



LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

February 21, 2024

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, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:31 PM.

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 Ruben Gutierrez Jr., Mayor Pro-Tempore, District V (left at 2:00 PM)
Honorable Melissa R. Cigarroa, City Councilmember, District III
Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII (joined meeting at 1:36 PM)
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
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 Dr. Victor D. Treviño, Mayor and LWCAMPO Vice-Chairperson

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

Second: CM. Gutierrez
For: 7
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 S. Briones, LWCAMPO Planner III
Julio A. Niño, LWCAMPO Planner III
Eduardo Bernal, LWCAMPO Planner III
Adriana A. Vigil, LWCAMPO Administrative Assistant

Others:

Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering
Roberto Garza, COL Transit
Sara Garza, TxDOT
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Luis M. Villarreal, TxDOT
J. Carlos Flores, Webb County Engineering
Anthony Garza, Webb County Consultant
Victoria Villarreal, Webb County Planning
Blasita J. Lopez, WC-CL RMA/LJA Engineering
Baltazar Avila, LJA 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 meeting held on January 17, 2024.

CM. Gutierrez, made a motion to **approve** the minutes of January 17, 2024.

Second: Mr. Brown
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Discussion with possible action to approve Resolution No. MPO 2024-03, adopting and supporting the 2024 Texas Department of Transportation Safety Performance Measures (PM1) and Targets.

Juan Mendive, MPO Director, presented the item and stated it was being brought back from last month's meeting. He stated that the deadline to set the targets was February 27, 2024 and as a Federal requirement, it was requested to adopt and support the Texas Department of Transportation Safety Targets.

Judge Tijerina, asked the reason why the Targets hadn't been approved last month.

Mr. Mendive, stated that there were questions on some of the Target figures, and now they were more concise. He further stated there was a discrepancy on one of the columns that showed figures as actual data instead of Target data.

CM. Gutierrez, made a motion to approve Resolution No. MPO 2024-03, adopting and supporting the 2024 Texas Department of Transportation Safety Performance Measures (PM1) and Targets.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

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

Mr. Ramon Chavez, City Engineer presented a brief status report of State Highway 84 or previously known as Hachar-Reuthinger Road. He stated that City Council had approved Resolution 2024-R-081 accepting the charitable donation of parcels 1, 2, and 5; and Resolution 2024-R-077 approving the purchase of a tract of land identified as parcel 4. Mr. Chavez further stated that out of the 9 parcels, 5 parcels were still pending to be acquired.

Mr. Chavez also reported that the documentation for the donation of land of parcel 6 had been received.

Judge Tijerina, asked if any issues were foreseen with the other 4 pending parcels.

Mr. Chavez, stated it was possible on one of the parcels only.

Judge Tijerina, asked if the letting date had changed.

Mr. Chavez, stated it had not.

CM. Perez, stated that she was excited about the information shared especially on parcel 6. She mentioned that if the City acquired portions of Hachar and Reuthinger which would be about 99% of the right of way, TxDOT should be fine in keeping the letting date.

Judge Tijerina, asked if the acquisition of Parcel 6 was enough for TxDOT to move forward.

Mr. Gonzalez, stated that TxDOT was currently updating their Construction Management Plan as part of the document that must be submitted to Administration, given that some right of way has not been cleared or acquired prior to letting and, the plan would show this won't have an impact to the project. He also stated it has been documented some existing utilities that still need to be adjusted and the plan demonstrated this won't delay the execution of the contract.

Mr. Chavez, stated that the City's goal was to have acquisition of parcel 6 item by the next Council meeting of March the 8th, 2024.

Mr. Gonzalez, stated that the main parcels were parcel 2 and 6 the others would not have an impact to the construction project, but that may have impact to the utilities so still needed to be monitored. He also stated that parcel 3 was going to eminent domain and parcel 7 and 8 were pending the offer letter from parcel 9.

Mr. Chavez, confirmed and stated that the last appraisal had been received the day before. He further stated City staff continued working to make parcels 7, 8, and 9 part of the packet final offer.

CM. Perez, expressed her enthusiasm towards the project and it being delivered to the public. She stated that despite all the obstacles with the funding gap and acquiring the Right-of-Way, TxDOT was still holding true to their letting date.

CM. Galo, asked what the construction time was after the letting date.

Mr. Gonzalez, stated it was about 32 months. He mentioned that the availability of resources/materials was another concern. He stated that the letting date was scheduled for May 2024, and it meant when bids were opened; And, the advertising occurred 21 day prior to the Letting date.

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

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

Mr. Jeb Brown, RMA Chairman, presented the following report part of the packet:

WC-CL RMA November 2024 Status Report to LWCAMPO

- 1. Vision Zero Webb Laredo Safety Action Plan** – The work began in September 2023. The first formal public engagement will begin in February 2024. Action was taken by the WC-CL RMA Board on adopting a pledge to zero fatalities and serious injuries on roadways in Webb County by 2040. Other agencies such as Laredo City Council, LWCAMPO Policy Committee, Webb County and School Districts will be invited to take the pledge as well. Completion of the study is anticipated for December 2024. The RMA will host a media event Feb. 29, 2024 at 10 a.m. at the downtown U.S. Post office grounds to publicly launch the Safety Action Plan and reintroduce Vision Zero, including the commitment and promote a survey.
- 2. Vallecillo Road** –The draft ROW parcel plats and strip map are anticipated for completion in March. Environmental studies are currently ongoing with field visits commencing in

March. Traffic Forecast modeling is currently ongoing and the draft report is anticipated for completion in late March. The drainage analysis of the project is ongoing with the draft report to be completed by the end of March. The proposed geometry (horizontal and vertical) is complete. A draft schematic is anticipated for submittal to the Laredo District in late February 2024. The RMA is projecting a Fall 2025 Letting of the project.

The RMA is finalizing its funding agreement with the Killam Company and is amending its Inter Local Agreement with the City of Laredo. The City of Laredo is commencing the development of the ROW agreement with the Killam Company. As the project sponsor, the executed Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) is solely between the TxDOT Laredo District and the RMA.

3. **Vallecillo Overpass** – In order to advance the schedule of the project, the WC-CL RMA has come to an agreement with the TxDOT Laredo District for the development of the Overpass project. The WC-CL RMA will undertake the design of the project, provide up to \$1M in funding for the design of the project and control the project schedule. TxDOT will design the remaining half of the project through a department design contract. The agreement will be codified via a separate Advanced Funding Agreement.
4. **Concord Hills (Wormser Road/ Lomas Del Sur to Los Presidentes)** – The 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. The 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 (ILA) between the City and the RMA. The RMA is working with the City to finalize the construction cost estimate for the project and complete the ILA for the project.
5. **Springfield Phase I, II, and IV** – Similar to Springfield Phase III, the RMA has committed up to \$1 million to the City 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 and the RMA. The RMA is working with the City to finalize the construction cost estimate for the project and complete the Inter Local Agreement for the project.
6. **North Laredo and Cuatro Vientos Transportation Reinvestment Zones (TRZ)** - The WC CL RMA hosted a TRZ workshop on July 19, 2023, to review the TRZ study and implementation process with the City. A second workshop was conducted on 8/28/23. The RMA is awaiting execution of the ILA with the City to commence the North Laredo TRZ Study. The City notified the WC-CL RMA on 2/13/24 that the City will move forward with drafting and distributing the ILA to the WC-CL RMA and commence the project.
7. **FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. Turn Lanes** – Project is pending final walk-through, and TDLR inspection and final Close-out Construction Change Order. Project is 99+% complete.

8. Other Items:

- RMA had a Board meeting on February 14, 2024.
- RMA will have their next Board meeting in the Spring.

Mr. Brown, also stated he had received his reappointment from Governor Abbott as Chairman of Webb County City of Laredo Regional Mobility Area for another two years.

B. Presentation and update by TxDOT on the FY 2025 Unified Transportation Program (UTP).

Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT, gave a presentation on the Unified Transportation Program (UTP). He started by giving a brief explanation on existing Planning and Programming documents used by TxDOT for the project's development process. He explained there was a two-year Certification or Letting Schedule, also a four-year STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program) that works in conjunction with the MPO for project funding and ready to let within the next four years. He further mentioned the UTP (Unified Transportation Program), a 10-year plan consisting of projects that were already funded for construction. From there, the MPO would develop the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to set 20 years' worth of projects, and then, the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan that is 24 years.

Mr. Rodriguez, stated that all the projects on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) were included on the Letting Schedule and projects on the UTP were also included on the STIP and the two-year Letting Schedule. Mr. Rodriguez, explained the TxDOT Project Path. Every project outside the UTP starts in the Plan Authority phase and develop schematics, environmental constrains, alternatives and feasibility studies etc. and, that's how the projects compete to get into the UTP, through Development Authority UTP phase with years between 5-10 on the Letting Schedule. Which allows time for the completion of PS&E, ROW acquisition, and necessary process to step into the next phase of the Construction Authority year 1-4. Finally, projects go to the In Construction or Post Letting phase.

Mr. Rodriguez, continued by presenting the UTP Development timeline. He also stated TxDOT was currently looking at preliminary numbers for the 2025 UTP based on the State's financials. He also stated that the UTP Planning Targets were about to be released and, these were specifically for Category 1, 2, & 4 that were usually calculated by formula.

Mr. Rodriguez further shared the Project Selection Methodology. He explained the Statewide Priorities and System Needs and, the Projected Project Performance as the two scoring systems used and what they consisted of. Both score results would be combined to obtain a final project score and be able to provide a project recommendation.

Mr. Rodriguez provided an overview of the different funding Categories, but focused on the ones impacted or selected by the MPO. He mentioned that Category 2 Metropolitan and Urban Area Corridors, included projects selected by the MPO in consultation with TxDOT and, Texas Transportation Commission allocates funds through a formula

allocation program. Also, Category 7 Metropolitan Mobility/Rehabilitation that worked very similar and currently being used for State Highway 84.

Mr. Rodriguez briefly went through the other Categories and how some were calculated by formula and were fixed amounts every year. He also presented the 2024 UTP Funding Distribution by Category chart, and amounts that were disturbed in each Category including funds that Laredo usually gets. He mentioned as well the approximately \$2.2 million currently on the 2024 -2033 UTP funds for the Laredo District.

CM. Perez asked where was Vallecillo Rd. interchange listed.

Mr. Rodriguez explained this project was part of the competition list for funding that had been submitted.

Mr. Brown, asked when would the draft list of all the projects anticipated for the Laredo District be released.

Mr. Rodriguez, stated that for the formula-based funding Categories 2 and 4, the draft list was almost complete. For the other Categories, it would be a couple of months before presented for a decision on priority of projects. He mentioned some of the projects on the draft list of requests included the expansion of the lanes of the US. Border Patrol Check point at mile 29 of IH35. He also talked about US59 by the airport with a gap of funding and also requesting funding for Sierra Vista and Cielito Lindo overpasses.

CM. Gonzalez, asked what would it be needed to get these overpasses funded.

Mr. Rodriguez, stated if Category 4 or 12 funds were obtained from the MPO, the projects could be partially funded.

C. Update by MPO staff on the stakeholder meeting held on January 24, 2024 to discuss traffic congestion issues at the Unitec Industrial Park area.

Mr. Mendive, shared the presentation used at the Stakeholder meeting. He mentioned there were around 20 people in attendance, including representatives from City of Laredo, Webb County, TxDOT, RMA, and stakeholders.

Mr. Mendive, stated that some of the purposes of the meeting were to better understand the existing issues and problems in the area, and to understand the MPO's role in managing congestion and planning for multimodal solutions. The meeting was also to brainstorm short mid and long-term potential solutions to manage congestion.

Judge Tijerina, asked if there was a short-term solution to manage the congestion.

Mr. Mendive, mentioned an idea that was discussed in the meeting which was to change some of the streets to one way. He stated that this option would have to be implemented by the City of Laredo.

Judge Tijerina, asked if TxDOT would be able to help with the congestion issues.

Mr. Gonzalez, stated that there have been some discussions between the City of Laredo and TxDOT about making some improvements to the intersections, for instance, eliminating some left movements to improve efficiency of the signal. He further stated that TxDOT could look into doing something that would help in the short term, within a few months.

CM. Galo, asked what the MPO boundaries were, and if they would go past the Unitec Industrial Park area.

Mr. Mendive, confirmed the MPO boundaries passed the Unitec Industrial Park area.

CM. Galo, suggested a North-South road out of Majestics connecting to Reuthinger and, an East-West road at Doctors Road. He stated that it should coincide with the opening of the overpass.

CM. Perez, mentioned a road that was used by the employees in the area that crossed the railroad tracks, but was no longer allowed to be used. She continued by stating that if the road could be used again, it would be as a short-term solution option.

CM. Perez, stated there should be a meeting coordinated with the railroad for a short-term solution, while TxDOT re-evaluates and provides a long-term solution. She suggested Laredo Traffic Dept. could eliminate the left turns in the area.

Judge Tijerina, requested to bring the item back to keep it in the forefront.

CM. Cigarroa, asked if there were plans on having other Stakeholders meetings.

Mr. Mendive, stated that there was a tentatively scheduled for late February possibly moved to March.

Judge Tijerina, stated that the items be brought back in 60 days and if it could be discussed prior, him and Mr. Mendive could go over it in Pre-Agenda and can decide if they bring it back earlier.

CM. Perez, stated that it might be good to bring the item to Council.

Mr. Mendive, stated that the item was on the Council Agenda per CM. Dr. King request to discuss what could be done. He mentioned Council talked about the TRZ and how the RMA, TxDOT and the MPO could help and possibly come up with other solutions and, after those conversations, the idea of having a Stakeholder meeting came about.

CM. Perez, stated that a status update and some of the solutions that have been proposed could be presented at Council to see if there was something Council could contribute to.

VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director's Report February 21, 2024

Mr. Mendive, congratulated Mr. Brown on being reappointed as Chairman of WC-LCRMA. Mr. Mendive, also congratulated TxDOT and their team on the US 59 Loop upgrade groundbreaking.

Mr. Mendive presented the following report to the Committee:

1. On February 20th, MPO staff met with our FHWA representative, Kirk Fauver, and TxDOT field representative, Sara Garza, to discuss the upcoming Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification review, which is scheduled for June 25th-26th.
2. The RFP for the Microtransit Feasibility Study programmed in our FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program was issued on February 3rd with a deadline of March 7th.
3. Texas Transportation Commission Meetings:
 - February 21, 2024 (2 p.m.)
 - February 22, 2024
 - March 27, 2024 (2 p.m.)
 - March 28, 2024
 - April 25, 2024

Upcoming Texas Transportation Commission meetings and agendas can be found on the following link: <https://www.txdot.gov/about/leadership/texas-transportation-commission/meeting-dates-agendas.html>.

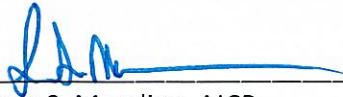
4. Upcoming regularly scheduled MPO meetings:
 - Active Transportation Committee – February 28, 2024
 - Technical Committee – March 12, 2024
 - Policy Committee – March 20, 2024

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

CM. Perez, made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 2:37 PM.

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

Motion carried unanimously.



Juan S. Mendive, AICP
LWCAMPO Director



Webb County Judge Tano E. Tijerina
LWCAMPO Chairperson