

Article 17.

Rural Transportation Planning Organizations.

§ 136-210. Definitions.

As used in this Article, "Rural Transportation Planning Organization" means a voluntary organization of local elected officials or their designees and representatives of local transportation systems formed by a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Transportation to work cooperatively with the Department to plan rural transportation systems and to advise the Department on rural transportation policy. (2000-123, s. 2.)

§ 136-211. Department authorized to establish Rural Transportation Planning Organizations.

(a) Authorization. – The Department of Transportation is authorized to form Rural Transportation Planning Organizations.

(b) Area Represented. – Rural Transportation Planning Organizations shall include representatives from contiguous areas in three to fifteen counties, with a total population of the entire area represented of at least 50,000 persons according to the latest population estimate of the Office of State Planning. Noncontiguous counties adjacent to the same Metropolitan Planning Organization may form a Rural Transportation Planning Organization. Areas already included in a Metropolitan Planning Organization shall not be included in the area represented by a Rural Transportation Planning Organization.

(c) Membership. – The Rural Transportation Planning Organization shall consist of local elected officials or their designees and representatives of local transportation systems in the area as agreed to by all parties in a memorandum of understanding.

(d) Formation; Memorandum of Understanding. – The Department shall notify local elected officials and representatives of local transportation systems around the State of the opportunity to form Rural Transportation Planning Organizations. The Department shall work cooperatively with interested local elected officials, their designees, and representatives of local transportation systems to develop a proposed area, membership, functions, and responsibilities of a Rural Transportation Planning Organization. The agreement of all parties shall be included in a memorandum of understanding approved by the membership of a proposed Rural Transportation Planning Organization and the Secretary of the Department of Transportation. (2000-123, s. 2; 2002-170, s. 2.)

§ 136-212. Duties of Rural Transportation Planning Organizations.

The duties of a Rural Transportation Planning Organization shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Developing, in cooperation with the Department, long-range local and regional multimodal transportation plans.
- (2) Providing a forum for public participation in the transportation planning process.

- (3) Developing and prioritizing suggestions for transportation projects the organization believes should be included in the State's Transportation Improvement Program.
- (4) Providing transportation-related information to local governments and other interested organizations and persons. (2000-123, s. 2.)

§ 136-213. Administration and staff.

(a) Administrative Entity. – Each Rural Transportation Planning Organization, working in cooperation with the Department, shall select an appropriate administrative entity for the organization. Eligible administrative entities include, but are not limited to, regional economic development agencies, regional councils of government, chambers of commerce, and local governments.

(b) Professional Staff. – The Department, each Rural Transportation Planning Organization, and any adjacent Metropolitan Planning Organization shall cooperatively determine the appropriate professional planning staff needs of the organization.

(c) Funding. – If funds are appropriated for that purpose, the Department may make grants to Rural Transportation Planning Organizations to carry out the duties listed in G.S. 136-212. The members of the Rural Transportation Planning Organization shall contribute at least twenty percent (20%) of the cost of any staff resources employed by the organization to carry out the duties listed in G.S. 136-212. The Department may make additional planning grants to economically distressed counties, as designated by the North Carolina Department of Commerce. (2000-123, s. 2; 2002-170, s. 3.)

§ 136-214: Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 136-215: Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 136-216: Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 136-217: Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 136-218: Reserved for future codification purposes.

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