



# MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #VI.D

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DATE: JANUARY 23, 2017

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATION AND PLANNING AREA REFORM FINAL RULE

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On December 15, 2016, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) jointly announced a “Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform Final Rule” which will affect the manner in which regional transportation issues are addressed in Southeast Florida by the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The text of the rule can be accessed here: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/mpocoordination.cfm>

This final rule revises the transportation planning regulations with the goal of promoting more effective regional planning by MPOs as well as States. The revisions aim to better align the planning regulations with statutory provisions concerning the establishment of metropolitan planning area (MPA) boundaries and the designation of MPOs. The rule clarifies that an MPA must include an entire urbanized area (UZA) and the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within a 20-year forecast period for the metropolitan transportation plan. The MPOs will have several options to achieve compliance.

As there are multiple MPOs designated within a single MPA in Southeast Florida, the region’s MPOs may need to coordinate to create unified planning products for the MPA. Specifically, the rule requires MPOs within the same MPA to develop a single metropolitan transportation plan (MTP), a single transportation improvement program (TIP), and a jointly established set of performance targets for the MPA (or ‘unified planning products’). The rule also clarifies operating procedures, and it adopts certain coordination and decision making requirements where more than one MPO serves an MPA.

The final rule includes an exception that, if approved by the Secretary, allows multiple MPOs in an MPA to continue to generate separate planning products if the affected Governor(s) and all MPOs in the MPA submit a joint written request and justification to FHWA and FTA that (1) explains why it is not feasible for the MPOs to produce unified planning products for the MPA, and (2) demonstrates how each MPO is already achieving the goals of the rule through an existing coordination mechanism with all other MPOs



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in the MPA that achieves consistency of planning documents. The final rule phases in implementation of these coordination requirements and the requirements for MPA boundary and MPO jurisdiction agreements, with full compliance required not later than 2 years after the date the Census Bureau releases its notice of Qualifying Urban Areas following the 2020 census.

Regional coordination for transportation planning is currently being addressed by the Southeast Florida Transportation Council. The Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) for each respective County have committed to developing and implementing a coordinated planning effort resulting in, but not limited to:

- Regional long-range transportation plan covering the tri-county region

- Regional project prioritization and selection process

- Regional public involvement process

- Performance measures to assess the effectiveness of regional coordination

#### Recommendation

Information only.