

Meeting of the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGV MPO) Policy Board

Wednesday, March 31, 2021
At
1:30 pm

Microsoft Teams Meeting **MINUTES**

Presiding: Chairman Ambrosio “Amos” Hernandez (Mayor City of Pharr)

I. Call to Order

Chairman Ambrosio “Amos” Hernandez called the meeting to order at 1:41 PM, a quorum was established. The Rio Grande Valley MPO Policy Board Meeting was held as a Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting with members present.

II. Roll Call

Roll call was taken, and present were representatives from each respective entity:

Members Present:	
Entity	Individual
City of Pharr	Chairman Ambrosio “Amos” Hernandez
Cameron County	Judge Eddie Treviño, Jr. (Vice Chairman)
Hidalgo County	Comm. Eddie Cantu
City of Brownsville	Mayor Trey Mendez
City of McAllen	Mayor Jim Darling
City of Edinburg	Mayor Richard Molina
City of Mission	Mayor Armando O’Caña
City of Harlingen	Mayor Chris Boswell
City of San Benito	Mayor Ricardo “Rick” Guerra
Cameron County RMA	Frank Parker, Jr.
Hidalgo County RMA	Ramon Navarro, V
Valley Metro	Tom Logan
TxDOT Pharr District	Pedro “Pete” Alvarez
GUEST	
EX-OFFICIO	
RGV Partnership	Sergio Contreras
LRGVDC	Manuel Cruz
Others Present:	
RGVMPO	Andrew Canon
RGVMPO	Staff

III. Public Comment
NONE

IV. Presentation, Discussion and Action Items:

A. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes From:
February 24, 2021

Chairman Hernandez asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of February 24, 2021. No corrections were noted to the minutes of February 24, 2021. Mayor Boswell (City of Harlingen) made a motion to approve the minutes of February 24, 2021; as presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Mayor Darling (City of McAllen); and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

B. Consideration and Concurrence on 2020 Thoroughfare Plan Amendment – Resolution 2021-05

Luis noted that staff received amendments from the County of Hidalgo - Pct. 4. The Amendments included on Resolution 2021-05 serve as an addendum to the 2020 Thoroughfare Plan Amendments previously approved via Resolution 2021-02 at the previous TAC meeting (See Below Table).

2020 Thoroughfare Plan Amendments Addendum				
Entity	Road Name	From	To	Requested Thoroughfare Classification
Hidalgo County PCT4	De la Rosa Street	Alamo Road	Brushline Road	Removal from Thoroughfare Plan
Hidalgo County PCT4	Terry Road	FM 88	FM 491	Removal from Thoroughfare Plan

No discussion took place on this item, Mayor O’Caña (City of Mission) made a motion to approve the 2020 Thoroughfare Plan Amendments – Resolution 2021-05 as requested by Hidalgo County Pct. 4 and presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Mayor Darling (City of McAllen); and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

C. Consideration and Action on the 2020 – 2021 UPWP Amendment – Resolution 2021-06

Fernando Cantu, GIS II provided a brief explanation on the FY2020– 2021 UPWP Amendment to Policy Members as follows: The RGVMPPO staff will be seeking to establish offices in the Cameron and Hidalgo Counties, due to space limitations of staff growth at the current Valley Metro Weslaco location. RGVMPPO will need to purchase laptops, monitors, keyboards, and peripherals as needed as well as GIS Devices and and/or GIS Desktop computers, to accommodate RGVMPPO Staff or replace existing units as they become outdated. This seamless Regional Planning process will provide ease in connectivity to RGVMPPO staff and the public, as well as members of local governments using the Satellite Office.

Staff will be acquiring “Moving Services” following all procurement requirements, for the possible relocation of RGVMPPO Staff to the Brownsville Transit Terminal and the Valley Metro Station in Edinburg. In doing so staff will be utilizing the following Cary Over Funds from FY2020-2021. Staff concluded by letting Policy Members know that the FY2020-2021 UPWP Amendment has been revised in “RED” to reflect the planning changes and is included in the packet (See Attachment).

Andrew noted that this was an exercise that staff needed to go through for the possibility of staff relocation to identify expensive which is part the approval from both TxDOT and FHWA, so that The Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (Fiscal Agent) knows they will be reimburse for any expenses during that process.

Chairman Hernandez ask staff is the two new office locations have been selected.

Staff noted that both sights have been selected, one in (LRGVDC) Edinburg area and the other sight in Brownsville. Cities’ representatives (City Managers or Mayors) were contacted regarding the two new sights as requested at the previous Policy meeting by members. No hesitation was expressed from anyone on the Policy Board/Planning Partners.

TxDOT ask whether these buildings will be on a lease. Staff replied, yes, these facilities will be on a lease agreement, just as RGVMPPO current facility is with the LRGVDC. These lease agreements would have to come before the Policy Board for final approval.

No further discussion took place on this item, Mayor Darling (City of McAllen) made a motion to approve the FY2020-2021 UPWP Amendment – Resolution 2021-06 as presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Mr. Parker.(Cameron County RMA); and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

D. Discussion Regarding the 2022-2023 UPWP Program Call

Andrew informed Policy Members present, that an email was sent out on Wednesday, March 1, 2021 to both the Policy and TAC Committees, letting everyone know that the RGVMPPO is preparing its’ FY2022-2023 UPWP, the Fiscal Budget by which the office operates and performs studies for the Regions. The RGVMPPO will be doing a Project Call to promote Plans and Studies for the Region that our Planning Partners may wish to undertake but may

not have all the funding to address. IF there is a study or plan that Planning Partners would like the RGVMPPO to consider assisting in, staff will be taking request until **Friday, April 30, 2021 by 5PM.**

Andrew noted that the Studies need to include the following:

- ❖ Type of Study/Plan
- ❖ Geographical Area Study/Plan is to take place in
- ❖ Expected Timeline for the Plan;
- ❖ Funding Your Organization Is Providing for such Plan/Study and amount of Funding being requested of the RGVMPPO.

Chairman Hernández asked if there were any cities that have reach out to staff regarding this Program Call as presented. Staff noted there have been several cities that have reached out, once those cities have submitted their projects, those projects will be brought forth to the Policy Board for approval.

No further discussion took place on this item, Policy members present acknowledged the 2022-2023 UPWP Program Call as presented by staff.

E. Discussion Regarding Category 9 Funding

Eva Garcia, Bike/Ped Program Coordinator gave a brief background on Category 9 Funding as follows: FY2021-2022 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program Call for Projects was postponed due to the Texas Transportation Commission adopting amendments relating to TASA, codified under Title 43, Texas Administrative Code, Part 1. Since the postponement, RGVMPPO staff has been working with TxDOT for guidance on the amendments and a consensus on funding availability for previously awarded projects and the upcoming Call for Projects.

RGVMPPO Staff, in collaboration with TxDOT Staff, are prepared now to move forward with the FY2021-2022 TASA Call for Projects. Approximately \$2.3M will be available for projects, with \$2.07M (90%) for construction and \$230,000 (10%) for planning. Staff will be presenting a draft project call announcement flyer, timeline, and revisions to the funding program guide at the April 7, 2021 Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Meeting.

Staff provided an attachment for Policy Board Members' convenience and as a reminder, a list of previously awarded projects currently in development, the Sept. 2020 TASA amendments, and a TASA Budget Page Sample which highlights the Category 9 federal (80%) and local government (20%) participation split, the Direct and Indirect State Costs.

No discussion took place on this item, Policy members present acknowledged the Category 9 Funding as presented by staff.

F. Discussion on the APL FY2020 Update

Andrew provided a brief update on the APL FY2020 Annual Listing of Projects to Policy Board Members as follows: As required by FAST ACT, MPOs are to publish an annual listing of project for which funds have been obligated in the preceding year, including a listing of pedestrian and bicycle projects. This provision is intended to increase the transparency of government spending on transportation projects and strategies in metropolitan areas to state and local officials, and to the public at large. A copy of Highway, Bicycle & Pedestrian, and Grouped projects has been included in the Policy Packet for review.

No discussion took place on this item, Policy members present acknowledged the APL FY2020 Update as presented by staff.

G. Discussion on the Functional Classification Update

Luis provided a brief update on the Functional Classification to Policy Board members as follows: Staff informed Policy member present that 365 Tollway Phase II and South Parallel Corridor Phases I and II, all as Major Collectors have been approved by FHWA.

Staff also informed Policy members that pending approval are FM1599 and the FM509 Extensions and have been forward to TxDOT and TPP for their review and for final approval.

Staff concluded by letting Policy Members know that the complete Functional Classification Table has been included as part of the Policy packet (See Attachment).

Chairman Hernández ask staff and TxDOT if there were any issues or concerns with any of the items on the Functional Classification Table as presented. Staff and TxDOT noted no issues or concerns at this time.

No further discussion took place on these items, Policy members present acknowledged Functional Classification Updated Reports as presented by staff.

V. RGVMP Executive Directors Reports and Updates

A. Directors Update

Andrew provided the 2021-2024 STIP Timetable that was updated March 2021 as follows:

- TPP Post 21-24 STIP, begins Public Comment PeriodFebruary 26, 2021
- Public Hearing Held.....March 18, 2021
- STIP PUBLIC Comment Period Ends.....March 29, 2021
- 2021-2024 STIP goes to the Commission for Approval.....April 29, 2021
- First Day FHWA / FTA can approve the 2021 – 2024 STIP.....*April 30, 2021
Or, once FHWA / FTA receives TxDOT letter of approval.
- STIP Public Comments period ends.....March 29, 2021
- Next Potential Revision.....*August 2021

*This will only be if the initial 21-21 gets approved and amicable time is allotted.

- Administrative Modifications & Revisions to 2021-2024 TIP & 2045 MTP

Staff provided to Policy Members a listing of Administrative Modification & Revisions to the 2021-2024 TIP & 2045 MTP, which do not require board approval. Staff has been working closely with these projects, to assure that everything moves forward accordingly.

- Chairman Canales Introduces HB2219 – \$3 Billion toward Transportation Mobility Funds/Projects. Encourages Policy members to further listen to this Bill on how it could benefit our region.

- Introduction of New Staff – The following staff were introduced, Javier Dominguez, Planner I, GIS, Christopher Nelson, Planner I, and Juan Pena, GIS and one more Planner, which will be starting on April 26, 2021, given a total of 12 employees currently hired with the RGVMP.

- New Office Location – Staff noted that at the request of the Policy Board, staff has visited with Hidalgo and Cameron County City Officials regarding the new office locations, and City Officials from both Counties had no issues with having two offices in Edinburg and Brownsville. No final date is confirmed, still waiting on TxDOT and FHWA for final approval.

- April 28, 2021 Policy Meeting Update – Staff will be sending an email to both Policy and TAC members, letting them know that Policy Meeting for April 28, 2021 has been moved to 9:30 AM and will be held at the Pharr Event Center. Policy Meeting was moved to facilitate the visit from Secretary of State Hughs. Secretary of State Hughs is hoping to meet as many of the Policy members as time allows and meeting will be held In-Person. Staff is still working with the Secretary of State and her staff to finalize agenda, once it is done, Policy members will be receiving a copy of that agenda.

Chairman Hernandez, noted that staff will be reaching out to the cities, food will be served and one other reason why the Policy Meeting was moved, because on that day Mayor Jim Darling will be delivering the State of the City Address in the afternoon, which many city officials will be in attendance. Also, being this will be Mayor Darlings' last year as Mayor for the City of McAllen: The City of Harlingen will also be holding a State of the City Address, date still pending.

B. Financial Update

Staff provided the Financial Summary to members present; staff noted budget continues to be (96%) under budget. (Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)

- STARR County – Staff have received the following Resolutions from Starr County supporting the Annexation of the following cities: City of La Grulla, City of Roma, City of Escobares, and Starr County. Staff will be reviewing and updating the Amendment RGVMP Bylaws as needed and presenting to both the TAC and Policy for approval in April. Starr County total vote would be (1) for Starr County.

VI. Status Report

A. TxDOT Project Status Report (Action Taken as Required)

Both Jesus Garcia and Rene Davila with (TxDOT) provided an updated presentation Via Teams on current projects and activities within the Hidalgo and Cameron Counties. All projects are continuing to move forward as scheduled. (Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)

B. Cameron County RMA

Mr. Sepulveda (Cameron County RMA) provided an updated presentation Via Teams on projects that are currently within the Cameron County RMA. All projects continue to move forward as expected. **(Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)**

Veteran POV Expansion – CSJ: 0921-06-313 – Chairman Hernandez asked HCRMA, what is the hold-up on the Veteran Project. Mr. Sepulveda explained the following: 1) Letting is scheduled for 2026, and because of the TIP is not scheduled until August, that Letting is not possible at this time; and 2) HCRMA have been working with both TxDOT and RGVMPPO Staff, for any possibility of a future amendment.

Staff noted that \$15 Million is needed on projects that can be ready to go in Cameron County, which Cameron County does not have at this time. Staff has been making several calls with other MPOs' to swap those funds and as soon as staff receives confirmation it will be shared with the Policy Members.

Chairman Hernandez did give staff directive to move forward and discuss possible swap of funds with other MPO's as recommended by staff.

C. Hidalgo County RMA

Mr. Navarro provided an updated presentation Via Teams on projects that are currently within the Hidalgo County RMA. All projects are continuing to move forward. **(Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)**

D. Regional Transit (Metro)

Ms. Tracie Orcillez, Transit Manager for Brownsville provided an updated report for all (3) Three Transit Providers Via Teams that are currently within the Hidalgo/Cameron Regions. Details values on ridership could be found within the RGVTPB Packet. **(Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)**

VII. New or Unfinished Business

RGVMPO Office Closed – Good Friday – April 2, 2021

DAP Projects - Chairman Hernandez reminded Policy members present that “Session is On”, DAP Projects is on a positive review, encourages Partners to look out for that Session.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

No further items were discussed, Chairman Hernandez called for a motion to adjourn at 2:25 PM. Mayor O’Caña (City of Mission) made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Parker (Cameron County RMA) second the motion; and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:


**RGVMPO POLICY COMMITTEE
(TPB) VICE CHAIRMAN**

4/30/2021