

**RIO GRANDE VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday December 04, 2024 - Minutes**

I) CALL TO ORDER

Benjamin Worsham – Chairman (Cameron County) called the TAC Meeting to order at 10:31 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	Ramon Navarro
Hidalgo County	Jorge Pena
City of Brownsville	Juan “Jonny” Peña Jr.
City of McAllen	Rene Gonzalez
City of Edinburg	Tomas D. Reyna
City of Harlingen	Luis Vargas
City of Mission	Absent
City of Pharr	Maria Rangel
City of San Benito	Absent
Starr County	Absent
TxDot Pharr District	Norma Y. Garza
Valley Metro	Nancy Sanchez
Cameron County RMA	Eric Davila
Brownsville Metro	Gennie Garcia
McAllen Metro	Jon Ray Bocanegra
Port of Brownville	Absent
Port of Harlingen	Absent
Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District	Absent
Cameron County Spaceport Dev Corp.	Absent
GUESTS/STAFF	
RGVMPO Executive Director	Michael Medina
RGVMPO Staff	

III) PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments

IV) CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of October 10, 2024. Chairman Benjamin Worsham asked if there were any corrections to the minutes and no corrections or comments were noted to the minutes.

Ramon Navarro from Hidalgo County RMA made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, which was seconded by Juan Peña from the City of Brownsville.

B. Discussion and Action on FY 24-25 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment #4 Management Process

Fernando Cantu presented the fourth amendment to the FY 24-25 Unified Planning Work Program.

- Key Changes:
 - McAllen Metro:
 - New Subtask 1.8: Adding a new subtask to cover the salary of a transit planner using Section 5307 funds for the next 12+ months. This is required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for planning studies.
 - Walkability Grant: Adding a grant awarded to McAllen Metro to enhance walkability around the Central Station in downtown McAllen.
 - RGVMPO:
 - Performance-Based Planning: Allocating \$40,000 of Planning Organization (PO) funds to support ongoing performance-based planning efforts. This task was previously used for consulting but will now be used by staff.
- Administrative Updates: Updating staff charges.

Tomas Reyna from the City of Edinburg made a motion to approve the UPWP Amendment #4 as presented, which was seconded by Rene Gonzalez from the City of McAllen. The item was unanimously approved.

C. Discussion and Action on the 2026 UTP – CAT 2 Project List

Norma Garza presented the proposed list of Category 2 projects for the 2026 UTP call for projects.

- Submission Deadline: December 6, 2024 (to the Texas Transportation Planning Partners (TPP) group).
- Construction Authority Projects:
 - Total requested amount: Under \$85 million.
 - Project Adjustments:
 - Some projects deauthorized due to decreased Statewide Mobility Scores (SMS).
 - Most projects saw increased costs.
 - Two projects deferred to a later plan year (FY2036) due to significant cost escalations:
 - FM 1732 (Cameron County):
 - FM 925 (Western side, from SH 681 to Walnut Street)
- Develop Authority Projects:
 - These projects are not fully funded with Category 2 funds and may be supplemented with other funding categories or developer contributions.
 - Deferred Projects:
 - SH 48/Highway 4511 (Cameron County): A widening project deferred due to a lack of active project development and a pending rehab/center median project in the same limits.
 - FM 364 (La Homa Road, Hidalgo County): Deferred due to a lack of active project development.
- Funds:
 - Approximately \$99 million for construction authority projects and a significant amount for develop authority projects are not covered by Category 2 funds.
 - These amounts will be leveraged through other funding categories or developer contributions.
 - Overall, there is a difference of approximately \$346 million that will be covered through these alternative sources.

Velinda Reyes (Hidalgo County Pct. 4):

- Asked for clarification on the 2026-2029 timeframe for Construction Authority projects and whether they are in the current Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Highlighted two projects important to Hidalgo County:
 - FM 88 (SH 1925 to 5th Avenue) - Precinct 1 project
 - FM 2220 (SH 107 to Mile 5) - Precinct 4 project

Velinda Reyes Inquired about the consideration of these projects in the proposed list. Norma Garza clarified that the 2026-2029 timeframe refers to the years the UTP will cover (September 2025 to August 2029), and that the current TIP covers 2025-2028. Norma Garza confirmed that both FM 88 and FM 2220 are included in the proposed list and explained the funding breakdown. Ms. Garza assured Ms. Reyes that as long as the projects are listed, they are being funded and moving forward.

Eric Davila asked for clarification on the status of FM 1732 since it was removed from the Construction Authority list, he inquired whether it would be moved to the Develop Authority list.

Norma Garza explained that FM 1732 would be moved to the Planned Authority list because Develop Authority funds are limited and represent the balance of the allocation after programmed projects. Ms. Garza also clarified that moving the project to Planned Authority takes it out of the UTP and sets the implementation year to 2036. She emphasized that under Planned Authority, they are still allowed to continue schematic and environmental development for FM 1732.

Chairman Worsham called for a motion to approve the 2026 UTP – CAT 2 Project List. A motion was made by Eric Davila from Cameron County RMA. The motion was seconded by Tomas Reyna from the City of Edinburg. The motion was unanimously approved.

D. Discussion and Action to recommend a call for planning studies for inclusion in the FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Task 5 Special Studies.

Luis Diaz presented the recommendation for a call for planning studies to be included in the FY 2025 UPWP Task 5 (Special Studies). He highlighted that funds have been identified for planning studies, available to all planning partners. Mr. Diaz emphasized that these funds are strictly for the planning phase of project development, not for any other phases.

- UPWP Funds:
 - \$1.9 million is currently available in the UPWP.
 - Some of these funds may be needed to address potential findings from the upcoming Transportation Management Area (TMA) certification review.
 - Any excess funds after the review may be used to cover planning studies requested by partners.

Mr. Diaz added that if approved, the call for planning studies would be opened at the beginning of 2025.

Chairman Ben Worsham asked for more information about the types of studies that could be funded under "Special Studies." Luis Diaz clarified that Task 5 has been used in the past for various planning studies, such as corridor studies, feasibility studies, or any other planning activities. He reiterated that the funds can only be used for the planning phase and not for project implementation. He also mentioned that opening the call for projects would allow them to potentially utilize the remaining \$77,000 within Task 5.

Chairman Worsham called for a motion to approve the item. A motion was made by Nancy Sanchez from Valley Metro. The motion was seconded by Ramon Navarro from the Hidalgo County RMA. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

A. TxDOT Project Status Report

Norma Garza presented the TxDOT Letting Report.

December 2024: A couple of local projects with the county.

January 2025: US 281 projects (first project in the corridor in a while).

April 2025: FM 494 widening project (Category 2).

August 2025:

- Stanger Street project in San Benito (state-led project with a bridge and sidewalks).
- Coordination with the Hidalgo County RMA is required.

September 2025:

- First phase of SH 195 (previously pushed out).
- SH 107 project (from FM 495 to FM 1924).

October 2025: FM 676 segment (from SH 107 to Taylor Road).

No questions or concerns were raised by the TAC members.

VI. NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Luis Diaz reminded the TAC members that the Transportation Policy Board meeting was rescheduled to Thursday December 12, 2024.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the RGVMPPO 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 10:55am. The motion was seconded by Eric Davila with the Cameron County RMA, the meeting was adjourned.