



# MPOs, RDCs and Transit Planning

2011 MPTA Public Transit Conference  
October 13, 2011





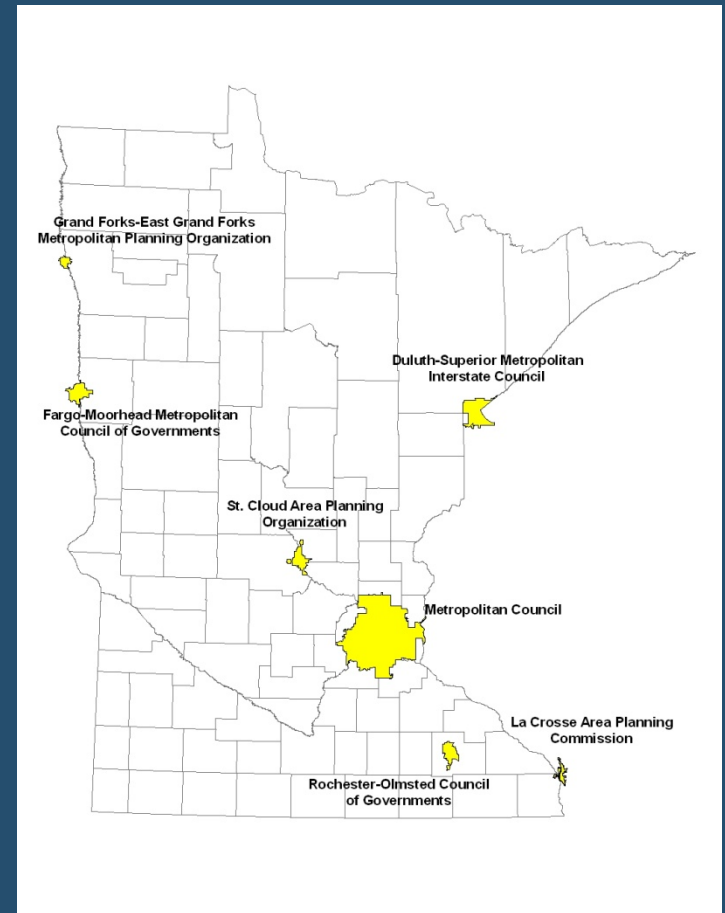
# What is a Metropolitan Planning Organization?

- Federally required transportation planning body in urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 or more
- Designated by agreement between the governor and local governments
- Responsible for the continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process



# Metropolitan Planning Organizations in MN

- Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
- Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments
- Grand Forks-East Grand Forks MPO
- La Crosse Area Planning Commission
- Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities Area
- Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments
- St. Cloud Area Planning Organization





## History of MPOs – Key Legislation

- Federal Highway Act of 1962 – established the “three-C” planning process in areas over 50,000
- Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 – provided federal aid for development of mass transit systems
- Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 – provided planning funds to metropolitan planning organizations





# MPO Federal Legislation

- Covered under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (2005)
- Regulations found in 23 CFR 450
- Governed by an Memorandum of Understanding that identifies the roles of the MPO, State, and public transportation operator





# Key MPO products

- Long-range transportation plan
  - Minimum 20-year forecast period
  - Multimodal
  - Updated on a regular basis
  - Be fiscally constrained





# Key MPO products

- Transportation improvement program
  - Minimum 4-year period
  - Include:
    - All projects utilizing federal funds
    - All regionally significant projects requiring FHWA or FTA action
  - Be fiscally constrained
  - Be consistent with the long-range transportation plan





# Key MPO products

- Unified Planning Work Program
  - Developed annually
  - Developed in cooperation with public transportation operators
  - Discusses planning priorities in the metropolitan planning area
  - Identifies work proposed for next 1-2 years, including funding



# MPO Funding

- Receive an annual FHWA and FTA planning grant – 80%
- Matched with state and local funds – 20%





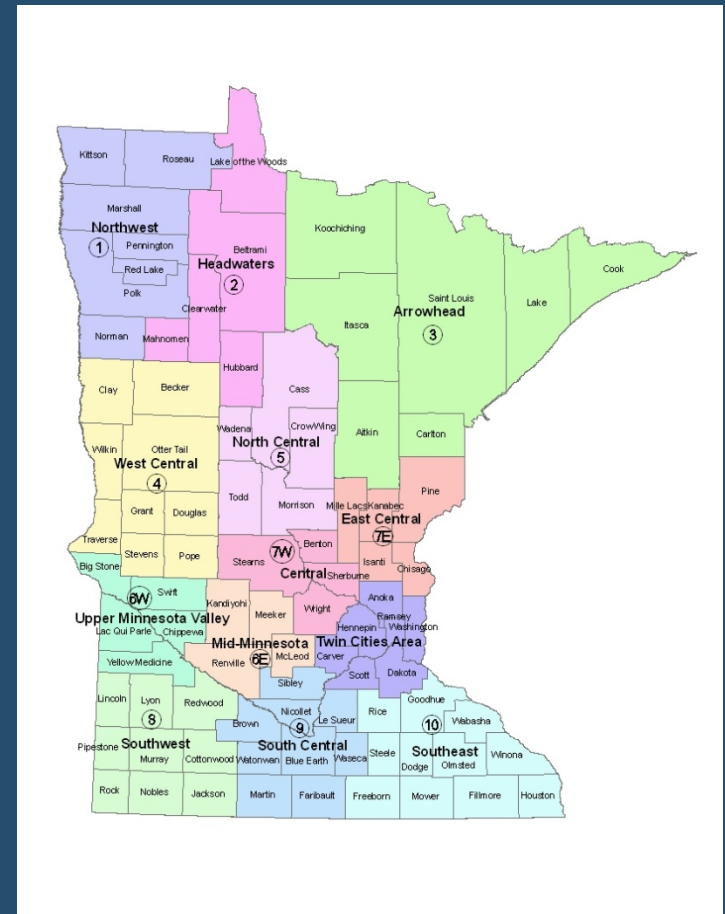
# What is a Regional Development Commission?

- Multi-county agency to encourage and facilitate cooperation between citizens, local governments, and the private sector
- Help identify local needs and priorities
- Assist in transportation, economic development, and land use planning
- May sponsor additional programs



# Regional Development Commissions in MN

- 12 regional development districts
- 9 active regional development commissions
- Region 4 – private 501(c)3 organization (West Central Initiative) that functions as an RDC
- Region 7W (St. Cloud) and Region 10 (southeastern MN) do not have active RDCs





## History of RDCs

- Regional Development Act of 1969 – established multi-county planning and economic development districts
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Act of 1991 – resulted in MN forming the Area Transportation Partnerships (ATP)





## Key RDC products

- Statewide projects
- ATIP development
- Regional planning activities
- Maintenance of the functional classification system
- Transportation related communications
- Transit/Human Services coordination studies



# RDC Funding

- Receive an annual state grant
- Require a local match – 15%





## MPOs, RDCs & transit planning

- Provide planning-related resources to transit agencies
- Act as liaisons
- Help navigate and identify potential funding opportunities





# For more information on MPOs and RDCs

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/MPORDC.html>

– or –

Bobbi Retzlaff, AICP

MnDOT

651-366-3793

[bobbi.retzlaff@state.mn.us](mailto:bobbi.retzlaff@state.mn.us)

