

Laredo Urban Transportation Study

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



MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 19, 2016 MEETING

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Pete Saenz called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Nathan R. Bratton, MPO Director, called roll and verified that a quorum did exist.

Regular members present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LUTS Chairperson
Honorable George Altgelt, City Councilmember, District VII
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
Honorable Charlie San Miguel, City Councilmember, District VI
Honorable Roberto Balli, City Councilmember, District VIII
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
Pete Alvarez, TxDOT

Regular members absent:

Honorable Jaime Canales, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
Melisa Montemayor, TxDOT

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42

Ex-Officio Members Not Present:

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

Yvette Limon, City of Laredo Bridge Department
Jesus Olivares, City Manager
Clarissa Rangel, City Manager's Office

State: Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Albert Ramirez, TxDOT
Ana Duncan, TxDOT
Sara Garza, TxDOT

County: Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering

Others: Antonio Rodriguez, Howard, Needles, Tammen, & Bergendoff
(HNTB, Inc.)
Ruben Soto, Regional Mobility Authority (RMA)
Mike Graham, TxDOT
Anthony Garza, Dannenbaum Engineering
David Plutowki, TxDOT

III. COMMITTEE AND DIRECTORS REPORTS

There was nothing to report from either the Committee or the Director.

IV. 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.

V. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION

A. Approval of the minutes for the meeting held on August 15, 2016.

Cm. Galo made a motion to **approve** the minutes for the meeting held on August 15, 2016.

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

Motion carried unanimously

B. Receive public testimony and initiate a 10 day public review and comment period on the proposed revision(s) of the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

- 1. Addition of project CSJ (pending) for the development of the Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) for the construction of the Jacaman Road and Airport overpasses, from US 59 to Jacaman Road, to be funded with \$4,641,030 in Coordinated Border Infrastructure Funds (CBI). Letting date is December 2016 (FY 2017).**
- 2. Addition of a grouped project CSJ (pending) for the acquisition of Right-of-Way on Loop 20, from US 59 to the Airport Overpass, to be funded with \$4,806,663 in CBI funds. Letting date is FY 2017.**
- 3. Addition of grouped project CSJ 0086-14-077 to fund the construction of the Airport Overpass. The estimated project construction cost is \$14,785,990 and will be funded with \$2,430,000 in 2017 Proposition 1 funds and \$12,355,991 in Proposition 1 & 7. Letting date is September 2017 (FY 2018).**
- 4. Addition of project CSJ 0086-14-078 for the construction of the Jacaman Overpass. The estimated project construction cost is \$19,691,424 and will be funded with \$19,691,424 in 2020 in Proposition 1 & 7 Planning funds as listed in the planning targets table released by TxDOT as part of the latest UTP update. Letting date is September 2019 (FY 2020).**
- 5. Revision of project CSJ 0086-14-065 intended to construct an interchange facility over IH 35, from 0.330 miles west of IH 35 to 0.160 miles west of McPherson Road, with an estimated project cost of \$39.1 million dollars. \$1.0 million has been moved to CSJ 0086-14-081 to fund the addition of ITS to the project as requested by the TxDOT, Laredo District. Letting date is fiscal year (FY) 2017. Purpose of the revision is to reduce funding amounts per the latest construction estimate from \$38.1 million, to \$25,564,945, a reduction of \$12,535,055. Any cost overrun where the estimated federal cost exceeds 50% and results in a revised total cost exceeding \$1,499,999 will require a TIP revision.**
- 6. Revision of project CSJ 0922-33-076 intended to realign Flecha Lane and Las Cruces along FM 1472. Purpose of revision is to move letting date from FY 2017 to FY 2018.**

Cm. Galo made a motion to **open** a public hearing for items B-1 thru 6.

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Mr. Bratton stated all six items reflected the Policy Committee's action of the MPO meeting held on July 18th, 2016.

Mr. George Altgelt asked if the six proposed TIP revisions adequately addressed the needs of both Loop 20 and Mines Road.

Mr. Bratton stated the proposed TIP revisions reflected an investment in Loop 20 improvements, which would need to be compared to the funds already allocated to the various programmed improvements of Mines Road and its tributaries.

Mr. Pete Alvarez, District Engineer, stated both Loop 20 and FM 1472 have relative amount of needs.

Cm. Altgelt inquired as to the reasons the Flecha Lane/Las Cruces projects had been delayed.

Mr. Bratton stated various components of the project had evolved over time and that there were issues with Right-of-Way acquisition, such that certain properties were unable to be acquired other than thru condemnation.

Mr. Albert Ramirez, TxDOT, stated TxDOT was in the process of executing a contract to upgrade the overpass at mile maker 13.

Cm. John Galo requested an agenda item be placed on the next MPO meeting agenda, wherein TxDOT would report on cost estimates for all Mines Road projects both currently programmed and considered for future implementation.

Pete Alvarez, TxDOT, stated the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) study identified the Vallecillo Road Project as a potential relief route for FM 1472.

Cm. Algelt made a motion to revise item B-1 to read "addition of a project for the development of the Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) for the expansion of Phase 1, 2, and 3 of the Mines Road Study."

Second: Cm. San Miguel

Mr. Bratton clarified that project listing in the proposed TIP revision agenda item was not a prioritized list. He stated the proposed revisions reflected the Policy Committee's action of July 18th, 2016, in which Coordinated Border Infrastructure (CBI) monies were committed to said items.

Representative Raymond asked what funding commitments have been made to the Vallecillo and Hachar Road Projects.

Mr. Bratton stated the City of Laredo and the MPO have committed funds to the design and construction of Hachar as an overweight corridor. He stated the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) was working on the development of the environmental document for the Vallecillo Road project.

Anthony Garza, Dannenbaum Engineering, stated TTI performed a study on Mines Road that included short, mid-range, and long term improvement recommendations. Several of the short term recommendations have already been funded.

Cm. Altgelt withdrew his motion.

Cm. Galo inquired whether there were any utility issues that would delay the start of construction of the interchange facility over IH 35.

Pete Alvarez, TxDOT, stated letting for that project is scheduled for January 2017 which does include the adjustment of a number of utilities.

Albert Ramirez, TxDOT, stated the utility issues are not anticipated to cause a delay to the start of construction. He stated the intent is to let the project as scheduled.

Mayor Pete Saenz inquired on the status of ROW acquisition on Loop 20 from US 59 to the Airport Overpass Project.

Mike Graham, TxDOT, stated that in general the principal issues delaying the completion of the environmental clearance of the project was the revision of the schematic to adequately address the County's 6F issue which involves the County's acceptance of conservation funds to improve the golf course and State Park. Said 6F issue must to be addressed by the County before clearance can be attained. Conservative estimates for environmental clearance attainment are projected for summer of 2017, conditional to the County's timely resolution of the 6F issue identified above.

Albert Ramirez stated that without the environmental clearance, the project could not proceed.

Anthony Garza, Dannenbaum Engineering, stated the 6F issue would add 2-3 more months to the existing project timeline. The current approximate letting date would be May, 2018.

Cm. Galo asked if the 6F issue needed action from Commissioners Court.

Mr. Garza stated the item was currently being reviewed by TxDOT Staff and would return to Commissioners Court for further review.

Cm. Galo made a motion to **close** the public hearing and **initiate** a 10 day public review and comment period for the proposed 2017-2020 TIP revisions.

Second: Cm. Balli
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

Representative Raymond asked for clarification on agenda item V-B.

Anthony Garza, Dannenbaum Engineering, stated that originally 39 million had been programmed to the Loop 20 over IH 35 overpass project. As the construction plans were finalized, the construction cost estimate, with the additions by TxDOT was reduced to 26 million dollars. The 12 million dollars proposed for removal from that project represents the balance between the previous estimate and new estimate. Said funds have been distributed to other Loop 20 projects for planning, Right-of-Way acquisition and other project development activities.

C. Receive public testimony and initiate a 10 day public review and comment period for the proposed revision(s) of the 2015-2040 Laredo Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), which are as follows:

- 1. Amending Table 12-10, entitled Roadway and Bicycle/Pedestrian Project Summary and Table 12-11, 12-12, 12-15, and 12-17, entitled Category 2, 7, 10 and 12 Roadway Projects, to reflect the following revisions:**
 - a. Revision of project CSJ 0086-14-065 intended to construct an interchange facility over IH 35, from 0.330 miles west of IH 35 to 0.160 miles west of McPherson Road, with an estimated project cost of \$39.1 million dollars. \$1.0 million has been moved to a separate CSJ to fund the addition of ITS to the project as request by the TxDOT Laredo District. Letting date is fiscal year (FY) 2017. Purpose of the revision is to reduce funding amounts per the latest construction estimate from \$38.1 million, to \$25,564,945, a reduction of \$12,535,055. TxDOT Laredo District will return to the Policy Committee for action if an overrun occurs during bidding.**

Cm. Balli made a motion to **open** a public hearing.

Second: Cm. Balli
For: 7

Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

There was no public comment.

Cm. Galo made a motion **close** the public hearing and initiate a 10 day comment period for the proposed 2015-2040 MTP revision.

Second: Cm. Balli
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

D. Presentation, discussion and possible action regarding the expansion of the World Trade Bridge, including but not limited to additional exit booths, weigh-in-motion, and FASTLANE and potential improvements to I69W including additional highway lanes and direct connects (fly-overs) at I35 and I69W.

Jesus Olivares, City Manager, gave a brief presentation on the proposed expansion of the World Trade Bridge.

Cm. San Miguel left the meeting at 1:38 p.m.

E. Discussion with possible action on Hachar Road.

Anthony Garza, Dannenbaum Engineering, stated Staff is working closely with TxDOT to develop and execute the Advance Funding Agreement (AFA).

Albert Ramirez, TxDOT, stated the AFA should be ready in the next three weeks.

F. Discussion with possible action on Mines Road.

Albert Ramirez, TxDOT, stated the project is intended to provide an additional north bound lane from Killam to Muller Memorial Dr. would begin construction in January of 2017. He also stated TxDOT was working with Mr. Roberto Murillo from City Traffic Safety Department on the Signal Light Synchronization Project. He stated the AFA would be ready very soon.

Cm. Balli left the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

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

A. TxDOT report on the percentage of local versus TxDOT funds for projects over the last 5 years.

Alberto Ramirez, TxDOT, submitted a table to the MPO Policy Committee on said item.

Pete Alvarez, TxDOT, stated in 2013 TxDOT contributed 25 percent funding of the total cost for design/build projects, in 2014, 16 percent, and in 2015, 21 percent.

Representative Raymond requested to have percentage total costs for design/build projects in writing.

Albert Ramirez, TxDOT, stated a presentation would be given at the next MPO Policy meeting regarding the recommendations TTI gave on Phase 3 on Mines Road. He also stated TxDOT has been meeting with City Traffic Department on the Light Synchronization Project. He stated Traffic was in the procurement process and ready to move forward. TxDOT would be meeting with Traffic Department soon.

Mr. Ramirez also stated TxDOT would provide a status report on the incorporation of bridge expansion data into the Mines Road Corridor Study.

Cm. Algelt requested TxDOT include the TTI recommendations on the Mines Road Study in the next Laredo, TxDOT discussions for purposes of the Fast Lane Grant.

Roberto Murillo, Traffic Safety Department, stated the City had amended its Advance Funding Agreement (AFA), received funding approval from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the City Traffic Department would be meeting with TxDOT to start the procurement process.

Cm. Algelt requested a status report on the Signal Light Synchronization Project at the next MPO meeting.

B. TxDOT status report on environmental clearance of ROW acquisition on Loop 20 from US 59 to the Airport Overpass project.

Discussion was made on said item during discussions on item V-B.

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

Ruben Soto, RMA, stated the RMA was in the process of performing an environmental assessment on the Vallecillo Road and stated it was projected to be completed by next summer. He stated the RMA had to date received approximately 4 million dollars in revenue from the County. No funds had been received from TxDOT.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Cm. Altgelt made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 2:12 p.m.

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

Motion carried unanimously

Prepared by: Angie Quijano
Angie Quijano,
MPO Staff

Reviewed by: _____
Vanessa Guerra,
MPO Coordinator

Reviewed by: _____
Nathan R. Bratton,
MPO Director

Melisa Montemayor,
District Administrator

Pete Saenz,
Mayor and LUTS Chairperson