

April 28, 2015

Brownsville

Metropolitan Planning Organization

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

What is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan?

The official intermodal transportation plan that is developed and adopted through the metropolitan transportation planning process for the metropolitan planning area, in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134, 23 USC 135 and 49 U.S.C. 5303.

Recent Adoption

The Brownsville MPO adopted the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) F.Y 2015-2040 on December 10, 2014. The purpose of this plan is to guide development of the Brownsville Transportation System through implementation of a prioritized list of potential transportation projects. This document is released every five years. Projects completed by the previous MTP include:

- West Rail
- Veteran’s International Bridge (provision of additional lanes)
- Widening of F.M. 511 / State Highway 550

MTP Packets Are Available

Packets consist of two maps, a spreadsheet and text. The maps include the 2010-2035 Brownsville Thoroughfare Plan which lists current and proposed arterials & collectors. The second map consist of the 2015-2040 Recommended MTP / Plan Improvements.

Stop by El Tapiz Building to purchase a copy. Requests for MTP packets to be mailed to your address can be fulfilled for a modest fee.



*El Tapiz Building
1150 E. Adams St. 3rd Floor
Brownsville, TX*



Texting and Driving!



Watch out for Pedestrians and Cyclists at Street Intersections!

Upcoming Policy Committee Meetings

Wednesday, **May 13, 2015**

At 10 a.m.

Historic Brownsville Museum
(Mary Yturria Education Center)
641 E. Madison St.
Brownsville, TX 78520

Wednesday, **June 10, 2015**

At 10 a.m.

Southmost Community Network Center
(Police Substation)
641 E. Madison St.
Brownsville, TX 78520

Wednesday, **July 8, 2015**

At 10 a.m.

Historic Brownsville Museum
(Mary Yturria Education Center)
641 E. Madison St.
Brownsville, TX 78520

Transportation Improvement Program

What is the Transportation Improvement Program?

A document prepared by a metropolitan planning organization that lists projects to be funded with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) / Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for the next one- to three-year period. The TIP document is the continuing implementation of the MTP. All projects included in the TIP are derived from the Brownsville MPO MTP.

Upcoming Projects

A TIP Revision, adopted on January 14, 2015 by the MPO Policy Committee, (the submittal of which took place in Feb. 2015), was completed and included 35 listings, worth over seven million dollars.

These are projects that the Brownsville MPO identified as needs in the MPO area. MPO staff gathered and shared information with agency staff to develop proposed projects for inclusion in

the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Some of the TIP revision improvement projects selected will use Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds. Two projects focus on Active Transportation – Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities and two focus on Safety and Access to Schools.

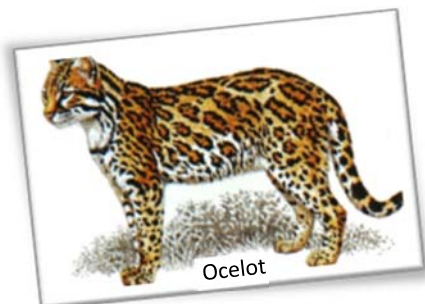
Six projects that will use Category 7 funds involve either construction of new traffic signals or optimization of existing traffic signal timing at various Brownsville streets. These improvements are required to accommodate increases in traffic volumes on area roadways and to eliminate delays and improve safety for motorists.



Furthermore, the proposed TIP Revision of February 2015 calls for the inclusion of two distinct projects. The construction of four tolled, main lanes on State Highway (S.H.) 550, for a total of one mile, sponsored by Cameron County RMA is one project. The other is establishment of a ten foot wide trail for a length of 7.0 miles at the Southmost Nature Trail. This project is to be done in two phases over several years; Phase I will begin in 2016.

Eight roadway studies lay the research and investigative groundwork for subsequent projects in the coming years. These studies include environmental assessment and engineering design tasks throughout various phases. One undertaking involves acquisition of a right-of-way and another consists of the development of a Comprehensive Transit Strategic Plan.

Save the Ocelots!



Coming Soon

Two projects will be included in the May 2015 TIP Revision.

These projects consist of providing wildlife crossings throughout various areas under State Highway 100, in order to prevent unfortunate accidents between motorists and the ocelot, an endangered species.

A concrete barrier installed to protect against vehicle collisions, unintentionally has led to the death of three of these wild cats in recent years. Construction of the wildlife crossings, underpass tunnels, will allow animals to travel between their habitats safely.

Funding is provided by Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), via Category 12 discretionary funds. TxDOT staff will continue to work closely with United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on these matters.

Unified Planning Work Program

A Draft Unified Planning Work Program Plan is currently being developed.

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) F.Y. 2016 is the work plan for the Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization for the approaching fiscal year which begins October 1, 2015.

The MPO allocates federal funds and coordinates the planning activities of all participants in the Brownsville Urbanized Area.

An outline of proposed tasks is provided below:

Administration: This task involves the direct support and assistance provided to the MPO Policy and Technical Committees, as well as MPO Public Involvement activities. Training activities for MPO staff are also charged to this task.

Data Development: Socioeconomic data is collected by the MPO staff on a continuous basis. One use of this demographic information is to perform travel demand modeling. This "model" is used by MPO staff to forecast future traffic volumes and assignments.

Short-Range Planning: Activities under this task include Transit/General Development and Comprehensive Planning; Transit/Short-Range Planning; Transit/Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); Short-Range Planning (Non-Transit) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning Activities.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan: Activities include development of the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan, as well as any amendments of this MPO document. Also, transit planning for long-range purposes is conducted under this task.

Special Studies: Special (one-time) activities are sometimes conducted under this task. The MPO supports a Congestion Management Process (CMP), which is an on-going federal requirement. The development of a Master Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan is slated in fiscal year 2016 for the Town of Rancho Viejo.

Written comments on the draft are welcomed up until the end of June 2015. Discussion by the MPO Policy Committee on this matter is scheduled on Wednesday, May 13, 2015 at 10 a.m. at the Historic Brownsville Museum (Mary Yturria Education Center) 641 E. Madison St., Brownsville, TX 78520.

I-69E / U.S. 77/83 Expressway Ramp Improvements

What is going on?

MPO staff have been asked this question a lot lately. We will explain.

Several years ago, the MPO Policy Committee asked TxDOT staff to investigate how to remedy problematic conditions at the northbound U.S. 77/83 Expressway frontage road adjacent to the Sunrise Mall. Existing conflict points between some motorists exiting and others seeking to enter the expressway deserved attention.

How could this be made safer?

Also, the queuing of vehicles on the frontage road near the F.M. 3248 intersection was another area of concern.

What could be done to provide relief of the congestion problems associated with this intersection?

TxDOT staff requested assistance from staff at the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) to examine these conditions and develop possible solutions. The overall goal was to augment safety within this roadway corridor. TTI staff identified a number of different treatments. Also, they compared them in order to assess which treatment might be the best one.

Of the two leading (preferred) solutions, Option No.6 was deemed the best choice by members of the MPO Committees.

MPO staff don't have a copy of the TxDOT construction documents, so we cannot outline the sequence(s) of how work will progress.

We do know, what the end results will look like. To learn more, please follow along, (below).

The Expressway entrance ramp, near the Sunrise Mall (north of F.M. 802), is to be closed.

This entrance ramp will be relocated to the north, near the location of the former Morrison Road exit.

This ramp reconfiguration is one of several changes.

To exit for Morrison Road, you'll need to exit at the Pablo Kisel exit ramp, (near the mall), and proceed north on the frontage road until you reach the Morrison Road intersection. (Continued on page 4)

I-69E / U.S. 77/83 Expressway Ramp Improvements

(cont'd from page 3)

While this particular ramp change may add some extra minutes to your trip (Morrison Road), the augmentation of safety on the northbound frontage road is the overall goal of this solution. Conflict points between some motorists exiting and others seeking to enter the Expressway will be eliminated. Similarly, ramp reversal will occur on the northern segment of the frontage road. The F.M. 3248 Expressway exit ramp which now exists well north of Morrison Road will be shifted to the south. This change will afford more space or distance to motorists, to allow weaving or lane changes in a safe manner.

In addition, the northbound frontage road will be widened. An extra (turning) lane will be built on the east, immediately south of the F.M. 3248 intersection.

A fourth lane on the I-69 facility itself will be established. This extra lane for northbound traffic will allow extra space for motorists to weave (or move). This result is achieved by widening of the Morrison Road Overpass to provide this auxiliary lane.

Inconveniences posed by construction activities will last for a considerable amount of time.

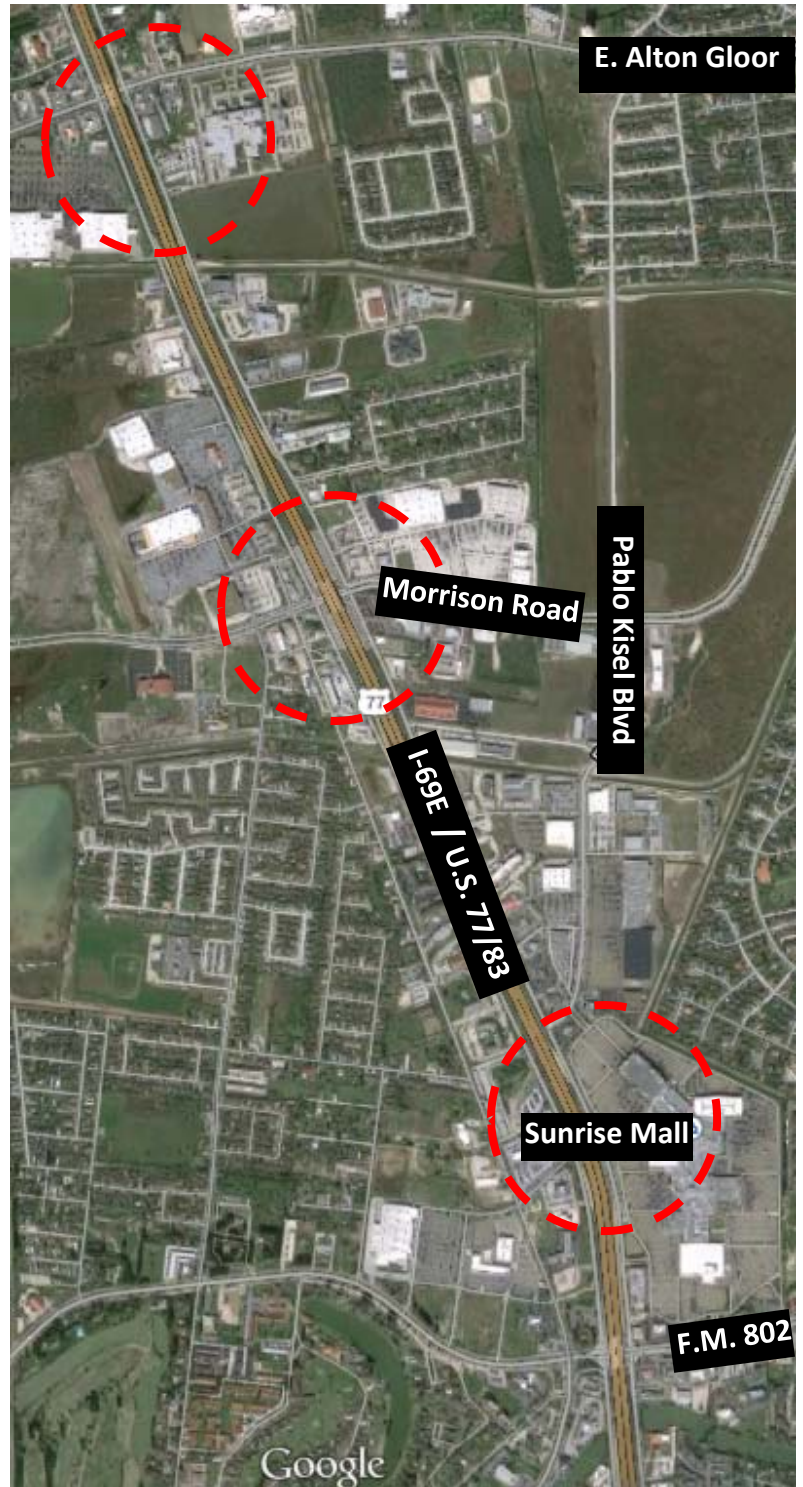
Work started on February 2, 2015. The contractor has been given 300 working days (or about 15 months) to complete this project.

Please give yourself extra time when you travel in this area, in order to safely arrive at your destination.

Establishing a safer facility and accommodating expected increases in (future) traffic volumes are important objectives to be met by construction of these improvements.



Watch out for Construction Workers.



Areas highlighted with red dashed circle will be altered.



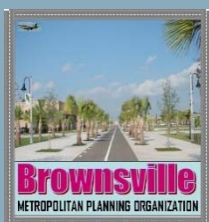
WHAT IS AN MPO?

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a regional policy board, required in urbanized areas with populations over 50,000 and designated by local officials and the governor of the state.

Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization

c/o City of Brownsville Planning
Department
PO Box 911
1150 E. Adams St. 3rd Floor
Brownsville, TX 7852

Fax: (956) 548-6144
E-mail: bmpo@cob.us
Visit: www.mpo.cob.us/



About Us

The Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization provides administrative support and technical services to coordinate, carry out and conduct transportation planning for Brownsville, Los Fresnos and the Town of Rancho Viejo following federal highway and transit legislation.

The activities conducted by the Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) are intended to identify policies, programs and improvement projects to address area transportation activities and needs. The adoption of transportation plans and policies by the MPO is an integral step in the process of obtaining federal funding of various transportation improvements, including transit activities.

Contact

Mark Lund, MPO Director
(956) 548-6154

Alfonso Vallejo, Assistant MPO Director
(956) 548-6158

Georgina Lopez, MPO Transit Planner II
(956) 574-6696

Monica Tellam, MPO Transit Planner
(956) 541-4881

Alicia Justilian, Administrative Specialist
(956) 548-6150

Federal Certification

The Brownsville Metropolitan Organization is preparing for the 2015 Federal Certification Review.

The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) together perform this review to ensure that the metropolitan planning organization is conforming to the Federal guidelines.

It is the first time that the Brownsville MPO undergoes such federal evaluation, since recently being designated as a Transit Management Area (TMA) by the Department of Transportation. This is a designation received when the population as noted by the United State Census Bureau, reaches over 200,000 within the urbanized area.

Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization
 City of Brownsville Planning Department
 PO Box 911
 1150 E. Adams St. 3rd Floor
 Brownsville, TX 78520

[Addressee]
 [Street Address]
 City, ST, Zip Code

NAME/NOMBRE	COMMENTS/COMENTARIOS
ADDRESS/DIRECCIÓN	
PHONE/TELÉFONO ()	
<p>PLEASE HELP US IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION IN BROWNSVILLE BY SENDING US YOUR IDEAS AND COMMENTS. WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS CAN BE ADDRESSED TO:</p> <p>Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization c/o City of Brownsville – Planning Department PO Box 911 1150 E. Adams St. 3rd floor Brownsville, TX 78520 georgina.lopez@cob.us</p>	
<p>POR FAVOR AYUDENOS A MEJORAR EL SISTEMA DE TRANSPORTE EN BROWNSVILLE. ENVÍENOS SUS IDEAS Y COMENTARIOS QUE QUEREMOS ESCUCHAR DE USTED. ENVIE SUS COMENTARIOS Y PREGUNTAS A LA SIGUIENTE DIRECCIÓN:</p> <p>Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization c/o City of Brownsville – Planning Department PO Box 911 1150 E. Adams St. 3rd floor Brownsville, TX 78520 georgina.lopez@cob.us</p>	