



**Office of the Secretary of State
Border Commerce Coordinator Report 2025**

**Jane Nelson
Secretary of State**

Introduction

In January 2023, Governor Greg Abbott appointed Jane Nelson as Secretary of State and designated Secretary Nelson as Border Commerce Coordinator (BCC) pursuant to Section 772.010 of the Texas Government Code.

The BCC's role is to facilitate communication and coordination of border initiatives among state agencies, local officials, and the federal governments of the United States, Mexico, and Canada. Additionally, the Secretary of State serves as the Chief International Protocol Officer for the State of Texas and acts as the Governor's Chief Liaison to Mexico and the Border Region of Texas, working closely with Mexican officials and other stakeholders to promote cross-border cooperation and collaboration.

This report covers the activities of Secretary Nelson as Border Commerce Coordinator in 2025.

I. Overview of Border Commerce Coordinator's Role and Responsibilities

Section 772.010 of the Texas Government Code outlines the duties and responsibilities of the State's Border Commerce Coordinator.

Pursuant to Section 772.010(a), the Border Commerce Coordinator is tasked with, among other duties: examining trade issues between the United States, Mexico, and Canada; acting as an ombudsman for government agencies within the Texas and Mexico border region by improving communication and cooperation between federal, state, and local governments; working with federal officials to resolve transportation issues involving infrastructure, including roads and bridges, to allow for the efficient movement of goods and people across the Texas-Mexico border; and working to identify problems associated with trade and transportation infrastructure and develop recommendations for addressing those problems.

Section 772.010(c) reflects that the BCC will coordinate with other state agencies, local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, other "appropriate community organizations" along the Texas-Mexico border, and "comparable entities in Mexican states" along the Texas-Mexico border to "address the unique planning and capacity needs of those areas." Under this provision, "the coordinator shall assist those governments, organizations, and entities to identify and develop initiatives to address those needs."

This report is being submitted pursuant to Section 772.010(c) of the Texas Government Code, which provides that before January 1 of each year, the BCC "shall submit to the presiding officer of each house of the legislature a report of the coordinator's activities under this subsection during the preceding year."

II. Communications with Mexican Officials and Others Relating to Texas-Mexico Trade

In 2025, the Border Commerce Coordinator and Secretary of State staff actively engaged with Mexican government officials and other key border stakeholders to strengthen binational collaboration and advance shared priorities across the Texas-Mexico border region.

As Border Commerce Coordinator, Secretary Nelson and her staff collaborated closely with officials from Mexico's four border states and other strategic partners to promote economic growth, facilitate cross-border trade, and advance infrastructure projects. These efforts have been instrumental in reinforcing and expanding the long-standing partnership between Texas and Mexico.

In February, Secretary Nelson's staff participated in the ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony for the new CPKC Patrick J. Ottensmeyer International Railway Bridge. The \$100 million, 1,170-foot structure represents a major binational infrastructure investment that will significantly increase cross-border rail capacity, improve supply chain efficiency, and strengthen trade connectivity between Texas and Mexico.

In May, Secretary Nelson joined Governor Greg Abbott and Governor María Eugenia Campos of Chihuahua for a meeting at the Governor's Mansion focused on border security and economic development. The discussion highlighted Chihuahua's role as a leading manufacturing hub in northern Mexico and a key partner in advancing Texas-Mexico trade and investment relations.

In June, Secretary Nelson's staff traveled to Mexico City to participate in the Mexico-U.S. Binational Bridges and Border Crossings Group (BBBXG) meetings. Co-led by the U.S. Department of State and Mexico's Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, the BBBXG convenes federal, state, and local officials, along with private-sector representatives, to coordinate binational efforts related to border infrastructure, port operations, and cross-border mobility.

In July, Secretary Nelson hosted a Consular Corps Information Session to brief members of the Texas consular community on the services provided by her office. Seven Mexican consuls participated in the event, reflecting the strong and ongoing collaboration between Texas and Mexico's diplomatic representatives.

Throughout the year, Secretary Nelson and her staff took part in events and initiatives aimed at strengthening the Texas-Mexico trade relationship. Secretary Nelson's staff attended the signing of a new sister city agreement between San Antonio and Querétaro City. In addition, Assistant Secretary of State for Mexican and Border Affairs Carlos Ealy delivered keynote remarks at the inaugural RGV-RioPlex Texas Port to the Stars FDI Summit 2025, highlighting the RioPlex region's growing role as a hub for binational investment, innovation, and trade.

Assistant Secretary Ealy also participated in a series of high-level engagements, including the USMCA Roundtable on Tariffs and the State of the North American Relationship hosted by the Texas Association of Business, and the Texas-Mexico Dialogue on Infrastructure and Energy

Opportunities. Additionally, he delivered remarks at the City of McAllen's "A Morning of Diplomacy: Honoring Hispanic Heritage" event, emphasizing the importance of cultural and diplomatic ties in the Texas-Mexico partnership.

The Secretary of State maintained regular communication with Mexican consular officials, including Consuls General Humberto Hernández-Haddad (Austin), Francisco de la Torre Galindo (Dallas), Rubén Minutti Zanatta (San Antonio), Mauricio Ibarra Ponce de León (El Paso), Judith Arrieta Munguía (Brownsville), Vivian Juárez Mondragón (Eagle Pass), Gamaliel Bustillos Muñoz (Presidio), and Patricia Pinzón (Albuquerque). These interactions focused on strengthening economic, cultural, and institutional relations between Texas and Mexico and advancing shared priorities along the border region.

In partnership with the Mexican Consulates of Albuquerque and Austin, the Secretary of State hosted an informational webinar on the apostille process. Secretary Nelson and her staff also communicated with representatives of the Mexican federal government and officials from Mexico's four border states throughout the year to ensure ongoing cooperation and alignment on mutual priorities.

Looking ahead to 2026, Secretary Nelson and her staff remain committed to building upon these partnerships and advancing Texas's leadership in fostering a stronger, more resilient, and competitive Texas-Mexico relationship.

III. Border Trade Advisory Committee

Established in 2001, the Border Trade Advisory Committee (BTAC) was created to develop strategic solutions, address challenges in border trade and transportation, and provide recommendations to the Texas Transportation Commission and the Governor. The Border Commerce Coordinator serves as its presiding officer. BTAC's membership includes distinguished leaders from the Texas border region, such as mayors, bridge and port directors, industry executives, academic experts, and federal representatives.

Secretary Nelson convened a BTAC meeting on August 12, 2025 in Austin. The meeting centered on reviewing transportation-related outcomes from the Texas Legislature's 89th Regular Session and included a panel discussion that provided valuable perspectives on legislative impacts, industry trends, and strategies to enhance Texas-Mexico border trade and transportation infrastructure.

Additionally, the August 12 meeting officially kicked off the update to the Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Master Plan (BTMP), building upon the foundation of the 2021 plan to develop a comprehensive, binational, long-range framework through 2050. The BTMP serves as a strategic multimodal plan that identifies issues, needs, challenges, opportunities, and strategies to improve the safe and efficient movement of people and goods across the Texas-Mexico border, throughout the border regions, and beyond. The updated BTMP will reflect evolving trade dynamics under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), the continued growth

of nearshoring trends, and shifts in global supply chains. The plan will include detailed assessments of infrastructure needs at border crossings, highways, rail, and multimodal connections, and will incorporate robust participation from Mexican federal and state counterparts. It is anticipated that the Texas Transportation Commission will consider the updated BTMP for final adoption in 2027.

BTAC members also received a briefing on the findings of the Texas-Mexico Border Region Connectivity Plan, a strategic roadmap designed to enhance mobility and economic growth across the border region. The plan focuses on improving the movement of people and goods through strengthened first- and last-mile, port-to-port, and region-to-region connections, reinforcing the shared commitment to regional competitiveness, efficiency, and cross-border connectivity.

Representatives from the Mexican states along the Texas-Mexico border participated in the BTAC meeting, providing updates on their respective infrastructure plans and investment priorities. The meeting attendees included Fernando Alba (Chihuahua), Sergio Guajardo (Tamaulipas), Ana Lidia Martínez (Coahuila), and Marco González (Nuevo León). The Mexican federal government was represented by Consul General Humberto Hernández-Haddad, and the Government of Canada was represented by Consul General Susan Harper. Several public officials, including Senator Sarah Eckhardt, Travis County Judge Andy Brown, and Austin Mayor Kirk Watson, attended the meeting as well, offering valuable input on the Committee's discussions.

In 2026, BTAC will continue to monitor progress on the updated Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Master Plan and support sustained coordination among binational stakeholders.

IV. Communications with Canadian Officials and Others Related to Texas-Canada Trade

As Texas's second-largest foreign export partner after Mexico, Canada continues to play a vital role in the State's international trade landscape. Throughout 2025, Secretary Nelson and her senior leadership engaged extensively with federal, provincial, and business leaders in Canada to advance bilateral cooperation in trade, energy, investment, and other areas of collaboration.

In February, Secretary Nelson met with Susan Harper (Canadian Consul General in Dallas) at the Texas Capitol to review ongoing Texas-Canada economic priorities and identify opportunities to enhance bilateral cooperation. In March, the Secretary welcomed Steven Jast (Delegate of Québec in Houston) to her office for discussions focused on economic development, trade expansion, and the potential for a future Texas mission to Québec. That same month, Assistant Secretary of State for International Affairs and Protocol Jacqueline Walker attended a roundtable at the Texas Association of Business to discuss the USMCA with key Canadian stakeholders.

In April, Secretary Nelson hosted Minister Christopher Skeete (Québec's Minister for Economy, Innovation, and Energy) to explore expanded economic engagement between Texas and Québec, with special emphasis on innovation partnerships.

In July 2025, Secretary Nelson traveled to Alberta at the invitation of Danielle Smith (Premier of Alberta) to participate in the Calgary Stampede as part of a delegation program. During the visit, the Secretary met with senior provincial and federal leaders, including Premier Smith and Doug Ford (Premier of Ontario). She also connected with representatives from Alberta's economic, cultural, and energy sectors. The visit provided valuable opportunities for the Secretary to participate in cultural exchanges, strengthen government-to-government relationships, and engage in business discussions focused on energy, innovation, and Texas-Alberta economic cooperation.

In September, Secretary Nelson met again with Consul General Harper to discuss pre-delegation planning, future economic development opportunities, and preparations for 2026 bilateral engagements. A few weeks later, Assistant Secretary Walker traveled to Dallas to attend the second annual Friends of Canada Golf Tournament, where she had the opportunity to visit with federal and provincial representatives of Canada and other business leaders representing major companies like Air Canada, RBC, Tiger, Export Development Canada, and many others.

In October, Deputy Secretary of State Dave Nelson and Assistant Secretary Walker met with a delegation of senior representatives from leading Canadian pension funds and financial institutions, including CPP Investments, Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, CDPQ, and major Canadian banks such as RBC, TD, Scotiabank, BMO, and CIBC. The delegation, led by Consul General Harper, highlighted Canada's existing investment activity in Texas, particularly in energy, infrastructure, and financial services, and discussed opportunities for expanded investment, while gaining insight into Texas's economic priorities and long-term growth strategy.

Overall, efforts and engagement with Canada throughout the year ensured continuous coordination with Canadian partners, reinforced Texas's commitment to strong bilateral ties, and supported the State's broader economic development objectives.

V. The North American Development Bank

The North American Development Bank (NADBank) is a binational financial institution established by the governments of the United States and Mexico to finance and support the development of critical infrastructure projects. NADBank provides technical expertise and financial assistance for initiatives that preserve, protect, and enhance the environment, thereby improving the quality of life for communities on both sides of the border. Section 772.010(a)(6) of the Texas Government Code directs the Border Commerce Coordinator to work to "increase funding for the North American Development Bank to assist in the financing of water and wastewater facilities," underscoring the State of Texas's commitment to addressing essential infrastructure needs in the border region.

In August, Assistant Secretary Ealy participated in the NADBank Summit 2025, Investing in Infrastructure: The Catalyst for a Prosperous U.S.-Mexico Border Region, held in San Antonio. He took part in the keynote conversation alongside Emmanuel Loo (Deputy Secretary of Economic Development for Nuevo León) and Rob Black (Secretary of Economic Development for New

Mexico). During the discussion, Assistant Secretary Ealy highlighted Texas's role as the United States' largest trading partner with Mexico, emphasized the importance of infrastructure efficiency as a driver of binational competitiveness, and showcased the historic infrastructure investments that Texas has made in recent years to strengthen trade and regional growth.

VI. Continued Work with Federal, State, and Local Officials and Stakeholders

Secretary Nelson maintained active communication with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the International Boundary and Water Commission, the agency responsible for implementing boundary and water treaties between the United States and Mexico. The Secretary's staff participated in Binational Policy Work Group meetings with both agencies to strengthen coordination and enhance the reliability and predictability of water deliveries to Texas.

Secretary Nelson also maintained regular engagement with federal, state, and local officials, as well as other key stakeholders, on matters affecting the Texas-Mexico border region. Throughout the year, Secretary Nelson and her staff met with Border Trade Advisory Committee members and border stakeholders, hosted delegations of border city leaders at the Texas Capitol, held meetings with U.S. Department of State officials, and briefed legislators and their staff on issues related to Texas-Mexico relations.

Beyond the BTAC initiatives and other activities outlined in this report, Secretary Nelson remains committed to continued collaboration with public officials and stakeholders on critical border issues, as directed under Section 772.010 of the Texas Government Code. The Secretary will continue to work closely with border leaders to address trade, security, and transportation challenges impacting the Texas-Mexico border and to promote sustainable regional economic growth.