

**WEBB COUNTY – CITY OF LAREDO
REGIONAL MOBILITY AUTHORITY BOARD**

WC-CL RMA Board of Directors Meeting
International Bank of Commerce
1200 San Bernardo Ave
3rd Floor – Community Suite
January 27, 2025

BOARD MINUTES

The Webb County-City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority (WC-CL RMA) Board met at the above time and place. The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. WC-CL RMA Board Vice-Chair Doug Howland present and presiding. The following board members were present:

Jed A. Brown
Douglas B. Howland
Oscar O. Lopez
Arturo Dominguez
Antonio Arce
David Garcia
Jose Murillo
Alfonso Mendiola
Diana Palacios

AGENDA

1. Open Meeting and Establish Quorum

After establishing a quorum, Presiding Officer Jed Brown called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Chairman Brown notified everyone present that a notice of the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and then asked everyone to stand for the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Welcome of Board Members – Jed Brown (WC-CL RMA Presiding Office)

Chairman Brown informed all present that the meeting was being recorded and thanked International Bank of Commerce for hosting the meeting.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Open Public Forum/Comment Period.

It was noted that no individual signed up to offer public comments during the meeting.

5. Action Item: Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action concerning the Approval of the November 6, 2024 WC-CL RMA Regular Board Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Motion to approve November 6, 2024, WC-CL RMA Board Meeting Minutes.
Moved by: Arturo Dominguez
Second by: Jose Murillo
Discussion: No discussion was held
In Favor: Motion passed unanimously

Note: The Chairman moved to take up Agenda Item No. 9.

9. Action Item (Resolution 25-02): Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action to Accept the FY 2024 WC-CL RMA Annual Audit Report presented by Canales, Garza & Baum, PLLC.

Chairman Brown welcomed Canales, Garza & Baum, PLLC to present the 2024 WC-CL RMA Annual Report. Aron Canales and Guadalupe Wright introduced the audit report, which details the auditor's opinion, management and discussion analysis, and financial statements. Ms. Wright proceeded with the auditor's report, which provided a clean, unmodified opinion on the financial statements for the year ending September 30, 2024. This means the financial statements were accurately presented in all material respects.

Ms. Wright outlined the audit process, including compliance with ethical standards, understanding the RMA's internal controls, and evaluating accounting policies. The RMA's financial position showed total assets of \$13.4 million, with most being cash or investments, and liabilities of \$460,000. The net position was \$12.9 million. Operating expenses were \$2.6 million, with an income of \$3.7 million, resulting in a reconciliation to the restricted net assets. The statement of cash flows was explained as a reconciliation between income and cash equivalents.

Ms. Wright emphasized that there were no issues during the audit, with no uncorrected misstatements or disagreements with management. The disclosures were clear and consistent.

Chairman Brown thanked the auditors for their services and added a statement of gratitude for Ruben Soto, the CPA who manages the WC-CL RMA's books.

Motion: Motion to Accept Resolution 25-02
Moved by: Oscar O. Lopez
Second by: Antonio Arce
Discussion: No discussion was held
In Favor: Motion passed unanimously

The Chairman announced that the Board would now resume the order of the agenda, returning to Agenda Item No. 6.

6. Chair's Report

A. Compliance Calendar Update

Chairman Brown thanked LJA Engineering for their help, specifically mentioning two items completed in December, with one being the project report. The report, which provides detailed information on the ongoing work, was shared with local elected officials to keep them informed. The annual audit was tackled this month, meeting the deadline, and it will be provided to the relevant individuals. Chairman Brown also discussed upcoming reports, including one on eminent domain authority and the compliance report, which will require approval next month.

The Chairman also reminded the Board about the personal financial statements due by the end of April and the importance of starting on them early.

B. Vallecillo Road future overpass at IH35 Update

The Vallecillo Road overpass project is progressing well, with a draft of the overpass now included in the QIP for approval by TxDOT this summer. The project has secured \$16 million in MPO category two funds, though additional funding is still needed. Conversations with TxDOT have been positive, and there's confidence that the necessary funds will be found.

The project involves acquiring additional right-of-way, increasing the estimated cost by \$20-25 million. TxDOT needs about 10 more acres for both the road project and adjacent areas. The Killam families, landowners, have agreed to donate this land, which will likely be worth much more than the \$10 million originally estimated once appraisals are completed. A presentation on the project is expected soon, which will provide more details.

C. Concord Hills Project Update

The Concord Hills Project is set for discussion and potential approval at the City Council's February 18th meeting, which will be a busy session. Chairman Brown

relayed there is only one meeting in February, due to many council members being out of town, the Project update will focus on the \$1 million contribution to the project. The drainage district is contributing \$400,000, with the city covering the balance. The Project is on track to stay within its budget.

The primary landowner, who is donating most of the necessary right-of-way, has agreed to cover the \$400,000 cost for the civil engineering design, saving the city money. The \$1 million city contribution is fixed and will not change based on project costs, avoiding the situation experienced with the Los Presidentes Project where cost overruns led to additional financial responsibility. The Project's handling has been streamlined, with no additional cost burden for the city beyond the initial donation. An update on the Project will be provided in a future meeting.

7. Presentations

A. Financial Report

Oscar Lopez, Treasurer, presented the financial report as of the end of November 2024. The total cash on hand in the checking account is \$7,954,876.54. Investments were valued at \$4,412,260.09, and receivables in the amount of \$684,005.47, bringing total assets to \$13,051,684.44. A summary of key deposits were communicated to the Board. Total cash in the bank at end of November is \$579,242.49.

Motion: Motion to accept Financial Statements
Moved by: Douglas Howland
Second by: Alfonso Mendiola
Discussion: No discussion was held
In Favor: Motion passed unanimously

B. Status Report on Vehicle Registration Fees (VRF's)

The amount of VRF funds that were received and have been paid to the WC-CL RMA are \$630,350.00. There was discussion about the fluctuations in the VFR (Vehicle Fee Revenue) and the potential for it to increase over time. While the revenue has varied, with some months being much larger than others, there is hope that as the community grows, the revenue will gradually increase. It was mentioned that with more vehicles on the road and the elimination of certain online registration shortcuts, the county may start collecting more fees in the future. Although the numbers have tapered off at the end of the year, there is optimism that, in the coming years, the revenue will steadily rise.

C. Financial Investment Planning Report

The report to the board highlights that the Investment Committee did not meet in the last quarter of 2024, but a meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 2025. As of December 2024, the account with Farol Wealth totaled \$9,645,789.61, which includes \$14,842 in accrued interest. The account consists of \$5,219,875 in a liquid money market account earning 4.10% interest and \$4,411,071.20 in US Treasury obligations. Several Treasury securities have upcoming maturities starting in February 2025, totaling over \$3.4 million. The committee plans to authorize the purchase of more Treasury securities based on cash needs. In 2024, the account earned \$241,997 in interest and dividend income, primarily from the money market mutual fund invested in US Treasuries. The report concludes with an invitation for questions regarding the account or the committee.

D. Mines Road Signalization Project presentation from the City of Laredo

The Mines Road signalization project was presented to the subcommittee, highlighting that Mines Road has become the second most congested road in Texas. This was an eye-opener for the committee. However, they felt the project wasn't substantial enough to include in the bond referendum, so they suggested bringing it to the WC-CL Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) for potential involvement. During a discussion with the general committee, it was noted that while the WC-CL RMA is seen as a potential funding source, it doesn't have unlimited resources. The committee had just approved their budget for the year and the next five years, and since then, there has been confusion among others about the RMA's funding capabilities. In the future, a "call for projects" may be needed, similar to past practices by MPOs, to prioritize new projects. Projects should be on the WC-CL RMA's radar to be considered, and while Mines Road is recognized as important, any project needs to be thoroughly evaluated.

The question was raised whether the WC-CL RMA is allowed to spend money on signalization projects. It was confirmed that, generally, the RMA can participate in such projects as it involves FM 1472 (a state highway), which qualifies for funding under the RMA's guidelines. While the WC-CL RMA might not cover the entire cost, there is an opportunity to contribute to the project, showing commitment and leveraging partnerships. The WC-CL RMA's approach has historically been to collaborate with others to fund and complete community projects more effectively.

Albert Quintanilla from the City of Laredo Traffic Safety Division went on to present to the Board Mines Road Signalization explaining that there are nine traffic signals between Pan American Boulevard and Bob Bullock Loop, and each signal was installed as a separate project, often with different manufacturers, software, and service dates. Some signal cabinets are already 10 years old, nearing the end of their service life. To address this, there's a need to upgrade all the signals at once to ensure consistency

and improve functionality as such improvement doesn't fully reflect the increased traffic congestion, as traffic now backs up not only on Mines Road but also on Loop 20 and I-35. As a result, police overtime costs have risen significantly, with more officers needed to manage traffic and control signals.

E. Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant program: Vision Zero Webb Laredo Safety Action Plan presentation

Blasita Lopez from LJA Engineering presented an overview of crash data, highlighting human behavior factors and the need for resources to address safety, equity, and education. The goal is Vision Zero—reducing serious injuries and fatalities by 2040. The plan involves policies, partnerships, and capital improvements focused on systemic safety. The approach is based on the Federal Highway Administration's Safe Systems framework, with themes including establishing programs, using data, making streets safe, and measuring progress.

The draft action plan includes collaboration with local agencies like the city, MPO, and county, with responsibilities shared across partners. It emphasizes the importance of identifying implementation dollars for success, particularly for securing funding for future projects. The goal is to present clear, concise plans that can fit within short time frames, as seen in city council meetings.

Jason Rodriguez followed with details on the capital plan, which outlines priority projects amounting to \$33 million. The projects focus on high-injury areas, considering socio-economic, transportation, and health burdens. The plan identifies the high injury network, where severe and fatal crashes are concentrated, guiding efforts for targeted improvements. The presenter discussed a plan to improve safety on 17 high-risk corridors in the Laredo area, including locations for school bus stops. The projects aim to reduce accidents and improve traffic conditions, with varying costs for each. The team is considering funding scenarios based on land ownership (city or TxDOT) and has developed a ranking system to prioritize the projects. The plan includes a mix of short-term and long-term improvements, such as raised medians and corridor-wide changes. The goal is to reach zero fatal and serious crashes by 2040. The next steps involve finalizing the plan, obtaining adoption from key bodies in March, and preparing a competitive implementation grant with a focus on securing local funding.

F. Vallecillo Road Project Presentation

The Project, which spans 2.85 miles from Mines Road to IH-35 in Laredo, primarily involves road improvements along Vallecillo Road. The proposed design includes four travel lanes with a raised median, sidewalks on both sides (a 6-foot sidewalk on one side and a shared-use path for pedestrians and cyclists on the other). The right-of-way is generally 150 feet, with adjustments near IH-35 due to changes in the raised median

design. The raised median will reduce costs compared to the previous design, which includes a continuous concrete turn lane. The median will remain in some areas, but with openings for turn lanes at major intersections. The project also involves coordination with adjacent property owners and the city for future access points.

Tasks completed so far include parcel plats, environmental studies, noise analysis, and traffic forecasting. A public meeting was held, and additional federal funding was added to the project. Ongoing tasks include utility coordination, with meetings to identify locations for sewer work and updates to the interchange at IH-35. The project cost is currently estimated at over \$30 million, not including inflation, and the timeline is projected to be impacted by the IH-35 interchange work, with construction plans expected by August 2025.

8. Action Item (Resolution 25-01): Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action to Elect the following WC-CL RMA Board Officers: Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The discussion centers on the election of officers for the Webb County, City of Laredo, Regional Mobility Authority, specifically the vice chair, secretary, and treasurer positions. The current officers' commitments are appreciated, and it's noted that the board is expected to get busier, especially with upcoming advisory committee meetings. The Board suggested keeping the current officers in their positions unless they were unwilling to serve. With no objections, the current officers are willing to continue in their roles.

Motion: Motion to Approve Resolution 25-01
Moved by: Alfonso Mendiola
Second by: Jose Murillo
Discussion: No discussion was held
In Favor: Motion passed unanimously

10. Action Item (Resolution 25-03): Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action to Approve Supplemental Work Authorization No. 4.3 with LJA Engineering, Inc. for additional scope and budget, for the development of the Vision Zero Webb Laredo Safety Action Plan under the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program.

The action item discusses approving a supplemental work authorization (Number 4.3) with LJA Engineering for an additional scope and budget for developing the Vision Zero, Webb Laredo Safety Action Plan under the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program. The requested amount is \$125,000, which is already covered under the original \$2 million grant and its 80/20 funding split. The extra budget will allow for more detailed work, including stakeholder engagement and design for school bus stops.

Motion: Motion to Approve Resolution 25-03
Moved by: Douglas Howland
Second by: Jose Murillo
Discussion: No discussion was held
In Favor: Motion passed unanimously

11. Action Item (Resolution 25-04): Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action to Approve the FY 2024 Compliance Report for Submission to Texas Department of Transportation as required by 43 Texas Administrative Code §26.65.

The Board discussed and approval of the fiscal year 2024 compliance report for submission to the Texas Department of Transportation, as required by 43 Texas Administrative Code § 26.65. The report was prepared by LJA Engineering and is an annual requirement to ensure compliance.

Motion: Motion to Approve Resolution 25-04
Moved by: Oscar Lopez
Second by: Arturo Dominguez
Discussion: No discussion was held
In Favor: Motion passed unanimously

12. General Engineering Consultant Update on the following projects:

A. Springfield Phase IV Project update

The Springfield Phase Four project received six bids, all under budget, with costs just under \$700,000, well within the \$1 million allocated. The city's portion of the project remains, following TxDOT's completion of the curb cuts and Loop 20 connection. The remaining \$300,000 could potentially be used for another city project, but this would require consideration by the Board, especially since federalized projects come with additional conditions. The Board will need to decide how to handle any leftover funds.

B. Cuatro Vientos TRZ Implementation Update

The Cuatro Vientos TRZ Implementation remains unchanged, and an Interlocal Agreement will be taken to the City of Laredo Council for approval. This project focuses on implementing the transportation reinvestment zone (TRZ). The WC-CL RMA's contribution to the Cuatro Vientos TRZ is approximately \$44,000 to \$45,000, which is half of the total cost of \$88,000.

C. North Laredo TRZ Feasibility Study Update

The North Laredo TRZ Feasibility Study will be presented for approval at the next City of Laredo Council meeting. There was a discussion about removing the east side of I-35 from the proposed study area, but as of a recent conversation, the city wants to add it back in, while avoiding the existing TIRZ area. TXP, the sub-consultant, is revising the map accordingly. The RMA's participation cost for the North Laredo TRZ study is estimated at around \$44,000 to \$45,000.

13. Report: Date/Time/Location of Next Regular Board Meeting

Chairman Brown informed the Board that there may be a meeting sometime in March and the exact date, time, and location will be determined and communicated to the group.

14. Adjournment.

On a motion made by Alfonso Mendiola and second by Arturo Dominguez. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.