



# RIO GRANDE VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**617 West University Dr, Edinburg TX, 78539  
(956) 682-3481**

## PLANNING PARTNERS:

**MAYOR AMBROSIO HERNANDEZ  
CHAIRMAN  
CITY OF PHARR**

**JUDGE EDDIE TREVIÑO, JR.  
VICE CHAIRMAN  
CAMERON COUNTY**

**CAMERON COUNTY RMA**

**CITY OF BROWNSVILLE**

**CITY OF EDINBURG**

**CITY OF HARLINGEN**

**CITY OF McALLEN**

**CITY OF MISSION**

**CITY OF SAN BENITO**

**HIDALGO COUNTY**

**HIDALGO COUNTY RMA**

**TxDOT (PHARR DISTRICT)**

**VALLEY METRO**

**STAFF:  
ANDREW A. CANON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**LUIS M. DIAZ  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

**EX-OFFICIO:  
RIO GRANDE VALLEY  
PARTNERSHIP**

September 29, 2021

Angela Erwin  
TxDOT Transportation Planning & Programming - STIP  
125 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Grouping of Category 9 – TASA Projects

Dear Ms. Erwin:

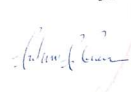
This letter serves to inform you of the modification to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGVMPO) Public Participation Plan (PPP) requires Policy Board action for substantive revisions to MPO plans and programs such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

This revision is proposed as per recommendation from the Transportation Planning and Programming (TPP) Division of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to update the Group Project Definitions which was revised in accordance with 23 CFR 450.218(g) and applicable classifications under 23 CFR 771.117 (c) and (d) and/or 40 CFR part 93 by Texas Park and Wildlife (TPWD) and TxDOT, the Federal Transit Agency (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on February 23, 2021.

A copy of this letter will be provided to the **RGVMPO Policy Board** for discussion and approval.

If further information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

  
Digitally signed by Andrew  
Canon  
DN: cn=Andrew Canon,  
o=RGVMPO, ou,  
email=acanon@rgvmpl.org,  
c=US  
Date: 2021.09.23 10:51:09  
-05'00'

Andrew A. Canon  
RGVMPO Executive Director

Cc: Mr. Pedro R. Alvarez, P.E.  
Pharr District Engineer

**Administrative Agent: Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council  
301 WEST RAILROAD - WESLACO, TX, 78596**



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION    FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
819 TAYLOR STREET, RM 14A02                      300 EAST 8TH STREET, RM 826  
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102                      AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701

February 23, 2021

REFER TO: HPP-TX

Grouped Project Definitions

Ms. Jessica Butler, Director,  
Transportation Planning and Program  
Development  
Texas Department of Transportation  
125 E. 11th Street  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Ms. Butler:

In consultation with TPWD and TxDOT, the Federal Transit Agency and Federal Highway Administration have agreed to revise the group project definitions and notes as identified in the attached table. The revision is in accordance with 23 CFR 450.218 G) and applicable classifications under 23 CFR 771.117 (c) and (d) and/or 40 CFR part 93. This revision is effective immediately. For your reference, enclosed is a complete table of approved grouped project categories definitions and notes. If you have any questions, please contact me at 512-536-5940 or Jose Campos at 512 536 5932.

Sincerely yours,

*Michael T. Leary*

Michael T. Leary,  
Director, Planning and Program Development  
Federal Highway Administration

Enclosures

Cc:

Trey Cooksey, TPWD  
Peggy Thurin, TxDOT TPP  
Karen Burkhard, TxDOT-PTN  
Donald R. Koski, FTA-Region 6  
Marisabel Ramthun, TxDOT-Design  
Bonnie Sherman, TxDOT-PTN  
FHWA-HA-TX, HAM-TX

## Exempt Projects

### *Safety*

Railroad/highway crossing.  
Projects that correct, improve, or eliminate a hazardous location or feature.  
Safer non-Federal-aid system roads.  
Shoulder improvements.  
Increasing sight distance.  
Highway Safety Improvement Program implementation.  
Traffic control devices and operating assistance other than signalization projects.  
Railroad/highway crossing warning devices.  
Guardrails, median barriers, crash cushions.  
Pavement resurfacing and/or rehabilitation.  
Pavement marking.  
Emergency relief (23 U.S.C. 125).  
Fencing.  
Skid treatments.  
Safety roadside rest areas.  
Adding medians.  
Truck climbing lanes outside the urbanized area.  
Lighting improvements.  
Widening narrow pavements or reconstructing bridges (no additional travel lanes).  
Emergency truck pullovers.

### *Mass Transit*

Operating assistance to transit agencies.  
Purchase of support vehicles.  
Rehabilitation of transit vehicles<sup>1</sup>.  
Purchase of office, shop, and operating equipment for existing facilities.  
Purchase of operating equipment for vehicles (e.g., radios, fareboxes, lifts, etc.).  
Construction or renovation of power, signal, and communications systems.  
Construction of small passenger shelters and information kiosks.  
Reconstruction or renovation of transit buildings and structures (e.g., rail or bus buildings, storage and maintenance facilities, stations, terminals, and ancillary structures).  
Rehabilitation or reconstruction of track structures, track, and trackbed in existing rights-of-way.  
Purchase of new buses and rail cars to replace existing vehicles or for minor expansions of the fleet<sup>1</sup>.  
Construction of new bus or rail storage/maintenance facilities categorically excluded in 23 CFR part 771.

### *Air Quality*

Continuation of ride-sharing and van-pooling promotion activities at current levels.  
Bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

### *Other*

Specific activities which do not involve or lead directly to construction, such as:

- Planning and technical studies.
- Grants for training and research programs.
- Planning activities conducted pursuant to titles 23 and 49 U.S.C.
- Federal-aid systems revisions.

Engineering to assess social, economic, and environmental effects of the proposed action or alternatives to that action.  
Noise attenuation.  
Emergency or hardship advance land acquisitions (23 CFR 710.503).  
Acquisition of scenic easements.  
Plantings, landscaping, etc.  
Sign removal.  
Directional and informational signs.  
Transportation enhancement activities (except rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities).  
Repair of damage caused by natural disasters, civil unrest, or terrorist acts, except projects involving substantial functional, locational or capacity changes.

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Note: <sup>1</sup> In PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment or maintenance areas, such projects are exempt only if they are in compliance with control measures in the applicable implementation plan.



## Grouped Project List Revisions

| Category / Note                           | Language changed <u>added</u> <del>deleted</del>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Preventive Maintenance and Rehabilitation | Projects to include pavement repair to preserve existing pavement so that it may achieve its designed loading. Includes seal coats, overlays, resurfacing, restoration and rehabilitation done with existing ROW. Also includes modernization of a highway by reconstruction, adding shoulders or adding auxiliary lanes (e.g., parking, weaving, turning, climbing, <u>passing</u> , non-added capacity) or drainage improvements associated with rehabilitation <u>[See Note 3]</u> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Bicycle and Pedestrian                    | <del>Construction or rehabilitation</del> <b>Projects including</b> bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths and facilities ( <u>e.g., sidewalks, shared usepaths, side paths, trails, bicycle boulevards, curb extensions, bicycle parking facilities, bikeshare facilities, etc.</u> ). <b>Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure related activities (e.g. enforcement, tools, and education programs).</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Transit Improvements and Programs         | Projects include the construction and improvement of small passenger shelters and information kiosks. Also includes the construction and improvement of rail storage/maintenance facilities bus transfer facilities where minor amounts of additional land are required and there is not a substantial increase in the number of users. Also includes transit operating assistance, <u>preventative maintenance of transit vehicles and facilities</u> , acquisition of third-party transit services, and transit marketing, and mobility management/coordination. Additionally, includes the purchase of new buses and rail cars to replace existing vehicles or for minor expansions of the fleet [See Note 4]. |
| <b>Recreational Trails Program</b>        | <b>Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV), Equestrian, Recreational Water/Paddling Trails and related facilities; Recreational Trails related education and safety programs.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Note 1                                    | <b><u>Projects eligible for grouping include associated project phases (Preliminary Engineering, Right-Of-Way and Construction).</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Note 2                                    | Projects funded with <del>Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Transportation Enhancement, and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality</del> funding require a Federal eligibility determination, and are not approved to be grouped.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Note 3                                    | <b><u>Passing lanes include "SUPER 2" lanes consistent with TxDOT's Roadway Design Manual.</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Note 4                                    | Note 4: In PM10 and PM2.5 nonattainment or maintenance areas, such projects may be grouped only if they are in compliance with control measures in the applicable implementation plan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Note 5:                                   | Projects funded as part of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program consistent with the grouped project category definitions may be grouped. RTP or TA funded projects that are not consistent with the grouped project category definitions must be individually noted in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). <b><u>Road diet projects may not be grouped.</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

Table 1

## GROUPED PROJECT CSJs

Definition of Grouped Projects for use in the STIP  
Revised February 23, 2021

| PROPOSED CSJ                              | GROUPED PROJECT CATEGORY                  | DEFINITION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5000-00-950                               | PE-Preliminary Engineering                | Preliminary Engineering for any project except added capacity projects in a nonattainment area. Includes activities which do not involve or lead directly to construction, such as planning and research activities; grants for training; engineering to define the elements of a proposed action or alternatives so that social, economic, and environmental effects can be assessed.                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 5000-00-951                               | Right of Way                              | Right of Way acquisition for any project except added capacity projects in a nonattainment area. Includes relocation assistance, hardship acquisition and protective buying.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 5000-00-952<br>5000-00-957<br>5000-00-958 | Preventive Maintenance and Rehabilitation | Projects to include pavement repair to preserve existing pavement so that it may achieve its designed loading. Includes seal coats, overlays, resurfacing, restoration and rehabilitation done with existing ROW. Also includes modernization of a highway by reconstruction, adding shoulders or adding auxiliary lanes (e.g., parking, weaving, turning, climbing, passing, non-added capacity) or drainage improvements associated with rehabilitation [See Note 3].                                                                                                  |
| 5000-00-953                               | Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation     | Projects to replace and/or rehabilitate functionally obsolete or structurally deficient bridges.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 5000-00-954                               | Railroad Grade Separations                | Projects to construct or replace existing highway-railroad grade crossings and to rehabilitate and/or replace deficient railroad underpasses, resulting in no added capacity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 5800-00-950                               | Safety                                    | Projects to include the construction or replacement/rehabilitation of guard rails, median barriers, crash cushions, pavement markings, skid treatments, medians, lighting improvements, highway signs, curb ramps, railroad/highway crossing warning devices, fencing, intersection improvements (e.g., turn lanes), signalization projects and interchange modifications. Also includes projects funded via the Federal Hazard Elimination Program, Federal Railroad Signal Safety Program, or Access Managements projects, except those that result in added capacity. |

Table 1

## GROUPED PROJECT CSJs

Definition of Grouped Projects for use in the STIP  
Revised February 23, 2021

| PROPOSED CSJ | GROUPED PROJECT CATEGORY                     | DEFINITION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5000-00-956  | Landscaping                                  | Project consisting of typical right-of-way landscape development, establishment and aesthetic improvements to include any associated erosion control and environmental mitigation activities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 5800-00-915  | Intelligent Transportation System Deployment | Highway traffic operation improvement projects including the installation of ramp metering control devices, variable message signs, traffic monitoring equipment and projects in the Federal ITS/IVHS programs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 5000-00-916  | Bicycle and Pedestrian                       | Projects including bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths and facilities (e.g., sidewalks, shared use paths, side paths, trails, bicycle boulevards, curb extensions, bicycle parking facilities, bikeshare facilities, etc.). Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure related activities (e.g. enforcement, tools, and education programs).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 5000-00-917  | Safety Rest Areas and Truck Weigh Stations   | Construction and improvement of rest areas, and truck weigh stations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 5000-00-918  | Transit Improvements and Programs            | Projects include the construction and improvement of small passenger shelters and information kiosks. Also includes the construction and improvement of rail storage/maintenance facilities bus transfer facilities where minor amounts of additional land are required and there is not a substantial increase in the number of users. Also includes transit operating assistance, preventative maintenance of transit vehicles and facilities, acquisition of third-party transit services, and transit marketing, and mobility management/coordination. Additionally includes the purchase of new buses and rail cars to replace existing vehicles or for minor expansions of the fleet [See Note 4]. |
| 5000-00-919  | Recreational Trails Program                  | Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV), Equestrian, Recreational Water/Paddling Trails and related facilities; Recreational Trails related education and safety programs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

Note 1: Projects eligible for grouping include associated project phases (Preliminary Engineering, Right-Of-Way and Construction).

Note 2: Projects funded with Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funding require a Federal eligibility determination, and are not approved to be grouped.



Table 1

## GROUPED PROJECT CSJs

Definition of Grouped Projects for use in the STIP

Revised February 23, 2021

Note 3: Passing lanes include "SUPER 2" lanes consistent with TxDOT's Roadway Design Manual.

Note 4: In PM10 and PM2.5 nonattainment or maintenance areas, such projects may be grouped only if they are in compliance with control measures in the applicable implementation plan.

Note 5: Projects funded as part of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program consistent with the grouped project category definitions may be grouped. RTP or TA funded projects that are not consistent with the grouped project category definitions must be individually noted in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Road diet projects may not be grouped.



## RESOLUTION 2021-19

### **SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF GROUPING PROJECTS FUNDED BY CATEGORY 9 – TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET-ASIDE (TASA)**

**WHEREAS**, the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGVMPO), is the designated agency for Transportation Planning in the Transportation Management Area; and

**WHEREAS** the RGVMPO's Transportation Policy Board is required to approve the action of Grouping for Category 9 – TASA funded projects.

**WHEREAS** these procedures have been discussed with RGVMPO's planning partners and will need TPB approval before submitting an update to TXDOT TP&P and FHWA.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Policy Board agreed by a majority vote to approve the Grouping of Category 9 – TASA projects.

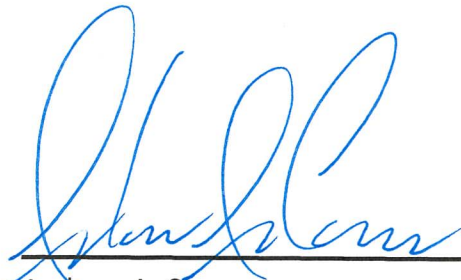
**Passed and Approved this 29<sup>th</sup> day of September 2021**



The Honorable Ambrosio "Amos" Hernandez  
Mayor City of Pharr  
Chairman of the RGVMPO Policy Board



Pedro "Pete" Alvarez  
District Engineer  
TxDOT – Pharr District



Andrew A. Canon  
Executive Director  
RGVMPO