MPOs and RPOs in North Carolina

North Carolina
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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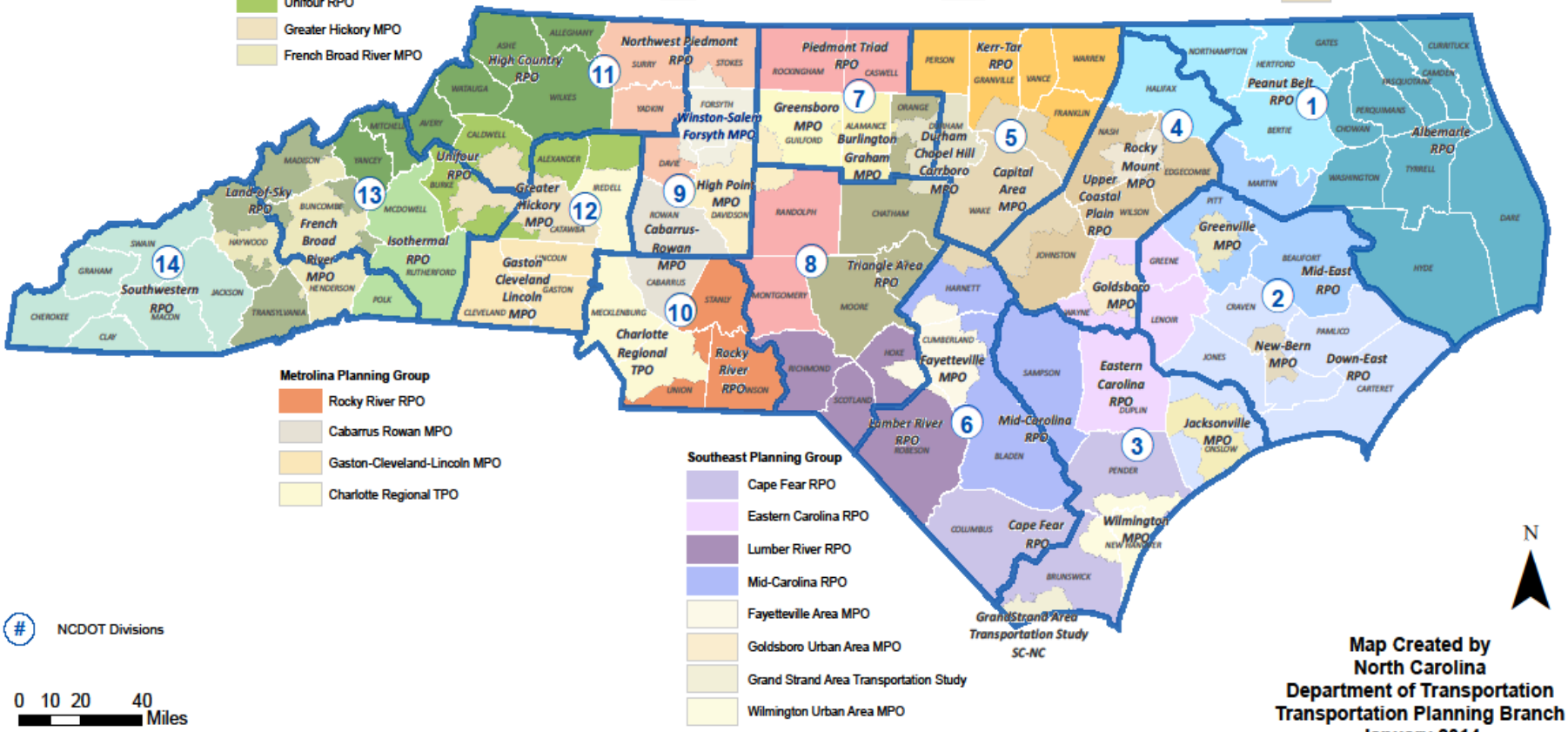
Transportation Planning Branch

NCDOT TPB
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BRANCH

MPOs and RPOs

- What is an MPO and an RPO?
- What areas do they cover?
- Why were they established?
- What are their duties and responsibilities?
- How are they structured?
- What does it mean to you?
- Future of the RPO Program?

Metropolitan Planning Orgaizations, Rural Planning Organizations, NCDOT Divisions and TPB Planning Groups



Relationship to Divisions

Division	RPOs	MPOs
1	Albemarle, Mid-East, Peanut Belt	none
2	Mid-East, Down East, Eastern Carolina	Greenville
3	Cape Fear, Eastern Carolina, Down East, Mid-Carolina	Jacksonville, Wilmington, Grand Strand
4	Eastern Carolina, Peanut Belt, Upper Coastal Plain	Capital Area (CAMPO), Goldsboro, Rocky Mount
5	Kerr-Tar	Capital Area (CAMPO), Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro (DCHC)
6	Cape Fear, Lumber River, Mid-Carolina	Capital Area (CAMPO), Fayetteville
7	Piedmont Triad, Triangle Area	Burlington-Graham, DCHC, Greensboro, High Point
8	Lumber River, Piedmont Triad, Triangle Area	DCHC, Fayetteville, High Point
9	Piedmont Triad, Northwest Piedmont	Cabarrus-Rowan, High Point, Winston-Salem
10	Rocky River	Cabarrus-Rowan, Charlotte Regional TPO
11	High Country, Northwest Piedmont, Unifour	Greater Hickory
12	Unifour	Gaston, Greater Hickory
13	Isothermal, High County, Land of Sky	French Broad River, Greater Hickory
14	Land of Sky, Isothermal, Southwestern	French Broad River
	RPO - In one Division only	MPO - In one Division only

Definition of MPO

- Established for all urban areas over 50,000 in population
  - 50,000+ population - MPO
  - 200,000+ population - TMA

    TMA - Transportation Management Area

- Defined by the US Census
  - Includes the central city and other areas that meet density criteria
  - Planning area may be expanded, but not contracted

- Designated by NCDOT Secretary of Transportation on behalf of Governor

Laws Establishing MPOs

- 1962 – Federal Law - Section 134(a) of Title 23 United States Code (3-C Process - Continuing, Cooperative and Comprehensive)
- 1991 - ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act)
- 1998 - TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act – 21 Century)
- 2000 – NCGS 136-200.1 MPOs recognized in State Law
- 2001 – NCGS 136-66.2(a) recognizes MPOs as regional planning entity for MPO area
- 2005 - SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – Legacy for Users)
- **2012 – MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century)**

MPO Responsibilities

- Carry out a Continuing, Cooperative and Comprehensive (3C) transportation planning process in cooperation with the State DOT and transit operators
- Cooperatively develop, update, and approve:
  - (Unified) Planning Work Program ((U)PWP)
  - Transportation Plan (MTP)
  - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
  - Air Quality Conformity
- Determine responsibilities in concert with the State DOT(s) and transit operators
- Have a proactive Public Involvement Process (PIP)

Definition of RPO

- Contiguous areas of three to fifteen counties or a total population of the entire area represented of at least 50K.
  - Must have at least 50,000 population according to Office of State Planning
  - Metropolitan Planning Organizations areas shall not be included
  - Not all municipalities in a proposed RPO must join the organization but the county must be a member in the RPO.

Law Establishing RPOs

- 2000 - GS 136-210 through 213 directed NCDOT to study RPOs
- 2001 – Based on results of study, NCDOT began forming RPOs
  - Between 2001 and 2003, 20 RPOs were established

RPO Responsibilities

- Assist the Department in developing comprehensive transportation plans (CTP)
- Provide a forum for public participation in the transportation planning and project development processes
- Develop and prioritize projects the organization believes should be included in the STIP
- Provide transportation related information to local governments
- Other duties as determined.

MPO/RPO Structure

- Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)
  - Local Elected Officials
  - BOT Area Representative
  - FHWA advisory non-voting member
  - Tribal Governments
  - Other members designated by the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)

- Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)
  - Member Government(s) Staff Representatives
  - NCDOT
  - FHWA
  - Transit Providers
  - Other Agencies

- LPA
  - Designated Staff (City, County or COG)

Responsibilities of the Board Member

- Represent NCDOT on the TAC as a voting member
- Act as liaison between the MPO/RPO and the Department
- Assist in developing the MTIP/STIP for the area
- Represent the MPO/RPO's project needs & priorities
- Provide policy guidance

Comparison of MPOs to RPOs

	RPOs	MPOs
Number	**19**	**19**
How Formed	**area identified locally based on common transportation/ land use concerns, with agreement by all counties; minimum of three counties required; cities may join and vote per MOU; MPOs are ex-officio members**	**area identified by US Census, includes central city and other areas that meet density criteria; planning area may be expanded, but not contracted.**
Designation	**chartered by Secretary of Transportation 2001-2003**	**designated by NC Secretary of Transportation on behalf of Governor based on population criteria by US Census and FHWA**
Population Criteria	**3 counties or minimum 50,000 population**	**minimum 50,000; special planning requirements for areas over 200k**

Comparison of MPOs to RPOs

	RPOs	*MPOs*
Funding	**Federal State Planning And Research Funds with 20% local match**	**1% takeoff from Federal Highway Trust Fund (Interstate, NHS, STP, CMAQ, Bridge); requires 20% local match**
Allocation	**Total $1.9 million/year; $92^{k}-$115^{k} per RPO**	**Total $5.7 million/year; $188^{k} - $825^{k} per MPO**
Formula	**½ on population from most recent OSP estimate and ½ on number of counties**	**$130k equal distribution and remainder on population from most recent census**
Organizational Structure	**includes LPA, TCC, TAC; MOU, funding agreement and annual work program are required**	**includes LPA, TCC, TAC; MOU, funding agreement and annual work program are required**
Tasks	**four core duties**	**3C planning process as required by federal planning regulations; products include MTIP, Transportation Plan**

Issues on the Horizon

- STI Process
- Public Involvement Process
- State Ethics Requirements for TAC members
- Other

WEB Resources

- NCARPO - http://www.ncarpo.org
- USDOT - http://www.dot.gov
- FHWA - http://www.fhwa.dot.gov
- EPA - http://epa.gov
- NCDOT - http://ncdot.gov
- Planning (FAQs) - http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census/faqa2cdt.htm
- Surface Transportation Reauthorization - http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reauthorization/links.htm
- MAP 21 - http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21
- FHWA and FTA Funds - http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/flexfdtble.htm
- NCDOT - Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations - https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/planning/Pages/MPO-RPO.aspx

Questions?

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