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MPO POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

www.laredompo.org

Meeting Date & Time: August 17th, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Location: City of Laredo Council Chambers, 1110 Houston St., Laredo, Texas 78040

Meeting Link: <http://laredotx.swagit.com/live>

Laredo TV: Spectrum TV channel 1300

AGENDA:

- I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER
- II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL
- 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.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

- A. Approval of the minutes for the meeting held on July 20th, 2022.
- B. Discussion with possible action on gap funding for the Vallecillo Road Project, and any other matters incident thereto. (Requested by Mayor Pete Saenz).
- C. Discussion with possible action on connecting International Blvd. north of US 59/Loop 20 to IH-35 and other necessary mobility improvements in Northeast Laredo, and any other matters incident thereto. (Requested by Dr. Marte A. Martinez).

MPO POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

- D. Discussion with possible action on the Hachar-Reuthinger Road project.
- V. REPORT(S) AND PRESENTATIONS (No action required).
 - A. Presentation on Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) representative, Kirk D. Fauver.
 - B. Presentation by TxDOT on the status of ongoing projects.
 - C. Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).
- VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS
 - A. Administrative modification to the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to incorporate an updated MPO/TxDOT Self-Certification Statement.
 - B. MPO 2022 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Call for Projects update.
 - C. Schedule of upcoming meetings.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE INFORMATION:

Notice of this meeting was posted at the municipal government offices, 1110 Houston Street, Laredo, Texas, at a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times. Said notice was posted 72 hours before the meeting date and time. The agenda and meeting information was also posted online at <http://www.laredompo.org/agendas-minutes/>.

All meetings of the MPO Committee are open to the public. Persons who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aid or services such as: interpreters for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers of large print or Braille, or a translator for the Spanish language are requested to contact MPO Staff at 956-794-1613, or via email at aquijano@ci.laredo.tx.us at least two working days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Materials in Spanish may also be provided upon request.

Disability Access Statement: This meeting is wheelchair accessible. The accessible ramps are located at 1110 Victoria and 910 Flores. Accessible parking spaces are located at City Hall, 1110 Victoria.

Ayuda o Servicios Auxiliares: Todas las reuniones del Comité del MPO están abiertas al público. Personas que planean asistir a esta reunión y que pueden necesitar ayuda o servicios auxiliares como: interpretes para personas con discapacidad auditiva, lectores de letra grande o en Braille, o un traductor para el idioma español deben comunicarse con el personal del MPO al 956-794-1613 o por correo electrónico aquijano@ci.laredo.tx.us por lo menos dos días laborales antes de

MPO POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

la reunión para que se puedan hacer los arreglos apropiados. Material en español está disponible mediante una petición.

Declaración de Acceso a la Discapacidad: Esta reunión permite el acceso a personas en silla de ruedas. Las rampas de acceso están ubicadas en 1110 Victoria y 900 Flores. Los espacios de estacionamiento para discapacitados se encuentran por la calle Victoria.

Información en español: Si usted desea esta información en español o si desea explicación sobre el contenido, por favor llámenos al teléfono (956) 794-1613 o comunicarse con nosotros mediante correo electrónico a aquijano@ci.laredo.tx.us.

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:

City of Laredo Representatives:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO Chairperson
Honorable Ruben Gutierrez, Jr., City Councilmember, District V
Honorable Dr. Marte Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI

County of Webb Representatives:

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge and LWCAMPO Vice-Chairperson
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

Laredo Mass Transit Board Representative:

Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII

State Representative:

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

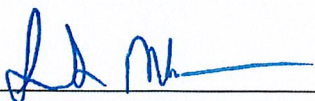
Private Sector Representative (Member at Large):

Mr. Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, Jr., P.E.

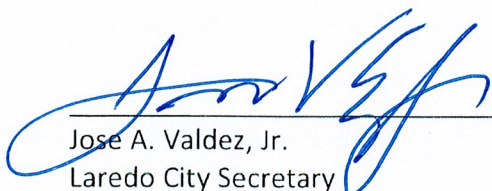
Ex-Officio Representatives:

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

AGENDA REVIEWED:



Juan S. Mendive,
LWCAMPO Interim Director



Jose A. Valdez, Jr.
Laredo City Secretary



LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

July 20th, 2022

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

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Judge Tijerina, called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

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

Judge Tijerina made a motion to excuse members not present.

Second: CM. Dr. Martinez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Regular members present:

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
Honorable Ruben Gutierrez, Jr., City Councilmember, District V
Honorable Dr. Marte A. Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI
Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII (joined the meeting at 1:32 p.m.)
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1 (joined the meeting at 1:32 p.m.)
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3 (joined the meeting at 1:41 p.m.)
David M. Salazar, Jr., P.E., TxDOT District Engineer
Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, Jr., P.E., Member at Large

Regular members not present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO Chairperson

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 Saavedra, COL Engineering Department
Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering
Orlando Navarro, COL Planning Department
Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro
Sara Garza, TxDOT
Luis Villarreal, TxDOT
Jason Hinojosa, TxDOT
Jed Brown, RMA
Melisa Montemayor, HNTB, Inc.
Tim Juarez, Stanley Consultants

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.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

A. Approval of the minutes for the meetings held on June 15th, 2022

CM. Dr. Martinez made a motion to approve the minutes of June 15th, 2022.

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

Motion carried unanimously

B. Receive public testimony and approve resolution No. MPO 2022-06, adopting the FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

CM. Dr. Martinez made a motion to close the public hearing and approve resolution No. MPO 2022-06, adopting the FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

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

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Perez and CM. J. Gonzalez joined the meeting at 1:32 p.m.

C. Receive public testimony and initiate a 45-day public review and comment period for the draft Public Participation Plan.

Julio Niño, MPO staff gave a presentation on the item detailing what the proposed plan consists of. He mentioned the proposed update to the plan would replace the previously adopted in May 15, 2017.

CM. Galo joined the meeting at 1:41 p.m.

CM. Dr. Martinez expressed the importance of the engagement of the public on the different proposed projects that will impact the community.

Mr. Mendive stated that it was very meaningful for the MPO to do this update and, staff did research on other MPOs current best practices to make sure all federal guidelines and regulations are being followed. This plan was developed totally in-house. It is lengthier than the previous but, it outlines newer strategies and it incorporates additional information that will be use as a tool for staff on how to engage the public as part of the planning process. He also mentioned that one or two workshops are proposed for the public input before the plan is adopted.

CM. Dr. Martinez made a motion to open and **initiate** a 45-day public review and comment period for the draft Public Participation Plan.

Second: CM. Perez

CM. Perez asked about a component that allows for virtual public participation.

Mr. Mendive stated that general comments in writing are currently being allowed through a google form on the MPO website.

Judge Tijerina suggested public comments would have to be strictly pertaining to the MPO items.

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

D. Discussion with possible action on submitting a joint application with the Webb County City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority and the City of Laredo for the U.S. Department of Transportation Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program, and any other matters incident thereto.

Mr. Mendive gave a brief presentation on the item. He stated that at the last meeting, the committee had requested to bring back an item and to act on it. He also stated that the MPO would partner with the City of Laredo and the RMA and would submit a joint application. If the City of Laredo or the RMA would apply by themselves, the maximum amount they could apply for was \$1 Million dollars; but if partnering up with the MPO they could apply for up to \$5 Million. He further stated the City of Laredo had already acted at the previous City Council meeting to collaborate in said grant and, they are paying for half of the cost to prepare the grant. The RMA has also authorized the participation and are paying for the other half to prepare the grant application. He stated that since the source of funds was federal, the MPO would not be participating at this time financially. He stated the MPO would help with staff time to help put the application together.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **approve** the item.

Second: Dr. Martinez

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

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

CM. H. Gonzalez stated the project was still on schedule with letting date of August 2023. He also stated TxDOT had met with the City of Laredo getting the Right-of-Way footprint finalized. TxDOT would be submitting it to the City within the next month that way the City could proceed with their Right-of-Way acquisition for the project.

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

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

Jed Brown, RMA, provided a status report which included the following:

1. FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. Turn Lanes – The commencement of work at Killam Industrial Blvd. at FM 1472 occurred in early May 2022. In May and June, the acceleration lane construction of FM 1472 has been ongoing. In the next 2 weeks, the placement of low-profile concrete barrier along Killam Industrial Blvd. for the construction of the dedicated right turn lane to commence. **Currently the project is estimated at 25% complete.** Substantial completion of the project is anticipated for October 2022.
2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – Construction is ongoing. Our 11th construction progress meeting was held on 6/23/22. Paving of the street is 100% complete. Construction of the sidewalk and curb is ongoing. The placement of the irrigation system is set to commence. A major critical path item that is pending is the revised design and construction for the 18-inch water main. The City of Laredo is working to develop the updated plans and issue to the Contractor. Currently, the project is scheduled for completion in 7/29/2022. The project was delayed due to lack of water for 2 to 3 weeks. **Overall the project is 90% complete.**
3. Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) Acceleration/ Deceleration Lane Project - The project was awarded to Anderson Columbia in October 2021. Construction to commenced on the week of the 14th of March. The paving is largely complete. Major critical path item that is still pending is the installation of the proposed illumination on the Northbound and Southbound Lanes of Cuatro Vientos. The project is scheduled for completion in August 2022. **Overall, the project is approximately 90% complete.**
4. Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) TRZ Study Update – Study commenced in May with the execution of the City of Laredo and WCCL RMA ILA. To date the team has met with representatives of the Laredo Economic Development Corporation and representatives of property owners in the study area. The team is working to meet with the City of Laredo Planning Director, Orlando Navarro, to discuss other possible stakeholders that would

provide beneficial information to the study. The study is scheduled for completion in **October 2022**.

5. Springfield Phase III – NTP was provided by the City of Laredo to AZAR Services, LLC on 12/15/21. Currently, the contractor is working on the concrete paving of the project. Substantial completion is scheduled for October 2022. **The project is approximately 65% complete.**
6. Webb County Fair Grounds TIA – The RMA team has completed the existing conditions analysis for the study. On 6/10/22, the RMA Team met with the TxDOT Laredo District to discuss the existing conditions analysis and review any possible concerns with the proposed driveway spacing on the project. The main points of the discussion is that the 2025 projection of the study will account for the improvements of the first phase of the fair ground improvements. The 2035 projection will account for the US 59 immediate improvements of a 6-lane rural divided highway configuration. The timeframe for completion of the study is **December of 2022**.
7. River Road Corridor Study – The MPO Policy Committee approved moving forward with the Study. The WCCL RMA and the MPO have executed the Inter Local Agreement. The study has officially commenced. Duration of the study is estimated for 12 months.
8. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant – The RMA has committed, subject to Board approval, to work with the MPO and possibly the City of Laredo for the development of the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant from FHWA. The grant has the following aspects:
 - It funds Local Governments, MPOs, and other jurisdictions to develop an action plan to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. If an action plan is already in place by a local government or MPO, it can fund the planning, design and development activities in support of the action plan or carry out strategies identified in the adopted action plan.
 - Total funding for FY 2022 is \$1 Billion. The minimum award is \$200K. The most that can be awarded to a recipient (joint venture with 2 or more Local Governments and/or political subdivisions) is \$5 Million.
 - Application due date is 9/15/22 at 5 pm.
9. Vallecillo Road –
 - The RMA continues to investigate options to close the \$17.5 million-dollar funding gap. We received good news on July 7th from Congressman Henry Cuellar that Congress will provide a \$3 million earmark towards Vallecillo. That leaves the funding gap at \$14.5 million.
 - On July 12th, the RMA reviewed the draft UTP and it was noted that Vallecillo did not make the draft project list for Category 12 funding. As the local TxDOT District office explained to Chairman Brown, the District office submitted Vallecillo for Category 12 Texas Transportation Commission discretionary funding, but the TPP division of TxDOT did not score Vallecillo high enough to place it on the final recommendation list. We have

until August 8th to get Vallecillo added to the draft UTP list, and that will take some effort by local, state and federal officials. The RMA is committed to that effort.

- The RMA also believes an easier option to close the funding gap would be to have the MPO Policy Committee to allocate two years of its Category 7 funding to Vallecillo, and then the gap would be closed and the project could move forward as fully funded. We ask the MPO Policy Committee to consider this option should Vallecillo not make the final UTP. The RMA requests two years of MPO Category 7 funds after Hachar receives its funds through 2024.

10. Other Items:

- The WC-CL RMA Board of Directors met this morning on July 20, 2022.

B. Update on the timeline for the Laredo Webb County Area MPO 2022 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program Call for Projects.

Mr. Mendive gave an overview of the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) program. He stated that in urbanized areas with populations over 200,000, TASA funds are distributed to MPOs and these MPOs are required to develop a competitive process for selecting projects. He further stated that these funds can be used for projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school, streetscaping, and traffic calming techniques.

Mr. Mendive further stated that the eligible entities for the TA Set-Aside program are local governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, natural resource or public land agencies, school districts, local education agencies, or schools, tribal governments and, now nonprofit entities are eligible to apply directly as well.

MPOs have to developed a competitive process (Call for Projects). The last Call for Projects done by the Laredo MPO was in 2016. However, there is new guidance from FHWA, therefore, the Laredo MPO is currently working on updating the previous local guidelines for the application process. He further mentioned that the potential funding to award is \$2.1 Million. TASA is not a grant, these funds are provided on a cost reimbursement basis; a 20% local match is required. This match used to be in cash only but, now in-kind will be permitted. Eligible entities may submit applicants for more than one project. MPO will create a subcommittee formed with MPO staff, ATC and Technical members to evaluate the submittals and present final selection(s) to Policy Committee for approval.

C. Update by City of Laredo Engineering staff on the FM 1472/Flecha Ln. Realignment (CSG 0922-33-076) and Calton Road Grade Separation (CSJ 0922-33-093) projects.

Gloria Saavedra, Engineering Department, gave an update on these projects which was as follows:

Flecha Lane/Las Cruces drive along FM 1472 (Mines Road)

Environmental. The consultant, KCI (formerly CEC) confirmed that the environmental policies are reversed by the Biden’s administration. A meeting with the consultant is scheduled for next week to discuss the option to submit a pre-construction notification (PCN) and the mitigation plan with a request for preliminary jurisdictional determination (PJD) to the Corps of Engineers. Mr. John Porter was in communication back in June of 2020 with the Valley Land Fund, out of McAllen, for the Conservation Easement Opportunity. They showed interest in being the 3rd party holder of a conservation easement of the mitigation pan. A join agreement needs to get approved by City Council between the City and The Valley Land Fund.

Also, during the meeting, there will be discussion on the construction plans, specifications and cost estimate to make sure they follow the updated TxDOT requirements.

Real Estate. Pending to acquire the last parcel 8111 Las Cruces from J&R Gon Investments, LTD. The condemnation of this property is in process. The city had already acquired Mr. Resendez’s property.

Calton Road Grade Separation and Roadway Widening

PS&E. While the consultant was working on addressing TxDOT and Union Pacific Road comments from 90% plan submittal, a recommendation was received from TxDOT regarding potential savings between steel vs prestressed concrete beams. The City asked the consultant to provide an amendment for redesign, additional time for the redesign and review by UPRR, overall delay to letting.

Amendment Number 12 was received and reviewed by City Staff. Engineering department provided comments to the consultants. If the savings are substantial, Engineering would recommend to TxDOT and City Council the redesign approval.

Activity. 90% Plans (addressing TxDOT changes since Nov 2017)

Completion Date. On hold depending Amending 12 approval

Environmental Re-Evaluation	May 2022
Project Letting	August 2023
Construction Phase Services complete	August 2023

Real Estate. Mediation with Crown Enterprises is scheduled for Tuesday, July 26, 2022.

VI. DIRECTOR’S COMMENTS

Mr. Mendive provided the following report:

1. Update on MPO Process Review – The proposed amendment to the Planning Agreement as approved by the Policy Committee has been reviewed and accepted by TxDOT. Additionally, the MOU detailing the roles and responsibilities of the MPO and the City of Laredo (fiscal agent) has been drafted and provided to the City of Laredo for their review.

2. On June 30th, MPO staff met with the consultants working on TxDOT’s US83 Corridor Study. The consultants were interested in learning more about how the MPO prioritizes and scores projects in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The meeting was also an opportunity for MPO staff to share information on the needs and future recommendations along the US83 Corridor within the Laredo region.

3. Upcoming regularly scheduled meetings:
 - Active Transportation Committee – July 27, 2022
 - Technical Committee – August 9, 2022
 - Policy Committee – August 17, 2022

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Martinez made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:22 p.m.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 8
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Juan S. Mendive
Interim LWCAMPO Director

Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO
Chairperson



125 EAST 11TH STREET, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 | 512.463.8588 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

August 11, 2022

The Honorable Henry Cuellar
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tracy King
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768

The Honorable Judith Zaffirini
Texas Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711

The Honorable Richard Peña Raymond
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768

Dear Congressman Cuellar, Senator Zaffirini and Representatives King and Raymond:

Thank you for your interest in the funding and development of Vallecillo Road in Laredo. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) encourages and supports the development of roadways that help improve safety, reduce congestion, and promote economic growth for the state and local communities.

To accomplish this goal, the Texas Transportation Commission has dedicated an unprecedented and historic level of funding to the Laredo area via TxDOT's Unified Transportation Program (UTP) to advance a number of key projects vital to both the state and local communities, including for I-35, I-69/Loop 20, and I-69/US 59, which total \$1.7 billion.

We stand ready to support the region's efforts to deliver the Vallecillo Road project as a locally funded and locally delivered undertaking as follows:

FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	COMMENT
Webb County-City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) (Category 12 from TxDOT allocated in 2014)	\$9 Million	Use all unspent TxDOT funds of \$9 Million
City of Laredo	\$5 Million	
Landowner Contribution	\$5 Million	
Federal Earmark	\$3 Million	Proposed by local stakeholders
Laredo & Webb County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Category 7 Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act Funds (IIJA)	\$13 Million	Leaves \$65 Million available to MPO
TOTAL	\$35 Million	

TxDOT will work with the Laredo & Webb County MPO to accelerate the availability of the \$13 million of Category 7 funds referenced above and additionally, TxDOT can support the financing through State Infrastructure Bank loans or can assist your development of a federal infrastructure grant application.

OUR VALUES: *People • Accountability • Trust • Honesty*

OUR MISSION: *Connecting You With Texas*


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We also discussed the need for better connectivity of the proposed Vallecillo Road with I-35 if the project is going to adequately improve mobility in the area. This is a project effort that would benefit mobility along I-35 and access to other growth areas of Laredo on the east side of I-35. With a commitment from the region, TxDOT is willing to immediately begin planning and design efforts for this project and work with you to pursue future funding opportunities for its delivery.

TxDOT is confident that the local transportation partners—the City of Laredo, Webb County, the Laredo & Webb County MPO, and the Webb County–City of Laredo RMA—can successfully deliver this project and TxDOT stands ready to help you administratively in this regard.

TxDOT appreciates your interest and desire to further projects that will help ensure a safe and efficient transportation system for the Laredo region, as well as the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Bruce Bugg, Jr.", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

J. Bruce Bugg, Jr.
Chairman, Texas Transportation Commission

cc: John B. Scott, Texas Secretary of State
Pete Saenz., Mayor, City of Laredo
Jed A. Brown, Chair, Webb County-City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority
Marc D. Williams, P.E., Executive Director, TxDOT
David Salazar, P.E., Laredo District Engineer, TxDOT

MPO STP-MM (Category 7) Funding

Laredo Cat 7 Programming

Category		Year										Grand Total	
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032		
7	Total Targets	\$56,794,853	\$8,154,760	\$8,317,866	\$8,484,234	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$130,699,465
	Total Programmed	\$52,213,781	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$52,213,781
	Total Remaining	\$4,581,072	\$8,154,760	\$8,317,866	\$8,484,234	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$8,157,959	\$78,485,684

Targets are draft 2023 UTP targets

Programming data as of July 20, 2022

FY 2023 includes projected FY 2022 carryover

Note added by MPO: \$1,000,000 of CAT 7 funds were allocated to CSJ 0922-33-213 (World Trade Bridge Expansion) for 2024 by the MPO Policy Committee on January 25, 2022. This will be reflected in TxDOT's programming data once the 2023-2026 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is approved.

Laredo Cat 7 Project List

MPO	District	CSJ	County	Highway	Limits From	Limits To	Description	Category	FY	DB/DBB	Let Type	Des LET SCH	FY	Total Programmed
LRD - Laredo Webb County Area MPO	Laredo	0922-33-165	Webb	CS	FM 1472	0.1 MILE E OF BELTWAY PARKWAY	NEW LOCATION CONSTRUCTI ON OF 4-LANE DIVIDED HIGHWAY	7	2023	DBB	Local Agency Let	2023		\$30,773,113
		0922-33-166	Webb	CS	0.1 MILE EAST OF BELTWAY PARKWAY	IH 35 WEST FRONTAGE ROAD	NEW LOCATION CONSTRUCTI ON OF 4-LANE DIVIDED HIGHWAY	7	2023	DBB	Local Agency Let	2023		\$21,440,668

Grand Total **\$52,213,781**

Based on a quick GIS review, this project appears to connect I-35 west and FM 1472

IV-C. Discussion with possible action on connecting International Blvd. north of US 59/Loop 20 to IH-35 and other necessary mobility improvements in Northeast Laredo, and any other matters incident thereto. (Requested by Dr. Marte A. Martinez).

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

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES

Planning and Environment Linkages: An Overview

Kirk D. Fauver, FHWA Texas

August 17, 2022

www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

- **Disclaimer:** Except for the statutes and regulations cited, the contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. The document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies. General considerations are not necessarily required by the statute or regulations; however, FHWA encourages these for all PEL approaches.

Add a footer

Agenda

PEL Overview

- What is PEL?
- PEL Benefits
- Flexibility in PEL Approaches
- PEL Best Practices
- FHWA PEL Resources

What is PEL?



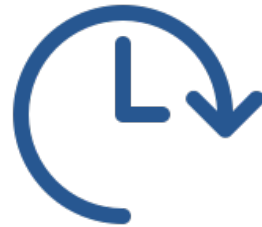
- PEL is a collaborative transportation decision-making approach
 - considers environmental, community, and economic goals early in the transportation planning process
 - uses the information, analysis, and products developed during planning to inform the environmental review process
- **Ultimately, the goal of PEL** is early collaboration to facilitate better planning to inform National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews to accelerate project delivery

PEL Benefits

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES



Accelerate project delivery



Align with future requirements



Stimulates development of new tools



Helps build relationships for agencies & the public



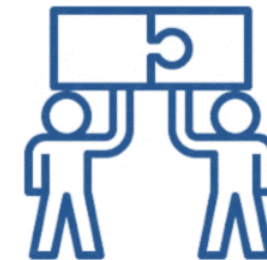
Early engagement in decision-making



Helps identify stakeholders early on



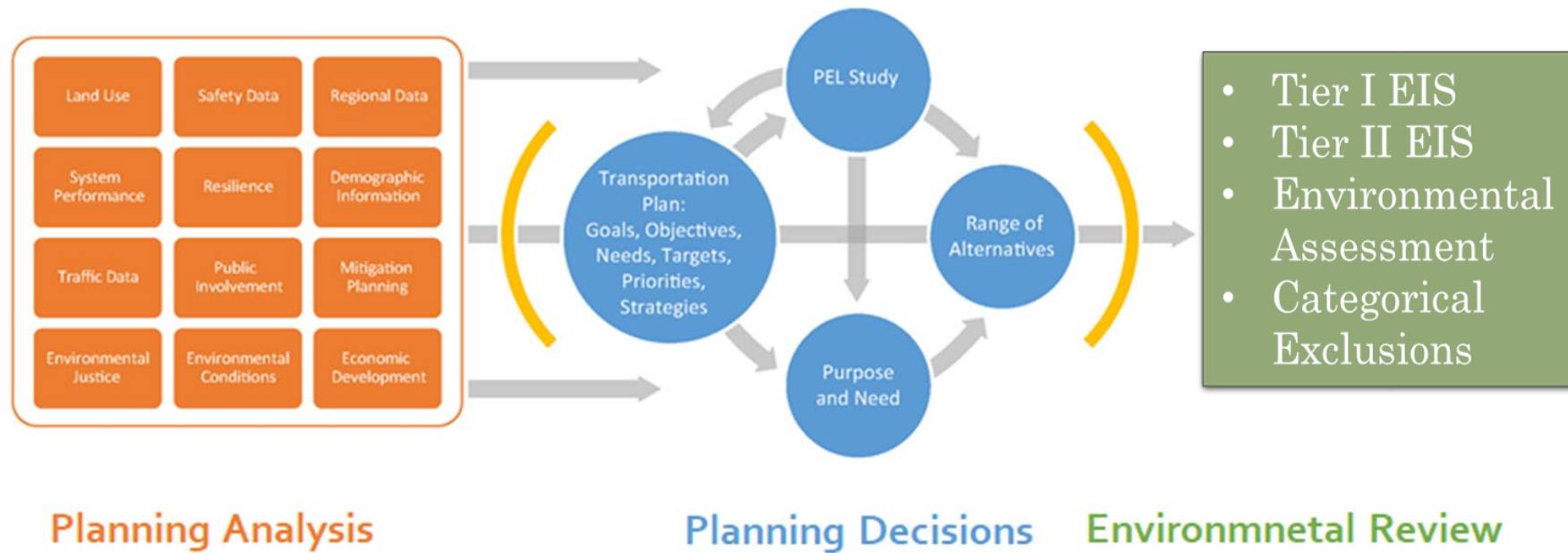
Creates better outcomes for the community



Improves planning products

PEL Today

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES









Funding PEL

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES

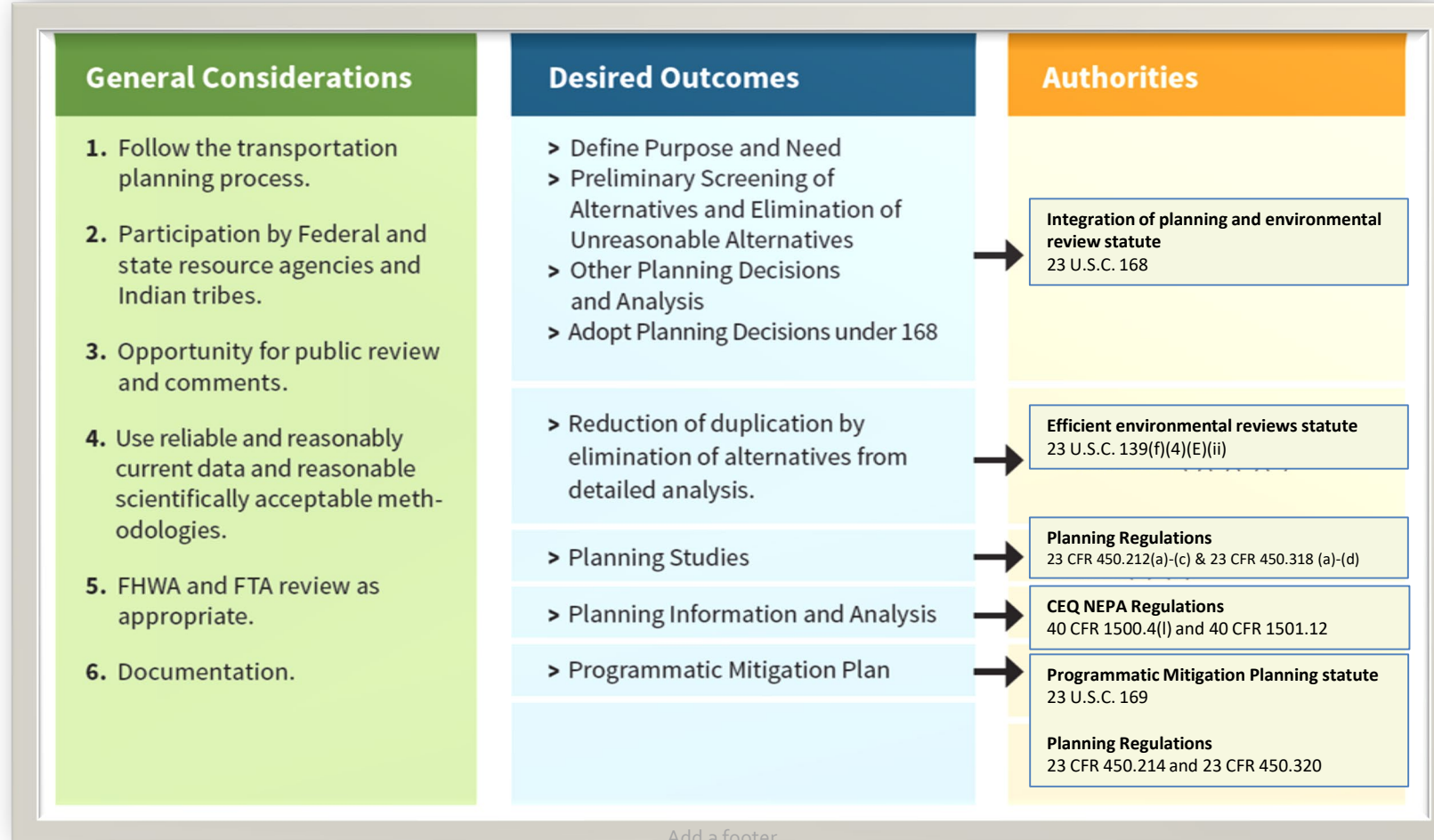
- PL and SPR funding
 - Transportation planning activities undertaken as part of planning process prior to the initiation of NEPA are eligible for PL and SPR funding.
- Once the NEPA process has been initiated, activities undertaken for a project are not eligible for PL or SPR funds.

Additional information: Metropolitan Planning Funding Eligibility Reminder
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/metroplanfund.cfm>

PEL General Considerations

-  Follow the transportation planning process
-  Solicit participation by Federal and State resource agencies and Indian tribes
-  Provide an opportunity for public review and comments
-  Use reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable, scientifically acceptable methodologies
-  Involve the FHWA Division and FTA Regional Office, as appropriate
-  Prepare appropriate documentation

Flexibility in PEL Approaches



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How Planning Products Can Benefit the NEPA Process

Planning Products	Support NEPA
Travel Demand Forecasting / Traffic Modeling / Transit Ridership / Safety Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inform purpose and need• Screen alternatives, including modal alternatives• Scope certain studies (e.g., air, noise)
Land Use and Growth Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define transportation problems• Evaluate alternatives, including modal alternatives• Ensure consistency with local goals
Population and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify stakeholders• Assess community impacts• Achieve full participation by all affected populations

Planning Products: Purpose and Need

- Develop a statement of purpose and need for a future project during planning that can be used in the environmental review process



Planning

NEPA

- Consult with FHWA/FTA to ensure purpose & need can be used in subsequent environmental review processes

Planning Products: Preliminary Screening and Elimination of Alternatives

- **Best Practices**
 - Be objective/fact based
 - Focus on corridor vision, fatal flaw analysis, mode selection
 - Reflects project purpose & need, community and public input, environmental impacts
 - May require several levels of screening or analysis

- The alternative to be eliminated from consideration is not necessary for compliance with the NEPA (23 U.S.C. 139(f)(4)(E)(ii))



Credit: Getty Images

PEL Best Practices

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Plan before initiating project



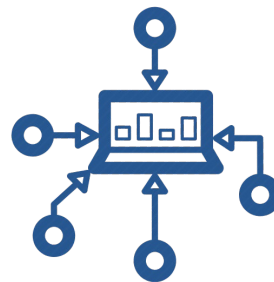
Plan schedule & budget



Planning informs future environmental study.



Leverage tools such as GIS and other mapping tools to help inform planning.



Agencies sharing resources to provide data.



Comprehensive record of data, analysis and decision-making is important

PEL Hypothetical Case Studies

- https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications.aspx

Results: 14

PEL - General

PEL Hypothetical Case Studies

- Alternatives
- Planning Analyses
- Planning Studies
- Purpose and Need

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NHI Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Course

PLANNING &
ENVIRONMENT
LINKAGES

COURSE NUMBER: FHWA-NHI-142078, 142078 A
and 142078V

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Course Description

Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL)

PROGRAM AREA: Environment
COURSE NUMBER: FHWA-NHI-142078
Instructor-led Training (ILT)

Print Friendly Page
Sign Up for Session Alerts

Calendar Year	Length	CEU	Host Price
2020	2 Days	1.2 Units	\$300 Per Participant

Host this Course

TRAINING LEVEL: Intermediate
CLASS SIZE: Minimum: 20 Maximum: 30
COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) is a 2-day instructor-led training course offered by NHI, the authoritative source in transportation training.

Integrating PEL into the transportation planning and environment review processes promotes more informed decision-making and accelerated project delivery. Furthermore, several policies and authorities encourage the implementation of PEL.

The course emphasizes the following benefits of PEL: accelerate project delivery, development of purpose and need early in the planning process, elimination of unreasonable alternatives during the planning process, early and improved coordination with resource agencies and stakeholders, improved program and informed project decisions, less duplication and improve documentation, promotion of efficient and cost-effective solutions, earlier consideration of potential environmental effects, and enhanced consultation, coordination, and public involvement.

As a participant, you will learn and discuss why PEL has been a successful practice, the benefits of PEL,

https://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/course-search?tab=o&key=PEL&sf=o&course_no=142078V

Other PEL Resources

Virtual Public Involvement & PEL Webinar Recording:

<https://usdot.zoomgov.com/rec/play/Wy5WiNgW5-1nal2Az1HKBm3csR6hDvE4Oz72QzdMiNgr2dHYRkWTJFoG4jtxZZLHyoy71T5Q6oqN4qli.odfrUQnrHSWHAHh1?startTime=1637252868000>

Federal-Aid Essentials PEL Video: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/federal-aidessentials/catmod.cfm?id=122>

PlanWorks PEL Application & Decision Guide:

<https://fhwaapps.fhwa.dot.gov/planworks/Applications/Show/planning-and-environment-linkages>

Conclusion

- PEL is flexible.
- Consider the future use of the planning analysis and planning products in the environmental review process.
- Consider environmental, social and economic early into the planning process to:
 - reduce duplication;
 - encourage relationship building and public engagement;
 - create better products, decisions, and outcomes; and
 - accelerate project delivery.

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES

E-MAIL

Kirk.fauver@dot.gov

PH: 512-536-5952



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

V-B. Presentation by TxDOT on the status of ongoing projects.

From: [Antonio Rodriguez](#)
To: [Juan Mendive](#); [Angelica Quijano](#)
Cc: [Jed Brown](#); [Douglas Howland](#); [Melisa Montemayor](#); [Jason Rodriguez](#); [.62804 WCCL Project Documents Control](#)
Subject: MPO August RMA Status Update
Date: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 5:39:30 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good afternoon, Juan. Please see the report from the WC-CL RMA for next week's MPO Policy Committee meeting. Please include in next week's packet for the Policy Committee members.

1. FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. Turn Lanes – The commencement of work at Killam Industrial Blvd. at FM 1472 occurred in early May 2022. In May and June, the acceleration lane construction of FM 1472 had been ongoing. The contractor has had struggles with resources due to COVID issues with staff. This resulted in delays for progressing on the Killam Industrial Blvd. section of the project during the latter month of July. On Friday the 12th of August, the contractor placed low profile concrete barrier along Killam Industrial Blvd. for the construction of the dedicated right turn lane to commence. **As of the week of the 8th of August, the project is 25% complete.** Based on discussions with the contractor, we estimate that project will advance significantly over the next 2 weeks and be 50% complete by the end of August. Substantial completion of the project is anticipated for October 2022.
2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – Construction is ongoing. Our 12th construction progress meeting was held on 8/02/22. Paving of the street is 100% complete. Construction of the sidewalk and curb is ongoing. Street is largely complete from Cuatro Vientos to Isla Mujeres. The placement of the irrigation system is ongoing. A major critical path item that is pending is the revised design and construction for the 18-inch water main. The City of Laredo is working to develop the updated plans and issue to the Contractor. Based on the current status of items on the project, substantial completion is projected for late September/ early October completion. The project has been delayed due to lack of water for 2 to 3 weeks and the need for a revised water main design. **Overall the project is 90% complete.**
3. Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) Acceleration/ Deceleration Lane Project - The project was awarded to Anderson Columbia in October 2021. Construction to commenced on the week of the 14th of March. The paving is largely complete. Major critical path item that is still pending is the installation of the proposed illumination on the Northbound and Southbound Lanes of Cuatro Vientos. The project is scheduled for completion in September 2022. **Overall, the project is approximately 90% complete.**
4. Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) TRZ Study Update – Study commenced in May with the execution of the City of Laredo and WCCL RMA ILA. To date the team has met with representatives of the Laredo Economic Development Corporation and representatives of property owners in the study area. On 8/09/2022, the team met with Ms. Vanessa Guerra of the City Planning Department to discuss upcoming developments from local stake holders. The team will be conducting one-on-one stake holder meetings over the next 6

- weeks. The study is scheduled for completion in **October 2022**.
5. Springfield Phase III – NTP was provided by the City of Laredo to AZAR Services, LLC on 12/15/21. Currently, the contractor is continuing to progress on the project. As in other projects, the supply of materials is continuing to be constrained. Substantial completion is scheduled for October 2022. **Overall, the project is approximately 65% complete.**
 6. Webb County Fair Grounds TIA – The RMA team has completed the existing conditions analysis for the study. On 8/10/22, the RMA Team met internally for a status of progress of the project. Currently, the study is addressing the trip distribution for 2025 and 2035 traffic projections. The 2025 traffic projections will account for the 1st phase of the fair grounds to be constructed. The 2035 traffic projections will account for the US 59 immediate improvements of a 6-lane rural divided highway configuration and the full build out of the fair ground improvements. The timeframe for completion of the study is **December of 2022**.
 7. River Road Corridor Study – The MPO Policy Committee approved moving forward with the Study. The WCCL RMA and the MPO have executed the Inter Local Agreement. The study has officially commenced. Duration of the study is estimated for 12 months. Currently, the team has begun identifying the environmental constraints of the area (archaeological, water, biological, etc.). The Team will begin developing possible alignments over the next 2 to 4 weeks. The Team will commence reaching out to stakeholders to obtain input for possible alignments in the area in October 2022.
 8. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant – In partnership with the MPO and the City of Laredo, the RMA is developing the grant application to develop an action to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. Currently, the team is developing the scope of the action plan that will be included as part of the grant application narrative. The team has developed a list of local and state level elected officials to obtain letters of support for the grant application. The grant application for this study will be requesting \$2M from the FHWA. The application is due on September 15, 2022. The team anticipates submitting the application one week prior to the due date.
 9. Vallecillo Road – As stated previously, on July 7th from US Congressman Henry Cuellar, he notified the RMA that Congress will provide a \$3 million earmark towards Vallecillo. This reduced the project funding gap from \$17.5 million to \$14.5 million. In our continued effort for funding to reduce the remaining gap, the project partners (WCCL RMA, City of Laredo, Killam Company) met with TxDOT Officials along with State and Federal elected officials for an in person meeting with some individuals attending virtually on the 3rd of August. The meeting was very productive and a lot of good information was shared among the parties. The project funding was discussed in detail. The RMA will present the key takeaways from this meeting to the MPO Policy Committee members at the 8/17 MPO Policy Committee meeting. Attendees at the meeting included the following:
 - A. Attendees in support of the project:
 - Mr. Jed A. Brown – WC-CL RMA Chair
 - United States Congressman Henry Cuellar
 - Texas Secretary of State John Scott

- State Senator Judith Zaffirini
- State Representative Richard Raymond
- State Representative Tracy King
- Mayor Pete Saenz
- Council Member Vanessa Perez
- Mr. Cliffe Killam, Killam Development
- Ms. Melisa Montemayor – WC-CL RMA GEC (HNTB)

B. Attendees from TxDOT:

- Mr. Marc William - TxDOT Executive Director
- Mr. Lance Williams – TxDOT Chief Engineer
- Mr. David Salazar – TxDOT Laredo District Engineer

10. Other Items:

- The WC-CL RMA Board of Directors is tentatively scheduled to meet in September

Thank you.

Antonio Rodriguez, PE

WCCL RMA GEC Deputy Program Manager

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LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Director's Report August 17, 2022

1. As per TxDOT's request to MPOs, an administrative modification to the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will be required to incorporate a revised Self-Certification Statement, which reflects updated language in accordance with the new Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).
2. The draft guidelines for the MPO 2022 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Call for Projects have been reviewed by the Active Transportation Committee and Technical Committee. Both committees recommended approval pending FHWA's review. The guidelines will be submitted to FHWA for their review. We plan to bring an action item to the Policy Committee meeting in September to consider approving the guidelines and authorizing the Call for Projects.
3. Upcoming regularly scheduled meetings:
 - Active Transportation Committee – August 31, 2022
 - Technical Committee – September 13, 2022
 - Policy Committee – September 21, 2022



**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION AND TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
SELF-CERTIFICATION**

In accordance with 23 CFR Part 450.336, the Texas Department of Transportation and the Laredo Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Laredo Urbanized Area, hereby certify that the transportation planning process is addressing the major issues in the metropolitan planning area and is being conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements of:

- (1) 23 U.S.C. 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450 subpart C;
- (2) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21;
- (3) 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity;
- (4) Section 1101(b) of the FAST Act (Pub. L. 114-357) and 49CFR part26 regarding the involvement of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in US DOT-funded projects;
- (5) 23 CFR part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts;
- (6) The provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) and (49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38);
- (7) The Older Americans Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
- (8) Section 324 of title 23 U.S.C. regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender; and
- (9) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and 49 CFR part 27 regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

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

Honorable Pete Saenz Mayor of Laredo
and Chairperson of the MPO Policy Committee

Date

Date



XIII. MPO Self-Certification

In accordance with 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 450.334, the Texas Department of Transportation and the Laredo Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, hereby certifies that the metropolitan transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements including:

- 1) 23 United States Code (U.S.C) 134, 49 U.S.C 503, and 23 CFR 450 subpart C – Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming;
- 2) In nonattainment and maintenance areas, sections 174 and 176 (c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7504, 7506 (c) and (d)) and 40 CFR part 93;
- 3) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21;
- 4) 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity;
- 5) Section 1101(b) of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU (Public Law 109-59)) and 49 CFR part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in USDOT funded projects;
- 6) 23 CFR part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts;
- 7) The provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) and 49 CFR parts 27, 37, and 38;
- 8) The Older Americans Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
- 9) Section 324 of title 23 U.S.C. regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender; and,
- 10) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and 49 CFR part 27 regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

A blue ink signature of David M. Salazar, written in a cursive style, positioned above a horizontal line.

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

A blue ink signature of Pete Saenz, written in a cursive style, positioned above a horizontal line.

Honorable Pete Saenz
Mayor of Laredo and Chairperson of the
MPO Policy Committee