



# LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

## AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

### POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2023

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

#### I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Dr. Victor D. Treviño called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

#### II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

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

##### **Regular members present:**

Honorable Dr. Victor D. Treviño, Mayor and LWCAMPO Chairperson

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge

Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1 (joined the meeting at 1:31 p.m.)

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

Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII (joined the meeting at 1:59 p.m.)

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

Honorable Jed A. Brown, RMA

##### **Regular members not present:**

Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

Judge Tijerina made a motion to excuse members not present.

Second: CM. Gutierrez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

**Ex-Officio members not present:**

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

**LWCAMPO Staff present:**

Juan S. Mendive, LWCAMPO Interim Director  
Graciela Briones, LWCAMPO Planner III  
Julio Niño, LWCAMPO Planner III  
Angie Quijano, LWCAMPO Administrative Assistant

**Others:**

Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering Department  
Orlando Navarro, COL Planning Department  
Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering  
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering  
Robert J. Garza, Transit, El Metro  
Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro  
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT  
Sara Garza, TxDOT  
Ana Duncan, TxDOT  
Fernando Martinez, TxDOT  
Sid Mielke, SEA

**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.

CM. Jesse Gonzalez joined the meeting at 1:31 P.M.

**IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:**

**A. Approval of the minutes for the meetings held on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **approve** the minutes of November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Second: CM. Gutierrez  
For: 6  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

**B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2023-01, adopting 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.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to open the public hearing.

Second: CM. Gutierrez  
For: 6  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Juan Mendive, Interim MPO Director, gave a presentation and an overview stating that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a federally required document which MPOs develop in cooperation with all their planning partners to program mobility and transit projects for a four-year period. On May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the MPO Policy Committee approved the Laredo MPO 2023-2026 TIP. Also, all MPO TIP documents are subsequently combined to form the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The revisions to the TIP involving major changes require a public review and comment period and formal action by the MPO Policy Committee. He further stated that the amendments presented were part of the February TIP revision.

No public comments were received during the 10-day public review and comment period for the proposed amendments.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **close** the public hearing and **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2023-01, adopting the proposed amendments to the 2023-2026 TIP.

Second:	CM. Gutierrez
For:	6
Against:	0
Abstained:	0

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Gutierrez requested to present Category 9 projects and funding at the next meeting.

**C. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2023-02, adopting 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.

Juan Mendive, Interim MPO Director stated that as per existing Public Participation Plan (PPP) a 10-day public review and comment period is required for amendments to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Projects included in the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) shall be consistent with the approved MTP. On April 19, 2021, an administrative modification to the MTP added Appendix A – Short Range Projects Identified in the MTP and Listed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to facilitate the identification of projects on both the TIP and the MTP, and to ensure consistency between both documents. The proposed revision is intended to make the necessary changes to the MTP, specifically Appendix A – Short Range Projects identified in the MTP and listed in the TIP to incorporate and reflect the proposed revisions to the 2023-2026 TIP. Project CSJ 0086-16-008 intended to provide for the construction of an interchange at Lomas Del Sur Blvd. and State Loop 20 is currently listed in the MTP, but the project information such as the project description, letting date, and funding needs to be updated to reflect the proposed changes.

No public comments were received during the 10-day public and review period for the proposed revisions.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2023-02, adopting the proposed revisions to the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Second: CM. Gutierrez  
For: 6  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

**D. Discussion with possible action to approve Resolution No. MPO 2023-03, adopting and supporting the Texas Department of Transportation’s 2023 targets for the following federal Safety Performance Measures:**

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

Mr. Mendive gave a quick overview on the item. He stated that federal regulations require that metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes incorporate performance goals, measures, and targets in the process of identifying needed transportation improvements and project selection. He also stated that MPOs shall adopt the required safety performance targets no later than 180 days after the date on which the state established the performance targets.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2023-02, adopting the proposed revisions to the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

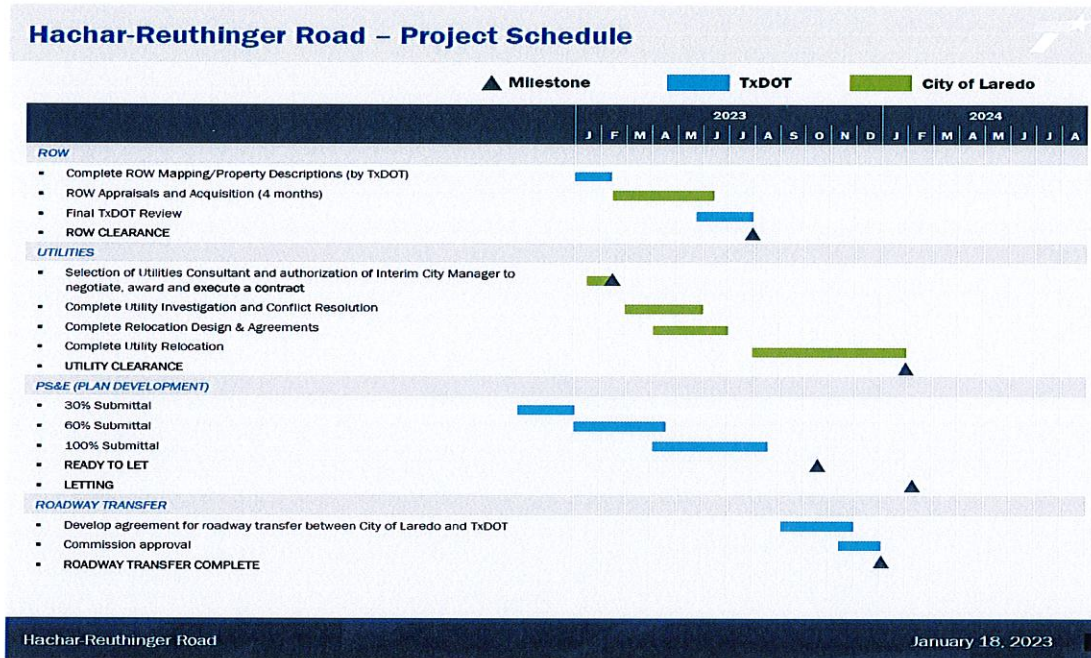
Second: CM. Gutierrez  
For: 6  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Vanessa Perez joined the meeting at 1: 59 p.m.

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

Ana Duncan, TxDOT, gave a brief presentation on the item. She provided the following updated schedule of the project:



She also explained that the main components that were impacting the project were the Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisition, the utilities, the plan development and the roadway transfer. She stated the ROW mapping was received late in December and should have it completed and submitted to the City by the beginning of February, 2023. She also said that the City estimated about four months to complete the appraisals and the acquisition of the ROW.

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

**A. Presentation and update on the World Trade Bridge Expansion project.**

Sid Mielke, Structural Engineering & Associates, gave a brief presentation and update on the item. He stated that the proposed World Trade Bridge Expansion Project was based on the following:

- The World Trade Bridge is the #1 commercial crossing on the U.S.-Mexico border
- Trade is growing rapidly
- Major infrastructure investments by the private sector
- Significant local, state, and federal investments in transportation infrastructure in the WTB area
- Reduce wait times and increase system throughout

He also mentioned that the fast lanes relocation project would have an opening by the end of January 2023. He further stated that the IH-69 widening project is already completed which was the expansion to three lanes each direction IH-69 from port of entry to IH35.

Mr. Mielke also stated there were world trade bridge area enhancement projects ongoing and under design which were the following:

- TxDOT-IH69W to IH35-Direct Connectors
- Hachar-Reuthinger & Vallecillo Rd.
- IH35 Expansion

He stated the purpose of the project was to construct a bridge slightly downstream and diagonally across from the old bridge and is proposed to be eight lanes. It is entirely dedicated to inbound or northbound traffic. The proposed lane assignments would be (existing bridge = 6 SB & 2 Fast NB) (New Bridges = 8 NB + 2 SB).

The progress on the expansion project was as followed:

- March 8, 2022: US Interagency Working Group (IWG) created
- April 29, 2022: Submitted Presidential Permit Application (PPA)
- July 2022: Expansion project inclusion in Texas STIP approved FHWA
- July 26, 2022: NEPA clearance "pre-scoping" meeting held
- August 29, 2022: Letter from USDOS to City of Laredo stating NEPA clearance must be completed prior to further PPA processing
- November 2, 2022: Draft Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) received
- December 6, 2022: City returns AFA comments to TxDOT
- January 18, 2023: Still awaiting TxDOT AFA signature

The updated timeline for expansion project was as followed:

- March 2023-June 2025-Environmental clearance process
- July 2025-Sept. 2025-Presidential permit issued
- October 2025-December 2025-Coast Guard, IBWC, and Army corps of engineers permits
- January 2026-October 2024-Construction period phased construction
- December 2027-New bridges fully open to traffic

He stated the execution of the AFA is the critical path in moving forward.



## **B. Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).**

Mr. Jed Brown, RMA, gave the following status report:

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. Concrete pouring for FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. was ongoing in late December through 1/6/23. Sidewalk and driveway construction is currently ongoing. Construction of the traffic signal and median islands are complete. Substantial construction completion is forecasted for February. **As of the week of the 2nd of January, the project is 85% complete.**
2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – The final walkthrough of the project occurred on 12/8/22. Paving of the street is 100% complete. Drainage is 100% complete. Sidewalk construction is almost complete from Isla Mujeres to Cuatro Vientos. The work for the 18-inch water line is complete. The outstanding items are the final flat work, irrigation and final striping. Anticipate the project opening to traffic in January. **Overall the project is 99% 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. The illumination poles will be complete by 01/13/23. Traffic delineators at the intersection of Los Presidentes are to be reset in the next week. Anticipate the project opening to traffic in January. **Overall the project is 99% complete.**
4. Springfield Phase III – Final walkthrough of the project occurred on 12/9/22. The roadway concrete paving has been completed. The flat work for the sidewalks and shared use path is almost complete. The water improvements area also almost complete. The major outstanding items are the completion of the drainage, lighting and traffic improvements. Substantial completion is scheduled for late January/ early February 2023. **Overall, the project is approximately 95% complete.**
5. Webb County Fair Grounds TIA – A draft of the final TIA report was submitted in mid-December. The RMA Team has completed its review and returned the comments to the consultant. The RMA has also submitted the draft Final TIA report to the TxDOT Laredo District for its review, and are awaiting receipt of comments. **The TIA report will be finalized in late January 2023.**
6. River Road Corridor Study – The WCCL RMA has completed the stakeholder meetings on the Study. The next phase of the study is ongoing 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.**
7. 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.

8. 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. Approval of the \$3M funds was included as part of the Omnibus Bill that was approved by Congress at the end of December 2022. Now that the project is funded for construction, the RMA has submitted the appropriate paperwork to TxDOT for the draft Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) and Funding Assistance Agreement (FAA) and begin design of the project. The RMA is currently awaiting receipt of the draft AFA and FAA from TxDOT. The RMA anticipates receipt of these items and commencing design in March 2023.

Other Items:

- The WC-CL RMA Board of Directors met on 12/13/22 for the December Board meeting.
- The WC-CL RMA completed its Annual Report for submittal to the Texas Transportation Commission. A copy of this report was distributed to the MPO, City of Laredo, Webb County, Congressman Cuellar, State Senator Judith Zaffirini, State Representative Tracy King and State Representative Richard Raymond.
- The WC-CL RMA Board of Directors will meet again for a January Board meeting.

CM. Perez requested an update on the River Road project at the next meeting.

Judge Tijerina requested to bring an item at the next meeting to alternate Chairperson every year or every two years.

## **VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Mr. Mendive, Interim Director provided the following comments/report:

1. Policy Committee membership update:

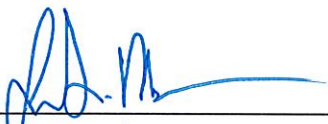
- Welcomed City of Laredo Mayor and Chairman Dr. Victor Treviño to the MPO Policy Committee.
  - Welcomed Jed A. Brown, Member At-Large to the MPO Policy Committee.
  - Thanked former Mayor Pete Saenz for his leadership as Chairman of the MPO Policy Committee and for his dedication and contribution to the MPO and community.
  - Thanked former Councilmember Dr. Marte Martinez for his leadership, dedication, and contribution to the community during his time as a member of the MPO Policy Committee.
2. The MPO Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Call for Projects closed on November 18, 2022. Two applications were received and reviewed by staff. The evaluation committee will review the applications in January and make a recommendation to the Technical and Policy Committee for project selection.
  3. MPO staff will be making a formal request to our TxDOT Field Representative to help us coordinate and schedule an MPO 101 training for Policy and Technical committee members.
  4. Upcoming regularly scheduled meetings:
    - Active Transportation Committee – January 25, 2023
    - Technical Committee – February 7, 2023
    - Policy Committee – February 15, 2023

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Judge Tijerina made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:51 p.m.


Second:	CM. Perez
For:	6
Against:	0
Abstained:	0

Motion carried unanimously




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Juan S. Mendive  
Interim LWCAMPO Director




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Dr. Victor Treviño, Mayor and LWCAMPO  
Chairperson