Congestion Management and Car Dependency

Transportation LRC
May 5, 2011

El Paso Department of Transportation

Main Issue

Are the City's Transportation Strategic goals to become the lowest car dependent city in the Southwest and to mitigate traffic congestion in conflict?

Actions to Achieve Transportation Strategic Goals

- Shift to different transportation modes
- Encourage different types of development
- Update City's Planning Documents

Tactics to Achieve Transportation Strategic Goals

Shift to different Transportation Modes

- RTS Project Development
- Trolley Study approved as a Transportation Priority by Council in March 2011

Tactics to Achieve Transportation Strategic Goals

Encourage different types of development

- Council approved first Smart Growth amendments to Title 19 on April 12, 2011
- Council adopted ITE's *Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach* as the recommended guidelines for City projects and directed staff to amend City Code to adopt as the standard for new construction

Tactics to Achieve Transportation Strategic Goals

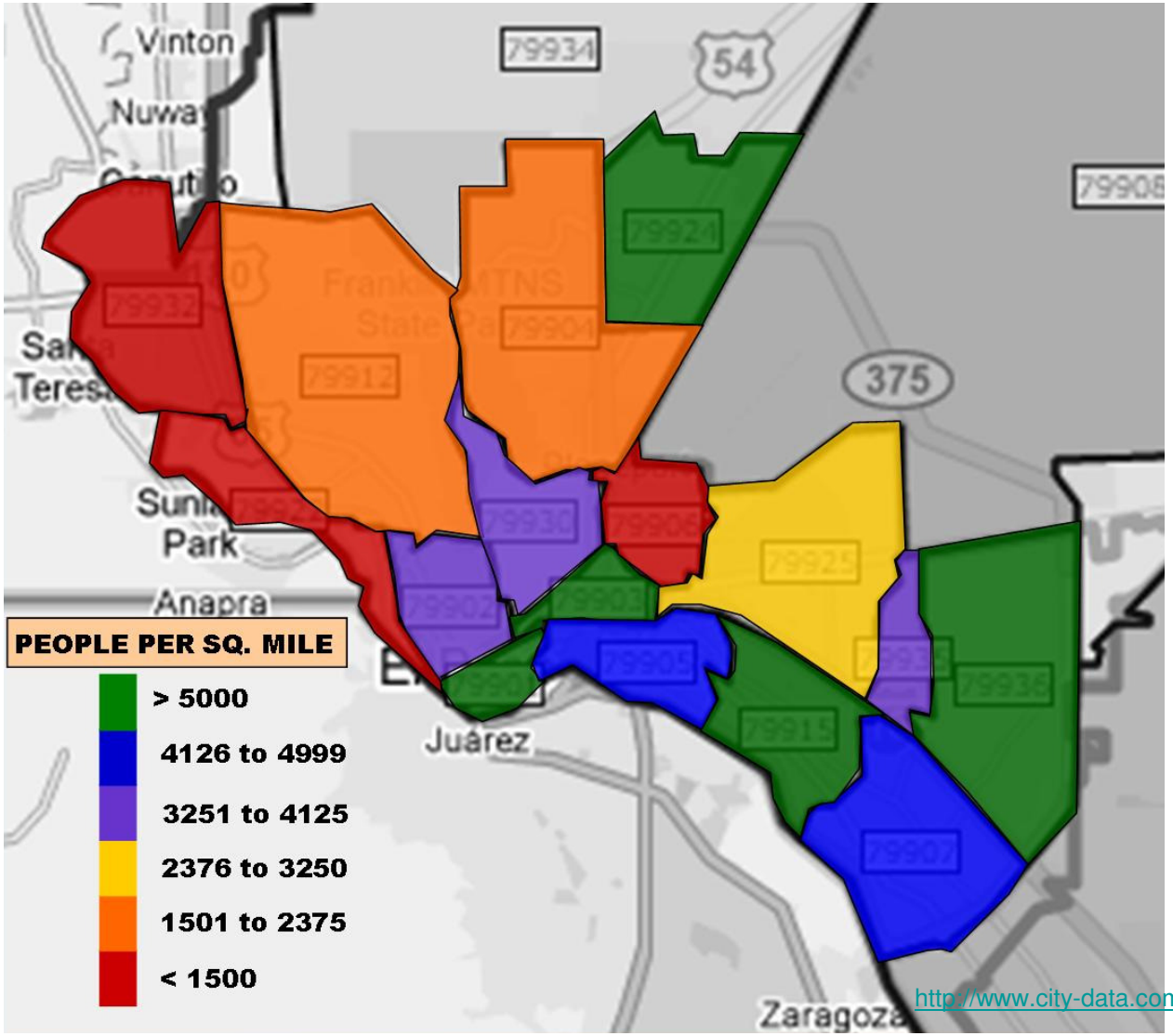
Update City Planning Documents

- City Council adopted “Connecting El Paso”
- Updating the City’s Comprehensive Plan
- Adopted Capital Improvement Program for Mass Transit facilities & RTS projects

El Paso's Geography

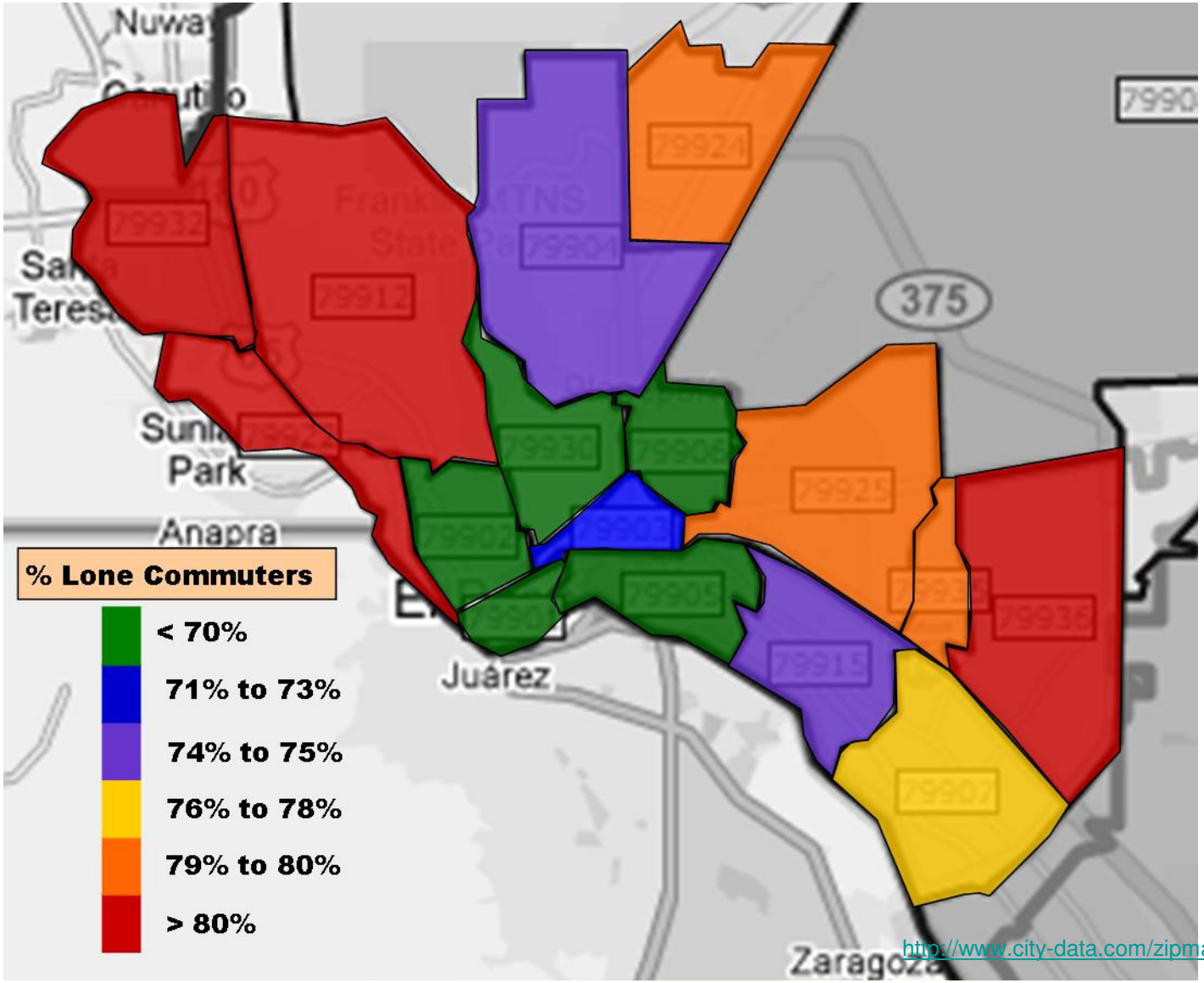
- Urban Growth in the city is limited by physical and geo-political boundaries: Franklin Mountains, Rio Grande, Fort Bliss, Mexico and New Mexico
- Development close to these boundaries tends to be residential rather than commercial

Density by Zip Code



http://www.city-data.com/zipmaps/El-Paso-Texas.html

Lone Commuters by Zip Code

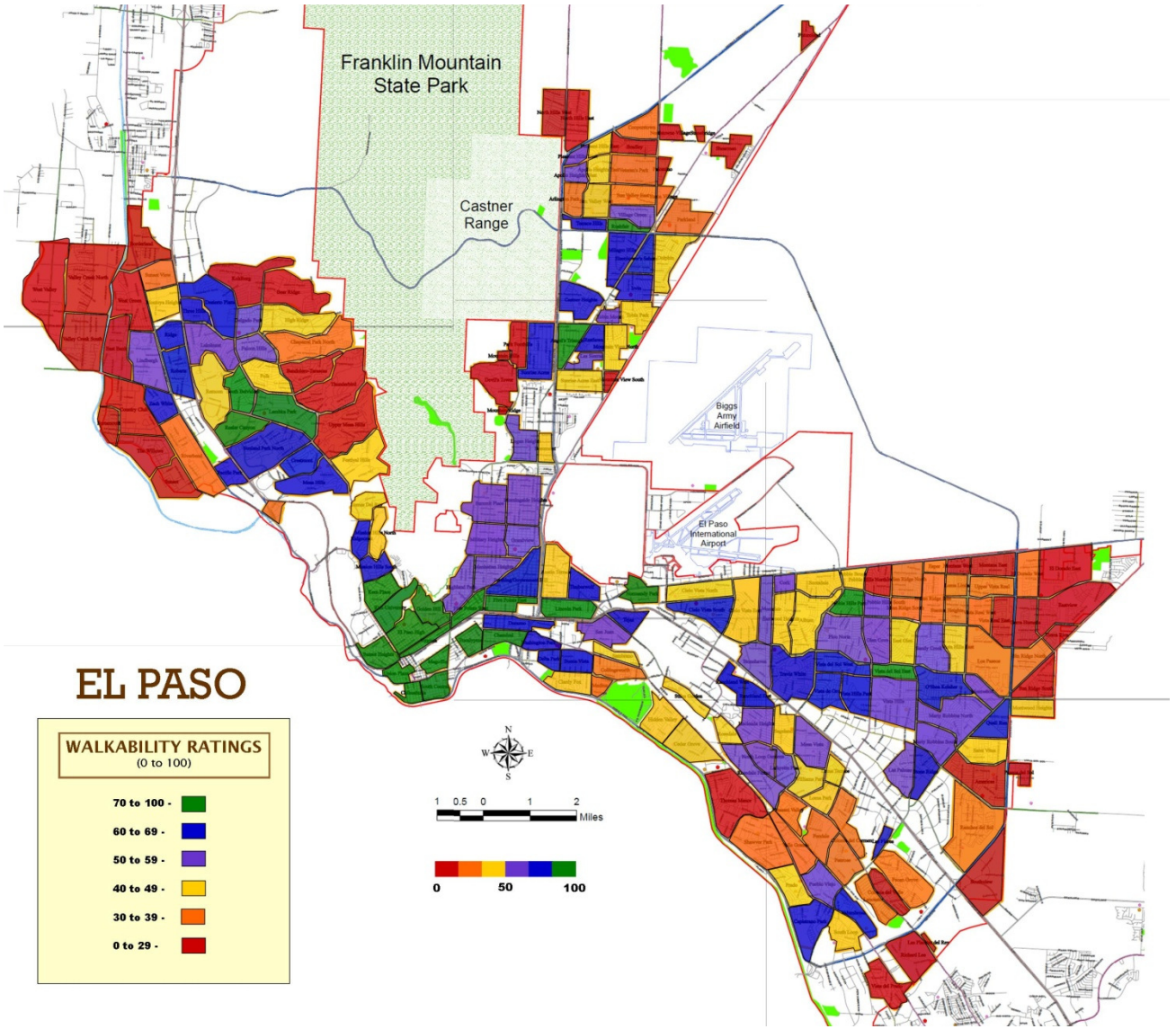


http://www.city-data.com/zipmaps/El-Paso-Texas.html

Commuting Trends in El Paso

- Highest percentage of lone commuters are in the Northwest and Far East sectors of the City
- Lowest percentage of lone commuters in downtown and central area.

Walkability Ratings by Neighborhood



Walkability in El Paso

- Walkability is determined by the number of amenities in a neighborhood that are within walking distance.
- El Paso's most walkable neighborhoods are in the central area and along the city's major commercial streets.

Focus on Congestion

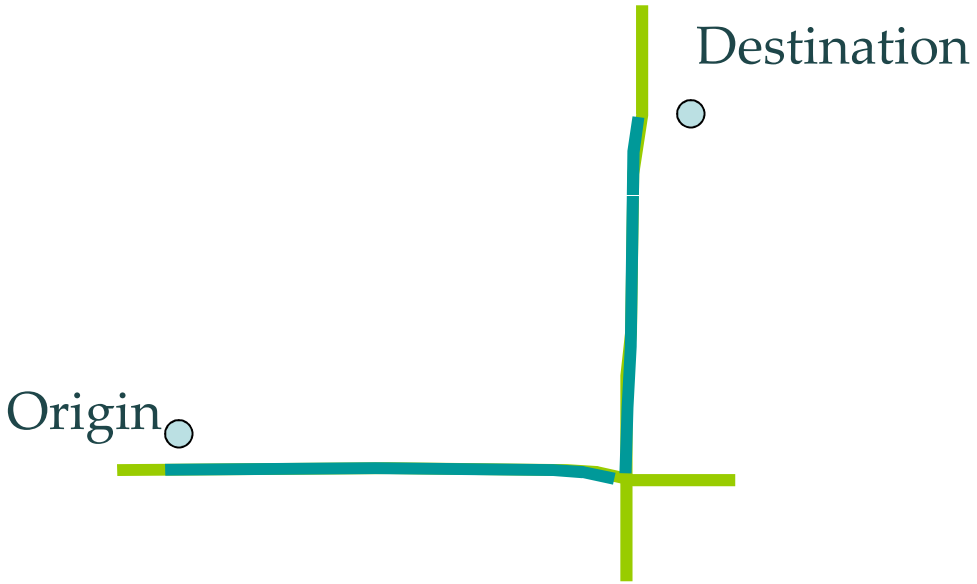
- SAFETEA-LU (Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users) requires that the MPO "shall address congestion management through a process that provides for effective management and operation, based on a cooperatively developed and implemented metropolitan wide strategy of new and existing transportation facilities"

MPO and Congestion

EPMPO study area was analyzed via seven congestion mitigation strategies:

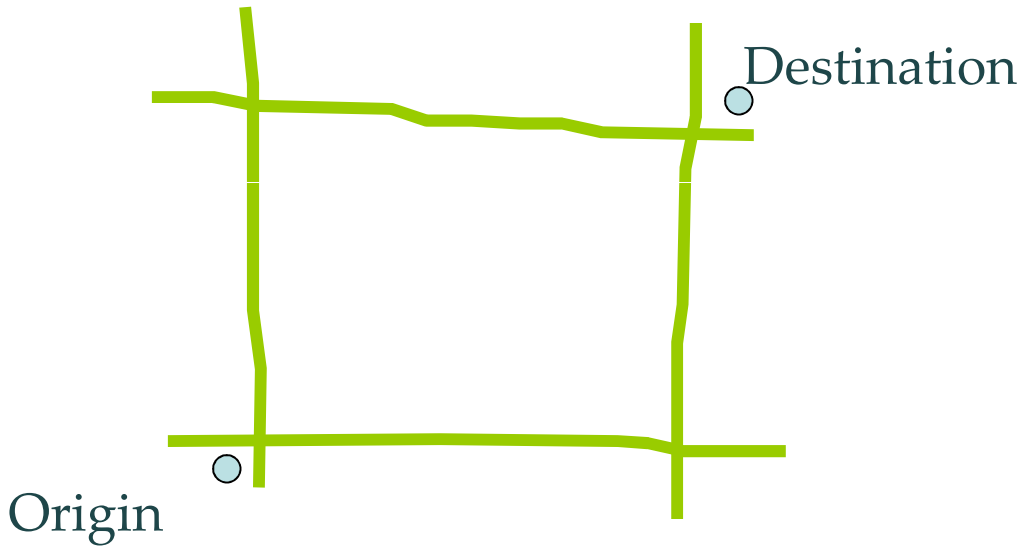
- Traffic Operational Improvements
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Transit Operational Improvements
- Transit Capital Improvements
- Non-Motorized Modes/Measures
- Congestion Pricing
- Capacity Expansion

Connectivity & Congestion



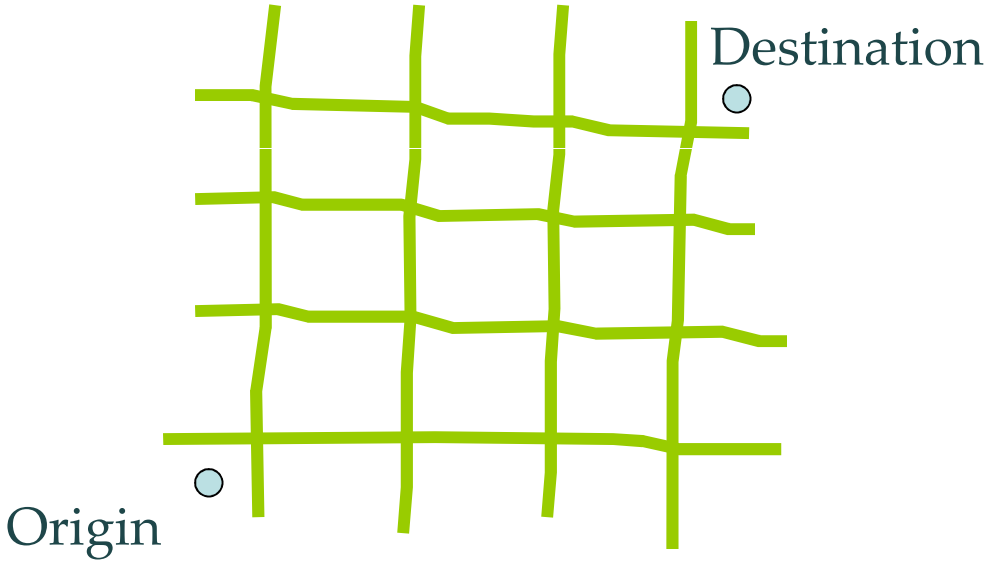
1 Pair of Streets = 1 Possible Route

Connectivity & Congestion



2 Pairs of Streets = 2 Possible Routes

Connectivity & Congestion



A greater number of connected streets yields more route choices.

Connectivity

Traditional grid patterns

- Provide higher levels of connectivity
- Help alleviate traffic on major streets
- Provide a greater number of route choices – regardless of mode

Mobility Management

- Coordinate regional transportation systems and coordinate land use planning to help reduce the need for motorized travel
- Coordinate corridor and land use strategies for efficient access to employment, commercial, educational, recreation destinations to reduce travel distances

The policies and projects that promote the City's transportation goals:

- **Work in tandem and do not conflict with one another**
- **Are designed to manage the entire transportation system**
- **Consider the City's geo-political and physical boundaries**
- **Address current housing and commuting patterns**
- **Set the infrastructure foundation for shifting mode choices**

SERVICE SOLUTIONS SUCCESS

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April 14, 2011

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