



## Regional Councils and Metropolitan Planning Organizations

When local governments (city or county) work cooperatively to address problems or issues for a region, they often do so as part of a council of governments, metropolitan planning organization (MPO), or regional council.

Regional councils have state and locally defined boundaries. They can deliver federal, state, and local programs and can function as planning organizations. They are accountable to local units of government and typically work in transportation planning, economic development, workforce development, environmental planning, services for the elderly, and providing information via clearinghouses.

A MPO is an agency created by federal law to provide local input for urban transportation planning and to allocate federal transportation funds to cities with populations of greater than 50,000. According to the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), nearly half of all MPOs operate as part of a Regional Council serving the same general geographic area.

Many Regional Councils and MPOs have sophisticated GIS that they use to map transportation and other planning activities. This data can be extremely valuable to you for community mapping.