PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

7

7. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

Public involvement is the heart and backbone of a well-developed Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The process for engaging public participation might vary by region, but the collaborative nature of public involvement remains essential and valuable to the planning process.

EL PASO MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The EPMPO maintains and enacts a Public Participation Plan (PPP), which serves as a program guide for the public participation process of the EPMPO by providing policies and principles that guide communication and coordination with residents, neighborhood associations, private and public agencies, transportation providers, and a wide array of interested parties and members of the public.

The primary principles of the EPMPO PPP are:

- Equal access is an essential part of the public involvement process.
- No major public policy decision is reached, or large project implemented, without significantly affecting someone.
- Professionals do not have a monopoly on good solutions.
- People are much more willing to live with a decision that affects different interests unequally if the decision-making process is open, objective, and considers all viewpoints.
- Interacting with an official representative of an organization or group is no substitute for interacting directly with that organization or group.
- Effective public notification and participation takes time and effort, and can be expensive, yet is essential to sound decision-making.

The PPP addresses Title VI as well as Environmental Justice concerns, and emphasizes the need to "consult, coordinate, consider, and cooperate." The PPP outlines communicating and disseminating for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) communities, as well as defining appropriate timeframes for public notice, and methods for disseminating information.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND THE MTP

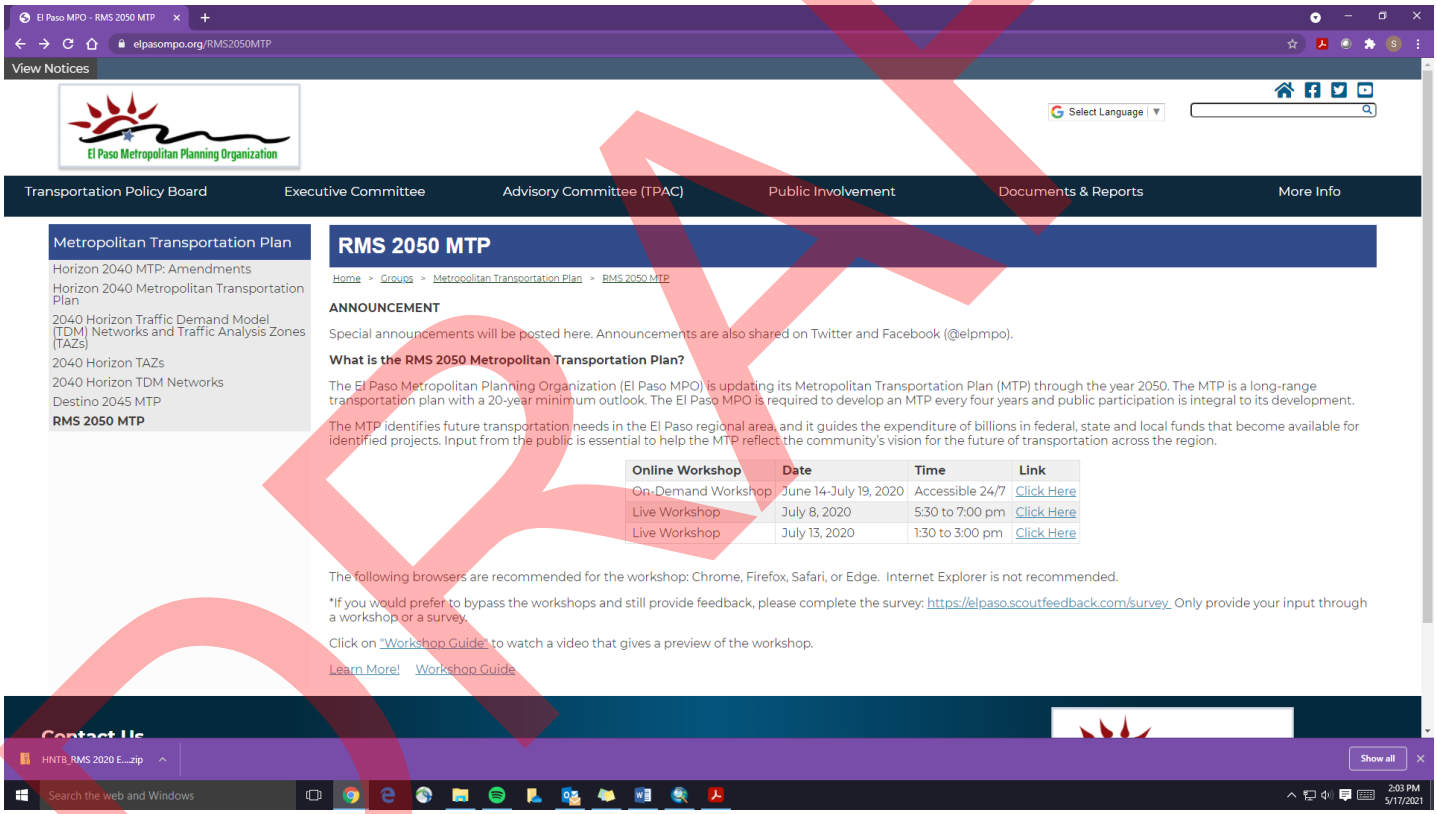
To support the development of the RMS 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), EPMPO staff hosted an on-demand, online visioning workshop whereby the public was asked to provide input and feedback for the region's new MTP.

The on-demand workshop was available 24/7 at the EPMPO website in both English and Spanish to allow for people who preferred to view the video at their own leisure. In addition to the on-demand workshop, two live virtual workshops were hosted by EPMPO staff to provide an additional opportunity for public involvement. The public comment period and the online workshops were available from June 14, 2020 through July 19, 2020. The two live virtual workshops were offered on Wednesday July 8, 2020 from 5:30pm to 7:00pm and Monday July 13, 2020 from 1:30pm to 3:00pm. (See **Table 7-1**).

TABLE 7-1: LIVE AND ON DEMAND WORKSHOPS

ONLINE WORKSHOP	DATE	TIME
On-Demand Workshop	June 14- July 19, 2020	Accessible 24/7
Live Workshop	July 8, 2020	5:30 to 7:00 pm
Live Workshop	July 13, 2020	1:30 to 3:00 pm

FIGURE 7-1: ANNOUNCEMENT SCREENSHOT (HTTPS://ELPASOMPO.ORG/RMS2050MTP)



VISIONING WORKSHOPS

During both the live virtual workshops conducted by MPO staff and the on-demand workshop, participants identified several deficiencies with the existing transportation system, including; congested roadways, connectivity and cooperation throughout the region, mobility and accessibility barriers for older adults and individuals with disabilities, safety and security concerns, and a shortage of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. In addition to identifying transportation system deficiencies, participants completed activities to determine the most important focus areas

for prioritizing projects in the MTP. These focus areas included: increasing multimodal options, improving safety and quality of life, connecting modes of travel, and improving access.

Complemented by voice narration, the workshops were organized into five exercises:

1. Tell us about yourself (The questions for this exercise were voluntary and not required).
2. Tell us your thoughts about the current state of the transportation system
3. Tell us your transportation priorities.
4. Give us your perspective on where you think the region is growing.
5. Tell us what your transportation needs will be over the next several decades.

For people who preferred to complete the survey on paper and submit through postal mail, a downloadable and printable survey version of the workshop was provided on the MPO website. However, no surveys were submitted via mail.

In addition to the comments provided for each exercise and presented below in the next sections, participants had a chance to submit other comments or questions in the final slide of the on-demand workshop. These comments are presented in Appendix E. Furthermore, public participation during the live workshops were recorded and the comments and responses can be found in Appendix L.

EPMPO Executive Director Eduardo Calvo also participated in an interview on local National Public Radio affiliate 88.5 FM (KTEP) that aired on Saturday June 20, 2020. The interview included an invitation to the public to participate in the live virtual workshop and on-demand workshop. Mr. Calvo also provided an overview of the development of an MTP and why public input is critical if the MTP is to reflect the communities' values and priorities.

During the five-week workshop period, 348 users visited the virtual workshop site and 43 users completed the workshop. Although participation was low, the information obtained gave MPO staff insight on public perception of the existing transportation system. The survey was not intended to be a scientific survey with a predetermined sample size, but rather strived for inclusivity and allowing substantial opportunity for community members to provide their input.

A summary of the public feedback was presented to the Transportation Policy Board (TPB) after the workshop period ended. In this regard, it was recommended by the TPB to improve the survey format for future use and have this type of survey done on a regular basis.

EXERCISE 1: STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT

During the first exercise, visioning participants were asked to self-identify the stakeholder groups to which they belong. This information was requested to gauge stakeholder representation during the visioning activities and identify stakeholder groups that were underrepresented, so additional targeted outreach could be done on subsequent public engagement activities. Many important stakeholder groups in the region were represented, such as community groups, and business owners as shown in **Table 7-2**.

TABLE 7-2: STAKEHOLDER GROUP PRESENTATION

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED*
Private Auto/SUV/Pickup User	36
Pedestrian Facility (Sidewalks, Hike & Bike Trail, Tec) User	28
Airport User	23
Bicycle User	23
Public transit user of Sun Metro	8
Responsible for transportation of children	3
Member of Community Group (Such as Neighborhood Association, Civic Club, Etc.)	11
Member of environmental protection organization	2
Member of historic or cultural preservation organization	2
Member of A Population Traditionally Underserved by The Transportation System	3
Business Owner	6
Representative of an agency that is responsible for transportation safety	2
Intercity bus or rail user	3
Planning Organization Member	2
Public transit user of El Paso County Transit or SCRTD	1
Transit for the elderly and disabled user	1
Private Transportation Provider (taxis, bus, etc.)	1
Freight handler or company owner	1

*Participants were able to select more than one group

As part of the first exercise, participants also had the option to provide the zip code of where they live. Based on this information a density map was developed for visual representation of the area and frequency where the participants lived. As observed in **Figure 7-3**, the most represented zip code was 79902 (covering areas of central and west El Paso), followed by 79912, 79935, and 79936.

The first exercise also asked about participants' transportation modes. While the private vehicle mode was best represented, there was also good representation of pedestrian, airport and bicycle users. However, very few participants were public transit users, as shown in **Figure 7-2**.

Similarly, participants were asked to identify in a map, areas where they live and conduct their regular activities. **Figure 7-3** shows the resulting map. Most dense areas where participants lived appear to be the Central area (downtown) and Central-East area near the airport (See **Figure 7-7** for subareas). Similarly, most participants identified the Central area as their place to work and the Central and Central-East areas appears to be also the place where most of the participants go for recreational purposes (**Figure 7-4**). The densest areas for school location appear to be the Westside near downtown area and the Lower Valley area.

FIGURE 7-2: TRANSPORTATION MODES

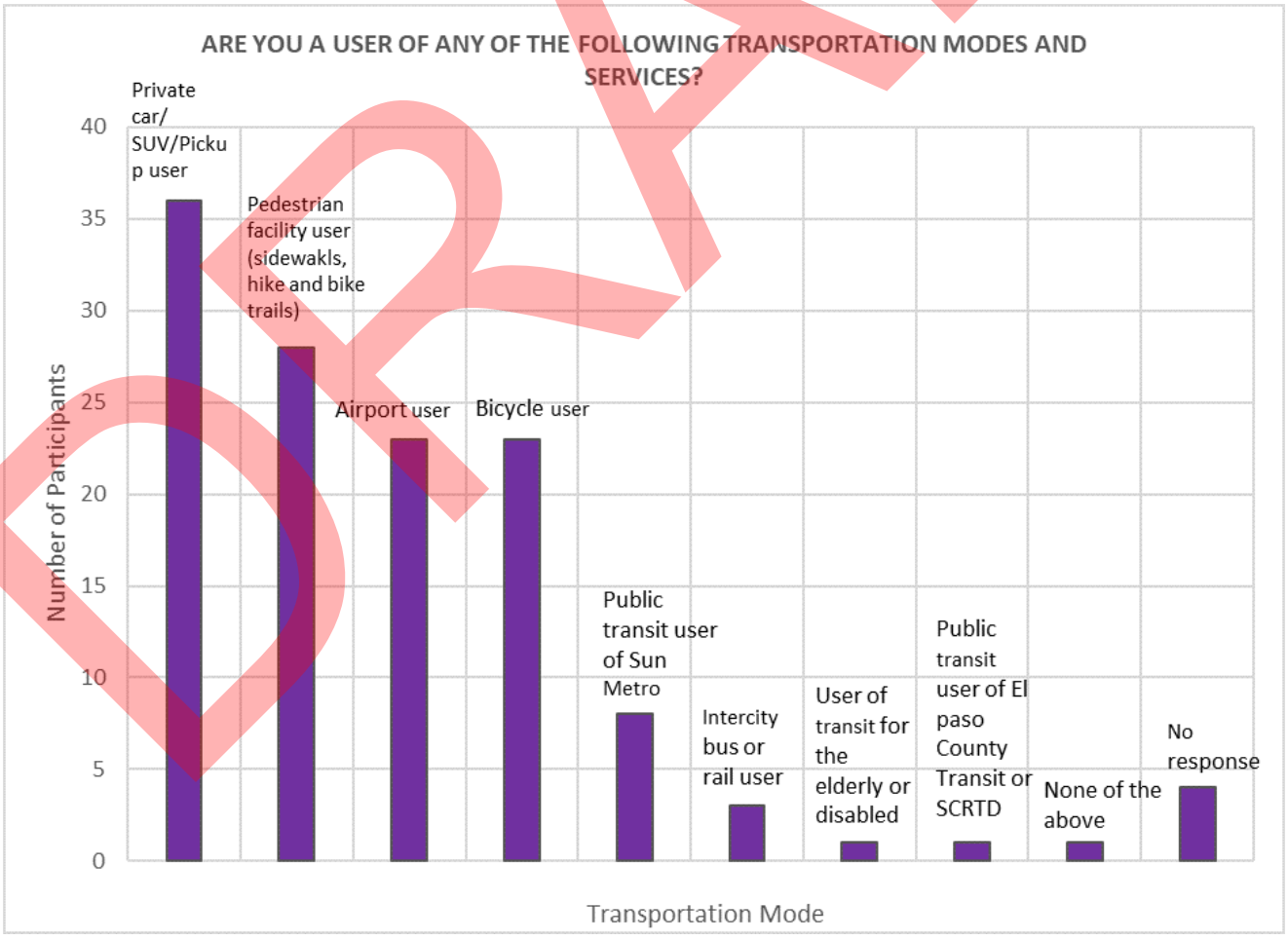
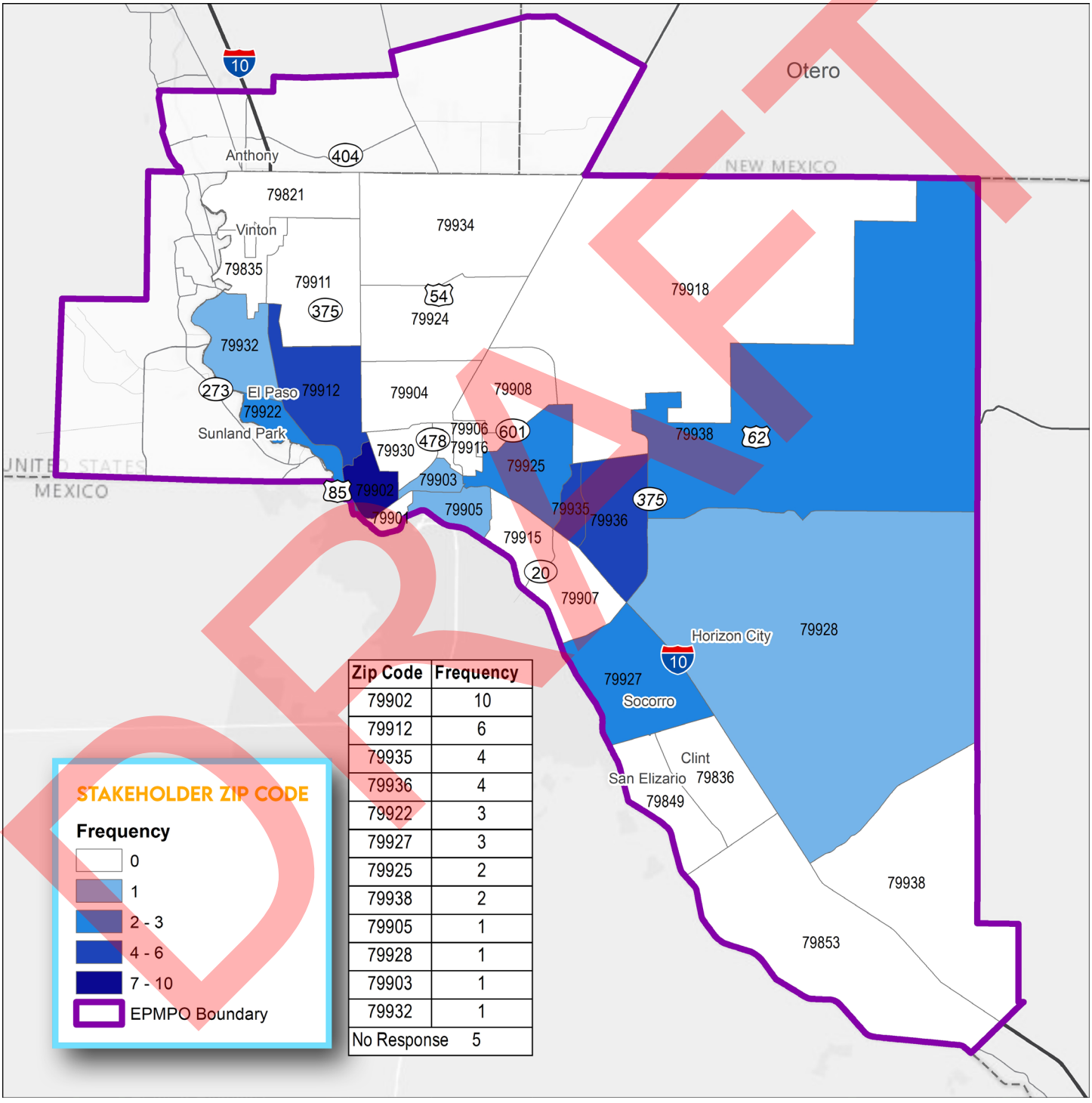
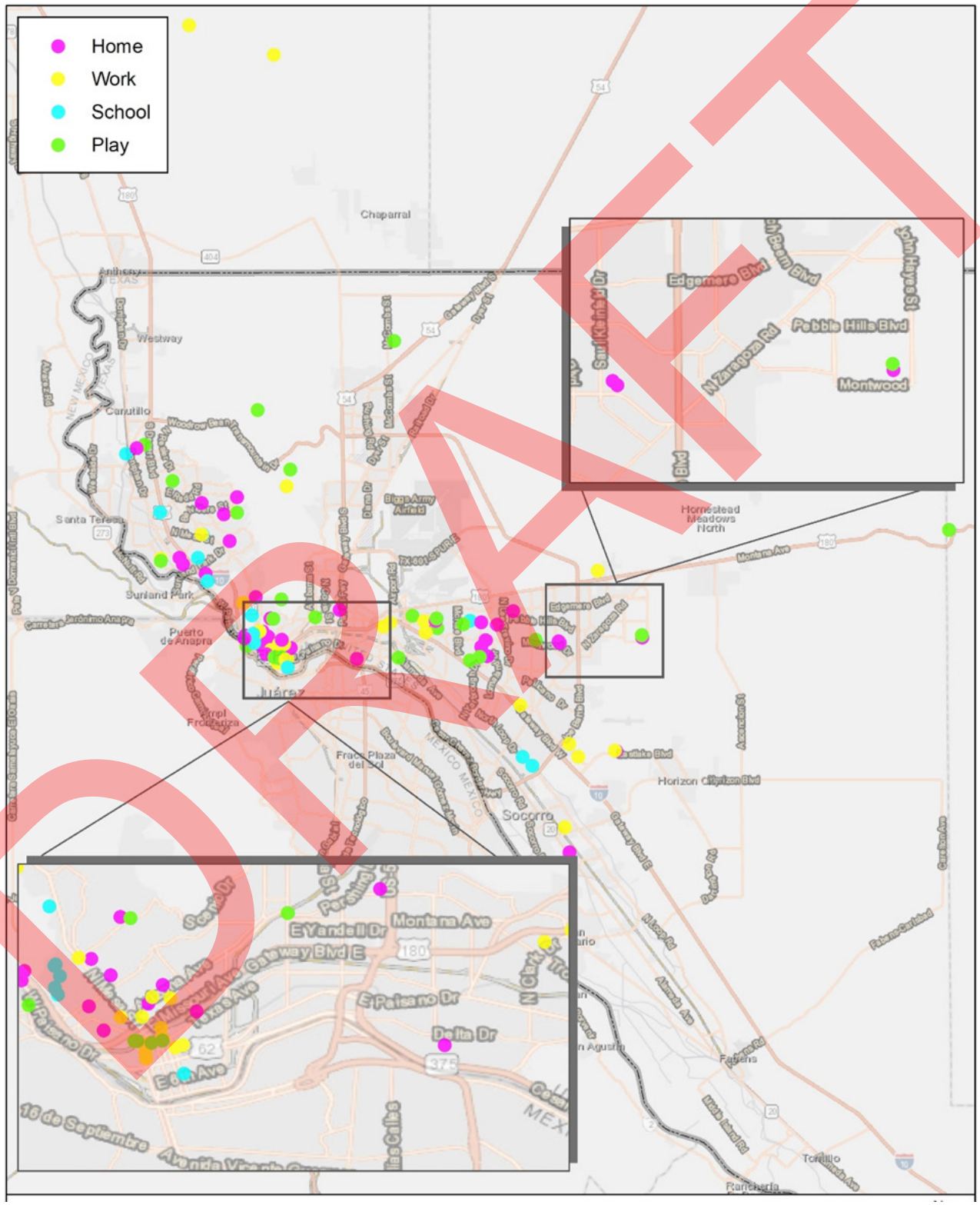


FIGURE 7-3: ZIP CODES MAP



Zip Code	Frequency
79902	10
79912	6
79935	4
79936	4
79922	3
79927	3
79925	2
79938	2
79905	1
79928	1
79903	1
79932	1
No Response	5

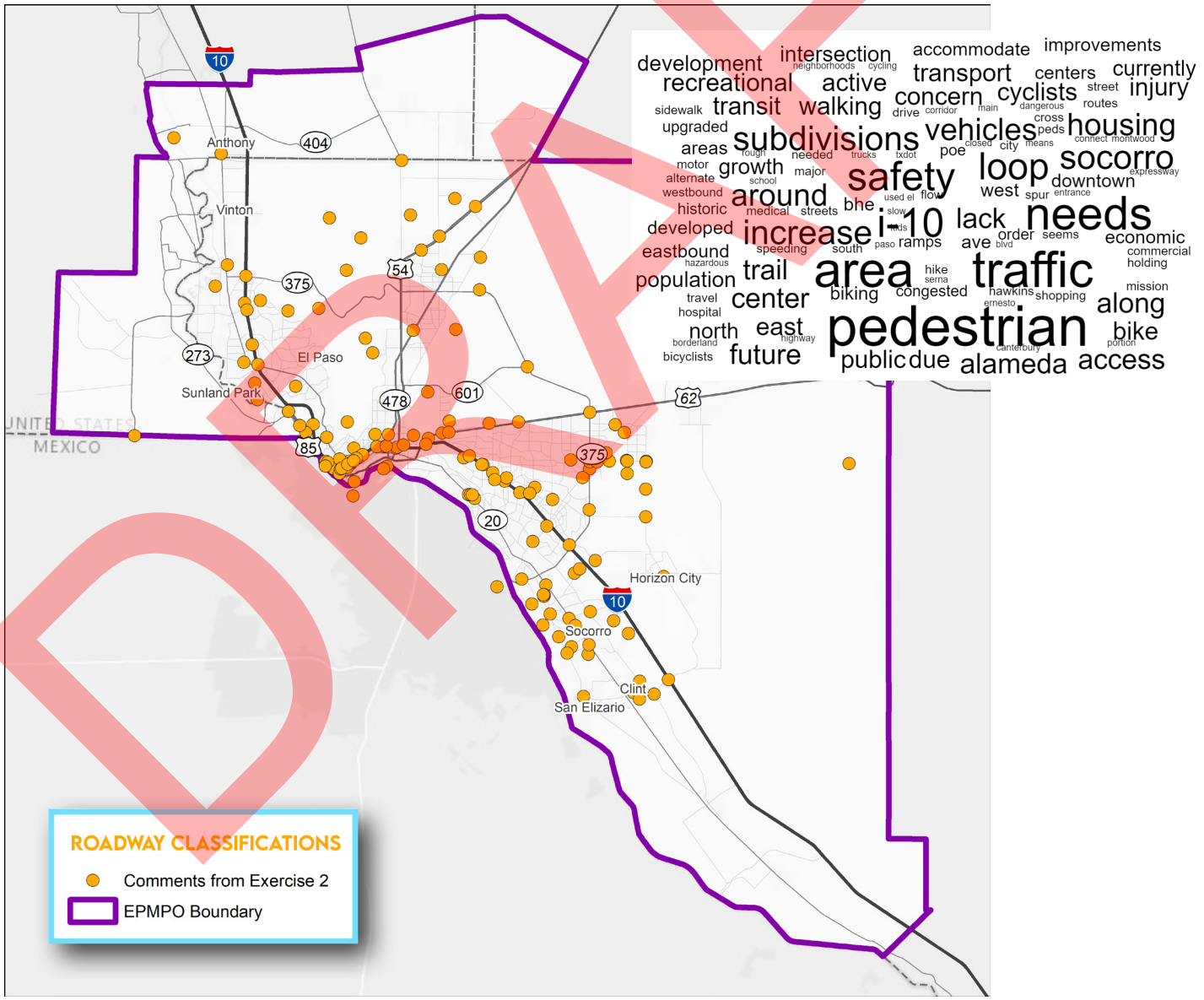
FIGURE 7-4: ACTIVITIES MAP



EXERCISE 2: CURRENT STATE OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The second exercise asked participants to provide their thoughts on the current transportation system. In addition to answering a set of questions, the participants were provided with an interactive map (**Figure 7-6**) where they could provide their thoughts on specific locations. There were 88 comments associated with various pin locations provided in the interactive map, which were summarized and grouped into the following categories: Roadways, Safety, Regional Mobility, Public Transportation, and Active Transportation. Participant comments are summarized for each category in this section. The complete list can be found in Appendix E Public Feedback Report (Comments associated with Exercise 2 pin locations).

FIGURE 7-5: WORD CLOUD AND MAP OF PARTICIPANT COMMENTS FOR EXERCISE 2



ROADWAYS

Participants identified several key issues regarding the existing roadway network. IH-10 downtown and the segment from US 54 to Bassett Place were highlighted as areas in which increased traffic was observed and reconstruction/widening is needed to support future growth. Special attention to the University Medical Center (UMC) area and various clinics and colleges was requested in regards to the increased traffic that has contributed to congestion in this area.

SAFETY

Safety was a top concern for many of the participants during the online visioning workshops. Participants identified several locations as dangerous, including the IH-10 at Hawkins interchange, and IH-10 near Lomaland and Yarbrough, mostly due to speeding freight trucks.

The area west of Hawkins Boulevard and south of Gateway Boulevard East (near Market Avenue) was identified as "dangerous and in need of a total zoning overhaul due to heavy concentration of freight trucks that intermingle with passenger vehicles carrying children on their way to extracurricular activities" (From public comment).

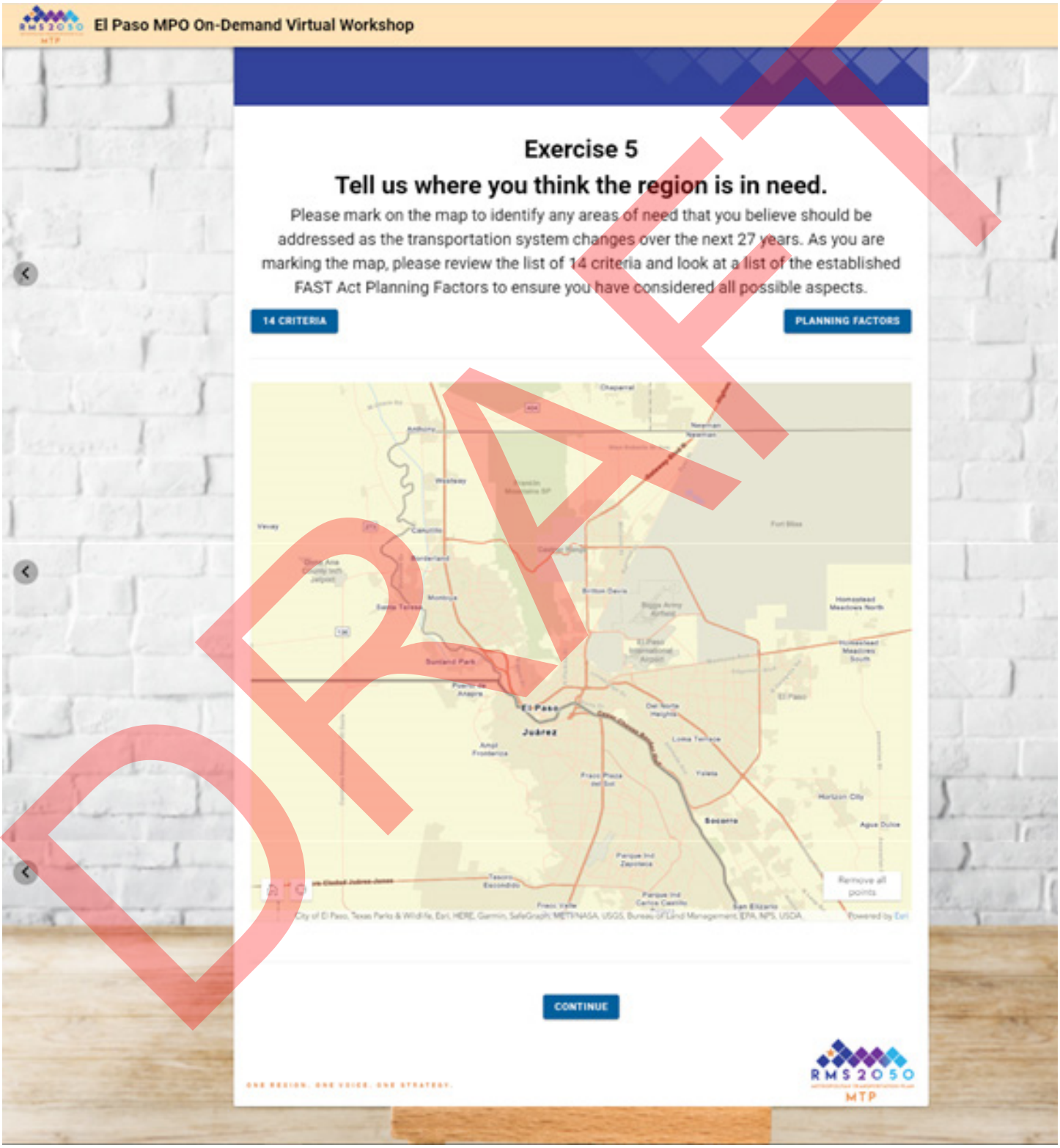
Many were also concerned with narrow sidewalks and unsafe intersections that put pedestrians in danger. Some highlighted locations by the public were the Mesa corridor: "Sidewalks too narrow, unsafe with fast traffic"; Alameda Avenue: "Safer intersection is needed to accommodate kids walking to Ernesto Serna School across Alameda Ave"; and Dyer corridor: "Safety issues on this corridor need to be addressed for cars and pedestrians".

The traffic circle recently constructed at the intersection of Edgemere and Rich Beem was also identified as an area of safety concern. The participants believe many residents of the area do not know how to use a traffic circle, in addition to the signage being counter to the needs of travelers accessing businesses directly off of the circle. There were also several locations identified with concerns regarding the safety of cycling infrastructure. Among these locations is Spur 1966, cited as hazardous for both bicyclists and pedestrians.

In addition, the aging of IH-10 overpasses in general, but specifically the McRae overpass - was noted. Local city streets in central El Paso are also aging, cracking and lacking ADA curb ramps.

Several locations were pointed out where there has been new developments and traffic has increased considerably. Some of these areas in the City of El Paso are Socorro Road and Alameda Avenue in the Lower Valley, Zaragoza Road at Rich Beem Boulevard in the Far East, Country Club Road in the Upper Valley and the IH-10/Artcraft interchange on the Westside.

FIGURE 7-6: EXAMPLE OF INTERACTIVE MAP



REGIONAL MOBILITY

Many participants noted areas of the city that are growing but have poor connectivity with other areas. Many of these comments were from participants located farther east in unincorporated El Paso County near Montwood Drive, and near Horizon City and the City of Socorro. There was specific mention of the lack of improvements along Socorro Road and the lack of alternate routes of travel for commercial vehicles (such as the future Border Highway East) that is holding back economic development to the historic Mission Trail, as well as lack of direct access to IH-10 and Loop 375 (Joe Battle). Other comments focused on the need for investment at the ports of entry. Participants mentioned that delays are a lost economic opportunity citing the need to do everything to reduce delay and maximize flow of people and goods.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Several locations were identified as currently being developed and participants cited the need to upgrade the roads for biking, walking and public transit in order to accommodate population growth. Some of the locations cited were North Loop Road near Darrington Road and Horizon Boulevard.

There was also a comment proposing a streetcar running along Montana Avenue with arterial bus lines to run down the major north-south roads, in which the participant cited that this streetcar route would be more useful than the existing route.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Similar to the comments identified in Destino 2045 MTP, citizens were concerned that the region may not be able to meet the demand of cyclists hoping for more active form of transportation if there are not improvements to the infrastructure. Although important investments have been made since the development of Destino 2045 MTP, there is still a lack of infrastructure that needs to be addressed as part of RMS 2050 MTP.

Moreover, concerns around pedestrian and cycling safety were frequent comments. Specifically, the intersection at Mesa/Sunland Park was identified as in need of safety improvements. Participants also identified several locations that need improvement in hiking and biking trails, such as northeast El Paso, far east El Paso, and some locations within the City of Socorro. Furthermore, participants cited the need for hike/bike trails to connect neighborhoods to public transit. In regards to lack of pedestrian connectivity the Ysleta POE as well as Sunland Park Drive were some of the identified locations.

Other comments mentioned a desire to keep the Lost Dog trail network open, to improve access to the Rio Bosque wetland, as well as a lack of sufficient active transportation infrastructure at the areas north and south of Transmountain Road and in downtown El Paso.

EXERCISE 3: RANKING AND SCORING CRITERIA

Exercise 3 asked participants to rank criteria based on each criterion's importance to the region. At the online workshops, participants completed an individual exercise which helped the EPMPO develop performance measures for the MTP and provide context for prioritizing potential MTP projects.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Taking as a base the criteria developed for the Destino 2045 MTP, participants were provided explanations of the criteria that will assist in the ranking process. The criteria were developed to assist in the evaluation of transportation programs and projects for inclusion in RMS 2050 MTP. Refer to Chapter 4 for a complete description of the evaluation criteria.

PRIORITIZING THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

For the individual exercise, participants were asked to rate the importance of 14 visioning evaluation criteria on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 meaning unimportant and 5 meaning extremely important.

Table 7-3 shows the final ranking for each of the criteria. The evaluation criteria help provide a clear picture of community priorities regarding the future of the regional transportation system.

FIGURE 7-7: PIN LOCATION ASSOCIATED WITH COMMENTS BY CATEGORY

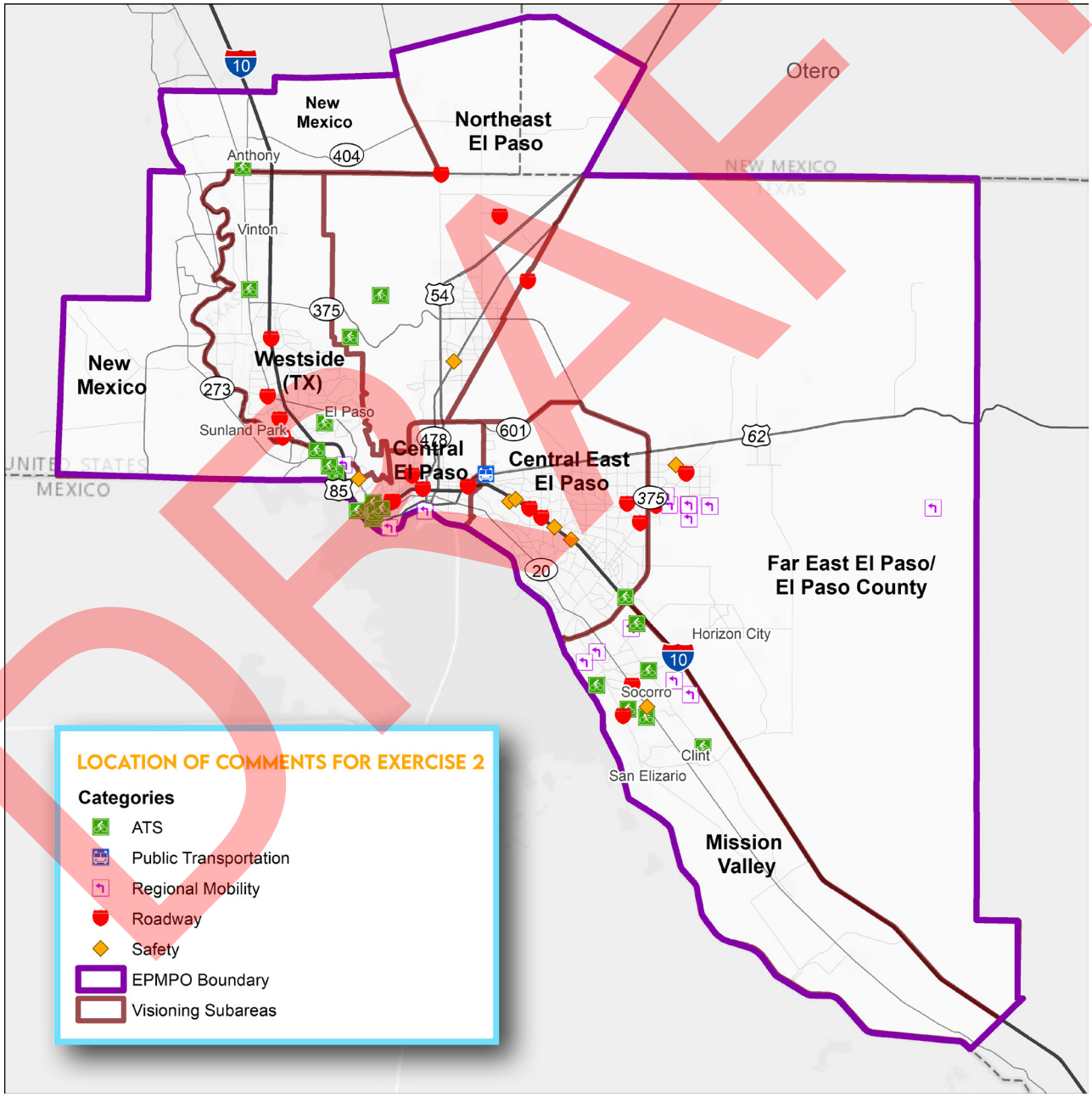


TABLE 7-3: CRITERIA RANKING

CRITERIA	AVERAGE SCORE
Improve Safety	4.2
Improve Quality of Life	4
Protect Environment	3.9
Conserve Energy	3.7
Promote Efficiency	3.6
Improve Access	3.6
Increase Multi-Modal Options	3.6
Reduce Congestion	3.5
Connect Travel	3.4
Support Economic Development Goals	3.4
Increase Connection	3.3
Support Land Use Goals	3.3
Preserve Rights-of-Way	3
Improve Security	3

EXERCISES 4 & 5: GROWTH TRENDS & ENVISIONING THE FUTURE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

For the final exercises participants were asked to identify the location of growth areas and transportation needs by means of an interactive map similar to the map in Exercise 2 (**Figure 7-6**).

In Exercise 4 participants were presented with recent growth trend data and were asked to provide their view about the current state of the transportation system. At the time of the visioning workshops the most current data was that generated for Destino 2045 MTP. Maps based on the Destino 2045 MTP data were provided to participants, and are presented in this section. The demographic projections developed for RMS 2050 are presented in Chapter 2: MTP Guiding Principles.

The questions were organized as follows: Population Growth, Employment Growth, Traffic Volume Data, Transit Route Data, and Non-Motorized Transportation Data. Below is a summary of the responses obtained. Detailed information and graphs are in Appendix E.

POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

For population growth, participants were provided a map of the projected population growth from 2012 to 2045 as seen in **Figure 7-8**. A plurality of participants (44%) believed the provided population growth trends were accurate. Twenty-three percent (23%) believed they were not accurate and thirty-three percent (33%) had no opinion or did not submit a response.

If participants believed the provided growth trends did not accurately display population and employment growth trends and responded "no" to the questions, they were then provided the opportunity to identify the subareas (New Mexico, Westside, Northeast, Central, Central-East, Far-East, and Mission Valley) of the region where they believed population and/or employment growth was inaccurately represented.

The most frequently identified subarea was the Westside subarea (6 out of 24 responses), followed by the Mission Valley subarea (5 out of 24) where participants felt that the population trends were overestimating growth.

In regards to employment trends, based on the projected employment growth from 2012-2045 (**Figure 7-9**), forty-two percent (42%) believed employment was displayed accurately, twenty-one percent (21%) believed it was not-accurate and thirty-seven percent (37%) did not respond or had no opinion.

In addition, participants were asked if they believed that employment changes in the region will have a positive or negative effect on the transportation system. Forty-nine percent (49%) of participants believe it will have a negative effect, thirty-seven percent (37%) believe it will have a positive effect and fourteen percent (14%) did not respond.

FIGURE 7-8: POPULATION GROWTH 2012-2045

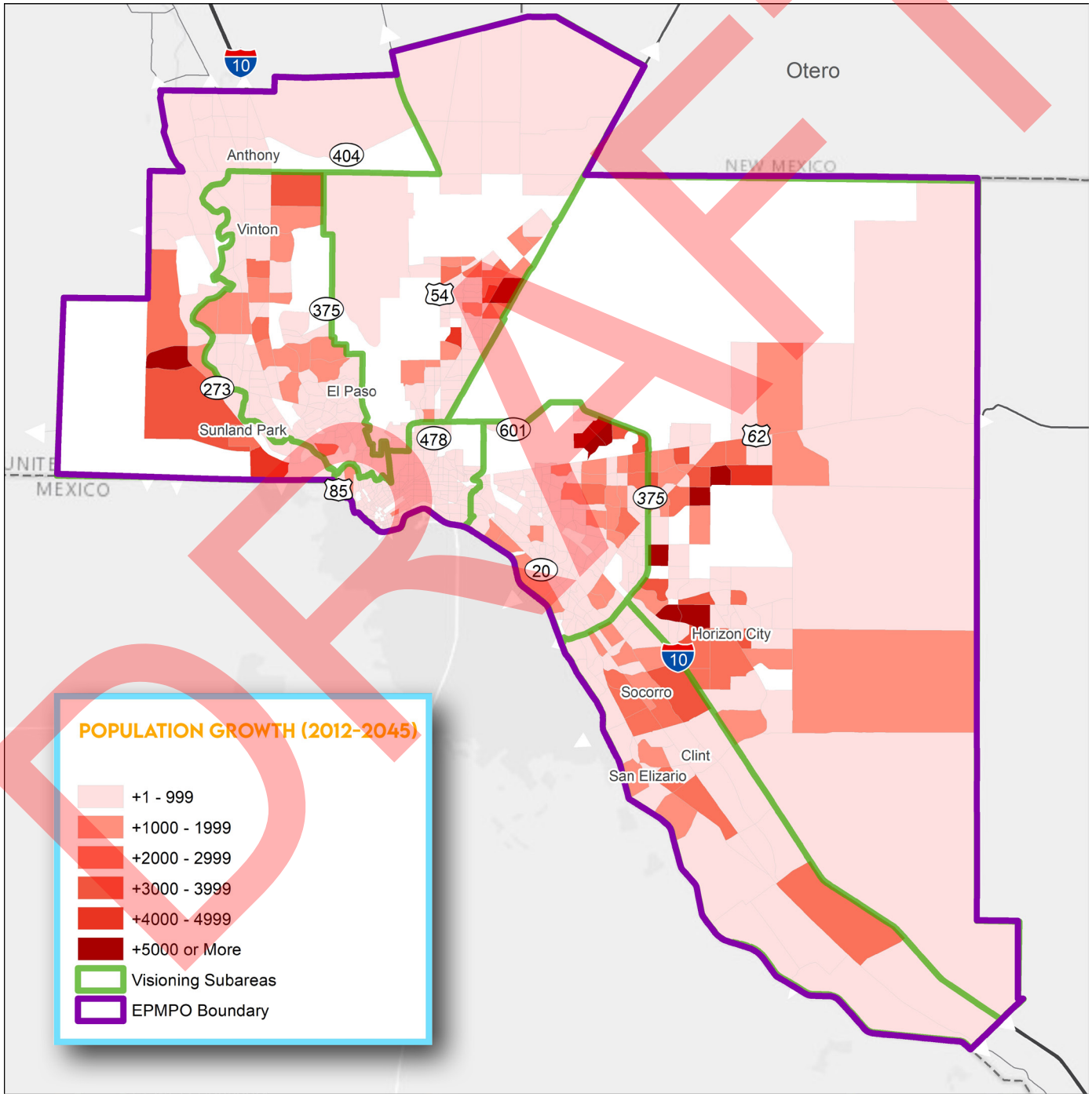
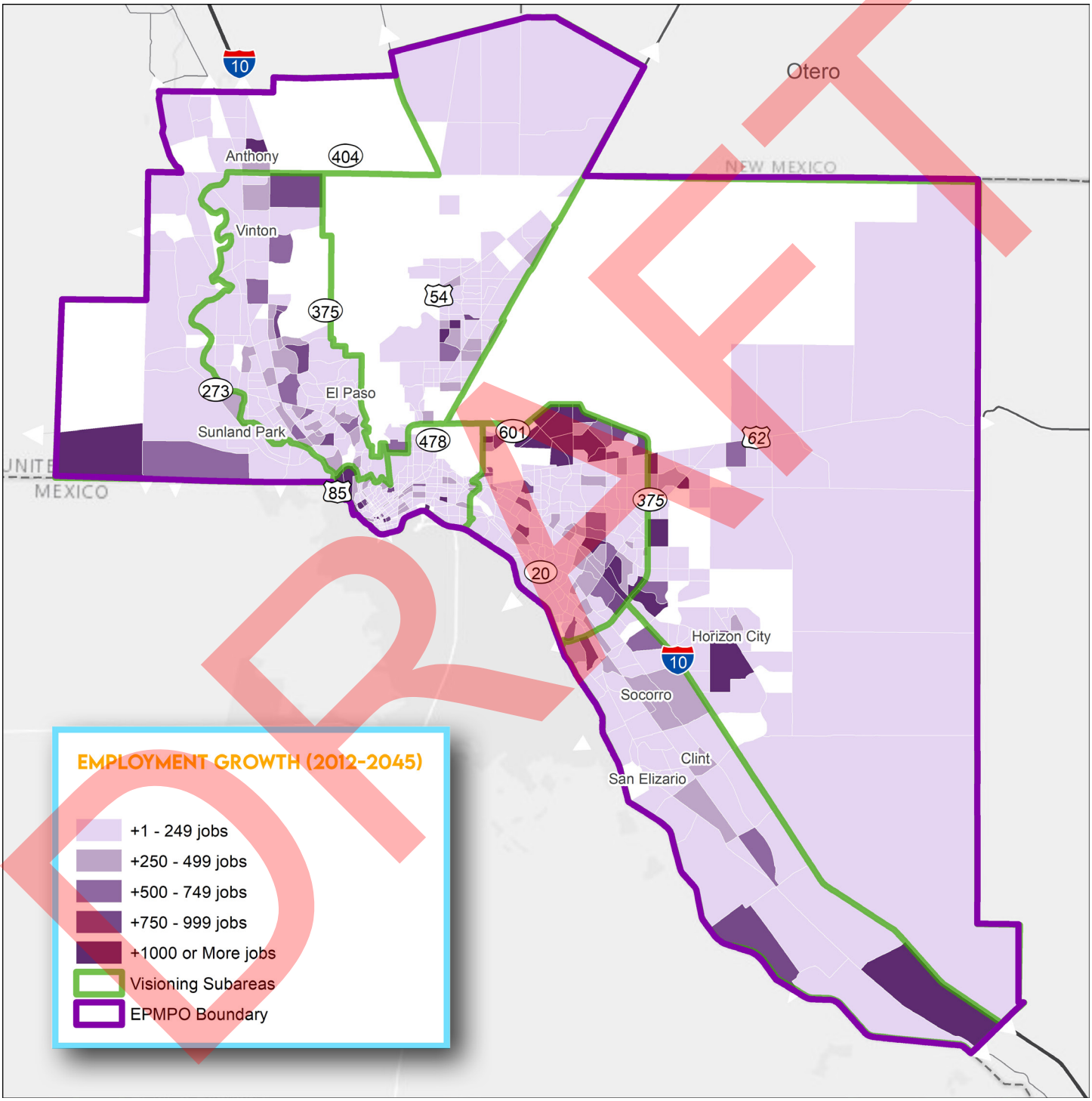


FIGURE 7-9: EMPLOYMENT GROWTH 2012-2045



TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Participants were provided a map (**Figure 7-11**) showing the expected traffic volumes compared to the capacity of current streets and highways if the population and employment growth shown in the previous two maps is realized. As mentioned before, the provided traffic volumes were those developed for Destino 2045 MTP. The 2050 No-Build traffic volumes are presented in Chapter 3. Forty-two percent (42%) of the participants felt the map was accurate, while thirty percent (30%) believed it was not accurate, and twenty-eight percent (28%) did not respond or had no opinion.

TRANSIT ROUTES

The existing and proposed transit routes for Sun Metro, El Paso County Transit, and South Central Regional Transit District were presented in a map (**Figure 7-12**) for participants to respond if they believed the routes would serve the transit needs the region will have in 2050. Forty-seven percent (47%) of the participants believed that the existing and proposed routes will not serve the transit needs the region will have in 2050. Twenty-one percent (21%) believed they will serve transit needs, and thirty-two percent (32%) did not respond or had no opinion.

If participants responded "no" to the question, they were then provided the opportunity to identify the subareas of the region where they believed existing transit is insufficient or where future transit needs will occur. The diversity of votes for each of the subareas as shown in **Figure 7-10** suggests that participants believe transit service is/will be lacking throughout the region.

FIGURE 7-10: SUBAREAS WHERE TRANSIT NEEDS WERE IDENTIFIED

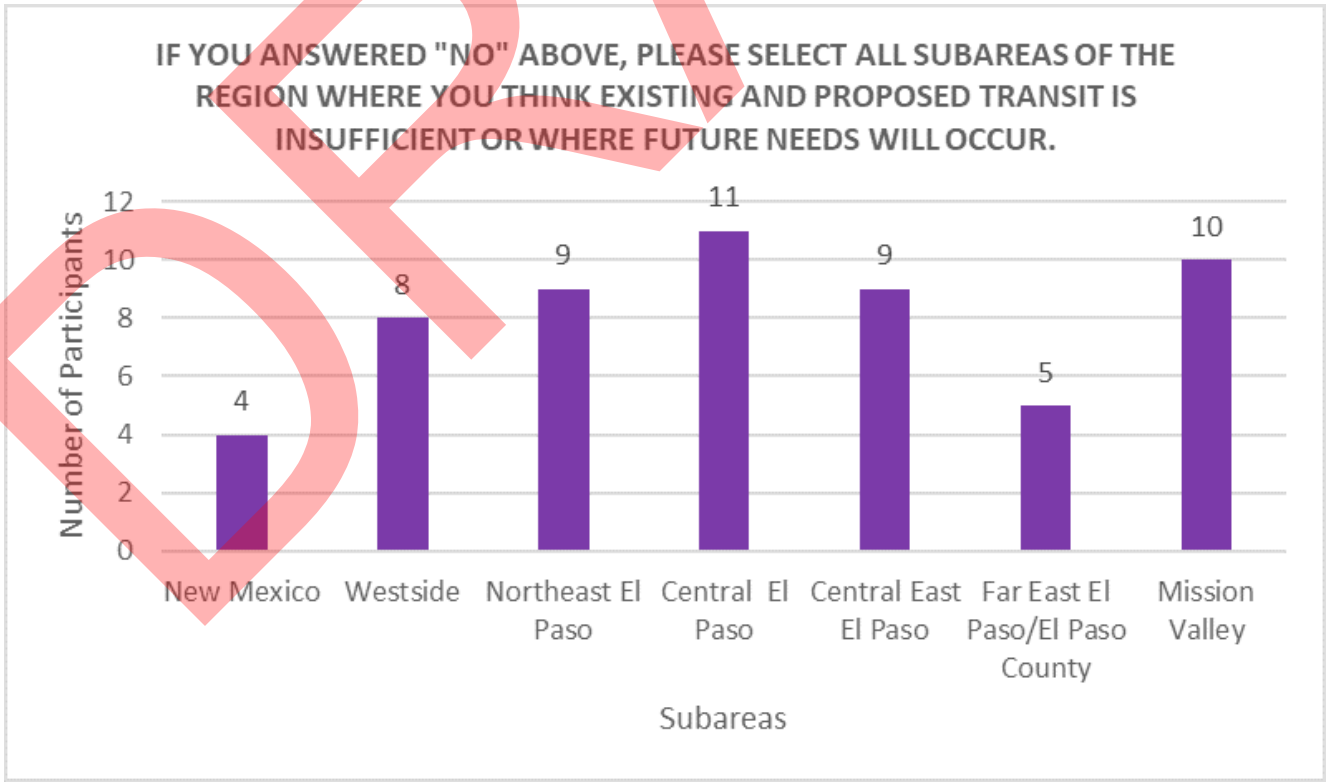


FIGURE 7-11: 2045 NO BUILD TRAFFIC VOLUMES

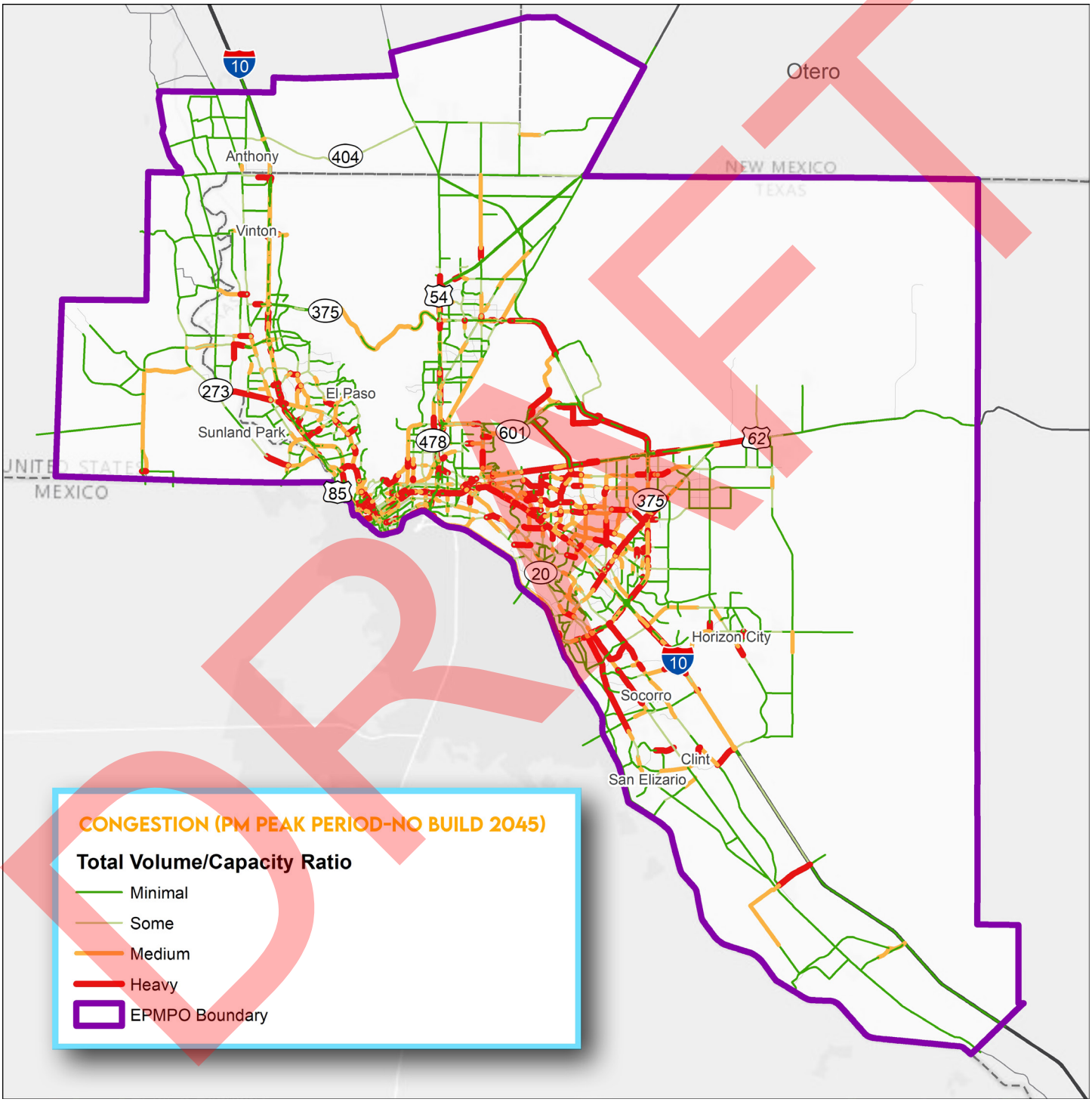
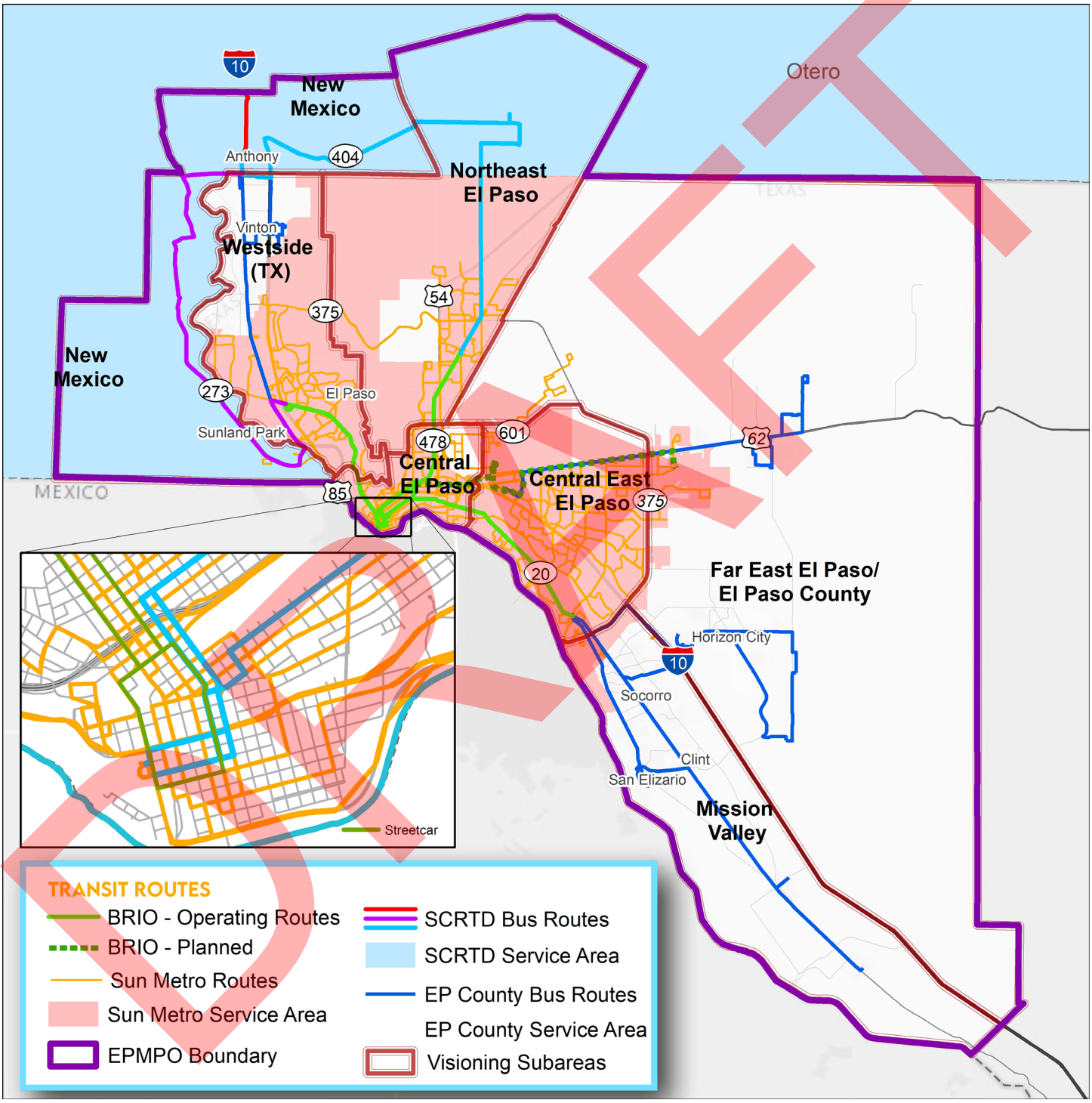


FIGURE 7-12: EXISTING AND PROPOSED TRANSIT ROUTES (AS OF JUNE 2019)



NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

Similarly, a map with existing and proposed bike facilities (**Figure 7-13**) was provided to the participants to identify if they believed they will serve the non-motorized transportation needs of the region through 2050. The most frequent response (44%) indicated that the existing and proposed facilities would not serve needs through 2050, while twenty-one percent (21%) felt that they will, and thirty-five percent (35%) had no opinion or did not respond.

The response to the question of what subareas do participants believe are in need of improvements was very similar to the transit response where the diversity of votes suggest that participants believe the need is throughout the region as reflected in **Figure 7-14**.

FIGURE 7-13: EXISTING AND PROPOSED ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FACILTIES (AS OF JUNE 2019)

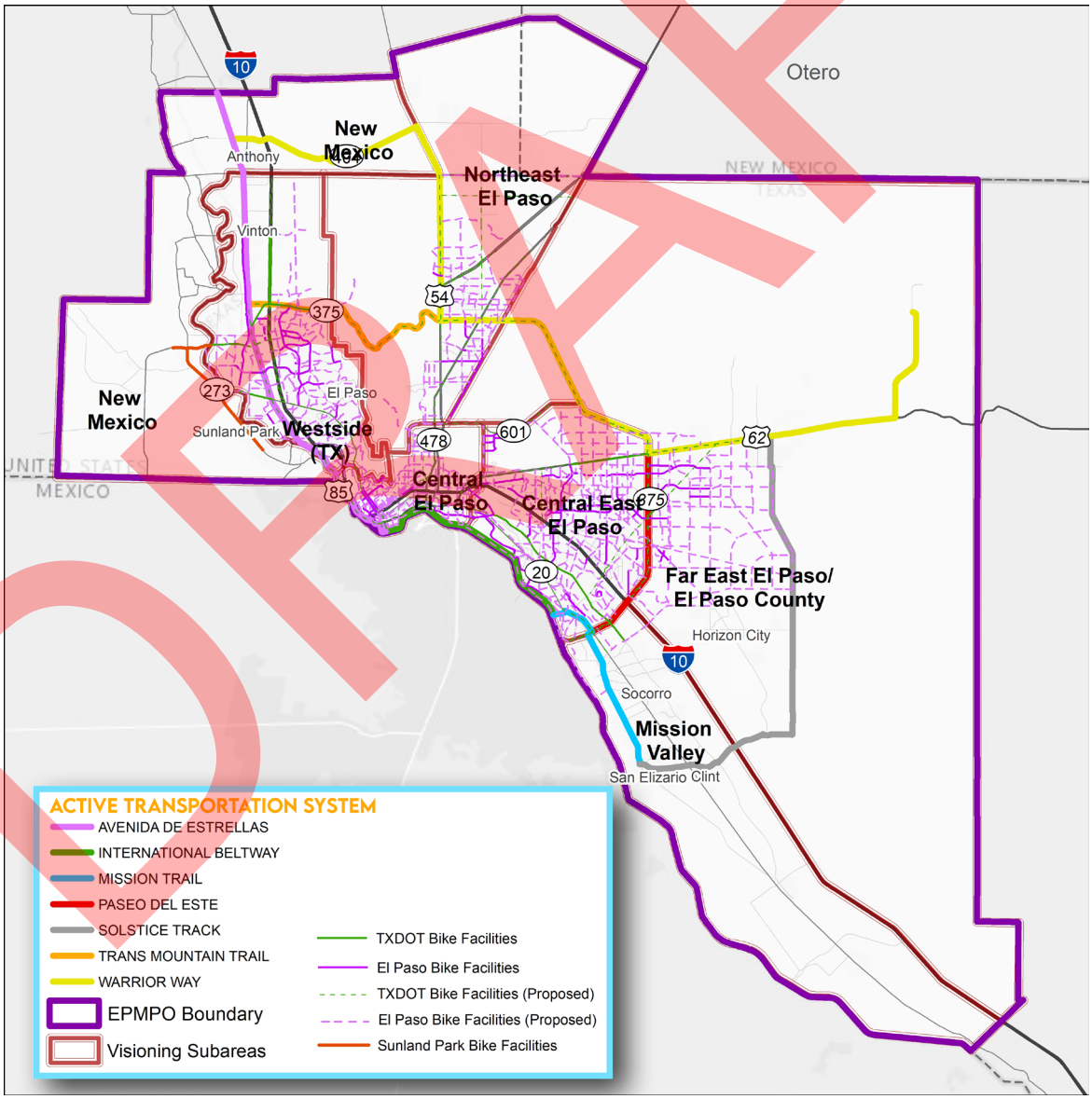
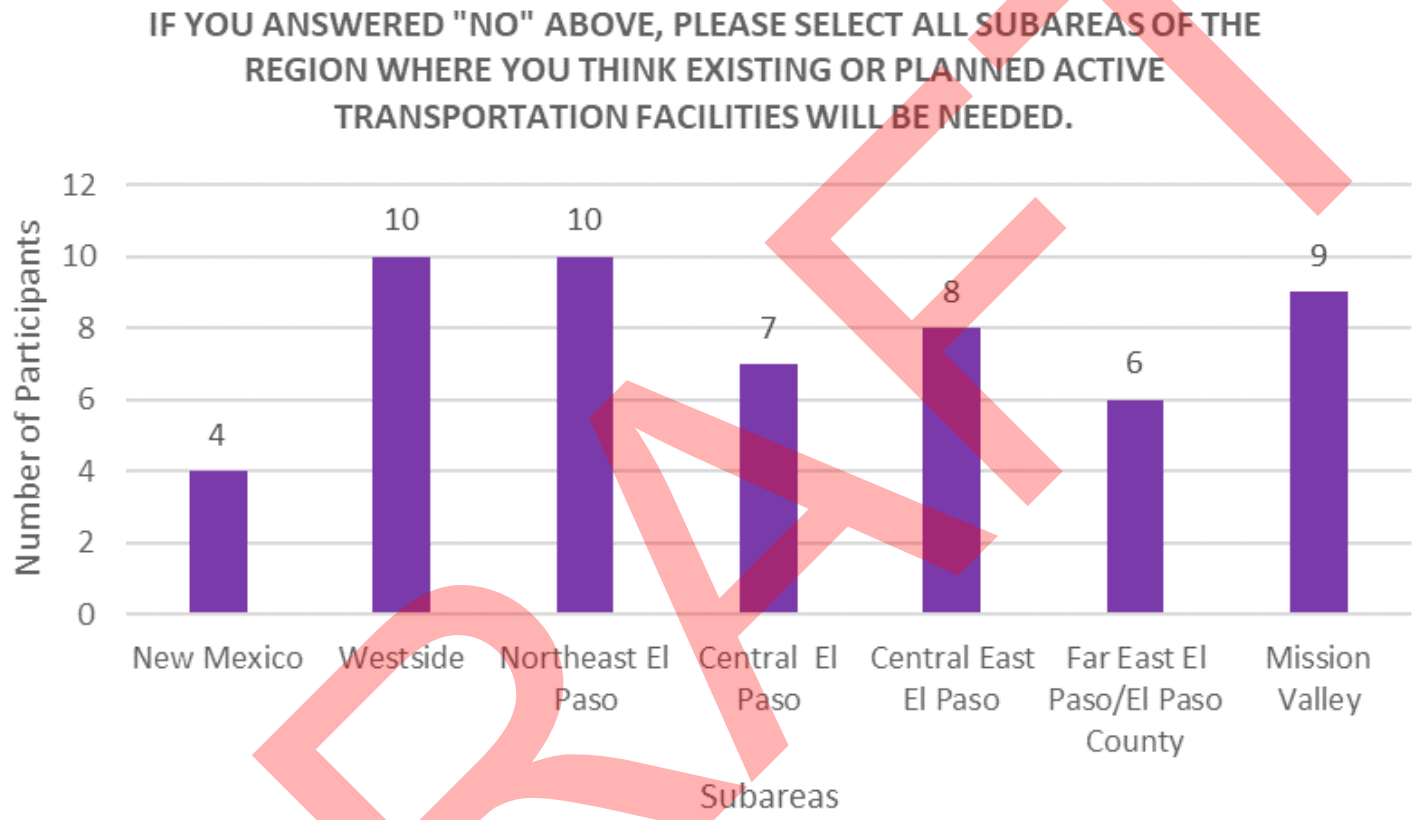


FIGURE 7-14: SUBAREAS WHERE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FACILITIES NEEDS WERE IDENTIFIED



Exercise 5 provided an interactive pin map where participants were asked to identify any areas of need that they believed should be addressed as the transportation system changes over the next 27 years. As they placed pins on the map they were asked to review the list of 14 criteria and look at the established FAST Act Planning Factors (previously presented in Chapter 1) to ensure they have considered all possible aspects. **Figure 7-15** shows the location of pins placed on the interactive map. The comments associated with each pin are presented in Appendix E.

Most participants believed the needs to be addressed by 2050 were region-wide needs (**Figure 7-16**) with transit availability/service quality the most selected region-wide need, followed by bicycle access. Relatively few participants said that needs to be addressed by 2050 were needs in the New Mexico subarea, and they identified a variety of specific needs as seen in **Figure 7-17**.

FIGURE 7-15: LOCATION OF PIN COMMENTS FOR EXERCISE 5

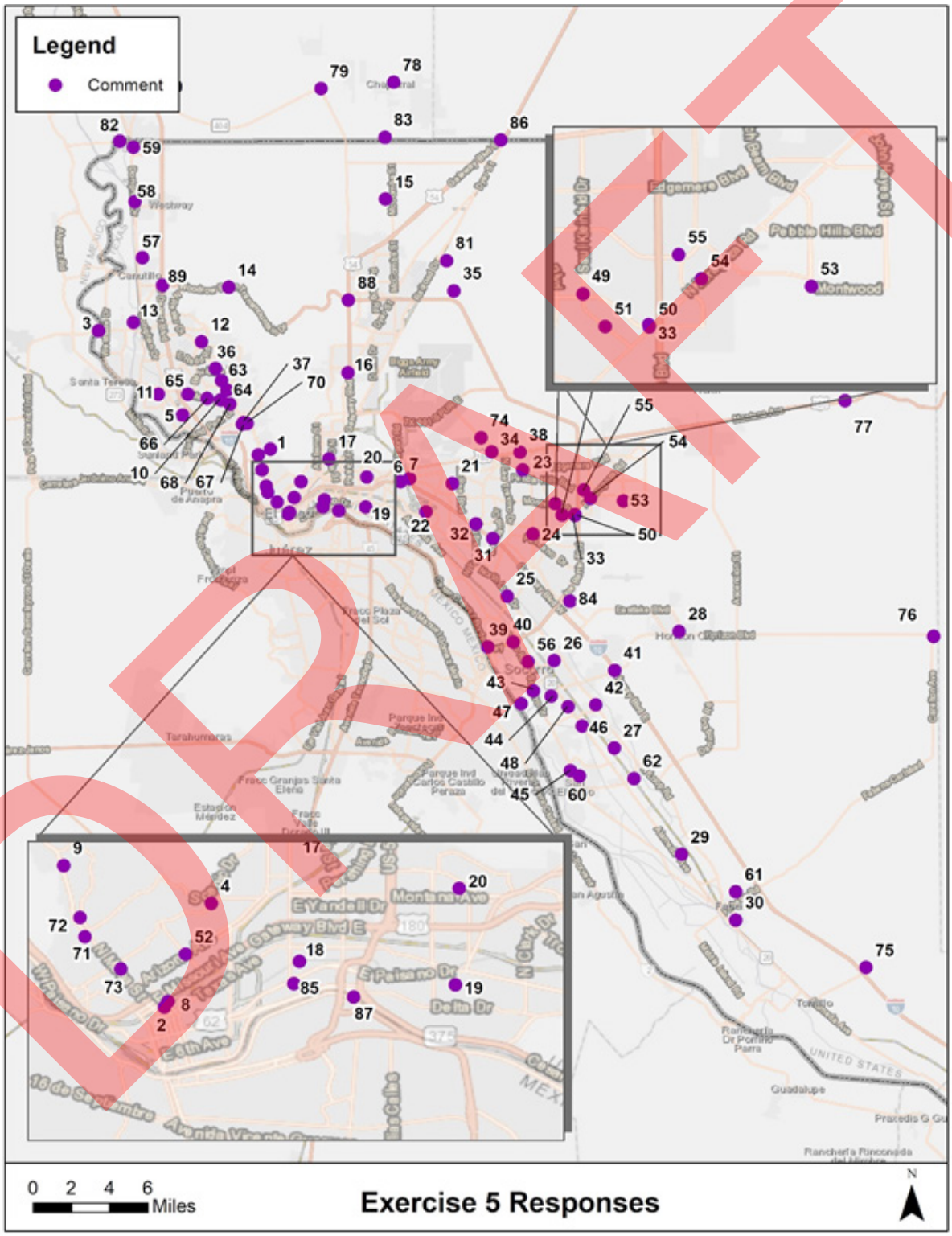


FIGURE 7-16: TYPES OF NEEDS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED REGION-WIDE

FIGURE 7-17: TYPES OF NEEDS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED IN NEW MEXICO

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Early stakeholder engagement began in 2018 with the development of the Regional Mobility Strategy (RMS). In 2018, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) El Paso District, in cooperation with the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (EPMPO), developed this document, which became a strategic plan beneficial to the region, as summarized in Chapter 2. Since its conception, the RMS was targeted to assist EPMPO efforts for the development of the update of the RMS 2050 MTP.

More than 20 stakeholder listening sessions were conducted between November 2018 and August 2019. Stakeholder participation included: the private sector, the Borderplex Alliance, the University of Texas at El Paso, the Hunt Institute, and several elected officials. The sessions focused on issues, opportunities, challenges, priorities, and ideas as identified by stakeholders themselves. In total, more than 70 stakeholders participated in the listening sessions.

Chapter 2 of the RMS Final Report (Appendix G), highlights the stakeholder listening session efforts, which were the centerpiece of the RMS. The primary goal of these sessions was to capture a multimodal representative cross-section of stakeholders across the region, which included Texas, New Mexico, and the State of Chihuahua, Mexico.

LISTENING SESSIONS

To collectively establish a vision for the regional transportation network that supports future growth and economic vitality, participating stakeholders and partnering agencies were asked to evaluate the current and future operational conditions of key highway corridors in the region, to identify constraints and areas of opportunity, and to identify potential opportunities for increased arterial connectivity. The final output was a list of recommendations for project prioritization based on the agency and stakeholder input received that supports the region's vision for the RMS 2050 MTP.

RMS evaluated infrastructure, policy, and technology opportunities at the regional level to accomplish several goals:

- Address safety issues
- Decrease travel times
- Increase connectivity
- Improve level of service
- Increase network reliability and redundancy
- Provide additional modal opportunities
- Preserve community character, cohesion, and quality of life
- Identify projects for funding and implementation
- Promote economic development opportunities

Several emerging themes of the listening sessions that were repeated by multiple stakeholders (**Figure 7-18**) were identified as a result of these sessions. Based on these major themes, a matrix was developed to organize the top regional needs and strategies. Some were tangible issues, such as traffic flow, while other themes were more abstract, such as leadership. A summary of the

collected feedback for some of the themes is presented in this section below. The complete information, including the themes matrix, is found in Appendix G.

FIGURE 7-18: MAJOR THEMES FOR LISTENING SESSIONS FROM RMS 2019

TRAFFIC FLOW AND CONNECTIVITY

To improve connectivity and traffic flow, the needed reconstruction of IH-10 (Reimagine I-10), improvements to alleviate congestion on Artcraft Road, construction of the Borderland Expressway in northeast El Paso, and the extension of NM 9 to NM 273 (McNutt Road) were noted as important projects. Additionally, stakeholders emphasized the importance of an outer loop, such as Borderland Expressway, (formerly known as the Northeast Parkway) as an alternative to IH-10, diverting traffic away from downtown where congestion and planned reconstruction are concerns.

Other recurrent topics were rail, eliminating choke points at ports of entry, improvements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and air quality non-conformity related to traffic congestion. Air quality non-conformity has been an issue in the region and has led to delayed or unrealized projects, and risks to transportation funding.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INCOME GROWTH

Stakeholders agreed that international trade is central to the economic success of the region and recognized that economic development can be spurred by mobility projects that provide access to jobs with higher salaries and improve quality of life for residents.

Stakeholders also agreed on the need to provide quality of life features, more multimodal transportation options, and better ways to move people between El Paso, Las Cruces and Juarez as a solution to attract young professionals to the region. Furthermore, the need to renovate and beautify public rights of way and build attractive destinations such as bike and pedestrian paths that leverage the region's landscape and landmarks.

POLICIES

Listening sessions made clear that some stakeholders had different and, at times, conflicting policies and priorities. However, several common priorities were identified that could be used to develop policies to benefit the region. These are some examples of the discussed priorities: promote industry and manufacturing to incentivize investments and job growth; expedite and streamline the environmental review process for projects; include bicycle and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure as a required component of design of projects; target projects that improve quality of life.

MULTIMODAL

Stakeholder discussion focused on multimodal solutions that will help alleviate congestion downtown and provide connections from surrounding communities to major destinations, such as the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP).

The opinions and ideas offered by stakeholders were considered as the basis for the analysis presented in Chapter 5 that evaluated a scenario with new BRT corridors and higher land-use densities.

FUNDING

The funding topics discussed during the listening sessions included a lack of understanding of funding when comparing El Paso to other Texas metros (i.e. Houston, Dallas, Austin or San Antonio), the identification of priorities for the region before funding can be addressed, and the understanding that different types of funding sources should be targeted or considered, such as tolling, federal funds, and public private partnerships. Other commonly discussed topics included obtaining a TxDOT metro designation for El Paso and securing more funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

DRAFT PLAN AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The 45-day public comment period began January 24th and ended March 9th. Further, public meetings were conducted February 3rd through February 21st as part of the public involvement process defined in the EPMPO PPP, as well as to give the public and stakeholders a chance to view the draft plan and make comment before final adoption. The MPO held a series of public meetings to present the Draft RMS 2050 MTP document, Draft FY2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Draft Transportation Conformity Report simultaneously. Electronic copies of the draft documents were available on the EPMPO website for public viewing and hard-copies may be available upon request. The table below outlines the meeting dates and locations of the public outreach. A video recording of the presentation was also posted on the EPMPO website during the 45-day public comment period for those unable to attend the meetings. Information was also provided via social media.

A full summary of public comments and responses from the MPO can be found in Appendix A.

TABLE 7-4: DRAFT PLAN REVIEW PUBLIC MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	ADDRESS
February 3, 2022	6pm to 8pm	El Paso MPO Boardroom (Suite 103)[1]	211 N. Florence, El Paso, TX 79901
February 9, 2022	11am to 1pm	Virtual Meeting[2]	https://www.elpasompo.org/RMS2050MTP
February 15, 2022	3pm to 5pm	Virtual Meeting[2]	https://www.elpasompo.org/RMS2050MTP
February 21, 2022	6pm to 8pm	Virtual Meeting[2]	https://www.elpasompo.org/RMS2050MTP

1) Due to increased safety precautions implemented as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, one public meeting will be conducted in a hybrid format which provided both an in-person meeting, as well as a virtual meeting option to join by phone and/or computer via link on the MPO website.

2) Due to increased safety precautions implemented as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the remaining public meetings were held exclusively in a virtual format with option to join by phone and/or computer via link on the MPO website.