MPO 101
Memphis Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Transportation History
What is an MPO?
MPO Functions
Memphis MPO Structure & Activities
Important MPO Topics
FAQ
Transportation History

History

What is Transportation
Transportation History

1956
Federal Aid Highway Act (Eisenhower Act)
Established the Highway Trust Fund - funds roads and transit

1962
Required MPOs to be established in urban areas

1977
Memphis Urban Area MPO was established (along with Knoxville, Chattanooga and Nashville MPO)

Some of the earliest MPOs were established around 1965-66 e.g. in DC, California, Texas etc.
Transportation

What is Transportation?

Risks, bridges, bike lanes, buses, sidewalk, traffic signals, facility maintenance, freight*, etc.

Planning

MPO & All its members
20 year future planning
Regional outlook
Federal funding allocation for project implementation

Implementation

Jurisdiction
Local roads construction and maintenance
Bike lanes
Traffic Signal
Buses
Sidewalks

State DOT's
Interstate and State Highway
Bridges on interstate and state highways
Bike lanes (rural roads)
Large traffic information projects

*Note: freight facilities are generally privately managed and operated, but their impact on local roads and highways requires investments from state and local jurisdictions.
What is an MPO?

Before We Start

MPOs

Urbanized Areas

Tennessee MPOs

Types

Mississippi MPOs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FHWA</td>
<td>Federal Highway Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPA</td>
<td>Environmental Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDO</td>
<td>Tennessee Department of Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMAQ</td>
<td>Congestion Mitigation &amp; Air Quality improvement Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Transportation Alternatives (funding category)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>Fiscal Year (Federal Fiscal Year starts October to September)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONST</td>
<td>Construction phase of a project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIP</td>
<td>Transportation Improvement Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public Participation Plan</td>
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**List of Acronyms**

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**

**Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)**

**Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)**

**Preliminary Engineering (PE)**

**Right Of Way Acquisition (ROW)**

**Construction (CONST)**

**Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)**

**Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**

**Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

**Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**

**Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA)**

**National Environment Policy Act (NEPA)**

**Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)**

**State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)**

**Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)**

**Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

**Transportation Alternatives (TA)**

**Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**

**Public Participation Plan (PPP)**

**Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality improvement Program (CMAQ)**

**Right Of Way Acquisition (ROW)**

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**

**Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**

**Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**
What is an MPO?

MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization

Title 23 CFR 450 mandates MPOs to be established in areas with urbanized area population of 50,000 or more.

MPO is a transportation policy-making and planning body that facilitates the allocation of transportation funds to member jurisdictions.

Federal Law requires regional transportation planning to reflect the region’s shared vision for its future using a comprehensive, cooperative and continuing process.

Over 400 MPOs in the Country.
### What is an MPO?

#### Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two Types</th>
<th>Large MPOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large (urbanized area population 200k or more) (Memphis MPO)</td>
<td>(Tennessee has 4 Large MPOs and Mississippi has 3 Large MPOs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (urbanized area population between 50K and 200K)</td>
<td>• Also called Transportation Management Areas or TMAs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Require federal certification every 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Receive direct allocations from Federal Government for STBG and TA funds (complete discretion to the MPO’s Board as how to they use these funds, within federal guidelines)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is an MPO?

Urbanized Area

Urbanized Areas are densely populated area with diverse land use around a central place.

Urbanized Areas traditionally includes a city of at least 50,000 people, or city and suburban areas of 100,000 people.

Rural Areas are less dense and characterized by agricultural activities.

*Metropolitan Areas include both urbanized and rural land.
Tennessee’s MPOs

Total 11 MPOs

4 Large MPOs:
- Memphis
- Nashville
- Knoxville
- Chattanooga
  (over 200,000 in population)

5 out of 11 are Bi-State MPOs in TN
Mississippi's MPOs

Total 4 MPOs

4 MPOs:

• Memphis (DeSoto Co. and Marshall Co.)
• CMPDD (Jackson MPO)
• GRPC (Gulfport MPO)
• Hattiesburg MPO
MPO Functions

- RTP
- TIP
- UPWP
- Core Functions
- PPP
- Other Plans
- How does the MPO receive funds?
- Where can funds be used?
- LAWS
- MPO Roles & Responsibility
- Performance Measures
Funds

How does the MPO receive funds?

*Note: Transit Funding coming to the MPO is diverted to MATA. The use of this funding is determined by the MATA Board.
Funds

Where can funds be used?

- Federal guidelines require that funds can only be used for roads identified on the federal roadway system – called functional classification system.
  - Roads within the urban area are classified as urban.
  - Roads within the rural area are classified as rural – MPO funds cannot be used on rural roads*.
  - Each MPO is given only certain miles of roads on which funds can be spent.

*Note: in very few instances funds can be used in rural areas.
**LAWS**

What laws apply to the MPO?

- **FAST Act**
  - Primary law that MPO has to follow
  - Explains what funding programs are available and how they can be used
  - Defines the MPO’s role and mandated tasks

- **Clean Air Act (Environmental Protection Agency) – Air Quality Non-attainment & Maintenance**

- **Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VI**

*Note: Applies to mobile sources, other sources such as industry pollutants from factories must meet EPA’s requirement as well.*
MPO Roles & Responsibilities

**Do**
- Facilitate planning for the overall transportation network, i.e., roads, bike/ped, transit, and freight
- Work with MPO members to allocate transportation funds appropriately
- Inform the public about MPO planning activities, studies, etc.
- Adopt federally required performance targets for the MPO Planning area.

**Do Not**
- Construct roads or other transportation improvements
- Perform road-related work (PE, ROW or CONST)
- Operate transit systems or airports
- Dictate what projects are pursued by jurisdictions
- Approve land use decisions, zoning etc.
**MPO Roles & Responsibilities**

**Performance Measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PM 1: Safety Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Total number of traffic related fatalities on all public roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rate of traffic related fatalities on all public roads per 100 million VMT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Total number of traffic related serious injuries on all public roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rate of traffic related serious injuries on all public roads per 100 million VMT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Total number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PM 2: Infrastructure Condition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• %age of pavements on the Interstate System in Good condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• %age of pavements on the Interstate System in Poor condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• %age of the non-interstate National Highway System in Good condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• %age of the non-interstate National Highway System in Poor condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• %age of National Highway System bridges classified as in Good condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• %age of National Highway System bridges classified as in Poor condition</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PM 3: System Performance</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• % of the Person-Miles Traveled on the Interstate that are reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of the Person Miles Traveled on the Non-Interstate National Highway System that are reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• %age of Interstate System mileage providing reliable truck travel time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Annual hours of peak hour excessive delay per capita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• %age of non-single occupancy vehicle travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Total emissions reductions by applicable pollutants under the CMAQ program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAM/PTASP: Transit Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The %age of revenue vehicles (by type) that exceed the useful life benchmark (ULB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The %age of non-revenue service vehicles (by type) that exceed the ULB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The %age of facilities (by group) that are rated less than 3.0 on the Transit Economic Requirements Model (TERM) Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The %age of track segments (by mode) that have performance restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Total amount and rate of injuries, fatalities, and safety events per total vehicle revenue miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mean distance between major mechanical failures</td>
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The Performance-Based Planning & Programming (PBPP) approach requires MPOs to set targets that address federal performance measures. It also requires linking investment priorities in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to the performance targets.

The Memphis MPO collaborates with FHWA, FTA, TDOT, MDOT, & MATA, as well as the West Memphis MPO and ARDOT, to set federally required performance targets and support the states and local transit established targets.
Core Functions

Five Core Functions

- Maintain a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP or LRTP)
- Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Identify and evaluate alternative transportation improvement options
- Involve the public – residents and key affected sub-groups
- Establish a setting for regional discussion
## Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

### Plan Development Timeline
- Approx. 2 years

### MPO Product | Time Horizon | Contents | Update Requirements
--- | --- | --- | ---
RTP | 20 years (minimum) 25 years (preferred) | Future goals, strategies, and projects | Every 4 years

1. **Long Range Plan** - Looks 20+ years into the future
2. Outlines the policies, and the long-range and short-range actions that support an integrated and intermodal transportation system
3. Fiscally constrained – guides decision-making for selection and implementation of projects
4. Conforms to national and local air quality standards
5. Includes federally funded projects and regionally significant local projects
6. Comprehensive public participation process
## Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

**Plan Development Timeline**  
Approx. 1-1.5 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPO Product</th>
<th>Time Horizon</th>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Update Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TIP</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Transportation investments and projects</td>
<td>Every 4 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Serve as the MPOs multimodal financial programming document - Roads, Bridges, Transit, Bike, Pedestrian, etc.
2. Allocates transportation resources among jurisdictions based on regional priorities
3. Amended on a quarterly basis (as needed)
4. Fiscally constrained and conforms to air quality standards
5. Lists each multimodal transportation project planned in the MPA
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Plan Development Timeline
Approx. 6-9 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPO Product</th>
<th>Time Horizon</th>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Update Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPWP</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Planning studies, tasks</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Identifies specific planning, data, and analysis tasks that the Memphis MPO and its partner agencies will undertake during a two-year period
2. Assist in further defining the comprehensive and multimodal transportation plans for the MPA
### Public Participation Plan

**Plan Development Timeline**
Approx. 6-12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPO Product</th>
<th>Time Horizon</th>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Update Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>As-Needed</td>
<td>Public Participation methods &amp; strategies for public engagement &amp; outreach</td>
<td>As-Needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Outlines the specific public participation methods and strategies for engagement and outreach the Memphis MPO can use to encourage and promote involvement.
In addition to the four major documents, the Memphis MPO conducts other multimodal plans and studies, in coordination with local, regional, state, and federal partners. A combination of outreach methods, engagement opportunities, and public comment periods may be used in the development of specific plans or studies.

For more information on MPO plans and studies, visit the Memphis MPO’s Plans Webpage.
Memphis MPO Structure & Activities

Memphis Urban Area MPO Boundary

Memphis MPO Structure

Membership
Memphis Urban Area MPO Boundary

Federal Regulations require Governors of Tennessee and Mississippi to approve the MPO Boundary.

Bi-State: Covers Portions of TN and MS
- Shelby County, TN ▫ Entire county
- DeSoto County, MS ▫ Entire county
- Fayette County, TN ▫ Western portion
- Marshall County, MS ▫ Northwestern portion

The MPO planning area covers the area that is currently urbanized and what is likely to become urbanized in the next 20 years. Coordination with West Memphis MPO, AR.
Memphis Urban Area MPO
Membership

MEMPHIS MPO

Memphis MPO Staff

State of Tennessee
State of Mississippi
TDOT
Local Elected Officials (Cities and Counties)
MDOT
MATA
Fort Commission & Airport Authority

Shelby County, TN
Fayette County, TN
DeSoto County, MS
Marshall County, MS

Arlington
Bartlett
Braden
Galloway
Hernando
Horn Lake
Byhalia

Collierville
Lakeland
Piperton
Oakland
Walls
Olive Branch

Germantown
Memphis
Rossville

Millington

Planners/Engineers

MDOT

Federal Agencies

Private Sector

Interest Groups

Public

MATA

Memphis Urban Area MPO

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Important MPO Topics

- Allocation vs Obligation
- What is Fiscal Constraint?
- Project Development
- Air Quality
Important Topics for the MPO

Allocation vs Obligation

**Allocation**
Similar to appropriation

**Obligation**
Funds are considered “promised” by the federal government however no money is transferred, Obligation time varies between DOTs

Periodically, Congress **rescinds**, or cancels unspent transportation funds from State DOTs. These rescissions are essentially a bookkeeping measure that allows the USDOT to take long unspent funds off the books.

Source: FHWA
Fiscal constraint means that the projected amount of expenditures would not exceed the projected amount of revenues, thus limiting the number of projects to be included in the TIP and RTP.

**Example**

STBG Annual Allocation = $15 million

4 year time of TIP = $15 \times 4 = $60 million

can only fund project up to $60 million or less
Important Topics for the MPO

Steps in Project Development (federally funded)

- The RTP & TIP are updated at a minimum of every four years.

**MPO Process**
- Long Range Plan (RTP)
- Short Range Plan (TIP)
- NEPA Process
- Design Process

**Lead Agency (TDOT, MDOT or Local Jurisdiction)**
- ROW
- Construction
- Operation

**Timeline**
- Project Initiation: 7-15 years
- NEPA Process: 1-5 years
- Design Process: 1-4 years
- ROW: 1-5 years
- Construction: 1-5 years
- Operation: Facility Operational

**Process Overview**

- MPO Process:
  - Lead Agency (TDOT, MDOT or Local Jurisdiction)
  - Design Process
  - NEPA Process
  - Short Range Plan (TIP)
  - Long Range Plan (RTP)
  - Project Initiation

- This is typical for capital road projects. The timeline/process for smaller scale projects such as resurfacing, signals, bicycle and pedestrian projects may differ based on the project scope.
Clean Air Act Amendments (1990) require that the EPA study the effects of air pollution on human health and the environment, and to establish appropriate air quality standards.

Ozone
(Maintenance: Shelby County and Desoto County)

Maintenance Area
A former nonattainment area which has successfully taken actions to meet the EPA’s Standards. The area generally remains in maintenance for 10 years, during which it has to continuously demonstrate compliance with EPA’s standards. After 10 years it will be designated as attainment.

What is a State Implementation Plan (SIP)?
It is a specific plan required by the Clean Air Act to achieve the EPA’s standards in all non-attainment areas. The SIPs are developed by the states (with local inputs) and submitted to U.S. EPA for approval. After approval, the SIPs and all associated control measures are enforceable at both the state and federal levels.
1. **Does the Memphis MPO build roads?**

Building roads is the responsibility of the local municipality or the Tennessee or Mississippi Departments of Transportation. The Memphis MPO only coordinates the planning and programming of federal funding to infrastructure projects. Projects go through several stages before construction can begin - like conducting an environmental study or roadway design, and acquiring right-of-way to name a few.

2. **Does the Memphis MPO run the buses?**

The Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA) provides fixed-route and paratransit services in the Greater Memphis Area. The Memphis MPO does coordinate with MATA to determine current and future public transportation needs by conducting plans and studies. The MPO’s long-range transportation plan, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and short-range transportation plan, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) include future transit service.
3. How can I learn about transportation improvements in my area?

The Memphis MPO provides an Interactive Webmap for residents to view long and short-term transportation projects planned in the area. Viewers can see the types of projects, future completion dates, the amount of funding on the project, and much more. For more information on specific project, contact your local municipality.

4. How can I learn about future public meetings?

You can sign-up for our quarterly newsletter, the Travel Times, to stay up-to-date on current and future MPO plans and programs. The Memphis MPO also maintains an online calendar that is updated with public meetings when available. Finally, you can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn to get the latest news on the MPO and transportation related updates. Visit our News/Events Webpage.
5. **Can I request an accommodation?**

Yes, the Memphis MPO will work with you to determine the best available accommodation for your request. The MPO works to ensure that public meetings are held in accessible locations and the program is accessible to all residents. Plans and studies can be provided in foreign language, Braille, or large-type format. To request an accommodation or translation, visit [memphismpo.org](http://memphismpo.org).

6. **Why is my County/City/Town not included in the MPO?**

The Memphis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) consists of nine counties and the municipalities within: Shelby, Fayette, and Tipton counties in Tennessee; Crittenden County in Arkansas; and Benton, DeSoto, Marshall, Tate, and Tunica counties in Mississippi. However, the Memphis MPO is responsible for transportation planning only in “urbanized areas” of the MSA or areas of the MSA that are expected to become urbanized within the next 20 years.
7. **How is it determined which projects can be funded with federal funds?**

   - Eligibility and Restrictions are set in the federal regulations/guidance for the use of the funds, some are
     - Type of Road (Federal Functional Classification System)
     - Type of Work (i.e. transit funds cannot be used to pave a road and highway funds cannot be used to operate transit)
     - Identification of project in MPO Plans

8. **How are project identified in the RTP?**

   - MPO planning process requires look at both current and future needs.
   - Projects identified then go through a rigorous ranking process to prioritize projects and includes only those that can be funded based on funding availability.
   - Additional information provided by the local jurisdictions is also used for project identification.
   - MPO Staff does not make the decision on which projects are included in the RTP.
9. If West Memphis, Arkansas is part of the Memphis Metropolitan Area, why is it not included in the Memphis MPO’s area of jurisdiction?

• West Memphis is served by its own MPO in cooperation with the Arkansas DOT and FHWA and FTA offices in Little Rock.
Questions

Visit Us
https://memphismpo.org/