

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

Wednesday, May 25, 2022, At 1:30 pm

MINUTES

Presiding: Chairman - Judge Eddie Treviño, Jr. (Cameron County)

I. Call to Order

Chairman Eddie Treviño, Jr. called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM, a quorum was established. The Rio Grande Valley MPO Policy Board Meeting was held at the Ken Boardroom located at 301 West Railroad, Weslaco, Texas with members present.

II. Roll Call

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

Members Present:	
Entity	Individual
Cameron County	Judge Eddie Treviño, Jr. (Chairman) Com. David Garza (Alternate)
Hidalgo County	Comm. David L. Fuentes (Vice-Chairman) Comm. Ellie Torres (Alternate)
Starr County	Judge Eloy Vera (Designee) (ABSENT) Comm. Raul Pena, III (Alternate)
City of Brownsville	Mayor Trey Mendez (Designee) Nurith Galonsky-Pinana (Alternate)
City of Edinburg	Mayor Ramiro Garza (Designee) Comm. Daniel "Dan" Diaz (Alternate)
City of Harlingen	Mayor Chris Boswell (Designee) Gabriel Gonzalez (Alternate)
City of McAllen	Mayor Javier Villalobos (Designee) (ABSENT) CM Roy Rodríguez (Alternate)
City of Mission	Mayor Armando O'Caña (Designee) Comm. Jessica Ortega- Ochoa (Alternate)
City of Pharr	Mayor Ambrosio "Amos" Hernandez (Designee) (ABSENT) Comm. Daniel Chavez (Alternate)
City of San Benito	Mayor Ricardo "Rick" Guerra (Designee) Manuel De La Rosa (Alternate)
Cameron County RMA	Frank Parker, Jr. (Designee) Arturo A. Nelson (Alternate)
Hidalgo County RMA	S. David Deanda Jr. (Designee) Ramon Navarro, V. (Proxy)
Valley Metro	Maribel Contreras (Designee) Jose Luis Silva (Alternate)
TxDOT Pharr District	Pedro "Pete" Alvarez (Designee) Rex A. Costley (Alternate)
EX-OFFICIO	
RGV Partnership	Sergio Contreras
LRGVDC	Manuel Cruz
GUEST	
Others Present:	
RGVMPO	Andrew Canon
RGVMPO	Staff

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes From:

March 30, 2022

April 27, 2022 (Meeting Canceled)

Chairman Judge Trevino asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of March 30, 2022. No corrections were noted to the minutes of March 30, 2022, Vice Chairman – Comm. David Fuentes (Hidalgo County) made a motion to approve the minutes of March 30, 2022, as presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chavez (City of Pharr); and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

2. Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the FY2022-2023 UPWP Amendment #2 and Resolution 2022-09

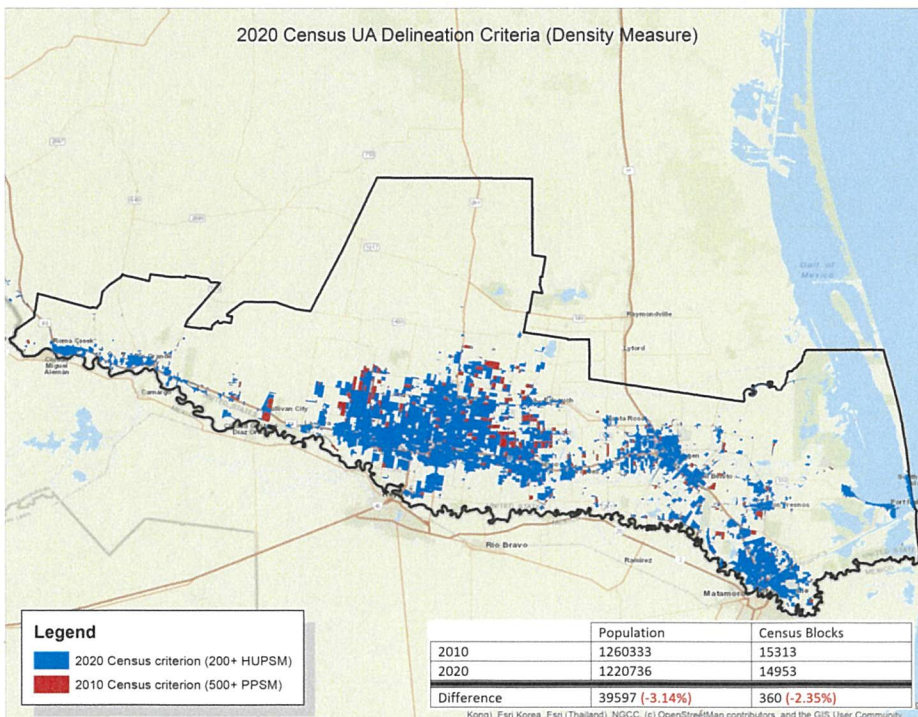
Fernando provided updated information on the FY2022-2023 UPWP Amendment #2. RGVMPO staff has made administrative changes to the FY2022-2023 UPWP and staff is asking to move over funds from our carry over, into Task 1,3,5 in the amount of \$998,948.33 for Subtask 1.3 for Policy Board Workshop/Retreat to be conducted by an outside consultant. The budget shall include funds for meeting space if needed and food for the policy board during the workshop. As well as Subtask 3.2 Planning Assistance (City of Brownsville and McAllen Transit Plans); Subtask 3.4 Complete Streets Planning; Subtask 3.5 Resiliency Planning; Subtask 3.6 Performance Base Planning and Subtask 5.4 Corridor Study, and a Regional Study to include Starr County.

Mayor Hernandez (City of Pharr) encourages all the cities to be pro-active when studies are being done in the near future.

No further discussion took place on this item, a motion was made by Mayor Hernandez (City of Pharr) to approve FY2022-2023 UPWP Amendment #2 and Resolution 2022-09 recommended by TAC Committee and presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Mayor O’Caña (City of Mission), and upon a vote; the motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion and Possible Action on the Final 2020 Census Urban Area Criteria

Fernando provided an updated map which contained information on the Urban Area Criteria for the 2020 Final Census-Final.



RGVMPO staff worked on a map, with the help from UTSA - IDSER/Texas Demographic Center, showing the potential loss of population by 3.14% and loss of census blocks by 2.35%, under the new 2020 Census Criterion.

Andrew informed Policy members present, that Chairman Judge Trevino had written a letter to the Census Bureau requesting clarification on what constitutes a “Urbanized Area”. There’s a deadline of November 2022, to hear back from the Census Bureau. Staff will keep Policy members up to date on this issue as it develops.

Chairman Judge Trevino also informed Policy members present that he met with Congressman Gonzalez, regarding supporting the negativity of the current Census process. Chairman Judge Trevino encourages all city leaders to continue reaching out on a Statewide coordination on this issue.

After some discussion on this item, Vice Chairman Fuentes (Hidalgo County) also recommended that staff reach out to TML.

This item was for discussion only, no action taken.

4. **Discussion and Possible Action on Request for Travel Demand Model from Municipalities**

Luis noted that staff is in coordination of a refresh of the 2014 – 2045 TDM, with a new base year of 2019 and a forecast year of 2050, alongside the Texas Department of Transportation, and the Transportation Planning and Programming Division; to assure that a true reflection of Demographics throughout the valley region is collected. Staff is requesting from all municipalities within the RGVMPO MAB to please provide a listing or map of new or planned subdivisions, apartment complexes, parking and commercial developments. (Preferably in GIS format).

In 2016, Regional MPO Staff began work on the Regional Transportation Model (TDM) with a base year of 2014 model for the RGV. Staff in coordination with TxDOT previously contracted a consultant to aide in the development of the overall Rio Grande Valley Regional Travel Demand Model (TDM) which produced a 2045 Forecasted TDM.

Staff concluded by stating that TAC members were asked at the last TAC meeting, that any updates be submitted to staff prior to May 27, 2022; and moving forward to be consistence; that they be submitted on a regular basis.

This item was for discussion only, not action taken.

5. **Discussion and Possible Action on the FY2023-2026 TIP Tables & 2045 MTP Amendment #6: Resolution 2022-10 and Prioritization of Additional Funding Requests**

Rudy noted the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) & FY 2023-2026 Highway & Transit Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) tables are undergoing Public Involvement. Public Involvement dates, locations, and material were shared by announcement via email, social media, and the RGVMPO website. The MTP & TIP tables have been included within this packet for members’ review and possible action. A resolution will be provided for required signatures. Requests for additional CAT 7 funding have been included for members’ review and discussion. Meetings will be scheduled to address these requests and prepare for future funding opportunities, such as the approval of the 2023 UTP (Unified Transportation Plan). Public involvement dates, locations, and materials were shared by announcement via email, social media, and the RGVMPO website.

A list of locations for in-person public outreach have been conducted and have been shared and included within this packet.

Tuesday May 10th	McAllen Transit Center	2PM - 5PM
Wednesday May 11th	Edinburg City Hall	9AM - 12PM
Friday May 13th	San Benito City Hall	9AM - 12PM
Saturday May 14th	Brownsville Farmers Market	9AM - 12PM

Rudy concluded by noting that the deadline to submit the new FY 2023-2026 Comprehensive TIP is June 10, 2022. Please note that approval and a signed resolution are required for uploading projects to the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program) Portal. A 30-day Public Involvement period is taking place from May 6 – June 6, 2022.

In preparation for future funding opportunities, RGVMPPO staff is seeking a prioritization of projects. Whether by utilizing federal grants or UTP allocation, the highest priority of projects should be considered for funding. RGVMPPO staff is available for guidance as necessary.

No discussion took place on this item, Vice Chairman Comm. Fuentes made a motion to approve the updates of the FY 2023-2026 TIP Tables & 2045 MTP Amendment # 6 and Resolution 2022-10 and Prioritization of Additional Funding Requests as recommended by TAC and presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Mayor Garza (City of Edinburg); and upon a vote, the motion passed.

6. Discussion and Possible Action of Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Project Updates and Potential Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) Amendment

Eva noted that staff is seeking approval of recent project updates, including project challenges and proposed changes for a potential Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) Amendment regarding CSJ 0921-06-325.

The City of Los Fresnos in coordination with the RGVMPPO and TxDOT Pharr District, request an Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) Amendment to reflect changes to the project. The City of Los Fresnos agrees to maintain the intent of the project and ensure the timely obligation of TASA Funds (Spreadsheet part of Policy Packet).

In 2019 the BMPO merged with the Hidalgo County Metropolitan Planning Organization (HCMPO) and Harlingen-San Benito Metropolitan Planning Organization (HSBMPO) to form the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGVMPPO), the current designated agency for Transportation Planning in the Transportation Management Area and responsible agency for selecting projects to receive TASA funding.

The Brownsville Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMPO) received an apportionment of federal TASA funds for FY2019-2020 and awarded \$308,810 of these funds to the City of Los Fresnos for the construction of the North High School Park Connection (CSJ 0921-06-325).

RGVMPPO Staff continues to review and monitor projects to ensure regional Category 9/Transportation Alternatives set aside (TASA) funds are obligated within the required three years of authorization.

After some discussion on this item, Mr. Parker (Cameron County RMA) made a motion to approve the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside (TASA) Project Update and Potential Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) Amendment as recommended by TAC and presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Commissioner Fuentes (Hidalgo County); and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

7. Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the Procurement of Bike Helmets for the RGV MPO BikePed Program

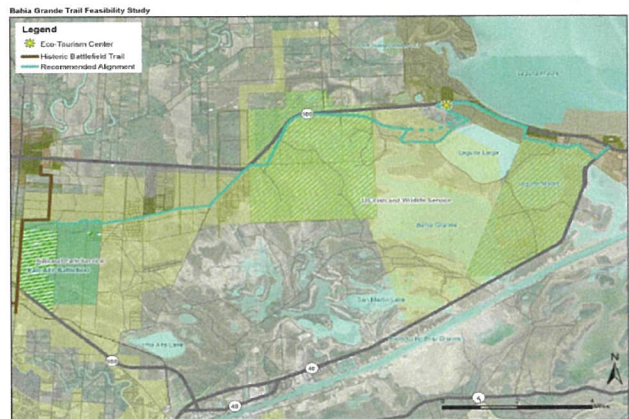
Eva provided a presentation to Policy members present which included information regarding the RGV Transportation Alternatives Facility Inventory and the RGV Traffic Safety Initiative. Staff noted that in order to meet the objectives of the RGV Traffic Safety Initiative Grant Objectives, staff is recommending approval to procure 1,505 bike helmets for \$27,742.25. The cost of these helmets will be reimbursed through the TxDOT Traffic Safety grant. To ensure transparency with regional transportation professionals, RGV MPO Staff continues to report on the status and upcoming activities of various BikePed projects and programs. The RGV MPO received a TxDOT Traffic Safety grant to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety through the distribution of safety materials (helmets and lights), in addition to administering two traffic safety trainings for law enforcement, and two traffic safety trainings for planners and engineers. Grant Objectives are:

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

Staff also discussed / covered the Bahia Grande Trail Feasibility Study that was prepared by FHWA, some key notes that were discussed by staff was:

Overall Trail Alignment

- 20 mile-long trail
- Connects →
 - Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park
 - The Bahia Grande Unit of the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge
 - City of Brownsville
 - Cameron County Communities



After some discussion on this item, by Mayor O'Caña (City of Mission) made a motion to approve the Procurement of Bike Helmets for the RGV MPO BikePed Program as recommended by TAC and presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Commissioner Fuentes (Hidalgo County); and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

V. RGVMPPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS' REPORT AND UPDATES

- A. Andrew provided the financial update and noted that the current budget continues with a positive trend. Report filed with the May 31, 2022, Policy Packet.

The following updates were part of the Policy Packet for informational purposes only:

A. 2022 TxDOT Transportation Planning Forum

May 2-5, 2022 - Omni Hotel – Houston - Update

The focus of the 2022 planning conference is to connect you with **Texas planning: sharing knowledge and experience** and provide other updated information about planning and programming processes, procedures, and tools used to coordinate the development of transportation projects. Transportation workshops and presentations will showcase various topics such as environmental affairs, federal and state legislation, sustainability, public involvement, freight, and multi-modal planning.

B. 2022 AMPO Planning Tools & Training Symposium

May 16-19 – Riverside Hotel – Fort Lauderdale, FL

The symposium takes place over the course of two and a half days and consists of multiple roundtable workshops. The workshops are divided into two tracks: Core Functions and Hot Topics. The Core Functions track is developed with junior staff in mind and seeks to provide practical training by topic area (i.e., MPO process and products, public involvement/environmental justice/Title XI, performance management, etc.). The Hot Topics track is developed with senior-level staff in mind and provides peer-to-peer exchange and training opportunities to discuss the state of the practice, innovation, and identify efficiencies.

C. RGVMPPO Policy Board Retreat

Friday, June 3, 2022, Cameron County Amphitheater and Event Center - 53550 Dolphin Cove – SPI -Update

The RGVMPPO Policy Board Retreat is scheduled for Friday, June 3rd at the Cameron County Amphitheater and Event Center. A big "Thank You" to Cameron County for providing this facility to us. Emails were sent out to TAC Members that are currently being appointed as Proxy to the TAC Committee. If you are planning to attend, please RSVP to Gloria before May 20, 2022. A second email will also be sent out for your lunch meal selection on May 23, 2022; with a deadline of May 27, 2022; please look out for that email as well. I look forward to this, we have wanted to do this since the merger and Covid got in our way. I know nothing but positive paths forward will come from this Board Retreat

D. Safety Taskforce

TASK Force

The TxDOT Commission, led by Commissioner Laura Ryan, has established the TxDOT/MPO Safety Taskforce. Your Executive Director has been asked to serve as one of 7 MPO's in representing MPOs across Texas. The Taskforce is identifying opportunities to address safety concerns and collectively develop ideas that may work regions, or statewide. As these opportunities are identified, they will be brought back to the RGVMPPO for discussion, consideration, and possible implementation. This is an exciting opportunity to identify items such as distracted driving and examine opportunities to address this growing problem.

VI. STATUS REPORT

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

Representative from Hidalgo / Cameron Counties with (TxDOT) provided an updated presentation 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)*

Concerns were voiced by several Policy members regarding the new inter-change in Pharr, TxDOT and neighboring cities need to make sure that plenty of information is shared within social media on how traffic is going to be interrupted with the new construction currently in progress; or else this will not go well with the citizens.

B. Cameron County RMA

Mr. Sepulveda (Cameron County RMA) was not present to provide his presentation on projects that are currently within the Cameron County RMA. *(Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)*

C. Hidalgo County RMA

Mr. Navarro provided an updated presentation 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)

Antonio Zubieta provided an updated report for all (3) Three Transit Providers that are currently within the Hidalgo/Cameron Regions. Ridership's continue to increase throughout the valley. Details values on ridership could be found within the RGVTPB Packet. *(Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)*

VII. OTHER BUSINESS (OLD OR NEW)

BIL Grants - Vice Chairman Fuentes thanked Mr. Javier Dominguez (RGVMPO Planner) for his assistance and information provided at the last Policy meeting on the BIL Grants. Commissioner Fuentes stated that his staff has applied for several Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Grants; and highly recommends that other cities do the same. Staff reminded Policy members that the new and expanded competitive grant programs are Safety, Transit, Climate and Resilience, Bridges, Equity, Raise MPDG, Planning and Project Delivery and Port Infrastructure. Staff are available by phone and emails, if any Policy Board members have questions or needs assistance.

Groundbreaking – June 8, 2022 - Hidalgo County RMA - 365 Tollway Groundbreaking Northwest Corner of Us 281 (Military Hwy) and San Juan Road Intersection - Pharr

VIII. Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the RGVMPO Transportation Policy Board Meeting is scheduled “In Person” for June 29, 2022, at 1:30 pm at the Ken Jones Boardroom.

No further discussion took place, Chairman Judge Trevino ask for a motion to adjourn. Vice Chairman Comm. David Fuentes (Hidalgo County) made a motion to adjourn the Policy Meeting at 2:32 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Costley (TxDOT); and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:



RGVMPO POLICY COMMITTEE
(TPB) VICE CHAIRMAN