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Chamber of Commerce  
Laredo, Texas

# Laredo

Gateway  
to  
Mexico



## Important Facts:

- The Port of Laredo is the largest port of entry on the U.S.-Mexico border, and the third largest inland border port of entry behind Detroit, MI and Buffalo, NY.
- The Port of Laredo handles over 40 % of U.S.-Mexico trade.
- Over 9,000 trucks cross at the Port of Laredo daily.

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# Vision 2006

## Economic Outlook Report

### Formulating a Vision

The Purpose of the Vision 2006 Conference and Trade Mission

During the past two centuries, Laredo has been at the crossroads of U.S.-Mexico trade and commerce. As the city of 207,639 inhabitants enters the new millennium, Laredo will continue to shape the destiny of the region. Tremendous efforts are underway to maintain a competitive business environment. In this regard, extensive participation by the business community will hallmark how well we are prepared to address both the increase in growth and commerce.

The Laredo Chamber of Commerce, over 700 members strong, has a vision and goal to foster the ongoing betterment of the community and region as well as encourage and promote the maintenance of a competitive business sector. There are three prime factors that bode well for the future of Laredo: first is the growing active work force, second the continued diversification of all economic sectors, and third, a significant public-private infrastructure initiative to enhance all areas of the region's transportation corridors and support services.

The 2006 Vision Conference intends to focus on the dynamic commercial viability of the city and the traditional linkages with counterparts in Mexico and the South Texas region. The membership of the Laredo Chamber of Commerce looks forward to continued regional and transnational cooperation. Thus, this publication is a snapshot of Laredo's recent growth and trade activities.

### Laredo's Economy Posts Steady Growth in 2005

By J. Michael Patrick, Regents Professor and Director, Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development Texas A&M International University

Laredo posted a year of steady growth in 2005. Gross industry sales reached \$5.6 billion, up 27 percent from 2004. Employment grew by 3,000 (3.9 percent). New business starts were up nearly 2 percent, counting the arrival of several nationally known companies—Convergys, Target, Goodwill Industries, Embassy Suites, Residence Inn, Homewood Suites, Hawthorn Suites and Laredo Speciality Hospital. New residential, commercial and industrial construction topped \$240 million. Retail sales hit a record \$3 billion.

#### International Trade and Commerce

U.S.-Mexico trade grew 8.8 percent in 2005, reaching a new high of \$290.2 billion (Chart 13). Over 80 percent of the trade passed through U.S.-Mexico border ports. Laredo led all border ports with 40.3 percent market share (\$93.8). El Paso was a distant second at \$43.1 billion (Table 4). Laredo truck crossings (Chart 3) were up 7.1 percent in 2005, while rail crossings (Chart 4) and air cargo (Chart 5) were flat.

Vehicle (Chart 1) and pedestrian (Chart 2) crossings in 2005 were down, 17.3 percent and 7.8 percent, respectively. Pedestrian and vehicle crossings, in particular, continued their downward trend begun in the early 2000s. The declines are likely the result of increased delays at the border due to stepped-up security. The declines, however, do not seem to be affecting cross-border sales. According to merchants and store managers surveyed by Texas A&M International University's Texas Center, cross-border shoppers may be crossing less

*(Continued on page 2)*

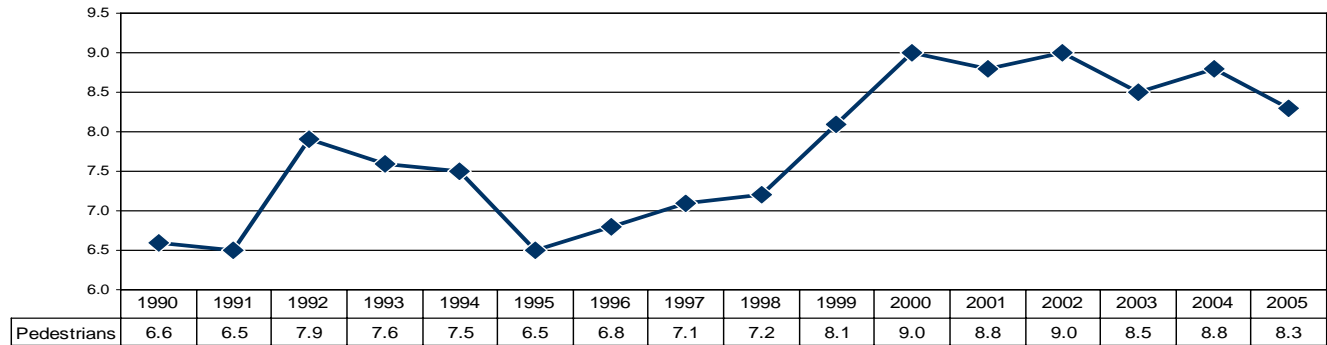
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frequently, but they are buying more each shopping trip. Consequently, total sales, in many cases, are actually increasing rather decreasing. Laredo's continued growth in retail sales would seem to support the merchants view. The effect of fewer pedestrian and vehicular crossings on bridge revenues is less clear, since bridge fees have been increased in recent years, offsetting somewhat the loss in bridge revenues due to fewer crossings.

After declining 6.8 percent in 2003, truck crossings recovered, growing 3.7 percent in 2004 and 7.1 percent in 2005 (Chart 3). Rail crossings (Chart 4) continued their long-term growth pattern in 2004 pattern, increasing by 3.6 percent, but flattened out in 2005 with virtually no growth over 2004. Air cargo (gross landed weight), after growing 5.4 percent in 2003, increased sharply by 30.9 percent, slowing to 2.2 percent growth in 2005 (Chart 5). In recent years, many

**PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS**

**Chart 1  
Pedestrian Crossings at Laredo  
(North and South)**



Source: Laredo Bridge System and Mexico's Oficina de Caminos y Puentes data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

maquiladoras have shifted to air freight to provide for timely deliveries of materials and component parts to their plants to minimize inventory costs. Changes in maquiladora activity consequently have a direct effect on the use of air freight services. With the recent growth in the U.S.-Mexico economies, maquiladora activity has begun to pickup, increasing the demand for air cargo services.

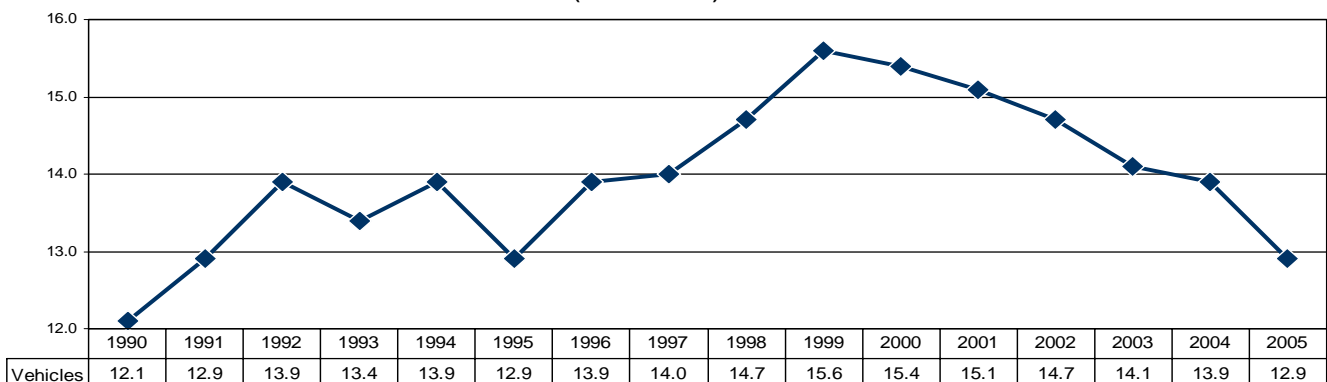
To put Laredo's border crossings in perspective, in 2005, 22,740 pedestrians, 35,342 vehicles, 9,981 trucks, and 1,217

railcars passed through the Laredo Port of Entry daily. Laredo accounted for 29.2 percent of the all pedestrians, 26.7 percent of all vehicles, 56.1 percent of all trucks, and 78.9 percent of all rail car crossings at Texas' ports of entry in 2005.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, roughly 84.6 percent of U.S.-Mexico trade (dollar value) moves by truck and rail. In 2005, the Laredo Port of Entry accounted for 40.3 percent (\$93.8 billion) of the total value of U.S.-Mexico overland merchandise trade, making it one of the

**VEHICLE CROSSINGS**

**Chart 2  
Vehicle Crossings at Laredo  
(North and South)**



Source: Laredo Bridge System and Mexico's Oficina de Caminos y Puentes data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

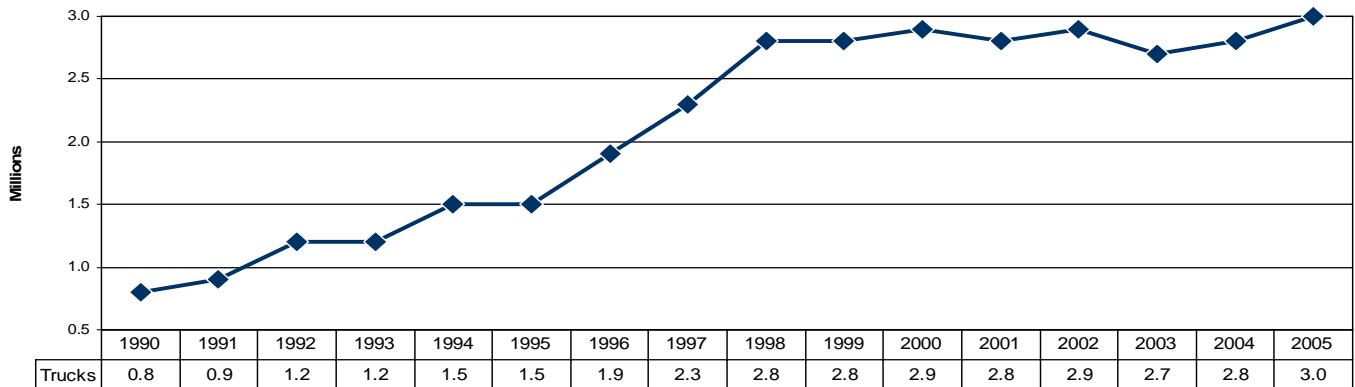
busiest ports of entry in the hemisphere. If the total number of trucks processed in 2005 at Laredo’s Port of Entry were lined up bumper-to-bumper, they would stretch from Mexico City to a point 93 miles north of Kansas City, MO.

Because of the large volume of traffic moving through Laredo, the port has been selected by the U.S. Customs Service as the testing site for two new programs—The North American Trade Automation Program (NATAP) and the

National Customs Automation Program (NCAP). Both programs are designed to improve the efficiency and speed of processing shipments at the border. Laredo, with four bridges operating around the clock, is pursuing the construction of a 5th bridge. The Texas Department of Transportation has a multi-year construction plan to upgrade and improve access roads and major highways in the area to accommodate growing trade-related traffic and relieve congestion.

**TRUCK CROSSINGS**

**Chart 3**  
Truck Crossings at Laredo  
(North and South)



Source: Laredo Bridge System and U.S. Customs Service data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

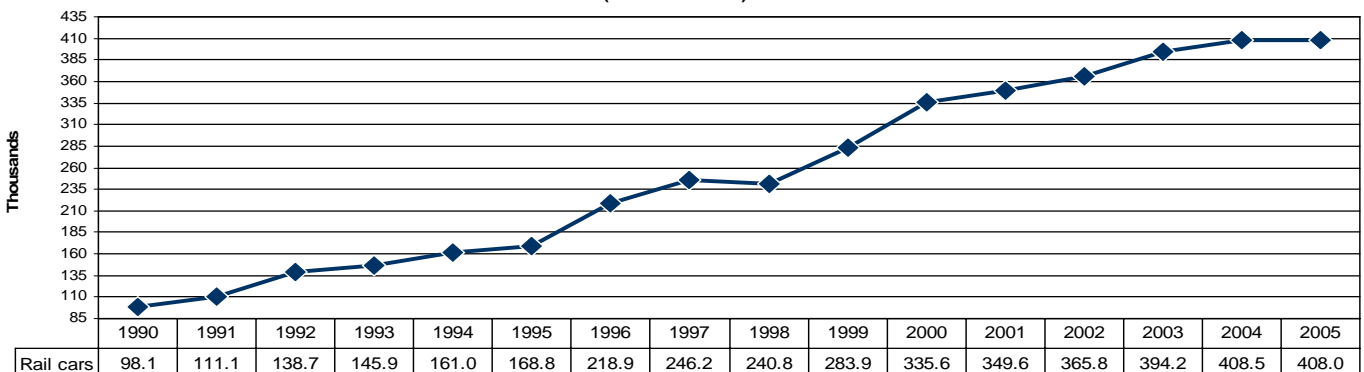
In an attempt to capture the full benefits of increased trade with the U.S., Mexico has privatized many assets previously held by the public sector, including the railroads. More than \$1.0 billion (U.S.) will be invested over the next five years to upgrade and improve Mexico’s stock of locomotives and rail cars. In addition, a consortium involving Transportación Ferroviaria Mexicana (TFM), Kansas City Southern Industries, the Texas Mexican Railroad, and Transportes Maritima Mexicana, has committed to upgrade and modernize

rail service between Laredo and Mexico City.

After a decade (1900-2000) of spectacular growth, averaging 8 percent per year, Laredo International Airport suffered a sharp decline in activity (gross landed weight) of 50.8 percent in 2001. The principal cause for the drop was the fall-off in U.S.-Mexico trade, particularly with the maquiladora industry. Since then, the airport experienced gradual increase in activity in 2002-2003, rising sharply (30.9%) in 2004. Today, officials are moving to diversify the airport’s customer base, including

**RAIL CAR CROSSINGS**

**Chart 4**  
Rail Car Crossings at Laredo  
(North and South)



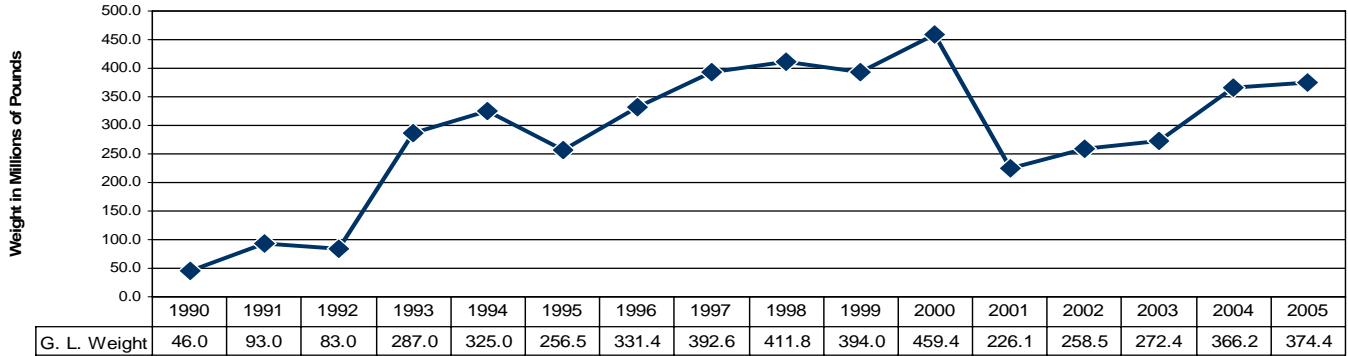
Source: Data provided by railroad companies and compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

plans to take advantage of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) . Airport officials are also keeping close watch on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations. The passage of the proposed hemispheric trade agreement is expected to increase the volume of air cargo moving through the Laredo International Airport.

Reflecting Laredo’s overall growth in international trade and commerce, local bridge revenues (Chart 6) have steadily increased over the past decade. Notwithstanding a 18.6 percent drop in revenues 1995, Laredo’s bridge system posted a 191 percent increase in revenues for the 1990s. Following

**INTERNATIONAL AIR CARGO**

**Chart 5**  
Gross Landed Weight at Laredo International Airport  
(Millions of Pounds)



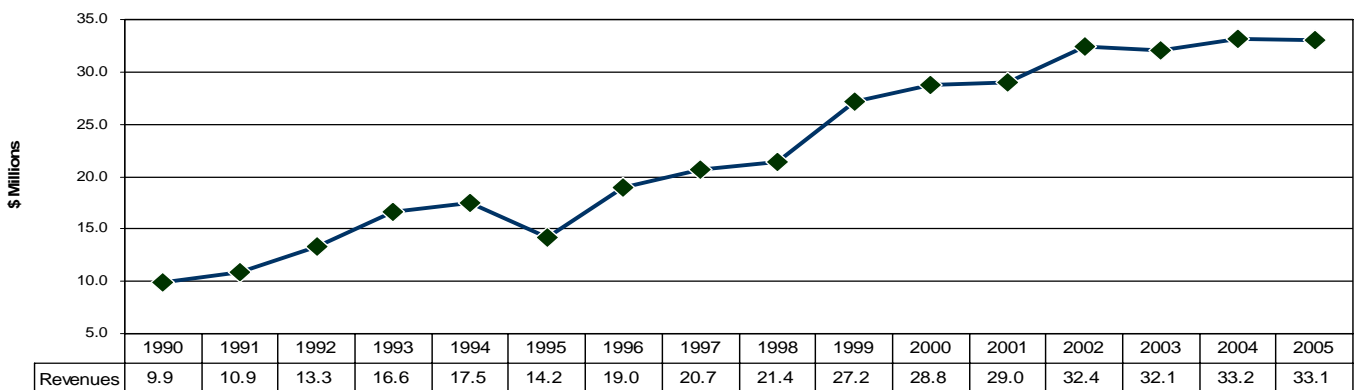
Source: Data provided by the Laredo International Airport.

modest growth (0.7 percent ) in 2001, bridge revenues grew 11.7 percent in 2002, reaching an all time high of \$32.4 million. In 2004, bridge revenues set a new high of \$33.2.

Local bridge revenues are an important source of revenue for the city.

**BRIDGE REVENUES**

**Chart 6**  
Bridge Revenues for Laredo



Source: Laredo Bridge System data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

**Local Economic Activity**

Spurred by strong population growth and economic opportunity, Laredo’s building and construction activity (Chart 7), retail sales (Chart 9), and employment (Chart 11) have steadily increased over the past 15 years.

After a decade of unprecedented growth, Laredo’s building and construction industry (Chart 7) posted its best year ever in 2002, with building permit values topping \$354 million, only to drop 27.8 percent in 2003. In 2004, building and construction activity rebounded, soaring 52.8 percent, to a

new high of \$390.8 million. 2005 saw continued growth, with building permit values increasing 6.2 percent, to \$415.1 million.

Population growth, economic expansion, and growing infrastructure needs have been the driving forces behind Laredo’s robust construction industry. Industry prospects appear good for future years as plans are being drawn-up for new construction, expansions, and improvements in the community’s infrastructure including hospitals, ambulatory

health care health care facilities, elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and local university and community college.

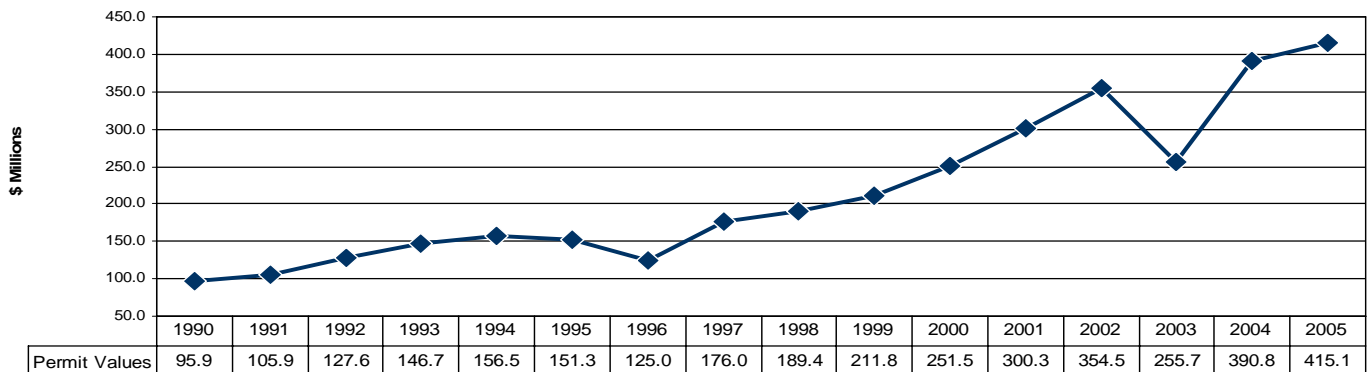
In addition, plans are in place for expansions and improvements in existing transportation infrastructure and warehousing facilities as well as the construction of new warehousing space, industrial park sites, and commercial properties. The demand for residential housing is expected to remain strong for some time as builders struggle to meet the

needs of a young and growing population.

While total building permit values have risen consistently over the past decade, fluctuations and swings better describe the behavior of the building and construction industry's subsectors (Chart 8)—warehousing/industrial, commercial/retail, multi-family and single and two family. Between 1994-2004, the warehousing/industrial subsector experienced a 792.9 percent spread between the year with the highest (1999) building permits issued and the lowest (1996); multi-family

**BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION**

**Chart 7**  
Laredo Building Permit Values (All Structures)



Source: City of Laredo's data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

had an 968.8 percent spread between the highest (2004) and lowest (1996) year; commercial/retail had a 376.3 percent spread between the highest (2001) and lowest (1994) year; and, single and two family had a 228.7 percent spread between the highest (2005) and the lowest (1995).

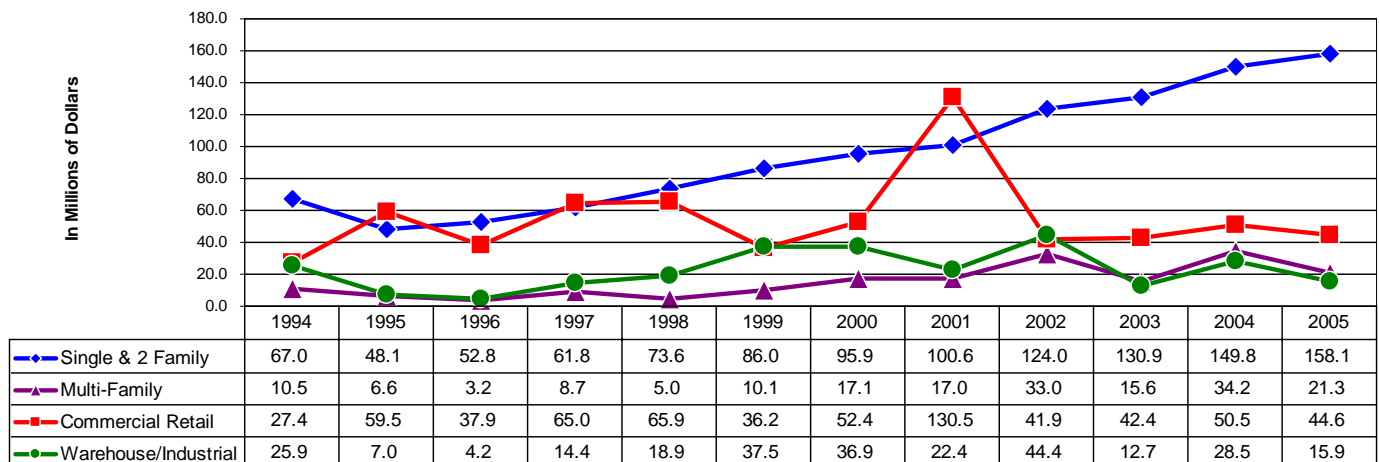
Building and construction decision are not spur of the moment decisions. They normally require months, sometimes years, of study and planning. A number of factors come into play when considering the performance of the different

building and construction industry subsectors. Current and future growth trends in the local economy, the cost of financing, and competition influence building and construction decisions in the warehouse/industrial and commercial/retail subsectors. Population growth, consumer purchasing power, and affordable financing shape building and construction decisions in the multi-family and single and two family subsectors.

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**BUILDING PERMITS BY INDUSTRY SUBSECTOR**

**Chart 8**  
Laredo Building Permit Values by Industry Subsector



Source: City of Laredo and Laredo Development Foundation data.

## Laredo's Business Cycle Mirrors the Mexican Economy

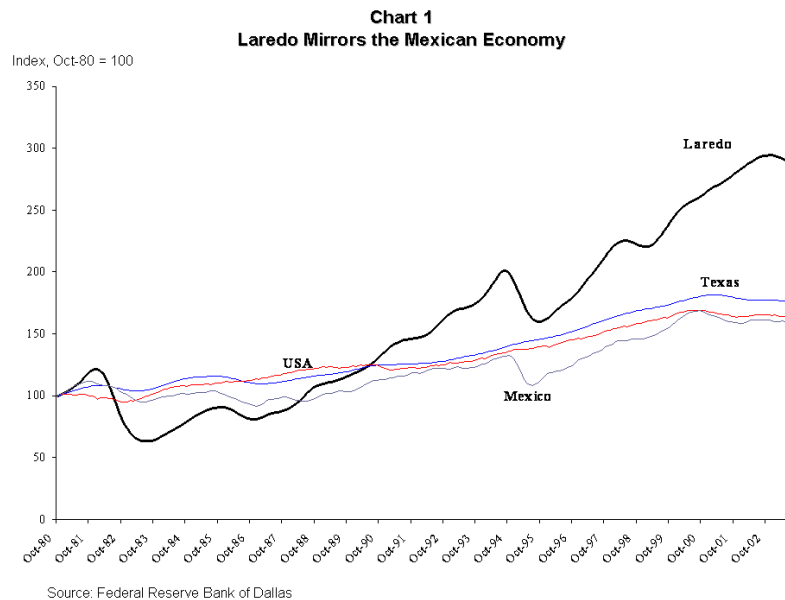
By J. Michael Patrick, Ph.D.

Analysts use business cycles to track the performance of the economy. Business cycles are alternating periods of expansion and contraction in economic activity, measured by the value of goods and services produced over a period of time. The ups and downs in an economy are influenced by many economic and non-economic factors, local and regional as well as national and international.

To better understand the performance of the cities on the Texas-Mexico border, Keith Phillips, Senior Economist, and his colleagues at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas-San Antonio Branch designed a set of economic indexes that define the current state of each border MSA economy over time—that is its business cycle. The Laredo MSA business cycle (see Chart 1) shows a strong tie to Mexican economy. The two economies move together, in times of economic expansion and contraction. This, of course will come as no surprise to those who live and work in the Laredo area. Trade and commerce with Mexico have long been the life blood of the Laredo economy, and will remain so in the future; diversification, however, in the area's economic activity, driven by the demands of a rapidly growing population, is taking place.

### Pre-NAFTA

Prior to NAFTA, cross-border sales of goods and services accounted for close to 90 percent of Laredo's economic activity, with roughly 58 percent of all wholesale and retail sales going to Mexican shoppers. While important at the time, the volume of U.S.-Mexico merchandise trade moving through Laredo's warehouses and across its international bridges was a fraction of what it is today. With NAFTA, U.S.-Mexico trade exploded—growing 189 percent to \$290.2 billion in 2005 from \$100.3 billion in 1994 (see Chart 2). Overnight, the number of licensed customs brokers and freight forwarders more than doubled to over 300, and new warehouses began to spring up everywhere.



### Post-NAFTA

Today, Laredo is the leading southern U.S. port of entry, accounting for 40 percent (\$100 billion) of all U.S.-Mexico overland merchandise trade. Over 9,000 trucks and 1,400 railcars cross Laredo bridges daily. The majority of the trade involves intra-industry shipments, to and from Mexican maquila plants, of transportation equipment, electrical and electronic parts and components, and semi-finished and finished products.

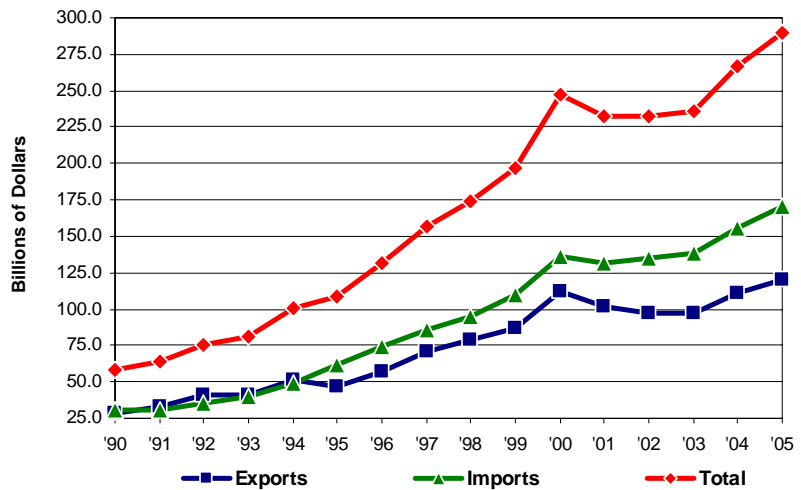
Post-NAFTA wholesale and retail trade, and financial and business services remain an important part of Laredo's economy, although relative to other sectors somewhat less than before. In 2005, roughly 23,000 pedestrians and 35,000 vehicles crossed daily between Laredo and Nuevo Laredo. Cross-border shoppers remain a significant factor in local sales accounting for over 51 percent of total retail sales, ac-

According to a Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas study.

The reasons for why the Laredo economy mirrors the Mexican economy are self evident. Historically, when the Mexican economy is strong and the peso stable, trade and cross-border commerce flourish and Laredo's economy grows. The reverse is also true. The performance of the Mexican economy is not entirely in Mexican hands, however. While the overall stability of the peso is primarily a matter of prudent fiscal and monetary policy on the part of Mexican officials, the macro performance of the Mexican economy is largely tied to the performance of the U.S. economy, and beyond

the control of Mexican officials. The U.S. is Mexico's largest trading partner and source for foreign investment. When the U.S. economy slows, the Mexican economy slows even more—negatively impacting Laredo's economy, when trade and cross-border commerce fall off.

**Chart 2**  
**U.S.-Mexico Trade, 1990-2005**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division, Data Dissemination Branch, Washington, D.C. 20233

**Recent Growth**

The strong population growth that Laredo has experienced in the past decade and a half, increasing by more than 67 percent, from 134,517 (1990) to 224,997 (2005), has created market demand for housing, health care, and education, for which hundreds of new businesses have sprung up to meet, creating thousands of new jobs in the process. The effective buying power of Laredo's core market has reached the minimum threshold necessary to sustain its growth even when the Laredo-Mexico economic connection is ailing.

**Diversification**

Diversification of the Laredo economy can be seen in its current employment profile. In 1992, wholesale and retail trade accounted for 25.7 percent of workforce, transportation and warehousing for another 12.9 percent, financial and business services for 12.4 percent, education and health services for 8.6 percent, and the leisure and hospitality industry for 8.6 percent. Today, 2005, wholesale and retail trade accounts for 17.4 percent of the workforce, down 8.3 percentage points, transportation and warehousing for 15.2 percent, up 2.3 percentage points, financial and business services for 12.8 percent, up 0.4 percentage point, educational and health services for 29.0 percent, up 20.4 percentage points, and the leisure and hospitality industry for 10.2 percent, up 1.6 percentage points.

Although trade and commerce with Mexico is the backbone of the Laredo economy, other sectors and industries, less depended on the Mexican shopper and Mexican market, are growing. This diversification is healthy and desirable. It muted the impact of the 1994 peso devaluation, and it kept Laredo's job growth rate at record levels during the downturn of the U.S. and Mexican economies in 2000-2002. (see Chart 1). ▽

—J. Michael Patrick is Regents Professor and Director of the Texas Center for Border and Enterprise Development at Texas A&M International University, Laredo, Texas.

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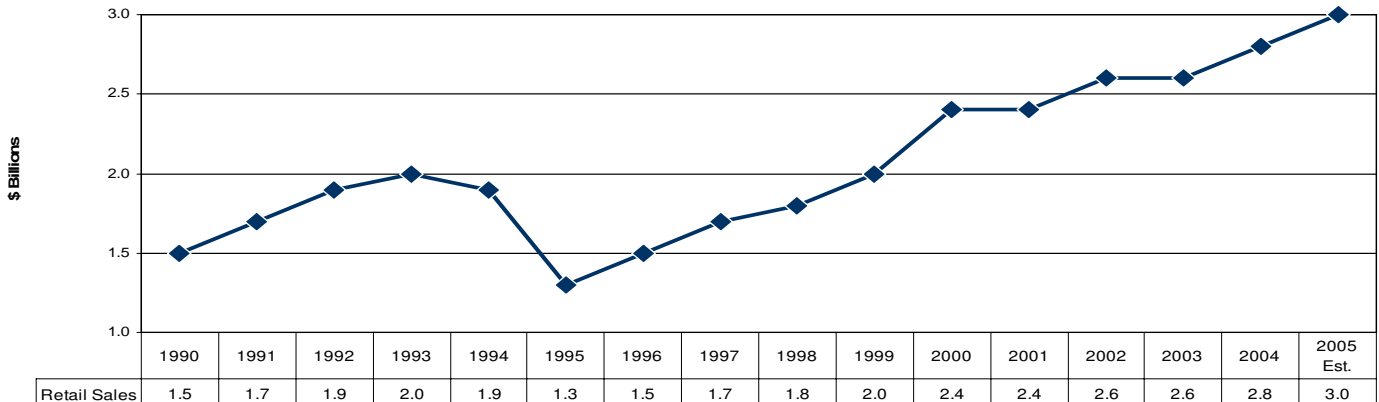
Local and cross-border retail sales constitute a major component of Laredo's economy. Retail sales account for over 50 percent of total sales, and provide income and employment opportunities to over a quarter of the area's residents. Notwithstanding a 31 percent decline in 1995 following the peso devaluation, Laredo's retail sales (Chart 9) grew 53.3 percent between 1990 and 2000. Even after accounting for the economy's slowdown and the tightening of

the border following the September 11th terrorist attacks, retail sales for 2001 did not fall below their 2000 level. In 2004, retail sales posted strong 7.7 percent growth. 2005 retail sales were equally strong, growing 7.1 percent.

Laredo's sales tax rebates (Chart 10) grew 10.3 percent in 2005, reaching a new record high of \$27.8 million. Between 1990-2000, sales tax rebates (Chart 10) increased 91.7 percent, notwithstanding the 20.1 percent decline suffered in

**RETAIL SALES**

Chart 9  
Laredo Retail Sales



Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

1995 following Mexico's peso devaluation. Today, Laredo's retail sector is much more insulated from the wild swings of past years when the economy was more heavily dependent on cross-border Mexican shoppers. Laredo's large, young, and growing local population provides stability to the area economy and retail sector.

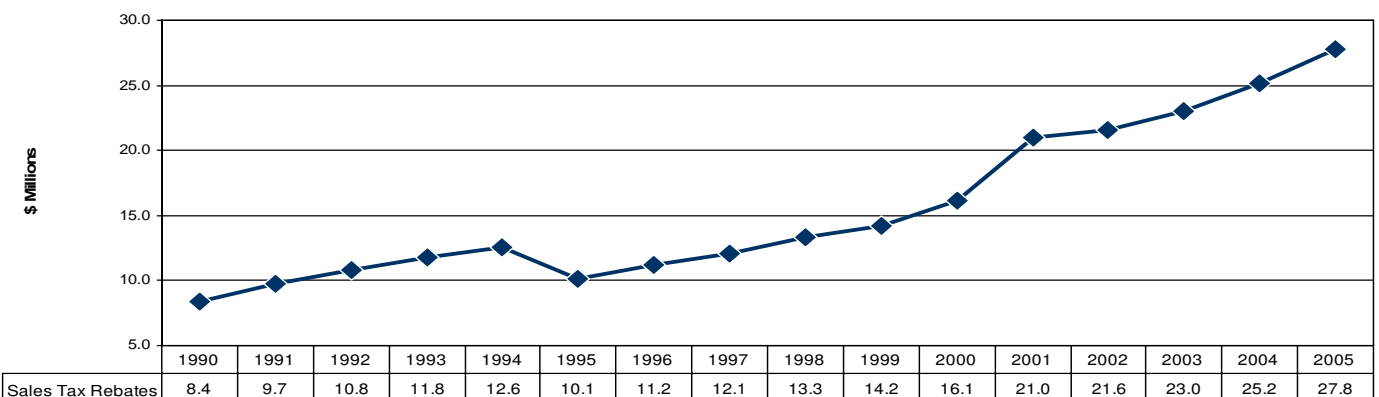
Local bridge revenues and retail sales tax rebates have always been an important source of local revenue. Between 1990 and 2005, funds available to the City of Laredo from these two sources grew 233 percent, from \$18.3 million to

\$60.9 million. In 2005, on a per capita basis, the dollars available from these two source was \$270.67, double the amount (\$136.04) available in 1990.

A measure of the strength of a local economy is its ability to generate jobs. Between 1990 and 2005, Laredo's robust economy created 35,729 new jobs (Chart 11). During this period, Laredo's rate of job creation (68.1 percent) was more than two times that of the State rate (28.3 percent). The Laredo economy created 3,000 new jobs in 2005, a 3.9 percent gain over 2004 (Chart 11). Clearly, Laredo's economy

**SALES TAX REBATES**

Chart 10  
Sales Tax Rebates for Laredo



Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts



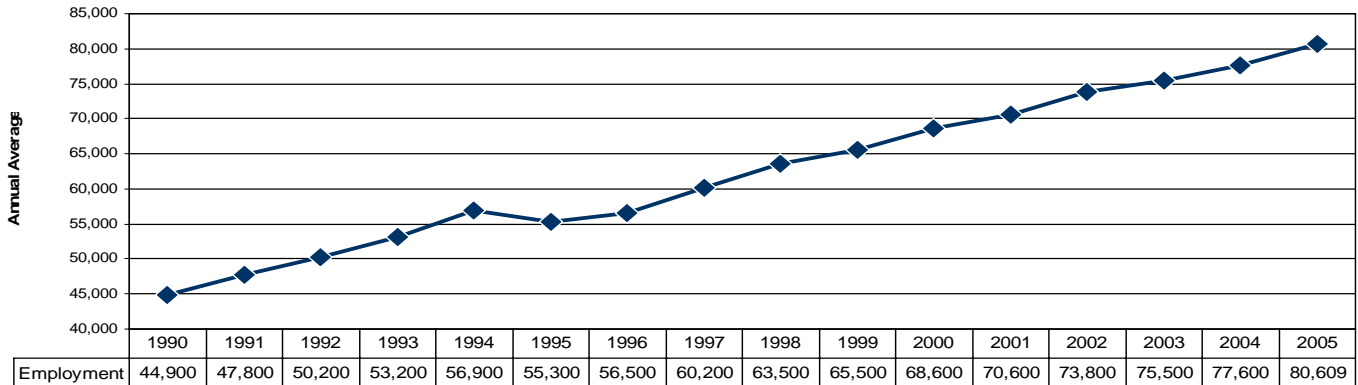
is capable of generating jobs. Over the past decade, 1995-2005, notwithstanding the city's rapid population growth, substantial progress has been made towards reducing the unemployment rate, compared to other border cities and the state (see related story—Laredo: A National Leader in Job Growth, pg. 10).

Laredo's economy is primarily a service economy with less than 2 percent of the jobs in goods producing sectors, compared to 17 percent for the state in 2005. Over 65 percent of Laredo's jobs are concentrated in the trade (18.7 percent),

services (35.6 percent) and transportation (15.2 percent) sectors. Another 24.0 percent are in the government sector. Laredo sectors experiencing the greatest growth over the past decade have been transportation (90.2 percent), services (88.3 percent) and construction (71.4 percent). Federal government employment also increased 122.2 percent. These job figures do not come as a surprise since they reflect the profile of a community that is undergoing rapid population growth, and one that is highly specialized in international trade and commerce.

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Chart 11**  
Laredo MSA Employment



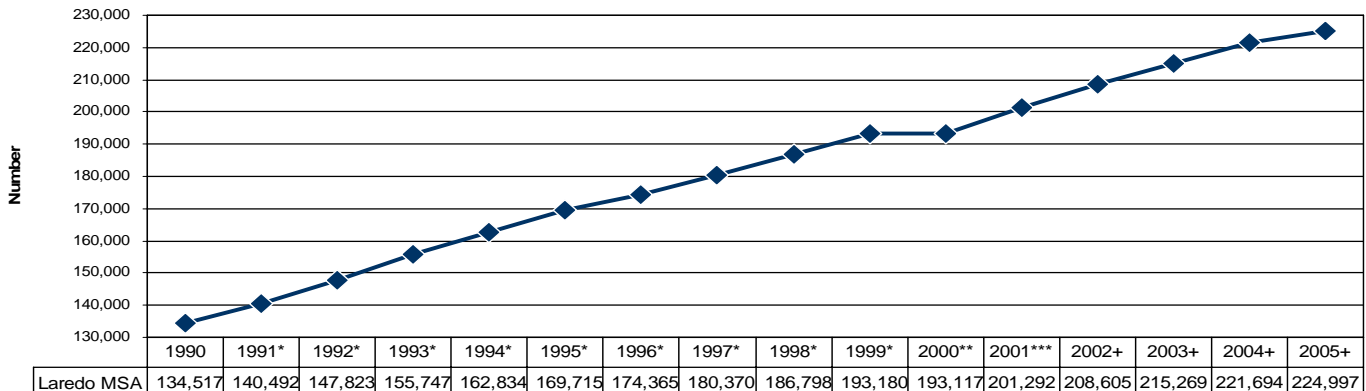
Source: Texas Workforce Commission data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2005 Laredo's population (Chart 12) stood at 224,997. Laredo's annual population growth rate of 3.3 percent, over the past decade, has been roughly twice that of the State—1.8 percent. With continued expansion of U.S.-Mexico trade and economic

integration likely in future years, Laredo can expect to remain one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the nation. The Texas Data Center projects that Laredo's population will reach 400,000 by 2030. V

**POPULATION**

**Chart 12**  
Laredo MSA Population



Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis' population figure for 1990 and \*estimates for 1991-99.

\*\* U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File, Matrices PL1, PL2, PL3, and PL4.

\*\*\* U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, July 1, 2001

+The Texas State Data Center, The Texas State Population Estimates and Projections Program, July 1, 2002 and January 1, 2005.

# Laredo: A National Leader in Job Growth By J. Michael Patrick, Ph.D.

Laredo has become a national hotbed of economic growth, leading the nation and the state in job creation. During the ten year period 1995-2005, Laredo's annual job growth rate of 2.6 percent was roughly double the state (1.7 percent) and national (1.4 percent) rates.

In September 2005, for the first time in the city's history, Laredo's unemployment rate fell below the state average. According to the Texas Workforce Commission, Laredo's unemployment rate dropped to 5.1 percent in September 2005 compared to state rate of 5.3 percent. This occasion also marked the first time that a border city has reported an unemployment rate lower than the state average. Historically, unemployment in border communities has been 2-3 times, sometimes 5 times, higher than the state rate.

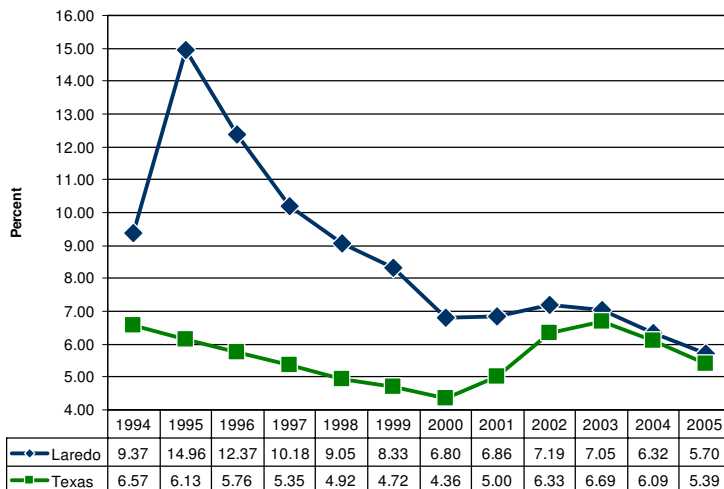
Laredo has enjoyed a decade (1995-2005) of strong economic growth, led by a robust construction sector and expanding trade, commercial, and service sectors, particularly in the areas of education and health care. In 1995, Laredo's unemployment rate stood at 14.9 percent, double the state average of 6.1 percent. By 2005, Laredo's unemployment had dropped to the state average (Chart 1). Laredo's unemployment rate tumbled by 61.8 percent between 1995 and 2005.

Over 80 percent of Laredo's employment growth during the past five years has occurred in five industries. Health care and social assistance accounts for 31.3 percent of the growth in jobs, followed by educational services (20.2 percent), accommodation and food services (16.6 percent), retail trade (9.3 percent) and transportation and warehousing (7.9 percent). (Chart 2)

Laredo's job growth is truly impressive and a glowing testament to the hard work of Laredo's community and business leaders. Although Laredo's average weekly wage increased by 30.2 percent between 2000 and 2005, it remains only 78 percent of the state average. Wages are below the state average in seventeen of Laredo's twenty industry sectors. The widest gaps are found in manufacturing (64.4 percent less), finance and insurance (51.0 percent less), and wholesale trade (44.1 percent less). Laredo average weekly wage however exceeds the state average in three industries: public administration (11.6 percent higher), health care and social assistance (1.9 percent higher) and utilities (1.8 percent higher). (Chart 2) *V*

—J. Michael Patrick is Regents Professor and Director of the Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development at Texas A&M International University Laredo, Texas.

**Chart 1**  
Laredo vs. Texas: Comparison of Annual Unemployment Rates 1994-2005



Source: Texas Workforce Commission data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

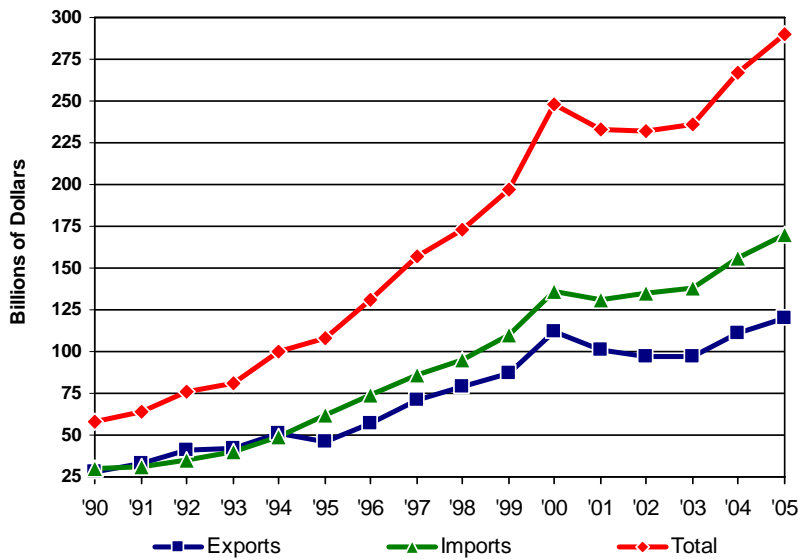
**Chart 2**  
Laredo MSA, 2000-2005

Industry	Employment				Average Weekly Wages			
	2000 3rd Qtr	2005 3rd Qtr	Absolute Change	Percent Change	2000 3rd Qtr	2005 3rd Qtr	Percent Change	% of State 2005
Accommodation and Food Services	5,438	7,389	1,951	35.9	199	220	10.6	73.6
Administrative and Waste Services	2,935	2,683	-252	-8.6	330	400	21.2	72.9
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	325	232	-93	-28.6	293	348	18.8	78.2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	467	851	384	82.2	228	280	22.8	58.6
Construction	3,242	3,327	85	2.6	429	533	24.1	72.9
Educational Services	9,173	11,558	2,385	26.0	468	510	9.0	82.0
Finance and Insurance	2,887	3,818	931	32.2	493	592	20.1	49.0
Health Care and Social Assistance	8,126	11,814	3,688	45.4	496	823	65.9	101.9
Information	782	713	-69	-8.8	536	666	24.3	72.1
Management of Companies and Enterprises	28	36	8	28.6	836	1,057	26.4	66.9
Manufacturing	1,757	1,681	-76	-4.3	432	395	-8.6	35.6
Mining	1,083	1,333	250	23.1	875	1,400	60.0	76.1
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	1,505	1,463	-42	-2.8	301	352	16.8	69.6
Professional and Technical Services	1,440	1,664	224	15.6	466	603	29.4	52.5
Public Administration	4,116	4,543	427	10.4	731	1,007	37.8	111.6
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	968	946	-22	-2.3	374	496	32.5	70.8
Retail Trade	10,402	11,495	1,093	10.5	325	381	17.2	73.0
Transportation and Warehousing	11,273	12,202	929	8.2	459	721	57.2	82.9
Utilities	401	344	-57	-14.2	848	1,143	34.8	101.8
Wholesale Trade	2,502	2,537	35	1.4	514	613	19.3	55.9
All Industry	68,850	80,629	11,779	17.1	482	627	30.2	78.0

Source: Texas Workforce Commission

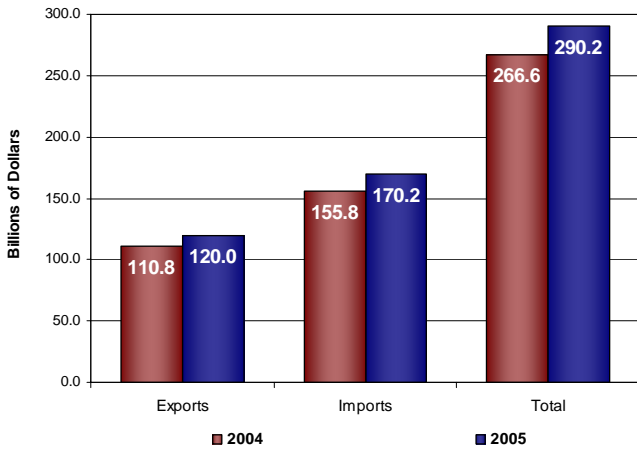
U.S.-MEXICO TRADE

Chart 13  
Total U.S.-Mexico Trade, 1990-2005



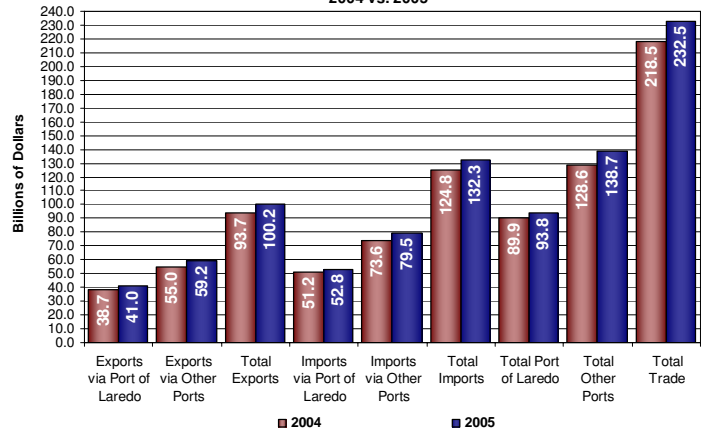
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division, Data Dissemination Branch, Washington, D.C.

Chart 14  
U.S.-Mexico Trade, 2004 vs. 2005



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

Chart 15  
U.S.-Mexico Trade by Laredo and Other U.S.-Mexico Border Ports  
2004 vs. 2005



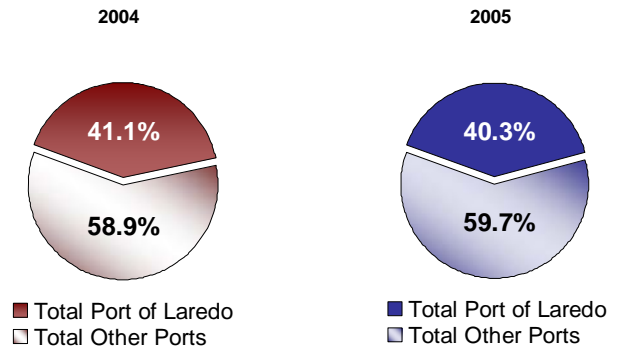
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

Table 4  
Total Imports and Exports, In Billions of U.S. Dollars  
2004 vs. 2005

	2004	2005
<b>Laredo</b>	<b>89.7</b>	<b>93.8</b>
El Paso	42.9	43.1
Otay Mesa Station	22.3	24.4
Hidalgo	15.9	18.3
Nogales	12.1	14.1
Brownsville	10.8	11.5
Calexico-East	9.9	10.8
Eagle Pass	6.9	7.7
Del Rio	2.8	3.0

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

Chart 16  
Percent Share of U.S.-Mexico Trade by U.S.-Mexico Border Ports  
2004 vs. 2005



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce data compiled by the Texas Center at Texas A&M International University.

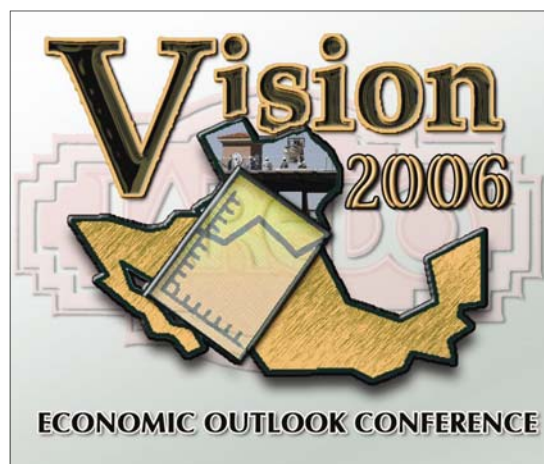


***"Gateway  
to Mexico"***

## **Chamber of Commerce Laredo, Texas**

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*The Vision 2006 Report series is produced by the Texas Center for Border Economic and Enterprise Development (Texas Center) in cooperation with the Laredo Chamber of Commerce. Dr. J. Michael Patrick, Director of the Texas Center, is the editor of the Vision series. Baldomero G. Garcia, Program Manager at the Center, is production editor of the series. Jacqueline Benavides, Data and Information Specialist at the Center, is data editor of the series.*

## **Vision 2006: Economic Outlook Report**

### **Partnership**

By Ray M. Keck III, President  
Texas A&M International University  
Laredo, Texas



The **Vision 2006: Economic Outlook Report** is a joint effort between the Laredo Chamber of Commerce and Texas A&M International University. The Chamber of Commerce and Texas A&M International University share the common goal of providing business/economic information and analysis to decision makers on a timely basis. We believe that informed decisions taken today by businessmen and women, public officials, and policy makers will determine Laredo's opportunities of tomorrow.

The Laredo Chamber of Commerce and Texas A&M International University are committed to pursuing partnerships, including conferences, workshops, research projects and reports, that will enhance Laredo's ability to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Reach us at our Web Site: [www.tamiau.edu](http://www.tamiau.edu).

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