

Laredo Urban Transportation Study

Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee
City of Laredo Council Chambers
1110 Houston St. -Laredo, Texas



MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 22, 2019 MEETING

Regular members present:

Honorable Pete Saenz, Mayor and LUTS Chairperson
Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge
Honorable George Altgelt, City Councilmember, District VII (joined the meeting at 2:47 p.m.)
Honorable Melisa Montemayor, District Administrator
David Salazar, TxDOT District Engineer
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

Regular members not present:

Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1
Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3
Honorable Roberto Balli, City Councilmember, District VIII

Ex-Officio Members Not Present:

Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42
Honorable Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, District 21
Honorable Tracy O. King, State Representative, District 80

Staff (Of Participating LUTS Agencies) Present:

City: Vanessa Guerra, City Planning/LUTS Staff
Angie Quijano, City Planning/LUTS Staff
Robert Eads, City of Laredo Traffic Safety
Robert Peña, City of Laredo Traffic Safety
Rosa Soto, Transit, El Metro

State: Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT
Ana Duncan, TxDOT
Danny Magee, TxDOT
Carlos Rodriguez, TxDOT
Mike Graham, TxDOT

County: Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineering
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering

Nathan R. Bratton, Webb County Civil Division

Others: Julia Wallace, Laredo Morning Times
Linda Teniente, City of Laredo Real Estate Division
Victoria Dominguez, City of Laredo Real Estate Division
Dr. Marte Martinez, City Councilmember, District VI
Mario Maldonado, Executive Director of Transportation
Ramon Chavez, Executive Director of Public Services
Antonio Rodriguez, HNTB, Inc.
Ruben Soto, Regional Mobility Authority (RMA)
Bill Frawley, Texas Transportation Institute

I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Honorable Mayor Saenz called the meeting to order at 1:36 p.m.

II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Vanessa Guerra, Acting MPO Director, called roll and verified a quorum existed.

III. CITIZEN COMMENT

Speakers are required to fill out witness cards, which must be submitted to MPO Staff no later than 15 minutes after the start 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 comment in the interest of order or time. Speakers may not transfer their minutes to any other speaker. Comments should be relevant to City 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 December 17, 2018.

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **approve** the minutes December 17, 2018.

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

Motion carried unanimously

B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2019-01 adopting the the pavement, bridge, and travel time reliability performance measures and targets, established by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), as required by Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act of 2015 (FAST), which are as follows:

Performance Measure	Baseline	2020 Target	2022 Target
Pavement on Interstate Highway (IH)			
% in "good" condition			66.40%
% in "poor" condition			0.30%
Pavement on Non- Interstate Highway (NHS)			
% in "good" condition	54.40%	52.00%	52.33%
% in "poor" condition	13.80%	14.30%	14.30%
NHS Bridge Deck Condition			
% in "poor" condition	0.88%	0.80%	0.80%
% in "good" condition	50.63%	50.58%	50.42%
Reliability			
IH Level of Travel Time Reliability	79.60%	61.20%	56.60%
Non-IH Travel Time Reliability			55.40%
Truck Travel Reliability	1.5	1.7	1.79

Judge Tijerina made a motion to open a public hearing.

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

Motion carried unanimously

Judge Tijerina made a motion to close the public hearing and approve Resolution No. MPO 2019-01 adopting the the pavement, bridge, and travel time reliability performance measures and targets, established by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), as required by Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act of 2015 (FAST).

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

Motion carried unanimously

C. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2019-02 adopting the Texas Department of Transportation’s 2019 targets for the five federal Safety Performance Measures, as listed below:

2019 Safety Targets	Number of Fatalities (FARS/CRIS/ARF DATA)	Rate of Fatalities (FARS/CRIS/ARF DATA)	Number of Serious Injuries (FARS/CRIS DATA)	Serious Injury Rate (CRIS DATA)	Total Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries (FARS/CRIS DATA)
2015	3,582	1.39	17,110	6.63	2,036
2016	3,776	1.39	17,602	6.49	2,301
2017	3,726	1.36	17,546	6.39	2,148
2018	3,891	1.46	18,130	6.64	2,309
2019	3,980	1.47	18,367	6.60	2,394
2019 Target as a 5 year Average:	3,791	1.414	17,751	6.550	2,237.6

Judge Tijerina made a motion to **open** a public hearing.

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

Motion carried unanimously

CM. Galo made a motion to **close** the public hearing and **approve** Resolution No. MPO 2019-02 adopting the Texas Department of Transportation’s 2019 targets for the five federal Safety Performance Measures.

Second: Judge Tijerina
 For: 5
 Against: 0
 Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously

D. Discussion with possible action on the River Road Project.

Ramon Chavez, City of Laredo Executive Director of Public Services, stated that 100 percent of the Right of Way (ROW) needed to be acquired. After acquiring the ROW, a funding source needed to be identified.

E. Discussion with possible action on Hachar-Reuthinger Road.

Vanessa Guerra, Acting MPO Director, stated that as it pertained to the Hachar section of the project, on July 16, 2018 City Council adopted Resolution No. 2018-R-96 authorizing the City Manager to execute a 380 agreement for the roadway traversing the 5,135 acres located West of IH 35 at the Unitec overpass across the Hachar Trust property to FM 1472. She stated she had spoken to Mr. Nicolas Van Steenberg, Project Manager, and he stated the contract would be executed upon the County initiating work on the County's portion of work.

Luis Perez Garcia, Webb County Engineer, stated that with regards to the Reuthinger section of the project, that the County had been working with TxDOT to move the project forward.

Mayor Saenz welcomed Councilmember Dr. Marte Martinez to the Committee.

Nathan Bratton, Webb County Civil Legal Division, stated all work completed by the consultant had been reviewed by Mr. Luis Perez Garcia. He also stated that he anticipated there would be no change orders on this project. Mr. Bratton stated the County had already spoke to the consultant and asked for a project initiation meeting. He also stated that the County had been speaking to Mr. Roberto Rodriguez from TxDOT to ascertain if a State Letter of Authorization was needed. He stated that if the letter is not needed, the County would need confirmation of same in writing. If a letter was needed, then TxDOT should move forward to provide the letter to the County.

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

A. Presentation by Bill Frawley of the Texas Transportation Institute on resiliency.

Bill Frawley, Texas Transportation Institute gave a brief presentation on resiliency.

He stated the following:

- Resilience or resiliency is the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to changing conditions and withstand, respond to, and recover rapidly from disruptions.
- The FAST Act requires agencies to take resiliency into consideration during transportation planning processes.

Steps to Incorporate Resiliency:

- **Assessing Criticality** - Stakeholder input is essential for identifying assets that are critical to the community.
- **Using Climate Data** - It is important to be able to concisely convey projected changes in climate in terms that are understandable to transportation practitioners and supported by robust science.

- **Assessing Vulnerability** - The use of indicators, which draw on existing data that is well-known to planners, can provide a good starting point for screening assets.

Mr. Frawley also stated the opportunities for incorporation of resiliency included regional vision and goals, long-range transportation plan, project evaluation and prioritization, and project development.

Strategies for Agencies with Limited Staff or Resources:

Resiliency strategies that may have a low or moderate cost and be more feasible for agencies with limited resources include:

- Update the existing project selection process to result in funding projects that contribute to resilience;
- Develop a template for standard operating procedures for emergency response that can be used by municipalities in the area;
- Develop a disaster mitigation plan; and
- Identify alternate routes based on existing infrastructure to improve redundancy of the network.
- Partnerships and Prioritization

What can the Laredo MPO do?

- Identify the vulnerable assets
- Determine solution feasibility
- Communicate
- Partner agencies (Including international partners)
- Advocacy groups
- Traveling public
- Develop Maps
- Enhance ITS messaging
- Coordinate with partner agencies

B. Status report to discuss the intersection of IH 35 and Mann Road and the traffic related issues at said intersection.

Robert Eads, Traffic Safety Department Director, stated the best thing to do, which would be costly, was to widen the Right-of-Way (ROW) for about 12 ft. He stated the other option would be for TxDOT to provide signage indicating for left lane must turn left. However, TxDOT mentioned its reluctance to follow this option as in doing that, it would cause backup to the off ramp of IH 35.

Danny Magee, TxDOT, stated that the current lane configuration was the best for current traffic. He stated that it might not be the best situation, but it was better to leave as is.

C. Status report by TxDOT on the Outer Loop Alignment Study.

Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT, gave a brief update and stated TxDOT had a work authorization with the consultant and at the moment the consultant was collecting data to update the schematic.

Judge Tijerina requested for TxDOT to send him a draft alignment for the outer loop.

D. Status report by TxDOT on ongoing projects.

Carlos Rodriguez, TxDOT, gave a brief presentation on the item which included:

Under Construction (Carlos G. Rodriguez, P.E.):

- SL20 Over KCS RR Grade Separation:
 - Work is 87% Completed. Anticipated Termination Date: Early Summer 2019
- US 59 Over IH 35 Overpass:
 - Work is 55% Completed. Anticipated Termination Date: Winter 2019
- SH 359 From City of Laredo to Duval County:
 - Work To start in Late January 2019. Anticipated Termination Date: Summer 2020
 - US 83 From Dimmit County Line to 3.4 MI S of SH 44:
 - Work To start in spring 2019. Anticipated Termination Date: Summer 2022

The major mobility projects (funded) included:

US 59 (Future IH-69W):

- 5 Overpasses (Interchanges):
 - Shiloh- \$21.5 million, Letting February 2022
 - Del Mar- \$24.1 million, Letting February 2022
 - University- \$16.9 million, Letting February 2022
 - Jacaman- \$19.7 million, Letting August 2021
 - Airport- \$14.8 million, Letting August 2024

IH 69:

- Widening IH 69 to 6 Lanes from World Trade GSA to IH 35. FM 1472 Improvements \$18.34 million, Letting August 2020

IH 35:

- Bridge Replacement and Widening to 6 lanes at UPRR- North of Shiloh - \$54.0 million, Letting December 2019

- Direct Connector # 5, West on US 59 to IH 35 South \$30.0 million, Letting December 2019
- IH 35 widening to 6 lanes at US 59 Interchange, \$5.0 million, Letting December 2019
- Bridge Replacement and Widening to 6 lanes at Uniroyal Interchange - \$65 million, Letting September 2021
- Bridge Replacement and Widening to 6 lanes at UPRR- Mile Marker 18 - \$75 million, Letting September 2021

Not Funded/ Under Development:

- IH 35/US 59 Construct Direct Connectors (4 Remaining) Approximately \$90 million
- IH 35 at Carriers and Unnamed Overpass, Widening of bridges Approximately \$45 million
- IH 35 from Mile Marker 20 to Mile Marker 30 (1 mile North of Border Patrol Inspection), Widening to 6 lanes Approximately \$70 million
- US 59 (Future IH69W) from Business 59 to International Blvd, Upgrade to Freeway (Main Lanes and Frontage Roads) approximately \$107 million
- SH 359 Widening (Undivided /Divided Highway) 4.0 Miles East of SL 20 to 5 Miles East approximately \$25 million
- US 83 Widening to 4 Lanes Divided From IH 35 to SH 255 approximately \$55 million
- FM 3338 Widening to 5 lanes From FM 1472 to SH 255 approximately \$45 million
- Under Study–Laredo Outer Loop approximately \$480 million

CM. Altgelt joined the meeting at 2:47 p.m.

Projects Funded To Let Up to FY 2023:

- Mobility: \$345 million
- Preventive Maintenance, Rehabilitation, and Safety: (up to FY 22) \$247 million

Projects Under Design Up to PS&E (Ready to Let)

- Mobility: \$437 million

Projects Under Study

- Laredo Outer Loop approximately \$480 million

E. Status report on the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).

Antonio Rodriguez, HNTB, Inc., and Ruben Soto, RMA Chairman, spoke in favor of the RMA. Mr. Rodriguez stated the RMA would be developing the grant application for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant program. He stated City of Laredo would be the primary sponsor and would submit the application. The project

to be submitted was the upgrade of Loop 20 (Future IH 69W) to Interstate Standards, from International Boulevard to University Boulevard, which equates to approximately 4 miles of roadway. The total construction cost of the project is approximately \$132,500,000. The 3 proposed overpasses in the project (Shiloh Drive, Del Mar, and University Boulevard) are currently funded in the Laredo MPO Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for \$79,531,845. The RMA has committed to contribute \$10,000,000 to the construction cost of the project. If the grant application is approved, the City of Laredo would have up to 18 months from the time of the award to obligate the \$7,500,000 to the construction of the project.

CM. Montemayor made a motion to **allow** the RMA to apply for Infra Grant and to prepare the application for the City of Laredo for the project of the upgrade of Loop 20 (Future IH 69W) to Interstate Standards from International Boulevard to University Boulevard which equates to approximately 4 miles to roadway.

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

Motion carried unanimously

VI. ADJOURNMENT

CM. Algelt made a motion to **adjourn** the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

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

Motion carried unanimously

Vanessa Guerra,
Acting MPO Director

Pete Saenz, Mayor and LUTS
Chairperson