

Is it possible to Use an Alternate Name for HRMPO?

1. Nationwide, the term Metropolitan Planning Organization has raised a few questions—it does not clearly allude to the MPO’s “transportation” function. The term implies a broader scope, and, therefore, the term may be misleading. However, roughly 80 or more percent of the nation’s MPOs and their communities have grown comfortable with and continue to use the term MPO. Still, this is a fair and useful question.
2. Federal law permits the use of an alternate name.
 - Examples of alternate names that are being used today include:
 - **MTC or Metropolitan Transportation Commission** (San Francisco/Oakland/Bay Area MPO, and the term is also used for a few regional transit agencies)
 - **MTPO or Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization** (the Lakewood Area, Tennessee MPO, an MPO in Kansas, etc. use this term)
 - **TPB or Transportation Planning Board** (the metropolitan Washington MPO that serves Northern Virginia uses this term)
 - **MTB or Metropolitan Transportation Board** (currently, this term is being used in congressional staff discussions as a term to define the large size MPOs whose duties and responsibilities are likely to be expanded in the next federal Re-Authorization Act (this new course of action and potential name change remains pending). The term is also used by the Mid Region, New Mexico MPO).
 - **MATS or Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions** (Anchorage, Alaska MPO)
 - **METROPLAN** (used by the MPOs in Little Rock Area, AK and Orlando Area, FL)
 - **TPA or Transportation Planning Agency** (Shasta Regional MPO, CA)
 - **TPO or Transportation Planning Organization** (Pensacola Area, FL)
 - **RTB or Regional Transportation Board** (the MPO for greater Baltimore, MD)
 - **TPA or Transportation Planning Authority** (Northern New Jersey’s MPO)
 - **MTC or Metropolitan Transportation Council** (Syracuse, NY regional MPO)
3. If an alternate term for the MPO is selected:
 - I tend to recommend retaining the term Metropolitan in the new title, but this is not vital.
 - Recognize that the state may desire a common term for all of their MPOs, or at least for their large (TMA-level) MPOs (as do some other states).
 - Recognize that with the new title, the MPO’s literature, websites, Bylaws, etc., as appropriate, will need to identify the new name (and organization) as being the legal, federally mandated MPO organization. The MTC in San Francisco/Oakland, and the TPB in Greater Washington do this very well.

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