



JAMES E. DARLING
MAYOR

September 18, 2020

The Honorable Terry Canales
House Committee on Transportation
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Re: Transportation RFI – Interim Charge #4

Dear Chairman Canales and Members of the House Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on interim charge #4, relating to international border ports of entry in Texas. As you know, the Texas economy has been among the fastest growing in the nation for over a decade. A large portion of Texas's economic success comes from its proximity with Mexico and the billions of dollars in trade that takes place each year between our state and Mexico.

Over the last decade, as trade has increased between Texas and Mexico, so has the volume of truck traffic on our international bridges. Currently, wait times at the Pharr-Reynosa Bridge can be up to 4 hours, which often results in spoiled produce and thousands of dollars in losses to Texas businesses. With continued growth and prosperity also comes the responsibility to ensure the proper infrastructure is in place to sustain binational commerce.

In order to help reduce wait times and to expedite trade, the Anzalduas Bridge Board (ABB) is working with local, state, and federal partners to complete the Anzalduas Land Port of Entry Expansion Project. As you may know, the Anzalduas International Bridge (Anzalduas) is a crucial international land port of entry owned and operated by the cities of McAllen, Mission and Hidalgo. Anzalduas' strategic location puts it at a major crossroads for manufacturing, trade and travel in Mexico and the United States.

The Anzalduas Land Port of Entry Expansion Project will increase the current facility's operations to include full commercial capabilities for both northbound and southbound commercial vehicles. This construction will provide both an alternate crossing point and create additional capacity for commercial traffic in the region, thereby reducing crossing distance and trip time for truck traffic. These reduced wait times will allow for the more efficient delivery of goods and services and will also reduce vehicle emissions resulting from less time idling at border crossings. Updating the facility will also improve national security by employing the latest in border security technology.

As the chair of the ABB, I want to thank Chairman Canales and our Rio Grande Valley legislative delegation for their unwavering support of Anzalduas. With their help, the Texas Department of Transportation recently included projects that help to expand Anzalduas in the 2021 Unified Transportation Program (UTP). Port of entry expansion projects, like the one proposed at Anzalduas, are essential to the economic viability of the region, state and country.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to share our vision for the Anzalduas Land Port of Entry Expansion Project. The City of McAllen looks forward to working together to reduce congestion and continue the economic growth of the Rio Grande Valley and the state as a whole.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Darling", with a large, stylized initial "J" that loops around the first part of the name.

Mayor Jim Darling
Chairman of the Anzalduas Bridge Board, City of McAllen