

**RIO GRANDE VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON MEETING
April 11, 2024 - Minutes**

I) CALL TO ORDER

Benjamin Worsham – Chairman (Cameron County) called the TAC Meeting to order at 10:00 AM. The TAC Meeting was held in person.

II) ROLL CALL

RGVTAC Representatives in attendance were as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT	
ENTITY	VOTING MEMBERS
Cameron County	Benjamin Worsham, Chairman
Hidalgo County RMA	Absent
Hidalgo County	Absent
City of Brownsville	Juan Peña Jr.
City of McAllen	Rene Gonzalez
City of Edinburg	Tomas Reyna
City of Harlingen	Absent
City of Mission	Absent
City of Pharr	Absent
City of San Benito	Johanna Maldonado
Starr County	Absent
TxDot Pharr District	Dora E. Robles
Valley Metro	Absent
Cameron County RMA	Absent
Brownsville Metro	Simon Ortiz
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 Interim- Executive Director	Luis Diaz
LRGDVC	Javier Dominguez
RGVMPO Staff	

III) PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments

IV) CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of March 14, 2024

Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Chairman had the following correction for the minutes; Correct the agency listed for Benjamin Worsham from Hidalgo County RMA to Cameron County. Correct the name of the moderator from Ramon Navarro to Ben Worsham.

No other corrections or comments were noted to the minutes. Item tabled and would be brought up for approval during the next TAC meeting.

Approved: May 9th, 2024

B. Discussion and Action to recommend transit projects for 5310 Program Funds

Fernando Cantu presented the scores from the subcommittee's review of two submissions for the Weslaco Loop Corridor Study RFP. ETSI received a score of 92.6, while TEDSI received an 85.9. Fernando requested a recommendation from the TAC members to take to the Transportation Policy Board for approval.

Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any questions regarding the scoring, to which there were none.

He then asked for a motion either to approve by scoring or any other motion.

Juan Peña Jr. from the City of Brownsville made a motion to approve ETSI based on the highest score, which was seconded by Rene Gonzalez from the City of McAllen. Chairman Benjamin Worsham confirmed approval of ETSI.

C. Discussion and Possible Action regarding Category 7 Utilization & Carryover

Eva Garcia provided a recap and detailed presentation on the Texas administrative code amendments related to transportation funding. She discussed the annual review of carryover funds, specifically focusing on Category 7 funding. Eva explained that funds exceeding 200% of the risk would be potentially transferred and highlighted the importance of utilization strategies to decrease carryover. She outlined the goals and progress made in increasing utilization rates, noting a significant increase in estimated utilization for fiscal year 2024. Eva also discussed projected utilization rates for future years and their impact on carryover thresholds.

Chairman Ben Worsham opened the floor for questions or discussion regarding Eva Garcia's presentation. No questions were raised by the attendees.

He inquired if Eva Garcia was requesting any action from the committee. Eva clarified that while she kept it as a possible action item, no specific action was required at this time. Chairman Worsham confirmed that no action was needed, and the meeting proceeded to the next agenda item.

D. Discussion and Action for approval of Federal Functional Classification requests of SL 195 Projects Phase I and II.

Luis Diaz presented two requests from TxDOT for SL195 projects in Starr County: Phase I from FM 3167 to FM 755, and Phase II from FM 649 to FM 3167. Both segments were requested to be classified as rural principal arterials. Mr. Diaz clarified that while both projects were presented as one item, they would require separate resolutions at the Policy Board due to their being different phases.

Chairman Ben Worsham opened the floor for questions or discussion regarding Luis Diaz's presentation. No questions were raised by the attendees.

Tomas Reyna from the City of Edinburg motioned to approve the requests. Juan Peña Jr. from the City of Brownsville seconded the motion. Chairman Ben Worsham confirmed the motion, and it passed unanimously.

V) REPORTS AND UPDATES

A. Presentation and Discussion regarding Active Transportation Media Awareness Campaigns (Education and Encouragement)

Eva Garcia provided an overview of the Active Transportation Media Awareness Campaigns, focusing on education and encouragement initiatives. She highlighted the importance of promoting walking and biking activities, along with the benefits they offer in terms of community health, connectivity, and accessibility. Key recommendations included promoting events like walking and bike months, developing media awareness campaigns, and utilizing social media platforms to promote existing trails. Eva emphasized the need for better communication and marketing strategies to raise awareness about available trails and encourage their use.

Chairman Ben Worsham suggested the use of story maps to present trail information effectively. He also proposed presenting these ideas to the Policy Board for consideration.

Rene Gonzalez suggested utilizing KMC maps with Google Earth for improved accessibility. Eva Garcia welcomed these suggestions and emphasized the need for better communication strategies to inform the public about available trails.

B. RGVMPO Executive Director's Report and Updates

Luis Diaz provided an update on the budget, noting that spending was well within the allocated amount. He reported that \$606,148 out of the \$885,217 budget had been spent, representing 14.27% of the total budget.

Luis also shared personal news, informing the members that he and his wife are expecting their third son in May. He mentioned that this might affect his availability for the next Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting but assured the board that necessary arrangements would be made to ensure the smooth continuation of proceedings.

Additionally, Luis mentioned the request for GIS data updates, highlighting the importance of receiving any amendments or changes to city limit data or annexations. He encouraged members to send over any relevant information to facilitate the update of the interactive map.

Chairman Ben Worsham thanked Luis for the report and opened the floor for any questions or comments. No further discussion took place.

C. TxDOT Project Status Report

Dora Robles provided an overview of the current TxDOT projects and upcoming lettings. She mentioned a busy letting month with a project in the city of Pharr, specifically the Pharr International Twin Bridge, scheduled for the end of the month. Looking ahead to May, Dora highlighted the inclusion of two projects, Nolana Loop, and Liberty Boulevard, which have been moved from previous fiscal years to fiscal year 2024 and are set to be let at the end of May.

Dora also reported progress on the two TASA projects with Cameron County and the city of Pharr, which need to be re-let. She expressed optimism about nearing a resolution and anticipated providing an update at the next meeting. Additionally, she mentioned a June letting in Starr County for a project on US 83, as well as upcoming projects in August.

Chairman Ben Worsham thanked Dora for the report and opened the floor for any questions or comments. No further discussion took place.

VI) NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

VII) ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the RGVMPO TAC Members, Chairman Ben Worsham called for a motion to adjourn. Tomas Reyna with the City of Edinburg made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:28am. The motion was seconded by Juan Peña with the City of Brownsville, meeting was adjourned.