

MEETING MINUTES

Mississippi Gulf Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)



Thursday, May 29, 2014 at 10:30
Gulf Regional Planning Commission
1635-G Popp's Ferry Road ~ Biloxi MS 39532



I. Call to order

TCC ATTENDEES:

Hancock County

Harrison County

Joseph Spires
Kelvin Jackson

Jackson County

Long Beach

Mayor Skellie

Waveland

Diamondhead

Bay St. Louis

Buz Olsen (TCC Chair)

Pass Christian

Gulfport

Kris Riemann
Ryan Merrill

Biloxi

Damon Torricelli (Vice Chair)
Ed Shambra

D'Iberville

Jeff Taylor

Ocean Springs

Gautier

Moss Point

Pascagoula

Jaclyn Turner (GRPC Chair)
GRPC Executive Director

CTA Executive Director

Gulfport-Biloxi Airport Planning

MDOT Planning Engineer

Jeff Ely

MDOT Dist. 6 Engineer

David Seyfarth

MDOT Public Trans Administrator

Gulfport-Biloxi Airport Planning

MS State Port Authority-Gulfport

Jackson County Port Authority

Hancock Co. Port and Harbor

Keesler AFB & NCBC

CSX, KCS & Souther Rapid

Jackson Co. & Gulf Coast Civic Action

GUESTS:

Federal Highway Administration

Randy Jansen
Donald Davis

NASA, Stennis Space Center

Ron Magee

MDOT Non-Voting Representatives

Perry Brown
Necole Baker
Jeff Altman

Mississippi State

Scott Pelano

MPO STAFF:

Kenneth Yarrow
Jeff Loftus
Martha Faures
Stephanie Plancich

II. Introductions- Mr. Donald Davis, MS Federal Highway Assistant Director

III. Public comment – none

IV. Approval of minutes from February 2014

Motion to adopt the February 14, 2014 minutes.

*Motion made by Mayor Skellie. Second by Kelvin Jackson. No Comments, **Passed***

V. Transportation Improvement Program (Kenneth Yarrow)

1. Amendments

- Ocean Springs – Remove Project. Porter Avenue/Martin Avenue to Howard Avenue.
- Jackson County – Remove Project. Hwy 57/Old Spanish Trl to US 90.
- Moss Point – Combine two projects. Combine Second Street sidewalk project and Main Street sidewalk project. New project listing will be Main Street/South to Jefferson Ave. \$444,000 STP.

Motion to adopt the listed TIP amendments for Ocean Springs, Moss Point and Jackson County.

*Motion made by Jaci Turner. Second by Kelvin Jackson. No Comments, **Passed***

2. Modifications:

- Gulfport – Seaway Rd. Funding Increase. Add \$149,791 STP to total \$3,578,813 STP. Used MPO Grouped Projects funds.
- Ocean Springs – Government St. Funding Increase. Add \$137,400 (Hawk signal) Add \$30,000 STP (sidewalks). Used MPO Grouped Projects funds.

3. Obligation Authority

Kenneth explained to the TCC that our obligation authority, in short, is the amount of money MDOT makes available for us to spend on project annually. Our 2014 authority was around \$6.5million. However the projects planned for this fiscal year total over \$8.6million. Through discussions and negotiations our obligation authority for FY 2014, which ends September 30th, was increased to near \$9.5 million to cover the listed projects.

In 2015, we expect our annual obligation to again be in the \$6.5million range. However, the project currently listed total just under \$17 million. MDOT does not have to increase our annual authority, and even if they elect to do so, it may not be raised to cover this full amount. The MPO need to start thinking about how to adjust if needed. Staff have begun researching budgeting alternatives like advance construction and project phasing options. If members have ideas or know of changes, Kenneth asks them to share with staff.

Randy Jansen informed the group to plan on meeting to discuss FY 2015 TIP projects after the August 28th TCC meeting. He will provide a project scheduling worksheet to each impacted jurisdiction to complete prior to the meeting. These will be used for the planning discussion.

4. ROW reimbursement guidelines

After conducting initial research, Kenneth provide an alternatives worksheet to the attendees to spark discussion on how the MPO may want to move forward with the development of ROW reimbursement guidelines.

A few discussed options include capping all projects requesting ROW reimbursement to a total federal share of \$4million. Another option would limit the amount of eligible ROW to 50% of the total project allocation.

He also clarified that a request for ROW reimbursement will be included as part of the TIP application process and then it will first be reviewed for special match credit before any STP reimbursement would be considered.

A TCC member suggested that since we are now competing more for funds and are planning above our obligation authority, perhaps the MPO should consider a project cap amount for every TIP project as the reimbursement talks continue.

VI. Gulf Coast functional classification system (Kenneth Yarrow)

Staff printed and posted each jurisdiction's draft Functional Road Classification maps on the wall for attendee review. Kenneth asked the TCC members to assist the staff in getting a poll vote completed with their TPC representatives. The poll vote was announced Sunday the 25th and a reminder email that they needed to be submitted by Friday the 30th was emailed to the MPO member on Tuesday the 28th.

A couple of jurisdictions stated they did not have time to do a comprehensive review of their maps and/or found errors or omissions they would like to have corrected. Due to the deadlines set by MDOT and FHWA for map submission, and the suggestion from MDOT staff, the TCC elected to recommend that the TPC adopt the maps as presented. Over the next few months, MPO staff will meet with any jurisdictions wanting to make map changes or revise them more closely. Any desired changes will then be presented for TCC/TPC consideration in the fall.

Motion to recommend that the TPC adopt the revised functional class roadway maps as currently drafted.

*Motion made by Kris Riemann. Second by Jodi Spires. No Comments, **Passed***

VII. MPO planning update – (Kenneth Yarrow)

Kenneth provided a presentation on the CTA transit stops program being conducted in partnership with the MPO. The program purpose is to improve access, comfort and safety at transit stop locations. He explained how on-board surveys were completed to capture a ridership data including high capacity stop locations. These locations have been listed, prioritized and have begun receiving new shelters and other improvements as requirement to meet accessibility needs. The presentation included several on-site photos of recently installed shelters.

MDOT staff asked Kenneth to work with CTA in order to ensure that their installation plans are in accordance with the requirement to have a 3' buffer between the curb and any new sidewalk. In other words if the shelters are set back allowing for a 5' sidewalk, there needs to be 8' from the roadway/curb to accommodate it. If the sidewalk installer is unable to abide by the 3' buffer law, they will have to obtain a design exception.

VIII. MDOT update

David Seyfarth reported for MDOT district 6. There are 5 projects of note:

1. Hwy 57 improvements are entering final phases this summer
2. I-10/I-110 interchange is entering Phase II this summer
3. Big Ridge Rd bridge over I-110 is set to be blown up in next week or so – get a good seat for the show – project set to complete in August 2015
4. I-110/Back Bay bridge still on-going – set to complete in June 2015
5. Hwy 49 in Lyman bridge replacement project ½ complete, lanes now shifting to other side of roadway, completion set for June 2015

The TPC approved the use of 2013 TAP funds to be used to offset funding shortages for several SRTA projects across the coast at their last meeting. A couple of those projects and remaining TE funded projects are close to kicking off. For example the Gautier improvement project near the Singing River Mall and the Hancock County scenic by-way project.

The new MDOT – District 6 office is well under way. The completed building will meet all storm shelter requirements and will be used as a response and recovery center in future emergency situations.

Mr. Magee asked for the process to get a camera installed to monitor activities at exit 2, near the new Infinity Science Center and state welcome center, in Hancock County? MDOT staff stated they were not sure why a camera was not currently installed and stated that a formal request can be submitted from their agency website. They explained that the most common reason for not installing technology is an insufficient communication infrastructure to support its use, but encouraged following up with them since that situation may have changed in the last few years.

Mr. Olsen asked MDOT staff to provide him with the plan and/or time frame for repairing the damaged light near the Bay St Louis post office. He explained it has been a long standing concern and wanted to make sure it was not forgotten. He then gave a general thank you to MDOT for paving the service road in Bay St Louis. It has been a great improvement for the city.

IX. Old/new business

- Walk Friendly Communities /Bike Friendly Communities (Jeff Loftus)
 - Jeff provided TCC members with a couple of handouts explain the process and purpose for the bike and walk friendly designations. He distributed a copy the bicycle friendly application since it is currently being accepted for fall consideration. He explained to the group that MPO staff are prepared to provide some assistance in support of an application. Jeff will work with any jurisdiction that is interested in receiving a designation. He shared some background history for the City of Pascagoula, who has applied, and since has developed an ongoing commitment to making their community safer for bicycling. Not only has the city designated significant miles as part of the bicycle route system, they have also committed to painting at least four share the road symbols monthly. Jeff showed the 60 page community assessment tool guide to the group and highlighted several checklists and easy processes that can be used in general planning and road auditing whether or not you are interested in applying for a designation.
- Event notice: Two maintenance classes in July, “Intersection Safety” Oct. 29th & 30th
 - Stephanie provided the group with a handout for upcoming training events scheduled in July and October. She encouraged participation at the August TCC meeting since several MPO documents would be going through the public review and updating process. We will likely be kicking off the LRTP update process at the same meeting.
- TAP Applications are due before the August TCC meeting. If you have a project and would like to apply contact Kenneth. Submitted applications will be discussed in August and recommendations will then be forwarded to the TPC for allocation. TAP funds have different requirements than STP funds that may better support planned activities in your community.
- Mr. Riemann informed the group that the City of Gulfport is entering into a partnership with Heritage Trails to develop a blue ways trail system as well as improving their bicycle route system to include a senior citizen specific route.
- Gulfport also requested clarification from MDOT staff on who is responsible for the maintenance of the sidewalks between Hwy 90 and the seawall/beaches. This situation impacts a majority of the MPO jurisdictions and a definitive answer is needed. The situation is unique because MDOT takes care of everything curb to curb, but the county maintains the actual beach space. Mr. Riemann requests a legal answer on who is responsible for the sidewalk maintenance and thus liable for any complaints. This question has been on the table for a while without an answer.

- To the group, Mr. Olsen acknowledged Mr. Magee for his many years of service to our region and primarily across Hancock County. Many projects would not have come to fruition without his support and dedication. Thank you
- TPC meeting is June 26th, Next TCC meeting is August 28th

X. Adjournment

*Motion to adjourn made by Kris Riemann. Second by Mayor Skellie. No Comments, **Passed***