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**SPECIAL
EDITION**

reliable mobility
improved safety
system preservation
project delivery
economic vitality

plan it ☆ build it ☆ use it ☆ maintain it ☆ manage it

**2002
annual
summary**

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T TRANSPORTATION NEWS 
January 2003 Volume 28 Number 4

TxDOT mission

To provide safe, effective and efficient movement of people and goods

TxDOT vision

To be a progressive state transportation agency recognized and respected by the citizens of Texas

- ✦ Providing comfortable, safe, durable, cost-effective, environmentally sensitive and aesthetically appealing transportation systems that work together
- ✦ Ensuring a desirable workplace which creates a diverse team of all kinds of people and professions
- ✦ Using efficient and cost-effective work methods that encourage innovation and creativity
- ✦ Promoting a higher quality of life through partnerships with the citizens of Texas and all branches of government by being receptive, responsible and cooperative

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Letter from the editor

January is the deadest of the winter months, but from another perspective, it is the beginning of spring. We're starting over, a whole year ahead of us. It's a month when most of us do a fair amount of introspection. We think about the things we did the year before, we make lists – mentally, on paper or in that new Personal Digital Assistant we got during the holidays – and resolve to improve on last year.

A state agency does the same thing. Our "New Year's Day" is Sept. 1, the beginning of our fiscal year, but January is a good time for TxDOT to reflect on what we did the year before. With that in mind, in this special issue of Transportation News, we're focusing on what we did in 2002 to benefit the people of Texas.

One of the major points in this report is that TxDOT is going to be looking at what it does in a new way. In an effort to simplify the way we do things, we have a new operating model: Plan it, build it, use it, maintain it and manage it.

We hope you'll enjoy this look back at 2002 and share it with your families and friends. TxDOT is eager for everyone in this state to know about the fine work all of us are doing.

With our February issue, will be back with our regular features along with in depth coverage of the 78th Texas Legislature and the transportation issues it faces.

— Mike Cox
Editor

TxDOT and its employees moved into new territory last year. We launched a bold anti-drunk driving campaign featuring the young victim of a fiery car crash. We also led the way in reducing pollution by helping private industry bring environmentally-friendly fuels to market. With your help and contributions, we conducted our own operations more and more like a successful business. And we forged new relationships by reaching out to the public, business owners and local and state officials, helping to bolster the state's economic health, public safety and overall quality of life.

To streamline TxDOT's business processes, the members of the Transportation Commission laid out a simplified plan for Department operations involving five steps that are fast becoming a TxDOT mantra:

Plan It....Build It....Use It....Maintain It....Manage It.

We appreciate your willingness to embrace this new approach to how we perform our jobs.

The Commission also has identified the five primary objectives that we will pursue in 2003 and beyond:

- ✦ **Reliable mobility** (ensure that people and goods move efficiently)
- ✦ **Improved safety** (reduce roadway fatalities)
- ✦ **System preservation** (maintain and improve existing roads)
- ✦ **Accelerated project delivery** (streamline average project completion time)
- ✦ **Economic vitality** (attract prosperity to all Texas communities)

Thanks to the work that you do, Texas roads, waterways and airports connect Texans to one another and to a world of opportunities that raises the quality of life for all Texans, businesses and visitors. When the Highway Department began in 1917, its charter was to "get the farmer out of the mud." Our current goal and mission points us down an equally practical if more complicated road: to move the commuter on to work, bring economic prosperity to every corner of the state, and improve safety to an all time high.

We have a lot to be proud of as TxDOT employees, both for our work over the years and for what we accomplished in 2002. Thank you for your help in bringing about the achievements highlighted in this 2002 Annual Summary.

— **Mike Behrens**
Executive Director

Strategies

TxDOT's budget for fiscal 2003 totals \$5.2 billion. This is a breakdown of the department's five strategies.

✦ Plan It

- ★ Plan/Design/Manage
- ★ Acquire right of way
- ★ Research

✦ Build It

- ★ Highway construction
- ★ Aviation services

✦ Use It

- ★ Public transportation
- ★ Vehicle titles and registration
- ★ Vehicle dealer regulation
- ★ Traffic safety
- ★ Travel information
- ★ Prevention of auto theft

✦ Maintain It

- ★ Roadways
- ★ Bridges
- ★ General aviation airports
- ★ Gulf waterway
- ★ Ferry system

✦ Manage It

- ★ Central administration
- ★ Information resources
- ★ Regional administration
- ★ Other support services

Performance

TxDOT measures its performance in many ways, as outlined in the department's strategic plan. Here are some key areas of performance TxDOT management monitors to ensure the department meets its organizational goals.

✦ Plan It

- ★ Project plans delivered on time
- ★ Right of way parcels delivered on time
- ★ Projects reviewed for environmental impact
- ★ Use accelerated construction techniques

✦ Build It

- ★ Lane miles built to increase capacity
- ★ Bridges replaced or rehabilitated
- ★ Improvements to locations where crashes occur
- ★ Reduced traffic congestion

✦ Use It

- ★ Reduction in highway fatality rate
- ★ Travelers served
- ★ Motor vehicle consumer complaints resolved
- ★ Highway safety grants awarded

✦ Maintain It

- ★ Condition of pavement
- ★ Miles of roadway receiving surface improvements
- ★ Percent of the state highway system receiving surface improvements
- ★ Condition of bridges

✦ Manage It

- ★ Public hearings on policy decisions
- ★ Ratio of managers to employees
- ★ Occupational safety data
- ★ State Employee Incentive Program awards

Reliable mobility: ensure that people and goods move efficiently

Through its highway, public transportation and aviation programs, TxDOT continually upgrades the state's multi-modal transportation system, addressing mobility needs throughout Texas. Building new roads, adding lanes to existing roadways, improving traffic management, providing motorists with real-time traffic information, coordinating planning with transit providers, supporting rural public transportation and helping to plan, build and maintain community airports across the state are just a few of the mobility improvements being made in Texas every day.

✦ **New roads using limited tax dollars**

New voter-approved financing tools that will help build roads sooner and provide congestion relief faster were put into action by the Transportation Commission.

★ **Creating regional mobility authorities** — The state's first regional mobility authority was approved in 2002, maximizing local control in transportation planning decisions, generating revenue for additional projects, and bringing congestion relief sooner. The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority proposes a new 12-mile turnpike in Williamson County, which will serve as a reliever route to U.S. 183 in the area of Cedar Park and Leander. A seven-member board, with representatives from Travis and Williamson counties, will oversee the authority. The governor appoints the chairperson.

★ **Toll equity** — By combining \$700 million in state funds with a federal loan, local contributions and bonds, TxDOT completed the funding package for the 65-mile long, \$2.9 billion Central Texas Turnpike Project. Once bonds are repaid from toll proceeds, tolls will fund continued operating, maintenance and future expansions.

This financing approach represents a key component of TxDOT's innovative set of funding tools aimed at leveraging limited state dollars. At the same time, this approach allows for speedier completion of road projects, which results in reduced congestion. Toll equity allows state highway funds to be combined with other funding sources to help pay for toll roads, and helps make projects more attractive to private sector investment, another key element of TxDOT's new approach to funding and building roads faster.

✦ **Access management**

TxDOT held two rounds of public meetings in 2002 to begin a public discussion of the mobility and safety benefits of access management. TxDOT also began drafting a manual in anticipation of possible Commission action on a statewide access management plan in 2003.

Access management is a method to move vehicles from highways to adjacent properties while preserving traffic flow and increasing safety on the surrounding road system. It extends the operational life of the existing road, postpones the need for road widening and supports economic development.

✦ **Border-colonia access program**

The Transportation Commission approved \$50 million in 2002 for 274 projects to improve access to border colonias. Applying to 21 counties along the Texas-Mexico border, the program will help pay for roadway improvements that connect colonias to other public roads. Projects include paving dirt roads, re-paving deteriorating roads and constructing drainage structures.

✦ **Texas Trunk System**

The Transportation Commission awarded \$51 million in 2002 to fund projects on the Texas Trunk System, a proposed 10,500-mile network of rural, four-lane highways. When completed, the system will link every Texas town or city with a population greater than 20,000 to major ports, military installations, recreational areas, adjacent states and Mexico. The trunk system will help meet the demands of increased international trade and promote economic development. It includes and complements parts of the Interstate, U.S., and Texas State Highway systems. Of the 10,500 miles designated as part of the Trunk System, 3,900 miles need expansion from two to four lanes. The expansion will cost an estimated \$6 billion and take 30 years to complete at current funding levels.

✦ **Loans to communities**

Since approval in 1997 by the Texas Legislature, the State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) has granted 45 loans totaling \$252 million. These loans have helped fund transportation improvements valued at more than \$1.8 billion. Any public or private entity that has the authority to build, maintain or finance certain transportation projects can apply for these low-interest loans.

As the SIB funds are replenished through loan repayments, additional entities may borrow the money to pay for their transportation improvements.

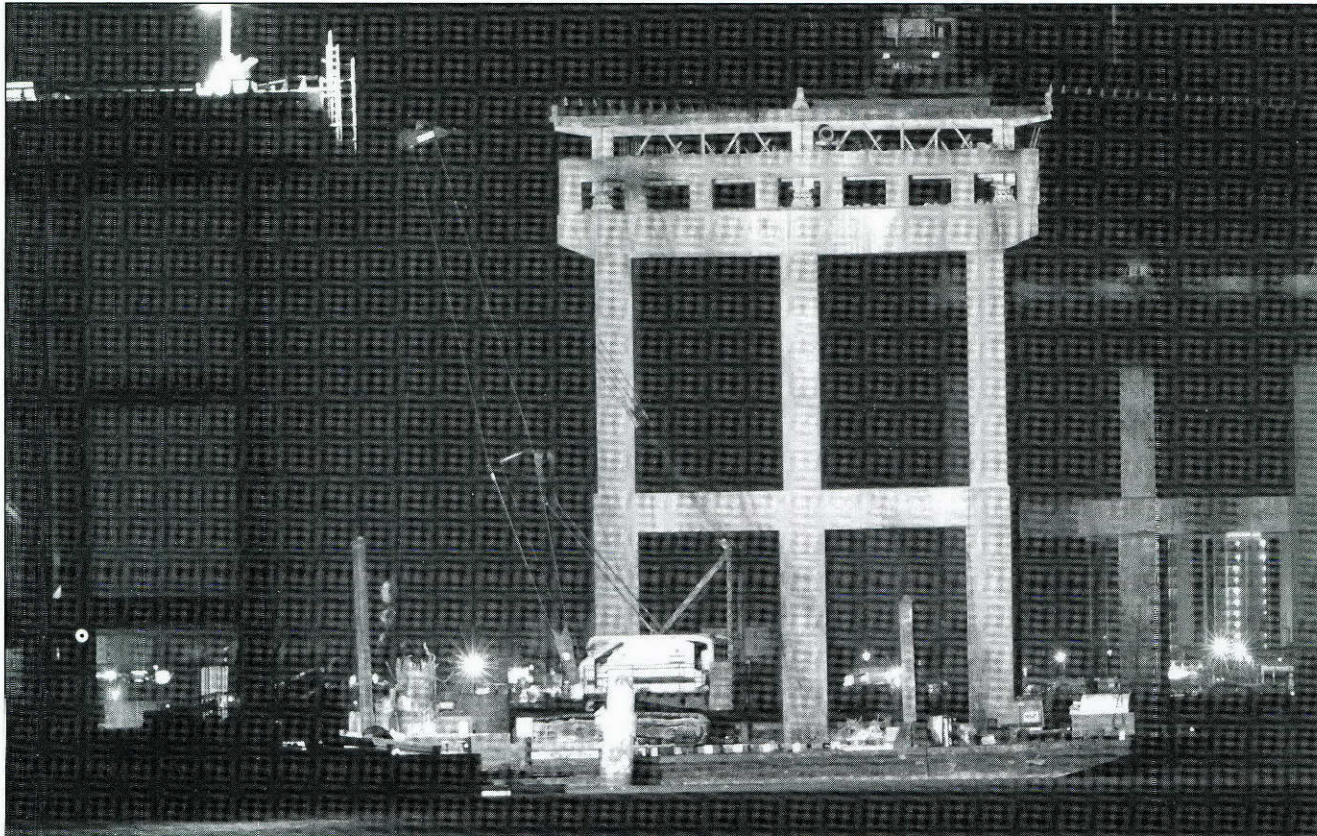


Photo by Valerie Bates, Rio Bravo Gallery, Port Isabel, TX

★ Queen Isabella Causeway

The Sept. 15, 2001 collapse of the Queen Isabella Causeway severed the link between South Padre Island and the mainland. The bridge collapse, resulting from pilings being knocked out by a tugboat and barges, claimed eight lives and destroyed 240 feet of the span. The repair cost more than \$10 million —

including a bonus to the construction company for beating the Christmas deadline by 30 days. Costs included operation of ferries and construction of associated facilities allowing access to and from the island for residents, school children, and visitors during the repairs.

★ Interstate 35

Efforts to improve mobility and safety along Interstate 35 — which carries more U.S.-Mexico trade than any other interstate in the nation — took major steps forward in 2002.

Construction to widen the interstate advanced on several segments between San Antonio and Dallas/Fort Worth, while a funding package was completed allowing for work to proceed toward an alternate route for I-35 in Central Texas. Meanwhile, citizens provided input on proposed improvements to I-35 between Jarrell and Hillsboro at several public meetings in 2002.

I-35 will eventually be a minimum of three lanes in each direction between San Antonio and Dallas/Fort Worth.

TxDOT hired Lone Star Infrastructure — a consortium of engineering and construction firms with world-wide experience — to design, construct and maintain State Highway 130, which will relieve congestion on I-35 and other major roadways in the Austin-San Antonio corridor. In August, Gov. Perry announced the sale of \$2.2 billion in bonds that will help fund SH 130 and two other Central Texas toll roads. The first 49-mile segment of

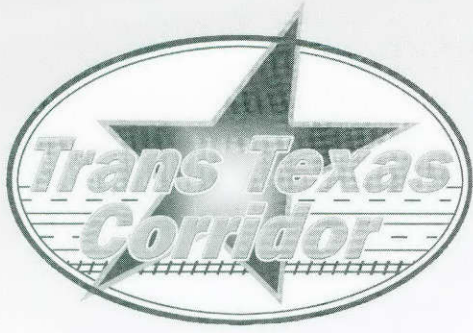
SH 130, from Georgetown to south of Austin, is scheduled to be completed in December 2007. Eventually, SH 130 will stretch south to Seguin.

★ Interstate 69

TxDOT in 2002 launched a three to five year environmental study for the expansion of I-69. This study will determine the preferred route and gather data to identify potential socio-economic and environmental issues.

More than half — 955 miles — of the planned 1,600-mile expansion will be in Texas, and will ultimately tie into the existing I-69 in Indianapolis. The Texas portion of this four-lane divided interstate, with limited frontage roads, will extend from northeast Texas to the Texas-Mexico border and pass near or through Houston, Victoria, Corpus Christi, McAllen, Brownsville and Laredo. The project is estimated to cost \$6 billion in 2002 dollars (including construction and right of way).

The U.S. Department of Transportation announced in October 2002 that I-69 had been selected for accelerated environmental review under a presidential executive order on environmental stewardship.



Trans Texas Corridor

The Trans Texas Corridor is as bold an undertaking as the state of Texas has ever envisioned. This 4,000-mile engineering project proposes a brand new footprint of transportation corridors across the state. Thanks to innovative funding tools approved by the Texas Legislature, the Trans Texas Corridor affords TxDOT new opportunities to forge partnerships with local communities and private businesses to build the safest, most efficient system possible.

TxDOT has charted this new course based on Gov. Rick Perry's vision of transforming the relationship between government and citizens by providing financial tools enabling regional and local governments to develop corridor components.

This new corridor provides separate lanes for passenger vehicles and big trucks, rail facilities for high-speed passenger, commuter and freight rail, and a dedicated utility zone for water, electricity, petroleum, and data transmission.

Adding lanes to existing highways fails to fully address our growing transportation crisis. The Trans Texas Corridor will create a new transportation network instead of additional decks on existing highways through Austin, Dallas, Houston, El Paso, San Antonio and Fort Worth. It will offer toll roads in addition to existing free roads. When completed, the Trans Texas Corridor will provide congestion relief for metropolitan areas, keep hazardous materials out of populated areas, improve air quality by reducing emissions, improve safety and boost economic activity.

Priorities include links between Denison and the Rio Grande Valley (I-35), northeast Texas to Laredo via Houston (I-69), Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston (I-45), and El Paso and Orange (I-10). Estimated total cost for the corridor ranges from \$145 billion to \$183.5 billion.

Unique among transportation systems anywhere, the Trans Texas Corridor will provide Texas with a network designed to move people and goods faster and more safely than ever before, well into the 21st century.

⊕ Ports-to-Plains

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor, designated as a high-priority corridor under federal legislation, is planned as a four-lane divided highway linking the Texas-Mexico border to Denver, Colorado. The corridor will serve international trade and promote economic development. The Transportation Commission in 2001 designated a final route covering 830 miles from Mexico to West Texas and through the Texas Panhandle. The estimated cost for the highway is \$1.2 billion.

⊕ Public transportation

TxDOT helps fund more than 350 public transit providers throughout the state. In 2002, the department awarded \$5 million to non-urbanized and small-urban transportation agencies to replace vehicles. TxDOT will award more than \$11 million to the non-urbanized transit agencies in Texas in 2003.

The most significant public transit programs are transportation for the elderly, for persons with disabilities and rural and small urban-transportation programs. Texas has more than 275 non-profit public organizations participating in the transportation program for the elderly and disabled.

Some 41 public transportation providers operating in the non-urbanized areas of the state receive funding through the rural public transportation program. In addition, 29 urban public transportation providers are operating in urbanized communities with a population ranging from 50,000 to 200,000.

Truck Lanes

Several Texas cities — including Austin and San Antonio — are preparing to follow Houston's lead in invoking a new state law that has reduced crashes by nearly two-thirds on the city's busiest road. Houston officials were the first to take advantage of the law allowing a city to enact ordinances to limit truckers to the right lanes. Houston implemented the rule on a trial basis in 2000 on an eight-mile stretch of Interstate 10.

Under the rule, left lanes are restricted to cars only; tractor-trailers are prohibited at peak travel hours from driving in the left lane of major highways with at least three through lanes.

The Texas Transportation Institute has studied Houston's experience and concluded that crashes dropped 68 percent on the roadway after the rule took effect. Houston has made the program permanent and is now planning to use it on other freeways.

The renewed interest in the truck lanes resulted from a reminder of the state law sent to Texas cities from Transportation Commission Chairman John W. Johnson, who suggested that they try the rule out in their areas.

Intelligent transportation systems (ITS)

ITS refers to the application of technologies designed to enhance transportation operations, efficiency and safety in a cost-effective manner. Examples include traffic-signal control systems, ramp meters and variable message systems. Texas increasingly will be using ITS to better manage existing resources and to reduce the cost of operating and maintaining highway and multimodal systems.

At present, ITS focuses on providing en route service and safety information by means of electronic sign advisories for motorists. This increases operational effectiveness and builds data for future research. ITS applications are used in Austin, Dallas, Corpus Christi, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, Laredo, Pharr and San Antonio.

⊕ Amber Alert

To aid in the recovery of abducted children, on Aug. 12, 2002, Gov. Perry created by executive order

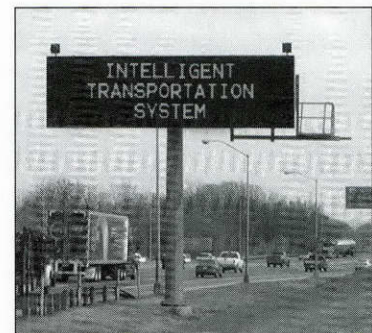
the Texas Amber Alert System. Just three days later, an Amber alert was issued from the Fort Worth area.

This alert was credited with assisting in the capture of a suspected abductor after a motorist saw the TxDOT sign and called police.

Another alert was issued in October from the Austin area and again was credited with helping authorities locate a suspected abductor.

TxDOT works closely with the governor's office and the Texas Department of Public Safety to implement the system.

DPS activates an Amber Alert after a request from a local law enforcement agency, with TxDOT using a network of dynamic message signs to relay information to the public.



Safety: reduce roadway fatalities

With its annual highway construction and maintenance program, TxDOT continually upgrades the state's road and bridge system, keeping it in line with the latest safety design standards. Wider traffic lanes, paved safety shoulders, upgraded pavement markings, more skid-resistant pavement, state-of-the-art traffic control devices, concrete barriers to separate traffic, easier-to-read signs and breakaway sign posts are just a few of the safety improvements being made on Texas highways every day. In addition to its ongoing efforts, whenever disaster strikes and some portion of the state's transportation infrastructure is damaged or blocked by high water, debris or snow and ice, TxDOT is there to get it back into operation as quickly as possible.

✪ Highway safety

TxDOT develops an annual Highway Safety Plan covering 13 traffic safety program areas. The plan describes the projects selected to reduce traffic crashes, injuries and fatalities through the use of federal grants. This plan is approved by the Transportation Commission and is funded at \$53 million for fiscal 2003.

Another highway safety effort at TxDOT — the Hazard Elimination Program — funded 200 projects aimed at reducing the number and severity of traffic crashes on public roads. This program seeks to correct or improve high-hazard locations, eliminate or address roadside obstacles, improve highway signs and pavement markings, and install traffic control or warning devices where high numbers of accidents occur. TxDOT annually funds \$30 million worth of projects under this program.

✪ Homeland security

The terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 changed the nation's approach to security, including TxDOT's. TxDOT supported Gov. Perry's Homeland Security Task Force in 2002 as a member of the state's Working Group on Terrorism and through continual inspections of key components to the state's transportation system.

The department increased efforts to ensure the safety of the transportation infrastructure by coordinating with the governor's office, and other states and agencies to anticipate possible threats and to develop efficient and cost-effective safeguards against acts of terror.

✪ Safe Routes to School

To improve traffic safety around Texas schools, the Transportation Commission pushed forward the Safe Routes to School program in 2002 and committed \$3 million to the effort. During 2002, TxDOT received 277

applications for funds for construction promoting safety on roadways near and leading to schools. TxDOT expects to announce projects selected for funding in 2003. Established by the 77th Texas Legislature, this program seeks to enhance student safety in and around school areas.

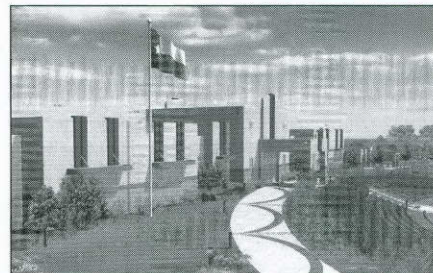
✪ Precious Cargo

With TxDOT's involvement in the earliest stages of new school planning and construction, the department continued in 2002 to improve traffic safety for elementary and high school students across the state. In the on-going program, school districts, with help from TxDOT advisers, overcome possible traffic safety problems as new schools are designed.

The program, begun in 1999, also works with existing schools to determine areas of potential traffic safety improvement. Precious Cargo has proven popular outside of Texas — 20 states have requested information about the Texas-initiated program or have adopted it.

✪ Safety rest areas

Texas' aging system of 96 safety rest areas received several upgrades in 2002. As a result of these efforts, weary Texas drivers will be more inclined to stop for a safety break and be more alert when they return to the



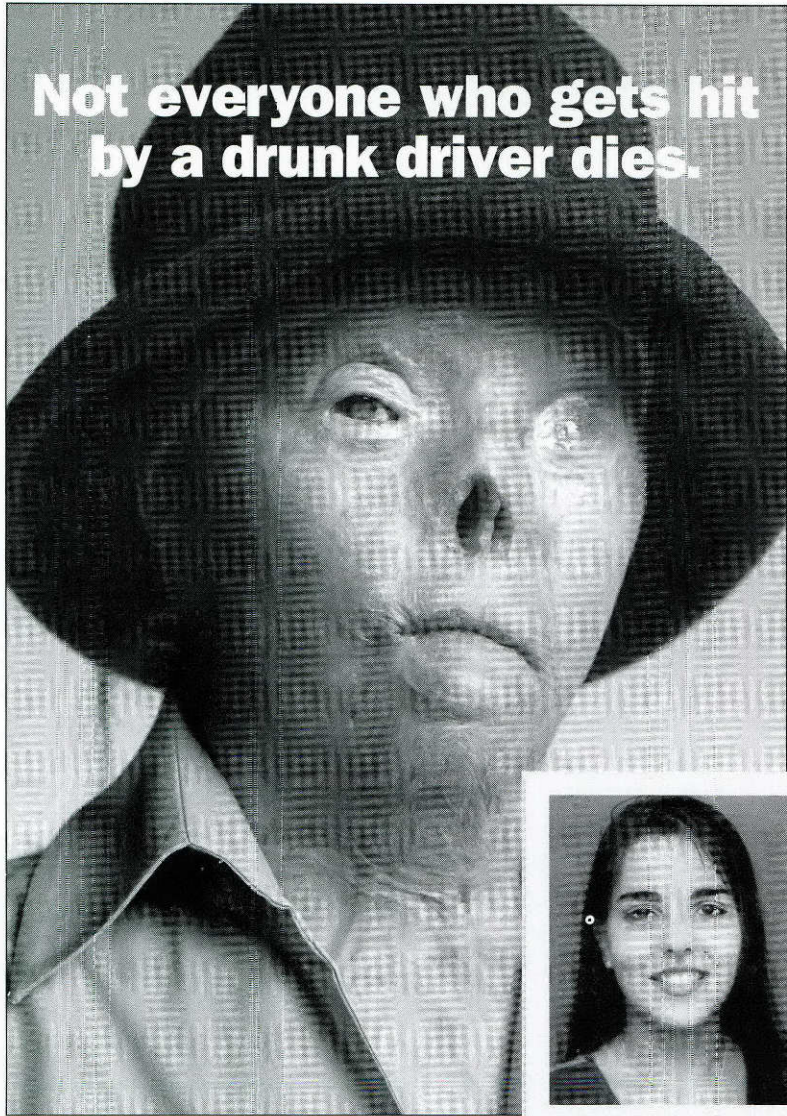
This architectural rendering depicts one of the 26 new-generation safety rest areas designed to help weary drivers stay alert.

road. TxDOT let \$16 million in contracts for the safety rest area program and opened four new rest areas during 2002. The department currently oversees \$36 million worth of construction contracts aimed at improving Texas' rest areas.

Serving more than 50 million motorists a year, the rest areas will offer several key safety upgrades including separate parking lots for cars and commercial trucks as well as surveillance cameras. Selected sites also will include tornado shelters. In addition, at many locations, law enforcement officers traveling Texas highways will have access to office space for writing reports, making phone calls or conducting other business.

Federal enhancement dollars fund 80 percent of the safety rest area improvements. Eventually, 26 new rest areas will be built, 67 will be reconstructed and 28 will be closed or relocated. With additional funding, the remaining projects could be complete in a decade.

**Not everyone who gets hit
by a drunk driver dies.**



✪ Preventing drunk driving

TxDOT introduced a public education campaign in October 2002 that has been acclaimed as one of the most powerful anti-drunk-driving spots ever undertaken. In addition to generating considerable attention in Texas, the campaign prompted inquiries for use from across the United States and around the world. Requesters ranged from military commanders concerned about drinking and driving among their troops to educators hoping to reduce the number of fatalities among younger drivers. The powerful anti-DWI campaign revolves around 23-year-old Jacqueline Saburido, a former University of Texas student. The victim of a drunk driver, she was burned severely in an accident that took the lives of two of her friends. Following the offender's conviction, Saburido said she would do anything she could to prevent others from suffering as she had. That included agreeing to appear in television and print ads. In the television spot, she holds a picture of herself taken before the fire and talks about the accident that changed her life. As she speaks, she reveals her disfigured face. "This is me after being hit by a drunk driver," she says. An announcer closes the powerful ad with: "Don't drink and drive...ever."

✪ Seat belt use

TxDOT joined forces with the Texas Department of Public Safety and local law enforcement agencies during 2002 to launch the Click It or Ticket campaign to get more people to buckle their seat belts — or face hefty fines. The \$3.4 million federally-funded program promised strong enforcement against violators of seat belt laws through a statewide media campaign that included TV, radio commercials, billboards and movie theaters. Thousands of extra law enforcement officers patrolled Texas streets and highways to locate and ticket seat belt violators.

In studies conducted by the Texas Transportation Institute in ten Texas cities targeted in the campaign, seat belt compliance was 86 percent, up from 80 percent before the campaign was launched. The compliance rate among drivers was 37 percent, 83 percent for passengers.

✪ Railroad crossings

Texas continues to see a decrease in crashes, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail crossings. From 1982 to 2001 (latest statistics available) the state has experienced a 61 percent reduction in car-train collisions, a 57 percent drop in related fatalities and a 62 percent decline in injuries. In 2002, TxDOT continued its work to improve railroad-highway crossings, spending close to \$30 million to install warning devices and improve crossing surfaces at the 12,000 public highway-rail crossings in Texas.

✪ Work-zone safety

Fatalities and injuries in Texas highway work zones are a serious concern. Most involve motorists. TxDOT is taking various steps to improve safety in work zones. These include improving traffic control devices, developing enhanced traffic control management methods, distributing educational and awareness materials, and participating in research related to work zones.

System preservation: maintain and improve existing roads

With a continuing strong emphasis on proper maintenance, TxDOT works every day to protect the billions of dollars taxpayers have invested over the years to build today's transportation system. Replacing thousands of miles of worn-out pavement, rehabilitating or replacing deteriorated bridges, rebuilding roadways that have outlived their design life, constantly inspecting roadway surfaces along with testing below the surface, upgrading safety rest areas and applying effective vegetation management practices all are examples of work done every day to preserve the state's transportation system.

+ Pavement maintenance

Maintaining the existing highway system remains a top TxDOT priority. The department resurfaced 24,869 lane miles in 2002, more than 13 percent of the state highway system. Still, the condition of interstate highways in Texas is declining, while the state's non-interstate highways remain only slightly above an acceptable level. Factors affecting pavement condition include age, the volume and weight of traffic, precipitation and temperature.

+ Bridge inspections

Texas leads the nation in the number of bridges, with 48,281 — eight percent of the national total.

TxDOT replaced or rehabilitated 393 on Texas public roads at a cost of \$267 million in 2002. Such work is critical because more than 60 percent of Texas bridges were built before 1970 and are nearing the end of their useful lives.

During the past two years, TxDOT inspected 32,048 bridges on the state system and 16,233 city and county bridges.

Every five years divers inspect bridge foundations and columns under the water.

+ Airport maintenance

TxDOT issued 98 matching grants of \$1.4 million for airport improvements that, with local matching funds, were worth \$2.9 million. Projects ranged from replacing a rotating beacon to paving an airport's runway. TxDOT's Routine Airport Maintenance Program joins federal, state and local government funds to bring about more efficient air and land operations.



- + TxDOT oversees two programs which not only reduce litter along the state's highways but also reduce the amount of money taxpayers have to spend to clean up after others.
- + The Don't mess with Texas campaign, begun in 1986, promotes awareness of the importance of keeping litter in the car and off Texas' roadways. The campaign targets drivers between 16 and 24, the age group surveys show litter the most.
- + Another effort, the Adopt-a-Highway program, has enlisted 3,624 local groups adopting 7,561 miles of highway in their communities. In doing that, they agree to clean a two-mile stretch quarterly for two years.
- + Texas is home of the world's first adopted highway. The Tyler Civitans adopted the first two-mile stretch on U.S. 69 in 1985. Most other states, as well as three other countries, have since copied this grassroots volunteer program.
- + Surveys have shown that these advertising and educational campaigns have paid off, with litter on Texas' roadways cut in half since 1995.
- + Tossing something as small as a cigarette or a drink cup can result in a fine of up to \$500.
- + Don't mess with Texas is a public-private partnership sponsored by TxDOT that invites Texas businesses, schools, churches, civic and environmental groups and government agencies to address the most common types of litter and find new ways to prevent Texans from trashing the roadsides.

www.dontmesswithtexas.org

Project delivery: streamline average completion time of all projects

Using new funding tools, TxDOT is maximizing limited resources to accelerate projects and speed congestion relief for Texas motorists. To encourage private participation in department turnpike projects, the Transportation Commission approved rules to accept and evaluate unsolicited proposals from private entities to design, finance, construct, maintain and operate toll projects. To minimize impact to the public, the department adopted a philosophy to Get In, Get Out and Stay Out when it comes to construction projects.

Accelerated project completion

To speed completion of critical highway projects, TxDOT required in 2002 the consideration of accelerated construction provisions on all projects disrupting traffic. Acceleration provisions include requiring completion of work within a limited number of days, providing incentives when project milestones are completed ahead of schedule, and sanctioning the contractor when milestones are not met. Other provisions allow TxDOT to charge a contractor a rental fee for closing a traffic lane as well as giving TxDOT the authority to consider the length of time a contractor proposes to complete a project when awarding a construction contract. This effort will save time and money for commuters and businesses by reducing traffic interruptions.

Greater contractor accountability

To hold highway contractors more accountable, the Transportation Commission in 2002 strengthened rules regarding contractor bidding and performance. The rules expand the commission's authority to reject proposals due to bid error and allow a contractor to be disqualified from re-bidding a project. The rules also expand the commission's authority to impose sanctions on contractors who do not perform.

Exclusive development agreement

In 2002, TxDOT signed the state's first exclusive development agreement with Lone Star Infrastructure — a consortium hired to design, construct and maintain SH 130. This agreement allows a consortium of design engineers, right of way acquisition agents and road contractors to do needed work at the same time, rather than dividing it into separate steps. Financing for the new tollway, part of the Central Texas Turnpike Project, includes a federal loan, local contributions, state highway funds (toll equity), and the sale of revenue bonds. The northern-most 49 miles of SH 130 are expected to be completed by December 2007.

Simplification



Following the lead of Transportation Commission Chairman Johnson, TxDOT is well into a streamlining process that affects all areas of the department, from allocating funds for projects to measuring success to issuing reports explaining what we're doing. The goal: TxDOT operations will be more easily understood by elected officials and all of TxDOT's customers.

A prime example of the department's simplification process is evident in a work-in-progress — the long-range planning process known as the Unified Transportation Plan or UTP. This annually updated plan guides the development of federal and state-funded projects slated for the state's highways, aviation and public transportation over the next decade.

The UTP totals \$27.5 billion and comprises thousands of projects. In response to legislative and public requests to streamline the program, TxDOT is reducing the number and complexity of funding categories from 36 to 14. As a result, TxDOT and the public can focus on moving projects to completion instead of dealing with red tape.

Another example of the simplification effort is TxDOT's Strategic Plan, which formerly contained 121 performance measures and 20 budget strategies that went along with them. Neither category was decipherable to anyone but the most technically-oriented.

The current 5 budget strategies are:

-  **Plan It**
-  **Build It**
-  **Use It**
-  **Maintain It**
-  **Manage It**

The simplification philosophy is filtering throughout the department. Simply put, it will be easier for the public to understand and be involved in TxDOT operations.

Economic vitality: attract prosperity to all Texas communities

TxDOT's function of planning, designing, building, operating and maintaining the transportation system in Texas creates jobs and supports the Texas economy every day. The department's work to reduce congestion and improve transportation safety is vital in the state's effort to attract and maintain economic development opportunities. Just as farmers need Farm-to-Market Roads to move goods to market, businesses need reliable ways to move products and provide services. TxDOT's efforts to deliver the Trans Texas Corridor will result in a multi-use transportation system that will keep Texas' economy vibrant well into the future.

✦ **Clean air**

The Drive Clean Across Texas campaign, launched by TxDOT in March 2002, is the nation's first statewide public outreach and education program designed to improve air quality. The first target of the campaign is mobile-source pollution.

Over the next several years, Drive Clean Across Texas will seek to change attitudes and driving behavior to reduce pollution. This is particularly important in those Texas cities designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as non-attainment and near-non-attainment areas. A non-attainment designation puts Texas at risk of losing valuable federal transportation dollars. These designations also would hit Texans in their wallet by bringing higher vehicle inspection fees and gasoline costs.

✦ **Freight rail**

TxDOT continued to provide a leadership role in a variety of rail matters in 2002, from the proposed Trans Texas Corridor to the preservation of rail lines.

As envisioned, the Trans Texas Corridor — a 4,000-mile multi-use transportation system — will include six rail lines (three in each direction) to serve high-speed passenger rail as well as commuter and freight rail. The corridor's rail component will increase safety and reduce traffic congestion by offering more transportation options. The corridor also will provide more capacity for freight, greatly enhancing the state's ability to move goods to market. In addition, the corridor will provide rail companies with new markets.

During 2002, TxDOT worked to implement the Comprehensive Abandoned Rail Program established by the Legislature in 2001. Under the program, TxDOT may

enter into lease agreements with short-line rail operators to keep a line open and viable.

Abandonment of rail segments over time has likely contributed to an increase in truck traffic on Texas' highways. Losing rail also affects the economies of smaller towns and rural areas.

✦ **Enhancement program**

The Transportation Commission approved more than \$155 million in 2002 for transportation projects across the state designed to enhance scenic, historical, natural and cultural resources. This competitive statewide program encourages diverse modes of travel, strengthens partnerships between state and local governments, and promotes citizen involvement in transportation decisions.

Nominated projects approved in 2002 included facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, multi-modal transportation centers, landscaping and streetscape beautification, and historic train depot renovations.

✦ **Clean fuel programs**

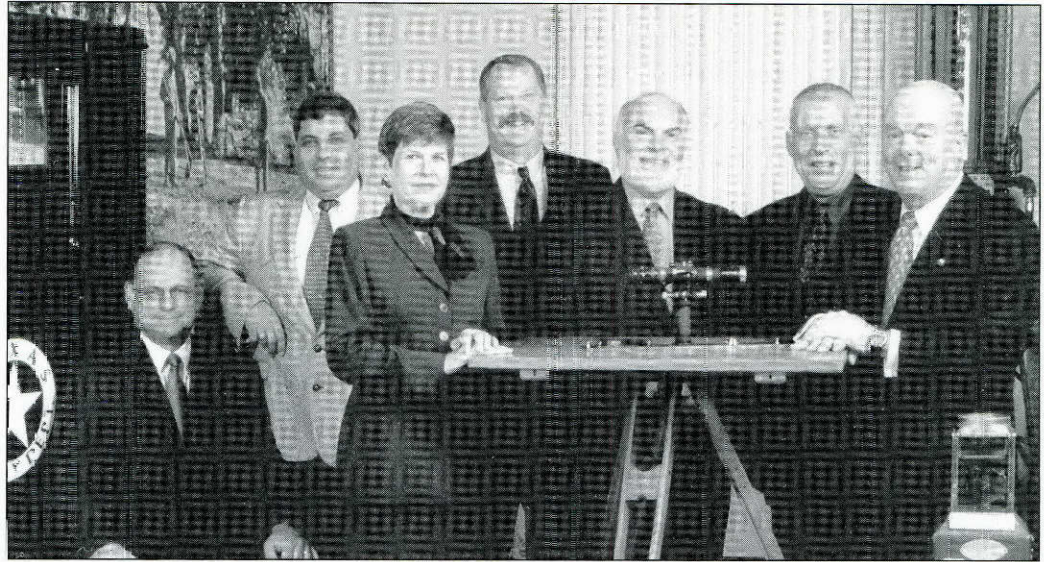
TxDOT played a key role in 2002 facilitating the use of two new diesel products that will significantly reduce future diesel emissions in Texas.

In June, TxDOT organized a statewide conference for fleet operators and other interested stakeholders to pursue the early introduction of ultra-low sulfur diesel (ULSD) in Texas. This successful effort will culminate in the introduction of ULSD in 2003, three years sooner than the government mandate. TxDOT also is working to finalize a statewide specification for Texas Low-Emission Diesel (TxLED), an ULSD that can be used by other political subdivisions. TxLED will be refined to further reduce ozone-forming emissions.

In July, TxDOT began using a water-based emulsified diesel fuel in its Houston-Beaumont area fleet to support local efforts to meet federal air quality standards. At the same time this fuel was introduced to the marketplace, TxDOT launched a research study to determine its operational and emissions impacts. Study results will be made available to interested parties.

With the largest and most diverse fleet in state government, TxDOT in 2002 used more than 5 million gallons of propane and natural gas in its 5,058 alternative fuel fleet vehicles. TxDOT has been recognized by the Propane Education and Research Council as one of six "Exceptional Energy" Award winners for its national leadership in the use of propane.

From left: Mike Behrens, Amadeo Saenz, Cathy Williams, Steve Simmons, Robert Nichols, Ric Williamson, John Johnson. Not pictured: Ed Wueste



Texas Transportation Commission

- ✦ **John W. Johnson** was appointed by Gov. George W. Bush in 1999 and became chairman in 2000. The Houston resident serves as chairman of Permian Mud Service, Inc. He earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Vanderbilt University, where he is currently a member of the Board of Trustees.
- ✦ **Robert L. Nichols** was appointed by Gov. Bush in 1997. The Jacksonville resident and East Texas businessman founded and headed four plastics-related companies between 1975 and 1996. Nichols holds a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering from Lamar University.
- ✦ **Ric Williamson** was appointed by Gov. Perry in 2001. The Weatherford resident served in the Texas Legislature from 1985 to 1998 and currently heads the natural gas production company that he founded. Williamson earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

TxDOT Administration

- ★ **Michael W. Behrens, P.E., Executive Director**
Executive director since 2001, Behrens began his TxDOT career in 1971 in the Yoakum District, where he became district engineer in 1992. Behrens' current duties include managing, directing and implementing TxDOT policies, programs and operation strategies in addition to representing the department before the Texas Legislature and industry groups. He holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Texas A&M University.

- ★ **Steven E. Simmons, P.E., Deputy Executive Director**
Since becoming deputy executive director in 2001, Simmons oversees TxDOT policies and programs in the daily administrative and engineering operations of the department. Simmons joined TxDOT's Houston District in 1982. He was named Fort Worth District Engineer in 1998. He holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Houston.
- ★ **Amadeo Saenz, Jr., P.E., Assistant Executive Director, Engineering Operations**
Named Assistant Executive Director in 2001, Saenz implements and manages TxDOT engineering policies and programs. Saenz joined TxDOT in 1978 in the Pharr District, where he was named district engineer in 1993. He earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering at the University of Texas at Austin. Saenz oversaw TxDOT's rapid response to the collapse and reconstruction of the Queen Isabella Causeway in South Padre Island in September 2001.
- ★ **Cathy J. Williams, PHR, Assistant Executive Director, Support Operations**
Since becoming assistant executive director in 1998, Williams has helped to set and implement departmental policy and procedures. She joined TxDOT in 1973 in the Paris District office. Williams has served in several positions at TxDOT, including Director of Human Resources. She holds a bachelor's degree from East Texas State University, where she also earned an MBA.
- ★ **Edward A. Wueste, Assistant Executive Director, Border Trade**
Wueste has worked closely with the Pharr, Laredo and El Paso districts and the department's International Relations Office since 1999 to accelerate border trade transportation projects. The former regional administrator for the Federal Highway Administration's Region 6, Wueste earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Texas A&M University.

TxDOT by the numbers

Alternative fuels

- 4,630:** TxDOT vehicles using liquified petroleum gas
- 428:** TxDOT vehicles using compressed natural gas
- 200:** TxDOT on-site LPG refueling stations
- 52:** percent of TxDOT on-road fleet using alternative fuels

Aviation

- 48,024:** pilots in Texas
- 1,800:** landing facilities
- 286:** airports eligible for funding assistance

Beautification

- \$40 million:** annual expense for vegetation management, roadway mowing
- 80,000:** worker hours spent mowing, managing vegetation
- 33,000:** pounds of wildflower seeds sown along highways
- 7,561:** miles of adopted highway
- 3,624:** volunteer groups adopting a highway

Bridges

- 48,281:** total bridges statewide
- 32,048:** bridges on state system
- 16,233:** bridges off state system

Budgets

- \$5.2 billion:** total TxDOT budget FY 2002

Employees

- 14,440:** total employees
- 6,422:** routine maintenance
- 5,198:** plan/design/manage
- 1,849:** indirect administration
- 470:** registration and titling
- 408:** other personnel
- 25:** seasonal and temporary
- 38:** aviation
- 30:** public transportation

Guardrails

- \$21.9 million:** cost of repairing 287 miles of damaged guardrail in 2001 (latest year available)

Highway-rail crossings

- \$150,000:** approximate cost to install a single train-activated warning device
- 200:** number of projects per year to install train-activated warning devices

Litter removal

- \$32 million:** annual expense for cleaning up roadside litter
- 52:** percentage decrease in roadside litter since 1995

Motor carrier

- 479,527:** oversize/overweight permits issued
- \$30.7 million:** revenue generated

Pavement

- 24,869:** lane miles of highway receiving pavement improvements
- 13:** percent of state highways receiving pavement improvements

Public transportation

- 285 million:** annual ridership
- 247 million:** vehicle miles driven
- 7,564:** average number of buses and vans in operation

Recycling

- \$305 million:** amount spent on recycled products
- 3,341:** tons of scrap metal recycled
- 3,280:** gallons of used oil recycled
- 2,562:** batteries recycled
- 1,431:** sign posts salvaged
- 405:** tons of paper recycled

Right of way

- 1.1 million:** estimated acres in state transportation system

System size

- 78,671:** miles of city streets
- 142,357:** miles of county roads
- 79,361:** state-maintained centerline miles
- 40,991:** miles of Farm to Market system roads
- 16,166:** miles of state highways
- 12,109:** miles of U.S. highways
- 6,526:** miles of frontage roads
- 3,233:** miles of interstate highways
- 336:** miles of park roads
- 726:** picnic areas
- 138:** miles of toll roads
- 96:** safety rest areas

Traffic signals

- \$100,000:** estimated cost to install a single traffic signal
- 15,316:** traffic signals maintained through TxDOT
- 4,751:** roadside flashing beacons
- 3,054:** flashing beacons situated in school zones in Texas
- 1,146:** traffic signals installed in 2001 (latest year available)
- 831:** traffic signals maintained by cities with expense reimbursed by TxDOT

Travel and Tourism

- 3.4 million:** Texas Highways magazine copies sold annually
- 3.1 million:** customers served at travel information centers
- 2.0 million:** copies printed of Texas Official Travel Map
- 1.2 million:** copies printed of Texas State Travel Guide
- 321,673:** inquiries received about road conditions

Vehicle Titles and Registration

- \$2.7 billion:** motor vehicle sales tax collected
- \$1.2 billion:** registration fees collected
- \$68 million:** title fees collected
- 18.7 million:** registered motor vehicles in Texas
- 7.9 million:** license plates manufactured
- \$7.0 million:** specialty license plate revenues
- 5.9 million:** vehicle titles issued

Coming next month...

State lawmakers face one primary task this session (and all sessions for that matter): passing a budget. Rarely, however, has the Texas Legislature had to grapple with such a large shortfall in revenue, estimated as high as \$9.9 billion over the biennium.

Read about this and other legislative issues affecting transportation — both at the state and federal levels — in the February issue of Transportation News. You'll also learn about TxDOT's Legislative Affairs Office, which serves as TxDOT's liaison to federal and state lawmakers, coordinating the department's work with the Texas Legislature, United States Congress and the Governor's office as well as the agency's participation in the state and federal legislative processes.

Also featured in February is the first of a three-part series on conference planning; a profile of a TxDOT employee who has published a novel; and a feature on interesting historical facts about the Texas Capitol. And of course, there will be the regular items found monthly in Transportation News: Names in the News, TxDOT Roundup, Service Awards, our letters section, retirees and more.

2003

JANUARY

30 Commission Meeting, Tyler

FEBRUARY

11-13 Right of Way Administrator's Meeting, Austin, ROW

17 Presidents Day (holiday)

27 Commission Meeting, Austin

MARCH

6-7 2003 Construction Conference, Waco, CST

19-21 Texas Aviation Conference, Austin, AVN

27 Commission Meeting, Austin

31 Cesar Chavez Day (optional holiday)

APRIL

3 Safety Rest Area Grand Opening, I-40 mm129, TRV

18 Good Friday (optional holiday)

21 San Jacinto Day (optional holiday)

23-24 Statewide Maintenance Conference, Waco, MNT

24 Commission Meeting, Austin

MAY

26 Memorial Day (holiday)

27-30 Transportation Planning Conference, Irving, TPP

29 Commission Meeting, Austin

The complete TxDOT Calendar is on the intranet at <http://crossroads/org/pio/articles/calendar.htm>



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