



PARTICIPATION PLAN
For the
Rapid City Area
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Planning Process

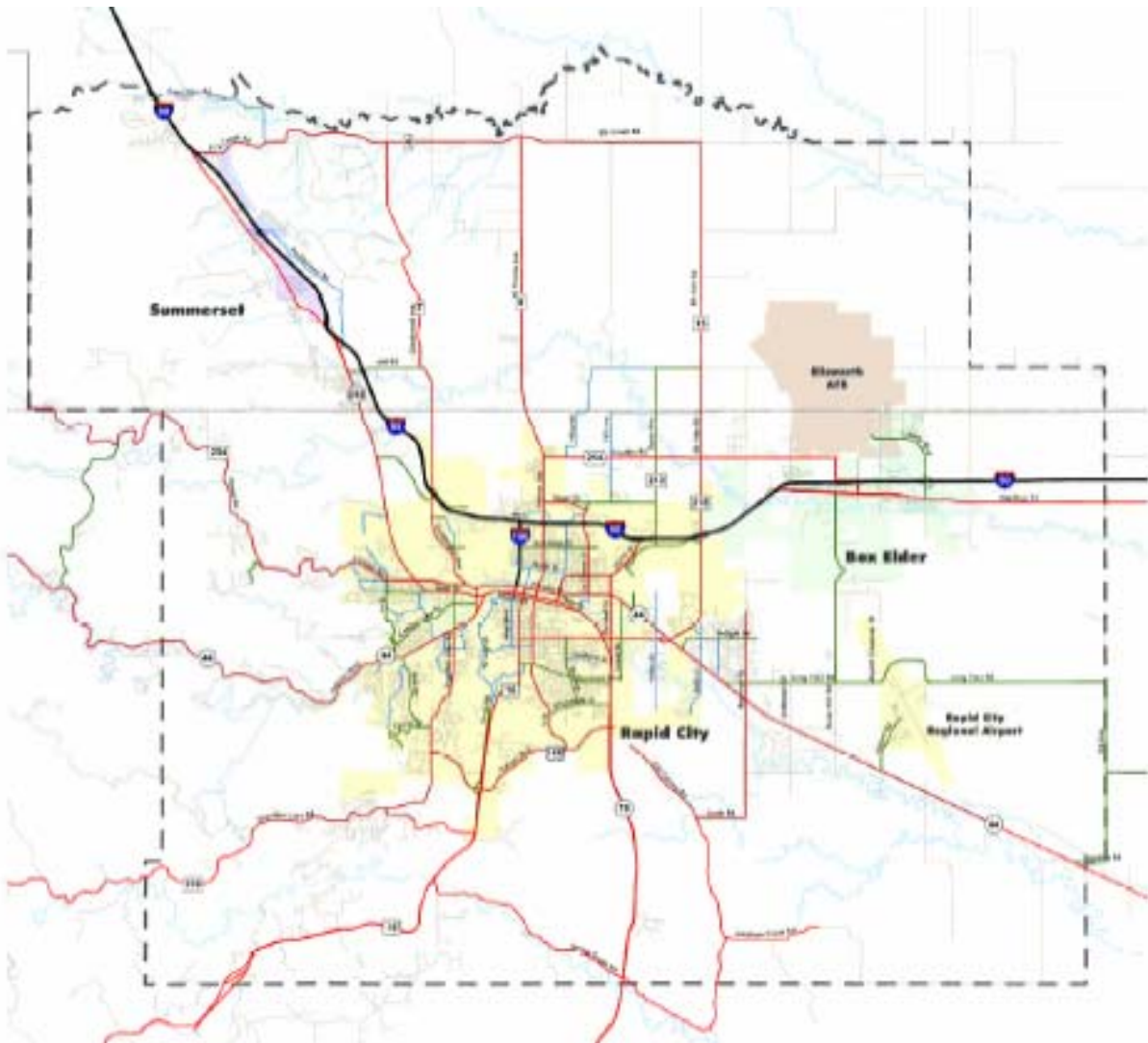


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1. Introduction

The Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was created in 1977 as an advisory body to coordinate transportation planning in the Rapid City area. As the designated metropolitan planning organization for the area, the Metropolitan Planning Organization carries out various requirements mandated by the United States Department of Transportation. The Metropolitan Planning Organization boundary includes the City of Rapid City, the City of Box Elder, the City of Summerset, Ellsworth Air Force Base, a portion of Pennington County, and a portion of Meade County, including the unincorporated areas of Black Hawk.

This report documents the actions to be carried out by the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to ensure that opportunities exist for the public to be involved in transportation planning activities, pursuant to Title 23 CFR 450.210 of Statewide Planning; Metropolitan Planning and Criteria and Procedures for Determining Conformity to State or Federal Implementation Plans of Transportation Plans, Programs, and Projects; and Statewide Transportation Planning Rules.

The report also serves as the statement of transportation public participation policies adopted by the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. Participation of the public in transportation planning activities is vitally important to the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. The emphasis of the adopted policies in this report is on regional system planning products regularly produced in the transportation planning process. Specific project-level public participation procedures and practices are defined by implementing agencies. Only the relationship of regional participation processes to project planning is included here.

2. Participation Policy

A. Federal Mandates

1) General Requirements Under SAFETEA-LU

Federal regulations require a public participation component for the metropolitan transportation planning process. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was signed into law in 2005. The Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization implements SAFETEA-LU through plans and programs that consider all modes of transportation, which are “Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive to the degree appropriate.” [SEC. 1203(a)(4)]. In addition to the “3C” process listed above, SAFETEA-LU emphasizes the broadening of public participation to include stakeholders who have not been involved previously. Transportation planning under SAFETEA-LU must be performed in conjunction with state and local officials, transit operators and the public. Further, Metropolitan Planning Organizations are responsible for conducting a locally developed public participation process as required by the Joint Federal

Highway Administration (FHWA)/ Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Planning Rule (23 CFR part 450, 49 CFR part 613). The metropolitan planning process must “include a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans” and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) [23 CFR part 450.316(b)(1)].

Coordination with other government agencies which are affected by transportation is important. Title 23 Part 450.316 also requires the Metropolitan Planning Organizations to appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the planning process, in particular, the development of long-range transportation plans and Transportation Improvement Programs. The Rapid City Metropolitan Planning Organization will coordinate with the South Dakota Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, State Historic Preservation Office, United States Corps of Engineers, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, South Dakota Environment and Natural Resource Agency and the United States Forest Service in developing its plans and programs. These “Resource Agencies” are valuable in identifying environmental, social and historical obstacles early in the planning process. Identifying potential obstacles early can save valuable time and money for planned transportation investments. These agencies will also be counted on for transportation studies where their area of expertise is needed to identify and/or mitigate potential obstacles.

The United State Forest Service has a major role for access into the Black Hills from the Rapid City area. Coordination of planned infrastructure both inside of and extending from the Rapid City urban area into the Black Hills is important to the region. The Metropolitan Planning Organization will include the United States Forest Service in the development of long-range transportation plans to ensure cohesion of the transportation system. The Forest Service is included on the main distribution list of the Metropolitan Planning Organization for coordination of documents regularly produced by the organization.

Additional Metropolitan Planning Organization public participation requirements and criteria are specified in *Appendix A, Federal Regulation on MPO Public Participation Process*.

2) Requirement Addressing Low-Income Communities and Minority Communities

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that “no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance” [42 USC 2000d]. Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations, was signed by President Clinton on Feb. 11, 1994 and published in the Feb. 16, 1994 Federal Register, Vol. 59, No. 32. The Executive

Order and accompanying memorandum reinforced the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that focus federal attention on the environmental and human health condition in minority and low-income communities. Together these two laws promote non-discrimination in federal programs affecting human health and the environment, and provide minority and low income communities access to public information and an opportunity to participate in matters relating to transportation and the environment.

The Executive Order is oriented not only toward project level decision-making in the engineering and design phases for projects, but also toward long-range and project programming activities. Metropolitan Planning Organization self certification reviews conducted by the FHWA and FTA in metropolitan areas stress the public participation efforts within potential environmental justice communities.

Through the regional planning process, the Metropolitan Planning Organization and partner agencies will thoroughly analyze the three fundamental environmental justice principles. The principles are:

- To avoid, minimize or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects of programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low-income populations;
- To ensure full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process; and
- To prevent the denial of, reduction of, or significant delay in the receipt of transportation benefits by minority and low-income populations.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization's public participation methods to address the full and fair participation of all populations are described in *Chapter 3: Opportunities for Public Participation*.

3) Requirements Addressing Populations with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires involving persons with disabilities in the development and improvement of transportation services. Planners, engineers, and builders must provide access for the disabled at sidewalks and ramps, street crossings, and in parking or transit access facilities. Persons with disabilities must also be able to access the sites where public participation activities occur as well as the information presented.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization's public participation methods to address the Americans with Disabilities Act are described in *Chapter 3: Opportunities for Public Participation*.

B. Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Participation Policy

Though the meaningful engagement of diverse interests may be challenging at times, transportation decisions are ultimately more responsive to local needs as a result of the

public participation process. Public participation is vital to the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. It provides the Metropolitan Planning Organization with the broadest spectrum of relevant, available information prior to its decision-making, and it provides the public an opportunity to raise concerns that can be considered with discussion of technical, political and economic issues. The Metropolitan Planning Organization welcomes the early and continued participation of the public in developing the agency's regional policies and plans. The Metropolitan Planning Organization seeks to establish a process that encourages public reflection, reaction and discussion of the wide-ranging issues with which the Metropolitan Planning Organization and public are involved.

Of particular importance is the identification of audiences which would be affected by or have a business or other affinity with the issues under consideration. Inclusive participation and sharing of views and concerns is encouraged. In this context, minority views include those whose perspectives may not be fully reflected by larger segments of the public. It is the intent of the Metropolitan Planning Organization to actively solicit comments and engage the interests of the public through the participation process. It is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Planning Organization to balance the public's needs and desires with the Metropolitan Planning Organization's responsibilities and visions for the future of the region.

Effective public input requires reasonable access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and open meetings. The following policies support public involvement in the planning activities for the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

- 1) All Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization public documents shall be available at the Rapid City Growth Management Department offices at 300 Sixth Street, Rapid City, South Dakota, 57701, during normal business hours (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday) for review, duplication, or purchase at a nominal cost. (See Appendix B for details.) These documents are also available and on-line at www.rcgov.org/planning/transplanninghomepage.htm.
- 2) Notification of all public meetings of the Executive Policy Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and Citizens Advisory Committee, and other special public meetings shall be in accordance with the South Dakota Open Meeting Laws, which states:
 - i. All public bodies shall provide public notice, with proposed agenda, at least twenty-four hours prior to any meeting, by posting a copy of the notice, visible to the public, at the principal office of the public body holding the meeting, and for special or rescheduled meetings, delivering, in person, by mail or by telephone, the information in the notice to members of the local news media who have requested notice. For special or rescheduled meetings, all public bodies shall also comply with the public notice provisions of this section for

regular meetings to the extent that circumstances permit. A violation of this section is a Class 2 misdemeanor. (SDCL § 1-25-1.1)

- 3) The Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization shall provide the Rapid City Finance Office, the Pennington County Commission Office, the Box Elder Finance Office, the Pennington County Auditor's Office and the Meade County Auditor's Office with a copy of the Executive Policy Committee agenda by regular mail or electronic mail at least seven (7) days prior to all regular meetings and at least twenty four (24) hours prior to special meetings, for posting in a prominent location in each agency's principal office. In the event that an emergency meeting of the Executive Policy Committee is called, notice of the meeting will be posted as circumstances permit.
- 4) A Public Participation Project Plan Worksheet will be developed for all transportation products for the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and shall provide and identify opportunities for public involvement at key decision points (See Appendix C). Metropolitan Planning Organization committee members are encouraged to review each Public Participation Project Plan, but the Metropolitan Planning Organization is not required to approve the Public Participation Project Plan worksheets.
- 5) Upon request, the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization shall support public involvement efforts of the State and local governments with regard to transportation planning activities.

C. Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Participation Goals

The fundamental goal of public participation is to assure that the decisions regarding a proposed plan or project are made only after the public is aware of and has had the opportunity to comment on the proposal. Transportation planning decision-makers must consider concerns of all the publics and users who may be affected by a proposed project. Specific goals of the public participation process are:

Goal 1: Educate and Present Information

The Metropolitan Planning Organization is responsible for providing timely and adequate information to the public. Metropolitan Planning Organization staff shall educate and present information about the regional planning process, including the sources of funding, data on transportation system performance, and impacts of regional planning decisions. Metropolitan Planning Organization staff shall inform the public about the transportation planning process as well as the committee structure of the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Metropolitan Planning Organization staff shall explain the specific tasks and goals of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, and indicate which related tasks that are not in the Metropolitan Planning Organization's authority to perform. This information shall be presented in non-technical terms so the public can readily understand and process this information.

Goal 2: Solicit Public Input

The Metropolitan Planning Organization shall actively seek out input and participation from a wide variety of individuals, groups and organizations affected by the transportation system to identify transportation related needs, desires, issues and concerns. Public participation will be sought continuously throughout transportation planning processes. Efforts will be specifically targeted at the beginning of planning efforts, at key decision points while there is ample opportunity to affect decisions, and when final product drafts are issued. The Metropolitan Planning Organization's Executive Policy Committee and Technical Coordinating Committee members also have direct contact with the public via the community that they represent and should reflect their concerns to Metropolitan Planning Organization staff. Metropolitan Planning Organization staff will also monitor public input received through project development efforts, corridor studies and other planning activities.

Goal 3: Facilitate Information Flow Between the Public and Decision-Makers

Metropolitan Planning Organization staff are responsible for compiling public issues, comments and concerns into complete and concise documents for presentation to the decision-makers. The Metropolitan Planning Organization staff shall also schedule and organize meetings where the public can present concerns to the staff or Metropolitan Planning Organization committees.

Goal 4: Consider Public Concerns in Decision-Making

The Metropolitan Planning Organization shall consider public concerns presented to them by the Metropolitan Planning Organization staff and those presented by individual persons at public meetings. Metropolitan Planning Organization staff shall consider public concerns as they prepare draft planning documents for review by the Metropolitan Planning Organization. The desired outcome in implementing these goals will be transportation plans, programs and projects which reflect local, regional and State priorities and needs, and which consider a range of transportation options and the overall social, economic, energy and environmental effect of transportation decisions.

3. Opportunities for Public Participation**A. Planning Process**

The Metropolitan Planning Organization will take a proactive approach to provide an opportunity for the public to be involved early and with a continuing involvement in all phases of the planning process. Extensive public notice will be undertaken of public information meetings and hearings with access to information also defined. Prior to the beginning of the public participation process for each transportation product, a list of names and addresses of citizens, organizations and resource agencies will be developed that will be contacted on a continued basis to serve as a base of interested parties for input and comment. This contact list will be continually updated as additional citizens attend the informational public meetings and make comments. The list is not

intended to be fully encompassing, but expanded through the public informational meetings and comment process.

Public Meetings. Public information meetings will be held at various Rapid City area locations to inform the public of the planning process and to solicit ideas, input and feedback. Public hearings and public information meetings will be held at locations accessible to and at times convenient to minority and disabled residents. The intent of holding public informational meetings at diversified locations is to solicit broad public comments.

Notice of public hearings and public informational meetings will be given in accordance with and as listed below. A reasonable attempt will be made to notify organizations representing minority and disabled people and a request made that they provide their members with meeting notice and information.

Special arrangements will be made to accommodate persons with disabilities, low income, and people who do not speak English. For those without transportation and the disabled, the Metropolitan Planning Organization may provide free transportation via public transit to the meetings. Interpreters will be provided to accommodate Spanish-speaking individuals.

Public Notice. Official notification of meetings, hearings or other significant events will be published in a newspaper of general circulation in Rapid City at least seven (7) days prior for both public hearings and public meetings, and shall include an explanation of the content, along with the date, time and the place of the meeting. The official notice will be published in the legal section of the newspaper.

Public Comment Procedures. Public comments on all transportation related issues are welcome during meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee, Technical Coordinating Committee and Executive Policy Committee. Public comments shall be received according to the following procedures.

Public Input Agenda Item. Each of the transportation planning committees shall include on its agenda an item entitled "Public Input." During this agenda item, any member of the public present wishing to address the committee on any matter not on the published agenda may do so. An individual's comment period shall be limited to 3 minutes. The appropriate staff will provide that member of the public with a response to their concern either during the meeting or in a reasonable amount of time following the meeting.

Specific Agenda Item Comments. After an agenda item is presented to a committee by staff, the Chair or Vice Chair shall afford any member of the public the opportunity to speak to the item pro or con. An individual's comment period shall be limited to 3 minutes. Following the comment period of the agenda item, the committee shall begin its discussion or action on the agenda item.

Formal Executive Policy Committee Public Hearings. Following the staff presentation of a particular agenda item, which has been properly public noticed as an official public hearing, the Executive Policy Committee Chair or Vice Chair shall open the public hearing and afford any member of the public present the opportunity to speak to the item pro or con. An individual's comment period shall be limited to 5 minutes. Following all public comments, the Executive Policy Committee Chair or Vice Chair shall close the public hearing and the Executive Policy Committee shall begin its discussion or action on the agenda item.

Written Comments. Members of the public who are unable to attend an official public hearing on a particular matter before the Executive Policy Committee are afforded the opportunity to submit their written comments for a specified period of time (7 days) following the public hearing.

Significant Comments. Staff must provide a summary, analysis, and report of how significant comments were addressed as part of the final Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvements Program.

Elected / Constituent Relationship. Comments into the local process may also be received through the elected/constituent relationship that exists between most of the EPC members and their constituents.

B. Metropolitan Planning Organization Committee Structure

Advisory committees will be formed to advise the Metropolitan Planning Organization Executive Policy Committee and staff in the preparation and review of public participation project plans, transportation plans, programs, and other related matters. There are three advisory committees:

Bike/Walk/Run Committee (BWR) – The Bike/Walk/Run Committee is a permanent advisory committee with members selected for their expertise or interest in creating and improving alternative transportation opportunities. The Committee represents the interests of area recreational and transit bicycle riders as well as the outdoor walking/running community and provides recommendations to the Metropolitan Planning Organization developing an efficient network of safe bikeways/walkways. The Committee is also committed to the education of bicycle riders and the motorists who share roadways with bicyclists on safe bicycling and driving practices. All committee members will have an equal voice in deliberations.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) – The Citizens Advisory Committee is a permanent advisory committee with members selected for their expertise, interest, or as an affected stakeholder. Examples are representatives of interest groups, transportation agencies, minorities, disabled, or representatives of geographical areas, such as neighborhood associations. All committee members will have an equal voice in deliberations.

1. All meetings are open to the public and the media.
2. All committee members and any interested member of the public will receive agendas and associated documentation by regular mail or electronic mail seven (7) days prior to all committee meetings.
3. Committee members may propose topics for future meetings.
4. The Citizens Advisory Committee is to review proposed transportation plans and issues under the purview of the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and to report its comments and recommendation to the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Executive Policy Committee.
5. Generally, the Citizens Advisory Committee meets bimonthly beginning in January of each calendar year.

Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) – The Technical Coordinating Committee is a permanent committee that is composed of technical, planning and/or managerial staff representatives from each participating Metropolitan Planning Organization agency. The Federal Highway Administration has one non-voting member.

1. All meetings, except those meetings or portions of meetings pertaining to consultant selection, are open to the general public.
2. All committee members and any interested member of the public will receive agendas and associated documentation by regular mail or electronic mail seven (7) days prior to all committee meetings.
3. Committee members may propose topics for future meetings.
4. The Technical Coordinating Committee is to review proposed transportation plans and issues under the purview of the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and to report its comments and recommendation to the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Executive Policy Committee.
5. Generally, the Technical Coordinating Committee meets bimonthly beginning in January of each calendar year.

Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization-Staff – Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization staff supports the Bike/Walk/Run Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee, Technical Coordinating Committee and the Executive Policy Committee by:

1. Scheduling, attending and documenting meetings.
2. Providing meeting notices and agendas to all members and anyone interested in receiving a copy.
3. Coordinating with the local media (television stations and newspapers) to advertise meeting information.
4. Advertising meetings of the major planning activities in a newspaper of general circulation.
5. Providing meeting information packets to the committees.
6. Periodically assessing the Bike/Walk/Run Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee, Technical Coordinating Committee and the Executive Policy

- Committee meeting times for the most convenient times for the member organizations.
7. Periodically polling non-members for their interest in the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization planning activities.
 8. Maintaining and updating membership, mailing lists, and attendance records.
 9. Making materials, such as planning/programming documents, studies, and reports, available to the Citizens Advisory Committee and the public for review or copy upon request. (The public may borrow certain documents to make copies or the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will charge a nominal fee for the copies.)
 10. Responding to questions and comments, if formally requested to do so.

Executive Policy Committee (EPC) – The Metropolitan Planning Organization Executive Policy Committee will hold the final public meeting on the transportation plans. Notice of the time and place of the public meeting will be provided in accordance with the notification requirements listed below. The adoption of transportation and related plans by the Executive Policy Committee occur at the public meeting.

1. All meetings, except those meetings or portions of meetings pertaining to personnel matters or consultant selection, are open to the general public.
2. Advance notice of meetings and agendas shall be sent by regular mail or electronic mail seven (7) days in advance of regular meetings and at least twenty four (24) hours prior to special meetings to any interested members of the public and news media as requested.
3. Notices of decision-making meetings are advertised in a newspaper of general circulation.
4. The receipt and the disposition of formal communications from the Citizens Advisory Committee shall be noted at the Executive Policy Committee meetings and reflected in the Executive Policy Committee meeting minutes.
5. All members of the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Executive Policy Committee are included on the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization mailing list.
6. Should circumstances warrant that the Executive Policy Committee conduct a regular or special meeting by teleconference, the following actions will be conducted (note that the statutory definition of teleconference is any information exchanged by audio or video medium):
 - a. Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization staff will provide the same public notice of any teleconference meetings as is required under SDCL § 1-25-1.1.
 - b. Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization staff will provide a place for the public to participate in the meeting by speakerphone.
 - c. Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization staff will ensure that all votes taken during a teleconference meeting of the Executive Policy Committee are roll call votes.

C. Key Planning Products and Plans

The metropolitan transportation planning process's need for products and plans is ever present as the region's population grows and the transportation network expands. These plans and products help guide the continued development of the transportation network and the transportation planning process. Although many products and plans are required before receiving federal transportation funds, these products and plans provide more than just required documentation. The products and plans provide the guidelines and necessary analysis of transportation issues in the metropolitan transportation planning area. The framework described in *Table 1* identifies types of planning products, the most appropriate agency responsible for the public participation activity, and the methodologies for obtaining public participation. Additional methods for public input may also be used if needed.

1) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The Long Range Transportation Plan is the federally mandated, 20 year transportation plan for the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization region. It represents the vision for a multimodal transportation system that will serve the region through the defined period. It also identifies transportation improvement projects of various travel modes in a plan that is financially constrained for the next 20 years given expected levels of funding. The Long Range Transportation Plan reflects proposals throughout the entire region. SAFETEA-LU requires that the Transportation Plan be updated at least every five years. Opportunities for public and resource agency participation are provided around key decision points in the planning process. Resource agencies include, but are not limited to, the South Dakota Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, State Historic Preservation Office, United States Corps of Engineers, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, South Dakota Environment and Natural Resource Agency and the United States Forest Service.

2) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is a document that programs transportation improvements to be funded in the region over a five-year period. Local governments, SDDOT, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, and other regional stakeholders propose projects to be included in the TIP. Early public input should be obtained by sponsor agencies before submitting projects for inclusion in the TIP. The draft TIP document is the subject of a public meeting.

3) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) describes all metropolitan transportation planning and transportation-related land use and air quality planning activities facing the Metropolitan Planning Organization region for a year planning period. The UPWP identifies tasks that will be accomplished using federal transportation planning funds. The activities of the annual UPWP, includes descriptions of planning tasks to be performed and identifies funding sources and descriptions of other major transportation planning activities by

partner agencies and local governments. Public and agency input is encouraged during the development and approval of the Unified Planning Work Program.

4) Operations Plan

The purpose of the Operations Plan is to provide a management document designed to serve as a descriptive guide relating to how the transportation planning process is conducted within the metropolitan transportation planning area. This descriptive guide provides a synopsis of each transportation related product or plan, which participants of the transportation process are involved in its development, and the process of recommendation, adoption, and acceptance of the particular products or plans by the transportation committees.

5) Special Studies

Special studies are local in concern yet often have impacts on larger areas. Such studies normally have very extensive public outreach and input efforts that attract a significant number of participants. The agency charged with conducting the specific study is responsible for conducting public participation activities. Metropolitan Planning Organization staff are actively involved and monitor the public participation activities in these studies to help identify broad issues, concerns, desires, etc. that may be relevant to regional planning. Opportunities to integrate Metropolitan Planning Organization public outreach efforts with corridor studies are also pursued.

6) Environmental Assessments (EA)

An Environmental Assessment is completed when the significance of environmental impacts are unknown. An Environmental Assessment provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Such studies normally have very extensive public outreach and input efforts that attract a significant number of participants. The agency charged with conducting the specific study is responsible for conducting public participation activities and coordination with "Resource Agencies". Metropolitan Planning Organization staff are actively involved and monitor the public participation activities in these studies to help identify broad issues, concerns, desires, etc. that may be relevant to regional planning. Opportunities to integrate Metropolitan Planning Organization public outreach efforts with corridor studies are also pursued.

Table 1
 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION METHODS √ Planned * Encouraged

NOTIFICATION AND PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES	LRTP	TIP	UPWP	PARTICIPATION PLAN	OPERATIONS PLAN	SPECIAL STUDIES	EA
Newspaper Advertisements	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Web Site	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Articles	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Press Release	√	*	√	*	√	√	*
Mass Mailing	√	√	√	*	√	√	
Flyers	√		√	*	√	√	
TV/Radio	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Public Service Announcements	√	√	√	*	√	√	√
Interviews	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Community Forums	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Public Meetings	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Public Hearings	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Group Presentations	√	*	√	*	√	√	
Advisory Committee	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

D. Planning Project Procedures

The process and implementation of a plan's adoption or acceptance is a critical element in the overall transportation planning process. Without an established guideline to follow, products produced by or for the Metropolitan Planning Organization will be meaningless in terms of process, review, and function. Thus, a description of the public meeting process and committee review follows. This process will be followed for the review of transportation products and plans for those committees involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

Committee review and approval of metropolitan transportation planning products follows specific procedures that include review by each of the three transportation planning committees, with final approval by the Executive Policy Committee (EPC).

Federally Required Transportation Planning Products. The Metropolitan Planning Organization process will be coordinated with the Statewide Planning Public Involvement process as required by CFR 450.316(a)(1)(ix). Approval of planning products required in the metropolitan transportation planning process can usually be accomplished with a minimum of two transportation planning committee meetings. This approval requires publication of public notices, the Executive Policy Committee conducts formal public meetings, and the committee review process includes public comment periods. The products subject to this approval procedure include:

- Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Long Range Transportation Plan Updates
- Metropolitan Planning Organization Operations Plan
- Metropolitan Planning Organization Operations Plan Updates
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Air Quality Certification
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Bikeway/Walkway Plan
- Bikeway/Walkway Plan Updates
- Participation Plan Updates

The approval procedure begins when both the Citizens Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinating Committee review the initial draft of the particular product. The Citizens Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinating Committee discuss separately the draft, and both committees provide any comments regarding the initial draft to staff.

Next, the Executive Policy Committee reviews the initial draft of the particular product. During its review, staff provides the Executive Policy Committee with all previous comments from the Citizens Advisory Committee, Technical Coordinating Committee and the public. The Executive Policy Committee reviews the draft and submits comments to staff regarding the initial draft. After the Executive Policy Committee approves the initial draft, public comments are encouraged for forty five (45) days for the Participation Plan and fourteen (14) days for all other products.

After committee review of the product's initial draft, staff develops the final draft, taking into consideration all public and committee comments received on the product.

The next step in the approval procedure begins with review of the final draft of the product by the Citizens Advisory Committee, where all changes made to the product since the initial draft are discussed by staff. Following its review, the Citizens Advisory Committee makes a recommendation to the Technical Coordinating Committee.

Next, the Technical Coordinating Committee reviews the final draft and the Citizens Advisory Committee recommendations. The Technical Coordinating Committee discusses the final draft, notes the Citizens Advisory Committee's recommendations, and forwards a recommendation to the Executive Policy Committee.

Finally, staff presents the final draft of the product to the Executive Policy Committee. The Executive Policy Committee conducts a public meeting,, discusses all changes since the initial draft, and notes both the Citizens Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinating Committee recommendations. Following its review, the Executive Policy Committee then votes to either approve, modify, or reject the final draft product. A vote by the Executive Policy Committee approving the product finishes the approval process; however, a vote to modify or reject the product would require modifications to the product and require additional committee review prior to final approval.

Approval Procedure for Other Process Products. Several other products may require approval action by the Executive Policy Committee. The approval process for these products, however, does not require public notices, formal public hearings or comment periods. A product amendment requiring Executive Policy Committee action may be accomplished with the simple majority vote of this committee. These products may include the following items:

- Transportation Improvement Program Amendments
- Unified Planning Work Program Amendments
- Transit Development Program
- Special Studies

With the exception of actions taken at special meetings of the Executive Policy Committee, the approval process for these products begins with review by the Citizens Advisory Committee, who discusses the product and provides any comments to staff. Following its review, the Citizens Advisory Committee will make a recommendation to the Technical Coordinating Committee.

Next, the Technical Coordinating Committee reviews the product. The Technical Coordinating Committee discusses the product and provides any comments to staff. Following its review, the Technical Coordinating Committee makes a recommendation to the Executive Policy Committee.

Finally, the Executive Policy Committee reviews the product. The Executive Policy Committee is informed of any comments from the other committees as well as their recommendations. Following its review and discussion, the Executive Policy Committee then votes to either accept, approve, modify or reject the product. A vote by the Executive Policy Committee approving the product completes the process; however, a vote to modify or reject the product would require the process to be repeated. If modifications are significant enough which

would result in a change on operations of facilities, costs, or impact on a particular population, then the public process will need to be repeated as identified in 23 CFR 450.316(1)(vii) of the Federal Register.

Informational Products. Several additional products, used by the local transportation planning process and committees in decision-making, are produced throughout the year by staff. These products are presented to the committees for their information and do not require approval action. The public is also invited to provide input on any or all of these products. These products include:

- Annual Report
- Socio-Economic Report
- Pedestrian & Bike Accident Report
- General Inventories Report
- Traffic Volume Counts Report
- Accident Statistics and Analysis Report
- Street Inventory Report
- Transportation System Management Efficiency Report
- Construction Project Updates
- Residential Land Use Report
- Transportation Enhancement Grant Applications

Environmental Assessments. Environmental assessments are completed in conjunction with some special projects requiring federal funding. These assessments will distinguish environmental factors that may have an impact on certain project areas. Environmental assessments will follow the procedures for public meeting notices listed below.

1. The draft environmental assessment may be released to the public after the Federal Highway Administration/South Dakota Department of Transportation approves it for public availability. This notice of availability of the draft environmental assessment is published fifteen (15) days prior to any public meeting.
2. Two public meeting notices will be published in a newspaper of general circulation in Rapid City. The first notice is posted fourteen days (14) prior to the meeting. The second notice is posted seven (7) days prior to the meeting. All affected property owners shall be notified by regular first-class mail at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.
3. The public meeting will allow the public an opportunity to submit both written or oral comments.
4. After the public meeting, public comments are encouraged for an additional thirty (30) days. During this thirty-day period, the Metropolitan Planning Organization committees, as well as any other City or county agency may review and approve the Environmental Assessment.

5. A written summary and corresponding documentation from all meetings, including the public meeting for the Environmental Assessment, is provided to the South Dakota Department of Transportation.
6. The South Dakota Department of Transportation reviews the documentation and forwards it to the Federal Highway Administration.
7. The Federal Highway Administration approves the Final Environmental Assessment. If no significant impacts are identified, FHWA forwards the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to the Metropolitan Planning Organization or the South Dakota Department of Transportation.

E. Participation Methods

Various techniques will selectively be used to provide information and solicit public comment. Some examples of public participation activities are briefly described below.

Informational Brochures or Newsletters - Informational brochures and newsletters are at times developed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization to facilitate communication between the regional community and the program staff. This helps to ensure that information regarding current activities is shared in a timely and appropriate manner throughout the region.

Mailing Lists - Mailing list databases help an agency organize and update its public communications. Lists may include telephone numbers, fax numbers and/or email addresses to help contact the public, "Resource Agencies", groups interested in economic development, airport operations and the movement of freight.. Using mailing lists, the Metropolitan Planning Organization reaches target audiences with announcements of upcoming events, meeting invitations, newsletters, summary reports and other information about its activities. The Metropolitan Planning Organization updates its mailing list at the start of a major planning process. The Metropolitan Planning Organization may also create a targeted mailing list for a survey. The Metropolitan Planning Organization master mailing list includes about 200 people and organizations.

Media Strategies - Media strategies inform the public about projects and programs through newspapers, radio, television and videos, posters and variable message signs, mass mailings of brochures or newsletters, and distribution of fliers. Promotional brochures or fliers can be used in direct mail campaigns or through a full-size newspaper supplement explaining the Long Range Transportation Plan. The Metropolitan Planning Organization may prepare press releases and media packets at the 'kick off' of the planning process of such major endeavors as the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan or other planning processes.

Strategies to Engage Under-represented Populations - Metropolitan Planning Organization staff are proactive regarding public outreach to potential low-income communities and minority communities. Previously used methods to obtain input

include presentations, recruitment of advocates, participation on studies, targeted mailings and surveys.

Piggybacking on Other Efforts - Metropolitan Planning Organization staff from time to time set up public outreach displays and materials on specific planning projects at public meetings or other community events.

Public Hearings - Public hearings are more formal than a public meeting and are based on legal requirements. A public hearing gathers community comments and positions from all interested parties for public record and input into decisions. The federal government for many transportation documents and projects requires public hearings. Additional hearings may be held during the transportation planning process at the discretion of the sponsoring organization. Public notices in a general circulation newspaper cite the time, date and place of a hearing. Subject documents must be available to the public when notice of a hearing is given. All Metropolitan Planning Organization-hosted public hearings are wheelchair accessible.

Public Interest Forums / Meetings / Workshops - Public forums and meetings disseminate information and provide a setting for public discussion, and gather feedback from the community. They are often hosted at more than one key point in the process to develop specific planning documents. They are often tailored to specific issues or community groups and may be informal or formal. Such forums may include the following: poster sessions, open houses / interactions periods, activities to engage public input, formal presentations, question and answer formats, brainstorming sessions, small break-out groups, and charettes. The Metropolitan Planning Organization will address the Americans with Disabilities Act by ensuring that all Metropolitan Planning Organization-hosted public forums and meetings are wheelchair accessible.

Speakers Bureau - Metropolitan Planning Organization staff routinely accept invitations from local organizations and municipal boards to come and speak on regional planning issues or specific planning projects.

Surveys and Questionnaires - The Metropolitan Planning Organization uses surveys to gather information for major updates to the Long Range Transportation Plan and for other major planning projects. The method of data collection varies by project, but included in-person interviews, surveys, and web-based questionnaires.

Visualization Techniques - This is a new requirement of SAFETEA-LU designed to better convey to the public, through visual media, information important in the transportation planning process. This might include regional maps showing modeled projections of how alternative land use policies scenarios will impact development and the transportation system in twenty years. It could also include simpler techniques such as renderings or photo simulations to show

a widened roadway or bridge in context; flow charts to clearly depict the transportation planning process; or graphs depicting project funding distribution.

Web Site - Improvements will be made continually to the Metropolitan Planning Organization web site to keep the public informed about planning activities and to offer another way to provide comments. Materials will be consolidated on the Metropolitan Planning Organization website to make it a comprehensive source including a calendar of meetings, agendas and meeting minutes, links to a range of regional demographic, economic, and traffic data and downloadable versions of planning documents, and GIS content.

Work Groups - These groups are assigned a specific task, with a time limit for reaching a conclusion or producing a draft document, subject to ratification by official decision-makers. The membership of these groups often includes local people or representatives from interest groups, appointed by elected officials or agency executives.

4. Review of Participation Process

Metropolitan Planning Organization's serving Census-defined Urbanized Areas with populations over 200,000 are required to undergo review and certification every four years by FHWA/ FTA to ensure compliance with Federal requirements. To date the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization has not been subject to this scheduled review as our Urbanized Area is below the 200,000 threshold. However, the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization does undertake a biennial self-certification review. The public participation processes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization are an important part of this review. As part of the self-certification, the MPO will biennially review the public participation process, considering the following items:

- What was the success of specific strategies in attracting the public and associated comments?
- What level of public input was received for various planning products?
- Was public input considered by decision-makers?
- Should any new strategies or adjustments be considered in the following year?
- Are any changes or amendments needed?

For good reason Federal regulations require a public participation component for the metropolitan transportation planning process. Only through public, local government and resource agency input can the broadest spectrum of relevant, available information be considered for decisions. The Rapid City Public Participation Plan provides opportunities to tap into this knowledge when discussing technical, political and economic issues. A process that encourages public reflection, reaction and discussion of the wide-range of transportation issues for the area is desired. Only through meaningful engagement of diverse interests in transportation decisions will local needs be addressed.

APPENDIX A**TITLE 23 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, 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 made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public participation efforts;
 - (ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public participation and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and

- (x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.
 - (2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.
 - (3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.
- (b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, metropolitan 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 non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and
 - (3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 204.
- (c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
- (d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
- (e) MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under §450.314.

TITLE 49 PART 613 Planning Assistance and Standards

Subpart A—Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming
613.100 Metropolitan transportation planning and programming.

The regulations in 23 CFR 450, subpart C, shall be followed in complying with the requirements of this subpart. The definitions in 23 CFR 450, subpart A, shall apply. [72 FR 7285, Feb. 14, 2007]

Subpart B—Statewide Transportation Planning and Programming

613.200 Statewide transportation planning and programming.

The regulations in 23 CFR 450, subpart B, shall be followed in complying with the requirements of this subpart. The definitions in 23 CFR 450, subpart A, shall apply. [72 FR 7285, Feb. 14, 2007]

Subpart C—Coordination of Federal and Federally Assisted Programs and Projects

613.300 Coordination of Federal and federally assisted programs and projects.

The coordination of Federal and federally assisted programs and projects implementing OMB revised Circular No. A-95, which are set forth in 23 CFR Part 420, subpart C, are incorporated into this subpart. [41 FR 33443, Aug. 9, 1976]

23 USC 135 Statewide Transportation Planning

(a) General Requirements

(4) Process of development.— The process for developing the plans and programs shall provide for consideration of all modes of transportation and shall be continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive to the degree appropriate, based on the complexity of the transportation problems to be addressed.

(e) Long-Range Transportation Plan.—

(3) Participation by interested parties.— In developing the long-range transportation plan, the State shall—

(A) provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, freight shippers, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transit, providers of freight transportation services, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed plan; and

(f) State Transportation Improvement Program.—

(1) Development.—

(C) Participation by interested parties.— In developing the program, the Governor shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, freight shippers, private providers of transportation, providers of freight transportation services, representatives of users of public transit, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed program.

42 USC 2000d -Prohibition against exclusion from participation in, denial of benefits of, and discrimination under federally assisted programs on ground of race, color, or national origin.

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

23 USC 134 Metropolitan Planning

(g) Development of Long-Range Transportation Plan.—

(4) Participation by interested parties.— Before approving a long-range transportation plan, each metropolitan planning organization shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transit, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the long-range transportation plan, in a manner that the Secretary deems appropriate

(h) Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program.—

(1) Development.—

(B) Opportunity for comment.— In developing the program, the metropolitan planning organization, in cooperation with the State and any affected public transit operator, shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transit, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed program.

(4) Notice and comment.— Before approving a transportation improvement program, a metropolitan planning organization shall, in cooperation with the State and any affected public transit operator, provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transit, and other interested parties with reasonable notice of and an opportunity to comment on the proposed program.

APPENDIX B

**RAPID CITY AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
OFFICE POLICY REGARDING DUPLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF MEETING
MATERIALS**

1. Provide, free of charge, copies of all meeting materials (including the agenda, minutes, and other meeting materials) to the members of that specific committee. A staff assistant to a committee member may receive a set of meeting materials (full or partial), free of charge, if requested by said committee member. (All Executive Policy Committee members receive all Executive Policy Committee meeting materials; all Technical Coordinating Committee members receive Technical Coordinating Committee meeting materials, and all Citizens Advisory Committee members receive Citizens Advisory Committee materials).
2. Provide, free of charge, meeting agendas to all other persons requesting receipt by fax or mail.
3. Provide, free of charge, meeting minutes to all other persons requesting receipt by fax. If requested, other meeting materials can also be faxed.
4. Provide, at the rate of 25 cents per page, sheet, or fraction thereof plus postage, meeting minutes and/or materials to all other persons requesting receipt by mail.
5. All meeting materials are also available for public inspection at the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization office, Rapid City Growth Management, 300 Sixth Street, Rapid City, SD 57701, (605) 394-4120, between normal working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.).

APPENDIX C

**Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Public Participation Project Plan Worksheet**

Prior to developing any transportation product, Metropolitan Planning Organization staff should consider the following information when designing a specific public participation plan.

1. Determine the specific goals and objectives that public involvement is to accomplish.

2. Identify the public that either might be interested in participating or whose involvement is necessary in order to achieve the objectives.

3. Select a technique(s) for interacting with the public that will achieve the objectives.

4. Select suitable notification techniques for reaching the desired public with the desired information.

5. Conduct the appropriate involvement technique(s).

6. Determine how the techniques are to be evaluated.

7. Incorporate the results of the involvement into the plan, document, special study, or project.

Project: _____ Today's Date: _____ Staff: _____

APPENDIX D

Public Comment Sheet Example

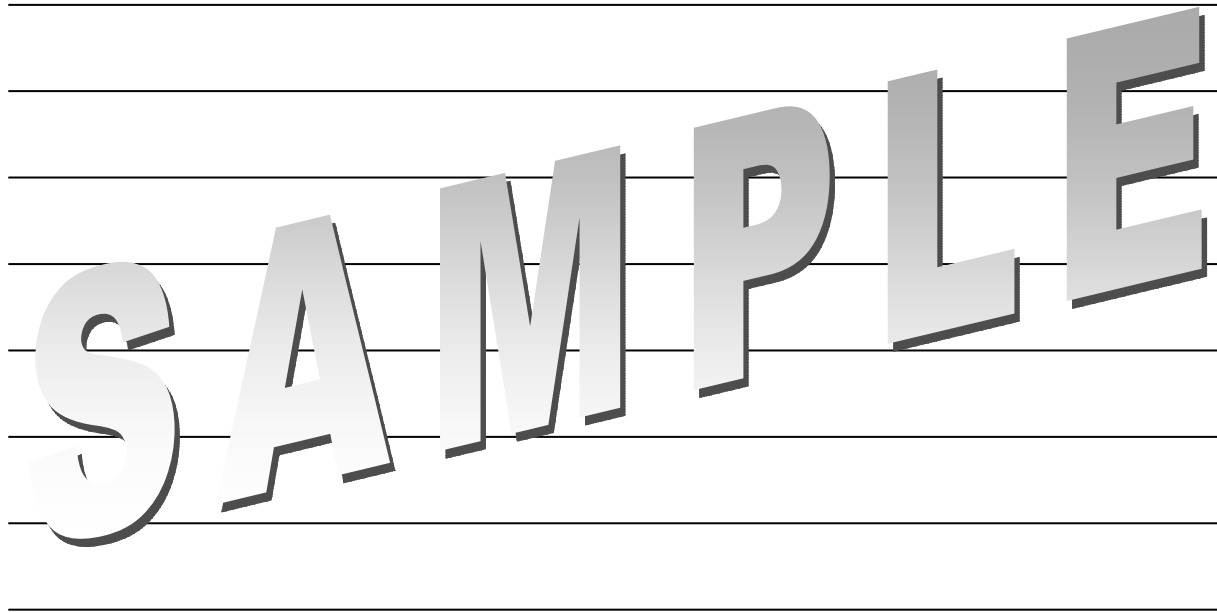
Elk Vale Neighborhood Area
Future Land Use Plan

Your suggestions and comments are important to the Elk Vale Neighborhood Area future Land Use Plan planning process. Please feel free to provide any comments you wish to make regarding the map. Some of the issues under review are the proposed land uses, road network, and bike path locations. Please send written comments by mail, email, fax or phone until March 13, 1999, and address your comments to:

Attn: Transportation Planning
Rapid City Growth Management
Department
300 Sixth Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

Phone: 394-4120

Fax: 394-6636
email transportationplanning@rcgov.org



[Optional]
Participant information: (Name) _____
(Address) _____
(Phone) _____



Needs
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postage

Transportation Planning
City of Rapid City
300 Sixth Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

