

**CORPUS CHRISTI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOTES (TAC) – March 24, 2016**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM DETERMINATION**

Meeting called to order by Mr. Sullivan at 9:00 a.m.

Present: Nueces County: Glen Sullivan, P.E., Chair; City of Corpus Christi: Dr. Raymond Chong, P.E.; City of Portland: Jamie Pyle, P.E.; Corpus Christi RTA: Gordon Robinson; Port of Corpus Christi Authority: David Krams, P.E.; TxDOT-CC: Paula Sales-Evans, P.E.; San Patricio County: Ms. Gwen Duhart.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF VISITING AGENCY OFFICIALS**

Chairman Sullivan welcomed all in attendance.

**3. DISCUSSION ONLY:**

**A. FY 2017 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Update.**

Mr. Pollack informed the Committee that four submittals—two from the City of Corpus Christi and two from the City of Portland—totaling approximately \$1.2M were received under the FY 2017 TAP Call for Projects, which closed at the end of January. Mr. Pollack reminded the Committee that the FY 2017 TAP Call for Projects identified the potential for funding to be broadened to include FY 2018 TAP funds so that appropriate proposals submitted for, but not funded by, the FY 2017 TAP might be programmed in FY 2018. He explained that the review team decided to exercise this option, which enabled the review team to program all four submittals between FY 2017 and FY 2018. Mr. Pollack directed TAC members to the memo in their packets, which summarizes the submittals and awards

**B. FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Update / 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Amendment.**

Mr. Pollack reminded the Committee that the MPO is in the midst of a two-year cycle update of its four-year plan, the TIP. Mr. Pollack pointed out that this was the fourth TAC meeting in a row at which staff had shared working versions of the TIP project tables and/or asked for TAC members' input regarding project prioritization on the MPO's long-range plan, the MTP.

Mr. Pollack directed TAC members to the two tables included in their agenda packets, one of which summarized proposed allocation of MPO funds for FY 2017-2020 on the basis of Committee input to date. Mr. Pollack requested Committee members' guidance as to whether to program relatively low cost feasibility studies, as shown, in FY 2018 and FY 2019 or to allow the accrual of positive Category 7 balances in those years so as to potentially support a larger project in FY 2020. Mr. Pollack also pointed out that the US 181 ramp reversals south of Buddy Ganem were programmed for the first available Category 7 dollars in FY 2020 once the MPO's commitment to Harbor Bridge construction had been met, but he stated that it was his hope that this project might be accomplished earlier, potentially using Proposition 1 or 7 dollars.

Mr. Krams asked if the TIP summary table distributed to the TAC at the February 2016 had listed the feasibility study project that were included in this version of the table.

Mr. Pollack responded that prior iterations of the table had not reflected these studies, as they were added to this version to illustrate one potential approach to utilizing the modest positive Category 7 carryover that is projected for FY 2017 and FY 2018.

Dr. Chong asked whether the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) process for various sections of the Regional Parkway project, (which are listed on the MTP with YOE costs that are commensurate with the projected carryover) might be programmed to utilize the projected positive Cat 7 balance in FY 2019 and/or FY2020.

Mr. Pollack responded that certainly the next steps in planning for Regional Parkway segments could be evaluated for inclusion if this was the will of the MPO, but he pointed out that the NEPA process cannot be completed unless construction funds have been identified.

Mr. Vourcos clarified that after NEPA process completion, amendment of the TIP to include the project cannot occur without available funding.

Ms. Sales-Evans stated that she would be in favor of maintaining the modest carryover as an unallocated or unobligated balance in order to afford flexibility. She suggested allowing positive carryover from FY 2017 and 2018 to accrue and then moving one of the two Harbor Bridge mitigation projects forward to FY 2019 from FY 2020 in order to demonstrate commitment to honor this obligation.

Mr. Krams also expressed general support for integration of feasibility studies into the MPO's short- and long-range plans, but he indicated that he was not opposed to the approach proposed by Ms. Sales-Evans.

Mr. Sullivan asked if the mitigation projects could move forward independently of construction on the Harbor Bridge project.

Mr. Vourcos affirmed that the mitigation projects could move forward independently of the Harbor Bridge project.

Ms. Sales-Evans stated that on the basis of the project's construction phasing, the park improvements project might be the preferred of the two mitigation projects to move forward to FY 2019.

Mr. Pollack indicated that since it appeared to be the preference of the TAC members to maintain a slight positive carry over rather than program feasibility studies and to move the park improvements project into FY 2019, staff would make those changes in anticipation of sharing a proposed working final TIP Update project list with the TAC in April.

Mr. Sullivan inquired as the TAMUCC's (Texas A&M University Corpus Christi) perspective about the relative priority of the the Oso Pedestrian Connection project, which would provide a walking connection between Momentum Campus to Main Campus and for which the University would be the local sponsor.

Mr. Pollack replied that he had had preliminary conversations with TAMUCC staff and was awaiting additional feedback as to the overall level of institutional support/priority.

Ms. Sales-Evans stated that if there is a project funded in the four-year plan, there is an expectation that there is progress and active work. She advised to determine Proposition 7 (Prop 7) funding and the proposed project for the funding.

Mr. Robinson asked whether showing a positive carryover would make the MPO less competitive for future funding allocations.

Mr. Pollack explained that Category 7 funds are distributed by formula and thus there would be no negative consequence of showing a positive carryover.

Ms. Sales-Evans asked about the opportunity to comment about the projects listed on the MTP Master Table.

Mr. Pollack replied that, as reported previously, staff are actively updating the scope and budgets of projects on the MTP, so any specific comments would be very timely.

Ms. Sales-Evans suggested two additional project needs for possible inclusion on the MTP Master Table: expanding/upgrading FM 2986 from US 181 to FM 3239 (Buddy Ganem Dr.) and improving the interchange at SH 361/Spur 202.

Mr. Pollack replied that, given what appeared to be general support for these additions among TAC members, staff would add them to the MTP Master Table and coordinate with the appropriate jurisdictions for project details.

Dr. Chong asked if Port and Airport projects would be included in the MTP.

Mr. Pollack replied that historically, the Corps Christi MPO's MTP has not served as an exhaustive clearinghouse of projects that fall outside of the MPO's scope.

Ms. Sales-Evans added that Category 7 funds have limitations.

Mr. Sullivan asked about the Statewide Highway 44 relief route.

Ms. Sales-Evans said that it was outside the MPO area and completion of a feasibility study is necessary to determine next steps.

Ms. Sales-Evans stated that TxDOT would investigate options and inform Mr. Pollack.

#### **4. PRESENTATION: HARBOR BRIDGE PROJECT UPDATE.**

Mr. Joseph Briones, TxDOT-CCRP District, provided an update on the Harbor Bridge Project. He informed the TAC that substantial completion was expected by the spring of 2020 and Final Acceptance expected by the end of 2020.

Mr. Sullivan asked about the Notice to Proceed (NTP) 2 regarding construction plans of the new Bridge.

Mr. Briones said that NTP 2 does not include design plans.

Mr. Robinson asked if the existing bridge would stay open during new bridge construction.

Mr. Briones confirmed that the old bridge will remain open until the new facility is ready to open with no closure of the connection across the Ship Channel at any point

Mr. Sullivan asked about the physical limits of the 25-year maintenance agreement.

Mr. Briones replied that the limits are from Beach Avenue across the Harbor Bridge to Morgan Avenue and along I-37 to Nueces Bay Boulevard.

#### **5. TAC MEMBERS' COMMENTS AND CONCERNS.**

Dr. Chong informed the TAC that the City Planning Commission recommended approval of the Strategic Plan for Active Mobility, Phase 1 – Bicycle Mobility to the City Council. He also informed that there would be an open house on April 11<sup>th</sup> from 3:30 to 5:30 at the Botanical Gardens regarding the Regional Parkway Planning and Environmental Linkages Study for Segments A & B.

Ms. Pyle informed the TAC that Mr. Pollack presented the Strategic Plan for Active Mobility, Phase 1, Bicycle Mobility to the Portland City Council, and Portland plans to adopt the plan by way of incorporation into the its Comprehensive Plan.

#### **6. STAFF BRIEFING:**

##### **A. FY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) development**

Mr. Pollack reminded the TAC that staff is currently working on the UPWP for FY 2017, which serves as the operating budget for the MPO. He informed the Committee that staff will be bringing forth a draft of the UPWP at the April TAC meeting and will be seeking a recommendation by the TAC to Transportation Policy Committee for approval of the UPWP.

##### **B. Regional Parkway PEL**

Mr. Pollack informed the TAC that the Regional Parkway project team has continued to meet with key stakeholder and has begun to develop alignment alternatives. He reminded

the Committee about the open house on April 11<sup>th</sup> from 3:30 to 5:30 at the Botanical Gardens. He also indicated that the project would likely become increasingly more visible in the media in the coming months and that it was still on schedule for completion in late summer.

**C. Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grant to update to the Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study: Roadways in Corpus Christi/Nueces County, Texas – October, 2010**

Mr. Pollack informed the Committee that data collection had begun in support of the update of the 2010 Commodities Flow Study. He reminded the Committee that the Nueces County LEPC, with support from the MPO, had successfully applied for financial support for this work from the state Division of Emergency Management. When the data collection effort concludes in late summer/early fall, it will help identify a clear path forward as to whether a formal Non-radioactive Hazardous Material (NRHM) Routing Process is merited for our area.

Dr. Chong asked if this project would entail signage on city highways and, if so, who would fund such an effort.

Mr. Pollack responded that there are detailed federal and state guidelines for implementing a routing process, including undertaking an alternatives analysis to identify the route and ultimately designating it, including signage. He explained that if this data collection effort determines that a routing process is merited, and, if it is the will of the jurisdictions in the MPO to pursue it, then one of the next steps would be an evaluation of potential costs and funding options.

**D. Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) meeting – April 14, 2016.**

Mr. Pollack informed the TAC that the next scheduled TPC meeting is April 14, 2016 but that it will likely be cancelled. He pointed out that staff will, however, be bringing action items before the TPC in both May and June (approval of the FY 2017 UPWP and approval of the FY 2017 – 2020 TIP Update).

**7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.**

Mr. Sullivan requested Mr. Briones to continue to update the TAC Committee regarding the Harbor Bridge.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS.**

There were no comments.

**9. ADJOURN.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.