

To: CBMPO Technical Committee

From: Tom Sills, Transportation Planner

Subject: Proposed Rule-Making concerning MPO Coordination/Mergers

Date: July 19, 2016

The Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administrations have proposed rules under the authority of the FAST Act that seek to improve the transportation planning process by aligning the regulatory definition of a Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) with the statute. The MPA would consist of that densely-settled area whose population and density result in the designation of an area as a Metropolitan Planning Organization. The formation of the CBMPO was a result of the Cartersville-Euharlee-Emerson area having such a densely-settled area (see Map 1, attached). The CBMPO planning area consists of the urbanized area (MPA) plus the surrounding area expected to urbanize within the next 20 years.

The proposed rule would require that those MPOs which have adjoining MPAs be merged, or, at the very least, produce a single Long-Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program for the combined area. This rule would impact the boundaries of 142 MPOs across the country, including (for now) Gainesville-Hall County with the Atlanta Regional Commission and Macon with Warner-Robins (see following boundary maps). At the present time, the CBMPO is not listed by either federal agency as being impacted by this proposed rule but see our area map, attached. Should the AVATRON Park materialize and LakePoint further develop, the potential definitely exists for the MPAs to adjoin one another and for this MPO to come under the provisions of the proposed rule requiring additional coordination with the Atlanta Regional Commission.

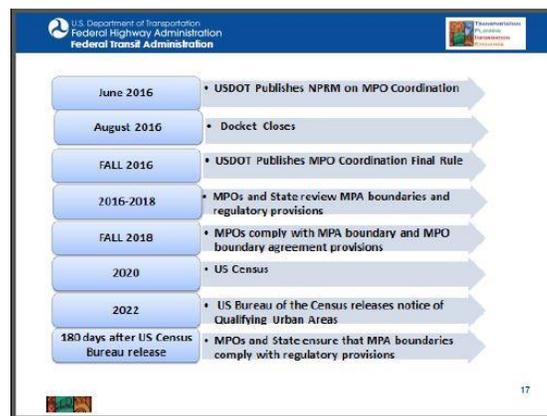


Table 1. Proposed Implementation of the NPRM

The proposed rule, if enacted, would have those MPOs whose MPA's adjoin be under a single Transportation Plan and have a formal dispute resolution process in place by late 2022 after the results of the 2020 Census are announced.

The full NPRM can be found on the CBMPO website (www.bartowga.org/mpo) under the Public Hearings and Notices tab in the left column. **Public comments are being accepted on this issue until August 26, 2016.**

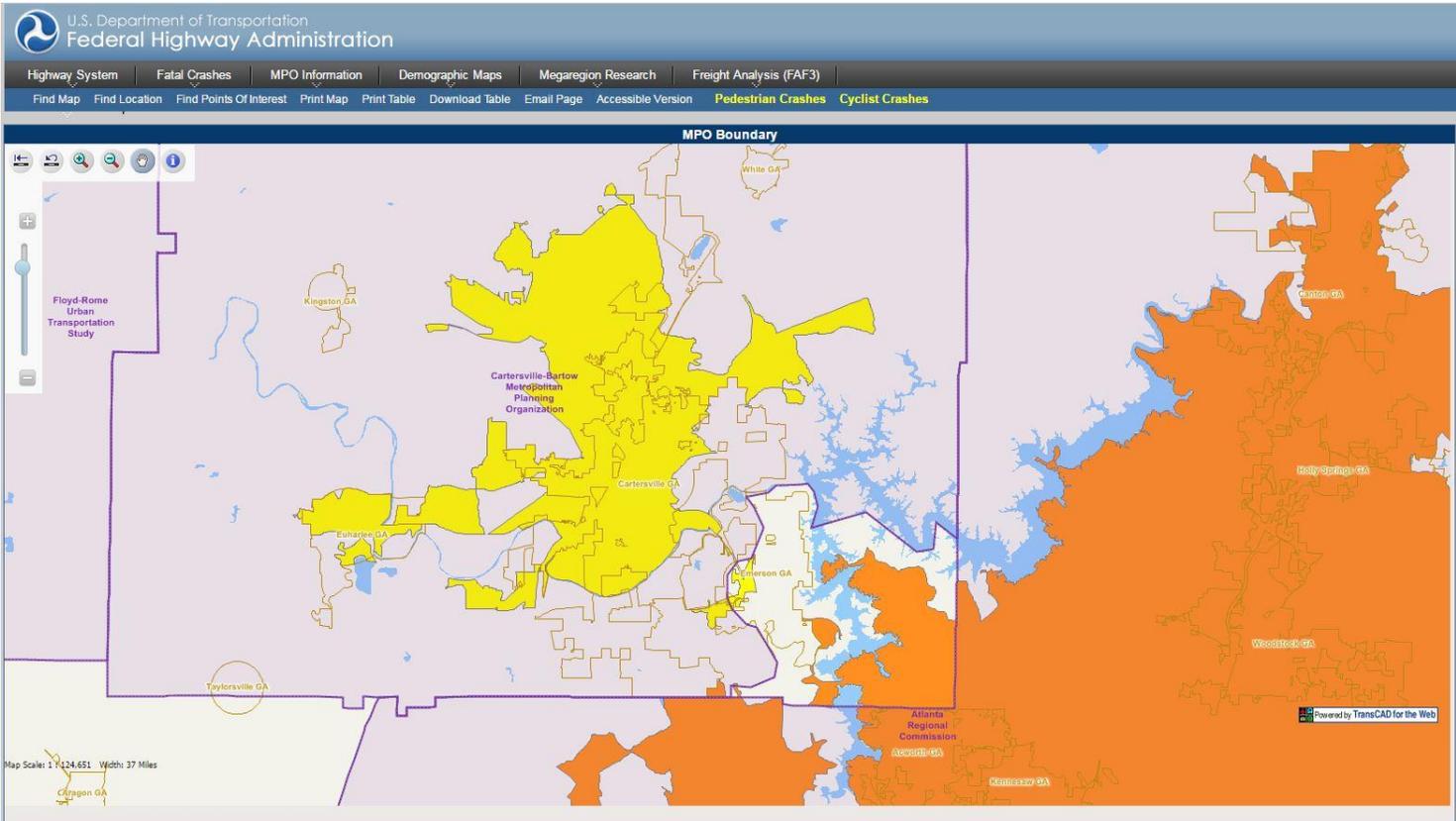


Figure 3. Cartersville and Atlanta Regional Commission MPA Boundaries 2010