

# Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

# Public Involvement Plan



**DRAFT** - Open for public comment October 13 — November 30, 2021

## DRAFT MIC Public Involvement Plan v.3

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Prepared by the



Duluth-Superior  
Metropolitan Interstate Council



*Duluth-Superior Urban Area Communities Cooperating  
in Planning and Development through a Joint Venture of the  
Arrowhead Regional Development Commission  
and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission*



**Copies of this plan are available from the Duluth-Superior MIC:**

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# I. Transportation Planning and Public Involvement

The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) conducts plans and studies to lay the groundwork for projects and policies to equitably meet this area’s transportation needs, now and in the future.

Federal regulations direct the MIC to develop and use a public participation plan to ensure that citizens and stakeholders are given reasonable opportunities to be involved and give input into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

The 2021 update of the MIC’s Public Involvement Plan is the framework for the MIC’s public involvement process, developed in accordance with best practices and in compliance with the requirements of the FAST Act § 1201, 23 USC 134 (*Metropolitan Transportation Planning*) and 23 CFR 450.316 (*Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation*).



## What is Transportation Planning?

Transportation planning is the foundation for making sound investments into the infrastructure that moves people and goods.

As the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Duluth-Superior area, the MIC works with local stakeholders and policymakers to anticipate and plan for the best ways to meet the transportation needs of the Duluth-Superior area.

The MIC’s plans, studies and programs identify priorities for funding transportation projects (from federal, state and local sources) that serve people of all ages and abilities in all the ways that they travel — whether by car, bike, bus, air, water or on foot.



## What is Public Involvement?

Public participation ensures that transportation investments are developed with input from the people who know this area best.

Public involvement means that multiple stakeholders are involved in our planning projects. It is a two-way process that provides opportunities for those who live and work here to give input, and creates a setting for our planning staff to give information, answer questions and understand community members’ perspectives on the issues they care about.



The MIC recognizes that effective public involvement is inclusive of the needs of all transportation system users with an emphasis on traditionally underserved populations. As part of our public involvement efforts, the MIC seeks out locations and methods of engagement that facilitates and encourages participation by potentially affected minority groups, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals and households.

## Why Should I Get Involved?

You do not need to be an expert to participate in the planning process. Chances are you used some form of transportation today. Whether you drove a car, rode a bike, took the bus or walked, you have knowledge and insight into local transportation needs.

There are important reasons to get involved:

- Every household and business depends on safe transportation infrastructure to move both people and goods.
- Our region's mobility, quality of life, economic growth and competitiveness rely on the multi-modal transportation network.
- The funding to build and maintain our transportation system comes from several sources—including your tax dollars.

## What are Stakeholders?

Stakeholders are people or organizations that could be affected by the recommendations in a plan or study or could influence its implementation. They include (but are not limited to):

- Neighborhood groups
- Local transportation providers
- Port, airport and transit authorities
- Natural, historic and cultural resources groups
- Local businesses and associations
- Children, the elderly and their representatives
- Freight shippers and carriers
- Advocacy groups for and users of active transportation modes such as walking, bicycling or transit
- People with low incomes and their representatives
- People with disabilities and their representatives

- Local officials and jurisdictional representatives
- Federal and state transportation agencies
- Low-literacy and Limited English Proficiency populations
- Tribal and federal land representatives

## Who Should Participate?

Our transportation system has many stakeholders. Broadly, major stakeholders live and work in the MIC's planning area (*Figure 1, below*) including:

- Cities of Duluth, Superior, Hermantown, Proctor and Rice Lake
- Canosia, Duluth, Grand Lake, Lakewood, Midway and Solway Townships
- The Towns of Lakeside, Parkland and Superior and the Villages of Oliver and Superior

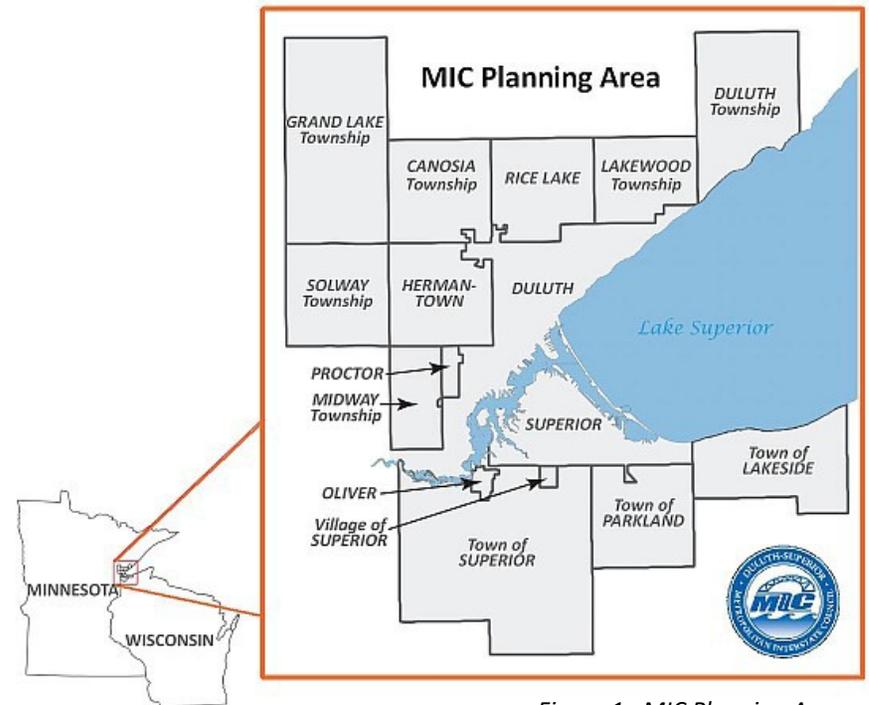


Figure 1. MIC Planning Area

## What is the MIC?

The [Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council](#) (MIC) is the designated bi-state Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the urbanized area of Duluth, MN and Superior, WI.

MPOs were created by Congress in 1962 to ensure that local transportation investments that use federal highway or transit funds are planned and prioritized with local input. They exist across the United States in every [urbanized area](#) with a population of 50,000 as required under federal transportation legislation (23 USC 134 and 49 USC 5303)

The MIC’s core function is to provide a setting for a continual, coordinated and cooperative (“3-C”) transportation planning process to occur. This process strives to build regional agreement on transportation investments that balance pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, roadway, and other transportation needs while supporting regional environmental, land use, and economic goals.

### MIC Policy Board & Advisory Committees

The MIC is directed by an 18-member Policy Board, with equal representation between Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The Board is advised by a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC), and Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC).

Figure 2 shows the current membership of the MIC Policy Board and TAC.

MIC Policy Board	Transportation Advisory Committee
Broc Allen – Douglas Co. Suburban Twps	Bryan Anderson – MnDOT
Ed Anderson – City of Superior Citizen Rep	Chris Belden – Duluth Transit Authority (Vice Chair)
Nick Baker – Douglas County Board (WI Co-chair)	David Bolf – City of Hermantown
Warren Bender – Superior Common Council	Jess Rich – City of Proctor
Wayne Boucher – City of Hermantown (MN Co-Chair)	Kate Ferguson – Duluth Seaway Port Authority (Chair)
Pete Clark – Douglas County Board	Jim Foldesi – St. Louis County
Earl Elde – St. Louis County Suburban Twps	Jason Jackman – Douglas County Engineering
Adam Fulton – Duluth Citizen Rep	Chris Carlson – City of Superior Engineering
Zack Filipovich – Duluth City Council	Chris Lee – City of Duluth Planning
Ashley Grimm – St. Louis County Board	Krysten Saatela Foster – MnDOT
Janet Kennedy – Duluth City Council	Vacant – City of Duluth Planning
Rosemary Lear – Douglas County Board	Vacant – Bike/Pedestrian Rep
Nick Ledin – Superior Common Council	Cari Pedersen – City of Duluth Engineering
Sam Pomush – Douglas County Board	Dena Ryan – WisDOT
Bob Quade – City of Rice Lake	Jason Serck – City of Superior
Jenny Van Sickle – Superior Common Council	Tom Szukis – Duluth Transit Authority
Chad Ward – City of Proctor	Cindy Voigt – City of Duluth Engineering
John Werner – City of Rice Lake	Tom Werner – Duluth Airport Authority
<b>MIC Staff</b>	
Ron Chicka – Director	Ricky Sarran, GIS Specialist
James Gittemeier - Principal Planner	Rondi Watson – Communications Coordinator
Sheldon Johnson – Deputy Director	Mike Wenholz – Senior Planner
Barb Peterson, Administrative Assistant	

Figure 2. MIC Organization

## The MIC's Requirements as an MPO

As the designated MPO for the Duluth-Superior area, the MIC is required to perform the transportation planning and programming activities as specified within 23 CFR 450:

- **Maintain a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)** The LRTP sets forth a vision for the area's transportation system with a minimum planning horizon of twenty years. It includes strategies to accomplish these goals and proposed projects with short, mid and long term timeframes. It also includes a financial plan that demonstrates how these projects can be implemented using the resources that are reasonably expected to be available over the life of the plan.
- **Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** The TIP is a short-range (four-year) program of the area's transportation improvements and must include all projects receiving federal funding, as well as those defined as "regionally significant" as agreed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the MIC. The TIP is a mechanism for allocating limited financial resources among the infrastructure needs of the area, based on the transportation priorities, goals and projects identified in the LRTP. The MIC produces a TIP each year for Duluth, MN and for Superior, WI.
- **Implement a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)** To ensure the timely implementation of the comprehensive, continuous, and coordinated (3-C's) transportation planning process, each year the MIC adopts a work program that details its transportation

planning and administrative activities, budgets and funding sources for each project for the next two years.

Public involvement in the development for the UPWP is not explicitly required of the MIC; however, specific plans and studies identified in the UPWP represent the planning priorities for the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area and are developed in consultation with the MIC Policy Board, Transportation Advisory Committee, representatives of local jurisdictions and state and federal agencies.

- **Facilitate Public Involvement.**

The requirements of 23 CFR 450.316 direct the MIC to develop and use a Public Involvement Plan to ensure that citizens and stakeholders are given reasonable opportunities to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning process. This document fulfills that requirement.

## What does the MIC do with the Input it Receives?

MIC staff documents and fully considers all public input received. This process varies, to an extent, depending on the project as well as the type and scope of input. For example, input pertaining to relatively minor modifications may be incorporated at MIC staff discretion, or a large number of survey comments may be aggregated and addressed according to main messages or key themes.

We document all written and oral comments received, present this feedback to MIC and TAC members for their consideration, and include the comments (or their summaries), as well as staff responses to them, in our draft and final plans.

For the Duluth and Superior TIPs and the LRTP, public input that prompts a significant change between the draft and final document will be brought to the MIC TAC and Policy Board for review and may trigger an additional public comment period.

## What is the Public Involvement Plan (PIP)?

Federal regulations direct the MIC to develop and use a public participation plan to ensure that citizens and stakeholders are given reasonable opportunities to be involved and give input into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

The 2021 update of the MIC's Public Involvement Plan is the framework for its public engagement processes, developed in accordance with best practices and in compliance with the requirements of the Federal FAST Act (23 C.F.R. 450.316).

It details the MIC's methods and strategies for public engagement and outreach, and is directed at two key audiences - members of the public as well as MIC staff.

Following the public comment period, all feedback will be incorporated into the PIP and presented to the MPO Board for consideration and adoption at the December 8, 2021, MIC MPO Board meeting.

The final approved Plan will be made available on the MIC's website ([www.dsmic.org](http://www.dsmic.org)) and printed copies will be provided to the FHWA and FTA and to members of the public upon request.

### Updates and Amendments to the PIP

The MIC updates its Public Involvement Plan no less than every three years to precede the update to the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Updates or amendments to the final Public Involvement Plan may also occur as needed to incorporate findings from planning assessments or to conform with changes in legislation.

Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are required to allow at least 45 days for comment before the PIP is adopted or revised.

### Assessment of the MIC's Public Involvement Efforts

The MIC continuously seeks to create opportunities for the public to participate in planning, reviewing, and implementing its transportation projects and programs.

The public involvement procedures outlined in the PIP will be periodically reviewed by the MIC to assess their effectiveness in providing full, fair and meaningful opportunities for participation.

In addition, an evaluation is conducted at the start of the annual TIP development cycle, based on 'lessons learned' from the prior year's public involvement efforts.

### Comments Encouraged

The public is invited and encouraged to provide feedback on this document at any time. Please contact:

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council  
221 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802  
218-529-7511 / 800-232-0707 / 218-529-7592 (fax)  
Email: [micinfo@ardc.or](mailto:micinfo@ardc.or)

### Overview of Changes in the 2021 Update:

- Expanded meeting formats to include virtual and "hybrid" meetings.
- Revised processes for gaining input into and amending the TIP.
- Revised processes for gaining input into the LRTP.
- Addition of "Opportunity for Public Comment" as a consistent agenda item at MIC and TAC meetings.
- New metrics to measure and assess the reach and effectiveness of the MIC's public input processes.

## II. Staff Guide

A reference guide for MIC staff to ensure public participation during the planning process.

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**Goal:** Using the tools and strategies in this plan, we will encourage meaningful public involvement that informs and actively seeks input from a broad range of community stakeholders throughout the planning process, before key decisions are made and while there is ample opportunity to influence decisions.

## Objectives

The objectives of the MIC's Public Involvement Plan (PIP) are consistent with the requirements outlined in 23 CFR 450.316:

- To develop a public participation plan in consultation with interested parties, and to update it regularly, in accordance with current or new federal regulations or guidelines.
- To provide a minimum public comment period of forty five (45) days before the PIP is updated, amended or adopted by the MIC Policy Board.
- To coordinate the MIC's PIP with statewide public participation plans to enhance public consideration and understanding of the area's transportation issues, plans, and programs.
- To actively seek input and involvement from a wide variety of individuals, groups, and organizations representing a wide variety of experiences and perspectives relative to the transportation system:
  - To explicitly consider the needs of those who have been traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including households with low income, minorities and people with disabilities, and to assure participation in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 12898 related to Environmental Justice.
- To provide for the involvement of various interest groups (i.e. traffic, bicyclists, pedestrians, rideshare, parking, transportation safety and enforcement agencies, rail operators, airport, private transportation providers, public officials, freight shippers, environmental groups, and permit agencies).
- To establish a consistent means of notification and involvement for the public.
- To provide access to information in a timely manner.
- To employ, to the maximum extent practicable, visualization techniques which may include photos, drawings, flowcharts, maps, models, videos, or visual preference surveys.
- To include a listing of all public involvement activities in draft and final plans.
- To demonstrate explicit consideration of the public input received.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of public participation strategies.

# Strategies

Structured, yet flexible. The following are the strategies and tools MIC staff will use to involve the public.

## A. The MIC’s Planning Process

Public participation is embedded into the MIC’s transportation planning process. It is not a “one size fits all” approach but rather recognizes that different projects call for customized approaches that will vary in the type and frequency of stakeholder participation and requires assembling a selection of techniques to meet the needs of a given transportation plan, or project.

Each of the following four planning phases is a strategic point at which to engage stakeholders, and each includes key tasks for staff that incorporate [FHWA guidance](#) on planning for effective public involvement.

### Phase I. Project Development

The first planning phase focuses on laying the groundwork for the plan.

<b>Scope of Work</b>	<p><b>Clearly define the scope and objectives for the project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The TAC and MIC review and approve the final Scope for projects in the UPWP. This is the first opportunity to communicate the purpose and extent of the project with internal stakeholders, as well as the first opportunity to receive input.</li></ul> <p><b>Clearly define the purpose and objectives for initiating public discussion of the project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The purpose and objectives will derive from the specific circumstances of the project.</li><li>• What decisions, formal or informal, are to be made? When? By whom?</li></ul>
<b>Stakeholder Identification</b>	<p><b>Determine specifically who is affected with respect to the plan, program, or project under development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review who is affected directly and indirectly, as well as those who have shown past interest.</li><li>• Look for people who do not traditionally participate, such as minorities and low-income groups.</li><li>• Complete the Stakeholder Identification form (Appendix A) for review and consideration of participants as required by statute</li><li>• In addition to brainstorming and analysis by MIC staff, ask MIC Board and its Advisory committees about people or groups who might be interested.</li></ul>

**Define a  
Plan-Specific  
Public  
Engagement  
Process**

**Develop a general approach or set of general strategies that are keyed to the goals and objectives of the involvement program and the characteristics of the target audiences.**

- General approaches respect agency resources of time, money, and staff and-
- Fit the target audience in terms of what input is desired and the level of interest or education.
- A general approach can be visualized in terms of a principal technique; for example:
  - A steering or advisory committee
  - A series of different activities keyed to specific project decisions
  - A focus on one or more groups or interests
  - A hybrid of the above

**Flesh out the approach with additional strategies and specific techniques and timeframes**

- Choose techniques that complement your general approach and your identified public
- Target individual groups with appropriate techniques
- Consult past experience for what works and does not work
- Consider ideas from groups or agencies that have had successful experiences with public involvement
- Use the MIC's Outreach Strategy Planner (Appendix B) to consider meeting types, tools and messaging

**Document a start-to-finish process that identifies strategies, tools and timeframes**

- Work backwards from the approval date of the final plan and identify timeframes or deadlines by which actions (e.g., survey closure date, release date of the draft plan) need to be taken, prior to that action
- Research dates that relevant public events or opportunities to partner with other groups will occur in the timeframe of the project

**Determine notification procedures which effectively target affected groups**

- Consider what communication tools will be most effective for reaching specific audiences at specific points in the process

**Consult with key stakeholders and/or the MIC board and/or its advisory committees** for ideas and input on the plan's engagement process and whether the public to be reached will find the approach acceptable.

## Phase II. Project Execution

The second planning phase focuses on collecting information, analyzing data and identifying solutions and formulating recommendations. A variety of public involvement tools (Section C) may be employed for each step and will be identified in the Public Engagement Process developed in Phase I.

<b>Issue Identification</b>	<p><b>Public involvement, as the planning process gets underway, is focused on identifying key stakeholder issues.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continually evaluate and make mid-course corrections in public engagement. Considerations include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Are many people participating with good ideas?</li><li>○ Are key groups participating?</li><li>○ Is the public getting enough information as a basis for meaningful input?</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Information Gathering and Analysis</b>	<p><b>As the project progresses, public involvement is focused on gathering, analyzing and sharing relevant data which may also assist in quantifying or verifying stakeholder- identified issues.</b></p> <p>This is also the stage at which limiting factors or filters (e.g., cost, existing policies, etc.) are introduced for consideration in shaping the plan’s final recommendation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To this end, utilize education and vizualization techniques which result in an accurate and full public understanding of potential solutions, and obstacles and opportunities within various solutions to the problem.</li><li>• Continually evaluate and make mid-course corrections in public engagement. Considerations include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Are many people participating with good ideas?</li><li>○ Are key groups participating?</li><li>○ Is the public getting enough information as a basis for meaningful input?</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Solution Identification &amp; Final Recommendations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow through by demonstrating that final decisions or recommendations were developed with serious consideration of public input.</li></ul>

## Phase III. Project Delivery

The third planning phase focuses on preparing the draft plan, distributing it for public review; consultation and coordination with state and federal transportation authorities; incorporating input received; and presenting the final plan for approval.

<p><b>Draft Document Production</b></p>	<p><b>Prepare the document for release for public review and comment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly present recommendations and employ visualizations to better explain data and key concepts.</li> <li>• Include a public involvement chapter that describes steps were taken to engage the public, a summary of main messages or key themes of input received, and discussion of how and why this input was (or was not) incorporated into the plan recommendations.</li> <li>• Determine length of public comment period (in consultation with Federal and State agencies, if appropriate) to give key stakeholders and members of the public a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the complete plan before it is presented for final approval.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Draft Plan Release</b></p>	<p><b>Present the draft version of the plan for public review and comment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post the draft plan on the MIC website.</li> <li>• Distribute draft document via a variety of electronic formats (e.g., email, social media posts, press release) to internal and external stakeholders as well as the general public.</li> <li>• Promote the public comment period and scheduled public meeting(s).</li> <li>• Solicit input by presenting information about the draft plan at public meetings and meetings of the MIC Board and relevant advisory committees.</li> <li>• For the TIPS, LRTP and PIP, a formal consultation with Federal and State agencies must take place before the end of the public comment period.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Final Plan Production and Approval</b></p>	<p><b>Prepare the final document for approval</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include a summary of the additional input received during the public comment period and demonstrate the MIC’s explicit consideration of this input.</li> <li>• An additional public comment period will be provided if the final plan will differ significantly from the draft version and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the initial public involvement efforts.</li> <li>• Approval of the final plan is made solely by the MIC Board, with input from the TAC. Project stakeholders will be able to see that their input was given explicit consideration.</li> </ul>

## Phase IV. Project Implementation

The fourth planning phase focuses on distributing the final plan and seeking opportunities to promote the plan to the elected officials, employees and residents of MIC-area jurisdictions that can facilitate the implementation of its recommendations.

<b>Distribute Final Plan</b>	<b>Make the final document available to project stakeholders and to the general public</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Post the draft plan on the MIC website.</li><li>• Distribute draft document via a variety of electronic formats (e.g., email, social media posts, press release) to internal and external stakeholders as well as the general public.</li></ul>
<b>Promote Plan Recommendations</b>	<b>Different plans will require different promotional strategies.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Targeted public outreach after the plan has been completed should be addressed in the initial public involvement strategy and discussed with the TAC and MIC and Study Advisory Committee.</li><li>• These strategies may include working with the media or giving presentations to selected groups and audiences.</li><li>• Other strategies include carrying forward and integrating the findings and recommendations in related planning and development initiatives, proposed TIP projects and future work programs.</li><li>• Internal stakeholders—the MIC Board and its advisory committees—as well as the stakeholders who participated in the development of the plans from start to finish, are the strongest allies in implementation in both the short- and long-term.</li></ul>

## Phase V. Assessment

The final step in the planning process is to assess the MIC’s public engagement efforts for use in developing the next project.

<b>Assess Public Engagement</b>	<b>Conduct assessment and document the efficacy of the MIC’s public engagement efforts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• See Section D, below, for engagement metrics</li></ul>
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## B. Stakeholder Identification

An important early task for any MIC-led planning project is to identify specific “stakeholders” — people or organizations that could be interested in or affected by the recommendations in a plan or study, or involved in its implementation.

Based on guidance from state and federal agencies and in accordance with the MIC’s Title VI plan and Policy Board expectations, MIC staff first identifies, gathers contact information and then reaches out to both internal and external stakeholders to inform them about the initiation of a plan or study and to notify them of specific opportunities to give input.

MIC staff will utilize one of the Stakeholder Identification tools (Appendix A) to identify potentially interested and/or impacted stakeholders as well as the required groups and agencies as specified below:

### **Internal stakeholders**

Internal stakeholders for all studies will include members of the MIC Policy Board and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and, if appropriate, members of the MIC’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC).

### **Citizens/General Public**

People who live and work in the Duluth-Superior area as well as neighborhood groups and civic organizations.

### **Government and Public Agencies (Coordinated Planning)**

Government agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the Duluth-Superior area that are affected by transportation.

### **Public Transportation Interests**

Representatives of both operators and users of transit.

### **Private Transportation Interests**

Demand response operators and other private transportation interests.

### **Other Multimodal Freight Interests**

Representatives of both freight-generating businesses (shippers) and providers of multimodal freight transportation services.

### **Non-Motorized/Active Transportation Interests**

Representatives of non-motorized (active) modes of transportation.

### **Human Services Interests**

Representatives of traditionally underserved populations.

### **Resources Preservation and Protection Interests**

Representatives of agencies, organizations and groups involved with land use management, conservation and resources protection (including environmental/natural, historical and archeological resources).

### **Business and Economic Development Interests**

State and local economic development groups, business representatives.

### **Education Interests**

Representatives of all elementary, middle school, high school and higher educational institutions.

### **Tribal and Federal Lands**

When the study area includes Indian Tribal and Federal public lands, the MIC will identify and involve representatives.

### **Media Outlets**

Newspaper of record is the Duluth News Tribune; also includes television stations or reporters who have picked up MIC-related and transportation –related stories over the past year.

**Other groups** with demonstrated interest in transportation and/or land use issues

## Stakeholder Identification Forms

MIC staff uses a Stakeholder Identification form at the start of planning initiatives (Fig. 3 at right and Appendix A). One is used for general planning projects, to identify local groups and individuals potentially interested in or impacted by recommendations, and the other is used for TIP and LRTP updates, in accordance with 23CFR 450.316 stakeholder requirements.

**Stakeholder Identification Tool for General (non-TIP or LRTP) Plans and Studies**

Plan Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Frame: \_\_\_\_\_

Current contact information will be sought for identified stakeholders and subsequently used to inform them about the initiation of a plan or study and to notify them of specific opportunities for public involvement.

Identified Stakeholders and Interested Parties (List below):	Group or Interest Represented						
	Jurisdiction	Resident/ Neighborhood	Business	Special Interest	Mode	Elected Official	Other (specify)
Name: _____							
Email: _____							
Name: _____							
Email: _____							
Name: _____							
Email: _____							
Name: _____							
Email: _____							
Name: _____							
Email: _____							
Name: _____							
Email: _____							
Name: _____							
Email: _____							
Name: _____							
Email: _____							

**Stakeholder Identification Tool for (TIP or LRTP):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time Frame:** \_\_\_\_\_

MIC staff will utilize the Stakeholder Identification Tool to determine the groups, individuals and agencies as specified below as well as other potentially interested and/or impacted stakeholders for the Duluth and Superior Area TIPs and the update of the MIC's LRTP Update and will be reviewed for all small area plans and studies as well.

Current contact information will be sought for identified stakeholders and subsequently used to inform them about the initiation of a plan or study and to notify them of specific opportunities for public involvement.

Required Stakeholders (23CFR 450.316 (a) & (b); MIC Title VI Plan; MIC Established Practice)	(List specific contacts)
<b>1. Citizens/General Public</b> <i>People who live and work in the Duluth-Superior area, including:</i>	MIC-LRTP-01 / List 767
(a) Those individuals and groups directly impacted by the results and recommendations of the plan or study, i.e., located inside or in close proximity to the study area; those individuals and groups who opt in to receive more information	
(b) Community clubs and neighborhood groups	
(c) Civic groups and service organizations such as the Rotary, Lions Club and Kiwanis Club	
(d) Contacts from recent plans and studies (within the past two years)	
<b>2. Government and Public Agencies (Coordinated Planning)</b> <i>Government agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the Duluth-Superior area that are affected by transportation, including:</i>	MIC-LRTP-02 / List 768
(a) Local elected officials from the cities, counties, and townships within the MIC Planning Area or Study Area	
(b) Local professional staff from the cities, counties, and townships within the MIC's Planning Area or Study Area — Engineering and Planning, Fire and Police, etc.	
(c) City and County planning commissions	
(d) Area organizations responsible for planning activities with transportation interests (e.g., small-area plans and/or policy studies)	
(e) Formal and informal groups representing area transportation-related interests such as traffic safety, parking, Parks and Recreation, etc.	
(f) State and Federal officials—legislators representing the study area in both MN and WI	
(g) State and Federal agencies, including the planning and modal divisions of MnDOT and WisDOT, FHWA and FTA	

Figure 3. Stakeholder Identification forms

## C. Outreach Tools and Techniques

MIC planners are responsible for providing opportunities for stakeholder participation at key decision points. However, each project calls for a customized approach based on the subject and scope of the project, time frame and other staff resources, as well as the potential public impact and level of interest in the project.

We utilize a combination of the following in person and technology-based tools to encourage participation.

### MIC Website ([www.dsmic.org](http://www.dsmic.org))

The MIC's website, [dsmic.org](http://dsmic.org), is the MIC's primary source for delivering information to the public. Project information, maps, and meeting calendars as well as meeting agendas and minutes, announcements of opportunity to comment, and draft and final versions of our plans provide an online, searchable archive of the MIC's current and past planning projects.



[www.dsmic.org](http://www.dsmic.org)

## Social Media

The MIC maintains a Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/dsmic](https://www.facebook.com/dsmic) ("Like" us!) with the goal of providing information and encouraging constructive community dialogue. Event listings are posted on Facebook prior to public meetings and the MIC will share Events from other area organizations whose projects complement our planning work.

In addition, the MIC monitors local social media sites such as the Duluth News-Tribune's Facebook page and the PerfectDuluthDay blog for discussions of local issues and participate, as appropriate, by initiating some conversations and by responding to others.

### Email Notifications

The MIC maintains several targeted mailing lists to distribute our written communications to individuals, organizations and businesses that have opted to receive emails about a particular plan or study.

Any interested individual, business, or organization can be added to the MIC's general *Transportation Stakeholders / Interested Persons* list or to the mailing lists for our regular MIC, TAC, HTAC or BPAC meetings by calling 218-529-7511 or by sending an email to [micinfo@ardc.org](mailto:micinfo@ardc.org).

## Meetings

The MIC encourages participation of all citizens in the transportation planning and programming process. All Policy Board and Advisory Committee meetings as well as plan-related open houses are open to the public.

### Meeting Locations

The MIC strives to find convenient ways for members of the public to attend its meetings. In addition to providing virtual meeting options (described below), meetings will be held in locations with good transit service, when possible, and in facilities that are accessible to mobility-impaired individuals. Public information documents, including meeting notices, will include text that makes it clear that the meeting space is ADA accessible.

For plans or studies with a defined study area, public meetings will be held within that geographic area.

### Virtual and Hybrid Meetings

In response to the social distancing measures necessitated by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, in 2020 the MIC began holding all meetings using online (virtual) technology via Microsoft Teams.

From this we learned that virtual public involvement effectively supports our efforts to engage the public by supplementing face-to-face information sharing with the option to participate remotely.

However, our use of virtual meeting technology is not intended to completely replace in-person public involvement opportunities, which remain an important part of a balanced public involvement approach.

Consistent with applicable state and local requirements, in-person meetings will be held when and where a suitable physical location is available and such meetings can be safely

conducted. Many in-person meetings will be set up as “hybrid” meetings that will provide an option for participants to join the meeting virtually via online meeting technology. Depending on the audience or group, some meetings will be held only in a virtual format, without an in-person option.

The same accommodations to provide access to non-English speakers for in-person meetings will be available to online participants. We will also provide telephone access as an alternative option for individuals with limited or no internet access. Staff will be available to provide technical assistance to the best of our ability.

### Meeting Days and Times

Meeting days and at times vary according to its purpose:

#### MIC Policy Board & Advisory Committee Meetings

Communication with the elected officials and community representatives on the MIC Policy Board and its advisory committees is a cornerstone of our public involvement efforts. MIC planners provide detailed project updates as well as written materials at the regularly-scheduled monthly (MIC and TAC) and quarterly (BPAC and HTAC) meetings.

#### Public Input Sessions / Open Houses

Public input sessions and open houses are held for many of the MIC’s plans and studies, at key decision points during the planning process to identify issues, review data collection and analysis, and comment on recommendations.

For plan-related public meetings and open houses, meetings will be generally be scheduled on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday at times before, during and after regular work hours. Depending on the plan or study, multiple meetings at different times of day may be held.

When setting a **public** information session or open house, MIC staff will review community calendars to avoid conflicts with other major meetings.

**Study Committees**

Study-specific advisory groups, or Study Committees, are sometimes formed to advise MIC planning staff on short-term planning projects. Study Committee members are consulted about the best dates and times to meet.

**Meeting Notices**

All meetings are advertised in advance to provide adequate time for public participation or comment. Meeting notices are posted on the MIC website and distributed by email (and by U.S. mail upon request).

Meeting notices and agendas for MIC, TAC, BPAC and HTAC meetings are sent out one week prior to the date of the scheduled meeting (Figure 4).

Notices for project-specific meetings such as info sessions and open houses are also posted on the MIC’s Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/dsmic](http://www.facebook.com/dsmic)).

**Legal notices** are placed in the local paper of record (Duluth News Tribune) at the start of public comment periods to announce the dates and times that public meetings will be held for the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Public Involvement Plan (PIP).

**Paid display ads** may be placed in local newspapers to promote selected meetings and events.

**Special Accommodations:** The MIC is committed to ensuring all individuals regardless of race, color,

national origin, sex, age, physical ability or income have access to the MIC’s programs and planning efforts.

Public information documents, including meeting notices, will include text that makes it clear that individuals may request accommodation of special needs, so that they may fully participate in the meetings. The MIC will provide interpreters and prepare enlarged print or other special-format materials upon request, with three days advance notice.

Committee	Frequency	Mtg Materials (hard copy)	Mtg Materials (electronic copy)	Info on Web-site (dsmic.org)
<b>MIC Policy Board</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed of each month (except Nov)	Mailed upon request	Members and <i>Interested Persons</i> list	Full agenda packet Past meeting summaries
<b>TAC</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tue of each month (except Nov)	Mailed upon request	Members and <i>Interested Persons</i> list	Full agenda packet Past meeting summaries
<b>HTAC</b>	Quarterly	Mailed upon request	Members and <i>Interested Persons</i> list	Full agenda packet Past meeting summaries
<b>BPAC</b>	Quarterly	Mailed upon request	Members and <i>Interested Persons</i> list	Full agenda packet Past meeting summaries

Figure 4. Notifications for MIC Board and Advisory Committee Meetings

## **Meeting Formats**

The purpose of project meetings or open houses is to hear from the public.

Planners will develop a meeting format that allows everyone to participate if they wish. This may mean giving a shorter presentation and/or setting reasonable time limits for speakers so that a few individuals do not monopolize the meeting (see “Speaker Rules”, below)

## **Opportunities for Public Comment**

All meetings of the MIC Policy Board and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) will include an “Opportunity for Public Comment” as a standing agenda item. Certain voting items, such as approval of draft and final TIPs, LRTP and PIP, will include an additional public comment opportunity.

## **Public Comment Guidelines**

Members of the public who wish to give comments at meetings of the MIC Policy Board, TAC, HTAC and BPAC, will be asked to observe the following:

- State your name and organizational affiliation (if any)
- Comments will be limited to 3 minutes for each speaker
- The meeting Chair, with committee approval, has the option of closing or extending the amount of time allowed for public comments, depending on the number of people who wish to speak and the length of the meeting agenda
- Remarks should address the specific plan, study or document under consideration by the Board
- Be respectful and constructive in dialogue

Meeting notices will include information about how to submit comments for consideration before the meeting. Tools that encourage written input (such as comment sheets at in-person meetings or chat boxes during virtual meetings) will also be provided.

## **Discussion with MIC Staff Members**

MIC staff members are always available for one-on-one discussions about projects, plans and studies. Staff members may be contacted by phone, email or by mail. Contact information for staff members can be found on the MIC’s website or by sending an email to [micinfo@ardc.org](mailto:micinfo@ardc.org).

## **Surveys and Questionnaires**

Citizen and stakeholder surveys, in both online and printed formats, are sometimes used to collect data and other relevant information to provide insight from a community perspective. This input is summarized and incorporated into the transportation plan or study.

## **Pop-Up Displays**

The MIC sets up informational displays in high-traffic areas at transportation- related events such as events at the transit center or by coordinating with other local jurisdictions at their planning outreach events.

We have reached some of our largest and most diverse audiences by setting up during public events such as Downtown Sidewalk Days and other small and large community gatherings.

### **Staff Presentations**

MIC staff is available to present information about its planning initiatives or to participate in panel discussions to area groups with transportation interests.

### **Walkability Audits/Group Rides**

The MIC periodically hosts or co- sponsors educational events for selected projects, including a highly interactive, group approach to examining the more technical aspects of street design from the perspective of pedestrians or bicyclists.

### **On-Site Project Messaging**

The MIC produces signage for certain projects describing its features with information about how to get involved.

Posters and flyers with information about upcoming meetings may be posted in public locations and businesses adjacent to and within the study area or mailed directly to addresses in the study area.

### **Visualization Techniques**

In all of the above settings and communication pieces, the MIC utilizes visualization techniques whenever possible (photos, drawings, flowcharts, maps, models, computer simulations, videos, or visual preference surveys) to communicate concepts.

### **News Media**

Coverage by the local news media in the form of newspaper articles and TV news features, provides the most widespread coverage about the MIC's work. The MIC maintains a current list of contacts and notifies the local news media (radio, television, newspapers) by sending project-specific press releases.

### **Editorial Board Meetings**

After a plan or study has been completed, MIC staff (and/or project stakeholders) may request a meeting with the Editorial Board of the Duluth News Tribune's Editorial Board.

The Editorial Board is "available to meet with area groups and individuals who may be interested in influencing the paper's editorial position in support of a particular issue or policy."

This approach to engaging with the media is separate from seeking general news coverage and should be undertaken strategically, as part of the project's implementation, to publicize the facts and 'make the case' for the recommendations put forth by the MIC.

## D. Measuring Effectiveness

MIC staff has developed and will implement a range of metrics to gauge the efficacy of the MIC's public engagement efforts.

Due to the broad and disparate nature of public involvement, documentation of each and every incidence of public input is not realistic. However, the new metrics provide a set of guideposts for MIC staff to track and measure the reach and effectiveness of public involvement efforts moving forward.

MIC staff will make efforts to document incidences as they apply to the below metrics (as applicable) and employ this data at the next update.

- Number of MIC public forums, workshops, and community meetings at which displays, presentations, discussions, and feedback occurred;
- Number of participants at public meetings and other events;
- Number of verbal and written comments received;
- Number of responses to surveys and interactive mapping exercises;
- Number of draft plans, reports, and other preliminary documents or surveys posted on MIC website for public comment;
- Number of MIC Facebook page followers/Facebook engagement;
- Number of visitors to project web pages;
- Documentation of revisions to plans based on input;
- Extent to which demographics of public participants reflects the demographics of the local community.

## Public Involvement Steps for Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs)

The MIC is required to adopt a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which programs federally-funded (FHWA and FTA) surface transportation projects in the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area, as well as those projects determined to be of regional significance. The TIP is updated annually and includes projects for the upcoming four (4) years.

The MIC develops a separate TIP document for the Duluth, MN and Superior, WI metropolitan area. Specific steps and timeframes are agreed upon in consultation with MPO liaisons from both Minnesota and Wisconsin DOTs and FHWA offices.

The annual process of developing a draft program of funded projects and approving the final TIP has several public involvement requirements (23 CFR 450.316 (a)).

### Duluth Area Transportation Improvement Program

#### I. TIP Development

The annual process of soliciting projects, developing a draft program of funded projects and approving the final TIP has several public involvement requirements (23 CFR 450.316). These steps will include:

##### A. Proposed Projects

Based on project applications received, we will determine appropriate methods to solicit input at this early phase of TIP. After project applications are received, public involvement actions may include:

1. Post all project applications received on the MIC website.

2. Publicize and distribute a link to the web page post about the proposed TIP projects and invite comments.
3. Schedule and publicize a public information session to explain the TIP process, describe proposed projects and take comments.
4. Consult with relevant jurisdictions and agencies about the proposed projects.
5. Report a summary of input received and responses to the TAC and MIC prior to project approval.

##### B. Draft TIP

Upon completion of the draft TIP document, public involvement actions include:

1. Conduct consultation with state and federal agencies (FHWA, FTA, MnDOT) prior to the start of the 30-day comment period, to review the Draft TIP.
2. Include approval of the start of the required 30-day public comment period as a voting item on TAC and MIC agendas.
3. Provide notice of the proposed start of the public comment period by publishing it on the Meeting Notice, at least one week prior to the scheduled meetings.
4. Post the Draft TIP document on the MIC website.
  - a. Include a link to the Draft TIP document in the meeting mailing to TAC and MIC members, at least one week prior to the scheduled meetings.
  - b. Publish legal notice in the Duluth News Tribune on the Sunday immediately prior to the first day of the required

30-day public comment period, including a link to the Draft TIP and date(s) of public info session on the dsmic.org website.

5. Make Draft TIP available to the public in both printed and electronic formats at the following locations:
  - a. MIC website (pdf)
  - b. NWRPC & MIC/ARDC offices (printed copy)
  - c. Printed copies will also be provided upon request. (A fee may be charged to cover the cost of printing, depending on the size of the document, the number of color pages and the number of copies needed).
6. On the first day of the public comment period, publicize the dates of the comment period and public info session and provide a link to the draft TIP (for example, on landing page of the MIC website and MIC's Facebook page).
7. Hold a public information session, prior to the end of the 30-day comment period, to review proposed project locations and potential impacts, and take comments on the Draft TIP, and publicize the meeting at least one week in advance.
8. If the final TIP will differ significantly from the Draft version that was made available for public comment and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, approval of the Final TIP will be delayed until an additional opportunity for public comment is provided.
  - a. The length of such an additional comment period, if determined to be necessary, will be

determined in consultation with FHWA, FTA and MnDOT.

- b. The same techniques to promote the revised draft will be utilized as outlined above for the Draft TIP.
- c. In addition to the 30-day extension of public comment, MIC staff is required to disseminate information regarding what specifically has changed and why, and to include this information in the final TIP.

### **C. Final TIP**

As the final TIP document is completed, public involvement actions include:

1. Include a review of all public involvement activities as a separate chapter and summarize the main messages or themes of the comments obtained.
2. Demonstrate explicit consideration of the input received, including discussion of where in the document and why it was (or was not) incorporated into the plan.
3. Include visualization tools as needed, such as maps and graphs, to explain aspects of the TIP.
4. Include approval of the Final TIP as a voting item on TAC and MIC agendas.
5. Provide public notice of the proposed action by listing "Opportunity for Public Comment" on the published Meeting Notice and on the Agenda, at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
6. Include a description in the accompanying meeting materials of the proposed action, as well as a summary of comments received during the public

comment period and a link to the document on the dsmic.org website.

7. Present a summary of public input received, as well as the MIC's response, to the Transportation Advisory Committee and the Policy Board and include in the published Meeting Summary.
8. Include the result of the MIC Board vote to approve the final TIP in the published Meeting Summary.
9. Make the final (approved) TIP document available to the public in both printed and electronic formats at the following locations:
  - a. MIC website (pdf)
  - b. NWRPC & MIC/ARDC offices (printed copy)
  - c. Printed copies will also be provided upon request. (A fee may be charged to cover the cost of printing, depending on the size of the document, the number of color pages and the number of copies needed).
10. Conduct a review of Public Involvement activities to quantify and analyze their effectiveness for use during next TIP cycle.

## II. Amendments and Administrative Modifications

For projects listed in the current, approved Duluth Area TIP, changes may be made periodically to accommodate project additions, advancements, changes to scope, cost and other types of changes requested by the sponsoring jurisdictions. Changes to the approved TIP may be made either by a formal TIP Amendment (for major project revisions) or by an Administrative Modification (for minor project revisions).

Any changes to the list of programmed projects proposed by the sponsoring jurisdiction, will, in consultation with MIC staff, be determined to require either a formal Amendment or an Administrative Modification.

For all project changes, the amended TIP must remain fiscally constrained within the revenues that can reasonably be expected to be available.

For changes requiring an Amendment, the MIC will undertake actions to allow for public review and comment, in accordance with the MIC's requirements as an MPO.

All formal Amendments to the TIP must be approved by the MIC Board at a regularly-scheduled monthly meeting.

Therefore proposed Amendments must be requested by the lead agency to the MIC thirty (30) days before the date of a regularly scheduled MIC Board meeting for staff review and approval and inclusion on the meeting agenda.

Exception: for unforeseen circumstances, changes may be requested no less than eleven (11) days before the date of the TAC meeting.)

The following process is consistent with federal transportation planning legislation in regard to the MPO's public participation requirements (23 CFR 450.316) and incorporates the criteria specified in MnDOT's 2015 Guidance for STIP Amendments.

**A. Amendments to the Duluth Area TIP**

A formal TIP Amendment is needed when a **major revision** is proposed to the project list.

**1. Criteria for FHWA-Funded Projects**

For projects using highway (FHWA) funds, one of the following changes is being requested:

**a. New project:**

- The change adds new individual FHWA funded projects.
- The change adds a regionally significant project.

**b. Cost Changes:**

- The total cost increases or decreases, in accordance with the TIP Amendment Threshold (Table A-1).

**c. Project Modifications:**

When the following revision is requested, in combination with the amount of the cost adjustment as shown in the TIP Amendment Threshold Table A-1):

- The requested change results in a project scope change including, but not limited to,
- The requested change adds or removes a phase of work such as preliminary engineering, right-of-way, construction, etc. .
- work type (such as bridge rehabilitation to replacement, resurface to reconstruct), and/or additional work/bridge/lane/ intersection/route.
- The change in project limit/termini greater than 0.3 miles in any direction.

Table A-1 / FHWA Funded Projects TIP Amendment Thresholds	
Original Estimated Cost of Project	Amendment needed if cost is increased or decreased more than:
< \$1 Million	A formal Amendment is not required (should be listed as an Administrative Modification).
\$1 Million to \$3 Million	50%
\$3 Million to \$10 Million	35%
\$10 Million to \$50 Million	20%
\$50 Million to \$100 Million	15%
> \$100 Million	10%

**2. Criteria for FTA-Funded Projects**

For projects using transit (FTA) funds, the following criteria apply:

- a.** The change adds new individual FTA funded projects to the current approved TIP.
- b.** The change increases the TIP total project estimate cost by more than 20% (Table A-2).

Table A-2 / FTA Funded Projects TIP Amendment Thresholds	
Original Project Estimate Cost	Amendment needed if cost is increased more than:
Any Amount	20%

### 3. Staff Actions

If it has been determined that a Formal Amendment to the Duluth Area TIP is necessary, the following steps will be taken:

- a. A consultation with MIC staff, MnDOT and lead agency will be held to discuss the project and to determine:

- If a 30-day public comment period is required.

*Depends on the scope of the change; to be determined in consultation between MIC and MnDOT and lead agency.*

- If a new Community Impact/ Environmental Justice analysis or is required for this TIP project

*Depends on the scope of the change; to be determined in consultation between MIC and MnDOT and lead agency.*

- List the proposed Amendment as a voting item on the published Agenda for meetings of both the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and the MIC Policy Board, at least one week prior to the scheduled action on the Amendment. Prepare a Resolution for signature by the MIC Board chair.

*See Appendix p. 51 for information about the timing to place an Amendment for approval on the TAC and MIC agendas; may require specially-scheduled meetings if the TAC's 11-day notification requirement cannot be met.*

- b. Provide public notice of the proposed changes to the TIP project by listing "Opportunity for Public Comment" on the published Meeting Notices for the TAC and MIC, at least one week prior to the scheduled action on the Amendment.
- c. Include a description in the accompanying meeting materials

of the proposed changes, as well as a copy of the proposed Amendment, for public review.

- d. Provide public notice of the proposed changes to the TIP project, by posting the proposed Amendment on the TIP page of the MIC website, at least one week prior to the scheduled action on the Amendment at the meetings of the TAC and MIC.
- e. Present the Amendment for approval at the scheduled TAC and MIC meetings.
- f. Present any comments received to the MIC Board and include them in the published Meeting Summary.
- g. Include the result of the MIC Board vote on the Amendment, along with a description of the changes to the TIP project, in the published Meeting Summary.
- h. Update the TIP project list on the TIP page of the MIC website.
- i. Provide printed copies of the Amendment and the updated project list upon request.
- j. Notify MnDOT District One staff of the action taken by the Board. If approved, include a copy of the signed Resolution.

**B. Administrative Modifications to the Duluth TIP**

An Administrative Modification is a minor revision or technical correction to a programmed project which does not meet the criteria for a formal TIP Amendment (section A).

**1. Criteria for FHWA-Funded Projects**

For projects using highway funds, Administrative Modifications are required based on the following criteria:

- a. The cost estimate is increased or decreased but does not impact fiscal constraint.
  - *Meets the TIP Administrative Modification Threshold (Table B-1).*
- b. A new project is identified from a federal set-aside in the same state fiscal year.
- c. Projects are advanced or deferred within TIP years with no changes to cost or scope.
- d. A state funded project is added to the TIP, which is not regionally significant.
- e. A state funded project is converted to a federally funded project with no changes to scope or cost.
- f. A change to source(s) of funding.
- g. A technical correction is made (such as changes to the project description or project number, or minor changes to the scope or cost of a project).
- h. Advance Construction (AC) funds are added, removed, increased, or decreased for a project.
- i. A project currently programmed in the TIP is removed.

- j. A project is split or combined into two or more projects and does not meet the formal Amendment criteria.

<b>Table B-1 / FHWA Funded Projects TIP Administrative Modification Thresholds</b>	
<b>Original Estimated Cost of Project</b>	<b>Administrative Modification needed if cost is increased or decreased more than:</b>
< \$1 Million	No Administrative Modification is needed**
\$1 Million to \$10 Million	20%
\$10 Million to \$100 Million	10%
\$50 Million to \$100 Million	15%
> \$100 Million	***

\*\* No Administrative STIP Modification is required when the original project cost is less than \$1 million AND the revised project cost remains less than \$1 million.

\*\*\*An Administrative Modification for high profile TIP projects (greater than \$100 million) requires prior collaborative discussion between

**2. Criteria for FTA-Funded Projects**

For projects using transit funds, Administrative Modifications are required based on the following criteria:

- a. Moving projects between years of the current approved TIP.
- b. Changing FTA funding source such as changing from Section 5307 funds to Section 5339 funds or vice versa.

- c. Changing federal funding from FTA funds to FHWA funds or vice versa. Fiscal constraint justification required.
- d. Making a technical correction.
- e. Changing the State Project Number.

### 3. Staff Actions

- a. Notify MnDOT District One staff of the decision made by MIC staff.
- b. Update project list on the MIC website

## Superior Area Transportation Improvement Program

### A. Annual TIP Development and Approval

#### Staff Actions

1. Administer TIP project solicitation process with eligible jurisdictions.
2. Develop the Draft TIP document and present it to MIC and TAC for their approval to release the plan for the required 30-day public comment period.
3. Publish legal notice and release Draft TIP for 30-day public comment period.
4. Make Draft Plan available to the public in print and electronic (pdf) formats at the following locations:
  - a. NWRPC & MIC websites (pdf)
  - b. NWRPC & MIC/ARDC offices (printed copy)
  - c. Printed copies will also be provided upon request.
5. Publicize and hold a public meeting during the 30-day comment period.
6. Conduct consultation with state and federal agencies prior to the end of the 30-day comment period, to review projects and take comments on the Draft document;
7. Present Final TIP to MIC and TAC for approval.
8. Make the final TIP document available to the public in both hard copy (printed) and electronic (pdf) formats at the following locations:
  - a. NWRPC & MIC websites (pdf)
  - b. NWRPC & MIC/ARDC offices (hard copy)
  - c. Copies will also be provided upon request.

### B. Amendments and Administrative Modifications

There two types of changes to TIPs: Administrative Modifications and Amendments.<sup>1</sup> These may occur at any time of the year.

The revised TIP must remain fiscally constrained within the revenues that can reasonably be expected to be available.

The following criteria will be used to review a requested project change and to determine the appropriate public involvement actions<sup>2</sup>:

#### I. Administrative Modifications

An administrative modification is defined as a minor revision to the current TIP, including:

- A minor change in project/project phase costs<sup>3</sup> (e.g., increasing or reducing the funding amount for a project without changing the scope of work or schedule for the project or any project within the TIP);
- A minor change in funding sources of previously included projects, such as changing the source of funding category;

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<sup>1</sup> TIP amendment requirements are in 23 C.F.R. 450.328 <https://www.law.cornell.edu/C.F.R./text/23/450.328>.

<sup>2</sup> TIP Preparation Guide, "Guidelines for Developing MPO Transportation Improvement Programs," WisDOT, December 2018

<sup>3</sup> A minor change in funding is defined as an amount that is less than (a) 10% of the total Federal funding programmed for the calendar year, or (b) \$1,000,000.

### Administrative Modifications Criteria, continued:

- A minor change to project/project phase initiation dates;
- A minor change in project design concept, design scope or limits (i.e., the character of work or project limits remains reasonably consistent with the approved project)
- Correction of minor inadvertent typographical errors or omissions.

...provided that the change does not trigger re-demonstration of fiscal constraint.

### Staff Actions

Administrative Modifications do not require Board approval.

1. Public notifications will occur through regular MIC and TAC meeting processes:
  - a. Provide advance notice of the Administrative Modification in the 'Project Updates' section of the published Agenda and by posting the Administrative Modification on the TIP web page on the dsmic.org site;
  - b. Include a description of the change in the published Meeting Summary.
2. Update Project lists accordingly and communicate the Administrative Modification to WisDOT and FHWA/FTA.

## II. Amendments

An Amendment is defined as a revision to a TIP that involves a major change, including one or more of the following:

- Addition or deletion of a project
- Major change in project cost
- Major change in the initiation date for a project or project phase

- Major change in project design concept, design scope or limits

An Amendment requires public review and comment, and re-demonstration of fiscal constraint.

MPO Amendments can be further categorized as "Minor" or "Major," as follows:

### A. Minor Amendments

Changes that fit the Minor Amendment category include one or more of the following:

**Change in Schedule**, such as:

- Adding an exempt/preservation project (reconditioning, reconstruction, or rehabilitation) to the first four years of the TIP, including advancing a project for implementation from an illustrative list or from the out-years of the TIP.
- Moving an exempt/preservation project out of the first four years of the TIP.

**Change in Scope** (character of work or project limits) of an exempt/preservation project within the first four years of the TIP such that the original project description is no longer reasonably accurate.

**Change in funding** that impacts the funding for other projects within the first four years of the TIP, forcing any project out of the four-year window.

### B. Major Amendments

Changes that fit the Major Amendment category include one or more of the following:

- Adding a nonexempt/capacity expansion project to the first four years of the TIP, including advancing a project for implementation from an illustrative list or from the out-years of the TIP.

- Moving a nonexempt/capacity expansion project out of the first four years of the TIP.
- Change in scope (character of work or project limits) of a nonexempt/capacity expansion project within the first four years of the TIP such that the original project description is no longer reasonably accurate.
- Adding or deleting any project that exceeds the lesser of:
  - a. 10% of the total Federal funding programmed for the calendar year, or
  - b. \$1,000,000

received from the public and from committee members during the meeting discussion, as well as the result of the Board vote on the Amendment;

6. Update the TIP project list and make the revised TIP document available to the public on the dsmic.org website and by request;
7. Transmit the details of the Amendment, along with the signed Board resolution, to WisDOT and FHWA/FTA.

### Staff Actions

Minor and Major Amendments are formal changes to the TIP and require the following public involvement and administrative steps to be taken:

1. List the proposed Amendment as a voting item on the published Agenda for meetings of both the MIC Policy Board and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and prepare a Resolution for signature by the MIC Board chair;
2. List “Opportunity for Public Comment” on the published meeting agenda and include a copy of the proposed Amendment in the accompanying meeting materials;
3. Provide advance notice of the proposed change by posting the proposed Amendment on the TIP page of the dsmic.org website for public review;
4. Present the proposed Amendment for approval at the TAC and MIC Board meetings, and report any public comments received;
5. Include a description of the proposed Amendment in the published Meeting Summary, as well as comments

## Public Involvement Steps for the 2050 Update of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The MIC is required to update and adopt a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) every five years, to identify goals, potential improvements and recommended policies for the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area transportation system to be implemented over the next 25 years.

The MIC defines its long-range vision as “a community-supported multimodal transportation system that not only supports the diverse needs of people and commerce, but is also fiscally, socially, and environmentally sustainable over time.” Its goals and objectives are, in part, specified by federal legislation, but also address regional transportation issues and priorities, and are directly shaped by local public input.

### LRTP Public Involvement Process

The MIC’s public involvement process for the development of its Long Range Transportation Plan 2050 update will:

- Identify roles, responsibilities and key decision points;
- Include LRTP-specific public involvement goals along with associated strategies, tools and techniques to provide diverse opportunities to review and comment with timeframes that provide timely notice of public participation activities and ensure a minimum public comment period of 30 days before the final LRTP is adopted;
- Employ visualization techniques and utilize electronic formats, including online meetings and in-person public meetings at accessible locations and times in order to provide reasonable access to information about Duluth-Superior area transportation issues and LRTP planning processes;
- Coordinate with statewide public involvement procedures and consider other related planning activities as well as the design and delivery of transportation services within the metropolitan area;
- Consult with related agencies, officials and tribes as identified in Step I-B, below;
- Identify stakeholders in keeping with federal requirements and the MIC’s Title VI and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plans to seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems;
- Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the LRTP;
- Periodically review the effectiveness of these procedures and strategies to ensure a full and open participation process.

### Phase I—Identify Stakeholders and Develop Process

The first of four planning phases lays the groundwork for the project. Steps will include:

#### I-A. Identify Stakeholders and Develop Contact List

1. Identify stakeholders in accordance with the Stakeholder Identification Tool as well as:
  - a. MIC Board and Advisory Committee members.
  - b. Interested persons and community stakeholders identified during past MIC planning projects.
2. Obtain (or verify) contact information for all stakeholders identified above.
3. Develop and maintain an email list of interested and affected parties whose input will be actively sought during the LRTP development process.

## **I-B. Devise a detailed public participation strategy and timeline**

1. Develop a calendar of meetings and community events as opportunities to give presentations or display information

## **Phase II—Disseminate Information and Seek Input**

The second planning phase focuses on providing opportunities for public and stakeholder input into the 2050 update of the LRTP that will result in the Plan’s vision, goals and objectives and project list.

### **II-A. Produce Informational Pieces, Media Content and Correspondence**

1. Develop branding elements (e.g., name, logo, colors, fonts) and key messages (e.g., goals and objectives, themes and issues, planning process timeline and opportunities for public comment) to ensure consistency among all future electronic, online and print communications.
2. Develop and maintain a web page for the LRTP 2050 on the dsmic.org website as the primary resource for current information about the LRTP, to include:
  - a. Background info and scope of work.
  - b. Project timeline.
  - c. Links to online meetings and public surveys as they are developed.
  - d. Staff member contact information for people to provide input or ask questions.

e. Links to the draft plan and draft chapters as they are released for public input.

3. Produce a handout that presents an overview of the LRTP’s goals and objectives, key issues and public involvement opportunities.
4. Develop presentations about the LRTP 2050 as needed and as applicable for various audiences.
5. Develop maps and other visualization tools to describe aspects of the LRTP update.
6. Write and distribute consultation requests to jurisdictional partners (as listed in section II-B).
7. Develop displays about the LRTP update and opportunities for public input for use at in-person public events.
8. Use the MIC’s stakeholder email list, Facebook page and other social media channels to publicize public involvement opportunities and provide a link to the MIC’s website and other online sources of information.
9. Write and distribute press releases and social media content as needed, to communicate with the public at key decision points to promote public involvement opportunities.

### **II-B. Conduct jurisdictional consultations and public outreach**

#### **1. For all audiences identified:**

- a. Obtain information about transportation priorities and short, mid, and long-term transportation goals.
- b. Obtain information about transportation and other related plans, including comprehensive plans, conservation plans and maps, and available inventories of historic and natural resources.

- c. Provide Environmental Justice/Community Impact assessments of projects proposed for the LRTP on groups of people or geographic locations (as appropriate).
  - d. Give information about timeline for the LRTP update, including other opportunities for input.
2. Consult with officials and/or staff from MIC Planning Area jurisdictions and transportation authorities and operators (transit, harbor, airport).
  3. Consult with federal, state, tribal and other agencies and officials responsible for planning activities in the MIC's planning area that are affected by transportation projects and policies., (as identified in REF).
  4. Consult with representatives of traditionally underserved (minority, low-income, disabled, elderly) populations.
  5. Give presentations and solicit comments, as appropriate, at meetings of the MIC's modal subcommittees (the HTAC and the BPAC).
  6. Seek opportunities to present information and obtain input from community organizations and groups, preferably at their regularly-scheduled meetings or events.

### **II-C. Hold public meetings and/or open houses**

1. Present information about the LRTP update and encourage comments on area transportation priorities and issues. Provide information about other opportunities for public input (e.g., surveys, draft plan review, etc.).

2. Publicize widely and give ample public notice using the stakeholder list developed in section I-A, and using the print materials and electronic distribution methods identified in section II-A.
3. Hold meeting(s) at varied times of day and at locations in accessible facilities and formats, including online meetings.
4. Present information and encourage comments by using varied multiple methods (e.g., group or one-on-one discussions, comment cards, etc.).

## **Phase III—Distribute Draft LRTP for Comment**

The third planning phase focuses on (a) preparing the draft plan, (b) distributing it for review and comment by state and federal transportation authorities and members of the public, (c) holding a public meeting; and (c) incorporating input received.

### **III-A. Compile Draft LRTP**

1. Include a list of all public involvement activities and summarize the main messages or themes of the comments obtained.
2. Demonstrate explicit consideration of the input received, including discussion of where in the document it is included, if appropriate, and why it was (or was not) incorporated into the plan.
3. Include visualization tools, such as maps, graphs, photos and illustrations, to explain aspects of the plan or the data collected for the plan.

### **III-B. Release Draft document for public comment period**

1. The purpose of the comment period is to give stakeholders and members of the public a reasonable opportunity to

review, and comment on the plan before it is finalized.  
Steps include:

- a. Determine the appropriate length of the public comment period in consultation with FHWA, FTA, MnDOT and WisDOT (usually 30 days, but can be longer).
- b. Request release of the draft LRTP for required public comment period.

### **III-C. Publish and Distribute Draft LRTP**

1. Publish legal notice in the Duluth News Tribune and in the Superior Telegram on, or immediately prior to, the start date of the required public comment period.
2. Distribute link to the Draft LRTP document to TAC and MIC members as well as MnDOT, FTA and FHWA contacts for review and comment before the end of the public comment period.
3. Distribute link to the Draft LRTP document to contacts identified in section I-B, for review and comment before the end of the public comment period.
4. Post information about the public comment period on the MIC's Facebook page and other social media outlets as applicable, with a link to the draft document.
5. Make Draft Plan available to the public in both print and electronic (PDF) formats at the following locations:
  - a. MIC website (<https://dsmic.org/planning/long-range/>)
  - b. NWRPC & MIC/ARDC offices (printed copy)

- c. Printed copies will also be provided upon request. *(A fee may be charged to cover the cost of printing, depending on the size of the document, the number of color pages and the number of copies needed).*

### **III-D. Hold a public meeting or open house to review projects and take comments on the Draft plan.**

1. Schedule at least one in-person or online public meeting/ open house to review projects and take comments on the Draft plan, prior to the end of the 30-day comment period.
2. Use the MIC's stakeholder email list, Facebook page and other social media channels to promote and publicize the public meeting (reference I-B instead).

### **III-E. Conduct consultation with state & federal agencies**

1. Request review and take comments on the Draft document
  - a. Hold consultation prior to the end of the 30-day comment period.

### **III-F. Develop the Final LRTP and present for approval**

1. Incorporate input received during the public comment period.
  - a. Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to the comments received during the comment period.
2. If, based on comments received, the final LRTP will differ significantly from the Draft version that was made available for public comment and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, approval of the final LRTP will be delayed until an additional

opportunity for public comment is provided.

- a. The length of such an additional comment period, if determined to be necessary, will be determined in consultation with FHWA, FTA, MnDOT and WisDOT
  - b. The same techniques to promote the revised draft will be utilized as outlined in III-C, D and E.
  - c. The MIC will disseminate information about the extended public comment period and, in addition, information about what specifically was changed and why.
  - d. This information, as well as any comments received during the extended comment period, will be included in the final LRTP.
3. Present the Final LRTP to the TAC and MIC for adoption.
    - a. Report on public comments received.
    - b. Document the action with a signed Board Resolution and include it in the Final document.

## Phase IV— Distribution, Implementation and Assessment

The fourth and final planning phase focuses (a) on making the final plan available to the public; (b) on seeking opportunities to promote the plan to the elected officials, employees and residents of MIC-area jurisdictions that can facilitate the implementation of its recommendations; and (c) evaluating the public involvement strategy.

### IV-A. Distribute Final LRTP

1. Distribute PDF copies of the Final LRTP to MnDOT, WisDOT, FWHA and FTA, along with a link to the LRTP website.
2. Distribute link to the Final LRTP document to contacts identified in section I-B..
3. Make Final LRTP available to the public in both print and electronic (PDF) formats at the following locations:
  - a. MIC website (<https://dsmic.org/planning/long-range/>)
  - b. NWRPC & MIC/ARDC offices (printed copy)
  - c. Printed copies will also be provided upon request. *(A fee may be charged to cover the cost of printing, depending on the size of the document, the number of color pages and the number of copies needed).*

### IV-B. Implement Final LRTP

1. Implement LRTP objectives in the development of the MIC's annual Work Programs and planning efforts and in the projects proposed for inclusion in the Duluth and Superior area TIPS.
2. Seek opportunities to present information about the LRTP to MIC-area jurisdictions that can facilitate the implementation of its recommendations.

### IV-C. Conduct a review of public involvement activities

1. Quantify and analyze effectiveness of public involvement efforts;
2. Make notes for use during next LRTP update.

## L RTP Amendment Process

All projects in the Duluth and Superior metropolitan area TIPs must be consistent with the current, approved L RTP. If not, the L RTP must be amended or the project cannot be programmed in the TIP.

L RTP amendments will be released for 30-day public comment if they are significant in nature.

1. "Significant" amendments include: major scope changes, projects that increase capacity and projects that negatively impact concentrated areas of low income and minority populations (Environmental Justice areas).
2. Public involvement steps will include:
  - a. Placing a legal notice in the Duluth and Superior newspapers of record;
  - b. Using selected tools and techniques in Section III, above, to publicize this information.

### III. Public Engagement for the 2021 PIP Update

Public Involvement is an important component of developing the update of the MIC's Public Involvement Plan. This section provides a summary of the steps taken and input received.

#### A. Outreach Strategy

#### B. Who Did We Involve?

#### C. What Outreach Activities Did We Provide?

#### D. What Comments Did We Receive?

## IV. Appendices

**A. Stakeholder Identification Tool**

**B. Outreach Strategy Planner**

**C. FAST Act Planning Requirements**

**D. Metropolitan Planning and Public Involvement Requirements: Sources and Definitions**

**E. Legal Notices**

**F. Board Resolution Adopting the 2021 Update of the MIC 's Public Involvement Plan**

## Appendix C - FAST Act Planning Requirements

Building on previous transportation authorizations, the current federal bill, Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act or FAST Act, continues the MPO’s role and requirement to provide regional-level coordination and planning for transportation investments in a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive manner (the 3-C planning process).

In accordance with 23 CFR 450.316, the MIC is required to develop and use a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) which sets the procedures by which the MIC will engage the public in the development of the metropolitan transportation planning process for the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan area.

The MIC’s 2018 PIP Update incorporates the following federal legislative mandates:

### 23CFR 450.316

#### Section (a) - Interested parties, participation, and consultation:

Citation	Requirement
23CFR 450.316 (a)	The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing 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 with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1)	The MPO shall develop the participation plan in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (i)	<b>Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points</b> , including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (ii)	<b>Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information</b> about transportation issues and processes;
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (iii)	<b>Employing visualization techniques</b> to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;

**Section (a) - Interested parties, participation, and consultation, *continued*:**

Citation	Requirement
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (iv)	<b>Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means,</b> such as the World Wide Web;
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (v)	<b>Holding any public meetings</b> at convenient and accessible locations and times;
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (vi)	<b>Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received</b> during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (vii)	<b>Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved</b> by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (viii)	<b>Providing an additional opportunity for public comment,</b> if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (ix)	<b>Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning</b> public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and
23CFR 450.316 (a) (1) (x)	<b>Periodically reviewing the effectiveness</b> of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.
23CFR 450.316 (a) (2)	<b>When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP</b> (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.
23CFR 450.316 (a) (3)	<b>A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO.</b>
23CFR 450.316 (a) (3)	<b>Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided</b> to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes.
23CFR 450.316 (a) (3)	<b>Copies of the approved participation plan shall be posted on the World Wide Web,</b> to the maximum extent practicable.

## 23CFR 450.316

### Sections (b), (c), (d), (e) – Coordinated Planning of LRTPs and TIPs:

<p><b>23CFR 450.316</b> <b>(b)</b></p>	<p>In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, <b>the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation</b> (including State and local planned growth, economic development, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities.</p>
<p><b>23CFR 450.316</b> <b>(b)</b></p>	<p>In addition, <b>the MPO shall develop the metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs with due consideration of other related planning activities</b> within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:</p>
<p><b>23CFR 450.316</b> <b>(b) (1)</b></p>	<p>Recipients of assistance under <b>title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53</b> funds [public transit providers];</p>
<p><b>23CFR 450.316</b> <b>(b) (2)</b></p>	<p>Governmental <b>agencies and non-profit organizations</b> (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) <b>that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services;</b></p>
<p><b>23CFR 450.316</b> <b>(b) (3)</b></p>	<p>Recipients of assistance under <b>23 U.S.C. 201-204</b> [Federal Lands Highway Program].</p>
<p><b>23CFR 450.316</b> <b>(c)</b></p>	<p>When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately <b>involve the Indian Tribal government(s)</b> in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.</p>
<p><b>23CFR 450.316</b> <b>(d)</b></p>	<p>When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately <b>involve the Federal land management agencies</b> in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.</p>
<p><b>23CFR 450.316</b> <b>(e)</b></p>	<p>MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, <b>develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies</b>, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included</p>

## 49 USC § 5307— Urbanized Area Formula Grants Section

### (b) — Program of Projects:

Citation	Requirement
49 USC § 5307 (b)	Program of Projects. --Each recipient of a grant shall--
49 USC § 5307 (b) (1)	Make available to the public information on amounts available to the recipient under this section;
49 USC § 5307 (b) (2)	Develop, in consultation with interested parties, including private transportation providers, a proposed program of projects for activities to be financed;
49 USC § 5307 (b) (3)	Publish a proposed program of projects in a way that affected individuals, private transportation providers, and local elected officials have the opportunity to examine the proposed program and submit comments on the proposed program and the performance of the recipient;
49 USC § 5307 (b) (4)	Provide an opportunity for a public hearing in which to obtain the views of individuals on the proposed program of projects;
49 USC § 5307 (b) (5)	Ensure that the proposed program of projects provides for the coordination of public transportation services assisted under section 5336 of this Title with transportation services assisted from other United States Government sources;
49 USC § 5307 (b) (6)	Consider comments and views received, especially those of private transportation providers, in preparing the final program of projects; and
49 USC § 5307 (b) (7)	Make the final program of projects available to the public.

## Appendix D

# Metropolitan Planning and Public Involvement Requirements: Sources and Definitions

### **FAST Act—Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (2015)**

In the FAST Act, public involvement remains a hallmark of the planning process. In an effort to engage all sectors and users of the transportation network, the FAST Act requires that the planning process include public ports and private transportation providers, and further encourages MPOs to consult during this process with officials of other types of planning activities, including tourism and natural disaster risk reduction. The FAST Act also changed criteria for MPO officials to provide transit provider representatives with equal authority and allow the representative to also serve as the representative of a local municipality.

Building on the previous transportation authorizations, the FAST Act continues the requirement for a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive metropolitan transportation planning process for the plans and programs developed by the MIC. In accordance with 23 CFR 450.316, the MIC is required to develop a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) which sets the procedures by which the MIC will engage the public, including a broad list of interested and affected individuals, in the development of the metropolitan transportation planning process for the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan area.

### **23 CFR 450.104**

#### **Planning Assistance and Standards – Definitions**

**Administrative modification** means a minor revision to a long-range statewide or metropolitan transportation plan,

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), or Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that includes minor changes to project/project phase costs, minor changes to funding sources of previously included projects, and minor changes to project/project phase initiation dates. An administrative modification is a revision that does not require public review and comment, a redemonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (in nonattainment and maintenance areas).

**Amendment** means a revision to a long-range statewide or metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP that involves a major change to a project included in a metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP, including the addition or deletion of a project or a major change in project cost, project/project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or design scope (e.g., changing project termini or the number of through traffic lanes or changing the number of stations in the case of fixed guideway transit projects). Changes to projects that are included only for illustrative purposes do not require an amendment. An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment and a redemonstration of fiscal constraint. If an amendment involves “non-exempt” projects in nonattainment and maintenance areas, a conformity determination is required.

### **23 CFR 450.328**

#### **TIP revisions and relationship to the STIP**

(a) An MPO(s) may revise the TIP at any time under procedures agreed to by the cooperating parties consistent with the procedures established in this part for its development and approval. In nonattainment or maintenance areas for transportation-related pollutants, if a TIP amendment involves non-exempt projects (per 40 CFR part 93), or is replaced with an updated TIP, the MPO(s) and the FHWA and the FTA must make a new conformity determination. In all areas, changes that affect fiscal constraint must take place by amendment of the TIP. **The MPO(s) shall use public participation procedures consistent with § 450.316**

**(a) in revising the TIP**, except that these procedures are not required for administrative modifications.

**(b)** After approval by the MPO(s) and the Governor, the State shall include the TIP without change, directly or by reference, in the STIP required under 23 U.S.C. 135. In nonattainment and maintenance areas, the FHWA and the FTA must make a conformity finding on the TIP before it is included in the STIP. A copy of the approved TIP shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA.

**(c)** The State shall notify the MPO(s) and Federal land management agencies when it has included a TIP including projects under the jurisdiction of these agencies in the STIP.

### **Other Definitions—for the MIC Planning Area**

**Regionally significant projects** are roadway, transit, and bicycle/pedestrian projects that occur on facilities that serve regional transportation needs (such as access to and from the area outside the region and major activity centers within the region), or that connect to major transportation assets (including transit, seaport, airport and passenger rail terminals).

A roadway project is generally considered Regionally Significant if it adds one or more travel lanes for over one mile or involves the addition or reconfiguration of an interchange such that a movement is added or eliminated, and would normally be included in the modeling of the MIC area's transportation network and in the air quality conformity analysis for the LRTP and TIP and amendments to the LRTP and TIP.

These facilities include all interstates, freeways, principal arterial highways, principal arterials, National Highway System (NHS), NHS intermodal connectors and all fixed guideway transit facilities that offer an alternative to regional highway travel.

*(Definition approved by the MIC Board May 21, 2014)*

**The timing of the TIP Amendment process** is addressed in the TAC Bylaws as follows: "Any new business or proposal pertaining to the TIP, LRTP or annual work program to be put forward for a vote must be communicated to the MIC Director by telephone or by email at least eleven (11) days before the date of a regularly scheduled meeting and at least five (5) days before the date of a special meeting."

*(4/21/10 TAC Bylaws, section 2.c)*

Appendix E  
Legal Notices

Appendix F

Board Resolution Adopting the 2021 Update of the MIC 's Public Involvement Plan

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Page 1 of 1

**Notice of 45-Day Public Comment Period  
MIC PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT  
PLAN**

The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) has prepared a draft Public Involvement Plan (PIP). The plan presents the updated public involvement procedures to which the MIC will adhere as the designated Metropolitan (Transportation) Planning Organization for the Duluth-Superior urbanized area. **Public comments are being taken through November 30, 2021.**

To view a copy of the draft Plan, please visit [www.dsmic.org/pip-2021](http://www.dsmic.org/pip-2021). To request a printed copy of the draft plan or to make comments, contact Rondi Watson at (218) 529-7511, by email at [rwatson@ardc.org](mailto:rwatson@ardc.org), or by U.S. mail at 221 West First Street, Duluth MN55802.

Comments are also welcomed at the two virtual public input and information sessions to be held on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Login and phone-in information for these meetings are posted on the MIC's website at [www.dsmic.org/pip-2021](http://www.dsmic.org/pip-2021).

The Public Involvement Plan, along with all comments received, will be considered for final approval at the MIC Policy Board meeting on December 8, 2021 at 6:00 pm. Meeting details are posted online at [dsmic.org/event/mic-policy-board-meeting-12-08-21](http://dsmic.org/event/mic-policy-board-meeting-12-08-21).

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