



BORDER BUSINESS INDICATORS

IN THIS ISSUE...

Topic of the Month:

Bridge Crossings
Pages 2-5

Border Statistics:

Aggregate Sales
Pages 6-7

Truck/Rail Exports
Page 8

Tourist Visas
Page 9

Airport Activity
Page 9

Power Connections
Page 10

Building Permits
Page 10

Unemployment
Page 11

Hotel Occupancy
Page 11

BUSH MEETS SALINAS ON FREE TRADE ISSUES

A Letter from the Editor

On November 25-27 the President of the U.S. George Bush and the President of Mexico Carlos Salinas De Gortari met in Monterrey, N.L., Mexico to discuss, among other bilateral issues, the preliminaries of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between the two countries.

The purpose of these negotiations is the total elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers between the two countries, a measure that will probably increase the trade volume between the U.S and Mexico to over \$100 billion by the turn of the century.

If the negotiations are completed successfully, the FTA will have a most significant effect upon the Texas/Mexico border economy due to the fact that the majority of the traded commodities between the two countries will physically pass through the communities along the border, and a variety of supporting services will be performed by border business entities.

The border business community will follow closely the developments of the FTA negotiations and lobby the U.S negotiators to insure that its special interests are incorporated into the agreement or that sufficient time be given for necessary adjustments.

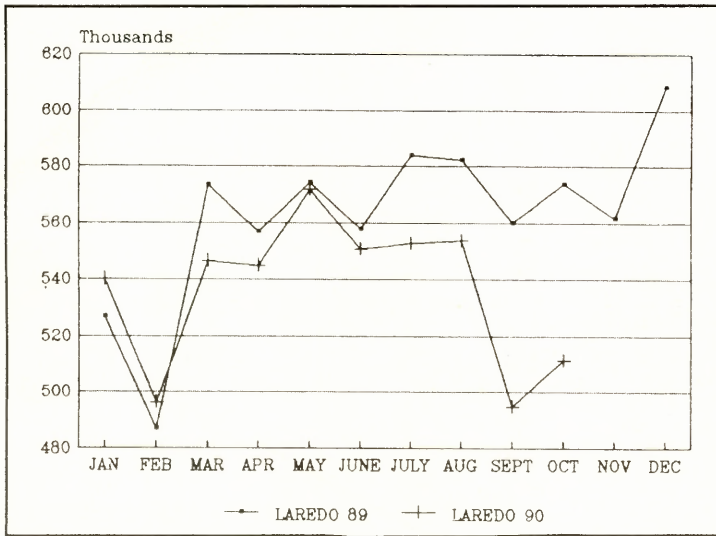
The Border Business Indicators will communicate to its readers available information and serve as an informational platform for dialog on the vital concerns regarding the Free Trade Agreement issues.

Kindly be reminded that as of the January 1991 issue the BBI will only be available to subscribers. The subscription fee is \$24.00 per year, and the subscription form can be found on the back of this issue. We hope that you have enjoyed the complimentary issues that you have received. We are looking forward to adding you to our list of subscribers. Seasons Greetings!!

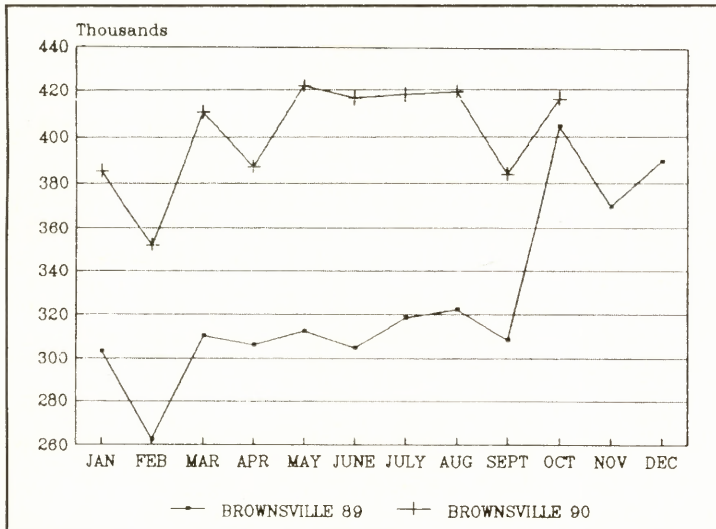
Dr. Michael Landeck
Director
Institute for International Trade
Laredo State University

Topic of Bridge

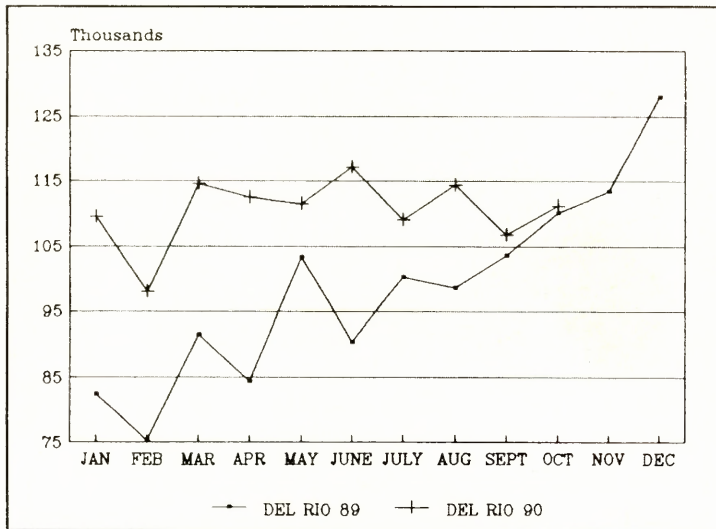
Vehicle Crossings - Laredo



Vehicle Crossings - Brownsville



Vehicle Crossings - Del Rio



The recent increase in the bridge toll fees collected by the Mexican authorities has developed a great concern among the border business community regarding the eventual effects of these increases upon the border economy.

The critical reactions are directed toward the frequent increases themselves as well as the lack of coordination or any prior notification to the U.S. counterparts as to the timing of their implementation.

In view of the above, the analysis of vehicle and pedestrian crossings has become a focal point of interest, and therefore this issue of the BBI presents a detailed statistical description of the bridge crossings from January 1989 to October 1990 city by city.

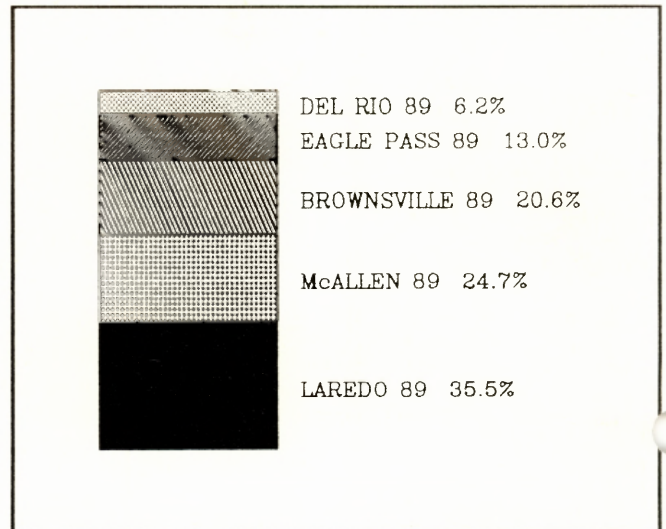
Vehicle Bridge Crossings Statistics

A comparison of the five border cities represented in this publication (excluding El Paso) indicates that the vehicle developments differ significantly along the Texas-Mexican border.

All five cities show the expected seasonal high in December and the seasonal low in the month of February, but the yearly developments are quite different.

Brownsville and Del Rio have an increased vehicle crossing traffic in 1990 as compared to 1989. The comparison in October shows a 2.89% increase for Brownsville and a 0.97% increase for Del Rio, but in previous months Del Rio was up by as much as 20% compared to 1989.

Vehicle Percent Share - Oct. 1989



the Month: Crossings

Eagle Pass and McAllen maintained in 1990 a similar level as in 1989 although Eagle Pass shows a 1.03% increase in October 1990 compared to October 1989.

The city that shows the greatest decrease in vehicle crossings in 1990 was Laredo which during the first half of 1990 followed the previous year trend but then fell behind in July - August by over 5% and in October by 10.9% as compared to October of 1989.

On the whole in October 1989, there were 1,685,133 vehicles crossing the bridges of the five cities as compared to 1,637,497 in October 1990, a decrease of 2.9%.

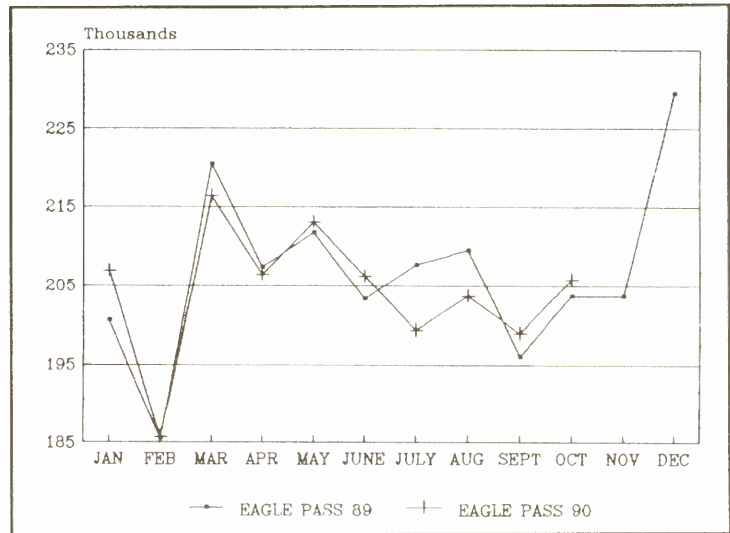
An analysis of the vehicle percent share that each city has in the total vehicle crossings shows that in 1989 Laredo had the largest share of 35.5% followed by McAllen 24.7%, Brownsville 20.6%, Eagle Pass 13.0%, and Del Rio 6.2%.

As indicated in the table below, Laredo has decreased in vehicle crossings from 573,820 to 511,277. This has resulted in a decline of Laredo's percent share of the total vehicle crossings from 35.5% to 32.6%. Nevertheless, Laredo still maintained its leading position in this category. The second largest portion of the vehicle crossings is now with Brownsville which increased from 20.6% to 24.4%. McAllen's vehicle crossings reduced its share from 24.7% to 23.9% and fell back to third place. Fourth is Eagle Pass with 12.4%, a decrease from 13% in October 1989, followed by Del Rio with 6.7%, up from 6.2% a year ago.

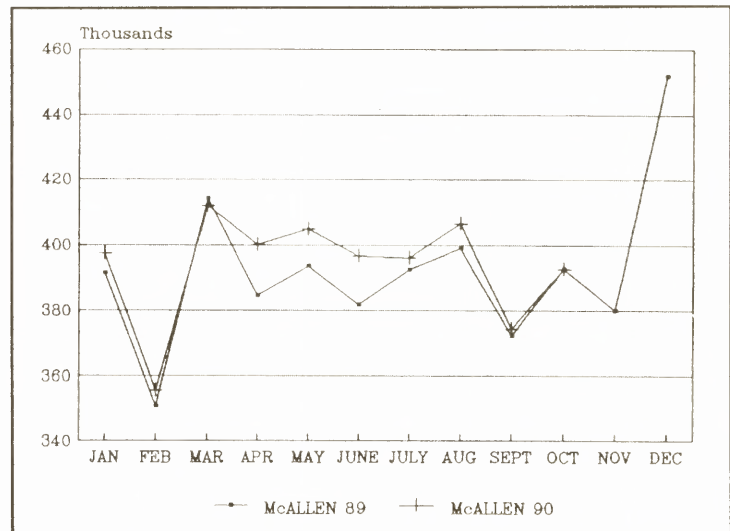
Vehicle Crossings - Aug./Oct. '90

CITY	AUG 1990	SEPT 1990	OCT 1990	OCT 1989	% CHG OCT 89-OCT 90
LAREDO	553,616	494,748	511,277	573,820	-10.90
BROWNSVILLE	418,992	383,903	416,128	404,423	2.89
DEL RIO	114,416	106,896	111,259	110,193	0.97
EAGLE PASS	203,707	198,936	205,805	203,706	1.03
McALLEN	406,609	374,328	393,028	392,991	0.01

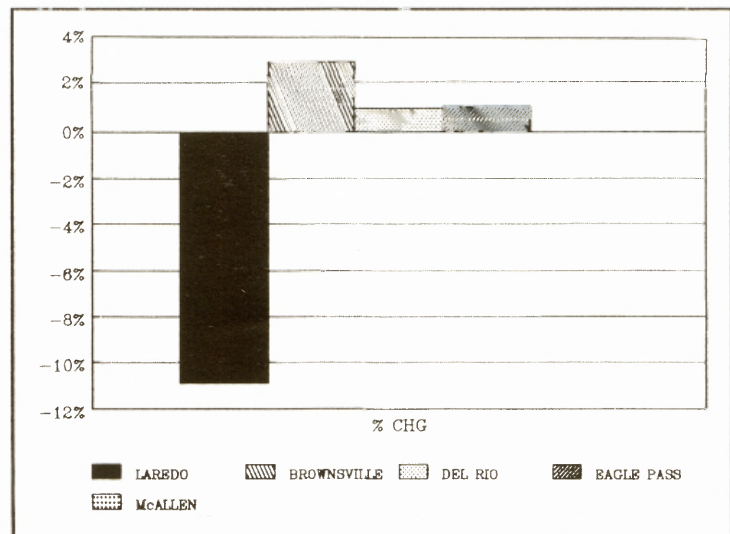
Vehicle Crossings - Eagle Pass



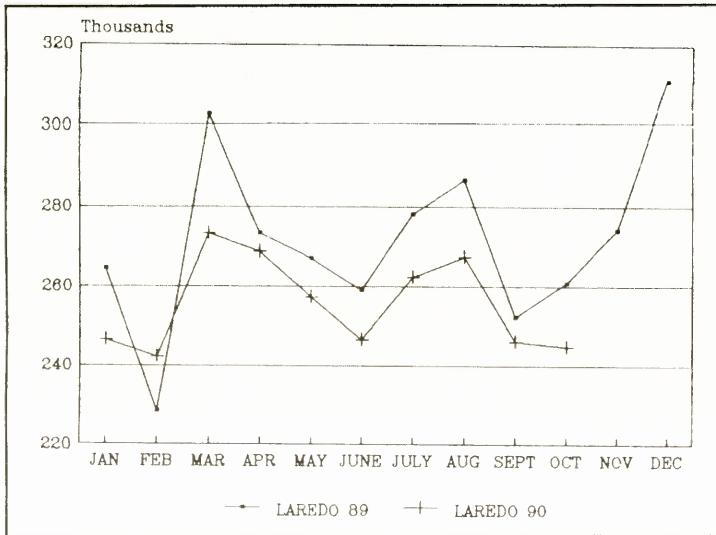
Vehicle Crossings - McAllen



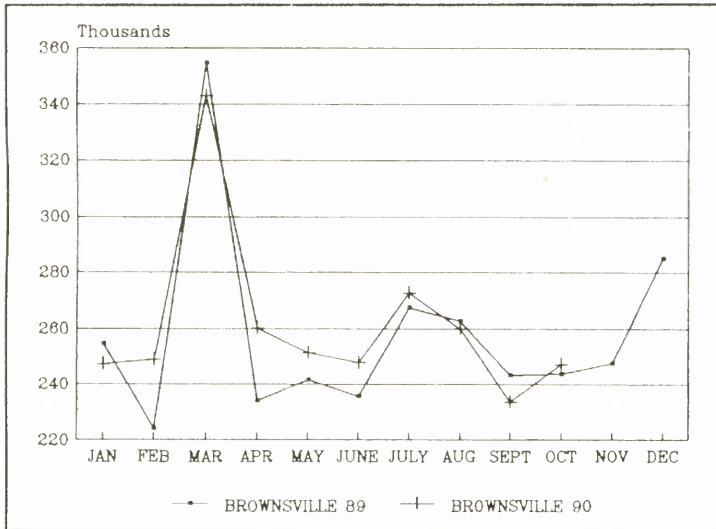
Percent Change - Oct. '89/Oct. '90



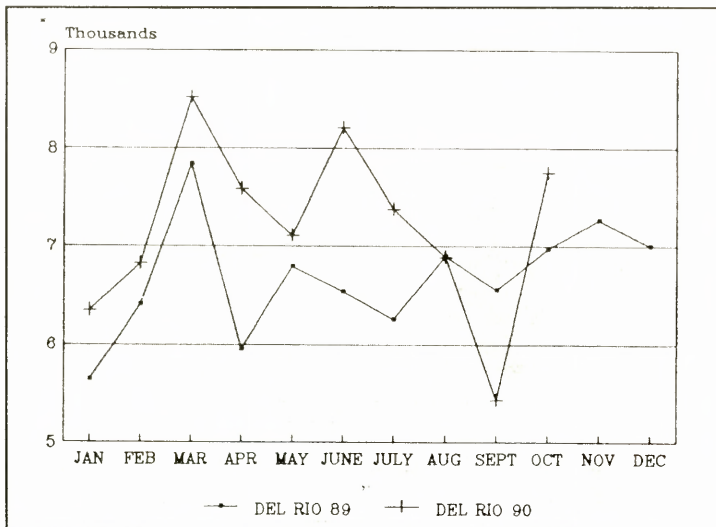
Pedestrian Crossings - Laredo



Pedestrian Crossings - Brownsville



Pedestrian Crossings - Del Rio



Topic of the Bridge

The previous analysis dealt with two-axle non-commercial vehicles and tractors crossing the bridges into Mexico. These vehicles bring with them a varying number of U.S. or Mexican citizens or citizens of other nationalities. Another vital statistic for border businesses, specifically those enterprises that are located within walking distance from the bridges, is the number of pedestrian crossings. The pedestrian group differs from the ones crossing in vehicles not only due to the means of transportation that they use to cross the border but they probably also differ in their purchasing habits, that is in what, where, and how they make their buying decisions.

Pedestrian Bridge Crossings Statistics

The seasonal highs regarding pedestrian bridge crossings are in December in the cities of Laredo (310,612) which represents an increase of 13.3% compared to November, and Eagle Pass (56,006) an increase of 22.9%. The other three cities of Brownsville (342,948), Del Rio (8,524), and McAllen (115,829) have the most monthly pedestrian crossings in Spring during the month of March. Brownsville pedestrian crossings increased by 38.3% compared to February, Del Rio by 16.9%, and in McAllen there was an increase of 12.7%.

Pedestrian Percent Share - Oct. 1989



Month (cont'd): Crossings

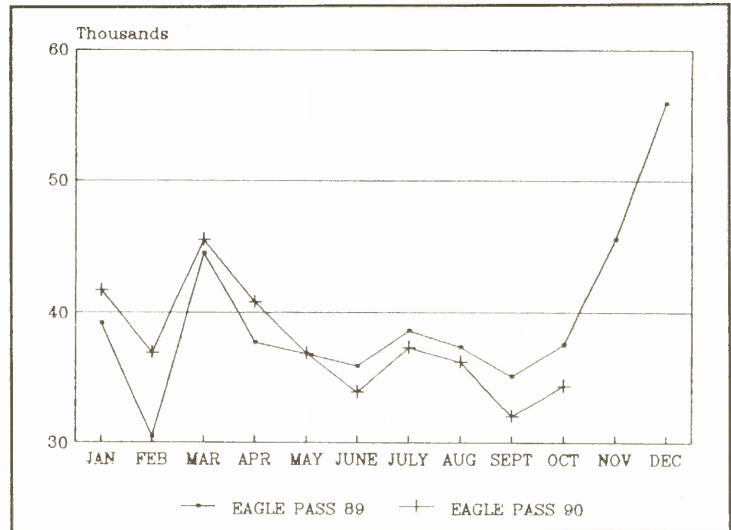
As in the case of the "vehicle" group, Laredo has decreased more than any other city in pedestrian crossings in October of 1990 as compared to the same month in 1989 namely by 6.11%, a decline of 15,930 pedestrians. Eagle Pass had a larger percent decrease of 8.41% but in total numbers the number of pedestrians decreased only by 3,165. All the other cities increased the number of pedestrian crossings compared to 1989. Del Rio lead with 11.10% or 774 pedestrians, Brownsville increased by 1.4% or 3,419 pedestrians, and McAllen increased by 0.88% or 709 pedestrians.

In terms of pedestrian percent share regarding the proportion of total pedestrians crossing the bridges in the above cities, in 1989 Laredo had the largest share with 40.5% of all pedestrians crossing through Laredo, followed by Brownsville 38.5%, McAllen 14.0%, Eagle Pass 5.9%, and Del Rio 1.0%.

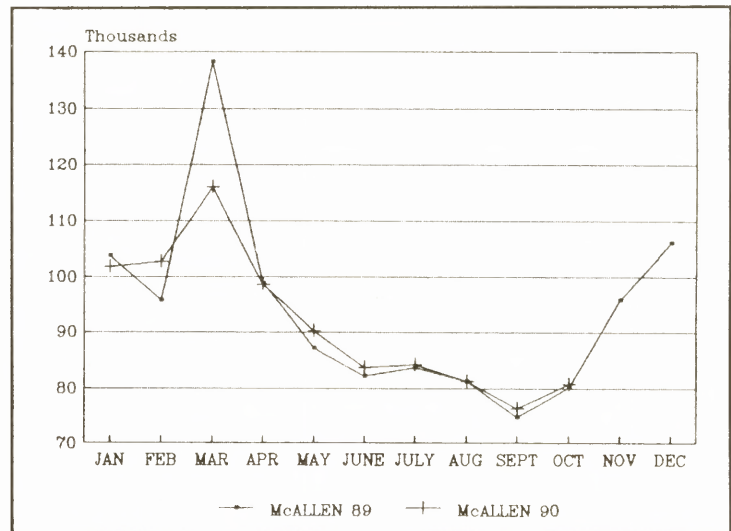
This picture has changed in the cumulative statistics as per October of 1990. Brownsville is now the leader with 40.0% closely followed by Laredo with 39.1%. McAllen maintained its position and figures with 14.0%, followed by Eagle Pass 5.8% and Del Rio 1.1%.

Note: All the statistics regarding the special topics were provided by the respective Bridge Authorities as reported to the Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development (TCBEED) at Laredo State university.

Pedestrian Crossings - Eagle Pass



Pedestrian Crossings - McAllen



Pedestrian Crossings - Aug./Oct. '90

CITY	AUG 1990	SEPT 1990	OCT 1990	OCT 1989	% CHG OCT 89-OCT 90
LAREDO	267,370	246,263	244,920	260,850	-6.11
BROWNSVILLE	259,868	233,564	247,038	243,619	1.40
DEL RIO	6,891	5,431	7,746	6,972	11.10
EAGLE PASS	36,317	32,064	34,466	37,631	-8.41
McALLEN	81,304	76,321	80,825	80,116	0.88

Percent Change - Oct '89/Oct. '90

