

RIO GRANDE VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RGVMPO)
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Thursday July 11, 2024 – 10:00 AM

*The RGVMPO Technical Advisory Committee Meeting 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

II. Roll Call

III. Public Comments – May be submitted online or may be submitted on a paper form specifying the matter you wish to address.

IV. Action & Discussion Items

A. Approval of Minute(s) for May 9, 2024

Action Possible Action Information

Presenter: Benjamin Worsham, TAC Chairman

Summary: Approval of the May 9, 2024

B. Discussion and Action on FY 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment #3

Action Possible Action Information

Presenter: Fernando Cantu, RGVMPO Transportation Planner III

Summary: The RGVMPO is revising the UPWP to integrate language addressing the 2021 Planning Emphasis Areas, pertinent to the development of Metropolitan and Statewide Planning Research Work programs. Additionally, update Task 3.2 'Complete Street' to reflect the requirement for MPOs to allocate at least 2.5% of their PL funds towards designated planning activities aimed at enhancing safe and accessible transportation options for individuals of all ages and abilities across various travel modes

Background: A UPWP is a biennial statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within the Rio Grande Valley metropolitan planning area. At a minimum, a UPWP includes a description of the planning work and resulting products, who will perform the work, time frames for completing the work, the cost of the work, and the source(s) of funds.

C. Discussion and Action on TJKM - SS4A Contract Amendment

Action Possible Action Information

Presenter: Fernando Cantu, RGVMPO Transportation Planner III

Summary: The current TJKM contract is being amended to incorporate new tasks and increase the budget from \$199,648.95 to \$250,000. This adjustment ensures that all necessary activities are adequately funded to meet SS4A Grant goals. The additional budget will allow for enhanced project capabilities and improved outcomes.

Background: Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) is a U.S. Department of Transportation initiative aimed at improving road safety nationwide. It focuses on reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries through comprehensive planning, innovative safety solutions, and local community engagement. The program supports projects that promote safer streets for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

D. Discussion and Action on ATG - MTP Contract Amendment

Action

Possible Action

Information

Presenter: Fernando Cantu, RGVMPPO Transportation Planner III

Summary: The current ATG contract is being amended to include new tasks and increase the budget from \$338,838.21 to \$397,043.03. This adjustment allows ATG to review the Travel Demand Model (TDM), a critical step before approving the new Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The additional budget will enable enhanced project capabilities and improved outcomes.

Background: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a strategic framework designed to address the long-term transportation needs of metropolitan regions, ensuring the efficient movement of people and goods. It incorporates comprehensive analysis of current and projected demographics, land use, and economic trends to guide investment in infrastructure and services. The MTP aims to enhance mobility, reduce congestion, improve safety, and promote sustainable growth over a 25-year planning horizon.

E. Discussion and Action for Qualifications RFQ for Legal Services for RGVMPPO Contract Review

Action

Possible Action

Information

Presenter: Fernando Cantu, RGVMPPO Transportation Planner III

Summary: The RGVMPPO is looking to acquire qualified firms who will review and enhance contractual agreements and legal compliance, evaluating new and existing contracts with vendors to identify risks and recommend amendments or renegotiations. They will also review MOUs between the MPO and local governments, offering legal guidance on interpretation, compliance, and potential amendments, and ensure adherence to federal regulations such as 23 CFR Part 450 and 2 CFR Part 200. The RGVMPPO/LRGVDC will select an experienced attorney or law firm to provide high-quality, timely legal advice to the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization's executive and administrative staff.

Background: The RGVMPPO selectively outsources tasks that exceed our in-house capabilities or scope. To maintain compliance with the fiscal guidelines and regulations, we adhere to the procurement process established by the LRGVDC, serving as the fiscal agents of our MPO.

F. Discussion and Possible Action regarding the RGVMPPO Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TASA; also known as Category 9)

Action

Possible Action

Information

Presenter: Eva Garcia, RGVMPPO Transportation Planner III

Summary: All FY2021-2022 TASA Projects are currently in the 'obligation phase' with awarded funds set to lapse (expire) by September 2025. As discussed in the May 2024 TASA Update, RGVMPPO Staff returns with project development updates.

Background: RGVMPPO Staff continues to communicate with RGVMPPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) & Transportation Policy Board (TPB) Members regarding TASA projects to ensure the timely obligation and reimbursement of programmed funds. Staff continues to work with the Texas Department of Transportation Pharr District (TxDOT) and Local Government (LG) projects sponsors to provide these updates to RGVMPPO Members. Thank you to all those involved for their continued communication and coordination.

V. Presentations & Reports

A. Congestion Management Process Update

Action

Possible Action

Information

Presenter: Klarissa Gonzalez, RGVMPPO Transportation Planner

Summary: Recent Congestion Management Process (CMP) Subcommittee meetings focused on a comprehensive analysis to address traffic congestion in our region. These meetings fostered productive discussions on establishing regional goals, evaluating traffic challenges and identifying effective strategies for implementation. This update serves to present the first draft of the 2024 RGVMPPO CMP for review and feedback before the adoption this Fall.

Background: In January of 2024, The RGVMPPO began producing the 2024 update to the Congestion Management Process. This is federally mandated activity for Transportation Management Areas (TMA), and the document will be considered during the certification of the RGVMPPO in December. The purpose of a CMP is to identify, analyze, and monitor traffic congestion in urban areas to provide data-driven implementation strategies and evaluate their effectiveness over time. This process is cyclic in nature and is an ongoing effort with the intention of alleviating traffic congestion and improving the efficiency of a regional transportation network.

B. National Ambient Air Quality Standards Revision

Action

Possible Action

Information

Presenter: Klarissa Gonzalez, RGVMPPO Transportation Planner

Summary: Effective May 6th, 2024, the EPA revised the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) reducing the primary annual standard for the PM_{2.5} pollutant from 12 micrograms per cubic meter to 9 micrograms per cubic meter. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) informed our region that Cameron County and Hidalgo County may potentially be affected by this revision. TCEQ awarded the LRGVDC a grant to conduct air quality planning activities focused on monitoring the level of PM_{2.5} in our area.

Background: National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) monitors the following specific pollutants: Ozone, Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀), Carbon Dioxide, Sulfur Dioxide, and Lead. The primary annual standard for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) was revised in 1997, 2012, and now 2024. Planning activities for the TCEQ grant are limited to inventorying emissions for PM_{2.5}, monitoring of pollution levels, air pollution and data analysis; modeling pollution levels; and administration of the program.

C. Presentation Discussion on Category 7 Utilization & Carryover Efforts

Action

Possible Action

Information

Presenter: Eva Garcia, RGVMPPO Transportation Planner III

Summary: Continuation of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 16 revisions discussion. RGVMPPO Staff will share new estimates and update Members on the Project Readiness Subcommittee discussions on project prioritization and scoring criteria. Efforts have been closely coordinated with TxDOT Pharr District staff.

Background: The Texas Transportation Commission approved Minute Order (MO) 116630 on January 17, 2024, officially amending the TAC. This MO impacts Transportation Allocation Funding Formulas for the Unified Transportation Program (UTP). The new TAC rules will require the RGVMPO to increase allocation utilization and decrease carryover to prevent the transfer of Category 7 funds exceeding the 200% fiscal year allocation threshold.

D. Federal Functional Classification Status Update

Action Possible Action Information

Presenter: Luis Diaz, RGVMPO Interim Executive Director

Summary: The RGVMPO is providing a status update of recent Federal Functional Classification submittals and upcoming submittals.

Background: Federal legislation continues to use functional classification in determining eligibility for funding under the Federal-aid program. Transportation agencies describe roadway system performance, benchmarks, and targets by functional classification. As agencies continue to move towards a more performance-based management approach, functional classification will be an increasingly important consideration in setting expectations and measuring outcomes for preservation, mobility, and safety.

E. RGVMPO Executive Director's Report and Updates

Action Possible Action Information

Presenter: Luis Diaz, RGVMPO Interim Executive Director

Summary: 1. Budget Update

F. TxDOT Project Status Report

Action Possible Action Information

Presenter: TxDot Pharr Area Office Staff

G. Cameron County RMA Status Report

Action Possible Action Information

Presenter: Eric Davila

H. Hidalgo County RMA Status Report

Action Possible Action Information

Presenter: Ramon Navarro, Hidalgo County RMA Chief Construction Engineer

I. Transit Status Report

Action Possible Action Information

Presenter: Transit Representative

VI. Other Business (Old or New): This item provides an opportunity for members to bring items of interest before the group.

A. The next RGVMPO Technical Advisory Committee is IN-PERSON at 10:00am on August 8, 2024.