

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-19-534](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

CBP and GSA own, lease, or manage all of the nation's 167 land border crossings. CBP facilitates trade and travel at these crossings and has identified significant capital investment needs at these facilities.

GAO was asked to review land border crossing infrastructure. This report examines (1) infrastructure constraints CBP faces and the extent CBP and GSA have information on infrastructure condition, (2) the extent CBP prioritizes capital projects and (3) the extent recent GSA capital projects met cost, schedule, and scope goals and challenges CBP and GSA reported.

GAO analyzed land border crossing data and documentation, including CBP and GSA facility assessments, CBP capital investment plans for fiscal years 2014 through 2018, and data for GSA capital infrastructure projects active during those years. GAO also interviewed officials from CBP field offices that oversee all crossings about infrastructure constraints and visited 16 crossings selected based on high traffic volume and border crossings CBP has prioritized for infrastructure improvement.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is making seven recommendations, including that CBP develop a plan to ensure it conducts facility condition assessments consistent with DHS policy; that CBP and GSA share and use each other's information on facility conditions at land border crossings; and that CBP establish review timeframes for its capital investment plan.

View [GAO-19-534](#). For more information, contact Rebecca Gambler at (202) 512-8777 or gablerr@gao.gov.

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BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE

Actions Needed to Improve Information on Facilities and Capital Planning at Land Border Crossings

What GAO Found

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reported infrastructure constraints at land border crossings including limited inspection capacity, technology challenges, and security limitations. However, CBP does not have complete information on infrastructure conditions at all land border crossings. Specifically, CBP assessed facility conditions at four of the 40 land border crossings it owns from 2016 through 2018. Further, CBP has not developed a plan to ensure it conducts such assessments, consistent with DHS policy which calls for them every three years. Developing and implementing a plan to ensure CBP executes its facility condition assessment program would enable CBP to collect more complete and current infrastructure information. In addition, while CBP and the General Services Administration (GSA) both assess facility conditions at 101 GSA-owned land border crossings, they do not consistently share or use each other's information. Doing so could enable CBP and GSA to improve the accuracy and completeness of their respective assessments.

Convent Street Land Border Crossing in Laredo, Texas



Source: GAO. | GAO-19-534

CBP prioritizes land border crossing capital projects in a five-year plan, which by statute is to be submitted with DHS's annual budget request to Congress. In fiscal years 2014 through 2018, CBP submitted two plans on time, submitted two plans more than 100 days after submission of the budget request, and did not submit a plan in one year due to delays in the plan's review and approval process. By establishing timeframes for the review process, CBP would be better positioned to identify and address sources of delay in the review process, and improve its ability to meet statutory reporting requirements by including its five-year plan with its annual budget submission to Congress.

The 10 completed or ongoing GSA land border crossing capital projects in fiscal years 2014 through 2018 generally experienced schedule growth ranging from 0 to 59 percent, but stayed within a 10 percent cost contingency allowance. Circumstances contributing to increased project costs or schedule growth include funding lags between project design and construction, and CBP-requested changes during construction to meet evolving mission needs, according to GSA and CBP officials.