

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

Wednesday, August 2, 2023, at 11:00 AM

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The RGVMPO Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting was held in-person at the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Small Board Room, 301 W. Railroad St., Weslaco, TX and virtually via Microsoft Teams. The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Rose Gowen, Vice Chair, at 11:00 A.M.

**II. ROLL CALL**

RGVMPO BPAC Representatives **PRESENT:**

Organization/Agency	Voting Membership	Alternate
Valley Off-Road Bicycling Association	David Hernandez, Chair	
Caracara Trails	Rose Gowen, Vice-Chair	
VACANT	VACANT	VACANT
City of Sullivan City	Alma Salinas	Ana Mercado
TxDOT Pharr District	Craig Wuensche	Augustin Ramirez
City of Edinburg	Larry Ayala	Valentin Sanchez Jr.
City of Pharr	Ruben Alfaro	Maria Rangel
City of Brownsville	Christopher Nelson	Juan (Johnny) Pena
Valley Metro	Claudia Olmedo	Stacie Garcia
LRGVDC	Horacio Garza	Nancy Sanchez
UTRGV	Rodney Gomez	Pablo Aguilar
TPWD	Javier De Leon	Kelly Malkoski
Citizen At-Large	Nina Torkelson	Robert Ordez
Citizen At-Large	Richard Cavin	
Citizen At-Large	Ana Adame	Tracy Roberts
Citizen At-Large	Michael McNew	Jon Ray Bocanegra

**Other Attendees:**

- Armando Villela, City of Harlingen
- Javier Mendez, City of Harlingen
- Jennifer Carr, City of Harlingen
- Ana Hernandez, City of Harlingen
- Herbert Camacho, City of McAllen
- Tom Reyna, City of Edinburg

**RGVMPO Staff:**

- Andrew Canon, Executive Director
- Melany Rodriguez, GIS Specialist/Planner I
- Javier Dominguez, Planner I
- Fernando Cantu, Planner III
- Alma Provencio, GIS Specialist
- Eva Garcia, Planner III Bike/Ped Program Coordinator

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III. **CITIZENS INPUT:**           **No comments were made.**

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

**A. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of June 7, 2023**

The Minutes of the June 7, 2023 RGVMPPO BPAC Meeting was presented. Javier De Leon, TPWD, made the motion to approve the Minutes of June 7, 2023. The motion was seconded by Larry Ayala, Edinburg, and upon a vote; the **motion passed unanimously**.

**B. Consideration and Action to Appoint New Members to the RGVMPPO BPAC**

Eva Garcia, RGVMPPO, presented the Membership Applications that were received:

1. City of Edinburg (Public Agency)
2. Hidalgo County (Public Agency)
3. Brownsville Community Improvement Corporation (Economic Development Agency)
4. Council for South Texas Economic Progress (COSTEP)
5. City of Brownsville (Pedestrian-Oriented)
6. City of Harlingen (Stakeholder Organization: Health/Fitness Community)
7. Even Gonzalez (Stakeholder Organization: Health/Fitness Community)

After some discussion, it was recommended to review potential appointments by membership category. Chris Nelson, Brownsville, made the motion to appoint Hidalgo County as a Public Agency member of the RGVMPPO BPAC. The motion was seconded by Jon Ray Bocanegra, Citizen At-Large, and upon the vote the **motion passed**. After further discussion, it was decided to proceed without further appointments.

**C. Presentation and Discussion on the RGVMPPO Resiliency and Sustainability Plan**

Javier Dominguez, RGVMPPO Project Lead, provided a brief background on the development of Plan and introduced Rene Pastorek, Project Manager from Alliance Transportation Group (ATG). Rene presented the draft recommendations developed through the planning process and explained benefits to active transportation, including reduced emissions and health benefits.

Jon Ray Bocanegra, Citizen At-Large, supported the recommendation from the Plan and discussed ho. Commissioner Rose Gowen, encouraged members to take pictures of examples and to share for potential pilot projects. Additionally, there was a consensus that trees are critical infrastructure for both active transportation and resiliency. It was encouraged that members talk with their City Officials to advocate for trees to help address heat islands. Signage is needed to identify active transportation corridors with bioswales, trees, and further recommendations. **No action was taken.**

**D. Presentation and Discussion on the Quarterly Updates of RGV B-Cycle, the regional bikeshare program**

Horacio Garza, Bikeshare Coordinator, presented new updates regarding the program. Specifically, he notified members that the typical dock station has 10 bikes and a kiosk. It has been recommended that the kiosk computers be eliminated from the program as they continue to have issues. Updates will be made to each station to incorporate a QR code that leads the user to the BCycle mobile app, which is the main way individuals pay for a bikeshare membership. Harlingen and Brownsville stations are back online, and staff is working on getting McAllen's stations back online. Horacio also stated that 3.0 docks and pedal-assist bikes have been procured to replace the station in Harlingen that had been hit by a motor vehicle (paid for through insurance). **No action was taken.**

**E. Presentation and Discussion regarding the West Rail Trail to Brownsville Sports Park Project Proposal**

Prior to the beginning of the presentations, Eva Garcia reviewed the FY2023-2024 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Call for Projects Funding Summary and Requests. Eva shared evaluation forms were created per voting member/project, and thanked Melany Rodriguez for her work on that. After a short preface, Christopher Nelson, Brownsville, was introduced and began to present the West Rail Trail to Brownsville Sports Park Project Proposal. The request is \$325,820 in TASA funds. After some

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discussion, Chris clarified that TxDOT's pedestrian bridge over the Union Pacific railroad would be utilized for this connection, and preliminary conversations were had with TxDOT. **No action was taken.**

**F. Presentation and Discussion regarding the Morrison Rd. to Monte Bella Park Project Proposal**

Christopher Nelson, Brownsville, presented the proposed planning project and \$153,457 request to BPAC members. Chris explained the funds would be used for the environmental and preliminary engineering of the proposed route/sidewalk. The project would create a safe walkable/bikeable connection for a predominately residential area to a large public park with many amenities.

After some discussion, a question about the Equity scoring criteria was brought up regarding how to compare the equity data project to project. Eva stated that RGVMPPO Staff would prepare a one-page sheet with each projects' equity data for Members to use during evaluation. **No action was taken.**

**G. Presentation and Discussion regarding the Dixieland Reservoir/Park Corridor Preliminary Engineering Project Proposal**

Javier Mendez, Harlingen, introduced Ana Hernandez and began to present the information regarding the proposed project and its connection to the existing Arroyo Colorado Trail. The \$276,000 request would help cover a scope of work that included a topographical survey, geotechnical engineering, civil engineering, environmental permitting, and design of the potential route.

After some discussion, Javier shared that the existing trail is 4.6 miles in length and there was a potential 16-mile route to connect to La Feria. Additionally, the proposed Phase III of the Arroyo Colorado Trail is currently being studied to determine a potential connection to San Benito. **No action was taken.**

**H. Presentation and Discussion regarding the Mission Comprehensive Transportation Alternative**

Michael Elizondo, Mission, introduced the proposed plan to develop the first comprehensive assessment and plan for transportation alternative projects. The TASA funding request is \$200,000 and would cover the entire City of Mission limits, approximately 34.1 square miles. Michael shared that the City saw a spike in non-motorized crashes in 2021 and considered multiple elements to incorporate in the plan including: emergency evacuation routes, emergency call stations, lighting, benches, ADA compliant integrations, travel stations (bike public, racks, etc.), and public transportation.

After some discussion, City of Pharr asked about how the cost estimate was determined, offered to share their scope/cost estimates, and recommended to narrow the scope. **No action was taken.**

**V. PROJECT UPDATES**

Eva Garica, RGVMPPO, briefly provided updates regarding the FY2019-2020 projects and reiterated that August was the local/regional deadline to get projects Ready-to-Let so TxDOT may submit the Federal Project Authorization & Agreement (FPAA) for the obligation of funds.

Eva also covered 2021-2022 projects and reiterated that most of these projects should be having their kickoff meetings with their appointed TxDOT Project Manager (PM).

**VI. NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Javier Dominguez, RGVMPPO, shared that FHWA has approved the grant agreement for the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan. The RGVMPPO hopes to kick off subcommittee meetings soon and Javier reiterated that the goal of the plan is to look at proven safety countermeasures. Additionally, Javier announced that the RFP was being written for the Passenger Rail Feasibility Study and a new subcommittee will be created with the new year when the Study kicks off.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Javier De Leon, TPWD, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:02pm. The motion was seconded by Christopher Nelson, Brownsville, and upon a vote; the **motion passed unanimously.**