

# Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization Staffing and Resources Assessment

*2019 NCAMPO Conference*

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# Overview

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- Purpose of the study
- Study approach
- Outcomes
- Next steps

# Study Purpose

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- Is CRTPO properly staffed and structured to meet and exceed requirements to ensure an effective transportation planning process?

## **2015 CRTPO Board**

Implement locally-administered projects in a timely manner and ensure CRTPO has the means to do so

## **2016 Federal Certification Review**

Evaluate staffing needs and identify staffing resources to meet planning requirements

# Study Scope

- Focus on staffing, resources, and processes within the existing CRTPO MOU
- The study did not address changes to the MOU, voting structure, or hosting arrangement

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
FOR  
COOPERATIVE, COMPREHENSIVE, AND CONTINUING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING  
AMONG  
THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA,  
THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,  
THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE, TOWN OF CORNELIUS, TOWN OF DAVIDSON, TOWN OF FAIRVIEW,  
TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE, TOWN OF INDIAN TRAIL, IREDELL COUNTY, TOWN OF MARSHVILLE,  
VILLAGE OF MARVIN, TOWN OF MATTHEWS,  
MECKLENBURG COUNTY, TOWN OF MINERAL SPRINGS, TOWN OF MINT HILL, CITY OF MONROE,  
TOWN OF MOORESVILLE, TOWN OF PINEVILLE,  
TOWN OF STALLINGS, CITY OF STATESVILLE, TOWN OF TROUTMAN, UNION COUNTY, TOWN OF  
WAXHAW, TOWN OF WEDDINGTON, VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL, TOWN OF WINGATE and the  
METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION, IN COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION**

WITNESSETH THAT:  
**WHEREAS**, Section 134(a) of Title 23 of the United States Code states:

“It is in the national interest to encourage and promote the development of transportation systems embracing various modes of transportation in a manner which will efficiently maximize mobility of people and goods within and through urbanized areas and minimize transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution. To accomplish this objective, metropolitan planning organizations, in cooperation with the State, shall develop transportation plans and programs for urbanized areas of the State. Such plans and programs shall provide for the development of transportation facilities (including pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities), which will function as an intermodal transportation system for the State, the metropolitan areas, and the Nation. The process for developing such plans and programs shall provide for consideration of all modes of transportation and shall be continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive to the degree appropriate, based on the complexity of the transportation problems”; and,

**WHEREAS**, a transportation planning process includes the operational procedures and working arrangements by which short and long-range transportation plans are soundly conceived and developed and continuously evaluated in a manner that will:

1. Assist governing bodies and official agencies in determining courses of action and in formulating attainable capital improvement programs in anticipation of community needs; and,
2. Guide private individuals and groups in planning their decisions which can be important factors in the pattern of future development and redevelopment of the area; and,

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 136, Article 3A, Section 136-66.2(a) of the General Statutes of North Carolina requires that:

Each MPO, with cooperation of the Department of Transportation, shall develop a comprehensive transportation plan in accordance with 23 U.S.C. § 134. In addition, an MPO may include projects in its transportation plan that are not included in a financially constrained plan or are anticipated to be needed beyond the horizon year as required by 23 U.S.C. § 134. For municipalities located within an MPO, the development of a

# CRTPO (2017)

Staff Function	Department
CRTPO Core Staff	Planning
Regional Travel Demand Model and analysis	CDOT
Administrative tasks	Both
Miscellaneous task support	Both

- CRTPO UPWP: \$3.2M
- Staff hours: 25,182
- Consultants
  - \$1.40 M in FY 17
  - \$1.04 M in FY 18
- Will the current structure continue to be the best approach to serve the CRTPO region?

# Study Approach

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## Document Current Planning Framework

- CRTPO structure, funding, staffing, and work products

## Stakeholder Outreach

- Steering Committee of key stakeholders who are fully engaged
- Broader stakeholder survey

## MPO Peer Analysis

- Research MPO planning, staffing, and organizational practices

## Develop Recommendations

- Address identified issues and develop staffing recommendations

# Outreach – Steering Committee

Position/Organization
CRTPO Chair, Councilmember - Statesville
CRTPO TCC Chair - Statesville Planning Dept. Asst Director
CRTPO Board, Town of Cornelius
CRTPO TCC Member, Union County
CRTPO Project Oversight Comm, MPO Vice-Chair, Town of Waxhaw
CRTPO Bicycle & Pedestrian Work Group, Mecklenburg County
Director Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Dept (LPA)
NCDOT Chief Deputy Secretary
NCDOT Division 10
NCDOT Division 12
Charlotte Area Transit System, Executive Director
Charlotte DOT Director
Centralina COG Director
CRAFT Representative, RRRPO Director
FHWA
Former CRTPO Board Member

Also interviewed additional CDOT staff, CRTPO staff, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

# Outreach – Surveys

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- Surveyed several additional stakeholders
  - Additional CDOT staff
  - Charlotte Planning Dept staff
  - CRTPO Board delegates and TCC members
  - CCOG staff
  - Lake Norman Transportation Commission
  - NCDOT Public Transportation Division
  - NCDOT Transportation Planning
  - FTA
  - Sustain Charlotte
  - Charlotte Regional Partnership
  - CRAFT



# Outreach Findings

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## Highlights:

- Top takeaway: No one is dissatisfied with CRTPO
- CRTPO does an excellent job meeting requirements
- Staff does quality work and is held in very high regard
- CRTPO is sufficiently staffed to meet requirements
- CRTPO is insufficiently staffed to go beyond requirements to proactively address pressing regional transportation needs

# Outreach – Areas for Improvement

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## Highlights:

- Transit planning
  - Strengthen MPO connection to transit, coordinate with CATS and Centralina COG
- More communication and outreach is needed
  - Proactive engagement with the business community, decision-makers, and public
- Where are we going?
  - What is the longer-term strategic plan for the organization to address challenges?

# Peer MPOs

MPO	MPO Pop.	MPO Staff	2018 UPWP Budget (total)
CRTPO	1.3 M	6	\$3.4 M
CAMPO (Raleigh, NC)	1.1 M	17	\$5.3 M
Indianapolis MPO	1.6 M	15	\$3.9 M
Hampton Roads TPO (Chesapeake/Virginia Beach, VA)	1.6 M	15+	\$6.2 M
Plan Hillsborough (Tampa, FL)	1.2 M	13	\$2.6 M
Nashville Area MPO	1.5 M	12+	\$4.1 M

Each peer has done a staffing/organizational study in recent years, or is currently doing so.

# Peer MPO Research

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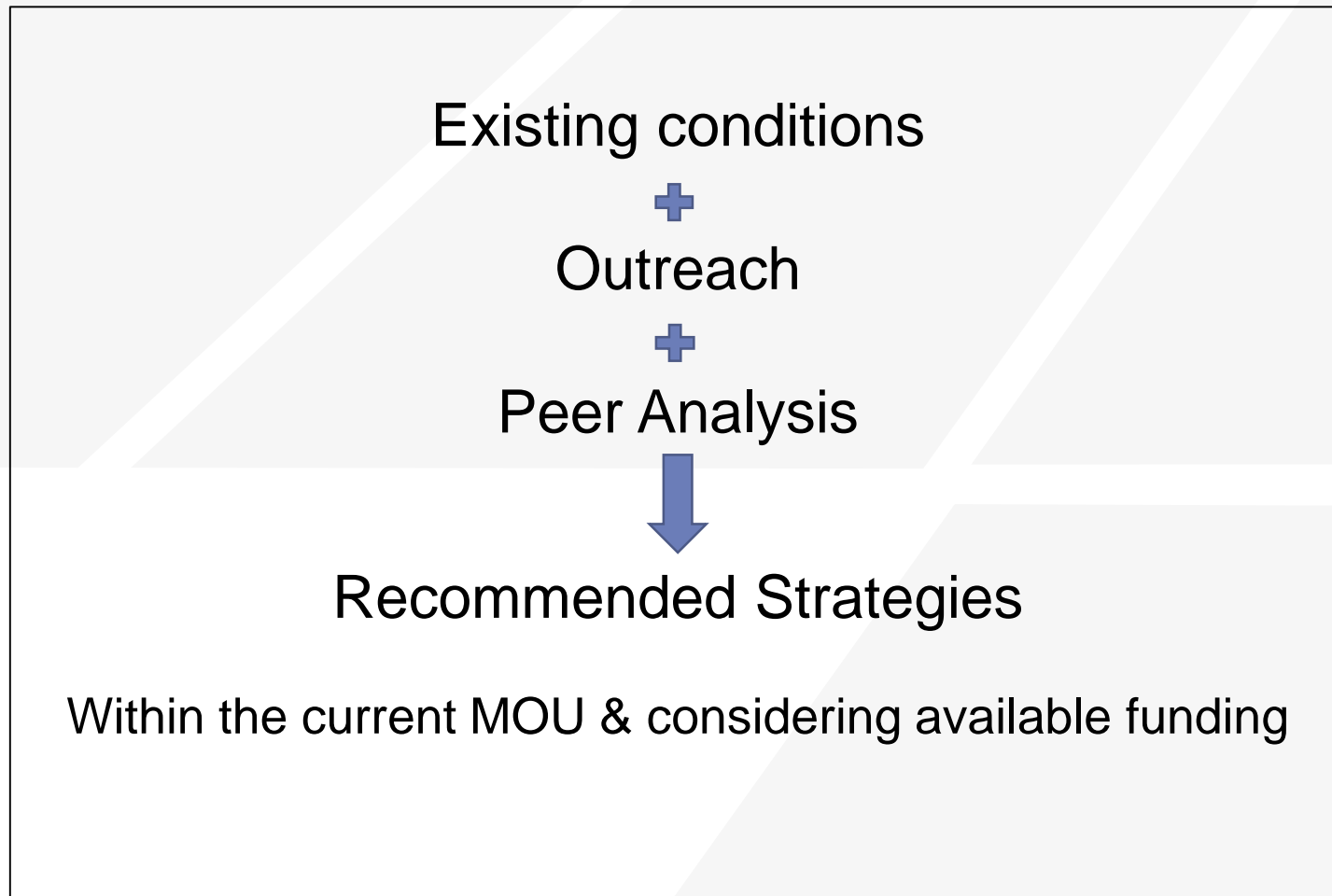
- What do these staffing numbers mean?
- Is this an accurate reflection of the number of staff working on MPO activities?
- How do these UPWP budgets correlate to number of MPO staff?
- How are staffing resources maximized?
- How is the MPO preparing for challenges?

# Recommendations Framework

INTERNAL FACTORS	
STRENGTHS (+)	WEAKNESSES (-)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High level of customer satisfaction.</li><li>• Strong staff capabilities and expertise.</li><li>• Staffed adequately to meet requirements.</li><li>• Strong team mentality among department staff and members.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Available capacity to address pressing needs.</li><li>• Availability for proactive planning.</li><li>• Multiple staff reporting lines.</li><li>• Public involvement and transit planning.</li><li>• Limited engagement at national level.</li></ul>
EXTERNAL FACTORS	
OPPORTUNITIES (+)	THREATS (-)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accessible to CDOT and CATS staff.</li><li>• Can tap City expertise and services.</li><li>• Recent staff additions.</li><li>• Recent Planning Dept. re-org.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased collaboration demands on staff time.</li><li>• New planning requirements and methods.</li><li>• Potential effects of staff turnover on current processes.</li></ul>

# Developing Recommendations

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# Recommendations

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## Already Implemented

- Engage on a national level
  - Learn from peers and showcase Charlotte
- Maximize Public Involvement staff position
  - Move PI from discrete task to integrated activity
  - Continuous and proactive engagement

# Recommendations

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## In Motion

- Advance transit planning within CRTPO
  - Enhanced focus on transit (and rail)
- Undertake an organizational strategic planning exercise
  - Define strategic goals for the next 5-10+ years
  - Implementation approach to link day-to-day work with longer term goals



# Recommendations

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## Under Discussion

- Create staff specialization & assign functional areas
  - Capitalize on staff growth and organize around key functions and priorities
- Create an internship program
- Integrate CDOT modeling staff into CRTPO activities
  - Enhance analytical approaches to issues

# Recommendations

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## Ongoing/As Opportunities Arise

- Continue to invest in staff expertise
  - Maximize expertise of current staff
- In-source more work
  - Build institutional knowledge
- Streamline administrative functions

# Recommendations

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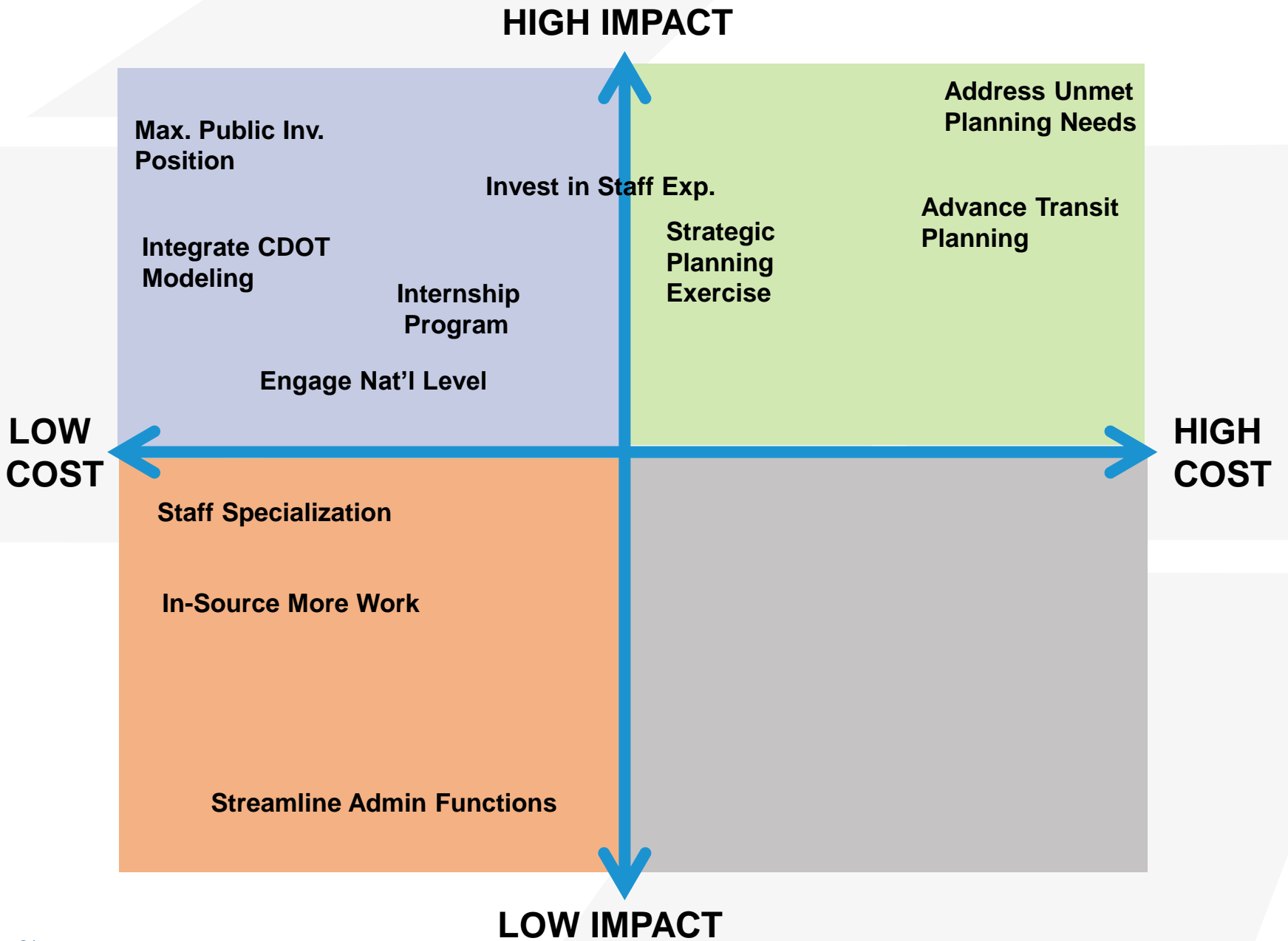
## Additional Resources Needed

- Address unmet needs identified by stakeholders
  - Expand CRTPO role
  - Expand staff roles
  - Additional staff or outside support
  - Develop partnerships

Transit planning, advocacy, additional technical assistance, land use, local projects, more coordination with neighboring planning agencies, corridor planning...

# Recommendations Summary

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Additional Resource Needs	Implementation Horizon
<b>Engage on a National Level</b>	Medium	Low-Medium	Immediate
<b>Maximize the Public Involvement Staff Position</b>	High	n/a	Short term
<b>Continue to Invest in Staff Expertise</b>	High	Low-Medium	Immediate
<b>Create Staff Specialization and Assign Functional Areas</b>	Medium	n/a	Short term
<b>Streamline Administrative Functions</b>	Low	Low	Medium term
<b>Create an Internship Program</b>	Medium	Low	Medium term
<b>In-Source More Work</b>	Low-Medium	n/a	Medium term
<b>Integrate CDOT Modeling Staff into CRTPO Activities</b>	High	Low	Medium term
<b>Undertake an Organizational Strategic Planning Exercise</b>	High	Medium	Medium term
<b>Advance Transit Planning Within CRTPO</b>	High	Medium-High	Medium term
<b>Address the Unmet Planning Needs Identified by Stakeholders</b>	High	High	Long term



# Going Forward

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- Staff retreat
- Board retreat
- Ongoing discussions

# Thank You!

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