



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** TPB Technical Committee  
**FROM:** Bryan Hayes and John Swanson, TPB Transportation Planners  
**SUBJECT:** Proposed Changes in the New TPB Participation Plan  
**DATE:** February 28, 2020

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TPB staff are currently working to update the TPB's 2014 Participation Plan. This memo describes work completed to date and outlines changes that will be made for the updated plan.

## BACKGROUND

Staff began updating the TPB's Public Participation Plan in fall 2019, focusing on reviewing and discussing information that will inform key elements of the updated plan.

The participation team met to review the following:

- The existing Participation Plan from 2014
- Relevant federal regulations
- The COG Title VI Plan and Program
- Findings from the 2019 federal certification review
- Findings from a 2019 consultant evaluation of the TPB's public participation activities
- A selection of other MPO participation plans

Based on review of these documents, we identified changes that we would like to emphasize in the new update, which are identified below. In February, staff also met with Kanti Srikanth, TPB Staff Director, to get his endorsement of the proposed changes.

## PROPOSED CHANGES AND POINTS OF EMPHASIS

The 2020 update to the TPB's Participation Plan will replace the last update, which was approved in 2014. That plan can be found here: <https://www.mwcog.org/tpb-participation-plan/>.

The new plan should not philosophically be significantly different from the current plan. However, it will be more succinct and purposeful. The updated plan should: articulate the TPB's vision for participation; clearly explain how the public can get involved; provide guidance on how staff can incorporate participation into their work; and demonstrate that the TPB is meeting federal requirements.

Below is a summary of the changes and points of emphasis that will be expanded upon in the new Participation Plan.

### 1) Clarify the purpose of public participation in the TPB process

The new plan will reaffirm the TPB's belief that public involvement in the regional planning process is inherently valuable. Unlike the 2014 version, however, the new plan will clearly distinguish how different activities serve different purposes:

- Informing and educating the public –  
*Why?* A public that is well-informed about transportation challenges and opportunities will be better prepared to promote positive changes in their communities and throughout the region.
- Seeking public input to influence policy and decision making –  
*Why?* Public feedback challenges the TPB to make its plans and programs better.
- Engaging the public in an ongoing dialogue –  
*Why?* By cultivating ongoing relationships with communities, the TPB and its staff will help make sure our work is effectively serving the region.

### 2) Clarify the purpose of the participation plan

More than past versions, the new plan will serve as a useful resource for planning, executing, and evaluating public engagement activities.

The plan will be intended for use by the public, staff, and regulators.

- The Public – It will include tips for how the public can get involved at the TPB.
- Staff – The plan will serve as a useful tool to help staff:
  - Determine if participation is necessary
  - Find out the most appropriate approach for participation (flow chart, checklist)
  - Respond to comment/input/participation in a meaningful way
  - Evaluate effectiveness of the participation activity (clear evaluation criteria, provide examples)
- Regulators – The plan will provide a framework to help staff demonstrate that the TPB meets and exceeds requirements.

### 3) Explain how the TPB's participation activities target different constituencies

Similar to past version of the TPB's Participation Plan, the new document will recognize that the TPB's participation activities should be tailored to different constituencies. The plan will identify and describe three levels of these constituencies: 1) Active Stakeholders, 2) Community Leaders, and 3) the General Public.

The stratification of different constituencies was a key feature of the 2014 Participation Plan. In that plan, the constituencies were named: 1) Involved, 2) Informed, and 3) Interested. These three constituencies were illustrated in a pyramid. The new plan will largely maintain the same concept regarding constituencies, and it will be clarified and simplified.

**4) Enhance evaluation activities**

The new plan will call for a more robust evaluation process with more frequent opportunities for review and comment. Among other things, evaluations will be regularly conducted at the completion of participation activities, in addition to periodic reviews with stakeholders.

**5) Remove operational details regarding TPB advisory committees from the plan**

Unlike past versions of the Participation Plan, the new plan will not include the mission statement and operating procedures for the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), nor will it include the mission statement for the Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA). Documentation for these two committees will be included in stand-alone documents that will be developed later in 2020.

**6) More explicitly tie in Title VI requirements**

The new plan will be consistent with COG's Title VI Plan and Title VI Program.

**7) Ensure we meet federal metropolitan planning requirements**

The plan will reference the overarching federal guidance, as well as more recent requirements.

**NEXT STEPS**

The goal is to have the plan ready for board approval at the July TPB meeting. To meet this goal, a draft needs to be ready for a 45-day public comment period starting mid-May. That draft will also be shared with the board at the June meeting.

Over the next month, we will work with staff and team leaders to better understand how an updated participation plan can be used by staff. We will also work with the CAC and AFA to get their input.



# TPB PARTICIPATION PLAN

## 2020 Update

Bryan Hayes  
TPB Transportation Planner

TPB Technical Committee  
March 6, 2019



National Capital Region  
Transportation Planning Board

Agenda Item 9

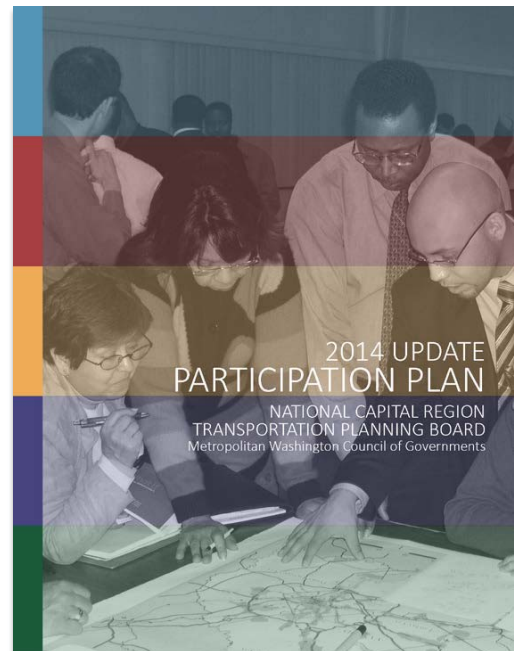
## Participation Plans

### Participation Plan

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments



ADOPTED BY THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
DECEMBER 19, 2007



National Capital Region  
Transportation Planning Board

Item 9: Participation Plan 2020 Update  
March 6, 2020

# 2020 Update – The Approach

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- **Information gathering** – Gather information through internal discussions and a review of key documents. The information gathered will identify potential elements that may be highlighted in the new plan.
- **Stakeholder input** – Present the proposed approach to key groups to solicit feedback
- **Draft new plan** – Based on input
- **Revise and finalize** – The plan will be revised and approved



# Proposed changes

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## 1) Clarify the purpose of public participation in the TPB process

### **Informing and educating the public**

A public that is well-informed about transportation challenges and opportunities will be better prepared to promote positive changes in their communities and throughout the region.

### **Seeking public input to influence policy and decision making**

Public feedback challenges the TPB to make its plans and programs better.

### **Engaging the public in an ongoing dialogue**

By cultivating ongoing relationships with communities, the TPB and its staff will help make sure our work is effectively serving the region.



# Proposed changes

## 2) Clarify the purpose of the participation plan

### The Public

It will include tips for how the public can get involved at the TPB.

### TPB Staff

The plan will serve as a useful tool to help staff:

- Determine if participation is necessary
- Find out the most appropriate approach for participation
- Respond to comment/input/participation in a meaningful way
- Evaluate effectiveness of the participation activity

### Regulators

The plan will provide a framework to help staff demonstrate that the TPB meets and exceeds requirements.

# Proposed changes

## 3) Explain how the TPB's participation activities target different constituencies

The new document will recognize that the TPB's participation activities should be tailored to different constituencies. The plan will identify and describe three levels of these constituencies: 1) active stakeholders, 2) community leaders, and 3) the general public.



## Proposed changes

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- 4) Enhance evaluation activities**
- 5) Remove operational details regarding TPB advisory committees**
- 6) More explicitly tie in Title VI requirements**
- 7) Ensure TPB meets federal metropolitan planning requirements**

## Next Steps

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1. Meet with team leaders – March 2020
2. Consult with CAC & AFA – March / April 2020
3. Draft plan – March / April 2020
4. Public comment (45 days) – May 2020
5. Board approval - July 2020



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**Transportation Planning Board**