



# Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program

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Annual Report  
Fiscal Year 2004



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration • Federal Transit Administration

# Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program

## Annual Report, FY 2004

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## Introduction

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The mission of the Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program is to support effective transportation planning in state, metropolitan, rural, and tribal settings. The Program is jointly sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), with support from the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center. Information and resources are provided through technical assistance, information dissemination, training and education, and outreach. The Program provides products and services designed to help decision-makers, transportation officials, and staff resolve the increasingly complex issues they face when addressing transportation needs in their communities. The primary audiences for the Program include:

- Members of policy boards or executive committees;
- Non-metropolitan local officials and staff, including elected and appointed officials with an interest in transportation planning;
- Staff who participate in the statewide, metropolitan, and local transportation planning processes as members of technical committees, advisory groups, or Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) subcommittees; and
- Tribal government officials and staff.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2004, the Program expanded its resources and services in all areas. The number of peer exchanges and similar events increased from a total of 10 in FY 2003 to 17 in FY 2004. The Program was involved in 47 deliveries of classroom training, up from 40 in FY 2003. The TPCB Program continued its central role as a clearinghouse for information on effective transportation planning, particularly through the TPCB website which experienced a sharp jump in use from the prior year. The Program also released a series of technical resources, including the MPO Database, which provides comprehensive data on all U.S. metropolitan planning organizations in a flexible, easily-searched format.

The TPCB Program's accomplishments during FY 2004 are highlighted in this report. Detailed information on work in these topic areas is always available on the TPCB website at [www.planning.dot.gov](http://www.planning.dot.gov).

## **Section I: Peer Program**

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The TPCB Peer Program conducted 17 events in FY 2004, involving more than 500 participants. Summary information for each event is included below, organized by topic area. Unless otherwise noted, events are peer exchanges.

### **Communities**

#### **Health and Human Services**

*Portland, OR (January 22, 2004), 32 participants*

Integrating Health and Physical Activity Goals Into Transportation Planning: Building the Capacity of Planners and Practitioners Proceedings of the Portland Roundtable

#### **Title VI / Environmental Justice**

*Atlanta, GA (May 5, 2004), 12 participants*

Identifying and Engaging Low Literacy and Limited English Proficiency Populations in the Transportation Decision making Process

### **Funding Issues**

#### **Asset Management Practices**

*Washington, DC (September 7-8, 2004)*

Transportation Research Board (TRB) Asset Management Committee

### **Natural Environment**

#### **Air Quality**

*Houston, TX (December 3-4, 2003), 24 participants*

Upcoming Transition to the New 8-Hour Ozone Air Quality Standard

#### **Linking Planning and NEPA**

*Raleigh, NC (December 15-17, 2003), 27 participants*

North Carolina Peer Exchange to Improve Environmental Processes

### **Operations**

#### **Performance Measures**

*Washington, D.C. (October 7-9, 2003), 30 participants*

Roundtable on System Performance Measurement in Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning

#### **Performance Measures**

*Charleston, SC (May 6, 2004), 19 participants*

American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO)/FHWA Performance Measurements

### **Planning Process**

#### **Tribal Planning**

*Albuquerque, New Mexico (March 2, 2004), 17 participants*

National Tribal Roads Conference Peer Workshop for Tribal Transit Service Development

#### **Planning and Programming**

*Salt Lake City, UT (March 2-4, 2004) and Whatcom County, WA (March 15-18, 2004), 39 participants*

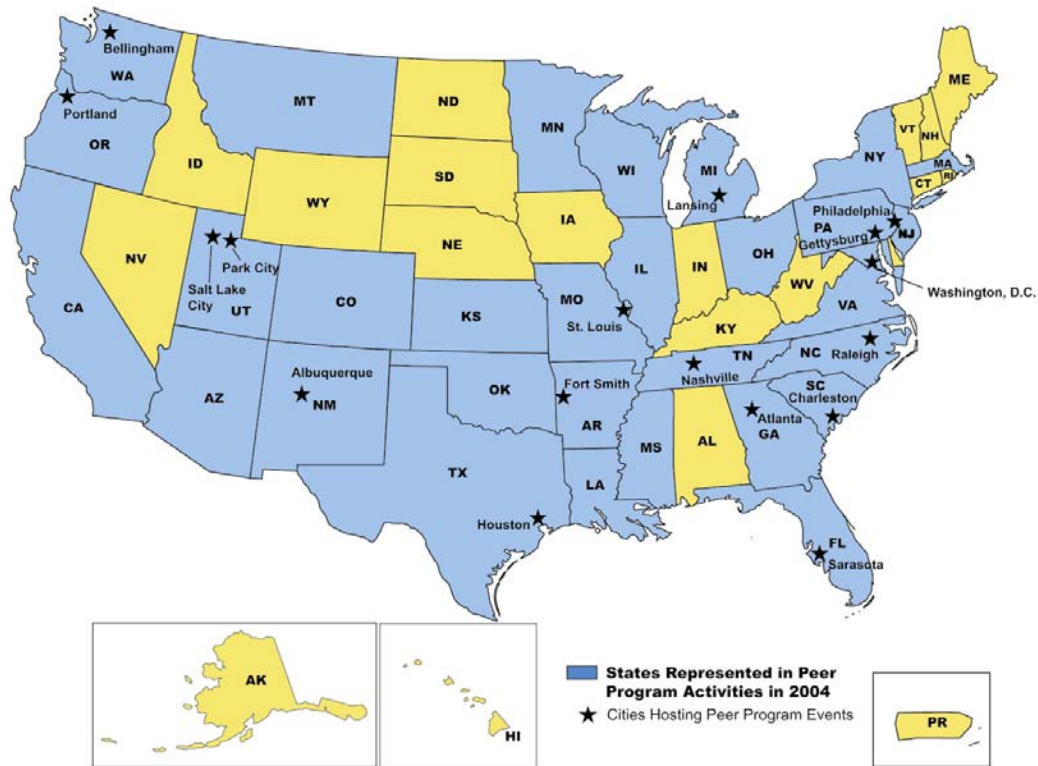
Preparing for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games

#### **Philadelphia Planning**

*Philadelphia, PA (April 8, 2004 and June 16, 2004), 253 participants*

A Two-Phase Peer-to-Peer Roundtable on Potential Transit Projects in the Nine-County Philadelphia Region

## 2004 Peer Program Participation



### Rural and Small Community Planning

*Fort Smith, AR (April 21- 23, 2004), 26 Participants*

Best Practices for Small and Medium Sized Metropolitan Planning Organizations

### Planning

*Lansing, MI (June 15-17, 2004), 26 Participants*

Electronic STIP Amendment Project

### Financial Planning

*Nashville, TN (September 27-29, 2004), 11 Participants*

Role of State Departments of Transportation in Guiding Transportation Investments

### Peer Forum on Transportation Planning Topics

*Washington, DC (October 23, 2003)*

Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations

### Peer Exchange on Inter-Modal Planning

*Sarasota, FL (September 23-24, 2004)*

AASHTO TRB Committee

### Peer Workshop on MPO Regional Experience from Florida

*Gettysburg, PA (Jan 26, 2004)*

FHWA PA Division

### Safety and Security

#### Peer Exchange on Safety and Cost Estimation

*Park City, UT (July 29-30, 2004)*

AASHTO TRB Committee

## Section II: TPCB Website

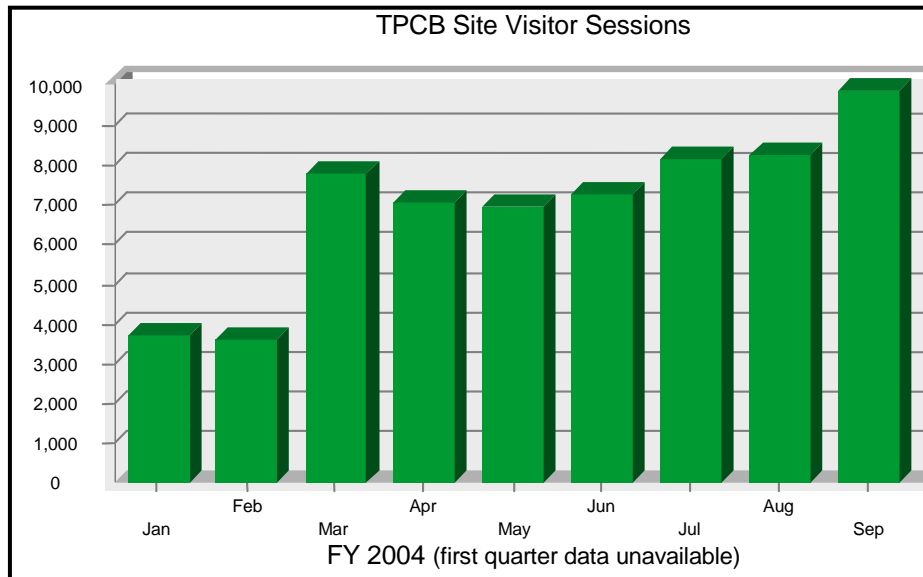
The TPCB Program website is a reliable, one-stop clearinghouse for the latest in transportation planning information and resources. Since the completion of major enhancements to the website in last quarter of FY 2003, usage has increased nearly 300%, from just over 2,600 visitor sessions in July 2003 to more than 9,900 as of September 2004. The Metropolitan Planning page and the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book continue to be the most popular page (besides the home page) and downloaded document, respectively. The information below highlights some characteristics of TPCB Program website usage over the last fiscal year. (This summary is based on data starting from January 9, the date a new server was installed.)

### General Statistics

The TPCB website saw a total of 654,043 hits and averaged 2,387 hits per day. (A hit is recorded each time a page on the website is visited.) Visitor sessions totaled 62,683 in the last nine months of FY 2004 and averaged 228 per day. (Each visitor session includes all hits to the TPCB Program website by a single visitor, with sessions timing out after 20 minutes of inactivity.) The average session length was over 22 minutes and 64% of visitor sessions could be confirmed as from a U.S. origin.

General TPCB Website Statistics: January – September, 2004		
<b>Hits</b>	Entire Site	654,043
	Average Per Day	2,387
	Home Page	16,257
<b>Visitor Sessions</b>	Entire Site	62,683
	Average Per Day	228
	Average Visitor Session Length	22 min, 45 secs
	International Visitor Sessions	5%
	Visitor Sessions of Unknown Origin	31%
	Visitor Sessions from United States	64%

The graph below shows the monthly totals for visitor sessions on the TPCB website. The statistics show a positive trend for the TPCB Program website in that usage has increased throughout the fiscal year. The last three months were the most active as usage rose above 8,000 visitor sessions in both July and August before reaching a high of 9,946 in September.



### Most Requested Pages

The table below provides information on how users are navigating the website and what topics or materials are of most interest. Metropolitan planning remains significant, based on the visit count of users to that page and the volume of visits to the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book (also see most downloaded files).

<b>Most Requested Pages</b>			
	<b>Pages</b>	<b>Visitor Sessions</b>	<b>Avg. Time Viewed (Minutes)</b>
1	<b>The TPCB Program Home Page</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/">http://www.planning.dot.gov/</a>	11,644	2.5
2	<b>The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process: Key Issues Briefing Book</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/BriefingBook/BBook.htm">http://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/BriefingBook/BBook.htm</a>	5,808	5.25
3	<b>Metropolitan Planning</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/metro.asp">http://www.planning.dot.gov/metro.asp</a>	3,939	2.5
4	<b>The Returning City: Historic Preservation and Transit in the Age of Civic Revival</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/CaseStudy/Cities/returning_city.htm">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/CaseStudy/Cities/returning_city.htm</a>	2,733	5.25
5	<b>Technical Resources</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/technical.asp">http://www.planning.dot.gov/technical.asp</a>	2,721	2.75
6	<b>Peer Programs</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/peer.asp">http://www.planning.dot.gov/peer.asp</a>	2,489	3
7	<b>Training and Education</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/training.asp">http://www.planning.dot.gov/training.asp</a>	2,466	2.75
8	<b>Tribal Planning</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/tribal.asp">http://www.planning.dot.gov/tribal.asp</a>	2,279	3
9	<b>Rural and Small Community Planning</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/rural.asp">http://www.planning.dot.gov/rural.asp</a>	2,238	3
10	<b>Calendar of Events</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Events.asp">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Events.asp</a>	2,173	3.75

### Most Downloaded Files

This section identifies the most popular file downloads for the site. The top four were the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book, the Public Involvement Tool, the TPCB 2003 Annual Report, and The Returning City.

<b>Most Downloaded Files</b>		
	<b>File</b>	<b>Session Downloads</b>
1	<b>The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process Briefing Book</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/BriefingBook/BBook.pdf">http://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/BriefingBook/BBook.pdf</a>	443
2	<b>Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision-Making</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Pitool/pdf/entire.pdf">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Pitool/pdf/entire.pdf</a>	368
3	<b>The Returning City – Part B</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/CaseStudy/Cities/returning_cityB.pdf">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/CaseStudy/Cities/returning_cityB.pdf</a>	348
4	<b>TPCB Annual Report</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/AnnualReport/AnnualReport.pdf">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/AnnualReport/AnnualReport.pdf</a>	320
5	<b>The Returning City – Part A</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/CaseStudy/Cities/returning_cityA.pdf">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/CaseStudy/Cities/returning_cityA.pdf</a>	295
6	<b>Public Involvement in the Development of the Long Range Transportation Plan</b> <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/Benchmark/BenchFinal/BenchmarkFinalReport.pdf">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/Benchmark/BenchFinal/BenchmarkFinalReport.pdf</a>	270

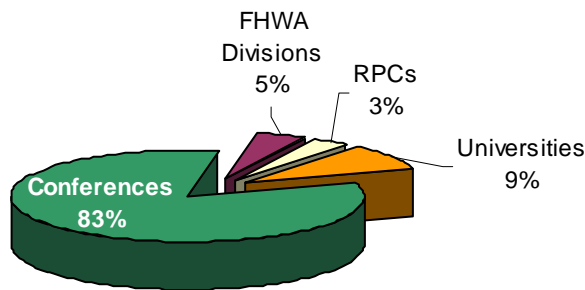
Most Downloaded Files		
	File	Session Downloads
7	Florida DOT Public Involvement Program <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/Rural/FLDOT.pdf">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/Rural/FLDOT.pdf</a>	242
8	A National Model of Smart Growth <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/LandUse/Robert_Dunphy.pdf">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/LandUse/Robert_Dunphy.pdf</a>	236
9	Information on Noteworthy MPO Practices <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/FinalReport/final_rpt_summary.pdf">http://www.planning.dot.gov/documents/FinalReport/final_rpt_summary.pdf</a>	220
10	Minnesota DOT Public Involvement Program <a href="http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/Rural/MN">http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/Rural/MN</a>	184

### Section III: Information Dissemination

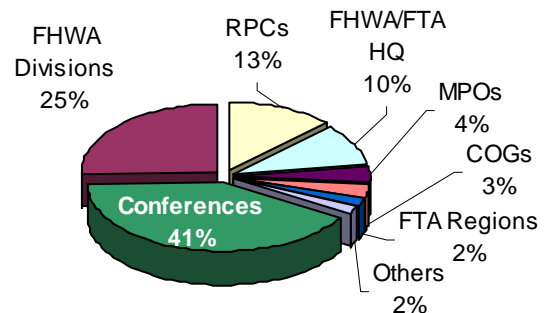
In FY04, the Program distributed 5,040 TPCB Program folders, each with the following contents:

- The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Briefing Book
- The Peer Exchange Program brochure
- The Executive Overview of Metropolitan Transportation Planning (CD)
- The Program overview pamphlet
- List of available courses
- List of key resources

In addition to the 41% of folders distributed at professional transportation conferences, 59% were distributed on request to: FHWA Division offices and FTA regional offices (27%), Regional Planning Councils (RPCs, 13%), FHWA or FTA headquarters (10%), and MPOs and Councils of Governments (COGs, 7%). Folders were distributed to every state in the United States, plus Guam and Puerto Rico. The Program also distributed 910 copies of the Executive Overview of Metropolitan Transportation Planning video presentation (247 VHS format, 663 CD). The two charts and one table that follow provide additional details on distribution.



**TPCB CD/Video Distribution FY04  
(total 910)**



**TPCB Folder Distribution FY04  
(total 5,040)**



State/Country	Folders Distributed	State/Country	Folders Distributed
Tennessee	360	California	10
Ohio	260	Colorado	10
Oregon	250	Connecticut	10
Pennsylvania	220	Hawaii	10
Texas	214	Idaho	10
Georgia	172	Iowa	10
Illinois	110	Kentucky	10
Indiana	90	Louisiana	10
Florida	85	Maine	10
Michigan	60	Minnesota	10
Missouri	35	Mississippi	10
Virginia	35	Montana	10
Delaware	30	Nebraska	10
Rhode Island	30	New Hampshire	10
Utah	30	New Jersey	10
South Carolina	25	New Mexico	10
Alabama	20	North Carolina	10
Kansas	20	North Dakota	10
Maryland	20	Oklahoma	10
Massachusetts	20	South Dakota	10
Nevada	20	Vermont	10
New York	20	Washington	10
Wisconsin	20	West Virginia	10
Wyoming	20	DC	10
Alaska	10	Puerto Rico	10
Arizona	10	Guam	10
Arkansas	10	Japan	1

## Section IV: Training

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Working cooperatively with the National Highway Institute and National Transit Institute, the TPCB Program was involved in 47 deliveries of seven different courses in FY 2004. Details about each course are provided below.

- **Administration of FHWA Planning Grants** (1 Delivery)  
 This course covers the responsibilities and relationships among Federal, State, and local agencies involved in administering FHWA planning grants to States and State subgrants to MPOs and local governments.
- **Fundamentals of Title VI/Environmental Justice** (2 Deliveries)  
 This two-day course presents a framework for using a variety of approaches and tools for accomplishing environmental justice goals in the transportation planning and project development process.

- **Introduction to Transportation/Air Quality Conformity** (8 Deliveries)  
This course is developed for staff who are not familiar with the broad ramifications of the conformity process. The course presents basic information about conformity and the relationship of the transportation and air quality planning process in order to prepare agency staff to participate in interagency consultation and work effectively in resolving conformity issues.
- **Metropolitan Transportation Planning** (13 Deliveries)  
This introductory program teaches the basics of metropolitan transportation planning and the expanded role of the MPO. It reviews the procedural and technical aspects of system planning, including elements of FTA/FHWA planning regulations.
- **NEPA & Transportation Decision-Making** (15 Deliveries)  
This course considers FHWA's policies and procedures for applying NEPA to the project development and decision making processes related to transportation facilities.
- **Public Involvement in the Transportation Decision-Making Process** (5 Deliveries)  
This two and a half day training program provides planning and project development professionals with the tools and techniques to effectively involve the public in transportation decisionmaking processes such as Major Investment Studies, Transportation Plans, Transportation Improvement Programs, and project development.
- **Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Programming** (3 Deliveries)  
This course provides instruction on the basic concepts, components, and participants in the transportation planning process. Current and best practices are incorporated into the program.

## **Section V: New Transportation Planning Resources**

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In FY 2004, the TPCB Program introduced a number of important technical resources, all available through the Program's website.

***The MPO Database*** was created to provide information about all of the MPOs in the United States. This tool is a searchable database that provides users with basic information about MPOs and links to their websites. The MPO Database also assists MPOs in finding and contacting peers with similar characteristics.

([www.planning.dot.gov/overview.asp](http://www.planning.dot.gov/overview.asp))

***The Planning Assistant*** is an interactive tool that enables users to identify reasonable choices of public involvement techniques for their particular context and needs. It is designed to help users who might be unfamiliar with public involvement or unsure of what public involvement techniques are appropriate for certain activities.

([www.planning.dot.gov/PublicInvolvement/pi\\_tool/getting-started.asp](http://www.planning.dot.gov/PublicInvolvement/pi_tool/getting-started.asp))

The Program also sponsored a domestic scan of exemplary integration of land use and transportation planning, resulting in the ***Domestic Scan Tour II Report: Integration of Land Use and Transportation Planning***. To more closely examine local efforts to integrate transportation and land use policies, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) sponsored a series of domestic scan tours. While visiting projects within the communities, the domestic scan tour teams have interviewed local staff and elected officials, regional, and state-level planners, MPO representatives, and transportation consultants. The results of these tours have been compiled and presented as useful tools for planning practitioners around the United States working to design livable communities. ([www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/DomesticScan/domscan2.htm](http://www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/DomesticScan/domscan2.htm))

## Section VI: Outreach

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The TPCB Program conducts outreach to transportation professionals at all levels, building awareness among stakeholders and enabling staff to develop new activities based on the needs of transportation planning decision makers and practitioners. The Program was represented at a total of 17 professional meetings in FY 2004. Details are provided in the table below. In most instances, outreach included on-demand distribution of Program resources, and presentations by FHWA, FTA, or Volpe staff.

Date	Conference	Location
October 2003	APTA Annual Meeting	Salt Lake City, UT
	AMPO Annual Meeting	Washington, DC
January 2004	Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting	Washington, DC
	New Partners for Smart Growth	Portland, OR
February 2004	National Association of Regional Councils Policy Conference	Washington, DC
	National Association of Counties (NACo) Policy Conference	Washington, DC
March 2004	American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Legislative Conference	Washington, DC
	Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Policy Conference	Washington, DC
April 2004	National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Policy Conference	Washington, DC
	American Planning Association Annual Meeting	Washington, DC
May 2004	AASHTO Standing Committee on Planning Meeting	Charleston, SC
June 2004	Community Transportation Association of America Annual Meeting	Seattle, WA
July 2004	NACo Annual Conference	Phoenix, AZ
	Conference of Minority Transportation Officials Annual Meeting	Cleveland, OH
August 2004	NADO Annual Meeting	Orlando, FL
September 2004	Rail-Volution	Los Angeles, CA
	TRB Small & Medium Communities, Biennial "Tools of the Trade"	Colorado Springs, CO

## **Section VII: Transportation Planning Capacity Building in 2005**

Building on the success of the past few years, the Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program will continue its core set of program activities in FY 2005. Technical Assistance, particularly the Peer Programs continues to be one of the most popular and valuable aspects of the program. Additional resources will be devoted to continuous improvement of the Peer Programs, with technology applications to facilitate timely access and peer participation, as well as a more comprehensive approach to identifying experts in individual topic areas.

The field of transportation planning continues to expand to include a wide variety of related subject areas. The TPCB program will endeavor to provide information and assistance on these myriad areas. Focus in FY 2005 will remain on the core set of transportation planning requirements in statewide, metropolitan, rural and tribal areas, but with added emphasis on freight planning, financial planning and fiscal constraint, consideration of flexible funding, land use and transportation, and strategies for incorporating asset management and performance measures in the planning process.

The Program will continue a high level of outreach to stakeholder groups through regional and national conferences, training, providing presentations, displays, expert panels, roundtables, etc., wherever possible. Program staff will meet with stakeholders regularly to assess their continuing needs and to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. In addition, the Program will apply new tools and techniques to reach customers, including mini compact discs promoting the program, informational flyers, and web-based technology.

Formal training courses will continue to be another important element of the Program. Through its partnership with the National Highway Institute and the National Transit Institute, the Program will offer training courses on a variety of planning topics including: Freight, Air Quality, Statewide, Metropolitan, Financial Planning and Safety Conscious Planning. Other important courses will include Public Involvement, Linking Planning and NEPA and Fundamentals of Environmental Justice. Program staff will update existing courses and begin to develop new ones in 2005 as well.



A Publication of the  
Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program

[www.planning.dot.gov](http://www.planning.dot.gov)

Federal Highway Administration - Federal Transit Administration

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