



Association of
Metropolitan
Planning
Organizations

North Dakota/ Minnesota Statewide Meeting

October 30, 2024

Today's Presenters



Ashby Johnson

AMPO Board Chair
Capital Area Metropolitan
Planning Organization
Austin, TX



Ron Chicka

AMPO Past Board Chair
Duluth-Superior Metropolitan
Interstate Council
Duluth, MN

About AMPO

AMPO's mission is to help communities thrive by strengthening the MPOs that plan for safe, reliable, and equitable multi-modal transportation networks that are accessible to all. MPOs vary by size, region, and needs, and AMPO strives to provide innovative approaches and curated solutions to help all MPOs.

Established in 1994

Peer Programs

Our greatest strength is our network



Interest Groups



Executive Directors Forum

2024 Leadership Team



This group was created so that MPO leaders can share ideas, experiences, and expertise with their peers. Topics for meetings include:

- Staffing, Retention, and Succession Planning
- Strategic Plans
- Educating your Board
- Contracting and Consultants
- Data and Software Acquisition
- Organizational Culture and Staff Development

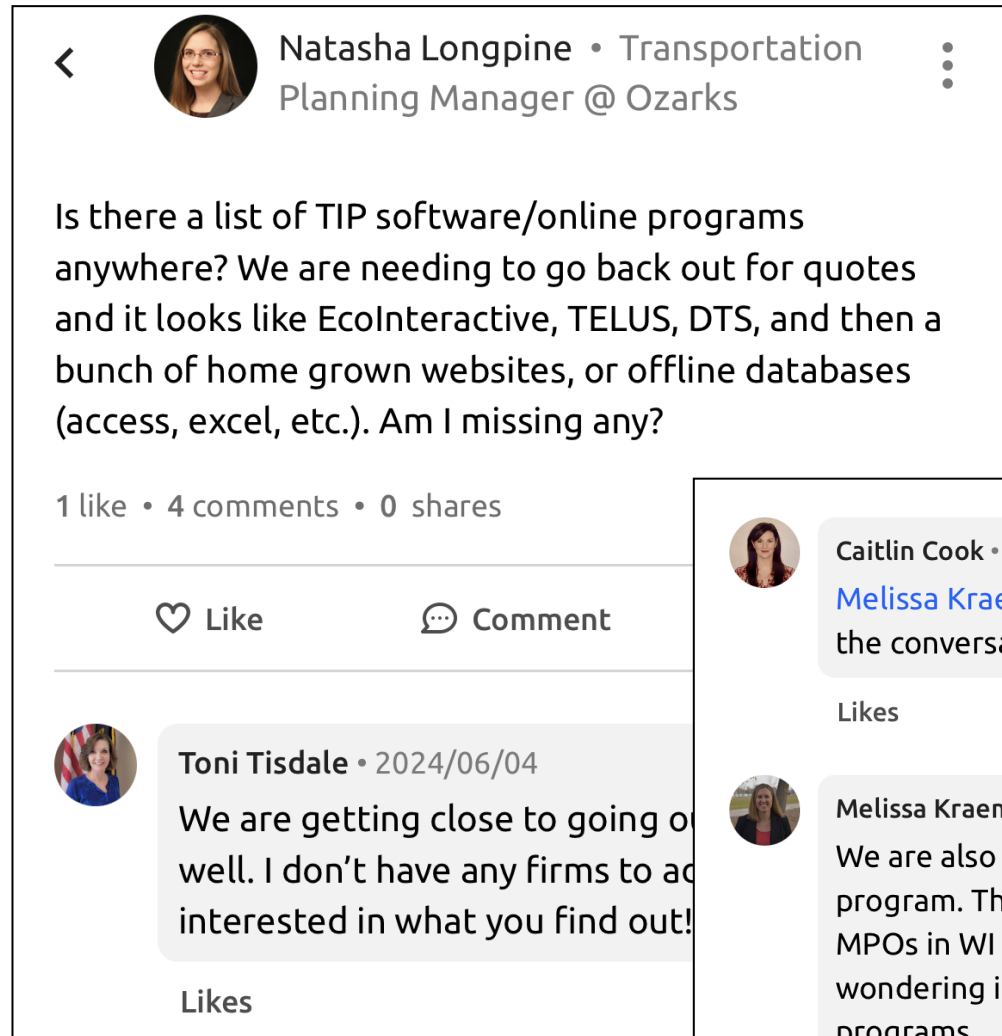
Meets Quarterly



Online Forum

Eligibility restricted to Executive Directors, Transportation Directors, and MPO Directors.

Online Forums



- Open to all members
- Organized by Interest Group and event
- Uses the platform Glueup
- Allows individuals to ask questions and share resources directly with their peers
- All future conference agendas will be digital on the same platform




←  Natasha Longpine • Transportation Planning Manager @ Ozarks 

Is there a list of TIP software/online programs anywhere? We are needing to go back out for quotes and it looks like EcoInteractive, TELUS, DTS, and then a bunch of home grown websites, or offline databases (access, excel, etc.). Am I missing any?

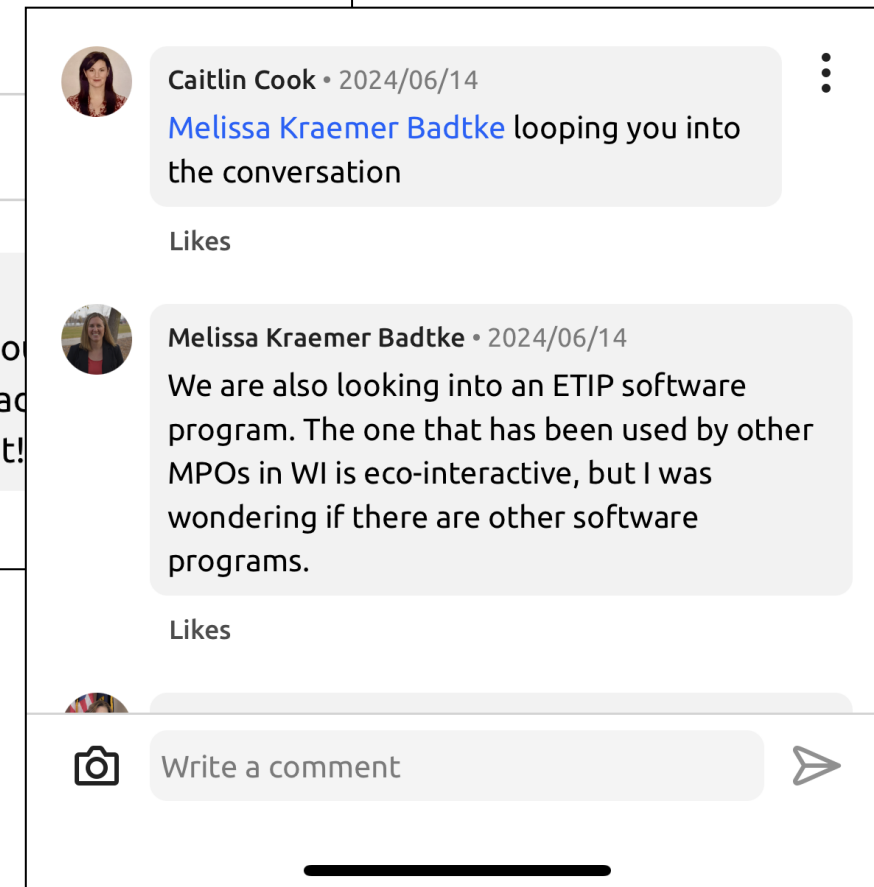
1 like • 4 comments • 0 shares



 Like  Comment

 Toni Tisdale • 2024/06/04

We are getting close to going o well. I don't have any firms to ac interested in what you find out!


Likes



 Caitlin Cook • 2024/06/14 


[Melissa Kraemer Badtke](#) looping you into the conversation



Likes

 Melissa Kraemer Badtke • 2024/06/14

We are also looking into an ETIP software program. The one that has been used by other MPOs in WI is eco-interactive, but I was wondering if there are other software programs.

Likes



 Write a comment 

Annual Conference 2025



2025 **SEPT 15-19** **AMPO ANNUAL CONFERENCE**
PROVIDENCE • RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER



Stay In The Know

Breaking News

Bi-Weekly Newsletter

Funding Opportunities

- [NOFO Tracker](#)

Policy Analysis

- [National Beat](#)

AMPO Research Foundation

Bringing Practice to Policy



Research Foundation

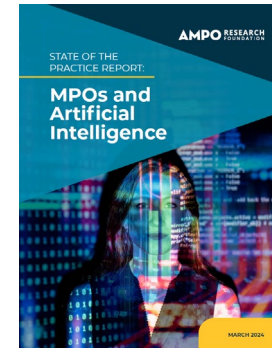
Current Programs



ActivitySim

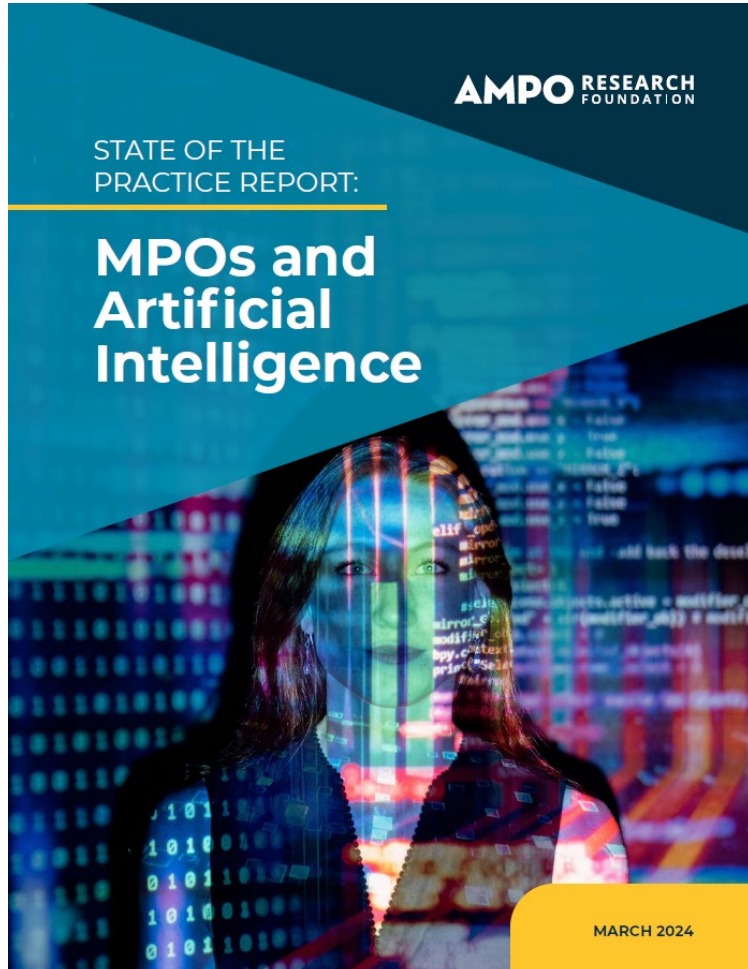


MPO Institute



State of the Practice

State of the Practice Reports



- Quarterly Reports
- Based on surveys and interviews
- Intended to provide a snapshot of the practice

2024 Topics:

- GHG Implementation
- MPOs and Artificial Intelligence
 - Includes AI Policy Guidance
- Board Composition and Training (Q3)
- MPOs and Housing (Q4)

2025 Tentative Topics:

- Salary and Compensation
- Administrative Structures of MPOs
- COOP Plans
- CRP Implementation

MPO Institute



**MPO
INSTITUTE**
Bringing Policy to Practice

The MPO Institute, the newest of the AMPO Research Foundation Programs, is launching this Spring!

The MPO Institute supports the evolving role of MPOs, understands the need for MPO-centric training, and provides content to tackle the challenges posed by retirements and staff retention. The institute serves as a unique national training where courses are developed in coordination with MPO practitioners to ensure we cover not just requirements, but also real-life practice.

So whether you're onboarding new staff, training staff for new positions, or simply need a refresher—the MPO Institute has the basics and more to meet your needs.

Our courses offer year-round, on-demand virtual training supplemented by live, instructor-led classes and events for a well-rounded training.

Spring 2024 Course Catalogue

Coming Soon!

- 📌 **MPO 101:** History, Federal Requirements, Core Products, Administrative Structures
- 📌 **New MPOs and TMAs:** Establishing Boundaries/Organizational Structure, TMA Requirements
- 📌 **Federal Funding & Finance:** Federal Aid Basics, Matching Funds, Programming and Obligation

AICP credits pending

Courses Available:

- New MPOs and Graduated TMAs (Free*)
- Federal Funding (\$395)
- MPO 101 (\$395)

Group Pricing Available

- Course bundles
- Statewide/MPO group portals

Credentialing

- MPO Institute Certificates
- AICP Credits Available

Review Team:

30+ MPOs and USDOT

*FWHA-funded



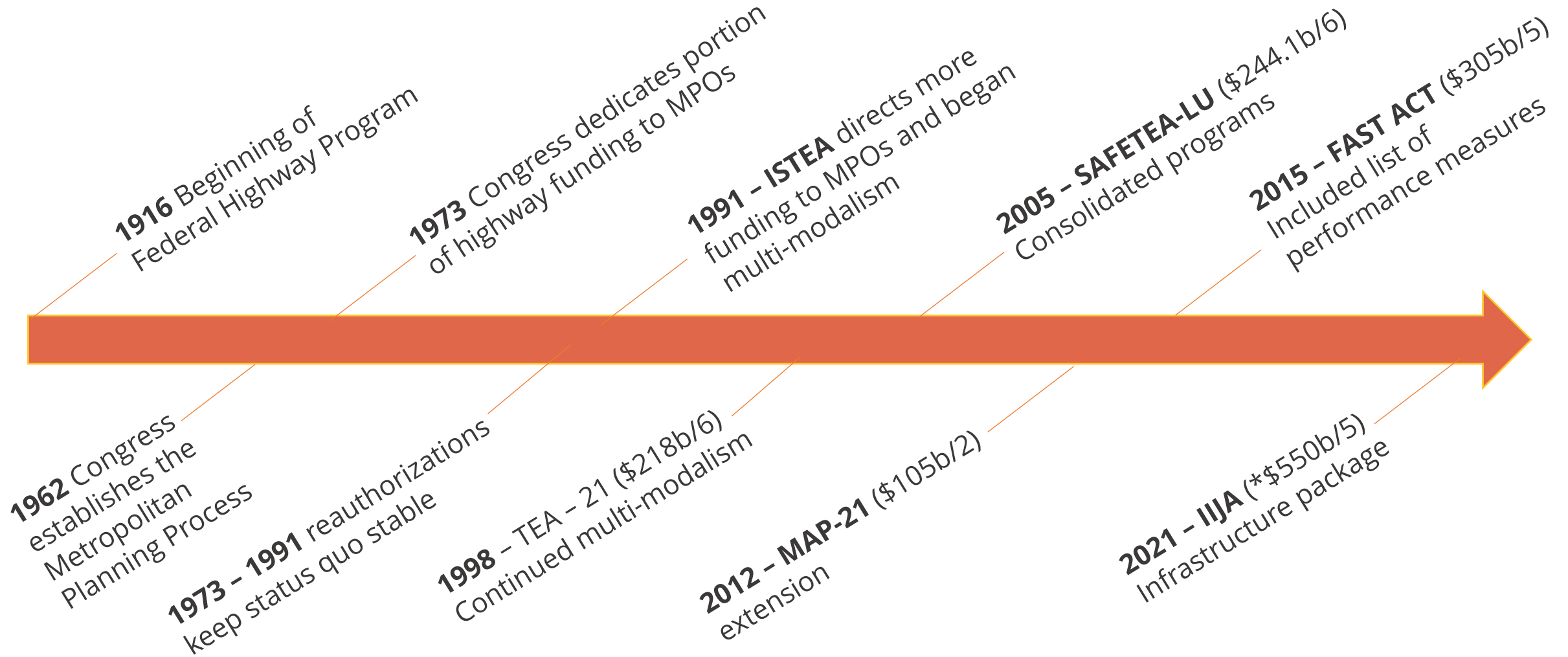
A Program of the
Association of Metropolitan
Planning Organizations
Research Foundation

Policy & Advocacy

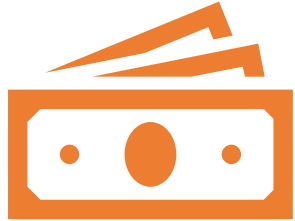
How we work with members to advocate and educate



An Abridged Reauthorization History



IIJA/BIL Overview



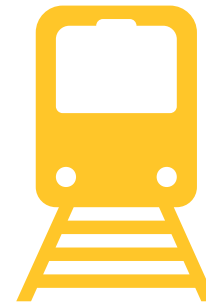
\$567 billion
investment in
surface
transportation



\$100+ billion
in grant
programs



**New formula
programs** to
address carbon
emissions



**Heavy
investment** in
electrification &
rail

The IIJA/BIL **expanded MPO eligibility** for many federal grant programs!

Reauthorization: Key Questions and Dates

November and Next Round of Leadership

IIJA Reauthorization or Surface Transportation Reauthorization

What is the baseline?

Discretionary vs Formula vs No Funding

Why Can't We be Friends?



119th Congress in Session: 1/3/2025



Presidency: 11/5/2024
Inauguration: 1/20/2025



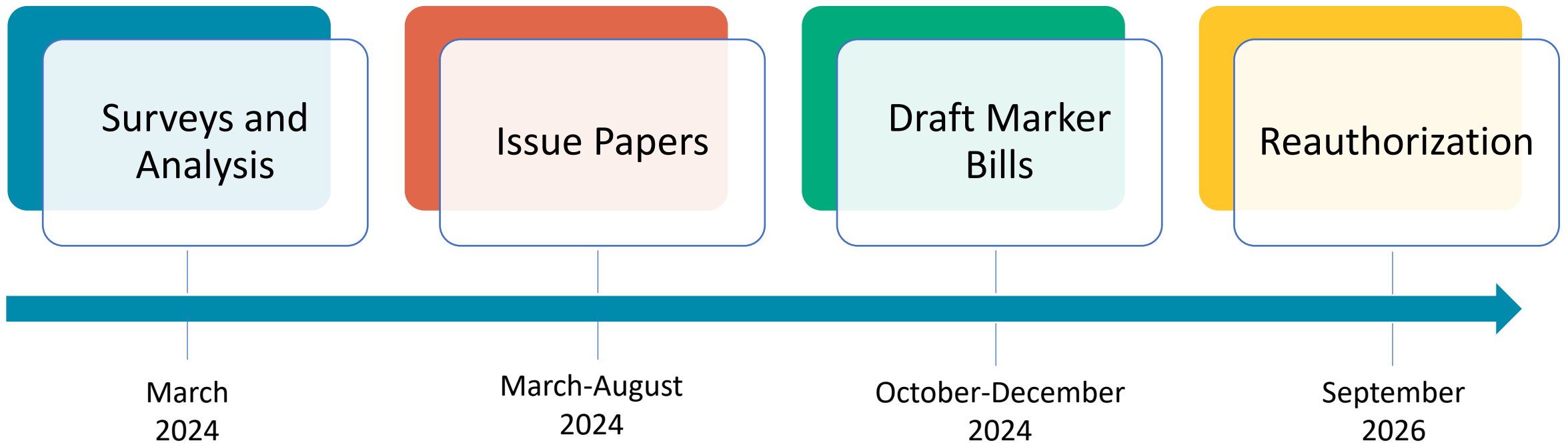
IIJA Expires: 9/30/2026



AMPO's Legislative Priorities for Reauthorization

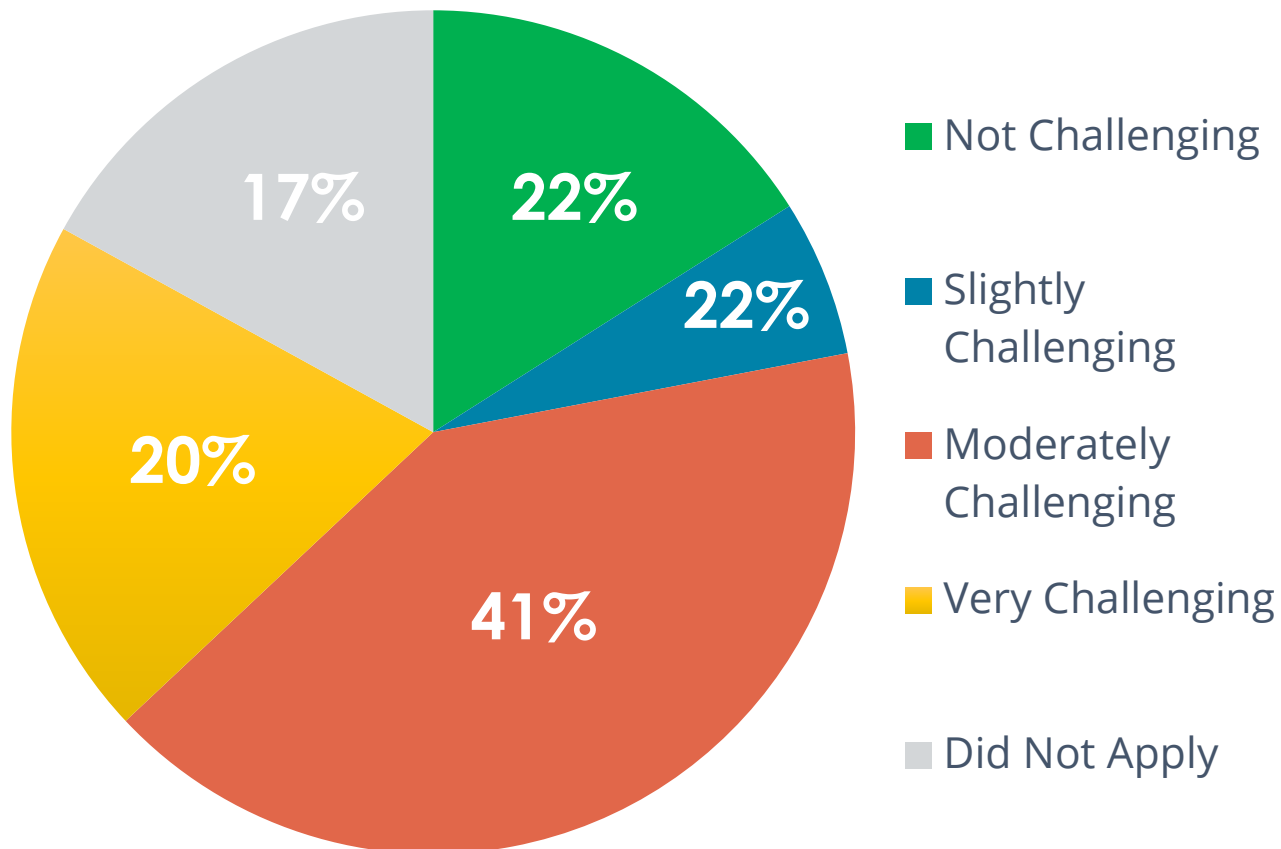
1. Increase Planning Funds to Meet Federal Planning Requirements
2. Shifting Certain Discretionary Funding to Formula Funding
3. Reducing Local Match for Federal Transportation Programs
4. Allowing for Carryover of Federal Funds
5. MPOs Becoming Direct Recipients for Certain Federal Funds

Legislative Priority Process



Discretionary to Formula Funding

How challenging has it been to apply for discretionary funds?



Potential Benefits:

- Reduced cost/burden for applications
- Equitable funding allocation
- Stability in long-term planning
- Enhanced project flexibility
- Improved project pipelines
- Capacity building
- Collaborative opportunities

Note: Not all discretionary funding is suitable for transition

Most Applied for Grants

FY 2022

SS4A

Applied: 48%

- **Received: 82%**

FY 2023

SS4A

Applied: 49%

- **Received: 83%**

Moderate-Low Applications

Other Grants

- Areas of Persistent Poverty
- **SMART grants**
- EDA grants
- **Thriving Communities**

FY 2022

RAISE

Applied: 30%

RCP

Applied: 11%

FY 2023

CFI

Applied: 17%

RCP

Applied: 22%

PROTECT

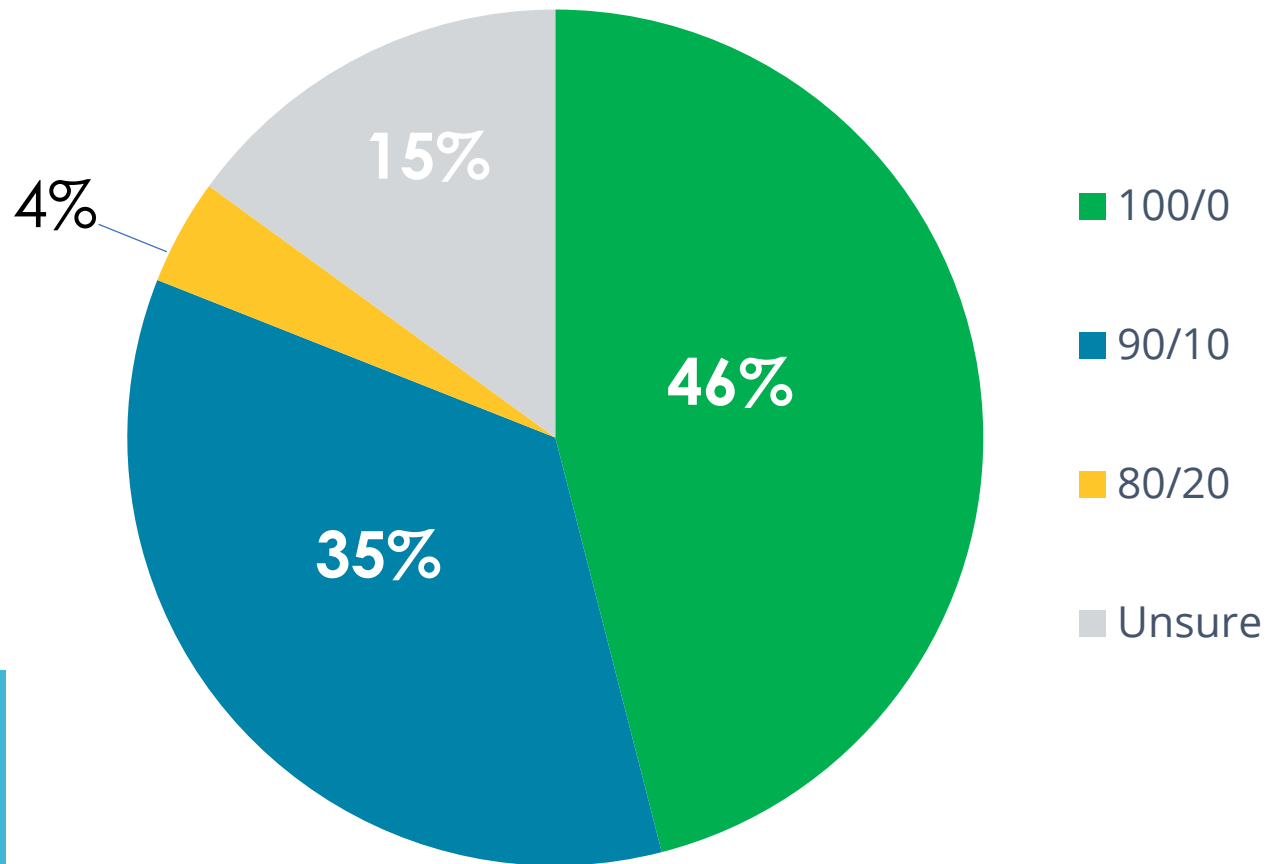
Applied: 13%

RAISE

Applied: 14%

Reducing Local Match

PL/5303 Preferred Funding Split



Potential Benefits:

- Improved Product Delivery Time
- Increased Flexibility with Funds
- Increased stability due to less reliance on local revenue sources
- Decreased balances

Note: The majority of feedback indicates a desire to maintain some amount of local match in capital projects

If your state DOT contributes toward your 20% planning match, the DOT:

57%

Matches completely or in part.



43%

Does not contribute to match.



If your state DOT contributes toward your 20% capital match, the DOT:

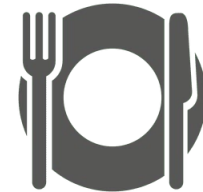
37%

Matches completely or in part.



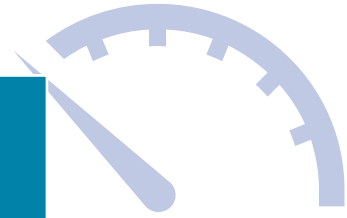
64%

Does not contribute to match.



What are the challenges your MPO faces in securing match for formula funds?

Limited local revenue
• 82%



Shortage of staff or expertise
• 43%



Meeting federal requirements
• 37%



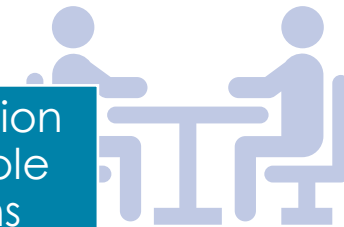
Competition with local entities
• 31%



Administrative costs & complexity
• 29%



Coordination with multiple jurisdictions
• 27%

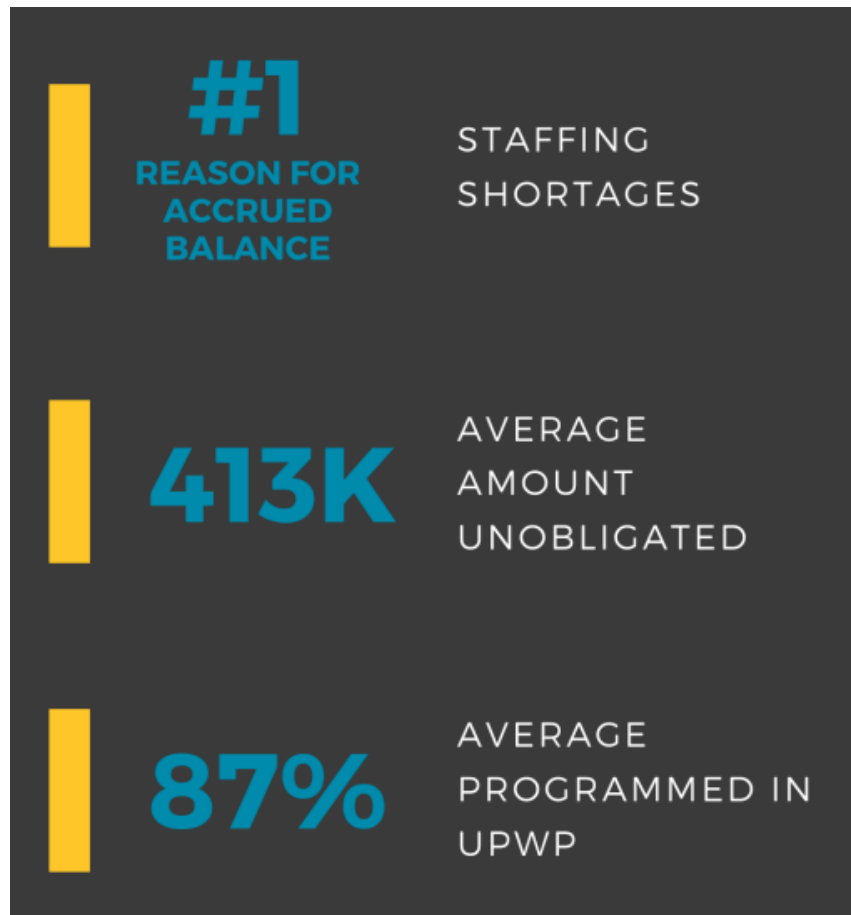


Other Specific Challenges

Cost Overruns and restrictions on using federal funds

Carryover of Federal Funds

PL/5303 Funding Balances



Potential Benefits:

- Greater uniformity in carryover nationwide
- Ability to better anticipate balances and draw down with larger projects

Note: The states vary widely on carryover policies and balances. Refer to the Obligation and Carryover Survey Report for details:

https://ampo.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Survey-Report-Unobligated-Balances-and-Project-Timelines_for-web.pdf?ver

Key Takeaways

Unobligated balances have risen

- Most of the available funding has been programmed through the MPOs' processes.

Obligation can take more than a year

- When State DOTs do not allow carryover, it jeopardizes funds programmed by the MPO.

Carryover policies vary widely

- Unique to each state.

Increased transparency is needed

- Could be accomplished through more consistent access to FMIS & involvement in the AR process.

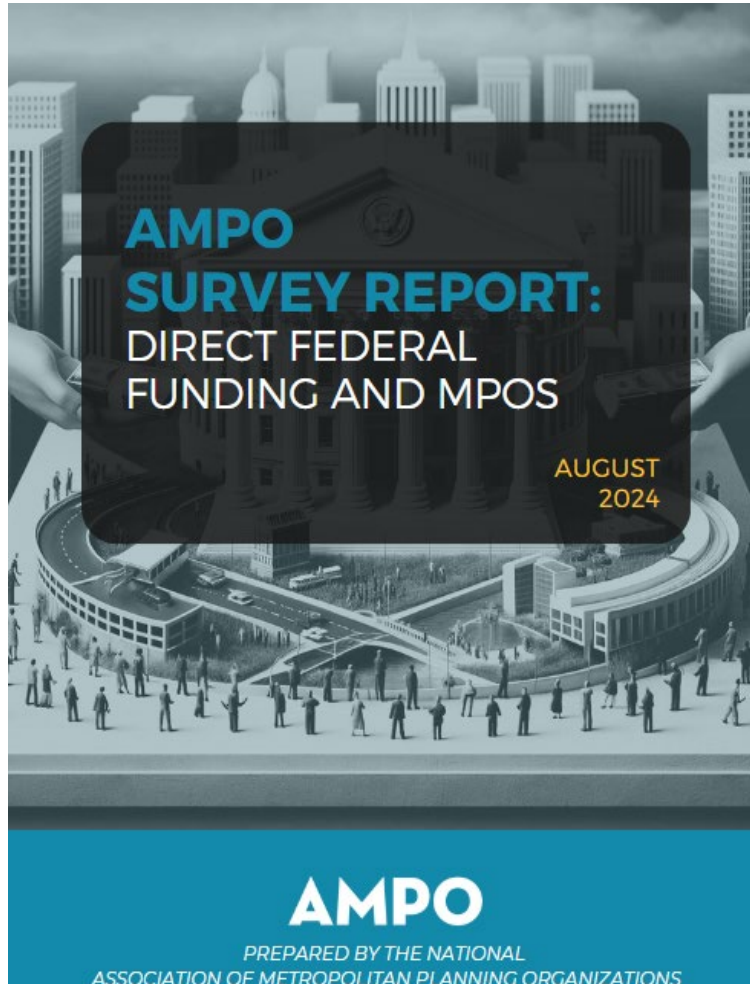
Reasonable Progress Policies are difficult to implement

- Without transparency & better inclusion in the entire project timeline.

Projects are often delayed

- Not controlled by the MPO or local agency.

Direct Recipient



Survey Goals

- Understand MPO experiences with direct federal funding.
- Identify challenges MPOs face in funding processes.
- Explore opportunities for streamlining federal fund access.
- Gather insights to guide policy and support for MPOs.

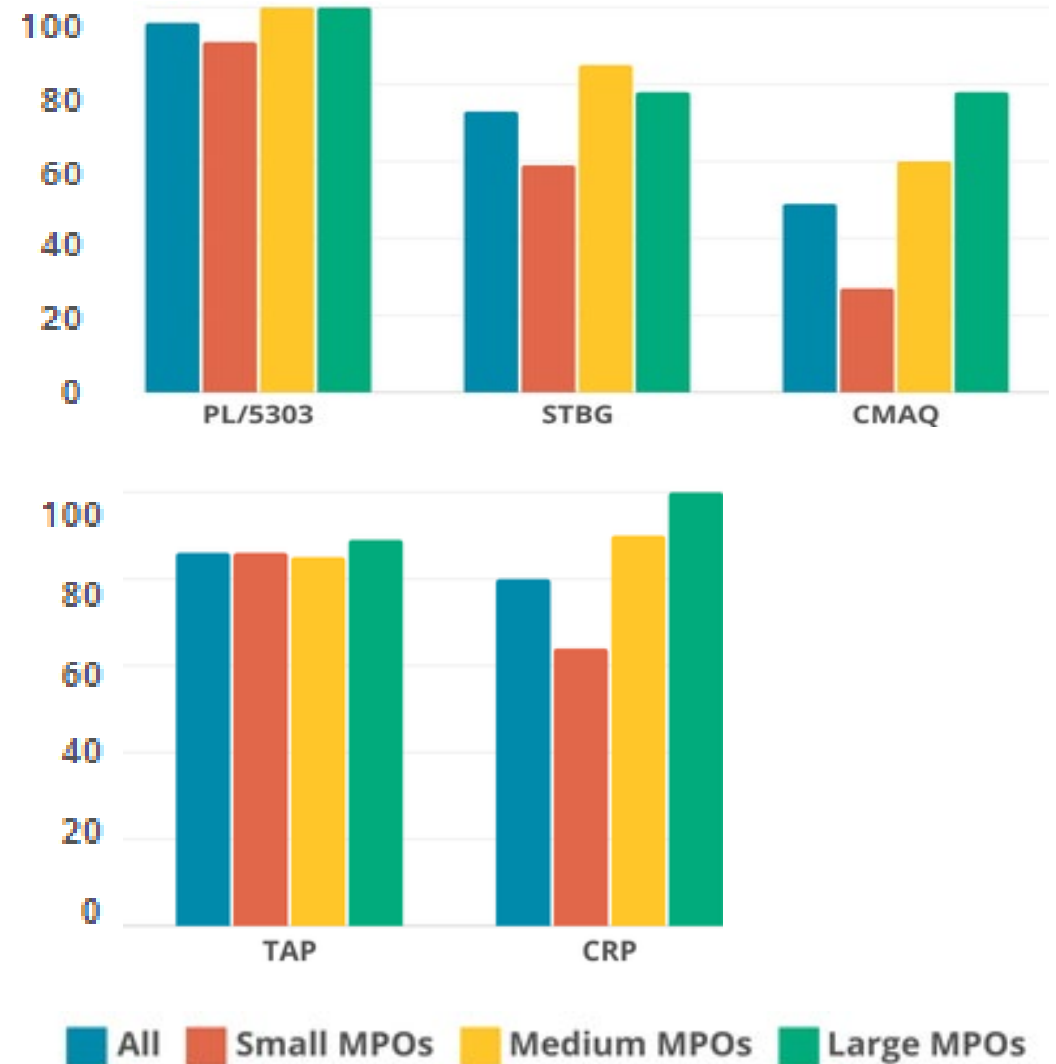
Report Goals

Reports will fill data gaps & inform Congress and other key stakeholders, helping to support our priorities.

MPO Perspectives on Direct Funding

*Of the **57%** of surveyed MPOs that want to be direct recipients of certain federal funds...*

- **96%** are interested in PL/5303
- **86%** are interested in TAP
- **80%** are interested in CRP
- **73%** are interested in STBG
- **49%** are interested in CMAQ



MPO Views on Direct Funding PL/5303 Funds



A significant **majority** of MPOs prioritize receiving PL/5303 funds directly.



The high interest is driven by a need for flexible funding to support essential planning activities, and current inefficiencies with the process*.



All large and medium-sized MPOs interested in direct funding express a strong preference for receiving PL funds directly.



PL funds are consistently ranked as the top choice for MPOs aiming to become direct recipients.

*Note: **44%** of surveyed MPOs rated the current PL/5303 funding model as **inefficient**. Key challenges include state DOT approval delays, redundant reporting, and complex fund transfers, highlighting the need for improvement.

Key Drivers of MPO Interest in Direct Funding

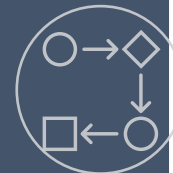
- **80%** seek direct funding to bypass state regulations and burdensome procedures.

Layered State DOT Regulations



- **76%** desire a more efficient, less burdensome funding process.

Streamlined Process



- **61%** believe direct funding will reduce delays.

Faster Planning Project Delivery



- **45%** see it as a way to improve coordinated planning efforts.

Boost Regional Collaboration



- **59%** value the flexibility to address unique challenges.

Adapt to Regional Needs



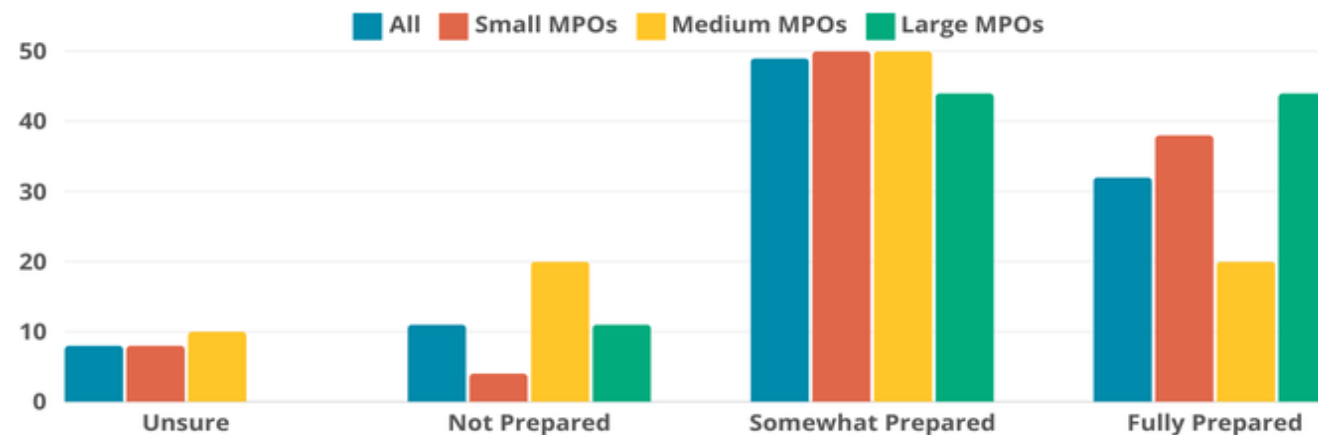
- **29%** believe direct control enhances transparency and management.

Improve Accountability



MPO Preparedness for Direct Funding

*Of the **57%** of surveyed MPOs that want to be direct recipients of certain federal funds...*



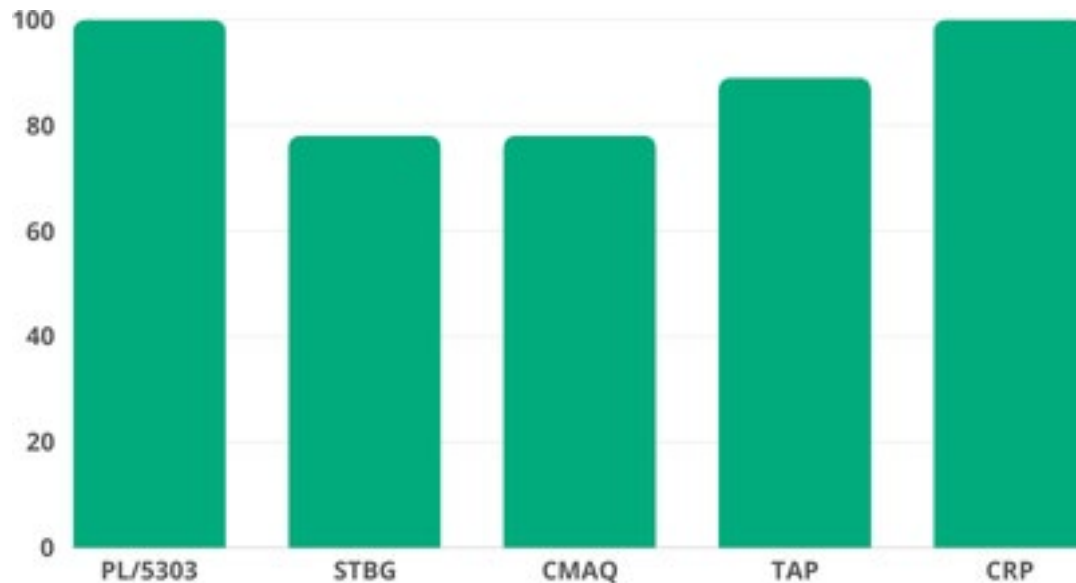
- While **81%** MPOs feel “somewhat” (49%) or fully (32%) prepared, the varying levels of readiness across different sizes indicate a need for tailored support.
- **11%** reported being not prepared.
- **8%** are unsure

Key Questions for Consideration

Planning Funds

- If MPOs automatically receive PL funds as direct recipients, should there be an opt-out option for those not ready, or should MPOs be required to opt-in to demonstrate their readiness?
- Should there be a floor for all MPOs to ensure smaller/rural ones aren't left behind, or should funding be tiered by MPO size with a different base for each tier?

Large MPOs (1m+) Views on Direct Funding

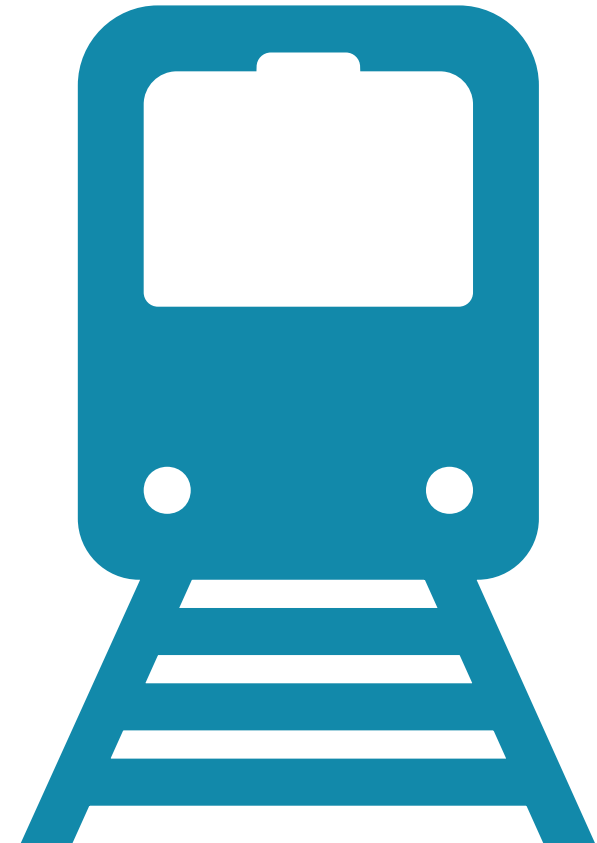


- **100%** interest in PL/5303 and CRP.
- **89%** interest in TAP.
- **78%** interest in STBG and CMAQ.
- Highest interest across almost all funding programs.

Large MPOs: Potential Benefits of Direct Funding

Large MPOs (1m+) identified several key benefits:

- **Streamlined Funding Process:** 87.5%
- **Expedited Planning Project Delivery:** 75%
- **Increased Regional Collaboration:** 37.5% noted better collaboration within their regions as a result of direct funding.
- **Enhanced Accountability:** 50% of large MPOs mentioned improved accountability due to direct oversight of funds.



Large MPOs: Potential Challenges of Direct Funding

While the benefits are notable, large MPOs may also face challenges:

- Managing direct funds may require more resources.
- **40%** expressed concerns over having adequate staff to handle the complexities of direct funding.
- Several MPOs noted the need for additional training and resources (ex: financial management training) to manage federal funds



Key Questions for Consideration

All Funding Sources

- What resources and technical assistance do MPOs need to successfully transition to direct recipients?
- What role should state DOTs, USDOT, and FHWA Division offices play after MPOs become direct recipients?
- What reporting and oversight requirements will ensure transparency and accountability?

Key Takeaways

Direct funding may improve efficiency and project implementation.

MPOs seek more autonomy and streamlined processes for federal funding.

Positive outcomes with SS4A grants

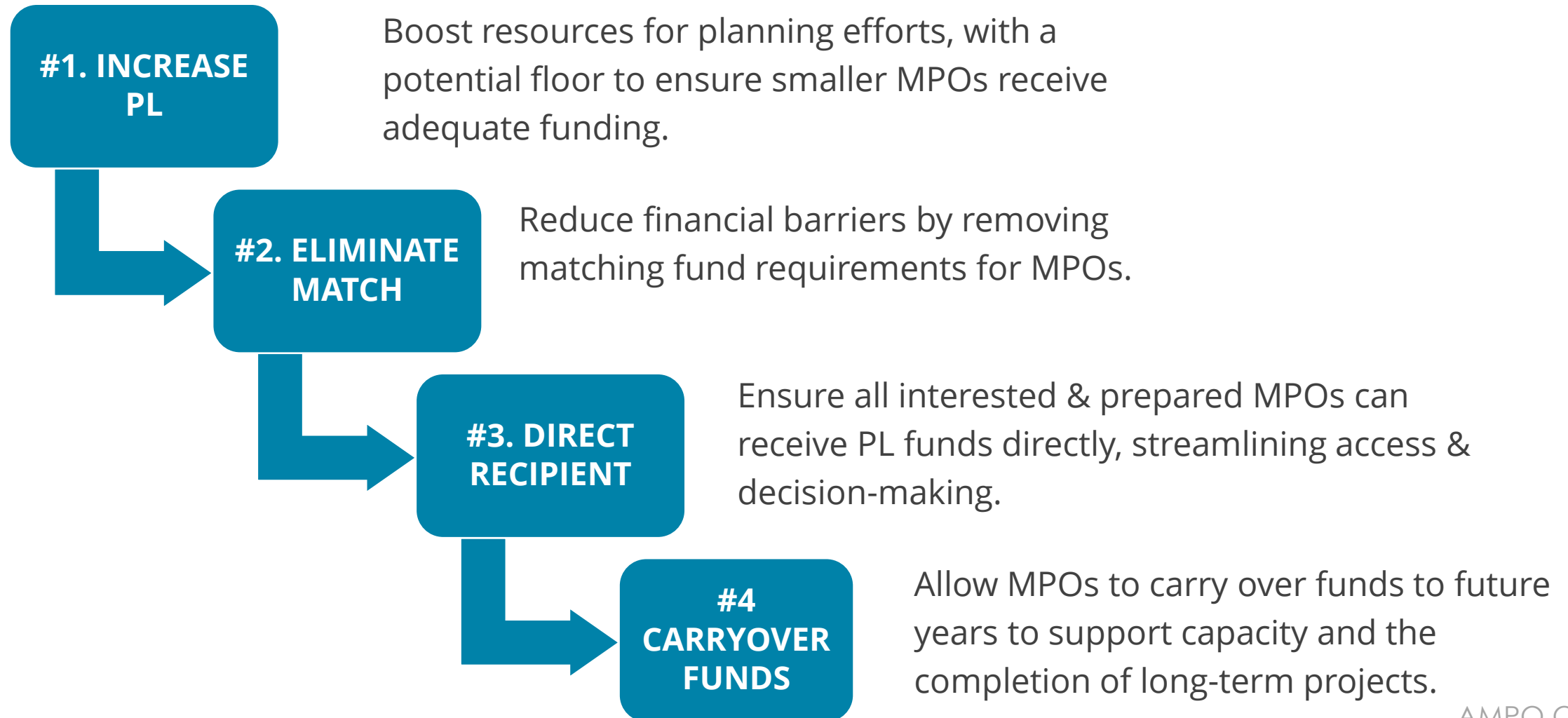
Current challenges with MPOs and federal funding: suballocation through state DOTs, stacked requirements, delays, and complexity.

Majority of MPOS feel somewhat or fully prepared to become the direct recipient of certain federal funds.

Need for more resources for transition to direct funding: funding guidance, legal support, training.

Smaller MPOs are concerned about the potential administrative burden.

Priorities at Play—*Planning Funds* (example)



Additional Considerations

Loper Bright overturns *Chevron* deference principle (6-3 ruling)

Profound implications for all three branches of government:

- Impacts **how agencies justify regulations and policy guidance**, and how they defend them in court; may also impact what actions agencies decide to pursue
- Impacts **how Congress drafts legislation**, how it relies on outside experts, and how it oversees federal agencies' implementation of the law
- Impacts **the frequency of judicial intervention**, and potentially, the odds of success of challenges to agency action

Additional Considerations

Loper Bright Predictions...

Agency rulemaking procedures will be more complicated:

- Increased litigation
- Increased lobbying for congressional action, including technical expertise
- New opportunities for engagement with agencies
- Conflicts between federal court statutory interpretations
- But the work of agencies will continue!
- Real question is how courts will adapt to their new(old) role

Additional Considerations

Remedial Programs Under Fire

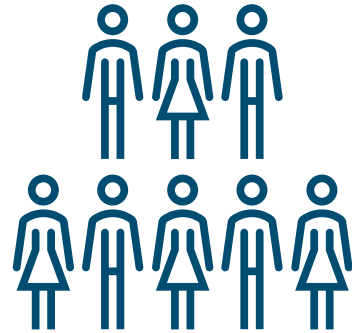
Across the board DEI and race-based programs are facing litigation:

- Farmers Covid Relief
- *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*
- Kentucky ruling against **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program**

How MPOs Can Get Involved



Join the
Intergovernmental
Affairs Group



Join the Policy
Committee



Participate in
Surveys



Share
Resources

Share Your Story!

Highlight your challenges
and successes

Your stories will help emphasize the need for additional resources and authority and demonstrate the real-world impact MPOs have on their communities.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MPOstories>

Recap

Join us:

- [An Interest Group](#)
- [The Policy or Technical Committee](#) (limited seats)
- The Intergovernmental Affairs Group (email keconomou@ampo.org)
- [Executive Directors Forum](#)
- Us at a [national conference](#)

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- [State of the Practice Reports](#)
- [MPO Institute Courses](#)
- AMPO Podcast | AmpedUp ([Spotify](#), [Apple](#))

Help us distribute:

- Surveys
- Upcoming webinars
- Resources ([NOFO Tracker](#), National Beat)

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To receive our newsletter please contact Jessica O'Keefe at jokeefe@ampo.org or any member of staff

Questions