

Notice:
US Department of Transportation
Request for Public Comments
on the
Baton Rouge
Transportation Planning Process

Due by December 22, 2023



Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration

Table of Contents

- Introduction 3
- Background 4-8
- Transportation Planning Process ... 9-21
- Comments 22-23

Introduction

- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are reviewing the Baton Rouge **transportation planning process** conducted with Federal funds for compliance with Federal requirements.
- The **Baton Rouge Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**, hosted by the Capital Region Planning Commission, manages the transportation planning process in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), local governments, and local transit operators.
- Your **comments** are a **valuable** part of this review.

Background

- Per Federal requirements, every 4 years FTA and FHWA must jointly review the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in urbanized areas with a population over 200,000.
- FHWA and FTA must ensure the requirements of Federal law and regulations are implemented by all planning partners involved (MPO, public transit providers, DOTD, etc.).
- This review includes seeking public comment on the transportation planning process.

Background

What Will Happen with Your Comments?

- Your comments are considered while FHWA and FTA evaluate the transportation planning process.
- Comments received on or before December 22nd will be included in the report produced for this review.
- Instructions for sending comments are at the end of this presentation.

Background

What will be the Outcome of this Review?

- A report of review findings will provide recommendations and/or corrective actions as needed.
- Promising practices may be highlighted.
- The final report is anticipated by the end of March 2024.
- If the planning process is found to meet Federal law and regulations, then the Baton Rouge planning process will be certified.

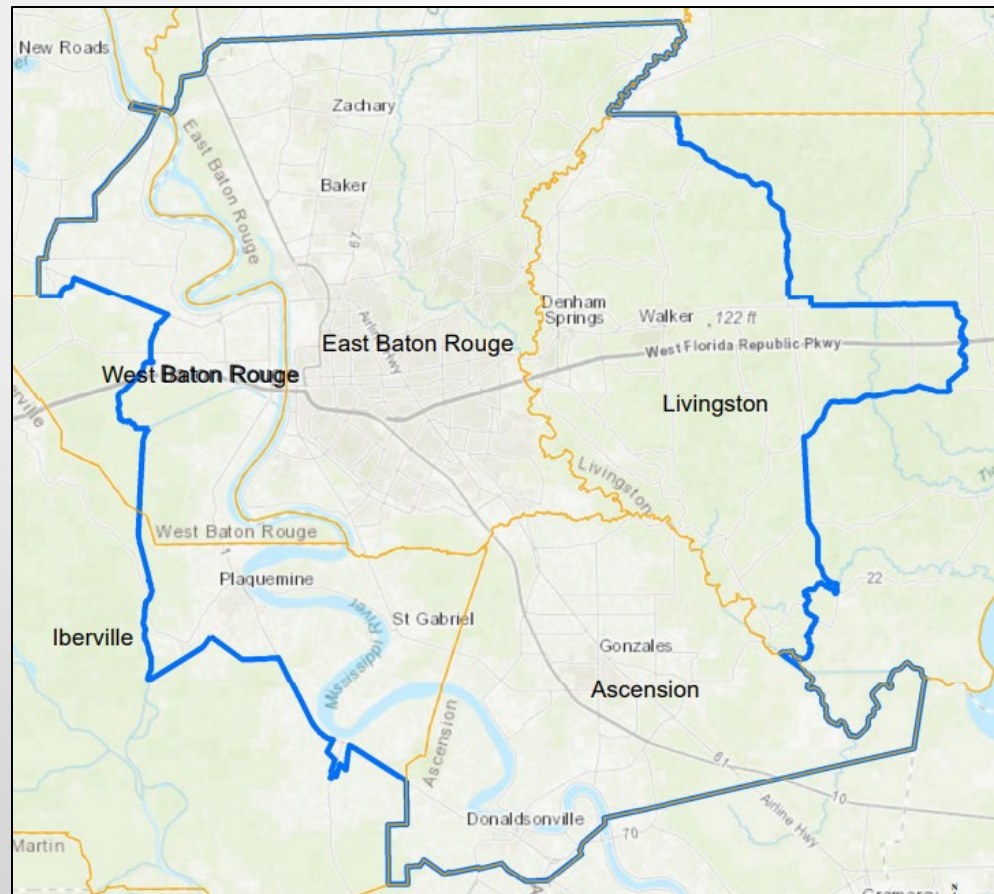
Background

Baton Rouge Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Structure

- **Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC):** provides staff to carry out the transportation planning process
- **Transportation Policy Committee (TPC):** Local elected officials and a Capital Area Transit System representative; the decision-making body regarding use of Federal transportation funds
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):** Transportation professionals from local governments; provides technical advice to the TPC and MPO staff
- Other committees convened by the TPC as needed

Background

Planning Area: This map shows the extents of the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA).





The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process

What is the Transportation Planning Process?

A process by which transportation decisions are made and projects are:

- Planned
- Selected
- Prioritized

Why is the Metropolitan Planning Process Important?

- **Decides** how a substantial share of Federal transportation **funding is spent** in each metropolitan planning area.
- With limited funding, regional **needs** must be **prioritized**, and the preferred **program of spending** must be identified.
- Determines the components, quality, and condition of the **future transportation system**.
- **Precedes** the environmental process, engineering work, and construction for a capital project.

In Baton Rouge, Who is Involved?

- Baton Rouge Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
 - Transportation Policy Committee (TPC): elected officials & Capital Area Transit System representative; decision-makers; mandatory
 - Transportation Advisory Committee: transportation professionals representing TPC member jurisdictions; optional
 - Other Advisory Committees: various, as needed, optional
 - MPO Staff: provided by the CRPC; performs planning work
- Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development
- Public Transit Operators
- Local Jurisdictions (municipalities, parishes)
- Residents
- Interest Groups and Stakeholders
- FTA & FHWA

Planning Approach

- “3 –Cs”
 - Continuing
 - Cooperative
 - Comprehensive
- Multimodal
 - For motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, freight shippers
- Public and stakeholder input

Federal Planning Factors

These issues must be considered:

- **Economic** vitality
- **Safety** for all users
- **Security**
- **Accessibility** and **mobility** for **people** and **freight**
- **Environmental** protection/enhancement, **energy** conservation, **quality of life**, **consistency** with other plans
- **Connectivity** across transportation modes
- **Management & operations**, for efficiency
- **Preservation**
- **Resiliency** and **reliability**; reduce/mitigate **storm water impacts** of surface transportation
- **Travel** and **tourism**

Required Products

- **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP):** Annual
- **Congestion Management Process (CMP):** Prior to MTP development
- **Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):** Min. 20-year planning horizon; update every 4 years in air quality maintenance areas
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** 4-year program of transportation projects; updated every 4 years
- **Public Participation Plan (PPP):** Procedures to obtain public input

What is a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)?

- A document that describes the planning activities and costs, to be completed by the MPO staff and/or consultants (a scope of work)
- Must be updated annually
- “A Plan for Planning Activities” – the work plan for MPO staff

What is a Congestion Management Process (CMP)?

- A procedure for the analysis, selection and application of strategies to improve transportation system performance and reliability
- Systematic and regionally-accepted approach for managing traffic congestion
- Includes:
 - travel demand management (e.g. carpool, vanpool, transit benefits, parking cash-out, shuttles, intercity buses, facilities for pedestrian and bicyclists, telework, alternative work schedules, real-time traffic info, etc.)
 - job access projects and programs
 - operational management strategies
 - new highways, roads, and lanes for motorists are a last resort

What is a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)?

- Long-range plan for the Metro Planning Area (MPA) addressing multiple modes of transportation
- Minimum 20-year forecast of regional transportation needs and guide to potential solutions
- Contains a vision, goals, objectives, recommended strategies and projects, and a financial plan
- Includes projects that can be funded with anticipated dollars and unfunded visionary projects
- Developed with public and stakeholder input
- Updated every 4 years in air quality maintenance areas (such as Baton Rouge)
- Conforms to Federal Clean Air Standards

What is a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?

- A document prioritizing projects for funding and implementation in the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA)
- 4-year list of financially “doable” projects (usually begins with the first years of the MTP); a program of projects that can be accomplished with anticipated funds
- For air quality maintenance areas (such as Baton Rouge), the program of projects must not cause emissions to exceed established limits

Public Participation Plan (PPP)

Procedures the MPO staff use to seek input from the public and stakeholders, addressing:

- Timely notice and access to information, including via the Internet
- Convenient and accessible meetings
- Use of illustrations and graphics in documents and presentations
- Consideration of comments received
- Consideration of the needs of traditionally underserved populations
- Consultation with State and local agencies
- Coordination with State's planning process
- Periodic Review of PPP effectiveness
- Comment period of 45 days required for revisions to the PPP

How do the products fit together?

- **UPWP:** Annual description of planning activities including CMP, MTP, and TIP development.
- **CMP:** identifies strategies to inform MTP and TIP development.
- **MTP:** Forecasts needs for at least 20 years. Prioritizes projects to include in the TIP. Guides all transportation planning decisions.
- **TIP:** 4-year program of projects that are consistent with the MTP and reasonably fundable.
- **PPP:** Guides the selection and use of processes and techniques to seek input from the public and stakeholders throughout the planning process.

Comments?

Consider:

- Do you have an adequate opportunity to participate in the MPO's transportation planning process?
- Do you have the chance to comment on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?
- Have you provided comments on the MTP, TIP, or the Public Participation Plan (PPP)?
- What do you think of the process?

Written Comments

Send written comments to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) by December 22, 2023.

- **FHWA**

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