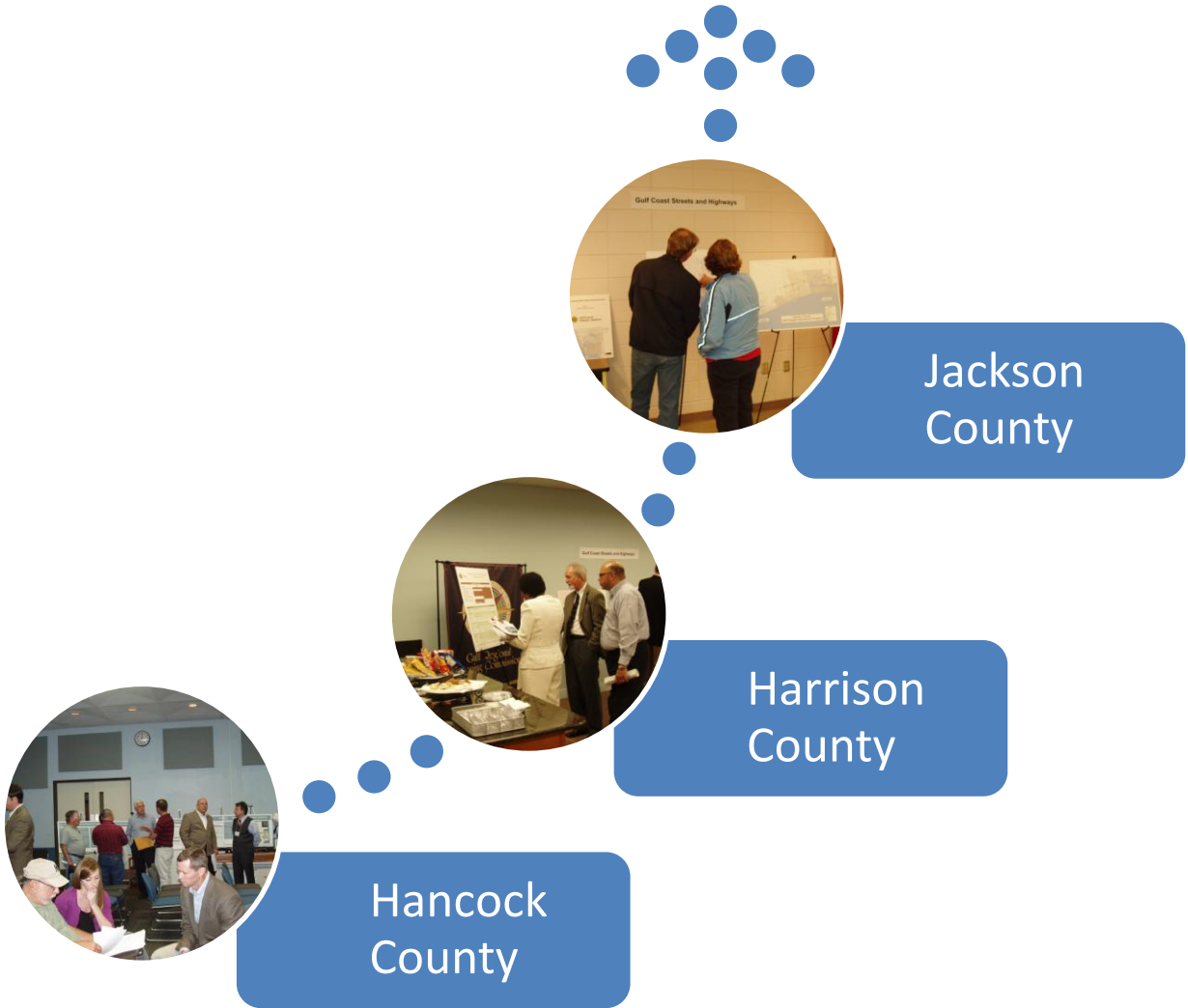


# Comments received from the public review period of the Draft 2035 LRTP

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## Comments received from the public review period the Draft 2035 LRTP

----Via Email----

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**Comment:** “Sir, I attended the 3/3/2011 meeting on Multiplan 2035 in Bay St. Louis and talked with a few GRPC and MDOT folks about noise from I-10 in the Diamondhead Community. I left some written comments there but would like to also submit this. A goal of Multiplan 2035 is Environmental Stewardship. A big part of environmental stewardship should be the effect on communities. I did not see this specifically mentioned in the plan. One of the effects on communities near highways is traffic noise. I suggest that the long range plan specifically include considerations of traffic noise abatement where highways pass near communities. This does not mean only man-made sound barriers which are expensive; noise can also be reduced by using a quiet road surface (asphalt, not concrete), by locating rumble strips outside of the road side lines, and by maximizing foliage along the sides and in medians. The Diamondhead Community is in the process of submitting a more detailed proposal to MDOT for reducing noise from I-10 by the above methods. We hope and request that this work be included in your near-term plans and be completed soon. I live in Diamondhead and am working with a number of others as part of the Diamondhead Community Association. Our detailed proposal mentioned above has the support of the Diamondhead Property Owners Association and of the Hancock County Board of Supervisors. We appreciate your support as we try to complete this program. I'm sending a copy to Jeff Loftus with whom I worked two years ago on re-planting storm damaged trees along I-10, and a copy to Bill Johnson with whom we are working now.”- Harold Preble

**Response:** GRPC submitted this comment to Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)

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**Comment:**

- Regarding Table 2.1, 2010 census numbers are now available and should be used instead of the 2009 estimate.
- For Tables 5.1 thru 5.3, the roadway segments that are at LOS E or F should be further delineated from those operating at LOS C or D, perhaps by using a red or similar color to denote the LOS E/F segments.
- On a related note, the maps in Figures 5.1 thru 5.4 should be further refined, with LOS D being reflected by a lighter color to show segments approaching, but not at congestion. Especially since FHWA and most state jurisdictions consider LOS D an acceptable level-of-service in an urban area.

**Response:** The planning and preparation of this Long Range Plan update did not coincide with the release of the 2010 Census data. The plan was in draft from when the data came out. We wish we could have used it.

The LOS maps showing congestion were used to help us identify roadway projects for consideration. This was one of the many methods we used to identify projects. Once projects were identified, they were prioritized based on the plan's goals and objectives. The LOS data was used to help prioritize the projects by giving points based on the

severity of the LOS (LOS F getting higher points than LOS C). I agree with the statement made about most states having acceptable LOS. Our region has never discussed this but probably should have something adopted through the MPO.

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**Comment:** - Regarding the CTA Bike-and-Bus Program in Section 8.3, I'm not sure if CTA buses have bike racks on the front. But if they don't, they need to and this should be included in the LRTP. And if the buses do have bike racks, it should be mentioned in the Bike-and-Bus Program paragraph.

- Regarding Chapter 10, I'm glad to see the increased focus in bicycle/pedestrian travel and I hope this continues and expands in the future.

**Response:** CTA buses have bike racks on the front of them. The MPO has put a priority on improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the gulf coast.

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**Comment:** - For the proposed projects listed in Tables 13.1 thru 13.4, the final LRTP document should include an appendix that shows more detailed information on each project, similar to what was done with the last GCATS update.

Below are comments on specific projects that are within Tables 13.1 thru 13.4:

- Project #89, the Popp's Ferry Rd extension to US 90, should be moved to Stage 1 if at all possible.

- Project #102, the Woolmarket Connector, should be as a 4-lane roadway, not 2-lane.

**Response:** In efforts to limit the number of pages that this document included, the detailed descriptions that were done in the 2030 GCATS were left out. Your comment indicating that this section was important will go into consideration for the next GCATS update. I agree with the comments regarding project #89 and project #102. When these projects come up for consideration for funding allocation this would be amended.

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**Comment:** - I was surprised to see Project #135, I-10 HOV lanes, listed. Are GRPC and MDOT serious about including HOV lanes? If so, I see this as a long-term need, not mid-term. It's going to take a \*LONG\* time for I-10 traffic volumes to increase to the point where more than 6 lanes are needed. As such, this project should be moved from Stage 2 to Stage 3. This would enable some sooner-needed projects to move from Stage 3 to Stage 2. For example, MS 43 widening (#163), US 90 improvements (#167-#171), and I-10 widening in Jackson County (#205-#206).

- Previous GCATS updates included a project to widen I-10 to 6 lanes between the Diamondhead interchange (Exit 16) and the Long Beach interchange (Exit 28), but it does not appear in this draft. It should be included for several reasons. It maintains 6-lane continuity, instead of going 6-to-4-to-6 as currently exists. It has high traffic volumes for a 4-lane freeway, and in fact per MDOT traffic counts has a higher volume

at Menge Ave than another 4-lane segment that is proposed for widening (project #s 205 and 206, between MS 609 and Gautier-Vancleve Rd). Given the higher traffic volumes, at least at/east of Menge Ave, part of this project should be given a higher priority than #205 and #206 and should be placed in the 2016-2025 timeframe if at all possible.

**Response:** The travel demand model only showed capacity deficiencies on I-10 between Lorraine/Cowan Exit and I-110 in the year 2035. This is why these decisions were made. In the event that a project in Stage 3 gains support and needs to be moved up in priority, the HOV lanes could be moved to Stage 3.

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**Comment:** - Kiln-Delisle Rd is a very busy connector between Kiln and I-10, almost functioning as an arterial. The segments in Harrison County and near Kiln (from MS 43/603 to roughly Bayou Cocoa Point Dr near Annunciation Catholic Church) are substandard and in need of improvement, especially shoulders. Including a project here would also be an opportunity to tie in a reconstruction project with a bicycle facility, as bike lanes are proposed along the road per Table 10.2.

**Response:** This is a very busy road. Improvements to this roadway were included in the 2030 GCATS but due to fiscal constraint this project was left out of this plan update. However, the intersection of this roadway and Hwy 603 is included in the plan.

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**Comment:** Is all of Three Rivers Road included? That road is a major north south connector and would be great as a bike-pedestrian route.

**Response:** GRPC included this road for proposed bike route improvements.

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**Comment:** I have included some Bike Features of the Scenic Byway to Space that I would like to have included that were not already included. I have included:  
An Adventure Cycling route for Ridge Road (from Texas Flat to County Limits (would really like it to go to the Crosby Arboretum in Pearl River County)  
A Shared Use Pathway called Discovery Trail from Logtown Road to the Infinity Science Center on Infinity Way.  
A Shared Roadway on Logtown Road  
A Shared Roadway on Logtown-Napoleon Road from Logtown Road to the Discovery Trail. A Shared Roadway on Logtown-Napoleon Road from Napoleon Road to where it ends at I-10. I also added what Allison suggested on the frontage road of Highway 90 from Waveland Avenue to Highway 607 (the idea is to connect the frontage road to the bike path going down Highway 90 from Waveland Avenue to Pearlington – some of it may need to be dedicated bike lane where Highway 607 and Highway 90 intersect).

**Response:** These recommendations were incorporated in the plan.

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**Comment:** I think there are some things that you could add to your map – there are more sidewalks coming to Chipley (south of Eastlawn School). We awarded that contract last night. I think there are more roads which could be included on the potential bike route as well. Otherwise, I think we're generally on the same page

**Response:** Ingalls Avenue was added to the proposed bike route network based on this comment. The MPO has put a priority on improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the Gulf Coast.

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**Comment:** I've inputted the data you requested on the attached chart. Hope this isn't too late. Let me where this goes from here.

**Response:** The input was reviewed and assessed- validating routes that were proposed and incorporating Division Street and Lee Street.

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**Comment:** Sorry guys...I'm just not getting it. After looking at the attachments I don't think I'm the right guy for this. I'm unable to analyze the data/maps and assign a priority; I will have to pass on this one.

**Response:** GRPC responded by email and thanking the individual for his consideration to review the draft of the existing and proposed routes and offered to discuss the process further if he was interested.

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**Comment:** Hoping that OS puts the link to Park Rd & the Powerline Trail just north of Hwy 90 (by hospital) as a #1.

**Response:** The power line trail was incorporated into the proposed bike route network.

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**Comment:** Please find attached my ratings of the segments in Pascagoula and Moss Point. My opinion is based on the objectives and uses of each segment and my knowledge of pedestrian and bicycle traffic on each segment.

**Response:** The input from this local advocate was used to identify routes in the Moss Point and Pascagoula area.

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**Comment:** Attached are my rankings for the listed projects. Thanks for keeping Gautier in the loop.

**Response:** The input received was used to validate priority routes for the Gautier proposed network.

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**Comment:** As to Long Beach. Harper McCaughn Elementary school is now on Pineville Rd; however there is now a town green in its place. Sidewalks have been improved down Jeff Davis and on the adjacent side streets. The new Rec center is a major facility on Daugherty road. Here would be my priorities for the Coast--

1) The beach --South of HWY 90--as the right of way is done--but much needs to be at the Harbors to enable a 12-14' wide path for bikes and sidewalks. The expansion of the seawall is great but is not built to handle bikes===with 2% more effort it could be a 12-14' bike path/ped walkway from Bay bridge to ocean Springs bridge.

2) use the canals and power line easements throughout the county. There will be some issues by property owners but it is the best use of land and the least cost--it would improve the quality of life like the trails in Hattiesburg.

3) Consider Railroad St as much of it exists and it give another East west corridor

4) Look for major North south sidewalks and bike paths.

5) I would encourage national legislation that all new construction within 1/2 mile of a school must have a sidewalk and possibly a bike path if possible.

6) Fill in the other areas and require sidewalk ordinances for all new construction inside the Cities.

Hope this helps and I could give more detail if needed

**Response:** The majority of input received was incorporated into the proposed bike route network except for pursuit of national legislation and the proposed routes on the canals. The plan promotes complete street policies with local governments but not from a national perspective. The canal trail was not incorporated due to lack of priority by the city. The city received Transportation Enhancement to build a shared use pathway along a canal but reprioritized the scope to fund a path at their sportsplex. The MPO has placed a priority on improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the Gulf Coast and will continue to work with Long Beach on their long range priorities.

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**Comments:** In general terms the short term goal would be connecting our major corridors. Beach boardwalk to Cowan/Lorraine and Cowan/Lorraine through Seaway to Crossroads. The small connectors would be mid-range and long-range in my opinion. It has been our observation that bikers in particular really want a long/longer course so they can do a lot of miles when they are riding rather than the shorter routes.

The administration has been pushing the completion of the Beach boardwalk sections in Gulfport to complete the 8 miles for Gulfport beach front. It is my understanding that they will be filling gaps in from Biloxi to Pass Christian (Bridge to Bridge). Short term

work should center around getting people to the boardwalk so they can take advantage of the beach.

Response: The input received was used to validate priority routes for the Gulfport network.



Comments received from the public review period the Draft 2035 LRTP

----Stakeholder's Meeting----

Comment:

1. There are some critical needs that are missing? If so, what are they?

Pedestrian access & bicycle safe route is needed on Atkinson Road, Biloxi. I suggest traffic calming devices on Atkinson, not speed enhancing. Biloxi Community Living Center (missing home or rehab) residents travel Atkinson on the MV lane. An off road multi-use path will serve the nursing home, the residents walking, the school children at Popp's Ferry Elementary, and the Shiloh Park families. Access to Shiloh Park tennis, basketball, walking and playground will be enhanced.

2. There are some projects that should be deleted? If so, what are they and why?

Popp's Ferry, Pass Road to Atkinson, has an unneeded continuous Turn lane with few and left turn locations and a continuous Right Turn lane N bound. Popp's Ferry is a bicycle commuter corridor and 14' lanes with Sharrows and Share the Road are needed.

3. Please list the top three projects that you would like to see happen ASAP. And why?

Bike Lane on US 90 Biloxi Bay to St. Louis Bay. Set the lane dimension at Two feet from the bunker curb. Narrow each MV lane by one foot, surface mark the lane, sign the Bike Route and enforce the 45 mile posted limit.

**Response:** Comments regarding Atkinson Road, Popp Ferry Road will be noted in this plan as well as incorporated into a project file to be used when this project is considered for funding. US 90 bike lane suggestions will be incorporated into the MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

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**Comment:**

3. Please list the top three projects that you would like to see happen ASAP. And why?

- ① THREE RIVERS ROAD TO HWY 90. THIS WILL REDUCE TRAFFIC ON HWY 49
- ② CONNECT CREOSOTE ROAD TO WASHINGTON. THIS WILL REDUCE TRAFFIC ON AIRPORT ROAD & ELIMINATE TRAFFIC THROUGH THE TURKEY CREEK COMMUNITY
- ③ AIRPORT CONNECTION TO I-10. BETTER ACCESS TO AIRPORT & REDUCE TRAFFIC ON HWY 49.

**Response:** Comments regarding Three Rivers Road extension, Creosote Road extension, and the I-10 Airport connector projects will be noted in this plan as well as incorporated into a project file to be used when this project is considered for funding.

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**Comment:**

1. There are some critical needs that are missing? If so, what are they?

May need some additional improvements from I-110 @ Division Street.

2. There are some projects that should be deleted? If so, what are they and why?

Possibly Forrest Ave in Blx. - Gate may shift south of Division Street

3. Please list the top three projects that you would like to see happen ASAP. And why?

- i) Irish Hill Drive - White to Porter - assist w/ moving traffic near Keesler Gate
- Cedar Lake Rd - I-10 to Papp's Ferry Rd - more Keesler employees to work quickly
- Cedar Lake Rd Medical Park drive - more Keesler

**Response:** Comments #1 & #2 from above would likely happen depending on Keesler Air Force Base future traffic flow plans. At that time the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan could be amended. Comments regarding Irish Hill Drive and Cedar Lake Road will be noted in this plan as well as incorporated into a project file to be used when this project is considered for funding.

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**Comment:**

1. There are some critical needs that are missing? If so, what are they?

- FUNDING, FUNDING, FUNDING  
- NOISE BARRIER DIAMONDHEAD/I-10

3. Please list the top three projects that you would like to see happen ASAP. And why?

- 43/603, 43/602, 43/603

**Response:** GRPC submitted this comment to Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)

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**Comment:**

1. There are some critical needs that are missing? If so, what are they?

May need to consider improvements near Division Street or Judge Selcel - Keesler AFB is considering a new gate on the east.

2. There are some projects that should be deleted? If so, what are they and why?

Forrest Ave - Keesler may be planning a new east gate which will be near Judge Selcel or Division Street.

**Response:** Comments #1 & #2 from above would likely happen depending on Keesler Air Force Base future traffic flow plans. At that time the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan could be amended.

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Comments received from the public review period the Draft 2035 LRTP

----Jackson County Public Meeting----

Comment:

1. There are some critical needs that are missing? If so, what are they?

Frontage Road Gautier-Vancleave to Martin Bluff would benefit by pedestrian bicycle facility. Frontage Road connects Sandhill Crane Refuge to Hickory Hills.

Gautier-Vancleave Road from Sandhill Crane Refuge to Gulf Coast Community College and commercial district allows active transportation for adults and families when there is a shared-use path separated from the high speed, high density traffic.

3. Please list the top three projects that you would like to see happen ASAP. And why?

1. Martin Bluff Road accomodates Hickory Hills and apartment complex children to Martin Bluff Elementary. This requires an off road shared use path for children & seniors citizens.

2. Shared use, off road path from Sandhill Crane Refuge to U.S. 90 via Gautier-Vancleave Road. This serves the businesses in Gautier, the visitors in RV parks and tourists from Sandhill Crane Refuge.

You can also provide comments on the plan via the web site [www.grpc.com](http://www.grpc.com) until March 27, 2011

3. Designate a dollar amount for bicycle/pedestrian projects in each ~~Phase~~ (stage) protected from transfer to other categories. PLEASE COMPLETE THE REVERSE SIDE Make the dollar amt as a percentage equal to the bike/ped death rate in the area.

Response:

Comments regarding Gautier-Vancleave Road, Martin Bluff Road and Frontage Road will be noted in this plan as well as incorporated into a project file to be used when this project is considered for funding. The comments will be used in the MPO's Bike and Pedestrian Planning. Suggestions for Martin Bluff Road will be sent to the City of Gautier to be considered as the ongoing development the Martin Bluff Road project reaches the design phase. The comments regarding a designation of funds for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, this is being considered by the MPO at this time. The MPO will consider setting aside a certain percentage of the Gulf Coast MPO's STP funds for this purpose.

Comments received from the public review period the Draft 2035 LRTP

----Harrison County Public Meeting----

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**Comment:**

1. There are some critical needs that are missing? If so, what are they?

A. I DON'T THINK CONTINGENCY PLANNING IS ADEQUATELY ADDRESSED  
B. I DON'T THINK THE IMPACT OF THE BIG SHIPS ON THE PORT OF GULF PORT IS ADEQUATELY ADDRESSED.

3. Please list the top three projects that you would like to see happen ASAP. And why?

A. I would like to see PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE — PROBABLY NOT ASAP.  
B. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TRADITIONAL TRANSPORTATION — like bicycles & walking.  
C. I would like to see public transportation improvement

**Response:** Alternative transportation analysis that is identified in the Transit Development Plan will address improved transit service for the commuter. This analysis will look at vanpool services, express transit and bicycles as a part of an improved transportation system on the Gulf Coast.

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**Comment:**

3. Please list the top three projects that you would like to see happen ASAP. And why?

PASS ROAD corridor around the intersection of  
COWAN ROAD. Open configuration allows for  
EXCESSIVE VARIANTS of traffic flow which conflicts  
causing collisions.

**Response:** Comments regarding Pass Road and Cowan Rd will be noted in this plan as well as incorporated into a project file to be used when this project is considered for funding. This information will be extremely useful as we address safety concerns in the planning process and give priority to the funding of projects that will mitigate safety concerns.

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**Comment:**

1. There are some critical needs that are missing? If so, what are they?

The Canal Road / Port Connector and  
Port MS railroad need to be separated from  
Hwy 90.

3. Please list the top three projects that you would like to see happen ASAP. And why?

Canal Road / Port Connector  
To be ready for Port restoration and  
to move trucks off of 25<sup>th</sup> Ave.

**Response:** The comments regarding the Canal Road connector are noted. These comments will be sent to MDOT.

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**Comment:**

1. There are some critical needs that are missing? If so, what are they?

HAVE MORE PUBLIC INPUT AND INFORMATION SHARING.  
(SEE BACK) - HAVE MORE MATERIALS AVAILABLE FOR THE FEW WHO DO  
ATTEND SO THEY CAN SHARE THE INFORMA WITH OTHERS AT GROUP MEETINGS

2. There are some projects that should be deleted? If so, what are they and why?

- THE ELEVATED HIGHWAY PROPOSED FOR GULFPORT. - POLLUTION - NOT WANTED  
- PROJECTS FOR THE TUNICA AREA TAKING FUNDS FROM ROAD  
DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH.

3. Please list the top three projects that you would like to see happen ASAP. And why?

- IMPROVE CANAL ROAD TO AND FROM I-10  
- IMPROVE 49 TO AT LEAST 3 LANES - PARTICULARLY IMPROVE  
49 SOUTH FROM JACKSON TO GULFPORT - IT IS OLD AND HAZARDOUS  
- IMPROVE BICYCLE PATHS ALONG THE COAST SAFELY FOR CYCLISTS AND  
CHILDREN  
- FIND ANOTHER RD OTHER THAN 49 FOR THE INCREASED PORT ACTIVITY

**Response:** The MPO is working hard to place priority on bicycle and pedestrians needs on the coast. Comment regarding Canal Road is appreciated and will help elevate the priority of initiating a project on this corridor. Comments regarding US 49 and the port connector will be sent to MDOT.

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**Comments received from the public review period the Draft 2035 LRTP**

**----Hancock County Public Meeting----**

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**Comment:** “Comments made by Diamondhead POA with approval of the Diamondhead POA and Hancock County. In line with the “Environmental Stewardship” goal of section 1.2.  
\*The Diamondhead Community has a problem with noise from -10. So question other communities do also.  
\*We understand that a man-made sound barrier would be expensive and that funds are getting tighter.  
\*We believe that other ways of reducing noise can be effective and affordable, such as  
-Maximizing the natural foliage along sides of I-10 and planting new foliage;  
-Re-paving with a “quieter” road surface such as asphalt;  
-Relocating the rumble strips to be outside the highway side lines.  
\*We and Hancock County are in the process of submitting a more detailed plan to MDOT to reduce noise by these means  
\*We request that the Multiplan 2035 include specifically Noise Abatement where traveled highways are close to residential areas.  
\*We also request that the Hancock County-Diamondhead proposed Noise Reduction Plan be included in MDOT’s short range plans.”- Harold Preble

**Response:** GRPC submitted this comment to Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)

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Comments received from the public review period the Draft 2035 LRTP

----Other Comment Received----

Comment:

1. There are some critical needs that are missing? If so, what are they? *The needs of the Communities for public input is vital. The environmental impact to historical + Wetland areas. I am oppose to the following: New Roadway thru wetland Dutchland property to Cressate Road; Cressate Road to Washington Ave; Three Rivers Road thru Wetlands behind Legion 8 (A.K.A) L.C Jones to 20th Ave; Dedcamp Road to Interstate 16 to Seaway Rd to the new Rippy Rd to Washington Ave. I am oppose to traffic coming into our community and closing Rippy Road to Washington Ave.*
2. There are some projects that should be deleted? If so, what are they and why? *Please delete the following. New Roadway thru wetland Dutchland property to Cressate Rd (see #1) to Washington Ave. Three River Road thru wetland behind the Leg. 8 / L.C Jones old property to 20th Ave; Dedcamp Road to Interstate 16 to Seaway to now Rippy Road to Washington Ave.*
3. Please provide any additional comments about the long range transportation plan *We would like to protect the African American Heritage and culture and our walkway / M.D.A.H. I am oppose to this 2035 Long Range plan and most of the 10,000 people I represent are also as we stated in the City Comprehensive plans*

**Response:** Please remember that the projects listed in the plan are intended to improve mobility of residents and visitors of all of the region's communities. In particular, the projects that would result in new roadways or roadway alignment changes that would impact the Turkey Creek and North Gulfport communities are conceptual as presented in the plan, and are intended to provide an alternative to Highway 49 for north-south mobility and better traffic flow for residents and visitors. The inclusion of a potential project in the long range plan does not necessarily mean that the project will be developed, or that anyone intends to develop it, but rather that the project has been identified as a potential improvement to be considered for increasing mobility within and through the area in meeting travel demands projected through the year 2035. Public meetings

would be held in impacted communities to discuss the potential merits and/or negative impacts of the projects, allowing residents the opportunity express their concerns and voice their opinions.

If the City of Gulfport desires to amend the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan to add or remove potential transportation improvement projects, a request to do so can be made to the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Transportation Policy Committee.

I assure you that the development of transportation improvements to the detriment of our region's established communities could not be farther from the intent of the MPO. Rather, our goal is to improve mobility and, ultimately, quality of life for our residents. Many good ideas were brought forward at the community visioning sessions held last week at the Good Deeds Center toward building a sustainable North Gulfport Community. We support those goals and are eager to work with the community and the City as a whole.

**Comment:** The comment page below was received from a total of 169 residents of the City of Gulfport. The residents that commented were from the communities of Turkey Creek (21), North Gulfport(121), Dedeaux Road (12) area and other areas(15).

**To Whom It May Concern:**

Out of my concern for community health, public safety, *sustainable* development, and improved local and regional traffic flow, I have reviewed the projects proposed in the Staged Implementation Plan of the Gulf Coast Area "2035 Transportation Plan." (<http://www.grpc.com/gcats.html>)

As a resident of Turkey Creek, I am particularly concerned about current and future traffic flow within the increasingly congested area bounded by I-10 to the north, Canal Road to the west, 28<sup>th</sup> Street to the south, Hewes Avenue to the east, and bisected by Highway 49. (*i.e., the lower Turkey Creek drainage basin, including its predominantly African-American, low-to-moderate income, and/or historic residential neighborhoods of North Gulfport, Turkey Creek, Forrest Heights, Rolling Meadows, Villa del Rey, 28<sup>th</sup> Street east and Canal Road*).

Historically, these neighborhoods have absorbed the heaviest adverse impacts of the gulf coast's major transportation infrastructure and associated traffic flows, including the highest concentration of unhealthy air emissions in close proximity to homes. These neighborhoods are also significantly more vulnerable than other residential communities of Gulfport, Harrison County and coastal Mississippi to the dangers, health impacts and inconveniences posed by heavy trucks, hazardous cargoes, traffic congestion, speeding, unsafe crossings for pedestrians and vehicles, inadequate sidewalks, noise, visual pollution, and impacts on current and future real estate values of adjacent land uses.

For these reasons, any and all future transportation projects within or near the area specified above must, as a *top priority*, seek to significantly lessen traffic volume, speed, accidents and emissions on both US 49 and Rippy Road – the respective *hearts* of the North Gulfport and Turkey Creek neighborhoods. It is important that this priority and the equally important priorities of protecting wetlands, avoiding contaminated sites, and increasing greenspace 'buffer' are seen as *central* rather than *contrary* to the best ideas and possibilities that exist for improving north-south traffic flows and connectivity in this currently congested area of our city, county and coast. I therefore and hereby urge revision of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan to:

- *Eliminate* proposed **Inland Port** at the southern edge of North Gulfport (relocate to north of I-10) due to wetlands, air quality and other avoidable adverse impacts on this residential neighborhood;
- *Prioritize* the proposed **I-10 interchange and road/bridge** that would connect Airport Road and Seaway Road to the interstate, thereby improving regional traffic flow and calming Rippy Road;
- *Eliminate* proposed eastward extension of **Creosote Road to Washington Ave**, and thereby avoid creosote-contaminated soil, creek sediment and wetlands at/near a permanent EPA Cleanup site;
- *Include/Add* the "looping" of **Creosote Road East back into itself via Taylor Blvd**, which would accommodate existing commercial/industrial activity, calm Rippy, and avoid above cleanup site;
- **Other:**

Residents of North Gulfport, Turkey Creek and the lower Turkey Creek Watershed will be impacted more than others by several projects included (or excluded) in the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. The future review and discussion these proposals should be conducted in our community to ensure adequate input and alignment with community concerns, goals and plans. To this end, projects within areas cited above should consult, consider and reflect the citizen-developed Turkey Creek-North Gulfport Community Action Plan (2006), Turkey Creek Watershed Implementation Plan (2006), and their respective (pending) revisions.

**Response:** The MPO has received numerous comments from residents concerned with the potential impacts of proposed projects in and around the North Gulfport and Turkey Creek communities. A form letter was distributed and signed by over 160 residents of the area expressing either support or opposition for the following projects:

1. Support for the project to provide a new route to connect Washington Avenue from Airport Road to a new I-10 interchange north of Seaway Road.
2. Opposition to the proposed eastward extension of Creosote Road to Washington Avenue.
3. Support for the addition of a new project to “loop” Creosote Road back into itself via Taylor Boulevard.
4. Opposition to the proposed Inland Port at the southern edge of North Gulfport.

Additionally, the comment sheets stressed the need for increased consultation with the citizens and their community plans to ensure that projects included in the plan were evaluated regarding their potential impacts to: congestion; safety (for both autos and pedestrians); air quality; noise and visual pollution; impacts on real estate values; wetlands; contaminated sites; and, other quality of life issues including preservation of African-American culture in this predominantly moderate-to-low income area. Emphasis is also placed on the protection and increase of existing greenspace to buffer residential areas within the communities from the adverse impacts of transportation infrastructure.

MPO staff responded to those comments by sending letters to each of the concerned citizens (for whom addresses could be discerned), informing them that their comments had been received, reviewed and included as attachments to the plan, and that they would be considered prior to development of any projects included in the plan. The citizens were also informed that the proposed projects had been identified to mitigate projected traffic deficiencies, either existing or projected for the year 2035, and/or to provide linkages or alternative travel options for residents and visitors. The citizens were further informed that the projects generating the most concern, new roadways and/or roadway re-alignments, were depicted on the LRTP maps in a purely conceptual manner, and that multiple stakeholder meetings would have to be held in the affected communities to allow ample opportunity for public comment and discussion prior to the allocation of federal funding for the construction of any of the projects.

Incidentally, the proposed projects to develop new roadways or roadway realignments for which concern was expressed in the above-referenced form letters and comment sheets were included in the previous long-range transportation plan (2030).

MPO staff will schedule meetings to further inform residents regarding the planning process, including the goals and objectives, how projects included in the plan were identified, and the project’s potential impacts on communities. The goal of these

meetings will be to discuss the projected benefits of the proposed projects and the potential positive and/or negative impacts of the projects with residents and stakeholders, identify possible alternatives, and develop consensus to move forward.