

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

Wednesday, November 3, 2021 at 11:00 AM  
Via Microsoft Teams

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting was held VIA Microsoft Teams and called to order by RGVMPPO Planner III, Eva Garcia, at 11:04am

**II. ROLL CALL**

RGVBPAC Representatives **PRESENT:**

Organization/Agency	Voting Membership	Alternate Voting Member
Caracara Trails	<b>Chair</b> <i>Commissioner Dr. Rose Gowen</i>	<i>Adrienne Wheatly</i>
At-Large	<b>Vice-Chair</b> <i>Michael McNew</i>	
City of Brownsville	<b>Frank Gudino</b>	<i>Joel Garza</i>
City of Edinburg	<b>Larry Ayala</b>	<i>Valentin Sanchez</i>
City of Harlingen	<b>Andy Vigstol</b>	<b>Javier Mendez</b>
City of McAllen	<i>Marlen Garza</i>	<b>Rosvel Hinojosa</b>
City of Pharr	<b>Omar Anzaldua</b>	<i>Maria Rangel</i>
City of Weslaco	<b>Omar Rodriguez</b>	<i>Rebecca de la Fuente</i>
TxDOT Pharr District	<b>Joseph Leal</b>	<b>Craig Wuensche</b>
Valley Metro		
Museum of South Texas History	<b>Rene A. Ballesteros</b>	
Bicycle World RGV	<b>Ana Adame</b>	
TPWD Estero Llano Grande SP	<b>Javier de Leon</b>	<b>Kelly Malkowski</b>
USFWS Santa Ana NWR	<b>Christine Donald</b>	<i>Imer de la Garza</i>
At-Large	<i>Eudenia "Eudy" Carrillo</i>	
At-Large	<b>Richard Cavin</b>	
At-Large	<i>Michael Padgett</i>	

Other Attendees:

- Rodney Gomez, UTRGV
- Horacio Garza, RGV BCycle
- Crystal Gonzalez, Cameron County
- Rick Carrera, LRGVDC
- Patty Alexander
- Monica Gomez
- Louis Cutaia

**RGVMPO Staff:**

- Luis Diaz, Assistant Director
- Rudy Zamora, Planner II
- Melany Rodriguez, Planner I
- Javier Dominguez, Planner I
- Chris Nelson, Planner I
- Nick Cousineau, GIS Specialist I
- Juan Pena, GIS Specialist I
- Fernando Cantu, GIS Specialist II
- Eva Garcia, Planner III Bike/Ped Program Coordinator

**III. CITIZENS INPUT – NONE.**

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

**A. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve the Minutes of October 6, 2021**

Eva Garcia, RGVMPO BikePed Program Coordinator, presented the Minutes of October 6, 2021. BPAC Member Larry Ayala (City of Edinburg) made a motion to approve the Minutes of October 6, 2021. The motion was seconded by Frank Gudino (City of Brownsville) and upon a vote; the **motion passed unanimously**.

**B. Discussion & Possible Action to Approve 2022 BPAC Meeting Schedule**

Eva reviewed the RGVMPO BPAC Bylaws to confirm the Procedures for developing a BPAC Meeting Schedule. Committee members then discussed the potential meeting styles and meeting locations: Rene Ballesteros supported the merger of the June/July and Nov./Dec. meetings and liked the idea of rotating the meetings between Hidalgo and Cameron County. Javier Mendez additionally supported getting back to meeting in-person and was willing to commit to a meeting location in Harlingen – either at City Hall or another building. Mr. Canon stated that the Policy Board Meetings are held at the LRGVDC Conference Room, which is centrally located in Weslaco and has hybrid meeting capabilities. Mr. Canon additionally added that the Committee may change from Microsoft Teams to Zoom depending on the facility we use for the 2022 hybrid meeting. BPAC Member Omar Rodriguez (City of Weslaco) agreed with Mr. Canon and made a motion to approve the proposed 2022 RGVMPO BPAC Meeting Schedule but keeping all the hybrid meetings in Weslaco. The motion was seconded by Omar Anzaldúa (City of Pharr) and upon a vote, the **motion passed** with eight (8) ‘ayes’ and two (2) ‘nays’.

**C. Discussion & Possible Action to form an RGV Traffic Safety Initiative Working Group**

To reference the origination of the RGV Traffic Safety Initiative for BPAC Members, Eva reviewed the approved/adopted **RGVMPO Active Transportation Plan (ATP) key principles and goals:**

- **Connectivity** - Increasing mobility across active transportation modes, while creating an integrated regional transportation network.
- **Accessibility** - Establishing a comprehensive system of transportation options and allowing users of all ages and abilities to access resources across the region.
- **Community Health** - Promoting active transportation modes that improve public health and support local economies.

Eva then reiterated that the five (5) **success areas for walking and biking** are:

- ❖ Planning & Design
- ❖ Policies & Programs
- ❖ Education & Encouragement
- ❖ Safety
- ❖ Active Tourism

The following **initiatives**, and their respective success areas, were then highlighted:

- ★ **Law Enforcement Trainings** (Safety Initiative)
- ★ **Regional Design Standards** (Planning & Design Initiative)
- ★ **Media Awareness Campaigns** (Education & Encouragement Initiative – distribute materials)

To implement these RGVMPO ATP Initiatives/recommendations, the RGVMPO applied for a TxDOT Traffic Safety Grant for the following four (4) objectives:

1. To administer two (2) hybrid trainings for 100 law enforcement officers from the RGV on traffic safety problems/goals by 9/30/2022.
2. To administer two (2) hybrid trainings for 50 project managers on safety strategies and project development by 9/30/2022.
3. To distribute 2,725 bike helmets throughout the RGVMPO jurisdiction by 9/30/2022.
4. To distribute 5,000 bike lights throughout the RGVMPO jurisdiction by 9/30/2022.

To deliver on these objectives, Eva asked BPAC members for volunteers to join a Safety Working Group. This group would lead the grant activities throughout the year, including develop training agendas, coordinate training speakers, secure training facility venue(s), send invitations for registration, develop a list of community events for public outreach, and determine how to distribute the bike helmets and lights throughout the region. Mr. Canon added that municipal staff would be helpful to connect RGVMPPO Staff with law enforcement officials, including local police departments and DPS to discuss how to enforce or bring awareness to local and regional policies, such as the Safe Passing Ordinance. With that, Ana Adame vocalized that she was interested in serving on the Working Group, while Omar Rodriguez and Craig Wuensche used the chat to also sign up for the group.

BPAC Member Omar Rodriguez (City of Weslaco) made a **motion to form the RGVMPPO BPAC Safety Working Group**. The motion was seconded by Ana Adame (BikePed Citizen At-Larger) and upon a vote, the **motion passed unanimously**. The following RGVMPPO BPAC Members will be participating in this group:

- Ana Adame, BikePed Citizen At-Large
- Omar Rodriguez, City of Weslaco
- Craig Wuensche, TxDOT Pharr Dist.

#### D. Discussion & Possible Action to form a US Bicycle Route System Working Group

To provide background information on the USBRS, Eva reviewed *Figure 3-44: Conceptual Regional Network* from the RGVMPPO ATP and pointed out segments 1-10, the proposed USBRS loop in Cameron County. Eva explained that AASHTO officially designates these routes, but the request for designation must come from the state Department of Transportation. Eva then explained that TxDOT included USBRS cross-state spines and connecting spurs in their *Bicycle Tourism Trails Example Network*. These routes were initially proposed by Adventure Cycling Association (ACA) to connect Mexico to Oklahoma, and eventually all the way to Canada. The only routes in the RGV to be 'vetted' are USBR 55 and USBR 255, which came out of the LRGV Active Transportation and Active Tourism Plan. Eva stated that these proposed routes can continue to be revised per public feedback and road improvements. Craig Wuensche added that he hopes the Hidalgo County Mobility Plan would help outline a proposed route for Hidalgo County. Public engagement and input will be needed, and the TxDOT Pharr District is ready to work on this designation. To help guide and lead the designation of the first USBRS route in Texas, the USBRS Working Group would focus on drafting the route, securing any necessary agreements, and working with TxDOT to prepare the AASHTO application.

BPAC Member Rene Ballesteros (Citizen At-Large) made a **motion to form the RGVMPPO BPAC USBRS Working Group**. The motion was seconded by Frank Gudino (City of Brownsville) and upon a vote, the **motion passed unanimously**. The following RGVMPPO BPAC Members will be participating in this group:

- Frank Gudino, City of Brownsville
- Rene Ballesteros, Citizen At-Large/Museum of South Texas History - Edinburg
- Craig Wuensche, TxDOT Pharr Dist. Landscape Architect

#### E. Discussion and Possible Action regarding the RGV BikePed Count Data Program

Eva reminded RGVMPPO BPAC Members that **Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts** were identified as a **short-term Planning & Design Initiative** in the **RGVMPPO Active Transportation Plan (ATP)**. The actions recommended:

1. Establish a regional bicycle, pedestrian, and trail count program.
2. Participate in the TxDOT BP|CX at regional level.

Both actions were initiated in 2021 and the RGVMPPO BPAC can focus on the measurements of success:

- Annual count reporting:
  - RGVMPPO BPAC to receive Quarterly reports/updates.
  - RGVMPPO TAC & Transportation Policy Board to receive Annual reports/updates.
- Number of automated counters:
  - Counters funded/installed through the LRGVDC/RGVMPPO Program.
  - Municipally purchased and managed counters.

Eva shared that the original goal is to have a public Eco-Visio webpage (need funds), but temporarily want to develop a webpage where data is uploaded monthly. A draft map was developed by RGVMPPO's Nick Cousineau to show the Average Daily Count in a range (from late October). It was recommended that the cities using those

counters could contribute a financial amount to fund the Eco-Visio platform. RGVMPPO's Chris Nelson added that they will be validating and updating the data, but due to the maps being created internally each update equates to the creation of a new map with the current data. **No action was taken.**

**F. Discussion and Possible Action regarding Planning Documents and Facilities Inventory**

Eva reminded RGVMPPO BPAC Members that a **Facility Inventory** was identified as a **short-term Planning & Design Initiative** in the **RGVMPPO Active Transportation Plan (ATP)**. The actions recommended:

1. Develop regional standards for a facility inventory.
2. Develop a strategy for cyclical review and updates.

These steps would play into the **medium-term Planning & Design Initiative**, but to take an inventory of the region's active transportation plans, including a list of contacts for each municipality. RGVMPPO's Chris Nelson reviewed the Municipal Profiles Spreadsheet that was created to inventory and create links/access to the bike/ped plans. RGVMPPO's Nick Cousineau then reviewed the RGV Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities web map that he created to show the existing network structure, as we are aware. The RGVMPPO is asking the municipalities to validate this data to make sure that the map accurately reflects the infrastructure, including the information within the attributes table. **No action was taken.**

**V. PROJECT UPDATES**

- A. Pharr Tri-City Pedestrian Safety Improvements Phase I is looking to re-let the project in December 2021.
- B. Pharr Tri-City Pedestrian Safety Improvements Phase II is a the 90% design phase, plans to let next year.
- C. Pharr Wellness Plan – currently working with TxDOT on the procurement procedures
- D. Harlingen Arroyo Colorado Trail (McKelvey Park connection to Dixieland Park) is having issues with weather and contracting for construction (increase in price of material).

**VI. NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS – NONE**

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business to come before the BPAC Committee, Frank Gudino (City of Brownsville) made a motion to adjourn meeting at 12:07 P.M. The motion was seconded by Omar Rodriguez (City of Weslaco), and upon a vote; the motion passed unanimously.**