



LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

September 21st, 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 1:31 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. Galo
For: 6
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 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 1:40 p.m.)
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1 (joined the meeting at 1:34 p.m.)
David Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, Jr., P.E., Member at Large

Regular members not present:

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

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:

Mercurio Martinez, III, COL Councilmember
Rosario Cabello, COL Interim City Manager
Riazul, Mia, COL Assistant City Manager
Steve Landin, COL Assistant City Manager
Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering Department
Jaime Garcia, COL Engineering Department
Orlando Navarro, COL Planning Department
Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering
Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro
Sara Garza, TxDOT
Luis Villarreal, TxDOT
Jason Hinojosa, TxDOT
Jed Brown, RMA
Melisa Montemayor, HNTB, Inc.
Antonio Rodriguez, HNTB, Inc.
Blasita Lopez, HNTB, Inc.
Jose Ceballos, Fasken Development
Jose R. Medina
Anthony Garza

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.

Mr. Jose Medina spoke in favor of the River Bank Road project. He stated the road was a great necessity for the people of Laredo and would be for passenger vehicles only. He further commented that if the MPO could do anything to fund the River Bank Road, the project would be a reality and extremely helpful for the residents of Laredo.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

CM. J. Gonzalez joined the meeting at 1:34 p.m.

A. Approval of the minutes for the meetings held on August 17th, 2022

Judge Tijerina made a motion to approve the minutes of August 17th, 2022.

Second: Cm. Gutierrez
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2022-07, adopting the updated 2022 Public Participation Plan.

Mr. Juan Mendive, MPO Interim Director stated that during the comment period, there were no comments received.

CM. Dr. Martinez made a motion to open the public hearing.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Dr. Martinez made a motion to close the public hearing and approve Resolution No. MPO 2022-07, adopting the 2022 Public Participation Plan.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0
Motion carried unanimously

C. Receive public testimony and initiate a 10-day public review and comment period for the following proposed amendments to the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

1. **Addition** of project CSJ 0922-33-205 intended to provide for the construction of new 4 lane [off-system] highway with continuous turn lane. The estimated construction cost is \$35,280,000. Category 7 funds in the amount of \$16,500,000 have been allocated for this project. Other funding amounts include \$14,780,000 in Category 3-local and \$4,000,000 in Category 12 Strategic Partnership funds. The project sponsor is the Webb County City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority and the proposed letting date is FY 2026. The project sponsor is the Webb County City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority and the proposed letting date is FY 2026.
2. **Reprogramming/addition** of project CSJ 0922-33-076 for the realigning of Flecha Ln. and Las Cruces Blvd. **Purpose** of amendment is to add this project to the 2023-2026 TIP as the updated letting date for this project has been changed to FY 2023. This project was previously included in the FY 2021-2024 TIP.
3. **Reprogramming/addition** of project CSJ 0922-33-093 (Calton Rd. and Santa Maria Ave. Interchange) for the construction of a grade separation interchange. **Purpose** of amendment is to add this project to the 2023-2026 TIP as the updated letting date for this project has been changed to FY 2023. This project was previously included in the FY 2021-2024 TIP.
4. **Transit revision** to increase FY 2023-2026 total transit funding from \$69,929,560 to \$88,274,585 for an increase of \$18,345,025.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **initiate** a 10-day public review and comment period for the above listed proposed amendments to the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Second: CM. Galo
For: 6
Against: 0

Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Galo had a question on item 3. He asked if there was still a need for a grade separation at the proposed location.

Juan Mendive, Interim MPO Director stated the City of Laredo was working on that project. He stated City Engineering would be giving an update at the next meeting.

CM. Dr. Martinez mentioned it is an on-going project that has several areas active that are being addressed to alleviate some traffic congestion.

Orlando Navarro, COL Planning Director, stated there was a time when Calton Rd. was going to go west towards the river and connect on Flecha Lane.

CM. Perez joined the meeting at 1:40 p.m.

Humberto Gonzalez, TxDOT, stated the funds for the project were allocated in 2006 and since they were earmarked, they would have to be presented to the Federal agency to deauthorize the funds. The funds cannot be transferred anywhere and any monies spent to be reimbursed.

D. Receive public testimony and initiate a 10-day public review and comment period for the following proposed revisions to the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):

1. **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 2023-2026 TIP.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **initiate** a 10-day public review and comment period for the following proposed amendments to the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Second: CM. Perez
 For: 8
 Against: 0
 Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

E. Discussion with possible action on the allocation and programming of Category 7 funds, including for project CSJ 0086-16-008 Loop 20 interchange at Lomas del Sur Blvd., and any other matters incident thereto.

Mr. Mendive spoke briefly about the item. He also stated Staff and the Technical Committee had recommended to program the funds in FY 2025.

CM. Dr. Martinez made a motion to approve the item and allocate Category 7 funds, including for project CSJ 0086-16-008 Loop 20 interchange at Lomas del Sur Blvd.

Second:	CM. J. Gonzalez
For:	8
Against:	0
Abstained:	0

Motion carried unanimously

CM. H. Gonzalez stated TxDOT had a consultant on board and hopefully starting work next month on the plans for the project. He also stated that if the project was letting in FY 2025, no Right of Way was needed. He stated construction time frame for an overpass would be in about 20 to 24 months.

CM. J. Gonzalez asked if the motion could include that if 2024 Category 7 funds could not be utilized for Hachar-Reuthinger, if funds could be utilized to make the process for this project quicker.

CM. Dr. Martinez amended to his motion to include CM. J. Gonzalez's comment.

F. Discussion with possible action on submitting a planning grant application for the U.S. Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program in collaboration with the Downtown Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) No. 1 and Laredo Main Street, and any other matters incident thereto.

Mr. Mendive gave a brief presentation on the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) grant program.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to approve the item and submit a planning grant application for the U.S. Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program in collaboration with the Downtown Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) No. 1 and Laredo Main Street

Second: CM. J. Gonzalez

Jose Ceballos, Downtown TIRZ, stated in order to qualify for the projects, the project had to go through said planning stage and would open the door for future project funding.

For: 8
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

G. Discussion with possible action on exploring the feasibility of a Transportation Reinvestment Zone (TRZ) in North Laredo-Webb County including along FM 1472.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to table the item.

Second: CM. Galo
For: 4
Against: 4 (Mayor, CM. Perez, Cm. Gutierrez, Dr. Martinez)
Abstained: 0

Mr. Mendive stated the Mayor had requested to put said item on the agenda back in July and at that time, MPO Staff were looking to see if the City and the County wanted to participate in said TRZ. At that time, Mr. Mendive had mentioned that the taxing entity would had to be the one to make the request to the RMA if they wanted to partner up to do a TRZ study. He stated the item would be brought back in three months.

No action was taken.

H. Discussion with possible action on El Metro's request to terminate the Advanced Funding Agreements (AFAs) for the ADA Bus Stops and Bicycle Plazas project CSJ 0922-33-181 and 0922-33-202, and any other matters incident thereto.

Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro, stated El Metro was requesting to cancel both CSJ's due to financial constraints. The project consisted of 26 bus stops and the amount of 300,000 of federal monies. However, said funds were construction funds but did not include engineering and design. When the RFQ was done, the engineering designs were extremely high and were not able to negotiate a contract. He stated at this time, in the best interest of El Metro to cancel the contracts.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **approve** the item and terminate the Advanced Funding Agreements (AFAs) for the ADA Bus Stops and Bicycle Plazas project CSJ 0922-33-181 and 0922-33-202

Second: CM. Galo
For: 8
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

I. A motion to authorize a 2022 Call for Projects for the Laredo Webb County Area MPO Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program and approve the TASA Program Application Guidelines and funding levels.

Mr. Mendive made brief presentation on the item. He mentioned the eligible projects. He explained this program is not a grant. Funds are provided on a cost reimbursement basis with a 20% local match requirement (in cash). He also stated that the original potential funding was \$2,143,500 but will add the \$300,000 just returned from El Metro.

CM. Dr. Martinez made a motion to **authorize** a 2022 Call for Projects for the Laredo Webb County Area MPO Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program and approve the TASA Program Application Guidelines and funding levels subject to making it effective next week.

Second: CM. Gutierrez
For: 8
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

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

CM. Gonzalez, TxDOT, stated the project was on target to let in August 2023 and construction should start two to three months after that.

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

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

Jed Brown, RMA, and Melisa Montemayor, HNTB, Inc., 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. Construction of the pavement widening components have been ongoing. For FM 1472, the bond breaker has been installed. Concrete pouring is tentatively scheduled for the week of the 19th. The grading for the widening of Killam Industrial Blvd. has been completed. For the traffic signal work, the foundation drill shafts have been set. The contractor is awaiting the traffic signal pole and assembly. **As of the week of the 12th of September, the project is 45% complete.** Substantial completion of the project is anticipated for mid-October 2022.
2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – Construction is ongoing. Our 13th construction progress meeting was held on 9/08/22. Paving of the street is 100% complete. Items completed last month include, installing sidewalk, irrigation and landscaping, and completing the concrete road tie into the Cuatro Vientos intersection. 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 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 late October 2022. **Overall, the project is approximately 95% 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 been conducting one-on-one stake holder meetings and are anticipating completing the analysis and forecasting by the week of the 19th. 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. To date, the roadway concrete paving has been completed. Outstanding items include the tie-in driveways at Shiloh and the proposed water main along the north end of the project. The contractor will be commencing the shared use path for the project in September. Substantial completion is scheduled for October 2022. **Overall, the project is approximately 85% complete.**

6. Webb County Fair Grounds TIA – The RMA team has completed the existing conditions analysis for the study. The first submittal for internal review was submitted on the week of 22nd of August. The consultant has received the comments from the GEC is addressing the comments. Currently, the study is addressing the trip distribution for the 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 – Currently, the team has developed a list of stakeholders to participate in the Stakeholder Listening Sessions. The team has also developed a preliminary environmental constraint for the project area. The Team will commence reaching out to stakeholders to obtain input for possible alignments in the area in October 2022. Total duration of the study is 12 months. **Completion of the study is anticipated in July 2023.**
8. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant – In partnership with the MPO and the City of Laredo, the RMA developed the grant application to develop an action to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. The team obtained letters of support for the grant application federal, state and local elected officials for inclusion in the application. The grant application for this study requested \$2M from the FHWA. **The application was successfully submitted on September 9, 2022** which was 6 days prior to the due date of the applicaiton.
9. Vallecillo Road – In the last MPO Policy Committee meeting, funding for construction of the project was concluded. Subsequent to the dedication of \$16.5M dollars of Category 7 funds from the MPO, US Congressman Henry Cuellar has pledged \$3M of federal earmark funds. These monies are in addition to the \$14M dedicated to the project by the RMA, City of Laredo and the Killam Company. Now that the project is funded for construction, the RMA is working to submit the appropriate paperwork for the draft Advanced Funding Agreement with TxDOT and begin design of the project.

Other Items:

- The WC-CL RMA Board of Directors is scheduled to meet on September 21, 2022.

B. Presentation by Webb County Engineering on a proposed strategy to accelerate the construction of Outer Loop Segments 1, 2, and 3 by leveraging local funds and Category 7 funds.

Anthony Garza, representing Webb County, gave a brief presentation on the item. He answered any questions the committee had.

Judge Tijerina and CM. Gutierrez left the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

VI. DIRECTOR's COMMENTS

Mr. Mendive provided the following report:

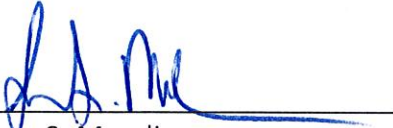
1. On September 7th, MPO Staff attended a training at the Laredo TxDOT District office to learn more about Decision Lens, a software that helps with managing project data, prioritizing and scoring projects, conducting what-if scenarios, and program budgets to facilitate data-driven decision making.
2. Staff is developing RFPs for the 2025-2050 Metropolitan Transportation (MTP) update, the Long-Range Freight Mobility Plan, and for General Planning Services/On-Call Technical Assistance as programmed in the FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
3. Upcoming regularly scheduled meetings:
 - Active Transportation Committee – September 28, 2022
 - Technical Committee – October 11, 2022
 - Policy Committee – October 19, 2022

VII. ADJOURNMENT

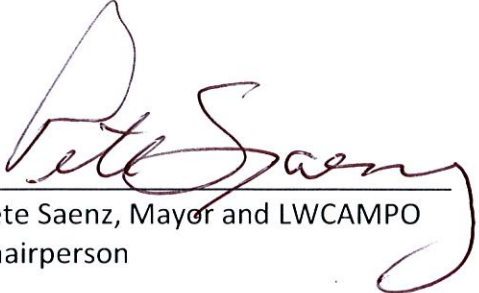
CM. Dr. Martinez made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:48 p.m.

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