



# MPO 101 Workshop

The Future of Texas' Multimodal System

# Introductions, Expectations, and Outcomes



- Who are we?
- What do we expect to learn?
- What will we do with it?

## Where did MPOs Come From?



- Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962
  - Main goal was to involve local governments in development of the Interstate Highway System
  - Some major metro areas in the country already had MPO-like organizations
  
- Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965
  - Authorized grant funding

## Texas Administrative Code



- Title 43 – Transportation
- Part 1 – TxDOT
- Chapter 16 – Planning and Development of Transportation Projects
- Several other chapters relate to transportation

## Federal Codes



- Title 23 United States Code (Highways)
  - Section 134 (Metropolitan Planning)
  - Section 135 (Statewide and Non-Metropolitan Planning)
  
- Title 49 United States Code (Transit)
  - Chapter 53 (Sections 5303, Metropolitan Planning and 5304, Statewide and Non-Metropolitan Planning)

## Federal Regulations



- 23 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 450 (Highways)
  - Subpart A- Definitions([§§ 450.100 - 450.104](#))
  - Subpart B- Statewide and non-metropolitan transportation planning([§§ 450.200 - 450.226](#))
  - Subpart C- Metropolitan transportation planning ([§§ 450.300 - 450.340](#))
  
- 49 Code of Federal Regulations (Transit)
  - Subpart A- Metropolitan transportation planning and programming ([§ 613.100](#))
  - Subpart B- Statewide and non-metropolitan transportation planning and programming ([§ 613.200](#))

## Federal Highway Legislation (Authorization Acts)



- ISTEA (FY 1991-97)
- TEA-21 (FY 1998-03)
- SAFETEA-LU (FY 2005-09)
- MAP-21 (FY 2013-14)
- FAST Act (FY 2016-20)
- IIJA/BIL (FY 2023-2026)

## MPO Parameters



- Designated by USDOT when at least one U.S. Census Bureau-designated urban area population exceeds 50,000
  
- More than 400 MPOs have been designated nationwide
  - 23 currently in Texas
    - Potentially one or two more
      - Del Rio
      - Eagle Pass

## TMA Parameters



- Transportation management areas (TMAs) are generally designated if at least one U.S. Census urban area population exceeds 200,000
  - 11 currently in Texas (one by request)
    - Permian Basin (Midland-Odessa)
  - Beaumont-Port Arthur has a metro population over 300,00, but the two urban areas with populations below 200,000; therefore, not a TMA
  - Potentially up to three more TMAs
    - Amarillo
    - Bryan-College Station
    - Waco

## What is the MPO?



- Agency responsible for **planning and programming** transportation projects for the metropolitan planning area
  - MPOs do not build anything
  - Member entities are the implementing agencies
  
- Staff
  - Coordinates efforts with all stakeholder agencies
  - Performs (in-house and through contracts) planning functions and studies
  - Presents information to the Technical Advisory Committee and the Transportation Policy Board

## What is the MPO?



- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
  - Staff (at least primarily) from member and stakeholder agencies
  - Make recommendations to Policy Board (actual name varies among MPOs)
  
- Policy Board
  - May have a variety of specific titles (PB, TPC, etc)
  - Elected officials and other representatives from member agencies (typically decision makers)
    - Cities, Counties, State DOTs, Transit Representatives, other
  - Responsible for making transportation planning and programming decisions, as well as approving necessary documents

## MPO Assistance and Peer Exchange



- TxDOT
  - TPP Division
  - Districts
  - TTI
    - Multiple IACs
      - Travel demand modeling (TDM)
      - Travel surveys
      - MPO assistance, training, mentoring, peer exchange
  
- TEMPO (Texas Association of MPOs)
  - Peer exchange
  - Partner agency insight and discussions

## Challenges Facing the MPOs



- Funding
  
- Staff
  - Turnover – all positions
  - Recruiting – some cities have tougher times than others
  - Pay – competing with partner agencies and private sector
  
- Increasing Workload
  - Continually increasing requirements
  - Grant opportunities

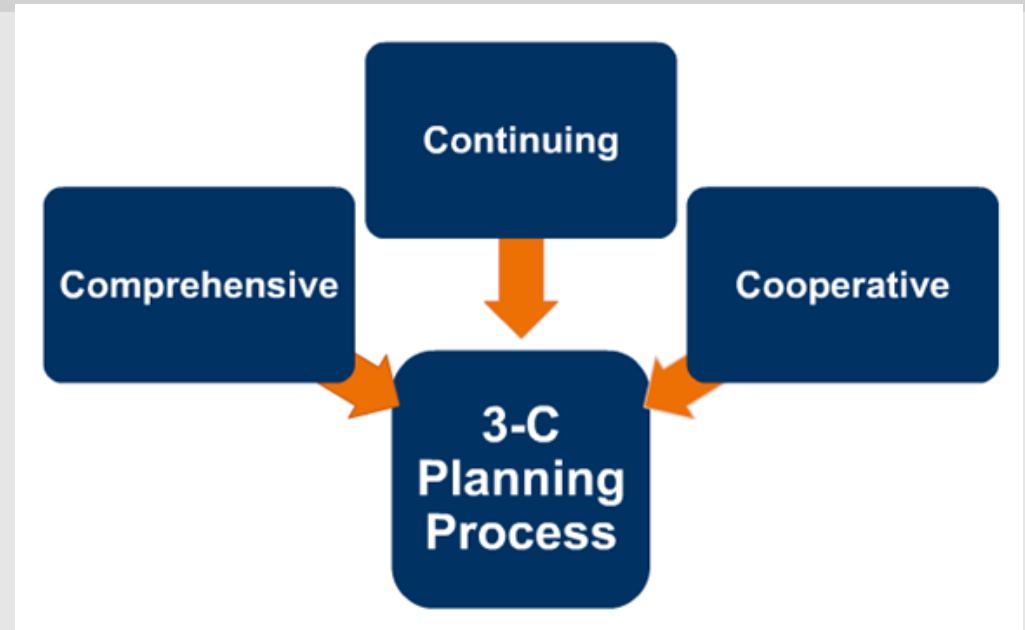
## The “3-C” Planning Process



**Comprehensive** – multiple transportation modes

**Continuing** – never ends, cyclical

**Cooperative** – Entities and agencies work together as a team for the good of the metropolitan area



## Funding Categories



- 1 – Preventative Maintenance and Rehabilitation
- 2 – Metro and Urban Area Corridors
- 3 – Non-Traditionally Funded Projects (local and private funds)
- 4 – Statewide Connectivity Corridors
- 5 – Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (Air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas only)
- 6 – Structures Replacement (Bridges – prioritized statewide)

## Funding Categories



- 7 – Metropolitan Mobility & Rehabilitation (TMAs only)
- 8 – Safety (statewide project selection)
- 9 – Transportation Alternatives (TMAs get designated amounts; others compete statewide)
- 10 – Supplemental Transportation Projects
- 11 – District Discretionary
- 12 – Strategic Priority

## Funding Realities



- Nothing is always guaranteed
- Federal funds typically are the most consistent
  - Based on multi-year federal transportation bills (legislation)
- State funding is more variable
  - Proposition 1 – Severance (oil & gas production) taxes
    - Dependent on oil and natural gas prices and production levels
  - Proposition 7 – State motor fuels tax, vehicle registration fees, sales taxes
    - Dependent on the overall economy
- Leveraging Funds

## Types of Planning Issues



- Asset Management- road and bridge infrastructure condition and repair/vulnerability to extreme weather events
  - Maintenance & operations
  
- Safety/Security
  
- Economic Development
  - Locally generated/attracted traffic
  - Through-traffic

# Types of Planning Issues



- Freight and Passenger Mobility
  - Types
  - Local facilities
  
- Environmental Justice (EJ)/Title VI (of 1964 Civil Rights Act)
  
- ITS/Management/Operations
  
- Public Participation/Engagement
  
- Others (Environmental Mitigation, Sustainability/Livability)

## Public Participation Process



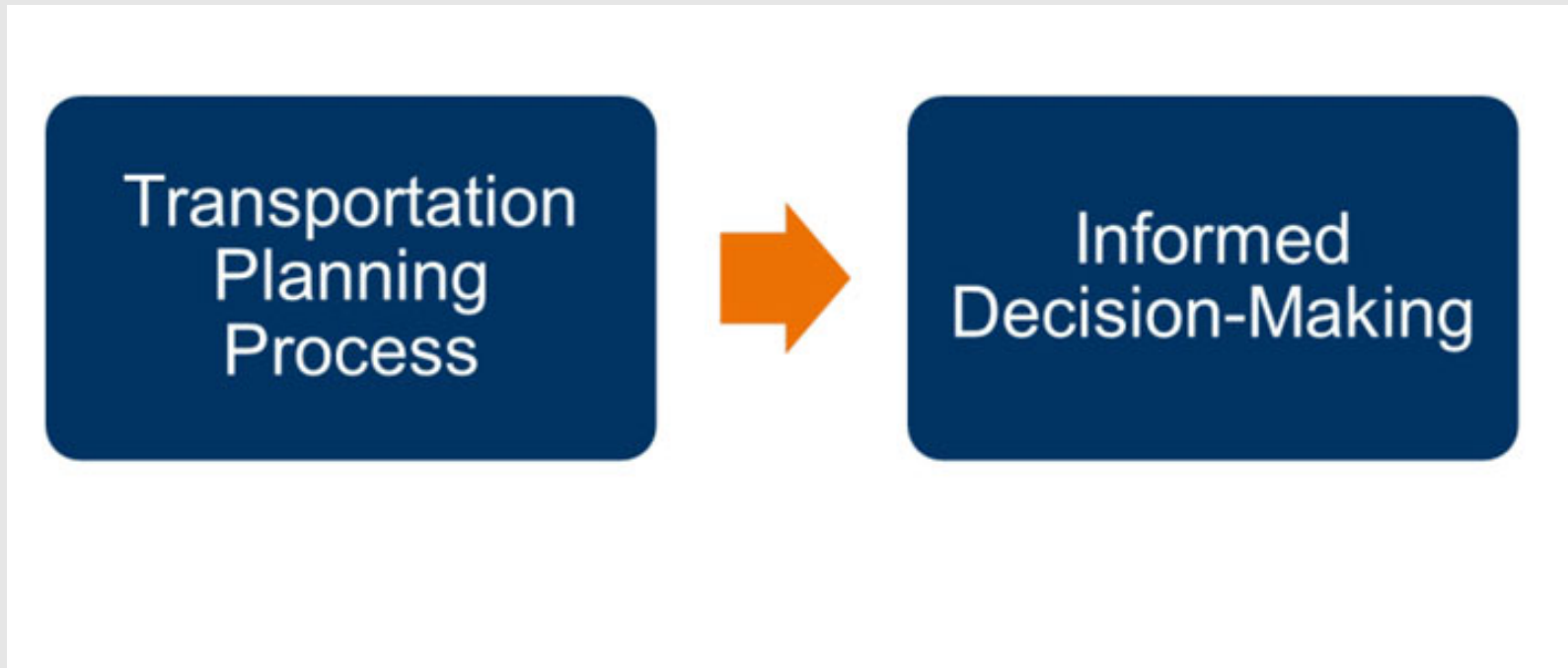
- Federally required for each MPO
- 45-day comment period to amend (only federal comment period requirement)
- Describes public comment process and period for each document impacted
- Each partner agency needs to know the MPO's specific requirements
  - Vital to making TIP and MTP amendments

## Public Participation Process



- Extremely important to not just “check the boxes”
  - Need to address the spirit of the requirements
  - Title VI / Environmental Justice
    - Find the most effective methods to reach all population groups
    - Take process to the affected people as much as possible
      - Convenient locations and times
      - Multiple languages (as appropriate)
    - Identify where affected population groups are located
      - NEPAssist tool

## Transportation Planning's Impact on Decision-Making



Very important to equip decision-makers for selecting and prioritizing the most effective projects

## Key Planning and Programming Documents



- What is the difference between planning and programming?
- Planning – identifying solutions to situations, challenges, and problems
- Programming – Assigning specific projects, with specific funding, to specific fiscal years for construction or implementation

## Key Planning and Programming Documents



- UPWP – Unified Planning Work Program (1-2 Years)
  - Provides budget and work plan for the MPO
    - Statewide template with 5 tasks
      - Variable subtasks
    - Staff
    - Contracted work
    - Must include all work to be performed using federal funds
    - May include other planning related efforts
  - Amendment processes

## Key Planning and Programming Documents



- MTP – Long-Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan
  - At least a 20-year outlook (4 or 5-year update cycle)
    - 5-year for air quality attainment areas
    - 4-year for non-attainment areas
  - Multimodal, consistent with SLRTP
  - Discussions of issues/factors affecting transportation

## Key Planning and Programming Documents



- MTP Project list
  - Fiscally constrained (at least first 10-15 years)
    - May have an “Illustrative Projects” list
  - Systems-level approach
  - Identifies strategies to address needs
  - Developed and adopted through a continuous planning process
  - Public and interagency stakeholder coordination
  - Environmental mitigation

## Key Planning and Programming Documents



- TIP – Transportation Improvement Program (4 years)
  - 4-year list of programmed metropolitan projects
    - Fiscally constrained
    - Must be consistent with the MTP
  - Amendment processes

## Key Planning and Programming Documents



- STIP – Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (4 years)
  - All 23 MPO TIPs
  - All 24 TxDOT District “rural” TIPs
  - Statewide programs
    - Bridge, safety, TAP, discretionary, etc

## Key Planning and Programming Documents

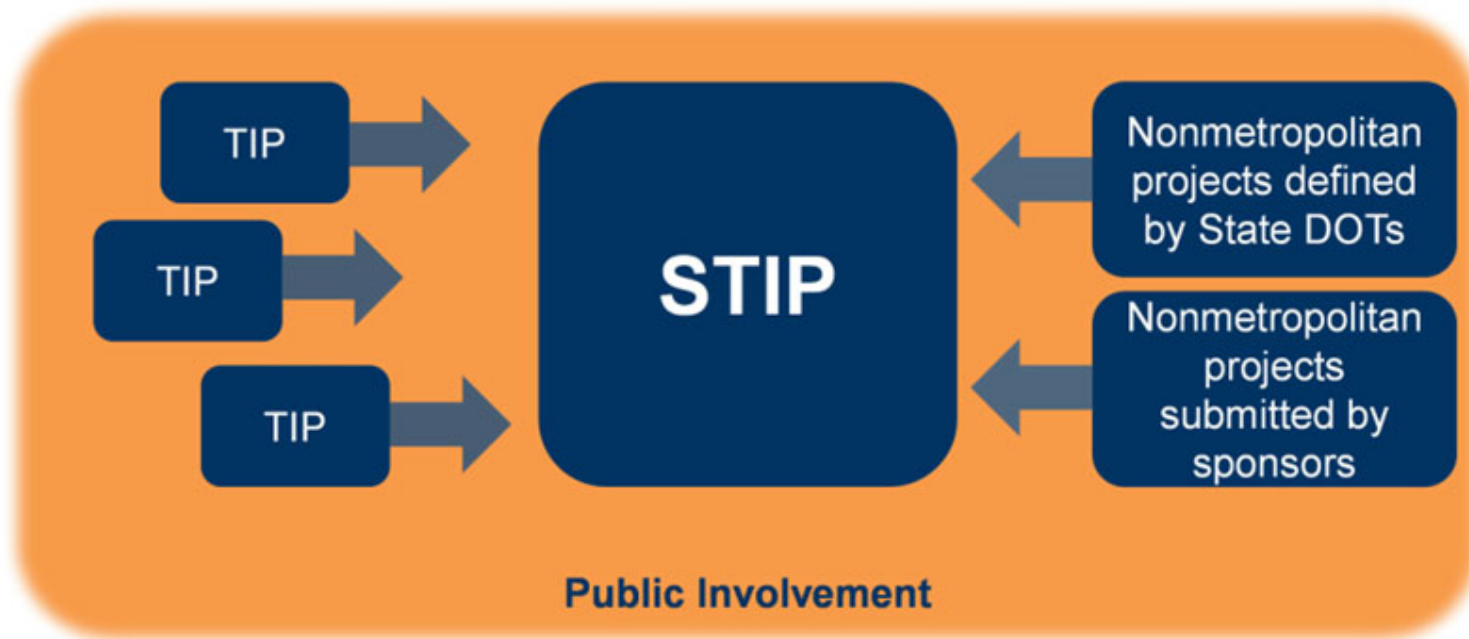


- UTP – Unified Transportation Program (TxDOT document)
  - 10-year planning target

# Key Planning and Programming Documents



## Relationship Between the TIP and STIP





## Metropolitan TIP: Update and Amendments Requirements

- The TIP:
  - May be revised or amended at any time to add or update projects
    - Revisions may be minor and termed “administrative modifications.”
    - Major revisions are termed “amendments.” Amendments require MPO action.
  - Must be readily available for public review, comments, and questions

## When Amending Both the MTP and TIP on the Same Day



- Both can be amended at same Policy Board meeting
  - Project descriptions in TIP and MTP must match exactly!
  - Place MTP amendment on agenda ahead of TIP amendment
  - MTP is required to be amended prior to TIP
  - All partner agencies need to be aware of lead time necessary for amendments
    - Advertising for public meetings
    - Public comment periods
    - Staff to prepare amendments as part of meeting packets

## Group Discussion



- Questions or observations about **planning and programming** and those documents?

## Why Should We Plan – So What?



- Asking the “So What?” question can be very valuable
  - “Why are we doing this?”
    - Projects
    - Strategies
    - Processes
    - Public participation
    - Other
  
- Open discussion

# Performance-Based Planning



- Vision
  - A very broad statement of how the future transportation should serve users
  
- Goals
  - General achievements that fulfill the vision
  
- Objectives
  - Measurable steps toward achieving goals
  
- Performance Measures
  - Metrics to track progress toward meeting objectives
  
- Targets
  - Specific measurements that you want to achieve by a certain time

## Establishing Performance Targets



- Targets should be:
  - Reasonable
  - Appropriate for your area
  - Measurable
  - Aligned with national, state, and metro vision, goals, and objectives

## Why do Performance Based Planning?



- Federal requirement
  
- Provides for accountability and transparency
  - Benefits decision-makers
  - Benefits the public
  
- Ties projects to vision, goals, and objectives
  
- Provides a feedback loop
  - Were expected results attained?
  - Can/should something different be done in the future?

## Performance-Based Planning (MTP Development Relationship)



- The MTP shall include:
  - Describe the Federally required performance measures and performance targets
  
  - System performance report that evaluates the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to the Federally required performance targets including progress achieved by the MPO toward the performance targets.

## Performance-Based Planning for TIP/STIPs



- The TIP/STIPs shall link those investment priorities to achievement of performance targets in the plans.

## Resiliency and Vulnerability



- Under the FAST Act, the long-range MTP shall include and **assessment of capital investment** and other strategies to preserve the existing and future transportation system and **reduce the vulnerability** of the existing transportation infrastructure **to natural disasters**.
  
- Resilience Improvement Plan (RIP)
  - Optional
  - Provides for reduced match requirements on certain projects
    - Must meet federal requirements

## What Do MPOs Do?



- Transition Presentation to Staff-Task Matrix in Excel (time permitting)

## Contact Information



- Bill Frawley
- Texas A&M Transportation Institute
- [b-frawley@tti.tamu.edu](mailto:b-frawley@tti.tamu.edu)
- 817-462-0533