Metropolitan Planning Organization: Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries.

(a) The metropolitan planning area boundary shall, as a minimum, cover the UZA(s) and the contiguous geographic area(s) likely to become urbanized within the twenty year forecast period covered by the transportation plan described in § 450.322 of this part. The boundary may encompass the entire metropolitan statistical area or consolidated metropolitan statistical area, as defined by the Bureau of the Census. For geographic areas designated as nonattainment or maintenance areas (as created by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA)) for transportation related pollutants under the CAA, the boundaries of the metropolitan planning area shall include at least the boundaries of the nonattainment or maintenance areas, except as otherwise provided by agreement between the MPO and the Governor under the procedures specified in § 450.310(f) of this part. In the absence of a formal agreement between the Governor and the MPO to reduce the metropolitan planning area to an area less than the boundaries of the nonattainment or maintenance area, the entire nonattainment or maintenance area is subject to the applicable provisions of this part. Where a portion of the nonattainment or maintenance area is excluded from the metropolitan planning area boundary, the STP funds suballocated to urbanized areas greater than 200,000 in population shall not be utilized for projects outside the metropolitan planning area boundary.

(b) The metropolitan planning area for a new UZA served by an existing or new MPO shall be established in accordance with these criteria. The current planning area boundaries for previously designated UZAs shall be reviewed and modified if necessary to comply with these criteria.

(c) In addition to the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, the planning areas currently in use for all transportation modes should be reviewed before establishing the metropolitan planning area boundary. Where appropriate, 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.
(d) Approval of metropolitan planning area boundaries by the FHWA or the FTA is not required. However, metropolitan planning area boundary maps must be submitted to the FHWA and the FTA after their approval by the MPO and the Governor.