



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
January 31, 2018

365 TOLLWAY PROGRESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN STARR COUNTY TO BE DISCUSSED AT FEBRUARY 14 PUBLIC MEETING IN MERCEDES

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) has scheduled a public meeting of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum (LRGCF) for **Wednesday, February 14, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the USIBWC office at 325 Golf Course Road in Mercedes, Texas.** The purpose of the forum is to promote the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the community regarding Commission projects and related activities.

Eric Davila, Hidalgo County Regional Mobility Authority (HCRMA) Chief Development Engineer, will discuss the future collaboration with the USIBWC during construction of the 365 Tollway, and the upcoming permitting coordination of the International Bridge Trade Corridor (IBTC) Project.

Between 2001 and 2003, the Texas Legislature created Regional Mobility Authorities (RMA) as a means to develop and finance a variety of multi-modal transportation projects at a local level. The HCRMA has worked with local stakeholders, cities, county, and statewide partners on the development of transportation solutions for an area of over 800,000 residents and five ports of entry.

The HCRMA is currently the administrator of an overweight corridor system over which

the 365 Tollway and IBTC projects will become the permanent backbone for heavy truck traffic in the region. The 365 Tollway and the IBTC parallel the Rio Grande and connect the Anzalduas, Hidalgo, Pharr, Donna, and Progreso International Ports of Entry.

The Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum will also hear from Rose Benavidez, President, and Sam F. Vale, Chairman of the Board, of the Starr County Industrial Foundation, on the current economic development recruitment and expansion efforts within the community. They will discuss planning strategies utilized to ensure proper mobility and infrastructure expansion to support growth initiatives, as well as the value of higher education and workforce development in transforming the community's economic outlook.

A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting may contact 956-565-3150 or the Public Affairs Office at lori.kuczanski@ibwc.gov

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM

Wednesday, February 14

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

USIBWC Conference Room

325 Golf Course Road

Mercedes, TX 78570

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions – Juan Uribe, USIBWC Area Operations Manager and Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- Hidalgo County RMA Project Briefing (365 Tollway and the International Bridge Trade Corridor) – Eric Davila, PE, PMP, CFM, HCRMA Chief Development Engineer
- Trade and Commerce: The Border’s Future – Rose Benavidez, President, and Sam F. Vale, Chairman of the Board, Starr County Industrial Foundation
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items

Directions: From Expressway 83, exit Mile 2 W. Travel south for approx. 1.5 miles to Golf Course Rd. Turn left. The USIBWC is the first building on your left.

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time. For more information, call 956-565-3150 or email Lori.Kuczanski@ibwc.gov