

Memorandum

REPORT TO: Gallatin Valley MPO - Transportation Technical Advisory Committee

FROM: Jeff Butts, MPO Manager

SUBJECT: Consider Recommendation for Adoption of the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Public Participation Plan

MEETING DATE: March 12, 2025

AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Administration

RECOMMENDATION: **Consider the motion:** Having reviewed the draft, I move to recommend adoption of the Public Participation Plan [with modifications].

STRATEGIC PLAN: 1.2 Community Engagement: Broaden and deepen engagement of the community in city government, innovating methods for inviting input from the community and stakeholders.

BACKGROUND: The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) must adopt several foundational documents, including the MPO Formation Agreement, Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary, Performance-Based Planning and Programming Agreement, Planning (PL) Funds Agreement, and the 3-Cs Agreement (cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning). The Public Participation Plan (PPP), a remaining requirement, establishes the framework for effective public engagement in the MPO's planning processes.

Public Participation Plan Review

The Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) reviewed the initial PPP draft. Feedback from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has been incorporated with Track Changes.

Public Engagement Framework

Previous discussions evaluated a broad, flexible approach (similar to the Billings-Yellowstone County MPO) or a structured checklist (adopted by the Missoula MPO). The revised draft offers a comprehensive framework and tables outlining each required planning document's purpose, update frequency, time horizon, and public review period.

Public Review Period Options

Federal regulations stipulate a 45-day public review for the PPP. For other MPO documents, staff proposes a 30-day review but requests TTAC's consideration of the following:

- Maintaining a 30-day review period for most documents.

- Extending the review period to 45 days for all documents.
- Designating public input to a Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee (TPCC) hearing.

A 30-day review requires finalizing plans, such as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), one month earlier for public feedback. This could potentially affect project timelines. The PPP may be updated as needed, subject to its 45-day review requirement.

Recommendation and Next Steps

Staff respectfully requests that TTAC review the revised PPP and recommend approval for public review and subsequent adoption by the TPCC, ensuring federal compliance.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES: None.

ALTERNATIVES: As suggested by the committee.

FISCAL EFFECTS: None.

Attachments:

[GVMPO_Public_Participation_Plan_TTAC_3-12-2025_Markup.pdf](#)

Report compiled on: March 5, 2025