

**CORPUS CHRISTI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE (TPC) REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

March 6, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND QUORUM DETERMINATION

Judge Connie Scott called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

TPC Members Present:

Judge Connie Scott, Nueces County, Vice Chairperson

Mayor Cathy Skurow, City of Portland

Mr. Mike Walsh, P.E. Texas Department of Transportation-Corpus Christi District

Mr. David Engel, Port of Corpus Christi

Ms. Mary Esther Guerra, Nueces County Assistant County Attorney

MPO Staff Present:

Rob MacDonald, P.E., Craig Casper, AICP, Daniel Carrizales, Victor Mendieta, and Carissa Tamez

2. NON-AGENDA ITEMS PUBLIC COMMENTS

None were made or offered.

3. APPROVAL OF THE TPC February 6, 2025, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Engel made a motion to approve the February 6, 2025, minutes.

Mayor Skurow seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

4. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

A. Corpus Christi MPO Boundary Change Resolution and Submittal Packet Revisions

Robert MacDonald presented this item.

The Corpus Christi MPO needs to update the MPO boundary in accord with federal and state rules related to the results of the 2020 U.S. Census. This change is primarily in the areas of the region that do or do not meet the definition of becoming urban as part of the Small Area Forecast. With this process and including the discussions with FHWA/FTA and TxDOT in the last year, the Corpus Christi MPO staff proposed to change the MPO Boundary to reduce the boundary in some areas, and to expand beyond the current MPO boundary in other areas. After review by TxDOT-TPP of the initial Boundary Change Package submitted to TxDOT, the MPO staff proposed revisions to components of the original Corpus Christi MPO Boundary Change Submittal Package.

Discussion:

Mr. Walsh expressed concern that the new proposed MPO boundary is significantly reduced in size when compared to the previous MPO boundary. Areas of concern that he noted are missing from the new proposed MPO boundary are:

1. The London area, which he noted has significant growth,
2. SH 286 extension
3. Calallen area, where the new boundary excludes from Bluntzer to CR 73
4. Water area reduction and questioned if there were any federal funding coming through Maritime and whether this will impact the ability for the MPO to contribute toward the second causeway.

Judge Scott and Mr. Engel also questioned why the boundary was reduced.

- Mr. MacDonald explained the methodologies that went into adjusting the census urban area and developing the MPO boundary with input and approvals from the Small Area Forecast Task Force, TAC, and TPC. The result is the proposed MPO boundary that started with the Adjusted Urbanized

Area and added areas of land in Portland (along Lang Road and Moore Avenue) and Corpus Christi (along FM 43).

Mr. Engel asked if there was any reason not to go back to the size we had before and if there was a reason why that's bad or if it created an issue.

- Mr. Casper explained that the metropolitan planning area is the area that is urban or would become urban within the long-range planning period. Regulations allow the use of the Metropolitan Statistical Area instead, which would include all of Nueces and San Patricio counties. Mr. Casper further noted that the existing MPO boundary was adopted roughly in the 1960s and has not been updated since even though there was a requirement in both 1990 and 2000 to do so. He also added that the funding is the funding allocated for the urban area.
- Mr. Walsh confirmed that funding doesn't change based on the boundary. He did note that the policy board has the ability to advocate for economic growth in the MPO area and what kind of roadways are needed.

Mr. Engel questioned if it is easier to do projects if it's in the MPO boundary.

- Mr. Walsh replied it gives the board decision making ability to weigh in on where roads are needed or where dollars should be spent in this community.

Mr. Engel wanted clarification on whether areas such as Ingleside, Aransas Pass, Port Aransas, Sinton, and Taft are in a different MPO.

- Mr. Casper confirmed that they are not in any MPO.

Mr. Engel stated the London area is growing faster than the state demographer may know as well as the Sinton area. He also observed that TxDOT would like to see the bigger boundary.

- Mr. Walsh confirmed that TxDOT would like to use the bigger boundary.
- Mr. Casper noted that there are two additional considerations. First is on the island, part of the Port Aransas urban area extends down to the State Park. If the existing MPO boundary were to remain, all of the Aransas Pass-Port Aransas-Ingleside urban area would be included into the MPO boundary, which was an option that was previously discussed by TAC and TPC. The second part is there is various slivers of Kleberg County that falls within the existing MPO boundary and that may create issues as well.

Mr. Walsh wanted clarification on the two areas that were required to be added: one was outside Robstown and the other was outside of Gregory. He noted that the two areas are required to be added because of their urbanization, or likely urbanization, but those are the ones that were required to change the map. He further added that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended leaving the map alone and just adding the areas required to add for this cycle.

- Mr. Casper responded that the TAC did not make the recommendation that Mr. Walsh relayed. The TAC recommended the boundary to be the urbanized areas of the small area forecast process, the Adjusted Urbanized Area, plus the two TAZs (one outside Portland and one in the London area).
- Mr. MacDonald stated that MPO staff can re-evaluate the boundary and bring it back as a reconsideration sometime and then address the different perspectives. TPC members were reminded that MPO staff brought eight alternative boundaries through the TAC and TPC, including one alternative that to contain everything in a three-county area. The consensus was that no one wanted to do that because it would mean adding 21 members to the policy committee. Mr. MacDonald reiterated the methodology that was used to arrive at the current proposed boundary.

Mr. Engel commented that Port Aransas population swells from May through September and identified one project (SH 361) in that area that Chairman Hunter would like to see done.

- Mr. Walsh stated that SH 361 is not currently funded and has no construction dollars.

- Mr. Engel reiterated that there is a huge population in this area. He also noted that the recommendation should be taking this item back to the technical staff.

Mayor Skurow wanted clarification on the potential impact on funding and projects as it pertains to being inside and outside of the MPO boundary. She wanted to make sure there weren't any unintended consequences of putting an area into the MPO boundary that would be better served by rural funding.

- Mr. Casper responded that TxDOT gives allocations for both rural and urban. He noted the difference that when it is urban funding within the metropolitan area, the MPO can weigh in on projects that receive category 2, 4 and 7 funds. When it is urban funding outside of the metropolitan area, areas like Sinton or Rockport, those are still urban dollars that TxDOT weighs in on completely. And lastly, when it is rural funding, then it is all allocated by TxDOT.
- Mr. Casper reminded TPC members that the MPO boundary is defined as the area designated by the Census plus all contiguous areas that are expected to become urbanized during the plan years.
- Mayor Skurow commented that getting the boundary correct is a priority. She gave an example of a project existing towards the outer limits, but within the MPO boundary, and questioned the chances of it being funded by this board versus another more centrally located project that need the funds more. She further added that the project could just be sitting there where as it could have been potentially funded under another pot of money.
 - Mr. MacDonald reminded Mayor Skurow that she posed this question months ago and when MPO staff noted that when the boundary touched those other urban areas that the TPC can opt to bring them in, TPC members mentioned that those areas could lose access to other state or federal funds by being included in the metro area. This was an agenda item that was discussed at multiple meetings and was decided to not include those areas into the proposed MPO boundary.
 - Mr. MacDonald noted another major consideration is that TPC allocated money for the next 20 years last month when they approved of the 20 year plan. This plan is revisited every five years. MPO staff is concerned about a potential impact on federal funding and the need to ensure ongoing projects are not affect by boundary changes. He reminded TPC members that the boundary change process is supposed to be done at the same time as the long range transportation plan (2045 MTP Update) approval. When TPC approved of the long range plan last month, it was with the understanding that the boundary change needed to be submitted, which MPO staff accomplished. The boundary submittal package was now being tweaked to ensure that the boundary change was approved and tied directly to the long range transportation plan, the 2045 MTP Update.
 - Mr. MacDonald stated that MPO staff recommendation is to let this boundary change go through so that there isn't any issues with the long range plan that was just adopted and federal approval of any projects that TxDOT wants to do. If the policy board needs to come back and do the boundary reconsideration, it can be done as a separate process.
 - Mr. MacDonald would have to verify with FHWA and TxDOT if there is any impact to funding if the boundary change isn't done with the ongoing long range plan.

Mr. Walsh asked if the TPC can table this agenda item for a month and then bring back to the board to answer if projects are being impacted. He further asked what are the impacts on waiting a month on this agenda item.

- Mr. MacDonald responded that MPO staff is unsure on the impacts of waiting a month. He noted that running the approval of the 2045 MTP Update and the Boundary Change in parallel is one thing, but putting a month delay in that is probably okay. MPO staff will get back to TPC members next month with some answers to the questions brought up today.

Mr. Walsh commented that more TPC members might want to weigh in and get their opinions on what they think of the reduction of the MPO Boundary.

Motion:

Mr. Engel made a motion to delay this item to the next meeting.

Mr. Walsh seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. TPC MEMBER STATEMENTS ON LOCAL AGENCY ACTIVITIES OR ITEMS OF INTEREST

None were made or offered.

6. UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

A. Technical Advisory Committee:	Regular Meeting	March 20, 2025
B. Transportation Policy Committee:	Regular Meeting	April 3, 2025

7. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 2:28 p.m.