

**Meeting Minutes of the
Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)**

Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 10:30 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

The RGVMPPO Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting was held in-person at the CIEDO Boardroom, located at LRGVDC's Main Campus, Building C, 301 W. Railroad Street, Weslaco, TX 78596. The meeting was called to order by Eva Garcia, RGVMPPO, at 10:30 A.M.

II. ROLL CALL

RGVMPPO BPAC Representatives **PRESENT:**

Organization/Agency	Voting Membership	Alternate
Valley Off-Road Bicycling Association	David Hernandez, Chair	
Caracara Trails	Rose Gowen, Vice-Chair	
Hidalgo County	Velinda Reyes	Nick Perez
City of Sullivan City	Alma Salinas	Ana Mercado
TxDOT Pharr District	Craig Wuensche	Augustin Ramirez
City of Edinburg	Larry Ayala	Valentin Sanchez Jr.
City of Pharr	Ruben Alfaro	Maria Rangel
City of Brownsville	Christopher Nelson	Juan (Johnny) Pena
Valley Metro	Claudia Olmedo	Stacie Garcia
LRGVDC	Javier Dominguez	Nancy Sanchez
UTRGV	Rodney Gomez	Pablo Aguilar
TPWD	Javier De Leon	Orlando Carranco
Bike/Ped Citizen	Robert Ordaz	
Bike/Ped Citizen	Richard Cavin	
Bike/Ped Citizen	Michael McNew	Jon Ray Bocanegra

Other Attendees:

- James Campbell, Valley Metro
- Tom Reyna, City of Edinburg
- Tom Logan, Valley Metro Director
- Elias Casas, General Land Office
- Ashley Bennis, Half Associates
- Ylda Capriccioso , Half Associates
- Julian Brown, Half Associates
- Celina Gonzales ,City Primera Manager

RGVMPPO Staff:

- Luis Diaz, Interim Director
- Melany Rodriguez, GIS Specialist/Planner I
- Klarissa Gonzalez, Planner I
- Eva Garcia, Planner III Bike/Ped Program Coordinator

III. CITIZENS INPUT

BPAC Minutes Approved
May 1, 2024

1. Tom Reyna, City of Edinburg:
 - Commented on the need to review the complete streets policy, specifically the right-of-way sections, to ensure incorporation of the CS.
 - Highlighted the importance of understanding the initiative, noting that Edinburg has a CS policy beneficial for grant requests.
 - Proposed converting Freddy Gonzalez into a pedestrian area, with traffic allowed during school hours but restricted to active transportation only during games, covering a quarter-mile stretch.
 - Discussed plans to work on a Park-n-Ride project in collaboration with UTRGV and ValleyMetro's transit services.
 - Commented on ongoing projects including the TASA project, Closner crossing, and expansion, with three projects currently underway.
 - Inquired about anticipated attendance for events, with an expectation of 9-10k per game at a stadium capable of holding up to 12k attendees.
2. Other Updates/Input:
 - Weslaco hike & bike trail project: Richard Cavin, Bike/Ped Citizen, requested information.
 - Commissioner Fuentes: Utilizing AARPA money, as mentioned by Velinda Reyes, Hidalgo County.
 - Paving project: Robert Ordaz, Bike/Ped Citizen, discussed plans to pave the south side of the levee from Westgate to the border, emphasizing its role as a significant connector.
 - Plans for a trail connection to Sal del Rey were mentioned.
 - Pharr's advertisement for their hike & bike trail project was noted, which would enhance connectivity in Hidalgo County.
 - Valley Metro's plan to extend the trail from Harlon block to recently purchased property was mentioned.

IV. PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND ACTION ITEMS

A. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve the Minutes of January 10, 2024.

The Minutes of the January 10, 2024, RGVMPD BPAC Meeting was presented. Jon Ray Bocanegra, Bike/Ped Citizen, made the motion to approve the Minutes of January 10, 2024. The motion was seconded by Velinda Reyes, Hidalgo County, and upon a vote; the **motion passed unanimously**.

B. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve the BPAC Bylaws Amendments

Eva reviewed the BPAC Bylaw Amendments. Eva initiated a discussion regarding the following points:

1. Amending the bylaws to reflect geographic equity:
 - Should geographic equity only apply to 'Public Agency' Members or the entire membership?
 - How should geographic equity be ensured/enforced? Options include weighted votes by population or equal representation per County.
2. Identifying certain agencies as ex-officio members:
 - Which agencies should be considered ex-officio?
3. Examples of language referencing geographic equity.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- Comparing BPAC Meetings vs. TASA Scoring.
- The possibility of amending the TASA Program Guide for more support.
- Scoring Criteria reflecting social equity more than geographic equity.
- Concerns about extra calculations related to population and potential disadvantages for smaller communities.
- Considering project area criteria such as high need, transit dependence, low-income status, historically disadvantaged areas, and average elderly population.

Richard Cavin, Pike/Ped Citizen, made a motion to incorporate equitable geographic representation within the TASA competitive process - program guide, application, and scoring criteria. The motion was seconded by Larry Ayala, City of Edinburg, and upon a vote; the **motion passed unanimously**.

C. Presentation and Discussion on the Pedestrian Egress Study

During the meeting, Elias Casas from the General Land Office (GLO) provided insights into the pedestrian egress study, particularly focusing on issues related to flooding disasters and the allocation of HUD funding. Following this discussion, Ashley Bennis, Halff Associates, presented findings from the LRGV pedestrian egress study, emphasizing

its importance in coastal resilience planning for pedestrian evacuation. Members from the GLO expressed their involvement in the plan and raised questions about how drainage and flood-related infrastructure could be effectively affiliated with disaster management efforts. Javier Dominguez, LRGVDC, brought up a planned project which will drop the elevation near a trail along the canal in the City of Weslaco to help with flood mitigation in the area.

No action was taken.

D. Presentation and Discussion on Design Standards Literature Review

Klarissa Gonzalez, RGVMPPO Planner I, introduced herself to the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee. She acknowledged her limited experience using bike/ped facilities in the RGV but expressed her commitment to improving infrastructure. The presentation focused on establishing regional design standards for active transportation facilities, a priority identified by the committee in surveys. The schedule outlined milestones, including determining region-specific goals, drafting, and finalizing the document. Key resources discussed included the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide and the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, both emphasizing safety and comfort for pedestrians and cyclists. The statewide roadway design manual from TxDOT was also mentioned, with the AASHTO guidelines serving as the governing document for design criteria not covered. Klarissa sought the committee's perspective on differentiating between base level standards, guidelines, and recommendations, with plans to develop a survey for input on specific components and draft an outline. She concluded by welcoming discussions and thanking the committee for their time. Richard Cavin, Bike/Ped Citizen, requested that links to the documents be provided on our website.

No action was taken.

E. Presentation and Discussion on RGV BCycle Quarterly Update

Tom Logan, Valley Metro Director, presented the quarterly updates on the RGV B-Cycle program. It was noted that ongoing technical issues persist with the B-Cycle system, resulting in all systems being offline. As a response, Tom plans to recall all bicycles from the field for maintenance. A public announcement will be made via social media to inform users of the temporary unavailability of bicycles due to maintenance. The aim is to reintroduce the B-Cycle system with a significant relaunch once maintenance is complete. Tom emphasized the necessity for B-Cycle to collaborate on addressing both technical and physical issues. Additionally, there is a desire to align with what is used in San Antonio and to eliminate the use of keypads in the system.

No action was taken.

F. Presentation and Discussion on RGV Bicycle & Pedestrian Counter Data Program

Eva Garcia, RGVMPPO Planner III,

Discussion:

- New batteries and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are needed.
- Plans to present to City Commissions/Councils in March, April, and May with Program Partners.
- Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation grant Letter of Intent due March 20th for Eco-Visio subscription, new modem/loggers, and potential training or trail use marketing plan.

No action was taken.

G. Presentation and Discussion regarding National Walk & Bike Month

Eva Garcia, RGVMPPO Planner III, proposed to table this item and distribute it via email due to time constraints.

No action was taken.

V. PROJECT UPDATES

- A.** 5310 FY24 was tabled, and an email will be distributed with this information due to time constraints.

VI. NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- North Transfer Hub opened March 5th.
- Jon Ray brought his compact scooter bike which ranged 13 miles and up to 30 mph for \$1k.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Jon Ray Bocanegra, Bike/Ped Citizen, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:02pm. The motion was seconded by Claudia Olmedo, Valley Metro, and upon a vote; the **motion passed unanimously.**