TTP282 Transportation Orientation Seminar

Regional Transportation Planning

Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Required since 1973 for metro areas greater than 50,000
- Types: Transportation Managements Agencies (TMAs) in areas above 200,000
- Establishment: governor and local jurisdictions decide on boundaries, representation
- Composition: policy body, advisory committees, staff
- Funding for planning: PL-112 funds from FHWA, 5303 funds from FTA
- Policy: regional transportation plan, transportation improvement program
- Funding for projects: federal funds, plus local sales tax, esp. in California
- Implementation: No road building or transit operations! Some projects.

Planning Requirements

Authorization bill sets basic parameters
FHWA issues planning rules, guidelines

Required Documents

Long-Range Plan (or Regional Transportation Plan):
- 20 or more years out
- Updated every 4 years for non-attainment areas (used to be 3), 5 years for others
- Must “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)
- Approved by MPO
- More on process next week

Transportation Improvement Program:
- 4 year program (used to be 3)
- Updated every 4 years (used to be 2)
- Projects must be in the LRP to be included in the TIP
- Approved by the MPO and by the Governor
- Incorporated into the STIP (State TIP)

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Updated every year
- Budget and tasks – LRP, TIP, and others

Public Involvement Program (PIP)
Air Conformity Analysis and Finding
Congestion Management Process in TMAs (used to be System)
Process Requirements

Planning Factors: no legal standing or recourse but influence...
- 15 planning factors in ISTEA – much broader considerations than in the past
- Reduced to 7 factors in TEA-21
- Changes in SAFETEA – safety and security separated, environmental factor changed

Public Involvement: must be “meaningful”
- Early and continuous
- Reasonable availability of technical and other information
- Collaborative input on alternatives, evaluation criteria, mitigation needs
- Open public meetings
- Open access to decision making process prior to closure

Fiscal Realism:
- LRP must be “financially constrained” – only as much spending as revenues available
- TEA-21 allowed “illustrative projects” beyond financial limits
- TEA-21 established “innovative finance” programs
- Plan includes financial plan that shows estimated costs and revenues, 20 years out

Coordination with other plans: state-local and T-LU-AQ
- Statewide LRP – required for the first time
- State Implementation Plan – conformity requirement
- SAFETEA-LU adds policy to promote consistency with state and local planned growth and economic development patterns

Certification of planning activities: by US DOT not less than once every 4 years (used to be 3)
- Has adequate public involvement component
- Considers all relevant information in planning process
- Complies with all procedural requirements in SAFETEA-LU and other relevant legislation (NEPA)

Environmental Streamlining:
- Changes to environmental review process made in TEA-21
- SAFETEA-LU makes further changes to “improve and streamline” the environmental process for transportation projects - but not called “streamlining”
- Central issue is Section 4(f) of NEPA – re. use of parks, wildlife refuges, etc.

SAFETEA-LU Priorities - From the FHWA Summary (August 25, 2005)
- Improving Safety
- Congestion Relief
- Maximizing Mobility
- Improving Efficiency
- Environmental Stewardship
- Research and Studies