



DES MOINES AREA

MPO

Public Participation Plan

2026 Update

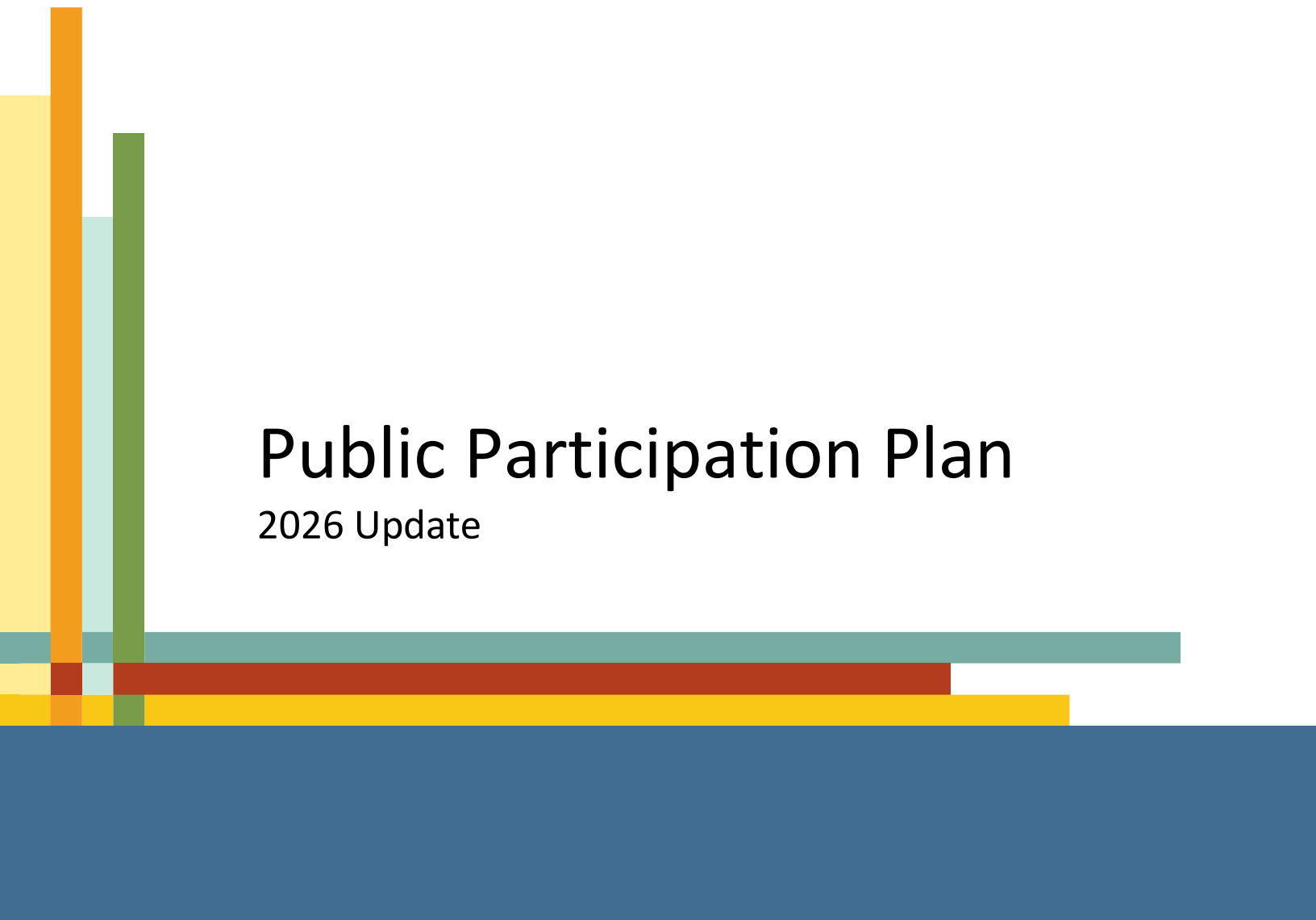


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The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) prepared this report with partial funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, and in part with local matching funds provided by the MPO member governments. The contents of this report are the responsibility of the MPO. The United States government and its agencies assume no liability for the contents of this report or for the use of its contents.



Purpose

A public participation plan (PPP) is a document that describes proactive strategies procedures and desired outcomes that underpin an MPO's public participation activities. It helps the agency to ensure that all community members who might be affected by a transportation decision are invited to engage in the decision-making process.

It is the responsibility of a transportation agency to involve the public and other stakeholders throughout the transportation process, including when developing transportation plans, programs, or projects. It is through the public's participation and involvement that they are:

- Informed of potential projects.
- Obtaining relevant local information.
- Joining a venue to express their ideas, views, opinions, concerns, and values to improve and inform decision-making.
- Allowed to influence project development.
- Building confidence in transportation agencies through transparency and improved accountability.
- Expressing diverse viewpoints and voicing consensus.

The PPP is required to be updated at least every five years at a due date one-year before the agency's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) due date. As the LRTP is generally an agency's most extensive planning process, the beginning of LRTP development is common practice for reviewing and updating the PPP before an agency seeks public input into the LRTP.

The MPO developed this PPP in consultation with MPO members and regional stakeholders. Draft documents were published online with requests for public feedback, and these were publicized via newsletter, social media, and MPO committee meetings. Feedback was reviewed and incorporated in this document following a 45-day comment period.

Scope

An MPO is made up of member governments & public agencies that are, also, required to have layers of public participation in their decision-making. Table 1 identify the two categories Des Moines Area MPO staff use collect and integrate public comment into the regional planning processes & outcomes: external and internal.



TABLE 1: CATEGORIES OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

<p>External Public Participation</p>	<p>Public participation processes conducted by MPO members and community stakeholders that focus on local transportation planning.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> City Council meetings; Traffic Safety or Public Works Committees; Annual resident surveys; corridor study public meetings; stakeholder meetings</p>
<p>Internal Public Participation</p>	<p>Public participation processes conducted directly by MPO staff that focus on regional transportation planning.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> Transportation Technical Committee; Freight Roundtable; Transportation Improvement Program Open House; Active Transportation Plan surveys.</p>

MPO staff has no control over external public participation opportunities held by its member communities/agencies or regional stakeholders. However, MPO staff are periodically invited into these external spaces to present, participate, observe, or assist locally and in some cases, are asked to be members of regional convening bodies as transportation experts.

Even if not present at every external opportunity, MPO staff does their best to stay informed about local transportation planning topics, projects, discussions, and outcomes - and to incorporate all public information collected through these external processes into regional planning whenever possible.

MPO staff does have control over its required and supplementary internal public participation opportunities. Therefore, Internal Public Participation will be the focus of this Public Participation Plan update.

Agency Overview

The MPO acts as the formal transportation planning 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 U.S. Census Bureau. The MPO functions as the Transportation Management Area, as well, because its population exceeds threshold of 200,000 persons, as established in 23 CFR 450.104.

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 for a planning area encompassing more than 500 square miles. The MPO develops both long- and short-range multimodal transportation plans, selects and approves projects for

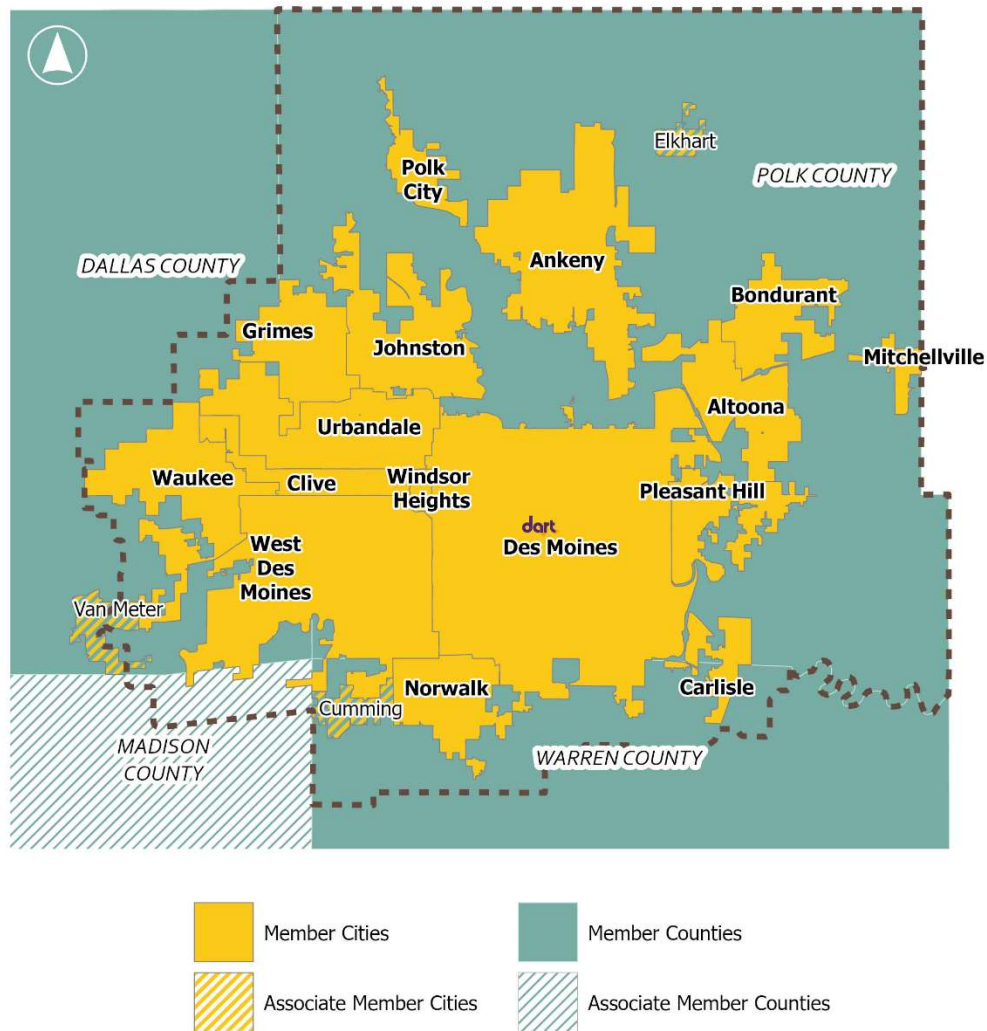


federal funding based upon regional priorities, and develops methods to reduce traffic congestion.

Full voting membership on the MPO is open to any county or city government that is located wholly or partially in the designated Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), that possesses a population of at least 1,500 persons, and that adopts the MPO's 28E Agreement.

Currently, sixteen communities, three counties and DART are voting members of the MPO, and there are associate cities and one associate county. Collaborating with the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), 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 the greater Des Moines metropolitan area.

MAP 1: DES MOINES AREA MPO PLANNING AREA



The MPO consists of three governing committees:

- Member representatives to the **MPO Transportation Technical Committee (TTC)** include city engineers, county engineers, public works directors, community planning directors, Des Moines International Airport staff, DART staff, and advisors from the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA. This committee makes technical recommendations to the MPO Executive Committee.
- The **MPO Executive Committee** is comprised of 11 members with geographical representation, including two representatives from Des Moines, two from a northwest subarea, two from a southwest subarea, two from an east subarea, as well as one representative from Polk County, one from Ankeny, and one from West Des Moines. From these, there are three officer positions, including the chair, vice chair, and secretary/treasurer, as well as an ex-officio representative. This body reviews transportation policy-related topics and reviews products and actions in a smaller setting.
- The **MPO Policy Committee** acts on the recommendations of the MPO Executive Committee. Representatives to the MPO are primarily local elected officials, city administrators, city managers, and appointed staff from the Des Moines International Airport, DART, the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA.

A full-time professional planning staff is committed to implementing a comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing multimodal transportation planning process for the greater Des Moines metropolitan area. As such, they conduct the work of the MPO.

Engagement 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.

Stakeholders

The MPO considers all who live, work, learn, and play in the greater Des Moines metropolitan area 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. This list of groups is solely an example, and not exhaustive. MPO staff will always attempt to engage these and other stakeholders in their regional work.



- Neighborhood organizations;
- Homeowner associations;
- 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; and
- Organizations or individuals interested in public hearings for major projects, or organizations and individuals that provide comments relating to public hearings for major projects.

Public Meetings

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. Previous agendas, meeting minutes, and other meeting documents can be found on the MPO website.

The MPO schedules single-purpose public input meetings several planning activities, including the LRTP, the PPP, TIP annual updates, and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program application reviews. Additionally, the MPO includes a public-comment period at the beginning of every MPO Policy Committee meeting, which covers any TIP amendments throughout the year.

Regional Roundtables & Working Groups

The MPO establishes and supports roundtables & working groups focused on issues relevant to the MPO's activities and responsibilities. Stakeholder organizations and residents may participate as appropriate. The MPO treats its roundtables as public-engagement tools to gather feedback from key stakeholders on important topics – these groups do not govern the MPO or its policies, they are advisory and collaborative in nature.

Currently, the MPO supports the following roundtables & working groups:

- **Trails Roundtable**, which facilitates the development and maintenance of the regional trail network.
- **Active Transportation Roundtable**, which convenes stakeholders to enhance on-street multi-modal transportation.



- **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;
- **Vision Zero Roundtable**, which provides a forum to discuss incident management, traffic management, and safety issues;

Surveys & Mapping

When practical and feasible, the MPO supplements public input meetings with other outreach techniques, such as publicly circulated surveys or mapping exercises regarding current issues and concerns. The MPO provides the results of any such surveys to the public through dashboards, planning documents, and presentations.

Events & Other Collaborations

The MPO seeks to engage all ages and demographics and ensure they have equal access to participating in regional transportation planning. Therefore, MPO staff seek out existing events in the region to participate in. By using community events, MPO staff go to the public with visually and linguistically appealing materials in an attempt to create memorable interactions with the general public and making sometimes complex information easier to understand for all.

In the past, this included tabling and surveying at the Blank Park Zoo and community festivals, hosting community and technical workshops with partner agencies, and hosting walkabouts with partners and MPO member representatives.

Having limited resources and networks, MPO staff coordinates and collaborates with a wide variety of partners - like the United Way OpportUNITY program, City of Des Moines Human Rights Commission, Iowa's Department for the Blind, AARP, Polk County Housing Trust Fund, and many more – to spread messages, gain support or momentum on safety education, and integrate transportation planning into other sectors to forward goals such as Vision Zero and those of the LRTP.

Finally, The MPO also reciprocally participates in other organizations' efforts with relevancy to the MPO's role in the region. For example, staff serve on a Capital Crossroads Steering Committee as transportation experts, and the MPO welcomes Capital Crossroads and other sector leaders or local experts to lend their expertise to the transportation planning process happening at the MPO.

Press Releases

Press releases are issued throughout the year to announce the many planning efforts, studies and other activities of the 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, funding award announcements, 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. All of these can be found on the MPO website, and anyone can subscribe to MPO distribution lists on the website or by contacting 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, YouTube, and Google Business Page. The MPO periodically updates these sites to engage residents and to build a better understanding of the MPO and the projects the organization takes on. Social media is used for targeted public engagement, and not a method for regular outward communication.

The MPO has employed several additional online engagement tools over the past several years. For example, the MPO recently utilized Adobe Spark to hold a virtual public meeting, uses ArcGIS for collaborative mapping exercises regarding STBG, and more.

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, UPWP, TIP, and PPP. The MPO makes notifications and announcements of upcoming public-input meetings for the LRTP, UPWP, TIP, and 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 releases 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, UPWP, and 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.

Additionally, MPO staff members are 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 committees on the website, as well as copies of presentations from guest speakers.

The MPO will provide hard copies of any public meeting document upon request. To request a document or to schedule a presentation call 515.334.0075 or email info@dmampo.org.

Public Review and Comment

The MPO provides a public review and comment period of at least 30-calendar days prior to the adoption of the LRTP, UPWP, TIP, and PPP. When possible and practical, the MPO hosts public meetings across the greater Des Moines metropolitan area to discuss these documents and transportation planning with the public.

In an effort to provide information to the public and to solicit public input, a greater frequency of public meetings take place during the development of the LRTP, and alongside standing committee meetings 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. These 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.

The public is invited to MPO Policy Committee meetings to provide comments on these revisions prior to voting on their approval. While the MPO strives to be as open to public comment as possible, the MPO may elect to place limits or requirements on the public comment period if reasonably necessary for an effective meeting.

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 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 online interactive maps and dashboards regarding the various planning goals, activities, and transportation projects in the greater Des Moines metropolitan area.

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 varying times to increase convenience for a broader audience and at public facilities that comply with Americans with Disabilities Act compliant facilities. MPO staff uses ADA checklists for events as found in the appendix of this document.



The MPO sends its news releases to foreign language media outlets in the greater Des Moines metropolitan area 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](#).

To request translation services, people can contact 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 any special accommodations that may be necessary in order for those needing accommodation 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 the [MPO website](#).

Hybrid Options

Like most organizations, the MPO had to adapt its work processes during the COVID-19 pandemic. These included virtual committee work and public meetings. Proving useful and convenient post-pandemic hybrid options remain in effect for most MPO meetings.

Cyclical Outreach Details

Each foundational document and plan for the MPO is cyclical in nature. The following pages outline the contents and procedures for each of these documents.



TABLE 2: CYCLICAL MPO PLANNING DOCUMENT PROCEDURES

Planning Document or Activity	Public Participation Procedure
<p style="text-align: center;">Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The official multimodal transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon that the MPO develops, adopts, and updates through the metropolitan transportation planning process, including a fiscally constrained list of projects. ● The development process includes an analysis of local trends, review of local transportation needs, and available funding, and is overseen by a Steering Committee of stakeholders. ● The document is reviewed by the Steering Committee, MPO roundtables and committees, the general public, the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. ● Updated every four years. ● The MPO Policy Committee adopts the Final LRTP after considering and incorporating state and federal comments. ● Public input meetings held during the development of the LRTP ● Legal notice published in <i>The Des Moines Register</i> one week prior to public meeting ● Public input opportunities published on MPO calendar and social media. ● 30 calendar day public comment and review period. ● Adopted by MPO committees. ● Revisions also require public notice, public comment period, and adoption by the MPO committees ● At least one public input meeting held for completed draft LRTP. ● The final product can be found on the MPO’s website.



<p>Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An annual or biennial statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area. At a minimum, a UPWP includes a description of the planning work and resulting products, who will perform the work, time frames for completing the work, the cost of the work, and the source(s) of funds.• Updated annually.• The MPO Policy Committee adopts the Final UPWP after considering and incorporating state and federal comments; the FHWA and FTA affirm the Final UPWP.• The development process includes staff evaluating its planning funding availability and regional planning tasks and needs with MPO communities and members to advance a draft UPWP.• The UPWP is reviewed for compliance with regulations by Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA. Public and stakeholder review is not required for the UPWP.• Developed with input from MPO committees and member governments via regular meetings and direct conversations.• Adopted by MPO committees.• MPO staff works with members, as well as state and federal governments, to monitor the UPWP implementation and process modifications and amendments as needed. Specific revision and amendment requirements can be found in the UPWP.• The final product can be found on the MPO's website.
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<p>Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long-term plan for the active management of passenger transportation services for the region.• Developed with oversight and input from the Transportation Advisory Group.• Updated every four years.• Public input meetings held during its development.• Legal notice published in <i>The Des Moines Register</i> one week prior to public meeting.• Public input opportunities published on MPO calendar and social media.• Available on MPO website.• 45 calendar day public comment and review period.• Adopted by MPO committees.• Revisions also require public notice, public comment period, and adoption by the MPO committees.• The final product is available on the MPO's website.
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<p>Active Transportation Plan (ATP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan for the improvement of bicycle and pedestrian access and facilities throughout the region. • Updated as needed – expected July 2026. • Public participation in the planning process uses many of the tactics listed in this document and more. • Public input opportunities published on MPO calendar. • Adopted by MPO Committees. • Final product is available on the MPO website.
<p>Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed list of regionally significant, federally funded transportation projects by all jurisdictions and transit agencies in the MPO planning area, covering a period of at least four years and including capital and non-capital surface transportation projects, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and other transportation enhancements, and safety projects included in the State’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Updated annually. • The development process includes the solicitation of eligible projects for inclusion from all jurisdictions and transit agencies within the MPO planning area, an analysis of fiscal capacity, and feedback from MPO committees. • The document is reviewed by the MPO committees, the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. • The MPO Policy Committee adopts the Final TIP after considering and incorporating state and federal comments; the FHWA and FTA approve the Final UPWP. • Public input meetings held during development. • Legal notice published in <i>The Des Moines Register</i> one week prior to public meeting. • 30 calendar day public comment and review period. • Adopted by MPO Committees.



<p>TIP Revisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates to the TIP based on changing status of projects during implementation. • Revisions occur as needed. • Adopted through MPO Committees. • 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.
<p>LRTP Amendments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed LRTP amendments made available on MPO website. • Legal notice published in <i>The Des Moines Register</i> one week prior to the public meeting. • Public input opportunities published on MPO calendar and social media. • Amendments occur as needed. • Adopted through MPO committees. • 30 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.



<p>Public Participation Plan (PPP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A documented participation plan that defines a process for MPO staff to utilize to ensure reasonable opportunities for member communities and stakeholders to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. • Updated every five years or as needed. • The development process includes a review of past and potential new engagement practices to ensure the plan fits the needs of the community. • The document is reviewed by MPO committees, the general public, the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. • The MPO Policy Committee adopts the Final PPP. • Legal notice published in <i>The Des Moines Register</i> one week prior to public meeting. • Public input opportunities published on MPO website. • 45 calendar day public comment and review period. • Final PPP available on MPO website.
<p>Additional Public Comment Period, as necessary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant documents and plans available on MPO website. • Legal notice published in <i>The Des Moines Register</i> one week prior to public meeting. • Public input opportunities published on MPO calendar and social media. • At least a 15-calendar day public comment and review period



Regulations & 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.

*** MPO staff is monitoring ongoing changes to Title VI by the federal government, and will update this document as advised by MPO counsel & Policy Committee.*

Executive Order #12898

The U.S. 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.”

*** MPO staff is monitoring ongoing changes to these programs by the federal government and will update this document as advised by MPO counsel & Policy Committee.*

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 transportation disadvantage analysis, the MPO has identified seven degrees of disadvantage, or groups 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
- Households in poverty
- Carless households
- Persons with a disability
- Single heads of households with children
- Households with persons over 65

By mapping the U.S. Census Bureau data for each degree of disadvantage and overlaying them to find concentrations, the MPO is better able to understand and illustrate the location and



density of these population groups throughout the greater Des Moines metropolitan area. This allows the MPO, its members, and its partner organizations to improve planning process components like public outreach to ensure engagement and create more impactful mobility solutions for the most vulnerable populations. The MPO also incorporates this data into its funding scoring criteria for transportation projects. The MPO calls for the identification of both positive and negative effects of transportation projects on the community when projects are in early stages.

With these concerns in mind, the MPO is committed to providing its materials to anyone 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 accommodation can be found in the MPO's Language Assistance Plan, [available online](#).

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, the MPO's Office Manager. 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.

Meeting Schedule

Regularly scheduled meetings of the MPO committees are conducted at the dates and times below. Hybrid options are typically available for all MPO committee meetings.



Transportation Technical Committee	First Thursday of the Month	9:30am
Executive Committee	First Thursday of the Month	11:30am
Policy Committee	Third Thursday of the Month	4:00pm

Unless posted in advance, all MPO committees, roundtables, and working groups meet in the Burnham Conference Room of the MPO office at 420 Watson Powell Jr. Way, Suite 200 – Des Moines, IA 50309.

The various roundtables and subcommittees meet at the MPO office, though meeting times and dates vary. For links and a calendar of these meetings, visit the MPO website.

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

All meetings of the TTC, Executive Committee, 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 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 Transportation Improvement Program (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 public comment periods at the beginning of Policy Committee meetings to allow 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 20-year period and undergoes updates every five years. Amendments to the approved LRTP also require a public input meeting. Because these amendment meetings are infrequent, the MPO schedules them on an as-needed basis.

Submitting 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 MPO public meetings
- [Submitted online through Public Comment Form](#)
- Mailed to the MPO, 420 Watson Powell Jr., Way, Suite 200, Des Moines, Iowa 50309

The public may also submit comments to their respective TTC or Policy representatives for transmittal to the full committees. Any residents 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 resident



representative on the appropriate subcommittee of the TTC or the MPO.

Residents 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 15 calendar days.

Coordination & Consultation

The MPO coordinates its public participation efforts with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation process, as necessary. The LRTP, TIP, and PPP are developed with due consideration of other related planning activities in the greater Des Moines metropolitan area, 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 annually with the UPWP update and evaluates the need to revise these procedures.



Agency Contact Information

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

YouTube: www.youtube.com/dmampo



Appendix A:

DMAMPO ADA Compliance Facility Checklist

Event: _____

Location/Address: _____

Date and Time: _____

Person Completing Checklist: _____

Date: _____

Element	Accommodation Area	Yes	No	N/A
Transportation	If the event itself includes transportation, are wheelchair accessible vehicles available and advertised as available to the public?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the meeting or event located close to accessible public transportation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	If located close to accessible public transportation, does public transportation operate before and after meeting times? Ensure transportation is available until at least 8 pm.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there an accessible route provided from the public transportation stop to the building or facility entrance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Accessible parking is available (review # of car and van accessible spaces)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	An accessible route with signage is provided from the parking lot to the facility?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evacuation	Do you know the emergency evacuation plans for the meeting/training location?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking	Does the building have accessible (handicap) parking spaces?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, are they at least 8' wide and have 5' aisles next to them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sidewalk	Are there unobstructed curb ramps leading to the sidewalk (walkway)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walkway	Is there a walkway from the parking lot to the building, at least 36" wide?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the walkway have a stable and firm surface?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	If the accessible route is different from the primary route to and through the building, can you post signs with the wheelchair symbol that slow the route?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the walkway level and free of steps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	If no, is there a ramp at least 36" wide?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	If there is a ramp, does it have a gentle slope (1" rise to 12" length)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Element	Accommodation Area	Yes	No	N/A
Fire Alarms	Are there flash fire alarm signals in the building, in the meeting/training room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signage	Is there Braille text in the signage at the facility?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Entrance/Doors	Is the door at least 36" wide (wide enough for a wheelchair)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can the hardware be operated with one hand level, push plate, etc.) with minimum of twisting or grasping?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are the handles low enough to reach (maximum 48" high)? Can the door be pushed open easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the threshold no more than ½" high and beveled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	When a vestibule, is there a minimum of 48" between the sets of doors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Floors	Are the floors hard and not slippery?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there a floor mat to dry feet and crutch tips to prevent slipping?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridors	Is there a 36" corridor, from the entrance to where the meeting/training is held?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the path free of objects projecting 4" maximum into the corridor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elevators	Is there an elevator in the facility where the meeting/training is located?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, is it a working one that is large enough for a wheelchair?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are the controls within reach (maximum 48")?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do the controls have Braille?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there an audible signal ringing at each floor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there an audible two-way emergency communication system in the elevator?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting Room	Is there enough clearance around the table for a wheelchair to move?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can the wheelchair pull under the edge of the table to sit close?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restrooms	Is there a wide, accessible path to the restroom?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there a toilet stall wide enough that a wheelchair can enter and close the door behind? Interior space to turn around?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the water closet (toilet) 17-19 inches high to the rim?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can the wheelchair roll under the sink (29" to the bottom)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can the faucets be reached and turned on easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are the dispensers (soap, towel, etc.) reachable (maximum 48" high)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there a mirror at an accessible height (bottom of the mirror 44" above the floor)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

