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Metropolitan Transportation Planning: Executive Seminar

FHWA/FTA Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program

Developed by the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center

Seminar agenda

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Introduction

Purpose of this seminar

To provide MPO board members with an overview of the federal perspective on:

- The purpose and process of metropolitan transportation planning, and the larger context for it
- The authority and responsibilities of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- The role of the MPO Board

Learning objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Explain the value of regional transportation planning
- Describe the functions and purpose of an MPO
- Explain the role and responsibilities of an MPO board member
- Describe key products of the metropolitan planning process
- Recall the Federal requirements for metropolitan transportation planning

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Planning for Transportation

What is transportation?

Transportation is different modes, working as a system, for the safe, efficient movement of people and goods

The transportation system is more than roadways**What is transportation planning?**

Transportation planning provides the information, tools, and public involvement needed for improving transportation system performance

Transportation planning is a continuous process that requires monitoring of the system's performance and condition

What decisions are influenced by transportation planning?

- Policies
- Choices among alternative strategies
- Priorities
- Funding allocations

Transportation planning is about more than transportation

- Land Use (State and local law)
- Clean Air Act / Air Quality Standards
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Title VI / Environmental Justice

Regional transportation planning is essential

- Regions face shared challenges in relation to transportation mobility, safety, and security
- Transportation initiatives can involve major financial investments with long life spans

Regional planning involves many contributors

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Agencies • Local Government • User & Other Groups • Private Sector • Legal System • Federal Government • Tribal Governments • States 	<p>And MUST involve the Public</p>
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The MPO...

- Is the required "forum for cooperative transportation decisionmaking for the metropolitan area"
23 CFR 450.104
- Is the engine driving regional collaboration and coordination
- Must meet regional transportation needs while being responsive to community interests and local by-laws and policies

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Anatomy of an MPO

A Metropolitan Planning Organization...

- Has the authority of Federal law
- Is a representative group of local stakeholders
- Leads the transportation planning process for the metropolitan area
- Is the region's policymaking organization responsible for prioritizing transportation initiatives
- Carries out the metro transportation planning process in cooperation with the State DOT(s) and transit operators

All "urbanized areas" are required to have an MPO or be part of an MPO

The MPO must work with others

- **Actively** seek the participation of all relevant agencies
- **Actively** seek input from the general public
- **Cooperate** with the State and public transit providers and **coordinate** with other transportation providers

MPO structure

- An MPO is required to have a decisionmaking "policy body"
- Beyond this, there is no required structure for an MPO, but most are made up of
 - A Policy or Executive Board
 - Technical and Citizen Advisory Committees
 - A director and staff

The MPO Board

- Takes approval actions
- Sets regional long-term transportation policy and approves plans
- Prioritizes and programs specific transportation initiatives for funding

Who sits on the Board?

- Required in TMAs/encouraged everywhere:

- Local elected officials
- Transportation operators
- Appropriate State officials
- Other possible members:
 - Representatives from private and not-for-profit sectors
 - General public

Membership should be as diverse as the region

In making decisions, the Board should consider...

- Public comments and community values
- Long-term vision for the region
- Effect on system operations
- Impacts on the environment and the economy
- Comparison with alternative options
- Cost effectiveness and short- and long-term availability of funding
- Federal, State, and local regulations and plans
- Whether **more information** is needed

How does the Board obtain technical analyses?

- MPO staff provide committees with technical assessments and evaluations of proposed transportation initiatives
- The Technical Advisory Committee provides recommendations to the board on specific strategies or projects
- Staff may engage consultants to generate needed data

Role of Advisory Committees

- Committees provide technical analysis, specialized knowledge, and citizen input on specific issues
- A Technical Advisory Committee and Citizen Advisory Committee are common
- Subcommittees examples:
 - Environmental Justice
 - Bicycle Advisory
 - Travel Demand Modeling

Role of the MPO Staff

- Provide information and technical support to board members and advisory committees
- Prepare documents
- Foster interagency coordination

- Facilitate public input and feedback
- Manage the planning process

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MPO Process and Products

Transportation planning and programming

<p>Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a vision • Creating policies and strategies to support the vision • Long-term horizon 	<p>Programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing proposed initiatives • Matching initiatives with available funds • Short-term horizon
<p>The public must be involved in both</p>	

Basic requirements

- **Reflect**
 - The "3C" planning process
 - The seven TEA-21 planning factors
- **Develop**
 - A Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) or simplified statement of work
 - Public involvement process/plan (PIP)
 - Financial Plan
- **Produce and maintain**
 - A Long-Range Transportation Plan
 - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Three C's

A **Comprehensive**, **Cooperative**, and **Continuing** process is required for initiatives to be eligible for Federal transportation funding

TEA-21 Planning Factors

The Board is required to consider:

- Economic vitality of the region
- Safety and security of the transportation system
- Accessibility and mobility options
- Environmental protection, energy conservation, and quality of life
- Integration and connectivity of the system

- Efficient system management and operations
- System preservation

The UPWP/Simplified Statement of Work

TMAAs **must** prepare a UPWP:

- Planning tasks and studies to be conducted
- Any transportation-related air quality planning tasks
- All Federally funded studies
- State/local planning activities conducted without Federal funds
- Funding sources identified for each project
- Schedule of activities
- Agency responsible for each task or study

The UPWP/Simplified Statement of Work

All other MPOs may prepare a simplified statement of work:

- Work that will be accomplished using Federal funds
- Who will perform the work
- MPO requests OK for this option from FHWA and FTA

Why do financial planning?

- Ensures realistic plans and programs
- Identifies funding shortfalls and establish strategies to overcome them Meets Federal requirements

What is "fiscal constraint"?

The cost of an initiative must not exceed the level of reasonably available revenue.

"Costs" depend on the initiative...

- Maintenance of existing infrastructure
- Improvement of existing system operations through modification (e.g., Intelligent Transportation Systems)
- New Project costs must also cover projected operating and maintenance

Who provides funding for MPO transportation initiatives?

- Federal government (FHWA, FTA)
- State government

- Local governments
- Transportation agencies
- Public-private partnerships

About Federal funding

- Many types, including:
 - Special programs (e.g., Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality [CMAQ] Program)
 - Formula-based funding
 - Transit
 - Earmarked
- Most pass to implementers through the State DOT, based on MPO priorities
- Nearly all Federal funding programs require matching funds from State or local sources

Public Involvement Process

- Public involvement is a process, but may be formalized in a written document
- The public involvement process should be
 - **Proactive**
 - **Early and continuing**
 - **Open and collaborative**
- A formal Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is required of TMAs

Components of effective public involvement programs

- Be committed
- Articulate your objectives
- Understand your stakeholders and their issues
- Use a variety of techniques
- Evaluate and refine your approach

For some success stories, go to www.planning.dot.gov

The Long-Range Transportation Plan

- Describes vision for the region, and policies, operational strategies, and projects to achieve it
- Covers at least the next 20 years
- Leads to an intermodal system
- Reflects public involvement
- Contains a financial plan and is fiscally constrained

- Is updated every 3-5 years

Fiscal constraint and the Transportation Plan

- Include a **financial plan** demonstrating consistency with available and projected revenues
- Identify proposed new revenue sources and strategies to ensure their availability



Good Long-Range Planning Practice

[Graphic above illustrates the following items in a circle with arrows between them to indicate the progression of the process:]

- Vision & Goals
- Objectives
- Problem Identification
- Alternatives
- Analysis & Evaluation
- Plan Approval
- Program Development
- Initiative Development & Operation
- Monitoring

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- A staged, multi-year, intermodal program of prioritized transportation initiatives consistent with Plan
- Shows annual activity for a 3-year period
- Contains a financial plan and is fiscally constrained
- An initiative **not** listed in the TIP cannot receive FHWA or FTA funds
- Reflects public involvement
- Must be updated at least every 2 years

Fiscal constraint and the TIP

- Financially constrained **by year**
- Demonstrates which projects can be implemented with current revenue sources
- Identifies strategies for ensuring the availability of new funding sources
- In non-attainment/maintenance areas, only projects with available or committed funding can appear in first 2 years of TIP
- Must ensure funding for ongoing management and operation of systems

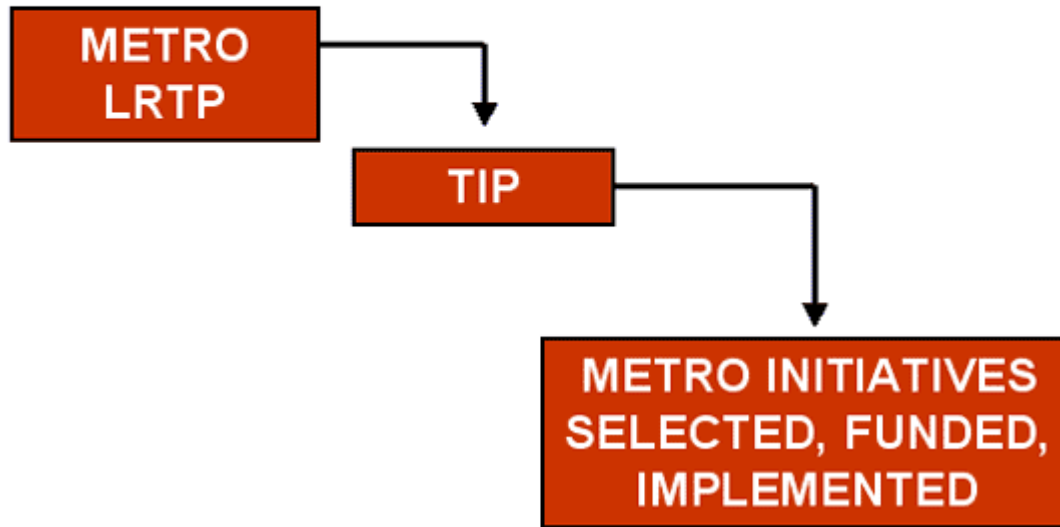
An effective TIP development process...

- Is part of a multimodal planning process
- Represents sound financial planning
- Contains only those initiatives consistent with Long-Range Plan
- Reflects early consensus and early screening of proposed initiatives
- Results from technical and policy leader buy-in

What does air quality have to do with projects?

- Transportation initiatives and TIPs must **conform** with the **State Improvement Plan** for achieving **air quality** standards (the **SIP**)
- During a conformity lapse, many types of Federal-aid funding cannot be used

The MPO planning process



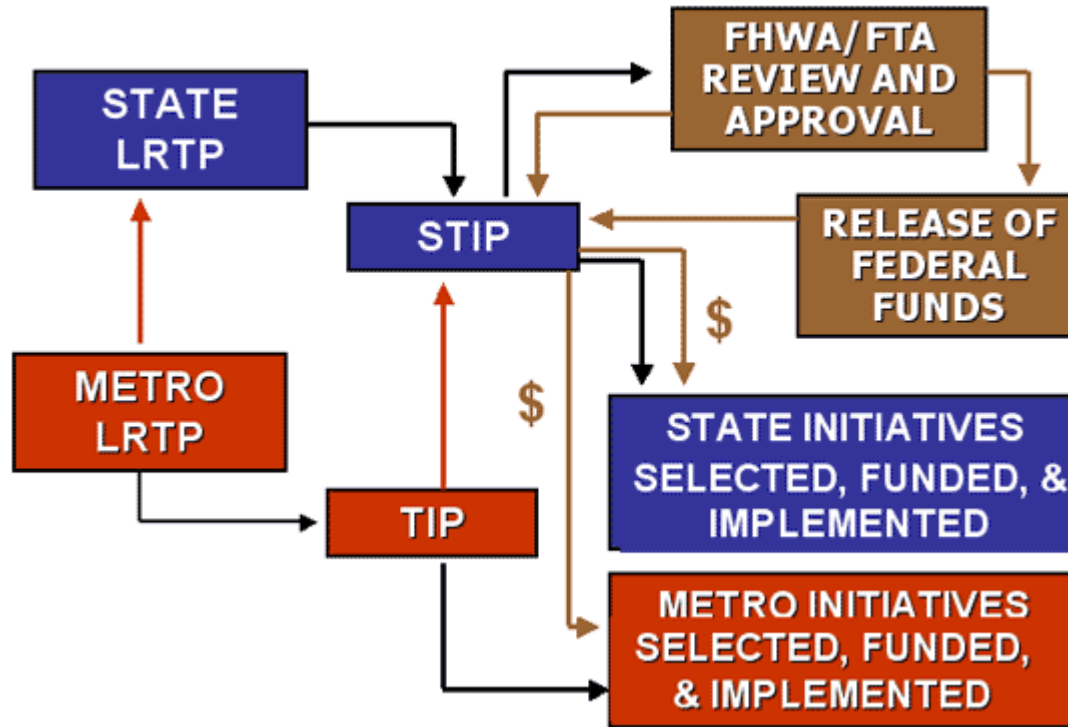
The MPO planning process

[Graphic above illustrates "METRO LRTP" with an arrow pointing down to "TIP" which has an arrow pointing down to "Metro Initiatives Selected, Funded, Implemented"]

The role of the State in transportation planning

- Carries out a "continuing, comprehensive, and intermodal statewide transportation planning process"
23 CFR 450.200
- Develops a vision and strategy for the transportation system throughout the State
- Coordinates with and incorporates transportation plans and programs developed by MPOs
- Performs planning for non-urbanized areas
- Oversees distribution of Federal planning funds and State and Federal project funds

The Statewide Planning Process



The Statewide Planning Process

[Graphic above illustrates the flow of information in the Statewide Planning Process among the following entities: FHWA/FTA REVIEW AND APPROVAL, RELEASE OF FEDERAL FUNDS, STATE INITIATIVES SELECTED, FUNDED, & IMPLEMENTED, METRO INITIATIVES SELECTED, FUNDED, & IMPLEMENTED, TIP, STIP, METRO LRTP, STATE LRTP.]

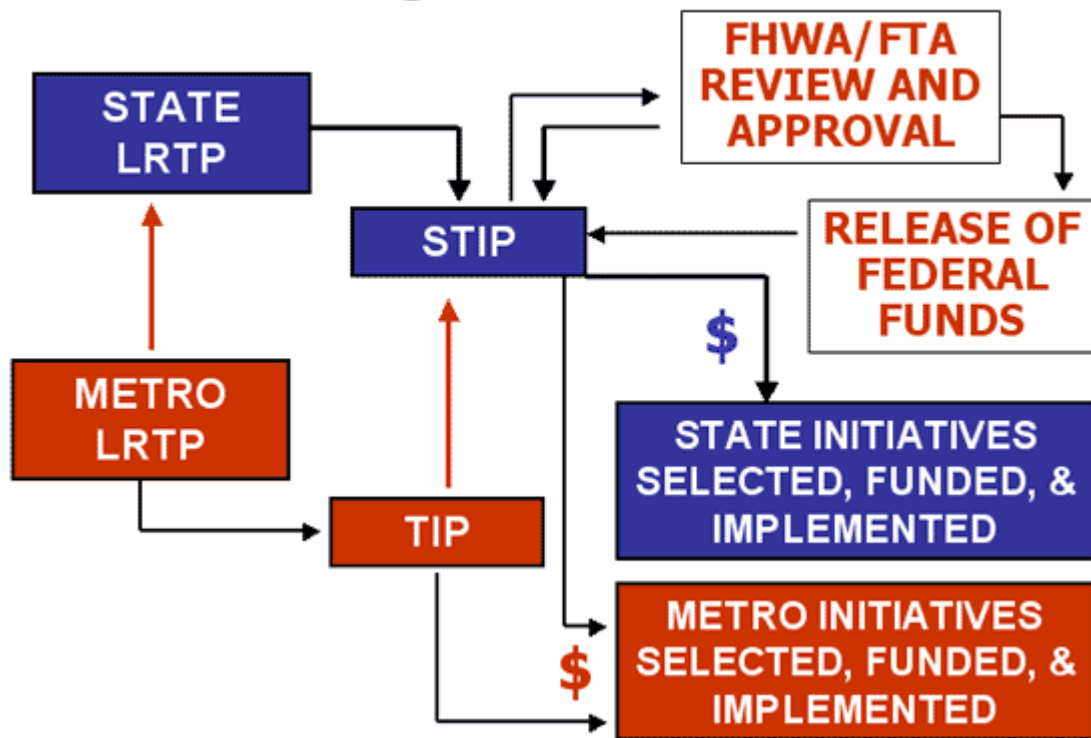
Responsibilities, cooperation, and coordination

- The MPO, in cooperation with the State and transit operators, is responsible for carrying out the metro transportation planning process.
23 CFR 450.210

The State is to assist the TIP development process by providing estimates of available federal and State funds.
23 CFR 450.216(a)

- The MPO approves the Long-Range Transportation Plan and updates, and
- The MPO and the Governor approve the TIP and amendments; an approved TIP goes into the STIP without modification.
23 CFR 450.312

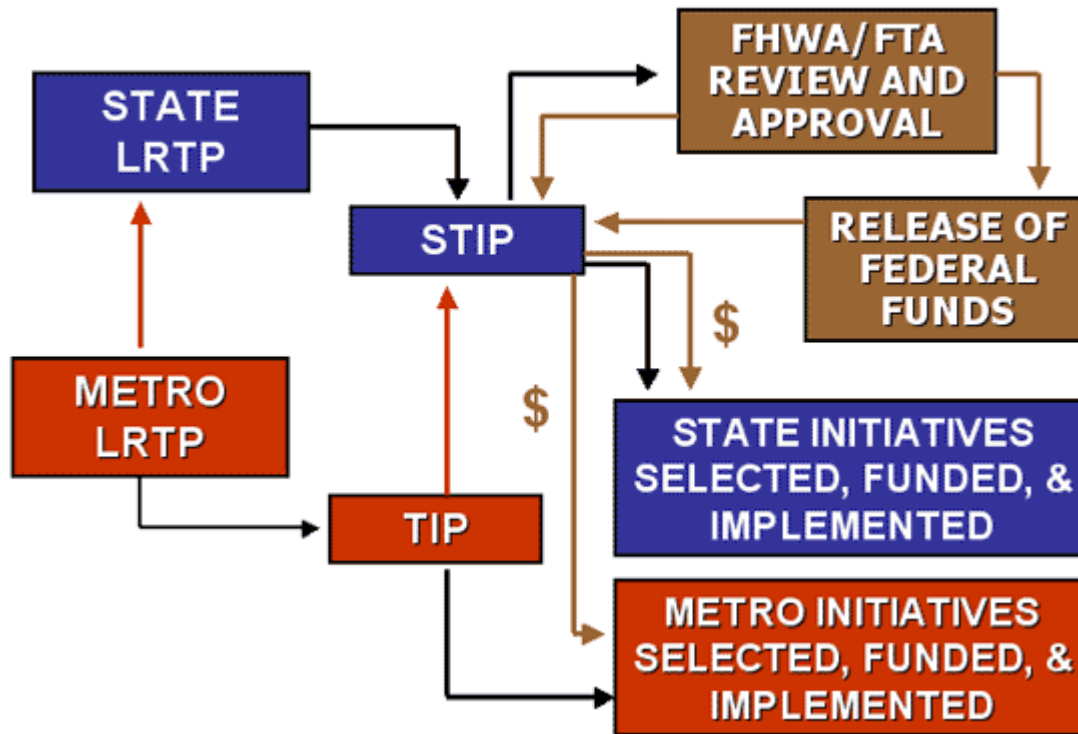
Working with the state



Working with the state

[Graphic above illustrates Working With the State and shows the flow of information between following entities: FHWA/FTA REVIEW & APPROVAL; RELEASE OF FEDERAL FUNDS; STATE INITIATIVES SELECTED, FUNDED & IMPLEMENTED; METRO INITIATIVES SELECTED, FUNDED & IMPLEMENTED; TIP; STIP; METRO L RTP; STATE L RTP.]

Working With the State



Working with the state

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Other benefits of cooperation

- Sharing of data
- Assistance with technical analyses
- Sound fiscal projections
- Coordinated public involvement outreach
- System synergy and connectivity
- Optimal planning outcomes

KEY: Early consultation, positive-sum negotiation, and continual two-way communication

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Conclusions

Effective planning pays off

- Modal connectivity to provide access, mobility, and ease in travel for all citizens
- Quality communities
- Environmental protection
- Regional economic development
- Safer, more secure transportation systems
- Equitable and efficient use of scarce financial resources

Where you can get more information

- The Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program — www.planning.dot.gov
- FHWA Resource Center — www.fhwa.dot.gov/resourcecenter
- FHWA Division Offices — www.fhwa.dot.gov/about/field.cfm
- FTA Regional Offices — www.transit.dot.gov/

Review of Learning Objectives

- Explain the value of regional transportation planning
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