

CORPUS CHRISTI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) MEETING NOTES

September 21, 2017

1. Call to Order and Quorum Determination

Mr. Sullivan called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Present: Glen Sullivan, Nueces County; Paula Sales-Evans, P.E., Texas Department of Transportation, Corpus Christi District; Gordon Robinson, Regional Transportation Authority; Brian DeLatte, Assistant City Manager, City of Portland; Raymond Chong, P.E., City of Corpus Christi; and Natasha Fudge, P.E., Port of Corpus Christi Authority

Staff present: Jeff Pollack, Brigida Gonzalez, Daniel Carrizales, Victor Mendieta, Elena Buentello, and Ingrid Spear

2. Introduction of Visiting Agency Officials

Mr. Sullivan welcomed all in attendance.

3. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Collaborative support for TxDOT Submittal for 2017 TIGER Discretionary Grant Program

TxDOT is seeking a statement of support from the MPO for a submittal to the 2017 Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant Program. The project would add capacity on I-37 between the I-69E interchange and the U.S. 77 interchange and would include elevation of the Nueces River Bridge. The project is currently identified in the Texas Department of Transportation's 2018 Unified Transportation Program and the MPO's 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and it was included in the August 2017 Amendment of the MPO's FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvements Program.

Mr. DeLatte made a motion to recommend that the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) provide a statement of support of TxDOT's grant application; Dr. Chong seconded. Motion Passed unanimously.

4. Presentation

A. Autonomous and Connected Vehicle Presentation

Dr. Kristie Chin, who coordinates the Texas Innovation Alliance on behalf of the University of Texas at Austin and who was instrumental in Austin's designation as one of ten Autonomous Vehicle Proving Grounds by the U.S. Department of Transportation, presented about the state-of-the-art in connected and autonomous vehicle research, technology, and market place.

Dr. Chong inquired about sources of funding for implementing the innovations covered in the presentations.

Dr. Chin spoke to the opportunity to maximize investments that are already being made by various entities. She also highlighted opportunities for economies of scale, such as cooperative purchasing agreements between cities or transit agencies, and she referenced federal grant programs and the potential for an innovations grant program through TxDOT.

Mr. Sullivan asked about the roll out process, particularly whether those leading the initiative were working with groups to identify corridors or sections of the state in which to begin. Dr. Chin responded that each of the regional teams participating in the Mobility Summit 2.0 (a gathering of regional delegates from across the State of Texas to build collaboration around transportation innovation, planned investments, and interactive engagement) has been asked to identify one or more corridors that represent locations where investment is needed.

Mr. Pollack identified three specific questions:

1. Given that the member entities in the MPO will continue to make investments in infrastructure, individually and collectively, what can be done to make those investments as flexible and adaptive as possible (given the mismatch in the time scales over which transportation infrastructure is planned, constructed, and maintained relative to the pace at which Connected Vehicles/Autonomous Vehicles (CV/AV) technology is changing)?
2. Is there an opportunity to involve the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle program at Texas A & M University - Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC) in the development of Texas as a proving ground for autonomous vehicles?
3. Are there Port projects, particularly the proposed truck queuing project that lend themselves to inclusion of CV/AV technology?

Ms. Fudge requested more information about the El Paso and Houston freight test sites. Dr. Chin cited the Ports of Miami and Seattle as other relevant case examples and referenced a company called Truck Smart Parking Solutions.

Mr. Robinson reported that the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) is already working with TAMU-CC on an autonomous campus shuttle, but he stated that RTA is already thinking about the application of autonomous technology on public roads. In terms of advice for continuing to develop these services, Dr. Chin encouraged RTA to work with the end users to identify needs, perceptions, and barriers.

Dr. Chin affirmed the merit of attempting to broaden the dialogue to include TAMU-CC.

5. Discussion Only

A. Texas Mobility Summit 2.0

TAC members discussed commitments to a regional delegation for participation in the TX Mobility Summit 2.0, to be held in Houston on October 16-17: <https://ctr.utexas.edu/texas-mobility-summit/>

Mr. Pollack asked for confirmation that Port staff are comfortable with the regional delegation using the Port's proposed truck queuing project as the region's case study.

Mr. Sean Strawbridge, Deputy Executive Director, Port of Corpus Christi Authority (Port), affirmed that the truck queuing project is an important project to the Port from a safety standpoint. He reported that the Port's Long Range Planning Committee would be evaluating the project and the financial commitment associated with the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant opportunity.

Mr. Strawbridge affirmed that conceptual discussion about expansion of the truck queuing project was safe fodder for the regional delegation at Mobility Summit 2.0, recognizing the uncertainty about project implementation and funding, as a means of gathering more information about best practices and benchmarks around the region.

Mr. Pollack stated that he, Mr. Caron, District Engineer for the TxDOT-CRP District, and Dan McGinn, Assistant Director of Planning at the City of Corpus Christi, planned to attend.

Curtis Rock, Chair of the RTA Board of Directors, indicated that he planned to attend, as did Dr. Chong.

Mr. Pollack committed to leading the creation of the team partnership profile but encouraged participants to register individually.

Mr. Pollack raised the question of Port representation on the delegation; Ms. Fudge responded that Port staff would follow up.

B. Travel Demand Model Update – Request for TAC Member Feedback

In anticipation of delivery of updated regional demographic data to TxDOT for use in validating the regional Travel Demand Model, staff is requesting feedback from TAC members as to whether the projected employment and population growth within different parts of the region is reasonable based on member's empirical knowledge of changes in their respective communities.

Mr. Pollack and Victor Mendieta, Geographic Information System Manager for the MPO, demonstrated the online data viewer that staff created to depict projections by Transportation Analysis Zones. Mr. Mendieta showed the spreadsheets designed to capture edits suggested by TAC members and their colleagues. Mr. Pollack requested TAC members' feedback by Friday, 9/29. He requested that TAC members solicit input from others in their organizations, as appropriate, and he emphasized that MPO staff are available to provide technical assistance in the process at any point. He requested that those TAC members who do not feel that changes to the growth or employment projections are required simply send an email to that effect to confirm that they have participated in the process.

Ms. Sales-Evans asked for guidance as to how conservative TAC members should be in their estimations of growth. Mr. Pollack responded that members should do their best to extrapolate out from current rates of growth over the full time horizon of the Travel Demand Model rather than simply account for growth and development that is occurring now. He reminded TAC members that the objective was to titrate the model to right-size the projection of infrastructure needs that come out of the model's travel demand projections.

Mr. Sullivan inquired as to the base year for the model; Mr. Mendieta responded that the base year for this model update is 2012.

6. Staff Briefing

A. Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) Call for Projects

Mr. Pollack reminded the TAC that the Call for Projects for the Transportation Alternative Set Aside program opened on September 19, 2017 and would remain open until December 13, 2017. MPO staff are available to work with prospective applicants to evaluate the suitability of proposal concepts.

B. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Livability Newsletter Feature

Mr. Pollack informed the TAC that the Corpus Christi MPO's Bicycle Mobility Plan would be featured in an upcoming issue of FHWA's Livability Newsletter, which has national readership and will garner positive attention for our region.

C. Forthcoming Update of TAC Meeting Calendar Invite

Mr. Pollack informed the TAC that staff would be issuing a new Outlook Meeting Calendar Invitation as part of an effort to streamline electronic communication and packet distribution.

D. Change in October meeting date

Mr. Pollack informed the TAC that the regularly scheduled October TAC meeting conflicted with the national meeting for the Association of MPOs, at which he would be presenting the MPO's work on performance measures. As such, staff will be following up in an attempt to identify a suitable alternative meeting date.

7. Public Comments on Agenda Items

8. Adjourn

Mr. Robinson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Chong seconded the motion. Motion Passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:36 a.m.