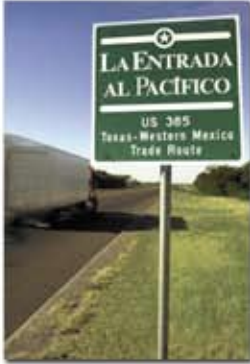


Corridor Study Initiated



The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has teamed together with HDR Engineering to perform the La Entrada al Pacifico Corridor Study in order to determine the most efficient location of a potential trade route from Mexico through the West Texas region. The La Entrada al Pacifico (LEAP) Corridor was signed into Texas state law by then Governor George W. Bush in 1997 as defined by House Bill 2115 and named High Priority Corridor 56 on the National Highway System (NHS) in Section 1304 of SAFETEA-LU. This current LEAP Corridor Study follows a progression of previous studies that include the Lubbock to IH 10/Amarillo North Route Study and the Ports to Plains Study, among others, that were initiated to evaluate North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) impacts on the Texas roadway infrastructure. In order to evaluate the impact to the West Texas roadway system, a good understanding of the existing Texas roadway network is required. In addition, since a proposed LEAP corridor would facilitate increased freight flow from Mexico and the Pacific Coast, a good understanding of Mexico's roadway system and freight movement is also needed. As part of this freight move-

ment analysis, an evaluation of the Mexican ports, such as the Port of Topolobampo, will be required to determine viable alternatives to the crowded Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Likewise, the underutilized border crossing at Presidio, Texas presents an opportunity to divert freight traffic from the already overburdened crossing at El Paso, Texas. These key elements, along with others, will be considered by the TxDOT Team as the LEAP Corridor Study progresses toward a viable solution.

What Will the Study Determine?

The La Entrada al Pacifico Corridor Study will focus on meeting local transportation goals as well as ensuring consistency with TxDOT's statewide goals. These statewide goals include 1) reducing congestion; 2) enhancing safety; 3) expanding economic opportunity; 4) improving air quality and 5) increasing the value of the transportation asset. In order to arrive at a solution that addresses both the need and purpose of this study and the overall TxDOT goals, a comprehensive alternative analysis process will be performed. The purpose of this current study is to evaluate alternatives and potential improvements to existing transportation facilities within Presidio, Jeff Davis, Brewster, Pecos, Reeves, Crockett, Crane, Ward, Upton, Ector and Midland Counties that will provide an opportunity to increase the

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transport of people and goods from the Port of Entry at Presidio to the Midland/Odessa area of Texas. To arrive at a viable corridor solution a three step process will be undertaken.

1 Step One: The first step of the study will be to collect information related to the existing roadway infrastructure and freight movement that impacts the study area for the project. This information will include environmental, engineering and mobility information that will be used in subsequent steps. The mobility data to be collected includes traffic and freight information that will be used for modeling the anticipated growth in the region.

2 Step Two: The second step of the study process will be to utilize this collected data to identify a broad range of Conceptual Alternatives that will be evaluated and narrowed down to the Viable Alternative(s) for future consideration.

3 Step Three: Finally, the study will conclude with the Corridor Development Plan that will provide input on prioritization of improvements along the identified corridor(s) and will present an overall funding strategy for the improvements.

As part of the alternative analysis process, the feasibility of providing a four-



lane divided facility within the designated national corridor will be determined. This existing LEAP Corridor currently follows US 67 from Presidio through Marfa and Alpine to IH 10 where it travels along IH10/US 67 through Fort Stockton to US 385 at McCamey before connecting to IH 20 and SH 349 in the Midland/Odessa area. In addition to this currently designated route, other alternatives will be evaluated by progressively screening alternatives based on environmental, mobility and engineering criteria. A key part of this evaluation process includes a public involvement/community outreach program to provide valuable information that will guide the TxDOT Team through the alternative analysis.

This public input is being sought at this early stage of the project in order to gain input into the overall need and purpose of the study, to provide corridor alternative suggestions and to identify issues and constraints.

Project Timeline



PUBLIC MEETINGS

Monday March 12, 2007

6:00PM – 8:00PM

Presidio High School
100 Market Street
Presidio, Texas 79845

Monday March 19, 2007

6:00PM – 8:00PM

Center for Energy & Economic
Diversification (CEED) - UTPB
1400 North FM 1788
Midland, Texas 79706

Tuesday March 13, 2007

6:00PM – 8:00PM

Alpine High School
300 East Hendryx
Alpine, Texas 79830

Tuesday March 20, 2007

6:00PM – 8:00PM

Fort Stockton High School
1200 West 17th Street
Ft. Stockton, Texas 79735

PROJECT MAP

Federally Designated LEAP Route (High Priority Corridor 56)



CONTACT INFORMATION

Written Comments to:

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Dallas, Texas 75248-1232

Project Hotline: 1-800-517-4652

Email Comments to: TPP_LEAP@dot.state.tx.us

Project Web Site: www.dot.state.tx.us Keyword: La Entrada
A La Entrada al Pacifico project web site is available on the
TxDOT studies web page that contains information related to the
La Entrada al Pacifico project including project background, maps
and upcoming events.

The La Entrada al Pacifico Newsletter is a publication of the TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming Division
Jim Randall, PE
Division Director
Peggy Thurn, PE
Study Director

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What's Next?

Following the March 2007 public meetings, the study team will identify and evaluate conceptual corridor alternatives. This evaluation will begin with the development of an environmental baseline that includes the identification of potential impacts. In addition, an inventory of existing roadway infrastructure and planned roadway improvements in Texas and Mexico will be established. The results from this conceptual corridor analysis will be presented during the second round of public meetings scheduled for the summer of 2007.

We Want to Hear From You

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) invites and welcomes your input during the La Entrada al Pacifico Corridor Study. Community and agency involvement are vital in determining the key issues and constraints and identifying alternatives as we work toward our goal of building consensus among the area communities and project stakeholders.

If you would like to be added to the LEAP mailing list, leave a comment for the project staff and/or find information about the project, please see contact information at the bottom of Page 3.

