



Mississippi Gulf Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Technical Coordinating Committee

Thursday, July 11, 2013, 10:30am  
Biloxi Planning Commission Auditorium  
676 Martin Luther King Jr, Biloxi, MS

**Meeting Minutes:**

I. Call to Order

II. Introductions

27 Total meeting attendees

0 Members of the Public were in attendance:

III. Public Comment - None

IV. Approval of minutes

**Recommendation to adopt March 28, 2013 drafted minutes.**

❖ **Motion made by Jeff Taylor. Seconded by Patrick Bonck. No Comments, Passed**

V. FY 2012-2015 TIP Amendments/Modifications: Discussion led by Mr. David Taylor.

Meeting attendees were provided the following information on 5 proposed TIP amendments. Discussion is included below the amendment descriptions. It was made clear by Mr. David Taylor that none of the requested changes would impact the local allocation of STP funds.

#1: 105281/302000 - I-110 Popps Ferry Rd and Boney Avenue:

302000 detail being added, FY 2013, CON, \$12,700,000 split 85/15

This phase of the I-110 project for Boney Avenue is being added to the STIP, the phase must be included in the STIP before Federal Highway will authorize it. It is scheduled to be LET in August.

Discussion: This amendment refers to MDA funds which will be allocated to support the first diverging interchange in our region. It will reduce congestion at the I-110 interchange by providing an alternative route option for both east and west bound commuters. It is an interstate project so the match rate is 85/15 instead of 80/20. There are no MPO funds being discussed for this project at this time.

❖ **Motion that the TIP be updated with the amendment titled 105281/302000 - I-110 Popps Ferry Rd and Boney Ave. Motion made by Mr. Kelvin Jackson. Seconded by Mr. Jeff Taylor. No Comments, Passed**

#2: 101204/303000 - I-10 from Harrison County Line to Exit 5:

Combining the prior 2014 CON phase which was for \$8,000,000, split 80/20, into the 2015 CON phase, making just one CON phase, and increasing the total slightly to \$30,000,000, split 80/20

This change was made to reduce advance construction costs and to pull future years of advance construction which was outside of the current STIP years of 2012-2015, into the current STIP year of 2015

Discussion: Project will increase I-10 to a six lane roadway from Gulfport to Exit 5.

**Motion that the TIP be updated with the amendment titled 101204/303000 - I-10 from Harrison Co. to Exit 5**

❖ **Motion made by Mr. Jeff Taylor, seconded by Jaci Turner, No Comments, Passed**

#3: 103060/203000 - SR 57 from I-10 to Vancleave:

Add a 203000 ROW phase, no change reflected in the funding

This phase is being added for the purpose of the relocation of utilities during the ROW work

#4: 103060/204000 - SR 57 from I-10 to Vancleave:

Add a 204000 ROW phase, FY 2013, total cost of \$18,100,000, split 80/20

This phase is being added to reflect additional funds needed to complete all ROW work

#5: 103060/301000 - SR 57 from I-10 to Vancleave:

Changes made to the 301000 CON phase, increasing total amount from \$26,500,000 all in federal funds, to \$87,200,000 split 80/20

This change was made to reduce advance construction costs, and to pull future years of advance construction which was outside of the current STIP years of 2012-2015, into the current STIP year of 2015.

Discussion: The **initial motion** to recommend adoption of amendment #3, made by Ms. Elaine Wilkinson, was tabled for two reasons. 1) it was decided that since Amendments 3-5 all refer to the same overall project they should be considered together and 2) as clarifying questions were asked about the project and discussion continued concerns arose about the potential impact on the local economy if a bypass was to be constructed.

❖ **Motion to table the discussion until the TPC meeting made by Patrick Bonck. Seconded by Ed Shambra.**

**Comment: \* TCC membership requests a copy of the project map be emailed to them and the TPC before the MPO meeting scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> and 2.**

#### VI. FY 2012-2015 TIP Amendments/Modifications: Discussion Led by Mr. Kenneth Yarrow

- TCC got a reminder that we are currently working with the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and that we will be updating the document for the 2014-2017 program years at our September MPO meetings. This means that we are looking to allocate 2 more years of STP funds, about 10 million dollars. As everyone is aware, TIP applications are being accepted through Friday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- We have at least six jurisdictions coming to the table with new projects. They are seeking to have STP funds allocated and be added to the TIP. We already know that the money they need and are requesting is more than the additional 10 million coming in. In previous years this was not a concern because we had enough funds to accommodate almost every project request. In an effort to not deny projects that are likely to be completed quickly and as allocated in the TIP, we (MPO staff and the TIP sub-committee) will be relying more on the project ranking process and will also be evaluating current TIP projects that are behind schedule to be obligated for possible removal from the TIP.
- Mr. Yarrow states that we currently have a backlog of around \$25 million and that about \$34 million is currently listed on our TIP. This represents about 7 years of inaction on our part. We will not be able to keep this up forever. We have to identify the holdups, get past them and spend our money. The lack of local match is also not a good enough reason for most project delays since each jurisdiction submits a "we have the money" resolution with their project application.
- Mr. David Taylor reiterates that the TIP is not a wish list. It needs to be made up of doable projects that will be obligated within the next four years. If a project cannot be completed on time it may need to be removed and brought back later when it is ready to be obligated.
- There are several projects that are 5+ years past due on our TIP. If we can free up the funding that has been allocated to them it would increase our immediate spending capacity and allow new projects to reach obligated stages faster. This will make both MDOT and FHWA happier.

**\* TCC committee requests a copy of the project roster that includes the number of years the project has been on the TIP be emailed to them and provided to the TPC committee as well.**

- Mr. Randy Jansen of FHWA supported Mr. Yarrow's budgetary statements by reiterating that FHWA is serious about getting allocated monies move into the obligated phases. They are supporting MPO activities to reorganize the TIP to get projects most likely to be completed added. We are in real jeopardy of having funds rescinded.

- Mr. Jeff Altman of MDOT contributed a suggestion that the MPO get more stringent in its practices. He demonstrated an option by discussing a new Funds Management process being implemented which puts deadline dates on obligating funds. He suggests that 18 months would be a reasonable time frame for jurisdiction to get their projects rolling.

**\* It was recommended by MDOT & FHWA that this option be discussed at the next TIP Sub-Committee meeting.**

- He notes that there are going to be some situations where obstacles make even the 18 month deadlines unfeasible, and that difficulties in the LPA process cannot always be completed in the time frame desired. This is where the monthly progress reports protect the jurisdictions. If it is a hold up that can be overcome with state or federal support they can jump in right away, if it is out of everyone's hands then at least everyone knows the projects status. MDOT will be on the coast to support the LPAs in developing project timelines and seeing them through. About every 6 months there will be a project progress meeting with the MPO, MDOT and FHWA to support our collaboration, keep moving money forward and identifying areas in the process that need support or improvement.
- Mr. Jeff Taylor suggests some out of the box thinking that will help reduce the competitiveness amongst the jurisdictions. Develop a process that reduces the ability for one jurisdiction to hold up funds for numerous years. The question was asked if there is an option to keep unobligated funds in a carryover type account to be made available for jurisdictions that are ready with their match. A first come first served type option. MPO staff said that the TIP sub-committee will be meeting and this question can be posed to them for consideration. It was reiterated that the TIP sub-committee is open to all MPO members who wish to participate. Typically it includes individuals representing projects on the TIP.
- Another discussed concern was that there may not be available funding for new and/or priority projects that are unforeseen today. Mr. David Taylor clarified that the MPO holds 5-10% of its available STP funds for just this type of possible situation.
- Mrs. Jaci Turner, speaking for the TIP Sub-Committee, states that they need jurisdictions to be very clear in their needs, lacks, and new priorities as they occur. Don't hoard funds. Release them for others to use. All projects must be reviewed by the sub-committee and they will help track progress.

## VII. Discussion of Special Match Options

We have never before allowed special match for STP projects. Starting in January 2013 it became available. Special match allows funds expended for ROW and Preliminary Engineering to be calculated as local match dollars. Any project already in construction phase is ineligible since the monetary number needed to be determined prior to construction start. Projects begun prior to January 2013 that have not begun construction phases may use ROW retroactively, but no PE funds incurred prior to 2013 are included.

The big difference on the PE side is that jurisdictions have some flexibility in how you get your consultant involved. If you are using the match, there are some specific requirements. The same flexibility does not exist for ROW since all must follow the federal guidelines regardless of special match or not. It makes sense to always use special match for ROW since it saves money and does not add any hoops to jump through.

- As it is today, for a \$1 million project the LPA match is \$250,000. If they spend \$500,000 on ROW purchases they cannot get special match above the \$250,000. Mr. Chris Riemann asks if there is an opportunity to relieve some pressure on the LPAs by allowing the special match to refund up to 80% of the entire ROW amount spent instead of limited to the required project match percentage. After discussion on this question with significant pros and cons identified **the MPO suggests tabling the discussion for the TIP Subcommittee to review and then to bring back a recommendation to the TCC membership.**

VIII. MPO Update

- A. Completed the TMA review in mid-June. Passed with flying colors. The final report will be completed by FHWA and FTA and sent to us. When it is, it will be made available for review.
- B. The Gulf Coast transportation Safety Summit planning process is moving forward and we are very grateful MDOT is our event partner. Sponsorship and vendor opportunities are available and participant registration is expected to be around \$150 per person for the 2 ½ day professional Development conference. Registration will open in August, please call or email with any questions or to get involved.

IX. Transit Update

X. MDOT Update

- New PDM class coming in Jackson in August – flier will be emailed to everyone soon.
- TE and SRTS projects lingering are being followed up on by MDOT staff. Money can be pulled since these funding sources changed to TAP funds under MAP 21. (Cities that are likely to be impacted include Moss Point and Long Beach) Looks like LB will complete there project before the end of the year. MP does not look so good. MDOT is working to connect with both mayors on this issue.

XI. Old/New Business

**NEXT MPO MEETINGS ARE SCHEDULED**

Biloxi Development Commission  
676 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.

**TCC on September 12th at 10:30am**

**TPC on September 26th at 10:30am**

XII. Adjournment

- ❖ *Motion to adjourn by Ed Shambra. Seconded by Jaci Turner. No comments, **Passed***