

# PARTICIPATION PLAN

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

DRAFT

**DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION**

JUNE 6, 2014

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Phone: **202.962.3300** or **202.962.3213** (TDD)

Email: [accommodations@mwkog.org](mailto:accommodations@mwkog.org). For details: [www.mwkog.org](http://www.mwkog.org).

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## PREFACE

This Participation Plan articulates the TPB's commitment to a transparent interface with the public and with relevant public agencies to support the regional transportation planning process, including the development of the Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

This plan provides an overall framework for participation in the TPB process. The Background describes the historic context for the TPB's ongoing participation and outreach activities. The Participation Policy sets the TPB's goals for participation and outreach, and identifies activities for involvement. The Participation Strategy identifies different audience groups for participation and details approaches for reaching each group. The Public Involvement Toolkit, found in Appendix E, details ongoing participation and outreach activities. Together, the Policy, Strategy, and Toolkit form the functional backbone of the Participation Plan.

## I. BACKGROUND

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is designated under federal law as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Washington region. As an MPO, the TPB brings together key decision-makers to coordinate planning and funding for the region's transportation system. The TPB relies on advisory committees and participation from interested parties in order to make informed decisions.

This Participation Plan is required under federal laws and regulations pertaining to metropolitan planning. The plan builds on previous efforts designed to encourage participation in the TPB process and provide reasonable opportunities for citizens and other interested agencies to be involved with the metropolitan transportation planning process.

As required by federal regulation, the plan has been developed in consultation with interested parties, including citizens, representatives of people with disabilities, users of public transportation and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and affected public agencies. In addition, federal regulations require the plan to be released for a minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days before it is adopted by the TPB.

## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

The TPB was created in 1965 by the region's local and state governments to respond to federal highway legislation in 1962 that required the establishment of a "continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated" transportation planning process in every urbanized area in the United States. The TPB's membership includes key transportation decision-makers in the metropolitan Washington region. The Board includes local officials— mayors, city council members, county board members, and others—as well as representatives from the state transportation agencies, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and the state legislatures. The TPB also includes non-voting representatives from key federal agencies, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, and the TPB's Private Providers Task Force.

The TPB became associated with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) in 1966. COG was established in 1957 by local cities and counties to deal with regional concerns including growth, housing, environment, public health and safety—as well as transportation. Although the TPB is an independent body, its staff is provided by COG's Department of Transportation Planning.

The TPB prepares plans and programs that the federal government must approve in order for federal-aid transportation funds to flow to the Washington region. In particular, federal law and regulations relating to the work of MPOs require the TPB

to adopt a long-range transportation plan, which is known as the Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) in the Washington region, and the six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TPB must also ensure compliance with other federal laws and requirements, including federal air quality conformity requirements.

In addition to ensuring compliance with federal laws and requirements, the TPB performs many other functions, including acting as a regional forum for coordination of policy-making, and providing technical resources for transportation decision-making. The TPB receives input and guidance from advisory committees that include members of the public, special interest groups, and jurisdictional staff.

## PREVIOUS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS DOCUMENTS

This Participation Plan is the TPB's fourth officially approved process for public involvement. The Board first adopted a Public Involvement Process in 1994 to fulfill the requirements of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991. The TPB amended that document in 1999 in response to the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) of 1998. The 1999 Public Involvement Process included a policy statement and general requirements for public involvement in the TPB process. It also contained a list of 14 specific activities designed to solicit participation and provide support for the policy statement and general requirements and criteria.

The 2005 federal transportation act, SAFETEA-LU (the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users), included the first federal requirement that MPOs must develop participation plans. Responding to that legislation, the TPB in 2007 adopted a Participation Plan, which provided a strategic framework for public engagement.

The TPB's 2014 Participation Plan is an update of the 2007 document. While retaining the structure of the 2007 plan, the new plan reflects recent enhancements in the TPB's public outreach activities and also responds to comments that the TPB received in the 2010 Federal Certification Review of the TPB process. Among other recommendations, that review suggested the TPB emphasize visualization techniques in its outreach and conduct regular evaluation of its participation activities.

## FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

This Participation Plan is intended to fulfill the current federal requirements for a Participation Plan outlined in the federal transportation reauthorization legislation of 2005 (SAFETEA-LU) and further detailed in the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Regulations that were published in the Federal Register on February 14, 2007. The federal regulations are provided in Appendix A of this document. SAFETEA-LU's requirements regarding the Participation Plan were reaffirmed by the

most recent federal transportation reauthorization bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21), which was enacted in July 2012.

For the first time, SAFETEA-LU called for Metropolitan Planning Organizations, including the TPB, to develop a Participation Plan. The law stipulated that this plan will be developed in consultation with “interested parties.”

In addition to requiring a Participation Plan, SAFETEA-LU expanded earlier versions of federal transportation law to include the following guidelines and requirements related to public participation:

- Broaden the definition of “interested parties” to be engaged in metropolitan transportation planning.
- Publish or make available for public view transportation plans and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible times and locations.
- Make information available in electronically accessible formats to the maximum extent possible.
- Employ visualization techniques to depict metropolitan transportation plans.

These guidelines and requirements are all addressed in this Participation Plan.

## PARTICIPATION ENHANCEMENTS IN RECENT YEARS

Since the approval of the last Participation Plan in 2007, the TPB has made substantial enhancements in its public outreach activities and practices. Notable highlights include:

- ***Continuation and enhancement of the TPB’s Community Leadership Institute (CLI).*** Normally conducted twice a year, the CLI is a multi-day program that uses interactive group exercises and discussions to help participants better understand the TPB process and regional transportation planning issues. CLI participants discuss ways in which the interests of their local communities connect with the planning issues facing the entire region. The goal is to prepare participants to actively participate in TPB activities as well as inform their communities about transportation initiatives and programs. Since its inception in 2006, the CLI curriculum has been continually refined and made more interactive. In 2013, the program was expanded to three days. A session of CLI held in early 2014 engaged staff of local elected officials.
- ***Launch of TPB Weekly Report,*** an online publication designed to provide brief, timely summaries of recent TPB research, analysis, outreach and planning. *TPB Weekly Report* was launched in January 2012 and reaches several hundred TPB stakeholders, reporters, and interested members of the general public. ([www.mwcog.org/tpbweeklyreport](http://www.mwcog.org/tpbweeklyreport))

- **Launch of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Information Hub**, a website that serves as a one-stop shop for information on transportation planning activities underway throughout the region. The Hub includes information on the planning processes of the TPB's member jurisdictions and agencies, high-profile projects under construction or planned in the region, and links to key documents and resources, including a directory with contact information for numerous local, state, and regional governments and transportation agencies. The Hub is designed to help the public engage with local decision-makers and planners and to become more engaged in the decision-making process. The Hub was launched in 2013. ([www.transportationplanninghub.org](http://www.transportationplanninghub.org)).
- **Development of social media presence**, including the launch of an official Facebook page and Twitter account. Both platforms are used to announce meetings, events, public comment periods, the release of key publications, and other relevant information. Beginning in 2013, staff began providing live updates of monthly Board meetings via Twitter.  
Twitter - <https://twitter.com/#!/NatCapRegTPB>  
Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/NatCapRegTPB>
- **Use of deliberative forums**, public engagement events that employ quantitative tools (e.g., keypad polling) and qualitative methods (e.g., facilitated groups discussions) to engage participants in discussions about particular planning issues and to solicit informed feedback. Through deliberative forums, people come together to learn and talk about problems and challenges, and to explore potential solutions. TPB staff have used deliberative forums on several occasions since 2011.
- **Public opinion research**, including the use of interactive web-based surveys. For the development of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan in 2013, the TPB used MetroQuest public engagement software, which conveyed large amounts of complex information in an attractive, visual interface, and allowed staff to solicit input through a variety of input devices.

These enhancements have been added to the TPB's existing array of public outreach activities and products, which are described in Appendix E: Public Involvement Toolkit. Taken together, these activities are designed to inform and engage a range of constituencies with different levels of interest and involvement in the TPB process.

## ADDRESSING CONTINUING CHALLENGES

While noting the TPB's recent public participation improvements, this Participation Plan acknowledges and addresses the continuing challenges that confront the transportation planning process in the Washington region.

- **Expectations for public participation in the TPB process.** Given the fact that project-level planning usually occurs at the state and local levels, the TPB's plans and processes are often not the appropriate or most effective venues for public involvement. The TPB must work to align expectations for public involvement with the actual decision-making process. These



activities should seek to build public knowledge about the transportation planning process to encourage meaningful public involvement at various stages of that process.

- ***The pace of the TPB's annual planning cycle.*** Although federal law requires updates only every four years, the TPB updates the Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) annually to incorporate project submissions from the state departments of transportation and local jurisdictions. The specific practice by the TPB and the region's implementing agencies of treating the CLRP and TIP as "living documents" has implications for public involvement strategies. The TPB and TPB staff recognize that this continuous update cycle for regional plans can make it difficult for members of the public and other constituencies to understand when public comment is being solicited and for what purposes. To a large degree, public participation tools and activities must encourage citizen involvement on an ongoing basis.
- ***Limited resources.*** The demand for public involvement and outreach will always be greater than the TPB's available resources. This Participation Plan recognizes that the TPB must be strategic in designing a public participation program focused on high-payoff activities, particularly those that will encourage public engagement and education beyond the immediate reach of the TPB.
- ***Special needs of traditionally underserved communities.*** As a matter of long-standing TPB policy and a requirement of federal law, the regional transportation planning process makes special efforts to consider the concerns of traditionally underserved communities, including low-income and minority communities and people with disabilities. To ensure that these concerns are heard, the TPB established the Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA) in 2001. This Participation Plan seeks to maintain and enhance the TPB's outreach to these communities.

## II. PARTICIPATION POLICY

### POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the TPB to provide public access and involvement under a true collaborative planning process in which the interests of all stakeholders— public and private—are reflected and considered. Accordingly, it is the TPB's intent to make both its policy and technical process inclusive of and accessible to all stakeholders. The TPB notes in structuring this Participation Plan that many additional opportunities for access and involvement exist at the state and local jurisdictional levels through local, subregional, and state sponsored activities associated with transportation planning in the Washington region.

### POLICY GOALS

The TPB believes that public input into its process is valuable and makes its products better. Regional transportation planning cannot, and should not, be based simply upon technical analysis. The qualitative information derived from citizen involvement is essential to good decision-making.

The Policy Statement provides a philosophy around which to build a regional transportation participation program that will accomplish the following goals:

- ***Effective communication and messaging of information leading to knowledgeable, informed constituencies.*** The TPB will disseminate information about programs and projects through a variety of conduits. Information will be presented in a manner that is clear and tailored to each of the TPB's constituencies.
- ***Involvement from diverse participants and opportunities for constituency building.*** The TPB will continue to encourage participation from diverse constituencies and to provide forums for discussion about transportation issues that are responsive to the interests of different constituencies.
- ***Open access to information and participation.*** The TPB will work to improve access to technical and planning documents and, where appropriate, tailor these documents to be accessible to more constituencies. Opportunities for participation in TPB meetings and in committee meetings will be clearly defined and provided for at each meeting.
- ***Receipt of public comment and provision of meaningful feedback to constituencies.*** The TPB will provide information on how comments will be considered in the planning process, including the development of the CLRP and TIP, and acknowledge that comments were received and considered.
- ***Develop a "regional story" that is clear and compelling.*** The TPB will communicate how regional transportation planning plays a vital role in coordinating planning activities on many levels.

## PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES

It is the policy of the TPB to carry out the following specific activities in support of the above policy statement and policy goals.

### PROCEDURES

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For items on which the TPB will formally act by way of vote, the TPB will share information about the proposed Action Items and will seek input, as follows:

- For federally required plans and programs, including the Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), associated air quality conformity analyses, and other documents, the following procedures will be conducted at a minimum:
  - Ensure that federal requirements for public involvement are followed, including:
    - a public comment period of at least 30 days prior to the approval of documents; and
    - development and consideration of written responses to comments received.
  - The TPB shall provide an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final CLRP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the TPB and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts.
  - When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft CLRP and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final CLRP and TIP.

For major regional plans and policy documents that are not specifically governed by federal requirements, the following procedures will be conducted at a minimum:

- Ensure that the listed public involvement procedures are followed:
  - a public comment period of at least 30 days prior to the approval of documents, and
  - development and consideration of written responses to comments received.
- The TPB shall provide an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final plan or policy document differs significantly

from the version that was made available for public comment by the TPB and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts.

For other Action Items before the TPB, the following participation procedures will be conducted at a minimum:

- Materials will be posted electronically (on the TPB website and announced by email notification) six days before the TPB meeting
- Materials will be reviewed at the TPB Technical Committee by representatives from regional jurisdictions

On an ongoing basis, the following procedures will be conducted:

- Dedicate a period of time at the beginning of each TPB meeting for public comment by interested citizens and groups on transportation issues under consideration by the TPB, and provide follow-up acknowledgment and response as appropriate.
- Offer opportunities on the TPB website for public comment.
- Provide access to the technical and policy activities of the TPB through open attendance at meetings of the TPB, and the TPB Technical Committee and its subcommittees.
- Ensure that reasonable public access is provided to technical and policy information used in the TPB process through the following activities:
  - Invite members of the public to review reports and other technical information (other than proprietary software or legally confidential data). The TPB will encourage dissemination of information through the following means:
    - Post all publicly available TPB documents on the TPB website, and otherwise seek opportunities to make suitable reports and technical information available through the TPB website.
    - Distribute relevant reports and technical information free of charge at meetings of the TPB and its committees and subcommittees.
    - At times other than the meetings of the TPB and its committees and subcommittees, fulfill requests for reports and technical information on an "at cost" basis, including duplication costs and staff time associated with responding to the requests. For state and local agencies, and WMATA, miscellaneous services budgets specified in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) may be used to cover these costs.

- Develop information and materials about regional transportation issues and the TPB process, including comprehensive descriptions of technical and policy procedures, in a manner that all members of the public can understand. Work with partners to distribute these materials at appropriate locations and public meetings across the region.
- Invite members of the public to participate in the review of technical work programs and analysis through attendance at the appropriate Technical Committee and Subcommittee meetings, and the TPB meetings. In addition to the opportunities provided through participation in these meetings, concerns and issues on such technical work can be raised formally with the TPB either through the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) or during the public comment period provided at each TPB meeting.
- Conduct environmental consultation activities to engage with affected land-use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation state and local agencies regarding the development of the CLRP. Environmental consultation seeks to identify potential activities to moderate, reduce, or avoid the environmental impacts of the CLRP as a whole, rather than at the project level.
- Provide at least one formal public meeting during the development process for the TIP.
- Maintain active communication and consultation with the COG Board of Directors and other interested COG committees.
- Conduct an evaluation of the TPB public involvement activities on an annual basis.

## COMMITTEES

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- Maintain and support the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), with the participation of individual citizens and representatives of environmental, business, and civic interests concerned with regional transportation matters as well as representatives of minority, low-income, and disabled groups.
- Maintain the Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA), which advises the TPB on transportation issues, programs, policies, and services that are important to low-income communities, minority communities and people with disabilities.

## WEBSITE AND PUBLICATIONS

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- Maintain and expand COG/TPB websites to provide comprehensive information on TPB activities and regional transportation planning issues. The TPB's portfolio of websites includes the Transportation homepage ("What's Happening in Transportation"), the CLRP pages, and the Transportation Planning Information Hub.  
<http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/>

- Maintain an online meeting calendar that links to agendas and meeting materials for the TPB board meeting and committee meetings.  
<http://www.mwcog.org/calendar/>
- Prepare and update as necessary reports, guidebooks, brochures, and other publications to explain the regional transportation planning process and key issues facing the TPB.  
[http://www.mwcog.org/publications/departmental.asp?CLASSIFICATION\\_ID=3](http://www.mwcog.org/publications/departmental.asp?CLASSIFICATION_ID=3)
- Publish and distribute periodical publications, including weekly and monthly newsletters and the TPB annual report, to inform as broad a regional audience as possible of the activities of the TPB and other regional transportation issues.  
<http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/#featured-publications>
- Announce public meetings and share materials via email to individuals who have subscribed to receive them. Emails are distributed in HTML and accessible text formats.  
<http://www.mwcog.org/publications/subscribe/>
- Maintain social media presence (Facebook and Twitter) to announce meetings, events, public comment periods, the release of key publications, and other relevant information.  
*Twitter* - <https://twitter.com/#!/NatCapRegTPB>  
*Facebook* - <https://www.facebook.com/NatCapRegTPB>
- Make printed TPB documents available at Board and committee meetings and at the COG office. Post TPB documents to the web as PDFs. Make other formats available upon request to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Utilize appropriate visualization techniques in all web and printed publications. Such techniques may range from simple use of pictures and graphics to more sophisticated computer-generated visual information.

## MEETINGS AND TRAININGS

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- Conduct and develop training workshops, such as the TPB's Community Leadership Institute (CLI), to engage members of the informed and interested public who have not been extensively involved in the regional transportation planning process. When appropriate, TPB staff will incorporate interactive techniques (such as polling, surveys, and collaborative map-making), and use appropriate visualization tools to more fully engage workshop participants.
- Conduct and participate in public forums, meetings, and information sessions across the region to provide information to citizens and obtain comment on key regional transportation issues. When appropriate, TPB staff will incorporate interactive techniques and use appropriate visualization tools to more fully engage participants.

- Seek participation by TPB members and staff in meetings of citizen, business, environmental, and other organizations interested in regional transportation matters.
- Board and committee meetings will occur at the MWCOG offices located at 777 N. Capitol St NE. These facilities are ADA-compliant, include assisted hearing technology, and are accessible by fixed-route transit.

#### GENERAL ACTIVITIES

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- Publicize special TPB meetings, forums, and workshops prominently in appropriate newspapers, websites, and on radio and TV.
- Work with COG's Office of Public Affairs to seek media coverage of issues before the TPB.
- Use representative polling techniques, focus groups, and the Internet to obtain the views of the public on key regional transportation issues.

**NOTE:** Specific details about the various activities and products the TPB currently uses or might use in the future to engage the public are included in *Appendix E: Public Involvement Toolkit*.

### III. PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

The key method for the implementation of this Participation Plan is the identification of different types of constituencies who possess varying levels of knowledge about and interest in transportation and the TPB process. The Participation Strategy provides a framework for tailoring public involvement tools and activities to serve the diverse needs of these constituencies.

#### CONSTITUENCIES

Federal regulations require that MPOs define a process for providing interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. The regulations define these parties as: citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties.

The TPB has defined the following three broad types of constituencies around which to develop future participation activities, with the federally defined interested parties in mind. In general, these three constituencies are grouped according to varying levels of engagement in regional transportation planning process and awareness of regional transportation issues.

- **The Involved Public** is both knowledgeable about transportation policy issues in general, as well as the TPB's role in the regional transportation planning process. These individuals and organizations already participate in regional transportation planning activities.
- **The Informed Public** has some knowledge of transportation policy issues, but is not familiar with the TPB's role in the regional transportation planning process. They also may not be fully aware of the regional context underlying the transportation challenges experienced throughout the region. This middle tier often includes community leaders and opinion leaders who work at the local level.
- **The Interested Public** has an inherent interest in transportation challenges, but possesses little direct knowledge of transportation policy issues. This group, which is the largest of the three, includes the "general public."

Each of these different types of constituencies includes a wide spectrum of members, including individuals, interest groups, community leaders, and elected officials. This Participation Strategy recognizes that transportation planning can be very complex and technical, and many individuals will never have enough time and interest to develop a full understanding of the TPB process. Therefore, the strategy *seeks to identify tools that will be appropriate for people with limited time whose input and opinions are valuable nonetheless.*



## SERVING DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES

### 1. THE INVOLVED PUBLIC

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#### WHO THEY ARE:

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This category of the public includes interest groups and citizens who already actively participate in the TPB process and have a fairly extensive understanding of regional transportation issues and policy. Among others, this category includes the TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA).

#### GOALS FOR SERVING THIS CONSTITUENCY:

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The TPB will seek to:

- Recognize and support the vital contributions of citizens who are already active in the TPB process.
- Utilize the expertise and commitment of involved individuals and groups to inform the TPB's decision-making.
- Support these individuals and groups in their efforts to disseminate information about regional transportation planning to their communities.

#### TOOLS FOR SERVING THE "INVOLVED PUBLIC":

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The TPB will continue to provide the following existing tools, and in some cases enhance these mechanisms and activities, in order to serve members of the public who are already involved in the TPB process. For more information on these tools, see Appendix E.

#### PROCEDURES

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- Access to Information
  - Provide pertinent documents on the website and at relevant meetings.
  - Ensure documents are available with enough time to review before action is taken on the items, whether by the TPB or one of its committees.
- Public Comment
  - Provide information on how comments will be considered in the planning process.
  - Acknowledge that comments have been received.

#### COMMITTEES

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- Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

- Support the CAC in its continuing efforts to provide clear, region-oriented advice to the TPB.
- Encourage a broad membership on the CAC so that a variety of interests are represented.
- Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA)
  - Support the AFA in its continuing efforts to advise the TPB on the transportation concerns of low-income and minority communities and people with disabilities.

## WEBSITE AND PUBLICATIONS

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- Provide information about TPB policy and research that is pertinent to the involved public via the COG/TPB website, social media, and periodical and other publications
- Assess whether the information needs of involved citizens are being met through the TPB’s website and publications

## MEETINGS AND TRAININGS

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- Encourage citizens who are already involved to attend public meetings and share their knowledge with their peers.

## 2. THE INFORMED PUBLIC

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### WHO THEY ARE:

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For the purposes of this Participation Plan, the term “informed public” represents individuals and groups who are not currently involved in the regional transportation planning process, although they are knowledgeable about transportation policy issues. In many cases, they may be active as community leaders at the local or state level, or with advocacy groups.

### GOALS FOR SERVING THIS CONSTITUENCY:

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The TPB will seek to:

- Provide information and knowledge about regional transportation issues that will empower members of the informed public to positively affect transportation decision-making at the local and state levels.
- Utilize the informed public and community leaders as conduits to disseminate information about regional transportation issues at the grassroots level.
- Encourage the informed public to get involved in the regional transportation planning process at the TPB.
- Provide opportunities for cross-jurisdictional networking.

## TOOLS FOR SERVING THE “INFORMED PUBLIC”:

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The TPB will use the following tools to assist informed citizens to more effectively influence decision making in their communities and to encourage these citizens to get involved in the TPB process. For more information on tools, see *Appendix E: Public Involvement Toolkit*.

## PROCEDURES

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- Access to Information
  - Ensure that information on the web and provided in public documents is clearly labeled.
  - When appropriate, seek to provide information through pictures and graphics as well as text.
- Public Comment
  - Encourage informed citizens who are not typically heard at the TPB to participate in public comment processes, especially the public comment period preceding every TPB meeting.

## COMMITTEES

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- Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
  - Ensure that the CAC reflects new and fresh perspectives by recruiting informed citizens to become committee members.
  - Provide individualized support to new CAC members who may need help in understanding the TPB process.
- Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA)
  - Continue to recruit informed community leaders to serve on the Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA).
  - Provide individualized support to new AFA members who may need help in understanding the TPB process.

## WEBSITE AND PUBLICATIONS

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- Develop simple and compelling documents and web material, including monthly and weekly periodical publications, that help informed citizens better understand the connections between regional challenges, TPB planning work and decision-making, and the local issues in which they are already involved.
- Provide, update, and incorporate definitional glossaries as part of all formats, where appropriate.
- Seek to provide information through pictures and graphics as well as text.
- Maintain a social media presence to announce meetings, public comment periods, the release of key publications, and other relevant information, as appropriate.

## MEETINGS AND TRAININGS

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- Public Meetings
  - Hold forums designed to educate the informed public and solicit input from them.
  - Use community leaders and other “informed citizens” to help organize forums.
  - Document the feedback received at public meetings so that it is meaningful and useful for decision makers at the TPB and in other decision-making bodies.
  - Use appropriate visualization techniques, including pictures and graphics, to help the informed public better understand the connections between local issues and the regional context.
- Training workshops
  - More frequently provide training opportunities, such as the Community Leadership Institute.
  - Follow up with graduates of the Community Leadership Institute to encourage them to become involved in the TPB process and regional decision-making.
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## 3. THE INTERESTED PUBLIC

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### WHO THEY ARE:

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For the purposes of this document, the “interested public” includes people with limited knowledge about specific transportation planning issues, especially the details of projects and plans. They are, however, familiar with the growing problems of getting around in the region, and they are interested in learning about possible solutions. This group includes members of the “general public,” but it may also include community leaders or even elected officials who have limited exposure to transportation planning at any level.

### GOALS FOR SERVING THIS CONSTITUENCY:

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The TPB will seek to:

- Make available basic information on regional transportation and land-use challenges to create a more informed public.
- Increase the capacity of interested citizens to understand transportation and land-use issues so that some of them might become “informed” and even “involved.”
- Understand that most members of the general public may not have the time or inclination to become more engaged in transportation planning activities. Therefore, outreach activities for interested citizens should focus on basic issues, not planning processes or institutions.

### TOOLS FOR SERVING THE “INTERESTED PUBLIC”:

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The TPB will use the following tools to provide basic information and outreach opportunities to the interested public. For more information on tools, see *Appendix E: Public Involvement Toolkit*.

## PROCEDURES

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- Access to Information
  - Ensure that interested citizens can quickly find information on the web.
  - Ensure that staff quickly responds to requests for information and documents.
  - Ensure information for the general public is visually engaging and easy to understand.
- Public Comment
  - Solicit input from the general public through opinion surveys or focus groups.

## COMMITTEES

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- The CAC and the AFA committees should strive to consider the interests of people who have little expertise or knowledge of the regional transportation planning process. Committee meetings are open to the public.

## WEBSITE AND PUBLICATIONS

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- Develop brochures on regional transportation and land use challenges with easily understood text and extensive graphic imagery.
- Incorporate definitional glossaries as part of all formats.

## MEETINGS AND TRAININGS

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- Be sensitive to the presence of interested citizens who have limited knowledge. Engage them as effectively as possible.
- Provide written and other visual information at meetings describing key issues and explaining acronyms.
- Seek to engage citizens and organizations on their “own turf.”

## IV. EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Each year, TPB staff will conduct an evaluation that looks at the public participation activities of the past year and identifies new activities for the year ahead.

Development of the annual evaluation will include a series of focus-group style meetings with the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA), other key stakeholders, and internal COG/TPB staff.

This evaluation will be shared with the TPB and the public, as well as posted to the TPB's website. It will address a series of questions that, for comparative purposes, will be repeated in future years.

The evaluation will address the following topics:

- **Assessment of activities.** Did public involvement and public information activities over the past year achieve their intended purposes? How could they have been improved?
- **Future activities.** Given the TPB work program activities that have been planned for the year ahead, what public participation activities should be planned? What new public outreach initiatives should be undertaken that may not be directly related to the TPB work program?
- **Recurring activities.** How can we enhance public involvement activities that are conducted on a recurring cycle, such as the Community Leadership Institute (CLI) and meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)? Would it make sense to discontinue or alter recurring activities? Are the information needs of key constituencies being met through the TPB's publications?
- **Reaching previously uninvolved resident and groups.** What public involvement activities should TPB staff conduct to reach constituencies that may not typically be part of the regional transportation planning process?

The evaluation report will include a summary of TPB publications, reports, and newsletters, as well as an inventory of news media coverage of the TPB and TPB-related activities.

This annual evaluation will be used in the annual development of the Public Involvement Program Element of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which includes drafting early in the calendar year and approval in early spring.

APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A: FEDERAL REGULATIONS

The TPB will fulfill all of the requirements and criteria provided for public involvement under 23 CFR §450.316 and §450.324 of Subpart C-Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming of 23 CFR Part 450 (Federal Highway Administration) published in the Federal Register on Wednesday, February 14, 2007, as follows:

### § 450.316 INTERESTED PARTIES, PARTICIPATION, AND CONSULTATION.

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(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

(1) The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

- (i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
- (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
- (v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;



(vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;

(vii) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;

(viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;

(ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and

(x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

(2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.

(3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable. *Protocol listed under § 450.316(a)(3) was followed during the adoption of the TPB's Participation Plan. The 45-day comment period began on September 13, 2007, and ended on October 28, 2007. Copies of the approved Participation Plan were provided to FHWA and FTA following the adoption of the Plan by the TPB on November 14, 2007, and the Plan was posted on the website on November 14, 2007.*

(b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport

operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs shall be developed with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:

- (1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;
- (2) Governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and
- (3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 204.

(c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(e) MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under § 450.314.

#### § 450.322 DEVELOPMENT AND CONTENT OF THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN.

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(i) The MPO shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan using the participation plan developed under § 450.316 (a).

#### § 450.324 DEVELOPMENT AND CONTENT OF THE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP).

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(b) The MPO shall provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP as required by §450.316(a). In addition, in

nonattainment area TMAs, the MPO shall provide at least one formal public meeting during the TIP development process, which should be addressed through the participation plan described in §450.316(a). In addition, the TIP shall be published or otherwise made readily available by the MPO for public review, including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web, as described in §450.316(a).

(n) Projects in any of the first four years of the TIP may be advanced in place of another project, subject to the project selection requirements of § 450.330. In addition, the TIP may be revised at any time under procedures agreed to by the State, MPO(s), and public transportation operator(s) consistent with the TIP development procedures established in this section, as well as the procedures for the MPO participation plan (see § 450.316(a)) and FHWA/FTA actions on the TIP (see § 450.328).

#### § 450.326 TIP REVISIONS AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE STIP.

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(a) An MPO may revise the TIP at any time under procedures agreed to by the cooperating parties consistent with the procedures established in this part for its development and approval. In nonattainment or maintenance areas for transportation-related pollutants, if a TIP amendment involves non-exempt projects (per 40 CFR part 93), or is replaced with an updated TIP, the MPO and the FHWA and the FTA must make a new conformity determination. In all areas, changes that affect fiscal constraint must take place by amendment of the TIP. Public participation procedures consistent with § 450.316(a) shall be utilized in revising the TIP, except that these procedures are not required for administrative modifications.

## APPENDIX B: MISSION STATEMENTS FOR TPB ADVISORY COMMITTEES

### TPB CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

The mission of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is:

- to promote public involvement in transportation planning for the National Capital Region; and
- to provide independent, region-oriented citizen advice to the TPB on transportation plans, programs, and issues in the region, including responding to requests from the TPB for comment on specific issues or subject matter.

### TPB ACCESS FOR ALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AFA)

The Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA) advises the TPB on transportation issues, programs, policies, and services that are important to low-income communities, minority communities, and people with disabilities. The mission of this committee is to identify concerns of low-income and minority populations and persons with disabilities, and to determine whether and how these issues might be addressed within the TPB process.

## APPENDIX C: OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE TPB CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) shall have 15 members approved by the TPB. Membership appointments shall be recommended to the TPB as follows:
  - A term of membership in the CAC will begin in February and end in January of the following calendar year.
  - By the end of December of each calendar year, the then current CAC shall designate six individuals to serve on the CAC for the next calendar year. These six individuals, two from each of the District of Columbia, Suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia, should represent the environmental, business, and civic interests in transportation, including appropriate representation from low-income, minority, and disabled groups and from the geographical area covered by the TPB.
  - Following receipt of the six designees from the CAC, the TPB officers shall nominate an additional nine members, three from each of the District of Columbia, Suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. These nine members should represent the environmental, business and civic interests in transportation, including appropriate representation from low-income, minority and disabled groups and from the geographical area served by the TPB.
  - The chair of the CAC for each calendar year shall be appointed from the 15 members by the chair of the TPB for that calendar year. The chair of the CAC shall select two Vice chairs such that the chair and Vice chairs are from the District of Columbia, Suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia.
  - The appointments to the CAC for each calendar year shall be approved by the TPB no later than the January meeting of the TPB.
    - The CAC shall meet at least two days prior to the day of each TPB meeting. Mailout materials for the TPB meeting shall be available for the CAC meeting. The schedule of meeting times for the calendar year shall be developed by the CAC at its first meeting of the calendar year, and notice of the schedule shall be provided to the general public.
  - The CAC chair shall encourage members of the general public to participate in the discussions at the CAC meetings to the maximum extent possible under the time constraints imposed by the agendas.

- The CAC chair shall prepare a report on the CAC meeting which shall be made available to the TPB members at each TPB meeting. Time (up to ten minutes maximum) shall be reserved on each TPB meeting agenda for the CAC chair to report to the Board on CAC activities.
- TPB staff shall be available at the CAC meetings to brief the CAC on TPB procedures and activities as requested, and to answer questions. TPB staff shall assist the CAC chair in preparing meeting agendas, assembling and mailing meeting materials to CAC members, and preparing the CAC chair's report to the TPB.
- An evaluation of the activities of the CAC shall be provided to the TPB by the chair of the CAC each January.

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## APPENDIX D: ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and the Transportation Planning Board are committed to the principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is COG/TPB policy to provide equal access for individuals with disabilities to programs, meetings, publications, and activities including employment. Special accommodations will be provided by the Council of Governments upon request. Reasonable accommodations may include modifications or adjustments to a program, publication, activity, or the way things usually are done to enable an individual with a disability to participate. Examples include:

- Providing sign language interpreters;
- Providing materials in alternative formats (large print or electronic copies);
- Providing tables that are “higher” than normal meeting room tables for people using electric wheelchairs;
- Alerting security staff that persons with disabilities will need assistance to the meeting room;
- Alerting COG garage attendants that a person with a disability will be needing disabled parking spaces;
- Offering individuals to participate in meetings through conference calls and other accommodations as necessary.

### MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Translation services in sign language and Spanish are available upon request for meetings that are open to the public. Other accommodations, such as special seating requirements, can also be arranged. Please allow up to seven business days to process your request.

### PUBLICATIONS

Most publications are available on the website. For information on locating reports, meeting agendas, presentations and other documents, go to: [www.mwcog.org/accommodations/#publications](http://www.mwcog.org/accommodations/#publications).

Alternative formats of publications are also available upon request. Please allow up to seven business days to process your request.

### ADVANCE NOTICE REQUESTED FOR INTERPRETING OR CART SERVICES

An individual needing a sign language interpreter or Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) service to participate in a meeting or event should

request the interpreter service within seven days in advance of the event. If the event is more than 12 interpreting hours, such as a two day conference, COG asks that the request be made 14 days in advance. Late requests will be handled based upon the availability of service(s).

#### TO MAKE A REQUEST:

Phone: 202-962-3300

TDD: 202-962-3213

Email: [accommodations@mwkog.org](mailto:accommodations@mwkog.org)

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## APPENDIX E: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TOOLKIT

This toolkit provides a menu of activities and products that the TPB currently uses or might use in the future. The public involvement element of the TPB's annual work program will be developed using these different tools as well as others identified through staff judgment and consultation with interested parties.

The TPB has numerous products and activities through which it provides information and solicits input on transportation planning projects and programs. In implementing the Participation Plan, gaps in participation may be identified through review of various committees, products, tools, and activities. TPB staff will analyze participation activities with a focus on how the TPB can use staff resources more effectively to ensure broad participation from all constituencies.

The following descriptions include current public involvement activities, and well as potential future efforts.

### COMMITTEES

The TPB is served by two primary public advisory committees: the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA). The two committees are described below.

#### CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

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The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to the TPB is a group of 15 people from throughout the Washington metropolitan region who represent diverse viewpoints on long-term transportation policy. The mission of the CAC is 1) to promote public involvement in transportation planning for the region and 2) to provide independent, region-oriented citizen advice to the TPB on transportation plans and issues. Nine members of the CAC are appointed annually by the TPB. The other six members are elected by the previous year's CAC. The membership is evenly divided between the District of Columbia, Suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. Meetings are held on Thursdays preceding the regular meetings of the TPB. Greater detail about the CAC's mission and operating procedures may be found in Appendices B and C.

#### ACCESS FOR ALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AFA)

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The Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA) advises the TPB on transportation issues, programs, policies, and services that are important to low-income communities, minority communities and

people with disabilities. The committee membership is composed of community leaders from around the region. The committee also includes ex-officio representation from six key transportation agencies that are active in the TPB process— the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

A number of other committees affiliated with the TPB include transportation and planning staff from the TPB's member jurisdictions. Their level of knowledge about the TPB process and transportation planning is quite extensive. These committees provide much of the local expertise behind many of the forecasting, modeling, and scenario planning activities conducted by TPB staff.

The TPB's primary technical committees are the TPB Technical Committee and the Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems Technical Subcommittee.

- The TPB Technical Committee includes transportation planners from the TPB's member jurisdictions, as well as the transit agencies and departments of transportation. The Technical Committee reviews transportation projects and programs and makes recommendations to the TPB on action items. The Technical Committee receives input from several subcommittees:
  - Aviation Technical Subcommittee
  - Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
  - Regional Bus Subcommittee
  - Travel Forecasting Subcommittee
  - Transportation Scenarios Subcommittee
  - Travel Management Subcommittee

The TPB receives input and guidance from a number of other committees comprising members of the public, special interest groups, and jurisdictional staff. These include the Steering Committee (largely acting as an executive committee of the TPB), the Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force, and the Private Providers Task Force.

## DOCUMENTS, PUBLICATIONS, AND REPORTS

Documents and reports provide information about the TPB process, projects, and programs. Documents are developed to convey results from a study or provide relevant information over a number of years, while publications are updated or produced on a continual basis. Reports are provided for decision-making and technical advisory committees and are available for review by persons interested in these topics.

## CONSTRAINED LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CLRP)

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The CLRP contains transportation projects and a system-wide collection of strategies that the TPB realistically anticipates can be implemented over the next 25 to 30 years. The CLRP is updated annually and is fully documented on the TPB website. A brochure summarizing the CLRP is printed and distributed on an annual basis. The brochure makes it easier to understand what projects are in the CLRP and how the system that is planned will meet future needs.  
[www.mwcog.org/clrp](http://www.mwcog.org/clrp)

## TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

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The TIP describes the schedule over the next six years for obligating federal funds to state and local projects, many of which are included in the CLRP. The TIP is mainly of interest to citizens and stakeholders who are already involved in the TPB process. It is produced in limited printed editions, and is also available on the TPB website.

<http://www.mwcog.org/clrp/projects/tip/>

## TECHNICAL REPORTS

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The TPB produces a number of technical reports that are published on a regular basis, including the Unified Planning Work Program, the Air Quality Conformity Assessment, reports on travel monitoring, evaluations of the Commuter Connections programs, and documentation related to the TPB travel forecasting model. These documents are provided for decision-making and technical advisory committees and are available for review by persons interested in these topics.

[http://www.mwcog.org/publications/departmental.asp?CLASSIFICATION\\_ID=3](http://www.mwcog.org/publications/departmental.asp?CLASSIFICATION_ID=3)

## SPECIAL REPORTS AND STUDIES

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The TPB produces special reports as needed and appropriate, such as publications on the regional transportation funding shortfall or reports from the Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA). Staff have made efforts in recent years to make these reports more visually engaging

and user-friendly. All such reports are available on the TPB website.  
<http://www.mwcog.org/transportation#featured-publications>

## WEBSITES AND PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS

### TPB WEEKLY REPORT

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A weekly, online publication designed to provide brief, timely summaries of recent TPB research, analysis, outreach, and planning in the metropolitan Washington region.

### TPB NEWS

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A monthly publication designed to provide brief updates on items discussed at the most recent TPB meeting, as well as a preview of the upcoming TPB meeting.

### THE REGION

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An annual report designed to highlight TPB activities from the previous year.

### CALENDAR

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A meeting calendar with links to agendas and meeting materials for the TPB meeting and other committee meetings.  
<http://www.mwcog.org/calendar/default.asp>

### COG / TPB WEBSITE

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The COG and TPB websites provide current information about ongoing projects and programs, as well as an archive of past publications and documents. The website was initially designed to provide information for individuals and groups that already participate in the TPB process. In recent years, the site has been updated to provide information in a more citizen-friendly format. TPB staff intends to continue making these enhancements. COG plans to launch a major update to the COG and TPB websites in late 2014 or early 2015.

### TRANSPORTATION PLANNING INFORMATION HUB FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

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The Hub is a website that serves as a one-stop shop for information on transportation planning activities underway throughout the region. It includes

information on the planning processes of the TPB's member jurisdictions and agencies, high-profile projects under construction or planned in the region, and links to key documents and resources, including a directory with contact information for numerous local, state, and regional governments and transportation agencies. The Hub is designed to help the public engage with local decision-makers and planners and to become more engaged in the decision-making process. The Hub was launched in 2013. ([www.transportationplanninghub.org](http://www.transportationplanninghub.org)).

## OUTREACH AND EDUCATION EFFORTS

Actively engaging the general public, the media, and local planning partners is part of the TPB's goal to gain broader participation in the planning and decision-making process, leading to a more informed constituency base and better plans and products.

### CLRP AND TIP MEETINGS

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Under SAFETEA-LU, the TPB is required to hold a formal public meeting during the development of the TIP, which is done every two years. At these forums, TPB staff provide information on the TPB process and educational materials on the CLRP and TIP.

### MEDIA AND MESSAGING

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The region's media frequently feature stories on the TPB and regional transportation issues. The TPB will make additional effort to engage the media in the dissemination of information about regional transportation decision-making, through greater coordination with the COG Office of Public Affairs, social media, and periodical publications.

### LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

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Since 2006, the TPB has conducted the Community Leadership Institute (CLI), a multi-day program that uses interactive group exercises and discussions to help participants better understand the TPB process and regional transportation planning issues. CLI participants discuss ways in which the interests of their local communities connect with the planning issues facing the entire region. The goal is to prepare participants to actively participate in TPB activities as well as inform their communities about transportation initiatives and programs. Participants in the CLI represent organizations that have been recognized as forces for change in their communities, including civic groups, homeowners associations, business organizations, and local citizen advisory boards. Since its inception in 2006, the CLI curriculum has been continually refined and

made more interactive. In 2013, the program was expanded to three days. A session of CLI held in early 2014 engaged staff of local elected officials. Future sessions of CLI may be tailored to groups of high school or college students.

## OUTREACH FORUMS

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TPB staff periodically conducts outreach forums throughout the region to seek feedback on TPB programs and projects, as well as providing members of the public with information about regional transportation challenges and opportunities. Such outreach forums have been a particularly effective tool for seeking input on the TPB's various scenario planning activities. Forums have often included interactive exercises in which participants, working in small groups, are asked to construct their own scenarios to address regional land use and transportation challenges. In setting up these public forums, TPB staff have focused on organizations and groups that already have regularly scheduled meetings and do not typically include citizens who are already involved in the TPB process.

## DELIBERATIVE FORUMS

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Deliberative forums are public engagement events that employ quantitative tools (e.g., keypad polling) and qualitative methods (e.g., facilitated groups discussions) to engage participants in discussions about particular planning issues and to solicit informed feedback. Through deliberative forums, people come together to learn and talk about problems and challenges, and to explore potential solutions. TPB staff have used deliberative forums on several occasions since 2011.

## VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES

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The TPB has developed a variety of visualization techniques to strengthen participation in the planning process and to aid the TPB's various constituencies in understanding proposed plans. An example of visualization includes an interactive mapping feature that shows projects programmed in the CLRP while displaying project information and facts. The TPB also uses photographs, charts, and other visuals to demonstrate planning concepts, networks and regional linkages.

Computer software has expanded the opportunities to convey complex concepts through visual media. In the development of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, for example, the TPB used

web-based public engagement software, designed by MetroQuest, which conveyed large amounts of complex information in an attractive and engaging visual interface, as well as soliciting feedback using a variety of input devices.

Such tools enhance the understanding of all constituencies when discussing the TPB projects and programs. Further development of these visualization techniques will enhance participation for the interested and informed citizens who may not be familiar with regional transportation challenges. The TPB will continue to consider the utilization of visualization techniques to further its outreach goals.

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

Maintain social media presence (Facebook and Twitter) to announce meetings, events, public comment periods, the release of key publications, and other relevant information.

- Twitter - <https://twitter.com/#!/NatCapRegTPB>
- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/NatCapRegTPB>