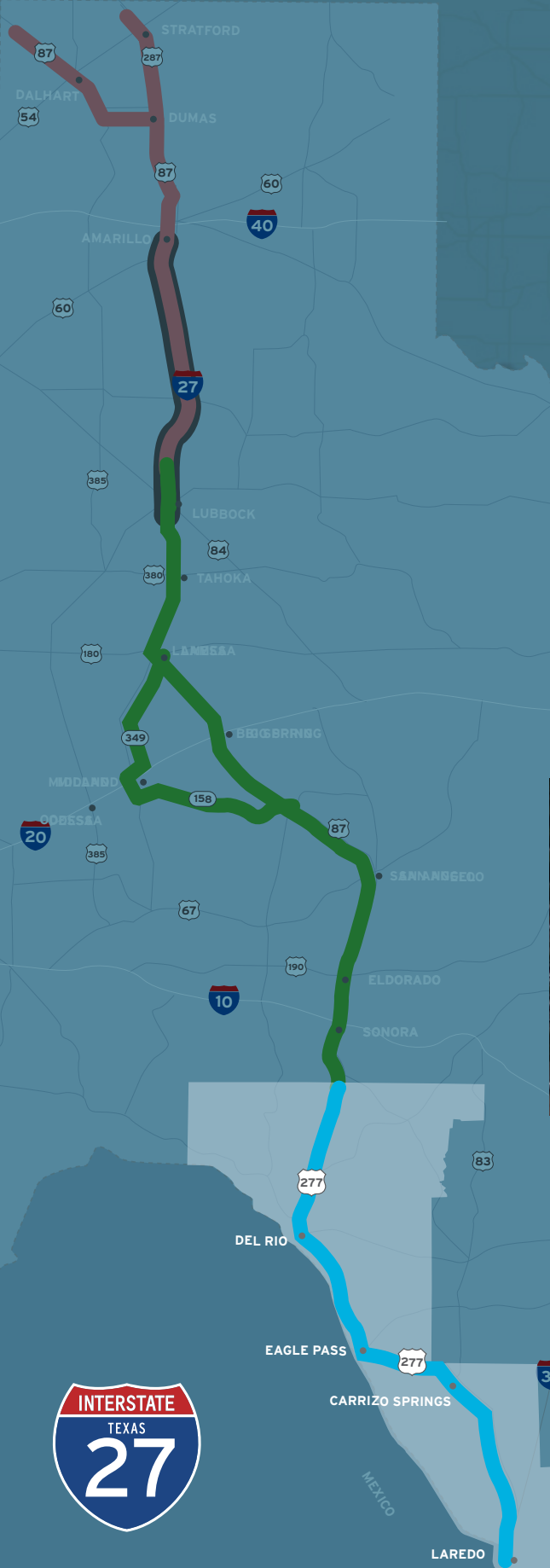


# PORTS-TO-PLAINS CORRIDOR INTERSTATE FEASIBILITY STUDY



## ● SEGMENT 3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY JUNE 30, 2020





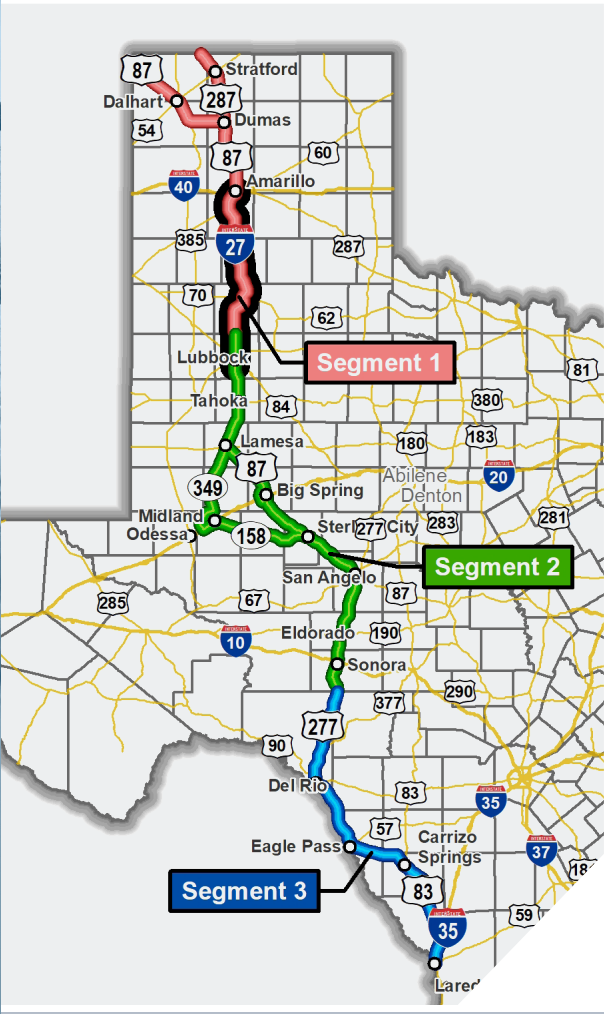


SEGMENT #3

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study (House Bill 1079)



The Ports-to-Plains Corridor is an international, national and state significant transportation corridor that connects and integrates Texas’ key economic engines, international trade, energy production and agriculture. The corridor also plays a vital role in supporting the growing demographic and economic centers of South and West Texas. The corridor functions as the only north-south corridor facilitating the movement of people and goods in South and West Texas and beyond.

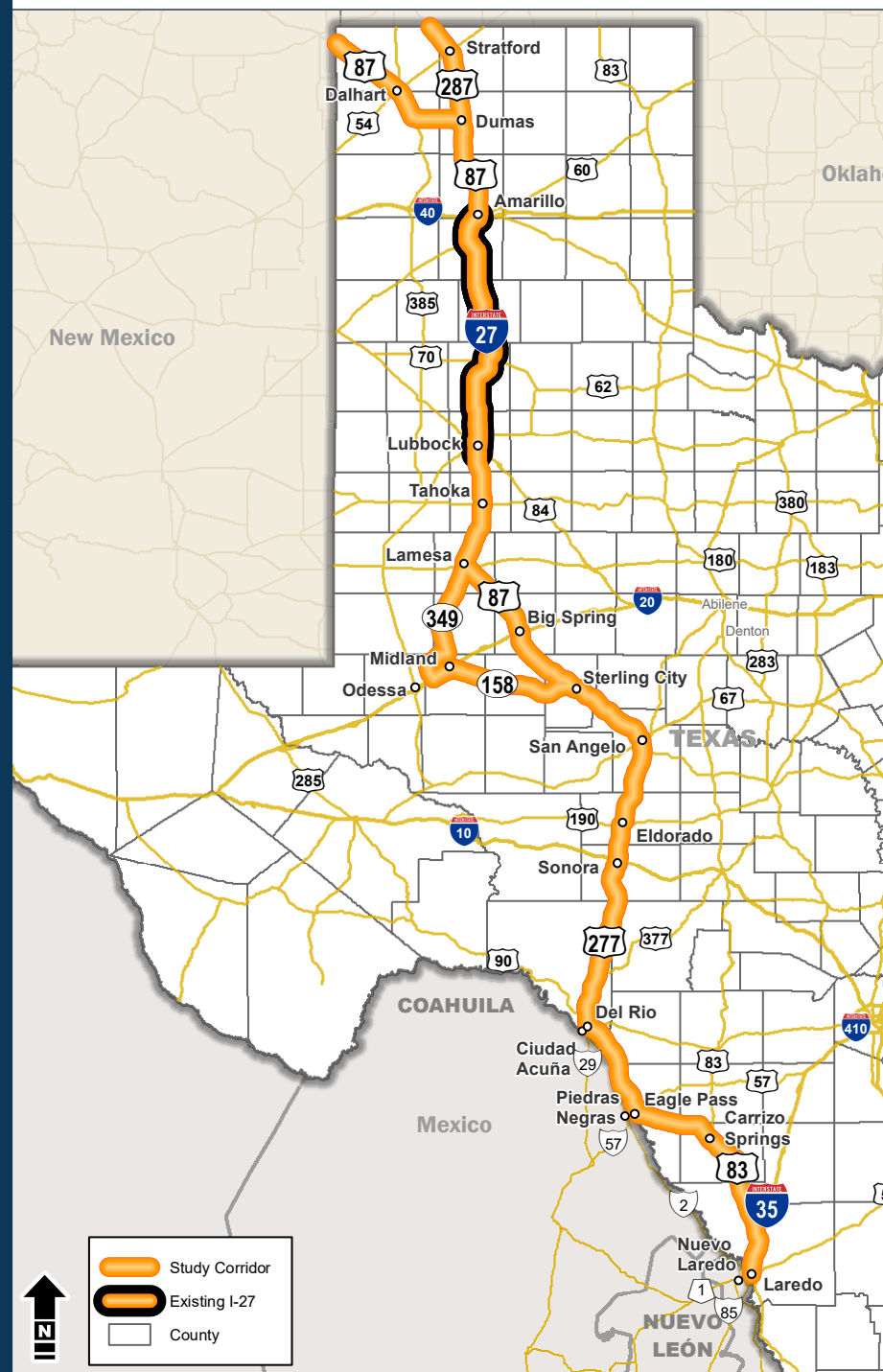
### Purpose of this Report

The Segment #3 Committee Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study Report (Segment #3 Committee Report) provides the recommendations and priorities of the Segment #3 Committee members for improvements to the Ports-to-Plains Corridor in Segment #3. The Segment Committee #3 Report meets the requirements outlined in House Bill 1079 that was signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott on June 10, 2019. The recommendations in this Segment #3 Committee Report will be used by the Ports-to-Plains Advisory Committee to make their recommendations on improvements to the Ports-to-Plains Corridor to the Texas Department of Transportation.



# Ports-to-Plains Corridor Overview

- Approximately **963 miles** of primarily rural area in West and South Texas
- Designated by Congress as a **High Priority Corridor** on the National Highway System in 1998
- Spans **26 counties** and is comprised of sections of Interstate 20 (I-20), Interstate 27 (I-27), Interstate 35 (I-35), US 83, US 87, US 277, US 287, State Highway 158, and State Highway 349
- Connects to the state's and the nation's strategic trade gateways of **Laredo, Eagle Pass, and Del Rio** to destinations north, west and east



## Significance of the Transportation Corridor

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor plays a critical role in the nation's food, energy, and national security.

### International Trade

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor carries a significant amount of Texas-Mexico trade entering through the three strategic U.S.-Mexico trade gateways of Laredo, Eagle Pass, and Del Rio.

**In 2018...**

The three border crossings accounted for

**50%**

of U.S.-Mexico cross-border trade

**66%**

of Texas-Mexico cross-border trade

**\$262 Billion**  
in trade

Northbound crossings alone totaled

**2.6** million trucks

This related to

**474,000**  
Net Jobs

**\$72 Billion**  
in gross domestic product

### Energy Production

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor is a vital energy trade corridor that connects the Permian Basin and Eagle Ford Shale production areas. Importing materials and equipment for extraction requires a significant amount of freight, much of which relies on the Ports-to-Plains Corridor energy development to grow.

**The Permian Basin comprises...**

**32%** of U.S. crude oil production

**13%** of U.S. natural gas production

**The Permian Basin accounted for...**

**\$9 Billion** of the state's taxes and royalties from oil and gas producers

**67%** of the total

**The Eagle Ford Shale produced...**

**5.5 Million** cubic feet of natural gas

**990 Thousand** barrels of oil per day in 2019

**Wind is also a critical component of the energy economy in west Texas. Much of that production comes from the counties along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor.**

### ➤ Agriculture Production

Another Texas economic engine supported by the Ports-to-Plains Corridor is agriculture. The total agricultural product sales is:

**\$11 billion** for the Ports-to-Plains Corridor

**\$9 billion** from the northern section alone

### ➤ National Defense and Security

There are several military installations and border enforcement facilities located along the Corridor. Existing I-27 in Segment #1, portions of Segment #2 and Segment #3 are on the Strategic Highway Network. Improvements to the corridor could result in additions to the Strategic Highway Network and improve mobility on all that is currently designated.

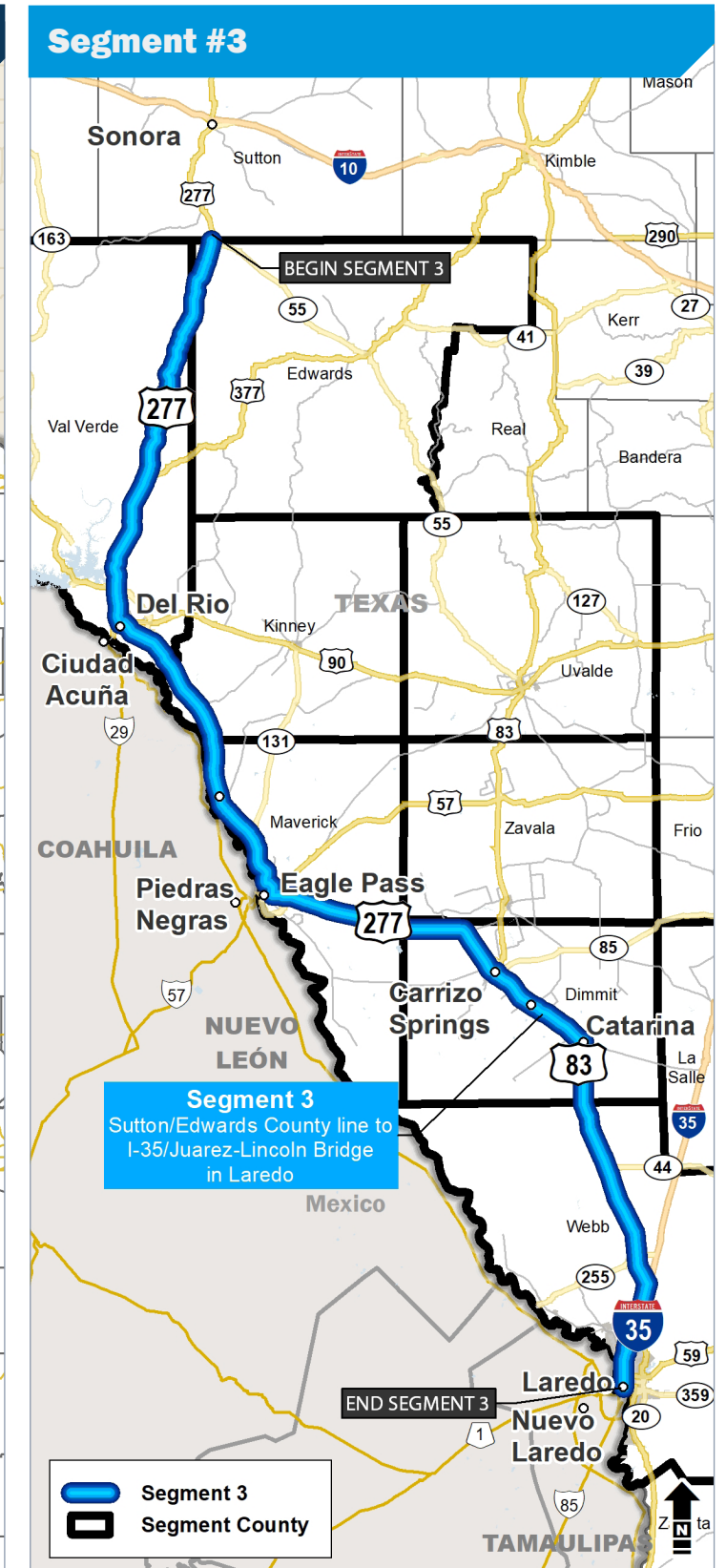
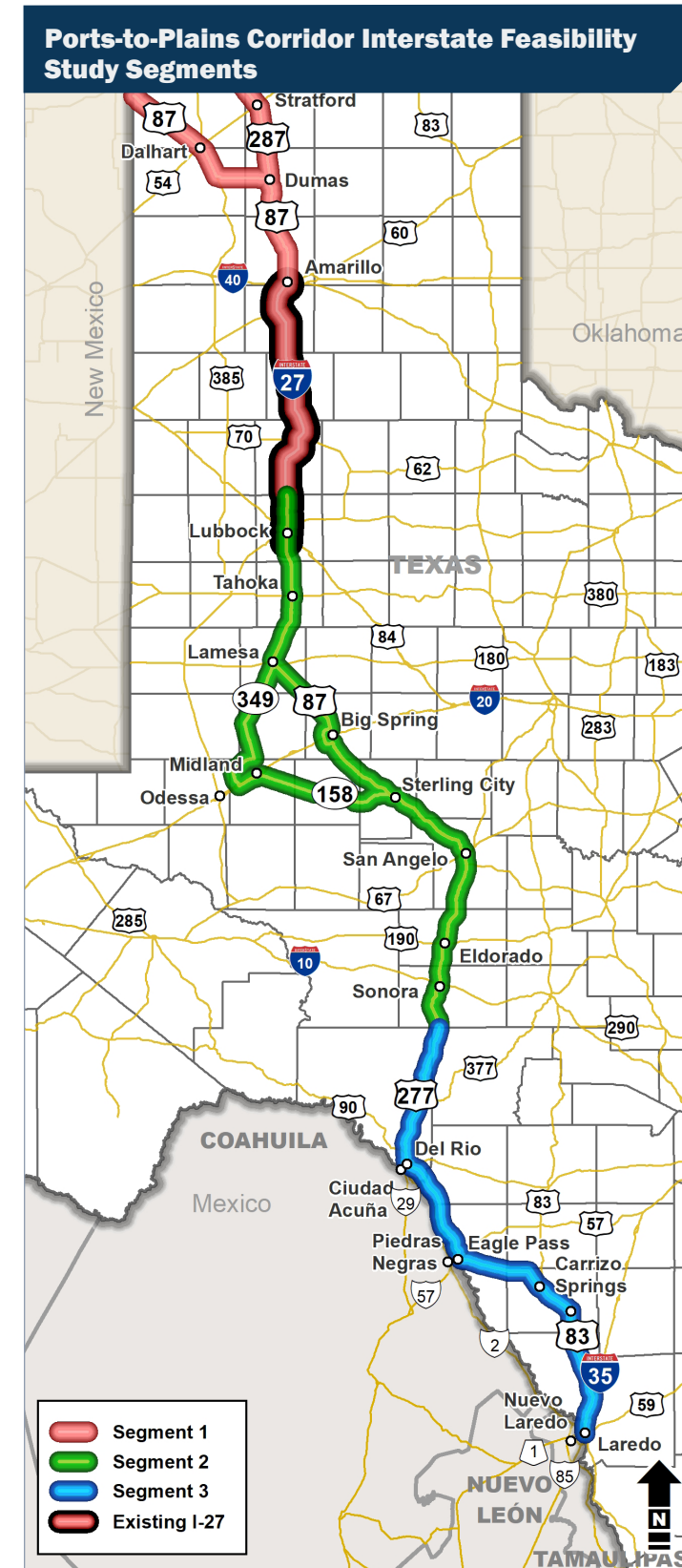
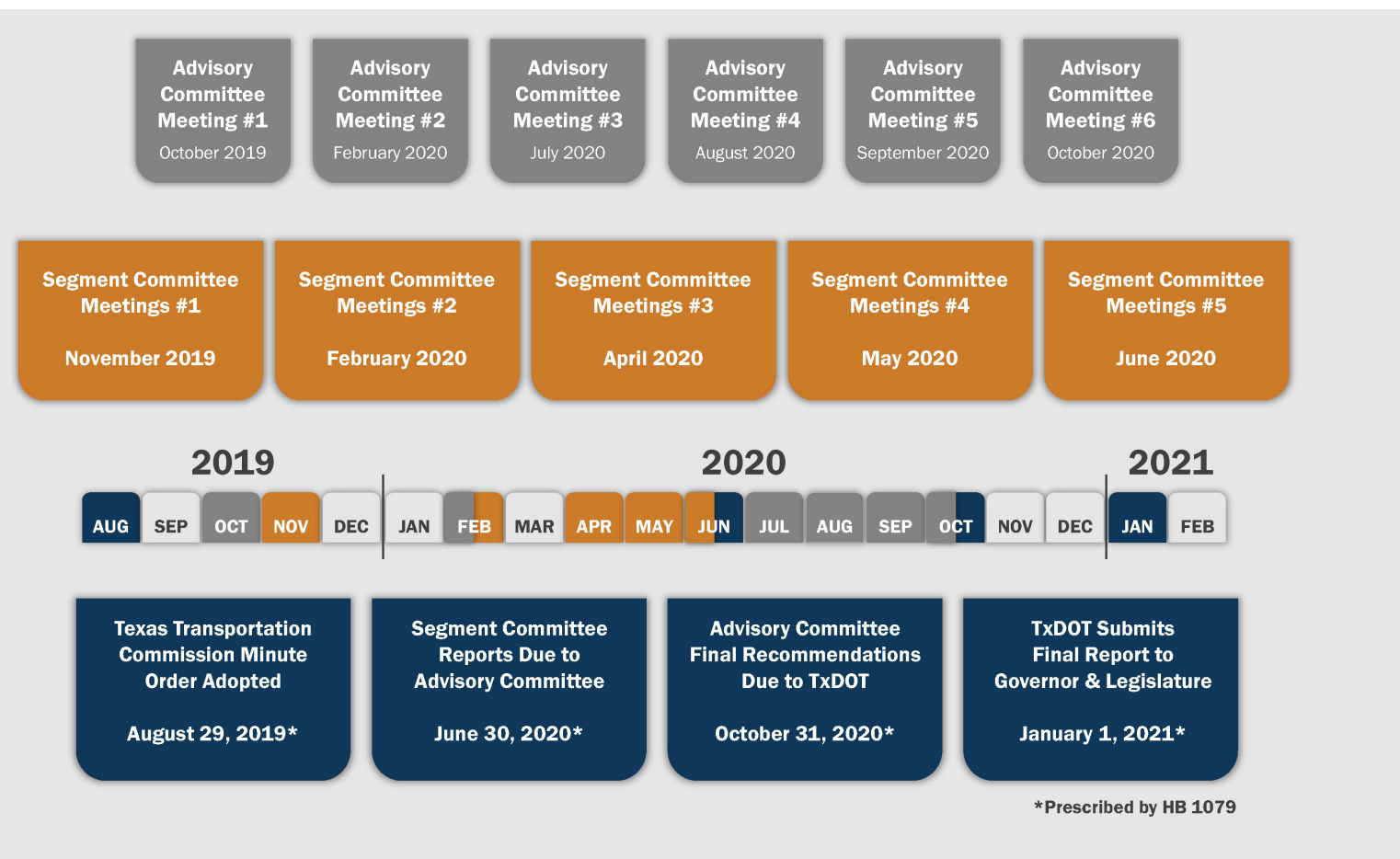
## House Bill 1079

House Bill (HB) 1079 requires TxDOT to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor, as defined by Texas Transportation Code 225.069.

The study must evaluate the feasibility of, and costs and logistical matters associated with, improvements to the corridor that create a continuous-flow, four-lane divided highway that meets interstate standards to the extent possible.

HB 1079 describes the composition of the Segment Committees, consisting of volunteers who may represent municipalities, counties, metropolitan planning organizations (MPO), ports, chambers of commerce, and economic development organizations along the segment.

### Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study Milestone Dates





## Study Goals

### ► The goals of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study include an examination and determination of:



**Freight movement** along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor



The ability of the energy industry to **transport products** to market



The economic development impacts of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor, including whether the improvement or expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor would create **employment opportunities** in this state



Whether improvements or expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor would **relieve traffic congestion** in the segment



Prioritization of improvements and expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor that are warranted in order to promote safety and mobility, while **maximizing the use of existing highways** to the greatest extent possible and **striving to protect private property** as much as possible



The areas that are preferable and suitable for **interstate designation**



**Project costs** related to the improvement or expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor



Federal, state, local, and private **funding sources** for a project improving or expanding the Ports-to-Plains Corridor

## Segment Committee Meetings

The Segment #3 Committee met live five times during the Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study. The Segment Committee's roles and responsibilities included electing a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson to assist in the development of meeting materials, attending Segment Committee meetings, providing feedback on corridor data and analysis presented by TxDOT, and providing segment-specific study recommendations for consideration by the Advisory Committee.



## District Coordination

- Provided current studies and roadway construction projects
- Reviewed cost estimate methodology and cost estimates
- Provided insight for frontage roads in rural areas
- Participated in Segment Committee and Public meetings



## Public Outreach

- The purpose of the outreach was to establish early and continuous public participation opportunities that provided information about transportation issues and decision-making processes to all interested parties.
- This provided access to information about the study to enhance the public's knowledge and ability to participate in the development of the study and to receive feedback on preliminary recommendations made by the committees before submitting reports.
- A key component of the stakeholder engagement for the Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study was a robust public engagement process in accordance with requirements of HB 1079.
- Eight public meetings were held between November 2019 and May 2020 on a quarterly basis at key study milestones as per HB 1079 requirements.

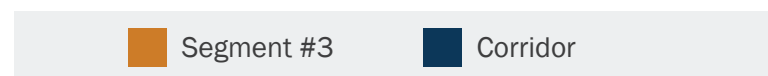
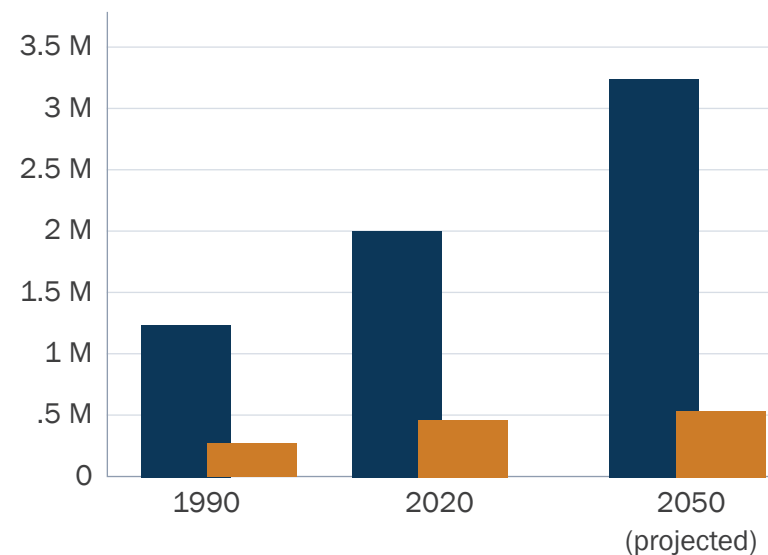


## Existing and Future Corridor Conditions

### Population

- ▶ From 1990 to 2020, population in Segment #3 has grown **70%**, compared to **47%** in the overall Ports-to-Plains Corridor.
- ▶ Much of this growth has occurred in **Webb County**, which has more than doubled in size since 1990.
- ▶ At **437,909** people, (in 2017), Segment #3 makes up **24%** of the corridor population.
- ▶ Population is projected to continue to grow, reaching **500,662** people by 2050, an increase of **11%**.
- ▶ Future growth in Segment #3 is expected to slow compared to the rest of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor which is expected to grow by **61%**.

### ▶ Segment #3 & Corridor Population



Population Growth  
Past 30 Years



Segment #3: **70%**  
Corridor: **33%**

Population Growth  
Next 30 Years

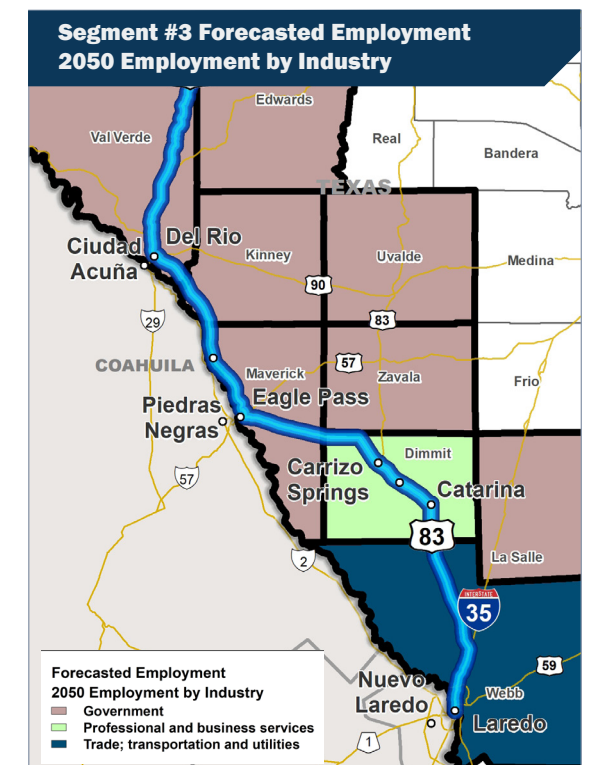
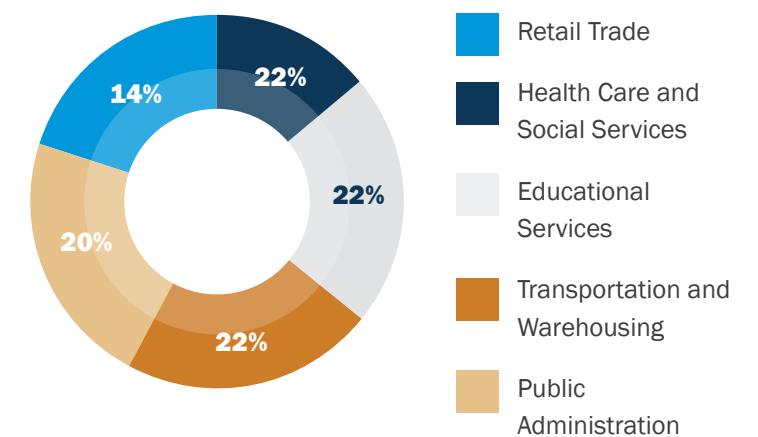


Segment #3: **11%**  
Corridor: **61%**

### Economic

- ▶ Economic indicators such as **employment, income, and gross domestic product (GDP)** indicate **substantial future growth** in Segment #3 and the Ports-to-Plains Corridor.
- ▶ Median household income in Segment #3 is anticipated to grow **116%** to **\$93,883** in 2050, compared to the Corridor at **161%**.
- ▶ Gross domestic product in Segment #3 is anticipated to grow **80%** by 2050, compared to the Corridor at **69%**.
- ▶ Segment #3 has the **highest anticipated percentage GDP growth rate** in the Corridor.
- ▶ **Health care, retail trade, and educational services** are all major employers in Segment #3.
- ▶ Segment #3 is the only segment that has **transportation/warehousing** in the top five industries. Transportation and warehousing include all modes as well as pipelines but is likely primarily truck-related transportation and support activities. Transportation and warehousing is expected to remain a top employment industry in 2050, particularly in Webb County.

### ▶ Segment #3 Top Industries



Source: Moody's Analytics County Forecast



# Existing and Future Corridor Conditions

## Traffic & Safety

### Comparing Interstate Upgrade to Baseline:

- ▶ Total traffic volumes are projected to grow 34% corridor-wide and 43% in Segment #3.
- ▶ Total truck volumes are projected to grow 34% corridor-wide and 44% in Segment #3.
- ▶ The average crash rate in the corridor is projected to reduce by 21% and by 29% in Segment #3.
- ▶ Free flow travel times are projected to reduce by 34.2 minutes for the entire corridor and by 13.5 minutes in Segment #3.
- ▶ Average travel times are projected to reduce by 89.2 minutes for the entire corridor and by 39.4 minutes in Segment #3.
- ▶ Peak period travel times are projected to reduce by 145.7 minutes for the entire corridor and by 72.2 minutes in Segment #3.

### ▶ Total Traffic Volumes – Vehicles Per Day Growth

	2018	Baseline (2050)	Interstate (2050)	% Growth*
Corridor	10,600	17,700	23,800	34%
Segment #3	9,400	18,000	25,700	43%

### ▶ Truck Traffic Volumes – Vehicles Per Day Growth

	2018	Baseline (2050)	Interstate (2050)	% Growth*
Corridor	2,200	3,800	5,100	34%
Segment #3	1,800	3,900	5,600	44%

### ▶ Crash Rates – Reduction in Annual Crashes per 100M Vehicle Miles Traveled

	2018	Baseline (2050)	Interstate (2050)	% Reduction*
Corridor	115	86	68	-21%
Segment #3	133	92	65	-29%

### ▶ The interstate upgrade would result in yearly reductions across the state of approximately...

18	fatal collisions	329	injury collisions	906	property damage collisions
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### ▶ Travel Times – Minutes Reduced

	Free Flow Conditions*	Average Conditions*	Peak Conditions
Corridor	34.2	89.2	145.7
Segment #3	13.5	39.4	72.2

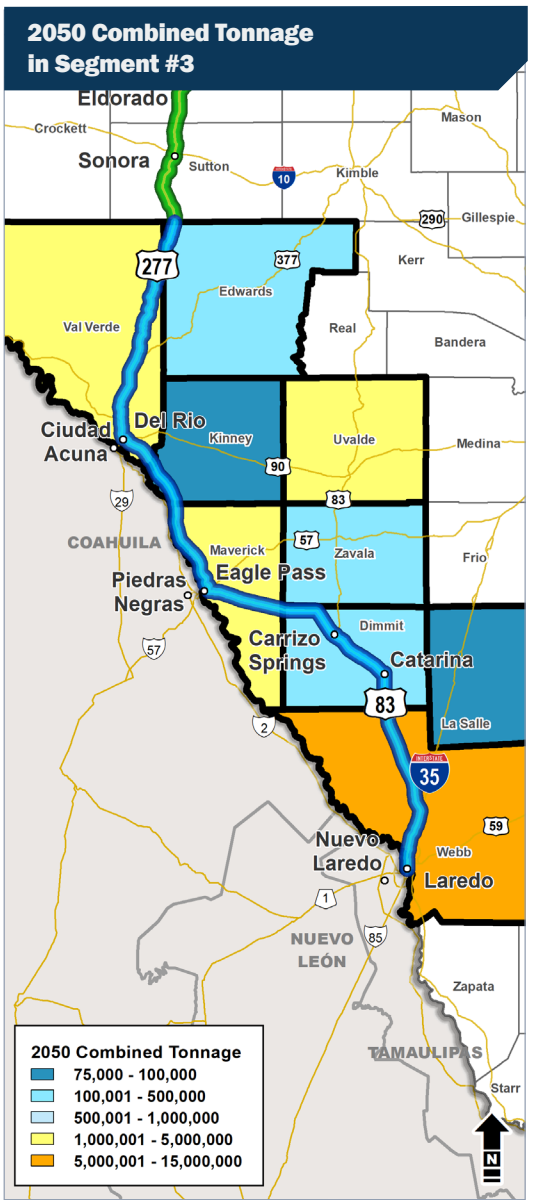
\*Difference between baseline and interstate

## Freight

- ▶ In Segment #3, the Baseline forecast projects total truck tonnage to grow 139% between 2018 and 2050.
- ▶ Truck tonnage in mixed shipments from warehouses and distribution centers grows well over 200 percent and represents 61% of inbound and outbound growth through 2050.
- ▶ In Segment #3, much of the truck traffic is concentrated between Laredo, Eagle Pass, and Del Rio.
- ▶ The interstate upgrade will divert trips from nearby parallel routes as well as national routes. In Segment #3, truck traffic will divert from I-35 with the interstate upgrade and rise to average of 5,600 trucks per day in 2050, which is a 44% increase over the baseline and the largest increase in the corridor.



Source: TxDOT SAM



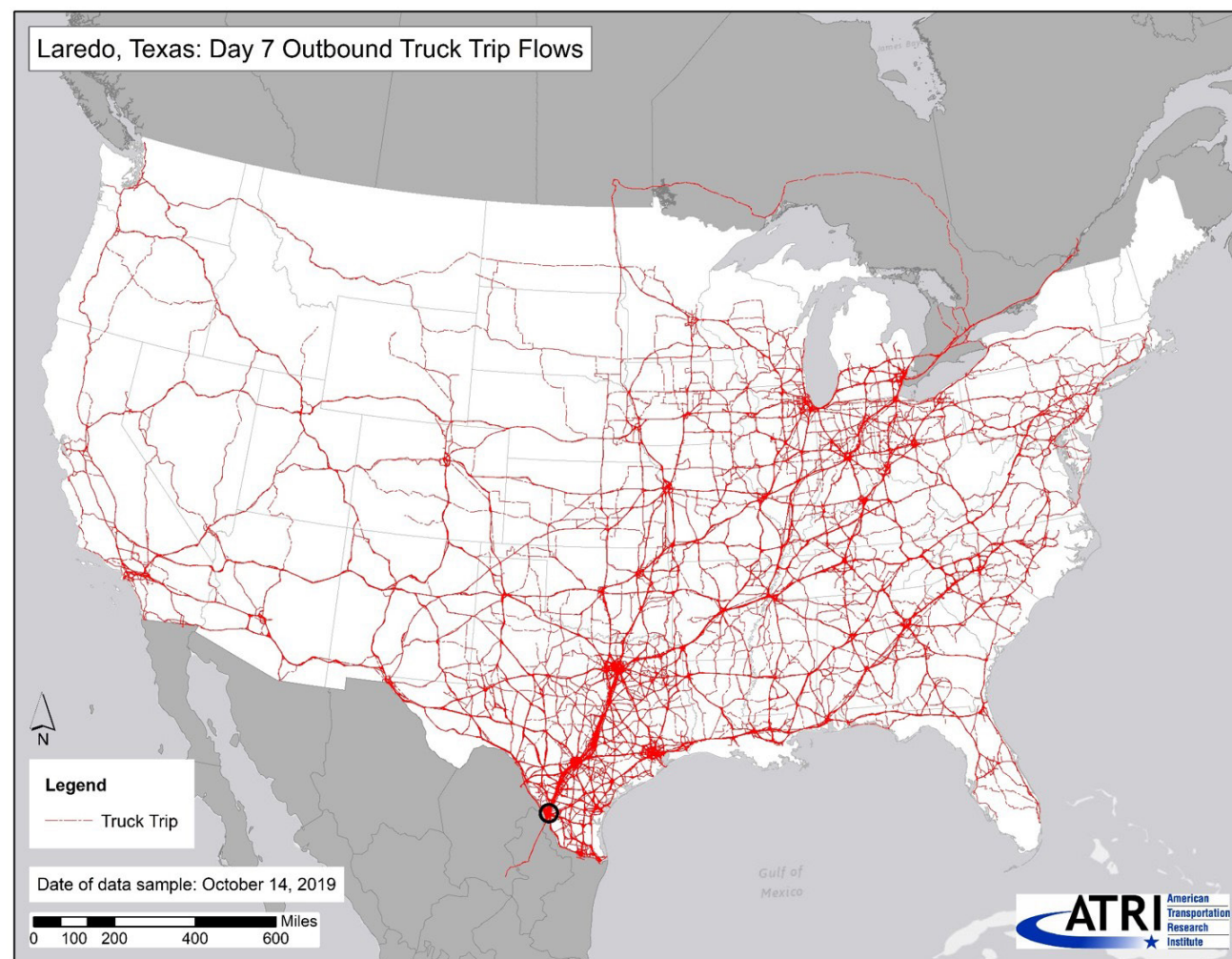
Source: TxDOT SAM and Transearch



## Outbound Truck Trip Flows

As shown on the map below, outbound truck trips originating in Laredo were tracked for a 7-day period as compiled by the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI). The map illustrates the magnitude of truck traffic flowing from the Port of Laredo with thicker red lines indicating the heaviest flows.

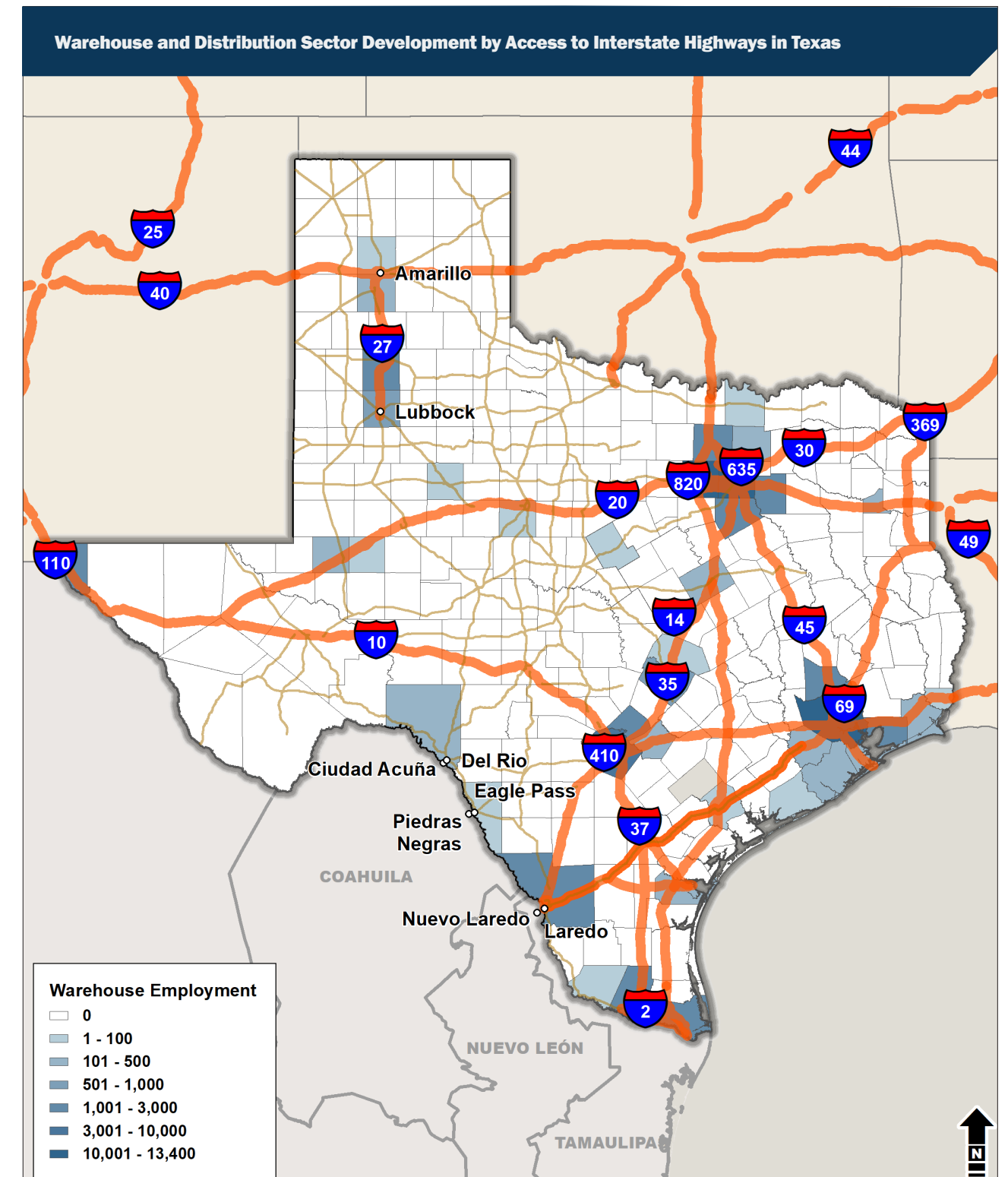
The strongest outbound truck demand from Laredo is along the I-35 corridor to the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area with other strong flows throughout Texas using other interstates, U.S. highways, and Texas state routes. The truck flows from Laredo reach all regions of the United States and into Canada.



Source: ATRI, 2019

## Warehouse and Distribution Sector Access

As shown on the figure below and supported by research by the National Academy of Sciences, warehouse and distribution sector development in Texas is driven by access to interstate highways.



Source: National Cooperative Freight Research Program Report 13

## Corridor Interstate Feasibility Analysis

The Segment #3 Committee conducted an interstate feasibility analysis for the Segment #3 portion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor to determine if upgrading the entire corridor to interstate standards, where feasible, would achieve the goals in HB 1079.

### ► The Segment #3 Committee considered two scenarios:

Baseline	Interstate upgrade
Scenario assumes only currently planned and programmed projects are implemented along the corridor by 2050 as listed in TxDOT's FY 2020 Unified Transportation Program.	Scenario assumes improvements to provide a continuous-flow, fully access-controlled facility with a minimum of two lanes in each direction separated by a median within a typical 300- to 500-foot right-of-way.

The Segment #3 feasibility analysis was performed to determine whether implementing a continuous-flow four-lane interstate facility on the Ports-to-Plains Corridor would achieve the goals set out in HB 1079. Data collected during the existing conditions, forecasted conditions analysis and needs assessment was used to evaluate the scenarios against the goals.

## Examination of Freight Movement

### Findings

- **Reduce travel times** from 89 to 146 minutes across the entire corridor and 39 to 72 minutes in Segment #3 over the baseline.
- **Improved travel time and access results in diverting truck volumes** from nearby parallel routes, as well as national routes like I-10, I-35 from Laredo to San Antonio, and I-35 to I-70 from Dallas to Denver. This results in truck traffic increasing 44% in Segment #3 over the baseline.
- **Attract corridor truck traffic** from 2,200 in 2018 to 5,100 in 2050, a growth of 132 percent, and 34 percent over the baseline.
- Provide **improved access** to the International Trade Gateways in Laredo, Del Rio and Eagle Pass.

Travel Time Savings = the amount of time saved due to upgrading the Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate.

## Determination of Ability to Promote Safety and Mobility

### Safety Findings

Upgrading the Ports-to-Plains Corridor-wide to an interstate would lower crash rates since interstates have 15 to 25% fewer crashes than a typical US highway and 35% fewer crashes than a typical state highway.

- Over 2018 conditions, the interstate is estimated to reduce the crash rate by approximately **51%** Segment #3 **41%** Corridor
  - In 2050, the interstate is estimated to reduce crashes over the baseline by **29%** Segment #3 **21%** Corridor
- The interstate upgrade will lower the number of crashes and provide a statewide monetary benefit of \$450M when USDOT guidance regarding avoidance of fatal (\$9.6M), injury (\$174k) and property damage only (\$4.3k) crash reductions is considered.
- Crash Rates = the number of crashes per 100 million vehicle miles.

### Mobility Findings

The interstate upgrade would provide a travel time benefit over the existing non-interstate due to greater travel speeds provided by full access control. The interstate upgrade would reduce travel time over the baseline:

- | Corridor-wide                                   | Segment #3                                      |
|---|---|
| <b>34</b> Minutes Free-flow travel time savings | <b>14</b> Minutes Free-flow travel time savings |
| <b>89</b> Minutes Average travel time savings   | <b>39</b> Minutes Average travel time savings   |
| <b>146</b> Minutes Peak travel time savings     | <b>72</b> Minutes Peak travel time savings      |

## Ability of Energy Industry to Transport Products to Market

### Findings

- Create a fully access-controlled facility for the entire corridor with improved travel times and reliability for freight, including trucks transporting energy products to market.
  - Reduce travel times 89 to 146 minutes across the entire corridor and 39 to 72 minutes in Segment #3 over the baseline.
  - Provide a safer and more reliable route for trucks carrying energy products to market when traveling through cities and small towns.
- This reduction in travel time, increased market access radius, and increase in route reliability provided by the interstate upgrade will help the energy industry transport products to market.**



# Determination of Traffic Congestion Relief

## Findings

**The interstate upgrade results in relatively higher speeds throughout the corridor. As a result, traffic would divert from parallel and intersecting roadways to take advantage of the improved travel time on the Ports-to-Plains Corridor.**

### Regional:

- ▶ Most diversion to the Ports-to-Plains Corridor comes from highways within 100 miles of the corridor.
- ▶ The interstate upgrade shows a stronger traffic diversion capability over the baseline indicating the ability to reduce traffic congestion from nearby corridors in Segment #3 and from other corridors in the state.
- ▶ In Segment #3, the interstate upgrade diverts east/west trips from the US 57 (Eagle Pass to San Antonio) and US 90 (Del Rio to San Antonio) corridors. The interstate upgrade also attracts north/south trips from US 83, SH 55, and I-35 between Laredo and San Antonio.

### Statewide:

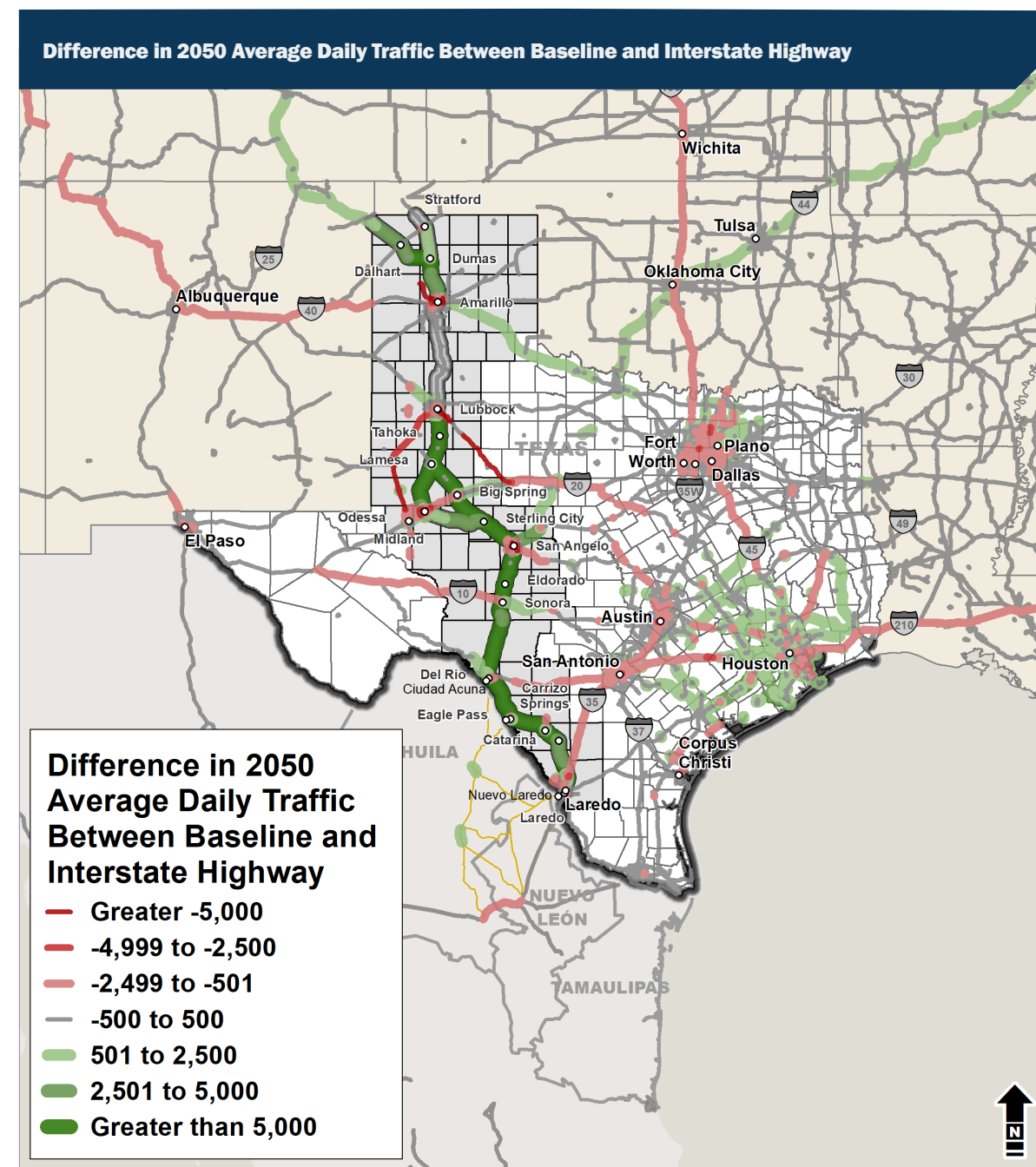
- ▶ The interstate upgrade diverts traffic from other corridors state-wide. The data showed significant traffic diversion of more than 5,000 vehicles per day from US 385 south of Hartley, US 385 to US 62 between Odessa and Lubbock, and US 84 between Lubbock and I-20.
- ▶ Moderate diversion was shown from I-35 from Laredo to San Antonio.

### National:

- The conversion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate would also create shifts in national travel patterns.
- ▶ The Ports-to-Plains Corridor was found to attract trips to I-44 from St Louis, Missouri to Wichita Falls and continuing towards the corridor while diverting trips away from other east-west routes east of Texas, such as I-10.
  - ▶ Diversion was also traced from the I-70/I-135/I-35 route from Denver to Dallas and instead favoring I-25 through New Mexico and connecting to US 87 in Texas.
  - ▶ Smaller national diversions – such as trips from the Pacific Northwest being attracted across the Rockies towards Denver and southward to the Ports-to-Plains Corridor – were traced with diversions from I-10 and I-40 to the west.

### Binational:

- ▶ Key diversion patterns include trips between the Mexican states of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas south of Texas, the Rocky Mountain and Midwestern states of New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri, and trips between the Gulf of Mexico coast toward the north Mountain and Pacific Northwest states.
- ▶ The magnitude of diversion and growth are also a response from increases in foreign trade via land ports with industrial areas of Mexico, and international seaport trade that can more easily reach Gulf of Mexico ports due to the Panama Canal expansion.



Source: TxDOT SAM and TxDOT 2018 RID

## Determination of Areas Preferable and Suitable for Interstate Designation

### ► There are three ways to obtain future interstate designation:

#### Method 1:

If the corridor currently meets interstate standards, the US DOT Secretary may designate as an interstate under 23 USC 103(c)(4)(A),

#### Method 2:

If the corridor does not currently meet interstate standards, TxDOT may submit a proposal requesting designation as future interstate under 23 USC 103(c)(4)(B), or

#### Method 3:

The corridor may be designated part of the interstate system by a congressional act.



### Findings

#### Method 1

- The southern 18 miles of Segment #3 is already designated as I-35. The remaining 229 miles in Segment #3 are on U.S. and state highways, consisting of generally 2 lanes, and have lower design speeds with smaller right-of-way widths. Except for the I-35 portion, Segment #3 does not currently meet interstate standards and is not currently suitable for interstate designation under 23 USC 103(c)(4)(A).

#### Method 2

- The existing 247-mile corridor in Segment #3 does not currently meet interstate standards, except for I-35 in Laredo. The Segment #3 Committee then looked at whether the corridor could be designated as future interstate under Method 2. Based on this assessment of interstate eligibility requirements, the Segment #3 Committee determined that TxDOT could submit for interstate designation under method 2.

#### Method 3

- Since a congressional action is a political process outside of the feasibility study, based on the Segment #3 Committee's assessment they can pursue congressional act designation.

## Assessment of Federal, State, Local, and Private Funding

Various funding sources would need to be explored from the federal, state, and local perspective to upgrade the corridor to an interstate. Potential funding sources at the federal, state, and local level and private sources include:

### Federal Funding

- **Federal-Aid Highway Program**
- **Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)**
- **United States Department of Transportation Build Program**
- **Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Discretionary Grant Program**

### State of Texas

Programmed through the Unified Transportation Program (UTP) – a ten-year program of planning, development and construction projects

- **Proposition 1**
- **Proposition 7**
- **State Infrastructure Bank**
- **State Highway Fund**

### Local Funding Sources

Metropolitan Planning Organization

- **Laredo Urban Transportation Study**

### Private Funding Sources

- **County Energy Transportation Reinvestment Zone**
- **Public-Private Partnerships**



## Evaluation of Economic Development Impacts, Including Job Creation

### ► The interstate upgrade is essential to:

- Improve connectivity, safety, and mobility, including improving access to market for energy and agricultural products, and facilitating the efficient flow of goods and international trade;
- Reduce travel time and costs along the corridor;
- Create jobs, new warehouses and distribution facilities, and other new businesses; and
- Expand the local tax base.

### ► The interstate is projected to provide the following economic benefits corridor-wide:

#### Return on Investment

#### RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF

**\$17.8 BILLION** OR **76%**

#### Benefit Cost Ratio

**BENEFIT COST RATIO OF 2.4**

The economic benefits listed in this report come by fulfilling the implementation plan fully for the entire corridor. The economic benefits of the development of the corridor is important to each segment, but do not accrue to any individual segment without completing the entire corridor.

#### ► Total Annual Travel Benefits

**\$4.1 BILLION** Statewide Travel Cost Savings

**\$1.1 BILLION** Segment #3 Travel Cost Savings

**\$450 MILLION** Statewide Safety Benefits

#### ► Total Annual Increase in Employment

**22,100** Corridor Employment

**4,400** Employment in the Rest of Texas

#### ► Total Annual Increase in Gross Domestic Product

**\$2.2 BILLION** Corridor GDP

**\$0.9 BILLION** Segment GDP

**\$640 MILLION** Rest of Texas GDP

### ► The interstate is projected to create the following economic impacts to industries in the corridor:

#### Food and Agriculture Industry Impacts

The food and agriculture industry is expected to experience significant benefits from the interstate, via reduced annual travel costs of \$295 million across the corridor.

- Increase jobs in the food and agriculture industry by 1,050 corridor-wide and 240 in Segment #3.
- Grow the food and agriculture sector GDP by \$80 million corridor-wide and \$12 million in Segment #3.

#### Energy Industry Impacts

The interstate will save energy companies approximately \$505 million in time and money across the corridor, making it easier to access workers and customers. The interstate will:

- Increase energy industry jobs by 3,120 corridor-wide and 1,160 in Segment #3.
- Grow the energy sector GDP by nearly \$400 million, with \$140 million in Segment #3.

#### Warehousing and Distribution Impacts

The two most important criteria in logistics facility site selection are access to key markets and interaction with the transportation network, which for highway transportation specifically means proximity to interstates and freeways. The interstate will:

- Generate \$365 million more direct warehousing output across the corridor and \$630 million more in Segment #3
- Add 2,550 more warehousing and distribution jobs, including 1,420 additional jobs within Segment #3.
- Generate \$450 million more in GDP compared to the Baseline across the corridor, and \$245 million in GDP in Segment #3.

#### Economic Impacts of Construction and Maintenance Spending

Construction of the interstate will create temporary statewide economic impacts totaling \$17.2 billion in cumulative GDP and 178,600 job-years, spread out across the duration of the design and construction period.

- Ongoing interstate maintenance will also support 2,090 long-term jobs and \$185 million in annual GDP statewide.
- Jobs would primarily support the construction industry, but would also provide opportunities in countless other industries.

## Examination of Project Costs

The planning level cost estimate is based on a methodology typically used to develop costs during the transportation corridor feasibility stage. The methodology used planning-level software with available mapping data for the corridor and assumptions developed in consultation with the TxDOT Laredo District. Costs were adjusted to account for planned and programmed projects in Segment #3 and used 2020 dollars.

**Corridor-wide  
cost  
estimate**

**\$23.5  
BILLION**

**Segment  
#3  
cost  
estimate**

**\$6.7  
BILLION**

This cost estimate is preliminary for planning purposes only and is subject to change based on more detailed right-of-way and design information during future stages of project development.

The Segment #2 cost estimate is 50% of the total corridor cost and 50% of the mileage.

### Cost Estimate Assumptions

- ▶ **A 75-mile per hour design speed and interstate standards for curves and grades**
- ▶ **2019 TxDOT District bid tabs to calculate prices for pavement, earthwork, and bridges for the TxDOT Laredo District**
- ▶ **Major utility relocations based on available mapping data, and minor utilities as a percentage of costs**
- ▶ **Seeding, mulching, lighting, and traffic control as a percentage of costs based on similar projects**
- ▶ **Frontage roads in all urban areas**
- ▶ **Frontage roads for approximately 160 miles in rural areas**
- ▶ **Right-of-way costs as ten percent of the construction costs**
- ▶ **Major utility relocation costs such as parallel pipelines, oil and gas wells, water wells, and parallel railroads**
- ▶ **Full reconstruction of the corridor**

## Committee Recommendations and Implementation Plan

### Recommendations

The Segment #3 Committee makes the following recommendations:

- 4** interstate upgrade projects that would extend I-27 by upgrading the existing primarily two-lane corridor to an interstate level facility.
- 6** relief route projects around communities where upgrading the existing facility to interstate standards would create significant adverse impacts.
- 10** safety and operational improvements along the corridor that are effective and low-cost strategies to improve safety on the existing corridor and compliment the interstate upgrade.
- ▶ **Other general and policy recommendations to address the key issues along the corridor.**

### Implementation Plan

As outlined in HB 1079, the Segment #3 Committee prioritized their recommendations for improvement and expansion of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor into the short-, mid-, and long-term.

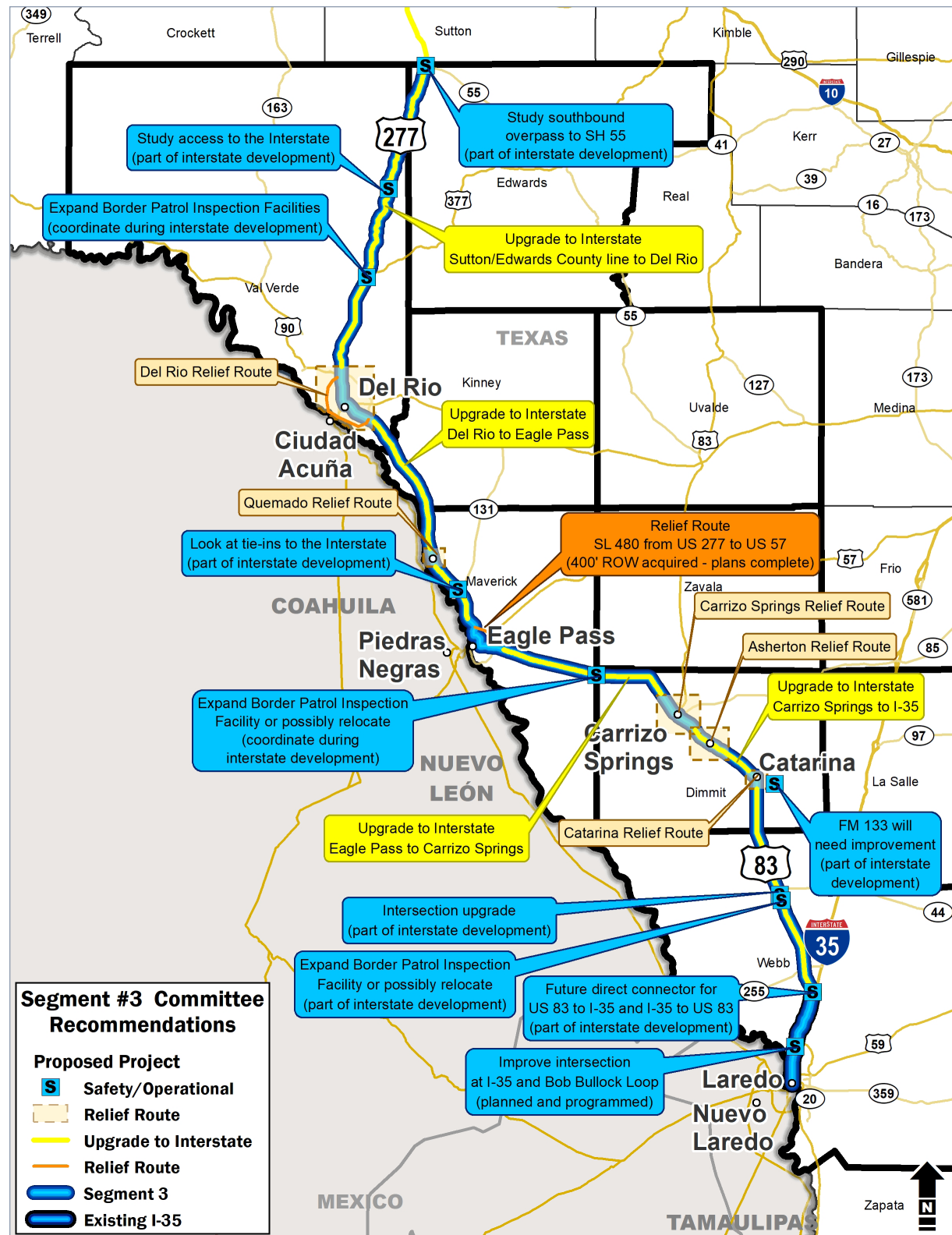
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| <p>▶ <b>Short-term projects</b><br/>are recommended for implementation within one to five years</p> | <p>▶ <b>Mid-term projects</b><br/>are recommended for implementation within six to ten years</p> | <p>▶ <b>Long-term projects</b><br/>are recommended for implementation for 11 or more years</p> |
|---|--|--|

These implementation phases are planning recommendations made by the Segment #3 Committee; however, these identified projects may be accelerated or decelerated based on opportunities and reallocation of resources needed for construction and implementation.

Maps showing the Segment #3 Committee project recommendations and the implementation plan are provided on the following pages.



## Committee Recommendations



## Committee Policy and General Recommendations

### ► Complete Planned and Programmed Projects

The Segment #3 Committee endorses efforts to complete the projects already planned and programmed by TxDOT and Laredo Metropolitan Planning Organization.

### ► Detailed Project-Level Planning Development Process

The Segment #3 Committee recommends TxDOT continues to further detailed project-level planning and development to implement the project recommendations outlined in this report to upgrade the Ports-to-Plains Corridor to an interstate facility. The activities should include the following:

- Develop a detailed district-level implementation plan outlining the project development process for each of the projects included in the recommendations of this plan.
- Routing the Ports-to-Plains Corridor from the current US 277 in Del Rio, which currently passes through the city center to follow State Loop 79,
- Upgrading U.S. Border Patrol security stops along the corridor,
- Connecting the interstate upgrades as recommended in this Feasibility Study follows the Ports-to-Plains Corridor which only connects to Bridge II-Juarez-Lincoln International (non-commercial only) via I-35 in Laredo, and does not directly connect to the Camino Real International Bridge in Eagle Pass or the Del Rio International Bridge in Del Rio. Future study is recommended by the Segment Committee #3 to conduct future studies to improve the connections to the commercial ports-of-entry bridges in the segment including Bridge III-Colombia Solidarity and Bridge

IV-World Trade Bridge in Laredo; Camino Real International Bridge in Eagle Pass or the Del Rio International Bridge in Del Rio,

- Determining specific location of items like frontage roads, bridges and grade separations (overpasses) as the planning and development processes continue, and determining future connections and interchanges with the proposed interstate to other regional highways serving the region.

### ► Environmental Review and Public Input

The Segment #3 Committee recommends construction of any relief route undergo an extensive environmental process and require public input and comment.

### ► Importance of Community Support

The Segment #3 Committee recognizes the importance of community support including resolutions for supporting future interstate designation supported and adopted by communities, counties, organizations and businesses in Segment #3 and has included a signed resolution in the Segment 3 Committee Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study Report.

### ► Continued Role of the Advisory Committee

Once this Ports-to-Plains Corridor Interstate Feasibility Study is complete, the Segment #3 Committee recommends the Ports-to-Plains Advisory Committee continue to guide the Implementation Strategy to manage the continued development and designation of the interstate upgrade in Texas.

Committee Implementation Plan

Roadway	Description of Work	Short-Term (0-5 years)	Mid-Term (6-10 years)	Long-Term (11+ years)
Upgrade to interstate (approximately 61 miles) <sup>a</sup>	US 277 (from Sutton/Edwards County Line to Del Rio)	Project Feasibility <sup>c</sup> / Preliminary Design/ Environmental	Final Design; ROW Acquisition	Construction
Upgrade to interstate (approximately 39 miles) <sup>a</sup>	US 277 (from Del Rio to Eagle Pass)	Project Feasibility <sup>c</sup> / Preliminary Design/ Environmental	Final Design; ROW Acquisition	Construction
Upgrade to interstate (approximately 42 miles) <sup>a</sup>	US 277 (from Eagle Pass to Carrizo Springs)	Project Feasibility <sup>c</sup> / Preliminary Design/ Environmental	Final Design; ROW Acquisition/ Construction	-
Upgrade to interstate (approximately 41 miles) <sup>a</sup>	US 83 <sup>b</sup> (from Carrizo Springs to I-35)	Project Feasibility <sup>c</sup> / Preliminary Design/ Environmental	Final Design; ROW Acquisition/ Construction	-
Loop 79 Extension Del Rio Relief Route <sup>d</sup>	Around City of Del Rio including international bridge connections	Project Feasibility <sup>c</sup> / Preliminary Design/ Environmental	Final Design; ROW Acquisition	Construction
Quemado Relief Route <sup>d</sup>	Around City of Quemado	Project Feasibility <sup>c</sup> / Preliminary Design/ Environmental	Final Design; ROW Acquisition	Construction
State Loop 480 Relief Route - Eagle Pass Relief Route <sup>e</sup>	From US 277 to US 57 (400 feet of ROW acquired, and plans are complete, but tabled for now)	Final Design/ Construction	-	-
Carrizo Springs Relief Route <sup>e</sup>	Around City of Carrizo Springs	Project Feasibility <sup>c</sup> / Preliminary Design/ Environmental	Final Design; ROW Acquisition/ Construction	-
Asherton Relief Route <sup>f</sup>	Around City of Asherton	Project Feasibility <sup>c</sup> / Preliminary Design/ Environmental	Final Design; ROW Acquisition/ Construction	-
Catarina Relief Route <sup>f</sup>	Around City of Catarina	Project Feasibility <sup>c</sup> / Preliminary Design/ Environmental	Final Design; ROW Acquisition/ Construction	-
Safety/Operational Improvement	Study southbound overpass US 277 to SH 55	Completed as part of Interstate Development	-	-

Roadway	Description of Work	Short-Term (0-5 years)	Mid-Term (6-10 years)	Long-Term (11+ years)
Safety/Operational Improvement	Study access US 277 to the interstate	Completed as part of Interstate Development	-	-
Safety/Operational Improvement	Expand Border Patrol Inspection Facilities at US 277	Coordination with CBP on Interstate Development	-	-
Safety/Operational Improvement	Look at tie-ins to the interstate of US 277 north of Eagle Pass	Completed as part of Interstate Development	-	-
Safety/Operational Improvement	Expand Border Patrol Inspection Facility or possibly relocate at Maverick/Dimmit County Line	Coordination with CBP on Interstate Development	-	-
Safety/Operational Improvement	FM 133 will need improvement in Catarina	Completed as part of Interstate Development	-	-
Safety/Operational Improvement	Intersection upgrade At US 83 and SH 44	Completed as part of Interstate Development	-	-
Safety/Operational Improvement	Expand Border Patrol Inspection Facility or possibly relocate along US 83 in Webb County	Completed as part of Interstate Development	-	-
Safety/Operational Improvement	Future direct connector for US 83 to I-35 and I-35 to US 83	Completed as part of Interstate Development	-	-
Safety/Operational Improvement	Improve intersection at I-35 and Bob Bullock Loop	Planned and Programmed	-	-

Notes: <sup>a</sup> The mileage included in the table are approximations and do not include miles along the corridor covered by relief route recommendations.

<sup>b</sup> The Segment #3 Committee notes a portion of this project, widening from 2-lane to 4-lane undivided from 1 mile north of SH 255 to US 83/I-35 underpass, is included in the Planned and Programmed Projects and in TxDOT’s Unified Transportation Program (UTP).

<sup>c</sup> This report is a Feasibility Study of the entire Ports-to-Plains Corridor. Project Feasibility listed in this table are project specific feasibility studies required before Preliminary Design.

<sup>d</sup> Environmental to be completed with US 277 Eagle Pass to Del Rio interstate upgrade.

<sup>e</sup> Environmental to be completed with US 277 Carrizo Springs to Eagle Pass interstate upgrade.

<sup>f</sup> Environmental to be completed with US 83 I-35 to Carrizo Springs interstate upgrade.





Segment #3 Committee Members



**Bruno Lozano**  
Mayor, Committee Chair  
City of Del Rio



**Tano E. Tijerina**  
Judge, Committee  
Vice Chair  
Webb County

**Luis Sifuentes**  
Mayor  
City of Eagle Pass

**Pete Saenz**  
Mayor  
City of Laredo

**Sid Cauthorn**  
Board Member  
Ports-to-Plains Alliance

**Miguel Conchas**  
President and CEO  
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Del Rio Port of Entry

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Judge  
Dimmit County

**David R. Saucedo**  
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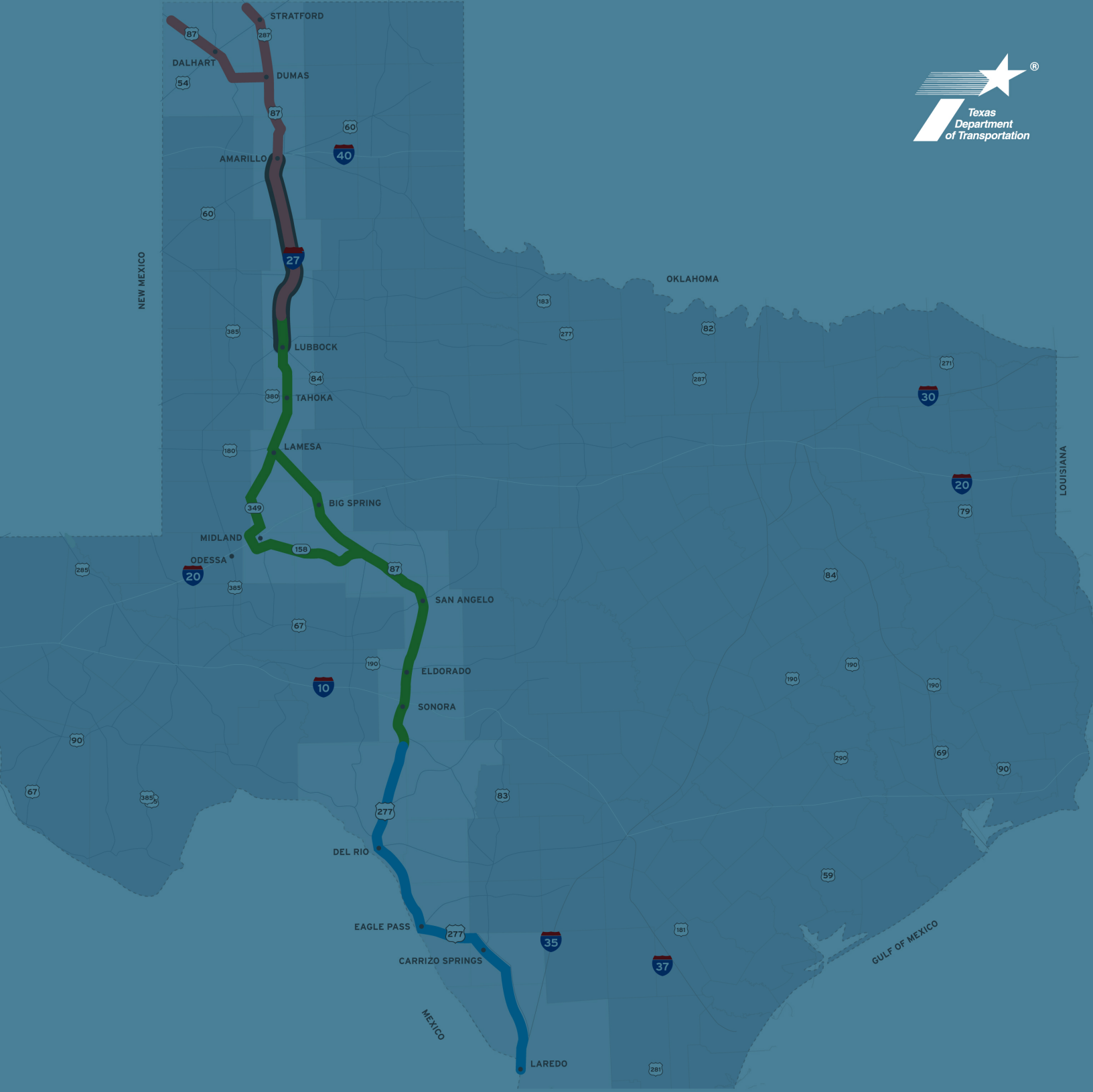
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