

**CORPUS CHRISTI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**JULY 18, 2024**

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

Brian DeLatte Chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:00 am

TAC Members Present:

Brian DeLatte, P.E., City of Portland, Chairperson

Jeff Pollack, AICP, Port of Corpus Christi, Vice Chairperson

Paula Sales-Evans, P.E., TxDOT – Corpus Christi District (CRP)

Liann Alfaro, Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Planning Authority (CCRTA)

MPO Staff Present: Rob MacDonald, P.E., Craig Casper, AICP, Daniel Carrizales, Victor Mendieta, and Karla Carvajal, MBA

**2. NON AGENDA ITEMS PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None were offered or made.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE TAC JUNE 20 REGULAR and JUNE 28 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. Sales-Evans made a motion to approve the June 20 regular and June 28, 2024 special meeting minutes.

Ms. Alfaro seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

**4. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS**

**A. DRAFT 2020- 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Amendment 1**

Mr. MacDonald presented the item.

The Corpus Christi MPO staff developed the DRAFT 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2045 MTP) with Amendment 1 for review by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). This MTP Amendment 1 is necessary due to a review by FHWA of the FY 2023-2026 TIP With Amendment 2. FHWA staff determined there are inconsistencies with a few projects in the 2045 MTP compared to projects in the FY 2023-2026 TIP with Amendment 2. Those projects include:

- **NEVI Charging Station New Project** (MPO-077) (CSJ 5000-00-187) \$1,202,800 CAT 10
- **Holly Rd. Train Trestle to Tourism Trail** (MPO-049) (CSJ 0916-022-282) \$13.034 million CAT 9
- **SH 286 Construct Phase I Freeway Extension by Upgrading Existing 2-LN Rdwy to 4-LN Divided Highway** (MPO-05) (CSJ 0326-01-056) \$65.0 million CAT 2/CAT 7

**Discussion:**

None.

**Motion:**

Ms. Sales-Evans made a motion to recommend the TPC to approve the DRAFT 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan with Amendment 1. Mr. Pollack seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

**B. DRAFT 2020-2045 MTP with Amendment 2**

Mr. MacDonald presented the item.

The Corpus Christi MPO staff developed the DRAFT 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2045 MTP) with Amendment 2 for review by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Amendment 2 is necessary to address inconsistencies within the fiscally constrained project list after the 2045 MTP with Amendment 1 and the FY 2025-2028 TIP were approved.

## Discussion:

Ms. Sales-Evans asked if the City of Portland and the City of Corpus Christi are aware of and in agreement with the removal of certain joint projects from the fiscal constraint list before these changes are released for public comment.

Mr. MacDonald confirmed that City of Corpus Christi staff have been informed about the removal of certain old projects, like the CAT 9, hike and bike projects, which were never acted upon for implementation. The initial phase of the Yorktown Boulevard project will be funded with local bond money, so if the City requests phase 2 of the Yorktown project in the 2050 MTP process, it needs to be redefined and submitted. He noted that adjustments have been made to various project timelines and cost estimates over the past five years since the 2045 MTP was approved.

Ms. Sales-Evans is asked if the Regional Parkway project, which is mentioned as removed on page 3, under financial impacts, should also be included in the list of projects that have been removed.

Mr. MacDonald confirmed that the Regional Parkway project should be listed as removed. He also reminded everyone that all projects can be submitted for evaluation as part of the upcoming 2050 MTP project selection process. He also noted that with the proposed changes to projects, there is an additional \$26 million unallocated in the Amended 2045 MTP compared to prior plan.

Ms. Sales-Evans mentioned that there has been public discussion about the Regional Parkway project, as a second crossing to the island, and upgrades to SH 361, and she wondered if this might influence the upcoming public comment period.

Mr. MacDonald expressed that staff would be happy to discuss this further with TxDOT and the public and pointed out that the Regional Parkway project hasn't been updated since 2017.

Mr. Pollack questioned if the removal of the CAT 9 list is final, expressing disappointment over the loss given the extensive work and funding efforts invested over the past six years. He emphasized that these projects had significant community benefits and questioned if there was any possibility of reconsideration.

Mr. MacDonald noted that the City of Corpus Christi was informed of the funds returning to the CAT 9 pool of funds for the most recent project selection process and that they could have resubmitted their projects during the last call-for-projects. The City declined that option and instead submitted different TA/CAT 9 eligible projects. All five projects were awarded CAT 9 funds. He mentioned that the city is developing agreements (AFAs with TxDOT) for those awarded projects.

Mr. DeLatte noted that the MPO-013 project [Portland Bicycle Lanes] in Portland had just been completed and wanted to clarify that the project was removed due to completion and not due to inactivity.

Mr. Pollack acknowledged the distinction but mentioned that his focus had been on other areas. He also stated that all documentation related to the standards had been shared.

Mr. DeLatte acknowledged the CAT 9 grouped projects and mentioned recent discussions with TxDOT regarding AFAs [Advance Funding Agreements]. He noted that there has been ongoing momentum on the Memorial Parkway AFA for the past two or three years and expressed readiness to advance it as soon as possible. He also thanked Ms. Sales-Evans for her efforts on the project.

Mr. MacDonald noted that the extension of the Rodd Field Road project has progressed with city-funded work but no longer includes the Oso Creek crossing under the federal aid project. This crossing would need to be proposed as a new project for the 2050 MTP.

Ms. Sales-Evans asked if the NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act] process for the Rodd Field Road extension across Oso Creek, which is part of project MPO-021, is being kept, but the construction is being removed by this amendment.

Mr. MacDonald confirmed and stated that there are many other projects in the current 2045 MTP, including the funds for an environmental impact study, that could be removed. He noted that since TxDOT is funding the EIS for the Regional Parkway project with planning funds, TxDOT is likely not using the specified MPO-allocated funds for the EIS.

Ms. Sales-Evans stated that the Regional Parkway project does not include environmental considerations for the Rodd Field extension, which would still need to be a city-led effort, emphasizing that their NEPA process does not cover the Rodd Field Road extension.

Mr. MacDonald stated that the City of Corpus Christi has not initiated the environmental clearance process for the Rodd Field Road extension. He suggested leaving it in the current plan would be advantageous if the city decides to proceed with the project in the next few months. This allows them to resubmit for EIS of construction funds in the future.

Ms. Sales-Evans pointed out that despite reallocating funds, the project still appears on page 2 of the list for Amendment 2, and while Yorktown Boulevard isn't necessarily staying, project MPO-022 isn't highlighted to indicate its removal.

#### **Motion:**

Ms. Sales-Evans made a motion to recommend the TPC to approve the DRAFT 2020-2045 MTP with Amendment 2 for the one-month public comment period subject to the clarifications to the MPO-022 project. Ms. Alfaro seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

### **C. DRAFT 2050 MTP Objectives**

Mr. Casper presented the item.

The Corpus Christi MPO staff asked the TAC if they disagreed with the objectives, to state which parts of the objectives or which objectives should be modified. The preliminary objectives were developed based on the DRAFT Goals, which the TPC adopted for use in developing the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2050 MTP). They have not been fully adopted as part of the 2050 MTP and may change.

The next step of the process for the 2050 MTP is the development of Objectives related to the Goals. The MPO staff, TAC as well as MPO Task Forces, Stakeholder Groups, partner agencies, and the citizens of the region will be asked to refine or replace these objectives for the 2050 MTP. It is important to keep performance measures and evaluation criteria in mind when developing objectives.

#### **Discussion:**

Ms. Sales-Evans emphasized the need to clearly define "vulnerable road user" to ensure consistent understanding. She questioned if it aligns with the FHWA's definition and expressed confusion about what percentage of safety funding (specifically 8%) is being referenced and its corresponding dollar amount.

Mr. Casper asked Ms. Sales-Evans which of the TxDOT category fundings covered safety.

Ms. Sales-Evans stated that funding category 8 (CAT 8) is designated for the Highway Safety Improvement Program. She suggested that focusing on MPO-specific data and safety concerns within the MPO boundary could lead to more effective and easier-to-track funding allocation. It might be more meaningful to allocate a percentage of MPO's CAT 7 dollars to address these safety issues rather than relying on competitive CAT 8 safety funding alone. Additionally, she stressed the importance of including education and outreach efforts to combat unsafe behaviors, such as pedestrians crossing highways inappropriately. She expressed uncertainty about the current objective and seeks clarification on its intended outcomes.

Mr. Pollack suggested that it is essential to establish a standard definition for key terms like "vulnerable road users" before finalizing any recommendations. He noted that while incorporating education and outreach strategies is crucial for achieving target reductions, these strategies are more

of a tactical approach and do not need to be explicitly included in the objective language. He supports making recommendations contingent on clear definitions but believes that acknowledging the importance of education and outreach internally is sufficient. He does not see this as a reason to delay the process and thinks it can proceed without disruption.

Ms. Sales-Evans stated that the 8% needs clarification because it could represent significantly different dollar amounts depending on the total funding and emphasized that funding percentages should be tied to specific crash reduction goals rather than just dollar amounts. Ms. Sales-Evans also asked whether safety funding allocated to the district for use across multiple counties will require the MPO and Transportation Policy Committee approval for any expenditure within the MPO area.

Mr. Casper explained that the MPO will analyze and report the effectiveness of the funding, but the funding itself is not directly managed by the MPO.

Ms. Sales-Evans wanted to ensure that the wording of the objective does not inadvertently delay addressing safety needs by adding unnecessary steps to an already cumbersome process and emphasized the importance of considering potential unintended consequences.

Mr. Casper believes that the benefit-cost analysis can be done concurrently with TxDOT's steps, as the VZS software used is very efficient, with individual project analyses taking only one to two hours.

Ms. Sales-Evans noted that the Federal Rules for Highway Safety Improvement Program funding (CAT 8) is based on a Safety Improvement Index (SII) and questions whether additional data might be needed. She wants to avoid unintended consequences that could limit addressing safety issues.

Mr. Casper responded that the software uses the same SII information and does not require additional data, ensuring a seamless process.

Mr. DeLatte inquired about the benefits of duplicating the analysis, and Mr. Casper suggested that TxDOT could report both the benefit-cost analysis and the SII for their projects, which would be helpful.

Mr. Pollack expressed concern that without performance thresholds, the tool's value may be diminished, as it would only provide data without benchmarks or reference points. He questioned if adding a secondary analysis and reporting arbitrary data is truly beneficial.

Mr. Casper believes that reporting the information has value, especially when considered alongside other regional investments.

Mr. Pollack suggested that future steps might involve defining performance benchmarks or minimum standards, while Mr. Casper noted that investments should be carefully evaluated to avoid funding projects that are not cost-effective.

Ms. Sales-Evans was concerned that requiring all safety projects seeking federal funds to go through a specific analysis might be too bureaucratic and not effective in reducing crashes.

Mr. Casper suggested that the process is about transparency, allowing for a clear demonstration of how project funding decisions are made and clarifying the benefits of those projects.

Mr. Pollack acknowledged the importance of the analysis for transparency but suggested that without clear performance thresholds, the objective might seem perfunctory. He suggested that while the analysis is useful, it should be done internally rather than as a formal rule and recommends creating a database of scores to set performance standards based on past data.

Mr. MacDonald explained that when projects are submitted, they will be evaluated through various tools and analyses, with safety being one component of the evaluation. He noted that not all projects have a safety component, but all projects will be prioritized based on a set of goals and objectives, and each project will receive a score based on these criteria. TxDOT's analysis of safety projects will be incorporated into this evaluation process.

Mr. Pollack raised a concern about having a clear definition of what constitutes a safety project, noting that not all projects will have safety as a primary component, which could lead to an uneven evaluation field.

Ms. Sales-Evans suggested that all projects requesting MPO-allocated federal dollars should be analyzed for safety benefits, regardless of their primary focus, to avoid confusion over what qualifies as a safety project.

Mr. Casper agreed that it's important to document all the expected benefits of projects in the region for performance-based planning and asked TxDOT to provide these expected outcomes.

Ms. Sales-Evans expressed uncertainty about how to quantify the expected benefits of safety measures, particularly for smaller interventions like "curve-ahead" warning signs, noting that while they are proven countermeasures, their impact on crash reduction may be harder to evaluate.

For the Objective B of the Asset Management Goal, Mr. Pollack emphasized the need for consistency and specificity, arguing that objectives should be clearly defined with measurable targets, rather than vague goals like "improved security" without clear metrics. He commended the overall effort but highlighted the inconsistency with SMART objectives.

Mr. Casper responded that TxDOT is developing the security-related objectives for their 2050 MTP plan, acknowledging that the current objective may not fully meet SMART criteria but aligns with future plans.

Mr. DeLatte inquired about how other MPOs identify objectives for similar goals.

Mr. Casper explained that we are ahead of others in this area and suggested revisiting the objectives later if necessary.

Mr. Pollack prefers maintaining strict SMART objectives, believing that vague goals weaken their effectiveness.

Mr. Casper added that even if a SMART objective for security could be developed, it might be withheld due to IT security protocols.

For Objective C of the Asset Management Goal, Mr. Pollack asked if the metric for success on the objective is simply the occurrence of an update, suggesting it's a binary measure.

Ms. Sales-Evans pointed out that design standard updates happen frequently and suggested adding a caveat to include any new or updated versions of guidelines, not just a specific version. She stressed the need to include ongoing updates or new guidelines as they come out.

Mr. Casper proposed reviewing and including updates on a quadrennial basis, or every four years.

Mr. Pollack agreed, suggesting the use of the latest or current version.

For Objective A of the System Performance Goal, Mr. Pollack questioned whether this 10% target is realistic and inquired about its basis.

Mr. Casper was unsure if the 10% target is achievable. He explained that this objective was set to be consistent with other agencies' plans, although current improvements are only around 3-5%.

Mr. Pollack agreed on the need for realistic targets and suggested that aiming for a smaller, achievable improvement might be better. He pointed out that coordinating with partners, who control the implementation, adds complexity.

Mr. DeLatte advised against setting arbitrary percentages and stressed the importance of basing targets on realistic and well-supported data.

Ms. Sales-Evans suggested marking the target for further review and asked for details about what the designated congestion management corridors are.

Mr. Casper explained that the corridors are part of the CMP and that they will be updated from the previous set, although specific names are not yet available.

Mr. Pollack proposed adding a reference in parentheses for transparency about the designated sources and Mr. Casper agreed.

For Objective D of the System Performance Goal, Mr. Pollack questioned the origin of the 20% target, noting that even if it's a relatively small number, its basis seemed arbitrary.

Mr. Casper explained that the figure was derived from examining other plans and was commonly used in similar contexts, though it was not based on Corpus Christi MPO specific data.

Mr. Pollack also pointed out the risk of misleading improvements due to advancements in measurement tools, which might not reflect actual progress. He recommended benchmarking analogous communities.

For Objective E of the System Performance Goal, Ms. Alfaro mentioned that mileage would be included in the definitions and indicated she was currently working on refining the numbers over the next four years.

For Objective G of the System Performance Goal, Mr. Pollack emphasized that while reliability is the metric, it should be clearly measured by reduced travel time, citing the need for a primary metric.

Mr. Casper explained that reliable truck travel time is a required performance measure and noted that even if a road is congested consistently, it can still be considered reliable if the level of congestion is predictable.

For Objective A of the Stewardship Goal, Ms. Sales-Evans raised concerns about applying this requirement to all federally funded projects, suggesting it should be specific to MPO-allocated funds. She cautioned against potential unintended consequences and emphasized the need to clarify that the goal applies primarily to MPO-controlled allocations, noting that other types of funding might not fit this approach.

For Objective B of the Stewardship Goal, Ms. Sales-Evans expressed concerns about the objective requiring 40% of MPO allocations to be distributed within designated disadvantaged communities. She worried that this could limit the ability to allocate funds effectively, as some projects benefiting these communities might not be located within them.

Mr. Pollack suggested that the focus should be on ensuring service benefits rather than spending funds directly within disadvantaged communities, advocating for more flexible language.

Mr. MacDonald noted that project applications would need to describe how they meet this objective.

Mr. Pollack proposed revising the language to emphasize serving or benefiting disadvantaged communities, rather than requiring funds to be spent directly within them. Additionally, he questioned how to ensure that travel times for residents in disadvantaged communities are comparable to or better than average. He wondered if this should be measured on an average basis.

Mr. Casper explained that they could use INRIX to determine average travel times for selected routes and the entire MPO area.

Mr. Pollack suggested including the term "average" to clarify that the measurement would be based on overall averages rather than individual trips.

Mr. DeLatte emphasized the need for realistic objectives and for understanding current performance numbers. Mr. Casper mentioned that the specifics would be known after performance measures are selected and approved, acknowledging that tracking environmental justice (EJ) items is legally required.

For Objective D of the Stewardship Goal, Mr. Pollack pointed out that the term "modernize infrastructure" needed clearer definitions and boundaries, as the term alone did not specify



measurable targets. He stressed the need to define what modernization would include and to set concrete, quantitative targets.

Mr. Casper suggested that modernization might involve vehicle-to-infrastructure communication and improvements to infrastructure resilience, such as upgrades to culverts to account for increased frequency of extreme weather.

Mr. Pollack proposed including specific requirements, such as incorporating certain elements into road projects, to make the goal more measurable and realistic.

Mr. DeLatte summarized the list of objectives, noting changes for various items. Objective B of the Asset Management Goal was to be removed, and System Performance Goal's Objective A 10% reduction target was noted as just a placeholder percentage. System Performance Goal Objective D was to be adjusted similarly.

For Objective A of the Stewardship Goal, Ms. Sales-Evans emphasized that it should focus on MPO-allocated funds.

For Objective G of the System Performance Goal, the 20% target for travel time might be adjusted to a different percentage. Objective B of the System Performance Goal would involve changing funds to serve designated residential communities and removing the latter part of the statement.

Objective B of the Economic Goal would include average travel times.

Mr. Casper suggested defining what "modernize" means in Objective D of the Economic Goal, and Mr. Pollack stressed the need to specify the designation criteria in references. They discussed referencing the appropriate tools or programs for terms like "designated disadvantaged" or "vulnerable road users."

Mr. Pollack and Mr. Casper agreed to clarify these points and ensure transparency.

#### **Motion:**

Ms. Sales-Evans made a motion to recommend the TPC to use these as the working objectives with the understanding that these are not the final objectives. Ms. Alfaro seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

## **5. INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **A. DRAFT 2025 Regional Safety Action Plan (RSAP)**

Mr. Casper Presented.

The Regional Safety Action Plan (RSAP) is the implementing document for regional safety projects. The RSAP meets all requirements described in the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant requirements document and will allow entities in the region to pursue federal grant funding for highly beneficial safety projects. The Corpus Christi MPO RSAP uses Texas-specific Safety Performance Functions (SPF) that were recently completed by TxDOT and TTI to examine crash trends, identify regional emphasis areas, and identify a Targeted Road (High Injury) Network (TRN) that has an elevated history of severe (fatal and injury) crashes. This network is useful for focusing activities such as intersection upgrades, shoulder widening, improved roadsides, barrier installation, etc. The current process has identified 31 locations (20 initial locations, plus an additional 11 paid for by TxDOT) that are highly susceptible to crash reduction and locations that are appropriate for implementing Proven Safety Countermeasures. Detailed analyses of the corridors in the region, using the TTI Safety Performance Functions (SPF) show arterials that are highly susceptible to safety enhancing investments.

#### **Discussion:**

Ms. Sales-Evans commented that the legend on the high injury network map needs to be relocated so that the island isn't covered.

Mr. Pollack commented that the high injury map extent should be zoomed in to the MPO boundary.

**B. 2050 MTP**

The TAC meeting was adjourned due to lack of quorum. Minutes are not provided for these informational topics.

- i. Updating Federal Functional Classification of Roads**
- ii. MPO Boundary Change Process Update**
- iii. Timeline**

**6. TAC MEMBER STATEMENTS ON LOCAL AGENCY ACTIVITIES OR ITEMS OF INTEREST**

TAC meeting was adjourned due to lack of quorum. Minutes were not developed for this item.

**7. UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS**

<b>A. Transportation Policy Committee:</b>	<b>Regular Meeting</b>	<b>August 1, 2024</b>
<b>B. Regional Traffic Safety Task Force:</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>August 14, 2024</b>
<b>C. Technical Advisory Committee:</b>	<b>Regular Meeting/Workshops</b>	<b>August 15, 2024</b>
<b>D. Small Area Forecast Task Force:</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>August 21, 2024</b>

**8. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:26 a.m.