
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: MDOT: VISION 21 PROPOSAL
DATE: 1/21/2002
CC: FILE

You are meeting with Butch Brown and George Smith of MDOT at 8:00 in the morning for them to brief you on the department's Vision 21 proposal.

MDOT refers to Vision 21 as its needs-based "pay-as-you-go" construction program, which will address the state's highway needs into the 21st Century. The program combines the Gaming Roads Program, Phase 4 of the 1987 Four-lane Program and other highway needs based on a statewide analysis of Mississippi's existing interstate and major highway network. MDOT has stated that, if passed, Vision 21 will provide for construction of four-lane highways or the upgrading of existing highways in those areas with the greatest traffic capacity need.

MDOT has projected that Vision 21 will cost \$3.6 billion, with \$200 million per year starting in 2006. The department contends that its current level of transportation revenues can be used for Vision 21 on a pay-as-you-go basis. MDOT has projected that immediate needs (depicted in red on the attached map) will cost \$2.3 billion, with mid-range needs (yellow on map) costing \$1.3 billion. However, this \$3.6 billion does not include costs for the long-range needs (green on map) and MDOT did not factor inflation into the Vision 21 cost estimate. Not factoring in inflation costs has been cited in the past as contributing to the 1987 Program exceeding projected costs. MDOT has stated that the Legislature must allow MDOT flexibility in deciding whether to fund any and all projects with either state or federal funds. If flexibility is approved, MDOT contends that it can continue with required federal "set aside" programs, bridge replacement projects, interstate maintenance, maintenance overlays, or local needs.

MDOT officials did state in a House Transportation committee meeting last week, that although the first five years of Vision 21 will actually incorporate Phase 4 (1987 Four-lane Program) projects, it is possible that new roads could be put ahead of Phase 4 projects, based on capacity needs of these new roads. Rep. Mayo is specifically interested in the status/completion of Highway 6 between Batesville and Clarksdale. Vision 21 classifies this segment as a "long range" segment.