

**ITEM 7 - Action**  
September 17, 2014

Approval of an Update of the TPB Participation Plan

**Staff Recommendation:** Adopt Resolution R3-2015 to approve the enclosed update of the TPB Participation Plan.

**Issues:** None

**Background:** The Participation Plan, which was adopted by the TPB in December 2007, provides the framework for public and agency involvement in the regional transportation planning process, including the development of the CLRP and TIP. At its July meeting, the Board was briefed on the main elements of the update, which was released for a 45-day public comment period at the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting on July 10.

**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002**

**RESOLUTION APPROVING THE TPB PARTICIPATION PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington Region, has the responsibility under the provisions of MAP-21, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (P.L. 112-141), for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Metropolitan Area; and

**WHEREAS**, the metropolitan planning regulations that apply to MAP-21 require MPOs to develop a Participation Plan in consultation with interested parties; and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB has conducted public participation activities under three previously approved official processes for public involvement, beginning with a Public Involvement Process adopted in 1994 in response to the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA); and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB's most recent Participation Plan was developed in response to requirements of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) legislation of 2005, and was approved by the TPB in 2007; and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB has made a number of enhancements in its public involvement activities in recent years, including the development of more citizen-friendly websites and publications, improved opportunities for public comment, development of the Community Leadership Institute, use of interactive public forums, and continued support for the TPB Citizens Advisory Committee and the Access for All Advisory Committee; and

**WHEREAS**, the draft Participation Plan was developed in consultation with a number of different committees and stakeholder groups, including the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Access for All Advisory Committee, and the TPB Technical Committee; and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB underwent a Federal Certification Review in 2010, and this Participation Plan responds to comments that the TPB received following that review; and

**WHEREAS**, the draft Participation Plan includes a policy statement, identification of goals and description of participation activities, including public comment; committees; documents reports and publications; website and social media; and outreach and trainings; and

**WHEREAS**, the goals of the Participation Plan include:

- Communicate effectively with appropriate audiences
- Provide clear and open access to information and participation
- Gather input from diverse perspectives
- Respond meaningfully to public comment and feedback.
- Promote a regional perspective

**WHEREAS**, the TPB, as demonstrated by its past activities and articulated in this Participation Plan, believes that the information derived from the involvement of citizens and stakeholders is essential to good decision-making; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 10, 2014, the TPB Participation Plan was released for a 45-day public comment period which ended on August 24, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, the comments and staff responses were reviewed and considered as part of the approval of the TPB Participation Plan by the TPB on September 17, 2014;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD approves the 2104 Update to the TPB Participation Plan.



# NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

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# TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

## MEMORANDUM

TO: National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board  
FROM: John Swanson, Principal Transportation Planner  
SUBJECT: Comments received regarding the 2014 TPB Participation Plan Update  
DATE: September 11, 2014

A draft of the 2014 TPB Participation Plan Update was released for 45-day public comment period on July 10, 2014. The following information describes the comments received during this official comment period and provides staff responses to those comments.

### 1. Clarify that the TPB will seek participation from traditionally tough-to-reach groups.

#### COMMENT

At a meeting with the TPB's Access for All Advisory Committee, participants requested that the Participation Plan be more explicit in acknowledging that staff will seek input from historically disadvantaged groups.

#### RESPONSE

The following underlined text will be inserted on page 13 of the Participation Plan:

Each of these different types of constituencies includes a wide spectrum of members, including individuals, interest groups, community leaders, and elected officials. The TPB also recognizes that each of these constituent groups include people from minority communities, people with limited English proficiency, people with low-incomes, and people from a variety of ages, including youth and the elderly. Staff remains aware of the need to engage these populations through outreach and participation.

The following underlined text will be inserted on page 21 of the Participation Plan:

The TPB will seek participation by TPB members and staff in meetings of citizen, business, and environmental, and other organizations interested in regional transportation, including people from minority communities, with limited English proficiency, with low-incomes, and from a variety of age groups.

**2. More explicitly state that the activities in the Participation Plan will be used to obtain comments on the long-range plan and TIP.**

COMMENTS

Recipients of FTA funding, including staff at VDRPT and MTA, have indicated that federal funders require the inclusion of text similar to that indicated below.

RESPONSE

The following text will be inserted as the third paragraph on page 2 (Background):

The activities and strategies described in this Participation Plan will be used to obtain comments on the region's Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP and six –year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which includes projects that are funded by the Federal Transit Administration (including projects funded by the Urbanized Area Formula Program) and the Federal Highway Administration.

**3. Make audio and/or video of meetings available on the website. Also provide options for live streaming of meetings.**

COMMENTS

Allen Muchnick of Manassas submitted the following comments:

“Video and audio recordings of TPB (and key TPB committee) meetings should be readily available to the public via the MWCOG website. Ideally, live streaming video and/or audio proceedings should be available in real time and then also archived indefinitely on the MWCOG website. Local governing bodies and state transportation boards have made this a standard practice for many years, and I suspect other large MPOs throughout the US have long done this. In addition, TPB meeting proceedings should be available for viewing on local public access cable TV channels, and/or MWCOG should launch its own cable TV channel.” *Submitted 7/10/14*

“My earlier comment, which has been posted, was in reference to the TPB's Participation Plan. To expand upon that earlier comment, TPB and TPB committee meetings should also be available for live viewing (and potentially also viewer participation) via a webinar format. The webinar recordings should also be archived on the MWCOG website.” *Submitted 8/5/14*

At the TPB meeting on July 16, 2014, Gary Erenrich of Montgomery County similarly suggested that recordings of TPB meetings should be made available and that live streaming options should be provided.

RESPONSE

TPB staff is currently investigating methods for posting recordings of board meetings on the website. Staff is also looking into options for live-streaming meeting audio and/or video.



# 2014 UPDATE PARTICIPATION PLAN

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments



## **Acknowledgements**

### **Director, Department of Transportation Planning**

Kanti Srikanth

### **Chief, Program Coordination**

Gerald Miller

### **Plan Authors**

Sarah Crawford

Ben Hampton

Bryan Hayes

Darren Smith

John Swanson

### **Special Thanks To:**

TPB committees and other stakeholders, especially the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Access for All Advisory Committee

## **ADA and Limited English Proficiency (LEP)**

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Phone (202)962-3300 or (202)-962-3213 (TDD)

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

Please allow seven working days for preparation of the material.

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*El Consejo de Gobiernos de Metropolitan Washington cumple todos los requisitos del Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964 y estatutos y regulaciones relacionadas en todas las actividades y programas. Para más información, o para presentar una queja relacionada con Título VI, visite [www.mwkog.org](http://www.mwkog.org) o llame (202) 962-3300.*





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## I. PREFACE

This Participation Plan articulates the TPB’s commitment to transparent communications and engagement 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. Appendix A: Existing Participation Activities and Procedures, details ongoing participation and outreach activities. Together, the Policy, Strategy, and Toolkit form the functional backbone of the Participation Plan.

## II. 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.

The activities and strategies described in this Participation Plan will be used to obtain comments on the region's Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) and six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which includes projects that are funded by the Federal Transit Administration (including projects funded by the Urbanized Area Formula Program) and the Federal Highway Administration.

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 FOR METROPOLITAN PLANNING

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 B 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.

## NONDISCRIMINATION

This Participation Plan identifies and describes the TPB's policies and procedures for inclusive public participation and ensures access to the transportation planning process for low-income and minority populations.

COG and the TPB are committed to assuring that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (PL 100.259), be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. COG further assures that every effort will be made to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not. COG and TPB's nondiscrimination policies and practices apply to not only the population groups included under the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (people of all races, colors, national origin, and genders) but also to people with disabilities, those with low-incomes, persons with limited English proficiency, and people of all ages and ethnicities.

In July 2010, the COG Board of Directors adopted a "Title VI Plan to Ensure Nondiscrimination in all Programs and Activities," which was developed to document the efforts COG undertakes on a continual basis to ensure compliance with Title VI and related statutes regarding nondiscrimination and environmental justice. The Plan includes a Title VI Policy Statement (in box at right), Title VI Assurances, organization and compliance responsibilities, nondiscrimination complaint procedures. It also describes how the TPB ensures that Title VI requirements, including Environmental Justice considerations, are met.

Because COG acts as the administrative agent for the TPB, the Title VI Plan applies to the TPB as well. As a matter of long-standing TPB policy and a requirement of federal law, the regional transportation planning process must make special efforts to consider the concerns of traditionally underserved communities, including low-income and minority communities and people with disabilities.

### COG's Title VI Policy Statement to Ensure Nondiscrimination in All Programs & Activities

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. COG further assures every effort will be made to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its program and activities whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not. In the event COG distributes federal aid funds to another governmental entity, COG will include Title VI language in all written agreements and will monitor for compliance. COG's Title VI officer is responsible for initiating and monitoring Title VI activities, overseeing the preparation of required reports and overseeing other COG responsibilities as required by Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200 and Title 49.



The following activities and procedures provide examples of key ways in which the TPB conducts outreach to traditionally underserved communities:

- ***Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee.*** The TPB created the AFA in 2000 to advise the TPB on issues and concerns of low-income and minority communities, persons with disabilities and people with limited English proficiency (LEP). The committee, which has addressed myriad issues over the last 14 years, includes approximately 25 community leaders, as well as ex-officio representation from the major transportation agencies in the region. The AFA is chaired by a TPB member who makes regular reports to the TPB on AFA issues and concerns. More information is available about the AFA at: [www.mwcog.org/transportation/committee/afa](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/committee/afa).
- ***Comments on CLRP and TIP updates.*** Each time the region's Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are updated, the TPB solicits comments representing the concerns of traditionally disadvantaged populations. The TPB's mailing lists include hundreds of community groups that represent Title VI protected groups throughout the Washington Region. Press releases are also sent to newspapers published by and for Title VI protected groups. In addition, the AFA committee reviews maps of proposed major projects and comments on the CLRP. The AFA chair, a TPB member, presents those comments to Board. The comments are also documented in a memorandum.
- ***Analysis on the impacts of the CLRP.*** The TPB conducts an analysis of how the CLRP may impact low-income, minority and disabled populations. The AFA, reviews and comments on this analysis, which addresses Title VI and Environmental justice requirements and is conducted each time a major update to the CLRP is adopted to ensure that the CLRP does not disproportionately and adversely affect low-income, minority and disabled populations. The analysis is published on the CLRP website: <http://www.mwcog.org/clrp/performance/EJ>.

In addition to the examples cited above, the TPB seeks to incorporate the participation and viewpoints of all population groups into the full spectrum of public outreach activities that are described in this Participation Plan. For example, surveys and focus groups have deliberately sought out participation from low-income and LEP communities. Training programs, such as the Community Leadership Institute (described in the next section), have actively recruited participants representing disadvantaged communities. And public education programs, such as the Street Smart campaign to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety, provide information in a range of different languages. The participation enhancements described below demonstrate outreach and communication to all population groups which provide clear and concise information about the

transportation planning process so that the public is better able to comment and participate.

## 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:

- **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 engage 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 planning processes at many levels throughout the region. 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 A: Existing Participation Activities and Procedures. 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 transportation decision making 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.

### III. 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:

- ***Communicate effectively with appropriate audiences.*** 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.

- ***Provide clear and open access to information and participation opportunities.*** 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.
- ***Gather input from diverse perspectives.*** 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.
- ***Respond meaningfully to public comment and feedback.*** 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.
- ***Promote a regional perspective.*** The TPB will communicate how regional transportation planning plays a vital role in coordinating planning activities on many levels.

## IV. 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

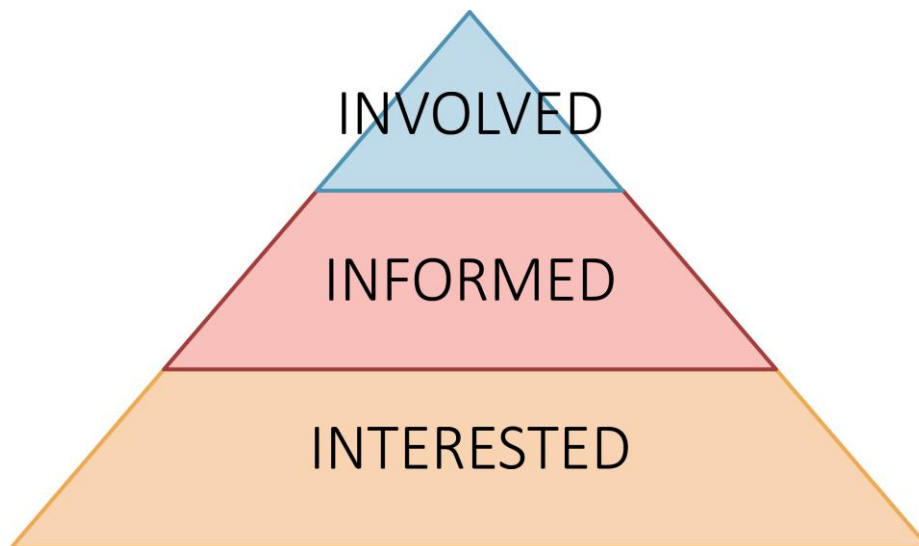
The TPB has defined the following three broad types of constituencies around which to develop future participation activities. In general, these three constituencies are grouped according to varying levels of engagement in regional transportation planning process and awareness of regional transportation 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 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).
- **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,” but it may also include community leaders or even elected officials who have limited exposure to transportation planning at any level.

These three constituency groups were developed with federal public participation regulations in mind. The 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.



Each of these different types of constituencies includes a wide spectrum of members, including individuals, interest groups, community leaders, and elected officials. The TPB also recognizes that each of these constituent groups include people from minority communities, people with limited English proficiency, people with low-incomes, and people from a variety of ages, including youth and the elderly. Staff remains aware of the need to engage these populations through outreach and participation.



## SERVING DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES

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 gathering the input and opinions of people with varying amounts of available time and interest.

### GOALS FOR SERVING THE “INVOLVED PUBLIC”

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- Recognize and support the vital contributions of individuals and groups 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.

### GOALS FOR SERVING THE “INFORMED PUBLIC”

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- 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.

### GOALS FOR SERVING THE “INTERESTED PUBLIC”

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- Make available basic information on regional transportation and land-use challenges to create a more informed public.
- Increase the capacity of interested individuals 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.

## V. PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES



It is the policy of the TPB to carry out the following participation activities in support of the above policy statement and policy goals. In some cases, the way activities are carried out must be tailored to the needs of one or more of the constituencies identified in the Participation Strategy. The differing needs of each of the constituencies are a result of varying levels of engagement in the regional transportation planning process and awareness of regional transportation issues.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

One of the most basic ways for the public to participate in the TPB process is to comment directly on the TPB's planning activities and planning products, including federally required plans and programs, other major plans or policy documents, technical reports, and more.

### KEY ELEMENTS

#### PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS

The TPB will provide formal windows of time during which the public can review and comment on items on which the Board will formally act by way of a vote. The length of these comment periods and the specific procedures followed will vary based on the type of item under consideration. A 30-day public comment period will be provided for federally required plans and

programs and other major regional plans and policy documents. Other Action Items due to come before the TPB will be provided six days in advance of the TPB meeting for review.

In some cases, the TPB will provide written responses to comments received prior to TPB action, and provide additional opportunities for comment if the final version of plans, programs, or other major policy documents differ significantly from the last version made available for public comment.

For more detailed public comment period procedures, please see Appendix A: Existing Participation Activities and Procedures.

## ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMENT

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The TPB will provide ongoing opportunities for the public to comment on its work through the COG/TPB website, by email, by postal mail, or by phone. For details about these avenues for providing comment, please see Appendix A: Existing Participation Activities and Procedures.

## OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS

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The TPB will invite members of the public to participate in the review of technical work programs and analysis through attendance at meetings of the TPB Technical Committee and other TPB subcommittees, and at regular monthly meetings of the TPB. 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.

The TPB will also provide at least one formal public meeting during the development process for the six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Meetings of the TPB and its subcommittees will occur at the MWCOG offices located at 777 N. Capitol St NE, Washington DC, 20002. These facilities are ADA-compliant, include assisted hearing technology, and are accessible by fixed-route transit.

## SERVING DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES

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- **Involved Public:** Provide information on how comments will be considered in the planning process and acknowledge that comments have been received.
- **Informed Public:** Encourage informed individuals who are not typically heard at the TPB to participate in public comment processes, especially the public comment period preceding every TPB meeting.

- **Interested Public:** Solicit input through opinion surveys or focus groups.

## COMMITTEES

The TPB is served by numerous technical and advisory committees. The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA) are intended to promote public involvement and represent the opinion of a variety of communities and interests. The public are also invited to attend other technical and advisory committees of the TPB.

### KEY COMMITTEES

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#### CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

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The TPB will 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.

The CAC's mission, detailed in Appendix C, is to promote public involvement in transportation planning, and to provide independent, region-oriented citizen advice to the TPB.

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

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The TPB will 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. Participants in the AFA include individuals and organizations that represent traditionally unrepresented populations. The AFA mission statement can be found in Appendix C: Mission Statements for TPB Advisory Committees.

### SERVING DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES

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- **Involved Public:** Encourage a broad membership on the CAC and AFA so that a variety of interests are represented.
- **Informed Public:** Ensure that the CAC and AFA reflect new and fresh perspectives by recruiting informed community leaders or informed members of the general public to become committee members. Provide individualized support to new CAC and AFA members who may need help in understanding the TPB process.
- **Interested Public:** Encourage members of the CAC and AFA to strive to consider the interests of people who have little expertise or knowledge of the regional transportation planning process, and ensure that meetings remain open to the public.

## DOCUMENTS, REPORTS, AND PUBLICATIONS

The various documents, reports, and publications the TPB produces provide policy and technical information that the public need in order to make more informed contributions to the TPB process.

The TPB will make these plans and policy documents available to the public at meetings of the TPB and its subcommittees, on the COG/TPB website, in person or by mail upon request, and at other appropriate locations and public meetings around the region.

### KEY ELEMENTS

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#### PLANS AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

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The TPB is responsible for producing a number of regional plans and policy documents both to reflect and to guide regional transportation decision-making. These include the region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), the six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

#### 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.

#### PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS

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The TPB will publish and distribute periodical publications, including weekly and monthly newsletters, the TPB annual report, and other reports, guidebooks, and brochures to inform as broad a regional audience as possible of the activities of the TPB and other regional transportation issues.

#### VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES

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The TPB will utilize appropriate visualization techniques in all plans and policy documents, technical reports, and periodical publications to more effectively communicate key ideas with desired audiences. Such techniques may range from use of simple pictures and graphics to more sophisticated computer-generated visual information. Of particular use in documents, reports, and

publications are explanatory diagrams, strategic photo selection, and stylized mapping.

## SERVING DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES

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- **Involved Public:** Provide information about pertinent TPB policy and research and periodically assess whether the information needs of this group are being met through the TPB's publications.
- **Informed Public:** Develop simple and compelling documents 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. Steps should also be taken to provide, update, and incorporate definitional glossaries as part of all formats, where appropriate, and to provide information through pictures and graphics as well as text.
- **Interested Public:** Develop brochures on regional transportation and land use challenges with easily understood text and extensive graphic imagery. Steps should also be taken to provide, update, and incorporate definitional glossaries as part of all formats.

## WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA

A growing share of the public now seek and consume information online and via social media. The TPB will seek to maintain its online and social media presence in a way that provides easy access to the policy and technical information and resources that the public need in order to make more informed contributions to the TPB process.

## KEY ELEMENTS

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### WEBSITES

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The TPB will maintain and expand existing websites to provide comprehensive information on TPB activities and regional transportation planning issues. The TPB's portfolio of websites includes the Transportation section of the COG/TPB website (including the Transportation homepage, "What's Happening in Transportation"), a website explaining and detailing the region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), and the Transportation Planning Information Hub.

### ONLINE MEETING CALENDAR

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The TPB will maintain an online meeting calendar that links to agendas and meeting materials for the TPB board meeting and committee meetings. The TPB will announce public meetings and share materials via email to individuals

who have subscribed to receive them. Emails will be distributed in HTML and accessible text formats.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

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

## VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES

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The TPB will utilize appropriate visualization techniques in all web and social media materials. Such techniques may range from use of simple pictures and graphics to more sophisticated computer-generated visual information, including interactive mapping tools.

## SERVING DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES

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- **Involved Public:** Provide information about pertinent TPB policy and research via the COG/TPB website and social media, and periodically assess whether the information needs of the Involved Public are being met through these avenues.
- **Informed Public:** Develop simple and compelling web material that help informed individuals better understand the connections between regional challenges, TPB planning work and decision-making, and the local issues in which they are already involved. TPB staff will take steps to provide, update, and incorporate definitional glossaries as part of all formats, where appropriate, and to provide information through pictures and graphics as well as text.
- **Interested Public:** TPB web and social media efforts represent the easiest opportunity to reach the largest audience. Information about regional transportation issues will be provided in interesting, clear and compelling formats.

## OUTREACH AND TRAINING

Other outreach and training efforts can encourage more effective participation in the TPB process and in local and state planning activities that contribute to regional planning.

## KEY ELEMENTS

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### TARGETED OUTREACH

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The TPB will conduct and participate in public forums, meetings, and information sessions across the region to provide information to area residents

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. These tools are described in greater detail in Appendix A: Existing Participation Activities and Procedures.

The TPB will seek participation by TPB members and staff in meetings of citizen, business, environmental, and other organizations interested in regional transportation matters, including people from minority communities, with limited English proficiency, with low-incomes, and from a variety of age groups.

The TPB will maintain active communication and consultation with the COG Board of Directors and other interested COG committees.

## TRAINING WORKSHOPS

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The TPB will develop and conduct 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. These techniques and tools are described in greater detail in Appendix A: Existing Participation Activities and Procedures.

## MASS MEDIA

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The TPB will publicize special TPB meetings, forums, and workshops prominently in appropriate newspapers, websites, and on radio and TV. TPB staff will work with COG's Office of Public Affairs to seek mass media coverage of issues before the TPB.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTATION

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The TPB will 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.

## SERVING DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES

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- **Involved Public:** Encourage citizens who are already involved to attend public meetings and share their knowledge with their peers.
- **Informed Public:** Hold more public forums and provide more training opportunities designed to educate the informed public, solicit input from



them, and encourage them to become involved in the TPB process and regional decision-making. Use community leaders and other members of the Informed Public to help organize additional public forums and 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.

- **Interested Public:** Be sensitive to the needs of interested individuals who have limited knowledge and 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.”

## VI. 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.

Discussions with stakeholders will occur in the fall, and the evaluation will be completed by December, in time to inform 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.

# APPENDIX

## APPENDIX A: EXISTING PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES

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.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

One of the most basic ways for the public to participate in the TPB process is to comment directly on the TPB's planning activities and planning products, including federally required plans and programs, other major plans or policy documents, technical reports, and more.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS

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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.

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 are conducted, per federal requirements, at a minimum:

- Public comment period of at least 30 days prior to the approval of documents.
- 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 followed:

- Public comment period of at least 30 days prior to the approval of documents.
- 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.

## ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMENT

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For other items and activities, the TPB provides an opportunity for public comment via mail, email, and on the TPB website. The TPB also provides access to documents in advance of all meetings to provide an opportunity to comment.

To ensure that reasonable public access is provided to technical and policy information used in the TPB process, members of the public will be invited 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.

## OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS

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The TPB will invite members of the public to participate in the review of technical work programs and analysis through attendance at meetings of the TPB Technical Committee and other TPB subcommittees, and at regular monthly meetings of the TPB.

To ensure that meetings are open, the TPB will:

- 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.
- Provide at least one formal public meeting during the development process for the TIP.
- 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.
- When possible, all 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.

## 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. 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.

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.

### 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 C and D.

## 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).

## OTHER TPB COMMITTEES

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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, REPORTS, AND PUBLICATIONS

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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## PLANS AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

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The TPB is responsible for producing a number of regional plans and policy documents both to reflect and to guide regional transportation decision-making. These include the region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), the six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

### 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>

## PUBLICATIONS

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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>

## PERIODICALS

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The TPB will publish and distribute periodical publications, including weekly and monthly newsletters, the TPB annual report, and other reports, guidebooks, and brochures to inform as broad a regional audience as possible of the activities of the TPB and other regional transportation issues.

## 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.

[www.mwcog.org/transportation/weeklyreport/](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/weeklyreport/)

## 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.

[www.mwcog.org/store/item.asp?PUBLICATION\\_ID=94](http://www.mwcog.org/store/item.asp?PUBLICATION_ID=94)

## THE REGION

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

[www.mwcog.org/store/item.asp?PUBLICATION\\_ID=353](http://www.mwcog.org/store/item.asp?PUBLICATION_ID=353)

## GUIDEBOOKS AND RESOURCES

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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)

## WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA

A growing share of the public now seek and consume information online and via social media. The TPB will seek to maintain its online and social media presence in a way that provides easy access to the policy and technical information and resources that the public need in order to make more informed contributions to the TPB process.

## 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.

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/>

## EMAIL

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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/>

## 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 TRAINING

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.

- 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.

## APPENDIX B: 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 C: 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 D: 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.

## APPENDIX E: ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is committed to the principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is COG's 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. 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@mwcog.org](mailto:accommodations@mwcog.org)

## LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN

COG's Title VI Plan includes a Language Assistance Plan (as Attachment F) which describes languages spoken in the region and the assistance that is provided to individuals with limited-English proficiency to ensure that they can participate in the TPB's transportation planning process.

COG's Title VI Plan can be found here:

<http://www.mwcog.org/publications/nondiscrimination.asp>

