





# 2019 Port of Brownsville Directory

AAPA Communications Awards Program

Entry Classification: Directories/Handbooks

## SUMMARY

The Port of Brownsville Directory is a comprehensive resource tool for industry, community and media relations, outlining economic development initiatives, intermodal capabilities and contact information for port-related businesses, stakeholders and other maritime related industries. The directory is intended to close the gap of communication between the port and the business community, the general public and members of the media.

The project is comprised of three components: a printed English issue, a printed Spanish issue, and an electronic version available on the port's website. The directory was designed to be a revenue-neutral project and does not impact the port's operational budget.

- Electronic version: <http://www.portofbrownsville.com/business-with-the-port/directory/>
- Downloadable PDF (English): [https://www.portofbrownsville.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/POB\\_2019Directory\\_interactive.pdf](https://www.portofbrownsville.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/POB_2019Directory_interactive.pdf)
- Downloadable PDF (Spanish): [https://www.portofbrownsville.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2019-POB\\_Directory\\_Spanish\\_print.pdf](https://www.portofbrownsville.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2019-POB_Directory_Spanish_print.pdf)

## COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As an important resource tool, the directory connects the port with the business community, the general public and members of the media – the three target audiences of the publication.

The Rio Grande Valley (RGV) in South Texas covers 1,881 square miles, has a population of 1.5 million and is comprised of 46 cities and towns and more than 100 communities. As the economic driver for this region, the Port of Brownsville plays a vital role in our community. Telling the story of how and why the port is the main catalyst for economic development in the RGV is the challenge for this project.

The 2019 Port of Brownsville directory positions the port as a competitive and strategic hub for intermodal transportation and thereby a logical extension of each RGV cities' economic development initiatives. The Fast Facts and Docking Facilities sections were written and formatted to provide site selectors and economic developers a convenient and easily understandable reference with service providers and contact information.



Additionally, the directory opens the gate to the public by providing them with a glimpse of the activity that otherwise goes unnoticed daily. The photography featured in the directory offers a compelling visual representation of the daily operations of the port that *works* – our port's tagline.

The Port of Brownsville is the only deepwater seaport directly on the U.S.-Mexico border and has established strong business relationships with international companies based in Mexico. To that end, a condensed version is translated to Spanish and is a secondary component of the directory available to current and potential Mexican customers. All translations are done in-house by a certified port staff translator.

Twelve thousand copies of the directory were printed with more than 3,500 mailed to various ships agents, logistics firms, third-party logistics providers and ocean shipping lines across the United States.

The directories were hand-delivered by communications and port staff to all RGV economic development corporations, chambers of commerce, port tenants, elected officials, media outlets, public libraries, and potential business partners. The directory was also published and featured on the port's website as well as distributed at industry trade shows and public port presentations.

## OVERALL MISSION

The Port of Brownsville's mission:

*“To be a leader in business development by providing state-of-the-art infrastructure expansion, developing economic opportunities, providing the best transportation facilities possible, and exhibiting high standards of public administration with the ultimate goal being to improve quality of life and create employment opportunities, gain the public’s trust and confidence in order to increase growth development, and establish the port as a world class port.”*

The content in the directory highlights how largescale industrial development at the port is transforming our region’s economic landscape with billions of dollars of investment and thousands of new jobs at the port. These major projects include:

- Three liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects, representing a combined investment of \$38.75 billion.
- Potential development of a state-of-the-art steel mill with a capital investment of \$1.6 billion.
- Construction of a new liquid cargo dock and rehabilitation of existing docks, patios and internal roads.
- Port’s plan to deepen its channel from 42 ft to 52 ft.

As identified in the directory, the port is the region’s leading economic driver creating more than 8,000 jobs locally and infusing more than \$2 billion annually to the regional economy. Activity at the port is also responsible for more than 44,000 jobs in the state of Texas and supports the state’s economy with \$3 billion annually.

This information demonstrates not only the port’s regional footprint but it’s global reach, as well as the port’s mission to advance regional trade and commerce while stimulating economic development and job creation.

### DEEP THINKING

**Arguably, the most valuable asset of any port is the depth of its channel.**

The depth of a port's channel can be compared to the length of an airport's runway. The longer the runway, the bigger the planes. The deeper the channel, the bigger the ships.

For example, with just one more inch of draft – or depth – a ship can carry 270,000 additional bushels of wheat valued at more than \$600,000.<sup>1</sup>

The Port of Brownsville plans to deepen its channel from 42 feet to 52 feet – 10 feet deeper! With that much additional draft, the cost savings for shipping goods across the Earth's oceans reach an economy of scale far greater than those of the aircraft example. Which also means, more jobs to handle more cargo at the Port of Brownsville.

The port's current channel depth is 42 feet, making it among the Gulf of Mexico's deepest ports. So why deepen an already deep channel?

Since 1914, most of the world's leading seaports deepened shipping channels to reach the draft of the Panama Canal at 42 feet – the most important draft in ocean shipping. In recent years, ships have dramatically increased in length and draft, prompting a mission expansion of the Panama Canal that became operational in 2016.

The Panama Canal's revised locks can accommodate ships drafting more than 50 feet and longer than five football fields. The canal expansion served as a catalyst, motivating U.S. East Coast and Gulf of Mexico ports to harmonize channel drafts with those in Panama to accommodate a flood of new shipping infrastructure challenges.

After years of effort, planning and success, the Port of Brownsville received channel deepening authorization in 2016 from the U.S. Congress. The project is currently in the final permitting stage, with expectations for construction to begin by 2020. Deepening the port's channel means bigger ships, more cargo, and more jobs for the Rio Grande Valley.

However, the cost of channel deepening is expensive, very expensive. The port estimates the cost may be as much as \$350 million. Creating an affordable financing strategy required the right mix of local, state, federal and private

solutions. The answer was found in a public-private partnership, combined with eligible federal dollars and port bonds.

NavSource, owner of the proposed Rio Grande LNG natural gas liquefaction plant (part of the proposed Port of Brownsville (P3)), adopted the P3 strategy as its own in a landmark agreement with the port in April 2019, agreeing to pay 100 percent

of the deepening project from the western boundary of its basin site along the ship channel to its offshore origin (more than one mile) – or more than half of the deepening project. Other proposed development projects are expected to join the P3, sharing in both the cost and benefit of a deeper channel.

1: NOAA. <http://noaa.nmfs.gov/industry/industry2017/>



2017 - The Port of Brownsville channel is 42 feet to 52 feet - 10 feet deeper!



The Atlantic 2017 Nordic Pollux is the largest of the Port of Brownsville by the size of cargo it carries, capable of 100,000 tons of 100 feet and a beam of 107 feet.

## PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

### Port of Brownsville Directory goals:

- Position the Port of Brownsville as a competitive and strategic hub for intermodal transportation and industrial development.
- Position the port as a regional asset informing the general public about the port's significance as the region's leading economic driver.
- Provide local and trade media with an accurate and reliable source of detail.
- **Target audiences:**
  - Business: Potential customers, port tenants and the business community.
  - Community: General public.
  - Media: Local and trade media outlets on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border.

This project is comprised of three components: a printed English issue, a printed Spanish issue, and an electronic version available on the port's website.

To help establish relationships with the target audiences, the directories were hand-delivered by communications and port staff to business offices, public libraries and newsrooms throughout the region. The directories were also available at industry trade shows, community events and public port presentations.

An additional 3,500 copies were mailed to various ships agents, logistics firms, third-party logistics providers and ocean shipping lines across the United States. All newsrooms of local media received at least a dozen copies of the directory and trade media contacts received copies by mail.



**THE PORT THAT WORKS**

A port community with all these exceptional benefits and active projects means skilled and diverse labor, local universities, colleges, technical schools, school districts and workforce development facilities are partnering with the port to meet the demands of growth. **Brownsville is home to one of the nation's most youthful populations, where the average age is 29. Educated, technologically savvy, ambitious and motivated to succeed, these young people understand the meaning of hard work.**

Many of those work for the port's three allied stevedoring operations, who collaborated on the movement of 1.3 million short tons of cargo last year. The Shipping Company, Schulte Stevedoring and Call Ocean Marine are the backbone and muscle of the port that works. Each has distinguished formations with records of safety and efficiency, serving the broadest needs of their clients, resulting in staggering regional and economic impacts.

According to a Martin Associates' report, cargo activity at the port's marine terminal and log boat operations support \$1 billion in total fees economic activity, creating more than 40,000 jobs. Of those, 7,000 local, regional direct, indirect and induced jobs are generated at the port by marine cargo-related activity and ship and log repair. These jobs release more than \$2 billion annually into the regional economy.

Martin Associates' report concludes that \$47.5 million of state and local tax revenue is generated by these activities, and another \$127.7 million in state and local taxes are generated due to economic activity of related users of cargo moving through the port's marine terminal. These impacts demonstrate the port as the region's leading economic driver.

Supporting the area with open responsibility, jurisdiction and guidance of the Brownsville Navigation District (BN) is the cornerstone development continuous plan for the port. The plan of fees and charges with any port policies and supporting regulations, including BN's members are critical to the port's success and the port's board is comprised of Chairman John Reed,



40215 - Working safety is job one for the port's stevedoring operations. Safety is the top priority for the port's 10,000 employees.



40216 - Rigging the 100-ton crane for the port's stevedoring operations. Rigging is a critical part of the port's operations.

New Chairman Sergio Irujo, Secretary Ralph Casero and Assistant Secretaries John Wood and Esteban Gomez.

Management of the port is accomplished by Port Director and CEO Donald A. Campos and Deputy Port Director Christy Leland. They manage the day-to-day activities of a team of stevedoring directors and dedicated staff, skilled in a variety of disciplines necessary to operate, secure, market and maintain the port's operating assets.

## ACTIONS AND OUTPUTS

The 2019 publication is the port's third comprehensive directory. The Communications Department is relatively new (4 years old) and has a staff of two. The objective was to pay for the project from advertising revenue without creating an onerous relationship with port tenants and users. By investing in the directory, advertisers would feel a sense of ownership and pride in the success of the directory. Ad sales for the 2019 Port of Brownsville Directory more than covered the hard costs of creating and printing the directory, achieving the objective of being revenue-neutral.

The Brownsville Navigation District (BND) is composed of a five-member elected commission. The members are elected to four-year staggered terms and the BND holds elections every other year during the month of May. For this reason, the directory is published every June to accommodate any changes in leadership after an election period.

All components of the directory, including writing copy, selecting photography, ad sales, translation of articles, creation of maps and graphics and review of contact information featured in the Green Pages, are done internally.

Communications staff begins planning for the directory in January. The first three months of the six-month project are spent creating an outline for articles and photography, soliciting advertisers, contacting all port tenants to provide their contact information, developing the port facilities map, and soliciting bids from printers. The remaining months are spent writing, photographing port facilities, editing, translating, finally printing and distribution.

Organizing more than 500 companies with contact information into more than 60 categories consumes almost two months of daily additions and editing.

The directory content covers several topics: new business opportunities, capital investments, overall port capabilities, port facilities, business directory, and maps. To make the directory attractive to the reader and help staff keep track of the information, the content is divided into four sections (Featured articles; Fast Facts; Overall Facilities; Business Directory). The use of hi-resolution, professional photos and colorful graphics provide a supportive visual of the port that *works* – our port's tagline.



### REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP ENHANCING INTERMODAL CONNECTIVITY

As part of a regional strategic collaboration, the Port of Brownsville and the Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority (CCRMA) work together to enhance the port's intermodal connectivity, further facilitating domestic and international trade throughout Cameron County.

Resulting from the collaboration is the South Port Connector Road project, which is part of the CCRMA's overall East Loop Corridor plan.

In April 2019, the South Port Connector Road received environmental clearance from the Texas Department of Transportation, authorizing the project to be constructed. The \$10 million project is scheduled for completion in 2020.

The port connector spans two miles connecting China Road inside the port with State Highway 4. The project improves traffic accessibility by providing another entry and exit to and from the port and offers convenient access to commercial lanes of the Veterans Intermodal Bridge.

About 1,000 commercial vehicles are expected to utilize the port connector daily. The new route opens travel time and improves safety for children in Brownsville by eliminating 17 stops and six school zone crossings.

The South Port Connector Road also links the port with Spratt's branch site at Boca Chico. The port expects to play an important role in the space company's operations in South Texas, assisting with the shipping and receiving of critical components and potential marine vehicle recovery operations.

Another major project enhancing the port's intermodal capabilities is SH 150/1100, the Rio Grande Valley's first road of its kind.

The 10-mile toll road connects the Port of Brownsville and State Highway 99 in Harlingen, TX. The road allows commercial traffic to move cargo faster, safer, more efficiently and directly to the port and facilitates economic development by creating access to previously undeveloped areas.

The multi-lane, high-speed corridor maintains a state-of-the-art electronic toll collection system, allowing uninterrupted travel with no toll plazas. Daily drivers of the corridor experience shorter travel times from Interstate 69E in the Port of Brownsville, avoiding stops, residential areas, school zones and multiple railroad crossings on the parallel SH 511. This saves more than just time by reducing fuel costs and wear and tear to expensive truck equipment & enhances safety.

The project has one construction phase remaining and is scheduled for completion in 2020. Once final construction is complete, the SH 150/1100 corridor will be measured between 100 and 100 meters of the port's primary entrance.

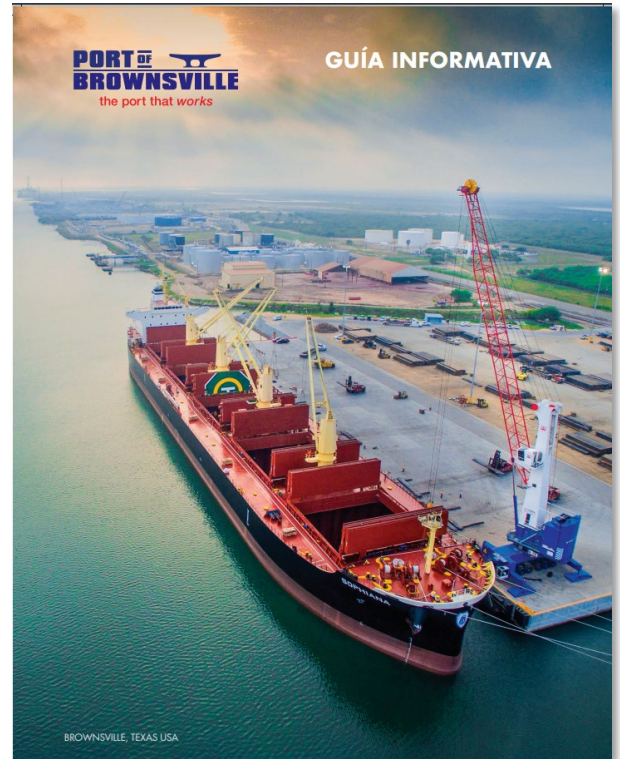
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The Spanish version of the directory can be viewed here: [https://www.portofbrownsville.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2019-POB\\_Directory\\_Spanish\\_print.pdf](https://www.portofbrownsville.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2019-POB_Directory_Spanish_print.pdf)

The directory has been distributed to EDCs, chambers of commerce, tenants, employees, media outlets, potential business partners, public libraries and elected officials. Thousands of copies have been hand-delivered personally. Copies have also been distributed at trade shows, regional, state and international events and by mail upon request, in addition to the 3,500 copies that were initially mailed to various ships agents, logistics firms, third-party logistics providers and ocean shipping lines across the United States.

The electronic version of the directory is available on the port's website at <http://www.portofbrownsville.com/business-with-the-port/directory/>

The directory's website version has recorded more than 4,200 views from June 2019 to date, with an average of 350 readers per month.



PORT OF BROWNSVILLE

## RUMBO A MÉXICO

**La proximidad del Puerto de Brownsville con México, la segunda economía más grande de América Latina, le brinda al puerto una ubicación privilegiada para servir como punto de transbordo para el despacho de productos y materiales a centros multinacionales de fabricación en ambos lados de la frontera.**

El Puerto de Brownsville mueve más acero a México que cualquier otro puerto marítimo de los EE.UU. En 2018, el puerto movió 3.2 millones de toneladas de acero al país azteca.

Monterrey, el principal centro industrial de México, es sede de decenas de empresas reconocidas a nivel internacional. Esta metrópoli mexicana se encuentra a tan solo 321 kilómetros de distancia del Puerto de Brownsville y las plantas acereras de esta ciudad dependen de la logística eficiente que ofrece el puerto. Eficientes cruces fronterizos se ubican a sólo 11 kilómetros del puerto por carretera y a 21 kilómetros de distancia por ferrocarril mediante el Puente Internacional de Ferrocarril del Oeste.

Además de las crecientes exportaciones de acero, las recién implementadas reformas petroleras en México contribuyen al incremento del cruce de carga por la frontera. Diesel, gasolina premium y otros lubricantes son transportados al sur con mayor frecuencia y volumen. Las importaciones de combustible, como el combustible #6, son transportadas por ferrocarril al puerto marítimo.

Estas actividades han ayudado a la Zona de Libre Comercio No. 62 (FTZ por sus siglas en inglés) a mantenerse entre las principales del país. De acuerdo con el más reciente reporte presentado al Congreso de EE.UU., por el tercer año consecutivo la FTZ No. 62 del puerto se ubica en el segundo lugar por el valor de exportaciones de entre las 293 zonas de libre comercio en el país, reportando \$3.6 mil millones de dólares en exportaciones.

Lo anterior no es ninguna sorpresa, ya que más de 10 millones de consumidores viven a menos de tres horas de distancia del puerto, muchos de los cuales se encuentran ubicados al sur de la frontera. El transporte de carga de y hacia México es fácil gracias a la gran variedad de opciones de transporte.

Tres ferrocarriles de Clase 1 ofrecen un conveniente servicio al puerto con Union Pacific y BNSF Railway sirviendo las rutas hacia el norte, y Kansas City Southern de México ofreciendo sus servicios para carga destinada al sur de la frontera. Brownsville Río Grande International Railway (BRG por sus siglas en inglés), que es operado por OmniTRAX mediante un acuerdo con el puerto, complementa a los proveedores de Clase 1 con 72.4 kilómetros de vías de ferrocarril dentro del puerto.

Cuando se requiere el transporte de carga por camión, el Puerto de Brownsville cuenta con un exclusivo corredor para vehículos con sobrepeso. Esta carretera para transporte pesado permite que los camiones entren y salgan del puerto cargados con el peso legal máximo en México de 57,000 kg, lo cual significa más de 20,400 kg por encima de los límites de sobrepeso impuestos en EE.UU. Esto se traduce en ahorros extraordinarios de tiempo, dinero y eficiencia logística.

**El transporte de carga de y hacia México es fácil gracias a la gran variedad de opciones de transporte. Desde gasolina premium y otros lubricantes son transportados por camión a México con mayor frecuencia y volumen.**



## OUTCOMES

Relationships with RGV communities have solidified the port’s role as the backbone of the regional economy among the various RGV cities and other entities. This can partly be attributed to the directory’s success in telling the port’s story by way of insightful articles and visually compelling photography and graphics.

Public interest has grown as well, and the directory has become a popular resource tool within the regional community. Chambers of commerce, regional visitor’s centers and public libraries for example, have requested hundreds of additional copies of the directory stating their visitors are interested in learning more about the port and continue to request copies of the publication.

Our community outreach efforts have been successful in placing the directory in school campuses and libraries of the Brownsville Independent School District. The directory is now available to local students as an informative resource tool.

Additionally, advertising sales for the port directory have reported a steady increase since its inaugural issue in 2017. The 2019 port directory grew by 10 percent from 2018 allowing us to grow the publication through new pages and circulation from 10,000 to 12,000 copies. Port staff has been successful in acquiring advertisers without the need of an aggressive approach to solicit advertising for the publication.

### Port of Brownsville Directory Ad Sales



New advertisers cite previous issues of the directory as their reason for wanting to advertise. As an example, The University of Texas A&M-Kingsville reached out to port staff with the intention to feature an ad after receiving a copy of the 2018 directory. The university campus is located just outside of Corpus Christi, about 120 miles north of the Port of Brownsville.

Port staff and commissioners continually receive positive comments from various sources about the quality of the 2019 Port of Brownsville directory.