



CITY OF  
**PORT LAVACA**



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February 23, 2026

Texas Department of Transportation  
Yoakum District  
Jeffery Vinklarek, P.E., District Engineer  
403 Huck St.  
Yoakum, TX 77995

CC: Wai Tun

Dear Mr. Vinklarek,

The City of Port Lavaca respectfully submits this letter as a strategic justification for transferring the right-of-way of US 87 (Main Street), from FM 1090 (Virginia Street) to SH 238 (Commerce Street). Securing this transfer is an essential step in implementing the City's Downtown Waterfront Master Plan and realizing the full value proposition of a one-way, eastbound corridor that supports the City's long-term mobility, placemaking, and economic competitiveness objectives.

Although currently classified as a state facility, this segment of US 87 functions as a high-value local mobility asset rather than a regional throughput corridor. Regional travel demand is already efficiently absorbed by SH 35 and SH 238, positioning this three-block segment of Main Street as a downtown access spine that directly supports retail vitality, visitor activity, and civic engagement. Re-aligning ownership with actual functional use is therefore both operationally rational and strategically aligned with TxDOT's asset management principles.

Following a robust, multi-channel public engagement process - including a Community Visioning Committee, a public workshop, and a public hearing - the City Council formally adopted the Downtown Waterfront Master Plan in June 2023. The plan outlines a targeted mobility strategy: converting three blocks of US 87 and Railroad Street to coordinated one-way operations to optimize circulation, improve the user experience, and create a more predictable and intuitive transportation network for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Currently, this Main Street segment spans a 55-foot right-of-way with a 38-foot-wide roadway, two-way traffic, parallel parking, and 8-foot-6-inch sidewalks. The corridor hosts a mix of commercial businesses, restaurants, a church, a live theatre, a public pocket park, and several redevelopment-ready parcels. However, the existing geometry generates inefficiencies including higher vehicle speeds, constrained pedestrian zones, and limited sight visibility, that restrict the City's ability to activate the downtown district and fully leverage its economic potential.

Transitioning this corridor to a one-way configuration will reduce conflict points, enhance multimodal safety, and optimize traffic flow within the historic core. More importantly, it creates

the structural flexibility needed to reinvest excess pavement width into value-enhancing placemaking features, including:

- Expanded sidewalks to increase pedestrian capacity and ADA compliance;
- Improved crosswalks and connections that strengthen the Main Street District's walkability and coherence;
- Strategic landscaping, lighting, and furnishing upgrades that drive foot traffic, extend dwell time, and amplify the district's market attractiveness.

These improvements directly support the City's broader economic development strategy. The 2016 Comprehensive Plan identifies the downtown as a high-potential asset with strong upside for reinvestment but also highlights right-of-way constraints as a key barrier to transformation. Local control of this segment of US 87 will unlock new project delivery pathways, enabling Port Lavaca to more efficiently implement capital improvements, pursue place-based economic development, and catalyze private-sector reinvestment.

We value our strong partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation and respectfully request favorable consideration of this right-of-way transfer. The City remains prepared to collaborate as needed to advance a solution that supports regional mobility goals while strengthening the long-term vitality of the downtown district.

Sincerely,

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Jack Whitlow, Mayor