LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY
AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING

MEETING MINUTES
July 23, 2026

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

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

CM. John Galo, Commissioner, Pct. 3 called meeting to order at 11:06 A.M.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Graciela S. Briones, MPO Planner III, called roll and verified a quorum existed.

Regular Members Present:

Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
Honorable Ruben Gutierrez Jr., City Councilmember, District V
Mr. Epigmenio "Epi" Gonzalez, P.E., TxDOT
Mr. Jed A. Brown, Member-At-Large

Regular Members Not Present:

Honorable Dr. Victor D. Treviño, Mayor and LWCAMPO Chairperson
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge and LWCAMPO Vice-Chairperson
Honorable Ricardo "Richie" Rangel Jr. City Councilmember, District II
Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1

Ex-Officio Members Not Present:

Honorable Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, District 21
Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42
Honorable Don McLaughlin, State Representative, District 80

LWCAMPO Staff Present:

Juan S. Mendive, AICP, Director
Graciela S. Briones, Planner III
Julio A. Niño, Planner III
Adriana A. Vigil, Administrative Assistant
Isabella Ramirez, Intern

Others:
Ramon Chavez, COL Assistant City Manager
Vanessa Guerra, COL Planning and Zoning
Eliud De Los Santos, COL Engineering
Jaime Ortiz, COL Economic Development
Sara Garza, TxDOT
Luis Villarreal, TxDOT
Melisa Montemayor, LJA/RMA
Blasita Lopez, LJA/RMA
Roberto Rodriguez, Entech Civil Engineers, Inc.

CM. Gutierrez, made a motion to **excuse** all members not present.

Second:	Mr. Brown
For:	4
Against:	0
Abstained:	0

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Mendive mentioned that according to the MPO's bylaws, four is a quorum. He further stated that in the absence of a Chair and Vice-Chair, the Committee selects a presiding officer.

CM. Gutierrez, made a motion to select CM. Galo to preside over the meeting.

Second:	Mr. Brown
For:	4
Against:	0
Abstained:	0

Motion carried unanimously.

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Speakers are required to fill out witness cards, which must be submitted to MPO Staff no later than 1:45 PM 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 made.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

A. Approval of the minutes for the meeting held on May 20, 2026.

CM. Gutierrez, made a motion to **approve** the minutes of May 20, 2026.

Second:	Mr. Brown
For:	4
Against:	0
Abstained:	0

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2026-08, adopting the FY2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

CM. Galo, asked if anyone wished to speak for or against the item.

No comments were made.

Mr. Juan Mendive, MPO Director, provided a presentation to the Committee regarding the FY2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Mr. Mendive, thanked the Committee members for their flexibility and attendance at the Special Policy Committee meeting. He noted that the regularly scheduled July meeting had been canceled to allow members and staff to attend the Transportation Planning Conference, which was successful. He explained that the Committee had previously been unable to obtain a quorum at the scheduled June meeting to approve the FY 2027 UPWP, which must be approved and submitted prior to August. He expressed his appreciation to the Committee members for attending the Special Meeting.

Mr. Mendive, provided a brief overview of the FY2027 UPWP and noted that the presentation had previously been presented in May when the public comment period was opened. He explained that the UPWP is a federally required work program that identifies and describes the transportation planning programs and activities to be conducted by the MPO during the fiscal year. He further noted that the UPWP may be amended as needed throughout the fiscal year. The UPWP outlines the MPO's transportation planning activities to be funded through Transportation Planning Funds (TPF). Mr. Mendive, explained that individual tasks may require more than one year to complete and,

therefore, may carry over from one UPWP to the next. Mr. Mendive stated that in accordance with the MPO's Public Participation Plan (PPP), the FY2027 UPWP was made available for a 20-day public review and comment period. No public comments were received during the review period. Following approval by the Policy Committee, the UPWP will be submitted to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for subsequent review and approval by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). He noted that MPO staff had communicated with TxDOT regarding the UPWP and that TxDOT was aware of the anticipated submission timeline to allow for FHWA approval prior to August.

Mr. Mendive, reviewed the planning priorities identified in the FY2027 UPWP. These priorities include transportation safety and Complete Streets initiatives, Vision Zero efforts, public participation and stakeholder engagement, congestion management and congestion relief, freight mobility, transit, border infrastructure, demographic changes, data and technology, organizational support, and project delivery. He emphasized the importance of freight mobility to the Laredo region due to its role as a major international trade and land port of entry. He also noted the importance of monitoring demographic, data, and technological changes at the state and regional levels to ensure that the MPO's transportation planning activities continue to address future needs. Additionally, the UPWP supports project delivery by ensuring that federally funded transportation projects programmed by the MPO are implemented effectively and that federal funds are used responsibly.

Mr. Mendive, then reviewed the FY 2027 UPWP budget summary.

For Task 1 – Administration and Management, a total of $665,000 is programmed. This amount includes Planning and General Administration activities, which support salaries, professional development, travel and training, Public Participation Plan activities, computer equipment, furnishings, office supplies, and building maintenance or repairs, as necessary.

For Task 2 – Data Development and Maintenance, $10,000 is programmed for general data administration. An additional $40,000 is programmed for the purchase of transportation improvement program (TIP) data management software, based on an anticipated annual license cost. Mr. Mendive, explained that programming for the software in the UPWP is necessary should the MPO enter into an agreement with a vendor for the software.

For Task 3 – Short-Range Planning, a total of $10,000 is programmed, consisting of $5,000 for General Administration and $5,000 for Planning Assistance.

For Task 4 – Long-Range Planning, a total of $10,000 is programmed. This includes funding for Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) monitoring, revisions, and implementation, including bringing future MTP amendments and revisions before the Policy Committee

for consideration. Mr. Mendive, also explained that the MPO will begin preliminary work related to updating the Travel Demand Model (TDM) for the next MTP update. The work will initially be conducted in-house, with $5,000 allocated in FY2027. As the MPO approaches the next MTP adoption cycle in 2030, additional funding will be allocated toward these activities. Mr. Mendive, then reviewed the Special Studies included in the FY 2027UPWP. The Long-Range Freight Mobility Plan is anticipated to be completed through a partnership between the MPO, the City of Laredo, and the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA). The MPO is proposing to contribute $250,000 toward the study, with additional funding to be provided by the City of Laredo and the RMA. Mr. Mendive, noted that the RMA would lead the study with assistance from its General Engineering Consultant. The MPO also has a Request for Proposals (RFP) underway for the South Laredo Transportation Planning Study, for which $250,000 is programmed.

CM. Galo asked what the South Laredo Transportation Planning Study would entail.

Mr. Mendive, explained that the South Laredo Transportation Planning Study will be a multimodal transportation planning study focusing on the area south of U.S. 59 through the southern boundary of the MPO planning area. The study will evaluate the impacts of continued growth in South Laredo and the anticipated impacts associated with future international bridge development. Mr. Mendive, stated that the study is intended to develop policy recommendations, as well as recommendations for new thoroughfares, roadway improvements, and transportation projects that could ultimately be incorporated into the MTP and potentially become part of the City's Thoroughfare Plan and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). He explained that the study will include extensive stakeholder engagement with City Council members, County Commissioners, TxDOT, the RMA, and other regional stakeholders. MPO staff will also engage the Policy Committee throughout the study process. Mr. Mendive, stated that the goal is to ensure that the region is appropriately planning for the future transportation needs of South Laredo. Mr. Mendive, noted that the study is expected to be similar in approach to the North Laredo transportation study previously conducted by the RMA, with transportation projects and recommendations expected to result from the study. Additional special studies include a Transit Asset Management Plan, for which $75,000 is programmed. Mr. Mendive, explained that the transit agency is required to periodically update its Transit Asset Management Plan and that it has been several years since the previous update. The programmed funding will assist El Metro with completing the required update. The FY 2027 UPWP also includes an update to the Active Transportation Plan, which was originally adopted in 2021. The MPO intends to update the document to reflect current transportation needs and priorities. Additionally, the MPO is proposing a Laredo Transit Hub Study at the request of El Metro. Mr. Mendive explained that the study would evaluate the feasibility and potential locations for transit hubs, including consideration of potential north and south hub locations. The study would assist in identifying feasible sites and evaluating future transit infrastructure needs.

Mr. Mendive, stated that the total amount programmed for FY2027 is $1,610,000. The overall available UPWP funding is approximately $2,428,539.72, leaving an estimated $818,539.72 available to carry forward into future UPWPs, assuming the full FY 2027 programmed amount is expended during the fiscal year. He explained that actual expenditures may extend into subsequent fiscal years depending on when contracts are executed and when studies or other activities are completed. Therefore, some funds may remain available beyond the current fiscal year and carry forward into future UPWPs. Mr. Mendive, concluded the presentation and asked the Committee if there were any questions regarding the FY2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

CM. Gutierrez, made a motion to approve Resolution No. MPO 2026-08, adopting the FY2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and close the public comment period.

Second:	Mr. Brown
For:	4
Against:	0
Abstained:	0

Motion carried unanimously.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Mendive, stated that the next agenda item was Communications. He explained that, due to the Special Meeting being limited to the FY2027 UPWP approval, no Director's Report or other staff reports were included on the agenda.

Mr. Mendive, announced that the next regularly scheduled Policy Committee meeting was anticipated to be held on Wednesday, August 19, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.

CM. Galo, asked for an update on the Hachar-Reuthinger Road project, noting that he had observed significant progress while flying over the area and asked whether TxDOT had an anticipated completion date.

Mr. Epigmenio "Epi" Gonzalez, TxDOT District Engineer, responded that the project was progressing well. He noted that the contractor had initially indicated that construction could potentially be completed by September or October 2026; however, the anticipated completion is now more likely to be toward the beginning of 2027. He emphasized that the project remains ahead of schedule and continues to progress well. Mr. Gonzalez, also provided updates on several other major transportation projects in the Laredo area. He noted that TxDOT had recently let the remaining three direct connectors at I-35 and I-69. A contractor has been selected, and TxDOT had recently met with the contractor, who indicated an intent to begin construction as soon as possible, potentially within the

August or September 2026 timeframe. Mr. Gonzalez, further discussed the upcoming improvements at I-35 and Uniroyal, which were scheduled to be let the following month. He explained that the project had originally been scheduled for letting in March but was postponed due to utility conflicts. Those conflicts have since been resolved, allowing the project to move forward during the current fiscal year. He explained that the I-35 improvements will expand the main lanes to three lanes in each direction and reconstruct and expand the interchange at Uniroyal, including improvements to the turnarounds. The project will also include construction of a new overpass at I-35 and SH 84 at Hachar-Reuthinger Road and will convert the frontage road configuration from two-way operations to one-way operations. Mr. Gonzalez, described the project as a major transportation improvement for the area.

CM. Galo, commented that he understood the project would prioritize construction of the entire overpass first in order to minimize congestion and impacts to traffic.

Mr. Gonzalez, confirmed that this was correct and explained that the project was structured to construct the overpass at Hachar-Reuthinger Road first, prior to significant impacts to existing traffic operations.

CM. Galo, then asked for an update regarding the Loop 20 project, specifically when TxDOT anticipated shifting traffic from the east side to the west side.

Mr. Gonzalez, explained that the initial plan had been to shift traffic during the summer; however, the traffic switch would likely be delayed by several months.

CM. Galo, noted that it appeared that most of the work on the east side had been completed, with the remaining work primarily involving the overpass.

Mr. Gonzalez, explained that the intent was to relocate the northbound frontage road from its existing location onto the newly constructed frontage road. The southbound frontage road would then be relocated to the area currently occupied by the northbound lanes.

CM. Galo, asked for clarification regarding whether traffic would be split during the transition.

Mr. Gonzalez, confirmed that traffic would be split and explained that this configuration would allow TxDOT to construct the future southbound frontage road. Once that work is completed, southbound traffic would be relocated to the newly constructed roadway.

CM. Galo, clarified that he had understood that all traffic would be shifted to the other side of the roadway.

Mr. Gonzalez, clarified that this would not be the case. He explained that the project would maintain the same number of lanes currently available to traffic while the construction activities proceed.

CM. Galo, further clarified his understanding of the proposed traffic configuration and construction sequence.

Mr. Gonzalez, explained that the contractor had presented several options intended to expedite construction and minimize impacts to traffic. He noted that the original contract did not include cast-in-place construction for certain bridge elements. The contractor subsequently submitted a proposal to use precast columns, abutments, and caps.

Mr. Gonzalez, stated that TxDOT was moving forward with the proposed approach, which is expected to expedite construction and minimize impacts to traffic. The bridge elements would be fabricated off-site and transported to the project location for installation, reducing the amount of construction activity required within the existing roadway footprint.

CM. Galo, thanked Mr. Gonzalez for the update and expressed appreciation for the progress being made on the projects.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Brown, made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 11:21 AM.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Juan S. Mendive, AICP
LWCAMPO Director

Mayor Dr. Victor D. Treviño
LWCAMPO Chairperson