Participation Plan

Michigan Department of Transportation
State Long Range Transportation Plan
2005–2030

Prepared for
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Chapter 1. Introduction

The goal of the Participation Plan (PP) for the update of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Long Range Transportation Plan (MI Transportation Plan) is to ensure that the process for public engagement is inclusive, sensitive, and responsive to the diverse issues of the stakeholders and the public. One focus of the MI Transportation Plan will be to identify transportation investment strategies that will contribute to the economic growth of the state. Another important focus will be on the users of the system—improving mobility and connectivity to all residents of the state. For example, like many other states, Michigan is experiencing a population that is growing older and whose mobility will become increasingly important.

A strategic, flexible, and dynamic participation process is required to guide the education, outreach, and engagement activities throughout the MI Transportation Plan development. The process will need to be nimble to allow for mid-course corrections to ensure that the update meets its goals and the needs of the public. This includes establishing an ongoing, inclusive, and meaningful two-way communication with the stakeholders and the public.

The process must be transparent so that everyone is educated and informed of the progress of the work and understands how their input has been incorporated as appropriate. Access and inclusiveness are key components of the approach to participation. The goal will be to "cast as wide a net as possible," so that the MI Transportation Plan really reflects the interests of a broad and varied constituency. The project team will pay special attention to identifying and involving the underserved, minority, and low income populations by: 1) holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times; 2) making materials available in alternative formats and languages upon request; and 3) proving translators where there is an identified need.

The PP is an integral part of the development of the MI Transportation Plan. It will include and build upon significant participation activities MDOT has undertaken during and after the highly successful Transportation Summit, including the work of the Communication, Consciousness-Raising, & Public Involvement Action Team, as well as the recent development and adoption of the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) policy. Coordination with MDOT's Office of Communications will occur throughout the process, so that a consistent message will emerge and be delivered through press releases, public meetings, and the study Web site.

Technical staff will provide the techniques, tools, and strategies needed to inform and educate the public regarding existing conditions across the state. The public will play an important role in the development and adoption of the MI Transportation Plan through this participation process. A knowledgeable public is central to the successful development and implementation of the MI Transportation Plan.