

MOBILITY2050



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INTRODUCTION

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1. Vision and Goals

The Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (AAMPO) planning region includes Bexar County, Comal County, Guadalupe County, and a portion of Kendall County. The region is culturally and geographically diverse. Over the next 25 years, each of these counties are projected to experience between 60 and 198 percent increase in population. In order to preserve and enhance the region’s movement of people and goods, strategic planning is required. The AAMPO Transportation Policy Board’s vision and goals seek to enhance and promote a safe, sustainable, and connected multimodal transportation system that maintains a regional focus. AAMPO’s regional growth is rapid with no real indicators of slowing down, due largely to the State of Texas’s economic prospects. Transportation planning, design, and construction takes time. Mobility 2050 provides a roadmap for planning to accommodate growth and maintain the area’s unique diversity, quality of life, and standard of living.



Figure 1: Vision and Goals

Over the past three years, the Alamo Area has experienced a number of disruptions to daily life. The COVID-19 pandemic was the largest disruption. The unexpected impacts improved mobility due to the shift to work from home but also negatively impacted critical supply chains and the delivery of goods and services. From travel and energy to transit and freight, the overall way people connect to each other and meet their needs was disrupted. Supply shortages, employment and education pivots, and labor shortages were the result. In addition to the pandemic, another significant disruption in the Alamo Area, and with nearly all areas of Texas impacted, was the extreme weather event, Winter Storm Uri, of February 2021. It involved freezing weather leaving many communities with no power and/or water for multiple days and impacted the delivery of goods and people's ability to be mobile. The winter ice storm, coupled with Bexar County's inability to maintain air quality at acceptable levels, underlined the importance of exploring climate resiliency policies and further examination of environmental mitigation measures. These disruptions also emphasized the need to continue to address equity issues and safety needs of the community. However, it also shone a spotlight on opportunities. Opportunities for advancing emerging technologies, continuing to explore various Travel Demand Management strategies, and planning for alternative energy sources. This plan aims to take advantage of the lessons learned and pursues the resulting opportunities. Combined, this allows for an incredible landscape for long-term planning.

AAMPO is a federally-created and funded transportation planning agency. The agency is responsible for ensuring existing and future expenditures of state and federal funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuous, comprehensive, and cooperative ("3-C") planning process. The ability to move people and goods influences education and employment, health and wellness, recreation and entertainment, quality of life, and the economy.



Figure 3: 3-C planning process

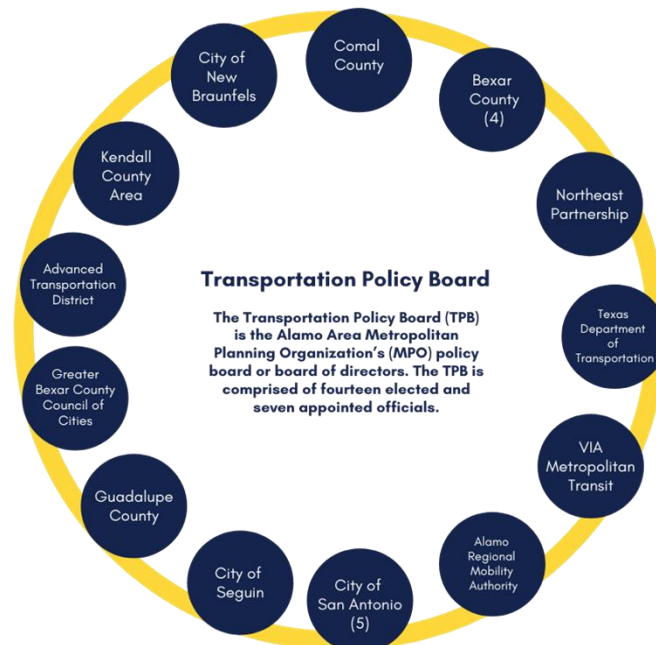


Figure 2: Transportation Policy Board

AAMPO’s Transportation Policy Board (TPB), committees, and staff, work closely with state, county, local governments, and the community in an inclusive 3C process to determine the distribution of federally-regulated transportation funding. The AAMPO TPB, with support from AAMPO’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) and through performance-based planning and public involvement processes, determines project and program funding awards. The TPB also develops regional transportation policy with support from these same committees alongside AAMPO planners.

HOW AAMPO WORKS



Figure 4: How AAMPO Works

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are federally-required deliverables for metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). The TIP is a document that summarizes the federally-funded projects and programs them for implementation over a four-year period. The MTP is the long-range plan required to have a planning horizon year of at least 20 years from plan adoption and be updated every four years for non-attainment areas, such as the Alamo Area. It lays out the existing network conditions, current plans and programs, forecasts future needs, and outlines potential future projects. AAMPO’s MTP is now updated every four years and will align with AAMPO’s adoption of the TIP and the required Transportation Conformity Document, specific to Bexar County’s air quality non-attainment status.

As AAMPO moves forward over the next four years, the Board and the agency will be focused on further developing a safer, more efficient, sustainable, and resilient multimodal system and advance the vision and goals outlined for this plan.

1.1 Why Long-Range Planning Matters

The level of growth experienced in the AAMPO region strains all facets of life, including mobility and the transportation network. AAMPO’s mission is to continuously plan, and ultimately fund, projects and programs utilizing a 3C approach. Additionally, AAMPO strives to make planning collaborative in order to

leverage resources and ensure the network is connected and efficient. A collaborative approach ensures funding is more equitably distributed. This plan outlines the area’s current planning efforts, environmental conditions, and three-year accomplishments, while exploring strategies for furthering a sustainable, multimodal regional network.

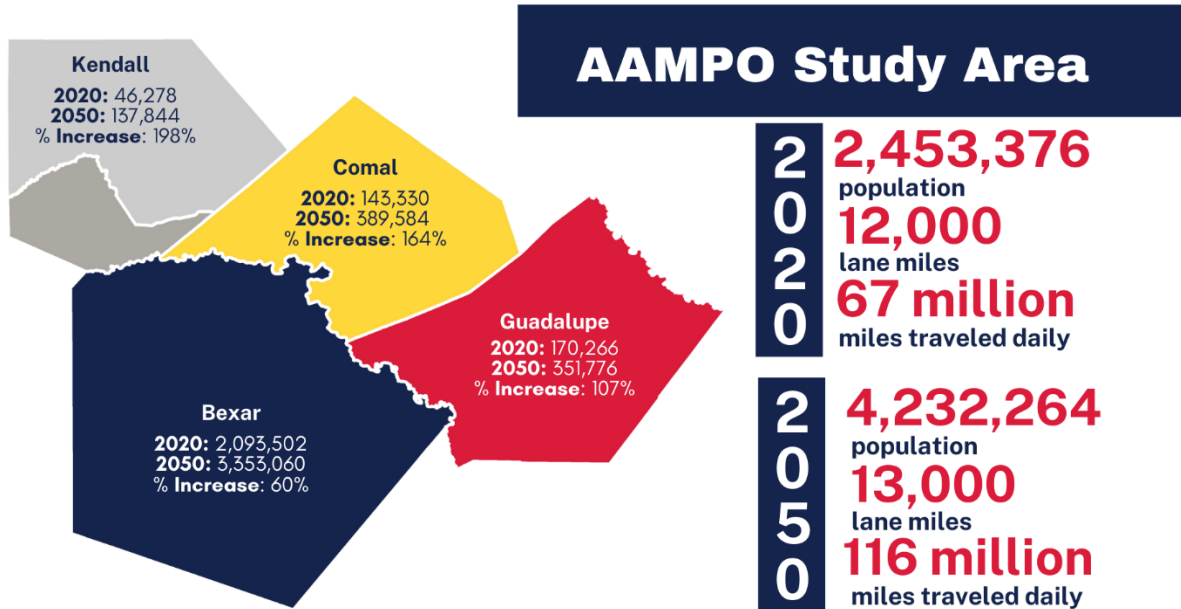


Figure 5: AAMPO Study Area

The Alamo Area has seen some gains in the past three years in the transportation arena. However, as the area continues to grow the need for significant gains in system improvements becomes vastly important. Planning and building out a multimodal transportation network take time and money. With the recent passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the area will receive long-awaited additional funding resources, as well as the opportunity to compete for newly created grants. While these additional resources are crucial, they will not address all the needs. With the uncertainty of supply chain and labor resources, following the COVID-19 pandemic, the planning and programming of funds will be largely predicated on readiness of transportation projects. Readiness is the ability to receive funds and construct a project given a specific budget and strict timeline. The planning involved to reach the various readiness milestones can take years and most large-scale improvements can take a decade or more to complete. Long-range planning, conducted in conjunction with short-term programming, is essential to mitigate the impact of growth on the region and the transportation system. Each project requires completion of the project development process as illustrated below. In September 2021, AAMPO reinstated the Project Readiness Work Group to assist with, and hold local planning partners accountable for, the planning efforts leading up to the competitive project call for the TIP. Project elements considered by the Project Readiness Group include early coordination of right of way needs, including private property need, utility and railroad coordination, potential environmental impacts, and local funding matches. The IIJA increases funding levels across all formula funding programs with a significant focus on safety. Additionally, it also provides additional competitive grants for states, MPOs, tribal governments, and local government entities seeking funds. These grants are intended to help support specific projects and programs related to various needs including bridge replacement, pedestrian and other vulnerable system user’s safety, and community connectivity. As IIJA project funding criteria and guidance are finalized, AAMPO will work with local partners to make adjustments to the agency’s policies, project performance measures, and funding.



Figure 6: Non-Construction Projects

1.2 Strategic Long-Range Planning

Through the passage of the IIJA and previously funded infrastructure acts, the federal government has established rules and regulations for federal planning and project/program award. Performance-based planning, fiscal constraints, and public involvement are part of AAMPO's planning efforts. Performance management strives to assist decision-makers to advance projects that provide a safe and reliable network based on need and quantitative measures. The approach uses current system information and data to make investment and policy decisions to achieve performance goals. AAMPO adopted performance measures, are safety, pavement and bridge condition, roadway system performance, and transit asset management. Additional performance measures will be added as new IIJA guidance is provided. Current performance is established through traffic counts, crash data, and the region's Travel Demand Model. This information is used to predict and provide criteria for future project selection. The goal is to utilize metrics that provide for consistent criteria and accountability for project selection and funding awards in the future.

Another important piece of federal regulation is the application of a funding constraint or cap (limiting the amount of funding allowed to be programmed). The MTP must be fiscally constrained, meaning it allows for a practical transparent approach to ensure a reasonable expectation of sufficient revenues to fund future efforts. This approach prevents creating an unobtainable wish list of projects and increases the likelihood of implementation and construction completion. By applying the funding constraint, local governments and transportation planners can prioritize legacy projects. And, because AAMPO's MTP is updated every four years, there is some flexibility to include other projects as additional future funding is identified.

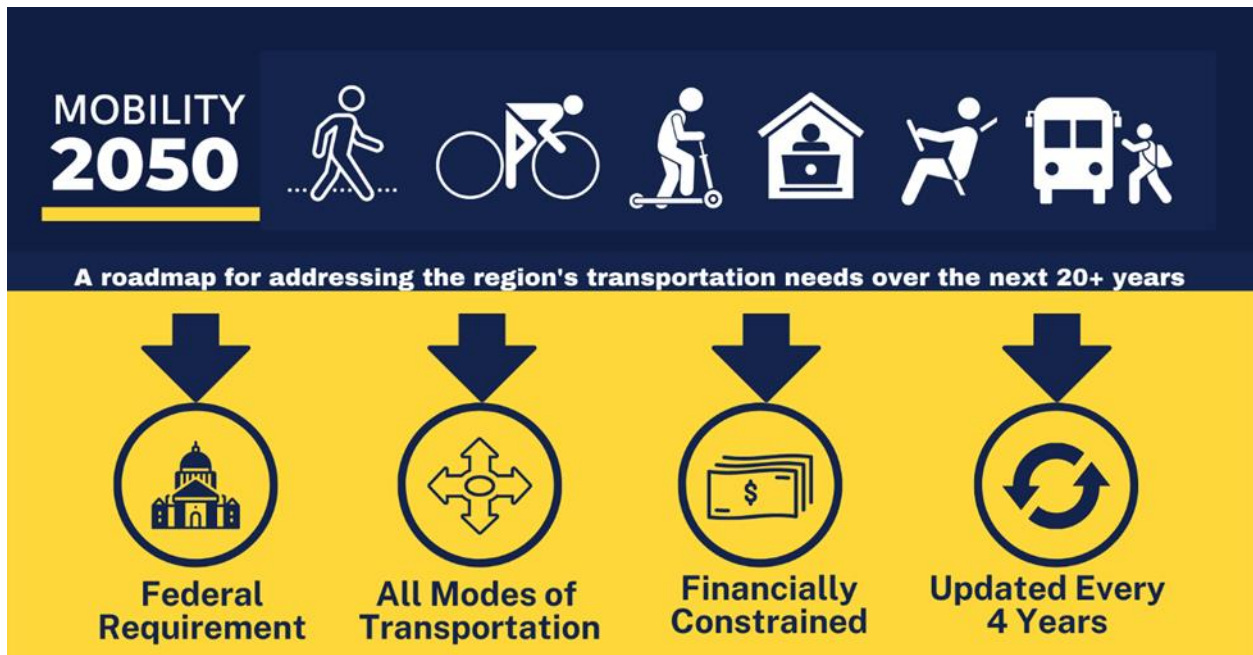


Figure 7: Twenty Year Roadmap

While the various infrastructure and transportation laws focus on return on investment and practical application of revenues, the government also emphasizes the importance of stakeholder and public involvement. Stakeholder and public involvement are crucial for project identification and development. Community support can affect various important aspects of a project's success. If not conducted in a meaningful way, it can lead to missed opportunities, schedule delays and, in worst case scenarios, litigation. Allowing the community and public at large to participate in the decision-making process is fundamental in their role as a taxpayer and ultimately as the system users. AAMPO continues to improve on public involvement efforts and community engagement by providing multiple opportunities for input and feedback. During the pandemic, AAMPO increased virtual participation options and will continue to capitalize on providing virtual and in-person engagement opportunities. Below is the planning process showing the four phases of public involvement opportunities for the MTP, *Mobility 2050*. For more information, see The Future of Transportation Public Involvement Section.



Figure 8: Four Phases of Public Involvement

AAMPO takes the technical approach, using performance measures and targets, and synthesizes it with public involvement feedback as well as other federal funding regulations and local policies using the 3C process. This process allows for information exchange between transportation partners and meaningful

community engagement. Ultimately, the desired result is federally funded, community-supported transportation policies, projects, and programs.

1.3 Plan Overview

The planning process includes data-driven elements as well as significant coordination and collaboration with AAMPO’s Transportation Policy Board, various committees, regional stakeholders and the public. Data-driven elements include demographic analysis and projections, system performance evaluation and travel demand modeling. Regional coordination and collaboration, coupled with technical information, allows for a more equitable, holistic, and data-driven approach to the distribution of transportation funding resources.

This latest update, *Mobility 2050*, outlines the Alamo Area’s current trends, existing transportation network, progress over the past three years, and explores potential future projects and programs and known available funding resources. The **Alamo Area Today** section highlights current growth population and employment demographics, land use, the current transportation system with recent achievements, and Bexar County’s air quality non-attainment mitigation status. The **Future of Transportation** section outlines near-term planning efforts, projected demand and planning strategies, long-range factors to consider in relation to growth and land use, emerging technologies, public involvement, equity, improved air quality, safety, security, and climate resiliency. The **Funding Forecast** section provides an overview of the fiscal constraints applied to proposed projects and programs and the various available funding sources. Lastly, the **Projects and Programs Lists** include roadway and transit projects and programs, funded and unfunded, for the MTP 2050 and the funded projects and programs for the 2023-2026 TIP. The unfunded list allows sponsoring transportation planners to leverage this listing to advance planning and take advantage of grant opportunities and other planning resources.

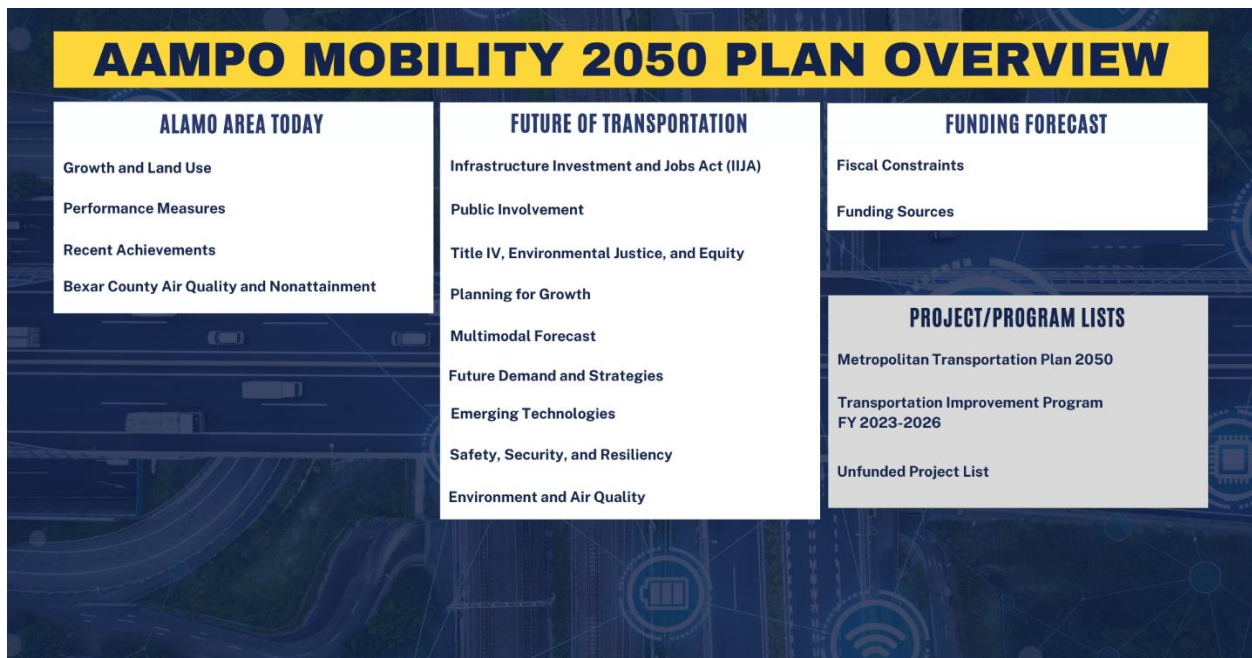


Figure 9: Mobility 2050 Plan Overview