

ITEM #: 2
DATE: 05-28-24
DEPT: AAMPO

TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

BACKGROUND:

The Public Participation Plan details how the AAMPO involves the public and stakeholders in its transportation planning efforts. It includes public and stakeholder engagement goals and strategies that the MPO plans to implement so that all interested parties have ample opportunity to get involved with the MPO's transportation planning efforts and planning document updates. It also details how to access the MPO's relevant transportation planning information and documentation.

All MPOs are federally required to have a Public Participation Plan. The Iowa DOT requires that MPOs update their Public Participation Plan at least every five years, after major organizational changes, or as otherwise needed. Even though the AAMPO's last update to the Public Participation Plan was only three years ago (in 2021), the MPO has recently undergone a complete website redesign, adopted a new planning area boundary, and has updated the composition of its Transportation Technical Committee. Therefore, it is necessary to update the Public Participation Plan to reflect these recent changes.

The draft Public Participation Plan (**Attachment A**) carries over most of the content from the 2021 update. However, **the following changes were made to reflect recent changes to the AAMPO, new sociodemographic data, and the recent redesign of the MPO website:**

- **Page 4 (Section 1.2):** Updated the discussion and map to reflect the AAMPO's recent modification to the planning area boundary.
- **Page 6 (Section 1.4):** Updated the Transportation Technical Committee overview to reflect the new composition of the committee (including the addition of five new voting members: two from the City of Ames, one from the City of Gilbert, one from the Gilbert Community School District, and one from Iowa State University).
- **Pages 10-11 (Sections 3.1 & 3.2):** Updated the discussion and information about the AAMPO website to reflect the recent redesign (which included separating the AAMPO website from the City of Ames website). Added discussion about the AAMPO's new email newsletter.
- **Pages 15-20 (Sections 5.1-5.6):** Reviewed the development and public input process for all core planning documents and made updates as appropriate. Some updates include: adding a requirement to create a Public Engagement Plan for Metropolitan Transportation Plan updates, removing the requirement to hold a public input session for every core planning document update, removing the 30-day public comment period requirement for Passenger Transportation Plan updates (due to the high level of public involvement already present throughout the plan's development), and shortening the minimum public comment period for amendments to all core planning documents (except for the Public Participation Plan) to 10-days (instead of 15-days) in order to simplify the process for processing amendment requests made to the AAMPO.
- **Pages 21-22 (Sections 6.1-6.4):** Updated the discussion on underserved populations to reflect the availability of new sociodemographic data, updates to project selection criteria to include "impact on high-need areas and disadvantaged populations" for AAMPO grant program applications,

updated links to the City of Ames and CyRide Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plans, and updated links to the AAMPO's LEP Plan and Title VI complaint form.

- **Pages 27-36 (Appendices C & D):** Generated new regional demographic table summaries using 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) five-year data for 2018-2022 and generated new sociodemographic maps using the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) new environmental justice (EJ) mapping and screening tool, EJScreen.

After review and approval by the Transportation Policy Committee, the draft document will undergo a 45-day public comment period. During this time, the Iowa DOT will also review the draft document. **Once final feedback is received and incorporated into the Public Participation Plan, the final document will be presented to the Transportation Policy Committee again for public hearing and final approval on July 9, 2024.**

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the draft Public Participation Plan and set July 9, 2024, as the date of public hearing.
2. Modify the draft Public Participation Plan and set July 9, 2024, as the date of public hearing.

MPO DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Transportation Technical Committee has reviewed the Draft Public Participation Plan and unanimously recommends approval. This plan was updated by staff based on all applicable federal and state regulations and guidance. **Therefore, it is the recommendation of the MPO Executive Director that the Transportation Policy Committee adopt Alternative No. 1, as noted above.**

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Attachment A - Draft Public Participation Plan.pdf](#)