



GUIDE TO COMMENTING ON THE DVRPC TIP



Adapted from "Tips for Submitting Effective Comments," accessed from Regulations.gov on July 14th, 2017.

DVRPC believes that public participation is a fair way to ascertain the interests of a wide variety of residents across the region, and public involvement is inherent to sound decision-making. Although the formal public comment period has closed for the TIP in Draft form, the public is still welcomed to submit comments, such as those concerning TIP Actions that require DVRPC Board action.

Your comments should be submitted in writing. A comment can express simple support or dissent for a TIP project. However, **a constructive, information-rich comment that is clearly communicated and supported with facts and local knowledge is more likely to have an impact on decision-making.** The following questions and suggestions are intended to provide guidance about how to submit comments that will help sponsors deliver the best possible transportation projects.

Advice for crafting effective comments:

- Read the description and understand the project you are commenting on. (For example, what type of project is it? If it is a project focused on an operational improvement, such as signal re-timing, adding a significant capital expense such as another travel lane would likely be outside the scope of the improvement. However, safety components can be included in many different types of projects.)
- Be concise, but support your claims. (For example, have you observed the impacts of a new development on traffic patterns? Is there a study that supports your comment?)
- If you disagree with a project, suggest an alternative (which potentially also includes no project at all) and include an explanation and/or analysis of how your alternative might meet the same objective or be more effective.
- Base your justification on sound reasoning, documented evidence, and/or how your community will be impacted. Try to address trade-offs and opposing views.
- Identify credentials and experience that may distinguish your comment from others. For example, if you are a resident of a community, or have relevant personal or professional experience, please state so.
- There is no minimum or maximum length for an effective comment.
- **A comment is not a vote – one comment that is well-supported with facts and local knowledge can be more influential than a hundred form letters.** DVRPC and its planning partners want to fund the best projects for the region under financial constraints; when crafting a comment it is important to explain the reasoning behind your position.

Additional questions to consider:

- Given the projects in the TIP, are we meeting the needs of the region?
- Given financial constraints, are we spending money on the right types of projects? Are we investing the right amounts in maintenance and reconstruction versus capacity-adding projects; or non-traditional projects, such as pedestrian, bicycle, and smart technology, versus traditional highway and transit projects?
- Is this region getting its fair share of resources compared to other regions in the state or across the nation?

***Disclaimer:** This document is intended to serve as a guide; it is not intended and should not be considered as legal advice. Please seek counsel from a lawyer if you have legal questions or concerns.*