Appendix B—Hear Every Voice

Contents:

1. Excerpts from Minnesota Department of Transportation’s Hear Every Voice Program Documents
MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Hear Every Voice: Mn/DOT Public and Stakeholder Participation Guidance

OBJECTIVES
The “Hear Every Voice: Mn/DOT Public and Stakeholder Participation Guidance” initiative offers state-of-the-art comprehensive curricula and skill building in best practices. Training is supported with online tools and resources to provide “real world” implementation opportunities and achieve maximum efficiency.

CLASSES
Participants are strongly encouraged to take the Core Course #101, Stop the Pain and Increase the Gain: Public Participation and Mn/DOT, prior to attending other classes. All Hear Every Voice classes are based on the foundational concepts presented in the Core Course.

Here are a few of the other courses being planned:
• Designing as if Stakeholders Matter: Engaging Underrepresented Stakeholders
• Productive Advisory Groups
• Setting Expectation with Consultants

Additional course descriptions and schedule appears on reverse side. For more information about the Hear Every Voice initiative or to register for a class please visit http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/publicinvolvement/index.html

WHO SHOULD ATTEND
• Mn/DOT employees
• City, County and MPO staff
• Other transportation partners
• Transportation consultants

September 2008 - May 2009
Arden Hills Training Center
1900 West County Road I
Shoreview MN, 55126

MN/DOT GOALS LEADING TO 21ST CENTURY SOLUTIONS TO 21ST CENTURY PROBLEMS
To rebuild public trust and confidence in Mn/DOT and the transportation community as a whole to 21st century problems.

To make sure the decisions we make in the future are really being responsive to public values.

To regenerate a spirit of innovation and creativity in the state of Minnesota.

Tom Sorel,
Transportation Commissioner

For more information, contact:
Norm Plasch
Mn/DOT, Office of Technical Support
651-366-4661

For registration information, contact:
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Continuing Professional Education
University of Minnesota
612-624-4754
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Introduction to Hear Every Voice</td>
<td>Understanding the business case for participation</td>
<td>Sept. 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Stop the Pain and Increase the Gain: Public Participation and Mn/DOT</td>
<td>This is the core course in Mn/DOT’s Hear Every Voice initiative. Productive participation is the result of basic foundational principles and core values guiding the planning and implementation process. Experience how these elements enhance your participation efforts. Core course (#101) is designed as a prerequisite to all other courses.</td>
<td>Sept. 16 &amp; Dec. 16 &amp; Jan. 13, ’09</td>
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<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Effective public participation within Mn/DOT: Core Curriculum Overview for Upper Management</td>
<td>Effective public participation within Mn/DOT Mn/DOT Commissioner and Management Team, by invitation</td>
<td>Oct. 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td>Minimize Risk: How to Determine the Need for and Level of Participation</td>
<td>Answer questions such as: How much participation is enough? How is that determined? What kind of participation is appropriate?</td>
<td>Oct. 14 &amp; Jan. 14, ’09</td>
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<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>Plan to Achieve: How to Design an Effective Participation Plan</td>
<td>Learn and apply a proven planning process. Discover tools and strategies for increased efficiency.</td>
<td>Oct. 15 &amp; Jan. 15, 09</td>
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<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td>How to Successfully Engage Non-Traditional Stakeholders</td>
<td>Explore effective strategies for involving non-traditional groups. Expand understanding of unique needs of under-represented populations.</td>
<td>Oct. 29 &amp; Feb. 5, ’09</td>
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<tr>
<td>301</td>
<td>Overview and Selection of Participation Tools &amp; Techniques</td>
<td>Explore a wide variety of tools &amp; techniques to engage participants. Learn how to select tools &amp; techniques that can achieve your goals – and which may be counter-productive</td>
<td>Oct. 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>302</td>
<td>Improving Participation Meetings</td>
<td>There will always be meetings. Learn how to enhance meeting effectiveness and various meeting techniques such as World Café and Open Space.</td>
<td>Nov. 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>303</td>
<td>Productive Advisory Groups</td>
<td>Stakeholder, public officials and/or technical advisory groups are frequently used tools that under achieve. Learn how to improve the productivity of advisory groups</td>
<td>Nov. 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>304</td>
<td>Participation Over Time and Distance</td>
<td>Projects that take years and initiatives in which a major segment of the stakeholders are physically distant present unique participation challenges. Explore best practices to enhance participation in these instances.</td>
<td>Nov. 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>401</td>
<td>Enhancing Your Personal Communications with Participants</td>
<td>Understand participants’ needs for communication and improve our ability to convey and receive messages.</td>
<td>Dec. 17</td>
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Hear Every Voice
Part II

Project Development

Public involvement must happen at every stop along the road

Stakeholder consultation and public involvement play an integral role in Mn/DOT’s decision-making processes at every step of a project from planning to project maintenance and operations. In order to fulfill the department’s mission, Mn/DOT is committed to involving members of the public throughout the state in the development and implementation of its plans and programs. In order to “hear every voice,” Mn/DOT’s stakeholder consultation and public involvement processes must be:

- appropriate
- accessible
- transparent
- accountable
- meaningful
- inclusive of the state’s diverse population

Planning

Minnesota transportation planning helps identify the needs and potential responses to providing a statewide transportation system. Planning sets into motion subsequent
spending allocations and determines what transportation projects and initiatives will be addressed within a predetermined timeframe.

Mn/DOT must involve members of the public throughout the state in the development and implementation of its plans and programs. This participation encourages the development of a joint vision for transportation shared by stakeholders, the public and Mn/DOT.

Objectives of participation in planning:
- To reach out to Minnesota’s diverse population and stakeholders to gather input and communicate Mn/DOT’s understanding of issues and needs.
- To educate stakeholders and the public about Mn/DOT’s planning process and the status of the state’s transportation system and resources.
- To gain external and internal information that will aid in setting policies and priorities based on the needs and desires of our customers/stakeholders.
- To fully comply with stakeholder consultation and public involvement requirements identified in state or federal law, rules or regulations.

Who is responsible for stakeholder consultation and public involvement?

Generally, the organization that has the responsibility for the transportation facility and/or is the lead agency within a partnership holds the responsibility for participation.

Examples:
Mn/DOT’s Office Aeronautics does not own or maintain any airports. Airports are usually owned by a local unit of government or privately. While Aeronautics provides services and support, it is the owner’s responsibility to conduct participation and meet federal requirements.

Major Plans
1. Mn/DOT public involvement policy and directions are based on Mn/DOT’s overarching Mn/DOT Strategic Plan that sets the direction for subsequent plans. Mn/DOT’s vision and mission as stated in the Strategic Plan is to focus on priority transportation improvements and investments that result in a transportation system that helps Minnesotans travel safer, smarter and more efficiently.

2. The 20-year Statewide Transportation Plan establishes the policies and performance measures required to implement the Strategic Plan. The commitment to involve the public is expressed in Policy 9 of the 2003 Minnesota Statewide Transportation Plan, which states Mn/DOT’s policy is to “Inform,
Involve and Educate All Potentially Affected Stakeholders in Transportation Plans and Investment Decision Processes."

The following outcome statements are identified for this policy.

- Mn/DOT will proactively seek early and continuing public input and involvement so as to be responsive and accountable to its stakeholders.

- Mn/DOT will listen to its customers and respond with accurate, timely information upon which they can rely. Mn/DOT will be a trusted source of information.

- Customers will understand Mn/DOT’s roles, processes and priorities, and will have access to information about Mn/DOT’s projects and activities.

3. Identification of system and service deficiencies, improvements and opportunities are identified in several plans including:

   - Local plans specific to metropolitan planning organizations and regional development commissions, tribal governments and other local plans.

   - Mn/DOT district long-range plans

   - Interregional corridor management plans

   - Modal plans (freight, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, motor carrier and aeronautics)

   - Other state long-range improvement plans (e.g. Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Highway Systems Operation Plan, Statewide Heavy Vehicle Safety Plan and the ITS Safety Plan).
Planning Framework

Every major planning effort should:

- Establish early and continuous stakeholder consultation and public involvement opportunities;
- Provide timely information about transportation issues and decision-making processes to stakeholders,
- Provide the appropriate level of stakeholder involvement in the planning process.

The planning framework ensures that essential levels of stakeholder consultation and public involvement approaches are developed and tailored to the complexities of the project.

The approach is consistent with each type of plan. The strategies for stakeholder consultation and public involvement vary according to the type and scope of the plan/project and any unique applicable requirements.

The Tools and Resources section offers guidance regarding all components of outreach including Stakeholder Identification, Levels of Consultation and Involvement, Tribal Consultation, and Techniques such as visualization, electronic formats, public notices and meetings.

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Approval of Work/Scope by Senior Management

Every major plan must have a documented stakeholder consultation/public involvement process. The process is integrated into the overall plan.

The scope of work, advisory structure and stakeholder consultation and public involvement process of any major plan requires Mn/DOT senior management approval.

Any major plan that will use funds from the State Road Construction budget requires the approval of Mn/DOT’s Transportation Program Committee as outlined in Mn/DOT’s Policy Guidelines for Plan Development/Approval Process Memorandum dated November 3, 2006. The TPC consists of Mn/DOT’s division directors, district engineers and deputy commissioner.
Stakeholder Consultation and Public Involvement Process Framework – The general stakeholder consultation and public involvement process framework indicates internal and external outreach efforts scheduled according to three milestones: project initiation, draft plan and final plan. Outreach indicates receipt of information and/or some level of participation.

Planning Framework
Plan Initiation

The first major stakeholder consultation effort is undertaken early in the planning process. This outreach (participation) effort is designed to solicit input from internal and external stakeholders at the beginning of the planning effort. Thus, allowing the input to influence the direction and focus of the planning process as well as the plan outcomes. This first outreach effort is primarily an opportunity for Mn/DOT to listen to stakeholder concerns and issues.

Draft Plan

The second major stakeholder and public involvement outreach (participation) effort follows the completion and presentation of the draft plan. It is a two-way conversation between Mn/DOT and stakeholders. It provides Mn/DOT the opportunity to communicate:

- findings from the early outreach effort,
- subsequent trend and data analyses, and
- draft recommendations.

The effort also affords stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the elements and recommendations of the draft plan, making the continuing outreach phase a two-way dialogue between Mn/DOT and stakeholders.

Final Plan

The third major stakeholder and public outreach effort occurs after revisions to the draft plan are made based on input from the previous outreach phase and the final plan is presented. The final outreach (participation) phase communicates to stakeholders what is in the final plan and how previous input influenced and shaped the final plan.

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Outreach Pathways & Responsibilities

Under SAFETEA-LU, five levels of outreach Spectrum of Participation Levels are identified. Outreach is described by the following Spectrum of Participation Levels - of communication and participation.

1. Inform – to provide objective, balanced information to assist the public in understanding issues, planning and program efforts.

2. Consider – to take into account opinions, actions or information from others.
3. *Consult* – to confer periodically and consider each other’s views prior to acting and report actions afterward.

4. *Cooperate* – Work together to achieve a common goal or objective.

5. *Coordinate* – Compare plans, programs & schedules, and adjust them for general consistency.

Requirements for minimum outreach activity directed toward specific types of stakeholders are also provided by SAFETEA-LU. For details see, Identified Stakeholders & SAFETEA-LU Levels of Outreach.

**Area Transportation Partnerships** (ATPs) are a means of:
- considering transportation improvement recommendations and
- Recommending to the District Engineer an integrated list of transportation investments.

The ATPs also serve as a forum for information exchange among transportation partners and to foster a climate of cooperation, coordination, and partnership efforts.

Members of the ATPs are determined by each group and may include:
- Representatives of the district and transportation partners within the ATP, including representatives of non-metropolitan local governments.
- MPO executive directors are required to serve on the District/ATP (where applicable), and
- Tribal governments are provided the opportunity to be represented on the ATP.

The unique ATP process, provides a forum for coordination and cooperation among representatives from non-metropolitan area, MPOs, tribal governments, and Mn/DOT.

**Market Research** provides information to better understand and respond to its customers. Customers of the transportation system include:
- The general public,
- Freight shippers and generators,
- Bicyclists,
- Transit users, etc. and
- Discrete market segments based on how they use the transportation system.

Mn/DOT’s market research helps Mn/DOT work with its stakeholders to provide the right products and services to end users.
**Tribal Consultation** responds to the unique sovereign status of federally recognized Tribes by:

- Respecting the cultural values of the eleven (11) American Indian tribes of Minnesota,
- Committing to the strengthening the Government-to-Government Relationship between the State of Minnesota and Indian Tribal Governments located within the State.

Mn/DOT has established and staffed the Advocacy Council for Tribal Transportation (ACTT) to discuss roadway policy and devise a cohesive plan for roadways on or near Indian Reservations.

Membership includes:

- 11 Minnesota tribes,
- The Minnesota Department of Transportation,
- The Federal Highway Administration,
- Bureau of Indian Affairs,
- The Michigan TTAP,
- Minnesota Indian Affairs Council and
- MN Counties and cities.

The ACTT provides a forum for Mn/DOT and tribal consultation.

Each District also periodically meets with Tribal representatives of tribes located in their area.

An annual Tribes and Transportation Conference provides opportunities for information sharing and consultation.

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**Final Plan Approval/Adoption**

The internal process of Mn/DOT review and approval occurs throughout the planning process at key milestones.

The Commissioner’s approval of the final plan, where required, follows the recommendation of Senior Mn/DOT Management.

For major plans implemented through funding from the State Road Construction Budget, the TPC will serve as the Mn/DOT authority for final plan approval and adoption (where the Commissioner’s approval is not required).
To: Distribution 57, 612, 618, and 650

From: Acting Division Director Engineering Services

Subject: Design Policy – “Design Excellence through Context Sensitive Design and Solutions”

Expiration
This Technical Memorandum supersedes Technical Memorandum 00-24-TS-03 and will remain in effect until October 17, 2011, or until the guidance is fully incorporated into the Mn/DOT Road Design Manual and Highway Project Development Process.

Implementation
This policy will only apply to Trunk Highways (not State Aid routes) and is effective immediately.

Introduction (A Tradition of Design Excellence)
The 20-year Minnesota Statewide Transportation Plan articulates 10 policies that support Mn/DOT’s Strategic Directions. In alignment with Mn/DOT’s Strategic Direction to “Make Mn/DOT Work Better”, Policy 10 is “Protect the Environment and Respect Community Values”. Mn/DOT has a tradition of context-sensitive planning, design, construction and operation of transportation facilities that become a source of community pride and enhance the economic vitality of the state. In recognition of this tradition of context-sensitivity, FHWA designated Mn/DOT as one of 5 “pilot states” charged with the responsibility to help advance the understanding and application of the philosophy and principles of Context Sensitive Design and Solutions nationwide. While many of Mn/DOT’s program and project accomplishments have been recognized nationally and internationally, it is important to articulate Mn/DOT’s policy, principles, and approach in regards to the implementation of Context Sensitive Design and Solutions (CSD&S).

Purpose (“Design Excellence through Context Sensitive Design and Solutions”) 
The purpose of this tech memo is to articulate Mn/DOT’s project development philosophy and design policy within the changing context of what society expects of public agencies in fulfilling their mission. It is Mn/DOT’s policy to use a “context-sensitive” approach to create excellence in transportation project development - an approach that incorporates flexibility within design standards, safety measures, environmental stewardship, visual quality, and community sensitive planning and design.

Guidelines (Context Sensitive Design and Solutions (CSD&S))
CSD&S can be defined as the simultaneous balancing and advancement of the objectives of safety and mobility with preservation and enhancement of aesthetic, scenic, historic, cultural, environmental, and community values in transportation projects. CSD&S is the art of creating and sustaining transportation public works that satisfy users, stakeholders, and neighboring communities by integrating and balancing projects with the context and setting in a sensitive manner that relies upon broadly-informed planning, consideration of differing values and perspectives, and tailoring of designs and solutions to unique project circumstances. CSD&S uses a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach that includes early and ongoing involvement of key stakeholders to ensure that transportation projects not only perform safely and efficiently, but also in harmony with the natural, social, economic and cultural environment. Effective management of early and ongoing public and stakeholder involvement helps reduce delays, rework cycles, and unnecessary expenditures of time and money and thereby contributes to streamlined and cost-effective project and program delivery.
Principles: (Mn/DOT’s CSD&S approach promotes six core principles)
1) Balance safety, mobility, community and environmental goals in all projects
2) Involve the public and affected stakeholders early and continuously
3) Address all modes of travel
4) Use an interdisciplinary team tailored to project needs
5) Apply flexibility inherent in design standards
6) Incorporate visual quality considerations throughout project development

Measures of Success: (Successful projects exhibit the following attributes)
1) Community acceptance
2) Environmental compatibility
3) Engineering and technical functionality
4) Financial feasibility
5) Timeliness of delivery
6) Commitment beyond the project (preserving the investment)

Cost:
The State’s cost participation shall be consistent with Mn/DOT’s “cost participation policies”. Furthermore, it should be recognized that while CSD&S can increase the scope and budget of project costs, CSD&S can also reduce project costs.

Questions
For information on the technical contents of this memorandum, please contact Scott Bradley, Landscape Architecture Principal Supervisor, (651) 284-3758.

Any questions regarding publication or distribution of this technical memorandum should be referred to Sophia Wicklund, Design Standards Unit at (651) 296-3190 or Michael Elle, Design Standards Engineer at (651) 296-4859. A link to all active Memoranda and a list of historical Technical Memoranda can be found at http://www.dot.state.mn.us/atoz.html.

-END-