

The Saginaw Metropolitan Area Transportation Study



A Metropolitan Planning Organization Primer

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Evolution of Transportation Planning and the MPO

Invention of Automobile in 1893.

Automobile venturing out of cities in 1904.

Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1925: Adopted the US Numbered Highway System.

Completed the construction of two-lane roads connecting major population centers by early 1930s.

Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1934: Funds created for survey, engineering, and economic analysis of future highway construction.

Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944: Created Federal-Aid Primary and Federal-Aid Secondary Systems of Highways. Formula allocation of funds (area, population, postal route miles).

Highway Revenue Act of 1956: Created Highway Trust Fund.

Housing Act of 1961: The act permitted federal aid to facilitate comprehensive planning for urban development, including *coordinated transportation systems on continuing basis*.

Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962: First act to mandate urban transportation planning as a condition of receiving federal funds in urbanized areas. Required that approval of any federal-aid highway project in an urbanized area of 50,000 or more in population be based on a *continuing, comprehensive urban transportation planning process carried out cooperatively by state and local governments* (3C Planning Process).

Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973: Established MPOs responsible for comprehensive transportation planning in urban areas. Increased the role of local officials in the selection of urban highway projects and broadened the scope of transportation planning.

Designation of the MPO

A Metropolitan Planning Organization shall be designated for each urbanized area of more than 50,000 population by *agreement among the Governor and units of general purpose local government* which together represent at least 75 percent of the affected population or in accordance with procedures established by applicable State and local law (23 U.S.C. 134 (b) (1)).

Transportation Management Area (TMA) MPO

The Transportation Management Area (TMA) MPO is an MPO for an urbanized area with a population of over 200,000 (as determined by the latest decennial census) or other areas when TMA designation is requested by the Governor and the MPO (or affected local officials), and officially designated by the Administrators of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The TMA designation applies to entire metropolitan area (23 CFR 450.100).

Boundary of the MPO

The metropolitan planning area boundary shall, as a minimum, cover the *urbanized areas and the contiguous geographic area likely to become urbanized within the twenty-year forecast period* covered by the transportation plan. The boundary may encompass the entire metropolitan statistical area or consolidated metropolitan statistical area as defined by the Bureau of the Census (23 CFR 450.308 (a)).

Who is the MPO

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) means a *forum* for cooperative transportation decision making for the metropolitan planning area (23CFR 450.104). The voting members of an MPO policy body must include *representation of local elected official, officials of agencies that administer or operate major modes or systems of transportation, and appropriate state officials* (23CFR 450.306 (I)).

Agreements

The responsibilities for cooperatively carrying out transportation planning and programming shall be clearly identified in an agreement or memorandum of understanding between the *State* and the *MPO* (23 CFR 450.310 (a)).

There shall be an agreement between the *MPO* and *operators of publicly owned transit services* which specifies cooperative procedures for carrying out transportation planning and programming (23 CFR 450.310 (b)).

Role of the MPO

As stipulated in 23 CFR 450.312, the Metropolitan Planning Organization *in cooperation with the State and with operators of publicly owned transit services* shall be responsible for carrying out the *Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process*. They shall cooperatively develop:

- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
- Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

In TMAs, the MPO must comply with the special requirements applicable to such areas regarding:

- Congestion Management System.
- Project Selection Criteria.
- Certification.

Metropolitan Transportation Process involves:

- Considering and reflecting the MPO Planning Elements (ISTEA) or Planning Areas (TEA-21). (See Appendix A for these elements or areas).
- Having a proactive Public Involvement Process (PIP).

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

According to 23 CFR 450.314, in TMAs, the MPOs in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit shall develop Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) that:

- *Discuss the planning priorities* facing the metropolitan area.
- Describe all metropolitan transportation and transportation related *air quality planning activities*.
- *Document planning activities* to be performed with both the Federal Highway Administration planning (**PL Funds**) and the Federal Transit Administration funds (**Section 5303**) planning funds.

The Unified Planning Work Program, approved by the MPO, contains:

- Annual budget of the MPO.
- Essential tasks to maintain certification.
- Various planning studies with their objectives, the expected product, and relationship of the study to the transportation planning process.
- Participating agencies' responsibilities for carrying out each study.
- Annual Performance and Expenditure Report.

The Unified Planning Work Program, as the name suggests, is a planning document and does not contain any transportation improvement projects.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The Metropolitan Planning Organization shall prepare, and update periodically, a long-range plan (a *Long Range Transportation Plan*) for its metropolitan area (23 U.S.C. 134 (g)). This plan shall, at a minimum:

- *Identify transportation facilities*: major roadways, transit, multimodal, and intermodal facilities that should function as an integrated system.
- *Identify pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities* in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 217 (g).

- Emphasize *facilities of national and regional importance*.
- *Consider planning elements or areas* in formulating a 20-year plan.
- Consider the area's *comprehensive land use plan, housing goals, linking low income households with employment opportunities, and the area's social, economic, environmental and energy conservation goals and objectives*.
- Include a *financial plan* to implement the MTP listing *public and private resources* including value capture, tolls and congestion pricing.
- Assess capital investment and other measures necessary to *ensure the preservation of existing transportation system* and make the most efficient use of the existing transportation system to *relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the mobility of people and goods*.
- Indicate proposed *transportation enhancement activities*.
- *Coordinate with clean air act agencies* in metropolitan areas that are in non-attainment for ozone and carbon monoxide.
- Ensure *participation by interested parties*.

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP):

- Includes All Transportation Improvement Projects for the next 25 years.
- Includes the Short-Range (10 years), Long-Range (10-20 years), and Unfunded Projects (over 20 years).
- Is revised and updated every 5th year.
- Includes a financial plan that demonstrates the consistency of proposed transportation investments with already available and projected sources of revenue.
- Is approved by the Transportation Policy Committee, including any revisions.

Transportation Improvement program (TIP)

The Metropolitan Planning Organization, in cooperation with the State and affected transit operators, shall:

- *Develop* a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- *Update* the TIP at least *every two years*.
- Provide reasonable opportunity for *public participation*.

- Develop the TIP to cover a period of not less than *three years*, but may cover a longer period.
- Develop the TIP that is *financially constrained*.
- Include only projects for which *construction and operation funds can reasonably be expected*.
- Include the *projects that are consistent with Metropolitan Transportation Plan*.
- Include *all regionally significant transportation projects for which the FHWA or the FTA approval is required* whether or not the projects are funded with federal funds.
- Include in a TIP, the criteria and process for *prioritizing* implementation.
- *Approve* the TIP and any amendments to it.

Project Selection Criteria

Procedures or arrangements to distribute the Surface Transportation Program (STP) or Section 9 (section 5307) funds to individual jurisdictions or modes within the metropolitan area by predetermined percentage or formulas are inconsistent with the legislative provisions. The law requires MPOs, in cooperation with the State and transit operators, *to develop a prioritized and financially constrained TIP*, based on considerations required to be addressed as part of the planning process (23 CFR 450.324 (l)).

Certification

- I. The State and the MPO shall annually certify to the FHWA and the FTA that the Planning Process is addressing the major issues facing the area and is being conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements of:
 1. Section 134 of Title 23, U.S.C. (Metropolitan Planning), Section 8 (5303) of the Federal Transit Act (49 U.S.C. app. 1607) and 23 CFR 450.334.
 2. Section 174 and 176 (c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7504, 4506 (c) and (d)).
 3. Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title VI assurance executed by each State under 23 U.S.C. 324 and 29 U.S.C. 794.
 4. Section 1003 (b) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in the FHWA and the FTA funded planning projects.
 5. The provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended and U.S. DOT regulations “Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities” (49 CFR 27, 37, and 38).
- II. The FHWA and the FTA jointly will review and evaluate the transportation planning process for

each TMA (as appropriate but no less than once every three years) to determine if the process meets the requirements of 23 CFR 450.334.

1. The FHWA and the FTA will certify the MPO with or without any specified corrective actions and provide opportunities to the MPO to take corrective actions before any sanctions are imposed.

Appendix A

MPO Planning Factors or Areas

The Transportation Planning Process involves explicit consideration, appropriate analysis, and reflection of the sixteen *Elements* under the rules of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) or the seven *Areas* under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). These factors are listed below.

ISTEA

1. **Preservation** and efficient use of existing transportation facilities.
2. Consistency of transportation planning with **energy conservation** programs.
3. The need to relieve and prevent **congestion**.
4. The likely effect of transportation policy on **land use**.
5. Programming expenditure for **transportation enhancement**.
6. The financial and social **effects** of all transportation projects.
7. **Access** to ports, airports, intermodal transportation facilities, major freight distribution routes, and military installations.

TEA-21

1. Support the **economic vitality** of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
2. Increase **safety** and **security** of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
3. Increase the **accessibility and mobility options** available to people and for freight.
4. Protect and enhance the **environment**, promote **energy conservation**, and improve **quality of life**.
5. Enhance the **integration and connectivity** of the transportation system, across and between modes for people and freight.
6. Promote efficient **system management and operation**.
7. Emphasize the **preservation** of existing transportation system.

ISTEA *(continue)*

8. **Connectivity** of roads within and outside of an MPO area.
9. Use of **management systems** to identify transportation needs.
10. **Preservation of right-of-way** for future transportation corridors.
11. Enhancement of the efficient movement of **freight**.
12. Use of **life cycle costs** for bridges, tunnels, and pavements.
13. The effects of transportation decisions on human environment including **air quality problems**.
14. Increased use of **transit** services.
15. **Security** of transit systems.
16. **Recreational travel and tourism**.

Public Involvement Process

The Metropolitan Planning Process shall include a proactive public involvement process for early and continued involvement of the public in developing plans and TIPs (23 CFR 450.316 (b) (1)).

Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CSJ	Control Section Job Number, project numbering system used by MDOT.
CTPP	Census Transportation Planning Package
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Federal Environmental Protection Agency
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
MDOT	Michigan Department of Transportation
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
STP	Surface Transportation Program, block grant program established in ISTEA to improve roads and bridges.
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century, the transportation act passed in 1998 to provide funds for transportation for 1998 - 2003 period.
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMA	Transportation Management Area
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
U.S.C.	United States Code