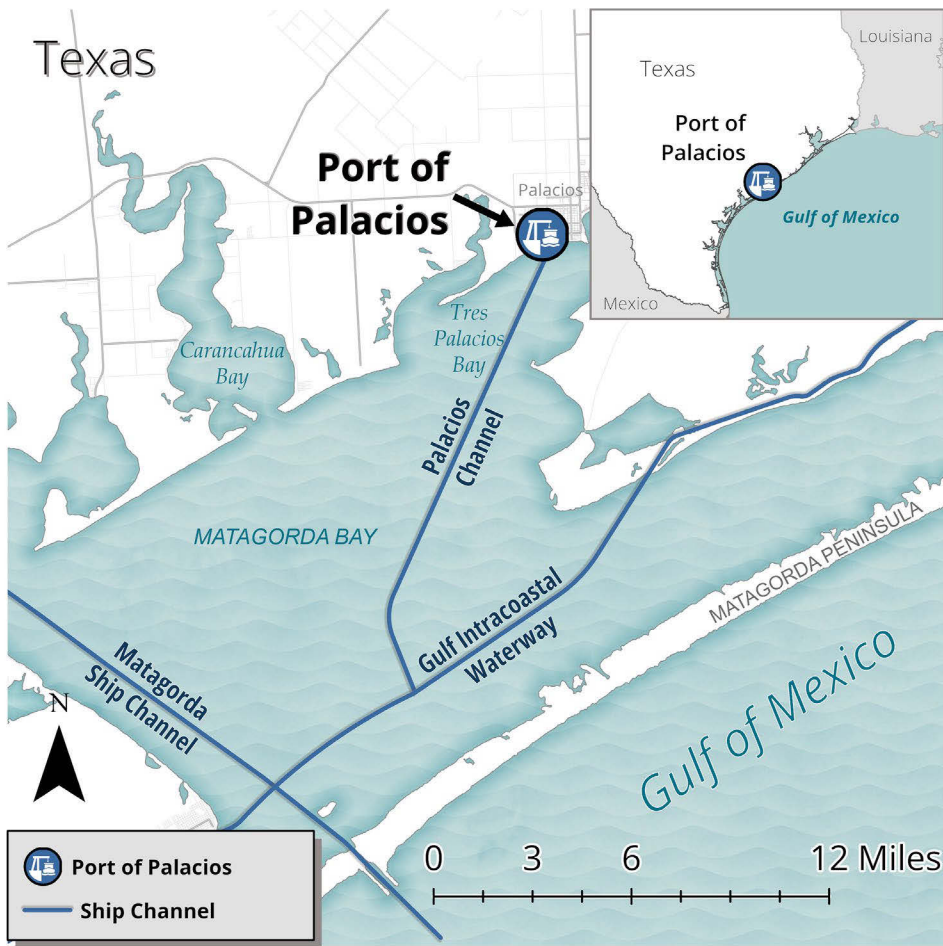
The port is seeking \$28 million for a dock hardening project, primarily for infrastructure improvements like bulkhead construction. Additionally, the port has been awarded a MARAD grant for dock rehabilitation benefiting the commercial fishing sector with an expected cost of \$13 million. For ship channel improvements, there are plans for spot dredging as needed, as well as a feasibility study for the deepening and widening of Palacios Channel, which is federally authorized but yet unfunded.

## Port Projects

Project Name	Project Type	Total Project Cost
South Harbor Bulkhead Reconstruction	Maritime Infrastructure	\$28.0 Million
Port of Palacios Channel Deepening and Widening Feasibility Study	Ship Channel	\$3.0 Million

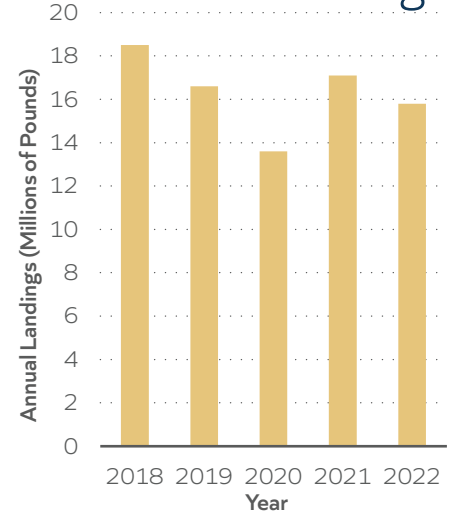
*Costs provided by port/navigation district*





## CARGO CONNECTIONS

### Commercial Fishing



Commercial fishing data from NOAA, 2023

### Port of Palacios Recreational Amenities Include:

- Gated Facility
- Water & electricity available
- Shower facility
- Public boat ramp
- Voted "Best Sailing Bay" in Texas
- Great fishing year-round
- Bait Available
- Local restaurants & lodging

## PORT FACILITIES

### DOCKS & WHARVES

- 6 cargo docks
- Over 900 acres of land for lease
- Two shipyards for repair, retrofit, fabrication, and dry dock

### EMERGING MARKETS

- Bulk cargo transportation
- Manufacturing and fabrication of tugboats and barges

### PALACIOS FISHING HARBOR

- 200-boat shrimp fleet
- 12,500 ft of bulkhead dock

## SHIP CHANNEL

**Ship Channel Name:** Palacios Channel

**Current Depth:** 14 ft

**Authorized Depth:** 14 ft

## INTERMODALITY

### ROAD

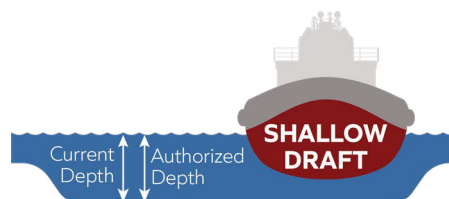
- Highway connection to SH 35

### BARGE

- 16-mile sailing distance to GIWW (M-10, M-69)

### AIR

- 2.5 miles from Palacios Municipal Airport



The Port of Palacios. Photo credit: Port of Palacios





*Texas Department of Transportation*