MPO 101
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF AN MPO

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Purpose

• What is an MPO?
• MPO requirements
• Relationship of MPOs to the larger picture of transportation planning
• Federal law
What is an MPO?

- A transportation policy-making and planning body with representatives of local, state & federal government and transportation authorities.
- Federal law requires in urbanized areas of 50,000 +
- 384 MPOs in the US
- Ensures federal spending on transportation occurs through a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) process.
- Variety of organizational arrangements – “hosted” by another agency; stand-alone; existing agency designated as MPO.
Federal Finances for an MPO

• MPOs receive Federal funds
  – Highway
  – Transit

• 20% match requirement to the Federal funds
Who is the MPO?

- Elected Officials
- State Agencies
- Municipalities, Counties & Regional Agencies
- Transit Operators
- Public
- Federal Agencies
- Private Sector
- Interest Groups
Why an MPO?

• Transportation investment means **allocating scarce transportation funding resources appropriately**

• Planning needs to reflect the **region’s shared vision** for the future

• Requires a **comprehensive examination** of the region’s future and investment alternatives

• MPO **facilitates collaboration** of governments, interested parties, and residents
MPO Federally Required Functions

• Establish a setting – fair & impartial
• Evaluation of transportation alternatives
• Maintain a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
• Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
• Involve the public – residents and key affected subgroups
# MPO Products

| Unified Planning Work Program | 1-2 years | Planning Studies Tasks Budget | Annual |
| Metropolitan Transportation Plan | 20 years (minimum) | Future Goals Strategies and Products | 4 years for air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas; 5 years for air quality attainment areas |
| Transportation Improvement Program | 4 years | Transportation Investment Projects | 4 years |
Subjects for MPO Long Range Plans

MAP 21 required planning factors:

• Economic vitality
• Safety
• Security
• Accessibility and mobility
• Environmental areas, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life
• Integration and connectivity
• Management & operations
• Preservation
"Typical" MPO Structure

- MPO Policy Board
  - Executive/Management Committee
  - Citizens Advisory Committee
  - Planning Committee
    - Subcommittees
  - Other Special Standing and ad hoc Committees

MPO Professional Staff
Planning Committee:
• An advisory body to the MPO Board for transportation issues, primarily technical in nature
• Oversees MPO technical work and develops recommendations on projects and programs for Board consideration
• Meets on regular schedule
• Usually comprised of staff-level officials of local, state & federal agencies
“Typical” MPO Structure

Citizen Advisory Committee

• Acts in an advisory capacity to MPO on public involvement strategies
• Meets regularly to review and develop plans and also assists in organizing and managing public meetings and comments
• Comprised of members of the public
  – Often appointed by localities and MPO policy board
  – May include representatives of community, environmental & other interested parties
Resources

• Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program – [www.planning.dot.gov/metro.asp](http://www.planning.dot.gov/metro.asp)
  – *The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process: Key Issues – A Briefing Notebook for MPO Board Members*

• Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) [www.ampo.org](http://www.ampo.org)
Resources

• Federal Highway Administration (www.fhwa.dot.gov)

• FHWA Resource Centers (www.fhwa.dot.gov/resoucecenter)

• Federal Transit Administration (www.fta.dot.gov)
Contact Us

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