

MPOAC

Federal Surface Transportation Authorization Principles

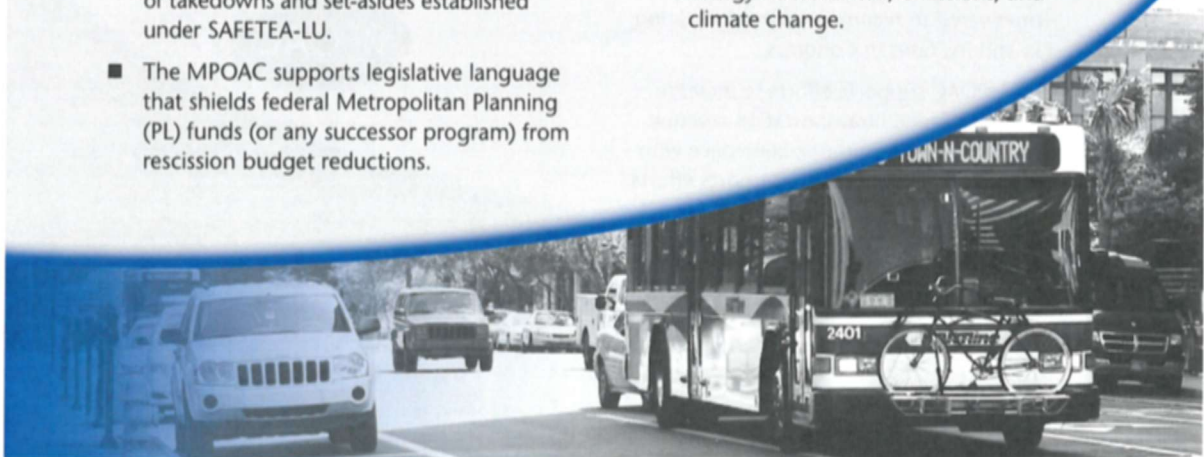
The Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) represents the twenty-six MPOs in the State of Florida. The principles are intended to serve as policy guidance to members of Congress, the Florida Department of Transportation, and the MPOAC's partner organizations.

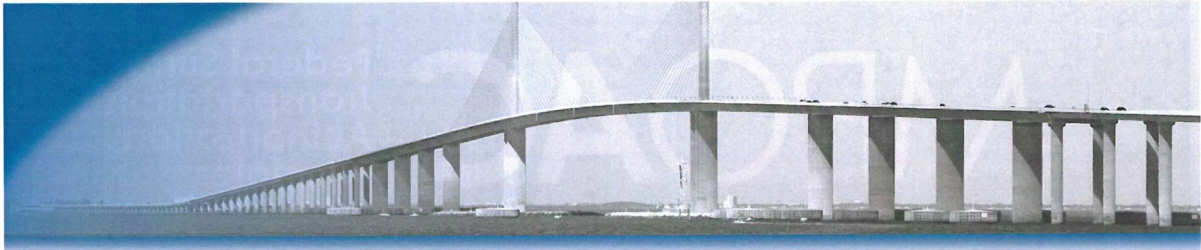
MPO Administration and Funding

- The MPOAC supports the designation of Metropolitan Mobility Authorities (MMA) to address issues unique to large urban areas including traffic congestion, public transit, and multimodal freight movement. MMAs would administer all appropriate federal program funds in metropolitan statistical areas larger than 500,000 people. The administrative structure of MMAs should be determined by the existing MPOs or group of MPOs that comprise the MMA area.
- The MPOAC supports raising the MPO designation threshold to 100,000 people and encourages newly designated urbanized areas to join with nearby MPOs.
- Federal planning and transit planning funds should be continued at levels that are no less than the pool derived under the system of takedowns and set-asides established under SAFETEA-LU.
- The MPOAC supports legislative language that shields federal Metropolitan Planning (PL) funds (or any successor program) from rescission budget reductions.

Roles, Responsibilities and Programs

- The MPOAC supports a continued strong Federal role in transportation policy and funding, with an emphasis on system preservation, safety, and metropolitan congestion. States should maintain their historic lead role in planning and programming for inter-regional movement of people and goods, while MPOs continue their traditional role as the primary planning and programming agency in metropolitan areas. Federal program funds should be allocated in a manner that advances the ability of states and MPOs to meet their responsibilities under these traditional roles.
- The '3-C metropolitan transportation planning process,' or any successor, should include a planning factor relating to energy conservation, emissions, and climate change.





- The MPOAC supports the designation of a multi-modal National Freight Network. The network should be funded, in part, by a dedicated stream of fees and taxes on freight shipments and freight vehicles.
- The MPOAC believes that MPOs should be given advice and consent authority over toll projects and public/private partnerships in their metropolitan area.
- The MPOAC supports legislative language that mandates new rulemaking for metropolitan and statewide transportation planning within 18 months of the passage of new federal transportation authorization legislation.
- The MPOAC supports legislative language that requires revenue generated from new tolls instituted on existing federal-aid facilities be directed toward congestion relief within that metropolitan area.
- The MPOAC supports innovative financing of infrastructure through public/private partnerships. In particular, the MPOAC endorses programs that enable public agencies to access private equity markets, such as State Infrastructure Banks, Private Activity Bonds, and Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act funds.
- The MPOAC supports additional movement towards minimizing donor state inequities.

Taxation and Finance

- The MPOAC endorses the consolidation of funding streams across FHWA/FTA from the current 108 programs to no more than 10. The resulting programs should increase funding flexibility within a multi-modal metropolitan transportation planning system.
- In an effort to insulate decision-making on transportation revenue increases from political pressure, the MPOAC endorses the creation of an Independent Transportation Revenue Adjustment Commission that is empowered to recommend transportation tax and fee rates to Congress.
- The MPOAC supports efforts to increase and index federal transportation revenue streams to, at a minimum, keep pace with inflation. The MPOAC also supports efforts

to address future transportation funding needs through new and innovative mechanisms which could include a vehicle miles traveled based approach.

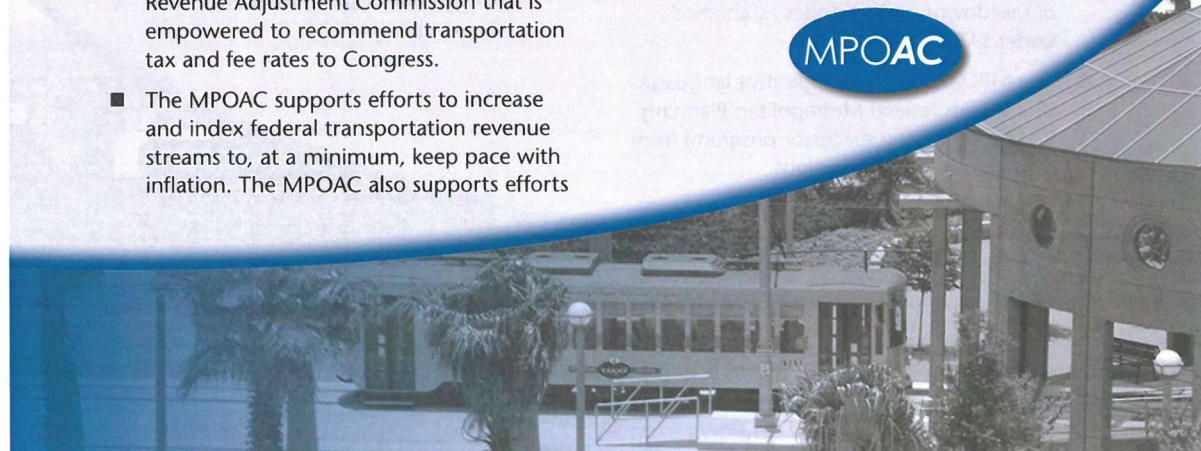
- The MPOAC supports legislative language that requires revenue generated from new tolls instituted on existing federal-aid facilities be directed toward congestion relief within that metropolitan area.
- The MPOAC supports innovative financing of infrastructure through public/private partnerships. In particular, the MPOAC endorses programs that enable public agencies to access private equity markets, such as State Infrastructure Banks, Private Activity Bonds, and Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act funds.
- The MPOAC supports additional movement towards minimizing donor state inequities.

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MPOAC



Methodology for Creating 2017

MPOAC Draft Federal Transportation Implementation Principles

Review of 2009 and 2014 Federal Policy positions

- Any policy position that was adopted was not brought forward
 - Example: Consolidate the current 108 Federal funding programs to no more than 10.
- Keep versus delete

Suggested deletions of previous Federal Policy Positions:

- 1) Continued development of a multi-modal National Freight Network funded, in part, by a dedicated stream of fees and taxes on freight shipments and freight vehicles.
- 2) Additional movement towards minimizing donor state inequities.
- 3) The MPOAC believes that MPOs should be given advice and consent authority over toll projects and public/private partnerships in their metropolitan area.

Suggested previous Federal Policy Positions to retain without change:

- 1) Retaining the current population threshold of 50,000 people for new MPO designations.
- 2) Rewarding states for attaining federally mandated performance measures and targets, but resisting the temptation to “fix” poor performance by redistributing funding among the states.
- 3) Creating an independent Transportation Revenue Adjustment Commission that is empowered to recommend transportation tax and fee rates to Congress in an effort to insulate decision-making on transportation revenue increases from political pressure.
- 4) Increasing and indexing existing federal transportation revenue streams, at a minimum, to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in order to keep pace with inflation.
- 5) Addressing future transportation funding needs through new and innovative mechanisms, including pilot projects for a mileage-based user fee in lieu of the traditional gas tax.
- 6) The MPOAC supports legislative language that requires revenue generated from new tolls instituted on existing federal-aid facilities be directed toward congestion relief within that metropolitan area.

Suggested changes to previous Federal Policy Positions:

- 7) Restoring federal planning funds (PL) to pre-MAP-21 levels for the 13 states that saw a reduction.
- **Suggested language:** MPOAC supports using the most recently available census data when determining distribution of federal planning (PL) funds.

8) Continuing a strong Federal role in transportation policy and funding, with an emphasis on system preservation, safety, and improving metropolitan mobility through a 6-year surface transportation authorization bill.

- **Suggested language:** The MPOAC supports a continued strong Federal role in transportation policy and funding, with an emphasis on system preservation, safety, and metropolitan congestion. States should maintain their historic lead role in planning and programming for inter-regional movement of people and goods, while MPOs continue their traditional role as the primary planning and programming agency in metropolitan areas. Federal program funds should be allocated in a manner that advances the ability of states and MPOs to meet their responsibilities under these traditional roles.

9) Initiating a sub-allocation of National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) funds to MPOs and increasing the percentage of sub-allocated Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds.

- **Suggested language:** Directly allocating and increasing Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program funds to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) for planning, programming and implementation purposes.

Suggested New Federal Policy Positions:

10) Recognizes that federal metropolitan transportation planning funds shall not be regarded as state funds for purposes of expenditure.

11) Providing Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) with the flexibility to express metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) project costs in either current year dollars or year of expenditure dollars.

12) Allowing Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to update metropolitan transportation plans (MTPs) on a 10 year cycle with the flexibility to update more frequently, if desired.

13) Allow local units of government to generate revenue and invest in infrastructure without state imposed financial restrictions.

MPOAC Draft Federal Transportation Implementation Principles

The Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) represents the twenty-seven MPOs in the State of Florida. The principles are intended to serve as policy guidance to the United States Congress, the Florida Department of Transportation, and the MPOAC's partner organizations.

The MPOAC supports:

MPO Administration and Funding

- Retaining the current population threshold of 50,000 people for new MPO designations.
- Using the most recently available census data when determining distribution of federal planning (PL) funds.
- Shielding federal planning (PL) funds from rescissions.
- Providing the full annual allocation of federal planning (PL) funds directly to MPOs as a grant at the beginning of each federal fiscal year.
- Prohibiting states and other governmental agencies from imposing additional requirements or limitations on MPOs beyond those imposed by federal law or rule for use of all federal funds used by MPOs for planning purposes.
- **Roles, Responsibilities and Programs**
- Continuing a Federal role in transportation policy and funding, with an emphasis on system preservation, safety, and improving metropolitan mobility. States should maintain their role in planning and programming for inter-regional movement of people and goods, while MPOs continue their role as the primary planning and programming agency in metropolitan areas. Federal program funds should be allocated in a manner that advances the ability of states and MPOs to meet their responsibilities under these traditional roles.
- Directly allocating and increasing Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program funds to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) for planning, programming and implementation purposes.
- Providing Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) with the flexibility to express metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) project costs in either current year dollars or year of expenditure dollars.
- Allowing Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to update metropolitan transportation plans (MTPs) on a 10 year cycle with the flexibility to update more frequently, if desired.
- Rewarding states for attaining federally mandated performance measures and targets, but resisting the temptation to "fix" poor performance by redistributing funding among the states.
- Requiring revenue generated from new tolls instituted on existing federal-aid facilities be directed toward congestion relief within that metropolitan area.

Transportation Project Finance and Funding

- Creating an independent Transportation Revenue Commission that is empowered to recommend changes in current transportation revenue sources and to suggest new revenue sources in an effort to insulate decision-making on transportation revenue streams from political pressure.
- Increasing and indexing existing federal transportation revenue streams, at a minimum, to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in order to keep pace with inflation.
- Addressing future transportation funding needs through new and innovative mechanisms, including pilot projects for a mileage-based user fee.
- Allow local units of government to generate revenue and invest in infrastructure without state imposed financial restrictions.

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The MPOAC supports Federal Transportation Legislation and Regulation that:

1. Directly allocates Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program funds to metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs).

The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program has the most flexible eligibilities among all Federal-aid highway programs. This level of flexibility is provided in an effort to facilitate the best and most creative approaches to addressing transportation needs. Recognizing that large urban areas have unique and complex transportation systems, Federal law currently requires that a significant percentage of a State's STBG apportionment be obligated for use in urbanized areas with populations greater than 200,000. Federal law establishes that MPOs are the lead planning and programming agency for federal transportation funds in those large metropolitan areas. Yet federal law undermines the intended flexibility in decision-making by routing STBG funds through the states for suballocation. In an effort to advance the federal intent to maximize decision-making flexibility in large urban areas, STBG funds intended for use in urbanized areas with populations greater than 200,000 should be directly allocated to MPOs in TMAs.

2. Use the most recently available census data when determining distribution of federal planning (PL) funds.

Federal transportation funds are currently apportioned to states based on their proportion of federal fiscal year 2009 funds to carry out Section 134 of MAP-21. As a result, states are receiving PL funds based on population data from the 2000 decennial census. Fast growing states, such as Florida, are disadvantaged by this approach and are underfunded relative to their share of the current US urban population. In an effort to appropriately allocate planning funds based on population and need, the approach for allocating federal PL funds should be required to be based on data from the most recent decennial census.