



Mississippi Gulf Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) & Technical Coordinating Committee

Thursday, March 28, 2013, 10:30am  
Biloxi Planning Commission Auditorium  
676 Martin Luther King Jr, Biloxi, MS

**Meeting Minutes:**

I. Call to Order

II. Introductions

Total meeting attendees - 41

Guests included:

1. Bobby weaver, Seymour Engineering
2. Sharpie Smith, Principle with Smith, Seckman Reid, Inc. (Former MDOT LPA Engineer)
3. Steve Twedt, Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

III. Public Comment - None

IV. Approval of minutes

*Recommendation to adopt September 27, 2012 drafted minutes.*

❖ *Motion made by Mr. Jeff Taylor seconded by Ms. Elaine Wilkinson, No Comments, **Passed***

V. FY 2012-2015 TIP Amendments/Modifications:

Mr. David Taylor provided the meeting attendees with an overview of two TIP amendments.

1. A poll vote was conducted and passed with approval of the TPC members. MDOT requested amendments for the following projects.

- a. Hwy 49 from O'Neal Rd to School Rd in Gulfport
- b. The 1-10/I-110 interchange in D'Iberville
- c. ST 57 from I-10 to Vancleave

❖ *Poll vote conducted and completed with TPFC members, passed by majority vote.*

2. TIP amendment requested by the City of Biloxi to increase funding for the Popp's Ferry bridge project. Request is to increase funding allocation from \$672,000 to \$749,000. This increase will cover the expenses for temporary power during the construction phase of the project. Mr. Damon Toricelli explained to the MPO that marine access surpasses vehicle traffic access in this instance. Without the funds for temporary power the bridge will be left in the open position during construction; drivers and pedestrians will have to find other routes of travel.

❖ *Motion made to approve the increased funding request for the Popp's Ferry bridge project made by Mr. Damon Toricelli, seconded by Ms. Elaine Wilkinson, No Comments, **Passed***

3. Reminder: MDOT and FHWA still want to see more allocated projects getting obligated. To assist in the project development process, Mr. David Taylor will be visiting the project holders in the field more often. He will assist with identifying obstacles which are holding projects up and will help to move the projects forward. He will be a direct link with MDOT. Mr. Jeff Altman of MDOT also stated his commitment to stepping up project support activities. He will work with the MPO to have regular project meetings. He will also help move project forward as well as ensuring accountability measures are in place. The purpose of the increased attention throughout the life of the project is to get the project completed on schedule and/or allow projects that are ready to move forward the opportunity to move up on the TIP.
4. The TIP Sub-Committee is made up of representatives for each active project listed on the TIP. This sub-committee will have its next meeting in May. Contact Kenneth Yarrow with any committee questions or comments.

VI. FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development

- A. **STP Update:** Applications for STP funding will be accepted starting now through August 1<sup>st</sup>. Call Kenneth or David with submission or project questions. Will review the projects in August and then the MPO will meet in September to discuss and adopt the 2014-2017 TIP. We will be allocating approximately \$10 million for the next 2 years.
- B. **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):** TAP funds are the Map 21 replacement to the individual funding pools for Safe Route to School (SRTS) and Transportation Enhancement (TE) under the former SAFETEA-LU plan.
  - Some priorities flip flopped. For example; under TE sidewalks could only be constructed as part of a landscaping project. Under TAP landscaping can only be done as part of a sidewalk project.
  - TAP in an 80/20 funding program instead of 100% like the previous programs.
  - Question: What is the difference between STP, TAP and the past SRTS applications?
  - Answer (Mr. Altman): the projects formerly included in the SRTS program are all included under the TAP program.
  - Our region will receive about \$280,000 in TAP funds annually
  - Mr. David Taylor explained that there will not be a stand-alone application process for TAP funds. All projects will be submitted during the TIP project application period, which for 2013 is March 28 through August 1<sup>st</sup>. During the application review process TAP eligible projects will be identified and those project holders will be informed by the MPO staff.

Comment to the MPO membership: (Mr. Jim Foster of Heritage Trails Partnership) we are the unhealthiest state in the nation. We are the fattest, sickest and most likely to die young. We must encourage our community members to get off the couch and exercise. Please include pedestrian facilities and access in project applications. We have done a good job but we can continue to do better.

Questions to the MPO membership:

1. What are the biggest differences in project development?
  - a. Biggest differences are that projects are not funded at 100% and that there are no longer dedicated funds for safe routes and TE.
2. How are the TAP funds handled, through MPO or MDOT?
  - a. The MPO staff will receive all project applications and during the review process will determine projects that best fit the TAP criteria to utilize those funds.
3. Is there less money available for pedestrian improvements?
  - a. The reduction is minimal, we may actually have more funds, but projects will still only be funded at 80/20. Previously our state was allocated about \$9million for \$3 million of that was divided among our 28 county area. This equaled about \$300,000 per year for our region. So we are about \$20,000 short under Map-21.
4. Are any bike/ped/SRTS projects prohibited under TAP?
  - a. No bike/ped/SRTS projects are precluded under TAP however some projects may require a difference approach, like the landscaping/sidewalks example given before.
5. Is there a preclusion to apply for other statewide funding for TAP type projects?
  - a. No, if it's out there, go ahead and apply for it.
6. What funding sources are available for continuing to address air quality issues on the coast?
  - a. MPO staff continues to work with MDOT and MDEQ on air quality improvement. As updates and new funding opportunities arise all LPAs will be informed.

C. **Special Match Credit Program:** available for all funding types of LPA projects in the MPO planning area

As of January 1<sup>st</sup> LPAs can be reimbursed for eligible:

1. New PE and ROW expenses accrued within the TMA area; and
2. ROW purchases made prior to January 1st where projects are still in progress.

❖ *Mr. David Taylor recommends that the MS Gulf Coast MPO reinstate the Special Match Credit Program. Moved by Kris Riemann, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Jeff Taylor, No Comments, **Passed***

VII. Title VI Program Update

Ms. Stephanie Plancich gave a Title VI program update to the MPO members. A brief slide show provided a program overview including an overview of the protected populations that must be considered during the transportation planning process. Copies of the newly completed population maps based upon 2010 census data were provided in the meeting packets and a reminder that MPO staff can help support the Title VI activities of the jurisdictions was given.

VIII. Gulf Coast Safety Summit

This was the first invitation to the MPO membership to save the date for the upcoming 2013 Gulf Coast Transportation Safety Summit. Ms. Plancich provided an overview of the many safety activities planned during the 4 day event. She provided a summit brochure to each attendee that includes event specifics, sponsor and vendor opportunity information as well as an overview of the professional conference.

IX. GRPC as an LPA

Working closely with MDOT a process has been developed where GRPC will now be the LPA on specific projects. This will primarily be the case for implementing regional safety projects. GRPC will see the project through the first stages of the project and then will hand it off to the jurisdictions for construction and completion. As projects move forward Mr. Taylor and Yarrow will meet with the appropriate jurisdiction.

X. Functionally Classified Roadways

Mr. David Taylor informed the MPO that the new classification and urban area boundary are in the final stages of completion. He is in the process of meeting individually with the jurisdictions to finalize recommendations. All recommendations will be brought to the MPO for discussion and adoption at the next quarterly meeting.

XI. Transit Update

Mr. Kevin Coggin reported a ^5 ridership increase from last year and that they are again on track to go over 1 million riders this year. CTA is focused on completing projects that are reliant upon recovery funds before usage timelines run out and we lose money. Some of those improvements include: modernizing equipment, adding more bus shelters and purchasing new transit vehicles. Mr. Coggin again thanked the local, state and federal officials who worked diligently to get those recovery funds for our community.

NOTE: CTA approved a draft Title VI plan update on March 21<sup>st</sup>. It has been submitted to FTA. Part of that update process required current protected populations maps for low income, minority, and limited English proficiency. GRPC generated those maps for their plan, the MPO participation plan and copies were provided to the MPO members under the Title VI update section of this agenda.

XII. MDOT Update

The LPA courses being conducted across the state are going very well. For those who did not have to renew this year there will be select courses scheduled in 2014. A schedule will be emailed to all LPAs later in the year.

The first TAP awards were distributed in April, MS Gulf Coast received its 6 month allocation of \$140,000. Applications open again in August which is in line with the TIP application process already scheduled through August 1<sup>st</sup>.

XIII. Old/New Business - None

XIV. Adjournment

❖ *Motion to adjourn by Mr. Buz Olsen, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Jeff Taylor, No comments, Passed*