



Public Participation Plan in Transportation Decision Making (Draft)

West Michigan Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program (WestPlan)

Last Updated: 11/17/2021

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1. Introduction

In 1973, the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC) established the Muskegon Area Transportation Planning Program to serve as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Muskegon metropolitan area. In 2003, the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program's planning boundary expanded to include northern Ottawa County in accordance with the 2000 Census. The program, now known as the West Michigan Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program (WestPlan), is responsible for coordinating transportation planning and supporting a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing transportation planning process.

As the designated MPO, WestPlan is responsible for providing opportunities for meaningful public participation throughout the transportation planning and decision-making process. Federal requirements established under federal transportation planning legislation require MPOs to develop and maintain a documented public participation process that provides reasonable opportunities for interested parties to be involved in transportation planning and programming activities.

Public participation is an essential component of effective transportation planning. Input from residents, community organizations, local governments, transportation providers, and other interested parties helps WestPlan better understand community needs, concerns, and priorities. The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to outline the policies, procedures, and methods WestPlan will use to encourage and facilitate public involvement. The plan is intended to ensure that public comments, concerns, and recommendations are considered throughout the transportation planning process and that the public has a clear understanding of how and when they may participate in transportation decision-making.

2. Public Involvement and Participation

a. The Public

The IJJA requires that MPOs document public participation utilizing a structured process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

Input from any individual, group, organization, agency, business, municipality, or service provider is encouraged. Activities encouraging open dialogue with these groups include maintaining and updating a contact list of interested parties as well as receiving comments by mail, telephone, or e-mail and during committee meetings.

Participation is encouraged of persons related to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Assistance will be offered to individuals with disabilities and/or language barriers to read and/or comment on this and other documents. This assistance could be done on a same day basis or within a two-day timeframe depending on the specific needs and desire.

Written communication, e-mail, newsletters, or phone will be utilized to notify some, or all, of the groups listed below when a particular agenda item directly impacts an organization or the clientele they represent, a significant planning initiative begins, or at the request of any committee member.

Stakeholder organizations representing the interests of:

- The elderly
- The disabled
- Non-motorized transportation users
- Minority populations
- Low-income populations

Types of organizations located in the area:

- Conventional and unconventional transit providers
- Representatives of public transportation employees
- Affected public agencies
- Private providers of transportation
- Law enforcement agencies and fire departments
- Freight shippers and providers of freight transportation services
- Railroad companies
- Airport operators
- Port advisors
- Environmental organizations
- Major employers
- Chambers of commerce
- Economic development
- Human service agencies
- Local Tribes
- Schools

These organization types are on the notification list. They receive meeting agendas and minutes and are encouraged to participate and provide input.

The transportation needs and opinions of those with disabilities will be sought out. 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 any persons with disabilities.

b. Public Notification

Meaningful public participation in transportation decision making requires that the public understand the transportation system's problems, processes, and potential solutions. Information must be provided in a timely manner, be easily understandable, and be reasonably accessible. All agency library and map files are available to the public. Planning documents, meeting minutes, and maps are available for review during normal business hours as well as on the WMSRDC website at: https://wmsrdc.org/resources/index.php#acc_0_panel_0.

Meeting schedules and minutes, planning studies, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program, newsletters, and other applicable documents will be posted on the WMSRDC website at: <https://wmsrdc.org/resources/>.

In addition, WestPlan staff participate in public forums and conduct presentations upon request.

c. Significant Planning Initiatives & Opportunities for Public Input

Significant planning initiatives include, but are not limited to, updating the Unified Work Program (UWP), Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), corridor studies, port studies, transit studies, non-motorized studies, and other activities such as this Plan which is the Public Participation Plan in Transportation Decision Making (PPP). When describing a significant planning initiative to the public, appropriate visualization techniques will be incorporated. Charts detailing the milestones for the PPP, UWP, MTP, and TIP, and a timetable for the best opportunities for public input in the planning process are in

the appendix. Please also see the Transportation Program Overview located in the appendix of this document for descriptions of initiatives.

d. Public Meetings

All regularly scheduled meetings of the policy and technical committees are open to the public and are held at sites which comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations. Time is allotted at these meetings for any person wishing to address committee members. The schedule of regular policy committee and technical committee meetings showing dates, times, and locations are posted on social media and are included on the WMSRDC website at wmsrdc.org. The schedule of meetings may also be distributed to each member unit of government for posting upon request.

Monthly meeting notifications, including agendas, location, and virtual meeting login information if virtual option is available are sent to the cities, townships, villages, road commissions, and transit agencies within the area for public posting. The WMSRDC website also shows meeting notifications, locations, and agendas. These can be found in several different places on the WMSRDC website such as the homepage at <https://wmsrdc.org/>, on the events calendar at <https://wmsrdc.org/calendar/>, on the Transportation Program page at https://wmsrdc.org/services_and_supports/transportation/, or on the Resources Page at <https://wmsrdc.org/resources/index.php>. Interested citizens may also have their name added to the contact list for communication via email

To Join the Email Distribution List

Transportation planning updates, notices, and other information can be received by email.

- Phone: (231) 722-7878, ext. 100 or 230
 - Email: info@wmsrdc.org or arinehart@wmsrdc.org
- Mail: West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340
Muskegon, MI 49440

WestPlan Policy and Technical Committee meetings comply with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Public Act No. 267 of 1976. Special meetings, such as public information meetings and public hearings, will be held at convenient and accessible locations and times where it is feasible for most to attend. Virtual meeting options may also be available; contact lblake@wmsrdc.org.

e. Outreach Strategies

New ways are continually being looked at to involve the public in the transportation planning process. The MPO will continue to proactively engage the public and strengthen efforts to keep the public up to date on MPO activities.

There are two primary audiences for this information: the public (as described previously) and the media. The residents of Muskegon County and the northern portion of Ottawa County, as well as others who use the transportation system within the area represent one audience. The various media outlets are the other target audience for outreach. As new media formats and technologies demonstrate their ability to engage different segments of the audience, it is important to consider their use as a public involvement tool. The following outreach goals were established to better inform the public:

Establish a dialogue with members of the local media

- Create and regularly update a list of local media contacts for print and electronic news.
- Proactively share information instead of reacting to incorrect or incomplete information.

Raise awareness about transportation planning efforts and the agency

- Raise awareness of responsibilities and functions.
- Highlight successful agency projects and its members.
- Regularly update online tools to increase traffic.
- Encourage attendance at public involvement meetings.

Create an appropriate suite of media and public communication tactics to allow for faster dissemination of information

- Create and maintain agency accounts using various social media outlets.
- Establish policies and procedures for social media updates.

Formats for outreach include, but are not limited to:

- **Electronic Media:**
 - Website: <https://wmsrdc.org>
 - Quarterly newsletter posted on website
 - Information releases to news media outlets in surrounding area
 - Social media, like Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn
 - Email
- **Print Media:**
 - Public hearing notices
 - Newsletters to be distributed to jurisdictions, libraries, other agencies/organizations and mailed to the agency-wide newsletter mailing list
 - Direct mailings/flyers to affected organizations and populations
 - Comment forms at public meetings/hearings
 - Access to planning documents at local cities, villages, and townships as well as local libraries
- **Meetings:**
 - Conduct open houses at key points in document development
 - Public meetings prior to document adoptions
 - Technical committee meetings and policy committee meetings

f. Measures of Effectiveness

Public participation tools require regular monitoring and evaluation to determine their effectiveness in the transportation planning process. The WestPlan MPO has utilized different tools and methods to meet the desired goals. See the appendix for a table demonstrating these goals and methods, as well as the criteria used to evaluate the effectiveness of the tools used to meet the suggested performance goals.

3. Requirements and Regulations

a. IIJA

The current federal transportation act, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), continues the emphasis on extensive stakeholder participation initiated and imbedded by the previous Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and MAP-21. A summation of the requirements of the public participation process can be found below:

- 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, such as the internet;
- 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.

For the full text of the IIJA, go to [congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov), or follow the link below:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/3684>

b. Title VI

Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any program or activity that receives federal funds or other federal financial assistance. All people of the state of Michigan are served, including minority populations, low-income populations, the elderly, people with disabilities, and those who traverse the MPO. The responsibility is recognized to provide fairness and equity in all programs, services, and activities, and federal and state civil rights legislation must be enforced. This participation plan works in concert with the Title VI Plan to reach out to traditionally disadvantaged populations to ascertain the potential effects and or impacts of proposed projects. The Title VI Plan can be found on the WMSRDC

website at <https://wmsrdc.org/resources/library.php> under the ‘Agency Related’ tab, or by contacting WestPlan staff.

c. ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) states that, “no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity.” Sites for participation activities, as well as the information presented, must be accessible to people with disabilities. Continue to the Meetings subsection to read on how ADA regulations are considered in the hosting and notification of meetings.

d. Consultation

Specific requirements, recommended by the FHWA and the MDOT, follow an outline of what types of agencies or stakeholders need to be consulted during the transportation planning process and the type of information that needs to be shared with these interested parties. The overarching goal of this process is to eliminate or minimize conflicts with other agencies’ plans, programs, or policies as they relate to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) planning process. When agencies such as land use management agencies are consulted during the development of the TIP, groups like these can compare the TIP project list and map with other natural or historic resource inventories. WestPlan is also able to compare the draft TIP to any documents received and adjust as necessary to achieve greater compatibility. More information about the consultation process can be found in the current TIP document available on the WMSRDC website at [https://wmsrdc.org/services_and_supports/transportation/fy2026-2029_transportation_improvement_program_\(tip\).php](https://wmsrdc.org/services_and_supports/transportation/fy2026-2029_transportation_improvement_program_(tip).php) or by contacting WestPlan.

4. Revisions to the Public Participation Plan

The public is invited to comment on this plan prior to final adoption by the Policy Committee. A review of this Participation Plan will periodically be undertaken. Major revisions will necessitate undertaking various measures as described earlier in this document.

Comments or questions concerning this Plan should be directed to:

West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340
Muskegon, MI 49440
(231) 722-7878 ext. 230
Email: lblake@wmsrdc.org

a. Making Public Comments

The public is encouraged to use the following methods for reviewing and commenting on significant documents being developed:

To Request Printed Copies of Documents

Printed copies of transportation planning documents are available on request.

- Phone: (231) 722-7878 ext. 100
- Email: info@wmsrdc.org
- Website: https://wmsrdc.org/contact_us/index.php

To Submit Comments:

Comments and feedback may be submitted through any of the following methods:

- Email: lblake@wmsrdc.org and info@wmsrdc.org
- Website: https://wmsrdc.org/contact_us/index.php
- Social Media: <https://www.facebook.com/WSMRDC/> and <https://www.instagram.com/wmsrdc/>
- Public Meetings and Hearings: <https://wmsrdc.org/calendar/index.php>
- Committee Meetings: Technical Committee and Policy Committee, https://wmsrdc.org/resources/technical_meetings.php https://wmsrdc.org/resources/policy_meetings.php
- Phone: (231) 722-7878 ext. 230 or 100

- Mail:
West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340
Muskegon, MI 49440

To Review Transportation Planning Documents

Transportation planning documents are available for review at:

- Website: www.wmsrdc.org
- Office: Visit the WMSRDC offices during regular business hours. Monday – Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Location:
316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340
Muskegon, MI 49440
- Public Meetings and Open Houses: Attend public meetings, open house, or other scheduled activity. Notices are published on the WMSRDC website.
- Committee Meetings and Hearings: Attend Technical Committee and Policy Committee meetings and hearings. Meeting schedules are available at <https://wmsrdc.org/calendar/index.php>

b. Treatment of Public Comments

When public comments are received on plans, studies, or other activities, they will be summarized and forwarded to the Policy Committee prior to any formal action to adopt or approve an activity, plan, or study. A copy of all comments will be filed and made available for public review. The comments, or a summary of the comments on a particular document, will be included in the document along with a discussion of how the comments were addressed prior to the adoption of the plans, major studies, and programs.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Acronyms and Definitions

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

The legislation defines the responsibilities of and requirements for transportation providers to make transportation accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act

On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Pub. L. No. 114-94) into law, providing the first long-term federal funding certainty for surface transportation in more than a decade. The FAST Act authorized \$305 billion for fiscal years 2016 through 2020 to support highways, public transportation, safety, rail, and transportation research and technology. The Act maintained a strong focus on safety, continued efforts to streamline project delivery, and established a dedicated source of federal funding for freight projects, helping states and local governments advance critical transportation investments.

FHWA: Federal Highway Administration

A branch of the US Department of Transportation that administers the federal-aid Highway Program, providing financial assistance to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads, and bridges.

FTA: Federal Transit Administration

A branch of the US Department of Transportation that is the principal source of federal financial assistance to America's communities for planning, development, and improvement of public or mass transportation systems.

GIS: Geographic Information System

Computerized data management system designed to capture, store, retrieve, analyze, and display geographically referenced information.

GPA: General Program Accounts

Federal regulation 23 CFR 450.324 (f) states projects that are not considered to be of appropriate scale for individual identification in a given program year may be grouped by function, work type, and/ or geographic area using the applicable classifications under 23 CFR 771.117(c) and (d) and/or 40 CFR part 93. In nonattainment and maintenance areas, project classifications must be consistent with the "exempt project" classifications contained in the EPA transportation conformity regulation (40 CFR part 93). In addition, projects proposed for funding under title 23 U.S.C. Chapter 2 that are not regionally significant may be one line item or identified individually in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). In Michigan, these groupings of projects are called General Program Accounts (GPA). Projects that have similar work type activities can be grouped together in a GPA for the state's metropolitan area TIPs and/or the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for non-metropolitan areas. Trunkline Project lists for each individual GPA are maintained by MDOT.

IIJA: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

On November 15, 2021, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) into law, providing long-term federal funding for transportation and infrastructure investment. The IIJA authorized approximately \$550 billion in new federal infrastructure funding from fiscal years 2022 through 2026, including

significant investments in highways, bridges, public transportation, rail, safety, and other infrastructure programs. The IIJA continued and expanded existing transportation programs while establishing new funding opportunities focused on areas such as infrastructure resilience, carbon reduction, and electric vehicle charging. Through these investments, the IIJA provides states and local governments with federal resources to improve transportation infrastructure, enhance safety, and address emerging transportation needs.

MPA: Metropolitan Planning Area

The geographic area in which the metropolitan transportation planning process required by 23 U.S.C. 134 and section 8 of the Federal Transit Act (49 U.S.C. app. 1607) must be carried out. (23CFR420).

MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization

1) Regional policy body, required in urbanized areas with populations over 50,000, and designated by local officials and the governor of the state. Responsible in cooperation with the state and other transportation providers for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning requirement of federal highway and transit legislation.

2) Formed in cooperation with the state, develops transportation plans and programs for the metropolitan area. For each urbanized area, a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) must be designated by agreement between the Governor and local units of government representing

MTP: Metropolitan Transportation Plan

This is a document resulting from regional or statewide collaboration and consensus on a region or state's transportation system and serving as the defining vision for the region or state's transportation systems and services. In metropolitan areas, the plan indicates all the transportation improvements scheduled for funding over the next 20 years.

Public Participation

The active and meaningful involvement of the public in the development of transportation plans and programs.

TIP: Transportation Improvement Program

A document prepared by a metropolitan planning organization that lists projects to be funded with FHWA/FTA funds for the next one- to three-year period.

UWP: Unified Planning Work Program

The management plan for the (metropolitan) planning program. Its purpose is to coordinate the planning activities of all participants in the planning process.

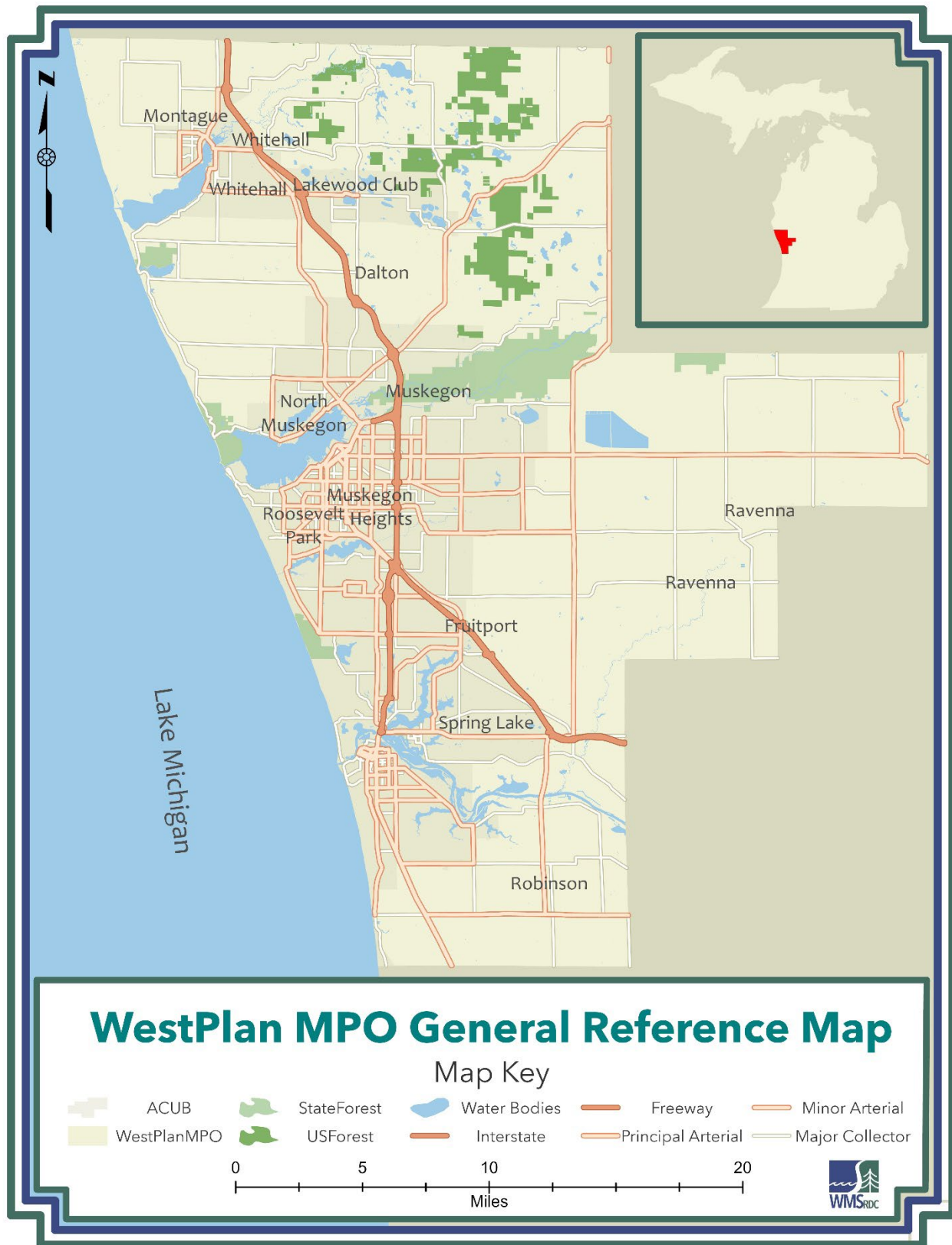
WestPlan: West Michigan Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program

The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the urbanized area of Muskegon and northern Ottawa County.

WMSRDC: West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

WMSRDC is a federal and state designated regional planning and development agency serving 120 local governments in Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties. WMSRDC staffs the Muskegon and northern Ottawa County MPO.

Appendix B: WestPlan MPO Boundary Map



Appendix C: WestPlan MPO Members and Participants

The MPO planning boundary is Muskegon County and northern Ottawa County. The following local communities, transportation agencies, and transit providers are members of WestPlan:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- City of Ferrysburg
- City of Grand Haven
- Harbor Transit
- Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)
- City of Muskegon
- Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS)
- Muskegon County Road Commission (MCRC)
- City of Muskegon Heights
- City of North Muskegon
- City of Norton Shores
- Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC)
- City of Roosevelt Park
- City of Whitehall
- Village of Spring Lake
- City of Montague
- Village of Fruitport
- Muskegon County urban township representative
- Ottawa County urban township representative
- Muskegon County rural township representative
- Ottawa County rural township representative
- Muskegon County
- Ottawa County

The Technical Committee meets at least six (6) times a year and is made up mostly of staff members of various member agencies. Members are typically engineers, city managers, or the Department of Public Works (DPW) staff. The Technical Committee acts as an advisory committee to work on primarily technical issues and make recommendations to the Policy Committee. Public attendance and participation are encouraged at these meetings.

The Policy Committee also meets at least six (6) times a year. It is comprised mostly of local elected officials who have been appointed to the committee by their jurisdiction. The Policy Committee is responsible for all final decisions regarding transportation within the MPO. For individual names of committee representatives, go to https://wmsrdc.org/services_and_supports/transportation/mpo.php. Public attendance and participation are encouraged at these meetings.

Appendix D: WestPlan Transportation Plan Milestones

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

The Public Participation Plan describes the ways in which WestPlan will engage the public in the transportation planning process. **The Public Participation Plan is updated every couple of years. The next update will be adopted by the spring of 2027. The next update will begin in the fall of 2026.**

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment (Minimum)
Draft Public Participation Plan developed and presented to the Policy Committee	After the draft Public Participation Plan has been developed and presented to the Policy Committee staff will bring it to the public for comment. Staff will notify the public of this opportunity in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) • Email sent to interested citizens and agencies 	At least one (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
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 • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) 	Six (6) days before the scheduled Policy Committee meeting	N/A

Various avenues will be considered when seeking public participation in these initiatives including, but not limited to, public informational meetings, surveys, and notices. In an effort to reach populations traditionally under served (minorities, low income, senior citizens, disabled, etc.), emphasis will be made to inform such populations. Consideration of non-English language notices and will be made in accordance with WMSRDC's Title VI Plan. It is also understood that the MPO's public involvement process, stated above, also satisfies the need for public involvement in the programming of federal dollars for public transportation.

UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM (UWP)

The purpose of the Unified Work Program (UWP) for the MPO outlines the transportation planning program of the West Michigan Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program (WestPlan). The UWP identifies how the available planning funds (federal and state) will be used to address the federal and state transportation planning requirements while concurrently addressing local transportation policies, programs, issues, and priorities. **The UWP is updated annually during the months of April through June.**

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment (Minimum)
Adoption of the draft document	<p>Once the draft UWP document is complete, staff will bring it to the Policy Committee for approval. A public comment opportunity will be available at the committee meeting. The public will be notified of the public comment opportunities in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Email to interested citizen/agency list • Press release • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) 	Six (6) days prior to the Policy Committee meeting.	A minimum of six (6) days, prior to the date of the Policy Committee meeting.
<p>UWP Amendments</p> <p><i>It is occasionally necessary to amend the UWP because of changes to the work program.</i></p>	<p>Staff will bring UWP amendments to the Policy Committee for approval. A public comment opportunity will be available at the committee meeting. The public will be notified of this public comment opportunity in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) • Email sent to interested citizen/agency list 	Six (6) days prior to Policy Committee meetings.	A minimum of six (6) days, prior to the date of the Policy Committee meeting.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP)

The purpose of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is to ensure that transportation investments in the MPO area enhance the movement of people and freight efficiently, effectively, and safely. **The MTP is updated every four (4) years. The next update is due in May 2028. The next update will begin in the fall of 2026. The update process is an approximate two-year process.**

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment (Minimum)
Kickoff to MTP Development	Once the MTP development process begins, Staff will notify the public in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice and MTP information on website • Email to interested citizen/agency list • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) 	N/A	N/A; Public involvement will be continuous throughout the MTP development process. Updates will be posted regularly on the website and given at committee meetings.
Pre-Programming	Staff will invite the public to review and comment on goals and objectives. The public will be notified of the opportunity in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice and MTP information on website • Email to interested citizen/agency list • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) 	Up to seven (7) days prior to the start of the public comment period	Fourteen (14) days
Draft MTP and air quality results (if applicable) completed and available for public comment	Once the draft MTP document and air quality analysis are complete, staff will bring the document to the public for comment. An open house will also be held to discuss these items. The public will be notified of the open house and the comment period in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Email to interested citizen/agency list • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) <p><i>Staff will contact state regulatory agencies (i.e., MDNR and EGLE) to consult with them on the draft project list and potential impacts on environmentally sensitive areas.</i></p>	Seven (7) days prior to the public meeting and before the first day of the public comment period	Fourteen (14) days

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment (Minimum)
Adoption of the draft document	<p>Once the draft MTP 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. The public will be notified of this public comment opportunity in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) • Receiving responses to public comments 	Six (6) days prior to Technical Committee meeting	<p>A minimum of seven (7) days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Policy Committee meeting.</p> <p>The duration of the comment period will vary depending on the amount of time between the meetings.</p>
*MTP Amendments. It is occasionally necessary to amend the MTP because of changes to projects listed within the document.	<p>Staff will bring MTP amendments to the Technical and Policy Committees for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at both committee meetings. The public will be notified of this public comment opportunity in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) • Email sent to interested citizen/agency list 	Six (6) days prior to Technical Committee meeting	<p>A minimum of seven (7) days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Policy Committee meeting.</p> <p>The comment period length will vary depending on the amount of time between the meetings.</p>

*Metropolitan Transportation Plan Amendments include:

- Add/delete regionally significant project
- Major scope/design change for regionally significant project(s)
- Move regionally significant illustrative list project into the MTP (new project)
- Change in air quality conformity model year grouping for regionally significant project

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the list of road, transit, and non-motorized projects of which communities and agencies plan to implement over a four-year period within the MPO area. **The TIP is updated every 3-4 years. The next update is due in June 2028. The next update will begin in the fall of 2027.**

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment (Minimum)
Kickoff to TIP Development	<p>Before the TIP development process begins, staff will notify the public in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Email to interested citizen/agency list and consultation agencies • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) 	Beginning of TIP Development Process	N/A; notification only
<p>Draft project lists, and air quality results (if applicable) completed and available for public comment.</p> <p><i>The environmental consultation phase will begin at this point also.</i></p>	<p>Once draft project lists have been developed, and an air quality analysis has been performed, staff will bring these items to the public for comment and to consultation agencies for consultation. Staff will contact state regulatory agencies (i.e., MDNR and EGLE) to consult with them on the draft project list and potential impacts on environmentally sensitive areas.</p> <p>An open house will also be held. The public and consultation agencies will be notified of the open house and the comment period in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Email to interested citizen/agency list and consultation agencies • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) • A public notice regarding the public comment period and open house 	Seven (7) days prior to the public meeting and before the 1st day of the public comment period	Fourteen (14) days

Milestone	Procedure	Public Notification Date	Length of Public Comment (Minimum)
Draft TIP document completed and available for public comment	<p>Once the draft TIP document is complete, staff will bring the document to the public for comment. An open house will also be held to discuss these items. The public will be notified of the open house and the comment period in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Email to interested citizen/agency list • Press release of the public comment period and the open house • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) • Copies of the draft TIP distributed to jurisdictions within the MPO area 	Seven (7) days prior to the public meeting and before the first day of the public comment period	Fourteen (14) days
Adoption of the draft document	<p>Once the draft TIP document is complete, staff will take it to the Technical and Policy Committees for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at both committee meetings. The public will be notified of this public comment opportunity in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) • Respond to public comments 	Six (6) days prior to Technical Committee meeting	<p>A minimum of seven (7) days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Policy Committee meeting.</p> <p>The comment period length will vary depending on the amount of time between the meetings.</p>
*TIP Amendments. It is occasionally necessary to amend the TIP because of changes to projects listed within the document.	<p>Staff will bring TIP amendments to the Technical and Policy Committees for approval. Public comment opportunities will be available at both committee meetings. The public will be notified of this public comment opportunity in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on website • Notice on social media (Facebook, etc.) • Email sent to interested citizen/ agency list 	Six (6) days prior to Technical Committee meeting	<p>A minimum of seven (7) days, beginning on the date of the Technical Committee meeting and ending at the Policy Committee meeting.</p> <p>The comment period length will vary depending on the amount of time between the meetings.</p>

Transportation Improvement Program amendments and administrative modification policy can be found on the WMSRDC website at <https://wmsrdc.org/publications/> or by contacting WMSRDC.

Appendix E: Transportation Program Overview

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

The West Michigan Metropolitan Planning Program (WestPlan) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Muskegon County and northern Ottawa County. WestPlan is a program housed in the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC). Federal legislation requires that an MPO be designated for each urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 people. The MPO carries out the metropolitan transportation planning process as a condition to receive federal transportation aid.

Every MPO, including WestPlan, consists of a Policy Committee and a Technical Committee. The Technical Committee recommends decisions to the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee is responsible for all final decisions regarding the MPO transportation planning process.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Every MPO, including WestPlan, prepares a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) in accordance with federal regulations that provide for a multi-jurisdictional, multi-year look at the Muskegon/Northern Ottawa area's future transportation system. The MTP is updated every four years and outlines the transportation needs and resources for the evaluated 25-year period with constrained finances. The plan also includes the use of local, state, and federal transportation goals and objectives to guide transportation plans and projects. The WestPlan MTP, in its continual development, is a cooperative effort of the MPO, the state, local communities, public transit agencies, transportation stakeholders, and the public.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

MPOs are also required to prepare a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is a cooperative effort between federal, state, and local officials and serves as the final link in the planning process. Its primary purpose is to identify programs and projects to be funded with federal aid, in accordance with federal law and the regulations of the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration over the next four-year period. Projects for the TIP are selected based on several factors, including need, local initiative, and requirements of the federal government through federal transportation regulations. Other considerations for project selection include impact on air quality and availability of funds. The TIP is amended continually and includes a detailed list of projects which are funded and scheduled for the upcoming four-year (fiscal years) period. The development of the TIP facilitates the required "3-C" (Continuous, Comprehensive, and Cooperative) planning process. The TIP is a product of a continuous process on the part of local and state government to improve the regional transportation system. The TIP is comprehensive because it encompasses all modes of transportation. In addition, the TIP demonstrates a cooperative intergovernmental working relationship between local officials to mutually agree upon priorities and needs. The TIP project list is edited frequently and can be found on the WMSRDC website at www.wmsrdc.org.

Unified Work Program (UWP)

WestPlan develops a required Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) in cooperation with the state, local communities, public transit agencies, transportation stakeholders, and the public. The UWP includes a discussion of the planning priorities facing the region and serves as the core budget for the urban transportation planning activities of WestPlan's transportation program. It identifies the work proposed for the upcoming fiscal year by major activity and task in sufficient detail to indicate who will perform the work, the schedule for

completing the work, the resulting products, the proposed funding by activity/task, and a summary of the total amounts and sources of federal and matching funds.

Public Involvement and Participation

WestPlan is committed to ensuring that citizen input will figure prominently throughout the planning processes and contribute to transportation issue identification through public comment periods, public meetings, open houses, review of draft documents, and other methods. WestPlan is also federally required to explicitly set forth public participation policies. The standards for this process are found in Title 23 CFR 450.316 which requires that the public have reasonable opportunity to comment on transportation plans and programs. These policies are laid out in the Public Participation Plan in Transportation Decision Making which can be found on the WMSRDC website at <https://wmsrdc.org/project/public-involvement-in-transportation-planning/>.

More Information on the Transportation Program

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Appendix F: Measures of Effectiveness

Goals	Measures and Tools	Target
Increase and maintain consistent public engagement	Number of public meetings and public events attended	Host a minimum of 12 public meetings per year and attend a minimum of 4 public events per year.
	Number of people added to the subscription list for the quarterly newsletter	A minimum increase of 1% in subscribers per year
	Number of public meeting attendees	Increase meeting participation by at least 5 people per year
	Consistently have document copies available	Document copies will be available upon request, as well as printed for at least 90% of meetings
Increase traffic to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission website and continue to use data visualization techniques and interactive engagement	Number of unique visitors to the WMSRDC website annually	The WMSRDC website will receive a 5% increase in website traffic for unique visits per year
	Percent of traffic to the WMSRDC website <u>through</u> social media pages	An annual increase of 1% to the WMSRDC website <u>through</u> social media accounts
	Annual updates to any interactive maps on the WMSRDC website	90% of interactive maps posted to the WMSRDC website will be updated annually
See growth in the traffic and presence of the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission social media pages and continue to use data visualization techniques and interactive engagement	Social media following	Active WMSRDC social media platforms will receive 5 additional followers per year
	Consistent proof of social media outreach for meeting reminders posted on social media platforms	Post notices and reminders for at least 90% of public meetings on active social media platforms
	Consistent proof of outreach on social media regarding public comment periods	Post reminders on social media for the beginning of public comment periods for 90% of all documents

Appendix G: Comments on Participation Plan Draft

Comments to come following the public comment period.