

## Public Participation Plan Proposed Amendment Summary

MassDOT has requested that the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO) amend its Public Participation Plan to reflect a change from the current 30-day public comment period to 21 days, so that MPO actions on federal certification documents can occur within the proposed recurring monthly MPO meeting schedule. The shortened comment period will ensure that the NMMPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to be fully endorsed by June 1<sup>st</sup>. This timeframe will allow MassDOT to incorporate the regional TIPs within the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the State's Capital Investment Plan (CIP), and meet the June deadline date established by the legislature. The following changes to the Public Participation Plan are proposed:

### Chapter 1

- *Section 1.2, Page 5 - Goals of the Public Participation Plan*
  - "Provide a predictable process that is understandable, with notification provided well in advance ~~30~~ 21 days for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP); and 45 days for the Public Participation Plan);"

### Regional Transportation Plan

- *Section 1.7.2, Page 15 - Notice of the Availability of the Regional Transportation Plan*
  - "A ~~30~~ 21-day public comment period will commence once the draft RTP document has been approved by a vote of the NMMPO. A minimum of two public meetings shall be held to receive comments. Comments may also be submitted, in writing, through conventional mail, by email, by phone or social media. A consultative process will also be provided for environmental permitting agencies and advocacy groups.
  - Future substantive changes or amendments to the Regional Transportation Plan will require an additional ~~30~~ 21-day public comment period, and will follow the process outlined above.

### Transportation Improvement Program

- *Section 1.7.3, Page 16 - Public Participation Procedures for the Transportation Improvement Program*
  - "A ~~30~~ 21-day public review and comment period prior to adoption of the TIP by the NMMPO."
  - "A ~~30~~ 21-day public comment period will commence once a draft TIP document is approved by a vote of the NMMPO."

### Unified Planning Work Program

- *Section 1.7.4, Page 17 - Public Participation Procedures for the Unified Planning Work Program*
  - "Provides a ~~30~~ 21-day public review and comment period prior to endorsement of the UPWP by the NMMPO."
- *Section 1.7.4, Page 18 - Notice of the Availability of the UPWP*
  - "A ~~30~~ 21-day public comment period will commence once the draft UPWP has been approved by a vote of the NMMPO. A minimum of one public meeting shall be held to

receive comments. Comments may also be submitted, in writing, through conventional mail, by email, phone or social media. At the completion of the comment period, all public comments shall be considered and incorporated into the draft UPWP if appropriate. The UPWP will include a summary of comments received and a report of responses/actions taken by the NMMPO. The NMMPO will then vote on the endorsement of the document.

- The endorsed UPWP document will be posted on the NMCOG website [www.nmcog.org](http://www.nmcog.org) and disseminated to stakeholders through the NMMPO public outreach list. Future substantive changes or amendments to the UPWP will require an additional 30 21-day comment period and will follow the outreach process outlined above.

### Section 1.7.7 Public Participation Procedures for making changes to Federal Certification Documents

- *Page 19:*
  - “A public comment period can be extended if the proposed amendment is significantly altered during the initial public comment period. If the document changes significantly during the initial public comment period, an additional 30 21-day comment period can be provided by the NMMPO. The public comment period can also be abbreviated by the NMMPO when extraordinary circumstances arise. This period can be abbreviated to no less than 10 calendar days.
  - The UPWP typically requires less frequent revisions than the TIP. A change to the UPWP includes the addition or deletion of a UPWP Task, which is handled through a 30 21-day public comment period prior to NMMPO action on the proposed amendment. Adjustments to the UPWP include moving funds from one task to another to reflect changes in level of effort.”