

Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Policy Committee Minutes
April 29, 2004, 1:30 PM

1. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance, Mr. Scott Leger

2. Prayer

The Prayer, Mr. Peter Rhodes.

3. Roll Call

Mr. Peter Rhodes called roll.

Lafourche Parish President, Ms. Charlotte Randolph-Present

Terrebonne Parish President, Mr. Don Schwab-Present, proxy Mr. Pat Gordon

City of Thibodaux Mayor, Mr. Charles Caillouet-Present, proxy Mr. Kermit Kraemer

Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Mr. Harold Lapeyre-Absent

Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Mr. Peter Rhodes-Present

Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Mr. Wayne Thibodaux-Absent

Terrebonne Parish Council Member, Mr. Clayton Voisin-Present

LADOTD, Mr. Tom Payment-Present

4. Approval of minutes from May 1, 2003 meeting

Moved, C. Voisin, second, T. Payment, no discussion, passed.

5. Presentation: Mr. L.P. Ledet, Neel-Schaffer, Inc., presented the DRAFT HOUMA-THIBODAUX METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN – MTP 2025.

K. Ghirardi gave a summary of the history and process involved in drafting the MTP. K. Ghirardi explained that this project was started about 8 years ago and originally included only the Houma Urban Area. Since then the study area for this project has expanded to include the Thibodaux Urban Area. K. Ghirardi then stated that Mr. L.P. Ledet would present an overview of the draft plan.

L.P. Ledet gave a summary of the process the consultants took to develop a travel demand computer model for the Houma-Thibodaux Area. L.P. Ledet stated that network data and demographic data were collected by Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) for input into the model. L.P. Ledet stated that 2000 Census data was also utilized and served as the Base Year Planning Data. L.P. Ledet then described the street network, functional classification and traffic counts in the study area. L.P. Ledet described how the travel demand model was calibrated for the Houma-Thibodaux Urban Area. L.P. Ledet then summarized the 3 stages of projects that the

plan recommends and gave a description of some of the more significant projects in the area and their potential impact. L.P. Ledet then described the projected cost for these projects as well as the methodology used to project costs. L.P. Ledet also described the 3 time stages the projects are planned for and possible funding sources. L.P. Ledet stated that Stage I (2005-2009) is estimated to cost about \$63 million, Stage II (2010-2015) is estimated to cost about \$79 million and Stage III is estimated to cost about \$153 million while the unfunded portion of the plan would cost about \$200 million. L.P. Ledet then offered to open up the floor for discussion, questions and answers about the draft plan.

6. Discussion: DRAFT HOUMA-THIBODAUX METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN – MTP 2025.

A question was asked about the connection of Hwy 311 to Industrial Boulevard and if it was in the plan. L.P. Ledet stated that the connection was in the plan under the unfunded portion because of the high cost of building a bridge over the Intracoastal waterway to connect the two facilities. A question was raised about the priority of this project in the plan. L.P. Ledet explained that from a traffic standpoint the project was a high priority but from a funding standpoint it was not. L.P. Ledet added that because it would cost so much to build the bridge many other projects would have to be eliminated from the plan which made the bridge unjustifiable. P. Gordon stated that tolling the bridge could be a funding option that should be considered. L.P. Ledet concurred that tolling the bridge is an option that could be pursued. A question was asked about the elevation that roads will be built to and whether these roads would flood. L.P. Ledet stated that road elevation and flooding concerns are at a level of detail that is beyond the travel demand model and what it is intended to do. K. Ghirardi explained that once the plan is adopted Stage I would basically become the new TIP (Transportation Improvement Plan) for the next 8 years. P. Gordon asked what governments and/or agencies or commissions have to approve the plan. K. Ghirardi stated that the MPO Policy Committee is responsible for approving the plan. A question was asked about how to get additional funding for a bridge over the Intracoastal waterway at industrial Boulevard. K Ghirardi stated that this plan gives the local government technical justification to pursue funding for a new bridge. K. Ghirardi gave some examples of how funds may be allocated for a new bridge based on the new six year federal transportation bill being considered by Congress this year. A question was raised about the possible failure of the ITS system because of power outages. It was stated that this problem should be addressed.

7. Call for Public Hearing on DRAFT HOUMA-THIBODAUX METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN – MTP 2025.

P. Rhodes asked if the MPO staff wanted to hold the Public Hearing on Wednesday, May, 26 2004 at 6:00 P.M. K Ghirardi stated that this was

the suggested time to hold the public hearing based on public notice requirements. It was noted that the Terrebonne Parish Council was scheduled to hold its council meeting on that date. C. Voisin made a motion to hold the public hearing on Thursday May 27 at 6:00 P.M. The motion was seconded P. Gordon and was passed.

8. Opportunity for public to comment on DRAFT HOUMA-THIBODAux METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN – MTP 2025.

P. Rhodes stated that agenda item 8 was incorporated into agenda item 6.

9. Determine date of next MPO Policy Committee meeting to discuss the adoption of the HOUMA-THIBODAux METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN – MTP 2025.

K. Ghirardi stated that the next MPO Policy meeting should be for the purpose of adopting the plan which cannot be legally adopted until after the public hearing process. C. Voisin made a motion to hold the next MPO Policy meeting on Thursday, June 3, 2004 at 2:00 P.M. The motion was seconded by P. Gordon and was passed.

10. Other Business

A question was asked as to how the plan would be made available to the public. P. Gordon suggested posting the plan and maps on the Terrebonne Parish website for the public to access. K. Ghirardi stated that this would be a good idea.

11. Adjournment

C. Voisin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by T. Payment and was passed.