



NASHVILLE AREA

Metropolitan Planning Organization

MEDIA RELEASE

Nashville MPO Director Receives National, Statewide Awards

Leadership Recognized by Peers in the Wake of Major Transportation Policy Advances for Middle Tennessee

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NASHVILLE, Tenn.— Michael Skipper, executive director of the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, was recently honored with two peer awards at both the national and statewide levels. In September, the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association named Skipper as the state’s “Planner of the Year” for 2011. And in October, the Association of Metropolitan Planning Associations presented him with their award for Outstanding Individual Leadership.

“Regional transportation planning is a big priority in the Nashville area, and I am pleased that Michael was twice recognized for his impressive contributions in that field,” said Mayor Karl Dean, current MPO Chairman. “With Michael’s leadership, the MPO is well-positioned to create a modern, efficient transportation system that increases opportunities for walking, bicycling and transit usage, while protecting valuable cultural and natural resources and developing livable communities.”

Since his return to the Nashville Area MPO in 2007 as its executive director, Skipper has increased the MPO’s relevance to the region by advancing initiatives that have improved the integration of land use, urban design, environmental sustainability, and economic development issues in the Nashville area, and in the process has built stronger partnerships with the business community, and non-profit regional and community groups.

Skipper’s signature accomplishment as MPO director has been overseeing the development and adoption of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan – a major policy shift from the MPO’s business-as-usual to an investment strategy that broadens the region’s multi-modalism. The 2035 Plan was recently highlighted in the Obama administration’s National Prevention Strategy (as required under the Affordable Care Act) as a representative example of policies that promote healthier communities.

Working with the Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee, the Middle Tennessee Mayors’ Caucus, and members of the Nashville MPO on the 2035 Plan, its core policy provisions include: A bold, new vision for mass transit; increased support for active transportation and the building of walkable communities; and preservation and enhancement of strategic roadways (a “fix-it-first” approach that emphasizes a Complete Streets network and greater deployment of ITS solutions).

The once-annual winner of AMPO’s award for individual leadership is selected by his or her peers for having demonstrated advancements in the MPO planning process, and for outstanding achievement. Skipper also currently serves on AMPO’s technical committee.

The Nashville Area MPO is the federally-designated transportation planning agency for over 2800 sq. mi. and more than 1.5 million people throughout Davidson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, Wilson, and parts of Maury and Robertson counties. Serving as a regional partnership among the U.S. DOT, Tennessee DOT, local elected leadership, local planning and public works directors, the business community, and citizens across the five-plus county planning area, the MPO leads in the development of the region’s long-range transportation plan and short-range Transportation Improvement Program, and contributes to ongoing conversations about issues such as land use, economic development, climate change and the environment, safety and security, and health.

ON PAGE 2: *Images from TAPA and AMPO Awards Ceremonies*



PHOTO DETAILS:

Nashville Area MPO Director Michael Skipper accepts the 2011 “Planner of the Year” award from TAPA President Karen Hundt, director of the Planning & Design Studio for Chattanooga, Tenn. TAPA’s annual conference was held Sept. 28-30 in downtown Nashville, themed *The Unexpected Environment—Planning with Nature*.

The American Planning Association [Tennessee Chapter] is a nonprofit and membership organization comprised of practicing planners, planning students, elected & appointed officials, planning commissioners, & interested citizens. TAPA is dedicated to advancing the art, science and profession of good planning — physical, economic and social— so as to create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live.



PHOTO DETAILS:

Nashville Area MPO Director Michael Skipper accepts the Outstanding Individual Leadership Award from Lon Wyrick, AMPO board president and Executive Director of the Thurston Regional Planning Council in Olympia, Wash. The Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations held its annual conference Oct. 25-28 in Dallas, Tex., themed *Moving America’s Metros*.

The Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations is a nonprofit, membership organization serving the needs and interests of metropolitan planning organizations nationwide. AMPO offers its member MPOs technical assistance & training, research, conferences, communications, and other tools to support transportation policy development, coalition-building, and cooperative decision-making.

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