
Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Certification Review Report

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Federal Highway Administration

Tennessee Division
404 BNA Drive, Building 200, Suite 508
Nashville, TN 37217

Federal Transit Administration

Region IV
230 Peachtree St., N.W., Suite 800
Atlanta, GA 30303

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Preface

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), signed into law on July 6, 2012, and Titles 23 and 49 of the United States Code (U.S.C.) uniformly direct the statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes across the country and the State of Tennessee.

The United States Department of Transportation issued the “Statewide and Metropolitan Planning Final Rule” on February 14, 2007 to establish the Federal requirements for the statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes in Titles 23 and 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The regulations in 23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613 establish the national policy that each urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, shall have a designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process.

Furthermore, MPOs are responsible for considering and implementing transportation projects, strategies, and services that address eight planning factors:

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

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(k)(5) and 49 U.S.C. 5303, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process conducted in each transportation management area (TMA), an urbanized area with a population over 200,000 people, no less than once every four years. This TMA Certification Review includes an assessment of the degree to which the MPO in each TMA meets the requirements of the metropolitan planning regulations. The TMA Certification Review is comprised of a desk review, an on-site visit, and a public involvement opportunity.

Upon completion of each Certification Review, FHWA and FTA (the Federal Review Team) can take one of three Federal actions:

1. **Jointly certify** the metropolitan transportation planning process,
2. **Jointly certify** the metropolitan transportation planning process subject to certain specified corrective actions being taken, or
3. **Jointly certify** the metropolitan transportation planning process as the basis for approval of only those categories of programs or projects that the FHWA and the FTA jointly determine, subject to certain specified corrective actions being taken.

If FHWA and the FTA do not certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in a TMA, or cannot certify within a four-year period, the Secretary of Transportation may issue corrective actions, restrict funding, and withhold up to 20 percent of the funds attributable to the metropolitan planning area under Title 23 U.S.C. and Title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.

The Nashville Area MPO, initially designated in 1977, is the federally designated MPO for the Nashville TMA. FHWA and FTA first certified the Nashville TMA in February 1994 and most recently in August 2010. This report represents the seventh Certification Review for the Nashville TMA and includes a summary of the Federal Review Team's observations, corrective actions, commendations, and recommendations.

- **Observations** are statements of fact that describe the conditions found during the data-gathering phases of the TMA Certification Review and provide the primary basis for determining corrective actions, recommendations, and commendations.
- **Corrective actions** denote items that do not meet the requirements of the applicable Federal rules and regulations. FHWA and FTA expect MPOs to address corrective actions in accordance with prescribed timelines to achieve specific outcomes.
- **Recommendations** concern the state of practice or technical improvements that would enhance existing processes and procedures. FHWA and FTA expect MPOs to give due consideration to the implementation of recommended actions to enhance metropolitan transportation planning activities.
- **Commendations** highlight noteworthy practices and elements that demonstrate innovative, highly effective, and/or well-thought-out procedures for implementing the planning requirements.

The Federal Review Team did not identify any corrective actions during the 2014 TMA Certification Review. The recommendations in this report reflect national trends and best practices. Action on the recommendations will not affect the status of this TMA Certification Review; however, the suggestions would help the Nashville Area MPO enhance the metropolitan transportation planning process in the Nashville metropolitan planning area. The report also highlights positive practices of the MPO with commendations that can serve as examples to other States and planning organizations.

The conclusion of this report provides the final certification determination, and the Appendixes provide additional technical information.

Executive Summary

The 2014 Nashville TMA Certification Review is comprised of a desk review, an on-site visit, and a public involvement opportunity. Since August 2010, the FHWA and FTA joint Federal Review Team (see Appendix B) has continuously reviewed the Nashville Area MPO's planning process and products to assess consistency with 23 CFR Part 450, 49 CFR Part 613, and other relevant Federal rules and regulations.

The Federal Review Team's desk review included the MPO's metropolitan transportation plan, transportation improvement program, unified planning work program, public participation plan, and other elements of the organization's continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process.

On June 11-12, 2014, the Federal Review Team organized an on-site visit with the MPO's Staff, members of the MPO's Technical Coordinating Committee, and the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) to discuss components of the metropolitan transportation planning process and major federal initiatives (see Appendices A and C).

On June 11, 2014, the Federal Review Team held a public meeting to invite public comments and feedback on the Nashville Area MPO's metropolitan transportation planning process (see Appendix D). The Nashville Area MPO advertised the public meeting in accordance to the procedures established in the MPO's Public Participation Plan, including public notices in regional newspapers and on the MPO's website – <http://www.nashvillempo.org>.

The Federal Review Team's previous TMA Certification Review in August 2010 did not identify any corrective actions; however, the Review identified ten recommendations. The Nashville Area MPO has adequately addressed all ten recommendations since August 2010.

The Nashville Area MPO substantially meets the requirements of 23 CFR 450 and 49 CFR 613. FHWA and FTA jointly certify the MPO's metropolitan transportation planning process.

Overall, the Nashville Area MPO has demonstrated a strong commitment to meeting the letter and intent of all applicable Federal rules and regulations. The Federal Review Team identified several notable planning practices and accomplishments by the MPO since the previous 2010 TMA Certification Review. The Nashville Area MPO has made great strides to balance the regional goals of livability, prosperity, sustainability, and diversity through a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process. The MPO has been especially effective in using digital technology, multi-media resources, and 21st Century planning tools to facilitate regional collaboration and public participation, build consensus among public and private sector stakeholders, integrate public health considerations into transportation decision-making, and analyze multimodal transportation system needs and investment performance.

Certification Summary			
Review Areas	Commendations	Recommendations	Corrective Actions
1. Overview of recent activities	3	1	
2. Organizational structure	1		
3. Unified Planning Work Program	2	1	
4. Metropolitan planning area boundaries		1	
5. Metropolitan planning agreements			
6. Metropolitan Transportation Plan	5	5	
7. Transportation Improvement Program	3	2	
8. Interested parties, participation, and consultation	2	4	
9. Transit	1	1	
10. Congestion Management Process	2	3	
11. Air quality			
12. Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture	1	2	
	20	20	

The Certification Report Card summarizes the Federal Review Team's findings, including the total number of commendations, recommendations, and corrective actions per review area. In total, the Federal Review Team identified 20 commendations and 20 recommendations. The Federal Review Team did not find any corrective actions.

The Certification Report Card also highlights priority review areas based on the number of recommendations:

- Metropolitan Transportation Plan (5);
- Interested parties, participation, and consultation (4);
- Congestion Management Process (3);
- Transportation Improvement Program (2); and
- Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture (2).

Summary of Commendations

Review Areas

1. Overview of recent activities

- Incorporating public health considerations into the MPO's planning process via policies, funding, and research.
 - Integrating transportation and land use considerations into the MPO's planning process via corridor management agreements, access management studies, subarea studies, and other planning activities.
 - Creating a forum for collaboration and innovation among local, regional, statewide and national transportation stakeholders.
-

2. Organizational structure

- Designating transit representation on the Executive Board prior to the MAP-21 requirement.
-

3. Unified Planning Work Program

- Continuously planning for the preservation, management, operation, and expansion of the regional multimodal transportation network.
 - Leveraging annual membership dues to build local support and commitment for regional planning efforts.
-

6. Metropolitan Transportation Plan

- Establishing an investment strategy to ensure that the MPO-managed federal grant funds are aligned with regional goals and objectives for multimodal roadway capacity and safety; active transportation and walkable communities; public transportation; and system management and operations.
- Developing a web-based project application and evaluation tool to facilitate a transparent, documented, collaborative, and analytical project selection process.
- Conducting a comprehensive data collection effort for the travel demand model and including regional data for travel speeds, bicycle level of service, vehicle ownership, household income, physical activity, and public health.
- Participating on the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) Committee, staying informed of regional and statewide safety needs, and providing valuable contributions to the State of Tennessee's effort to improve highway safety.
- Participating on the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee, networking with State and local law enforcement agencies, and contributing to the overall improvement of traffic records in Tennessee.

7. Transportation Improvement Program

- Implementing programming policies to assist in the effective administration of MPO-managed federal grant funds.
 - Developing a web-based application to manage the TIP and track project information.
 - Amending the TIP to include individual line-items for projects that have been selected for funding under a MPO-managed project grouping.
-

8. Interested parties, participation, and consultation

- Employing visualization tools in public meetings and on the MPO website to describe the metropolitan planning process and solicit participation.
 - Consistently including Title VI assurance statements in publications.
-

9. Transit

- Examining best practices for transit mapping and creating an investment vision for short and long term multimodal transportation choices.
-

10. Congestion Management Process

- Evaluating congestion through tiered aggregation areas, such as regional corridors, districts, neighborhood/communities, and at the system level, and producing measures of effectiveness.
 - Proactively addressing congestion through non-traditional travel demand management strategies, including complete streets design, transit services, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).
-

12. Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture

- Implementing a user-friendly process for updating the Regional ITS Architecture as transportation projects are developed.

Summary of Recommendations

Review Areas

1. Overview of recent activities

- Continue evaluating transportation connectivity gaps regarding access to essential services, including housing, employment, health care, education, and recreation.
-

3. Unified Planning Work Program

- Continue to coordinate with Federal and State planning partners on expectations for documenting major planning priorities and carryover activities/funds during the development of the FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program.
-

4. Metropolitan planning area boundaries

- Prioritize the review of the region's urban areas and Federal-aid highway system for consistency with the 2013 Edition of FHWA's *Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures*.
-

6. Metropolitan Transportation Plan

- Explore the application of safety analysis tools from the Highway Safety Manual, including the Interactive Highway Safety Design Module, SafetyAnalyst, and the Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse.
 - Include local safety initiatives in the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan that coincide with emphasis areas of the SHSP to show progress with safety performance measures and SHSP initiatives.
 - Continue formalizing relationships with TDOT and the Tennessee Department of Safety to facilitate the continuous sharing of safety information and to ensure the MPO is involved in future SHSP updates and the development of specific safety strategies and performance targets for the Nashville metropolitan planning area.
 - Continue to involve TDOT in the development of the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan to integrate the results of the Tennessee Extreme Weather Project.
 - Engage TDOT and public transit agencies on MAP-21 requirements, especially the Transportation Performance Management elements on performance measures and performance targets.
-

7. Transportation Improvement Program

- Continue to work with TDOT to enable the continuous sharing of project/program obligations and expenditures so the MPO has the best available information for programming decisions.
- Explore the potential to establish connections between the MPO's web-based TIP application and TDOT's Statewide Environmental Management System (SEMS).

8. Interested parties, participation, and consultation

- Ensure public meeting notices and agendas are published in accordance to the MPO's Public Participation Plan so the general public and other interested parties can prepare for participation.
- Update the Public Participation Plan to reflect changes in membership, demographic and U.S. Census information, and Federal legislation.
- During the update and implementation of the Public Participation Plan, continue to seek opportunities to educate interested parties and stakeholders on the MPO's planning processes and local public participation activities in the region.
- Consider collecting demographic data at public meetings using TDOT's Data Collection Toolkit to better understand audience participation.

9. Transit

- Continue facilitating regional forums for multimodal transportation decision-making.

10. Congestion Management Process

- Explore travel time reliability as a performance measure for the congestion management process, including travel time index, planning index, and buffer index.
- Leverage opportunities with TDOT, especially the Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) Committee, to provide the best travel time reliability for the region's surface transportation networks.
- Engage FHWA for resources concerning travel time reliability prediction models for project evaluation and comparison.

12. Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture

- Coordinate with Federal, State and local partners to find opportunities to align the Regional ITS Architecture with the regional vision and objectives.
- Ensure the next update of the Regional ITS Architecture includes the seven-county metropolitan planning area boundary and the planning horizon for the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan.

Review Areas

1. Overview of Recent Activities

Observations

Since the previous TMA Certification Review in August 2010, the Nashville Area MPO has actively used a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process to provide for the consideration and implementation of transportation projects, strategies, and services. The following is a summary of noteworthy awards, events, and regional planning activities:

Awards and Recognition

- In August 2010, the Institute of Transportation Engineers Planning Council recognized the Nashville Area MPO with a National Best Project Award for the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Study;
- In August 2010, the Tennessee Chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies recognized the MPO with a Grand Award for the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Study;
- In September 2010, the Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC) recognized the MPO with the Marshal Stuart Award for promoting regional cooperation in Middle Tennessee;
- In June 2011, the Office of the Surgeon General and the National Prevention, Health Promotion, and Public Health Council highlighted the MPO's 2035 RTP in the "National Prevention Strategy: America's Plan for Better Health and Wellness;"
- In July 2012, FHWA and FTA, in association with the American Planning Association and Transportation Research Board of the National Academy of Science, recognized the Nashville Area MPO with a National Transportation Planning Excellence Award for the integration of public health issues into transportation policies, plans, and programs;
- In January 2013, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Volpe Center highlighted the MPO in a white paper on public health in transportation planning and policy;
- In June 2013, FHWA featured the MPO's 2035 RTP and regional household travel survey in the Public Roads publication ("How Does Transportation Affect Public Health?" Volume 76, Number 6); and
- In September 2013, the U.S. Department of Transportation awarded the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant for transit signal priority and upgraded passenger amenities.

Presentations, Conferences, and Planning Events

- The MPO partnered with Cumberland Region Tomorrow and TDOT to host the "Power of Ten" summit on regional cooperation and quality growth initiatives in May 2011, May 2012, May 2013, and April 2014;
- In September 2012, the MPO delivered a presentation at the Transportation Research Board's "Tools of the Trade" Conference on the use of uniform visualization methodologies to support analyses of equity, safety, congestion, health, and other

regional performance measures;

- On October 25, 2012, the MPO hosted a regional symposium on transit system development;
- In April 2014, the MPO participated in an FHWA peer exchange with the Atlanta Regional Commission to discuss freight movement in megaregions; and
- In May 2014, the MPO participated in an FHWA peer exchange with the Mid-Region MPO in Albuquerque, NM to discuss scenario planning.

Regional Planning Activities

- On September 15, 2010, the MPO Executive Board adopted the Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP);
- On December 15, 2010, the MPO Executive Board adopted the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP);
- On December 15, 2010, the MPO Executive Board adopted the FY 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP);
- On August 17, 2011, the MPO Executive Board adopted the FY 2012 UPWP;
- In August 2011, the MPO completed the Northeast Corridor Mobility Study and a regional transportation investment strategy for the 30-mile corridor between downtown Nashville and Gallatin, TN;
- In February 2012, the Nashville Area MPO served as a test pilot for the System Planning module of FHWA's Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool (INVEST) to assess how the region could integrate sustainability into transportation programs, policies, processes, practices, and projects;
- In February 2012, the MPO helped the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) finalize the Broadway/West End Corridor Study, evaluating streetcar, light rail and bus rapid transit options in Davidson County (this effort is synonymous with the East-West Connector and the AMP bus rapid transit project);
- In March 2012, the Nashville Area MPO completed the Southwest Area Transportation and Land Use Study in order to coordinate planning across the southern portion of the Nashville metropolitan region and identify important regional transportation investments;
- In April 2012, the Nashville Area MPO and the Nashville Civic Design Center published "Moving Tennessee Forward" to promote better urban design considerations around transportation investments identified in the 2035 RTP;
- On August 15, 2012, the MPO Executive Board adopted the FY 2013 UPWP;
- In the fall of 2012, the MPO, TDOT and the Clarksville Urban Area MPO completed a regional household travel, health, and physical activity survey of 6,324 households; 11,574 persons; 13,722 vehicles; and 61,019 trips;
- In October 2013, the MPO partnered with the Nashville Chamber of Commerce to produce the "Nashville Region's Vital Signs 2013" report to track key issues that impact the region's economic well-being;
- On December 11, 2013, the MPO Executive Board adopted the FY 2014-2017 TIP;
- On December 11, 2013, the MPO Executive Board approved an expansion of the

metropolitan planning area to include Robertson and Maury counties (the Governor of Tennessee approved the change on April 1, 2014);

- In 2013, the MPO served on a national advisory panel with the U.S. Department of Transportation and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to develop a new transportation and health index tool;
- In 2013, the MPO served on the State Route 109 Corridor Management Agreement (CMA) Committee with the City of Gallatin, City of Lebanon, City of Portland, Sumner County, Wilson County, TDOT, and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC);
- On June 18, 2014, the MPO Executive Board approved an amendment to the Nashville Area Transportation Planning Bylaws and Prospectus.

Currently, the Nashville Area MPO is updating the 25-year RTP for 2040 forecasts, initializing the FY 2017-2021 TIP, and renewing the Regional ITS Architecture and Deployment Plan. The MPO will also adopt the FY 2015 UPWP in August 2014 and begin work on the FY 2016 UPWP thereafter.

For the 2040 RTP update, the MPO is conducting an analysis on the costs associated with asset management and system preservation. This analysis involves estimating costs for maintaining a state of good repair for base year and future year condition for the federal-aid system and bridges using FHWA's Highway Economic Requirements System (HERS) and National Bridge Investment Analysis (NBIA) models. The MPO will conduct a similar analysis with the regional transit agencies to analyze transit assets.

Additionally, the MPO is developing the third phase of a Regional Freight and Goods Movement Study, the Southeast Area Transportation and Land Use Study, and the State Route 109 Access Management Study. The MPO is also evaluating how to use the Integrated Transportation Health Impact Model (ITHIM) to forecast health savings due to changes in travel behavior and pollution levels.

Commendations

- Incorporating public health considerations into the MPO's planning process via policies, funding, and research.
- Integrating transportation and land use considerations into the MPO's planning process via corridor management agreements, access management studies, subarea studies, and other planning activities.
- Creating a forum for collaboration and innovation among local, regional, statewide and national transportation stakeholders.

Recommendations

- Continue evaluating transportation connectivity gaps regarding access to essential services, including housing, employment, health care, education, and recreation.

2. Organizational Structure (23 CFR 450.306 and 450.310)

Observations

The Nashville Area MPO, originally designated in 1977, coordinates a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Nashville-Davidson and Murfreesboro urbanized areas in partnership with TDOT and several public transportation providers. The MPO covers over 3,500 square miles and more than 1.6 million people throughout Davidson, Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson Counties (see Appendix E).

The Nashville Area MPO consists of an Executive Board, Technical Coordinating Committee, Staff, and various committees and working groups (see Appendix F). The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County houses the MPO staff.

Executive Board

The MPO Executive Board is responsible for establishing regional policies and adopting transportation plans and programs. The Executive Board provides cooperative decision making for transportation planning in the metropolitan planning area, and the Board has two standing committees:

- The **Finance and Audit Committee** is responsible for authorizing the release of funds for consultant invoices approved by the MPO's Executive Director and
- The **Executive Committee** is responsible for negotiations with the MPO's host agency/fiscal agent and for the annual evaluation of the MPO's Executive Director. The Executive Committee also serves as the selection committee during the hiring processes for the MPO's Executive Director.

The Executive Board consists of the principal elected official of each county government within the metropolitan planning area and each municipality with a population of at least 5,000 people, as of latest decennial U.S. Census.

Membership includes:

- Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County (two seats on Board);
- Cities of Brentwood, Columbia, Fairview, Franklin, Gallatin, Goodlettsville, Greenbrier, Hendersonville, LaVergne, Lebanon, Millersville, Mt. Juliet, Murfreesboro, Portland, Springfield, Spring Hill, and White House;
- Towns of Nolensville and Smyrna;
- Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson Counties;
- Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA);
- Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC);
- State of Tennessee (represented by TDOT);
- Federal Highway Administration (non-voting member); and
- Federal Transit Administration (non-voting member).

Technical Coordinating Committee

The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) is responsible for assisting MPO Staff in evaluating policies, plans, and programs for consideration by the MPO Executive Board, and for assisting in the local implementation of those regional policies, plans, and programs. The TCC consists of administrators, planning directors, and transportation engineers from local governments and transportation related agencies.

Local government membership includes:

- Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County;
- Cities of Brentwood, Columbia, Fairview, Franklin, Gallatin, Goodlettsville, Greenbrier, Hendersonville, LaVergne, Lebanon, Millersville, Mt. Juliet, Murfreesboro, Portland, Springfield, Spring Hill, and White House;
- Towns of Nolensville and Smyrna; and
- Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson Counties.

Transit membership includes:

- Regional Transportation Authority (RTA);
- Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA);
- City of Murfreesboro Public Transportation Department; and
- Franklin Transit Authority (represented by the TMA Group).

Regional membership includes:

- Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC).

State and Federal membership includes:

- Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC);
- Tennessee Department of Transportation, Long Range Planning;
- Tennessee Department of Transportation, Multi-modal Transportation Resources;
- Federal Highway Administration (non-voting member); and
- Federal Transit Administration (non-voting member).

The MPO Staff is working with a subcommittee of the TCC to study the Committee's structure and evaluate the potential for reorganization to expand membership to include representation by organizations involved in social equity, health, environmental quality, economic development, housing, and other key regional issues affected by transportation plans.

MPO Staff

The Nashville Area MPO's Executive Director is responsible for administration, work program management, policy development, and coordination with Executive Board members and regional partners. The Executive Director supervises the MPO Staff, and staffing responsibilities include the following:

- **Administrative Assistant** – Administrative support, contract and invoicing support, meeting/event support, and archiving;
- **Finance Officer** – Processes payroll, invoicing, reimbursement requests, and facilitates auditors;
- **Communications Director** – Manages media relations, social media coordination, Title VI compliance, copy editing, and provides public and stakeholder outreach support;
- **Director of Healthy Communities** – Coordinates with external partners on the integration of public health and transportation, manages the regional active transportation program and the regional bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee;
- **TIP Coordinator** – Manages the TIP, coordinates adjustments and amendments, and consults with TDOT and local agencies as part of the local program process;
- **Freight Planner** – Manages regional freight planning activities, coordinates with freight stakeholders, and manages the activities of the freight advisory committee;
- **Regional Modeler** – Develops and maintains regional planning models including transportation and land use models;
- **Economic and Systems Data Analyst** – Provides demographic and economic data analysis support for MPO staff, consultants, regional partners, and local agencies;
- **Land use, urban designer/ housing planner** – Provides support for the integration of land use/urban design or housing issues;
- **Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Technician/ Interns** – Provides technical analysis in support of MPO staff, consultants, and partner agencies; and
- **Policy Interns** – Provides policy and research support for MPO policy initiatives including school siting, public health, environmental screening, and social equity analysis.

Due to the growth in staffing and planning responsibilities, the MPO Staff is restructuring to accommodate additional management and supervisory support. The reorganization will include a deputy director in July / August 2014. The MPO staff also hosts the Middle Tennessee Mayors Caucus to support regional dialogue on livability issues ranging from economic development to environmental resiliency to public health. Several Caucus mayors serve on the Executive Board.

Advisory Committees and Groups

The Nashville Area MPO created the Freight Advisory Committee, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and numerous ad hoc working groups to solicit feedback on transportation related issues. The MPO established the Freight Advisory Committee to guide freight planning efforts and provide a forum for public and private sector collaboration. The MPO established the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) to guide the MPO on issues related to non-motorized transportation. The BPAC is comprised of stakeholders from local governments, transit agencies, law enforcement, and private non-profits. The MPO is considering creating a Planning for Operations committee in partnership with TDOT.

Commendations

- Designating transit representation on the Executive Board prior to the MAP-21 requirement.

3. Unified Planning Work Program (23 CFR 450.308)

Observations

The Nashville Area MPO updates the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) annually to outline how the MPO, local governments, transit agencies, and TDOT intend to use federal transportation planning funds in the Nashville metropolitan planning area. The MPO Staff develops the UPWP in consultation with partner agencies and input from local citizens and stakeholders.

The UPWP identifies transportation planning activities to be undertaken for a one-year period, following the Federal fiscal year from October 1st through September 30th, and discusses accomplishments from the previous fiscal year and future activities for the subsequent fiscal year. The UPWP discusses how the MPO will address the eight planning factors and various federal initiatives, including climate change and extreme weather, sustainability and livability, planning for operations, planning and environmental linkages, and the movement of freight goods.

The MPO receives FHWA's Metropolitan Planning (PL) and Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) funds from TDOT. For PL activities, the MPO's 20% non-Federal match typically comes from local member jurisdictions. For SPR activities, the non-Federal match generally comes from TDOT or local member jurisdictions. On the transit side, the MPO receives FTA's Metropolitan Planning (5303) funds, and the 20% non-federal match typically comes from TDOT (10%) and local member jurisdictions (10%).

The MPO receives funding from member jurisdictions three different ways:

1. In-kind contributions are provided by the MPO sponsor (Metro Nashville) to leverage Federal planning funds to pay for MPO staff salaries, benefits, and operating expenses;
2. Match amounts for regional studies conducted by consultants are provided by each MPO member jurisdiction on a proportionate fair share basis using population distribution as published by the most recent decennial Census (i.e. annual membership dues); and
3. Additional contributions are provided by MPO members to cover special efforts that affect only a subset of regional partner agencies or jurisdictions.

The MPO Executive Board adopted the current FY 2014 UPWP on August 21, 2013. The FY 2014 UPWP provides nearly \$4.5 million for planning activities in the Nashville region. The FY 2014 UPWP outlines eight broad work program tasks:

1. Program administration;
2. Long-range plan and regional model;
3. Transportation Improvement Program;
4. Congestion mitigation / air quality planning;
5. Multi-modal planning;
6. Land use integration;

7. Data collection and analysis; and
8. Public participation.

The MPO anticipates adopting the FY 2015 UPWP in August 2014. The FY 2015 UPWP outlines the following planning activities:

- Major update to the RTP and TIP;
- Third phase of the Regional Freight & Goods Movement Study;
- Regional active transportation planning activities;
- Regional transit master planning;
- Regional modeling and scenario planning;
- Continuation of congestion management data collection;
- Air quality planning and outreach;
- Transportation, urban design, and land use integration;
- Major transit study for northwest corridor;
- State Route 109 Access Management Study; and
- Southeast Area Transportation and Land Use Study.

Commendations

- Continuously planning for the preservation, management, operation, and expansion of the regional multimodal transportation network.
- Leveraging annual membership dues to build local support and commitment for regional planning efforts.

Recommendations

- Continue to coordinate with Federal and State planning partners on expectations for documenting major planning priorities and carryover activities/funds during the development of the FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program.

4. Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries (23 CFR 450.312)

Observations

The Nashville Area MPO evaluates the metropolitan planning area boundary after each decennial Census and upon requests from local municipalities. The Nashville metropolitan planning area encompasses the Nashville-Davidson and Murfreesboro urbanized areas (as defined by the Bureau of the Census) and Davidson, Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson Counties. The metropolitan planning area includes the contiguous area the MPO expects to become urbanized within the 25-year horizons of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan and upcoming 2040 update.

The MPO considers metropolitan planning area boundary adjustments in accordance with the criteria in 23 CFR 450.312, projected population densities over a 25-year horizon, and the interconnectedness of proposed expansion areas with the existing urbanized area in terms of transportation and commuting patterns. The MPO Staff also considers development patterns, economic development initiatives, and input from local partners.

On December 11, 2013, the MPO Executive Board approved a revised metropolitan planning area boundary, including the entirety of Robertson and Maury Counties. The Governor of Tennessee approved the metropolitan planning area expansion on April 1, 2014.

The Bureau of the Census updated the Nashville-Davidson and Murfreesboro urbanized areas with the release of the 2010 Census in March 2012. The Nashville metropolitan planning area also includes seven urban clusters from the 2010 Census:

- Portland, TN-KY;
- Springfield, TN;
- Lebanon, TN;
- Fairview, TN;
- Spring Hill, TN;
- Columbia, TN; and
- Mount Pleasant, TN.

The Nashville Area MPO expects to evaluate adjustments to the urban area boundaries in calendar year 2014.

Recommendations

- Prioritize the review of the region's urban areas and Federal-aid highway system for consistency with the 2013 Edition of FHWA's *Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures*.

5. Metropolitan Planning Agreements (23 CFR 450.314)

Observations

The Nashville Area MPO, TDOT, and public transportation operators serving the Nashville region have cooperatively determined their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. The MPO relies on Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs), and contractual agreements among the partner agencies to define the various roles and responsibilities concerning the MPO's continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process.

The previous 2010 TMA Certification Review recommended that the MPO review and update the existing MOUs upon completion of the 2035 Regional Plan to ensure that they are consistent with the demands of all planning documents, goals and objectives. The Nashville Area MPO has adopted or updated the following MOUs and contractual agreements:

- MPO Sponsorship Policy with host agency / fiscal agent;
- MPO Regional Dues Policy and MOU for federal planning grant funds;
- TDOT / MPO Transportation Improvement Program MOA;
- Transit Programming MOU on the process to program FTA funds;
- Greater Nashville Regional Council annual contract;
- Regional Transportation Authority annual contract;
- Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority annual contract; and
- Nashville Area Transportation Planning Prospectus and Bylaws of the MPO Executive Board.

On December 11, 2013, the MPO Executive Board approved a revised metropolitan planning area boundary, including the entirety of Robertson and Maury Counties. On June 18, 2014, the MPO Executive Board approved an amendment to the Nashville Area Transportation Planning Bylaws and Prospectus to add representatives to the Executive Board for the Cities of Columbia and Greenbrier, Maury and Robertson Counties, the Town of Nolensville, and the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority.

6. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (23 CFR 450.322)

Observations

The Nashville Area MPO Executive Board adopted the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) on December 15, 2010. The 2035 RTP established guiding principles, goals, and objectives for the Nashville region's multimodal transportation system over a 25-year planning horizon. The MPO outlined a multi-modal strategy to support the region's goals for economic growth and prosperity while balancing future congestion, concerns for public health, the safety and security of travelers, and the negative effects that system expansion can have on the natural and socio-cultural environment.

The MPO developed the 2035 RTP according to the following guiding principles:

- **Livability** – Enhance quality-of-life by supporting increased opportunities for affordable housing, education, jobs, recreation, and civic involvement without increasing the burden on citizens to enjoy their community;
- **Prosperity** – Contribute to regional economic well-being through transportation solutions that reduce the cost of living and doing business, increase access to education, jobs and amenities, and attract new investment;
- **Sustainability** – Support growth and prosperity without sacrificing public health, natural and socio-cultural resources, or the financial stability of this or future generations; and
- **Diversity** – Recognize the multitude of needs and variety of perspectives and backgrounds of Middle Tennessee's citizenry by promoting a range of transportation choices designed with sensitivity to the desired context.

The 2035 RTP focused on three major transportation policy initiatives to support the guiding principles:

1. **Create a Bold, New Vision for Mass Transit** – Help guide the expansion and modernization of the region's mass transit system in preparation for the increasing competitive global economy and to more proactively address the growing concerns about the health of our environment, worsening congestion, and the sprawling land development pattern that has begun to encroach upon the area's cherished rural countryside;
2. **Support Active Transportation and the Development of Walkable Communities** – Improve connectivity between people and places within the urbanizing area of the region, foster healthier activity for the region's citizens, and to serve as the backbone of investments in mass transit; and
3. **Preserve and Enhance Strategic Roadway Corridors** – Focus on repairing an aging roadway and bridge network to ensure the safety and security of the traveling public and an emphasis on using technology to make roadway corridors more efficient and ready for the vehicle fleet of the 21st century.

The MPO developed eight regional goals to support the guiding principles and major policy initiatives:

1. Maintain and preserve the efficiency, safety, and security of the region's existing transportation infrastructure;
2. Manage congestion to keep people and goods moving;
3. Encourage quality growth and sustainable land development practices;
4. Protect the region's health and environment;
5. Support the economic competitiveness of the Greater Nashville Area;
6. Offer meaningful transportation choices for a diverse population including the aging;
7. Encourage regional coordination, cooperation, and decision-making; and
8. Practice thoughtful, transparent financial stewardship by ensuring that transportation improvements meet regional goals.

Furthermore, the MPO defined thirteen objectives to achieve the regional goals:

1. Adopt a "fix-it-first" mentality in directing transportation funding. Initial focus should always be on the maintenance or improvement of existing facilities.
2. Strive for quality over quantity. Build out all elements of priority projects or phases rather than stringing funding out over several incomplete projects or incomplete phases.
3. Shift investment strategies towards providing a diversification of modes, rather than solely on strategies focused on roadway capacity.
4. Improve marketing and promotion of successful existing transportation services. It is acceptable to use federal transportation funds to do this.
5. Provide opportunities and define roles for all types of organizations and/or individuals (public or private) to assist in the implementation of programs and projects.
6. Improve the coordination of land use, urban design, transportation, rural and environmental feature preservation, and economic development policies and decisions through incentives and/or policies.
7. Encourage the development of context sensitive solutions to ensure that community values are not sacrificed for a mobility improvement.
8. Increase efforts to improve the form and function of transportation corridors in order to contribute to the "sense of place." Such investments can: improve attractiveness to visitors or prospective businesses or residents; compliment existing natural and cultural resources; improve the function of the road for a variety of users; and foster civic pride toward public investments in infrastructure.
9. Consider how transportation policies, programs, and investment strategies affect the overall health of people and the environment including air quality, physical activity, biodiversity, and the natural resources.
10. Invest in the development of walkable communities that offer citizens the ability to access residences, jobs, retail, recreation, and other community amenities without the need to rely on an automobile.
11. Invest in a modern regional mass transit system to maintain the region's economic competitiveness with other metropolitan regions, and to ensure continued economic prosperity in the face of growing energy costs, environmental concerns, and increasingly

expensive automobile traffic.

12. Work to ensure that Middle Tennessee is given priority consideration in proposed national plans for high-speed rail. Identify opportunities to coordinate regional mass transit planning efforts with super-regional and national efforts to invest in rail infrastructure.
13. Provide proper guidance to the region for how to bridge the gap between the MPO's "cost-feasible" plan and the ultimate vision for how transportation will shape the future of the region.

Call for Projects and Project Selection

The Nashville Area MPO screened strategies and projects through numerous call-for-project sessions, an extensive public outreach process, and a fiscally constrained financial analysis to support the development of a more sustainable, multimodal, and cost-effective transportation plan. The MPO developed nine project factors to evaluate, prioritize and select projects for the 2035 RTP and to ensure projects were consistent with the MPO's guiding principles, regional goals, and major objectives:

1. System preservation and enhancement;
2. Quality growth, sustainable development, and economic prosperity;
3. Multimodal options;
4. Congestion management;
5. Safety and security;
6. Freight and goods movement;
7. Health and environment;
8. Project history; and
9. Consistency with plans and state and local support.

The MPO's selection process focused largely on the identification of high-scoring projects eligible for MPO-managed funds including FHWA Surface Transportation Program (STP), FHWA Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program funds, and FTA Section 5307 Urban Transit grant funds. Projects more appropriately suited for state-managed funds were evaluated and scored primarily for the purpose of communicating priorities to TDOT. Those projects with local or state funding commitments or prior federal funding commitments were given priority for funding in the new work program.

The 2035 RTP also featured an investment strategy to ensure that the Nashville Area MPO aligned the MPO-managed federal grant funds with regional goals and objectives for active transportation and walkable communities, public transportation, and system management and operations. The MPO established a regional policy to distribute suballocated STP funds through four categories of transportation investments. The MPO designated 70% of the STP funds over the RTP's 25-year horizon for "Multi-Modal Roadway Capacity & Safety" projects, and the MPO created three new competitive grant programs with the remaining sub-allocated STP funds:

- 15% for "Active Transportation & Walkable Communities;"
- 10% for "Public Transportation/ Mass Transit;" and
- 5% for "System Management & Operations."

The MPO conducted a separate call-for-projects process for each category of transportation investments:

- The project solicitation, evaluation, and select process for the “Multi-Modal Roadway Capacity & Safety” program occurred during the development of the 2035 RTP and before the Executive Board adopted the RTP in December 2010;
- In January 2012, the MPO completed a call-for-projects for the “Active Transportation and Walkable Communities” program to prioritize funds for walking, bicycling, or transit-supportive projects;
- In the spring of 2012, the MPO completed a call-for-projects for the “Public Transportation / Mass Transit” program to prioritize funds for the implementation of regional plans to modernize and improve mass transit in Middle Tennessee; and
- In February 2013, the MPO completed a call-for-projects for the “System Management and Operations” program to prioritize funds for the implementation of regional plans to modernize and improve system operations in Middle Tennessee.

The MPO is developing a web-based project application and evaluation tool to facilitate a transparent, documented, collaborative, and analytical project selection process for the 2040 RTP and future MPO-managed federal grant programs. The new web-based project application and evaluation tool will streamline the call-for-projects process as project sponsors and MPO Staff will be able to simultaneously review project information and share feedback. The MPO can also use the web-based tool to develop planning scenarios for regional priorities, weighted evaluation criteria, and revenue projections. The MPO is also exploring the potential to link the project evaluation results with the environmental process required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

Travel Demand and Land Use Modeling

The Nashville Area MPO evaluated the latest available land use, population, employment, travel, and economic conditions, trends, and forecasts during the development of the 2035 RTP. The MPO used a “Four-Step” travel demand model (i.e. trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice, and trip assignment) to assess the demands and performance of the existing regional transportation network and project the future conditions. The MPO also used the travel demand model to analyze the performance of the RTP’s planned transportation improvements over the 25-year planning horizon. Furthermore, the MPO used the congestion management process (CMP) to identify congested corridors and hotspots.

The MPO and its consultants continuously maintain, update, and validate the travel demand model. The MPO has updated the travel demand model since the 2010 TMA Certification Review to include new base-year socioeconomic data, refined traffic analysis zones and roadway and transit networks, a newly integrated mode-choice sub-model, and a population synthesizer that helps disaggregate future year population into demographic categories. In preparation of the 2040 RTP, the MPO has updated regional population and employment forecasts through the year 2040 and improved the regional land use model to suballocate intra-county growth and to support scenario-planning activities.

The MPO uses Woods and Poole Economics for county level population and employment forecasts. The Technical Coordinating Committee and Executive Board review and endorse these forecasts and typically incorporate them into local comprehensive planning efforts. The MPO has also worked with the Technical Coordinating Committee to construct a land use model to distribute anticipated growth within counties. The MPO aggregates the growth forecasts to traffic analysis zones for use in travel demand modeling. The MPO also developed a new uniform visualization methodology to present transportation, land use, and economic development data in an easier to digest format.

The MPO is investing in the development of an activity-based travel demand model. The activity-based model will be available to supplement the current travel demand model as the MPO evaluates scenarios for the 2040 RTP. The MPO anticipates a full transition to the activity-based travel demand model for the 2045 RTP update.

Corridor/Subarea Studies

The Nashville Area MPO continuously works with local governments to ensure that all parties clearly understand regional travel demands and the potential impact of regional transportation investments on land use, urban design, and economic development. The MPO supports updates and refinements to local land use plans through the subarea transportation and land use studies. The MPO developed the 2035 RTP with input from local comprehensive plans, corridor studies, subarea studies, and other major planning efforts, including:

- Southeast Corridor Transit Alternatives Analysis;
- Northeast Corridor Mobility Study;
- Tri-County Transportation & Land Use Study;
- Regional Freight & Goods Movement Study;
- Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Study; and
- Nashville MTA Master Plan.

Each effort contained a robust public involvement process that included a range of activities, from public meetings and workshops to web-based and telephone surveys.

Fiscal Constraint

The Nashville Area MPO developed the 2035 RTP to provide a balanced, financially feasible program of transportation improvements that could be constructed or implemented over the next 25 years with nearly \$6 billion in expected federal, state, and local revenues. The MPO identified these long-term transportation improvements to alleviate traffic congestion, provide more transportation choices, improve transportation system operations, and meet the region's air quality goals.

The MPO developed the financial plan for the 2035 RTP by projecting historic highway transportation and transit capital revenues, calculating current and projected project costs, and analyzing operations and maintenance costs and revenues that ensure adequate system maintenance. The MPO coordinated these forecasted revenues, costs, and maintenance figures

with TDOT, the local jurisdictions, and the public transit service providers using inflation rates to reflect year of expenditure dollars.

The 2035 RTP contains projects over three planning horizons – a short-term horizon (2011-2015), a mid-term horizon (2016-2025), and a long-term horizon (2026-2035). During the development of the 2035 Plan, the MPO realized the transportation needs identified within the metropolitan planning area outpaced the expected revenues. Accordingly, the MPO developed an illustrative list of projects in the case future funding might become available. The MPO also documented strategies the region could implement to alleviate funding needs.

Planning Coordination, Consultation, and Public Involvement

The Nashville Area MPO used the Public Participation Plan to guide the development of the 2035 RTP and collect feedback on the existing and anticipated transportation needs for the Nashville metropolitan planning area. The Public Participation Plan outlined a public participation process for all citizens, State and local agencies, providers of freight transportation services, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities, and traditionally-underserved populations (including the low-income, disabled, and minority groups) to have reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan.

The Nashville Area MPO developed the 2035 RTP in coordination with a regional coalition of local governments, non-profit organizations, private sector businesses, and public citizens. The MPO created the three major policy initiatives around the public attitudes and opinions about transportation needs in the Nashville region. The MPO engaged these public and private sector stakeholders early in the process, kept them involved through adoption, and has relied on them since the December 2010 adoption to help implement the various transportation projects, strategies, and services.

The MPO used a variety of opportunities for public participation, including:

- MPO website;
- Print, radio, and television media;
- Social media;
- Public workshops and open houses;
- Regional symposiums/summits;
- Speakers' bureaus;
- Presentations and discussions with civic organizations;
- Scientific polling/surveys;
- Online surveys;
- Videos and other visualizations;
- Local planning efforts;
- Regional studies; and
- Public comment periods at Executive Board and Technical Coordinating Committee meetings.

The MPO coordinated the development of the 2035 RTP with TDOT, TDEC, FHWA Tennessee Division, and FTA Region IV Office. The MPO also coordinated the 2035 RTP with the public transportation providers in the region.

The MPO also consulted with State and Federal agencies responsible for environmental protection, land use management, natural resource conservation, and historic preservation. The MPO was able to seek comments and compare available plans and maps with planned transportation improvements to assess environmental impacts on natural resources such as wetlands, floodplains, and historic areas. The MPO also overlaid the transportation projects on a map of the Title VI areas in the Nashville region to better distribute resources and funding in a non-discriminatory manner and monitor the impacts to socioeconomic and ethnic minorities. The 2035 RTP identified eight categories of vulnerable populations including:

1. Households in poverty;
2. Non-Hispanic minorities;
3. Hispanic populations;
4. Limited English-language proficiency;
5. Senior adults;
6. Physically disabled persons;
7. Carless households; and
8. Single mother households.

Safety

The Nashville Area MPO collaborated with TDOT and the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security to study safety trends and identify safety priorities both at the project and system level. The MPO worked with both state agencies to collect crash data and develop data analysis software to identify safety “hot spots” in the metropolitan planning area. The MPO has continuously participated and provided input to the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) committee and the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC). The MPO incorporated language from the SHSP into the 2035 RTP and anticipates updating this information with the 2040 update.

Amendment Process

The Nashville Area MPO processes RTP amendments as needed. First, local agencies and project sponsors submit proposed amendments to the MPO staff for analysis to ensure consistency with regional policies, goals, and objectives and fiscal constraint parameters. The MPO Staff then presents the recommendations to the Technical Coordinating Committee and Executive Board for endorsement and release for public review and comment for a minimum of 30 days. The MPO makes the proposed amendments available for review in area libraries, on the MPO website, and in the MPO office. Following the review period, the Technical Coordinating Committee hosts the first adoption hearing and the Executive Board hosts the second/final adoption hearing. The Executive Board approves amendments via resolution, and following approval, the MPO sends amendment packages to TDOT for state and federal review/concurrence.

The Executive Board approved three amendments to the 2035 RTP:

- The addition of ten projects on December 16, 2011;
- The addition of the East-West Connector project (i.e. the AMP bus rapid transit project) on March 26, 2012; and
- The addition of the State Route 1 interchange project in Murfreesboro on September 19, 2012.

2040 Regional Transportation Plan

The Nashville Area MPO's general timeline for the 2040 RTP update is the following:

- Development of planning models and data collection (FY 2012-2014);
- Coordination with supporting regional studies (FY 2013-2015);
- Existing conditions and trends analysis (FY 2014);
- Call-for-projects (July-September 2014);
- Reaffirmation of regional goals and objectives (August-November 2014);
- Project evaluation and prioritization (September-December 2014);
- Draft document for state/federal review (April-August 2015);
- Draft document for public review (October-November 2015); and
- Executive Board adoption (December 2015).

The MPO will engage public and private sector stakeholders through outreach methods consistent with the Public Participation Plan. The updated 2040 RTP will include three horizon periods – 2016-2020, 2021-2030, and 2031-2040 – over a 25-year forecast.

Commendations

- Establishing an investment strategy to ensure that the MPO-managed federal grant funds are aligned with regional goals and objectives for multimodal roadway capacity and safety; active transportation and walkable communities; public transportation; and system management and operations.
- Developing a web-based project application and evaluation tool to facilitate a transparent, documented, collaborative, and analytical project selection process.
- Conducting a comprehensive data collection effort for the travel demand model and including regional data for travel speeds, bicycle level of service, vehicle ownership, household income, physical activity, and public health.
- Participating on the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) Committee, staying informed of regional and statewide safety needs, and providing valuable contributions to the State of Tennessee's effort to improve highway safety.
- Participating on the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee, networking with State and local law enforcement agencies, and contributing to the overall improvement of traffic records in Tennessee.

Recommendations

- Explore the application of safety analysis tools from the Highway Safety Manual, including the Interactive Highway Safety Design Module, SafetyAnalyst, and the Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse.
- Include local safety initiatives in the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan that coincide with emphasis areas of the SHSP to show progress with safety performance measures and SHSP initiatives.
- Continue formalizing relationships with TDOT and the Tennessee Department of Safety to facilitate the continuous sharing of safety information and to ensure the MPO is involved in future SHSP updates and the development of specific safety strategies and performance targets for the Nashville metropolitan planning area.
- Continue to involve TDOT in the development of the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan to integrate the results of the Tennessee Extreme Weather Project.
- Engage TDOT and public transit agencies on MAP-21 requirements, especially the Transportation Performance Management elements on performance measures and performance targets.

7. Transportation Improvement Program (23 CFR 450.324, 332, and 334)

Observations

The Nashville Area MPO Executive Board adopted the FY 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on December 15, 2010 and the FY 2014-2017 TIP on December 11, 2013. These TIPs documented how project sponsors in the Nashville metropolitan planning area planned to expend Federal, State, and local funds on roadway and public transportation improvements. The TIPs included State and local roadway, bridge, bicycle, pedestrian, safety and transit projects. The MPO coordinated these fiscally constrained, multi-modal TIPs through a comprehensive, continuing and cooperative effort with FHWA, FTA, TDOT, TDEC, local transit agencies, and other interested parties from the public and private sectors.

Both TIPs are consistent with the guiding principles, policy initiatives, regional goals, and major objectives outlined in the 2035 RTP and the projects enumerated in the first horizon years. Both TIPs outline a series of fifteen programming policies to assist in the effective administration of MPO-managed federal grant funds and the achievement of the 2035 RTP's principles, initiatives, goals, and objectives:

1. Compliance with Regional Plan;
2. Compliance with Air Quality Standards;
3. Compliance with State Transportation Work Program;
4. Fiscal Constraint Limitations;
5. Illustrative Priorities;
6. Eligibility for MPO-Managed Federal Grant Funds;
7. MPO Commitment to Projects;
8. Project Sponsor Commitment to Projects;
9. Construction Funding;
10. Dormant or Inactive Projects;
11. Inflation Adjustments;
12. Cost Increases/ Cost Over-Runs;
13. Changes in the Scope of Work;
14. Project Tracking; and
15. TIP Amendment Cycles.

Public Involvement

The MPO used the Public Participation Plan to guide the development of the FY 2011-2014 and FY 2014-2017 TIPs and gave the public and other interested parties opportunities to review and comment on the proposed programs of projects throughout the TIP development processes. The Public Participation Plan outlined a public participation process for all citizens, State and local agencies, providers of freight transportation services, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities, and disabled persons to have reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed programs. The MPO solicited public feedback using a variety of methods including the MPO's website, newspaper advertisements, and open public meetings and hearings. The Technical Coordinating Committee and Executive Board invited public review

and comments prior to the adoption of each TIP.

Amendments and Adjustments

The Nashville Area MPO has a memorandum of agreement with TDOT regarding the definition and need for amendments and administrative adjustments to the TIP. The MPO processes amendments on a quarterly cycle and administrative adjustments as needed.

For amendments, project sponsors first submit a proposal to the MPO Staff for an analysis to ensure consistency with the RTP and TIP fiscal constraint parameters. The MPO Staff then presents the recommendations to the Technical Coordinating Committee and Executive Board for endorsement. After endorsement, the MPO releases the amendments for public review and comment for a minimum of 21 days. The MPO makes the proposed amendments available for review in area libraries, on the MPO website, and in the MPO office. Following the review period, the Technical Coordinating Committee hosts the first adoption hearing and the Executive Board hosts the second/final adoption hearing. The Executive Board approves amendments via resolution, and following approval, the MPO sends amendment packages to TDOT for state and federal review and approval. All TIP amendments require final concurrence from FHWA or FTA.

For administrative adjustments concerning state-managed projects, TDOT sends the project/program changes to the MPO, FHWA, and FTA concurrently, per the memorandum of agreement. For administrative adjustments concerning locally managed projects, the MPO staff reviews proposals for compliance with adjustment policies and for consistency with the RTP and TIP fiscal constraint parameters. Once reviewed, the MPO Executive Director authorizes the change via an adjustment packet sent to TDOT then FHWA and FTA. Administrative adjustments do not require concurrence from FHWA or FTA.

Self-Certification

The MPO Executive Director and TIP coordinator completed the most recent self-certification as a final step in the development of the FY 2014-2017 TIP to certify that the metropolitan transportation planning process was carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements outlined in 23 CFR 450.334(a).

The Technical Coordinating Committee endorsed the self-certification in conjunction with the Committee's endorsement of the FY 2014-2017 TIP, and the Executive Board adopted the self-certification in conjunction with the approval of the FY 2014-2017 TIP on December 11, 2013.

Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

After each Federal fiscal year, the Nashville Area MPO collaborates with TDOT and the region's public transportation providers to develop a listing of projects for which federal funds were obligated in the preceding program year. The MPO strives to publish these listings no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the fiscal year. The MPO publishes these listings on the MPO website and reviews the projects with the Executive Board and Technical Coordinating Committee. The MPO Executive Board reviewed:

- The FY 2010 obligations list in January 2011;
- The FY 2011 obligations list in December 2011;
- The FY 2012 obligations list in December 2012; and
- The FY 2013 obligations list in February 2014.

The MPO also produces a brochure with pictures, graphics, project summaries, and financial information to accompany the annual listings of obligated projects.

FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program

The Nashville Area MPO's TIP development cycle is consistent with TDOT's update cycle for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which the State develops every three years. The current STIP covers FY 2014-2017, and the next STIP will cover FY 2017-2020. The Nashville Area MPO anticipates using the first horizon years of the 2040 RTP for the next TIP update.

Commendations

- Implementing programming policies to assist in the effective administration of MPO-managed federal grant funds.
- Developing a web-based application to manage the TIP and track project information.
- Amending the TIP to include individual line-items for projects that have been selected for funding under a MPO-managed project grouping.

Recommendations

- Continue to work with TDOT to enable the continuous sharing of project/program obligations and expenditures so the MPO has the best available information for programming decisions.
- Explore the potential to establish connections between the MPO's web-based TIP application and TDOT's Statewide Environmental Management System (SEMS).

8. Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation (23 CFR 450.316)

Observations

The Nashville Area MPO's Executive Board adopted the current Public Participation Plan on August 30, 2007. The MPO Staff developed the Public Participation Plan in partnership with the Technical Coordinating Committee after a review of federal requirements and best practices. Additionally, the MPO surveyed interested parties for their preferences on how best to be contacted, and opened a review and comment period for the general public prior to the Plan's adoption.

The Public Participation Plan supports involvement of the public and private sector stakeholders in developing plans, programs, and projects and offers several strategies to engage vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations in the MPO planning process. The Nashville Area MPO holds public meetings, including public hearings, workshops, and open houses, to confirm the purpose and intent of plans and projects and to gather public input. The MPO strives to hold meetings at locations and times that are convenient and accessible. The MPO chooses meeting locations based on proximity to transit and tends to favor community-based centers that are already located within close proximity to traditionally underserved populations. The regularly scheduled meetings of the Technical Coordinating Committee and Executive Board serve as public meetings and are open for public comment.

The MPO distributes meeting notices via its website and in area newspapers, including publications that target non-English speaking and minority populations. The MPO uses local media outlets, including print, radio, and television media, to promote an awareness of transportation issues and challenges. The MPO makes documents available at the MPO office, on the MPO website, and in libraries across the region. The MPO Staff and consultants generate graphics, maps, videos, and other visual aids to translate technical information for non-technical audiences.

The MPO has invested significantly in the MPO website and social media channels to maximize its public outreach efforts. The website is comprehensive, informative, and intuitive and has eye-catching graphics, an aesthetically attractive color scheme, and a user-friendly layout. The website's translation tool helps facilitate diverse public access and involvement. The MPO is also active in Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, and LinkedIn. The MPO developed a "Web 2.0 – Use Policy" in September 2009 to clarify how social media tools will be used in the planning process (e.g. communications made through e-mail and messaging systems within social media channels will in no way constitute a legal or official notice or comment to the MPO).

The Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC) evaluated the effectiveness of the Public Participation Plan after the adoption of the 2035 RTP in December 2010. The MPO anticipates updating the Public Participation Plan in the summer of 2014 in advance of the public outreach for the 2040 RTP. As part of this process, the MPO will survey interested parties for their preferences on how and when to be contacted regarding MPO plans and programs.

Civil Rights, Title VI, Environmental Justice

The Nashville Area MPO ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 49 CFR Part 26, and related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

The MPO strives to distribute funding, projects, and services in a nondiscriminatory manner. The MPO's goal is to ensure that the public has full opportunity to participate in the development of plans and in the transportation decision-making process. The MPO reviews plans, programs, and projects to ensure the equitable distribution of impacts. The MPO uses demographic and socioeconomic data from the Census to identify the location of targeted disadvantaged populations and analyze the potential impacts of transportation plans and programs on these communities.

The MPO works closely with the Regional Transportation Authority, Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority, City of Murfreesboro Public Transportation Department, and Franklin Transit Authority to distribute transit services in a nondiscriminatory manner, and the MPO helps prepare a Title VI report every year.

The Nashville MPO has not received any Title VI complaints since the 2010 TMA certification review.

Commendations

- Employing visualization tools in public meetings and on the MPO website to describe the metropolitan planning process and solicit participation.
- Consistently including Title VI assurance statements in publications.

Recommendations

- Ensure public meeting notices and agendas are published in accordance to the MPO's Public Participation Plan so the general public and other interested parties can prepare for participation.
- Update the Public Participation Plan to reflect changes in membership, demographic and U.S. Census information, and Federal legislation.
- During the update and implementation of the Public Participation Plan, continue to seek opportunities to educate interested parties and stakeholders on the MPO's planning processes and local public participation activities in the region.
- Consider collecting demographic data at public meetings using TDOT's Data Collection Toolkit to better understand audience participation¹.

¹ TDOT's Data Collection Toolkit is available at

<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/civil-rights/titlevi/documents/DataCollectionToolkit.pdf>

9. Transit (49 CFR 613)

Observations

The Nashville Area MPO is actively involved in multimodal transit planning, which includes both urban and rural transit providers, and is proactive in supporting, improving, and expanding transit mobility and accessibility in the Nashville metropolitan planning area. The MPO works closely with four urban/regional public transit operators:

- **Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)** – Provides commuter rail, regional commuter bus, and vanpool services;
- **Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA)** – The oldest and largest transit system in the Nashville-Davidson urbanized area providing local fixed-route bus, bus rapid transit, and paratransit services within Metro Nashville-Davidson County;
- **Franklin Transit Authority** – Provides flex route bus service for the City of Franklin and the Cool Springs area; and
- **City of Murfreesboro (Rover)** – Provides fixed-route bus service in the Murfreesboro urbanized area.

Additionally, the TMA Group is actively engaged in the MPO planning process as the private non-profit vendor for the Franklin Transit Authority and the RTA and Williamson County vanpool programs.

The four public transit agencies, and additional rural transit operators providing transit services into the Nashville urbanized area from outlying areas, work together to maximize public transit service that can be provided with the amount of resources available for services. The Nashville MTA has been able to improve the age of its vehicle fleet and RTA has been able to provide expanded regional service because of local funding initiatives and the regional planning process. The Nashville MTA serves as the designated recipient of FTA formula funds for the Nashville-Davidson urbanized area.

The Nashville Area MPO supports the planning efforts of each transit agency as all four public transit operators have representation on the Technical Coordinating Committee and are involved in the development of the RTP and TIP. The Nashville MTA is also voting member on the Executive Board.

The MPO considers, scores, and ranks transit project for funding within the overall goals and objectives of the MPO's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP project evaluation process gives higher consideration to projects that include transit elements and/or coordinate with transit projects. Additionally, the MPO in conjunction with the transit agencies, developed a transit vision for the region that has become a blueprint to achieve a true regional transit network for Middle Tennessee. The Public Transportation/ Mass Transit program included in the MPO's Surface Transportation Program investment strategy has been especially beneficial as it provides transit agencies with another funding opportunity specifically for transit projects. As part of the Transit Improvement Program, the MPO has fostered an environment of dialogue

and taken a leading role in ensuring a fair and open process for distribution of FTA formula funds between the partner agencies in the metropolitan planning area. Transit partners meet regularly with the MPO staff during the development of the TIP to discuss project status, transit plans, and funding needs and opportunities.

With the publication of the annual listing of obligated projects, the transit agencies provide the MPO with their list of obligations for the preceding fiscal year which are then included in the list. The MPO also publishes a brochure with a summary of the obligations list and several transit projects have been highlighted in the past.

The Nashville Area MPO has recognized the need for transit agencies to have a more stable source of revenue in order to accomplish their goals and provide a higher quality level of service. The MPO is working hand-in-hand with transit agencies, political leadership and the support of other public and private partners. The MPO has taken a proactive role in advancing the discussion for dedicated funding for transit in Middle Tennessee, and dedicated funding for transit has been at the top of the agenda for the Middle Tennessee Mayors Caucus. These efforts are helping to broaden the support and understanding of transit in the Nashville region.

The MPO also assists the transit providers in delivering the Public Transit-Human Services Coordination Plan and meeting State and Federal requirements of Title VI, Environmental Justice, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs).

The Nashville MPO worked with the Nashville MTA and RTA to finalize the Coordinated Human Services Transportation and Program Management Plan on October 30, 2007 and an update in September 2011.

Commendations

- Examining best practices for transit mapping and creating an investment vision for short and long term multimodal transportation choices.

Recommendations

- Continue facilitating regional forums for multimodal transportation decision-making.

10. Congestion Management Process (23 CFR 450.320 and 500.109)

Observations

The Nashville Area MPO uses a performance-based congestion management process (CMP) to evaluate existing Federal-aid roadways for current and future levels of traffic congestion and proposed projects for their ability to alleviate congestion. The MPO uses the following performance measures in the CMP to monitor and evaluate system performance:

- Observed (INRIX and other third-party sources) and modeled travel speeds;
- Observed and modeled volume to capacity ratios;
- Observed and modeled level of service (LOS);
- Percentage Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) on congestion corridors; and
- Percentage of truck VMT on congestion corridors.

The MPO fully integrated the CMP into the 2035 RTP and FY 2014-2017 TIP. The Executive Board adopted the current CMP on December 15, 2010 as part of the 2035 RTP update. The MPO evaluates and updates the CMP with every major update to the RTP and updates analytical tools on an ad hoc basis.

The MPO deploys a “congestion toolbox” to identify common mitigation strategies and match the appropriate solution to specific areas on a case-by-case basis as part of the project identification and evaluation process of RTP development. MPO staff and project sponsors are required to identify causes of congestion, assess appropriate mitigation strategies, and rate projects based on how well they address the goals and objectives of the region, of which congestion is a major factor.

Some of the MPO’s most common and effective travel demand strategies include:

- Investments in alternative modes of transportation, including transit;
- Complete Streets investments;
- ITS solutions to improve traffic operations;
- Influencing policy and behavioral shifts in land use and urban design;
- Innovative ride share programs; and
- Employer-based commuter programs.

The MPO uses TRANSCAD modeling software to identify congestion by roadway link and then aggregates that data to regional corridors, districts, neighborhood/communities, and at the system level. More recently, the MPO has implemented a methodology to identify congestion hot spots. The MPO’s definition of congestion varies by area type and time-of-day, including: AM peak, midday, PM peak, and off-peak periods. The MPO evaluates congestion for truck movements in addition to passenger vehicles.

Commendations

- Evaluating congestion through tiered aggregation areas, such as regional corridors, districts, neighborhood/communities, and at the system level, and producing measures of effectiveness.
- Proactively addressing congestion through non-traditional travel demand management strategies, including complete streets design, transit services, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

Recommendations

- Explore travel time reliability as a performance measure for the congestion management process, including travel time index, planning index, and buffer index.
- Leverage opportunities with TDOT, especially the Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) Committee, to provide the best travel time reliability for the region's surface transportation networks.
- Engage FHWA for resources concerning travel time reliability prediction models for project evaluation and comparison.

11. Air Quality (1990 Clean Air Act, 40 CFR 51, and 40 CFR 93)

Observations

The Nashville region is currently in attainment for all six criteria pollutants (i.e. carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide) under the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

The EPA previously designated Davidson, Rutherford, Sumner, Wilson, and Williamson Counties as nonattainment areas under the 1979 1-hour ozone standard. On October 30, 1996, the EPA redesignated all five Counties to maintenance. On April 15, 2009, the EPA redesignated the Nashville region as an attainment area to coincide with the revocation of the 1979 1-hour ozone standard.

On December 29, 2004, the Nashville region entered into an Early Action Compact (EAC) with the State of Tennessee and the EPA to develop and implement air pollution control strategies to defer a nonattainment designation for the 1997 8-hour ozone standard.

As such, the Nashville Area MPO is no longer required to demonstrate conformity with established motor vehicle emissions budgets. However, the MPO has continued to participate in Tennessee's statewide Interagency Consultation (IAC) group with FHWA, FTA, EPA, and TDEC in order to stay up-to-date on air quality information and congestion mitigation strategies.

The MPO continues to support the Clean Air Partnership of Middle Tennessee, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization focused on air quality in an eight-county area including Cheatham, Dickson, Davidson, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson counties, and the Partnership's efforts to promote carpooling, mass transit, and regular car maintenance. The MPO also continues to support the Clean Air Partnership of Williamson County, a public-private coalition that coordinates the Air Alert Day program, educates citizens about air pollution, and promotes the use of alternate modes of transportation.

CMAQ Funds

The Nashville region remains part of Tennessee's State Implementation Plan (SIP), and as such, continues to be eligible to receive CMAQ funding, at the discretion of TDOT. Member jurisdictions submit project proposals to TDOT for consideration as part of the State's competitive solicitation process. The MPO Staff, Technical Coordinating Committee, and Executive Board determine project eligibility prior to submissions to TDOT. The MPO has used CMAQ to fund projects for bicycles, pedestrians, transit, and ITS.

12. Regional ITS Architecture (23 CFR 450.306 and 23 CFR 940)

Observations

In June 2010, the Nashville Area MPO updated the Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture and Deployment Plan as part of the development of the 2035 RTP to guide cohesive long-range planning, system interoperability, and resource sharing among regional stakeholders.

The 2010 Regional ITS Architecture updated all of the required elements per 23 CFR 940, including regional description, stakeholders, operational concept, applicable operational agreements, functional requirements, interface requirements, applicable ITS standards, and a project sequence.

The Regional ITS Architecture helps the MPO, TDOT, and local project sponsors in the Nashville region ensure ITS projects conform to Federal requirements and national systems engineering standards. The Regional ITS Architecture is a roadmap for transportation systems integration and provides an overarching framework that spans all of the region's transportation organizations and individual transportation projects through the year 2030 (i.e. the horizon year of the MPO's 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan that the MPO Executive Board adopted on October 19, 2005 and superseded on December 15, 2010).

The geographic boundaries of the Regional Architecture matched the five-county metropolitan planning area in 2010, which consisted of Davidson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson Counties and parts Maury and Robertson Counties. In fact, the Architecture stakeholder group decided to include all of Robertson County in the Regional ITS Architecture.

The MPO developed the Regional ITS Architecture through a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive planning effort with a diverse set of stakeholders encompassing traffic, transit, public safety, and many other operating agencies at local, state, and national levels, covering all modes and all roads in the region. The Architecture represents a shared vision of how each agency's systems will work together in the future, sharing information and resources to provide a safer, more efficient, and more effective transportation system for travelers in the Nashville region.

The Architecture details projects, electronic technologies, and communications equipment related to Traffic Management Centers, closed circuit television cameras, dynamic message signs, traffic signal systems, and signal preemption equipment. The Architecture includes components of TDOT's SmartWay system and numerous transit management strategies, including systems for automated vehicle location, computer-aided dispatch, vehicle routing, and reservations.

Projects outlined in the Regional ITS Architecture's Deployment Plan are considered candidate projects for the RTP. During project application and evaluation, project sponsors and reviewers must qualitatively review the project description to ensure it is consistent with the

Architecture. If development of a project necessitates a minor or major change to the Architecture, the MPO helps the managing agency make those change requests.

The Nashville Area MPO budgeted funds in the current FY 2014 UPWP to update the project and stakeholder lists in the Regional ITS Architecture (TDOT typically uses a four-year update cycle).

Commendations

- Implementing a user-friendly process for updating the Regional ITS Architecture as transportation projects are developed.

Recommendations

- Coordinate with Federal, State and local partners to find opportunities to align the Regional ITS Architecture with the regional vision and objectives.
- Ensure the next update of the Regional ITS Architecture includes the seven-county metropolitan planning area boundary and the planning horizon for the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan.

Conclusion

The 2014 Nashville TMA Certification Review is comprised of a desk review, an on-site visit, and a public involvement opportunity. Since August 2010, the FHWA and FTA joint Federal Review Team has continuously reviewed the Nashville Area MPO's planning products to assess consistency with 23 CFR Part 450, 49 CFR Part 613, and other relevant Federal rules and regulations.

The Federal Review Team's desk review included the MPO's metropolitan transportation plan, transportation improvement program, unified planning work program, public participation plan, and other elements of the region's continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process.

On June 11-12, 2014, the Federal Review Team organized an on-site visit with MPO Staff, members of the MPO's Technical Coordinating Committee, and TDOT to discuss components of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

On June 11, 2014, the Federal Review Team held a public meeting to invite public comment and feedback on the Nashville Area MPO's metropolitan transportation planning process.

The Nashville Area MPO substantially meets the requirements of 23 CFR 450 and 49 CFR 613. FHWA and FTA jointly certify the MPO's metropolitan transportation planning process.

Furthermore, FHWA and FTA encourage the Nashville Area MPO to evaluate and give due consideration to the 20 recommendations outlined in the 2014 TMA Certification Review as the Federal Review Team prepares for the next Certification Review in four years.

Appendix A – 2014 TMA Certification Review Agenda

DAY 1 – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 2014

8:30 am – 11:30 am 1. ON-SITE REVIEW SESSION

*Nashville Area MPO Office, Conference Room
800 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210*

8:30 am – 9:30 am	Welcome, Introductions, Nashville Area MPO Overview	
9:30 am – 10:15 am	Unified Planning Work Program	23 CFR 450.308

10:15 am – 10:30 am SCHEDULED BREAK

10:30 am – 11:00 am	Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries and Metropolitan Planning Agreements	23 CFR 450.312 23 CFR 450.314
11:00 am – 11:30 am	Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Part 1	23 CFR 450.322

11:30 am – 1:00 pm LUNCH BREAK

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm 2. ON-SITE REVIEW SESSION

*Nashville Area MPO Office, Conference Room
800 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210*

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Part 2 Air Quality / Conformity	23 CFR 450.322 40 CFR Part 93
2:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Transportation Improvement Program, Part 1	23 CFR 450.324

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm SCHEDULED BREAK

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm	Transportation Improvement Program, Part 2 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects MPO Self-Certification	23 CFR 450.324 23 CFR 450.332 23 CFR 450.334
3:45 pm – 4:00 pm	Wrap-up discussion and next steps	

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm 3. PUBLIC MEETING

*Music City Central, Meeting Room
400 Charlotte Avenue
Nashville, TN 37219*

23 CFR 450.334

5:30 pm – 5:45 pm	Welcome, introductions, FHWA overview
5:45 pm – 6:15 pm	Nashville Area MPO overview
6:15 pm – 7:00 pm	Public comment and feedback

7:00 pm

ADJOURN

DAY 2 – THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2014**8:30 am – 11:30 am 4. ON-SITE REVIEW SESSION**

*Nashville Area MPO Office, Conference Room
800 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210*

8:30 am – 9:15 am	Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation	23 CFR 450.316
9:15 am – 10:00 am	Congestion Management Process	23 CFR 450.320 23 CFR 500.109

10:00 am – 10:15 am SCHEDULED BREAK

10:15 am – 11:00 am	Regional ITS Architecture	23 CFR 450.306 23 CFR Part 940
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11:00 am – 11:30 am Continued discussion on Certification Review topics

11:30 am – 1:00 pm LUNCH BREAK**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm 5. FEDERAL REVIEW TEAM LISTENING SESSION WITH MPO'S TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*Nashville Area MPO Office, Conference Room
800 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210*

2:00 pm – 2:15 pm SCHEDULED BREAK**2:15 pm – 3:00 pm 6. FEDERAL REVIEW TEAM SESSION**

*Nashville Area MPO Office, Conference Room
800 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210*

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm 7. ON-SITE REVIEW SESSION

*Nashville Area MPO Office, Conference Room
800 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210*

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	FHWA and FTA initiatives
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	Questions, comments, and next steps

4:00 pm ADJOURN

Appendix B – Composition of Federal Review Team

Theresa Claxton
*Planning & Program Management
 Team Leader*
 Federal Highway Administration
 Tennessee Division
 404 BNA Drive, Building 200, Suite 508
 Nashville, TN 37217
 615.781.5772, Theresa.Claxton@dot.gov

Corbin Davis
Planning & Air Quality Specialist
 Federal Highway Administration
 Tennessee Division
 404 BNA Drive, Building 200, Suite 508
 Nashville, TN 37217
 615.781.5767, Corbin.Davis@dot.gov

Scott Allen
Planning & Air Quality Specialist
 Federal Highway Administration
 Tennessee Division
 404 BNA Drive, Building 200, Suite 508
 Nashville, TN 37217
 615.781.5792, Scott.Allen@dot.gov

Joi Hamilton-Jones
Civil Rights Program Specialist
 Federal Highway Administration
 Tennessee Division
 404 BNA Drive, Building 200, Suite 508
 Nashville, TN 37217
 615.781.5790, Joi.HamiltonJones@dot.gov

Pamela Heimsness
Safety & Traffic Operations Team Leader
 Federal Highway Administration
 Tennessee Division
 404 BNA Drive, Building 200, Suite 508
 Nashville, TN 37217
 615.781.5774, Pamela.Heimsness@dot.gov

Jessica Rich
Safety Engineer
 Federal Highway Administration
 Tennessee Division
 404 BNA Drive, Building 200, Suite 508
 Nashville, TN 37217
 615.781.5788, Jessica.Rich@dot.gov

Nick Renna
Operations Program Manager
 Federal Highway Administration
 Tennessee Division
 404 BNA Drive, Building 200, Suite 508
 Nashville, TN 37217
 615.781.5769, Nicholas.renna@dot.gov

Elizabeth Martin
Community Planner
 Federal Transit Administration
 Region IV
 230 Peachtree St, NW, Suite 800
 Atlanta, GA 30303
 404.865.5609, Elizabeth.Martin@dot.gov

Jennifer Hibbert
Director of Planning & Program Development
 Federal Transit Administration
 Region IV
 230 Peachtree St, NW, Suite 800
 Atlanta, GA 30303
 404.865.5632, Jennifer.Hibbert@dot.gov

Appendix C – List of Participants

The following individuals participated in the on-site visit held on June 11 – 12, 2014 in Nashville, TN either in person or via teleconference (denoted by *).

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

Theresa Claxton, FHWA Tennessee Division, *Planning & Program Management Team Leader*

Corbin Davis, FHWA Tennessee Division, *Planning & Air Quality Specialist*

Scott Allen, FHWA Tennessee Division, *Planning & Air Quality Specialist*

Joi Hamilton-Jones, FHWA Tennessee Division, *Civil Rights Program Specialist*

Pamela Heimsness, FHWA Tennessee Division, *Safety & Traffic Operations Team Leader*

Jessica Rich, FHWA Tennessee Division, *Safety Engineer*

Nick Renna, FHWA Tennessee Division, *Operations Program Manager*

Elizabeth Martin, FTA Region IV, *Community Planner*

Jennifer Hibbert, FTA Region IV, *Director of Planning & Program Development*

Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT)

Angela Midgett, Division of Long Range Planning, *MPO Program Manager*

Larry McGoogin, Division of Long Range Planning, *Community Planner*

Jessica Wilson, Multimodal Transportation Resources Division, *Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator*

Pamela Sharp, Civil Rights Office, *Title VI Specialist*

Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Michael Skipper, MPO Staff, *Executive Director*

Lou Edwards, MPO Staff, *Administrative Assistant*

Anna Emerson, MPO Staff, *Senior Planner*

Max Baker, MPO Staff, *Senior Planner*

Chin-Cheng Chen, MPO Staff, *Engineering Associate*

Wesley Rhodes, MPO Staff, *Policy Intern*

Sam Williams, MPO Staff, *GIS Intern*

Felix Castrodad, MPO Technical Coordinating Committee, *Interim Director of Planning and Grants for the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority*

*Doug Demosi, MPO Technical Coordinating Committee, *Committee Chair and Planning Director for Rutherford County*

Appendix D – Comments & Questions Received

The Federal Review Team received the following comments (paraphrased) in-person, via teleconference, or through the public comment cards regarding the Nashville Area MPO's metropolitan transportation planning process:

Public Meeting, June 11, 2014, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Music City Central, Meeting Room, 400 Charlotte Avenue, Nashville, TN 37219

- **Comment #01:** The MPO is not in compliance with Regional Growth Planning, especially compliance with TN Public Chapter 1101 (Growth Management). Also, we do not want so many overlaying growth management boards.
 - **Response #01:** This comment is beyond the scope of the 2014 TMA Certification Review. The purpose of the TMA Certification Review is to assess the degree to which the Nashville Area MPO meets the requirements of the metropolitan transportation planning regulations in 23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613.

Please forward this comment to the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR). Contact information is available at <http://www.state.tn.us/tacir/>.

- **Comment #02:** Are the recently updated Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) policies in compliance with Labor Code 13C?
 - **Response #02:** This comment is beyond the scope of the 2014 TMA Certification Review. The purpose of the TMA Certification Review is to assess the degree to which the Nashville Area MPO meets the requirements of the metropolitan transportation planning regulations in 23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613.

Please forward this comment to the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Labor-Management Standards. Contact information is available at <http://www.dol.gov/olms/org/contact.htm>.

- **Comment #03:** Develop a method to address citizen input delivered at MPO (Executive Board and Technical Coordination Committee) public comment periods. The MPO Director does not address or acknowledge questions citizens ask.
 - **Response #03:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #04:** Conflict of interest compliance. Currently the Nashville MPO is “hosted by” the Nashville Metropolitan Planning Department. This MPO should report directly to the Governor of Tennessee.
 - **Response #04:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation’s Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #05:** Why does the MPO need to study freight? Freight is controlled by the railroads – why can’t they do it?
 - **Response #05:** The Federal regulations in 23 CFR 450.306 require MPOs to provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the accessibility and mobility of people and freight and the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
- **Comment #06:** The MPO’s studies have been a problem, especially the AMP. The MPO needs to be more involved in project level planning and public involvement.
 - **Response #06:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation’s Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #07:** Where is the money for the AMP coming from? We want to know where to find the alternatives analysis for the AMP. Why does the public need to file a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to get information? The public is entitled to see feasibility studies.
 - **Response #07:** This comment is beyond the scope of the 2014 TMA Certification Review. The purpose of the TMA Certification Review is to assess the degree to which the Nashville Area MPO meets the requirements of the metropolitan transportation planning regulations in 23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613.

Please forward this comment to the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA). Contact information is available at <http://www.nashvillemta.org/>.

The Project Development Team for the AMP is also collecting comments at <http://www.nashvillemta-amp.org/AMP-Nashville-MTA-Contact1.asp>.

- **Comment #08:** The MPO needs more public hearings on what they are proposing for the AMP. The MPO needs a new process to get things done. People come to speak and want to make input, but nothing gets addressed and information is not shared. Federal funds were used to produce analyses, but the results were not shared and the preferred alternative was picked without considering public input.
 - **Response #08:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #09:** Public involvement has not been sufficient for the AMP and the Federal funding spent to study the AMP is a waste. The MPO needs to be more involved. The consultants presented one-side information to the Executive Board and the public comments in support of the project came from the Metropolitan Planning Department, which hosts the MPO.
 - **Response #09:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #10:** Many people think the MPO is part of Metro's land use department and many officials don't understand the MPO.
 - **Response #10:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #11:** The MPO needs to reach out to locals and elected officials better during early project planning efforts.
 - **Response #11:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #12:** I want to go to the Middle Tennessee Mayors Caucus, but the meetings are closed.
 - **Response #12:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #13:** I want to know if the Feds are looking at the public comments captured during public meetings.
 - **Response #13:** The FHWA Tennessee Division and FTA Region IV Office are non-voting members of the Nashville Area MPO's Executive Board and Technical Coordinating Committee. FHWA and FTA routinely attend meetings and review meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and publicly available documents. The 2014 TMA Certification Review includes the Nashville Area MPO's Public Participation Plan and the MPO's efforts to engage interested parties and stakeholders.
- **Comment #14:** In the TIP, the public can't track how much will be spent on a project in total – only the four years published in the program.
 - **Response #14:** The Nashville Area MPO's current fiscal years (FY) 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes specific project pages that outline total project costs and the Federal, State, and local funds programmed for each project during the four-year horizon of the TIP. More information is available at http://www.nashvillempo.org/plans_programs/tip/.
- **Comment #15:** The MPO added the AMP improperly to the 2035 Plan as an amendment. The AMP was added as the "East-West Connector." The public comments were manipulated and staged.
 - **Response #15:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #16:** The multimodal mobility studies need to be consolidated – some are run by the MPO, some by TDOT, and some by public works. It's confusing to know what is being planned in the region and the public input techniques are inconsistent.
 - **Response #16:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #17:** There must be planning best-practices that the Nashville Area MPO can adhere to.
 - **Response #17:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #18:** The public meeting for the 2014 TMA Certification Review was not well advertised.
 - **Response #18:** The Nashville Area MPO advertised the public meeting in accordance to the procedures established in the MPO's Public Participation Plan, including public notices in regional newspapers and on the MPO's website – <http://www.nashvillempo.org>.

- **Comment #19:** I want the MPO website to send notifications of meetings.
 - **Response #19:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #20:** What is the status of the Sustainability Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development?
 - **Response #20:** This comment is beyond the scope of the 2014 TMA Certification Review. The purpose of the TMA Certification Review is to assess the degree to which the Nashville Area MPO meets the requirements of the metropolitan transportation planning regulations in 23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613.

Please forward this comment to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Nashville Field Office. Contact information is available at <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/states/tennessee/offices>.

- **Comment #21:** I want the bylaws amended to remove the weighted vote restrictions.
 - **Response #21:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #22:** I want GNRC removed from the Executive Board as a voting member. GNRC's position on the Executive Board is inappropriate and represents a conflict of interest.
 - **Response #22:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #23:** I want to add a citizen representative to the Executive Board and Technical Coordinating Committee as a voting member.
 - **Response #23:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #24:** I want to remove the ability to do proxy votes.
 - **Response #24:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #25:** I want to know how much the local match is for the TIGER grant and where the money is coming from.
 - **Response #25:** This comment is beyond the scope of the 2014 TMA Certification Review. The purpose of the TMA Certification Review is to assess the degree to which the Nashville Area MPO meets the requirements of the metropolitan transportation planning regulations in 23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613.

Please forward this comment to the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA). Contact information is available at <http://www.nashvillemta.org/>.
 -
- **Comment #26:** I want more information on consultant contacts. We don't know who is contracted or what the contracts are for. The consultants come to speak in support of projects and that's a conflict of interest.
 - **Response #26:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #27:** Commenters during public meetings need to disclose residency and whether or not they receive MPO funding.
 - **Response #27:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #28:** The Broadway East-West Connector did not meet the requirements of the MPO's public participation plan.
 - **Response #28:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #29:** The Unified Planning Work Program needs to clarify how citizens can make input into the work program and how much consultants are paid.
 - **Response #29:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #30:** TDOT's MPO Coordinator position is vacant and it needs to be filled to ensure better statewide coordination.

- **Response #30:** This comment is beyond the scope of the 2014 TMA Certification Review. The purpose of the TMA Certification Review is to assess the degree to which the Nashville Area MPO meets the requirements of the metropolitan transportation planning regulations in 23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613.

Please forward this comment to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division. Contact information is available at <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/longrange/>.

- **Comment #31:** The planning process is very difficult for citizens to figure out.
 - **Response #31:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #32:** How many people visit the MPO website?
 - **Response #32:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #33:** The MPO takes too long to post meeting minutes to the MPO website.
 - **Response #33:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #34:** When FTA approved the STIP amendment for the East-West Connector, the approval letter referenced the Jackson MPO area.
 - **Response #34:** The FTA Region IV Office approved STIP amendment number 23 on April 12, 2012 and incorrectly identified the Jackson Area MPO in the first paragraph of the approval letter.

Listening Session with Nashville Area MPO's Executive Board and Technical Coordinating Committee, June 12, 2014, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Nashville Area MPO Office, Conference Room, 800 Second Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37210

- **Comment #35:** The MPO has good relationships with transit providers, good representation from transit providers, and a good understanding of how all modes of transportation affect the regional network.
 - **Response #35:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #36:** Transit agencies tend to be territorial with funding and the MPO encourages sharing and planning for regional needs.
 - **Response #36:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #37:** The MPO's involvement in the Middle Tennessee Mayors Caucus is critical for transit planning and dedicated transit funding.
 - **Response #37:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #38:** The MPO has deformed the Technical Coordinating Committee meetings and made the meetings more conversational.
 - **Response #38:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.
- **Comment #39:** The new web-based tools made the TIP easier to manage and implement. The MPO has received many comments on the usefulness of the online TIP database.
 - **Response #39:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #40:** The STP programs in the 2035 RTP are good ways to make funding available for active transportation, mass transit, and traffic operations.
 - **Response #40:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #41:** The MPO has been supportive of MTA, RTA, the Northwest Transit Study, and the Clarksville MPO.
 - **Response #41:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.

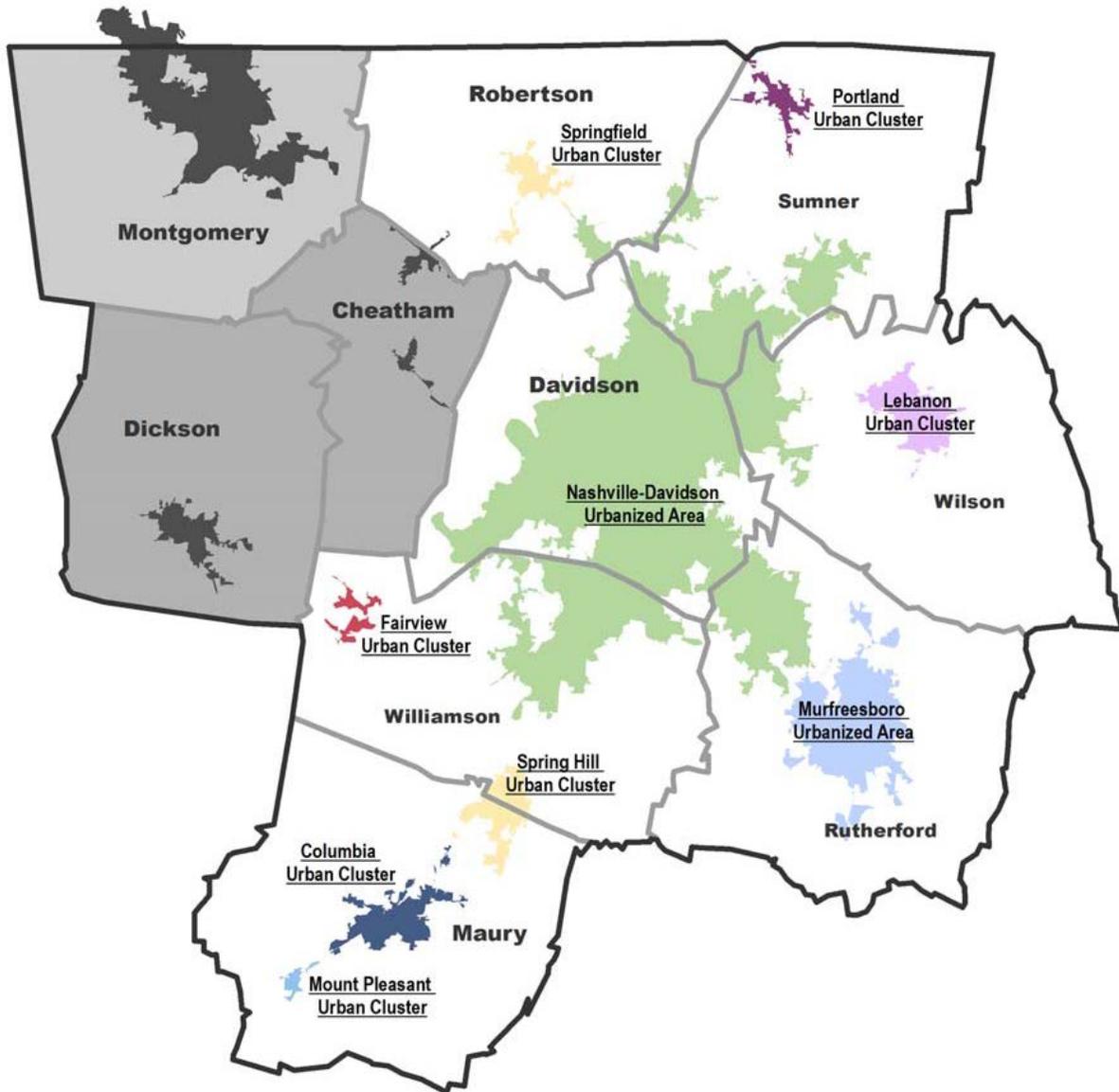
- **Comment #42:** The Executive Director has made the Technical Coordinating Committee and the metropolitan transportation planning process more interactive.
 - **Response #42:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #43:** I appreciated the MPO's focus and vision for transit.
 - **Response #43:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.

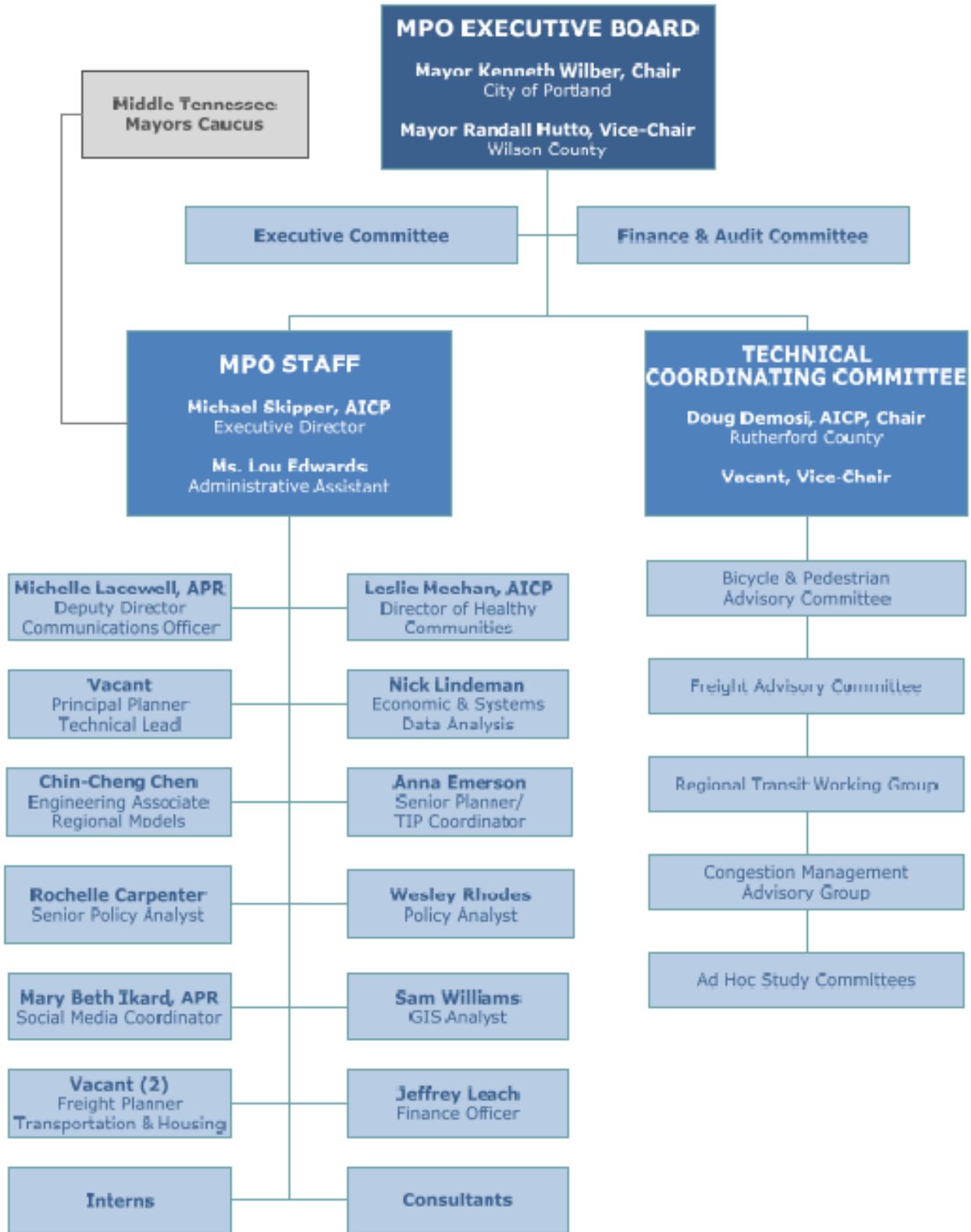
- **Comment #44:** I appreciate the MPO's efforts to coordinate local thoroughfare plans with development.
 - **Response #44:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning Division and the Nashville Area MPO.

- **Comment #45:** As the area grows, the MPO needs to look harder at the connections among Davidson County and the surrounding counties.
 - **Response #45:** Comment noted and forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Long Range Planning and Multimodal Transportation Resources Divisions and the Nashville Area MPO.

Appendix E - Nashville Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries



Appendix F – Nashville Area MPO Structure



Appendix G – List of Acronyms

BPAC	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CMA	Corridor Management Agreement
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
CMP	Congestion Management Process
DBE	Disadvantaged Business Enterprises
EAC	Early Action Compact
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GNRC	Greater Nashville Regional Council
HERS	Highway Economic Requirements System
IAC	Interagency Consultation
INVEST	Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool
ITHIM	Integrated Transportation Health Impact Model
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTA	Metropolitan Transit Authority
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NBIA	National Bridge Investment Analysis
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
PL	Planning
RTA	Regional Transportation Authority
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SEMS	Statewide Environmental Management System
SHSP	Strategic Highway Safety Plan
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SPR	Statewide Planning and Research
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
STP	Surface Transportation Program
TACIR	Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations
TCC	Technical Coordinating Committee
TDEC	Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
TDOT	Tennessee Department of Transportation
TIGER	Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery

TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TSM&O	Transportation Systems Management and Operations
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
U.S.C.	United States Code
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
U.S.C.	United States Code