

# **FY 2015 East Central Intergovernmental Association Regional Planning Affiliation 8 Public Involvement Policy Plan**

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The ECIA RPA (Region 8) consists of local jurisdictions including:

Counties of:	Cities over 5,000:	Transit Systems:	50 Small Cities in:
Clinton County Delaware County Dubuque County Jackson County	Clinton, Dewitt Manchester  Maquoketa	Clinton MTA Great River Bend Region 8 RTA	Clinton County Delaware County Dubuque County Jackson County

## DISCLAIMER

The preparation of this report was financed in part through a federal grant by the Federal Highway Administration under the provision of the 1964 Federal-Aid Highway Act, as amended

## CAVEAT

THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A STANDARD, SPECIFICATION, OR REGULATION.

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## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT POLICY

## **DUBUQUE METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

The Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA 8) is designated as a four-county region excluding the Dubuque Metropolitan Area (MPO.) The RPA 8 region encompasses the counties of Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque and Jackson, which are located in the eastern-central portion of the State of Iowa. Three of the counties, Dubuque, Jackson and Clinton, are bordered on the eastern edges by the Mississippi River. Within this region, the RPA 8 services 57 cities and all of the rural areas in all of their transportation needs. The sizes of the cities range from Durango's 24 in population to Clinton's 26,875, giving the RPA 8 a vast set of circumstances for which to work with.

### **I: PURPOSE**

RPA 8 *Public Involvement Policy (PIP)* was developed due to a need for proactive citizen involvement in the *Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)* and all other planning activities conducted by RPA 8. The public involvement process will provide the following:

- Compete and accurate information to the public
- Timely notices of public hearings
- Complete access to all key decisions made at public hearings
- Continuing involvement of the public

This PIP is developed in hopes that it will promote and encourage citizen involvement in the decision making process. It is the obligation and responsibility of RPA 8 to provide information and consider public input in decision making as prescribed by the **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)**.

In worst case scenarios, public participation does not occur until after the community becomes aware of an unpopular policy decision. In such a case citizen involvement mobilized to overturn or amend a decision that had already been made. Late citizen involvement prolongs the planning process and ultimately costs more in terms of resources and staff time. Public involvement in decision making process at an early stage makes such occurrences minimal or non-existent.

In keeping with the spirit of public involvement and participation, RPA 8 will follow a systematic approach that will allow the public to become involved in transportation issues through increased participation. RPA 8 will consistently adhere to established guidelines as a means of heightening public involvement.

Utilizing various techniques to solicit public involvement has proven to be the most effective means by which to attract citizen involvement. The Regional Planning Affiliation is such a diverse area in terms of geographical, socioeconomic, and cultural

areas that it takes more than just one technique to capture the attention of citizens. RPA 8 remains committed to using a variety of resources by which to reach out to the public and attempt to engender public participation.

RPA 8 is committed to the concept of public participation and will work hard to ensure that the public has an active role in transportation planning decisions. It is hoped that this public participation will reduce unfavorable public opinions of transportation projects by making an active outreach for public involvement and incorporating public sentiment into the planning process.

## **II: HISTORY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AT RPA 8**

Since the inception of RPA 8 as the region planning agency for Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque and Jackson County area, public participation and input as has always been one of the priorities in the transportation planning process. RPA 8 shares some of the same historical perspectives in citizen involvement that many planning organizations across the country have experienced. RPA 8 opened there policy and tech meetings to public from 1998. The RPA 8 Technical Committee reviews the policy recommendation and vote to approve or disapprove the recommendation; the issue was then placed before the RPA 8 Policy Board for final consideration.

### **Public Input at RPA 8 Meetings**

RPA 8 has always provided citizens with the opportunity to voice their opinions on transportations issues during the RPA 8 Policy Board meetings. When transportation issues are being decided upon by the RPA 8 Policy Board, the RPA 8 Policy Board Chair calls for any public input or comments. This process is followed for any transportation alternatives, TIP, or LRTP projects that are put before the Policy Board for final consideration and a vote.

## **III: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES**

### **Goal:**

Able to get public's attention and have them provide their opinions and comments in order to have a meaningful impact on transportation decisions.

### **Objective 1: Public Access**

RPA 8 will provide timely notice and reasonable access to the public information on transportation issues and processes.

### **Public Access Policies:**

- Documents:

It shall be the policy of RPA 8 that all plans and documents shall be made available for the public to review at the RPA 8 office. When citizens request to obtain copies of current RPA 8 plans and documents, the documents shall be provided upon request.

Current copies of the RPA 8 Long Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Plan, and any other regularly published documents shall be distributed to all public libraries in the RPA 8 planning boundary as well as local planning departments and city governments associated with RPA 8.

- Notices:  
RPA 8 shall provide to the media any notices and agendas of any board or committee meetings that have been scheduled. RPA 8 will provide such notification within (4-20) days prior to when meetings are scheduled to occur.
- Access:  
RPA 8 will make every effort possible to provide reasonable access to technical and policy information.
- Assistance:  
RPA 8 will make every effort to provide assistance upon request to any and all citizens who require some special assistance to attend any RPA 8 meeting.
- Meeting Locations:  
All RPA 8 meetings and workshops and all of its advisory committees shall be held in ADA compliant locations.

## **Objective 2: Public Outreach**

RPA 8 recognizes the need for opportunities to be created for all segments of the general public to become informed and educated about issues and proposals that it may be under consideration by the policy committee. RPA 8 especially recognizes the need for public outreach for those citizens who might be directly affected by the outcome of projects under consideration or might not currently be well served by the transportation system.

### Public Outreach Policies:

- Informing the Public:  
RPA 8 will attempt to inform the public about all issues under consideration through public workshops, newsletters, exhibits, ECIA website or other techniques during the development of each of its transportation plans, studies, and projects.
- Public Notification Lists:

RPA 8 will develop and maintain a list of civic and public service organizations in addition to interested or potentially interested persons for the purpose of distributing information about its planning activities. Efforts will be made to include members of potentially underserved groups.

- Annual Review:  
RPA 8 will conduct an annual review of its public involvement procedures to gauge the effectiveness of soliciting public input and citizen participation at public meetings. Of particular importance in this review will be an examination of public participation process to determine if underserved citizen groups have been reached and given the opportunity to participate in the public involvement process.
- Public Hearings:  
RPA 8 will conduct public hearings as herein outlined prior to the adoption of each of the transportation plans and programs for which it is responsible, including the LRTP, TIP, and transportation improvement priorities, and on substantive amendments and annual updates.
- Previously Received Public Comments:  
RPA 8 will, upon request, provide previously received public comments relating to all transportation plans.
- Public Comment during Public Meetings:  
RPA 8 will provide an opportunity for the public to comment during any public meetings.

#### **IV: PLANNING PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

##### **Public Participation Process**

The RPA 8 public participation process will be reviewed annually by RPA 8 staff to determine if revisions are necessary. If revisions occur, the draft of the new policy will be made available for public review for 45 days. These public hearings will be held as part of a regularly scheduled RPA 8 meeting. The meeting will be held at location that is accessible to transit-dependent and disabled residents.

##### **Long Range Transportation Plan**

The most recent Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update was adopted on April 28, 2011. RPA 8 is required to prepare and update periodically a long-range plan for its planning area. It is an extensive plan that outlines the current 20-year planning horizon for the RPA 8. The LRTP is a living document in that it is constantly under revision and being updated to reflect the area's needs for transportation planning.

The RPA 8 is required by federal regulations to provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunity to comment on the LRTP and then publish the plan thereby making it readily available to the public for review.

One or more Public input meetings will be held to gather information during the planning process and one public input meeting will be held for draft plan approval and one for final plan approval.

**Revisions, Developments and Updates:**

In the event of revisions, developments and updates to LRTP, there will be a 45-day comment period for the general public to voice any comments pertaining to the proposed changes.

**Transportation Improvement Program**

RPA 8 will make a concerted effort to make a wide variety of interest groups and the public aware of the transportation alternative activities in the Regional Planning Area. Among the groups that will be informed of the Transportation Alternative Program application cycle are the Rural Transit Authority (RTA), Clinton Municipal Transit Authority (MTA) implemented as well as an indication of what public and private resources can be expected to be made available to complete the transportation improvement.

Before the RPA 8 Policy Committee can approve any transportation improvement, it will provide citizens, affected public agencies, and representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties with reasonable notice of an opportunity to comment on the proposed improvement.

The TIP Process will include the following steps:

- RPA 8 staff will distribute project applications in January to the membership organizations in the RPA 8 area.
- RPA 8 staff will collect applications from the members in February and begin developing TIP following RPA 8 policies, rules and regulations adopted by FHWA in selecting TIP projects.
- After the draft TIP is finished, it will be released for a 30-day public review process in April. RPA 8 staff will inform the public of the draft TIP's availability by sending notice to the organizations on the RPA 8 public participation process list and by publishing legal notices in local newspapers and ECIA website. These notices will be posted and published 4-20 days before the scheduled meeting.
- The public hearing meeting will be held with the RPA 8 Policy Board meeting and the meeting will be opened for public input during the process.
- After the final TIP is finished, it will be released for a 30-day public review process in June. RPA 8 staff will inform the public of the final TIP's availability

by sending notice to the organizations on the RPA 8 public participation process list and by publishing legal notices in local newspapers and ECIA website. These notices will be posted and published 4-20 days before the scheduled meeting.

- The public hearing meeting will be held with the RPA 8 Policy Board meeting and the meeting will be opened for public input during the process.

### **Accommodation:**

**Meetings, public hearings, and ECIA formal events are held in facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities.** Public notices of ECIA meetings and events include a notice of location for public. Individuals with disabilities will be provided with accommodations to attend the meetings on request with a minimum of one week notice. Individuals requiring special material or presentation formats will be asked to contact the staff at least one week before the meeting.

### ***Revising/Amending an Approved TIP***

#### **Revising the TIP**

Revisions are defined as changes to a TIP that occur between scheduled periodic updates. There are two types of changes that occur under the umbrella of revision. The first is a major revision or “Amendment”. The second is a minor revision or “Administrative Modification”.

#### **Amendment**

An amendment is a revision to a TIP that involves a major change to a project included in the TIP. This includes an addition or deletion of a project or a major change in project cost, project/project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or scope (e.g. changing project termini or the number of through lanes). *Changes to projects that are included only for illustrative purposes do not require an amendment.* An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment, redemonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination. Changes that affect fiscal constraint must take place by amendment of the TIP.

The TIP Amendment Process will include the following steps:

- RPA 8 staff will collect the amendment information from the requesting member.
- RPA 8 staff will inform the public of the amended TIP’s availability by sending notice to the organizations on the RPA 8 public participation process list and by publishing legal notices in local newspapers and ECIA website. These notices will be posted and published 4-20 days before the scheduled meeting.
- The public hearing meeting will be held with the RPA 8 Policy Board meeting and the meeting will be opened for public input during the process.

- The DOT and FHWA staff will be provided with updated TIP with amendments once approved by RPA 8 Policy and Tech boards.

### **Administrative Modification**

A minor revision to a TIP is an administrative modification. It includes minor changes to project/project phase costs, minor changes to funding sources of previously-included projects, and minor changes to project/project phase initiation dates. An administrative modification is a revision that does not require public review and comment or redemonstration of fiscal constraint,

### **Amendment vs. Administrative Modification**

There are four main components that can be used to determine whether a project change constitutes an amendment or an administrative modification. They include the following:

- **Project costs**-Determination will be made based on the percentage change or dollar amount of change in federal aid. Projects in which the federal aid has been changed by more than 30% or total federal aid increases by \$2.0 million or more will require an amendment. Anything less can be processed with an administrative modification.
- **Schedule changes**-Changes in schedules to projects which are included in the first four years of the TIP/STIP will be considered administrative modifications. Projects which are added or deleted from the TIP/STIP will be processed as amendments.
- **Funding sources**-Additional federal funding sources to a project will require an amendment. Changes to funding from one source to another will require an administrative modification.
- **Scope changes**-Changing project termini or changing the amount of through traffic lanes will be processed as an amendment. Other examples of changes that require amendment are changing the type of work from an overlay to reconstruction. Another example is changing a project to include widening of the roadway.

### **Transportation Planning Work Program**

The Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) outlines various transportation planning activities to be conducted by the staff for RPA 8. The TPWP is prepared and adopted each year and contains transportation planning activities for the current fiscal year.

The TPWP Process will include the following steps:

- RPA 8 staff will start developing TPWP in the month of February, following rules and regulations adopted by the FHWA and guidance from state DOT's.
- After the draft TPWP is finished, it will be released for a 30-day public review process in March. RPA 8 staff will inform the public of the draft TPWP's availability by sending notices to the organizations on the RPA 8 Public Participation Process mailing list and by publishing legal notices in local newspapers and the ECIA website. These notices will be published 4-20 days before the scheduled meeting.
- The public hearing will be held during the RPA 8 Policy Committee meeting in March and the meeting will be opened for public input during the process.
- After the final TPWP is finished, it will be released for public review process in May. RPA 8 staff will inform the public of the final TPWP's availability by sending notices to the organizations on the RPA 8 Public Participation Process mailing list and by publishing legal notices in local newspapers and the ECIA website. These notices will be published 4-20 days before the scheduled meeting.
- The public hearing will be held during the RPA 8 Policy Committee meeting in May. The meeting will be opened for public input during the process.

### **Public Comments**

Copies of all public comments received prior to the hearing shall be provided by either the RPA 8 staff at or before the public hearing. A summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of the comments received shall be prepared and made available upon request.

### **Accommodation:**

**Meetings, public hearings, and ECIA formal events are held in facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities.** Public notices of ECIA meetings and events include a notice of location for public. Individuals with disabilities will be provided with accommodations to attend the meetings on request with a minimum of a week notice. Individuals requiring special material or presentation formats will be asked to contact the staff at least a week before the meeting.

### **Amendments:**

TPWP amendment will be necessary when a new work item is added.

An amendment will require the following steps:

- Staff will begin the amendment process by conducting public review at ECIA office. Staff will inform the public of the proposed amendment by sending notices to the organizations on the RPA 8 Public Participation Process mailing list and by

publishing a legal notice in the local newspapers and the ECIA website. These notices will be printed 4-20 days before the scheduled meeting.

- The public hearing will be held during the RPA 8 Policy Committee meeting. The meeting will be opened for public input during the process.
- The state DOTs will be provided with the updated amendment.

**Revisions:**

TPWP revisions will be necessary when there are minor changes to project description and dollar amounts.

- Staff will update the RPA 8 Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee on the revised item and notify the state DOTs of the changes.

**Waiver of approvals from FHWA & IADOT**

All work program changes require prior written Federal approval, unless waived by the awarding agency. The following table denotes the approving agency for various changes to work programs.

<b>Revision type</b>	<b>Approving Agency</b>
Request for <b>additional Federal funding</b> [49 CFR 18.30(c)(1)(i) and FTA Circular 5010.0C,I.6.e(1)].	FHWA/FTA
<b>Transfer of funds</b> between categories, projects, functions, or activities <b>which exceed 10 percent</b> of the total work program budget when the Federal award share of the total work program budget exceeds \$100,000 [49 CFR 18.30(c)(1)(ii)].	FHWA/FTA
<b>Revision of the scope or objectives</b> of the activities (i.e. adding or deleting of activities or major change in scope of activity) [49 CFR 18.30(d)(1)].	FHWA/FTA
Transferring substantive programmatic work to a <b>third party</b> (i.e. consultant) [49 CFR 18.30(d)(4)].	FHWA/FTA
Capital expenditures including the <b>purchasing of equipment</b> [OMB Circular A- 87)].	FHWA/FTA
<b>Transfer of funds</b> between categories, projects, functions, or activities <b>which do not exceed 10 percent</b> of the total work program budget or when the Federal award share of the total work program budget exceeds \$100,000 [49 CFR 18.30(c)(1)(ii)].	Iowa DOT
Transfer of funds allotted for <b>training</b> allowances [49 CFR 18.30(c)(1)(iii)].	Iowa DOT
<b>Extending</b> the period of performance past the approved work program period [49 CFR 18.30(d)(2)].	MPO/RPA
<b>Changes in key persons</b> in cases where specified in an application or a grant award (i.e. change in lead consultant for a project) [49 CFR 18.30(d)(3)].	MPO/RPA

## **Revision and Approval Procedures**

Revisions where **FHWA/FTA** is the designated approving agency shall require written approval by FHWA/FTA prior to commencement of activity, purchasing of equipment, or request for reimbursement. Requests from the RPAs shall be submitted in writing [four (4) hard copies of the updates to the work program] to the Iowa DOT Office of Systems Planning through the District Planner, and then forwarded to FHWA and FTA for approval. Notification by the approving agency will be in writing in reverse order.

Revisions where the **Iowa DOT Office of Systems Planning** is the designated approving agency shall require written approval by the Iowa DOT Office of Systems Planning prior to commencement of activity, purchasing of equipment, or request for reimbursement. Requests from the RPAs shall be submitted in writing [four (4) hard copies of the updates to the work program] to Iowa DOT Office of Systems Planning through the District Planner. Copies will be forwarded to FHWA/FTA. Notification by the approving agency will be in reverse order.

Revisions where the **RPA** is the approving agency shall be approved by the Policy Board. Hard copy updates to the work program shall be provided to the District Planner, Iowa DOT Office of Systems Planning, FHWA and FTA.

## **Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)**

RPA 8, in cooperation with the IADOT and RTA transit system and Jule transit system, is required to develop a PTP for the region. RPA 8, is further required to provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, other affected employee representatives, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed program during the process.

The PTPs are an Iowa creation, providing needs-based justification for passenger transportation projects and as well as incorporating federal requirements for coordinated planning.

The Iowa Department of Transportation requires East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA) to be responsible for the Passenger Transportation Plan for the Regional 8 Planning Affiliation (RPA 8). Before the RPA 8 Policy Committee can approve any transportation improvement, it will provide citizens, affected public agencies, and representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties with reasonable notice of an opportunity to comment on the proposed improvement.

A Transit Action Group was formed in 2008. The group consists of human service providers, transportation providers, and other interested individuals within the community. Members of the group are charged with resolving transportation barriers for

consumers in the community. The group has three sub committees; Urban, Rural, and Marketing. The group meets every other month and members can choose to attend on a regular basis or attend as needed as a resource to the group. Group notices are sent out via email or snail mail and information is also available on the RTA website if anyone is interested in participating

The PTP Process will include the following steps:

- ECIA staff collects information from member agencies and TAG group throughout the year.
- Staff develops the draft PTP document by end of January following RPA 8 policies, rules and regulations adopted by FHWA and IADOT.
- After the draft PTP is finished, it will be released for a 30-day public review process in February/March. Staff will inform the public of the draft PTP's availability by sending notice to the organizations and members on the RPA 8 public participation process list by email and mail, by publishing legal notices in local newspapers and ECIA website. These notices will be posted and published 4-20 days before the scheduled meeting.
- The public hearing meeting will be held with the RPA 8 Policy Board meeting and the meeting will be opened for public input during the process.
- After the final PTP is finished, it will be released for public review process in June. RPA 8 staff will inform the public of the final PTP's availability by sending notice to the organizations and members on the RPA 8 public participation process list by email and mail, by publishing legal notices in local newspapers and ECIA website. These notices will be posted and published 4-20 days before the scheduled meeting.
- The public hearing meeting will be held with the RPA 8 Policy Board meeting and the meeting will be opened for public input during the process.

### **Accommodation:**

**Meetings, public hearings, and ECIA formal events are held in facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities.** Public notices of ECIA meetings and events include a notice of location for public. Individuals with disabilities will be provided with accommodations to attend the meetings on request with a minimum of one week notice. Individuals requiring special material or presentation formats will be asked to contact the staff at least one week before the meeting.

### ***Revising/Amending an Approved PTP***

#### **Revising the PTP**

Revisions are defined as changes to a PTP that occur between scheduled periodic updates. There are two types of changes that occur under the umbrella of revision. The first is a major revision or "Amendment". The second is a minor revision or "Administrative Modification".

### **Amendment**

An amendment is a revision to a PTP that involves a major change to a project included in the PTP. This includes an addition or deletion of a project or a major change in project cost, project/project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or scope (e.g. changing project termini). *Changes to projects that are included only for illustrative purposes do not require an amendment.* An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment.

### **Administrative Modification**

A minor revision to a PTP is an administrative modification. It includes minor changes/project phase costs, minor changes to funding sources of previously-included projects. An administrative modification is a revision that does not require public review and comment or redemonstration of fiscal constraint,

### **Amendment vs. Administrative Modification**

There are four main components that can be used to determine whether a project change constitutes an amendment or an administrative modification. They include the following:

- **Project costs**-Determination will be made based on the percentage change or dollar amount of change in federal aid. Projects in which the federal aid has been changed by more than 30% or total federal aid increases by \$2.0 million or more will require an amendment. Anything less can be processed with an administrative modification.
- **Schedule changes**-Changes in schedules to projects which are included in the first four years of the TIP/STIP will be considered administrative modifications. Projects which are added or deleted from the TIP/STIP will be processed as amendments.
- **Funding sources**-Additional federal funding sources to a project will require an amendment. Changes to funding from one source to another will require an administrative modification.
- **Scope changes**-Changing project termini or changing the amount of through traffic lanes will be processed as an amendment. Other examples of changes that require amendment are changing the type of work from an overlay to reconstruction. Another example is changing a project to include widening of the roadway.

### **Environmental Justice**

Environmental Justice (EJ) is a federal term that was created in 1994 when President Clinton signed Executive Order 12898. EJ involves the need to ensure that low-income and minority population groups are not disproportionately affected by the transportation planning process. Historically, such groups are under-represented in the planning process

and EJ is designed to ensure that the public involvement process makes every attempt to solicit their input.

RPA 8 is committed to ensuring that low-income and minority population groups, as well as all citizens in the Dubuque Metropolitan Area, have sufficient access to the transportation planning process and are given every opportunity to voice their opinions at RPA 8 meetings.

RPA 8 staff will continue to use US Census Block Group Data and GIS technology to identify concentrations of minority and low-income populations in the RPA 8 area. This information will continue to be used to determine if proposed transportation projects will adversely affect these populations. Staff will make additional efforts to engage minority and low-income residents in public participation. The following outreach efforts are illustrative of measures that may be taken as appropriate to provide citizen access to the process. Failure to use any one of these shall not be considered as violation of this plan.

**Mailing List:** Develop a comprehensive mailing list of interested parties, public and private agencies that provide and utilize transportation services and use to send summary information and public hearing comments period notices.

**City Channel 8:** Create and run public service announcements about the RPA 8 program and the planning process to inform, educate and promote citizen participation.

### **Social Media**

## **V: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCEDURES**

### **Regular Public Hearings**

RPA 8 will hold at least one public hearing prior to the adoption or amendment of each of the following planning products. These public hearings may be held as part of a regularly scheduled RPA 8 meeting.

### **Substantive Public Comments**

When substantive public written and oral comments are received on the draft LRTP, TIP or TPWP as a result of the public involvement process, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be prepared and made available upon request.

### **Notification of Documents to Interested Parties**

The following describes the notification process for the materials that shall be made available, the process of documenting the input received, public hearings conducted as part of the development, updates, and amendment processes for the LRTP, TIP, TPWP and transportation improvement priorities.

- ***Public Notice***

A public notice announcing a scheduled public hearing shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Dubuque Metropolitan Area. These notices will be printed 4-20 days before the scheduled meeting.

- ***Press Releases***

Press releases announcing scheduled public hearings shall be provided to community newspapers and local broadcasters throughout the Dubuque Metropolitan

### **Printed – Graphical Material**

Any printed or graphical material that is available shall be provided by either RPA 8 staff or the appropriate agency upon request.

### **Public Comments**

Copies of all public comments received prior to the hearing shall be provided by either the RPA 8 staff at or before the public hearing. A summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of the comments received shall be prepared and made available upon request.

## **VI: ELECTRONIC MEETINGS**

The RPA 8 may conduct a meeting by electronic means only in circumstances where such a meeting in person is impossible or impractical and RPA 8 will comply with all of the following:

- a. RPA 8 will provide public access to the conversation of the meeting to the extent reasonably possible.
  - b. RPA 8 complies with section 21.4. For the purpose of this paragraph, the place of the meeting is the place from which the communication originates or where public access is provided to the conversation.
  - c. Minutes are kept of the meeting. The minutes shall include a statement explaining why a meeting in person was impossible or impractical.
2. A meeting conducted in compliance with this section shall not be considered in violation of this chapter.
  3. A meeting by electronic means may be conducted without complying with paragraph “a” of subsection 1 if conducted in accordance with all of the requirements for a closed session contained in section 21.5.

Example from IA DOT:

STATEMENT OF WHY MEETING OF THE IOWA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION IN PERSON ON MARCH 30, 2010, IS IMPRACTICAL PURSUANT TO IOWA CODE SECTION 21.8(1)(C).

The members of the Iowa Transportation Commission are holding this session by electronic means pursuant to the provisions of the Iowa Open Meetings Law, Section 21.8, Code of Iowa.

Due to the limited agenda for this meeting and the relatively short period of time that this meeting is expected to be held, the expense of transporting the Commission members in person is impractical. The meeting is being held by conference call originating from the Iowa DOT complex in Ames. It is open to the public and those in attendance can hear the proceedings. Public notice of the meeting has been issued in accordance with Iowa Code Section 21.4.

## **VII: PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES**

### **Public Information Workshops**

Public information workshops shall be announced through a press release, which will be transmitted to newspapers and broadcasters throughout the Regional Planning Area one week prior to the date of that workshop. Notices of these workshops shall be mailed to standing mailing list and other interested parties.

A public workshop or exhibit shall be conducted prior to the adoption and/or comprehensive update of the RPA's Long Range Transportation Plan. These workshops or exhibits shall be held in locations that are easily accessible to a broad cross-section of Regional Planning Area residents. A Transportation Alternative Activity (TA) application workshop shall be conducted by RPA 8 staff to explain the application process and scheduled a minimum of 30 days prior to the deadline for submitting applications to RPA 8. A public exhibit or workshop shall be held in the community affected by a transportation improvement currently under consideration as part of a special study of a specific corridor being undertaken by RPA 8.

### **Transportation Presentations**

RPA 8 will give presentations on a regular basis to community as a means of providing information to the public on transportation issues. It has proven more effective to provide presentations to community groups that encompass a wider representation of the community than to target single identity groups where public outreach is minimal.

### **Meetings & Location**

Meeting notices and agendas shall be mailed to everyone who requests them. They shall also be available to the public at the RPA 8 office during business hours. **Meetings, public hearings, and RPA 8 formal events are held in facilities that are accessible by**

**persons with disabilities.** Public notices of RPA 8 meetings and events include a notice of location for public. Individuals with disabilities will be provided with accommodations to attend the meetings on request with a minimum of a week notice. Individuals requiring special material or presentation formats will be asked to contact the staff at least a week before the meeting.

## **VIII: FEDERAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STANDARDS**

The public involvement process requirements in *23 CFR 450, Section 450.316(b)(1)*, are listed below. These requirements encourage a proactive public involvement process and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in the planning process. The requirements listed are addressed in RPA 8 Transportation Study Policy.

- Require a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or revised;
- Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including but not limited to central city and other local jurisdiction concerns);
- Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and TIPs and open public meetings where matters related to the Federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered;
- Require adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of plans and TIPs (in nonattainment areas, classified as serious and above, the comment period shall be at least 30 days for the plan) TIP and major amendment(s);
- Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the planning and program development processes;
- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to low-income and minority households;
- When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan or TIP (including the financial plan) as a result of the public involvement process, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and TIP;
- If the final transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the one which was made available for public comment by the RPA 8 and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan or TIP shall be made available;
- Public involvement processes shall be periodically reviewed by the RPA 8 in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all;

- These procedures will be reviewed by the FHWA and the FTA during Certification reviews for TMAS, and as otherwise necessary for all RPAs, to assure that full and open access is provided to decision-making processes;
- Regional Planning Affiliation public involvement processes shall be coordinated with statewide public involvement processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans, and programs and reduce redundancies and costs.