EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - *updated JANUARY 2019*

US DOT Tier-1 University Transportation Center

CM² Cooperative Mobility for Competitive Megaregions

WHITER REGIONALISM:
THE EVOLVING ROLE OF MPOs

The Evolving Role of MPOs on Intra and Inter-Regional Transportation, Land Use and Access Policies and Outcomes (#CM2-15)

Dr. Michael Oden,
University of Texas at Austin

09/01/2017 - 01/31/2019

Project Information Form:
http://sites.utexas.edu/cm2/files/2018/03/Year-1-Michael-Oden-The-Evolving-Role-of-Metropolitan-Planning-Organizations.pdf

TEXAS
The University of Texas at Austin

Analysis of larger clusters or agglomerations of metro regions has a long history, beginning in the 1920s under RPAA and Mumford in the US. However, as urban populations continue to grow and cities continue to spread outwards, the megaregion has become a major point of discussion amongst academic researchers. However is the megaregion a legible and compelling scale to address pressing environmental, social and infrastructural challenges now or in the future? Does the megaregional scale have meaning and salience for existing government and governance institutions addressing planning and policy problems spanning multiple metropolitan areas (U.S. MSAs)? How does one even begin to delineate the borders of an identified megaregion?

This research project provides a literature review and evaluation of cases of multi-metro, multi-jurisdictional planning and implementation in the U.S. In addition, the researchers have conducted a survey of directors and/or senior planners at 372 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The survey asks respondents questions dealing with the following themes: 1). Do MPO directors view collaboration and planning at the megaregional level as a meaningful framework and an important means to address interregional transportation and land use challenges? 2). In what ways do MPOs actively collaborate and/or cooperate with other MPOS across their state or at larger regional scales? 3). What are the legal, regulatory or institutional barriers to greater collaboration or joint project planning and implementation between MPOs at the state or megaregional scale?

Preliminary analysis of survey results show modest evidence that megaregional scales have significant resonance or salience with government or governance institutions or actors.

What topics and/or project areas at the mega-regional scale have been a focus of your collaborations with other MPOs and/or other organizations in your mega-region?

#	Answer	%	
1	Congestion Management Issues	17.83%	157
2	Major Transportation Corridor Issues	43.31%	157
3	Intelligent Transportation Systems/Operations	16.56%	157
4	Intercity Passenger Rail Service	24.84%	157
5	Intercity High Speed Rail Service	21.02%	157
6	Intercity Passenger Bus Service	14.65%	157
7	Multi-modal Freight Issues and Services	43.95%	157
8	Planning for Potential Future Growth in Driverless Vehicles	12.74%	157
9	International Border Transit and Crossing Issues	5.10%	157
10	Air Quality Issues	21.02%	157
11	Other Environmental Issues	5.73%	157
12	Coordination of Transportation and Land Use Planning Issues	18.47%	157
13	Economic Development Issues	26.11%	157

What topics and/or project areas have been a focus of your collaborations with other MPOs or international transit-related organizations?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Congestion Management Issues	41.12%	88
2	Major Transportation Corridor Issues	69.16%	148
3	Intelligent Transportation Systems/Operations	35.51%	76
4	Intercity Passenger Rail Service	30.37%	65
5	Intercity High Speed Rail Service	15.89%	34
6	Intercity Bus Service	43.46%	93
7	Multi-modal Freight Issues and Services	52.34%	112
8	Planning for Potential Future Growth in Driverless Vehicles	22.43%	48
9	Air Quality Issues	37.38%	80
10	Other Environmental Issues	14.95%	32
11	Coordination of Transportation and Land Use Planning Issues	50.00%	107
13	International Border Transit and Crossing Issues	3.27%	7
12	Economic Development Issues	35.98%	77

Preliminary MPO Survey results

This study was funded by the consortium of Cooperative Mobility for Competitive Megaregions (CM²). CM² is a USDOT Tier-1 University Transportation Center (UTC). CM²'s consortium partners include The University of Texas at Austin, Louisiana State University, Texas Southern University, and the University of Pennsylvania, with affiliates at Cornell University and Rutgers University.