

Laredo-Webb County Area (LWCA)

Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee  
Virtual Meeting

LIVE WEB LINK: <http://laredotx.swagit.com/live>

PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNEL: Spectrum TV channel 1300



MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL APRIL 19TH, 2021 VIRTUAL SPECIAL MEETING

**Regular members present:**

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LW-CAMPO Chairperson  
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge  
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3  
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1  
Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, P.E., Private Sector  
David M. Salazar, Jr., P.E., TxDOT District Engineer  
Honorable Ruben Gutierrez, Jr., City Councilmember District V  
Honorable Dr. Marte Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI  
Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember District VII

**Ex-Officio Members Not Present:**

Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42  
Honorable Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, District 21  
Honorable Tracy O. King, State Representative, District 80

**Staff (Of Participating LWCA Agencies) Present:**

City: J. Kirby Snideman, City Planning/LW-CAMPO Staff  
Graciela Briones, City Planning/LW-CAMPO Staff  
Juan Mendive, City Planning/LW-CAMPO Staff  
Julio Niño, City Planning/LW-CAMPO Staff  
Jason Hinojosa, City Planning/LW-CAMPO Staff  
Angie Quijano, City Planning/LW-CAMPO Staff  
Ramon Chavez, City Engineering Department  
Danny Magee, City Traffic Safety Department

State: Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT

Sara Garza, TxDOT

Others: Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering  
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering  
Melisa Montemayor, HNTB, Inc.  
Antonio Rodriguez, HNTB, Inc.  
Douglas Howland, RMA

**I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Mayor Saenz called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL**

Graciela Briones, LW-CAMPO Staff, called roll and verified a quorum existed.

**III. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Speakers are required to fill out witness cards, which must be submitted to MPO Staff no later than 15 minutes after the start of the meeting. Speakers shall identify themselves at the microphone. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. No more than three (3) persons will be allowed to speak on any side of an issue. Should there be more than three (3) people who wish to speak on a specific issue, they should select not more than three (3) representatives to speak on their behalf. The presiding officer may further limit public on the interest of order or time. Speakers may not transfer their minutes to any other speaker. Comments should be relevant to City business and delivered in a professional manner. No derogatory remarks shall be permitted.

Mrs. Graciela Briones, MPO Staff, stated a comment was submitted by Jed Brown from the RMA and it read as followed:

The RMA was certainly excited to learn the results of the survey with the Vallecillo Road project coming out and ranked first in the list of unfunded projects. Trade and transportation are the life blood of our community and as the RMA has presented multiple times, Vallecillo road improved safety and mobility. It increases economy, economic development, regional tax base, and it provides job growth. The results of the unfunded survey item were discussed in the Lomas del Sur web-ex meeting held on April 8<sup>th</sup> with the members of the City, County, and the RMA attending. In that meeting, it was discussed that the Lomas del Sur overpass was ranked as one of the top three unfunded projects according to the survey responses. It is important to note that the ranking of the Lomas del Sur overpass of being ranked first, second, or third is not required for the City or the County to proceed with the Lomas del Sur project. In

the April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, there was a discussion of possibly redoing the survey. The RMA cautioned against retaking the survey because we believe it would give the appearance that our community and those asked to take the survey would look disorganized or unprepared. We also believe our community may lose credibility if we take the survey on top of survey for the same projects or data. The RMA supports taking an annual survey for unfunded projects. We also strongly support the Lomas del Sur overpass project as it is needed for south Laredo and all motorists using the stretch of roadway now and in the years to come. The RMA welcomes the opportunity to work with the City, the County or whoever proposes this much needed overpass project.

**IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:**

**A. Approval of the minutes for the virtual meeting held on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.**

Dr. Martinez made a motion to approve the minutes for the meeting held on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Second: CM. Perez  
For: 9  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Mayor Saenz made a motion to move up item #V-C.

Second: Dr. Martinez  
For: 9  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

**REPORT(S) AND PRESENTATIONS (No action required).**

**C. Presentation by MPO staff of the ranking of unfunded projects based on the survey released at the joint City, County, RMA, MPO meeting held on February 11, 2021.**

Kirby Snideman, MPO Director, a gave a brief presentation as followed:

MTP 25-year projects were identified from the following sources:

- TxDOT Unified Transportation Plan (UTP) 2020

- Existing Regional Plans and Projects
- Congestion Management Process
- Travel Demand Modeling
- Agency and Public Call for Projects

**TXDOT UTP UNFUNDED PROJECTS LIST**

The list includes 16 projects

**Project Areas:**

- IH 35
  - US 59
  - SL 20
  - Mangana-Hein
  - US 83
  - Vallecillo Rd.
  - Outer Loop
- In preparing the fiscally constrained project list, the UTP was used to identify programmed projects through the year 2030.
  - The MPO coordinated with TxDOT to identify projects to program with expected revenue for the years 2020-2045.
  - TxDOT added one local project (Vallecillo Rd) to the unfunded list for consideration of priority

<b>Ranking Unfunded TxDOT Projects</b>			
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Roadway</b>	<b>CSI #</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
1st	Vallecillo	Local Project	\$ 31.5 M
2nd	IH 35	0018-06-186	\$ 22 M
3rd	SL 20	0086-16-008	\$ 22 M
4th	SL 20	0086-16-010	\$ 22 M
5th	Outer Loop	0922-33-039	\$ 25 M
6th	SL 20	0086-16-009	\$ 22 M
7th	Mangana-Hein	0922-33-066	\$ 14.1 M
8th	IH 35	0018-04-058	\$ 68 M
9th	US 59	0542-01-094	\$ 205 M
10th	IH 35	0018-03-057	\$ 8 M
11th	IH 35	0018-04-061	\$ 19.7 M
12th	IH 35	0018-05-098	\$ 22 M
13th	US 59	0542-02-043	\$ 260M
14th	US 83	0037-10-040	\$ 45 M
15th	Outer Loop	0922-33-182	\$ 70 M
16th	IH 35	0018-06-196	\$ 22 M

<b>Q1. Stakeholder Information</b>	
<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Name:	13
Title:	13
Email Address:	13
Phone Number:	0
Answered	13
Skipped	0

**B. Discussion with possible action related to the need for internal infrastructure at Unitec Industrial Park to accommodate the additional traffic that will be generated by the expansion related to the newly approved City TIRZ. (Mr. Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez)**

David Salazar, TxDOT, stated that in discussions with Mr. Snideman and City Staff, TxDOT was aware of the amount of work that is coming into the Uniroyal area up north. TxDOT wanted to briefly discuss what is planned out in that area so possibly think of altered routes.

Humberto Gonzalez, TxDOT, stated that TxDOT had been holding weekly meetings with City Planning and directors from different departments. One of the projects was for the improvements at the Uniroyal interchange at mile marker 13. TxDOT has an estimated 65 million dollars which were funds that were already secured for that project with a proposed letting date of 2024. The project would also consist of removing and replacing the current overpass at the Uniroyal intersection and also reconstructing the at grade crossing at Uniroyal which would go under IH 35. It would also have railroad upgrade improvements to the railroad crossing on the east side. TXDOT was already coordinating with Union Pacific to get the clearance needed for the railroad.

The other project TxDOT was working on was building a new proposed interchange that would tie in the Hachar-Reuthinger project. It would be an elevated interchange that would be constructed. This segment of the project was 45 million dollars which TxDOT already has secured and also with a proposed letting date of 2024.

CM. Galo asked if one would be able to fly over tracks otherwise the same problem with the overflow of traffic at Uniroyal.

CM. Salazar stated the Hachar-Reuthinger project would be tightening on the west side which would be an elevated tie-in and would be a fly overpass. He stated eventually there would have to be a route east of IH 35. As of now, the interchange would only go over IH 35 where you can go north or southbound but eventually TxDOT is hoping that there will be a tie in east of the Union Pacific railroad. He stated it is designed elevated enough so you can clear the tracks if needed.

Dr. Martinez stated that it was important for the MPO Policy committee to understand the viability or having or investing a north, south parallel to IH 35 that would have multiple connections to IH 35.

Mr. Gonzalez recommended to have a meeting discuss specifically about what are the future plans in that area Dr. Martinez referred to.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to explore the feasibility of a north, south parallel to IH 35 as well as to start a study inside the area, even if its just within the MPO and to look for the viability of said roadway.

Second: CM. Perez (for discussion)  
For: 9  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

- C. Discussion with possible action on a motion to approve the second version of the Laredo Transit Management Inc. (LTMI) Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) and Safety Performance Targets for calendar year 2021 and to incorporate into the Metropolitan and Statewide Planning Process with the Laredo Metropolitan Organization (MPO).**

Dr. Martinez made a motion to approve the item.

Second: CM. Gutierrez  
For: 9  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

- D. Discussion with possible action on Hachar-Reuthinger.**

Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering, stated the consultant was going to submit schematics and all documents on Thursday. Once the County reviews them, they will forward them to TxDOT for further handling. He also stated the consultant has been paid all their services up to now. In addition to the amendment to the advance funding agreement in which TxDOT would take over the rest of environmental work, it would go through Commissioner's court for approval on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

CM. Salazar clarified and stated what TxDOT wanted to do is once the environmental was cleared, transfer over the right-of-way to TxDOT so they can begin the process of construction and design. By doing that, it would save the City and the County approximately about ninety million dollars.

- E. REPORT(S) AND PRESENTATIONS (No action required).**

- A. Update by TxDOT staff on three projects in the design stage currently out for public comment; intersection improvements on FM 1472, an expansion project on US 59, and a signal project at Business 59 and San Francisco.**

Cm. Gonzalez gave a brief presentation on the item. He stated for the expansion project on US 59 the virtual public hearing went live on April 12<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00a.m. In person portion public hearing was held by appointment only on April 12<sup>th</sup>. The virtual public hearing would end on April 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

For the intersection improvements on FM 1472, the virtual public meeting started on April 6<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00 a.m. and the comment period would end on April 21<sup>st</sup>, at 11:59 p.m.

He also stated a project presentation could be found at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov) by searching "FM 1472 Webb County.

For the signal project at Business 59 and San Francisco, letters would be sent out on April 19<sup>th</sup> to property owners within project limits and comment would need to be received by May 7, 2021.

**B. Update by MPO staff of an administrative modification to the FY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to accept the recently revised group project definitions, and an administrative modification to the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to include Appendix A – Short Range Projects Identified in the MTP and Listed in the TIP.**

Mr. Snideman gave a brief presentation on the item. He stated nothing was removed or taken away, it was just a rearrangement of information into the format that the federal government wanted.

**D. Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).**

Antonio Rodriguez, HNTB, Inc., representing the RMA provided a status report via email which read as followed:

1. Killam Industrial Blvd. Turn Lanes – Anticipated NTP for Anderson Columbia for construction will be in February. Construction start date is anticipated for the month of June/ July. The reason for the delay is due to a lag in time for the ordering of the signal poles in the project. This is lag in time from the ordering to the arrival of signal poles is an issue that is being seen on various street projects across the state.
2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – Construction has commenced. The team has issued cut sheets for the project for use by the contractor, and the team has also received multiple RFIs which have been quickly resolved. On the Cuatro Vientos Acceleration/ Deceleration Lane project, the 90% plans will be submitted to TxDOT on the week of the 26<sup>th</sup> of April. The project is scheduled for letting in October of this year.
3. Vallecillo Road – Received a Resolution of Support by the MPO on 2/16/21 from the MPO Policy Committee Meeting. We have also received a letter of support from State Representative Richard Raymond, State Representative Tracy King, State Senator Judith Zaffirini, US Congressman Henry Cuellar. We also had a follow-up meeting with TxDOT Deputy Executive Director Marc Williams to further discuss the project. At the conclusion of the discussion, he committed to work with Chairman Bruce Bugg's schedule to meet with Chairman Jed Brown.

CM. Perez suggested to have a meeting to discuss funding and mainly to discuss the top 3 projects based on the survey that was discussed in the beginning of the meeting.

**E. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Mr. Snideman stated he would update the MPO committee regarding any future in person meetings. He stated City Council would be discussing Phase IV strategy but he will keep the MPO committee updated if there were any changes.

**F. ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Martinez made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:42 p.m.

Second: CM. Perez  
For: 6  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously



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Juan S. Mendive  
Interim MPO Director



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Pete Saenz, Mayor and LW-CAMPO  
Chairperson