

**RIO GRANDE VALLEY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RGVMPO)**

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)**

**Wednesday, December 2, 2020**

**AT 11:00 A.M.**

**VIA – Microsoft Teams**

**MEETING AGENDA**

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ROLL CALL**

**III. CITIZENS INPUT**

**IV. PRESENTATION, ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

A. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of November 4, 2020

B. Discussion Regarding ATG Active Transportation Plan

- TAC adopted plans on November 19, 2020
- Public Involvement Period ends December 4, 2020

C. Discussion on TxDOT Traffic Safety Program

- Potential regional grant proposal ideas
- Deadline for Proposal Submission: January 6, 2021

**V. PROJECT UPDATES**

**VI. NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Next BPAC Meeting: **Wednesday, January 6, 2021 at 11AM**

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

Wednesday, November 4, 2020  
At  
11:00 AM

## Microsoft TEAMS MINUTES

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting was held VIA Microsoft TEAMS and called to order by Chairperson Commissioner Rose Gowen, at 11:11 AM.

**II. ROLL CALL**

RGVMPO BPAC Representatives in attendance were as follows:

Members Present:	
Entity	Individual
Bicycle / Ped Health Advocate	Rose Gowen (Chairperson)
Bicycle / Pedestrian Citizen At-Large	Michael McNew (Vice Chairman) ABSENT
City of Brownsville	Joel Garza
	Antonio Zubieta (Alternate)
City of Edinburg	Larry Ayala (Designee)
City of Harlingen	Andy Vigstol (Designee)
	Javier Mendez (Alternate)
City of McAllen	Marlen Garza (Designee)
	Martina Mejia (Alternate)
City of Pharr	Cynthia Garza (Designee)
	Maria Rangel (Alternate)
Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge	Christine Donald (Designee) ABSENT
Texas Parks/Wildlife Department – Estero Llano Grande State Park	Javier De Leon (Designee)
TxDOT	Craig Wuensche (Designee)
	Joseph E. Leal (Alternate)
Valley Metro – B-Cycle	Juan Macias (Designee) ABSENT
Valley Metro	Frank Jaramillo (Designee) ABSENT
Bicycle World RGV	Ana Adame (Designee)
Citizen At-Large	Eudenia "Eudy" Carrillo (Designee) ABSENT
Museum South Texas History	Rene A. Ballesteros (Designee)
Bicycle / Pedestrian Citizen At-Large	Richard Cavin (Designee)
Bicycle / Pedestrian Citizen At-Large	Michael Padgett (Designee) ABSENT

STAFF	
RGVMPO	Andrew A. Canon
RGVMPO	Crystal Gonzalez
RGVMPO	Luis Diaz
RGVMPO	Eva Garcia

**III. CITIZENS INPUT – NONE**

BPAC Minutes Approved  
December 2, 2020

#### IV. PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND ACTION ITEMS

##### A. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of October 7, 2020

Chairperson Commissioner Rose Gowen asked the members if there were any corrections to the Minutes of October 7, 2020. Eva Garcia informed the BPAC that Vice Chairman Michael McNew had noted a few corrections to the minutes of October 7, 2020: a minor typo and the absence of Mr. McNew at the October meeting.

With the corrections noted, Mr. Joel Garza (City of Brownsville) made a motion to approve minutes as presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Javier De Leon (Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.) and upon a vote; the motion passed unanimously.

##### B. Discussion regarding ATG Active Transportation Plan

- Next Steps

Mr. Lee Miller advised the members that the public comment period was open starting today, November 4, 2020 until December 4, 2020. He thanked the members for their great feedback and found the input very valuable. He did want to note that the photos that were provided and included in the plan, that there was approval or no issues regarding the use of those photos. Mr. Miller proceeded to show the BPAC the website that was the access point for the 30-day comment period and noted that it hosted all three RGVMPPO plans, including the Active Transportation Plan. He demonstrated that it also had information regarding the visioning process and some of the technical analysis. A brief demonstration of how to use the virtual public comment cards was done and Mr. Miller advised the members to please reach out to him if there were any questions. The plans will be presented to the Transportation Policy Board on December 10, 2020.

- Questions

Mr. Andrew Canon applauded Alliance Transportation Group and Mr. Lee Miller for the great document. He noted that the ATP is a document for guidance to tell us where we are and where we can go with the use of the plan as a tool.

With no further questions, the discussion was concluded with no action taken.

##### C. Discussion on TxDOT Traffic Safety Program

Ms. Eva Garcia advised the BPAC that the item was put on the agenda as interest from the Chair and Vice Chair came in during input for the Active Transportation Plan, regarding a safety program/initiative for the region. This funding opportunity was brought to the Chair's attention and the previous year's request for proposals was emailed to the Committee in advance of the discussion. Ms. Garcia proceeded to highlight the program areas for the Traffic Safety grant and the funding available for each of the fourteen program areas. Chairperson Commissioner Rose Gowen noted that the proposal did not have to fall into the program area of pedestrian and bicycle safety, but the opportunity is not limited.

Chairperson Rose Gowen asked if she were correct that both the region and individual cities could apply for funding. Ms. Garcia confirmed that she was correct, a regional application could be submitted in addition to individual submittals from municipalities. Commissioner Gowen then asked if Andrew Canon, as the Director of the RGVMPPO, saw any needs or had ideas for the proposal to address? Mr. Canon shared that there are needs, but none that immediately came to mind. Mr. Canon shared that they have never applied for funds like this before but that it was one of the benefits to the merger. Previously we have only used allocated federal dollars for the region, but he was supportive of us looking into this more and he was open to facilitating and maximizing any dollars they could get. Commissioner Gowen shared that driver's education had come to her mind and felt that it was likely that the portion of driver's education that included bike/ped laws or education was not robust. It likely could be standardized across the valley to educate drivers as much as bicyclists. Chairperson Rose Gowen then asked if there were any other thoughts from the Committee and Mr. Canon added that driver's education was a fantastic idea as, through his experience, he had realized that often the schools were unfamiliar with what a Safe Passing Ordinance was. With no input from other municipalities and members, Chairperson Gowen asked for the members to do some homework and come up with some ideas or thoughts to bring the funds into the region. Ms. Garcia shared that there was still time for the BPAC to come up with ideas as the call for proposals was not officially open yet and the deadline for proposal submission was in January. She additionally highlighted that the proposal needed to be specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-framed. Additionally, it needed to include completion dates, tangible quantities, number of tasks and number of deliverables. Commissioner Gowen then vocalized a potential to fund some of the needs for the regional bike/ped counter program or would compliment the study. Ms. Garcia agreed that it was a good idea, and she could look further into it. Mr. Lee Miller added that a potential helpful primer would be a review of the safety analysis in the ATP which included some key recommendations. Mr. Rene Ballesteros stated that he saw some awesome bike repair stands with tools on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Hike and Bike Trail. Mr. Ballesteros felt that it was very convenient and would help the cycling community. Commissioner Gowen agreed it was a great idea and added that the stations could compliment the RGV

Bikeshare efforts. Richard Calvin chimed in that the paths have been very busy with trail users, but that in McAllen there were problems with a lack of sharing the trail and/or distracted cyclists that may or may not be using headphones; Mr. Calvin thought there may be a potential idea to add signs to the trail for users to be more courteous and cautious. Another comment from Mr. Calvin was that the San Juan Trail was very nice, the lights were great and the number of runners, walkers, people was remarkable!

Report only, no action taken.

## V. NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Project Updates as a regular agenda item at future meeting** – Eva Garcia wanted to gauge the interest or desire of the BPAC to include Project Updates or Announcements as a regular agenda item at future BPAC meetings. It would allow for members to voluntarily provide an update to the Committee on their organization's bike/ped programs, initiatives, projects, etc. Chairperson Rose Gowen agreed with the idea and asked where it would be included, to which Ms. Garcia explained she considered adding it either after Public Comment or before New or Unfinished Business. Andrew Canon agreed it could be listed as a Project Update item, like how they have them in the Transportation Policy Board meetings. He shared that with the Technical Advisory Committee they ask the local governments and RMAs and Transit for any updates they have that they wish to share with the Committee. He shared it may even be worth considering, when applicable, to ask for updates from Transit to further push for connectivity to learn about new stations and bus stops or what is being implemented on that end. Commissioner Gowen agreed absolutely and added any flyers for events, maps, or visuals can be shared with Eva Garcia in advance for showing during the meeting.
- **Example of trail, environmental and other design guidelines for the network** – Eva Garcia shared that she had stumbled upon the Great Rivers Greenway website and found that it had a very comprehensive set of design guidelines and resources for their network. She brought it up so the BPAC could consider and contemplate the development of guidelines for the RGV active transportation network. Ms. Garcia mentioned that her and Mr. Javier De Leon, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, had briefly discussed developing landscaping guidelines for native species, habitat conservation, etc. So just a resource to share with the group. Commissioner Gowen then brought up the Northeast Texas Trail, which she learned about through Eric Chamberlain who completed the trip around the perimeter of Texas. Based on what she saw from the pictures shared and a Rails-to-Trails Conservancy article, she felt it was very analogous to our region and demonstrated what we could do. She shared that the article also talked about small cities and the economic development impact the trail brought to the region. She encouraged everyone to check out the RTC article and suggested that when the pandemic was over, maybe the committee could take a trip to see the trail to learn more and bring back ideas for the region.
- **TASA Update and City of Harlingen** – Andy Vigstol, City of Harlingen, wanted clarification on the TASA update and its impacts for the City of Harlingen. Andrew Canon stated that, as he understood it, the City of Harlingen would be eligible to apply for TASA either through the MPO or the statewide call. The reason being that the City falls within the MPO boundary but not within the larger urbanized area or TMA, which is the Brownsville area and Hidalgo County. For that reason, they can choose to apply to either process, but not both. Mr. Vigstol thanked Mr. Canon for the clarification and shared that the general intention for the City was likely to apply through the MPO, not the statewide call.
- **I69 Connector public input** – Andy Vigstol shared that there had been a stakeholder meeting/webinar for the I69 Connector project and that one of the questions that came up was: would a bike/ped travel facility be encouraged in that sort of corridor? Mr. Vigstol and Ms. Garcia both gave input that it would be beneficial and encouraged the inclusion of this facility into the design for the entire Connector, which is going on the north side of region. He felt if there was ever a southern connector project that it would be a great path from one side to the other for a significant bike/ped pathway/loop for the entire valley. He just wanted to share that with the Committee and wanted to encourage that the members and organizations push for that with TxDOT. Andrew Canon stated that if they are using federal dollars on the facility, that it must incorporate some sort of bike/ped facility as well.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the BPAC Committee, Member Andy Vigstol (City of Harlingen) made a motion to adjourn meeting at 11:58 AM. The motion was seconded by Javier DeLeon (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department), and upon a vote; the motion passed unanimously.