

Study Process Update



The potential of the La Entrada al Pacifico (LEAP) trade corridor in West Texas and its impacts to local and regional mobility continues to be the focus of this study by the Texas Department of Transportation.

The La Entrada al Pacifico corridor was designated from Lamesa to Presidio by both state and federal authorities to provide a potential link for commercial traffic from the Pacific Coast of Mexico and Western Mexico through West Texas.

This LEAP study, which will determine what highway improvements are needed to meet anticipated trade demand, is currently finalizing a Risk Analysis Process (RAP) that will provide forecast data on incoming freight at the Presidio Port of Entry for inclusion into the travel demand modeling process.

Results of each step are being and will continue to be presented to the public at public meetings scheduled throughout the study, as well as in meetings with local citizens on a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) representing various local and regional interests.

"The purpose of this study is not to promote a trade corridor," said Amadeo Saenz, TxDOT's Executive Director. "It is to assess the potential of a trade corridor and forecast trade flow at the Presidio Port of Entry."

Impacts of foreign imports and freight diversion from other ports of entry with Mexico will be assessed and used to determine the impact at Presidio, according to Saenz.

In the phases to follow, team members will analyze each of the major route alternatives in the region in order to assess the most appropriate application of potential improvements. This analysis will be based on demographic, socioeconomic, environmental, economic, safety, and engineering data; and will study expected travel demands along these routes – including commercial traffic – projected for the year 2030.

"Once a realistic trade number is determined, then – and only then – can local and regional impacts on the Texas roadway network be assessed," he said.

"If the forecasted trade flow at the Presidio Port of Entry is significant over the next 25 years, this study will help form a plan that will minimize the impacts to the area," explained Saenz. "If the forecasted trade flow is relatively low, then the study will be modified to only address safety and local mobility needs."

He said that the study is designed to identify existing local and regional impacts in the study area and plan for any future needs expected to occur as a result of continued growth in the region and the potential impact of trade flows from Presidio.

"Due to funding limitations and competition from other projects statewide, a plan is needed that addresses mobility deficiencies and is sensitive to the environmental and community vision," said Saenz.

"We are still fairly early in the study process and no outcome has been determined," said Saenz. "Public involvement is a significant part of the process and we greatly appreciate input we have received already."

Risk Analysis Process (RAP)...What Is It?

An analysis of the expected freight diversion to the LEAP Corridor was conducted using HDR Decision Economics' Risk Analysis Process (RAP). RAP involves a series of processes including economic analysis, third party review of inputs and assumptions, and a probability analysis. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was assembled for RAP session meetings in Alpine and Odessa in late October to provide perspectives on the impacts of port capacity limits, travel time savings and alternative routes on future Presidio crossing volumes. Responses from the TAC provided a foundation for the reasoned assessments of the varying sources of potential traffic and have generated helpful suggestions on refinements to better capture all likely impacts.

Risk Analysis provides a way of developing traffic and/or freight forecasts in an inherently uncertain environment. It helps avoid the lack of perspective in the typical approach of presenting "high" and "low" cases by measuring the probability or "odds" that any particular outcome will actually materialize.

The Risk Analysis Process involves four steps:

1 Step One: Define the structure and logic of the forecasting problem, in this case freight diversion to Presidio and the LEAP Corridor;

2 Step Two: Assign estimates and ranges (probability distributions) to each key factor and forecasting coefficient in the structure and logic model from Step 1;

3 Step Three: Engage experts and TAC members in assessment of model and assumption risks (the "RAP Session"); and

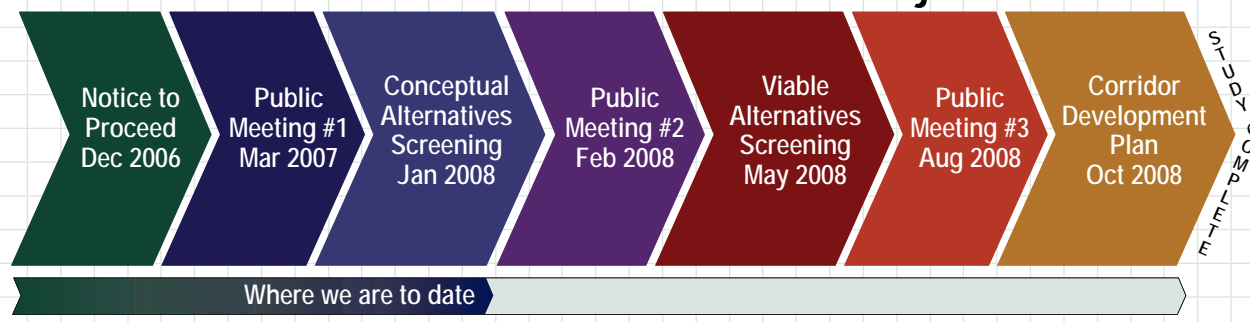
4 Step Four: Update risk analysis assumptions, run the freight forecasting diversion model, and report and document results (currently underway).

What's Next?

The next steps are to finalize the RAP and hold another round of public meetings to present the results to the public for comment. The second round of public meetings is planned for February 2008. Then, after any revisions are made as a result of the public meetings, the LEAP team will utilize the results from the RAP to assess impacts to the LEAP Study Area.

Conceptual Alternatives have been identified and a map has been provided on page three (3) of this newsletter. These conceptual alternatives, including a No-Build Alternative, will be evaluated by progressively screening them based on environmental, mobility and engineering criteria. These will then be narrowed down to Viable Alternative(s) for future consideration. Finally, the goal of the study is to create a corridor development plan identifying improvements and timelines needed throughout the LEAP Study Area to address both existing and future needs of the region.

Project Timeline



PUBLIC MEETINGS

ALPINE

Tuesday
February 19, 2008
6:00PM

Sul Ross State University
Espino Conference Room
University Center, 2nd Floor
400 North Harrison
Alpine, Texas 79830

PRESIDIO

Wednesday
February 20, 2008
6:00PM

Presidio High School
1000 East FM 170
Presidio, Texas 79845

MIDLAND

Monday
February 25, 2008
6:00PM

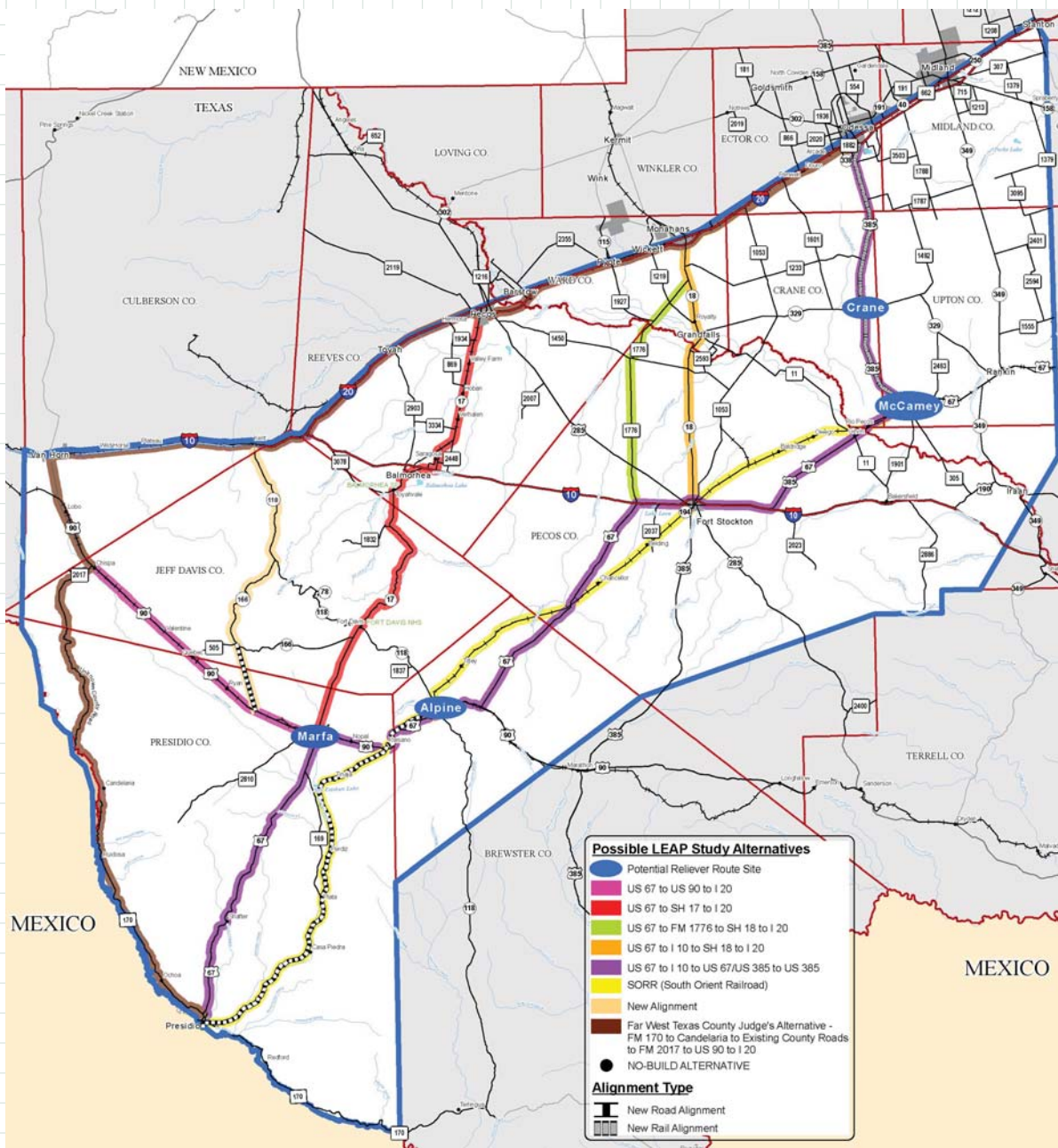
Center for Energy & Economic
Diversification (CEED) - UTPB
1400 North FM 1788
Midland, Texas 79706

FT. STOCKTON

Tuesday
February 26, 2008
6:00PM

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

Conceptual LEAP Study Alternatives



The La Entrada al Pacifico Newsletter is a publication of the TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming Division
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We Want to Hear From You

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) invites and welcomes your input during the La Entrada al Pacifico 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. The following options are available to you 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.

Written Comments to:

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Texas Department of Transportation
17111 Preston Road, Suite 200
Dallas, Texas 75248-1232

Project Hotline:

1-800-517-4652

Email Comments to:

TPP_TXDOT-LEAP@DOT.STATE.TX.US

Project Web Site:

http://www.dot.state.tx.us/services/transportation_planning_and_programming/la_entrada/default.htm.

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.

