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*"Embracing our Heritage, Advancing our Future"*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Key Milestones Achieved on the Two-Port Solution**

**DOUGLAS, ARIZ. – March 31, 2020.** In November 2019, the General Services Administration (GSA) notified stakeholders of its completion of the Douglas Port of Entry Feasibility Study. The GSA is using the study internally for technical, planning and design purposes and will not share the report publicly. It has announced the Feasibility Study confirms a Two-Port Solution as the right course of action to resolve the issue of overcrowding of the current Raul Castro Port of Entry in Douglas. This is similar to port separations in San Luis, Arizona and Calexico, California. A Commercial Port of Entry will move semi-trailer and commercial truck traffic to a new route nearly five miles west of the existing port, which is in the downtown area. The new location will align along the James Ranch Road south of Highway 80 where the City has already committed up to 80 acres of land for the construction of the new, state-of-the-art facility.

Another milestone occurred in March this year when the US and Mexican governments conducted an exchange of Diplomatic Notes, signaling the intent by both countries to plan and construct a second port, alleviating the overcrowding at the current port of entry in Douglas. This binational exchange solidifies a strong commitment to this project by both countries. The protocols of review and authorizations took nearly six months to get through the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the US Department of State for the President-to-President communique to be exchanged.

The City was advised of the Diplomatic Note on March 11, formalizing the binational port development process. This is essential for a fully coordinated approach on both sides of the border. Mexico will now begin a highly layered process that involves the review of multiple agencies in their country. Our process will incorporate reviews outside of the General Services Administration which acts as project manager, to include the Department of Homeland Security and Customs and Border Patrol. Mexico will now begin to study their roadways for route improvement and infrastructure requirements as well as set a timeline for advancement of the project in collaboration with the US.

The City of Douglas, Cochise County and the many other stakeholder agencies around the state remain committed to bringing the two-port solution to reality. Already underway is the planning for water, wastewater, broadband, utility and road infrastructure to serve this \$170.5 million federal construction project that will create greater capacity for commerce and strengthen the economies between our countries within the next five years.

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