



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Highway  
Administration**

**Tennessee Division**

September 23, 2016

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Phone (615) 781-5770

Ms. Deborah Fleming  
Tennessee Department of Transportation  
Regional Planning Office  
James K. Polk Building, Suite 900  
Nashville, TN 37243-1402

In Reply Refer To:  
HPP-TN

**Subject: Fiscal Year 2017 Unified Planning Work Programs**

Dear Ms. Fleming:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the FY2017 Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWPs) for the following metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs):

- Bristol Metropolitan Planning Organization,
- Chattanooga-Hamilton County / North Georgia Transportation Planning Organization,
- Clarksville Urbanized Area Metropolitan Planning Organization,
- Cleveland Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization,
- Jackson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization,
- Johnson City Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization,
- Kingsport Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization,
- Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization,
- Lakeway Area Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization,
- Memphis Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, and
- Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

In coordination with the Region 4 Office of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and our bi-state Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Division Office partners, the FHWA Tennessee Division reviewed the FY2017 UPWPs. FHWA offers no comments on the FY2017 UPWPs. Based on our review of the FY2017 UPWPs, FHWA offers comments for improvements to future year UPWPs in Attachment 1. As we have discussed in meetings, FHWA intends to coordinate further with TDOT and the MPOs early in the development of the FY2018 UPWPs to identify further opportunities to improve the detail and consistency of these documents statewide.

FHWA hereby approves the FY2017 UPWPs.

If you have any questions for the FHWA Tennessee Division, please contact Scott Allen at (615) 781-5792. If you have any questions for FTA Region 4, please contact Parris Orr at (404) 865-5617.

Sincerely,



Theresa Claxton  
Planning & Program Management Team Leader

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Tanisha Hall, Director of Long Range Planning, TDOT  
Ms. Jennifer Hibbert, Director of Planning and Program Development, FTA Region 4  
Ms. Parris Orr, Community Planner, FTA Region 4  
Ms. Greg Rawlings, Transportation Specialist, FHWA Kentucky  
Mr. Kevin Jones, Transportation Planner, FHWA Virginia  
Ms. Ann-Marie Day, Transportation Planner, FHWA Georgia  
Mr. Randall Jansen, Planning Engineer, FHWA Mississippi

## Attachment 1

FHWA offers the following comments regarding improvements for future UPWPs. Please continue to coordinate with the MPOs on our expectations for these considerations:

1. **Federal Rules and Regulations** – Continue incorporating provisions from the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act as they become available in Title 23 of the United States Code (U.S.C.), Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and FHWA and FTA policy and guidance, especially the transportation performance management requirements.
2. **Planning Area Boundaries** – Continue mapping the urban areas and metropolitan planning area boundaries and documenting the boundary adjustments made over time, especially those incorporating the results of the U.S. Census Bureau’s decennial census.

A possible best practice would be one map with the following details:

- County boundaries,
- Metropolitan planning area boundaries,
- Census defined urban area boundaries and/or adjusted urban area boundaries,
- National Highway System (NHS),
- A legend clearly defining map elements,
- A description of the most recent metropolitan planning area boundary approval from the respective Governor(s), and
- A description of the most recent urban area boundary adjustment approval(s) from the respective FHWA Division Office(s).

3. **Metropolitan Planning Organization Structure** – Continue highlighting the organizational structures of the metropolitan planning organizations, including the policy boards, technical committees, advisory committees, and work groups.
4. **Available Revenues** – Continue summarizing the total amounts and sources of Federal, State, and local funding revenues (including estimated future allocations and carry-over funds from previous fiscal years) and the associated matching rates.
5. **Proposed Work** – Continue enumerating major metropolitan transportation planning work tasks for the time horizon of the work program with sufficient detail to indicate:
  - The specific purpose of the tasks,
  - Who will perform the work,
  - The proposed planning activities,
  - The schedule for completing the planning activities,
  - The resulting products, and
  - The proposed funding by work activity.
6. **Proposed Costs** – Continue summarizing the proposed costs by work task, funding source, and responsible agency and explaining the rationale for contingency funds.
7. **Previous Work** – Continue reporting progress on work activities and tasks from the previous Federal fiscal year that are completed, continuing, or carrying-over into the next Federal fiscal year.

- 8. Federal Planning Factors and Initiatives** – Continue incorporating the ten Federal planning factors and associated Federal initiatives into work tasks and resulting products:
- (1) Support the economic vitality of the United States, the States, metropolitan areas, and non-metropolitan areas, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;**
    - Transportation performance management
    - Economic development
    - Financial planning and forecasting
    - Multimodal and intermodal freight planning and performance
    - Public private partnerships
    - Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP)
    - Every Day Counts (EDC)
  - (2) Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;**
    - Transportation safety planning and performance
  - (3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;**
    - Disaster preparedness and Continuity Of Operations (COOP) planning
    - Climate trends and extreme weather
  - (4) Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight;**
    - Access management and corridor management
    - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility
    - Congestion management, travel time reliability, and system performance
    - Active transportation and transportation alternatives
    - Multimodal and intermodal freight planning and performance
  - (5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;**
    - Livability
    - Sustainability
    - Title VI and environmental justice
    - Planning and environmental linkages (PEL)
    - Air quality and public health
    - Integrating transportation and land use
  - (6) Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes throughout the State, for people and freight;**
    - Active transportation and transportation alternatives
    - Multimodal and intermodal freight planning and performance
  - (7) Promote efficient system management and operation; and**
    - Planning for operations
    - Congestion management, travel time reliability, and system performance
    - Transportation system management and operations (TSMO)
  - (8) Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.**
    - Asset management
    - Pavement and bridge performance

(9) Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation;

(10) Enhance travel and tourism.

9. **Planning Emphasis Areas** – The U.S. Department of Transportation identified three Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAs) for consideration in FY2015 and beyond:

(1) **Models of Regional Planning Cooperation**

Promote cooperation and coordination across MPO boundaries and across State boundaries where appropriate to ensure a regional approach to transportation planning. This is particularly important where more than one MPO serves an urbanized area or adjacent urbanized areas. This cooperation could occur through the metropolitan planning agreements that identify how the planning process and planning products will be coordinated, through the development of joint planning products, and/or by other locally determined means.

Coordination includes the linkages between the transportation plans and programs, corridor studies, projects, data, and system performance measures and targets across MPO and State boundaries. It also includes collaboration between State DOT(s), MPOs, and operators of public transportation on activities such as: data collection, data storage and analysis, analytical tools, target setting, and system performance reporting in support of performance based planning.

(2) **Access to Essential Services**

As part of the transportation planning process, identify transportation connectivity gaps in access to essential services. Essential services include housing, employment, health care, schools/education, and recreation. This emphasis area could include identification of performance measures and analytical methods to measure the transportation system's connectivity to essential services and the use of this information to identify gaps in transportation system connectivity that preclude access of the public, including traditionally underserved populations, to essential services. It could also involve the identification of solutions to address those gaps.

(3) **FAST Act/MAP-21 Implementation**

The development and implementation of a performance management approach to transportation planning and programming includes the development and use of performance measures, target setting, performance reporting, and transportation investments that support the achievement of performance targets. These components will ensure the achievement of transportation system performance outcomes.

The use of scenario planning by MPOs as part of developing metropolitan transportation plans. MPOs may use scenario planning to improve decision making by providing information to the public and to decision makers on the performance outcome tradeoffs of various investment decisions when developing the metropolitan transportation plan.

10. **FHWA's INVEST**– Continue evaluating the applications of FHWA's Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool (INVEST) and the System Planning (SP),

Project Development (PD), and Operations and Maintenance (OM) modules. More information is available at: <https://www.sustainablehighways.org/>.

**11. Regional Planning Priorities** – Continue connecting the goals, objectives, policies, strategies, work tasks, activities, and end products to the regional priorities in the respective metropolitan transportation plans and improvement programs.

**12. Coordination with Other Planning Activities** – Continue coordinating work tasks with the development and implementation of other planning efforts, such as:

- Long-range statewide transportation plans,
- Statewide transportation improvement programs,
- State planning and research programs,
- Statewide public involvement plans,
- Statewide freight plans,
- Air quality transportation conformity determinations,
- Strategic highway safety plans,
- Regional intelligent transportation systems (ITS) architectures,
- Coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans,
- Highway functional classification system maintenance,
- Asset management plans,
- Title VI programs for FTA designated recipients,
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plans,
- Discretionary Federal regional planning grants,
- Federal certification reviews for transportation management areas (TMAs), and
- Federal statewide planning findings.

**13. Public Participation** – Continue involving interested parties and the general public in the development and implementation of the UPWPs through published notices, website postings, public meetings, workshops, site visits, open houses, roundtables, and other public involvement activities.

Continue holding public participation events at convenient times and locations that are accessible via public transportation, ADA compliant, and have the necessary Limited English Proficiency (LEP) resources.

Continue making public information available via websites and social media.

**14. Interagency Review** – Continue involving State and Federal planning participants in the UPWP development process.

**15. Work Program Changes** – Continue outlining the procedures for revising the UPWPs, including the changes that qualify as amendments, the changes that qualify as administrative modifications, and the procedures for public participation, MPO policy board approval, State review, and Federal review and approval.

**16. Performance and Expenditure Reports** – Continue reporting performance with established goals, progress in meeting schedules, the status of expenditures in a format compatible with the work program (including a comparison of budgeted amounts and actual costs incurred), cost overruns or underruns, and approved work program revisions.

Continue submitting quarterly reports within 30 days of the end of each Federal fiscal year quarter and annual reports within 90 days of the end of each Federal fiscal year.

- 17. Technical Quality and Readability** – Continue developing comprehensive UPWPs in a style and format that is easy to read and understand and contains minimal grammatical or other quality errors.