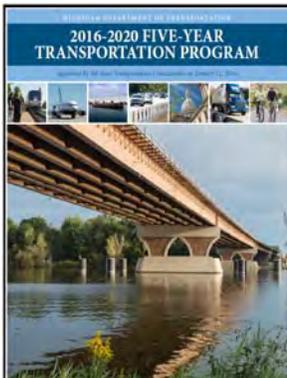


# 2017-2020 STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

## Introduction



*MDOT's State Long-Range Plan is an assessment of key trends, demographic changes and initiatives that will guide the selection of transportation projects through 2040 (update in progress in 2016). View it at: [www.michigan.gov/slrp](http://www.michigan.gov/slrp).*



*Another important document in the STIP process is MDOT's annual Five-Year Transportation Program, a listing of state road and bridge projects planned for the next five years. The projects in years one through four become the STIP project list for the state infrastructure. View it at: [www.michigan.gov/mdot5yearplan](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot5yearplan)*

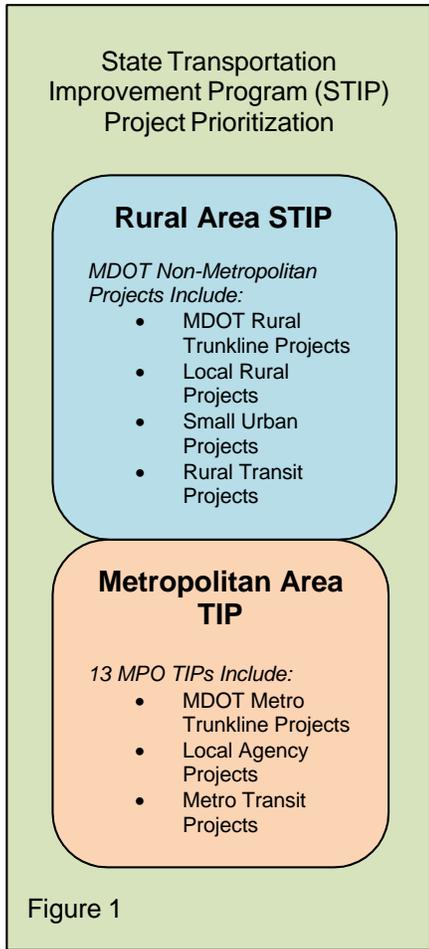
Public participation is integral to efficient, effective and responsive transportation decisions. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) values and encourages public involvement throughout its planning processes. From goal-setting to prioritizing projects to environmental clearance, the public plays an important role in shaping Michigan's transportation system. Through two-way information sharing, stakeholders and MDOT join together to develop plans that best meet the ongoing transportation needs of the state. This Public Participation Plan provides a road map for assuring that the public's voice is not only heard, but makes a difference in moving Michigan forward.

## The STIP's Role in Transportation Planning

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a federally mandated planning document that lists surface transportation projects that the state plans to fund with federal aid. It provides information on the programs and projects to which state and local transportation agencies have committed to over the next four years, and verifies that financial resources are available and sufficient. Included are all federal-aid transit projects, rural federal-aid road projects, federal-aid road projects in small urban areas, and state trunkline projects located within metropolitan planning organization (MPO) areas. By federal law, the STIP list must be:

- Consistent with the state long-range plan
- Financially constrained
- Cover at least four years
- Provide for input from the public
- Meet air quality conformity regulation

The primary source of funding for Michigan's transportation programs are federal funds provided under multi-year federal authorization acts. Federal surface transportation funds are generated from federal motor fuel taxes and certain excise taxes, and distributed to states by formula. The STIP is a compilation of transportation projects that will be authorized for funding in fiscal years 2017-2020. "Financially constrained" means the total cost of the listed projects cannot exceed available funds; so, for a project to be listed in the STIP, it has to have identified funding within the four-year period covered by the document. This makes the STIP an important reference used by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in approving the use of federal funds for transportation projects in Michigan. Projects must be in the STIP to move forward to completion.



So how does the STIP fit with MDOT’s overall plan? Which agencies are responsible for determining if a project should be included? The department’s recently updated State Long-Range Transportation Plan (SLRP), *2040 MI Transportation Plan*, is a policy document that identifies overarching goals and objectives for the state’s transportation program through 2040. The SLRP is important because it determines the priority by which prospective projects are approved or denied. The STIP is the vehicle for implementing Michigan’s goals for its transportation system. All projects listed in the STIP contribute to achieving one or more of the objectives stated in the SLRP.

While the project lists tend to generate the most public interest and input, the STIP also includes important information on the transportation planning processes, public involvement, and a financial plan that compares annual resources to new commitments. All components play a role and need to undergo public review.

Who chooses the projects? Project prioritization is the result of state and local processes designed to assure the broadest participation in meeting the state’s transportation needs. Michigan’s 13 MPOs approve road and bridge projects for the metro areas in the state with populations greater than 50,000. MDOT selects them for the non-MPO areas and rural task forces (RTFs) approve rural transit projects as well as local, non-trunkline work.

Each MPO develops a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for their area in cooperation with MDOT and regional partners to implement their regional transportation plan. As Figure 1 shows, all projects within MPO boundaries, whether under the jurisdiction of MDOT or a local transportation agency, are listed in the relevant MPO TIPs are incorporated by reference in MDOT’s STIP. In these more populated areas, MDOT shares its list of state trunkline projects with the respective MPO that, in turn, determines its TIP list. The MPOs conduct their own extensive public involvement as federally required. Information on specific plans is available through the MPOs.

STIP projects in the rural, or non-MPO, areas of Michigan are developed by MDOT and local government officials through the rural consultation process. MDOT’s central and region offices work closely with regional planning agencies and RTFs to address the needs of the local transportation system, including public transit. The projects included in the STIP are state trunkline projects, local small urban (areas with a population of 5,000-50,000) projects, and local rural projects. The local rural projects are those selected by the RTFs, while small urban projects are prioritized through the Small Urban Program. Those processes are described in greater detail later in this document.

## MDOT's STIP Partners

### **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

- a transportation policy-making body of representatives from local government and transportation agencies with authority and responsibility in metropolitan planning areas with populations greater than 50,000. Members may include counties, cities, townships, airports, transit agencies, intermediate school districts, community colleges, and universities. There are 13 MPOs in Michigan. They submit their projects separately in a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that is referenced in the STIP.

**Rural Task Force (RTF)** - a multi-county decision-making body that chooses how federal dollars are spent on local road and transit projects in a rural geographical area with population less than 400,000. Members may include representatives from a city/village, transit agency or road commission in each county. There are 22 RTFs statewide. Projects approved by the RTFs are included in the STIP.

**Small Urban Task Force** - A decision-making body comprised of cities, villages, transit agencies, and road commissions located within or service urban areas that have a population of 5,000 to 50,000. The committee selects road and transit capital projects for funding consideration under MDOT's Small Urban Program included in the STIP. There are 55 in Michigan.

The STIP is much more than a list of projects. The report also contains information on the federally mandated statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes, MDOT's transportation goals, a financial plan that compares annual transportation resources to new commitments, and the public participation process for the STIP.

### **Cooperation Key among Transportation Providers and Agencies**

Roads in Michigan are owned by cities, villages, counties and the state. Each agency continually evaluates road system operation, pavement and bridge condition, safety, and mobility on their portions of the transportation system.

In large urbanized areas, the city, township and county agencies work together with the transit agencies under an MPO to identify and plan actions to meet regional transportation needs. Contacts for each MPO in the state are listed at the end of this document.

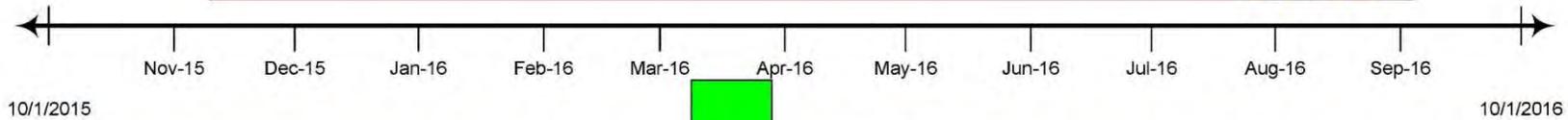
In rural areas, RTFs, which represent a group of counties together with the associated local road agencies, cities, villages and transit agencies, convene annually to create and update the component of the STIP that pertains to their respective region of the state. Contacts for each of the 22 RTFs are available on the Michigan Association of Regions website (link at the end of the document).

MDOT regions and their respective regional planning and development agencies consult annually with local elected officials regarding rural transportation planning issues and needs. This consultation process for local elected officials is federally required and defined as separate and discrete from other public involvement initiatives needed for statewide planning. Similarly, each of the 83 counties holds a meeting with their cities, townships and transit providers to identify eligible projects within funding targets to present at the annual RTF meeting. This process covers the state and assures that local transportation agencies determine what is best for their jurisdiction. Regional planning and development agencies assist MDOT in coordinating these efforts.

### **Early and Continuous Public Involvement**

The STIP public involvement opportunities are as diverse as the processes used to select projects. As Figure 2 shows, project prioritization takes several months to complete and involves multiple opportunities along the way for the public to have an important voice

# STIP/Five-Year Transportation Program Timeline



10/1/2015

10/1/2016

**2017 - 2021  
Five-Year Transportation  
Program**

**New State and Federal Revenue Packages  
November & December 2015**

Revised Investment Strategy January - February	Five-Year Transportation Program Document Development	Draft Document Submitted to STC July 2016	Public Comment 30 days	Approval for Final Document by STC September 2016 Submit to Legislature
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**2017 - 2020  
State Transportation  
Improvement Program**

MPO and RTF Project Selection begins	Rural Project Selection and STIP Document Development	MPO Approvals of Projects and TIP's April - June	TIP's submitted to MDOT & STIP Finalized Public Comment July - August	Submit STIP/TIP's to FHWA/FTA August 15	Federal Approval of STIP/TIP's by October 1st
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**Five-Year Transportation Program/STIP Snapshot  
March 15**

Written Comment	Public Meeting
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**Get Involved! Tip #1:** *MDOT planners and region and Transportation Service Center (TSC) engineers often are present at local council, commission and other government meetings to present project concepts, answer questions and receive input from participants. During STIP development, these meetings help MDOT gather input on project priorities. They also can be an excellent opportunity to discuss preliminary project details and influence things like traffic management plans, detours and staging as projects move from concept to construction.*

**Get Involved! Tip #2:** *The more involved you are in the workings of your local government, the better able you are to shape transportation decisions. Foster relationships with city managers, township supervisors, road commission engineers and MDOT region and TSC contacts to learn what's ahead and make your needs known. Don't wait. The earlier you get involved the better.*

**Get Involved! Tip #3:** *Want to know which projects MDOT is planning for the next five years? View them on a map at [www.michigan.gov/stip](http://www.michigan.gov/stip) or request a printed copy at 517-373-2227. Tell MDOT what you think!*

in STIP development. The most effective way to get involved is to participate in project discussions early, frequently and strategically with as many decision-makers as possible. Participation at MPO, RTF and pre-RTF county meetings is a great way to share in the discussions that shape local decisions. It is also effective for learning what lies ahead for MDOT and the state's transportation needs. Also indicated in the STIP flow chart are various opportunities for providing written and spoken comments during public meetings. Comments shared at meetings will be directed to the appropriate MDOT staff for consideration and follow up. Dates, times and locations of scheduled public meetings are included in this document or available through the STIP website at [www.michigan.gov/stip](http://www.michigan.gov/stip).

The MPO and RTF processes coordinate with MDOT's STIP development. Since the MPOs must approve MDOT's road and bridge projects located within metropolitan boundaries, MDOT planners share project lists with MPO technical committees early on in TIP development. The technical committees discuss the benefits of each project at public meetings before voting on a list of projects to recommend to the MPO policy committee and governing board. MPOs are responsible for their own public involvement plans, but at a minimum, committee and board meetings are open to the public and advertised as involvement opportunities.

### **The Annual Call and Five-Year Transportation Program**

The STIP cycle begins with MDOT's Annual Call for (Highway) Projects, which adds a year of state road and bridge projects to the annual Five-Year Transportation Program. During the Call, MDOT's TSCs throughout the state communicate with RTFs, county road commissions, MPOs, cities, and villages to evaluate a list of prospective projects. This advanced notice of potential projects gives the local agencies an opportunity to comment and influence such things as scheduling in order to coordinate proposed work with local projects and events. This annual process also presents opportunities to review upcoming projects scheduled for the next four years, explain MDOT's process for prioritizing projects for the fifth year, communicate system condition goals, and discuss pavement management strategies. This two-way communication and collaboration is beneficial to the parallel MPO and RTF processes.

The Five-Year Transportation Program is an excellent example of MDOT's ongoing effort to encourage early involvement in developing projects for the STIP. It is an integrated multi-modal program that implements the goals and policies outlined by the State Transportation Commission (STC), emphasizing preservation of the transportation system and providing safe mobility to Michigan's citizens.

**Get Involved! Tip #4:** MDOT publishes its Five Year Transportation Program in July for 30 days of public review and comment. This review period is especially important during STIP prep, since the first through fourth years of the Five-Year Transportation Program comprise MDOT's trunkline projects in the next STIP. The list appears on MDOT's website as an interactive map where the public may comment on specific projects. The STC approves the program at the September meeting, another opportunity for the public to comment publically on MDOT's transportation priorities.

**Get Involved! Tip #5:** Since many decisions that go into STIP development are local, attend your local MPO, RTF or small urban committee meetings to have the greatest voice in project prioritization. Transportation decisions move along in the planning process more slowly than quickly, so the earlier you get involved the better. Learn when the meetings are scheduled at [www.michigan.gov/stip](http://www.michigan.gov/stip). Don't wait until projects break ground to express yourself.

**Get Involved! Tip #6:** Your final opportunity to comment on the 2017-2020 STIP will occur in July when the draft document is released for review and comment. Remember that the projects included in the lists have been scrutinized by MDOT and local agencies throughout several months of planning. Tell MDOT if the list does not include a project you would like to see. It's never too late to make your voice heard. Projects that do not appear can always be included in the next STIP. Stay involved along the way to assure your voice is heard.

Besides providing a list of road and bridge projects planned for the next five years, the document addresses the investment strategies, funding assumptions, and economic benefits and impacts for the various modes, including highways, public transit, rail, aviation, marine, and nonmotorized transportation. It is a major effort to keep the general public and local planning agencies throughout the state informed early in the process of project and program development. It also provides an excellent opportunity for the public to influence the department's priorities and the development of projects for inclusion in subsequent STIPs.

The STC approves the draft Five-Year Transportation Program for public review in July. The draft list also is shared with the multi-county RTF members, regional planning agencies, MPOs, tribal governments and transportation user groups. Following a 30-day public comment period, the commission reviews and approves the final document for implementation. The document is placed on MDOT's website at <http://mdotnetpublic.state.mi.us/fyp/> and is printed upon request. Additionally, the road and bridge projects are plotted on a Web-based interactive state map with location, type of work, construction year and contact information on each project. The public can easily view projects of interest, comment on them or suggest additional needed improvements. Throughout the year, various public outreach sessions hosted by each MDOT region provide venues for individuals, groups, and local government officials to make needs and priorities known for consideration as subsequent Five-Year Transportation Programs are developed.

### **Building the STIP**

MDOT planners develop the STIP list from road and bridge projects included in years one through four of the Five-Year Transportation Program that are not part of an MPO TIP. Again, each of the 13 MPOs prepares its own STIP list of state and local projects; they are included by reference in MDOT's STIP. Besides trunkline road and bridge projects, the STIP includes federal-aid transit and local road and bridge projects approved by local RTFs and small urban committees.

Though MDOT does not own or operate transit and intercity passenger bus services in the state, it does assist providers with obtaining funds needed for capital improvements. Rural public transit projects in the STIP must be approved by the local RTF or be recommended to MDOT by the small urban committee in urbanized areas with populations of 5,000 to 50,000. The small urban task forces, at locally publicized meetings, also choose non-trunkline road projects to include in MDOT's Small Urban Program list in the STIP as funds are available.

As MDOT moves forward with the STIP development, MPOs do the same with their TIPs. The STIP and TIPs are evaluated for air quality conformity, environmental justice analysis and environmental considerations, and reported in the draft STIP. MDOT finalizes the draft STIP document and releases it for a 30-day public comment period. The MPOs conduct a similar involvement process before approving their TIP and submitting it to MDOT for inclusion in the STIP.

### **Specific Procedures Planned for STIP Public Involvement**

- In April, the year before the STIP is to be approved, MDOT issues a Call for (Highway) Projects to determine the list of state trunkline projects to include in the Five-Year Transportation Program.
- In July, the department presents to the STC the draft list of projects to include in the next 2017-2021 Five-Year Transportation Program. The commission meetings are public meetings with an opportunity for public comment.
- With commission approval of the draft, MDOT begins a 30-day public review period by making the list available online through its interactive map that shows project locations, description of work, construction year and contact information. Printed copies of the document are made available upon request.
- MDOT sends notices to all media outlets in Michigan's 83 counties announcing the availability of the draft Five-Year Transportation Program for public review and comment. Notification also is sent to other newspapers or newsletters with circulations serving transit-dependent persons, minorities and other traditionally underserved populations.
- MDOT expands its STIP website to include additional information on how the STIP process works, with emphasis on early and continuous involvement opportunities. The information is available in printed form and distributed through MDOT region and TSC offices and regional planning agencies. A listing of the addresses of these offices is attached. A copy also is posted on MDOT's website. Written comments on the draft STIP may be submitted on the STIP website or mailed to the Bureau of Transportation Planning. MDOT responds to comments as needed.
- Information on asset management strategies, program revenue assumptions and investment strategies information used in developing the program and projects also is included in the draft Five-Year Transportation Program document.
- MDOT summarizes the comments received on the draft Five-Year Transportation Program during the review period to include in the final document.

Appropriate changes based on public and agency comments are made to the draft document to present to the commission for approval.

- The commission will review and approve the final Five-Year Transportation Program document in September. Commission meetings are public with an opportunity for public comment.
- The final document is submitted to the Legislature, including years one through four from the list of MDOT road and bridge projects. MDOT updates the online mapped listing of the Five-Year Transportation Program as needed and removes its draft status.
- In Michigan's urbanized areas, with agreement of the areas' MPOs, the STIP public involvement process is coordinated with the MPO's public involvement activities conducted as part of the MPOs' TIP development process. MDOT representatives attend public meetings/open houses associated with the MPOs' TIP public involvement activities. Known meeting dates, times and locations are included in this document or listed on MDOT's STIP website at [www.michigan.gov/stip](http://www.michigan.gov/stip).
- Regional planning agencies (RPAs), under contract with MDOT, work with county, city, village and township governments and transit agencies to select local projects through the RTF process. The RPAs help individual counties conduct pre-RTF public meetings to discuss and select projects that meet local needs. County representatives then bring their needs to the RTF, comprised of multiple counties in a rural area, where projects are selected for the STIP. MDOT representatives at the RTF meetings share information on state trunkline projects to help coordinate with local priorities.
- MDOT issues a Call for Projects among the 55 small urban communities with populations of 5,000 to 50,000 to solicit recommendations for road and transit capital projects. The county, city, village and township governments and transit agencies select local projects through the Small Urban Task Force process, which MDOT funds based on need and available funding. The meetings are publicized and open to the public. Meeting dates, times and locations are listed on MDOT's STIP website.
- In May and June, the MPO Technical Advisory and Policy committees vet their final project lists to the public and vote to approve the list of projects for reference in MDOT's STIP. The meeting dates, times and locations are listed in this document or listed on MDOT's STIP website.
- In August, MDOT releases the draft STIP document

## STIP DECISION POINTS / PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Milestone or Decision Point	Public Involvement Activity	Comment Period	Public Comment Method	Information Available	Notification Method	How input will be used
Release draft Five-Year Transportation Program.	Review draft Five-Year Transportation Plan, comment as desired; learn about concurrent MDOT, MPO and RTF processes.	30-day public review and comment period July-August.	Written comments submitted on Five-Year Transportation Plan via the Web, e-mail or U.S. Mail.	Draft Five-Year Transportation Plan available on MDOT website, printed copies available upon request.	News release to conventional and social media, e-mail to stakeholder groups, post on MDOT website, links on MPO and RPA websites.	Comments analyzed and summarized in final Five-Year Transportation Plan; forward requests for projects not included to region planners for consideration; follow up with commenters as needed.
Concurrent MPO and RTF project prioritization processes.	Attend MPO committee meetings and RTF county meetings to express interest.	Varies; MPOs and RTFs make meeting notices public; contact local agencies involved to learn more about specific comment opportunities.	Varies; MPOs and RTFs required to make meeting notices public; contact local agencies involved to learn more about specific comment opportunities.	MPOs and RTFs responsible for preparing and updating project lists as they move through selection process.	MPOs and RTFs are required to publish notice of project prioritization meetings; notification varies by MPO; RPAs assist RTFs.	Comments are considered by decision-makers and referred to appropriate agency for follow up. Comments requiring response are followed up.
State Transportation Commission approves final Five-Year Transportation Plan.	Attend TSC meeting in July comment in person.	Commission provides an opportunity for public to address it during proceedings.	Verbal comments taken from public at the start of commission meeting.	Final posted on MDOT website after approval by STC.	The STC schedule is available on MDOT's website.	Information shared with the commission will be recorded in the minutes and staff will follow up as needed.
MDOT planners assemble STIP project lists for STIP.	Review final Five-Year Transportation Plan list of projects on MDOT website; obtain printed copy by request.	Ongoing.	Complete comment form on Web or contact MDOT region planner or TSC manager in person or by phone.	Final MDOT Five-Year Transportation Plan list available online, viewable by location with type of work, construction year and TSC contact.	MDOT issues news release announcing final list available for review; news release sent to statewide news and social media.	Public comments shared with MDOT planners who will make changes and/or follow up with commenter as needed.
RTFs submit final STIP lists to MDOT.	Final RTF project prioritization meetings open to the public.	Ongoing.	Comments taken in writing via websites, e-mail, phone or U.S. Mail.	Regional planning agencies post final project lists on their websites; MDOT STIP website links to regional planning agency sites.	Regional planning agencies announce final list of non-trunkline projects that will go into MDOT STIP.	Public comments shared with regional planning agency and RTF leadership for consideration and follow up as needed.
MPOs submit final TIP lists to MDOT for inclusion in the TIP by reference.	Attend MPO committee (public) meetings where trunkline projects are discussed and approved.	Ongoing.	MPO meetings are public with opportunities during meetings for the public to comment on lists.	MPOs prepare final lists and submit to MDOT for reference in STIP; website links to MPOs.	MPOs announce public meetings for final TIP approval.	Public comments shared with MPO and MDOT region management for follow up.
MDOT places draft STIP document online for public comment.	Comment on the draft STIP document.	July-August.	Written comment submitted on draft STIP via the Web, e-mail or U.S. Mail.	Draft STIP available on MDOT STIP website, printed copies available upon request, Information explaining STIP process available on website.	News release to conventional and social media, e-mail to stakeholder groups and previous participants; post on STIP and Five-Year Transportation Plan website, links on MPO and RPA websites.	Comments analyzed and summarized in final STIP; forward project requests for region planners for consideration in next Call for Project, follow up with commenters as needed.

Finalize STIP and submit to FHWA and FTA for approval	Review final STIP document online or request printed copy	Ongoing	Website comment form or submit e-mail, U.S. mail or fax.	Final document available online at MDOT STIP website	MDOT issues news release announcing federal approvals	Comments shared with MDOT planners, follow up as needed
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*Bolded text indicates key points when public should get involved in STIP process.*

for public review and comment. The document is placed online at MDOT's STIP website and made available at MDOT region and TSC offices, as well as at the MPOs and RPAs. MDOT and RPAs notify local government agencies, transportation advocacy groups and interested public of the availability of the draft document. Local libraries also will be contacted to include a link to the document through their websites.

- Comments generated in the draft STIP review process will be evaluated and the results will be reflected in the final STIP. A document summarizing the comments and MDOT's responses to the comments is developed and made available.
- The final STIP is scheduled for submittal to the FHWA/FTA in August. As the final STIP is developed, if it becomes apparent that there are significant differences from the draft STIP, MDOT will make the document available for another public review prior to submittal to the FHWA/FTA.
- MDOT will review the effectiveness of this STIP Public Participation Plan at key milestones throughout the process to determine if it is accomplishing the objectives outlined in the federal guidance for statewide transportation planning. As needed, MDOT may make minor adjustments to the plan without requiring a 45-day public comment period.

### **Amending the STIP**

While the STIP is completely updated every two to three years, it is a dynamic document that may undergo annual changes due to shifts in priorities and funding. Amendments to the project lists in metropolitan areas are the responsibility of individual MPOs, which follow procedures detailed in their public participation plans. MDOT region planners and engineers work closely with MPOs throughout the year to address and communicate any needed changes that occur between formal STIP cycles. The amendments must go through a similar committee approval process that is subject to public participation.

MDOT projects in rural areas are presented to the public through the annual RTF process. While the RTFs are not required to vote on MDOT projects like MPOs, MDOT region and TSC offices communicate regularly and share changes as they occur with the appropriate local transportation agencies and RTFs.

MDOT's annual Call for Projects and Five-Year Transportation Program provide an excellent way for stakeholders to provide ongoing input and recommend changes in priority to influence the next round of STIP development. MDOT strives to keep the lines of communication open throughout the STIP cycle and beyond to assure that its plans fully address the current transportation needs of the entire state.

**Get Involved! Tip #7:** Do you need assistance to more fully participate in transportation planning? MDOT and its partnering agencies can help. With seven days advance notice, meeting materials can be provided in alternative formats like large print, audio recordings, signing and language translation. Please contact:

Geralyn A. Ayers  
Supervisor, Environmental  
Analysis Unit  
Environmental Services  
Section  
Michigan Department of  
Transportation  
P.O. Box 30050  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Voice: 517-373-2227  
[ayersg@michigan.gov](mailto:ayersg@michigan.gov)

### **Federal Regulations Help Guide Diverse Participation**

MDOT's mission of "Providing the highest quality integrated transportation services for economic benefit and improved quality of life" can only be accomplished when customers are identified and brought into the planning process. MDOT strives to include a diverse public by following various federal statutes that help guide its participation activities.

**Federal Regulations for Statewide Transportation Planning.** The federal regulations related to participation in transportation decision-making can be found in **Title 23; Section 450.210, Code of Federal Regulations**. These regulations leave the methods for carrying out participation to the discretion of each state; however, participation processes must provide:

- Early and continuous opportunities for involvement.
- Public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times.
- Timely information on transportation issues, processes and procedures.
- Reasonable access to technical and policy information.
- Electronically accessible and available public information via the Web.
- Adequate notice of involvement opportunities at key decision points.
- Methods for considering and responding to public input.
- A course of action for seeking out and considering the needs of traditionally underserved groups.
- Periodic review and evaluation of the participation process.

**Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities.** 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 persons with disabilities. ADA requires specific participation – particularly for developing para-transit plans – such as:

- Outreach by developing contacts, mailing lists, and other means of notification.

- Consultation with disabled individuals.
- The opportunity for public comment.
- Accessible formats.
- Public hearings.
- Summaries of significant issues raised during the public comment period.
- Ongoing efforts to involve persons with disabilities in planning.

**Anti-Discrimination.** Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, together with related statutes and regulations, provide that “no person shall on the ground of race, color, and national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal funds. The entire institution, whether educational, private or governmental must comply with Title VI and related Federal civil rights laws, not just the program or activity receiving federal funds.”

Executive orders regarding environmental justice and outreach to persons with limited English proficiency are also regulated under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

**Environmental Justice.** Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 1994, states 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.” Traditionally underserved groups, such as low-income and minority populations, must be identified and given increased opportunity for involvement in order to ensure effective participation.

**Limited English Proficiency.** Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, 2000, requires that recipients of federal financial aid must ensure that the programs and activities normally provided in English are accessible to persons with limited English proficiency.

**Consultation with Native American Tribal Governments.** MDOT considers the concerns of Native American tribal governments that have jurisdiction over land within the state. The department provides meaningful and timely consultation with 12 federally recognized sovereign Native American tribal governments on a regular basis and prior to certain types of department actions. MDOT’s tribal affairs coordinator serves as a point of contact for Native American tribal governments to facilitate communication and problem resolution on transportation-related topics. Coordinating with Native American tribes is an essential part of determining transportation needs and the environmental impacts and mitigation of proposed projects.

Besides the development of the SLRP and STIP, under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and MDOT's Programmatic Agreement with FHWA, the department is responsible for consulting with any Native American tribe that attaches religious and/or cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by an MDOT transportation project. MDOT's staff archaeologist is responsible for all project-specific Native American tribal consultation.

### **Conclusion**

Many factors play into MDOT, MPO and RTF project prioritization. System operation, pavement and bridge condition, safety and funding are a few. Public involvement is important as well. While the agencies invite and encourage comments, both favorable and critical, they must be weighed among the myriad of factors that influence decisions. Just as it is important for the public to provide a rationale for recommending certain improvements or approaches, decision-makers must be willing to share their reasoning to foster understanding. Two-way communication can help raise awareness on important issues like purpose, staging and traffic management that can benefit the project from development through construction.

### **For Further Information**

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#### **MDOT Rural Task Force Program**

[www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9621\\_17216\\_54903---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9621_17216_54903---,00.html)

#### **Map of Rural Task Force Areas**

Michigan Association of Regions website

[www.miregions.com](http://www.miregions.com)

#### **MDOT Small Urban Program**

[www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9621\\_17216\\_40829---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9621_17216_40829---,00.html)

#### **MDOT STIP**

[www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9621\\_14807\\_14808---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9621_14807_14808---,00.html)

#### **MDOT Five-Year Transportation Program**

[www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9621\\_14807\\_14810\\_59639---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9621_14807_14810_59639---,00.html)

#### **MDOT Region Map**

[www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9623-36042--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9623-36042--,00.html)

#### **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO List**

[www.mtpa-mi.org/members.asp](http://www.mtpa-mi.org/members.asp)

***Resources for Involving Persons with Special Mobility Needs***

***Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs***

***Bureau of Services for Blind Persons***

[www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-28313---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-28313---,00.html)

201 N. Washington Square, Second Floor

Lansing, MI 48909

Phone: 517-373-2062

Fax: 517-335-5140

DSS TTY: 517-373-4025

Toll-Free (voice): 800-292-4200

***Michigan Department of Civil Rights***

***Division of Deaf, Blind, and Hard of Hearing***

[www.michigan.gov/mdcr/0,4613,7-138-28545-23760--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr/0,4613,7-138-28545-23760--,00.html)

110 W. Michigan Ave., Suite 800

Lansing, MI 48913

VP: 517-507-5223

Toll-Free Voice/TTY: 877-499-6232

Fax: 517-241-3963

Names of Councils and Commissions on Aging can be obtained from:

***Michigan Department of Health and Human Services***

***Aging and Adult Services Agency***

[www.michigan.gov/miseniors](http://www.michigan.gov/miseniors)

300 E. Michigan Ave., Third Floor

Lansing, MI 48933

Phone: 517-373-8230

Fax: 517-373-4092

DSS TDD: 517-373-4096

## ***Glossary of Terms***

<i><b>Annual Call for (Highway) Projects</b></i>	The process of adding a new year to the rolling Five - Year Transportation Program.
<i><b>Collaborative Task Force</b></i>	A group that is assigned a specific task of reaching a conclusion or resolving a difficult issue and making recommendations to decision-makers.
<i><b>Community Advisory Committee</b></i>	A group of community residents who meet regularly to discuss issues of common concern and to convey the community's perspective to decision-makers.
<i><b>Environmental Justice</b></i>	A federal policy that protects minority populations and low-income populations from experiencing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of federally funded programs, policies and activities.
<i><b>Executive Order</b></i>	A directive issued by the president of the United States or the state governor.
<i><b>Federal Aid</b></i>	Federal funds allocated to the state from federal gas tax revenues. Only certain classes of roads are eligible for federal aid.
<i><b>Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)</b></i>	The federal government agency that oversees the distribution of federal funds for and the activities pertaining to airport development.
<i><b>Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)</b></i>	The federal government agency that oversees the distribution of federal funds for and the activities pertaining to road systems in each state.
<i><b>Federal Transit Administration (FTA)</b></i>	The federal government agency that oversees the distribution of federal funds for and the activities pertaining to transit systems in each state.
<i><b>Financial Constraint</b></i>	Keeping spending within income. Financial constraint is a federal requirement for Transportation Improvement Programs and for long-range plans in metropolitan planning areas.
<i><b>Local Road</b></i>	A road owned and maintained by a county road commission, city or village.
<i><b>MDOT</b></i>	Michigan Department of Transportation
<i><b>Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)</b></i>	Comprised of county road commissions, cities, villages, townships and transit agencies in an area having a population greater than 50,000.
<i><b>Paratransit</b></i>	Special public transportation services for the elderly and disabled.

***Rural Task Force (RTF)*** A group of counties and associated cities, villages and townships working cooperatively to set priorities and oversee transportation investments for a region of the state.

***SLRP*** State Long-Range Plan. A document that identifies statewide transportation needs, sets investment priorities for a period of at least 20 years, and establishes goals and objectives for addressing transportation needs throughout the state.

***State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*** A document that lists specific transportation projects scheduled during a four-year period for the entire state.

***Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)*** The most recent federal legislation authorizing the distribution of federal Highway Trust Funds to the states.

***Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*** A document that lists specific transportation projects scheduled during a three-year period within a metropolitan planning area boundary.

***Title 23*** The United States Code is the codification by subject matter of the general and permanent laws of the United States. It is divided by broad subjects into 50 titles and published by the Office of the Law Revision Counsel of the U.S. House of Representatives. Title 23 covers highways.

***Title VI*** A portion of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin.

***Transit*** A public mode of transportation such as bus or train service.

***Trunkline*** The portion of the road system owned by the State of Michigan.

***Underserved*** Individuals who experience more difficulty getting to work, school, recreation activities, and shopping than the population at large.