



**Memphis MPO**  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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## **Memphis MPO Launches Regional Study: Community Response Needed for Future Transportation Planning**

What transportation services work to make the area's communities more profitable, enjoyable, and environmentally sound? What infrastructure should be built or changed for better mobility? What cost-effective transportation solutions will reduce congestion and increase the quality of life for the citizenry? These are some of the questions the Memphis Urban Area MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) seek to answer through the launch of its "Mid-South Regional Travel Survey" campaign beginning late October 2013 and running through May 2014.

The Memphis MPO, in cooperation with the Mississippi and Tennessee Departments of Transportation, has commissioned Cambridge Systematics, a transportation-focused consulting firm, along with Dikita Engineering, to conduct this study in order to provide planners and officials with up-to-date travel information within the region. The results will help the Memphis MPO in the development of its Long Range Transportation Plan and in prioritizing future transportation projects for the region. This study will spotlight transit riders, households and car riders, freight and truck transport, pedestrians, and bicyclists and will incorporate surveys, travel information, and existing data. All participation is completely voluntary and the information gathered will be kept strictly confidential.

The Memphis MPO is asking for earnest community support and input throughout this study in order to gain the most accurate and in-depth information needed to advance the area's transportation needs.

Pragati Srivastava, Administrator of the Memphis MPO stated, "We can't improve the way things move without knowing what people need. The travel data we have now is at least 15 years old. What people need and want has changed a lot in that time."

The regional data collected will be drawn from portions of the Memphis TN-AR-MS Metropolitan Statistical Area located within the States of Tennessee and Mississippi. The study area for the household travel survey will consist of the following seven counties within the Memphis metro area: Fayette, Shelby, and Tipton Counties in Tennessee; and DeSoto, Marshall, Tate, and Tunica Counties in Mississippi.

Memphis Mayor A C Wharton, Chairman of the MPO's Transportation Policy Board said, "It has to be

regional to be successful. Memphis may be the hub, but people move from one city to another, one county to another, and even one state to another. Having a choice of effective transportation options is a big part of creating prosperous communities."

The "Mid-South Regional Travel Survey" campaign will also help with the Memphis MPO's "Livability" program. Using principles developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Memphis MPO is incorporating livability into the planning process as proposed by the HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) supports livable communities through funding transportation related projects and sponsoring activities to enable people to live closer to jobs, save households time and money, and reduce pollution. Livability is about tying the quality and location of transportation infrastructures and services to broader opportunities such as access to good jobs, affordable housing, and safer streets.

"We hope people, when asked, will participate," said Srivastava. "As we make important decisions on everything from what roads to expand to where we need bike lanes, their input will help us make better decisions that will, in turn, knit and grow our communities together for the health and well-being of future generations."

People can learn more about the effort at <http://www.memphismpo.org>.

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