

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 JULY 20TH, 2020 MEETING

Regular members present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, City of Laredo Mayor and LWCAMPO Chairperson
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
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 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/LWCAMPO Staff
Vanessa Guerra, City Planning/LWCAMPO Staff
Jason Hinojosa, City Planning/LWCAMPO Staff
Juan Mendive, City Planning/LWCAMPO Staff
Graciela Sosa-Briones, City Planning/LWCAMPO Staff
Angie Quijano, City Planning/LWCAMPO Staff
Ramon Chavez, City Engineering
Claudia San Miguel, Transit, El Metro
Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro
Danny Magee, Traffic Safety Department

State: Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, TxDOT
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT

Others: Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering
Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering
Antonio "Tony" Rodriguez, HNTB, Inc.

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Pete Saenz called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

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

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.

Kirby Snideman asked staff to verify if the Public Access Channel (PAC) was broadcasting for public comments.

There were no citizen's comments.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

A. Approval of the minutes for the virtual meeting held on June 15th, 2020.

Dr. Marte Martinez announced he was in attendance.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **approve** the minutes for the meeting held on June 15th, 2020.

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

Motion carried unanimously

B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2020-09, adopting the 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Vanessa Guerra confirmed the meeting was being broadcasted.

Kirby Snideman stated a public comment period had been initiated at the last Policy Committee meeting.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to approve Resolution No. MPO 2020-09, adopting the 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

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

Motion carried unanimously

C. Discussion with possible action on the repair of IH 35 Del Mar Access Road and underpass surface. (CM. Altgelt).

Judge Tijerina inquired on the reason for this item on the agenda.

Kirby Snideman responded that this item had been requested by CM. Altgelt and, currently any member who would like to add an item to the agenda may do so provided approval from the Chairperson of the Committee.

Judge Tijerina stated this type of items in particular may be easily addressed by contacting the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) directly.

David Salazar from TxDOT agreed with Judge Tijerina's comments.

Mayor Saenz recommended this item be tabled as CM. Altgelt was not in attendance.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to table this item for next meeting.

Second: Mayor Saenz
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Dr. Martinez stated that he agreed with the fact that any member is able to request the addition of a specific item to the agenda and, the Mayor or Chairperson has authority to contact the individual member to discuss it ahead of time.

Dr. Martinez mentioned that while sometimes phone calls are made in trying to resolve certain issues, having a public discussion is important.

Dr. Martinez further commented that even though our MPO Policy Committee is geared towards the planning aspect of transportation projects, it is important to follow up on the status of repairs or maintenance of current infrastructure.

Tito Gonzalez, TxDOT Transportation Planning & Design Director, informed the Committee that TxDOT has a four-year pavement and preservation plan for the District that includes the maintenance of the area in question (from west frontage road to Shiloh), which is scheduled for February 2021. He mentioned this document is available to the public and reiterated TxDOT staff is always willing to address this type of concerns or questions via phone call or email.

D. Discussion with possible action on Hachar-Reuthinger

Guillermo Cuellar, Assistant Webb County Engineer, provided a brief update. He stated that the final environmental assessment was being reviewed in coordination with TxDOT and some minor issues were being addressed before it is sent to Austin for final review.

Mayor Saenz asked the status on the Right-of-Way title issues.

Ramon Chavez, City Engineer, stated he had received an update via e-mail from Mr. Nicholas Van Steenberg representing the Hachar Trust. They have been working on the draft agreement, as well as, finalizing various details that should be resolved in the next 30 days.

Mayor Saenz asked if this will represent a financial impact to the City or County.

Ramon Chavez stated that on July 10th, the City had received an Amended Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) from TxDOT for the Hachar-Reuthinger project. The purpose of the amendment was to incorporate additional funds allocated to the project. A resolution by City Council will be required to authorize execution of the amended AFA and provide for the local match. This will be reviewed through the City Manager's office.

Dr. Martinez requested further details on this subject.

Tito Gonzalez explained that \$21.4 million had been allocated to the project by the MPO in June 2016, but the funds had never been formally incorporated into the existing agreement with TxDOT.

Mayor Saenz asked if local match participation would be primarily the City's responsibility or the County's as well.

Tito Gonzalez stated that would be up to both entities to determine their respective participation in the required local matching funding.

Ramon Chavez stated that the funding participation was currently being discussed with the management.

Mayor Saenz asked if local match was approximately 20%.

Ramon Chavez confirmed the percentage.

Mayor Saenz suggested collaboration from the County given that both entities will be benefiting from this project.

Ramon Chavez stated the City would reach out to County staff for alternatives.

Dr. Martinez asked if the City had already begun looking for a design team considering the environmental assessment is almost done.

Ramon Chavez stated the City had already received comments from TxDOT on its draft Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

Dr. Martinez expressed his desire to move forward with this project as soon as possible. He asked how long would the process take to be completed.

Mr. Cuellar anticipated the environmental assessment completion and funds availability by December 2020.

Mayor Saenz asked if construction would follow afterwards.

Guillermo Cuellar confirmed.

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

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

Kirby Snideman mentioned the updated report received from the RMA was included as part of the packet.

Tony Rodriguez, HNTB Inc., gave a brief report on the status of the projects led by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA). He mentioned there was a Board virtual meeting scheduled for Thursday, July 23rd at 10:00 am. The project priorities for upcoming years would be discussed during this meeting.

Regarding the Killam Industrial Boulevard Turning Lane project, the Plans, Specification and Estimates (PS&E) were at 100% completion, Right-of-Way had been approved by Planning & Zoning and was on track for completion by end of July, 2020. Utilities were on track for clearance by August, 2020, and water availability completion was anticipated by late July. RMA continues coordination with TxDOT for the letting of the project programmed for November.

The Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Concord Hills) project was being developed in coordination with the City of Laredo and Webb County Drainage District (WCDD). The 95% plans had been received, reviewed and submitted to City of Laredo for fall letting of this project. Construction is anticipated to start late 2020 or early 2021.

In regards to the Vallecillo Road project, the geotechnical bore holes were scheduled for the end of July. Work continues on the traffic study component and refining the final pavement design for this project.

Mayor Saenz asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting if there were no additional questions or further business to be discussed.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

CM. Galo made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 1:58 p.m.

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

Motion carried unanimously

J. Kirby Snideman
MPO Director

Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO
Chairperson