



**Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization
of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission**
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Memorandum

To: CHART Committee
From: Ann Whitham, Planner
Date: January 30, 2008
Re: Land Use and Transportation Planning Presentation

At the February 6, 2008 CHART meeting, UVA joint law and urban and environmental planning graduate student Adam Lovelady will present a synopsis of his independent study, “Regionalism, Old and New: MPOs and the Integration of Transportation and Land Use Planning.” Mr. Lovelady’s research focuses on the role that MPOs have evolved to play in regional transportation and land use planning, and offers normative recommendations for strengthening that role. The topic is a timely one with SAFETEA-LU up for reauthorization, and in the context of updating the Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO’s Long Range Plan, UnJAM 2035. Copies of the full report will be available at the meeting and via TJPDC’s website.

Regionalism, Old and New: MPOs and the Integration of Transportation and Land Use Planning Abstract

The basic concept is simple: Transportation and land use are interrelated. Grinding traffic is a function of highway capacity *and* a function of congestion from new development; re-thinking sprawling development is a matter of mixed-uses *and* a matter of transportation alternatives. The institutional organization of land use and transportation, however, is not so simple. The system is plagued with complexity and fragmentation—horizontally among municipalities and vertically between local, state and federal governments—that separate land use and transportation planning, facilitate a myriad of problems, and create barriers to addressing those problems.

Legal scholars within the local-regional debate seek to remedy problems of horizontal fragmentation, but proposals often fail to account for vertical complexities. Meanwhile, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)—federally-mandated regional transportation planning bodies, often overlooked by legal scholars—serve as forums to resolve vertical complexity for transportation but fall short of Congress’ lofty goals because they fail to integrate land use.

This Note draws together the older regional institution, the MPO, with newer arguments of regionalism to propose a practical integration of land use and transportation planning. Gleaning from innovative MPOs, this Note proposes conditional federal spending to facilitate Regional Corridor Plans that coordinate transportation investments with local land use planning. Increased authority and funding, though, requires increased accountability. Thus, the Note outlines the need for public participation in administrative processes and proportional representation for MPO boards.