



LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

May 18th, 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 1:33 P.M.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

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

CM. J. Gonzalez made a motion to **excuse** members not present.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Regular members present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO Chairperson

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge

Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII (joined the meeting at 1:36 p.m.)

Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1

David M. Salazar, Jr., P.E., TxDOT District Engineer

Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, Jr., P.E., Member at Large

Regular members not present:

Honorable Ruben Gutierrez, Jr., City Councilmember, District V

Honorable Dr. Marte A. Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI

Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

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
Jason Hinojosa, LWCAMPO Planner
Angie Quijano, LWCAMPO Administrative Assistant

Others:

Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering
Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering
Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering Department
Orlando Navarro, COL Planning Department
Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Jed Brown, RMA
Tim Juarez, Stanley Consultants
Jose Ceballos

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, representing Farias Development, spoke in favor of item #IV-B and stated he was in support of the River Road Planning Study. He asked for the Committee to consider moving forward with the study.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

A. Approval of the minutes for the meetings held on April 20th, 2022

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **approve** the minutes of April 20th, 2022.

Second: CM. J. Gonzalez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Perez joined the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2022-05, adopting the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

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

Second: CM. J. Gonzalez
For: 6
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Mayor Saenz mentioned that this item had been presented at the previous meeting.

Juan Mendive, LWCAMPO Interim Director, confirmed the item was previously presented to the Committee in draft form. He further mentioned that the final draft of the document was included in the packet and no public comments were received and, the Technical Committee and staff recommended approval of the item.

CM. J. Gonzalez made a motion to **close** the public hearing and **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2022-05, adopting the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Second: CM. J. Gonzalez
For: 6
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

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

Mr. Humberto Gonzalez, TxDOT, provided a brief report and stated that the project was still on schedule for the August 2023 letting. He mentioned TxDOT had been in

coordination with the City of Laredo to provide the final information needed for the Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisition process and construction should commence late 2023. He also said construction would take about two years.

Mr. Gonzalez also stated that when TxDOT took over the project, the schematic that was provided by Dannenbaum Engineers was an add grade connection onto the west side of IH35. He stated TxDOT was building a brand-new overpass at Hachar-Reuthinger which would be elevated. TxDOT has identified the need or funding gap so that the connection of Hachar-Reuthinger would be elevated on the west side as well.

Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT, stated the funding needed would be about approximately \$6 million dollars to elevate and to match the bridge due to the recent increase of cost of materials but figures are not finalized. He stated hopefully next month they would be able to provide an update with more accurate numbers.

Mr. Gonzalez further added that the original \$52 million estimated provided by the engineers for this project is being reviewed by TxDOT. They have also been looking at possible modifications of the schematic and would calculate final figures that will be presented in the near future to the MPO for potential gaps that need to be secured for the project letting and for options of additional funds.

Mr. David Salazar, TxDOT summarized the scope of the project and current circumstances of probable funding gaps based on the increase of cost of steel and cement. He stated the final numbers will be provided and they are considering to fund the gap with TxDOT monies.

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

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

Jed Brown, RMA, gave a presentation with a brief status update of the projects. He stated the study for the Transportation Reinvestment Zone (TRZ) for the Cuatro Vientos Corridor from US 59 to the proposed International Bridge 4/5 location was to commence in May 2022 and to be completed in Fall 2022. He stated the purpose of the study for the River Road Corridor was to identify the most appropriate alignment of the new location roadway from Aquero Blvd. to FM 1472 (Mines) and Future Hachar Parkway. He stated the study was anticipated to commence in June 2022, pending execution of the Interlocal Agreement between the Laredo and Webb County MPO and the RMA. The anticipated duration of the study is 12 months. He also stated for the Vallecillo road project, the improvements listed in the North Laredo County Transportation Study were needed and would lead to benefits, especially by Vallecillo Road and Hachar Parkway.

B. Report on the results of the external audit of the Laredo Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Organization performed by the TxDOT Compliance Division.

Juan Mendive, Interim MPO Director gave a presentation with a report on the item. A copy of said report was included in the member's packets. He mentioned this audit was requested by the Policy Committee as a result of the transition just to make sure everything was properly functioning with the operations of the MPO and for staff to feel comfortable thought the transition of new administration.

Mr. Mendive briefly provided the objective of the audit. He also stated that the overall scope of the audit included the MPO's and the City of Laredo's (fiscal agent) operations, including goods and services procured, and requests for reimbursement submitted to TxDOT between October 1, 2019, and September 30, 2021. He further mentioned that the conclusion of the audit found that the MPO and the City of Laredo, as fiscal agent, have implemented financial controls to ensure grant and loan funds are managed in accordance with applicable funding agreements. Finally, he stated that we agreed on the recommendations that we were given and we will work towards their implementation to help strengthen our processes, procedures and internal controls, especially as the MPO finalizes its restructuring.

VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Mendive provided the following report:

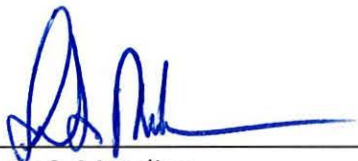
1. MPO staff attended the TxDOT Transportation Planning Conference from May 3rd-5th. Staff attended sessions on safety, project selection and prioritization, environmental affairs, corridor planning, active transportation, among other topics. Throughout the conference, promoting a safe transportation system was emphasized as the top priority.
2. May is National Bike Month – The City of Laredo and the MPO Active Transportation Committee coordinated a proclamation ceremony on May 4th, 2022 proclaiming May as National Bike Month in Laredo.
3. During the May 10th meeting, the Technical Committee had a productive discussion about potential planning studies to be programmed in the FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
4. Upcoming regularly scheduled meetings:
 - Active Transportation Committee – May 25, 2022
 - Technical Committee – June 7, 2022
 - Policy Committee – June 15, 2022

VII. ADJOURNMENT

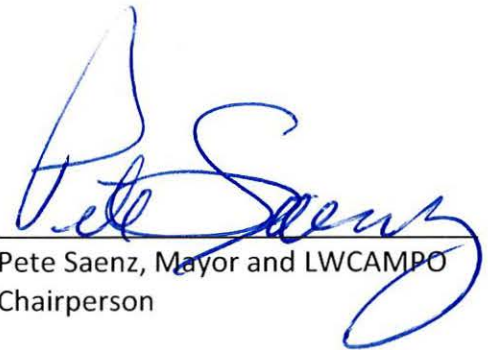
Judge Tijerina made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:19 p.m.

Second: CM. J. Gonzalez
For: 6
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously



Juan S. Mendive
Interim LWCAMPO Director



Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO
Chairperson