



MPO Public Participation Plan

2015 Update

October 2015

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INTRODUCTION

The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) provides a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) transportation planning process for Greater Des Moines. As part of a successful 3-C transportation planning process, the MPO solicits public review and comment on the work, projects, and products proposed and created by the MPO.

The MPO's *Public Participation Plan* (PPP) intends to promote this effort by defining a process that provides citizens, stakeholder groups, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the transportation planning process.

The MPO developed this PPP in consultation with the public and other interested parties. Included in this PPP are the MPO's policies and procedures for conducting public outreach, scheduling public meetings, and incorporating public input into the transportation planning process.

ABOUT THE MPO

The MPO acts as the formal transportation body for the greater Des Moines metropolitan area, carrying out the intent of 23 CFR 450. In 1983, the Governor of Iowa designated the MPO as the official MPO for the Des Moines Urbanized Area, as defined by the US Census Bureau. The MPO functions as the Transportation Management Area as well, as it exceeds the population threshold of 200,000 persons established in 23 CFR 450.104. The MPO is committed to implementing a comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing multimodal transportation planning process for the greater Des Moines metropolitan area.

The MPO provides a regional forum to ensure coordination between the public and local, state, and federal agencies in regard to planning issues and to prepare transportation plans and programs. The MPO develops both long- and short-range multimodal transportation plans, selects and approves projects for federal funding based upon regional priorities, and develops methods to reduce traffic congestion.

In 2015, the MPO is comprised of 16 cities; the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART); two associate, non-voting cities; unincorporated portions of three counties in central Iowa; and one associate, non-voting county. The MPO's planning area encompasses over 500 square miles. Collaborating with the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and many other cooperating agencies, the members of the MPO seek to provide an efficient and equitable surface transportation system for Greater Des Moines.

The MPO consists of three main committees:

- Representatives to the **MPO Transportation Technical Committee (TTC)** include city engineers, county engineers, public works directors, community planning directors, Des Moines International Airport (DSM) staff, DART staff, and advisors from the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA. This committee makes technical recommendations to the MPO Executive Committee.
- The MPO chair, vice chair, secretary/treasurer, three at-large members, and an ex-officio member comprise the **MPO Executive Committee**. This body reviews transportation policy-related topics and recommends action to the MPO.
- The **MPO Policy Committee** – referred to as the MPO – acts on the recommendations of the MPO Executive Committee. Representatives to the MPO are primarily local elected officials, city administrators, city managers, and advisors from the DSM, DART, the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA.

A full-time professional planning staff makes recommendations to the TTC and supports these three committees in addition to a number of roundtables and working groups. Staff also coordinates and prepares committee meetings, informs the committees of projects and programs, and develops the final MPO work products and reports.

REGULATIONS and REQUIREMENTS

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and natural origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. As President John F. Kennedy said in 1963, “Simple justice requires that public funds, to which all taxpayers of all races [colors, and national origins] contribute, not be spent in any fashion which encourages, entrenches, subsidizes, or results in racial [color or national origin] discrimination.” Per the US Department of Justice:

If a recipient of federal assistance is found to have discriminated and voluntary compliance cannot be achieved, the federal agency providing the assistance should either initiate fund termination proceedings or refer the matter to the Department of Justice for appropriate legal action. Aggrieved individuals may file administrative complaints with the federal agency that provides funds to a recipient, or the individuals may file suit for appropriate relief in federal court. Title VI itself prohibits intentional discrimination. However, most funding agencies have regulations implementing Title VI that prohibit recipient practices that have the effect of discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

To assist federal agencies that provide financial assistance, the wide variety of recipients that receive such assistance, and the actual and potential beneficiaries of programs receiving federal assistance, the US Department of Justice has published a Title VI Legal Manual. The Title VI Legal Manual sets out Title VI legal principles and standards. Additionally, the Department has published an Investigation Procedures Manual to give practical advice on how to investigate Title VI complaints. Also available on the Federal Coordination and Compliance Website are a host of other materials that may be helpful to those interested in ensuring effective enforcement of Title VI.

Executive Order #12898

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. EPA has this goal for all communities and persons across this Nation. It will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.”

In February 1994, President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order #12898 – Executive Order on Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations. The order is intended to focus federal attention on the “environmental and human health conditions in minority communities and low-income communities with the goal of achieving environmental justice. That order is intended to promote nondiscrimination in federal programs substantially affecting human health and the environment, and to provide minority

communities and low-income communities with access to public information on, and an opportunity for public participation in, matters relating to human health or the environment.”

Open Meetings Law

The State of Iowa established the Open Meetings Law in 1999. It states that meetings should be open to the public; however, the Open Meetings Law does permit some closed meetings. The Open Meetings Law applies to the MPO Policy Committee, the MPO Executive Committee, and such other subgroups as may be directed by the MPO Policy Committee.

Where Open Meetings Law applies, the MPO keeps minutes as public records that show the date, time, members present, and the actions taken during the meeting. Staff may keep additional records from the meetings that also are public records.

Public Records Law

The State of Iowa also established the Public Records Law in 1999. This legislation, with certain statutory exceptions, ensures that every person has a right to examine public records and to copy them.

Nondiscrimination Obligations

The MPO is obligated to manage its programs and provide planning services to Greater Des Moines without regard to race, color, and national origin. The MPO is further obligated to avoid discrimination based on handicap or disability.

Accommodations

The MPO schedules public input meetings at convenient and accessible locations, and at times and facilities compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The MPO sends news releases to foreign language media outlets in the region as well as to stakeholder groups representing low-income, minority, and disabled populations.

As part of its environmental justice analysis, the MPO has identified seven degrees of disadvantage, or types of traditionally disadvantaged populations, as the analytic basis for ensuring compliance with Title VI. The seven degrees of disadvantage include:

- Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- Non-white population
- Persons in poverty
- Carless households
- Persons with a disability
- Single heads of households with children
- Persons over 65

The MPO created maps highlighting areas identified as disadvantaged through this process. The maps help the MPO determine public input meeting locations. This process will also help the MPO develop a methodology for assessing the positive and negative effects that transportation projects may have on areas sensitive to environmental justice.

With these concerns in mind, the MPO is committed to providing its materials to all citizens within the MPO planning area. The MPO developed a Language Assistance Plan to ensure individuals with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to the transportation planning process. For example, the MPO encourages LEP persons to contact the MPO for translation services of MPO documents. Upon request, the MPO works with local organizations to obtain translations of the desired documents within a reasonable period. The MPO also ensures that a notice of the availability of translation services is included in relevant MPO documents and written in the language of large LEP populations. More details on LEP accommodations can be found in the MPO's Language Assistance Plan, available online at www.dmampo.org/public-participation/.

Complaint Procedures

Persons wishing to file a formal discrimination complaint may do so by completing the Title VI Complaint Form available by contacting the MPO. Complaint forms are also available on the MPO website at www.dmampo.org/title-vi-complaint-form/ in printable PDF and online form formats. Persons should send the form to the MPO's designated Title VI Coordinator. Within 10 calendar days, the MPO will forward this form and any additional information to the Iowa DOT Title VI Coordinator. The Iowa DOT will conduct an investigation into the complaint and make a recommendation to the FHWA, who will make the final determination. The Iowa DOT and the MPO will inform the person filing the complaint of the final determination. For more information, please visit <http://www.iowadot.gov/civilrights/subrecipient.html>.

Record Keeping

The MPO's civil rights specialist maintains a log of all complaints and the disposition of those complaints. The MPO maintains files of each complaint for a period of no less than seven years. Annually, the MPO staff provides a summary of discrimination complaints to the MPO Policy Committee. At the time of this publication, the MPO has yet to receive any discrimination complaints.

STAKEHOLDERS AND PUBLIC GROUPS

The MPO considers all who live, work, learn, and play in Greater Des Moines to be stakeholders. With its long-range focus, the MPO even has responsibilities to generations not yet born. Staff works to balance this spectrum of needs and desires throughout the development of the many plans and programs the MPO undertakes.

To fully capture the pulse of the public, the MPO has identified a number of groups and individuals as having potential interest in public input and involvement opportunities. These groups are included in email distribution groups for staff to use in communications with stakeholders.

- Neighborhood organizations
- Homeowner associations
- The Greater Des Moines Partnership, chambers of commerce, and other business groups
- Private transportation providers
- Groups working within the transportation industry, including those working in trucking, rail, and transit, and on bicycle and pedestrian issues
- Advocacy groups for disadvantaged, disabled, and/or minority groups
- Transportation providers for groups that lack access to private vehicles
- The media, including television, radio, print, and electronic means
- Young professionals
- Governmental agencies
- Schools
- Environmental organizations + other social action groups
- Hospitals
- Organizations or individuals interested in public hearings for major projects, or organizations and individuals that provide comments relating to public hearings for major projects.

Roundtables + Working Groups

The MPO establishes and supports subcommittees focused on issues relevant to the MPO's activities and responsibilities from time to time. Stakeholder organizations and citizens serve on these committees as appropriate. Currently, the MPO supports the following committees:

- **Central Iowa Bicycle and Pedestrian Roundtable**, which facilitates the development, maintenance, and promotion of a world-class commuter and recreational bicycle and pedestrian system in central Iowa;
- **Freight Roundtable**, which works with local, regional, national, and international partners to assist with the efficient movement of freight in the region;
- **Transportation Advisory Group (TAG)**, which discusses human service and transportation coordination needs in the region;
- **Traffic Management Advisory Committee**, which provides a forum to discuss incident management, traffic management, and intelligent transportation systems issues.
- **Environmental Roundtable**, which is comprised of local experts who help to guide the efforts of the MPO's transportation-related activities as well as spearheading other regional planning efforts including implementation of aspects of The Tomorrow Plan.
- **The Tomorrow Plan Steering Committee and Implementation Team**, which is comprised of regional leaders in business, government and non-profit organizations who support the ongoing implementation of The Tomorrow Plan. A smaller group of leaders works in support of The Tomorrow Plan Steering Committee as the Implementation Team.

OUTREACH STRATEGIES

The MPO implements a variety of techniques to reach the populations outlined at the beginning of this section. As work on documents such as the long-range transportation plan (LRTP) or the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) commences, staff has a general outline of public engagement strategies to be implemented. It is important to note, however, that these strategies are designed to be responsive to public feedback and may be modified to enhance the engagement.

Public Events

The TTC, Executive Committee, and MPO Policy Committee all meet on a monthly basis. All of these meetings are open to the public, per the State of Iowa's Open Meetings Law.

The MPO also hosts a number of roundtables and subcommittees that hold regular meetings. These roundtables and subcommittees are outlined on the previous page. All of the roundtable and subcommittee meetings are open to the public as well.

The MPO schedules single purpose public input meetings for the LRTP, the TIP, and the PPP with the sole intent of disseminating information to the public and soliciting public comment on these important documents. Additionally, the MPO holds public input meetings to solicit public review and comment on amendments to the LRTP, the TIP, and the PPP, and to gather feedback on the development of other planning products. When practical and feasible, the MPO supplements public input meetings with other outreach techniques, such as publicly circulated surveys regarding current issues and concerns. The MPO provides the results of any such surveys to the public.

Finally, the MPO hosts special events on an as-needed basis. The MPO hosts events to celebrate the successful implementations of The Tomorrow Plan in the previous year, as well as call out major focuses of implementation in the coming year. These also include public open houses with learning opportunities and chances to interact with the MPO's community partners; facilitated small group discussions; and focus groups with subject matter experts; speaker series events. The MPO seeks to partner with existing community events and with local businesses in order to attract a more diverse crowd. Connecting with employee resource groups provides another engagement opportunity. In the past, the MPO has participated in the Earth Day Trash Bash, the Science Center of Iowa's Earth Day celebration, the 80/35 music festival, and the ARAG sustainability fair.

In hosting and participating in events, the MPO seeks to engage all ages. The materials at the events present information both textually and visually, making it easier to understand for all. The MPO seeks to incorporate engaging elements that residents will remember into its events. In the past, this has included an interactive art piece at the 80/35 music festival that invited participants to imagine what amenities they would like along waterways in Greater Des Moines.

One strategy in engaging new socioeconomic groups has been strategic partnerships with the African American Leadership Forum (AALF) and young professionals groups. The MPO has partnered with the AALF to bring educational programming to African Americans. Much of this programming has been focused on the urban core and reaching those individuals traditionally left out of the planning process. Likewise, young professionals often are not involved in planning processes. However, many MPO projects reach well into the future, meaning that young professionals likely will be more impacted by these projects than older generations. The MPO has made a concerted effort to tap into young professionals and has experienced record-breaking participation as a result.

Publications

Press releases are issued three or four times per month on the many planning efforts, studies and other activities of the Des Moines Area MPO. Topics include reports on progress the region is making in meeting the performance measures of the long-range transportation plan, events related to planning activities, and public input opportunities. Media releases go to media outlets throughout the region, including those with LEP and minority audiences.

On occasion, the MPO publishes other documents and informational brochures that provide summary information regarding important planning issues and activities.

To subscribe to the MPO distribution list, contact MPO staff at 515.334.0075 or info@dmampo.org.

Online Presence

Over the past few years, the MPO has significantly bolstered its online presence. The MPO website – accessible at www.dmampo.org – provides an overview of upcoming meetings along with agendas, committee representatives, staff information, news, maps, plans, and publications produced by the MPO. Relevant links are included on the website, too.

Beyond the website, the MPO maintains an online presence through social media sites Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google Business Page. The MPO regularly updates these sites to engage residents and to build a better understanding of the MPO and the projects the organization takes on. In the 12-month period prior to this report, more than 30,000 people saw content associated with the MPO's Facebook page. Additionally, during this same period, more than 49,000 people saw MPO or MPO-related content from the MPO's Twitter account.

The MPO has employed several additional online engagement tools over the past several years. For example, the MPO has used MindMixer, an online town hall too.

In the spring of 2012, the MPO, through The Tomorrow Plan, debuted Design My DSM, an online game that allowed residents to identify priorities, understand the impacts of different planning projects and policies on these priorities, and design a scenario that linked priorities with limited funding. In 2015, the tool was again used, this time on a discussion specific to the public's interest in options for developing water trails in Greater Des Moines.

Being fully aware of differences in internet access, the MPO took a low-tech version of Design My DSM to events with youth, young professionals, elderly, and immigrants, among others. Knowing that the online version of Design My DSM was not representative of the region's population, the MPO conducted a statistically valid 450-person survey, which included an oversample in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

The MPO makes every effort to provide adequate notice for public review and comment, particularly as these activities relate to proposed drafts of the LRTP, the TIP, and the PPP. The MPO makes notifications and announcements of upcoming public input meetings for the LRTP, the TIP, and the PPP approximately four weeks in advance of the scheduled meeting through publications and online. Approximately one week in advance, the MPO publishes legal notice of public meetings and public review and comment periods in the Des Moines Register. The MPO also posts meeting agendas and minutes in accordance with the State of Iowa's Open Meetings Law. The MPO issues press releases of upcoming public input meetings to local media outlets and encourages them to advertise the dates, times, and locations of public meetings and public review and comment periods. These release go to a broad range of media outlets, including several with LEP and minority audiences.

From time to time, member governments request amendments to the LRTP and to the TIP. In conducting revisions to the approved TIP, the MPO notifies the public of the MPO's intent to discuss and potentially vote on revisions at least one week prior to the meeting, when possible.

Availability of Information

In order to provide reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes, the MPO posts all of its publications, meeting notices, and other related information online at www.dmampo.org. The MPO posts most publications in PDF format, which uses the free, downloadable Adobe Reader software. The MPO will provide hard copies of any document upon request. Additionally, the MPO staff is available to make presentations on relevant topics to local citizens, organizations, and other interested parties. The MPO also employs the use of videos to relay information related to regionally significant planning initiatives. The MPO also posts copies of all presentations to its MPO Policy Committee on the website, as well as copies of presentations from guest speakers. To request a hard copy of a document or to schedule a presentation call 515.334.0075, fax 515.334.0098, or email info@dmampo.org.

Public Review and Comment

The MPO provides a public review and comment period of 45 calendar days prior to the adoption of the LRTP, the TIP, and the PPP. The MPO hosts public meetings across Greater Des Moines region to discuss these documents with the public. In an effort to provide information to the public and to solicit public input, public input meetings take place during the development of the LRTP, and during the review periods of the draft LRTP, draft TIP, and draft PPP. Additional public input meetings take place as needed.

The MPO provides the public an opportunity to comment on proposed revisions to the approved TIP. The MPO considers two types of revisions in the TIP development process. An

amendment to the TIP involves major changes to an approved project or the addition of a new project. Amendments to the approved TIP require formal MPO approval. Amendments are required under the following conditions:

- **Project cost:** Projects in which the recalculated project costs increase federal-aid by more than 30 percent or increase total federal-aid by more than \$2 million from the original amount.
- **Schedule changes:** Projects added or deleted from the TIP.
- **Funding sources:** Projects receiving additional federal funding sources to a project.
- **Fiscal constraint:** Changes that result in the TIP no longer being fiscally constrained (makes any of the four federal fiscal years not fiscally constrained).
- **Scope changes:** Changing the project termini, the amount of through traffic lanes, type of work from an overlay to reconstruction, or a change to include widening of the roadway.

Administrative modifications involve minor changes to existing projects in the approved TIP. Administrative modifications do not require formal MPO approval and often are conducted administratively by the MPO staff. Administrative modifications that involve moving Surface Transportation Program (STP) or Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funds forward require MPO approval to ensure that the MPO's TIP remains fiscally constrained. Administrative modifications involve:

- **Project cost:** Projects in which the recalculated project costs do not increase federal-aid by more than 30 percent and do not increase total federal-aid by more than \$2 million from the original amount.
- **Schedule changes:** Changes in schedules to projects included in the first four years of the TIP.
- **Funding sources:** Changes to funding from one source to another.
- **Scope changes:** All changes to a project's scope require an amendment.

In conducting revisions to the approved TIP, the MPO considers all amendments and modifications as optional votes. The public is invited to MPO Policy Committee meetings to provide comments on these revisions prior to the MPO vote. A person may speak at the MPO Policy Committee meeting if he or she:

- Lives in or represents someone living in the MPO planning area; and,
- Registers with complete contact information and the subject the comments will address prior to the start of the MPO Policy Committee meeting.

Speakers are generally limited to three minutes; however, the chair may reduce speaking time to two minutes based on the number of individuals wishing to speak at a meeting. The chair also may amend this time limit if an individual is speaking on behalf of an organization or group of individuals. Speakers generally offer comments at the beginning of the meeting and must state the subject he or she will be addressing. The public comment portion of the meeting is the only time when comments by the public are permitted. It is not the intent of the board to engage in debate during this time. Any audio/visual or similar equipment to be used to support the comments must be approved by the MPO chair at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. While the MPO generally follows the procedure outlined above, the chair has the discretion to amend the comment portion of the meeting as appropriate.

News releases notifying the public of the MPO's intent to discuss and vote on revisions are sent to the MPO distribution list at least one week prior to the meeting, when possible. News releases are distributed to a broad spectrum of media outlets in the region, including several with LEP and minority populations.

Visualization Techniques

The MPO makes every reasonable effort to incorporate visualization techniques into its public outreach activities. The MPO creates large legible maps for public meetings regarding the development of the LRTP and the TIP to help demonstrate the location and impact of possible transportation improvements and various network alternatives. Other useful visual aids used by the MPO may include graphs representing various types of data and flow charts to depict the transportation planning process. The MPO also works to provide an online interactive map demonstrating the location of various planning activities and transportation projects in Greater Des Moines.

Accommodations for Special Populations

The MPO works to reach out to special populations traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems that may face challenges accessing employment and other services. These populations may include low-income and minority households, persons with disabilities, and persons with limited English proficiency. The MPO schedules public input meetings at Americans with Disabilities Act compliant facilities, and at convenient and accessible locations and times. In 2013 the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) conducted a survey to identify the best ways to engage with minority and limited English proficiency populations. The survey was completed by 405 people who identified as being either low-income, minority, or individuals with Limited English Proficiency. The survey indicated that meetings held in the evening (6-8 PM) or late afternoon (4-6 PM) were the preferred times, best serve these populations. The survey also found that meetings held in downtown Des Moines or at suburban or Des Moines branch libraries were the preferred locations.

The MPO sends its news releases to foreign language media outlets in Greater Des Moines as well as to stakeholder groups representing low-income, minority, and disabled populations. The MPO also works with the Iowa DOT to provide translation services, which are publicized on the

MPO's website at www.dmampo.org/translation-services/. To request translation services, people can call or email MPO staff at 515-334-0075 or info@dmampo.org. The public is asked to provide the MPO staff with as much notice as possible, so they can best provide for any special accommodations that may be necessary in order for them to participate in any public events. Additional information on the MPO's nondiscrimination obligations and procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints can be found elsewhere in this document, or is available upon request by calling 515.334.0075 or by visiting www.dmampo.org/title-vi.

PLANNING DOCUMENT OR ACTIVITY	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES
Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public input meetings held during the development of the LRTP • Draft + final LRTP available on MPO website • Legal notice published one week prior to public meeting • Forty-five calendar day public comment and review period • At least one public input meeting held for completed draft LRTP
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft + final TIP available on MPO website • Legal notice published one week prior to public meeting • Forty-five calendar day public comment and review period • At least one public meeting held for draft TIP
TIP Revisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed TIP revisions available on MPO website • Information regarding proposed TIP revision(s) made available through MPO news release at least one week prior to formal action, when possible • Legal notice published one week prior to the public meeting • Public comment for proposed TIP revisions can be made at the MPO Policy Committee meeting prior to the MPO's formal action on the request
LRTP Amendments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed LRTP amendments made available on MPO website • Legal notice published one week prior to the public meeting • Forty-five calendar day public comment and review period • At least one public input meeting held • Public comment for proposed LRTP revisions can be made at the MPO Policy Committee meeting prior to the MPO's formal action on the request
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and final PPP available on MPO website • Legal notice published one week prior to public meeting • Forty-five calendar day public comment and review period • At least one public input meeting held
Additional Public Comment Period, as necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant documents and plans available on MPO website • Legal notice published one week prior to public meeting • At least a fifteen calendar day public comment and review period

MEETING SCHEDULE

Regularly scheduled meetings of the MPO committees are as follows:

- The TTC meets on the first Thursday of every month at 9:30 am at the MPO office – Burnham Conference Room;
- The Executive Committee meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 11:30 am in the Mead Conference Room of the MPO office;
- The MPO meets on the third Thursday of every month at 4:00 pm at the MPO office – Burnham Conference Room; and,
- The various roundtables and subcommittees meet at the MPO office, though meeting times and dates vary.

The MPO posts meeting times, agendas and minutes on its website at www.dmampo.org.

All meetings of the TTC, Executive Committee, MPO Policy Committee, roundtables, and subcommittees are open to the public. Members of the public may request time on the agenda at the TTC or the MPO Policy Committee to comment on specific subjects of interest to the representatives. Additionally, the MPO Chair may appoint new subcommittees and working groups to address specific transportation-related topics or areas of interest.

The MPO hosts an annual public meeting for comment on the proposed TIP. The TIP is an annual document identifying transportation projects that MPO member governments and agencies intend to implement using federal funds over the next four years. The MPO holds other public input opportunities throughout the year, as necessary, allowing for comment on proposed revisions to the approved TIP.

Several public input meetings occur in conjunction with the update of the LRTP. The LRTP addresses transportation planning issues over at least a twenty-year period and undergoes updates every five years. Amendments to the approved LRTP also require a public input meeting. Because these meetings are infrequent, the MPO schedules them on an as-needed basis.

PUBLIC INPUT

The MPO accepts input and comments from the public through a variety of means. Members of the public may make comments by calling the MPO at 515.334.0075. Written comments may be:

Presented at public meetings

Faxed to the MPO at 515.334.0098

Submitted online at www.dmampo.org/public-comment-form/

Mailed to the MPO, 420 Watson Powell Jr., Way, Suite 200, Des Moines, Iowa 50309

The public may submit comments to their respective TTC or MPO representatives for transmittal to the respective full committees. Citizens can make comments on MPO plans, reports, and programs at public input meetings. Additionally, members of the public or a representative of a group with expressed comments on a particular topic may request of the MPO Chair an appointment to serve as a citizen representative on the appropriate subcommittee of the TTC or the MPO. Citizens or representatives of special interest groups may request time on an MPO TTC or MPO agenda to offer input to the full committees as well. The MPO staff shares all public comments and input with the TTC, the Executive Committee, and the MPO in verbal and/or written form.

The MPO accepts and considers public input and comments received during the public participation process. When the MPO receives significant written or oral comments regarding the draft LRTP, the draft TIP, or the draft PPP through the public participation process, the MPO includes a summary, analysis, and report on those comments in the final document. In those instances where a final LRTP, TIP, or PPP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment, the MPO provides an additional opportunity for further public comment on the final version. Additional public comment periods are at least fifteen calendar days.

COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

The MPO coordinates its public participation efforts with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation process, as necessary. The LRTP, the TIP, and PPP are developed with due consideration of other related planning activities in Greater Des Moines, and the MPO consults and/or coordinates with other agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that may be impacted or affected by transportation. Additionally, the MPO involves the appropriate federal land management agencies in the development of the LRTP and TIP, as necessary.

EVALUATION

The MPO periodically reviews the PPP in order to monitor the effectiveness of the procedures outlined in this document. Following evaluation of the outputs and outcomes of the PPP, the MPO may revise these procedures to incorporate new and innovative ways to involve the public and ensure a full and open participation process. In particular, the MPO documents information regarding public attendance at public input meetings, records the number of requests or complaints associated with special populations, and solicits feedback on the use of visual aids at public meetings. The MPO reviews this information every year and evaluates the need to revise these procedures.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The MPO understands that, without the public, the planning process is not nearly as strong as it could be. As such, the MPO encourages residents to submit comments to the MPO. This can be accomplished by contacting the MPO by:

Mail: Des Moines Area MPO
420 Watson Powell, Jr., Way, Suite 200
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Phone: 515.334.0075

Fax: 515.334.0098

Email: info@dmampo.org

Web: www.dmampo.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/dmampo

Twitter: www.twitter.com/dmampo