

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)

Areas designated by the Federal Census as being Urban in nature and having a population of 50,000 or more are required by the Federal Highway Act of 1962 to have a **continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive** ("3C") transportation planning process in order to qualify for federal transportation funds. It is important to note that this is not the same as having a single city of 50,000 or more; there may be several municipalities combined, along with some unincorporated area in the boundary which the Census draws to define the "urbanized area."

In North Carolina, this process is carried out by **Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)**. There are currently 19 urban areas in North Carolina, which participate in the 3-C transportation planning process.

They are:

- Asheville (French Broad River MPO)
- Burlington-Graham
- Cabarrus-Rowan
- Charlotte (Mecklenburg-Union) (MuMPO)
- Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro (DCHC)
- Fayetteville (FAMPO)
- Gastonia
- Goldsboro
- Grand Strand (Myrtle Beach)
- Greensboro
- Greenville
- Hickory-Newton-Conover
- High Point
- Jacksonville
- New Bern
- Raleigh (CAMPO)
- Rocky Mount
- Wilmington
- Winston-Salem

In North Carolina, MPOs typically are represented by two principal committees: the Technical Coordinating Committee and the Transportation Advisory Committee. A **Lead Planning Agency** is designated for each MPO and provides staff support for MPO functions

The **Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)** is comprised of staff representatives of the various member local, state, and federal government agencies, transit providers, and other agencies with an interest in transportation planning. The TCC has the responsibility of making technical recommendations to the Transportation Advisory Committee on decisions pertaining to transportation planning including the 3C process, and the multi-modal Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

The **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)** is the governing policy board for the MPO. The TAC's membership includes elected officials, members of local government, the area's representative on the NC Board of Transportation, an advisory member from FHWA, and other members as may be designated. The TAC provides policy direction for the planning process, provides for public involvement, and guides the development of a comprehensive multi-modal transportation program for the urban area (both long range plans and funding programs).