The Public Participation Plan in Transportation Decision Making

Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study

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3801 East Kilgore Road 5220 Lovers Lane, Suite 110
Kalamazoo, MI 49001-Portage, MI 49002
Phone: (269) 343-0766 Fax: (269) 381-1760
E-mail: info@KATSmpo.org
www.KATSmpo.org
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The Public Participation Plan in Transportation Decision Making for the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study

I. INTRODUCTION

The Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Kalamazoo County Urbanized Area. The Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) for KATS is Kalamazoo County and a portion of Van Buren County. Public participation in the transportation planning process has been an important part of the activities of KATS since its early years. Many public participation efforts have been part of the transportation planning process utilized by KATS. Further history on the public participation efforts of KATS is available at www.KATSmpo.org.

The processes described within this document apply to transportation planning in accordance with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) legislation, and subsequent extensions. SAFETEA LU MAP-21 continues the public participation provisions beyond previous legislation by requiring MPOs to develop and adopt participation plans.

II. REQUIREMENTS

SAFETEA LU MAP-21 places additional emphasis on extensive stakeholder “participation.” Highlights of the SAFETEA LU MAP-21 requirements for public participation include:

- Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points;
- Employing visualization techniques;
- Making information accessible in various formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
- Holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- Seeking out and considering needs of traditionally underserved populations;
- Coordinating with statewide transportation planning public participation and consultation processes; and
- Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies in the
The full text relating to the public participation process within SAFETEA-LU MAP-21 can be found under Appendix B.

III. THE PUBLIC

The requirements identify “citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, agencies or entities responsible for safety/security operations, providers of non-emergency transportation services receiving financial assistance from a source other than Title 49, U.S.C. Chapter 53, and other interested parties.” MAP-21 requires that “The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, 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.(23 CFR 450.316)” for inclusion in the input process for transportation decision making. KATS is open to and encourages input from any individual, group, organization, agency, business, municipality, or service provider. Activities encouraging the open dialogue between these groups and KATS include maintaining and updating a mailing contact list of interested parties as well as KATS receiving contact by mail, telephone, or e-mail and during committee meetings.

KATS will work to encourage the participation of persons who have been traditionally underserved, as well as to meet the requirements of Executive Order 12898 related to Environmental Justice and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. KATS, through written communication, e-mail, newsletters, or phone, will endeavor to notify some or all of the groups listed below when a particular agenda item directly impacts an organization or the clientele they represent, a significant planning initiative begins, or at the request of any KATS Policy Committee member.

Stakeholder organizations that represent the interests of:

- The elderly
- The disabled
- Non-motorized transportation users
- Minority populations
- Low income populations

Types of organizations located in the KATS area:
• Conventional and unconventional transit providers
• Representatives of public transportation employees
• Affected public agencies
• Private providers of transportation
• Law enforcement agencies and fire departments
• Freight shippers and providers of freight transportation services
• Railroad companies
• Airport operators
• Environmental organizations
• Major employers
• Chambers of commerce
• Economic development
• Interested citizens
• Human service agencies

Some of these organizations are non-voting members of the Technical Committee. They receive meeting agendas and minutes and are encouraged to participate and provide input.

IV. MEETINGS

All regularly scheduled meetings of the KATS Policy and Technical Committees are open to the public and are held at sites which comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations. Time is allotted at Technical and Policy Committee meetings for any person wishing to address committee members.

The annual schedule of regular Policy Committee and Technical Committee meetings showing dates, times, and locations are included on the KATS Web site. The scheduled meetings will also be posted in the KATS office and distributed to each member unit of government for posting.

Monthly meeting notifications, including agendas and location, are sent to local media and to the cities, townships, villages within Kalamazoo County the KATS Metropolitan Planning Area and the county administration building for public posting. The KATS Web site also contains meeting notifications, locations, and agendas. Interested citizens may have their name added to the mailing list for meeting materials by contacting KATS. KATS Policy and Technical Committee meetings comply with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Public Act No. 267 of 1976.

Special meetings, such as Public Information Meetings and Public Hearings, will be held at convenient and accessible locations and times where most people could attend.
V. SIGNIFICANT PLANNING INITIATIVES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INPUT

Significant planning initiatives include, but are not limited to, updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program, corridor studies, subarea plans, transportation demand management studies and transit plan implementation activities. When describing a significant planning initiative to the public, KATS shall incorporate appropriate visualization techniques.

Below is a chart showing the significant planning initiatives. The chart also shows a timetable for the best opportunities for public input in the planning process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Planning Document</th>
<th>Updated</th>
<th>Next Scheduled Update (20124)</th>
<th>Best Opportunities for Public Input</th>
<th>Public Information Meeting</th>
<th>Public Hearing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>June, 2014</td>
<td>Draft Document</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Transportation Plan</td>
<td>Every 4 years</td>
<td>July-September, 2015</td>
<td>Project Selection; Draft Document; Public Information and Hearings</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)</td>
<td>Every 3-4 years</td>
<td>June, 2013</td>
<td>Project Selection; Draft Document; Public Information and Hearings</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Participation Plan</td>
<td>Every 2 years (minimum)</td>
<td>June, 2014</td>
<td>Draft Document; Public Hearing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title VI Plan</td>
<td>Every 4 years</td>
<td>October, 2015</td>
<td>Draft Document; Public Hearing</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Various avenues will be considered when seeking public participation in these initiatives including, but not limited to, public informational meetings, surveys, mailings, and notices. In an effort to reach populations traditionally underserved (minorities, low income, senior citizens, disabled, etc.), emphasis will be made to inform such populations. Consideration of non-English
language notices and public service announcements will also be made in accordance with the KATS Title VI Plan. *It is also understood that the MPO’s public involvement process, stated above, also satisfies the need for public involvement in the programming of federal dollars for public transportation.*

**VI. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

KATS recognizes that, in order for the public to participate in transportation decision making, it must understand the transportation system’s problems, processes, and potential solutions. Information must be provided in a timely manner, be easily understandable, and be reasonably accessible.

KATS will make available to the public the agency’s library and map files. Copies of all KATS planning documents, meeting minutes, and maps are available for review during normal business hours as well as online. Local public libraries have computers available for public use so access to the Web will not necessitate personal ownership of a computer. Meeting schedules and minutes, planning studies, the KATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program, newsletters, and other applicable documents will be posted on the KATS website. The KATS’s World Wide Web address is [http://www.KATSpdo.org](http://www.KATSpdo.org).

Local public libraries also receive copies of many documents published by KATS. In addition, KATS staff participates in public forums and conducts presentations upon request. KATS will meet with the Citizens Advisory Committee to share information and receive input.

**VII. OUTREACH STRATEGIES**

KATS continually looks at ways to involve the public in the transportation planning process. KATS will continue to be proactive in its approach in engaging the public and will continually expand its efforts to keep the public up to date on KATS activities.

There are two primary audiences of KATS information: the public (as described previously) and the media. The residents of Kalamazoo County and portions of Van Buren County, as well as others who use the transportation system within the area represent one audience. The various media outlets are the other target audience for outreach. As new media formats and technologies demonstrate their ability to engage different segments of the audience, it is important that KATS consider their use as a public involvement tool. The following outreach goals were established to better inform the public and local media:

- **Establish a dialogue with members of the local media**
  - Create and regularly update a list of local media contacts for print and electronic news.
Proactively share information instead of reacting to incorrect or incomplete information.

- **Raise awareness about transportation planning efforts and the agency**
  - Raise awareness of KATS responsibilities and functions
  - Highlight successful projects of KATS and its members
  - Regularly update the online tools to increase traffic
  - Encourage attendance at public involvement meetings

- **Create an appropriate suite of media and public communication tactics to allow for faster dissemination of information.**
  - Create agency accounts using various appropriate social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).
  - Establish policies and procedures for social media updates.

Formats for outreach include, but not limited to:

- **Electronic Media:**
  - Website (www.KATSmpo.org)
  - Quarterly Newsletter to website and Email Addresses contact list.
  - Press Releases to News Media Outlets in Surrounding Area

- **Print Media:**
  - Public Hearing Notices
  - Newsletters to be Distributed to Jurisdictions, Libraries, and Other Agencies/Organizations
  - Direct Mailings/Flyers to Impacted Organizations and Populations
  - Comment Forms at Public Meetings/Hearings
  - Access to Planning Documents at Local Cities, Villages, and Townships As Well As Local Libraries
Meetings:

- Conduct Open Houses As Part of Kickoff of Document Development and Other Key Points in Document Development
- Public Hearings Prior to Document Adoptions
- Technical Committee Meetings and Policy Committee Meetings

VIII. OBTAINING PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public is encouraged to use the following methods for reviewing and commenting on significant documents being developed and published by the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study:

Where to find transportation planning documents to review:

- Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Website [www.KATSmpo.org](http://www.KATSmpo.org)
- Visit the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study offices
- Public libraries in Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties
- Attend public meeting, open house, or other scheduled activity (notices to be published on KATS website as well as local government jurisdictions)
- Attend committee meeting or hearing (Technical Committee and Policy Committee meeting schedules are available at [www.KATSmpo.org](http://www.KATSmpo.org))

To Request a Printed Copy of the Documents

Call: (269) 343-0766
Fax: (269) 381-1760
Email: info@KATSmpo.org
Internet: [http://www.KATSmpo.org](http://www.KATSmpo.org)

Write: Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
3801 East Kilgore Road
5220 Lovers Lane, Suite 110
Kalamazoo, MI 49001-Portage, MI 49002

Comments May Be Submitted By:
Email to KATS at info@KATSmpo.org
Online at KATS website www.KATSmpo.org
At public meetings and hearings
At Policy Committee meetings and hearings
Phone at (269) 343-0766
Fax at (269) 381-1760
Mail Letters to KATS
**IX. TREATMENT OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

When public comments are received on plans, studies, or other activities, they will be summarized and forwarded to the Policy Committee prior to any formal action to adopt or approve a plan or study. A copy of all comments will be filed and made available for public review. Comments will be answered in a timely manner. The comments, or a summary of the comments, will be included in the document along with a discussion of how the comments were addressed prior to the adoption of the plans, major studies, and programs.

**X. MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS**

KATS should review this plan and any social media product accounts periodically for their effectiveness. Some technologies can take months and even longer to be successful. KATS should use several available analytical metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of each technology and report progress to the Policy Committee. As new technologies and formats emerge and gain traction, KATS should consider using those media resources.

Such measures can include, but are not limited to; tracking website hits, social media interest, and comments received, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Participation Tools</th>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Suggested Performance Goal(s)</th>
<th>Method to Meet Goal(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study Website</td>
<td>Number of hits to website</td>
<td>Minimum of 25 hits/month with 5% increase in total hits/year</td>
<td>Provide all agency documents on the KATS website (<a href="http://www.KATSmpo.org">www.KATSmpo.org</a>); publish agency website information on all agency documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press Releases</td>
<td>Calls, emails, letter correspondence, etc.</td>
<td>Submittal of press release at key points in document development using email list of media outlets in Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties</td>
<td>Involvement of media in meetings of Technical Committee and Policy Committee, as well as during the development of agency documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Calls, emails, letter correspondence, etc; Number of “friends” and “followers”</td>
<td>Annual increase in “friends” and followers</td>
<td>Provide information, announcements, access to surveys, meeting information, important action items; maintain and monitor activity daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Participation Tools</td>
<td>Evaluation Criteria</td>
<td>Suggested Performance Goal(s)</td>
<td>Method to Meet Goal(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Meetings/Hearings</td>
<td>Attendance at meeting/hearing; calls, emails, letter correspondence, etc.</td>
<td>1% of affected population in attendance</td>
<td>Schedule meetings at convenient times and locations; use other public participation tools to increase awareness of meeting/hearing; Outreach to affected population (neighborhood associations, community groups, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Announcements</td>
<td>Calls, emails, letter correspondence, etc.; Number of emails sent</td>
<td>Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw the email announcement</td>
<td>Increase email list by advertising availability of email announcements using other public participation tools; Email address on all agency documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualization Techniques (Print and Electronic Formats)</td>
<td>Usefulness to Explanation of Document Development</td>
<td>Comment on visualization during public comment period; hits on specific page within KATS website</td>
<td>Publish visual aid in draft document and for use during public meetings; publish visual aid on KATS website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment Forms</td>
<td>Direct mail to impacted organization and/or neighborhood</td>
<td>1% return rate based on number of comment forms distributed</td>
<td>Provide self-addressed /pre-posted comment form; provide alternative formats for providing comment (phone, email, letter, website, in person)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**XI. REVISIONS TO PARTICIPATION PLAN**

The public is invited to comment on this plan prior to final adoption by the Policy Committee. A review of this Participation Plan will periodically (at a minimum bi-annually) be undertaken by the Technical and Policy Committees. Major revisions will necessitate undertaking various measures as described in Section V.
Comments or questions concerning this Plan should be directed to:

Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
3801 East Kilgore Road 5220 Lovers Lane, Suite 110
Kalamazoo, MI 49001- Portage, MI 49002
(269) 343-0766
E-mail at: info@KATSmpo.org

www.KATSmpo.org
Appendix A
Acronyms and Definitions

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act
The legislation defining the responsibilities of and requirements for transportation providers to make transportation accessible to individuals with disabilities.

EJ: Environmental Justice
Environmental justice assures that services and benefits allow for meaningful participation and are fairly distributed to avoid discrimination.

FHWA: Federal Highway Administration
A branch of the US Department of Transportation that administers the federal-aid Highway Program, providing financial assistance to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads, and bridges.

FTA: Federal Transit Administration
A branch of the US Department of Transportation that is the principal source of federal financial assistance to America's communities for planning, development, and improvement of public or mass transportation systems.

GIS: Geographic Information System
Computerized data management system designed to capture, store, retrieve, analyze, and display geographically referenced information.

ISTEA: Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
Legislative initiative by the U.S. Congress that restructured funding for transportation programs.

KATS: Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Kalamazoo Urbanized Area County.

LRTP: Long-Range Transportation Plan-MTP: Metropolitan Transportation Plan
A document resulting from regional or statewide collaboration and consensus on a region or state's transportation system, and serving as the defining vision for the region's or state's transportation systems and services. In metropolitan areas, the plan indicates all of the transportation improvements scheduled for funding over the next 20 years.

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)
On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed into law P.L. 112-141, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). Funding surface transportation programs at over $105 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2013 and 2014, MAP-21 is the first long-term highway authorization enacted since 2005. MAP-21 represents a milestone for the U.S. economy – it provides needed funds and, more importantly, it transforms the policy and programmatic framework for investments to guide the growth and development of the
country’s vital transportation infrastructure. MAP-21 creates a streamlined, performance-based, and multimodal program to address the many challenges facing the U.S. transportation system. MAP-21 builds on and refines many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991.

**MPA: Metropolitan Planning Area**

The geographic area in which the metropolitan transportation planning process required by 23 U.S.C. 134 and section 8 of the Federal Transit Act (49 U.S.C. app. 1607) must be carried out. (23CFR420)

**MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization**

1) Regional policy body, required in urbanized areas with populations over 50,000, and designated by local officials and the governor of the state. Responsible in cooperation with the state and other transportation providers for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning requirements of federal highway and transit legislation. 2) Formed in cooperation with the state, develops transportation plans and programs for the metropolitan area. For each urbanized area, a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) must be designated by agreement between the Governor and local units of government representing

**Public Participation**

The active and meaningful involvement of the public in the development of transportation plans and programs.

**SAFETEA-LU: Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users**

On August 10, 2005, the President signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). With guaranteed funding for highways, highway safety, and public transportation totaling $244.1 billion, SAFETEA-LU represents the largest surface transportation investment in our Nation’s history.

**TIP: Transportation Improvement Program**

A document prepared by a metropolitan planning organization that lists projects to be funded with FHWA/FTA funds for the next one- to three-year period.

**UPWP: Unified Planning Work Program**

The management plan for the (metropolitan) planning program. Its purpose is to coordinate the planning activities of all participants in the planning process.
Appendix B
SAFETEA-LU MAP-21 Participation Plan Regulations

23 CFR Part 450.316 Interested parties, participation, and consultation.

(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, agencies or entities responsible for safety/security operations, providers of non-emergency transportation services receiving financial assistance from a source other than title 49, U.S.C, Chapter 53, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

(1) The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO 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 but not limited to 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 initially made available for public comment;
(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 (Environmental Protection Agency) transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), 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 (Federal Highway Administration) and the FTA (Federal Transit Administration) 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 shall consult, as appropriate, with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation. To coordinate the planning functions to the maximum extent practicable, such consultation shall compare metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, as they are developed, with the plans, maps, inventories, and planning documents developed by other agencies. This consultation shall include, as appropriate, contacts with State, local, Indian Tribal, and private agencies responsible for planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, freight movements, land use management, natural resources, conservation, and historic preservation. In addition, transportation plans and TIPs shall be developed 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 nonprofit 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. 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) The MPOs are encouraged to 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.
Appendix C
Comments on Participation Plan

Comment:

Cheryl Hudson, Title VI Coordinator, Michigan Department of Transportation
Executive Order 13166, Limited English Proficiency is mentioned extensively in your Title VI Plan, but not in the Public Participation Plan. Perhaps a link between the two would resolve this.

Response:

Page 4: Various avenues will be considered when seeking public participation in these initiatives including, but not limited to, public informational meetings, surveys, mailings, and notices. In an effort to reach populations traditionally underserved (minorities, low income, senior citizens, disabled, etc.), emphasis will be made to inform such populations. Consideration of non-English language notices and public service announcements will also be made in accordance with the KATS Title VI Plan and address the Limited English Proficiency elements of the Title VI Plan.

Comment:

Suzann Flowers, Associate Planner, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
In fairness, since you reviewed our plan I should review yours. My comments below.
For your PPP you only hold 1 meeting for a population of almost 200,000??
I assume you are reading this off the "Significant Planning Initiatives" Chart. What you are seeing there are the "Best Opportunities for Public Input," kind of a one-stop-shop for the best time for someone to comment. The best time for someone from the public is to comment at our Public Hearing. But that isn't by any means the "only" time they can comment. In fact, there will be at least 3 public meetings at KATS that will have the PPP on the agenda. We've also requested in our outreach that other agencies discuss it at their meetings.

If VBC is added to MPO how about holding a meeting for that region as well
When VBC is formally incorporated into KATS in the future, additional effort will be needed to incorporate the public in that area. Since we are in the early stages of that incorporation, their elected officials have been invited to comment on the PPP.
When was the last survey done which showed what measures were effective for the MPO?
There hasn’t been any official record keeping in regards to effective measures. The prior PPP did not include any performance measures. Each subsequent PPP will need to be adjusted to the data we will begin collecting.

How often are underserved populations represented at meetings?
Frequently by advocacy groups that support under served populations. Less frequently by the actual public.

How often are students in the region reached out to?
Students, in the past, were infrequently reached out too often due to a lack of interest. KATS hopes that the incorporation of other social media strategies can better improve student involvement.

Do you have any tribal populations in the county? There is a tribe in Van Buren, have you reached out to them?
Tribal governments are involved in our consultation process, as well as our general mailings. Kalamazoo has two Tribes within the County. As we expand into Van Buren County, we will add the third (Tribal Government is listed on Pg 3.)

Could you use facebook to reach out to those who regularly engage in social media?
See page 7, 3rd bullet under Outreach Strategies.

For your website, something that we are working on too, is a google translator for non-english speaking and browse aloud application. These avenues have been explored, but due to the general lack of accuracy of aggregate translators, we’d prefer those needing translation services to contact us, as prescribed in our Title VI Plan.

Since WMU, K-College and others fall into the MPO what is their participation level or representation?
See your question 5 in regards to students. WMU is an active member of our Policy Committee as well as an active technical consultant in regards to our planning activities. We are currently working with WMU in developing a transit model for our next LRP.

Page 8 how often do you make phone calls to get people to meetings?
I’m confused on the question, since pg 8 describes the different avenues the public can contact us for comment/review of documents.

We have created outreach lists in our database for the MPO which targets those who have an interest in transportation topics. It has worked really well for us, in the past 12 months, I have added students and many others (at least 25) and have only had 2 people asked to be removed from the list.

Additionally, how will you measure your VII Outreach strategies, is that separate from the public participation tools, it appears to be connected but no MOE are linked to those.
The first three MOE's on page 9 are directly related to section VII, with the exception of "Establish a dialogue with members of the local media." It is hoped that local media will latch on to our new outreach strategies. However, due to the constant flux in local media (hardly any newspaper, etc) a performance measure was not directly tied to that factor.