Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Board

209 S. Danville, Building B, Suite 212
Abilene, TX 79605
www.AbileneMPO.org
325-437-9999

Provide cooperative, comprehensive, and continuing short and long-range transportation planning which promotes safe and reliable movement of people and goods in the Abilene Metropolitan Area.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Agenda

REGULAR MEETING POLICY BOARD (MPO PB)

DATE & TIME	LOCATION
Tuesday, October 20, 2026 1:30 p.m.	City Council Chambers, Abilene City Hall 555 Walnut St., Abilene, Texas

The Abilene MPO Policy Board may discuss and take action on any item listed below; items may be considered in any order. The Board may convene in Executive Session at any time during the course of this meeting for consultation with attorney pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071.

1.	Call to Order.	
2.	Public Comment on any Agenda Item.	RECEIVE
3.	Election of Officers for the Abilene MPO Policy Board.	ACTION
4.	Consideration and action on the minutes of the August 18, 2026 meeting.	ACTION
5.	Consideration and action on the Consultant Contract(s) for Planning Assistance.	ACTION
6.	Regional Coordination (Specialized Transit) Plan Adoption.	ACTION
7.	Unified Planning Work Program DRAFT Amendment 2.	DISCUSSION
8.	Discussion of Preliminary DRAFT Public Participation Program.	DISCUSSION
9.	Presentation on planned changes to the access road next to the Taylor County Expo Center at SH 36 and Loop 322.(TxDOT Staff).	DISCUSSION
10.	Discussion and review of transportation projects. (TxDOT, Abilene City Staff, other).	DISCUSSION
11.	Director's Report. • Financial Status and Budget Report • Operations and Staffing • TAC and TEMPO Meeting Summaries • Upcoming Work Tasks	DISCUSSION
12.	Recommendation of Items for Consideration at a Future Meeting.	DISCUSSION
13.	Executive Session.	
14.	Hold a discussion and take action on the Annual Evaluation of the Executive Director.	ACTION

15. Adjournment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Policy Board reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any item on the agenda as authorized by Texas Government Code Sections: 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about real property) 551.073 (Deliberations about gifts and donations), 551.074 (Personnel matters), and 551.076 (Deliberations about security devices). After discussion in executive session, any action or vote will be taken in public. 12. 551.074 (Personnel Matters) – Policy Board may consider appointment, employment, compensation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of employees.

ADA / ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATION

The Abilene MPO meeting facility is wheelchair accessible. Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aid, services, or special accommodation should contact the MPO office at 325-437-9999 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The agenda was also on www.AbileneMPO.org.

Posted: I hereby certify the above meeting notice was posted on the bulletin board at the City Hall of the City of Abilene, Texas on the 12th day of October 2026 at 4:45 p.m.

Kaitlin Richardson, Deputy City Secretary

ABILENE MPO POLICY BOARD MEMBERS

- COUNCILMAN SHANE PRICE, CITY OF ABILENE (MPO CHAIRPERSON)
- JUDGE DALE SPURGIN, JONES COUNTY (MPO VICE-CHAIRPERSON)
- JUDGE PHIL CROWLEY, TAYLOR COUNTY
- JUDGE NICKI HARLE, CALLAHAN COUNTY
- MAYOR WELDON HURT, CITY OF ABILENE
- MR. JEREMY DEARING, P.E., TXDOT DISTRICT ENGINEER

To: Abilene MPO Policy Board
From: Craig Casper, Executive Director
Subject: Item 3: Election of Officers for the Abilene MPO Policy Board
Action: Election

Summary

The desired action is election of a Policy Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson as described in the Bylaws of the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Prior Actions

During the October 15th, 2024 Abilene MPO Policy Board Meeting, Councilman Shane Price was elected Chairperson, and Judge Dale Spurgin was elected Vice-Chairperson.

Background

Bylaws of the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization

Section 3.03 Officers

The Transportation Policy Board shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson from the voting members. The Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chairperson. The chairperson shall be an elected official. The officers may be elected (a) by the individual person or (b) by the membership position. The officers shall be elected for a term of two (2) federal fiscal years and may be re-elected.

MINUTES OF THE ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

COMBINED MEETING WITH THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING — AUGUST 18, 2026

Date & Time:	Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at 12:30 p.m.
Location:	South Branch — Abilene Library, Mall of Abilene, 4310 Buffalo Gap Rd., Abilene, Texas
Presiding:	Councilman Shane Price, City of Abilene (Policy Board Chairman)

ATTENDANCE RECORD

Voting Policy Board Members Present: Councilman Shane Price (Chairman – City of Abilene), Judge Dale Spurgin (Jones County), Judge Nicki Harle (Callahan County), Judge Phil Crowley (Taylor County), and Mr. Jeremy Dearing, P.E. (TxDOT District Engineer). [Quorum established with five voting members present.]

MPO Staff in Attendance: Mr. Craig Casper (Executive Director).

Staff of Member Agencies, TAC Representatives & Public Present: Mr. Richard Harbert (City of Abilene), Mr. Max Johnson (City of Abilene Public Works), Ms. Kelly Messer (Assistant City Attorney, City of Abilene), Mr. Cal Hays (TxDOT Abilene District), Mr. Anthony Boucher (TxDOT), Mr. Billy Dezern (TxDOT Abilene District Planner), Mr. Brian Trontine (TxDOT Abilene Area Office), Ms. Amanda Courtney (CityLink), Mr. Conrad Smith (Dyess Air Force Base), Mr. Norm Archibald (Abilene Chamber of Commerce), Mr. Kevin Lawrence (Development Corporation of Abilene), Mr. Randy Williams (Taylor County Commissioner Precinct 1), Mayor Billy Richardson (City of Hawley), Ms. Brenna Troncoso (presumptive Jones County Judge, guest), and Mr. John Overman (Texas A&M Transportation Institute, guest presenter).

DRAFT

AGENDA SUMMARY & OUTCOMES

Item	Agenda Description	Action Type	Status / Outcome
1	Call to Order and Public Comments Announcement	Procedural	Meeting opened at 12:47 p.m.
2	Public Comment on any Agenda Item	Public Hearing	No comments offered.
3	Approval of Minutes of the June 11, 2026 meeting	Action	Approved Unanimously (5-0)
4	Consideration and action on the 2027 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)	Action	Approved Unanimously (5-0)
5	Metropolitan Planning Organizations: History and Purpose (Texas A&M Transportation Institute)	Discussion	Presentation received
6	Discussion and review of regional transportation projects	Discussion	Reports received from TxDOT, City Staff, and CityLink
7	Director's Report (MPO Staffing and Budget Report)	Discussion	Report received
8	Recommendation of Items for Consideration at a Future Meeting	Procedural	Requested presentation on planned changes to the access road next to the Taylor County Expo Center at SH 36 and Loop 322
9	Adjournment	Procedural	Meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

DRAFT

DETAILED MEETING PROCEEDINGS

1. Call to Order

Chairman Price called the meeting to order at 12:47 p.m. and noted that a quorum was present. He recognized Judge Nicki Harle as the newly seated Callahan County representative on the Policy Board, following the boundary expansion and bylaws amendments approved at the June 11, 2026 meeting. Chairman Price also introduced Ms. Brenna Troncoso, the presumptive incoming Jones County Judge, noting that Judge Dale Spurgin will retire at the end of the year and that Ms. Trancoso, having won the primary election, is unopposed in the November general election.

Because this meeting was combined with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Chairman Price asked everyone present to introduce themselves and their affiliated organization. Introductions were received from representatives of the City of Abilene, TxDOT, Jones County, Taylor County, Callahan County, Dyess Air Force Base, CityLink, the Abilene Chamber of Commerce, the Development Corporation of Abilene, the City of Hawley, and the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI).

2. Public Comment on any Agenda Item

Chairman Price announced that public comment could be made on any item listed on the agenda. He noted that ongoing technology upgrades at the library branch prevented the meeting from being live-streamed; a recording would instead be made available on the City of Abilene's website. No public comments were offered.

3. Consideration and Action on the Minutes of the June 11, 2026 Meeting

The draft minutes of the June 11, 2026, Policy Board meeting were presented for review. No deletions, additions, or corrections were requested.

BOARD ACTION — MINUTES APPROVED

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2026, meeting as printed. Motion Carried Unanimously (5-0).

4. Consideration and Action on the 2027 Unified Transportation Program (UTP)

Mr. Craig Casper presented the 2027 Unified Transportation Program (UTP), TxDOT's 10-year statewide project and funding plan for which MPOs serve as planning partners. He noted that the Board's June 11, 2026 adoption of the MTP amendment and the 2027–2030 TIP had effectively pre-approved the substance of the UTP, but that the UTP itself had not yet been released for statewide public comment; it has since been released, and Attachment 1 in the packet — downloaded verbatim from TxDOT's UTP Library — reflects the draft the Texas Transportation Commission is scheduled to act on at its August 26, 2026 meeting.

Mr. Casper reported that 11 projects fall within the Abilene MPO boundary in the 2027 UTP, the same number as in the 2026 UTP, though not an identical set of projects. Referencing the side-by-side comparison in Attachment 2, he noted that several projects have advanced into construction and are no longer carried on the list, and that one prior project was replaced with a new freeway operational-improvements project at a different location.

Mr. Casper highlighted a statewide funding shortfall reflected in the draft UTP: a 10-year statewide funding forecast of $95 billion against an estimated $217 billion needed to meet adopted performance targets, with the long-term (through 2050) forecast of $193 billion falling well short of an estimated $511 billion needed over that period. He noted that Map ID 2 (I-20 widening, SH 351 to the Callahan County line) illustrates the effect of inflation on delayed projects: its current UTP cost of $268 million is projected to grow to roughly $430 million in year-of-expenditure dollars once it enters the MTP.

In response to Board questions, Mr. Casper stated that the $95 billion forecast holds only if Congress maintains current transportation funding levels; a reduction, or a shift to funding transportation year-by-year in competition with other national priorities, would lower that figure. A Board member asked whether projects currently listed with FY 2027–2030 letting dates, for which FY 2027 budgets have already been set by TxDOT, should be considered funded, and whether any could be removed from the list given that not all FY 2027 projects had yet been let. Mr. Casper acknowledged that only the projects identified in the Attachment 2 comparison as advanced to construction are confirmed off the list, that he had not yet fully evaluated which additional FY 2027–2030 projects remain unlet, and that this question was not further resolved at this meeting.

BOARD ACTION — 2027 UTP APPROVED

A motion was made and seconded to approve the 2027 Unified Transportation Program as presented in Attachment 1. Motion Carried Unanimously (5-0).

5. Metropolitan Planning Organizations: History and Purpose — Presentation by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute [DISCUSSION ONLY]

Mr. John Overman, Research Scientist with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI), presented an educational “MPO 101” briefing on the history, structure, and purpose of Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Mr. Overman explained that TTI's visit was arranged through TxDOT's Transportation Planning and Programming (TPP) Division as part of a routine statewide effort to brief MPO boards, noting that Abilene was among six or seven of Texas's 24 MPOs visited to date. He referenced the newly published Texas MPO Planning and Programming Handbook, developed jointly by TxDOT and TTI, and noted that the Abilene MPO boundary shown on the handbook's map has since been corrected to reflect the 2026 boundary update.

Foundations and History

Mr. Overman described the “three Cs” of transportation planning — continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive — established under the 1962 Federal Aid Highway Act, which also created MPOs. He reviewed subsequent milestone legislation: the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (citing Overton Park v. Volpe as a landmark case establishing modern public-involvement practice); the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (air quality conformity); the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (fiscal constraint, Transportation Management Areas, and CMAQ); the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (planning factors); the 2012 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (performance-based planning); the 2015 FAST Act (performance measures and targets); and the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which nearly doubled the size of the prior federal transportation authorization.

Legal Framework and Definition

An MPO is a policy board — not an agency that designs, builds, or operates transportation infrastructure — designated for any Census-defined urbanized area exceeding 50,000 in

population, established by agreement between the Governor and local officials. Mr. Overman noted there is no population ceiling for MPO status, but that urbanized areas exceeding 200,000 are additionally designated Transportation Management Areas (TMAs), which carry added requirements, including a dedicated transit seat on the policy board. An MPO's four core functions are to establish its planning-area boundary, evaluate transportation alternatives, maintain a 20-year Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); Texas additionally requires MPOs to plan against the state's 10-year Unified Transportation Program (UTP) horizon, since project delivery routinely spans several years from planning through letting.

Roles, Partners, and Limits

Mr. Overman reviewed the MPO's core partners — TxDOT, FHWA (Texas Division), FTA (Region 6), member agencies, transportation providers and operators, and the public — and emphasized that transportation planning is inherently cooperative: no single agency is responsible for the entire regional system. State DOTs typically operate the highest-volume roadways; cities and counties operate other principal roadways; transit operators run transit systems; and the MPO's role is to actively coordinate all parties rather than to build or maintain infrastructure itself. Mr. Randy Williams (Taylor County Precinct 1) commented that a key value of the MPO structure is bringing local, community-level input into decisions made by agencies that may not otherwise be positioned to assess local impacts; Mr. Overman agreed this reflects the intent behind the MPO model. Mr. Overman also outlined the limits on MPO authority — funding constraints (MPOs allocate but do not independently raise transportation revenue), regulatory limitations (MPOs plan and prioritize but do not implement projects directly), geographic restrictions (authority limited to the designated urbanized boundary), and dependence on the federal and state regulatory frameworks within which MPOs operate — alongside the MPO's broader coordination, regional-influence, multimodal-planning, and data-and-analysis responsibilities.

Statewide and Local Context

Mr. Overman reported more than 430 MPOs nationwide and 24 in Texas — recently reduced from 25 following consolidation of three Rio Grande Valley MPOs into one, offset by the addition of the newly designated Eagle Pass MPO — collectively representing more than 25.6 million Texans. He reviewed the Abilene MPO's statistics: designated in 1974, an estimated 2025 population of 154,321 projected to grow to approximately 176,543 by 2050, a 788-square-mile planning area, and a boundary last updated in 2026. In response to a Board question, Mr. Casper confirmed that the City of Abilene serves as the MPO's fiscal agent, noting that statewide roughly half of Texas MPOs use a council of governments as fiscal agent and half use a city, and that the Abilene area has a dedicated transit sales tax supporting CityLink.

Products, Funding, and Public Participation

Mr. Overman described the MPO's required products and their update cycles: the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP, updated at least every two years, dictating the scope of MPO staff effort); the MTP (20-year horizon, updated every four to five years); the TIP (the MTP's first four years, updated at least every two years); and the Public Participation Plan (PPP, updated periodically). He cautioned that no transportation funding is guaranteed: federal funding is comparatively stable when tied to multi-year authorizations but depends on consistent annual appropriations, while state funding fluctuates more, drawing on Proposition 1 severance-tax revenue (tied to oil and gas prices and production) and Proposition 7 motor-fuel tax, vehicle registration fee, and sales tax revenue (tied to the broader economy). He noted that Texas funds an unusually large share of its own highway program directly compared with most other states. On public participation, Mr. Overman encouraged the Board to go beyond minimum compliance — taking engagement to accessible locations with good bicycle, pedestrian, and transit connections, setting milestones, and publicly acknowledging participating individuals and organizations.

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Freight and Safety Planning

Mr. Overman reviewed freight and intermodal planning considerations for rail (local origin/destination and pass-through traffic, at-grade crossing improvements, and intermodal transfer facility access) and trucks (local delivery planning, pass-through travel and safety rest stops, and truck stop access), and reviewed the MPO's crash-data dashboards by time of day, month, and year, alongside related Abilene District safety programs, including project selection criteria, the Active Transportation Program, Street Skills, the Wrong Way Driver Program, Traffic Jam, the Safe Kids Coalition, and the Highway Emergency Response Operator (HERO) program.

Closing Observations

Mr. Overman closed by identifying pressures facing MPOs statewide — rising construction costs, staff turnover and recruiting difficulty, and increasing federal and state reporting requirements competing for limited staff time — and summarized the purpose of MPOs as providing a forum for regional transportation decision-making, comprehensive planning, intergovernmental agreement on specific projects, and compliance with federal and state requirements. No formal action was taken on this item.

6. Discussion and Review of Regional Transportation Projects [DISCUSSION ONLY]

Mr. Casper opened with an update on the West Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan, which had not been briefed to the Board since spring 2026. He reported that City and Rural Rides (CARR) has assumed the role of lead agency and has organized a Regional Coordination Committee of 11 member agencies working to coordinate transportation services for seniors, low-income residents, and individuals with disabilities across the region. A public hearing on the draft plan is scheduled for September 16, 2026, and Mr. Casper anticipated bringing the finalized plan to the Board at its October meeting.

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Mr Bryce Turrington reported on FM 89 Buffalo Gap Road. The barricades are still up but they are down to reviewing the punch list, so 5 years of construction is basically complete. The Interchange north of town with FM 3034 (Beltway North Road) and US 83/277. The walls are basically complete and the first slabs are getting poured. Also, Project #9, on FM 89 (Buffalo Gap Rd) from 707 south past Gainesway Drive in Buffalo Gap almost to Belle Plaine Rd. This project will construct some turn lanes to increase safety along the corridor. This has been a concern for several years. An interesting part of this project is they are doing a Jack and Bore drainage culvert under the road with live traffic.

Planned project numbers 5 and 6. Project 5 are the Waldrip Interchange where Winters Freeway Loop 322 and Treadaway all come together. The proposed operational improvements aren't big individual projects but will punch above their weight class. This includes ramp realignment and auxiliary lanes that when combined will noticeably increase safety and improve operations.

Project 6 is intersection improvements at Loop 322 and SH 36 (South 11th). This also includes access road improvements in front of the Expo Center. There are several configurations for the intersections that are being analyzed. We think the final project will be a positive benefit to all of the traffic in that area. There have been a series of inputs from the neighborhood associations, the experts and the public about how these all tie together. The biggest challenge is that the west access road for Loop 322 from SH 36 to the east. South 27th (Lytle Trail) is two-way operation that has a significant impact on operations near that intersection and with the Lyft Campus by the airport and expansion by TSTC and the Cheese Factory and another warehouse has changed the type and volume of traffic. There is a conflict where the entrance ramp has to cross northbound traffic and a previous design routed traffic through the neighborhood. The current effort is maintaining 2-way function from Expo Drive to South 27th and one way from SH 36 to Expo. This

will happen using a reconfigured intersection on the south side of the fair grounds to direct northbound traffic onto Expo Drive. In October, TxDOT will bring back a layout that shows changes from a previous layout that address some of the concerns from the neighborhood.

City of Abilene

Mr. Richard Harbert reported on the project by CW Gill park near 14th and Barrow. The concrete work by Crocket and Head Start is just finishing. Project N9 is between Grape and Hickory from North 13th to North 18th. It's 99% completed. There is also completion of a neighborhood project near Ward Elementary/the high school; the start of this summer's street-maintenance-fee paving program, Another big project is from North 18th streets from Willis to Mockingbird with concrete work closing the entire street with paving targeted for completion before cold weather. We expect mobilization in late August, for a contractor to install flashing yellow arrow signal upgrades at several intersections along Antilley Road, pending arrival of the required signal hardware. This project addresses a significant number of comments about not being able to turn during rush hour. Two additional projects selected by the Street Maintenance Board are 11A and 11B. They encompass from North 10th Street to North 19th Street and Richland drive to Westwood.

CityLink Transit

An update was provided noting that CityLink continues to rely on its diesel fleet for regular route service, as its new electric buses have not yet achieved expected range performance in summer heat conditions. The agency's vehicles have recently been repainted, and new pavement striping has been completed in front of the CityLink facility.

7. Director's Report [DISCUSSION ONLY]

Mr. Craig Casper briefed the Board on staffing and budget matters:

- **Staffing:** The MPO remains without a filled administrative position. Of roughly 30 applications received, three candidates had advanced, but the leading candidate accepted another opportunity and withdrew; staff will reopen the posting. The MPO Planner position remains on hold pending the outcome of a pending Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for consultant planning support, to determine whether contracted staff could be used on an as-needed, task-based basis instead.
- **Budget:** Year-to-date expenditures invoiced to TxDOT (November 2025 through June 2026) totaled $110,786.55. The program remains under budget, primarily reflecting unspent salary funds associated with the vacant positions.
- **Activities:** Mr. Casper reported attendance at TxDOT's PlanCON conference and the Association of Texas Metropolitan Planning Organizations (TEMPO) Executive Directors meeting in San Antonio; summarized the scope of the pending consultant RFQ, which covers the Public Participation Plan update, Complete Streets Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Resiliency Plan, Regional Safety Action Plan, a microtransit study, state and federal performance-measures reporting, and continued Travel Demand Model development (including Small Area Forecast work with the Texas Demographic Center, new Traffic Analysis Zone boundaries, and new traffic count data); noted his continued service as the MPO's representative on FHWA's Traffic Monitoring System Accuracy Testing Methods research project and NCHRP Project 23-32 (Transportation Asset Risk and Resilience); and reported staff training on the Inrix/RITIS and Streetlight data platforms and the AASHTOWare Safety tool, all provided to MPOs by TxDOT.

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8. Recommendation of Items for Consideration at a Future Meeting

Chairman Price asked whether any Board members wished to recommend items for a future meeting agenda. No items were proposed.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Price declared the meeting of the Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED AND ADOPTED:

Councilman Shane Price, Policy Board Chair
Abilene Transportation Policy Board

Date: _____

Kelley K. Messer, First Assistant City Attorney
City of Abilene

Date: _____

DRAFT

To: Abilene MPO Policy Board
From: Craig Casper, Executive Director
Subject: Item 5: General Planning Consultant Master Agreements
Action: Review, Discuss, and Consider Approval

Summary

The desired action is authorizing the Policy Board Chair to sign on-call General Planning Consultant Master Agreements with the two highest-ranked firms under RFQ #CB-2643. Signing would occur only after contract negotiations, legal review, and City Purchasing's compliance determinations are complete. The TAC has not seen these results because at the time of their September meeting we had not received scores from one of the evaluators. All evaluators had the same order of finish.

Selection Process

The MPO issued RFQ #CB-2643 through the City of Abilene on July 8, 2026. This process is using qualifications-based selection. Price was not an evaluation factor. Three firms responded by the August 1 deadline. The notice was distributed through normal City of Abilene procedures, plus it was emailed to all Abilene MPO TAC members and posted on the national Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Four of five invited evaluators scored each submission on the 100-point rubric published in the RFQ. The fifth did not complete scoring but did agree with the outcome. The scoring rubric has eight categories: firm qualifications and capacity; core MPO planning and programming; data, modeling and forecasting; safety planning; equity, accessibility and environment; public engagement; operations and resilience; and decision making under deep uncertainty. A summary of results are shown below.

Exhibit 1: Scoring Summary

TECHNICAL CATEGORY BREAKDOWN (AVERAGE SCORES)				
RFQ Technical Category	Max Weight	Firm A	Firm B	Firm C
A. Firm Qualifications, Capacity & Past Performance	14	13.0	10.3	13.3
B. Core MPO Planning & Programming Process	18	16.3	10.5	16.0
C. Data, Modeling & Forecasting	11	11.0	8.0	10.3
D. Safety Planning	12	11.8	6.0	11.8
E. Equity, Accessibility, Design Context & Env	9	8.0	6.5	7.5
F. Public Engagement & Communication	11	9.5	8.5	8.0
G. Operations & Resilience	5	5.0	3.8	4.5
H. Decision Making Under Deep Uncertainty (DMDU)	20	13.8	13.3	16.8
Consolidated Total Score Average	**100**	**88.3**	**66.8**	**88.0**

Fiscal Impact

The master agreements do not commit funds on their own. Work is assigned through individual task orders, each funded within the adopted Unified Planning Work Program using FHWA planning (PL) funds and associated with specific UPWP Subtask deliverables and budget. [Term: X years, with X renewal options. Not-to-exceed: $X, if applicable.]

Alternatives

1) Provide additional direction to MPO staff.
2) Authorize the Abilene MPO Policy Board Chairperson to sign the Master Agreements.

Recommended Action to the Policy Board

1) The Abilene MPO Staff unanimously recommend the Abilene MPO Policy Board authorizing the Abilene MPO Policy Board Chairperson to sign the Master Agreements.

Attachments

1) Sample Master Agreement

To: Abilene MPO Policy Board
From: Craig Casper, Executive Director
Subject: Item 6: 2026 West Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP)
Action: Review, Discuss, and Consider Approval

Summary

The desired action is approval signing the MOU with for the 2026 West Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP) (click the link to access the plan in its entirety from the Abilene MPO website) and incorporation of this Plan into the Abilene MPO 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) as Appendix B. The RPTCP is the region's coordinated public transit–human services transportation plan for the 2027–2031 cycle.

Federal law requires that projects funded under FTA Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit–human services transportation plan, and 23 CFR Part 450 requires the MPO to coordinate the MTP and TIP using that framework. Chapter 461 of the Texas Transportation Code directs regional coordination of public transportation planning statewide on a five-year cycle. Adopting the RPTCP as Appendix B to the 2050 MTP documents that coordination and preserves Section 5310 eligibility for subrecipients operating in the metropolitan area.

The Central Texas Rural Transit District (CTRTD), operating as City and Rural Rides (CARR), has served as Lead Agency for the 19-county planning region since June 26, 2025. Coordination is carried out through the Regional Coordination Council (RCC), in which the Abilene MPO should participate as a member agency with a signed Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 1). The four primary providers are CityLink, CARR, SPARTAN Transit, and Double Mountain Coach, with a combined regional fleet of 185 revenue vehicles.

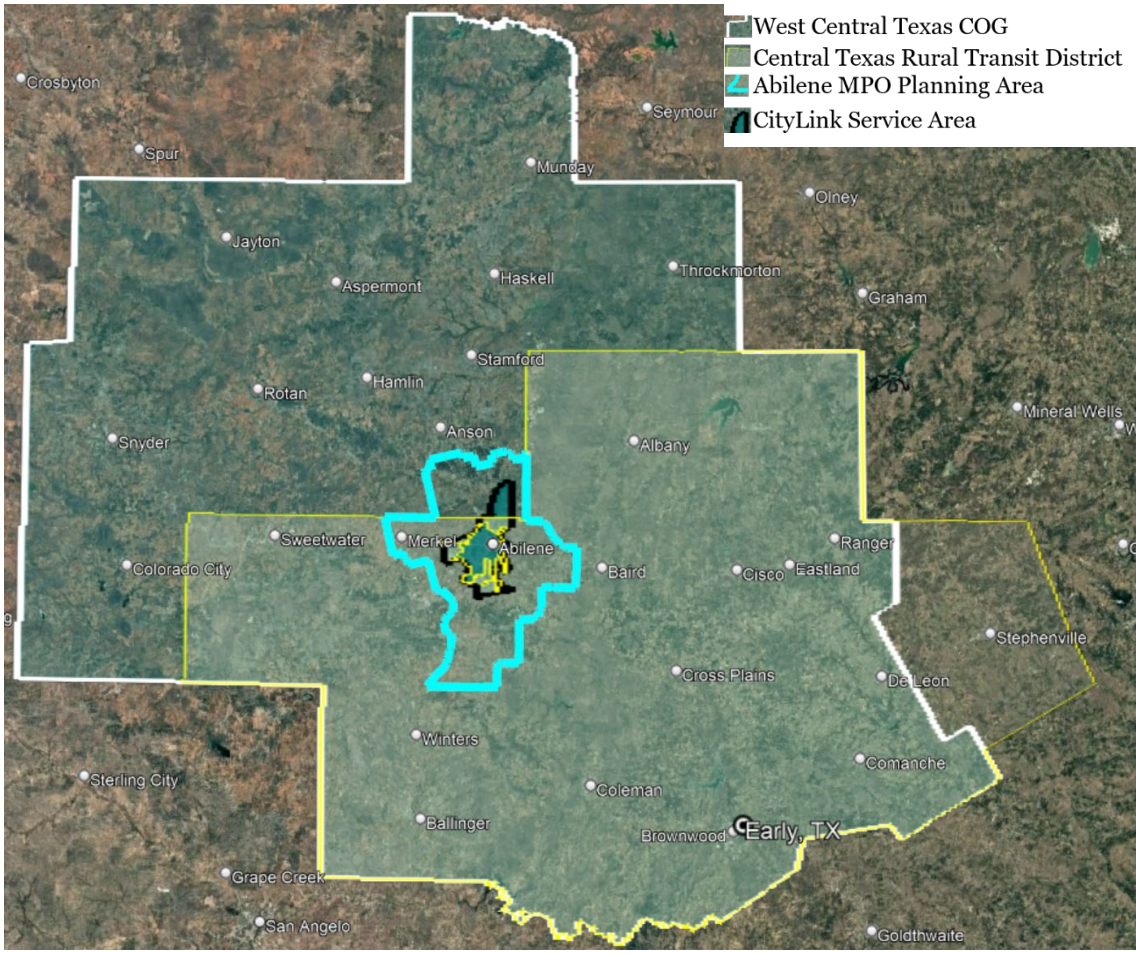
At its prioritization session on May 28, 2026, the RCC ranked five regional needs highest for the 2027–2031 cycle: agency coordination, late-hour and weekend service gaps, financial resources, job area access, and cross-boundary trips. Customer surveys further identified out-of-pocket costs for dialysis and medical riders arising from gaps in Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation coverage, and a shortage of residential wheelchair ramps that functions as a first-mile barrier for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Prior Actions

MPO staff participated in RCC meetings, stakeholder engagement, and the May 28, 2026 prioritization session. The Draft Final Plan was released for public comment in August 2026. A public hearing was held September 16, 2026, at the CTRTD offices in Early. A second feedback opportunity occurred at the ADRC Partners Power Summit on September 30, 2026. The RCC will approve the final Plan in October 2026, after which it is submitted to TxDOT for posting.

The Abilene MPO Policy Board expanded the Metropolitan Planning Area into Callahan County and amended the MPO Bylaws on June 11, 2026, which enlarged the area of overlap between the Abilene MPO Planning Area and CARR service areas addressed in the Plan.

Exhibit 1: Regional Boundaries by Agency



Background

The Plan's recommendations for the metropolitan area address three areas of MPO interest:

- **Urban/rural service boundary.** Following the 2026 expansion of the MPO boundary into portions of Taylor, Jones, and Callahan counties, the Plan recommends interagency MOUs defining service hand-offs, ADA-accessible physical transfer hubs, and an out-of-boundary referral database to reduce denied cross-boundary trips.
- **VA Clinic (CBOC) access.** With the opening of the Abilene VA Clinic, the Plan recommends realigning CARR, SPARTAN, and Double Mountain Coach rural runs to terminate at the clinic, and recommends that CityLink evaluate extending ZipZone microtransit to the site. The West Central Texas Aging and Disability Resource Center has a "No Wrong Door" referral portal.
- **Commuter access and digital infrastructure.** The Plan recommends evaluating a microtransit pilot connecting the Abilene Business Park and industrial shift workers to the core network, and revitalizing WCTXRides.com as a GIS-integrated service map and traveler information resource. Staff proposes carrying the WCTXRides.com effort in the Resiliency Plan under UPWP Subtask 5.2; staff will evaluate whether the project can qualify for FHWA PROTECT funding, which may reduce the local match for eligible resilience projects, and will confirm eligibility with TxDOT before programming.

Adoption as an MTP appendix is a reference action and does not by itself amend the fiscally constrained project list. Any RPTCP project proposed for federal funding may require a separate MTP and TIP action.

Alternatives

1) Take no action. The RCC would adopt the Plan without a documented MPO position. Metropolitan-area transit needs would be less clearly tied to the MTP and TIP, weakening the administrative record supporting Section 5310 and other federal applications by providers serving the Abilene area.
2) Recommend adoption and incorporation as an appendix. This documents the required coordination between the MTP, the TIP, and the regional coordinated plan, positions metropolitan-area projects for Section 5310 and related funding, and commits the MPO to resolving the urban/rural service boundary issues created by the expanded planning area.

Recommended Action to the Policy Board

The Abilene MPO Technical Advisory Committee and the Abilene MPO Staff unanimously recommend the Policy Board adopt the 2026 West Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan, as approved by the Regional Coordination Council, and incorporate the Plan into the Abilene MPO 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan as Appendix B.

Attachments

1) Regional Coordination Council Memorandum of Understanding signature page.

PLAN ADOPTION AND PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATION

Planning Region:	West Central Texas	Fiscal Years:	2027-2031
Adoption Date:		Lead Agency:	Central Texas Rural Transit District

Certification Statement

The undersigned members of the Regional Coordination Council (RCC), Planning Committee, and participating stakeholders certify that they have participated in the development, review, and adoption of this Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP).

By signing below, each participant affirms that:

- They had an opportunity to review and provide input on the draft Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan.
- The planning process included representation from transportation providers, human service organizations, older adults, individuals with disabilities, members of the general public, and other interested stakeholders.
- The final plan was reviewed and considered during a publicly noticed meeting of the Regional Coordination Council or designated planning committee.
- The plan reflects the region's coordinated transportation priorities and strategies as determined through the planning process.

Planning Committee and Regional Coordination Council Signatures

Name	Email	Organization	Stakeholder Category	Title	Signature	Date
Rhonda Kelton	rhonda@cityandruralrides.com	Central Texas Rural Transit District, aka City and Rural Rides	General public/older adults/people with disabilities	Transit Manager		
Jose Fernandez	Jose.Fernandez@abilenetx.gov	City Link	General public/older adults/people with disabilities	General Manager		
Brian Baker	bbaker@spcaa.org	SPARTAN Public Transit	General public/older adults/people with disabilities			

Name	Email	Organization	Stakeholder Category	Title	Signature	Date
Amy Shows	ashows@goodwillwesttexas.org	Good Will of West Texas	Individuals with disabilities			
Patti Sedberry	psedberry@asbdc.net	Aspermont Small Business Development Center aka Double Mountain Coach	General public/older adults/people with disabilities			
Leah Beltran	leah.beltran@disabilityinaction.org	Disability in Action	Individuals with disabilities			
Rebecca Aldape	rebecca@unitedwayabilene.org	211 Texas - Abilene	General public			
Hanna Adams	hanna.adams@cornerstonecaa.org	Cornerstone Community Action Agency	Individuals with low income			
Annette Lerma	Annette.Lerma@abilenetx.gov Cc Chrystal chrystal.mccutchen@abilenetx.gov	Abilene-Taylor County Health District	General Public	Director of Public Health		
Gladys De La Cerda	gdelacerda@westcentraltexas.org	West Central Texas Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC)	Older adults and individuals with disabilities			
Shane Price	Shane.Price@abilenetx.gov CC Craig.Casper@abilenetx.gov	Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization	General public/older adults/people with disabilities	MPO Policy Board Chairman		

Lead Agency Certification

I certify that the planning process for this Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan was conducted in accordance with applicable Texas Department of Transportation guidance and that the individuals listed above participated in the review and adoption process.

Lead Coordination Agency:	____Central Texas Rural Transit District____	Date:	_____
Representative Name / Title:	_____Rhonda Kelton, Transit Manager_____	Signature:	_____

To: Abilene MPO Policy Board
From: Craig Casper, Executive Director
Subject: Item 7: Unified Planning Work Program Amendment 2
Action: Review and Discuss

Summary

The desired action is review of Proposed Amendment 2 to the 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program. The Abilene MPO has an approved 2-year 2026-2027 UPWP. There are two primary reasons for an amendment:

- FY 2026 Work Order 3, the funding carryover from federal fiscal year 2025 into federal fiscal year 2026 has been received. These funds need to be added into the work program. The amendment will move them directly into FY 2027. Previously, an estimate of the funding carryover from FY 2025 to FY 2026 was used.
- Also, during Item 5 of this agenda, the Abilene MPO may have approved contracting with General Planning Consultants. The Consultant Work Tasks for the GPC need to reflect subtasks in the UPWP for ease of expenditure tracking and progress reporting.

This item was a discussion item at the TAC, updating the template and removing 2026 and adding 2028 so the UPWP would be for Years 2027-2028. At the advice from TxDOT, the Abilene MPO staff are now pursuing it as Amendment 2 to the current 2026-2027 UPWP in lieu of adopting a new 2-year UPWP. A track change version is Attachment 1.

Prior TPC Actions

- The 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program was adopted on August 19, 2025
- The 2026-2027 UPWP Amendment 1 was adopted on February 17, 2026.

Background

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the federally mandated list of all transportation planning activities that will occur within the boundaries of the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) during Federal Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027, no matter who does the work or what the source of funding is (Federal, State, or local sources) if it affects the regional (federally functionally classified) transportation system. All activities that impact the National Highway System must be included in the UPWP. A Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is also the operational budget and statement of work that outlines all federally-funded multimodal transportation planning activities undertaken within the planning area of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) over a one- or two-year period. It is the mechanism MPOs use to describe what will result from federal planning funds, establish regional transportation priorities for federal funds, assign operational responsibilities, and ensure transparency with state and federal partner agencies. Along with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Public Participation Program (PPP), the UPWP is one of the four foundational documents every MPO must maintain.

This 2027-2028 UPWP is the document that defines the Abilene MPO's work program. It was developed by MPO staff, and will be reviewed by the TAC and approved by the MPO's Policy Board. TxDOT TPP provides MPO's with a template to use for the development of the UPWP.

The UPWP also serves as the "scope of work" that identifies all transportation planning activities that the Abilene MPO staff will undertake within that same period. It is the basis for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to authorize planning funds for reimbursement to the Abilene MPO. The Tasks listed in the UPWP are below. All Tasks include some degree of private contracting, depending on subtask.

Task 1: Administration and Management – Involves administrative support activities and the general management of an MPO, including community outreach, public surveys, advertisements, and other efforts necessary for regulatory compliance.

Task 2: Data Development and Maintenance – Focuses on collecting and cleaning of data. It also involves creating and operating models to analyze existing and forecast future conditions in the region.

Task 3: Short-Range Planning – Addresses planning for activities taking place within a two-to ten-year timeframe, including the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the 10-Year Unified Transportation Program.

Task 4: Metropolitan Transportation Plan - Monitors and updates the 2050 MTP to ensure it meets current and future regional transportation needs.

Task 5: Special Studies – For the Abilene MPO this task includes planning activities and major corridor analyses. The current list of subtasks include: drafting a Regional Safety Action Plan, a Regional Resiliency Plan, and studying ways to increase Safe and Accessible Transportation Options.

Alternatives

N/A

Recommended Action to the Policy Board

N/A

Attachments

1) Track-Change version of the 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program.

FY 2026 and FY 2027

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

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TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA (TMA) STATUS:

Non-Transportation Management Area (Non-TMA)

AIR QUALITY STATUS:

Attainment

The preparation of this report has been financed in part through grant(s) from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), under the State Planning and Research Program, Section 505 [or Metropolitan Planning, Section 104(d)] of Title 23, U.S. Code. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

This UPWP complies with federal and state requirements, is true and correct, and is approved by Abilene MPO Policy Board: August 19, 2025

Amendment 1: February 17, 2026

Amendment 2: Month-Day, Year

Federal Approval: September 25, 2025

Abilene MPO - 209 S Danville Dr., Ste. B-212 - Abilene, TX 79605 - (325) 437- 9999 - www.abilenempo.org

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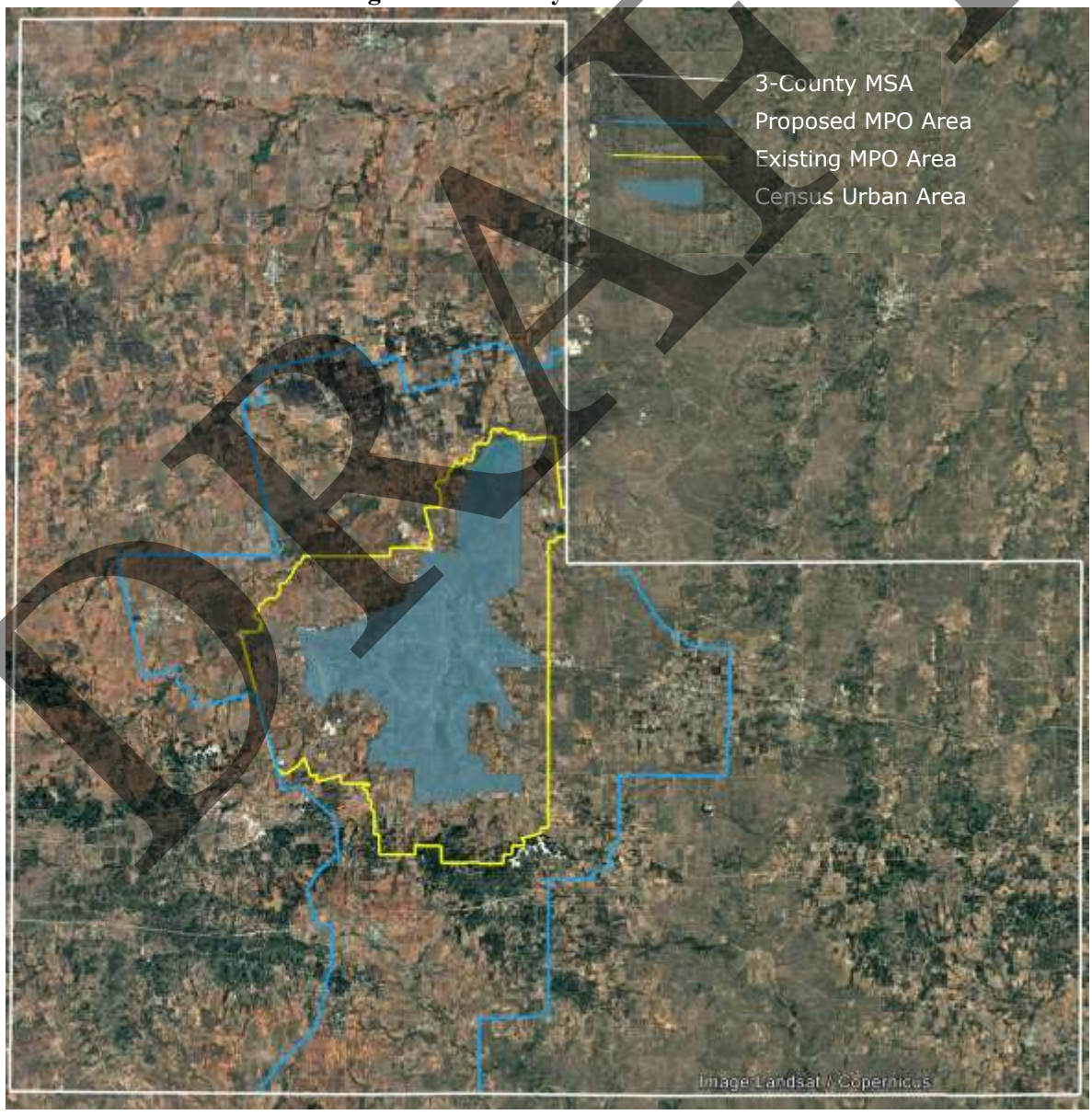
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the federally mandated "scope of work" that identifies all transportation planning activities an MPO will undertake over a 1- or 2-year period. It is the basis for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to authorize planning funds and lists all transportation planning activities that will occur within the boundaries of the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) during Federal Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027, no matter the source of funding (Federal, State, or local sources) if they affect the regional transportation system. UPWPs are required by the joint planning regulations to include: "*At a minimum, an UPWP includes a description of the planning work and resulting products, whom will perform the work, time frames for completing the work, the cost of the work, and the source(s) of funds*." (23 C.F.R. 450.308). Figure 1, below, depicts Abilene's Census Designated Urban Area, shaded in blue, the current approved MPO Planning Boundary, outlined in yellow, the proposed MPO Planning Area Boundary outlined in blue and the Federal Office of Management and Budget designated Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), outlined in white. The Abilene MPO conducted a review and proposed an update to the MPO Planning Area Boundary in June 2024, but to date this update has not been approved by the Texas Governor.

Figure 1: 2025 Abilene MPO Planning Area Boundary



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The tasks described below will occur between October 1, 2025 and September 30, 2027, in or near the Cities of Abilene, Impact, and Tye, and include the communities of Caps, Elmdale, Hamby, and Potosi, some rural area in Taylor County adjacent to the Abilene city limits plus the entire Lake Fort Phantom area in the southeastern corner of Jones County. If the Governor approves the proposed MPO Planning boundary, the expansion will also include Callahan County, City of Buffalo Gap, City of Clyde, City of Hawley, City of Lawn, City of Merkel, and City of Tuscola. There are five principal Tasks that are included in Texas MPO UPWPs:

- **Task 1: Administration and Management** – Involves administrative support activities such as financial management, contract management, public outreach, travel, equipment purchases, training and education, and the general management of an MPO, including public meetings, advertisements, and other efforts necessary for regulatory compliance.

- **Task 2: Data Development and Maintenance** – Focuses on collecting and cleaning of data. It also involves creating and operating models to analyze existing and forecast future conditions in the region. These activities potentially include the development of socio-economic forecasts, asset management models or analyses, traffic operations and/or travel demand models, social and environmental impact models, economic and financial models, to support regional transportation decision-making. This Task may involve contracting work with private consultants.

- **Task 3: Short-Range Planning** – Addresses planning for activities taking place within a three- to ten-year timeframe, including the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the 10-Year Unified Transportation Program, as well as transit studies, initiatives regarding specialized transit planning, regional bicycle and pedestrian planning, complete streets planning, safety analysis, and traffic operations improvement planning. the development of the FY 2026–2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and coordination with local transit agencies. This Task may involve contracting work with private consultants.

- **Task 4: Metropolitan Transportation Plan -** Monitors and updates the 2050 MTP to ensure it meets current and future regional transportation needs. This includes describing planning activities for the long-term development and maintenance of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), developing baseline conditions, monitoring change and reporting progress towards the goals. This Task may involve contracting work with private consultants.

- **Task 5: Special Studies** – This task involves special one-time planning activities and major corridor analyses or other transportation related topics that support the development and maintenance of the regional transportation planning process. Activities might include consultant contracting, research and data analysis. Documents produced in this task are intended to supplement information for other tasks as well as contribute to the revision of the MTP and help in prioritizing transportation improvement projects. This Task may involve contracting work with private consultants.

Please note that annual operating costs consume much of the annually appropriated funds, and some Abilene MPO commitments extend beyond the 2-years of this UPWP. Maintaining a reserve sufficient for these contracts is good accounting practice. An estimated $341,755 were “carried over” from FY 2025 into FY 2026. A total of $1,091,755 in Transportation Planning Funds (TPF) are forecast to be available over the 2-years of this 2026-2027 work program, and an effort was made to reserve approximately half of one years’ budget ($180,000) to “carry over” into 2028.

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Version	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Total	Estimated Carryover / Used*
Original 2025 Funding ^	$ 160,000	$ 114,000	$ 35,500	$ 97,000	$ 290,000	**$ 696,500**	**$ 235,695**
Actual 2025 Expenditure	$ 129,828	$ 53,875	$ 42,335	$ 190,442	$ 236,000	**$ 652,480**	
Original 2026	$ 159,000	$ 134,000	$ 59,000	$ 37,000	$ 270,000	**$ 659,000**	**$ 226,795**
Amended 2026	$ 154,987	$ 221,283	$ 74,235	$ 39,035	$ 327,157	**$ 816,697**	
Original 2027	$ 170,000	$ 104,000	$ 29,000	$ 27,000	$ -	**$ 330,000**	**$ 8,900**
Amended 2027	$ 154,987	$ 99,554	$ 29,108	$ 14,345	$ 38,269	**$ 336,263**	

^ Did not include carryover funding available from 2024 * Some funding categories are lost if they are not used.

ADOPTED FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2027

	BUDGETED	ADDITIONAL	REMAINING
TASK 1:	$ 154,987.00		$ 154,987.00
TASK 2:	$ 99,554.00		$ 99,554.00
TASK 3:	$ 29,108.00		$ 29,108.00
TASK 4:	$ 14,345.00		$ 14,345.00
TASK 5:	$ 38,269.00		$ 38,269.00
TOTAL	**$336,263.00**	**$ -**	$ 336,263.00
		As of October 9, 2026	*Estimated*

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INTRODUCTION

Federally required regional transportation planning began with the passage of the Federal Highway Transportation Act of 1962. This act created a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) regional transportation planning process for urban areas. The legislation required urban areas of more than fifty thousand in population to create and implement transportation plans in order to receive federal highway funds. On January 23, 1969 an agreement between the City of Abilene and the State of Texas was executed to establish what is now known as the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). No federal reimbursement to the Abilene MPO can occur for work not explicitly identified in the approved UPWP.

The Abilene MPO is the regional transportation planning body for the City of Abilene, the City of Impact, the City of Tye, the communities of Caps, Elmdale, Hamby, and Potosi; along with some adjacent rural areas in Taylor County and Jones County. The Abilene MPO consists of federal, state and local agencies working together to avoid conflicting plans, duplicated projects or funding conflicts between transportation priorities in the metropolitan planning area. As the designated metropolitan planning organization, the Abilene MPO is responsible for carrying out the: "…*continuing, cooperative and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a metropolitan transportation plan and a transportation improvement program (TIP), that encourages and promotes the safe and efficient development, management, and operation of surface transportation systems to serve the mobility needs of people and freight (including accessible pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) and foster economic growth and development, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution"* (23 CFR 450.300)."

UPWP's in Texas are organized into Tasks. Tasks 1.0 through 5.0 relate to activities accomplished by the Abilene MPO staff and are formatted to show the purpose, objective, methodology, expected products, schedule, previous accomplishments, and budget summary. The process of planning, maintaining, and improving the area's surface transportation system is a demanding, ongoing, and complex operation which requires collaboration and coordination among the State and local government agencies, transportation providers, local businesses, and the residents of this region, in order for the process to succeed.

A. PURPOSE

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) should describe all of the transportation planning work and resulting products, whom will perform the work, the time frames for completing the work, the cost of the work, and the source(s) of funds conducted within the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) boundaries regardless of the source of funds. The UPWP functions as the fiscally constrained scope of work that the Abilene MPO uses to conduct the regional transportation planning process between October 1, 2025 and September 30, 2027.

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) which took effect on October 1, 2012 originated a new set of performance measure requirements. This performance-based system established national performance goals to achieve the following:

1. **Safety**—to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads;
2. **Infrastructure condition**—to maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair;
3. **Congestion reduction**—to achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System (NHS);
4. **System reliability**—to improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system;
5. **Freight movement and economic vitality**—to improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development;
6. **Reduced project delivery delays**—to reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies' work practices.

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In addition to the national performance goals, the performance measures also apply to transit systems regarding state of good repair status for those systems receiving federal funding. This state of good repair is assessed and targets are set through the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan. Once federal rules have been adopted, state departments of transportation (DOT) then set statewide performance targets for each measure. Following this, MPOs must then make a choice to set their own targets or agree to support the targets established by the State. MPO's, transit agencies and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) have cooperatively established practices, support systems, and relationships necessary for the successful implementation of Project-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP).

B. DEFINITION OF AREA

The Abilene Metropolitan Planning Area is the area in and around the City of Abilene that is currently considered urbanized or, by Federal definition, the contiguous geographic area likely to become urbanized within the 20-year forecast period covered by the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The U.S. Census Bureau shows the Abilene area covers 106.79 square miles. This includes the Cities of Abilene, Impact, and Tye, the communities of Caps, Elmdale, Hamby, and Potosi, some rural area in Taylor County adjacent to the Abilene city limits plus the entire Lake Fort Phantom area in the southeastern corner of Jones County.

In early 2022, the MPO began a process of reviewing its MPA boundary in partnership with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI). In September 2023, AECOM was recruited to provide support to the Abilene MPO to finish the boundary revision process. The Policy Board took action to approve the changes at their April 16, 2024 meeting. On June 25, 2024, the technical memo and revised boundary information was submitted to TxDOT. On October 3, 2024 that TxDOT has submitted the boundary expansion request to the Governor's Office and they are in the process of reviewing the submittal and providing the final sign-off. When the revised boundary gets approved, the expansion will include Callahan County, City of Buffalo Gap, City of Clyde, City of Hawley, City of Lawn, City of Merkel, and City of Tuscola.

The 2020 Census reported the population of Abilene was 125,182, for Taylor County 143,208, for Jones County 19,663, and for Callahan County 13,708.

C. ORGANIZATION

The Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (Abilene MPO), is the Governor designated MPO for the Abilene Urban Area. The City of Abilene is the fiscal agent for the Abilene MPO. The Abilene MPO Policy Board (PB) is the forum for the public, municipalities, counties, the transit agency, state agencies, and private agencies to address regional transportation issues within the Governor-approved MPO Planning Area Boundary. The Policy Board is also responsible for taking the required approval actions as the Metropolitan Planning Organization to make sure all federally-funded projects, plans, programs and studies comply with federal and state laws based on comments from the public and advice from both the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and the MPO Staff.

In November 2010, the Policy Board was reorganized from seventeen members to five voting members and the Technical Advisory Committee was established. The MPO Policy Board has five voting members: Mayor of the City of Abilene, City of Abilene Council Member, Jones County Judge, Taylor County Judge, and the TxDOT Abilene District Engineer. Three elected State and Federal legislators are represented as non-voting members. These include the U.S. Representative District 19, State Senator District 28, and the State Representative District 71.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) reviews and makes recommendations to the Policy Board on all technical matters and on any other issues assigned to it by the Policy Board. Membership on the TAC includes the cities of Abilene, Tye, and Impact; the counties of Taylor and Jones; the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT); Dyess Air Force Base; CityLink Transit; Abilene Chamber of Commerce; the West Central Texas Council of Governments (WCTCOG); and the Abilene MPO. *These members provided all transportation planning studies that they are, or will, undertake in 2026 and 2027 if that study may lead to changes that impact the regional transportation system.* The Technical Advisory Committee's non-voting members include the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA),

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the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), TxDOT MPO Coordinator, and the TxDOT Public Transportation Coordinator.

The MPO staff is authorized for two full-time and one part-time employees who are responsible for the day-to-day activities of the MPO including information gathering and assembling of documents that correspond to transportation issues within the MPO boundary. The Executive Director is responsible for the direction of responsibilities and administration of the MPO. The Transportation Planner and Office Assistant provide valuable planning, technical resources, and clerical assistance for the MPO.

In order to assist with the mutual responsibility of carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process, a memorandum of understanding was executed among the Abilene MPO, TxDOT, and the City of Abilene as the Public Transit Operator of CityLink Transit. This agreement clearly defines the roles of each entity in regard to transportation planning within the Abilene MPO Planning Area. This memorandum facilitates a clear path towards ensuring that the development of major planning documents meet the needs of citizens today and for future generations.

D. NON-MPO INVOLVEMENT

The Abilene MPO uses the knowledge and expertise of the Technical Advisory Committee that includes members who are part of the private sector. The MPO may obtain legal and professional services from private consultants to supplement MPO staff planning efforts for such tasks and subtasks outlined throughout the document. All civic and professional groups are encouraged to participate in the regional transportation planning process. Meeting notices, mailings, and local newspaper and media coverage encourage all citizens to attend. These meeting notices, agendas, and minutes are available on the Abilene MPO webpage: https://www.abilenempo.org/. To aid in identifying and dispersing information to the public, included disadvantaged citizens, the Abilene MPO staff uses Virtual Public Involvement for all processes and products.

E. PLANNING ISSUES AND EMPHASIS

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (or IIJA) became law on November 15, 2021 and provides the basis for FHWA and FTA programs and activities through September 30, 2026. The IIJA continues to promote an efficient and effective Federal surface transportation program by focusing on transportation issues of national significance, while giving regional transportation decision-makers flexibility for solving transportation problems in their communities. Under IIJA, metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes are continued, but changes made by the previous federal transportation act, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), were continued to enhance the planning process for surface transportation; some of these changes add flexibility and efficiency, while others add new consultation and planning requirements. Consultation requirements for states and MPOs remain significantly expanded; and requirements continue for plans to address environmental mitigation, improved performance, multimodal capacity, and enhancement activities. Bicycle, pedestrian, and disabled interests must also be represented.

Additional planning issues and emphasis that are important in the Abilene MPO include coordination efforts and maintaining existing documents. Also, regional coordination efforts of collaborating with community organizations to focus on a need to understand the dynamics of the transit providers along with the needs of transit users and matching those to the needs of the traveling community. Another important factor is to update and maintain the Travel Demand Model. Lastly, working to ensure the performance-based planning efforts are sufficient to maintain their incorporation into the planning process.

Regional Demographics in Transportation Planning – FHWA Division and FTA regional offices will work with MPOs, State DOTs, and providers of public transportation to support underserved and disadvantaged communities. This will help ensure public involvement in the planning process reflect various perspectives, concerns, and priorities from impacted areas. The guidance encourages strategies that:

> (1) improve infrastructure for non-motorized travel, public transportation access, and increased public transportation service in underserved communities;

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(2) plan for the safety of all road users, particularly those on arterials, through infrastructure improvements and advanced speed management;
(3) reduce single-occupancy vehicle travel and associated air pollution in communities near high-volume corridors;
(4) offer reduced public transportation fares as appropriate;
(5) target demand-response service towards communities with higher concentrations of older adults and those with poor access to essential services; and
(6) consider demographics while developing transit-oriented development including affordable housing strategies and consideration of disadvantaged populations.

Complete Streets – FHWA Division and FTA regional offices should work with MPOs, State DOTs and providers of public transportation to review current policies, rules, and procedures impact safety for all road users. This effort should include provisions for safety in future transportation infrastructure, particularly those outside automobiles.

A "*Complete Street*" is safe, and feels safe, for everyone using the street. FHWA and FTA seek to help Federal aid recipients plan, develop, and operate streets and networks that prioritize safety, comfort, and access to destinations for people who use the street network, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, micromobility users, freight delivery services, and motorists. The goal is to provide an effective and safe transportation network for travelers of all ages and abilities, including those from marginalized communities facing historic disinvestment. This vision is not achieved through a one-size-fits-all solution – each complete street is unique and developed to best serve its community context and its primary role in the network. Per the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's 2021 data, 70 percent of the motor vehicle crashes that resulted in pedestrian fatalities took place on arterials. Arterials tend to be designed for vehicle movement rather than mobility for non-motorized users and often lack sidewalks or convenient and safe crossing opportunities. They can function as barriers to a safe travel network for road users outside of vehicles.

To be considered "*complete*", these roads should include safe pedestrian facilities, safe transit stops (if present), and safe crossing opportunities on an interval necessary for accessing destinations. A safe and complete network for bicycles can also be achieved through a safe and comfortable bicycle facility located on the roadway, adjacent to the road, or on a nearby parallel corridor. MPOs and municipalities are encouraged to prioritize safety improvements and speed management on arterials to create complete travel networks for those without access to single-occupancy vehicles.

Public Involvement – Conducting public involvement early in the process and continuing the outreach throughout the life cycle of transportation projects is effective at involving the public and bringing diverse viewpoints into the decision-making process. Every public comment is recorded and available for both the public and decision-makers to see. FHWA Division and FTA regional offices encourage MPOs, State DOTs, and providers of public transportation to increase meaningful public involvement in transportation planning by integrating Virtual Public Involvement (VPI) tools into the overall public involvement approach while ensuring continued public participation by individuals that do not have access to computers and mobile devices. The use of VPI broadens the reach of information to the public and makes participation more convenient and affordable to greater numbers of people. Virtual tools provide increased transparency and access to transportation planning activities and decision-making processes. Many virtual tools also provide information in visual and interactive formats that enhance public and stakeholder understanding of proposed plans, programs, and projects. Increasing participation earlier in the process can reduce project delays and lower staff time and costs. The Abilene MPO will reach out to existing groups in order to solicit their views on their access to the process and their preferred methods of participation.

The Abilene MPO is committed to the ongoing practice of public participation in all aspects of the transportation planning process. The Abilene MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) specifies how the MPO will provide an opportunity for meaningful, active, on-going public participation and involvement for citizens, groups, agencies, and private providers of transportation to be included in every facet of transportation planning and related activities, especially at key decision-making times. As we look at ways

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to implement strategies, the MPO's Public Participation Plan (PPP) will outline the opportunities for citizens' input into the transportation planning activities of their community and provide a more distinct picture of how future transportation decisions will affect the general population. The Abilene MPO utilizes their website www.abilenempo.org along with Facebook, Twitter (X), news media, public meetings, and other means to notify the citizens of ways to comment and become involved in the process.

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TASK 1 – ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

REMINDERS:

1) Equipment purchases over $10,000 must comply with 2 CFR §200.439: "Capital expenditures for special purpose equipment are allowable as direct costs, provided that items with a unit cost of $10,000 or more have the prior written approval of the Federal agency or pass-through entity."

2) Out-of-state travel must be pre-approved by TxDOT according to 43 TAC §16.52(b): "The department will approve proposed travel outside the State of Texas by MPO staff and other agencies participating in the MPO planning processes if the travel is funded with federal transportation planning funds. The MPO must receive approval prior to incurring any costs associated with the actual travel (e.g., registration fee). This provision will not apply if the travel is at the request of the department. Travel to the State of Arkansas by the Texarkana MPO staff and travel to the State of New Mexico by the El Paso MPO staff shall be considered in-state travel."

F. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this task is providing administrative support to the transportation planning process for our region, securing necessary tools to ensure success, providing opportunities for public input, and facilitating interagency cooperation and coordination. This task addresses general operations of the MPO, as well as administrative and managerial activities, financial management, interagency coordination, travel, procurement, transportation planning, and miscellaneous administrative support.

G. EXPECTED PRODUCTS

The outcomes of this task are services or products, including a trained and knowledgeable staff, that maintain the operations of the MPO, including financial management, personnel, and the procurement of equipment and supplies needed for operations.

- **Service**: Ongoing monitoring and, if necessary, revising the FY 2026 UPWP throughout FY 2026.
- **Deliverable** (as necessary): Approved revisions of the FY 2026 UPWP and resolutions of approval. (Document, as necessary).
- **Service and Deliverables**: Development, amendment, submission, and approval of the UPWP, anticipated final formal adoption in May 2027. (Document).
- **Deliverable**: FY 2025 and FY 2026 Annual Performance and Expenditure Report (APER), due by December 15, of each year. (Document and presentation).
- **Deliverable**: The Annual Listing of Projects (ALOPL) for FY 2025 and FY 2026 are due within 90 days after the conclusion of each Fiscal Year (December 29). (Document).
- **Deliverable**: FY 2026 and FY 2027 Self-Certifications. (Document).
- **Service**: Facilitation of public meetings and the public participation process throughout FY 2026 and FY 2027.
- **Deliverables** (as applicable): Monthly MPO meeting packets, minutes, presentations, and agendas. (Documents and presentations, as applicable)
- **Service**: Internal MPO Activity, staff PTO, and Holiday time throughout FY 2026 and FY 2027.
- **Service**: Maintenance of the Abilene MPO website, https://www.abilenempo.org/, throughout FY 2026 and FY 2027
- **Deliverable**: Regularly updated website content.
- **Service**: Staff attendance and participation in both in-state and out-of-state training, educational courses, and meetings throughout FY 2026 and FY 2027.

PREVIOUS WORK

Created PowerPoint presentations, meeting handouts, agenda packets, project maps, detailed spreadsheets, and a variety of materials for the MPO Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee. Prepared the monthly billing statements. MPO administrative and fiscal operations. Staff attendance at workshops,

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meetings, conferences, and training sessions. Development of monthly, quarterly, and annual reports as required by State and Federal agencies. Acquisition of supplies and minor office equipment. Completed required reports. Staff hiring and training. Maintained the Abilene MPO Facebook and Twitter (X) accounts and compiled pertinent information to be disseminated. Created and posted MPO Insider Newsletters.

H. SUBTASKS

For Task 1 where it is not specified elsewhere, the MPO staff will conduct the bulk of the work.

Subtask 1.1: Program Support and Administration

Under this subtask, MPO staff will prepare and submit all necessary documents to ensure compliance and maintain the continuity of the planning process. The plans and documents prepared under this subtask include the Annual Performance and Expenditure Report (APER), the Annual Listing of Projects (APL), and changes or new UPWPs; prepare for and conduct Policy Advisory Committee meetings and any other necessary meetings; general staff time, including all PTO and holidays taken by MPO staff; benefits for employees; complete meeting minutes and documentation; facilitate citizen participation; maintain financial records; and purchase office supplies, materials, furniture, computers, and any related equipment needed to administer the MPO. Any purchase of equipment exceeding $5,000 for one unit will require prior approval from FHWA. Subtask 1.1 is funded through the MPO's TPF funds, with most of the work ongoing throughout each fiscal year.

- Management of the MPO to fulfill the goals and objectives of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
- Maintain and update the UPWP as needed to reflect current plans, programs, and regional priorities.
- Develop the Annual Performance and Expenditure Report (APER).
- Develop the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects (ALOP).
- Develop and update the FYs 2026-2027 UPWP.
- Coordination and monitoring of the transportation planning activities including compliance with the Federal and State requirements. This could include preparing and submitting reports, documents, and correspondence; maintaining and updating records; administering planning funds and financial information; maintaining the transportation grants - timesheet and billing submittal, budgeting, and financial planning; ensuring the development and delivery of required reports for transit and transportation activities.
- Providing support and facilitating the Technical Advisory Committee, Policy Board meetings, and other committees/subcommittees. This could include providing food and non-alcoholic beverages, pending TxDOT approval, at meetings and events when deemed appropriate.
- Prepare, and administer contracts, or agreements between the MPO, local agencies, and private consultants.
- Engage in staff supervision, personnel administration, and other miscellaneous administrative tasks that support the function of the MPO. All personnel management will be in compliance with established payroll policies and procedures related to existing regulations of the fiscal agent.
- Purchase or lease of office supplies, materials, furniture, equipment, computers, monitors, printers, plotters, support/maintenance agreements, and related computer software/equipment along with insurance, advertising, meeting facilities, etc. as necessary to provide transportation planning for the MPO area. A Plotter HP Designjet might need to be replaced for the printing of large maps with a cost around $15,000. An office copier will need to be purchased with estimated costs up to $20,000.
- Facilitation of program activities through acquisition of long-term working and meeting space readily accessible to the general public and other public agencies including but not limited to the following: lease of workspace, electric and water utilities, acquisition, repair, and maintenance of office furnishings and non-computer equipment appropriate to program needs, local and long-distance telephone utilities, janitorial services.

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- Indirect Cost Allocation Plan - City of Abilene staff and independent auditors will do the following work with TPF funding: financial, administrative, and managerial support functions of the fiscal agent necessary for the financial oversight and facilitation of the planning activities, including both internal and independent audits. The City of Abilene has a Cost Allocation Plan for indirect services provided by central departments. This plan is the product of an independent firm acting on the request of the City of Abilene. Actual expenditure information is obtained from the City's financial statements for the year-end. Statistics used to allocate costs are taken by performing one-hundred percent counts or in some cases conducting a representative sample period count.

Subtask 1.2: Professional Development Training and Travel

- MPO staff will attend meetings, workshops, seminars, and conferences to develop and maintain a professional and competent staff. This training may entail regional, state, or national conferences conducted by the American Planning Association, the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, the Texas Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Texas Department of Transportation, National Highway Institute, GIS software including ESRI User Conference, ArcGIS South Central Area Users' Group (SCAUG), ESRI training workshops, and other related organizations as deemed necessary or mandated for professional development purposes. This task may include travel costs of elected officials. The MPO will obtain prior approval from TxDOT for out-of-state travel.
- Participation in meetings including but not limited to City Council and County Commissions; along with boards and commissions; other stakeholders meetings; business associations and developers' meetings; and many others both local and regional to keep informed and disseminate information and/or data on transportation emerging trends and patterns. This task may also include attendance at meetings and trainings that coordinate with the Department of Defense (DOD) on the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) that connects to DOD facilities and coordination with the Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA) on infrastructure and connectivity needs related to access routes and other public roads/transportation services that connect to Federal lands.

Subtask 1.3: Transit Planning Management

CityLink staff with FTA Section 5307 funding will do the following work:

- Participation with the Citizen's Advisory Board for People with Disabilities as a vehicle for public involvement.
- Review and analysis of any future fare changes or route planning.
- Continue employee development through training courses and certification of both supervisory staff and employees.

I. FUNDING SUMMARY

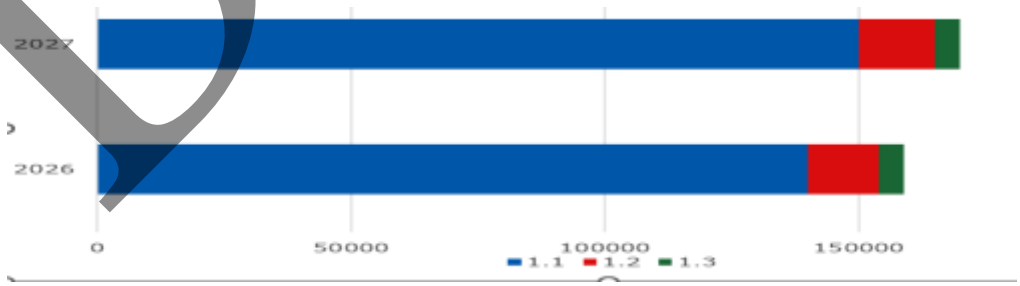

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Table 1a: Task 1 – FY 2026 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds (TPF)[2]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[3]
1.1	MPO/CITY OF ABILENE	$ 140,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 140,000**	$ -
1.2	MPO	$ 14,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 14,000**	$ -
1.3	CITYLINK	$ -	$ 4,000	$ -	$ 1,000	**$ 5,000**	$ -
TOTAL		**$ 154,000**	**$ 4,000**	**$ -**	**$ 1,000**	**$ 159,000**	**$ -**

Table 1b: Task 1 – FY 2027 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds (TPF)[4]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[5]
1.1	MPO/CITY OF ABILENE	$ 150,000	$	$ -	$ -	$ 150,000	$ -
1.2	MPO	$ 15,000	$ -	$	$ -	$ 15,000	$ -
1.3	CITYLINK	$	$ 4,000	$	$ 1,000	$ 5,000	$ -
TOTAL		**$ 165,000**	**$ 4,000**	**$ -**	**$ 1,000**	**$ 170,000**	**$ -**

TPF – This includes both FHWA PL-112 (including the 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside) and FTA Section 5303 Funds. TxDOT will apply transportation development credits sufficient to provide the match for TPF. As the credits reflect neither cash nor work hours, they are not reflected in the funding tables.
2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside – This funding must come from the PL funds within TPF.

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II. TASK 2 - DATA DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

A. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this task is supporting activities that collect or analyze transportation data. Transportation planning requires the development of detailed databases and maps that describe the primary aspects of the transportation system and maintenance of the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to aid data development and tracking. Thesesis data ~~is~~ are focused on obtaining existing and forecast future performance of transportation investments using the adopted performance measures the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, and being consistent with other performance-based reports and studies.

B. EXPECTED PRODUCTS

The outcomes of this task are analyses or products, including geospatial data, socio-economic data, crash data, asset condition data, congestion data, and transit performance data.

- **Service**: Ongoing maintenance and updates of the Abilene MPO GIS database will continue throughout FY 2026 and FY 2027.
- **Deliverables**: Updated GIS datasets, maps, and visual aids to be produced as needed/ongoing (visual aids, presentations, and datasets).
- **Service**: Updates to the Travel Demand Model will include expansion to at least the new Metropolitan Planning Area, new traffic counts, network revisions, and updated socio-economic data. This work will continue throughout FY 2026 and FY 2027.
- **Deliverables**: Updated TDM model files and supporting documentation, created as needed or upon updates to plans or projects (visual aids, presentations, and datasets).
- **Service**: Coordinate with TxDOT and Abilene Citylink to develop, document, and report on federally mandated performance measures for the Abilene Urban Area during FY 2026 and FY 2027.
- **Deliverables**: Performance measure documentation, data summaries, presentations, and adopted regional performance measures are produced annually in late January, or as required (documentation, presentation, and reports, as necessary).
- **Service**: Continuously analyze demographics and oversee public involvement to ensure equal opportunities for all to participate in the transportation planning process, in accordance with Title VI. This effort will persist throughout FY 2026 and FY 2027.
- **Deliverables**, as necessary: Demographic analysis reports/summaries and necessary updates to the Public Participation Plan document, produced as needed (document).
- **Analyze crash data**
- **Analyze congestion data**
- **Analyze condition data**

Mapping roadway networks supports transportation planning activities. Geodatabase development for presentation of maps for MPO, transit, and other planning purposes. Geographic Information System (GIS), and data development analysis of various transportation elements. Develop and analyze transportation growth, trends, and needs, utilize traffic counts, land use and development data, and collision location data. To use socioeconomic data for travel demand forecasting. To maintain a database of useful planning tools to facilitate map creation. To generate, collect, and analyze detailed transportation data to develop and implement regional transportation plans and projects. To explore collection methods that enhance the ability to perform regional and corridor planning and analysis. Establishment and maintenance of performance measures to coincide with the federal regulations. Development of the Title VI Civil Rights and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Updates and Implementation. All products are expected to be completed during the appropriate fiscal year.

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C. PREVIOUS WORK

Continued update to a sidewalk layer map using Google Earth imagery, aerial imagery, as well as some physical site verifications as needed. Maps were prepared related to current project listings. Updated the website with pertinent information as needed such as minutes, board meeting notices, public meeting notices, reports, project picture updates, upcoming MPO events, and many other items. Performance measures were updated and used as applicable. CityLink captured daily and monthly statistics and data in order to provide periodic reporting to the City, State and Federal entities as required. CityLink also had ongoing data analysis that provided opportunities to improve services (microtransit zones, ZipZones, and on-call service areas), implement minor fixed route changes, and complete bus stop/bus shelter placement recommendations.

D. SUBTASKS

For all tasks not specified elsewhere, the MPO will be conducting the work.

Subtask 2.1: Geographic Information System (GIS) and Data Development:
This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from the City of Abilene and/or private consultants to complete.

- Maintenance of physical inventories along with on-going data gathering, updates, and maintenance of databases and maps related to transportation planning.
- Management and organization of internal internet GIS data, enhance the GIS resources available to the public, advance the mapping functionality, and augment the use of GIS visualization techniques.
- Evaluation/analysis of the existing and planned transportation system with regard to issues related to emergency evacuation, hazardous materials transportation, and other emergency response situations. Coordination with the STRAHNET and with FLMA will help promote a useful planning network that shows connections to Federal lands and advocates for the best use of resources.
- Identify and analyze Title VI impacts during the planning process in order to minimize adverse effects of transportation projects on the human environment.
- Analysis and mapping of the environmental and economic areas (Planning and Environmental Linkages-PEL) which can help ensure that the needs of our community are met while avoiding/minimizing the impacts on human and natural resources.

Subtask 2.2: Performance Measures:

This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from the City of Abilene and/or private consultants to complete.

- The MPO will monitor and update performance measures/targets as needed. Continue implementation of the performance-based planning and programming process including working with TxDOT to monitor and evaluate the performance measures.

Subtasks 2.3: Title VI Civil Rights/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from private consultants to complete.

- Continue to identify and analyze Title VI Civil Rights in the planning process and identify strategies to better reach minority and low-income groups.
- Continue to strive towards consistent and systematically fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals throughout the planning process.
- Continue to share as much data as possible to improve the policy and decision making of all parties involved in transportation planning.

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Subtask 2.4: Travel Demand Model:
This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from TxDOT, the Transportation Institute and/or private consultants to complete.

- Travel Demand Model (TDM) maintenance.
- Review of data, socioeconomic data collection, roadway network analysis, alternative analysis, and other work associated with the TDM.
- Ongoing updates to the GIS data pertaining to the Travel Demand Model including roadway network database development, Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) structure development, monitoring of regional growth through data collection of new residential development, acquisition of employer information, acquiring land-use data, and creating organized databases for this data for transportation and land-use analysis, and demographic database development.

Subtask 2.5: Transit Planning Data:

This task will use the City of Abilene Citilink staff and could include assistance MPO staff from and/or a consultant to complete. CityLink staff with FTA Section 5307 funding will do the following work:

- Provision of monthly operational and statistical and financial reports.
- Development and incorporation of information, data and statistical analysis to address short range transit needs as it relates to fare changes, route changes, bus stop evaluations, and bus stop amenities.
- Compile data for the Triennial Review.

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E. FUNDING SUMMARY

Table 2a: Task 2 – FY 2026 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds(TPF)[7]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[8]
2.1	MPO/CITY OF ABILENE	$ 70,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 70,000**	$ -
2.2	MPO	$ 15,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 15,000**	$ -
2.3	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ 30,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 30,000**	$ -
2.4	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ 15,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 15,000**	$ -
2.5	CITYLINK	$ -	$ 3,200	$ -	$ 800	**$ 4,000**	$ -
TOTAL		**$ 130,000**	**$ 3,200**	**$ -**	**$ 800**	**$ 134,000**	**$ -**

Table 2b: Task 2 – FY 2027 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds(TPF)[9]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[10]
2.1	MPO/CITY OF ABILENE	$ 70,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 70,000**	$ -
2.2	MPO	$ 10,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 10,000**	$ -
2.3	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ 5,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 5,000**	$ -
2.4	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ 15,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 15,000**	$ -
2.5	CITYLINK	$ -	$ 3,200	$ -	$ 800	**$ 4,000**	$ -
TOTAL		**$ 100,000**	**$ 3,200**	**$ -**	**$ 800**	**$ 104,000**	**$ -**

TPF – This includes both FHWA PL-112 (including the 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside) and FTA Section 5303 Funds. TxDOT will apply transportation development credits sufficient to provide the match for TPF. As the credits reflect neither cash nor work hours, they are not reflected in the funding tables.
2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside – This funding must come from the PL funds within TPF.

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III. TASK 3 - SHORT RANGE PLANNING

A. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this task is to undertake planning activities both local and regional that are associated with short range or immediate implementation. This could include facilitating the implementation of transportation projects and programs in the TIP; providing for multimodal planning to improve the overall system; and supporting the development of short-range planning. Many of these tasks will require data from the an unapproved Metropolitan Planning Area.

B. EXPECTED PRODUCTS

The outcomes of this task are processes or documents.

- **Process and Deliverable:** Process amendments to the FY 2025-2028 TIP and the FY 2027-2030 TIP, as needed. Amendments as necessary using TxDOTs quarterly STIP revision cycle (TIP document, STIP upload)
- **Process and Deliverable**: The development of the FY 2027-2030 TIP commenced in early FY 2026. The draft is due for public review by May 2026, with final approval from the Policy Advisory Committee anticipated at 16th June 2026 meeting (deliverable, document, meeting, presentation)
- **Process**: Continue collaboration between Abilene Citilink and the Abilene MPO by evaluating the existing transit systems in relation to local needs and Federal requirements, including the ADA Transition Plan requirements throughout FY 2026 and FY 2027.
- **Process:** Public engagement and involvement activities for the education of the community on the multimodal transportation system. Participation in development of Regional Specialized Transit Coordination Plan.
- **Process and Deliverable**: Review past public engagement and involvement activities and identify potential methods for improvement. Focus on performance--based education to the community about the transportation system within the MPO and transportation topics that are identified by the public is an ongoing task through FY 2026 and FY 2027. Provide an updated PPP approximately 1 year after approval of the new MPO Planning Area Boundary.
- **Process:** Evaluate the Public Participation Plan (PPP) to monitor its effectiveness and revise as necessary (service/deliverable, document, as necessary).

Updates to the Transportation Improvement Program. Annual Listing of Obligated Projects. Provide support to the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning Committee. More coordinated efforts among public transportation providers in the planning and development of transit related activities. All products are expected to be completed during the appropriate fiscal year.

C. PREVIOUS WORK

MPO staff and CityLink staff work on the Regional Coordination Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Annual Performance and the Expenditure Report (APER). The MPO participated in the Regional Coordination Transportation Plan (RCTP) Stakeholders Group. Most of these tasks are ongoing and shown in the subtasks below.

D. SUBTASKS

For all tasks not specified elsewhere, the MPO will be conducting the work.

Subtask 3.1: Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):
This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from private consultants to complete.

- The MPO will monitor and amend the current TIP as needed and conduct project development meetings/presentations to educate and receive public participation as needed. Provide support, review and incorporate transit activities for more coordinated transit efforts.

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- Data gathering, planning and public process for, preparation, and development, and amending of the FYs 2027 – 2030 TIP document.

Subtask 3.2: Transit, Bicycle, and Multimodal Planning:
This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from private consultants to complete.

- Work with public transportation providers to coordinate transportation efforts and participate in the regional planning process of the multi-county regional planning area.
- Work with transit providers, the City of Abilene, and others on continuation of the Multimodal Terminal planning for the Abilene area.
- Continue to work with CityLink Transit to ensure efficient operations and planning.
- Conduct planning activities as needed to evaluate traffic patterns, needs analysis, and service standards on transit services.
- Provide support for the implementation of planning activities in the City of Abilene's Bicycle Plan.
- Work with local government and community organizations to access grants and other funding opportunities to develop bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation.
- Work with the local transit agency to incorporate a more congruent transit, bicycle, and pedestrian method of transportation.
- Provide support and work with partner agencies to create a network of active transportation facilities (sidewalks, bikeways, trails, transit routes) to places of interest such as work, school, retail, recreation areas, community activity centers, and healthcare facilities.

Subtask 3.3: Public Participation and Education:
This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from private consultants to complete.

- Review, maintain and keep updated the Public Participation Plan.
- Conduct public outreach and provide support for public meetings. Includes publishing legal notices, press releases, advertisements, along with securing meeting arrangements, producing materials and data for distribution.
- Provide newsletters, update MPO website, use of social media, workshops, and development of pertinent publications to disseminate information and educate on programs. Work toward more virtual public involvement possibilities.
- MPO staff will maintain the MPO website and provide updates to enhance public participation in the MPO processes. This is a continual project that will evolve as technology changes to provide the best possible use of resources.

Subtask 3.4: Short-Term Transit Planning:

This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from the City of Abilene and/or private consultants to complete. CityLink staff with FTA funding will do the following work:

- Short range planning projects needed to meet federal/state requirements.
- Provide funding projections and budgetary planning for incorporation of transit projects in the TIP and UPWP.
- Bus Stop identification, GIS database compiling and integration, inventory, and shelter locations.
- Analysis of effectiveness of routes.
- Mobile fare applications and improved payment systems analysis.
- Participate in the Regional Planning Process.

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E. FUNDING SUMMARY

Table 3a: Task 3 – FY 2026 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds (TPF)[12]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[13]
3.1	MPO	$ 40,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 40,000**	$ 3,000
3.2	MPO	$ 5,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 5,000**	$ 2,000
3.3	MPO	$ 10,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 10,000**	$ -
3.4	CITYLINK	$ -	$ 3,200	$ -	$ 800	**$ 4,000**	$ -
TOTAL		**$ 55,000**	**$ 3,200**	**$ -**	**$ 800**	**$ 59,000**	**$ 5,000**

Table 3b: Task 3 – FY 2027 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds (TPF)[14]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[15]
3.1	MPO	$ 10,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 10,000**	$ 3,000
3.2	MPO	$ 5,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 5,000**	$ 2,000
3.3	MPO	$ 10,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 10,000**	$ -
3.4	CITYLINK	$ -	$ 3,200	$ -	$ 800	**$ 4,000**	$ -
TOTAL		**$ 25,000**	**$ 3,200**	**$ -**	**$ 800**	**$ 29,000**	**$ 5,000**

TPF – This includes both FHWA PL-112 (including the 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside) and FTA Section 5303 Funds. TxDOT will apply transportation development credits sufficient to provide the match for TPF. As the credits reflect neither cash nor work hours, they are not reflected in the funding tables.
2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside – This funding must come from the PL funds within TPF.

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NEEDS UPDATING

IV. TASK 4 - METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this task is to encompass all activities associated with maintaining the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The MTP identifies long-range transportation needs within the MPO boundary for a 25-year horizon. To develop, monitor, adopt, and publish the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Provide updates to the Ten-Year Plan. Identify long-range transportation needs within the MPO boundary. To focus on having an integrated multimodal transportation system. To incorporate performance measures into the plan.

B. EXPECTED PRODUCTS

Analysis of the current MTP and Ten-Year Plan to ensure needs are being met along with more coordination and planning activities among public transportation providers, bicyclist, pedestrians, and other modes of transportation. All products are expected to be completed during the appropriate fiscal year.

C. PREVIOUS WORK

The current Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) FYs 2050 was approved at the December 17, 2024 Policy Board meeting. Consultants and MPO staff worked throughout the year on the document. CityLink conducted long-term planning activities including discussions relating to feasibility studies, land acquisition and use of current property. Numerous aspects of the complete streets were covered under other avenues including TxDOT and the City of Abilene striving to place sidewalks, multi-use paths, and bicycle facilities within their projects. The majority of this work was completed with updates to the MTP on-going as needed.

D. SUBTASKS

For all tasks not specified elsewhere, the MPO will be conducting the work.

Subtask 4.1: Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):
This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from TxDOT, the Transportation Institute and/or a consultant to complete.

- Ongoing MPO support of the social and economic vitality of the metropolitan area through any needed updates or revisions to the current MTP. Focus on incorporating performance measures into the MTP. Focus on a proactive public participation along with assessment of the social impacts of transportation projects in low-income and minority areas to make certain that Title VI guidelines are met.
- Working with partner agencies to plan for resiliency to extreme weather events and other disasters.
- Maintain the FYs 2025-2050 MTP.
- Continue updates to the MPO's Ten-Year Plan.

Subtask 4.2: Long-Range Transit Planning:
CityLink staff with FTA funding will do the following work:

- Provide support for long-term planning projects.
- Focus on modernization of the transit system, facilities and fleet through the Transit Asset Management Plan.

Subtask 4.3: Complete Streets:
This task will use MPO staff and could include assistance from the City of Abilene, TxDOT, and/or a consultant to functionally classify the federally eligible road network and identify existing and potential future multi-modal networks. Provide support and work with partner agencies to create a network of active transportation facilities (sidewalks, bikeways, trails, transit routes) to places of interest such as work, school, retail, recreation areas, community activity centers, and healthcare facilities. Ensure at a minimum that 2.5% of PL funds will be used to increase safe and accessible options for multiple travel modes for

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people of all ages and abilities as described in Section 11206(b) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

- Staff will compile and share data and information on active transportation.
- Evaluate active transportation system to understand system performance needs to identify regional activities.
- Hold public outreach sessions to share information and encourage active transportation.
- Work with other interested parties to advance and improve the program.
- Look for innovative ways to optimize funding for active transportation projects.
- Support and align statewide and regional active transportation strategies and actions.

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FUNDING SUMMARY

.Table 4a: Task 4 – FY 2026 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds(TPF)[17]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[18]
4.1	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ 20,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 20,000**	$ -
4.2	CITYLINK	$ -	$ 1,600	$ -	$ 400	**$ 2,000**	$ -
4.3	MPO	$ 15,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 15,000**	$ 15,000
TOTAL		**$ 35,000**	**$ 1,600**	**$ -**	**$ 400**	**$ 37,000**	**$ 15,000**

Table 4b: Task 4 – FY 2027 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds(TPF)[19]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[20]
4.1	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ 25,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 25,000**	$ -
4.2	CITYLINK	$ -	$ 1,600	$ -	$ 400	**$ 2,000**	$ -
4.3	MPO	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	$ -
TOTAL		**$ 25,000**	**$ 1,600**	**$ -**	**$ 400**	**$ 27,000**	**$ -**

TPF – This includes both FHWA PL-112 (including the 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside) and FTA Section 5303 Funds. TxDOT will apply transportation development credits sufficient to provide the match for TPF. As the credits reflect neither cash nor work hours, they are not reflected in the funding tables.

2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside – This funding must come from the PL funds within TPF.

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NEEDS UPDATING

V. TASK 5 - SPECIAL STUDIES

A. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this task is special studies of transportation and transportation related topics that support the development and maintenance of the planning process. Activities might include consultant contracting, research and data analysis. Documents produced in this task are intended to supplement information for other tasks as well as contribute to the revision of the MTP and help in prioritizing transportation improvement projects. It involves special one-time planning activities and major corridor analyses.

B. EXPECTED PRODUCTS

Comprehensive planning analysis. All products are planned for completion during the 2026 and 2027 fiscal years.

C. PREVIOUS WORK

Some of these tasks are still on-going as shown in the subtasks below. MPO Boundary Expansion, Transit Multimodal Facility, Safety Action Plan, and Microtransit Services Study.

D. SUBTASKS

For all tasks not specified elsewhere, these subtasks will use MPO staff and could include assistance from TxDOT, the Transportation Institute and/or a consultant to complete.

Subtask 5.1: Increasing Safe and Accessible Transportation Options

The MPO along with the help of a consultant will develop a plan to ensure the safe and adequate accommodation of all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclist, public transportation users, children, older individuals, individuals with disabilities, motorists, and freight vehicles (Section 11206(b) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act). Funding includes 2.5 percent of the amounts made available to the MPO under section 104(d) of Title 23, United States Code.

Subtask 5.2: Resiliency Plan

The MPO, in cooperation with TxDOT, FHWA, and local planning partners along with the possibility of a consultant will develop a plan to make the local transportation network resilient to natural disasters with an emphasis on network redundancy during extreme weather events.

Subtask 5.3: Safety Action Plan

MPO staff will work with TTI and possibly a consultant develop a Regional Safety Action Plan. This includes determining the sources and types of data and information the MPO uses for Safe System Planning activities; how the MPO works with partner agencies and stakeholders to communicate safety-related information to decision makers and the public; and current and planned initiatives, projects, strategies, and counter measures to address transportation safety in the Metropolitan Planning Area.

~~**Subtask 5.4: Microtransit Services Study**~~

~~CityLink staff with FTA funding will complete the following task. A consulting firm will conduct a strategic evaluation of fixed-route to microtransit system conversion. The primary aim of this evaluation is to explore the feasibility of transitioning from the City's current fixed-route transit system to a more flexible and efficient microtransit system. This analysis is crucial in determining the best approach to adapt and enhance the City's transit services to better align with the evolving transportation needs of the community. The primary goals are to optimize existing microtransit services, further improve operational efficiency, and develop a strategic, comprehensive plan for the expansion and refinement of microtransit services throughout the City.~~

E. FUNDING SUMMARY

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Table 5a: Task 5 – FY 2026 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds (TPF)[22]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[23]
5.1	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ 30,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 30,000**	$ 30,000
5.2	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ 20,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 20,000**	$ -
5.3	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ 20,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ 20,000**	$ -
5.4	CITYLINK/CONSULTANT	$ -	$ 200,000	$ -	$ -	**$ 200,000**	$ -
TOTAL		**$ 70,000**	**$ 200,000**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ 270,000**	**$ 30,000**

Table 5b: Task 5 – FY 2027 Funding Summary Table

Subtask	Responsible Agency	Transportation Planning Funds (TPF)[24]	FTA Section 5307 Funds	FTA Section 5304 Funds	Local Funds	Total Funds	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[25]
5.1	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	$ -
5.2	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	$ -
5.3	MPO/CONSULTANT	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	$ -
5.4	CITYLINK/CONSULTANT	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	$ -
TOTAL		**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**

NEEDS UPDATING

TPF – This includes both FHWA PL-112 (including the 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside) and FTA Section 5303 Funds. TxDOT will apply transportation development credits sufficient to provide the match for TPF. As the credits reflect neither cash nor work hours, they are not reflected in the funding tables.
2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside – This funding must come from the PL funds within TPF.

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BUDGET SUMMARY

Table 6a: Funding Summary - FY 2026

UPWP TASK	DESCRIPTION	Transportation Planning Funds(TPF)[26]	FTA SECTION 5307 FUNDS	FTA SECTION 5304 FUNDS	LOCAL FUNDS	TOTAL FUNDS	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[27]
1	ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT	$ 154,000	$ 4,000	$ -	$ 1,000	**$ 159,000**	$ -
2	DATA DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE	$ 130,000	$ 3,200	$ -	$ 800	**$ 134,000**	$ -
3	SHORT RANGE PLANNING	$ 55,000	$ 3,200	$ -	$ 800	**$ 59,000**	$ 5,000
4	METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING	$ 35,000	$ 1,600	$ -	$ 400	**$ 37,000**	$ 15,000
5	SPECIAL STUDIES	$ 70,000	$ 200,000	$ -	$ -	**$ 270,000**	$ 30,000
TOTAL		**$ 444,000**	**$ 212,000**	**$ -**	**$ 3,000**	**$ 659,000**	**$ 50,000**

Table 6b: Funding Summary - FY 2027

UPWP TASK	DESCRIPTION	Transportation Planning Funds(TPF)[28]	FTA SECTION 5307 FUNDS	FTA SECTION 5304 FUNDS	LOCAL FUNDS	TOTAL FUNDS	Amount of 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside Funding[29]
1	ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT	$ 165,000	$ 4,000	$ -	$ 1,000	**$ 170,000**	$ -
2	DATA DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE	$ 100,000	$ 3,200	$ -	$ 800	**$ 104,000**	$ -
3	SHORT RANGE PLANNING	$ 25,000	$ 3,200	$ -	$ 800	**$ 29,000**	$ 5,000
4	METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING	$ 25,000	$ 1,600	$ -	$ 400	**$ 27,000**	$ -
5	SPECIAL STUDIES	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**	$ -
TOTAL		**$ 315,000**	**$ 12,000**	**$ -**	**$ 3,000**	**$ 330,000**	**$ 5,000**

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NEEDS UPDATING

Combined TPF Allocations (WO 1 and WO 2) for FY 2026 and FY 2027	$750,000.00~~$750,000.00~~
Estimated Unexpended TPF Carryover (WO 3) from FY 2025	$~~9,386.49~~$353,148.02
TOTAL TPF for FY 2026 and FY 2027	**$1,103,148.82~~$759,386.49~~**

TPF – This includes both FHWA PL-112 (including the 2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside) and FTA Section 5303 Funds. TxDOT will apply transportation development credits sufficient to provide the match for TPF. As the credits reflect neither cash nor work hours, they are not reflected in the funding tables.
2.5% Safety/Complete Streets Set-Aside – This funding must come from the PL funds within TPF. The carryover amount exists due to the on-going challenge of staffing levels that has been a battle since 2016.

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APPENDIX A

ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD MEMBERS

Voting Members	Member's Title	Representing
CROWLEY, Phil	County Judge (elected)	Taylor County
DEARING, Jeremy	P.E., District Engineer	TxDOT, Abilene District
HURT, Weldon (Vice-Chairman)	Mayor (elected)	City of Abilene
PRICE, Shane (Chairman)	City Councilman (elected)	City of Abilene
SPURGIN, Dale	County Judge (elected)	Jones County
HARLE, Nicki	County Judge (elected)	Callahan County

Non-Voting Members (All Elected)	Member's Title	Representing
Representative Jodey Arrington	U.S. Representative District 19	U.S. Congress
Representative Roger Williams	U.S. Representative, District 25	U.S. Congress
Senator Phil King	State Senator, District 10	State of Texas
Representative Stan Lambert	State Representative District 71	State of Texas
Senator Charles Perry	State Senator District 28	State of Texas

*The City of Abilene Council Member position shall be occupied by the Council Member designated by action of the City Council. All other positions on the Transportation Policy Board shall be occupied by the individuals who hold the positions.

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ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Voting Members	Member's Title	Representing
COLLETT, Danny	Commissioner Jones County	Jones County
GREEN, Don	Transportation Director	City of Abilene
~~HAITHCOCK, Michael~~BOUCHER, Anthony	P.E., Transportation Planning & Development Director	TxDOT
JOHNSON, Max	Public Works Director	City of Abilene
LITTLEJOHN, Tim	Planning & Development Services Director	City of Abilene
~~SHIELDS, RANDEE~~	P.E., Director of Transportation Operations	TxDOT
~~SMETANA, E'Lisa~~CASPER, Craig *(Chairperson)*	Executive Director	Abilene MPO
SMITH, Preston "Conrad"	Community Planner	Dyess Air Force Base
~~STEVENS, Lauren~~FERNANDEA, Joe	General Manager	City of Abilene CityLink
SUMNER, PJ	Environmental Program Coordinator	West Central COG
~~TREADWELL~~DRY, Kenny~~Greg~~	Mayor	City of Tye
TURENTINE, Bryce	P.E., Abilene Area Engineer	TxDOT
WILLIAMS, Randy *(Vice-Chairperson)*	Commissioner Taylor County	Taylor County
~~WILLIAMSON, Doug~~ARCHIBALD, Norm	Director of Government Affairs~~, Community Partnerships, Military Affairs~~	Abilene Chamber of Commerce
VACANT	City Engineer, P.E.	City of Abilene
~~VACANT~~CAVITT, Canaan	Traffic Engineer	City of Abilene
~~VACANT~~DICKSON, Trevor	Mayor ~~Pro Tem~~ (elected)	City of Impact
VACANT	Public Works Director	City of Tye

~~Non-Voting Members~~	~~Member's Title~~	~~Representing~~
~~HAWKINS, Shannon~~	~~Metropolitan Transportation Planner - TxDOT TPP Division~~	~~TxDOT~~
~~OLIPHANT, Mare~~	~~Community Planner (Review Office)~~	~~FTA Region VI~~
~~PENA, Jessica~~	~~PTN Coordinator~~	~~TxDOT~~
~~TAYLOR, Michael~~	~~Regional Director~~	~~TCEQ~~

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ARRINGTON, Mark	Transportation Planner	FHWA

Non-Voting Members	Member's Title	Representing
FLEISCHMAN, Samantha	Metropolitan Transportation Planner - TxDOT TPP Division	TxDOT
OLIPHANT, Marc	Community Planner (Review Office)	FTA Region VI
PENA, Jessica	PTN Coordinator	TxDOT
TAYLOR, Michael	Regional Director	TCEQ
ARRINGTON, Mark	Transportation Planner	FHWA

~~AB~~

ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION STAFF MEMBERS

Member's Name	Member's Title
CASPER, Craig	Executive Director
~~RYAN, Rita~~VACANT	Office Assistant III
VACANT	Transportation Planner

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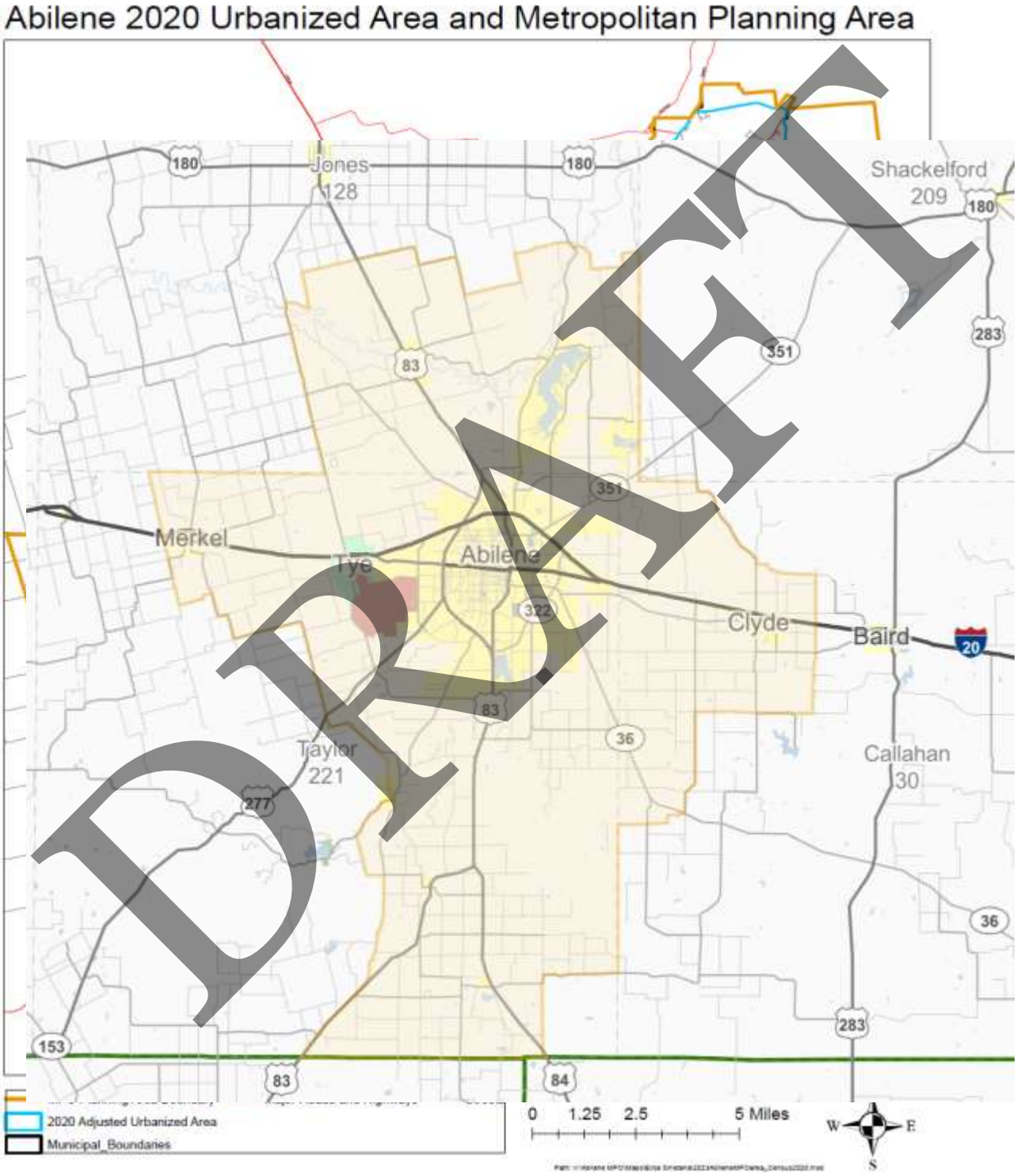
APPENDIX B

Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary Map

(GOVERNOR OR GOVERNOR'S DESIGNEE APPROVED – OCTOBER 17, 2006) (Based on the 2020 Census Data)



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APPENDIX C

Debarment Certification

(Negotiated Contracts)

(1) The Abilene **MPO** as **CONTRACTOR** certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief that it and its principals:

(a) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal department or agency;

(b) Have not within a three-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public* transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of federal or state antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;

(c) Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity* with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1)(b) of this certification; and

(d) Have not within a three-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions* terminated for cause or default.

(2) Where the **CONTRACTOR** is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such **CONTRACTOR** shall attach an explanation to this certification.

**federal, state or local*

Councilman Shane Price, City of Abilene	Date
Policy Board – Chair	
Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization	

DRAFT

APPENDIX D

Lobbying Certification

The undersigned certifies to the best of their knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any federal agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal grant, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by Section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Councilman Shane Price, City of Abilene	Date
Policy Board – Chair	
Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization	

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APPENDIX E

Certification of Contract and Procurement Procedures Compliance

I, Shane Price, Abilene City Council Member and Policy Board Chair,

a duly authorized officer/representative of the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

do hereby certify that the contract and procurement procedures that are in effect and used by the forenamed MPO are in compliance with 2 CFR §200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards," as it may be revised or superseded.

Councilman Shane Price, City of Abilene — Date

Policy Board – Chair

Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization

Attest:

Craig T. Casper

Executive Director – Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization

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APPENDIX F

Certification of Internal Ethics and Compliance Program

I, Shane Price, Abilene City Council Member and Policy Board Chair

a duly authorized officer/representative of the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

do hereby certify that the forenamed MPO has adopted and does enforce an internal ethics and compliance program that is designed to detect and prevent violations of law, including regulations and ethical standards applicable to this entity or its officers or employees and that the internal ethics and compliance program satisfies the requirements of 43 TAC § 31.39 "Required Internal Ethics and Compliance Program" and 43 TAC § 10.51 "Internal Ethics and Compliance Program" as it may be revised or superseded.

Councilman Shane Price, City of Abilene — Date

Policy Board – Chair

Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization

Attest:

Craig T. Casper

Executive Director – Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization

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APPENDIX G

Amendment Summary

Abilene MPO

FY 2026 and 2027 UPWP Amendment Summary

Policy Board Action DATE	Federal Approval DATE	UPWP Amendment Resolution Number	UPWP Page #(s)	CIV Reporting– DBE Goal	UPWP Amendment Summary

DRAFT

APPENDIX H

Completed UPWP Checklist (Optional)

DRAFT

To: Abilene MPO Policy Board
From: Craig Casper, Executive Director
Subject: Item 8: Public Participation Program Update
Action: Review, Discuss, and Consider Approval

Summary

This item is requesting a discussion on the Preliminary Draft Public Participation Plan (PPP) so that MPO staff can take the DRAFT document out to collaborating agencies and determine if the suggested processes meet their needs. The 2027 PPP identifies the types and steps in outreach and involvement activities for updating both the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2050 MTP) process and updates to the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). The basis for these activities are outlined in FHWAs recommended planning and programming process named *PlanWorks Decision-guide.* The primary outreach efforts outlined in the PPP are developing online conversations with the regional community and going to other groups' meetings instead of inviting them to our meeting. This use of community conversations is the current best practice for receiving input. By federal law the public review period for the final adopted PPP is a minimum of 45 days.

Prior Actions

The current PPP was written in 2013 and reviewed in 2018. Since that time federal requirements for on-line outreach and visualizations have been adopted. Focusing on Discrimination, Equity and Inclusiveness was removed. TxDOT completed the Statewide Strategic Public Engagement Guidance in January 2024 and this has also been incorporated. If time is limited, Chapter 4, page 16 is the most critical chapter to review. The policies listed are based on Federal and State requirements.

Background

Several Federal and State laws and regulations guide the public participation efforts of the Abilene MPO and ensure that input into its various planning and programming activities is received. The federal transportation legislation, called the IIJA, continued the FAST ACT requirements that MPO public participation plans: "*be developed in consultation with,*" and "*all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment*." It further directs MPOs "*to the maximum extent practicable*" to "*hold any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times*," to "*employ visualization techniques to describe plans*," and to "*make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information*."

Engaging the public has become increasingly difficult for the Abilene MPO and most other transportation planning agencies. Across many public involvement efforts, low levels of participation are due to a lack of public awareness about the importance of their participation, as well as increases in more enjoyable interests and obligations that compete for their time. These outreach challenges are magnified when trying to engage traditionally hard to reach populations such as low-income and minority communities. Additional challenges include time and mobility constraints, social isolation, and distrust of and cynicism about an increasingly polarized government. Finding methods to overcome these challenges and meaningfully engage the public is critical. A PPP defines the processes that the Abilene MPO will use to provide all interested or potentially impacted citizens with meaningful opportunities to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning and programming processes.

Attachments

1) Preliminary Draft 2027 Public Participation Program

ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

2026 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

Public participation for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, and the Community Preference Research Program

DRAFT FOR 45-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT

Adopted by the Transportation Policy Board on [ADOPTION DATE]

Supersedes the Public Participation Plan adopted [DATE OF PRIOR PPP]

DRAFT

Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization
209 South Danville Drive, Suite B-212
Abilene, Texas 79605
(325) 437-9999 | abilenempo@abilenetx.gov | www.abilenempo.org

ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

2026 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

Adopted by the Transportation Policy Board on [ADOPTION DATE]

In cooperation with:
The U.S. Department of Transportation
The Federal Highway Administration
The Federal Transit Administration
The Texas Department of Transportation, Abilene District
The City of Abilene and CityLink Transit
Taylor County, Jones County, and Callahan County

DRAFT

FUNDING AND DISCLAIMER

Prepared in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration. The preparation of this document was financed in part through grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, or the Texas Department of Transportation. Acceptance of this document does not constitute a commitment on the part of any federal or state agency to participate in any development depicted herein, nor does it indicate that any proposed development is environmentally acceptable in accordance with public laws.

The Abilene MPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability in its programs or activities. This document is available in accessible formats and in Spanish upon request. Call (325) 437-9999 or email abilenempo@abilenetx.gov.

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SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) exist to give the residents of an urbanized area a structured voice in how federal transportation funds are planned, prioritized, and programmed in their region. Federal law requires an MPO for every urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000. The Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (Abilene MPO) is the designated MPO for the Abilene urbanized area and the surrounding metropolitan planning area in Taylor, Jones, and Callahan counties. Its Transportation Policy Board is the forum in which the cities, the counties, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and the region's transit provider make cooperative transportation decisions.

Transportation planning in Abilene began in late 1964 with the Abilene Urban Transportation Study, initiated under the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962. On July 2, 1974, the Governor of Texas designated the City of Abilene as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the urbanized area, a designation that became continuous in 1988. The policy body that grew out of the 1973 continuing-phase agreement adopted the name Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board in 1993 and continues today as the provider of overall transportation policy guidance to the MPO. In June 2026, the Policy Board was reorganized to six voting members and five non-voting members, and the Technical Advisory Committee was expanded to reflect the full three-county planning area.

The Abilene MPO is responsible for carrying out the continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) metropolitan transportation planning process described in 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303, as implemented by 23 CFR Part 450. The foundational products of that process are:

1. A documented process for involving the public in transportation decision-making (this Public Participation Plan);
2. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which is the MPO's two-year work plan and budget;
3. The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), which has a horizon of at least 20 years and is updated at least every five years;
4. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is the fiscally constrained four-year program of projects; and
5. Coordination of all of these products with the statewide planning process and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The Abilene MPO is not a Transportation Management Area (TMA); the Abilene urbanized area has fewer than 200,000 residents. A federally required Congestion Management Process is therefore not applicable, although the MPO monitors congestion and reliability as part of its performance-based planning. The metropolitan planning area is in attainment for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards, so transportation conformity determinations are not applicable. This plan states both areas that are not applicable so that the public and reviewing agencies do not mistake their absence for an omission.

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What This Plan Covers

As required by 23 CFR 450.316, the MPO develops and uses a documented participation plan that defines the process for providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and all other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

This 2026 PPP identifies the outreach and involvement activities for three bodies of work:

- **The next update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.** The current 2025–2050 MTP was adopted December 17, 2024. Its update must be adopted before December 2029. The MPO will conduct that update using a decision sequence, described in Section VI, in which candidate interventions are stress-tested across a range of plausible futures rather than optimized for a single forecast.
- **Transportation Improvement Program development and amendment,** beginning with the FY 2027–2030 TIP and continuing through subsequent two-year cycles.
- **The Community Preference Research Program,** a multi-stage sequence of public involvement activities, beginning with an open online conversation in residents' own words and ending with a probability-sample survey, that provides the community-derived values, priorities, and acceptability thresholds the MTP and TIP decision sequence requires.

The policies in this document are:

1. The Abilene MPO shall actively engage the public in the transportation planning process according to state and federal law and the policies outlined in this plan.
2. The Abilene MPO shall keep the public informed of ongoing transportation-related activities on a continuous basis.
3. The Abilene MPO shall encourage the involvement of all area residents in the transportation planning process.
4. The Abilene MPO shall strive to continuously improve public participation and shall evaluate the effectiveness of this plan.
5. The Abilene MPO, as a recipient of federal assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, shall ensure that no person, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability, is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities. These prohibitions extend from the MPO to its sub-recipients, contractors, and consultants.
6. The Abilene MPO shall state plainly, for every key decision in its planning and programming process, whether that decision is open to public influence, is a matter of agency consultation, or is a technical step with no practical opportunity for public input, so that residents can direct their effort to the decisions they can actually affect.

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7. The Abilene MPO shall keep its public involvement record free of synthetic, simulated, or machine-generated (AI) input. Every statement, comment, vote, survey response, and interview in the participation record shall come from a person. That person may validly use a machine to aid their submission, but automated input is not allowed.

Why This Is Hard, and Why It Matters

Engaging the public has become increasingly difficult for the Abilene MPO and for most other transportation agencies. Across many public involvement efforts, low participation can be traced to a lack of awareness about why participation matters, and to the many interests and obligations that compete for people's time. These challenges are magnified when trying to reach people who have traditionally been underserved by the transportation system: households without a vehicle, people with limited English proficiency, shift workers, rural residents of Jones and Callahan counties, military families at Dyess Air Force Base who rotate through the region, and residents who distrust government or have concluded that participating changes nothing. The Abilene MPO takes the last group seriously. A resident who has been asked for input three times and never seen a decision change is behaving rationally when they stop showing up.

Finding ways to overcome these challenges is critical as the MPO moves to a planning process that asks residents not only what they want but how much of one thing they would give up for another. Those trade-off answers, gathered from a sample that resembles the region rather than from whoever attends a meeting, are what allow the Policy Board to adopt a plan that performs acceptably for the different publics of the region across a range of futures, and to say so honestly.

At the heart of every approach in this plan is building trust and a reputation for being open and transparent. The behavior of MPO staff, consultants, and committee members will determine the success or failure of the public participation effort. Behaviors cannot be faked. The behaviors this plan expects are:

- **Transparency,** to open up the process so that all parties understand how decisions are being made and what information is being considered, and to approach problems as colleagues.
- **Openness** to different stakeholders, ideas, input, and ways of working with people, regardless of who they are.
- **Humility,** to suspend judgment and assumptions, to value the contributions of others, and to take the attitude of a learner.
- **Respect** for individuals, their experience, their points of view, their emotions, and their needs.
- **Honesty,** to always provide truthful and timely information, including plain statements of where a decision is technical and the public's influence is small.
- **Reliability,** to put forth the effort it takes to make a participatory process work and to do what was promised.
- **Flexibility,** to recognize that not every contingency can be anticipated and that the process will have to adjust.

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- **Resiliency,** to move the process forward through difficult and controversial circumstances.

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SECTION II. FEDERAL AND STATE REQUIREMENTS

Several federal and state laws and regulations guide the public participation efforts of the Abilene MPO. The MPO's obligations rest on statute and regulation. Executive orders and agency guidance documents change with administrations; where this plan describes a practice that originated in an executive order or guidance document, the MPO continues that practice as a matter of Title VI compliance and local policy, not because the order remains in force.

Federal Surface Transportation Authorization

The metropolitan planning provisions of federal law are codified at 23 U.S.C. 134 (highways) and 49 U.S.C. 5303 (transit). These sections are periodically amended by multi-year surface transportation authorization acts. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA, Public Law 117-58), enacted November 15, 2021, is the most recent full authorization; its program authorities were set to expire September 30, 2026, and at the time this plan was drafted Congress was acting on a short-term extension while a successor bill is developed. The public participation requirements are found in 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(6) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(i)(6). The Abilene MPO staff does not expect the successor act to reduce them. This plan cites the codified statute and regulation so that it remains accurate through an extension or a new authorization.

The statute directs each MPO to have a participation plan that provides the public and "affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process." It further directs MPOs, to the maximum extent practicable, to hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, to employ visualization techniques to describe plans, and to make public information available in electronically accessible formats.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Related Nondiscrimination Statutes

Title VI (42 U.S.C. 2000d) requires that transportation planning and programming be nondiscriminatory on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 extended Title VI to all programs of a recipient of federal assistance, whether or not the individual program is federally funded. Related federal statutes extend the prohibition to sex (23 U.S.C. 324), age (Age Discrimination Act of 1975), and disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990). U.S. DOT implements Title VI at 49 CFR Part 21 and FHWA at 23 CFR Part 200.

Title VI's national-origin protection is the basis for providing meaningful access to people with limited English proficiency (LEP). The MPO maintains a Limited English Proficiency Plan and a Title VI Program, both available at the MPO office and on the MPO website, and provides language assistance as described in Section VII. Detailed nondiscrimination procedures and the complaint process are in Appendix B.

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23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii) separately directs the MPO to seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services. The MPO treats this as a planning obligation independent of any executive order: the transportation needs of households without a vehicle, of people who cannot drive, and of neighborhoods where past investment decisions fell hardest are identified, analyzed, and reported in the MTP and TIP.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that programs, meetings, and information be accessible to people with disabilities. The MPO facilitates participation by people with disabilities using the following practices:

- Meetings, public hearings, and formal events are held in facilities accessible to persons with disabilities, including wheelchair-accessible entrances, restrooms, and elevators where applicable.
- Every public notice includes a statement that individuals with disabilities will be accommodated upon request, with the phone number and email address to use.
- Requests for accommodation should be made at least 48 hours before a meeting or event. Requests for sign-language interpretation, real-time captioning, or documents in alternate formats should be made at least five business days in advance so that the service can be scheduled; the MPO will honor later requests whenever a provider can be secured.
- In collaboration with CityLink, the MPO can arrange transportation to public meetings for individuals with disabilities within the CityLink service area.
- The MPO website is maintained to be accessible under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, and documents posted for public comment are provided in accessible formats.

Code of Federal Regulations

The Code of Federal Regulations contains the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by federal agencies. Three sections of 23 CFR Part 450 govern this plan directly.

23 CFR 450.316 — Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation

The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators and employer-based commuting programs such as carpool, vanpool, transit benefit, shuttle, or telework programs), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. The plan shall be developed in consultation with all interested

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parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

1. Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed MTP and TIP;
2. Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
3. Employing visualization techniques to describe MTPs and TIPs;
4. Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the Internet;
5. Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
6. Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the MTP and the TIP;
7. Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
8. Providing an additional opportunity for public comment if the final MTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment and raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen;
9. Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes; and
10. Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft MTP or TIP (including the financial plans), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final MTP or TIP. A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted. Copies of the approved plan shall be provided to FHWA and FTA for informational purposes and posted on the Internet.

Section 450.316 also requires the MPO to consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities affected by transportation, including state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, historic preservation, emergency response, tourism, and natural disaster risk reduction; to coordinate with recipients of assistance under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 and with agencies that receive non-DOT federal assistance to provide non-emergency transportation; to involve Indian Tribal governments and Federal land management agencies where the planning area includes their lands; and, to the extent practicable, to document the roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for these consultations. The Abilene metropolitan planning area contains no Tribal lands and no Federal public lands other than Dyess Air Force Base, which is a Department of Defense installation represented on the Technical Advisory Committee.

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23 CFR 450.324 — Development and Content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Paragraph (j) requires the MPO to provide all of the interested parties listed above with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the MTP using the participation plan developed under 450.316(a), and to publish or otherwise make the MTP readily available for public review, including in electronically accessible formats. Paragraph (i) expressly permits the MPO to develop multiple scenarios for consideration as part of the MTP; the decision sequence in Section VI relies on that authority and requires no waiver or pilot status. Paragraph (f)(10) requires the MTP to discuss types of potential environmental mitigation activities, developed in consultation with the relevant resource agencies.

23 CFR 450.326 — Development and Content of the Transportation Improvement Program

Paragraph (b) requires the MPO to provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP as required by 450.316(a), and to publish or otherwise make the TIP readily available for public review, including in electronically accessible formats. Because the Abilene MPO is neither a TMA nor in a nonattainment area, the requirement for a formal public meeting during TIP development does not apply; the MPO nonetheless offers the TIP for comment at a public meeting of the Policy Board as described in Section V.

State Requirements

- **Texas Open Meetings Act (Texas Government Code Chapter 551).** Meetings of the Transportation Policy Board and the Technical Advisory Committee are open to the public. Notice of each meeting is posted in a place readily accessible to the general public, and on the MPO website, at least three business days before the meeting, excluding weekends and holidays. Meetings include a designated opportunity for public comment.
- **Texas Public Information Act (Texas Government Code Chapter 552).** Records of the MPO, including comments received, moderation and outreach logs, survey data files, and meeting recordings, are records of a governmental body and are presumed open, subject to the exceptions in the Act. Personal identifying information collected in the course of public involvement is handled as described in Section VII and Appendix C.
- **Texas Transportation Code Chapter 472, Subchapter D,** and **Section 201.9911** (House Bill 20, 84th Legislature), which require each MPO to develop a ten-year plan for the use of funds allocated to the region and to use performance-based project selection.
- **TxDOT Metropolitan Planning Organization Planning and Programming Handbook,** which sets the documentation and amendment procedures the MPO follows for the UPWP, MTP, TIP, and STIP.
- **Texas Government Code Section 551.128,** under which the MPO records and posts Policy Board meetings.

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SECTION III. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ABILENE MPO

The Abilene MPO is a collaborative assembly of the City of Abilene, Taylor County, Jones County, Callahan County, the smaller cities of the planning area, TxDOT, CityLink, and Dyess Air Force Base. The City of Abilene is the designated MPO and serves as the MPO's fiscal agent and host agency. The MPO is governed by its Bylaws, most recently amended in June 2026, which are available at the MPO office and on the MPO website.

Transportation Policy Board

The Transportation Policy Board (Policy Board) is the policy body established by 23 CFR 450.104 and the MPO Bylaws. Its members are the principal elected officials of the general-purpose local governments in the planning area and the TxDOT Abilene District Engineer. Each voting member has one vote. The City of Abilene Council Member position is filled by the Council Member designated by action of the City Council; all other positions are held by the individuals who hold the named offices. The Board elects a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from among its voting members for two-year terms; the Chairperson must be an elected official.

Voting Members (6)	Non-Voting Members (5)
Callahan County Judge City of Abilene Mayor City of Abilene Council Member Jones County Judge Taylor County Judge TxDOT Abilene District Engineer	U.S. Representative, Texas District 19 U.S. Representative, Texas District 25 State Senator, District 28 State Senator, District 10 State Representative, District 71

The functions of the Policy Board, defined in Article Two of the Bylaws, are to:

- Provide general policy guidance for the transportation planning process;
- Review and approve the Transportation Improvement Program and the Unified Planning Work Program and revise them as necessary;
- Take appropriate action on the recommendations of the planning coordinators or their staff, including those relative to certification and recertification of the planning process;
- Meet as necessary to perform its function as the forum for cooperative transportation decision-making in the Abilene metropolitan area;
- Hold a public meeting to discuss the status of the planning process at least once a year; and
- Designate such technical committees or task forces as it finds necessary to carry out the planning process.

Under the MPO's planning agreement with TxDOT, the MPO also adopts the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and its revisions; documents its planning activities in a UPWP that meets federal requirements; prepares an Annual Performance and Expenditure Report; forecasts, collects, and maintains socioeconomic, roadway, and travel data in cooperation with TxDOT;

and develops an MTP, TIP, and UPWP consistent with the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan and with 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303.

Policy Board meetings are held on the schedule posted on the MPO website, generally at Abilene City Hall, and are live-streamed and recorded. The Board does not meet monthly; because of this, the comment periods in Section V are set in calendar days and run independently of the meeting schedule.

Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) reviews and makes recommendations to the Policy Board on all technical matters and on any other issues assigned to it by the Board. Members are appointed on the basis of the technical knowledge needed to perform the MPO's planning activities. Following the June 2026 reorganization, the TAC includes the following voting positions, each of which may be filled by a designee:

Local governments	City of Abilene and CityLink	TxDOT, regional, and federal partners
Taylor County Commissioner Jones County Commissioner Callahan County Commissioner Mayors of Buffalo Gap, Clyde, Hawley, Impact, Lawn, Merkel, Tuscola, and Tye	City Engineer Planning and Development Services Director Public Works Director Traffic Engineer Transportation Director Abilene Transit System (CityLink) General Manager	TxDOT Abilene Area Engineer TxDOT Director of Maintenance TxDOT Director of Transportation Operations TxDOT Director of Transportation Planning and Development Dyess Air Force Base Civil Engineer West Central Texas Council of Governments representative Abilene Chamber of Commerce representative MPO Executive Director

The TAC assists the Policy Board with the technical tasks of developing the UPWP, MTP, and TIP and recommends their adoption; reviews transportation-related studies within the planning area; and advises the Policy Board on technical matters and, when specifically authorized, on policy matters with accompanying recommendations and supporting rationale. TAC meetings are open to the public and are noticed under the Texas Open Meetings Act.

MPO Staff

The MPO staff, led by the Executive Director, carries out the day-to-day activities of the MPO, including data collection, document preparation, public involvement, and coordination with TxDOT and member agencies. The Executive Director is the MPO's Title VI coordinator and the point of contact for accommodation requests, language assistance, and complaints.

Other Advisory Committees, Task Forces, and Panels

The Policy Board may establish standing or ad hoc committees, task forces, and expert panels to assist in its work. These may include Board members, public officials, residents, and other individuals the Board considers appropriate. Two kinds of bodies are anticipated under this plan and are described in Section VI: technical task forces convened for steps that are technical in nature (for example, agreeing on socioeconomic control totals or the financial plan), and expert or Delphi panels convened to bound the range of external conditions the MTP must be tested against. Membership and meeting summaries of every such body are posted on the MPO website. Standing committees may have separate bylaws, which must be ratified by the Policy Board.

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SECTION IV. POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Public involvement processes must be appropriate, accessible, transparent, accountable, meaningful, and inclusive of the region's population and its needs. This plan sets the policies and principles that guide the MPO's communication and coordination with residents, neighborhood and community organizations, private and public agencies, transportation providers, and other members of the public. It is also a tool for planners and decision-makers: it tells them where in the process input is sought, what kind of input is useful at that point, and what the MPO owes the public in return.

Goals of the Public Participation Plan

The purpose of this plan is to include residents, community and neighborhood groups, non-profit organizations, business groups, transportation providers, and federal, state, and local agencies in a proactive, predictable planning effort that provides access to key transportation decisions early and throughout the process. Involving the public early reduces the time and cost of preparing plans and projects, and it produces plans that the region can defend when conditions change. This plan allows the public to voice ideas, concerns, and priorities and to help decision-makers weigh the trade-offs that shape the transportation system of the future.

Policies of the Abilene MPO's Public Participation Plan

Policy 1: The MPO shall actively engage the public in the transportation planning process according to state and federal law and the policies outlined in this plan.

Policy 1.1 — Informing Interested Parties. The MPO shall make a good-faith effort to inform those who are interested in or affected by transportation decisions about reasonable opportunities to provide input. To accomplish this, the MPO shall maintain up-to-date contact information for the interested parties listed in Section VI under "Planning for Participation," and shall add any person or organization that asks to be notified.

Policy 1.2 — Consultation with Agencies and Officials. The MPO shall make a good-faith effort to consult with agencies responsible for other planning activities affected by transportation, including federal, state, and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, conservation and historic preservation, emergency response, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, and environmental protection. The agencies consulted, and the decisions at which they are consulted, are listed in Section VI.

Policy 1.3 — Coordination with Statewide Planning. The MPO shall coordinate its metropolitan planning process with the statewide transportation planning, public involvement, and consultation activities of TxDOT and with any other planning activity affected by transportation.

Policy 1.4 — Visualization. The MPO shall employ visualization and communication techniques that depict transportation plans and the trade-offs among them. These may include

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charts, graphs, maps, GIS displays, interactive dashboards, renderings, and comparisons of how candidate investment programs perform under different futures.

Policy 2: The MPO shall keep the public informed of ongoing transportation-related activities on a continuous basis.

Policy 2.1. The MPO shall make all publications and work products available electronically on the MPO website and in hard copy at the MPO office.

Policy 2.2. MPO staff shall be available to provide general and project-specific information at the MPO office during normal business hours and, on request and with reasonable notice, after hours and at locations convenient to a requesting community group.

Policy 2.3. The MPO shall maintain a website that is accessible to individuals with disabilities and is updated to provide the most current and accurate planning information available, including the schedule of key decisions in Section VI and the status of each.

Policy 3: The MPO shall encourage the involvement of all area residents in the transportation planning process.

Policy 3.1. The MPO shall identify target audiences, including individuals with disabilities, households without vehicles, low-income households, minority households, residents with limited English proficiency, rural residents of the planning area, and military households, and shall tailor outreach to reach them.

Policy 3.2. The MPO shall make a good-faith effort to hold public meetings at sites convenient to potentially affected residents, including sites outside the City of Abilene when the subject affects Jones or Callahan county residents.

Policy 3.3. The MPO shall make a good-faith effort to attend and participate in existing meetings of organizations and coalitions serving these communities, rather than expecting those communities to come to the MPO.

Policy 3.4. When the MPO gathers input that will be used to set weights, thresholds, or priorities, it shall do so from a sample designed to resemble the region's population, and shall report how closely the participants matched the region.

Policy 4: The MPO shall strive to continuously improve public participation and shall evaluate the effectiveness of this plan.

Policy 4.1. The MPO shall continuously evaluate and adjust its public involvement strategies and techniques, using the measures in Section VIII.

Policy 4.2. This plan shall be reviewed, and adopted with appropriate revisions after a 45-day public comment period, before every Metropolitan Transportation Plan update and at least every five years.

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Policy 5: The MPO shall ensure that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities.

Policy 5.1. The MPO shall maintain a procedure under which complaints alleging discrimination in MPO programs, services, or activities can be filed by persons who are not MPO employees (Appendix B).

Policy 5.2. Any person who believes the MPO, or any entity receiving federal financial assistance from or through the MPO, has subjected them or a class of individuals to unlawful discrimination may file a complaint.

Policy 5.3. The MPO shall follow the timelines set by U.S. DOT, FHWA, FTA, TxDOT, and the Department of Justice for processing complaints.

Policy 5.4. The MPO shall collect and analyze data on the populations affected by its plans and programs, shall report in the MTP and TIP how the benefits and burdens of the adopted program fall across the region, and shall keep that documentation available for federal and state review.

Policy 6: The MPO shall disclose, for each key decision, the real opportunity for public influence.

Policy 6.1. Section VI lists every key decision in the MPO's long-range planning and programming process and states, for each, whether the public can influence the decision, whether the decision is made in consultation with partner agencies, or whether the decision is technical with no practical opportunity for public input. Technical steps are still documented on the website.

Policy 6.2. The MPO shall not ask the public an open-ended question at a decision the public cannot influence. Broad questions raise expectations and draw input toward subjects where no influence is possible.

Policy 6.3. When the MPO seeks the public's tolerance of a decision that is not any group's first choice, it shall say so. The standard the MPO works toward is informed consent: participants understand the trade-offs, have been heard, and can accept the decision even when it is not the one they preferred. The MPO does not represent informed consent as consensus.

Policy 7: The MPO shall keep the participation record free of synthetic input.

Policy 7.1. The MPO may use computational tools, including simulated respondents, to test survey wording before it is fielded and to stress-test how a proposed program might be received. Those tools are internal quality-control methods. Their outputs shall be stored separately from, and never combined with, comments, votes, survey responses, or interviews received from people.

Policy 7.2. No output of a synthetic or simulated process shall appear in a public involvement summary, a comment disposition report, a participation record submitted to TxDOT, FHWA, or FTA, or any count of participants. Where the MPO reports on internal testing, it shall do so in a separately labeled technical appendix.

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Policy 7.3. Comments submitted to the MPO by a person using software to write them are that person's comments and are accepted as such. This policy governs the MPO's own conduct, not the public's.

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SECTION V. REVISIONS TO MPO DOCUMENTS AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS

Any Abilene MPO member agency may request the consideration of a revision to the MTP, TIP, UPWP, Ten-Year Plan, or this PPP on its own behalf or on behalf of a non-member agency, private group, business, or individual. Private parties work through the MPO member agency that represents them. Requests are submitted in writing to the MPO Executive Director. The Executive Director may also initiate a revision to keep a document in conformance with federal, state, and regional requirements.

Types of Revisions

A revision is a change to an adopted document between scheduled updates. The Abilene MPO follows the TxDOT STIP revision procedures and recognizes three tiers of revision.

Tier 1: Amendment (Formal Revision)

A major revision that requires a public comment period, Policy Board approval, and, for the MTP and TIP, a demonstration of fiscal constraint. An amendment is required for:

- Addition or deletion of a project;
- Addition or deletion of a project phase (preliminary engineering, right-of-way, construction, transfer);
- A change in the scope of a federally funded project, or of a regionally significant state-funded project, such as a change in project limits or termini or in the number of through lanes;
- A major change in the federal funding source, such as moving a project from state to federal funding or from one federal category to another that requires federal action;
- A change in federal funding amount greater than 50 percent of the approved federal cost estimate where the revised cost estimate is $1,500,000 or more;
- A change to the evaluation criteria, weights, thresholds, or robustness screens adopted in the MTP (see Section VI, PRO-4); or
- Any other change the Policy Board determines to be significant given the particulars of a project and its forecast effects.

Tier 2: Administrative Modification

A minor revision that does not require a public comment period or Policy Board action, is approved by the Executive Director, and is reported to the TAC and Policy Board at their next meetings. An administrative modification is used for:

- Changes to a project identifier or Control-Section-Job (CSJ) number, or the addition of a CSJ;
- A minor change in funding source, such as moving from federal to 100 percent state funding, or between state categories, or between federal categories where no federal action is required;

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- A change in federal funding amount that is not greater than 50 percent of the approved federal cost estimate, or where the revised cost estimate is less than $1,500,000;
- Addition of a grouped project using a statewide CSJ, or addition of a project to a statewide program;
- A change in limits, scope, letting date, or TIP year for a state-funded project within the four years of the approved STIP; or
- A change in TIP year for a project within the four years of the approved STIP.

Tier 3: Editorial Adjustment

Correction of typographical, grammatical, or formatting errors that do not change the content of a document. Editorial adjustments require no comment period and no Policy Board action, and are noted in the document's revision log.

Public Comment Periods

The Policy Board of the Abilene MPO does not meet every month. For that reason, every comment period in this plan is set in calendar days and begins when the draft document is posted on the MPO website and notice is published, not when a Board meeting occurs. The Policy Board takes action at its first regular or special meeting after the comment period closes. A comment period that would end on a weekend or a holiday is extended to the next business day. Written comments may be submitted by email, by mail, in person at the MPO office, and through the comment form on the MPO website; oral comments may be given at any TAC or Policy Board meeting during the comment period. Every notice states the closing date and time of the period.

Document	Action	Minimum comment period	Notification
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	Adoption, update, or Tier 1 amendment	45 calendar days (23 CFR 450.316(a)(3))	MPO website; social media; notice to the interested-parties list; legal notice in the newspaper of general circulation; notice to county clerks
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	Adoption or scheduled update	30 calendar days, plus a public hearing before the Policy Board	Same as above, plus notice to partner agencies and the media list
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	Tier 1 amendment	15 calendar days	MPO website; social media; interested-parties list; legal notice
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	Adoption or scheduled update	30 calendar days	Same as MTP adoption
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	Tier 1 amendment	15 calendar days	MPO website; social media; interested-parties list; legal notice

Document	Action	Minimum comment period	Notification
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Adoption, update, or Tier 1 amendment	15 calendar days	MPO website; interested-parties list
Ten-Year Plan (Texas Transportation Code 201.9911)	Adoption or update	15 calendar days	MPO website; interested-parties list
Key decisions in Section VI that carry a comment period	Approval by the Policy Board	As stated in Section VI (generally 30 calendar days)	MPO website; social media; interested-parties list
Annual reports (Annual Listing of Obligated Projects, Annual Performance and Expenditure Report, performance target reports)	Acceptance	None required; presented at open meetings and posted	MPO website

Abbreviated Comment Periods

With increased emphasis on expediting project delivery and funding obligation, there may be rare occasions when an urgent revision of the MTP, TIP, UPWP, or Ten-Year Plan is required because of funding deadlines. In those cases the Executive Director may authorize an abbreviated comment period of not less than seven calendar days. The notice and the Policy Board agenda item will state plainly that the period is abbreviated and why. Longer periods are always preferred and will be offered whenever the deadline allows. The 45-day period for this plan cannot be abbreviated.

Significant Changes After the Comment Period

If the final MTP or TIP differs significantly from the version made available for public comment and raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen, the MPO will provide an additional comment period of at least 15 calendar days on the revised document before adoption, as required by 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(viii).

Disposition of Comments

Every comment received during a comment period is logged, acknowledged, and answered. For the MTP and TIP, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of significant comments is included in the adopted document, as required by 23 CFR 450.316(a)(2). For every other document and key decision, the comment log and the MPO's responses are posted on the MPO website with the adopted item and presented to the Policy Board before it acts. The disposition report states what was changed in response to comment and what was not, and why.

Documents Covered by This Plan

Metropolitan Transportation Plan. A long-range plan with a horizon of at least 20 years, updated at least every five years, and developed through the decision sequence in Section VI.

The MTP is fiscally constrained and includes the financial plan, the adopted investment program by tranche, the vulnerability statement, and the monitoring and adaptation program.

Transportation Improvement Program. A fiscally constrained four-year program of highway and transit projects, developed every two years and amended as needed. The TIP is drawn from the adopted MTP using the same criteria, weights, and thresholds, and is incorporated without change into the STIP.

Unified Planning Work Program. The MPO's two-year work program and budget, developed every two years and amended as necessary. Federal rules do not require public review of the UPWP; the MPO offers a 15-day comment period because the UPWP is where the activities in this plan are funded and scheduled.

Ten-Year Plan. The plan required by Texas Transportation Code Section 201.9911 for use of the funds allocated to the region, of which the first four years are the TIP.

Public Participation Plan. This document. It is reviewed before every MTP update and at least every five years.

Other plans and studies. Modal and topical plans developed by the MPO, including the regional safety plan, the resiliency plan, the coordinated human services transportation plan, active transportation and freight plans, and corridor studies, are developed within the MTP process and share its outreach. Where a plan is developed on its own schedule, the MPO provides a 30-day comment period before adoption.

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SECTION VI. ACHIEVING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

"Public participation is any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and uses public input to make decisions." — International Association for Public Participation

Public participation is a process, not a single event. It is a series of activities over the full life of a planning process that both informs the public and obtains input from them. Meaningful participation means seeking input at the specific points where it will shape a decision. It is not appropriate or useful to simply ask the public "what do you want?" Broad questions raise expectations and draw input toward subjects where no influence is possible. Sometimes the opportunity for influence is small; at other times the public can determine the outcome. This section tells residents which is which.

There is no "general public." The region is made up of many publics whose values differ and whose priorities conflict. A household that depends on CityLink, a rancher whose access road floods, a shift worker at a plant on the east side, a military family that will leave in three years, and a retiree on a fixed income do not want the same transportation system, and it is not the MPO's job to pretend they do. The MPO's job is to learn what each of those publics needs, to tell the Policy Board honestly where those needs conflict, to help the Board choose an investment program that every public can tolerate, and then to report back to each public how its concerns were weighed.

General Approach

The MPO uses public outreach and communication to increase transparency and to build credibility with policymakers and the public. This includes day-to-day responses to residents by email, phone, and in person; monitoring social media; conducting community outreach; and holding public meetings and hearings as needed, with particular attention to residents traditionally underserved by the transportation system. The MPO will:

- Monitor, evaluate, and implement Title VI compliance across its plans and programs;
- Collect and analyze data on the populations affected by its programs and on how the transportation system serves them, and identify ways to mitigate adverse effects;
- Maintain and expand its database of residents and organizations in underserved areas to make outreach effective;
- Use visualization to translate data into graphics that communicate the trade-offs among investment choices; and
- Publish, at the start of each MTP cycle, the roadmap of key decisions below with target dates, and keep it current as the schedule changes.

Outreach on individual projects after they enter the TIP is undertaken by the sponsoring agency (TxDOT, a city, a county, or CityLink) in accordance with that agency's own procedures and the National Environmental Policy Act. The MPO's role at that stage is to make its planning record available so that decisions made during long-range planning can be carried into project development rather than relitigated.

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Planning for Participation

Research and the MPO's own experience indicate that it is better to do a limited public involvement effort well than a large one poorly. Within a performance-based planning process the standard is providing objective information so that different audiences can understand the issues and the trade-offs. The general steps the MPO uses are:

1. Lay out the entire process and when stakeholders participate. Meaningful participation requires that outreach be built into each step of the decision process, that it start early so that stakeholders and decision-makers are on the same footing, and that stakeholders have an equal opportunity to identify goals, needs, and the criteria that will be used to decide. The roadmap later in this section is that layout.

2. Identify the target audiences. The MPO identifies the audiences for engagement using Census and American Community Survey data, transit ridership data, consultation with elected officials, advisory committees, and partner agencies, and institutional knowledge from previous efforts. A "stakeholder" is anyone with a stake in the outcome; in practice it is the subset of the public with an elevated interest in the topic or who represent constituencies whose views are needed. The MPO maintains up-to-date contact information for:

Residents and community	Transportation users and providers	Government and institutions
Residents who have expressed an interest Neighborhood and homeowners associations, including North Abilene associations Civic groups and service clubs Faith communities, including Spanish-language congregations Social service organizations Special interest groups and other interested parties Libraries (for public display) Local media (television, radio, print, online)	Representatives of users of public transportation, and CityLink riders Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities, including the Steamboat Cycling Club Representatives of individuals with disabilities and of older adults Representatives of public transportation employees Private freight shippers and providers of freight transportation services, including trucking and heavy-haul firms Private providers of transportation, including intercity bus, taxi and rideshare, and employer-based carpool, vanpool, shuttle, and telework programs Major employers, plants, and wind and energy operators Human service transportation providers and the West Central Texas Council of Governments	Elected officials of the cities and counties Local government planning, engineering, and public works staff Independent school districts Abilene Christian University, Hardin-Simmons University, McMurry University, Cisco College, and Texas State Technical College Dyess Air Force Base public affairs and family readiness Abilene Chamber of Commerce and economic development organizations Abilene Regional Airport Native American Tribal governments that have asked to be notified of activities in Texas, through TxDOT

3. Interview stakeholders and build relationships before designing outreach. No effective participation process can be designed without first learning about the stakeholders it

will engage. At the start of each MTP cycle the MPO interviews likely stakeholders directly about their concerns, interests, and values, and lets them get to know the MPO. This is also where cultural and language differences are identified and planned for.

Engage local leaders. The MPO will hold sub-regional briefings for elected officials and municipal staff in each county to explain the MPO's role and their community's role within it and to solicit input on regional needs. Staff will meet one-on-one with newly elected officials.

Engage underserved populations. The MPO's process must seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by the transportation system. Many of these residents do not know or trust the MPO. In low-trust situations the MPO begins by partnering with a trusted third party, such as a congregation, a clinic, a school, or an employer, to help create and distribute information. The primary goal is trust; the secondary goal is more participants and more participation from each.

Consult stakeholder agencies. The MPO shall make a good-faith effort to consult with agencies responsible for other planning activities affected by transportation. The MPO maintains contact information for, and invites into the decisions marked "Agency consultation" in the roadmap, the following:

Federal	State	Regional and local
Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration U.S. Army Corps of Engineers U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Natural Resources Conservation Service (U.S. Department of Agriculture) Federal Emergency Management Agency Department of Defense, through Dyess Air Force Base	Texas Department of Transportation (Abilene District and Transportation Planning and Programming Division) Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Texas Historical Commission Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Texas Water Development Board Texas Division of Emergency Management Texas Demographic Center Texas General Land Office	West Central Texas Council of Governments City of Abilene Planning and Development Services, Public Works, and CityLink Taylor, Jones, and Callahan county judges and commissioners Local emergency management coordinators Development Corporation of Abilene and county economic development organizations Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau Water districts and utilities Independent school districts

The Community Preference Research Program

The decision sequence in the roadmap below asks the Policy Board to adopt an investment program that performs acceptably for each of the region's publics across a range of futures. That requires three things the MPO cannot assert on its own: what the publics of the region are, how each of them weighs competing goals, and what level of performance each would accept. The Community Preference Research Program is the sequence of public involvement activities that produces those inputs. It is planned to take roughly fourteen months from design to application, running through the early decisions of the MTP update, and its results are adopted at LRP-3.

The program is deliberately ordered. Residents write statements in their own words before any survey question exists. The survey is tested, first on internal tools and then with residents in interviews and a pilot, before it is fielded. Weights and thresholds are estimated only from the probability-sample survey. The stages are:

No.	Activity	Public role	What the public gets back
1	**Design and measurement plan.** The value dimensions to be measured, the trade-off method, the analysis plan, and the data-management plan are fixed and published before any resident is asked anything.	Technical. No public input; the measurement plan is posted so that anyone can see what will be asked and why.	The measurement plan and analysis plan, on the website.
2	**Open online conversation.** A twelve-week conversation on an open-source deliberation platform in which residents submit short statements about what the region should fix, build, protect, or leave alone, and vote agree, disagree, or pass on others' statements. Participation is anonymous and requires no account. Staffed tablets at the transit center, libraries, employers, the sale barn, and county events reach residents who would not find the conversation online. Standards for this stage are in Appendix C.	Open to every resident. The floor is 400 participants and 150 approved statements, with every county represented and at least eight distinct recruitment channels; the target is 1,000 participants.	A public summary of what residents said, the statements that divide the region, and the statements every group agreed on; a weekly moderation report; the full anonymized export, archived as a public record.
3	**Survey construction.** Residents' own phrasing from Stage 2 is used to write the survey items. The eight value dimensions are care and harm, fairness, liberty, property rights, tolling and cost, freedom and access, localism, and growth. Items also cover transportation quality of life and a forced trade-off block.	Technical. The item codebook records which items came from resident statements.	The codebook, on the website, after the survey is frozen.
4	**Internal pretest.** The draft survey is administered to simulated respondents to find items that are unclear, circular, or fail to run through the analysis pipeline. This stage tests the instrument, not the public.	None. Outputs are stored separately from all human data under Policy 7 and never enter the participation record.	A pretest memo stating what the pretest can and cannot establish, in a separately labeled technical appendix.
5	**Cognitive interviews.** Eight to twelve residents, recruited to over-represent the groups least likely to appear elsewhere (transit-dependent adults, shift workers, rural Jones and Callahan residents, Spanish-dominant speakers, adults over seventy, military households), read each question aloud and explain what they take it to mean. The Spanish instrument is tested with Spanish-dominant participants.	By invitation, through the Stage 2 outreach channels.	Revised wording, with the reason for every change.
6	**Pilot survey.** A small address-based mail-to-web sample, with paper and Spanish options, tests the instrument on real residents. This is the first point at	Sampled households. Every household drawn receives a letter explaining the study and how to respond.	A frozen instrument and a change log.

No.	Activity	Public role	What the public gets back
	which an item may be dropped for failing to discriminate.		
7	**Main survey.** A probability sample of 500 to 800 completed responses drawn from every address in the three counties, stratified so that rural, low-vehicle, low-income, and Hispanic areas are represented, weighted to Census and ACS controls, and geocoded to the traffic analysis zone. Mail-to-web with paper return, Spanish administration, and a toll-free help line.	Sampled households. Response rates are reported by stratum so that the public can see who answered.	A topline report, cross-tabulations by county, mapped results, and the weighting memo. The respondent file is retained under the MPO records schedule with all identifying information removed.
8	**Analysis.** Residents are grouped by their values, not by their demographics; each group's priorities and acceptable performance levels are then profiled. Criterion weights are estimated with uncertainty intervals. The "consensus floor," the outcomes every group agrees on, is reported separately from the differences.	Technical. The analysis follows the plan published at Stage 1; any departure is documented.	A technical report and a plain-language public summary of the region's publics and what each of them needs.
9	**Application.** The weights, thresholds, and consensus floor are adopted at LRP-3 and carried into project scoring at PRO-4. The public involvement record submitted with the MTP is the record of Stages 2, 5, 6, and 7 only.	30-day comment period at LRP-3 on the derivation procedure and, once results exist, on the numeric thresholds.	The adopted weights and thresholds, and a statement of how each public's values were reflected.

WHAT THE CONVERSATION AND SURVEY ARE NOT

The online conversation is not a survey and produces no estimate of how many residents hold a view. The "opinion groups" the platform reports are patterns among the people who happened to participate, not shares of the population, and the MPO will not describe them as either.

The value groups identified at Stage 8 are descriptions of how residents weigh transportation trade-offs. They are not political labels, are not assigned to any individual, and are not used to target anyone. The MPO never attempts to re-identify a respondent and never joins survey data to any other record that could permit it.

Planning and Programming Roadmap: Key Decisions

For residents to give the MPO useful input, and for the MPO to make the best use of it, potential participants must know where and how they can influence the decisions they care about, before those decisions are reached. The MPO's process is organized around named key decisions, each publicly approved by the Policy Board and each traceable. The decision names and numbering follow the Federal Highway Administration's PlanWorks Decision Guide, revised so that each decision approves a test of candidate programs against a range of plausible futures rather than a bet on a single forecast. What the public is asked, and when, is stated for each decision. No

roadmap survives contact with a multi-year process unchanged; when the schedule or sequence changes, the MPO will update the roadmap on its website and explain the change.

PLAIN-LANGUAGE GUIDE TO THE TERMS USED BELOW

A future is a set of conditions the region does not control: how many people and jobs arrive, how much revenue is available, what fuel and construction cost, what the weather does. The MPO tests plans against many futures. No future is called "most likely." Futures are stress cases, not predictions.

A portfolio is a candidate set of projects and policies, within the money the region can expect. Portfolios are what the region controls. The plan adopts a portfolio; it does not adopt a future.

Robust means a portfolio performs acceptably across many futures, rather than best in one. **Satisficing** means meeting a community-set minimum level of performance in every future, instead of maximizing performance in one forecast. Those minimum levels come from the Community Preference Research Program.

The vulnerability statement is the plan's own stress-test warning label: the conditions under which the adopted portfolio would fall short, written in plain language and adopted with the plan.

Signposts and triggers are the "if this, then that" of the plan: observable indicators that a vulnerability is emerging, threshold values that mean it has arrived, and the response the Policy Board pre-committed to when it does.

Core projects are needed in nearly every future and are funded. **Contingent projects** are prepared and costed but funded only when their signpost fires.

Informed consent means participants understand the trade-offs, have been heard, and can tolerate the decision even if it is not their preferred choice. It is the standard the MPO works toward at decisions where no option is anyone's first choice. It is not consensus, and the MPO will not call it that.

Each key decision below lists what the Policy Board approves, the public's role, agency consultation where it applies, and the comment period. Decisions marked "Technical" carry no practical opportunity for public influence; the MPO says so rather than staging a meeting that could not change the result. Every decision is documented on the MPO website.

Preliminary Technical Steps

Socioeconomic control totals. One of the first steps in an MTP update is forecasting the amount, type, and location of population and jobs through the plan horizon. There are several sources for these forecasts and all of them will be wrong; the value lies in understanding their differences. A technical task force of local staff and TxDOT resolves data issues in this highly technical step. Under the approach below, divergent forecasts are kept as the ends of the range the plan is tested against rather than averaged into a single estimate. *Public role: technical; the forecasts and their sources are posted.*

Metropolitan planning area boundary. The planning area must include the Census urbanized area and the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within the plan horizon,

and is set by agreement between the Policy Board and the Governor. A technical task force assists. *Public role: technical; the proposed boundary and the basis for it are posted, and the adopting resolution is acted on at an open meeting.*

Long-Range Transportation Planning Phase

LRP-1. Approve Scope of the MTP Process

What the Policy Board approves. The framework for the MTP update: (a) the commitment to evaluate investments across a range of futures rather than a single forecast; (b) the initial classification of every factor as something the region does not control (an external condition), something it does control (an investment or policy lever), a modeled relationship, or a performance measure; and (c) the data, modeling, and participation program the update requires, including the Community Preference Research Program.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. Deciding to plan under uncertainty is itself a decision and is made in public at the start, not discovered mid-process. Getting federal, state, and local agencies to endorse the fairness of the test early prevents disputes about project eligibility later.

Public role	Open. The proposed scope, including the plain-language list of what the region does and does not control, is released for comment. Stakeholder interviews and sub-regional briefings for local officials occur during this decision. Residents can comment on whether the right factors are on the right lists.
Agency consultation	TxDOT, FHWA, FTA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state and federal wildlife and water agencies, the Texas Demographic Center, economic development and land use agencies, and the Texas Historical Commission are invited to endorse the ranges they will supply.
Comment period	30 calendar days before Policy Board action.

LRP-2. Approve Vision and Goals

What the Policy Board approves. The region's transportation vision and a set of goals written so that each can be measured and scored in every future the plan is tested against. A goal that cannot be measured cannot be tested. The decision states explicitly that goal attainment will be evaluated across many futures.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. The purpose is unchanged from PlanWorks; the form is sharpened. Values are gathered from the region's publics in a usable form, because a test against thresholds that were never collected from a representative sample is theater rather than analysis.

Public role	Open, and the most important opportunity in the process for residents to state what they want and need. The online conversation (Stage 2) is the first opportunity to inform the MTP and opens this decision. The MPO also attends existing community meetings, holds workshops in each county, and briefs elected officials. After outreach, the proposed vision and goals are released for comment.
Comment period	30 calendar days on the proposed vision and goals before Policy Board action, in addition to the twelve-week conversation.

LRP-3. Approve Robustness Criteria, Scoring Rules, and Performance Measures

What the Policy Board approves. Four elements: (1) the federal and regional performance measures; (2) the modeling approach, including which external conditions will be varied and roughly how many combinations will be tested, and the method for discovering which combinations cause a portfolio to underperform; (3) the scoring rules that combine many measures into one acceptability judgment for each of the region's value groups; and (4) the robustness tests, of which the satisficing rule decides and the others are reported as cross-checks. The Board first approves the procedure for deriving thresholds from the Community Preference Research Program; a follow-up action sets the numeric thresholds once survey results exist.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. This is the first inverted decision. PlanWorks criteria compare scenarios against one another under one future; these criteria compare outcomes to community-derived acceptability thresholds across all futures. The question changes from "which agency-submitted project is best" to "which interventions are good enough, in the places that matter." Designating one test as deciding is a value judgment, so it is made in public rather than left to the analyst.

Public role	Open, and the point at which public input is most influential. The weights and thresholds come from the probability-sample survey (Stages 6–7), not from staff. The criteria, scoring rules, and derivation procedure are released for comment; the numeric thresholds are released for a second comment period when the survey closes. Results are posted for future reference.
Agency consultation	TxDOT, FHWA, FTA, and partner agencies are asked to concur in the fairness of the evaluation before it is applied.
Comment period	30 calendar days on the criteria and procedure; 30 calendar days on the numeric thresholds.

LRP-4. Approve Deficiencies and Vulnerabilities Across Futures

What the Policy Board approves. The list of transportation deficiencies identified across the full range of futures, reported by location, by how often the deficiency appears, and by the likely type of intervention. Deficiencies that appear in most or all futures are near-certain and warrant investment; deficiencies that appear only under specific conditions are candidates for monitoring and contingent strategies. Safety, asset condition, and resilience deficiencies are identified through their own analyses, not only through congestion.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. A deficiency list built against one or two forecasts commits the region to problems that may never arrive and misses problems that are not foreshadowed. Testing many futures is what makes it possible to tell core investments from contingent ones.

Public role	Open. Residents identify specific problem locations and issues through an online map-based comment tool, the online conversation, and the survey, beginning early and continuing through this decision. The draft deficiency list is released for comment.
Agency consultation	Land use, environmental, emergency management, economic development, and historic preservation agencies contribute the non-transportation needs and constraints that shape the list.
Comment period	30 calendar days before Policy Board action.

LRP-5 / PRO-1. Approve the Financial Plan (one decision serving the TIP, the UTP, and the MTP)

What the Policy Board approves. A single Financial Plan establishing (a) the revenue forecast by source and category for the plan horizon and the TIP window; (b) the project cost estimation method, including year-of-expenditure inflation by tranche; (c) the restrictions, eligibility rules, and match provisions of each source; and (d) the documented range around revenue that the plan will be tested against. The fiscal-constraint demonstrations of the MTP, the TIP, the Ten-Year Plan, and the STIP all cite this one resolution.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. PlanWorks routed the programming-phase revenue decision into the plan's financial assumptions; this plan makes them one decision, taken once, eliminating divergent financial assumptions between plan and program. Fiscal constraint is demonstrated on the adopted point forecast exactly as today; the range is analytical.

Public role	Technical during development. A group of transportation funding experts from TxDOT, CityLink, and local governments prepares the plan; there is no practical opportunity for public input on the revenue forecasts themselves, and the MPO does not stage one. The draft Financial Plan, with its assumptions in plain language (for example, what a 4 percent inflation rate does to a project cost over 25 years), is released for comment before adoption.
Agency consultation	TxDOT and CityLink cooperatively develop the estimates of reasonably available funds, as 23 CFR 450.324(f)(11) requires.
Comment period	30 calendar days before Policy Board action.

LRP-6. Approve Strategies (the Interventions Library)

What the Policy Board approves. The library of candidate interventions, both projects and policies, developed to address the approved deficiencies. Each intervention is coded with its cost under the Financial Plan, its eligible funding sources, and the range over which its effect will be tested. Interventions are classed as core (addressing deficiencies present in nearly all futures) or contingent (addressing conditional deficiencies, prepared and costed but committed only when a signpost fires).

What changed from PlanWorks and why. Static strategy lists force a binary: fund it or do not. Contingent strategies let the region prepare for futures it will not pay for unless they arrive, which is the fiscal expression of robustness.

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Public role	Open for proposals. Interventions proposed by residents during earlier outreach are collected and combined with those from local governments and partners. The library is posted and comments are accepted throughout its development. The most expensive alternative for each need is carried to preserve fiscal constraint, but no alignment is presupposed.
Agency consultation	Resource agencies contribute a combined map of conservation, economic development, and land use priority areas so that interventions avoid conflicts with partner plans.
Comment period	30 calendar days on the draft library before Policy Board action.

LRP-7. Approve the Experimental Design: Futures Ensemble and Candidate Portfolios

What the Policy Board approves. The test the plan will be put through: (a) the ranges of the external conditions, including divergent third-party forecasts kept as the ends of the range rather than averaged; (b) the candidate portfolios assembled from the library within the Financial Plan; and (c) the run plan by which every portfolio is evaluated against every future. The approval states in plain language that no future is designated most likely, preferred, or adopted.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. The most completely inverted decision. In PlanWorks the scenario is the candidate plan; here the scenario is the test condition and the portfolio is the candidate. Decision-makers approve the fairness and breadth of the test rather than being asked to bet on a single future.

Public role	Open. Residents and stakeholders can comment on whether the range of futures is wide enough and whether the candidate portfolios reflect the interests of the region's publics. Each portfolio is named in terms the public can understand (for example, "maintain first," "safety first").
Agency consultation	Agencies that supplied ranges at LRP-1 confirm them here.
Comment period	30 calendar days before Policy Board action.

LRP-8. Adopt the Robust Plan Portfolio

What the Policy Board approves. The fiscally constrained investment program that meets the adopted thresholds for each of the region's value groups across the widest range of futures, selected within the Financial Plan. Adopted with it are the vulnerability statement (the conditions under which the portfolio of interventions falls short), the signposts that will show those conditions emerging, and the contingent strategies pre-approved to respond. Where no portfolio satisfies every group, the Board adopts the one satisfying the most and records which groups it fails and by how much. Claims of optimality are excluded from the adoption documentation.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. The choice criterion changes from best-under-the-forecast to acceptable-across-the-range, and the adoption must disclose its own failure

conditions in terms the public can understand. A plan that admits what would change the interventions does not have to be defended as prophecy.

Public role	Open, with the standard of informed consent. Each generation of portfolio refinement is posted for comment, and MPO staff are available to present the trade-offs of each to community organizations and stakeholder groups until the regionally least-unacceptable portfolio is identified. The vulnerability statement is written for residents, not analysts.
Comment period	30 calendar days on the proposed portfolio and vulnerability statement before Policy Board action.

LRP-9. Make Conformity Determination by the MPO

What the Policy Board approves. Not applicable. The Abilene metropolitan planning area is in attainment for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and no transportation conformity determination is required. The decision is retained in the sequence so that the roadmap remains complete should the area's status change.

Public role	Not applicable.
Comment period	Not applicable.

LRP-10. Adopt the Metropolitan Transportation Plan

What the Policy Board approves. The complete MTP, including the Financial Plan, the adopted portfolio by tranche (the first six years by individual year of expenditure, then four five-year tranches), the vulnerability statement, the signposts and contingent strategies, the performance targets, the environmental mitigation discussion, the comment disposition report, and the public involvement record. The robustness documentation is adopted as part of the plan, not attached as a technical appendix, so it carries the same authority as the project tables and survives staff and Board turnover.

Public role	Open. A public hearing is held before the Policy Board, and MPO staff present both the process and the outcome to community organizations and stakeholder groups on request. If comments produce significant changes, an additional comment period is provided.
Comment period	30 calendar days and a public hearing before adoption; at least 15 additional calendar days if the final plan differs significantly from the draft.

LRP-11. Make Conformity Determination by FHWA and FTA

What the Policy Board approves. Not applicable, on the same basis as LRP-9.

Public role	Not applicable.
Comment period	Not applicable.

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LRP-12. Approve the Monitoring, Signposts, and Adaptation Program

What the Policy Board approves. A new decision with no PlanWorks counterpart: (1) the signposts to be tracked, using data the MPO already reports every one to two years; (2) the trigger values that signal a needed change; (3) the pre-committed responses, such as advancing a contingent project between tranches or funding a corridor study; (4) the reporting roles, assigned within existing annual cycles; and (5) the rule by which monitoring results feed the scoping of the next plan. A trigger that fires obligates an implementing agency, not the MPO, so those agencies concur in the trigger values and responses before adoption and their concurrence is part of the record.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. Without this decision, robustness analysis produces a static document and the adaptation logic evaporates the day after adoption. Pre-committing in public to what will be done when conditions change makes later action fast instead of contentious, and lets the public trace it rather than experience it as starting over.

Public role	Open. Residents may propose signposts (conditions they want watched) and comment on the trigger values and the pre-committed responses. The annual signpost report is presented at an open meeting of the Policy Board and posted.
Agency consultation	TxDOT, CityLink, the cities, and the counties concur in the triggers and responses that would obligate them.
Comment period	30 calendar days before Policy Board action.

Programming Phase

Programming is where robustness survives or dies. An MTP selected for robustness and then programmed using different criteria has been overwritten, not implemented. The programming phase therefore uses the scoring rules, thresholds, and robustness screens adopted at LRP-3 without modification. The TIP is the execution phase of the plan, with one addition: grouped projects, which state law allows TxDOT to program without individual listing, are reported to the Policy Board with their performance contribution before they enter the STIP, so that the answer to "why is this project needed?" traces back to the adopted plan.

PRO-1. Approve Revenue Sources

What the Policy Board approves. Unified with LRP-5. The Financial Plan adopted there is the revenue basis for the TIP and is not re-decided here.

Public role	See LRP-5.
Comment period	See LRP-5.

PRO-2. Verify Cost Consistency

What the Policy Board approves. A checkpoint at the opening of each TIP cycle at which MPO and TxDOT staff certify to the TAC and Policy Board that the cost methodology applied to TIP candidates is the one adopted in the Financial Plan. If costs have moved outside the adopted

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year-of-expenditure ranges, staff bring a Financial Plan amendment rather than adjusting quietly.

Public role	Technical. The certification is presented at an open meeting and posted.
Comment period	None; a Financial Plan amendment, if needed, carries a 15-day comment period.

PRO-3. Approve the Project List from the Adopted Plan

What the Policy Board approves. The universe of projects eligible to request funding in the TIP, drawn from the adopted MTP and sorted into core (funded), contingent (funded only when a trigger has fired), and excluded, with each project placed in a tranche. Projects that are not in the MTP's fiscally constrained list cannot enter the TIP without an MTP amendment, which includes performance analysis and, because the MTP must remain constrained, removal of projects of similar cost. Grouped project candidates are listed with their performance contribution.

Public role	Open. The initial list is released as it exists in the adopted MTP. Residents and sponsors may suggest how additional projects could be considered; if projects are to be added, the MTP amendment process and its comment period begin.
Comment period	30 calendar days before Policy Board action.

PRO-4. Approve Project Prioritization

What the Policy Board approves. The prioritized project list, produced by applying the scoring rules, thresholds, and robustness screens adopted at LRP-3 without modification or new criteria. If a new criterion is genuinely required, it triggers a formal MTP amendment beginning at LRP-3. Where robust projects exceed available funding, the highest-performing combination that fits the budget in each tranche is selected by transparent constrained-portfolio methods operating only within the sets the Board has already endorsed as robust.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. Changing rules during programming for short-term political or budgetary convenience is prohibited by this plan. Consistency between plan and program is what federal review tests.

Public role	Open. The scoring and ranking are released for comment with a specific request for information that could raise or lower individual project scores. Any new information that comes to light is applied to all pertinent projects; the MPO does not rescore one project in isolation.
Comment period	30 calendar days before Policy Board action; an additional 15 days if rescoring produces significant changes.

PRO-5. Reach Informed Consent on the Draft TIP

What the Policy Board approves. The draft TIP, selected against category-constrained funding by tranche. The draft lists each project's robustness result from PRO-3 so that the

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adaptation pathway stays visible, and states the trade-off that early-year selections may reduce flexibility in later years.

What changed from PlanWorks and why. Renamed from "Reach Consensus." Satisficing portfolios are suboptimal by construction, and the MPO seeks stakeholders' informed tolerance rather than endorsement.

Public role	Open. Staff present the draft to the TAC, the Policy Board, member governments, and stakeholder groups. The draft is released for comment with the selection process and the reasons for each project's placement.
Comment period	30 calendar days before Policy Board action.

PRO-6. Adopt the TIP

What the Policy Board approves. The TIP, after comments are addressed and the disposition report prepared. The first tranche bridges two TIP cycles, so every new TIP includes a performance check on its first four years to confirm the projects are still needed. Scoring criteria cannot be altered at this stage.

Public role	Open meeting of the Policy Board with opportunity for public comment.
Comment period	The PRO-5 period; an additional 15 days if the final TIP differs significantly from the draft.

PRO-7. Approve the TIP by the Governor and Incorporate into the Draft STIP

What the Policy Board approves. A state action. The Governor or designee, through TxDOT, confirms that the TIP meets state and federal requirements and incorporates it into the STIP without change. The transmittal package includes the robustness documentation and the Financial Plan so that state and federal reviewers see one consistent fiscal story.

Public role	None at the MPO level; the MPO posts its transmittal.
Comment period	None.

PRO-8. Reach Informed Consent on the Draft STIP

What the Policy Board approves. A state-led step in which TxDOT releases the draft STIP for public comment. The MPO verifies that its projects appear correctly and supports the state comment process by posting the STIP comment opportunity and forwarding comments it receives.

Public role	Through TxDOT's statewide public involvement process, which the MPO publicizes.
Comment period	Set by TxDOT.

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PRO-9. Approve the STIP with Respect to Fiscal Constraint

What the Policy Board approves. A federal action. FHWA and FTA find that the STIP meets fiscal-constraint requirements. Because the MTP, TIP, and STIP submission all rest on the single Financial Plan, the fiscal story tested at every level is the same story.

Public role	None.
Comment period	None.

Amendments After Adoption

Amendments to the MTP and TIP after adoption follow Section V. An amendment that would add a project not in the adopted portfolio, or change a criterion, weight, or threshold, re-enters the roadmap at the affected decision and carries that decision's comment period. An amendment that executes a pre-committed response to a signpost that has fired is still a Tier 1 amendment with its 15-day comment period, but the public record already contains the reason: the Policy Board decided in advance, in public, what it would do.

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SECTION VII. METHODS OF OUTREACH AND PARTICIPATION

Outreach and participation methods are as diverse as the communities an MPO serves. What works for one community or one decision may not work for another. This requires the MPO to tailor outreach to the circumstances and to keep changing its methods as the ways people communicate change. None of the techniques below is "the solution"; each is part of a strategy that uses several approaches at once. By offering information in a variety of formats, the MPO reaches more people than any single method could.

The MPO uses proactive engagement whenever possible: attending festivals, fairs, markets, the sale barn, and other events; speaking to community organizations, congregations, employers, and clubs; engaging riders at the CityLink transfer center; and partnering with organizations that already have the trust of the communities the MPO needs to reach. The purpose is to take the MPO to the public and to broaden the number and diversity of people reached. In every outreach effort the MPO will:

- Make personal connections in the target communities to build trust and credibility;
- Identify the audience that needs to give or receive information;
- Make the event worth the participant's time; and
- Engage partner organizations with standing in the target community to promote and encourage participation.

Outreach Methods

Local media. All legal notices are published in the *Abilene Reporter-News*, the newspaper of general circulation for the region. Notices of comment periods and major decisions are also sent to the region's television stations (KTXS, KTAB, and KRBC), to KACU public radio and other local radio, to Spanish-language outlets serving the region, and to the community newspapers of Jones and Callahan counties [confirm current list: e.g., the *Western Observer* (Anson), the *Merkel Mail*, the *Clyde Journal*]. Radio and television are used when a larger audience is needed; community papers distribute targeted information.

Website. The MPO website (www.abilenempo.org) is the official platform for informing the public. It provides meeting schedules, agendas, packets, minutes, and recordings; drafts released for comment and the closing date of each comment period; adopted plans and programs; the roadmap of key decisions and the status of each; the comment form; and the physical and mailing address, phone number, and email address of the MPO. Every notice the MPO issues includes the website address. Online participation has surpassed in-person participation in most public involvement efforts, and the MPO treats the website as its primary public meeting room, while recognizing that not every resident has reliable internet access.

Social media. The MPO maintains accounts on Facebook (facebook.com/AbileneMPO) and X (@abilenempo) and posts meeting announcements, comment-period notices, and links to the online conversation and surveys. Social media allows direct, unfiltered communication with residents and lets partners amplify the MPO's messages at no cost. It complements, and does

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not replace, other outreach. Comments received on social media during a comment period are logged as comments.

Interested-parties list. The MPO maintains an email and postal list of every person and organization that has asked to be notified, plus the stakeholder categories in Section VI. Anyone may join by contacting the MPO. Notices of every comment period and public meeting go to the list.

Partner channels. For each major outreach effort the MPO designs channel-specific materials, such as seat-back cards on CityLink buses, break-room cards at major employers, bulletin inserts for congregations, parent communications through school districts, base bulletins at Dyess Air Force Base, and printed cards at county courthouses, extension offices, rural post offices, and volunteer fire departments. Participation is tracked by channel so that under-performing channels can be reinforced during the effort rather than after it.

Newsletter and speakers. The MPO publishes a periodic newsletter and offers staff as speakers to service organizations, classrooms, chambers, and civic groups, both to explain the MPO's work and to hear the concerns of those groups.

Methods of Engagement

The traditional public meeting, whether hearing, open house, or town hall, is the most widely used technique and one about which significant doubt exists. Such meetings are criticized as failing to attract enough participants, drawing mainly the most vocal supporters and opponents, ignoring the time and cost constraints that limit participation, and serving as a legal formality rather than a forum for input. They can leave residents feeling that their opinions will not influence the decision, and at worst they pit neighbors against one another. The MPO will continue to hold public meetings where the law requires them and where they are useful, and will rely on the methods below to reach the residents public meetings miss.

Regularly scheduled Policy Board and TAC meetings. Every meeting includes a designated opportunity for public comment on MPO issues and serves as a comment forum for any draft document during its comment period. Meetings are noticed under the Texas Open Meetings Act, and Policy Board meetings are live-streamed and archived on the City of Abilene video platform.

Open online conversation. Described in Section VI and Appendix C. Used at the start of each MTP cycle to collect residents' statements in their own words and to identify the statements that divide the region and the statements it shares. Anonymous, open to everyone, and supported by staffed tablets for residents without devices.

Probability-sample survey. Described in Section VI. Used to derive the weights and thresholds that the MTP and TIP apply. The address-based sample is drawn from every household in the three counties and weighted to Census controls, so the MPO can report how closely respondents resemble the region. Self-selected online surveys are used for other purposes but never to set weights or thresholds.

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Cognitive interviews. One-on-one sessions in which residents read survey questions aloud and explain what they take them to mean, used before any survey is fielded. Participants are recruited to over-represent the groups least likely to appear elsewhere.

Stakeholder interviews. One-on-one conversations with people whose knowledge, position, or experience gives them insight into a topic, used at the start of each MTP cycle and at LRP-1. These reveal concerns and ideas that would not surface in response to a fixed set of questions.

Workshops and small-group meetings. Interactive sessions, including sub-regional workshops in each county, that allow discussion among residents, staff, and decision-makers. Splitting large workshops into small groups working on specific problems is an effective way of capturing creative ideas.

Focus groups. Small, balanced groups convened to discuss a specific issue in depth, used to test the wording of trade-off questions and to understand the reasoning behind survey results. Virtual sessions are offered to reduce travel and childcare barriers.

Task forces and technical panels. Agency-created groups representing diverse interests, used for technical steps (control totals, boundary, financial plan) and, where a vocal group begins to monopolize the public dialogue, to ensure balanced representation. A neutral facilitator is used when needed.

Expert (Delphi) panels. Structured, iterative consultation of experts used to bound the range of external conditions the plan is tested against, such as growth, revenue, technology, and hazard ranges.

Map-based comment tools. Online and in-person map displays that allow residents to pinpoint problem locations and opportunities, used at LRP-4.

Community surveys. Intercept, printed, web, phone, and text-message surveys used for general opinion research and to evaluate the effectiveness of this plan. Their limitations are stated when results are reported.

Telephone town halls. Used when the MPO needs to hear from a cross-section of the region at once on an issue that affects everyone; all who call in may leave a comment and receive a reply.

Speakers bureau where the MPO staff attend existing meetings. The most direct way to reach residents who will/can not come to the MPO.

Accessibility and Language Assistance

- Public meetings are held in buildings that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, in locations accessible by CityLink where possible, and at times that do not exclude working residents. Presentations and supporting documents are available at every meeting.
- Requests for accommodation should be made at least 48 hours in advance; requests for sign-language interpretation, real-time captioning, or alternate-format documents at least five business days in advance. The MPO honors later requests whenever a provider can be secured. Every notice includes the phone number and email address for requests.

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- The MPO provides Spanish-language versions of comment notices, comment forms, survey instruments, and public summaries, and provides interpretation at public meetings on request. Other languages are provided on request under the MPO's Limited English Proficiency Plan. Staff can assist residents who cannot use a device to enter a statement or comment, which is logged as staff-entered on the resident's behalf.
- When in-person meetings are not feasible because of weather, a public-health event, or facility unavailability, the MPO holds virtual meetings and provides a printed-materials and comment drop option at the MPO office.

Virtual Public Involvement

Virtual public involvement expanded rapidly during the pandemic and has become the primary means by which most residents participate. The MPO uses its website, social media, live-streamed and recorded meetings, virtual workshops, the online conversation, online map-based comment tools, and web-based surveys. As the MPO gathers more data and expands its analysis capability, staff will provide that information to the public in interactive form, including a data dashboard that reports system performance and the status of the signposts adopted at LRP-12. Video recordings of Policy Board meetings are posted in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.128. Virtual tools complement rather than replace in-person and print methods, because not every resident has internet access.

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SECTION VIII. EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS PLAN

23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x) requires the MPO to periodically review the effectiveness of its participation procedures. The MPO evaluates this plan in two ways: an annual summary to the Policy Board, and a full review before each MTP update.

Annual summary. At the end of each fiscal year MPO staff report to the Policy Board, and post on the website, the following measures for the year:

- Number of comment periods held, their lengths, and the number of comments received in each, by method (web form, email, mail, in person, social media) and by language;
- Attendance at public meetings, workshops, and events, by location and county;
- Website page views for documents released for comment, and social media reach and engagement for comment-period notices;
- Number of accommodation and language-assistance requests received and fulfilled;
- For the Community Preference Research Program, the participation, statement, county-coverage, and channel figures against the floors and targets in Appendix C, and the survey response rates by stratum;
- The number of comments that resulted in a change to a document, and the number that did not, with the reasons; and
- Median time from receipt of a comment to the MPO's response.

Comment-period survey. Each comment form asks, optionally, how the respondent learned of the opportunity, whether the materials were understandable, and whether the respondent believes their input will be considered. Responses inform the next outreach effort.

Full review. Before each MTP update, and at least every five years, the MPO reviews this plan against the annual summaries, changes in federal and state requirements, demographic change, and the experience of the previous MTP cycle, and adopts revisions after a 45-day comment period. The review specifically asks whether the participation record for the previous plan resembled the region, which publics were under-represented, and what this plan should change to reach them.

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APPENDIX A. TRANSPORTATION LEXICON

Terms used in this plan. Terms marked with an asterisk have a specific meaning in the MPO's decision process that may differ from common usage.

3-C	The continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive metropolitan planning process required by 23 U.S.C. 134.
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
ALOP	Annual Listing of Obligated Projects: the list of projects for which federal funds were obligated in the preceding fiscal year.
APER	Annual Performance and Expenditure Report, submitted to TxDOT each year.
CityLink	The fixed-route and paratransit public transportation system operated by the City of Abilene.
Contingent project*	A project that addresses a deficiency present only under specific future conditions. Prepared and costed in the MTP, but funded only when its signpost fires.
Core project*	A project that addresses a deficiency present in nearly every future tested. Funded in the adopted portfolio.
CSJ	Control-Section-Job number: TxDOT's unique identifier for a project.
Financial Plan*	The single Policy Board resolution, adopted at LRP-5/PRO-1, that establishes reasonably available revenue, cost estimation methods, funding restrictions, and the revenue range the plan is tested against. Cited by the MTP, TIP, Ten-Year Plan, and STIP.
Fiscal constraint	The requirement that a plan or program spend only funds that can reasonably be expected to be available, in year-of-expenditure dollars.
Future*	A combination of external conditions the region does not control, used as a test case. Not a prediction.
FHWA / FTA	Federal Highway Administration; Federal Transit Administration.
Group-informed consensus*	In the online conversation, a statement with high agreement within every opinion group, not merely high agreement overall.
Informed consent*	The standard at decisions where no option is anyone's first choice: participants understand the trade-offs, have been heard, and can tolerate the decision. Distinct from consensus.
LEP	Limited English proficiency.
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area: the urbanized area plus the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within the plan horizon.
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization.
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan: the region's long-range plan, with a horizon of at least 20 years.
Opinion group*	In the online conversation, a cluster of participants with similar voting patterns. An artifact of that conversation, not a share of the population.

Participation record*	The documentation of public involvement submitted with the MTP and TIP: notices, outreach logs, participation statistics, comments, and their disposition. Contains no synthetic input (Policy 7).
PBPP	Performance-based planning and programming.
Portfolio*	A candidate set of projects and policies within the Financial Plan. What the region controls and what the plan adopts.
Probability sample	A sample in which every household in the region has a known chance of selection, allowing results to be weighted to represent the region.
Robust*	Performing acceptably across many futures, rather than best in one.
Satisficing*	Meeting a community-set minimum level of performance in every future, rather than maximizing performance in one forecast.
Scenario*	In this plan, a test condition (see Future), not a candidate plan (see Portfolio). Readers of older MPO documents should note the change.
Signpost / trigger*	A signpost is an observable indicator that a plan vulnerability is emerging; a trigger is the threshold value at which the Policy Board's pre-committed response is executed.
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, into which the TIP is incorporated without change.
Synthetic pretest*	Administration of a draft survey to simulated respondents to find defective items before any resident is asked. An internal quality-control method whose outputs never enter the participation record.
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee.
Ten-Year Plan	The plan required by Texas Transportation Code 201.9911 for the use of funds allocated to the region; the first four years are the TIP.
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program: the fiscally constrained four-year program of projects.
Title VI	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in federally assisted programs; extended by related statutes to sex, age, and disability.
TMA	Transportation Management Area: an urbanized area of more than 200,000 population. The Abilene MPO is not a TMA.
Tranche*	A time band of the adopted portfolio: the first six years by individual year of expenditure, then four five-year bands. Later tranches are less certain of funding.
Transportation Policy Board	The policy body of the Abilene MPO, referred to as the Policy Board.
TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation.
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program: the MPO's two-year work program and budget.
UZA	Census-designated urbanized area of 50,000 or more residents.
Value group*	One of the region's publics, identified from the survey by how its members weigh transportation trade-offs. Also called a preference profile. Not assigned to individuals and not used to target anyone.

Vulnerability statement*	The plain-language statement, adopted with the MTP, of the conditions under which the adopted portfolio would fall short.
Year of expenditure	Costs and revenues expressed in the dollars of the year in which they are expected to occur, using an agreed inflation rate.

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APPENDIX B. TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Detailed information is in the Abilene MPO Title VI Program and Limited English Proficiency Plan, available at the MPO office and on the MPO website [insert link and adoption dates].

Policy

As a recipient of federal financial assistance, and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related nondiscrimination statutes, the Abilene MPO ensures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities. All programs funded in whole or in part with federal financial assistance are subject to Title VI, and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 extends this to all programs of the MPO regardless of funding source. The Executive Director is the MPO's Title VI coordinator.

This procedure allows persons who are not MPO employees to file complaints alleging discrimination in the MPO's programs, services, or activities. Any person who believes the MPO, or any entity that receives federal financial assistance from or through the MPO (sub-recipients, contractors, or consultants), has subjected them or a class of individuals to unlawful discrimination may file a complaint. The MPO follows the timelines set by U.S. DOT, FHWA, FTA, TxDOT, and the Department of Justice.

When to File

A complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged act of discrimination, or of its discovery, or, where there has been a continuing course of conduct, of the date that conduct stopped. Filing means a written complaint is postmarked, emailed, or delivered before the end of the 180-day period. The complaint form and consent/release form must be dated and signed. Complaints received after 180 days will be returned with a letter explaining why they cannot be processed and identifying other agencies to which a report may be made.

Where to File

Signed complaint forms may be mailed or delivered to: Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization, Attn: Executive Director / Title VI Coordinator, 209 South Danville Drive, Suite B-212, Abilene, Texas 79605; or emailed to abilenempo@abilenetx.gov. On request, reasonable accommodations will be made for persons unable to complete the form because of disability or limited English proficiency. A complaint may be filed by a representative on behalf of a complainant. Persons not satisfied with the MPO's findings may seek remedy from TxDOT's Civil Rights Division, FHWA, FTA, or the U.S. Department of Justice.

Required Elements of a Complaint

- Name, address, and phone number of the complainant;
- Name, address, and organization of the person or persons alleged to have discriminated;

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- Date of the alleged discriminatory act or acts;
- Basis of the complaint (race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability);
- A statement of the complaint; and
- A signed consent/release form.

Complaint Process

1. **Receipt.** Complaints must be in writing and signed by the complainant or a designated representative. A complainant who cannot complete the form because of disability or limited English proficiency will be assisted on request, and a form will be mailed to anyone without internet access. The complainant is notified if the form is incomplete.
2. **Logging.** The complaint is entered in the MPO complaint log with basic tracking data.
3. **Jurisdiction.** The Executive Director reviews the complaint to confirm that it states a basis covered by this procedure, was filed within 180 days, and concerns an MPO program or activity. If the program is not an MPO program, every attempt is made to identify the correct agency and, with the complainant's consent, forward the complaint. If the complaint is transportation-related and names the MPO or a sub-recipient, a copy is forwarded to the TxDOT Civil Rights Division, 125 East 11th Street, Austin, Texas 78701.
4. **Acknowledgment.** Within 10 working days of receipt the MPO sends the complainant written confirmation, requesting any additional information needed or explaining why the complaint cannot be processed. A copy of the acknowledgment and the complaint is forwarded to the TxDOT Civil Rights Division for information.
5. **Investigation.** The Executive Director determines the fact-finding process appropriate to the complaint, which may include interviews of the complainant and others, review of planning, public involvement, and technical documentation, review of analysis methods and demographic data, consultation with state and federal agencies, and consultation with the City of Abilene's legal counsel. Where the Executive Director is the subject of the complaint, the City of Abilene designates an alternate investigator.
6. **Determination.** The investigation is completed within 60 days of receipt of a complete complaint unless circumstances warrant otherwise. A report of findings and a recommended resolution is prepared.
7. **Notification.** Within 10 days of completing the investigation the complainant is notified in writing of the decision and of the right to appeal to state and federal agencies. A copy of the letter and the report of findings is forwarded to the TxDOT Civil Rights Division.

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APPENDIX C. PARTICIPATION STANDARDS FOR THE OPEN ONLINE CONVERSATION

This appendix sets the public commitments the MPO makes when it hosts the open online conversation described in Section VI. It is written as a standard the MPO holds itself to, so that residents can judge whether the conversation was run fairly.

Purpose and Limits

The conversation collects transportation statements in residents' own words, identifies the statements that divide the region and the statements it shares, and creates a documented public involvement activity under this plan and 23 CFR 450.316. It is the raw material for survey construction. It does not produce estimates of how many residents hold a view, does not produce criterion weights or population segments, and will not be represented as doing any of those things in any MPO document.

Conversation Design

- One prompt, in plain language, asking what the region should fix, build, protect, or leave alone with the limited money it has; a seed set of statements balanced for and against within each of the eight value dimensions; and one idea per statement, in plain language, with no planning vocabulary.
- Anonymous participation with no login required. Statement submission enabled. Submitted statements are held until approved by a moderator; voting on approved statements is available immediately.
- A distinct entry link for each recruitment channel, so that participation can be attributed to a channel without identifying any participant.
- A landing page that states who is asking, why, what will happen to the input, and what will not happen: no names, no attribution, no individual follow-up. The landing page also states whether the conversation will remain publicly hosted after it closes.
- A Spanish-language interface, with Spanish statements accepted and approved as written. If Spanish-language participation is below the threshold at the mid-course check, a parallel Spanish conversation is opened with the translated seed set, and the statement corpora, not the vote matrices, are merged.
- The conversation is hosted on an open-source platform. Data is exported weekly from the fourth week onward so that a change in hosting terms or availability is a recoverable event. The MPO owns all exported data.

Recruitment

Self-selection is the central risk. Every channel exists to reach a population that would not find the conversation on its own. The MPO tracks participation by channel weekly and redirects effort to channels that under-perform. Channels include, at minimum: general public (MPO, City, counties, media); CityLink riders (seat-back cards, transfer center signage, staffed tablet at the transfer center); healthcare waiting rooms; Dyess Air Force Base (base bulletin, spouse and

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family networks); the region's colleges and universities; rural Jones and Callahan county residents (extension offices, Farm Bureau, sale barn, courthouses, rural post office boards, volunteer fire departments); employers and shift workers; congregations, including Spanish-language congregations; school districts; the Chamber and economic development organizations; libraries (staffed tablet); and North Abilene neighborhood associations. Six to eight staffed tabling events with tablets are held at locations across the three counties. Staff may enter a statement on behalf of a participant who cannot use a device, logged as staff-entered.

Moderation

1. Two trained MPO moderators review every submitted statement within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends.
2. A statement is approved if it is on topic, contains one idea, is under the length limit, contains no personal information, names no identifiable individual or business, contains no profanity or harassment, and is not a near-duplicate of an approved statement. Otherwise it is rejected, and every rejection is logged with the reason. Borderline rejections require two-person concurrence.
3. Moderators never edit a statement. An edited statement is no longer what the participant said.
4. After launch, staff submit no statements except to fill a documented coverage gap, and any such statement is logged as staff-authored.
5. A one-paragraph moderation summary is published weekly: statements submitted, approved, and rejected, with the reasons for rejection by category.
6. Interim opinion-group results are not published during the conversation, because publishing them invites organized voting to move them.
7. Board members and staff are welcome as participants with no special role; anonymity means there is no way to distinguish them.

Performance Floors and Targets

Measure	Floor	Target
Participants	400	1,000
Approved statements	150	250
Approved statements per value dimension	15	30
Median votes per participant	15	25
County coverage	Each county at least 10 percent of participants	Roughly proportional to population
Channels with 20 or more participants	8	12
Spanish-language participation	Set from the ACS limited-English-proficiency share for the three counties [insert]	Proportional

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Measure	Floor	Target
Opinion groups	Report whatever emerges	No target; a target would invite tuning

Mid-course check. At the seventh week the MPO triggers supplemental outreach if any dimension has fewer than 15 approved statements, any county is under 10 percent of participants, fewer than eight channels have 20 or more participants, or Spanish-language participation is below threshold. The mid-course memo and any actions taken are posted.

Data, Privacy, and Public Records

- No personal information is collected. Participation is anonymous. Channel tags identify a distribution channel, not a person.
- The conversation export, the moderation log, and the outreach log are records of a governmental body, subject to the Texas Public Information Act, and are retained under the MPO's records schedule.
- The landing page informs participants that statements are public, may be quoted without attribution, and may be used to develop a later survey.
- The MPO does not attempt to re-identify participants and does not combine the export with any other dataset that could permit it.
- No synthetic or simulated data is ever stored with, joined to, or reported alongside the conversation export (Policy 7).

Closure and Reporting

Statement submission closes at the end of the tenth week and voting at the end of the eleventh. In the twelfth week the MPO exports and archives the full dataset with the moderation and outreach logs; produces the conversation report (opinion groups, majority statements, group-informed consensus statements, most divisive statements, and coverage by dimension and channel); codes every approved statement to a value dimension for survey construction; publishes a plain-language public summary that reports what residents said and does not report opinion groups as population shares; and assembles the participation record package for this plan's file: the public notice, the outreach log by channel with dates and counts, participation statistics, the moderation policy and log, the public summary, and a statement of how the results were used.

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APPENDIX D. RECORD OF PUBLIC COMMENT AND ADOPTION

To be completed after the 45-day comment period.

Development of This Plan

This plan was developed in consultation with interested parties as required by 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1). The draft was released for a 45-day public comment period beginning [DATE] and ending [DATE]. Notice was published in the *Abilene Reporter-News* on [DATE], posted on the MPO website and social media on [DATE], sent to the interested-parties list on [DATE], and posted with the Taylor, Jones, and Callahan county clerks on [DATE]. The draft was presented to the Technical Advisory Committee on [DATE] and to the Transportation Policy Board on [DATE].

Comments Received and Disposition

No.	Date	Source	Summary of comment	MPO response and disposition
1				
2				
3				

Adoption

Adopted by the Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board on [ADOPTION DATE] by Resolution [NUMBER]. Copies provided to the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Texas Department of Transportation for informational purposes and posted at www.abilenempo.org.

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[Name], Chair, Transportation Policy Board

Craig T. Casper, AICP, CTP, CEP, Executive Director

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-To: Abilene MPO Policy Board
From: Craig Casper, Executive Director
Subject: Item 11: Executive Directors Report
Action: Report and Discuss

Financial Status and Budget

The Federal Fiscal Year ended on September 30. This is also the date that the current Federal Transportation Authorization (IIJA) expired. There is a partial continuing resolution through December 11, 2026. There is approximately $180,000 in FFY 2026 funds remaining, plus carryover from 2025. There is a continuing Resolution that funds USDOT through December 11th. The next transportation bill was a primary topic of discussion at the TEMPO meeting, discussed below.

Operations and Staffing

As discussed in Items 5 and 7, the RFQ process is proceeding and the scope and budget for the first set of Work Orders is being developed. Two MPO staff positions remain unfilled. One of these (Planner 2) is by design; the other (Administrative Assistant) is in the process of being filled. These vacancies, combined with the RFQ funding accounts for the unspent funds. The concept for the Planner 2 position is to use the funding for that position for ongoing planning services from a private consultant.

Upcoming Work Tasks

Both the Annual Performance Achievement Report (APER) and the Annual Listing of Projects (ALOP) are due in December.

The Travel Demand Model is progressing. On Monday October 12th, a Teams meeting confirmed completion of the updated Travel Analysis Zones, including expansion of the area to match the new MPO Boundary. Also, the new model road network was completed and matches the new Functional Classifications. There are a couple questions around SH 83 scope and timing that will likely be answered very shortly.

The next steps the MPO is responsible for are populating the TAZs with households by type and jobs by classification in the Base Year, UTP year, and MTP Year. The Small Area Task Force has been authorized and the control total data is being consolidated.

Consulting assistance with the Travel Demand Model is among the Work Orders that the contracted consultants will help with. Other likely efforts include updating the website, helping fine tune the Public Participation Program, and beginning several of the UPEP Subtasks, such as the Regional Resiliency Plan, the Regional Safety Action Plan, and the Safe and Adequate accommodation of pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, older indivduals, etc.

TxDOT is pursuing an online STIP portal and each MPO will be developing a regional version of some sort to work with that system. It is likely that this tool will be very similar to the TxDOT Project Tracker, except with more information about the project included. This will likely be part of the website update.

I have had very preliminary discussions with TTI on their helping develop a regional survey of viewpoints on transportation in the Abilene Area. This will be very useful for many purposes, include the UPWP Task 5 efforts.

TAC Meeting Summary

The Summary of the 22SEP2026 Technical Advisory Committee meeting is below. One item to note is that none of the new TAC representatives brought by the expansion attended. If this continues it could create some issues with quorum.

TAC AGENDA SUMMARY & OUTCOMES

Item	Agenda Description	Action Type	Status / Outcome
1	Call to Order	Procedural	Meeting opened at 1:31 p.m.
2	Procedural Item [Agenda Template Legacy]	Procedural	Item skipped during meeting (template artifact from Policy Board agenda)
3	Consideration and action on the Minutes of the May 26, 2026 meeting	Action	Approved as presented; Motion Carried
4	Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan Adoption (Specialized Transit Plan)	Action	Recommended to Policy Board for inclusion as 2050 MTP Appendix; Motion Carried
5	DRAFT 2026 Public Participation Program (PPP)	Discussion	Reviewed outreach strategies, 45-day review requirement, & policy groups; No formal action
6	DRAFT 2027–2028 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Discussion	Reviewed PlanWorks framework, Task 1-5 tasks, & $400k FY25 carryover drawdown; No formal action
7	Discussion and review of transportation projects	Discussion	Status updates received on SH 3438 bike/ped project & TxDOT donation agreements
8	Director's Report	Discussion	Received financial update, TAZ model expansion, website rebuild, & TAC schedule; No formal action
9	Recommendation of Items for Consideration at a Future Meeting	Procedural	No items proposed; Potential cancellation of Nov 17 meeting noted
10	Adjournment	Procedural	Meeting adjourned

Texas MPO Association (TEMPO) Meeting Agenda Day 1

1. **Welcome, Introductions, and Thank You's!**
   Clay Barnett, Grayson County MPO Executive Director and TEMPO Chair.

2. **TEMPO BUSINESS MEETING AND ELECTION**

   For Information. According to TEMPO bylaws, an annual meeting is required of the organization shortly after the beginning of the state's fiscal year. This agenda topic is to cover this matter and for conducting an election of the at-large vacancy on TEMPO's Executive Committee.

3. **SUBCOMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE UPDATES**

   Subcommittee and Task Force chairs will provide updates on their activities. At the discretion of the chair, the conversation may expand to either adding or dismissing subcommittees, filling vacant chair positions, and their membership. Action may be taken during by the membership during this topic.

4. **MPO 101: Texas MPO Bylaws Review**

   Presentation. During the December 2025 Executive Directors Meeting, membership discussed and questioned the status of MPO Bylaws and their practice in Texas. An update on this research was provided in March. TTI staff will present the findings from its research to conclude this topic.

5. **MPO Fiscal Agent Operating Agreements**

   Presentation. During the July 2026 Executive Directors Meeting, membership had requested information from the El Paso MPO (ELPMPO) about their current operating agreement between the MPO and its fiscal agent. Eduardo Calvo, ELMPO Executive Director, will provide a presentation about the current his organization's agreement for discussion by TEMPO.

MORNING BREAK

6. **REAUTHORIZATION TASK FORCE**

   For Information. Rob MacDonald, Corpus Christi MPO Executive Director, will update the TEMPO membership on the latest events in establishing the next version of the federal Surface Transportation Act.

7. **LOCAL FUNDS AT MPOs**

Presentation. During the July 2026 TEMPO Executive Directors meeting, membership began a discussion about local funds and their use within Texas MPOs. TTI will provide a presentation summarizing their research into this subject for discussion by TEMPO.

LUNCH BREAK

8. **TxDOT Planning, Policy and MPO Topics**

Presentations. The Transportation Planning and Programming Division (TPP) of TxDOT will provide updates about their recent planning efforts. Topics in this session include *(please note that presentation order may vary):*

- County Corridor Agreements (John Jameson and Sam Lawrence)
- STIP Update (Enyu Li)
- Audit Readiness and Common Findings (Naima Hafeez and Christopher Ramirez)
- Freight Update – Statewide Plan Update (Leah Casey)

AFTERNOON BREAK

9. **H-GAC Local Programs Administration**

Best Practice Presentation. The Houston-Galveston Area Council recently established a system to systematically monitor and provide for the administration of local infrastructure projects pursued by its member agencies. A representative from H-GAC will be present to introduce their system for membership information.

10. **Leadership Academy Update**

For information. During the July 2026 TEMPO Executive Directors meeting, membership received a presentation about a Leadership Academy proposal. Membership will be provided an update on this topic.

11. **Concluding Remarks**

Clay Barnett, Grayson County MPO Executive Director and TEMPO Chair.

Texas MPO Association (TEMPO) Meeting Agenda Day 2

1. **Recap and Continuing Discussion from Day One**

   Clay Barnett, Grayson County MPO Executive Director and TEMPO Chair.

2. **Introduction to the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC)**

   Presentation. A representative from the National Association of Regional Councils will introduce membership to this organization and their planning initiatives.

3. **Statewide Call for Transportation Alternatives (TA) Funding**

   Presentation. A representative from the TxDOT Public Transportation (PTN) division will give a presentation about the statewide call for TA funding that is anticipated for January 2027.

4a. **MPO Roundtable – Part 1**

The Executive Directors will be invited to present examples of best practices and achievements from their MPOs during this agenda item.

MORNING BREAK

4b. **MPO Roundtable – Part 2**

The Executive Directors will be invited to present examples of best practices and achievements from their MPOs during this agenda item.

5. **Plans, Studies, Research, Conferences, etc.**

   Briefing about forthcoming conferences relevant to the MPO community.

6. **Adjournment and Concluding Remarks**

   Clay Barnett, Grayson County MPO Executive Director and TEMPO Chair.

TxDOT & MPO Senior Leadership Meeting

Welcome

Caroline A. Mays, AICP, Senior Director of Planning & Modal Programs, TxDOT
Clay Barnett, P.E., Executive Director, Grayson County MPO, TEMPO Chair

Safety Briefing Video

Progress Since May 7th Meeting: Key Actions, Outcomes, and Next Steps

Casey Wells, Section Director, Advance Transportation Planning, Transportation Planning & Programming Division, TxDOT
Clay Barnett, P.E., Executive Director, Grayson County MPO, TEMPO Chair

FHWA Updates

Edward Ofori, P.E., Acting Division Administrator, Texas Division, FHWA

Reauthorization / Continuing Resolution

Federico Rodriguez, State/Federal Relations Representative, TxDOT

Open Discussion/Q&A

Discussion: Partnership Opportunities

County Corridor Agreements: Continuing the Conversation

Carl L. Johnson, P.E., Chief Engineer, TxDOT

Charon Williams, Director, Transportation Programs Division, TxDOT

John Jameson, Section Director, Local Government Programs, Transportation Programs Division, TxDOT

Portfolio Readiness to Advance Delivery

Texas MPO Success Stories

Juan S. Mendive, AICP, Executive Director, Laredo MPO,

Ryan Collins, Interim Executive Director, Capital Area MPO

Partnership Opportunities to Accelerate Delivery

Mo Bur, P.E., Senior Director of Project Development, TxDOT

MPO Academy

Eduardo Calvo, AICP, Executive Director, El Paso MPO

Open Discussion/Q&A

Discussion: Upcoming Legislation and Funding Outlook

Upcoming 90th Legislative Session

TxDOT Update:

Wesley Starnes, State Legislative Affairs Section Director, TxDOT

Recent Testimonies and MPO Perspective:

Michael Medina, Executive Director, Rio Grande Valley MPO

Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG

Federal Funding Outlook and August Redistribution Opportunities

Stephen Stewart, CPA, Chief Financial Officer, TxDOT

Open Discussion/Q&A

Closing Remarks

Caroline A. Mays, AICP, Senior Director for Planning and Modal Programs, TxDOT

Clay Barnett, P.E., CFM, Executive Director, Grayson County MPO, TEMPO Chair

Welcome / Opening Remarks

Caroline A. Mays, AICP, Senior Director of Planning & Modal Programs, TxDOT

Clay Barnett, P.E., Executive Director, Grayson County MPO, TEMPO Chair

Outcomes

Federal Initiatives: Supporting eSTIP modernization, TIP/UPWP document quality, and conformity self-certification discussions.

Reauthorization: Reviewed TxDOT priorities and opportunities for MPO support.

Funding Outlook: Identified the need for clearer statewide funding and transportation-needs messaging.

LG AFAs: Efforts to standardize and track the AFA process to improve visibility, consistency, and predictability. MPOs can contribute improvements to the AFA process.

Planning Agreement: Supported retaining the three-party agreement with separate local operating agreements.

Action Items

1. **TxDOT and MPOs:** Reinforce expectations for clean, well-written, and defensible TIP and STIP documents.
2. **FHWA:** Explore potential MPO self-certification for elements of air-quality conformity.
3. **TEMPO:** Provide FHWA with a list of processes perceived to exceed federal regulations.
4. **TxDOT and MPOs:** Develop clearer statewide transportation-needs messaging that considers population growth, VMT trends, and a Texas Metro/Urban Mobility Plan (TMMP/TUMP; 2006) style approach.
5. **TxDOT:** Continue implementing the standardized AFA workflow and DocuSign CLM, including training and performance tracking.
6. **MPOs w/ LGs:** Align local resolutions with proposed AFA language and elevate requested deviations early through TxDOT District partners.
7. **MPOs:** Consider developing common AFA agreement types and related training.

Texas Department of Transportation

FHWA Updates

Edward Ofori, P.E., Acting Division Administrator, Texas Division, FHWA

Reauthorization/Continuing Resolution

Robin Ayers, State/Federal Relations Representative, TxDOT

Current Status

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

IIJA expired on September 30, 2026

Congress

Congress passed H.R. 6500, the "Continuing Resolution and Extension Act"

President

The President signed H.R. 6500, which includes an IIJA extension through December 11, 2026

Senate Reauthorization Activity

Environment and Public Works

Federal highway, bridge, freight, and planning programs; primary jurisdiction over FHWA programs

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Transit programs and FTA funding

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Transportation safety, rail, trucking, and pipeline programs

Finance

Highway Trust Fund revenues, fuel taxes, user fees, and financing provisions

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County Corridor Agreements: Continuing the Conversation

Carl L. Johnson, P.E., Chief Engineer, TxDOT

Charon Williams, Director, Transportation Programs Division, TxDOT

John Jameson, Section Director, Local Government Programs, Transportation Programs Division, TxDOT

TxDOT Website: https://www.txdot.gov/about/programs/county-corridor-agreement.html

Portfolio Readiness to Advance Project Delivery

October 7, 2026

Portfolio Success – Four Factors

Successful portfolio management and funding utilization come down to:

Ready Projects
Select projects that are ready to advance

Overprogramming*
Program more projects than available funding

TxDOT Partnership
Build strong relationships with your TxDOT district

Sponsor Oversight
Actively monitor and stay involved with local sponsors

*Successful overprogramming requires a measured approach based on active portfolio management.

Performance Trends – Additional Statistics

98% of projects missed their originally submitted schedule

8 years is the longest current project delay

16 years is the longest project delay on record

$6 million is the average annual cost of delays

9 projects have been cancelled

CAMPO

Step 1 - Eligibility

Determines that a project meets the federal funding program requirements

Step 2 - Readiness

Determines that a project can complete all required milestones and be implemented as scheduled

Step 3 – Benefit Evaluation

Determines the regional value of a project and how well it meets the goals/objectives of the TPB

Step 4 - Recommendation

Recommends project based on evaluation results, ranking, and funding availability

CAMPO

The Project Development Process

Project development is an iterative decision-making process with the outcomes of each phase directly informing the next.

The readiness assessment evaluates projects to determine where they are in the process to ensure they are ready for the next development phase.

Project development may very slightly, but all must demonstrate a comprehensive development process relative to the project phase requested.

CAMPO

Texas Department of Transportation

Partnership Opportunities to Accelerate Delivery

Mo Bur, P.E., Senior Director of Project Development, TxDOT

FY27 Rack 'n' Stack All Acceleration Rounds

- Round 1 – 3 Projects for $561.04M
- Round 2 – 4 Projects for $119.81M
- Round 3 – 4 Projects for $373.01M
- Round 4 – 27 Projects for $162.12M
- Round 5 – 29 Projects for $341.22M
- Round 6 – 7 Projects for $46.18M
- Round 7 – 15 Projects for $137.84M

Data as of 10/02/2026. Inflation not included.

District	Project Count	Est. Volume
Abilene	4	$27.97M
Amarillo	2	$278.86M
Atlanta	3	$14.09M
Austin	1	$14.10M
Beaumont	3	$19.62M
Bryan	4	$5.96M
Corpus Christi	1	$1.70M
Dallas	12	$547.93M
El Paso	7	$35.11M
Fort Worth	4	$49.29M
Houston	6	$86.31M
Laredo	1	$3.51M
Lubbock	1	$2.29M
Lufkin	5	$79.05M
Odessa	2	$4.21M
Pharr	4	$59.23M
San Angelo	4	$16.64M
San Antonio	5	$325.99M
Tyler	2	$25.45M
Waco	5	$50.02M
Wichita Falls	3	$7.07M
Yoakum	10	$86.82M
Total	**89**	**$1,741.22M**

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Texas Department of Transportation
Connecting you with Texas

Rack 'n' Stack Accelerations into FY27 by Funding

Category	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7	Total
Cat 1	-	14.36%	-	56.77%	11.25%	27.06%	37.67%	12.40%
Cat 2	41.17%	22.40%	44.77%	-	18.82%	56.07%	3.84%	29.66%
Cat 3	-	0.46%	-	0.11%	-	-	-	0.04%
Cat 4R	-	-	-	-	26.29%	-	-	5.05%
Cat 4U	28.62%	35.58%	15.93%	-	25.23%	-	8.30%	20.52%
Cat 5	-	14.43%	1.10%	-	0.96%	-	-	1.50%
Cat 6	-	-	-	3.63%	-	9.14%	-	0.57%
Cat 7	-	12.76%	-	-	-	-	-	0.95%
Cat 8	-	-	-	8.78%	7.06%	7.72%	12.14%	3.43%
Cat 9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cat 10	-	-	-	3.32%	0.74%	-	1.75%	0.59%
Cat 11	-	-	5.02%	2.63%	2.90%	-	2.85%	2.16%
Cat 12	30.21%	-	33.18%	24.78%	6.77%	-	33.45%	23.11%
Total	**100.00%**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**

Data as of 10/2/2026. Inflation not included. Note: Authorized funding is greater than project estimates per TxC

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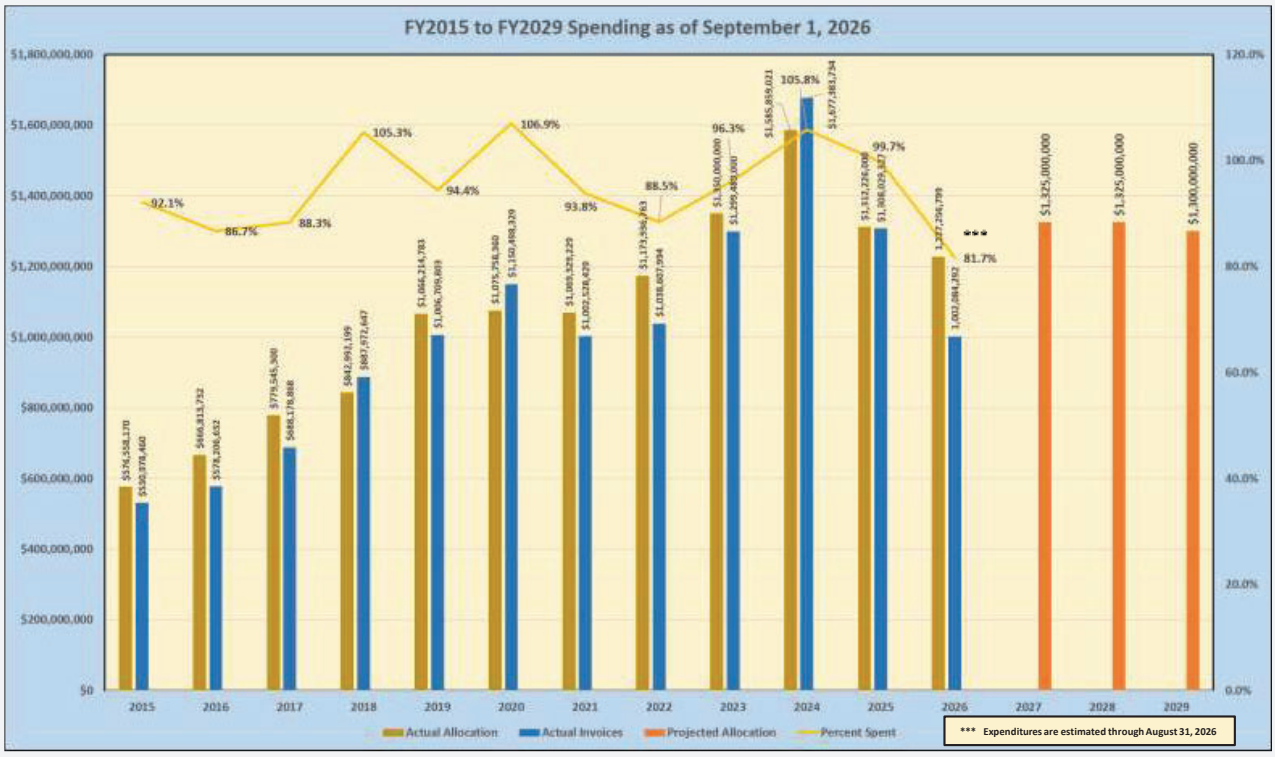


Change in PEPS Funding from Previous Year's Allocations

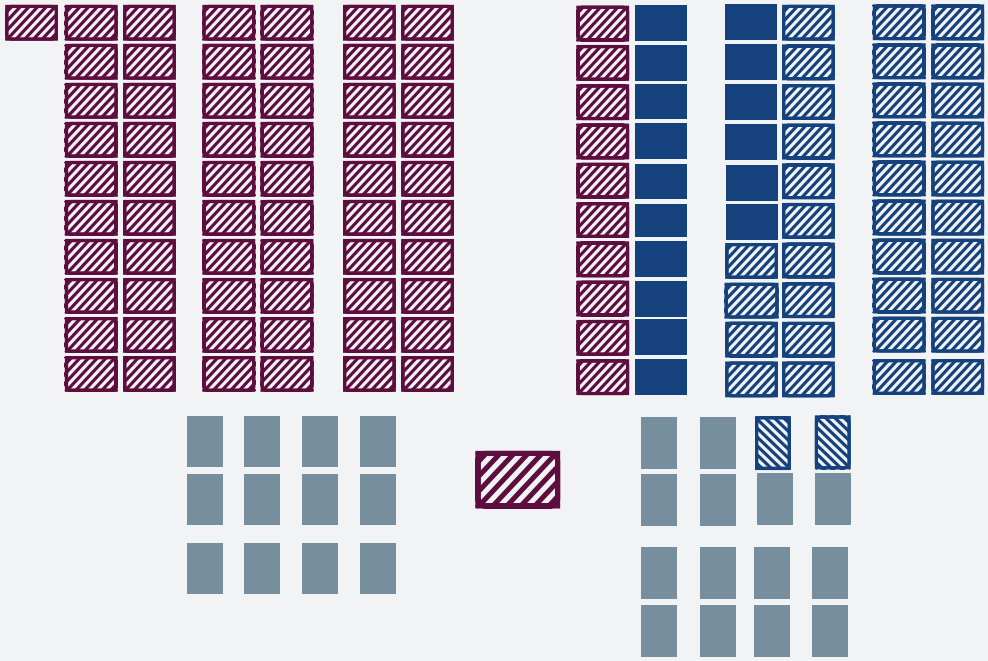
- Increase of $65 million for FY2027
- Increase of $95 million for FY2028

TxDOT Update: Upcoming 90th Legislative Session

Wesley Starnes, State Legislative Affairs Section Director, TxDOT

Texas Department of Transportation

Texas House of Representatives



Because House members serve two-year terms, the entire chamber is elected every two years.
150 Members

- R Seats up for election – **72**
- D Seats up for election – **36**
- R Unopposed seats – **0**
- D Unopposed seats – **16**
- Open Seats – **26**

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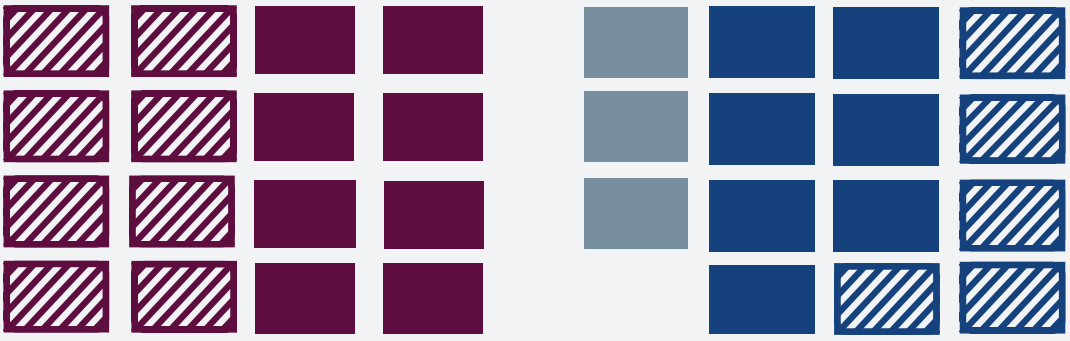
Texas Department of Transportation
Connecting you with Texas

Texas Senate



Because Texas senators serve four-year terms, approximately half of the Senate is elected every two years.
31 Members

- R - Seats up for election – **8**
- D - Seats up for election – **5**
- R - No election – **8**
- D - No election – **7**
- Open Seats – **3**

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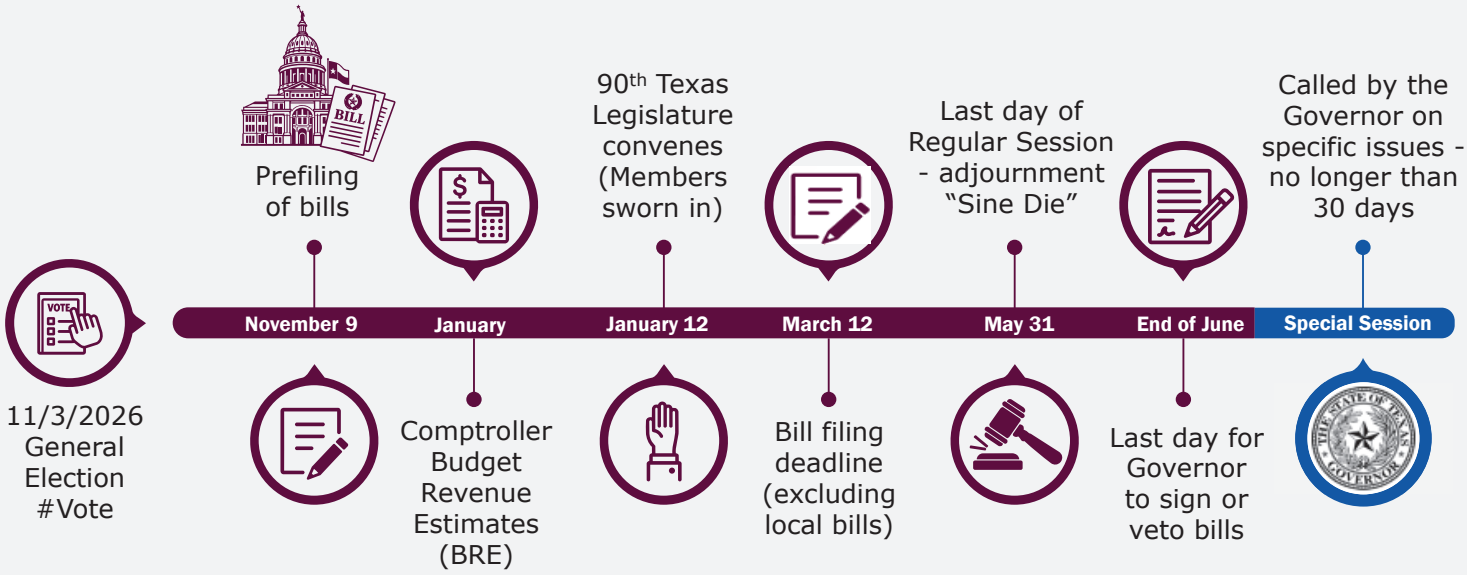
90th Legislative Session (2027) Timeline



The 90th Regular Session Convenes January 12, 2027

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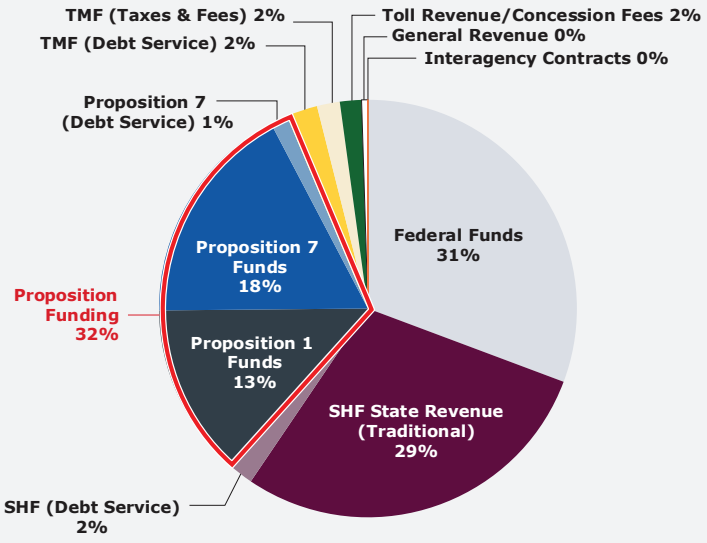
Texas Department of Transportation
Connecting you with Texas

Budget Sources FY 2028-29 (LAR)



BUDGET SOURCES

Federal Funds	$11.2 billion
State Highway Fund (SHF) (Traditional)	$10.5 billion
SHF (Debt Service)	$0.8 billion
Proposition 1 Funds	$4.8 billion
Proposition 7 Funds	$6.4 billion
Proposition 7 (Debt Service)	$0.5 billion
Texas Mobility Fund (TMF) (Debt Service)	$0.9 billion
TMF (Taxes & Fees)	$0.6 billion
Toll Revenue/Concession Fees	$0.6 billion
General Revenue	$0.1 billion
Interagency Contracts	$0.0 billion
Total	$36.4 billion

*Totals and percentages may not sum due to rounding

FY 2026-27 General Appropriations Act/HB 500 Supplemental = $39,962,646,630

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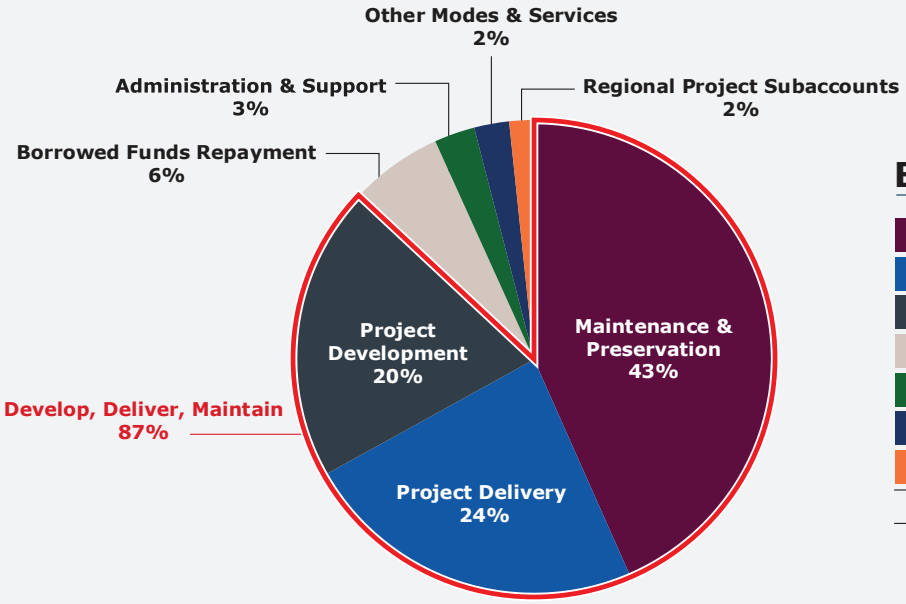
Budget Uses FY 2028-29 (LAR)



BUDGET USES

Maintenance & Preservation	$15.8 billion
Project Delivery	$8.6 billion
Project Development	$7.3 billion
Borrowed Funds Repayment	$2.3 billion
Administration & Support	$1.0 billion
Other Modes & Services	$0.8 billion
Regional Project Subaccounts	$0.6 billion
Total	$36.4 billion

*Totals and percentages may not sum due to rounding

FY 2026-27 General Appropriations Act/HB 500 Supplemental = $39,962,646,630

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SIMULATION OF TXDOT FREEWAY NEEDS AND TEXAS METROPOLITAN MOBILITY PLAN

MICHAEL MORRIS, P.E.
NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

OCTOBER 7, 2026

TEXAS METROPOLITAN MOBILITY PLAN

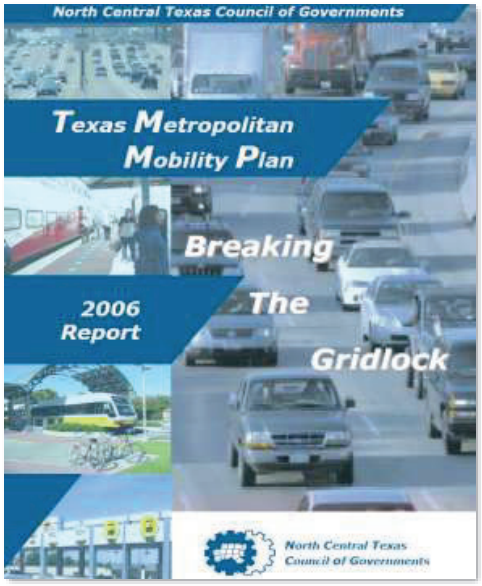
The 2006 Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan (TMMP) addressed a statewide initiative to quantify long-range needs within the larger metropolitan areas of the state and to develop a shorter-range prioritized listing of projects.

This Plan served as a comprehensive, multimodal blueprint for transportation systems and services within the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Metropolitan Area.

Unlike the region's long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan, it is not constrained by anticipated revenues.

The TMMP focused on the magnitude of unmet transportation needs for the region and provided decision-makers with a better feel for the quantity of additional funding needed.

NCTCOG Presentation



https://web.archive.org/web/20161220041047/http://www.nctcog.org/trans/mtp/tmmp/TMMP_Report_2006_000.pdf

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Texas Department of Transportation

Federal Funding Outlook and August Redistribution Opportunities

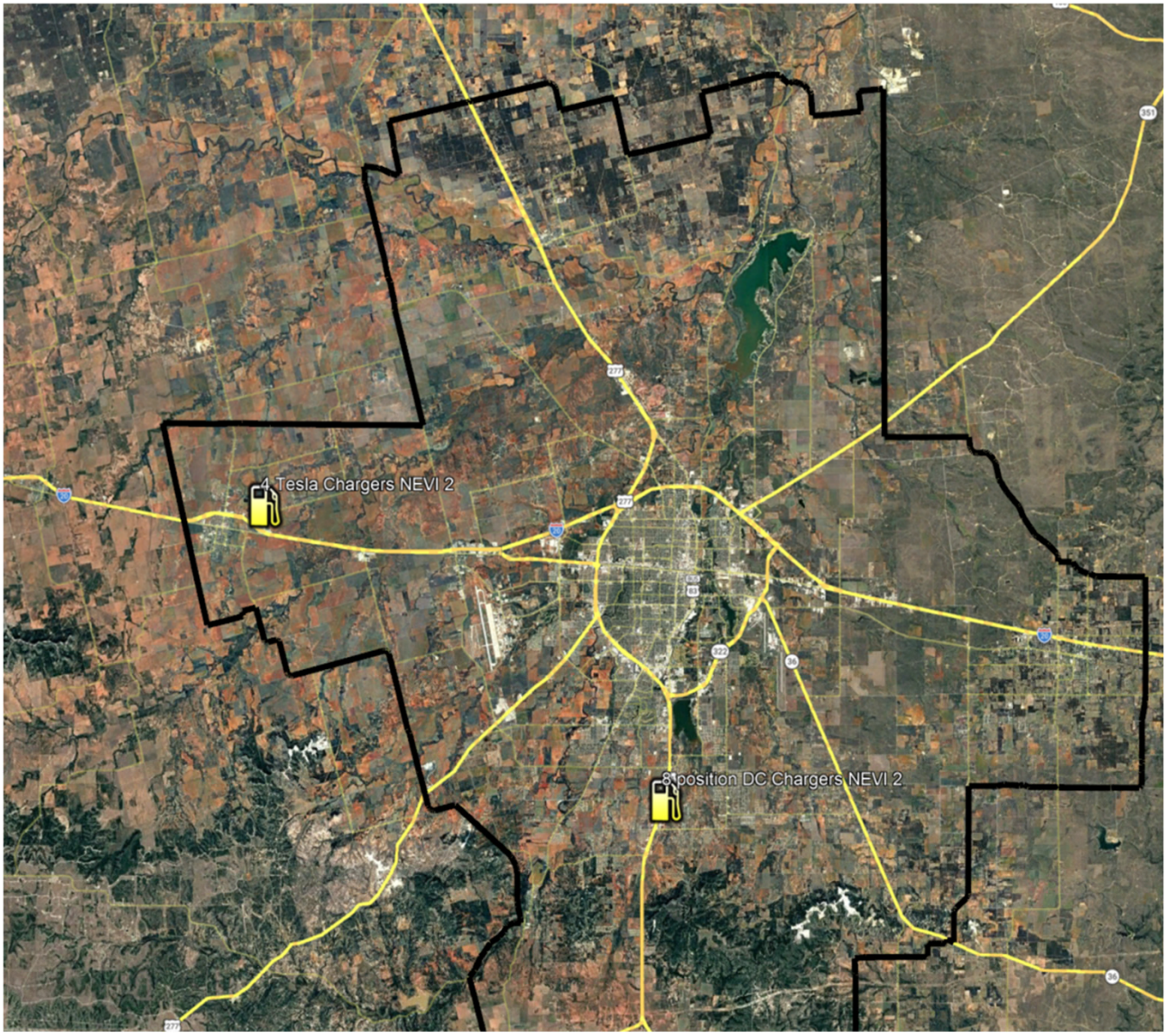
Stephen Stewart, CPA, Chief Financial Officer, TxDOT

MPO Academy

Eduardo Calvo, AICP, Executive Director, El Paso MPO

Closing Remarks

Caroline A. Mays, AICP, Senior Director for Planning and Modal Programs, TxDOT

Clay Barnett, P.E., CFM, Executive Director, Grayson County MPO, TEMPO Chair

STUDY_AREA_NAME	CSJ	MPO	CITY	TIP	PHASE	PROJECT_SPONS	LIMITS_FROM	DESCRIPTION	CATEG	TAL_PROJECT_C	FEDERA	LOCA
Abilene MPO-2	5000-00-4	Abilene MPO		2027	CONSTRUCTIO	Imperial Construction	980 Clark Rd, Abilene, TX 7960	Construct a Direct Current Fast Charge station plus 5 years of operations and maintenance.	10 NEVI	$1,231,915	$985,532	$246,383
Abilene MPO-1	5000-00-5	Abilene MPO	Merkel	2027	CONSTRUCTIO	Tesla, Inc.	9405 I-20 EXIT #270, Merkel, T	Construct a Direct Current Fast Charge station plus 5 years of operations and maintenance.	10 NEVI	$528,440	$422,752	$105,688