



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



## **TXDOT AND ALAMO REGIONAL RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (ARRPO)**

**Virtual Workshops with In-Person Option  
January 20, 2022 – April 7, 2022**



Welcome to the virtual workshop for the Development of the 2023-2026 Rural Transportation Improvement Program. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), in partnership with the Alamo Regional Rural Planning Organization (ARRPO) is conducting workshops in each of the rural counties of TxDOT's San Antonio district. TxDOT is also providing this virtual option for those unable to attend in person. The same materials shown at the workshops are available online. Additionally, online engagement software allows you to submit comments, suggestions and concerns directly to TxDOT.

## Participating Virtually

- Watch this presentation
- Under the “Download” section of your respective county’s meeting page on txdot.gov you can:
  - Review maps and materials of proposed upcoming projects
  - Use interactive map to provide comments on items of interest or concern in your area
- After reviewing material provide comments by:
  - Mail: Texas Department of Transportation  
San Antonio District, ATTN: Rural TIP  
4615 NW Loop 410  
San Antonio, TX 78229
  - Email: [Darcie.Schipull@txdot.gov](mailto:Darcie.Schipull@txdot.gov). Subject: Rural TIP

This presentation will present information about rural transportation planning and funding. TxDOT wants your feedback on the draft 2023-2026 Rural Transportation Improvement Program. After watching this presentation, we encourage you to review the other workshop materials and offer your comments via the interactive software. You can also comment via mail or email. All comment must be postmarked or received by April 7, 2022.

## What Is a Rural Planning Organization (RPO)? What does It do?

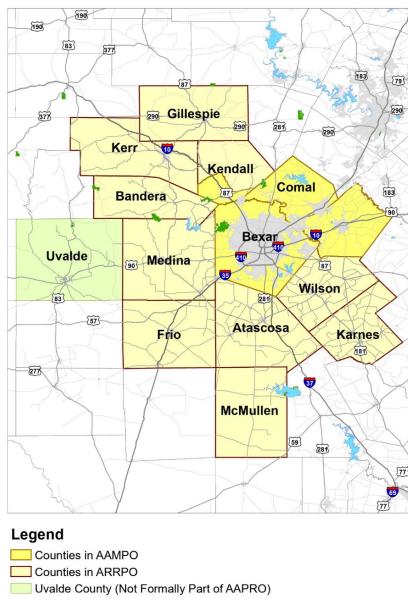
- RPOs represent rural and small urban areas outside metropolitan planning area (MPA) for transportation planning
- Non-Metropolitan area (aka “rural”) is an area of the state not included within the boundaries of a metropolitan planning organization

OK, let's start with some basics. What is a rural planning organization or RPO? And what does it do?

Contrary to what you might think, an RPO is more than a football term. Rural planning organizations represent rural and small urban areas that are outside the boundaries of a metropolitan planning area. A metropolitan planning organization or MPO conducts planning for areas inside the planning area. These boundaries are created based on population and population growth.

The Texas Administrative Code recognizes the authority of RPOs but they are voluntary organizations that are created and governed by elected officials. TxDOT and RPOs work cooperatively on transportation planning and programming. The RPO provides recommendations and priorities to TxDOT and TxDOT approves the projects. The projects get included in TxDOT's planning documents which we'll cover shortly.

## Alamo Regional Rural Planning Organization



In the San Antonio area the MPO covers Bexar, Comal and Guadalupe counties and a small portion of Kendall county. The area shaded in darker yellow is the boundary of the Alamo Area MPO. The counties shaded in lighter yellow are the counties included in the Alamo Regional Rural Planning Organization, including the parts of Kendall county not covered by the MPO. Uvalde county, in green, is not part of ARRPO but is part of the TxDOT San Antonio District.

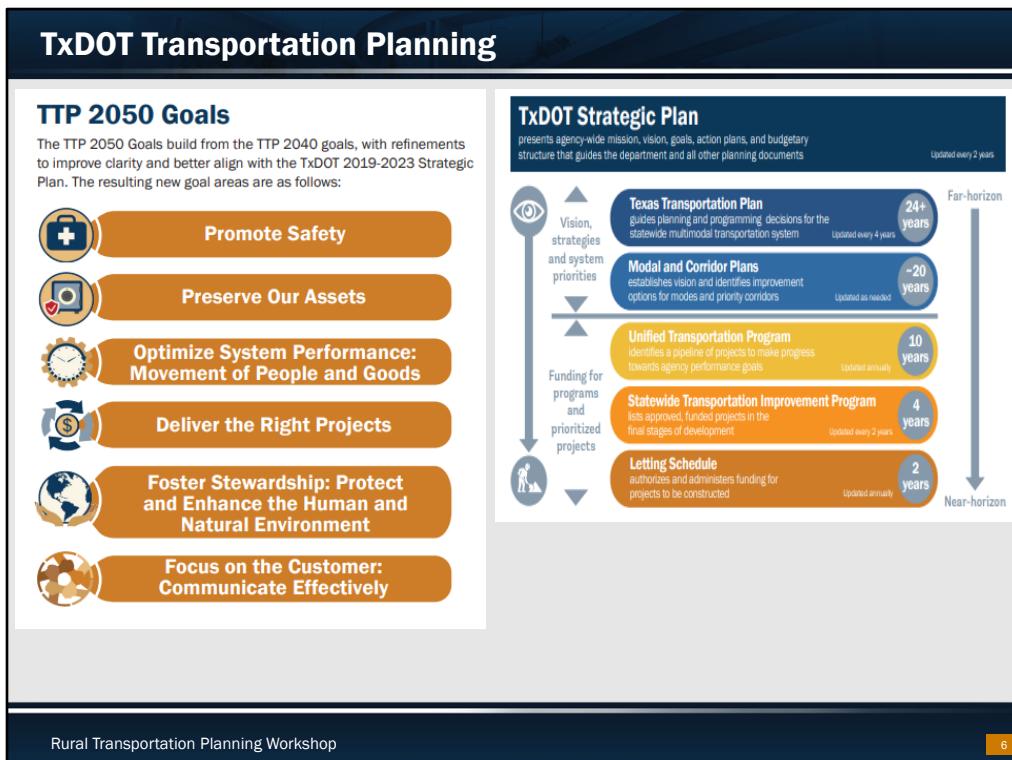
## Keys to the Transportation Planning Process

Key Factor	Importance to Planning
 <p><b>System Conditions</b> – Texas highways are well-preserved, and the state's citizens expect system conditions to be maintained.</p>	New highways require more maintenance and preservation spending in the future. In a fiscally-constrained environment, TxDOT will need to consider tradeoffs between highway expansion and preservation.
 <p><b>Population Growth</b> – The population of Texas increased 71% over the last 30 years to 28.7 million. It is expected to grow another 60% to 47.3 million by 2050.</p>	Accommodating the transportation needs of the state's growing population will require both expanding highways and providing more travel options.
 <p><b>The Texas Economy</b> – The state's economy is projected to grow by over 250% between 2020 and 2046, from a gross state product of approximately \$2 trillion to nearly \$7 trillion.</p>	The Texas economy and transportation infrastructure are inextricably linked. Economic growth both drives transportation investment needs and is enabled by productivity and accessibility improvements.
 <p><b>Freight Movement</b> – More than 2.2 billion tons of freight moved within Texas on the state's multimodal network in 2016. This figure is expected to grow to 4.0 billion tons per year by 2045.</p>	The safe and efficient movement of freight is a foundation of the Texas economy that ensures the state's future prosperity. The Texas freight transportation sector itself supports 2.2 million jobs and \$215 billion in economic activity.
 <p><b>Trade</b> – For the past 14 years, Texas has led the country in exports. The state's exports to Mexico grew in value from \$62 billion in 2008 to \$93 billion in 2016, and exports to Canada reached \$20 billion in 2016.</p>	TxDOT's preeminence in trade will continue to place strong demand on the transportation system and the need for improved mobility.
 <p><b>Technology</b> – The speed of technology being developed and deployed is accelerating, particularly in areas associated with automated and connected vehicles.</p>	New and emerging technologies will both provide opportunities to improve the safety and efficiency of transportation and create new institutional challenges to planning and managing their deployment.
 <p><b>Safety</b> – On average, 10 deaths and 48 serious injuries are reported every day on Texas public roadways. While the annual number of traffic fatalities declined between 2002 and 2010, the state has seen an increase in recent years as the population and amount of travel has increased.</p>	Promoting safety on the Texas transportation system is one of TxDOT's most important roles. In support of its strategic goal to "Promote Safety," TxDOT will continually seek and implement strategies to reduce crashes and fatalities through innovation, targeted awareness, and education.
 <p><b>Risk and Resiliency</b> – The transportation system has been negatively affected by several natural disasters in recent years such as flooding damage caused by Hurricane Harvey and wildfires in Bastrop and rural Texas.</p>	Having a transportation system that resists and efficiently recovers in the face of disruptions will keep Texans safer, facilitate emergency management operations, and limit the extent of economic damages.

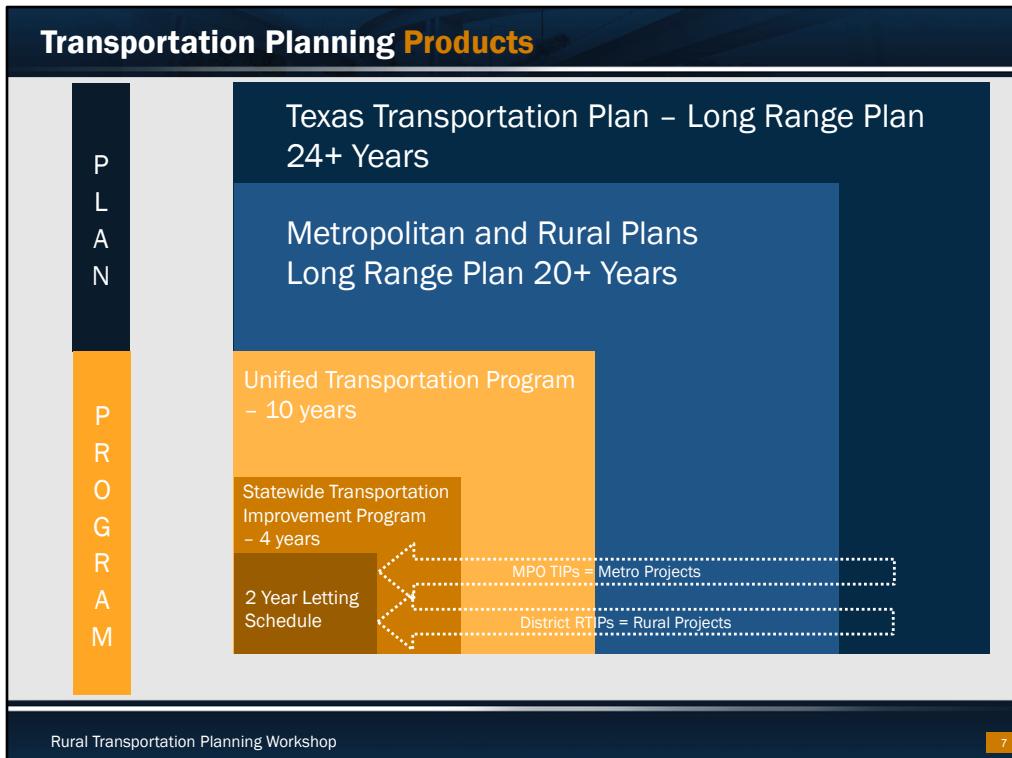
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There are several factors that guide the transportation planning process. Key factors include: system conditions, population growth, the Texas economy, freight movement, trade, technology, safety, and risk and resiliency. To read up on these items you can find this handout under the "Download" section of the meeting page at [txdot.gov](http://txdot.gov).



Now that we know a little about RPOs, let's learn a little more about the TxDOT transportation planning process. TxDOT's planning documents outline goals and strategies that guide transportation planning. The Texas Transportation Plan 2050 is the primary mechanism that TxDOT uses to evaluate its long-term investment priorities and it drives the department's planning and project selection activities. It is a statewide, multimodal transportation plan that is updated every 4 years. The TxDOT Strategic Plan for 2019-2023 was adopted by the transportation commission in June 2018 and includes action plans to address TxDOT's seven strategic goals. The strategic plan is updated every 2 years. These documents guide how the department carries out transportation planning and programming.



TxDOT's plans are further developed into a series of programs. These programs are documented in TxDOT's planning products, including the Unified Transportation Program (UTP), the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Letting Schedule. The UTP is a 10-year plan that identifies a pipeline of project to achieve the department's performance goals. The STIP is a list of projects that have identified funding and are in the final stages of development. The STIP is a compilation of projects from metro and rural areas. Finally, the Letting Schedule authorizes and administers funding for projects to be constructed in the next two years.

## Rural Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)

### THE RURAL TIP

is list of local projects to be funded within a TxDOT District during the next four years, including those eligible for federal funding.

It can include projects for :



A Rural TIP project is anticipated to be funded within the next 4 years.

It shows regional agreement (community-region-state) on the need of a project.

The Rural TIP is a part of the STIP and includes a list of local projects to be funded and underway in a TxDOT District over the next 4 years, following approval. These are the changes you can expect to go to contract in the near future!

It is multimodal; which means that it can include projects related to highways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit services and freight projects, as well as the preliminary studies used to define those projects.

Projects included in the Rural TIP indicate there is regional agreement on the need and priority of a transportation project.

Because the program rules are established by Federal law, no project can receive federal funding unless it is listed in the Rural TIP!

These county workshops and this virtual workshop experience is your opportunity to provide input as the Rural TIP is developed.

## Rural Transportation in Texas

Nearly **57,000 miles** of on-system roadways and 24,600 bridges outside of MPO boundaries



Nearly **10,500 miles** of the Texas Trunk System and 50,000 miles of farm/ranch-to-market roads



Most funding is determined by **needs-driven** formula



**53%** of the Texas Highway Freight Network is located in rural areas



Now let me give you some facts about rural transportation in Texas. There are nearly 57,000 miles of roadways and almost 25,000 bridges that are outside of the metro areas. That includes nearly 10,500 miles on the Texas Trunk System and 50,000 miles of farm and ranch to market roads. And 53% of the Texas Freight Network is located in rural areas. These systems are vital to the Texas economy. Most of the funding to build and maintain these systems is based on a formula.

For example, preventive maintenance and rehabilitation funding are distributed based on pavement distress scores, on-system lane-miles, truck traffic volumes and on-system bridge deck area. Similar formula-based approaches are used to determine funding for bridges and safety. Bicycle and pedestrian projects are mostly funded through the TxDOT-administered Transportation Alternatives Program. Rural airports are funded in part through Federal Aviation Administration grants administered by TxDOT and rural public transit is funded through Federal Transit Administration grants. In addition, TxDOT has allocated \$2.1 billion to the Energy Sector Program for fiscal years 2020 to 2029 to address specifically identified roadways affected by traffic in various energy development areas. For the San Antonio district, that would be the Eagleford Shale area.

## Rural Transportation in Texas

15% of Texas residents live in rural areas (roughly 1 Texan in 7)



TxDOT has identified \$4,700 of planned investment per rural resident



This planned investment is nearly 33% higher than the statewide average



TxDOT's *Project Tracker* includes more than 6,400 projects in rural areas with initial costs of \$22.6 billion



Some more facts that are relevant to rural transportation include the fact that 15% of Texas residents live in a rural area. TxDOT has a planned investment of \$4,700 per rural resident. That's 33% higher than the statewide average. TxDOT's *Project Tracker*, which keeps track of all TxDOT projects, includes more than 6,400 projects in rural areas. totaling almost \$ 23 Billion in project costs. We'll talk more specifically about the types of funding in just a minute.

## Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

- **\$1.2 trillion for transportation, broadband, electricity grid, water infrastructure.**
- **\$351 billion for highway programs.**
  - Of which \$307 billion is in formula funding to states.
  - **\$26.9 billion for Texas**
- **Creates a new \$27.5 billion formula-based program for bridges.**
  - Eligible uses include highway bridge replacement, rehabilitation, preservation, protection, or construction projects on public roads.
  - **\$537.2 million for Texas**
- **Includes \$91 billion for public transit (49% increase over the FAST Act).**
  - Funds are for local buses, subways, commuter rail, light rail, paratransit, and ferries.
  - **\$450 million to TxDOT for rural transit**
- **A new National Electric Vehicle Formula Program receives \$7.5 billion.**
  - Requires the Department of Transportation and the Department of Energy to jointly develop guidance for states and localities to strategically deploy EV charging infrastructure.
  - **\$407.8 million for Texas**

Before we get to specifics about funding categories, it is also important to mention the recently signed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This Act provides for a substantial infusion of federal monies for infrastructure projects over the next 5 years. Much of this funding is determined by formula, as we discussed earlier. It is important to mention that these are anticipated amounts as determined by TxDOT Administration.



This graphic shows the total that is expected to be apportioned to Texas over the next five fiscal years. You can see that beginning in fiscal year 22, it is almost a billion dollars more than FY 21. This will provide TxDOT and its partners with considerable opportunities to positively impact transportation in Texas.

## Most Common Rural Funding Categories

- Preventative Maintenance and Rehabilitation
- Statewide Connectivity
- Structures Replacement and Rehabilitation Bridge Program, Railroad Grade Separation Program
- Safety – Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Federal Railway-Highway Crossing Program, Safety Bond Program
- Transportation Alternatives/Transportation Enhancements
- District Discretionary

Now let's talk about the most common categories for funding rural projects. Preventative Maintenance and Rehabilitation includes projects such as overlays and sealcoats.

The statewide connectivity category funds projects that connect people and places. This might be creating a connection between a state highway and an interstate.

The Structures Replacement and Rehabilitation Bridge program and the Railroad Grade Separation Program are pretty much as they sound. This provides funding for bridge replacements and to separate roads from railways. Funding for safety projects includes many programs such as the Federal Highway Improvement Program, the Federal Railway-Highway Crossing Program and the Safety Bond Program. Transportation Alternatives and Transportation Enhancements fund projects such as bike lanes, safe routes to school and sidewalk connectivity. Finally, the district also has a source of funds to use at the discretion of the district engineer. It is important to note that some projects may be eligible for funding from several categories. This can be helpful in the case of an especially large project.

## What is Programming? What is the STIP and RTIP?

- Programming is identifying top priority projects, and matching projects with funding
- Cost of worthy projects always exceeds funding – need to set priorities
- Programming decisions are documented in the:
  - Rural Transportation Improvement Program = RTIP
  - Statewide TIP = STIP
  - MPO's TIP

We've talked about planning and planning products and funding and funding categories, so as a quick recap, we are interested in your input about the draft Rural TIP and future priorities in your county. The Rural TIP is a program of projects over the next 4 years and when approved, the Rural TIP becomes part of the Statewide TIP along with the plans for metropolitan areas. That doesn't mean that you can't suggest projects that will be necessary farther in the future. This exercise is about identifying priorities and matching projects with funding.

- Multiple objectives may be in conflict
- Competition for scarce resources
- Institutional and political fragmentation
- Attaining and keeping public interest
- Trade-offs over modes and programs

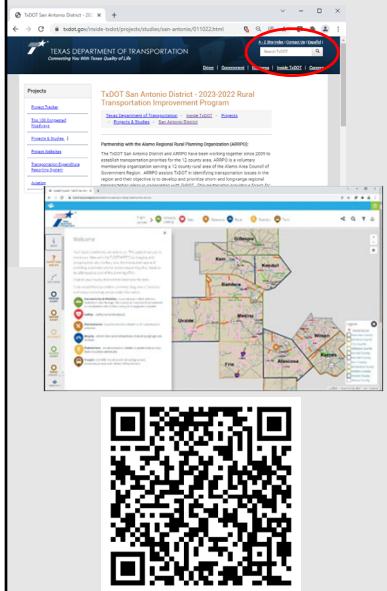
Even with the infusion of funding from the IIJA, project needs nearly always exceed available funding. That's why it's important to have these workshops to identify and get agreement on priorities. The district has challenges that they will need to consider as well, including conflicting objectives and trade-offs between modes and projects. It is also often necessary to work cooperatively with cities in the county or with the leadership in an adjacent county. Longer term projects need sustained interest and support. The challenges are important to keep in mind when planning future projects. The more agreement there is on a project, the greater likelihood for success.

## Think

- Regionally
- Long range
- Statewide plans and priorities
  - Promote Safety
  - Preserve Assets
  - Optimize System Performance: Movement of People and Goods
  - Deliver the Right Projects
  - Foster Stewardship: Protect and Enhance the Human and Natural Environment
  - Customer Service: Communicate Effectively

We've provided you some background information about rural transportation planning in Texas. Now we invite you to review the materials associated with each county. The materials include information about population and anticipated population growth in the Alamo regional rural planning organization. They also include maps that show daily traffic counts, number of lanes and lane width; crashes and TxDOT funded projects from 2016 to 2026. Keep this information in mind as well as TxDOT's plan and priorities as you identify needs and priorities in the interactive software.

## How You Can Participate

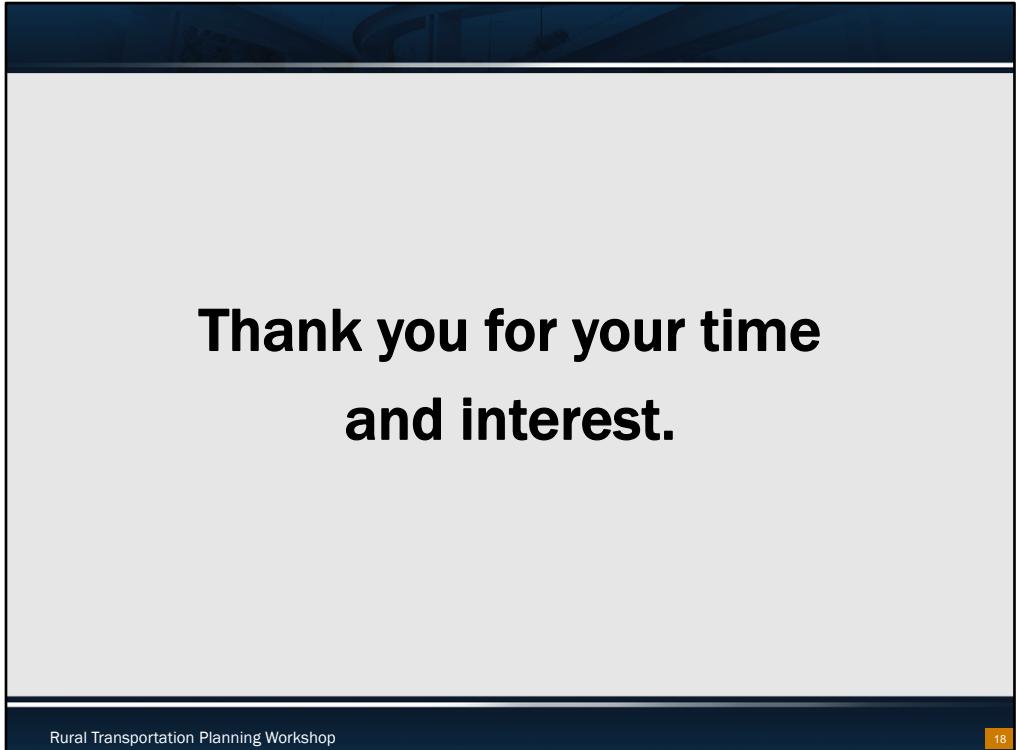


- Provide feedback on plans and priorities through an **interactive map** provided on the project page
- Send in comments by:
  - **Mail:** Texas Department of Transportation  
San Antonio District, ATTN: Rural TIP  
4615 NW Loop 410  
San Antonio, TX 78229
  - **Email:** [Darcie.Schipull@txdot.gov](mailto:Darcie.Schipull@txdot.gov). Subject: Rural TIP
- **Comment deadline : April 7, 2022**
- For all information, materials and maps visit **TxDOT.GOV** and search **“San Antonio RTIP”** in the top right-side box circled above
- Or **scan code** to the left to go directly to the “TxDOT San Antonio District – 2023 – 2026 Rural Transportation Improvement Program” project page
- For questions, please contact [Darcie.Schipull@txdot.gov](mailto:Darcie.Schipull@txdot.gov) or 210-615-5902

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The interactive software allows users to provide feedback and indicate where there are concerns or issues that should be addressed. You can scan the QR code on the screen or go to TxDOT.gov and search San Antonio RTIP in the search box in top right-hand side. If you have any questions please reach out to me at [Darcie.Schipull@txdot.gov](mailto:Darcie.Schipull@txdot.gov) or 210-615-5902. The deadline for comments is April 7, 2022.



**Thank you for your time  
and interest.**

We appreciate your time in watching this video. We hope you found it informative.