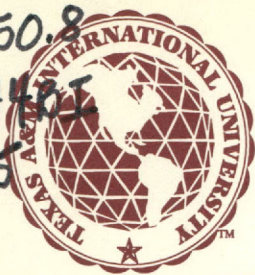


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Border Business Indicators

Government Publications
Texas State Documents

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Institute for International Trade
Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

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Note from the Director

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Indicators of border business activity for the month of March were up. All twenty-two monthly indicators were up when compared to February. In addition, for the year-to-date (YTD) figures, seventeen indicators were up and five were down. Selected YTD comparisons to 1997 reported by border cities include the following:

- Southbound pedestrian crossings into Mexico were up 3.4 percent. Eagle Pass rose 40.2 percent, Laredo increased 1.4 percent, Brownsville was up 1.6 percent and El Paso gained 0.1 percent.
- Northbound pedestrian crossings into Texas were up 11.3 percent. Eagle Pass rose 21.7 percent, Brownsville was up 17.8 percent, El Paso increased 10.4 percent and Laredo gained 5.1 percent.
- Southbound vehicle bridge crossings were up 6.6 percent. Pharr rose 45.7 percent, El Paso increased 8.0 percent, Eagle Pass gained 1.3 percent and McAllen-Hidalgo was up 2.6 percent.
- Northbound vehicle bridge crossings into Texas were up 2.7 percent with Eagle Pass increasing 6.8 percent and El Paso gaining 2.9 percent, Laredo was up 5.3 percent and McAllen-Hidalgo posted an increase of 2.1 percent YTD.
- Southbound truck shipments into Mexico were up 28.5 percent. Pharr increased 95.2 percent, Laredo rose 30.5 percent and Brownsville gained 35.8 percent.
- Northbound truck shipments into Texas were up 12.8 percent with Pharr increasing 9.5 percent, Eagle Pass gained 22.6 percent and Laredo posted a 17.5 percent increase YTD.
- Southbound shipments by rail were up 11.9 percent.
- Northbound shipments by rail were down 1.4 percent.
- Revenues collected by U.S. Customs were down 12.3 percent YTD but revenues collected by U.S. Bridge operators were up 14.1 percent.
- Building permits issued were up 12.6 percent. Eagle Pass gained 19.1 percent, Laredo was up 23.3 percent, Brownsville rose 27.3 percent and El Paso increased 11.2 percent.
- Building permit values were down with a YTD decrease of 35.1 percent. Brownsville decreased 54.3 percent, Harlingen was down 37.1 percent, McAllen fell 28.6 percent and El Paso reported a 13.8 percent decrease.
- Total employment was up with 5,644 jobs gained YTD. The average unemployment rate in March 1998 was 10.4 percent.

The current and back issues of the Border Business Indicators can be found at the home page of the Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development at

<http://www.tamui.edu/coba/txcntr/>

IIT Technical Reports Available

- IIT Technical Report No. 1: NAFTA Rules of Origin: An Explanation (March 1994)
IIT Technical Report No. 2: The Impact of NAFTA on U.S.-Mexico Commercial and Border Zones and the Potential Consequences to the Border (February 1994)
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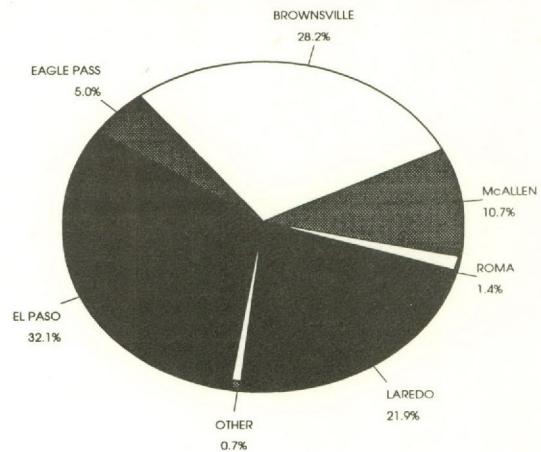
Pedestrian Bridge-Crossings into Mexico

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	264,611	258,943	336,892	362,070	846,699	860,446	1.6
DEL RIO	5,741	4,590	6,716	6,133	14,869	17,047	14.6
EAGLE PASS	56,757	53,673	59,670	48,446	121,302	170,100	40.2
EL PASO	390,094	339,061	382,645	424,432	1,111,118	1,111,800	0.1
HARLINGEN	125	93	77	100	273	295	8.1
LAREDO	365,367	320,448	261,867	359,505	935,028	947,682	1.4
McALLEN-HIDALGO	131,678	125,387	127,595	133,146	350,863	384,660	9.6
PROGRESO	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RIO GRANDE	946	1,116	802	1,244	3,173	2,864	-9.7
ROMA	16,383	14,530	16,831	16,597	43,656	47,744	9.4
TOTAL	1,231,702	1,117,841	1,193,095	1,351,673	3,426,981	3,542,638	3.4

Source: Data provided by U.S. bridge operators in cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

Southbound pedestrian bridge crossings into Mexico for March was up 6.7 percent compared to February. Del Rio increased 46.3 percent, Brownsville rose 30.1 percent, Roma was up 15.8 percent, El Paso increased 12.9 percent, Eagle Pass grew 11.2 percent and McAllen-Hidalgo increased slightly at 1.8 percent. However, Rio Grande fell 28.1 percent, Laredo decreased 18.3 percent and Harlingen was down 17.2 percent. YTD, total southbound pedestrian crossings into Texas were up 3.4 percent. El Paso southbound pedestrian crossings, which make up 32.1 percent of all crossings in March rose 0.1 percent. Laredo, accounting for 21.9 percent of all crossings, was up 1.4 percent and Brownsville was up 1.6 percent with 28.2 percent of all crossings YTD.

% Share Pedestrians for March 1998



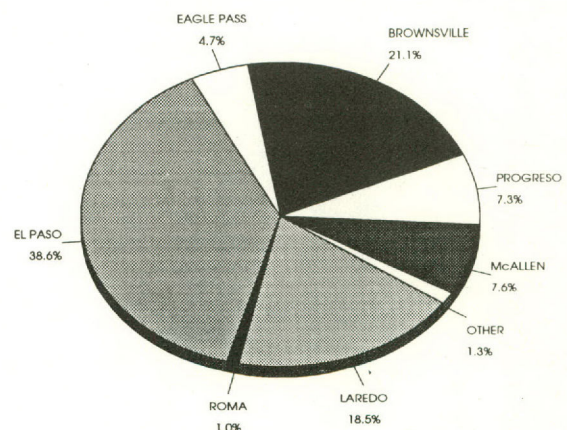
Pedestrian Bridge-Crossings into Texas

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	300,920	245,268	293,282	294,775	712,326	839,470	17.8
DEL RIO	13,065	10,212	12,159	12,963	34,719	35,436	2.1
EAGLE PASS	65,658	62,055	65,222	63,334	158,579	192,935	21.7
EL PASO	540,813	474,273	536,591	535,864	1,405,665	1,551,677	10.4
LAREDO	274,280	250,374	257,663	284,395	744,538	782,317	5.1
McALLEN-HIDALGO	104,144	105,294	105,078	117,127	325,368	314,516	-3.3
PRESIDIO	3,669	3,215	4,002	3,270	8,510	10,886	27.9
PROGRESO	94,994	93,388	101,755	78,408	224,574	290,137	29.2
RIO GRANDE	1,264	1,341	1,320	1,464	4,002	3,925	-1.9
ROMA	14,717	13,078	14,337	12,756	32,892	42,132	28.1
TOTAL	1,413,524	1,258,498	1,391,409	1,404,356	3,651,173	4,063,431	11.3

Source: Data provided by Mexico's Oficina de Caminos y Puentes and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

Northbound pedestrian crossings into Texas were up 10.6 percent in March. Presidio rose 24.5 percent, Brownsville was up 19.6 percent, Del Rio increased 19.1 percent and El Paso gained 13.1 percent. Roma rose 9.6 percent, Progreso was up 9.0 percent, Eagle Pass gained a 5.1 percent and Laredo increased 2.9 percent. However, Rio Grande decreased 1.6 percent and McAllen-Hidalgo slid 0.2 percent. YTD total northbound pedestrian crossings into Texas were up 11.3 percent. El Paso, accounting for 38.6 percent of all northbound pedestrian crossings in March, was up 10.4 percent YTD. Laredo, with 18.5 percent of all northbound crossings, was up 5.1 percent and Brownsville, with 21.1 percent of all northbound pedestrian crossings, had a 17.8 percent increase in crossings YTD.

% Share Pedestrians for March 1998



Vehicle Bridge-Crossings into Mexico

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	534,407	497,362	554,502	522,779	1,476,751	1,586,271	7.4
DEL RIO	147,721	135,232	155,485	154,193	413,302	438,438	6.1
EAGLE PASS	213,747	196,838	222,288	226,626	624,516	632,873	1.3
EL PASO	443,688	458,997	509,604	477,604	1,308,098	1,412,289	8.0
HARLINGEN	37,094	35,900	41,567	37,977	99,527	114,561	15.1
LAREDO	626,379	612,386	700,727	669,084	1,865,574	1,939,492	4.0
McALLEN-HIDALGO	421,568	389,721	447,745	434,045	1,226,655	1,259,034	2.6
PHARR	128,807	126,579	143,424	99,888	273,636	398,810	45.7
PROGRESO	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RIO GRANDE	47,771	44,994	52,244	51,858	139,237	145,009	4.1
ROMA	71,896	66,158	73,835	77,752	210,561	211,889	0.6
TOTAL	2,673,078	2,564,167	2,901,421	2,751,806	7,637,857	8,138,666	6.6

Source: Data provided by U.S. bridge operators in cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

Southbound vehicle bridge crossings into Mexico increased 13.2 percent in March from February's figures. Rio Grande increased 16.1 percent, Harlingen was up 15.8 percent, Del Rio increased 15.0 percent, McAllen-Hidalgo rose 14.9 percent, Laredo gained 14.4 percent, Pharr increased 13.3 percent, Eagle Pass was up 12.9 percent, Roma increased 11.6 percent, Brownsville gained 11.5 percent and El Paso rose 11.0 percent. YTD total southbound vehicle bridge crossings were up 6.6 percent. Laredo, with 24.2

percent of all southbound traffic in March, was up 4.0 percent YTD. Brownsville, with 19.1 percent of all southbound vehicle bridge crossings, had a 7.4 percent increase YTD. El Paso, with 17.6 percent of all southbound vehicle crossings, experienced an 8.0 percent increase YTD. McAllen-Hidalgo, accounting for 15.4 percent of all southbound vehicle crossings had a 2.6 percent increase YTD.

Vehicle Bridge-Crossings into Texas

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	500,880	443,919	537,317	517,287	1,465,884	1,482,116	1.1
DEL RIO	127,949	116,528	132,550	144,948	392,546	377,027	-4.0
EAGLE PASS	215,106	194,184	221,175	214,201	590,181	630,465	6.8
EL PASO	675,085	620,166	700,055	711,403	1,938,281	1,995,306	2.9
HARLINGEN	52,113	49,135	55,236	48,994	115,161	156,484	35.9
LAREDO	579,242	561,264	629,872	594,452	1,680,948	1,770,378	5.3
McALLEN-HIDALGO	394,906	354,633	404,014	394,709	1,129,424	1,153,553	2.1
PRESIDIO	55,533	48,072	57,526	54,413	148,607	161,131	8.4
PROGRESO	81,535	78,021	89,636	98,843	280,036	249,192	-11.0
RIO GRANDE	53,701	48,296	56,942	56,994	154,470	158,939	2.9
ROMA	77,725	72,358	79,396	85,581	246,870	229,479	-7.0
TOTAL	2,813,775	2,586,576	2,963,719	2,921,825	8,142,408	8,364,070	2.7

Source: Data provided by Mexico's Oficina de Caminos y Puentes and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

Northbound vehicle bridge crossings into Texas for March were up 14.6 percent since February. Brownsville registered a 21.0 percent increase, Presidio rose 19.7 percent, Rio Grande increased 17.9 percent, Progreso reported an increase of 14.9 percent, McAllen-Hidalgo and Eagle Pass gained 13.9 percent, Del Rio rose 13.7 percent, El Paso increased 12.9 percent, Harlingen was up 12.4

percent, Laredo increased 12.2 percent and Roma grew 9.7 percent. YTD northbound vehicle bridge crossings into Texas were up 2.7 percent. El Paso, with 23.6 percent of all crossings in March was up 2.9 percent YTD. Laredo, with 21.3 percent of all crossings, gained 5.3 percent and Brownsville with 18.1 percent of all crossings, was up 1.1 percent YTD.

Export Shipments by Trucks into Mexico —Number of Trucks

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE+	23,060	22,032	25,162	17,737	51,738	70,254	35.8
DEL RIO+	4,342	4,252	4,499	3,429	10,164	13,093	28.8
EAGLE PASS++	3,482	3,496	3,496	3,790	10,758	10,474	-2.6
EL PASO+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	N/A
HARLINGEN+	4,119	4,367	4,393	2,290	7,303	12,879	76.4
LAREDO++	57,353	58,998	66,823	45,736	140,358	183,174	30.5
McALLEN-HIDALGO+	4,166	4,139	4,735	10,192	27,268	13,040	-52.2
PHARR+	13,317	14,303	17,709	9,336	23,221	45,329	95.2
PROGRESO+	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RIO GRANDE+	2,010	1,879	2,257	1,759	4,891	6,146	25.7
ROMA+	857	778	939	731	2,098	2,574	22.7
TOTAL	112,706	114,244	130,013	95,000	277,799	356,963	28.5

Source: Data provided by U.S. bridge operators in cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

+ Includes both loaded and empty trucks.

++ Includes loaded trucks only.

+++ El Paso does not separate loaded trucks from other vehicles and therefore is not reported.

Southbound truck shipments into Mexico were up 13.8 percent in March. Pharr increased 23.8 percent, Roma rose 20.7 percent, Rio Grande was up 20.1 percent, McAllen-Hidalgo grew 14.4 percent, Brownsville gained 14.2 percent, Laredo increased 13.3 percent, Del Rio was up 5.8 percent, Harlingen grew 0.6 percent and Eagle Pass was unchanged. YTD, total southbound truck traffic had an

increase of 28.5 percent. Laredo, with 51.4 percent of all southbound shipments in March, experienced a 30.5 percent increase YTD. Brownsville, with 19.4 percent of all southbound shipments, had a 35.8 percent increase YTD. Pharr with 13.6 percent of all truck traffic, registered an increase of 95.2 percent and McAllen-Hidalgo, with 3.6 percent of all truck crossings, fell 52.2 percent.

Import Shipments by Trucks into Texas —Number of Trucks

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	8,430	9,067	9,990	8,646	27,126	27,487	1.3
DEL RIO	2,850	2,819	3,085	2,662	8,023	8,754	9.1
EAGLE PASS	3,380	3,746	4,177	3,027	9,217	11,303	22.6
FALCON	7	2	8	7	12	17	41.7
LAREDO	48,978	48,806	56,349	44,438	131,197	154,133	17.5
McALLEN-HIDALGO	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PHARR	12,173	13,579	17,778	15,586	39,763	43,530	9.5
PROGRESO	215	201	358	1,543	2,566	774	-69.8
RIO GRANDE	1,100	1,199	1,297	1,364	3,718	3,596	-3.3
ROMA	541	617	709	434	1,270	1,867	47.0
TOTAL	77,674	80,036	93,751	77,707	222,892	251,461	12.8

Source: Data provided by U.S. Customs Service, Port of Entry in cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

*Editor's Note: Figures represent loaded trucks only.

Northbound truck shipments into Texas increased 17.1 percent from February's shipments. Falcon increased 300.0 percent, Progreso gained 78.1 percent, Pharr rose 30.9 percent, Laredo was up 15.5 percent, Roma was up 14.9 percent, Eagle Pass grew 11.5 percent, Brownsville gained 10.2 percent, Del Rio rose 9.4 percent and Rio Grande increased 8.2 percent. YTD northbound truck

shipments were up 12.8 percent. Laredo, accounting for 60.1 percent of all northbound truck traffic in March had a 17.5 percent increase YTD. Pharr, with 19.0 percent of shipments, experienced a 9.5 percent increase YTD. Brownsville, with 10.7 percent of all northbound truck shipments in March, rose 1.3 percent YTD.

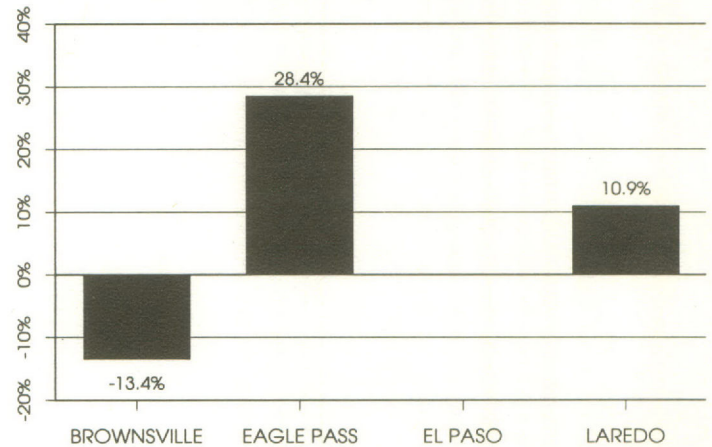
Export Shipments by Rail into Mexico —Number of Rail Cars

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	2,028	1,042	1,993	1,963	5,848	5,063	-13.4
EAGLE PASS	5,533	4,329	4,454	4,067	11,153	14,316	28.4
EL PASO	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LAREDO	12,721	13,362	14,237	13,253	36,361	40,320	10.9
TOTAL	20,282	18,733	20,684	19,283	53,362	59,699	11.9

Source: Data provided by railroad companies serving cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

Southbound rail shipments into Mexico increased 10.4 percent in March. Brownsville was up 91.3 percent, Laredo increased 6.5 percent and Eagle Pass rose 2.9 percent. YTD, total southbound rail shipments into Mexico from Texas were up 11.9 percent. Laredo, which accounts for 68.8 percent of all southbound rail shipments in March was up 10.9 percent. Eagle Pass, accounting for 21.5 percent of all southbound rail shipments, increased 28.4 percent. Brownsville, with 9.6 percent of all southbound rail shipments in March, fell 13.4 percent YTD.

Export Rail YTD % Change 97-98



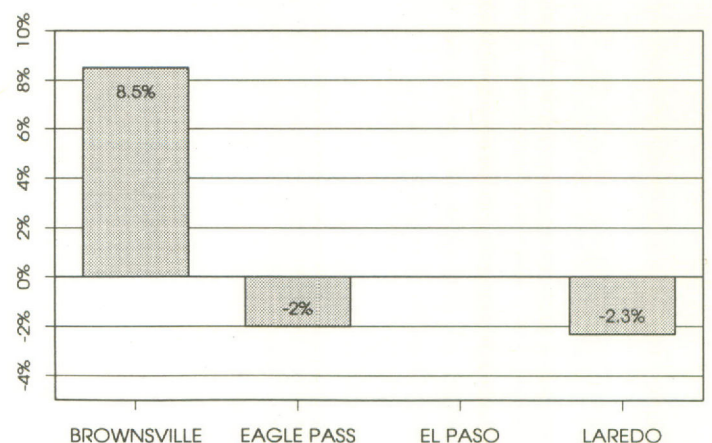
Import Shipments by Rail into Texas —Number of Rail Cars

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	1,014	1,010	1,074	1,011	2,854	3,098	8.5
EAGLE PASS	2,916	2,572	3,498	3,209	9,172	8,986	-2.0
EL PASO	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LAREDO	7,354	7,148	8,102	8,291	23,140	22,604	-2.3
TOTAL	11,284	10,730	12,674	12,511	35,166	34,688	-1.4

Source: Data provided by railroad companies serving cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

Northbound rail shipments into Texas increased 18.1 percent in March. Eagle Pass registered a 36.0 percent increase, Laredo rose 13.3 percent and Brownsville gained 6.3 percent. YTD, total northbound rail shipments into Texas from Mexico were down 1.4 percent. Laredo, which accounts for 63.9 percent of all northbound rail shipments in March was down 2.3 percent. Eagle Pass, accounting for 27.6 percent of all northbound rail shipments in March, decreased 2.0 percent and Brownsville, with 8.5 percent of all northbound rail shipments, increased 8.5 percent YTD.

Import Rail YTD % Change 97-98



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

CITY	DUTY	MPF	OTHER	TOTAL	TOTAL	YTD	YTD	YTD % CHG
	MAR 98	MAR 98	REVENUE MAR 98	REVENUE MAR 98	REVENUE MAR 97	REVENUE MAR 97	REVENUE MAR 98	
BROWNSVILLE	2,042,429	592,259	267,993	2,902,681	2,887,523	8,925,548	7,803,427	-12.6
DEL RIO	257,261	119,505	34,098	410,864	432,806	1,314,334	1,089,840	-17.1
EAGLE PASS	570,422	210,428	2,068,677	2,849,527	2,027,132	5,940,052	7,863,277	32.4
LAREDO	10,188,733	2,967,723	4,647,122	17,803,578	22,922,505	61,265,694	49,096,396	-19.9
McALLEN-HIDALGO	4,705,959	645,544	1,643,620	6,995,123	4,771,795	13,205,042	13,951,244	5.7
PROGRESO	28,952	6,421	22,635	58,008	398,484	565,608	155,786	-72.5
RIO GRANDE	77,106	21,570	11,903	110,579	193,847	408,487	296,490	-27.4
ROMA	26,042	9,209	25,619	60,870	39,554	115,892	185,830	60.3
TOTAL	17,896,904	4,572,659	8,721,667	31,191,230	33,673,646	91,740,657	80,442,290	-12.3

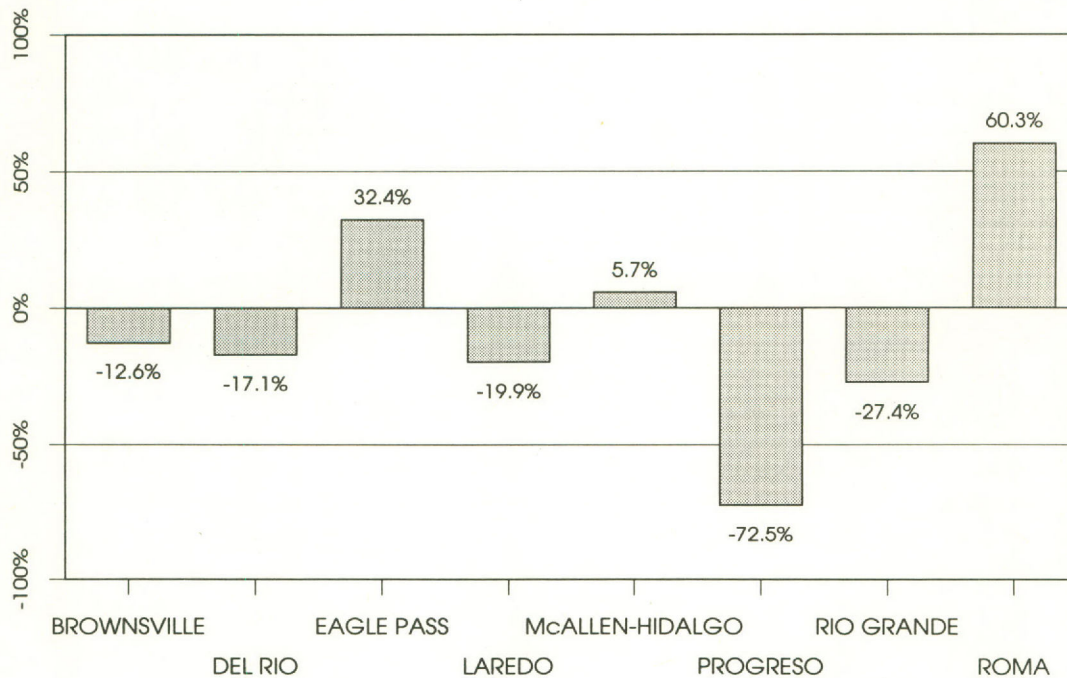
Source: Data provided by U.S. Customs Service, Port of Entry in cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

*MPF = Merchandise Processing Fee

Total U.S. Customs revenues for the former District of Laredo increased 23.3 percent from February's figures. McAllen-Hidalgo increased 99.2 percent, Progreso gained 71.5 percent, Rio Grande rose 36.0 percent, Del Rio was up 19.5 percent, Eagle Pass jumped 18.2 percent, Roma gained 12.6 percent, Laredo grew 10.0 percent and Brownsville was up 8.0 percent. YTD revenue figures were

down 12.3 percent compared to March 1997. Laredo, accounting for 61.0 percent of total District revenues, was down 19.9 percent YTD and McAllen-Hidalgo with 17.3 percent of total revenues, was up 5.7 percent YTD. Brownsville with 9.7 percent of all revenues in March decreased 12.6 percent YTD and Eagle Pass, with 9.8 percent of total revenues in March increased 32.4 percent.

% Change Total Revenues YTD 97-98



Revenues (in U.S. Dollars) Collected by U.S. Bridge Operators

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	622,648	577,666	707,749	524,900	1,461,798	1,908,063	30.5
DEL RIO	189,294	185,003	193,824	186,702	517,413	568,121	9.8
EAGLE PASS	345,097	317,156	358,040	397,687	1,123,484	1,020,293	-9.2
EL PASO	922,706	909,829	1,067,011	957,706	2,718,233	2,899,546	6.7
HARLINGEN	87,323	88,827	96,099	52,886	168,194	272,249	61.9
LAREDO	1,726,497	1,677,790	1,862,398	1,658,036	4,689,715	5,266,685	12.3
McALLEN-HIDALGO	604,836	559,096	653,284	561,495	1,566,609	1,817,216	16.0
PHARR	261,786	245,281	294,294	191,022	508,854	801,361	57.5
TOTAL	4,760,187	4,560,647	5,232,699	4,530,435	12,754,300	14,553,534	14.1

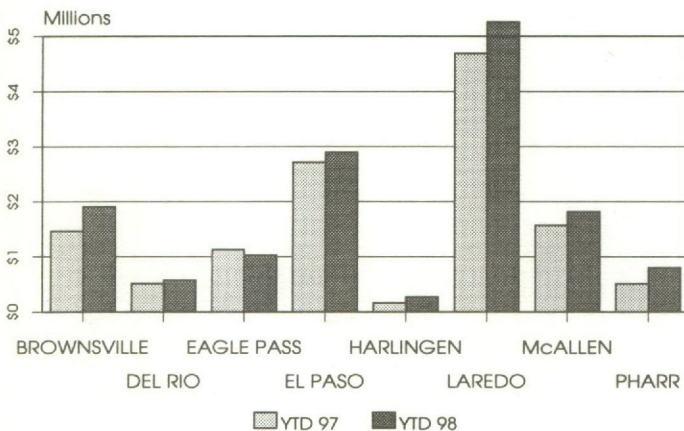
Source: Data provided by U.S. bridge operators in cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

*Brownsville's Revenues are for Cameron County Bridge only. **Pharr began operations 1/10/95.

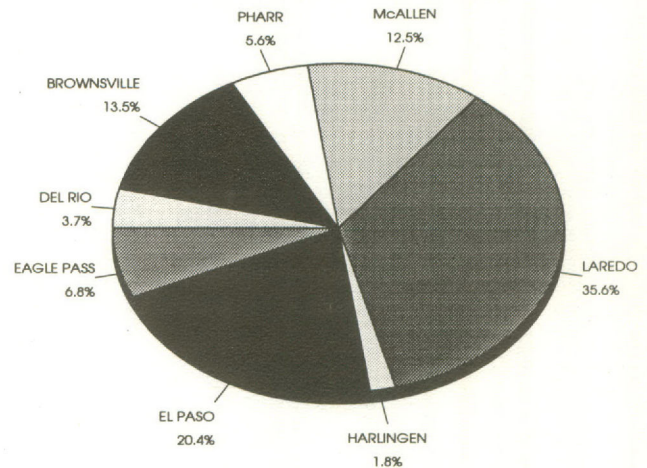
U.S. bridge operator's revenues increased 14.7 percent in the month of March. Brownsville showed an increase of 22.5 percent, Pharr increased 20.0 percent, El Paso was up 17.3 percent, McAllen-Hidalgo rose 16.8 percent, Eagle Pass gained 12.9 percent, Laredo increased 11.0 percent, Harlingen was up 8.2 percent, and Del Rio grew 4.8 percent. YTD, U.S. bridge operators' revenues were up 14.1 percent. Laredo, accounting for 35.6 percent of total U.S. bridge operator's revenues collected in March, had a 12.3 percent

increase YTD. El Paso, accounting for 20.4 percent of total U.S. bridge revenues, increased 6.7 percent YTD. McAllen-Hidalgo, with 12.5 percent of the total bridge revenues, was up 16.0 percent YTD. Brownsville, with 13.5 percent of total U.S. bridge operator's revenues in March, was up 30.5 percent. Harlingen with a 1.8 percent of total U.S. bridge revenues in March was up 61.9 percent YTD.

Total Revenues Collected YTD 97-98



% Share Revenues March 1998



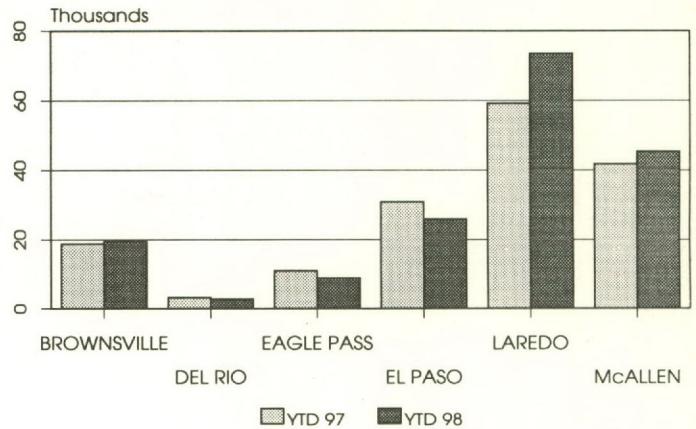
Visas to Tourists from Texas to Mexico

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	%CHG
BROWNSVILLE	5,815	5,664	7,946	8,282	18,734	19,425	3.7
DEL RIO	852	750	1,193	1,386	3,146	2,795	-11.2
EAGLE PASS	2,470	2,462	3,777	6,009	10,906	8,709	-20.1
EL PASO	7,432	7,819	10,649	13,599	30,949	25,900	-16.3
LAREDO	22,033	18,970	32,580	28,359	59,212	73,583	24.3
McALLEN	12,545	16,060	16,772	17,467	41,825	45,377	8.5
TOTAL	51,147	51,725	72,917	75,102	164,772	175,789	6.7

Source: Data provided by Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Migracion and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

The number of tourist visas issued in March were up 41.0 percent. Laredo increased 71.7 percent, Del Rio rose 59.1 percent, Eagle Pass was up 53.4 percent, Brownsville rose 40.3 percent, El Paso showed a 36.2 percent increase and McAllen was up 4.4 percent. YTD, the number of tourist visas issued were up 6.7 percent. Laredo, with 44.7 percent of total visas issued in March was up 24.3 percent. El Paso, with 14.6 percent of total visas issued, had a 16.3 percent decrease YTD. McAllen, with 23.0 percent of all visas issued, rose 8.5 percent YTD and Brownsville with 10.9 percent of total visas issued, increased 3.7 percent YTD.

Tourist Visas YTD March 97-98



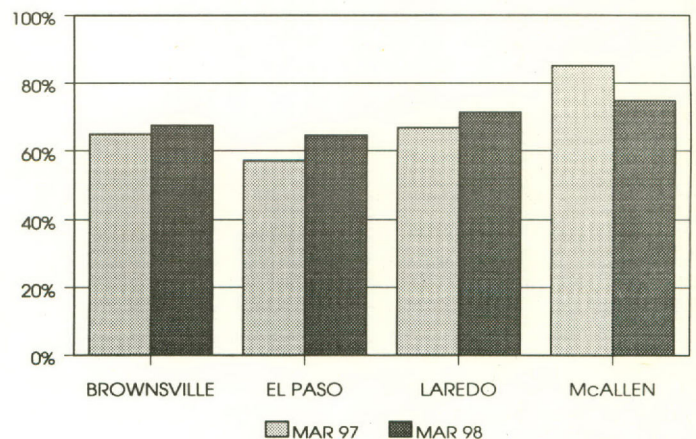
Hotel Occupancy Percentage Rate — Texas Border

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	% CHG 97-98
BROWNSVILLE	58.8	63.9	67.5	64.9	4.1
EL PASO	55.9	64.7	64.6	57.3	12.6
LAREDO	62.3	69.6	71.3	66.8	6.7
McALLEN	78.5	84.4	74.7	85.1	-12.2
AVERAGE	63.9	70.6	69.5	68.5	1.4

Source: Data (preliminary figures subject to revision) provided by selected hotels in cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

The average hotel occupancy rate of reporting Texas border hotels for March was down 1.6 percent. McAllen had a 74.7 percent rate, Laredo had a 71.3 percent rate, Brownsville had a rate of 67.5 percent and El Paso posted a 64.6 percentage rate for the month of March.

Hotel Occupancy Percentage March 97-98



Telephones in Service — Texas Border

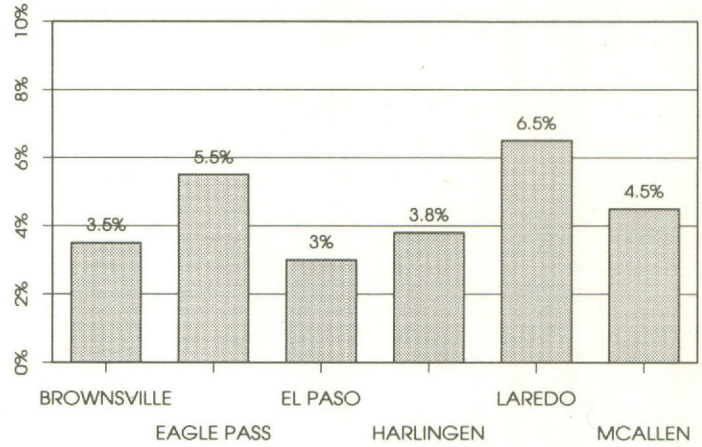
Residential Telephones

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97
BROWNSVILLE	42,429	42,860	43,133	41,662
EAGLE PASS	11,271	11,388	11,485	10,884
EL PASO	209,599	210,902	212,523	206,287
HARLINGEN	26,686	26,910	26,656	25,677
LAREDO	47,829	48,407	48,987	46,011
MCALLEN	35,497	35,762	35,977	34,424
TOTAL	373,311	376,229	378,761	364,945

Source: Data (preliminary figures subject to revision) provided by Southwestern Bell and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

In March, the number of residential telephones in service for reporting Texas border cities increased 0.67 percent since February. YTD, the number of residential telephones in service for reporting Texas border cities increased by 3.8 percent. Laredo increased 6.5 percent, Eagle Pass rose 5.5 percent, McAllen was up 4.5 percent, Harlingen increased 3.8 percent, Brownsville was up 3.5 percent and El Paso rose 3.0 percent YTD.

Residential Phones % Change March 97-98



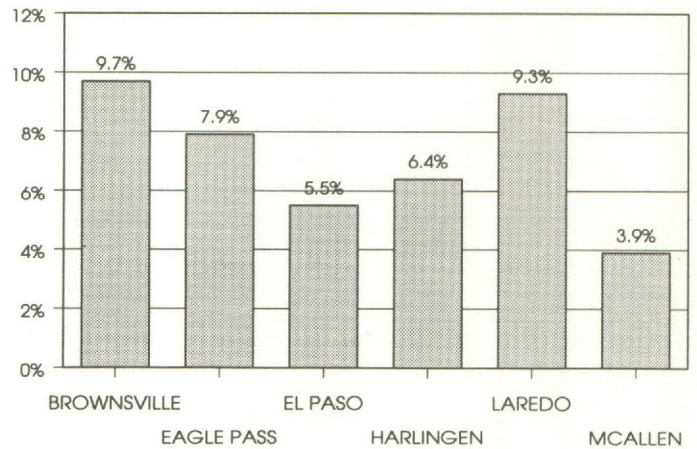
Business Telephones

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97
BROWNSVILLE	20,756	20,915	21,263	19,376
EAGLE PASS	3,824	3,854	3,890	3,606
EL PASO	95,235	95,404	96,008	90,998
HARLINGEN	13,847	13,964	14,280	13,425
LAREDO	29,413	29,471	29,709	27,175
MCALLEN	24,939	25,028	25,111	24,169
TOTAL	188,014	188,636	190,261	178,749

Source: Data (preliminary figures subject to revision) provided by Southwestern Bell and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

In March the number of business telephones in service for reporting Texas border cities increased 0.86 percent. YTD, the number of phones in service for reporting Texas border cities rose by 6.4 percent. Brownsville had the largest increase with 9.7 percent, Laredo rose 9.3 percent, Eagle Pass was up 7.9 percent, Harlingen gained 6.4 percent, El Paso increased 5.5 percent and McAllen rose 3.9 percent YTD.

Business Phones % Change March 97-98



Power Connections – Texas Border

Residential Connections

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97
BROWNSVILLE	28,815	28,840	28,914	28,048
DEL RIO	13,592	13,636	13,673	13,353
EAGLE PASS	9,173	9,141	9,174	8,953
EL PASO	254,623	255,164	255,793	251,486
HARLINGEN	20,765	20,933	20,998	20,693
LAREDO	45,292	45,422	45,573	44,039
McALLEN	30,510	30,687	30,773	30,163
TOTAL	402,770	403,823	404,898	396,735

Source: Data provided by CP&L, Brownsville Public Utilities Board, and El Paso Electric Co. and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

March commercial power connections for reporting Texas border cities increased 0.23 percent from February's figures. YTD, commercial power connections for reporting Texas border cities increased 3.6 percent. YTD, Harlingen was up 6.8 percent, Laredo increased 5.7 percent, Del Rio was up 4.8 percent, McAllen gained 4.7 percent, Brownsville increased 3.4 percent, Eagle Pass rose 3.3 percent and El Paso was up 2.4 percent YTD.

March residential power connections for all reporting Texas border cities increased from February's figures by 0.27 percent. YTD, residential power connections for all reporting border cities were up 2.1 percent. Laredo was up 3.5 percent, Brownsville increased 3.1 percent, Eagle Pass rose 2.5 percent, Del Rio gained 2.4 percent, McAllen increased 2.0 percent, El Paso was up 1.7 percent and Harlingen gained 1.5 percent YTD.

Commercial Connections

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97
BROWNSVILLE	3,790	3,829	0	3,712
DEL RIO	1,930	1,943	1,950	1,861
EAGLE PASS	1,287	1,288	1,297	1,256
EL PASO	25,913	25,949	25,990	25,385
HARLINGEN	3,360	3,353	3,367	3,154
LAREDO	6,884	6,943	6,960	6,583
McALLEN	5,345	5,348	5,365	5,123
TOTAL	48,509	48,653	44,929	47,074

Source: Data provided by CP&L, Brownsville Public Utilities Board, and El Paso Electric Co. and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

Building Permits — Texas Border

Number of Permits

NUMBER	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG.
BROWNSVILLE	222	259	368	268	667	849	27.3
DEL RIO	79	82	110	126	328	271	-17.4
EAGLE PASS	28	41	43	42	94	112	19.1
EL PASO	792	843	1,084	927	2,446	2,719	11.2
HARLINGEN	52	72	67	56	174	191	9.8
LAREDO	274	380	422	366	873	1,076	23.3
MCCALLEN	109	102	139	146	363	350	-3.6
TOTAL	1,556	1,779	2,233	1,931	4,945	5,568	12.6

Source: Data provided by cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic & Enterprise Development

March building permits issued by reporting Texas border cities were up 25.5 percent from February. Brownsville increased 42.1 percent, McAllen was up 36.3 percent, Del Rio rose 34.1 percent, El Paso increased 28.6 percent, Laredo gained 11.1 percent and Eagle Pass was up 4.9 percent. However, Harlingen dipped 6.9 percent. YTD, the number of permits issued were up 12.6 percent.

El Paso, accounting for 48.5 percent of all building permits issued in March, had an increase of 11.2 percent YTD. Laredo, with 18.9 percent of building permits issued, was up 23.3 percent YTD. Brownsville was up 27.3 percent while McAllen fell 3.6 percent YTD.

U.S. Dollar Value of Permits

VALUE	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG.
BROWNSVILLE	10,611,215	10,872,561	16,925,782	38,485,474	84,103,310	38,409,558	-54.3
DEL RIO	1,285,920	1,199,105	1,937,428	1,886,380	5,704,953	4,422,453	-22.5
EAGLE PASS	571,456	1,178,926	893,446	1,363,489	3,845,241	2,643,828	-31.2
EL PASO	31,151,238	29,540,253	38,211,401	27,327,607	114,790,047	98,902,892	-13.8
HARLINGEN	3,892,793	1,981,281	3,528,040	2,730,565	14,949,006	9,402,114	-37.1
LAREDO	11,494,654	12,104,928	16,023,992	54,560,655	77,847,814	39,623,574	-49.1
MCCALLEN	8,006,859	5,124,302	11,845,545	10,599,723	35,003,274	24,976,706	-28.6
TOTAL	67,014,135	62,001,356	89,365,634	136,953,893	336,243,645	218,381,125	-35.1

Source: Data provided by cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic & Enterprise Development

March building permit values for reporting Texas border cities were up 44.1 percent from February. McAllen increased 131.2 percent, Harlingen rose 78.1 percent, Del Rio was up 61.6 percent, Brownsville gained 55.7 percent, Laredo jumped 32.4 percent and El Paso gained 29.4 percent. However, Eagle Pass decreased 24.2

percent. YTD, reporting border cities experienced a 35.1 percent decrease. El Paso, with 42.8 percent total value for the month of March, fell 13.8 percent YTD. Brownsville, with 18.9 percent total value, decreased 54.3 percent YTD. Laredo, with 17.9 percent total value for the month of March, was down 49.1 percent YTD.

Employment/Unemployment Rates —Texas Border

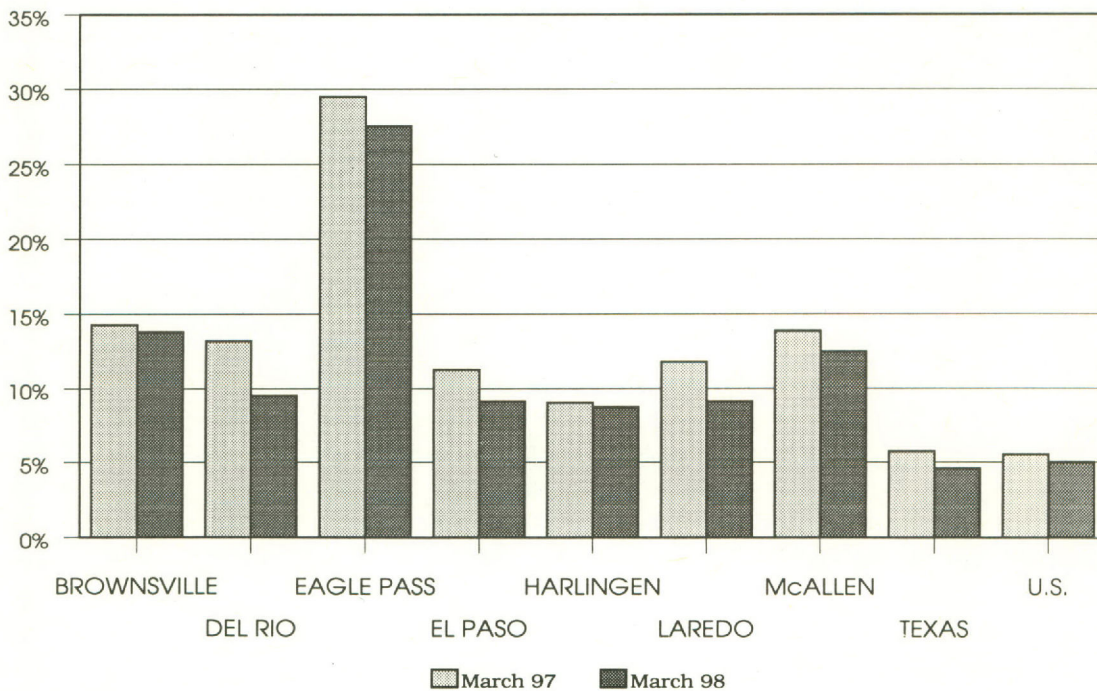
CITY	TOTAL EMPLOYED	TOTAL EMPLOYED	TOTAL UNEMPLOYED	TOTAL UNEMPLOYED	PERCENT UNEMPLOYED	PERCENT UNEMPLOYED
	MAR 98	MAR 97	MAR 98	MAR 97	MAR 98	MAR 97
BROWNSVILLE	41,739	41,060	6,688	6,827	13.8	14.3
DEL RIO	13,627	13,176	1,436	2,002	9.5	13.2
EAGLE PASS	7,879	7,710	2,994	3,229	27.5	29.5
EL PASO	234,290	233,358	23,506	29,510	9.1	11.2
HARLINGEN	23,979	23,588	2,274	2,321	8.7	9.0
LAREDO	59,693	57,738	5,996	7,749	9.1	11.8
McALLEN	42,608	41,541	6,071	6,716	12.5	13.9
TOTAL	423,815	418,171	48,965	58,354	10.4	12.2
THE TEXAS UNEMPLOYMENT RATE					4.59	5.70
THE NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE					4.98	5.46

Source: Data (preliminary figures subject to revision) provided by the Texas Employment Commission and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic & Enterprise Development

In March, total employment in reporting Texas border cities rose 1.1 percent (4,766 jobs gained) from February's figures. Brownsville and Harlingen increased 1.8 percent (756 and 435 jobs gained), Del Rio rose 1.5 percent (199 jobs gained), McAllen jumped 1.4 percent (572 jobs gained), Eagle Pass was up 1.3 percent (102 jobs gained), El Paso grew 1.1 percent (2,563 jobs gained) and Laredo

increased 0.2 percent (139 job gained). YTD, the total employment in Texas border cities was up 1.3 percent (5,644 jobs gained) from a year ago. The average unemployment rate for the border was 10.4 percent compared to 4.59 percent for Texas and 4.98 percent for the U.S. in March.

% Unemployed March 97-98



Air Passenger Service Activities — Selected Border Cities

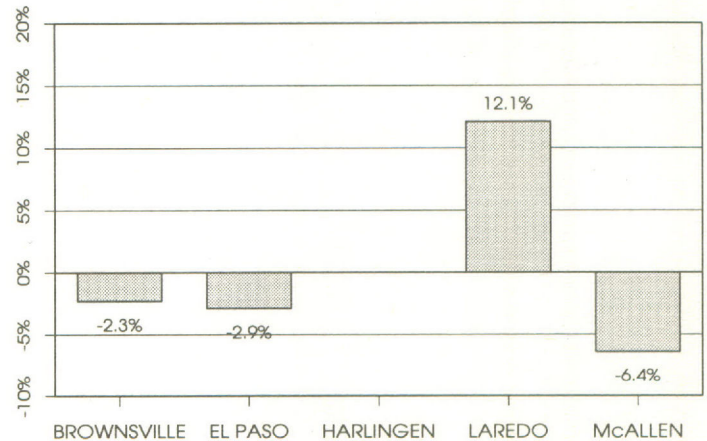
Passenger Arrivals

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	5,890	6,425	7,344	8,438	27,203	26,590	-2.3
EL PASO	112,414	109,869	140,559	144,820	514,155	499,157	-2.9
HARLINGEN	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LAREDO	6,168	5,319	7,103	5,679	22,517	25,234	12.1
McALLEN	24,680	24,254	25,753	31,479	107,564	100,627	-6.4
TOTAL	149,152	145,867	180,759	190,416	671,439	651,608	-3.0

Source: Data provided by cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic & Enterprise Development

March air passengers arriving in Texas border cities were up 23.9 percent over February's figures. Laredo was up 33.5 percent, El Paso rose 27.9 percent, Brownsville increased 14.3 percent and McAllen jumped 6.2 percent. YTD air passenger arrivals were down 3.0 percent. El Paso, with 77.8 percent of all passengers arriving in March, fell 2.9 percent. McAllen, with 14.2 percent of all arrivals, was down 6.4 percent. **Harlingen, no longer gives out arrival information.** Laredo increased 12.1 percent YTD and Brownsville fell 2.3 percent YTD.

Passenger Arrivals % Change YTD 97-98



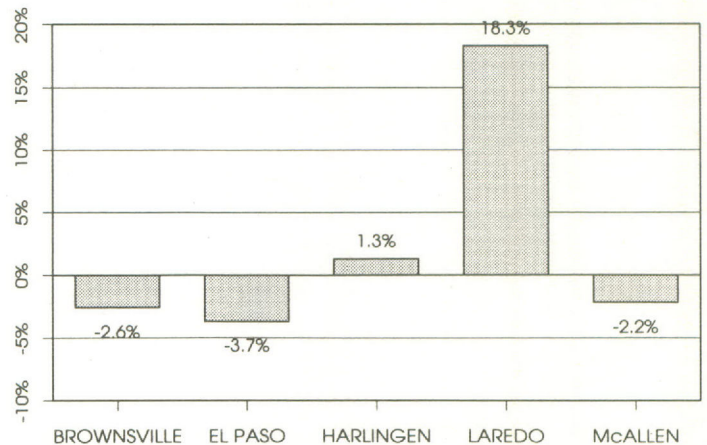
Passenger Departures

CITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BROWNSVILLE	6,187	6,292	7,787	8,572	28,469	27,715	-2.6
EL PASO	119,904	113,520	141,675	147,506	530,434	510,742	-3.7
HARLINGEN	34,839	38,904	47,560	47,414	160,762	162,931	1.3
LAREDO	6,559	5,577	6,880	6,490	22,026	26,060	18.3
McALLEN	25,861	24,918	27,960	31,226	111,129	108,731	-2.2
TOTAL	193,350	189,211	231,862	241,208	852,820	836,179	-2.0

Source: Data provided by cited cities and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic & Enterprise Development

March air passenger departures for reporting Texas border cities were up 22.5 percent from February's figures. El Paso increased 24.8 percent, Brownsville rose 23.8 percent, Laredo was up 23.4 percent, Harlingen jumped 22.2 percent and McAllen gained 12.2 percent. YTD, air passenger departures decreased 2.0 percent from a year ago. El Paso, with 61.1 percent of all passengers departing in March, was down 3.7 percent YTD. Harlingen, with 20.5 percent of all passengers departing, was up 1.3 percent. McAllen, with 12.1 percent of all passengers departing, decreased 2.2 percent YTD. Laredo rose 18.3 percent while Brownsville was down 2.6 percent YTD.

Passenger Departures % Change YTD 97-98



Port Of Corpus Christi

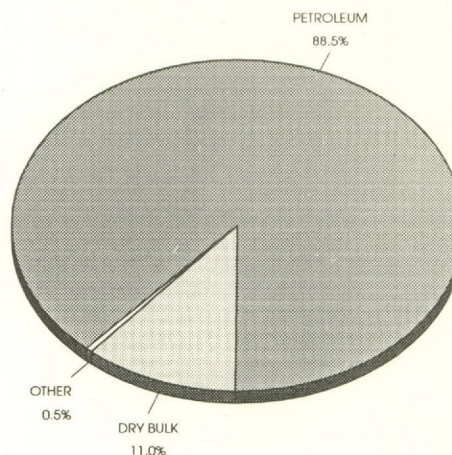
Inbound Cargo (in Tons)

COMMODITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BREAK BULK	0	377	1,069	284	3,809	1,446	-62.0
DRY BULK	450,592	15,162	483,833	240,513	881,022	949,587	7.8
BULK GRAIN	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
LIQUID	0	7,812	8,318	5,450	18,936	16,130	-14.8
PETROLEUM	3,385,580	3,794,014	3,882,061	3,428,743	10,150,986	11,061,655	9.0
CHEMICAL	9,470	8,756	11,765	11,060	29,097	29,991	3.1
TOTAL	3,845,642	3,826,121	4,387,045	3,686,050	11,083,850	12,058,808	8.8

Source: Data provided by the Port of Corpus Christi and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

The Port of Corpus Christi had a 14.7 percent increase in inbound cargo from last month. Petroleum, which makes up 88.5 percent of all inbound traffic in March, was up 2.3 percent compared to February. Dry bulk, which accounts for 11.0 percent of the port's inbound cargo for March, rose 3091.1 percent. YTD, inbound cargo tonnage was up 8.8 percent. Dry bulk was up 7.8 percent YTD and petroleum was up 9.0 percent YTD.

% Share March 1998 Inbound Cargo



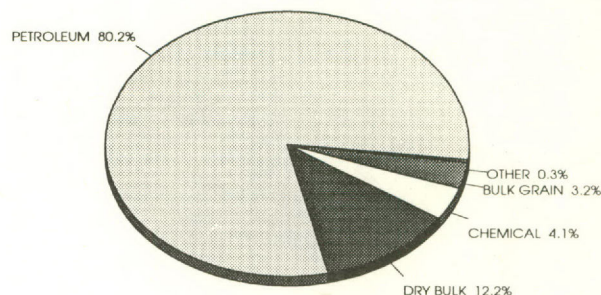
Outbound Cargo (in Tons)

COMMODITY	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	MAR 97	YTD 97	YTD 98	% CHG
BREAK BULK	0	2,748	5,816	1,306	2,662	8,564	221.7
DRY BULK	264,269	84,607	282,508	198,719	751,468	631,384	-16.0
BULK GRAIN	116,751	549,238	73,590	83,687	206,671	739,579	257.9
LIQUID	0	0	0	0	2,865	0	-100.0
PETROLEUM	2,234,329	2,347,989	1,861,849	2,039,011	6,428,252	6,444,167	0.2
CHEMICAL	141,833	84,975	93,965	178,428	476,320	320,773	-32.7
TOTAL	2,757,182	3,069,557	2,317,728	2,501,151	7,868,238	8,144,467	3.5

Source: Data provided by the Port of Corpus Christi and compiled by Texas A&M International University, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

The Port of Corpus Christi had a 24.5 percent decrease in outbound cargo tonnage in March. Petroleum, which is 80.3 percent of total outbound cargo for March, decreased 20.7 percent compared to February. Dry bulk increased 233.9 percent, Chemicals rose 10.6 percent while Bulk Grain decreased 86.6 percent. YTD, total outbound cargo tonnage was up 3.5 percent.

% Share March 1998 Outbound Cargo



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