



## Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

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To: Resource Management Agencies; Economic Development Agencies; Land Use Agencies

Re: Interagency Consultation Process; Monday, May 3 Meeting

Dear Friend:

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) invites and encourages your agency or jurisdiction to participate in an active comparison and consultation process to evaluate potential impacts of proposed transportation projects overseen by our respective agencies. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the greater Lansing area (Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties), the TCRPC is charged with developing a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) consisting of all anticipated federally funded transportation projects proposed for the years 2011-2014. These project lists are developed through a cooperative process with transportation agencies and other local stakeholders, and are eventually brought to this body's board (TCRPC) for action. Projects were initially reviewed and prioritized through a planning process, and were given **preliminary approval** in February, 2010. These projects, identified by proposed funding program, may still be adjusted or augmented prior to final action on June 23, 2010. It is important that projects that increase or decrease roadway capacity (either new roads, or roads with reduced or added laneage) be consistent with TCRPC's Regional 2035 Transportation Plan projects, as they are subject to and consistent with air quality conformity provisions of the Clean Air Act. The approved preliminary list of projects proposed for the 2011-2014 TIP are included on the home page of this agency's website at [www.mitrpc.org](http://www.mitrpc.org). Also on the website are proposed transit capital projects, which have been given preliminary approval, and are also subject to TCRPC action in June. Attached for your reference is the TIP development schedule which includes various milestones in the TIP development process.

As an agency, TCRPC has always strived to be a strong advocate of the public participation process, but this consultation process is far more than just another opportunity to comment. Recent laws and federal regulations now require active comparison to plans, programs and projects developed by our agency to yours, and to a host of other new partners with a stake in the efficient functioning of the regional transportation system. This interagency consultation process is driven by regulations in USDOT's Metropolitan Transportation Planning Final Rule (23 CFR 450:316(b)) that explains the intent behind this expanded effort. In part, the requirements read as follows: *(b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the Metropolitan Planning Area (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:*

(Over)

- 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.*

**To implement these new requirements, we created an expanded list of consultation partners, which includes your agency. Your agency, along with our other new partners, is invited to an interagency consultation meeting to be held at 1:30 p.m. Monday, May 3 at the Ingham County Human Services Building, Conference Room A, 5303 S. Cedar Street in Lansing.** We will brief you on proposed Plan projects with changes in capacity, and the planning process that brought forth this list, which will eventually lead to inclusion in the 2011-2014 TIP. Your comments on the projects, particularly on how they might impact (negatively or positively) your agency's plans or projects would be helpful and is the basis for this meeting. In addition, it is just as important that you provide us with copies or inform us of your plans and projects in order for mutual impacts to be determined.

We are actively encouraging and requesting all our new consultation partners to participate in this meeting and the associated review and comparison process, which includes state, local and private agencies responsible for economic growth and development, environmental protection, airport operations, freight movement, land use management, natural resources, conservation, historic preservation and human service transportation providers. The intent of the effort is to foster an exchange of information and comparison of plans, maps and inventories developed by these agencies with our Transportation Improvement Program to assure compatibility. We would appreciate hearing from your agency by April 26. In the interest of good planning and regional coordination, our staff will be contacting these special resource agencies (identified earlier in this paragraph) in the following week, prior to May 3, in an effort to identify any issues of concern or commonality.

Specifically, we request that you provide us with a copy of your local plans, inventories, geographic information system (GIS) files or other information that you believe may be useful to planners and policy makers in the long range plan development process to assist us in this meeting. If you have electronic files that are better suited to viewing in a media format, we will strive to work with you as time permits to facilitate this exchange. It would behoove all our partners to review our projects which are linked to our agency's website at [www.mitcrpc.org](http://www.mitcrpc.org) in order to determine consistency.

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Action Requested: This request to actively exchange plans and coordinate on the planning process is going to various categories of recipients. The requested response is based on the type of agency you represent, with appropriate response as follows:

Resource Agencies: These agencies are specifically charged with oversight or management of some natural resource within the area, and are broadly identified by type in the second full paragraph of this page. Please provide any plans (electronically or in hard copy) pertinent to management of the applicable resource. In addition to reviewing the TIP project lists, you may wish to refer to TCRPC's recently developed Regional 2035 Transportation Plan, available on our website at [www.mitcrpc.org](http://www.mitcrpc.org).

Do any of your plans or proposed projects have a bearing on ours, or vice versa? **Please send us your latest plans and any relevant GIS files, if available.** We especially would like to know of any recent plans or management guides to facilitate the needed “active comparison.” Resource agencies should anticipate a phone call from our staff to facilitate dialogue on this objective.

Economic Development Agencies: These partners should also take a look at the projects listed on the [www.mitrpc.org](http://www.mitrpc.org) website and let us know if you anticipate significant impacts on proposed economic development initiatives within your jurisdiction. TCRPC staff will be comparing projects in the TIP to those in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document that our economic development staff maintains. The goal is to ensure consistency with your local economic development plans. **If you have them please send us copies and GIS files of your plans.**

Land Use Agencies: Jurisdictions with land use or zoning jurisdiction should similarly go to the [www.mitrpc.org](http://www.mitrpc.org) website and determine if any of your plans or projects might have a bearing on one another. TCRPC has digitized local future land use plan maps and zoning maps for all jurisdictions in the region. Copies are on our website’s home page which also shows all Regional 2035 Transportation Plan projects as an overlay at [www.mitrpc.org](http://www.mitrpc.org). These also are direct inputs into the Commission’s socio-demographic forecasts used to model current and future traffic, and in turn help to guide transportation project priorities. Please send us updated GIS files for any projects that may have a bearing on ours, and let us know of any concerns posed by our projects. Again, the goal is to ensure consistency between land use plans and transportation.

Additional Agencies or Interest Groups: TCRPC maintains an active process of seeking out less traditional partners in an attempt to assure that agencies and user groups we don’t regularly work with have an opportunity for input, and that their needs be considered in the planning process. Some examples of these less traditional partners include human service agencies, employees of transportation agencies, historic preservation agencies, freight interests and citizen advocates, among others. If you fall in one of these broad categories we welcome your comments on our TIP projects, and would like to have the opportunity to review any plans or policies you think might be relevant to our planning process.

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You may provide comments in writing to TCRPC (Attn: Steve Skinker). Comments provided prior to the May 3 interagency consultation meeting will be copied and made available for review at that meeting. Feel free to contact me or Paul Hamilton or Steve Skinker of my staff for further information at (517) 393-0342 or [sskinker@mitrpc.org](mailto:sskinker@mitrpc.org). Similarly, plans or GIS files should be sent to Steve Skinker.

We look forward to hearing from you and hopefully seeing you on Monday, May 3.

Sincerely,



Jon W. Coleman  
Executive Director

JWC/SS/mh