



BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary and CEO and MPO Chair
Karl H. Quackenbush, Executive Director, MPO Staff

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 30, 2017
TO: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
FROM: Karl H. Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director,
and Jennifer M. Rowe, Public Participation Program Manager
RE: Amendment to Public Participation Plan

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has requested that all metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the state amend their public participation plans to shorten the length of the public review and comment period for both draft certification documents and amendments to final certification documents. The following sections provide the language of the proposed amendment, the public review process, and background information for your consideration.

1 PROPOSED MOTION

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) votes to amend its Public Participation Program, to shorten the public review and comment period for both draft certification documents and amendments to final certification documents.

2 PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The proposed amendment would modify five sentences, in three sections of the Public Participation Program (approved October 2014). The proposed changes are shown in red text below:

1. **Chapter 4, Section 1, Page 40**

The MPO discusses the staff recommendations and comments on both the TIP and the UPWP and releases draft documents for a ~~30~~ **21-day** public review and comment period.

2. **Chapter 4, Section 2, Page 41**

Although the public participation schedule is different for the LRTP, it follows the same general sequence and set of outreach tools used for the TIP and UPWP, and if possible public participation activities for the LRTP are coordinated with TIP and UPWP outreach. **The MPO releases the**

draft LRTP for a public review and comment period that is, at minimum, 21 days long.

3. Chapter 4, Section 3, Page 42

The proposed draft amendment then is posted on the MPO's website and a ~~30~~ 21-day public comment period begins.

4. Chapter 4, Section 3, Page 42

In extraordinary circumstances, such as an unforeseen regulatory requirement or funding deadline, the MPO may vote to shorten the ~~30~~ 21-day public comment period ~~by as much as to a minimum~~ of 15 days.

5. Chapter 4, Section 3, Page 42

An additional comment period of ~~30-21~~ days will be scheduled if a significant alteration occurs after the close of the initial public comment period.

3 PUBLIC INPUT

At its meeting on January 19, the MPO voted to release the proposed Amendment for a 45-day public review and comment period.

MPO staff notified the public of the review and comment period through email, Twitter, and a notice banner on the MPO's website homepage. Staff also made announcements at the February meetings of the Regional Transportation Advisory Council and the Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA.

Staff invited the public to take a short survey, submit a written or oral comment, and/or give testimony during regularly-scheduled MPO meetings. A total of 134 individuals took the survey. Additionally, 23 individuals or organizations submitted comments. Please refer to Attachments 1 and 2 for the survey results and a compilation of the comments received, including that of the MPO's Regional Transportation Advisory Council.

4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Reasons for the Proposed Amendment

A 21-day public review and comment period will allow for the Boston Region MPO to shorten the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development process. This should enable the MPO to annually endorse a final TIP by the end of May.

MassDOT compiles the regional TIPs prepared by the state's thirteen MPOs into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Because MassDOT includes the STIP in its Capital Investment Plan (CIP), early approval of each region's TIP would allow MassDOT to develop the two state documents in sync and finalize both by the end of each state fiscal year.

This year, MassDOT's Capital Programs Committee is scheduled to meet on June 8, and the MassDOT Board of Directors and the MBTA's Fiscal and Management Control Board are scheduled to meet on June 12 to vote on the CIP. Please refer to Attachment 3 for a timeline reflecting accelerated approvals of the MPO's TIP and MassDOT's STIP and CIP.

Review of Federal Requirements and MPO Guidelines

To inform your consideration of this proposed amendment, staff has attached relevant excerpts from the Federal Metropolitan Planning Rule (Attachment 4), as well as the Boston Region MPO's Public Participation Plan (Attachment 5).

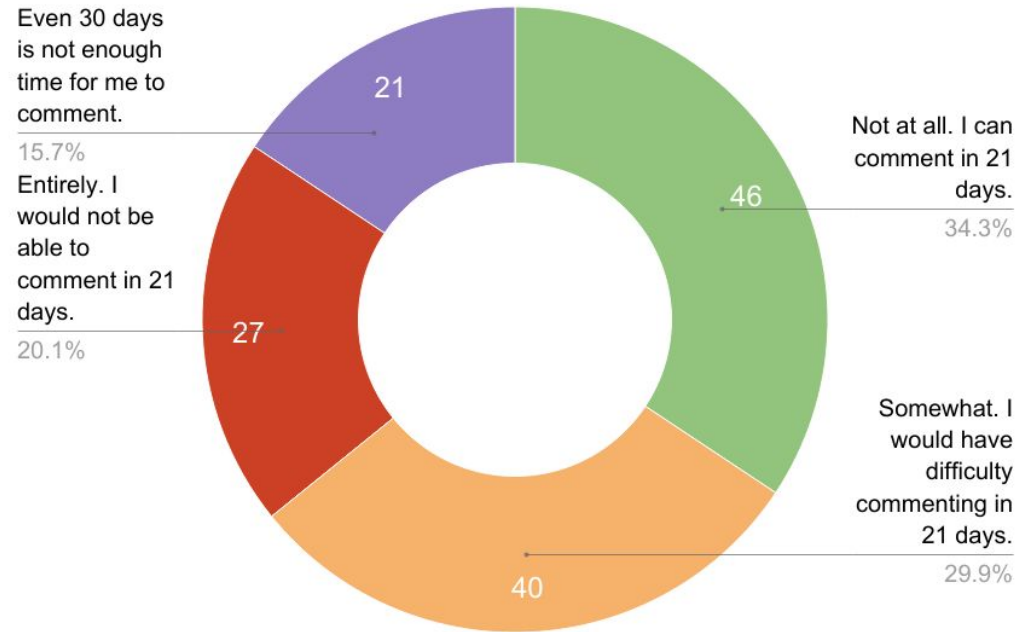
KHQ/JMR/jmr

Attachment 1: Survey Results

Overall, how would shortening the public comment period from 30 to 21 days affect your ability to review and comment upon MPO documents?

134 respondents, including:

- 85 local residents
- 57 transportation advocates
- 28 city/town employees
- 27 transportation professionals/consultants
- 24 city/town elected officials
- 15 business owners
- 9 transportation providers
- 8 other

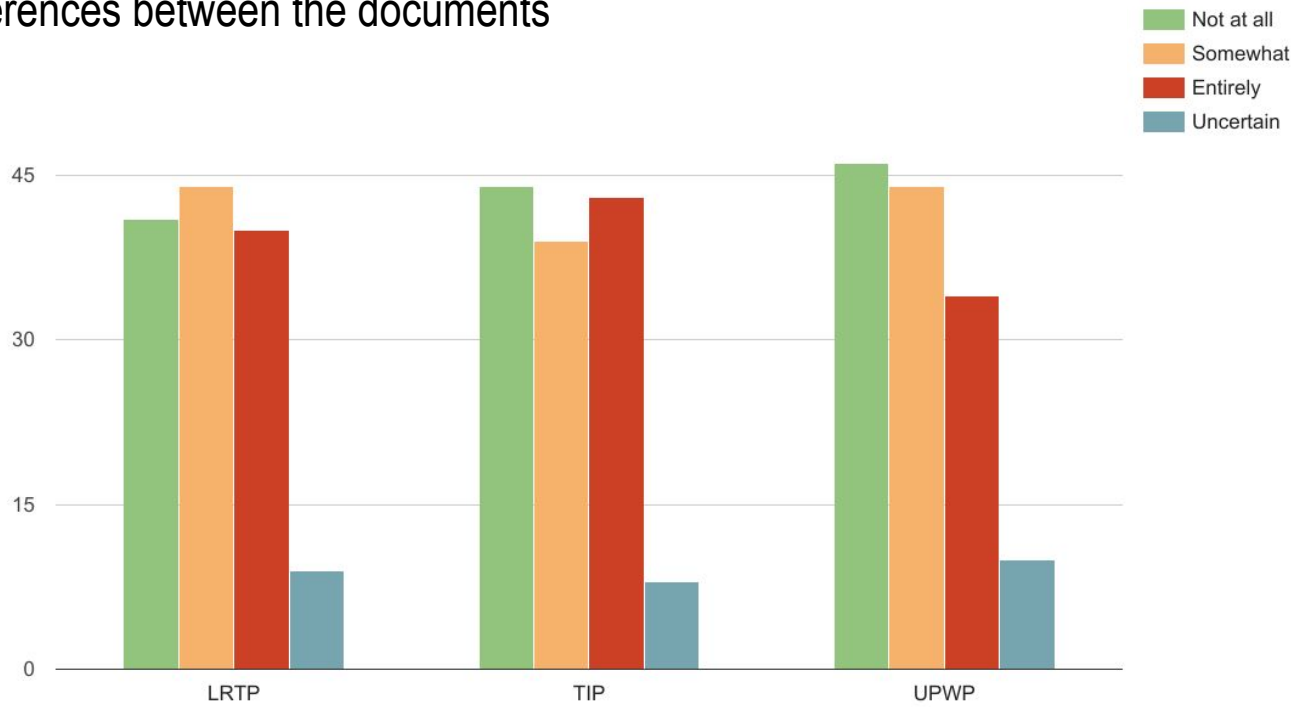


Affiliations of Individual Survey Respondents

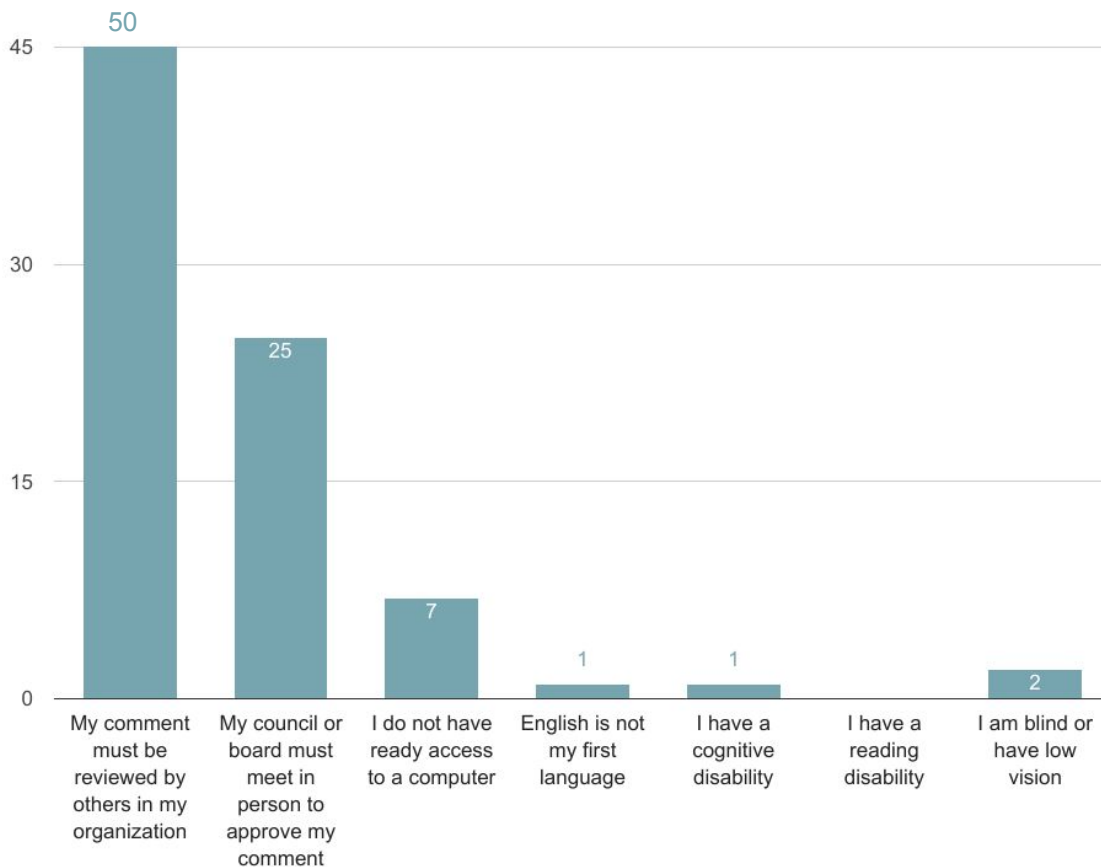
Not at all. I can comment in 21 days.	Somewhat. I would have difficulty commenting in 21 days.	Entirely. I would not be able to comment in 21 days.	Even 30 days is not enough for me to comment.
Bellingham Department of Public Works Retired Woburn Alderman Maynard Selectman Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea Town Government (Bedford) Town of Marblehead Peabody Council on Aging Sampan Newspaper WalkBoston MassRIDES Montachusett Regional Transit Authority MBTA	Town of Maynard Town of Acton Newton City Council Town Council (Watertown) Stoneham Transportation Advisory Committee Brookline Climate Action Committee Sustainability Specialist (Arlington) MBTA Rider Oversight Committee Norwell Conservation Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA Bay State Council of the Blind Boston Society of Architects Activist (Lexington) Massachusetts Sierra Club Nonprofit Organization (Lincoln)	Town of Needham, RTAC Member Sudbury Selectman Planning Board (Lynnfield) Town of Natick Town of Wellesley City of Everett Town of Cohasset Town of Needham City of Boston Friends of the Tri-Community Greenway, Inc Project RIGHT, Inc. Friends of the Community Path Massachusetts Climate Action Network	Wellesley Planning Board Member Town of Hingham Traffic Committee Municipal Government (Unknown) Sierra Club Librarian (Lynn) National Resources Defense Council Livable Streets Alliance

Attachment 1: Survey Results (continued)

Differences between the documents



Factors affecting ability to comment



Attachment 2: Comments Received

(Between January 27 and March 13, 2017)

Commenter	Position	Comment
Tegin Teich Bennett, Regional Transportation Advisory Council	<p>Do not shorten the periods permanently without further assessment of the impacts.</p> <p>Consider shortening only the TIP, or only the TIP and UPWP, only this year. Evaluate the impact and potential mitigation strategies.</p> <p>Consider and evaluate other options for aligning schedules.</p>	<p><i>[See attached letter for full comments. Excerpt provided below.]</i></p> <p>As the chair of the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council), I am writing to express concerns that the Advisory Council membership has with the proposal to amend the Public Participation Plan (PPP) to shorten the public comment period for the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP to 21 days.</p> <p>We understand that the justification for shortening the public comment period is a need to bring the schedule of the TIP more into alignment with the STIP and CIP. We support the better alignment of these schedules in principle, but we would like to raise some concerns about the proposed PPP amendment as the method of accomplishing this goal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Certain stakeholders, such as those who require a significant review process (such as a City or Town) or those who meet monthly and must vote to approve feedback (such as the Advisory Council), may find it difficult to meet these shortened deadlines. 2. Because of differences in process, it seems potentially inappropriate to apply the amendment uniformly to all three document certification activities. For example, municipalities have a strong motivation to be engaged in TIP development early if they have a project in the universe. However, for the LRTP, the final public comment period might have much more value for stakeholders who have not been as engaged in the full process. The Advisory Council asks that this overarching amendment to the PPP not be approved without further assessment. [...] We ask that the MPO staff provide a clear justification for why other methods will not work before the PPP amendment is approved. We thank you for your consideration of stakeholders' concerns with this proposal.
Scott Zadakis, Executive Director of CrossTown Connect TMA	<p>Maintain the 30-day period for the TIP and LRTP, this year and in perpetuity.</p> <p>Shorten the TIP period to 21 days this year.</p> <p>In future years, find another way to align the TIP and CIP processes and revert the TIP period back to 30-days.</p>	<p>While I understand the crunch that the MPO is under this year to develop the TIP, I think that making a permanent change from a 30 day public comment period to 21 days for all three MPO planning documents is not necessary. I'm concerned that there will be less opportunity for the public and other stakeholders to weigh in on these plans. Furthermore, some of the stakeholders consist of groups or organizations that meet monthly, and a 21 day public comment period will negatively affect their ability to meet and form a consensus before the comment period closes. Finally, it is my opinion that the UPWP and LRTP should not be included in any shortening of comment periods since they are not subject to the same time crunch. A shortened comment period for the LRTP is particularly concerning, because it is a long-term, widely-ranging and consequential vision for the future that should be deliberated upon sufficiently by all who wish to be a part of its development. Considering the above comments it would be my recommendation to shorten the public comment period for the TIP to 21 days for this year with the understanding that this change may have to be extended or made permanent based on whether or not federal funding levels are announced at an earlier time in subsequent years, which as I understand it may happen. If the funding does become known earlier, I would recommend reverting the comment period back to 30 days. As for the LRTP and the UPWP, I would rather that their public comment periods remain at 30 days. While I understand that there are multiple forces and bureaucratic decisions driving this conversation, these are my recommendations from the ground level. As always, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.</p>
Anonymous Town Council Member of Watertown, MA	<p>Unclear. (At least) maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents; (possibly) consider extending the period for all documents</p>	<p>You should know that many residents are frustrated by what feels like short notice, even with 30 days, for many reasons, including time needed to get the word out as well as to understand and digest issues and be informed as possible.</p>

Attachment 2: Comments Received

(Between January 27 and March 13, 2017)

Commenter	Position	Comment
Lynn Weissman, President of Friends of the Community Path	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	<p>Subject: Please keep the MPO Comment period to 30 days</p> <p>The Friends of the Community Path, like many citizen advocacy groups, have a small core of dedicated volunteers. With other obligations such as work, family, and our efforts to achieve the greater mission of Friends of the Community Path, it can be a hardship for us to keep pace with and even to understand revisions (and the implications of those revisions) to MPO documents.</p> <p>While MPO documents like the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) can seem esoteric to an average citizen, they of course greatly affect the vision for and the real funding allocation for federal transportation dollars in the Boston region.</p> <p>If it is hard for us to keep us a group, then it is even more difficult for individual citizens. So we respectfully continue our request to keep the public comment period to 30 days instead of reducing it to 21 days.</p> <p>Thank you for the hard work of the MPO and CTPS.</p>
Jeff Segel	Unclear; seems fine with a 21-day period.	<p>A shorter reply period may cause me "some difficulty" as I generally use my telephone for the internet now. To comment on a large document I would want to use a computer, and I sometimes use the public access computers at the library to make them easier to view, as my own (older) computer sometimes struggles with large documents, and, of course, the phone is crazy.</p> <p>However, note that since I am now retired and thus less in contact with transit than I was (14 years commuter rail, 23 years subway) so I've been commenting less frequently, and in less detail, than I would have in the past (and when I would have simply used the computers (and printers) at work).</p> <p>Also, please note, I am going to upgrade my own system this budget-cycle, so you can probably look forward to a flurry of comments supporting transit and rail projects coming from me in future!</p> <p>And much as I miss the old TransReport in my mail, and as often as I wish I had hard copy of the documents to mark up, I have to point out that I find the use of email and the web (and other e-media (such as this survey!)) by MPO (and MassDOT) is increasingly effective, and the the fact that things are instantly disseminated suggests that the effective time to comment probably isn't really reduced that much, back in the day the first several days of the comment period would probably pass before one even knew it had started.</p> <p>So, all in all, "some" difficulty, but not a big deal for me.</p> <p>I hope this helps clarify my response, and I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the comment process. Please let me know if you have any other questions!</p>

Attachment 2: Comments Received

(Between January 27 and March 13, 2017)

Commenter	Position	Comment
Member of the Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT) who preferred to remain anonymous	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	<p>Shortening the public comment period would make it more difficult for me to comment. Four weeks can go fast but three weeks goes faster—all of the sudden it's there. I think four weeks is good.</p> <p>Not having a computer makes it difficult. Having low vision makes it more difficult. But it shouldn't matter [that I have low vision]—sighted people don't have computers, too. I'm trying to get used to the fact that everybody's on email and people don't use the phone.</p> <p>I have reviewed budget documents in past federal fiscal years. Janie [AACT coordinator] put them in Braille. I have difficulty commenting, depending upon the length of the document and getting someone [to help me].</p>
Roland Bartl, Town Planner for the Town of Acton	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	A shortened comment period would affect the Town of Acton's ability to participate in the MPO's transportation planning. Often, a project spans over multiple municipalities and requires us to consult with other towns to coordinate comments. In addition, some projects require us to confirm information with our engineering consultants, or internally with committees, boards or other relevant staff persons. The time period in which MPO comments are due coincides with preparation of our Annual Town Meeting which tends to be the busiest time of year. Therefore, shortening the comment period would make it much more difficult to coordinate with other towns, engineers, boards, committees and staff.
Rafael Mares, Vice President and Program Director of Healthy Communities and Environmental Justice at the Conservation Law Foundation	<p>Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.</p> <p>Find another way to align the TIP and CIP processes.</p>	<p><i>[See attached letter for full comments. Excerpt provided below.]</i></p> <p>Based on years of experience commenting on the TIP, LRTP, and UPWP, however, we are concerned that shortening the public comment period would negatively impact public participation.</p> <p>A shortened public participation period is likely to negatively impact public participation by individuals and organizations not actively engaged in the MPO process on a regular basis. Comments from representatives of organizations which require an internal approval process could also be affected. Likewise, coalitions or organizations that meet on a monthly basis could be challenged by this proposed rule. Finally, we are afraid that participation by people with disabilities or from disadvantaged communities could be chilled. It is therefore our hope that the MPO can find a way to achieve MassDOT's goal of aligning the TIP and CIP processes without requiring a shortened comment period.</p>
Robert Hachey, Bay State Council of the Blind	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	As an experienced user of both computers and screen readers, shortening the comment period would have a slight impact upon my ability to comment on longer documents. However, other blind and visually impaired persons who are less skilled in their use would be more adversely impacted especially if they had to ask you for alternative formats. In addition, if you are looking for organizational comments, many organizational boards meet only once per month. Thus, if board approval were required, these organizations would be adversely impacted in their ability to meet the new 21-day period restriction.
Matthew Thall	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	The Mass DOT proposal does not provide a compelling reason for reducing the public comment period by 9 days. Therefore I believe it should be kept at 30 days.

Attachment 2: Comments Received*(Between January 27 and March 13, 2017)*

Commenter	Position	Comment
Brad Bellows	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	While I appreciate the drawbacks of lengthy public review processes, which when they stretch into years can result in substantial increases in project cost, I think the drawbacks of shortening the comment period from 30 to 21 days will outweigh any advantages. In particular, it seems likely that non-professional commenters will be most impacted by this change, since it often takes a week or two to get the word out to those not already closely engaged in the planning process, and juggling their civic engagement with other responsibilities. For these reasons, I encourage you to retain the current comment period.
David Manugian, Director of Public Works for the Town of Bedford	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I have worked with three MA MPO's over the last ten years and each one runs their programs a little differently. Promoting both efficiency and transparency can be tough and each has benefits. In the balance I would support keeping a 30 day comment period to provide more opportunity for varied public comments. Thank you.
Rick Corsi, Senior Planner at the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation	Shortening the period is not a problem.	I have no problem with the proposed 21 day comment period!
Michael D. Zehner, Planning Director for the Town of Wellesley	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents, but consider extending the period for all documents.	In my opinion reducing the time further would not be appropriate. In fact, given the current process, and the dynamic of Wellesley (which is not likely unique), extending the period would be more appropriate.
Robert O'Regan, Selectman of the Town of Stoughton	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	A 30-day comment period represents an easily understood and anticipated timeframe for public comment. Researching an issue for comment, drafting, and submitting the comment can be burdensome to members of the public. The agencies determine when the comment period opens, not the public, and they have whatever time they may decide to take before posting a proposal. This idea would tend to chill both public comment and the perception by the public that our views matter. It could be seen as intending to catch the public unaware. That is not a positive development for government, especially in the environment we now have. I see these as huge costs for public confidence in decision-making and no discernible benefit from shortening the comment period by 9 days.
Kurt Marden	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	The MPO/CTPS should retain the 30 day public review / comment period so that the public has time to independently research the actions and implications of the proposed changes. The public does not have a research staff like the MPO does so it would naturally take longer for the public to independently evaluate MPO/ CTPS proposals and changes.

Attachment 2: Comments Received

(Received between March 13, 2017 and March 20, 2017)

Commenter	Position	Comment
Terry Forest	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	I would like to keep the 30 day Public review in place!! Shortening the response time leaves many individuals with disabilities; including myself out of the loop in responding to concerns and issues!!!
Jonathan Keyes	Shortening the period is not a problem.	I think 21 days is enough time.
Joshua Davidson	Shorten the period.	In this day and age, it is imperative that government be able to act faster. Any individual who is interested in commenting on MPO affairs can complete that as easily in 21 days as in 30 days. This will not impact the deliberative responsibility of the MPO staff, but rather improve it, since the urgency of the matter will be improved by the faster pace set by the reduced comment period. If the public is given nine fewer days to comment, then the staff should work to equal that improvement, so that decisions/findings are rendered on average 18 days sooner than compared to the 30-day "era."
Catherine Moore	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	Reducing the public review period would affect my ability to comment on MPO actions. I lead a busy life (as you can see by the time stamp on this email) and the extra time helps greatly to give me time to review proposals and then formulate a response.
Ann Frenning Kossuth	While shortening the period is not a problem, not certain about whether there is a need to do so.	While I think that 21 days is OK for the public, I don't understand why you wouldn't just keep it at 30.
Mike Gowing, Vice Chair of Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Maintain the existing 30-day period for the LRTP and the UPWP. Shorten the period for the TIP during this year only. Afterwards, decide whether 21 days is adequate.	Although I understand the driving force behind wanting to shorten the review period for the TIP, I don't think that the same holds true for the LRTP & UPWP. Many boards and committees only meet monthly and would have no opportunity to discuss/submit comments if all were changed to 21 days. My recommendation is to change the review period for the TIP this year only! Leave the UPWP & LRTP at 30 days. We can then decide, going forward, whether we feel that 21 days is adequate.
MBTA Rider Oversight Committee	Maintain the existing 30-day period for all documents.	The Rider Oversight Committee (ROC) for MBTA respectfully requests the that public comment period for the draft documents remain at 30 days. As a group of volunteers that has monthly meetings, a 45-day review period would be more helpful. Even though it is possible for us to have discussions outside of our monthly meetings, arranging for conversations with MBTA staff and others with the knowledge to answer our questions and concerns about proposals in the draft documents can easily require 3-4 weeks. Regardless of your decision, we encourage the MPO to continue its outreach to the public on the LRTP, the TIP, and the UPWP.



March 9, 2017

David Mohler, Chair
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Amendment to Public Participation Plan to Reduce Public Comment Period

Dear Mr. Mohler,

As the chair of the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council), I am writing to express concerns that the Advisory Council membership has with the proposal to amend the Public Participation Plan (PPP) to shorten the public comment period for the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP to 21 days.

We understand that the justification for shortening the public comment period is a need to bring the schedule of the TIP more into alignment with the STIP and CIP. We support the better alignment of these schedules in principle, but we would like to raise some concerns about the proposed PPP amendment as the method of accomplishing this goal:

1. Certain stakeholders, such as those who require a significant review process (such as a City or Town) or those who meet monthly and must vote to approve feedback (such as the Advisory Council), may find it difficult to meet these shortened deadlines.
2. Because of differences in process, it seems potentially inappropriate to apply the amendment uniformly to all three document certification activities. For example, municipalities have a strong motivation to be engaged in TIP development early if they have a project in the universe. However, for the LRTP, the final public comment period might have much more value for stakeholders who have not been as engaged in the full process.

The Advisory Council asks that this overarching amendment to the PPP not be approved without further assessment. If the strategy to shorten the public comment period is viewed as the only solution given this year's timeline, we ask that this be a trial year, and before amending the PPP going forward, we respectfully ask the following:

1. Have MPO staff evaluate whether the short-term decrease of the public comment period significantly impacted the ability of stakeholders to provide input into the process. Determine which stakeholders it most negatively impacts and if there are ways to mitigate this impact.
2. Consider where there are other opportunities to tighten the schedules and bring them into alignment without shortening the public comment period and clearly communicate that these opportunities have been explored. For example, we are interested in learning more about whether target funding sources can be announced earlier and therefore move up the entire process.

3. If after careful analysis it is still recommended to shorten the comment period, consider only shortening it for the TIP, or the TIP and UPWP. In particular, 21 days does not seem like adequate time to review a document as complex as the LRTP.

We ask that the MPO staff provide a clear justification for why other methods will not work before the PPP amendment is approved. We thank you for your consideration of stakeholders' concerns with this proposal.

Sincerely,

Tegin Teich Bennett

Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council



For a thriving New England

CLF Massachusetts 62 Summer Street
Boston MA 02110
P: 617.350.0990
F: 617.350.4030
www.clf.org

March 1, 2017

VIA EMAIL (jrowe@ctps.org)

Jennifer Rowe, Manager Public Participation Program
Central Transportation Planning Staff
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Public Participation Plan Amendment

Dear Ms. Rowe:

I write on behalf of Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) to provide the following comments in response to the MPO's proposal to shorten its public review and comment period for draft documents and amendments from 30 to 21 days.

We greatly appreciate the thoughtful approach the MPO is taking to this proposed amendment to its public participation plan. The request to shorten the MPO's formal public comment period was made by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). It is our understanding that the objective behind this request is to align the TIP and Capital Investment Plan processes and to complete them by the beginning of the state fiscal year, which is a laudable goal. Based on years of experience commenting on the TIP, LRTP, and UPWP, however, we are concerned that shortening the public comment period would negatively impact public participation.

A shortened public participation period is likely to negatively impact public participation by individuals and organizations not actively engaged in the MPO process on a regular basis. Comments from representatives of organizations which require an internal approval process could also be affected. Likewise, coalitions or organizations that meet on a monthly basis could be challenged by this proposed rule. Finally, we are afraid that participation by people with disabilities or from disadvantaged communities could be chilled. It is therefore our hope that the MPO can find a way to achieve MassDOT's goal of aligning the TIP and CIP processes without requiring a shortened comment period.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions, I can be reached by phone at (617) 850-1739 or by email at rmares@clf.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rafael Mares'.

Rafael Mares
Vice President and Program Director,
Healthy Communities and Environmental Justice

MBTA Rider Oversight Committee

Craig Laskowski

Co-Chair

Wig Zamore

Co-Chair

March 20, 2017

Dear Members of the Boston Region MPO,

The Rider Oversight Committee (ROC) for MBTA respectfully requests that the public comment period for the draft documents remain at 30 days. As a group of volunteers that has monthly meetings, a 45-day review period would be more helpful. Even though it is possible for us to have discussions outside of our monthly meetings, arranging for conversations with MBTA staff and others with the knowledge to answer our questions and concerns about proposals in the draft documents can easily require 3-4 weeks. Regardless of your decision, we encourage the MPO to continue its outreach to the public on the LRTP, the TIP, and the UPWP.

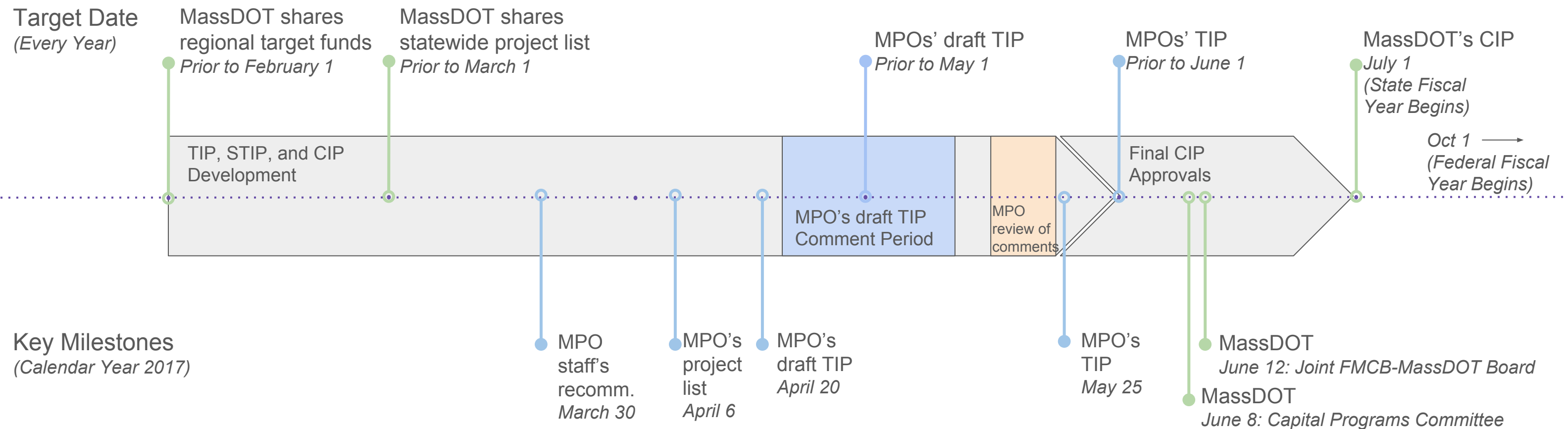
Respectfully,

The MBTA Rider Oversight Committee

mbtaroc@gmail.com

Attachment 3: TIP/STIP-CIP Approval Timeline

Alignment of MassDOT's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Capital Investment Plan (CIP)



ATTACHMENT 4

Federal Requirements for Public Participation

§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;
 - [...]
 - 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.

ATTACHMENT 5

MPO Public Participation Vision and Guidelines

[Public Participation Plan, Chapter 3—The MPO’s Approach to Public Participation, Section 3]

Vision

[Page 26] The MPO’s vision for public participation in the region is to hear, value, and consider—throughout its planning and programming work—the views of and feedback from the full spectrum of the public, and use this input in its decision-making.

Guidelines

[Page 27: *relevant excerpts*] The MPO makes every effort to:

1. Arrange convenient, timely, and meaningful opportunities for public involvement
2. Create a framework that encourages constructive contributions by members of the public to the work and decisions made by the MPO
3. Cast a wide and inclusive net to invite participation of interested parties and the general public: bolster outreach to minority, low-income, elderly, and youth communities, the LEP population, and persons with disabilities
4. Explore strategies for connecting with people who do not use or don’t have ready access to computer