

Role and Function of the MPO

ROLE of the MPO:

- ❑ Transportation planning and programming
- ❑ Developing and implementing work programs
- ❑ Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for a 3 to 5 year horizon
- ❑ Develop a Regional Transportation Plan for a 20+ year horizon
- ❑ Is a Forum for the “Three C” process – Cooperative, Continuous and Comprehensive planning process.

To accomplish the role, the **FUNCTIONS** of the MPO are:

- ❑ Prepare and adopt 20 year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRPT)
- ❑ Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which the Governors and the MPO approve
- ❑ Develop a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- ❑ Track air quality conformity for compliance with state plans where applicable
- ❑ MPO, State and transit agencies must cooperate in developing financial estimates for LRTP and TIP
- ❑ Conduct technical studies, including travel surveys, demographics and travel demand modeling
- ❑ Ensure fiscal constraint (balance revenues to expenditures)
- ❑ Initiate public involvement

The legislation that mandates the metropolitan level planning provides the following guidance in the preparation of transportation plans:

“The process for developing the plans and programs shall provide for consideration of all modes of transportation and shall be continuing, cooperative and comprehensive to the degree appropriate, based on the complexity of the transportation problems to be addressed.”

What are the factors and issues the Policy Board need to be considering in the development of the Long Range Transportation Plan? They are as follows:

- ❑ Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area
- ❑ Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
- ❑ Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight
- ❑ Protect and enhance environment, promote energy conservation and improve quality of life
- ❑ Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight
- ❑ Promote efficient system management and operation
- ❑ Emphasize the preservation of existing transportation system.

There are three major components of the planning process. At this point, it is important to note the transportation plans may not be ‘pie in the sky’ or ‘wish lists’ but must be realistic in nature. The legislation requires plans to be fiscally constrained – that is, it demonstrates the consistency of proposed transportation investments with already available and projected sources of revenue. However, it is permissible to include illustrative projects – such as a new bridge or major new corridor – if appropriate.

The **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**:

- ❑ Is an annual program
- ❑ It documents the planning work done with FHWA and FTA planning funds
- ❑ It discusses planning priorities
- ❑ It describes a process of developing a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and a Transportation Improvement Program (TI)

One of the most important products generated by the Policy Board is that of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). It sets the priorities for a twenty (20) year horizon – versus an annual work program (the UPWP) or a short-term project schedule (the Transportation Improvement Program – TIP) which looks at a three to five year schedule. The plan includes both long range and short-range strategies and actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods.

The **Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)** will consider fifteen major factors in the planning process that fall in the following general categories:

- ❑ An identification of transportation facilities of all types that should function as an integrated metropolitan transportation system, giving emphasis to those facilities that serve important national and regional transportation systems
- ❑ A financial plan that demonstrates how the adopted long range transportation plan can be implemented, indicates resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be made available to carry out the plan, and recommends any additional financing strategies for needed projects and programs
- ❑ Assess capital investment and other measures necessary to assure the preservation of the existing metropolitan transportation systems and to make the most efficient use of existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the mobility of people and goods.

The LRTP should be updated periodically as conditions in the community change and evolve, and as projects and plans are implemented. At a minimum, it will be updated every five years, or more often if circumstances indicate a necessity to do so.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is one of the major tools used to implement the LRTP. **The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** considers the following:

- Is consistent with the twenty year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Describes projects;
 - May include non-federally funded projects
 - Must include regionally significant projects regardless of funding
 - Must include federally funded projects
- Prepared in cooperation with State and public transit operator
- Prioritize list of projects covering at least three (3) years
- Must be fiscally constrained to revenues at the project level and the entire plan
- Lists funding sources
- Provides an opportunity for public comment
- Typically updated annually although the requirement is on a biannual basis