

# 1 History

A Metropolitan Transportation Plan is one of the most important tools to facilitate orderly urban and rural development, as it guides the location and type of roadway facilities that are needed to meet projected growth within an area. It enables cities and counties to determine and plan for their existing and future transportation improvement needs and to acquire adequate rights-of-way. A Metropolitan Transportation Plan is a means of assuring that basic infrastructure needs and right-of-way will be available when travel demand warrants new or improved highway facilities.

## FEDERAL LEGISLATION

With the passage of the Federal Highway Act of 1962, Congress made urban transportation planning a condition for receipt of federal highway funds in urban areas with 50,000 population or more. In these urbanized areas, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) were designated by the governor of each state to carry out this legislative requirement. This legislation encouraged “a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process carried on cooperatively by the states and local communities;” thus the “3-C” planning process evolved. Subsequent highway bills further increased the need for the transportation planning process. In addition, these highway bills will undergo periodic review and reauthorization furthering the need to continue the transportation planning process. These bills include:

- Federal Aid Highway Act of 1970
- FHWA/UMTA Joint Resolutions (1975)
- Federal Aid Highway Act of 1982
- Revised FHWA/UMTA Joint Resolutions (1983)
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)
- Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century of 1998 (TEA-21)
- Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)

In 1991, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) was signed into law and provided a new perspective and emphasis on transportation planning and project development. ISTEA required that 20-year transportation plans, called Metropolitan Transportation Plans, be adopted every 5 years by Metropolitan Planning Organizations. It also required that these plans be financially constrained which means that the projects expected to be constructed or buses purchased, etc., in the 20-year planning horizon could not exceed the funds projected to be available. In 1998, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) was enacted, continuing the objectives set out in ISTEA with minor modifications. TEA-21 expired earlier in 2004. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), was signed into law in 2005.

## MPO ORGANIZATION

As a result of federal guidelines, the City of Tyler was designated as the Tyler Urban Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization in 1974, and is responsible for the “3-

C" (continuous, comprehensive and cooperative) planning process. The organization has transitioned into what is now known as the Tyler Area MPO.

Urban transportation planning efforts have been conducted for the Tyler urban area since the early 1960's. The first comprehensive transportation plan was released in 1966 and this plan was completed as a requirement of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962. This act required long-range transportation planning be undertaken in metropolitan areas over 50,000 population where federal funds were used in highway construction. Since this original plan, various updates have been adopted. An update was released in the mid-1970's in response to an increased awareness of environmental issues. In 1988, an additional update was conducted that included the collection and analysis of large databases relative to urban activity in the Tyler area. Population and land use forecasts in this update served as the base year to project traffic demands into the year 2005. Until 1994, a comprehensive long-range transportation plan had not been released since the original 1966 report and the various updates mentioned. Through a consultant study completed in 1985, the City of Tyler developed and adopted the Master Street Plan. The Master Street Plan identified improvement needs to existing major streets in the city. During 1999 the Master Street Plan was updated with the completion of the City's Comprehensive Plan which was adopted during the fall of 1999. The Master Street Plan along with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan was updated during 2004. This document meets the "3-C" planning requirements, as it is the five year update to the previous MTP developed in 2004. This current plan will be approved in 2009 and will have a planning horizon of 2035. Another update to the MTP must be completed within five years, or no later than the end of calendar year 2014. In the event that the Tyler Area MPO is designated with an Ozone Nonattainment status, the MTP update will be required within four years, or no later than the end of calendar year 2013.

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE**

The Policy Board consists of eleven members composed of the principal elected and appointed officials in the Tyler/Smith County area. The Policy Board's purpose is to approve and adopt transportation policies for the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

## **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Technical Advisory Committee consists of 25 members with knowledge and expertise in various transportation fields. The Technical Committee's purpose is to advise the Policy Committee on the development of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). All official action of adopting policies, endorsing the UPWP, approving the MTP, and adopting the TIP resides with the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee may direct the Technical Committee to present alternatives for its consideration, with accompanying recommendations and supporting rationale.

## **MPO STAFF**

The Tyler Area Metropolitan Planning Organization staff provides administrative support to the Policy Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee. MPO Staff is also responsible for coordinating, developing and maintaining all required transportation planning documents.

### **METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA/BOUNDARY**

The long-range transportation plan requires analyzing the existing transportation network in terms of current and projected future needs and developing a program of projects to address these needs. In order to accomplish this, the plan must outline a transportation study area. The MPO Boundary has been approved by the Governor to address transportation planning for the Tyler urbanized area, which was revised in 2004. The MPO planning region for the Tyler urbanized area includes the City of Tyler and several other developing areas such as Gresham, Lindale, Hideaway, New Chapel Hill, Noonday and Whitehouse. The study area is intended to include those areas outside the main urban area most likely to experience urbanization during the 25-year planning horizon.

MPO AREA MAP

FIGURE 1 TYLER AREA MPO BOUNDARY



