



LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 15, 2023

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

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Dr. Victor D. Treviño called the meeting to order at 1:34 P.M.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Graciela Briones, MPO Staff, called roll and verified a quorum existed.

Regular members present:

Honorable Dr. Victor D. Treviño, Mayor and LWCAMPO Chairperson

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge

Honorable Ruben Gutierrez, Jr., City Councilmember, District V

Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1 (joined meeting at 2:09 P.M.)

Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII (joined meeting at 1:36 P.M.)

Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

Mr. Epigmenio "Epi" Gonzalez, P.E., TxDOT District Engineer

Mr. Jed A. Brown, RMA

Ex-Officio members not present:

Honorable Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, District 21

Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42

Honorable Tracy O. King, State Representative, District 80

LWCAMPO Staff present:

Juan S. Mendive, LWCAMPO Interim Director

Graciela Briones, LWCAMPO Planner III

Julio Niño, LWCAMPO Planner III

Others:

Sara Garza, TxDOT

Ana Duncan, TxDOT

Jesus Saavedra, TxDOT

Jose D. Vargas, TxDOT
Jason Hinojosa, TxDOT
Orlando Navarro, COL Planning
Angie Quijano, COL Planning
Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering
Jaime Garcia, COL Engineering
Luis Perez Garza, Webb County Engineering
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering
Victoria Villarreal, Webb County Planning
Lalo Uribe, Webb County, Judge's Office
Roberto J. Garza, Transit, El Metro
Eduardo Bernal, Transit, El Metro
Monica Meza, Transit, El Metro
Melissa Montemayor, HNTB, Inc.
Jose Ceballos, Fasken Development
Anthony Garza, GDJ Engineering

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Speakers are required to fill out witness cards, which must be submitted to MPO Staff no later than 1:45 P.M. the day 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 MPO 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 meetings held on January 18, 2023.

Judge, Tano Tijerina made a motion to approve the minutes of January 18, 2023.

Second: CM. John Galo
For: 6
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

B. Discussion with possible action on the selection and funding of projects submitted through the MPO Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TA) 2022 Call for Projects.

Juan Mendive, Interim MPO Director made a presentation on the applications submitted for the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside program (TA) to the committee. The two projects received were “*El Metro ADA Bus Stops and Bicycle Plazas Enhancement Project*” and “*Downtown Safe Sidewalk Improvements*”. Mr. Mendive proceeded in advising the Committee that the Technical Committee and staff have reviewed the applications received and recommended to approve the funding for both projects in the amount of \$1 million in Category 9 funds for each project. If funding was awarded, the next step would be to enter into an Advance Funding Agreement (AFA) with TxDOT and after that, they will have 3 years to get projects off the ground.

CM John Galo asked if those monies could be used for any other projects.

Mr. Mendive stated that these Category 9 funds are specifically set for transportation alternatives related and they had to go through this call for projects to award the funds.

CM. John Galo made a motion to approve both projects submitted through the MPO Transportation Alternative Set-Aside Program (TA) 2022 Call for Projects.

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

Motion carried unanimously

C. Discussion with possible action on potential future amendments to the MPO Bylaws regarding the structure and terms of the Policy Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Note: A change in the structure and terms of Policy Committee membership will require a future MPO Bylaws amendment and 10-day public comment and review period.

Juan Mendive, Interim MPO Director stated that the committee requested this item be presented in order to discuss the structure and terms of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Mr. Mendive presented some data he gathered from other MPOs across the state. He explained to the committee how each MPO worked, the method they follow and the terms they serve.

Mr. Mendive, continued by stating the item was not being presented for a Bylaws amendment at the moment, but to get direction from the committee on how they would like to proceed.

Judge Tijerina commented that he appreciated the information presented. He stated that he believed the idea of rotating the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson was good and it was a healthy business practice. He recommended it should be the Mayor and the County Judge the ones rotating, but the board members could vote however, they would like. He further stated that it should be a two-year term for each.

CM Perez asked Judge Tijerina if it would be a rotation between the Mayor and the County Judge every year one and one.

CM. Galo answered by saying it could be every year or as the Judge had suggested two years each.

Judge Tijerina, stated that it could be however they decided, but he believed that out of the four-year term it should be two years for the Mayor and the same for the County Judge. He further stated that other than rotating the chair he did not have any other concerns.

Mayor Treviño asked if there were any other comments.

CM. Perez stated how she thought it was a fair idea and not a bad change; she also asked if a motion or a vote needed to be made.

Mayor Treviño stated that before a motion was made, they needed more information on the number of projects that were for each, the City of Laredo and the Webb County, and the respective dollar amounts. He also asked Mr. Mendive if the City Charter had to be changed as well.

Mr. Mendive stated that to his understanding there was nothing in the City Charter about the Mayor being the MPO Policy Committee Chairperson. He further stated that it was not something he looked at since the MPO had its own governing body and its own set of rules.

Mayor Treviño stated that he required more information before they act on the item.

CM. Galo expressed how this was not an action item for that day.

Mr. Mendive stated that the action could be just to direct staff and do more research and to bring back a certain language for the amendment of the Bylaws. He further stated that the idea for the item was only to present and compare how other MPOs were structured. It was also intended to get direction from the Policy Committee and how they could proceed. If the Committee decided to make the change, some language could be brought back in next month's meeting for their review. Mr. Mendive also

reminded the committee that a 10-day comment period will have to be opened, and after that, the changes for the Bylaws amendments could be made.

CM. Ruben Gutierrez Jr. made a motion to bring back the item for next month's meeting, with a recommendation on the number of terms for each, the Mayor and the County Judge should serve.

Second: CM. Galo
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

D. Discussion with possible action on the ongoing restructuring of the MPO including the appointment of a permanent MPO Director, and any other matters incident thereto.

Juan Mendive, MPO Interim Director gave a quick overview on the item. He stated that since May 2021 the MPO had been undergoing a restructure, which separated the MPO from the City of Laredo Planning Department. Since then, there had been a number of changes including some to the Bylaws, where the MPO Director is currently a separate full-time position and no longer the same Director for the Planning Dept.

Judge Tano Tijerina made a motion to appoint Mr. Juan Mendive as permanent MPO Director, and to bring recommendation for salary adjustment for next meeting.

Second: CM. John Galo
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

E. Discussion with possible action on the Hachar-Reuthinger Road project.

Ana Duncan, TxDOT, gave a brief presentation on Hachar-Reuthinger road project. She asked Ramon Chavez to join her for her presentation. She stated that this was just a follow up on what had been discussed in last month's meeting. She presented an updated schedule of the project. She explained how they had completed the right-of-way map.

CM. Galo asked if the metes and bounds had been provided from TxDOT.

Ms. Duncan, confirmed that TxDOT had submitted them to the City in final draft and the signed documents were submitted on February 10th.

CM. Galo asked Mr. Chavez, City Engineer how long it would take to convey the tracks as per the meets and bounds provided.

Mr. Chavez stated that they had discussed with TxDOT to have four months to be able to acquire the properties. He further stated that they had received seven parcels, and they had already contacted the owners of all the properties.

CM. Galo questioned why they needed four more months.

Mr. Chavez stated that the four months were as of when the project was received, and it was included in the schedule presented to them, it was set within the timeline for the letting of the project.

CM. Galo expressed how he understood what Mr. Chavez was explaining, but that with every day that was saved there was potential of receiving additional funds from TxDOT.

Mr. Chavez explained they were trying for less than the estimated four months; he stated that he and the Real Estate Division were already in contact with the owners.

CM. Galo asked what the next step was in the process. He asked TX Dot for clarification.

Ms. Duncan stated that they were required to follow the Title 3 checklist for federal projects, because this project is federally funded for construction.

Mr. Chavez asked to be given the opportunity to present a full report of the process in next month's meeting. In the meantime, they would continue to work on the project and they would keep the committee updated.

Mr. Brown asked if the meets and bounds were for full right-of-way acquisition and not necessarily for option 3A, which was the reduced scope project.

Mr. Chavez stated it was for the full right-of-way.

Mr. Brown asked if the seven different property owners had agreed to donate the property or if some were expecting to be paid.

Mr. Chavez stated how one of the owners actually owns five of the properties and another owns the other two properties. He further stated that part of the parcels belongs to Hachar and the others belong to Reuthinger. He stated that he was already in contact with Mr. Gilpin who represents the Reuthinger portion.

Mr. Mendive stated the City of Laredo was asking for full funding for the project. He further stated that in the time he has been with the MPO Division he's seen the project move forward. The time line presented by TxDOT will help stay on track of the process.

No Action was taken.

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

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

Mr. Jed Brown provided the following report:

1. FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. Turn Lanes – The commencement of work at Killam Industrial Blvd. at FM 1472 occurred in early May 2022. Construction of the pavement widening components have been ongoing. Concrete pouring for FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. was ongoing in late December through 1/6/23. Construction of the traffic signal and median islands are complete. Main outstanding components are the sidewalk along Killam Industrial Blvd. and the driveway off of Killam Industrial Blvd. **Project is close to 90% complete and substantial completion is scheduled for early March.**
2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – The final walkthrough of the project occurred on 12/8/22. Paving of the street is 100% complete. Drainage is 100% complete. The work for the 18-inch water line is complete. The outstanding items are the lighting and irrigation. **Ribbon cutting of the project occurred on 2/1/23 and is now open to traffic. Overall the project is 99% complete.**
3. Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) Acceleration/Deceleration Lane Project - The project was awarded to Anderson Columbia in October 2021. Construction to commenced on the week of the 14th of March. The roadway and traffic items are all complete. The illumination poles will be complete. Traffic delineators at the intersection of Los Presidentes are in process to be reset. **The project is now open to traffic. Overall the project is 99% complete.**
4. Springfield Phase III – Final walkthrough of the project occurred on 12/9/22. The major outstanding items are the completion of the lighting and traffic improvements. Substantial completion is scheduled for late February/ March 2023. **Overall, the project is approximately 95% complete.**
5. Webb County Fair Grounds TIA – **The TIA report is complete and submitted to the County.**
6. River Road Corridor Study – The WCCL RMA has completed the stakeholder meetings on the Study. The traffic analysis, cost estimating and report development are

ongoing. Total duration of the study is 12 months. **Completion of the study is anticipated in June 2023.**

7. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant – In partnership with the MPO and the City of Laredo, the RMA developed a \$2M grant application to develop an action to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. The application was successfully submitted on September 9, 2022 which was 6 days prior to the due date of the application. On the 30th of January, the RMA was informed by US Congressman Cuellar’s Office that the grant was approved for \$1.6M. Following the notification, the Federal Highway Administration notified the RMA that the Grant Agreement process between the RMA and the Federal Government will begin in the following weeks. A formal announcement by Congressman Cuellar is scheduled for 2/21/23.
8. Vallecillo Road – In the August MPO Policy Committee meeting, funding for construction of the project was concluded. Subsequent to the dedication of \$16.5M dollars of Category 7 funds from the MPO, US Congressman Henry Cuellar has pledged \$3M of federal earmark funds. These monies are in addition to the \$16.24M dedicated to the project by the RMA, City of Laredo and the Killam Company. Congressman Cuellar had a joint press conference with the City and State officials to announce the funding of the project. Approval of the \$3M funds were included as part of the Omnibus Bill that was approved by Congress at the end of December 2022. Now that the project is funded for construction, the RMA has submitted the appropriate paperwork to TxDOT for the draft Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) and Funding Assistance Agreement (FAA) and begin design of the project. The RMA is currently awaiting receipt of the draft AFA and FAA from TxDOT.
9. Concord Hills (Wormser Road/ Lomas Del Sur to Los Presidentes) - Similar to the Los Presidentes project, the WC-CL RMA will sponsor and lead the design and construction of a new location 1.3 mile, 2-lane minor arterial roadway extension from Los Presidentes to Wormser Road/ Lomas Del Sur within a nominal ROW width of 90’ in partnership with the City of Laredo. The WC-CL RMA has committed \$1 million to the development of the project. The project will provide a parallel route to Cuatro Vientos and provide additional access to the new Laredo Sports Complex and the Municipal Water Park. The sponsorship and implementation are subject to the negotiation of an Inter Local Agreement between the City of Laredo and the WC-CL RMA.
10. Springfield Phase I, II, and IV – Similar to Springfield Phase III, the WC-CL RMA has committed up to \$1 million to the City of Laredo to assist with the funding of the construction of the next Phase of the project.

Other Items:

- The next WC-CL RMA Board of Directors meeting will be in March.

VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Juan Mendive, MPO Interim Director provided the following comments/report:

1. On February 8th, TxDOT's Transportation Planning & Programming Division held a meeting with MPOs, Districts, and Divisions to discuss Category 7 balances, utilization, and opportunities to maximize the State's August Re-distribution request. MPO staff were in attendance and will use the information and resources provided to continue effectively leveraging Category 7 funding. Staff were also informed about the new federal Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funding that will be allocated to MPOs. Additional information will be shared with the Policy Committee as more details about CRP funding becomes available.
2. The RMA, in partnership with the City of Laredo and MPO, successfully developed and submitted a grant application to the Safe Streets and Roads for All program. The RMA was awarded a grant of \$1.6M to develop a safety action plan to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. The MPO looks forward to the continued collaboration with the RMA in the development of the safety action plan.
3. We would like to welcome our newest team member, Adriana A. Vigil, Administrative Secretary for the MPO.
4. Upcoming regularly scheduled meetings:
 - Active Transportation Committee – February 22, 2023
 - MPO Technical Committee – March 7, 2023
 - MPO Policy Committee – March 15, 2023

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Policy Committee reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any posted agenda item when authorized by Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property), 551.073 (Deliberations about Gifts and Donations), 551.086 (Economic Development). Following closed session, the open meeting will reconvene at which time action, if any, may be taken.

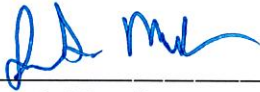
The Committee did not adjourn into executive session.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

CM. Galo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:27 P.M.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 8
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously



Juan S. Mendive
LWCAMPO Director



Dr. Victor D. Treviño, Mayor and
LWCAMPO Chairperson