

Laredo Urban Transportation Study

**Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee
City of Laredo Council Chambers
1110 Houston St. -Laredo, Texas**



MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2017 MEETING

Regular members present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LUTS Chairperson
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
Honorable Charlie San Miguel, City Councilmember, District VI (joined the meeting at 1:37 p.m.)
Honorable George Altgelt, City Councilmember, District VII
Melisa Montemayor, TxDOT District Administrator

Regular members not present:

Honorable Roberto Balli, City Councilmember, District VIII
Honorable Jaime Canales, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 4
Pete Alvarez, TxDOT District Engineer

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 LUTS Agencies) Present:

City: Nathan R. Bratton, City Planning/LUTS Staff
Vanessa Guerra, City Planning/LUTS Staff
Angie Quijano, City Planning/LUTS Staff
Roberto Murillo, City Traffic Safety Department

State: Sara Garza, TxDOT
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Alberto Ramirez, TxDOT
Ana Duncan, TxDOT
Alberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Mike Graham, TxDOT
Danny Magee, TxDOT
Jorge Rodriguez, TxDOT

County: Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering
Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering
Jose Luis Rodriguez, Webb County

Others: Ruben Soto, Regional Mobility Authority, (RMA)
Antonio Rodriguez, HNTB, Inc.
Enrique Valdez, LNV

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Pete Saenz, LUTS Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Vanessa Guerra, MPO Staff, called roll and verified that a quorum existed.

C.M. Galo made a motion to **excuse** members not present.

Second: C.M. Altgelt
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Judge Tijerina informed the members present that Cm. Jaime Canales had been replaced with Cm. Jesse Gonzalez.

C.M. San Miguel joined the meeting at 1:37 p.m.

III. CITIZEN COMMENT

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 comment in 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.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION

A. Approval of the minutes for the meeting held on July 17, 2017 and August 21, 2017.

C.M. Altgelt made a motion to **approve** the minutes of July 17, 2017 and August 21, 2017.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 6
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

B. Receive public testimony, initiate an additional 10 day public review and comment period and approve Resolution No. MPO 2017-08 adopting the following proposed amendment(s) of the 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), conditional to receipt of no significant comment:

- 1. Amending Table 12-10, entitled Roadway and Bicycle/Pedestrian Project Summary, Figure 12-1, entitled Roadway and Bicycle/Pedestrian Projects, Table 12-11, entitled Roadway Projects, Figure 13-1, entitled Natural Resources and Federally Funded Projects, Figure 13-2, entitled Cultural Resources and Federally Funded Projects, Figure 13-3, entitled Low Income Areas and Federally Funded Projects, Table 13-1, entitled Federally Funded Projects Environmental Assessment Results, Table 13-3, entitled Federally Funded Projects and Environmental Justice Populations; and, Figure 13-4 entitled Colonias and Federally Funded Projects as necessary to incorporate the following revisions:**
 - a) ***Adding* project CSJ 0086-14-076 for the construction of the Shiloh Road Overpass on US 59, with an estimated construction cost is \$18,539,712. Estimated letting date FY 2023.**
 - b) ***Adding* project CSJ 0086-14-079 for the construction of the University Overpass on U.S. 59, with an estimated project construction cost of \$14,648,370. Estimated letting date is FY 2022.**
 - c) ***Adding* of project CSJ 0086-14-075 for the construction of the Del Mar Overpass on U.S. 59, with an estimated construction cost of \$20,496,476. Estimated letting date is FY 2021.**
 - d) ***Adding* Vallecillo Road project, identified as project X-10, intended to develop schematic and environmental for a 5 lane roadway, from FM 1472 to IH35. Engineering by RMA's general engineering consultant is \$300,000 and is in progress.**

- e) **Revising project CSJ 0086-14-077 for the construction of the Airport Overpass on US 59 at the International Airport , with an estimated project construction cost of \$14,785,990, by changing estimated letting date from fiscal year (FY) 2018 to FY 2024.**
- f) **Revising project CSJ 0086-14-078 for the construction of the Jacaman Road Overpass on US 59, with an estimated project construction cost of \$19,691,424, by changing letting date from fiscal year(FY) 2020 to FY 2021.**
- g) **Revising project #4/CSJ 0086-14-058/CSJ 0086-14-072 for the upgrade to interstate standards, including overpasses at Shiloh, University and Del Mar by removing identifier CSJ 0086-14-058, revising scope to remove the three overpasses and revising funding accordingly. The overpass projects at Shiloh, University and Del Mar will be identified independently as indicated above. Project CSJ 0086-14-058 for the preliminary schematic, environmental, ROW surveying/mapping and PS&E for Loop 20 from east of International Blvd. to US 59/Loop 20 is listed independently and has already let.**

C.M. Altgelt made a motion to **open** a public hearing.

Second: Judge Tijerina
 For: 6
 Against: 0
 Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

C.M. Altgelt inquired on the HOV lanes for Mines Road.

C.M. Altgelt made a motion to **bring up** item #C-1.

Second: Judge Tijerina
 For: 6
 Against: 0
 Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

C. Discussion with possible action to include High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) lanes for FM 1472 (Mines Road).

1. Report by TxDOT on steps necessary to convert FM 1472 to a freeway.

Danny Magee, TxDOT, gave a brief presentation on the item.

He stated HOV lanes were designed to improve efficiency on freeways and highways. He stated in his opinion, HOV lanes on FM 1472 would not work due to the existing congestion. He stated current traffic levels required free flowing movement.

C.M. Altgelt inquired as to possible alternate routes to alleviate congestion in the Mines Road area.

Melisa Montemayor, TxDOT, stated the Mines Road study performed by the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) included long term corridor improvement strategies among which listed recommendations for several alternate routes to Mines Road.

Danny Magee, TxDOT, stated TTI's study included short term, mid-range, and long term improvement recommendations. He stated TxDOT had already begun working on implementing the mid-range recommendations. Mr. Magee also mentioned that the congestion at the intersection of Killam Industrial Boulevard and Mines Road could be alleviated by providing right turn lanes as well as dual left turns. However, these improvements could not be implemented without the City improving Killam Industrial Boulevard to accommodate the dual left turn movements.

Alberto Ramirez, TxDOT, stated that on intersect City streets, engineering work was needed to determine the length of storage, and/or the amount additional R.O.W. needed for said improvements.

C.M. Altgelt stated landowners from El Pico Road to Cantu Road alongside the river were willing to donate Right-of-Way towards the creation of a new road.

C.M. San Miguel stepped out of the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

C.M. Montemayor stated a study would need to be performed to ascertain the feasibility of a River Road from El Pico/Cantu Road.

Second: C.M. Altgelt

C.M. Montemayor amended her motion to use the MPO monies to study the River Road or any other off system road as an alternative route to FM 1472.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

C.M. San Miguel stepped back into the meeting at 2:18 p.m.

Judge Tijerina asked whether the RMA might be interested in completing the proposed River Road/ Mines Road alternate route study.

Antonio Rodriguez, HNTB, Inc. stated the RMA would require the financial assistance of the MPO, City, and County if the RMA were to perform the study.

Mayor Saenz requested the RMA return to the next MPO meeting with a proposed approach for conducting the study.

Mr. Bratton reminded the Committee that the City had allocated approximately 400,000-500,000 to develop a Port Master Plan Project. Mr. Bratton further recommended the RMA wait till the City develops the scope for that project in order to reduce the possibility of redundant efforts.

C.M. Tijerina made a motion to **close** the public hearing, initiate an additional 10 day comment period and **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2017-08 adopting the proposed amendments to the MTP, subject to receipt of no significant comment during the additional 10 day comment period.

Second: C.M. Altgelt
For: 6
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

D. Discussion with possible action to restripe and/or add Right-of-Way for a bicycle lane on FM 1472 (Mines Road).

1. Report by TxDOT on the projected timeframe for conducting surveying efforts associated with the proposed bike lane and presentation of draft survey instrument.

Danny Magee, TxDOT, gave a brief presentation on the item. He presented the following information:

The 2012 AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, identifies three types of bikeways that are potentially suitable.

1. Shared lanes (wide outside lanes)
2. Bike lanes (Re-stripe)
3. Shared use path: adjacent to roadways (sidepath)

TxDOT would continue to evaluate Mines Road for possible implementation of a bike route.

Judge Tijerina inquired as to the status of Las Tiendas Road.

C.M. Montemayor stated TxDOT continued to work on finalizing the pavement design for FM 3338, which was proposed to let in 2019. The project would widen the roadway to two - 12 foot lanes, with 10 foot shoulders, and a four foot center buffer. The project will be designed such that the pavement can accommodate commercial vehicles/trucks.

Judge Tijerina stated a bike lane would be needed on said road.

C.M. Altgelt requested a status report from TxDOT at the next MPO meeting on the possibility of implementing a bike lane on FM 3338.

C.M. Algelt also requested TxDOT return to the Committee at the next Policy Committee meeting with a "wish list"/list of recommendations for necessary improvements on the part of the City to improve Mines Road area.

Judge Tijerina left the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

C.M. Altgelt asked what analysis would be needed to determine the ideal route for a bike lane on Mines Road.

C.M. Montemayor stated TTI was already working on a study to identify areas of highest bicycle ridership. She further stated town hall meeting to gain public comment would be held at the end of the year, possibly in December. She stated she would need C.M. Altgelt's help in getting participation at the town hall meetings.

C.M. Altgelt made a motion to **bring up** item #V-B.

Second: C.M. Galo
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

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

B. Status report by City of Laredo, Traffic Safety Department on the signal light synchronization on Mines Road.

Roberto Murillo, Traffic Safety Department, gave a brief presentation on the item. He stated the revised RFQ would be sent to TxDOT for review and possible solicitation of RFQ's by October 1st, 2017. He also stated the contract may be awarded by December 4th, 2017.

C.M. Altgelt made a motion to **bring up** item #I-A of the addendum agenda.

Second: C.M. Galo
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

I. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION

A. Discussion with possible action on available road projects to submit under Tiger Grants, including but not limited to Delmar-Loop 20 overpass.

Ruben Soto, Chairman, Regional Mobility Authority (RMA), stated the RMA was in the process of developing a Tiger Grant application to request funding for the Delmar/Loop 20 Overpass project. He stated the RMA would prepare the application and recommended the City take the lead and co-sponsor the application with the County and the MPO.

C.M. Galo expressed his concerns regarding the possibility of funds being awarded but construction unable to commence due to R.O.W issues.

Alberto Ramirez, TxDOT, stated the Del Mar proposed project would not suffer from the same type of R.O.W. issues present in the Jacaman and Airport projects.

C.M. Galo made a motion to have the RMA prepare the Tiger Grant application and the City, County, and MPO co-sponsor the application.

Second: C.M. Altgelt
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

(None of the remaining items were discussed, due to time constraints, and would be placed on the next Policy Committee agenda.)

C. Discussion with possible action to place digital signage on FM 1472 (Mines Road) intended to notify the driving public of congestion.

1. Report by TxDOT on possible sign locations, cost estimates, and funding sources for digital signage on Mines Road.

D. Discussion with possible action on the \$2.4 million, Proposition 1, Category 2 funds allocated to project CSJ 0086-14-077, intended to provide for construction

of an interchange at the international airport, with an estimated construction cost of \$14,785,990. Latest estimated letting date is fiscal year (FY) 2024.

E. Discussion with possible action on Hachar Road.

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

A. Presentation by TxDOT on the IH 35 Corridor Projects from mile marker 6 to mile marker 30.

C. Presentation by Webb County intended to visually demonstrate the layout of the Airport overpass designed so as to avoid encroachment on the Armory or the Airport's property.

D. TxDOT report on the status of ongoing construction projects.

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

F. Letting date for Flecha Lane/Las Cruces realignment project CSJ 0922-33-076 is proposed to be moved from September 2017 (FY 2018) to August 2018 (FY 2018).

VI. ADJOURNMENT

C.M. Altgelt made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 2:56 p.m.

Second: C.M. San Miguel
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Nathan R. Bratton,
MPO Director

Pete Saenz, Mayor and
LUTS Chairperson