



Webb County–City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority 2024 Strategic Plan

About the Authority

The Webb County–City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority (the “WC-CL RMA”) is a political subdivision, formed pursuant to Chapter 370 of the Texas Transportation Code (the “RMA Act”). The formation of the WC-CL RMA was approved by the Texas Transportation Commission on February 27, 2014, pursuant to the joint request of Webb County and the City of Laredo.

The WC-CL RMA represents the Legislature’s vision to give local communities greater flexibility to develop and implement innovative transportation programs, while working with local governments and the Texas Department of Transportation (“TxDOT”). The WC-CL RMA can develop infrastructure projects in the City of Laredo and Webb County that otherwise might depend solely on state or federal funding. With the support and guidance of Webb County and the City of Laredo, the WC-CL RMA is evolving into an agile and effective organization.

About the Strategic Plan

Section 370.261 of the RMA Act and Article XVIII of the WC-CL RMA Bylaws provide for the issuance of a Strategic Plan each even numbered year for the operations of the WC-CL RMA covering the next five fiscal years, beginning with the next odd numbered fiscal year. The 2026 Strategic Plan is a continuation of 2024 and previous plans. Through strategic partnerships with the City of Laredo (City), Webb County (County), the Webb County Drainage District no. 1, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Laredo & Webb County Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and private landowners, the WC-CL RMA will continue to work to develop transportation planning and roadways to benefit the traveling public in Laredo and Webb County.

Board Members

The Board is composed of nine members, with four directors appointed by the Webb County Commissioners Court and four directors appointed by the City Council of the City of Laredo. Pursuant to the RMA Act, the Texas Governor appoints the Board's presiding officer.

Current Board Members:

Jed A. Brown, Presiding Officer/Chairman
Tony Arce, Jr., Precinct 1 County Representative
Oscar O. Lopez, Precinct 2 County Representative
David Garcia, Precinct 3 County Representative
Diana Palacios, Precinct 4 County Representative
Jose Murillo, District 1 & 2 City Representative
Alfonso Mendiola, District 3 & 4 City Representative
Douglas B. Howland, District 5 & 6 of the City Representative
Arturo Dominguez, District 7 & 8 City Representative

Mission Statement

The mission of the WC-CL RMA is to assist the establishment of a comprehensive transportation system to directly benefit the traveling public within Webb County and the City of Laredo through the development of additional transportation alternatives within the region.

The 2026 Strategic Plan

The Port of Laredo, located in the City of Laredo and Webb County, is the largest port in the western hemisphere. The area is a major gateway for trade between the United States, Mexico, and countries farther south. Therefore, effective transportation infrastructure is a priority for governmental entities, transportation officials, business owners and residents of the South Texas region.

The WC-CL RMA plays a key role in the region's long-term transportation planning. The Authority strives to: (1) improve mobility and travel safety in and around Webb County and the City of Laredo more quickly; (2) help meet the transportation needs of a rapidly growing population; and (3) help meet the transportation needs of the growing international trade and trucking businesses.

Without careful planning, anticipated growth related to population and international trade volume in Webb County and the City of Laredo could lead to congestion and inefficiencies in the existing infrastructure. The populations of Webb County and the City of Laredo are growing at an accelerated rate. The population for the county in the 2020 Census measured 267,114 and is expected to grow to 500,000 by 2050. Improvements to transportation infrastructure and safety are vital to meet resulting demands.

Strategically located along the U.S.-Mexico border, Webb County and the City of Laredo have played a significant role in cross-border trade for decades, and especially since the inception of NAFTA in 1994. Exponential growth in international trade activities in recent years have placed significant stress on the regional transportation infrastructure, and the trend is expected to continue in the foreseeable future.

The following Initiatives represent the WC-CL RMA's proposed long-term goals and objectives for the next five years. Set in context of four major strategic initiatives (economic vitality, regional mobility, innovation, and travel safety), achievement of these goals will move the WC-CL RMA towards realization of its mission.

Initiative #1: Economic Vitality

A strong, reliable, and efficient transportation network is a critical component of a successful regional economy. Residents and businesses benefit from economic expansion that accompanies an improved mobility network. Local businesses may recognize greater efficiency and profitability due to greater reliability of the transportation network. With the level of anticipated sustained growth, the region has to plan and implement a wide range of integrated mobility solutions to ensure the quality of life of the community is retained and improved. Mobility is a key component for the future of the region. WC-CL RMA has the ability to support the development of transportation projects through direct funding partnership commitments or through participation with the MPO. They have successfully utilized public / private partnerships and are uniquely structured to continue to facilitate this formula to realize new transportation infrastructure in the region.

Goal 1.1: Actively support projects and programs that support economic development.

Objectives:

- Invest in plans and studies that provide valuable information justifying the use of innovative methods of developing and financing transportation projects (e.g., Transportation Reinvestment Zones, Public-Private Partnerships, etc.).
- Support the development of transportation projects that directly benefit safety and mobility for current and future international trade, housing, and employment centers.

Goal 1.2: Influence efforts to increase transportation capacity and reliability in congested areas and desired development zones.

Objectives:

- Support the development of projects that increase capacity of the full roadway network as well as individual roadways offering additional opportunities for new development, while supporting existing demands.
- Support the development of projects and mobility enhancements that contribute to consistent and predictable travel times.

Initiative #2: Regional Mobility

Webb County and the City of Laredo will benefit from greater access to a regionally integrated network of transportation modes that provide safe, reliable, efficient, and affordable travel and an improved quality of life. The international ports of entry in the area are significant due to Laredo's location on IH-35, and Highway 85, the Mexican interstate highway counterpart. WC-CL RMA supports plans for expanding Interstate Highway access through the region to meet growing demand for commercial traffic to and from the region by upgrading US 59 to IH-69W, US 83N to IH-27, and US 83S to IH-2. The level of international trade in Laredo and Webb County presents unique challenges in relation to the roadway infrastructure and produces a substantial percentage of trucks on local streets and roadways causing emergency services to experience reduced response times. WC-CL RMA can partner and advocate for investment in infrastructure near border crossings providing connectivity that supports improved regional mobility.

Goal 2.1: Advocate for reliable, transportation options, alternative routes to congested roadways, and greater roadway connectivity.

Objectives:

- Take a leadership role in coordinating with regional partners through advocacy for the development of new roadways that offer alternative routes for personal vehicles.
- Continue involvement and investment in roadway projects that improve connectivity between major roadways, improving safety and travel time for commercial vehicles.

Goal 2.2: Advocate for an appropriately maintained regional roadway network.

Objectives:

- Support the development of transportation facilities that allow for reliable and efficient maintenance strategies that protect the RMA's initial investment.
- Support the development of strategies and infrastructure that utilizes technology to improve traffic flow and provide information to the traveling public.

Goal 2.3: Partner with regional entities to facilitate economic development initiatives in relation to investment in border infrastructure and connectivity to Ports of Entry.

Objectives:

- Continue involvement in regional planning activities with community partners such as business, transportation, logistics and manufacturing associations supporting convenient and reliable connectivity to international crossings and expansion of the Interstate highway system through the region, connecting to other parts of the State.

Initiative #3: Innovation

The WC-CL RMA is a regional transportation leader and service provider that uses innovative practices and transparent processes. Transportation infrastructure users benefit from innovative financing mechanisms. As traditional sources of funding for transportation projects continue to only cover a fraction of the costs of needed projects, the WC-CL RMA can help the region

overcome these funding shortfalls. Implementing new technology and social media can increase awareness of alternative transportation choices, improve decision making and increase efficiency. Innovative construction methods and materials can also help to optimize the use of public funds in the region.

Goal 3.1: Advocate for innovative funding partnerships and various funding options.

Objectives:

- Work closely with elected officials to enact legislation that supports flexible funding mechanisms that support regional mobility and infrastructure near border crossings.
- Support the use of all potential funding tools, including traditional funding from federal and state sources (e.g., the motor fuels tax), the Optional Vehicle Registration Fee, the creation of Transportation Reinvestment Zones, and the use of public-private partnerships (P3) when leveraging RMA funds.
- Advocate at the State and Federal level to increase funding for regional mobility.

Goal 3.2: Enhance the citizen experience through effective WC-CL RMA communication and accessibility.

Objectives:

- Maintain consistent messaging through expert content development and reputation management on all digital platforms, including its websites & social media
- Use digital engagement and analytics data to measure effectiveness of digital communication & make adjustments as needed
- Reach out proactively to the community through public relations efforts harnessing local media, strategic stakeholder groups and local transportation advocates
- Engage the public in transportation issues through collaborations with key partners on relevant projects including the Laredo & Webb County Area MPO, TxDOT Laredo District, Webb County, City of Laredo, and other community-based organizations.
- Enhance WC-CL RMA's transparency through timely, compliant financial and operations reporting.

Goal 3.3: Advocate for the use of innovative construction materials and methods, and readiness for future mobility demands.

Objectives:

- Support investment in durable and cost-efficient materials and methods to extend roadway lifespan, reduce maintenance costs, and optimize public spending.
- Support investment in smart sensors, resilient materials, and climate-adaptive designs improve road safety, support modern vehicle technologies, and ensure infrastructure readiness for future demands.

Initiative #4: Travel Safety

WC-CL RMA will promote travel safety as a top priority when agreeing to participate in the funding of projects or programs in Laredo and Webb County. The Vision Zero Webb Laredo Safety Action Plan represents an important contribution and investment by WC-CL RMA in partnership with City of Laredo and Federal Highway Administration in formalizing the Safe System Approach to mobility and design. This should be incorporated into all projects that WC-CL RMA chooses to invest in, and an expectation should be set for potential funding partners that this investment is recognized and taken seriously, so as not to omit safety countermeasures or any opportunity to implement infrastructure and programs that can contribute to saving the lives of our residents and neighbors. One life lost, is one too many.

Goal 4.1: Support Vision Zero in Laredo and Webb County, and advocate for funding related specifically to safety countermeasures and programs.

Objectives:

- Continue participation in implementation of Vision Zero by investing in continued annual monitoring of progress toward achieving Zero fatalities and serious injuries on Laredo and Webb County roadways by 2040.
- Support and participate in trainings on the goals of Vision Zero with local partners.
- Support and participate in partnerships to improve safety for children traveling to school and waiting to be picked-up by school buses in Laredo and Webb County.

Goal 4.2: Support investment in planning and developing infrastructure that encourages and facilitates safe travel using multiple modes of transportation.

Objectives:

- Continue involvement and investment in planning activities that support the improvement of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure.
- Support the development of safe and comfortable protected bike lanes and shared-use paths where applicable into existing and future projects.

Goal 4.3: Actively participate in increasing public awareness of travel safety and influence implementation of the Safe System Approach among local agency partners.

Objectives:

- Coordinate with local partners on public awareness campaigns for travel safety and initiatives that educate the public and encourage safe travel behaviors.
- Actively promote implementation of Safe System Approach practices among local partners through participation in the MPO and through WC-CL RMA-funded projects.