

**Request for Research Funding for FY 2023-2024**

**SPR Subpart B Project:** (Research Center use only) MPO-24-01

<b>Requesting Office</b>	Florida MPO Advisory Council (MPOAC)	<b>Priority</b>	1 of 1
<b>Proposed Title</b>	Noteworthy Practices Performing MPO Administrative Functions		
<b>Justification</b>	<p>Federal and state laws, regulations, and guidance (e.g., 2 CFR 200, 23 CFR 450, FTA Circular 8100.1D, s. 215.97, F.S., and the FDOT MPO Program Management Handbook) provide Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in Florida and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) with rules and information for managing aspects of MPO administrative tasks, they do not dictate the exact manner in which those tasks can be achieved. Additionally, there is a lack of specific research and guidance related to MPO noteworthy practices in the area of MPO administrative functions that would help MPOs in Florida save time and money streamlining and improving the efficiency of a wide variety of administrative tasks and functions. These tasks include, but are not limited to, tracking staff hours, time spent on grants and consultant costs, producing Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) progress reports, staff onboarding and retention methods, facilitating career progression and succession planning, and providing professional development.</p> <p>As a result of the lack of specific guidance and noteworthy practices research, individual MPOs across the state have developed methods and systems for completing these tasks to varying degrees of success. But these solutions are siloed within each MPO and therefore best practices are not known and duplicated throughout the state.</p> <p>Through a literature review, surveys, interviews, document review, and analysis of the resulting data, this project proposal seeks to identify the various methods and systems used by Florida's 27 MPOs to carry out the administrative functions described above. Various aspects of the administrative functions of MPOs will be documented including how hours and tasks are tracked for the UPWP, systems in place for progress reporting, and processes for staff onboarding, retention, and professional development. The results of this research will be captured in a report that will outline existing administrative systems and methods and identify noteworthy practices that can be shared with MPOs across the state. Deliverables will include a literature review, database of current MPO administrative practices, and a draft and final report containing a summary of statewide noteworthy practices (in the form of short case examples organized by practice area) and suggestions for improved statewide practice.</p>		
<b>Impact</b>	<p>This research will assist the Department and MPOs to improve productivity and efficiency by identifying current and noteworthy practices for performing MPO administrative functions and suggesting improvements for MPOs across the state to consider implementing as part of their own administrative planning and management process. This will result in improved quality of work, increased productivity, and will give Florida MPOs a framework for efficiently and effectively managing their workforce and other administrative tasks in order to achieve organizational goals. The resultant streamlined administrative processes and improved MPO staff retention would, in turn, benefit FDOT as the entity responsible for overseeing the spending of federal transportation planning funds.</p>		
<b>Affected Offices</b>	Florida MPO Advisory Council, Office of Policy Planning, Office of Work Program and Budget, FDOT District Offices		
<b>Existing Work</b>	<p>MPO Program Management Handbook; November 2022.</p> <p>Additional existing work will be identified as part of a brief literature review</p>		
<b>Keywords Used In Existing Work Search</b> (Cannot leave blank)	MPO administration, workforce development, streamlining work processes and workflow		
<b>Related Contracts</b> (Give contract numbers)			
<b>Funding Request</b>	\$185,000	<b>Anticipated Duration</b>	24 months
<b>Project Manager</b>	Mark Reichert	<b>Contracting Method</b>	Direct contract with a university

<b>Equipment</b>	N/A	
<b>Urgency</b>	1	There is currently a lack of guidance for administrative functions within an MPO such as streamlining work processes and workforce development. It will benefit all parties immediately if noteworthy and effective practices are available for all MPOs across the state.
<b>Implementability</b>	1	Resulting data and products, once published, will be immediately useful to the Department (Central and District Offices) and MPOs (and their member jurisdictions).

**Project Benefits (Succinct, complete explanation)**

A comprehensive and thorough study of methods and systems of administrative processes in Florida MPOs, such as workforce development and the streamlining of workflow, will provide a basis for understanding how MPOs can improve their own administrative processes. This will result in improved quality of work, increased productivity, and will give Florida MPOs a framework for efficiently and effectively managing their workforce and other administrative tasks in order to achieve organizational goals. The resultant streamlined administrative processes and improved MPO staff retention would, in turn, benefit FDOT as the entity responsible for overseeing the spending of federal transportation planning funds.

<b>Project Benefits (Select all that apply and explain)</b>	<b>Quantifiable Benefits (units, dollars, etc...if applicable)</b>	<b>Methodology or Data Sources Used to Determine Quantifiable Benefits. If not applicable, please give justification of project benefits</b>
○ Materials Enhancement		The proposed research project will provide a basis for streamlining the administrative functions carried out by Florida Metropolitan Planning Organizations such as the professional development of staff, methods for onboarding and retention, and the streamlining of certain administrative tasks related to the UPWP.
○ Materials Savings		The proposed research project would result in material savings through the retention of MPO staff, decreasing hiring and training costs, and the utilization of efficient workflow processes to reduce operational costs.
○ Time Savings		The proposed research project will result in time saved through efficient and effective use of the workforce through better preparing staff for their tasks, retaining experienced staff, and streamlining certain continuous and repetitive processes. As a result of these improved workflow processes, FDOT staff will experience time savings through reduced staff time dedicated to support and oversight of MPO administrative functions.
○ Lives Saved/Injuries Prevented	N/A	
○ Other (Explain)	N/A	

\*Comments should explain and support urgency, financial benefit, and implementability scores