



July 6, 2006

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee

From: Kathi Wiederhold

Subject: Item 4.b – Draft Public Participation Plan (PPP)

Action Recommended: Release draft PPP to the public and open public comment period from July 13, 2006 to August 31, 2006.

Report

The Citizen Advisory Committee finished their work on the draft Public Participation Plan (hereafter called the Plan) at their regular meeting on June 7, 2006. The CAC recommended that staff forward the draft to MPC to open the public comment period and implement the outreach strategy. The public outreach strategy for the draft Plan consists of the public comment period, public hearing before MPC, email notice to interested parties, and notice on the MPO web site.

CAC Approach

The CAC used the following approach to develop the draft Public Participation Plan:

Main Functions/Purpose

- An adopted document to meet federal requirements for specifying how and when public involvement will occur for key MPO products
- Provides framework for more detailed public involvement strategy to be developed at the time work commences on a key product
- Has the force of policy in directing the MPO

Format

Lean, clear brief presentation of core public involvement for each key MPO product, clearly distinguish core from optional public involvement tools

Components

- Basic Information about the MPO—Who, What, Where, Why
- Purpose of the Public Participation Plan
- Goals, Objectives, and Policies
- Providing Input – When and How
 - Summary Table of Public Involvement
- Evaluation—How to Tell If the Plan Is Effective
- Appendixes
 - Acronym List and Glossary of Terms
 - Federal, State, and Local Regulations and Policies Concerning Public Involvement in Transportation Planning
 - Public Involvement Tools

Draft Public Participation Plan

The draft plan recommended to MPC accomplishes the following:

- Meets requirements for the federally-required MPO Public Participation Plan
- Identifies core public involvement tools the MPO will use for each key MPO product
- Tells how to measure whether the plan is effective
- Provides for an annual review so changes can be made to improve effectiveness
- Makes changes required by the federal transportation legislation called SAFETEA-LU
- Develops policies dealing with public involvement, including those dealing with responding to public comment received by the MPO and environmental justice

Staff made the following changes to the CAC Review Draft Plan to develop the MPC Review Draft Plan: text changes to correct references to compliance with Statewide Planning; editing to remove typos and grammatical errors; formatting to make the draft easier to read; reorganizing Chapter III to make it easier to read, including removing the descriptions of key MPO products.

Initial Comments from Transportation Planning Committee

The Transportation Planning Committee conducted an initial review of the draft Plan at its regular meeting on June 22, 2006 and will make additional comments during the public comment period. In its initial review of the draft Plan, the Transportation Planning Committee recommended the following changes:

- Clarify the relationship between MPO transportation system planning and Statewide Planning
- Change language in Table 2, Evaluating Public Involvement Tools, to read “Stimulate more effective comments by improving the quality of the presentation materials” instead of “Quality of comments”
- Add language about the budget process for the core public involvement and optional public outreach strategies

Next Steps

- Send email notice of the public comment period to interested parties (week of July 17)
- Post notice on the MPO web site (week of July 17)
- Additional review by the Transportation Planning Committee (July and August meetings, as needed)
- MPC Public Hearing (September 14, 2006)
- Prepare Comments and Response Summary with input from Transportation Planning Committee and CAC (late September/early October)
- Present Comments and Response Summary to MPC for review, comment, and adoption (October 12, 2006)