

**CITY OF LAREDO  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

**AIRPORT CONFERENCE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR  
5210 BOB BULLOCK LOOP  
JANUARY 18, 1999  
12:00 NOON**

M99-W-03

M I N U T E S

JANUARY 18, 1999

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

With a quorum present Mayor Elizabeth G. Flores called the meeting to order.

**II. ROLL CALL**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Elizabeth G. Flores,	Mayor
Alfredo G. Agredano,	Councilmember, District I
John C. Galo,	Councilmember, District III
Eliseo Valdez,	Councilmember, District V
Mario Alvarado,	Councilmember, District VII
Consuelo "Chelo" Montalvo,	Councilmember, District VIII
Gustavo Guevara, Jr.,	City Secretary
Florencio Pena, III	City Manager
Jaime L. Flores,	City Attorney

ABSENCES:

Motion to excuse Cw. Moreno, Cm. Bruni and Cm. Guerra.

Moved : Cw. Montalvo

Second: Cm. Alvarado

For: 4

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

**III. Presentation by FIDENOR Representatives on the proposed railroad bridge in Northwest Laredo with possible action.**

In attendance from FIDENOR were Arquitecto Antonio Fuentes Flores, Mr. Gerald Smith, Transportation Director for the U.M.A. Group, who is responsible for providing technical and management assistance on transportation projects to various branches and companies of the U.M.A. Group, and Ms. Alicia Angelica Guajardo, Planner for FIDENOR.

Arquitecto Fuentes Flores made the presentation on the proposal for the construction of an International Railroad Project at

Colombia, Nuevo Leon. He said that we either grow, modernize, and be more efficient with our neighbors or we lose our complete advantage with other border cities, with other industrial areas, and with other manufacturing centers around the world.

Ms. Alicia Antonieta Guadajardo made the statistical presentation in terms of export plus presented factors that they believe would force the project to be done.

Mr. Smith went over the feasibility study scope, the cost estimate study, and the project cost of \$148.8 Million.

Cw. Montalvo said that since she represents the downtown district this is very important to her. This issue is of great concern because it affects many people who live in the west side. She said they have been working with the Union Pacific and Tex-Mex and she has been pushing for a project such as this because it is really needed, but she does not know if they can work out a bond election. She said they spoke about a bond election as an option, the fees per train are about \$13.00 right now, there are about 10,000 trains per month right now, but this will affect Union Pacific only and it will not affect Tex-Mex.

Cm. Galo asked if on the toll charge of \$13.00 (that they are now paying) does the city benefit on that?

Mayor Flores answered, no.

Cm. Galo stated that he is looking at Alternative "A". He informed council that a one time his wife's family and herself were involved in the Camino Colombia Project and there is still some pending litigation. He quoted, "there is no action now, but in the future...I just want you all to know that I am "for" the project, and it looks very well." He added that Alternative "B" doesn't look like it would affect anything, but Alternative "A" certainly would affect the American side.

Cm. Alvarado wanted to know if there has been any kind of dialogue held with the State of Nuevo Leon as far as trying them to help improve on some of those road conditions? How much of a part is the State of Nuevo Leon, a part of this particular project.

Ms. Guajardo said that in terms of the road condition, there has been comments between the Governor of Nuevo Leon and the Secretary of Transportation. It was agreed that they are going to repave the whole Riverena (20 kilometers) and they are going

to expand to one additional lane and this is the first step of this collaboration.

Cm. Alvarado asked if these road improvements are already being worked on or are they contingent upon this particular project going into effect. He also asked if there has been dialogue with Tex-Mex or Union Pacific on this project.

Arquitecto Fuentes said the improvements will begin in two months.

Ms. Guajardo said that Union Pacific wants to support the Colombia Bridge which is what they have been told.

After lengthy discussion Mayor Flores explained that we need to work and get as much information as we can to make the decision as quickly as possible so that they know what avenues to follow.

Cw. Montalvo explained to Arquitecto Fuentes that in order that council makes a decision they need to bring a written document whereby Union Pacific states they are interested, compromised, and committed in order that council can see if they want to be part of this commitment because they are the ones that will be affected.

Mr. Fuentes said they will be here on the 27th day of January. He said he has already asked them for their support and that probably they will bring back an answer from them before the end of two months.

Cw. Montalvo, Cm. Alvarado, and Cm. Galo expressed that some kind of commitment be made with Union Pacific before the City of Laredo can join FIDENOR on the railroad bridge venture and some kind of commitment by TFM also.

Mr. Noe Hinojosa, Financial Advisor, said that their projections are that ultimately in the insurance of three years that growth might go from 10-15 trains per day. If in fact that is to occur, what are their estimates whereby that growth is going to come from? Is it from existing crossing that now is done through trucks thus replacing trucks by railroad crossings or is it additional new crossing?

Mr. Fuentes said that some of their projections were that 3-5% would transfer from trucks to train and that most of it will be actual growth.

Mayor Flores spoke on future projections and said there are still some issues that need to be re-examined and meetings have to be held with our other partners that we now have in the business.

Ms. Guajardo asked for a letter from the City of Laredo saying that we are looking at this project as an option for development so that they can continue.

Mayor Flores said that in order for them to move along with this letter she would ask that a motion be entertained to direct the City Manager to prepare some type of resolution for council to pass at the council meeting tonight that would say that "we in theory support the idea or concept".

Cw. Montalvo said it is very important that they take their time in making these decisions because this is just a preliminary presentation.

Cm. Alvarado said it was hasty to take some type of direction without actually hearing from Union Pacific authorities and suggested that they wait for some input from UP as far as trying to support the idea of this option.

Mr. Gabriel Del Bosque of the Planning Department wanted to know how would TFM come into the picture, whether they are or are not going to support this project. He said this project has not been addressed and researched. If they are not going to support it could they stop it? He wants to know what is the position of TFM and what can they do?

Ms. Guajardo said that from the engineering point of view, they are reviewing the financial possibilities and are looking to connect onto the Colombia Bridge and they will support the alternative of the intermodal yard.

Motion to direct the City Manager to prepare a letter that agrees to discuss this concept as an option.

Moved : Cm. Galo

Second: Cm. Agredano

For: 4

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

(Cm. Valdez left the meeting at this time and was not present to vote.)

**IV. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn.

Moved : Cm. Alvarado

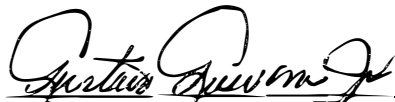
Second: Cm. Agredano

For: 4

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

I hereby certify that the above minutes contained in pages 01 to 05 are true, complete, and correct proceedings of the City Council Workshop held on the 18th day of January, 1999. A certified copy is on file at the City Secretary's Office.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
GUSTAVO GUEVARA, JR.  
CITY SECRETARY

Minutes approved on: February 22, 1999