

**RIO GRANDE VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL MEETING**

Minutes

August 10, 2023

I) CALL TO ORDER

Benjamin Worsham, Vice-Chairman (Cameron County) called the TAC Meeting to order at 10:05 AM. The TAC Meeting was held virtually.

II) ROLL CALL

RGVTAC Representatives in attendance were as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT	
ENTITY	VOTING MEMBERS
City of Mission	Abel Bocanegra
Cameron County	Benjamin Worsham, Vice Chairman
City of Brownsville	Absent
City of Edinburg	Mardoqueo Hinojosa
City of Harlingen	Ana Hernandez
City of McAllen	Rene Gonzalez
City of Pharr	Commissioner Roberto "Bobby" Carrillo
City of San Benito	Mayor Ricardo Guerra
Hidalgo County	Armando Garza, Jr.
Starr County	Absent
TxDot Pharr District	Dora E. Robles
Valley Metro	Nancy Sanchez
Cameron County RMA	Eric Davila
Hidalgo County RMA	Ramon Navarro
Brownsville Metro	Octavio Salazar
McAllen Metro	Jon Ray Bocanegra
Port of Brownville	Absent
Port of Harlingen	Amy Lynch
Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District	Absent
Cameron County Spaceport Dev Corp.	Absent
Guest	
RGVMPO Executive Director	Andrew A. Canon
RGVMPO Assistant Director	Luis Diaz
RGVMPO Staff	

III) PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments

IV) CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes

Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of:

- June 8, 2023

Vice-Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any more corrections to the TAC minutes of June 8, 2023. No corrections or comments were noted to the minutes of June 8, 2023, Ana Hernandez from the City of Harlingen made a motion to approve the minutes of June 8, 2023. The motion was seconded by Dora Robles with TxDOT Pharr District. Motion carried.

Approved September 14, 2023

2. Discussion and Action on FY 22-23 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Fernando Cantu summarized the FY 22-23 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and advised the board that MPO staff is requesting approval for UPWP. He highlighted that the McAllen Metro staff will conduct a comprehensive study to assess current service levels and explore the viability of implementing high-capacity transit to restore and surpass pre-COVID-19 service standards. The project will be funded through 5307-9a-5307- Urbanized Area Formula – Discr. Planning (ARPA).

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any questions. After no questions or comments were presented, the Vice Chairman asked for a motion to approve. Nancy Sanchez with Valley Metro made a motion to approve, and it was seconded by the Mayor of the City of San Benito Ricardo Guerra. Motion carried.

3. Discussion and Action on RGVMPPO Bylaws

Fernando Cantu provided an overview of the RGVMPPO Bylaws' revisions that reflect the latest 2020 Census population data. With this latest census, Edinburg will be granted an additional vote for surpassing a population of 100,000. Mr. Cantu added that the Bylaws revisions also include the necessary adjustments to properly incorporate the Starr County bylaws.

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any more questions. After no questions or comments were presented, the Vice-Chairman asked for a motion to approve. Mardoqueo Hinojosa with the City of Edinburg made a motion to approve, and it was seconded by the Mayor from the City of San Benito Ricardo Guerra. Motion carried.

4. Request for Proposal (RFP)

Fernando Cantu provided a review of the three Requests for Proposals (RFP) that would be going out at the beginning of January. The studies are as follows:

- Planning study for the proposed Southwest Loop around the City of Weslaco
- Updating the Hidalgo County Commuter Rail Feasibility Study for the Rio Grande Valley MPO Area
- Developing a 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the RGVMPPO. We seek a collaborative partnership with a skilled and experienced vendor to ensure the successful execution of this project.

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there was a board for the commuter rail still in existence and Andrew Canon responded that the board seize existence once the funds lapse. However, the RGVMPPO would explore having a subcommittee for this study.

The Vice Chairman followed by asking about how the study came about. Andrew Canon explained that it was internal after RGVMPPO staff looked at studies that had been done before and agreed that it would be prudent to work towards that given that lately there have been talks about a passenger through the valley.

Jon Ray Bocanegra with McAllen Metro chimed in to comment and agree with Andrew's point and support the rail Feasibility study.

Javier Dominguez added that through research and communication with representative Martinez, the last time the commuter rail district applied for the funding to complete the study was in 2011 and offered and signed in 2019. Furthermore, a passenger rail is obtained as the bill is written, it would be the COG board overseeing the regional transit authority. In conclusion, it looks like some of the funding is other than sales tax.

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any questions. After no questions or comments were presented, the Chairman confirmed that the item was for information purposes only and asked for a motion to acknowledge the report. The motion was made by Hidalgo County RMA, Ramon Navarro and it was second by CCRMA, Eric Davila.

5. Presentation of the Project Videos

Fernando Cantu showcased two videos, offering a visual representation of RGVMPPO's latest roadway and trail projects. The informative videos provided valuable insights into the proposed projects but also served to introduce a powerful tool obtained by the MPO for effective communication and stakeholder engagement.

He added that this new software was purchased as part of the RGVMPPO's commitment to supporting local government and is offered upon request at no cost.

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any questions. After no questions or comments were presented, the Vice-Chairman confirmed that the item was for information purposes only and asked for a motion to acknowledge the report. The motion was made by Hidalgo County, Armando Garza Jr. and it was second by Abel Bocanegra from the City of Mission.

6. Presentation on New 2022 Crash Data Dashboard

Alma Provencio showcased the new interactive ArcGIS Dashboard illustrating 2022 Crash Data for Starr, Hidalgo, and Cameron counties. Mrs. Provencio provided a review of the dashboard highlighting that it was created using the 2022 Crash Records Information System (C.R.I.S.) portal. The dashboard is on the RGVMPPO website and is user-friendly, and interactive. It displays a Map that outlines the Metropolitan Area Boundary (MAB) and within it the crashes that happened in the region. The dashboard can compute Crash Data statistics such as Total Crashes, number of deaths, number of crashes per county, and the vehicle type of crash. Data can also be filtered by city, or a specific city can be looked up. Mrs. Provencio closed by encouraging members to utilize the tool and share it with their organizations.

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there is anything that differentiates the dashboard from C.R.I.S. Portal. Mrs. Provencio pointed out that it is different because it is specific to our area and the ease of user access, and it is understandable. The vice-chairman suggested that it would be a good idea to be able to overlay information.

Ramon Navarro asked if the data is real-time data. Mrs. Provencio explained that the data is provided on a yearly basis around February and at that point is uploaded to the dashboard.

Eric Davila asked if there was a way to export the raw data and Mrs. Provencio that there was a function within the dashboard and that she would turn it on.

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any questions. After no questions or comments were presented, the Vice-Chairman confirmed that the item was for information purposes only and asked for a motion to acknowledge it. The motion was made by Eric Davila with the CCRMA, and it was second by Hidalgo County, Armando Garza Jr.

7. Discussion on IIJA Infrastructure BIL, specifically on the Safe Streets for All Grant Program

Javier Dominguez provided an update on the status of the Action Plan Grant that was awarded to develop the MPO's first regional comprehensive safety action plan. He highlighted that the goal of this plan is to identify which 28 proven safety countermeasures that are provided by FHWA might seem relevant to the area and how can the RGVMPPO identify areas to implement other projects to go back and apply for an implementation grant.

Andrew Canon added that being mindful that \$250,000 would not get a good regional action plan, but as everything goes along the difference would be taken out of the PL funds, which are funds that can be used for studies, and a local match is not required.

Ana Hernandez asked about the timeline for the project kickoff. Mr. Dominguez disclosed that the MOUs should be signed by the end of the month, then about 90 days of the RP process, then a kickoff to select the consultants. Andrew Canon added that it all depends on the time that the local funds are received.

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any questions. After no questions or comments were presented, the Vice-Chairman confirmed that the item was for information purposes only and asked for a motion to acknowledge it. The motion was made by Ramon Navarro with the HCRMA, and it was seconded by Ana Hernandez with the City of Harlingen.

8. Update on the Performance Management Framework Project

Luis Diaz presented a revision for IBTC FC request classification from principal arterial to major collector and amending previous limits from 365 Tollway at FM 493 to IH-2. A portion of IBTC is currently functionally classified on FM 3072 / Dicker Road from the 365 Tollway to FM 907 as a major collector therefore requiring a limit change. (Resolution 2023-15 to be presented to Policy Committee for Approval on August 30, 2023) The official Federal Functional Classification Packet is being developed by RGVMPPO staff in coordination with the HCRMA.

Ramon Navarro chimed in to compliment the RGVMPPO staff for all the due diligence done through the process. He added that he appreciated all the attention that has been given to the project and the assistance provided with dealing with the agencies.

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any questions. After no questions or comments were presented, the Vice Chairman asked for a motion to approve. Ramon Navarro with HCRMA made a motion to approve, and it was seconded by Armando Garza Jr. with Hidalgo County. Motion carried.

9. Discussion and Action of Revision of Federal Functional Classification (FC) request of Morrison Road CSJ#0921-06-291 CCRMA.

Luis Diaz presented a revision of Functional Classification limits for Morrison Road from previous limits of FM 1847 to FM 511; to new request limits From FM 1847 To Dana Avenue (Resolution 2023-16 to be presented to Policy Committee for Approval on August 30, 2023) Official Federal Functional Classification Packet is being developed by RGVMPPO staff in coordination with the CCRMA.

Vice Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any questions. After no questions or comments were presented, the Vice Chairman asked for a motion to approve. Eric Davila with CCRMA made a motion to approve, and it was seconded by Nancy Sanchez with Valley Metro. Motion carried.

V) RGVMPPO Executive Director's Report and Updates

- **Budget**
- **MPO101 summary and thank everyone who attended.**
- **ATG in town for 8/15/23 for project scoring workshop**
- **Update on workgroup on the TASA process for planning funds**
- **Status Reports for the RMAs will be moved to quarterly starting next month.**
- **Sept. 19th, 2023, Better Border Conference-EI Paso, TX**
- **Jane Nelson reception August 21st.**

Armando Garza Jr. chimed in to congratulate RGVMPPO staff for the great job done with MPO101.

Ramon Navarro asked if it was a good idea to continue to provide the status report to the board.

Eric Davila added that there is no problem at all given that the report is prepared regardless.

The vice-chairman requested copies of the MPO101 booklets and Andrew Canon confirmed that they would be present at the Policy Board meeting.

VI) Status Reports

A. TxDOT Project Status Report

Dora Robles provided a brief update for TxDot Projects.

Mrs. Robles provided an update to TxDOT's monthly letting update, highlighting that some changes to the report included within the package that includes some headways have been done with the TASA projects. She added that there are two projects letting in November: Olmitos and Las Palmas sidewalks. Projects listed in September would be moved to October and the project listed in December would be letting to October.

Mrs. Robles thanked the RGVMPPO's for their cooperation in all these projects closely with TxDOT. She advised the board and meeting attendees that TxDOT would be requesting fall construction estimates update and to be on the lookout for the invite coming from project managers. Mrs. Robles added the upcoming, starting 24-month letting commitment.

No questions were posed after the presentation.

B. Cameron County RMA

Eric Davila (Cameron County RMA) provided a brief updated presentation on projects that are currently within the Cameron County RMA. Mr. Davila highlighted some of the projects in his slide presentation.

- Veterans POV Expansion active construction project.
- SH 550 GAP 2 Project CSJ: 0684-01-068
- East Loop CSJ:0921-06-315
- Flor de Mayo Bridge
- Free Trade Bridge
- Old Alice Rd SJ: 0921-06-290
- FM509 CSJ: 0921-06-253
- Dana Road CSJ: 0921-06-330
- 1846-William Road
- SPI 2nd Access
- Harlingen Rail Improvements Project
- S. Parallel Corridor PH II
- S. Parallel Corridor PH III
- US 281 Connector
- West Blvd – Roadway
- Whipple Road
- FM 1847 Sidewalk Project
- Los Fresnos Hike & Bike Trail
- Outer Parkway

Mr. Davila closed by stating that everything else can be found on the report included within the agenda packet.

No questions were posed after the presentation.

C. Hidalgo County RMA

Ramon Navarro (Hidalgo County RMA) provided an updated presentation on projects that are currently within the Hidalgo County RMA.

- 365 Toll Project
- IBTC Project Over

No questions were posed after the presentation.

VII) NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Luis Diaz informed the board and attendees about the kickoff of the annual thoroughfare amendment process. A notification email will be sent out about the virtual meeting that will be taking place.

VIII) ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the RGV TAC Members, the Chairman called for a motion to adjourn. Dora E. Robles with TxDOT Pharr District made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:03am. The motion was seconded by Nancy Sanchez with Valley Metro, meeting was adjourned.