

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 29, 2021, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM, VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT (QUORUM)

Stacy Dowden (Chair) (City of Sulphur)
John Cardone (City of Lake Charles)
Mary Bass Fontenot (Calcasieu Parish School Board)
Brian Duplechain (Westlake)
Kevin Melton (Chennault International Airport)
Seth Woods (LaDOTD)

LCMPO STAFF

Michael Hollier (Executive/MPO Director)
Jamie Gaines (Special Projects Manager)
Steve Jiles (Transportation Manager)
Walter Council (Planner III)
Ashifur Rahman (Planner)

GUESTS

Angela Murrell (LaDOTD)
Kelli Van Norman (City of Lake Charles)
Tammy York (LaDOTD District 7)
Marion Greene (City of Lake Charles)
Al Hoover (City of Lake Charles)
Brennan Marque (IMCAL)
Justin Habetz (IMCAL)
Michael Bernard (IMCAL)

1. OPENING

A. Roll Call

Ms. Stacy Dowden, Chair, called the meeting to order. Mr. Mike Hollier called Roll to identify attendance. He stated there was quorum for Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC).

B. Minutes (8/18/21)

Mr. John Cardone motioned, to approve and adopt the draft minutes of the meeting held on August 18, 2021, seconded by Mr. Seth Woods. Chair requested a vote on the motion to adopt the minutes of the August 18, 2021 meeting, which passed unanimously.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. Freight Movement

1. TAC Representation – Mr. Hollier noted that LaDOTD, based on the particular needs and trends in freight movement, wanted to have a local Freight/Trucking representative

added to TAC. He requested members to provide any potential names for recommendation to sit on the committee. Additional notes on the topic:

- Since the freight/trucking interests moves around the area that subset of transportation has specific interests.
 - Mr. Cardone inquired what type of individual, to which Mr. Hollier responded someone local that is very knowledgeable about trucking industry and needs. There is national and state association but figured TAC would collectively know someone as well.
 - Mr. Kevin Melton stated the LaDOTD Office of Multimodal Commerce staff had been in area, and suggested having them in the conversation, as well as access to Chennault and aviation.
2. Generating Freight Movement Counts – Mr. Hollier noted LaDOTD has this information, and typically, MPOs have a handle on freight movement in their area.
- LCMPO staff is working on a freight analysis, which includes regional rail movement along with highways.
 - Hope is that in 5 – 6 months, the MPO could have the capacity to manage the Travel Demand Model for urban area, which would allow for clear analysis, evaluation, and cost-benefits assessments for specific projects TAC wants to consider.
 - Freight movement and needs will become a regular item on the agenda for consideration and discussion.

B. MPO 2045 Long Range/Metropolitan Transportation Plan Project Review

1. Survey Results on first 30 projects selected for removal –
Mr. Council shared that 4 of the 30 projects were recommended to be retained in the 2045 MTP fiscally constrained table.
2. Questions and Comments on Survey Results –
 - C-100 LA 384 Country Club Rd @ Ihles/Elliot Rd intersection:
 - Mr. Jiles: Multiple projects at this location, and those projects could take care of needs of this specific project. So recommended to retain in 2045 MTP.
 - C-103 Dave Dugas Rd @ LA 1256 intersection :
 - Mr. Jiles: Two projects south and north of this project on LA 27.
 - First, south of project is C-46 is suggested in the 2045 MTP as a divided 4-lane section just north of the intracoastal waterway, or at Falco Road which leads to the West Calcasieu Port. The divided 4-lane would be similar to LA 171 and LA 165, turning into a 5-lane at Dave Dugas Road.
 - Second, north of project is C-49, starting at Dave Dugas, would be 5 lane road section like Nelson Road in Lake Charles with sub-surface drainage, ending at Patton Road. This would connect close to I-10.
 - C-102 Walker Dr @ LA 1256 intersection:
 - Mr. Jiles: Part of C-103 that would fall within limits of C-49, mentioned previously, so doesn't see need for that stop gap project. Instead recommends retaining and advancing this bigger C-102 project.

Problems with every single intersection on this route, because of general LA 27 challenges.

- C-46 LA 27 @ Dave Dugas Rd to LA 108
 - Mr. Jiles: This was also previously mentioned as overlapping C-101 project, south Sulphur on LA 27, with intent to widen to 5-lanes like Nelson Road in Lake Charles. The overlap, or duplication, or reason for recommending for removal of other projects suggestion to do as one project.
 - Mr. Seth Woods: Wanted to make some comments, since he was one of TAC representatives recommending retaining some of the projects shown. One of concerns is some of locations, like Country Club and LA 27 are in the works, studies being done, and moving forward. Example, C-46 is not scheduled for construction before 2045 horizon, so do you want to put a roundabout here as an improvement for congestion for next 15 – 20 years?
 - In the meantime, why we wait for this big project to come to fruition, maybe this roundabout can be designed with future growth or expansion in mind. However, to say a big project is coming down the pike in 20 years and not do other improvements on route for 20 years?
 - Seems like you could do something in the meantime as well as planning for the future, like a 4-lane roundabout. Some of these projects function as a stop gap, and may get ripped out., which does happen.
 - Just hate to ignore something because you're waiting for a big project, which we know can get stalled by utilities, right of way, and funding issues, etc. So if we can work on other locations identified as problematic, then that's reasoning to recommend retaining these.
 - Mr. Jiles: Hope to advance this project and removing unnecessary projects. Agrees with Mr. Woods on suggestions, like Nelson Road widened down Country Club about 900 feet. However, doesn't necessarily agree with need to tear anything out. However, drainage system should be designed in advanced or so that it fits, and not building C-46 then having to remove it. Believes, makes it harder to do big project as opposed to putting money in the little project into the big project.
 - Mr. Woods: Agrees drainage is imperative, but also thinks there will sometimes be waste or stop gap measures when preparing for big projects. It ultimately comes down to do you want to see some movement in an earlier time period or wait longer for more permanent solution? However, believes its prudent and optimal to possibly be able to wants to see if which projects in 2045 Horizon year can be moved up closer to 2035 or sooner.
 - Mr. Cardone: Feels similar to Mr. Woods about Country Club and Ihles Rd intersection. So far CoLC spending about \$22 million to add a 5-lane section of that road, which has been an outstanding discussion for

years. He would rather do an intersection improvement that can be incorporated whenever you make those additional improvements to Country Club. The CoLC passed a bond issue about 20 years ago that had matching funds with the state to make improvements to Country Club and there were no funds.

- Agrees with Mr. Woods, if it is being indicated that some of these projects will take 20 years, then we ought to try to make intersection improvements that can be incorporated into overall plan that moves them a little quicker towards construction.
- Reiterates there is bottleneck at intersection of Country Club and Ihles Road, and if CoLC wasn't spending money on other big projects he would get it but wants to make sure steps are in place to move it forward, which makes advancing Prien Lake Road going to Cove Lane more efficient. The past multi-entity partnership at Cove Lane intersection is working, but still has traffic problem.
- Mr. Jiles: Thinks Cove Lane is working but could be minor details like signal timing changes. He doesn't drive on Country Club Rd and Ihles Rd daily during congested periods, so isn't sure how bad it is to Weaver and other intersections but doesn't want to get bogged down in a project, return to it and rip it out to enhance Country Club, feeling like that wouldn't be optimal.
- Mr. Cardone: Wants to see how quick it can be done, because he has seen multiple case studies, but no concrete action. If there can be a way to move it up and get funds, he would be onboard.
Mr. Jiles: He hopes so. He mentioned that the area hasn't built anything substantial in 20 years by LaDOTD. Mentions there was issue with creating 5-lanes, because it is a tool in the toolbox, and the 5-lane works great for turn lanes.
- Mr. Cardone: The TAC has been told in the past to get away from real large projects, so that is the philosophy the TAC has gone towards.
- Mr. Jiles: Thinks that \$10 - \$15 million cost are easier than the \$50 - \$60 million to implement, if done a couple of miles at a time.
- Mr. Cardone: Mentioned that Prien Lake Road exceeds \$22 million dollars, so just wants to make sure it is a doable project.
- Mr. Woods: Agrees with Mr. Cardone and will continue to push to get Country Club Rd with 5-lanes as a big project. However, doesn't want to miss out on improving Ihles Rd in the meantime, to keep it moving forward. If there is a way to design Country Club at Ihles Rd as either a 2-lane roundabout or future 4 lane and where it can tie in and make improvements and not waste funds on it.
- M-01 12th St @ LA 385 to 1st Ave intersection:
 - Mr. Cardone: Wants to be sure it was noted as being retained by CoLC.
 - Mr. Jiles: Suggested it needed a revised scope, possibly even 3-lane section, plus issue with railroad, and may need bike lane. Project as defined had some concerns.

- Mr. Cardone: Stated this it is not just an overlay, that road should be a full reconstruction, so for right now leave it there in 2045 MTP. This is a project the CoLC is looking to implement and possibly get additional funding.

3. Project Recommendations to Transportation Policy Committee –
John Cardone motioned to retain C-100, C-103, C-102, C-46, and M-01 in 2045 MTP Roadway and Freight section, seconded by Mr. Woods. Motion was passed unanimously.

Seth Woods motioned to remove the other 25 projects, seconded by John Cardone, which included the following: C-45, C-81, N-62, M-03, C-50, N-29, N-46, C-98, N-39, C-97, M-16, C-66, M-11, M-09, N-41, N-74, C-80, M-10, N-32, C-70, C-24, C-07, M-12, M-02, and N-33. Motion was passed unanimously.

C. 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Call for Projects

1. Scoring Evaluation Sheets for Submitted Projects –
Mr. Council reiterated he is working with CoLC and Calcasieu Parish to move forward scoring mechanism for these projects.
2. Timeline – Mr. Council mentioned the scoring should happen before end of 2021.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Congestion Mitigation Techniques

1. Infrastructure –

Mr. Hollier noted that a lot of the projects in the Project Call are more oriented toward maintenance and overlays and not necessarily congestion.

- Originally the MPO was designed to expand capacity of roadways to handle more volume. The LCMPO Roundabout Plan has been added to the toolbox to mitigate congestion, improve capacity and safety. He could see those being added and almost nothing else. However, if interested in resources for congestion then this becomes an issue when MPO funds are more maintenance oriented. The Motorist Assistance Program (M.A.P.) does help mitigate congestion, by removing stalled vehicles from roadway, which MPO funds with \$500K annually.
- He explained as work on heart of 2045 MTP Roadway and Freight section revision, it should be viewed as not just a waiting list on a spread sheet for funding to become available. Should not just be seen as a spreadsheet to wait for MPO funds.
- The I-10 bridge files go back 30 years. This will be a \$1 billion project, with bulk of funds to pay for bridge provided by private investors. If it's going to go from 4-lanes to 6-lanes, then it is a capacity improvement, but with the age and condition of bridge, likewise, it is a maintenance improvement.

2. Access Management discussion - Ryan Street, for example, has business

establishments with strong customer bases. There are some establishments with drive-thru idling lines meandering into arterial street, creating congestion. LaDOTD has toolbox to address access management on state routes to mitigate congestion. He was not sure if a LCMPO jurisdiction had access management plan. Seeking non-MPO funds as well.

B. TIP FY 2019 – 22 Amendment 27 (Aggregate Record Item No. 53)

Mr. Hollier requested TAC recommend TPC action for amending TIP FY 2019 – 22 to add H.014741 IMCAL MPO Supplemental Planning Services FY 2021 – 22, which will include an array of planning activities. Project will be using STP<200K funds at \$350K (80% Fed Share).

Mr. Kevin Melton motioned to make recommendation to the TPC, seconded by Mr. Seth Woods. The motion was passed unanimously.

4. INFORMATION

A. Autonomous Vehicles Technology

Mr. Hollier wanted to make sure TAC had a moment to watch the video on autonomous trucking, which he believes will be enhanced in the freight industry. The lack of drivers is part of what will lead the effort. It doesn't matter if widening or building, but how will we use and prepare the infrastructure for this autonomous era, believing this change is as transformative as going from horse and buggy era to the combustible engine automobile.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Melton motioned to adjourn the TPC meeting, seconded by Ms. Mary Bass Fontenot. The motion passed unanimously.



Stacy Dowden
Chair



Michael Hollier
Executive/MPO Director