



February 19, 2016

Dear Members of the Arizona State Transportation Board,

Welcome to the gateway for trade and travel between Arizona and Mexico. I hope you enjoyed your firsthand experience witnessing how our small community moves over \$20 billion in goods and tens of millions of people each year. Thank you for holding your meeting here. This community appreciates the opportunity to share our vision for growth with you.

I also want to thank John Halikowski and his terrific staff for working so closely with our community as we navigate solutions for our transportation issues. You have a smart, hard-working team at ADOT.

We mean business in Nogales in more ways than one. We literally mean business. The trade and travelers passing through our community mean business creation and business growth for Arizona and the accompanying economic benefits that come with it. We also mean business in the figurative sense in that we feel very strongly about positioning our community and our state for future growth. As you all know, one key way to do that is through transportation infrastructure investment.

Ruby Road, Rio Rico Drive

There has been a lot of emphasis and discussion about SR 189. While that stretch of road is a crucial priority for the state, we must ensure that we do not move the bottleneck from one place to another. The Ruby Road/I-19 interchange and Rio Rico Drive/East Frontage Road corridor must be considered as part of the overall transportation solution in Santa Cruz County.

60 to 70 percent of the warehouses in the region are located between Ruby Road and Rio Rico Drive. That means a majority of trucks crossing the border must use the Ruby Road exit and the East Frontage Road leading to Rio Rico Drive. In addition, for every one northbound truck using this corridor, there are two to three U.S. trucks that drive south to pick up the fresh produce being sold here and then return north to distribute the goods across North America.

During the peak produce season, it is not uncommon to see a line of trucks stretching down the exit and onto I-19 waiting to access the Rio Rico Industrial Park. Several times a day the situation is compounded with school traffic, passenger vehicles traveling to and from a large residential neighborhood, and also train crossings to the east of the exit. The situation causes unnecessary delays and creates significant safety issues.

With the construction of a bridge in north Rio Rico at Palo Parado, traffic has lessened at Rio Rico Drive. However, the residents at the south end of this corridor, Ruby Road, continue to face serious traffic delays. The Frontage Road must be turned into a two-way access to the industrial park at Rio Rico Drive to alleviate much of the pressure at Ruby Road. Additionally, the Ruby Road interchanges on both the east and west sides of I-19 must be improved.

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Include Funding for Ruby Road, Rio Rico Drive in the ADOT 5-Year Plan

ADOT has completed a preliminary study for improvements to Ruby Road and Rio Rico Drive. In addition, Santa Cruz County has received approximately \$1 million in grant money for the design work for Ruby Road and Rio Rico Drive.

I ask that the State Transportation Board consider including \$10.6 million in the 5-Year Plan to address the serious congestion and traffic issues on this vital piece of the transportation network for the state.

Again, thank you for joining us in Santa Cruz County. We are here as a partner to you and the state to achieve greater economic growth and stability.

Sincerely,

Allison Moore
Fresh Produce Association of the Americas