



Economic Outlook Report

2026

Daniel Covarrubias, Ph.D.

texascenter.tamiu.edu

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Trade Outlook



Top 5 U.S. Ports of Entry

Nov 2024-Oct 2025 Total Import/Export Trade Value

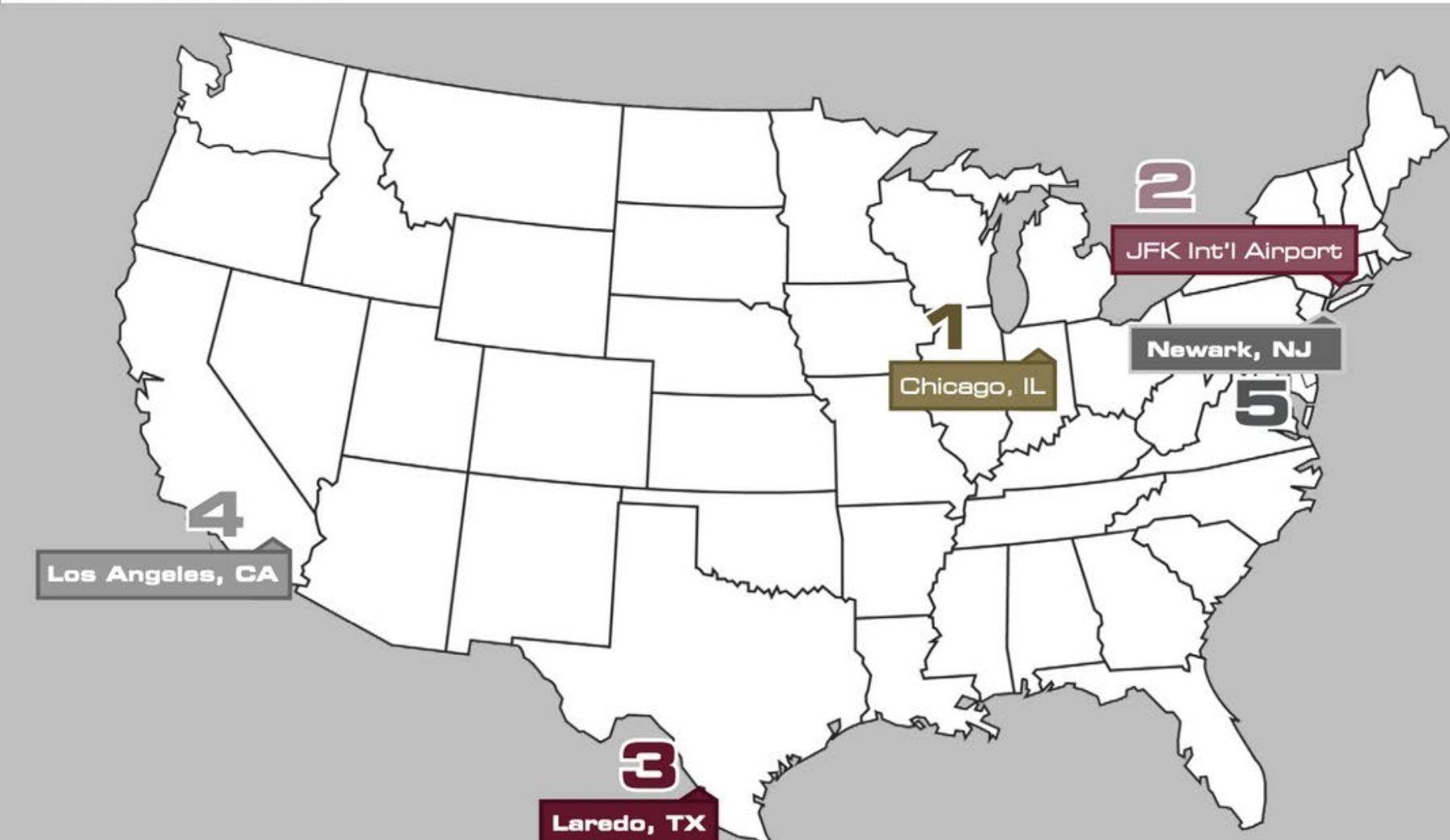
1 **\$420 billion**
Chicago, IL

2 **\$384 billion**
JFK Int'l Airport

3 **\$352 billion**
Laredo, TX

4 **\$313 billion**
Los Angeles, CA

5 **\$237 billion**
Newark, NJ



- Laredo ranks #3 overall. Chicago and JFK climbed on air cargo investments and volume surges. Los Angeles dropped as China tariffs cut container imports by double digits.
- Laredo remains #1 for land-based trade and #1 for USMCA commerce, and unlike LA, our trade is protected by the USMCA exemption.

Trade Outlook



Share of Total U.S. Trade

Nov 2024-Oct 2025 Laredo Port of Entry



- Laredo handled \$341 billion in trade through October 2025, 40% of all U.S. - Mexico trade and 22% of all USMCA trade. No other land port comes close.
- That's roughly \$1.1 billion crossing the bridges every day.

Trade Outlook



Commodity Transportation

Nov 2024-Oct 2025 Commercial Crossings into U.S. through Border POE



Commercial Truck Crossings

2.96 Million

Truck Crossing into the U.S.

\$261 Billion

Total Import/Export Traded Value



Rail Container Crossings

480,479

Rail Containers Crossing into the U.S.

\$50 Billion

Total Import/Export Traded Value

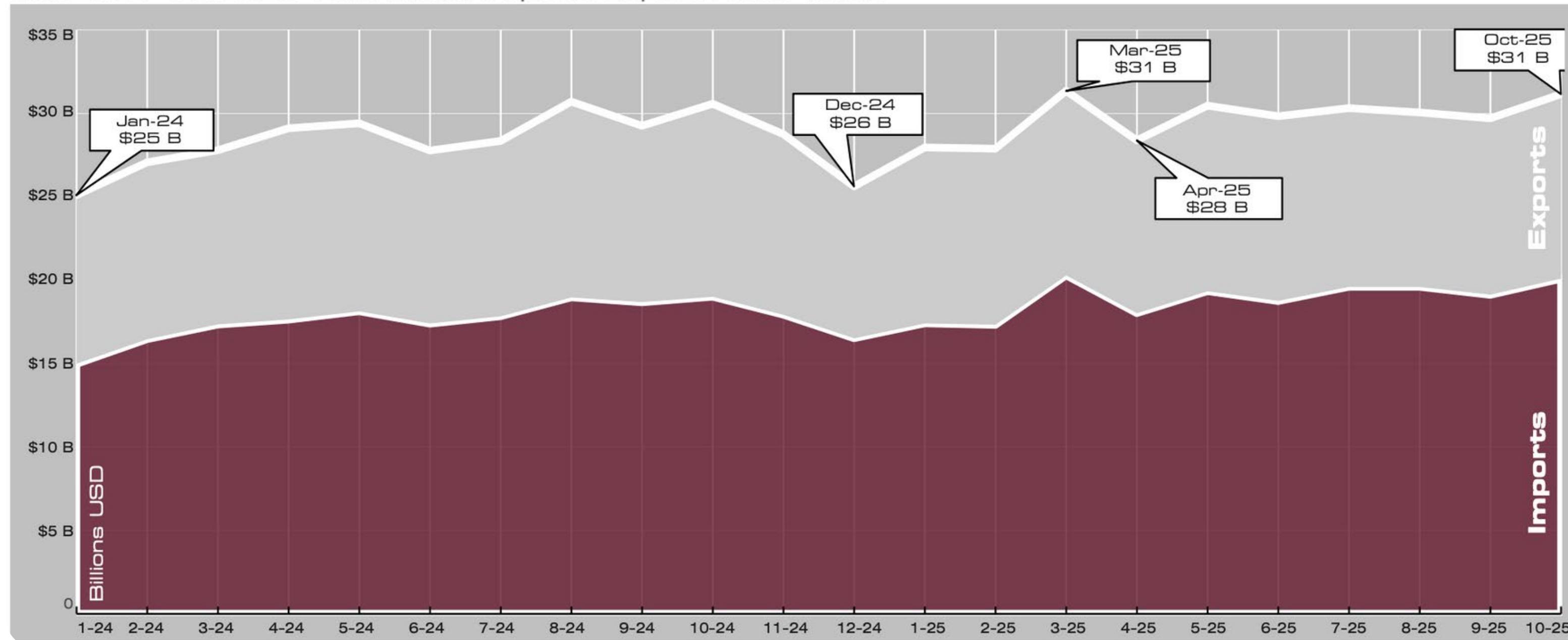
- One in four commercial trucks crossing any U.S. border port crosses at Laredo —2.96 million truck crossings carrying \$261 billion in goods.
- Rail adds another 480,000 containers and \$50 billion in trade, together, Laredo moves over \$310 billion in surface freight annually.

Trade Outlook



Laredo POE Trade Trend

Jan 2024-Oct 2025 Total World Import / Export Trade Value



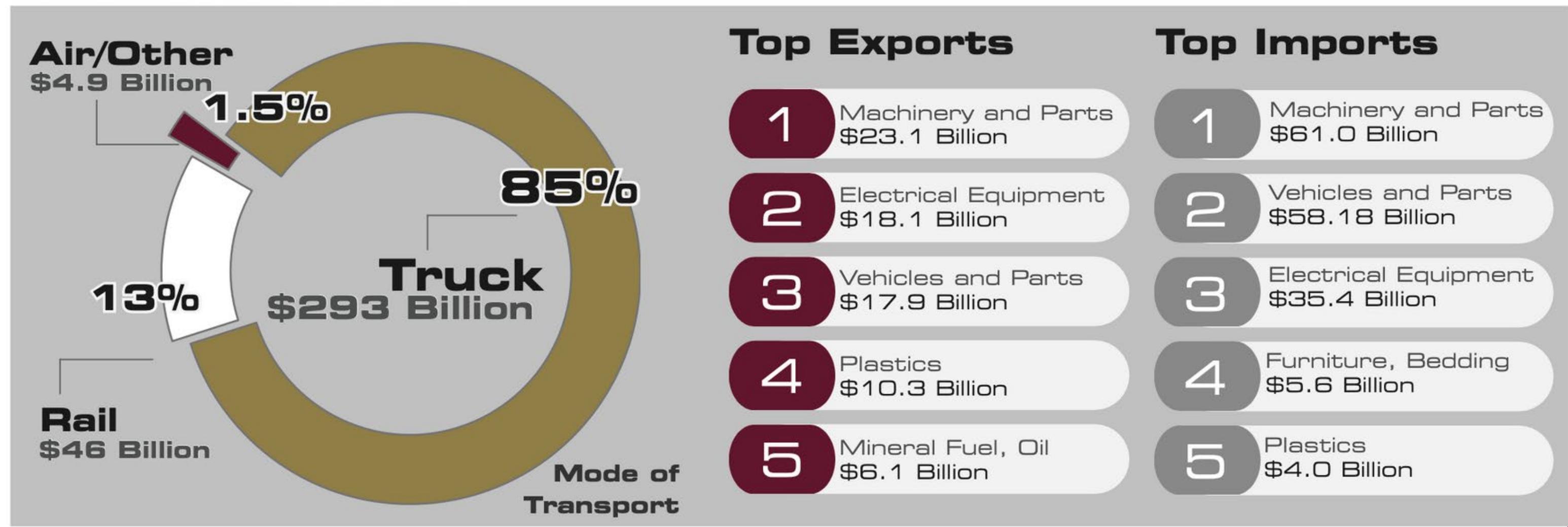
- Trade grew from \$25B/month in January 2024 to \$31B/month by October 2025, a 24% increase despite tariff uncertainty.
- The peaks and valleys track tariff cycles: March surged to \$31.4B before the March 4 deadline, April dropped to \$28.4B after tariffs hit, and October spiked again as companies front-loaded before anticipated escalation.

Trade Outlook



Total World Import / Export Trade

Nov 2024-Oct 2025 Laredo POE



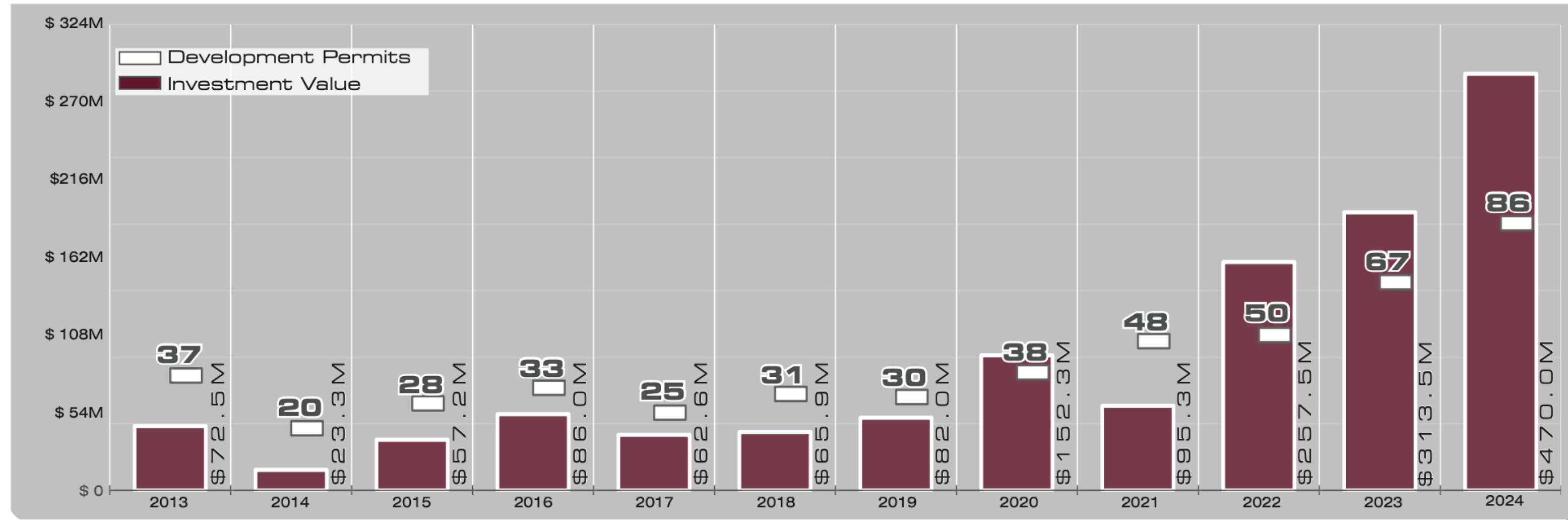
- 85% of Laredo's trade moves by truck, 13% by rail, and under 2% by air. The mode split reflects what's crossing: time -sensitive manufacturing components that can't wait for container ships.
- Top categories, machinery, vehicles, and electrical equipment, are the signature of integrated North American production. These aren't finished goods from overseas; they're parts crossing multiple times before final assembly.

Trade Outlook



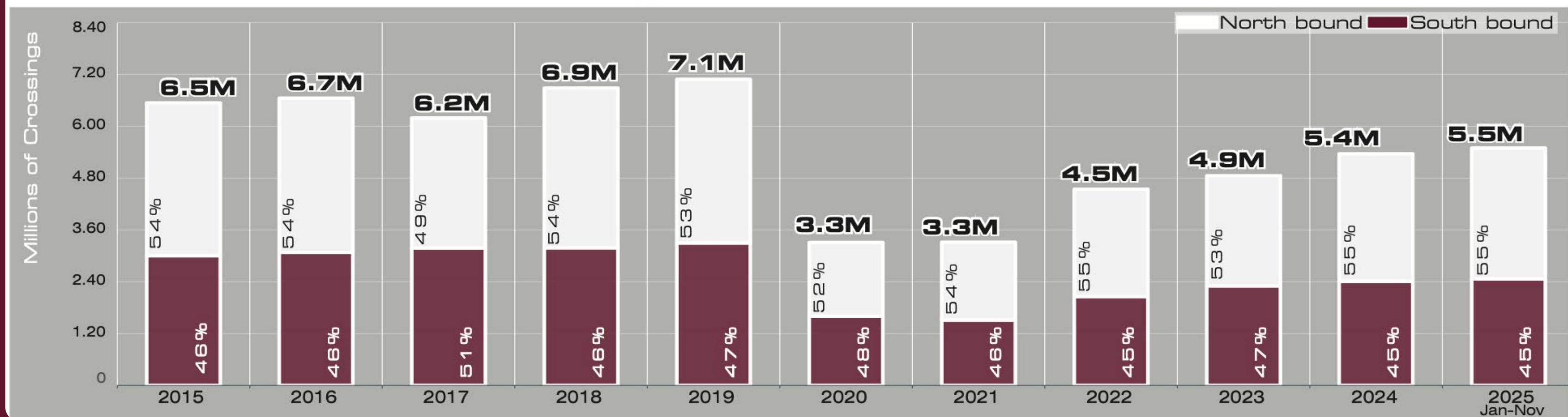
Logistics Facilities

Laredo POE Warehouse & Industrial Park Development



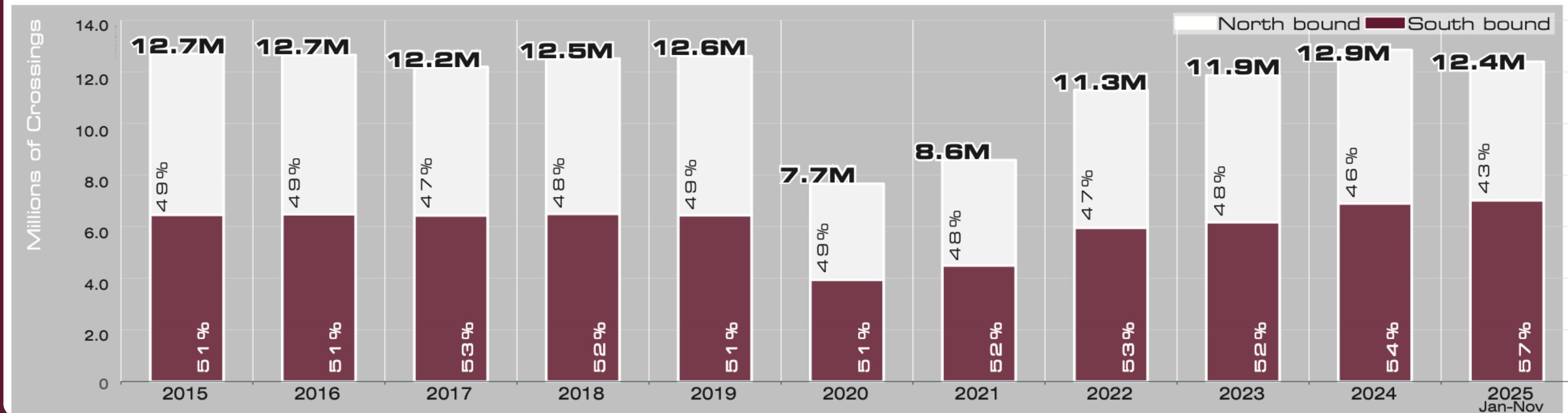
- Warehouse investment hit \$470 million in 2024 with 86 permits, the highest on record.
- In the last three years, Laredo has seen over \$1 billion in warehouse investment, more than the previous 15 years combined.

Pedestrian Crossings



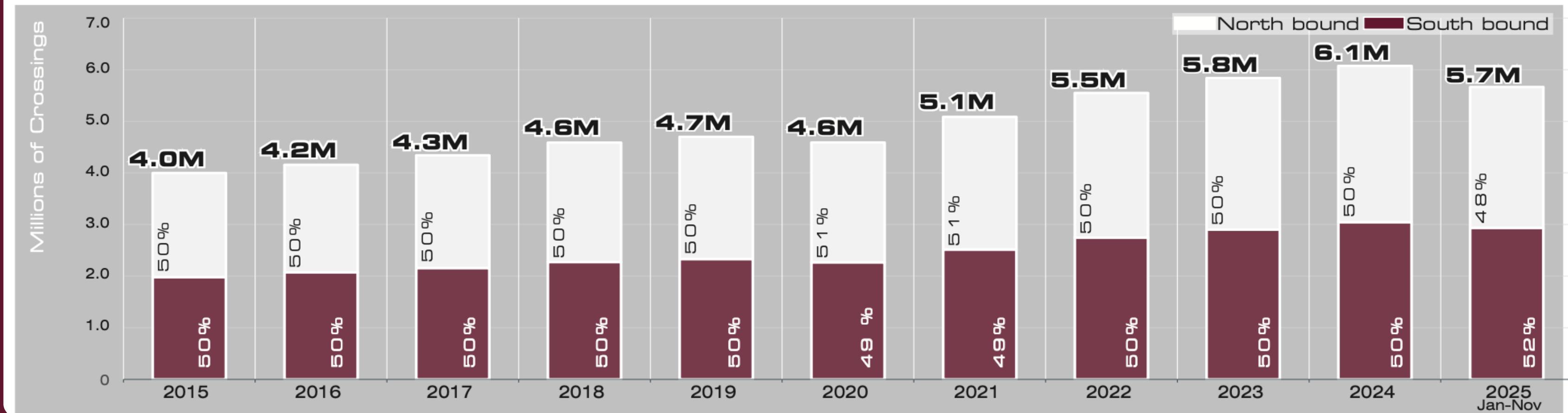
- Pedestrian crossings reached 5.5M through November 2025, about 15,000 per day, but that's still 22% below the 2019 peak of 7.1M.
- Pedestrian traffic is the only crossing category that hasn't fully recovered, and it's worth asking why —fewer retail draws downtown, more vehicle crossings, or a structural shift we haven't fully understood yet.

Passenger Vehicle Crossings



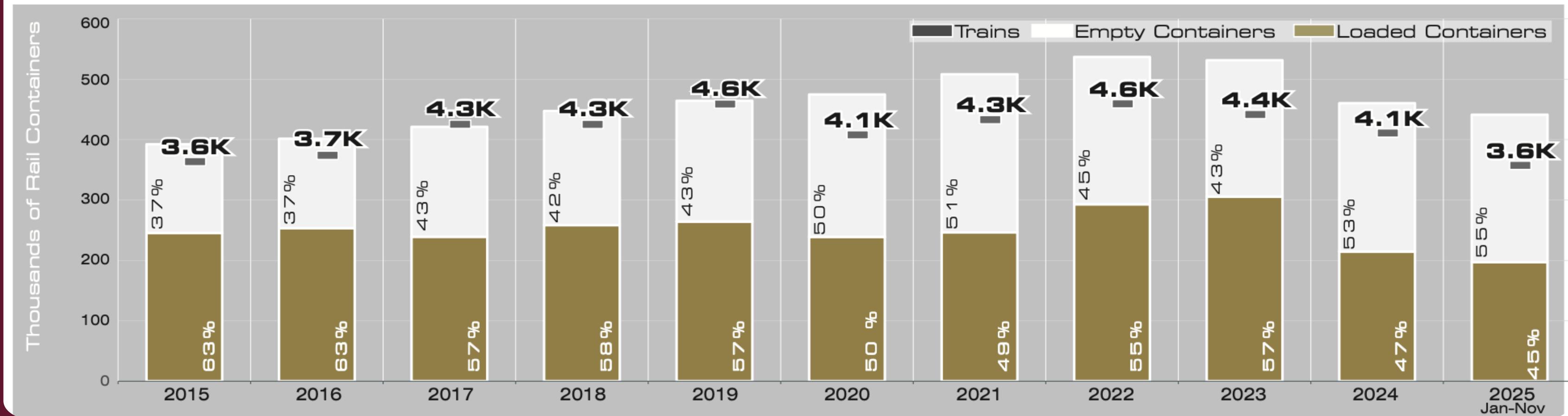
- Passenger vehicle crossings reached 12.9M in 2024, about 35,200 per day, fully recovered and slightly above pre - pandemic levels.
- Unlike pedestrian traffic, vehicle crossings bounced back completely.

Commercial Truck Crossings



- Through November 2025, commercial trucks are crossing at nearly 19,800 per day, about 825 per hour during operating hours.
- That pace mirrors 2024's record of 6.1M crossings, up 54% from a decade ago.

Northbound Rail Crossings



- Rail crossings are tracking around 4K trains for 2025, roughly flat with 2024.
- Still a slight dip from 2023's 4.4K, which is worth monitoring as intermodal patterns shift.

What's at Stake?

Port Laredo's position is strong —but a policy debate in Washington could change the rules that made it possible.



One Rulebook or Three?



TRILATERAL (USMCA)



One Compliance System

BILATERAL DEALS



Three Separate Rule Sets

The 2026 USMCA review is underway. Some in Washington propose replacing one trilateral framework with three separate bilateral deals.

The Compliance Reality



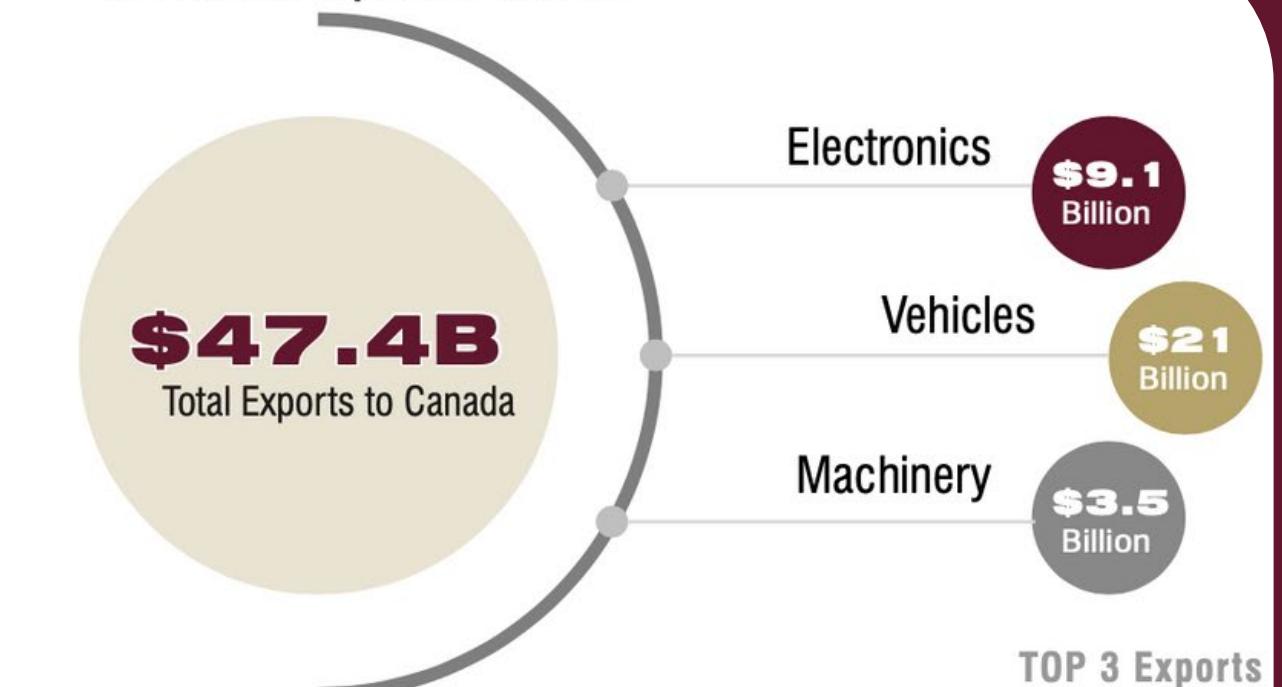
A single component using Canadian aluminum, Mexican manufacturing, and American assembly would need to satisfy three distinct origin rules, each with distinct thresholds and certification requirements.



The Mexico - Canada Problem

- \$56 billion in annual Mexico -Canada trade would be left without a framework. Bilateral U.S. deals don't cover this relationship.
- That includes \$21 billion in vehicles and \$9 billion in electronics —supply chains that run through all three countries, not just two.

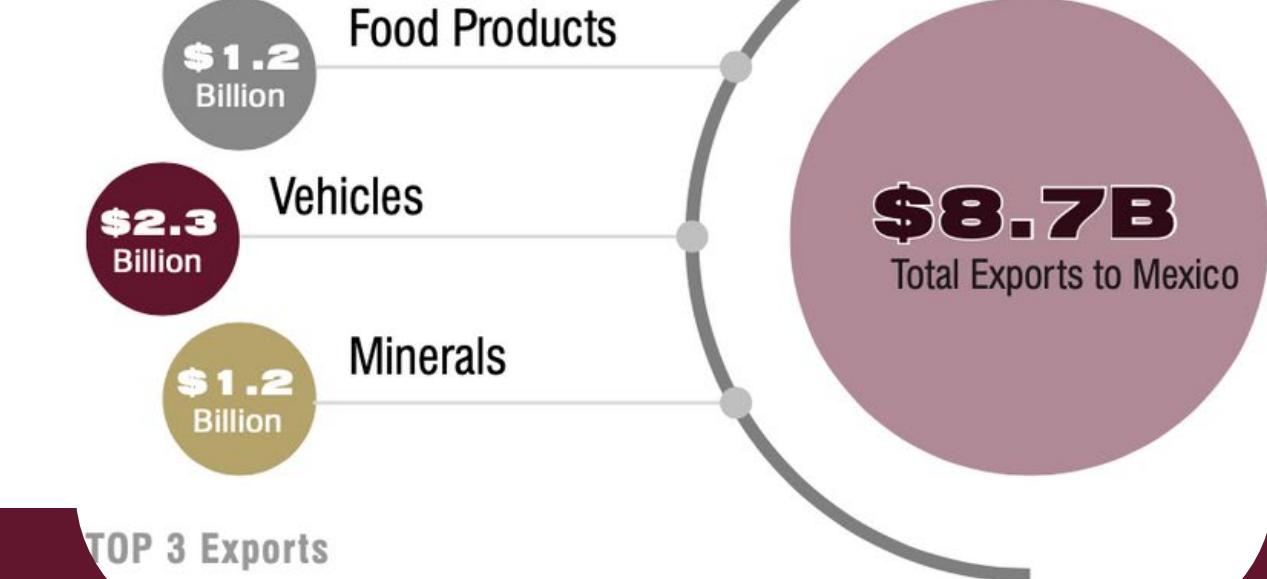
2024 Mexico Exports to Canada



\$56.1 Billion

2024 CANADA-MEXICO
TOTAL TRADE

2024 Canada Exports to Mexico





Negotiation Timeline Comparison

USMCA

Actual Time

3 Years

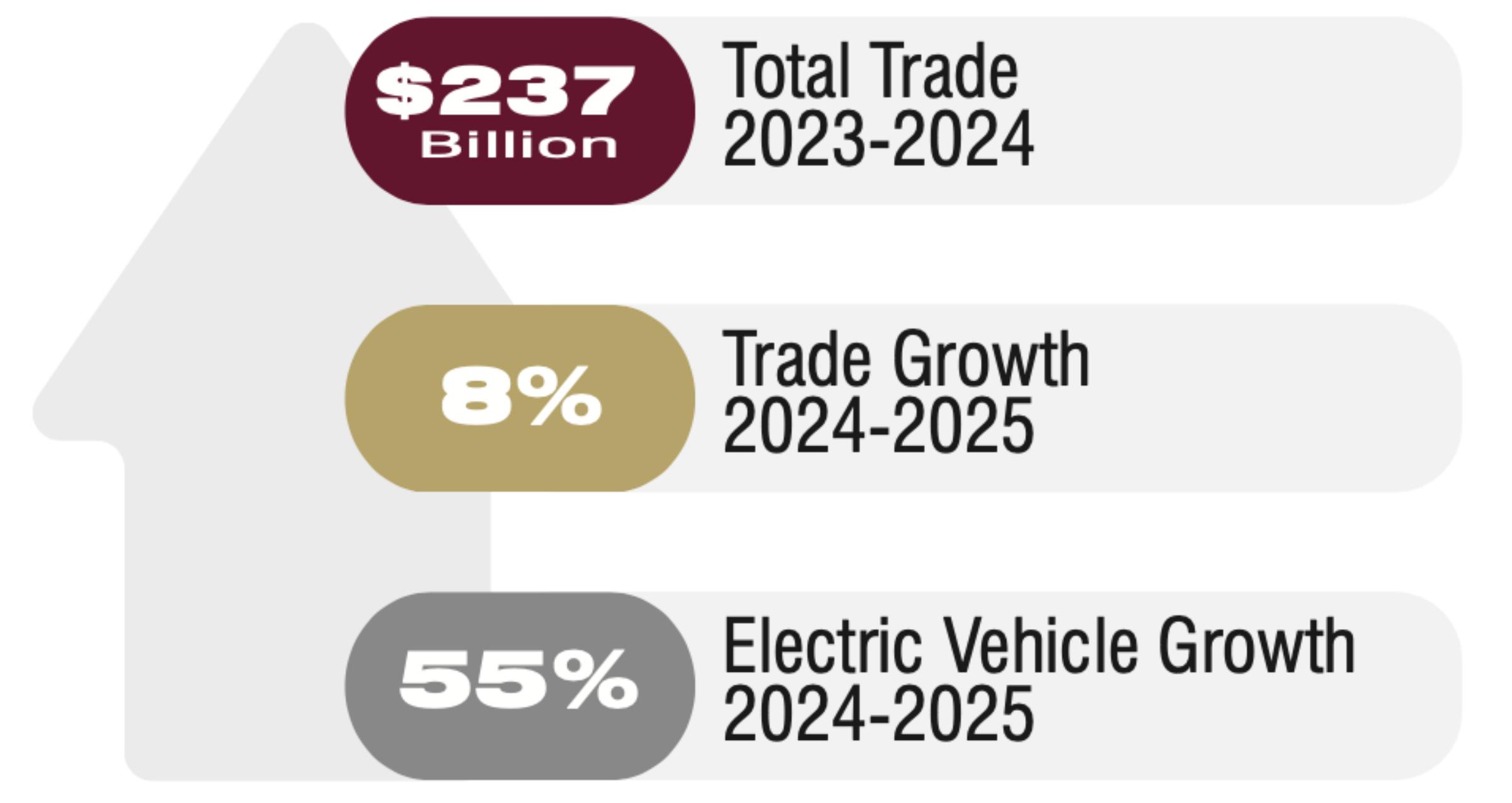
Bilateral

Sequential
Negotiations

9 Years

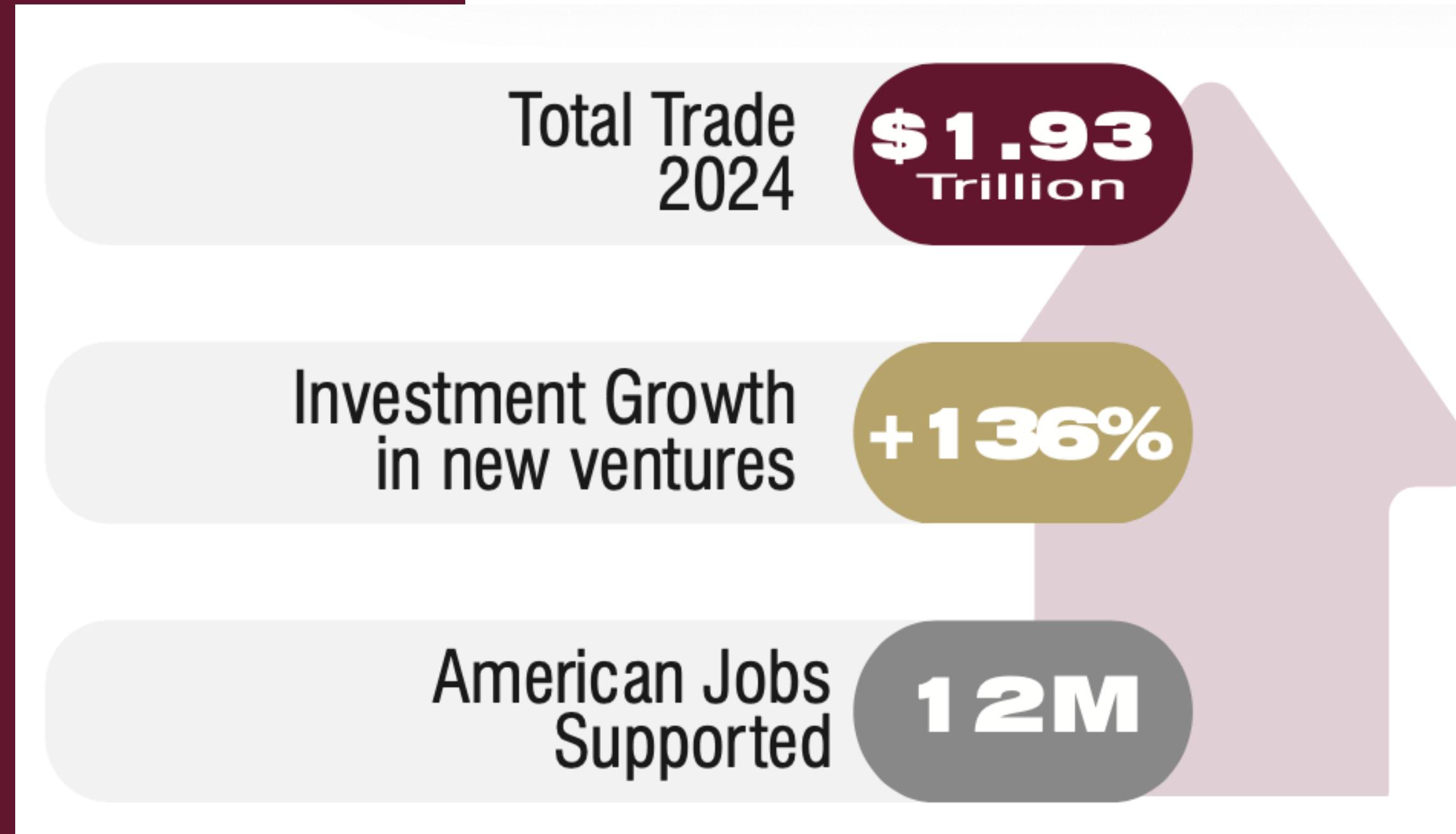
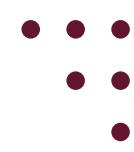
The original USMCA took 3 years to negotiate. Three separate bilateral deals could mean 6 - 9 years of uncertainty.

While We Debate, China Moves



Chinese exports to Latin America reached a record \$287 billion in 2024 —up 13% year -over -year.
Fragmentation benefits competitors.

What Trilateral Built



Where we Go...

The 2026 USMCA review is an opportunity to
modernize the trilateral framework —not fragment it.





The 2026 review is an opportunity to strengthen trilateral cooperation through institutional innovation, not fragment it.

A Framework for North American Competitiveness

01

The Binational Customs Agency



02

North American Industrial Coordination Council (NAICC)

Toward a North American Industrial Strategy:

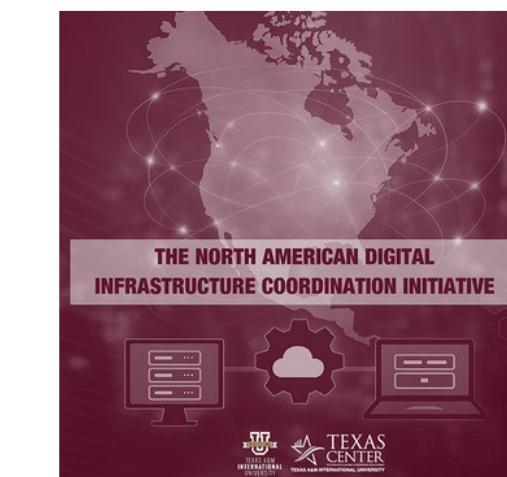
THE CASE FOR A NORTH AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL COORDINATION COUNCIL (NAICC)

DANIEL COVARRUBIAS, PH.D.
GERARDO (GERRY) SCHWEBEL



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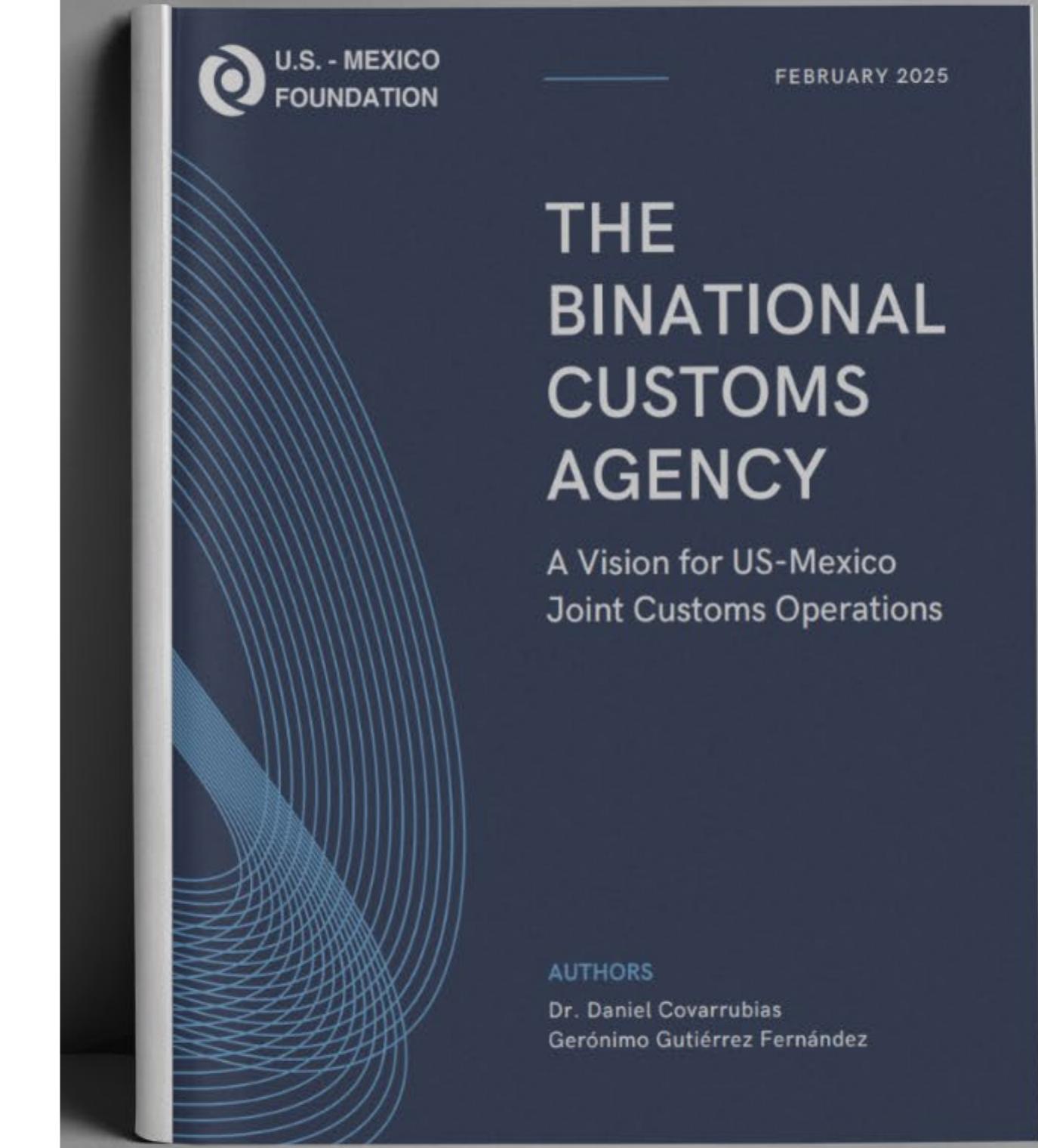
North American Digital Coordination Initiative (NADICI)





The Binational Customs Agency

- Think of this as a joint venture for customs, shared inspection facilities, unified data systems, and coordinated enforcement. It's how wait times at the bridges can be reduced while strengthening security.
- Joint inspections already exist at several ports, including WTB, but the systems still don't talk to each other. The BCA goes further: unified data, shared intelligence, harmonized procedures. That's the infrastructure that doesn't exist yet.





North American Industrial Coordination Council (NAICC)

- Competing with China on EVs, semiconductors, and critical minerals requires trilateral coordination, not three national strategies undercutting each other.
- China has one industrial strategy backed by state investment. North America has three countries bidding against each other for the same factories. NAICC creates the coordination mechanism, so it stops competing with itself while China consolidates.

Toward a North American Industrial Strategy:

THE CASE FOR A NORTH AMERICAN
INDUSTRIAL COORDINATION COUNCIL (NAICC)

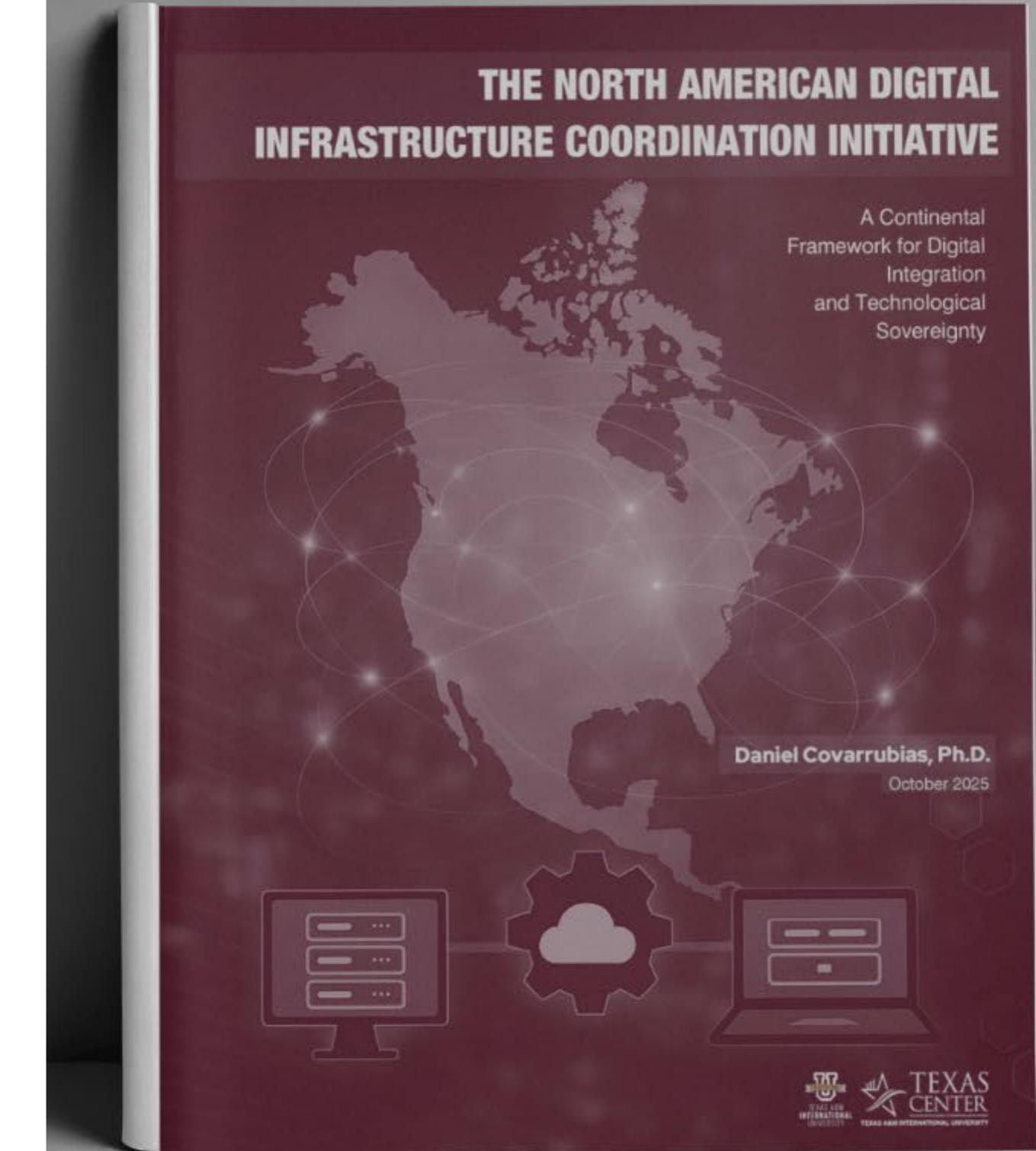
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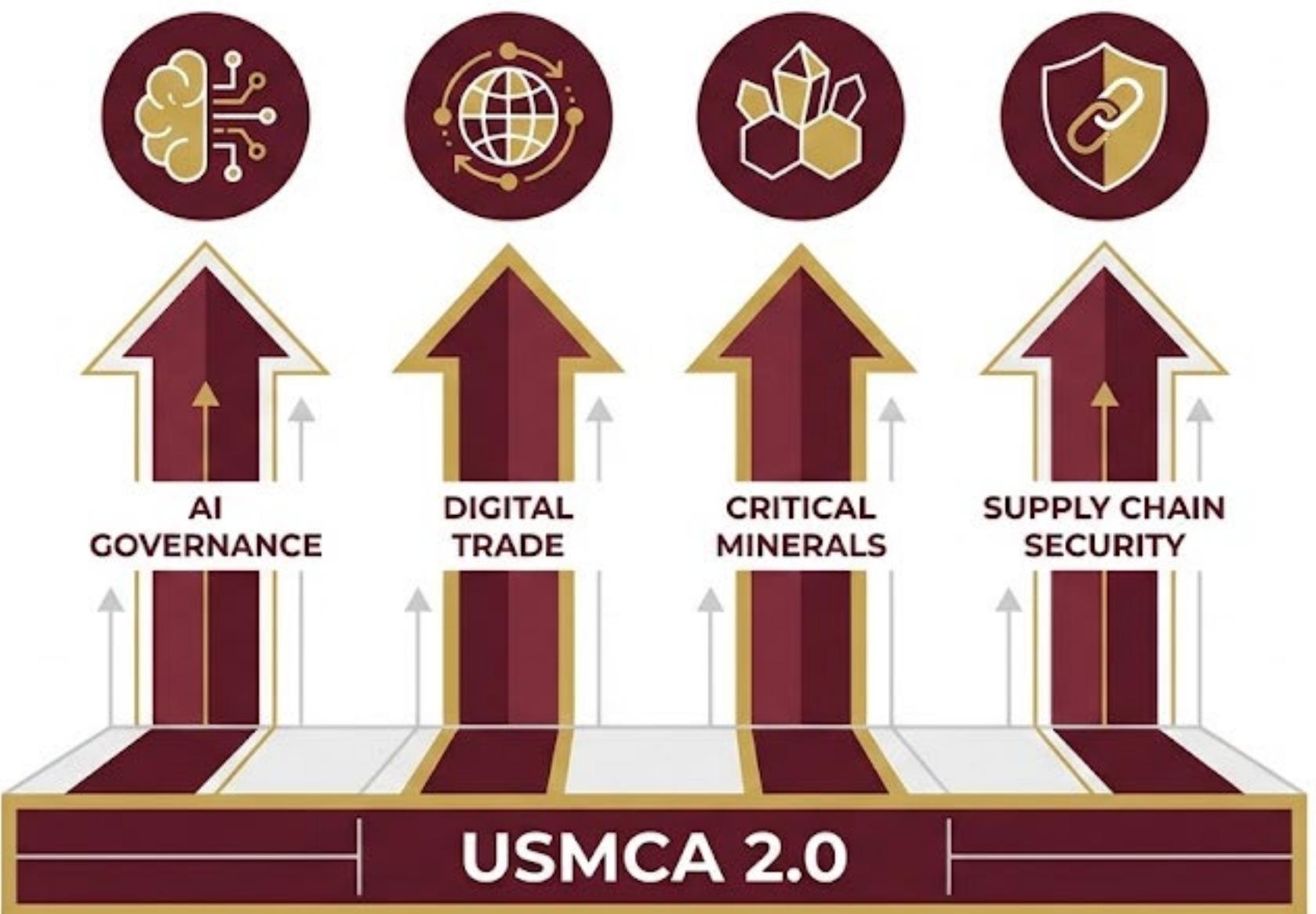


North American Digital Coordination Initiative (NADICI)

- Digital infrastructure is the next frontier. Each country has separate standards for data, cybersecurity, and AI governance. The U.S. can't win the AI race with its two largest trading partners lagging behind.
- When a shipment crosses at Laredo, the data trail breaks at the border, different systems, different standards, different rules. NADICI creates interoperable digital infrastructure, so supply chain visibility doesn't stop at the Rio Grande.



Modernize, Don't Fragment



Priority areas: AI governance, digital trade, critical minerals, supply chain security. The solution is trilateral adjustment —not three separate agreements

From Where We Sit in Laredo

Close to 20,000 daily truck crossings represent the physical manifestation of trilateral integration. The operational case is clear, and the frameworks are ready. They exist so the 2026 review doesn't start from zero





North America Integration Series



<https://texascenter.tamu.edu/research-nai.shtml>

