

## **VOLUME II, SECTION I. INTRODUCTION**

In July of 1997, four governmental bodies in the Denver metropolitan area<sup>1</sup> entered into a Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] in which they agreed to support an “independent examination of the operation of the Denver MPO” [Metropolitan Planning Organization] under funding to be provided by the federal reauthorization of transportation projects.<sup>2</sup> The MOU provided that each of the four signatories would urge Congress to hold in abeyance any amendments to ISTEA reauthorization pertaining to designation or redesignation of MPOs pending completion of the study.

In October of 1997, the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress appropriated \$500,000 to the Colorado Department of Transportation [CDOT] to study “the metropolitan planning process and organization in the Denver metropolitan area.” The funds were to be made available to “a Denver-based, private sector, non-profit university based research organization with expertise in public policy.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The four governmental institutions were Douglas County, the Colorado Department of Transportation, the Denver Regional Council of Governments, and the City and County of Denver.

<sup>2</sup> ISTEA is the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. House of Representatives, Conference Rep. No. 105-313, Making Appropriations for the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 1998, and for Other Purposes, 105<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> Sess. (Oct. 7, 1997).