



Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program

Executive Summary

A Two Year Review:
Federal Fiscal Years 2009-2010
(Covering the Period of October 2008 – September 2010)

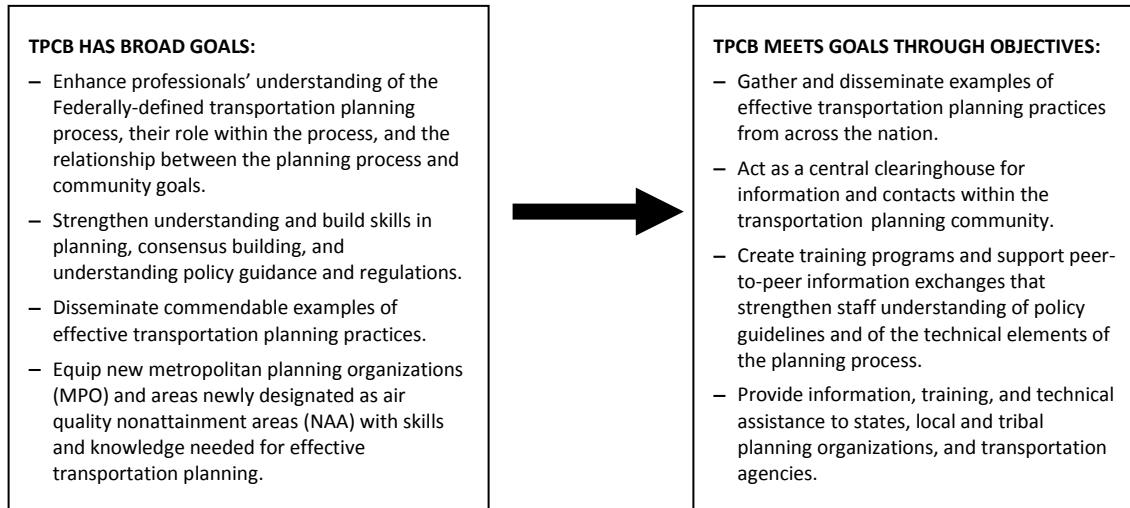


U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration • Federal Transit Administration

TPCB Program Overview

Federal requirements and programs related to surface transportation planning are complex. In an effort to foster effective transportation planning in state, metropolitan, rural, and tribal settings, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) created the Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program.

Jointly administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), with assistance from the U.S. DOT's Volpe National Transportation Systems Center (Volpe Center), TPCB products and services provide information, training, and technical assistance to the transportation professionals responsible for planning for the capital, operating, and maintenance needs of our nation's surface transportation system.



Clients in urban, rural, and tribal areas take advantage of the resources provided by the TPCB Program. Program participants include transportation planning staff, members of MPO policy boards or executive committees, non-metropolitan local officials and staff (both elected and appointed), members of technical committees and advisory groups, and tribal government officials and their staff.

TPCB Program Accomplishments

During the past 2 years, the TPCB Program has realized significant accomplishments in many areas. TPCB activities take place in all areas of the U.S., and address diverse topics related to transportation planning – from performance management and human service transportation coordination to integrating transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and land use.

Peer learning is a key component of the overall TPCB Program. During the 2-year period, the TPCB Program sponsored a total of 11 Peer Program events and 4 Scenario Planning workshops – 15 total, with an average of approximately seven events per year. TPCB

In 2 years...

- 11** TPCB Peer Program events
- 4** Scenario Planning Workshops
- 30** New Publications
- 11** Transportation Planning Excellence Award recipients
- 169** Transportation Planning-Related Course Offerings through NHI and NTI

Program staff collect feedback forms at the close of each event, and conduct follow-up telephone interviews with applicant agencies 6-9 months after the event to better understand the value and impacts of peer dialogue. The table below shows the average evaluation scores for peer events held during FYs 2009-2010, based on responses from 70 participants.

Average Evaluation Scores of TPCB Peer Events in FYs 2009-2010

Evaluation Question	Average Score (4 = "excellent" 1 = "poor")
Overall quality of the event	3.6
Pre-event planning support	3.2
On-site facilitation support	3.6
Usefulness of the information you learned for your work	3.6

According to participant feedback forms from FYS 2009-2010, the most valuable aspect of peer events includes:

- "High level conversation that can be had when everyone is at roughly the same level. I learned so much."
- "Interaction with a cross-section of people and functions."
- "I will be taking all of the ideas back to build a stronger implementation program for our planning program."
- "Building relationships with peers that I can take advantage of in the future."
- "Diversity of MPOs and Federal staff all at the same table for open discussion."

The reach of TPCB peer events and scenario planning workshops is broad, with participation by professionals in all corners of the U.S., from rural and tribal areas to the nation's largest metropolitan corridors. In FYs 2009-2010, the TPCB Program sponsored peer exchanges and scenario planning workshops in 12 states and the District of Columbia. In addition, 25 states and the District of Columbia sent agency representatives to serve as peers in peer events and Scenario Planning workshops in FYs 2009-2010. The map below features the host cities for peer events and scenario planning workshops during the 2-year period.

Location of TPCB Peer Events and Scenario Planning Workshops in FYs 2009-2010 and States with Peer Representatives



The TPCB Program made a number of other accomplishments during FYs 2009 and 2010 as well:

- Awarded **11 Transportation Planning Excellence Awards** and 11 Honorable Mentions, after reviewing 81 nominations from around the nation. TPEA awardees highlight innovative, successful examples of effective local, regional, and statewide multimodal transportation planning efforts.
- Developed **30 new publications** on topics from safety and performance measures, to livability and Transit at the Table, all displayed on the TPCB website. These publications include 11 new research publications, as well as the production of 6 tribal transportation training modules, 10 peer event reports, and 3 scenario planning reports.
- Offered **26 transportation planning-related courses a total of 169 times** through the National Highway Institute (NHI) and National Transit Institute (NTI), with the participation of 4,828 attendees from across the country; an average of 28 attendees per class. The courses help transportation professional to better understand topics like coordinated land use and transportation planning, public participation, the environmental review process, traffic monitoring, and air quality conformity, among many others.
- Redesigned and re-launched the **TPCB website** (www.planning.dot.gov) to be more visually compelling and user friendly.

TPCB Program Administration

The TPCB Program is unique in its collaborative management approach. Because statewide and metropolitan transportation planning requirements and programs affect multiple surface transportation modes, the planning professionals at FHWA and FTA jointly oversee the program's activities. This collaboration is aided by the technical expertise of community planners and transportation analysts at the U.S. DOT Volpe Center.

Strategic planning occurs periodically with the participation of high-level staff at each agency. Day-to-day activities are carried out by Volpe Center staff in coordination with FHWA and FTA program managers. Professional trainers affiliated with NHI and NTI lead courses, while executive leaders and professional staff at agencies around the country facilitate peer exchanges and dialogues.

There are several sources of funding for TPCB Program elements (both discretionary grant programs and formula funding programs). In order to provide a comprehensive and well-rounded set of resources, TPCB leadership successfully leverage multiple funding streams: the Surface Transportation Environment and Planning (STEP) cooperative research program, FTA Section 5314-Research, and FTA Section 5327-Oversight, all provide direct financial support for information dissemination, training and technical assistance, and applied research.

Some TPCB funding is provided by FTA and FHWA to the Volpe Center to enable the continued administrative and technical support of its staff in carrying out TPCB Program activities.

Future of the TPCB Program

The TPCB program has built a strong foundation upon which to deliver transportation planning resources, training, information dissemination, and outreach. The TPCB Program is also committed to evolve and respond to emerging needs as surface transportation planning becomes increasingly complex and involves a growing number of issues and stakeholders. As such, key TPCB Program staff from FHWA, FTA, and the U.S. DOT Volpe Center held a day-long Strategy Session in early FY 2011, with input from stakeholder organization representatives, to review the TPCB Program and to discuss opportunities for continual improvement of core services and products.

Moving forward, the TPCB Program will continue to be a valuable resource for transportation planning agencies and stakeholders by:

- Responding to new provisions that may result from future Federal legislation with transportation planning implications.
- Publicizing innovative, successful examples of effective statewide, regional, local, and tribal transportation planning efforts.
- Identifying and developing planning resources and materials to address new and emerging areas in planning.

Seeking engagement and identifying the needs of non-traditional transportation planning process participants.