

2 MTP Vision and Goals

One of the products of the MPO is the development of this Plan. The information generated through the transportation planning process is made available to city staff and officials to assist them in developing transportation policies and programs. The transportation process is an on-going process of evaluating data, needs and programs for future growth and development. The purpose of this Plan is to provide a framework for rational development of transportation improvements within the Tyler Metropolitan Study Area.

SAFETEA-LU 2005 PLANNING FACTORS

Transportation planning is a process of projecting future transportation needs, investigating and evaluating alternative actions for meeting those needs, assessing the financial ability of the community to implement those actions, and recommending reasonable strategies based on needs and available resources. Elected officials and others in decision-making roles need access to this information to help them develop policies, programs, and projects. The transportation planning process is continuous. Conditions affecting the transportation system, such as population growth, land use patterns, employment changes, traffic volumes, etc., are monitored. Alternate means for alleviating congestion are identified, and decisions are made on which projects are to be carried out. The proposed projects are evaluated in relation to expected funding levels, prioritized, and listed in order of importance to the community. All transportation modes for the entire metropolitan area are studied and addressed in a comprehensive manner. The transportation planning process is structured to include cooperative input and direction from participating cities, counties, agencies, and the public. This results in the development of a plan, which encompasses the 3-C planning process.

After the initial Plan is developed and adopted, the Plan must be continuous through on-going review of transportation projects and continual monitoring of basic elements of the Plan. These provisions were, and still are, intended to:

- ❑ Prevent the development of conflicting plans by different governmental entities;
- ❑ Prevent duplication of effort by providing a single focus of regional transportation planning through the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization; and,
- ❑ Provide an organized system to establish priorities for project funding.

CONGESTION RELIEF

PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

The overall goal of the plan is *to develop a safe, efficient, and economically feasible multi-modal transportation system that will accommodate the mobility needs of all*

people and goods traveling within and through the Tyler area over the next 30 years.

Specific objectives were developed to accomplish this goal. Transportation system projects developed and recommended for implementation through the Metropolitan Transportation Plan should meet one or more of these objectives. The following objectives were identified for the MTP:

- ❑ To promote the efficient use and preservation of existing transportation systems and their infrastructure;
- ❑ To develop roadway facilities that ensure network continuity throughout the Tyler area and are planned and classified based on function and relative importance, including providing a proper balance of expressways, freeways, major and minor arterials, collectors and local streets in coordination with the City of Tyler's Master Street Plan;
- ❑ To improve safety on the existing transportation system by developing projects that reduce hazards and improve driving conditions;
- ❑ To develop a network of bicycle facilities that is safe and accessible for residents and provides important connections between residential areas and major developments;
- ❑ To develop adequate thoroughfares for improved east-west movement through the Tyler area and preserve existing neighborhoods by discouraging through traffic on local and collector streets;
- ❑ To develop improved pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks and trails, that connect residential areas to major developments, schools, and transit services;
- ❑ To provide for improved transit services, including local bus service, commuter bus service, and long distance rail transportation;
- ❑ To develop Tyler Pounds Field into a regional Hub for air transportation and improve automobile access to the airport;
- ❑ To maintain consistency with adopted land use plans and ordinances; and,
- ❑ To accommodate future land development and provide an adequate level of accessibility to the roadway system without significantly deteriorating level-of-service.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

The Tyler Area MPO Boundary is located within Smith County, a member of the East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG). ETCOG was established in 1970 and is a voluntary association of various governments including counties, cities, schools districts, and special districts. Services provided by the Council of Governments include: 9-1-1 emergency call

system, peace officer training, homeland security planning, environmental grant funding, business finance programs, and rural transportation services.

MPO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP is prepared on a biannual basis to identify all work to be executed by the Tyler Area MPO. The document is divided into five sections: Administration and Management Activities, Data Development and Maintenance, Short Range Planning, Long Range Planning, and Special Studies.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is the short range implementation plan with a four year planning horizon. The plan provides the guide to the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and local officials for budgeting funds and planning design and construction of transportation and transit improvements for the near future. All projects come out of the long-range plan known as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The TIP may be amended as funding levels change or transportation needs change. Amendments to the TIP, updating or adjusting amounts, of listed projects, let dates, project numbers, and similar amendments will not require approval by the Tyler Area MPO Policy Committee following concurrence by TxDOT.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan is a long range and comprehensive study of the metropolitan area. This long range plan prepares transportation improvements with a 20 year planning horizon and is fiscally restrained to realistic funding forecasts over the same period. The plan uses economic and demographic forecasting, traffic models, employments data, and other regional data to construct a forecast of transportation needs in the area.