



2004 TRANSPORTATION PLANNING CERTIFICATION REVIEW SUMMARY REPORT

**METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
PROCESS FOR THE MICHIANA AREA COUNCIL OF
GOVERNMENTS (MACOG)**

Certification Review By:

**FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
AND
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Indiana Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA-IN) and the Region 5 Office of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) hereby find that MACOG and its staff, in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), and public transportation providers, are following a transportation planning process which complies with the spirit of TEA-21 and provides a solid foundation for the development of the required federal planning documents.

The overall planning process has good procedures for the development of the Unified Planning Work Program, the Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program. Based on this certification review, the MACOG transportation planning process is found to substantially comply with Section 134 of Title 23 of the United States Code and Section 8 of the Federal Transit Act. Accordingly, FHWA-IN and FTA hereby jointly certify the MACOG transportation planning process for a 3-year period beginning with the date of the certification letter transmitting this report.

The following sections of this report contain a discussion of the items reviewed, the issues discussed, and the recommendations made for enhancing the process, where appropriate.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

None

RECOMMENDATIONS

INDOT-MACOG Coordination

It is important to acknowledge that INDOT-MACOG relations are very good at this point in time and is a very positive working relationship that mutually benefits both agencies. However, there has been some confusion expressed by all parties regarding INDOT and MACOG points of contact and associated responsibilities. FHWA and FTA recommend that FHWA/FTA/INDOT/MPO working group be created to develop INDOT-MPO coordination procedures. These procedures would detail INDOT points of contact, timelines and schedules, and basic description of coordination procedures.

2030 Transportation Plan Update Schedules

We recommend that MACOG, as well as all of the MPOs in Indiana, partner with INDOT and IDEM to establish a schedule for their respective updates. The

schedule would show how the INDOT 2030 Statewide Transportation Plan update coordination would occur so there is agreement regarding State jurisdiction expansion projects. The schedule would also show approximately when MACOG would provide VMT estimates for State Implementation Plan (SIP) development purposes. The schedule would show how all this is going to be accomplished prior to the June 15, 2005 deadline for MPOs to demonstrate conformity to the new 8-hour non-attainment budgets using the new MOBILE6 model.

Contents of the 2030 Transportation Plan

It is important that MACOG's 2030 Transportation Plan be a stand alone document and include all the contents required by 23 CFR 450.316 – 322. It should include the socioeconomic assumptions, documentation regarding model calibration, Title VI/Environmental Justice consideration, consideration of the seven planning factors, SOV analysis results demonstrating that all projects have come out of the CMS per 23 CFR 500.109 (c). MACOG has exceptional GIS capabilities and it seems that some of this can be accomplished with visuals that fully tell the story. While the full Transportation Plan would be available for public comment and presented for Policy action, an abbreviated Executive Summary could be developed for general circulation that includes the information that most citizens would be interested in seeing. Thus the adopted document would be fully defensible, but a user-friendlier version would be available for general distribution.

TIP/INSTIP Coordination

MACOG, as well as all of Indiana's MPOs have emphasized the importance of the INDOT Scheduling Manager and the need for INDOT to adequately staff this area as it directly impacts the cooperative TIP/INSTIP process. Staffing issues have resulted in the MPOs not being able to review draft lists of projects and delays in providing MPOs the basic lists needed for timely development of their TIPs. We recommend that the FHWA/FTA/INDOT/MPO workgroup review the PDP TIP/INSTIP coordination process and the associated timeline with the INDOT Scheduling Manager and work towards implementation.

Planning Agreements/Conformity Consultations

We recommend that MACOG, and all Indiana MPOs, INDOT, and IDEM review the current planning agreements and the Air Quality Conformity MOUs and update them as needed after the reauthorization of the 6-year surface transportation bill and designation of the new 8-hour and PM 2.5 non-attainment areas. The coordination issues are more complex since the non-attainment areas are not just limited the MPO study area and in one case involve two MPOs.

Public Involvement Process

As noted previously the MACOG PIP was last updated in November 1999. The PIP discusses the goals of the program and the federal public involvement requirements. It is the policy of the MACOG MPO PIP to provide access to the planning process so as to allow the public opportunity to comment on their transportation planning activities.

In accordance with 23 CFR 450.322 (c) and 450.324 (c), all new non-attainment areas will need to provide for a minimum of one formal public meeting as the TIP and Transportation Plan are being updated. It is also recommended that the TIP be updated in conjunction with the Plan update because the 6-month grace period to re-determine TIP conformity has demonstrated in the new regulations.

We recommend MACOG update the Public Involvement process policy document, as needed, to address developing local issues, identify best practices, and respond to changes in federal law. To improve future public involvement activities, several methods of assessment should frequently be applied to ensure effective public participation.

We also recommend that MACOG consider publishing a “citizen-oriented” guide to transportation planning either independently or as a companion piece to common planning products.

BEST PRACTICES

GIS

As mentioned above, MACOG has a very comprehensive GIS program that allows the MPO to use computer technology to assist in making more intelligent transportation decisions. The foresight and leadership that had to have taken place several years ago allows MACOG to be recommend on a national level as an example for best practices. When FHWA Headquarters was looking for an MPO in the Indiana region that could be used to facilitate Scenario Planning, MACOG was contacted to participate because of the high quality of their GIS capabilities.

Water Quality

MACOG has been active partner in water quality planning activities since the early 1970s. Nearly every activity related to water quality has been funded through grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which are administered by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. MACOG provides staff and management to the St. Joseph River Basin Commission, a local conservation agency that exists to conserve, enhance and promote the natural resources and benefits of the Watershed for present and future generations by providing vision, leadership,

and the means. These partnerships allow for additional activities to preserve groundwater and surface water resources through wellhead protection and prevention of nonpoint source pollution.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

MACOG is currently updating the Action Plan for their CEDS. The Project Listing in the document is being updated to remove completed projects, make changes to current projects, and add any new projects. The public participation period was held from January 12 through February 13, 2004. Public comments submitted during that time are being inputted into the update. Such action plans promote strong economic growth and analyze the region's strengths and weaknesses, discusses the natural resources, infrastructure (water, sewer, highways, railways, etc.), the economy, and major industries (agriculture, manufacturing, services, etc.).

Training for Member Agencies on Traffic Counting

MACOG is an active partner in developing high quality Highway Performance Monitoring Data (HPMS) and hold regular traffic counting instruction for member governments to instruct their engineering staffs on proper traffic counting procedures. This is a noteworthy endeavor and is a best practice to highlight for other MPOs to emulate.

COMMENDATIONS

MACOG has a very experienced and competent staff that is highly qualified to perform transportation planning for the MPO region. This dedicated staff is a reflection of the MPO Policy Committee and its dedication and desire to provide the MACOG Planning Area with the best transportation solutions possible.

MACOG is a leader for the Indiana MPOs in providing a positive working relationship with all of its planning partners. This is a reflection on the character and dedication of the Policy Committee as well as the MPO Executive Director whose leadership improves the framework for the MPO to operate.

Additionally, MACOG, through the leadership of its Executive Director, is a driving force on the Indiana MPO Council. The cooperative leadership that the Executive Director has maintained has enabled the MPOs to get out in front of evolving issues that could severely impact program delivery.

PURPOSE OF CERTIFICATION REVIEW

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(5) and 49 U.S.C. 1607, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning processes in Transportation Management Areas at least every three years (A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U. S. Census, with a population of over 200,000. There are 152 TMAs in the U. S., based on the 2000 Census). In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, review of planning products, and preparation of a report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), State Transportation Agency and transit operator in the conduct of the metropolitan planning process. Joint FTA/FHWA certification review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect local issues and needs. As a consequence, the scope and depth of the certification review reports vary significantly.

The certification review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a local metropolitan planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Unified Planning Work Program approval, Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program findings, air quality conformity determinations (in non-attainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal contacts provide both FTA and FHWA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the certification review process.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Following the certification review, Federal reviewers prepare a certification review report to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices and content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed.

While the certification review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “finding” of certification review, in fact, is based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

To encourage public understanding and input, FTA/FHWA will continue to improve the clarity of the certification review reports.

CERTIFICATION REVIEW FORMAT AND GUIDELINES

FHWA and FTA performed a Certification Review of the transportation planning process for the MACOG Transportation Management Area on March 9-11, 2003. The review was conducted at the offices of MACOG in South Bend, IN. An updated set

of Certification Review guidelines was developed for this review. These guidelines, in the form of a list of questions, were provided to MACOG and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) in advance of the review. A copy of the set of guidelines is attached.

CERTIFICATION REVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Sandra Seanor	Executive Director, MACOG
Mary Beth McAdams	Senior Planner/Transit Manager, MACOG
James Galvas	Senior Planner/Traffic Counts Manager, MACOG
Mandie Stafford	Regional Planner, MACOG
Lihe Wang	GIS/Network Modeling Technician, MACOG
Corey Hull	GIS/Network Modeling Technician, MACOG
John-Paul Hopman	GIS/Network Modeling Technician, MACOG
Sherry Sellers	Office Manager, MACOG
Roy Nunnally	Indiana Department of Transportation
Victor Austin	Federal Transit Administration, Region V
Larry Heil	Federal Highway Administration, Indiana Division
David Franklin	Federal Highway Administration, Indiana
Division	
Jim Thorne	Federal Highway Administration, Resource Center

As part of the review, a public meeting was held. Although the MACOG staff properly advertised the meeting, there was no attendance by the general public.

Presiding:

Victor Austin	Federal Transit Administration, Region V
Larry Heil	Federal Highway Administration, Indiana Division
David Franklin	Federal Highway Administration, Indiana
Division	
Jim Thorne	Federal Highway Administration, Resource Center

Attending:

Sandy Seanor	Executive Director, MACOG
Susan Al-Abbas	St. Joseph County Engineer
Roy Nunnally	Indiana Department of Transportation

MPO ORGANIZATION

MACOG Policy Committee members are identified and selected by their elected position as stated in the MACOG Bylaws. The Policy Committee actually is the MPO, with the authority to review and power to approve the plans, programs and projects sent it by the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC).

MACOG's TTAC members are comprised of representatives from engineering, planning, health departments, airports, and other transportation professionals from the Elkhart, Marshall and St. Joseph Counties in Indiana. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has representatives from INDOT's two Districts that attend TTAC and Policy Committee meetings on a regular basis. Since the MACOG boundaries straddle both the LaPorte and Fort Wayne Districts, there can sometimes be representatives from either INDOT District. The MACOG TTAC reviews and recommends plans, projects, and programs for review and endorsement by the MACOG Policy Committee. All of MACOG's jurisdictions are represented as well as all modes of transportation. The Bylaws provide voting membership to each of the following:

Each county in the MACOG planning area is represented by a County Commissioner and County Council representative. 1st (cities over 200,000 in population) and 2nd (cities over 50,000 in population) class Cities are represented by their Mayor and one City Council member. 3rd (cities over 5,000 in population) class Cities are represented by their Mayor. All of the towns within the member counties can be associate members but without voting rights and may be represented by its Town Committee President. The Transportation Technical Advisory Committee includes members from area transit, air, rail and highway.

Staff Organization

MACOG has an experienced and competent staff of planners and administrators to conduct transportation planning for the metropolitan planning area (MPA). MACOG provides the MPA with many planning services that meet not only the needs of the community for transportation planning, but also other planning needs such as economic development and watershed preservation.

MACOG has 18 full or part time employees that carry out transportation planning and serve as the planning arm for all of the planning activities that the region is engaged in. Of particular note is the GIS staff that has, over time, established a comprehensive database of information that MACOG and its membership governments have been able to utilize in making planning decisions.

MACOG is well staffed in all areas of operations. In addition to the GIS staff mentioned above, the MPO also has planners dealing with economic development, water quality, traffic data, freight, transit, pedestrian, bicycle, Long Range Transportation Plan, and Transportation Improvement Plan.

MACOG's planning staff are complimented with support staff that deal with administration and executive functions such as finance, clerical, and executive director.

TRANSIT OPERATORS

South Bend Public Transportation Corp (TRANSPO)

TRANSPO operates 17 fixed routes in South Bend and Mishawaka. Para transit service, known as TRANSPO Access, is also offered in the same service area, and a downtown shuttle operating on weekdays in South Bend.

TRANSPO and the MACOG are both designated as recipients of FTA funds although MACOG does not exercise its recipient status in the South Bend urbanized area. TRANSPO receives a portion of the South Bend urbanized area annual FTA apportionment, and has been successful in securing capital earmarks for bus purchases and for construction of transit facilities. TRANSPO also receives Public Mass Transit Funds(PMTF) from INDOT, and receives local funds through a dedicated tax from the Cities of South Bend and Mishawaka. The INDOT 2002 Indiana Public Transit Annual Report shows nearly \$250,000 in charter revenue also supported the system.

Niles Dial A Ride

The City of Niles contracts with a private service provider to offer demand response and some fixed route transit services. The City of Niles is a designated recipient of FTA funds and receives a portion of the South Bend UZA annual FTA apportionment. In addition, the City of Niles receives State funding through Act 51 of the Public Acts. Funds are provided from Michigan's Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF), which is derived from a portion of state motor fuel taxes, vehicle registration fees, and state sales taxes on automobiles and other auto-related products. The State's Local Bus Operating Assistance Program also provides non-urbanized areas and urbanized areas under 100,000 population with up to 60 percent of eligible expenses.

South Shore Rail Service

South Shore rail service runs from South Bend to Chicago. A terminal is located at the South Bend Regional Airport. Because a portion of this rail service operates in the South Bend UZA, a portion of the FTA Section 5307 annual apportionment is allocated to this service. The major portion of South Shore funding comes from the Chicago UZA, in Sec. 5307 and Sec. 5309 funds as well as PMTF funds.

In the Elkhart-Goshen Urbanized Area MACOG administers the following transit programs: The BUS, Heart City Rider, and Goshen Transit Service.

The BUS

The Bus provides fixed route service in Elkhart and Goshen. Two routes are operated by MACOG and coordinate with a route operated by Concord Township that serves the west side of Elkhart. These routes cooperate to provide seamless service and are operated during similar hours and offer free transfers between the routes. This service is operated under a three-year service contract with a local private bus operator. One hundred percent local funds are used to fund the Concord route, which in turn are used as matching dollars for the two routes operated by MACOG.

MACOG is the designated recipient of FTA funds for the Elkhart-Goshen urbanized area. The BUS is funded with FTA operating and capital funds and also receives PMTF funds from the State of Indiana. Local funds are provided from the Cities of Elkhart and Goshen, and the local funds expended on the Concord Township Bus are counted toward the local share as well, because of the coordination of services.

Heart City Rider (HCR) and Goshen Transit Service (GTS)

MACOG is now operating under a 3-year contract with a local taxi company. This contract, was first entered in to provide 24 hours a day, 7 days a week demand response service in Elkhart and Goshen. The HCR and GTS services are also used as the comparable Para transit service for disabled citizens unable to ride The BUS fixed route system.

MACOG is a designated recipient of FTA funds for the Elkhart-Goshen UZA. HCR and GTS are funded with FTA operating and capital funds and also receive PMTF funds from the State of Indiana. Local funds are provided from the Cities of Elkhart and Goshen.

Transit Planning

MACOG, its participating members, transit providers, and the State develop the required planning documents of the planning process in a cooperative manner. The public is provided an opportunity to review and comment on the UPWP, Transportation Plan, and TIP before they are approved by the MACOG Policy Committee and transmitted to FHWA and FTA for appropriate action.

As mentioned above, MACOG has a transit planner who deals with transit issues and coordinates transit issues with member governments. TRANSPO holds a seat on the TTAC, and participates at the monthly meetings. Niles Dial A Ride holds a seat on the Southwestern Michigan Commission, coordinated by the MPO for their service area and the TTAC. The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) represents the South Shore.

Face to face meetings are held between MACOG, TRANSPO, the City of Niles, and the South Shore, when necessary, to discuss FTA funding splits, TIP amendments, and other transit issues.

Access to Jobs

MACOG developed a regional Job Access and Reverse Commute Plan in 2001 to identify areas not serviced by transit. Fixed route bus service was implemented in Elkhart and Goshen to close several of these gaps, including a new route that began in February to extend transit to the State Road 19 corridor. This new route has brought transit access to more than 125 job sites in the MACOG area. Para transit and subsidized cab rides are available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week in Elkhart and Goshen, which provides transit access for all work shifts.

Federally Funded Transportation Services and Para Transit

MACOG provides Para transit services (Heart City Rider, Goshen Transit Service, and Rock City Rider) and trains Para transit drivers for local transit operators. MACOG also sits on TRANSPOT's ADA advisory committee. A regional transportation fleet inventory is maintained to identify fleets for coordination efforts. Several efforts to coordinate services have been attempted. MACOG contracts with the Marshall Co. Older Adult Services to provide Para transit service in Plymouth.

OTHER COOPERATING AGENCIES

INDOT Involvement

The MACOG meets several times during the year to work with both of its INDOT Districts (LaPorte and Fort Wayne) in addition to its annual call for projects meeting. Additionally, the LaPorte District is present at each MACOG TTAC and the Fort Wayne District is kept informed by receiving the Tech Notes flyer monthly. INDOT has almost no central office representation at either the MACOG Policy or TTAC meetings. The area of interest to INDOT, with regards to long range planning, is to ensure that state system projects are coordinated with MACOG so that both the statewide plan and MACOG's plan mirror each other. In areas outside of state jurisdiction, INDOT plays no active role.

Safety and Security Planning

MACOG's current work element to evaluate the area transit programs for safety and security issues is contained in their FY 2004 UPWP. MACOG has an additional work element underway in the 2004 UPWP involving development of the regional Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) to conform with the national ITS architecture. This effort will coordinate area-wide communication with transit providers, law enforcement, emergency management, and other stakeholders.

Urban Boundary

The process for smoothing the urbanized area boundary after the census was initiated when MACOG submitted to INDOT's Division of Program Development a proposed boundary. To date, INDOT has not completed their review of the MACOG submission for the smoothing of the urbanized areas. MACOG has been in contact with INDOT's Division of Program Development and it is their understanding that INDOT will provide a review copy in the very near future and MACOG will review the changes if there are any and proceed to adopt the final map. MACOG and Southwestern Michigan Commission (SWMC) work to develop the smoothing of the Michigan portion of the urbanized area.

Planning Agreements

In 2002, MACOG entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SWMC and all of the transit operators to define the planning agreements among the respective agencies. Another significant planning agreement that MACOG has entered into is a 1999 MOU with, INDOT, The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), FHWA, and FTA that determines the responsibility of each party with respect to Clean Air Act. MACOG appears to have a very comprehensive MOU program with all transportation and environmental regulatory agencies that it conducts business with on a routine basis.

LAND USE AND GROWTH ISSUES

The MACOG urbanized area does not have a regional land-use policy at this time to assist in the planning process. St. Joseph County does not have land use policies in place, however, Elkhart County land-use is available and is based on the assessor land-use category.

Urban Sprawl

Unlike most TMA areas, urban sprawl is not a major concern for the MACOG area. To work toward consensus building and public education, the City of South Bend sponsored a series of planning forums over the past two years that addressed sprawl and livable communities initiatives. MACOG houses both Elkhart and St. Joseph County GIS data and has built and maintains the public website, which allows the public, elected officials, county and city employees to view and use the GIS. This allows viewers to quickly see the developed areas, as well as areas that are undeveloped.

Land-use and zoning GIS data layers will allow MACOG's transportation planners to fully consider land-use solutions for transportation problems. As data layers are developed, MACOG's GIS allows for clear visualization of land-use impacts as they relate to transportation.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT AND CORRIDOR PRESERVATION

In the MACOG urbanized area, the Area Plan Commission and the City of Mishawaka have developed an access management plan to limit access along the Capital Avenue - SR331 corridor. INDOT, St. Joseph and Marshall Counties have been working together to identify and limit access on the new US 31 Corridor alignment and recently received approval of the draft Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for the South Bend portion of the corridor. The final decision is expected by the end of 2004.

Brownfields

In the area of brownfields, MACOG urban area has been active in taking proactive steps to identify and eliminate contaminated sites. The City of Mishawaka has acquired, demolished, and is in the process of redeveloping the Uniroyal Brownfield site along the St. Joseph River bank.

The City of South Bend is currently redeveloping the old Oliver Plow brownfield site as well as the Studebaker brownfield corridor. South Bend has also partnered with the University of Notre Dame and EPA to develop an environmental center on a former dumpsite. The City of South Bend has also aided in establishing a major regional distribution center for the A.J. Wright Corp. (i.e. T.J. Maxx stores) locating on the City's west side which included the redevelopment of land considered to be a brownfield site.

The City of Goshen is developing a Advisory Commission to deal with brownfields as part of its redevelopment commission activities to identify, develop strategies and seize opportunities to reuse these sites. Additionally, City of Elkhart has included brownfield redevelopment within their Riverwalk development. Elkhart County maintains a listing of brownfield areas that were developed by the Elkhart County Horizon Project. Nappanee has developed a list of Brownfields in the community that could be considered for future development.

St. Joseph County redeveloped the Jackson Road landfill into a scenic project, which includes a bike and pedestrian trail connecting to the proposed Plymouth Industrial Line.

TRANSPORTATION MODEL AND TECHNICAL PROCESS

Travel Demand Model

MACOG uses TransCad software to run their traffic demand model. MACOG is scheduled to update the long-range transportation plan in the coming year and the travel demand model will play a significant role in providing the data needed to update the planning assumptions of the plan. The U.S. Census has only released the first and second releases of the Census Transportation Planning Package (CTTP) when this Certification Review was held and MACOG, to meet its internal deadlines, used the best available data to update their model.

MACOG does use both the Congestion Management System (CMS) their travel demand model to identify congestion and level of services issues for the metropolitan area. These are reviewed by staff and the jurisdictions' engineers and are a component in the project selection process.

With respect to mode split and the travel demand-forecasting model, the model is calibrated to within 2.6% of actual ground counts. MACOG estimates that all transit trips in the two urban areas generate less than 1% (0.2%) of all trips and has determined that modeling modal split is not accurate given the error rate. As a result, the transit trips modeled will be lost in the model's error rate and it is not cost efficient to include a mode split. Additionally, for the same reasons, MACOG does not model truck traffic or truck delivery traffic.

The MACOG metropolitan area has several special trip generators that generate large volumes of traffic on both a constant basis and also on occasional basis. The University of Notre Dame has a large number of regular students who account for a large amount of vehicle usage on a daily basis. Additional university activities, i.e., athletic events, student concerts, and ceremonies, account for large numbers of occasional visitors to the metropolitan area. Other special generators in the area include two area hospitals, Memorial and St. Joseph, other area colleges, shopping malls, Grape Road and the Main Street corridor.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

The MACOG Policy Committee adopted the existing Long Range Transportation Plan on June 3, 2002. MACOG is currently updating its planning assumptions and preparing to update its existing 2025 plan. Because of the new air quality standards that were issued on April 15, 2004, MACOG will have to model its new plan using MOBILE6 to determine air quality conformity.

MACOG initiates a request for the financial capacity data for the long-range plan. The various jurisdictions are cooperative in providing the requested information. The plan does show sufficient revenue for the projects identified.

There is a bicycle and pedestrian element to the current LRTP. Projects are submitted by the local public agencies. Such projects are ranked and reviewed by the MPO staff and funded with available CMAQ and TE funds.

MACOG confers with the transit providers on an annual basis during the TIP process to update planning for capital needs on a 5-year scope. MACOG also confers with these agencies in conjunction with updates to the LRTP to incorporate a chapter on transit issues and needs.

Normally, the INDOT requests that the MACOG Network Modeling Staff complete various scenarios and provide projections to their consulting engineers. The Design Consultant will complete the design level data and provide it to the MACOG for review and agreement.

When the State does update its LRTP, it uses various planning tools such as HERS-ST to determine capacity building projects within the urbanized boundaries of MPOs. The State then briefs the MPO on its capacity building projects and later submits to the MPO the necessary paperwork that will incorporate the State projects into the MPO LRTP.

By all indications, MACOG's LRTP is fiscally constrained and has a reasonable expectation for all funds that it has projected to be used in its Long Range Transportation Plan. While MACOG normally has good communication with all of its member governments, it sometimes is not always notified when a local sponsor requests a congressional earmark.

MACOG's current LRTP identifies the projected transportation demand through 2025. It adopts congestion strategies as identified in the MACOG Congestion Management System (CMS), which include ridesharing, bike and pedestrian activities, public transportation improvements where feasible, intersection improvements and other activities. MACOG became a non-attainment area on June 15, 2004 and is not currently subject to the SOV 23 CFR Part 500 requirements; however, MACOG is incorporating the SOV process in its CMS activities.

MACOG does incorporate a financial update section in its plan that considers operation and maintenance costs as part of the plan. The projects in the 2025 Transportation Plan Update are descriptive of existing and proposed projects and have cost estimates developed. The U.S. Highway 31 project is the only transportation project fitting the major investment study category. The original MIS was completed in 1998.

CONFORMITY AND AIR QUALITY PLANNING

MACOG currently has an existing MOU that covers the development of new or amended transportation plans or improvement programs requiring conformity determinations. This MOU was first created in 1999 and was signed by MACOG, INDOT, IDEM, USEPA, FHWA, and FTA. Since the new National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) announced April 15, 2004 do effect the MACOG urbanized area, MACOG will be working to update its conformity MOU to take the new air quality standards into consideration.

Under the terms of the existing Conformity MOU, MACOG has agreed to consult with the other affected agencies in the development of their LRTP and transportation improvement program.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

MACOG's TIP is developed annually when the MPO sends out a call for projects to its member governments and also transit partners. Jurisdictions are responsible for updating costs for projects currently in the TIP and for new projects over the next five years. Once projects are received, they are reviewed and ranked using the MACOG project selection process. The INDOT Sharing Arrangement allows the MPO's to manage its federal funding over a three-year period, with the ability to spend all of the funds at once or spread over three years. Traditionally, MACOG has been able to obligate and spend all of the federal funds its has been allocated. MACOG staff review the TIP to assure consistency with the LRTP and provides the projects to the INDOT for their consistency review.

Amendments to the MACOG TIP are categorized as major or minor amendments. Minor amendments are routinely amended based on the endorsement of the TTAC and agreement of the Policy Board. Discussion is open to the public at regular Policy Board meetings. Major amendments follow the Public Participation Process. After approval by MACOG and Indiana Governor, the TIP is incorporated by reference into the INSTIP. MACOG has commented that they do not receive a copy of the STIP from INDOT as is stated to in the INDOT PDP Manual, but is aware that an electronic copy of the INSTIP is available on the INDOT website.

TITLE VI / ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

MACOG has proactively taken on the responsibility to ensure that the process and outcome of the transportation planning process does not unfairly deprive of benefit, or unduly burden any persons based on race, income, or heritage. MACOG is the compliance coordinator for the region pertaining to all Title VI issues and coordinates all efforts for its member governments. TRANSPO assesses their transit service using policies and standards governing vehicle loads, vehicle assignments, vehicle headway, route performance, distribution of transit amenities, and transit access. TRANSPO documents this data and submits it to MACOG for review and inclusion with Title VI updates. MACOG performs a similar assessment of transit service in the Elkhart-Goshen UZA for inclusion in the Title VI updates.

During the certification review, MACOG indicated that there were no Title VI complaints in the MACOG region during the past three-year period. MACOG's current Title VI document includes demographic profiles of the two urbanized areas and the locations of low-income and minority populations by census tracts.

MACOG has developed an Environmental Justice GIS - mapping layer that allows

the viewing of transit routes and highway projects in low income and minority areas. The GIS tool is used to verify that the multi-modal system access and mobility performance improvements in the Transportation Plan, TIP, and planning process comply with Title VI and Environmental Justice requirements. The GIS System also provides MACOG with a tool to plan and analyze transportation investments in the region and their impact on low income and minority areas.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS (PIP)

MACOG's current PIP was adopted by their Policy Committee in 1999. PIP effectiveness is dependent on how controversial the projects in question have been. Projects with little public impact do not have the same level of public involvement, as do larger projects that might require property acquisition or cause traffic problems during facility construction.

MACOG first contacted its freight partners by survey in 1995 and again in 2000. MACOG is updating its freight survey and inventory this year and has used its website to electronically survey its freight partners. This allows these respondents to view the MACOG website and obtain information about the LRTP, TIP and other MPO products. According to MACOG, sixty new freight partners signed up to receive the MACOG Gazette.

Transit users have the same opportunity to comment as other citizens, and are very familiar with MACOG in Elkhart County. MACOG Performs a survey annually regarding ridership issues, and actively seeks opinions regarding service issues. In 2002, TRANSPO, South Bend and Mishawaka conducted a full service review in 2002 that included participation of a group of approximately 30 local stakeholders that met regularly during the process to review interim products, discuss study issues, monitor progress of the projects, keep informed, and to provide local input. The service review included a random sample telephone survey and two focus groups to provide citizen input. TRANSPO also holds monthly board meetings that are open to the public. Additionally, MACOG has begun distributing rider comments cards to riders of The BUS for feedback and public comment.

MACOG adopted their public involvement process that is used for the TIP projects and amendments, the LRTP, and other related transportation and transit projects. Methods used to gain public input include holding open houses at the MACOG office, distributing documents to public libraries in the region, including information in the MACOG newsletter (The MACOGazette), and on the MACOG website. MACOG has an extensive mailing list of nearly 1700 individuals and agencies that have been developed to provide notice of transportation meetings, documents, and programs. The mailing list includes public agencies, transportation agencies, freight users and shippers, neighborhood centers and neighborhood leaders, as well as other interested individuals. Additionally, MACOG's TTAC and Policy Committee meetings are open to the public. Additionally, MACOG meets with the directors of the Human Rights Commissions in Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties to gain input regarding minority populations.

Low-income and minority citizens have been reached through notification to neighborhood centers and neighborhood leaders. Documents are provided to public libraries in minority areas. MACOG advertised in several local minority newspapers to get their public involvement message out to low-income and minority populations in their urbanized area. Additionally, Bus schedules and transit brochures have been formatted in Spanish for non-English speaking residents. MACOG is bilingual in Russian, Chinese and Spanish and has a Spanish voice mail in the BUS with the bus stops times announced.

MACOG now holds an annual event that brings a Community Resource Fair to TRANSPO's downtown transfer center. This event is an opportunity to bring transit and transportation information to transit users.

MACOG's public participation process is reviewed on an ongoing basis, as needed. Improvements since its development in 1999 have included use of the MACOG website, the development of the open house format, and continual additions to the mailing list.

American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

TRANSPO has an ADA Plan and operates Para transit service in South Bend and Mishawaka. There have been no significant ADA issues in the metropolitan area. Replacement of the fixed route fleet has also improved ADA access with 50% of the fleet now lift-equipped. All fixed route vehicles used for The BUS are lift equipped. Heart City Rider and Goshen Transit Service use seven minivans equipped with ramps to provide Para transit service in the Elkhart-Goshen urbanized area. MACOG also attends annual meetings with the Elkhart County Disability Network to provide transit information and to promote discussion of ADA issues.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

Each year, MACOG reviews the Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAs) that FHWA and FTA develop and incorporate them, along with INDOT's priorities into their local planning needs. MACOG staff review the planning emphasis areas, discusses priorities with their transit partners, and work with the TTAC to develop a program of projects. The TTAC reviews, endorses and sends the UPWP to the Policy Board for their approval. The final UPWP document reflects all of MACOG's transportation planning activities in the MPO planning area and is updated in a very timely manner.

MACOG, as does the majority of MPOs in the state of Indiana, use the calendar months of July through June for its fiscal year. This is also the same fiscal year used by the State of Indiana.

With regards to carry-over PL funds, MACOG does not carry a large amount of

PL/5303 funds, but instead has carefully managed and spent its PL on many of the transportation related studies and technology. MACOG continually updates its GIS capabilities by adding additional information layers to its database thereby increasing the effectiveness of their GIS tools.

MACOG is developing a Regional Economic Development District while working with the region regarding its U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) applications. MACOG is also working with the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), transit systems, the GIS fiber optic study, and ITS experts in the state to enhance their transportation planning capabilities. MACOG is currently conducting a freight study of shippers and freight modes to determine the effects that freight traffic have on the planning area. MACOG also has a water quality planner on their staff to develop a watershed management plan, address point source pollution, septic video, ground water contamination sites, best practices CD, house and operate the St. Joseph River Basin Commission. Additionally, MACOG has developed a pavement management system, which is still being used by several counties and in some city jurisdictions.

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (ITS)

The Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) and the ITS Architecture for the MACOG region are currently being developed. ITS technologies were first deployed in the MACOG region in 1991 when a signal interconnect was installed for the City of South Bend. MACOG is also developing its ITS Architecture. MACOG is the lead agency for the development of the ITS Architecture in the MACOG region.

MACOG is in the process of completing its ITS structure. The next phase in their development is an integration strategy, which can act as a guide for future investment. Currently MACOG is working on a regional fiber optic wireless telecommunications regional inventory and strategy plan which will allow their MPO to take the next step in defining an ITS integration strategy.