



Transportation Planning in Greater Charlotte Region

Regional Transportation Planning
Study

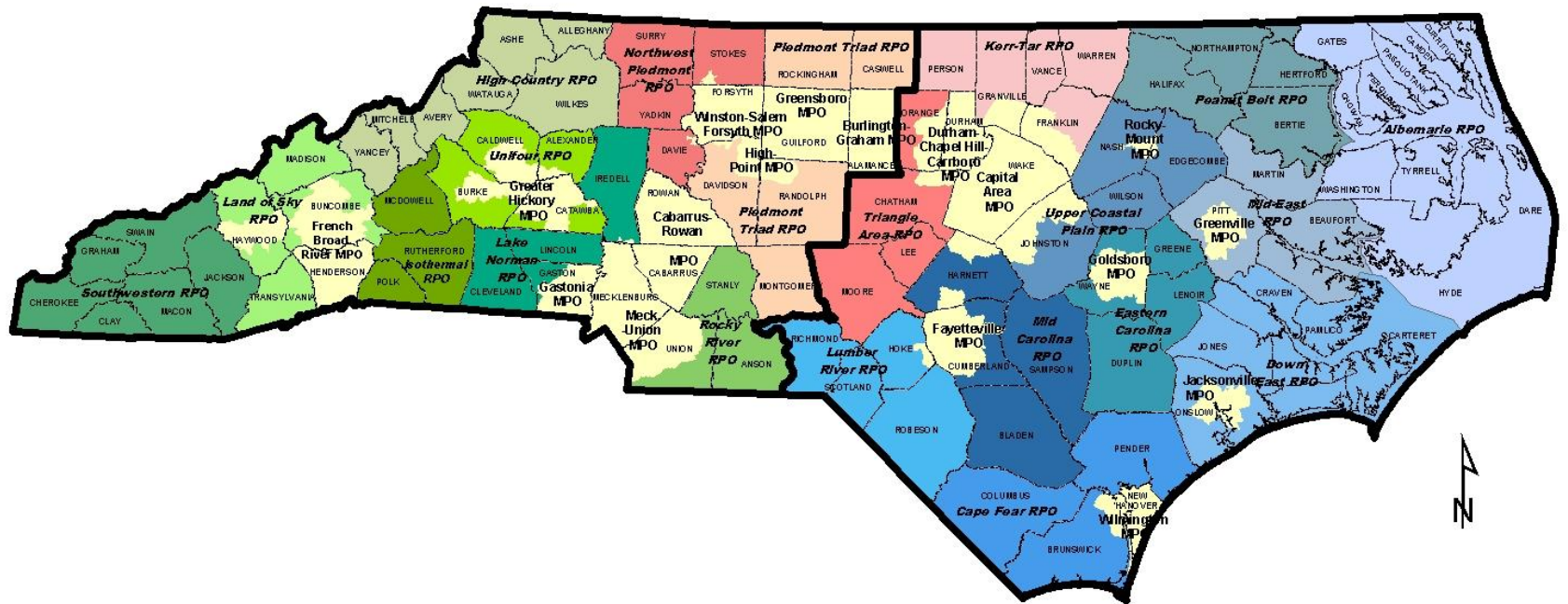
July 21, 2010



Topics

- Existing area transportation planning boundaries
- Existing SC DOT and NC DOT boundaries
- MPO background and boundary methodology
- Impact of the 2010 census and SAFETEA-LU reauthorization

North Carolina Rural Planning Organizations and Metropolitan Planning Organizations



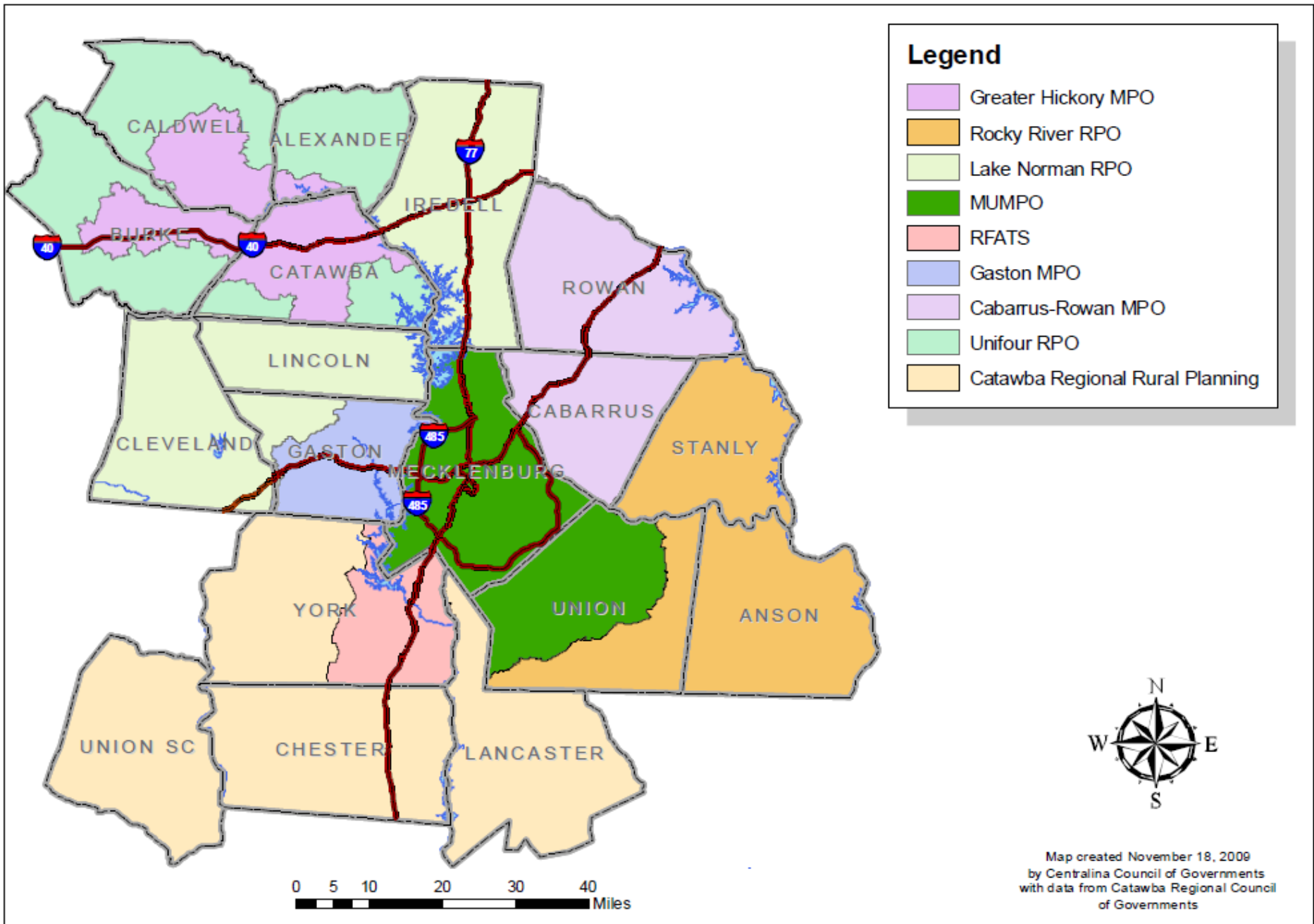
Legend

Yellow MPO_Boundaries



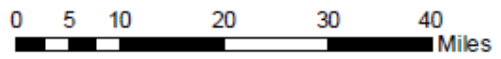
Map Created by
North Carolina
Department of Transportation
Transportation Planning Branch
December 13, 2005

MPOs and RPOs in the Region



Legend

- Greater Hickory MPO
- Rocky River RPO
- Lake Norman RPO
- MUMPO
- RFATS
- Gaston MPO
- Cabarrus-Rowan MPO
- Unifour RPO
- Catawba Regional Rural Planning



Map created November 18, 2009
by Centralina Council of Governments
with data from Catawba Regional Council
of Governments

MPO 101

- Initiated by USDOT in 1960s
- Required for urbanized areas of 50,000 or more
- Affected cities/ regions differently throughout the country, and over time:
 - Northern cities/regions were already in multiple counties in the 1960s
 - Southern cities/ regions were traditionally smaller and more separated
- Currently nearly 400 MPOs nationwide (17 in NC)
- 80 percent of funding comes from FHWA (via federal gas and use taxes).

How Does An MPO Study Area Expand?

- MPOs are required to cover urbanized areas and adjacent areas likely to urbanize in next 20 years.
- New MPO Study Area boundaries must be approved by:
 - Governor(s) and,
 - Local governments representing 75% of the affected population

Discussion: MPOs seldom expand Study Area boundaries except for census updates. Funding is tied to the *urbanized* population, so there is no financial benefit to the MPO to expand the Study Area into non-urbanized areas.

Census Terminology

■ Urban Areas

- Census blocks or block groups with pop. density greater than 1,000 per sq. mi.
- Adjacent blocks or block groups with pop. density greater than 500 per sq. mi.

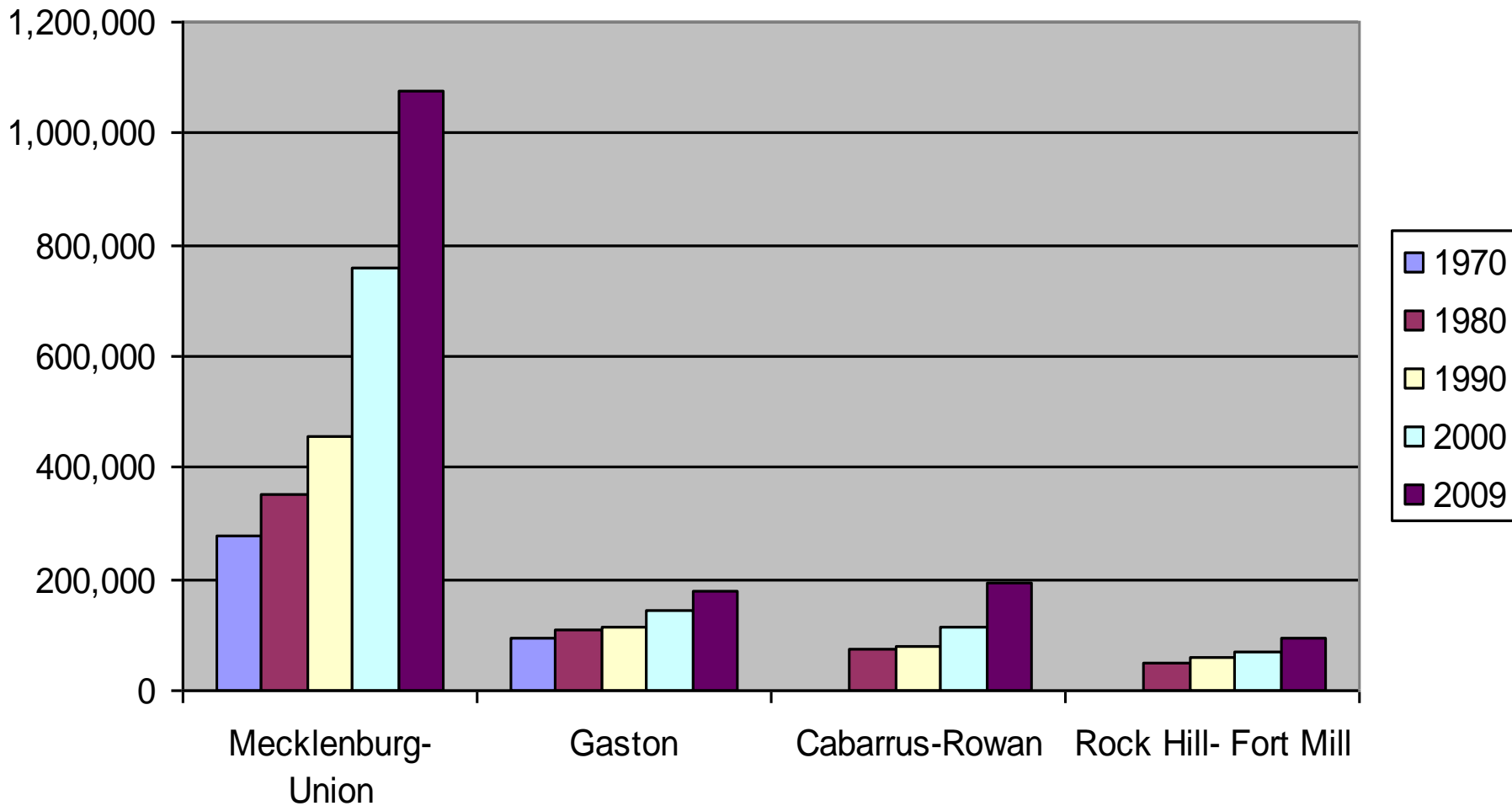
■ **Urbanized Areas** - Urban areas with a collective population greater than 50,000

■ **Urban Clusters** - Urban areas with a collective population less than 50,000

■ Urban/Urbanized area designations determined after each decennial census

Metrolina Area Urbanized Area Population Trends 1970-2009









Source: US Census and ESRI



Note: Fort Mill, Tega Cay, and Lake Wylie were included in Mecklenburg- Union UA in 2000 census

2000 Census Metrolina Urbanized Areas and Urban Clusters

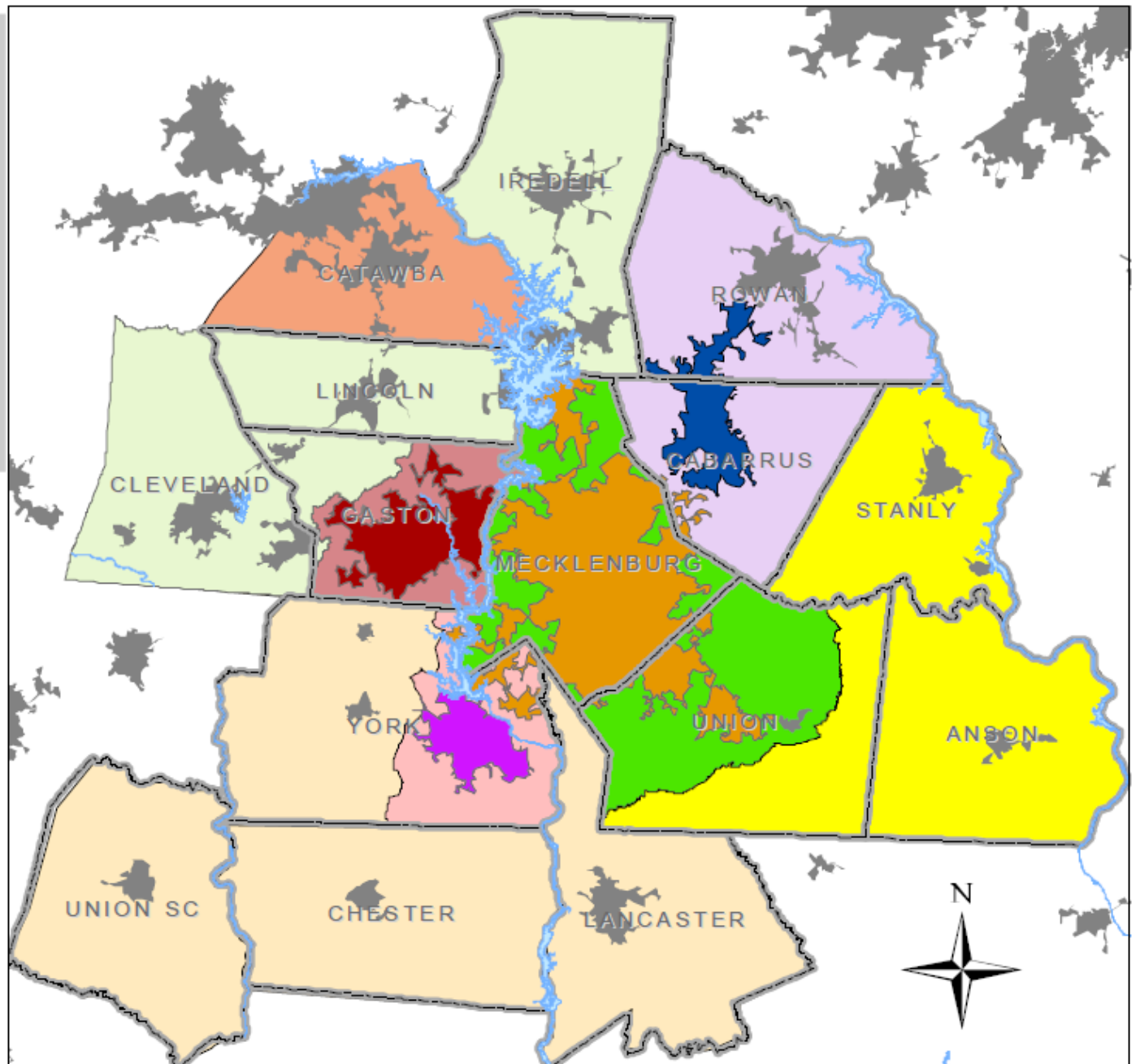
Legend

-  Mecklenburg- Union Urbanized Area
-  Cabarrus-Rowan Urbanized Area
-  Gaston Urbanized Area
-  Rock Hill- Fort Mill Urbanized Area
-  Urban Cluster or Urbanized Area
-  Catawba County
-  Rocky River RPO
-  Lake Norman RPO
-  MUMPO
-  RFATS
-  Gaston MPO
-  Cabarrus-Rowan MPO
-  Catawba Regional Rural Planning

About This Map

MPO Study Area boundaries are larger than the Urbanized Areas found within their boundaries. Study Area boundaries must encompass all areas expected to urbanize over the next 20 years.

Urbanized areas are defined by the US Census Bureau.



Map Created: December 2009
by Centralina Council of Governments

How can “Rural” Areas Become “Urban” so Quickly?


- “Hops” – the application of UA status to non-qualifying block groups to connect qualifying areas less than 0.5 miles apart
- “Jumps” – noncontiguous urban areas less than 2.5 (previously 1.5) miles from other UA/UC-limit one
- Connections along transportation facilities
 - Example: NC 73 across the Catawba River
- 2000 census was completely automated
 - Meant a clean slate for determining urbanized areas

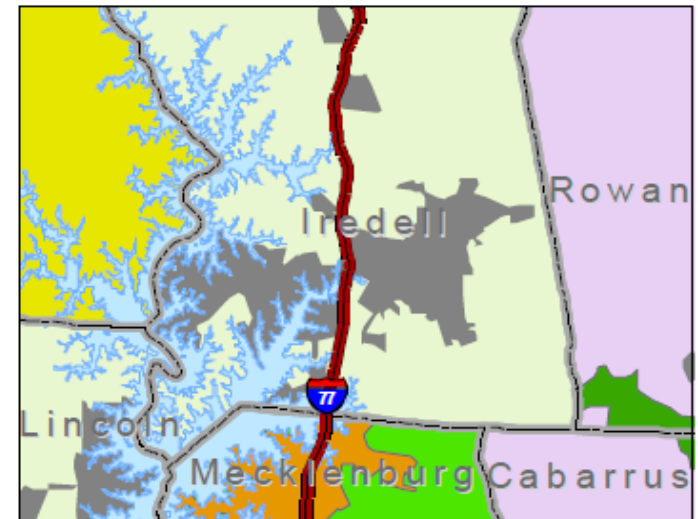
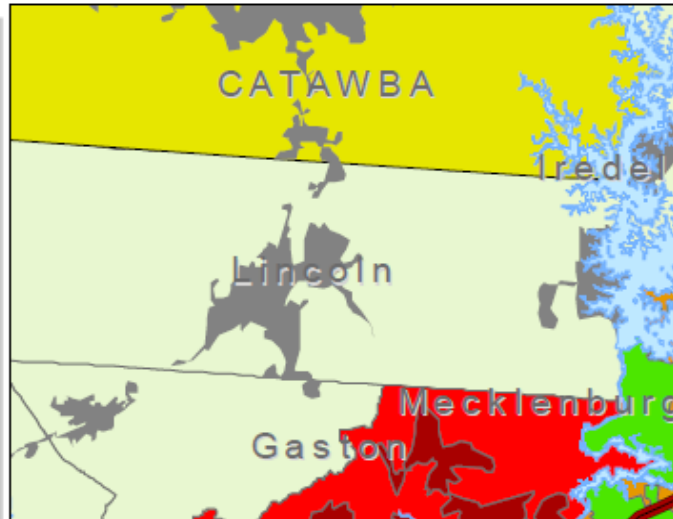
Impacts of Revised 2010 Census Methodology

- More than just raw population density will be considered
 - *Developable* land will be considered for density purposes
 - Employment levels
 - Commuting patterns
 - Land development intensity
- “Hops” and “Jumps” can now cross water bodies
- Previous unit of analysis was block or block group. Tracts will be used as first level of analysis in 2010.
 - Intent is for more contiguous boundaries
 - Impact is for the urban area to increase size
 - Process is automated, and there is no appeal process
- Guidance to be published in Federal Register in late March 2010

2000 Metrolina Urban Clusters and Proximity to Urbanized Areas

Legend

-  Interstate
-  Urban Cluster
-  Rocky River RPO
-  Lake Norman RPO
-  MUMPO
-  RFATS
-  Gaston MPO
-  Cabarrus-Rowan MPO
-  Catawba County
-  Catawba COG Rural Planning
-  Mecklenburg- Union Urbanized Area
-  Cabarrus-Rowan Urbanized Area
-  Gaston Urbanized Area
-  Rock Hill- Fort Mill Urbanized Area



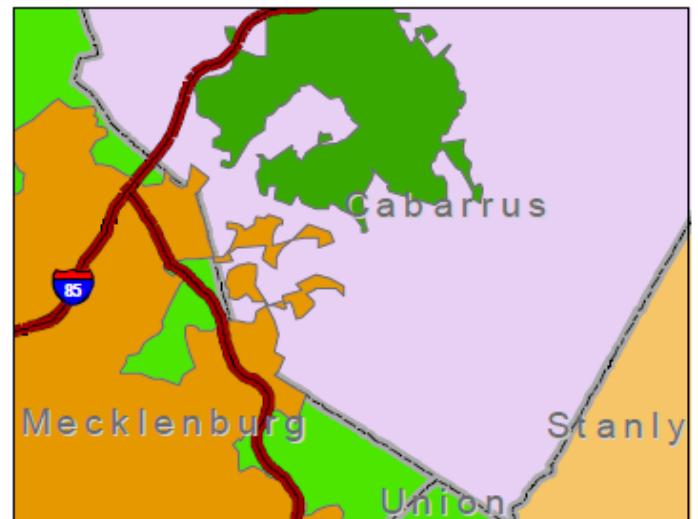
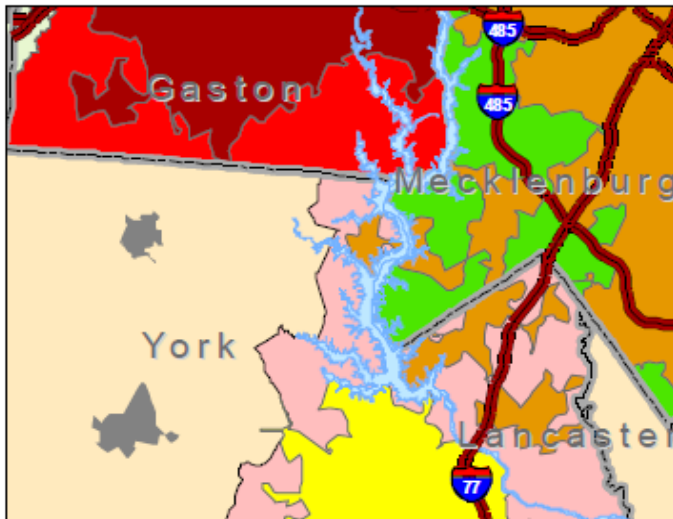
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


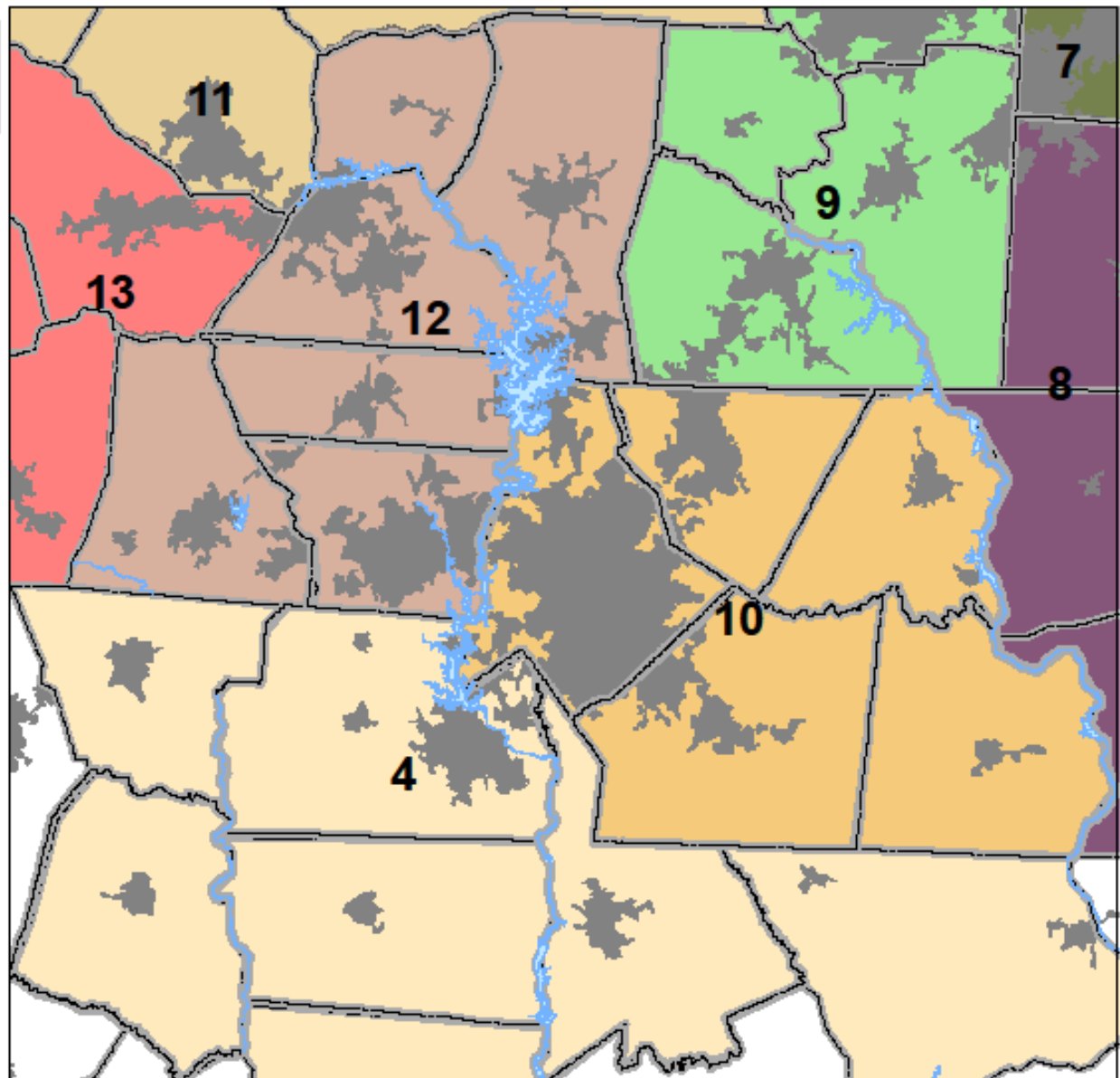
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Area Highway Divisions (NC) and Districts (SC)

Legend

-  counties
-  Urban Cluster or Urbanized Area



About This Map

The majority of transportation construction dollars are administered by highway divisions and districts for NC and SC.

This map shows the boundaries of the divisions and districts in the region.



Map Created: December 2009
by Centralina Council of Governments

Area Funding Regions

Legend

- counties
- Urban Cluster or Urbanized Area
- NCDOT Region D
- NCDOT Region E
- NCDOT Region F

About This Map

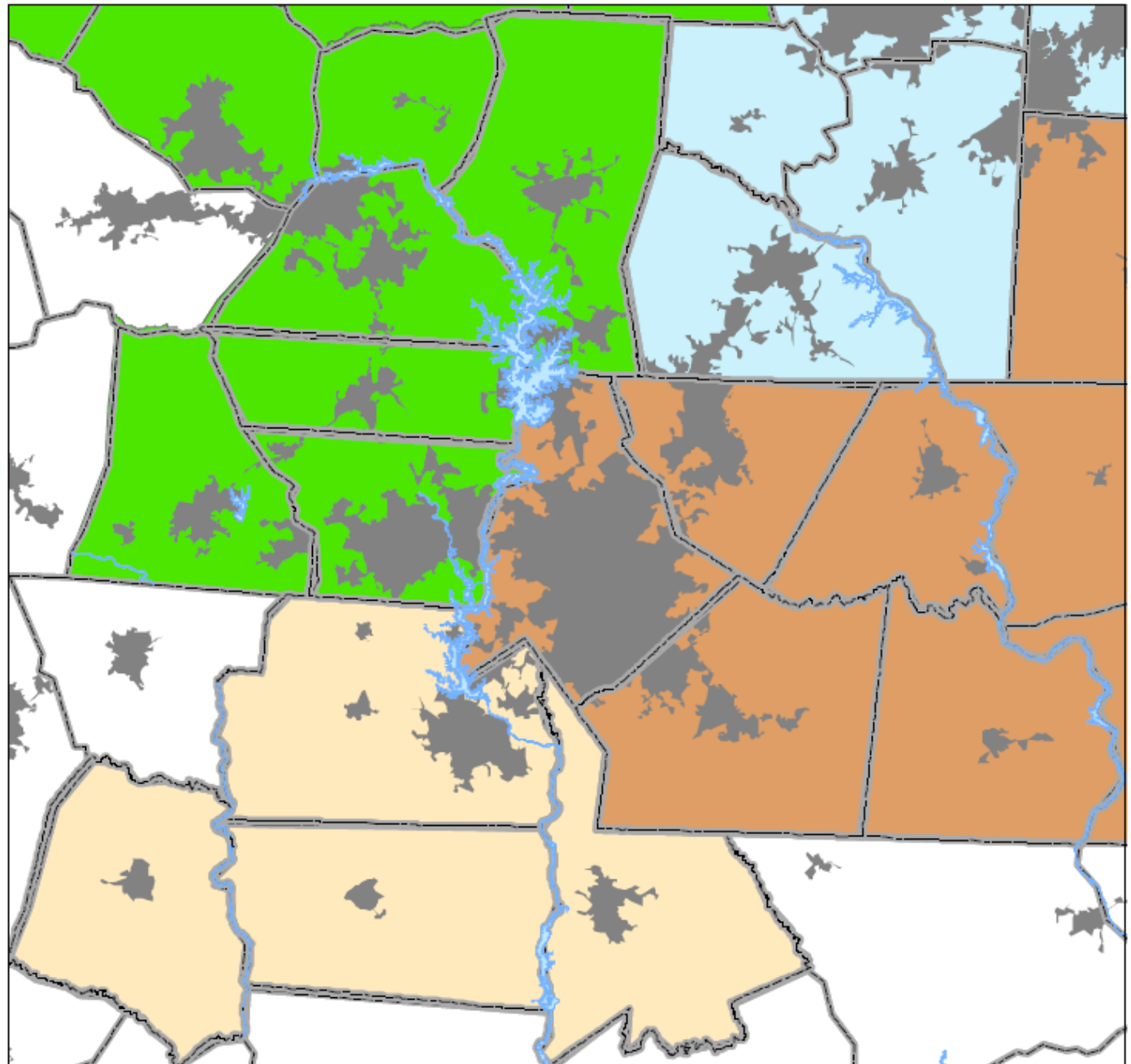
Most transportation funding in NC is designated based on Funding Regions, which are pairings of Highway divisions.

The RFATS Study Area in eastern York County is considered a Funding Region. The rural portion planned for by the Catawba COG is also considered a Funding Region. South Carolina recently made many projects compete at a statewide level due to Commission Act 114.

This map shows the boundaries of the Funding Regions in the area.



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SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization

- Not likely until early 2011
- Affects both funding and regulations
- Issue: minimum population of new MPOs?
 - Current minimum is 50,000
 - Frequently cited recommendation is 100,000
- Requirements of MPOs are increasing
 - Greenhouse gas regulation
 - Performance outcomes (instead of just process)
 - More holistic planning (land use, energy, health)
- Will likely include federal recognition of RPOs
- May contain incentives for larger organizations (more people covered equals more authority)

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

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