



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS

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OVERVIEW

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 - Enhance connections
 - Expand participation
 - Promote transparency
 - Ensure statewide consistency
 - Accommodate variability



WHAT IS AN RTPO?

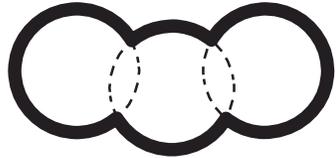


Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century

Created an institutional framework for establishing Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) to perform transportation planning tasks in non-metropolitan areas.



WHAT DOES AN RTPPO LOOK LIKE?



- A multi jurisdictional organization of nonmetropolitan local officials and reps of local transportation systems. 135(m)(2)



- A policy committee, the majority of which are non-metro local officials, and as appropriate, reps from the State, private business, transportation service providers, economic development practitioners and the public in the region. 135(m)(3)



- A fiscal and administrative agent, such as an existing regional planning and development organization to provide professional planning, management, and administrative support 135(m)(3)

WHAT DOES AN RTPPO DO?

- Develop regional long-range multimodal transportation plan and regional Transportation Improvement Program
- Coordinate local planning, land use and economic development
- Provide technical assistance to local officials.
- Participate in National, multi-state, State policy and planning development processes
- Provide a forum for public participation in regional and statewide planning
- Share plans and programs with neighboring RTPPOs and MPOs and tribal organizations



HOW IS AN RTPO FUNDED?

Statewide Planning and Research (SPR)

- States can use SPR funds to fund RTPOs and RTPO Transportation Planning

Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)

- Statewide and non-metropolitan planning and metropolitan planning are eligible for funds.



ADVANTAGES FOR RURAL REGIONS

- Instill a systematic transportation planning process.
- Involve local officials in Policy Committee decisionmaking.
- Provide a means to establish transportation goals, objectives, and regionally unique priorities.
- Improve the ability of prioritized projects to compete for funding.
- Facilitate conversation and public involvement between local communities and the State DOT.



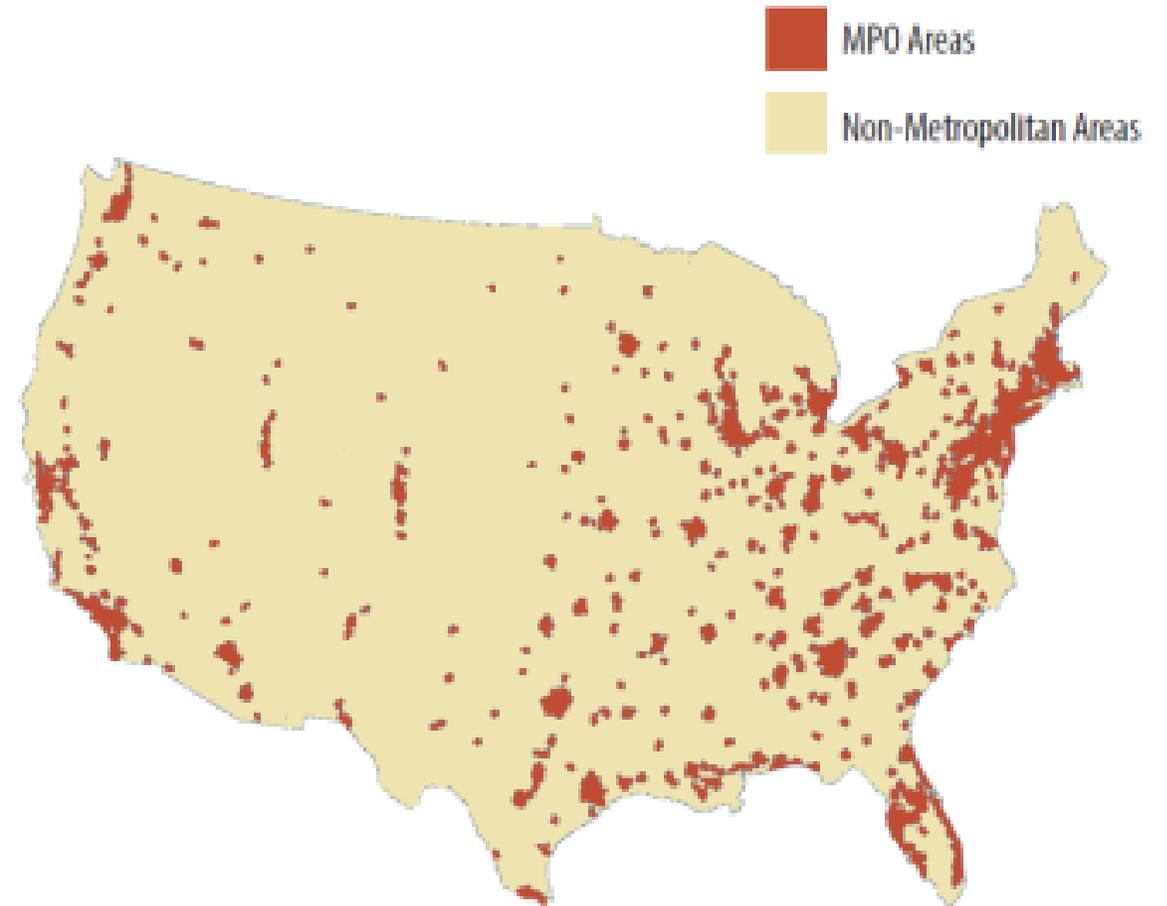
ADVANTAGES FOR STATE DOT

- Facilitates quality conversation between agencies and with members of local communities
- Provides uniformity for planning and project inputs from rural and metropolitan regions
- Creates a basis for fully integrating rural transportation needs into the State Transportation Plan and STIP
- Provides an established source of information on rural economic development needs and opportunities, resource development, and transportation system resiliency
- Can streamline outreach to local governments by bringing them together in a regional forum.



STATEWIDE APPROACH

1. Enhance connections
2. Expand participation
3. Promote transparency
4. Ensure statewide consistency
5. Accommodate variability



1. ENHANCE CONNECTIONS

Boonslick Regional Planning Commission (RPC)

The Missouri-based RPC attends local government meetings to make RPC staff available and hear issues directly from local entities.

The RPC has a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) with representatives from several sectors from each of its three counties.

The TAC has an executive board and voting membership comprised of local officials and holds four meetings per year to discuss transportation priorities.

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT)

MoDOT refers to its institutional framework for working with local governments and regional entities such as metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and non-metropolitan Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) as the “Planning Partnership.” Supporting positive relationships among these partners has been a goal since the mid-1990s, and the emphasis on connections has been beneficial to ensure local buy-in.



2. EXPAND PARTICIPATION

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

Caltrans requires that its non-metropolitan regional agencies provide formal Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) to implement the vision and goals from the regional long-range plan.

Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans)

A fiscally constrained TIP is not required for regional agencies, but the agency provides local priorities and feedback to VTrans. VTrans uses regional input as 20% of the weight in the Statewide project ranking process.

3. PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY

North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning & Development Commission (NCPRPDC)

NCPRPDC's TIP is included in the State TIP, as the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) allocates funding by region.

The agency has a regional Transportation Planning Committee, which includes FHWA and PennDOT as active partners to enhance awareness of State and local priorities.

Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT)

MoDOT shares data with its RPCs to help project prioritization.

Each MoDOT District serves more than one RPC, so projects are selected considering priorities from all RPCs in the District. Stakeholders are able to present large-scale projects to RPCs, MPOs, and MoDOT representatives to justify the need for State funding.



4. ENSURE STATEWIDE CONSISTENCY

Iowa DOT

Iowa DOT holds quarterly meetings to include representatives from all regional planning agencies in discussions on Statewide planning resources, requirements, and emerging issues.

One meeting each year is held concurrently with staff training.

PennDOT

PennDOT holds regular meetings with rural and metropolitan agencies. PennDOT formed working groups on specific topics involving representatives from rural to large metropolitan regions.

Working groups develop guidance for all planning regions to follow.

5. ACCOMMODATE VARIABILITY

Iowa DOT

Many non-metropolitan regional planning affiliations are housed in organizations that complete other planning processes.

Iowa DOT allows regional partners to combine plans where applicable.

Neighboring regions have coupled regional economic development plans with long-range transportation plans.

Two Rivers – Ottawaquechee Regional Commission (TRORC)

TRORC piloted the first regional safety forum with VTrans to address stakeholder concerns. The safety forum established relationships between regional safety stakeholders, addressed resource sharing, and identified highway safety issues.

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