



LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

September 20, 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 the meeting to order at 1:39 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 (joined meeting at 1:49 PM)
Honorable Melissa R. Cigarroa, City Councilmember, District III
Honorable Ruben Gutierrez Jr., City Councilmember, District V
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

Regular members not present:

Honorable Vanessa Perez, Mayor Pro Tempore, CM. District VII
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
Mr. Epigmenio "Epi" Gonzalez, P.E., TxDOT District Engineer
Mr. Jed A. Brown, Member-at-Large

CM. Galo, made a motion to excuse members not present.

Second: CM. Gutierrez
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

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:

Robert J. Garza, COL Transit
Eloisa Mascorro, COL Transit
Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering
Gloria P. Saavedra, COL Engineering
Jeffery Gonzalez, COL Traffic
Juan Carlos Villarreal, COL Traffic
Sara Garza, TxDOT
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Ana Duncan, TxDOT
Luis M. Villarreal, TxDOT
Fernando Martinez, TxDOT
Angel Martinez, TxDOT
Chief Miguel Rodriguez, LPD
Manuel Maciel, LPD
Rene R. Alvarado, LPD
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering
Anthony Garza, Webb County Consultant
Eddiberto Gomez, Webb County Sheriff's Office
Melissa Montemayor, WC-CL RMA/LJA
Blasita Lopez, WC-CL RMA/LJA
Baltazar Avila, LJA

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.

No citizen comments were received.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

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

CM. Gutierrez, made a motion to approve the minutes of August 16, 2023.

Second: CM. Cigarroa
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

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.

Mr. Juan Mendive, MPO Director stated that the City of Laredo's Economic Development Department was applying for a grant to make sidewalk and crosswalk improvements to the 4 blocks in front of International Bridge #2. He further stated that they were asking for a Letter of Support from the MPO and a draft letter was in their Policy packet.

CM. Galo, made a motion to approve the Letter of Support.

Second: Judge Tijerina
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

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

Judge Tijerina, asked Mr. Mendive if this item was going to be tabled. He mentioned that he really appreciated the new Chief of Police and PD staff being present, and asked them for a couple of words.

Mr. Mendive, stated that law enforcement was invited to the meeting because there was going to be a discussion on the safety concerns and what role the MPO could play in helping enhance safety of the transportation network, and in case there were any questions but they had not been asked to prepare anything for the meeting.

CM. Ruben Gutierrez, commented that they had asked TxDOT and DPS for help on the Loop 20, Cuatro Vientos, Hwy 83 specifically to target speeders specifically for accidents. CM. Gutierrez asked if they could give an update or information on when they would be able to assist in those areas.

Chief Rodriguez, stated that for PD, at one point there were about 22 Officers in the Traffic Division and now they were down to 10 Officers but they were enhancing and adding more personnel to their Traffic Division for those specific areas that based on data were considered "hot zones" like Cuatro Vientos, Loop 20, Hwy 35, Hwy 83 and other areas

Chief-Rodriguez, also stated that he has had conversations with Captain Victor Sotelo, from the DPS Highway Patrol who was in charge of that area which is Region 3. He stated that they were coordinating on a plan of action to be done bi-weekly, deploying assets to the right areas and making sure that everyone was aware that there will be more law enforcement out in those areas. He also stated that they want a plan of action that would be upwards of 6 months so that they know when they'd start the operation together with DPS. Chief Rodriguez, also stated that DPS would be fully engaged in trying to make sure that the numbers in fatalities and traffic accidents decreased, he further stated that they want to focus consistently in those areas.

CM. Gutierrez, suggested that for the next Publicsafety meeting they have with the City, they should have DPS invited so they could discuss the plans about having certain zones patrolled in the city and increasing fines.

Chief Rodriguez, stated that regarding public education he had spoken to some of the Traffic Officers about bringing up ideas on how to approach the public. He stated that the Officers had come up with the idea of "Taco with a Traffic Officer" similar to "Coffee with a Cop" program, something to engage and educate the public, especially on the traffic accidents.

Judge Tijerina, congratulated Chief of Police Miguel Rodriguez on behalf of the MPO on his new position.

(Mayor, Dr. Victor D. Treviño joined the meeting)

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

Mr. Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT, introduced Ms. Anna Duncan, TxDOT Project Manager to provide a quick update on the project.

Ms. Duncan, stated that they were right on schedule with their plans, they should be getting the 90% PS&E within the upcoming month. She also stated that, that day was the closing date for the Environmental Clearance public outreach, and they should be having the FONSI issued out to them within the following week and they would be able to begin with the Right-of-Way offers. She further stated that the City had a few that were needed to be submitted to TxDOT for final review. She also stated that on the utilities they've been having regular meetings every 2 weeks at TxDOT offices. She added that representative Raymond attended those meetings and was very interested in the project as well as helping to assure that they moved forward with it. Ms. Duncan also stated that they have been in communications with AEP on the Transmission lines and had a target date to have everything completed. She further stated, that they would be having a management plan for those and should still be on target for the May 2024 letting.

Judge Tijerina, asked Ms. Duncan if they were still having problems with AEP regarding the transmission lines.

Ms. Duncan, stated that the transmission lines take the longest when they do adjustments so they had to target between a year and a half to two years to move them. She further

stated that they were able to phase them into their schedule, so it shouldn't have an impact on the construction.

CM. Galo, asked what was missing for the Right-of-Way.

Mr. Ramon Chavez, City Engineer, stated that as far as the property acquisition was concerned, all the appraisals were completed but some would have to be amended because they had to include any existing utilities and the property owners needed to be compensated. Mr. Chavez explained that the offer letters could not be send out to the property owners until the Environmental Clearance is completed.

Judge Tijerina, asked if there was anything they could do as an MPO or at the County level to help speed up the process.

Mr. Chavez, stated that at that time they were on schedule to meet the letting date. He further stated that if they need something else, they would come before the Committee and ask for support.

CM. Galo, asked Mr. Chavez why they were restricted if they City of Laredo was the one procuring the Right-of-Way.

Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT, stated that the project's construction had Federal funds and since it had been designated as an on-system Road a few months back, they had to follow all the Federal procedures.

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

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

Ms. Melissa Montemayor, RMA, provided the following status report:

Ms. Montemayor stated that Webb County Fairgrounds TIA was completed and they stand ready at the County's request to present it at any County Commissioner's Court meeting. She further elaborated on the following projects' status:

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 30th 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.

VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Mendive, thanked law enforcement, Laredo PD, and the Sheriff's office for being present at the meeting. He stated, that they would bring back the item in October to have a fuller discussion on that and also to show some data that they had from a safety report.

Mr. Mendive, provided the following comments/report:

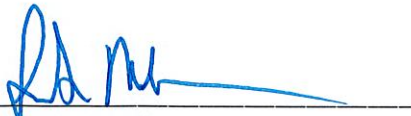
1. The Active Transportation Committee met in-person on August 30th and had a productive discussion on back-to-school traffic safety and future needs. Representatives of the school districts and law enforcement were in attendance. This is the second year the Active Transportation Committee has held this 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

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

CM. Galo, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:00 P.M.

Second: CM. Gutierrez
For: 5
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.



Juan S. Mendive, AICP
LWCAMPO Director



Webb County Judge Tano P. Tijerina
LWCAMPO Chairperson