

Metropolitan Council TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Draft (updated May 2017)

Introduction

Public participation is an essential element of transportation planning in the Twin Cities metropolitan region. Because the region is growing and the people are changing, public participation will need to be more coordinated and deliberate. The Metropolitan Council's public engagement framework is outlined in *Thrive MSP 2040*, the Council's Public Engagement Plan, and the Transportation Policy Plan. Together, these policy documents set the tone and give overall policy direction for public participation in transportation planning.

This Transportation Public Participation Plan establishes a framework for the region's stakeholders to influence both long-term transportation policy development and short-term transportation programming. It details the methods and strategies that the Metropolitan Council will use to engage the wide range of stakeholders, from policymakers, to business interests, to residents of the region. It also identifies specific ways those stakeholders can connect to the decision-making process for transportation in the Twin Cities region.

This plan is also responsive to the guidance provided in federal law (23 §CFR450.316).

Regional Policy Guidance

Thrive MSP 2040

With *Thrive MSP 2040*, the Council has not only laid out a foundation on how programs and services will be administered to maintain the region's growth and prosperity, but also how engagement supports this with an outcomes-based approach. Required by state law, *Thrive MSP 2040* underwent a rigorous vetting process by the public through a comprehensive public participation process. Efforts to create the regional plan engaged a broad range of stakeholders, including community organizations and advocacy groups. The result of this engagement are the five outcomes and three principles of *Thrive MSP 2040*:

5 Outcomes for the Twin Cities Region

- **Stewardship** advances the Council's longstanding mission of orderly and economical development by responsibly managing the region's natural and financial resources and making strategic investments in our region's future.

- **Prosperity** is fostered by investments in infrastructure and amenities that create regional economic competitiveness, thereby attracting and retaining successful businesses, a talented workforce, and consequently, wealth.
- **Equity** connects all residents to opportunity and creates viable housing, transportation, and recreation options for people of all races, ethnicities, incomes and abilities so that all communities share the opportunities and challenges of growth and change.
- **Livability** focuses on the quality of our residents' lives and experiences in our region, and how places and infrastructure create and enhance the quality of life that makes our region a great place to live.
- **Sustainability** protects our regional vitality for generations to come by preserving our capacity to maintain and support our region's well-being and productivity over the long term.

3 Principles to Guide the Metropolitan Council's Work

- **Integration** is the intentional combining of related activities to achieve more effective results, leveraging multiple policy tools to address complex regional challenges and opportunities.
- **Collaboration** recognizes that shared efforts advance our region most effectively toward shared outcomes.
- **Accountability** includes a commitment to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our policies and practices toward achieving shared outcomes and a willingness to adjust course to improve performance.

The three principles are also significant to the Public Participation Plan in helping to guide regional transportation planning. Specifically, they are integrated throughout the participation plan to support the approach that:

- Reflects the interests and priorities of the diverse stakeholders of the Twin Cities transportation planning area – including residents, employers, policymakers, local government officials and staff, developers, and other interested stakeholders.
- Engages a cross-section of the transportation planning area's residents, including residents from all parts of the area and from a representative range of demographic characteristics (race/ethnicity/nationality, age, and income level).
- Transcends political differences and transitions by assuring robust participation by partners, stakeholders, and constituents.
- Promotes a regional approach to economic growth and competitiveness.

More information about *Thrive MSP 2040* can be found at <http://www.metrocouncil.org/Planning/Projects/Thrive-2040/Thrive-MSP-2040-Plan.aspx>.

Public Engagement Plan

Among the new elements called out in *Thrive MSP 2040* is the need for a more inclusive approach to engaging community – both individuals and the broader community at-large. In response, the Council created and implemented a Public Engagement Plan to establish principles and guidance for all Council outreach and engagement activities as a specific way to address equity in the region.

This Public Engagement Plan refocuses participation activities on the people of the region, rather than just the infrastructure we're planning for and building, or the traditional processes that may be commonplace, but don't necessarily engage certain communities effectively. It sets the tone for the Council on how to do business with the people throughout the region – namely the notion that the Council will come to the people, not make the people come to the Council.

Specifically, the policy sets the expectation that constituencies will be consulted prior to any outreach activities, to assure greater effectiveness in those efforts. Success will be measured against those expectations and plans that result from consulting with constituencies.

Transportation planning is not only about transit, roads, infrastructure and government. It also involves people — the involvement of the individuals who use regional transportation programs and services, and experience the impact of the transportation system; the people who live, work and enjoy recreation throughout the region. By facilitating this change, the public is empowered to rightfully take ownership of their communities. This knowledge of people's experiences with the system is gathered in an ongoing and iterative manner – conversations happen all the time, and sometimes informally, rather than being isolated to specific projects. As we gather information and learn, we work that knowledge and experience into the next effort.

In response, this Transportation Public Participation Plan focuses on building long-term relationships, which also include the expectation of ongoing communication (rather than self-contained projects that lack connection to the bigger picture). It is flexible to leverage opportunities for shared agenda-setting and meaningful engagement that might pop up in-between significant planning efforts.

The Public Engagement Plan has influenced the nuances of the participation plan by reinforcing the Council's commitment to engagement in all of its regional planning and to support outcomes that are equitable for all the region's constituencies. A key purpose

of the Council's engagement plan is to encourage change in how planning is perceived and shaped. The Council partners with people to jointly make decisions that impact the region.

The following principles are front and center when approaching outreach and engagement:

- Equity
- Respect
- Transparency
- Relevance
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Inclusion
- Cultural Competence

The principles within the Council's engagement plan provide guidance to public participation in the transportation context to ensure that the region's diverse communities are represented and included in a meaningful way. These principles are simultaneously guided by *Thrive MSP 2040*, the state-required comprehensive regional plan.

The Public Engagement Plan was created collaboratively with community stakeholders. Community members wrote and structured significant portions of the plan and vetted related sections with community partners. Dozens of meetings with hundreds of comments led to the Council's policy. Constituencies in the public fundamentally influenced the content in the plan, and that policy significantly influences this Transportation Public Participation Plan, as well. Every day Council outreach staff are adapting methods to be responsive to community needs. That influence will continue throughout the process to implement the participation plan, as well.

For more information about the Public Engagement Plan, and to read more about the community members who participated in creating it, refer to <http://www.metrocouncil.org/About-Us/Publications-And-Resources/Public-Engagement-Plan.aspx>.

Transportation Policy Plan

The Transportation Policy Plan echoes the outcomes and principles that are outlined in *Thrive MSP 2040* and the Public Engagement Plan, and it serves as a building block for transportation planning for the metropolitan region. Participation from the public is essential to transportation planning and to the Transportation Policy Plan specifically. Together in partnership, the Council and the people of the region can build a

transportation system that provides a strong foundation for access and efficiency, yet also encourages flexibility as the region continues to change and grow.

Both state and federal law require the Council to draft and adopt the Transportation Policy Plan which is the regional vision for planning and developing the region's transportation system. The Transportation Policy Plan is updated at least every four years. It lays out a course of action to maintain and enhance our existing facilities, better connect people and communities, and provide more transportation choices that will make the region stronger and a better place to live, through six goals:

- Transportation System Stewardship
- Safety and Security
- Access to Destinations
- Competitive Economy
- Healthy Environment
- Leveraging Transportation Investments to Guide Land Use

Guiding Principles for Public Participation

The following values and principles comprise the core of the participation plan and have helped shaped and guide both *Thrive MSP 2040* and the Public Engagement Plan.

- Regional planning and transportation planning are about people – we're building better communities for all of our region.
- People, businesses, and the broader community have a stake in the region's transportation decisions.
- Participation processes should facilitate discussion and dialogue about transportation impact on the natural and built environments.
- Participation in policy discussions and decisions should be meaningful and have impact in the appropriate contexts.
- Participation opportunities should be inclusive and assure groups traditionally underrepresented in regional policymaking are engaged.
- A variety of participation activities should be used to assure the process can be responsive to the needs of affected audiences and groups.
- Multiple methods will be used to capture public comments, including traditional methods (mail, phone) and emerging methods (email, online forums, and related opportunities).
- Information submitted will be summarized and communicated to participants and the general public, and its impact on the planning process will be tracked.
- Whenever possible, public meetings will be scheduled at times and in locations that are accessible by transit riders and people with disabilities, to avoid potential

conflicts with opportunities hosted by other units of government, in locations throughout the region to provide convenient/nearby access to the process, and at different times during the day and evening hours to accommodate a variety of work schedules.

- Opportunities will be promoted widely, both through the Metropolitan Council's channels, and also through organizations and agencies partnering with the Council on various planning and outreach efforts.

Public participation includes a broad range of activities geared to inform stakeholders, interested parties, and the public about a topic and to provide opportunities for the public at-large, as well as specific stakeholders, to participate and engage in the processes used to create policies. Technology is increasingly used to connect with audiences, and the rapidly changing nature of technology means new methods and communications channels become available regularly. Processes will use technology methods and capture emerging technologies when appropriate, including visualization techniques. However, technology will not replace in-person engagement methods, though it may be used to enhance in-person engagement.

Transportation Public Participation Process and Strategies

The Council strategically approaches public participation to meet the needs of the region. It is important to reach out to stakeholders from all backgrounds and perspectives to have well thought out policies that benefit everyone. Public participation is done holistically and comprehensively with the practice of collaboration and inclusion (both are principles of the Public Engagement Plan, as stated above).

Stakeholder Engagement

Partners in local and state government have a key role in helping to shape the work of the Council and are pulled in at early stages of engagement – especially to help plan and shape participation methods. Specific constituencies include:

- Residents of the region – including drivers, bicyclers, pedestrians, and transit users
- Elected officials and staff of counties, cities, the state and other relevant public agencies (Minnesota Department of Transportation, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Metropolitan Airports Commission)
- Freight interests (including ports, shippers, freight transportation services)
- Business interests (employers and employees)
- Organizations that represent public transportation employees, private transportation, and commuting programs (carpooling, vanpooling, parking and transit benefit programs, telework, etc.)

- Interests historically underrepresented in regional planning efforts (communities of color, cultural communities, the disability community)

When applicable, the Council will also engage agencies that represent rural parts of the region, as well as urban centers. Agencies with expertise in areas such as land use and multi-modal solutions, identified in the Transportation Policy Plan as regional goals, are also engaged.

Constituencies who have not been historically engaged in policy dialogues with the Council will be intentionally included in engagement. Outreach activities actively seek out the involvement of underrepresented communities to open up opportunities for involvement and giving feedback. This can be done by targeting public information toward these groups and conducting special outreach to invite more participation in the future.

Building new relationships in non-traditional groups for the Council is an ongoing effort. At the same time, it is important to leverage the relationships that are already established in order to cultivate long-lasting connections. One example of this kind of partnership is the Council's Community Engagement Steering Committee, where work is being done to improve community engagement with ELL and immigrant populations. A second example is the Council's Equity in Place initiative where the focus is place-based equitable development.

Strategies

The strategies identified below reflect commonly used public participation methods in transportation planning. Outreach and public involvement are valuable activities that can engage stakeholders, underrepresented constituencies and newer audiences in shaping the region-wide transportation system.

1. Creating background information for posting on web sites, and for use in fact sheets, handouts, and other materials.
2. Convening stakeholders for discussion around large topics of regional scale.
3. Sponsoring listening sessions, workshops or conferences to feature policy aspects and promote topic-based policy discussions on plan content.
4. Using social media to connect constituencies to planning efforts and promote involvement – both for two-way discussion and one-way push marketing. Includes using interactive techniques (such as crowd-sourcing and visual wiki-mapping) to gather data and facilitate feedback.
5. Designing and disseminating informal surveys – use social media, electronic mailing lists, idea-gathering platforms and websites to ask questions and promote discussion spaces.

6. Utilizing online interactive engagement tools with abilities to crowdsource or generate surveys; interactive online maps and visualization which support features such as layering, videos, creating markers and providing feedback. (Related to social media methods.)
7. Offering forums, including online forums, to elicit stakeholders' and communities' ideas and perspectives on regional issues, projects and initiatives.
8. Developing special events to announce, highlight or kick-off an issue, discussion, project, initiative or news event.
9. Offering open opportunities to learn about the project, through open houses, meetings/tours/receptions specific to locations that interest the public, or other experience in order to highlight an initiative, project or facility.
10. Soliciting in-depth information by hosting focus groups or small-group discussions about issues, activities or public perceptions from stakeholders.
11. Update existing foundational planning documents (including the Transportation Planning and Programming Guide and the Transportation Policy Plan) to reflect lessons learned through engagement strategies.
12. Include engagement guidance in Work Program for the Transportation Policy Plan, and specific expectations for items funded through the Unified Planning Work Program.

A mixture of several or all of these strategies will be used in every effort, as is appropriate for the specific audiences and constituencies. A specific plan of activities will be created for each effort that reflects the broader goals, strategies, and tactics of this Public Participation Plan. Those plans will be posted online and communicated widely to clarify for constituencies how and when they can participate.

Public Comment and Promotion

State and federal law require formal public comment processes for specific short-term and long-term planning efforts. The public comment period is designed to more formally involve people in the transportation planning process. These formal comment processes generally occur at the end of an effort, as a final opportunity to lend voice and feedback to decisions.

When a public hearing is involved in the process, it unfolds as follows:

- Council policy requires Council action to set hearing dates at least 45 days before a public hearing occurs. State law requires 30 days notice, and this accounts for that time.

- A public notice is placed on the Council’s website, and in a newspaper of regional circulation to formally announce public meetings/hearings and how to comment.
- A news release is issued to the following major and niche outlets:
 - Major metro-wide circulation daily newspapers/related daily Web news outlets
 - Public policy websites and news sites
 - All television stations in the metro area
 - All radio stations in the metro area
 - Online and printed publications with non-daily production schedules
 - Ethnic news organizations (newspapers, online sites, radio)
 - Other niche audience publications
- Other optional promotional activities are also used:
 - Paid Web advertising
 - Paid Facebook advertising
 - Earned promotion through various partner organization newsletters, websites, and publication channels (typically community organizations that represent a specific, hard-to-reach or general audience).
 - An informational news article is posted on the Council’s website that includes the nature of the decision and how people can get involved. This article is distributed through the Council’s online and print newsletter, as well as social media channels.
- Proactive engagement with key constituencies to assure they are aware and can participate in the process – this is broad for large-scale regional discussions and more targeted for specific, smaller-scale conversations.
- The Council collects public comment through the Website, via email, via traditional mail, and via recorded phone message. Oral and written testimony is received via public hearing. A report is created at the close of the process, and that information is shared publicly and with the Council for decision-making.
- State law requires a public comment process to remain open for 10 days after a public hearing. Public comment processes are never closed on a weekend day.

Specific efforts, identified in the tables below, may have slightly different public processes. They are noted there.

Effort-Specific Strategies for Transportation Plans and Programs

Transportation Policy Plan

The Transportation Policy Plan sets policies and investment guidance for the regional transportation system, based on the goals and objectives in Thrive MSP 2040, the region’s

development guide. The transportation plan is one of three major systems plans that result from Thrive MSP 2040. It also responds to federal planning guidance provided in the Moving Ahead for Progress of the 21st Century Act, known as MAP-21.

The Transportation Policy Plan reflects a combination of technical analysis and policy discussion. The plan builds on Thrive MSP 2040 and its extensive public engagement process, on previous regional transportation plans, studies of significant regional transportation issues, discussion and feedback from policymakers throughout the region, and ideas and feedback from other regional stakeholders.

<p>Public Participation Strategies</p>	<p>Every transportation-related planning study has an engagement component. That feedback and guidance also influences any updates to the regional transportation policy plan.</p> <p>The standard Council public comment/promotion process identified above applies to the Transportation Policy Plan update process. In addition, the Council will do the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include any transportation-related feedback and guidance from other regional planning activities, including Thrive MSP 2040 (regional development guide) and transportation corridor planning and implementation. Utilize this information in creating any public participation plans 2. Develop outreach and engagement plan for the region, in consultation with stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create interactive web-based engagement tool that will allow users to provide feedback and discussion • Conduct stakeholder meetings that target a broad swath within the community including businesses, council districts and community based coalitions; conduct one-on-one meetings if necessary • Partner with research groups, transportation experts and urban planners within government and the community to gather information and data on needs assessments and current trends • Performance-based workshops • Focus groups and/or listening sessions 3. Promote the plan using the Metropolitan Council's website, Twitter, Facebook, and printed materials; include online information and notices, interactive online visualization and mapping tools (for illustration and facilitating tradeoff discussion), opportunities for public comment, media releases, web and media strategies 4. Engage TAC/TAB members, council members and other stakeholders early in and throughout the process of preparing a draft plan for public review to provide guidance to the existing plan
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Engage TAC/TAB, council members and representatives from local government during the execution of engagement plan 6. Create specific stakeholder/policy-maker advisory groups to guide policy development in the plan, where necessary 7. Include engagement plan with Work Program to establish expectations for upcoming planning studies. 8. Identify key issues, provide context to them, and communicating progress toward related policy to stakeholders, such as those for the 2018 update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomous vehicles • Performance measurement • Investment (rehab) and mobility in developed urban highway corridors (I-94 project) • Equity and environmental justice • Investment strategy (all modes)
Decision-making Roles	Technical Advisory Committee (Planning), Transportation Advisory Board, Equity Advisory Committee, Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Metropolitan Council

<p>Regional Solicitation</p> <p>The Regional Solicitation is a process that allocates federal transportation funds to locally initiated projects to meet regional transportation needs. The Council, as Metropolitan Planning Organization, works with the Transportation Advisory Board to review and allocate these funds, using an objective, data-driven, transparent process. Project selected through the Regional Solicitation also end up in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Funds are typically awarded on a two-year cycle. Specific constituencies include the Minnesota Department of Transportation, counties, school districts, and cities in the region.</p>	
Public Participation Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote availability of Regional Solicitation funds via the Web, newsletters, email distribution lists, social media. 2. Provide general information about Regional Solicitation process and types of projects included. 3. Create informational news articles for the Council's website on projects chosen through the Regional Solicitation process. 4. Use online mapping and visualization techniques to display projects and illustrate scope and type of project. 5. Coordinate media outreach, in collaboration with local officials, to media outlets that cover specific geographic areas throughout the metro area. The goal of this outreach is to highlight projects throughout the region, educate about the federal funding processes, and provide an opportunity for local communities to share their projects.

	<p>Future process work</p> <p>The Council will collaborate with the Transportation Advisory Board and its Technical Advisory Committee to more actively engage communities in the region around the projects chosen through the Regional Solicitation process.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather information from local communities about their engagement processes related to projects submitted for funding through the Regional Solicitation. 2. Provide technical assistance for engaging local constituencies about projects. 3. Investigate including engagement-related elements to a future Regional Solicitation application process. Create related performance measures for assessment. 4. Integrate this work with the potential workgroup identified in the TIP section below. <p>In addition, the Council will highlight completed projects funded through the Regional Solicitation process. The Council will use visualization techniques on its website. It will also create a standard template to highlight each project in a way that can be printed.</p>
Decision-making Roles	Minnesota Department of Transportation, Metropolitan Pollution Control Agency, Technical Advisory Committee (Funding), Technical Advisory Committee (Planning), Transportation Advisory Board, Metropolitan Council

<p>Transportation Improvement Program</p> <p>The TIP is a staged, four-year, multimodal program of highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian and transportation enhancement projects and programs proposed for federal funding throughout the seven-county metropolitan area. The TIP is a federally required document that reflects funding available and reasonably anticipated (fiscally constrained). The Metropolitan Planning Organization is required to prepare the TIP as a short-range programming document that complements the long-range transportation plan. The Council prepares the TIP in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The TIP includes federal funds allocated through the regional solicitation process, and federal formula funds programmed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Council and transit providers.</p>	
Public Participation Strategies	The standard Council public comment process applies to the Transportation Improvement Program. A standard 45-day comment process applies. A 21-day comment process is used for any proposed amendments to the TIP. The following additional items will take place for the next few cycles:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate what engagement process works best for the Transportation Improvement Plan. Tactics include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask applicants from the Regional Solicitation why a project was chosen to be included • Ask local agencies about project engagement at the local level • Recommend support for project engagement at local level and for TIP 2. Conduct in-depth discussions among Council Communications and MTS staff regarding engagement strategies for the Transportation Improvement Plan 3. Create a work group consisting of Technical Advisory Committee/Transportation Advisory Board members, members of partnering agencies and other key stakeholders with the purpose of developing an engagement plan during the next Regional Solicitation revision 4. In publishing the TIP, use accompanying resources to visualize projects and region-wide impact.
Decision-making Roles	Minnesota Department of Transportation, Metropolitan Pollution Control Agency, Technical Advisory Committee (Funding), Technical Advisory Committee (Planning), Transportation Advisory Board, Metropolitan Council

<p>Unified Planning Work Program The Unified Planning Work Program is a federally required program that details and describes proposed transportation and transportation-related planning activities in the metropolitan area. The UPWP is a critical document in the planning and policy work of the Council as it also serves as the application for transportation planning funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation. The UPWP is prepared annually and describes metropolitan-area transportation planning activities being undertaken by four agencies: the Metropolitan Council, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Metropolitan Airports Commission.</p>	
Public Participation Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Pollution Control Agency, Metropolitan Airports Commission and Transportation Advisory Board about the process of the Unified Planning Work Program; develop an outreach and engagement plan with help from partners and constituencies. 2. Include guidance for anticipated engagement strategies for projects included in the work program. 3. Develop online tool to obtain feedback from the public on what priorities the Met Council as an MPO should include in their work plan. 4. After draft of budget and work plan is completed, open up for public comments.

	5. Apply standard promotional process to work plan.
Decision-making Roles	Technical Advisory Committee, Transportation Advisory Board, Equity Advisory Committee, Metropolitan Council

Air Quality Conformity Determination	
<p>The Federal Clean Air Act Amendments passed in 1990 stipulate that transportation plans, programs, and projects in non-attainment and maintenance areas must undergo an air quality conformity analysis. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency designates the seven-county metropolitan area and a developed portion of Wright County adjacent to the metropolitan area (along U.S. Highway 10 and I-94), as a maintenance area for carbon monoxide emissions. Therefore, transportation plans, projects, and programs are subject to air quality analysis.</p>	
Public Participation Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruit air quality and environmental experts onto the Minnesota Interagency Air Quality and Transportation Planning Committee; identify key issues, providing context to them, and communicating progress toward related policy to stakeholders, interested parties, and the general public 2. Analysis 3. Conduct public comment 4. Apply standard promotional process
Decision-making Roles	Technical Advisory Committee (Planning), Transportation Advisory Board

Transportation Public Participation Plan (and effort-specific plans)	
<p>This Transportation Public Participation Plan establishes a framework for the region’s stakeholders to influence both long-term transportation policy development and short-term transportation programming. It details the methods and strategies that the Metropolitan Council will use to engage the wide range of stakeholders, from policymakers, to business interests, to residents of the region.</p> <p>Plans for specific planning studies and related transportation planning efforts will also be created, consistent with this plan.</p>	
Public Participation Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage affected constituencies in determining specific goals, strategies, and effectiveness measures 2. Create draft for feedback from constituencies (including advisory committees identified below) 3. Publish draft and release for public comment; a standard 45-day comment process applies 4. Apply standard promotional process 5. Compile public comment and revise; conduct second public comment review if revisions are significant

	6. Conduct annual evaluation of plan effectiveness; Include specific evaluation of effort-specific plans
Decision-making Roles	Technical Advisory Committee (Planning), Transportation Advisory Board, Equity Advisory Committee, Metropolitan Council

Evaluation of Effectiveness

Public participation in transportation planning is measured against the outcomes, goals and principles of *Thrive MSP 2040*, the Transportation Policy Plan and the Public Engagement Plan in order to evaluate their effectiveness and ultimately, their impact on how planning and policy will be shaped. Methods that satisfy these measurements are the ultimate goal of public participation in transportation planning.

The public participation activities for transportation planning should achieve the following outcomes:

1. Provide policy details consistent with the overall vision included in the *Thrive MSP 2040* plan and the Transportation Policy Plan where relevant.
2. Employ practices consistent with the *Thrive MSP 2040* Outreach and Engagement Plan.
3. Build upon relationships and partnerships identified in the *Thrive MSP 2040* Outreach and Engagement efforts.
4. Support the key goals identified in the *Thrive MSP 2040* Outreach and Engagement Plan (as stated in this document).
5. Engage transportation stakeholders as identified in the Transportation Policy Plan.

It’s also important to note that evaluation and engagement are ongoing activities. Evaluation will take place after each effort – and aggregate review will take place semi-annually. Typically evaluation will take place through participant survey. Results are iterative and built into the next relevant engagement effort. While there are baseline measures of effectiveness and satisfaction with transportation efforts, the results of those measures should support the integration into future planning and participant ownership of the process, rather than merely using volume as a measure of success or reporting quantities of participants.

All public planning efforts are relevant to an audience. Public outreach and engagement efforts identify those key audiences and the methods that will be used to authentically convene and include voices from those audiences. Authenticity requires providing space for all feedback – whether perceived as positive or negative – to support the

ultimate decision-making process. Relevance sometimes stirs controversy and it is the role of government to provide opportunities for all viewpoints to be raised and included. Particularly where controversy exists, effectiveness will be measured in terms of whether the range of viewpoints were included and individuals felt respected and valued.

Authentic engagement is an evolving cycle that will lead to success when lessons are learned and the opportunity to foster involvement occurs. Below are some methods (which can either be qualitative or quantitative) for evaluating the effectiveness of public participation in transportation planning in order to achieve the goals stated above:

Goal/Outcomes	Policy	Method of Evaluation of Effectiveness
Consistency with overall vision, outcomes and goals	<i>Thrive MSP 2040</i> , Transportation Policy Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final reports that include data on the process of public participation • Case studies or project overviews are included in the Transportation Policy Plan to highlight the work that achieves these goals • Staff evaluation of data to compile a “lessons learned” narrative of the overall engagement method
Engagement was executed using practices and principles that are collaborative in nature and includes many perspectives of the region	<i>Thrive MSP 2040</i> , Public Engagement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method engaged underrepresented communities throughout the region • All meetings are scheduled to meet the needs of community • Online engagement tools and other products are accessible to everyone
Building new relationships and leveraging existing ones	<i>Thrive MSP 2040</i> , Public Engagement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing relationships with partners and stakeholders are deepened with the Council • New relationships are formed within transportation and other sectors
Augment and amplify outreach and engagement goals	<i>Thrive MSP 2040</i> , Public Engagement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate outreach and engagement goals into public participation plans that are measurable and transferrable to other transportation policies
Stakeholders are integrated with	Transportation Policy Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local government, other planning agencies and community-based

Goal/Outcomes	Policy	Method of Evaluation of Effectiveness
deliberation in engagement		transportation organizations are involved in engagement planning and determining specific measures by creating work groups or subcommittees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local government, other planning agencies and community-based transportation organizations take a more interactive role in facilitating and participating in participation and engagement opportunities

Other measures that may be used to evaluate the effectiveness of public participation are:

- Number of people participating in public involvement activities
- Number and diversity of organizations participating in transportation planning efforts
- Number of individuals who participate in transportation-related online discussions; depth of participation in discussions (based on measurable activities)
- Percentage of county, city and township governments whose staff and/or policymakers participated in transportation planning efforts
- Earned media related to transportation planning efforts (and comparisons, as available)

Advisory Bodies

The Council's advisory bodies provide key opportunities for stakeholder participation. They allow members, representing a cross-section of key stakeholder groups in the region, to help shape regional transportation plans and policies. The Council appoints members of the general public, local elected officials, professionals with technical knowledge and experience, or representatives of statute-identified groups, according to the responsibilities of particular advisory bodies. Advisory bodies may conduct studies, recommend action to the Council's standing committees, and/or provide expert advice.

1. **Transportation Advisory Board (TAB):** The TAB works in conjunction with the Council to distribute federal transportation funds and set regional transportation policy. The TAB consists of 34 members: 10 elected city officials; 1 member from

each county board in the metropolitan area; the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation; the Commissioner of the Pollution Control Agency; one member of the Metropolitan Airports Commission; one member from the Suburban Transit Association; one person appointed by the Council to represent non-motorized transportation, one member representing the freight transportation industry, two members representing public transit, one “citizen” representative from each Council district (for a total of eight), and one Council member. The TAB chair is appointed by the Council from among the 34 members. The TAB works closely with the Council, reviewing, commenting on and coordinating transportation planning and programming activities. A key responsibility of the Council’s TAB is to solicit and evaluate project applications for federal funding programs.

2. **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to the TAB**: The TAC also works closely with the TAB and the Council. Composed of professional staff from city and county governments and the agencies involved in transportation in the seven-county region, the TAC provides technical expertise to the TAB. The TAC has two standing committees, the Funding and Programming Committee and the Planning Committee as well as ad hoc multimodal task forces
3. **Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)**: The TAAC was created by the legislature and consists of 16 members including a chair appointed by the Council – seven members chosen by disability and senior groups in the metro area, and eight others, also selected by the Council, who represent districts that are combinations of the Council's 16 districts. At least half TAAC members must be certified as eligible for paratransit services under the Americans with Disabilities Act and be active users of public transportation in the metro area.
4. **Equity Advisory Committee**: In late 2015, the Metropolitan Council created an advisory committee to advise the Council on issues related to the equity commitments in Thrive MSP 2040 and other Council equity-related policy issues. The ultimate goal of the committee’s work is to create more equitable outcomes for people who live and work in the Twin Cities region.