

ACADIANA

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT  
PROGRAM (TIP)

Selection Process Handbook

## Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION.....	3
II. THE ACADIANA MPO.....	4
III. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP).....	7
IV. TIP DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATE PROCESS .....	9
V. TIP STRUCTURE.....	13
VI. TIP PROJECT GUIDELINES .....	15
VII. TIP PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESS WORKSHEET .....	19

## I. INTRODUCTION

### *Purpose*

The purpose of this document is to provide a guide on processes used to develop the four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and project selection. This guide has been developed for jurisdictions within the Acadiana Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Planning Area. As mandated, all federally funded projects carried out within the boundaries of a metropolitan planning area serving a Transportation Management Area shall be selected for implementation from the approved TIP by the Metropolitan Planning Organization designated for the area in consultation with the State and any affected public transportation operator.

### *The Metropolitan Planning Organization*

MPO's are authorized by federal legislation and governed by 23 U.S.C. 134-135. Every urbanized area, a geographic area with a population of 50,000 or more as designated by the Bureau of the Census, may have a designated MPO to qualify for federal highway or transit financial assistance. MPOs are formed to ensure federal transportation funds are spent in a manner that has a basis in metropolitan region-wide plans. These plans are developed through inter-governmental collaboration, rational analysis, and consensus-based decision-making. In accordance with regulations referenced above, MPOs must develop transportation plans and programs which encourage and promote safe and efficient management, operation, and development of transportation systems which embrace the various modes of transportation in a manner that will maximize mobility of people and goods while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution. The MPO serves to evaluate transportation alternatives, scaled to the size and complexity of the region. The MPO is organized to facilitate the comprehensive coordination and cooperation on transportation issues, programs and projects with realistically available options to advance the area's goals. Transportation projects within the MPO Planning Area must be in conformity with and supported by the MPO's long range transportation plan to be eligible for federal/state funding.

### *Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds*

Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds provide flexible monies that may be used by States and localities for projects on any Federal-aid highway. STP funds are apportioned to the State and a percentage is made available to metropolitan planning areas to advance local priorities. The funds may be used for a variety of planning, program or improvement projects as listed in Section III of this document. The MPO distributes funds to jurisdictions based on the region's highest ranking transportation projects defined in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and evaluation criteria listed within this document.

## II. THE ACADIANA MPO

### *MPO Planning Area*

The Acadiana MPO Planning Area is the entirety of Lafayette Parish. It also encompasses parts of St. Martin, St. Landry, Vermilion, Iberia and Acadia Parishes. An Urbanized Area (UZA) is a statistical geographic area designated by the Census Bureau, consisting of a central core and adjacent densely settled territory that together contain at least 50,000 people, generally with an overall population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile.

Census 2000 population for the Lafayette Urbanized Area was 178,079. In 2010 the Lafayette Urbanized Area population increased to 252,720, prompting the U. S. Secretary of Transportation to designate the Acadiana MPO as a Transportation Management Area (TMA: an urbanized area population of over 200,000) in the *Federal Register* on July 18, 2012. A map of the Acadiana MPO Planning Area is located on the MPO web page ([mpo.planacadiana.org](http://mpo.planacadiana.org)).

The MPO is charged with developing criteria for project selection that meets goals of the region and addresses federal planning requirements, particularly regarding congestion management. The governing body responsible for such decisions in accordance with federal guidelines 23 *CFR* 450.306, shall consist of local elected officials, officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation in the metropolitan area, and State officials. The following governing bodies serve in this capacity for the Acadiana MPO.

### *Transportation Policy Committee*

The Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) meets bi-monthly for the purpose of reviewing/adopting transportation planning and programming issues as they affect regional transportation planning goals and objectives. Among other duties and obligations, the TPC is responsible for the adoption of a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Congestion Management Plan and for establishing policies and procedural guidelines that comply with federal regulations. The TPC is guided through recommendations presented by the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC).

### *Transportation Technical Committee*

The Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) meets bi-monthly. Among other duties and obligations, the TTC is responsible for making recommendations to the TPC with respect to the adoption of transportation plans, programs, projects and policies and procedures to be enacted by the MPO; and guidance to MPO staff on various transportation planning

activities. The Transportation Technical Committee consists of individuals whose skills, training and professional status qualify them to take an active role in helping to shape and to oversee the transportation planning program for the region.

### *MPO Goals*

The MPO is required to develop criteria for transportation project selection that meet goals of the region. Goals adopted by the MPO are developed with assistance of area citizens and area jurisdictions. The MPO's transportation planning program demonstrates the overall goals are achieved, in part, through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The goals:

- (1) Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- (2) Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- (3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- (4) Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight;
- (5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and [State](#) and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- (6) Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- (7) Promote efficient system management and operation;
- (8) Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system;
- (9) Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and
- (10) Enhance travel and tourism.

### *MPO Performance Measures and Targets*

The MAP-21 federal transportation bill established performance measures and targets that MPOs must adopt and use to measure the effectiveness of the projects developed using federal funding. The objective of the program is for states and MPOs to invest resources in projects that collectively will make progress toward the achievement of national goals.

The Acadiana MPO has adopted five performance measures:

1. Safety
2. Transit Asset Management
3. Pavement and Bridge Condition
4. Travel Time Reliability
5. Transit Safety

The impact of the proposed project on the MPO's performance measures are a significant factor in the project selection process.

### III. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

#### *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*

Federal regulations require the Acadiana MPO, to develop and maintain a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is a four-year schedule of project implementation and identifies available federal and non-federal funding for included projects. The TIP must identify all federal funded projects, including those Surface Transportation Program (STP) funded projects selected by the MPO, as well as locally funded projects of regional significance in the Urbanized Area. The TIP for each MPO in the state is incorporated into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which addresses all the transportation needs of the State of Louisiana, including those areas outside the MPO Urban Areas. The TIP is updated every four years through a cooperative effort of local leadership, state officials, transit operators, federal agencies, including participation by the general public. In between TIP updates, changes to the TIP, in the form of amendments and administrative modifications, are approved by the TPC.

#### TIP Facts:

- Includes all federal funded projects
- Covers a 4-year period
- May be amended
- Approved by the MPO, DOTD, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration
- Included in the STIP

#### *Eligibility*

To be eligible as a Surface Transportation Program (STP) funded Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project, the improvement must be located within the MPO Planning Area and have a certain functional classification designation on the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) roadway network. The network includes all roads that the DOTD has designated as a Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, Urban Major/Minor Collector or Rural Major Collector. STP projects may not be undertaken on roads functionally classified as local or Rural Minor Collectors except in certain cases defined by federal regulations.

#### *Type of Projects*

Types of projects eligible in the TIP are defined by STP regulation 23 USC 133, which includes but is not limited to construction improvements, highway and transit safety improvements, Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), Transportation Control Measures

(TMC), operational improvements, alternative activities, management systems, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Table 1.0 describes many improvement measures that are implemented through the TIP.

**Typical Types of Projects:** This program has many eligible types of projects.

<p><b>1. Roadway Construction</b> — Projects can include both new alignment, adding capacity, reconstruction, and overlay projects</p>	<p><b>2. Signalization</b> — Improvements such as new signal equipment, synchronization of corridors, ITS related improvements</p>	<p><b>3. Bridge Construction</b> — Projects can include both new construction and rehabilitation</p>
<p><b>4. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities</b> — Sidewalks, walkways, curb ramps; bike lane striping, wide paved shoulders, bike parking and bus racks; bike and pedestrian bridges and underpasses</p>	<p><b>5. Landscaping and scenic beautification</b> — Improvements such as street furniture, lighting, and landscaping along travel corridors</p>	<p><b>6. Mass Transportation</b> — Purchase of buses</p>
<p><b>7. Studies</b> — Transportation Planning Studies; Environmental Impact Studies</p>		

*Table 1.0 - Project Types*

Disclaimer: federal eligibility may change depending on current federal transportation legislation.



#### IV. TIP DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATE PROCESS

##### *TIP Development*

A new TIP is developed every four years. The TIP development process' notable policies are outlined below. Project selection in the Acadiana MPO TIP is *not* a guarantee of project implementation or construction. Ultimately, the requesting jurisdiction is responsible for project management and completion. If problems arise, such as engineering obstacles, environmental conflicts or changes in priorities, adjustments may be made to projects on the TIP. The following are the procedures and requirements for developing the TIP.

1. The Acadiana MPO will send a letter with a TIP application packet to each of the jurisdictions within the MPO Planning Area to initiate the TIP application process.
2. The project application must be completed with required information and returned to the Acadiana MPO before 5pm on the stated submission deadline date.
3. Each completed project application shall include a letter of transmittal signed by the chief elected official (mayor, parish president, police jury president, etc.) of the jurisdiction or chief executive officer of a public entity submitting.
4. After receiving project applications for the TIP, the MPO will rank projects internally based on the TIP project evaluation process.
5. The MPO will submit the ranked list of projects to the Project Evaluation Subcommittee to approve and make a recommendation on which projects move forward.
6. The Acadiana MPO will assemble a draft TIP based on the project rankings and available funding and program scheduling.
7. The draft TIP will be presented to the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) for recommendation and Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) for approval by resolution.
8. The MPO will advertise in the MPO Social Media and a web post on the MPO website for public input on the Draft TIP. The notices will include a listing of the proposed projects and the Draft TIP may be viewed. The TPC adoption of the TIP Resolution will occur at the conclusion of the public comment period.

9. Public comments will be reviewed by the MPO and forwarded to the appropriate project sponsor. A file for public comments will be recorded as an appendix to the TIP. The file will include concluding decisions and explanation with respect to each public comment.
10. The sponsoring applicants may submit alternate projects resulting from public input within a specified appropriate timeframe.
11. After the TPC has reviewed public comments, forwarded public comments to the sponsoring entities, prepared draft decisions and explanations with respect to each public comment, and received alternative projects (when applicable), it will consider final adoption of resolution approving the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).  
  
The approved MPO TIP will then be submitted to the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD) for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
12. After approval by the MPO, the TIP shall be included without change, directly or by reference, in the STIP required under 23 U.S.C. 135.
13. The State shall notify the MPO and Federal agencies when the TIP has been included in the STIP.

#### *TIP Update*

Every year the Acadiana MPO will initiate an amendment and evaluation process to consider additional projects or adjustments (either fiscal or physical) to approved funded projects. This process will be initiated through the MPO's Dormant Project Policy which stipulates change to a project after one year of inactivity. All project additions will be considered based on availability of funds in the TIP. This process provides fair and impartial consideration to all requests from each jurisdiction or entity. This yearly review gives the MPO opportunity to evaluate implementation schedules of each project to ensure Federal/State/Local monies are obligated on time to avoid a funding lapse.

On an as needed basis existing TIP projects may need adjustments. Adjustments are usually to expedite the process as project scope or funding may change. Changes will be qualified as either a TIP "Amendment" or "Administrative Modification" as described below and summarized in *Table 2.0*.

**Amendment** – Amendment means a major revision as defined in Table 2.0 to the TIP. Formal amendments will be processed on as needed basis at the MPO meetings. Amendments are evaluated based on TIP project evaluation

guidelines found in the TIP Handbook. All comments and recommendations are forwarded to the Transportation Technical Committee for consideration and the Transportation Policy Committee for consideration.

*Public Review* – the Acadiana MPO will advertise on social media and the MPO website for public input regarding proposed amendments to the TIP. The MPO will provide the public 15 days to review and provide comment.

***Administrative Modification***– The revisions that qualify as Administrative Modifications are minor in nature and there is not distortion of fiscal constraint and the availability of funds is assured. Administrative Amendments are processed by the MPO staff. The Administrative Modifications do not require public review, TTC recommendations, or TPC approval. The MPO retains the right to require a formal amendment for any proposed modification to the TIP that, in the opinion of staff, requires public review and the formal endorsement of the Transportation Policy Committee.

*Public Review* – None

## Quick Reference Chart for Amendments vs Modifications

Administrative Modification	Amendment
Revision of a project description that does not significantly change the project design concept and/or scope	Major changes to a project including the addition or deletion of a project
<p>Minor changes to project/project phase cost; applies to feasibility, environmental, R/W, utility relocation, engineering, construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding changes are limited to \$1,250,000 for projects for S \$5,000,000</li> <li>• For projects &gt; \$5,000,000 an administrative modification is classified as a change of less than 25% in funding</li> </ul>	<p>Major changes on project cost, project/project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or design scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding changes that are greater than \$1,250,000 for projects greater less than or equal to \$5,000,000</li> <li>• Change of 25% or more in funding</li> </ul>
Minor changes to funding sources of previously included projects that does not affect fiscal constraint	Major changes to funding sources, such as adding a new federal funding source for a project not previously funding with federal funding.
Minor changes to project/project phase initiation dates as long as the project stays within the approved S/TIP timeframe and does not affect fiscal constraint. <a href="#">23 CFR 450.330(a)</a>	
A change in the project implementing agency;	
A split or combination of individually listed projects; as long as cost, schedule, and scope remain unchanged;	
The addition or deletion of projects from grouped project (line item) listings as long as the total funding amounts stay within the guidelines in number two above.	

Source: Federal Highway Administration Louisiana Division Letter: "Approval of Procedures to Amend or Administratively Modify the Louisiana STIP and TIPs" dated November 1st, 2018.

Table 2.0 – TIP Amendment Classifications

## V. TIP STRUCTURE

The TIP funds programmed cannot exceed the anticipated amount of funding available by more than 20%. Once a year, La DOTD notifies the MPO's of the amount of new STP funds that will be available for the next fiscal year. The Acadiana MPO will structure the new 4 year TIP by assigning each of the 4 years with the amount of funds as indicated by La DOTD. In accordance with CFR 450.324(f), "projects that are not considered to be of appropriate scale for individual identification in a given program year may be grouped by function, work type, and/or geographic area," the TIP structure will include listings of "Grouped Projects." All projects that are considered as Categorical Exclusions (CEs), as described in 23 CFR 771.117, will be arranged into these groups using the applicable classifications under 23 CFR 771.117(c) and (d) and/or 40 CFR part 93. Projects that are not considered CEs (usually projects that increase capacity by adding through lanes or new roadways) will be listed specifically in the TIP outside of the grouped listing. The TIP is set up as described below:

### *LA DOTD Project Listing*

This listing includes projects initiated and advanced by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD). These projects do not affect the MPO's apportionment of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds.

### *MPO Project Listing*

This listing includes projects proposed by public agencies and approved by the MPO for use of the MPO's apportionment of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds (sometimes referenced as "Urban Systems" or STP>200K). This listing includes projects not considered to be Categorical Exclusions (CEs), therefore will require Environmental Assessments (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) during project development. Examples are presented in Table 1.0 under: "Add Base Capacity and New Construction".

### *Independent Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects Group*

The Acadiana MPO has a goal of allocating 10% of the Surface Transportation Program (STP)> 200K funds for projects to improve bicycle and pedestrian accessibility and mobility in the region. These projects help the MPO advance its objective to "enhance bicycle, pedestrian and transit mobility and accessibility. Examples are presented in Table 1.0 under: "Bike/Pedestrian improvements".

### *MPO Plan Implementation*

The Acadiana MPO will set aside \$350,000 in STP funds annually for the purpose of developing and implementing projects that directly support the MPO goals and objectives. Each year a project(s) will be selected by the MPO for funding through this program.

Project(s) are based on needs identified through the agency's transportation planning process toward the provision of an efficient, safe and accessible transportation system for all modes.

*FTA Projects*

The TIP will also include projects funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for the support of public transit within the Acadiana MPO Planning Area.

## VI. TIP PROJECT GUIDELINES

This section outlines procedures and policies for TIP projects in the Acadiana MPO Planning Area. The policies and guidelines are established to support and coordinate with the MPO's goals and objectives. The MPO ensures that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs are based on a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) planning process. Additionally, the MPO serves to evaluate transportation issues, realistically available options, conformity with the twenty-five year Financially Constrained Transportation Plan, the long range (20+years) build-out scenario (Metropolitan Thoroughfare Plan), MPO Goals, and local plans consistent with MPO Goals. This TIP project selection process ensures these functions are achieved regarding Federal/State/Local funds managed and facilitated by the MPO.

### *Long Range Transportation Plan Consistency*

The MPO maintains a 25-year long range transportation plan called the Staged Improvement Plan for the Lafayette Urbanized Area. The LRTP is approved by the MPO's Transportation Policy Committee (TPC), FHWA, FTA and the Governor. This plan ensures that the urbanized area is eligible for federal transportation funding such as Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds administered by the MPO.

### *Local Comprehensive Plan Consistency*

The MPO provides the vehicle for coordination of local, state and federal transportation planning and implementation. There must be consistency between and among the various levels of government to ensure the greatest efficiencies in allocating resources. Local governments are encouraged to provide complete street policies and assurances through local adopted plans to protect the integrity of the transportation plan infrastructure investment.

### *Project Applications*

Each jurisdiction/entity must fill out the "Application for Federal Surface Transportation Program Funds" for a roadway project to be considered for STP funding. The application provides a description and other information needed to properly evaluate the project according to the MPO Criteria. The entity will also have to fill out a DOTD required Stage 0 Checklist, Environmental Checklist as well as an Internal Control Questionnaire. MPO staff provides assistance to member jurisdictions/entities with preparation of these applications. Applicant must provide a timeline for completion of preliminary engineering (PE), environmental (ENV), right-of-way (ROW) and construction (CON) stages of the proposed project.

### *Council Ordinance or Board Resolution*

To be considered for STP funding, jurisdictions must demonstrate a commitment to the requested project. A local government must include an ordinance by the legislative body (Council, Police Jury, Aldermen), or for other public or private entities, a resolution of the governing board authorizing the required local match for the project whether it is from general funds, a bond issue, or other. The match is to ensure compliance with federal requirements that each project be fully funded before being placed in the TIP. A project will be required to follow the approved timeline submitted on the project application. If a TIP project is not implemented in a timely manner, the jurisdiction, or other public entity as appropriate, will be required to give explanation of the delay. If project requirements are not met, the TTC shall consider recommendation to the TPC for removal of the project from the TIP. If it is found the jurisdiction or other public entity no longer has the required match for the project, the TTC shall consider recommendation to the TPC for removal of the project from the TIP.

### *Drainage*

In order to maximize the impact of projects to enhance transportation system mobility, accessibility, and quality for all roadway users and modes, the MPO requires that STP funding for drainage work incidental to a project is minimal. Drainage infrastructure costs should be paid for by other funds.

### *Complete Streets Guidelines*

Principal arterial, minor arterial and urban collector roadways should be designed to be suitable for pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Project sponsors will be required to follow state complete streets policy guidelines.

### *Bicycle Mobility*

The MPO refers to American Association of State Highway and Transportation Official's "Guide for the development of Bicycle Facilities" to support the goals of the MPO and this TIP Handbook. The guidelines described in *Table 3.0* will be used and promoted by the MPO in the development of federal-aid projects to better accommodate bicycles on metropolitan area roadways. *Table 3.0* also includes recommended bicycle facility types based on Average Daily Traffic (ADT) and the posted speed limit.



	Standard lane (signage and pavement markings may be provided)	Standard-width travel lane that both bicycles and motor vehicles share. Cyclists would have the option to take the lane. No special provisions are provided for the cyclist (Share the road).
	Wide curb lane	An outside travel lane with a width of at least 14 ft (15ft is preferred) to accommodate both bicyclists and motorized vehicles. Cyclists generally can operate alongside vehicles without the motorist having to change lanes to pass a bicyclist. A wide curb lane also provides more room when drivers are exiting from driveways into the travel lane. In situations where more than 15 feet of pavement width exists, consideration should be given to striping bike lanes or shoulders
	Bike lane or shoulder	<p>A shoulder for bicycle use should be a minimum 3 foot wide paved portion of the roadway. However, any shoulder width is better than <u>none at all</u>. Facility is adjacent to travel lane with no separation.</p> <p>A bike lane is a portion of the roadway designated by striping, signing, and/or pavement markings for preferential or exclusive use by bicycles. For roadways with no curb and gutter the minimum width should be 5 feet. Facility is adjacent to travel lane with no separation.</p>
	Wide bike lane or separated path	Bike lanes over 6 foot wide or path that is physically separated from the roadway and intended for use by bicyclists, pedestrians, and others.

	18000				
	16000			17,000	
					15,250
	14000				
	12000				
Average Daily Traffic		10,500			
	10000				
			9,000		
	8000				
				7,500	
	6000	6,500			6,000
			5,250		
	4000			4,250	
					3,250
	2000				
		25mph	30mph	35mph	40mph
		<i>Posted Speed Limit</i>			

Table 3.0 – Bicycle Facility Recommendations

### *Mid-block Pedestrian Crossings*

For roadways with 3 or more lanes carrying 12,000 or more vehicles per day, a raised median should be provided to accommodate areas with high mid-block pedestrian crossings. The raised median creates a safer refuge for pedestrians and breaks a long, complex crossing into two shorter ones. For all multi-lane streets carrying 15,000 or more vehicles per day, recent research indicates that it may be safer to leave the mid-block crossing unmarked, thereby encouraging the pedestrian to use a heightened level of caution when crossing.

<b>AADT</b>	<b>Crosswalk Marking</b>	<b>Refuge median</b>
Less than 12,000	YES	Optional
12,000 - 15,000	YES	Required
Greater than 15,000	NO	Required

*Table 4.0 – Pedestrian Facility Recommendations*

### *Transit*

A TIP project proposed on a roadway utilized by fixed transit service shall be required to coordinate with the transit service provider to discuss opportunities to accommodate facilities that will provide for improved safety, accessibility and comfort to transit users.

## VII. TIP PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESS WORKSHEET

Given current fiscal realities with demands for budget reductions at all levels of national, state, and local government, decisions on where and how to spend limited transportation funds should not be taken lightly. To ensure that the most beneficial projects are implemented, a project ranking process is used. When a jurisdiction/entity submits project applications to the MPO for consideration during each TIP development or amendment process, it is presented to a review committee for ranking based on the MPO's adopted goals and objectives reflected in the TIP project evaluation worksheet. Since the TIP project selection process is the primary method for implementing the federal performance measures for the MPO, projects that assist the MPO in reaching these goals are given additional weight in the selection process.

### *Project Readiness/Funding*

Key elements of a project's viability are the status or need for acquisition of right-of-way, project readiness and project funding, including local matching funds as well as the amount of federal funds requested.

### *Right-of-Way*

The amount of right of way needed affects the timely progress of a project because of the potential problems that occur with the purchase of right-of-way. Therefore, the MPO will give extra priority in the scoring of a project which requires no right-of-way. Projects with minimal right-of-way required will be ranked higher than projects requiring right-of-way. Entities should be aware that the acquisition of right-of-way for federally funded projects must meet federal guidelines.

### *Project Readiness*

If a jurisdiction has preliminary engineering done on a project, extra priority will be given. Project readiness will help ensure projects be completed as quickly as possible because of need to obligate federal funds within 3 years to prevent a lapse in funding.

### *Project Local Match*

The impact to available funding is also an important consideration of a project proposed for inclusion on the TIP. In some cases, a local government may have secured funding from other non-federal sources that may be applied to a project, which enables the project sponsor to ask for less than 80% funding from the TIP for the project. If additional funds from other sources are to be used on the project, an additional priority will be given to the project.



### *Federal Participation Cost*

The federal participation cost of a project is a very important factor to consider when prioritizing projects. The Acadiana region receives a limited amount of funds to be distributed among many jurisdictions; it is beneficial to the MPO to keep a TIP project's cost as low as possible. For this reason, the MPO promotes low-cost improvements such as, traffic operational improvements including upgraded signals and intersection geometry improvements, rather than projects that build new roads. In many cases it may be wise to consider phasing larger projects.

### *Transportation Network Conditions/Operations*

The conditions of an existing roadway or how a transportation network operates are key components to consider when evaluating potential projects for funding. There are several methods of measuring the effectiveness of a proposed project.

### *Congestion*

One way the MPO utilizes the TIP to achieve objectives of "*Relieving traffic congestion and decreasing travel time*". Points will be given to a project based on the anticipated impacts of the project on roadway congestion.

### *Traffic Flow (Congestion Management Process)*

The MPO's Congestion Management Process (CMP) provides data that measures this condition on critical roadways and intersections in the region. A higher ranking will be given to roadways identified in the CMP Reports.

### *Capacity*

Projects that improve roadway or intersection capacity and projects that improve the transportation network capacity will have a higher ranking than those with little or no impact.

### *Safety*

An improvement that corrects or improves roadways with identified safety concerns is considered a safety project. Safety improvement projects are a primary focus of the MPO. The MPO uses the TIP to accomplish the goal of "*Enhance public safety and security*". To accomplish this, the MPO will give priority to projects that mitigate safety deficiencies by identifying the intersections and roadways with a high potential for safety improvement as well as the identification of roadways with areas of concern for pedestrians and bicyclists. The proposed project will also receive points for the incorporation of proven safety countermeasures into the project.

### *Access Management*

The use of access management principals can reduce conflict points along a transportation corridor. The reduction of conflict points improves safety, reduces congestion, and improves capacity of a transportation corridor. Projects that employ access management principals will be have a higher priority ranking than those that do not.

### *Network Connectivity*

A transportation system with network connectivity provides alternative route choices for users and improves the overall efficiency of the network. Projects that connect existing roadway, pedestrian, bike or transit routes will be given a higher priority than those that do not.

### *Pavement Conditions (LA DOTD Roughness Category)*

LA DOTD measures roadway roughness for all federally-aid eligible roadways. The Roughness Category for the existing roadway, as established by LA DOTD, will be a part of the project evaluation. Pavement condition is a significant performance measure for the MPO.

### *Policy/Plan Conformance*

To ensure that MPO funding for transportation projects and programs are based on a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) planning process, projects will be evaluated on their conformance to various Federal, State, MPO and Local plans and policies.

### *Conformance with MPO/Local Entity Plans*

The MPO has adopted several plans that are used to determine improvements to the transportation network in the MPO Planning Area. These plans include the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Bike Plan and the Pedestrian Plan. Information on each plan can be obtained from the MPO staff or the MPO website ( [mpo.planacadiana.org](http://mpo.planacadiana.org)).

In addition to MPO plans, local entities are also encouraged to develop local transportation plans consistent with MPO Plans. Projects identified within Local Master Plans will be given a higher priority than those that are not.

Potential projects that are not in conformance with any MPO Plans will be considered as lower priority projects.

### *MPO Complete Streets Policy*

To create a comprehensive, integrated, connected transportation network for the MPO Area that balances access, mobility, health and safety needs of motorists, transit users, bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities, the MPO adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2014. The MPO's Complete Streets Policy is applicable for all projects that involve federal or state funding or approval. Projects that comply with MPO's Complete Streets Policy will be given a higher priority than those that do not.

#### *Pedestrian and Bike Mobility*

To achieve the objective of "Enhance bicycle, pedestrian and transit mobility and accessibility" the MPO gives additional points to projects that incorporate sidewalks and pedestrian facilities as well as measures used to provide for the safety and accessibility of pedestrians and bicyclists. The extent that projects address identified pedestrian or bicycle needs will be measured by the number and type of pedestrian or bicycle strategies used. Each proposed project that incorporates pedestrian and bicycle strategies listed under Bike/Pedestrian Improvements in Table 1.0 will be given added priority.

#### *Functional Classification (DOTD)*

DOTD, in conjunction with FHWA and the MPO, has developed a Functional Classification map for the MPO area that identifies the roadways that are eligible for federal aid funding. This map classifies roadways by functionality and identifies Primary Arterials, Minor Arterials and Major and Minor Collectors. Evaluation points will be based on the roadway's functional classification.

#### *Multimodal*

To accomplish the goal "Enhance Transportation System Mobility, Accessibility, and Quality for All Roadway Users and Modes" the MPO will give priority to projects that support the facilitation of transit. This is achieved by the identification of inter-modal connectors and transit routes in the region and the assignment of priority to the projects requested on those roadways. In addition, projects that incorporate measures to support the efficient movement of transit that are listed under the project type Transit System Improvements in Table 1.0 will be given added priority.

#### *Freight Network*

The Federal Highway Administration identifies roads that are critical to freight movements. These are roads that are adjacent to Ports, Airports and Major Interstate that facilitate large freight carrying type trucks. Any project that is on one of these roads and helps freight movements will be given a positive grade in this category.