

# Talking Points on Connecting Texas 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

## Why is this Plan Important?

- Connecting Texas 2050 provides an overview of the state's transportation system for all modes, details the challenges and opportunities Texans face with the system, and identifies strategic recommendations to address those challenges in a manner that integrates efforts across all modes
- Reinforces TxDOT's efforts to improve safety for the traveling public and for all modes of freight, including efforts to reduce fatal and severe injury crashes on Texas roadways
- Promotes the preservation of vital infrastructure and services, including roads, bridges, sidewalks, transit fleet and facilities, railways, airports, seaports, and border crossings
- Encourages more efficient, resilient, and reliable travel options to enhance mobility for the traveling public and freight across all modes
- Improves connectivity between all modes and all geographic areas, including urban areas, rural areas, and border regions
- Strengthens economic vitality by investing in the modernization of aging transportation infrastructure, leveraging innovative and technology-oriented solutions, expanding system capacity to accommodate growing freight demand, and promoting job creation
- Promotes stewardship that prioritizes fiscal responsibility, maintains funding, minimizes negative natural and cultural impacts, and improves the overall project delivery process

## Draft Highlights

- Corridors of Statewide Significance
  - The Corridors of Statewide Significance play a crucial role in connecting different regions and facilitating the movement of people and goods across Texas
    - Rural corridors identified as Corridors of Statewide Significance will be eligible for funding
    - As projects along the Corridors of Statewide Significance advance to implementation (construct/expand/improve), they will increasingly contribute to achieving Connecting Texas 2050's vision and goals, enhancing efficiency, promoting economic development, and improving the overall quality of life for all Texas residents
    - Future interstate corridors – refers to corridors such as I-69, I-14, and I-27 that have been advanced through federal or state initiatives and play a larger economic role for the state
    - With three future interstates under planning and development, Texas is in a unique position at the crossroads for trade and connectivity with Mexico and other U.S. States as well as Canada. When completed, the combined lengths of I-14, I-27, and I-69 will double the interstate mileage in Texas, while eliminating connectivity gaps that currently exist along portions of I-35, I-10, I-20, and I-30, and providing economic opportunity to Texans
- Appendix A: Corridors of Statewide Significance
  - Future Interstates: Ports-to-Plains / I-27

- Texas Trunk System
  - The Texas Highway Trunk System is a rural network of highways expected to be four-lane divided or better. The Texas Trunk System was adopted by the Texas Transportation Commission in 1990 to improve rural mobility, connect major activity centers, and provide access to ports of entry into Texas
  - The Texas Transportation Commission identified Phase 1 Corridors to prioritize expansion of two-lane highways to a more desirable four-lane divided facility. However,
  - due to limited funding in subsequent years, not all segments of Phase 1 Corridors have
  - been expanded to four-lane divided and there remain some gaps. Addressing these
  - gaps will significantly enhance mobility in these rural areas of Texas. The Texas Transportation Commission has identified some such priority corridors with gaps in four-lane divided facility. These include:
    - US 87 & US 83 (includes the Ports-to-Plains Corridor between Texline and San Angelo)
    - US 277 & US 83 (Includes the Ports-to-Plains Corridor between Sonora and Laredo)
- Recommended Strategies
  - Promote freight infrastructure and intermodal connectivity for a prosperous future
    - Includes: Proactively integrate freight considerations into the planning and implementation of future interstate routes, including I-14, I-27, and I-69
  - Enhance cross-border connectivity and operations
    - Implement, reevaluate, and update policy recommendations outlined in the Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Master Plan (Includes project recommendations to build Interstate Highway along the border between Laredo and Del Rio)
- Transportation Investment Overview
  - Trends in Recent UTP Totals
    - Over the past several years, investments have grown significantly for certain categories to better address goals and performance targets
    - Cat 1 – Preventive Maintenance and Rehab has increased over \$4.8 billion (35%) since 2017
    - Cat 4 – Statewide Connectivity Corridors has increased over \$6.1 billion (53%) since 2017
    - Cat 9 – Transportation Alternatives has increased over \$1.2 billion (247%) since 2017
    - Cat 10 – Supplemental Transportation Projects has increased over \$1.8 billion (337%) since 2017
    - Cat 11 – District Discretionary has increased over \$2.9 billion (74%) since 2017
  - UTP Analysis – Minimum Investment Level for 2050 Targets
    - Table 23 lists the 2033 and 2050 targets for key performance measures related to safety, preservation, and mobility goals
      - The Alliance supports setting performance goals for investment
    - The construction investments add up to around \$455 to \$500 billion, which averages to \$215 billion per 10-year UTP
    - Funding is also needed to prepare UTP projects for construction, referred to as development cost
      - Development Costs will require UTP investments of \$155 - 170B to meet 2050 targets

- Connectivity – Rural will require UTP investments of \$85-95B to meet 2050 targets
  - Potential UTP Scenarios
    - To meet the minimum level of investment shown below, an average of approximately \$21.5 billion (2023 USD) annually would need to be invested over the next 22 years
    - No Growth Scenario - A no-growth scenario would be an unacceptable level of investment
    - The second scenario is a scenario that pegs the growth rate to the Texas Gross State Product (GSP) growth forecast, an approximate 2.3% annual growth (normalized for inflations), resulting in an 87% increase from 2024 to 2046
      - This would result in a lower annual growth rate than the final scenario
    - The final scenario is based on a continued average annual growth of 2.82%, consistent with the past 10-year trend line (normalized for inflation), resulting in a 109% increase from 2024 to 2046
      - Ports-to-Plains Alliance supports the scenario that continues average annual growth of 2.82%, consistent with the past 10-year trend line
  - PLAN Authority
    - Prior to projects reaching the UTP, where funding is authorized for developing and constructing projects, a planning step sets the stage for more evaluation of significant corridors to prioritize investments and planning projects that will further TxDOT goals as outlined in this plan
    - PLAN Authority is reserved for large, regionally impactful planning projects requiring long lead times for development and major funding commitments. It is prioritized for IH, US, and SH corridors
    - Connecting Texas 2050 has identified Corridors of Statewide Significance. This identification supports prioritizing limited PLAN Authority funding for studies along these corridors that will directly contribute to identifying and preparing for projects that will support Connecting Texas 2050 goals
      - This PLAN Authority will be critical in moving Ports-to-Plains / I-27 forward
  - High-level Corridors of Statewide Significance Investment Outlook
    - The Alliance appreciates the High-level Estimates for Corridors of Statewide Significance, especially
      - Existing two-lane or “super two” to four lane freeway (interstate standards)
      - Existing four-lane undivided to four-lane freeway (interstate standards)
      - Existing four-lane divided to four-lane freeway (interstate standards)
- Connecting Texas to the Future
  - The Ports-to-Plains Alliance urges TxDOT to consider adding Future Technologies to this Chapter