

Laredo Urban Transportation Study

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



MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 16, 2017 MEETING

Regular members present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LUTS Chairperson
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge (joined the meeting at 1:37 p.m.)
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
Honorable Charlie San Miguel, City Councilmember, District VI
Honorable George Altgelt, City Councilmember, District VII (joined the meeting at 1:47 p.m.)
Honorable Roberto Balli, City Councilmember, District VIII (joined the meeting at 1:57 p.m.)
Melisa Montemayor, TxDOT District Administrator
David M. Salazar, Jr., District Engineer

Regular members not present:

Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

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
Robert Peña, City Traffic Safety Department
Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro
Garbriel Martinez, City Engineering

State: Sara Garza, TxDOT
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Alberto Ramirez, TxDOT
Ana Duncan, TxDOT
Carlos Rodriguez, TxDOT
Mike Graham, TxDOT
Marissa Montoya, TxDOT
Luis Villarreal, TxDOT

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

Others: Ruben Soto, Regional Mobility Authority, (RMA)
Antonio Rodriguez, HNTB, Inc.
Enrique Valdez, LNV
Ricardo Ramos
Andy Gonzalez, Killam Industrial
Angel Rivera, LDF
Jorge Martinez, S & B Infrastructure
Tim Juarez, Border Trade
Miles Buillon, Half Associates

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Saenz called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

Mayor Saenz welcomed the new TxDOT District Engineer, Mr. David M. Salazar.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

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

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 September 18, 2017

C.M. San Miguel made a motion to approve the minutes of September 18, 2017.

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

Motion carried unanimously

B. Discussion and possible action to utilize \$31,632.85 originally obligated by the MPO for PS&E of the Loop 20 Extension from US 59 to the Jacaman Overpass to be used for the preliminary engineering for identifying drainage ponds along Loop 20. (CBI Funds-FY 2018 Letting).

Melisa Montemayor, TxDOT, stated said item would return to the committee for consideration at the next MPO meeting, as the funds are currently allocated to a project identification number that has been cancelled. At the next meeting, the funds would be proposed for relocation to an active project identification number.

C.M. San Miguel made a motion to **approve** the item.

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

Motion carried unanimously

Judge Tijerina joined the meeting at 1:37 p.m.

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.

Robert Rodriguez, TxDOT gave a brief presentation on the proposed Digital Message Sign (DMS) improvements in the Mines Road area. The proposed sign locations and estimated costs were as follows:

Location	Proposed Work	QTY	Material/ Installation Price
LP20 @ EB FM1472	Upgrade DMS	1	\$81,000
FM1472 @ NB LP20	Upgrade DMS	1	\$81,000
DEL MAR NB	Upgrade DMS	1	\$81,000
IH35 NB at LP20	Upgrade DMS	1	\$81,000
IH35 SB @ MM8	Upgrade DMS	1	\$81,000
IH 35 SB North of SH255	New DMS	1	\$143,450
Camino Colombia EB DMS	New DMS	1	\$143,450
EL Pico Rd SB DMS	New DMS	1	\$143,450
Study Area (Min of 2 Sensors)	Radar Sensor and Pole	2	\$149,450
Multiple Locations	Radio Communication	6	\$14,400
Total Estimate --->			\$999,200.00

Ms. Montemayor stated the estimated construction costs for the proposed signage was 1 million dollars. She stated the District receives approximately 2 million dollars for traffic control type signage projects for the entire district; therefore utilizing half of their yearly budget on one million dollar project was not currently feasible.

Ms. Montemayor stated TxDOT would consider funding half of the total estimated cost for the DMS signs, but would not be able to fund 100 % of the project.

C.M. San Miguel stated that at a previous council meeting, there had been an item to discuss signage for the Overpass on Shiloh project. He mentioned that a portion of the funds allocated to that project could be considered for DMS signs on the Mines Road area.

Ms. Montemayor agreed that possibly those funds could fill the funding gap. She also suggested the Traffic Department review its fund balances for any available funding.

Mayor Saenz suggested C.M. San Miguel meet with TxDOT and the City Traffic Department to discuss which funds may be utilized. Mayor Saenz requested that meeting occur prior to the next MPO meeting.

2. Report by TxDOT on “wish list”/recommendations from the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) Mines Road Study pertaining to proposed City of Laredo facility improvements that would improve the function of Mines Road.

Robert Peña, Traffic Safety Department, stated the City and TxDOT had previously met to discuss the Texas Transportation Institute’s (TTI) short term recommendations. He further stated the City, TxDOT, and C.M. Altgelt would meet later in the week to further discuss possible alternatives.

Mayor Saenz requested to be included in the meeting, as well as a status report given on said meeting at the next Policy Committee meeting.

C.M. Altgelt joined the meeting at 1:48 p.m.

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.

Ms. Montemayor stated the 2.4 million of Proposition 1, Category 2 funds originally allocated to project number CSJ 0086-14-077 set to lapse in FY 2018, were moved to project # CSJ 0086-14-065, for the construction of the Main Lanes over IH 35 on Loop 20, which let in July. Furthermore, 2.4 million in Coordinated Border Infrastructure (CBI) funds were moved from the 0086-14-065 to 0086-14-077 project to replace the lapsing 2.4 million in Category 2 Proposition 1 funds.

Mrs. Montemayor repeated that no funds were being lost. The funds were simply being swapped to prevent them from lapsing.

C.M. San Miguel made a motion to **approve** the transfer of the 2.4 million Proposition 1, Category 2 funds from the 0086-14-077 to 0086-14-065, and the transfer of 2.4 million in CBI funds from 0086-14-065 to 0086-14-077.

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

Motion carried unanimously

E. Discussion with possible action on Hachar Road.

Mr. Bratton stated the owners of the Hachar Trust expressed interest in assuming responsibility of the remainder of the work necessary for the development of the environmental assessment for the Hachar Project.

Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineer, stated the call for bids had been announced for the Reuthinger Project and proposals were currently being received. He stated the County Purchasing Department had developed criteria for the selection committee's use in making its determination of the firm to be selected. He stated the selection committee's recommendation is anticipated to be ready for presentation to the Commissioner's Court, possibly as soon as their next meeting.

C.M. Balli joined the meeting at 1:57 p.m.

F. Administrative change to the TIP Amendment approved October 16, 2016 meeting approving the PS&E funds for the Jacaman and Airport Overpasses. Remove Airport overpass and replace with Del Mar Overpass utilizing the existing allocated funds. (CBI funds FY 2018 Letting).

C.M. San Miguel made a motion to **approve** the removal of the Airport overpass, replacing it with the Del Mar Overpass project, and utilizing the existing allocated funds. (CBI funds FY 2018 Letting).

Second: C.M. Altgelt
For: 8
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

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

A. Status of submission of Infra Grant application.

Mr. Bratton gave a brief presentation on the item. He stated the first draft of the application had been submitted. TxDOT had received a draft of the application and Ms. Montemayor was heavily involved in the development of the application.

C.M. Altgelt requested Mr. Bratton return to the next meeting with information on the relative competitiveness of the application.

Mr. Bratton stated the application was due for submittal by November 2, 2017, by 8:00 p.m.

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

Luis Villarreal, TxDOT, gave a brief presentation on the IH 35 Corridor Projects from mile marker 6 to mile marker 30.

The IH 35 Corridor Projects were as follows:

CSJ 0018-06-136 - Highway Overpass (Union Pacific Railroad Grade Separation)
CSJ 0018-06-183 - construction of Direct Connector Interchange #5
CSJ 0018-05-900 - widening of Carriers Drive Bridge
CSJ 0018-06-910 - widening of United Avenue Overpass
CSJ 0018-06-184 - for the construction of Direct Connector Interchange #8
CSJ 0018-06-185 - for the construction of Direct Connector Interchange #3
CSJ 0018-06-186 - for the construction of Direct Connector Interchange #4
CSJ 0018-06-187 - for the construction of Direct Connector Interchange #6
CSJ 0018-05-089 - bridge replacement (schematic & PS&E)
CSJ 0018-05-988 - widening to 6 lanes/railroad grade separation/direct connectors
CSJ 0018-04-988 - widening to 6 lanes
CSJ 0018-03-988 - widening to 6 lanes

Ms. Montemayor stated TxDOT would consider using Strategy 111 funds on future Mines Road improvements.

Mr. Bratton, MPO Director, recommended that the MPO consider requesting that TxDOT utilize Strategy 111 funds to develop a schematic for Mines Road improvements, and thereby facilitate future funding thru project readiness enhancement.

Ms. Montemayor suggested a ROW, conceptual schematic, and constraints analysis study be developed for the mid/long-range Mines Road improvements recommended by the TTI study.

Mayor requested Ms. Montemayor's suggestion, recommending the development of a R.O.W., conceptual schematic, and constraints analysis for Mines Road, be placed on the next MPO Policy Committee agenda.

C.M. Altgelt requested a presentation on the proposed alignment of the Outer Loop at the next MPO Policy meeting.

C. TxDOT report on the feasibility of implementing a bike lane on FM 3338.

Although TxDOT would not build a true bike lane on FM 3338, Ms. Montemayor stated TxDOT would ensure that the FM 3338 roadway would include a rideable smooth surface on the 10-foot shoulder. Furthermore, the shoulder would be striped as a shared use facility due to the rural nature of the area.

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

Carlos Rodriguez, TxDOT, stated the Clark overpass project was approximately 98 percent complete and would be ready by December 2017. He stated the project over the railroad on Loop 20 would be completed by approximately December 2018. He stated the overpass on Loop 20 and International would be completed by early December 2017.

TxDOT continues to work on the roadway overlay projects located in north and south Laredo. Work continues on 359, from Loop 20, to about 4 miles east of Loop 20. Mr. Rodriguez stated the date for the Main Lanes over Loop 20 ground breaking ceremony had not yet been finalized.

C.M. San Miguel requested a presentation by the developers on Riverbank Road at the next MPO meeting.

C.M. Altgelt requested TxDOT give a presentation at the next meeting on the funding sources available to the proposed Riverbank Road.

Ms. Montemayor stated TxDOT could return to the committee with ideas on possible funding sources.

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

Ruben Soto, Chairman, RMA, stated City Council authorized the RMA to develop a study on a Transportation Reinvestment Zone (TRZ) from US 59 to US 83.

Mr. Soto inquired on the status of the setback ordinance.

Mr. Bratton stated he had reviewed State guidance on setbacks as well as Bryan Texas and College Station. He stated he was waiting on guidance from El Paso, Texas. He stated the Bryan and College Station ordinances were only for study purposes, not for corridor maintenance preservation.

C.M. Altgelt requested Mr. Bratton present a draft ordinance so that Council could initiate a discussion on the subject.

Mr. Bratton stated he can have it ready in two City Council meetings.

Mr. Soto recommended the City consider exchanging lane miles from San Bernardo or Clark to the Vallecillo Road project and thus make the project eligible for funding.

C.M. Altgelt expressed his desire that the RMA begin focusing its efforts on the transit needs of the City of Laredo.

Antonio Rodriguez, Howard, Needles, Tammen, & Bergendoff (HNTB, Inc.), stated the RMA had already begun reviewing the Laredo Comprehensive Plan and various areas where the RMA could assist the City with its transit needs.

C.M. Altgelt requested a presentation by the RMA on suggestions for purposes of mass transit at the next MPO Policy meeting.

The RMA's consultant reported that they had already investigated the development of a proposed regional Mines Road traffic study and estimate the cost of said study would be \$635,000.

C.M. Altgelt reminded the RMA to consider light rail when developing their scope of services.

C.M. San Miguel requested a presentation from the RMA and its consultant, on its proposed scope of services for the regional Mines Road Traffic study.

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).

Gabriel Martinez, City Engineering, stated the acquisition of R.O.W. had not yet been completed.

C.M. Altgelt requested a representative from the City of Laredo Real Estate Division be present at the next MPO meeting to report on the status of the R.O.W. acquisition.

C.M. Altgelt further requested that a representative from CEC Engineering be present at the next meeting to report on the status of specification updates, Army Corps of Engineers permitting, and request for additional funding for the Flecha/Las Cruces project.

C.M. Gonzalez left the meeting at 3:29 p.m.

G. Letting date for Calton Railroad grade separation project (CSJ 0922-33-093) is proposed to move from November 2017 (FY 2018) to August 2018 (FY 2018).

Mr. Martinez stated that the plans and specifications were being updated in order to comply with TxDOT's recently revised specification standards.

Ana Duncan, TxDOT, stated TxDOT was reviewing a proposed contract amendment to ascertain that all required federal procedures were being followed. She also stated TxDOT would require further supporting documentation from the City regarding its project negotiations process.

C.M. Altgelt requested the Calton Railroad Grade Separation item be placed on the next MPO Policy agenda as a discussion with possible action item.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

C.M. Algelt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:34 p.m.

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

Motion carried unanimously

Nathan R. Bratton,
MPO Director

Pete Saenz, Mayor and
LUTS Chairperson