

Metropolitan Transportation Planning: **Primer**



**FHWA/FTA Transportation
Planning Capacity Building
Program**

Purpose of this Presentation

To provide an overview of the perspective on:

- The purpose and process of metropolitan transportation planning, and the larger context for it
- The authority and responsibilities of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- The role of the [MPO Board](#)



PLANNING FOR TRANSPORTATION

The MPO ...

- Is the required “forum for cooperative transportation decisionmaking for the metropolitan area” **23 CFR 450.104**
- Is the engine driving regional collaboration and coordination
- Must meet regional transportation needs while being responsive to community interests and local by-laws and policies
- Is THE entity responsible for transportation planning in the metro area

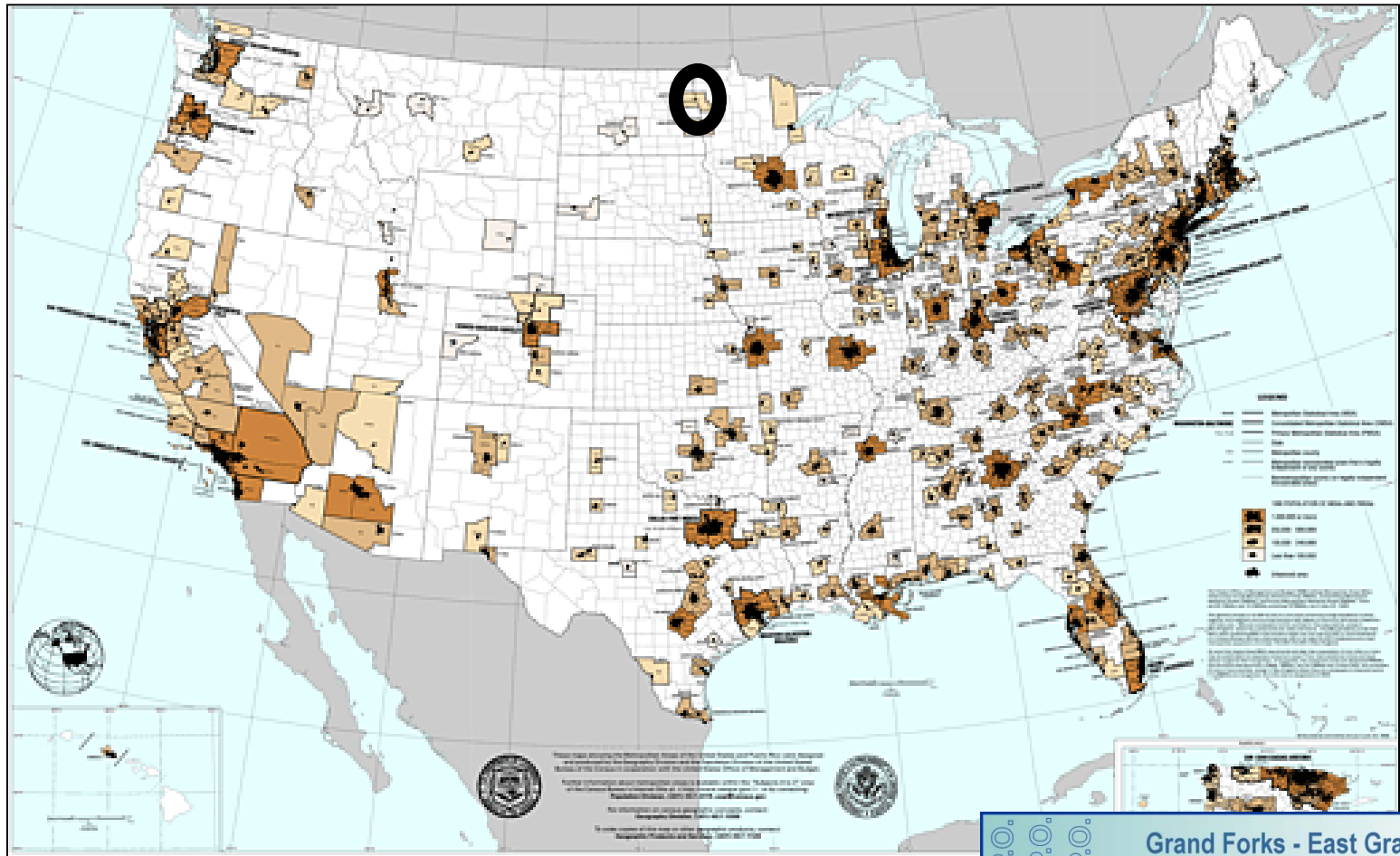


A Metropolitan Planning Organization...

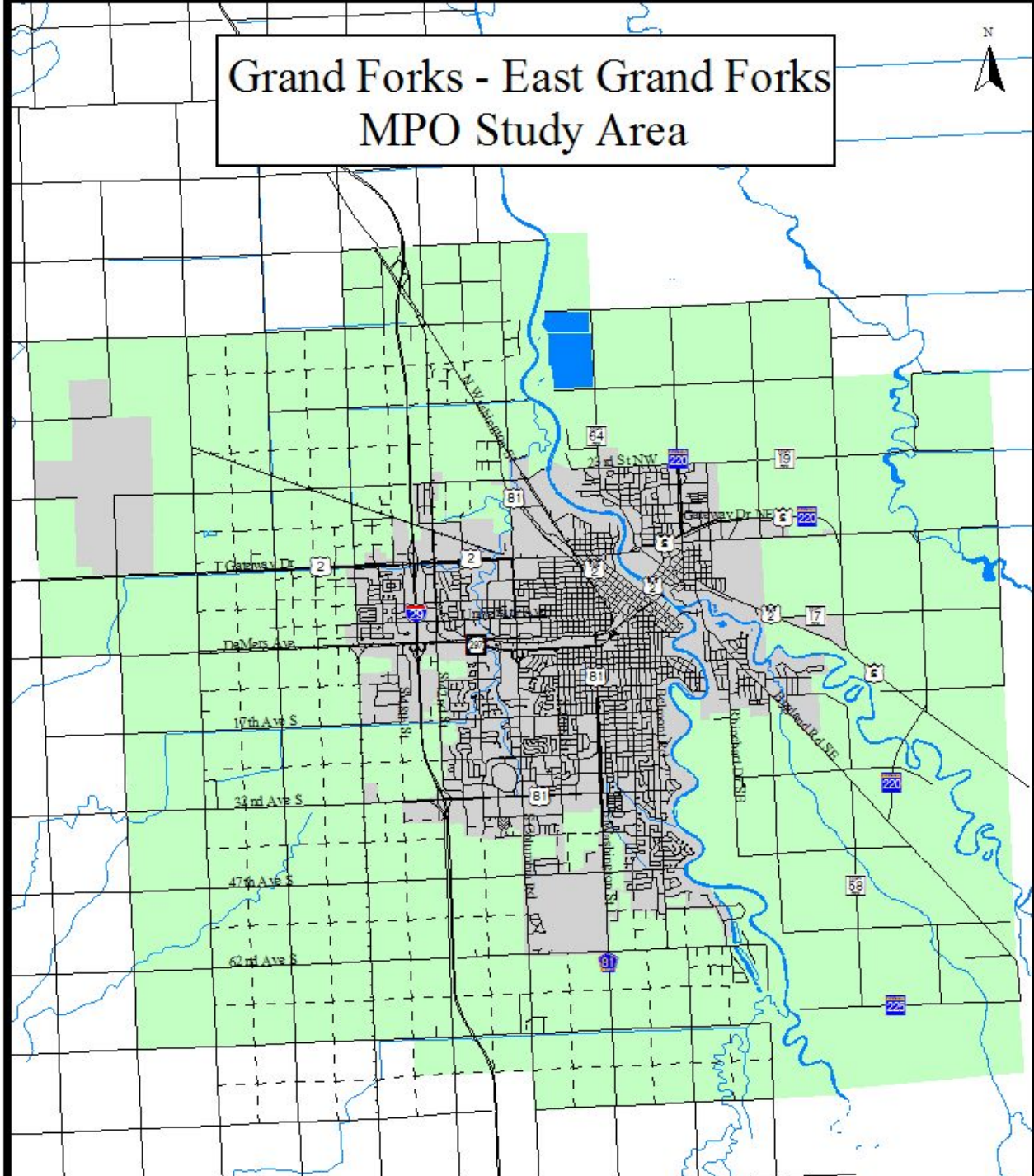
- Has the authority of Federal law
- Is a representative group of local stakeholders
- Leads the transportation planning process for the metropolitan area
- Is the region's policymaking organization responsible for prioritizing transportation initiatives
- Carries out the metro transportation planning process in cooperation with the State DOT(s) and transit operators



All “urbanized areas” are required to have an MPO or be part of an MPO



Grand Forks - East Grand Forks MPO Study Area



The MPO must work with others

- **Actively** seek the participation of all relevant agencies
- **Actively** seek input from the general public
- **Cooperate** with the State and public transit providers and **coordinate** with other transportation providers



MPO structure

- An MPO is required to have a decisionmaking “policy body”
- Beyond this, there is no required structure for an MPO, but most (LIKE US) are made up of
 - A Policy or Executive Board
 - Technical Advisory Committees
 - A director and staff



The MPO Board

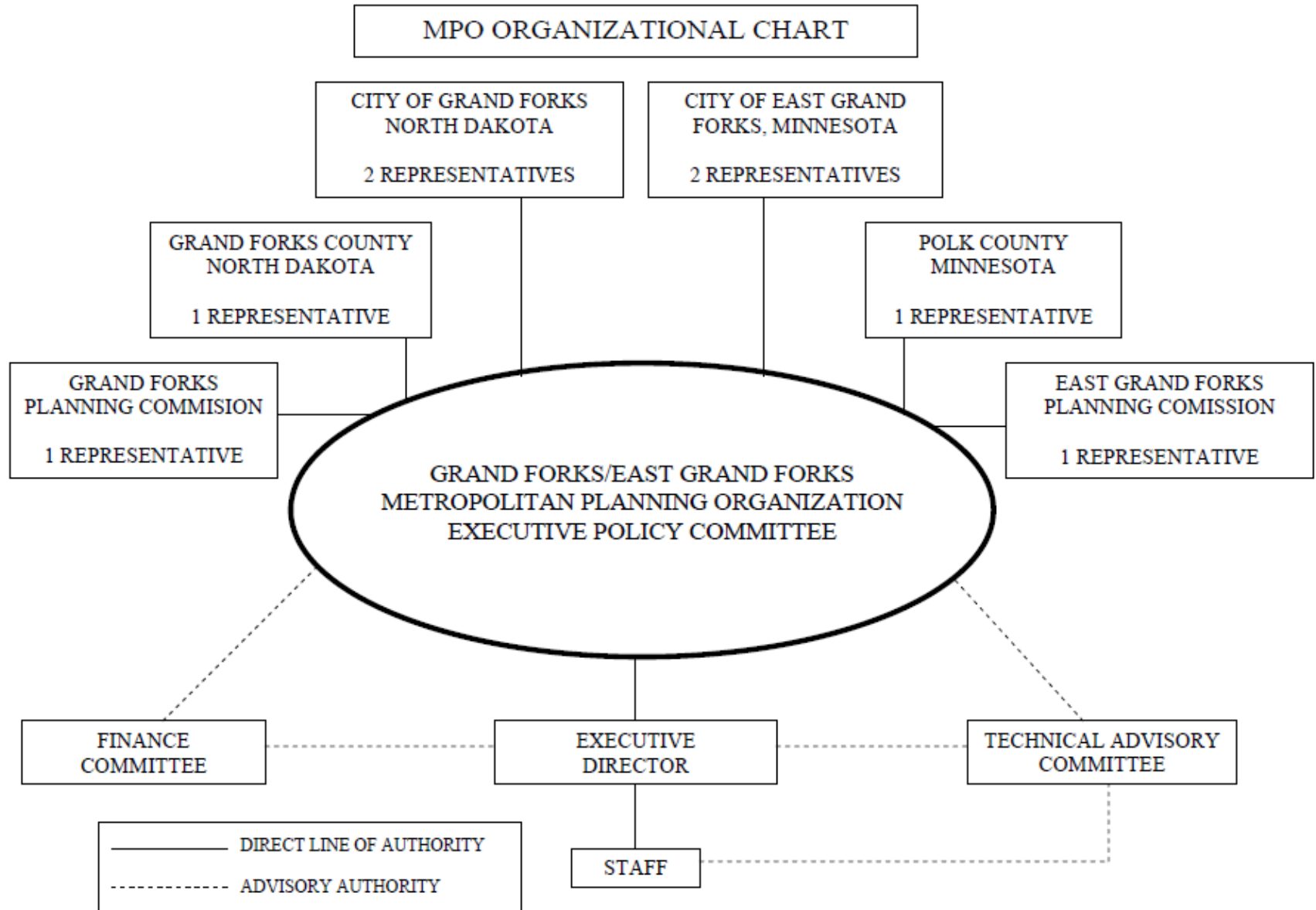
- Takes approval actions
- Sets regional long-term transportation policy and approves plans
- Prioritizes and programs specific transportation initiatives for funding



Who sits on the Board?

- 8 Members from Local Bodies:
 - **4 People from Each Side of the River**
 - **3 of the 4 are Elected Officials**
 - **Serve 2 year Terms**
- Specific Representation of members:
 - **2 from Each City Council**
 - **Greg Leigh & Clarence Vetter– EGF City Council**
 - **Jeannie Mock & Ken Vien– GF City Council**
 - **1 form Each County Commission**
 - **Warren Strandell – Polk County**
 - **Gary Malm – GF County**
 - **1 from Each Planning Commission**
 - **Mike Powers– EGF Planning Commission**
 - **Steve Adams– GF Planning Commission**





In making decisions, the Board should consider...

- Public comments and community values
- Long-term vision for the region
- Effect on system operations
- Impacts on the environment and the economy
- Comparison with alternative options
- Cost effectiveness and short- and long-term availability of funding
- Federal, State, and local regulations and plans
- Whether **more information** is needed



How does the Board obtain technical analyses?

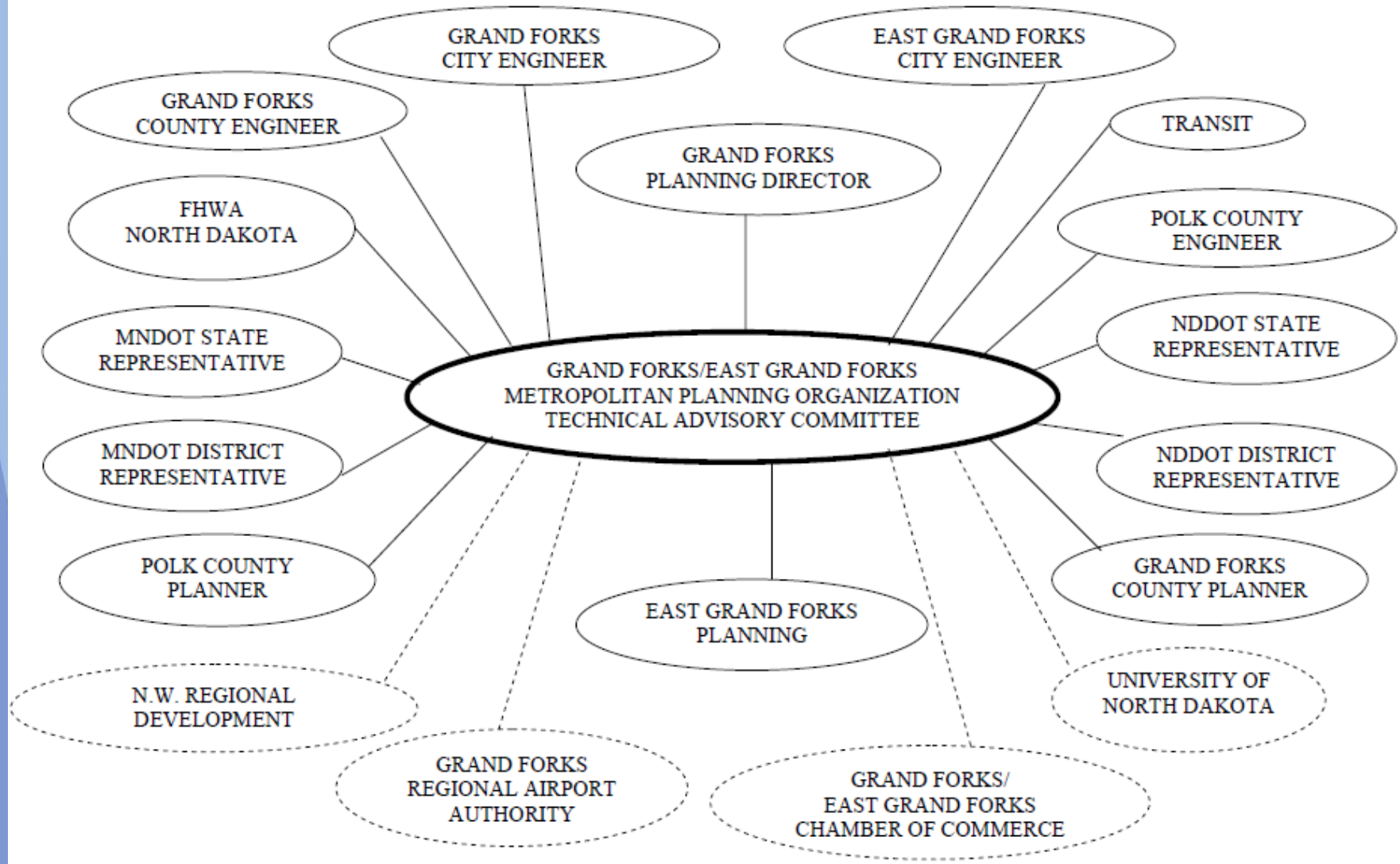
- MPO staff provide committees with technical assessments and evaluations of proposed transportation initiatives
- The Technical Advisory Committee provides recommendations to the board on specific strategies or projects
- Staff may engage consultants to generate needed data



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING IN GRAND FORKS

M.P.O.
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M.P.O.

Grand Forks - East Grand Forks
Metropolitan Planning Organization



— STANDING MEMBERS
- - - AD HOC MEMBERS

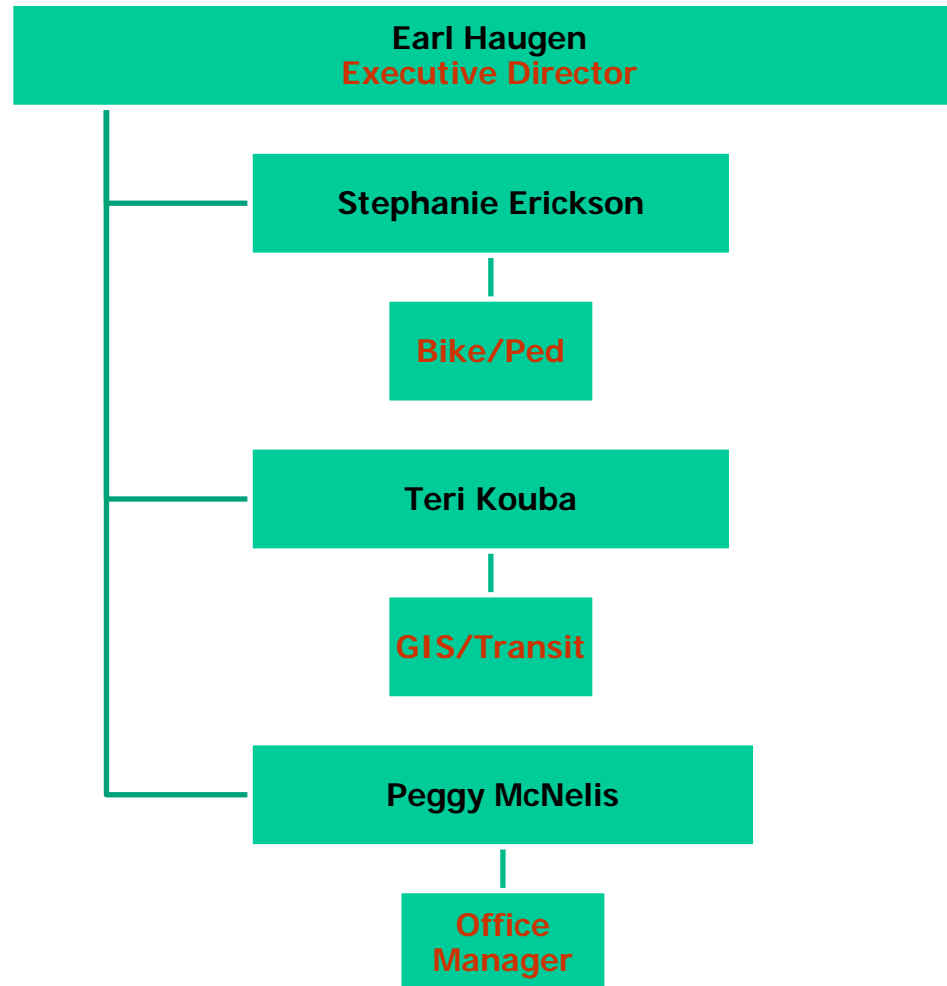


Role of the MPO staff

- Provide information and technical support to board members and advisory committees
- Prepare documents
- Foster interagency coordination
- Facilitate public input and feedback
- Manage the planning process



MPO Staff Responsibilities



Relationship between MPO and Local Governments

- Local Governments are members of the MPO
- MPO is the avenue for local governments to access Federal transportation funds



Relationship between MPO and Local Governments

- MPO process depends on cooperative relationships with member governments, State DOT(s), and transit operator
- Process has mutual veto/mutual suicide; i.e. Its much easier to block projects than to approve projects. It takes cooperation to get a project through the process



MPO PROCESS AND PRODUCTS



Grand Forks - East Grand Forks
Metropolitan Planning Organization

MPO Products

	Time Horizon	Contents	Update Requirements
UPWP	2 Years	Planning Studies, Tasks, Budget	Annual
LRTP	20 Years (min.) 25 Years (preferred)	Future Goals, Strategies & Projects	Every 5 Years
TIP	4 Years	Transportation Investments/Projects	Every Year



Transportation planning and programming

Planning:

- Developing a vision
- Creating policies and strategies to support the vision
- Long-term

Programming (TIP):

- Prioritizing proposed initiatives
- Matching initiatives with available funds
- Short-term

The public must be involved in both



Basic requirements

- **Reflect**
 - The “3C” planning process
 - The eight SAFETEA-LU planning factors
- **Develop**
 - A Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) or simplified statement of work
 - Public involvement process/plan (PIP)
 - Financial Plan
- **Produce and maintain**
 - A Long-Range Transportation Plan
 - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)



The Three C's

A Comprehensive, Cooperative, and Continuing process is required for initiatives to be eligible for Federal transportation funding



Federal Planning Factors

The Board is required to consider:

- Economic vitality of the region
- Safety of the transportation system
- Security of the transportation system
- Accessibility and mobility options
- Environmental protection, energy conservation, and quality of life
- Integration and connectivity of the system
- Efficient system management and operation
- System preservation



UPWP

- Reflects local planning priorities
- Lists studies & tasks to be performed by MPO and/or member agencies (with MPO funds)
- Covers 2 years
- Funding sources for each study/task
- Basis for contract for federal funding
- Schedules
- Responsible agencies for each study/task
- Often includes “preamble” element



UNIFIED PLANNING
WORK PROGRAM

**Grand Forks – East Grand Forks
Metropolitan Planning
Organization**

**Prepared By
Grand Forks – East Grand Forks
Metropolitan Planning Organization**



Who provides funding for MPO transportation initiatives?

- Federal government (FHWA, FTA) 80%
- State government – just Mn 5%
- Local governments – 7.5/7.5%



The Long-Range Transportation Plan

- Describes vision for the region, and policies, operational strategies, and projects to achieve it
- Covers at least the next 20 years
- Leads to an intermodal system
- Reflects public involvement
- Contains a financial plan and is fiscally constrained
- Is updated every 5 years



2040 Plan Horizon

- Street/Highway Element
- Transit Development Element
- Pedestrian/Bicyclist Element
- ITS Strategy and Regional Architecture Element

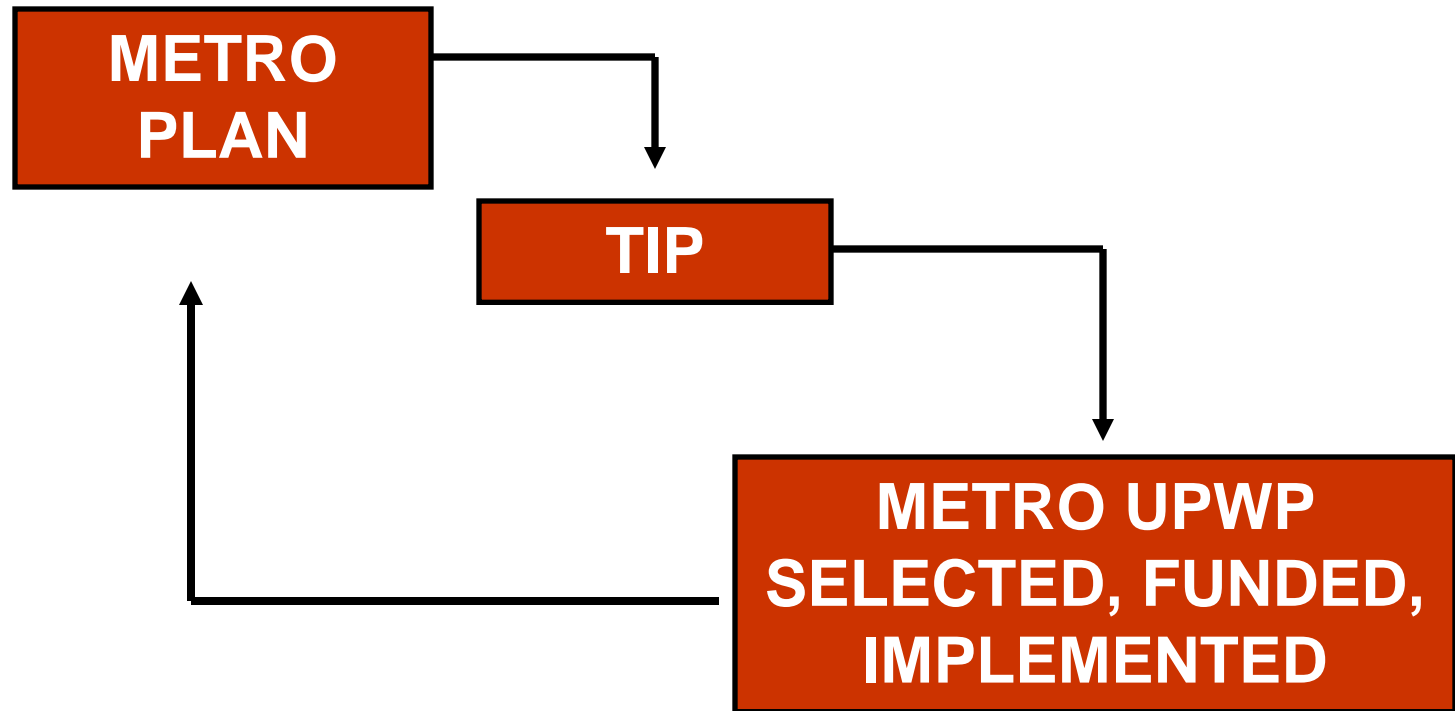


The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

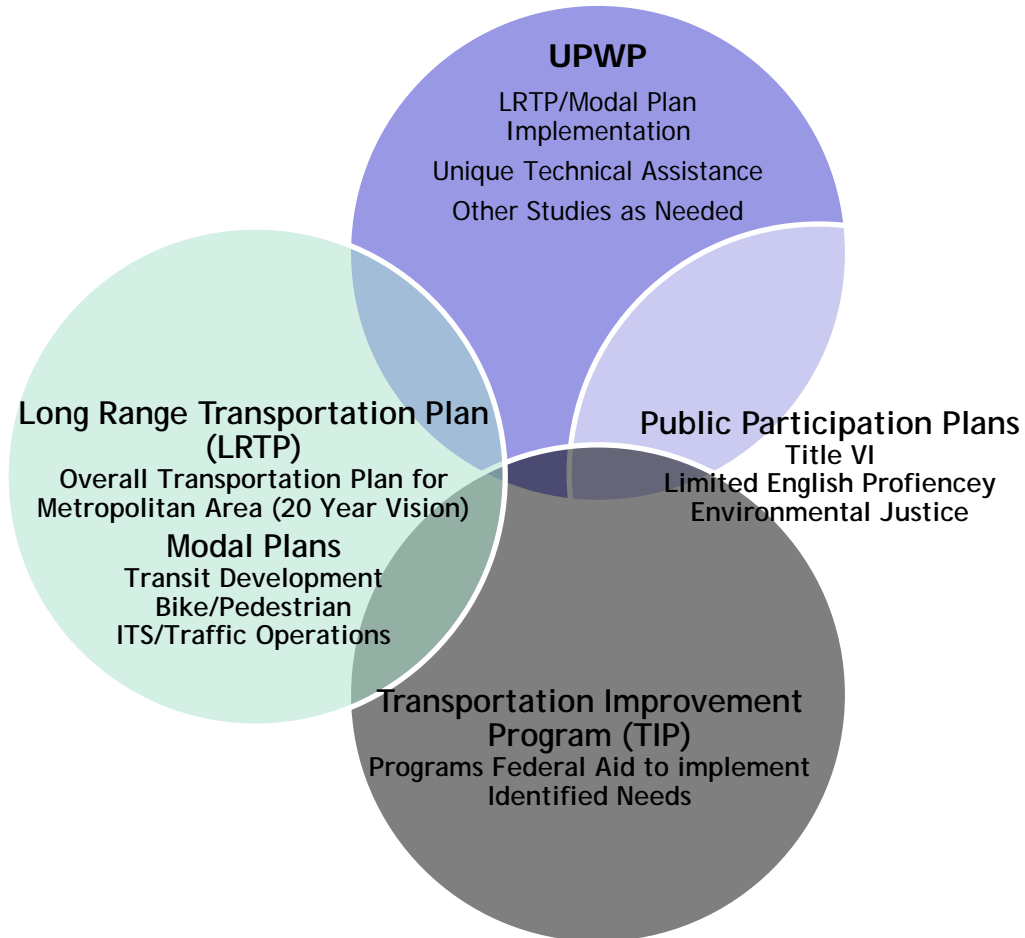
- A staged, multi-year, intermodal program of prioritized transportation initiatives consistent with Plan
- Shows annual activity for a 4-year period
- Contains a financial plan and is fiscally constrained
- An initiative not listed in the TIP cannot receive FHWA or FTA funds
- Reflects public involvement
- Is updated every year



The MPO planning process



METROPOLITAN PLANNING PROCESS – SUMMARY



CONCLUSIONS



Effective planning pays off

- Modal connectivity to provide access, mobility, and ease in travel for all citizens
- Quality communities
- Environmental protection
- Regional economic development
- Safer transportation systems
- Equitable and efficient use of scarce financial resources

