

INTRODUCTION

WFMPO Background

The Wichita Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization (WFMPO) serves as the federally mandated surface transportation-planning agency for the City of Wichita Falls, Lakeside City, Pleasant Valley, southeast Wichita County, and a small portion of northeast Archer County. The U.S. Census Bureau identifies areas containing more than 50,000 people as urbanized areas. There are over 400 urbanized regions within the United States. The City of Wichita Falls, and the surrounding contiguous communities, constitutes a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of nearly 150,000 people and covers a 150 square mile area. Federal law requires the creation of a Metropolitan Planning Organization for each census-defined urbanized area. To achieve this, the Governor of Texas designated the City of Wichita Falls as the MPO responsible for transportation planning within the Wichita Falls Urbanized Area.



Since 1973, WFMPO has worked with local, county, state, tribal and federal governments to coordinate the highway, transit; bicycle/pedestrian and land-use planning process in order to receive government funds for surface transportation improvements in our region. WFMPO develops transportation planning strategies and initiatives with input from area government agencies, citizens and stakeholders. Simply stated, WFMPO's mission is to design and implement a coordinated transportation network that moves people, goods, and services affordably, efficiently, and safely throughout the WFMPO area. The primary goal of the Wichita Falls MPO is to bring about regional planning under one voice while providing the greatest transportation benefit for all. Other goals include supporting economic vitality, making transportation safer, providing greater access to mobility options, protecting the environment while promoting energy conservation, improving connectivity of the current transportation system, and preserving existing transportation infrastructure.

WFMPO's governing body, called the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) or Policy Board, consists of nine members representing the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the City of Wichita Falls, Pleasant Valley, Lakeside City, and Archer and Wichita Counties. The Policy Board reviews and adopts metropolitan transportation planning policy and makes all decisions concerning regional transportation priorities. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), made up of nine members designated by the Policy Board, reports directly to the Transportation Policy Committee. Engineering, planning, and technical professionals from TxDOT, the City of Wichita Falls, and WFMPO staff make up the Technical Advisory Committee and provide the Policy Board with the technical assistance necessary for the decision making

process. Please refer to the [Acknowledgements](#) on page 12 of this Section for a list of Policy Board, Technical Committee and MPO staff members as of FY 2015.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The WFMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is the long-range plan that takes a comprehensive approach to transportation planning in our region. The MTP identifies projects and policies for implementation by WFMPO over the next 25 years. This edition of the MTP spans years 2015 through 2040 and is the defining vision for transportation systems and services within the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Area. The MTP includes Long-Range and Short-Range strategies/actions that will (a) lead to development of an integrated multimodal transportation system, (b) facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and services, and (c) address current and future transportation demand. As an Air Quality Attainment Area (air quality meeting or exceeding National Ambient Air Quality Standards as defined in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970 (P.L. 91-604, Sec. 109), WFMPO updates its MTP every 5 years to maintain improved transportation goals and policies.

WFMPO accomplished this update utilizing the latest available estimates and assumptions for population, land use, travel, employment, congestion and economic activity. WFMPO reviewed existing and proposed transportation facilities for suitable functionality within the



region's integrated metropolitan transportation system. WFMPO focused on identifying facilities that serve important national and regional transportation functions such as major roadways, transit, multimodal and intermodal facilities, pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities, and intermodal connectors. WFMPO reviewed existing, and developed new operational, and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities in order to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods. WFMPO reassessed the MTP's capital investment strategies aimed at preserving the existing and projected future metropolitan transportation infrastructure to determine if they will continue to provide multimodal capacity increases based on our regional priorities and needs. Capital investment should consider projects and strategies that address areas and/or corridors where current or projected congestion threatens the efficient functioning of key elements of the metropolitan area's transportation system. The MTP also examines environmental mitigation activities, policies, programs, and strategies via WFMPO's annual Environmental Justice Analysis Report for projects located within the financially constrained Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The MTP update includes a section dedicated to pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities as prescribed by 23 U.S.C. 217(g). The hike and bike section gives due consideration to pedestrians and bicyclists in regards to general comprehensive planning and to the development of safe and contiguous bicycle and pedestrian routes. Finally, the MTP update includes a review of transportation and transit enhancement activities, as appropriate, and a financial plan that demonstrates how WFMPO will implement the adopted transportation plan.



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While serving as the blueprint for the development of future mobility projects, the MTP must adhere to the federal guidelines concerning funding sources for proposed projects. Federal law requires the MTP to include all projects intending to utilize federal highway or transit dollars during the 25-year planning period as well as all other regionally significant transportation projects, regardless of their source of funding. However, the MTP must constrain those projects against a realistic estimate of available resources. The MTP can only contain projects having a realistic chance for funding during the 25-year planning period. To accomplish this, WFMPO developed a financially constrained MTP project list, or Financial Plan, which specifically addresses transportation system operations and maintenance within our area. The MTP project list contains system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonably expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways (as defined by 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(5)) and public transportation (as defined by title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53).

WFMPO worked with the Wichita Falls Transit System (WFTS), the City of Wichita Falls, and the Texas Department of Transportation to develop an estimate of the funds available for implementing the metropolitan transportation plan, as required under 23 CFR § 450.314(a). WFMPO identified all necessary financial resources from public and private sources that WFMPO could reasonably expect to have available to carry out the transportation plan.

The Financial Plan also includes recommendations on any additional financing strategies - created or identified - that WFMPO can use to fund projects and programs within the Metropolitan

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Transportation Plan. In the case of new funding sources, WFMPO will identify strategies to ensure their availability. When developing the Financial Plan, WFMPO will take into account all projects and strategies proposed for funding under title 23 U.S.C. (Title 23, Federal Aid Highways), title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 (Title 49, Section 5307, Federal Aid Transit), or with other Federal funds; State assistance; local sources; and private participation. WFMPO uses an inflation rate of 4% to reflect “Year of Expenditure Dollars”, or YOE, when developing revenue and cost estimates that support the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

WFMPO’s MTP project list classifies projects into three main categories. The first category, Short-Range, includes all projects the MPO reasonably expects will receive funding during years 2015 through 2025. The second category, Long-Range, also called “the outer years”, includes all projects the MPO reasonably expects will receive funding during years 2026 through 2040. The final category, Un-Met Needs, includes all remaining projects that have no reasonable expectation to receive funding from any source.

Concerning land use, WFMPO consulted with the appropriate State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of the transportation plan. Where possible, WFMPO



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compared the transportation plan to State conservation plans and maps, and to inventories of natural or historic resources.

Throughout the document, the Vision 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan incorporates Metropolitan Planning Area safety elements that support the priorities and goals of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan as required under 23 U.S.C. 148. The Vision 2040 plan also references local emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans, strategies and policies that support homeland security and safeguard the personal security of all motorized and non-motorized users.

A Project identified as fiscally constrained within the MTP's Financial Plan becomes eligible for federal highway or transit dollars for study, design, Right-of-Way acquisition, and construction activities. If funding becomes available then the project moves into WFMPO's Transportation Improvement Program where it remains until the project "lets" or goes into construction or implementation. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) only contains fiscally constrained projects that the MPO expects will go into construction or implementation within the next four fiscal years. The TIP follows similar guidelines for constraining projects to realistic funding estimates.

During the development of this edition of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), WFMPO provided citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, 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 comment on the transportation plan. MPO staff utilized the principles, methods, and strategies of the Public Participation Plan developed under § 450.316(a) to create numerous public comment opportunities. MPO staff made the MTP available to the public (to the maximum extent practicable) via hardcopy and electronically accessible formats including, but not limited to, www.wfmppo.com and the World Wide Web.

WFMPO's 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan is the final product of several years of continuous and comprehensive planning research done cooperatively with the Policy Board, the Technical Advisory Committee, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Wichita Falls Transit System, WFMPO staff, local stakeholders, and private citizens. The success in preparing this plan update is due in large part to their efforts. The Policy Board approved this update of the plan on January 28, 2015.

Legislative Basis for Vision 2040

The driving force behind the Vision 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan is the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama on July 6, 2012. Public Law 112-141, or MAP-21, will fund surface transportation programs at over \$105 billion for fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and is the first long-term highway authorization enacted since 2005. MAP-21 represents a milestone for the U.S. economy – it provides needed funds and, more importantly, it transforms the policy and programmatic framework for investments to guide the growth and development of the country's vital transportation infrastructure.



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Prior to MAP-21, WFMPO operated under several other transportation reauthorization acts passed by Congress. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) greatly advanced the role of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) in the overall transportation planning process. ISTEA strengthened the MTP to the point where it became the dominant mechanism for investment decision-making regarding the development of the metropolitan transportation system. The passage of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) continued the same basic philosophy. Building upon ISTEA and TEA-21, President George W. Bush signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) on August 10, 2005. SAFETEA-LU focused on the challenges of improving safety, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency in freight movement, increasing intermodal connectivity, and protecting the environment. The law also established two new standalone planning factors for metropolitan and statewide planning processes. They are safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users. Table 1-1 below illustrates the chronology of federal transportation bills authorized by Congress since 1991.

Table 1-1 Legislative Basis for the MTP (Vision 2040 Plan)		
Federal Transportation Bill	Year	Overview
ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act)	1991-1997	ISTEA was the first federal transportation bill following the interstate highway system era. The bill recognized the role of transit and the need for more local decision-making in transportation.
TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century)	1998-2004	TEA-21 continued many of the funding and policy efforts initiated as part of ISTEA, but saw a large increase in active transportation funding, reaching \$2.3 billion.
SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act)	2005-2009	SAFETEA-LU broke new ground with two innovative programs designed to promote active transportation: Safe Routes to School, to encourage children to safely walk and bike to school, and the Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP).
MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century Act)	2012-Present	MAP-21 reduced the amount of funding available for active transportation and allowed states to opt out of funding these programs. This bill also reduced the amount of funding for bicycle and pedestrian transportation and consolidated everything into a broader program called "Transportation Alternatives". Furthermore, MAP-21 included the development of a national freight policy and reformed tolling on federal highways.



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Similar in context to SAFETEA-LU, MAP-21 creates a streamlined, performance-based, and multimodal program to address the many challenges facing the U.S. transportation system. These challenges include improving safety, maintaining infrastructure condition, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency of the surface transportation system, supporting the national freight network by strengthening the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets which in turn supports regional economic development, protecting and enhancing the natural environment, and reducing delays in the project development and delivery process. MAP-21 builds on and refines many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991 under ISTEA.

In MAP-21, the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes are continued and enhanced to incorporate performance goals, measures, and targets into the process of identifying needed transportation improvements and project selection. Public involvement remains a hallmark of the planning process.

Requirements for a long-range plan (MTP) and a short-term transportation improvement plan (TIP) continue, with the long-range plan to incorporate performance-based planning as required by the Act for specific programs. The long-range plan must describe the performance measures and targets used in assessing system performance and progress in achieving the performance targets. MPO's must develop their Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP's) to make progress toward established performance targets and include a description of the anticipated achievements.

Setting the course for transportation investment in highways, MAP-21 strengthens America's highways by incorporating principal arterials, not previously included, in to the National Highway System (NHS). MAP-21 establishes a performance-based program that focuses on national transportation goals, increasing the accountability and transparency of federal highway programs, and improves transportation investment decision-making through performance-based planning and programming. MAP-21 creates jobs and supports economic growth by authorizing funding for road, bridge, bicycling, and walking improvements, and by enhancing innovative financing through private sector investment. It also includes a number of provisions designed to improve freight movement in support of national goals. MAP-21 supports the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) aggressive safety agenda, via the Highway Safety Improvement Program, by doubling funding for infrastructure safety, strengthening the linkage among modal safety programs, and creating a positive agenda to make significant progress in reducing highway fatalities. It also continues to build on other aggressive safety efforts, including the Department's fight against distracted driving and its push to improve transit and motor carrier safety. MAP-21 streamlines federal highway transportation programs by substantially consolidating the program structure into a smaller number of broader core programs. The law eliminates many smaller programs, including most discretionary programs, with the eligibility generally continuing under core programs. Finally, MAP-21 accelerates project delivery and promotes project innovation through a host of changes aimed at ensuring the timely delivery of transportation projects. Changes will improve innovation and efficiency in the development of projects, through the planning and environmental review process, all the way to project delivery.



Resolution

Wichita Falls Urban Transportation Study Resolution #1-2015

A RESOLUTION BY THE POLICY BOARD OF THE WICHITA FALLS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (WFMPO) AND THE WICHITA FALLS URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY (WFUTS) ADOPTING THE 2015-2040 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND AUTHORIZING ITS SUBMISSION TO THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (TXDOT).

WHEREAS, the Transportation Policy Committee is the policy body for the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and the Wichita Falls Urban Transportation Study (WFUTS), and is responsible for preparing and submitting the 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Wichita Falls MPO staff recommends the adoption and submission of the 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan to TxDOT; and

WHEREAS, the Wichita Falls MPO Technical Advisory Committee recommends the adoption and submission of the 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan to TxDOT.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Transportation Policy Committee of the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Wichita Falls Urban Transportation Study that:

SECTION 1: the 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization is hereby adopted.

SECTION 2: the 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan is attached hereto.

SECTION 3: the Executive Director of the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization is hereby authorized to submit the 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan to TxDOT.

SECTION 4: this resolution shall be in effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED during the regular session of the Wichita Falls MPO Transportation Policy Committee on January 28, 2015.

Glenn Barham, Chairperson
Transportation Policy Committee
Wichita Falls MPO

I hereby certify the Transportation Policy Committee (Policy Board) of the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization, for the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Area, adopted this resolution during regular session on January 28, 2015.

Irvan F. (Lin) Barnett Jr.
Executive Director
Wichita Falls MPO



Acknowledgements

The Wichita Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization (WFMPO) sincerely appreciates the input and assistance from its local, county, state, and federal planning partners, the Cities of Wichita Falls, Lakeside City, and Pleasant Valley; Wichita and Archer Counties; the Texas Department of Transportation; the Federal Transit Administration, and the Federal Highway Administration.

In particular, WFMPO acknowledges the participation and assistance of the following people:

TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE (TPC) 2014/2015

Voting Members

Hon. Glenn Barham, Chairperson, Mayor of Wichita Falls
Hon. Woodrow (Woody) Gossom, Vice-Chairperson, Wichita County Judge
Mr. Dennis Wilde, Executive Director, North Texas Regional Planning Commission
Mr. Jeff Watts, City Representative, City of Pleasant Valley
Mr. Jim Henson, Mayor, City of Lakeside City
Mr. Larry Tegtmeyer, District Engineer, Texas Department of Transportation
Mr. Michael Smith, City Councilor, City of Wichita Falls
Mr. Russell Schreiber, Director of Public Works, City of Wichita Falls
Mr. Tim Ingle, City Councilor, City of Wichita Falls

Non-Voting Members

Hon. Craig Estes, State Senator, District 30
Hon. Frank James, State Representative, District 69
Hon. William "Mac" Thornberry, U.S. Representative, District 13
Hon. Gary Beesinger, Archer County Judge
Ms. Barbara Maley, Federal Highway Administration, Planning Coordinator
Mr. Darron Leiker, Wichita Falls City Manager
Mr. Danny Brown, Texas Department of Transportation, Transportation Planning and Development Director
Ms. Susan Stockett, Texas Department of Transportation, PTN Coordinator
Mr. David Rohmer, Texas Department of Transportation, Area Engineer
Ms. Tammy Marlow, Texas Department of Transportation, TPP Division
Ms. Winona Henry, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Regional Director

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

Mr. Irvan F. (Lin) Barnett Jr., Wichita Falls MPO, MPO Director and TAC Chairperson
Mr. Allan Moore, Texas Department of Transportation, Director of Construction
Mr. Danny Brown, Texas Department of Transportation, Transportation Planning and Development Director
Mr. David Rohmer, Texas Department of Transportation, Area Engineer
Mr. Davis Powell, City of Wichita Falls, City Engineer



Ms. Karen Montgomery-Gagne, City of Wichita Falls, Planning Administrator
Mr. Kevin Hugman, City of Wichita Falls, ACM/Community Development Director
Mr. Mark Beauchamp, City of Wichita Falls, Traffic Superintendent
Mr. Tim Hertel, Texas Department of Transportation, Director of Operations

WICHITA FALLS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION STAFF

Ms. Jaimie Lee, Wichita Falls MPO, Transportation Planner II
Mr. Donnie Arbeau, Beau and Sons, Ltd., Planning Consultant

Acronyms

The following abbreviations denote boards, agencies, and programs:

Local:

BPAC	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
LRPRP	Long-Range Project Readiness Plan
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
TPC	Transportation Policy Committee
WFMPO	Wichita Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization
WFTS	Wichita Falls Transit System
CBD	Central Business District

Regional:

NORTEX	North Texas Regional Planning Commission
RCTC	Regional Coordination Transportation Committee

State:

TCI	Texas Congestion Index
TPP	Transportation Planning and Programming Division (TxDOT)
TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation

Federal:

ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
EJ	Environmental Justice
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century