

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (ADA): A federal law mandating sweeping changes in building codes, transportation, and hiring practices to prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities, not just in projects involving federal dollars, but all new public places, conveyances and employers. The significance of ADA in transportation is mainly felt in terms of transit operations, capital improvements and hiring.

ARTERIAL: A street classification for roadways serving major traffic volumes other than highways.

ATTAINMENT AREA: An area considered to have air quality at least as good as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) health standards used in the Clean Air Act. An area may be an Attainment Area for one pollutant and a Non-Attainment Area for others.

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (ADT): The average number of vehicles passing a fixed point in a 24-hour time frame. A convention for measuring traffic volume.

BASE YEAR: An analysis or study's baseline or lead off year. The year to which other years are compared.

BIKEWAY: A facility intended to accommodate bicycle travel for recreational or commuting purposes. Bikeways are not necessarily separate facilities ; they may be designed and operated to be shared with other travel modes.

CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: Block groups are subdivisions of census tracts containing between 400 and 2,000 persons.

CENSUS TRACT: Census tracts are small, relatively permanent subdivisions of a county which are delineated for all metropolitan areas and other densely populated counties by local census statistical area committees. Each census tract contains between 1,000 and 8,000 persons with an average of about 2,000 persons.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (CBD): The most intensely commercial sector of a city.

THE CLEAN AIR ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1990 (CAAA): Amendments which identify "mobile sources" (vehicles) as primary sources of pollution and call for stringent new requirements in metropolitan areas and states where attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) is or could be a problem.

COLLECTOR/DISTRIBUTOR STREET: A road which collects traffic from local streets and distributes it to arterials or expressways. A collector may also parallel an expressway to collect and distribute traffic at access points to the expressway involving through lanes.

CRASH: A collision of one vehicle with another object or two or more vehicles with each other or another object which results in damage to one or more vehicles. Formerly referred to as accidents.

DEMAND RESPONSE SERVICE: Term for a service type, usually considered para-transit, in which a user can access transportation services that can be variably routed and timed to meet changing needs on a semi-daily basis. Frequently used to serve elderly and handicapped persons. Compare with Fixed Route Service.

DEMOGRAPHY: Characteristics of a total population. Characteristics can include, but are not restricted to: ethnic makeup, age distribution, education levels, and occupation patterns.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT): Can refer to U.S. DOT or to a state DOT.

EISENHOWER INTERSTATE SYSTEM: See INTERSTATE SYSTEM.

EMPLOYER TRIP REDUCTION (ETR) PROGRAM: An employer designed program which minimizes employee commuting levels. These programs are federally required in non-attainment areas.

EMPLOYMENT DENSITY: The number of jobs within a defined geographical area.

ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES: Refers to activities conducted in relationship to a particular transportation project which "enhance" the existing or proposed project. Examples of such activities include provision of facilities for pedestrians or cyclists, landscaping other scenic beautification projects, historic preservation, control and removal of outdoor advertising, archeological planning and research, and mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) Report which details any adverse economic, social and environmental effects of a proposed transportation project for which federal funding is being sought. Adverse effects could include air, water, or noise pollution; destruction or disruption of natural resources; adverse employment effects; injurious displacement of people or businesses; or disruption of desirable community or regional growth.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA): EPA is the source agency of air quality control regulations affecting transportation.

EXPRESSWAY: A divided limited access highway for through traffic with controlled access, the intersections of which are usually separated from other roadways by differing grades.

FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM: Federal classification of streets and highways into functional operating characteristics.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA): The agency of U.S. DOT with jurisdiction over highways.

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA): The agency of U.S. DOT administration with jurisdiction over transit. Formerly the Urban Mass Transit Administration.

FIXED ROUTE SERVICE: Term applied to transit service which is regularly scheduled and operates over a set route.

FREEWAY: Antiquated term referring to a highway that is free of at-grade intersections and traffic signals. See expressway.

HEADWAYS: Public Transportation term referring to the frequency of service for a fixed transit route.

HIGH SPEED RAIL: Rail facilities where travel exceeds 150 miles per hour.

HIGHWAY: Term applies to roads, streets, and parkways, and also includes rights-of-way, bridges, railroad crossings, drainage tunnels, drainage structures, signs, guard rails, and protective structures in connection with highways.

HOME-BASED WORK TRIP: A trip for the purpose of one's employment with the trip end being one's home.

HOUSEHOLD DENSITY: The number of households within a defined geographical area.

INCENTIVE ZONING: Flexible zoning techniques that give the municipality more control over the details of land development than zoning regulations usually allow through allocation of incentives such as tax breaks, etc.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT: The process of building homes, businesses, and public facilities on unused and underutilized lands within existing urban areas. The primary goal of infill development is to keep resources where people already live and allow rebuilding to occur.

INFRASTRUCTURE: A term connoting the physical underpinnings of society at large, including, but not limited to, roads, bridges, transit, waste system, public housing, sidewalks, utility installations parks, public buildings, and communication networks.

INTERMODAL: Refers to the connections between transportation modes.

INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT OF 1991 (ISTEA): A federal mandate signed into law December 18, 1991, ISTEA proposed broad changes to the way transportation decisions are made by emphasizing diversity and balance of modes and preservation of existing systems over construction of new facilities, especially roads, and by proposing a series of social, environmental and energy factors which must be considered in transportation planning, programming and project selection.

INTERSTATE SYSTEM: That system of highways which connects the principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers of the United States. The interstate system also connects at suitable border points with routes of continental importance in Canada and Mexico. The routes of the interstate system were selected by joint action of the state highway department of each state and the adjoining states, subject to the approval of the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

JOB-HOUSING BALANCE: The development of a land use pattern offering a balance of jobs to housing opportunities.

LAND USE: The way in which specific portions of land or structures on them are used, i.e., commercial, residential, retail, industrial, and so on.

LOCAL STREET: A street intended solely for access to properties contiguous to it.

LONG-RANGE: Refers in transportation planning to a time span of more than five years. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is three years in scope, is typically regarded as a short-range program.

MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDIES: A planning tool to provide the regional multimodal planning effort with more in-depth technical analysis of various sub-area or corridor options.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO): The agency designated by the Governor (or Governors in multi-state areas) to administer the federally required transportation planning process in the metropolitan area. An MPO must be in place in every urbanized area over 50,000 population. The MPO is responsible for the 25-year long-range plan and the transportation improvement program. The official name for an MPO may also be Council of Governments, Planning Association, Planning Authority, Regional or Area Planning Council, Regional or Area Planning Commission.

METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA (MSA & CMSA): The Census classifications for areas having a population over 50,000. The MSA may contain several urbanized areas, but contains one or more central city or cities. The MSA also does not subdivide counties. For example the Waco MSA is the same as McLennan County. When the commuting patterns of two MSAs have caused them to merge, the result is a Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA).

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN: A document, formerly known as the Long-Range Transportation Plan, which identifies existing and future transportation deficiencies and needs, as well as network improvements needed to meet mobility requirements over at least a twenty five year time period. To receive federal funding, a transportation project must be included in the MTP and the TIP.

MOBILITY: The ease with which desired destinations can be reached.

MODEL: A mathematical and geometric projection of activity and the interactions in the transportation system in an area. This projection must be able to be evaluated according to a given set of criteria which typically include criteria pertaining to land use, economics, social values, and travel patterns.

MULTIMODAL: Refers to the diversity of options for the same trip; an approach to transportation planning or programming which acknowledges the existence of or need for transportation options.

NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARD (NAAQS): Federally mandated maximum levels (i.e., federal health standards) for air pollutants such as ozone, carbon dioxide, particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, and lead.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA): Federal act requiring a study on any environmental impact a federally funded or permitted project might cause.

NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM (NHS): A classification of roads authorized by ISTEA which are comprised of Interstate Highways and roads designated as important for interstate travel, national defense, intermodal connections, and intermodal commerce. Federal funds are designated for projects on the NHS system.

NEO-TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN (NTND): Neighborhoods characterized by an interconnecting street network, mixture of land uses, bike and pedestrian paths, grid pattern of land use, and resemblance to those areas developed in America before World War II.

NETWORK: A graphic and/or mathematical representation of multimodal paths in a transportation system.

NITROGEN OXIDES (Nox): A pollutant produced during fossil fuel combustion which contributes to ground-level ozone.

NON-ATTAINMENT AREA: A designation by the Environmental Protection Agency of any place in the United States failing to meet national air quality standards (NAAQS).

ORIGIN: The point or locale where a trip begins.

ORIGIN-DESTINATION SURVEY (O-D Survey): A survey of travelers (motorists or transit passengers) typically undertaken to identify travel patterns, habits, and needs.

OZONE: A gas which in excess quantities at ground-level is a pollutant and irritant. Ozone is created when nitrogen oxides (Nox) react with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in sunlight, also known as smog.

PARA-TRANSIT: Alternatively known as special transportation when applied to social services systems. Applies to a variety of smaller, often flexibly scheduled and routed non-profit oriented transportation services using low capacity vehicles to operate within normal urban transit corridors or rural areas. These services usually serve the needs of persons whom standard mass transit services would serve with difficulty or not at all. Common patrons are the elderly and persons with disabilities.

PARA-TRANSIT VAN: A van specially modified to carry disabled passengers.

PASS THROUGH TOLLS: A funding mechanism where an entity such as a City, County or private corporation pays for the initial construction of a transportation facility. That entity is then repaid from the State of Texas based on the usage of that facility.

PEAK HOUR: The sixty minute period in the a.m. or p.m. in which the largest volume of travel is experienced.

PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (POD): Similar to a Neo-Traditional Neighborhood Design, except that it often incorporates higher densities and is designed to encourage the walkability of the surrounding neighborhood.

PERSON-TRIP: A trip made by one person from one origin to one destination.

PHASE: Project Phase for Federal Funding (E = Preliminary Engineering, R = Right of Way Acquisition, and C = Construction).

PLANNER: In the transportation field, a title likely having to do with the management and analysis of data which directly supports qualitatively oriented, strategic, or "macro" decision making.

PRIVATIZATION: Concept having to do with for-profit business supplying goods and services for government, public programs or systems, with intent of enhancing cost efficiency.

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION (Project ID): Code assigned by the MPO for local tracking and identification. Used to relate projects to the MTP.

PROVIDER: An agency that causes clients to be transported, as opposed to an agency whose role is limited to funding programs.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: The active involvement of the public in the development of transportation plans and improvements program. ISTEA requires that state departments of transportation and MPOs "shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the development of the long-range plan and the TIP.

PUBLIC ROAD: Any road or street under jurisdiction of and maintained by a public authority and open to public traffic.

REVERSE COMMUTE: Travel from home to work or from work to home against the main directions of traffic.

RIGHT OF WAY (ROW): Priority paths for the construction and operation of highways, light and heavy rail, railroads, etc.

SAFE ACCOUNTABLE FLEXIBLE EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT: A LEGACY FOR USERS (SAFETEA-LU): The federal reauthorization act for TEA-21 designed to support transportation across the nation.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (STP): One of the key capital programs in Title I of ISTEA. It provides flexibility in expenditures of "roads" funds for non-motorized and transit modes and for a category of activities known as transportation enhancements, which broaden the definition of eligible transportation activities to include bicycle and pedestrian facilities and enhance community and environmental quality through ten categories of activity.

TELECOMMUTING: Using a home computer or a neighborhood work center for work, effectively eliminating the need to travel to a conventional workplace.

TELECONFERENCING: Using audio, video, and/or computer connections among sites for meetings. Eliminating any need to travel to the meeting site.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF): A state-administered block grant program apportioned to each state on a formula basis from the federal government. The funding is temporary in that recipients will have no more than sixty months total (some states have chosen shorter periods) to find employment. After sixty months of support, TANF benefits end.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (TxDOT): State agency responsible for construction and maintenance of all Interstate, U.S., and State Highways; and Farm-to-Market (FM) Roads within the state.

TEXAS T-BONE: A proposal by the Texas High Speed Rail and Transportation Corporation to construct high speed rail lines between the cities of Dallas and San Antonio and then Houston and Fort Hood.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS ZONE: The smallest geographically designated area for analysis of transportation activity such as data collection and travel movements within, into, and out of the urban area. A zone can be one to 10 square miles in area.

TRAFFIC DISTRICT: A geographic unit comprised of several serial zones which may be used for the same purposes as traffic analysis zones.

TRANSIT: Transportation mode which moves larger numbers of people than does a single automobile. Generally renders to passenger service provided to the general public along established routes with fixed or variable schedules at published fares.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD): Similar to a Neo-Traditional Neighborhood Design, except that it incorporates higher densities and possesses a distinct focus toward transit.

TRANSIT DEPENDENT: Persons who must rely on public transit or para-transit services for most of their transportation. Typically refers to individuals without access to personal vehicles.

TRANSPORTATION: The act of getting persons or things from here to there, through personal or communal means. An integral and vital human need, behavior, and/or service.

TRANSPORTATION CONTROL MEASURE (TCM): Any measure designed to reduce congestion, emissions, and other traffic problems.

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM): Strategies for easing or reducing transportation demand, specifically aimed at diverting people from driving alone. Programs used to improve air quality and congestion by decreasing vehicle miles traveled and vehicle trips.

TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY (TEA-21): The reauthorization bill for ISTEA designed to support transportation across the nation.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP): A three year transportation investment strategy, required at the metropolitan level, and a two year program at the state level, which addresses the goals of the long-range plans and lists priority projects and activities for the region.

TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREAS (TMA): Areas subject to special requirements under ISTEA and in some cases benefiting from preferential treatment with regard to air quality needs, and local authority to select transportation projects. Any area over 200,000 population is automatically a transportation management area, which subjects it to additional planning requirements, but also entitles it to earmarked funds for large urbanized areas under the Surface Transportation Program. Additional areas may be designated TMAs if the Governor and the MPO or affected local officials request designation. Such a designation would entitle them to greater local project selection authority through their MPOs, but would not, according to interim guidance issued by U.S. DOT, entitle them to the earmarked STP funds for large urban areas.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT (TSM): That element of the TIP which proposes non-capital-intensive steps toward the improvement of a transportation system, such as refinement of system and traffic management, the use of bus priority or reserved lanes, and parking strategies. It includes actions to reduce vehicle use, facilitate traffic flow, and improve internal transit management.

TRANS TEXAS CORRIDOR: A proposal by the Governor of Texas to create a network of corridors throughout Texas to provide rapid mobility options for through traffic. These corridors are proposed to include toll expressways, separate truck lanes, high speed rail facilities, freight rail facilities and a corridor for various utilities. User fees are anticipated to pay for most of the costs associated with construction.

TRAVEL TIME: Customarily calculated as the time it takes to travel from "door-to-door." For transit service measures of travel time include time spent accessing, waiting, and transferring between vehicles, as well as that time spent on board.

TRIP: A one-direction movement from an origin to destination.

TRIP END: Origin or destination of a trip.

TRIP PURPOSE: Reason for a trip.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (TxDOT): Agency responsible for construction and maintenance of state highway facilities and also oversees the distribution and regulation of planning funds to the MPO's.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP): Annual report or budget document prepared by the Waco MPO describing transportation planning activities which will be performed by the MPO staff.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (US DOT): Principal federal funding and regulating agency for transportation facilities. FHWA and FTA are agencies within US DOT.

URBANIZED AREA (UZA): A census classification for area having a population of 50,000 or more which meet certain population density requirements. The 1990 Census identified thirty-five UZAs that newly qualify to have designated MPOs.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (VMT): Term used for describing the total number of miles traveled by a vehicle in a given time. Most conventional VMT calculation is to multiply average length of trip by the total number of trips.

WELFARE TO WORK (WTW): This program shares the same overall objectives of TANF, especially making welfare receipt temporary and changing the culture of welfare from one of cash benefits to one of work and self-sufficiency. The funding is intended to help states and localities meet their welfare reform objectives and the goals set forth under PRWORA by providing federal resources above and beyond the TANF block grant to move the least employable TANF recipients and non-custodial fathers of TANF children into long-term unsubsidized employment