



## MPO POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

www.laredompo.org

**Meeting Date & Time:** September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 1:30 P.M.

**Meeting Location:** Joe A. Guerra Laredo Public Library Multipurpose Room, 1120 East Calton Road, Laredo, Texas 78041

**Meeting Link:** <http://laredotx.swagit.com/live>

**Laredo TV:** Spectrum TV channel 1300

### AGENDA:

- I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER
- II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL
- 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 meeting held on August 16, 2023.
- B. Discussion with possible action to provide a letter in support of the City of Laredo's grant application for the USDOT Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program for the Boulevard of the Americas project.

## MPO POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

- C. Discussion with possible action on transportation planning activities and initiatives to improve the safety of the regional transportation network.
- D. Discussion with possible action on the Hachar-Reuthinger Road project.
- V. REPORT(S) AND PRESENTATIONS (No action required).
  - A. Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).
- VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS
- VII. ADJOURNMENT

### **NOTICE INFORMATION:**

Notice of this meeting was posted at the municipal government offices, 1110 Houston Street, Laredo, Texas, at a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times. Said notice was posted on Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 by 5:00 PM. The agenda and meeting information was also posted online at <https://www.laredompo.org/agendas-minutes/>.

All meetings of the MPO Committee are open to the public. Persons who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aid or services such as: interpreters for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers of large print or Braille, or a translator for the Spanish language are requested to contact MPO Staff at 956-794-1605, or via email at [aavigil@ci.laredo.tx.us](mailto:aavigil@ci.laredo.tx.us) at least two working days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Materials in Spanish may also be provided upon request.

Disability Access Statement: This meeting is wheelchair accessible. Accessible entrance and accessible parking spaces are located at Joe A. Guerra Public Library, 1120 E. Calton Road.

Ayuda o Servicios Auxiliares: Todas las reuniones del Comité del MPO están abiertas al público. Personas que planean asistir a esta reunión y que pueden necesitar ayuda o servicios auxiliares como: interpretes para personas con discapacidad auditiva, lectores de letra grande o en Braille, o un traductor para el idioma español deben comunicarse con el personal del MPO al 956-794-1605 o por correo electrónico [aavigil@ci.laredo.tx.us](mailto:aavigil@ci.laredo.tx.us) por lo menos dos días laborales antes de la reunión para que se puedan hacer los arreglos apropiados. Material en español está disponible mediante una petición.

Declaración de Acceso a la Discapacidad: Esta reunión permite el acceso a personas en silla de ruedas. Los espacios de estacionamiento para discapacitados se encuentran en Joe A. Guerra Biblioteca Publica, 1120 E. Calton Road.

MPO POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Información en español: Si usted desea esta información en español o si desea explicación sobre el contenido, por favor llámenos al teléfono (956) 794-1605 o comuníquese con nosotros mediante correo electrónico a [aavigil@ci.laredo.tx.us](mailto:aavigil@ci.laredo.tx.us).

**POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:**

LWCAMPO Chairperson

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge

LWCAMPO Vice-Chairperson

Honorable Dr. Victor D. Treviño, City of Laredo Mayor

City of Laredo Representatives:

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

Honorable Melissa R. Cigarroa, City Councilmember, District III

County of Webb Representatives:

Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1

Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

Laredo Mass Transit Board Representative:

Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII

State Representative:

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

Member at Large Representative:

Jed A. Brown

Ex-Officio Representatives:

Honorable Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, District 21

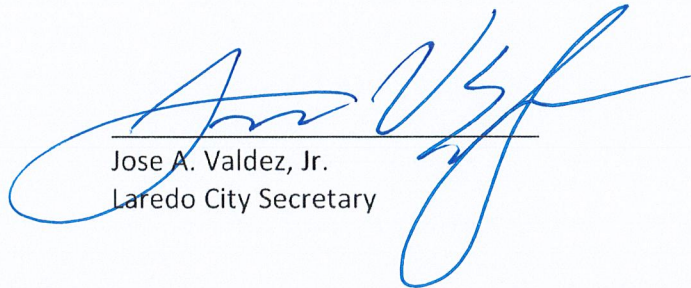
Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42

Honorable Tracy O. King, State Representative, District 80

**AGENDA REVIEWED:**



Juan S. Mendive, AICP  
LWCAMPO Director



Jose A. Valdez, Jr.  
Laredo City Secretary



# **LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY**

**AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

## **Item IV.A.**

**Approval of the minutes for the meeting held on August 16, 2023.**



# LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

## AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

### POLICY COMMITTEE

#### MEETING MINUTES

August 16, 2023

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

#### I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Judge, Tano E. Tijerina, called meeting to order at 1:32 P.M.

#### II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

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

##### **Regular members present:**

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge and LWCAMPO Chairperson  
Honorable Dr. Victor D. Treviño, Mayor and LWCAMPO Vice-Chairperson  
Honorable Vanessa Perez, Mayor Pro Tempore, CM. District VII  
Honorable Melissa R. Cigarroa, City Councilmember, District III  
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1  
Mr. Epigmenio "Epi" Gonzalez, P.E., TxDOT District Engineer  
Mr. Jed A. Brown, Member-at-Large

##### **Regular members not present:**

Honorable Ruben Gutierrez Jr., City Councilmember, District V  
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

##### **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 Director  
Graciela Briones, LWCAMPO Planner III  
Julio Niño, LWCAMPO Planner III  
Eduardo Bernal, LWCAMPO Planner III  
Adriana A. Vigil, LWCAMPO Administrative Assistant

**Others:**

Orlando Navarro, COL Planning  
Gloria Perez-Saavedra, COL Engineering  
Roberto J. Garza, COL Transit  
Eloisa Mascorro, COL Transit  
Jeffery Gonzalez, COL Traffic  
Juan Carlos Villarreal, COL Traffic  
Miriam Castillo, COL Economic Development  
Arnold Lozano, COL Economic Development  
Adelaido “Lalo” Uribe, Webb County Judge’s Office  
Anthony Garza, Webb County Consultant  
Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering  
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering  
Victoria Villarreal, Webb County Planning  
Cary Karnsadt, TxDOT  
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT  
Ana Duncan, TxDOT  
Fernando Martinez, TxDOT  
Luis Villarreal, TxDOT  
Pablo Briones, TxDOT  
Melissa Montemayor, LJA/WC-CL RMA  
Baltazar Avila, LJA/WC-CL RMA  
Blasita Lopez, LJA/WC-CL RMA

**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 meeting held on July 19, 2023.**

CM. Perez, made a motion to approve the minutes of July 19, 2023.

Second: Mr. Brown

For: 7  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2023-11, adopting the FY2022 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects (APL).**

Mr. Mendive, stated the item was brought at the previous meeting to open the public comment period and no public comments were received. He further stated that it was brought now to receive any further public testimony and approve the FY2022 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects (APL).

Judge Tijerina, asked the public if anyone was For or Against the approval of this item. He further stated there were none to behave.

CM. Perez, made a motion to close the public review and comment period for this item.

Second: Mayor Dr. Treviño  
For: 7  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

CM. Perez, made a motion to approve Resolution No. MPO 2023-11, adopting the FY2022 Annual List of Obligated Projects (APL).

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**C. Discussion with possible action on programming of projects with Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds.**

Mr. Mendive, gave a quick overview of the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) for the Laredo Webb County MPO Area. He stated this was a new federal program that MPOs

were able to select projects for. He also stated that there was already a funding request through this program from Webb County.

Mr. Mendive, stated that the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) was created through the new Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the BIL authorized a new Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and was codified as 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) 175 to reduce transportation emissions. The State of Texas was expected to receive approximately \$641 million for FY22-26 in federal apportionment. MPOs had the authority to allocate corresponding apportionments and to select projects eligible for the Carbon Reduction Program funds (CRP) funds.

Mr. Mendive, further stated that the purpose was to reduce transportation emissions through the development of State carbon reduction strategies and by funding projects designed to reduce transportation emissions. He also stated that the projects were going into the eligible projects but they could not be for new added capacity or new roadway type projects.

Mr. Mendive, provided the following list of the eligible activities that could make use of the funds:

- Alternative fuel vehicle deployment (e.g. an electric vehicle infrastructure).
- Reduce emissions at Port facilities (e.g. supporting docked ships).
- Transportation alternatives (e.g. bicycle and pedestrian facilities).
- Diesel engine retrofit projects
- Public transportation projects
- Projects that reduce environmental and community impacts of freight movement, (e.g. truck parking including Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)).
- Projects that support congestion pricing and traffic congestion management technologies.
- Programs that help shift transportation demand
- Programs that Enhance Vehicle to Infrastructure connecting technology
- Programs that Reduce demand for roads
- Development of a Carbon Reduction Strategy

Mr. Mendive, stated that the state is mandated to do this carbon reduction strategy and that is why they were working with the MPOs to create one at state level. He further stated that with these funds the MPO could also decide to do their own for our region.

Judge Tijerina, asked what was the amount allocated to Webb County and the City of Laredo from the \$641 million that the state of Texas is expected to receive.

Mr. Mendive, stated that from FY2024 through FY2026 it is estimated at \$4,884,536. He further provided an example as shared by Mr. Garza, from El Metro Transit during Technical Committee meeting. It was mentioned that one electric bus has a cost of



approximately \$1 million dollars, and they would still need the technology and infrastructure to support it.

Mr. Mendive, further stated that funding a project of this type would wipe out 1-year worth of funding.

CM. Cigarroa, asked if the funds represent a 20% match of additional Federal dollars, so that the funding can be leveraged for bigger projects.

Mr. Mendive, stated that the funding targets listed in the TxDOT UTP include the 80% Federal portion plus a 20% local portion that is expected to be provided by the local government sponsoring the project. He further stated that when projects are selected for funding, these are programmed to include the total project development cost or construction cost which consist of 80% Federal monies and 20% local match.

CM. Cigarroa, asked if the 65% of the statewide allocation was granted to each individual MPO and 35% granted to the State of Texas. She also asked if TxDOT had some discretion to allocate the additional 35% so that the budget could be increased if needed.

Mr. Mendive, confirmed that the 65% is for urban areas, and MPOs have that discretion to select projects with the allocated funding and the other 35% is maintained by TxDOT. He also stated that TxDOT is able to select projects across the state and are able to use that 35% in rural areas as well.

Judge Tijerina, asked how the MPO would like to proceed with the programming of projects.

Mr. Mendive, stated that there was a timeline of how this was being done and further mentioned that there was already a project request from Webb County. He also stated that TxDOT had held a coordination meeting with the MPOs back in February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023 where this program was discussed and it was finally been programed in the UTP. He further stated that TxDOT asked the MPOs to look at projects that were already eligible and just swap the funding, due to the time limitation of when the funds needed to be spent.

Mr. Mendive, also stated that most of the existing projects, did not qualify for these funds, and the MPO had reached out to the Technical Committee back in March and April 2023 asking for a recommendation of some projects. He also stated that the MPO received a request from Webb County that would be presented to the Policy Committee.

Mr. Brown, asked if they have to come up with the 20% match of the \$11 million of the funding available.

Mr. Mendive, stated that they have to come up with the 20% of the total cost of each project that would be funded by the program.

Mayor Trevino, asked about the electric buses that were mentioned by Mr. Mendive. He asked if the cost of the electric buses can increase by the project programming ends.

Mr. Mendive, stated that he used that as an example of how a large amount of the money could go towards just one project instead of several. He also stated that it was not something that they were exploring at the moment.

Mr. Brown, asked if they would have to spend their money first and then get the 80% back.

Mr. Mendive, responded that the program was under TxDOT Category 10 Carbon Reduction Program, very similar to others like Category 7 or Category 9 where there were targets for the different years and the projects would have to be programmed. He also stated that project sponsors requesting funds would need to up front the cost and they would be reimbursed as the project advances.

Roberto J. Garza, El Metro Transit, mentioned that if El Metro would consider to program a project like the electric vehicles, they would have to come up with the 20% of the total cost.

Judge Tijerina, asked Mr. Mendive how they can proceed in suggesting projects for this program.

Mr. Mendive, stated that at that time there was a funding request from the Webb County to construct an approximately 3.9 mile 10-foot wide shared use path for pedestrians and cyclists building an existing right-of-way on the Mangana Hein Rd., with a total project cost of \$3.12 million. Mr. Mendive, stated that the project has two segments, he continued by stating that segment 1 would be 2.5 miles East from State Highway 20 and the estimated construction cost for that shared use path would be \$2 million dollars. Segment 2 would be from US 82 to State Highway 20 and that would require an interlocal agreement because it was within the city limits, he stated the estimated construction cost for that would be \$1.12 million. Mr. Mendive, further mentioned that the project had been discussed with the Technical Committee and both the staff and the Technical Committee recommended programming the \$3.12 million in total project cost, which would consist of \$2,496,000 which would be the 80% Federal share and \$624,000 which would be the 20% local match. He stated that it would leave a remaining balance of \$1,764,536 through FY 2026 and \$8,602,885 through FY 2033 if the funding was authorized in the future.

CM. Perez, stated that one of the issues she had identified was that El Metro services was not being offered to all the residents that live on the Mines Road area. She further stated

that she would like to work with either El Aguila or El Metro to service that area and the people that work in that area.

Judge Tijerina, asked if there were other project requests in addition to the one from Webb County.

Mr. Mendive, stated that at the moment that was the only project request received. He also mentioned that there had been talks to TxDOT about truck parking. He stated that at that time staff recommended to work with projects that had an existing right-of-way and were ready to move forward. He also stated that they did want to identify other projects and to work with the Committee and their Planning partners, the City of Laredo, the Webb County and the RMA to make sure that they were funding projects that were going to help reduce carbon emissions.

CM. Perez, made a motion to program Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds for a \$3.12 million-dollar project to construct an approximately 3.9 mile 10-foot shared use path for pedestrians and cyclists building an existing right-of-way on the Mangana Hein Rd.

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

CM. Cigarroa, stated that the 359 Highway area was similar to the Mines Road area in needed more public transportation due to the area growing. She also stated that the idea of truck parking and electrification in City or County land would fit perfect into this Carbon Reduction Program.

Judge Tijerina, suggested the Committee members send their input to Mr. Mendive, to start working on a list of projects requests.

Judge Tijerina, made a motion to program a list of projects to be funded by the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

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

Gloria Perez Saavedra, COL Engineering, gave an update on the Hachar-Reuthinger Road, state highway 84. Mrs. Saavedra stated, that in reference to the right-of-way acquisition, they had already received the 8 parcels for review and it was completed. She further stated that they were coordinating with TxDOT to confirm the information of any existing utilities within any of the parcels so they could be compensated.

Mrs. Saavedra also stated that they were coordinating with Premier Civil Engineering on the utility adjustments. She stated that they had a utility matrix identifying the conflicts and 10 utility adjustments were found including an AEP existing utility pole, an abandoned 8" gas line, and another gas line that had to be lowered, some AEP transmission lines with potential vertical clearance, and AT&T underground line that had to be adjusted.

Mrs. Saavedra stated that they had requested a schedule from all the Utility companies of when these adjustments will be completed as well as an estimated cost. She continued by stating that they had a meeting on August, 3<sup>rd</sup> with Premier Engineering and TxDOT to discuss the potential horizontal vertical clearance conflicts. She stated that Premier Civil Engineering submitted the Transmission Port data that was requested on August, 9<sup>th</sup>. She also stated that the AEP Transmission team would review the information and prepare a model to confirm if there were any adjustments needed to the vertical and horizontal. She further stated that if there were any conflicts with the Transmission line they had to develop a Construction Management Plan, and the plan had to certify that all the utilities were cleared. She also stated that if there were any conflicts with AEP they know they would take time to resolve and it would impact the construction schedule.

Judge Tijerina asked Mrs. Saavedra to define what she meant by saying "it may take time".

Mrs. Saavedra, stated that in the meeting they had with AEP they mentioned that if in case there were adjustments needed to any possible conflicts, they may need around a year to complete them. She further stated that, that was why they may need to develop a Construction Management Plan to see if they could continue with a letting date of May 2024. If they need to develop a Construction Management Plan they would need to submit it to TxDOT and TxDOT would submit it to the Administration office for review and approval.

Judge Tijerina, asked what the cost would be for the relocation.

Mrs. Saavedra, stated that they had not been provided with a firm amount, and there was just an estimate amount of \$1 million provided which was subject to change.

CM. Perez, stated that if there were any conflicts and the poles had to be moved, construction and probably start at the beginning of where the road started, since there were no poles in that area. CM. Perez asked if the other utility conflicts like the moving of the gas line and the water well line would hold the project up.

Mrs. Saavedra, stated that the other utility conflicts were easier to relocate. She also stated that that were asking the property owners to contact the utility companies to get an estimate of how much it would cost to do the relocations, she also stated that the City of Laredo was responsible for those expenses.

CM. Perez asked, when did the City of Laredo acquire the land so that they could make the phone calls to anything related to the properties.

Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT, stated that they had already gotten the Environmental Assessment document reviewed and approved, they just need to make a public announcement with the Laredo Morning times to provide a 30-day public comment period. He further stated that after the 30 days the submitted back to Austin for final approval. Mr. Rodriguez stated that they are looking at the end of September to have it approved.

Judge Tijerina, asked if the \$1 million was from the County's portion or the City's portion.

Mrs. Saavedra, stated that the \$1 million was the City of Laredo's portion.

Judge Tijerina asked if the \$1 million had already been allocated.

CM. Perez, replied that there should be money allocated in the project already. CM. Perez requested if she could be part of the meetings the Engineering Department had with AEP.

Mr. Gonzalez, TxDOT stated that he had a conversation with Representative Raymond, and he volunteered to have a meeting to bring everyone together to make sure everyone understood the sense of urgency and to have a plan. He further stated that if a Construction Management plan was needed TxDOT would have to review it and submit to Administration for approval. He stated that the Construction Management plan was ultimately a plan to come up with the sequence of construction so they can proceed with the work and have enough work for the constructor to do while the utility work was being done without having any impact. CM. Gonzalez stated that depending on the information they receive from AEP, it would help them determine if a Construct Management plan was needed.

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

**A. Presentation by TxDOT to discuss the Ports-to-Plains (P2P) Project.**

Cary Karnstadt, TxDOT, presented the Ports-to-Plain (P2P) Project. Mr. Karnstadt gave a brief overview of their implementation strategy and efforts that were taken over the next several months. Mr. Karntsadt, stated they completed feasibility study in 2020 and the next steps were the implementation strategy efforts. He stated what were some of the

benefits of an Interstate Highway. He described the safety design standards of an Interstate Highway. Mr. Karntsadt, explained the Enabling Legislation for Development as an Interstate Highway. He continued by presenting the characteristics of the region in Texas, he also presented the number of non-interstate miles being 808 miles and 155 of Interstate miles that currently meet the criteria. Mr. Karntsadt, stated they are looking at 90 active projects along with almost 1.5 billion dollars, he furthered described the projects.

**B. Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).**

Mr. Brown, presented the RMA status report as follows:

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. The traffic signal is fully operational, and traffic is now utilizing the new turn lanes on FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. Project is pending final walk-through, TDLR inspection and final Close-out Construction Change Order. Project is 99+% complete.
2. **Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood)** – Project is complete.
3. **Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) Acceleration/Deceleration Lane Project** – Project is complete.
4. **Springfield Phase III** – Project is complete. Ribbon cutting held on August 8, 2023
5. **Webb County Fair Grounds TIA** – The TIA report is complete. The WC-CL RMA stands ready to provide a presentation to the County at their request.
6. **River Road Corridor Study** – The study is complete. The study’s findings were presented to the MPO Policy Committee at the June meeting and to City of Laredo City Council on August 7, 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. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, the RMA was informed by US Congressman Cuellar’s Office that the grant was approved for \$2.0 M. A formal announcement by Congressman Cuellar was conducted at City Hall on 2/21/23. The agreement between FHWA and WC-CL RMA is executed. The WC-CL RMA will work with the City of Laredo for the execution of an Inter Local Agreement for the sharing of the local funding match for the grant. The Study effort to commence in September 2023.
8. **Vallecillo Road** – Survey field operations commencing in 2 weeks, pending right-of-entry approvals from the land owner.
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. The WC-CL RMA is working with the City of Laredo to finalize the construction cost estimate for the project and complete the Inter Local Agreement for the project.

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. The sponsorship and implementation are subject to the negotiation of an Inter Local Agreement between the City of Laredo and the WC-CL RMA. The WC-CL RMA is working with the City of Laredo to finalize the construction cost estimate for the project and complete the Inter Local Agreement for the project.
11. **The WCCL RMA hosted a TRZ workshop on July 19, 2023.** A review of the TRZ study and implantation process was presented. A second workshop to City of Laredo City Council is tentatively scheduled for the end of August 2023.

**Other Items:**

12. WC-CL RMA will have their next board meeting in September 2023. Exact day to be announced.

**VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Mr. Mendive, MPO Director provided the following comments/report:

1. The next TxDOT Border Trade Advisory Committee (BTAC) meeting will be held in McAllen on August 22, 2023. BTAC provides a forum for the exchange of communications between the Texas Transportation Commission, TxDOT, the governor, and committee members representing border trade interests.
2. A letter of support was provided to the City of Laredo for its application to the U.S. Department of Transportation Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities (RTEPF) Grant program. The grant would support the City's Signal Management and Automated Reliable Transit (SMAART) Trade & Mobility Corridor Project to reduce port-related emissions from idling trucks through advance traffic preemption as well as control and prioritization of traffic signalization.
3. A Fort-Worth to Laredo High-Speed Transportation Study was completed in 2020 through an initiative of the six MPOs along the I-35 corridor, including LWCAMPO. Recently, the North Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) has reached out to the MPOs included in the study as well as TxDOT to reinstate the discussions regarding the study findings and potential next steps. Additional details will be provided as they become available.

4. Upcoming regularly scheduled meetings:

- Active Transportation Committee – August 30, 2023
- Technical Committee – September 12, 2023
- Policy Committee – September 20, 2023

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Judge Tijerina, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:45 P.M.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

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Juan S. Mendive, AICP  
LWCAMPO Director

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Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge and  
LWCAMPO Chairperson





# **LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY**

## **AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

### **Item IV.B.**

**Discussion with possible action to provide a letter in support of the City of Laredo's grant application for the USDOT Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program for the Boulevard of the Americas project.**



# LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

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## AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

September 14, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Honorable Secretary Buttigieg:

The Laredo and Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (LWCAMPO) is pleased to express its full support for the City of Laredo's grant application for \$25,000,000 to the Department of Transportation FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) program for the Boulevard of the America's Project. If awarded, the grant would support the construction and improvement of roadway crossings and pedestrian improvements at the four blocks of IH-35-mile marker 1 resulting in the enhancement of pedestrian traffic and safety, including widening of sidewalks, thus restoring mobility and access of the area and the promotion of economic development.

As part of the transportation planning process, LWCAMPO understands the importance of Environmental Justice and the role it plays in collaboration and meaningful public involvement. This project will entail community engagement and public outreach activities, which will be key in ensuring a successful project. Thus, the Laredo Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Area supports the Boulevard of the Americas project and its public involvement efforts.

In addition, the Boulevard of the Americas project will address infrastructure barriers, restore community connectivity, and improve people's lives as a result. The Laredo and Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is fully committed to collaborate with the City of Laredo and its stakeholders for the success of this important project.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and funding of this grant application.

Sincerely,

Tano E. Tijerina  
Webb County Judge  
Laredo and Webb County Area MPO Chairman



# **LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY**

## **AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

### **Item IV.C.**

**Discussion with possible action on transportation planning activities and initiatives to improve the safety of the region transportation network.**



# Laredo & Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Organization 2023 Safety Planning Report

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Transportation Planning and Programming Division



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# Safety Planning Report Profiles

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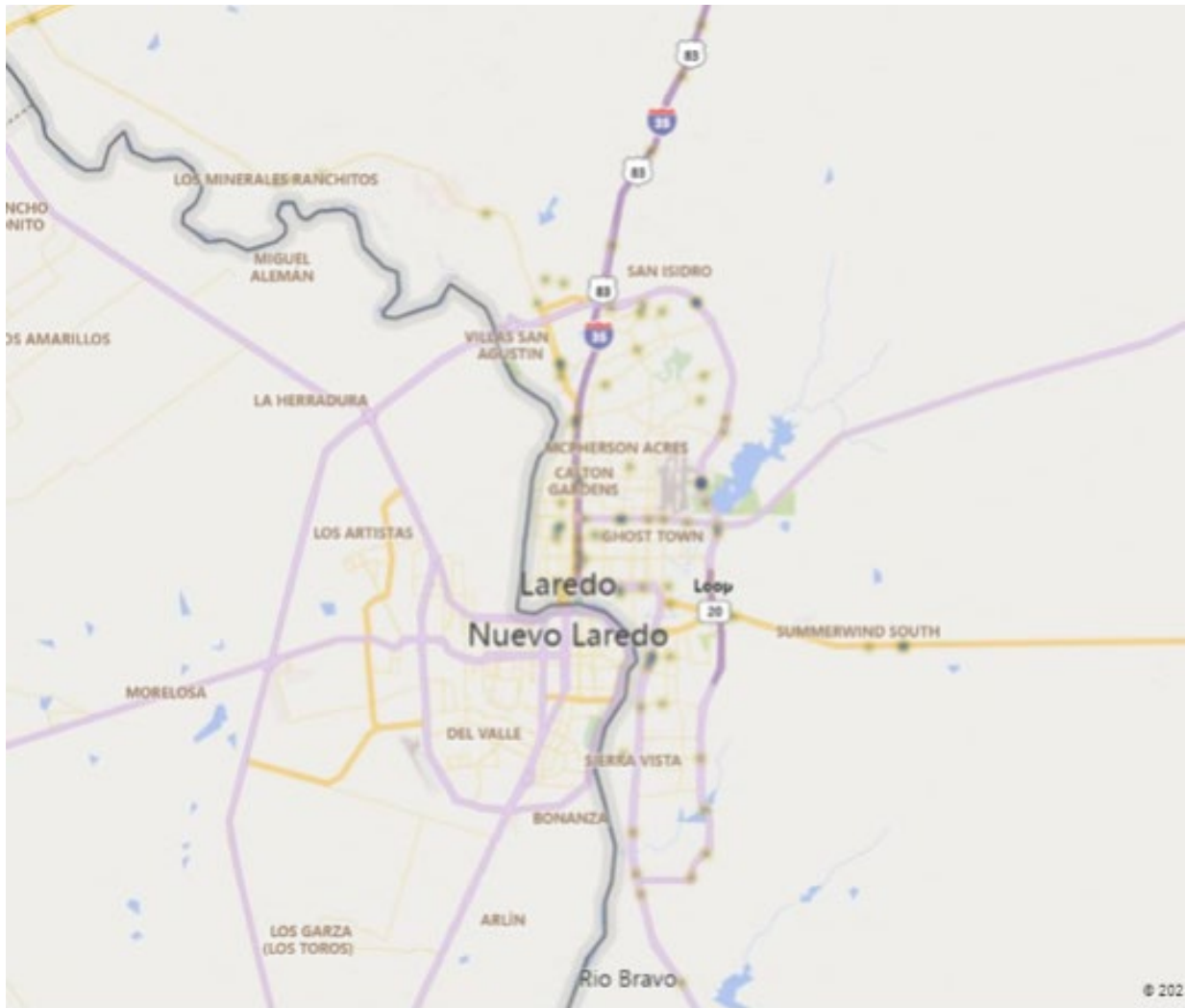
## Laredo & Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

### *Data-Driven Plan of Action*

The Laredo & Webb County Area MPO (LWCAMPO) relies on Crash Record Information System (CRIS) and Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) data utilized by planning consultants to develop and track all safety metrics. The safety data are incorporated into project selection, planning, and development. The data are used within regional planning products including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The metropolitan planning organization (MPO) does not have a specific safety plan but uses safety data for project decision making in the TIP. LWCAMPO uses the grouped project control section jobs (CSJs) that covers various potential safety projects in the region as funds become available. Safety projects can include construction or replacement/rehabilitation of guardrails, median barriers, crash cushions, pavement markings, skid treatments, medians, lighting, highway signs, curb ramps, railroad/highway crossing warning devices, fencing, intersection improvements (e.g., turn lanes), signalization, and interchange modifications.

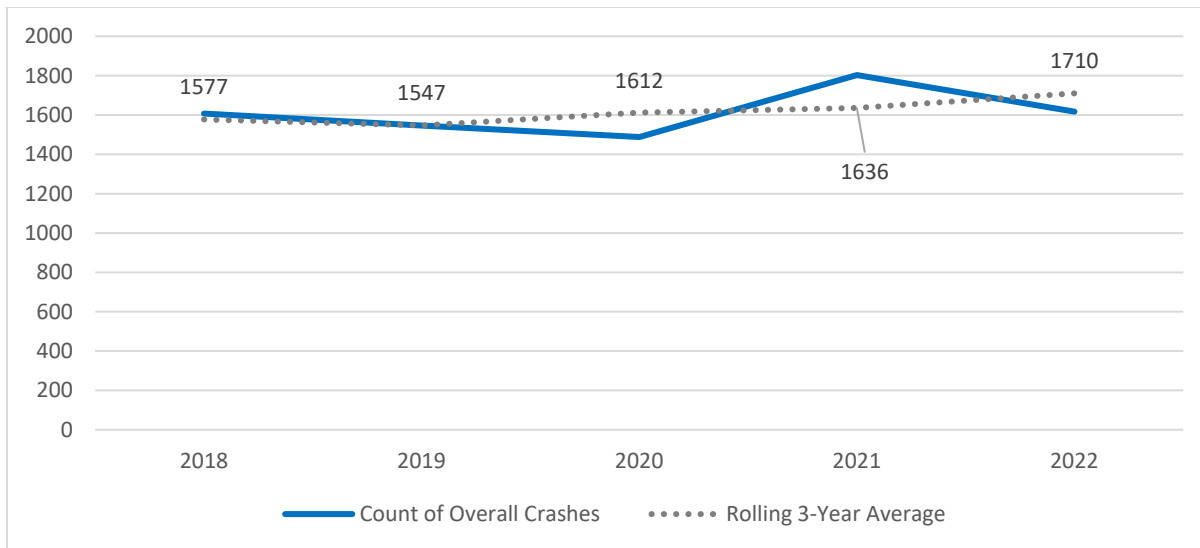
The following safety trends were determined from a 2023 Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) analysis of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) CRIS data set examining the data years 2018–2022. As shown in Figure 1, fatal crashes in the LWCAMPO region were distributed fairly evenly throughout the region along on-system roadways and major roadways. Major roads that have some crash concentrations include IH 35, SL 20, and FM 1472.



*Figure 1. Location of Fatal Crashes in the LWCAMPO Region from 2018 to 2022*

*(Source: TTI Center for Transportation Safety)*

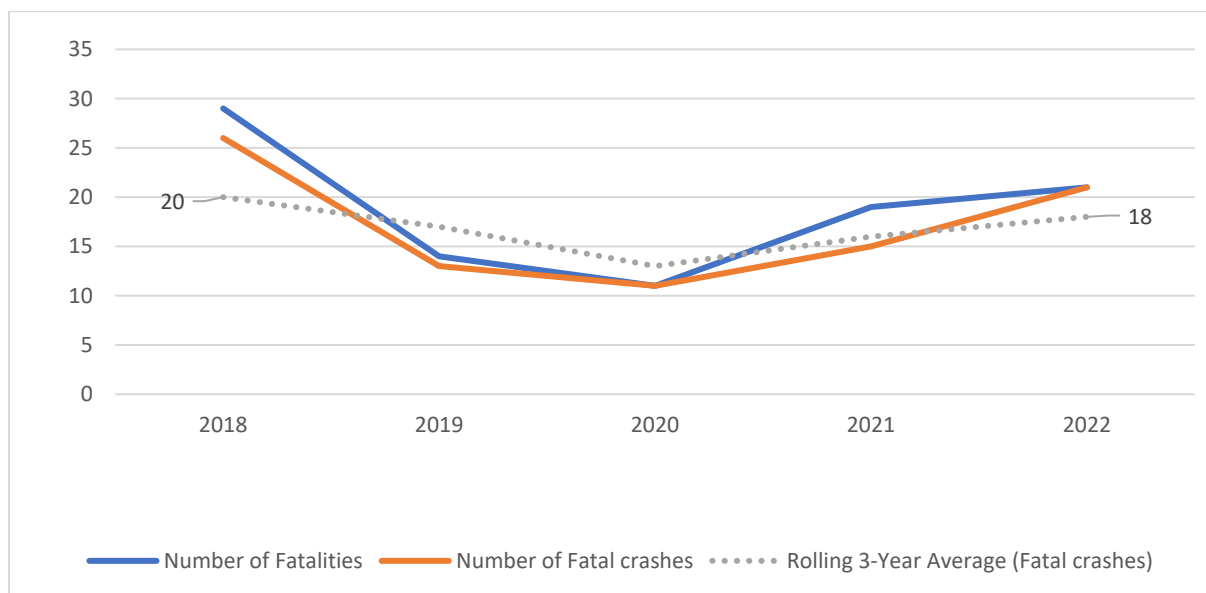
Figure 2 displays a very slight upward trend in overall crash counts. The low volume of 1,488 crashes in 2020 and the high volume of 1,803 in 2021 stand out from the relatively constant three-year rolling average and trend.



**Figure 2. Overall LWCAMPO Regional Crash Trend**

(Source: TTI Center for Transportation Safety)

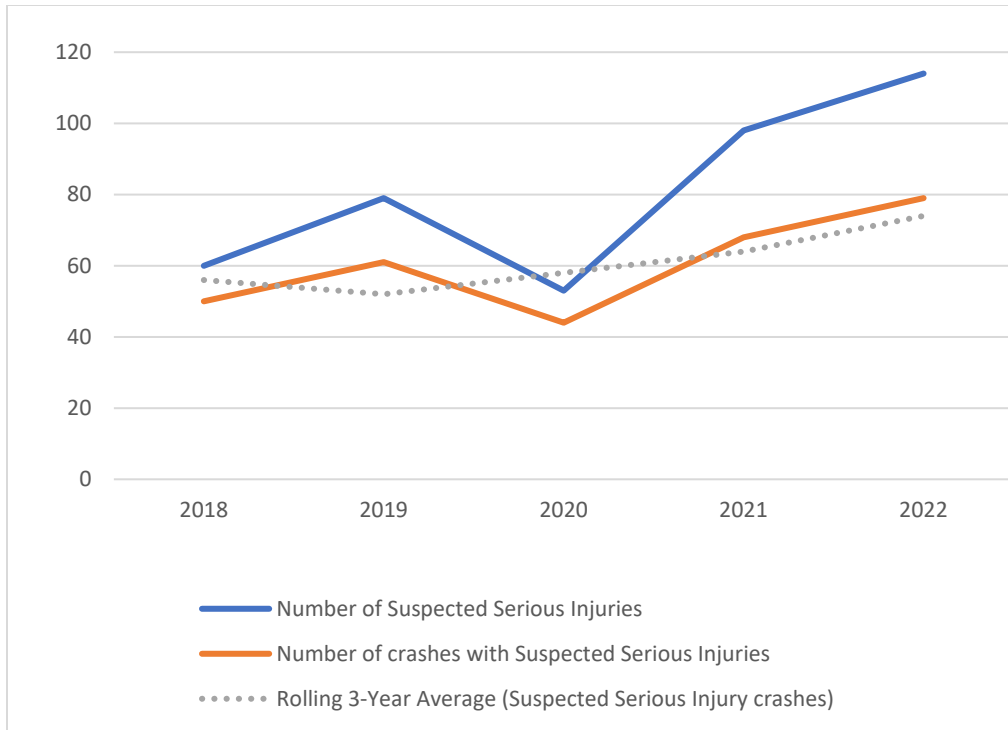
Fatal crash and fatality trends based on CRIS data from 2018 to 2022 are depicted in Figure 3. The number of fatalities is very close to the number of fatal crashes in most of the five years. The standout exceptions are in the years 2018 and 2021. Fatal crashes and fatalities decreased by about 50 percent from 2018 to 2019 and then decreased further in 2018. The trend showed increases though in 2021 and 2022.



**Figure 3. Fatalities and Fatality Crashes from 2018 to 2022**

(Source: TTI Center for Transportation Safety)

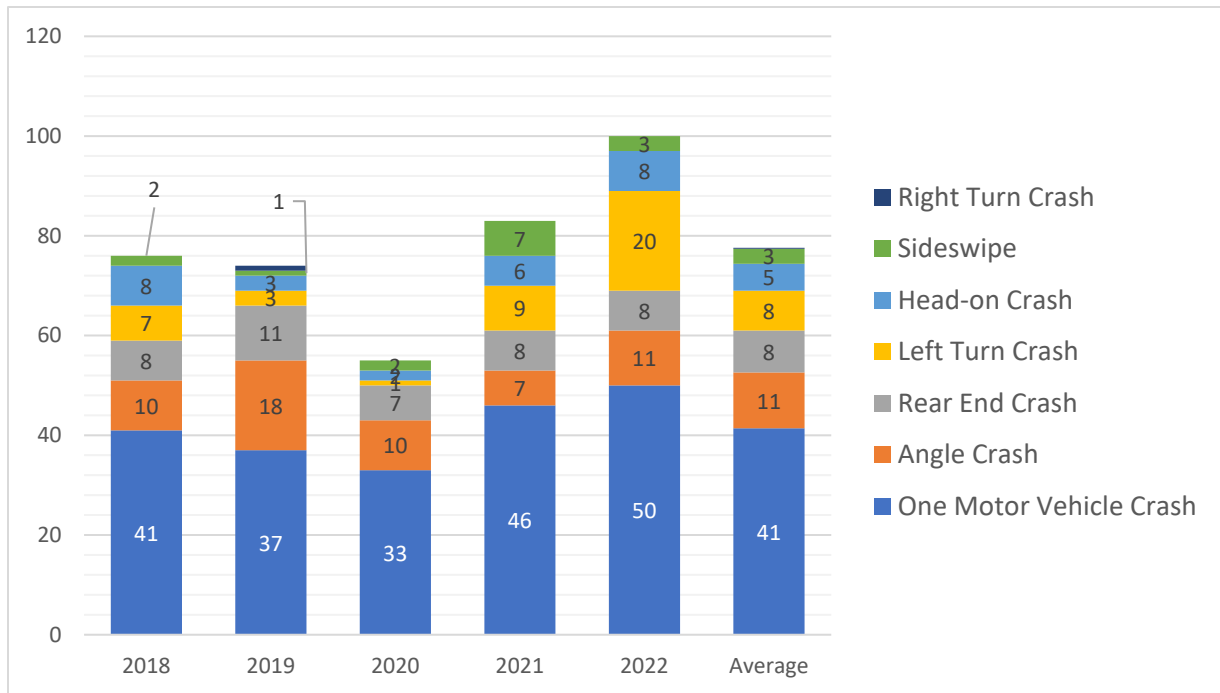
The trend in suspected serious (SSI) injuries and SSI crashes is shown in Figure 4. The number of SSI injuries and incidents each about doubled from 2019 to 2022. In the interim years, SSI incidents and injuries increased and decreased erratically.



*Figure 4. Suspected Serious Injuries and Crashes from 2018 to 2022*

*(Source: TTI Center for Transportation Safety)*

The distribution of fatal and serious injury crash types is shown in Figure 5. One outstanding observation is that one motor vehicle (OMV) crashes were by far the leading type of crash during the five-year period.



**Figure 5. Fatal and SSI Crash Type Distributions from 2018 to 2022**

(Source: TTI Center for Transportation Safety)

The distribution of the top five contributing factors from the region’s safety emphasis areas is shown in Figure 6. In four of the five years, speed was the leading contributing factor, with intersection related crashes emerging as the leading crash type in 2022. Roadway/lane departure was the next leading contributing factor during the five-year period.

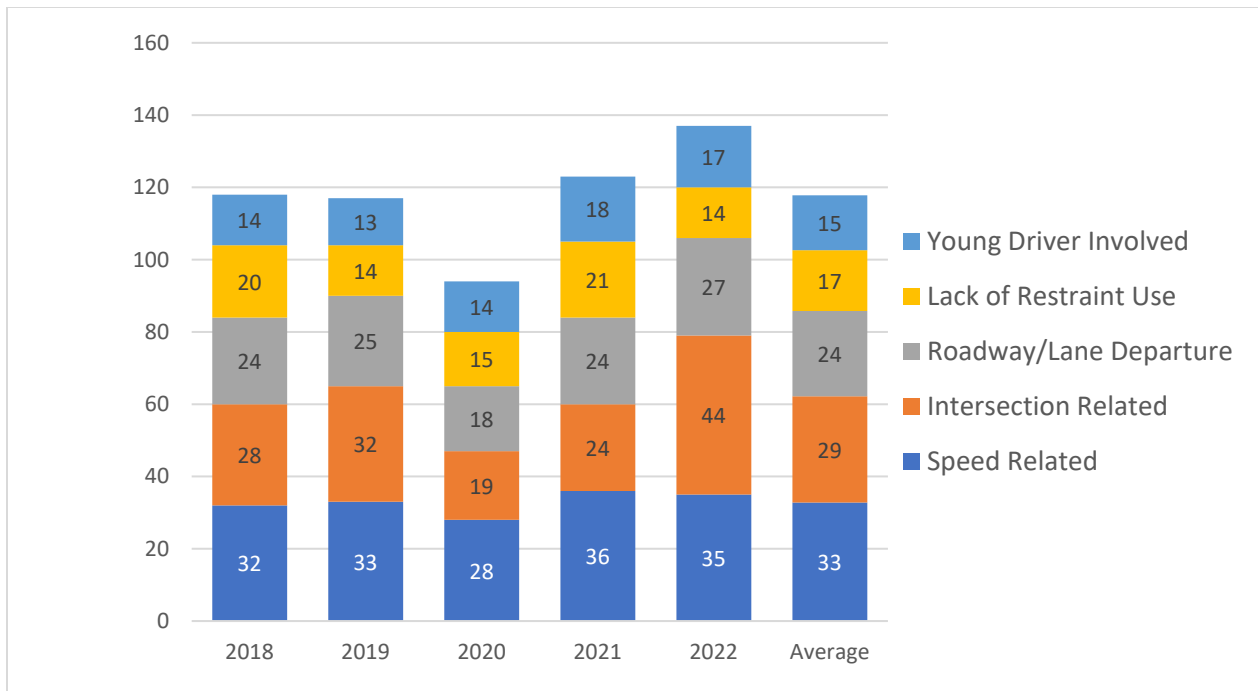


Figure 6. Distribution of the Top Five Regional Contributing Factors in Fatal and SSI Crashes from 2018 to 2022

(Source: TTI Center for Transportation Safety)

Figure 7 depicts the trends in fatal crashes for passenger vehicles and trucks from 2018 to 2022. Truck-involved fatal crashes remained relatively steady during this period, until 2022 when a significant increase occurred. Passenger vehicle-only fatal crashes decreased by more than 50 percent from 2018 to 2019. After two years with 11 crashes each, the trend began increasing in 2021 and 2022.

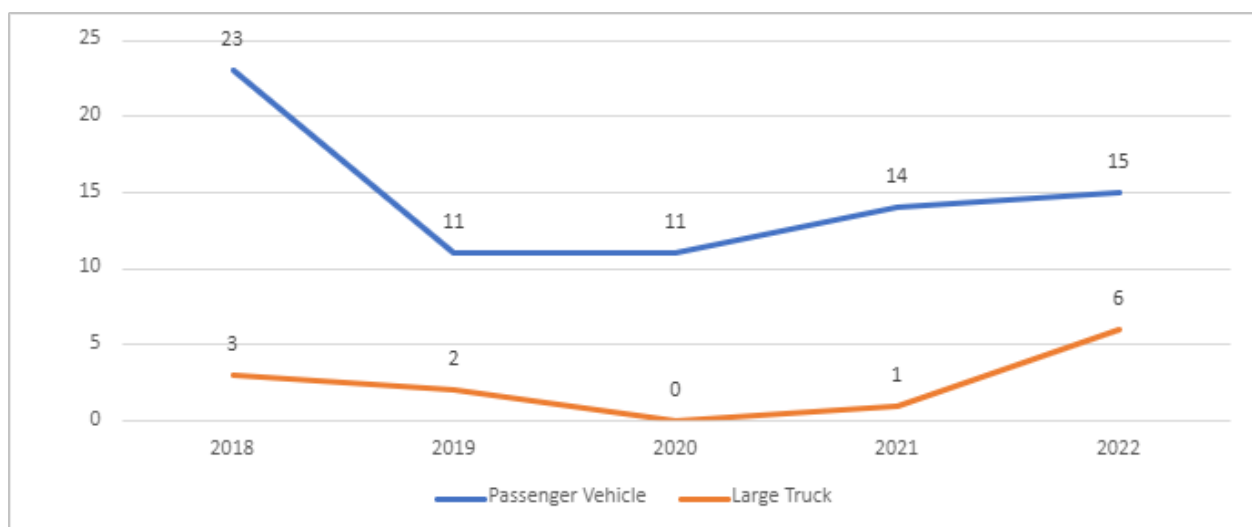
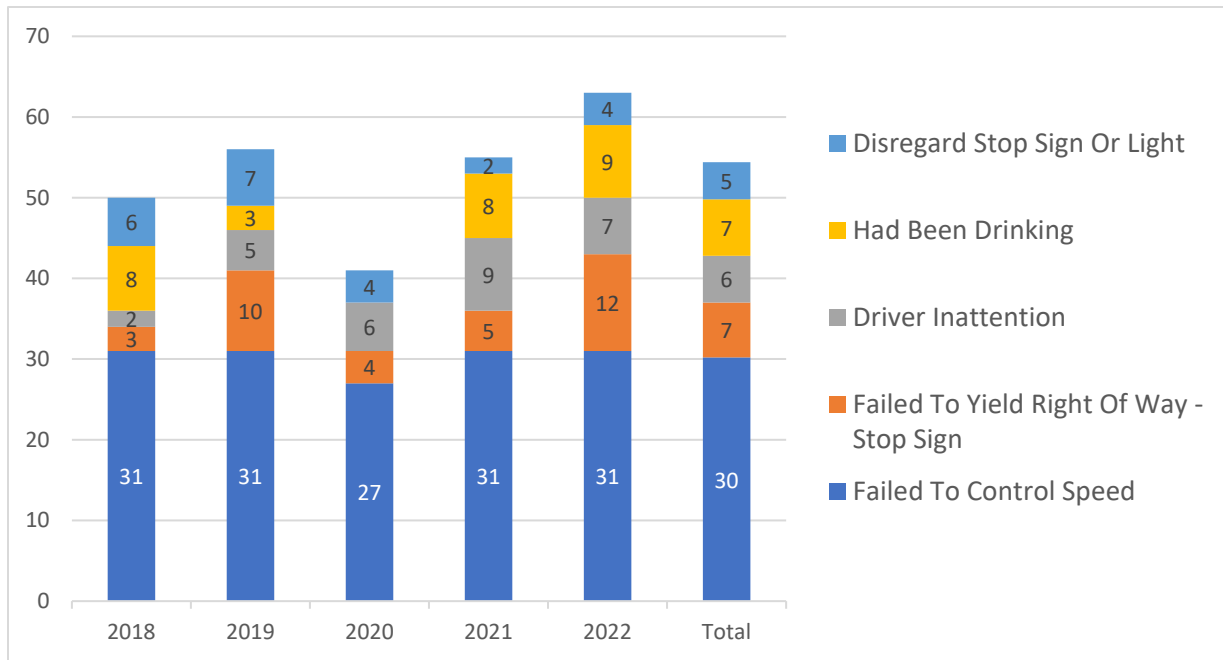


Figure 7. Fatal Crash Counts by Auto and Truck over Five Years

(Source: TTI Center for Transportation Safety)

Figure 8 displays the top five contributing factors for fatal and serious crashes in the MPO region. Failure to control speed was by far the top factor. Driver inattention and failure to yield right of way – stop sign displayed the largest growth on average.



**Figure 8. Top Five Regional Contributing Factors for Fatal and Suspected Serious Injury Crashes**

(Source: TTI Center for Transportation Safety)

### Performance Measures

The LWCAMPO has adopted TxDOT’s safety performance measures and targets. The MPO staff stated that it would be very time consuming to amend documents and maintain the necessary data to set their own targets given limited staff resources. Appendix B of the TIP includes safety and other performance targets.

The MPO uses CRIS and FARS data, along with other sources such as the National Automotive Sampling System. Regarding the CRIS data, MPO staff has cross-referenced these data with Laredo Police Department data due to identified inconsistencies.

The MPO has not yet looked at crash types, factors, or root causes. The staff has focused on reviewing fatalities and highest crash frequency locations. The MPO uses safety data when considering specific projects and in the project scoring and selection process. The MPO staff also uses safety data when developing the MTP and specific plans, as well as for general public outreach.

### Coordination and Outreach

The LWCAMPO coordinates with all member entities regarding safety planning, including the following entities and specific entity departments or groups:

- TxDOT Laredo District.
- Independent school districts.
- Webb County-City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).
- City of Laredo Traffic Department.
- City of Laredo Planning Department.
- Webb County Planning Department.

Freight operators and the warehousing industry, along with TxDOT, engaged LWCAMPO on congestion and mobility issues along FM 1472, creating the FM 1472 Mobility Task Force. Another collaboration, between the RMA and MPO, was to create the River Road Route Analysis. This effort is to identify a new facility alignment for a road that would separate non-commercial vehicles from FM 1472, improving mobility and safety.

Following its Public Participation Plan (PPP) requirements, the MPO engages the public in all matters, including safety planning activities and document preparation. The MPO staff has developed an interested parties list that enables them to send emails and other correspondence to stakeholders. Other stakeholders contact the LWCAMPO through its website and attend Policy Committee meetings. The MPO staff also provide opportunities for the public to comment when the Policy Committee adopts safety targets.

While the MPO staff has not made many presentations to civic and similar groups, it has presented information to the City of Laredo Planning & Zoning Board and similar groups. The MPO staff plan to increase outreach to schools, building upon past United High School Career Day presentations. Realizing that transportation planning will accommodate today's students, the MPO has engaged students by having them complete surveys specifically for the Active Transportation Plan and will probably do the same activity during the next MTP update process. The Active Transportation Committee recently facilitated a back-to-school safety discussion that included members of the Laredo Police Department and local school district police departments.

The LWCAMPO staff maintains safety information on the MPO website. Currently the data are mainly national level data, but the MPO plans to expand it to increase local data content. Some interactive maps are posted on the website, and the MPO uses interactive maps in Policy Committee and Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) presentations. The MPO also produces static heat maps to display safety information.

### *Alignment with Other Plans and Efforts*

#### **Safety-Related Documents and Materials**

The MPO staff is aware of the City of Laredo Hazardous Materials Guidance Manual, which includes a requirement for Hazardous Materials Management Plans to be filed in advance of transporting hazardous materials. The LWCAMPO also coordinates with El Metro's (the local transit authority) Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). In addition, Chapter 6 of



the Active Transportation Plan addresses the complete street concept. Safety is one of the four main themes of the Active Transportation Plan.

The MTP includes Chapter 9–Safety, Security, and Resiliency, which focuses on safety issues and strategies. Other chapters that address safety include the following:

- Bike/Ped (Chapter 6).
- Congestion Management Process (Chapter 11).
- Performance Management (Chapter 12).

**Work Plan and Priorities**

The MPO has a project scoring process that incorporates safety as a criterium for projects programmed in the TIP, included in the Unified Transportation Program (UTP), and planned in the MTP. The MTP includes Goal 1, which states, “Provide a transportation system network that is safe and secure for all transportation modes and all system users.” This goal is supported by the following objectives:

- Support projects that address existing and identified safety or security needs.
- Support projects, programs, and strategies that advance safety and secure travel for all users.
- Continue coordination with TxDOT to meet federal safety performance targets.

**Prioritized Projects**

Table 1 illustrates category funding balances over the life of the current 2023 UTP for Categories 2, 5, and 7 for the LWCAMPO.

*Table 1. Laredo & Webb County Area MPO 2023 Funding Balances for Category 2, 5, and 7*

*(Sources: 2023 UTP, TxDOT Category Analys Report, and TxDOTCONNECT data)*

Category 2	Category 5	Category 7
\$0	\$0	\$6,885,412

The MPO staff also recognizes that newly available carbon reduction (CR) funds may be used on projects that also have safety benefits.

The MPO Active Transportation Committee wants to develop public service announcements (PSAs) related to bicycle safety for National Bike Month, which is in May of each year. The MPO staff also plan to work with the City of Laredo public information office and health department teams to help develop and distribute the PSAs.

The LWCAMPO member entities have adopted safety countermeasures including the following examples:

- Speed humps on streets.

- Four-way stop intersection on International Boulevard.
- Speed notification trailers encouraging motorists to slow down.
- “Stop for Pedestrian” (according to state law) signs at pedestrian crossings.
- Roundabouts.
- Bicycle lanes (striped on roads and one that is completely separated from the road).
- Twelve-foot shared bike/ped paths (mainly on city street principal arterials, including Springfield [north extension] and Los Presidents East).
- Flashing beacons at pedestrian crossings.
- Restriped lanes on faded markings.

The Laredo area has a very high bicycle use relative to other areas of similar size, due to the low automobile ownership levels. In addition, many people walk their bicycles across international bridges from Nuevo Laredo in Mexico. The MPO recognizes a continuing need for additional bike lanes throughout the metropolitan area.

In its Category 9 project application, the MPO includes a request for applicants to explain how a nominated project would address safety and how it relates to countermeasures. To aid applicants in this effort, the MPO includes a link to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) countermeasures.

Table 2 lists the MTP projects that were identified as being safety related, due to their Category 8 funding sources.

*Table 2. Laredo & Webb County Area MPO Funded Safety Projects*

(Source: LWCAMPO MTP 2020-2045)

CSJ	Roadway	Sponsor	Funding Category	Fiscal Year	Description	Reference Document	Amount
001806201	IH 35	TxDOT	8	2020	Wrong way driver advanced technology	MTP	\$58,045
008601093	SH 359	TxDOT	8	2020	Install raised median	MTP	\$1,353,740
008601095	SH 359	TxDOT	8	2020	Install raised median	MTP	\$688,677

### *Achievements and Next Steps*

The LWCAMPO plans to continue working with member entities and the Active Transportation Committee on safety planning efforts and outreach. The MPO staff has

expressed a desire to make information easy for the public to access. One method to accomplish this will be to increase visualization of data and information.

The MPO staff also stated that there seems to be a disconnect between MPO work and other entities' implementation efforts. The MPO staff wants to develop techniques to ensure that project implementation addresses needs resulting from the MPO transportation planning process, including the federally required 3-C process. There are opportunities to improve communication and public buy-in for the overall transportation planning and programming process. The MPO staff stated that it wants to get the best results for the motoring public.

Specific next steps included analyzing and considering Complete Street concepts and opportunities, as well as safety treatments beyond the currently used speed humps. Related to this effort, the City of Laredo Traffic Department is looking at their speed hump related ordinance to determine if any changes are needed.

The MPO director stated that he wants the MPO to play a larger role in all safety related activities and help determine how to move forward with them. One such effort may include adding a safety planning committee or task force to help identify problem areas and a menu of appropriate countermeasures and treatments. Other potential tools include interactive and crowdsourcing maps on the MPO's website. These tools would allow the general public to provide input at any time, not only when the MPO reaches out with specific public meetings or workshops.

A complimentary effort to increasing public input would be using data to compare public perceptions with actualities.

The MPO staff wants to increase overall public outreach, including presentation to civic organizations, schools, and stakeholders.

The regional mobility authority (RMA) won a Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant, with the MPO and City of Laredo as partners. It is notable that the RMA and City of Laredo each paid half of the grant writer expenses to prepare the grant, which the MPO reviewed. The MPO also provided data, shared plans and relevant information, and secured letters of support to help the grant writing process. Using locally generated matching funds, the RMA will take the lead in developing a comprehensive safety action plan.

## Appendix A. Interview Documentation

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### Laredo & Webb County Metropolitan Planning Organization

Interview Date: April 11, 2023  
Media: Microsoft Teams  
MPO Staff Present: Juan Mendive, Julio Nino  
TTI Interviewer: Bill Frawley  
TPP Field Representative: Sara Garza



# **LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY**

**AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

## **Item IV.D.**

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



# LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## Item V.A.

Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).



### WC-CL RMA September 2023 Status Report to LWCAMPO

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. The traffic signal is fully operational, and traffic is now utilizing the new turn lanes on FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. Project is pending final walk-through, TDLR inspection and final Close-out Construction Change Order. Project is 99+% complete.
2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – Project is complete.
3. Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) Acceleration/ Deceleration Lane Project – Project is complete.
4. Springfield Phase III – Project is complete. Ribbon cutting held on August 8, 2023.
5. Webb County Fair Grounds TIA – The TIA report is complete. The WC-CL RMA stands ready to provide a presentation to the County at their request.
6. River Road Corridor Study – The study is complete. The study's findings were presented to the MPO Policy Committee at the June meeting and to City of Laredo City Council on August 7, 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. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, the RMA was informed by US Congressman Cuellar's Office that the grant was approved for \$1.6M. A formal announcement by Congressman Cuellar was conducted at City Hall on 2/21/23. The RMA submitted to the FHWA the draft Grant Agreement between the RMA and the FHWA. Upon execution, the WC-CL RMA will work with the City of Laredo for the execution of an Inter Local Agreement for the sharing of the local funding match for the grant. The draft ILA was submitted to the City on 8/10/23. It was presented to City Council on 8/21/23. We are awaiting final execution. The Study effort to commence in September 2023.
8. Vallecillo Road – Right of Entry to was granted on 8/15/23. Design Team conducted a kick-off meeting with the TxDOT Laredo District on 8/24/23. Data collection operations have commenced. Currently, field survey crews have ongoing operations. The design team has commenced existing utilities data collection and will commence the utility coordination in conjunction with the City of Laredo Utility Coordination Committee. The WC-CL RMA is projecting a Fall 2025 Letting of the project.
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. The WC-CL RMA is working with the City of Laredo to finalize the construction cost estimate for the project and complete the Inter Local Agreement for the project.

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. The sponsorship and implementation are subject to the negotiation of an Inter Local Agreement between the City of Laredo and the WC-CL RMA. The WC-CL RMA is working with the City of Laredo to finalize the construction cost estimate for the project and complete the Inter Local Agreement for the project.
11. The WCCL RMA hosted a TRZ workshop on July 19, 2023, to review the TRZ study and implementation process with the City of Laredo. A second workshop was conducted on 8/28/23. The RMA is awaiting execution of the ILA with the City of Laredo to commence the North Laredo TRZ Study. Concurrently, the City of Laredo is considering implementing the Cuatro Vientos TRZ.
12. Other Items:
  - WC-CL RMA will have their next board meeting in late September 2023.





# LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## Item VI.

DIRECTOR's COMMENTS



# LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

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## AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

### Director's Report September 20, 2023

1. The Active Transportation Committee met in-person on August 30<sup>th</sup> and had a productive discussion on back-to-school traffic safety and future needs. Representatives of the school districts and law enforcement were in attendance. This is the second year the Active Transportation Committee has held this in-person discussion related to back-to-school traffic safety. We are hoping to continue these conversations and incorporate stakeholder input into our planning activities.
2. MPO staff is working with the Technical Committee to develop a training program and series of workshops to provide resources and learning opportunities for all our committee members and planning partners.
3. Upcoming regularly scheduled meetings:
  - Active Transportation Committee – September 27, 2023
  - Technical Committee – October 10, 2023
  - Policy Committee – October 18, 2023



# **LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY**

**AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**Item VII.**  
**ADJOURNMENT**