



# USDOT Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Planning Proposed Rulemaking



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# Presentation Overview

- Current Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Planning Program Requirements
- Key MAP-21 Changes
- USDOT's June 2 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
- Areas for Comment



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# Existing Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Planning Program

- State DOTs required to undertake a 3-C statewide planning process: continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive
- Multimodal long-range statewide transportation plan covering a 20-year horizon (LRP)
- 4-year statewide transportation improvement program (STIP)
- Public must be involved in development of LRP and STIP
- State DOT must “cooperate” with MPOs and “consult” with local officials on LRP and STIP



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# Key Changes to Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Planning Process Under MAP-21

- States are to “cooperate” with nonmetropolitan local officials- elevated from “consult”
- Option for states to establish Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs)



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# USDOT's June 2 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

- The NPRM implements requirements under MAP-21, not a new proposal
- Last planning rule with impacts on nonmetropolitan planning was in 2003
- Final rule will shape the direction of the federally-required consultation process for years to come
- Jointly issued by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Comments due by September 2



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# NPRM: State and MPO Requirements for a Performance-Based Approach

- States, MPOs, and Providers of Public Transportation are required to establish a transparent, accountable decision-making framework for investments
- Support MAP-21's seven national goals for the federal-aid highway system:
  - Safety
  - Infrastructure condition
  - Congestion reduction
  - System reliability
  - Freight movement and economic vitality
  - Environmental sustainability
  - Reduced project delivery delays



# **NPRM: State and MPO Requirements for a Performance-Based Approach**

- Targets are to be set for performance measures to track outcomes
- States are to coordinate with stakeholders in rural areas to ensure consistency in selection of performance targets
- Measures and targets are to be considered when a state develops policies, programs, and investment priorities in LRP and STIP



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## NPRM: New Emphasis on Nonmetropolitan Planning

- Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan must be developed in **cooperation** (previously consultation) with nonmetropolitan officials with responsibility for transportation or, if applicable, with Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs)



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# **NPRM: Regional Transportation Planning Organizations**

- States have the option of establishing and designating Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) to enhance statewide planning
- Authority to establish and designate an RTPO resides with a state's Governor or the Governor's designee
- States without RTPOs shall cooperate with the affected nonmetropolitan officials



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# NPRM: Regional Transportation Planning Organizations

## RTPO Requirements

- Must be established as a multi-jurisdictional organization of nonmetropolitan local officials and representatives of local transportation systems
- Must establish a policy committee, the majority of which are nonmetropolitan officials and representatives from the state, private business, transportation service providers, economic development practitioners, and the public
- Must establish a fiscal and administrative agent, such as an existing regional planning and development organization to provide planning, management, and administrative support



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# NPRM: Regional Transportation Planning Organizations

## RTPO Duties

- Develop regional long-range multimodal transportation plans and regional TIPs
- Coordinate local planning, land use, and economic development
- Provide technical assistance to local officials
- Participate in national, multi-state, and state policy and planning development process
- Provide a forum for public participation in regional and statewide planning efforts
- Share plans and programs with neighboring RTPOs, MPOs, and tribal organizations



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# NPRM Areas for Comments

- Several key areas where comments to the NPRM will be valuable. RPO America Council of Peers provided input and discussion on these topics:
  - Nonmetropolitan participation in LRP and STIP
  - RTPO Tasks
  - Regional TIPs
  - Funding Opportunities for RTPOs
  - Process for selecting priorities for STIP if no RTPO is present
  - Unified Regional Plans
  - NEPA Review Process



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## Area for Comment: Nonmetropolitan Participation in LRP

- Documents that a state long-range plan should refer to:
  - Relevant federally-recognized regional plans such as Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) or regional sustainability plans
- Communication between states and nonmetropolitan officials on what the change from “consultation” to “cooperation” means
- Encourage states to set a timeframe for when the shift to “cooperation” will occur
- Ask states to maintain their current relationships with regional planning partners in developing LRP



## Area for Comment: RTPO Tasks

- Thank FHWA for including language in the NPRM making it clear that there is no prohibition on an RTPO conducting other transportation planning activities beyond those listed
- FHWA should encourage states to maintain existing work with planning partners and not create new relationships with other bodies



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## Area for Comment: Regional TIPs

- Ask that states be encouraged to incorporate regional TIPs into the STIP if they meet the same requirements as an MPO's TIP
- Several states require RPOs to follow the same guidelines as MPOs in developing their TIP; clarify that they should be incorporated into the STIP



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## Area for Comment: Funding Opportunities for RTPOs

- MAP-21 provides no dedicated funding for RTPOs, however there are funding sources available including the State Planning and Research Program and the Surface Transportation Program
- Request a discussion of funding options in the final rule



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## Area for Comment: Process for Selecting Local and Nonmetropolitan Priorities

- If an RTPO is not present in a region, states should refer to regional priorities identified through a CEDS or other federally-recognized regional plan when selecting nonmetropolitan priorities for the STIP



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## Area for Comment: Unified Regional Plans

- Suggest that FHWA include language in the final rule stating that MPO/RPO unified regional plans, in instances where the two share an administrative agent, are an eligible way to structure planning activities



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## Area for Comment: NEPA Review Process

- RTPOs should be mentioned as contributors to the NEPA review process since they are involved in establishing the purpose and needs for sub-area or corridor plans



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# How to Comment

Easiest way to comment is electronically through  
<http://www.regulations.gov>

Include agency name, docket name, and docket number:

**Federal Highway Administration, Statewide and Nonmetropolitan  
Transportation Planning NPRM: FHWA-2013-0037**



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## More Resources

NPRM in the Federal Register

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/06/02/2014-12155/statewide-and-nonmetropolitan-transportation-planning-metropolitan-transportation-planning>

NADO Rural Local Officials Consultation Assessment Guide

<http://www.nado.org/rural-local-officials-consultation-assessment-guide/>

FHWA Planning Process: Rural and Small Community Planning

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/rural/>

FHWA/FTA Focus Area: Rural and Small Community Planning

[http://planning.dot.gov/focus\\_rural.asp](http://planning.dot.gov/focus_rural.asp)



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**Save the Date!**

**National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference**

**December 3 – 5, 2014 | Cincinnati, OH**

**<http://www.nado.org/events/rpo2014/>**

**Call for Presentation Ideas**

**<http://www.ruraltransportation.org/rpo2014-call/>**



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# QUESTIONS



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