

RIO GRANDE VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Technical Advisory Committee
Via MICROSOFT TEAMS
October 8, 2020

I) CALL TO ORDER

Pete Sepulveda, (Cameron County RMA) Chairman called the TAC Microsoft Teams Meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. The RGV TAC Microsoft Teams Meeting was held remotely with the following TAC Members.

II) ROLL CALL

RGVTAC Representative in attendance were as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT	
ENTITY	VOTING MEMBERS
Cameron County RMA	Pete Sepulveda, Chairman
City of Mission	JP Terrazas, Vice Chairman
City of Brownsville	Joel Garza (ABSENT)
City of Edinburg	Tom Reyna
City of Harlingen	Gabriel Hernandez (ALTERNATE)
City of McAllen	Yvette Barrera
City of Pharr	ABSENT
City of San Benito	ABSENT
Cameron County	Benjamin Worsham
Hidalgo County	Armando Garza, Jr.
TxDOT Pharr District	Melba Schaus
Valley Metro	Frank Jaramillo
Brownsville Metro	Norma Zamora / Antonio Zubieta
McAllen Metro	Jon Ray Bocanegra
Port of Brownsville	Ariel Chavez, III (ABSENT)
Port of Harlingen	ABSENT
Port Isabel-San Benito Navigation District	ABSENT
Hidalgo County RMA	Eric Davila
STAFF	
RGVMPO	Andrew A. Canon
RGVMPO	Luis Diaz
RGVMPO	Staff

III) PUBLIC COMMENTS

NONE

IV) PRESENTATION, ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of October 8, 2020

Pete Sepulveda (Cameron County RMA) Chairman asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of October 8, 2020. *No corrections were noted to the minutes of October 8, 2020, City of Edinburg made a motion to approve the minutes as presented by staff. The motion was seconded by the Cameron County; and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Discussion on TASA Project Call update

Andrew A. Canon, RGVMPO Executive Director, provided a TASA Project call update. He provided a PowerPoint slide explaining five highlighting points from TASA updates as per minute order #115825 adopted by TxDOT Transportation Commission on September 21, 2020. Mr. Canon emphasized how MPO's are now required to include TX Dot's Direct Cost for PE and Construction, currently seeking specific guidance on this matter. He continued with the returned funds to address reasonable project overruns, since this is the time first time to be allowed. RGVMPO is working closely with TxDOT throughout this process. He is proposing to come at the beginning of 2021 to have a project call release by March but does not foresee anything sooner. During this discussion, City of Harlingen asked does the cost of TxDOT include the dollar amount for direct cost for PE. Mr. Canon directed the question to TxDot to provide an explanation. Melba Schaus, TxDOT, answered the direct cost be included on these projects was not being done before, e.g., CAT 7.

After some discussion on this item, Melba Schaus, TxDOT made a motion to approve the TASA Project call update the motion was seconded by City of Harlingen; and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

C. Discussion and Consideration of Category 7 workshop date(s)

Andrew A. Canon recommended Category 7 virtual workshops for members. Policy Board to move forward with workshops as needed. The will of the Advisory meeting was to pinpoint some dates. Andrew reiterated that he and his staff are busy with Certification and upcoming AMPO conference. A question by Armando Garza, regarding dates and the presentations will be provided by whom. The presentations will be a combination effort between RGVMPPO staff and TxDOT to show the history how CAT 7 been used. As per all members after deliberating Wednesday, November 4, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. is the first Category 7 workshop. Yvette Barrera, City of McAllen, asked if the workshops would provide additional information. Andrew responded that he wants to provide more information that originally went out because it is on the sparse side.

D. Discussion and Update of Federal Certification review

Andrew A. Canon discussed the importance of Federal Certification requiring all staff to come into the office these past two weeks, with expectation to return to rotation once certification is completed. He also mentions Pete Sepulveda, Chairman, would likely need to be present and provide his review. Possibly kick off December 7th continuing with Dec. 8th, 9th, 10th. Conceitedly, the last policy meeting for this year will be huge since it will highlight Federal Certification, Congestion Study, BPAC etc. addressing RGVMPPO plans for the upcoming years. No further questions regarding Federal Certification.

After much discussion on this item, City of McAllen made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by City of Brownsville; and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

E. Discussion and update on Active Transportation Plan

Andrew A. Canon discussed the Active Transportation Plan and provided a hard target date, Friday, October 9, 2020 at the end of the working day. Anyone who reviews and wants to comment can do so on the document. The reasoning for the hard target is due to public involvement an additional 30 days. Yvette Barrera, City of McAllen, questioned the funding if there was anything set aside, which was answered by Mr. Canon, responded no funding will be figured throughout the years (much like other projects). Ms. Barrera concern was future funding impact where the priorities are not the same as the cities. As per Mr. Canon, like anything it must go through consultative process following recommendations for connectivity and has not received anything contrary, however, keep an open mind for funding options. TASA funding and public comment questions were asked by Ms. Barrera. She wanted reassurance that this does interfere with future TASA funding (not tied strictly to this that it is still open to their bike plans and routes). Mr. Canon explained the only TASA funding that is tied up to anything are the projects approved through TIP for the Brownville areas approved upon redesignation area, several projects approved during a four-year period. As per Mr. Canon, public comments would be recorded but cannot guarantee documents would change. No further questions regarding Active Transportation Plan.

After some discussion on this item, City of McAllen made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by the Hidalgo County RMA; and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

V) RGVMPPO STAFF REPORTS AND UPDATES

A. Director Update

B. Introduction of new RGVMPPO staff

New RGVMPPO staff was introduced.

- TAC Meeting Moved to November 19, 2020

Next TAC meeting has been moved as approved per last meeting board right before Thanksgiving to facilitate the joint Policy Board meeting for December 10th.

- Update from statewide MPO meeting, TEMPO

Mr. Canon updated the members of TEMPO meeting held yesterday but no real surprises, the biggest as discussed in the last TAC and Policy Board meeting was hoping to move forward with TIP revisions for November but the brakes have been pumped. He found out that TxDot will be approve STIP in the first quarter of next year. No approved TIP 2021-2024 to make amendments also halting MTP to prevent overlapping of projects. RGVMPPO is working closely with TxDot until the TIP is adopted. Pete Sepulveda, Chairman, asked which projects are being negatively impacted delaying let and funding. Melba Schaus, TxDOT responded and as of date only two (April lettings). As per funding, Ms. Schaus assured him that funding will not be affected only project process. Norma Garza clarified Ms. Schaus comments by explaining the do not anticipate any loss of funds, letting will have a later date.

C. Financial Update

Mr. Canon was please to provide financial update he presented a PowerPoint detailing RGVMPPO finances. RGVMPPO staff has been expanded and current budget reflects the end this fiscal year all under budget. Next meeting the new fiscal year budget will be presented. No further questions regarding financial update.

VI) STATUS REPORTS

A. TxDOT Project Status Report

Melba Schaus (TxDOT) provided an updated Via Microsoft Teams TxDOT Project Status Report within the RGVMPPO area. The following reports included TxDOT Monthly Letting Update (Nov. 2020, Dec. 2020, Apr. 2021, May 2021, July 2021) and Pharr District Master Letting Plan. Ms. Schaus notified members of delayed letting process and could not provide an exact date but assured everyone will be updated. Briefly discussed McAllen Projects and TIP delays. She encouraged to reach out to their project managers for any questions, but she would also be available to answer questions.

B. Cameron County RMA

Pete Sepulveda (Cameron County RMA) provided an updated presentation Via Microsoft Teams on projects that are currently within the Cameron County RMA. All projects are moving forward as scheduled and Cameron County RMA report following the project process: Environmental, Preliminary Engineering, ROW & Utilities, Design, and Funding filed with the October 8, 2020 RGVTAC Packet. **Report only, no action taken at this time.**

C. Hidalgo County RMA

Eric Davila, PE, (Hidalgo County RMA) provided an updated presentation Via Microsoft Teams on projects that are currently within the Hidalgo County RMA; he discussed the major milestones of each project. All projects are continuing to move forward despite seeing COVID-19 related challenges and adjusting to the news of approval of the STIP. They are working closely with TxDot. The Hidalgo County RMA monthly report is filed with the October 8, 2020 RGVTAC Packet. **Report only, no action taken at this time.**

D. McAllen Metro

Jon Ray Bocanegra provided a brief update Via Microsoft Teams and noted a small passenger increase since the previous month, utilizing CARES ACT grant, and everything appears to be moving upwards. The McAllen Metro report is filed with the October 8, 2020 RGVTAC Packet. **Report only, no action taken at this time.**

E. Brownsville / Island Metros

Antonio Zubietta provided an updated report Via Microsoft Teams which included the Brownsville Metro and Island Metro. These reports include on-going connecting community projects and combined ridership. He explained compared to previous years numbers are low, however, there is an increase since COVID-19. The reports are filed with October 8, 2020 RGVTAC Packet. **Report only, no action taken at this time.**

F. Valley Metro

Frank Jaramillo provided an update Via Microsoft Teams for ridership for both rural and urban year to date report. COVID-19 continues to impact services, however, there is a steadily increase. The reports are filed with the October 8, 2020 RGVTAC Packet. **Report only, no action taken at this time.**

VII) NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Pete Sepulveda, Chairman, wants to make sure everyone receives a calendar invite for Category 7 workshop. Luis will be forwarding the invites at a later time through Microsoft Teams. Yvette Barrera, City of McAllen, wants to add an item to discuss emergency relief program she has questions as does Tom Reyna, City of Edinburg. Mr. Sepulveda clarified Cat 6 falls under FHWA and not classified (local roadways) would be the FEMA program. Ms. Barrera wants to include another item to review how the functional classification is used to determine emergency relief funding. Mr. Sepulveda suggested including this for the next meeting.

VIII) ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the RGVTAC Members, Pete Sepulveda, (Cameron County RMA) Chairman called for a motion to adjourn. The Hidalgo County made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 AM. The motion was seconded by City of McAllen; and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

