



The Principles of Reauthorization for the Illinois MPO Advisory Council

The landscape of Illinois varies from its northern to southern extremes. There are vast differences between all 14 MPOs in this State, including the varying size of their populations and the challenges they face with regard to transportation planning. As the federal government debates a new national transportation authorization program, the Illinois MPO Advisory Council recommends five principles for consideration.

- 1. Increase the planning resources available to MPOs to handle the current and new planning requirements placed upon them.**
- 2. Reduce the number of transportation programs and grant MPOs the planning and programming flexibility to address their specific regional needs.**
- 3. Call for the use of comprehensive planning factors beyond transportation benefits in the evaluation and selection of transportation infrastructure investments.**
- 4. Address the specific challenges faced by smaller MPOs with limited resources and increased burdens.**
- 5. Identify sustainable revenue sources that can finance our transportation system for the next 10 years.**

The first principle is aimed at providing additional technical and financial resources to MPOs. MPOs are being called upon to better integrate safety and security, the environment and multimodal efforts into planning. This requires more technologically advanced modeling tools and more intense data collection and analysis efforts.

Equally important is the reduction in the number of highway and transit programs. Each state and metropolitan region has its own specific transportation challenges. By increasing the flexibility of funding between highway, transit and non-motorized modes will allow for more multi-modal solutions to be developed to address these challenges.

With regards to the third principle, transportation does not operate in a vacuum so the prioritization of projects necessitates a regional perspective that takes into consideration economic development, housing, land use and the environment including climate change. Dedicate funds to the planning and programming of transportation infrastructure that are inclusive of these different objectives.

Smaller MPOs face their own set of specific challenges that are often overlooked in the statewide system. As state DOTs address the intricacy and scale of intercity, interstate, and interregional travel demands, the equally important needs of smaller cities and regions often go unnoticed. The Advisory Council supports the "grandfathering" of any existing MPO should the current MPO population threshold be raised above 50,000.

The fifth and final principle recommends that reauthorization include a plan for increased revenues that will adequately support our aging transportation infrastructure and move it sensibly into the future. This should include the consideration alternative funding mechanism beyond the tradition vehicle and motor fuel fees and taxes including, but not limited to Public Private Partnerships, Regional Infrastructure Improvement Zones (RIIZ) and congestion pricing.

Chairman, Cameron Moore (CUATS), Vice Chair, Randy Blankenhorn (CMAP); Secretary/Treasurer, Terry Kohlbus (PPUATS)

Bi-State Regional Planning Commission
Champaign Urban Area Transportation Study
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Danville Area Transportation Study
Decatur Area Transportation Study

DeKalb-Sycamore Transportation Study
East-West Gateway Council of Governments
Kankakee Area Transportation Study
McLean County Regional Planning Commission

Peoria/Pekin Urbanized Area Transportation Study
Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Springfield Area Transportation Study
Stalene Area Transportation Study