

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS  
AGENDA ITEM  
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

**DEPARTMENT:** City Manager

**AGENDA DATE:** May 31, 2011

**CONTACT PERSON NAME AND PHONE NUMBER:** Jane Shang, Deputy City Manager (915) 541-4686

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** all

**SUBJECT:**

Discussion and action on City initiatives and action plan to mitigate the impacts of commercial truck traffic to the Chamizal neighborhood when crossing the Bridge of the Americas.

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

n/a

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

n/a

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

n/a

---

**BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:**

N/A

---

\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:**

---

(If Department Head Summary Form is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)

*Information copy to appropriate Deputy City Manager*



Texas Department of Transportation  
Attn. Mr. Charles H. Berry Jr., P.E.  
13301 Gateway East Blvd.  
El Paso, Texas 79928-5410

Dear Mr. Berry,

The City of El Paso is seeking to improve safety and mobility for southbound traffic at the Bridge of the Americas (BOTA) by restricting vehicles with three or more axles from using the southbound approaches to BOTA from 2 pm to 8 pm Monday through Friday. During this time period commercial truck traffic backs up to Bowie High School and many neighborhood streets are illegally being used as truck routes. Commercial trucks also do not adhere to the traffic signals and block intersections, creating health and safety problems for the Chamizal neighborhood because even fire and police emergency vehicles can not access/exit the neighborhood.

To address these problems, the City has installed signage to restrict commercial truck traffic from using neighborhood streets and assigned police staff to issue citations for enforcement. The City will also look at narrowing City streets to physically prevent trucks from making turnarounds on neighborhood streets. These actions have helped to alleviate the problem but police enforcement is costly and only temporarily alleviates the problem. A more permanent solution is required, specifically restricting commercial truck traffic on the approaches to BOTA during specific times of the day.

The El Paso City Council plans to adopt a resolution to restrict use of the approaches. As previously discussed, the City of El Paso is again requesting the Texas Department of Transportation's assistance in implementing the restriction. The Chamizal neighborhood has been unfairly burdened with truck traffic. The City is requesting TxDOT's help to find a solution to the problem.

For your review, we are submitting documentation composed of the following:

1. Six copies of the proposed ordinance to restrict trucks with three or more axles from using the southbound approaches to BOTA from 2 pm to 6 pm Monday through Friday.
2. An aerial map showing the proposed areas where vehicles with three or more axles would be restricted, the proposed detours and proposed sign locations alerting drivers of the restriction.

Mayor  
John F. Cook

**City Council**

*District 1*  
Ann Morgan Lilly

*District 2*  
Susannah M. Byrd

*District 3*  
Emma Acosta

*District 4*  
Melina Castro

*District 5*  
Rachel Quintana

*District 6*  
Eddie Holguin Jr.

*District 7*  
Steve Ortega

*District 8*  
Beto O'Rourke

City Manager  
Joyce A. Wilson

3. A DVD recording of the City Council meeting and the public comments made.

Please keep me informed as to the status and progress of this request, and contact me should you have any questions or need additional information at (915) 541-4035.

Sincerely,

Jane Shang,  
Deputy City Manager  
for Mobility Services



**Mayor**  
John F. Cook

**City Council**

*District 1*  
Ann Morgan Lilly

*District 2*  
Susannah M. Byrd

*District 3*  
Emma Acosta

*District 4*  
Melina Castro

*District 5*  
Rachel Quintana

*District 6*  
Eddie Holguin Jr.

*District 7*  
Steve Ortega

*District 8*  
Beto O'Rourke

**City Manager**  
Joyce A. Wilson

DRAFT

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 12 (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) OF THE EL PASO CITY CODE, BY ADDING CHAPTER 12.43 (RESTRICTIONS FOR TRUCKS UPON A SOUTHBOUND PORTION OF INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 110 and PAISANO), RESTRICTING TRUCKS WITH THREE OR MORE AXELS DURING THE HOURS OF 2:00PM TO 8:00 PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FROM THE SOUTHBOUND LANES ON INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 110 FROM THE JUNCTION OF US-54 TO THE BRIDGE OF THE AMERICAS, ON THE EASTBOUND RAMP OFF OF PAISANO DRIVE (US 62) FROM RAMP G TO A POINT 1,200 FEET WEST THEREOF, ON THE WESTBOUND RAMP OFF OF PAISANO DRIVE (US 62) FROM A POINT 250 FT WEST OF GATEWAY SOUTH TO RAMP X, ON RAMP G, FROM THE JUNCTION OF THE BRIDGE OF AMERICAS, SOUTHBOUND, THE PENALTY AS PROVIDED IN CHAPTER 12.84 OF THE EL PASO CITY CODE.**

**WHEREAS**, the Texas Transportation Code §\_\_\_\_\_, allows a municipality, by ordinance, to \_\_\_\_\_; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of El Paso seeks to restrict trucks having three or more axels from the southbound lanes of Interstate Highway 110 from the junction of US-54 to the Bridge of the Americas; the Eastbound ramp off of Paisano Drive (State Highway 62) from Ramp G to a point 1,200 feet west thereof; the Westbound ramp off of Paisano Drive (State Highway 62) from a point 250 feet west of gateway south to ramp x; Ramp G from the junction of the Bridge of the Americas Southbound within the City of El Paso in accordance with (Order from the Texas Transportation Commission) from 2:00 pm through 8:00pm Monday through Friday; and

**WHEREAS**, the traffic congestion on the Bridge of the Americas (BOTA) has caused collisions and extensive delays; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has submitted a request to the Texas Transportation Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has provided the Texas Department of Transportation and the Texas Transportation Commission with a complete description of the restrictions sought by the City; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the order from the Texas Transportation Commission, the City \_\_\_\_\_; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the order from the Texas Transportation Commission, the Executive Director of the Texas Department of Transportation, or his designee, has reviewed the proposed restrictions, conducted the required traffic study, provided the required public notice, and issued a letter of authorization to the City approving the proposed restrictions described in this ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, it is in the interest of public safety, it is desirable to establish such restrictions.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:**

**Section 1.** That Title 12 (Vehicles and Traffic) shall be and hereby is amended to add Chapter 12.43 (Restrictions for Trucks Upon a Southbound Portion of Interstate Highway 110, RAMP G and access ramps to Bridge of Americas) as follows:

**Chapter 12.43 Restrictions for Trucks Upon a Portion of Interstate Highway 110**

**Section 12.43.010 Definitions**

*Designated portion of affected highway* means that part of the southbound lanes of Interstate Highway 110 from the junction of US-54 to the Bridge of the Americas; the Eastbound ramp off of Paisano Drive (State Highway 62) from Ramp G to a point 1,200 feet west thereof; the Westbound ramp off of Paisano Drive (State Highway 62) from a point 250 feet west of gateway south to Ramp X; Ramp G from the junction of the Bridge of the Americas Southbound.

**Section 12.43.020 Restrictions**

Any person driving or operating a truck on the designated portion of affected highway shall not utilize any control access lane during the hours of 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm Monday through Friday other than the authorized lanes.

**12.43.030 Enforcement**

A. Enforcement of this ordinance will commence upon the placement of the appropriate traffic control devices as specified under Texas Transportation Code Section §(\_\_\_\_\_).

B. A violation of this provision is a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine not exceeding \$500.00.

C. This restriction may be suspended by the Texas Department of Transportation Executive Director or his designee, for any reasons stated under Texas Transportation Code Section §(\_\_\_\_\_).

**Section 2.** Except as expressly herein amended, all other provisions of Title 12 of the El Paso City Code shall remain in full force and effect.

PASSED AND APPROVED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011.

CITY OF EL PASO

\_\_\_\_\_  
John F. Cook  
Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richarda Duffy Momsen  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kristen L. Choi  
Assistant City Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jane K. Shang  
Deputy City Manager, Mobility Services



# Traffic Mitigation Plan for the Chamizal Neighborhood

May 31, 2011



# The problem

- Too many commercial trucks are utilizing BOTA to go southbound to Mexico, M-F from 2-8pm
- Commercial trucks back up to Bowie High School on Paisano
- Commercial trucks do not adhere to traffic signals and block intersections, creating health and safety problems for the Chamizal neighborhood



# The problem continued

- Neighborhood streets are illegally being used by trucks and for turnarounds
- The roadway approaches from the US to Mexican facilities are misaligned resulting in criss-crossing of traffic between commercial trucks and private vehicles



NOT TO SCALE  
MAY 25, 2011



NO TRUCKS SIGNS (2)  
NEW INSTALLATION  
BACK TO BACK

NO TRUCKS SIGN  
NEW INSTALLATION

NO TRUCKS & ONE WAY SIGNS  
NEW INSTALLATION BELOW  
EXISTING STREET NAME SIGN

NO TRUCKS SIGN  
NEW INSTALLATION  
BACK OF EXISTING  
STOP SIGN

**Legend**

-  NO TRUCKS EXCEPT FOR LOCAL DELIVERIES
-  NO TRUCKS OVER 26 FT. IN LENGTH
-  NO U TURN
-  HC ROUTE
-  HC PROHIBITED



# Short term action plan

- EPDOT met with Chamizal neighborhood representatives on April 5, 2011 to obtain suggestions
- Neighborhood representatives acknowledged that “No Truck” signs are in place but needs enforcement and additional signage locations
- Installation of additional signage restricting truck traffic to neighborhood streets (Paisano/San Marcial, Paisano/Central, Piedras/Olive, Piedras/San Antonio) completed in consultation with neighborhood residents
  - completion date: April 26, 2011
  - cost: \$3000
- 22 “No Truck” signs exist in Chamizal neighborhood



# Short term action plan continued

- Police enforcement and citations issued
  - Commencement: April 11, 2011
  - Hours for enforcement: M-F from 2pm-5pm (depending on need, as early as 12 noon and as late as 7pm)
  - Citations issued (4/11/11-5/11/11): 360
    - Commercial trucks: 92 (obstructing traffic, off truck route, illegal parking, oversize load)
    - Private vehicles: 268 (illegal parking, non-hazard and hazard violations, inspections, no insurance)
  - Cost: \$3700 (\$54/hr.), 68 hours
  - Additional enforcement hours: MTF from 3-5pm as requested by neighborhood representatives
  - Result: enforcement has helped the situation



# Short term action plan continued

- Narrowing side street entrances to create a physical barrier so that commercial trucks cannot use neighborhood streets for a turnaround
  - Time frame: 90 days after funding is identified (if TxDOT approval is not required)
  - Cost: \$71K



# Short term action plan continued

- Mexico is allowing empty tractors to utilize Zaragoza
- City has reduced tolls for empty tractors to encourage use of Zaragoza



# Longer term action plan

- Continue PD enforcement, included in FY 2012 Bridge Dept. budget (\$260K for Stanton, BOTA, Zatagoza)
- City Council ordinance to restrict southbound commercial truck use of the approaches to BOTA, M-F from 2-8pm, and to detour traffic to either Santa Teresa or Zaragoza POE, requires TxDOT support!!! Will need to lobby Austin officials.



# Longer term action plan continued

- Reconstruction of BOTA interchange (Paisano and I-110) to correct traffic alignments between US and Mexico.
  - Eligible for federal and TxDOT funds since on system
  - Removal from system will block access to several types of state funds
  - Project is recommended in the Cambridge Systematics Operations plan
  - Estimated cost: \$1.5-\$2M
  - Identify funding



# Longer term action plan continued

- Continue to work with Mexico to advance completion of empty cargo inspection lane at Zaragoza (est. completion Dec. 2011) which will allow empties to go through Zaragoza. 60% of BOTA traffic is empties and they are forced to use BOTA. City to reduce tolls.
- Improve Zaragoza to make this the “preferred port of entry”
  - Limit BOTA hours of operation for commercial trucks; increase hours of operation at Zaragoza
  - Technology improvements
  - Traffic segregation
  - Make off-site roadway approach improvements (\$6M)
  - Make on-site infrastructure improvements to segregate the access and egress points to Zaragoza (\$5.3M)



# Longer term action plan continued

- Financing strategies
  - Compete for CBI funds with the MPO
  - City debt by taking out a private loan at less than 3% (quickest solution)
  - Private public partnership



# Questions?