

Transportation Public Participation Plan (PPP)

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The Public Participation Process for Transportation Planning

A participation process for transportation planning must be explicitly set forth and adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which receives transportation funds from the Federal Highway Administration and from the Federal Transit Administration. The actions and processes described in this document apply to transportation planning done by the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (GVMC) in conjunction with the work done by the transportation committees of the Council. The standards for this process can be found in Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 450, especially Section 316.

In general, the Federal regulations cited above had required “a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and TIPs (Transportation Improvement Programs).” With the passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), enacted on August 10, 2005, additional emphasis was placed on extensive stakeholder participation. SAFETEA-LU expanded the public involvement provisions by requiring MPOs to develop and utilize “participation plans” that are developed in consultation with an expanded list of “interested parties,” which the GVMC refers to as the Interested Citizens/Agencies List. The latest transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), was signed on July 6, 2012, and continues to ensure that public involvement remains a hallmark of the transportation planning process.

Specific public involvement requirements detailed in MAP-21 legislation include the following:

- Holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times
- Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs
- Making public information available in electronically accessible format and means (such as the World Wide Web)
- Requiring a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised
- Providing timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including, but not limited to, central city and other local jurisdiction concerns)
- Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes, and including written and oral comments received on the draft transportation plan or TIP as a result of the public involvement process, as an appendix of the plan or TIP
- Being consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which ensures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, national origin, or physical handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program receiving Federal assistance from the United States Department of Transportation; and moreover, seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including, but not limited to, low income and minority households
- Identifying actions necessary to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

To meet these standards, this participation process includes outreach to solicit public opinion and transportation needs, especially of the underserved, through the following means:

- Continually adding new information to the website
- Ensuring that there is an opportunity for public comment at committee meetings
- Making information easily available to the public in a variety of ways (online, print, email, etc.)
- Making every attempt to schedule public meetings at convenient times and locations that are along transit routes and accessible to those with disabilities
- Allowing opportunities for public comment on key decisions
- Responding to comments in a timely and forthright manner
- Regularly reviewing the public involvement process itself

The emphasis of this process is on early involvement of the public in all processes in order to obtain input and insight before decisions are made.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Plans and policies need to be revisited and reviewed periodically to determine if the public's needs are being addressed in an effective and efficient manner. In order to ensure the effectiveness of this plan, the public must be kept informed of activities of the Transportation Division of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council. The public must be given a meaningful opportunity to participate in the development and review of public policy through the use of presentations, press releases, mailings, public meetings, and other public outreach activities.

Public Participation Goal: The public involvement process for transportation planning shall provide complete information, timely public notice, and full access to information regarding key decisions; and shall support early and continuing involvement of the public.

Objective 1-Public Access to Information: The public shall be provided timely notice and appropriate access to information about transportation plans, issues, and processes through notices/information posted on gvmc.org, direct mailings to the interested citizen/agency list, flyers posted at local libraries and jurisdictions, newspaper ads, press releases, as well as other tools and techniques when determined necessary. (Please see the Public Participation Timeline Summary on page 18 for more information on public notification dates.)

The following policies will be adhered to in order to meet this objective:

- The TIP, the MTP, the Public Participation Plan, the Unified Planning Work Program, the Title VI Plan, the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, and other important documents shall be made available by GVMC Transportation staff in an electronic format for the public to review on the GVMC website (www.gvmc.org). For those without Internet service, libraries may offer free Internet access and should be contacted to determine if this service is available. All plans and documents will also be available at GVMC offices and copies of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan will be distributed to all public libraries in the MPO area and to all members of the GVMC Transportation Committees. Copies of other plans or projects will be distributed to the GVMC Transportation Committees and notice of release for those plans or projects will appear in area media. Any person or agency may also request a copy of any of GVMC's plans via telephone, fax,

mail, or in person at any time. A small copying fee may apply.

- GVMC will employ visualization techniques to describe Metropolitan Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). These may include the following formats: project location maps, photographs, narrative project descriptions, charts, illustrations, graphics, diagrams, and sketches. Staff will continue to monitor and investigate developing technologies to improve the MPO's visualization process.
- Notice and agenda of all GVMC Transportation Committee meetings shall be available to the public seven days before they occur with the exception of emergency meetings when less time is allowed under the State of Michigan Open Meetings Act.
- Information pertaining to the adoption, revision, or amendment of all GVMC Transportation plans shall be available seven days prior to the date of the final action with the exception of emergency meetings when less time is allowed under the State of Michigan Open Meetings Act.
- All meetings and workshops of GVMC Transportation Committees will be open to the public except as allowed by the State of Michigan Open Meetings Act.
- Per GVMC's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, strategies will be developed to provide notices of programs, services, or activities to limited English proficiency (LEP) populations by using appropriate media and brochures (also in languages other than English). Community groups serving LEP populations will be contacted, as well as schools, church groups, chambers of commerce, and other relevant entities as part of the regular public participation process.
- In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations to participate in meetings or individuals with limited English proficiency should contact GVMC Transportation Staff at least four working days prior to the scheduled meeting. As per GVMC's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, GVMC will provide oral and written translation; written interpretation and translation; and sign language, if requested, or as a result of an LEP analysis on any given project or projected program, requiring translation or interpretation.

Objective 2-Public Access to Meetings and Facilities: Opportunities shall be created for the public to participate in the planning process for important issues, plans and projects under consideration by the GVMC Transportation Division, through public meetings, committee meetings, and other venues. GVMC will target groups who can expect to be directly affected by the outcome or those with special needs that may not be well served by the existing transportation system.

The following policies will be adhered to in order to meet this objective:

- GVMC Transportation Staff shall inform the public about issues and proposals under their consideration through public meetings, presentations, mailings, press releases, or other techniques during the development of each of the transportation plans, programs, or projects for which GVMC

is responsible.

- GVMC Transportation Staff will continue to develop and maintain an Interested Citizens/Agencies List for the purpose of disseminating information about transportation plans, policies, and activities. The Interested Citizens/Agencies List, while all inclusive, will be especially geared to reach those low-income and minority populations that have traditionally been underserved in the transportation planning process.
- GVMC Transportation Staff shall review the Public Participation Plan prior to the start of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) development process. The Public Participation Plan will also be reviewed for required updates if needed before the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- GVMC Transportation Staff shall consult with stakeholders through correspondence that utilizes the continuously updated Interested Citizens/Agencies List.

Objective 3-Public Input: The solicitation, compilation, and consideration of public input shall be an integral part of the GVMC Transportation decision making process.

The following policies will be adhered to in order to meet this objective:

- GVMC Transportation Staff shall conduct public participation meetings prior to the adoption of the transportation plan or program for which it is responsible, including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, or substantive amendments thereof. Notices of such meetings will be distributed through the Interested Citizens/Agencies List as well as the area media. Meeting notices will also be posted on the GVMC website, www.gvmc.org.
- Those plans and programs that require extended review periods will allow for written comments to be submitted, including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, the Public Participation Plan, and any other plan with extended review periods. All comments received as well as a response to each comment will appear as an appendix to the applicable plan or program. GVMC Transportation Staff will notify the public of extended review periods that are required by State or Federal guidelines and specifics regarding how to comment on those plans or programs.
- Those members of the public wishing to address comments to any GVMC Transportation Committee will be given the opportunity to comment at the regular public meetings of those committees.

Contact GVMC Transportation Division

Those seeking more information can contact the GVMC Transportation Division:

Office/Mail: 678 Front Ave NW
Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Phone: (616) 776-3876

Fax: (616) 774-9292

E-mail: andrea.faber@gvmc.org

Website: www.gvmc.org

Public Participation Strategies

Participation Plan

The development, adoption, and amendment of GVMC transportation plans and programs shall be subject to the Public Participation Plan. The Public Participation Plan will be monitored and reviewed before the start of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) development process as required by federal guidelines and before the start of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development process if needed due to changes in federal law, deficiencies in the tools and techniques used to reach the public, or if it is determined that other changes need to be made to the document. (Please see Appendix A for information on the Public Participation Plan evaluation criteria.) It is hoped that the directives of this plan will result in well-attended public meetings, local news coverage of programs, and more public interest in transportation issues within the region. The procedure for amending or adopting the Public Participation Plan is outlined on page 11.

Availability of Information

All events/opportunities appear on GVMC's webpage (www.gvmc.org) and are sent to the Interested Citizens/Agencies List that GVMC maintains. Transportation plans and TIPs will also be included on the GVMC website for public review and comment. Open house/public meeting notices are published in a general circulation newspaper in the region, such as The Advance and its affiliate papers—The Cadence and The Penasee Globe, The Grand Rapids Press, or El Vocero Hispano. For more information about these newspapers, please see the “Newspaper Ads” section on page 21.

GVMC staff will make written materials provided to our committees available to the public upon request. Requests can be made by phone, fax, email, through gvmc.org, or in person at GVMC's office or at Committee meetings. When appropriate, a charge may be levied for copies of publications. The charge will cover the cost of producing and, if applicable, mailing the materials. All such materials are available for viewing at GVMC offices at no cost.

Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

The transportation needs and opinions of those with disabilities will be sought out and the planning process will be made accessible to such persons as per the regulation provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Public meetings will be held in facilities that are on transit routes and that are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Meeting Times

Every attempt will be made to host public meetings at convenient hours to maximize attendance. Public meetings are generally held between 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm. There is also an opportunity for public comment at GVMC's Technical Committee, Policy Committee, and Board meetings. Committee meetings are held in the early morning, so those with atypical work schedules may find these meeting times more convenient. For a list of committee meeting times and locations, please see the “Committee Meetings” section on page 19.

Writing in Plain Language

Plain language is defined as “communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it.”¹ Every effort will be made to use plain language in all MPO public involvement materials, including newspaper ads, flyers, and mailings, in accordance with the Plain Writing Act of 2010. This act requires that

¹ From www.plainlanguage.gov

Federal agencies use "clear Government communication that the public can understand" and was signed on October 13, 2010.² For more information on writing in plain language, please visit www.plainlanguage.gov.

Public Comments

General Comments: Members of the public are welcome to submit comments on specific issues or to contact staff with questions at any time. A staff directory with emails and direct phone numbers is included on gvmc.org for the public's convenience, or staff can be reached through GVMC's main line at (616) 776-3876. GVMC's Technical Committee, Policy Committee, and Board meetings are also open to the public and include an opportunity for public comment on the agenda. (Please see "Committee Meetings" on page 19 for more information about meeting times and locations.) Meeting agendas are posted on gvmc.org seven days before a scheduled meeting.

Ways to Submit Comments: During public comment periods, staff ensures that comment forms are available to the public in a variety of ways. Comments can be submitted by:

- Completing an online submittal form on gvmc.org
- Downloading a comment form from gvmc.org and sending it to GVMC by mail or email
- Emailing comments to a GVMC staff member
- Phoning in comments to a GVMC staff member
- Filling out a comment form in person at GVMC or at a public meeting

Note: Comment forms are for the public's convenience only, and comments don't need to be written on an official comment form to be considered.

A comment form is available in Appendix B.

Response to Comments: GVMC will summarize and respond to public comments on the MTP, the Public Participation Plan, the TIP, on amendments to the TIP, on proposed major area-wide investment studies, and on key decisions. We will also forward comments about specific projects to the responsible entities. Comments and responses will be kept on file, be available for public review, and will be made part of the plan, program, or other document as adopted. Summaries of comments and responses will also be given to the Technical and Policy Committees as well as the jurisdiction(s) directly responsible for the project for review. Comments will be responded to before decisions are made or plans or programs are adopted. Responses will be made in a timely manner so that they can be considered during the next phase of the plan or program development.

Public Involvement in Planning Projects That Are Not in the TIP

As particular planning or programming projects arise, the performing entity will develop a specific participation process that is appropriate for the project. Examples of such projects are: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan, substantial amendments to that plan, corridor studies, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and major metropolitan transportation investment studies. The participation process for planning or programming projects will follow the TIP or MTP amendment procedures outlined in this document and include the following specific measures as well as other actions: (1) a formal public meeting will be held well in advance of the adoption of transportation plans and before the adoption of the TIP, (2) a reasonable period of time will be set aside before the adoption of a plan or the TIP during which the public may comment verbally at the public meeting or in writing to the GVMC offices.

² From <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/plLaw/>

Continual Evaluation of Tools and Techniques

The MPO uses a variety of tools and techniques in order to involve the public in the transportation planning process. GVMC staff believes the tools and techniques reflected in this document allow MPO staff to reach the public most effectively at the present time. However, these tools and techniques will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure that they continue to be relevant and effective in reaching the public. (Please see Appendix A for information on the Public Participation Plan evaluation criteria.) If staff determines that a specific tool or technique is no longer effective, staff will discontinue its use and consider replacing it with a different tool or technique. Staff will also continue to monitor technology advancements as well as new and emerging social media outlets that have the potential to be useful in the public involvement process. If a new tool or technique is discovered or becomes available, staff may use it in addition to the tools and techniques listed in this document.

For a description of the tools and techniques that the MPO uses to reach the public, please see the “Public Participation Tools and Techniques” section on page 19.

Public Participation Summary Reports

After the completion of all TIPs, MTPs, and Public Participation Plans, staff will generate a report that summarizes the overall number of public comments received, the estimated number of people reached throughout the public participation process, and the various tools that were utilized. This report will be included as an Appendix of the document.

Public Participation Procedures for Major Documents

GVMC produces three major documents that require public involvement. These documents include the Public Participation Plan (PPP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Public involvement for the Public Participation Plan, TIP, and MTP document will be continual throughout the plan development processes. Updates will be posted on gvmc.org before TPSG Committee meetings, public meetings, and before public comment periods begin, and will be given verbally during Technical and Policy Committee meetings periodically as well. However, GVMC has selected several milestone points for each document when it will engage the public through additional means in order to inform them of opportunities to become involved in the development process, which may include invitations to public meetings, requests for public comment, or other information. These milestones are outlined in the tables on the following pages, along with the procedures for amending the TIP and MTP. *Please note: In years when the TIP and MTP are developed simultaneously, public participation activities for both documents may be combined at staff's discretion in order to maximize efficiency and resources and reduce confusion. Please also note: GVMC staff may choose to add additional tools and techniques not specified at their discretion at any point during the TIP development process to enhance public outreach.*

Public Participation Plan

The Public Participation Plan describes the ways in which GVMC will engage the public in the transportation planning process. The table below describes the public participation procedure for developing the PPP.

Milestone	Public Participation Procedure	Public Notification Date (minimum)	Length of Public Comment Period (minimum)
1. Draft Public Participation Plan developed and presented to the Technical and Policy Committees	After the draft Public Participation Plan has been developed and presented to the Technical and Policy Committees, GVMC will bring it to the public for comment. GVMC staff will notify the public of this opportunity in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Direct mailing sent to interested citizen/agency list • Advertisement in newspaper (Please see pg. 21 for more information on newspaper ads.) 	At least 1 day before the public comment period begins	45 days; the public comment period will begin after the draft document is presented to the Policy Committee and will end at least one week before the final document is approved by the Policy Committee (approximately two months after the comment period begins)

2. Public Participation Plan approval	After all comments have been considered and the 45-day public comment period has concluded, the document will be brought to the Policy Committee for approval. The public will have an additional opportunity to comment on the document at the Policy meeting, and will be notified of this meeting in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website 	5 days before the scheduled Policy Committee meeting	N/A
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Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the list of road, transit and non-motorized projects that communities and agencies plan to implement over a four-year period within GVMC's MPO area. (Please see Appendix C for a map of GVMC's MPO area.) The table below describes the public participation procedure for the development of the TIP document, and the following table describes the public participation procedures for amendments and modifications to the document once it's developed.

Transportation Improvement Program Development

Milestone	Public Participation Procedure <i>(For more information on the items listed below, please see the Public Participation Tools and Techniques section on page 19.)</i>	Public Notification Date (minimum)	Length of Public Comment Period (minimum)
1. Kickoff to TIP Development	<i>Before the TIP development process begins, GVMC staff will notify the public in the following ways:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Direct mailing sent to Interested Citizen/Agency List • Advertisement in newspaper (Please see pg. 21 for more information on newspaper ads.) 	7 days prior to the first TIP programming meeting	N/A; notification only

<p>2. Draft project lists, environmental justice, and air quality results (if applicable) completed and available for public comment</p>	<p><i>Once draft project lists have been developed, environmental justice has been completed, and an air quality analysis has been performed, GVMC staff will bring these items to the public for comment. A public meeting will also be held. The public will be notified of the meeting <u>and</u> the comment period in the following ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Direct mailing sent to Interested Citizen/Agency List and to environmental justice mailing list • Newspaper advertisement in English and Spanish that notifies the public of the public comment period <u>and</u> the public meeting • Flyer with information on the public comment period <u>and</u> the public meeting distributed to all libraries and jurisdictions within the MPO area (See Appendix D for complete list.) <p><i>Note: Please see the “Public Comments” section on pg. 9 for information on submitting comments.</i></p>	<p>7 days prior to the public meeting and before the 1st day of the public comment period</p>	<p>14 days</p>
<p>3. Adoption of draft document</p>	<p><i>Once the draft TIP document is complete, Staff will bring it to the Technical and Policy Committees and GVMC board for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at all three committee meetings. The public will be notified of this public comment opportunity in the following ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Everyone who submitted a comment will be contacted individually <p><i>Note: Please see the “Public Comments” section on pg. 9 for information on submitting comments.</i></p>	<p>6 days prior to Technical Committee meeting</p>	<p>A minimum of 14 days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Board meeting. The comment period length will vary depending on the amount of time between the meetings.</p>

Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

It is frequently necessary to amend the TIP because of changes to projects within the document. Outlined below is the public involvement procedure for TIP amendments. For additional information about the process that is followed for TIP amendments and administrative modifications, please see the matrices in Appendix E.

Description of TIP Amendment	Public Participation Procedure
1. Add new project (including Safety, Transportation Enhancement, TAP, and CMAQ projects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web posting • Committee meeting
2. Delete project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web posting • Committee meeting
3. Federal aid cost increase over 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee meeting
4. Major* scope/design change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee meeting
5. Move illustrative list project into the TIP (new project)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee meeting
6. Change non-Federal aid funded project to Federally funded project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee meeting
7. New discretionary projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web posting

Please see the Public Participation Timeline Summary on page 18 for information on the length of the public comment period and prior public notice for TIP amendments.

Public involvement is not necessary for TIP administrative modifications, which include the following:

- Additional lanes or non-motorized, up to one mile
- Increase in Federal aid cost more than 10% and less than or equal to 20%
- Increase in Federal aid cost up to 10% (per Local Agency Programs (LAP) Policy)
- Decrease in Federal aid project cost
- Change in non-Federal aid project cost
- Change in Federal funding category (applies to MDOT only)
- Change in non-Federal funding category
- Change in Federal aid funding level not affecting other projects (i.e., MDOT, ITP, TE, Bridge, Safety, HPP (earmarks), or other discretionary sources)
- Adding or changing job numbers within approved funding and scope limits
- Changing an advance construction project to Federal aid
- Changing a Federal aid project to advance construction
- Change of project year within the 4-year TIP
- Listing error corrections
- Minor** scope changes (not regionally significant as defined)

Notes:

- *Major** = 1) change in lane configuration, 2) change affecting road capacity, 3) change affecting air quality (regionally significant)
- *Minor*** = May include at staff's discretion: 1) lane extensions up to 1/4 mile, 2) sidewalks & NM up to 1/4 mile, 3) ADA enhancements, 4) signalization and/or signs, 5) utility issues, 6) pavement type, 7) phase changes, 8) additional spaces in park-and-ride lots, 9) other

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The purpose of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is to ensure that transportation investments in GVMC’s MPO area enhance the movement of people and freight efficiently, effectively, and safely. (Please see Appendix C for a map of GVMC’s MPO area.) The MTP has a 20-year horizon. Outlined below is the public participation procedure for MTP development, and following is a table that addresses the public participation procedure for MTP amendments.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Development

Milestone	Public Participation Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment Period (minimum)
<p>1. Kickoff to MTP Development</p>	<p><i>Once the MTP development process begins, GVMC staff will engage the public in the following ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice and detailed MTP information added to website • Direct mailing to Interested Citizen/Agency List • Advertisement in newspaper (Please see pg. 21 for more information on newspaper ads.) • Transportation issues survey developed and circulated • Press release submitted to GVMC’s media contact list and posted online <p><i>The following tools and techniques may be used on an optional basis:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flyer, brochure, or informational card printed and distributed • Visual aids • Radio PSAs 	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A; Public involvement will be continuous throughout the MTP development process. Updates will be posted regularly on gvmc.org and given at committee meetings.</p>
<p>2. Pre-Programming Collaboration</p>	<p><i>GVMC staff will invite the public to review and comment on identified modal needs. The public will be notified of this opportunity in the following ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Direct mailing to Interested Citizen/Agency List • Press release <p><i>The following tools and techniques may be used on an optional basis:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flyer, brochure, or informational card printed and distributed • Visual aids • Radio PSAs 	<p>Up to 7 days prior to the start of the public comment period</p>	<p>14 days</p>

<p>3. Draft MTP, environmental justice, and air quality results (if applicable) completed and available for public comment</p>	<p><i>Once the draft MTP document, environmental justice, and corresponding air quality analysis are complete, GVMC staff will bring the document to the public for comment. A public meeting will also be held to discuss these items. The public will be notified of the meeting <u>and</u> the comment period in the following ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Direct mailing to Interested Citizen/Agency List and to environmental justice mailing list • Newspaper advertisement in English and Spanish that notifies the public of the public comment period <u>and</u> the public meeting • Copies of the draft MTP distributed to all libraries and jurisdictions within the MPO area. (See Appendix D for list.) <p><i>The following tools and techniques may be used on an optional basis:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flyer, brochure, or informational card printed and distributed • Visual aids • Radio PSAs <p><i>At this point, staff will also contact state regulatory agencies (i.e., MDNR and MDEQ) to consult with them on the draft project list and potential impacts on environmentally sensitive areas.</i></p>	<p>7 days prior to the public meeting and before the 1st day of the public comment period</p>	<p>14 days</p>
<p>4. Adoption of draft document</p>	<p><i>Once the draft MTP document is complete, Staff will bring it to the Technical and Policy Committees and GVMC board for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at all three committee meetings. The public will be notified of this public comment opportunity in the following ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Everyone who submitted a comment will be contacted individually 	<p>6 days prior to the scheduled Tech meeting</p>	<p>A minimum of 14 days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Board meeting. The comment period length will vary depending on the amount of time between the meetings.</p>

Note: For more information about the items in the Public Participation Procedure column, please see “Public Participation Tools and Techniques” section on pg. 19.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Amendments

It is occasionally necessary to amend the MTP because of changes to projects listed within the document. Outlined below is the public involvement procedure for MTP revisions. For additional information about the process that is followed for MTP amendments and administrative modifications, please see the matrix in Appendix E.

Description of MTP Amendment	Public Participation Procedure
1. Add/delete regionally significant* project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech & Policy Committee meeting • Web posting
2. Major ** scope/design change for regionally significant project(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech & Policy Committee meeting • Web posting
3. Move regionally significant illustrative list project into the MTP (new project)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech & Policy Committee meeting • Web posting
4. Change in air quality conformity model year grouping for regionally significant project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech & Policy Committee meeting • Web posting

Please see the Public Participation Timeline Summary on page 18 for information on the length of the public comment period and prior public notice for MTP amendments.

Public involvement is not necessary for MTP administrative modifications, which include the following:

- Additional lanes or non-motorized facilities, up to one mile
- Increase in Federal aid cost up to 20%
- Decrease in Federal aid project cost
- Change in non-Federal aid project cost
- Change in Federal or non-Federal funding category
- Listing error corrections or other non-regionally significant project changes
- Minor** scope changes (not regionally significant as defined)
- Update to the first four years of the MTP to correspond to the most current TIP

Notes:

- **Regionally Significant = Adding or reducing through capacity over 1 mile; adding new federal-aid road, transit, non-motorized, or rail infrastructure.*
- *Major** = 1) change in lane configuration, 2) change affecting road capacity, 3) change affecting air quality (regionally significant).*
- *Minor*** = May include at staff's discretion: 1) lane extensions up to 1/4 mile, 2) sidewalks & NM up to 1/4 mile, 3) ADA enhancements, 4) signalization and/or signs, 5) utility issues, 6) pavement type, 7) phase changes, 8) additional spaces in park-and-ride lots, 9) other.*

Public Participation Timeline Summary

Draft Document/Plan Review	Prior Notice to Public (minimum)	Length of Public Comment Period (minimum)
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	At least 1 day before the public comment period begins	14 days
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	At least 1 day before the public comment period begins	14 days
Public Participation Plan	At least 1 day before the public comment period begins	45 days

Plan (Amendments)	Prior Notice to Public (minimum)	Length of Public Comment Period (minimum)
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	6 days	6 days
Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)	6 days	6 days

Other	Prior Notice to Public (minimum)	Length of Public Comment Period
Congestion Management Plan (CMP)	The CMP goes through public involvement when the MTP is developed; a separate public involvement process is not necessary.	
Major Corridor Studies	6 days	6 days
Major Transportation Investment Studies	6 days	6 days
Non-Motorized Plan	The Non-Motorized Plan goes through public involvement when the MTP is developed; a separate public involvement process is not necessary.	
Public Meetings	7 days	7 days
Unified Planning Work Program	6 days	6 days

Public Participation Tools and Techniques

The MPO strives to create a Public Participation Process that encourages early and continuous involvement of citizens, jurisdictions, communities and others interested in the planning process and the decisions and actions of the GVMC Transportation Committees. GVMC will use a variety of tools and techniques to encourage communication with the public in order to achieve this goal. These tools and techniques are described below, along with their primary objectives.

Primary Public Participation Tools and Techniques

The tools and techniques outlined below are the ones that GVMC staff believes are the most effective for engaging the public at the present time and will be utilized most frequently during the public participation process.

Comment Forms

During every public comment period, staff ensures that comment forms are available to the public in a variety of ways. These comment forms include a large area for writing comments on a specific project as well as the name and contact information from the respondent. If the respondent chooses, they can also sign up to be added to GVMC's Interested Citizen/Agency Mailing List by checking a box on the form. (See "Public Comments" section on pg. 9 for more information on submitting comments.)

Primary Objectives—Recording the views and opinions of the public during the TIP and MTP development process and signing up for the Interested Citizen/Agency List.

Committee Meetings

The MPO has two standing Committees: the Technical Committee and the Policy Committee. The agendas for both Committee meetings are posted online and on GVMC's office window at least five days before the scheduled meeting, and both meetings include an opportunity for the public to comment on the items listed on the agenda. Since issues frequently pass from the Technical Committee to the Policy Committee, there will often be two opportunities to comment on issues. The Technical and Policy Committees also include non-voting representatives from the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce and a local environmental advocacy group. The GVMC Board meeting agendas also always include an opportunity for public comment, and this meeting is televised on a local governmental access channel.

The Technical Committee, Policy Committee, and GVMC Board meeting schedule is as follows:

Technical Committee—1st Wednesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Kent County Road Commission Offices, 1500 Scribner NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Policy Committee—3rd Wednesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Kent County Road Commission Offices, 1500 Scribner NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council Board—1st Thursday of the month at 8:30 a.m. at the Kent County Commission Chambers, Kent County Administration Building, 300 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 (*Please note meeting is also televised.*)

A complete schedule of MPO meetings is posted on GVMC’s website. Meeting times and locations occasionally change, so it is important to call or view the meeting agendas from the website before attending.

Primary Objectives – Allowing an in-person opportunity for the public to comment on TIP or MTP amendments, the documents themselves, or anything else on the meeting agenda.

Databases

GVMC staff maintains a **master database** for the organization as a whole, which includes committee membership lists, local government contacts, elected officials, as well as the **Interested Citizen/Agency List**, a composite of citizens or businesses that have a working relationship with GVMC or are interested in the transportation planning process.

Primary Objectives – Keeping the organization’s contacts organized and up-to-date and maintaining accurate records of committee membership.

Direct Mailings

The MPO may decide to use a direct mailing to reach a targeted group of individuals to inform them about an upcoming meeting, a public involvement opportunity, a construction project in their area, or another issue of interest to them. Mailings will generally be postcards, but may also be letters or flyers.

Primary Objectives—Reaching the public as part of the environmental justice (EJ) process, sending information to the Interested Citizen/Agency List, and whenever else a targeted group of individuals needs to be reached.

Document Copies

Hard copies of all of GVMC’s work products, including the MTP, the TIP, the UPWP, and the Non-Motorized Plan, are available at GVMC’s office. Draft copies of the MTP are also distributed to all libraries and jurisdictions/members within the MPO area before the document is approved. (Please see Appendix D for the complete list of libraries and jurisdictions in the MPO area.)

Primary Objectives—Providing those who don’t have access to a computer or who lack the technical skills to find the information online the opportunity to view important MPO work products.

Flyers

Flyers are developed in order to advertise public meetings, public comment opportunities, or other important events. They may include information such as the time, date, and location of a public meeting; contact information; instructions on commenting on draft documents or project lists; and deadlines for commenting. To view the list of locations that may post flyers, please see the “List of Libraries and Jurisdictions in the MPO Area” listed in Appendix D.



Flyers advertising a public meeting

Primary Objectives—Advertising public meetings, public comment opportunities, and other important events.

Interested Citizen/Agency List

This list is a composite of private citizens who have asked to receive transportation-related information, as well as a variety of agencies (including businesses and governmental entities) that have expressed an interest in or are impacted by transportation issues, such as the following:

- Members of the Technical and Policy Committees
- Traffic agencies
- Private providers of transportation services
- Ridesharing agencies
- Parking agencies
- Transportation safety agencies
- Traffic enforcement agencies
- Commuter rail operators
- Airport and port authorities
- Freight companies
- Railroad companies
- Environmental organizations
- Neighborhood associations
- Interested citizens
- Organizations representing the interests of:
 - The elderly
 - Minorities
 - Transportation agency employees
 - Users of various modes of transportation
 - People with disabilities
 - Economically disadvantaged
 - Ethnic/Cultural groups
 - Native American tribes
 - Others underserved by the transportation system

Individuals and agencies can sign up to be included on this list by checking a box on a comment form or by contacting GVMC by phone, email, fax, or mail, and asking to be included on the list.

Primary Objectives—Providing this group information about upcoming public meetings, public comment periods, and other public involvement opportunities through direct mailings.

Newspaper Ads

The MPO uses newspaper ads on a case-by-case basis to alert the public to upcoming public involvement opportunities. These ads may appear in the following papers:

- The Advance, a free newspaper that is delivered weekly to homes within Kent and Ottawa County, as well as its affiliate papers—the Cadence and the Penasee Globe
- The Grand Rapids Press, a for-purchase paper published three times a week
- El Vocero, a free paper geared toward the local Hispanic community

- GVMC may also choose to advertise with MLive, which includes print and online advertisements on mlive.com

Primary Objectives – Notifying the public about upcoming public meetings or other opportunities for public involvement.

Organizational Logos

The MPO has two logos—one for GVMC and one for the West Michigan Clean Air Coalition (WMCAC). The MPO logo appears on all official correspondence, including direct mailings, and on all published advertisements, including newspaper ads and flyers. The West Michigan Clean Air Coalition (WMCAC) logo appears on all official correspondence and on all promotional items for the Clean Air Action program.

Primary Objectives – Maintaining uniformity of the MPO’s publications, making its products and correspondence official, and helping the public to identify plans, promotional items, and advertisements of the MPO.

Press Releases

Press releases are generally used on a case-by-case basis and sent to GVMC’s media list, which includes TV, news, press, and radio representatives, and are used to alert the media of noteworthy news items from the MPO and its committees.

Primary Objectives—Informing the public about major initiatives, program changes, or other important news; or alerting the media about the MTP kickoff and pre-programming collaboration.

Public Meetings

Public meetings are generally informal gatherings that give the public a chance to interact with staff and discuss questions or concerns about projects, plans, etc. that are of interest or importance to them. These meetings may include a short staff presentation as well as a variety of visuals, such as maps, brochures, or other important materials, for the public’s convenience. The public is also encouraged to fill out a comment form at the meeting. Records of public meeting attendance and Title VI information are kept on file and included in the appendices of the TIP and MTP.

Primary Objectives – Encouraging public participation during the development of the TIP and MTP and allowing the public an opportunity to meet with staff.



Photograph from April 9, 2013, public meeting regarding GVMC’s FY2014-2017 TIP.

Surveys

Surveys may be conducted on an as-needed basis during the development of the MTP to gain insight into important issues within the area. Individuals can contact staff by mail, email, fax, phone, through gvmc.org, or stop by GVMC's office in person to receive a copy of the survey.

Primary Objectives— Gauging the public's interest in investment priorities.

Visual Aids

As part of policy 1.2, attempts will be made to use visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). These may include maps, photographs, charts, illustrations, graphics, diagrams, and sketches. Staff continues to monitor and investigate developing technologies to improve the MPO's visualization process.

Primary Objectives – Engaging the public during public meetings and helping to increase their understanding of projects, project locations, etc.

Website

GVMC's website is an inclusive resource for transportation planning information. The website includes basic information such as meeting schedules, committee membership, and contact information, as well as work products, such as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Metropolitan Transportation Program (MTP), and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Information about additional transportation programs and activities is also available. During public comment periods, an electronic comment form is added to the site that allows the public to submit comments online, and a copy of the form is also made available for downloading. The site is maintained by a webmaster, consistently reviewed for accuracy, and new information is added to it continuously. GVMC's website can be found at www.gvmc.org.

Primary Objectives – Alerting the public to the latest developments in the TIP or MTP development process, as well as TIP or MTP amendments and public comment opportunities, facilitating the submission of public comments during public comment periods, or providing updates about other plans, programs, opportunities, or transportation developments.

Optional Public Participation Tools and Techniques

The MPO primarily relies on the tools and techniques above for reaching the public, but occasionally, the MPO may decide to employ additional tools and techniques to augment its public involvement process in order to increase the public's participation in transportation planning. This may occur because a primary tool or technique is determined to no longer be effective during the PPP review process, because the primary tools and techniques need to be enhanced with additional activities in order to better engage the public, because an optional public participation tool or technique becomes more popular with the public, or because staff determines it is necessary to use an optional tool or technique for another reason altogether. Examples of optional tools and techniques are outlined on the following pages.

Radio Ads

GVMC may occasionally purchase radio air time for public service announcements (PSAs) in order to announce public meetings for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan or to inform the public about other important opportunities for participation. The radio ads are generally targeted to reach

lower income and ethnic minority populations—a demographic that has been underserved in the transportation planning process in the past—through the station that staff selects to air the commercial. (Radio companies can provide demographic information about the listeners of their stations before an advertising contract is signed. Therefore, staff can ensure that the station selected will reach the intended group of listeners.)

Primary Objectives—Advertising times, dates, and locations of public meetings or other significant public involvement opportunities.

Social Media

GVMC is on Facebook and Twitter and uses both venues to promote organizational activities. GVMC is also investigating the use of YouTube and the possibility of creating informative videos about the TIP and MTP development process.

Primary Objectives – Notifying the public about Clean Air Action Days (Facebook only), collaboration opportunities, major public events, or opportunities for the public to get involved in the transportation planning process.

Staff Presentations

Staff will make presentations to requesting organizations about transportation issues and activities as needed. GVMC will publish and distribute an outline of how the transportation planning process works, listing relevant committees and governmental bodies. Staff will proactively identify community based, transportation related collaboratives and consortia in the impacted area, learn their resources and roles in communicating with the community around transportation issues and regularly meet with them to provide pertinent GVMC information to their constituencies and impact areas.

Primary Objectives – Informing the public about the transportation process or other transportation issues or initiatives as they arise.

Other Media

Staff will continue to monitor its public participation procedures and modify its public participation process to include the addition of new, innovative tools and techniques when possible. These may include creating an MPO newsletter or email newsletter, providing information to publishers of other newsletters (cities, Neighborhood Associations), facilitating small group meetings or subject/project specific workshops, developing email announcements, or establishing a Citizen Advisory Committee.

Primary Objectives—Enhancing the current public participation procedure.

Appendix A: Guide to Evaluating the GVMC Public Participation Plan

Introduction

GVMC continually strives to improve its public involvement and participation process. To this end, GVMC staff has developed the Public Participation Plan (PPP), which is a guideline for public participation activities conducted by the Grand Valley Metro Council. The PPP contains the goals, objectives, and policies (adopted May 19, 2010) of the MPO for actively engaging the public.

The Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the Michigan Department of Transportation require the MPO to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement activities. Therefore, GVMC staff reviews and updates the PPP prior to the start of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan development process and before the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) if needed. By monitoring public participation practices, it is possible to assure that public participation tools and techniques remain effective. If certain tools or techniques are determined to be ineffective during the review process, it is possible to improve them, discontinue their use, or replace them with new activities. This guide outlines the steps to be taken to evaluate the public involvement tools and techniques described in the PPP, identifies performance measures to quantify success rates, suggests strategies to improve the MPO's public participation process, and provides an avenue through which GVMC can evaluate its public involvement goals and objectives. This guide, along with the PPP itself, is a "living document" that will be consistently reviewed to ensure that appropriate changes are being implemented by the MPO.

Evaluation Methods and Performance Goals

In order to determine the effectiveness of public involvement tools and techniques, they must be evaluated and compared to established performance goals. The two typical methods for evaluating the effectiveness of public involvement tools are surveys and quantitative statistical analysis.

Surveys typically consist of short, specific questions regarding public involvement tools. They may be conducted in person, by phone, mail, email, or on the internet. Surveys conducted in person are considered highly effective and generally have the best response rates. Mail, email, or online surveys are useful for providing a written record of respondents' answers. Each surveying method has strengths and weakness, and the survey format affects the type of results and types of people responding. In addition to these surveys, we also encourage you to submit comments at any time about the public participation processes listed in this document. Comments can be submitted to GVMC Staff by mail, email, fax, or phone. Please see page 7 for contact information for GVMC staff.

Statistics can be a great indicator of whether or not tools used for public involvement are reaching their intended audience and which tools have the strongest response rate. For example, the number of people attending a meeting can be compared to the number of people notified of the meeting. This type of evaluation can indicate the effectiveness of any particular involvement strategy.

The following table briefly describes the evaluation methods that GVMC may use to evaluate each of the public participation tools that GVMC currently uses during the PPP review, which will occur after the MTP and TIP development processes have concluded. For each public participation tool, performance goals and methods for meeting those goals are suggested. Below the tools and techniques that are currently employed is a list of public participation tools that GVMC may use occasionally or may substitute as necessary to replace or augment a currently used tool or technique.

Public Participation Tool Evaluation Table

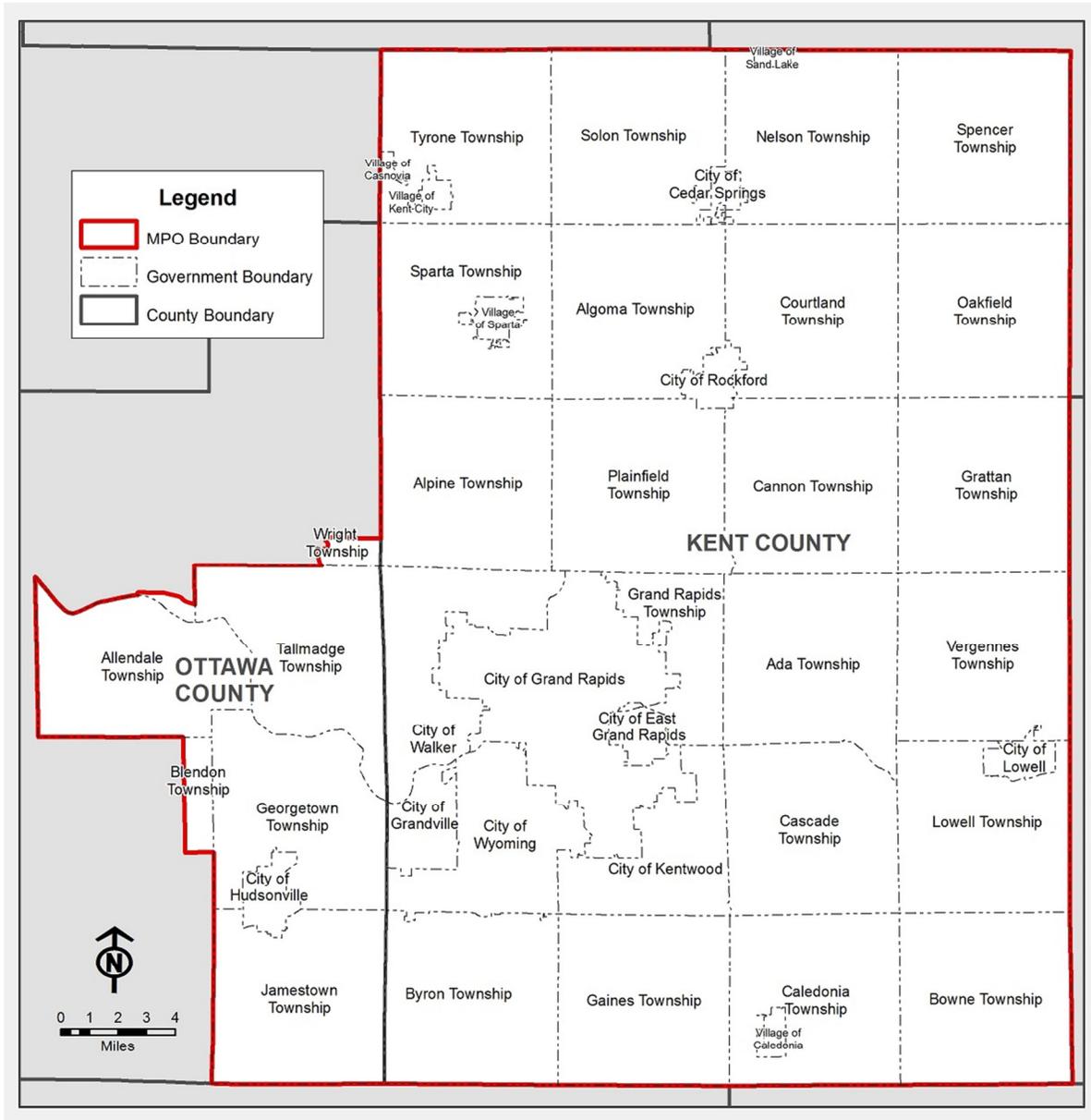
Public Participation Tools	Evaluation Criteria	Suggested Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Comment Forms	Calls, emails, etc; Number of responses	20% of meeting attendees filled out a form -OR- 1% of the annual website visitors emailed a comment	Encourage responses by explaining the importance of receiving comments
Direct Mailings (Environmental Justice)	Calls, emails, etc; Number of persons reached	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they received the mailing	Use the most up-to-date geographic address data available to direct EJ mailings to property owners/renters adjacent to proposed project locations
Document Copies	Number of signatures on the document sign-out sheet	A minimum of one signature per sign-out sheet at every location where a document copy is left for review.	Work with GVMC members and jurisdictions within the MPO area to inform them about the document and to advertise that it's available for review.
Interested Citizens/Agencies Mailing List	Number of returned mailing items	Maximum of 2% return rate per mailing	Make immediate corrections when items are returned
Newspaper Advertisements	Calls, emails, etc; Number of persons the publication reached	Minimum of 10% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw the ad; ad formats may be modified based on feedback received	Improve the size, layout, or placement of the ad to increase visibility
Organizational Logo	Calls, emails, etc	Recognition of the logo	The GVMC logo should be used on all MPO products and publications and on materials for all MPO sponsored activities
Press Releases	Calls, emails, etc	No standard; format may be modified based on feedback received	Encourage publication of press releases by keeping the media informed
Public Meetings	Calls, emails, etc; attendance	Level of attendance	Schedule meetings at convenient times and locations; use other public participation tools to increase awareness of hearings
Surveys	Calls, emails, etc; Number of responses	25% of contact persons participated in the survey – OR- 20% of mail recipients returned the survey	Encourage responses by explaining the importance of receiving feedback; offer incentives for returning surveys
GVMC Website	Number of hits	Minimum of 50 hits/month, 5% increase in hits/year	Provide all plans and documents on the website for public review; use other public participation tools to advertise the website

Optional Public Participation Tools	Evaluation Criteria	Suggested Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	Calls, emails, etc; Number of "friends" or "followers"	N/A; participants select GVMC themselves	Provide information, announcements, access to surveys, and meeting information; maintain and monitor account weekly
MPO Newsletter/Email Newsletter	Calls, emails, etc; Number of returns	N/A; return rate is addressed under Interested Citizens/Agencies List	Continue items that receive favorable comments and correct or improve items that receive negative comments
Other Newsletters (Cities, Homeowners Associations, etc.)	Calls, emails, etc; Number of persons reached	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees/survey respondents were reached	Provide information to publishers of these newsletters in a timely fashion; investigate all possible newsletters that may reach an affected area
Small Group Meetings	Calls, emails, etc; Met the expectations of the group	N/A; these meetings are held at the request of the affected groups or interested parties	MPO staff should be available in a timely manner to hold small group meetings regarding any MPO activity or issue; the meeting should be formatted to provide specific information requested by the group and should highlight issues that are of interest to the group
Subject Specific Workshops/ Project Specific Workshops	Calls, emails, etc; attendance	Minimum attendance as it relates to workshop cost achieved	Schedule at convenient times and locations; hold multiple workshops when possible; use other participation tools to advertise increase awareness
Email Announcements	Calls, emails, etc; Number of persons reached	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw the email announcement	Increase email list by advertising the availability of email announcements using other public participation tools

Improvement Strategies

The Grand Valley Metro Council continues to strive for improved public participation in the transportation planning process. With review and evaluation, GVMC hopes to refine public participation strategy improvements to increase public awareness and to improve the quality and quantity of information provided to the public. Contributions and input from the citizens of Kent and Eastern Ottawa Counties are crucial for responsible planning decisions, and therefore it is critical for GVMC to seek the most effective public input methodologies.

Appendix C: Map of GVMC's MPO Area



Appendix D: List of Libraries and Jurisdictions within the MPO Area

Ada Township	Kent District Library-Byron Township Branch
Algoma Township	Kent District Library-Caledonia Twp. Branch
Allendale Township	Kent District Library-Cascade Township Branch
Alpine Township	Kent District Library-Comstock Park Branch
Bowne Township	Kent District Library-East Grand Rapids Branch
Byron Township	Kent District Library-Englehardt Branch
Caledonia Charter Township	Kent District Library-Gaines Township Branch
Cannon Township	Kent District Library-Grandville Branch
Cascade Charter Township	Kent District Library-Kentwood Branch
City of Cedar Springs	Kent District Library-Krause Memorial Branch
City of East Grand Rapids	Kent District Library-Plainfield Township Branch
City of Grand Rapids	Kent District Library-Sand Lake/Nelson Twp. Branch
City of Grandville	Kent District Library-Spencer Township Branch
City of Hudsonville	Kent District Library-Tyrone Township Branch
City of Kentwood	Kent District Library-Walker Branch
City of Lowell	Kent District Library-Wyoming Branch
City of Rockford	Lakeland Library Cooperative: Allendale Twp Library
City of Walker	Lakeland Library Cooperative: Cedar Springs Public Library
City of Wyoming	Lakeland Library Cooperative: Gary Byker Memorial Library
Courtland Township	Lakeland Library Cooperative: Georgetown Twp Library
Gaines Charter Township	Lakeland Library Cooperative: Patmos Library
Georgetown Township	Lakeland Library Cooperative: Sparta Branch
Grand Rapids Charter Township	Lowell Charter Township
Grand Rapids Public Library (Main)	MDOT
Grand Rapids Public Library: Madison Square Branch	MDOT-GR TSC
Grand Rapids Public Library: Ottawa Hills Branch	Nelson Township
Grand Rapids Public Library: Seymour Branch	Oakfield Township
Grand Rapids Public Library: Van Belkum Branch	Ottawa County Road Commission
Grand Rapids Public Library: West Leonard Branch	Plainfield Charter Township
Grand Rapids Public Library: West Side Branch	Solon Township
Grand Rapids Public Library: Yankee Clipper Branch	Sparta Township
Grattan Township	Spencer Township
Gerald R Ford International Airport	Tallmadge Township
Hope Network	Tyrone Township
ITP-The Rapid	Vergennes Township
Jamestown Township	Village of Caledonia
Kent County Road Commission	Village of Casnovia
Kent District Library Service Center	Village of Kent City
Kent District Library-Alpine Township Branch	Village of Sand Lake
Kent District Library-Alto Branch	Village of Sparta

Appendix E: Matrix

TIP Revisions		Staff Recommendation	Committee Chair Approval	Technical Committee Review & Recommendation	Policy Committee Approval	MDOT/FHWA/FTA Approval	Public Participation Procedure
TIP Amendment	Add New Project (including Safety, Transportation Enhancement, TAP, and CMAQ projects)	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting, Web posting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial constraint must be maintained at all times. 	Delete Project	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting, Web posting
	Federal-aid cost increase over 20%	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any new project or major scope/design change shall be consistent with the MTP. 	Major* scope/design change	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting
	Move Illustrative List Project into the TIP (new project)***	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting
	Change non-federal aid funded project to federally funded project	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting
	New Discretionary Projects	X	X (Option)			X	Web posting
TIP Administrative Modification	Additional lanes or non-motorized, up to one mile	X	X (Option)	X	X		Not required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial constraint must be maintained at all times. 	Increase in Federal aid cost more than 10% and less than or equal to 20%	X	X (Option)	X	X		Not required
	Increase in Federal aid cost up to 10% (per LAP Policy)	X					Not required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to existing projects. 	Decrease in Federal aid project cost	X					Not required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes will be reflected in the next e-STIP filing. 	Change in Non-Federal aid project cost	X					Not required
	Change in Federal funding category (applies to MDOT only)	X					Not required
	Change in Non-Federal funding category	X					Not required
	Change in Federal-aid funding level not affecting other projects (ex. MDOT, ITP, TE, Bridge, Safety, HPP (earmarks), or other discretionary sources)	X					Not required
	Adding or changing job numbers within approved funding and scope limits	X					Not required
	Changing an advance construction project to Federal-aid	X	X (Option)	X	X		Not required
	Changing a Federal-aid project to advance construction	X	X (Option)	X	X		Not required
	Change of project year within the 4-year TIP	X	X (Option)	X	X		Not required
	Listing error corrections	X					Not required
	Minor** scope changes (not regionally significant as defined)	X					Not required
Notes:							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial constraint must be maintained at all times. • Any new project or major scope change shall be consistent with the MTP. • Regionally significant for air quality = Adding or reducing through capacity over 1 mile; adding new Federal aid road, transit, non-motorized, or rail infrastructure. • Major* = 1) change in lane configuration, 2) change affecting road capacity, 3) change affecting air quality (regionally significant) • Minor** = May include at staff's discretion: 1) lane extensions up to 1/4 mile, 2) sidewalks & NM up to 1/4 mile, 3) ADA enhancements, 4) signalization and/or signs, 5) utility issues, 6) pavement type, 7) phase changes, 8) additional spaces in park-and-ride lots, 9) other • *** Any project from the TIP Illustrative Project list, which has previously been processed for public involvement with the TIP, is not required to have additional public involvement (Consultation, EJ and EA) prior to completing the TIP amendment process. 							

MTP Revisions

MTP Revisions		Staff Recommendation	Committee Chair Approval	Technical Committee Review & Recommendation	Policy Committee Approval	MDOT/FHWA/FTA Approval	Public Participation Procedure
MTP Amendment	Add/Delete Regionally Significant Project	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting, Web posting
	Major* scope/design change for regionally significant project(s)	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting, Web posting
	Move Regionally Significant Illustrative List Project into the MTP (new project)	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting, Web posting
	Change in air quality conformity model year grouping for regionally significant project	X	X (Option)	X	X	X	Committee meeting, Web posting
MTP Administrative Modification	Additional lanes or non-motorized facilities, up to one mile	X	X (Option)	X	X		Not required
• Financial constraint must be maintained at all times.	Increase in Federal aid cost up to 20%	X	X (Option)	X	X		Not required
	Decrease in Federal aid project cost	X					Not required
• Changes to existing projects.	Change in Non-Federal aid project cost	X					Not required
• MTP modifications will be made during the next MTP amendment or plan update.	Change in Federal or Non-Federal funding category	X					Not required
	Listing error corrections or other non-regionally significant project changes	X					Not required
	Minor** scope changes (not regionally significant as defined)	X					Not required
	Update to the first four-years of the MTP to correspond to the most current TIP	X					Not required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial constraint must be maintained at all times. • Any new project or major scope change shall be consistent with the MTP. • Regionally Significant = Adding or reducing through capacity over 1 mile, Adding new federal-aid road, transit, non-motorized, or rail infrastructure. • Major* = 1) change in lane configuration, 2) change affecting road capacity, 3) change affecting air quality (regionally significant) • Minor** = May include at staff's discretion: 1) lane extensions up to 1/4 mile. 2) sidewalks & NM up to 1/4 mile, 3) ADA enhancements, 4) Signalization and/or signs, 5) Utility issues, 6) pavement type, 7) Phase changes, 8) additional spaces in park-and-ride lots, 9) Other 							

Appendix F: Comments Received

Andrea Faber

From: David Schroeder <dschroeder971@sbglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2013 11:32 AM
To: Andrea Faber
Cc: Dave Bulkowski
Subject: GVMC Transportation Public Participation Plan (PPP) - Comment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Andrea,
Please add the following comment to your PPP review:

On page 24 of the draft plan - Tools and Techniques, Staff Presentations - a new second sentence following the first should be inserted reading: *Staff will proactively identify community based, transportation related collaboratives and consortia in the impacted area, learn their resources and roles in communicating with the community around transportation issues and regularly meet with them to provide pertinent GVMC information to their constituencies and impact areas.*

An example would be, in Kent County, GVMC staff joining in the work of the Kent County Essential Needs Task Force Transportation Committee and Faith In Motion collaboratives to develop "on the ground" information from transit providers and users and, more importantly, to take advantage of their connections to key transportation linked community players and consumers to more efficiently obtain input on GVMC planning work.

Thanks for the opportunity to share comments on an outstanding plan that clearly points to your desire to get the word out on this important work.

David P. Schroeder
Consultation, Evaluation
and Management Services
4011 Kalamazoo SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508-3602
phone: 616-822-7879
fax: 616-455-1384

Andrea Faber

From: Alex Arends <a.arends@alpinetwp.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 18, 2013 4:52 PM
To: Andrea Faber
Subject: Public comments regarding the Transportation Public Participation Plan

Andrea,

This is in response to seeking public comments regarding the Transportation Public Participation Plan draft that was submitted in November 2013.

Regardless of my issue of being required to do all this including the seeking of public comment, I understand how having a good plan in place favors GVMC when it comes to funding.. It is well written and very defined and I applaud your efforts and support the plan.

**Alex Arends, Supervisor
Alpine Township**

(616)784-1262

December 30, 2013

Ms. Andrea Faber
Grand Valley Metro Council Technical Committee
Grand Valley Metro Council

Dear Andrea,

At the November 20 2013 Policy Committee the members had the opportunity to discuss and act on the proposed revised draft Transportation Public Participation Plan. At that meeting I made some comments that I have been asked to elaborate on.

I would like to apologize if I gave the impression that I had issues with the document itself. It is very well written and the revisions are very commendable.

There was discussion about how to better engage the public in transportation planning and I made some comments about rather than trying to engage a non-interested public we should make sure an interested public has one place to go to find out whatever information it is they need.

This led to the suggestion that Grand Valley Metro Council offer its members the opportunity to publish all public notices on line, accessible from one location, and searchable by type, municipality, date, and any other way this data could be searched. There would be minimal cost involved once the program is put in place.

Newspapers across the nation are trying to maintain a monopoly on publishing public notices, whether in print or on line. This is an unfunded mandate that does not benefit government or taxpayers. Public notices can just as easily, if not better, made available on line by communities themselves, by a for-profit electronic publisher, or by an organization such as GVMC.

There have been efforts across the nation to allow for electronic publishing. Several local legislators have been involved in this effort including Rob VerHeulen and Pete McGregor. The City of Novi proposed a referendum to address this issue. State Representative Douglas Geiss introduced legislation allowing for publishing on line. This will eventually happen but I would hope that GVMC would support and take the lead. A few years ago, this was one of the top ten legislative goals of GVMC.

If GVMC would consider taking the lead in an effort to provide electronic publishing of legal notices, I would be happy to talk with them. I have also discussed this with Ocean-Omega, a local company that could work independent of GVMC or perhaps collaborate with them to offer such a service to local, county, and state governments and agencies.

Respectfully submitted,

Alex Arends
Alpine Township



**Public Participation Plan
Public Comment Form**

Comments:

In general, the West Michigan area has not been supportive of someone in my condition—someone of limited income, with a certified disability. I could not get simple accommodations within this area in the past. I could do much more but can't because of limited transportation options.

<u>Rose Zahm</u> <i>Name</i>
<u>Courtland Township</u> <i>Address</i>
_____ <i>City</i>
_____ <i>Zip</i>
 <i>Phone Number</i>

<i>Email</i>

1. Would you like to be added to our mailing list? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave N.W. Suite 200 Grand Rapids, MI 49504
Phone: 776-3876 Fax: 774-9292

Appendix G: Public Participation Summary Report

Public Outreach Strategy and Tools Used

The public comment period for the Public Participation Plan ran from Saturday, November 23, 2013, through Monday, January 6, 2014, for a total of 45 days. Before the comment period began, staff placed a notice on gvmc.org notifying the public that GVMC had reviewed and updated its previous Public Participation Plan (PPP) and that the draft document was available for public comment through Monday, January 6. Staff explained that the document details the specific times and ways that GVMC engages the public during the transportation planning process. A link to the document was also included on the notice, as well as instructions for submitting comments, which were to be directed to Andrea Faber and sent by email, phone, fax, or mail. Interested parties could also fill out an online comment form.

Advertisements with similar information were placed in El Vocero on Friday, November 22, 2013, and in the Advance, as well as its affiliate papers, the Cadence and the Penasee Globe, on Saturday, November 23, 2013. A postcard containing the same information as the web notice was also sent out to the Interested Citizen/Agency List on Thursday, November 21, 2013.

After all comments were considered and the 45-day public comment period concluded, the public was given a final opportunity to comment on the document at the Policy Committee meeting on Wednesday, January 15, at 9:30 am at the Kent County Road Commission. The public was notified of this opportunity through a notice on gvmc.org.

Estimated Number of People Reached

The ad in El Vocero reached an estimated 12,000, while the ad that ran in the Advance, the Cadence and the Penasee Globe reached 204,743. The postcard mailed to the Interested Citizen/Agency list went to 589 people.

Comments Received

Staff received four comments during the 45-day public comment period, which are included in Appendix F of this document. GVMC staff responded to all comments based on the manner that the comment was received. For instance, comments phoned in were recorded by staff and received verbal responses, whereas written comments received written responses. No additional comments were received at the Policy Committee meeting on Wednesday, January 15.