

Ports-To-Plains project allocating funds to improve rural roads in Texas

A national transportation research non profit highlights critical components of the state's rural transportation system



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LUBBOCK, Texas (KCBD) - The Ports-To-Plains trade corridor is Lubbock's largest upcoming transportation project. Today TRIP-NET highlighted a few reasons why this corridor is essential for transportation safety in Texas rural areas.

TRIP-NET's Keeping Rural Texas Connected report stated that the roads, "lack

adequate capacity in some corridors to support growing freight and passenger vehicle travel; they do not provide needed levels of connectivity to some communities; they lack some needed roadway safety features; and they carry a higher share of large trucks than urban roadways, including large trucks needed to support energy and agricultural production, which causes increased wear and tear on these road surfaces."

"Good transportation is essential in rural areas to provide access to jobs, to facilitate the movement of goods and people, to access opportunities for health care and education, and to provide links to social and recreational activities," TRIP-NET noted.

TRIP-NET says the new Ports-to-Plains Corridor will manage funds to fix many of these issues, including a focus on road safety.

Traffic crashes are a major source of fatalities in Texas. Rural, non-interstate, highways have a significantly higher fatality rate compared to urban areas.

"In 2020, traffic crashes claimed the lives of 3,874 people in Texas. Traffic crashes on Texas' non-Interstate rural roads resulted in 1,334 fatalities in 2020, 34 percent of all traffic fatalities in Texas," according to the report.

Alvin New is a Texas Transportation Commissioner. He said there is a dramatic need for rural road infrastructure, and everyone in the state of Texas benefits from investment in rural Texas.

"The next thing we talked about is safety. 50% of the fatal accidents occur in rural Texas 50%. When you have around 15% of the population, then you're creating 50% of the fatal accidents," New said. "It shows that there's a very strong need for more shoulders, wider roads, and ultimately divided four-lane roads because that's the safest way to move products and people from one place to the other."

Over the next ten years, New says Texas is investing \$14 billion into these types of changes. For more information about transportation safety in Texas visit [TRIP-NET's website here](#).