LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY
AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 16TH, 2022

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

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Pete Saenz, called the meeting to order at 1:33 P.M.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

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

Regular members present:
Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO Chairperson
Honorable Dr. Marte A. Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI
Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII (joined the meeting at 1:37 p.m.)
David M. Salazar, Jr., P.E., TxDOT District Engineer
Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez, Jr., P.E., Private Sector

Regular members not present:
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
Honorable Ruben Gutierrez, Jr., City Councilmember, District V
Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

Judge Tijerina 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 Mendive, LWCAMPO Interim Director
Graciela Briones, LWCAMPO Planner
Julio Niño, LWCAMPO Planner
Angie Quijano, LWCAMPO Administrative Assistant

Others:
Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering Department
Gloria Saavedra, COL Engineering Department
Teclo Garcia, COL Economic Development Department
Luis Perez-Garcia, Webb County Engineering
Tim Juarez, Stanley Consultants
Sara Garza, TxDOT
Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Jed Brown, RMA
Melisa Montemayor, HNTB, Inc.
Jose Ceballos

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.

Jose Ceballos, representing Farias Development, spoke in favor of item #IV-B and stated he was in support of the River Road Planning Study. He asked for the Committee to consider moving forward with the study.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:

A. Approval of the minutes for the meetings held on January 25th, 2022 and February 8th, 2022.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **approve** the minutes of January 25th, 2022 and February 8th, 2022.

Second: Mayor Saenz
For: 4
Against: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

B. Discussion with possible action on the Laredo Webb County Area MPO's participation in the River Road Planning Study in collaboration with the Webb County-City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority, and any other matters incident thereto.

Juan Mendive, Interim MPO Director, stated the study would be $250,000 with the RMA fronting fifty percent and the MPO would take care of the rest from Federal Planning funds. He stated the MPO had been in contact with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and TxDOT regarding the project. He stated the MPO was ready to move forward with the study as long as an interlocal government agreement was done. He stated if the MPO committee decided to move forward with the study, an amendment to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) needed to be done. He stated Staff recommended approval of the study. He also stated the Technical committee recommended approval and emphasized that there would still be funding gap after the study was done.

Cm. Vanessa Perez joined the meeting at 1:37 p.m.

David Salazar, TxDOT, asked if previous studies on said area would be used for the study.

Jed Brown, RMA, stated the previous studies that have been done have been incorporated in said study.

Mr. Salazar stated TxDOT was in favor of the study.

Cm. Vanessa Perez thanked the committee and staff for all the support and also stated she would make herself available for any public outreach that needed to be done.

Dr. Martinez made a motion to **approve** the item.
Second: Mayor Saenz
For: 5
Against: 0

Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

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

Humberto Gonzalez, TxDOT, stated the project was moving forward. He stated it was under Plans, Specifications and Estimate (PS&E) and already had a consultant on board. He stated it would most likely get environmental clearance in July or August of this year. After that, the City would be able to legally acquire the right-of-way which would allow TxDOT to look at the other aspects of the project to continue to move forward and keep it on schedule. He stated the project was planned for letting date of August of 2023 and until then, the Category 7 funds that the MPO would be using for the project would become fully available.

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

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

Jed Brown, RMA, gave a brief status update which was as follows:

1. FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. Turn Lanes – NTP for the contractor was provided by TxDOT at the end June. Currently, Anderson Columbia working from Big Bend to South of Killam Industrial Blvd. The Killam Turn Lanes portion of the project and the northern portion of the project began on the week of the 7th of December. TxDOT notified us on 1/11/22, that have pulled away from the work at Killam Industrial Blvd. and FM 1472. Their current focus of work is around Milo and FM 1472. The commencement of work a Killam Industrial Blvd. at FM 1472 will occur in May 2022.

2. Los Presidentes (Cuatro Vientos to Brownwood) – Construction ongoing. Our 7th construction progress meeting was held on 2/15/22. Currently, the project is scheduled for completion in 6/24/2022. **The project is 60% complete**. By phase, Phase 1 is 50% complete and Phase 2A is 90% complete.

3. Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) Acceleration/ Deceleration Lane Project - The project was awarded to Anderson Columbia in October 2021. Construction to commence on the week of the 14th of March.

4. Loop 20 South (Cuatro Vientos) TRZ Study Update – Awaiting approval of the Interlocal Agreement with the City of Laredo. Upon approval, work will commence on the TRZ Study.

5. Springfield Phase III – NTP was provided by the City of Laredo to AZAR Services, LLC on 12/15/21. Since NTP, clearing and grubbing of the project corridor has commenced. The first progress meeting occurred on 2/16/22. Substantial completion is scheduled for 8/29/2022.

6. Webb County Fair Grounds TIA – The RMA team met with the TxDOT Laredo District to discuss the future plans for US 59. Tentatively, upgrade of US 59 to IH 69W could begin by 2032 as part of the Ports-to-Ports Initiative. The RMA team also met with the County Consultant, Mr. Judd Gilpin. He informed the team that the current master plan for the Fair Grounds is being revised. The updated master plan is tentatively scheduled to be released by April 2022. The Team is focusing on the existing conditions model for the study. Traffic Counts and Traffic Movement Data was collected on 3/4 and 3/5 during the Laredo International Fair and Expo. Overall, timeframe for completion of the study is the end of 2022 to early 2023, depending on the availability of the updated master plan.

7. River Road Corridor Study – The Technical committee recommended placing the Study on the March MPO Policy Committee Agenda for Discussion and Possible Action. Upon approval by the MPO Policy Committee to partner with the RMA, the RMA will commence work on the Study. Duration of the study is estimated for 12 months.

8. Vallecillo Road – We are continuing to communicate with officials from the Texas Transportation Commission and higher regarding the importance of the project to the Laredo Greater Area and the State.

9. Other Items:
   The WCCL RMA would conduct its March Board Meeting on 3/25/22.

Dr. Martinez thanked the RMA in their participation with the Springfield extension.

Mr. Mendive congratulated Mr. Brown on his re-appointment as Chairman of the RMA.

B. Presentation by MPO Staff on the results of the survey ranking TxDOT's unfunded projects list for Laredo and Webb County.

Mr. Mendive gave a brief presentation and overview of the survey responses.

Unified Transportation Program (UTP)

- TxDOT's 10-year planning document
- Developed annually

- List of projects that TxDOT intends to develop or begin constructing over the next 10 years
- Provides information related to available funding for listed project.

Unfunded Projects Survey

Total Responses: 25

- MPO Policy Committee: **5**
- MPO Technical Committee: **7**
- Stakeholders (MPO Staff, RMA, & Webb County): **13**

Project Selection and Prioritization Process

- Projects are prioritized in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) using both objective and subjective measures.
- Do we need an annual prioritization process?
- Creating a prioritized project list using objective criteria.
- Staff is researching project selection and prioritization best practices.
- Work with the Technical Committee to create a new project selection and prioritization process.
    - i.e. Category 7 Project Selection Guidelines

VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Mendive provided the following report:

1. The audit of the Laredo Webb County Area MPO by TxDOT is ongoing. An entrance conference was held on January 14, 2022. The fieldwork is scheduled through the end of March, with a report release tentatively scheduled for April 2022.

2. The MPO Process Review is nearing completion. Bill Frawley of the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) was in Laredo from March 8th through March 10th. During his visit we met with the City of Laredo Finance Director and Interim Human Resources Director to discuss final details in preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding between the MPO and the City of Laredo (Fiscal Agent). We are also working with the HR Department to finalize a job description, create a position for the permanent full-time MPO Director, and determine the appropriate classification.

3. The El Metro Comprehensive Operation Analysis (COA) was adopted by the Mass Transit Board on February 22, 2022. MPO and El Metro staff will continue collaborating to help implement the recommendations of the COA. Additionally, we will continue to work closely with El Metro in our planning efforts to promote transit and improve multimodal mobility in our region.

4. MPO staff is working with TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming Traffic Analysis and TTI staff to develop our Travel Demand Model with a base year of 2018 and a forecast year of 2050 as part of the next Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) update.

5. Upcoming regularly scheduled meetings:
   - Active Transportation Committee – March 30, 2022
   - Technical Committee – April 12, 2022
   - Policy Committee – April 20, 2022

Dr. Martinez left the meeting at 2:32 p.m.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Cm. Perez made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 2:34 P.M.

Second:	Mayor Saenz
For:	4
Against:	0
Abstained:	0

Motion carried unanimously

Juan S. Mendive
Interim LWCAMPO Director

Pete Saenz, Mayor and LWCAMPO
Chairperson