Multimodal Connectivity is a Key Priority for the Ports-to-Plains Corridor Future Interstate and Texas I-27 Advisory Committee

Texas Department of Transportation

INTERSTATE TEXAS **27**

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor was designated as a future interstate in Texas and New Mexico in the federal Fiscal Year 2022 omnibus appropriations bill. Interstate 27 (I-27) is part of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor and exists between Lubbock and Amarillo. It is assumed the Corridor will be designated I-27 as it extends south from San Angelo and north from Amarillo. Route numbering is ultimately the responsibility of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the United States Department of Transportation. The **963-mile corridor spans 26 Texas counties** and includes portions of I-20, I-27, I-35, US 83, US 87, US 277, US 287, SH 158, and SH 349.

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor is a key component of the multimodal transportation system in Texas. **Multimodal is the process of moving cargo using multiple types of transport - such as truck, rail, plane, or ship.** The Corridor provides connectivity to several modes of transport.

Highway Freight

The Texas Highway Freight Network (THFN) is the highway network prioritized by the state for freight movement. **All 963 miles of the Ports-to-Plains Corridor are designated part of the THFN.** Freight flow along the Corridor is generated by the energy and agriculture industries and the international border crossings of Laredo, Eagle Pass, and Del Rio.

Freight Rail

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor connects to important railways in Texas. Class I railroads in the Ports-to-Plains Corridor transport goods from Oklahoma/New Mexico to Texas maritime ports and International Border Crossings: Kansas City Southern Railway (KCS), BNSF Railway, and Union Pacific (UP).

Short-line railroads in the corridor provide critical first-mile/last-mile connections for shippers and are crucial links in the supply chain: Lubbock and Western Railway (LBWR), Texas Pacifico (TXPF), and Texas North Western Railway (TXNW).

Maritime Ports

Texas handled more waterborne tonnage than any other state, with more than 590 million tons of foreign and domestic cargo in 2019[1] — which is transported by truck, rail, or pipeline. Commodities from North and West Texas travel along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor before connecting to other parts of the TMFN to maritime ports for export, or from maritime ports inland for imported goods.

Air Cargo

Air cargo relies on connections to other modes to get time-sensitive goods to their final destinations. **Efficient access to highways and interstates is important for airports that handle large volumes of air cargo.** Two of the top 10 Cargo Airports in Texas are located along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor[2] on the Texas Multimodal Freight Network (TMFN):
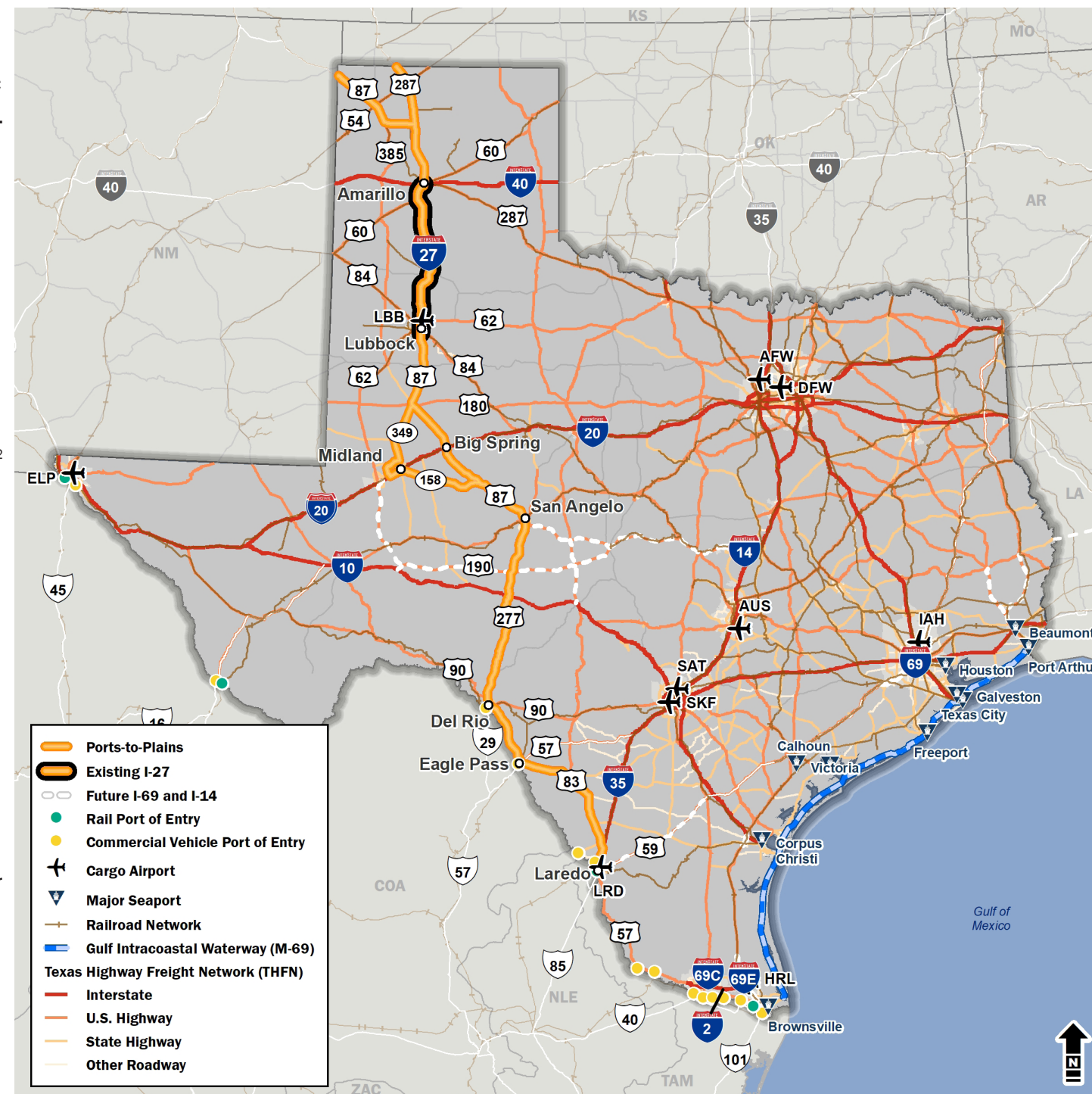- Lubbock Preston Smith International
- Laredo International

Transit

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor connects with passenger rail at the Amtrak system in Del Rio (one train a day), which connects passengers at the border to state and national major urban areas. In addition, **the future System could facilitate rural transit or highway bus rapid transit along the Corridor.**

Active Transportation

Existing I-27 from Amarillo to Lubbock is located along the Bicycle Tourism Trails Example Network, and trail sections near Del Rio, San Angelo, and Laredo could potentially intersect the future Ports-to-Plains System in Texas. **Early planning along the Corridor will allow for incorporation of best practice bicycle and pedestrian design guidance and standards into future projects.**

Multimodal Network Crossing[3]

Legend:
- Ports-to-Plains
- Existing I-27
- Future I-69 and I-14
- Rail Port of Entry
- Commercial Vehicle Port of Entry
- Cargo Airport
- Major Seaport
- Railroad Network
- Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (M-69)
- Texas Highway Freight Network (THFN)
- Interstate
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- Other Roadway

[1] USACE. Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center: CY 2019 Waterborne Tonnage by State
[2] T-100 Market (all-carrier). 2018-2020. Bureau of Transportation Statistics
[3] TxDOT ArcGIS OpenData

Future U.S. Interstate Highway and International Connections

Legend:
- Existing I-27
- Ports-to-Plains
- Heartland Expressway
- Theodore Roosevelt Expressway
- Eastern Alberta Trade Corridor
- International Corridor
- Future I-69 and I-14
- Major Road
- ○ Cities
- ▪ Dept of Defense / Military Facility
- ▼ Seaport