



PORTS-TO-PLAINS

ALLIANCE

Securing the Benefits of Commerce to
North America's Energy & Agricultural Heartland

News Release - For Immediate Release

December 9, 2015

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Ports-to-Plains Encourages Safer Highways

The primary mission of the Ports-to-Plains Alliance is to advocate for expansion of existing two-lane highways through the Ports-to-Plains region to four-lane divided.

Today we will look at this from a safety viewpoint. As discussed last week, the number of trucks will continue to grow so the need for expanded highways will continue to grow. In addition to increasing numbers of trucks, there is the increasing speed differential in trucks. Many trucks, because of the need for fuel efficiencies, are governed to speeds slower than the speed limit. Other trucks and passenger vehicles who want to travel the speed limit or faster become impatient and try to pass on the two-lane highways resulting in dangerous situations.

Accidents will be significantly reduced on current two-lane segments of the corridor when they are upgraded to four-lane-divided highway. Rural roads are dangerous and improving them SAVES LIVES. Each year, more than 42,000 Americans are killed and nearly 3 million are injured on our nation's highways. The total economic cost of these crashes exceeds \$230 billion annually. Unfortunately, nearly 60 percent of highway fatalities typically occur on two-lane rural roads. When adjusted for vehicle miles traveled, according to the Governmental Accounting Office, some rural roads have a fatality rate over six times greater than urban interstates. These facts are extremely troubling since only 40 percent of all vehicle miles are traveled on two-lane rural roads.

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor Development and Management Plan, looking at the Texas to Colorado corridor, stated the economic benefit associated with crash reduction was calculated using national costs per crash by type of crash. Those costs include actual costs incurred, such as emergency and legal services, insurance costs, travel delay for other motorists and also include a component to measure more intangible costs such as lost productivity and reduced quality of life resulting from injury. The total reduction in crashes associated with expansion to four-lane along the Corridor is estimated to be approximately 3,296 Property Damage Only crashes, approximately 1,369 crashes involving an injury, and approximately 70 crashes involving a fatality through 2030.

Please let your state departments of transportation know that by expanding to four-lane, Ports-to-Plains can improve rural highway safety. Both your state and federal elected officials need to hear this safety message: Accidents will be significantly reduced on current two-lane segments of the corridor when they are upgraded to four-lane-divided highway.

Ports-to-Plains is a grassroots alliance of over 275 communities and businesses, including alliance partners Heartland Expressway, Theodore Roosevelt Expressway and Eastern Alberta Trade Corridor Coalition, whose mission is to advocate for a robust international transportation infrastructure to promote economic security and prosperity throughout North America's energy and agricultural heartland including Mexico to Canada. Additional information on the Ports-to-Plains Alliance is available at <http://www.portstoplains.com/>.

Graphic:

