



Public Involvement Policy

Adopted: November 19, 2015

Amended: October 18, 2018

Amended: June 27, 2019

Policy Purpose

As a public agency the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization (MMMPO) is required to maintain "...continuous, comprehensive and cooperative planning process." (23 U. S. Code 134 (c) (3)) This means the MMMPO is committed to providing a proactive, open and transparent public involvement process that actively seeks engagement from stakeholders and the public at large.

All public involvement activities should strive to engage underrepresented communities and stakeholders as well as the public at large. In particular any public meetings held under this Policy will be held at convenient locations and times.

The MMMPO's public involvement process must also meet the requirements of State and Federal laws and regulations for an open decision making process that is accessible to the public. The MMMPO will also develop a separate policy to address the requirements of Title VI which will be incorporated into this document when adopted. A list of applicable laws and regulations is included in Appendix 1.



3C PLANNING PROCESS

The process for developing the plans and TIPs shall provide for consideration of all modes of transportation and shall be continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive to the degree appropriate, based on the complexity of the transportation problems to be addressed.

-- 23 U.S. Code 134 (c) (3)

This Policy is subject to the review by the following agencies:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT)
- Other agencies as may be required by law

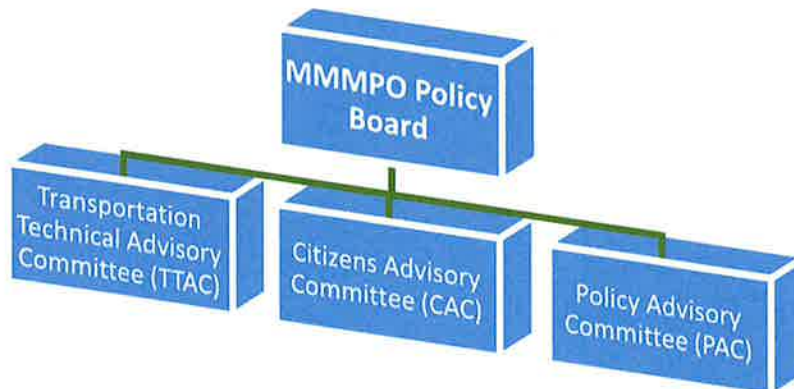
As possible all public involvement activities should be coordinated with ongoing State and Federal activities, particularly for statewide transportation planning public involvement and the associated consultation processes.

Relationship to the MMMPO Structure

The MMMPO Bylaws establishes three (3) advisory Committees for the consideration of the documents the MPO produces and the policies the MPO adopts for the development of the MPO's products, services and positions. These Committees are

- Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC)
- Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)

These Committees act in an advisory capacity to the MMMPO's Policy Board, the MPO's decision making body.



The TTAC and CAC meet prior to each Policy Board meeting to review items for the Policy Board's consideration. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, consideration of these items by these two Committee's is considered one of the primary outreach strategies of this Policy. The meetings of these Committee's and the related meeting agenda's for these Committees will be advertised on the MPO's website at least three (3) days prior to a regularly scheduled meeting.

Unless specifically mentioned below, all of the items considered by the Policy Board will be publicly reviewed by these Committees as part of this Public Involvement Process.

How a transportation project get approved at the MMMPO



All notices publicized on the MMMPO’s website will also be forwarded to all MPO standing committee members and a list of public outlets and stakeholders established in a list of media agencies to be kept by MMMPO staff. A preliminary list of these agencies is included as Appendix 2 of this document.

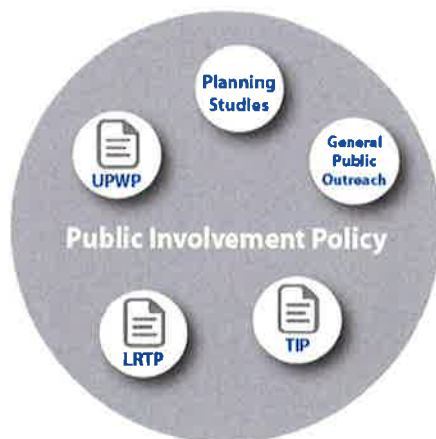
The MPO’s Policy Advisory Committee will meet at least twice a year to discuss ongoing policy initiatives and the activities of the MPO. These meetings will be conducted in an open public forum format.

As the decision making body for the MMMPO, the Policy Board will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Regularly scheduled Policy Board meetings will be broadcast on the City of Morgantown’s public access channel unless technical difficulties do not allow this.
- The agenda for the Policy Board will be publicized on the MPO Website six (6) days prior to the Policy Board meeting.
- Special meetings may be called where it may not be possible for the meeting to be broadcast. In this instance adequate notice as stipulated by applicable law will be given to the public outlets and stakeholders established on the MMMPO Media/Stakeholder list.
- The Policy Board will open the floor for public comment at the beginning of each meeting. At the discretion of the Chairman, comments made to the Policy Board may be limited to four (4) minutes.

Applicability of the Public Involvement Policy

This Policy is applicable to consideration of all action items and recommendations made to and by the MMMPO Policy Board by the MMMPO’s committees with the exception of the consideration of personnel issues and similar matters that are exempted from open meetings laws under State code. The Policy also provides guidance in the development of planning documents and planning studies. In addition to meeting the requirements of the MMMPO, the Policy is meant to address the public involvement requirements for the adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and TIP Amendments for the Mountain Line Transit Authority.



Specific requirements for individual items considered by the MMMPO, particularly this Public Involvement Policy, the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP or MTP) and amendments, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and amendments, the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and planning studies, and general public involvement activities are described below.

Adoption Process of the Public Involvement Policy



Public Involvement Policy

The initial review of this Policy will be conducted by an ad-hoc review committee established with representation from the TTAC, CAC, and Policy Board. The ad-hoc Committee will recommend the release of the Policy for a minimum of a forty five (45) day review period prior to adoption of the Policy by the Policy Board. Notice of the release of the Policy for comment will be made on the MMMPO website, provided to established media outlets and an advertisement notifying the public of the availability of the Policy will be placed in the local newspaper.

During the forty five (45) day comment period, the Policy will be reviewed prior the next Policy Board meeting by the TTAC and CAC as part of the established review process. Written comments from the public on the Policy will be forwarded to the Policy Board. Verbal comments will be summarized by Staff and forwarded to the Policy Board for their consideration during the adoption process. Staff will periodically review the effectiveness of this Policy to ensure that the procedures and strategies contained in the Policy provide a full and open process.

Long Range Transportation Plan/Metropolitan Transportation Plan Adoption and Amendment

The Long Range Transportation Plan/Metropolitan Transportation Plan is one of the two primary documents the MMMPO produces. It is crucial that the LRTP/MTP have a strong public outreach component to ensure that the plan has public support as the MPO seeks funding to implement the projects identified in the Plan.

Adoption of an Updated LRTP/MTP

Adoption of an Updated LRTP/MTP-The update of the Long Range/Metropolitan Transportation Plan requires these additional steps:

- 1) The public should be notified of the intent to update/develop the LRTP/MTP. This process may occur as part of the public involvement for the development and consideration of the Unified Planning Work Program as part of the MPO's Committee review process identified above.
 - 2** The development of the LRTP will include at least two (2) walk through public forums, as well as at least two (2) Steering Committee meetings where public comments may be received.
 - 45** Unless the draft Plan is found to need major revisions, the Steering Committee will release the draft LRTP/MTP for a forty five (45) day final comment period before consideration by the MPO Policy Board.
- 2) Establishment of a Steering Committee including Policy Board Members, members of the MPO's Committee's, and representatives of the general public.
- 3) The development of the Plan will include _____ at a minimum two walk through public forums, as well as at least two (2) Steering Committee meetings where public comments may be received. The first public forum will present an examination of the existing conditions in the area, and the public will be encouraged to express their concerns with transportation in the area. The second public forum will be to review the recommendations for the LRTP/MTP. The Steering

Committee meetings will be to review the results of the public forums and to receive public comment. It is anticipated that unless the draft Plan is found to need major revisions, the Steering Committee will release the draft LRTP/MTP for a forty five (45) day final comment period before consideration by the MPO Policy Board. In addition to advertisements published a minimum of one (1) week in advance of required meetings, all public outreach activities will include the use of non-traditional media including but not limited to social media such as Facebook and Twitter and similar websites to solicit input and to advertise public involvement activities including meetings. Materials prepared for the MTP will include the use of visualization techniques to assist the public in understanding proposals.

- 4) All public comments received during the comment period will be summarized and presented to the MPO's Committee's and the Policy Board for consideration prior to adoption of the Plan. The summarized comments will be included in an appendix to the Plan.

Amendments to the LRTP/MTP

Amendments to the LRTP/MTP to include a new non-Tier One project require a thirty (30) day public notification for any potential significant change to the LRTP/MTP. A proposal to modify the LRTP/MTP fiscally constrained Tier One Project List must include recommendations for projects to be removed or adjusted to meet the fiscal constraint requirements of the Tier One List. The public must be allowed a minimum 45 day comment period and a minimum of two public meetings on the proposed new project and the project(s) proposed to be impacted by the proposed change to the Tier One List. The MPO Policy Board meeting may be one of the two required public meetings. Minor amendments, meaning those that do not substantially impact the purpose and/or need of a project, require the same notification as a TIP Amendment. This notification will be made to the MMMPO's media and stakeholders list.

Transportation Improvement Program Adoption and Amendment

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the primary document for identifying the projects to be implemented over the next six (6) years. Funding in the TIP is primarily for the first two years with the remaining years being illustrative. The MMMPO is required to prepare and update the TIP approximately every two to three year. The preparation of the TIP and amendments to the TIP will be in accord with the requirements of the applicable Federal legislation and regulations and will include adequate descriptive information including mapping and other visualization techniques as well as identification of implementing agencies, project phases, project costs, identification of Federal funds. All notices for the adoption of the TIP and amendments to the TIP will inform the public that the MPO’s Public Involvement activities also serve as public involvement for Mountain Line Transit.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the primary document for identifying the projects to be implemented over the next six (6) years.



Public Meeting Notice

- Post yearly calendar on the MPO’s website
- Post policy board meeting agenda 6 days prior to meeting
- Post committee meeting agenda 3 days prior to meeting
- Broadcast policy board meetings on public access channel

Adoption of the TIP

Thirty (30) days prior to the preparation of the TIP a notice will be advertised in the local newspaper and provided to the Media/Stakeholders List, posted on the MMMPO’s website and in social media, informing the public that the TIP will be developed and soliciting input into projects that should be recommended for inclusion in the TIP. All comments received will be documented and provided to the MPO’s committees for consideration of inclusion in the draft TIP. Upon completion of the notification period the draft TIP will be included in the MPO committee process as part of the regular agenda for review by the MPO Policy Board. Upon satisfactory review by the MPO Policy Board, the Board will release the draft TIP for

public comment and consideration by the Policy Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Amendment of the TIP and Administrative Adjustment of the TIP

The TIP may be amended at the request of the West Virginia Department of Transportation, the MMMPO, Mountain Line Transit, West Virginia University and the MMMPO's member jurisdictions. Any proposed amendment of the TIP must be advertised fifteen (15) working days in advance of consideration by the MPO Policy Board. Proposed Amendments of the TIP will be subject to the MPO's established Committee process unless it is an emergency. Administrative Adjustments to the TIP will be in accord with the MPO's Administrative Adjustment Policy adopted August 21st 2014 see Appendix 3.

Unified Planning Work Program

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the annual funding document for the MPO's Planning Activities. In addition to review utilizing the MMMPO's standing committee structure the development of the UPWP requires the following activities.

- 1) Notification at the November MPO Committee meetings and Policy Board meeting soliciting input for the development of the UPWP. Notification requesting input from the public, the MPO's member jurisdictions and agencies will be sought through information released to the MPO Media/Stakeholder List.

- 2) The Executive Director will prepare a draft UPWP with the aid of the MPO Executive Committee to be presented for consideration at the regularly scheduled January Policy Board meeting. Upon review the Board may recommend changes to the UPWP and recommend its release for public review for adoption at the Policy Board's regularly scheduled March meeting. All public comments received will be summarized and presented to the MPO's committees and the MPO Policy Board as part of the committee process at the March meeting.

Public Involvement for the Development of General Planning Documents

In addition to LRTP/MTP, the MMMPO prepares various planning studies and documents.

Planning studies meant to further develop or modify the recommendations of the LRTP/MTP or to be adopted by the MPO's Policy Board as opposed to studies meant to document existing conditions such as the MMMPO's Traffic Count Program, must have a proactive public involvement element. The minimum elements to be included in the development of these plans include:

- 1) An ad hoc steering committee made up of stakeholders
- 2) A well-defined public involvement plan including non-traditional outreach strategies for the identification of underserved populations and how they will be addressed.
- 3) A minimum of two (2) public meetings to gather public input and to seek comments on the proposed plan.
- 4) Inclusion in the MPO's regular committee review process.

In addition to these minimum requirements, the development of these planning studies may include additional public involvement techniques including but not limited to charrettes, focus groups, newsletters, web blogs, the use of QR codes to publicize informational websites and other innovative techniques as may be found appropriate for the study being conducted. These techniques should be identified in the public involvement plan.

Ongoing Public Involvement Activities

As a public agency, the MMMPO must engage the area's residents to keep them informed of the agency's activities and potential changes that may occur to the area's transportation network. To accomplish this task the MMMPO's Staff and Officers should be engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the public through the media and public outreach.

The MPO should at a minimum, prepare and distribute a newsletter twice a calendar year and publicize the MPO's efforts through non-traditional social media on an ongoing basis. MPO Staff

should also periodically make presentations to neighborhood and regional groups on the MPO's efforts that may affect the area's residents, particularly in underrepresented communities.

The MMMPO Staff should also maintain ongoing relationships with transportation-oriented groups including but not limited to the Morgantown Bike Board, the Morgantown Pedestrian Board, the Monongahela River Trails Conservancy as well as statewide organizations oriented to transportation. The Executive Director and/or Chairman of the MPO Policy Board should also regularly seek to speak to civic groups including traditional groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary and student associations, and non-traditional groups about the MPO's activities.

Table 1: Public Participation Policy Summary

Plan/Program Adoption			
Program or Plan	Required Notification	Comment Period	Minimum Required Meetings
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	Newspaper, social media, email distribution list	45 Day notice to MPO stakeholders and media lists as well as non-traditional strategies	Two walk through meetings, two public steering committee meetings to receive comments. Review Steering Committee and MPO Committee's
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	Newspaper, social media, email distribution list	30 Day advance public notice to stakeholders and media. Review by all MPO	MPO Committee Meetings. Release of draft by Policy Board for adoption at next

		Committees. Policy Board adoption of draft at subsequent meeting.	Policy Board meeting.
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Noticed as part of 3 regular MPO Committee meetings notices.	Advertised for input as part of regular MPO Committee meeting process beginning in November.	9 regular MPO Committee public meetings (3 TTAC, 3 CAC, 3 Policy Board)
Participation Plan	Newspaper, social media, email distribution list	45 day notice for public comment prior to adoption	Review comments at MPO Committees
Plan/Program Amendments			
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	Newspaper, social media, email distribution list	30 day notice for public comment prior to the addition of any non-Tier One Project. When amending the fiscally constrained Tier One Project List a proposed project must have at least two public meetings over a period of 45 days and the amendment must include the existing projects to be impacted by the addition of the proposed project.	Review comments at MPO Committees
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	Newspaper, social media, email distribution list	15 day notice for public comment prior to adoption	Review comments at MPO Committees

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Noticed as part of 3 regular MPO Committee meetings notices.		Review comments at MPO Committees
Participation Plan	Noticed as part of 3 regular MPO Committee meetings notices.		Review comments at MPO Committees



MPO Website



MPO Facebook



Presentations



Group Meetings



Coordination



Newsletters

This Public Involvement Policy was duly adopted by the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Organization Policy Board at a regularly scheduled and duly advertised meeting June 27, 2019.

J. William B. Austin 6/28/19

J. William B. Austin, AICP

Secretary to the Board

APPENDIX 1

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

- MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (1994)
- Executive Order 13166, 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 the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998(Section 508); and,
- The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.

Appendix 2 Initial Media Stakeholders List for Distribution of Information

The Dominion Post newsroom@dominionpost.org

WAJR Radio Morgantown-

WBOY TV Clarksburg

The Daily Athenaeum WVU Student Newspaper

WMMN Radio Morgantown

Appendix 3 TIP Adjustment Policy



RESOLUTION 2014 #2

MORGANTOWN MONONGALIA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY AMENDMENT

WHEREAS, the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has been requested to adopt a Policy for Administrative Adjustments to the Transit Section of the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program by Mountain Line Transit in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration; and

WHEREAS, such a revision to the MPO's Policy's will allow for the speedy implementation of Transit Projects while not materially impacting the project being amended in a substantive fashion; and

WHEREAS it is in the best interest of the public that projects and expenditure of project funds be made expeditiously so that the public might more quickly benefit from such investment,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Policy Board of the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization that the MPO hereby Authorizes the Executive Director to expedite proposed changes to the Transportation Improvement Program as an Administrative Adjustment when such changes meet any one of the following criteria without violating any other one criteria:

- 1) Are less than 5% of the total project cost or \$50,000 dollars, whichever amount might be less;
- 2) Shorten the implementation and project completion timeframe of the originally approved project resulting in project delivery more quickly;
- 3) Lengthen the implementation time if such time extension does not result in a project extension of more than an additional 60 days;
- 4) Make any changes, including categorizing or reclassifying any project, timeline or funding classification or funding program source where such changes do not result in changes to the scope, expenditure or final project delivery of the originally proposed project, except as provided for in items 1), 2) and 3) above.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such actions meeting the stated criteria shall carry the full force of the Policy Board as if such Action had been voted upon during a regular meeting of the Board, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that such action must be reported by the Executive Director to the Policy Board electronically at the time of the action and the Public on the MPO's website and at the Board's next regularly scheduled public meeting.

ADOPTED, this 21st day of August 2014, at a regular meeting of the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization

ATTEST:

Anthony Garabrone

William B. Austin