



LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 25TH, 2022

LIVE WEB LINK: <http://laredotx.swagit.com/live>
PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNEL: Spectrum TV channel 1300

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Pete Saenz, called the meeting to order at 1:32 P.M.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Graciela Briones, LWCAMPO Staff, called roll and verified a quorum existed.

Regular members present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO Chairperson
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
Honorable Ruben Gutierrez, Jr., City Councilmember, District V
Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, Jr., P.E., Private Sector
David M. Salazar, Jr., P.E., TxDOT District Engineer (joined the meeting at 1:38 p.m.)

Regular members not present:

Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
Honorable Dr. Marte A. Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI

Judge Tijerina made a motion to excuse members not present.

Second: Cm. Gutierrez
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Ex-Officio members not present:

Honorable Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, District 21

Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42

Honorable Tracy O. King, State Representative, District 80

LWCAMPO Staff present:

Juan Mendive, LWCAMPO Interim Director

Graciela Briones, LWCAMPO Planner

Julio Niño, LWCAMPO Planner

Angie Quijano, LWCAMPO Administrative Assistant

Others:

Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering Department

Gloria Perez-Saavedra, COL Engineering Department

Yvette Limon, COL Bridge Department

Teclo Garcia, COL Economic Development Department.

Luis Perez-Garcia, Webb County Engineering

Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering

Sandy Esparza, Transit, El Metro

Sara Garza, TxDOT

Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT

Jed Brown, RMA

Oscar Lopez, RMA

Tony Arce Jr., RMA

Arturo Dominguez, RMA

George Beckelhymer, RMA

Melisa Montemayor, HNTB, Inc.

Sid Mielke, Structural Engineering Associates (SEA)

Jose Ceballos

Belinda Peña

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Speakers are required to fill out witness cards, which must be submitted to MPO Staff no later than 1:45 p.m. the day 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 MPO business and delivered in a professional manner. No derogatory remarks shall be permitted.

Jose Ceballos spoke in favor of items IV-E, IV-G, and IV-H.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

A. Approval of the minutes for the meeting held on December 15th, 2021.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to approve the minutes of December 15th, 2021.

Second: Cm. Gutierrez
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

B. Receive public testimony and initiate a 10-day public review and comment period for the following proposed amendment(s) of the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

1. **Addition** of project CSJ 0922-33-213 intended to provide for preliminary engineering and construction for the expansion of existing World Trade Bridge. The estimated construction cost is \$12,000,000 with an estimated total project cost of \$16,000,000. The project sponsor is the City of Laredo and the proposed letting date is FY 2024.
2. **Revision** of project CSJ 0922-33-166 for the construction of Hachar-Reuthinger Road. **Purpose** of amendment is to update the project description to read “new location construction of 4-lane divided highway” to adequately describe the initial construction phase(s).
3. **Revision** of project CSJ 0922-33-165 for the construction of Hachar-Reuthinger Road. **Purpose** of amendment is to update the project description to read “new location construction of 4-lane divided highway” to adequately describe the initial construction phase(s).
4. **Revision** of project CSJ 0922-33-165 for the construction of Hachar-Reuthinger Road. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to increase Category 7 funds from \$26,796,901 to \$28,431,178 and add \$2,341,935 allocated to the project through Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRRSAA) funds.

5. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-01-073 for the widening of SH 359. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to include \$7,000,000 in category 11 funds.
6. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-14-089 for the reconstruction of existing 6-lane highway to proposed 6-lane freeway with 3-lane frontage roads. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to include \$2,605,222 in category 11 funds and decrease category 10 funds from \$9,000,000 to \$4,285,269.
7. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-14-088 reconstruction of existing 6-lane highway to proposed 6-lane freeway with 3-lane frontage roads at University Blvd. to Shiloh Dr. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to replace \$11,500,000 in category 4 funds with category 2U funds, increase category 10 funds from \$8,500,000 to \$22,000,000, and include \$11,894,778 in category 11 funds.
8. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-14-079 for the construction of US 59 interchange at University Blvd. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to include \$2,514,639 in category 10 funds.
9. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-14-076 for the construction of US 59 interchange at Shiloh Dr. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to include \$10,356,549 in category 10 funds.
10. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-14-075 for the construction of US 59 interchange at Del Mar Blvd. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to include \$4,346,123 in category 10 funds.
11. **Reprogramming** of project CSJ 0018-06-185 for the construction of a new direct connector (#3) south I-35 to east I-69W. **Purpose** of amendment is to remove this project from the 2021-2024 TIP as the updated letting date for this project has been changed to FY 2026 and is outside of the current TIP years.
12. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-14-086 for the reconstruction of existing 6-lane divided highway to proposed 6-lane freeway facility with a section including 3-lane frontage roads from US 59 to 0.4 miles north of E. Corridor Rd. (airport). **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to increase category 12 funds from \$15,600,000 to \$29,290,676.

13. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-14-078 for the construction of US 59 interchange at Jacaman Rd. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to increase category 12 funds from \$17,000,000 to \$21,742,567.
14. **Revision** of project CSJ 0086-14-077 for the construction of US 59 interchange at airport. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the existing funding amounts. Funding amounts will be adjusted to include \$16,418,996 in category 12 funds.
15. **Administrative Amendment** of project CSJ 0922-33-181 to improve connections, accessibility and security for up to 17 bus stops. **Purpose** of amendment is to revise the estimated letting date from fiscal year (FY) 2022 to FY 2023. This project letting date revision is listed for informational purposes only as moving a letting date within the TIP years does not require a formal revision.
16. **Administrative Amendment** of project CSJ 0086-02-023 for the widening of SH 359 from 8.935 miles east of SL 20 and 9.830 miles east of SL 20. **Purpose** of amendment is to adjust the ROW purchase cost information. Change in ROW cost information does not require a formal revision.

Cm. David Salazar joined the meeting at 1:38 p.m.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to open the public hearing.

| | |
|------------|---------------|
| Second: | Cm. Gutierrez |
| For: | 5 |
| Against: | 0 |
| Abstained: | 0 |

Motion carried unanimously

Mr. Mendive, MPO Interim Director gave a quick overview of the 2021-2024 TIP and STIP revision process and read all the proposed amendments.

Mayor Saenz stated he would like to abstain from any project located along Hwy 359 (Item 5 and Item 16) as he owned property in the area.

David Salazar, TxDOT, provided a brief overview of the reasons behind the proposed amendments.

Judge Tijerina asked if for item 1 a Presidential permit was needed. And, if so, what was the reason the item was included in the list.

Mr. Mendive explained this was a project being sponsored by the City of Laredo that will seek Federal funding allocations and the 1st step was to list it in the current TIP.

Mr. David Salazar continued with the quick summary of the proposed amendments.

Judge Tijerina asked what was the total amount for these items.

Mr. Salazar and Mr. Gonzalez from TxDOT responded it was approximately a total of \$34.1M in Category 12 that was approved in the UTP 2022 and \$21.5M in Category 11 from TxDOT funds. Both projects were already in the STIP and some with environmental clearances completed.

Juan Mendive, MPO Interim Director stated the addition of the expansion to World Trade Bridge project to the MPO documents was an important step for FHWA be able to participate in the development of the project.

Sid Mielke, Structural Engineering Associates (SEA), stated that the rules for the permitting have changed in early 2019. He stated there was executive order issued that altered the way how presidential permits were reviewed and issued and also how the environmental clearances were issued and the timing for it. When the executive order was issued, the requirement for the Department of State to be the authority over the environmental clearance of a project was removed. It also reversed the order in which the environmental clearance was to be done relative to the presidential permit. And, it allowed the presidential permit application be submitted up front and be approved with the agreement that all other permitting would be done. It did not define who would be the responsible agency on the federal side for the environmental clearance. He stated they had been in discussions with Federal Highway and they had agreed to be the federal reviewer of the environmental assessments for projects that require presidential permits. However, in order for them to participate, any project would have to be listed within the TIP and the STIP for the state. It would also have to have a small amount of funding assigned to it that would allowed them to participate.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to close the public hearing and initiate a 10-day public review and comment period.

Second: Cm. Gutierrez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 2 (Mayor Saenz, only for items 5 & 16)

Motion carried.

- C. Receive public testimony and initiate a 10-day public review and comment period for the following proposed revision(s) of the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):
1. **Addition** of project CSJ 0922-33-213 intended to provide for preliminary engineering and construction for the expansion of existing World Trade Bridge. The estimated construction cost is \$12,000,000 with an estimated total project cost of \$16,000,000. The project sponsor is the City of Laredo and the proposed letting date is FY 2024.
 2. **Revision** of *Appendix A – Short Range Projects Identified in the MTP and Listed in the TIP* as necessary to incorporate and reflect the proposed revisions to the 2021-2024 TIP.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **open** the public hearing.

Second: Cm. Gutierrez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **close** the public hearing and **initiate** a 10-day public review and comment period.

Second: Cm. Gutierrez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

- D. Discussion with possible action on scheduling a Special MPO Policy Committee meeting the second week of February 2022 to receive public testimony and consider final action on the proposed revisions to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Cm. Gutierrez made a motion to schedule a special meeting on Tuesday, February 8th, 2022.

Second: Cm. Gutierrez
For: 5

Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

E. Discussion with possible action on committing and allocating FY 2024 Category 7 funds in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 towards CSJ 0922-33-213 World Trade Bridge Expansion project.

Cm. Gutierrez made a motion to approve on committing and allocating FY 2024 Category 7 funds in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 towards CSJ 0922-33-213 World Trade Bridge Expansion project.

Second: Mayor Saenz
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

F. Discussion and recommendation on approving resolution No. MPO 2022-01, adopting and supporting the Texas Department of Transportation's 2022 targets for the following federal Safety Performance Measures:

1. Number of Traffic Fatalities.
2. Rate of Fatalities per 100 million Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT).
3. Number of Serious Injuries.
4. Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT).
5. Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Non-Motorized Serious Injuries.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to approve resolution No. MPO 2022-01, adopting and supporting the Texas Department of Transportation's 2022 targets for the following federal Safety Performance Measures:

Second: Cm. Gutierrez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

G. Discussion with possible action on the River Road project.

Mr. Mendive stated the RMA’s legal team would find out how the MPO could participate in the River Road study with the RMA. Once that is confirmed, it would be discussed with the technical committee and give a recommendation to the policy committee.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **table** the item to the next meeting.

Second: Cm. Gutierrez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

H. Discussion with possible action on the Hachar-Reuthinger Road project.

Mr. Salazar, TxDOT, stated the design was moving forward and the environment clearance should be cleared by December.

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

A. Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).

Jed Brown, RMA, stated that there were four additional members of the RMA present at the meeting. He further stated that in the packet there was a status report of seven projects and he was available for any questions. The report read as follows:

1. FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. Turn Lanes – NTP for the contractor was provided by TxDOT at the end June. Currently, Anderson Columbia is working from Big Bend to South of Killam Industrial Blvd. The Killam Turn Lanes portion of the project and the northern portion of the project began on the week of the 7th of December. TxDOT notified us on 1/11/22, that have pulled away from the work at Killam Industrial Blvd. and FM 1472. Their current focus of work is in the area of Milo and FM 1472. We did not receive a time for commencement of work a Killam Industrial Blvd. at FM 1472.
2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – Construction is ongoing. Our 6th construction progress meeting was held on 1/13/21. Currently, the project is scheduled for completion in 6/24/2022. **The project is 60% complete.** By phase, Phase 1 is 50% complete and Phase 2A is 80% complete. Regarding the Cuatro Vientos Acceleration/ Deceleration Lane project, the project was awarded to Anderson Columbia in October 2021. We anticipate construction to commence in early 2022.

3. Springfield Phase III – NTP was provided by the City of Laredo to AZAR Services, LLC on 12/15/21. Since NTP, clearing and grubbing of the project corridor has commenced. The City anticipates a construction progress meeting for the first week of February. Substantial completion is scheduled for 8/29/2022.
4. Webb County Fair Grounds TIA – The RMA team met with the TxDOT Laredo District to discuss future plans for US 59. Tentatively, upgrade of US 59 to IH 69W could begin by 2032 as part of the Ports-to-Ports Initiative. The RMA team also met with the County Consultant, Mr. Judd Gilpin. He informed the team that the current master plan for the Fair Grounds is being revised. The updated master plan is tentatively scheduled to be released by February 2022. Overall, timeframe for completion of the study is the end of 2022.
5. River Road Implementation Study – Awaiting next steps in funding approval to proceed.
6. Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) TRZ Study Update – In the January 19th RMA meeting the Board approved entering into an ILA with the City of Laredo to update the 2018 Cuatro Vientos TRZ study with current 2021/ 2022 data.
7. Vallecillo Road – We are continuing to communicate with officials from the Texas Transportation Commission and higher regarding the importance of the project to the Laredo Greater Area and the State.

Other Items:

- The WCCL RMA conducted a Transportation Reinvestment Zone Workshop for the full WCCL RMA Board, members of City Council, members of Commissioners Court and members of the MPO staff on 12/17/21.
 - The WCCL RMA conducted the January Board meeting on 1/19/22.
 - The WCCL RMA Project Report for 2021 will be distributed to members of the Policy Committee this month.
- B. Update by City of Laredo Engineering staff on the FM 1472/Flecha Ln. Realignment (CSJ 0922-33-076) and Calton Road Grade Separation (CSJ 0922-33-093) projects listed in the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Ramon Chavez, City Engineer, stated that a status report was included as part of the packet and introduced Ms. Gloria Perez-Saavedra who gave a presentation on the status of both projects. She stated she would be available for any questions.

- C. Discussion and review of TxDOT's FY 2023 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) and unfunded projects, and discussion on the survey of MPO Technical and Policy Committee members regarding the ranking of unfunded projects.

Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez stated Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT, was going to provide a brief scope and description of the projects.

Roberto Rodriguez gave a brief presentation of the item and went over the list of unfunded projects.

Mayor Saenz left the meeting at approximately 2:43 p.m.

Mr. Mendive stated that he would send out a survey to the MPO Policy and Technical Committee members and to consider how the projects improve safety, reduce congestion and promote mobility equity in the region.

VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Mendive advised the committee that the audit of the MPO by TxDOT was initiated and is ongoing.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Judge Tijerina made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:47 P.M.

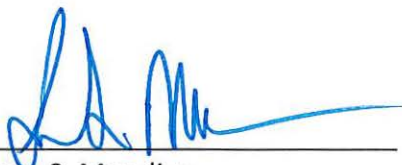
Second: Cm. Gutierrez

For: 4

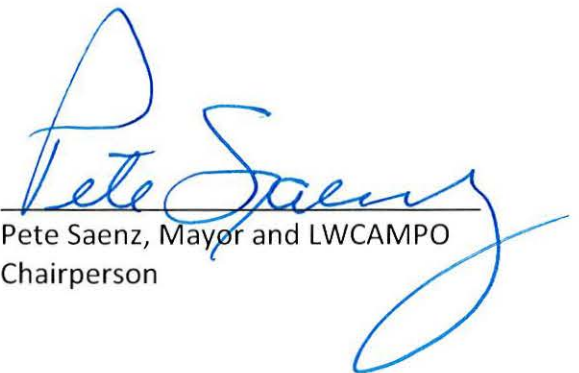
Against: 0

Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously



Juan S. Mendive
Interim LWCAMPO Director



Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO
Chairperson