

## **California Planning Emphasis Areas (PEA) Fiscal Year 2010/2011**

PEAs are policy, procedural and technical topics that should be considered by Federal planning fund recipients when preparing work programs for metropolitan and statewide planning and research assistance programs. The attached PEAs address objectives identified in FHWA/ FTA Strategic Plans. They also address a mix of planning issues and priority topics identified during ongoing reviews of metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes as requiring additional work.

The FHWA California Division, in consultation with FTA Region IX, has determined that the areas of emphasis for California's transportation planning and air quality program in Federal FY 2010 are:

- Performance management;
- Implementation of Certification Review corrective actions and recommendations; and,
- Public Involvement Procedures/documentation of planning and programming process.

### **Performance Management**

FHWA and FTA anticipate that an emphasis on measuring the outcomes of the planning process via performance measures will be a key feature of the reauthorization of the Federal transportation bill. The primary purpose of this PEA is to assist Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) in making a transition to performance based planning. While details of the final legislation are uncertain, the proposed bills filed in both houses of Congress require the States to adopt system performance goals and measures.

Our challenge in California is to position MPOs to successfully integrate the new legislation with their planning and program delivery processes. Once performance measures have been identified, MPOs in conjunction with State and Federal agencies, will work to develop a fiscally-constrained package of transportation investments that constitute the most effective solution to improving mobility in each MPO region. The performance measures are anticipated to be used as a feedback mechanism to guide the development and implementation of future investment packages, based on continuing analysis of what the performance measures say about the effectiveness of implemented projects for improving mobility.

Therefore, the MPOs and the State, in cooperation with FHWA and FTA, will establish and implement at least one performance measure for transportation programming. The FHWA and FTA planners for each region can assist the MPO with the implementation of any agreed-upon performance measures in the Statewide and/or metropolitan planning processes.

### **Implementation of Certification Review corrective actions and recommendations**

Certification reviews occur in Transportation Management Areas (TMA) every four years under 23 CFR 450.334, when the USDOT is required to send a team to each TMA to assess compliance with the Federal Aid Highway Program requirements. At the end of each review cycle, a report containing the recommendation for continued certification of the TMA is proffered containing notable practices, recommendations for improvement and corrective actions, which are subjects that need to be improved upon for the TMA to operate in compliance with Federal requirements.

This year, USDOT will continue a practice of following up with TMAs to discuss the status of any corrective actions, as well as the implementation status of recommendations from the federal partners.

During FY 2010, this process will occur as a component of the Annual Meeting cycle, allowing for an in-depth review of the MPO practices to assess any progress made in addressing the recommendations or corrective actions. Each TMA should be prepared to detail what recommendations and corrective actions were received during the last certification review, and what has been done to address those issues.

**Public Involvement Procedures/documentation of planning and programming process**

The completeness of documentation regarding how the planning and programming processes are carried out varies widely from MPO to MPO. While the State has developed guidance/reference materials for development of the OWP and RTP, often documentation of core MPO-specific processes – RTP, FTIP, fiscal constraint, conformity, public involvement – are located in several documents with no central repository to explain to the public what the planning requirements are (including statutory references) and how each individual MPO executes the necessary work to develop the core MPO products. While the public involvement procedures in most cases explain in plain language how to participate in the planning process, there is very little documentation regarding what the process is, how it works, and how the input received from the public is utilized.

The optimal place to fully document the entire planning process is through the public involvement procedures (PIP). It provides an opportunity for the agency to explain to the public what an MPO is, the products that are required and their purpose; it can also be used to show the public how they can become involved in the process and how their input will be used in shaping an effective investment package for improving mobility that meets Federal planning requirements.

At this year's Annual Meeting, all MPOs regardless of size should be prepared to discuss their current means of documenting procedures for all Federally-mandated transportation planning processes. FHWA and FTA are encouraging all MPOs to consider centralizing all of their process documentation in the PIP during their next update cycle.