

AN ASSESSMENT OF NEW YORK STATE MPOs DURING THE TEA ERA

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Craig Secrest, Partner
High Street Consulting Group



PROJECT PURPOSE

- ◎ Document, assess, and summarize TEA-era impacts on NYS MPO processes, organizations, and systems
- ◎ Evaluate how NYSDOT's metropolitan planning roles and practices have evolved
- ◎ Identify success stories and barriers to better performance

PROJECT OVERVIEW

- ◎ Self assessment survey
- ◎ Project research
 - Review of certification reports, plans, TIPs, etc.
 - Case Studies: NYMTC, PDCTC, NYSDOT
 - Statewide synthesis of practices/experiences
- ◎ Key topic areas
 - Organization and administration
 - Multimodal planning
 - Programming processes
 - Long range planning

THE “TEA” VISION

- ⦿ Emphasis on intermodalism
- ⦿ Stronger MPO role as regional broker/leader
- ⦿ Improved prioritization and selection
- ⦿ Better regional coordination and cooperation
- ⦿ Broader and deeper public/stakeholder involvement
- ⦿ Increased resources for transportation
- ⦿ More meaningful/useful funding categories
- ⦿ Funding flexibility
- ⦿ Creation of “real” plans

ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ◉ Range of core functions has grown
- ◉ Governance flexibility has been important
- ◉ Size and scope of UPWPs has increased dramatically
- ◉ Agency resources
 - Staffing and consultant use have generally increased, particularly for larger MPOs
 - Expanded use of tools, models, and data

RELATIONSHIP CHANGES

- ◎ Regional coordination and collaboration
 - Increased participation by members
 - Better regional vision and cooperation
- ◎ Working relationship with NYSDOT is generally much improved
- ◎ Stakeholders and public
 - More informed/active
 - Increased expectations

PROCESS CHANGES: TIP & PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- ◉ More strategic view of regional needs
- ◉ More rigorous project screening
- ◉ Imposition of fiscal constraint
- ◉ More stakeholder involvement/greater impact
- ◉ Stronger financial controls
- ◉ Increased consideration of environmental issues
- ◉ Better process transparency and documentation

MAJOR ISSUES

- ⦿ Administration of fiscal constraint and TIP amendments is onerous
- ⦿ CMAQ program does not achieve its goals
- ⦿ Federal program coordination is poor
- ⦿ Earmarks can be problematic
- ⦿ Effectiveness of funding flexibility and program categories has been mixed
- ⦿ MPOs often have limited influence beyond selected funding categories

MAJOR ISSUES (CONT.)

- ◉ MPOs often have limited influence beyond selected funding categories
- ◉ Plan-TIP linkage is often weak, particularly in times of declining resources
- ◉ Staffing/resources continues to be a problem
- ◉ Land use coordination tends to be more about communication and coordination than integration

CONCLUSIONS

- ◉ Growing federal support for regional transportation planning contrasts with trend
- ◉ MPO process facilitates exploration of a broad range of issues, policies, options
- ◉ The TEA era MPO model provides an important “common ground” for regional planning
- ◉ The roles, responsibilities, and activities of NYS MPOs continue to grow and evolve
- ◉ The MPO, as an institution, is alive and well