Regional Non-Radioactive Hazardous Materials Route Designation Study

Austin Transportation Department
April 2019
Why are we initiating a Study?

The transport of hazardous materials, which are capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety, or property in commerce, are regulated by the Federal and State of Texas governments.

Today, non-radioactive hazardous materials (NRHM) - mostly petroleum products - are being transported on all public roads and highways, including through the densest population centers of the Austin region.
Federal & State Regulations

- Federal standards require the State to make a finding of a non-radioactive hazardous materials (NRHM) route that enhances public safety, and prescribes criteria for a route designation.

- State regulations require municipalities with a population of more than 850,000 to designate routes for commercial motor vehicles carrying NRHM.
What are NRHM?

- NRHM = Non-Radioactive Hazardous Materials

- NRHM are materials transported by motor vehicle in types and quantities which require placarding that indicates the type of material being carried.

- Routes for the transport of radioactive materials are designated separately from other hazardous materials due to their unique security/safety risks.
Purpose of Study

- **Designate** roadways for through-routing of NRHM in Austin, with logical nexus points, without unduly burdening commerce
- **Minimize** potential for vehicular incidents involving NRHM
- **Minimize** consequences to the community should an NRHM incident occur
- **Maximize** public safety in relation to NRHM transport
Formed Steering Committee and Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) to guide process

Steering Committee included staff of City of Austin (CoA), and Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Define Objectives and Responsibilities

Stakeholder Working Group – to provide technical expertise on infrastructure and operations:

- CoA departments; TxDOT; CAMPO; Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA); local Chambers of Commerce; emergency response agencies; environmental protection agencies; schools/universities; county representatives; healthcare providers; and shipping/trucking industry representatives
- CoA boards and commissions including the Chairs of the Public Safety and Urban Transportation Commissions
The following public events and outreach efforts were conducted to gather input on the NRHM route identification process, priorities of the community, and preliminary outcomes:

- Notification to political subdivisions of open house
- 2 public open houses
  - Locations: Ruiz Branch Public Library & Terrazas Branch Public Library
  - Advertised through official CoA press release, social media, project webpage, and secondary outreach to the SWG and Austin City Council
  - Advertised and covered by local news
- 2 presentations to local emergency planning committees
- Presentations to the CAMPO Technical Advisory Committee, CoA Public Safety Committee, and the CoA Mobility Committee, and
- Coordinated outreach with Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) public events
North-South Through-Routing Example

- North-south is the predominant NRHM through-routing movement for the study area

**Major Through-Route Risk Analysis Comparison (IH 35 N-S) for Study Area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Incident Risk Factor</th>
<th>Travel Time</th>
<th>Minority Pop. within 0.5 Miles - Austin ETJ</th>
<th>Pop. in Poverty within 0.5 Miles - Austin ETJ</th>
<th>Residential Units within 0.5 Miles - Austin ETJ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IH 35 (Current Likely)</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>150,960</td>
<td>45,153</td>
<td>54,915</td>
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<td>SH 130</td>
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<td>43,824</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Loop 360</td>
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<td>163</td>
<td>102,590</td>
<td>30,813</td>
<td>54,184</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 2012-2016 US Census American Community Survey; 2016 City of Austin Land Database
This map shows the draft recommended NRHM routing for the City of Austin.

Note that the routing is broken down into three categories to minimize the potential burden to commerce.
Next Steps

- Notify affected cities and counties within 25 miles of routes and request comments
- Review comments and adjust as needed
- Post formal notification in two general circulation newspapers; additional email notification to jurisdictions
- Austin City Council public hearing; approve submittal to TxDOT
- TxDOT review and comment; notify jurisdictions, post in Texas Register
- 30 day public comment period
- TxDOT public hearing, consideration of approval
- City Council ordinance to fund signage, notification and enforcement
Thank You!