

Wilmington Urban Area  
Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Public Participation Plan



*Adopted January 25, 2017*

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b> .....	4
1.1	Overview .....	4
1.2	The WMPO Mission Statement .....	4
1.3	The WMPO Board .....	4
1.3.1	Board Meetings.....	5
1.4	Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC).....	5
1.5	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.....	6
<b>2</b>	<b>Purpose</b> .....	7
2.1	Goals.....	7
2.2	Objectives.....	7
<b>3</b>	<b>Federal Requirements</b> .....	8
3.1	Federal Regulation .....	8
3.2	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 .....	8
3.3	The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 (Section 508).....	9
3.4	Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (2000) .....	9
3.5	Executive Order 12898, USDOT Order 5610.2(a), and FHWA Order 6640.23A.....	9
3.5.1	Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (1994) .....	9
3.5.2	Department of Transportation Update Environmental Justice Order 5610.2(a).....	9
3.5.3	Federal Highway Administration Order 6640.23A Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations .....	10
3.6	Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency Outreach Strategies.....	10
3.6.1	Develop and Implement a Plan to Reach Non-Participating Minority and Low Income Populations.....	11
3.6.2	Develop Outreach and Education Programs.....	11
<b>4</b>	<b>Outreach Efforts</b> .....	12
4.1	Stakeholder Interviews.....	12
4.2	Publicize WMPO Activities.....	12
4.3	Establish a Speaker Bureau .....	12
4.4	Maintain a Website.....	13
4.5	Develop and Distribute Brochures .....	13
4.6	Conduct Public Informational Workshops, Charrettes and Public Open Houses .....	13

4.7	Conduct Surveys .....	13
4.8	Create Newsletters.....	13
4.9	Periodic Transportation Summits.....	14
4.10	Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) .....	14
4.11	Social Media .....	14
4.12	Annual Report.....	14
4.13	Visualization Techniques .....	14
<b>5</b>	<b>Plan Specific Guidelines .....</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1	Public Comment for MTP, UPWP, and MTIP .....	15
5.2	Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) .....	15
5.2.1	Objectives .....	15
5.3	Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) .....	16
5.3.1	Annual Listing of Obligated Projects .....	16
5.4	Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).....	16
5.5	Plan Specific Chart.....	17

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

The Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (WMPO) Public Participation Plan is an umbrella policy, encompassing the plans and programs of the greater Wilmington Urban Area's transportation planning process. Public participation is an integral part of the WMPO's planning efforts. The Public Participation Plan is comprised of the public involvement programs for all the major planning activities, including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and federal requirements (FAST Act, Civil Rights Act, Environmental Justice, Limited English Proficiency and Americans with Disabilities Act).

The WMPO is an intergovernmental transportation planning agency created by an agreement among the City of Wilmington, Town of Belville, Town of Carolina Beach, Town of Kure Beach, Town of Leland, Town of Navassa, Town of Wrightsville Beach, Brunswick County, New Hanover County, Pender County, Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority and the North Carolina Board of Transportation. Federal and state laws require the formation of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) in urbanized areas with populations of greater than 50,000 in order for surface transportation projects to be eligible for federal transportation funding.

The Wilmington Urban Area population has exceeded 200,000 and in July 2012 the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)/Federal Transit Administration (FTA) designated the Wilmington Urban Area as a Transportation Management Area (TMA). This new designation provides for additional requirements including a Congestion Management Process, official FHWA/FTA Certification Review, additional federal reporting requirements and the administration of the Direct Attributable Programs.

The WMPO is responsible for conducting a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process for all of the members within the WMPO urbanized area. The WMPO must plan for the movement of both people and goods within the WMPO boundaries by all modes of travel, including highways, public transportation, bicycles, and pedestrians. It also plans for the connections (such as airports, seaports, buses, railroads, and pipeline terminals) linking these modes and connecting the greater Wilmington area to the rest of the State, country, and world.

## 1.2 The WMPO Mission Statement

*Create and execute continuing, cooperative and comprehensive regional long-range planning efforts that proactively drive transportation decisions to improve safety, connectivity, economic development and quality of life in the Wilmington region.*

## 1.3 The WMPO Board

The Board is the policy and decision-making body for the WMPO. The Board is comprised of elected and appointed officials from the City of Wilmington, Town of Belville, Town of Carolina Beach, Town of Kure Beach, Town of Leland, Town of Navassa, Town of Wrightsville Beach, Brunswick County, New Hanover County, Pender County, Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority, and the North Carolina Board of

Transportation. The Board is ultimately responsible for providing opportunities for citizen participation in the transportation planning process.

WMPO Voting Members:

- Brunswick County:** One elected official
- New Hanover County:** One elected official
- Pender County:** One elected official
- City of Wilmington:** Two elected officials
- Town of Belville:** One elected official
- Town of Carolina Beach:** One elected official
- Town of Kure Beach:** One elected official
- Town of Leland:** One elected official
- Town of Navassa:** One elected official
- Town of Wrightsville Beach:** One elected official
- Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority:** One elected official (appointed by the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners to the Authority Board)
- North Carolina Board of Transportation:** One appointed official

WMPO Non-Voting Members:

- Federal Highway Administration**
- Cape Fear Council of Governments**
- North Carolina State Ports Authority**
- Wilmington Airport Authority**
- North Carolina Turnpike Authority**

1.3.1 Board Meetings

Regular schedules will be adopted by the Board at the last meeting of the calendar year for the upcoming year. These meetings will typically be held eleven (11) times per calendar year unless otherwise approved. Notice of these meetings will be published in the Star News and Wilmington Journal at least five (5) days prior to the day of the meeting and also posted in accordance to the State Open Meetings Laws. These meetings and agendas will also be published on the WMPO's website. These meetings are open to members of the public and upon request anyone can be placed on the Board mailing list. At the beginning of each regular meeting, a sign-in sheet will be available before each meeting for those who wish to speak. Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes and the entire public comment period shall not exceed fifteen (15) minutes. If necessary, the Chairman can extend the public comment period by a vote of the Board.

1.4 Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) is made of planners, engineers, and other staff from each of the member agencies to facilitate coordination of the WMPO's planning activities and transportation planning and related activities occurring within each member agency's jurisdiction. The TCC makes recommendations to the Board.

## 1.5 Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee is composed of members appointed by the Board, the Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, and the Chairman of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee promotes the safe use of bicycling and walking for transportation, fitness, and recreation; provides recommendations on policies and plans that affect the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and contributes to the development of the MTP.

## 2 Purpose

The purpose of the WMPO Public Participation Plan is to create an open decision-making process whereby citizens have the opportunity to be involved in all stages of the transportation planning process. This policy is designed to ensure that transportation decisions will reflect public priorities.

### 2.1 Goals

The goals of the WMPO's Public Participation Plan are:

- A. The WMPO will actively seek and consider public input and incorporate or otherwise respond to the views of its stakeholders in making its decisions.
- B. The public will be informed in a timely manner about and empowered to participate in the WMPO's decision-making processes, which are open, understandable, and consistently followed. Access points for public input will be clearly defined from the earliest stages of a decision process and provide adequate time for stakeholders to participate.
- C. Credible, effective public participation processes will be consistently incorporated into the WMPO's program operations, planning activities, and decision-making processes, at headquarters and in the field. Every employee within the WMPO will share responsibility to promote, practice, and improve public participation.

### 2.2 Objectives

- Bring a broad cross-section of the public into the public policy and transportation planning decision-making process.
- Maintain public involvement from the early stages of the planning process through detailed project development.
- Use different combinations of public involvement techniques to meet the diverse needs of the general public.
- Determine the public's knowledge of the metropolitan transportation system and the public's values and attitudes concerning transportation.
- Educate citizens and elected officials in order to increase general understanding of transportation issues.
- Make technical and other information available to the public.
- Establish a channel for an effective feedback process. Evaluate the public involvement process and procedures to assess their success at meeting requirements specified in the FAST Act (or most current regulation), NEPA, and FTA/FHWA Guidance on Public Participation.

### 3 Federal Requirements

The federal laws and processes covering public participation in the transportation planning process include the following:

- *Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)*, (or most current regulation);
- *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*;
- *Executive Order 13161, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (2000)*;
- *The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)*, and *Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 (Section 508)*; and
- *Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (1994)*, *USDOT Order 5610.2(a)*, and *FHWA Order 6640.23A*.

In order to be in compliances with the federal requirements for Environmental Justice (EJ) and Limited English proficiency (LEP), the WMPO may develop strategies that encourage EJ and LEP populations to participate in the transportation planning process.

#### 3.1 Federal Regulation

As mandated under the 23 U.S. Code § 134 and directed by the FAST Act, or other, current supporting federal regulations, MPOs must establish, periodically review and update public participation processes. These processes should assure early and continued public awareness of and access to the transportation decision-making process.

The planning regulations contain a number of performance standards for public involvement, including:

- Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the MTIP;
- Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the MTIP;
- Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and MTIPs; and
- Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means.

#### 3.2 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.”



### 3.3 [The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 \(Section 504\), and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 \(Section 508\)](#)

The *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* mandates that public facilities be made accessible to people with disabilities and has been the basis for requiring that transit buses and street curbs be retrofitted or reconstructed with appropriate equipment and design details.

The *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (Section 504) states that “no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under” any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance.

The *Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998* (Section 508) states that federal agencies must ensure that electronic and information technology is accessible to employees and members of the public with disabilities to the extent it does not pose an “undue burden.”

All notices for planning activities of the **WMPO** will include an announcement that states that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (e.g., having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator or other provisions requested). Public meetings will be held in locations accessible to persons with disabilities and will be located near or on a transit route if possible. TTY users may dial 711 to contact the WMPO.

### 3.4 [Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency \(2000\)](#)

The basis of *Executive Order 13166* lies in *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*. It requires that federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of federal financial assistance provide “meaningful access” to their limited English proficiency applicants and beneficiaries.

### 3.5 [Executive Order 12898, USDOT Order 5610.2\(a\), and FHWA Order 6640.23A.](#)

#### 3.5.1 [Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations \(1994\)](#)

The basis of *Executive Order 12898* lies in *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*. The Executive Order directs that “each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.”

#### 3.5.2 [Department of Transportation Update Environmental Justice Order 5610.2\(a\)](#)

The *USDOT Order 5610.2(a)* sets forth the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) policy to consider environmental justice principles in all USDOT programs, policies, and activities. The three fundamental environmental justice principles include:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations;

- To ensure full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in transportation decision-making; and
- To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

### 3.5.3 Federal Highway Administration Order 6640.23A Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations

The *FHWA Order 6640.23A* is the directive that establishes policies and procedures for the FHWA to use in complying with *Executive Order 12898*. In addition, it defines the following terms:

**Low-Income** – A person whose median household income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines.

**Low-Income Population** – Any readily identifiable group of low-income persons who live in geographic proximity, and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons who will be similarly affected by a proposed program, policy, or activity.

**Minority** – A person who is:

- Black: a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa;
- Hispanic or Latino: a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race;
- Asian American: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent;
- American Indian and Alaskan Native: a person having origins in any of the original people of North America, South America (including Central America), and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition; or
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa or other Pacific Islands.

**Minority Population** – Any readily identifiable groups of minority persons who live in geographic proximity, and if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons who will be similarly affected by a proposed program, policy, or activity.

### 3.6 Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency Outreach Strategies

The WMPO places great emphasis on reaching people and groups that have not traditionally been participants in the transportation planning process. These traditional non-participants include low-income, minority, elderly and disabled; do not have vehicles; and low literate or have limited English proficiency. The WMPO will develop strategies to address participation barriers that may include the following listed below. In addition, staff may modify the techniques listed in the next section, Outreach Efforts, to ensure traditionally non-participating populations are involved in the transportation planning process.

### 3.6.1 Develop and Implement a Plan to Reach Non-Participating Minority and Low Income Populations

WMPO staff should identify and meet with organizations and community leaders who represent traditional non-participant populations. The purpose of these meetings will be to build relationships with the groups and leaders as well as identify strategies to bring traditional non-participants into the planning process. The identified strategies will be implemented in cooperation with the organizations and community leaders. Detailed plans may outline the meetings with group leaders and implementing strategies.

### 3.6.2 Develop Outreach and Education Programs

The WMPO should develop outreach and education program designed to educate the public about the regional transportation planning process and its relevancy to all stakeholders. English and Spanish materials may be produced as part of this program and may include such tools as pamphlets and brochures which can be used in various presentations and for distribution.

Special considerations and arrangements will be made to design a program that is tailored for traditional non-participants. These considerations may include developing materials specifically targeted to those communities. It will be necessary to periodically review and update the program and materials.

## 4 Outreach Efforts

The WMPO will seek public input through a menu of techniques, including public notices, comment periods, workshops, charrettes, public hearings, newsletters, surveys, media relations, periodic transportation summits, and the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC). The techniques employed will vary, depending on the specific planning task and a menu of options are outlined in this section. The WMPO will hold a forty-five (45) day public comment period for amendments to the Public Participation Plan and will seek input and feedback on the WMPO's public involvement efforts.

### 4.1 Stakeholder Interviews

A stakeholder is defined as any person or group that is affected by a transportation plan, program or project, including those who are not aware they will be affected. In accordance with the FAST Act, stakeholders will include “individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties.”

Individuals will include the general public; environmental, health, neighborhood, citizen and civic organizations; and, traditionally underserved communities such as people with disabilities, and/or low-income, minority, and elderly.

The WMPO will create a database holding contact information for individual stakeholders and representative stakeholder groups. The WMPO will continually work to identify new stakeholders interested in and or affected by the transportation planning process. With their consent, these names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses will be included in the stakeholder, contact database.

Ongoing meetings with stakeholders will be conducted to share information and for the WMPO to receive feedback on transportation issues throughout the community and region.

### 4.2 Publicize WMPO Activities

Media coverage will be actively cultivated to ensure that mainstream and ethnic radio, television and newspaper outlets understand the importance of providing information on transportation planning activities. In addition, articles, new releases and/or media releases will be used to disseminate information to announce public review and comment periods and public meetings. In order to accomplish this task, a current list of media outlets such as mainstream and ethnic television and radio stations and newspapers, including small community-based publications, will be established and maintained.

### 4.3 Establish a Speaker Bureau

The Speaker's Bureau will consist of WMPO members and staff who can speak to civic organizations, professional organizations, neighborhood associations and other groups about the

regional transportation planning process. Members of the Speaker's Bureau will present information in order to educate the public regarding the WMPO planning process and on-going transportation projects within the region. A goal of holding a Speaker's Bureau will be that WMPO staff will gain further insight on the public's issues/concerns and transportation needs within the region.

#### 4.4 Maintain a Website

The WMPO's website ([www.wmpo.org](http://www.wmpo.org)) provides information about WMPO meetings and activities, including listing all upcoming meetings. This website includes a calendar, agendas and minutes; plans and documents and updates on current transportation projects. This website should provide the public with an opportunity to provide input and formal comments on an ongoing basis through the e-mail links.

#### 4.5 Develop and Distribute Brochures

The WMPO may produce a brochure in English and Spanish dedicated to explaining the WMPO and its roles and responsibilities. If requested, this brochure will be provided in large print format. The brochure should be available on-line and made available to identified stakeholders, libraries, government buildings, WMPO offices and other locations. Specialized brochures may be required to be provided to targeted groups.

#### 4.6 Conduct Public Informational Workshops, Charrettes and Public Open Houses

Public Informational Workshops, Charrettes and Public Open Houses may be conducted on topics associated with the transportation planning process. Such workshops, charrettes and/or open houses will be designed based on the intent of the meeting. These can be used to educate the participants on specific topics, e.g. transportation projects, the transportation model, planning efforts, etc. Public Informational Workshops, Charrettes and Public Open Houses provide a means for allowing the public to express their ideas and concerns in an informal setting. The workshops, charrettes and open houses may be conducted on an as-needed basis.

#### 4.7 Conduct Surveys

Surveys may be used to gather information from peoples' perceptions, preferences and practices. In areas where low literacy exists; surveys should be conducted in person. In limited English proficient communities, these surveys should be published in Spanish. In areas where the public is literate, surveys may be mailed, e-mailed or posted on the WMPO's website.

#### 4.8 Create Newsletters

The WMPO may produce a quarterly newsletter in both English and Spanish dedicated to transportation planning activities in the Wilmington region. If requested, this newsletter should be provided in a large print format. This newsletter should include information regarding technical issues written in layman's terms for the general public. In addition, the newsletter should provide the public with periodic updates of WMPO activities. The newsletter should be available on-line and distributed to all identified stakeholders, made available to libraries, government buildings, WMPO offices and other locations. Additionally, a specialized newsletter may be needed to provide timely information on targeted projects/topics.

#### 4.9 Periodic Transportation Summits

Periodic Transportation Summits may be conducted by the WMPO to educate local elected officials, business, transportation, and community leaders on topics in the transportation industry. These summits will be focused on federal, state and local transportation issues and serves as an avenue to bring these leaders together to discuss transportation concerns and needs. The WMPO may utilize Transportation Summits for State and local leaders to discuss local and regional transportation issues.

#### 4.10 Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

The WMPO Board may establish a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC is a volunteer group consisting of representatives from community organizations, professional associations, neighborhood associations, civic and community organizations and the private sector. The CAC will assist in developing public participation programs and collecting public input for the decision making process. Comments received from the CAC members and non-members are treated equally. The CAC will establish a meeting schedule approved at the last meeting of the calendar year for the upcoming year. These meetings are open to the public and provide an opportunity for interested parties to hear and discuss transportation matters to guide developing the MTP and other studies.

#### 4.11 Social Media

The WMPO may use social media outlets to provide an additional avenue to effectively communicate information and encourage citizen participation. Adjusting practices to involve innovative technologies ensures that the WMPO is capitalizing on cost-effective resources that citizens use when obtaining and sharing information. Posts and comments directed to the WMPO through social media outlets will not be considered to be public comments for planning activities or projects.

#### 4.12 Annual Report

The WMPO may publish an Annual Report that highlights annual agency accomplishments and provides a review of the services provided to the community.

#### 4.13 Visualization Techniques

The WMPO may use visualization techniques for communicating information to the public, elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders. Visualization techniques should deliver information in a clear and concise manner, promoting a better understanding of existing or proposed transportation planning activities.

Depending on the planning activity, visualization techniques may include, but not limited to: GIS maps; web-based surveys; videos; brochures or flyers; PowerPoint presentations; or photographic renderings. The WMPO should evaluate the effectiveness of visualization techniques and seek guidance from other partnering agencies, including, but not limited to FHWA's "Visualization in Planning" website.

## 5 Plan Specific Guidelines

The WMPO's Public Participation Plan is consist of a number of procedures and all planning programs and activities are required to go through the Board's public participation process. In addition, the WMPO has initiated specific public participation techniques for the MTP, the MTIP, the UPWP complying federal requirements – FAST Act, Civil Rights Act, Environmental Justice, Limited English Proficiency and Americans with Disabilities Act.

### 5.1 Public Comment for MTP, UPWP, and MTIP

The WMPO will provide an opportunity for meaningful public involvement in the development and update of the MTP; final draft of the MTIP; and in the development of the UPWP. The public comment period will be a minimum thirty (30) day period, effective from the date of the public notice publication. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the WMPO. The WMPO's contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice. The Board shall hold at least one public hearing prior to the adoption of the MTIP every two years. A public comment period is not required for administrative modifications to the MTIP.

The WMPO will assemble all comments and forward summary of comments to the TCC and the Board. The Board typically acknowledges public comments for the MTP, UPWP, and MTIP in one of the following two ways: the Board may incorporate a summary of public comments and the WMPO's response, as an appendix, into the specific planning document, or, depending on the number of comments, the Board may instruct the planning staff to respond directly by letter. Acknowledging public comments is a way to let the public know that its comments are being addressed and is part of the public involvement feedback process.

### 5.2 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

The MTP is developed for the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and covers at least a 20-year planning horizon. The MTP encompasses transportation strategies to maintain the existing transportation infrastructure while meeting the future needs of all federally funded transportation modes in the MPA, including highways, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian, freight and rail, ferry, and aviation.

#### 5.2.1 Objectives

- Proactive participation techniques may be employed to involve citizens and provide fuller access to information and technical data on the Transportation Plan. The technique may include, but not be limited to, public meetings/hearings, surveys, focus groups, newsletters, public service announcements, charrettes, transportation advisory group, mass media, etc.
- Public meetings may be held to formulate a vision for the MTP development, provide the public background information on the metropolitan transportation system and other issues as well as the proposed framework of the MTP update process, and to receive citizen input.



- Public meetings (forums) designed to solicit public comment may be held at various locations around the metropolitan area to encourage the greatest public participation.
- Efforts will be made to hold public meetings at a locations which are accessible to persons with disabilities and preferably located along a transit route.

Notifications will inform the public of the availability of the draft MTP for review and comment, where to send written comments, and addresses and phone numbers of contact persons. The notices also will include an announcement that states that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (e.g. having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator, or other provisions as requested). Additionally, the notice will inform the public where copies of the draft MTP will be on file for public review. A copy will also be available in a PDF format for downloading on the WMPO website.

### 5.3 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP)

The federally required Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program, or MTIP, is a comprehensive listing of all the WMPOs transportation projects that receive federal funds. The MTIP sets forth the Board's priorities, funding and scheduling of transportation improvement projects (highway, bicycle, pedestrian, transit capital and operating assistance, and other transportation improvements in the WMPO) using State and federal funds. The MTIP serves as the project selection document for transportation projects and, therefore, is the implementation mechanism by which the objectives of the MTP are reached.

The MTIP and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) must match exactly in projects, schedule, and scope, for projects to move forward with federal funding. It is therefore critical that close coordination be held with the State to assure that both parties are in agreement with the program and thus allow projects and programs (including transit elements) to move forward.

The Board adopts the MTIP and STIP every two years. By law, the MTIP and STIP must cover at least a three-year period and contain a priority list of projects grouped by year. Further, the MTIP and STIP must be financially constrained by year (meaning that the amount of dollars programmed must not exceed the amount of dollars estimated to be available). Federal regulations also require an opportunity for public comment prior to MTIP approval.

#### 5.3.1 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

The WMPO publishes the annual listing of obligated projects which displays projects and strategies that were authorized and committed using federal funds in the previous year. The annual listing will be published on the WMPO website at [www.wmpo.org](http://www.wmpo.org) within ninety (90) days following the end of the program year. Hard copies are available upon request by contacting the WMPO.

### 5.4 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The FAST Act requires each MPO, as a condition to the receipt of federal highway and transit capital or operating assistance, to conduct a documented comprehensive transportation planning



process. A Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which includes planning and project development activities that address transportation issues in the area, is required by this process. Annual certification that the planning process is being carried on in conformance with stated requirements is necessary for the receipt of funding for surface transportation programs, air quality, national highway system, Interstate maintenance, state bridge replacement, and transit capital and operating funds.

The purpose of the UPWP is to administer the MPO planning program and carry out the planning activities necessary to implement the MTP. It also serves to document the proposed expenditures of federal, state and local transportation planning funds, and provides a management tool for the WMPO and the funding agencies in scheduling major transportation planning activities and projects.

The major elements of the Unified Planning Work Program include:

- Surveillance of Change
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Planning Work Program
- Transportation Improvement Plan
- Civil Rights/Other Regulatory Requirements
- Incidental Planning/Project Development
- Management and Operations

The UPWP must identify the MPO’s planning tasks to be undertaken with the use of federal transportation funds, including highway and transit funds. The purpose of public involvement in the UPWP process is to keep the public apprised of and to receive input on the planning activities to be undertaken by the MPO.

### 5.5 Plan Specific Chart

	<b>Public Comment Period</b>	<b>Public Hearing</b>	<b>Draft Document Availability</b>	<b>Responding to Public Comment</b>	<b>Final Plan Availability</b>
<b>MTP</b>	Minimum 30 days	Not required	WMPO offices and website, WMPO member planning department offices, and at area libraries	When significant written/oral comments are received on the draft, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final MTP	WMPO offices and website, WMPO member planning department offices, and at area libraries
<b>MTIP</b>	Minimum 30 days	Yes, prior to the MTIP adoption every 2 years	WMPO offices and website	When significant written/oral comments are received shall be presented to the Board	WMPO offices and website
<b>UPWP</b>	Minimum 30 days	Not required	WMPO offices and website	When significant written/oral comments are received shall be presented to the Board	WMPO offices and website
<b>PPP</b>	Minimum 45 days	Not required	WMPO offices and website	When significant written/oral comments are received shall be presented to the Board	WMPO offices and website