



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**Coordination of the Transportation Planning Processes**  
**Between Eastgate Regional Council of Governments and**  
**Mercer County Regional Planning Commission**

**I. Background and Purpose**

- A. The Eastgate Regional Council of Governments (Eastgate) and the Mercer County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) are partners in maintaining and improving the contiguous transportation systems of Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, Ohio and Mercer County, Pennsylvania, respectively. The purpose of this agreement is to define the roles and responsibilities of the two Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) as they work to improve the economy, environment, transportation systems and quality of life for the citizens within their respective planning areas.
- B. This agreement provides the framework for how the federally mandated continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process will be conducted between these MPOs within the tri-county area. Programs and activities where coordination will occur between the two agencies include state and regional Transportation Plans (TPs), state and regional Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs/TIPs), Transportation Planning Work Programs, Air Quality Maintenance and Conformity, and other federal, state and regional planning activities, including Congestion Management Processes (CMP) and certification review.

**II. General Points of Understanding and Agreement**

- A. We, Eastgate and MCRPC, commit to working together, as duly appointed MPOs by the governors of our respective states, to achieve the goals, where applicable, of our state and regional Transportation Plans. We will achieve this through open and honest communication, mutual trust and respect, and mutually beneficial solutions.
- B. We agree to acknowledge and value our different processes and perspectives. We understand that collaborative efforts are needed in order to achieve mutual and individual goals. We agree to provide early coordination regarding any new policy or program that may affect either agency.
- C. We agree to collaborate in the planning, conduct and reporting of transportation related information at the state and regional levels. We agree to share information and plans in order to achieve the goals of state and regional Transportation Plans, assist, where appropriate, in the joint selection of projects, and improve the coordination of investment.

- D. We agree to work together to achieve compliance with all federal planning regulations and guidance. We will work collaboratively to address the U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration certification review process, in order to continually improve upon our transportation planning processes.
- E. We agree that staffs of both MPOs will communicate regularly, as necessary, to review progress of cooperative efforts, to discuss key findings from program activities, and to discuss the scope, plans and implementation of activities under consideration for the next planning cycle.
- F. This agreement will be reviewed and updated as required, and shall be in effect until the until the 15<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2026.

### III. Specific Points of Understanding and Agreement

#### A. Metropolitan Transportation Plans

1. We recognize that the currently adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plans are the Transportation Plans for Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, Ohio and Mercer County, Pennsylvania. We agree to cooperatively work together on long range planning in the future to further enhance the validity and value of each agency's plan.
2. We agree to work together where appropriate in developing, maintaining and managing an understandable and equitable process for documenting projects of mutual benefit within the planning area for our respective Metropolitan Transportation Plans, including air quality conformity. We agree to provide early communication regarding any proposed policy or procedural changes that may impact mutually inclusive project selection or the implementation of our respective Metropolitan Transportation Plans. We agree to assist each other with technical support in the development and implementation of our respective Metropolitan Transportation Plans, as necessary.
3. We agree to work together, where appropriate, in the development and data collection of transportation system indicators, as required by the transportation planning process.

#### B. Transportation Improvement Program

1. We agree to work together with the development of mutually inclusive highway and transit projects within the planning area at the Ohio/Pennsylvania state line, and assure that available funds are spent on projects and programs that improve the transportation system in our planning region.
2. We agree to share information and guidelines for STIP/TIP development and management and further agree to abide to our respective state's STIP/TIP guidelines.
3. To help ensure continuity of federal funds and help support project delivery, both Eastgate and MCRPC agree to abide by the methodology and process used within our respective states to allocate federal funds to the respective MPOs.

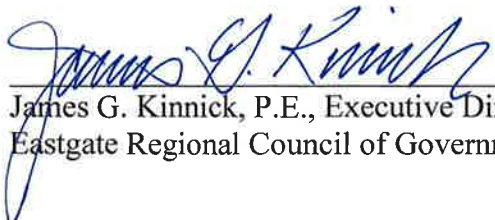
C. Transportation Work Program


1. We recognize that Eastgate and MCRPC are partners in the transportation planning process in the planning area. At the time of work program development, we will coordinate our planning interests and work together to develop and fund planning projects of mutual interest where appropriate, within the planning area at the Ohio/Pennsylvania state line. Each MPO agrees to incorporate, as much as is possible, mutually inclusive emphasis areas as determined through interagency consultation.
2. To help ensure the continuity of federal funds and help support the planning process within our existing MPO planning area boundaries, each agency agrees to abide by the methodology and process currently used within each state to allocate planning funds to the respective MPO.

D. Other Planning Activities

1. We agree to work together to identify the need for any corridor projects of regional significance and cooperatively develop the scope of such studies in accordance with mutually agreed policies, state Department of Transportation and federal guidelines.
2. We agree to improve the selection of projects in the area by working together, sharing technology and supporting each other with our processes.
3. We agree to work together to address urban area boundary issues and review the functional classification of all public roads and streets within the region on a periodic basis. This review will be completed using the National Functional Classification System guidelines.
4. We agree to cooperate with planning and implementation of our respective management systems.
5. We agree to coordinate air quality maintenance and conformity issues as they affect our regional attainment status and conformity of each MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program.
6. We agree to coordinate public involvement activities affecting our planning processes in our respective states.
7. We agree to keep informed of transportation developments and work together to explore new planning and research initiatives to improve the transportation systems within our contiguous Metropolitan Planning Organization boundaries.

Agreed to this 15th day of August, 2016 by:

  
James G. Kinnick, P.E., Executive Director  
Eastgate Regional Council of Governments

  
Daniel Gracenin, Executive Director  
Mercer County Regional Planning Commission

