

Laredo-Webb County Area (LWCA)

Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee Virtual Meeting

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



MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL JUNE 15TH, 2020 MEETING

Regular members present:

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
Honorable Dr. Marte Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
David M. Salazar, Jr., TxDOT District Engineer

Regular members not present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCA Chairperson
Honorable Norma "Nelly" Vielma, City Councilmember, District V
Honorable George Altgelt, City Councilmember, District VII
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
(Member At Large- Currently Vacant)

Ex-Officio Members Not Present:

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

Staff (Of Participating LWCA Agencies) Present:

City: J. Kirby Snideman, City Planning/MPO Staff
Vanessa Guerra, City Planning/MPO Staff
Jason Hinojosa, City Planning MPO Staff
Angie Quijano, City Planning, MPO Staff
Ramon Chavez, City Engineer
Claudia San Miguel, Transit, El Metro
Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro
Danny Magee, Traffic Safety Department
Rosa Soto, Transit, El Metro

State: Humberto “Tito” Gonzalez, TxDOT
Jesus Saavedra, TxDOT
Curtis Jones, TxDOT
Akila Thamizharasan, TxDOT

Others: Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering
Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering
Kirk Fauver, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Lalo Uribe, Webb County Judge’s Office

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Judge Tano E. Tijerina called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Vanessa Guerra, MPO Division Manager, called roll and verified a quorum existed.

CM. Galo made a motion to excuse members not present.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Speakers are required to fill out witness cards, which must be submitted to MPO Staff no later than 15 minutes after the start 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 City business and delivered in a professional manner. No derogatory remarks shall be permitted.

There were no citizen’s comments.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

A. Approval of the minutes for the meeting held on May 18, 2020.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **approve** the minutes for the meetings held on May 18, 2020.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2020-06, adopting the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

CM. Galo made a motion to **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2020-06, adopting the 2021-2024 TIP.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

C. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution MPO No. 2020-07, adopting the following proposed amendment(s) of the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):

- 1. Amending Table 10-2, entitled List of TxDOT UTP 2020-2030 Programmed Projects, & Figure 10-1, entitled Map of TxDOT UTP Programmed Projects,
as necessary to incorporate the following revisions:**
 - a) *Addition* of project CSJ 0086-02-023 intended to provide for the widening of SH 359 from 2 to 4 lanes, from 8.935 miles east of SL 20 to 9.830 miles east of SL 20, with an estimated total project cost of \$7,367,400. The proposed letting date is FY 2023.**

CM. Galo made a motion to **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2020-07, adopting the proposed amendment(s) of the 2020-2045 MTP.

Second: Dr. Martinez
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

D. Receive public testimony and initiate a twenty-day public review and comment period for the draft 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Judge Tijerina made a motion to open a public hearing.

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

Motion carried unanimously

Kirby Snideman, MPO Director, gave a brief presentation on the proposed item.

CM. Galo asked if any funding from the UPWP could be used for environmental on any other studies that are moving forward.

Mr. Snideman stated the funds are only to be used for Long-Range and Short-Range Planning as part of the function of the MPO.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to initiate a twenty-day public review and comment period for the draft 2021 UPWP.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

E. Receive public testimony and approved Resolution No. MPO 2020-08, supporting the following proposed amendments to the National Highway System (NHS):

- 1. The addition of the following roadways to the National Highway System:**
 - SL 20/Cuatro Vientos Rd from SH 359 to Mangana Hein Rd
 - Mangana Hein Rd from SL 20/Cuatro Vientos Rd to US 83
 - BUS 59Z/Saunders St from SL 20 to I-35

- 2. The removal of following roadways from the National Highway System:**
 - Clark Blvd. and Spur 400 from SL 20 to I-35
 - Arkansas Ave. from US 83 to BUS 59Z/Saunders St
 - Meadow Ave. from US 83 to BUS 59Z/Saunders St.

- 3. The modification of the Intermodal Connector for the Port of Laredo UPRR Yard as follows:**

- **Remove Intermodal Connector designation from the I-35 northbound frontage road from Del Mar Blvd to Uniroyal Dr.**
- **Add Intermodal Connector designation to Uniroyal Dr and Carriers Dr from I-35 to Port Dr and Port Dr from Uniroyal Dr to the entrance of the Port of Laredo UPRR Terminal to reflect current connectivity.**

Mr. Snideman stated the item was to approve the resolution subject to the amendments that were discussed and approved at last month's MPO meeting.

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

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

Motion carried unanimously

Dr. Martinez stated that he still had some concerns regarding the removal of the I-35 northbound frontage road from Del Mar Blvd to Uniroyal Dr.

He asked how would road standards be affected by the removal of said frontage road.

Mr. Snideman stated the roadway would still fall under TxDOT jurisdiction, therefore the City does not control the standards on the frontage roads.

Mr. Snideman assured the committee that the proposed changes would not affect funding eligibility for those roadways removed from the NHS network.

David Salazar, TxDOT District Engineer, stated that the frontage road was still designated as a portion of interstate 35. Funding would not be an issue for the frontage road.

Curtis Jones, TxDOT, stated the road would still be maintained by TxDOT. He stated the removal of the frontage road was proposed as the road did not meet the characteristics of roads included in the NHS network.

Dr. Martinez asked if that meant that the removal of the frontage road would not change the ability to apply for National Highway monies at said intersection.

Curtis Jones, from TxDOT, replied affirmatively to Dr. Martinez's comment.

CM. Galo made a motion to **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2020-08, supporting the following proposed amendments to the National Highway System (NHS).

Second: Judge Tijerina

For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

F. Motion to approve and authorize the execution of Contract Amendment #2 with CDM Smith for the 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update and FAST Act Compliance Project in order to amend the scope of services to include 10 hours of Travel Demand Model training, for MPO Staff, and increase the fee by \$7,500 from \$364,390.50 to \$371,890.50.

CM. Galo made a motion to approve and authorize the execution of Contract Amendment #2 with CDM Smith for the 2020-2045 MTP Update and FAST Act Compliance Project in order to amend the scope of services to include 10 hours of Travel Demand Model training, for MPO Staff, and increase the fee by \$7,500 from \$364,390.50 to \$371,890.50.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

G. Discussion with possible action on Hachar-Reuthinger.

Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering, stated the County has received the 100% schematic from the consultant. He also stated that the final environmental assessment draft has been received and would be submitted to TxDOT for review.

CM. Galo asked what were the next steps.

Mr. Cuellar stated once the environmental assessment draft was submitted to TxDOT and TxDOT was okay with it, TxDOT would prepare the environmental assessment document for distribution. It would be sent to Austin for review.

Mr. Cuellar also stated that the process would take a couple of months. Once the document was approved, then the County would get ready to receive the funding of with No Significant Impact (FONSI). That would complete the environmental process.

Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, TxDOT, stated TxDOT was working with the City of Laredo to put together the documents that are required to procure the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) packet and therefore progress towards the design phase of the project. He stated August 2022 was the letting date to go to construction.

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

A. Report by TxDOT on the status of on-going projects.

Jesus Saavedra, TxDOT Area Engineer, gave a brief presentation on the item which is summarized as follows:

- US 83 From Dimmit County Line to 3.4 MI S of SH 44:
 - Anderson Columbia Co. Investments \$ 49.0 Mill
 - Work is 20% Completed/Anticipated Completion Date: December 2022

- US 83 From 3.4 MI S of SH 44 to IH 35 Intersection:
 - Anderson Columbia Co. Investments \$ 68.5 Mill
 - Work is 3% Completed/Anticipated Completion Date: December 2024

- FM 3338 From FM 1472 to SH 255:
 - Anderson Columbia Co Investments \$ 23.5 Mill
 - Work is 15% Completed. Anticipated Completion Date: September 2022

- FM 1472 From 9.8 MI N of SH 255 to 14.5 MI N of SH 255:
 - Anderson Columbia Co. Investments \$ 3.1 Mill
 - Work to Start Late June 2020. Anticipated Completion Date: June 2021

- IH 35/ Railroad Grade Separation / Direct Connector 5 / Direct Connector 8:
 - Not Awarded Investments \$ 115.0 Mill
 - Work to Start Fall 2020. Completion Date: Summer 2024

- US 59 From BI59/ SL20 to East Corridor Dr:
 - Not Awarded. Investment \$ 688,000
 - Work to Start Fall 2020. Completion Date: Summer 2021

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

Tony Rodriguez, HNTB Inc., gave a brief report on the status of the RMA.

He stated that the Killam Industrial Turning Lane project is programmed to let in August. He also stated that TxDOT Division was reviewing the plans in conjunction with the Laredo District Project I-69 west 1472. The Los Presidentes project plans are 95% percent complete and scheduled for submittal to the RMA and the City of Laredo this month.

CM. Galo inquired if there was a possibility to use funds from the UPWP to do a traffic study on the Webb County Fair Grounds.

Judge Tijerina stated the County wanted an entrance to get in safely.

CM. Galo suggested the Webb County Fair Grounds could be improved by relocating the entrance and building and additional point of ingress and egress.

Dr. Martinez suggested the possibility of a Traffic Safety Study in that area.

Danny Magee, City Traffic Safety Director, stated the discussion would have to be with TxDOT.

Dr. Martinez suggested to MPO Staff to coordinate a meeting with TxDOT.

Mr. Snideman stated he would schedule a meeting with Dr. Martinez, TxDOT, the RMA and the City of Laredo.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 2:23 p.m.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

J. Kirby Snideman,
MPO Director

Pete Saenz, Mayor and LUTS
Chairperson