



National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Technical Committee
FROM: Lyn Erickson, Plan Development and Coordination Program Director
SUBJECT: Upcoming Federal Certification On-Site Review, April 10-11
DATE: March 29, 2019

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least once every four years [23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k)]. Certification is granted after a thorough review of the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) products, programs and processes. The objective of a Certification Review is to determine how the MPO is addressing Federal law and regulations, including assessing progress on prior Federal actions.

FHWA and FTA are currently using a new "Risk Based Transportation Management Area Planning Certification Review" approach. A risk-based review focuses on activities within the planning process that may be in non-compliance (threats) or in marginal compliance (opportunities for improvements) including new requirements, and does not attempt to address all planning areas. The new approach starts with a Desk Review to examine documented planning products, programs and processes. The Desk Review serves as a primary information-gathering tool, allowing the review team to identify critical issues that can best be addressed through discussion during the second step which is an On-Site Review. TPB staff working with the federal representatives have compiled and provided all the requested documents for the Desk Review. Products and materials provided to the federal review team can be found here: <https://www.mwcog.org/transportation/2019-federal-certification/>.

FHWA/FTA are providing regular stewardship and oversight to the TPB in their review and approval of planning products, by conducting Division/Region Office Risk Assessments, by providing technical assistance, and through the promotion of best practices throughout the year. Based upon their ongoing involvement in and review of the MPO planning products and their Desk Review, FHWA/FTA reviewers have scheduled an On-Site Review meeting for April 10-11, 2019 at the COG offices. While the agenda for the meeting is yet to be finalized, TPB staff understands topics to be discussed would include the following: a review of TPB responses to past recommendations (e.g., financial plans); new requirements (e.g., PBPP); enhanced work activities (e.g., Equity Emphasis Areas) and emerging areas such as Connected/Autonomous Vehicles. These topics are included in addition to the standard metropolitan planning topics such as agreements, TIP, UPWP, Public Involvement and the Congestion Management System.

While representatives of all TPB member jurisdictions are welcome to attend the review meeting or participate via webinar, the state departments of transportation are required to attend the meeting in their capacity of providing oversight to the MPO.

After the on-site review, a final report which documents the results of the On-Site Review will be prepared by the FHWA/FTA and will be presented to the TPB, which is anticipated to occur during the June meeting.