



LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

November 16th, 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 2:32 P.M.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Juan Mendive, Interim MPO Director, 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 Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1

Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

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

Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII

Honorable Epigmenio "Epi" Gonzalez, P.E., TxDOT District Engineer

Regular members not present:

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

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 S. Mendive, LWCAMPO Interim Director

Graciela Briones, LWCAMPO Planner III

Julio Niño, LWCAMPO Planner III

Angie Quijano, LWCAMPO Administrative Assistant

Others:

Riazul Mia, City Manager’s Office
Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering Department
Gloria Perez-Saavedra, COL Engineering Department
Jaime Garcia, COL Engineering Department
Orlando Navarro, COL Planning Department
Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering
Lalo Uribe, Webb County Judge’s Office
Robert J. Garza, Transit, El Metro
Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Sara Garza, TxDOT
Ana Duncan, TxDOT
Fernando Martinez, TxDOT
Jesus Saavedra, TxDOT
Jose Vargas, TxDOT
Luis M. Villarreal, TxDOT
Melisa Montemayor, HNTB, Inc.
Blasita Lopez, HNTB, Inc.
Anthony Garza, GDJ Engineering

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.

Judge Tijerina and Mayor Saenz congratulated and welcomed District Engineer Epigmenio “Epi” Gonzalez to the MPO Policy Committee.

CM. Perez made a motion to move up item #VI. A-C.

Second: Mayor Saenz
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

A. Policy Committee membership update.

Juan Mendive, Interim MPO Director, formally welcomed new member Mr. Epi Gonzalez, P.E., TxDOT District Engineer. He also thanked Mr. David Salazar and Mr. Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez for their leadership and contributions to the MPO Policy Committee. Mr. Gonzalez's departure leaves a vacancy as of November 9th on the MPO Policy Board.

B. MPO 2022 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Call for Projects update

Mr. Mendive stated the call for projects would be closing on November 18th, 2022. The next steps would include the MPO staff review of received applications for completion and eligibility.

C. Schedule of upcoming meetings.

Mr. Mendive stated the Active Transportation meeting was scheduled for November 30th, 2022, MPO Technical meeting scheduled for December 13th, 2022, and the next MPO Policy meeting on December 21st, 2022.

CM. J. Gonzalez made a motion to **move up** item #IV-E.

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

Motion carried unanimously

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

E. Discussion with possible action on the allocation and programming of Category 7 funds for the preliminary engineering and ROW phase in the amount of \$1,000,000 for segments 1, 2, and 3 of the Laredo Outer Loop, and any other matters incident thereto.

Mr. Mendive stated the item was tabled at last month's meeting and was brought back for consideration.

Mayor Saenz mentioned some of discussions he previously had with CM. Marte Martinez regarding

Judge Tijerina informed Mayor Saenz if there were any issues with segment 1 of the Outer Loop and the situation of Bridge 4/5, segment 1 could be excluded and just leave segment 2 and 3.

CM. Galo stated that the MPO was to promote City of Laredo and Webb County and it would be a good idea to have joint meetings and have the public's input and TxDOT's input and meet with the new council and commission.

Mayor Saenz stated he truly cared for the city's south and thought the city was ready to move forward with the Memo of Understanding (MOU) with the County and the landowner of the proposed site. He also stated he was in agreement with the 3 legs (segments) as proposed.

Anthony Garza consultant for Webb County Planning, stated that the original proposal was legs 1, 2, and 3 in an effort to try to get the County to participate along with TxDOT and to develop projects to try to get more money for the region. He further said there were options to look at and also an option for a road that was going to be on system. He stated that there was a lot of opportunity to expand how much money to get. He stated the best to do was to be proactive and make both the Outer Loop and Hachar Reuthinger able to happen without hurting each other project.

Mr. Epi Gonzalez, TxDOT, stated the alternate funding may come from Category 12.

CM. J. Gonzalez stated enough funds for Hachar-Reuthinger had always existed.

CM. Perez stated she was concerned knowing about the shortage of funds for this project.

Anthony Garza stated \$1 million is a place holder inside the TIP to allow for planning and development authority with TxDOT a commitment to follow the federal process and to enter it in the system.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **approve** and accept the item as written.

Second: CM. Galo
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Perez made a motion to **move up** item #D.

Second: Mayor Saenz

For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Judge Tijerina left the meeting at 3:09 p.m.

D. Discussion with possible action on the Hachar-Reuthinger Road project and presentation by TxDOT regarding the updated project cost estimate.

CM. Perez stated her concerns regarding the Hachar-Reuthinger project and the traffic congestion on Mines Road.

Ana Duncan, TxDOT, gave an extended presentation on the item that included a chronology included history of the project.

The project is from FM 1472 IH35 for 4-lane divided highway.

She stated that the original Dannenbaum's Engineering estimate was at \$51.8 million as of June 2020. The updated project cost estimate was now at \$90.4 million as of October 2022. She also stated the design did not meet criteria needed for an on-system highway road. When TxDOT had their schematics prepared and updated with all the requirements that were discussed, it would come out to \$140.3 million. She also stated the reason was to include increased bridge length and added scope: traffic signals, continuous lighting, ITS (Intelligent Transportation System) for August 2023 letting.

CM. Gutierrez left the meeting at 3:22 p.m.

Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT, stated that the only options were with Category 7 remaining funds. He stated those funds could be requested to be accelerated but it did not mean the funds would get approved to be accelerated. He also stated funds can also come from Category 12 but would need to qualify. This would run into the risk of moving the project four years down the road because no new funds can be brought within the next four years. He further stated that in order to make the project on-system, TxDOT would need a resolution from the City to acquire the Right-of-Way (ROW) and would also need to go through approval by the state commission.

Mr. Riazul Mia, Assistant City Manager, stated the City was waiting for TxDOT because the environmental needed to be finished before acquiring the ROW.

Ana Duncan stated TxDOT had their consultant working on the final metes and bounds which was the actual information they need to formally acquire the ROW. TxDOT had

provided the footprint so that the City could begin their preliminary discussions with the property owners. TxDOT's final mapping and metes and bounds would be provided mid-December.

CM. Galo requested a detailed check list of required steps to follow.

CM. E. Gonzalez agreed a timeline with expected completion dates would help.

CM. Perez made a motion to accelerate Category 7 funds so said funds could cover the preferred option of approximately \$40 million additional in order to get the project to let on time.

Second: Mayor Saenz

Mr. Mendive stated the project was already on the TIP and STIP.

Ramon Chavez, City Engineer, stated City was advertising to get a consultant for the utility relocations and most likely bring back the recommendation for a consultant in February 2023.

Ana Duncan stated TxDOT would be proving the metes and bounds in December to begin acquiring the ROW, but before the ROW can be transferred over, major arrangements are needed on how all the utilities would be addressed.

CM. Galo asked Mr. Mia if the city had any monies for any relocations that would be required by the City.

Ramon Chavez stated TxDOT and the City have been in contact and having meetings with the property owners.

CM. Galo stated to include any consultants needed to the detailed check list he requested.

Anthony Garza stated that asking the question whether or not there's a capability to get the money somewhere else would not substantially create a massive delay.

CM. Perez modified her motion to say move forward to "Option 3A modified" and then check to see if Category 7 funds can be advanced in case it is needed but also put in the request for funding for the missing amount on the Unified Transportation Plan (UTP) and make the final funding decision once the MPO committee is aware how much funding is needed, and the MPO committee would be ok with the letting date moving 30 days later.

Second: Mayor Saenz

For: 5

Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Galo stepped out of the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

A. Approval of the minutes for the meetings held on October 19th, 2022

CM. Perez made a motion to **approve** the minutes of October 19th, 2022.

Second: CM. Gonzalez
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 amendments to the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

1. **Addition** of project CSJ 0086-16-008 intended to provide for the construction of an interchange at Lomas del Sur Blvd. and State Loop 20. The estimated construction cost is \$30,240,000. Category 7 funds in the amount of \$7,030,287 have been allocated for this project. Other funding amounts include \$23,209,713 in Category 2 funds. The project sponsor is TxDOT and the proposed letting date is FY 2025.
2. **Removal** of project CSJ 0922-33-181 for the ADA Bus Stops and Bicycle Plazas project. The Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) for this project has been terminated at the request of the project sponsor. Funds in the amount of \$180,000 previously allocated to this project have been removed and added to the Category 9 available funding balance, which can be awarded to other eligible projects.

CM. Gonzalez made motion to **open** the public hearing and **initiate** a 10-day public review and comment period for the proposed amendments to the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Second: Mayor Saenz
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Galo stepped back into the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

CM. Gonzalez left the meeting at 4:12 p.m.

C. 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.*

CM. Galo made motion to open the public hearing and initiate a 10-day public review and comment period for the proposed amendments to the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Second: CM. Perez
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

F. Discussion with possible action on the selection of a representative to fill the Policy Committee Member At-Large vacancy.

Mr. Mendive stated Mr. Brown requested to be considered for the board member vacancy. Mr. Mendive also presented the committee with letters of recommendation for Mr. Brown.

CM. Perez made a motion to select Jed Brown for the Member At-large vacancy.

Second: Mayor Saenz
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

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

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

Melisa Montemayor, HNTB, Inc., stated she was available if there were any questions. The status report was included in the member's packet.

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 for FM 1472 was scheduled for pouring in late September. The grading for the widening of Killam Industrial Blvd. has been completed. For the traffic signal work, the foundation drill shafts have been set. A utility issue was encountered and is in the process of being cleared. TxDOT anticipates clearance resolution by the end of October. Substantial construction completion is forecasted for late November. **As of the week of the 7th of November, the project is 50% complete.**
2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – Construction is ongoing. Paving of the street is 100% complete. Drainage is 100% complete. Sidewalk construction is currently ongoing from Isla Mujeres to Cuatro Vientos. The work for the 18-inch water line is complete. Final water main testing is pending. The outstanding items are the wheel chair ramps at the intersections, outstanding landscaping and irrigation, pedestrian railing installation and final striping. Overall, anticipate substantial completion at the end of November. **Overall the project is 97% 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 roadway and traffic items are all 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 November 2022. **Overall, the project is approximately 98% 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. The report was completed on 10/31/22. The WCCL RMA provided a presentation of the report to City Council on 11/7/22. The study has concluded.
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. Substantial completion is scheduled for December 2022. **Overall, the project is approximately 88% complete.**
6. Webb County Fair Grounds TIA – The RMA team received the updated trip distribution for the 2025 traffic projections and the 2035 full build out conditions on 10/20/22. 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. A draft of the final TIA report to be completed and reviewed by the GEC in late-November. **The timeframe for completion of the study is December of 2022.**
7. River Road Corridor Study – The WCCL RMA conducted a series of stakeholder presentations on the week of the 17th of October 2022 and completed the stakeholder meetings on 11/11/22. The next phase of the study has commenced with regards to processing the data received in the stakeholder meetings for the development of the multiple route

alternatives, traffic analysis, cost estimating and report development. Total duration of the study is 12 months. **Completion of the study is anticipated in June 2023.**

8. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant – In partnership with the MPO and the City of Laredo, the RMA developed a \$2M grant application to develop an action to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. **The application was successfully submitted on September 9, 2022** which was 6 days prior to the due date of the applicaiton. The team developed and distributed follow-up letters to local elected officials. The WCCL RMA is currently conducting follow-up outreach to the USDOT and the Secretary of Transportation, Mr. Pete Buttigieg to provide the benefits to the community if the grant was to be approved.
9. Vallecillo Road – In the August 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 \$16.24M dedicated to the project by the RMA, City of Laredo and the Killam Company. Congressman Cuellar had a joint press conference with the City and State officials to announce the funding of the project. Now that the project is funded for construction, the RMA has submitted the appropriate paperwork to TxDOT for the draft Advanced Funding Agreement and begin design of the project. The RMA is targeting commencement of design in December 2022.

Other Items:

- The WC-CL RMA Board of Directors met on 11/07/22 for the November Board meeting
- The WC-CL RMA Board of Directors will meet again for a December Board meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

CM. Perez made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 4:17 p.m.

Second: Mayor Saenz
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously



Juan S. Mendive
Interim LWCAMPO Director



Dr. Victor Treviño, Mayor and LWCAMPO
Chairperson