

**LAREDO WEBB COUNTY AREA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL MEETING**

LIVE WEB LINK: <http://laredotx.swagit.com/live>

PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNEL: Spectrum TV channel 1300

May 18th, 2020

1:30 p.m.

In order to adhere to the current public gathering guidelines, this meeting will be held in a virtual meeting format. Citizens wishing to provide public comment may phone in their comments during the meeting, or submit them electronically through means provided.

MEETING AGENDA

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Speakers are required to fill out witness cards, which must be submitted to MPO Staff no later than 15 minutes after the start of the meeting. Speakers shall identify themselves at the microphone. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. No more than three (3) persons will be allowed to speak on any side of an issue. Should there be more than three (3) people who wish to speak on a specific issue, they should select not more than three (3) representatives to speak on their behalf. The presiding officer may further limit public on the interest of order or time. Speakers may not transfer their minutes to any other speaker. Comments should be relevant to City business and delivered in a professional manner. No derogatory remarks shall be permitted.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

A. Approval of the minutes for the virtual meeting held on April 20, 2020.

B. Receive public testimony and approve a motion to initiate a 10-day public review and comment period for the following proposed amendment(s) of the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):

1. Amending Table 10-2, entitled List of TxDOT UTP 2020-2030 Programmed Projects, & Figure 10-1, entitled Map of TxDOT UTP Programmed Projects, as necessary to incorporate the following revisions:

a. Addition of project CSJ 0086-02-023 intended to provide for the widening of SH 359 from 2 to 4 lanes, from 8.935 miles east of SL 20 to 9.830 miles east of SL 20, with an estimated total project cost of \$7,367,400. The proposed letting date is FY 2023.

C. Discussion with possible action on the presentation by TxDOT on the National Highway System

D. Discussion with possible action on Hachar-Reuthinger.

V. REPORT(S) AND PRESENTATIONS (No action required).

A. Status report on the ongoing Active Transportation Plan. (Cm. Altgelt)

B. Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).

VI. ADJOURNMENT

THIS NOTICE WAS POSTED AT THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 1110 HOUSTON STREET, LAREDO, TEXAS, AT A PLACE CONVENIENT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC AT ALL TIMES. SAID NOTICE WAS POSTED BY MAY 15TH, 2020, BY 1:30 P.M.

All meetings of the MPO Committee are open to the public. Persons who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aid or services such as: interpreters for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers of large print or Braille, or a translator for the Spanish language are requested to contact Ms. Vanessa Guerra, City Planning, 1120 San Bernardo Ave. at 956-794-1613, vguerra@ci.laredo.tx.us, at least five working days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Materials in Spanish may also be provided upon request.

Disability Access Statement-This meeting is wheelchair accessible. The accessible entrances are located at 1110 Victoria and 910 Flores. Accessible parking spaces are located at City Hall, 1110 Victoria.

Ayuda o Servicios Auxiliares: Todas las reuniones del Comité del MPO están abiertas al público. Personas que planean asistir a esta reunión y que pueden necesitar ayuda o servicios auxiliares como: intérpretes para personas con discapacidad auditiva, lectores de letra grande o en Braille, o un traductor para el idioma español deben comunicarse con la Sra. Vanessa Guerra, en el Departamento del Planificación de la Ciudad, 1120 San Bernardo Ave. al (956) 794-1613, vguerra@ci.laredo.tx.us, al menos cinco días hábiles antes de la reunión para que los arreglos apropiados se pueden hacer. Materiales en español se proveerán a petición.

Declaración de Acceso a la Discapacidad: Esta reunión es accesible para sillas de ruedas. Las entradas accesibles están ubicadas en 1110 Victoria y 900 Flores. Las plazas de aparcamiento accesibles se encuentran en el Ayuntamiento, 1110 Victoria.

Información en Español: Si usted desea esta información en español o si desea explicación sobre el contenido, por favor llámenos al teléfono (956) 794-1613 o comunicarse con nosotros mediante correo electrónico a vguerra@ci.laredo.tx.us.

CITY OF LAREDO REPRESENTATIVES:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LUTS Chairperson
Honorable Norma “Nelly” Vielma, City Councilmember, District V
Honorable Dr. Marte Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI

LAREDO MASS TRANSIT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:

Honorable George Altgelt, City Councilmember, District VII

COUNTY OF WEBB REPRESENTATIVES:

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

STATE REPRESENTATIVES:

Mr. David M. Salazar, Jr. P.E., TxDOT District Engineer


PRIVATE SECTOR

Member at large (Vacant)

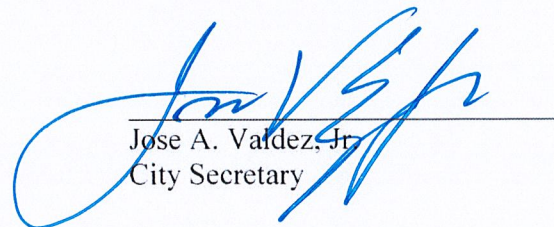
*****EX-OFFICIO*****

Honorable Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, District 21
Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42
Honorable Tracy O. King, State Representative, District 80

MAY 14 '20 PM2:47
REC'D CITY SEC OFF



J. Kirby Sndeman, AICP
MPO Director



Jose A. Valdez, Jr.
City Secretary

Laredo-Webb County Area (LWCA)

Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee Virtual Meeting

LIVE WEB LINK: <http://laredotx.swagit.com/live>
PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNEL: Spectrum TV channel 1300



MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL APRIL 20, 2020 MEETING

Regular members present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCA Chairperson
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
Honorable Dr. Marte Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI
David M. Salazar, Jr., TxDOT District Engineer

Regular members not present:

Honorable Norma “Nelly” Vielma, City Councilmember, District V
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
Honorable George Altgelt, City Councilmember, District VII
(Member At Large- Currently Vacant)

Ex-Officio Members Not Present:

Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42
Honorable Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, District 21
Honorable Tracy O. King, State Representative, District 80

Staff (Of Participating LWCA Agencies) Present:

City: J. Kirby Snideman, City Planning/MPO Staff
Vanessa Guerra, City Planning/MPO Staff
Jason Hinojosa, City Planning MPO Staff
Angie Quijano, City Planning, MPO Staff
Ramon Chavez, City Engineer
Claudia San Miguel, Transit, El Metro
John Porter, Environmental Services

State: Humberto “Tito” Gonzalez, TxDOT

Others: Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Saenz called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Vanessa Guerra, MPO Division Manager, called roll and verified a quorum existed.

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Speakers are required to fill out witness cards, which must be submitted to MPO Staff no later than 15 minutes after the start of the meeting. Speakers shall identify themselves at the microphone. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. No more than three (3) persons will be allowed to speak on any side of an issue. Should there be more than three (3) people who wish to speak on a specific issue, they should select not more than three (3) representatives to speak on their behalf. The presiding officer may further limit public on the interest of order or time. Speakers may not transfer their minutes to any other speaker. Comments should be relevant to City business and delivered in a professional manner. No derogatory remarks shall be permitted.

There were no citizen's comments.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

A. Approval of the minutes for the meeting held on February 18, 2020 and the virtual special meeting held on April 6, 2020.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **approve** the minutes for the meetings held on February 18, 2020, and virtual meeting of April 6, 2020.

Second: CM. Gonzalez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2020-04, adopting the proposed amendment(s) of the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

1. **Addition** of project CSJ 2150-04-078 intended to provide for the construction of a right turn lane at the intersection of Killam Industrial Blvd. and FM 1472, from

Killam Industrial Blvd. to 0.187 miles N. of Killam Industrial Blvd intersection, with an estimated total project cost of \$1,410,667. The proposed letting date is FY 2020.

2. **Revision** of project CSJ 0018-06-136 intended to widen main lanes and construct railroad grade separation on IH 35, from Shiloh Dr. to 0.38 miles south of IH 35 interchange (INT), proposed to let in 2020. **Purpose** of the amendment is to convert funding from Federal funds to State funds, and adjust funding to \$54,000,000.
3. **Revision** of project CSJ 0018-06-198 intended to provide for widening of IH 35 from 4 to 6 lanes, from 0.38 miles south of US59/IH 35 INT to 0.80 miles north of US59/IH 35 INT, proposed to let in 2020. **Purpose** of amendment is to convert funding from Federal to State funds, and adjust funding to \$5,000,000.
4. **Revision** of project CSJ 0018-06-183 intended to provide for the construction of a Direct Connector Interchange (DC #5), from 0.50 miles south of US59-SL20 to 0.50 miles east of IH35/US59-SL20, proposed to let in 2020. **Purpose** of amendment is to convert funding from Federal to State funds, and adjust funding to \$30,000,000.
5. **Revision** of project CSJ 0018-06-184 intended to provide for construction of a Direct Connector Interchange (DC #8), from 0.50 miles west of IH 35 to 0.50 miles south of US59, proposed to let in 2020. **Purpose** of the amendment is to convert funding from \$22,000,000 in Federal to \$22,000,000 in State funds. The total amount of funds allocated will remain unchanged at \$22,000,000.
6. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-14-084 intended to provide for widening of IH 69W from 4 to 6 lanes, from World Trade Bridge to IH 35, proposed to let in 2020. **Purpose** of amendment is to convert funding from Federal to State funds, and adjust funding to \$15,000,000.
7. **Revision** of project CSJ 2150-04-076 intended to provide for the construction of additional travel lane on FM 1472, from Big Bend Blvd to Killam Industrial Blvd., proposed to let in 2020. **Purpose** of the amendment is to convert funding from Federal to State funds, and adjust funding to \$3,340,000.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **open** the public hearing.

Second: CM. Gonzalez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Ms. Guerra reviewed each project and the proposed modifications.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **close** the public hearing and **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2020-04, adopting the proposed amendment(s) of the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

Ms. Guerra reviewed the projects.

Second: CM. Gonzalez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

C. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2020-05, adopting the proposed amendment(s) of the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):

1. Amending Table 10-2, entitled List of TxDOT UTP 2020-2030 Programmed Projects, & Figure 10-1, entitled Map of TxDOT UTP Programmed Projects, as necessary to incorporate the following revisions:

- a) **Addition** of project CSJ 2150-04-078 intended to provide for the construction of a right turn lane at the intersection of Killam Industrial Blvd. and FM 1472, from Killam Industrial Blvd. to 0.187 miles N. of Killam Industrial Blvd intersection, with an estimated total project cost of \$1,255,375. The proposed letting date is FY 2020.

2. **Addition** of a chapter on the Congestion Management Process (CMP). The new chapter is intended to identify: the 8 step CMP process, the related project prioritization efforts, and the specific CMP projects resulting from the process.

Dr. Martinez asked if any comments were received.

No comments were received.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **open** the public hearing.

Second: CM. Gonzalez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **close** the public hearing and **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2020-05, adopting the proposed amendment(s) of the 2020-2025 MTP.

Second: CM. Gonzalez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

D. A motion to consider the award or rejection of funding for three (3) projects submitted for funding through the Laredo MPO's Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) Program. \$1,176,000 in federal funds are available for allocation, which require a 20% match of the \$294,000, totaling \$1,470,000 in total project costs. The proposed projects and funding requests are as follows:

- a. Plum Street Shared Use Path/Mier Street Shared Use Path - \$816,000
- b. East Chacon Creek Hike and Bike Connector - \$160,000
- c. El Metro ADA Bus Stops and Bicycle Plazas Enhancement Project - Phase II \$100,000.

Kirby Snideman stated the source for the 20% match has not been determined.

Claudia San Miguel, Transit, El Metro, stated the 20% match for the transit project would be coming from district priority funds approved by District 8, Councilmember Roberto Balli.

John Porter, Environmental Services Director, stated the 20% match for the East Chacon Hike and Bike connector project would be coming from stormwater funds.

Ramon Chavez, City Engineer, stated the 20% match for the Plum/Mier Street shared use path project would be coming from district priority funds.

Kirby Snideman stated City Council had already adopted a resolution approving the 20% match.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **approve** the funding of the three projects submitted as requested.

Second: CM. Gonzalez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

E. Receive public testimony and approve a motion initiating a twenty-day (20) public review and comment period for the proposed draft of the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **open** the public hearing.

Second: CM. Gonzalez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **close** the public hearing and **approve** a motion initiating a 20-day public review and comment period for the proposed 2021-2024 TIP.

Second: CM. Gonzalez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

F. Discussion with possible action on Hachar-Reuthinger.

Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering, gave a brief update on Hachar-Reuthinger.

He stated the consultant was finalizing the 100 % percent schematic with comments provided by TxDOT. He also stated the consultant would be sending the Environmental Assessment for TxDOT review. Once the comments for the Environmental Assessment were provided by TxDOT, the document would be revised and finalized for further processing.

Mayor Saenz inquired whether the issues with the Right-of-Way (R.O.W.) on the Hachar portion of the corridor had been resolved.

Ramon Chavez, City Engineer, stated he would check with Mr. Van Steenberg and city management on any additional information regarding the R.O.W. He also stated City Staff would be having a meeting with TxDOT, Thursday (April 23rd) regarding the project. He stated he would be able to provide more details after said meeting.

V. REPORT(S) AND PRESENTATIONS (No action required).

A. Status report on the ongoing Active Transportation Plan. (Cm. Altgelt)

B. Update by Transit on its working relationship with El Aguila, the Laredo College South Campus Transit hub, and any matters incidental thereto. (Cm. Altgelt)

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **table** the item # V-A & B to the next meeting.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

C. Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).

Mr. Snideman advised the members that the RMA submitted a status report via-email and a copy would be emailed to the committee immediately after the meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 2:21 p.m.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

J. Kirby Snideman,
MPO Director

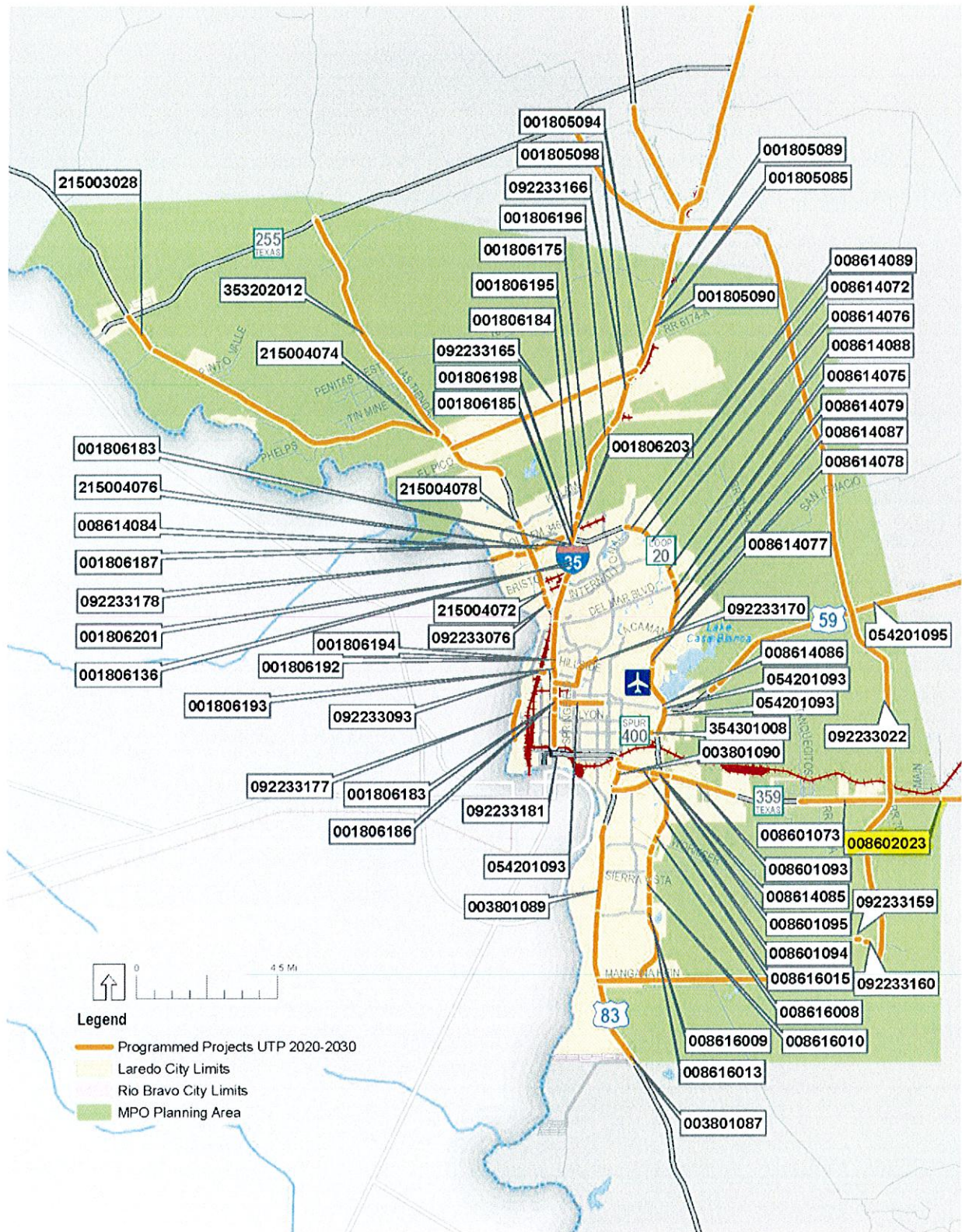
Pete Saenz, Mayor and LUTS
Chairperson

**LAREDO WEBB COUNTY AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANZIATION
ACTION ITEM**

<p>DATE: 5-18-20</p>	<p>SUBJECT: MOTION Receive public testimony and approve a motion to initiate a 10 day public review and comment period for the following proposed amendment(s) of the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amending Table 10-2, entitled List of TxDOT UTP 2020-2030 Programmed Projects, & Figure 10-1, entitled Map of TxDOT UTP Programmed Projects, as necessary to incorporate the following revisions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Addition</i> of project CSJ 0086-02-023 intended to provide for the widening of SH 359 from 2 to 4 lanes, from 8.935 miles east of SL 20 to 9.830 miles east of SL 20, with an estimated total project cost of \$7,367,400. The proposed letting date is FY 2023. <p align="right">MTP 20-45/REV 2</p>
<p>INITIATED BY: TXDOT and FHWA</p>	<p>STAFF SOURCE: J. Kirby Snideman MPO Director</p>
<p>PREVIOUS ACTION: On January 21st, 2020 the Policy Committee adopted the 2020-2045 MTP. A ten day public review and comment period was initiated by the Policy Committee on April 6th, 2020. Amendment #1 was approved by the Policy Committee on 4-20-20, after the required 10 day public review and comment period.</p>	
<p>BACKGROUND: The development of the MTP is federally required in to assure the continuation of federal transportation funds. The plan must address, at a minimum, a continuous twenty-year planning horizon.</p> <p>See attachments for full details of all proposed revisions.</p>	
<p>COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval</p>	<p>STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval.</p>



Figure 10-1: Map of TxDOT UTP Programmed Projects



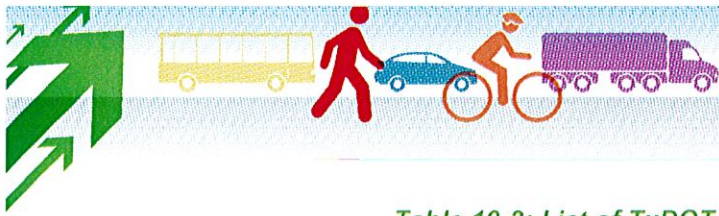


Table 10-2: List of TxDOT UTP 2020-2030 Programmed Projects

CSJ/ID	Facility	Limits	Description	Funding Categories	Letting Year	Total Funds
IH 35						
001806136	IH 35	Shiloh Dr to 0.25 miles North of US 59/IH 69W	Widen mainlanes and construct overpass	2, 4, 12	2020	\$54,000,000
001806183	IH 35	0.5 miles South of US 59 to 0.5 miles East of IH 35	Construct Direct Connector #5 (DC#5)	4	2020	\$30,000,000
001806198	IH 35	0.38 miles South of US 59/IH 59 Interchange to 0.8 miles North of US 59/IH 59 Interchange	Widen from 4 lanes to 6 lanes	11	2020	\$5,000,000
001806201	IH 35	At San Isidro Pkwy	Wrong Way Driver Advanced Tech	8	2020	\$58,045
001805085	IH 35	1.19 miles South of Carriers Dr to 1.80 miles North of US 83	Preventive Maintenance	1	2021	\$2,714,168
001805089	IH 35	0.5 miles South of Uniroyal Interchange to 2.6 miles North of Uniroyal Interchange	Replacement of existing bridge	4, 12	2021	\$110,000,000
001805094	IH 35	2.68 miles North of Uniroyal Interchange to 1.2 miles North of US 83	Widen Road - New six land undivided section with shoulders	4	2021	\$75,000,000
001806175	IH 35	Interchange SL 20 concrete section to 1.19 miles South of Carriers Dr	Preventive Maintenance	1	2021	\$729,670





CSJ/ID	Facility	Limits	Description	Funding Categories	Letting Year	Total Funds
001806194	IH 35	Del Mar Blvd to 0.222 miles North of Shiloh Dr	Preventive Maintenance	1	2022	\$2,779,612
001805090	IH 35	0.173 miles North of Uniroyal Drive to US 83	Rehabilitate Existing Roadway	1	2023	\$3,048,449
001806192	IH 35	Scott St to 0.403 miles North of Shiloh Dr	Preventive Maintenance	1	2023	\$2,779,612
001806193	IH 35	Scott St to Del Mar Blvd	Preventive Maintenance	1	2023	\$1,521,857
001805098	IH 35	1.353 miles South of Carriers Dr to Uniroyal Interchange	Add turnarounds to Carriers Dr Bridge	DA	2024	\$22,000,000
001806184	IH 35	0.5 miles West of IH 35 to 0.5 miles South of US 59	Construct Direct Connector #8 (DC#8)	12	2024	\$22,000,000
001806185	IH 35	0.5 miles East of IH 35 to 0.5 miles North of US 59	Construct Direct Connectors #3	12	2024	\$35,000,000
001806186	IH 35	0.5 miles East of IH 35 to 0.5 miles North of US 59	Construct Direct Connectors	DA	2024	\$22,000,000
001806187	IH 35	0.5 miles South of US 59 to 0.5 miles East of IH 35	Construct Direct Connectors	DA	2024	\$18,000,000
001806196	IH 35	0.25 miles North of US 59 Interchange to 1.353 miles South of Carriers Dr	Widen United Ave Overpass - Add one additional lane with turnarounds	DA	2024	\$22,000,000
001806203	IH 35	Shiloh Dr to 0.25 miles	Interchange Improvement -	DA	2028	\$25,000,000





CSJ/ID	Facility	Limits	Description	Funding Categories	Letting Year	Total Funds
		North of US 59/IH 69W	New grade separation two lane frontage road			
IH 69W						
008614084	IH 69W	World Trade Bridge GSA Facility to IH 35	Widening of existing freeway from four lanes to six lanes	11	2020	\$15,000,000
US 59						
008614078	US 59	0.5 miles North of Jacaman Rd to 0.5 miles South of Jacaman Rd	Construct interchange - New six lane grade separation interchange	2, 12	2024	\$19,691,424
008614075	US 59	0.5 miles South of Del Mar Blvd to 0.5 miles North of Del Mar Blvd	Construct interchange - New six lane grade separation interchange	2	2023	\$24,100,000
008614076	US 59	0.5 miles South of Shiloh Dr to 0.5 miles North of Shiloh Dr	Construct interchange - New six lane grade separation interchange	2	2023	\$21,500,000
008614079	US 59	0.5 miles South of University Blvd to 0.5 miles North of University Blvd	Construct interchange - New six lane grade separation interchange	2	2023	\$16,850,000
008614086	US 59	US 59 to 0.4 miles North of Airport	Reconstruct Existing Roadway	12	2024	\$15,600,000
008614087	US 59	0.4 miles North of Airport to 0.36 miles North of Del Mar Blvd	Reconstruct Existing Roadway	12	2024	\$30,600,000
054201095	US 59	7.4 miles West of FM 2895 to 1.982 miles	Resurface Roadway	1	2023	\$6,150,639





CSJ/ID	Facility	Limits	Description	Funding Categories	Letting Year	Total Funds
008614077	US 59	East of SL 20 International Airport	Construct interchange - New six lane grade separation interchange	2M	2024	\$12,355,990
008614088	US 59	0.36 miles South of University to 0.51 miles South of Shiloh Dr	Reconstruct Existing Roadway	2, 10	2023	\$20,000,000
008614089	US 59	0.51 miles South of Shiloh Dr to International Blvd	Reconstruct Existing Roadway	2, 10	2023	\$40,500,000
BU 59						
054201093	BU 59	Buena Vista Ave to IH 35	Resurface of Existing Highway	1	2024	\$1,031,501
US 83						
003801090	US 83	Market St to Chacon St Bridge	Resurface Roadway	1	2020	\$398,469
003801089	US 83	Palo Blanco St to Cielito Lindo Blvd	Preventive Maintenance	1	2022	\$776,149
003801087	US 83	Cielito-Lindo Blvd to Espejo Molina Rd	Preventive Maintenance	PA	2029	\$238,550
SH 359						
008601093	SH 359	SL 20 to RR 6086L	Install Raised Median	8	2020	\$1,353,740
008601094	SH 359	US 83 to SL 20	Install Raised Median	8	2020	\$688,677
008601095	SH 359	0.25 miles East of SL 20	Intersection Improvement - Preliminary Engineering for continuous flow intersection	11	2023	\$500,000
008601073	SH 359	Intersection 4.06 miles East of SL 20 to 8.935 miles East of SL 20	Widen Road - New four lane undivided section with one left turn continuous lane,	12	2023	\$18,000,000





CSJ/ID	Facility	Limits	Description	Funding Categories	Letting Year	Total Funds
008602023	SH 359	8.9535 miles east of SL 20 to 9.830 miles east of SL 20	and a new four lane divided section Widen roadway from 2 lane to 4 lane divided highway	11	2023	\$6,000,000
SL 20 (Loop 20 / Bob Bullock Loop)						
008616013	SL 20	SH 359 to Mangana Hein Rd	Preventive Maintenance	1	2021	\$801,960
008616015	SL 20	0.5 miles North of SL 20 to 0.5 miles South of SL 20	Intersection Improvements - Construction of right/left turn lane and driveway	11	2021	\$664,625
008616008	SL 20	2.77 miles South of SH 359 to 2.39 miles South of SH 359	Construct interchange - New four lane grade separation interchange	DA	2026	\$22,000,000
008616009	SL 20	0.1 miles South of Cielito Lindo Rd to 0.1 miles North of Cielito Lindo Rd	Construct interchange - New four lane grade separation interchange	DA	2026	\$22,000,000
008616010	SL 20	0.1 miles South of Sierra Vista Rd to 0.1 miles North of Sierra Vista Rd	Construct interchange - New four lane grade separation interchange	DA	2026	\$22,000,000
008614072	SL 20	International Blvd to US 59	Upgrade to interstate standards	10	2035	\$6,897,669
SS 260 (Spur 260)						
008614085	SS 260	SH 359 to US 83 (Zapata Hwy)	Preventive Maintenance	1	2022	\$1,632,745
SS 400 (Spur 400)						
354301008	SS 400	North Arkansas Ave to SL 20	Resurface Roadway	1	2024	\$209,930





CSJ/ID	Facility	Limits	Description	Funding Categories	Letting Year	Total Funds
FM 1472 (Mines Road)						
215003028	FM 1472	SH 255 to 1.321 miles South of SH 255	Preventive Maintenance	1	2020	\$104,409
215004074	FM 1472	1.321 miles South of SH 255 to 0.226 miles North of Pan American Blvd	Preventive Maintenance	1	2020	\$1,070,193
215004076	FM 1472	Big Bend Blvd to Killam Industrial Blvd	Widening of pavement to provide additional travel lane	11	2020	\$3,340,000
215004072	FM 1472	0.123 miles South of SL 20 to 0.4 miles North of IH 35	Resurface of Existing Highway	1	2024	\$574,146
215004078	FM 1472	Killam Industrial Blvd. Int. to 0.187 miles North of Killam Industrial Blvd. Int.	Intersection Improvements - Construction of right turn acceleration lane	3	2020	\$1,255,375
FM 3338						
353202012	FM 3338	FM 1472 to SH 255	Widen Road - Add two additional turn lanes with one continuous left turn lane	DA	2024	\$45,000,000
County Roads						
092233160	County Road	Wormser Rd at Dolores Creek	Replacement of Off-System Bridge	6	2020	\$855,000
City Streets						
092233076	City Street - At the intersection of FM 1472 and Flecha Ln/Las Cruces Dr	Intersection of FM 1472 and Flecha Ln/Las Cruces Dr	Re-align intersection	3, 10	2021	\$1,987,857





CSJ/ID	Facility	Limits	Description	Funding Categories	Letting Year	Total Funds
092233093	City Street - Calton Road	Santa Maria Ave	Construct interchange - New two lane grade separation interchange over the UPRR tracks	3, 10	2021	\$21,249,609
092233149	City Street	Spur 400 to US 59	Transportation Non-Roadway	3, 10	2020	\$1,644,700
092233159	City Street	Wormser Rd at Dolores Creek Relief	Replacement of Off-System Bridge	6	2020	\$402,000
092233165	City Street - Hachar Parkway	FM 1472 to 0.1 miles East of Beltway Pkwy	Preliminary Engineering- Construction of 5.07 miles of 5 lane rural roadway	7	2020	\$26,796,901
092233170	City Street	At Zacate Creek	Zacate Creek Multi-Use Alternative Transportation Trail	9	2020	\$818,144
092233177	City Street - MSC	Anna Park to LCC Campus	River Vega Hike and Bike Trail	9	2020	\$815,798
092233181	City Streets	Various Locations	Construct ADA compliant bus stops and bicycle plazas	9	2020	\$250,000
092233178	City Street - World Trade Bridge (Inspection Booths)	World Trade Bridge	Construct inspection booths	3, 10	2021	\$10,300,000
092233166	City Street - Hachar Parkway	0.1 miles East of Beltway Pkwy to IH 35	Construction of 5 lane rural road	7, 10	2022	\$21,740,668
VA (Various)						
092200066	VA	Districtwide	Bridge Maintenance	11	2020	\$2,250,000
092233179	VA	Various Locations	Traffic Signal Improvements	11	2022	\$120,000
092200063	VA	Districtwide at various locations	Drainage Improvements	11	2023	\$1,000,000
092200067	VA	Districtwide	Bridge Clearance Sign Installations.	11	2023	\$1,000,000





CSJ/ID	Facility	Limits	Description	Funding Categories	Letting Year	Total Funds
092233022	VA	Proposed International Bridge #5 To SH 255	Preliminary Engineering for the new location of the Laredo Outer Loop	PA	2035	\$1,255,781



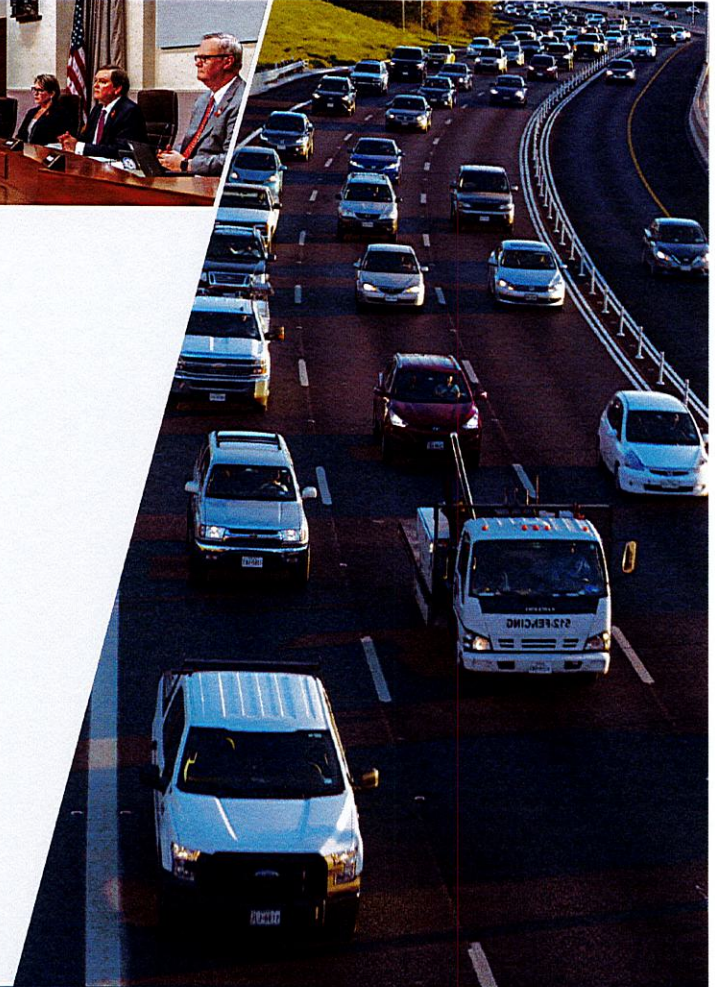
**LAREDO WEBB COUNTY AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
ACTION ITEM**

DATE: 5-18-20	SUBJECT: Discussion with possible action on the presentation by Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) on the National Highway System (NHS).	
INITIATED BY: TxDOT		STAFF SOURCE: J. Kirby Snideman, MPO Director
PREVIOUS ACTION: In April of 2019, after review and positive recommendation by the Technical Committee, TxDOT presented their suggested proposed modifications of the NHS to the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee did not agree with the proposed NHS modifications. The Policy Committee expressed its reticence to remove any roads from the NHS and recommended TxDOT and its consultant further review additional local roads for inclusion in the NHS.		
BACKGROUND Below is a listing of TxDOT's proposed modifications to the National Highway System (NHS) in Laredo. Per FHWA, NHS design standards apply to all NHS segments- existing or newly added. (see attached email dated May 13 th , 2020) Said design standards are listed in 23 U.S.C. 109(c). (SEE ATTACHED PRESENTATION FOR FULL DETAILS): <u>TxDOT Suggested Additions</u> - (3 corridors/11.7 miles) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Loop 20 (Cuatro Vientos) – from SH 359 to Mangana Hein Road • Mangan Hein Rd – from US 83 to SL 20 • Business 59 (Saunders St.) – from SL 20 to I -35 <u>TxDOT Suggested Removals</u> - (3 corridors/7.5 miles) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clark Blvd.– from I-35 to SL 20 • Meadow Ave. – BUS 59 to US 83 • Arkansas Ave. – BUS 59 to US 83 <u>TxDOT Suggested Intermodal Connector Modifications</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniroyal, Carriers, and Port Dr. – to be designated as intermodal connectors. 		
Technical Committee Recommendation: Approval		Staff recommendation: Approval



Texas NHS Study

Laredo MPO Area Modifications



May 12, 2020

Today's agenda



1 NHS Background & Study Approach

2 Implications of NHS Designation

3 Study Progress to Date

4 NHS in Laredo

5 NHS Review

6 Suggested Modifications

7 Next Steps

NHS Background and Study Approach



NHS History

- Originally designated in 1995 through cooperation between local transportation officials and FHWA
- MAP-21 legislation (2012) automatically added around 4,000 miles to the system in Texas
- This study is the first attempt to comprehensively evaluate the NHS in Texas since it was created

Texas NHS Study Objectives

- Review the NHS in a data-driven manner using **Federal criteria & guidelines**, suggest additions and removals
- Coordinate with FHWA-Texas and ensure informed consent from MPOs and other partners
- Prepare and submit official requests to change NHS to FHWA

Agency Roles in NHS Designation/Modification

- **MPOs** consider possible modifications for alignment with **regional priorities** and provides guidance and statements of support
- **TxDOT** provides initial analysis, offers technical support, and facilitates stakeholder input
- **FHWA** provides guidance on the review process and approves or rejects final requests to change the system

NHS Background and Study Approach



The National Highway System shall consist of **interconnected urban and rural principal arterials and highways** (including toll facilities) which **serve major population centers, international border crossings, ports, airports, public transportation facilities, other intermodal transportation facilities and other major travel destinations; meet national defense requirements; and serve interstate and interregional travel.**

23 CFR 470.107 (b)

NHS Principal Arterial Review

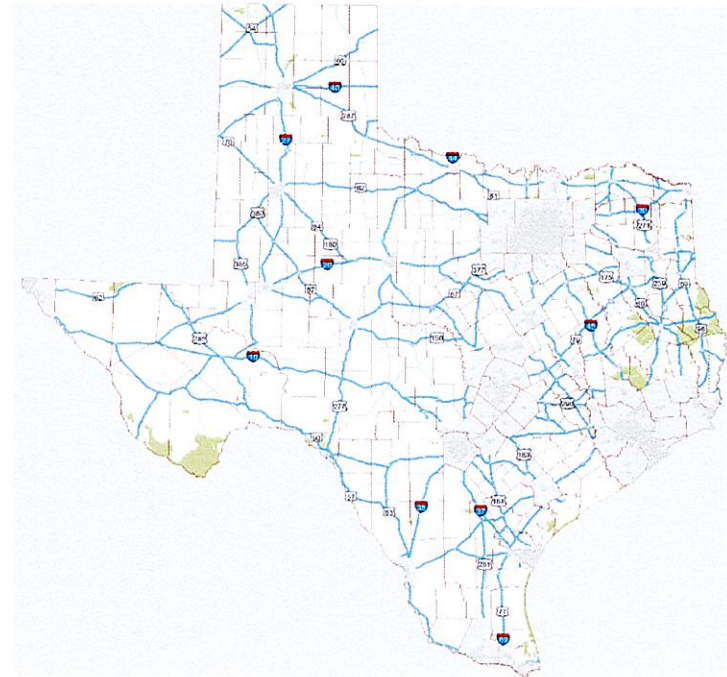
- Serve long-distance and regional travel needs
- Serve major activity centers
- Limit access to surrounding land uses and avoid residential areas
- Create an interconnected system linking other major facilities (no NHS stubs)

Intermodal Connector Review

- Apply federal criteria for trip generation specific to each facility
- Review connector efficiency: Is this the most direct way to access the facility from the NHS?

Implications of NHS Designation

- **National Performance Management Measures** - MPOs and States required to track and set targets for improvement:
 - Pavement condition
 - Bridge condition
 - Safety
 - Travel Time Reliability
- Removal from the NHS system **does not affect overall Federal funding eligibility**
- Projects on NHS facilities are subject to **Federal Design Standards**



Study Progress to Date



- Recommendations obtained from 21/23 MPOs
- Finalizing >250 NHS modifications based on recommendations to date
- Laredo MPO coordination
 - Initial meeting in February 2019
 - Presented to TAC and Policy Committee April 2019
 - No decision was reached on NHS modifications
 - Agreed that modifications would not involve downgrades to Minor Arterial
 - **Need to finalize decisions on NHS recommendations**

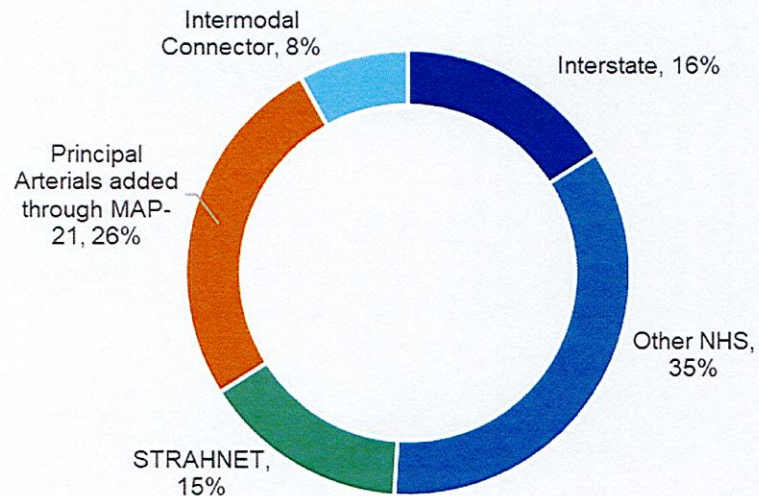
National Highway System in Laredo

Laredo Urban Transportation Study NHS Facts

115 centerline miles (12% of total miles)

2 million daily vehicle-miles traveled (55% of total travel)

332 thousand daily truck-miles traveled (81% of all truck travel)



Current System Designation

Source: Texas HPMS 2017 Year-End Data Submission



NHS Review – Three Step Process



Review components of the National Highway System against Federal Criteria & Guidelines

- Evaluate Texas portions of the National Highway System in a data-driven manner
- Align process with Federal requirements for modification

1. Scoring Principal and Minor Arterials

Identify likely Principal Arterials based on facility characteristics

2. Urban Contextual Review

Further review of facilities to evaluate their mobility function within the transportation system

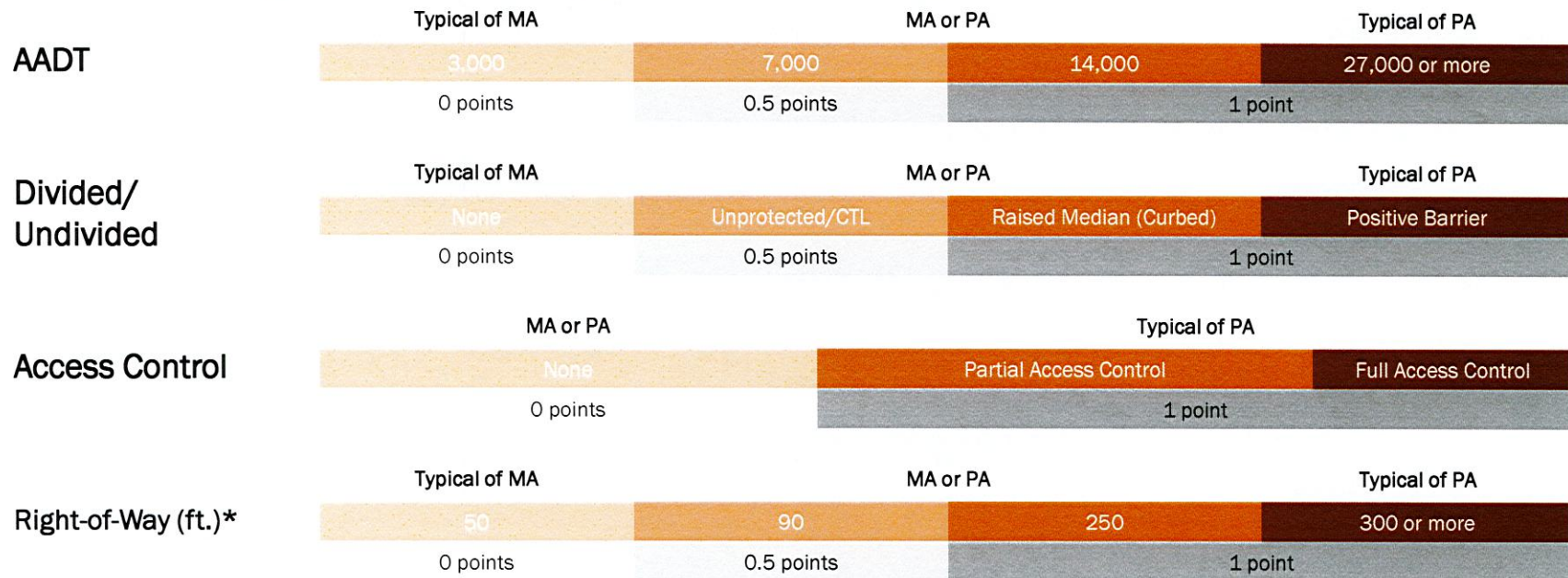
3. System Architecture Review

Refine results based on spacing and system continuity

Step 1 of NHS Review Process



Step 1: Use FHWA guidelines to identify potential Urban Principal Arterials



Translate “Typical Characteristics” into **Scores (0 – 4)** to identify likely Principal Arterials

Criteria based on FHWA Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures, 2013

*Estimates developed by Jacobs based on 20th/80th percentile

Step 2 of NHS Review Process



Step 2: Review Function within the Urban Context using Google Maps, aerial imagery, etc.

Does a road...?	Yes	No
Serve major activity centers		
Serve long-distance travel needs / Connect large regions		
Provide mobility across a region, especially between outlying areas and the urban core		
Avoid residential areas and provide limited access to surrounding land uses		
Directly link Interstate Highways, Freeways, or Expressways		

Criteria based on FHWA Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures, 2013

Existing Other Principal Arterial (OPA) / Existing Minor Arterial (MA)

Number of criteria that scored "Yes"	Preliminary Suggestion
4-5	Keep as OPA / Re-designate as OPA
2-3	Further Review
1	Keep as MA / Re-designate as MA

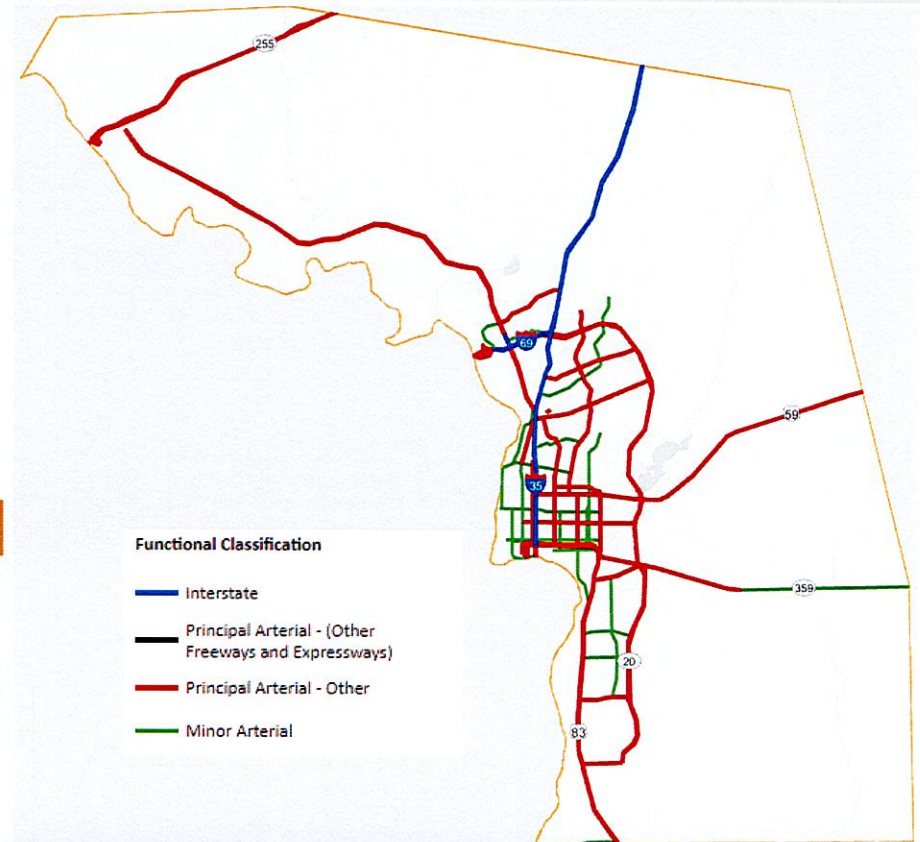
Step 3 of NHS Review Process



Step 3: Review Suggested Modifications against System Architecture Needs

- Look at overall allocation of Principal Arterials, following **density and spacing** guidelines
- Revise any **stub connections**
- Use **rules of thumb** to resolve dense arterial areas

Area Type	Arterial Spacing
Central business district	1/8-1/2 mile
Urban (central city except CBD)	1/2-1 mile
Suburban	1-2 miles
Lowest density development	2-3 miles



NHS Intermodal Connector Review



Connectors provide last-mile access to the main NHS from major intermodal facilities

- FHWA criteria specifies the volume of traffic a facility must generate to qualify for an NHS intermodal connector
- The connector must be the “principal connecting route” between the facility and the main NHS

Review Steps

- Validate existing connectors (facility traffic generation and connector route) where information is available
- Review connectivity to current NHS
- Identify large facilities not connected to the NHS



Laredo MPO Suggested NHS Modifications



Potential Additions

3 corridors/11.7 mi.

Potential Removals

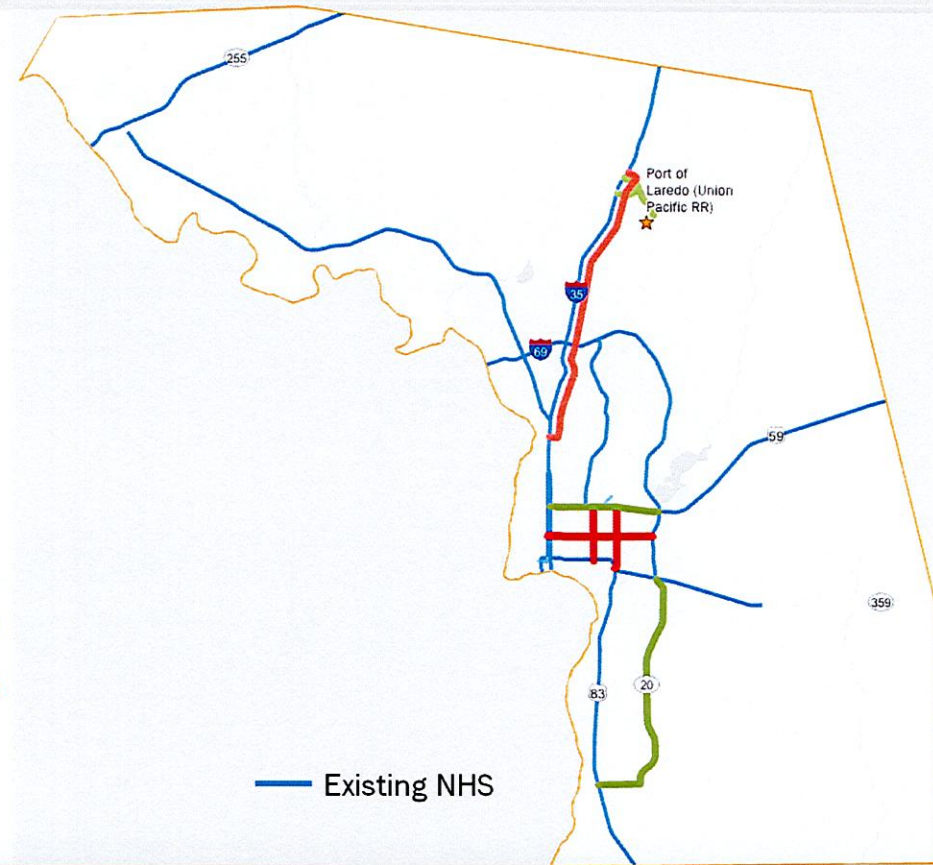
3 corridors/7.5 mi.

+4.2 net NHS mi.

Intermodal Connectors

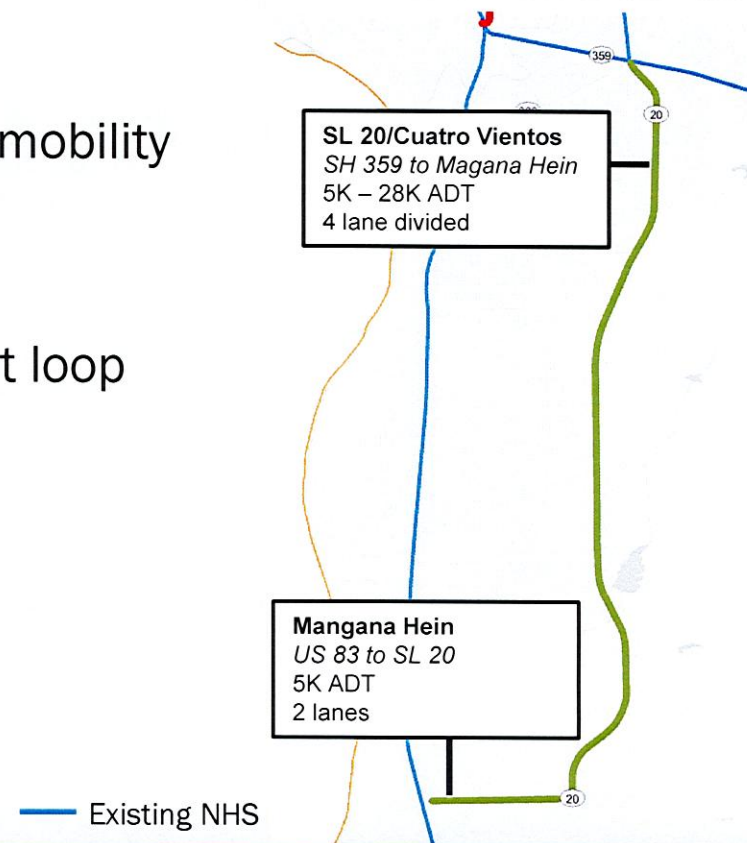
Add 3 connectors/3 mi.

Remove 1 connector/8.7 mi.



Suggested Additions to the NHS (1)

- **SL 20/Cuatro Vientos**
 - Major regional connection providing mobility for areas of new growth
- **Mangana Hein Rd/CR 313**
 - Links SL 20 to US 83 - part of current loop



Suggested Additions to the NHS (2)



■ BUS 59/Saunders St.

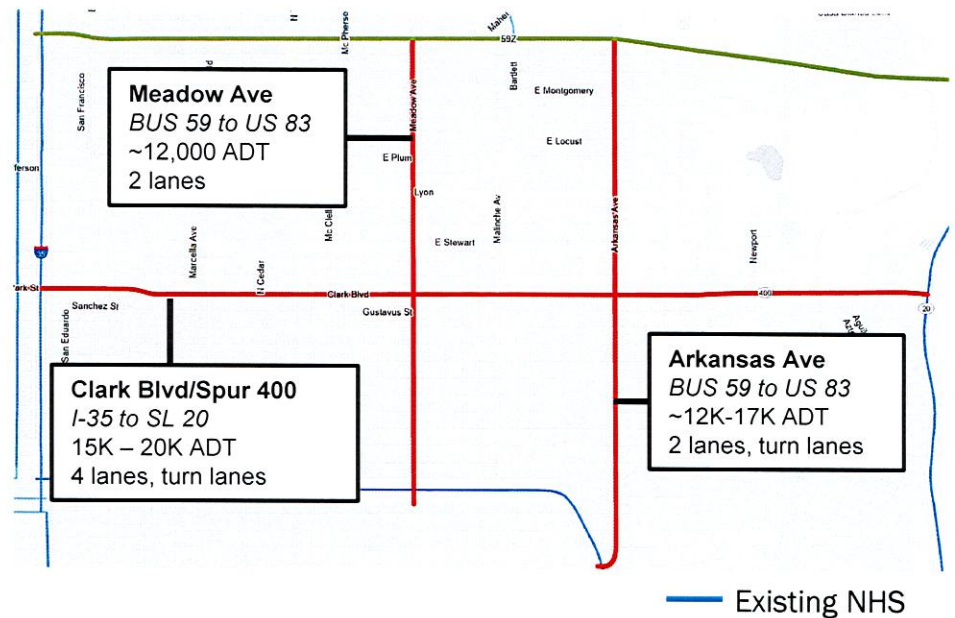
- Major links between major corridors (SL 20, I-35), connects to airport
- Critical connection with high traffic volumes
- Limited options for expansion, no access control



Suggested Removals from the NHS

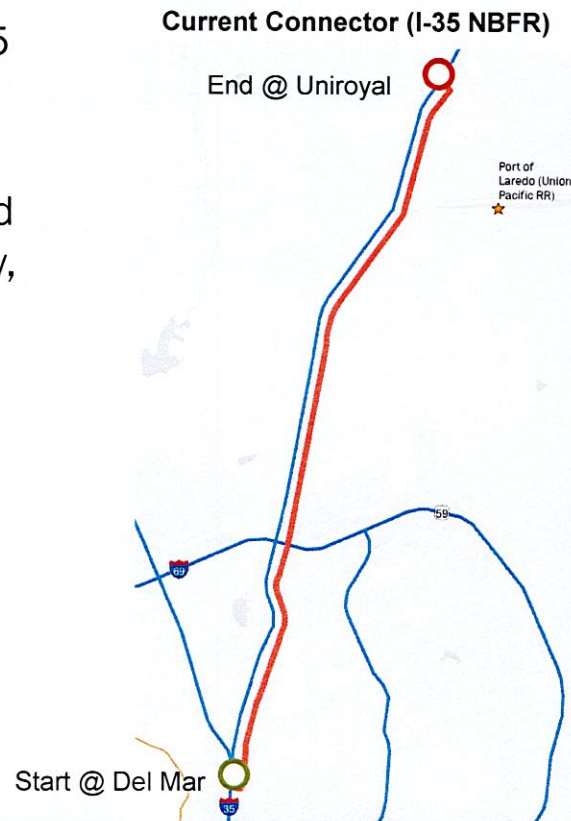
■ Clark, Meadow, and Arkansas

- Automatically added to NHS with MAP-21 (2012)
- **Do not meet NHS criteria**
 - Serve more local, short-distance travel
 - Provide access to neighborhoods, schools, and other local land uses
 - Mostly or fully city-owned streets
- No historical use of NHS funds for construction



Suggested Intermodal Connector Modification

- Port of Laredo connector is I-35 frontage road from Del Mar to Uniroyal (8.7 miles)
- I-35 interchange at Carriers and Uniroyal serves the Port directly, constructed after NHS designation
- Suggest designating Uniroyal (0.4 mi), Carriers (0.8 mi.), and Port Dr (1.8 mi.) as intermodal connectors



Next Step: MPO Review & Concurrence Process



1 MPO TAC Recommendations

MPO TAC provides recommendations on NHS modifications

2 MPO Policy Committee Decision

MPO Policy Board, provides indication of support, revision, or rejection of suggested modification to NHS

3 MPO Concurrence Statements

MPO provides official concurrence statements in the form of MPO Letter of Resolution supporting modifications

4 TxDOT Submission to FHWA

TxDOT TPP reviews MPO supported modifications and develops official submission documentation, which are submitted to the FHWA Texas Division Office and forwarded to FHWA-HQ

5 TxDOT Map Updates

Official State maps are updated to reflect NHS modifications approved by FHWA

Study Contact



Curtis Jones, Project Development Manager

TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming Division

Curtis.Jones@txdot.gov

(512) 486-5032 (o)

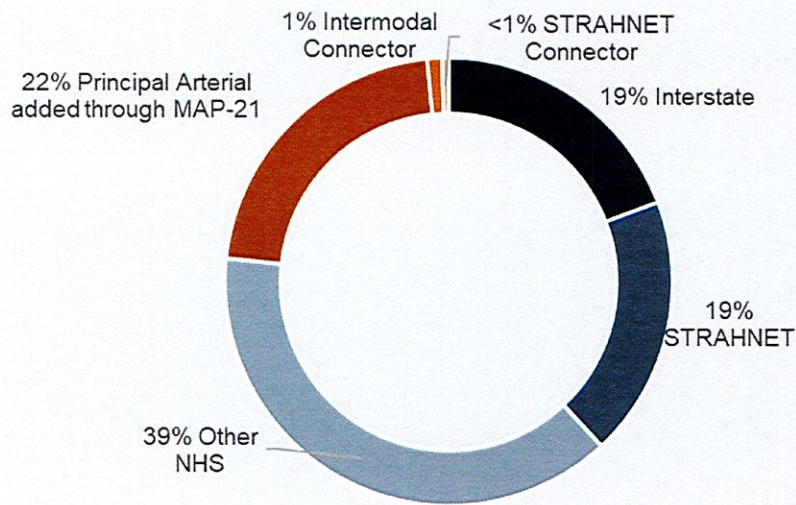
(737) 610-9526 (m)

National Highway System in Texas

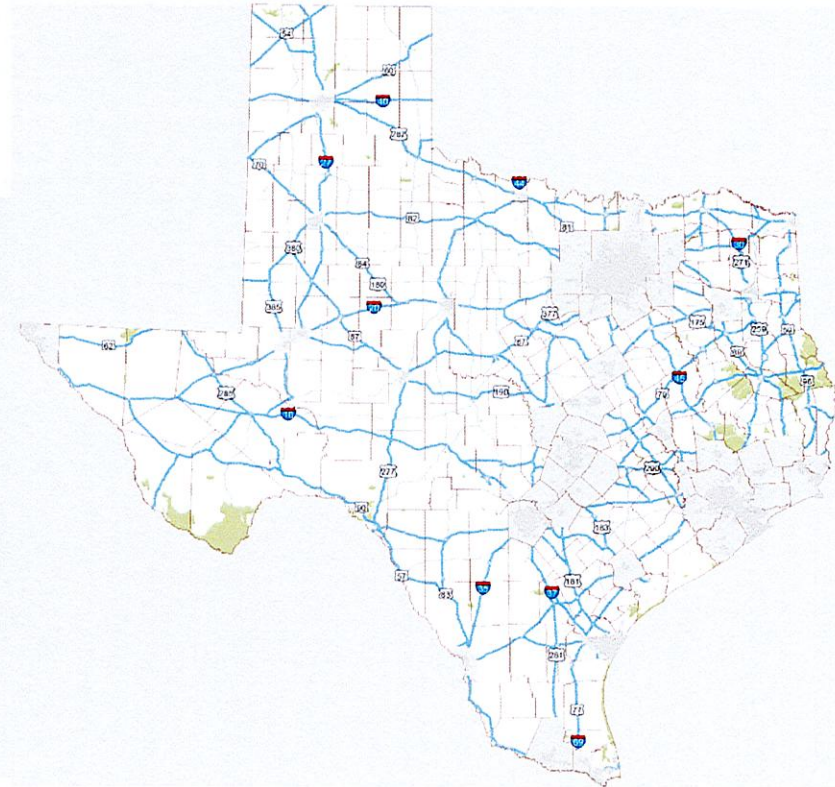


Texas NHS Facts

Over 18,000 centerline miles (6% of all roadway miles)
450 million vehicle-miles traveled (60% of all vehicle travel)
58 million truck-miles traveled (75% of all truck travel)



Current System Designation



Source: Texas HPMS 2017 Year-End Data Submission

Current NHS Comparison



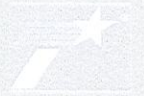
MPO Area	NHS Miles		NHS VMT		Truck VMT	
	#	% of all miles	#	% of all VMT	#	% of all Truck VMT
Laredo	115	12%	2M	55%	332K	81%
Lubbock	175	10%	4M	61%	295K	79%
Amarillo	126	7%	2M	53%	421K	84%
South East Texas	319	8%	8M	65%	1M	82%
Corpus Christi	156	9%	6M	65%	334K	69%
Permian Basin	290	12%	6M	60%	725K	74%

Intermodal Connector Criteria



Facility Type	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3
Commercial Aviation Airports	250,000 annual passengers	100 trucks/day/direction	100,000 tons/year arriving or departing by truck
Ports - Terminals	50,000 TEUs/year	100 trucks/day/direction	
Ports - Bulk Commodity Terminals	500,000 tons/year by highway/direction	100 trucks/day/direction	
Ports - Passengers	250,000 passengers/year	1,000 passengers/day for at least 90 days during the year	
Truck/Rail	50,000 TEUs/year	100 trucks/day/direction	
Pipelines	100 trucks/day/direction		
Amtrak	100,000 passengers/year		
Intercity Bus	100,000 passengers/year		
Public Transit	500 parking spaces at park & ride lots	Stations with 5000 daily bus or rail passengers with significant highway access	
Ferries	1,000 passengers/day for at least 90 days during the year	500 parking spaces at park & ride lots	

Laredo Intermodal Connectors



Facility Type	Facilities Connected	Designated Connectors	Data Available?	Meets Criteria?
Truck/Rail Facilities	1	1	Yes	Yes
Airport	1	1	Yes	No
Intercity Bus Terminals	2	2	No	N/A
Total	4	4	2/4	1/4

Design

Guidance on NHS Design Standards and Design Exceptions

With the implementation of the MAP-21 legislation and the resulting changes to highways included in the National Highway System (NHS), the need has arisen to address how to apply our design standards and design exceptions in the development of highway improvement projects.

While FHWA-approved standards apply to all projects on the NHS, we encourage flexibility and a context-sensitive approach which considers the full range of project needs and the impacts to the community and natural and human environment. Design exceptions are a useful tool that may be employed to achieve a balance of project needs and community values. State DOT or local authorities must evaluate, approve, and document design exceptions. Approving any design exception is a Federal Action, which requires reviewing and documenting their potential environmental impacts.

For highways added to the NHS under MAP-21, the effective date that projects are required to comply with the NHS design requirements and standards is October 1, 2012. NHS projects having completed an environmental decision or final design prior to that date may proceed without changes. NHS projects completed on or after that date must follow the FHWA-approved standards or receive approval for design exceptions.

Additional information on MAP-21 legislation is available at: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/qandas/>. We encourage you to review this information and share it with your State and local partners.

1. [Are there design standards that apply to the National Highway System \(NHS\)?](#)
2. [What design standards has FHWA adopted?](#)
3. [Do FHWA-adopted design requirements apply to all projects on the NHS?](#)
4. [Do NHS standards apply to projects that do not use Federal-Aid Highway Program \(FAHP\) funding?](#)
5. [What flexibilities are allowed with NHS design standards?](#)
6. [Can projects on the NHS deviate from the NHS design standards?](#)
7. [What justification is required to evaluate, review, and approve design exceptions on the NHS?](#)
8. [Are design exceptions approved on a project-by-project basis?](#)
9. [At what point in the development of a project should design exceptions for a project on the NHS be reviewed and approved?](#)
10. [What variances from NHS standards require FHWA review and approval of design exceptions?](#)
11. [Who approves design exceptions for projects on the NHS?](#)
12. [Does a State DOT or local agency's approval of design exceptions on behalf of FHWA constitute a Federal Action?](#)
13. [Do design exceptions meet the criteria to be classified as a Categorical Exclusion \(CE\)?](#)
14. [What information must State DOTs or local agencies review to determine if a proposed design exception can be classified as a CE?](#)

-
1. **Are there design standards that apply to the National Highway System (NHS)?**

Yes. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has adopted design standards for the NHS (as specified in 23U.S.C.109(c)).

2. What design standards has FHWA adopted?

The FHWA has adopted standards for roadway geometrics, bridges and structures, erosion and sediment control, hydraulics, traffic noise, materials, and accessible pedestrian design. These standards are listed in 23CFR625.4 and 49CFR37.9.

3. Do FHWA-adopted design requirements apply to all projects on the NHS?

Yes. The FHWA-adopted design requirements found in 23CFR625 and 49CFR37.9 apply to projects on the NHS, including routes added to the NHS by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21).

The FHWA-adopted geometric design standards apply to new and reconstruction projects on the NHS. The NHS standards for the geometric design of highways include the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) [*A Policy on Design Standards Interstate System*](#) (January 2005) and [*A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*](#) (2011).

For resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation (3R) projects, design standards adopted by the State Department of Transportation (DOT) and approved by the FHWA Division Administrator will apply (23CFR625.4(a)(3)). More information about developing geometric design standards for 3R projects is available in the Transportation Research Board publication [*Designing Safer Roads: Practices for Resurfacing, Rehabilitation, and Restoration*](#) and the FHWA Technical Advisory [*Developing > Geometric Design Criteria and Processes for Non-freeway RRR Projects*](#).

4. Do the NHS design standards apply to projects that do not use Federal-Aid Highway Program (FAHP) funding?

Yes. These FHWA-adopted or approved design standards apply to all street and highway projects on the NHS, regardless of the funding source for the project. (23CFR625.3).

5. What flexibilities are allowed with NHS design standards?

The NHS geometric design standards provide a range of acceptable values for highway features and FHWA encourages the use of this flexibility to achieve a design which best suits the desires of the community while satisfying the purpose for the project and needs of its users.

Design values should be selected based on an evaluation of the context of the facility, needs of all the various project users, safety, mobility (i.e., traffic performance), human and natural environmental impacts, and project costs. For most situations, there is sufficient flexibility within the range of acceptable values to achieve a balanced design. However, when this is not possible, a design exception may be considered and be appropriate.

In addition, section 1404(b) of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) creates an exception to current FHWA regulations at 23CFR 625 governing the design standards for all NHS highways, providing some local jurisdictions with additional flexibility in the choice of design standards for specific projects. Refer to separate Questions & Answers specific to the provisions of section 1404 of the FAST Act, available at <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/programadmin/standards.cfm>.

6. Can projects on the NHS deviate from the NHS design standards?

Yes. State and local agencies may consider designs that deviate from the NHS design standards when warranted based on the conditions, context, and consequences of the proposed projects. If an agency chooses to deviate from a standard, they must document the design exception. (23CFR625.3(b)).

A design exception states the reason(s) for a specific deviation from an established standard for a specific highway feature and may also include features to mitigate any negative effects. For additional information on design exceptions, please refer to the FHWA publication [Mitigation Strategies for Design Exceptions](#).

7. What justification is required to evaluate, review, and approve design exceptions on the NHS?

All proposed design exceptions should be thoroughly analyzed and the potential impacts understood before approval. The process to evaluate and justify design exceptions must be based on an evaluation of the context of the facility (e.g., community values), needs of all the various project users, safety, mobility (i.e., traffic performance), human and environmental impacts, project costs, and other impacts. As codified in 23 CFR 625.3(f), exceptions may be approved on a project basis for designs that do not conform to the minimum or limiting criteria set forth in the standards, policies, and standard specifications adopted in 23 CFR 625. Design exceptions, subject to approval by FHWA, or on behalf of FHWA if a State transportation agency has assumed the responsibility through a Stewardship and Oversight agreement, are required for projects on the NHS only when the controlling criteria are not met (see Question #10).

Documentation for design exception requests should describe all of the following:

- Specific design criteria that will not be met;
- Existing roadway characteristics;
- Alternatives considered;
- Comparison of the safety and operational performance of the roadway and other impacts such as right-of-way, community, environmental, cost, and access for all modes of transportation;
- Proposed mitigation measures; and
- Compatibility with adjacent sections of roadway.

Design Speed and Design Loading Structural Capacity are fundamental criteria in the design of a project and additional documentation is required for exceptions to these criteria. Design speed exceptions should also describe the length of the proposed section with a lower design speed compared to the overall length of the project, and the measures that will be used in transitioning to adjacent sections with a different design speed. Documentation for exceptions to the Design Loading Structural Capacity should include verification of safe load-carrying capacity (load rating) for all State unrestricted loads or routine permit loads and, in the case of bridges and tunnels on the Interstate System, all Federal legal loads.

8. Are design exceptions approved on a project-by-project basis?

Yes. Design exceptions may be approved on a project-by-project basis. (23CFR625.3(f)). Each design exception should be thoroughly evaluated to ensure the implications are understood and

potential mitigation features considered before making any decisions when the design of a roadway feature falls outside of the established minimum values. As a result, design exceptions cannot be approved for general application to an entire corridor or geographic region.

9. At what point in the development of a project should design exceptions for a project on the NHS be reviewed and approved?

Design exceptions may be approved at any time prior to finalizing the design of a project. However, agencies are encouraged to review and approve design exceptions as soon as sufficient analyses have been conducted and implications of these exceptions identified. The early consideration, evaluation, and decision on design exceptions will ensure more informed decision-making occurs early in the project development process, reducing the risk and cost of delays resulting from changes later in the process. Design exceptions are typically reviewed in conjunction with the overall review and approval of the plans, specifications, and estimates for a project on the NHS.

10. What variances from NHS standards require FHWA review and approval of design exceptions?

The FHWA requires the review and approval of design exceptions on high-speed (i.e., Interstate highways, other freeways, and roadways with design speed ≥ 50 mph) roadways on the NHS for 10 controlling criteria: design speed, lane width, shoulder width, horizontal curve radius, superelevation rate, maximum grade, stopping sight distance, cross slope, vertical clearance, and design loading structural capacity.

As of May 5, 2016, on low-speed roadways (i.e., non-freeways with design speed < 50 mph) on the NHS, only the following two controlling criteria apply: design speed and design loading structural capacity. While FHWA only requires the approval of design exceptions for these controlling criteria, agencies are encouraged to develop and implement procedures to analyze, evaluate, document, and approve all types of design variances. More information about this change can be found at <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/design/standards/160505.cfm>.

11. Who approves design exceptions for projects on the NHS?

Design exceptions from NHS standards for the controlling criteria listed in Answer #10 must be approved by FHWA or on behalf of FHWA by a State DOT or local agency (as specified in 23CFR625.3(f)).

On those projects where the State DOT has assumed FHWA's stewardship and oversight responsibilities (as specified in the State DOT-FHWA Stewardship Agreement), the State DOT must evaluate, approve, and document design exceptions as if they were approved by FHWA.

12. Does a State DOT or local agency's approval of design exceptions on behalf of FHWA constitute a Federal Action?

Yes. The approval of design exception for any project on the NHS by FHWA is a Federal Action (that requires the evaluation and documentation of any environmental implications prior to taking any formal action or granting approval of these exceptions). The approval of design exceptions is a Federal Action regardless of the source of funding (e.g., Federal, State, local, private) or if a State DOT or local agency approves the design exceptions on behalf of FHWA. In other words, the Federal Action is the approval of the design exception and not the project. If a project on the NHS

does not use Federal funding, the approval of design exceptions may be the only action or decision that may involve a State DOT or FHWA on these projects. In many circumstances, the approval of the design exception will likely fall under categorical exclusion. (Reference 23CFR771.117(c). Also see question 13).

13. Do design exceptions meet the criteria to be classified as a Categorical Exclusion (CE)?

Typically, yes. The selection of the appropriate environmental review, documentation, and approval of FHWA's decision-making process will usually be based on the type and scope of the project. Design exceptions by themselves normally do not result in a change in the scope of a project or cause any significant impacts. In many circumstances, the approval of the design exception will likely fall under categorical exclusion. (Reference 23CFR771.117(c)). The FHWA Division Offices are encouraged to review and amend their programmatic CE agreements with their State DOTs to include design exceptions, as appropriate.

Additional information and resources to support the environmental review, documentation, and approval that may be required on a project are available in FHWA's [Environmental Review Toolkit](#).

14. What information must State DOTs or local agencies review to determine if a proposed design exception can be classified as a CE?

The review, consideration, and approval of design exceptions generally occurs after the impacts of a project's design have been reviewed and approved as complying with the applicable Federal and State or locally-required environmental finding, determination, or decision (as specified in 23CFR771 and any equivalent State or local requirements). A re-evaluation would be conducted to confirm that the applicable Federal and State or locally-required environmental finding, determination, or decision remained valid after the design exceptions were proposed.

Typically design exceptions by themselves do not involve unusual circumstances or result in significant environmental impacts, making it highly unlikely that design exceptions alone would require an environmental review and documentation other than what is required for a CE action. For a project where the only Federal involvement is the approval of design exceptions, a CE would likely satisfy the NEPA evaluation and documentation requirements (as specified in 23CFR771).

The FHWA Division Offices, State, or local agencies reviewing design exceptions also need to confirm proposed design exceptions are consistent with the project's previously completed environmental review and any commitments that were made, for the purpose of complying with applicable environmental requirements (as specified in 23CFR771 and any equivalent State or local requirements).

The review and approval of design exceptions as a CE must be conducted in accordance with the State DOT-FHWA Stewardship and Oversight Agreement, any State DOT-FHWA CE Agreement, the State DOT's design policies, and FHWA approval standards. Based on past experience, the review of design exceptions must verify they do not involve significant environmental impacts or unusual circumstances (as specified in 23CFR771.117(a)and(b)). The documentation of this information may vary based on the procedures and practices of each agency (i.e., Design Study Reports and Project Fact Sheets).

Federal Highway Administration | 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE | Washington, DC 20590 |
202-366-4000

Vanessa Guerra

From: Kirby Snideman
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2020 9:31 AM
To: Fauver, Kirk (FHWA)
Cc: caroline.mays@txdot.gov; Bales, Genevieve (FHWA); Vanessa Guerra; Sara Garza (Sara.Garza@txdot.gov)
Subject: RE: NHS Federal Design Standards for NHS Segments

Kirk & gang,

Thanks for the info.

Thanks,
Kirby

*J. Kirby Snideman, AICP - Planning & MPO Director
(956) 794-1601 - jksnideman@ci.laredo.tx.us*

*City of Laredo Planning Department
1413 Houston Street
Laredo, Texas 78040*



From: Fauver, Kirk (FHWA) [<mailto:Kirk.Fauver@dot.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2020 9:14 AM
To: Kirby Snideman <jksnideman@ci.laredo.tx.us>; Vanessa Guerra <vguerra@ci.laredo.tx.us>; Sara Garza (Sara.Garza@txdot.gov) <Sara.Garza@txdot.gov>
Cc: caroline.mays@txdot.gov <caroline.mays@txdot.gov>; Bales, Genevieve (FHWA) <Genevieve.Bales@dot.gov>
Subject: FW: NHS Federal Design Standards for NHS Segments

ATTENTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
FYI.

From: Neathery, Mike (FHWA) <Mike.Neathery@dot.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2020 7:15 AM
To: Hilton, Elizabeth (FHWA) <Elizabeth.Hilton@dot.gov>; Fauver, Kirk (FHWA) <Kirk.Fauver@dot.gov>
Cc: Wellman, Clayton (FHWA) <clayton.wellman@dot.gov>
Subject: RE: NHS Federal Design Standards

Thanks Elizabeth.

From: Hilton, Elizabeth (FHWA)
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2020 8:08 AM
To: Neathery, Mike (FHWA) <Mike.Neathery@dot.gov>; Fauver, Kirk (FHWA) <Kirk.Fauver@dot.gov>

Cc: Wellman, Clayton (FHWA) <clayton.wellman@dot.gov>
Subject: RE: NHS Federal Design Standards

Thanks Mike.

Kirk – I'm also copying Clayton Wellman on our HICP-10 team since he's your lead point of contact for Texas. You can find the current list of adopted standards at https://ecfr.io/Title-23/se23.1.625_14. Let Clayton or I know if you have further questions.

Thanks,
Elizabeth

From: Neathery, Mike (FHWA) <Mike.Neathery@dot.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2020 7:02 AM
To: Fauver, Kirk (FHWA) <Kirk.Fauver@dot.gov>
Cc: Hilton, Elizabeth (FHWA) <Elizabeth.Hilton@dot.gov>
Subject: RE: NHS Federal Design Standards

Kirk,
Yes, NHS design standards would apply to all NHS segments—existing or newly added. I am copying Elizabeth for her expansion as needed. This link, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/design/standards/qa.cfm#q02>, has Q&A's about the NHS design standards. Thanks.
-Mike

From: Fauver, Kirk (FHWA)
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 5:55 PM
To: Neathery, Mike (FHWA) <Mike.Neathery@dot.gov>
Subject: NHS Federal Design Standards

Mike;

Had a simple question for you regarding NHS federal-aid design standards, my assumption was always this refers to the AASHTO Policy Guide on Geometric Standards. Is this still the case? If a non-NHS route or intermodal connector is added to the NHS system, do the federal-aid design standards always apply to the newly designated corridor or local road (if intermodal connector)?

Thanks,

Kirk D. Fauver
Planning & Research Engineer
FHWA Texas Division (HPP-TX)
300 E. 8th Street, Room 826
Austin, Texas 78701

PH: 512-536-5952
FAX: 512-536-5990
E-Mail: kirk.fauver@dot.gov

Discussion with possible action on Hachar-Reuthinger

Status report on the ongoing Active Transportation Plan

Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).

Angelica Quijano

From: Antonio Rodriguez <anrodriguez@HNTB.com>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2020 6:55 PM
To: Vanessa Guerra; Kirby Snideman; Angelica Quijano
Cc: Douglas Howland; Richard Ridings; Carlos Lopez; Melisa Montemayor; Jed Brown
Subject: MPO Meeting (May 18, 2020)

ATTENTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Team, below is the WCCL RMA report for the month of May.

1. Conducted a Board Meeting on 5/13/20.
2. Killam Industrial Blvd. Turn Lanes – 100% Design completed and submitted to TxDOT on 5/14/20. Letting of the project is anticipated for August 2020.
3. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Concord Hills) – Design is ongoing. 90% Design is ongoing. Anticipated letting of the project is scheduled for August 2020.
4. Vallecillo Road – WCCL RMA is conducting preliminary surveying on the proposed project alignment.

If you have any other questions, please let us know. I hope you have a great day.

Thanks.

Antonio Rodriguez, PE

WCCL RMA GEC Deputy Program Manager
Cell (512) 300-0382

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