

**Background Memorandum  
Rio Grande Riverfront Coordination & Advisory Committee  
City Manager's Office**

**Subject: Informational Presentation – Stakeholder Report Regarding Riverfront Conditions**

The Rio Grande International Study Center (RGISC) has submitted a report prepared by Dr. Mark R. Tompkins, PE, PhD (FlowWest), addressing potential river conditions and considerations associated with proposed federal infrastructure along portions of the Rio Grande corridor in Webb County. The report and a related proposal for further analysis were previously provided directly to the City Manager's Office.

At the request of RGISC, the committee has been invited to hear a presentation on the report as part of its role in raising awareness of riverfront conditions, stewardship considerations, and coordination matters affecting the river corridor.

**Committee Role and Scope**

The Rio Grande Riverfront Coordination & Advisory Committee serves in a strictly advisory capacity. The committee's purpose is to support long-term riverfront stewardship, raise community and technical awareness of the river corridor, and assist with coordination on infrastructure, environmental considerations, and public access along the riverfront.

The committee operates strictly within its charter and does not advocate for or against federal border infrastructure, engage in negotiations with outside entities, or make any decisions that are binding on the City.

Accordingly, the purpose of this agenda item is to allow the committee to receive stakeholder information and to ask clarifying questions related to riverfront stewardship and coordination matters affecting City property and public access.

The committee is not tasked with conducting a technical evaluation of federal infrastructure or initiating engineering studies, and no additional analysis or professional services are requested for this item.

**City Posture Regarding River Corridor Impacts**

Stakeholders have raised questions about potential river conditions and interactions with infrastructure associated with the proposed federal border infrastructure along the Rio Grande corridor. The City of Laredo recognizes that understanding river dynamics and riverfront conditions is an important consideration for long-term stewardship of the corridor.

At the same time, the City's current posture is to monitor riverfront conditions and potential impacts to City property and infrastructure as projects are implemented. Should measurable

impacts occur, those matters would be addressed through appropriate coordination channels with the responsible authorities involved in the management of the river corridor.

This approach keeps the City mindful of potential riverfront impacts while maintaining the committee's advisory and coordination roles.

### **Alignment with the Cooperative Border Security and River Stewardship Framework**

The committee's approach to this item is consistent with the City's Cooperative Border Security and River Stewardship Framework, which recognizes that border infrastructure decisions are federal responsibilities while local governments maintain an important role in riverfront stewardship, coordination, and protection of City assets.

Within this framework, the City maintains awareness, supports coordination, and protects riverfront assets, while avoiding advocacy positions on federal border infrastructure.

The committee's discussion of this item is therefore intended to support awareness and coordination consistent with the framework, rather than evaluation of the federal project itself.

### **Jurisdictional Context of the Rio Grande**

Ownership and jurisdiction along the Rio Grande corridor are governed by established legal principles and treaty frameworks.

Private property along the river generally extends to the gradient boundary, which marks the transition between private land and the State-owned riverbed. The State of Texas holds title to the riverbed between the gradient boundary and the active river channel, as recognized in *State of Texas v. Grubstake Investment Association*.

The international boundary between the United States and Mexico generally follows the thalweg, or center of the main river channel, and is administered through federal treaty authorities, including the International Boundary and Water Commission.

Accordingly, the City of Laredo does not hold ownership of the center of the river except where specific property interests have been conveyed.

### **Administrative Context**

The presentation will be received as stakeholder input. The report and proposal referenced in the presentation have previously been submitted to the City Manager's Office for administrative awareness.

The committee will receive information for awareness regarding riverfront stewardship and coordination considerations, and no committee action or recommendation is requested for this item.