

# **MPO/RTPO 101**

Yakima Valley  
MPO/RTPO  
Executive Committee



**YAKIMA VALLEY  
CONFERENCE OF GOVERNMENTS**

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## **M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: MPO/RTPO Executive Committee members

FROM: J. Page Scott, Executive Director

DATE: March 14, 2012

SUBJECT: **MPO/RTPO 101**

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The enclosed information is intended to give you an overview of common issues and terminology associated with your role as MPO/RTPO Executive Committee members.

Transportation planning has its own language. No one expects you to learn it all at once. There are many laws and regulations – state and federal - affecting what we do in metropolitan and regional transportation planning. No one expects you to become an expert in those, either.

Please do not feel overwhelmed. I have tried to simplify some very complex information about planning requirements and funding that have taken me many years to understand.

I hope you find the enclosed information helpful. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to call on me.

### **MEMBER JURISDICTIONS**

Grandview • Granger • Harrah • Mabton • Moxee • Naches • Selah  
Sunnyside • Tieton • Toppenish • Union Gap • Wapato • Yakima • Yakima County •  
Zillah

## **What does the Yakima Valley MPO/RTPO do?**

In general,

- Ensures compliance with state and federal transportation planning requirements to remain eligible for federal transportation project funding.
- Provides a forum for local, regional and state transportation agencies and other interested parties to participate in discussions of regional transportation issues.

## **What decisions does the MPO/RTPO Executive Committee make?**

Reviews and approves

- Transportation Planning documents (UPWP, TIP, MTP/RTP)
- Contracts with WSDOT for funding (MPO/RTPO, CTR)
- Contracts for transportation planning services (modeling, consultants)
- Contracts for Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) services (guaranteed ride home, interlocal agreements)
- Transportation project funding
  - STP Regional prioritization process and project selection
  - CMAQ prioritization process and project selection
  - Transportation enhancement prioritization
  - WSDOT Public Transportation Consolidated Grant – regional priorities

# REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS IN WASHINGTON

## What is an RTPO?

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Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO) are formed by voluntary associations of local governments within a county or within geographically contiguous counties. RTPO members may include cities, counties, WSDOT, tribes, ports, transportation service providers, and private employers.

## Why were RTPOs created?

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RTPOs were authorized as part of the 1990 Growth Management Act to ensure local and regional coordination of transportation plans.

## What do RTPOs do?

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RTPO planning must involve cities, counties, WSDOT, transit agencies, ports, and private employers. Among other duties individual RTPOs may perform to serve their membership, RTPOs are **required** to:

- Prepare a Regional Transportation Plan
- Certify that countywide planning policies and transportation elements of local comprehensive plans are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan
- Develop a six-year Regional Transportation Improvement Program

## Who are RTPOs?

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There are 14 RTPOs covering 38 of the 39 counties in Washington. San Juan County is not part of any RTPO.

## How are RTPOs different than Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)?

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- | <u>RTPO</u>  | <u>MPO</u>   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Created by <b>state</b> legislation (GMA) and supported by <b>state</b> funding</li><li>• Covers <b>both urban and rural</b> areas</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Created by <b>federal</b> legislation and supported by <b>federal</b> funding</li><li>• Covers <b>urbanized areas only</b></li></ul> |

MPOs and RTPOs serve the same basic transportation planning functions – develop a long-range plan, coordinate within a region, and prepare a transportation improvement program. The federal MPO and state RTPO requirements of these organizations are complementary. The lead agency for a RTPO is also the lead agency for the MPO within the region (except Lewis-Clark Valley MPO because it is a bi-state organization).

## What are the key documents produced by the metropolitan and regional transportation planning process?

Document	Time Horizon	Contents	Update Requirements	Comments
Unified Planning Work Program ( <b>UPWP</b> )	1-2 yr  (state fiscal year July-June)	List of planning studies and tasks with funding sources identified	Can be done annually or 2-year	<i>draft in Feb/March based on FHWA/FTA/WSDOT planning emphasis areas and WSDOT "guidance"</i>
Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program ( <b>MTIP/RTIP</b> )	4 yrs*	Transportation improvement projects from local 6-yr TIPs that either have  1) federal funds; or  2) "regionally significant" projects	Updated at least every 2 years (amendments as needed)	<i>draft in Aug/Sept for public comment; adopted in October</i>
Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan ( <b>MTP and RTP</b> )	20 yrs	Future goals, strategies and projects – long range plan	Every 4 yrs * (Yakima is an air quality maintenance area)	<i>Next update due to be adopted in Spring 2011</i>

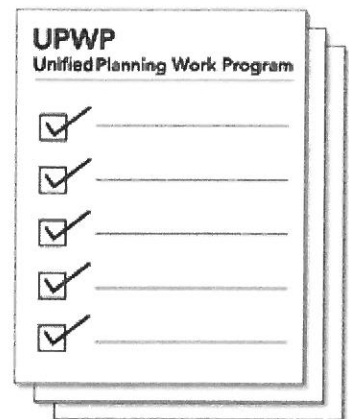
*\* indicates a change in SAFETEA-LU from previous federal requirements*

Also required by WSDOT

- Annual Report to WSDOT at end of SFY
- MPO Self Certification included with MTIP – compliance with federal requirements ("long form")

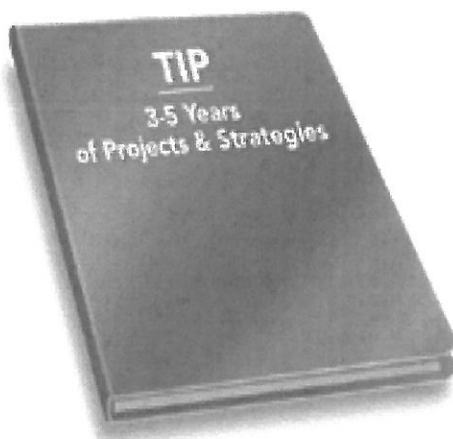
**The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP):** The UPWP lists the transportation studies and tasks to be performed by the MPO staff or a member agency. Because the UPWP reflects local priorities, the content differs from one metropolitan area to another but is based on the annual planning priorities established by FHWA, FTA and WSDOT. The UPWP contains several elements:

- The planning tasks and studies that will be conducted over a one- to two-year period;
- All federally funded studies as well as all relevant state and local planning activities conducted without federal funds;
- Funding sources identified for each project;
- A schedule of activities; and
- The agency responsible for each task or study.



**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** The TIP is a financially constrained three-year program covering the most immediate implementation priorities for transportation projects and strategies from the metropolitan transportation plan. It is the region's way of allocating its limited transportation resources among the various capital and operating needs of the area, based on a clear set of short-term transportation priorities.

Under federal law, the TIP:



- Covers a minimum four-year period of investment;
- Is updated at least every two years;
- Is realistic in terms of available funding (known as a fiscally constrained TIP) and is not just a "wish list" of projects;
- Conforms with the SIP for air quality if the region is designated a nonattainment or maintenance area;
- Is approved by the MPO and the governor for air quality; and
- Is incorporated into the statewide transportation improvement program (STIP).



**The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) or Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):**

The transportation plan is the statement of the ways the region plans to invest in the transportation system. The plan shall "include both long-range and short-range program strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods." (23 CFR450C, Sec.450.322)

The plan has several elements, for example:



- Identify policies, strategies, and projects for the future;
- Determine project demand for transportation services over 20 years;
- Focus at the systems level, including roadways, transit, non-motorized transportation, and intermodal connections;
- Articulate regional land use, development, housing, and employment goals and plans;
- Estimate costs and identify reasonably available financial sources for operation, maintenance, and capital investments (see Part II, section on financial planning);
- Determine ways to preserve existing roads and facilities and make efficient use of the existing system;
- Be consistent with the statewide transportation plan; and
- Be updated every four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas.

MPOs should make special efforts to engage interested parties in the development of the plan. In cases where a metropolitan area is designated as a nonattainment or maintenance area, the plan must conform to the SIP for air quality.



## YVCOG MPO/RTPO Transportation Planning Funds

Funding Source	SFY 2014 anticipated funding	Notes
<i>Federal – MPO</i>		
FHWA PL funds	\$288,551	Federal Hwy Admin – 13.5% non-fed match required
FTA Section 5303 funds	\$42,658	Federal Transit Admin – 13.5% non-fed match required as part of consolidated grant
<i>State – RTPO</i>		
RTPO planning funds	\$98,596	WSDOT – no match required
<i>Other Transportation Planning Funds</i>		
STP Regional	????????	A portion of STP Regional funds may be requested for regional planning needs (i.e. MTP/RTP plan update, aerial photos; modeling); requires TAC approval to be spent on specific work items; 13.5% non-fed match

Federal \$\$\$\$

State \$\$\$\$





# Fiscal Years



**Calendar Year** = January to December

*Examples: YVCOG budget, Transportation Improvement Program*

**State Fiscal Year** (SFY) = July to June

*Examples: Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), CTR contract, state funded contracts*

**Federal Fiscal Year** (FFY) = October to September

*Examples: STP funding, CMAQ funding, any other federal funds (e.g., PL, FTA)*

## **MPO/RTPO Terminology**

*This is a list of common terms that come up in MPO/RTPO Executive Committee business.  
This is not intended to be an exhaustive list.*

### **Planning Terms**

- Transportation plans
  - MTP – Metropolitan Transportation Plan
  - RTP – Regional Transportation Plan
  - WTP – Washington State Transportation Plan
  - HSP – Highway System Plan
- Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP)
  - Six-year TIP (city/county)
  - MTIP – Metropolitan area TIP (MPO)
  - RTIP – Regional TIP (RTPO)
  - STIP – State TIP
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

### **Funding terms**

- Transportation PROJECT funding sources
  - STP
  - CMAQ
  - TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) – formerly Enhancements
- Transportation PLANNING funding sources
  - FHWA PL – metropolitan planning funds
  - FTA Section 5303 – metropolitan planning funds
  - RTPO – state regional transportation planning funds
- Commute Trip Reduction (CTR)
  - CTR Program Implementation – ongoing state funding
  - CMAQ – 3 yr grant using federal funds (13.5% match requirement)

### **Transportation Agencies**

- U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
  - FHWA – Federal Highway Administration
  - FTA - Federal Transit Administration
  - FAA – Federal Aviation Administration
  - STB – Surface Transportation Board
- Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
  - Strategic Planning & Programming (SP&P)
  - Highways and Local Programs (H&LP)
  - South Central Region (SCR)
  - Public Transportation Division
  - Aviation Division
  - Freight Strategies Division
- WSTC – Washington State Transportation Commission
- TIB – Transportation Improvement Board (urban and small city transportation funding)
- CRAB – County Road Administration Board (County road funding)
- WTSC – Washington Traffic Safety Commission (seatbelts, DUI education campaigns, traffic safety grants)

- National associations
  - Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO)
  - National Association of Regional Councils (NARC)
  - National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)
- State associations/committees
  - MPO/RTPO/WSDOT Coordinating Committee
  - Tribal Transportation Planning Organization (TTPO)
  - Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT)
  - Commute Trip Reduction Board (CTR Board)

### **Air Quality Terms**

- Conformity
- State Implementation Plan (SIP)
- NAAQS – federal air quality standards for a variety of pollutants
- PM10, PM 2.5 – particulate matter pollutants, either 10 microns or 2.5 microns
- CO – carbon monoxide
- Attainment, non-attainment, maintenance areas

### **Laws & Regulations**

- Federal
  - MAP-21 – federal planning requirements and funding (administered by U.S. DOT)
    - SAFETEA-LU
    - TEA-21
    - ISTEA
  - NEPA – national environmental laws (administered by U.S. EPA)
  - Endangered Species Act (ESA) – plant/animals that have to be considered when planning transportation improvement projects
  - Clean Air Act (CAA) – federal standards for air pollutants
  - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – requirements for non-discrimination if agency receives any federal funds
    - Environmental Justice
- State
  - Growth Management Act (GMA) – local planning requirements (administered by Washington State Dept. of Community Trade & Economic Development)
  - Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) – regional planning requirements (administered by WSDOT)
  - Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) – state, regional, and local requirements to reduce commute trips in urbanized areas of the state (administered by WSDOT)
  - SEPA – state environmental laws (administered by Washington State Dept. of Ecology)
  - Washington Clean Air Act (administered by Dept. of Ecology)