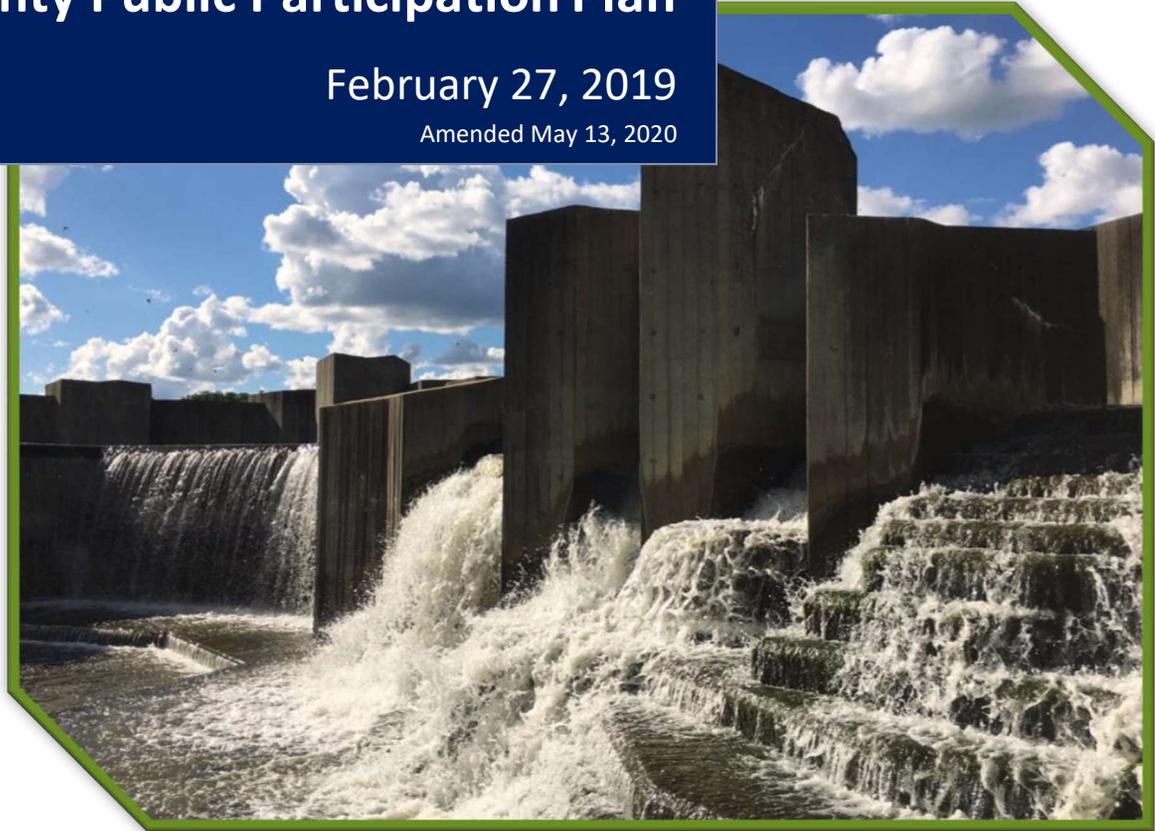


Genesee County Public Participation Plan

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Prepared by the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission

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A. Introduction

The Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission (GCMPC) administers several Federal and State of Michigan programs for the Flint-Genesee County area. The major programs are the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – Community Planning and Development (CPD) Programs; Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Programs; Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Programs; and the Solid Waste Management Program. A major component of these programs is the assurance that public participation is provided for and encouraged throughout the planning processes. These programs are authorized by the following federal acts:

Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended in October 1992, stipulates that: "A grant may be made only if the grantee certifies that it is

following a detailed citizen's participation plan..." (Sec. 104 paragraph a, subparagraph 3). The final rule providing for a Consolidated Plan; substantial amendments and performance reports for all HUD CPD formula grant programs. Further, 24 CFR Part 91.105 requires that Genesee County "adopt a citizen participation plan that sets forth policies and procedures for citizen participation."

Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, on December 4, 2015, President Obama signed into law Public Law 114-94, the FAST Act. It funds surface transportation programs—including, but not limited to, Federal-aid highways—at over \$305 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2016 through 2020. It is the first long-term surface transportation authorization enacted in a decade that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation. The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP- 21), enacted in 2012, included provisions to make the Federal surface

transportation more streamlined, performance-based, and multimodal, and to address challenges facing the U.S. transportation system, including improving safety, maintaining infrastructure condition, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency of the system and freight movement, protecting the environment, and reducing delays in project delivery. The FAST Act builds on the changes made by MAP-21. The United States Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) pertaining to the FAST Act states in Title 23, Subsection 450.316, Paragraph a, that:

(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.





Part 115 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended R299.4706 (Rule 706.1-8) states:

“The designated planning agency shall conduct a public participation program, which shall encourage the participation and involvement of the public and municipalities in the development and implementation of the solid waste management plan.”

GCMPC is committed to ensuring that citizen input will figure prominently throughout the planning processes, from the initial problem identification, through phases of workshop formats or public comment periods, to the final selection stages where public hearings culminate in final plan evaluations. GCMPC’s Public Participation Plan (PPP) is reviewed and updated every five years or whenever significant program changes necessitate. (A significant program change, for example, would be when transportation legislation changes and creates new guidelines that staff must follow.)

Periodic updates address significant policy or procedural changes to planning processes and further ensure that all citizens continue to have opportunities for public participation.

It is staff’s opinion that workshops/public informational meetings are an effective and conducive venue for communicating knowledge of planning processes from the perspective of citizens-at-large. This method is an effective tool utilized in initial planning phases. Final review and selection of proposed plans and other planning activities will be made through the Public Hearing process. Public Hearings allow a still broader base for community participation. The following framework presents a basic format to facilitate



“grass roots participation” in the planning process. Implementation, including workshops and administrative procedures of the Public Participation Plan are covered in this section. Input received will be incorporated into problem identification, evaluation, alternative development and final plan selection phases.

B. General Public Participation Policies

GCMPC has established policies and procedures for public participation that apply to each administered program. The policies and procedures are as follows:

GCMPC has increased usage of electronic public information and notification formats while decreasing the usage of more costly and ineffective methods, such as public notices in newspapers. GCMPC, as outlined in this plan, will utilize electronic formats such as social media, posting notices and plans on the GCMPC website located at www.gcmprc.org, e-mailing entities on the Public Participation list, using on-line survey methods, and may do direct mailing when appropriate. To help ensure that the public is aware of these changes, GCMPC will publish a notification in the newspaper for a plan that is being updated (i.e. Consolidated Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Long Range Transportation Plan, etc.) indicating the start of the review and updates, and where more information can be found on-line about

said plan. Public notifications will also be posted in the Genesee County Administration Building located at 1101 Beach Street, Flint MI, 48502.

GCMPC uses social media to reach out to interested persons and to persons who may not get their news from traditional sources such as newspapers or television. GCMPC has a Facebook page and a Twitter feed which can be accessed from the main website at www.gcmPC.org or through individual Facebook pages or Twitter accounts. Notices of

GCMPC events and accomplishments are posted to these social media forums.

Citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties will be provided with reasonable and timely access to information and records, as well as timely responses to comments, complaints or inquiries relative to programs administered by GCMPC. Notifications of public hearings are sent out at least ten (10) days in advance by way of e-mail to the GCMPC public participation list and are electronically accessible through the GCMPC website at

www.gcmPC.org. A hardcopy notice is also posted at the Genesee County Administration Building located at 1101 Beach Street, Flint MI, 48502.

GCMPC will comply with all Federal and State statutes, and Genesee County ordinances, standards and requirements relating to and prescribed by including, but not limited to: nondiscrimination; displacement of persons; labor standards; environmental measures; environmental justice; fair housing; historic preservation; lead-based paint prohibition; and financial audits for all programs.

With regards to all public hearings, GCMPC will upon a 48-hour notice (a minimum of two business days), make appropriate provisions available to assist those individuals with special needs, i.e., individuals who are visually and/or hearing impaired, individuals with other disabilities or those who are considered Limited English Proficient (LEP). LEP refers to individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. According to the 2016 American Community Survey of the United States Census, those in Genesee County who spoke a language other than English at home accounted for 3.6 % of the county population. According to the same survey, 1.1% of the population over five years of age speaks English less than “very well”.



If members of the public require other assistance such as the printing of a GCMPC publication in another language or in braille, more time than the 48-hour notice (a minimum of two business days) will be needed. To accommodate translation requests, staff will work with several organizations to translate documents. To translate materials from English to Arabic, staff will work with the Arab American Heritage Council located in Flint. For large documents, up to one month may be needed. Staff will also work with the Genesee County Hispanic Latino Collaborative to translate documents into Spanish. Large documents may take several weeks to translate. To handle requests for translation



into other languages, staff will work with Bromberg and Associates. Large documents may take about three weeks. All translation requests will be handled in as timely a manner as possible.

For requests regarding transcription of materials into braille, staff can work with the Disability Network and the Michigan Braille Transcribing Fund (MBTF). Depending on the length of the document, up to six weeks may be needed.

C. Public Participation Methodology

1. Purpose

The purpose of GCMPC's PPP is to solicit, facilitate and address input from many different sources. This is done in order to provide diverse perspectives on the transportation, community and economic development, and solid waste programs, plans, and resultant projects.

2. Goal

The goal is to encourage citizen participation during GCMPC planning processes. This goal can be achieved by:

- Seeking out non-traditional program users
- Educating the public on the planning processes
- Obtaining community ideas

- Incorporating community ideas into the planning process
- Evaluating the performance of the Public Participation Plan



3. Format

The four citizen participation formats generally used by GCMPC are: workshops; public needs hearings for Community Development or public input sessions for Transportation; public

comment periods; and public hearings. Participation by the general public and targeted groups and/or individuals is the focus of these events. At each event, staff meets with the citizens and works to answer their questions and gather their input.

Additionally, GCMPC staff seeks opportunities to talk with community groups as part of their regularly scheduled meetings. Staff also utilizes non-traditional venues to seek input, such as shopping malls, farmers' markets, transit facilities, business expos and community events.

Workshops

Workshops are utilized to invite comments and encourage discussion on selected planning topics. Workshops will generally culminate in public hearings for presentation and acceptance of a specific study.

A workshop is an interactive process with the public to obtain input and provide technical assistance. The workshop format is held in an informal setting where interested parties will be given updates on the progress of the study/program/project and are then encouraged to participate in the discussion of work activities. Workshops may include the goals, purposes, visual aids, outline of presentations, citizen response and administrative reaction to the citizen input. Workshops are held in various geographic

locations throughout Genesee County that are accessible by public transit and are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act guidelines. Additionally, whenever possible, workshops will take place in non-government buildings such as senior centers, community centers, churches, non-profit offices, farmers' markets, transit facilities, etc.

Goals and Objectives

- To educate the public on plans, projects, studies, programs, issues or policies
- To provide for public input and discussion on the above items
- To provide reasonable and timely access to public information

Public Needs Hearings/Input Sessions

Public input sessions for Transportation or public needs hearings for Community Development are used as either a formal or informal method of collecting public reaction and/or input for planning issues and for identifying community needs. These events are also a way of notifying the public that eligible agencies are being asked to apply for the use of specific grant funds.

Community Development

The objective of public needs hearings is to allow citizens the opportunity to review and make comments on needs, planning issues and

policies. The Community Development Program has provisions for public needs hearings during the development of certain plans and projects.

The Community Development Program must provide for at least two public needs hearings per year. These will be conducted at a minimum of two different stages of the year for the purpose of obtaining citizen views and formulating or responding to proposals. These will address needs, activities, and program performance. GCMPC will also consult with other private and public agencies. This includes local units of government, agencies who provide assisted housing, supportive services, health services, and fair housing services. A minimum of ten (10) days' notice will be given to citizens for each public needs hearing and sufficient information will be published to permit informed comments.

The Community Development Program also requires that local units of government participating in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program hold local public needs hearings regarding their proposed CDBG projects, with published notices given at least seven (7) days prior to each hearing.

The Community Development hearings should follow the guidelines set forth in the following paragraph:

Citizens, public agencies and other interested parties will be provided information that includes the amount of assistance the county expects to receive (including grant funds and program income) and the range of activities that may be undertaken, including the estimated amount that will benefit low and moderate income persons. This information will be made available at the Needs Hearing. A minimum of ten days' notice shall be given to citizens for each needs hearing and sufficient information shall be published to permit informed comments. Public Hearings shall be held at a barrier-free location in the community that will accommodate potential and actual beneficiaries.

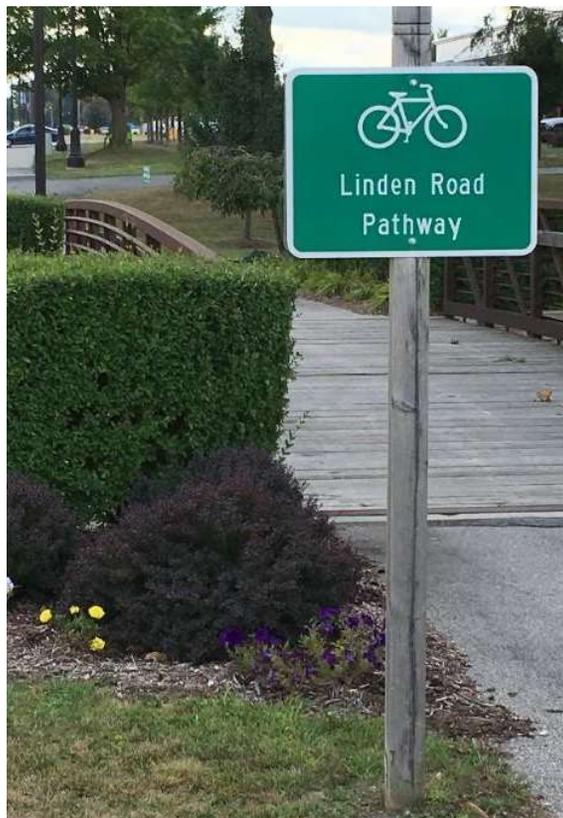
Whenever possible, the Community Development Division will hold public needs hearings out in the community to better engage potential beneficiaries of the program.

Transportation

The Transportation Division requires public input sessions at key decision points in the planning process, including, but not limited to, the approval of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The Transportation Division uses the public input session process as a means of identifying community needs, developing projects and alternatives, and considering other input from

interested agencies and/or individuals. Whenever possible, the Transportation Division will hold public input sessions out in the community, such as at farmers' markets or



senior centers, to better engage the affected population in the process.

Public Comment Periods

A public comment period is a process in which the public is provided the opportunity to review, make formal comments and voice

concerns on planning processes, documents, studies or issues.

Some programs require a period ranging from several days to several weeks to receive public comment. The length of any public comment period will vary depending on specific program requirements. Public comments will be received by GCMPC in electronic (website comment, social media, or e-mail submittal), written or oral forms. Oral comments can be addressed at the meeting if possible, or if the public provides their contact information, staff will address the oral comments in writing.

The Community Development Program must provide a 30-day public comment period on the Consolidated Plan and at least one public hearing during the development of the Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) allowing at least 30 days for public comment.

The Solid Waste Designated Planning Agency must provide a period of not less than three months so that agencies stated in the rules have the opportunity to review and comment on the Solid Waste Management Plan.

For the Transportation Division, there is a required 45-day public comment period for updates to the Public Participation Plan.

For the Transportation, Community Development and Solid Waste divisions, notices that indicate the availability of the documents and the locations where the documents can be

found are posted on the GCMPC website and are also sent out electronically by way of e-mail notifications to those on the GCMPC public participation mailing list. A hardcopy notice is also displayed at the Genesee County Administration Building (1101 Beach Street, Flint).

Program	Advance Notice Provided	Method of Providing Notice
Community Development	10 days	- GCMPC website -newspaper publication
Transportation	10 days	- e-mail to those on the PPP mailing list
Solid Waste	30 days or more	- hardcopy at Genesee County Administration Building

Goals and Objectives

- To compile a list of public needs/concerns on proposed issues
- To provide an open forum for public input on proposed issues, policies and/or plans

Public Hearings

A public hearing allows citizens a final opportunity to review and comment on planning issues and policies.

The objective of Public Hearings is to afford the citizens of Genesee County a final opportunity to review and comment on plans, issues and policies. It also allows citizens a chance to evaluate progress and past performance. Public Hearings should closely follow the guidelines set forth as follows:

Public Hearings shall be held at barrier-free locations that offer accommodations for persons with disabilities, focused on actual and potential beneficiaries of proposed plans/actions in the community.

Goals and Objectives

- To ensure that all interested and affected parties will have the opportunity to make or submit public statements, ask questions, voice disagreement, offer suggestions or support concerning a proposed course of action, and comment on past plans/actions

- To finalize public input into the selected plan
- To establish an agency/community consensus on the plan

Responsibilities

Staff's responsibility is to provide the planning background and technical information that is used as a basis for recommendation on the

proposed plan or issue. Staff will provide technical assistance to groups representing low- and moderate- income persons/households, persons with disabilities, the elderly, minorities, groups representing environmental concerns, and socially and economically disadvantaged persons that may have distinct and separate interests in proposed projects or plans. Additionally, any comments received will be addressed by staff within a reasonable time frame, within fifteen (15) days where practicable. The comment will be addressed with an e-mailed response, where practicable, otherwise a written response will be mailed to the address provided by the party who made the comment. Staff has continually endeavored to respond to public input received during the development of programs and plans in a timely and considerate manner.

In turn, the participants' responsibilities are to review, evaluate and comment on proposed issues, policies and/or plans providing public input to staff and oversight committees.

Visualization techniques help to ensure that all attendees, including those facing literacy or English language challenges, are able to better understand what is being presented. Visualization techniques may include maps that show project locations, photographs, diagrams, PowerPoint presentations, charts, graphics, sketches, illustrations, models and narrative descriptions. Each public meeting will

incorporate at least two of the above visualization techniques. Staff will provide a narrative description of the plan, project, etc. and will provide a map or other visual aid. Staff will continue developing visualization techniques so that all attendees will leave the meeting with a full understanding of the projects being discussed. Transportation staff has already used these requirements in the past by routinely providing maps, flow charts, photographs, posters, etc. at meetings to help the community visualize planning efforts.

The GCMPC website, located at www.gcmpr.org, is routinely updated and improved to make public information easily available on the web. A Transportation Improvement Program Story Map and a Community Development Story Map are now

available on our website. They provide a picture of each project along with basic information about the project, such as the cost of the project and when it will be constructed. To continue past practices, public meetings will be held at convenient times and locations so that members of the community will have equal opportunities to attend. Since the last update in 2011, GCMPC has expanded on the list of agencies to include as part of the GCMPC public participation mailing list. In addition, staff has routinely followed the guidance in the PPP in the development of programs and plans. In order to continue to receive quality and valued input, staff is committed to routinely expanding the GCMPC mailing list to include various community groups and interested parties.



D. Critical Involvement Stages/Schedule

1. Critical Involvement Stages/Schedule

Staff has identified the following stages as critical steps within the planning process:

- Formation of goals and objectives
- Data gathering
- Data analyses
- Problem identification
- Development of alternatives
- Evaluation of alternatives
- Impact on the community
- Draft plan
- Finalize plan
- Submittal of project applications
- Performance evaluation
- Amendments

The critical involvement stages above may be addressed as a survey, a committee discussion, in a series of workshops, or in a public input session. The only exception will be the portion entitled "Finalize Plan", which will be preceded by a public hearing.

2. Amendments to Programs and Plans

Amendments to the Consolidated Plan

Changes to an activity funded under the HUD funds may happen periodically. Changes could include recapture of funds, reallocation of

funds, change in project scope, or the addition of a new project. Activity changes will require a notification be posted on the GCMPC website. Typically, project changes do not meet the criteria of a substantial amendment as described below but include minor funding changes.

Periodically, funding transfers to move funds between projects or to close out a completed activity occur. These transfer requests are brought to the Allocation Committee for review and recommendation to the Community and Economic Development Committee, with final approval by the Genesee County Board of Commissioners.

A substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan is defined as a change in proposed funding under the Community Development Block Grant Program, HOME Program, or Emergency Solutions Grant Program. This includes projects where a change in proposed funding allocations of more than 20% of a total grant award under one of the specifically named grants occurs. The following process will be followed:

Staff will notify HUD regarding the Substantial Amendment. Public notice regarding the Substantial Amendment will be published in local newspapers and posted on the GCMPC website. Hard copy postings will be placed at the local unit of government in which the project will be undertaken. Written comments

will be received during a 30-day period. A copy of the amendment with public comments and responses will be submitted to HUD upon completion of the public comment period and approval by Allocation, Community & Economic Development, and the Genesee County Board of Commissioners.

An emergency amendment to the Consolidated Plan or program year Action Plan is defined as an immediate increase in proposed funding under the Community Development Block Grant Program, HOME Program, or Emergency Solutions Grant Program. The amendment entails adding the allocation in the Action Plan as an available resource for the year and identifying the proposed use of all funds and how the funds will be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the emergency. The timeliness of this funding requires the implementation of expedited procedures to draft, propose or amend the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan and amend the Citizens Participation Plan. The following process will be followed:

Staff will notify HUD regarding a Substantial Amendment. Public notice regarding the Substantial Amendment will be published in local newspapers and posted on the GCMPC website. Electronic copy postings will be sent to local units of government in which the projects will be undertaken. Written comments will be received during a 5-day period. A virtual public

hearing will be held during the public comment period. A copy of the amendment with public comments and responses will be submitted to HUD upon completion of the public comment period, public hearing and approval by the Allocation, Community & Economic Development, and the Genesee County Board of Commissioners.

Amendments to the Solid Waste Management Plan

An amendment to the Solid Waste Management Plan is described as any change to the plan. Rule 299.4709 of Part 115 states “an amendment to the plan shall follow the same procedures for review and adoption as the original plan and the updates.”



Amendments to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

An amendment to the LRTP is defined by federal regulations, but in general, as a capacity/regionally significant project added, deleted, or changed that will significantly affect fiscal constraint. The proposed amendment will need to meet the financial constraints of the LRTP, and may also need to receive a determination of air quality conformity. An amendment to the LRTP will be brought to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and then to the Metropolitan Alliance (Metro), and will require action by both. This process will include GCMPC webpage notifications, as well as a public hearing as described in the “Public Hearings” section on Page 11 of this document. For a detailed description of the TAC and Metro committees that includes membership, function, and goals, see Appendix A for the Committees Table.

Amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

An amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is defined in the federal regulations, but in general, is a project added or deleted, a change in scope, or a significant change in cost. An amendment to the TIP will be brought to TAC and Metro and will require action by both TAC and Metro. The amendment process will include GCMPC webpage notifications.

The amendment will also be reviewed for any potential Environmental Justice and Air Quality issues. Where appropriate, Air Quality analysis will be done. Staff does an analysis of the amendment to make sure the projects will have no disproportionately high or adverse impacts to any of the identified Environmental Justice populations in Genesee County. The analysis also checks to make sure that these projects have not excluded anybody from participation in, or denied or delayed benefits to, or discriminated against any person or group of persons in Genesee County. The analysis by GCMPC supports principles and requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Executive Order (E.O.) 12898 and the 1997 U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Order to Address Environmental Justice. Information on the identified Environmental Justice populations in Genesee County can be found by going to our website (www.gcmpr.org) and accessing the Environmental Justice sections of the Transportation Improvement Program document or the Long Range Transportation Plan.

3. Participation Plan Process for the Development of the Long Range Transportation Plan

The following steps provide details regarding how the Transportation Division will carry out the public participation process for the

development of the Long Range Transportation Plan. The plan is updated every five years. The last update of the plan began with a kick-off meeting in May of 2013. The plan was approved by the Genesee County Metropolitan Alliance in January of 2015. The next update of the plan will begin in 2018, with approval expected in 2020.

Genesee County Public Participation Plan Process for the Development of the LRTP

Step 1: Notice and Kick-off Meeting

A public notice will be published in the newspaper at the beginning of the development of the LRTP signifying the start of the process and providing notification of where to find more information on the GCMPC website as the update process continues. A notice will be sent to all local units of government, local officials, local transportation providers, environmental, conservation, land use and natural resource agencies, historic preservation agencies, economic development and chamber of commerce agencies, freight agencies, our regional partners such as the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), and other interested parties that work will begin on the update of the LRTP and the notice will invite them to a project kick-off meeting and to participate in the LRTP update.

Step 2: Begin Long Range Plan Steering Committee Meetings

The first several meetings of the Long Range Transportation Plan Steering Committee will be focused on developing an updated strategy for the LRTP. This includes review of the existing document, identification of items that need to be changed or added to the plan, public participation strategy, and development of timelines. Development of the plan will begin once the committee approves a strategy. The steering committee will continue to meet throughout the plan development process to provide guidance to staff on plan development and provide recommendations to TAC and Metro regarding plan approval.

Step 3: Public Outreach

E-mails will be sent to the GCMPC Public Participation list announcing public LRTP meetings/events. A transportation survey will be made available by way of the GCMPC website and may be in conjunction with a service provider, such as “Survey Monkey”. Also, staff will provide press releases announcing public LRTP meetings/events, and post LRTP update information on the GCMPC website. Staff routinely handles media requests for LRTP information.

Step 4: Call for Projects

A Call for LRTP Projects will be advertised and a notice will be sent to local road and transit agencies.

Step 5: Draft list of projects



The steering committee will evaluate projects received from the Call for Projects and prioritize them based on projected funding. Once the draft list of projects is approved by the Genesee County Metropolitan Alliance a series of three public outreach events will be held to receive comment on the projects. A notice may be sent to all residents and businesses along the proposed project corridor, and will be sent to individuals on the public participation GCMPC mailing list, and to local units of government. The events will also be advertised for the general public according to PPP requirements. The information will also be sent out to the list of Environmental Consultation and Mitigation entities for their review and comments.

Step 6: Response to Comments Received

All public comments are addressed in a timely manner. Copies of comment sheets and transportation surveys will be included in the LRTP appendices. The steering committee will

review comments received and incorporate comments where appropriate.

Step 7: Develop Draft Plan

Using the information gathered from the LRTP Steering Committee, the local stakeholders, local agencies and the public, staff develops a draft LRTP.

Step 8: Public Comment Period for LRTP (30 days) and Public Hearing

The draft LRTP is made available for public comment on the website, at local units of government and at GCMPC offices. Concerned citizens can provide comments by calling, faxing, writing, in person, by e-mail, or by social media with Facebook or Twitter. A Public Hearing will be held to receive final public comment.

Step 9: Response to Comments Received

All public comments are addressed in a timely manner. Copies of comment sheets and transportation surveys will be included in the LRTP appendices.

Step 10: Two Week Period to Incorporate Comments Received

A two week period between the public hearing and final approval of the LRTP by the Genesee County Metropolitan Alliance will be used to incorporate comments received during the public comment period.

Step 11: Approval of LRTP

After the public comment period has ended and all public comments have been addressed, the



LRTP goes through the appropriate committees/agencies for review and approval.

4. Participation Plan Process for the Development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The following steps provide details regarding how the Transportation Division will carry out the public participation process for the development of the Transportation Improvement Program. The TIP is updated every three years.

Genesee County Public Participation Plan Process for the Development of the TIP

Step 1: Call for Projects

Staff publishes an announcement in the newspaper stating that preparations have

begun to develop the TIP that notifies the public of where to find additional information on the designated website. Staff sends out a Call for TIP Projects to all local road agencies; there is also a website ad announcing the TIP development and Call for TIP Projects.

Step 2: Staff Reviews Potential Projects

Staff meets with local road agencies to discuss their projects. At these meetings, any issues with Environmental Justice, Air Quality, local match monies, etc. are discussed. Staff reviews submitted projects and prioritizes them according to the process approved by the Metropolitan Alliance. A draft list of projects is sent to the road agencies for their review.

Step 3: Public Review of Preliminary Project List

Staff develops a preliminary list of TIP projects which is released for public review on the GCMPC website. Staff holds meetings with the public to inform them of the potential TIP projects. Meetings include at least two types of visualization techniques. A Story Map is developed on the GCMPC website to show the location of the projects and provide basic information on them. All comments received by staff are addressed in a timely manner and are also sent electronically to the local road or transit agency, so the agency knows what the public is saying about the project.

Step 4: Consultation with Agencies

Staff consults with local, state and federal agencies whose activities may be affected by the projects in the TIP, such as: environmental protection agencies, airport facilities, freight interests, historic preservation, natural resources, economic growth, etc. All comments are addressed in a timely manner.

Step 5: Public Comment Period

The Public Comment Period is held for thirty (30) days, with all comments being addressed in a timely manner. Concerned citizens can provide comments by calling, faxing, writing, in person, by e-mail, or by social media with Facebook or Twitter.



Step 6: Approval of TIP

A two-week period between the public hearing and final approval of the TIP by the Genesee County Metropolitan Alliance will be used to incorporate comments received during the public comment period.

Notices of the public hearing are listed on the GCMPC website and sent out electronically to all parties on the Public Participation List. At the public hearing, comments are recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The TIP is approved after the public hearing.

5. Participation Plan Process for the Development of the Community Development Annual Action Plan

The following steps provide information about how the Community Development Program will carry out the public participation process for the development of the Annual Action Plan. The Action Plan details the annual activities to be carried out under the priorities identified in the Five-Year Consolidated Plan. The following funding programs are included in the plan: Community Development Block Grant, HOME, and Emergency Solutions Grant programs.

CDBG Program Process

Step 1: Call for Projects

Notices are sent out stating that applications are available for projects to be included in the Annual Action Plan for all Community Development Programs. All Local Units of Government receive the CDBG Pre-Applications. Applications are made available on the GCMPC website. A notice is put in the local newspaper regarding the HOME Investment Partnership call for projects.

Step 2: Public Input

Local Units of Government applying for CDBG funds are required to hold a public hearing to give their residents an opportunity to share project ideas and comment on the past use of funds. A County public hearing is also held to receive comments on the administration of the program and to gather additional needs.

Step 3: Project Evaluation

CDBG Pre-Applications are reviewed for eligibility and environmental concerns. Full Applications are sent out for projects meeting eligibility criteria. ESG and HOME applications are reviewed and scored. Following receipt of Full CDBG Applications, a draft project list is developed.

Step 4: The draft Annual Action Plan is created. Public notice is published in local newspapers and posted on the GCMPC website to announce a thirty-day comment period. A county public hearing is held to gather public input on the programs and projects.

Step 5: Full Environmental reviews are completed.

Step 6: The Annual Action Plan is submitted to HUD for approval.

Step 7: Request for Release of Funds (RROF)/Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) Posting in local newspapers or at local unit of government where project will take place.

There is a fifteen-day comment period for the public to review and comment on projects.

Step 8: HUD approval of Action Plan and RROF

Step 9: Grant agreements and Subrecipient Contracts finalized for signature

HOME Program Process

Step 1: RFP released to interested agencies/ publication of ad in the local newspapers and posting on the GCMPC website.

Step 2: Local Units of Government are notified of any projects proposed to be assisted with HOME funds in their jurisdiction. Local units are required to sign a resolution supporting the project before an application is considered for funding.

Step 3: Eligible organizations submit affordable housing applications.

Step 4: Project feasibility is determined, and level of funding is determined by staff.

Step 5: Public notice regarding proposed projects is published in local newspapers and posted on the GCMPC website. A thirty-day comment period is available, and a county public hearing is held to gather public input on the programs and projects as part of the Annual Action Plan.

Step 6: Full Environmental review completed.

Step 7: Submittal of projects to HUD with the Annual Action Plan.

Step 8: Request for Release of Funds (RROF)/Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) Posting in local newspapers or at local unit of government. There is a fifteen- day comment period for the public to review and comment on projects.

Step 9: HUD approval of Action Plan and RROF.

Step 10: Grant agreements and Subrecipient Contracts finalized for signature.

Emergency Solutions Grant Process

Step 1: Notice of funding availability is published in local newspapers and posted on the GCMPC website announcing availability of funds and application process to eligible agencies.

Step 2: Project applications are submitted for review and eligibility determination.

Step 3: Agencies/service partners submit project applications. Eligibility is determined by CD staff.

Step 4: Projects reviewed by Continuum of Care Subcommittee.

Step 5: Take projects to full Continuum of Care for final approval.

Step 6: Public notice is published in local newspapers and posted on the GCMPC website.

A thirty-day comment period is available, and a county public hearing is held to gather public



input on the programs and projects as part of Annual Action Plan.

Step 7: Submittal of projects to HUD with the Annual Action Plan

Step 8: Request for Release of Funds (RROF)/Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) Posting in local newspapers or at local unit of government. There is a fifteen- day comment period for the public to review and comment on projects.

Step 9: HUD approval of Action Plan and RROF.

Step 10: Grant agreements and Subrecipient Contracts finalized for signature.

E. Publicizing the Program

1. Format

Each of the GCMPC Programs will use distinct logos and/or slogans for publicizing different aspects of their programs. All public notices will provide dates, times and locations for solicitation of public comments and local needs.

The Community Development Program requires local units of government to publish

public notices providing dates, times, and locations for the solicitation of public comments and local needs regarding proposed projects. Community Development is also mandated to publish certain items during the course of a program year. These items include the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan, the Environmental Review Records (ERR), and the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) Notice of Availability. Staff will publish the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan and will include a list of the locations where copies of the entire proposed Consolidated Plan may be examined. Copies will be made available to citizens and groups upon request. Staff will also provide a Story Map summary on the GCMPC website for new projects.

During the Solid Waste Management Plan update or amendment processes, the Solid Waste division will notify the public and direct the public to the GCMPC website for more information. An e-mail will be sent to those on the GCMPC public participation list announcing the availability of the Solid Waste Management Plan for inspection or copying. A hardcopy notice will be posted at the Genesee County Administration Building (1101 Beach Street, Flint) at the time the plan is submitted to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for review.



On an annual basis, the Transportation Division will notify the public of a listing of projects for which Federal funds have been obligated in the previous fiscal year. (The fiscal year (FY) begins October 1 and ends September 30.) Staff will provide a notice of the listing of projects that were obligated during the previous fiscal year no more than ninety (90) calendar days following the end of the represented fiscal year. The public will be notified by the GCMPC website and through the public participation mailing list. A hardcopy notice is also displayed at the Genesee County Administration Building (1101 Beach Street, Flint).

2. Contacting Target Community Resources and Development Populations

GCMPC staff has developed mailing lists (including e-mail lists) for locating businesses,

labor and civic organizations, economic development agencies, housing groups, community non-profit agencies and special interest/minority groups and organizations. These lists are comprised of individuals, interest groups and organizations providing service and/or referrals in the four major planning areas: Community Development, Transportation, Economic Development, and Solid Waste. These lists are cross-referenced, revised and/or expanded through staff contact with various social service agencies, transportation service providers, solid waste service providers, businesses and committees within the county.

Federally funded programs place emphasis and requirements on planning agencies to invite and encourage the participation of: non-English

speaking residents; minority populations; the elderly; low- and moderate- income persons, particularly those living in slum and blighted areas; and all special needs residents. In an effort to meet these requirements, at the beginning of a planning process, notices will be sent to all contacts on identified lists, inviting them to participate in upcoming planning developments and workshops. Examples of underserved populations that are represented in the Public Participation List include the Disability Network, the Valley Area Agency on Aging, the Genesee County Hispanic Latino Collaborative, My Brother's Keeper, Shelter of Flint, and Carriage Town Ministries.

The GCMPC website is updated frequently with current information and news of upcoming projects and events. Annual Reports are produced to showcase major achievements of GCMPC throughout the previous year and inform the public about GCMPC's various programs and services. The Annual Reports are e-mailed to those persons on the Public Participation Mailing List and on the Annual Report List.

The GCMPC website lists the divisions' contact persons, planning and policy committees, their scheduled meeting dates, locations and times, and their meeting minutes and agendas.

3. Public Service Announcements

Prior to beginning major projects, studies, plans, etc., staff will contact local radio and television stations for announcements regarding public service/community calendar items. The Public Service Announcement will include details on the topic to be discussed and dates and locations of those discussions.

4. General Publicity

Whenever necessary, GCMPC's publicity efforts will be coordinated with local government jurisdictions to provide notice through their websites and handouts for display in public places. Staff utilizes the GCMPC website (www.gcmpr.org) and social media as more opportunities for publicizing notices of planning processes and plans.



In an effort to provide public outreach to underserved populations, staff will request that commercial enterprises, public institutions, community centers and homeless services providers display information throughout the course of planning processes and programs.

Staff requests Public Service Announcements on television and radio stations to engage their audiences, while also being an effort to engage the population that experiences challenges with reading. Publicized materials will be written so as to be readily understood by all literacy levels in Genesee County. According to the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) estimates, approximately 10% of Genesee County adults lack basic prose literacy skills. According to the American Community Survey for the years 2012-2016, 89.6% of persons aged 25 years and over in Genesee County were high school graduates or higher. For the City of Flint, that number was 83.2%.

5. Distribution of Plans

At a minimum, paper copies of all studies and/or plans intended for public comment will be available at the GCMPC offices and digital copies will be available at www.gcmpr.org. Digital copies will also be provided to local units of government and to appropriate agencies based on specific program requirements.

The Community Development Division and the Transportation Division keep the Consolidated and Annual Action Plans, the Assessment of Fair Housing, annual performance reports (CAPER), the Solid Waste Management Plan, the LRTP, the TIP and the PPP available on the GCMPC website at all times.

F. Public Participation Process Evaluation

1. Self-Evaluation of Public Participation Process

GCMPC staff conducts a self-evaluation after each series of workshops to determine if the outreach format and content of the workshops were effective and pertinent to the public. This self-evaluation is based on the number of attendees and comment input. Persons present will be requested to complete a registration sheet, which includes questions regarding publicity. Comments received from these sheets will help staff evaluate outreach efforts. Written input received from the public will be included in appropriate plans. For the attendees that cannot read or write, staff is available to ask these attendees the questions, and then record their responses for them.

Periodically, staff will review how effective the public participation process has been. Staff members will ask themselves questions regarding how the public was contacted and how they were involved in the process. The following list is an example of the kinds of questions staff will ask themselves, in order to improve the process.



- Were the strategies used successful in attracting citizens to the events?
- What new strategies could be used to attract more citizens to future events?
- Did different strategies result in a different level of input from citizens?
- Was the public made to feel that their opinions were important and needed?

- Was the public input considered by decision-makers? Was this process documented?
- Was the public made to feel included in the planning process from the beginning, not just at the end of the process?
- Was an effort made to contact traditionally underserved citizens (disabled, homeless, and other underserved populations)?
- Was input received from minority and low-income populations?
- Was a follow-up summary made available to the public after the events?
- Is there frequent news coverage on program issues?
- Are any changes needed to update the Public Participation Plan?

2. Committee Evaluation of Public Participation Process

Staff works with a Public Participation Process Review Committee (PPPRC). These committee members represent the various needs of the public. Members include representatives from the following groups: local, state and federal government, technical advisory committees, Chambers of Commerce, Downtown Development agencies, organizations for the elderly and for persons with disabilities, minority organizations, transportation and planning agencies, faith-based groups,

environmental organizations, and recreation and non- motorized interests. The PPPRC is asked to complete a survey regarding GCMPC's current participation efforts and provide feedback to staff. A meeting is held to generate discussion and evaluate the public participation efforts of GCMPC and make suggestions on how to improve those efforts. Meetings of the PPPRC will continue to be held in order to effectively evaluate GCMPC's public participation efforts. Please see Appendix B to view materials from the last PPPRC meeting.

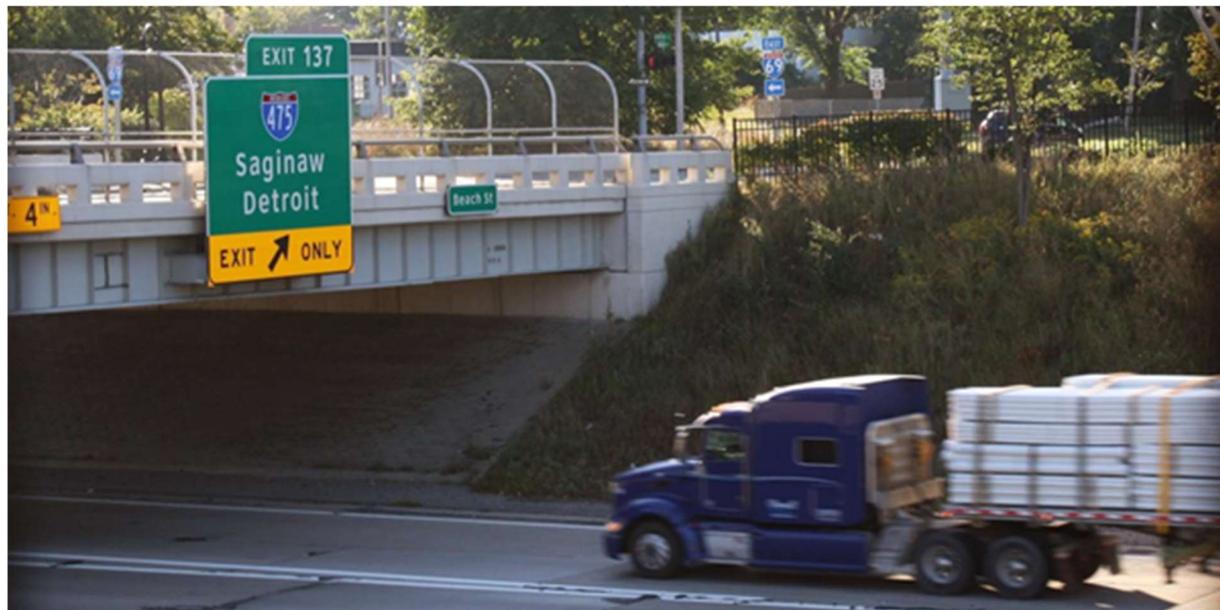
G. Committee Structure

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Allocation Committee

The Allocation Committee was established to: review and make recommendations to the C&ED Committee, and the Genesee County Board of Commissioners on the allocation of entitlement funds for use by the local participating communities; to implement the county Community Development Block Grant, ESG and HOME Programs; and to address Community Development program needs as they arise.

The Allocation Committee is comprised of the following representatives: three Genesee County Board Commissioners; three elected township officials; two elected city officials; one



elected village representative; and two representatives of the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission (one representing the Planning Commission and one representing housing interests).

Goals and Objectives

- Evaluate and prioritize the use of Genesee County CD funds.
- Review, analyze and make recommendations on policies to the County Board that assure that Genesee County's community development, housing, and homeless needs and requirements are being met.
- To assure that the funds made available for distribution through the CDBG, HOME, and ESG

programs to participating communities are allocated and expended as closely as possible according to the local units' levels of population, overcrowded housing, and low- and moderate-income residency.

Community and Economic Development Committee

The Community and Economic Development Committee (C&ED) is a committee of the whole of the Genesee County Board of Commissioners (Board). They are responsible for the organization and administration of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME programs throughout Genesee County outside the City of Flint boundaries, and of the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

throughout Genesee County. The C&ED committee meets once a month. The yearly C&ED meeting schedule is established by the Board of Commissioners in January of each year.

Goals and Objectives

- Develop and maintain viable communities.
- Provide decent housing.
- Provide a suitable living environment for the residents of Genesee County, principally for persons of low and moderate income.

TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Division has monthly meetings with the Technical Advisory Committee and the Metropolitan Alliance. It also has several subcommittees that meet as needed, depending on current projects or plans. See the Committees Table in Appendix A for a detailed explanation of these meetings.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Solid Waste Management Planning Committee

Following Part 115 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, the Solid Waste Management Planning Committee is a committee appointed by the Genesee County Board of Commissioners. All members are appointed to

serve a term of two (2) years. This committee assists the Designated Planning Agency in preparing a Solid Waste Management Plan and consists of fourteen (14) members as outlined below:

- Four (4) from the solid waste management industry
- Two (2) from environmental interest groups
- One (1) from county government
- One (1) from city government
- One (1) from township government
- One (1) from the regional solid waste planning agency
- One (1) from industrial waste generators
- Three (3) from the general public

Goals and Objectives

- Identification of local policies and priorities
- Insuring coordination and public participation
- Periodically advising the county and municipalities of the plan's status
- Reviewing and approving the plan
- Submitting the plan for approval to the Genesee County Board of Commissioners, local units of government, and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

H. Summary

The goal of the Public Participation Plan is to encourage citizen participation in the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission planning processes over and above the representation already included in established committee structures. The public participation program is a multi-purpose activity, which will provide a method for obtaining community ideas/concerns, determining community goals and objectives, and educating the public in terms of the planning process, legislative requirements, organizations, and concepts as well as the selection of a final plan for Genesee County.

The Public Participation Plan entails extensive publicity efforts including community outreach at non-traditional venues, providing electronically accessible information by way of e-mailing, the GCMPC website (www.gcmpc.org), Facebook, Twitter, letters, public service announcements, paid advertising media, and community flyers.

The public comment period for the Public Participation Plan will be for forty-five (45) days. A public hearing will be held prior to the plan's approval by the entities listed below.

The Public Participation Plan has been approved by the following:

Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission: April 2, 2019

Genesee County Metropolitan Alliance: February 20, 2019

Genesee County Board of Commissioners: February 27, 2019

The Public Participation Plan amendment has been approved by the following:

Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission: May 5, 2020

Genesee County Board of Commissioners: May 13, 2020