

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** GTC Planning Committee Members & Alternates  
**FROM:** Joseph M. Bovenzi, AICP, Executive Director *JMB*  
**DATE:** May 7, 2026  
**SUBJECT:** Approval of the Draft *Genesee Transportation Council Public Engagement Plan* for Public Review

The purpose of the *Genesee Transportation Council Public Engagement Plan* (PEP) is to provide guidance on public engagement activities to GTC staff, member agencies, and project sponsors. Additionally, it defines what the public can expect in terms of opportunities to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning process. This PEP provides guidance and parameters to manage expectations while maintaining flexibility in how project sponsors meet community needs.

GTC is committed to providing the public with meaningful opportunities to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning process. If circumstances beyond its control impact on the ability of GTC to follow the processes proscribed by this plan, the agency will strive to meet the intention of this plan to the extent possible.

The updated PEP defines different opportunities for engagement, explains how a person could participate, describes how a person could learn about input opportunities, and identifies accessibility and accommodations, contingency plans, and additional references. GTC will make the status and recommendations of all programs, projects, and activities conducted by or on behalf of GTC accessible to the public.

23 CFR, 450.316 requires metropolitan planning organizations to periodically review the effectiveness of their public participation plans. While there is no required timeframe for this review, GTC aims to review and update its PEP every five years. The current plan was adopted in 2021.

23 CFR, 450.316 requires a 45-day public comment period prior to the adoption of a new or revised PEP. The public comment period for the new GTC PEP will occur from May 15 through June 29. Following this period, GTC staff will revise the PEP based on any comments received, and the Planning Committee will make a final recommendation for board action at its August 13, 2026, meeting. The GTC Board is expected to consider and adopt the PEP at its August 27, 2026, meeting. The PEP will go into effect immediately after adoption by the GTC Board.

**Summary of changes:** Updates to the PEP reflect a shift toward clearer, more flexible, and more practical public engagement expectations across GTC processes. Board meetings will continue to be held in the spirit of the New York State Open Meetings Law, but will no longer require formal legal notices. For the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the process is streamlined to include one public meeting, supported by other engagement opportunities as appropriate. A new section has also been added to address the Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Transportation Plan, ensuring its development process is clearly defined. In addition, revisions to UPWP task classifications aim to simplify and clarify expectations by

moving away from rigid project-based requirements toward a more outcome-driven approach. This includes replacing the Technical/Data and Planning/Policy categories with a three-tiered engagement framework — Inform, Consult, and Involve — focused on identifying the type of input needed to shape each project. Together, these changes are intended to improve communication, strengthen proposals, support more accurate cost estimates, and create a more consistent and user-friendly public engagement process for project teams.

***Recommended Action***

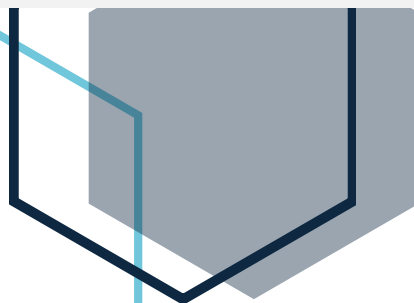
Approve the draft *Genesee Transportation Council Public Engagement Plan* for Public Review.



# Genesee Transportation Council Public Engagement Plan

**DRAFT - May 2026  
August 2026**

This document defines the policies and procedures that the Genesee Transportation Council will undertake to ensure that members of the public have meaningful opportunities to participate in the transportation planning decision-making process.





DRAFT



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If you have any questions or comments on this document, please contact the Genesee Transportation Council at 1 South Washington Street, Suite 520, Rochester, New York 14614; by telephone at (585) 232-6240, or via email at [ContactGTC@gtcmpo.org](mailto:ContactGTC@gtcmpo.org)

Financial assistance for the preparation of this report was provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The Genesee Transportation Council is solely responsible for its content.



## Introduction

The Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) Public Engagement Plan (PEP) explains how people and interested parties can participate in the regional transportation planning process and what they can expect from GTC. It outlines the policies and guidelines used to ensure everyone has meaningful opportunities to stay informed, share input, and provide feedback on plans, programs, and projects.

This document describes opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, including Planning Committee and Board meetings, as well as in the development of core work products such as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Transportation Air Quality Conformity, Public Engagement Plan, and the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. It also includes opportunities to participate in federally funded planning activities and projects.

The PEP also provides guidance for GTC staff, member agencies, and project sponsors carrying out work on behalf of GTC. It sets clear expectations for engagement while allowing flexibility to respond to the different needs of communities across the region.

Each engagement opportunity is described in terms of its purpose, how to get involved, and how GTC will communicate and support participation. This includes information on outreach approaches, accessibility and accommodations, contingency planning, procedures for updates or amendments, and additional resources.

## GTC Background

The Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the nine-county Genesee-Finger Lakes Region, which includes Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates counties. Federal transportation law requires every urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 to have an MPO to receive federal highway and transit funding.

GTC coordinates how federal transportation funding is planned and used in this region. Through a cooperative planning process with local, state, and federal partners, GTC helps guide policies, plans, and investments that affect how people and goods move across the surface transportation system.

Additionally, GTC provides technical expertise for regional transportation planning needs in the areas of bicycle and pedestrian planning, travel demand modeling, and intelligent transportation systems among others.

Federal transportation laws and policies guide the planning work carried out by the MPO.



## Title VI/Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

### **GTC's Commitment to the Public**

The Genesee Transportation Council assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, disability, age, gender, or income status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. GTC further assures every effort will be made to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities, whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.

It is also the policy of the Genesee Transportation Council to ensure that none of its programs, policies, and other activities have disproportionate adverse effects on minority and low-income populations. The Genesee Transportation Council identifies minority and low-income communities from US Census data. The Genesee Transportation Council takes a proactive approach to engage these communities and ensures their full and fair participation in the transportation decision-making process.

In addition, GTC will provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency.

In the event GTC distributes federal-aid funds to another agency as a subrecipient, GTC will include Title VI language in all written agreements and will monitor them for compliance.

GTC is responsible for initiating and monitoring Title VI activities, preparing required reports and other GTC responsibilities as required by 23 CFR 200 and 49 CFR 21.

### **En Español**

El Consejo Genesee de Transporte asegura que ninguna persona, por motivos de raza, color, nacionalidad, discapacidad, edad, sexo o situación económica, será excluida de participar en ningún programa o actividad, ni se le negarán los beneficios de los mismos, ni será objeto de discriminación de ningún tipo. El GTC, (por sus siglas en inglés) asegura además que se hará todo lo posible para asegurar la no discriminación en todas las actividades de sus programas, ya sea que esos programas y actividades estén financiados por el gobierno federal o no.

For additional information, refer to GTC's Title VI/Nondiscrimination Implementation Plan on the GTC website.

## Opportunities to Participate in the Decision-making Process

### GTC Board Meetings

#### Definition & Purpose:

The Genesee Transportation Council Board is the governing body that directs GTC as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Region. It provides direction and establishes policy regarding the roles and responsibilities of GTC as the designated MPO for the region to comply with the federally certified planning process required by USDOT. The GTC Board approves all activities and work products, including the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The GTC Board consists of 27 members, including elected officials from each of the nine counties, the City of Rochester, and representatives from local, regional, state, and federal agencies. See Figure 1 for full list.



Figure 1



Members of the public can review meeting materials, attend meetings, and submit comments.

**Public Participation:**

GTC Board meetings are open to the public. People can attend in person or remotely. Members of the public can review meeting materials up to one week prior to the meeting. People can submit comments pertaining to agenda items on advance or during the public comment period at the beginning of the meeting.

**Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

Meeting notices and materials, including agendas and supporting documents, are posted on the GTC website at least one week in advance of the meetings. Printed or other accessible formats will be available upon request. GTC Board meeting notices are distributed to traditional news media outlets across the nine-county region, shared on social media platforms, and emailed to subscriber lists.

GTC Board meetings are held in venues that are accessible to people with disabilities and are located along public transit routes. GTC includes information in public notices on how to request assistance for full participation.

To support remote participation, GTC provides a live stream of each meeting that can be accessed via computer, mobile device, or toll-free telephone line. Members of the public observing remotely may participate, as if in person. Meeting recordings are archived on the GTC website.

**Contingency Plans:**

If a GTC Board meeting cannot be held in person due to circumstances such as severe weather, power outages, or public health concerns, the meeting may be cancelled or conducted fully remotely with provisions for the public to observe and participate online or by telephone. Notice of cancellation or changes will be made promptly via the webpage, social media, email notification, and a media release.

**References & More Information:**

Under GTC Board Resolution 22-18, the GTC Board amended Article VII, Section 1 of the GTC By-laws in June 2022 stating that GTC Board shall be open to the public and conducted in the spirit of the New York State Open Meetings Law, as amended.

Information about GTC Board policies, requirements, and governance structure is available at: GTC Website: <https://www.gtcmpo.org>

GTC Community Engagement Hub: [www.publicinput.com/GTCBoard](http://www.publicinput.com/GTCBoard)



## Planning Committee Meetings

### **Definition & Purpose:**

GTC's Planning Committee provides professional and technical direction to the GTC Board. The committee is made up of transportation and planning professionals that represent each jurisdiction that are appointed by GTC Board members. After considering input from sub-committees and GTC staff, the Planning Committee reviews planning work and recommends actions to the GTC Board for final approval. The committee meets eight times per year.

Members of the public can review meeting materials, attend meetings, and submit comments.

### **Public Participation:**

Planning Committee meetings are open to the public. People can attend in person or remotely. People can submit comments pertaining to agenda items in advance or during the public comment periods at the beginning and the end of the meeting.

### **Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

Meeting notices and materials, including agendas and supporting documents are posted on the GTC website at least one week in advance. Printed or other accessible formats will be available upon request. Planning Committee meeting notices are distributed to traditional news media outlets across the nine-county region, shared on social media platforms and emailed to subscriber lists.

Planning Committee meetings are held in venues that are accessible to people with disabilities and are located along public transit routes. GTC includes information in public notices on how to request assistance for full participation.

To support remote participation, GTC provides a live stream of each meeting that can be accessed via computer, mobile device, or toll-free telephone line. Members of the public observing remotely may submit questions or comments through several methods, including chat, email, text message, recorded voice message, or by speaking during the public comment portion of the meeting. Meeting recordings are archived on the GTC Community Engagement Hub.

### **Contingency Plans:**

If a Planning Committee meeting cannot be held in person due to circumstances such as severe weather, power outages, or public health concerns, the meeting may be cancelled or conducted fully remotely with provisions for the public to observe and participate online or by telephone. Notice of cancellation or changes will be made promptly via the webpage, social media, email notification, and a media release.

### **References & More Information:**

Information about Planning Committee policies, requirements, and governance structure is available at: GTC Website: <https://www.gtcmpo.org>

GTC Community Engagement Hub [www.publicinput.com/GTCPlanningCommittee](http://www.publicinput.com/GTCPlanningCommittee)



## Opportunities to Participate in the Development of Core Work Products

Among the federally required core responsibilities of the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) is the development of a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). They guide transportation policy, planning activities and investment decisions in the Genesee Finger Lakes Region.

Each of these products plays a distinct role in the metropolitan planning process and is developed through coordination with GTC member agencies, state and federal partners, and the public. Opportunities for public participation are provided throughout the development and review of these documents to ensure they accurately reflect community needs, regional priorities, and are following federal requirements.

Submitted comments and responses will be documented as part of the public record.

### Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Members of the public can comment on transportation issues, opportunities, and potential solutions affecting the region. A draft plan will be shared for public review, and feedback can be submitted before it is adopted.

#### **Definition & Purpose:**

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a key document required to receive federal transportation funding. It sets the overall direction for transportation policy, planning, and investment decisions across the nine-county Genesee-Finger Lakes Region.

The LRTP looks at current and future transportation conditions, identifies regional needs and priorities, and outlines strategies and recommendations to guide investments over the next 25 years. It also serves as the policy framework for other transportation planning activities carried out by GTC.

#### **Public Participation Process:**

At the start of each LRTP update, GTC develops and carries out a community engagement plan to guide public participation throughout the process. This plan identifies stakeholders and interested parties, and outlines outreach activities aligned with the LRTP schedule.

The engagement plan includes a mix of online, virtual, and in-person outreach designed to reach a broad audience. Visual and interactive tools may be used to explain planning concepts and gather feedback. All engagement activities and input received are documented, and a summary of results is included in the LRTP.

Opportunities to participate may include online input on project webpages, public meetings or workshops, community group meetings, surveys, information tables at community events, and other outreach activities as appropriate.



The public engagement process includes two rounds of outreach, along with a separate public review period of at least 30 days before the plan is finalized and adopted. GTC also provides ongoing opportunities for people to contact staff and share input throughout the process.

**Round 1 Outreach:** Conducted early in the process to gather input on regional needs, issues, priorities, and the desired future of the transportation system.

**Round 2 Outreach:** Conducted later in the process to gather feedback on draft recommendations and proposed strategies.

**30-Day Public Review Period:** Conducted at the conclusion of the process to present the full document and to seek final comments.

GTC hosts at least one public meeting during each round of outreach. Meetings may be held in different locations across the region, at various times of day, and offered in both in-person and virtual formats to encourage participation.

**Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

GTC will publicize outreach and engagement opportunities using traditional news media, sharing on social media platforms, emailing subscriber lists and utilizing other creative methods. A legal notice announcing the public review period will be published in the daily newspaper with the largest circulation in the region, *Democrat and Chronicle*.

An electronic version of the draft LRTP will be available online. A printed copy or other formats will be available upon request.

Members of the public may submit written comments during the review period through online tools, email, or U.S. mail.

**Review and Adoption Process:**

The Planning Committee will review the draft LRTP and release it for a minimum 30-day public review period before recommending the plan to the GTC Board for adoption.

If significant revisions are made following the review period, the Planning Committee may approve a revised draft LRTP for an additional 10-day public review period before recommending a final version to the GTC Board.

**Review, Updates, and Amendments:**

Federal law requires MPOs to review and update the LRTP at least every five years.

**References & More Information:**

GTC Website: <https://www.gtcmpo.org>

GTC Community Engagement Hub: [www.publicinput.com/gtc\\_lrtp](http://www.publicinput.com/gtc_lrtp)

United States Department of Transportation: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/transportation-planning/metropolitan-transportation-plan-mtp>



Code of Federal Regulations:

[§450.324](#) - Development and content of the metropolitan transportation plan

## Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Members of the public can review and submit comments on the draft Program and the recommended list of planning projects. The section “Participate in Federally Funded Projects & Studies” provides information about opportunities to participate in the individual planning projects administered by GTC or project sponsors.

### **Definition & Purpose:**

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are required to develop a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to guide the use of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) planning funds.

The UPWP serves as GTC’s operating plan and annual budget. It identifies the federally funded transportation planning activities that GTC, its member agencies, and other municipalities in the nine-county Genesee-Finger Lakes Region will undertake during the fiscal year.

A portion of the planning funds are shared with project partners to carry out transportation planning activities. Projects include:

- Planning for physical improvements to the transportation system;
- Non-infrastructure transportation services and programs; and
- Integration of transportation and land use.

The UPWP includes descriptions of planning tasks and expected products, responsible agencies, schedules, costs, and funding sources.

### **UPWP Development Process:**

Each year, GTC solicits project proposals from eligible applicants seeking partnerships to carry out transportation planning activities using federal planning funds. GTC notifies municipalities and member agencies through written and electronic communication.

Applicants may attend informational workshops, review the program handbook, and consult with GTC staff to better understand the application process and program requirements. Project sponsors receive *UPWP Public Engagement Requirements* at the time of application.

The UPWP Development Committee (UDC), a subcommittee of the Planning Committee, guides development of the UPWP. The UDC is composed of representatives from GTC member agencies and is responsible for reviewing and prioritizing project applications and recommending a draft list of projects for funding consideration by the Planning Committee



The project sponsor shall describe the proposed outreach approach within the Scope of Work, including target audiences, engagement methods, and timing.

**Public Participation Process:**

The Planning Committee reviews and approves a draft UPWP and draft project list for a minimum 30-day public review period before recommending the program to the GTC Board for adoption.

**Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

GTC will publicize the public review period through traditional and electronic methods including, but not limited to:

- Legal notice published in the daily newspaper with the largest circulation in the region, currently the *Democrat and Chronicle*;
- Media releases distributed to local news outlets across the nine-county region;
- Announcements on social media platforms;
- Email notifications to subscriber lists; and
- Information posted on the GTC website and Community Engagement Hub.

The draft UPWP is available online and in print upon request. Accommodations, including alternative formats and language assistance, are available upon request. Members of the public may submit written comments during the review period through online tools, email, or U.S. mail.

Following the public review period, the Planning Committee will review a summary of public comments and revise the draft UPWP as appropriate before recommending a final version to the GTC Board for adoption. Planning Committee and GTC Board meetings are open to the public.

**Review, Updates, and Amendments:**

GTC is required to update the UPWP at least every two years, though updates are often completed annually prior to the start of the fiscal year (April 1). Amendments to the UPWP are reviewed by the Planning Committee before consideration by the GTC Board.

**References & More Information:**

GTC Website: <https://www.gtcmppo.org>

GTC Community Engagement Hub: [www.publicinput.com/GTCUPWP](http://www.publicinput.com/GTCUPWP)

United States Department of Transportation: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/transportation-planning/unified-planning-work-program-upwp>

Code of Federal Regulations:

§450.308 - Funding for transportation planning and unified planning work programs



## Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)

Members of the public can review and submit comments to GTC on the draft TIP, its recommended list of transportation projects, and amendments presented to the GTC Planning Committee and GTC Board.

### **Definition & Purpose:**

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a five-year capital improvement plan that schedules the spending and implementation of federal and state funded transportation improvements. The TIP covers New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Region 4, a seven-county area including Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Wayne, and Wyoming counties.

The TIP lists specific projects, the lead agency responsible for implementing the project, anticipated schedules, estimated costs, and funding sources for each project phase. This includes preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, construction, and inspection.

NYSDOT develops the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for the entire state. GTC and NYSDOT Region 4 work cooperatively to develop the TIP for the seven-county area. Upon adoption, the TIP is incorporated into the STIP. The TIP is the short-term implementation tool of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and must be consistent with its goals and objectives.

### **TIP Development Process:**

In coordination with NYSDOT's development of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, GTC and NYSDOT Region 4 solicit project proposals from member agencies, eligible counties, municipalities, and public authorities seeking federal funding for engineering, right-of-way, or construction phases. The TIP is updated on a three-year cycle. Outreach occurs through a combination of written and electronic notifications.

Potential project applicants may attend informational workshops, review the TIP Guidebook and TIP Procedures Manual, and consult with GTC staff to better understand the process and requirements for securing federal transportation funds.

The TIP Development Committee (TDC), a subcommittee of the Planning Committee, guides the development of the TIP. The TDC includes representatives from the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), including Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, and Wayne counties, the City of Rochester, the Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA), and NYSDOT Region 4. The committee reviews and prioritizes project applications and recommends a draft project list to the Planning Committee.

### **Public Participation Process:**

The Planning Committee reviews and approves a draft TIP for a minimum 30-day public review period.



During the public review period, GTC will host at least one public meeting to present the draft TIP, explain the development process, and solicit public input regarding how the proposed projects support the goals and objectives of the LRTP.

**Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

GTC will publicize the public review period through traditional and electronic methods including, but not limited to:

- Legal notice published in the daily newspaper with the largest circulation in the region, currently the *Democrat and Chronicle*;
- Media releases distributed to local news outlets across the nine-county region;
- Announcements on social media platforms;
- Email notifications to subscriber lists; and
- Information posted on the GTC website and Community Engagement Hub.

The draft UPWP is available online and in print upon request. Accommodations, including alternative formats and language assistance, are available upon request. Members of the public may submit written comments during the review period through online tools, email, or U.S. mail.

Following the public review period, the Planning Committee will review a summary of public comments and revise the draft TIP as appropriate before recommending it to the GTC Board for adoption. Planning Committee and GTC Board meetings are open to the public.

**Review, Updates, and Amendments:**

GTC updates the TIP on a three-year cycle.

The TIP Development Committee meets quarterly to review proposed changes to the TIP. The TDC can approve minor changes and make recommendations to the Planning Committee on the approval of more substantive changes.

Substantive changes to projects involving adding or removing projects or significantly changing project scopes, limits, schedules, or federal funding require a TIP Amendment. Amendments, as defined by the TIP Procedures Manual, are first reviewed by the Planning Committee prior to consideration by the GTC Board. All TIP Amendments are subject to public review and comment.

Less significant TIP changes are classified as either Staff or Administrative Modifications. These modifications may be approved by the Planning Committee or the TIP Development Committee. The GTC Board is notified of these changes, but public review is not required.

**References & More Information:**

GTC Website: [www.gtcmpo.org](http://www.gtcmpo.org)

GTC Community Engagement Hub: <https://publicinput.com/GTCTIP>



TIP Procedures Manual (Updated August 2021):

[https://www.gtcmpo.org/sites/default/files/TIP/gtc\\_tip\\_procedures.pdf](https://www.gtcmpo.org/sites/default/files/TIP/gtc_tip_procedures.pdf)

[2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program - Program Guide](#)

New York State FFY 2026-2029 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP): <https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/stip>

United States Department of Transportation: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/transportation-planning/transportation-improvement-program-tip>

Code of Federal Regulations:

[§450.326](#) - Development and content of the transportation improvement program (TIP)

## Opportunities to Participate in the Development of Other Required Products

# Transportation Conformity Statement

Members of the public can review and submit comments on the draft Transportation Conformity Statement

### Definition & Purpose:

Transportation Conformity is the process through which metropolitan planning organizations ensure that transportation investments included in the region's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) comply with the requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act. The conformity process demonstrates that the planned transportation projects will not negatively affect a region's ability to meet or maintain federal air quality standards.

Under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, the LRTP and TIP for the Rochester Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) must receive a positive conformity determination from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in consultation with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). This determination confirms that transportation projects in the plan and program will not hinder the region's ability to attain or maintain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone.

GTC works with the New York Air Quality Interagency Consultation Group to evaluate project classifications. Federal regulations identify certain transportation projects that are exempt from air quality analysis because they have little or no impact on emissions or primarily



address safety concerns. Projects that may affect air quality are classified as non-exempt and require project-specific analysis.

GTC and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) work cooperatively to conduct the required analysis to ensure that federally funded transportation improvements in the Rochester MSA conform to federal air quality standards. The results of this analysis are documented in a Transportation Conformity Statement, which is submitted to FHWA, FTA, and USEPA for review and approval.

**Public Participation Process:**

The GTC Planning Committee reviews and approves a draft Transportation Conformity Statement for a minimum 30-day public review period.

After the public review period, a summary of comments received and how they were addressed will be included in the final document before it is recommended to the GTC Board for adoption.

**Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

GTC will publicize the public review period through traditional and electronic methods including, but not limited to:

- Legal notice published in the daily newspaper with the largest circulation in the region, currently the *Democrat and Chronicle*
- Media releases distributed to local news outlets across the nine-county region
- Announcements on social media platforms
- Email notifications to subscriber lists
- Information posted on the GTC website and Community Engagement Hub.

The draft Transportation Conformity Statement is available online and in print upon request. Accommodations, including alternative formats and language assistance, are available upon request. Members of the public may submit written comments during the review period through online tools, email, or U.S. mail.

Following the public review period, the Planning Committee will review a summary of public comments before recommending it to the GTC Board for adoption. Planning Committee and GTC Board meetings are open to the public.

Upon adoption, GTC staff submits the final Transportation Conformity Statement to FHWA and FTA for a conformity determination in consultation with USEPA.

**Review, Updates, and Amendments:**

The Transportation Conformity Statement is updated when a new LRTP or TIP is updated or when significant changes occur to a non-exempt project that may affect the air quality analysis.



**References & More Information:**

GTC Website: <https://www.gtcmppo.org>

GTC Community Engagement Hub: [publicinput.com/GTCAirQuality](http://publicinput.com/GTCAirQuality)

United States Department of Transportation: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/environmental-programs/air-quality-conformity>

Code of Federal Regulations:  
40 CFR Part 93.105 - Determining Conformity of Federal Actions to State or Federal Implementation Plans

## Public Engagement Plan (PEP)

Members of the public can review and submit comments on the draft Plan.

**Definition & Purpose:**

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are required to develop and maintain a Public Participation Plan that guides how the public and stakeholder communities are engaged in the metropolitan transportation planning process, including development of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and other key documents.

The Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) Public Engagement Plan (PEP) outlines the policies and strategies used to ensure that the public and transportation system stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to participate in the metropolitan planning process. It describes how the public can learn about and engage in key decision points through accessible in-person and virtual opportunities, supported by adequate public notice.

**Public Participation Process:**

The GTC Planning Committee reviews and approves a draft PEP for a minimum 45-day public review period. Following the review period, the Planning Committee will review a summary of public comments and revise the draft as appropriate before recommending the final plan to the GTC Board for adoption. Planning Committee and GTC Board meetings are open to the public.

**Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

GTC will publicize the public review period through traditional and electronic methods including, but not limited to:

- Legal notice published in the daily newspaper with the largest circulation in the region, currently the *Democrat and Chronicle*
- Media releases distributed to local news outlets across the nine-county region
- Announcements on social media platforms



- Email notifications to subscriber lists
- Information posted on the GTC website and Community Engagement Hub.

The draft Transportation Conformity Statement is available online and in print upon request. Accommodations, including alternative formats and language assistance, are available upon request. Members of the public may submit written comments during the review period through online tools, email, or U.S. mail.

**Review, Updates, and Amendments:**

The PEP is reviewed and updated periodically, typically in coordination with updates to the Long Range Transportation Plan, or as needed to reflect changes in federal requirements or engagement practices.

**References & More Information:**

GTC Website: <https://www.gtcmpo.org>

United States Department of Transportation: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/transportation-planning/public-involvement-outreach>

Code of Federal Regulations:  
[§450.316 - Interested parties, participation, and consultation](#)

## Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Members of the public, specifically older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes can submit input about publicly funded transportation services.

**Definition & Purpose:**

The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) identifies transportation needs and strategies to improve mobility for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. The plan promotes coordination among public transit providers, human service agencies, and other transportation providers to improve efficiency and expand transportation options. It is required to be reviewed and updated every five years.

To be eligible for funding from the FTA Section 5310 - Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program, projects must be derived from a locally developed Coordinated Plan. In addition to establishing eligible project criteria, the Coordinated Plan identifies service gaps coordination needs and transportation barriers encountered by the mobility challenged community.

The Coordinated Plan complements other metropolitan planning activities and directly informs the development of the region's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and



Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by identifying strategies and projects that enhance mobility for populations with specialized transportation needs.

**Public Participation Process:**

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) calls for the Coordinated Plan to be developed through a process that includes participation by older adults, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation agencies and human service providers, and other members of the public. Consistent with this approach, updates to the Coordinated Plan incorporate input from public transit providers, human service organizations, transportation providers, caregivers and advocacy groups, and individuals who rely on publicly subsidized transportation services.

Engagement activities may include stakeholder meetings, workshops, surveys, and other opportunities to gather input on transportation needs, service gaps, and strategies to improve coordination and access.

**Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

GTC will publicize the opportunity to participate through traditional and electronic methods including, but not limited to:

- Media releases distributed to local news outlets across the nine-county region
- Announcements on social media platforms
- Email notifications to subscriber lists
- Information posted on the GTC website and Community Engagement Hub.

Surveys will be available online and in print upon request. Accommodations, including alternative formats and language assistance, are available upon request. Members of the public may submit written comments through online tools, email, or U.S. mail.

The draft Plan will be presented to the Planning Committee for approval and to the GTC Board for adoption.

**Review, Updates, and Amendments:**

The Coordinated Plan is updated every five years to reflect changing transportation needs, program requirements, and coordination opportunities among transportation providers and human service organizations.

**References & More Information:**

GTC Community Engagement Hub: [publicinput.com/gtc\\_coordinatedplan](http://publicinput.com/gtc_coordinatedplan)

NYS DOT Website: <https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/policy-and-strategy/public-transportation/local-dev-coordinated-plans>

2021 Coordinated Plan: [https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/policy-and-strategy/public-trans-respository/Final\\_2021\\_Coordinated\\_Plan\\_Update.pdf](https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/policy-and-strategy/public-trans-respository/Final_2021_Coordinated_Plan_Update.pdf)



United States Department of Transportation:  
<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/coordinated-public-transit-human-services-transportation-plans>

## Opportunities to Participate in Federally-funded Projects & Studies

### Introduction

Besides participating in the development of the core work products, members of the public are encouraged to share input on specific projects and studies that are funded through the UPWP or TIP.

GTC expects project sponsors to exceed minimum standards described in this Plan and other policies to ensure early and meaningful public involvement. Project sponsors may use their own public participation policies and guidelines provided they satisfy the minimum requirements of this plan and provide a transparent decision-making process.

GTC staff are available to support project sponsors in planning, conducting, and publicizing public participation efforts. Staff can also review and provide guidance on community engagement strategies based on experience, offer technical assistance with implementation, and assist in evaluating outcomes.

## UPWP Plans & Studies

### Definition & Purpose:

Projects funded through the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) cover a broad range of transportation planning activities led by GTC, its member agencies, and project sponsors. These efforts produce plans and studies, collect data, and/or make policy recommendations that guide transportation decision-making across the region. Projects vary in scope and typically result in recommendations and outcomes shaped by input provided by external stakeholders including partnering agencies or members of the public. Many of the plans are used to help communities pursue future capital improvement funding to implement the plan recommendations.

### Public Participation Process:

Members of the public can participate in UPWP planning projects at different levels, depending on the project's purpose, public impact and how much public input can inform outcomes. Engagement goals for some projects focus on keeping the public **informed**, while others **consult** or **involve** external stakeholders more directly in shaping recommendations. Projects with greater potential to affect the public are designed to include more opportunities for meaningful engagement.

All projects are updated and published in the UPWP document that is adopted annually in April, at the start of the state fiscal year. Task Descriptions outline the objective, key participants, budget, process, and preliminary schedule.



When projects have a defined scope of work and a project sponsor, scopes of work and final executive summaries are presented to the Planning Committee and recommended to the Board for acceptance. Planning Committee and Board meetings are open to the public. They are also recorded and archived online.

### **Inform Level (Sharing Information)**

The public engagement expectation for planning tasks at this level is to ensure awareness and transparency. While there may be little to no direct public input, the work still supports broader transportation planning efforts that shape decisions that ultimately affect the public.

Examples of UPWP planning tasks that are typically suited to the **Inform** level of engagement are often administrative or technical in nature may include but are not limited to:

- Administrative or internal staff management activities; and
- Data Collection and Analysis activities such as Land Use Monitoring Reports, Highway Safety Investigations/High Crash Location Reports, Asset Management.

### **Consult Level (Interagency Coordination)**

At this level, engagement relies on coordination with agencies and stakeholders through multi-agency working groups, often referred to as project steering or advisory committees. This approach is particularly important when partners have a specific role, interest, or expertise related to the work, or when they may be affected by potential recommendations.

Steering Committees may include representatives of local municipalities, transit operators, state agencies, public health or environmental organizations, and others with a specific interest or perspective on the subject matter. Owners of transportation facilities are always represented. Steering Committee meetings are generally considered working sessions and are not typically publicized or open to the public.

Depending on the context and purpose of the planning task, the scope for the public engagement component is flexible.

Examples of UPWP planning tasks that are typically suited to the **Consult** level of engagement may include but are not limited to:

- Early stage or background analysis of facilities or systems such as travel demand modeling exercises, feasibility studies, alternative analysis, and other efforts where coordination and targeted input help shape project direction.

### **Involve (Engaging Directly with the Public)**

Engagement at this level is for planning projects that gather and assess existing conditions and identify transportation needs that will result in a set of recommendations incorporating community input.



Engagement plans are expected to be broader and more complex providing opportunities for a wider range of community members to participate. These projects warrant structured public engagement plans outlining outreach strategies, with at least two rounds of public engagement. The first round of public engagement introduces the project to the community and defines the problem(s) the project seeks to solve, while the second round of public engagement introduces proposed recommendations to the community.

Members of the public can participate through more interactive engagement opportunities, such open-house events, workshops, pop-up events, surveys, virtual engagement tools, etc.

These projects also include coordination with agencies and stakeholders in the form of Steering Committees.

Examples of UPWP planning tasks that are typically suited to the **Involve** level of engagement may include but are not limited to:

- Active Transportation Plans
- Corridor Studies
- Small Area Studies
- Other efforts where community input plays a key role in shaping outcomes.

**Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

The project sponsor will publicize the opportunity to participate through traditional and electronic methods including, but not limited to:

- Media releases distributed to local news outlets in the project area
- Announcements on social media platforms
- Email notifications to subscriber lists
- Information posted on the GTC website and Community Engagement Hub.

Outreach materials will be available online and printed upon request. Accommodations, including alternative formats and language assistance, are available upon request. Members of the public may submit written comments through online tools, email, or U.S. mail.

GTC will assist sponsors with publicity and notification as appropriate.

**References & More Information:**

GTC's UPWP Public Engagement Requirements

## **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Project Development & Delivery**



**Definition & Purpose:**

Transportation projects included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) involve the design, development, and construction of transportation infrastructure improvements funded with federal transportation funds. These projects are typically administered by state or local agencies, such as the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), counties, municipalities, or public transportation authorities.

Because these projects may involve changes to transportation facilities and services, they are subject to environmental review and public involvement requirements during project development.

**Public Participation Process:**

Agencies responsible for administering transportation-related projects included in the TIP must provide meaningful opportunities for the public to participate in the development and implementation of those projects.

Project sponsors are responsible for conducting outreach activities appropriate to the project’s scope and potential impacts. Outreach activities may include public meetings, public information sessions, public comment periods, and other opportunities for community input during project development.

**Public Notice, Accessibility, and Participation Options:**

Project sponsors are responsible for notifying the public of outreach opportunities using appropriate communication methods. Public notices typically include information about the project purpose, proposed improvements, and opportunities to provide comments.

**References & More Information:**

[New York State Department of Transportation Public Involvement Manual](#)

[NYSDOT Public Involvement Section, Project Development Manual - Appendix 2](#)

[NYSDOT Procedures for Consultation with Public Officials in Rural Areas](#)

[New York State FFY 2026-2029 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#)

[USDOT Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-making - October 2022](#)

**Federal and State Regulations**

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) annual edition is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the departments and agencies of the



Federal Government produced by the Office of the Federal Register (OFR) and the Government Publishing Office.

Title 23 Highways

Chapter I → FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION

Subchapter E → PLANNING AND RESEARCH

PART 450–PLANNING ASSISTANCE AND STANDARDS

Subpart C–Metropolitan Transportation Planning and  
Programming

Relevant sections of the Code of Federal Regulations citing guidance for each topic were noted at the end of each section.

- [§450.324](#) Development and content of the metropolitan transportation plan
- [§450.308](#) Funding for transportation planning and unified planning work programs
- [§450.326](#) Development and content of the transportation improvement program (TIP)
- [40 CFR 93](#) PART 93–Determining conformity of federal actions to state or federal implementation plans
- [§450.316](#) Interested parties, participation, and consultation

*The MPO shall provide 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 cashout 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 a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan using the participation plan developed under §450.316(a).*

## Appendix

Board Resolution - Adoption anticipated August 27, 2026

[§450.316](#) Interested parties, participation, and consultation, Updated 3-6-26



New York State Open Meetings Law, Updated May 28, 2024

DRAFT

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This content is from the eCFR and is authoritative but unofficial.

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## Title 23 – Highways

### Chapter I – Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation

#### Subchapter E – Planning and Research

#### Part 450 – Planning Assistance and Standards

#### Subpart C – Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming

**Authority:** 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135; 42 U.S.C. 7410 *et seq.*; 49 U.S.C. 5303 and 5304; 49 CFR 1.85 and 1.90.

**Source:** 81 FR 34135, May 27, 2016, unless otherwise noted.

#### § 450.316 Interested parties, participation, and consultation.

- (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.
  - (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:
    - (i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
    - (ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
    - (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
    - (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
    - (v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
    - (vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
    - (vii) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
    - (viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, 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 that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;

- (ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and
  - (x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.
- (2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (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, subpart A), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.
- (3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.
- (b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (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. In addition, the MPO shall develop the metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:
- (1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;
  - (2) Governmental agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and
  - (3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 201-204.
- (c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
- (d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
- (e) MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under § 450.314.

[81 FR 34135, May 27, 2016, as amended at 81 FR 93473, Dec. 20, 2016; 82 FR 56544, Nov. 29, 2017]

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*By Electronic Mail Only*

July 19, 2021

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*The staff of the Committee on Open Government is authorized to issue advisory opinions. The ensuing staff advisory opinion is based solely upon the information presented in your correspondence, except as otherwise indicated.*

Dear Rima Shamieh:

I am writing in response to your request for an advisory opinion regarding the application of the New York State Open Meetings Law (OML) to a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), an entity established pursuant to federal law. Specifically, you ask whether an MPO, which is the policy board of an organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process pursuant to § 134(d) of Title 23 of the United States Code ("Metropolitan transportation planning"), must conduct its meetings pursuant to the requirements of the OML.

The OML governs meetings of "public bodies" and defines the that term as:

any entity for which a quorum is required in order to conduct public business and which consists of two or more members, performing a governmental function *for the state or for an agency or department thereof*, or for a public corporation as defined in section sixty-six of the general construction law, or committee or subcommittee or other similar body of such public body.

OML § 102(2) (emphasis added). As noted above, an MPO is an entity created pursuant to and deriving its authority from the requirements of federal, not state, law. In recognition of the statutory definition of public body in the OML, the New York State Court of Appeals, in *ASPCA v. Board of Trustees of the State University of New York*, 79 N.Y.2d 927, 929 (1992), held with respect to another federally-created body called a Laboratory Animals Use Committee (LAUC) that "the Open Meetings Law excludes Federal bodies from its ambit. The LAUC's constituency, powers and functions derive solely from Federal law and regulations. Thus, even if [the LAUC] could be characterized as a governmental entity, it is at most a Federal body that is not covered under the Open Meetings Law."

Similar to the LAUC discussed in *ASPCA v. Board of Trustees*, MPOs are given effect by an instrumentality of government in New York and MPO members are selected by New York government officials. However, the existence both the LAUC and MPOs "derive[s] solely from Federal law and regulations." Although New York State Transportation Law § 15-a addresses the *functions* of MPOs, in a 1999 opinion issued by the New York State Ethics Commission (a precursor to the Joint Commission on Public Ethics), the Commission noted in relevant part that "Transportation Law § 15-a, enacted in 1975, *recognized* MPOs as the 'organization designated as such by the governor for the purpose of *complying*

*with federal statutes.* Transportation Law § 15-a *did not provide the statutory authority for the creation of MPOs but recognized their existence as continuing.* NYS Ethics Commission, Advisory Opinion No. 99-9 (May 7, 1999) (emphasis added).

For these reasons, it appears to us that MPOs would not constitute “public bodies” required to comply with the OML. For previously prepared advisory opinions regarding similar entities created pursuant to federal statutory or regulatory authority, see [OML AO 2603](#), [OML AO 2943](#), and [OML AO 3341](#).

I hope this information proves useful.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Kristin O'Neill*

Kristin O'Neill  
Assistant Director