

CHAPTER 5: Public Notices

TPO & Committee Meetings

According to the TPO By-Laws:

The Executive Director is responsible for providing written public notice of all TPO meetings, public hearings and committee meetings. Except in case of emergencies, written notice of any meeting shall be given at least five (5) days prior to the meeting. In case of emergency, notice of such meeting shall be given to each member as far in advance of the meeting as possible and by the most direct means of communications. In addition, notice of such emergency meeting shall be given to the media, utilizing the most practicable method. Written notice of any meeting shall state the date, time and place of the meeting, a brief description of the agenda for the meeting, and shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of Florida law and this Public Participation Plan.

2045 Long Range Transportation Plan

The Hillsborough TPO began its 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update in late 2017. The LRTP identifies and prioritizes major transportation projects for funding under scenarios and trends that will shape Tampa Bay in the future.

The 2045 LRTP was coordinated across county boundaries and contains a chapter dedicated to regional priority projects. The Hillsborough TPO coordinated with the TPOs of Pasco and Pinellas Counties to identify travel needs that span the three-county region. The Plan was adopted in 2019.

More information about the 2045 LRTP can be accessed online at planhillsborough.org/2045-lrtp/



The TPO manages its notifications with an email database software called Constant Contact ®. TPO staff complies with the requirements by posting agendas for all TPO meetings and public



hearings on PlanHillsborough.org and ensuring that all board and committee members, the media and other interested parties are on the TPO’s Constant Contact ® mailing list to receive notices of all TPO and committee meetings. Any member of the public can register to receive notifications by visiting <http://www.planhillsborough.org/> and clicking “Join our Mailing Lists” under “Be Involved.”

Required Public Review

The Hillsborough TPO is obligated and will ensure reasonable time for public review and comment at key decision points on major documents and plans. These include, but are not limited to, the PPP, *Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*, *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* and *Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)*. The following table highlights requirements for public review periods and notices. The TPO’s practice is to meet or exceed these minimum requirements.

Plan or Program	Min. Review Period	Min. Public Notice/Ad	Min. Ad(s) Required	Public Hearing Required?
Public Participation Plan	45 days	45 days	1	No
LRTP Adoption	30 days	10 days	2	Yes
LRTP Amendment	15 days	15 days	1	Yes
TIP Priorities and Final Adoption	30 days	10 days	1	Yes
TIP Amendment	21 days	Not required	None	No
UPWP Adoption	30 days	Not required	None	No

Notifications and Advertisements

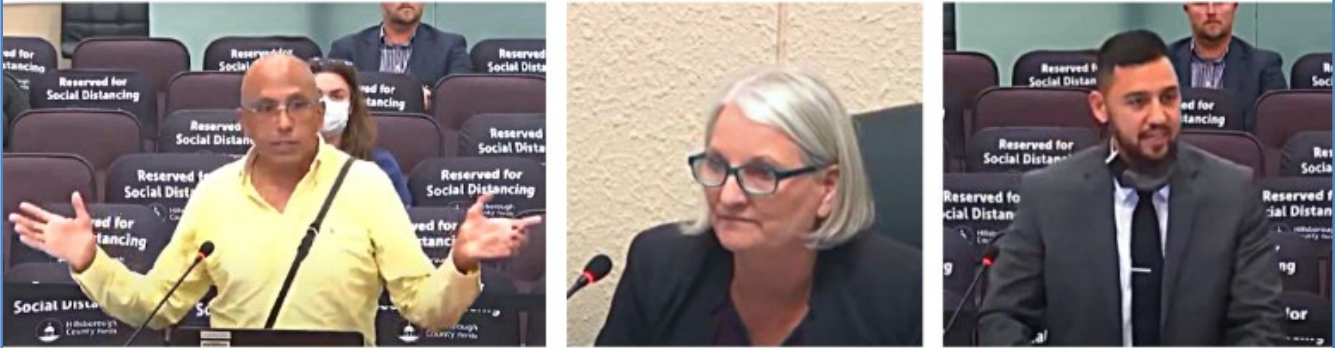
Public notices and/or advertisements are placed in accordance with the above table. At least one newspaper ad will be placed not less than 10 calendar days in advance of all TPO Public Hearings.

Monthly TPO Board and committee meetings and agendas are posted on the main page of PlanHillsborough.org. Regular TPO committee meetings are posted online at least 30 days in advance. Additional notices and schedule changes are promptly noted. Agendas for meetings are emailed and/or mailed out and are available on the TPO website normally seven days in advance. Draft meeting minutes are posted online in the agenda packet of the following month’s meeting.

TPO Board meetings are advertised, broadcast live and rebroadcast later in the month on Hillsborough County’s government television channel, HTV. These meetings are also available for streaming on the web at youtube.com/c/HillsboroughCountyMeetings/live. In late 2017 the TPO began uploading recordings of all TPO Board meetings to its YouTube Channel, available at youtube.com/channel/UCsojHyZb_mkYIU3o32Tbg4w, Mid-2018, the TPO

ICYMI

(IN CASE YOU MISSED IT)



Here's your chance to view the 2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Public Hearing! Just visit a webpage below.

WATCH
READ



TinyURL.com/watchTIP2022
TinyURL.com/seetheTIP

began recording and uploading Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group meetings to its YouTube profile.

The TPO advertises public hearings in newspapers of general circulation such as the Tampa Bay Times. Public notices and/or advertisements will also involve a social media post, notice on the PlanHillsborough.org website, a post on the calendars of news media websites, and a press release or newsletter article in Plan Hillsborough's newsletter, and placement of road signs. The TPO will also mail out notices for TIP amendment projects requiring right-of-way acquisition.

As appropriate and depending upon the project, the TPO may also place advertisements in newspapers with minority audiences, such as *La Gaceta* and the *Florida Sentinel Bulletin*, or in smaller community weeklies. The TPO may also provide information about TPO services and the availability of language services to LEP populations through non-English language radio and television advertisements.

Distinction Between Public Hearings and Public Meetings

There is no formal requirement for a TPO to hold a public hearing unless it is in a non-attainment Transportation Management Area. The Hillsborough TPO is not in a non-attainment area. However, it goes beyond the formal requirements by holding public hearings when adopting or amending an LRTP, or when adopting a new TIP, as shown in the adjacent table.

Plan or Program	Frequency of Public Hearing
LRTP Adoption	At least once every five years
LRTP Amendment	As needed
TIP Priorities and Final Adoption	Yearly

Public hearings must be advertised, and the public must have a reasonable time to comment on the item under consideration at the hearing. Generally, the timeframe for public comment on items under consideration at a public hearing is longer than the timeframe at a public meeting. For instance, adoption of the TIP Priorities and TIP Final Program require a 30-day public review period, public advertisement, and a public hearing. TIP Amendments require a 21-day review period, and in special situations, a minimum of a 14-day review period. They require no public advertisement and are considered at a public meeting. Additionally, an official transcript or record of comments must be kept for a public hearing.

Public hearings and meetings require that anyone who wishes to speak has the opportunity to do so, although the time to speak may be limited and a request may be made that speakers with similar messages consolidate those messages.

CHAPTER 6: Public Participation Procedures

The TPO will adhere to the following procedures to ensure public participation in the transportation planning process.

Public Participation Plan

The TPO makes every attempt to coordinate its public participation process with state and local governments to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans and programs. The TPO will produce a new or updated PPP at least once every two years to continuously improve our outreach strategies to encourage public participation.

Adopting or amending the PPP requires a 45-day public review and comment period and includes:

- A legal advertisement placed in the aforementioned media outlets, thereby initiating the 45-day public review period;
- Notice of the public review and comment period is posted on PlanHillsborough.org;
- The PPP Draft is made available on PlanHillsborough.org under “Current Projects and Drafts,” as well as in the Planning Commission Library during regular business hours, for at least 45 days prior to TPO consideration;
- A post is made to the Hillsborough TPO’s social media accounts with a link to the PPP Draft;
- Formal presentations are made to the TPO Advisory Committees (CAC, TAC and Policy at a minimum) as an Action Item on the Agenda for review and comment prior to TPO Board consideration;
- Public comments will be accepted at each TPO Board and Advisory Committee meeting, and forwarded to the Board prior to adoption;
- Reviews and comments will be solicited from FDOT and other interested partner agencies.

The PPP will be evaluated and reviewed at least once every two years by TPO staff, Advisory Committees and the TPO Board. This process assures that the process complies with all statutory requirements, encourages complete and continued participation from all interested parties, and that it adapts in response to changing technologies, outreach strategies, and effectiveness results. A PPP *Measures of Effectiveness* (MOE) report will be presented to the TPO and its CAC, TAC, Policy, and TDCB committees at least once every two years. The MOE will summarize the TPO’s participation activities, measure the effectiveness of the TPO’s public engagement over the past two years, and analyze the results to inform recommendations for



continued improvement. Comments received will be reproduced in the MOE presentation to the TPO for consideration.

The PPP frames the TPO's approach to involving the public in its decision-making. Specific public outreach strategies may be pursued for individual projects. Such strategies may be tailored to fit unique circumstances or project requirements but will conform to the PPP.

PPP Amendment

For major amendments, updates, or new PPP documents, the procedures listed above will be followed. Minor changes and additions between LRTP update periods will be implemented through the advisory committee process. The appendices are provided for information and are not subject to amendment requirements. Public comment on the PPP will be taken at any time, considered, and implemented with the bi-annual review, as appropriate. Creative suggestions are encouraged throughout the process.

Long Range Transportation Plan

The LRTP identifies transportation improvements necessary to maintain adequate mobility and accommodate anticipated growth. The LRTP includes a comprehensive listing of highway, public transit, bicycle, pedestrian and freight movement needs, and identifies cost affordable projects through a 20-year horizon. Major public participation strategies are noted in [Appendix B](#), the Public Participation Toolbox, of this document.

Federal legislation requires the LRTP development to incorporate consultation with state and federal environmental protection, tribal government, wildlife management, land management, and historic preservation agencies. The TPO accomplishes this through Florida's Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process, which uses a web-based tool to solicit comments and provide information and map data to affected agencies. Other procedures include:

- Coordination with FDOT, HART, the jurisdictions and other partner agencies throughout LRTP development;
- Extensive public involvement plan developed and executed to provide early and continuing opportunities to participate in the development of the LRTP;
- Coordination with American Indian entities such as the Seminole Tribe of Florida, through contacts furnished by tribal governments and FDOT (these are listed in [Appendix G](#));
- Concerted initiatives to identify and engage groups and areas which may have been under-represented in the past (e.g., low income, minority, LEP, and disabled populations);
- TPO newsletters, web posts, social media, direct mail, email blasts and ads in newspapers are used at various points to notify the public of participation opportunities;
- Key technical documents posted for public review and comment on PlanHillsborough.org;

- The Draft LRTP is posted on the PlanHillsborough.org and available in the Planning Commission Library for public review during regular business hours;
- A 30-day public review and comment period as required, followed by a Public Hearing for TPO adoption of the LRTP;
- A good faith effort is made by posting signs, direct mail, or other means to inform the affected areas and notify parties potentially affected by the proposed LRTP;
- Two newspaper advertisements:
 - The first announcing the 30-day public review period and announcing the upcoming Public Hearing,
 - The second for the 10-day notice of the upcoming Public Hearing;
- Notice of the public review period and Public Hearing posted on the PlanHillsborough.org website;
- Formal presentations made to the TPO advisory committees as an Action Item on the Agenda for review and comment before the TPO Board considers adoption;
- In-person, written and electronic public comments accepted at each TPO Board and advisory committee meeting (when entirely virtual meetings must be conducted, there will be flexibility for public comment online and by phone);
- Soliciting review and comment by FDOT, HART, local jurisdictions, and other partner agencies;
- Adoption by a roll call or hand-counted vote of the TPO.



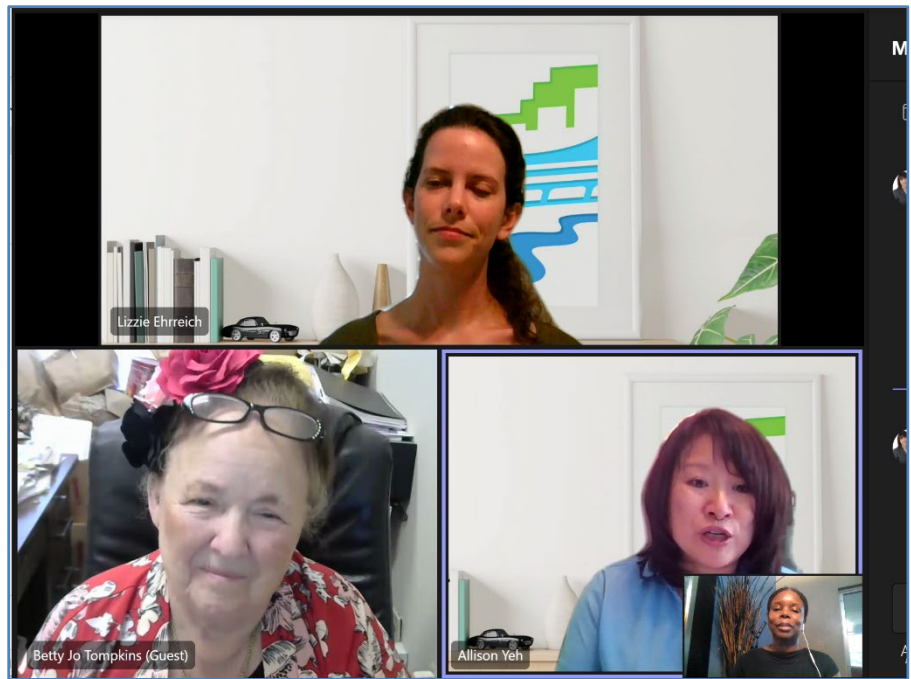
LRTP Amendment

An amendment is a major revision to the LRTP, such as adding or deleting a project, a major change in project costs, initiation dates, and/or design concept and scope, such as changing project locations or the number of through traffic lanes. Changes to the LRTP on projects included only for illustrative purposes do not require an amendment.

An amendment requires public review and comment, demonstration that the project can be completed within expected funding, and where appropriate, a finding that the change is

consistent with federal transportation air quality conformity mandates. The following outlines public participation procedures for an LRTP Amendment:

- A 15-day public review and comment period is required followed by a Public Hearing for an LRTP Amendment;
- One legal advertisement is placed announcing the 15-day review period, availability of the proposed LRTP Amendment on



PlanHillsborough.org, and announcing the upcoming Public Hearing;

- Notice of the public review period and Public Hearing is posted on PlanHillsborough.org;
- The proposed LRTP Amendment is posted on PlanHillsborough.org and is available in the Planning Commission Library for public review during regular business hours for at least 15 days prior to TPO consideration;
- Formal presentations are made to the TPO advisory committees (CAC, TAC and Policy Committee at a minimum) as an Action Item on the Agenda for review and comment before the TPO Board considers adoption;
- In-person, written or electronic public comments are accepted at each TPO Board and advisory committee meeting (when entirely virtual meetings must be conducted, there will be flexibility for public comment online and by phone);
- Evaluate and document whether any adverse social, economic, and environmental impacts to the community at large and to the underserved population, in particular, would result from implementation of the amended or updated plan;
- Review and comment by FDOT, HART, local jurisdictions, and other interested partner agencies is solicited.

LRTP Administrative Modification

An administrative modification is a revision to the LRTP for minor changes to a project including project phase costs, funding sources, and/or initiation dates.

An administrative modification requires neither public review and comment, demonstration that the project can be completed based within expected funding, nor a finding that the change is consistent with federal transportation requirements. LRTP administrative modifications are executed as follows:

- No public review requirement;
- Approved by the TPO Executive Director;
- LRTP document is modified and posted on PlanHillsborough.org.

Transportation Improvement Program

Revised annually to incorporate those projects in the LRTP having the highest priority and an ability to be funded, the TIP contains all transportation projects programmed for the upcoming five fiscal years. Projects are grouped by jurisdictional responsibility, which indicates the year, funding source and levels for each phase of the project. From a policy perspective, the TIP is particularly important in that it establishes the priorities for scheduling improvements to the



Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), including freight and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) strategies, federal Interstate highway system, local roadways and TPO priorities concerning transit, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environments, and transportation demand management programs. The TPO updates its priorities every year and includes them in the TIP document.



Federally funded projects and most state funded projects must be included in the TIP and are subject to TPO approval. Locally funded projects are included for informational purposes and are not subject to TPO approval.

When an updated TIP and new priorities are proposed, a Public Hearing is held to adopt them. The new priorities are used by FDOT for programming the new fifth year to be integrated into FDOT's Work Program.

The TPO adopts the updated TIP at a Public Hearing held the following summer to meet the July 15th state deadline for submittal each year. Steps in the process include:

- Coordination with FDOT, HART, local jurisdictions, and other partner agencies throughout TIP development;
- A 30-day public review and comment period before the TIP Public Hearing;
- Newspaper advertisements are placed to provide a 10-day notice of the TIP Public Hearing,
- Notice of the Public Hearing is also posted on PlanHillsborough.org;
- The Draft TIP document is posted on PlanHillsborough.org and available in the Planning Commission Library for public review during regular business hours for at least 30 days prior to TPO consideration;
- A good faith effort is made by posting signs, direct mail, or other means to inform the affected areas and notify parties potentially affected by the proposed TIP;
- Formal presentations are made to the TPO advisory committees as an Action Item on the Agenda for review and comment before the TPO Board considers adoption of the TIP;
- In-person, written and electronic public comments are accepted at each TPO Board and advisory committee meeting (when entirely virtual meetings must be conducted, there will be flexibility for public comment online and by phone);
- Review and comment by FDOT, HART, local jurisdictions, and other interested partner agencies are solicited;
- The TIP is published annually and posted on PlanHillsborough.org. In addition, the website features an interactive version of the TIP that allows users to search and map individual projects listed in the document.
- To improve transparency, the TIP indicates which projects cannot be unilaterally rescheduled or removed, per the Florida State Statutes, Section 339.175, Sub 8 (d).

We Want to Hear From You!

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Transportation Improvement Program
Wednesday - June 8, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.

Tune in: TinyURL.com/HCmeets
For more info: TinyURL.com/seetheTIP
Comments & Questions: TPO@plancom.org
or call 813-272-5940 press 9



 Hillsborough TPO
 Transportation
 Planning Organization

www.PlanHillsborough.org

TIP Amendment

A TIP Amendment is a major change to the TIP, including: adding or deleting a project; changes in project phase costs, initiation dates, and/or design concept and scope, such as changing project locations or the number of through traffic lanes; or a cost increase greater than 20% and \$2 million. An amendment requires public review and comment and re-demonstration of fiscal constraint. The following outlines public participation procedures for a TIP Amendment:

- A public review and comment period will coincide with the formal presentations made to the TPO advisory committees (at a minimum CAC, TAC and Policy Committee) as an Action Item on the Agenda for review and comment before the TPO consideration, which includes posting on PlanHillsborough.org at least three weeks before the TPO meeting, or in special situations, two weeks before the TPO meeting;
- An engagement effort that includes a social media post, a dedicated webpage on PlanHillsborough.org, a press release or newsletter article in the Plan Hillsborough newsletter, road signs, and mailers for projects requiring right-of-way acquisition;
- In-person public comments are accepted at each TPO Board and advisory committee meeting (when entirely virtual meetings must be conducted, there will be flexibility for public comment online and by phone);
- Review and comment by FDOT, HART, local jurisdictions, and other interested partner agencies are solicited, with public discussion opportunities among agencies at the TAC meeting;
- Approved by a roll call vote of the TPO Board;
- Amended TIP document is updated and posted on PlanHillsborough.org.



TIP Administrative Modifications

A TIP modification includes minor changes to an already adopted project's costs or to the cost of a project phase; minor changes to funding sources; changes to the initiation dates within the same fiscal year; changes to projects that are not federally funded; changes to information and projects included for illustrative purposes only; changes to information outside of the TIP period or not required to be included in the TIP per federal regulations; or changes to correct simple or data entry errors. Administrative modifications are executed as follows:

- No public review;
- Approved by the TPO Executive Director¹;
- TIP document is modified and placed on the PlanHillsborough.org website.

Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

To make the project funding process as transparent as possible, no later than 90 days after the end of the program year (i.e., the fiscal year ending September 30th), in combination with FDOT, HART and other public transportation operators, the TPO develops a list of projects in Hillsborough County – including bicycle and pedestrian projects – for which federal transportation funds were obligated (i.e., funds contractually committed to a project) in the previous program year. Based on the TIP, the list describes the project by name, to/from limits, type, funding source, and amounts obligated to specific project phases. The TPO posts this information each year on PlanHillsborough.org.

Air Quality Conformity Determination

Hillsborough County has attained air quality standards for ozone (a contributor to smog), and therefore, is not required to determine whether its Plan will have an adverse impact on air quality, an analysis known as a conformity determination.



Unified Planning Work Program

The UPWP defines the transportation planning activities and products to be developed by the TPO and other transportation planning agencies including FDOT and HART for a two-year period. Updated bi-annually, it is the basis for allocating federal, state, and local funds for transportation planning activities.

UPWP public participation opportunities are included in the process as follows:

- The UPWP requires a 30-day public review and comment period prior to TPO adoption in May;
- In February/March concurrent with the development of the new draft two-year UPWP; staff solicits planning project suggestions from TPO committees;
- A UPWP Draft will be available by March 15th for transmittal to FDOT and federal agencies;

¹ Federal Aid Technical Bulletin 10-03 from FDOT’s Federal Aid Office

- Formal presentations will be made at public meetings of TPO advisory committees such as the CAC, TAC and Policy Committee for review and comment before the TPO Board considers adoption no later than May 15th);
- In-person, written or electronic public comment is accepted at each TPO Board and advisory committee meeting (when entirely virtual meetings must be conducted, there will be flexibility for public comment online and by phone).



All UPWP Revisions

UPWP Amendments must be approved by the FDOT, FHWA and/or FTA. Since the UPWP is updated bi-annually, there is likely to be at least one amendment when state and federal budgets are approved each year. Revisions to the UPWP involving FHWA and FTA funds fall into two categories:

1. **Minor Amendments:** do not change the approved FHWA and/or FTA budget or scope funded work tasks.
2. **Major Amendments:** change the FHWA and/or FTA approved budget, change the scope of funded work tasks, or add or delete a work task.

UPWP Minor Amendments are executed as follows:

- Notify the FDOT District TPO Liaison and the FHWA and/or FTA within the consultation process prior to its execution by the TPO (no approval is required);
- No public review requirement;
- Approved by the TPO Executive Director;
- The revised UPWP is posted on PlanHillsborough.org.

The Hillsborough TPO will provide opportunities for public review and comment of UPWP Major Amendments as follows:

- Draft UPWP Amendment is posted on PlanHillsborough.org with the meeting packets at least seven days prior to each meeting;
- Formal presentation to the Policy Committee and/or directly to the TPO Board for approval;
- In-person, written or electronic public comment to be accepted at each TPO Board and advisory committee meeting (when entirely virtual meetings must be conducted, there will be flexibility for public comment online and by phone);
- Final approval by the TPO Board.

Transportation Disadvantaged Program

Established by the Hillsborough TPO in 1990, the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB) serves as the Local Coordinating Board (LCB) for Hillsborough County in order to guide and coordinate transportation services with the goal of improving quality of life for:

- Children who are at high risk;
- The elderly;
- Those who have physical or mental disabilities; and
- Low income or economically disadvantaged.



Public participation is a priority as outreach is targeted to people in our community most in need of services. Created by the TDCB's Outreach & Awareness subcommittee, the *Ride Guide* is a great example of outreach material consolidating relevant information for the transportation disadvantaged in Pasco, Pinellas, and Hillsborough Counties. An annual evaluation of the Sunshine Line (paratransit service) is conducted by the TDCB, including a direct-mail survey of more than 6,000 customers of the service. Other forums and public engagement opportunities are used to continue public involvement throughout the year.

The Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan is an annually updated tactical plan jointly developed by the Planning Agency and the Coordinator, which contains development, service and quality assurance components. The TDCB's Planning subcommittee provides input to the plan's development. The Local Coordinating Board reviews and approves the Service Plan, and it is submitted to the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged for final action.

According to the CTD Handbook, the TDSP planning process must allow representatives of public, private and non-profit transportation; human services providers; and the public to participate.

Stakeholders may include:

- **Transportation planners and providers** – area transportation planning agencies; public transit and ADA transit providers; and private transportation providers such as brokers, taxi operators, vanpool providers, ride-share providers and intercity bus operators.
- **Passengers and advocates** – existing and potential riders; protection and advocacy organizations; representatives from independent living centers; advocacy organizations working on behalf of targeted populations.
- **Human service partners** – agencies that administer health, employment or other support programs for targeted populations; job training and placement agencies; housing agencies; health care facilities; and mental health providers.
- **Others** – emergency and security management agencies; tribes and tribal representatives; economic development organizations, faith-based and community-based organizations; representatives of the business community (employers); appropriate local or state officials and elected officials; and school districts.

Other TPO Plans & Studies

The TPO often prepares plans and studies focusing on particular sub-areas, corridors or specific project areas. These may be carried out by staff and/or consultants, and the scope and level of detail of such products can vary greatly, as can the level of public involvement and engagement technique. There are no set requirements, but the TPO makes a practice of engaging the community in such plans and studies early and continuously. The TPO strives to identify affected parties and invite them to collaborate as stakeholders.



Ideally, constituents will be invited to participate throughout the process and help shape the plan or study by:

- Identifying the issues or problem statement;
 - Defining goals, objectives and prioritization factors;
 - Developing alternative solutions;
 - Reaching a consensus on the preferred alternative; and
 - Reviewing and commenting on draft plans and studies.
- At a minimum, the TPO will provide timely notification of all such plans or studies as they develop in draft form and allow the public ample opportunity to review and comment on them before being adopted or approved by the TPO. Staff will forward all

relevant comments to the TPO board prior to acting, along with a synopsis and response to all pertinent issues.

Public Engagement in Emergency Situations

- *Public participation during periods of social distancing.* To reduce the spread of contagious illnesses, government facilities may be temporarily closed to the public and/or in-person meetings limited or suspended. In such situations, virtual meetings will replace in-person meetings until in-person meetings can be held safely. TPO staff will work to provide equal access to all constituents and will continue to be available via phone and email.

Public notices and meeting agendas will continue to be posted on the agency's website and other media, consistent with the procedures outlined in Chapter 5. Notices will provide information about how the public can access the meeting, such as a call-in number, PIN, virtual meeting link.

Members of the public will continue to be encouraged to make comments, by telephone, email, the Facebook event page, and during public meetings online. Advance comments left on voicemail for consideration at public meetings will be screened for profanity and played into the record. Written messages received in advance will continue to be distributed to board/committee members and verbally summarized by staff during the meeting.

- *Public participation in disaster recovery.* In the event of a weather-related or other disaster, power or internet outages may prevent the TPO from posting meeting notices online or holding public meetings in its usual locations. Alternate meeting locations may be announced, with preference given to local or state government facilities that are centrally located, ADA compliant, and accessible via transit to the extent that transit is available. Public notice may be given by radio or other media announcement, and/or by physically posting a notice at the County Center building, or other local or state government building if the County Center building is not available.
- To maintain continuity of operations during such emergency conditions, meetings of the TPO Board may be scheduled with less than 5-day meeting notice. In addition, a quorum of board or advisory committee members at a publicly noticed virtual meeting may provide direction to staff, and later ratify the board or committee's intent with a vote at its next in-person public meeting.

