transportation operator(s) are strongly encouraged to coordinate transportation planning for the entire multistate area.

(g) The MPA boundaries shall not overlap with each other.

(h) Where part of an urbanized area served by one MPO extends into an adjacent MPA, the MPOs shall, at a minimum, establish written agreements that clearly identify areas of coordination and the division of transportation planning responsibilities among and between the MPOs. Alternatively, the MPOs may adjust their existing boundaries so that the entire urbanized area lies within only one MPA. Boundary adjustments that change the composition of the MPO may require redesignation of one or more such MPOs.

(i) The MPA boundaries shall be reviewed after each Census by the MPO (in cooperation with the State and public transportation operator(s)) to determine if existing MPA boundaries meet the minimum statutory requirements for new and updated urbanized area(s), and shall be adjusted as necessary. As appropriate, additional adjustments should be made to reflect the most comprehensive boundary to foster an effective planning process that ensures connectivity between modes, reduces access disadvantages experienced by modal systems, and promotes efficient overall transportation investment strategies.

(j) Following MPA boundary approval by the MPO and the Governor, the MPA boundary descriptions shall be provided for informational purposes to the FHWA and the FTA. The MPA boundary descriptions shall be submitted either as a geo-spatial database or described in sufficient detail to enable the boundaries to be accurately delineated on a map.

§ 450.314 Metropolitan planning agreements.

(a) The MPO, the State(s), and the public transportation operator(s) shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State(s), and the public transportation operator(s) serving the MPA. To the extent possible, a single agreement between all responsible parties should be developed. The written agreement(s) shall include specific provisions for cooperatively developing and sharing information related to the development of financial plans that support the metropolitan transportation plan (see §450.322) and the metropolitan TIP (see §450.324) and development of the annual listing of obligated projects (see §450.332).

(b) If the MPA does not include the entire nonattainment or maintenance area, there shall be a written agreement among the State department of transportation, State air quality agency, affected local agencies, and the MPO describing the process for cooperative planning and analysis of all projects outside the MPA within the nonattainment or maintenance area. The agreement must also indicate how the total transportation-related emissions for the nonattainment or maintenance area, including areas outside the MPA, will be treated for the purposes of determining conformity in accordance with the EPA’s transportation conformity rule (40 CFR part 93). The agreement shall address policy mechanisms for resolving conflicts concerning transportation-related emissions that may arise between the MPA and the portion of the nonattainment or maintenance area outside the MPA.

(c) In nonattainment or maintenance areas, if the MPO is not the designated agency for air quality planning under section 174 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7504), there shall be a written agreement between the MPO and the designated air quality planning agency describing their respective roles and responsibilities for air quality related transportation planning.

(d) If more than one MPO has been designated to serve an urbanized area, there shall be a written agreement among the MPOs, the State(s), and the public transportation operator(s) describing how the metropolitan transportation planning processes will be coordinated to assure the development of consistent metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs across the MPA boundaries, particularly in cases in which a
§ 450.316 Interested parties, participation, and consultation.

(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

(1) The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

(i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;

(ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;

(iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;

(iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;

(v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;

(vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;