



PORTS-TO-PLAINS INFORMATION HIGHWAY

Inside this Issue

- 1 TxDOT Podcast Program Features Transportation Issues
- 2 TxDOT Podcast Program - cont.
Third Annual Texas Transportation Forum
- 3 PTP Spotlight-Wayland Baptist University
- 4 PTP Spotlight continued
- 5 Transportation for Tomorrow ... Report of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission - Part III
- 6
- 7
- 8 2008 Investors in Progress

Ports-to-Plains Coalition
Michael Reeves-President
5401 N. MLK Blvd.,
Unit 395
Lubbock, TX 79403
Phone: (806) 775-2338
Fax: (806) 775-3981

TxDOT Podcast Program Features Transportation



Texans have a new way to stay informed on statewide transportation issues: The Texas Department of Transportation Podcast Program. TxDOT, through its www.KeepTexasMoving.com Web site, is offering a weekly podcast covering a wide variety of statewide transportation-related topics.

"There are a lot of ways to get information about TxDOT and transportation issues in Texas," said TxDOT's Larry Krantz, the podcast host, "but our podcasts are a good way to get that information directly from us." The statewide podcast is part of TxDOT's efforts to find new ways to communicate transportation issues.

Each statewide podcast episode is a weekly talk-radio-style audio program downloadable from the Internet. Statewide podcasts will be less than 10 minutes long and feature an interview with an expert in a transportation-related field.

Sixteen episodes of the statewide podcast are currently available, including an episode in which Krantz spoke with Texas Transportation Commissioner Ted Houghton on the Town Hall Meeting tour which proceeds throughout the I-69/TTC project study corridor.

"The Town Hall meeting concept is totally different from our outreach effort for TTC-35," Krantz said. "The episode with Commissioner Houghton sheds some light on how feedback from the public has shaped - and continues to shape - the way we do business."

Krantz has also interviewed TxDOT's Randall Dillard about former Texas Transportation Commission Chairman Ric Williamson, who died in late December, Dr. Joseph Giglio, a college professor and author of several

-continued on page 2



TxDOT Podcast Program *continued from page 1*

forward-looking books on the future of transportation, for an episode entitled "They Assume the Future Will Look Like the Past," and TxDOT's Deputy Executive Director Steve Simmons on why the I-69/Trans-Texas Corridor study area is so large. For Krantz, who started the nation's first state-sponsored transportation podcast in TxDOT's Tyler District in June 2006, the challenge was a good opportunity to see if a statewide podcast could have a broad appeal.

"My little Tyler District podcast got some 5,800 hits last month alone," Krantz said. "That's not bad for something that's never been advertised commercially. Hopefully the statewide podcast will be just as successful, but on a larger scale."

In addition to the Podcast program, TxDOT's Amarillo District and the Amarillo Globe-News have teamed up to provide internet readers with transportation information as well. A new forum is available online to give general transportation news and to also help you safely travel the Texas Panhandle highway system. The forum provides internet readers up-to-date road and travel information and emergency travel announcements. The site welcomes feedback, some of which will be answered in the forum.

- This Web site can be accessed at www.amarillo.com under the Texas Department of Transportation logo.
- Find the statewide podcast at: <http://keptexasmoving.com/index.php/podcast>.
- All TxDOT podcasts are also available on iTunes, search keyword: **txdot**

Third Annual Texas Transportation Forum Scheduled for April 20-22

Individuals looking for an opportunity to discuss statewide transportation issues need look no further. Come and share those ideas at the Third Annual Texas Transportation Forum, April 20 - 22 in Austin. The forum will provide the opportunity for business leaders, government officials and the public to discuss Texas' transportation future, partnerships, and resources. The event allows some of the best in the transportation industry to gather and discuss the future of transportation in Texas.

Texas has accomplished much in recent years by adopting varied and innovative mechanisms to advance transportation planning and development. But our work does not stop there. State, regional, and private partnerships will continue to play a big role in developing and maintaining our transportation system.

The need to pool resources that support transportation infrastructure is great - probably greater than it has ever been with the state seeing increases in populations, numbers of vehicles, and miles driven. Planning for increases and accommodations of all modes of transportation in the future must take place now. The Third Annual Texas Transportation Forum provides the perfect opportunity to begin that process.

Transportation affects us all and we must work together to plan and develop a system for the future that will reduce congestion, improve air quality, enhance safety, spur economic opportunity and increase the value of our state's transportation assets.

The Forum is hosted by the Texas Department of Transportation, Associated General Contractors of Texas, Texas Good Roads Transportation Association and the Texas Transportation Institute.

For more information or to register for the third Annual Texas Transportation forum view: www.TexasTransportationForum.com.

For Additional Information and Access to Previous Newsletters

Visit us Online at: www.portstoplains.com

Ports-to-Plains Membership Spotlight: Wayland Baptist University to Celebrate Centennial

"We believe a completed Ports-to-Plains Corridor would be a significant enhancement to those communities we serve as a faith-based institution of higher learning," said Dr. Paul W. Armes, current president of Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas. WBU has been a supporting member of Ports-to-Plains for over seven years.



Gates Hall at Wayland Baptist University

"Wayland Baptist University has three campus sites along the proposed Ports-to-Plains route - in Lubbock, Plainview and Amarillo," stated Dr. Armes. "Improvement of existing highways not only makes them safer for our students and staff who already regularly travel to our campuses, it also means prospective students may feel more comfortable about coming to the High Plains of Texas to attend Wayland Baptist University. This is an important project which merits our enthusiastic support."

"Wayland supports the Ports-to-Plains concept because of the positive impact it can have not just on West Texas, but on the entire state," said Dr. Bobby Hall, WBU's Provost/Academic Vice President. "Through its multiple campuses, Wayland serves a large geographical area in Texas. Ports-to-Plains will directly touch the three campuses (Amarillo, Plainview and Lubbock) located directly on the trade corridor, and should produce positive results for the remainder of Texas as well. Wayland is naturally interested in and supportive of initiatives designed to produce jobs, enhance trade, and improve the economy of Texas."

The history of Wayland Baptist University is quite intriguing. Dr. James Henry Wayland, a pioneer physician who settled in Plainview in 1891 with his family, brought the initial dream of education to this West Texas city. Making a pledge of \$10,000 and 25 acres of prime land to begin the institution, Dr. and Mrs. Wayland knew that big dreams required big commitment and big sacrifices. In the end, they'd give more than \$100,000 to the fledgling university that bears their name, a sacrifice they felt was well worth the price. His dream was for children of the high plains of Texas to have an educational institution of their own, set in the context of faith in Jesus Christ. At Wayland Baptist University, the mission is to keep that dream alive for the students who grace the halls today and the thousands who will come in the future.



Dr. Adam Reinhart, Associate Professor of Biological and Physical Sciences works with WBU students in the science lab.

By adhering to a simple mission - WBU exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success, lifelong learning and service to God and humankind - Wayland is able to focus on what matters most.

"While the cost to some of us was enormous, we do not regret that, and we are very much pleased over the results of our gift, for we have seen many great and noble boys and girls leaving Wayland to exit upon their life's work, not only in this great state of Texas but in many other states and even foreign fields," Dr. Wayland once said.

-continued on page 4

Wayland Baptist University - *continued from page 3*

While Wayland was once simply an administration building and one dorm - Matador Hall - the present Plainview campus boasts 80 acres and several student dormitories, with an enrollment of around 1,125. In addition, Wayland maintains 12 external campus locations around the nation: Anchorage and Fairbanks, Alaska; Phoenix and Sierra Vista, Ariz.; Aiea, Hawaii; Albuquerque and Clovis, N.M.; Altus, Okla.; and Amarillo, Lubbock, San Antonio and Wichita Falls, Texas. Since 1998, the university has also maintained a partnership campus at Kenya Baptist Theological College in Africa, providing for students there to obtain college degrees. The first class of bachelor's degrees will be awarded there in July 2008. Wayland's system-wide enrollment is around 5,500, making it the fourth-largest Baptist school in the nation.

Construction is the most noticeable change on the Plainview campus, with the recent completion of the Pete & Nelda Laney Student Activities Center. The 50,000 square foot, \$5.1 million facility will bring an added, much needed dimension of fitness and recreation options for students. Other changes include the addition of a new intercollegiate athletics offering in women's soccer, completing their season in fall 2007. Academically, new fields of study have been added, including a major in geology and in music performance along with new master's degrees in education, specifically in special education, educational diagnostics and educational administration. Graduate programs continue to grow, along with the Virtual Campus offerings and enrollment, responding to a growing demand for online education.

Probably the biggest news at Wayland is the upcoming Centennial Celebration, slated to begin in August 2008 and run through August 2009. From the kickoff Plainview Pioneer Palooza Community Birthday Party in September to the closing graduation celebration in May 2009, the year is full of events that will celebrate the various aspects of Wayland's rich heritage of service, faith and providing education for students of all ages. The university Web site (www.wbu.edu) will soon feature the full lineup of events and the community is encouraged to help celebrate this milestone at WBU.

Ports-to-Plains wishes to thank Wayland Baptist University for the support and commitment given through the years as a coalition member and looks forward to all the opportunities ahead to continue to work with this

Staff Contact Information

Ports-to-Plains Corridor Coalition

5401 N MLK Blvd. Unit 395
Lubbock, TX 79403
phone: (806) 775-3373
fax: (806) 775-3981

Michael Reeves-President

5401 N MLK Blvd. Unit 395
Lubbock, TX 79403
Phone (806) 775-2338 Fax (806) 775-3981
E-mail - michael.reeves@ports-to-plains.com

Joe Kiely-Vice President

P.O. Box 9
Limon, CO 80828
Phone (719) 775-2346 Fax (719) 775-9073
E-mail - joe.kiely@ports-to-plains.com

Duffy Hinkle-Vice President

5401 N MLK Blvd. Unit 395
Lubbock, TX 79403
Phone (806) 775-3373 Fax (806) 775-3981
E-mail - duffy.hinkle@ports-to-plains.com

Transportation for Tomorrow - Report of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission - Part III

"Simply put, the Commission believes that it takes too long and costs too much to deliver transportation projects, and that waste due to delay in the form of administrative and planning costs, inflation, and lost opportunities for alternative use of the capital hinder us from achieving the very goals our communities set."

(Transportation for Tomorrow, Volume I: Recommendations, Page 11)

This month the focus will continue on the recommendations to Reform Institutions and Programs. As stated previously, the Commission's recommendations for reform of the Federal Surface Transportation Program constitute three legs of a stool. The first leg is accelerating the lengthy process by which transportation projects are delivered, saving both time and money. The second leg is consolidating the numerous investment categories of current law into a more focused, performance-based set of transportation programs related to objectives of genuine national interest. The third leg involves creating an independent National Surface Transportation Commission (or NASTRAC) to oversee development of a national strategic plan for transportation investment and to recommend appropriate revenue adjustments to the Congress to implement that plan. This article will focus on Speeding Project Delivery.

Impacts of project delays on construction costs	
Project Completion Year	Current Dollar Cost (inflated by the Bid Price Index)
2011	\$500,000,000
2014	\$616,000,000
2021	\$1,002,000,000

This table illustrates the potential financial impact of project delays.

Source: Commission Staff analysis.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has indicated that major highway projects take an average of 13 years from initiation to completion. Increasing construction inflation results in a rapid erosion of the purchasing power of construction dollars.

To reduce overall project delivery times for major transportation projects, the time to complete environmental reviews must be shortened, in conjunction with other measures that address conventional strategies for implementing projects once they clear environmental review. Many fear that reducing the time devoted to the environmental review process or other aspects of project development will ultimately lead to projects that do not adequately address environmental and other community impacts. Several things can be done to reduce the time required for the environmental review process without adversely affecting the quality of that process.

-continued on page 6

"In recent years the median time to complete environmental impact statements (EISs) for highway projects has varied from 54 to 80 months."

Transportation for Tomorrow - continued from page 5

Two sources of delay can and should be addressed in the short term:

1. **Redundancies in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process.**

The current process can create numerous redundancies, including the need to backtrack to revisit alternatives that were previously rejected, or to duplicate environmental analyses that were previously endorsed during planning or scoping but may not have been formally recognized by other agencies when done outside the formal NEPA process.

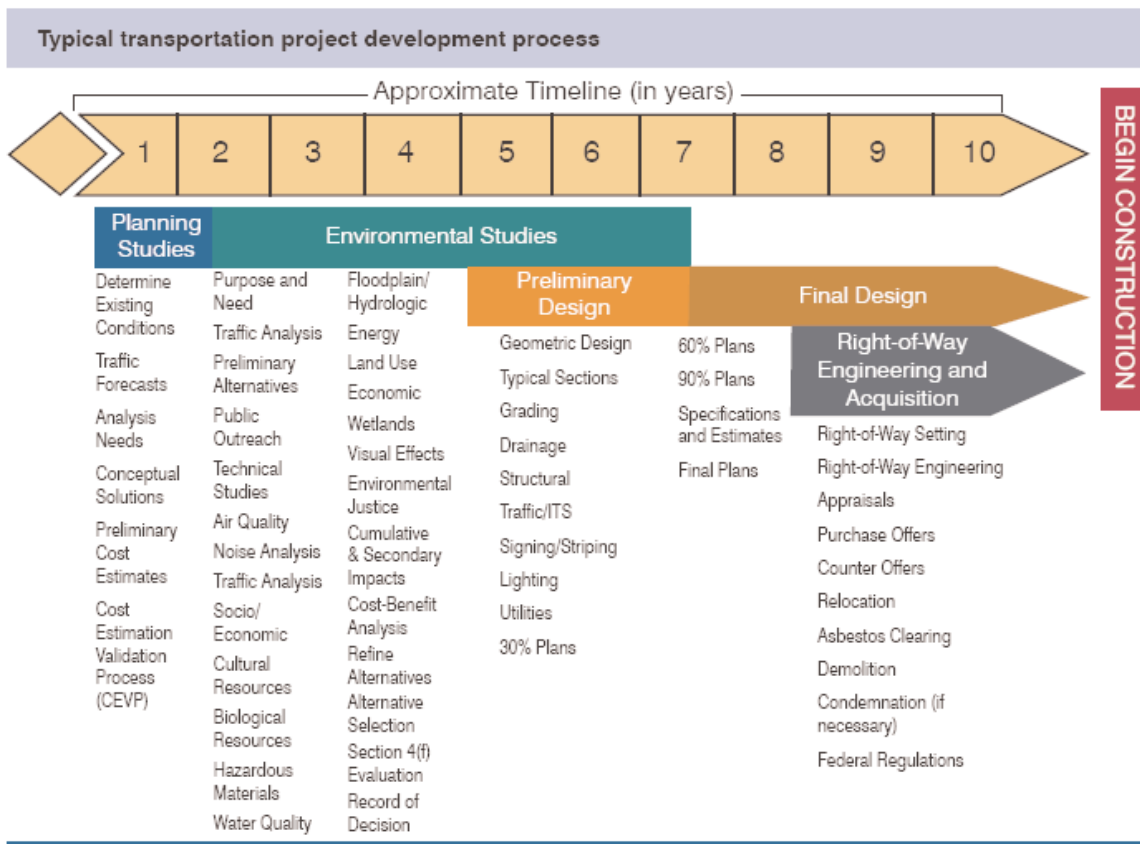
2. **Permit Process Can Add Significant Time.**

In addition to the delays associated with NEPA compliance, projects often are held up pending permit approvals from Federal agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corps of Engineers.

Changes in the current legal and regulatory framework for environmental reviews would be needed before any significant time-savings could be realized. Specifically, the Congress and USDOT should consider changes in the following areas:

- Legislatively provide for a simplified NEPA process that offers the equivalent of a 1040 EZ tax return for projects with few significant impacts.

-continued on page 7



Source: Nevada DOT.

Transportation for Tomorrow - continued from page 6

- Revise Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations to allow additional factors to narrow the number of alternatives considered as "reasonable alternatives":
 - o Alternatives should be appropriate for project-level (rather than planning-level) decisions
- Revise CEQ regulations for implementing NEPA to allow for a single EIS rather than the current requirement for a draft and final EIS, while preserving adequate opportunities for public comment and review.
- In parallel with revisions to CEQ regulations, FHWA would set minimum conditions for what must occur during a "robust scoping period" before publishing the Notice of Intent and formally beginning NEPA. Some requirements could include:
 - o Determination of general project location
 - o Determination of modal choice
 - o Development of a risk management plan
- Handle impacts identification and mitigation issues early by considering them in an integrated fashion, looking at overall resources rather than in a sequential, project-by-project basis. This might involve addressing these issues at the programmatic level earlier in the planning process.
- Standardize the "risk design" approach under Federal regulations so that project sponsors can proceed with design activities at risk during the EIS process. The USDOT recently issued similar guidance for bridge projects in wake of the Minneapolis bridge collapse.
- Require greater coordination among Federal agencies reviewing transportation project permits, including:
 - o Setting time limits for review
 - o Using Federal transportation funds to pay for regulatory staff to speed reviews and comply with time limits
 - o Establishing a Cabinet-level appeal process where USDOT can seek redress for adverse decisions.



Next month the last of this series will look at the third section of the Commission's Report that addresses the creation of an independent National Surface Transportation Commission (or NAS-TRAC) to oversee development of a national strategic plan for transportation investment and to recommend appropriate revenue adjustments to Congress to implement that plan.

Ports-to-Plains will continue to provide details of this report but if you would like to review on your own, it is available at <http://www.transportationfortomorrow.org/>

Ports-to-Plains Investors in Progress

Municipal Investors	County Government Investors
<p>City of Abernathy - TX City of Amarillo - TX City of Big Spring - TX City of Boise City - OK Town of Clayton - NM City of Del Rio - TX City of Dumas - TX Town of Eads - CO City of Hale Center - TX City of Happy - TX City of Lamar - CO City of Lamesa - TX Town of Limon - CO City of Lubbock - TX City of New Deal - TX City of Plainview - TX City of Raton - NM City of San Angelo - TX Town of Springfield - CO City of Stratford - TX City of Sonora - TX City of Tahoka - TX City of Tulia - TX</p>	<p>Cimarron County - OK Colfax County - NM Elbert County - CO Hale County - TX Howard County - TX Kiowa County - CO Lincoln County - CO Lubbock County - TX Maverick County - TX Moore County - TX Prowers County - CO Sherman County - TX Sterling County - TX Sutton County - TX Tom Green County - TX Union County - NM Val Verde County - TX</p>
Economic Development Corp. Investors	Chamber of Commerce Investors
<p>Amarillo Economic Development Corporation - TX Adams County Economic Development - CO Canyon Economic Development Corp. - TX Metro Denver Economic Development Corp. - CO Dumas Economic Development Corporation - TX Lamesa Economic Development Corporation - TX Laredo Development Foundation - TX Lincoln County Economic Development - CO Lubbock Economic Development Alliance - TX Maverick County Development Corporation - TX Moore Development for Big Spring - TX Plainview/Hale County Industrial Foundation Inc. - TX Sonora Industrial Development - TX I-70 Regional Economic Advancement Partnership - CO</p>	<p>Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce - TX Cimarron County Chamber of Commerce - OK Dalhart Chamber of Commerce - TX Dumas/Moore County Chamber of Commerce - TX Eagle Pass Chamber of Commerce - TX Lamesa Chamber of Commerce - TX Lubbock Chamber of Commerce - TX San Angelo Chamber of Commerce - TX Stratford Chamber of Commerce - TX Sonora Chamber of Commerce - TX</p>
Other Investors	Conference Investors
<p>Amarillo College - TX Central 57 Importers & Exporters, Inc. - TX Colorado Motor Carriers Association - CO Ehler & Hettler, LLP - TX Lubbock Christian University - TX Panhandle Regional Planning Commission - TX Plainview Convention & Visitors Bureau - TX Prairie to Ports Gateway and Inland Port - SK, CANADA South Plains Association of Governments - TX Texas Tech University - TX TransPort - CO Wayland Baptist University - TX West Texas A&M University - TX</p>	<p>Del Rio Economic Dev. Corp. and City of Acuña Além International Management, Inc. Aquila The Bank & Trust City and County of Denver Colorado Asphalt Paving Association Colorado Contractors Association Colorado Office of Economic Development/Eastern Colorado Colorado Motor Carriers Association DMJM+HARRIS Dumas Economic Development Corporation Hugo Reed & Associates, Inc. Laredo Development Foundation Metro Denver Economic Development Corp. Panhandle Area Development District Parkhill, Smith & Cooper, Inc. Pate Engineers, Inc./Pate Transportation Partners Peoples Bank Reece Albert, Inc. State National Bank Stratford Grain Company Texas Good Roads Theodore Roosevelt Expressway Turner Collie & Braden Valero Energy Xcel Energy - Colorado Region Xcel Energy - Texas Region</p>