

## Chapter 3: The Role of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's)

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) were established under the authority of Title 23 of the United States Code. MPO's are designated for urbanized areas with a population of more than 50,000 individuals by agreement between the Governor and local government units. Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulation, section 450.216 (a) requires the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP's) of Metropolitan Planning Organizations to be included without modification in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Pursuant to Title 23, Section 450.104, MPO's are defined as "the form or body responsible for cooperative transportation decision-making." 23 CFR 134 (3) (A-B), states that "MPO's are designated to: develop plans and programs for adoption; develop long-range capital plans; coordinate transit services and projects; and carry out other activities pursuant to State law".

### **Washoe County Planning Process**

The Governor of Nevada designates the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Washoe County as the MPO for the Reno-Sparks urbanized area. Acting as the MPO, the RTC of Washoe County is responsible for carrying out a "continuing, cooperative, comprehensive" transportation planning process that results in plans and programs consistent with the planned development of the urbanized area. The RTC's planning process is guided by the development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTC of Washoe County develops the RTP, which is a 20-year transportation plan, in conjunction with the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), which is a five-year transportation funding program. The RTP development process includes public participation and advisory committee input. The review process involves local advisory committee comment, thus securing community representation and support prior to submission and adoption.

### **Clark County Planning Process**

The Regional Transportation Commission, (RTC) of Southern Nevada has been designated by the Governor of Nevada as the MPO for the Las Vegas urbanized area. The RTC is responsible for carrying out a "continuing, cooperative, comprehensive" transportation planning process that results in plans and programs consistent with the planned development of the urbanized area. The Clark County transportation planning process proceeds through an Interlocal agreement between the RTC, NDOT, and its member entities. This agreement requires that a citizens' advisory committee and a planning technical committee be maintained for the purposes of reviewing transportation plans and programs developed to enhance the region's mobility. The central component of the planning process is the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP development process utilizes public input and technical data. Public hearings are conducted to further ensure adequate public participation in the planning process. The RTP is then submitted to the RTC for adoption. After the RTC

adopts the RTP, it is submitted to various local and regional agencies for concurrence. The RTC also has oversight responsibility for developing the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), which outlines programmatic and investment requirements of the transportation system. The RTIP delineates regionally significant federal and non-federal funded projects over the preceding three fiscal years. The planning process follows that of the RTP, which is inclusive of public hearing and participation prior to adoption.

### **Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization Planning Process**

The Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMPO) is the policy body responsible for the cooperative decision-making process of the Lake Tahoe Basin including the City of South Lake Tahoe. The TMPO Board of Directors is comprised of fourteen voting members of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). TMPO's mission is to make policy decisions on transportation plans and programs. As required by law, TMPO prepares a Federal Transportation Plan (FTP) and a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that forecasts transportation conditions twenty-five years in advance, while focusing on implementation planning five years in advance. The Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) for the Lake Tahoe Region is a three-year, basin-wide, intermodal program of transportation projects consistent with Tahoe FTP/RTP and related transportation planning processes. The RTIP is prepared by TRPA staff on behalf of the TMPO, in cooperation with Caltrans, NDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and others. Opportunities for public involvement are provided throughout the plan's development process.

### **Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization**

Following the 2000 census, it was determined that Carson area's population exceeded 50,000. As a result, the U.S. Census Bureau designated the Carson Area as an urbanized area in 2002. The boundaries of the new urbanized area included Carson City, portions of northern Douglas County, and western Lyon County. In 2003, Nevada's governor designated the Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) as the agency responsible for the transportation planning for Carson's urbanized area. CAMPO consists of representatives from Carson City, Douglas County, and the Nevada Department of Transportation. Lyon County is not represented on the CAMPO Board, but is actively involved in CAMPO activities. Since its designation, CAMPO completed its public involvement program, the initial Unified Planning Work Program, and an Interim Program of Projects for the area. CAMPO will complete its First Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program during the 2005 Fiscal Year.