



**Memphis MPO**  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Memphis MPO's Regional Transportation Study Launches First Phase with Transit Focus.**

Beginning late October and running through November 2013, bus and trolley riders might notice a few extra on-board passengers counting, engaging, and asking questions about their transit experience during their commute and at their bus stops.

As the first phase of four of its "Mid-South Regional Travel Survey" campaign, the Memphis Urban Area MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization), in cooperation with the Mississippi and Tennessee Departments of Transportation and MATA (Memphis Area Transit Authority), has commissioned Cambridge Systematics, a transportation-focused consulting firm, along with Dikita Engineering, to survey transit riders. The results of this survey will provide planners and officials with up-to-date analyses on transit services, efficiencies, and policies that will help steer future planning for improved ridership experiences. It will help guide funding for transit projects to ease and accelerate travel in the region and meet the requirements for federal transportation funding.

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, "Transit riders' needs are rapidly changing with technology, environmental concerns, and economics. This survey will go a long way in helping us define the riders' needs and plan for the future accordingly as well as fulfill mandatory FTA requirements. Without their help, we're left using old information."

The survey will take about 5-10 minutes and will include questions about locations of origin and destination, accessibility, costs and fares, ease and convenience, and purpose of travel. All participation is entirely voluntary and will be kept strictly confidential. Those who participate will be entered into a drawing and eligible to win a free 31-day Fast Pass.

This transit study is part of the larger "Mid-South Regional Travel Survey" transportation study that not only includes bus and trolley riders, but will also incorporate research on car drivers, freight transport, pedestrians, and bicyclists, ending in May 2014.

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 want to strongly encourage riders to participate when asked as this will help us help them," said Srivastava. "Their input is vital and will positively impact transit decisions that will serve our communities now and well into the future."

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

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