



APPENDIX C

PENDING ACTIONS FOR THE NEXT UPDATE



Appendix C

Potential Actions for the Next Update

Passage of the new federal transportation bill, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), confers new responsibilities upon MPOs. The Laredo Urban Transportation Study takes these responsibilities seriously and will implement various new methods during its next MTP update cycle to comply with the renewed description of continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative planning in these newly adopted policies and regulations. This appendix outlines potential strategies for the Laredo MPO to contemplate.

Coordination with Other Agencies

The Laredo MPO will be considering two approaches towards coordination with other agencies. One approach is to contact other agencies as part of the public participation portion of the MTP update process. This has the advantage of bringing the relevant agencies into the process early. One disadvantage is that the MTP is only updated every five years. Another approach to coordination with other agencies is to have representatives of the various agencies join the technical committee. An advantage to this approach is that it recognizes the potentially technical nature of the input from relevant agencies and provides for more frequent input than every five years if there are changing circumstances. A disadvantage to this approach is that it places an extra time commitment on agencies that are not directly involved in transportation and may have little interest in service.

Operational and Management Strategies to Improve the Existing System

After adoption of the current MTP, the City of Laredo commissioned an ITS Master Plan report. The objective was to coordinate ITS efforts among the various departments and agencies in the Laredo area. This report was delivered in 2003.

Strategy to Improve Intermodal Connectivity/Mode Integration

The most pressing issue of concern related to multi-modal connectivity is actually related to one mode impeding another. At this time a long wait is required for freight trains crossing the border. While waiting for inspection these trains block traffic at at-grade intersections creating disruptions to people traveling by automobile as well as goods traveling by truck. In the short term efforts are under way to reduce the number of at-grade crossings. In the long term the City is evaluating potential routes outside the CBD that would minimize traffic disruptions.

Environmental Mitigation

Under SAFETEA-LU MPOs are now required to consider potential environmental impacts at a broad scale. The Region VI Environmental Protection Agency office has developed a GIS-based analysis tool. They have vetted a wide range of environmental criteria that are combined with weighting factors to create an environmental "score" for each square kilometer of the study area. The output is a map such as that shown in Figure C-1.



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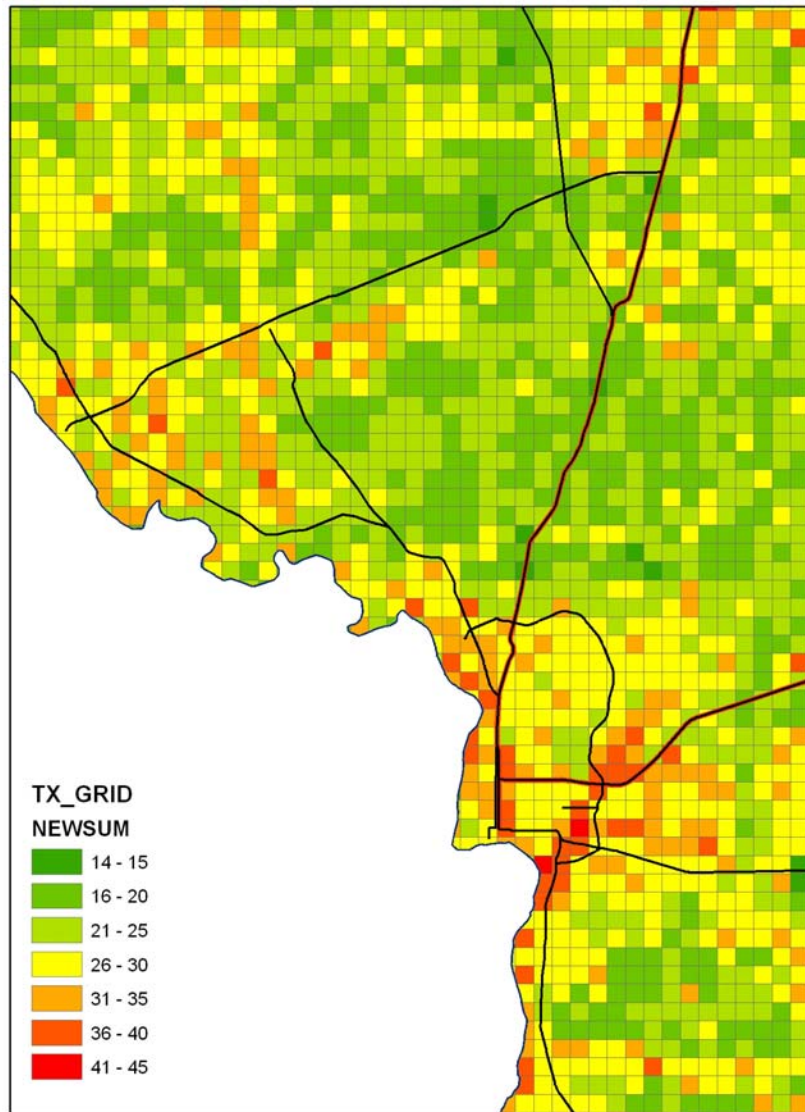


Figure C-1 Results of GISST Analysis for the Laredo Metropolitan Area