

### 1. Roll Call

NAME	Member or Friend?		NAME	Member or Friend?	
Andrew Canon (RGV MPO)	Member	X	Stacie Wilson	Friend	X
Ashby Johnson (CAMPO)	Member		James McGill (KTMPO)	Friend	X
Bob Dickinson (SETRPC)	Member	X	Eric Weiner	Friend	X
Cameron Walker (PB MPO)	Member	X	Clifton Hall	Friend	X
Clay Barnett (S-D MPO)	Member	X	Claudia Valles	Friend	X
Craig Raborn (H-GAC)	Member	X	Jeremy Roger (TxDOT)	Friend	X
Dan Kessler (NCTCOG)	Member	X	Brenda Bustillos (TxDOT)	Friend	X
Dan Rudge (BCSMPO)	Member	X	Luke Albert (TTI)	Friend	X
Robert F. MacDonald, MPA, PE (CC MPO)	Member	X	Javier Dominguez	Friend	X
David Jones (Lubbock MPO)	Member	X	Alma RGVMPPO	Friend	X
Eduardo Calvo (EPMPO)	Member	X	Kirk Fauver (FHWA)	Friend	X
E'Lisa Smetana (Abilene MPO)	Member	X	Nora Roy	Friend	X
Michael Howell (Tyler MPO)	Member	X	Bart Benthul (BCSMPO)	Friend	X
Juan Mendive (Laredo MPO)	Member	X	Latasha Brookins	Friend	X
Lin Barnett (WF MPO)	Member		Karen White(HGAC)	Friend	X
Maggie Bergeron (Victoria MPO)	Member	X	Michelle Bloomer	Friend	X
Major Hofheins (San Angelo MPO)	Member	X	Ken Van Dyne (PBMPO)	Friend	X
Mukesh Kumar (Waco MPO)	Member		Matt McDonald	Friend	X
Rea Donna Jones (Texarkana MPO)	Member	X	Ryan Collins	Friend	X
Sid Martinez (Alamo Area MPO)	Member	X	Arthur Chambers	Friend	X
Travis Muno (Amarillo MPO)	Member	X	Felipe Dias	Friend	X
Uryan Nelson (KTMPO)	Member	X	Adam Beckom	Friend	X
Bryan McBride (Longview MPO)	Member	X	Dan Seedah	Friend	X
Gerardo Fizero (EPMPO)	Friend	X	Thelma Ramirez	Friend	X
Brigida Gonzalez (TxDOT)	Friend	X	Carol Court (TTI)	Friend	X
Mansour Shiraz (TxDOT)	Friend	X	Paul Paine	Friend	X
Casey Wells (TxDOT)	Friend	X	Adriana Rodriguez	Friend	X
Robert Gronberg (FHWA)	Friend	X	Julio Nino	Friend	X
Angelica Rodriguez (FHWA)	Friend	X	John Overman (TTI)	Friend	X
Genevieve Bales (FHWA)	Friend	X	Mohammad Al Hweil	Friend	X
Mike Leary (FHWA)	Friend	X	Paul Conley	Friend	X
Kevin Hall (TTI)	Friend	X	James Lance	Friend	X
Harrison Plourde (EPMPO)	Friend	X	Humberto "Tito" Gonzalez Jr. (TxDOT)	Friend	X
Art Estrada (TxDOT)	Friend	X	Jolanda Prozzi (TTI)	Friend	X
Bob Hazlett (TTI)	Friend	X	Miguel Arispe	Friend	X
Matt Miller (TTI)	Friend	X	Todd Gibson (TxDOT)	Friend	X
Bill Eisele (TTI)	Friend	X	Bethany Wyatt (TxDOT)	Friend	X
Martin Lucero (Lubbock MPO)	Friend	X	Anna Guayante	Friend	X
Dallas Teston (TxDOT)	Friend	X	Allie Isbell	Friend	X

Marty Boyd (TxDOT)	Friend	X	Adriana Torcat (TxDOT)	Friend	X
Eddie Bernal (Laredo-Webb County MPO)	Friend	X	Victor Mendieta (CCMPO)	Friend	X
Allison Nunez (TTI)	Friend	X	Christie Gotti (NCTCOG)	Friend	X
Angela Erwin	Friend	X	Jenny Narvaez	Friend	X
Ivonne De La Rosa	Friend	X	Gerardo Fierro	Friend	X
Audrey Zenon (TxDOT)	Friend	X	Giacomo Yaquinto	Friend	X
Sara Finch	Friend	X	Chad McKeown	Friend	X
Griselda Saldivar	Friend	X			
Kyle McGough (Longview MPO)	Friend	X			
Barbara Maley (FHWA)	Friend	X			
Gabriela Lopez (EPMPO)	Friend	X			
Juan Sanchez	Friend	X			
Victoria Martinez (USDOT)	Friend	X			
Raymond Sanchez (TxDOT)	Friend	X			
Krystal Lastrape (FHWA)	Friend	X			
Marco Trigueros (Decision Lens)	Friend	X			
Jo Anne Gray	Friend	X			
Supin Yoder (FHWA)	Friend	X			
Lori Morel (TxDOT)	Friend	X			

### 2. TxDOT Casey Wells Update on the Safety Task Force

- Casey discussed updates on the Safety Task Force and related planning activities. It was mentioned that very few agencies had comprehensive safety action plans, but safety considerations were included in various planning documents like the tips and MTPs. The Safety Task Force's outline for safety plans was considered a good baseline plan that could be expanded upon.
- Some potential areas of opportunity were identified, including providing safety project identification training, developing project-based safety plans, dedicating a chapter to safety performance and programmatic strategies, and establishing regional safety work groups. There was also a suggestion to share grant writing resources among agencies.
- The meeting discussed the completion status of the safety plans for various agencies, with 21 plans almost finalized, and 2 more to be completed by the end of July. It was noted that safety data analysis resources were limited among the agencies, and there was a need for more safety data training.
- Moving forward, the option was presented by Casey to expand the current safety planning support and provide additional resources to agencies to utilize over the next year or two. Agencies could use this support to further develop their safety plans or conduct detailed assessments of safety projects. Alternatively, agencies could choose to use the \$50,000 allocation as a supplement to a larger effort or establish their own consultant arrangements, which would require administrative setup and reimbursement processes.
- Casey discussed two options related to contracting, budgeting, and administrative work. He advised that Option 1 is the preferred choice due to its simplicity and fewer strings attached, particularly in processing invoices. Option 2, on the other hand, seems to involve more procedural work and may require additional time for setup.
- Casey requested that the audience let them know their preference between the two options by August 15th. If someone fails to respond or is late in their response, they will be assumed to have chosen Option 1. The administration team will set up purchase orders for Option 2, but reimbursement may take a few weeks, likely not until the fall.

- There is also a mention of federal funds and the importance of keeping them separate from other funding sources. It's highlighted that Option 2 funds cannot be used as a match or for any other federal program. They recommend a single invoice for Option 2 to ease administrative processes.
- Towards the end of the conversation, there seems to be a discussion regarding safety action plans and how the \$50,000 can be used in conjunction with existing federal grants. The speaker emphasizes the importance of addressing safety issues and bringing the board together as part of the solution. The need for comprehensive safety planning, including engineering, law enforcement, and public education, is stressed. Joe C. agreed to take notes and prepare draft minutes. Ann and Emily agreed to review the draft minutes.

### **3. TxDOT Phillip Tindall's Update on Eagle Pass MPO Developments**

- Phillip led a discussion revolving around the MPO designation process. TxDOT is working with local governments and officials to move the designation process forward.
- There is a deadline of December 29th of the current year (2023) to complete the designation, and before that, TxDOT needs to incorporate a new distribution formula for the FY 24 budget. The new formula will affect the overall distribution, and the 2020 census figures also need to be incorporated into the calculation.
- Phillip advised that the biggest challenge at this point is developing a boundary map that includes the urbanized area and is represented by the Eagle Pass MPO policy committee. Internal teams have the data to provide a map for the urbanized area, but it needs to be expanded to cover the area affected by the designation.
- Phillip advised that TxDOT is also working on developing a draft set of bylaws and identifying the entities to be represented on the policy board.
- One participant raised concerns about the distribution formula, and Phillip advised there are plans to address the formula in the future.
- Other concerns were also raised about funding, especially for smaller entities, and the current minimum funding of \$180,000 being considered inadequate for covering necessary expenses, such as hiring consultants and staff salaries.
- Overall, the discussion revolved around ongoing efforts to work with local governments, address the designation process, and consider potential changes to the distribution formula and funding allocation. Further follow up will be pursued on this topic of distribution formula updates and PL funds.

### **4. TxDOT Audrey Zenon's Presentation on 504.E Workforce Development**

- Audrey's presentation focuses on workforce development and the use of Section 504 funds for various workforce development activities. She advised that the Texas division shared new guidance in December regarding the use of these funds. The new guidance allows for the inclusion of workforce development activities and highlights that all funding programs can be used for such activities, regardless of their alignment to the program goals.
- Audrey clarified that workforce development activities can range from recruiting and hiring to training staff and partnering with various organizations to target underserved populations. She encouraged MPOs to consider using these funds as a new avenue for workforce development funding and suggest reaching out to their local Texas division for more information or to pursue this further.
- There were no questions from the participants, and the presentation concludes with Audrey expressing her availability for answering any future questions.

### **5. TxDOT Jeremy Roger's Presentation on Updates to Census Urban Boundaries**

- Jeremy Roger's presentation discussed boundary questions related to urban areas and their adjustment. The main objective is to smooth the boundaries, extending them slightly from the

existing boundaries but avoiding significant outward expansions. They aim to identify definable features like roadways and water bodies to use as boundary markers rather than arbitrary lines.

- The boundary update process involves developing a draft set of adjusted urban areas, which will be presented to the MPOs for review. Collaborative working sessions will be set up to gather suggestions and make informed decisions. The goal is to finalize the boundaries by November 1 and incorporate them into the 2023 data for the administration's program.
- Jeremy also included examples of boundary adjustments, explaining how they handle new growth areas and urbanized regions that need to be cleaned out from existing boundaries. Once the adjustments are complete, the data will be distributed to participants for review using online tools and web maps.
- Discussions arose on the topic of extending MPO boundaries and whether entire interchanges are included in the smoothing process, to which the answer was yes they are included.

### **6. FHWA Michael Leary General Updates from FHWA**

- Michael Leary advised that FHWA Texas Division will be introducing two new planners joining the team, one from New York and another from South Salt Lake City, Utah. These new hires are expected to take on additional responsibilities once they are settled into their roles.
- Michael also emphasized the importance of addressing upcoming MTP (Metropolitan Transportation Plan) requirements, which are due in 2024. Michael reminded participants to focus updates on performance measures, fiscal constraints, and project listings. He advised that there are issues with project eligibility and categorization that need to be resolved to move forward with the approval process.

### **7. FHWA Kirk Fauver Presentation on Equity Analysis Tools for Transportation Planning**

- Kirk led a presentation and discussions about various tools for equity analysis and transportation planning. One of the tools mentioned was the Equitable Transportation Community (ATC) Explorer tool, which allows users to explore the fields of burden on communities resulting from transportation underinvestment. The tool covers five components: translation and security, climate and risk burden, environmental burden, health vulnerability, and social vulnerability. The aim is to address disparities in access to transportation infrastructure and services, reducing inequalities, and improving mobility for disadvantaged communities.
- Another tool presented was the Planning and Equity Tool, which identifies disadvantaged communities using 16 different census variables. It provides a comprehensive view of factors such as population demographics, poverty rates, educational attainment, and housing affordability within specific buffer areas. The tool is web-based and accessible for analyzing the impact of projects on vulnerable populations.
- The Center for Disease Control (CDC) tool was also discussed, which aids local officials in identifying communities that may require assistance during and after disasters. It assesses social vulnerability and potential negative effects on communities due to external stresses, such as natural disasters or disease outbreaks.
- Furthermore, the presentation covered the Equity Action Plan, which is part of the administration's efforts to address underinvestment in disadvantaged communities. It focuses on wealth creation, community power, interventions, and expanding access. Additionally, the Strategic Plan emphasizes equity in transportation and outlines key actions to expand access and opportunities for all communities.
- During the meeting, FHWA's Supin Yoder provided a demonstration of the Screening Tool for Equity Analysis. The tool helps evaluate the impact of transportation projects on disadvantaged populations and supports project scoping and alternative development. It allows for meaningful public engagement by identifying vulnerable populations and offering language-specific materials.

- Finally, the presentation emphasized that these tools are valuable for conducting equity analyses required in transportation planning and programming processes, promoting fair treatments, and ensuring meaningful involvement of all individuals in decision-making processes.
- Questions and discussion addressed the timing of including these tools in project selection and scoring. The consensus is that it is still early in the process of formalizing Justice 40 and estimated equity impacts into the project selection process based on these tools.

### 8. FHWA Kirk Fauver on the Latest Updates on TMAs

- Kirk Fauver led the discussion focused on the census urbanized areas and their TMA designation based on the 2020 Census. Based on the changes with the 2020 Census, Amarillo and Brian College Station were included in the designated urban areas with over 200,000 population.
- Additionally, there was a suggestion to provide training and mock certification reviews to help areas prepare for their certification reviews, with Amarillo scheduled for a mock certification review the following month. Other key findings include:
  1. The schedule of activities for establishing urban area boundaries after the 2020 census.
  2. Publishing the Federal Register notice for urban areas with a population over 200,000 by June 5th.
  3. States revisiting their MPO planning funds allocation formula to account for the new 2020 census population figures in October 2023.
  4. Expanding metropolitan planning areas to include all territories within urban areas with a population over 50,000.
  5. Designating new MPOs to represent urban areas over 50,000 by December 29th, 2023.
  6. Approving adjustments to urban area boundaries by the state and federal highway division offices by December 29th, 2023.
  7. Reporting adjustments as part of data submittals in April of the following year (2024).
  8. Using the original 2020 census boundaries for areas that have not been adjusted if not updated by April 15, 2025.
  9. Implementing a congestion management process within 18 months for new urban areas.
  10. Making changes in functional classification based on the 2020 census data and obtaining approvals from federal highway and state DOT by 2025.
  11. Formally adopting MTP and TIP by new areas by December 29th, 2026.
  12. Completing a federal planning certification review for each newly designated area by June 5th, 2027.

### 2. USDOT Office of Inspector General Special Agent Reginald Lee Update on Waste, Fraud, and Abuse

- Special Agent Lee's advised MPOs how they can guard their operations to ensure the effective use of transportation funds within their regions. Here are several ways MPOs can apply these points:
- Fraud Awareness and Prevention: MPOs can learn from case studies available at the OIG to raise awareness among their staff and partners about the potential for fraud and abuse in transportation projects. By educating employees about common types of fraud, such as contract or grant fraud, and encouraging a culture of vigilance, MPOs can help detect suspicious activities early and take appropriate action.
- Transparent Procurement Processes: MPOs and TxDOT can coordinate to review and strengthen project selection and procurement processes to ensure transparency and fairness.

By adopting competitive bidding procedures, setting clear evaluation criteria, and conducting thorough background checks on potential contractors, MPOs can reduce the risk of bid rigging or collusion and ensure that projects are awarded to qualified and reputable companies.

- **Strong Oversight and Accountability:** MPOs can establish robust oversight mechanisms to monitor the use of transportation funds and track project outcomes. Implementing regular audits and evaluations can help identify any financial irregularities or discrepancies and hold recipients accountable for the appropriate use of allocated funds.
- **Collaboration with Law Enforcement and DOT OIG:** Establishing strong partnerships with law enforcement agencies and the U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General can be beneficial for MPOs. Collaborating with these entities can help MPOs access investigative expertise and resources in cases of suspected fraud or misconduct, enhancing their ability to address transportation-related crimes effectively.
- **Emphasize Transportation Safety:** MPOs can prioritize transportation safety in their planning and decision-making processes. Ensuring that infrastructure projects are designed and implemented with safety as a top consideration can help prevent accidents, injuries, and potential fraud associated with unsafe practices.
- **Training and Education:** Providing ongoing training and education to MPO staff, contractors, and partners can help raise awareness about fraud risks and best practices for fraud prevention. Investing in the professional development of employees can contribute to a more knowledgeable and proactive workforce capable of identifying and mitigating potential fraud threats.

### **3. TEMPO Executive Director David Jones on the Status of the Letter of Support for the Resilience Working Group**

- David Jones led the discussion about the resiliency work group. TxDOT TPP Director has received a letter from TEMPO requesting the continuation of the resilience working group and TTIs support in running. Jeff Neil will continue to be the chair of the group for the time being until further meetings define the scope and next steps. There are letters of support from different MPOs, including Amarillo and Brian College Station. Presently, each MPO also has a sample letter to show their support for the resiliency work group should they chose to complete and send in. The resilience working group will expand the group to include more MPO participants. Jeff Neil may need to hand off his role due to bandwidth constraints from his ongoing studies in the region.

### **4. FHWA Victoria Martinez Presentation on Key Collaborations - Health in Transportation**

- Ms. Martinez presented on the intersection between health and transportation planning, with an emphasis on incorporating health considerations into transportation projects and policies. The main points covered are as follows:
  1. **Importance of a New Way of Thinking:** Victoria emphasizes the need for a new way of thinking in transportation planning, moving away from a siloed approach and considering ethics, equity, and empathy in decision-making.
  2. **Transportation and Public Health Pathways:** The relationship between transportation and public health highlights key factors like air quality, safety, and accessibility as well as concerns that these changes haven't been addressed through the lens of historic lack of investment and heightened impacts which leads to further disparities in health outcomes.
  3. **Health and Transportation Working Group:** The Health and Transportation Working Group, established by the Federal Highway Administration, aims to support transportation planning and project delivery that promotes health outcomes. The group collaborates with various organizations and federal agencies, focusing on multi-modal productivity, active transportation, and other related areas.

4. Resources and Case Studies: The group has developed resources, including a framework for integrating health considerations into transportation planning and case studies that highlight successful collaborations between transportation agencies and health stakeholders.
  5. Economic Benefits of Health Considerations: A white paper discusses the economic benefits of including health considerations in transportation planning, emphasizing that communities with well-planned transportation systems experience improved well-being and economic growth.
  6. Importance of Partnerships: Successful transportation projects that prioritize health outcomes often involve partnerships with various stakeholders, including local governments, businesses, and public health agencies.
  7. Rural Transportation Opportunities: The discussion extends to opportunities for improving transportation and health in rural areas, focusing on mobility for non-drivers and opportunities for physical activity.
  8. Available Resources: The Health and Transportation Working Group provides resources such as the "Making Healthy Connections" article, brochures on various topics, and a research roadmap for transportation and public health.
- Overall, the discussion highlights the need for transportation planning to prioritize health considerations, with an emphasis on collaboration, equitable outcomes, and a more holistic approach to improve public health and well-being.

### **5. Decision Lens Marco Trigueros on Best Practices from Decision Lens**

- Marco Trigueros presented Decision Lens, a cloud-based solution for data organization, project prioritization, and decision-making. The main focus was on their past work in Texas, where Decision Lens was utilized for long-range plans, tips, and other transportation planning projects. The tool's flexibility allowed for customization based on the region's specific goals and outcomes. The prioritization process was highlighted, which involved a criteria-based framework to define project values and rankings.
- Decision Lens has introduced new features for budgeting and scheduling. The budgeting screen allowed users to track funding sources, project schedules, and potential fiscal constraints. Scenario planning was also discussed, enabling users to explore different funding options, project schedules, and make informed decisions by comparing various scenarios. These features aimed to help users optimize value, allocate resources efficiently, and adapt to changes in real-time during committee or board meetings.
- Participants mentioned the usefulness of automating pairwise comparisons for performance measures, which can vary based on individual perceptions. Decision Lens also integrated with TxDOT's performance metrics data integration system, providing valuable project impact assessments based on performance and condition data. Overall, Decision Lens aimed to improve transparency, collaboration, and informed decision-making in the transportation planning process.

### **6. TxDOT Dallas Teston Presentation on the Texas State Infrastructure Bank**

- Dallas presented on the State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) and its low-cost transportation financing program available to any local government in the state. The SIB is a revolving loan program, self-sustaining through repayments, and has been operational since the late 1990s. Despite misconceptions, the program is still active, with ample funds available for lending across the state. Notably, the SIB funds are non-federal, meaning projects financed through the SIB do not become federalized, although they must meet federal eligibility criteria.
- One significant advantage of the SIB for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) is that it can be used for both on and off-system projects, provided they meet the federal eligibility requirements. It is not limited to on-system roadways, as some believe, but can fund various

projects, including construction, reconstruction, and those requiring a local match. This feature is particularly useful for MPOs seeking additional financing options to complete transportation projects efficiently.

- Dallas highlighted a successful partnership example with an MPO, specifically the project in El Paso. The MPO provided categorical funding, while the county utilized the SIB to meet its local match requirement. This collaboration allowed the project to include essential components like pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, landscaping, and other safety improvements. Such partnerships can be beneficial for MPOs looking to leverage available funding sources effectively.
- Moreover, the SIB offers low-cost financing with favorable interest rates, making it an attractive option for MPOs. The application process is straightforward, with no charges to apply or handle loans. The timeline for loan funding is relatively short, taking about 4 to 6 months, enabling MPOs to expedite project implementation.
- A question arose regarding eligibility. Dallas advised that the program is primarily open to local governments with a repayment source or taxing authority. Although the SIB rules do not explicitly mention cities or counties, authorized entities responsible for roadways and capable of repayment can potentially apply for funding. This allows MPOs to explore various opportunities for accessing the SIB funds, making it a valuable resource for transportation projects across the state.

### **7. TxDOT Bethany Wyatt Presentation on Traffic Data Service Updates on Wejo, Replica, and INRIX Data Uses**

- Bethany Wyatt is a member of the TxDOT Strategic Planning Division and works in the Cooperative and Automated Transportation Program team.
- The program's goal is to enable the utilization of connected vehicle data and cooperate with different areas of TxDOT to further mobility goals. The program includes vehicle data from mobile devices, connected vehicles, sensors on roads, etc., to support spot applications and automation of transportation needs.
- Bethany described several data services available to MPOs that include Wejo and Replica:
  1. Wejo provided granular connected vehicle data every 3 seconds until May 2023, but its future availability is uncertain due to a UK bankruptcy process.
  2. Replica data includes network link volumes, origin-destination analysis, turning movement counts, etc., but direct access to the tool is limited under the current contract.
- TxDOT has a [techdata@txdot.gov](mailto:techdata@txdot.gov) email address where MPOs can inquire about the availability of Wejo and Replica data for their use cases. The data can be used for traffic demand models, origin-destination studies, performance metrics, corridor studies, and more. MPOs can attend the monthly Data User Group series to learn more about the data services, use cases, and how to gain access. Resources and links to access the data services will be provided for further information and utilization.

### **8. FHWA Genevieve Bales Presentation on the Congestion Management Workshop, Functional Classifications, and USDOT Financial Discrepancy**

- Genevieve talked about CMP workshops that took place with a virtual component in February and an in-person component in June. 9 team members participated providing positive feedback. During the workshop, several demonstrations were presented on GTIs from the University of Albany. The workshop aimed to help improve CMP-related evaluations and to use partners for evaluation support. The idea of having a quarterly working group to share ideas was discussed, and it was considered successful.



- In terms of next steps, coordination with the FHWA Congestion Management team was suggested. The focus was on keeping the GTIs (Good Transportation Investments) current and essential in the transportation planning and tech stack.
- Genevieve and Barbara Maley discussed functional classification issues emphasizing that new alignments require proper approval. Additionally, federal authorizations and funding requests for engineering and right-of-way stages must also include functional classification.
- An update was provided on the discrepancy in USDOT accounting, which has since been reduced from \$3.5 billion to \$1 billion, allowing more Pre-bill funds to be used. The remedy for the remaining discrepancy is expected in December 2023. Overall, the meeting covered various topics related to workshops, evaluations, functional classification, and accounting discrepancies.

### 9. TxDOT Lori Morel Presentation on Upcoming STIP Training

- The STIP workshop is scheduled for July 19th, and it will be an in-person meeting without a virtual component to encourage better discussions. Over 100 people are expected to attend, including representatives from FTA and various divisions. The goal is to have at least one person from each district that develops the STIP and MTP information to foster productive discussions and identify issues. The meeting will be held at the TxDOT HQ from 1 PM to 4:30 PM, and future sessions will be virtual.

### 10. TxDOT Adriana Torcat Presentation on the Carbon Reduction Program

- TxDOT's Adriana Torcat led the discussion about the development of a carbon reduction strategy as part of a statewide carbon reduction program. MPO participants discussed the different projects and strategies that will be included in the carbon reduction document. Some project categories being considered include:
  1. advanced technology,
  2. travel demand management,
  3. intersection and interchange improvements, and
  4. freight movement.
- Connected to these are the need to submit projects for consideration and the timeline for completing the document. MPOs inquired about the specific conditions and requirements for using CR funds for the purchase of electric vehicles. Adriana advised how the carbon reduction strategy will be eligible for funding, highlighting the need to quickly identify projects for funding allocated in 2022 and 2023. Adriana advised the allocation of funds for the carbon reduction program is separate from the statewide flex funds. MPOs inquired about the timeline for inclusion of carbon reduction projects in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and whether it will be necessary to amend the MTP to include these projects. TxDOT advised that it is likely MTPs will need amendment to include these projects and to ensure further coordination with other regional plans such as active transportation plans, as well as with the Statewide NEVI plan.

### 11. TTI's Bob Hazlett on the MPO 101 Presentation

- **Key points discussed during Bob's presentation include:**
  1. The process of transportation planning, which is ongoing, cyclical, and cooperative, addressing all modes of transportation.
  2. The evolution of transportation planning and various acts that have shaped it, including the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, Clean Air Act, and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law).

3. Federal regulations and codes governing transportation planning, such as Title 23 and Title 49 under the United States Code and Title 30 under the Texas Administrative Code.
  4. Questions and concerns about new programs and planning emphasis areas which are not necessarily requirements for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).
  5. The importance of coordination between Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and other entities involved in transportation planning to ensure compliance and avoid duplication of efforts.
  6. Policy Boards are the MPO, not its staff, with policy boards organized differently in different regions.
  7. MPOs are identified in state statute or county regulations.
  8. MPOs vary from state to state and region to region in terms of their structure and processes.
  9. The MPO Institute aims to help MPOs across the United States with various services and support.
  10. The policy board is the decision-making body of an MPO and sets the agenda, debates issues, and collaborates with stakeholders.
  11. MPO boards should represent 75% of the urbanized area's population and include the largest incorporated city.
  12. MPOs formulate and evaluate transportation and infrastructure alternatives based on regional interests.
  13. Engaging the MPO board in planning activities is optimal if all members have been educated on transportation planning processes, covering resources like the Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book.
- Engagement with Policy Board Members
    1. Bob discussed need to get things done and the importance of meeting deadlines through one-on-one discussions with board members and senior staff. Addressing stakeholders with micro-management tendencies is often tied to increased use of one-on-one discussions to establish rapport and trust. Another aspect of communication is inviting two-way dialogue to policy board members in order to identify where issues and concerns arise or where further education may be needed. Another strategy is use of advisory committees to get more input and support for decision-making. MPOs engaged in the presentation relaying experiences of having to conduct many one-on-one briefings with new board members in a small committee. Often there is an exchange that takes place once out of the formal policy board meeting that covers interagency relations and disputes which can help MPO staff be cognizant of potential conflicts in putting forward an MTP or TIP for update.
  - Partners, Stakeholders, and Resources
    1. Bob discussed how federal agencies are best seen as partners rather than adversaries, and avoiding using the phrase "the feds said we had to do it" when discussing policies with the board. He also discussed Transportation Management Areas (TMA), which are designated by the federal government based on population density for census-designated regions over 200,000. Some MPOs have successfully challenged their TMA designation by adjusting census tracks.
    2. Bob continued to describe various partners involved in the transportation planning process for MPOs. He mentioned TEMPO as a helpful resource in transportation matters. Several MPOs noted other resources like the "National Association of Cities

and Towns" (NACO), "Knights of Columbus," and "Rotary clubs" as potential partners in planning and implementation.

- Visioning, Goals, Objectives, and Performance-Based Planning and Programming
  1. Bob discussed visioning and goal establishment. Several focal points used in the Maricopa Association of Governments is diversifying the economy, creating a safe and reliable transportation system, and improving the quality of life. He advised that with performance-based planning, the four main steps were:
    - where to go,
    - how to get there,
    - what it will take, and
    - how to measure success.
  2. He emphasized the importance of setting performance targets and aligning them with national, state, and regional goals, acknowledging that the federal requirement for performance-based planning is the primary impetus, but that there are inherent values from increased capacity MPOs receive in building in place the feedback loops and constant adjustment in the planning process that results.
  3. Bob advised that in PBPP, the main challenge is showing how projects are moving the needle in terms of performance. Communicating these results relies on development of case studies and stories to complement hard data in performance reporting in order to effectively inform planning and project selection criteria and weighting.
  4. Bob discussed distinctions between planning and programming, and the importance of fiscal constraints to provide assurance on the availability of funds for projects that are listed in the MTP. To support fiscal constraints, some MPOs conduct framework studies to project growth and identify high capacity quarters for planning purposes. Resources and tools like decision lens, plan works, and econ works may also be applied within the PBPP framework.
  5. Bob indicated MPOs face funding realities where partnerships are essential to support further planning and programming oriented toward addressing performance. Challenges that MPOs face are rising costs, staff turnover, increasing workloads from planning emphasis areas, and federal strings attached to funding.
- TxDOT Support for MPOs
  1. Bob advised and showed a map with planned realignments of TxDOT MPO coordinators that will take effect October 1st, with a transition period for adjustments.
- Discussion
  1. MPOs discussed various topics during the meeting, including the use of the EPA as a valuable resource and the potential for sharing and accessing the MPO 101 presentation. MPOs also discussed orientation requirements for new policy board members and how certain graphics in the presentation could be re-used.
  2. On Future TEMPO topics, there was interest in discussing the MPO one-on-one engagement with policy board members and keeping an eye on GTI (Global Transit Innovations) topics. Additionally, there was a suggestion to inquire about updates on the implementation of Phase 1 of the state plan and the progress towards Phase 2.
  3. MPOs suggested the need for a more formalized mentoring or cross-collaboration process among the MPO participants. There are opportunities to help each other out by sharing best practices and successes. There may be a possibility to create a

planning-oriented capability framework and survey to help guide and support each other.

### 9. Next Meeting and Adjournment

- The next meeting is estimated to take place in the October 19-20 time period but may shift based on venue availability.
- The meeting was adjourned.