Public Involvement

MDOT strives to continually involve the public and stakeholders in the development of its programs and projects. The Five-Year Transportation Program process is an important opportunity to implement the vision that citizens and businesses have for Michigan. Transportation projects are often many years in the making, so it is important to engage stakeholders early so that public participation can help shape mutually desired outcomes. The Five-Year Transportation Program creates a continuous, interactive dialogue with the users of the state transportation system to anchor MDOT’s project development and delivery systems. MDOT’s seven region offices, 22 Transportation Service Centers (TSC) and statewide planning staff work throughout the year to share project lists with local agencies, stakeholders and the public. Information is presented at rural elected officials meetings, TSC meetings, Rural Task Force meetings, and meetings with legislators. In addition to formal presentations, MDOT staff members informally discuss individual projects within the plan with economic development and tourism agencies, rural planning agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, road commissions, local officials, tribal governments, businesses, local nonprofit groups and the general public.

Public participation in MDOT’s Five-Year Transportation Program feeds into the biennial State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Five-Year Transportation Program also serves as an opportunity for the public to be notified and provide local input to the upcoming STIP. The road and bridge projects proposed in years one through four of the Five-Year Program are incorporated into MDOT’s STIP. Michigan is required to complete this planning process to receive federal transportation funding. MDOT will work with urban Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), rural transportation agencies and the public over the next several months to arrive at a list of projects to guide investment decisions.

The public review and comment period for the Preliminary Draft of the MDOT 2015-2019 Five-Year Transportation Program was Dec. 5, 2014, through Jan. 5, 2015. On Dec. 5, MDOT placed the document on the MDOT website and issued a news release and e-mail notification to invite comments. The e-mail notice went to state transportation advocacy groups, regional planning agencies, Rural Task Force members and other interested groups. Also available on the MDOT website was an interactive state map feature, which encouraged users to view the Five-Year Transportation Program project list geographically and quickly locate projects by year. The interactive state map website containing the document and the interactive maps received more than 2,700 visits, and the document was downloaded 780 times within the comment period.

MDOT received a total of 20 submitted public comments on the draft program:

- Five comments were directed at poor road conditions and the need for improvement at a variety of trunkline locations.
- Three comments specifically mentioned the poor conditions on ramps and/or poor ramp alignments.
- Two comments suggested that programmed projects in 2017 and 2019 needed to be moved up to current year due to their poor ride quality.
- Two comments suggested the need for funding for ferry service in Chippewa County.
- One comment complained about the complete shutdown of freeways for reconstruction, specifically I-96 in Livonia, being detrimental to the business community and commuters.
- One comment suggested MDOT should advocate more on behalf of commuters through upgrading US-23, the Barton Road interchange, and completing US-127 and US-31 in Berrien County.
- One comment discussed the possibility of using sand instead of salt for winter road treatments.
- One comment focused on possible improvements for the online interactive map of projects.
- One comment asked for more emphasis on MDOT efficiencies.
- One comment suggested the need for a new interchange.
- One comment was focused on gas prices and the “Reality Check” series.
- One comment mentioned a local road network suggestion.

Information and comments received were directed to appropriate MDOT project areas or MDOT region planners. Response letters to individuals were generated to address their area of concern or recognize a comment. Local road comments were forwarded to the appropriate local offices. MDOT appreciates receiving feedback and looks forward to providing more avenues for public involvement through MDOT’s website and social media outlets.