

January 20, 2016

MPO Members to Discuss Design Issues Regarding a Proposed I-69E Frontage Road Overpass

In December 2014, the Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) adopted a new Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). This long range transportation plan included listing of an overpass structure at the I-69E Northbound frontage road; to be sited near the gate in front of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) line.

Said improvements were proposed to be funded via Strategic Mobility (Category 12) monies. Such funding is awarded at the discretion of the Texas Transportation Commission.

Since that time, several significant events have taken place. First, the voters of Texas approved of Proposition One. This enables oil severance fees to be directed towards funding of eligible roadway improvements. Second, the City of Brownsville requested that TxDOT Pharr District staff begin undertaking design work for such a facility. With a potential means of funding these improvements, TxDOT staff began design activities in the fall of 2015. (Continued on page 2)

Upcoming Policy Committee Meeting

**Wednesday,
February 10, 2016
At 10 a.m.**

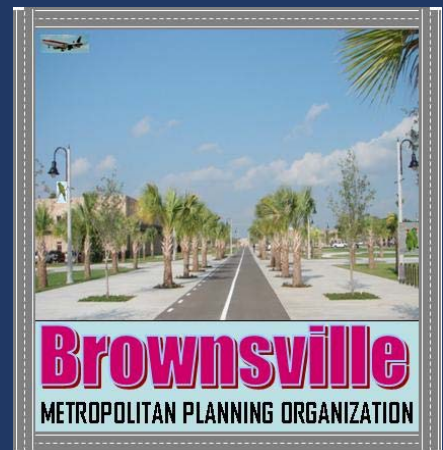
**City Hall, City Commission Chambers, 2nd
Floor, 1001 E. Elizabeth St., Brownsville,
TX 78520**

Note: Brownsville MPO Policy Committee Meetings are now televised effective September 1, 2015. Archived recordings of these meetings will be loaded onto the Brownsville MPO website:
www.brownsvillempo.org .

Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization

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mpo.cob.us



A meeting was held in October 2015 between City staff and TxDOT staff to review preliminary designs for this overpass. The initial design concepts were discussed. Some modifications were developed for future design consideration.

Since that time, design work has proceeded. Some other design alternatives have been formulated by TxDOT staff.

On December 9, 2015, TxDOT staff briefed the MPO Policy Committee members about four (4) design alternatives. The Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has approximately 6.3 million dollars available to allocate towards building these improvements.

Unfortunately, the preliminary cost estimate is the full project may cost 10-11 million dollars, or more.

Limited additional funding may be available via Category 11 --- District Discretionary funds. However, this is a matter solely at the discretion of the Pharr District staff. The MPO has no decision-making authority over Category 11. Normally, the MPO would wait a period of time to obtain more funding to undertake all of the proposed improvements.

In this case, that solution is not feasible.

The Proposition One Funding must be employed within the next two (2) years.

Therefore, MPO Policy Committee members will discuss completion of some overpass elements now, (within two years). The expectation is that the other elements will be completed later.

The two elements consist of two independent structures. One structure is the proposed northbound vehicular lane, to go up and over the railroad tracks. This element will help serve the community's need for northbound travel during Hurricane Evacuation events. In addition, this new vehicle lane will serve emergency fire / police travel when needed, in the event that the I-69E northbound main lanes are blocked due to major accidents.

Also, this northbound one-lane roadway will feature a generous roadway shoulder. Bicyclists will be able to use this shoulder to travel northbound. This element (above) does not address the need for southbound travel. However, the improved travel for Hurricane Evacuation is a very significant benefit needed by this community.

The other proposed element or structure is a hike and bike facility that offers both northbound and southbound travel. Located a few feet to the east of the vehicular structure, the hike and bike overpass will be considerably longer, since the slope needs to be gentler to comply with ADA requirements.

MPO staff have no details at this time, about the cost estimates for these two (proposed) structures.

Those persons with an interest in these issues are welcome to attend the upcoming February MPO Policy Committee meeting to learn more.

If you have any further questions, please call Mark Lund, MPO Director at (956)548-6150 or send your query via e-mail to bmbo@cob.us when you have a chance. Thank you.



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 City, ST, Zip Code

NAME/NOMBRE	COMMENTS/COMENTARIOS
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<p>PLEASE HELP US IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION IN BROWNSVILLE BY SENDING US YOUR IDEAS AND COMMENTS. WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS CAN BE ADDRESSED TO:</p> <p>Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization c/o Brownsville Planning & Development Services Dept. P.O. Box 911 1034 E. Levee St., 2nd floor Brownsville, TX 78520</p> <p>Or E-mail: georgina.lopez@cob.us</p>	
<p>POR FAVOR AYUDENOS A MEJORAR EL SISTEMA DE TRANSPORTE EN BROWNSVILLE. QUEREMOS SU OPINIÓN DE USTED. ENVÍENOS SUS IDEAS, COMENTARIOS Y PREGUNTAS A LA SIGUIENTE DIRECCIÓN:</p> <p>Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization c/o Brownsville Planning & Development Services Dept. P.O. Box 911 1034 E. Levee St. 2nd floor Brownsville, TX 78520</p> <p>O Correo Electrónico: georgina.lopez@cob.us</p>	