

Gaston Urban Area MPO Transportation Advisory Committee New Member Orientation

January 26, 2010



Agenda

Kick-off

Mr. Jim Long

About the MPO

Vincent Wong

TCC Roles & Responsibilities

Vincent Wong

TAC Roles & Responsibilities

Bernie Yacobucci

Funding, Planning & Partnerships

Hank Graham

Dinner Break/Q&A

MPO Staff &
Partners

Mr. Jim Long

GASTON URBAN AREA



Metropolitan Planning Organization

TAC Chairman

March 25, 2003 – December 31, 2009

About the MPO

GASTON URBAN AREA



Metropolitan Planning Organization

Vincent Wong
Transportation Planner

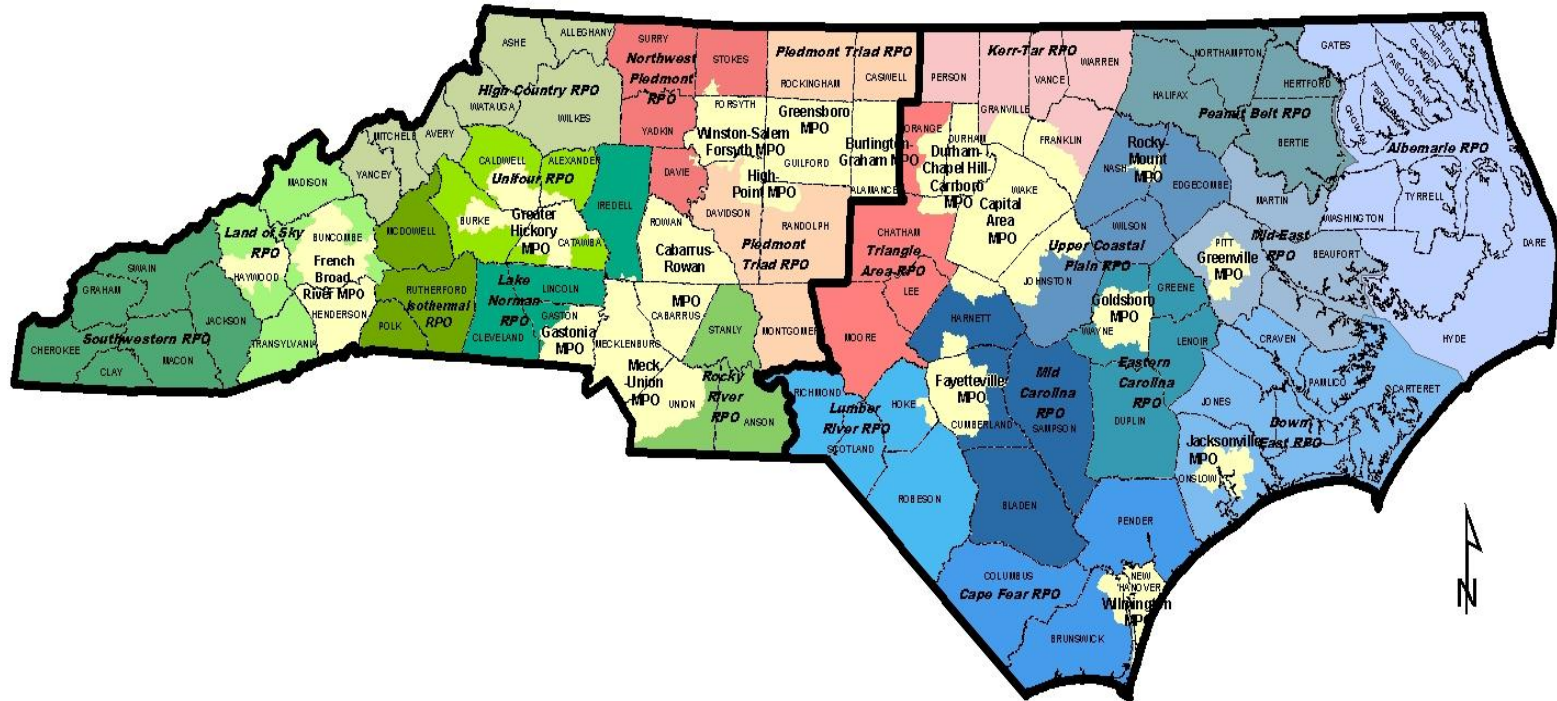
Background

- How MPOs are established
- Functions
- Formation of the Gaston MPO
- Modes/Types of Transportation Considered

How are MPOs Established?

- 1962 Congress enacted federal law establishing MPO's
- Based on urbanized area defined by the U.S. Census
- Every urbanized area over 50,000 in population
- Area over 200,000 designated as a Transportation Management Area (TMA)

North Carolina Rural Planning Organizations and Metropolitan Planning Organizations



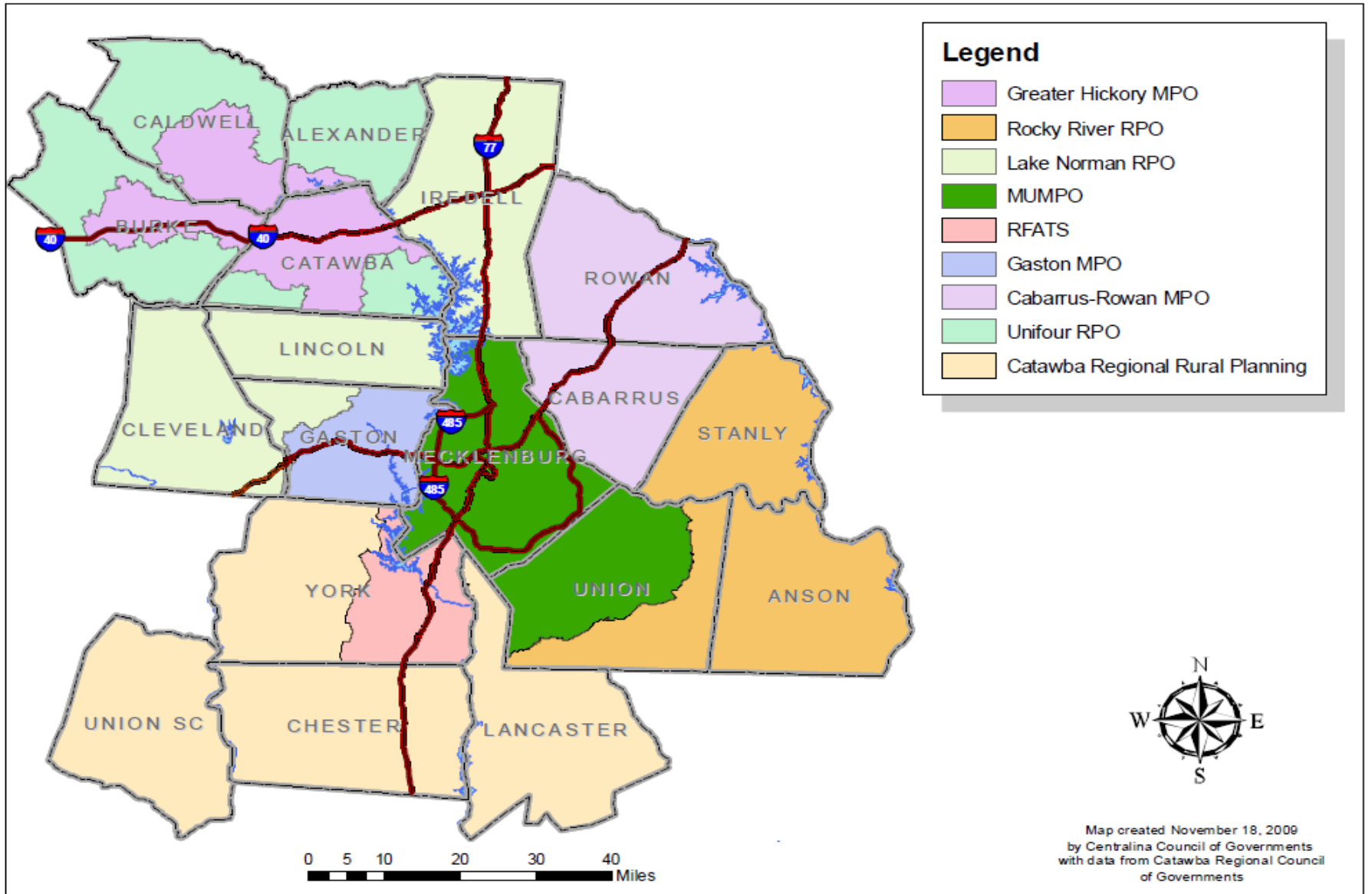
Legend

MPO_Boundaries



Map Created by
North Carolina
Department of Transportation
Transportation Planning Branch
December 13, 2005

MPOs and RPOs in the Region



MPO Roles

➤ **“The forum for cooperative transportation decision making for the metropolitan planning area.”** Source: 23 CFR Part 450.104

➤ **The Three C's of Transportation Planning**

* **Comprehensive**

* **Continuing**

* **Cooperative**

MPO Functions

- Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP)
- Transportation Studies
- Air Quality Conformity
- Public Involvement
- Priority Needs List
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

MPO Composition

- Policy Board
- Local Elected and Appointed Officials
- Major Modes of Transportation
- State Officials
- Citizens
- Ex-Officio Members
- MPO Staff
- Technical Committees
- Citizens Committees

Role of Staff

- Provide information & technical support to Board Members
- Prepare documents
- Foster interagency coordination
- Facilitate input and feedback from the public
- Manage the planning process

Gaston MPO

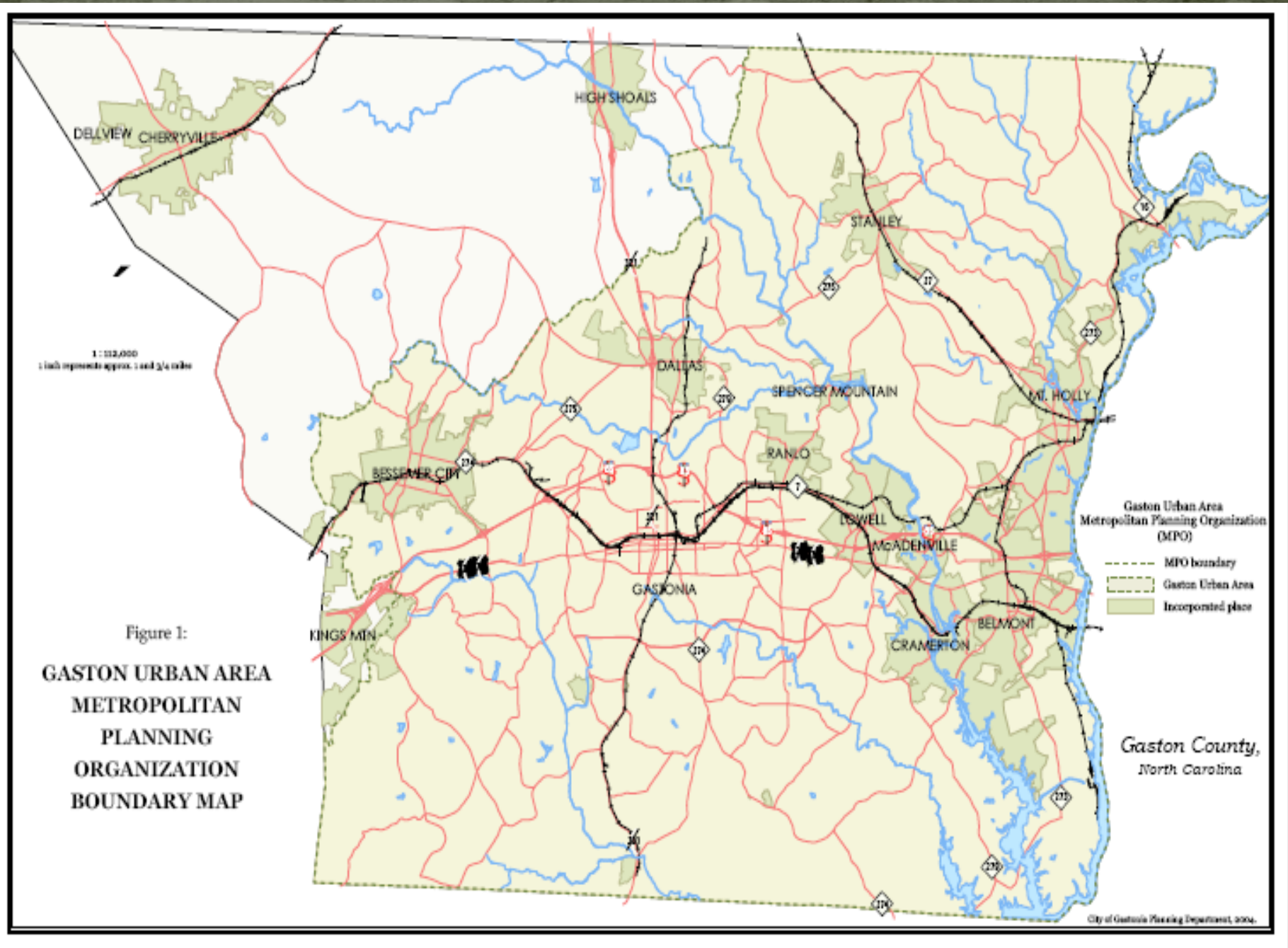
- Inception following 1970 Census

- Twelve Municipalities

(Belmont, Bessemer City, Cramerton, Dallas, Gaston County, Gastonia, Lowell, McAdenville, Mount Holly, Ranlo, Spencer Mountain, and Stanley)

- NCDOT Division 12

- Established by Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)



Modes of Transportation

- Automobile (Roads and Highways)
- Public Transportation (Buses, Rail)
- Bicycle (Greenways, Bike Lanes)
- Pedestrian (Sidewalks, Greenways)
- Freight (Rail, Trucks, Air Cargo)
- Aviation

Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)



Vincent Wong
Transportation Planner

What is the TCC?

- The TCC is comprised of staff representatives of various member governments, NCDOT, FHWA, and other agencies with an interest in Transportation Planning.
- The TCC has the responsibility of supervising and coordinating the 3-C process by making technical recommendations to the Transportation Advisory Committee.

Role of TCC

- The TCC reviews plans, programs, projects, studies, and reports and provides the TAC with recommendations concerning them.
- Communicate with TAC members
- Communicate with MPO Staff

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)



Bernie Yacobucci
Transportation Planner

Some Roles of the TAC

- Adopt Key Regional Plans (LRTP, MTIP, etc.)
- Adopt MPO Initiated Plans
- Adopt Regional Policies
- Ensure your decisions reflect your citizens views

Key Regional Plans

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

- Updated Every Four Years
- Addresses the Eight Planning Factors
- Public Involvement
- Coordinate with Resource Agencies
- Contains a List of Projects Scheduled for Implementation
- Fiscally Constrained
- Financial Assumptions
- Conforms to Air Quality Requirements

Key Regional Plans

Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP & STIP)

- Covers at least four years
- Updated every two years
- Is consistent with the approved LRTP
- Includes nearly all surface transportation projects proposed for federal funding
- Fiscally Constrained
- Conforms to Air Quality Requirements

Key Regional Plans

Air Quality Conformity

- National Ambient Air Quality Standard
- Non-Attainment for Ozone
- Metrolina Region

Metrolina Regional Model

- LRTP Project Lists
- Project Ranking
- Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ's)

MPO Initiated Plans / Studies

Examples of Previous MPO Initiated Plans

- Transit Expansion Study
- Franklin Boulevard Corridor Study
- Freight Study
- Multi-modal Site Suitability and Alternative Design Study
- Functional Designs for Highways/Thoroughfares
- Greenways (Carolina Thread Trail)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)

Summary

TAC = Decision Makers

- Establish policy directions
- Review, comment, and approve individual transportation projects/lists, programs, plans, and reports
- Direct MPO staff
- Engage the public

Funding, Planning & Partnerships



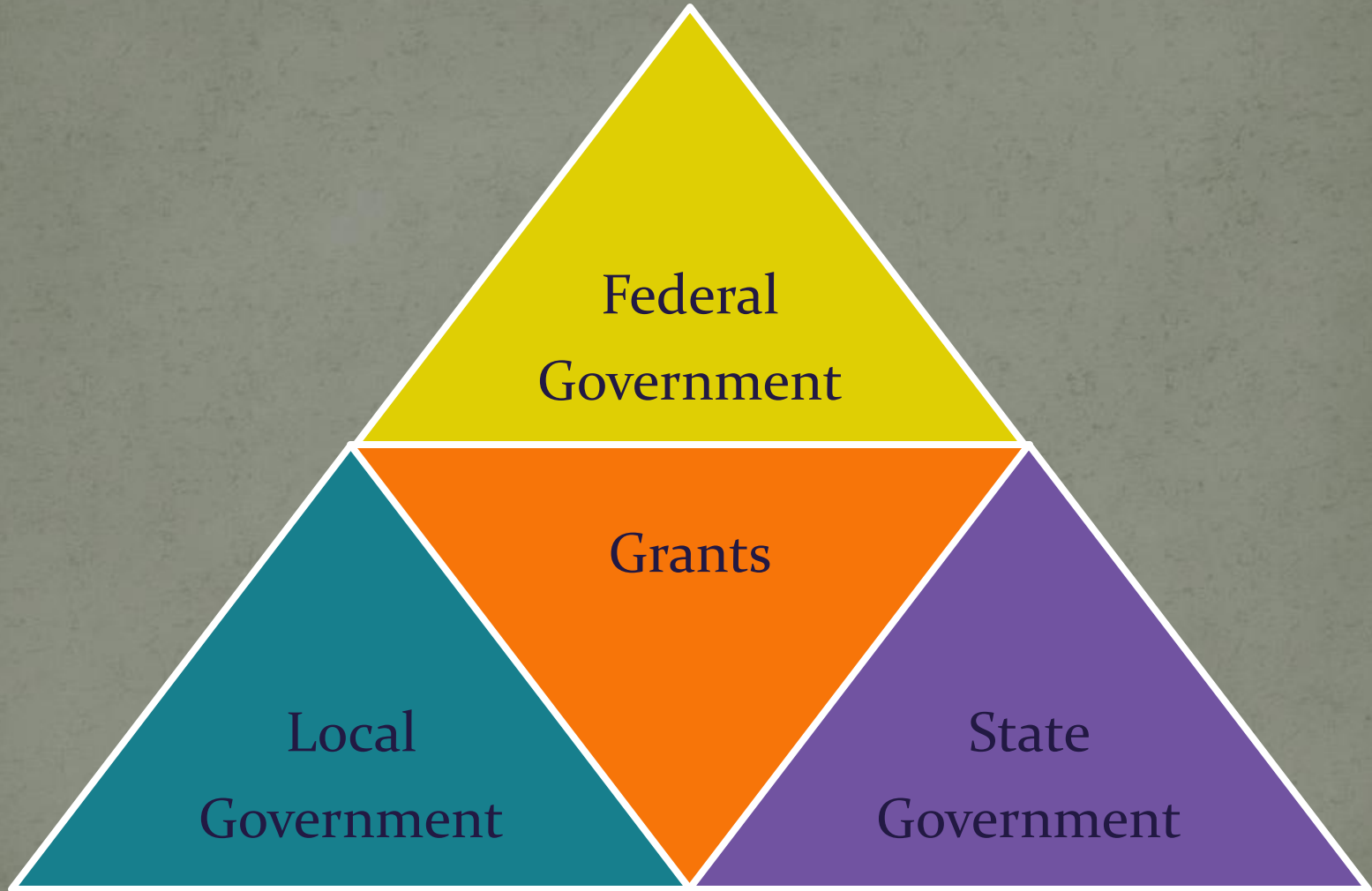
Hank Graham, AICP
Principal Transportation Planner

Funding

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- Every Fiscal Year, UPWP documents all studies and activities for the MPO
- Describes the activities
- Includes estimated cost for each activity

Funding



Transportation Planning Process



MPO and DOT
Adoption

Technical
Report

Collect Base
Year Data

Recommend
Plan

Corridor
Protection

Analysis/
Develop Model

Develop
Alternatives

Programming

Project Future
Year Data

Analyze
Deficiencies



Partnerships

STATE
GOVERNMENT
(NCDOT, NCDENR,
etc.)

FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT
(FTA, USDOT, FHWA,
EPA, etc.)



REGIONAL PARTNERS
(MUMPO, CABARRUS-
ROWAN, LAKE
NORMAN RPO,
RFATS, etc.)

UNIT MEMBER
LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS

Questions & Comments

GASTON URBAN AREA



Metropolitan Planning Organization

Please visit our website

www.gastonmpo.org

Thank you!

GASTON URBAN AREA



Metropolitan Planning Organization

Metropolitan Planning Organization Roles and Responsibilities

What is a Metropolitan Planning Organization?

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a transportation policy-making body made up of representatives from local government and transportation agencies with authority and responsibility in metropolitan planning areas. Federal legislation passed in the early 1970s required the formation of an MPO for any urbanized area (UA) with a population greater than 50,000.

What is responsibility of the MPO?

MPOs were created in order to ensure that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs were based on a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3-C) planning process. [23 U.S.C. 134](#)

What is the transportation planning process?

Transportation planning is a cooperative process designed to foster involvement by all users of the system, such as the business community, community groups, environmental organizations, the traveling public, freight operators, and the general public, through a proactive public participation process conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), state Department of Transportation (state DOT), and transit operators.

What are the typical functions of the MPO?

Establish a setting: Establish and manage a fair and impartial setting for effective regional decision making in the metropolitan area.

Identify and evaluate alternative transportation improvement options: Use data and planning methods to generate and evaluate alternatives.

Prepare and maintain a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)/(LRTP): Develop and update a Metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) for the metropolitan area covering a planning horizon of at least twenty-years (20) that fosters (1) mobility and access for people and goods, (2) efficient system performance and preservation, and (3) good quality of life.

Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): Develop a short-range (four-year) program of transportation improvements based on the metropolitan transportation plan; the TIP should be designed to achieve the area's goals, using spending, regulating, operating, management, and financial tools.

Involve the public: Involve the general public and other affected constituencies in the four essential functions listed above.

What are key documents produced by the metropolitan and statewide planning processes?

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP): The UPWP lists the transportation studies and tasks to be performed by the MPO staff or a member agency. The UPWP covers a one- to two-year period. It typically contains several elements:

- The planning tasks (e.g., data collection and analysis, public outreach, and preparation of the plan and TIP), the supporting studies, and the products that will result from these activities;
- All federally funded studies as well as all relevant state and local planning activities conducted without federal funds;
- Funding sources identified for each project;
- A schedule of activities; and
- The agency responsible for each task or study.

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)/(LRTP): In metropolitan areas, the transportation plan is the statement of the ways the region plans to invest in the transportation system. Per the federal regulations, the plan shall "include both long-range and short-range program strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods."

The plan addresses, for example:

- Policies, strategies, and projects for the future;
- A systems level approach by considering roadways, transit, non-motorized transportation, and intermodal connections;
- Projected demand for transportation services over 20 years;
- Regional land use, development, housing, and employment goals and plans;
- Cost estimates and reasonably available financial sources for operation, maintenance, and capital investments (see Part II section on Financial Planning and Programming); and
- Ways to preserve existing roads and facilities and make efficient use of the existing system.

The Transportation Plan and the long-range statewide transportation plan must be consistent with each other. The MTP must be updated every four years in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas and five years in attainment areas.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): In the TIP, the MPO identifies the transportation projects and strategies from the MTP that it plans to undertake over the next four years. All projects receiving federal funding must be in the TIP. The TIP is the region's way of allocating its limited transportation resources among the various capital and operating needs of the area.

Under federal law, the TIP:

- Covers a minimum four-year period of investment;
- Is updated at least every four years;
- Fiscally constrained, i.e. Is realistic in terms of available funding and is not just a "wish list" of projects.
- Conforms with the SIP for air quality in nonattainment and maintenance areas;
- Is approved by the MPO and the governor; and
- Is incorporated directly, without change, into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

In accordance with federal regulations, the MPO is required to carry out metropolitan transportation planning in cooperation with the state and with operators of publicly owned transit

services. The MPO approves the transportation plan. Both the governor and the MPO approve the TIP.

Most MPOs will not take the lead in implementing transportation projects, but will provide an overall coordination role in planning and programming

What are the relationships among the MPO, the state DOT, and other agencies involved in transportation planning and project implementation?

Transportation planning must be cooperative because no single agency has responsibility for the entire transportation system. For example, some roads that are part of the Interstate Highway System (IHS) are subject to certain standards and are usually maintained by a state DOT. Others are county arterials or city streets which are designed, operated, and maintained by counties or local municipalities. Transit systems are often built, operated, and maintained by a separate entity.

In metropolitan areas, the MPO is responsible for actively seeking the participation of all relevant agencies and stakeholders in the planning process; similarly, the state DOT is responsible for activities outside metropolitan areas. The MPO and state DOT also work together. For example, a state DOT staff person may sit on the MPO board.

What is the relationship between transportation and air quality?

Usage of the transportation system is an influential factor in a region's air quality. Therefore, the estimated emission of pollutants from motor vehicles is a key consideration in transportation planning. Regions that have nonattainment or maintenance air quality status are required to ensure that emissions from transportation investments are consistent, or in conformity with, levels set forth in state air quality plans. Therefore, state DOTs and MPOs need to have a clear understanding of the air quality-related transportation planning requirements.

What is the role of the MPO in air quality planning?

The MPO must ensure that transportation investments in the region do not contribute to the degradation of air. The MPO must analyze the emission from the LRTP and the TIP to demonstrate that motor vehicle emissions do not exceed the emissions levels in the State Implementation Plan. This is a conformity determination.

What is financial planning?

Financial planning takes a long-range look at how transportation investments are funded, and at the possible sources of funds. State DOTs, MPOs, and public transportation operators must consider funding needs over both the 20-year period of the metropolitan transportation plan and the 4-year period of TIPs and STIPs. In the MTP MPOs must develop a financial plan that identifies funding sources for needed investments, and demonstrates the reasonably reliable means to maintain and operate the existing federally funded transportation system.

What is financial programming?

Financial programming is different from financial planning because programming involves identifying funding sources and implementation timing for specific projects in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which must cover a period of at least four years and be updated at least every four years. Programming also includes notifying FHWA and FTA of the sources of the funds that will likely be used to support each individual transportation project.

What is fiscal Constraint?

Fiscal constraint is a demonstration of sufficient funds (federal, state, local and private) to implement proposed transportation system improvements, as well as to operate and maintain the entire system, through the comparison of revenues and costs.

How is the public involved?

Throughout the entire transportation planning process the MPO must provide the public with reasonable opportunity to participate, comment and be heard. The MPO must develop a public involvement plan that outlines for the public their opportunities to be involved in the transportation planning process.

- MPOs must prepare a public participation plan
- Plan must be proactive and provide for:
 - Complete information and timely public notice
 - Early and continuous involvement
 - Full public access to key decisions
 - Explicit consideration and response to input
 - Consider the needs of all populations