

CONSULTATION

SAFETEA-LU legislation requires that MPOs consult “as appropriate” with state, local, and private agencies, Native American Tribes, and human service transportation providers responsible for economic growth, land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, historic preservation. When developing long-range transportation plans a broad consultation process is required in order to eliminate or minimize conflicts with other agencies’ plans. Because the SWMPC is both a regional planning agency and an MPO, relationships with agencies responsible for cultural, land use, and environmental planning are already established. The SWMPC has a wide range of planning expertise which regularly cross-cuts with transportation planning. Expanding the scope of transportation planning to ensure the inclusion of the range of stakeholders and partners will only enhance the quality of the region’s transportation plans and projects. To prepare for a full consultation process, the SWMPC used prior contacts to create a list that encompasses agencies responsible for historic, environmental, and land use planning. This list can be found in Appendix M.

Agencies with which the SWMPC requested consultation were sent the following

1. A letter explaining the transportation planning consultation process according to SAFETEA-LU legislation.
2. The TwinCATS role in this process.
3. A draft list of 2035 LRTP proposed transportation projects.
4. A map displaying proposed projects.
5. Directions on how they might provide their input.

An example of the complete mailing is located in Appendix L.

SWMPC did receive comments from the Coloma TSC with project changes that were updated in the LRTP project list. There were no other comments received during the comment period, however the LRTP list will remain on the SWMPC website and we will continue to accept comments.

SWMPC also engaged many partners to assess potential impact of transportation projects on environmentally sensitive areas within TwinCATS. This consultation process was previously described in the Environmental Mitigation Chapter.