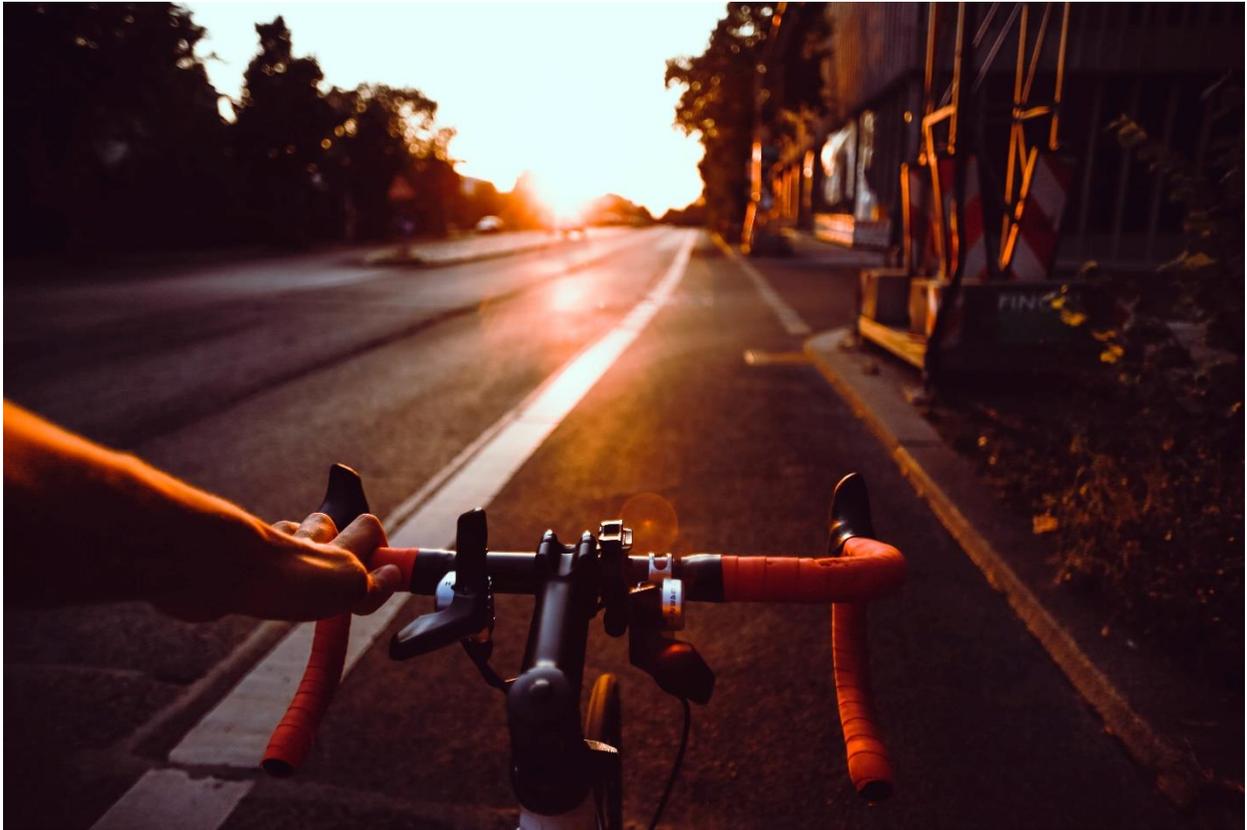


MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



**TRANSPORTATION
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
HANDBOOK**

2017

Prepared by:
GULF REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

For:
THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



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I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose is to provide a clear guide on the processes used to develop the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the project selection. This handbook has been developed for the member jurisdictions of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to explain the policies and procedures of the TIP. As mandated, all federally funded projects carried out within the boundaries of a metropolitan planning area serving a transportation management area shall be selected for implementation from the approved TIP by the metropolitan planning organization designated for the area in consultation with the State and any affected public transportation operator.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization

The MPO was created by federal legislation and is governed by 23 U.S.C. 134-135. Every urbanized area, a geographic area with a population of 50,000 or more as designated by the Bureau of the Census, must have a designated MPO to qualify for federal highway or transit financial assistance. MPOs were formed to ensure federal transportation funds are spent in a manner that has a basis in metropolitan region-wide plans. All transportation projects within the MPO planning area must be supported by the MPO's long range transportation plan to be eligible for federal funding.

Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO

The Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO planning area is the entirety of Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson counties. GRPC is the designated MPO for the two urbanized areas within these counties, which include the Gulfport, MS and Pascagoula, MS urbanized areas. The Gulfport, MS urbanized area consists of the cities of Waveland, Bay St. Louis, Diamondhead, Pass Christian, Long Beach, Gulfport, Biloxi, D'Iberville and Ocean Springs. The Pascagoula urbanized area consists of the cities of Gautier, Pascagoula, and Moss Point. The MPO is charged with developing criteria for project selection that meets the goals of the region and addresses federal planning requirements. The MPO is governed by two committees: The Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) and the Technical Coordination Committee (TCC). The Gulf Regional Planning Commission (GRPC) serves as staff for the Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO providing administration and a planning process in accordance with federal regulations.

MPO Goals

The MPO must develop criteria for project selection that meet the goals of the region. The MPO's transportation planning program requires all planning and proposed projects to demonstrate the following overall goals are achieved.

- GOAL 1: Strategically enhance corridors
- GOAL 2: Improve and expand transportation choices
- GOAL 3: Increase safe transportation
- GOAL 4: Manage the relationship between transportation, community and environment

II. THE TIP

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Federal regulations require the Gulf Regional Planning Commission (GRPC), as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Gulf Coast, to develop and maintain a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is a four-year program of project implementation, and identifies available federal and non-federal funding for the included projects to maintain fiscal constraint. The TIP must include all federally funded projects in the region. The TIP for each MPO in the state is incorporated into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which addresses all the transportation needs of the State of Mississippi, including those areas outside the MPO urban areas.

TIP Facts:

- Includes all federally funded projects
- Covers a minimum 4 year period
- Is updated every 2 years
- May be amended every 6 months
- Is financially constrained
- Approved by the MPO, Governor, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration
- Included in the STIP

The TIP must be financially constrained, meaning that the amount of funds programmed cannot exceed the anticipated amount of funding available. During each TIP update, MDOT notifies the MPO of the amount of funds that will be available for the next fiscal year. GRPC will structure the new 4 year TIP by assigning each of the 4 years with the amount of funds as indicated by MDOT. In accordance with CFR 450.324(f), “projects that are not considered to be of appropriate scale for individual identification in a given program year may be grouped by function, work type, and/or geographic area”. The TIP will include listings of “Grouped Projects”.

Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds

Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds provide flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects on any Federal-aid highway. STP funds are apportioned to the State and a portion is made available to metropolitan planning areas to advance local priorities. The funds may be used for a variety of planning, program or improvement projects. The MPO allocates the funds to local public agencies within the planning area based on the region’s highest priority transportation projects.

To be eligible as a STP funded TIP project, the improvement must be located within the MPO planning area and on the functional classified network. The network includes all roads that the MPO has designated as a principal arterial, minor arterial, or collector. STP projects may not be undertaken on roads functionally classified as local or rural minor collectors except in certain cases defined by federal regulations. The types of projects that are eligible as TIP projects are defined by STP regulation 23 USC 133. The applicant is reimbursed 80% of the total project cost up to the Federal fund award amount. The applicant is responsible for at least 20% of the total project cost.

Grouped Projects - Safety

The Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO will set aside 10% of its Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds for projects to enhance the safe mobility of all modes of transportation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The Federal share payable on account of any project for certain safety projects may amount to 100 percent of the cost of construction of such projects; except that not more than 10 percent of all sums apportioned for all the Federal-aid programs for any fiscal year in accordance with section 104 of this title shall be used under this subsection.

Grouped Projects - Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit

The Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO will set aside 10% of the Gulf Coast’s Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds for projects to improve bicycle, pedestrian and transit accessibility and mobility in the region. An independent walkway project must be constructed on highway right-of-way or easement. Independent walkway projects are constructed separately from a Federal-aid highway construction project.

SAFETY PROJECTS

Safety measures described in 23 U.S.C. 120 (c):
Traffic control signalization
Pavement marking
Commuter carpooling and vanpooling
Rail-highway crossing closure
Traffic signs
Traffic lights
Guardrails
Impact attenuators
Concrete barrier end treatments
Breakaway utility poles
Priority control systems for emergency vehicles or transit vehicles at signalized intersections

Pedestrian and bicycle projects described in 23 CFR 652.9:
Independent walkway projects,
Independent bicycle projects,
Non-construction bicycle projects.

FHWA Office of Safety countermeasures:
Road safety audits
Rumble strips
Safety edge
Left and right turn lanes at stop-controlled intersections
Yellow change intervals
Medians and pedestrian refuge areas
Walkways, including roadway shoulders and shared use paths

Grouped Projects - MPO Studies/Projects

The Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO will set aside \$400,000 in STP funds annually for the purpose of developing and implementing studies/projects that directly support the MPO goals and objectives. Each year studies/projects will be selected by GRPC for funding through this program. The studies/projects are based on needs identified through the agency’s transportation planning process toward the provision of an efficient, safe and accessible transportation system for all modes. Studies/projects considered for funding through this program include: various intersection improvements that enhance traffic flow and/or safety; projects that enhance transportation modal options (bike/pedestrian, transit, etc.); projects that improve roadway safety; intersection analyses; corridor studies; safety audits; and others.

Obligation Authority

Obligation authority or spending authority or obligation limitation is the ceiling or total amount of commitments of federal apportionment that can be made within a year. The MPO can only spend apportionment up to the amount of obligation authority it receives in any year.

TAP Projects

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is eligible for funding under the Surface Transportation Program (STP). The TAP was established under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) of 2012 and replaces the Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP), Safe Routes to School Program (SRSP), as well as the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The applicant is reimbursed 80% of the total project cost up to the Federal fund award amount. The applicant is responsible for at least 20% of the total project cost.

III. TIP Development

Call for Projects

A new TIP is developed every two years through a cooperative effort of local leadership, state officials, transit operators, federal agencies, including participation by the general public. The TIP development process is described and notable policies are outlined below. Project incorporation into the Mississippi Gulf Coast TIP is *not* a guarantee of project implementation or construction. Ultimately, the requesting jurisdiction is responsible for project completion. In the event that problems arise, such as engineering obstacles, environmental conflicts or changes in priorities, adjustments may be made to the projects on the TIP. The following are the procedures and requirements for developing the TIP.

1. GRPC will send a letter with a TIP application packet to local public agencies within the MPO planning area to initiate the TIP application process.
2. The project application must be completed with the required information on the proposed project and returned to GRPC before the stated submission deadline.
3. The application package must include a letter signed by the mayor of the city or the member of the board of supervisors. The letter must demonstrate the jurisdiction has allocated the required funds to complete the project and the project meets the goals of the MPO.
4. The application package must also include a resolution from the governing board committing to the local match.
5. After receiving the project applications, GRPC will rank the projects based on the TIP project evaluation funding process. GRPC will assemble a draft TIP based on the project rankings and available funding.
6. GRPC and MDOT kick off a 45-day public review period and will host public meetings during the review period concerning the proposed projects for the TIP. GRPC will then advertise in primary newspapers within the urbanized area for public input on the draft TIP. The advertisement will include a listing of the proposed projects and directions to where the draft TIP may be reviewed.
7. Public comments will be reviewed by GRPC and forwarded to the project sponsor. A file for public comments will be recorded as an appendix to the TIP. The file will include the concluding decision and explanation with respect to each public comment.

TIP Project Application Package:

- Project application
- Letter of request
- Resolution from the Board

8. The cities and counties will then submit any additional or alternate projects resulting from public input.
9. Eligible projects that do not get recommended for the financially constrained TIP, can be placed in a stand by category and will be considered during the 6-month TIP amendment and evaluation process if funds become available.
10. The draft TIP will be presented to the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) for recommendation and Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) for approval.
11. The approved TIP will be submitted to the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
12. After approval by the MPO and the Governor, the TIP shall be included without change, directly or by reference, in the STIP required under 23 U.S.C. 135.
13. In nonattainment and maintenance areas, a conformity finding on the TIP must be made by the FHWA and the FTA before it is included in the STIP. A copy of the approved TIP shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA.
14. The State shall notify the MPO and Federal land management agencies when the TIP has been included in the STIP.

TIP Amendments

Every six months GRPC will initiate an amendment and evaluation process to consider the addition of “new” projects to the TIP or changes to existing projects in the TIP. All project additions will be considered based on the availability of funds in the financially constrained TIP. This process will provide fair and impartial consideration to all requests from each jurisdiction. It will also give GRPC opportunity to evaluate implementation schedules of each project to ensure Federal monies are obligated on time to avoid a funding lapse.

Changes to the TIP or changes to an existing project that are considered a major revision to the TIP will be processed as amendments. Amendments are processed at the quarterly MPO meetings. If the amendment is time sensitive the MPO may choose to perform a “poll vote” of the TPC to pass an amendment to the TIP. Amendments include:

- Addition or deletion of a project
- Major changes in design or scope such as changes that do impact travel demand models or an approved air quality conformity analysis (i.e. travel lanes, etc.)
- Termini changes
- Financial changes in a project’s programmed amount of federal funds greater than 20% of the original cost

GRPC will advertise in primary newspapers within the urbanized area for public input regarding proposed amendments to the TIP. GRPC will provide the public a period 10 days to review and provide comment. Ad language for TIP amendments should state the following:

“In compliance with federal regulations 23 CFR 450, the Mississippi Gulf Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is seeking the public's input on proposed amendments to the FY 2015-2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This document includes all projects to be funded using the Gulf Coast's allocation of Surface Transportation Program (STPJ funds, which are allocated by the Federal Highway Administration through the Mississippi Department of Transportation. The projects are based on local short term priorities set by the jurisdictions within the urbanized areas of Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties.”

For amendments that include transit projects attach the following language,

“Also listed in this document is Coast Transit Authority's Program of Projects that are funded by the Federal Transit Administration. The public meetings/comment period will satisfy the public participation requirements for the FTA Section 5307 and 5309 POP notice. The proposed CTA Program of projects will be final unless revised as a result of public comment.”

Following approval from the MPO's TCC and TPC, MPO staff will submit a letter from the MPO to MDOT requesting that the changes to the TIP be included on into the STIP. The letter should include explain why the action is consistent with the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The letter should also include a detailed recap of the amendment, the new TIP page with the modified items, the old TIP page with item to be amended. All amendments will be included in action summaries in the appendix of the TIP and on the MPO website. Fiscal constraint should be demonstrated.

Administrative Modifications to the TIP

The revisions that qualify as administrative modification are minor in nature and there is no distortion of fiscal constraint and the availability of funds is assured. Administrative modifications are processed by MPO staff and no public review is required. They include:

- Correcting obvious minor data entry errors
- Splitting or combining projects without modifying the original project design, concept and scope or creating project segmentation
- Changing or clarifying elements of a project description. This change would not alter the original project design, concept and scope. It also must be consistent with the approved environmental document.
- Moving a project from one federal funding category to another federal funding category
- Moving a project from federal funding to state funding

- Shifting the schedule of a project or phase within the years covered by the TIP (only the first 2 years for nonattainment and maintenance areas)
- Updating project cost estimates (within the original project scope and intent) not to exceed greater than 20% of the original cost estimate
- Moving any identified project phase programmed for previous year into a new TIP (rollover provision)
- Adding an additional agency to a group
- Adding projects with grouped projects within the TIP, provided fiscal constrain is maintained
- Removing a project reported as obligated or completed
- Re-demonstration of fiscal constrain is not required

MPO staff will submit a letter from the MPO to MDOT showing the modifications made to the TIP and request that it be included on in the STIP. The letter should also include a copy of the new TIP page with the modified items, the old TIP page with item to be modified. All modifications will be included in action summaries in the appendix of the TIP and on the MPO website. The MPO TCC and TPC will be advised of the change at the next meeting

Transit Projects

If the change to the TIP includes transit projects, then the amendment or modification will need to be approved by both the Mississippi Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Division Office and the Region 4 Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

MDOT Projects

MDOT must provide written request to the MPO for changes to the MPO TIP. MODT should advise the MPO if the change should be processed as a modification or amendment. In the event the change is to be processed as an amendment, an MDOT representative should provide a presentation to the MPO TCC and TPC regarding the amendment.

Grouped Projects

The MPO sets aside funding for three grouped project categories including: Safety group, Bike/pedestrian/transit and MPO studies. Project additions and changes to projects within these groups will be processed as modifications because the funding in each group is already approved for use by the MPO.

IV. TIP PROJECT GUIDELINES

This section outlines the procedures and policies for TIP projects in the Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO planning area. The policies and guidelines are set up to support and coordinate with the MPO's goals and objectives. The MPO ensures that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs are based on a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) planning process. Additionally, the MPO serves to evaluate transportation alternatives, scaled to the size and complexity of the region, to the nature of its transportation issues, and to the realistically available options and develop a program based on the long-range transportation plan and designed to serve the area's goals. This TIP process ensures these functions are achieved with regard to federal funds managed by the MPO.

Project Application

Each municipality must fill out a project application for STP or TAP funding. The application provides the project description and other information needed to properly evaluate the project. GRPC staff will provide any assistance the municipality may need with the completion of the application.

City Council or Board Resolution

To be considered for STP funding, jurisdictions must demonstrate a commitment to the requested project. The city must include a resolution by city council or board to provide the needed local match for the project whether it is from general funds, a bond issue, or other. This is to ensure compliance with federal requirements that each project be fully funded before being placed in the TIP.

Project Update Meetings

Project sponsors will be required to participate in project meetings with FHWA, MDOT and GRPC to discuss the development and schedule of the project. A project will be required to follow the approved timeline submitted on the project application. If a TIP project is not implemented in a timely manner, the jurisdiction will be requested to give explanation of the delay. If project requirements are not met, and delays unjustified, the recommendation will be made to the TCC and TPC for removal of the project from the TIP. If it is found the jurisdiction no longer has the required match for the project, the recommendation will be made to the TCC and TPC for removal of the project from the TIP.

Drainage

In order to maximize the impact of projects to enhance the transportation system mobility, accessibility, and quality for all roadway users and modes, the MPO requires that STP funding for drainage work that is incidental to the project is minimal. These costs should be paid for by other funds.

Street Overlays

The Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO does not generally provide STP funding for overlay projects. However, if an overlay project results in improved access, mobility and safety for bicycle, pedestrian or transit using improved channelization from pavement striping, then the project would be eligible. For instance, a roadway currently designed with four lanes that are twelve feet wide could be reconfigured through restriping to reduce the lane width in order to add a shoulder on each side of the roadway. This shoulder would provide for improved bicycle mobility on the roadway. These projects may be approved as funding is available.

Complete Streets Policy

On September 24, 2015 the Transportation Policy Committee of the Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO adopted a Complete Streets policy for the region. This policy includes firm, but reasonable, language that requires both new and reconstruction roadway projects utilizing federal transportation funds on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, to include measures to accommodate bicycles, pedestrians and transit to the extent possible. Project sponsors should review the Complete Streets Policy to determine of which bicycle amenities should be included in a roadway's cross-section. If the project area has planned or currently includes fixed transit routes, applicant must request comments from Coast Transit Authority (CTA).

Project Cost

The Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO receives an annual distribution of Surface Transportation Program to be used by 15 or more Local Public Agencies. Therefore it is important to keep project costs as low as possible so that everyone can benefit from the funding. When planning a large project, it is recommended that it be built in phases of no more than \$4,000,000 where possible.

V. PROJECT EVALUATION

Given the fiscal realities of today and tomorrow with demands for budget reductions at all levels of national, state, and local government, decisions on where and how to spend the Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO's allocation of Surface Transportation Program (STP) transportation funds should not be taken lightly. To ensure that the most beneficial projects are implemented, a project prioritization process is used. When a municipality submits project applications to the MPO for consideration during each TIP development or amendment process, it is presented to a review committee for ranking based on the MPO's adopted goals and objectives reflected in the TIP project evaluation worksheet.

Regional Significance

Connectivity benefits play an important part in maintain and expanding the functionality of the transportation system, providing or supporting alternative travel choices, including both diverging paths and multiple travel routes. Projects are given points based on the scale of the transportation project's service area. MS Gulf Coast mobility corridors are important routes that carry most of the region's longer distance trips from city to city that access major employment, regional shopping and large medical facilities. Localized corridors support shorter trips from one end of a city to the other such as Pass Road in Gulfport and Biloxi or Old Spanish Trail in Gautier.

The project is intended to service a specific land use. (Score: 0)

The project is on a localized corridor (not on a mobility corridor). (Score: 3)

The project improves a mobility corridor. (Score: 5)



Project Readiness

The amount of right of way needed affects the timely progress of a project because of the potential problems that come up with the purchase of right-of-way. Therefore, the MPO will give extra priority in the scoring of the project which requires no right-of-way. If a jurisdiction has preliminary engineering done on a project extra priority will be given as well. Project

readiness will help ensure that the project be completed as quickly as possible because of the need to obligate federal funds within 3 years to prevent a lapse in funding.

No right-of-way required. (Score: 5)

Preliminary engineering completed. (Score: 5)

Plan Consistency

This criterion measures the importance/need for a project based on whether the project is listed as a priority in an adopted plan. Projects that have been reviewed and approved under the guidance of regional planning processes are assumed to have merit by virtue of their inclusion in locally adopted plans. The MPO's adopted long-range transportation plan. The project would also receive extra points if an MPO funded study was done on the project.

Is this project included in the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan? (Score: 5)

Was an MPO Technical Study done that included this project? (Score: 5)

Project Benefit (Cost/Benefit Ratio)

The objective of a benefit-cost analysis is to translate the effects of an investment into monetary terms and to account for the fact that benefits generally accrue over a long period of time while capital costs are incurred primarily in the initial years. The primary transportation-related elements that can be monetized are travel time costs, vehicle operating costs, safety costs, ongoing maintenance costs, and remaining capital value (a combination of capital expenditure and salvage value). For some kinds of projects, such as bypasses, travel times and safety may improve, but operating costs may increase due to longer travel distances. A properly conducted benefit-cost analysis would indicate whether travel time and safety savings exceed the costs of design, construction, and the long-term increased operating costs.

In economic terms, the cost of a transportation investment is the value of the resources that must be consumed to bring the project about. The total value of construction and any additional maintenance costs must be estimated. It is important to note that the analysis does not emphasize who incurs the cost but rather aims to include any and all costs that are involved in bringing about the project.

The value of travel time is estimated with percentages of the median annual household income. Different rates are developed based on varying trip types and vehicles including trips conducted by workers during the work day, commuting trips, personal travel. Commuting trips are very sensitive to the costs of lost productivity due to travel time variability under congested road conditions. Workers making trips during the day are also considered. These trips include repair services, package deliveries, and travel to and from meetings. Excess time spent in traffic results in extra expenses from worker's wages and other overhead costs. Congestion delay causes more time in traffic which increases fuel costs. Improvements to a roadway will include pothole repairs and street resurfacing which reduces vehicle wear. The U.S. Department of Transportation uses a value of \$19.00 per hour intercity personal vehicle travel in its "2015

Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Tiger Grant Applicants”. This is a weighted average that uses distributions of travel by trip purpose of 78.6% personal travel and 21.4% business travel.

Cost/ Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT) ratio compared to other similar projects. (Score: 1-5)

Impact to Economic Development

Projects that have a major effect on the relative attractiveness of an area to live or locate a business. A transportation project can affect an area’s ability to attract new businesses and encourage them to stay and grow and in the process property values may rise. Some projects have obvious impacts on economic development that would be beneficial to the community’s tax base and quality of life such as access to a shopping center, major employer or casino.

Does this project generate new economic development and create new demand? (Score: 5)

Freight Benefit

Travel-time savings typically generate the greatest amount of benefit. These savings are calculated based on the difference in travel time between the base case and an alternative. Travel time is often expressed as vehicle-hours traveled (VHT) and can be estimated using the travel demand model. The value of travel time is estimated with percentages of the average wage rate for business travel. Rates are developed for medium and heavy truck travel. The value of travel time for trucks considers average wages for truck drivers as well as other factors. The value of on-time deliveries are considered as the shipper or recipient will bear excess cost of late pickup or delivery. These excess costs apply to many factors including product spoilage and/or missed delivery window. For example, concrete/cement arriving outside of its useful life or pickup or delivery trips that arrive after the gate or loading dock is closed for the day which extends delivery time by a day and may cause extra driver overtime wages. The U.S. Department of Transportation uses a value of \$25.80 per hour for truck drivers in its “2015 Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Tiger Grant Applicants”.

Does this project serve freight use on an identified freight connector? (Score: 5)

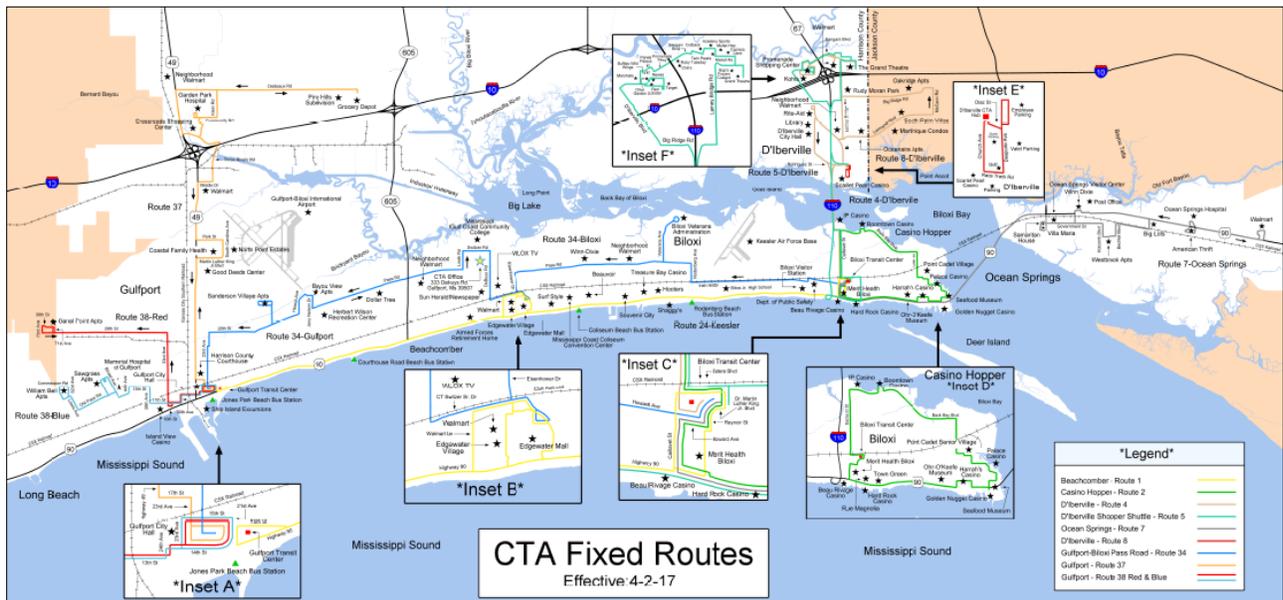
Or

The value of vehicle hours traveled (VHT) savings for trucks from this project? (Score: 1-5)

Transit Benefit

The overall performance of the transportation system is enhanced by measures that promote the availability and efficient interaction of different modes linked in ways that facilitate the safe and efficient movement of goods and people. Projects that improve the efficiency of transit are considered very beneficial to the region. As transit options become more attractive to commuters, less vehicles will be on the road resulting in lower vehicle emissions and traffic congestion. Therefore projects that are on fixed transit routes are given priority.

Is this project on a roadway with fixed route transit service? (Score: 5)



Traditionally Underserved Community Impacts

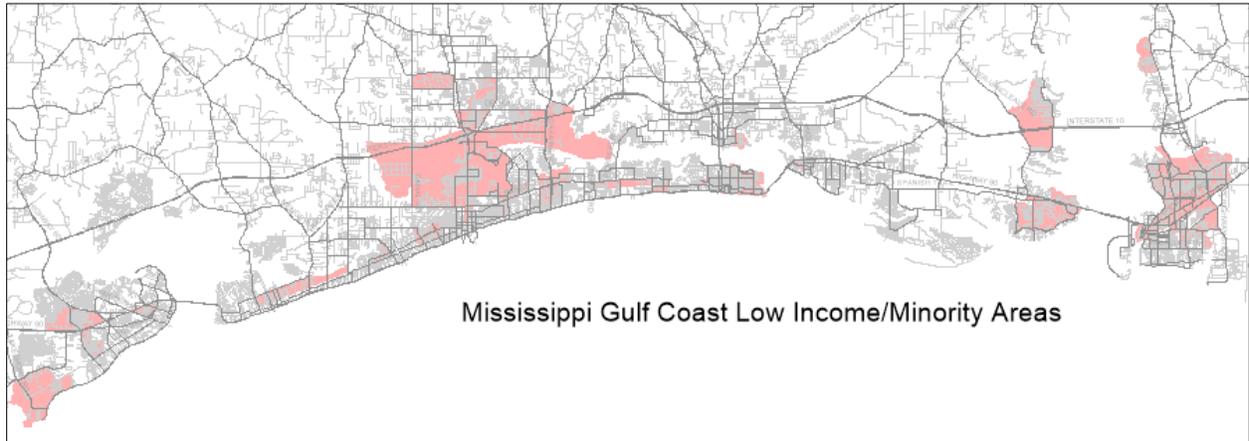
To ensure that environmental concerns, Title VI compliance and environmental justice principles are understood and implemented in the planning process, MPO planners identify residential patterns of low-income and minority populations so that the benefits and burdens of transportation investments can be fairly distributed. Methods are established to evaluate each transportation project proposal to determine the potential impact to the traditionally underserved populations.

Negative impacts may include new construction and widening projects in environmentally sensitive areas or near traditionally underserved areas add more traffic or enable higher traffic speeds by adding lanes or building a new roadway through a target area. This impacts may provide positive benefits to the region but also have the negative impacts to small communities by causing disruption of community cohesion and the displacement of people and businesses.

Positive impacts may include but are not limited to improvements traffic operational improvements and reconstruction projects in or near traditionally underserved areas will have

major effect on travel time and decrease congestion unusually without significant impact to personal property.

Project negatively impacts the environment or traditionally underserved communities? (Score: - 5)
Project positively impact traditionally underserved communities? (Score: 5)



Environmental

Environmentally sensitive areas are also identified to consider potential transportation project impacts. When constructing new roadways on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the consideration of wetlands is always needed. Projects sometimes result in unavoidable impacts to wetlands and other aquatic habitats. In these cases mitigation to these resources is needed. Mitigation efforts require the replacement of these resources. While this can usually be accomplished, the efforts extra time and money to the project and in some case the loss of valuable aquatic resources.

Assess impact to wetlands. (Score: 0 - 5)

Funding

This criterion is included to determine whether newly funded projects can attract or complement other funding, thereby leveraging new money. The impact to the available funding is an important consideration of a project proposed for inclusion on the TIP. In some cases, a municipality may have secured funding from other federal or non-federal sources that may be applied to a project, which enables the project sponsor to ask for less than 80% funding from the TIP for the project.

Would this project utilize MPO's STP funds of less than 80% of the overall project cost? (Score: 5)

Safety

Safety improvement projects are a primary focus of the MPO. If a proposed project is on an intersection or roadway with a high accident rate it will be elevated in priority. Proposed projects are evaluated and given priority based crash rates from three years of crash data expressed in crashes per million vehicle miles. The MPO may use total accidents or accidents with injury to determine the accident rate. The equations used are as follows:

Corridor Crash Rate =	$\frac{N * 1,000,000}{365 * AADT * L}$	$N =$ average annual crashes
		$AADT =$ average annual daily traffic
Intersection Crash Rate =	$\frac{N * 1,000,000}{365 * AADT}$	$L =$ length of the roadway segment in miles

Project identified in the MPO safety management program? (Score: 10)

Or

Comparison of crash rate (accidents per 1,000,000 vehicles) in this project area to the region?

Crash rate for accidents with injury <.25 (Score: 0),

Crash rate for accidents with injury .25 - .5(Score: 5),

Crash rate for accidents with injury .5< (Score: 10)

Community quality of life impact

While increasing traffic volumes are usually a good thing for business, neighborhoods can be very vulnerable traffic volumes and vehicle speeds. Negative impacts from noise, safety, air quality and disruption of community cohesion all impact a community as traffic volumes and travel speeds increase.

This project reduces and/or slow traffic on roads with excessive average speeds. (Score: 5)

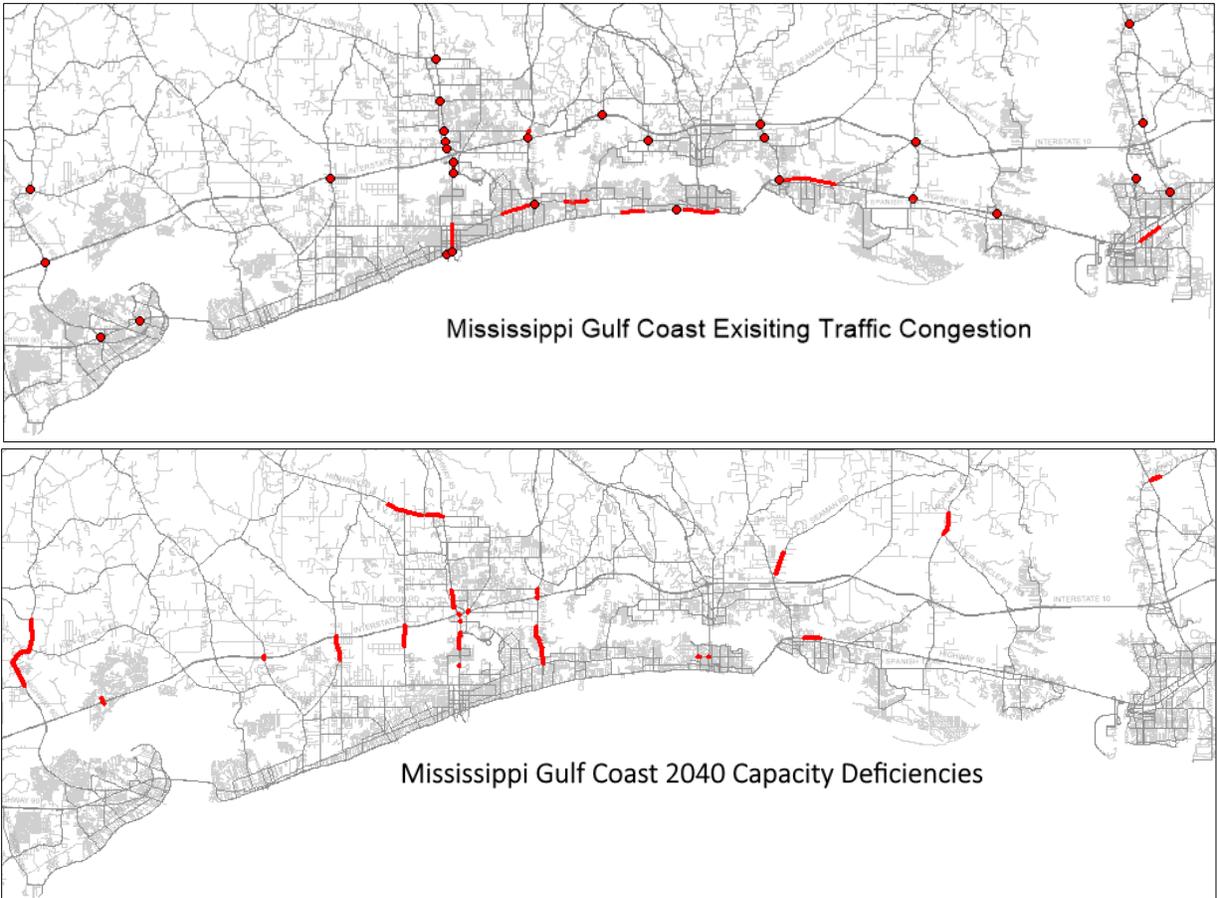
Traffic Flow (Congestion)

As a part of the development of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the MPO's Congestion Management Program (CMP) and travel demand forecasting model were updated. These important tools help planners quantify and identify areas of existing and future congestion. The CMP uses travel time data to identify areas of extended vehicle delay and the travel demand model is used to identify areas of future traffic congestion. Results from these tools help score and prioritize transportation projects based on expected benefits.

Project addresses existing congestion identified in the CMP or travel demand model? (Score: 5)

Or

Is this project intended to meet expected future demand? (Score: 5)



Public Concerns

The MPO promotes public involvement throughout the TIP development process in order to assure that local values and community sustainability is accounted for. To accomplish this, the Gulf Coast MPO facilitates and public involvement process to collect comment about proposed projects.

Significant negative comments about this project were received (Score -5)

Federal Participation Cost

The federal participation cost of a project is a very important factor to consider when prioritizing projects. The MS Gulf Coast region receives a limited amount of funds to be distributed between 14 jurisdictions; therefore it is beneficial to the MPO to keep a TIP project’s cost as low as possible. For this reason, the MPO promotes low-cost improvements such as, traffic operational improvements including upgraded signals and intersection geometry improvements, rather than projects that build new roads. In many cases it may be wise to consider phasing larger projects.

Is the amount of STP funding requested less than \$500,000? (Score 5)

Is the amount of STP funding requested between \$500,000 and \$1,500,000? (Score 0)

Is the amount of STP funding requested greater than \$1,500,000? (Score -5)

Traffic Operational Improvement

Traffic operational improvements are inexpensive improvements to existing streets and highways, including intersection improvements, turn lanes, signage and signalization and similar measures that are designed to allow more effective management of existing roadways. These improvements are intended to increase capacity without the addition of general-purpose lanes. Projects that may be categorized as minor intersection improvements, intersection improvements, corridor reconstruction-operations and channelization, or traffic management as shown in Table 1.0 will be given added priority.

Is this a traffic operations project? (Score 5)

Pedestrian and Bike Mobility

The MPO gives additional points to projects that incorporate measures used to provide for the safety and accessibility of pedestrians and bicyclists. The extent that projects address identified pedestrian or bicycle needs will be measured by the number and type of pedestrian or bicycle strategies used. Each proposed project that include pedestrian and bicycle strategies will be given added priority.

To what extent does this project utilize bicycle/pedestrian measures listed in the MPO projects toolbox? (Score 1-5)

Demand Management

STP funding can be used for the development projects that change travel behavior such as park and ride lots or bus lanes. It is the practice of the MPO to promote the development of such innovative measures, such as those listed under travel demand management on Table 1.0.

Is this a travel demand management project? (Score 5)

MPO Planning Emphasis Areas

Transit supportive development or Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is the utilization of high quality transit that supports surrounding development which in turn supports transit. The basic principle is that convenient access to transit can be a key attraction that fosters economic development. It is an area $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ from a transit station. It includes retail, offices, housing, civic uses, open space, pedestrian/bicycle amenities. It is higher density than other areas.

Is this project within an MPO identified Transit Supportive Development area? (Score 5)

Proximity to essential services including schools, housing, employment, health care, and recreation. Projects within $\frac{1}{4}$ of these areas will enhance connectivity that may preclude access of the public, including traditionally underserved populations, to essential services.

Is this project within a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of an essential service? (Score 5)

VI. TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) or “STP set-aside” as it is referred to in the FAST act, are funds set aside to expand travel choices and improve the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure. The TAP replaced the funding from pre-MAP-21 programs including the Transportation Enhancement Activities, Recreational Trails Program, and Safe Routes to School Program.

TAP Eligible Activities

There are four (4) eligible TA activity groups. There is NO requirement for TAP projects to be located along Federal-aid highways. The following specified four (4) activity groups are eligible for the Transportation Alternatives Program.

Transportation Alternatives as defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a) (29) (MAP-21 1103):

Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.

Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.

Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.

Community improvement activities, including: inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising; historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities; vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control; and archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under title 23.

Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in sections 133(b) (11), 328(a), and 329 of title 23; or reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats. The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) under section 206 of title 23.

The Safe Routes to School Program (SRSP). Infrastructure-related projects.-planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects on any public road or any bicycle or pedestrian pathway or trail in the vicinity of schools that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school, including sidewalk improvements, traffic calming and speed reduction improvements, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements, on-street bicycle facilities, off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities, secure bicycle parking facilities, and traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools. Non-infrastructure-related activities to encourage walking and bicycling to school, including public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders, traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools, student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment, and funding for training, volunteers, and managers of safe routes to school programs. Safe Routes to School coordinator.

Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

VII. TAP AND BIKE/PED PROJECT EVALUATION

Listed below are the scoring categories for both Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and for independent bicycle and pedestrian projects. An independent bicycle or pedestrian project is a facility constructed independently and is not included as an incidental part of a highway construction project. TAP projects and general bicycle pedestrian have most of the same scoring categories except for three additional categories for TAP.

Regional Significance

Connectivity benefits play an important part in maintain and expanding the functionality of the transportation system, providing or supporting alternative travel choices, including both diverging paths and multiple travel routes. Projects are given points based on the scale of the transportation project's service area. MS Gulf Coast mobility corridors are important routes that carry most of the region's longer distance trips from city to city that access major employment, regional shopping and large medical facilities. Localized corridors support shorter trips from one end of a city to the other such as Pass Road in Gulfport and Biloxi or Old Spanish Trail in Gautier.

The project is intended to service a specific land use. (Score: 0)

The project is on a localized corridor (not on a mobility corridor). (Score: 3)

The project improves a mobility corridor. (Score: 5)

Project Readiness

This criterion rewards projects that are production ready. Project readiness will help ensure that the project be completed as quickly as possible because of the need to obligate federal funds within 3 years to prevent a lapse in funding.

No right-of-way required. (Score 5)

Preliminary engineering completed. (Score 5)

Bike/Ped and Comprehensive Plan Priority

This criterion measures the importance/need for a project based on whether the project is listed as a priority in an adopted plan. The MPO's adopted long range transportation plan, MPO bicycle and pedestrian plan or county or municipal comprehensive plans.

Is this project currently included in a local, regional or state plans? (Score: 5)

Ability to Expand / Extend Adjacent Network

This criterion was developed to reward projects that extend the physical limits of previous projects, thereby providing system-wide continuity for the bike/ped network.

Project connects to existing sidewalks, pathways, etc. (Score: 5)

Transit Access

As transit options become more attractive to commuters, less vehicles will be on the road resulting in lower vehicle emissions and traffic congestion. Therefore projects that are on fixed transit routes are given priority.

Is this project on a roadway with fixed route transit service? (Score: 5)

Environmental and Traditionally Underserved Community Impacts

It is assumed that TAP projects and other bicycle and pedestrian projects provide positive impacts to the community that they are implemented without displacing its population. Therefore when a proposed project is in or near a traditionally underserved area, it will have major effect on the relative attractiveness of the area to live or locate a business. These types of improvements will increase pedestrian and bicycle mobility and safety leading to better access to essential services and better community health.

Project is located in or near a traditionally underserved communities. (Score: 5)

Project Match

This criterion is included to determine whether newly funded projects can attract or complement other funding, thereby leveraging new money. The impact to the available funding is an important consideration of a project proposed for inclusion on the TIP. In some cases, a municipality may have secured funding from other sources that may be applied to a project, which enables the project sponsor to ask for less than 80% funding from the TIP for the project.

Would this project utilize MPO's STP funds of less than 80% of the overall project cost? (Score: 5)

Cost Per Mile Efficiency

This category will give priority to projects that maximize the use of resources. Use of the following scoring thresholds will help take into account costs associated with drainage and other issues that increase project costs. The baseline project costs shown below maximize resources. Using the formula " $Proposed\ cost / project\ length = proposed\ cost\ per\ mile$ ", any amount over the baseline reduces the maximization of funding resources. Baseline cost per mile: 5 foot sidewalk - \$500,000 per mile, 10 foot pathway - \$1,000,000 per mile.

>10 % under baseline cost per mile (Score: 5),

10 % under to 10% over baseline cost per mile (Score: 3)

10 %< over baseline cost per mile (Score: 0)

Proximity to Schools

The MPO's funds can be used to create safe and convenient opportunities for children to bicycle and walk to and from schools. Increasing the number of kids that can walk or bike to schools will go a long way to help reverse the nationwide trend toward childhood obesity and inactivity.

Is this an infrastructure project improving walking and biking within ¼ mile of a school? (Score: 5)

Safety

Pedestrian and bicycle safety is very important to give people a secure feeling when they ride of bike. Safer roads for bicyclists and pedestrians will encourage more people to consider using these modes.

Areas that have experienced pedestrian or bicycle accidents. (Score: 5)

Or

Projects that provide for safe crossings and refuge on wide roadways (Score: 5)

Additional TAP Scoring Categories

Off Road Trails

Construction of off-road recreation trails, including the conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors, utility easements, drainage ways, and public lands for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.

Is this an off-road trails project? (Score: 10)

Local Road Needs

TAP funds can be used on local roadways needs that are not eligible for the STP funding. This may be important to provide biking and walking opportunities on local roads to access major roads.

Is this a project that supplements another project on the federal-aid system to include needs on connecting local roads? (Score: 5)

Safe Routes to School

The MPO's TAP funds can be used to establish Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs.

Is this a Safe Routes to School education or awareness program? (Score: 10)

VIII. APPENDIX

Transportation Alternatives Program Project Application



MPO TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) PROJECT APPLICATION OR "STP SET-ASIDE"

AGENCY

Jurisdiction/agency: _____

Date: _____

Agency type:

- Local government
- Regional transportation authority
- Transit agency
- Natural resource or public land agencies
- School districts, local education agencies, or schools
- Tribal government
- Nonprofit entity responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs
- Other agency that oversees recreational trails

Prepared by: _____

MDOT LPA Project Development Manual (PDM) certified contact person:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project name: _____

Project description: (Provide map.) _____

Need for and benefit to be derived from project. _____

PROJECT TYPE

Transportation Alternatives

- Sidewalks
- Bicycle infrastructure
- Pedestrian and bicycle signals
- Traffic calming techniques
- Other facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Lighting or other safety related infrastructure
- Transportation project to achieve compliance with ADA requirements

Recreational Trail Program projects

- Off-road trail
- Other

Safe Routes to School Program

- Infrastructure to improve walking and biking in the vicinity of schools
- Public awareness, education campaigns to encourage walking and bicycling to school
- Traffic enforcement in the vicinity of schools
- Training for volunteers and managers of safe routes to school programs
- Safe routes to school coordinator

Other _____

This project supplements a Surface Transportation Program (STP) project through the MPO to improve facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians on roadways not eligible for STP funding.

PROJECT READINESS:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Is there community support for the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Have you begun preliminary engineering? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Has funding been identified to cover the required match? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Is right-of-way (ROW) required for the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Is utility relocation required? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Are there potential environmental concerns? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

Please elaborate on the readiness of the project. _____

What year are you proposing project funding obligation? FY: _____

PROJECT COST:

- Federal share: _____ Special match credit requested for Design/PE
- Local share: _____ Special match credit requested for ROW
- Total: _____

Identify and describe any additional sources of funding (including federal and non-federal, grants, local matches, private partnerships, etc.)

Please attach "TIP PROJECT RESOLUTION" and map of the project location

Submit to: David Taylor, GRPC, 1635 Popps Ferry Rd, Biloxi, MS 39532, dtaylor@grpc.com

Surface Transportation Program Project Application



MPO SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (STP) ROADWAY PROJECT APPLICATION

LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY (LPA):

Jurisdiction/agency: _____ Date: _____

Prepared by: _____

MDOT LPA Project Development Manual (PDM) certified contact person:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Project name: _____

Project location/termini: _____

Project description: (Provide map.) _____

Need for and benefit to be derived from project. _____

Number of existing travel lanes _____

Existing traffic count _____

Number of proposed travel lanes _____

Future traffic count _____

Existing lane width _____

Proposed lane width _____

Posted speed _____

Project length (miles) _____

Please indicate proposed project elements:

Center turn lane

Left turn lane

Medians

Right turn lane

Round-a-bout

Is this project included in Mississippi Gulf Coast 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan?

YES

NO

REQUESTING AMENDMENT

PROJECT READINESS:

Is there community support for the project?

YES NO

Have you begun preliminary engineering?

YES NO

Has funding been identified to cover the required match?

YES NO

Is right-of-way (ROW) required for the project?

YES NO

Is utility relocation required?

YES NO

Are there potential environmental concerns?

YES NO

What year are you proposing project funding obligation? FY: _____

PROJECT COST:

Federal share: _____

Special match credit requested for Design/PE

Local share: _____

Total: _____

Special match credit requested for ROW

Identify and describe any additional sources of funding (including federal and non-federal, grants, local matches, private partnerships, etc.)

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

How will this project comply with the MPO COMPLETE STREETS POLICY to make roadways suitable for bicyclists?

Shared use

3' Paved shoulder

4' Paved shoulder

5' Bicycle lane

Separated path

Other _____

Exemption requested

How will this project comply with the MPO COMPLETE STREETS POLICY to make roadways suitable for pedestrians?

Sidewalks on both sides of the road

Sidewalks on one side of the road

Other _____

Exemption requested

Is this project located on a roadway with CTA fixed route transit service? YES NO

If yes, explain how you will coordinate with Coast Transit Authority on this project.

Please attach "TIP PROJECT RESOLUTION" and map of the project location

Submit to: David Taylor, GRPC, 1635 Popp's Ferry Rd, Biloxi, MS 39532, dtaylor@grpc.com

MPO PROJECTS TOOLBOX. Please circle the all that apply to your project.

Project Types		
<p>Minor Intersection Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signal-retiming • Remove signal • Restrict turns • Restrict trucks • Improve signage • Re-striping • On-way operations 	<p>Intersection Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add signal • Geometry improvement • Add turn lanes • Roundabout • Traffic circle • Intersection beacon 	<p>Corridor Reconstruction – Access Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontage roads • Driveway control • Curb and gutter • Add/improve medians • Reconstruct roadway • Add or widen shoulders • Lane widening • Lane narrowing
<p>Transit System Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express bus service • Expanded service • Commuter rail • Light rail • Technology improvements • Bike and bus program • Improved transit stops • Bus traffic signal preemption • Transit marketing • Transit pull-outs • Shelters 	<p>Bike/Pedestrian Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike lanes • Shared use paths • New paved shoulders • Wider paved shoulders • New sidewalks • Improved sidewalks • Marked/raised crosswalks • Bike/pedestrian signals • Improved signage • Curb extensions • Bike parking • Pedestrian refuge area 	<p>Corridor Reconstruction – Operations and Channelization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronize signals • Pavement signs • Reversible lanes • Add turn lanes • Minor reconstruction • Ramp metering • Accel, decel lanes • Extended turn lanes • Movable barrier • Improved pavement marking • Center turn lane
<p>Travel Demand Management (TDM)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HOV lanes • Bus lanes • Park and ride lots • Vanpool program • Carpool program • TDM marketing & signage 	<p>Safety Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guard rails • Roadway lighting • Rumble strips/stripes • Safety edge • Pavement markings • RR crossing closure • RR crossing improvements • New or improved signage • Raised centerline markers 	<p>Traffic Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic surveillance • Computerized signal systems • Motorist information systems • Incident management
<p>Minor Bridge Reconstruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge maintenance • Bridge replacement 		
<p>Traffic Calming Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chokers • Bulbouts • Speed tables • Speed humps • Chicanes • Neckdowns 	<p>New Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New road • New interchange • Overpass • Underpass • Extend roadway 	<p>Add Base Capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add travel lanes • Interchange reconstruction



Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Resolution



Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Resolution

A RESOLUTION of the _____
(Hereinafter referred to as "APPLICANT") AUTHORIZING the filing of an APPLICATION for
FEDERAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (STP) FUNDING for _____

_____ (Hereinafter referred to as "PROJECT") and COMMITTING the necessary NON-FEDERAL
MATCHING FUNDS for said project, and ASSURING that APPLICANT intends to follow project
scheduling and development guidelines set forth by the Mississippi Gulf Coast Metropolitan
Planning Organization (MPO) and the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)
toward initiation of project construction in FY _____.

WHEREAS, APPLICANT is submitting an application to the MPO
for _____ in funding from the federal Surface Transportation
Program (STP) for the PROJECT; and,

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO is the Metropolitan Planning Organization
(MPO) for the Gulfport-Biloxi and the Pascagoula, Mississippi urbanized areas; and,

WHEREAS, the Gulf Regional Planning Commission (GRPC) serves as the
administrative agency for the Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO; and,

WHEREAS, GRPC administers federal STP funds to the local jurisdictions within the
MPO's designated urbanized area under the guidance and direction of the MPO's Technical
Coordinating Committee and the Transportation Policy Committee; and,

WHEREAS, the MPO's *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Handbook*
describes the policies and procedures for development of the TIP; and,

WHEREAS, on September 24, 2015, the MPO's Transportation Policy Committee
adopted a Complete Streets Policy for the region that includes firm, but reasonable,
language requiring both new and reconstruction projects utilizing federal transportation
funds on the Mississippi Gulf Coast to include measures to accommodate bicycles,
pedestrians and transit to the extent possible; and,

WHEREAS, GRPC will review and evaluate said PROJECT based on goals set by the
MPO and rank against other projects submitted for funding consideration; and,

WHEREAS, the commitment of local matching funds of at least 20 per cent of PROJECT construction cost is required to receive STP funding consideration; and,

WHEREAS, available STP funding is limited, and additional cost increases cannot be expected to be funded with such funds and may cause additional financial liability to be borne by APPLICANT; and,

WHEREAS, STP-funded projects must comply with the MDOT *Project Development Manual for Local Public Agencies*.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that _____ is authorized to execute and file a project application for funding under the Surface Transportation Program (STP); and, be it further

RESOLVED, that if approved for funding, APPLICANT will provide \$_____ in non-federal matching funds; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that if approved for funding, APPLICANT must complete the project as described in the project application; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that if approved for funding, APPLICANT understands that the PROJECT must be activated and systematically moved toward completion as prescribed in this resolution and in the project application; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that a signed copy of this resolution will be transmitted to the Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO in conjunction with the filing of the project application for funding.

I, _____ (hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly and regularly introduced and adopted at a regular meeting of the _____ (Name of Applicant's Board or Council) on the _____ day of _____ 2016, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NAYS:

OBSTAIN:

ABSENT:

_____ (Signature)