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Laredo: The Port of Choice by J. Michael Patrick

Following a decade of an unprecedented 30 percent growth per year, U.S.-Mexico trade declined 5.9 percent in 2001. Trade between the two countries is showing signs of turning around however—declining only 0.3 percent in 2002 and growing 4.9 percent in 2003 year-to-date in 2003 (Chart 1). Contributing to the drop in U.S.-Mexico trade have been the sluggish U.S. and Mexican economies, a decline in U.S. industrial production, soft U.S. import demand, and a slowdown in Mexico's maquiladora industry production.

With over 80 percent of Mexico's exports destined for the U.S. market, the slowdown in the U.S. economy has had adverse effects on the Mexican economy, reducing output and employment. Mexico's leading export sector, the maquiladora industry, saw its exports to the U.S. decline roughly 20 percent in 2002, resulting in worker layoffs. With modest to moderate growth forecast for the U.S. and Mexican economies in 2003-2005, U.S.-Mexico trade levels are not expected to return to their peak 2000 levels until 2005-2006.

Notwithstanding the downturn in U.S.-Mexico trade in 2001 and 2002, Laredo remains the port of choice for trade between the two countries. In 2002, the Laredo port of entry accounted for 41.1 percent of all U.S.-Mexico trade, handling more than twice the amount (\$79.4 billion) of its nearest competitor, El Paso (\$38.6 billion) (Table 1).

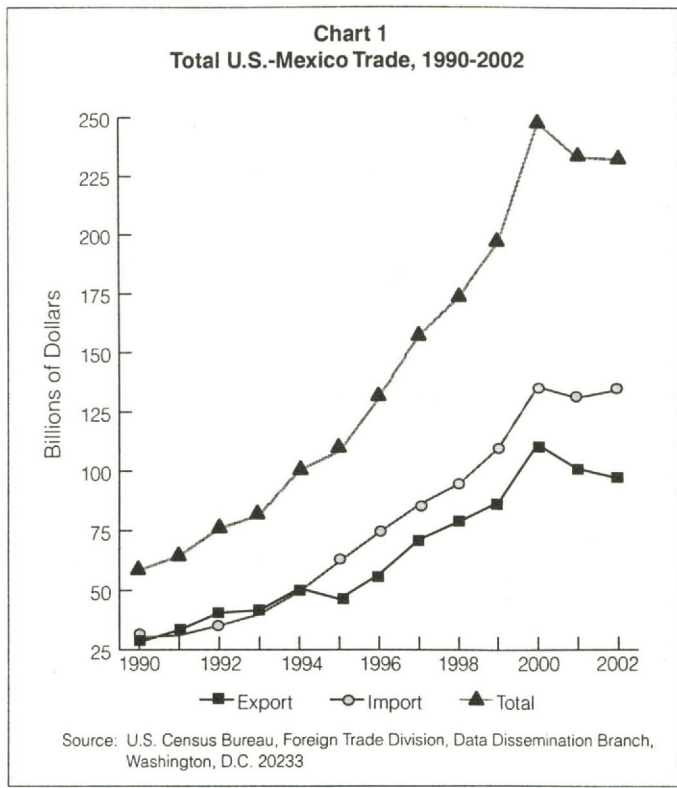


Table 1
Total Imports and Exports
In Billions of U.S. Dollars
2001 vs. 2002

	2001	2002
Laredo	79.8	79.4
El Paso	38.3	38.6
Otay Mesa Station	19.5	20.4
Hidalgo	12.4	12.7
Nogales	12.5	10.8
Brownsville	11.0	10.4
Calexico-East	7.3	8.4
Eagle Pass	6.7	6.1
Del Rio	2.4	2.7

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

In addition to being the leading U.S.-Mexico border port of entry, Laredo is the port of choice for Mexico's maquiladora industry. The industry accounts for roughly 50 percent of Mexico's

exports and 40 percent of its imports. The maquiladora industry is Mexico's leading employment generator and foreign exchange earner. In 2002, roughly 60 percent of Mexico's trade with the U.S. involved maquila industry-related exports and imports. Laredo was the port of choice for maquila products, materials, and supplies in 2002, handling 42.9 percent of total maquila shipments, including transportation equipment (73.7 percent), textile and apparel products (31.6 percent), and electric and electronic products (25.8 percent).

The importance of maquiladora industry to the Laredo port of entry can be seen in the numbers. Transportation equipment, electric and electronics and machinery and tools account for roughly 90.0 percent of the top ten product categories moving through the Laredo port of entry (See Table 2 on back page). These product categories, which account for over 80 percent of Mexico's maquiladora industry output, have experienced production slowdowns since 1996. During the same period, growth

Continued on Back Page

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Dr. Ray M. Keck, III
President, Texas A&M International University

Dr. J. Michael Patrick
Director, Texas Center

Baldomero G. Garcia
Associate Director, Texas Center

Leo Lozano
Database Specialist, Texas Center

S. Saul Solis
Data & Information Specialist, Texas Center

Eleni Athanatou
Student Research Assistant, Texas Center

Further information may be obtained by calling:
TEL. (956) 326-2546
FAX (956) 326-2544

or by writing to the addresses below:

E-mail: texascenter@tamui.edu
Texas A&M International University
Texas Center
5201 University Boulevard
Laredo, TX 78041-1900

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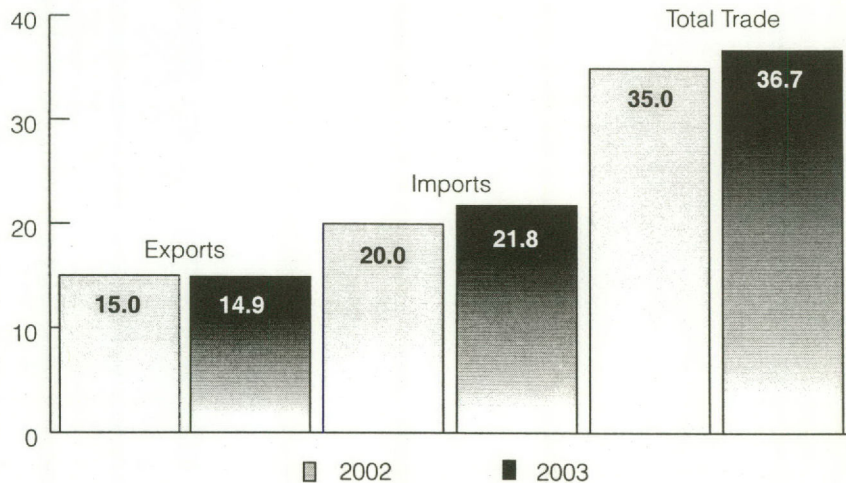
Note from the Director

Indicators of border business activity for February 2003 year-to-date (YTD) demonstrated eleven indicators increased and eleven decreased. 2003 YTD comparisons to 2002 reported for the border are listed below:

- Pedestrian bridge crossings into Mexico were down 4.8 percent.
- Pedestrian bridge crossings into Texas were down 5.0 percent.
- Vehicle bridge crossings into Mexico fell 4.4 percent.
- Vehicle bridge crossings into Texas fell 4.9 percent.
- Truck bridge crossings into Mexico lost 6.1 percent.
- Truck bridge crossings into Texas lost 2.0 percent.
- Rail car bridge crossings into Mexico went up 4.7 percent.
- Rail car bridge crossings into Texas went up 4.5 percent.
- Revenues collected by U.S. Customs increased 26.8 percent.
- Revenues collected by U.S. bridge operators registered a gain of 2.7 percent.
- Tourist Visas issued for entry into Mexico were down 2.1 percent.
- Total employment was up 4.2 percent, with 19,493 jobs gained. The average unemployment rate for the border in February 2003 was 10.0 percent.
- Total building permits issued fell 18.9 percent.
- Total building permit values decreased 17.9 percent.
- Power Connections in service for residential were up 2.6 percent, commercial were up 3.5 percent and industrial were up 22.8 percent.
- Air passenger arrivals were up 1.2 percent, and departures were up 1.2 percent.
- Total cargo for the Port of Brownsville decreased 16.5 percent.
- Inbound cargo for the Port of Corpus Christit went up 9.1 percent, and outbound cargo went down 2.0 percent.

U.S.-Mexico Trade at a Glance

February 2003 Year-to-Date
(In Billions of U.S.\$)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division, Data Dissemination Branch

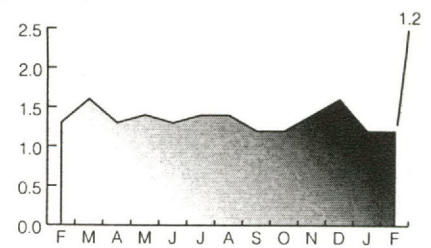
Disclaimer: Please note that the data contained in this and all issues of the *Border Business Indicators* is collected from different government agencies and private sources. Readers should note that different data-collecting agencies use dissimilar, often conflicting, techniques in collecting and compiling the information they publish. Because of this lack of uniformity, comparing different data could result in erroneous conclusions. While we are most grateful to our sources for their cooperation, we cannot assume responsibility for the comparability of the data.

Pedestrian Bridge Crossings from Texas to Mexico

City	Feb 03	%Share	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg
			%Chg					
Brownsville	187,952	15.6	-7.5		408,249	377,374	15.4	-7.6
Del Rio	3,776	0.3	3.2		7,467	8,145	0.3	9.1
Eagle Pass	42,540	3.5	-9.5		94,296	86,286	3.5	-8.5
El Paso	412,410	34.2	-3.2		879,027	854,667	34.9	-2.8
Harlingen	49	0.0	2.1		106	93	0.0	-12.3
Laredo	294,520	24.5	-6.7		635,207	610,875	24.9	-3.8
McAllen-Hidalgo	97,358	8.1	-5.3		204,893	192,965	7.9	-5.8
Progreso	153,415	12.7	-8.1		320,208	296,171	12.1	-7.5
Rio Grande	382	0.0	-31.0		904	783	0.0	-13.4
Roma	11,729	1.0	-5.2		25,192	24,230	1.0	-3.8
Total	1,204,131	100.0	-5.8		2,575,549	2,451,589	100.0	-4.8

Source: U.S. bridge operators in cited cities

Pedestrians into Mexico All Cited Cities
Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Down 5.8%
(In Millions)

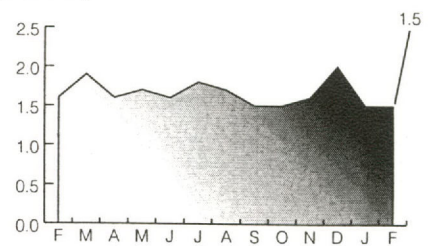


Pedestrian Bridge Crossings from Mexico to Texas

City	Feb 03	%Share	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg
			%Chg					
Brownsville	207,803	14.3	-10.1		470,381	425,380	14.2	-9.6
Del Rio	6,159	0.4	5.4		12,738	12,897	0.4	1.2
Eagle Pass	53,700	3.7	-8.5		120,046	110,722	3.7	-7.8
El Paso	563,139	38.6	-5.3		1,209,997	1,166,326	39.0	-3.6
Laredo	326,244	22.4	-6.3		712,906	683,390	22.9	-4.1
McAllen-Hidalgo	126,678	8.7	-3.7		264,482	253,017	8.5	-4.3
Presidio	2,293	0.2	23.0		4,044	4,804	0.2	18.8
Progreso	156,018	10.7	-6.2		318,749	299,305	10.0	-6.1
Rio Grande	1,374	0.1	-9.7		2,812	2,730	0.1	-2.9
Roma	14,402	1.0	-2.7		30,624	29,947	1.0	-2.2
Total	1,457,810	100.0	-6.2		3,146,779	2,988,518	100.0	-5.0

Source: Oficina de Caminos y Puentes Federales, Mexico

Pedestrians into Texas All Cited Cities
Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Down 6.2%
(In Millions)

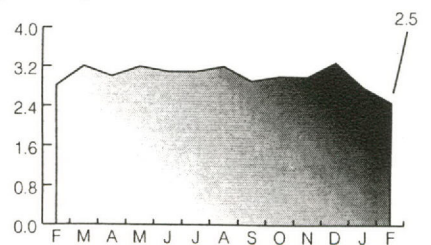


Vehicle Bridge Crossings from Texas to Mexico

City	Feb 03	%Share	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg
			%Chg					
Brownsville	528,092	20.7	-6.5		1,151,737	1,099,496	20.5	-4.5
Del Rio	140,806	5.5	-10.9		316,787	295,965	5.5	-6.6
Eagle Pass	245,509	9.6	-5.9		526,146	510,263	9.5	-3.0
El Paso	299,911	11.8	-8.0		659,367	674,747	12.6	2.3
Harlingen	49,264	1.9	-7.0		105,171	100,688	1.9	-4.3
Laredo	497,527	19.5	-6.2		1,079,818	1,035,294	19.3	-4.1
McAllen-Hidalgo	426,405	16.7	-11.8		980,853	893,848	16.7	-8.9
Pharr	131,043	5.1	-7.2		284,502	274,075	5.1	-3.7
Progreso	93,320	3.7	-5.5		196,225	188,013	3.5	-4.2
Rio Grande	47,407	1.9	-11.7		107,567	98,305	1.8	-8.6
Roma	88,233	3.5	-7.0		190,069	181,639	3.4	-4.4
Total	2,547,517	100.0	-7.9		5,598,242	5,352,333	100.0	-4.4

Source: U.S. bridge operators in cited cities

Vehicles into Mexico All Cited Cities
Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Down 7.9%
(In Millions)

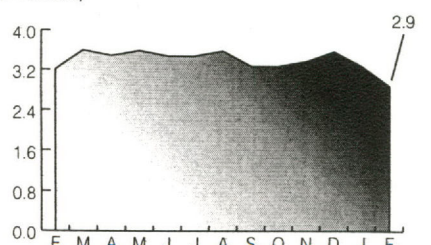


Vehicle Bridge Crossings from Mexico to Texas

City	Feb 03	%Share	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg
			%Chg					
Brownsville	525,523	18.0	-7.2		1,133,734	1,104,654	17.7	-2.6
Del Rio	140,145	4.8	-12.5		327,338	300,545	4.8	-8.2
Eagle Pass	271,281	9.3	0.5		554,719	553,088	8.9	-0.3
El Paso	539,640	18.4	-10.3		1,254,006	1,202,433	19.3	-4.1
Harlingen	57,588	2.0	-15.0		139,135	119,776	1.9	-13.9
Laredo	522,042	17.8	-6.7		1,176,991	1,123,578	18.0	-4.5
McAllen-Hidalgo	389,869	13.3	-11.5		913,217	840,045	13.5	-8.0
Pharr	194,214	6.6	-4.8		412,007	393,389	6.3	-4.5
Presidio	50,301	1.7	-12.9		120,597	108,726	1.7	-9.8
Progreso	92,757	3.2	-9.3		206,183	188,690	3.0	-8.5
Rio Grande	53,879	1.8	-4.1		116,267	111,612	1.8	-4.0
Roma	89,621	3.1	-7.7		199,678	189,053	3.0	-5.3
Total	2,926,860	100.0	-8.0		6,553,872	6,235,589	100.0	-4.9

Source: Oficina de Caminos y Puentes Federales, Mexico

Vehicles into Texas All Cited Cities
Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Down 8.0%
(In Millions)

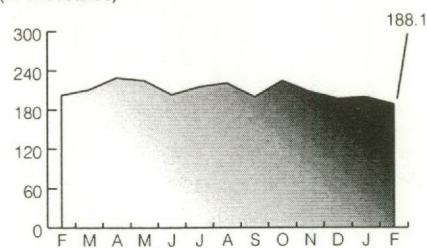


Truck Bridge Crossings from Texas to Mexico

City	Feb 03	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	YTD	
		%Share	%Chg			%Share	%Chg
Brownsville	15,725	8.4	-5.3	34,584	32,933	8.5	-4.8
Del Rio	6,053	3.2	-1.3	12,436	12,509	3.2	0.6
Eagle Pass	6,810	3.6	-1.5	14,394	13,911	3.6	-3.4
El Paso	21,399	11.4	-21.8	54,892	44,928	11.6	-18.2
Harlingen	2,887	1.5	14.1	5,083	5,600	1.4	10.2
Laredo	105,528	56.1	-7.1	233,055	219,605	56.6	-5.8
McAllen-Hidalgo	1,947	1.0	-7.5	4,540	3,982	1.0	-12.3
Pharr	23,817	12.7	8.1	43,755	45,563	11.7	4.1
Progreso	1,640	0.9	-21.7	4,390	3,698	1.0	-15.8
Rio Grande	1,591	0.8	-14.8	3,864	3,551	0.9	-8.1
Roma	747	0.4	-27.6	2,008	1,519	0.4	-24.4
Total	188,144	100.0	-7.0	413,001	387,799	100.0	-6.1

Source: U.S. bridge operators in cited cities
 Note: Figures include loaded and empty trucks. El Paso figures do not include Bridge of the Americas.

Trucks into Mexico All Cited Cities
 Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Down 7.0%
 (In Thousands)

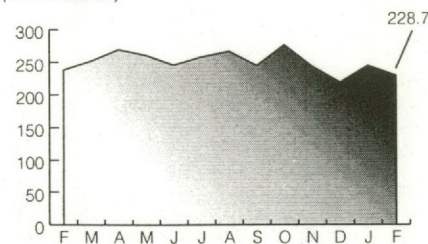


Truck Bridge Crossings from Mexico to Texas

City	Feb 03	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	YTD	
		%Share	%Chg			%Share	%Chg
Brownsville	14,636	6.4	-8.8	32,535	30,756	6.5	-5.5
Del Rio	5,730	2.5	3.6	11,016	11,744	2.5	6.6
Eagle Pass	6,811	3.0	-2.2	14,312	13,967	3.0	-2.4
El Paso	53,807	23.5	-5.4	114,971	109,449	23.1	-4.8
Harlingen	3,053	1.3	-18.4	8,029	6,215	1.3	-22.6
Laredo	107,787	47.1	-4.3	228,345	225,560	47.7	-1.2
Pharr	32,148	14.1	5.9	61,789	65,240	13.8	5.6
Presidio	377	0.2	-51.0	1,511	882	0.2	-41.6
Progreso	1,433	0.6	-19.9	3,916	3,067	0.6	-21.7
Rio Grande	2,303	1.0	9.7	4,374	4,890	1.0	11.8
Roma	577	0.3	-39.6	1,799	1,085	0.2	-39.7
Falcon Heights	33	0.0	50.0	60	56	0.0	-6.7
Total	228,695	100.0	-3.8	482,657	472,911	100.0	-2.0

Source: South Texas Customs Management Center, Laredo & U.S. Customs Office of Public Affairs, El Paso
 Note: Figures include loaded and empty trucks.

Trucks into Texas All Cited Cities
 Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Down 3.8%
 (In Thousands)

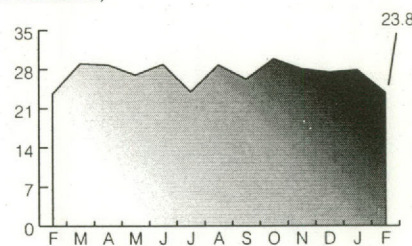


Rail Car Crossings from Texas to Mexico

City	Feb 03	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	YTD	
		%Share	%Chg			%Share	%Chg
Brownsville	2,832	11.9	-16.8	8,179	6,894	13.3	-15.7
Eagle Pass	5,299	22.2	-21.1	12,939	11,016	21.3	-14.9
El Paso	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Laredo	15,699	65.9	16.2	28,223	33,771	65.3	19.7
Total	23,830	100.0	0.8	49,341	51,681	100.0	4.7

Source: Railroad companies in cited cities
 Note: Figures for El Paso are not available.

Rail Cars into Mexico All Cited Cities
 Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Up 0.8%
 (In Thousands)

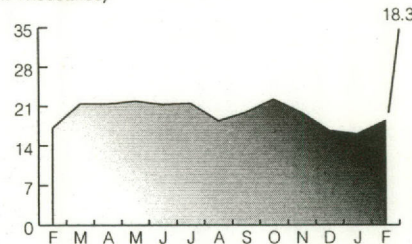


Rail Car Crossings from Mexico to Texas

City	Feb 03	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	YTD	
		%Share	%Chg			%Share	%Chg
Brownsville	1,185	6.5	207.8	860	2,095	6.1	143.6
Eagle Pass	1,106	6.1	-42.9	4,070	2,512	7.3	-38.3
El Paso	1,613	8.8	-39.2	3,742	2,823	8.2	-24.6
Laredo	14,347	78.6	18.7	24,156	26,867	78.3	11.2
Total	18,251	100.0	7.0	32,828	34,297	100.0	4.5

Source: Railroad companies in cited cities & U.S. Customs Office of Public Affairs, El Paso

Rail Cars into Texas All Cited Cities
 Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Up 7.0%
 (In Thousands)

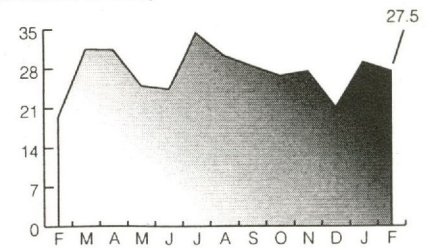


Revenues Collected by U.S. Customs District of Laredo (in U.S.\$)

City	Feb 03	%Share	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	YTD %Chg
			%Chg					
Brownsville	1,533,215	5.6	-14.1		4,937,026	3,042,038	5.4	-38.4
Del Rio	121,289	0.4	-26.8		319,391	259,942	0.5	-18.6
Eagle Pass	1,939,110	7.1	71.5		4,580,939	6,459,840	11.4	41.0
McAllen-Hidalgo	3,335,790	12.1	9.5		6,440,412	10,119,198	17.9	57.1
Laredo	20,459,492	74.5	54.7		28,164,639	36,550,378	64.6	29.8
Progreso	15,428	0.1	-19.4		37,280	32,200	0.1	-13.6
Rio Grande	42,927	0.2	-5.1		100,602	84,716	0.1	-15.8
Roma	11,399	0.0	-45.5		40,091	21,440	0.0	-46.5
Total	27,458,650	100.0	41.3		44,620,380	56,569,750	100.0	26.8

Source: South Texas Customs Management Center, Laredo
 Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Customs Revenues for the District of Laredo
 Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Up 41.3%
 (In Millions of U.S.\$)

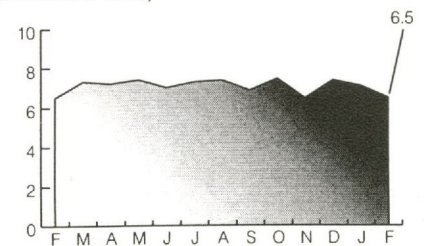


Revenues Collected by U.S. Bridge Operators (in U.S.\$)

City	Feb 03	%Share	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	YTD %Chg
			%Chg					
Brownsville	1,004,535	15.6	10.3		1,866,591	2,090,751	15.5	12.0
Del Rio	283,341	4.4	-10.8		637,856	594,282	4.4	-6.8
Eagle Pass	539,517	8.4	4.7		1,039,985	1,119,808	8.3	7.7
El Paso	736,175	11.4	-5.5		1,598,401	1,581,394	11.7	-1.1
Harlingen	134,475	2.1	15.6		230,838	269,763	2.0	16.9
Laredo	2,311,958	35.8	-4.6		4,957,535	4,893,521	36.2	-1.3
McAllen-Hidalgo	790,199	12.2	2.4		1,567,540	1,649,530	12.2	5.2
Pharr	459,369	7.1	10.3		827,002	908,964	6.7	9.9
Roma	192,657	3.0	-7.9		420,902	396,290	2.9	-5.8
Total	6,452,226	100.0	-0.1		13,146,648	13,504,302	100.0	2.7

Source: U.S. bridge operators in cited cities
 Note: El Paso figures do not include Bridge of the Americas (Toll-free). Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Bridge Revenues All Cited Cities
 Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Down 0.1%
 (In Millions of U.S.\$)

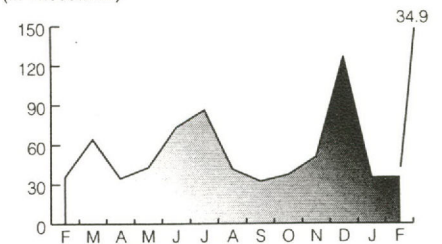


Tourist Visas Issued for Entry into Mexico

City	Feb 03	%Share	02 vs. 03		YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	YTD %Chg
			%Chg					
Del Rio	504	1.4	8.9		995	1,026	1.5	3.1
El Paso	4,614	13.2	6.9		9,241	9,348	13.4	1.2
McAllen-Hidalgo	9,926	28.4	-5.8		19,819	18,125	26.0	-8.5
Brownsville	4,309	12.3	-3.1		8,837	8,722	12.5	-1.3
Laredo	13,627	39.0	-1.6		28,396	28,714	41.2	1.1
Eagle Pass	1,937	5.5	-2.0		3,794	3,679	5.3	-3.0
Total	34,917	100.0	-1.9		71,082	69,614	100.0	-2.1

Source: Instituto Nacional de Migracion, Mexico

Tourist Visas Issued All Cited Cities
 Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Down 1.9%
 (In Thousands)



Employment & Unemployment Rates (Texas Border)

City	Employed		%Unemp	Emp Avg		02 vs. 03 Emp %Chg	Gain/Loss YTD
	Feb 03	Feb 03		YTD 02	YTD 03		
Brownsville	47,535	6,413	11.9	45,183	47,588	5.3	2,405
Del Rio	15,445	1,415	8.4	14,426	15,425	6.9	999
Eagle Pass	8,200	3,355	29.0	8,286	8,186	-1.2	-100
El Paso	242,849	24,160	9.0	233,394	242,850	4.1	9,456
Harlingen	27,308	2,181	7.4	25,958	27,339	5.3	1,381
Laredo	70,339	5,913	7.8	67,738	70,577	4.2	2,840
McAllen	49,853	5,934	10.6	48,177	49,781	3.3	1,604
Pharr	14,866	3,165	17.6	14,364	14,844	3.3	481
Rio Grande	5,440	1,291	19.2	4,979	5,408	8.6	429
Total	481,835	53,827	10.0	462,503	481,996	4.2	19,493
Texas Unemployment Rate							6.6
U.S. Unemployment Rate							5.8

Source: Texas Workforce Commission
 Note: Figures are preliminary and subject to revision. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

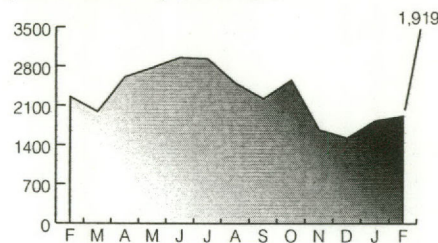
Percent of Unemployment All Cited Cities Combined
 Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Up 4.0%
 (In Percent)



Building Permits

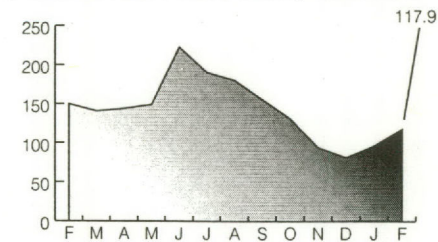
Number City	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		YTD		YTD	
	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg		
Brownsville	314	16.4	6.1	643	587	15.6	-8.7	
Del Rio	91	4.7	160.0	94	167	4.5	77.7	
Eagle Pass	41	2.1	2.5	77	85	2.3	10.4	
El Paso	968	50.4	22.4	1,580	1,937	51.6	22.6	
Harlingen	82	4.3	-4.7	162	132	3.5	-18.5	
Laredo	276	14.4	-66.4	1,605	547	14.6	-65.9	
McAllen	147	7.7	-20.5	465	296	7.9	-36.3	
Total	1,919	100.0	-14.9	4,626	3,751	100.0	-18.9	

Building Permits All Cited Cities
Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003
(Number of Permits): Down 14.9%



Dollar Value City	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		YTD		YTD	
	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg		
Brownsville	31,821,646	27.0	117.7	34,694,569	48,571,344	22.7	40.0	
Del Rio	1,524,107	1.3	-91.8	28,188,651	6,204,020	2.9	-78.0	
Eagle Pass	3,350,209	2.8	31.7	3,340,185	5,229,879	2.4	56.6	
El Paso	28,034,781	23.8	-52.7	88,725,310	66,498,602	31.0	-25.1	
Harlingen	5,362,317	4.5	39.9	8,631,715	7,424,735	3.5	-14.0	
Laredo	27,356,862	23.2	-9.4	58,289,822	46,191,547	21.6	-20.8	
McAllen	20,442,213	17.3	-0.5	39,169,241	34,192,641	16.0	-12.7	
Total	117,892,136	100.0	-21.2	261,039,493	214,312,768	100.0	-17.9	

(Value of Permits In Millions of U.S.\$): Down 21.2%

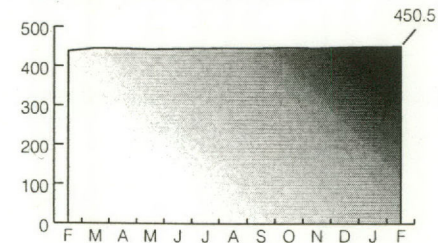


Source: Permit Departments in cited cities
Note: Dollar value totals may not add up due to rounding.

Power Connections (in Service)

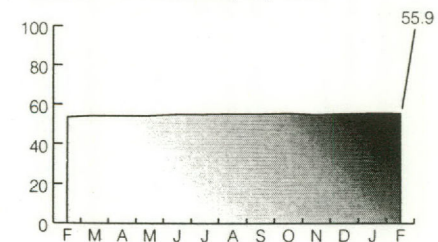
Residential City	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		Average		YTD	
	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg		
Brownsville	33,054	7.3	3.7	31,907	33,228	7.4	4.1	
Del Rio	14,339	3.2	6.2	13,776	14,326	3.2	4.0	
Eagle Pass	10,096	2.2	1.7	9,922	10,102	2.2	1.8	
El Paso	283,000	62.8	2.1	276,801	282,678	62.8	2.1	
Harlingen	22,195	4.9	8.7	21,311	22,229	4.9	4.3	
Laredo	53,378	11.8	5.9	51,181	53,369	11.8	4.3	
McAllen	34,417	7.6	0.0	34,195	34,466	7.7	0.8	
Total	450,479	100.0	2.9	439,092	450,396	100.0	2.6	

Power Connections All Cited Cities
Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003
(Residential - In Thousands): Up 2.9%



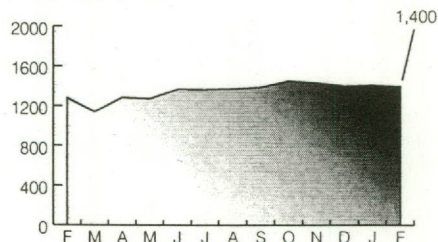
Commercial City	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		Average		YTD	
	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg		
Brownsville	4,316	7.7	4.1	4,150	4,368	7.8	5.3	
Del Rio	2,288	4.1	14.6	2,052	2,286	4.1	11.4	
Eagle Pass	1,585	2.8	6.2	1,540	1,581	2.8	2.7	
El Paso	29,335	52.5	2.4	28,609	29,306	52.4	2.4	
Harlingen	3,857	6.9	8.4	3,703	3,883	6.9	4.9	
Laredo	8,436	15.1	9.9	7,984	8,442	15.1	5.7	
McAllen	6,110	10.9	2.2	6,016	6,104	10.9	1.5	
Total	55,927	100.0	4.6	54,052	55,969	100.0	3.5	

(Commercial - In Thousands): Up 4.6%



Industrial City	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		Average		YTD	
	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg		
Brownsville	754	53.9	21.4	622	753	53.6	21.2	
Del Rio	43	3.1	-4.4	35	43	3.1	24.6	
Eagle Pass	29	2.1	-12.1	25	31	2.2	22.0	
El Paso	142	10.1	2.2	140	142	10.1	1.4	
Harlingen	105	7.5	-6.3	93	108	7.7	16.8	
Laredo	210	15.0	7.1	150	210	14.9	40.5	
McAllen	117	8.4	-9.3	82	119	8.5	46.0	
Total	1,400	100.0	9.8	1,144	1,405	100.0	22.8	

(Industrial): Up 9.8%



Source: American Electric Power Company, Brownsville Public Utilities Board & El Paso Electric Company
Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

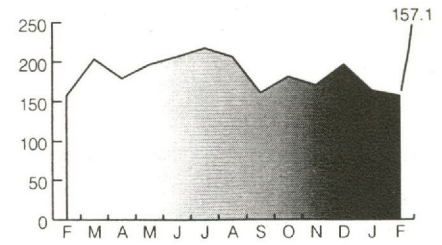
Air Passenger Service Activity (Number of Passengers)

City	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		YTD		YTD	
	Feb 03	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg	
Brownsville	4,603	2.9	-29.8	11,650	9,594	3.0	-17.6	
El Paso	92,258	58.7	-1.4	193,416	192,148	59.8	-0.7	
Harlingen	33,178	21.1	13.6	55,996	63,995	19.9	14.3	
Laredo	5,145	3.3	1.2	10,605	11,179	3.5	5.4	
McAllen	21,873	13.9	-3.0	45,545	44,177	13.8	-3.0	
Total	157,057	100.0	0.06	317,212	321,093	100.0	1.2	

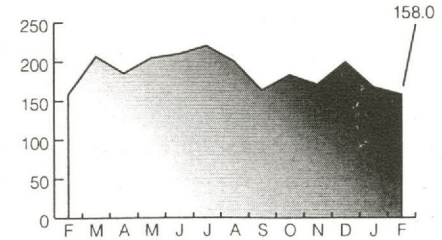
City	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		YTD		YTD	
	Feb 03	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg	
Brownsville	4,451	2.8	-29.2	11,416	9,049	2.8	-20.7	
El Paso	93,994	59.5	-1.2	198,192	196,980	60.5	-0.6	
Harlingen	33,075	20.9	12.8	56,625	64,386	19.8	13.7	
Laredo	5,148	3.3	-1.1	10,990	11,383	3.5	3.6	
McAllen	21,381	13.5	-3.9	44,531	43,899	13.5	-1.4	
Total	158,049	100.0	-0.1	321,754	325,697	100.0	1.2	

Source: Airports in cited cities

Air Passenger Activity All Cited Cities
Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003
(Arrivals – In Thousands): Up 0.06%



(Departures – In Thousands): Down 0.1%



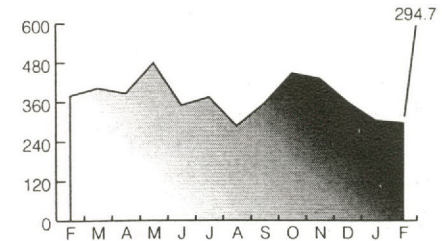
Port of Brownsville (Total Cargo in Metric Tons)

Cargo Type	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		YTD		YTD	
	Feb 03	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg	
Break Bulk	188,200	63.9	-13.8	354,729	334,144	55.9	-5.8	
Containers	0	0.0	-0.0	2,020	0	0.0	-100.0	
Grain Bulk	0	0.0	0.0	16,918	17,406	2.9	2.9	
Liquid	623	0.2	-90.7	8,826	3,871	0.6	-56.1	
Machinery	1,297	0.4	0.0	627	2,782	0.5	343.7	
Petroleum	104,542	35.5	-32.3	332,748	239,262	40.0	-28.1	
Total	294,662	100.0	-22.3	715,868	597,465	100.0	-16.5	

Source: Port of Brownsville

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Port of Brownsville Total Cargo
Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003: Down 22.3%
(In Thousands of Metric Tons)



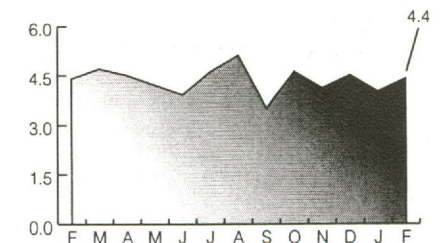
Port of Corpus Christi (Cargo in U.S. Tons)

Cargo Type	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		YTD		YTD	
	Feb 03	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg	
Break Bulk	9,320	0.2	223.4	4,012	12,980	0.2	223.5	
Chemical	4,883	0.1	-31.4	18,970	14,818	0.2	-21.9	
Dry Bulk	308,532	7.0	-34.4	798,383	616,699	7.4	-22.8	
Grain Bulk	6,381	0.1	N/A	0	9,581	0.1	N/A	
Liquid	0	0.0	-100.0	22,086	29,103	0.3	31.8	
Petroleum	4,093,306	92.6	4.1	6,847,688	7,706,260	91.9	12.5	
Total	4,422,422	100.0	-0.2	7,691,139	8,389,443	100.0	9.1	

Source: Port of Corpus Christi

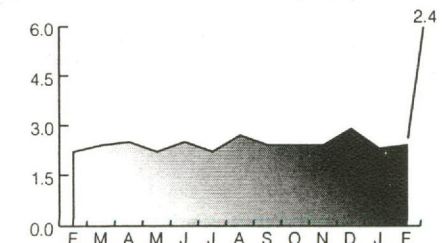
Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Port of Corpus Christi Cargo
Feb. 2002 vs. Feb. 2003
(Inbound – In Millions of U.S. Tons): Down 0.2%



Cargo Type	Feb 03		02 vs. 03		YTD		YTD	
	Feb 03	%Share	%Chg	YTD 02	YTD 03	%Share	%Chg	
Break Bulk	72,225	3.0	57048.9	11,163	98,789	2.1	784.9	
Chemical	112,652	4.7	5.3	222,275	287,010	6.0	29.1	
Dry Bulk	338,447	14.0	82.0	509,126	503,873	10.6	-1.0	
Grain Bulk	64,818	2.7	-69.9	389,885	114,202	2.4	-70.7	
Liquid	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	
Petroleum	1,826,183	75.6	7.9	3,730,964	3,760,422	78.9	0.8	
Total	2,414,325	100.0	9.7	4,863,414	4,764,297	100.0	-2.0	

(Outbound – In Millions of U.S. Tons): Up 9.7%



Continued from Front Page

in truck and rail crossings, and air cargo gross landed weight at the Laredo port of entry also exhibited a general decline.

In addition to being the maquiladora industry's port of choice, Laredo is a leading port for U.S. agricultural exports to Mexico, accounting for nearly 80 percent of U.S. shipments of animal feed and animal and vegetable fats and oils—crude and processed—to Mexico in 2002. The U.S. Department of Commerce uses a 64 product category format (SITC) to classify products moving across U.S. borders. When it comes to U.S.-Mexico trade, Laredo was the number one port of entry for 40 of the 64 categories in terms of total dollar value in 2002. The top ten product categories moving through the Laredo Port in 2001 and 2002 are listed in Table 2.

With the continued growth in U.S.-Mexico trade moving through the Laredo port of entry likely in future years, there are mounting concerns over the adequacy of the port facilities to handle the increase, particularly in terms of the deployment of U.S. Customs personnel. Local officials are working closely with the U.S. Customs to minimize this problem. The placement of federally mandated commercial truck inspection facilities on the border is another issue that will likely affect the flow of trade through the Laredo port in the future. City officials and business sector representatives are working with federal and state officials to resolve this issue.

Laredo is the port of choice for the U.S.-Mexico trade not only because of its strategic location, but, more importantly, because

of the extensive expertise in international trade found in the community's transportation, warehousing, business services and financial sectors.

Table 2
Top Ten Product Categories
Processed at the Port of Laredo
2001 & 2002
(In Billions of Dollars)

Product	Total Value	
	2001	2002
Road Vehicles	26.0	25.3
Electrical Machinery	7.2	7.5
Telecommunications Equipment	3.0	3.0
Office Machinery	5.2	4.2
Apparel & Clothing	2.9	2.7
General Industrial Machinery & Equipment	3.6	3.7
Power Generating Machinery & Equipment	3.9	4.4
Miscellaneous Manufactured Products	2.0	2.6
Professional, Scientific & Controlling Devices	1.3	1.2
Manufacturers of Metal	1.9	2.0
	57.0	56.6

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

J. Michael Patrick is Professor of Economics in the College of Business Administration and Director of the Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development at Texas A&M International University, Laredo, Texas.

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