



Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

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Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

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**Joint Policy Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 27, 2023
2:30 pm to 4:30 pm**

HYBRID MEETING: WITH TEAMS VIDEO/CALL IN AVAILABLE
OCWCOG Albany Building; Albany ABC (Downstairs) Conference Room
1400 Queen Avenue SE, Albany Oregon 97322

Via Teams by Clicking [HERE](#)

Meeting ID: 294 775 811 756

Passcode: ocwzng

Mobile One Click Number

[+1 872 242 8088](tel:+18722428088)

Phone Conference ID: 870 165 858#

AGENDA

- | | | |
|----------------|--|--|
| 1) 2:30 | Call to Order, Roll Call/Introductions | AAMPO Chair,
Darrin Lane |
| | | CAMPO Chair,
Matt Lehman |
| 2) 2:35 | Public Comments | Chairs |
| 3) 2:45 | Regional Project Updates | Nick Meltzer,
AAMPO/CAMPO
Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Highway 20/34 Projects</i> • <i>Transit Workforce Study</i> • <i>Corvallis to Albany Path</i> | |
| | <i>ACTION: Information only</i> | |
| 4) 3:05 | Regional Safety Overview (Attachment A) | ODOT staff |
| | <i>Review of safety topics, funding programs, and approaches to address safety issues.</i> | |
| | <i>ACTION: Information and Discussion</i> | |
| 5) 3:30 | STBG Funding (Attachment B) | Meltzer |
| | <i>Update on legislative changes to MPO funding for construction projects.</i> | |
| | <i>Action: Information</i> | |
| 6) 3:50 | MPO Merger Conversation (Attachment C) | Staff |
| | <i>Review of historical conversations, concerns and future discussions about merging the two MPOs.</i> | |

ACTION: Discussion

AAMPO ATTENDANCE (FOR QUORUM PURPOSES)

Board Members	Jurisdiction	Attendance
Walt Perry	City of Jefferson	
Councilor John Sullivan	City of Millersburg	
Councilor Ray Kopczynski (Vice Chair)	City of Albany	
Councilor Greg Jones	City of Tangent	
Commissioner Roger Nyquist	Linn County	
Commissioner Pat Malone	Benton County	
Darrin Lane (Chair)	Citizen Representative	
Savannah Crawford	Oregon Department of Transportation	
Alternates	Jurisdiction	Attendance
Dave Watkins	City of Jefferson	
Janelle Booth	City of Millersburg	
Chris Cerklewski	City of Albany	
Joe Samaniego	City of Tangent	
Wayne Mink	Linn County	
Gary Stockhoff	Benton County	
James Feldmann	Oregon Department of Transportation	

Quorum Requirement: MPO business may be conducted provided a quorum of the Policy Board is in attendance. A quorum consists of at least four members of the Policy Board or their alternates. The Policy Board members may participate telephonically or by other means of electronic communication as provided in Section 6.D (Special or Emergency Meetings).

– AAMPO Policy Board Bylaws, Section 6: Meeting, Subsection E: Quorum

CAMPO AMPO ATTENDANCE (FOR QUORUM PURPOSES)

Board Members	Jurisdiction	Attendance
VACANT	City of Adair Village	
Jan Napack (Vice Chair)	City of Corvallis	
Councilor Matt Lehman (Chair)	City of Philomath	
Commissioner Pat Malone	Benton County	

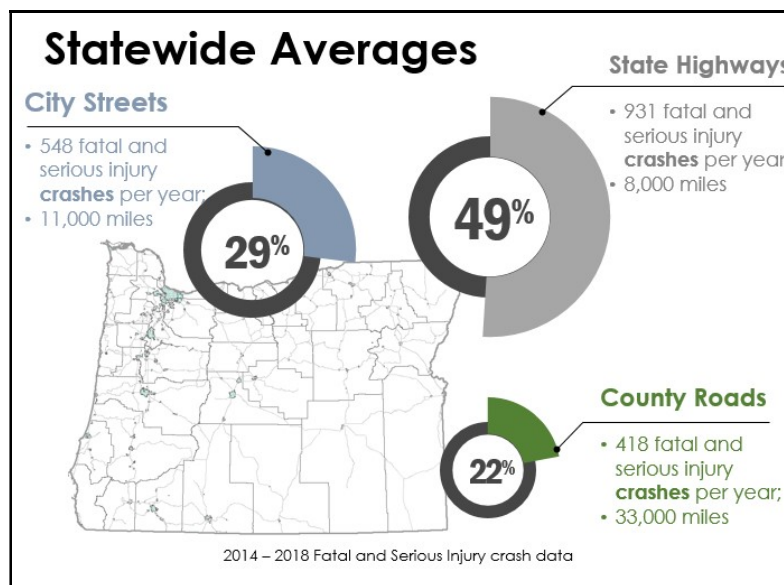
Meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. If you need any special accommodation, please contact Ashlyn Muzechenko at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Ashlyn can be reached amuzechenko@ocwcog.org.

Savannah Crawford	Oregon Department of Transportation	
Alternates	Jurisdiction	Attendance
VACANT	City of Adair Village	
Greg Gescher	City of Corvallis	
Chris Workman	City of Philomath	
Gary Stockhoff	Benton County	
James Feldmann	Oregon Department of Transportation	

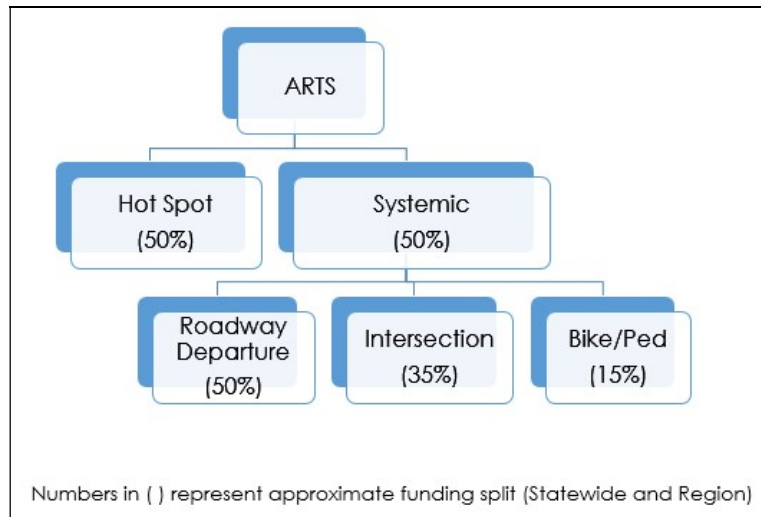
Quorum Requirement: MPO business may be conducted provided a quorum of the Parties attends. A quorum consists of at least seventy-five percent of the Parties on the Policy Board. The Policy Board members may participate telephonically or by other means of electronic communication, provided the meeting is called to order at a public noticed meeting place where the public can attend, hear, understand and/or read the comments of the members participating by telephonic or electronic means and the members so participating can fully hear, understand, and/or read the comments of the other members participating in the meeting.

All Roads Transportation Safety Program Key Facts —2023

- ODOT and representatives of the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) and the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) have examined road safety statistics throughout the state. The results reveal a great need to improve local road safety.
- In February 2013, ODOT entered into a memorandum of understanding with AOC and LOC. The MOU establishes that all Oregonians share the roads and that safety is everyone’s concern. The common purpose is to reduce fatal and serious injuries on all public roads through a data driven process.
- MAP 21 increased safety funding and emphasizes a focus on all public roads. Because of this, ODOT decided to offer a portion of its safety funds to improve safety on local roads, leading to the creation of the All Roads Transportation Safety (ARTS) program.
- The state road system makes up about 10 percent of the total mileage in the total road system. Ten percent of the system carries 50 percent of all traffic and has 50 percent of all crashes in the state. The other 50 percent of crashes occur off the state system. Under the ARTS program, available funds go toward the best and highest use.



- The available money is separated into two categories — systemic and hot spots.



- Systemic project are proven, low-cost measures that have successfully reduced the occurrence of fatal and serious injury crashes and that can be widely implemented, like rumble strips on the shoulder of the road.
- Hot spots are identified by a higher than normal crash occurrence. These are often higher cost projects and are targeted to a specific segment of roadway or intersection.
- ODOT collected input from the local governments in each region of the state. By cooperating with local agencies we hope to raise the awareness of safety on all roads and promote best practices.
- Funding is allocated to each region based on the distribution of the most current 5-years of fatal and serious injury crashes.
- Potential projects within each region are prioritized based on application type.
 - Hot Spot, Systemic Roadway Departure and Systemic Intersection projects are prioritized by their benefit cost which factors in the number of crashes, the crash reduction potential of the safety treatment and the project cost.
 - Systemic Pedestrian/Bicycle projects are prioritized by their cost effectiveness index (CEI) which factors in risks, crash history, the crash reduction potential of the safety treatment and the project cost.

The program is data driven, using safety data to perform problem identification and analysis, to achieve the greatest benefits in terms of fatal and serious injury crash reduction.

All Roads Transportation Program: Frequently Asked Questions

1. *What is the ARTS Program?*

The All Roads Transportation Safety Program (ARTS) is a statewide safety program that addresses safety for all public roads in the state of Oregon. The program is a competitive program with a focus on implementation of cost-effective and proven safety countermeasures. It is supported through federal and state funds based on the federal [Highway Safety Improvement Program](#). HSIP adopts a data-driven approach that uses crash data, risk factors, and other supported methods to identify the best possible locations to achieve the greatest benefits. The ARTS program primarily uses federal funds from the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).

2. *What is the purpose of the ARTS Program?*

The primary purpose of the ARTS Program is apply a data driven safety approach to identify and select the best projects for reducing fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads in the state. A data-driven approach uses crash data, risk factors, or other data supported methods to identify the best possible locations to achieve the greatest benefits.

Appropriate use of HSIP funds is only for locations or corridors where a known problem exists as indicated by location-specific data on fatalities and serious injuries or risks, and/or where it is determined that the specific safety project can, with confidence, produce a measurable and significant reduction in such fatalities or serious injuries. To achieve the maximum benefit, the focus of the ARTS program is on cost effective use of the funds allocated for safety improvements addressing fatal and serious injury crashes.

All projects shall:

- Address a specific safety problem contributing to fatalities and serious injuries.
- Use only proven countermeasures from the ODOT Crash Reduction Factor (CRF) List that eliminates or substantially reduces fatalities and serious injuries.
- Use ODOT Benefit Cost (B/C) method for Hotspot, systemic roadway departure and systemic intersection applications and Cost effectiveness Index (CEI) for Bicycle/Pedestrian.
- Use ODOT crash data (most recent five years of published data) to establish the benefit/cost ratio or the CEI (so projects can be compared fairly) which will be based on the most recent available five years of crash data.
- Be prioritized or categorized based on the benefit/cost ratio for developing the 150% list.
- Must include written support from the road jurisdiction if the project is proposed by another agency.

3. *What is the timeline for ARTS Program?*

ARTS project selection will begin in the fall of 2023 and extend through the spring of 2024. During this period, projects will be selected for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and delivered in years 2027 through 2030.

**SUMMER/FALL
2023**

OUTREACH TO
LOCAL AGENCIES

DEC. 15, 2023

APPLICATION
DEADLINE

SPRING 2024

PROJECT
SELECTION FOR
SCOPING

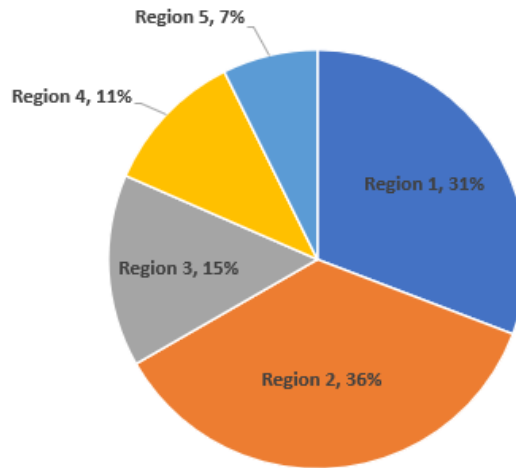
4. What statewide screening level safety tools are available?

ODOT maintains several safety plans and tools to help screen for potential safety projects. The following tools and safety plans may be helpful:

- Safety Priority Index System (SPIS):
<https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Engineering/Pages/Highway-Safety.aspx>
- Oregon Adjustable Safety Index System (OASIS):
<https://zigzag.odot.state.or.us/oasisapp/OasisTool.aspx>
- Systemic Roadway Departure Plan:
<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Engineering/Pages/Roadway-Departures.aspx>
- Systemic Intersection Safety Plan:
<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Engineering/Pages/Intersection-Safety.aspx>
- Systemic Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan:
https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Engineering/Docs_TrafficEng/Bike-Ped-Safety-Implementation-Plan.pdf
- Addressing Oregon's Rise in Deaths and Serious Injuries for Senior Drivers and Pedestrians:
<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Programs/ResearchDocuments/SPR828Final.pdf>

5. How much funding is available and how is it allocated?

During the period of 2027 through 2030, approximately \$46 million per year will likely be available for the ARTS program. This funding ultimately will be determined by the [Oregon Transportation Commission](#) (OTC). The safety funds are split to each region based on the amount of fatalities and serious injuries occurring in the region on all public roads. At the region level, funds are further split 50%/50% between state highways and local roads.



6. What application types are available in ARTS?

ODOT uses two different methods for selecting projects – traditional ‘Hotspot’ method and ‘Systemic’ method. ODOT regions are encouraged to spend at least half of the funding for Systemic projects. These two methods are designed to select the most cost-effective projects among all public roads in Oregon to reduce the most fatal and serious injury crashes with available funds. The 2017 – 2021 crash data shall be used to support applications for his round of ARTS.

7. What is the difference between the Hot Spot and Systemic Applications?

The hotspot method address’s an individual location with a history of high crash frequency and severity. These projects must address locations with a crash history of at least one fatal or serious injury crash within the last five years. Hotspot countermeasures are typically more expensive than systemic countermeasures. Examples of hotspot projects include installation of left turn lane(s), installation of a new traffic signal or roundabout at an intersection, or conversion of a signalized intersection to a roundabout.

ODOT typically develops a list of locations for potential projects using its Safety Priority Index System (SPIS), and Safety Implementation Plans for three emphasis areas including potential remedies and countermeasures: Roadway Departure, Intersections and the Pedestrian and Bicycle. Local agencies can use the SPIS list or whatever method they choose to pick the best potential projects.

Local agencies and ODOT will both prepare applications for the projects that they believe will be the most effective at reducing fatal and serious injury crashes and yet have a good benefit cost ratio. All the proposed hotspot countermeasures must be from the [ODOT CRF List](#). Hot Spot projects are prioritized based on benefit cost ratio and those with the highest benefit cost ratio (within each region) are selected and added into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The Systemic method takes a broader view by looking at the crash history and risks associated with an entire roadway/corridor and then applying proven low-cost countermeasures to reduce the risk along the entire roadway, corridor or within a specific

jurisdiction. The ARTS Program consists of three emphasis areas for systemic improvements: Roadway Departure, Intersection, and Pedestrian and Bicycle. Systemic Intersection and Roadway Departure projects must include at least one location with a crash history of at least one fatal or serious injury crash within the last five years. Systemic Pedestrian/Bicycle applications are risk based and can address locations where no crash history exists.

Examples of systemic projects include installation of curve warning signs, rumble strips, reflectorized backplates on signals, rumble strips, countdown pedestrian timers and conversion to flashing yellow left turn arrow (FYLTA) signal heads for protected-permitted left turn (PPLT) signal operation.

Like the hotspot approach, the systemic approach is an application-based process. ODOT and all local jurisdictions within a region can submit an application for available Systemic funding. All the proposed systemic countermeasures must be from the [ODOT CRF List](#). Projects are prioritized based on benefit cost ratio (for Roadway Departure and Intersection projects) and cost effectiveness index (Pedestrian and Bicycle projects).

8. *Can the same countermeasures be used for Hotspot as Systemic projects? Can a single location use a Systemic approach?*

While ODOT asks applicants to submit separate applications for hotspot and for systemic treatments, the flexibility exists to combine these approaches, provided that the application type being proposed contributes to over 50% of the projected benefits. It is important to note that a maximum of four countermeasures can be applied in one application.

9. *If a local jurisdiction has supplemental crash data, can that data be used during the project selection process?*

ODOT recognizes that some jurisdictions may have supplemental crash data (e.g. police reports) that might be different from ODOT crash data. While this data may be informative for project selection, it is excluded from project prioritization and benefit cost analysis. For fairness and consistency, crash data from 2017-2021 obtained from [ODOT Crash Reports](#) must be used for analysis purposes. However, the supplemental data may be informative for selecting appropriate countermeasures at a given location.

10. *How is the final project list prepared?*

All projects in the refined lists (for both hotspot and systemic) go through multi-disciplinary assessment to verify the applicability of the proposed solution. A final list (100 percent list) is prepared and prioritized based on the best benefit cost ratios (Pedestrian and Bicycle projects are ranked based on cost effectiveness).

11. *Can a Hotspot or Systemic safety project from the final list be combined with another Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) project at the same location?*

Yes, if a hotspot or systemic safety project from the final list is at a location where another STIP project is planned, these two projects may be combined for efficiency. Similarly, if a Hotspot project is selected in a location that is in the corridor where there will be a systemic

project, both projects may be combined to a single project for efficient design and delivery of the project. This typically occurs after project lists are completed and before the STIP is adopted.

12. Who designs and delivers the projects?

After the final 100 percent list is complete, ODOT regions work with the local jurisdictions to determine the delivery methods, timelines, and delivery agencies. The delivering agency is responsible for timely and fiscally responsible delivery.

13. Will a local match be required for selected projects?

ODOT requires local agencies to contribute a 10% match for safety projects. If the local agency fails to identify matching funds, the local agency and ODOT Region staff should work together to develop a funding plan for local match subject to Highway Administrator approval. More information can be found on the [Local Agency Guidelines](#) website.

14. Will the state fund exchange be available?

Because of insufficient state funds, the fund exchange (state funds for federal funds) for local projects will not be available. All projects must be estimated and scoped for federal delivery for the 2027-2030 STIP.

15. Do HSIP projects follow Statewide Transportation Improvement Program process?

All the projects selected under the ARTS Program follow the STIP process. Refer to the [STIP website](#) for more information on the STIP process and stakeholder involvement.

16. Do the engineering countermeasures impact driver behaviors such as drinking and driving and speeding?

A direct relationship between countermeasures and driver behaviors has not been determined. Some countermeasures may directly improve driver behaviors, others may not, however the improvement may prevent similar crashes in the future. For example, a roadway with a countermeasure installed — such as a median barrier or centerline rumble strips — may prevent an intoxicated driver from crossing into oncoming lanes.

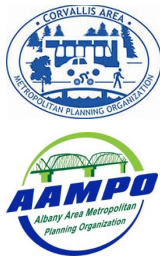
Countermeasures that effectively reduce crashes are developed using data from all types and causes of crashes. The Crash Reduction Factor represents the relative change in crash frequency for a particular countermeasure regardless of cause of a crash. Engineering judgment may be needed to determine the appropriate countermeasure to mitigate poor driver behaviors.

17. So what can my local agency do to start preparing for ARTS?

ODOT will reach out to local agencies in each region. In the meantime, local agencies and ODOT can begin thinking about and looking for good safety project candidates that meet funding eligibility. ODOT will update the [ARTS webpage](#) as more information becomes available.

18. Who should I contact if I have questions?

For questions regarding the ARTS Program, please contact your local ODOT Region Traffic Office. While the FAQs are informative, some items like schedule and timelines could change.



Community and Economic Development
 1400 Queen Avenue SE, Suite 205 • Albany, Oregon 97322
 (541) 967-8551 • FAX (541) 967-4651

**Joint AAMPO/CAMPO
 POLICY BOARD MEMORANDUM**

To: AAMPO/CAMPO Policy Boards
From: Nick Meltzer, MPO Manager
Date: September 27, 2023
Re: STBG Funding-State Fund Exchange Update

Background

Historically, both AAMPO and CAMPO received federal surface transportation block grant (STBG) funding to distribute to member projects. This funding was able to be exchanged with state funds, to allow more flexibility in project type and delivery. During the summer of 2022, the Oregon Department of Transportation announced that due to expected funding shortfalls, the state fund exchange program would be going away, requiring all STBG projects to be delivered with federal funding and associated regulations.

State Legislation

After significant pushback from local governments when ODOT announced the end of the state fund exchange program, the League of Oregon Cities and Association of Oregon Counties lobbied the Oregon Legislature to make the program permanent. In 2023, HB2101 codified the state fund exchange for local governments and small MPOs.

One peculiarity with the new legislation is that the funds are more restrictive than previous state fund exchange dollars. The new funds are coming from the State Highway Fund (SHF), which mandates all projects must occur within the public right of way. This includes all cities, counties and state right of way, but does prohibit the use of funds for anything outside. This limits the use of shared use path projects and planning studies if they fall outside the public right of way.

Available Funding

The legislation set a specific amount of funding available for state fund exchange, in order to preserve state funds over time. The amounts AAMPO and CAMPO are expected to receive are significantly lower than the amount of STBG funding programmed for the 2024-2027 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). For AAMPO, approximately \$840,000 will be available each year in State Highway Funds (SHF). For CAMPO, approximately \$860,000 will be available. This compares to each MPO receiving approximately \$1 million in STBG funding each year between 2024-2027.

Next Steps

While we are excited about transition to a permanent fund exchange, there is some bookkeeping and reconciliation to complete for the projects we previously programmed in the 2024-2027 MTIP. As those funds were expected to be federal, we also may discuss with the TAC the transition to other projects that better fit the use of SHF dollars. We anticipate having these conversations with the TAC in January 2024.



**Joint AAMPO/CAMPO
 POLICY BOARD MEMORANDUM**

To: AAMPO/CAMPO Policy Boards
From: Billy McGregor, Corum Ketchum, & Nick Meltzer, MPO Staff
Date: September 27, 2023
Re: MPO Coordination & Collaboration

Background

The Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization was established in 2002 and the Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization in 2013. Per federal definition, these organizations serve to facilitate continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive regional planning within their metropolitan areas, yet the two MPOs are located only 5 – 10 miles apart. While each group of communities face issues unique to their specific geographies, the region as a whole is connected through housing, transportation, and economics. This interconnectedness can sometimes make it difficult to plan for regional scenarios because the issues are often between, and not within, the MPO boundaries.

Federal vs. State Regulations

Metropolitan Planning Organizations were established as part the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962, for the purpose of including local decision making in the planning and implementation of federal funds in urban areas. Established for an urban area over 50,000 people, the boundaries of MPOs are drawn around the “urbanized area.”¹ This is defined as a population density of 1000 people per square mile, or higher. “Skips” and “jumps” can be made along transportation corridors to connect urbanized areas within the same general geography.

If Albany and Corvallis were in another state, it is likely only one MPO would already exist, as development would occur along Highway 20. However, due to Oregon’s land use program and Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs), urban development outside UGBs is limited. This leads to two separate urbanized areas in our broader region.

The federal guidance for establishing MPO boundaries permits more than one urbanized area within one MPO and also states:

(d) MPA boundaries may be established to coincide with the geography of regional economic development and growth forecasting areas.

MPO Merger

The request to investigate a merger of the two MPOs was initially brought to the policy boards of both AAMPO and CAMPO at a joint meeting on January 22, 2020 by staff Dana Nichols and Nick Meltzer. With the continued emphasis placed on MPO coordinated operations by the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), an addendum to FHWA rules published in July 2022, there are more incentives now for MPOs to work together. While this new rulemaking does seek to make MPO mergers easier, it also offers other avenues for coordination. During the 2020

¹ <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/23/450.312>

lead up to this conversation to aid in the discussion of an MPO merger, staff identified the following questions: *Can we merge? What are the implications if we do? And, should we merge?* The issue was of particular relevance in 2020 due to the upcoming decennial census and questions about the MPO boundaries expanding.

The outcome of the 2020 conversation was to continue coordinating among the MPOs as much as possible and wait for census results to bring the issue up again. With census results now available, three years of collaboration and changes in staffing, the staff are bringing the conversation forward again. Of particular interest in a potential merger are the following topics: (1) funding, (2) governance, and (3) transit. This memo explores each of those topics in more detail below.

Albany and Corvallis MPOs currently have a relationship built into our individual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). With its roots in the Corvallis FY'20 UPWP, this has been a work task item since its addition in FY'22 and continued in the FY'23 UPWPs. Currently both MPOs share the costs on a number of mutually beneficial services such as administrative assistance, GIS staffing, and management.

Concern 1: Funding

Our MPO's receive two types of funds. Planning (PL) funds, used for annual short and long range planning work, and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding, allocated to construction projects every four years.

PL funding comes from a federal allocation that is given to the state to distribute to each MPO on the basis of: population, status of planning, attainment of air quality standards, metropolitan area transportation needs, and other factors necessary to provide for an appropriate distribution of funds to carry out Highway and Transit Program requirements and other applicable requirements of Federal law.²

Our State DOT has four components that make up the funding allocations for MPOs.

- *Component 1* takes money off the top to fund the two bi-state MPOs (Rainier with Longview/Kelso Washington and Freewater with Walla-Walla, Washington) and \$75,000 annually to fund the Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC).
- *Component 2* provides baseline funding for data needs in each MPO boundary. Allocations are broken up into four tiers: small non-TMA, larger non-TMA, TMA, and Metro. Money is also set aside for modelling, as this is seen as a significant area of responsibility for an MPO. To normalize modeling costs, ODOT considers the existing costs for the non-TMA models and then estimates comparison costs if ODOT were to provide a similar service to TMAs. Data and modeling account for approximately 29% of the federal allocation.
- *Component 3* accounts for population, and this is where a majority of funds are allocated (55%). It is calculated by percentage of population within the MPO boundary, as compared with the total number of people located in MPOs throughout the state.
- *Component 4* is a factor of complexity: number of jurisdictions, level of Air Quality requirements, requirements to develop a Congestion Management Process, timeline for

² 23 CFR 420.109: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-E/part-420/subpart-A/section-420.109>

updating RTS, bi-state MPO collaboration expectations. Weights are shown for each complexity as follows:

<u>Complexity Factor</u>	<u>Weight</u>
1-2 Jurisdictions	1
3-10 Jurisdictions	2
11-20 Jurisdictions	4
21+ Jurisdictions	6
Air Quality non-CMAQ	1
Air Quality CMAQ	2
Congestion Management Process	1
4yr RTP	1
Bi-State MPO Responsibilities	1

Ultimately, since population models are updated every few years, and federal allocation changes annually, exact financial implications of a merger are challenging to estimate. However, we know a few things about each component: Component 1 will remain the same; Component 2 may increase due to increased needs of modeling, but may also decrease due to a reduced baseline funding needed to manage only one organization; Component 3 may provide greater funding based on an increase in geography, and thus population, though we know this will be minimal due to constraints of Urban Growth Boundaries; and, Component 4 will likely remain the same, as combined the two MPOs encompass 9 jurisdictions and other factors remain the same.

Surface Transportation Block Grant funding is provided to MPOs using a population-based formula set by the Federal government. Merging the two MPOs would only moderately affect the amount of STBG allotted each year, as the population between the two MPOs that would join a single MPO is likely around 2,000.

Concern 2: Governance

In the event of a merger, the MPO will need to “redesignate” and form a new governance structure. There are ways to address issues of geographic and population balance by establishing rules around voting rights and representation. Intergovernmental balance is often addressed through seat rotation, allocation of seats, and voting weight.³ Seat rotation/allocation is used when the number of seats at the table is less than the number of jurisdictions represented in the MPO. The seat may rotate between certain jurisdictions (smaller cities), or amongst regions, for a certain period of time. The other way to balance voices is to establish weighted voting, where jurisdictions are assigned a number of votes based on population (or some other mechanism). This is a largely uncommon practice, only seen amongst larger MPOs. Other MPOs incorporate more non-voting members as active ex-officio so as to include everyone in the conversation, but limit the number of voting members to simplify the decision making process.

Of particular concern in 2020 was the distribution of small and large cities within a joint policy board, and the potential for the two larger cities to “outweigh” small city concerns. If MPOs merged, staff recommends each member be allocated one vote with the following membership.

As noted in the table, no one “interest group” would have a majority over another. Furthermore, both MPO Policy Boards are excellent examples of using consensus decision making and

³ https://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/MPOStaffing_and_Org_Structures.pdf

considering all viewpoints prior to coming to a collaborative decision. In recent years, the distribution of STBG funds has also been more equally split among larger and smaller cities, demonstrating the region’s willingness to work together for mutual interests.

<i>Large Cities</i>	<i>Small Cities (5,000 or less)</i>	<i>Non-City Members</i>
Albany	Adair Village	Benton County
Corvallis	Jefferson	Linn County
	Millersburg	Oregon Department of Transportation
	Philomath	
	Tangent	

Concern 3: Transit

As an MPO is established, the MPO establishes an agreement with the “designated recipient,” or the primary transit agency serving the MPO region. This enables the transit agency to receive 5307 funding from the Federal Transit Administration, which is approximately \$500,000 a year for operations, capital improvements and maintenance. Each MPO has a designated recipient; Corvallis Transit System and Albany Transit System.

Currently, CTS also receives money through the 5307 Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) program. This funding is provided to a transit agency within a small urbanized area (UZA) when they exceed specific performance factors: passenger miles per vehicle revenue mile, passenger miles per vehicle revenue hour, vehicle revenue mile per capita, vehicle revenue hour per capita, passenger miles per capita, and passenger trips per capita. CTS generally exceeds all of these, which, in 2019, amounted to an additional \$1,309,556.⁴

In 2020, a major concern in merging MPOs was possibility of the FTA allowing only one designated recipient. This would have the potential to dilute Corvallis Transit System’s ridership by combing it with Albany Transit System, causing them not to qualify for the STIC factors and additional funding.

23 U.S.C 134(e)(2)(a) pertains to Metropolitan Planning Areas (MPAs), which are the geographic areas determined by agreement between the MPO and the Governor, in which metropolitan transportation planning processes are carried out. The CFR states that MPA boundaries:

1. Shall encompass at least the existing urbanized area and the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within a 20-year forecast period for the transportation plan;
2. May encompass the entire metropolitan statistical area or consolidated metropolitan statistical area, as defined by the Bureau of the Census. So, the UZA(s) is the minimum MPA boundary, however this does not preclude expansion of the MPA to include areas beyond what is required by federal law.

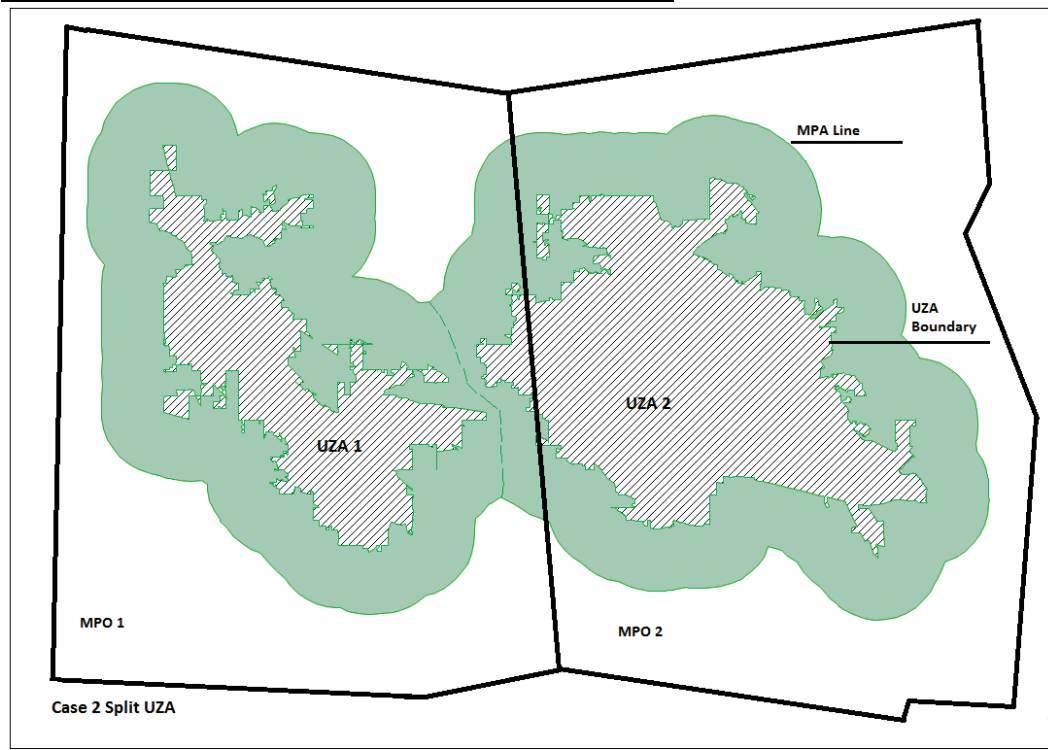
The FTA currently recognizes Corvallis and Albany as two separate urbanized areas (population between 50,000 and 200,000). Again, due to Oregon’s Urban Growth Boundaries, the density

⁴ Performance factors are based on the average level of service for all UZAs with populations between 200,000 and 1,000,000, which are updated every two years. This funding is not guaranteed, and requires that small transit agencies be reevaluated during each cycle to ensure their current numbers meet or exceed the performance factors set by the larger UZAs.

for each metro area is contained, with only a small buffer between them. It appears possible to have more than one urbanized area within an MPO boundary (examples exist in Florida, Idaho, as well as FHWA NPRM Guidance), which would allow Corvallis Transit System to remain separate from Albany Transit System, for the purposes of retaining funds. It doesn't appear that the two Urbanized Areas will combine in the next census.

In talking with Metro, the MPO for the Portland region, they have multiple transit agencies within one large urbanized area, including Tri-Met, and they allocate FTA funds to each agency using an agreed upon methodology. They do not have the same situation with STIC factors, but staff have emailed the Federal Transit Administration in an effort to gain clarity.

FHWA Multiple-UZA Merger Example for the NPRM



Alternatives and Timing

The merger process has not traditionally been a quick one. While the NPRM sets the ambitious goal of two years from start to finish, the reality is usually between three and four years for MPOs merging together. While there are multiple courses of action, in the interim, steps can be taken both towards **Merger** or towards **Increased Coordination/Collaboration**

MPO Boundary Smoothing – redrawing the MPO boundaries to have a shared border and to “clean up” the edges. Would be reviewed with FHWA then presented to both MPOs for consideration of changes or adoption. Process has been shown to take up to One Year. Proposed boundary would be either: (1) along the Willamette River, ex. SW Washington Regional Transportation Council & Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System, (2) connected along US-20, ex. Middle Rogue MPO & Rogue Valley MPO

*Yearly MOUs** – drafting and approving a Memorandum of Understanding in which coordination efforts are detailed and approved by both MPO Policy Boards. This would describe coordination efforts in greater detail than currently written into the MPO's UPWPs. In order to show State and Federal agencies proof of consistent coordination this document would be renewed Yearly.

*Synchronize Annual Work Products** – while most MPO work products are based on State or Federal timeframe requirements, some of these are due at different times of the year compared to other MPOs. This is due to products such as the RTP/LRTP having its due date based on the formal founding date of the MPO itself. Currently AAMPO and CAMPO have a gap of one year in between their RTP due dates. To accomplish synchronization, AAMPO would need to develop its next RTP one year early. This is allowed and would be offset by working with CAMPO staff to reduce workload.

*Share Federally Funded Projects** - Federal Law/Rules require MPOs to work together on their RTP/LRTP if they share a federally funded project. Without a merger, both MPOs can find ways to share work products as mentioned above.

*AAMPO/CAMPO are currently performing Coordination, with shared work products and other measures we would be performing Collaboration.

Possible Courses of Action

Staff have determined some potential next steps for the two policy boards to consider.

1. Continue with current Coordination.

- Benefits: Staff are already performing this function.
- Cost: Less coordination, more duplicative meetings

Actions: Continue UPWP Coordination task, continue occasional joint MPO Policy Board meetings, possibly establish MOU for shared project work as appropriate.

2. Increase MPO interaction from Coordination to Collaboration.

- Benefits: Staff time savings on joint work products, less administration oversight required by state and federal partners, less confusion for members of the public, better staff coverage, potentially a bigger voice in state matters
- Cost: Initial staff time to standardize joint work products, still separation of budgets and tasks, loss of some individuality of each independent MPO

Actions: Smooth MPO Boundaries to be contiguous (not joint), renew a yearly MOU, produce joint planning documents as appropriate (RTP, Title VI and PPP, etc.), establish more regular joint meeting schedule (i.e. 2-3 times a year)

3. Merge MPOs to create one regional entity.

- Benefits: Eliminate all redundant tasks, reduction in administrative support needed (fewer meetings), staff cost time savings from meetings can be re-directed, fewer meetings for joint members (ODOT, Benton County)

- Cost: Initial effort to develop joint structure and documents,

Actions: Explore formalizing of one MPO, confirm transit funding concerns, establish timeline for implementation

Conclusion

The process through which a merger would take place is called “redesignation”. 23 U.S.C 450.310⁵ states that an MPO designation shall remain in effect until an official redesignation has been made. An existing MPO may be designated only by agreement between the Governor and units of local government that represent at least 75 percent of the existing metropolitan planning area population (including the largest city by Census designation). It is required when an MPO makes substantial changes to voting membership, or in the decision making authority or responsibility.

Staff provides this information for Policy Board discussion, and welcomes direction on potential course of action.

⁵ <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/23/450.310>