



Texas Freight Advisory Committee Meeting

Dewitt C. Greer Building- Austin, Texas



November 12, 2024

Safety Minute

HELP
#EndTheStreakTX
End the streak of daily deaths on Texas roadways.



TxDOT.gov (Keyword: #EndTheStreakTX)

#EndTheStreakTX Toolkit



Safety Minute

Navigating Roadways During the Holidays

- Buckle up
- No drinking and driving
- Watch your speed
- Avoid distractions
- Drive in the appropriate conditions
- Move over, slow down
- Follow the law



Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.	Networking	
2:00 – 2:20 p.m.	TxFAC Welcome, Call to Order, and New Business	
	<div><p>Judge Ed Emmett <i>Fellow in Energy & Transportation Policy, Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy, TxFAC Chair</i></p></div> <div><p>Commissioner Alvin New <i>Texas Transportation Commission</i></p></div> <div><p>Commissioner Alejandro "Alex" G. Meade III <i>Texas Transportation Commission</i></p></div>	
	<div><p>The Honorable Jill Dutton <i>Texas House of Representatives, House District 2</i></p></div> <div><p>Caroline Mays, AICP <i>Director of Planning and Modal Programs, TxDOT</i></p></div>	
2:20 – 2:50 p.m.	Freight Plan Implementation Update	Tyler Graham , <i>Freight Systems Branch Manager, TxDOT</i>
2:50 – 3:10 p.m.	Texas Rail Plan Update	Chad Coburn , <i>Rail Division, TxDOT</i>
3:10 – 3:20 p.m.	Break	
3:20 – 4:00 p.m.	TxDOT LAR Update	<i>Government Affairs Division, TxDOT</i>
4:00 – 4:30 p.m.	Truckers Paradise: Innovative Approaches to Private Truck Parking	Dean Ash , <i>Truckers Paradise Truck Parks</i>
4:30 – 4:40 p.m.	Future Workshops and Updates from TTI	Allan Rutter , <i>TTI Senior Research Scientist Program Manager, Texas A&M Transportation Institute</i>
4:40 – 4:45 p.m.	Final Remarks	Judge Ed Emmett , <i>Chair</i>
4:45 p.m.	Adjourn	

TxFAC Welcome, Call to Order, and New Business



**Judge
Ed Emmett**
Fellow in Energy &
Transportation Policy,
Rice University's
Baker Institute for
Public Policy,
TxFAC Chair



**Commissioner
Alvin New**
Texas Transportation
Commission



**Commissioner
Alejandro
"Alex" G.
Meade III**
Texas Transportation
Commission



**The Honorable
Jill Dutton**
Texas House of
Representatives,
House District 2



**Caroline Mays,
AICP**
Director of Planning
and Modal Programs,
TxDOT



Texas Delivers 2050: Program and Policy Recommendations



TxFAC Presentation

November 12, 2024

Table of Contents

- 1** | Text Overview of process
- 5** | Program recommendations
- 10** | Policy recommendations
- 19** | Next steps

Process for Developing Recommendations



Communicating Recommendations

Supportive

- *Maintain existing TMFN*
- *State of good repair*
- *Enhance safety*

Stimulative

- *Enhance mobility*
- *Improve operations*
- *Ensure resiliency*
- *Address equity concerns*
- *Expand connectivity*

Transformative

- *Evolve the way freight moves*
- *Enable technology deployments*
- *Reimagine gateways*
- *Diversify fuels*

Recommendation Phasing

- Short-term solutions
 - Immediate focus
- Long-term solutions
 - Future Freight Plan



Program Recommendations

Summary of Program Recommendations

SUPPORTIVE

Create a rural freight connectivity program.

Develop a multimodal freight network resiliency enhancement plan.

Establish a first and last mile intermodal connector program.

Coordinate on a freight and logistics workforce development program.

Develop and expand truck parking facilities at key gateways and freight generators.

Summary of Program Recommendations

STIMULATIVE

Conduct training on incorporating freight into MPO and local planning.

Develop industrial access and freight supportive land use and development guidance.

Assess feasibility of truck bypasses in congested urban areas.

Summary of Program Recommendations

TRANSFORMATIVE

Develop a freight demand management program.

Elevate the “3rd Coast” concept as a key gateway to North America.

Reimagine public and stakeholder interaction.

MENTIMETER EXCERISE: Recommendation Summary

QUESTION 1: Prioritize the 11 program actions



Policy Recommendations

Summary of Supportive Policy Recommendations

SUPPORTIVE

Include freight considerations in the Unified Transportation Program project development and prioritization process.

Explore funding for existing freight programs, such as the Texas Rail Relocation Fund, Port Access Account Fund, and the Ship Channel Improvement Fund.

Identify, preserve, protect, and invest in the Network across the state.

Continue to expand and administer a comprehensive and multimodal freight planning program that integrates freight considerations into project selection process.

Support strategic initiatives of the Governor's Office of Economic Development and Tourism.

Ensure effective implementation of the Plan through a commitment to appropriate staffing and resources.

Address freight movement safety "hot spots" in coordination with planning partners.

Comply with federal requirements for freight planning and future project funding eligibility.

Monitor and support policies that encourage technology deployment while ensuring public interests are protected.

Integrate freight considerations into TxDOT district and Metropolitan Planning Organization planning, project development, and implementation.

MENTIMETER EXCERISE: Recommendation Summary

QUESTION 2: Prioritize the 10 supportive policy recommendations

Summary of Stimulative Policy Recommendations

STIMULATIVE

Coordinate on statewide traffic management system by integrating data provided by existing traffic management centers to provide comprehensive traveler information.

Expand stakeholder outreach for freight planning efforts to include community and public outreach using high- and low-tech techniques, especially in vulnerable communities.

Identify opportunities to advance high priority multimodal projects based on the increased availability of National Highway Freight Program funds for intermodal projects.

Develop and incorporate resiliency performance measures in transportation planning, policy, and infrastructure investment decisions.

Advance the highest priority projects on the Network by ensuring they are fully funded.

In coordination with planning partners, advance recommendations from the Statewide Truck Parking Study.

Pursue federally available funds through discretionary grants for multimodal freight projects.

Further the understanding of the role of the Network in supporting the state's supply chains.

Improve communication between public agencies to streamline project delivery and build consistency among jurisdictions in regulating and preserving the freight network.

In coordination with planning partners, advance a Third Coast Global Gateway concept of a one-stop, unified, coordinated, and comprehensive information portal for all transportation modes.

MENTIMETER EXERCISE: Stimulative Recommendations

QUESTION 3: Prioritize the 10 stimulative policy recommendations

Summary of Transformative Policy Recommendations

TRANSFORMATIVE

In coordination with planning partners, establish a Third Coast Global Gateway task force.

Partner with emerging technology leaders and the private sector to ensure Texas is a leader for freight mobility technology.

Support establishment of a statewide Supply Chain Council consisting of industry representatives to advise state agencies on a variety of supply chain challenges and opportunities.

Develop digital infrastructure and integration policies necessary to enable the development of digital twins and implementation of emerging freight mobility technologies.

Encourage a robust community impact assessment and outreach program related to freight movement that includes examining community impacts and evaluating and communicating the equity considerations of those impacts.

Support technology and operational strategies and deploy integrated border-crossing management solutions.

MENTIMETER EXERCISE: Transformative Recommendations

QUESTION 4: Prioritize the 6 transformative policy recommendations



Next Steps



Tyler Graham
Freight System Branch Manager
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512-354-9278





2024-2025 Texas Rail Plan



SAFETY moment



#EndTheStreakTX

[View the campaign »](#)



Talk. Text. Crash.

[View the campaign »](#)



Bicycle Safety

[View the campaign »](#)



Pedestrian Safety

[View the campaign »](#)



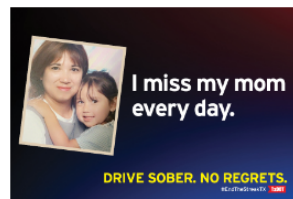
Move Over or Slow Down

[View the campaign »](#)



College and Young Adult Impaired Driving

[View the campaign »](#)



Faces of Drunk Driving

[View the campaign »](#)



Be Safe. Drive Smart.

[View the campaign »](#)

WHO IS the TxDOT Rail Division?

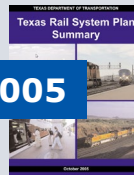
- **Established** in 2009
- **Implements** rail-related policies
- **Analyzes** rail infrastructure and operations
- **Plans and coordinates** rail projects
- **Oversees** rail-highway safety and inspection
- **State liaison** to Federal Railroad Administration
- **Manages** state-owned railroad

WHAT IS the Texas Rail Plan?

- **Defines** what the system is today
- **Determines** needs for the future
- **Integrates** with other TxDOT plans
- **Includes** stakeholder input —
TxDOT wants to hear from you!



Texas Rail Plan History:

2005

First rail
plan

2019

Last
update

DEVELOPING the Texas Rail Plan goals and objectives

Previous Rail Plan Goals:



SAFETY: Reduce rail-related fatalities and serious injuries, especially at at-grade rail crossings.



ASSET MANAGEMENT: Achieve a state of good repair of the rail assets, especially those assets owned by TxDOT.



MOBILITY AND RELIABILITY: Reduce congestion and improve rail system efficiency, capacity, and performance, including rail freight and passenger travel time reliability.



MULTIMODAL CONNECTIVITY: Provide freight and passenger choice by improving the rail system and providing intermodal and multimodal connectivity.



ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS: Strengthen Texas' position as a trade and logistics hub and support both existing industries and the attraction of new industries.

WHY update the Texas Rail Plan?

The federal government requires states to develop, maintain, and update rail plans (49 CFR 266.15).

Requirements for State Rail Plans:

- Based on a comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing planning process for all transportation services within the state.
- Developed with an opportunity for participation by persons interested in rail activity in the state and adjacent states, where appropriate.

Section 11315 of the FAST Act (2015) amended the statutory requirements under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 227 pertaining to state rail plan requirements making the updates mandatory every four years instead of the original five years.

- *Continues to be required by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act/BIL.*

Inclusion within a state rail plan will be considered by the Federal Railroad Administration for competitive grant programs.

WHY update the Texas Rail Plan?

Additional Reasons for Update:



Gain guidance for future rail priorities from dialogue with stakeholders and the general public.



Assess rail needs and develop a list of potential rail improvement projects.

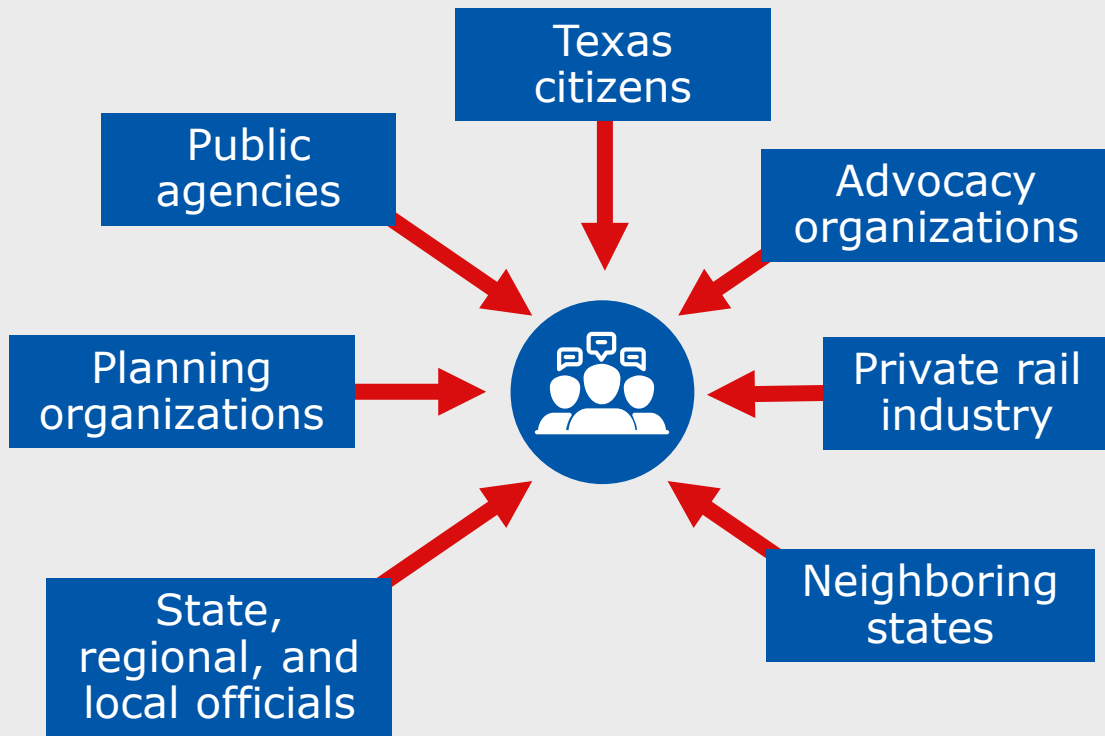


Communicate to the public and decision makers about rail's benefits to Texas and its role within the Texas transportation network.



Understand needs and issues of the rail industry.

WHO ARE the Texas Rail Plan stakeholders?



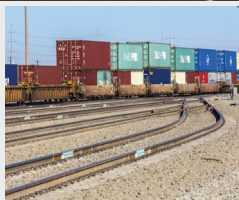
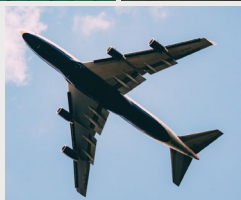
Rail Transportation

- Freight Rail
- Passenger Rail



Freight Systems

- Air
- Waterway
- Freight
- Highway
- Port



DEFINITIONS

- **TRP:** Texas Rail Plan
- **FRA:** Federal Railroad Administration
- **Class I/Class III/Shortline:** Different "sizes" of freight railroads
- **Intermodal:** The transportation of freight in an intermodal container or vehicle, using multiple modes of transportation
- **Intercity/Commuter Rail:** Designations for passenger rail systems
- **MPO:** Metropolitan Planning Organization
- **Amtrak:** National Railroad Passenger Corporation

FRA guidance FORMAT

Executive Summary

1. The Role of Rail in Statewide Transportation (Overview)
2. The State's Existing Rail System:
 - i. Description and Inventory
 - ii. Trends and Forecasts
 - iii. Rail Service Needs and Opportunities
3. Proposed Passenger Rail Improvements and Investments
4. Proposed Freight Rail Improvements and Investments
5. The State's Rail Service and Investment Program
6. Coordination and Review

Technical Appendix

TRP Highlights

- New Projects – Short Term (Years 1-4) and Long Term (Years 5-20)
- Important for Short Lines – their needs should be highlighted for future grant applications
- Grade separation project lists
- Stakeholder Outreach is important
 - Passenger Rail/Freight Rail Stakeholder Meetings – Mesquite, San Antonio, Houston (June/July 2024)
 - Interviews
 - Live virtual meeting hosted via Webex – August 19, 2024
 - Next round of Stakeholder Meetings - December 10, 2024

STATEWIDE Passenger rail



Corridor identification and development **PROGRAM**

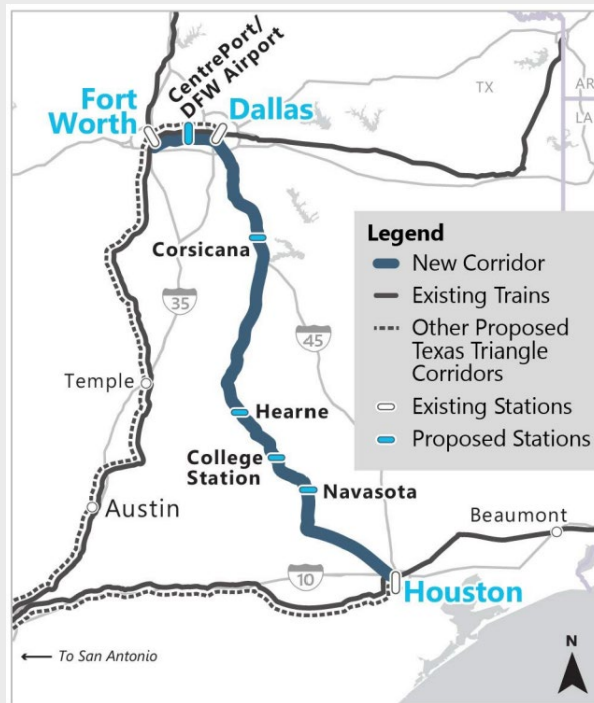
The FRA CID Program funds the service development planning, preliminary engineering, and environmental evaluation of new and expanded intercity passenger corridors.

Corridors in Texas receiving CID awards include:

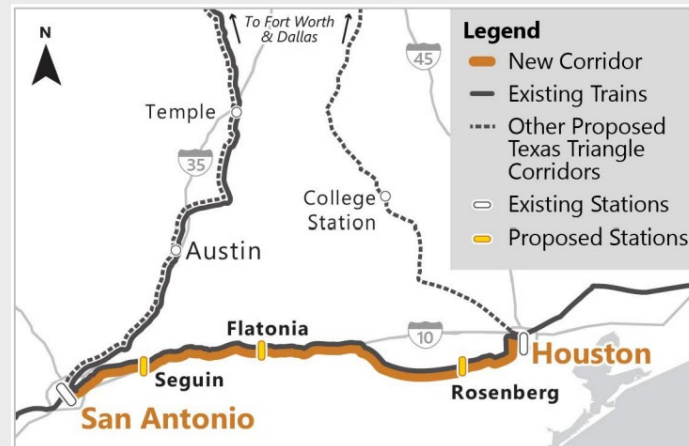
1. Texas Triangle: Dallas-Fort Worth to Houston Intercity Passenger Rail Corridor (TxDOT)
2. Texas Triangle: Houston to San Antonio Corridor (TxDOT)
3. Heartland Flyer Extension (Kansas DOT)
4. I-20 Corridor Intercity Passenger Rail Service (Southern Rail Commission)
5. Daily Sunset Limited Service (Amtrak)
6. Amtrak Texas High-Speed Rail Corridor (Amtrak)
7. Fort Worth to Houston High-Speed Rail Corridor (North Central Texas Council of Governments)

Corridor ID program AWARDS

Dallas-Fort Worth to Houston



Houston to San Antonio



SOURCE: TxDOT.gov (Corridor Identification and Development Program)

FRA long- distance service STUDY

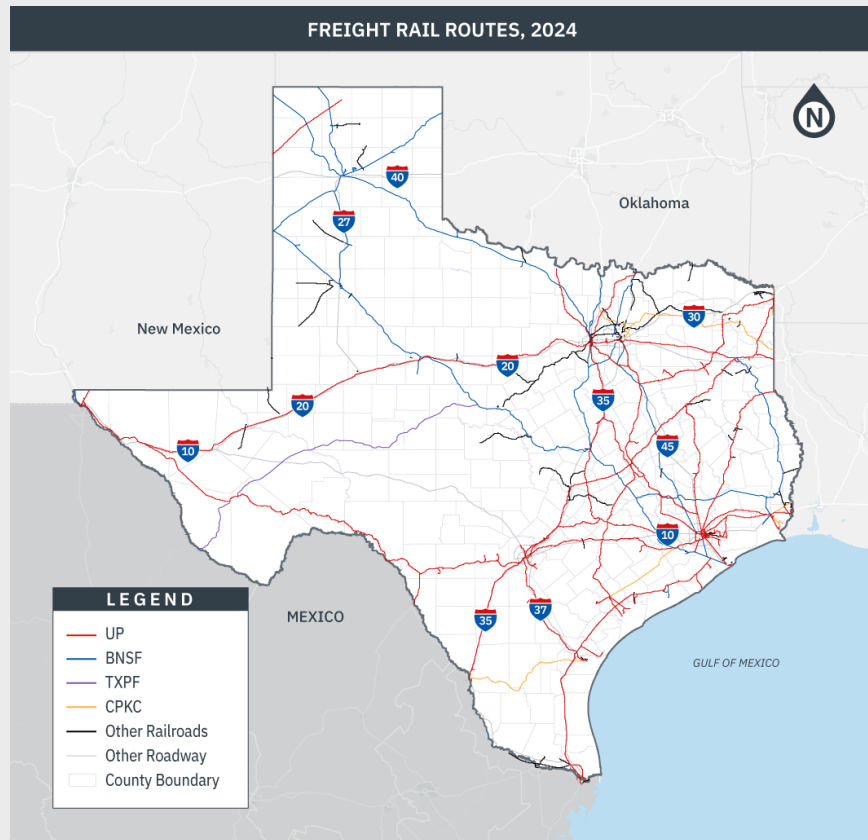
The IIJA required FRA to conduct a study to evaluate the restoration of daily intercity passenger service along any:

- Amtrak long-distance routes that were discontinued.
- Amtrak long-distance routes that occur on a nondaily basis.
- Potential new Amtrak long-distance routes.

Proposed network of preferred routes includes the following that serve Texas:

1. Dallas/Fort Worth – Miami
2. Denver – Houston (via Amarillo and Dallas/Fort Worth)
3. Phoenix – Minneapolis/St. Paul (via Amarillo)
4. Dallas/Fort Worth – New York
5. Houston – New York
6. San Antonio – Minneapolis/St. Paul (via Dallas/Fort Worth)
7. San Francisco – Dallas/Fort Worth (via El Paso and Midland)
8. Dallas/Fort Worth – Atlanta (via I-20)
9. El Paso – Billings

STATEWIDE Freight rail



FY 23-24 CRISI Grant Awards

- North Texas Rail Safety and Efficiency Project (Up to \$16,754,834)
 - Dallas, Garland & Northeastern Railroad
- East Texas Revival Project (Up to \$13,354,839)
 - Jaguar Transport Holdings, LLC
- Rio Valley Capacity Improvement Project – Phase 2 (Up to \$5,250,000)
 - Rio Valley Switching Company
- Texas Triangle Rail Revitalization Project (Up to \$4,634,546)
 - Texas Gonzales Northern Railway Company
- The Camp Bowie Access Project (Up to \$3,511,714)
 - The Texas Rock Crusher Railway

FY 22 RCE Grant Awards

- Texas – NE 24th Avenue Railroad Overpass (Up To \$8,425,000) - City of Amarillo
- Texas – Rittiman Road Grade Separation Project (Up To \$4,886,512) - City of San Antonio
- Texas – US 90 Grade Separation Project (Up To \$19,550,000) -Texas Department of Transportation
- Texas – Haslet-Fort Worth-Saginaw Corridor Bonds Ranch Road Grade Separation Project (Up To \$17,187,552) -Texas Department of Transportation
- Texas – West Belt Improvement Project (Phase 1) (Up To \$36,916,200) - City of Houston

WHAT TxDOT has already heard

Top Themes:



Safety



Modernization/technology



Funding



Economic development



Reliability



Expanded connectivity



Bottlenecks

**Other
relevant
plans:**



Connecting
Texas 2050



Statewide
Multimodal
Transit Plan

WHAT TxDOT has already heard



Safety:

- Safe routes to schools
- Resiliency and emergency response
- Priority of grade separations, especially in urban areas



Funding:

- Leverage federal funding opportunities
- Dedicated state stream for improvements
- Infrastructure investment needed



Reliability:

- Address congestion
- Consider length of time routes take
- End-to-end/last-mile connections



Bottlenecks:

- Congestion around the state including the Metroplex, Uvalde, Houston, Beaumont, Eagle Pass
- Bridge condition and low clearances
- Blocked crossings

WHAT TxDOT has already heard



Modernization/ Technology:

- Performance standards
- Technology to identify potential bottlenecks
- Alternative fuel sources



Economic Development:

- New industrial centers
- Cross-border trade
- Development of supporting uses (i.e., air carriers, amenities)



Expanded Connectivity:

- Interstate and intercity passenger service
 - Support for multiple routes including Dallas to Austin, Austin to San Antonio, San Antonio to Houston, and Dallas to Houston
 - Connections to border cities
 - Increased service for routes and frequencies, both on existing and new routes
 - Interstate connection from Dallas to Oklahoma to Louisiana along I-20 and I-10, on to New Mexico
 - Opportunity for intra-state trips with fewer stops and higher speeds
- Population centers exist for increased routes
- Coordination between service types so riders can make transfers (i.e., airport, transit hubs)

HOW can I stay informed and get involved?



Participate in a
commenting opportunity



Contact the Rail Division at
512.486.5230 or RRD_RailPlan@txdot.gov



Visit www.txdot.gov
Search "Texas Rail Plan"



Mail Texas Rail Plan c/o TxDOT Rail Division
6230 E. Stassney Lane, Austin, TX 78744



Break



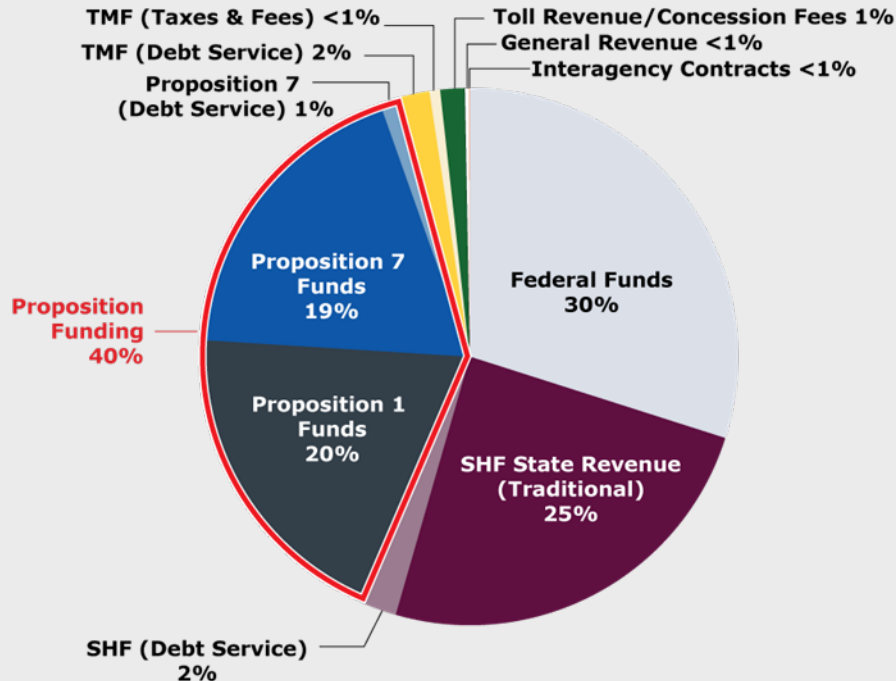


FY 2026-2027 LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST (LAR)



November 12, 2024

Budget Sources FY 2026-27

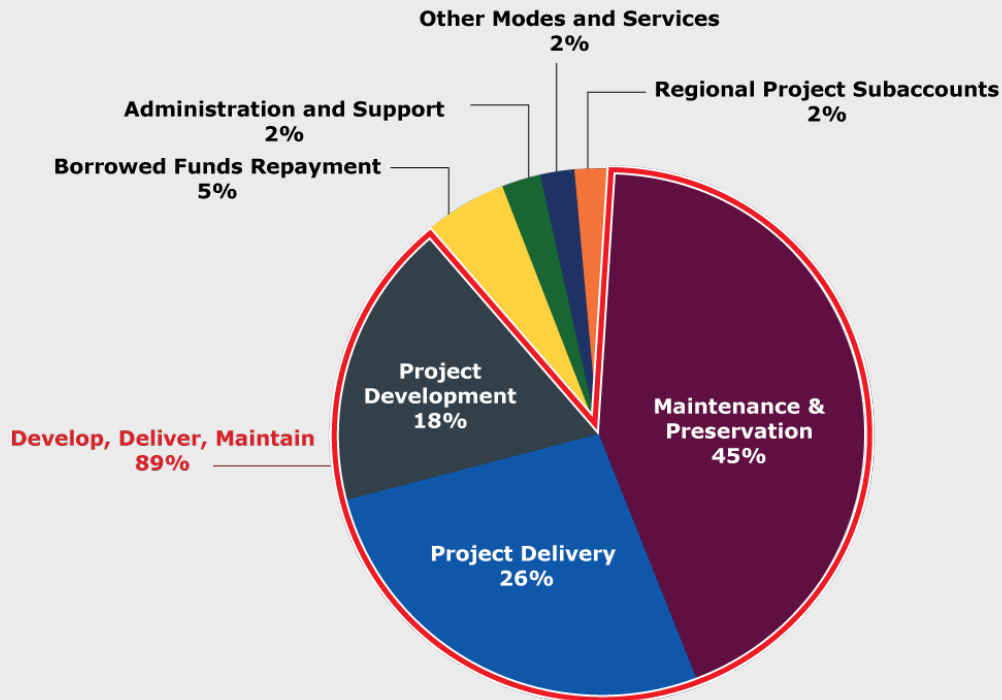


BUDGET SOURCES


Federal Funds	\$12.07 billion
SHF (Traditional)	\$9.91 billion
SHF (Debt Service)	\$0.80 billion
Proposition 1 Funds	\$7.89 billion
Proposition 7 Funds	\$7.50 billion
Proposition 7 (Debt Service)	\$0.50 billion
TMF (Debt Service)	\$0.72 billion
TMF (Taxes & Fees)	\$0.26 billion
Toll Revenue/Concession Fees	\$0.59 billion
General Revenue	\$0.11 billion
Interagency Contracts	\$0.01 billion
Total	\$40.4 billion

*Totals and percentages may not sum due to rounding

Budget Uses FY 2026-27



BUDGET USES

	Maintenance & Preservation	\$17.99 billion
	Project Delivery	\$10.45 billion
	Project Development	\$7.36 billion
	Borrowed Funds Repayment	\$2.13 billion
	Administration and Support	\$0.97 billion
	Other Modes and Services	\$0.86 billion
	Regional Project Subaccounts	\$0.59 billion
	Total	\$40.4 billion

*Totals and percentages may not sum due to rounding

Exceptional Items Discussion

Priority	Exceptional Items	FY 2026-27 LAR Amount
1	Additional Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) - 301	*
2	Public Transit - 2020 Census Impacts: Sustain State Transit Program at 2010 Per Capita Funding Levels	\$3,770,000
3	Aviation - Flight Services Fuel Facility Improvements	\$20,000,000
4	Maritime - Ports Capital Investment - Port Authority Advisory Committee (PAAC)	\$900,000,000
5	Maritime - Brazos River Flood Gates West Gate Construction	\$140,000,000
6	Rail - Amtrak Heartland Flyer Financial Support	\$2,126,450
7	Public Transit - Rural Area Program State of Good Repair	\$25,000,000
8	Maritime - Ship Channel Improvement Revolving Fund - Port Authority Advisory Committee (PAAC)	\$200,000,000
9	Rail - Local Rail Grade Crossing Separations	\$175,000,000
10	Rail - Short Line Development	\$25,000,000
	Total Exceptional Items	\$1,490,896,450

*FTEs would be funded within various strategy amounts, so no additional general revenue dollars have been requested.

Full Time Equivalents (FTEs)

TxDOT Operations FTE Request	FY 2026-27 LAR
District Operations (i.e., Roadway Maintenance, Project Delivery, Contract Management, Inspections)	214
Engineering Operations (i.e., Bridge, Construction, Maintenance, Material Testing, Traffic Safety)	15
Project Development (i.e., Design, Prof. Eng., Right of Way, Planning & Programming, Alternative Delivery)	20
Multi-Modal (i.e., Aviation, Maritime, Public Transportation, Rail)	18
Support (i.e., Fleet, Civil Rights, Human Resources, Communications, Procurement, Occupational Safety, Information Technology, Research, Strategic Planning)	34
Total FTE Request	301

FY 24-25 FTE Cap:
13,157

FY 26-27 LAR Request:
13,458

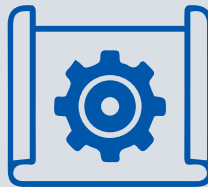
Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), Project Awards, & Delivery

**2011**

FTEs - 14,088

2024

FTEs - 13,157

**7% Decrease from 2011****2011**

\$5.3 B Annual Project Awards

2024\$6.8 B Annual Project Awards
HCI Adjusted or \$13.6 B Nominal**27% Increase from 2011**
HCI Adjusted**2011**

1 FTE = \$377 K in Project Delivery

2024

1 FTE = \$514 K in Project Delivery

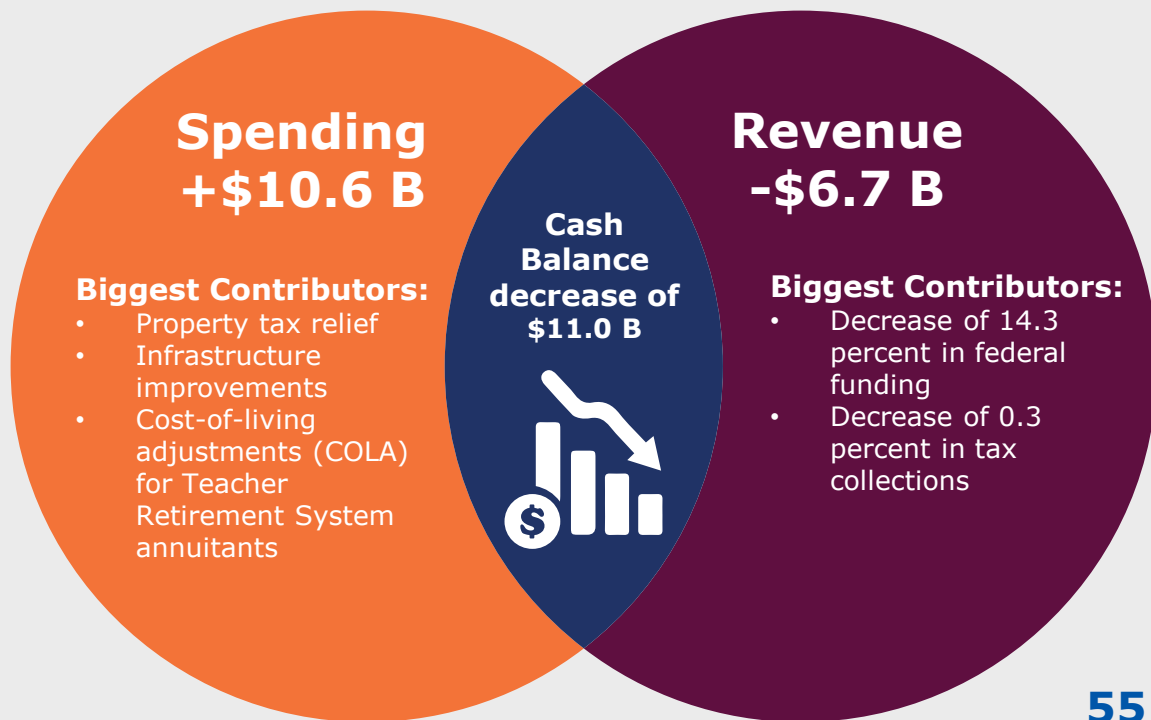
**36% Higher Delivery per FTE**
HCI Adjusted **54**

State of Texas Annual Cash Report (FY 2024)*

The state ended Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 with a cash balance of \$37.3 billion, a decrease of \$11.0 billion, or 22.8 percent from FY 2023.

While revenues generally declined, increased spending had the greatest impact on the cash balance.

The Comptroller's Biennial Revenue Estimate for Texas (BRE) will be published in January 2025. This forms the basis of the state budget for the upcoming biennium.



Questions?



January 27 - 29, 2025





Welcome to Paradise

Dean Ash





Truck Parking

Truck Parking





No wait mobile fueling and truck wash

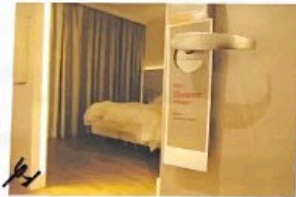
Oasis Rooms



PARADISE SLEEP ROOMS

Trucker Paradise, has you covered? We have micro hotel rooms for your comfort.

Comfortable and cost-efficient.



General Sleep Room

1 Double Size Bed
1 Work Desk
Electric/ Charging
Private
24 hr. Service & Security

Luxury Sleep Room

1 Queen Size Bed
1 Work Desk
Electric/ Charging
Private
24 hr. Service & Security
Toilet and Sink

Available anytime throughout the day!

¼ Day – ½ Day – Full Day

Price:

General

- ¼ Day \$23
- ½ Day \$30
- Full Day \$45

Luxury

- ¼ Day \$34
- ½ Day \$42
- Full Day \$55

Whether you're arriving during the day or in the middle of the night, our welcoming range of sleep rooms has been designed to give you the personal space you need to rest and recuperate during your Drive.



- Order Fuel
- Order a Truck Wash
- Reserve Parking
- Reserve Showers
- Reserve Sleep Room
- Facility Map
- Order Tire Repair



Truckers Paradise App



Parking – No Reverse

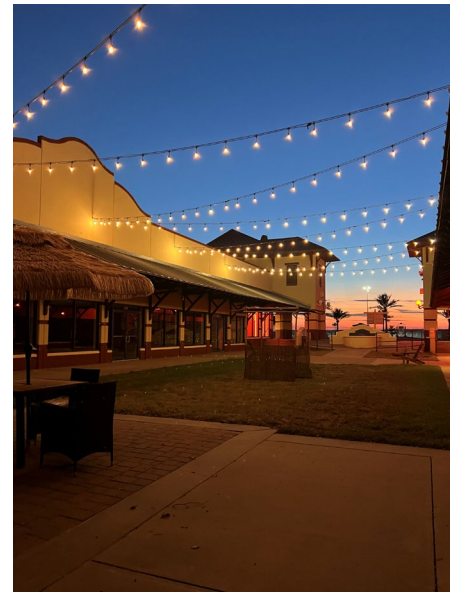
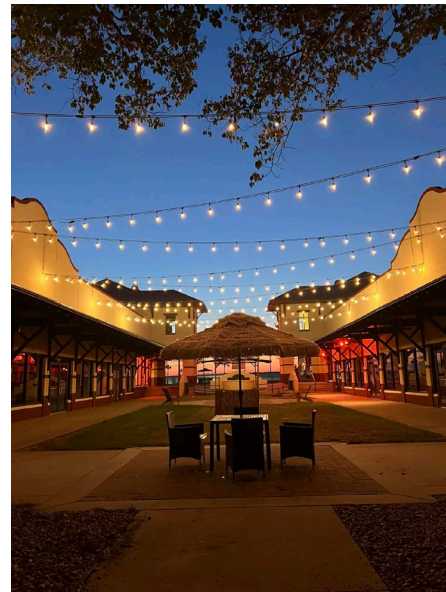
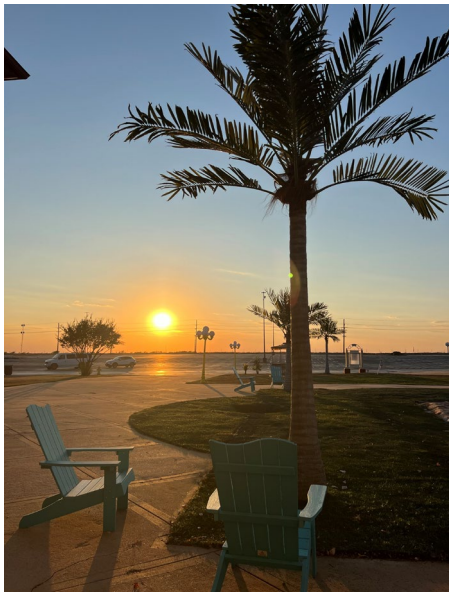
Truckers Paradise in the making



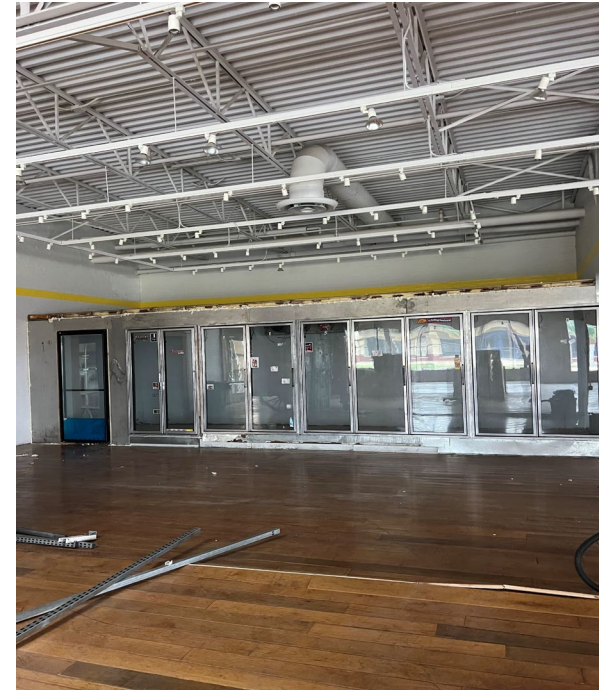
Truckers Paradise Dog Park



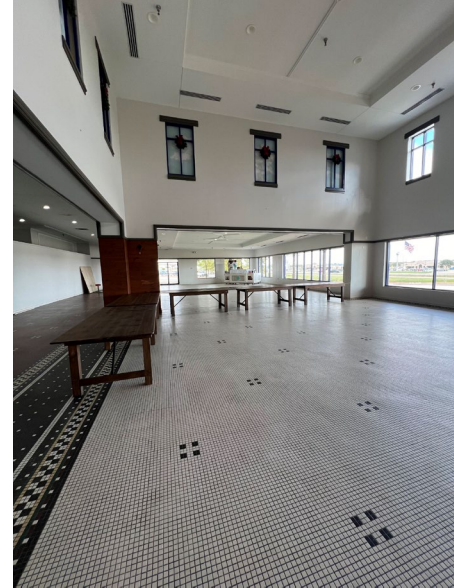
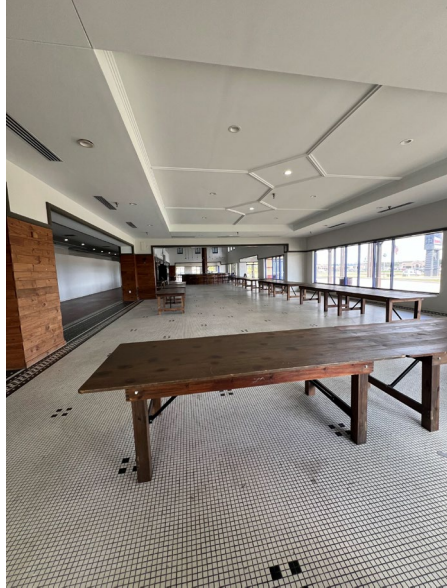
Truckers Paradise Beach & Tiki Area



Paradise Mart, Chrome Shop & Cigar Lounge



Food Court







Future Workshops and Information from TTI



November 12, 2024



November 12, 2024

Truck Parking Workshop December 4, 2024

Truck Parking Workshop

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Duro Canyon Room, TxDOT Stassney Campus
6230 E. Stassney Lane, Austin TX 78744

In person attendance encouraged
but virtual option available



Workshop Contents

Focus on public sector truck parking activities:

- Regional Truck Parking Action Plans
- Truck Parking Information Systems
 - In place on I-45
 - In development on I-10
- Truck Parking Visualization Tool
- Truck Parking Capacity Efforts



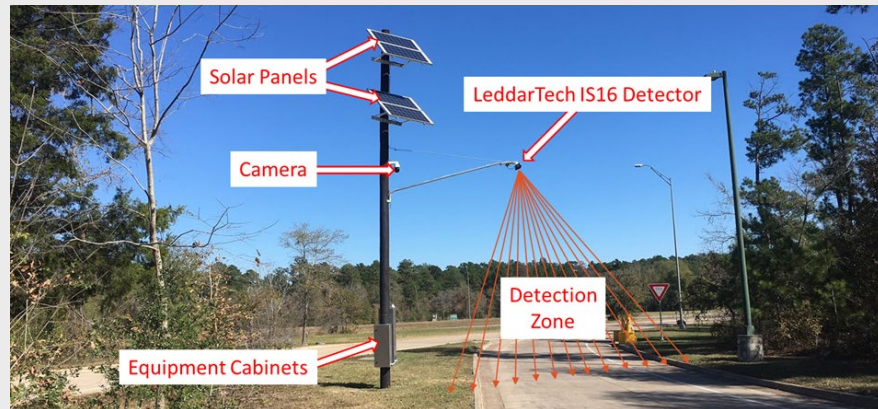


November 12, 2024

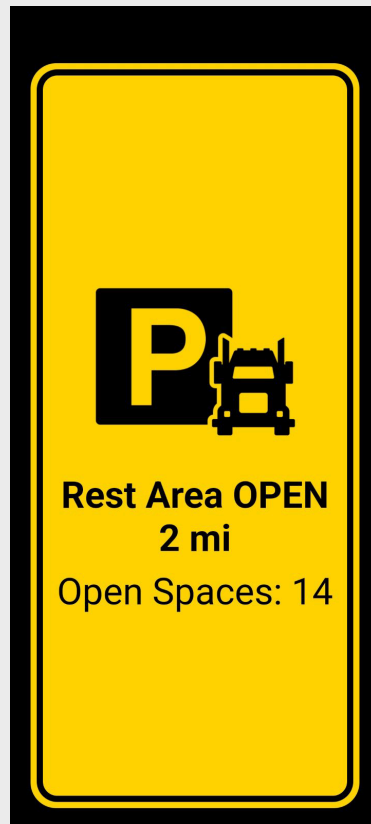
Truck Parking Implementation Example

Truck Parking Measurement Test Bed

- TxDOT I-45 NB/SB Walker County Safety Rest Area (operational since September 2020)
- Each area has 28 marked truck spaces with added area along curb
- Installed detection systems:
 - Entry/Exit System (Lot Count)
 - In-Ground Space Counting System



Truck Parking Messaging



Parking Availability Expansion Possibilities

- TxDOT Maintenance Division briefed TxFAC in July 2024 on their Truck Parking expansion projects
- Expanding the Walker County truck parking testbed to the I-45 Navarro County Safety Rest Areas
- Districts examining options for truck parking outside of Safety Rest Areas. Example Paris District converting rest area on I-30 two miles west of Mt. Vernon to truck parking; adding a truck parking information system



Truck Parking Expansion Along I-30 Franklin County, Paris District



Westbound



Eastbound



November 12, 2024

Freight Policy Monthly Update Briefing Papers

Freight Policy Monthly Update Briefing Papers

- Part of Freight Policy Analysis task, reports provided to TxDOT and TTI freight planning staff
- Monthly papers highlight:
 - Federal Agency:
 - Rulemakings affecting freight modes
 - Grant programs with freight impacts
 - Reports on freight data
 - Congressional funding and hearings — freight transportation focus
 - Texas Legislative activity on freight transportation
 - Other national, regional, and state news of significance to Texas on all freight modes

Freight Policy Monthly Update - October 2024

State Legislative Update

State Senate and House of Representatives Transportation Committee Hearings on Interim Charges

Summary: On September 18, the Senate Transportation Committee held a nearly four-hour [hearing](#) on interim charges related to transportation funding, autonomous vehicle (AV) safety, historic accomplishments in transportation, and the future of the economy. Testimony came from TxDOT leadership (Executive Director Marc Williams (Figure 1 below), Chief Financial Officer Stephen Stewart, and Deputy Executive Director for Planning and Administration Brandye Hendrickson). On October 10, the House Transportation Committee held a nearly five-hour [hearing](#) on interim charges related to port infrastructure, bridge safety, alleviating road traffic, and implementation of legislation passed during the 89th Legislature. Testimony included those from TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams and TPP Director Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, Jr.

Significance for TX: The hearings provided a glimpse into legislative appropriations requests (LAR), bills, and issues that will be considered during the 89th Texas Legislature. Testimony and Q&A responses from TxDOT leadership were similar during the two hearings, covering milestones, priorities, and trends. They focused on:

- The Texas Transportation Commission's (Commission) approval of [Connecting Texas 2050](#) in July, which continued TxDOT's focus on enhancing safety, preservation, and mobility by reducing fatal crashes, maintaining the state's multimodal transportation system, reducing congestion, and connecting rural areas. The new plan integrates other statewide

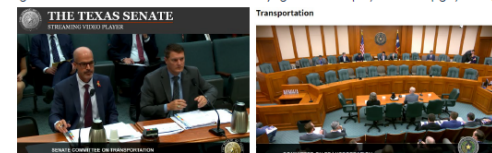
plans, including the state's rail plan, freight plan, and border master plan, and identifies challenges and opportunities (e.g., the 42% increase in VMT expected by 2050, the 6% increase in fatal crashes annually in 2023).

- The 10-year, \$104.2 B [FY 2023 UTP](#), which the Commission approved in August to meet Connecting Texas 2050-identified needs. Over the past ten years, the UTP has increased construction letting dollars due to passage of Propositions 1 and 7. In FY 2024, TxDOT set a record \$13.6 B in construction letting expenditures. However, the number of projects let declined over that period due to a rising highway cost index (inflation), which increased by over 60% since 2022.
- The need for the 10-year UTP construction letting funding level to be at approximately \$215 B to keep pace with population and economic growth. Over the next 22 years, TxDOT will need \$455 B (or \$22 B per year) to meet minimum investment targets. The need increases to \$740 B if maintenance and development costs are included. Legislators noted that this is well over the current UTP levels and identified how the state would meet that shortfall as "a huge problem".

Testimony from Executive Director Williams and TTI highlighted congestion-related findings from the Texas Top 100 Most Congested roadway segments. Reporting 2022 data, the panels provided:

- VMT is up 3% over 2021 levels and 2% over 2019 levels; vehicle delay is up 7% from 2021 levels and 23% below 2019 levels; and truck congestion is up 15% from 2021 levels and 1% from 2019 levels.
- Congestion costs the public \$17 B annually from 550 M annual hours of delay; however, statewide congestion improvements resulted in over \$3 B in time and cost savings to commuters.

Figure 1. TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams Testifying at TX Senate (left) and House (right) hearings



10/18/2024

Interested?

- Copies of October and September monthly reports as examples
- If you're interested in receiving these reports, contact Tyler Graham

Freight Policy Monthly Update - September 2024

Labor Update

Potential East Coast and Gulf Coast Seaport Strike

Summary: On September 30, the multiyear contract between the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and the United States Maritime Exchange (USMX) that represents employers at East and Gulf Coast ports will expire. A September 7 message to members from ILA leadership wrote that the two sides remain far apart on a new contract. A September 13 statement from USMX, however, provided that a new contract is still within reach, and publicly called for the International Longshoremen's Association to return to contract talks. For now, the Administration is resisting calls by shippers to intervene in the dispute.

Significance for TX: A strike starting on October 1 will likely result in significant disruptions to the domestic supply chain, including in Texas. With East and Gulf Coast ports handling about 43% of all U.S. imports, researchers estimate that every one day of a strike would take about five days to recover. A one-week strike, for instance, would take until mid-November to clear cargo backlogs. A two week strike would impact ports into 2025. The impacts of a strike may even reach West Coast ports with support for the ILA from the International Longshore & Warehouse Union, as well as from union and non-unionized workers at "hybrid" ports, such as the Port of Savannah. Many retailers have imported cargo earlier than usual and shifted to alternate ports as a precaution to meet holiday season demand. In addition, importers are weighing shipping in goods, particularly from China, that could be impacted by rising tariffs following the General Election in November. Global Port Tracker forecasts that in September, U.S. ports will handle 14% more imports than it did in September 2023, bringing 2024 totals in line with 2022 levels.

Federal Update

FY 2025 Federal Transportation Appropriations

Summary: On September 9, the U.S. Congress returned from a monthlong recess. The House and Senate are unlikely to pass all 12 FY 2025 appropriations bills, including the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Appropriations, before September 30 when the federal fiscal year (FFY 2024) ends. Thus, Congress must pass a Continuing Resolution to fund the federal

government at FY 2024 levels starting on October 1. H.R. 2494, the *Continuing Appropriations and Other Matters Act, 2025* was introduced in the House on September 9 and would continue FY 2024 appropriations through March 28, 2025, unless FY 2025 appropriations are passed before then. The bill was defeated in a floor vote on September 18. Senate appropriators are working on their Continuing Resolution, which would continue FY 2024 appropriations through December 13.

Significance for TX: With both chambers pursuing Continuing Resolutions to avert a federal government shutdown on October 1, State DOTs like TxDOT should expect the same transportation funding levels, policies, and programs for at least the next three months. House and Senate appropriators are pursuing discussions on FY 2025 appropriations measures, but are not likely to make much progress in the near-term given that they are on recess from September 30 through November 11. When they do resume discussions, they will have to reconcile differences in approaches to funding levels and programs for truck parking and motor carrier requirements, among other freight-related issues.

FHWA Request for Information (RFI) – EV Charging Technologies and Infrastructure Needs for Freight

Summary: On September 12, FHWA announced a RFI requesting stakeholder input about four areas of EV charging technologies and infrastructure for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles (MHD): (1) unique EV charger and station needs; (2) vehicle charging patterns; (3) MHD EV charger technology and standardization; and (4) workforce, supply chain, and manufacturing to support charging of MHD battery EVs. The goal of the RFI is to: collect information on the potential type and need for setting federal standards; and to inform future federal activities to support the development and timely build-out of a national EV charging network that balances the needs of technology and infrastructure investments in freight and a multimodal transportation system.

Significance for TX: TTI will monitor any FHWA freight-related regulatory activities on TxDOT's behalf. Should TxDOT want to comment on this RFI, the agency should, by November 12, address how TX is balancing advances in technology with the need for and pace of building out EV charging infrastructure for trucks.



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Questions?

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[Thinking Transportation podcast](#)

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Future Meetings and Final Remarks





Adjourn

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