



NC Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

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Legislation Text

File #: ACT 16-091, **Version:** 2

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: MPO Coordination and Planning Area Reform

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FHWA and FTA have released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for revisions to the transportation planning regulations governing MPO's. The goal of the proposed revisions is to result in unified planning products for each designated urbanized area (UZA). The NPRM clarifies the definition of the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) to include the entire UZA plus all area that can be expected to urbanize in the next 20 years. Currently, the 23 USC 134 allows multiple MPOs to be designated within a single MPO if the Governor and MPO determine the size and complexity of the area make multiple MPOs appropriate; the proposed rule would establish certain requirements applicable in such instances where multiple MPOs serve a single MPA. It also proposes, if multiple MPOs in within and MPA are deemed appropriate, the multiple MPOs would be required to jointly develop a single Metropolitan Transportation Plan, a single TIP, and a single set of performance targets.

After review of the NPRM, CAMPO staff have developed preliminary comments in response to the NPRM, including:

- The proposed changes to require joint planning products should be implemented on a scaled basis; actual MPA overlap should be evaluated on a percentage basis, and the higher the percentage of overlap, the more stringent the joint planning requirements should be.
- The purpose of the rule is noted to "enable individuals within that region to better engage in the planning process." It is unclear whether a larger geographic area covered under a single MPO would actually facilitate more direct public engagement from a larger entity.
- There is some question as to whether MPOs should be required to merge under the circumstances of overlapping MPA's or UZA's. CAMPO staff feels that this requirement would unduly remove local influence on the form, function and priorities of individual MPO's, and that the requirement to merge should not be enacted.
- The rule should recognize the levels of effort already being put into the joint planning efforts of adjacent MPO's, such as the existing joint MTP adopted by CAMPO and DCHC.

Comments to FHWA and FTA on the proposed rule are due by August 26, 2016.

Requested Action: Receive as information; discussion.