The Better Border for a Better America Conference is an informative and engaging event focused on improving connectivity and efficient mobility across the U.S.-Mexico border. Keynote speakers, panel presentations, and a field trip will showcase innovative solutions for border trade and transportation challenges.

The Conference provides a unique opportunity for engineers, planners, administrators, and researchers to exchange information and explore the benefits of recent research and practical case studies related to the U.S.-Mexico border pertaining to:

- Policy and Regulation
- Infrastructure
- Planning
- Operations
- Resiliency
- Technology
- Economic Competitiveness

All sessions will be held at the Double Tree Hotel in Downtown El Paso, Texas. The conference language is English.

**Tuesday, September 19th**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 pm - 9:00 pm</td>
<td><strong>WELCOMING RECEPTION AND REGISTRATION</strong>&lt;br&gt;Double Tree Hotel Downtown, El Paso, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 am - 8:30 am</td>
<td><strong>BREAKFAST AND REGISTRATION</strong></td>
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<td>8:30 am - 10:00 am</td>
<td><strong>PLENARY SESSION</strong>&lt;br&gt;Rafael Aldrete, Texas A&amp;M Transportation Institute, presiding&lt;br&gt; Welcome:&lt;br&gt;• Representative Veronica Escobar&lt;br&gt;• Senator John Cornyn&lt;br&gt;• Ricardo Samaniego, El Paso County Judge&lt;br&gt;Presentations:&lt;br&gt;• Andrew Edwards, Southern Border Coordinator, Federal Highway Administration&lt;br&gt;• Commissioner Bobby Janecka, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality&lt;br&gt;Keynote Address&lt;br&gt;Caroline Mays, Director of Planning and Modal Programs, Texas Department of Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 am - 10:30 am</td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
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<td>10:30 am - 12:00 pm</td>
<td><strong>TECHNICAL SESSION 1: ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS</strong>&lt;br&gt;Jolanda Prozzi, Texas A&amp;M Transportation Institute, presiding&lt;br&gt;Presentations:&lt;br&gt;• John Barela, Chief Executive Officer, Borderplex Alliance&lt;br&gt;• Michael Bomba, Research Professor, University of North Texas&lt;br&gt;• Jesus Cañas, Senior Business Economist, Dallas Federal Reserve Bank&lt;br&gt;• Salvador Contreras, Professor and Associate Dean for Graduate and Professional Programs, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley&lt;br&gt;• Mayra Maldonado, Director of the Hunt Institute for Global Competitiveness, University of Texas at El Paso</td>
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**Wednesday, September 20th**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 am - 12:00 pm</td>
<td><strong>TECHNICAL SESSION 2: POLICY AND REGULATIONS</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sergio Vasquez, Texas Department of Transportation, presiding&lt;br&gt;Presentations:&lt;br&gt;• Gerry Schwebel, Executive Vice President, IBC Bank (Invited)&lt;br&gt;• Juan Villa, Research Scientist, Texas A&amp;M Transportation Institute&lt;br&gt;• Mario Porras, Director of Binational Affairs, El Paso Community Foundation (Invited)&lt;br&gt;• Carlos Santillán, Chief Executive Officer, Ciao (International and Transportation Operations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 pm - 4:30 pm</td>
<td><strong>ON THE GO BOX LUNCHES AND FIELD TRIP:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Ysleta Port of Entry*&lt;br&gt;* Participants will need to email name, date of birth, and last 4 digits of social security number to (email to be provided). Also please note that this field trip entails a certain level of walking. Please bring comfortable shoes.</td>
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A BETTER BORDER FOR
A BETTER AMERICA

El Paso, TX
September 20-21, 2023

7:30 am - 8:30 am: BREAKFAST AND REGISTRATION

8:30 am - 10:00 am: TECHNICAL SESSION 3: OPERATIONS
Eduardo Calvo, El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization, presiding

Presentations:
- Roberto Tinajero, Assistant Director, City of El Paso: International Bridges
- Tony Hall, Acting Assistant Director of Field Operations, Customs and Border Protection
- Paul Mendoza, Director of Mexico Operations, BNSF Railway Company
- Allan Russel, Chief Executive Officer, TECMA

TECHNICAL SESSION 4: RESILIENCY
Jeff Shelton, Texas A&M Transportation Institute, presiding

Presentations:
- Javier Dominquez, Transportation Planner, Lower Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Nicole Ferrin, Chief Resilience Officer, City of El Paso
- Veronica Gonzalez-Sepulveda, Chief Resilience Officer, Juarez Municipality
- Rodolfo Souza, Assistant Transportation Research Scientist, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

10:00 am - 10:30 am: BREAK

10:30 am - 12:00 pm: TECHNICAL SESSION 5: INFRASTRUCTURE
Juan Villa, Texas A&M Transportation Institute, presiding

Presentations:
- Homerio Bernal, International Programs Planner, New Mexico Department of Transportation
- Lauren Garduno, President/CEO, Ports to Plains Alliance
- Jesse Hereford, Head of Strategic Partnerships & Stakeholder Engagement, North American Development Bank (NADBANK)
- Marco Grajeda, Executive Director, New Mexico Border Authority
- Rogelio Fernandez, Director of the Chihuahua Border Bridges Trust

TECHNICAL SESSION 6: TECHNOLOGY
Juan Carlos Espinosa, Texas A&M Transportation Institute, presiding

Presentations:
- Mark Sanders, Director of the Office of International Affairs, Arizona Department of Transportation
- Carlos Silva, Research Specialist, Texas A&M Transportation Institute
- Swapnil Samant, Senior Software Engineer, Texas A&M Transportation Institute
- Bernardo Ortiz, Chief Executive Officer, CEO IBI Group
- TBD, Chihuahua Border Bridges Trust

Draft Program
Thursday, September 21st
A BETTER BORDER FOR
A BETTER AMERICA

El Paso, TX
September 20-21, 2023

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm: LUNCH Tuscan Tavern
Remarks: Chairman Bryan Daniel, Texas Workforce Commission

1:00 pm - 2:30 pm:
TECHNICAL SESSION 7: PLANNING: International Bridges
Rafael Aldrete, Texas A&M Transportation Institute, presiding

Presentations:
- Roberto Ransom, Economic Development Director, El Paso County
- Pete Sepulveda, Executive Director, Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority
- Yvette Limon, Director, City of Laredo - Laredo Bridge System
- Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge (Invited)
- Homero Balderas, Bridge Director, Port of Eagle Pass

TECHNICAL SESSION 8: PLANNING: Transportation
Jolanda Prozzi, Texas A&M Transportation Institute, presiding

Presentations:
- Okan Gurbuz, Assistant Research Scientist, Texas A&M Transportation Institute
- Eduardo Calvo, Executive Director, El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Raul Ortega, Director of Transportation Planning and Development, Texas Department of Transportation, El Paso District
- Arq. Roberto Mora, Director, Instituto Municipal de Investigacion y Planeacion de Ciudad Juarez
- David Galicia, Research Scientist, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

2:30 pm - 3:00 pm:
CONCLUDING REMARKS
A BETTER BORDER FOR A BETTER AMERICA

El Paso, TX
September 20-21, 2023

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