

## FULL POLICY BOARD AGENDA

### POLICY BOARD MEETING WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2023 – 1:30 PM RIO GRANDE VALLEY

#### METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RGVMPO)

*Pursuant to Chapter 551, Title 5 of the Texas Government Code, the Texas Open Meeting Act, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of the RGVMPO POLICY BOARD will be held In Person at the LRGVDC Main Campus, 301 W. Railroad Street, Building B, Ken Jones Executive Board Room in Weslaco, TX.*

**I) CALL TO ORDER**

Judge Eddie Trevino (Cameron County) called the TPB meeting to order at 1:30 P.M. The TPB Meeting was held in person at the Ken Jones Board Room.

**II) ROLL CALL**

**RGVMPO TPB Representatives in attendance were as follows:**

<b>Members Present:</b>	
<b>Entity</b>	<b>Individual</b>
Cameron County	Judge Eddie Treviño, Jr. (Chairman) -PRESENT Com. David Garza (Alternate)
Hidalgo County	Comm. David L. Fuentes (Vice-Chairman) PRESENT Comm. Ellie Torres (Alternate) -PRESENT
Starr County	Judge Eloy Vera (Designee) Reyna Guerra Proxy – PRESENT
City of Brownsville	Helen Ramirez, Interim City Manager (Designee) Nurith Galonsky-Pinana (Alternate) PRESENT
City of Edinburg	Mayor Ramiro Garza (Designee) - PRESENT Comm. Daniel “Dan” Diaz (Alternate)
City of Harlingen	Mayor Norma Sepulveda (Designee) -PRESENT Gabriel Gonzalez (Alternate) –
City of McAllen	Mayor Javier Villalobos (Designee) Roel “Roy” Rodriguez (Alternate) - PRESENT
City of Mission	Norie Gonzalez Garza (Designee) - PRESENT Comm. Jessica Ortega- Ochoa (Alternate)
<b>City of Pharr</b>	<b>Mayor Ambrosio “Amos” Hernandez (Designee) ABSENT Comm. Daniel Chavez (Alternate)</b>
<b>City of San Benito</b>	<b>Mayor Ricardo “Rick” Guerra (Designee) ABSENT Manuel De La Rosa (Alternate)</b>
Cameron County RMA	Frank Parker, Jr. (Designee) – PRESENT Arturo A. Nelson (Alternate)
Hidalgo County RMA	S. David Deanda Jr. (Designee) – PRESENT Ramon Navarro, V. (Proxy)
Valley Metro	Maribel Contreras (Designee) – PRESENT Jose Luis Silva (Alternate)
TxDOT Pharr District	Pedro “Pete” Alvarez (Designee) - PRESENT Rex A. Costley (Alternate)
<b>EX-OFFICIO</b>	
<b>RGV Partnership</b>	<b>Daniel Silva – ABSENT</b>
LRGVDC	Manuel Cruz
<b>GUEST</b>	
Lee Engineering	James Robertson
TxDOT	Dallas Teston
<b>Others Present:</b>	
RGVMPO	Andrew Canon
RGVMPO	Staff

**III) PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

IV) **CONSENT AGENDA**

**1. Approval of Minutes**

Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of December 14, 2022

Judge Trevino Chairman (Cameron County) asked if there were any corrections to the Policy minutes of December 14, 2022.

**No corrections were noted to the minutes of December 14, 2022. Motion to approve was made by Hidalgo County David L. Fuentes and was seconded Starr County Reyna Guerra. The item was unanimously approved.**

**2. RFP Contract Approval**

Fernando Cantu asked for action to approve two contracts: Performance Measures and Comprehensive Sustainability & Resilience Study. Mr. Cantu informed of meeting with TAC and the recommendation of consultant Alliance Transportation Group. He added that selected consultant for FM 509 TEDSI would be held back until January once all items are received.

Judge Treviño asked Mr. Cantu for the recommendation and ATG was recommended.

**After no questions or comments were presented; motion was made by Hidalgo County David Fuentes and second by the mayor of Edinburg Ramiro Guerra. Item unanimously approved.**

**3. GIS Data Request**

Fernando Cantu presented the form that will be used to request GIS data from all municipalities. He informed the board that the data is one more tool for TAC and Policy meeting reports and presentations. Mr. Cantu went over the form, reviewing the main points and the reference materials.

**(Information item only, no action required.)**

**Chairman Judge Trevino requested for form to be updated to include contact information for RGVMPPO staff. Mr. Cantu confirmed that the form will be updated by the end of the week.**

**4. City of McAllen – 20185 Traffic Improvement Bond**

City of McAllen Marlene Garza gave an overview of the City of McAllen's Traffic Improvement bond that was passed in 2018 to improve traffic flow on major city streets.

Dr. James Robertson with Lee Engineering join in the presentation providing a summary of improvement that helped improve traffic flow along corridors within the City of McAllen limits. He mentioned that the improvements included upgrades to traffic signal infrastructure, communications to traffic signals with software that provides updates on intersection performance and signal timing study.

**After no questions were offered, Chairman Judge Trevino confirmed that the presentation was only of reporting purposes and no action was required, but he requested a motion to acknowledge the report. Motion was made by City of Edinburg's mayor Ramiro Guerra and second by TxDot Pharr District Engineer Pedro "Pete" Alvarez. Report acknowledged.**

**5. CMP Workshop Tier 2 Follow Up**

Luis Diaz gave an update on the CMP Congestion Management Process Tier II. He highlighted that the current stage of the process is collection of data and synchronization. Data collection will be completed in January and during April and May, CoPlan will be providing guidance on signalized intersection timing plans. By September the plan will wrap up and final data will be received as well as comparisons with the previous study. He also highlighted that this moment is crucial for detention systems should be looked at and repaired in time for April when the guidance will be provided for the timing plans. It's important to consider this to make sure that the timing plans are accurate.

At the end of the presentation, Mr. Diaz provided the contact information for Steve with CoPlan.

After no more questions or comments were presented; Chairman Judge Trevino thanked Mrs. Garcia and moved to item 6.

**This item was informational only, no action required.**

## 6. 2022 Thoroughfare Plan Amendment Process Update

Luis Diaz reviewed the Thoroughfare Plan Amendment plan process. He confirmed that the process has wrapped up and that the RGVMPPO has received 11 amendments. The item will be presented for approval in front of the TAC and Policy board by next month. Final approval will be done at county commissioners and then in April all the amendments received will be applied. And starting in August 2023 the whole process will start again. Mr. Diaz pinpoint that after the approval in April is a good time for all local governments to start reviewing all thoroughfare plan data when all amendments will be applied.

When the floor was opened for questions, chairman Judge Treviño asked if the December 21<sup>st</sup> deadline was met, and Mr. Diaz confirmed.

**After no questions or comments were presented, a motion was requested to acknowledge report. motion was made by TxDot Pharr District Engineer Pedro “Pete” Alvarez and second by Hidalgo County Frank Parker, Jr. Item unanimously approved.**

## 7. Presentation and Discussion on TxDOT’s State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) Loan Program

Informational item was introduced by RGVMPPO’s staff Christopher Nelson. Mr. Nelson introduced presenter Dallas Teston with TxDOT SIB Program.

Dallas Teston presented the basic of the low-cost transportation financial tool. He gave an overview of the background of SIB loan program, the benefits, and the process to obtaining a loan. He made emphasis on seeing this type of loan as a low-cost transportation financial tool to have in your toolbox. Mr. Teston also informed that the loans are from a revolving fund, and it uses non-federal dollars, therefore using the loan does not have additional state requirements. He also reviewed statistics of the program and facts. Through the presentation Mr. Teston highlighted the type of borrowers they have as well as statistics of borrowers around the state.

He also reviewed the eligible uses of the dollars of the loan and examples of local matches to the program. Mr Teston reviewed the advantages of borrowing from the Texas SIB, highlighting low cost, prepayment flexibility, rate set at application time at a point below market rate, and EDC adjustment discount. Presenter reviewed in detail the process of the loan application and after approval process.

Frank Parker with Cameron County RMA asked about the advantages of SIB over bonds. Mr. Teston asked that each scenario would have to be reviewed by each entity’s own financial advisor. He added that their rates are available by contacting his office.

Ramiro Garza with the City of Edinburg asked about the main source of collateral for SIB loans. Anything that is eligible to be pledged for transportation project as long as the eligible pledge supports the debt. Mr. Garza asked if an SIB loan can be used as a one source of funding or if it must be for the full project. Mr. Teston confirmed that yes it can be the sole source of funding or part of a large project.

Judge Treviño asked if using an SIB loan would have a potential negative effect on the overall rating of the organization. Mr. Teston responded that it depends on each individual situation, but basically if an organization can prove that they can take on additional debt and pay for it as part of the financial review, then a negative impact would not be seen.

Further discussion was done about details about SIB loans and Mr. Teston confirmed that he is available for questions or assistance about the loan.

TxDot Pharr District Engineer Pedro “Pete” Alvarez exhorted everyone to take advantage of the opportunity and he reference the last meeting’s comment by the Chairman of Transportation Terry Canales. Judge Trevino confirmed with Mr. Teston that the commission that makes the approval is TxDot and not the SIB Commission.

After Dallas Teston’s presentation Christopher Nelson reviewed the economic side of SIB loans and the benefits to organizations. He emphasized that it is more cost-effective to take out the loan now than wait and pay an inflated cost.

Judge Trevino asked if the environmental cost is an eligible use. Mr. Nelson asked Mr. Teston to go ahead and answer the question. Mr. Teston informed that the commission does prefer a clear environmental for the SIB loan. He added that it is an eligible use in a technical sense, but the commission does want the environmental components done before approval.

After conversation about environmental clearance, Judge Treviño asked Mr. Nelson to continue with his presentation at which he concluded by underlining that using SIB would be cheaper than waiting to have the funds available.

**Motion to acknowledge the report was made by TxDot Pharr District Engineer Pedro “Pete” Alvarez and second by Ramon Navarro with Hidalgo County RMA.**

At 2:20pm commissioner Ellie Torres took over representation of Hidalgo County, replacing commissioner David Fuentes.

## 8. Presentation on TASA

Eva Garcia reported on the status of FY2019-2020 and FY2021-2022 TASA projects. The main highlights of the status of the projects are that we still pending the final execution of two AFA Amendments,

Mrs. Garcia also review the status of 0921-02-430 LRGVDC Hidalgo Co. Mobility Plan, procurement plan has been approved by TxDOT. They are addressing comments for the bid documents before going out for RFP.

For 0921-02-431 McAllen Jackson Rd. H&B Trail Phase II. Project continues to develop, meeting with the railroad agreement and their environmental still under review. They are working on their 30% comments to submit 60% by February 16<sup>th</sup>.

For 0921-02-432 Pharr Tri-City Ped. Safety Improvements II: overall they have to go back to preliminary engineering and environmental for some new sections. They are working for a 90% package by February.

For the Brownsville Los Fresno’s connect a resolution was presented to have a reroute approved. The reroute will include TxDOT’s ROW. Two upcoming meetings with TxDOT to discuss the projects status. Judge Trevino asked about the origin of the issue for the re-route.

Judge Trevino asked more details about the timeline of the findings regarding the ownership of the easements. Multimodal Transportation Director for the City of Brownsville Joel Garza come up to the podium to provide a timeline of the process to the acquisition of the easement.

Resolution 2023-02 was presented for approval, Judge Trevino asked for a motion for approval. Motion to approve resolution was made by City of Mission Norie Gonzalez and second by Hidalgo County. **Resolution unanimously approved.**

Resolution 2023-03 was presented for approval for Amendments to the Olmito Sidewalks. The resolution is for the reduction of scope due to inflation cost and materials along other things.

Judge Trevino asked for a motion for approval. Motion to approve resolution was made by Cameron County RMA Frank Parker and second by City of Brownsville Nurith Galonsky. **Resolution unanimously approved.**

Resolution 2023-04 was presented for approval for Amendments to the Las Palmas Sidewalks. Mrs. Garcia presented the schematics of the changes reflecting the change of scope for reducing the sidewalks to only one side of the road.

Judge Trevino asked for a motion for approval. Motion to approve resolution was made by mayor of Edinburg Ramiro Garza and second by Hidalgo County Commissioner Ellie Torres. **Resolution unanimously approved.**

Mrs. Garcia also reviewed the 2021-2022 TASA projects update, out of the six projects programed 3 of them have fully executed the AFA. A discussion has started about developing a similar program (schedule of activities) just to ensure the obligation of funds on time. The pending programs have a deadline of April 2023 to fully execute their AFA.

Mrs. Garcia also added that we do not anticipate any project changes because we try to work very hard since the time of application and programing to develop AFA’s that are accurate to project fund needs.

Mrs. Garcia made emphasis on the 2-year requirement to obligate the funds. Funds will expire by September 2025.

Finally, Mrs. Garcia reminded everyone that importance of obligating funds in a timely manner. She added that the website has been updated with all the draft documents for 2023-2024 available for review and comment. She also provided an overview of the status of the working group meetings with a draft timeline of activities.

Mrs. Garcia shared that the RGVMPPO received the application for the Texas Federal Land Access Program, funds total 2.5 million for the environmental and design for a 20-mile route starting at Palo Alto and ending at Port Isabel.

Judge Trevino thank and congratulated Mrs. Garcia for the grant and proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

**9. Template for CAT 7 reports**

Andrew Canon presented template for CAT 7 reports. He provided an overview of the template the purpose and requirements for it. He highlighted that the purpose of the template is to gather all the necessary information so when the conversation about additional funding or advancing projects an educated decision is made.

The mayor of the City of Edinburg asked if there was anything in place at the moment, and Mr. Canon reported that there is nothing in place.

**After no more questions or comments were presented; motion to approve the use of the form was made by City of Mission Mayor Norie Gonzalez Garza and second by Hidalgo County. Item unanimously approved.**

**10. Local transportation Plan Project**

Fernando Cantu reviewed the call for planning projects form and informed that in case multiple submittals, they will be scored and put to a process to determine which one is the best to select. Finally, Mr. Cantu reminded that the deadline for application is April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**After no questions or comments were presented; motion to approve was made by Hidalgo County RMA and second by Starr County. Item unanimously approved.**

**V. RGVMPPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS' REPORT AND UPDATES**

1. Financial Update  
Report contained within the packet shows that the RGVMPPO is where it should be at 50% mark.
2. Project Readiness Workgroup review, meeting dates, and status
3. Transportation Forum, Jan. 29-31, 2023, Austin, TX  
Border Trade Advisory Committee
4. RGV Days Feb. 21-23, 2023.  
Hosted by RGV Partnership, contact Daniel Silva for additional information.
5. Presentation of the State of the System Booklet and rack card

**After no questions or comments were presented; motion to proceed to the next item**

**VI) STATUS REPORTS**

**A. TxDOT Project Status Report**

Jose Luis Lozano, project manager for TxDOT Pharr area provided an updated status report for projects within the Hidalgo County area.

Gabriel Villarreal, project manager for TxDOT San Benito area provided an updated status report for projects within the Cameron County area.

**B. Cameron County RMA**

Eric Davila (Cameron County RMA) provided an updated presentation on projects that are currently within the Cameron County RMA.

**C. Hidalgo County RMA**

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

VII) **NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Review activities going on within the cities/entities  
City of Mission – Texas Citrus Fiesta  
City of Brownsville – Charro Days  
City of McAllen – Border Fest

TxDOT Pharr District Engineer Pero “Pete” Alvarez informed that they will be moving projects on their own without the local contributions.

Judge Trevino asked if there was a minimum as far as how far along each project must be, and Mr. Alvarez confirmed that that a minimum has not been established, each project will be threatened on a one-on-one basis.

Judge Trevino changed the meeting from March 15<sup>th</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>, an email will be mailed out to all members.

VIII) **ADJOURNMENT:**

*There being no further business to come before the RGVMPPO TPB Members, Chairman Judge Treviño called for a motion to adjourn. TxDot Pharr District Engineer Pedro “Pete” Alvarez and second by Cameron County Frank Parker, Jr. Motion carried unanimously.*

ATTEST:

  
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RGVMPO POLICY COMMITTEE  
(TPB) VICE CHAIRMAN