Project Scope

- FHWA contracted with CUTR at USF to research and prepare report, *Staffing and Administrative Capacity of MPOs* (May 2010).
- Project involved national survey of MPOs and follow up case study research.
- Purpose – help MPOs evaluate their staffing and organizational structures in light of planning responsibilities, budget, and policy environment.
- Total of 279 MPOs or 70% participated in survey.
Map of Participants
Survey Scope

Topics covered in the FHWA reports include:

- MPO governance
- MPO organizational structure
  [Organization funding]
- Work planning
- Staffing arrangements, employee retention, technical skills
- Use of consultants
- Use of advisory committees

2017 report also includes information on:

- Performance management
- Scenario planning
Survey Results
Governance

- Vast majority of seats on MPO boards belong to local (municipal, county) elected officials.
- Intergovernmental balance on board achieved through:
  - Allocation of seats (most common)
  - Rotation of seats among subset of local governments, and
  - Weighted voting.
- Over 50% of MPO boards have non-voting members, with State DOT representative by far the most common.
- Over 90% of MPOs have a technical advisory committee. Over 30% have citizen and pedestrian/bicycle advisory committees.
Administrative Structure

- More than 2/3 of MPOs are hosted by another entity/agency (i.e., acts as fiscal agent and hires employees).

- Regional council/RPC most common host (39%), followed by municipal government (35%), and county government (17%).

- MPOs structures span continuum ranging from fully independent to completely integrated with their host agency.
MPO Hosting Continuum
Types of Hosting

- More likely to be hosted if the MPO is a non-TMA
- Regional Council/RPC is most common host
- Combined, local governments host 36% of all MPOs
Host Agencies / Characteristics Shared with Host Agencies

- Vast majority (81%) of hosted MPOs do not share same name and logo as host agency.

- Vast majority (84%) of hosted MPOs have separate board from host agency.
  - MPOs hosted by regional council more likely to have same board as host agency or a subset of that board.

- 63% of hosted MPOs have budget integrated with budget of the host agency.
Advantages of Hosted Structure

- Reduced cost of operations (shared resources, economies of scale)
- Financial assistance
- Enhanced coordination of planning efforts
Disadvantages of Hosted Structure

- Administrative rules/procedures of host agency
- Blurring between MPO and host agency responsibilities, identities, and boundaries
- Lack of autonomy and independence
MPO Staffing and Use of Consultants

- Median number of employees: 5 full-time and 1 part-time.
- Average of 1 employee per 50,600 population in planning area.
- Staff specialization starts to occur when staff size reaches 8.
MPOs were asked: Did any staff member spend more than half of their time in a specialized area?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Percent of MPOs with this Specialty</th>
<th>Median Staff Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Demand Modeling</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle and Pedestrian</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Involvement</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only selected results are shown*
MPO Staffing and Use of Consultants (cont.)

- Staff time is allocated, on average:
  - 20% to public involvement activities
  - 22% to committee management
  - 23% to general administration

- On average, 27% of MPO budgets are spent on consultants.
Uses of Consultants

- Special Studies: 90%
- Draft Core Documents: 39%
- Operate The Travel Demand Model: 33%
- Public Involvement Activities: 32%
- General Services: 23%
- Other: 11%
- Track Performance: 4%
- Monitor Asset Management: 3%
MPO Workforce Issues

- Larger MPOs tend to have more stable staff rosters, with smaller MPOs having more difficulty retaining employees.

- 2/3s of MPOs reported pay was competitive.
Performance-Based Planning and Programming/Scenario Planning

- As of early 2016, 94% of MPOs were already transitioning to performance-based planning and programming as directed by MAP-21.

- About ½ of MPOs said implementation of PBPP has required reallocation of resources and prioritization of tasks.
  - 80% said it increased staff workload by 20% or less.

- 58% of MPOs used scenario planning in development of their most recent LRTP.
Uses of Performance Measures/Targets in LRTPs

*Other areas include environmental sustainability, the economy, equity, and multimodal*
Discussion Questions

- How well does your MPO governance and administrative structure work? Has a change ever been considered?
- Do any MPOs/RPCs have non-voting members on their boards?
- Have any MPOs/RPCs ever undertaken a strategic planning effort?
- What orientation and education do you provide for board members? Have you developed a board handbook?
Discussion Questions

- What advisory committees do you have? Are they effective in providing input in drafting plans etc., including input on how MPO decisions will impact local governments?

- Do you feel you receive adequate technical support from FHWA and WisDOT? For what areas could you use more assistance?
Discussion Questions

- Do you have staffing issues (e.g., retention, obtaining staff with needed expertise, training, etc.)?

- Do you have a budget for regular consultant assistance? For what projects/studies/plans do you use consultants?