

Best Practices



Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations



# Basic Tenets of the MPO Process

- All MPOs must adhere to the same set of Federal laws and regulatory guidelines.
- Each MPO is responsible for a different geographic area with differing state and local governmental structures and different demographics.
- Each MPO has developed a slightly different approach to the way in which it satisfies the Federal regulations.



## Focus of the Hampton Roads MPO Best Practices Study

- Identify best practices being used by other MPOs that could potentially be used to improve the metropolitan planning process in the Hampton Roads region.



# Best Practices Summary

- Identify and Interview 38 Peer MPOs
- Discuss Organization Issues / Best Practices
  - Board Composition
  - Interaction of Boards with Committees
  - Weighted Voting Procedures / Proxy Voting
- Discuss Public Participation Best Practices
  - Notification and Outreach Formats
  - Reaching Underserved Communities
  - Performance Measures

# HAMPTON ROADS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION





# Recommendations

1. MPO Mission
2. MPO Membership and Voting
3. MPO Bylaws
4. MPO Related Committees
5. Public Involvement
6. Other MPO Practices



# MPO Mission

- Mission Statement
- Vision Statement
- Goals
- Objectives



## MPO Mission

- ***Mission Statement.*** Focuses on the MPO's present state and reflects the views of both internal and external participants.
- ***Vision Statement.*** Describes the future state of the organization primarily from the internal MPO staff perspective.



## MPO Mission

- **Goals:** Describes where the MPO is going and contains information on time frames and expectations of outcomes.
- **Objectives:** Provides information on specific strategies to achieve the formally adopted goals of the MPO.



## Recommendations: Create a Mission Statement

- Conduct an internal priority exercise with both the MPO Board and the Transportation Technical Committee (separately) as well as the recommended (but not yet formally established) Citizen's Advisory and Freight Advisory Committees.
- Prioritize elements of the Mission Statement with the public and members of the various advisory committees to initiate discussion about goals.



## Recommendation: MPO Board Membership

- Local governmental agencies – one voting member per agency
- VDOT, DRPT and regional transit service providers – one voting member per agency
- FHWA, FTA, state-level public officials and chairpersons of standing advisory committees – one non voting member per agency



## Recommendation: TTC Membership

- Allow multiple voting seats for any one government agency (including VDOT)
  - Based on population size
  - Based on agency complexity
  - Consider representation from planning, public works, modes of travel, and/or public administration functions of the agency



## Recommendation: Weighted Voting on the MPO Board

- Institute a policy of having both weighted and non-weighted voting procedures
- Each formally designated voting member of the MPO Board shall have one and only one vote



## Recommendation: Weighted Voting on the MPO Board

- During quarterly meetings of the full MPO Board, all voting members are eligible to vote on every issue
- At meetings of the MPO Executive Committee, one representative of each agency shall be allowed to vote on behalf of their representative agency



## Recommendation: Weighted Voting on the MPO Board

- At both quarterly and regular meetings of the full MPO Board and Executive Committee the adoption of any action requires:
  - A simple majority of the voting members present **and**
  - A majority of the voting members representing no less than  $2/3$  of the total population of the MPO region



## Recommendations: MPO Bylaws (Version of November 10, 2008)

- Edit Bylaw Articles IV, V, VII, and XI as necessary to reflect weighted voting procedures
- Minor amendments to Articles 3.02 (Voting Representation), 5.03 (Quorum), and 5.06 (Public Comments)
- Alternative procedure for electing officers described in Article 6.01



# MPO Related Committees

- Differentiation between formal standing advisory committees and working groups
- Standing Advisory Committees (long-term)
  - Citizen's Advisory Committee
  - Freight Advisory Committee
- Other Committees or Working Groups (temporary)
  - Project Prioritization
  - CLRP Update
  - Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Group, etc.



## Citizens' Advisory Committee: Purpose

- Regularly convene a group of people that represent a cross section of geography, race/ethnicity, income, age, and mobility orientations of the HRMPO region that will provide direct input to the actions of the MPO Board and the Transportation Technical Committee.



## Citizens' Advisory Committee: Composition

- Individual member governments to each select one representative totaling 50% of the membership of the CAC
- Remaining representatives to be initially selected by HRMPO staff and ratified by MPO Board
- Subsequent membership seats should be nominated by the Committee itself and reviewed/approved by the MPO Board.



## Citizens' Advisory Committee: Composition

- Membership terms should not exceed three years
- No more than two consecutive terms should be served
- Officers of the CAC should be nominated and appointed by the membership of the CAC without further approval required by the MPO Board



## Freight Advisory Committee: Purpose

- Regularly convene professionals in the area of rail, truck, aviation, and port freight transportation to provide input and recommendations to the MPO Board and the Transportation Technical Committee



## Freight Advisory Committee: Composition

- Appointments should be made by the MPO Transportation Technical Committee and validated by the MPO Board
- Membership should include representatives of at least:
  - VDOT, DRPT, and the Virginia Port Authority (VPA)
  - Other maritime facility owners/operators
  - Class I railroads
  - U.S. Department of Defense
- Officers of the FAC should be nominated and appointed by the membership of the FAC without further approval required by the MPO Board



## CAC & FAC Staffing & Representation

- At least one-half (1/2) of an FTE position to administer to and provide staffing support for each standing advisory committee.
- HRMPO staff will:
  - Provide data, analyses, reporting and other information to the committee
  - Report back to the MPO Board and Technical Committee on the recommendations and past actions of the standing advisory committee.



## CAC & FAC Staffing & Representation

- At least twice each year, the MPO Board should provide an agenda item for the Chairperson of each standing committee to present information in the activities, opinions on MPO actions, and issues
- Actions of the standing advisory committees should be posted prominently on the HRMPO website.
- Regular meetings of the two defined standing advisory committees should occur no less than once every two months, on alternating months, at the discretion of the membership of the standing advisory committee.



# Characteristics of a Successful Public Participation Process

- Demonstrate a true commitment to involving all communities in the region in the process.
- Use of well-qualified staff with backgrounds in social work, community outreach, and other non-technical perspectives.
- Build a process both from the top down and from the bottom up.



## Three Major “Best Practice” Public Involvement Strategies

- “...And Justice for All” - Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) (Philadelphia, PA)
- Community Characteristics Program - Miami-Dade MPO (Miami, FL)
- “Strings and Ribbons” - Volusia County MPO (Daytona Beach, FL)



## Public Involvement: Background

- Success requires commitment
- HRMPO is beginning from scratch, with a clean slate, and with a limited history of past success
- Recommendations will require a high level of continuing administrative and management support for a period of several years to achieve full implementation



## Public Involvement: Recommendations

- Begin cataloguing all public involvement data information currently available at each of the cities and counties in the MPO region to determine what information has been collected and the format in which it has been collected
- Use this information to create and implement an “***and Justice for All***” type process



## Public Involvement: Recommendations

- Advertise the Public Information Manager position using the expanded description of duties and qualifications suggested by the Consultant Team
- Advertise the position on a truly national basis through a wide variety of professional organizations



## Public Involvement: Recommendations

- Engage a wide ranging selection committee for this position to review resumes of applicants (e.g., FHWA, FTA, VDOT, DRPT, consultant team, peer MPOs outside of Virginia, HRMPO staff)
- Five best qualified candidates should be interviewed in person
- Recommendation of the selection committee should be accepted without change by the MPO Executive Director and the MPO Board



## Public Involvement: Recommendations

- HRMPO should engage in a series of peer-to-peer exchanges with other similar size MPOs in the eastern United States
- HRMPO should join and actively participate in the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) and should support and encourage the creation of a Virginia Association of MPOs
- The Public Involvement Manager should participate in the annual meetings of AMPO and the Transportation Research Board (TRB)



## Public Involvement: Recommendations

- The HRMPO Public Involvement Manager should reevaluate and expand upon the current HRMPO Public Participation Plan at the earliest possible date
- Use the new Public Participation Plan to prepare the Participation Evaluation Report (addresses requirements of Title VI)



## Public Involvement: Recommendations

- Consider hiring a Public Involvement Officer (PIO) when the data cataloguing is completed
  - Assistant to the Public Involvement Manager
  - PIO should not be hired until the PIM has established the appropriate framework
- Retain the services of one of the local universities to host the MPO internal website and supplement the MPO's public involvement efforts



## Public Involvement: Recommendations

- Begin the process of engaging the public in the “***Strings and Ribbons***” project prioritization and selection games once discrete communities have been delineated and local informal and formal community leaders have been identified
- Use this process as the primary public involvement tool for the Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan update.



## Public Involvement: Recommendations

This listing of public involvement recommendations is not complete because the specific list of actions to be pursued will not be known until such time as a much better understanding exists in the region of who the “publics” are that need to be more involved with the metropolitan planning process.



# Public Involvement: Recommendations

Only at such time as the location, characteristics, and needs of the publics are known and documented can formal recommendations for each of the following topics be defined:

- Effective public access
- Effective public communications activities/strategies
- Effective strategies for engaging the public
- Effective public involvement/public awareness activities
- Effective visualization techniques
- Effective outreach to low-income and/or minority communities
- Best practices regarding: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (including related Acts and Executive Orders), Limited English Proficiency, and Environmental Justice



## Other MPO Practices: Recommendations

- **Implement Performance Monitoring**
  - Prepare a set of performance indicators to report on annually to the MPO Board, other agencies, and the general public
  - External performance measures on transportation demand generation factors and effects
  - Internal performance measures on public outreach metrics
  - Challenging but a crucial ingredient to achieving long-term success.



# MPO Core Functions

- Establish a setting where fair and impartial debate and discussion can take place
- Evaluate transportation alternatives in an unbiased and objective fashion
- Develop and maintain a multimodal CLRP
- Develop a financially constrained TIP
- Involve the public – residents and key affected sub groups – in the regional planning process



# Questions and Contacts

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