

Traverse Transportation Coordinating Initiative (TTCI)

FY24 Public Participation Plan

DRAFT



**Traverse Transportation Coordinating Initiative (TTCI)
FY24 Public Participation Plan**

Prepared by:



Table of Contents

Title of Section	Page
Introduction	5
What is an MPO?	5
What is TTCI?	5
TTCI Committees	5
Requirements	6
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964	6
Environmental Justice	6
Improving Access for Persons with Limited English Proficiency	7
Americans with Disabilities Act	8
Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Program of Projects	8
The Public Participation Process for Transportation Planning	9
Goal, Objectives, and Policies	10
Public Participation Strategies	13
Participation Plan	13
Availability of Information	13
Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities	13
Meeting Times	13
Writing in Plain Language	14
Public Comments	14
Public Involvement in Transportation Planning Processes	15
Continual Evaluation of Tools and Techniques	17
Evaluation of Effectiveness	18
Public Participation Summary Report	18
Significant Planning Initiatives	19
Unified Planning Work Program	19
Public Participation Plan	20
Transportation Improvement Program	21
Metropolitan Transportation Plan	23
Public Participation Timeline for Other Planning Documents	25
Appendix A: FHWA Michigan Division and FTA STIP and TIP Amendment and Administrative Modification Guidance	26
Appendix B: TTCI MPA Boundary Map	28
Appendix C: Public Comment Form	29

TTCI Website:

<https://www.networksnorthwest.org/community/transportation/ttci/>

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

What is an MPO?

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the policy board of an organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process. MPOs are required to represent localities in all urbanized areas (UZAs) with populations over 50,000, as determined by the U.S. Census. MPOs are designated by agreement between the governor and local governments that together represent at least 75 percent of the affected population (including the largest incorporated city, based on population) or in accordance with procedures established by applicable state or local law.

The Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundary refers to the geographic area in which the metropolitan transportation planning process must be carried out. The boundary is determined in agreement by the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Governor. By law, the Metropolitan Planning Area, at a minimum, must encompass the existing urbanized area as defined by the most recent Census and the contiguous area(s) likely to become urbanized within the 20-year forecast covered by the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The Metropolitan Planning Area boundary is reviewed and updated as necessary after each Census by the MPO in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

What is TTCI?

The Traverse Transportation Coordinating Initiative (TTCI) is the MPO for the greater Traverse City Urbanized Area. The MPA for TTCI is a portion of Grand Traverse County and Leelanau County. TTCI is a federally mandated policy body made up of representatives from local, state, and federal governments, transit agencies, and other stakeholders and is responsible for regional transportation planning and programming for the planning area. Any highway, transit, local road, or non-motorized project or program to be constructed or conducted in the region receiving Federal funding, must have approval by TTCI before any funds can be expended. In addition, any highway or transit project deemed to be regionally significant by TTCI staff, must receive their approval to proceed.

TTCI Committees

TTCI has two standing committees and may form ad-hoc committees as needed to study and develop specific area-wide transportation related topics. The two committees are the Policy Board and Technical Committee. The Policy Board is comprised of local elected and appointed officials and is the governing body that oversees the activities and decision-making processes of an MPO. The Technical Committee is comprised of professionals with technical knowledge in transportation planning, engineering, and other related fields. They provide technical expertise and advice to support the MPO's planning and decision-making processes.

Each meets monthly to discuss issues facing the region and process necessary changes requested by local agencies. Notice of meetings and agendas are posted on the TTCI website.

<https://www.networksnorthwest.org/community/transportation/ttci/>

Requirements

Several authorizing legislations establish requirements for public participation. These legislations include the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century Act (MAP-21), Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), The Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century (TEA-21), and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Highlights of the requirements for public participation include:

- Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points;
- Employing visualization techniques;
- Making information accessible in various formats and means;
- Holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- Seeking out and considering the needs of traditionally underserved populations;
- Coordinating with statewide transportation planning public participation and consultation processes; and
- Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies in the Participation Plan.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that no person in the United States, shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice (EJ) at the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) means identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse effects of the agency's programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations to achieve an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens.

Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations: Executive Order 12898

Environmental justice (EJ) is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, income or education level in the planning and decision-making process. EJ policy was formalized with the signing of Executive Order (E.O.) 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, which mandates that federal agencies make achieving environmental justice a part of their mission. The E.O. directs federal agencies to identify and address the disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their actions on minority and low-income populations, to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law. The order also directs each agency to develop a strategy for implementing environmental justice. The order is also intended to promote

nondiscrimination in federal programs that affect human health and the environment, as well as provide minority and low-income communities access to public information and public participation.

Environmental Justice outreach is important as it helps to ensure full and fair participation by potentially affected communities in every phase of the transportation decision making process. When this is accomplished, the development, construction, operation and maintenance of transportation projects should reflect an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens. In 1994, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12898, directing federal agencies, to the greatest extent practicable, to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. In 1997, the Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) issued an Order to address EJ in minority populations and low-income populations to summarize and expand upon the requirements of Executive Order 12898 on EJ. The FHWA issued its own EJ Order in 1998 (Order 6640.23). U.S. DOT, FHWA, and other modal administrations have since updated the respective orders and continually seek to enhance their efforts to address EJ effects of their programs, policies, and activities. TTCI will work to encourage the participation of persons who have been traditionally underserved to meet the requirements of Executive Order 12898 related to Environmental Justice and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. TTCI, through written communication, email, newsletters, or phone, will endeavor to notify the appropriate groups listed below when a particular agenda item directly impacts an organization or the clientele they represent.

Stakeholders organizations representing:

- Elderly
- Disabled
- Non-Motorized transportation users
- Minority populations
- Low-income populations
- Transit users
- Immigrant populations
- Homeless

Improving Access for Persons with Limited English Proficiency

Executive Order 13166, Improving Access for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), was issued in 2000 to improve access to federally conducted and federally assisted programs and activities for persons who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency. It requires federal agencies to ensure that recipients of federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 provides “no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by a department, agency, special purpose district or other instrumentality of the state or local government.”

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Program of Projects

The public participation process described herein is used to satisfy the public participation process for the Program of Projects (POP) for the Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA).

The Public Participation Process for Transportation Planning

Public participation is an integral part of the transportation process which helps to ensure that decisions are made in consideration of and to benefit public needs and preferences. Early and continuous public involvement brings diverse viewpoints and values into the decision-making process. This process enables agencies to make better informed decisions through collaborative efforts and builds mutual understanding and trust between the agencies and the public they serve. Successful public participation is a continuous process, consisting of a series of activities and actions to both inform the public and stakeholders and to obtain input from them which influence decisions that affect their lives.

The public, in any one area or jurisdiction, may hold a diverse array of views and concerns on issues pertaining to their own specific transportation needs. Conducting meaningful public participation involves seeking public input at specific and key points in the decision-making process issues where such input has a real potential to help shape the final decision or set of actions.

Public participation activities provide more value when they are open, relevant, timely, and appropriate for the intended goal of the public involvement process. Providing a balanced approach with representation of all stakeholders and including measures to seek out and consider the needs of all stakeholders, especially those that are traditionally underserved by past and current transportation programs, facilities, or services.

Specific public involvement requirements detailed in Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) legislation include the following:

- Require a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised as mandated by federal transportation planning regulations outlined in 23 CFR 450.316, which governs the development and content of public participation plans for MPOs
- Holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times
- Identifying actions necessary to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- Employing visualization techniques to describe long range transportation plans and TIPs
- Making public information available in easily accessible formats such as electronically on the World Wide Web
- Use clear, non-technical language to ensure that information is understandable to a broad audience
- 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 inclusive of underserved communities through special efforts to engage minority, low-income, and rural communities in the planning process
- Ongoing coordination and communication with local governments, tribal governments, and other regional entities to ensure that their perspectives and needs are considered in infrastructure projects
- 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
- Public involvement processes must incorporate environmental justice considerations to ensure that the environmental and health impacts of infrastructure projects do not disproportionately affect disadvantaged communities

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.

Goal, 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 TCI activities and 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 networksnorthwest.org, emails to the interested citizen/agency list, press releases, as well as other tools and techniques when determined necessary.

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

- The TIP, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Public Participation Plan, the Unified Planning Work Program, the Title VI Plan, and other important documents shall be made available by TTCI staff in an electronic format for the public to review on the [TTCI website](#).
- 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 TTCI offices and copies of the MTP will be distributed to all public libraries in the MPO area and to all members of the TTCI Committees. Copies of other plans or projects will be distributed to the TTCI 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 TTCI's plans via telephone, email, mail, or in person at any time. A small copying fee may apply.
- TTCI will employ visualization techniques to describe the MTP 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 TTCI Committee meetings shall be made available in compliance with the State of Michigan Open Meetings Act.
- Information pertaining to the adoption, revision, or amendment of all TTCI 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 TTCI Committees will be open to the public except as allowed by the State of Michigan Open Meetings Act.

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 TTCI through public meetings, committee meetings, and other venues. TTCI 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:

- TTCI 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 TTCI is responsible.
- TTCI 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.

- TTCI Staff shall review the Public Participation Plan prior to the start of the 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).
- TTCI 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 TTCI decision making process.

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

- TTCI 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 [TTCI website](#).
- 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. TTCI 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 TTCI Committee will be given the opportunity to comment at the regular public meetings of those committees.

Public Participation Strategies

Participation Plan

The development, adoption, and amendment of TTCI 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 MTP development process as required by federal guidelines and before the start of the 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. 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.

Availability of Information

All events/opportunities appear on [TTCIs webpage](#) and are sent to the Interested Citizens/Agencies List that TTCI maintains. Transportation plans and TIPs will also be included on the [TTCI website](#) for public review and comment.

TTCI staff will make written materials provided to our committees available to the public upon request. Requests can be made by phone or contact form, through [TTCIs webpage](#), or in person at Networks Northwest office (600 East Front Street, Suite 205, Traverse City, MI 49686) or during a 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 TTCI 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. A schedule of public meetings will be made available on the [TTCI Website](#). There is also an opportunity for public comment at the TTCI Technical Committee, Executive Committee, and regular Board meetings. Generally, these meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Technical Committee – 3rd Thursday every other month at 1:30 pm, NW Michigan Works! (1209 S. Garfield) and online
- Executive Committee – Last Tuesday every other month at 3:00 pm at the Networks Northwest offices, 600 E. Front St. and online
- Policy Board – 2nd Tuesday every other month at 3:00 pm, NW Michigan Works! (1209 S. Garfield) and online

Writing in Plain Language

Plain language is defined as “communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it.” 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 Federal agencies use “clear Government communication that the public can understand” and was signed on October 13, 2010. 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 [TTCI website](#) for the public’s convenience, or staff can be reached through TTCI’s main line at (231) 929- 5000. TTCI’s Technical Committee, Executive Committee, and regular Board meetings are also open to the public and include an opportunity for public comment on the agenda. Meeting agendas are posted on the [TTCI website](#) before a scheduled meeting and in compliance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

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 the [TTCI website](#).
- Sending comments to TTCI via Networks Northwest by mail at: Networks Northwest, PO Box 506, Traverse City, MI 49686
- Emailing comments to a TTCI staff member
- Phoning in comments to a TTCI staff member (contact information available on [TTCI website](#))
- Filling out a comment form (available in Appendix C) in person at Networks Northwest (600 East Front Street, Suite 205, Traverse City, MI 49686) 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.

Response to Comments: TTCI 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 Executive 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 Transportation Planning Processes

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 (MTP), substantial amendments to that plan, corridor studies, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and major long range 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 TTCI offices.

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 Committee and TTCI Board
- Traffic agencies
- Private providers of transportation services
- Ridesharing agencies
- Parking agencies
- Transportation safety agencies
- Traffic enforcement agencies
- Airport and port authorities
- Freight companies
- Railroad companies
- Traverse Area Recreation Trail (TART)
- 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
 - Native American tribes
 - Others underserved by the transportation system

Individuals and agencies can sign up to be included on this list by visiting the [TTCI webpage](#) or 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.

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 Traverse City Record Eagle

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

Organizational Logos

The MPO has two logos – one for TTCI and one for Networks Northwest. The MPO logo appears on all official correspondence, including direct mailings, and on all published advertisements, including newspaper ads and flyers.

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 TTCI’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.

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

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 the [TTCI Website](#), or stop by TTCI’s office in person to receive a copy of the survey.

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

Visual Aids

Attempts will be made to use visualization techniques to describe long range 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

[TTCI'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 Plan (MTP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Public Participation Plan (PPP). Information about additional transportation programs and activities is also available. An electronic comment form will be 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. TTCI's website can be found at:

<https://www.networksnorthwest.org/community/transportation/ttci/>

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.

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. TTCI 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. 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.

Evaluation of Effectiveness

TTCI will support efforts to expand public participation in the planning process, as well as evaluating the results in the most effective manner. This will include continuous research into best practices and outcome evaluation, as documents are created, released, and amended.

TTCI will utilize a four-part evaluation process for public participation that can help determine if either the public or the agency benefited from the public's engagement. In this process, there are at least four different public engagement outcomes that local officials can review:

1. **The appropriateness and effectiveness of the engagement process design and delivery, including the "satisfaction" of participants with the process.** Did the chosen process "fit" the problem, provide the sort of information needed, and meet participation goals? Was it done well?
2. **The impacts on public decisions, policies and actions.** Was the ultimate agency decision different and/ or better than would otherwise have been the case?
3. **The changes to the capacity for participation by community residents.** Has the completed engagement activity made it more or less likely that the public, including appropriate neighborhood/ community organizations, has the interest, information, and skills to get involved?
4. **The changes to the local agency's capacity to effectively develop and carry out other public engagement efforts in the future.** Was the public engagement activity seen solely as a one-time event, or are sponsors using it to build a more sustained agency capacity for soliciting the public's ideas and recommendations?

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. These summary reports will be included in their respective documents.

Significant Planning Initiatives

Significant planning initiatives include, but are not limited to the Unified Planning Work Program (UWP), Public Participation Plan (PPP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Other plans that may follow similar procedures to develop or update plans may include corridor studies, subarea plans, transportation demand management studies, and transit plan implementation studies. When describing a significant planning initiative to the public, TTCI shall incorporate appropriate visualization techniques. Significant planning initiatives are listed below. The following tables and graphics detail the milestones for each initiative and shows a timetable for the best opportunities for the public to provide input during the process.

Updates will be posted on the [TTCI website](#) before public meetings, and before public comment periods begin, and will be given verbally during Technical Committee and regular Board meetings periodically as well. However, there are 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

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 to maximize efficiency and resources and reduce confusion. Please also note: TTCI 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.

Unified Planning Work Program (UWP)

Estimated timeline: 6 months

This plan outlines the transportation planning program for TTCI and identifies how available planning funds from both federal and state funds will be used to address planning requirements while also addressing local transportation policies, programs, issues, and priorities. The UWP is updated on an annual basis.

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment
Adoption of the draft document	Once the draft UPWP document is complete, Staff will bring it to the Technical and Policy Committees for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at both committee meetings.	6 days prior to Technical Committee meeting	A minimum of 7 days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Policy Committee meeting

Amendment Process: Same as adoption Process

Public Participation Plan

Estimated timeline: 6 months

The Public Participation Plan describes the ways in which TTCI will engage the public in the transportation planning process. It is reviewed every two years and updated and as needed.

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment
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, TTCI will bring it to the public for comment. TTCI staff will notify the public of this opportunity by posting the notice on the TTCI website .	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)
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 by posting the notice on the TTCI website .	6 days prior to Policy Board meeting	N/A; notification only

Amendment Process: Same as adoption Process

Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)

Estimated timeline: 8 months

A list of road, transit and non-motorized projects that communities and agencies plan to implement over a four-year period within the TTCI MPO. The Transportation Improvement Program is redone every three to four years and modified frequently.

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment
Call for Projects	Before the TIP call for projects begins, TTCI staff will notify the public via TTCI website .	6 days prior to the first TIP programming meeting	N/A; notification only
Draft project lists, environmental justice, and air quality results (if applicable) completed and available for public comment	TTCI staff will bring these items to the public for comment. A public meeting will also be held.	7 days prior to the public meeting and before the 1st day of the public comment period	14 days
Adoption of Draft Document	TTCI Staff will bring document to the Technical and Policy Committees for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at both committee meetings.	6 days prior to Technical Committee meeting	A minimum of 7 days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Policy Committee meeting

Amendment Process

It is frequently necessary to amend the TIP because of changes to projects within the document. Some changes require public notice/input. Outlined below is the public involvement procedure for TIP amendments.

Some changes are considered minor modifications and may be revised administratively.

**See Appendix A for details regarding criteria for Administrative TIP amendments.*

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment
Amendments to the TIP are frequently necessary due to project changes (scope, cost, etc).	Staff will bring TIP amendments to the Technical Committee for recommendation to the Policy Board for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at both committee meetings.	6 days prior to Technical Committee meeting	A minimum of 7 days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Policy Committee meeting

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Estimated timeline: 12 months

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a 25-to-30-year vision for the transportation network. The purpose of the MTP is to ensure that transportation investments in TTCI's MPO area enhance the movement of people and freight efficiently, effectively, and safely.

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment
Kickoff to MTP and Development of Goals & Objectives	Once the MTP development process begins, TTCI staff will notify the public.	N/A	Public involvement will be continuous throughout the MTP development process
Data Collection & Call for Projects	TTCI staff will invite the public to review and comment on identified modal needs.	Up to 7 days prior to the start of the public comment period	14 Days
Environmental Justice Process and Evaluation: Draft Document	TTCI staff will bring the document to the public for comment. A public meeting will also be held to discuss these items.	Up to 7 days prior to the start of the public comment period	14 Days
Adopt Plan	TTCI Staff will bring plan to the Technical Committee and Policy Board for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at both committee meetings.	6 days prior to Technical Committee meeting	A minimum of 7 days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Policy Board meeting

Amendment Process

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.

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment
Amendment(s)	Staff will bring MTP amendments to the Technical Committee and Policy Board for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at both committee meetings.	6 days prior to Technical Committee meeting	A minimum of 7 days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Policy Committee meeting

Public Participation Timeline for Other Planning Documents

It is sometimes necessary for TPCI to develop plans either in conjunction with other major documents or independently. Below is the public involvement timeline for the development of other significant documents or public meetings that may be used to discuss or receive public comments.

Plan	Prior Notice to Public (minimum)	Length of Public Comment (Minimum)
Major Corridor Studies		6 Days
Major Transportation Studies		6 Days
Other plans (i.e. – non-motorized, freight, safety)	Typically goes through public involvement when the MTP is developed; a separate public involvement process is not necessary unless updates or development of plans occurs outside of the MTP development.	
Public Meetings	As required by the Michigan Open Meetings Act	

Appendix A: FHWA Michigan Division and FTA STIP and TIP Amendment and Administrative Modification Guidance

Federal Amendment (23 CFR 450.104)

1. Any project or project phase change that affects air quality conformity or requires a conformity determination (in nonattainment and maintenance areas) regardless of the cost of the project or the funding source;
2. A project or project phase change that requires public review and comment and/or the re-demonstration of fiscal constraint;
3. The addition of a new project/phase or moving a project/phase from the illustrative list to the financially constrained list;
4. The deletion a project/phase or moving a project/phase to the illustrative list;
5. Major change in project phase cost (increase or decrease greater than 25% of the total phase cost);
6. Changing a non-Federally funded project/phase to a Federally funded project/phase (except when switching a project from regular federal-aid project to an Advance Construction project or vice versa); and
7. Major change in project/phase design concept or design scope.*

*Major change in design concept or design scope is defined as:

- A change resulting in an air quality conformity reevaluation (per Interagency Work Group determination).
- Significant change to work type or project/phase description.
- Significant change in limits – Increase/decrease a project phase length by a 1/2 mile or more.
- Addition/increase/decrease of a travel lane by 1/2 mile or more.
- Addition of new project items (sidewalk, bike lane, ADA enhancements) that are a 1/2 mile or more in length.

Administrative Modification (23 CFR 450.104)

1. Minor change in cost (increase or decrease less than 25% of the total project phase cost);
2. Minor change in funding source (moving from one federal funding source to another federal funding source, except CMAQ funding);
3. Shifting projects/phases between fiscal years of the current STIP while maintaining financial constraint defined as “project selection” in the regulations (23 CFR 450.222 and 23 CFR 450.332);
4. Switching a project/phase from regular federal-aid to Advance Construction and vice versa (per Michigan Division and MDOT finance agreement provided the change is noted in the request sent to FHWA at the time of project/phase authorization);
5. Addition of a project/phase that uses 100% State or local funding, unless it is deemed “regionally significant” by the MPO;
6. Changes in non-federal project/phase costs;
7. Addition of a project/phase for emergency repairs to roads or bridges**;

8. Addition, deletion, and scope changes to projects/phases within General Program Accounts (GPAs);*** and
9. Technical corrections – corrections to typos, misspellings, and other data entry errors.

**Emergency relief projects may (but are not required to) be included in the STIP, except those involving substantial functional, location, or capacity changes per 23 CFR 450.218(g)(5).

***May require a Federal amendment for transit projects in urbanized areas if FTA program of projects public participation requirements have not been met.

Administrative Modifications do not require Federal approval. However, MDOT will make available information about any modifications to FHWA and FTA for review and comment. FHWA and FTA reserve the right to disallow an administrative modification that is not consistent with Federal regulations.

Appendix B: TTCI MPA Boundary Map



Appendix C: Public Comment Form

Project:

Comments:

Name: _____

Address (Optional): _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? Yes / No (circle one)



TTCI is a program of Networks Northwest
PO Box 506
Traverse City MI 49685-0506
PHONE: (231) 929-5000