

# METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS

## OVERVIEW

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (or “MPO”) is a local decision-making body responsible for overseeing the metropolitan transportation planning process. Federal law requires that a Metropolitan Planning Organization be designated for each urban area with a population of more than 50,000 people. Metropolitan Planning Organizations are designated by agreement between the governor and local governments that together represent at least 75 percent of the affected population. There are currently twenty-five Metropolitan Planning Organizations in Texas (*see Metropolitan Planning Organizations map on back*).

A Metropolitan Planning Organization can be a stand-alone agency, some are found within other agencies such as cities, counties, or councils of governments. The governance of the Metropolitan Planning Organization resides internally within its policy board, which is free to adopt policy, bylaws, and organizational procedures.

Composed of local elected officials and representatives of state agencies, Metropolitan Planning Organizations coordinate transportation planning in urban areas, guided by local public input, cooperatively with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Texas Transportation Commission. Metropolitan Planning Organizations, TxDOT and the Texas Transportation Commission work together to balance the planning needs of local communities with the need for statewide connectivity.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations receive funding through federal, state and local sources. Federal transportation funds are directed through TxDOT to the Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

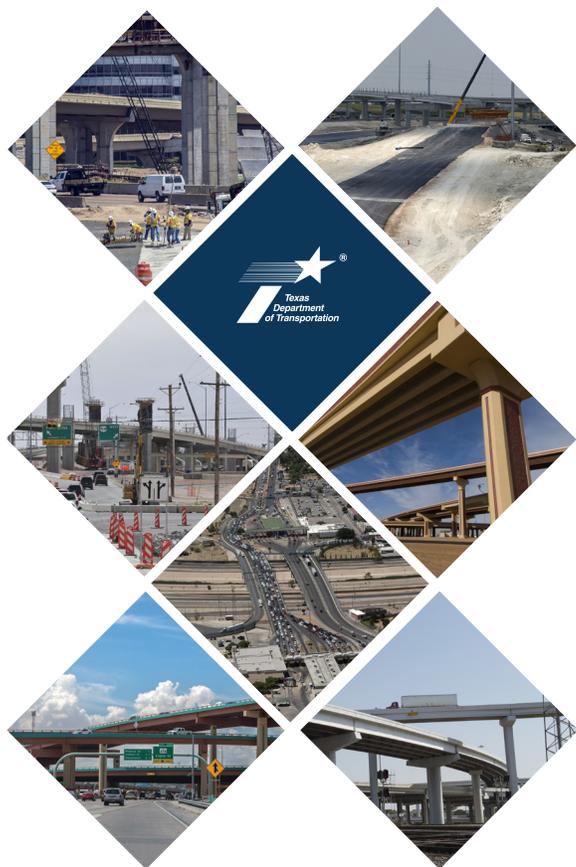
## METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITY

Metropolitan Planning Organizations are responsible for conducting the urban transportation planning process that allows the Metropolitan Planning Organizations to receive federal and state transportation funding. This is accomplished primarily through three related activities and documents:

- Metropolitan Transportation Plan – A long range plan (minimum) 20-year plan; identifies funding sources for proposed projects.
- Transportation Improvement Program – A short-range, four year list of projects; fiscally constrained and must identify funding that can be reasonably expected for proposed projects.
- Unified Planning Work Program – The work plan and budget (one to two year) describing the proposed activities, their estimated costs, Metropolitan Planning Organizations budget and funding sources for projects in the Transportation Improvement Program.

## METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION PLANNING PROGRAMS

Once all of the approved Transportation Improvement Programs from Metropolitan Planning Organizations throughout the state are complete, they are compiled with rural Transportation Improvement Programs and other state transportation programs into one document, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (or “STIP”). This statewide program is reviewed and must be approved by the Texas Transportation Commission and also reviewed by federal highway and transit administrations. After the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program is approved and funding is approved by the Texas Transportation Commission, local project sponsors and TxDOT can work together to implement projects in the Metropolitan Planning Organizations.



# Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) Map

