

# SEDA-COG MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

A Reference Guide to Public Involvement for Planning Activities in the SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Region

Prepared by:

**SEDA-COG MPO** 

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#### SEDA-COG MPO Public Participation Plan EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### **SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization Role**

The SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is responsible for transportation planning for the eight-county Central Pennsylvania region (Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union counties). The MPO consists of voting members representing each member county, the two largest municipalities, transportation planning and service agencies, PennDOT, and others, as well as additional non-voting members.

The SEDA-COG MPO follows a federally prescribed process to allocate public funds for transportation system improvements. These responsibilities are carried out through four primary decision-making documents: the region's 20-year Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan, and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

#### Purpose and Goals of the Public Participation Plan

MPOs are required to establish and follow a Public Participation Plan (PPP). The PPP documents the methods SEDA-COG will use to inform and engage the region's diverse residents and stakeholders in the transportation planning process, in compliance with federal non-discrimination laws. The PPP is updated every three years to address ongoing changes in regional demographics and socioeconomics, communication methods and preferences, and regulatory requirements.

SEDA-COG MPO's Public Participation Plan is guided by six goals that set the framework for outreach and involvement in the MPO's transportation decision-making processes.

- 1. Extend the reach of the participation program.
- 2. Encourage diversity of participants.
- 3. Increase the impact of participation.
- 4. Increase participant satisfaction.
- 5. Realize opportunities for education.
- 6. Formalize the use of performance indicators.

#### **Public Participation Strategies**

The SEDA-COG MPO uses a wide range of strategies and public engagement techniques to provide for meaningful participation, including:

- Communication by mail, phone, fax, e-mail, or person-to-person contact
- Public meetings, workshops, open houses, and hearings that are held at convenient and accessible locations and times
- Distribution of public notices and press releases
- Distribution of reports, fact sheets, maps, and other documents for planning efforts



- SEDA-COG's website for documents, meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, news, etc.
- Paper copies of draft plans placed at county, municipal, and agency offices
- Distribution of an MPO e-newsletter
- Dissemination of public surveys and comment forms
- Posts and announcements through SEDA-COG's social media accounts
- Partnering with community, civic, non-profit, and business groups to share information and host public input sessions
- Consulting with agencies and officials working with traditionally underserved populations or responsible for planning activities affected by transportation
- Publicizing that translation, interpretation, or other auxiliary services are available to the public
- Visualization aids to help the public understand transportation plans and/or programs
- Cross-promoting and working with data from state agency public surveys

The SEDA-COG MPO tracks activity by strategy and monitors a range of indicators to evaluate effectiveness and inform future strategy updates as needs and tools change. Process checklists for the MPO's primary planning documents ensure that strategies are consistently implemented.

#### **Outreach to Residents and Businesses**

The SEDA-COG MPO ensures that all outreach strategies, communications, and public involvement efforts comply with Title VI, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other federal and state requirements. The MPO makes concerted efforts to involve members of all socioeconomic and demographic groups in the public involvement process. The PPP specifies techniques for engaging:

- Minority Populations
- Low-Income Persons
- Limited English Proficiency Individuals
- Disabled Individuals
- Zero-Car Households
- Senior Citizens

The SEDA-COG MPO Limited English Proficiency Plan provides additional detail on how the MPO accommodates speakers of other languages to encourage their involvement in transportation planning.



#### SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

SEDA-COG is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the following eight counties: Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union. The MPO's vision for the eight-county region is an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient and safe movement of people and goods while maintaining the region's character, enhancing the quality of life, and strengthening economic vitality.

#### **SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization**

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The SEDA-COG MPO is funded by a variety of funding sources including grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, as well as by SEDA-COG's local member governments. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the funding agencies.

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#### Deutsche

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#### TRANSPORTATION ACRONYMS

**ACM** Agency Coordination Meeting

ADA Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

**EJ** Environmental Justice

FHWA Federal Highway Administration
FTA Federal Transit Administration
GIS Geographic Information System

LAP Language Assistance Plan
LEP Limited English Proficiency

**LRTP** Long-Range Transportation Plan

MPMS Multimodal Project Management System

MPO Metropolitan Planning Organization

**PennDOT** Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

PPP Public Participation Plan

**SEDA-COG** SEDA-Council of Governments

STIP Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

TIP Transportation Improvement Program

**UZA** Urbanized Area

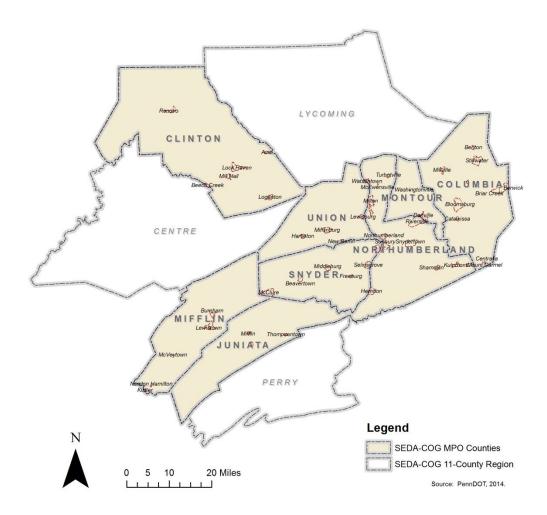
**UPWP** Unified Planning Work Program

**USDOT** United States Department of Transportation

#### 1. OVERVIEW

#### **About SEDA-COG**

SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG) is a multi-faceted public development organization serving 11 counties in Central Pennsylvania. SEDA-COG's mission is to enhance the quality of life and economic advantage for residents and businesses in the 11-county region through its vital partnerships and initiatives. Policies are established by a 22-member Board and carried out by a professional staff with expertise in a wide range of fields. SEDA-COG is committed to working with the region's counties, communities, companies, and individuals to enhance growth opportunities in an environmentally sensitive manner, while retaining the region's predominantly rural character.



#### The SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization

The SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the official transportation planning organization for eight Central Pennsylvania counties—Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Mifflin,

Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union—as designated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on March 27, 2013. Prior to that date, these counties were part of the SEDA-COG Rural Planning Organization (RPO). The 2010 U.S. Census resulted in a new urbanized area (UZA) determination that required the formation of an MPO for the affected Bloomsburg-Berwick UZA. Local and state parties agreed to make the MPO coverage contain the entirety of the eight counties listed above.

The SEDA-COG MPO operates via an agreement with PennDOT to approve studies and capital improvements for highways, bridges, transit, railroads, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and other transportation concerns. Four primary documents are developed and approved by the MPO: the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Public Participation Plan (PPP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). In executing its work, the MPO strives to help provide a balanced transportation system for the maximum benefit of people, businesses, and communities in the region.

Consistent with its bylaws, the SEDA-COG MPO's governing body consists of 17 voting members: one representative from each of the eight member counties (typically the county planning director); three representatives from PennDOT (Engineering District 2-0, Engineering District 3-0, and Central Office); one representative from transit; one representative from multimodal interests; one representative from the SEDA-COG Board; one representative from SEDA-COG's Transportation Program; one representative from the largest municipality (by population) in the Bloomsburg-Berwick UZA; and one representative from the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest municipality (by population) in the Bloomsburg-Berwick UZA. In addition to the 17 voting members, the MPO includes non-voting members. Such non-voting members receive MPO reports and agendas and may participate in MPO discussions. Non-voting members include, among others: Lycoming County officials, Centre County officials, Luzerne County officials, Federal Highway Administration officials, Federal Transit Administration officials, SEDA-COG staff, other state and federal resource agencies, and private citizens with an interest in transportation and economic development throughout the region.

#### **MPO Transportation Planning Documents & Activities**

The SEDA-COG MPO carries out the metropolitan planning process for the eight-county MPO region. In doing so, the MPO has adopted and regularly updates and amends a core set of plans and programs.

Document	Required Update Cycle	Next Update Planned for Adoption
Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	5 years	2026
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	2 years	2022
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	Triennially	2025
Unified Planning Work Program	Biennially	2023
Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services	Periodically	2024
Transportation Plan		

Much of the SEDA-COG MPO's public participation effort is associated with these plans, as they are the most influential and far-reaching in guiding transportation investments. Public participation is critical to the ongoing improvement and adaptation of these plans to the everchanging needs, priorities, and circumstances of the MPO region.

In addition, the MPO may generate other plans and technical studies, including corridor improvement plans, bicycle and pedestrian plans, and land use/economic analysis.

#### Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The SEDA-COG MPO is required to conduct a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process. Developing an LRTP is an integral part of this process. The LRTP identifies transportation conditions, needs, goals, projects, and policies for a minimum 20-year horizon. It is updated at five-year intervals for the SEDA-COG MPO region. The most recent <a href="SEDA-COG MPO LRTP">SEDA-COG MPO LRTP</a> was adopted in June 2021, and an LRTP update is planned for adoption by June 2026.

The SEDA-COG MPO LRTP establishes the vision and objectives that guide public decisions affecting transportation facilities and services in the region. It serves as the blueprint for transportation and economic investments that address network deficiencies, safety issues, mobility constraints, accessibility limitations, and unsustainable development. The SEDA-COG MPO staff coordinates development of the LRTP with residents of the region, a diverse steering committee, and other local, state, and federal agencies.

Consistent with the LRTP's performance monitoring, the MPO staff provides an annual report on the performance measures included in the plan. These performance measures are designed to examine the condition of our transportation system and gauge the effectiveness of the strategies developed for implementation.

#### Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is the regionally agreed-upon list of priority projects, which consists of the first four years of PennDOT's Twelve-Year Program (TYP). The TIP consists of modal and multimodal projects, including traditional highway/bridge and transit projects, along with bicycle/pedestrian, aviation, and freight-related improvements.

The TIP is comprehensively updated every two years in Pennsylvania, but between updates, it is a "living document" that is revised regularly by the MPO. As guided by the regional SEDA-COG TIP Revisions Procedures, TIP Amendments address major changes, such as the addition or deletion of a project or a substantial change in project cost, schedule, or overall project scope. TIP Administrative Modifications address minor changes.

#### Public Participation Plan (PPP)

This document, the PPP, ensures that the SEDA-COG MPO's public involvement activities comply with applicable federal and state metropolitan transportation planning regulations. The

PPP was developed based on consultation with stakeholders and includes regional overview information and a framework of goals, objectives, and strategies for accomplishing an effective and compliant public participation process in SEDA-COG's transportation planning efforts. The PPP includes procedures for implementing public involvement as well as indicators for evaluating the performance of the plan and suggesting future improvements.

#### **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

The UPWP describes the planning program and scope of activities for the MPO. It identifies the transportation planning activities that the SEDA-COG MPO intends to accomplish during a two-year period using federal, state, and local resources. Included in the UPWP is a budget which details how resources will be utilized. The UPWP is reviewed, updated, and re-adopted biennially.

#### Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

The Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) examines the breadth of regional human services needs that trigger a need for public transit service. The plan is called out as a requirement for accessing certain federal grant programs, particularly the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Formula Grants for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (49 U.S.C. 5310). The most recent Coordinated Plan was completed jointly with the Williamsport Metropolitan Planning Organization and was adopted in September 2019.

#### Other Planning Activities and Special Studies

Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Municipal Outreach — SEDA-COG has partnered with PennDOT to provide the region's municipalities with free training through LTAP. LTAP offers various training courses dealing with roadway maintenance and safety. Technical assistance is also available. The goals of the LTAP program are:

- Increase municipal expertise
- Improve safety for client and public
- Increase professional communication
- Disseminate information
- Promote the implementation of research
- Provide tailored training materials
- Meet municipal government needs

Special Studies – SEDA-COG routinely conducts special supplemental studies that evaluate transportation, land use, and economic development issues. Some prior studies have investigated special community-level traffic concerns, transportation elements of comprehensive plans, Smart Transportation corridor studies, bicycle/pedestrian safety studies, interchange studies, etc.

#### 2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan is to document and publicize the methods the SEDA-COG MPO uses for public engagement related to transportation planning and programming. The PPP also serves as a guide for MPO staff and consultants to ensure compliance with public participation commitments. The SEDA-COG MPO seeks to provide the public with convenient and timely information and to simplify participation in transportation planning processes. For ease of reference and to encourage broader public participation, highlights of the PPP are provided in the "Your Voice Matters" fact sheet, which will be made available at SEDA-COG offices, website, public meetings. The SEDA-COG MPO will make all reasonable modifications to policies, programs, and documents to ensure that people with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency have an equal opportunity to participate in all its programs, services, and activities. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, documents in alternative formats or languages, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of the SEDA-COG MPO should contact SEDA-COG at (570) 524-4491 as soon as possible but no later than five days before scheduled events.

Public participation encompasses all the activities that seek to reasonably inform and involve citizens, affected public agencies, operators of transportation services, and representative users of the transportation system in the transportation planning process. The ongoing development and maintenance of the transportation system is performed best when the users of the system participate in the planning process, bringing diversified viewpoints into the process that shapes how transportation investments will be made.

#### **Plan Development with Interested Parties**

Interested parties were engaged both in developing the underpinning goals of this Public Participation Plan and in editing/refining the draft plan. The following interested parties were actively involved during development of the draft PPP:

#### Management Team:

- Federal Highway Administration Pennsylvania Division Office
- Federal Transit Administration Region III Office of Planning & Program Development
- PennDOT Bureau of Equal Opportunity
- PennDOT District 2-0 Planning & Programming Unit
- PennDOT District 3-0 Planning & Programming Unit
- PennDOT Program Center
- SEDA-COG Transportation Planning Program

#### Via Focus Group Meetings:

- Clinton County Housing Authority
- Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging

- Northumberland County Housing Authority
- Union-Snyder Community Action Agency
- Union/Snyder Area Agency on Aging
- Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
- Pennsylvania Statewide Center for Independent Living

#### Via MPO Outreach and Committee Meetings:

All MPO Committee Members

#### **Public Participation Goals**

SEDA-COG MPO's Public Participation Plan is guided by six goals that set the framework for outreach and involvement in the MPO's transportation decision-making processes.

- 1. Extend the <u>reach</u> of the participation program. The MPO desires to increase the number of participants in the transportation planning process. This includes strengthening communication networks among local, regional, and state planning partners to increase public access and transparency of information and operations. Accordingly, the MPO intends to expand the use of existing electronic and new media communications (see examples defined below in Strategies section) alongside the known effective traditional approaches to make the participation process more inviting and convenient.
- 2. **Encourage diversity of participants.** The SEDA-COG MPO desires to increase engagement with minority, low-income, limited English proficient, disabled, senior citizen, and youth populations. The MPO recognizes the benefit of stimulating involvement by a broad range of persons with a variety of perspectives and interests in the transportation system.
- 3. Increase the <u>impact</u> of participation. As participation is extended, the MPO aims to better manage and apply that feedback to the decision-making process. This includes the internal conduits by which feedback is presented to decision-makers, as well as the response back to participants and all interested parties—so that there is better accountability and follow-up to ensure the effective influence of public participation.
- 4. **Increase participant** <u>satisfaction</u>. Participants in the planning process desire to come away feeling that they understood the material presented, were respected, their point of view made a difference, and their effort was worthwhile. The MPO aims to enhance its use of comment forms and various modes of surveying to gauge satisfaction with the participation process, including the content and quality of communication materials.
- 5. **Realize opportunities for <u>education</u>**. SEDA-COG desires to expand the baseline knowledge about transportation issues, how transportation investments are made, and

the opportunities that citizens have to influence the planning process. The MPO will seek to raise awareness about the MPO's existence, function, and role in transportation decision-making through more attention to branding, linkages with agency partners, and an increasing presence in the communities served.

6. **Formalize the use of <u>performance</u>** indicators. The MPO will formalize a set of indicators for measuring and tracking the effectiveness of public involvement strategies to evaluate goals and support continuous improvement efforts.

#### **Public Participation Objectives**

The objectives of the SEDA-COG MPO's Public Participation Plan incorporate all of the fundamental federal guidance for public participation at the MPO level (23 C.F.R. § 450.316) as well as other MPO objectives. The objectives have been fitted to each plan goal, as follows:

1. Extend the <u>reach</u> of the participation program.

OBJECTIVE: Provide adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the draft long-range transportation plan, TIP, and PPP.

OBJECTIVE: Coordinate with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes for:

- Transit agencies that receive federal funds
- Agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive federal assistance from a source other than the USDOT to provide non-emergency transportation services
- Agencies that maintain/operate roadways or other transportation services on federal or state lands

OBJECTIVE: Make public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, making full use of Internet capabilities and virtual public involvement opportunities.

OBJECTIVE: Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times. Continue or expand virtual public involvement techniques.

#### 2. Encourage diversity of participants.

OBJECTIVE: Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.

#### 3. Increase the impact of participation.

OBJECTIVE: Provide an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final LRTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts.

OBJECTIVE: Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the LRTP and the TIP.

#### 4. Increase participant satisfaction.

OBJECTIVE: Provide concise and well-organized plan materials within a transportation planning process that is well-defined and easily understood.

OBJECTIVE: Employ visualization techniques to describe LRTPs and TIPs.

#### 5. Realize opportunities for education.

OBJECTIVE: Provide timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.

#### 6. Formalize the use of performance indicators.

OBJECTIVE: Periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the public participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

#### 3. STRATEGIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is essential to effective transportation planning. Meaningful public participation helps produce better decisions and avoid unintended negative impacts from transportation projects. The SEDA-COG MPO uses a wide range of strategies and public engagement techniques to provide for meaningful participation, including:

- Communication by mail, phone, fax, e-mail, or person-to-person contact
- Public meetings, workshops, open houses, and hearings that are held at convenient and accessible locations and times
- Distribution of public notices and press releases
- Distribution of reports, fact sheets, maps, and other documents for planning efforts
- SEDA-COG's website for documents, meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, news, etc.
- Paper copies of draft plans placed at county, municipal, and agency offices
- Distribution of an MPO e-newsletter
- Dissemination of public surveys and comment forms
- Posts and announcements through SEDA-COG's social media accounts
- Partnering with community, civic, non-profit, and business groups to share information and host public input sessions
- Consulting with agencies and officials working with traditionally underserved populations or responsible for planning activities affected by transportation
- Publicizing that translation, interpretation, or other auxiliary services are available to the public
- Visualization aids to help the public understand transportation plans and/or programs
- Cross-promoting and working with data from state agency public surveys

More details on several of these techniques follow. Through this PPP and subsequent updates, the SEDA-COG MPO will expand its existing community engagement activities through the incorporation of proposed new and traditional media strategies with existing ones. These strategies are designed to develop a more robust PPP that offers more access throughout the planning region.

#### **Electronic, New Media Strategies**

Regional planning organizations—particularly those like SEDA-COG, that are responsible for large geographic areas with dispersed, lower-density populations—are looking to electronic and other non-traditional methods of communications to fulfill their plan goals. This update of the SEDA-COG MPO Public Participation Plan will promote and support the use of more electronic and "new media" resources (virtual meeting software, apps, social media, online surveying) to extend accessibility to broader community segments who are using smart phones and all types of mobile and desktop computers as their primary means of sending and receiving information. Through future updates, the Public Participation Plan will continue to evolve to reflect the evolving communication methods and trends of the communities served.

To fulfill the goals of this plan update, the following menu of electronic, new media, and traditional strategies will be utilized:

#### **SEDA-COG Website**

The SEDA-COG website (<a href="www.seda-cog.org">www.seda-cog.org</a>) currently provides an online presence and multi-purpose platform for information dissemination and public feedback. The site is actively monitored and maintained by SEDA-COG staff to keep the site current and implement new features.

#### Existing SEDA-COG website functionality:

- Identification and description of the MPO's role in metropolitan transportation planning and its bylaws for operation.
- Clearinghouse for current and draft MPO planning documents, including the Long-Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Public Participation Plan, Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan, Unified Planning Work Program, Strategic Plan, and Middle Susquehanna Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan.
- Links to transportation resources, particularly those relevant to grant programs, statewide plans, and interactive visualization tools.
- Links to other transportation planning organizations, planning efforts, studies, and improvement projects throughout the region.
- Notification point for MPO Committee meetings, other public meetings, and public involvement activities associated with plan review and updates.
- Repository for MPO Committee Meeting agendas, packets, recordings, and minutes of past meetings.
- SEDA-COG Calendar of Events.
- Comment portal for online feedback.
- Document translation request form.

Providing this broad online functionality helps fulfill the MPO's mission to extend public access across SEDA-COG's large geographic area. The MPO will enhance the webpage resource by adding proposed interactive features, such as expanded functionality of SEDA-COG's website.

#### Proposed expanded SEDA-COG website functionality:

- Additional interactive features within the resources of the MPO and maintenance capabilities and expertise of the SEDA-COG IT staff (e.g., surveys, social media connections, and GIS-based mapping—within the available resources, maintenance capabilities, and staff expertise of the MPO).
- Link the SEDA-COG website from planning partners' websites as part of an Agency Coordination Effort to establish an online planning informational network in the region. This will increase the number of access points through which the general public may locate planning update documents for review and comment.

• More online availability of public meeting information to supplement public meetings conducted at physical locations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, SEDA-COG MPO initially transitioned to solely virtual MPO Committee meetings and then pivoted to hybrid meetings that accommodated either in-person or virtual participation. The meetings were recorded using software powered by Zoom and afterward uploaded to SEDA-COG's YouTube channel and posted on the MPO's website. This practice will continue and could be expanded to other meetings sponsored by the MPO. Further, brief videos about MPO plans and studies could be created and shared over social media or placed on the MPO website.

#### Google Analytics

Google Analytics is a service offered by Google that generates detailed statistics about a website's traffic and traffic sources. The basic service is free and provides a "dashboard" of general webpage usage data, with more in-depth data available through various reporting functions. The service requires minimal modification of the website coding. SEDA-COG has completed the necessary website modifications and is currently using the analytics data.

#### Google Translate

Google Translate is a translation service that provides instant translations between dozens of different languages. It can translate words, sentences, and entire webpages in supported languages. SEDA-COG has integrated Google Translate into its website, such that any HTML programmed webpage may be translated between English (base language) and any of the supported languages. (It is worth noting that Google Translate will not translate PDF files between languages.)

In keeping with current best practices, SEDA-COG updated the Google Translate function to show a flag icon alongside 10 of the most common language names for easier identification.

#### Other Electronic Outreach Methods - Existing

The regular maintenance of well-organized contact databases support effective e-mail blast efforts and online engagement platforms in which information is shared with large groups of recipients in an efficient and coordinated way. The SEDA-COG MPO primarily maintains and uses the following for electronic outreach:

#### • Interested Parties Database

The MPO maintains an Interested Parties Database of contact information pursuant to federal planning regulations and for those who wish to be notified directly of transportation planning activities, public meetings, and modifications to the MPO's primary planning documents. Interested parties include all citizens, as well as agencies, government entities, and their representatives. An Interested Party may be added to the database by:

- Contacting the MPO staff via phone or e-mail with name and e-mail address and requesting to be added to the Interested Parties Database.
- Completing the online Comments Form with name and e-mail address and requesting to be added to the Interested Parties Database.
- Indicating on a Public Comment Form the request to be added to the Interested Parties Database.

The MPO maintains the database regularly, updating it as staffing changes occur or in response to undeliverable e-mails sent as part of frequent draft plan comment period notices. A summary of the database (in Distribution List format with e-mails and other contact information removed) is included in **Appendix R.1**.

#### Mailing Lists

The MPO also maintains other mailing and e-mailing lists for more specific purposes where the Interested Parties Database is too broad or otherwise not appropriate. For instance, an individual who is participating in a Long-Range Transportation Plan Update but does not wish to receive notifications about future TIP Updates or Amendments might wish to be added to the LRTP-specific mailing list only.

#### Online E-mail Marketing Service

Online e-mail marketing services offer a platform for designing, distributing, and tracking e-mail correspondence. The MPO uses Constant Contact to disseminate specific e-mail and electronic newsletter campaigns. The MPO initiated its quarterly e-newsletters in 2020 and has seen healthy open and click rates from the nearly 270 recipients on the e-newsletter contact list. The e-newsletters are also posted to the MPO's website and promoted on social media.

#### SurveyMonkey

SurveyMonkey is an online survey tool that offers a variety of templates to facilitate easy survey creation. The SEDA-COG MPO has successfully used SurveyMonkey to support many plan updates, committee polling, training needs queries, etc. It features easy question creation and custom branding to help identify a survey with a particular project or planning activity. With a single URL, responses can be gathered through e-mail, links on websites, Facebook pages, and Twitter feeds. Data collected can be sorted by cross tabs and filters and reported in several ways including tables, charts, and graphs. The online interface/display is compliant for accessibility by persons with visual disabilities.

#### Social Media

SEDA-COG MPO staff collaborate with the SEDA-COG Communications Coordinator to issue public information on social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Announcements for transportation plan comment periods, public meetings, grant funding rounds, published final reports, PennDOT initiatives, etc., are shared over the social media platforms. Further, MPO meeting recordings are posted to SEDA-COG's YouTube channel.

#### • Online Mapping Tools

The MPO develops and maintains interactive online maps for various plan updates and public engagement efforts. SEDA-COG GIS staff spearhead these efforts, building and maintaining interactive Web maps with <u>ArcGIS Online</u>, Esri's Web-based mapping software. SEDA-COG hosts a variety of maps that effectively share staff data and insights for exploration and analysis by interested parties and the public. In addition, as part of developing the 2021 Long-Range Transportation Plan, the MPO started using <u>ArcGIS Hub</u> to engage and collaborate with area stakeholders by sharing data, maps, and applications on user-friendly Hub websites.

#### Other Electronic Outreach Methods – Proposed

- Online Survey Tools Although these tools are not explicitly required by federal or state guidelines, they can be useful alternative methods for collecting feedback.
  - MetroQuest is an online survey tool utilized effectively for planning and transportation projects. The survey can be a separate webpage or integrated/embedded into an existing website. Using mapping and visuals, MetroQuest guides users through the process of learning about a planning project and providing valuable input. Below is a summary of the different types of screens and information that can be utilized:
    - **Surveys/Polls** Surveys and other types of polling can be created to gather feedback and demographic information from the public.
    - Ideas Submission Polls or topic discussions can provide a comment field for open-ended feedback. Mapping features allow users to place icons and identify specific projects or concerns. Specific roadways and travel routes may also be identified. The data may be saved and exported into GIS-compatible formats.
    - **Prioritization Activities** The public can participate in prioritizing plan topics and/or funding strategies.
    - Report Results Comments, ideas, and poll results can be exported.
    - Analytics Demographic data can be gathered using polls or surveys.

#### www.metroquest.com

• <u>MindMixer</u> is a public participation tool founded by urban planners to address the challenge of effectively engaging the public. The site functions like a traditional website, but also offers the following features and capabilities:

- Ideas Submission The public can submit ideas, which can also be tied to locations on dynamic maps. Administrators and stakeholders can leave feedback and updates on ideas submitted by participants, helping keep the conversation going and ensuring participants that their voices are being heard.
- **Prioritization Activities** The public can participate in prioritizing plan topics or funding opportunities.
- **Surveys/Polls** Surveys or polls can be created to gather information from the public.
- Report Results Comments, ideas, and poll results can be exported into a variety of workable formats to measure public feedback.
- **Analytics** Demographic data can be gathered by topic and reported to analyze who is commenting and from what area they reside.

#### www.mindmixer.com

 Visualization Tools – Visualizations provide information and context that narrative alone is unable to convey. SEDA-COG MPO will consider taking advantage of visualization techniques that provide the public with an increased understanding of what proposed transportation projects will look like and mean for their communities. These techniques could include photo simulations, 3-D images, videos, animations, aerial footage, etc.

The following visualization tools are already hosted by PennDOT, and links to these tools are included on the SEDA-COG webpage. The SEDA-COG MPO will use these tools in its ongoing planning activities and promote their use among planning partners.

PennDOT's TIP Visualization Application provides the public with an informational portal for learning about and viewing improvements to state highways and bridges, as well as to aviation, public transit, and rail freight modes of transportation. The TIP Visualization portal is a web-based GIS mapping application for highway, bridge, aviation, and transit projects on the Commonwealth's Twelve-Year Plan (transportation program) and regional TIPs. Users can map and obtain information for highway and bridge projects on various geographical levels, including PennDOT Engineering District, County, Legislative District, Planning Partner, and Address.

#### https://gis.penndot.gov/paprojects/TipVisMap.aspx

 <u>PennDOT's One Map</u> application is a system designed to support the provision of improvements to state highways and bridges, as well as to aviation, public transit, and rail freight modes of transportation. Like the TIP Visualization portal, One Map is a web-based GIS mapping application that allows users to search for projects using criteria such as Location, Planning Partner, Legislative District, PennDOT Engineering District, and Highway Occupancy Permits (HOPs). Projects can also be mapped individually by MPMS Project ID number or by Bridge Key. One Map provides a wealth of layers beyond what exists in the TIP Visualization portal and allows users to import their own data and print/share maps.

#### https://gis.penndot.gov/OneMap/

PennDOT's Pennsylvania Transportation and Heritage (PATH) application is an online database and communication tool to facilitate consultation between PennDOT and the public on cultural resources that may be affected by its projects. PATH provides users with a searchable database of historical resource listings per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Pennsylvania State History Code undertakings on all transportation projects programmed on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. Users can search for a project by location, name, or PennDOT MPMS number. PATH also offers an e-mail alert system to inform users about transportation projects in their community, and/or based upon interest categories, that may have the potential to affect historic resources.

https://path.penndot.gov/

#### Traditional Outreach Strategies – Existing

#### MPO Meetings and Other Public Meetings

These provide an opportunity for the public to provide comments on MPO business and planning projects. The details of public meetings should be well-planned in advance (see example Public Meeting Plan in **Appendix R.2**) to assist in the identification, development, and creation of all materials, including advertisements, allocation of public meeting location space (see example Public Meeting Site Review Checklist), and informational handouts and displays. Public meeting comment forms will be available in hard copy at public meeting locations to receive public comments, and online during the associated public comment period. Actionable public comments will be identified, and responses will be given to demonstrate the influence of public participation and feedback upon planning processes. Non-actionable comments will be recognized, and the commenters thanked for their input.

Regularly scheduled MPO Committee meetings accommodate in-person or virtual participation. As an added convenience for the public or other stakeholders, a virtual meeting option may be used to supplement in-person meeting formats for other meetings conducted by the MPO. In the event that an in-person public meeting is not feasible or advisable (e.g., public health or other emergency), the SEDA-COG MPO may offer a solely virtual meeting option instead. Detailed information on the virtual meeting option (date,

time, dial-in number, conference code, and link for the virtual meeting software) will be provided to the public.

#### Placement of Paper Copy Plan Documents for Review

Paper copies of draft plans are placed in the following county, municipal, and agency offices throughout the SEDA-COG MPO region during comment periods:

- SEDA-COG Office 201 Furnace Road, Lewisburg, PA 17837
- Clinton County Offices 2 Piper Way, Suite 244, Lock Haven, PA 17745
- Columbia County Offices 26 West First Street, Bloomsburg, PA 17815
- Juniata County Offices Bridge and Main Streets, Mifflintown, PA 17059
- Mifflin County Offices 20 North Wayne Street, Lewistown, PA 17044
- Montour County Offices 435 East Front Street, Danville, PA 17821
- Northumberland County Offices 399 Stadium Drive, Sunbury, PA 17801
- Snyder County Offices 9 West Market Street, Middleburg, PA 17842
- Union County Offices 155 North 15th Street, Lewisburg, PA 17837
- Call A Ride Service, Inc. 249 West 3rd Street, Lewistown, PA 17044
- Lower Anthracite Transit System 137 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Mt Carmel, PA 17851
- rabbittransit 61 Tyler Avenue, Elysburg, PA 17824
- rabbittransit 713 Bridge Street, Suite 11, Selinsgrove, PA 17870
- STEP, Inc. 2138 Lincoln Street, Williamsport, PA 17701
- Town of Bloomsburg Office 301 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Bloomsburg, PA 17815
- Borough of Berwick Office 1800 North Market Street, Berwick, PA 18603
- PennDOT District 2-0 Office –70 PennDOT Drive, Clearfield, PA 16830
- PennDOT District 3-0 Office 715 Jordan Avenue, Montoursville, PA 17754

#### **Mailings**

Informational materials and announcements are distributed to committee members, interested parties, and the general public. Materials are primarily shared to the mailing lists via e-mail.

#### **Support Other Planning Efforts**

The SEDA-COG MPO will coordinate with the statewide transportation planning, public involvement, and consultation processes for transit agencies that receive federal funds; agencies and non-profit organizations that receive federal assistance (other than USDOT) to provide non-emergency transportation services; and agencies that maintain and operate roadways and other transportation services on federal or state lands. This will be achieved through MPO Committee surveys, the Interested Parties Database, MPO coordination activity, and the Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan.

#### Print Media

MPO and public meetings are advertised in *The Daily Item* (at minimum) and other newspapers in the respective counties of the SEDA-COG MPO region as appropriate. This includes placement of legal notices, advertisements, and press releases announcing public comment periods.

#### **Public Plans Displays**

Major planning documents are displayed at county government buildings, local libraries, and in the offices of planning partners in the SEDA-COG region during public comment periods.

#### **Demographic Profiles**

The MPO maintains profiles of the region's demographic composition (including mapping that illustrates the profiles) for planning purposes. Wherever possible, identical datasets are used in the various plans and documents, so that data consistency exists across the MPO's various planning efforts. Profiles of particular interest include minority, low-income, elderly, disabled, and limited English proficiency (LEP) populations.

#### **Broadcast Media**

Broadcast media outlets have become a fusion of traditional and new media, often delivering messages in two or more formats, with one being an online posting.

 Press Releases are a <u>required</u> component of the outreach process and should be issued 10 calendar days prior to a public meeting or upon the start of a public comment period and are sent to local newspapers, radio, and TV broadcast media outlets.

#### 4. INDICATORS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This Public Participation Plan adopts a series of indicators that serve as "performance measures" for the effectiveness of public participation strategies and the return on investment of time, professional expertise, and financial resources devoted to outreach efforts. Evaluations of the indicators will be conducted annually and incorporated with other MPO performance measures. The annual indicator evaluations will be referenced in the triennial reviews of the Public Participation Plan.

The listing of indicators provided here is the minimum set of indicators that the SEDA-COG MPO commits to using in monitoring the performance of the PPP. Other indicators and measures may be developed to supplement this list or serve the unique needs of a specific planning effort, but these additional indicators will not be considered "required" unless they are formally adopted in future updates of the PPP.

To assist in implementation of the PPP, the indicators listed here are paired with one or more "strategies" that are described in the previous chapter. In most cases, these pairings are set up such that the strategies are the primary source of the data for evaluating the indicators.

The following conventions are implied in the indicator specification:

- Indicators are frequently organized under a topic heading, particularly where two or more indicators are specified for a particular aspect of public participation.
- Certain indicators that gauge satisfaction, usefulness, awareness, or understanding are intended to be measured on a scale, for example:
  - Satisfaction: Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Indifferent, Somewhat unsatisfied, Mostly unsatisfied.
  - Usefulness: Very useful, Somewhat useful, Indifferent, Somewhat useless, Mostly useless.

The performance measure for these indicators could then be formatted in terms of the percentage of participants who were, for example, "Very satisfied." As an alternative, the percentage might be calculated for the total participants who were either "Very satisfied" or "Somewhat satisfied."

• Indicators that generate "lists" (e.g., source of notice about a public meeting) have a typical set of responses that may be evaluated across the planning program.

#### **Indicator Specification**

Strategies	Indicators		
Public Comment Forms	Advertisement methods:		
(paper forms distributed at public meetings)	<ul> <li>Source of notice about the plan revisions, planning activity, or public meeting</li> </ul>		
Online Public Surveys	Satisfaction with adequacy of notice about		
(SurveyMonkey, electronic comment forms)	plan revisions		
	Meeting locations & accommodations:		
	Satisfaction with meeting		
	accessibility/accommodations		
	<ul> <li>Average distance traveled from home to meeting site for meeting participants</li> </ul>		
	Participant diversity:		
	Demographic composition of meeting and survey participants (race, ethnicity, income,		
	language, age, disability) Quality and organization of materials and visuals:  • Understanding of materials presented		
	Satisfaction with the graphics and visuals Comprehension and confidence in the public		
	participation process:		
	Understanding of process being followed		
	<ul> <li>Satisfaction that the process is being followed correctly</li> </ul>		
	Adequacy of public comment period:		
	Satisfaction with the opportunities for public review and comment		
Interested Parties Database	Generation/maintenance of planning interest:		
	Total number of Interested Parties in distribution lists		
	Year-over-year increase in the number of Interested Parties in the distribution lists		
Project/Plan-Specific Web Portals	Effectiveness of Web Portal:		
Evaluation of portal analytics	Total site hits		
	List of top feeder sites/URLs		
	Number of registered users		
	Average time users spent on the portal		
	Total hits on the most accessed		
	pages/materials		

Strategies	Indicators
MPO Committee Surveys (SurveyMonkey)	<ul> <li>MPO Committee diversity:         <ul> <li>Demographic composition of MPO</li> <li>Committee (race, ethnicity, gender, income, language, age, disability)</li> </ul> </li> <li>MPO Committee use of public comment:         <ul> <li>Usefulness of participant feedback in their decision-making effort</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
SEDA-COG Website Analytics (Google Analytics)	<ul> <li>Effectiveness of the MPO website:         <ul> <li>Total hits on the MPO page</li> </ul> </li> <li>Total hits on the Transportation sub-pages (MPO, LRTP, TIP, PPP, TA, LTAP, Transit, Bike/Ped)</li> <li>Total hits on Web advertisements of plan updates/amendments/etc.</li> <li>Total hits on advertised plan updates during the public comment periods for plan updates/amendments/etc.</li> <li>Participant diversity:         <ul> <li>Total requests for Google Translate by language requested</li> <li>Total website hits on translated versions of posted documents</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Event Site Checklist	Accessibility of Public Meetings:  • Percentage of public meetings held in an ADA-accessible location
Comment Tracking	<ul> <li>Extent of comments received:</li> <li>Total number of comments received during the primary comment period</li> <li>Total number of comments received during the additional comment period</li> </ul>
Maintain Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Transportation Plan and other public transportation support functions	<ul> <li>Extent of MPO resources expended:</li> <li>Dollar value of MPO resources supplied</li> <li>Dollar value of staff time</li> </ul>
Visualization Tools	<ul> <li>Use of Visualization Tools:</li> <li>Number of hits on website links to visualization tools         (TIP Visualization, One Map, PATH, SEDA-COG ArcGIS Online and ArcGIS Hub Web maps)</li> </ul>

Strategies	Indicators	
<ul> <li>Targeted Follow-Up Surveys</li> <li>Surveys of participants who provided comments, using the contact information provided by respondents/participants.</li> </ul>	Effectiveness of follow-up on participant feedback:  • Awareness of how their comments were addressed  • Satisfaction that their comments were addressed	
<ul> <li>Agency Coordination Effort</li> <li>Surveys of municipalities and agencies</li> <li>Inventory of municipal and agency websites</li> </ul>	Recognition of coordinated planning:              Number of municipal, community, and regional transportation agency sites posting the SEDA-COG logo and/or link to the SEDA-COG website	

#### **Evaluation Processes for the Public Participation Plan**

The MPO will maintain the following processes for documenting and evaluating the effectiveness of the public involvement activities stipulated in the PPP:

- Maintenance of a Public Involvement Activity Portfolio
- Annual Evaluation of the Performance Measures
- Triennial Evaluation of the PPP

#### Public Involvement Activity Portfolio

The MPO retains concise documentation of its public involvement and participation activities that are stipulated in this PPP within a "portfolio" as a record of the plan's implementation. The actual items collected for the portfolio reflect the PPP requirements of the planning activity completed, and will generally include:

- Public notices and announcements of comment periods and involvement activities
- Summaries of the proceedings of the public outreach activity
- Listings of participants
- Records of materials displayed, distributed, and/or made available
- Compilations and analysis of surveys and comments received
- Interested Parties distribution lists and correspondence sent/received
- Record of media coverage of the event

#### Annual Evaluation of Performance Measures

In parallel with the reporting and evaluation of performance measures for other MPO functions—particularly the long-range transportation plan—the MPO will also compile the indicators outlined in this plan on an annual basis.

#### Triennial Evaluation of the Plan

The Public Participation Plan serves as a component of the MPO's overarching Title VI Program document. As such, the PPP will be updated or reviewed for update every three years, as part of the Title VI Program maintenance schedule. The MPO will evaluate its PPP and review the Public Involvement Activity Portfolio and Performance Measures triennially, using the checklists provided in **Appendix R.5**:

- Plan/Planning Activity Review Each plan or plan activity is reviewed using the onepage checklist and materials found in the Activity Portfolio. The checklist could be completed as an after-action exercise immediately after the plan or activity is completed.
- Need for Public Participation Plan Update This checklist identifies the most common circumstances that would trigger the need for a public participation plan update. Based on the review, the degree of the update would be determined. The solicitation of public comment and/or the need for new adoption votes will only result from significant PPP updates or requirements in new federal/state policy and legislation.
- Open-Ended Review This form offers only two starter questions, and it is directed toward big-picture thinking about the PPP's effectiveness and improvement. The review is intended to be a repository of ideas and future aspirations for SEDA-COG's PPP.

The MPO staff will facilitate and document the review, and the findings will be used to improve the quality of public involvement activities. The documentation of the review may include listings of the planning activities completed, accomplishments and milestones that the MPO has achieved, etc.

#### Future Public Participation Plan Efforts

The SEDA-COG MPO recognizes the need to continuously enhance its outreach efforts. An array of potential outreach strategies is included in **Appendix R.3**, but the following are primary activities that will take place to fulfill this goal:

- Further identify and consult with interested parties
- Continue to seek out EJ/LEP organizations, resources, and points of contact
- Conduct reviews of ADA accessibility features for meeting spaces
- Coordinate with disability advocates and IT experts to make electronic materials and SEDA-COG website content easier to access
- Investigate the formation of a Public Participation Panel (to include representatives of traditionally underserved populations) for assisting the MPO in implementing public outreach strategies and empowering citizens to get involved in regional planning

#### 5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN MATRIX

The Public Participation Plan Matrix on the following pages concisely summarizes the goals, objectives, strategies, and indicators (performance measures) that are described earlier in this PPP.

Overall goals for public participation are listed in the first (left) column of the matrix. The goals identify the primary points of emphasis for the reach, diversity, impact, satisfaction, education, and performance of SEDA-COG's public participation efforts.

Objectives listed in the second column involve general actions that address each goal, and individual strategies identified in the third column list the strategies or action items specific to each corresponding objective. Implementing the public participation strategies will effect the desired change as identified in the goals and objectives.

Indicators contained in the far-right column identify performance measures that will be utilized to gauge the effectiveness of each public participation strategy. Monitoring the performance indicators will enable the SEDA-COG MPO to identify the effectiveness of each strategy and thus the overall efficacy of its Public Participation Plan. Based on performance results, SEDA-COG MPO will refine its goals, objectives, strategies, and indicators in future triennial evaluations intended to continuously improve the PPP.

## SEDA-COG MPO Public Participation Plan Plan Matrix of Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Indicators

Goals	Objectives	Strategies	Indicators
1. Extend the reach of the participation program.	Provide adequate public notice of public participation	Public Comment Forms	Advertisement methods:
The MPO desires to increase the number of participants in the transportation planning	activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a	(paper forms distributed at public meetings)	<ul> <li>Source of notice about the plan revisions, planning activity, or public meeting</li> </ul>
process. This includes strengthening	reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed	Online Public Surveys	Satisfaction with adequacy of notice about plan revisions
communication networks among local, regional,	long-range transportation plan, TIP, and PPP.	(SurveyMonkey, electronic comment forms)	Adequacy of public comment period:
and state planning partners to increase public access and transparency of information and			Satisfaction with the opportunities for public review and comment
operations. To this end, the MPO intends to expand the use of existing electronic and new		Interested Parties Database	Generation/maintenance of planning interest:  • Total number of Interested Parties in distribution lists
media communications alongside the known		Project/Plan-Specific Web Portals	Effectiveness of Web Portal:
effective traditional approaches to make the		Evaluation of portal analytics	Total site hits
participation process more inviting and		, ,	List of top feeder sites/URLs
convenient.			Number of registered users
			Average time users spent on the portal
			Total hits on the most accessed pages/materials
	Coordinate with the statewide transportation planning	MPO Committee Survey	MPO Committee diversity:
	public involvement and consultation processes for:		Demographic composition of MPO Committee (race,
	<ul> <li>Transit agencies that receive federal funds.</li> </ul>		ethnicity, gender, income, language, age, disability)
	<ul> <li>Agencies and non-profit organizations that</li> </ul>	Interested Parties Database	Generation/maintenance of planning interest:
	receive federal assistance from a source other	interested furties butdouse	Total number of Interested Parties in distribution lists
	than the USDOT to provide non-emergency		Year-over-year increase in the number of Interested
	transportation services.  • Agencies that maintain/operate roadways or other transportation services on federal or state lands.		Parties in the distribution lists
		Maintain Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services	Extent of MPO resources expended:
		Transportation Plan and other transit and public transportation	Dollar value of MPO resources supplied
		support functions	Dollar value of staff time
	Make public information (technical information and	SEDA-COG Website Analytics	Effectiveness of the MPO website:
	meeting notices) available in electronically accessible	(Google Analytics)	<ul> <li>Total hits on the MPO page</li> </ul>
	formats and means, making full use of Internet		Total hits on the Transportation sub-pages (MPO, LRTP,
	capabilities and virtual public involvement		TIP, PPP, TA, LTAP, Transit, Bike/Ped)
	opportunities.		Total hits on Web advertisements of plan
	Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible		updates/amendments/etc.
			Total hits on advertised plan updates during the public
			comment periods for plan updates/amendments/etc.
		Event Site Checklist	Accessibility of Public Meetings:
	locations and times. Continue or expand virtual public		Percentage of public meetings held in an ADA-accessible
	involvement techniques.	Dublic Comment Forms	location
		Public Comment Forms	Meeting locations and accommodations:
		(paper forms distributed at public meetings)	Satisfaction with meeting accessibility/accommodations
		Online Rublic Surveys	Average distance traveled from home to meeting site for
		Online Public Surveys (SurveyMonkey, electronic comment forms)	meeting participants
		(Surveyivionkey, electronic comment forms)	

## SEDA-COG MPO Public Participation Plan Plan Matrix of Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Indicators (continued)

Goals		Objectives	Strategies	Indicators
The SED engagen English p	age diversity of participants.  PA-COG MPO desires to increase ment with minority, low-income, limited proficient, disabled, senior citizen, and opulations. The MPO recognizes the	Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.	Public Comment Forms (paper forms distributed at public meetings)  Online Public Surveys (SurveyMonkey, electronic comment forms)	Participant diversity:  Demographic composition of meeting and survey participants (race, ethnicity, income, language, age, disability)
benefit o	benefit of stimulating involvement by a broad range of persons with a variety of perspectives and interests in the transportation system.		SEDA-COG Website Analytics (Google Analytics)	Participant diversity:         • Total requests for Google Translate by language requested         • Total website hits on translated versions of posted documents
			MPO Committee Surveys (SurveyMonkey)	<ul> <li>MPO Committee diversity:</li> <li>Demographic composition of MPO Committee (race, ethnicity, gender, income, language, age, disability)</li> </ul>
As partio	Increase the impact of participation.  As participation is extended, the MPO aims to better manage and apply that feedback to the decision-making process. This includes the internal conduits by which feedback is presented to decision-makers, as well as the response back to participants and all interested parties—so that there is better accountability and follow-up to ensure the effective influence of public participation.	Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the long-range transportation plan and the TIP.	MPO Committee Surveys (SurveyMonkey)	MPO Committee use of public comment:  • Usefulness of participant feedback in their decision-making effort
internal to decisi to partic			<ul> <li>Targeted Follow-Up Surveys</li> <li>Surveys of participants who provided comments, using the contact information provided by respondents/participants.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Effectiveness of follow-up on participant feedback:</li> <li>Awareness of how their comments were addressed</li> <li>Satisfaction that their comments were addressed</li> </ul>
ensure t		Provide an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final LRTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts.	Comment Tracking	<ul> <li>Extent of comment received:</li> <li>Total number of comments received during the primary comment period</li> <li>Total number of comments received during the additional comment period</li> </ul>
Participa come av material	e participant satisfaction.  ants in the planning process desire to way feeling that they understood the I presented, were respected, their point of ade a difference, and their effort was	Provide concise and well-organized plan materials within a transportation planning process that is well-defined and easily understood.	Public Comment Forms (paper forms distributed at public meetings)  Online Public Surveys (SurveyMonkey, electronic comment forms)	Comprehension of and confidence in the public participation process:  • Understanding of process being followed  • Satisfaction that the process is being followed correctly
commer to gauge process,	worthwhile. The MPO aims to enhance its use of comment forms and various modes of surveying to gauge satisfaction with the participation process, including the content and quality of communication materials.  Employ visualization techniques to d TIPs.	Employ visualization techniques to describe LRTPs and TIPs.	Public Comment Forms (paper forms distributed at public meetings)  Online Public Surveys (SurveyMonkey, electronic comment forms)	<ul> <li>Quality and organization of materials and visuals:</li> <li>Understanding of materials presented</li> <li>Satisfaction with the graphics and visuals</li> </ul>
			Visualization Tools	<ul> <li>Use of Visualization Tools</li> <li>Number of hits on website links to visualization tools (TIP Visualization, One Map, PATH, SEDA-COG ArcGIS Online and ArcGIS Hub Web maps)</li> </ul>

SEDA-COG MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN ADOPTED – 6/10/2022

## SEDA-COG MPO Public Participation Plan Plan Matrix of Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Indicators (continued)

Goals		Objectives	Strategies	Indicators
desires transp	e opportunities for <u>education</u> . SEDA-COG s to expand the baseline knowledge about ortation issues, how transportation ments are made, and the opportunities that	Provide timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.	Interested Parties Database	Generation/maintenance of planning interest:  • Year-over-year increase in the number of Interested Parties in the distribution lists
citizen: The MI MPO's transpo	s have to influence the planning process. PO will seek to raise awareness about the existence, function, and role in ortation decision-making through more ion to branding, linkages with agency		Public Comment Forms (paper forms distributed at public meetings)  Online Public Surveys (SurveyMonkey, electronic comment forms)	Adequacy of public comment period:     Satisfaction with the opportunities for public review and comment
·	ers, and an increasing presence in the unities served.		Agency Coordination Effort	Recognition of coordinated planning:  • Number of municipal, community, and regional transportation agency sites posting the SEDA-COG logo and/or link to the SEDA-COG website
MPO w	lize the use of <u>performance</u> indicators. The vill formalize a set of indicators for	Periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to	MPO PPP Review	Conduct triennial review of the PPP
involve	ring and tracking the effectiveness of public ement strategies to evaluate goals and rt continuous improvement efforts.	ensure a full and open participation process.	Regional Performance Measures Report	Conduct yearly MPO staff-level evaluation of the indicators of PPP effectiveness, and incorporate the indicators into the annual Indicators Report

#### 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS CHECKLISTS

This section contains a series of checklists designed to offer-step-by-step public participation guidance to support specific SEDA-COG planning activities. These planning activities include the development of: Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTP) and Updates; LRTP Amendments; Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Updates, Amendments, and Administrative Modifications; and Public Participation Plan (PPP) Updates.

The following Process Checklists lay out the key steps of SEDA-COG's public participation process for primary plans, plan updates, amendments, and modifications. Each Process Checklist is built with steps that are generally chronological, although certain elements of each step may happen earlier or later in the process. Statutory and regulatory requirements—such as timeframes for public comment and involvement of FHWA—are provided at their minimum or better values, and their source (*Federal* or *State*) are indicated, where applicable.

Process Checklists are provided for the following:

- Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) & Updates
- Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Amendment
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Administrative Modifications

Each Process Checklist is provided on its own page or pages.

#### Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) & Updates

Applies to the adoption of a new LRTP or a regular five-year update

- Conduct a review of the MPO's current Public Participation Plan and appropriate the plan for the LRTP effort or implement an update, as required to comply with new transportation legislation, regulations, executive orders, and guidance (see Public Participation Plan Update).
- 2 Implement a public involvement program that is consistent with the MPO's adopted PPP to support the LRTP development.
  - Ensure that FHWA and FTA are provided with an opportunity to participate in the LRTP development process. (Federal)
- 3 Release DRAFT LRTP document for public and agency comment.
  - Provide a reasonable opportunity for comment on the plan, including a public comment period of 30 calendar days, unless the MPO Committee elects a shorter period.
  - Provide DRAFT LRTP document to FHWA and FTA for review prior to the beginning of the public comment period.
  - Make document available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website.
  - Make document available in a hard copy format at the SEDA-COG office, county government offices, public transit agency offices, and PennDOT District 2-0 & 3-0 Offices.

Encouraged (but not required) activities to support LRTP public participation:

- At the discretion of the MPO, the MPO staff may meet with local stakeholders and county staff and commissioners at their regularly scheduled and advertised meetings.
- 4 Notify public and agencies of opportunities to comment.
  - Publish notifications at least 30 calendar days prior to the comment period ending date and at least 10 calendar days prior to the public meeting date:
    - Legal notice to appear in *The Daily Item* newspaper, at a minimum.
    - Press release distributed to other newspapers and broadcast media outlets.
    - o Interested Parties notified via e-mail using distribution list.
    - Web notification on the SEDA-COG webpage in an accessible electronic format.
    - Tribal outreach.
  - Conduct at least one public meeting at an accessible location.
- **5** Document the public participation effort and record in the Activity Portfolio.
  - Document the participation activities conducted (Meeting Venue Checklist, Public Participation Meeting tracking form).
  - Compile comments received and generate responses to actionable comments that indicate how the comment was incorporated or why a different approach was taken.
  - Incorporate comments and comment responses into the FINAL LRTP document.
  - Provide notification (by e-mail) of the comment responses to all those who commented and provided e-mail contact information.

# Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) & Updates (continued)

- 6 If the final version of the LRTP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment, provide an additional seven-calendar-day public comment period.
  - Provide notification (by e-mail) of the additional public comment period to the Interested Parties and all those who commented previously and provided e-mail contact information prior to the beginning of the public comment period start date.
  - Provide revised document to FHWA and FTA for review prior to the beginning of the additional public comment period.
  - Make document available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website.
- Conduct Pennsylvania-required inter-agency consultation through presentation at an Agency Coordination Meeting (ACM). (State)
  - Request presentation time at a regularly scheduled ACM meeting.
- 8 Adopt the LRTP.
  - MPO adopts the final version of the LRTP by vote of the MPO Committee at a regularly scheduled public meeting.
  - Make the final version of the LRTP available on the SEDA-COG website in an accessible electronic format.
  - Post notice of the LRTP adoption to the SEDA-COG webpage.
  - Provide adopted version of the LRTP in electronic format to both state and federal partners (PennDOT, FHWA, FTA).

# Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Amendment

Applies to modifications of the MPO LRTP that occur between LRTP Update cycles. Where the update is triggered by a TIP Amendment, the public participation activities may be conducted jointly. The public participation effort should follow the more stringent requirements (TIP amendment or LRTP amendment).



Release the DRAFT LRTP Amendment(s).

- Provide a reasonable opportunity for comment on the plan, including a public comment period of 30 calendar days.
- Provide DRAFT LRTP document to FHWA and FTA for review prior to the beginning of the public comment period.
- Make document available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website.
- Make document available in a hard copy format at the SEDA-COG office, county government offices, public transit agency offices, and PennDOT District 2-0 & 3-0 Offices.

Encouraged (but not required) activities to support LRTP public participation:

• At the discretion of the MPO, the MPO staff may meet with local stakeholders and county staff and commissioners at their regularly scheduled and advertised meetings.



Determine the need to provide targeted outreach for project amendments that disproportionately burden populations or concentrations of Minority, In-Poverty, LEP, or Disabled Persons.

TRIGGER: Burdensome action or project in an area defined by one or both of the following:

- a. In a project area where the <u>likely affected</u> Minority, In-Poverty, LEP, or Disabled persons exceeds 1,000 persons, or
- b. In a Census tract where the concentration of Minority, In-Poverty, LEP, or Disabled persons exceeds two times the regional average for that population.
  - \*\* If a West Germanic LEP population is the trigger, the outreach may be waived if representatives of the West Germanic-speaking community indicate that the outreach activity is not desired.
  - \*\* Targeted outreach will not be required in the event that the trigger results from an institutionalized population (e.g., within a prison, penitentiary, etc.).
- High LEP Outreach Activities:
  - Conduct a targeted outreach activity within the project area to engage the affected population.
  - Advertise the activity in the LEP language and through agencies, community organizations, or advocacy groups that serve the affected population.
  - Make amendment(s) available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website in the affected LEP language (if possible).
- High Minority, In-Poverty, or Disabled Outreach Activities:
  - Conduct a targeted outreach activity within the project area to engage the affected population.
  - Advertise the activity through agencies, community organizations, or advocacy groups that serve the affected population.
  - Make amendment(s) available in print copy format at the nearest municipal office to the project area.

# Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Amendment (continued)

- 3 Notify public and agencies of opportunities to comment.
  - Publish notifications at least 30 calendar days prior to the comment period ending date and at least 10 calendar days prior to the public meeting date:
    - Legal notice to appear in *The Daily Item* newspaper, at a minimum.
    - Press release distributed to other newspapers and broadcast media outlets.
    - o Interested Parties notified via e-mail using distribution list.
    - Web notification on the SEDA-COG webpage in an accessible electronic format.
    - Tribal outreach.
  - Conduct at least one public meeting at an accessible location.
- 4 Document the public participation effort and record in the Activity Portfolio.
  - Document the participation activities conducted (Meeting Venue Checklist, Public Participation Meeting tracking form).
  - Compile comments received and generate responses to actionable comments that indicate how the comment was incorporated or why a different approach was taken.
- If the final version of the LRTP Amendment differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment, provide an additional seven calendar day public comment period.
  - Provide notification (by e-mail) of the additional public comment period to the Interested Parties and all those who commented previously and provided e-mail contact information prior to the beginning of the public comment period start date.
  - Provide revised document to FHWA and FTA for review prior to the beginning of the additional public comment period.
  - Make document available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website.
- 6 Adopt the LRTP Amendment(s).
  - MPO adopts the final version of the LRTP Amendment(s) by vote of the MPO Committee at a regularly scheduled public meeting.
  - Make the final version of the LRTP Amendment(s) available on the SEDA-COG website in an accessible electronic format.
  - Post notice of the LRTP Amendment(s) to the SEDA-COG webpage.
  - Provide adopted version of the LRTP Amendment(s) in electronic format to both state and federal partners (PennDOT, FHWA, FTA).

# **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update**

Applies to the regular update of the TIP/STIP and Twelve-Year Plan (TYP) according to the statewide program.

- 1 Release the DRAFT TIP.
  - Provide the public with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the DRAFT TIP, including a public comment period of 30 calendar days (minimum). (State)
  - Provide the DRAFT TIP Update to FHWA and FTA for review prior to the beginning of the public comment period.
  - Make DRAFT TIP available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website.
  - Make DRAFT TIP available in a hard copy format at the SEDA-COG Office, county government offices, public transit agency offices, and PennDOT District 2-0 & 3-0 Offices.

Encouraged (but not required) activities to support TIP public participation:

- At the discretion of the MPO, the MPO staff may meet with local stakeholders and county staff and commissioners at their regularly scheduled and advertised meetings.
- 2 Notify public and agencies of opportunities to comment.
  - Publish notifications at least 30 calendar days prior to the comment period ending date and at least 10 calendar days prior to the public meeting date:
    - o Legal notice to appear in *The Daily Item* newspaper, at a minimum.
    - o Press release distributed to other newspapers and broadcast media outlets.
    - o Interested Parties notified via e-mail using distribution list.
    - Web notification on the SEDA-COG webpage in an accessible electronic format.
    - Tribal outreach.
  - Conduct at least one public meeting at an accessible location.
- 3 Document the public participation effort and record in the Activity Portfolio.
  - Document the participation activities conducted (Meeting Venue Checklist, Public Participation Meeting tracking form).
  - Compile comments received and generate responses to actionable comments that indicate how the comment was incorporated or why a different approach was taken.
  - Provide notification (by e-mail) of the comment responses to all those who commented and provided e-mail contact information.
- 4 If the final version of the TIP Update differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment, provide an additional seven-calendar-day public comment period.
  - Provide notification (by e-mail) of the additional public comment period to the Interested Parties and all those who commented previously and provided e-mail contact information prior to the beginning of the public comment period start date.
  - Provide revised DRAFT TIP to FHWA and FTA for review prior to the beginning of the additional public comment period.
  - Make revised DRAFT TIP available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website.
- **5** Adopt the TIP.
  - MPO adopts the final version of the TIP by vote of the MPO Committee at a regularly scheduled public meeting and submits the adopted TIP package to PennDOT.
  - Make final version of the TIP available on the SEDA-COG website in an accessible electronic format.

• Post notice of the TIP adoption to the SEDA-COG webpage.

# **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments**

Applies to interim revisions of the MPO TIP that occur between TIP Update cycles and qualify as Amendments per the SEDA-COG MPO TIP Revisions Procedures:

- Affects air quality conformity regardless of the cost of the project or the funding source.
- Adds a new project, deletes a project that utilizes federal funds, or federalizes a project that previously was 100% state and/or locally funded. A new project is a project that is not programmed in the current STIP/TIP and does not have previous federal obligations.
- Adds a new phase(s), deletes a phase(s), or increases/decreases a phase(s) of an existing project that utilizes federal funds where the modification exceeds \$2 million.
- Involves a change in the scope of work to a project(s) that would:
  - o Result in an air quality conformity reevaluation.
  - Result in a revised total project estimate that exceeds the thresholds established between PennDOT and the MPO.
  - Result in a change in the scope of work on any federally funded project that is significant enough to essentially constitute a new project.
- 1 Release the Proposed TIP Amendment(s).
  - Make TIP amendment(s) available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website.
  - Notify MPO Committee of the TIP amendment(s) via meeting packet distributed prior to committee meetings.
  - If action on a critical TIP amendment is needed between regularly scheduled MPO Committee meetings, a special meeting may be held to approve the amendment. Such special meetings will be advertised to the public and allow for in-person or virtual participation. The TIP amendment materials will be posted to the SEDA-COG website.
- 2 Provide the proposed TIP amendment(s) to FHWA and FTA for review.
- 3 No public comment period required.
- 4 Adopt the TIP Amendment(s)
  - SEDA-COG MPO adopts the final version of the TIP Amendment(s) by vote of the MPO Committee at a regularly scheduled public meeting or during a special public meeting.
  - Make the final version of the TIP Amendment(s) available on the SEDA-COG website in an accessible electronic format.
  - Submit an eSTIP package after adoption to PennDOT/FHWA/FTA.

# Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Administrative Modifications

Applies to interim revisions of the MPO TIP that occur between TIP Update cycles and qualify as Administrative Modifications per the SEDA-COG MPO TIP Revisions Procedures.

- 1 No public comment period required.
- 2 Notify MPO Committee of the Administrative Modification(s) via meeting packet distributed prior to committee meetings.
- **3** Approve the TIP Administrative Modification(s).
  - SEDA-COG MPO approves the Administrative Modification(s) by vote of the MPO Committee at a regularly scheduled public meeting.
  - Make the Administrative Modification(s) available as part of the MPO Committee
     Meeting packet and on the SEDA-COG website in an accessible electronic format.

# **Public Participation Plan (PPP) Update**

Applies to periodic updates of the PPP.

- 1 Conduct a review of the MPO's current Public Participation Plan.
  - Task MPO staff or a sub-group of the MPO Committee to review the current PPP and identify need and scope of updates required.
- 2 Implement updates to the Public Participation Plan.
  - Determine whether the update will be completed by staff or with consultant help.
- 3 Release the DRAFT PPP for public and agency comment.
  - Provide the public with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the plan, including a public comment period of 45 calendar days. (Federal)
  - Provide the DRAFT PPP document to FHWA and FTA for review prior to the beginning of the public comment period.
  - Make DRAFT PPP available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website.
  - Make DRAFT PPP available in a hard copy format at the SEDA-COG Office, county government offices, public transit agency offices, and PennDOT District 2-0 & 3-0 Offices.
- 4 Notify public and agencies of opportunities to comment.
  - Publish notifications at least 45 calendar days prior to the comment period ending date and at least 10 calendar days prior to the public meeting date:
    - o Legal Notice to appear in *The Daily Item* newspaper, at a minimum.
    - o Press Release distributed to other newspapers and broadcast media outlets.
    - Interested Parties notified via e-mail using distribution list.
    - Web notification on the SEDA-COG webpage in an accessible electronic format.
    - o Tribal outreach.
  - Conduct at least one public meeting at an accessible location.
- 5 Document the public participation effort and record in the Activity Portfolio.
  - Document the participation activities conducted (Meeting Venue Checklist, Public Participation Meeting tracking form).
  - Compile comments received and generate responses to actionable comments that indicate how the comment was incorporated or why a different approach was taken.
  - Incorporate comments and comment responses into the FINAL PPP document.
  - Provide notification (by e-mail) of the comment responses to all those who commented and provided e-mail contact information.
- 6 If the final version of the PPP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment, provide an additional seven-calendar-day public comment period.
  - Provide notification (by e-mail) of the additional public comment period to the Interested Parties and all those who commented previously and provided e-mail contact information prior to the beginning of the public comment period start date.
  - Provide revised PPP document to FHWA and FTA for review prior to the beginning of the additional public comment period.
  - Make revised PPP document available in an accessible electronic format on the SEDA-COG website.

# **Public Participation Plan (PPP) Update (continued)**



Adopt the PPP.

- MPO adopts the FINAL PPP by vote of the MPO Committee at a regularly scheduled public meeting.
- Make the FINAL PPP document available on the SEDA-COG website in an accessible electronic format.
- Post notice of the PPP adoption to the SEDA-COG webpage.

#### 7. MPO CONTACT INFORMATION

#### How to Get Involved

The SEDA-COG MPO provides information to the public via hard copy mailings, e-mail, social media, news media, and the SEDA-COG website. Public forums, public meetings, and special presentations are scheduled as needed or as requested by organizations. Persons wanting to get involved in the activities of the MPO can do the following:

- Visit the Transportation section of the SEDA-COG website at: www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation
- View MPO meeting schedules, agendas, packets, and minutes that are posted in the Metropolitan Planning Organization section at: <a href="https://www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation/seda-cog-metropolitan-planning-organization">www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation/seda-cog-metropolitan-planning-organization</a>
- Sign up for the MPO Interested Parties Database and e-mail list by:
  - Contacting the MPO staff by phone at (570) 524-4491.
  - Submitting your contact information through the Comments page at:
     www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation/transportation-comments
- View notices of MPO public meetings, which are advertised in the legal notices of *The Daily Item* newspaper, at a minimum.
  - The MPO generally <u>meets six times per year</u>, from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM at the SEDA-COG office (201 Furnace Road, Lewisburg, PA). Virtual participation is also available, and the access details are shared in meeting notices.
  - All MPO meetings are <u>open to the public</u>, and an opportunity for public comment is included on every MPO meeting agenda.
  - We recommend confirming all MPO meetings with SEDA-COG staff or via the SEDA-COG website.

#### Contact

For more information about this Public Participation Plan, please contact:

Steve Herman, Program Director Transportation Planning SEDA-COG 201 Furnace Road

Lewisburg, PA 17837 Phone: (570) 524-4491

E-mail: <a href="mailto:sherman@seda-cog.org">sherman@seda-cog.org</a>

# **SUPPORTING APPENDIX**

Appendix S.1	Statutes and Regulations for Public Participation
Appendix S.2	General Demographic Analysis
Appendix S.3	Demographic Analysis for Environmental Justice and Other Traditionally Underserved Populations
Appendix S.4	Documentation of Public Participation and Comment for the Public
	Participation Plan Update

#### APPENDIX S.1

#### STATUTES AND REGULATIONS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

# **Federal Acts and Regulations**

Public participation in the transportation planning and programming process has been a priority for federal, state, and local officials since the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991; its successors, the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21); the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU); the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21); the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST); and the current Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Therefore, the SEDA-COG MPO Public Participation Plan and Environmental Justice policies must reflect the mandates of ISTEA, TEA-21, SAFETEA-LU, MAP-21, FAST, IIJA, and subsequent federal legislation.

In particular, the federal regulation requiring an MPO's development of a public participation plan is found in 23 C.F.R. § 450.316.

The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

 $\frac{\text{http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title23-vol1/xml/CFR-2011-title23-vol1-sec450-316.xml}$ 

# **Environmental Justice (EJ)**

Public participation must also take into consideration <u>Presidential Executive Order 12898</u>, Environmental Justice. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines environmental justice as the "fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies." Fair treatment means that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental, and commercial operations or policies. Meaningful involvement means that people have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health. **Appendix S.3** includes a map of minority and low-income populations identified for the region's PPP update, based on the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey data.

The Federal Highway Administration articulates three fundamental EJ principles:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.
- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

#### Title VI of the Civil Rights Act

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

<u>Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964</u> is the federal law that protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of their race, color, or national origin. All programs administered by a federal aid recipient must be provided in accordance with Title VI per the <u>Civil Rights</u> Restoration Act.

There are many forms of illegal discrimination based on race, color, or national origin that can limit the opportunity of minorities to gain equal access to services and programs. Among other things, recipients of federal funds cannot, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, either directly or through contractual means:

- Deny program services, aids, or benefits;
- Provide a different service, aid, or benefit, or provide them in a manner different than they are provided to others; or
- Segregate or separately treat individuals in any matter related to the receipt of any service, aid, or benefit.

# Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The <u>Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990</u> prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities in services, programs, and activities. Public entities are required to make programs and services accessible to individuals with disabilities, including conducting meetings and hearings in ADA-compliant buildings. Special accommodations must be provided to ensure communications are equally effective for persons with disabilities in order to participate in meetings, planning, and programming activities.

# Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency

Signed by the President on August 11, 2000, this <u>Executive Order</u> requires federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency (LEP), and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. It is expected that agency plans will provide for such meaningful access consistent with, and without unduly burdening, the fundamental mission of the agency. The Executive Order also requires that the federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries.

# **Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Acts and Regulations**

# Sunshine Act (65 PA C.S. § 701-716)

The <u>Pennsylvania Sunshine Act</u> requires agencies to deliberate and take official action on agency business in an open and public meeting. It requires that meetings have prior notice, and that the public can attend, participate, and comment before an agency takes official action. The openness keeps residents more informed and allows for increased public confidence in governing bodies. Major provisions of the act are:

- All meetings or hearings of every agency at which formal action is taken are public
  meetings and shall be open to the public. The board or council has the option to accept
  all public comment at the beginning of the meeting.
- No formal action shall be valid unless formal action is taken during a public meeting.
- An agency may hold an executive session for a limited set of reasons. The reason for holding the executive session must be announced at the open meeting occurring immediately prior or subsequent to the executive session.
- The minutes of a public meeting of an agency shall be promptly recorded and open for examination and inspection by citizens of the Commonwealth. A person attending a meeting of an agency shall have the right to use recording devices to record all the proceedings.
- Every agency shall hold public meetings at specified times and places of which previous notice must be given by posting notice of the public meetings at the principal office of the agency or the building where the meeting is to be held.
- Public notice of meeting times and locations shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation.

The above statutes/regulations ensure that planning and public involvement activities are conducted fairly and in consideration of all people. It is important to the SEDA-COG MPO that all people have an equal voice and opportunity to share their needs and concerns related to the transportation network. Although there are no areas in Pennsylvania under the jurisdiction of Indian Tribal governments, SEDA-COG MPO considers federally recognized tribes to be interested parties. Therefore, SEDA-COG MPO sends transportation planning and programming

materials (e.g., TIP, LRTP, PPP) to representatives of federally recognized tribes that have interests in the eight-county MPO region to provide opportunities for review and comment.

#### APPENDIX S.2

#### **GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

**Table S.2.1** gives county, MPO, and state population statistics since the 2000 U.S. Census. Approximately 364,000 people live in the SEDA-COG MPO region, according to the 2020 Census. Between 2000 and 2020, the MPO region's population increased at a rate of 0.2 percent. The largest population growth was seen in Snyder and Union counties during the 20-year period. The highest rates of growth on a percentage basis occurred in Snyder and Juniata counties. The minimal population growth and population declines in certain MPO counties is likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, closing of several large manufacturers in the region, and potential issues with accurate data collection during the 2020 Census.

**Table S.2.1. Population of SEDA-COG MPO Counties** 

County/Area	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Census	Numeric Change 2000-2020	% Change 2000-2020
Clinton	37,914	39,238	37,450	-464	-1.2%
Columbia	64,151	67,295	64,727	576	0.9%
Juniata	22,821	24,636	23,509	688	3.0%
Mifflin	46,486	46,682	46,143	-343	-0.7%
Montour	18,236	18,267	18,136	-100	-0.5%
Northumberland	94,556	94,528	91,647	-2,909	-3.1%
Snyder	37,546	39,702	39,736	2,190	5.8%
Union	41,624	44,947	42,681	1,057	2.5%
SEDA-COG MPO	363,334	375,295	364,029	695	0.2%
Pennsylvania	12,281,054	12,702,379	13,002,700	721,646	5.9%

#### Source:

U.S. Census Bureau: Decennial Censuses.

Figure S.2.1 depicts population density within the SEDA-COG MPO counties in 2020.

**Table S.2.2** shows historical county, MPO, and state population statistics since the 1990 Census. Since 1990, the MPO's population has grown moderately.

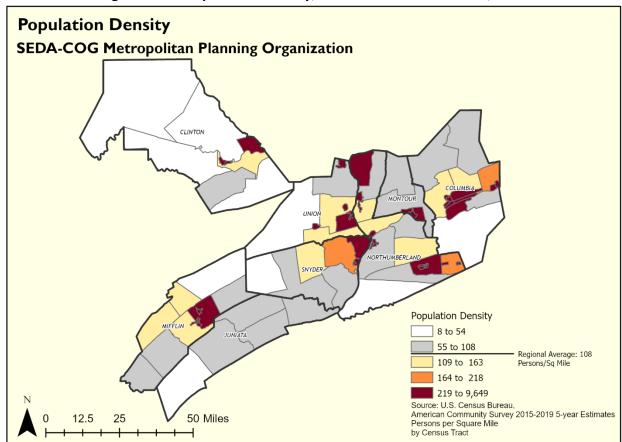


Figure S.2.1. Population Density, SEDA-COG MPO Counties, 2020

Table S.2.2. Historical Population and Growth of SEDA-COG MPO Counties, 1990-2020

County/Area	2020	2010	2000	1990	% Change 1990- 2020	% Change 2000- 2020	% Change 2010- 2020
Clinton	37,450	39,238	37,914	37,182	0.7%	-1.2%	-4.6%
Columbia	64,727	67,295	64,151	63,202	2.4%	0.9%	-3.8%
Juniata	23,509	24,636	22,821	20,625	14.0%	3.0%	-4.6%
Mifflin	46,143	46,682	46,486	46,197	-0.1%	-0.7%	-1.2%
Montour	18,136	18,267	18,236	17,735	2.3%	-0.5%	-0.7%
Northumberland	91,647	94,528	94,556	96,771	-5.3%	-3.1%	-3.0%
Snyder	39,736	39,702	37,546	36,680	8.3%	5.8%	0.1%
Union	42,681	44,947	41,624	36,176	18.0%	2.5%	-5.0%
SEDA-COG MPO	364,029	375,295	363,334	354,568	2.7%	0.2%	-3.0%
Pennsylvania	13,002,700	12,702,379	12,281,054	11,881,643	9.4%	5.9%	2.4%

Source:

U.S. Census Bureau: Decennial Censuses.

#### **APPENDIX S.3**

# DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND OTHER TRADITIONALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

In response to the identified environmental justice (EJ) policies, a distributive geographic analysis was conducted to identify the locations and concentrations of minority, low-income, limited English proficiency, and other traditionally underserved populations (TUP). The preparation of such a demographic profile describes the social composition of the SEDA-COG MPO region and illustrates how demographic patterns vary spatially.

The identification of these populations is a first step toward establishing effective strategies for engaging them in the transportation planning process. The mapping not only aids in the development of an effective public involvement program but also provides a baseline for assessing impacts of the Transportation Improvement Program.

#### **Distributive Analysis Methodology**

Datasets and mapping were assembled as a baseline inventory of demographic attributes for the following populations that are traditionally underserved by the transportation system:

- Minority
- Low-Income (In-Poverty)
- Seniors (Elderly)
- Disabled
- Those with limited English proficiency (LEP)
- Those with no personal vehicle available (zero-vehicle households)
- Female Head of Household with Own Children Present

The primary and most comprehensive data source for information on these populations is the U.S. Census Bureau—particularly the American Community Survey. The primary dataset referenced in this appendix is the 5-year Estimates for 2015-2019.

#### U.S. Census Data

Using a geographic information system, spatial and demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau were compiled at the Census tract level of geographic detail. **Table S.3.1** provides a profile of the Environmental Justice and Other Traditionally Underserved Populations in the SEDA-COG MPO region according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. The regional thresholds for each population are established as the average concentration of that population across the SEDA-COG MPO region as a whole. The "Data Universe" varies according to U.S. Census data collection and accounting methodology for that population.

Table S.3.1. Profile of Environmental Justice and Other Traditionally Underserved Populations in the SEDA-COG MPO Region

	SEDA-COG MPO Region		
	Population	Regional Threshold (Average Concentration)	
<u>Data Universe</u> : <b>Total Population</b>	371,144		
Minority Population <sup>1</sup>	27,244	7.3%	
Senior Population <sup>2</sup>	72,572	19.6%	
<u>Data Universe</u> : <b>Total Population for whom Poverty Status is determined</b>	347,331		
Low-Income Population <sup>3</sup>	45,320	13.0%	
<u>Data Universe</u> : <b>Total Population Age 5 or Older</b>	351,814		
Limited English Proficiency Population ⁴	6,905	2.0%	
<u>Data Universe</u> : <b>Total Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population</b>	358,684		
Disabled Population <sup>5</sup>	53,075	14.8%	
<u>Data Universe</u> : <b>Total Households</b>	145,283		
Zero-Vehicle Households <sup>6</sup>	13,508	9.3%	
Female Head of Household with Children <sup>7</sup>	5,293	3.6%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

#### Notes:

- Minority Population: Table DP5, ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE Calculated as "Total Population" minus "Total Population: Not Hispanic or Latino: White Alone."
- <sup>2</sup> Senior Population: Table DP5, ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, SEX AND AGE Value given as "Total Population: 65 years and over."
- 3 Low-Income Population: Table S1701, Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months Value given as "Population for whom poverty status is determined: Below poverty level."
- 4 Limited English Proficiency Population: Table DP2, Selected Social Characteristics in the United States, LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME Value given as "Population 5 years and over: Language other than English: Speak English less than "very well."
- Disabled Population: Table DP2, Selected Social Characteristics in the United States Value given as "Total civilian noninstitutionalized population: With a disability."
- Zero-Vehicle Households: Table B08201, Household Size by Vehicles Available Value given as "Total Households: No vehicle available."
- <sup>7</sup> Female Head of Household with Children: Table DP2, Selected Social Characteristics in the United States, HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE Value given as "Female householder, no spouse/partner present: With own children under 18 years."

## **Mapping Methodology**

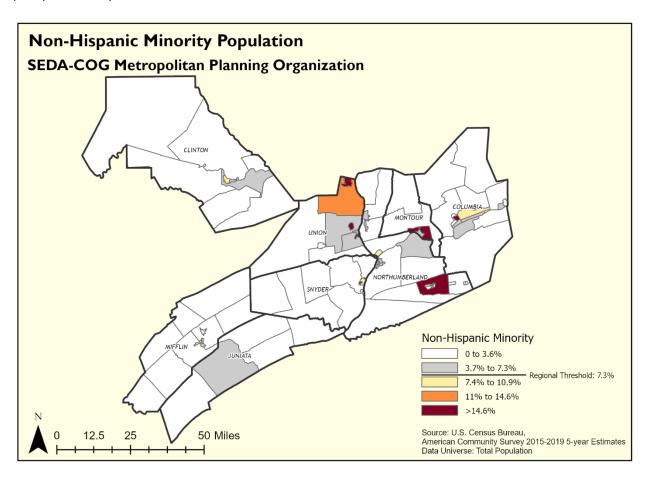
Mapping of Census data was completed individually for each population according to the concentration of the population within each geographic area (Census tract). The mapped concentration is represented using five classes, which are related to the Regional Average Concentration (Regional Threshold) shown in **Table S.3.1**, as follows:

Class 1	0 to ½ of the Regional Threshold
Class 2	½ of the Regional Threshold to Regional Threshold
Class 3	Regional Threshold to 1½ times the Regional Threshold
Class 4	1½ times the Regional Threshold to 2 times the Regional Threshold
Class 5	Greater than 2 times the Regional Threshold

# **Racial Non-Hispanic Minority Populations**

"Minority" is defined as any individual or group that self-identifies as a member(s) of the racial categories Black/African American, Asian American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander and the ethnic category Hispanic/Latino. Mapping below shows racial and ethnic minority population distributions.

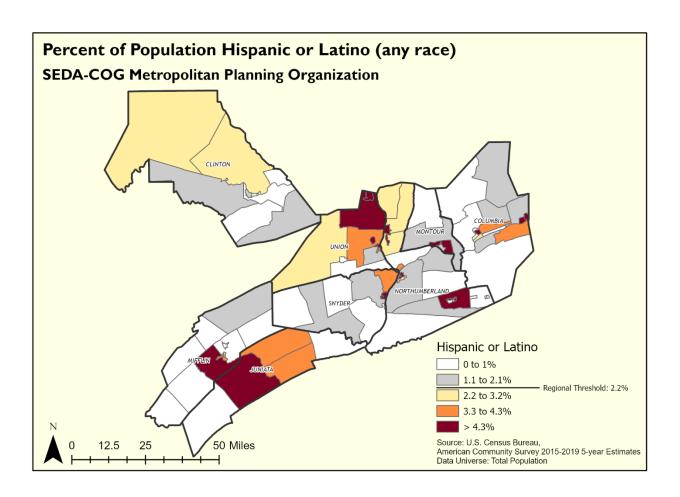
Minority population is defined as any readily identifiable group of minority persons who live in geographic proximity, and if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who would be similarly affected by a proposed DOT program, policy, or activity.



## **Ethnic Minority Population**

U.S. federal government agencies, including the Census Bureau, adhere to standards issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) which specify that race and Hispanic origin (also known as ethnicity) are two separate and distinct concepts. The race and ethnicity categories generally reflect social definitions in the U.S., and they are not an attempt to define race and ethnicity biologically, anthropologically, or genetically.

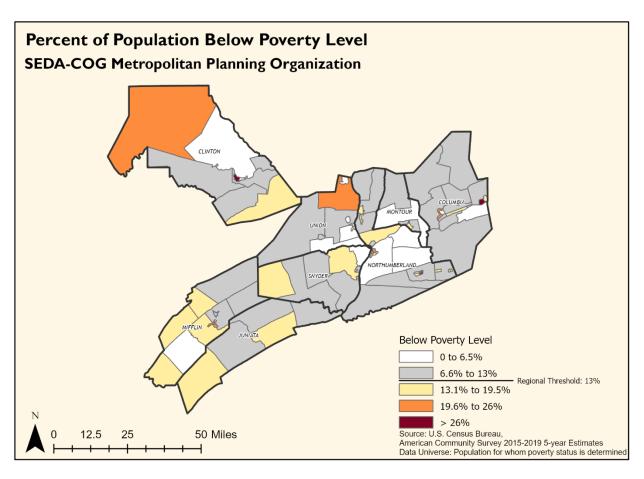
Ethnic minority population includes those who self-identify as "Hispanic or Latino," which refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.



#### **Low-Income Populations**

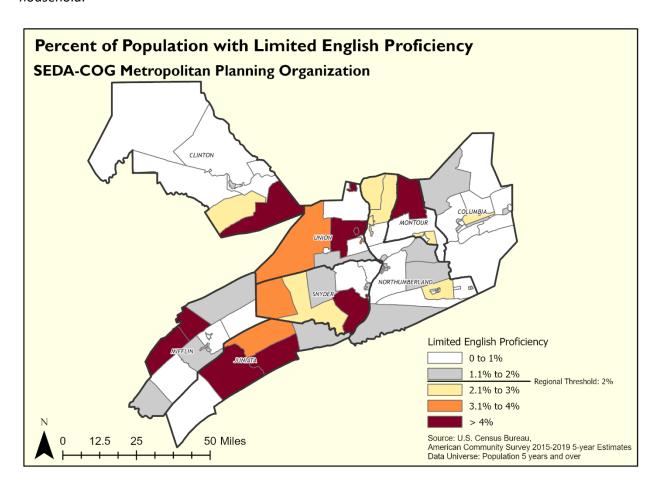
Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice and the USDOT Order on Environmental Justice specifically identify low-income populations as a group to be considered in the long-range transportation plan when identifying and addressing the impacts of the transportation investment program. USDOT defines low-income populations as those having a median household income that is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services' poverty guidelines. Because information from the U.S. Census Bureau informs these guidelines, the Census's "In-Poverty Status" indicator was used to identify low-income populations.

To prevent bias, the percentage below poverty level is calculated using the "Population for which Poverty Status is determined." The Census determination of poverty level is based on family size, composition, and income. If a family's total income is less than the threshold for that family type, then each person in the family is considered to be "in poverty." While the income thresholds do not vary by geographic region, they are updated annually according to the Consumer Price Index.



#### **Limited English Proficiency Population**

Executive Order 13166 on Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) aims "to improve access to federally-conducted and federally-assisted programs and activities for persons who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency." An operative definition for an individual with limited English proficiency may be stated as those individuals who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand the English language. This Department of Justice definition is derived from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits recipients from discriminating on the basis of race, color, or national origin, and contemplates a close relationship between one's national origin and one's language. For the purpose of this analysis, LEP persons include those who speak the English language "less than very well," as classified by the Census. It should be noted that ability to speak English is based upon self-reporting or upon an answer given by another member of the household.

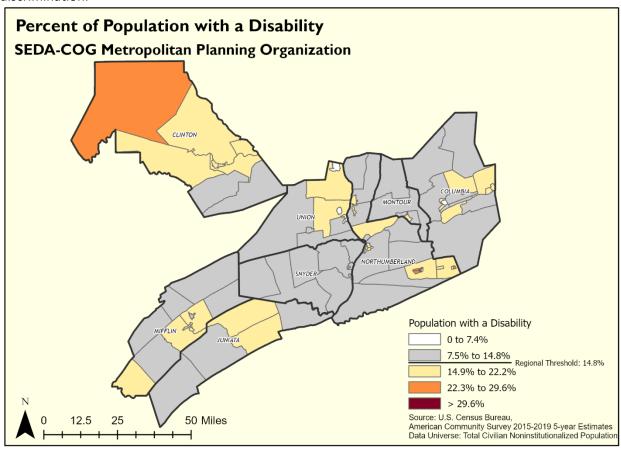


## **Disabled Population**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, along with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008, prohibit discrimination on the basis of disabilities. The term "disability" means, with respect to an individual:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual:
- A record of such an impairment; or
- Being regarded as having such an impairment, which includes the circumstance where an
  individual has been subjected to actions prohibited under the ADA Act because of an actual or
  perceived physical or mental impairment.

The ADA Amendments of 2008 were enacted to provide "a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination" and "clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards addressing discrimination."

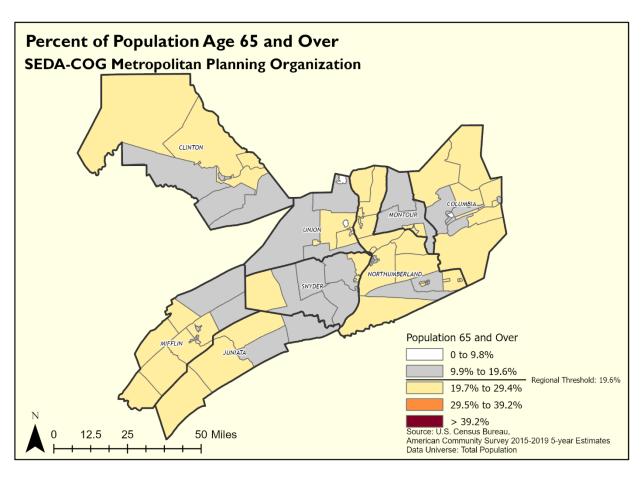


## **Senior Population**

The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, states:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

For the purposes of this public participation plan, the application of the Age Discrimination Act is made for the Senior (Elderly) population—persons age 65 and older. The U.S. median age is increasing rapidly, from 28 in 1970 to 38.5 in 2019. In the upcoming decades, cumulative advances in medicine and nutrition, as well as improvements in environmental quality, are anticipated to amplify this trend, and the Senior population will continue to expand as the Baby Boomer generation ages.

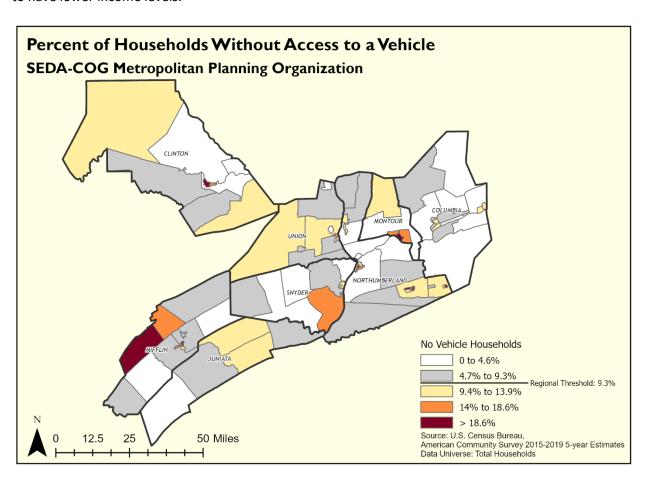


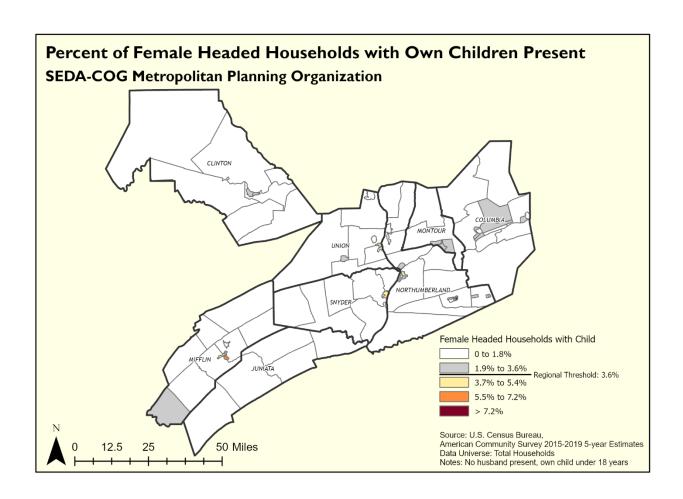
#### Zero-Vehicle Households

# Female-Headed Households with Children Present

While not afforded specific protections under an Executive Order or federal or state act, households with these demographic characteristics face unique transportation challenges and are considered in this analysis as traditionally underserved populations.

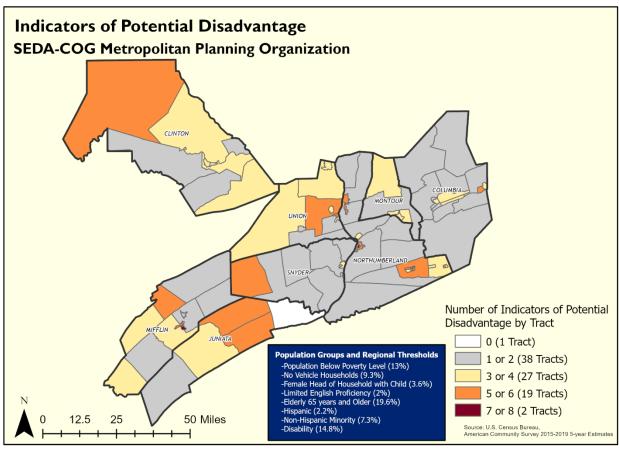
Zero-vehicle households are those households without direct ownership of an automobile and tend to be highly transit-dependent. In the U.S., the transportation program has traditionally favored investments in highway infrastructure, and the vast majority of all personal travel occurs on the highway system via personal automobile. Female-headed households with children but no spouse present tend to have lower income levels.





#### Indicators of Potential Disadvantage

The eight maps of the various EJ and other traditionally underserved populations were combined into a single map of "Indicators of Potential Disadvantage," which illustrates the overlap of populations within the region's Census tracts. The intensity of the overlap is represented by the number of populations in each tract that exceed the regional thresholds established in Table S.3.1.



<u>Note</u>: While this is a convenient way to view the distributions of EJ and Traditionally Underserved Populations, it is highly generalized and should not be used independently of the preceding analyses of individual populations. The knowledge of which specific populations are present and in what concentrations is far more constructive in the development and execution of an effective public participation plan.

#### **Evaluating Trigger Criteria for Conducting Targeted Outreach**

In Section 6 of the PPP, the process checklists for the Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendment and Transportation Improvement Program Amendment include trigger criteria for conducting targeted outreach to minority, in-poverty, limited English proficient (LEP), and disabled populations. The data and mapping below are intended to assist in evaluating these criteria.

#### **Trigger Criteria**

The trigger criteria for conducting targeted outreach are stated within the process checklists as follows:

Determine the need to provide targeted outreach for project amendments that disproportionately burden populations or concentrations of Minority, In-Poverty, LEP, or Disabled Persons.

TRIGGER: Burdensome action or project in an area defined by one or both of the following:

- a. In a project area where the <u>likely affected</u> Minority, In-Poverty, LEP, or Disabled persons exceeds 1,000 persons, or
- b. In a Census tract where the concentration of Minority, In-Poverty, LEP, or Disabled persons exceeds two times the regional average for that population.
  - \*\* In the event that a West Germanic LEP population is the trigger, the outreach may be waived if representatives of the West Germanic-speaking community indicate that the outreach activity is not desired.
  - \*\* Targeted outreach will not be required in the event that the trigger results from an institutionalized population (e.g., within a prison, penitentiary, etc.).

#### **Tracts Meeting Trigger Criteria**

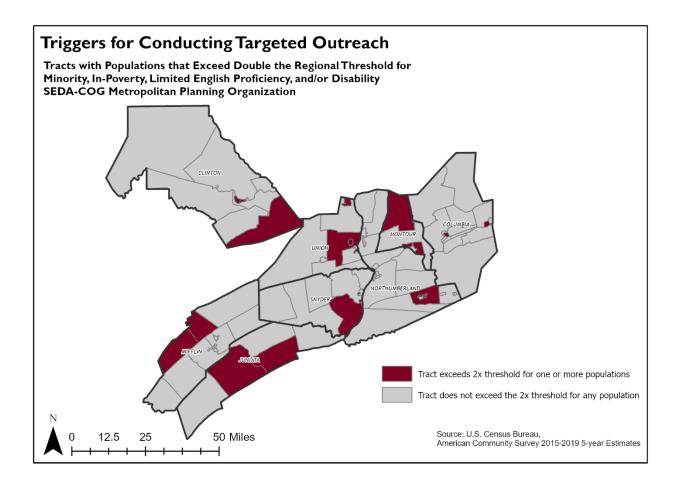
The following provides an initial evaluation of the two triggers and describes the tracts where the criteria are met, according to the current data.

**Trigger (a)** – According to the 2015-2019 American Community Survey data, no tracts currently meet this trigger criteria, even if the entire Minority, In-Poverty, LEP, or Disabled populations residing within each tract were considered "likely affected." However, this situation may change in the future and will be evaluated in future demographic analyses. The 1,000-person standard was adapted from the U.S. Department of Justice's Safe Harbor Provision.

**Trigger (b)** – The table and map below describe the 22 tracts that exceed this trigger criterion for one or more of the Minority, In-Poverty, LEP, or Disabled population groups. Each county in the SEDA-COG MPO contains at least one tract that meets the trigger.

County	# of	Description of Tracts &	Triggering Populations
	Tracts	Communities	
Clinton	3	Tracts occur in and around Lock Haven and the rural agricultural valleys in the southern portion of the county.	<ul> <li>Lock Haven – In-Poverty</li> <li>Southern Clinton County – LEP (West Germanic)</li> </ul>
Columbia	2	Tracts occur in Bloomsburg and Berwick.	<ul> <li>Bloomsburg – Minority and In- Poverty</li> <li>Berwick – In-Poverty</li> </ul>
Juniata	2	Tracts occur in central portion of the county.	Central Juniata County – LEP (Spanish)
Mifflin	2	Tracts occur in and around Lewistown and in the rural agricultural valleys in the northern portion of the county.	<ul> <li>Northern Mifflin County – LEP (West Germanic)</li> <li>Lewistown – In-Poverty, Disability</li> </ul>
Montour	2	Tracts occur in and around Danville and the rural agricultural valleys in the northern portion of the county.	<ul> <li>Danville – LEP (Spanish)</li> <li>Northern Montour County – LEP (West Germanic)</li> </ul>

County	# of	Description of Tracts &	Triggering Populations
	Tracts	Communities	
Northumberland	5	Tracts occur around Shamokin and at the penitentiary facility north of Shamokin.	<ul><li>Shamokin – In-Poverty</li><li>Penitentiary – Minority</li></ul>
Snyder	2	Tracts occur in the southeast portion of the county and in Selinsgrove	<ul> <li>Southeast Snyder County – LEP (West Germanic)</li> <li>Selinsgrove – Minority</li> </ul>
Union	4	Tracts occur around Lewisburg and at the penitentiary facilities in the northern part of the county.	<ul> <li>Lewisburg – Minority</li> <li>Penitentiaries – Minority,</li> <li>In-Poverty, LEP (Spanish)</li> </ul>
TOTAL	22		



#### **APPENDIX S.4**

# DOCUMENTATION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMENT FOR THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN UPDATE

- Legal Notice of the Public Comment Period and Public Meeting
- Press Release announcing the Public Comment Period and Public Meeting
- Webpage Notices of the Public Comment Period and Public Meeting
- Correspondence with Interested Parties regarding the Public Comment Period and Public Meeting
- Record of the Public Meeting
  - o Public Meeting Plan
  - o Sign-In Sheet
  - Informational Handout
  - Sample Comment Form
- Comment and Response Tracking

# THE DAILY ITEM P. O. BOX 607 SUNBURY PA 17801-0607 (570)286-5671 Fax (570)988-5356

# ORDER CONFIRMATION

Salesperson: EUGINA GOLDER	
Acct #: 5417	Ad #: 670676 Status: New CHOLD
SEDA COG MPO ATTN: ACCOUNTS PAYABLE 201 FURNACE ROAD LEWISBURG PA 17837	Start: 04/21/2022 Stop: 04/21/2022 Times Ord: 1 Times Run: *** STD 3.00 X 67.00 Words: 511 Total STD 201.00 Class: 105 PUBLIC NOTICES Rate: LEGDI Cost: 389.55 # Affidavits: 1
Contact: KAY AIKEY Phone: (570)524-4491 Fax#: Email: kaikey@seda-cog.org	Ad Descrpt: PUBLIC NOTICE DRAFT 2021-Given by: * P.O. #: Created: egold 04/14/22 10:55
Agency:	Last Changed: egold 04/14/22 13:34
COMMENTS: approved	
PUB ZONE EDT TP RUN DATES DI A 97 S 04/21 IN A 97 S 04/21	
	IZATION
Please sign to authorize ad approval.	
Name (print or type)	Name (signature)
(CONTINUED O	N NEXT PAGE)

# THE DAILY ITEM P. O. BOX 607 SUNBURY PA 17801-0607 (570)286-5671Fax (570)988-5356

# ORDER CONFIRMATION (CONTINUED)

Salesperson: EUGINA GOLDER

Printed at 04/14/22 13:34 by egold

Acct #: 5417

Ad #: 670676

Status: New CHOLD CH

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Draft 2021-2026 SEDA-COG MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Draft 2022 SEDA-COG MPO Title VI Program

#### Public Comment Periods and Public Meeting

The SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is seeking public review and comment on its Draft 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Draft Title VI Program. The public review and comment period for the TIP will begin at 8:00 a.m. on April 22, 2022, and will continue through 4:00 p.m. on May 23, 2022. The public review and comment period on the Draft Title VI Program will begin at 8:00 a.m. on April 22, 2022, and will continue through 4:00 p.m. on June 6, 2022.

The TIP is the regionally agreed-upon list of priority transportation projects, as required by federal law. The Title VI Program describes how the MPO complies and Title VI of th Civil Rights Act. The public comment periods allow the public to provide feedback on the draft TIP and draft Title VI Program for review by the MPO. Electronic versions of the draft Tip and draft Title VI Program documents are available for public review online at <a href="https://www.seda-cog.org">www.seda-cog.org</a>. Paper copies of these documents are available for public review at the SEDA-COG office, county planning offices, public transit offices, PennDOT District offices, and libraries throughout the MPO's eight-county region (Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union counties).

A public meeting and information session on the Draft 2023- 2026 TIP and the Draft Title VI Program will be conducted on May 9, 2022, between 6 p.m and 7:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Union County Government Center, 155 North 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Lewisburg, PA 17837. The meeting can also be joined via teleconference or videoconference using the following log-in

Teleconferece: (470) 869-2200; Meeting ID: 7697993399# Videoconference: https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399

Comments on the Draft TiP and/or Draft Title VI Program may be submitted

Steve Herman, Transportation Planning Director SEDA-COG MPO 201 Furnace Road

Lewisburg, PA 17837

E-mail: sherman@seda-cog.org
Online comment form: www.sed-cog.org/departments/transportation/transportation-comments

Comments on the Draft TIP must be received by 4:00 p.m. on May 23, 2022. Comments on the Draft Title VI Program must be received by 4:00 p.m. on June 6, 2022. Commenters must include their name and address,

The content of this notice is available in alternative formats and other languages upon request by contacting the SEDA-COG MPO at 570-524-4491, or by written correspondence directed to the MPO at 201 Furnace Road, Lewisburg, PA 17837, or by email to sherman@seda-cog.org. Persons requiring translation, interpretation, or other auxiliary services to review the draft documents, submit writtne comments, or attend public meeting can request these from the SEDA=COG MPO. If these services are neede to atted the May 9 public meeting, requests should be made by 4 p.m. on May 2 to allow sufficient time to arrange accommodations. to allow sufficient time to arrange accommodations.

The SEDA-COG MPO will consider adoption of the 2023-2026 TIP and the Title VI Program at a meeting scheduled for June 10, 2022, at SEDA-COG's office in Lewisburg, PA. The public is welcome to attend.

April 21, 2022

#### PUBLIC NO FICE

Draft 2021-2026 SEDA-COG MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Draft 2022 SEDA-COG MPO Title VI Program

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Comments on the Draft TIP and/or Draft Title VI Program may be submitted

Steve Herman, Transportation Planning Director SEDA-COG MPO 201 Fumace Road

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# STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA COUNTY OF NORTHUMBERLAND

EIN: 82-2664009

Personally appeared before me, the subscriber, Fred Scheller, Publisher

of THE DAILY ITEM, a newspaper of general circulation in Union, Northumberland, Snyder and Montour Counties, the paper in which publication has been directed, who being duly sworn according to law, doth depose and say that said newspaper was established April 15, 1970, and has its place of business at Second & Market Sts., in the city of Sunbury, County of Northumberland, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and that, the Notice, of which the attached is a copy, was published in THE DAILY ITEM in the City of Sunbury, County of Northumberland and State of Pennsylvania on the

## 21st day of April, A.D. 2022

that affiant is not interested in the subject matter of the foregoing notice of advertising, and avers that all of the allegations of the statement as to the time, place and character of the publication are true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me This 21<sup>st</sup> day of April, A.D. 2022

Jotany

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal DIANNE L ALLAN - Notary Public Northumberland County My Commission Expires Dec 10, 2022

Commission Number 1341876

# Public invited to comment on Public Participation Plan for regional transportation planning

# SEDA-COG to conduct public meeting; accept mail and e-mail comments

From April 22 through June 6, 2022, the public is invited to review and comment on documents that define how the SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) provides the public with opportunities to comment on its regional transportation planning activities. The SEDA-COG MPO's Public Participation Plan (PPP) and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan specify the methods used to engage a wide range of stakeholders in the transportation planning process. Both documents, together comprising parts of the SEDA-COG MPO's draft Title VI Program, were recently updated based on changes in regulatory guidance and widespread use of virtual meeting technology.

The SEDA-COG MPO offers several options for public input on the draft Title VI Program: attend a public meeting with the opportunity to speak to regional planners in person, participate in the meeting virtually, or comment via the SEDA-COG website, by e-mail, or by U.S. Mail.

**Public Meeting:** A public meeting will be held May 9 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Union County Government Center, 155 N. 15<sup>th</sup> St., Lewisburg. Regional transportation planners will introduce the draft Title VI Program. The government center is accessible to people with disabilities. If accommodations related to language, sight, or hearing are needed for those with special needs, please contact the SEDA-COG MPO at 570-524-4491 by May 2.

**Virtual Participation:** The public can participate in the meeting and submit comments via teleconference or videoconference using the following log-in info: Teleconference: (470) 869-2200; Meeting ID: 7697993399#

Videoconference: https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399

**Website:** The draft Title VI Program can be viewed at SEDA-COG's transportation website, <a href="https://www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation">www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation</a>, by clicking on Public Participation Plan. Comments can be submitted by clicking the Transportation Comments link or Contact Us button on the website.

**Other Contact Info:** Comments may be submitted by U.S. Mail to Steve Herman, Transportation Planning Director, SEDA-COG MPO, 201 Furnace Road, Lewisburg, PA, 17837, or by e-mail at <a href="mailto:sherman@seda-cog.org">sherman@seda-cog.org</a>.

**Deadline:** All comments on the draft Title VI Program must be received by 4 p.m. on June 6 and must include the name and address of the commenter.

The SEDA-COG MPO works with local governments, businesses, and nonprofits to establish the region's transportation priorities. Priority highway, bridge, and transit projects for the next four-year period are detailed in the Transportation Improvement Program, or TIP, and updated by SEDA-COG every two years in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and local and regional transportation stakeholders. Improvement needs across all modes of the transportation system for the next 20 to 25 years are documented in the regional

long-range transportation plan, which is updated every five years with the same partners and stakeholders. Additional plans, studies, and initiatives can be found at SEDA-COG's transportation website, <a href="https://www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation">www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation</a>.



Transportation Planning
SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization
SEDA-COG Long Range Transportation Plan
Transportation Alternatives Program
Transportation Improvement Program
Middle Susquehanna Regional Bike-Ped Plan
Public Participation Plan
Region Gas Utilization Initiative
Local Technical Assistance Program
Transit Planning
Transportation Comments
Document Translation Request

# **Public Participation Plan**

SEDA-Council of Governments is responsible for regional transportation planning activities and staffs the SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated for the following counties: Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union. SEDA-COG communicates with interested parties to ensure effective and innovative transportation planning that is representative of and responsive to the needs of the entire MPO

SEDA-COG MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN ADOPTED – 6/10/2022

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Appendix S.4

region. To achieve this goal, SEDA-COG encourages the public to play an active role in the development of transportation plans, programs, and projects – beginning in the early stages of, and extending throughout, the planning processes.

#### **Draft Title VI Program Available for Review**

From **April 22 through June 6, 2022**, the public is invited to review and comment on documents that define how the SEDA-COG MPO provides the public with opportunities to comment on its regional transportation planning activities. The SEDA-COG MPO's Public Participation Plan (PPP) and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan specify the methods used to engage a wide range of stakeholders in the transportation planning process. Both documents, together comprising parts of the SEDA-COG MPO's draft Title VI Program, were recently updated based on changes in regulatory guidance and widespread use of virtual meeting technology.

The draft Title VI Program is available for download here.

The SEDA-COG MPO offers several options for public input on the draft Title VI Program: attend a public meeting with the opportunity to speak to regional planners in person, participate in the meeting virtually, or comment via the SEDA-COG website, by e-mail, or by U.S. Mail.

**Public Meeting:** A public meeting will be held May 9 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Union County Government Center, 155 N. 15th St., Lewisburg. Regional transportation planners will introduce the draft Title VI Program. The government center is accessible to people with disabilities. If accommodations related to language, sight, or hearing are needed for those with special needs, please contact the SEDA-COG MPO at 570-524-4491 by May 2.

Public Meeting Presentation
Public Meeting Handouts
Public Meeting Recording

**Virtual Participation:** The public can participate in the meeting and submit comments via teleconference or videoconference using the following log-in info:

Teleconference: (470) 869-2200; Meeting ID: 7697993399# Videoconference: https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399

**Website:** Comments can be submitted by clicking the Transportation Comments link or Contact Us button on the website.

**Other Contact Info:** Comments may be submitted by U.S. Mail to Steve Herman, Transportation Planning Director, SEDA-COG MPO, 201 Furnace Road, Lewisburg, PA, 17837, or by e-mail at sherman@seda-cog.org.

**Deadline:** All comments on the draft Title VI Program must be received by 4 p.m. on June 6 and must include the name and address of the commenter.

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) ensures that SEDA-COG MPO public involvement activities comply with applicable federal/state regulations and guidelines on transportation planning and programming. The PPP includes regional overview information and a framework of goals, objectives, and techniques for obtaining effective public participation as part of SEDA-COG's transportation planning efforts. The PPP identifies current outreach techniques and outlines steps for future improvement in order to increase and enhance public participation in the SEDA-COG MPO planning process.

The current **Public Participation Plan** for the SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was made available for public review in late 2014 and adopted in December 2014. The Plan is periodically reviewed for updates and enhancements. Comments or questions on the Plan can be forwarded to the contact person listed below.

SEDA-COG MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN
ADOPTED – 6/10/2022

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The SEDA-COG MPO is responsible to take steps to ensure meaningful access to the services, information, and other important portions of MPO programs and activities for individuals who are limited-English proficient. In response to this responsibility, the SEDA-COG MPO has prepared a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, which is a stand-alone umbrella document that complies with Federal guidance.

The SEDA-COG MPO is committed to compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of applicable civil rights statutes, executive orders, regulations, and policies. If you have a request for a special need, wish to file a complaint, or desire additional information, please contact the below person.

SEDA-Council of Governments Attn: Steve Herman 201 Furnace Road Lewisburg, PA 17837 570-524-4491

SHOW ALL DEPARTMENTS

# MPO Title VI and Nondiscrimination Procedures

Included below are copies of the SEDA-COG MPO Title VI and Nondiscrimination notices, complaint procedures and complaint forms. These procedures apply to all external complaints relating to any program or activity administered by SEDA-COG MPO and/or its sub-recipients, consultants and contractors, filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

Title VI Notice to the Public
Title VI Policy & Procedures
Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form
Public Accommodation Provisions Notice

# Public Meeting on SEDA-COG MPO's Draft 2023-2026 TIP and Draft Title VI Program

#### **Event Details**

**Date:** May 9, 2022 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

**Categories:** Transportation

A public meeting and information session on the SEDA-COG MPO's Draft 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Draft Title VI Program will be held on May 9, 2022, between 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

The meeting will be held at the Union County Government Center, 155 North 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Lewisburg, PA, 17837.

The meeting can also be joined via teleconference or videoconference using the following log-in info:

Teleconference: (470) 869-2200; Meeting ID: 7697993399#

Videoconference: https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399

Draft TIP documents can be accessed here.

The Draft Title VI Program can be accessed here.

Persons requiring translation, interpretation, or other auxiliary services to review the draft documents, submit written comments, or attend the public meeting can request these from the SEDA-COG MPO by calling 570-524-4491. If these services are needed to attend the May 9 public meeting, requests should be made by 4 p.m. on May 2 to allow sufficient time to arrange accommodations.

From: <u>Herman, Steve</u>

**Subject:** Transportation Program and Title VI Program Comment Periods

**Date:** Friday, April 22, 2022 8:52:50 AM

#### Greetings,

The SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) announces that its Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Federal Fiscal Years 2023-2026 and its Draft Title VI Program are available for public review.

Draft TIP related documents can be found online at:

https://seda-cog.org/departments/transportation/transportation-improvement-program/

Draft Title VI related documents can be found online at:

https://seda-cog.org/departments/transportation/public-participation-plan/

Some of the SEDA-COG MPO's main responsibilities include development of a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and a Title VI Program on behalf of its member counties: Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union. The SEDA-COG MPO TIP is the regionally agreed upon list of priority projects over a four-year period that lists the planned expenditure of federal, state, and local funds for the transportation projects. The TIP contains multimodal transportation projects – that is, it includes traditional highway/bridge projects, along with transit, bicycle/pedestrian and freight-related improvements. The official TIP is updated every two years in Pennsylvania, but it serves as a living document that is regularly being modified. The Title VI Program describes how the MPO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

The public comment period for the Draft 2023-2026 SEDA-COG MPO TIP began today (April 22, 2022). The region's residents and other interested parties are encouraged to review the TIP documents available at the above link and offer written comments up until 4:00 p.m. on May 23, 2022. The public review and comment period on the Draft Title VI Program began on April 22, 2022, and will continue through 4:00 p.m. on June 6, 2022.

The SEDA-COG MPO will convene a public meeting to review the Draft FFY 2023-2026 TIP and Draft Title VI Program, receive public input, and address questions or concerns about the documents. The public meeting will be held May 9, 2022 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Union County Government Center. This will be a hybrid meeting that can be attended in-person or joined via teleconference or videoconference.

Teleconference: (470) 869-2200; Meeting ID: 7697993399#

Videoconference: <a href="https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399">https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399</a>

Below is the text for the Public Notice on the public comment periods that ran in the April 21<sup>st</sup> edition of *The Daily Item* newspaper. Please feel free to distribute the notice and this e-mail to other individuals or agencies that should receive it. If you have questions or need additional information, do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Steve Herman, AICP | Program Director
Transportation Planning
SEDA-Council of Governments
201 Furnace Road
Lewisburg, PA 17837
(570) 524-4491 ext. 7242
www.seda-cog.org | sherman@seda-cog.org

SEDA-COG...Building Strong Economies & Strong Communities

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

# Draft 2023-2026 SEDA-COG MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Draft 2022 SEDA-COG MPO Title VI Program

#### **Public Comment Periods and Public Meeting**

The SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is seeking public review and comment on its Draft 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Draft Title VI Program. The public review and comment period for the TIP will begin at 8:00 a.m. on April 22, 2022, and will continue through 4:00 p.m. on May 23, 2022. The public review and comment period on the Draft Title VI Program will begin at 8:00 a.m. on April 22, 2022, and will continue through 4:00 p.m. on June 6, 2022.

The TIP is the regionally agreed-upon list of priority transportation projects, as required by federal law. The Title VI Program describes how the MPO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The public comment periods allow the public to provide feedback on the draft TIP and draft Title VI Program for review by the MPO. Electronic versions of the draft TIP and draft Title VI Program documents are available for public review online at <a href="https://www.seda-cog.org">www.seda-cog.org</a>. Paper copies of these documents are available for public review at the SEDA-COG office, county planning offices, public transit offices, PennDOT District offices, and libraries throughout the MPO's eight-county region (Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union counties).

A public meeting and information session on the Draft 2023-2026 TIP and the Draft Title VI Program will be conducted on May 9, 2022, between 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Union County Government Center, 155 North  $15^{th}$  Street, Lewisburg, PA, 17837. The meeting can also be joined via teleconference or videoconference using the following log-in info:

Teleconference: (470) 869-2200; Meeting ID: 7697993399#

Videoconference: <a href="https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399">https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399</a>

Comments on the Draft TIP and/or Draft Title VI Program may be submitted to: Steve Herman, Transportation Planning Director SEDA-COG MPO 201 Furnace Road Lewisburg, PA 17837

Fax: 570-524-9190

E-mail: <a href="mailto:sherman@seda-cog.org">sherman@seda-cog.org</a>

Online comment form: <a href="https://www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation/transportation-comments">www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation/transportation-comments</a>

Comments on the Draft TIP must be received by 4:00 p.m. on May 23, 2022. Comments on the Draft Title VI Program must be received by 4:00 p.m. on June 6, 2022. Commenters must include their name and address, at a minimum.

The content of this notice is available in alternative formats and other languages upon request by contacting the SEDA-COG MPO at 570-524-4491, or by written correspondence directed to the MPO at 201 Furnace Road, Lewisburg, PA 17837, or by e-mail to <a href="mailto:sherman@seda-cog.org">sherman@seda-cog.org</a>. Persons requiring translation, interpretation, or other auxiliary services to review the draft documents, submit written comments, or attend the public meeting can request these from the SEDA-COG MPO. If these services are needed to attend the May 9 public meeting, requests should be made by 4 p.m. on May 2 to allow sufficient time to arrange accommodations.

The SEDA-COG MPO will consider adoption of the 2023-2026 TIP and the Title VI Program at a meeting scheduled for June 10, 2022, at SEDA-COG's office in Lewisburg, PA. The public is welcome to attend.



# PUBLIC MEETING PLAN Draft 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Draft Title VI Program

#### **DATE & TIME:**

Monday, May 9, 2022 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

#### LOCATION:

Union County Government 155 North 15th St. Lewisburg, PA 17837 Teleconference or Videoconference (470) 869-2200; Meeting ID: 7697993399# https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399

#### **Meeting Purpose:**

The purpose of the SEDA-COG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) public meeting is to provide the public with information and the opportunity to review and provide comment on the Draft 2023-2026 TIP and Draft Title VI Program documents. Public comment received at this meeting will be reviewed and addressed in the MPO's Draft TIP and Title VI Program update processes, as appropriate.

#### **Meeting Format:**

The meeting is being conducted as a hybrid in-person or teleconference/videoconference meeting for increased accessibility and convenience for the public and other stakeholders. There will be designated timeframes for presentations on the TIP and Title VI Program. In addition to an overview of the documents, the presentation will include clear instruction on how to provide comments and the remaining steps of the update process that will eventually conclude with the plan adoptions in June 2022. The presentations will be followed by question-and-answer periods, and then will conclude with an invitation to the attendees to view the draft TIP/Title VI Program documents and maps and to provide written comments. Comment forms will be available at the meeting and on the SEDA-COG website for use by attendees and others during the comment period.

The meeting start time is 6:00 p.m. The TIP presentation period will begin at 6:05 p.m. The presentation should take approximately 30 minutes. The TIP question-and-answer period will be approximately 15 minutes. The Title VI presentation should take approximately 15 minutes. The Title VI question-and-answer period will be approximately 15 minutes and will conclude the structured segment of the meeting. The meeting will conclude at 7:30 p.m.

Copies of the meeting agenda, comment forms, the TIP presentation, the Title VI presentation, and mapping will be available in-person and posted to the SEDA-COG website to extend the availability of the meeting information and comment opportunity to interested citizens who may not be able to participate on May 9.

#### **Meeting Agenda**

A meeting handout will be prepared to include an agenda for the evening and pertinent information regarding the Draft TIP/Title VI Program and how and where to review the documents and provide comments.

Following the question-and-answer period, attendees will be invited to view the draft plan documents and mapping, interact with the staff, and prepare comments to be submitted before they leave, or to be returned at a later date prior to the conclusion of the comment periods. A draft of the proposed public meeting agenda content follows:

#### **Draft Agenda**

1.	Welcome and Introductions	5 minutes
2.	Draft TIP Presentation	30 minutes
3.	Draft TIP Question-and-Answer Period	15 minutes
4.	Draft Title VI Program Presentation	15 minutes
5.	Draft Title VI Question-and-Answer Period	15 minutes
6.	Review Hard Cony Documents and Mans	10 minutes

#### **Handouts and Materials**

Each attendee will be provided with their meeting materials at registration. The meeting handouts include: an agenda, comment forms for the draft TIP and draft Title VI Program, an evaluation form for the public meeting, a sheet on how to stay involved with TIP planning, and printouts of the presentations (3 slides per page).

Materials, supplies and/or equipment necessary to support the meeting include the following:

- Sign-in sheets
- Agenda (20 copies)
- 2-sided Comment Form for the TIP (20 copies)
- 2-sided Comment Form for the Title VI Program (20 copies)
- Public Meeting Evaluation Form (20 copies)
- 2-sided Handout that addresses how to stay involved with TIP planning (20 copies)
- TIP Presentation 3 slides/page (20 copies)
- Title VI Presentation 3 slides/page (20 copies)
- Copies of Draft Highway/Bridge TIP 11x17 sheets (10 copies)
- Poster Map showing TIP projects in MPO region (locatable projects only)
- Poster Map showing Indicators of Potential Disadvantage from PPP
- Notice of Language Services printout (in Title VI Program)
- U.S. Census Language ID Survey card (in Title VI Program)
- Lingualinx Language ID Card and Procedures/Instructions sheet (in Title VI Program)
- Title VI Complaint Form and Log Tracking Form (in Title VI Program)
- Project team nametags
- Easels (as needed for maps and flip charts, at least 4)
- Pens, markers, and push pins
- Flash drive with PowerPoint
- Smart phone for taking photos
- Outdoor directional signage

• Comment/evaluation form collection box

#### **Room Set Up**

The presentation will be set up in the large training room along with pertinent mapping displays. The registration table will be set up in the lobby.

#### **Invitations**

E-mail invitations to SEDA-COG MPO members and interested parties and other stakeholders were sent on April 22, 2022. No RSVP is required for the public meeting invitation. The meeting is listed on the SEDA-COG website and has been promoted over social media, press releases, and a legal ad in The Daily Item.

#### **Staffing**

The project team will arrive approximately 1-hour before the starting time to ensure room access and set up for the meeting. The meeting facilitator will initiate and conclude the presentation period. The meeting facilitator will also assist with time management and keeping the discussions on task. The meeting facilitator will also oversee registration and documentation of the overall meeting activity. All members will be responsible for meeting set-up and tear-down. Project team members who will be in attendance include the following:

SEDA-COG	PennDOT	Consultant
Steve Herman	Carey Mullins (virtual)	Michelle Brummer
Katherine Wilde	Jonathan Ranck (virtual)	Sophia Fox (virtual)
Kay Aikey	Mark Schultz (virtual)	Carrie Long (virtual)
Kyle Postupack		

#### **Meeting Summary**

The input received at the meeting will be recorded on the comment tracking forms, reviewed by the SEDA-COG MPO and consultant staff, and addressed, as appropriate. The documentation of the meeting will be finalized for inclusion in the update process documentation. The presentation materials, discussion notes, and sign-in sheets will be included in the meeting summary. A draft of the meeting summary will be prepared by May 23. The final meeting summary will be developed by no later than May 30.

#### **Task Tracking Table**

	Task	Responsibility/Activity	Due Date	Deliverable(s)
1.	Develop and Distribute Public Meeting Email Invitations	S. Herman	4/22/22	Public Meeting Invitation  Website Calendar Listing
2.	Review and Approval of the Public Meeting Plan	S. Herman	5/5/22	Finalized Public Meeting Plan
3.	Preparation of Draft Public Meeting Materials	S. Herman K. Wilde M. Brummer SEDA-COG TIP Presentation	5/6/22	Sign-in sheets Handout/Agenda Comment Forms Evaluation Form Handout/How to stay involved Presentation slides Poster Maps
4.	Preparation of Draft Meeting Summary	K. Aikey M. Brummer	5/22/22	Draft Public Meeting Summary
5.	Final Meeting Summary	K. Aikey M. Brummer	5/29/22	Final Meeting Summary
6.	Compilation of Public Comments	S. Herman M. Brummer	6/1/22	Updated Comment Tracking Form



SEDA-COG MPO
Draft 2023-2026 TIP and Title VI Program Public Meeting
May 9, 2022, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Union County Government Center
155 North 15th Street, Lewisburg, PA 17837

### **SIGN-IN SHEET**

Name	Organization	Mailing Address & Phone	Email	Place checkmark to be added to the MPO Interested Parties List
Steve Herman	SEOA-COG	Lewisburg, PA 17837	sherman @ sed a- cog org	
Kay ally	52DA-COG	1) 4	Kaikey @ seda Eog.c	5
Katherine Wilde	SEDA-COG	1)	Klewis@seda-cog.org	
Michelle Brummer	CANNETT FROMING	207 Senorte Avec CompHill SPA 17011	mbrummerægfne	+-com
Kathler Brady	Peres Consultants.		K brady Deters	Yes
Kum amolio	United Way of Pennsylvania	3080 County line Rd Winfield PA 17889	Karnsler @ uwp. org	
tyle Postupac	SEDA COG			
Cindy Adams	Office of State Senator John Gordner			



SEDA-COG MPO
Draft 2023-2026 TIP and Title VI Program Public Meeting
May 9, 2022, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Union County Government Center
155 North 15th Street, Lewisburg, PA 17837

# **SIGN-IN SHEET**

Name	Organization	Mailing Address & Phone	Email	Place checkmark to be added to the MPO Interested Parties List
Terri Campbell (virtual)	Office of State Senator John Gordner			
Kristy Heintzelmon (virtual)	11 11			
Chris Messner (virtual)	Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.			
Carey Mullins	PennDOT Program Center			
Mark Schultz (virtual)	Penn DOT District 2-0			
Carrie Long (virtual)	Gannett Fleming			
Sophia Fox (virtual)	Quest			



### **Public Meeting Agenda**

Draft 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Draft Title VI Program
Monday, May 9, 2022

6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Union County Government Center or Teleconference/Videoconference

(470) 869-2200; Conference ID: 7697993399; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/7697993399

**Welcome** to the public meeting on the SEDA-COG MPO Draft 2023-2026 TIP and Title VI Program. This meeting is being held to provide information and the opportunity to review and submit comments on these documents. Tonight's meeting includes two presentations, each followed by a question-and-answer period. Upon conclusion, please feel free to review the TIP and Title VI hard copy documents here on display or on the SEDA-COG website at the links below. Please submit your comment and meeting evaluation forms in the collection box before you leave. If other comments come to mind after you leave, you may submit additional comments on the SEDA-COG website until the public comment periods close (May 23 for TIP, June 6 for Title VI Program).

Tonight's Program

- 6:05 pm ......Transportation Improvement Program Presentation
- 6:35 pm ......Question and Answer Period
- 6:50 pm .....Title VI Program Presentation
- 7:05 pm ......Question and Answer Period
- 7:20 pm ......Review Hard Copy Documents and Maps
- 7:30 pm ......Public Meeting Concludes

The **TIP** is the regionally agreed-upon list of priority projects which consists of the first four years of PennDOT's Twelve Year Program. The TIP contains multimodal projects, including traditional highway/bridge and transit projects, along with bicycle/pedestrian, aviation, and freight-related improvements. The TIP is formally updated every two years in Pennsylvania, but it serves as a living document that is constantly being revised and amended. The draft TIP can be viewed at SEDA-COG's transportation website, <a href="https://www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation">www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation</a>, by clicking on Transportation Improvement Program. We welcome your comments on the draft TIP. You can complete a Comment Form here at the meeting tonight or click the Transportation Comments link or Contact Us button on the website.

The **Title VI Program** describes how the MPO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The Title VI Program demonstrates that the public has a fair opportunity to participate in the MPO's activities and decision-making. The draft Title VI Program can be viewed at SEDA-COG's transportation website, <a href="www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation">www.seda-cog.org/departments/transportation</a>, by clicking on Public Participation Plan. We welcome your comments on the draft Title VI Program. You can complete a Comment Form here at the meeting tonight or click the Transportation Comments link or Contact Us button on the website.



# Draft SEDA-COG Title VI Program Comment Form

SEDA-COG MPO Public Meeting May 9, 2022 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Union County Government Center

Thank you for reviewing and providing your comments on the SEDA-COG MPO Draft Title VI Program. <u>All comment forms must include the name and address of the person submitting the comments. If name and address are not provided, the comments will not be considered in the update process.</u> The comment form may be deposited in the Comment Box at the Registration Station; mailed to Steve Herman, SEDA-COG Transportation Planning Director, 201 Furnace Road, Lewisburg, PA 17837; faxed to 570-524-9190; or e-mailed to <a href="mailto:sherman@seda-cog.org">sherman@seda-cog.org</a> by 4:00 p.m. on June 6, 2022.

Name:	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Date:
Address:		
City:		
Email:		_ (Optional)
Please use the space below and the back of this form	to provide your o	comments.



#### Comment and Response Tracking for the

#### **Draft SEDA-COG MPO Title VI Program**

Comment Period: Friday, April 22, 2022 through Monday, June 6, 2022

Date	Name	Address		Comment	Disposition	
	No comments received through June 6, 2022.					

# **RESOURCE APPENDIX**

Appendix R.1	Interested Parties Distribution Lists
Appendix R.2	Public Participation Event Checklists and Tools
Appendix R.3	Outreach Strategies
Appendix R.4	Language Assistance Plan
Appendix R.5	Evaluation Process for the Public Participation Plan

#### **APPENDIX R.1**

#### INTERESTED PARTIES DISTRIBUTION LISTS

#### SEDA-COG MPO Members (Full Copy of Draft Plan/TIP)

- 1. Clinton County Katie de Silva, County Planning Director
- 2. Columbia County Eric Stahley, County Resiliency Officer
- 3. Juniata County Brad Kerstetter, County Planning Director
- 4. Mifflin County Mark Colussy, County Planning Director
- 5. Montour County Greg Molter, County Planning Director
- 6. Northumberland County Justin Skavery, County Planning Director
- 7. Snyder County Lincoln Kaufman, County Planning Director
- 8. Union County Shawn McLaughlin, County Planning Director
- 9. SEDA-COG Board of Directors Commissioner Richard Ridgway
- 10. Transit Representative Michele Holman, rabbittransit Assistant General Manager
- 11. Multimodal Representative Stephen Phillips
- 12. PennDOT Central Office Carey Mullins, Transportation Planning Specialist
- 13. PennDOT District 2-0 Mark Schultz, Planning and Programming Manager
- 14. PennDOT District 3-0 Jonathan Ranck, Transportation Planning Specialist
- 15. Town of Bloomsburg Lisa Dooley, Town Administrator
- 16. Berwick Borough Jack Kyttle, Public Works Foreman

#### **Counties and Municipalities (Notice Only)**

- 1. Clinton County Board of Commissioners
- 2. Columbia County Board of Commissioners & Planning Director
- 3. Juniata County Board of Commissioners
- 4. Mifflin County Board of Commissioners
- 5. Montour County Board of Commissioners
- 6. Northumberland County Board of Commissioners
- 7. Snyder County Board of Commissioners
- 8. Union County Board of Commissioners
- 9. All municipalities in the eight-county MPO

#### Legislators – Federal & State (Notice Only)

- 1. Senator Bob Casey
- 2. Senator Pat Toomey
- 3. Congressman Glenn Thompson
- 4. Congressman Fred Keller
- 5. Congressman Dan Meuser
- 6. State Senator Gene Yaw
- 7. State Senator John Gordner
- 8. State Senator Jake Corman
- 9. State Senator Cris Dush

- 10. State Representative Stephanie Borowicz
- 11. State Representative Joe Hamm
- 12. State Representative Johnathan Hershey
- 13. State Representative David Rowe
- 14. State Representative Kurt Masser
- 15. State Representative Lynda Schlegel Culver
- 16. State Representative David Millard
- 17. State Representative Rich Irvin
- 18. State Representative Kerry Benninghoff

#### Transit Providers (Full Copy of Draft Plan/TIP)

- 1. Call A Ride Service, Inc. (Juniata/Mifflin Counties)
- 2. Lower Anthracite Transportation System (Northumberland County)
- 3. rabbittransit (Columbia/Montour/Northumberland/Snyder/Union Counties)
- 4. STEP, Inc. (Clinton/Lycoming Counties)

#### **Freight Providers (Notice Only)**

- 1. Canadian Pacific
- 2. Con-Way Central Express
- 3. Federal Express
- 4. Milton Transportation
- 5. Moran Logistics
- 6. Norfolk Southern
- 7. North Shore Railroad Company
- 8. Reading & Northern Railroad Company
- 9. SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority (Non-operator railroad)
- 10. United Parcel Services
- 11. Ward Trucking
- 12. Watsontown Trucking
- 13. XPO
- 14. Yellow Transportation

#### **Human Service Agencies (Notice Only)**

- 1. AARP
- 2. ACTION Health
- 3. The Advocacy Alliance
- 4. AGAPE
- 5. Allied Services
- 6. American Cancer Society
- 7. The Arc of Susquehanna Valley
- 8. Berwick Area United Way
- 9. Buffalo Valley Nursing Home
- 10. Caring Communities
- 11. Center for Independent Living of North Central PA

- 12. Center for Independent Living of Central PA
- 13. Center for Independent Living of Northeast PA
- 14. Central PA Workforce Development Corporation
- 15. Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.
- 16. Clinton County Assistance Office
- 17. Clinton County Housing Authority
- 18. Clinton County United Way
- 19. CMSU
- 20. Columbia and Montour County Assistance Offices
- 21. Columbia County Housing Authority
- 22. Columbia County Human Services
- 23. Columbia/Montour Aging Office, Inc.
- 24. Community Services Group
- 25. Community Strategies Group
- 26. CSIU
- 27. DAVITA Dialysis
- 28. Donald Heiter Community Center
- 29. Elmcroft Senior Living
- 30. Evangelical Community Hospital
- 31. Family Service Association
- 32. Focus Health LLC
- 33. Foster Grandparent Program of Central PA
- 34. Geisinger Health Plan
- 35. Geisinger Health System
- 36. Geisinger HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital
- 37. Geisinger Home Care
- 38. Grayson View
- 39. Greater Susquehanna Valley United Way
- 40. Grey Medical Advocate, LLC
- 41. Hope Enterprises
- 42. Housing Authority of Northumberland County
- 43. Keystone Human Services of North Central PA
- 44. LIFE Geisinger
- 45. Living Unlimited, Inc.
- 46. Mental Health Association
- 47. Mifflin-Juniata Area Agency on Aging
- 48. Mifflin-Juniata County Human Services
- 49. Mifflin-Juniata Literacy Program
- 50. Mifflin-Juniata Regional Services Corporation
- 51. Montour County Housing Authority
- 52. North Central Sight Services
- 53. Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging
- 54. Nottingham Village Senior Living Community
- 55. PA CareerLink

- 56. PA Statewide Independent Living Council
- 57. Pennsylvania Health Management
- 58. RiverWoods
- 59. SEDA-COG Housing Development Corporation
- 60. Service Coordination Unlimited
- 61. Snyder County Housing Authority
- 62. Square One Clubhouse
- 63. STEP, Inc.
- 64. SUMMIT Early Learning
- 65. Sunbury Housing Authority
- 66. Suncom Industries
- 67. Transitions
- 68. The Manor at Penn Village
- 69. Union County Assistance Office
- 70. Union County Housing Authority
- 71. Union/Snyder Area Agency on Aging
- 72. Union-Snyder Community Action Agency
- 73. United Cerebral Palsy of Central PA
- 74. United Disability Services
- 75. United Way of Columbia and Montour County
- 76. United Way of Mifflin-Juniata
- 77. UPMC Susquehanna

#### **Economic Development Agencies (Notice Only)**

- 1. Berwick Industrial Development Association
- 2. Central PA Chamber of Commerce
- 3. Clinton County Economic Partnership
- 4. Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce
- 5. Danville Business Alliance
- 6. Downtown Bloomsburg, Inc.
- 7. Downtown Lewistown, Inc.
- 8. DRIVE
- 9. Greater Susquehanna Valley Chamber of Commerce
- 10. Juniata Business & Industry, Inc.
- 11. Juniata River Valley Chamber of Commerce
- 12. Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation

#### **Environmental and Recreation/Bike/Ped Agencies (Notice Only)**

- 1. Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area Authority
- 2. Buffalo Valley Recreation Authority
- 3. East Buffalo Township Pedestrian and Bike Committee
- 4. Lewisburg Neighborhoods Corporation
- 5. Merrill W. Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy
- 6. Montour Area Recreation Commission

- 7. Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy
- 8. Penn State Cooperative Extensions
- 9. Susquehanna Greenway Partnership
- 10. Susquehanna River Basin Commission

#### State and Federal Agencies (Notice Only)

- 1. PA Department of Aging
- 2. PA Department of Agriculture
- 3. PA Department of Community and Economic Development
- 4. PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- 5. PA Department of Environmental Protection
- 6. PA Department of Health
- 7. PA Department of Human Services
- 8. PA Dept. of Military & Veterans Affairs and the PA Disabled Veteran Outreach Program
- 9. PA Department of Transportation
- 10. PA Emergency Management Agency
- 11. PA Fish and Boat Commission
- 12. PA Game Commission
- 13. PA Historical & Museum Commission
- 14. PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- 15. PA State Police
- 16. Governor's Action Team
- 17. Governor's Regional Offices (Northeast and Northwest)
- 18. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- 19. U.S. Department of Agriculture
- 20. U.S. Department of Commerce
- 21. U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration
- 22. U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration
- 23. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- 24. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

#### **Surrounding County Planning Agencies (Notice Only)**

- 1. Centre County Planning & Community Development Office
- 2. Centre Regional Planning Agency
- 3. Luzerne County Planning Commission
- 4. Lycoming County Planning Commission
- 5. Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance
- 6. North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission
- 7. Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission
- 8. Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission
- 9. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

#### **Private Citizens (Notice Only)**

1. Eric Adams

- 2. Michelle Beiler, Bucknell University
- 3. Carol Coldren
- 4. Gloria Fultz, Independent Consultant
- 5. Dan Knorr, Bloomsburg University
- 6. Teena Kubasti, LIFE Geisinger
- 7. Bruce Phelps
- 8. Megan Wolleben, Bucknell University

#### **Consulting Firms (Notice Only)**

- 1. Michelle Brummer, Gannett Fleming
- 2. Gini Feigles-Karr, Dewberry
- 3. Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker International
- 4. Robert Watts, McCormick Taylor, Inc.

#### **Interested Persons from Meeting Survey (Notice Only)**

See list of contacts interested in transit meeting activity notices also (from past surveys)

#### **Community Libraries (Full Copy of Draft TIP Only)**

- 1. Annie Halenbake Ross Library (Lock Haven)
- 2. Bloomsburg Public Library
- 3. Juniata County Library
- 4. Mifflin County Library
- 5. Thomas Beaver Free Library (Danville)
- 6. Degenstein Community Library (Sunbury)
- 7. Rudy Gelnett Memorial Library (Selinsgrove)
- 8. Public Library for Union County

#### Tribal Contacts (Full Copy of Draft Plan/TIP)

- 1. Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- 2. Cayuga Nation
- 3. Delaware Nation, Oklahoma
- 4. Delaware Tribe of Indians
- 5. Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- 6. Oneida Indian Nation
- 7. Oneida Nation
- 8. Onondaga Nation
- 9. Seneca-Cayuga Nation
- 10. Seneca Nation of Indians
- 11. Shawnee Tribe
- 12. Tonawanda Band of Seneca
- 13. Tuscarora Nation

#### **APPENDIX R.2**

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EVENT CHECKLISTS AND TOOLS

- Event Site Checklist
- Public Meeting Plan Template
- Public Meeting Comment Form Template



# **EVENT SITE CHECKLIST**

<b>Venue Information</b>	
Location:	
Address:	
Available Dates:	
Confirmation needed by:	
Cost	
Size / # of rooms	
Seating capacity	
Any restrictions?	
Certificate of Insurance	
Required?	
Directions to Venue	
Contact Person:	
Phone:	
E-mail:	
Website:	
<b>Event Logistics</b>	
Table / chairs needed	
Audio-visual provisions	
Projector	
Projection screen	
Computer	
Internet access	
Cell phone reception	
Sound system provisions	
Floor plan with electrical	
outlets	
Platform/stage	
Lighting	
Telephone / Conference	
call capability	
Food / beverage service	
Set-up	By facility operator? Provide meeting layout
•	By event sponsor? Obtain photos of facility
Security	

<b>Event Accessibility</b>	
Transportation	Parking available
	Fixed-route transit service
	Paratransit service
Disability Accessibility	
Restrooms	
Nearby Hotels	

Notes (Concerns, Pros & Cons)					
Venue meets criteria?	Yes	No			
Form completed by:					
Date:					



#### **PUBLIC MEETING PLAN**

**DATE:** Select a date that works for all project team members. Tuesdays, Wednesdays,

and Thursdays often work best as meeting dates.

**FORMAT / TIME:** Determine what type of meeting will be held. Often, evening meetings allow the

public to attend the meeting after work hours.

o Will there be a Presentation? Yes / No

Will there be an Open House/Plans Display? Yes / No

Example scheduling:

○ Open House: 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

○ Presentation: 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Select a location that is close to the project area, accessible by public

transportation, and is ADA-accessible. The meeting venue should be a building that routinely provides community services (such as a fire hall, a community

center, school, or church).

**PURPOSE:** Determine the purpose of the meeting. Example meeting purposes include:

Obtain feedback from the public

Share the results of technical studies

Provide information about a project or document

STAFFING (TBD): Determine the individuals from each participating agency that will be attending

the meeting and list them here by agency.

#### PLANS DISPLAY AREA

If you choose to do a Plans Display, divide the content by station. See an example of Station listings below, along with suggested materials for each station. A staff member should be present at each station in order to answer questions and provide information. Staff should be located at stations that align with their areas of expertise.

#### STATION I: REGISTRATION

**Staffing:** List staff that would be present at this station.

Materials: Welcome sign, General Sign-in Sheets, Comment Form, Public Meeting

Informational Handout, Media Kits, Hard Copies of Relevant Documents,

**Comment Box** 

Provide an explanation of the purpose of each station here.

#### **STATION 2: PROJECT PURPOSE & NEED (if applicable)**

**Staffing:** List staff that would be present at this station.

Displays: Project Purpose and Needs Summary, Project Mapping

Provide an explanation of the purpose of each station here.

#### **STATION 3: TECHNICAL INFORMATION (traffic studies, environmental studies, etc.)**

**Staffing:** List staff that would be present at this station.

Displays: Two Environmental Features Maps - Natural / Socioeconomic Features,

Environmental Effects Matrix, Section 106 Renderings and Mitigation

information

Provide an explanation of the purpose of each station here.

#### STATION 4: DOCUMENT DISPLAY/COMMENT AREA

**Staffing:** List staff that would be present at this station.

Displays: Tables and Chairs, Pencils, General Comment Forms, Documents for

Review

Provide an explanation of the purpose of each station here.

#### **MEDIA COORDINATION:**

- Will there be a press release? Yes / No
- O When will the press release be distributed?

#### **ADVERTISEMENT/NOTIFICATIONS:**

- Does the project / document require 30-day comment period notice (in the form of an advertisement prior to the meeting? Yes / No?
- O How many times will the advertisement run in the newspaper(s)?
- o Will notification letters be sent to the public / local stakeholders? Yes / No



Please provide comments regarding the in the space provided below. You may submit this form via e-mail to < <name>&gt;@seda-cog.org or mail it to the address below</name>						
201 Furnace Rd	SEDA-COG MPO 201 Furnace Rd Lewisburg, PA 17837					
Name:						
Address:						
City:	State:	Zip:				
E-mail:						
Phone:						
Comments:						

#### **Suggested Questions**

The following is a list of potential questions that can be used to customize the Comment Form to gather more targeted feedback. Comment categories include Plan / Planning Document, Limited English Proficiency, and Public Meeting.

<u>Plan</u>	<u> Planning Docume</u>	<u>ent</u>			
•	How helpful were the graphics in the Plan / Planning Document?				
	Very helpful				
	Somewhat H	elpful			
	Not very hel	pful			
•	The Plan / Planning your response.	Document ind	cludes an appro	priate level of p	ublic outreach. Circle
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Please explain:				
<u>Limit</u>	ed English Proficie  Do you have a limit Yes		ead, speak, writ	e, or understan	d English?
•	What is your prima	ry/preferred l	anguage?		
•	How do you receive	e information	?		
	Community	Group Bulleti	n	E-ma	ail
	Word of Mo	uth		Mail	
	Newspaper			Socia	al Media

• How could SEDA-COG improve services to LEP persons in the area?

# Public Meeting

<ul> <li>Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today</li> </ul>					eeting site do you live	How far from
<ul> <li>I0 to 20 miles</li> <li>Over 20 miles</li> <li>Was the meeting site reasonably accessible for you? Yes No</li> <li>Was the meeting time convenient for you? Yes No</li> <li>Did you clearly understand the purpose of the meeting? Yes No</li> <li>Was the meeting information presented in a clear manner? Yes No If no, let us know how we can improve:</li> <li>The time allotted for the meeting was: Adequate Too Long Too See Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today</li> </ul>					miles	Less th
<ul> <li>Over 20 miles</li> <li>Was the meeting site reasonably accessible for you? Yes No</li> <li>Was the meeting time convenient for you? Yes No</li> <li>Did you clearly understand the purpose of the meeting? Yes No</li> <li>Was the meeting information presented in a clear manner? Yes No If no, let us know how we can improve:</li> <li>The time allotted for the meeting was: Adequate Too Long Too So</li> <li>Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today</li> </ul>					5	5 to 10
<ul> <li>Was the meeting site reasonably accessible for you? Yes No</li> <li>Was the meeting time convenient for you? Yes No</li> <li>Did you clearly understand the purpose of the meeting? Yes No</li> <li>Was the meeting information presented in a clear manner? Yes No If no, let us know how we can improve:</li> <li>The time allotted for the meeting was: Adequate Too Long Too See Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today.</li> </ul>					es	10 to 2
<ul> <li>Was the meeting time convenient for you? Yes No</li> <li>Did you clearly understand the purpose of the meeting? Yes No</li> <li>Was the meeting information presented in a clear manner? Yes No If no, let us know how we can improve:</li> <li>The time allotted for the meeting was: Adequate Too Long Too So</li> <li>Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today</li> </ul>					es	Over 2
<ul> <li>Did you clearly understand the purpose of the meeting? Yes No</li> <li>Was the meeting information presented in a clear manner? Yes No If no, let us know how we can improve:</li> <li>The time allotted for the meeting was: Adequate Too Long Too So</li> <li>Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today</li> </ul>		No	Yes	for you?	e reasonably accessible	Was the meet
<ul> <li>Was the meeting information presented in a clear manner? Yes No If no, let us know how we can improve:</li> <li>The time allotted for the meeting was: Adequate Too Long Too Section Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today.</li> </ul>			No	Yes	ne convenient for you?	Was the meet
If no, let us know how we can improve:  The time allotted for the meeting was: Adequate Too Long Too S  Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today		Yes No	Y	the meeting?	erstand the purpose of	Did you clearl
<ul> <li>The time allotted for the meeting was: Adequate Too Long Too S</li> <li>Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today</li> </ul>	10	Yes N	er?	a clear manne	formation presented in	Was the meet
Please describe any specific concerns with the information as presented at today					ow we can improve:	If no, let us kn
	Too Short	oo Long	Too	Adequate	r the meeting was:	The time allot
	oday's public	oresented at to	on as pr	the informatio	specific concerns with	Please describ
meeting, the meeting site itself, or suggestions you have for improving future me	e meetings:	proving future	for impi	ons you have f	g site itself, or suggesti	meeting, the n

Thank you for taking the time to attend this public meeting! Your input will be reviewed and used to improve our public participation efforts.

#### **APPENDIX R.3**

#### **OUTREACH STRATEGIES**

#### **Outreach Best Practices and Tools**

SEDA-COG ensures all outreach strategies, communications, and public involvement efforts comply with Title VI. SEDA-COG actively provides information regarding its Title VI obligations to the public using a variety of methods. Information, such as reference to the FTA circulars and the SEDA-COG Title VI and LEP programs and complaint procedures, is available at the SEDA-COG office and on the website. Aligned with the above-referenced communication tactics, SEDA-COG provides the following:

- a. Public notices published in non-English publications (if available).
- b. Title VI non-discrimination notice on SEDA-COG's website.
- c. Services for Limited-English-Proficient persons. Upon advance notice, translators may be provided.

In addition, SEDA-COG's Public Participation Plan proactively initiates the public involvement process and makes concerted efforts to involve members of all socioeconomic groups in the public involvement process. When staff prepares a document or schedules a meeting for which the target audience is expected to include LEP individuals, then these documents, meeting notices, flyers and agendas may be printed in an alternative language based on the known LEP population. Outreach tools that may further inform and engage underserved populations are shown in the table below.

Outreach Tool	Definition
Direct Mailings	Mail sent to an affected group or area to educate, notify, or request input.
Display Ads in Newspaper	Paid advertisement in the newspaper to alert readers about an upcoming event or action.
Displays at Transit Centers	Permanent or temporary displays at transit hubs and centers to reach a large number of system riders.
Legal Notice	Public posting or advertising in newspapers to announce a legal action or intent.
Social Media or Mobile Device Alerts	Real-time information to alert stakeholders and customers to important information or events.
On-Board Public Transit Postings	Pamphlets and posters provided within the transit vehicle that alert riders about transportation plans and programs that may be of interest or benefit to them.
Public Hearing	A meeting during which public testimony may be heard and formal action may be taken on any measure before the SEDA-COG Board.

Outreach Tool	Definition
Signs	Signs at community facilities, on buses, at stop locations, and at transit centers to reach people who use transit services.
Surveys (scientific and self-selected)	Surveying opinions and ideas to help SEDA-COG understand how to better serve the constituency.
Workshops/Open Houses/Town Halls	Types of meetings where staff and public interact and discuss various issues.

#### **Outreach to Minority Populations**

In addition, SEDA-COG may also employ one or more of the following techniques to involve minority persons:

- Research and catalog the kinds of forums and processes minority persons would prefer for discussing transportation planning issues.
- Meeting notices should include information on how to request translation assistance.
- Provide extensive use of visualization techniques, including maps and graphics.
- Focus groups provide opportunities to meet with affected communities or groups in smaller, focused settings in order to inform, educate, or solicit input.
- Engage in an ongoing dialogue with groups and organizations that represent minority persons (religious leaders, civic activists, social service organizations, etc.). These local "intermediaries" are often trusted community leaders that minority groups may trust more than an outside organization. These intermediaries can also serve as a conduit for providing transportation-related information and facilitating feedback to the MPO.
- Establish a Public Participation Panel (to include minority persons) for: providing
  ongoing access to the regional planning and decision-making process, guiding various
  plan updates, reviewing timely issues, serving as a conduit for SEDA-COG information to
  organizations across the region, assisting the MPO in implementing public outreach
  strategies, and empowering citizens to get involved in regional planning.
- Seek opportunities to speak at meetings of groups involving minority/low-income and traditionally underserved populations (i.e., "piggy-back" technique).
- Notify agencies that work with minority populations of agency activities.
- When multiple meetings are held for a single subject, efforts should be made to use a diversity of meeting locations in an effort to reach all segments of affected populations.
- Distribute press releases to minority media outlets to inform the public of meetings, open houses, and other SEDA-COG activities. For instance, many areas have one or more Spanish-language radio stations.
- Include language on all SEDA-COG press releases and other notices that SEDA-COG assures nondiscrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and that special accommodations can be arranged in advance.
- Vary the style of communication and feedback processes used. In some cultures, disagreeing with an authority is considered improper. To garner more open and

- genuine feedback, less direct communication methods and a relaxed meeting environment have been helpful.
- Overcoming the "outsider" mentality is particularly challenging for outreach in areas with low numbers and concentrations of minorities. Extra efforts for inclusion of minorities may be necessary to gain trust and more than short-term interest.
- The staff or consultants used in outreach may require new skills, open-minded attitudes, and a more sensitive cultural understanding. Some degree of education, a record of experience with certain minority populations, or even diversity in the staff employed to conduct outreach activities may be needed to enable the best outreach results.
- Conduct periodic reviews of the PPP with the ever-changing demographic landscape in mind. Most agencies that are successful in outreach to minorities and other traditionally underserved populations cite flexibility (changing methods over time) and trial-and-error as their primary methods for success.

#### **Outreach to Low-Income Persons**

In addition, SEDA-COG may also employ one or more of the following techniques to involve low-income communities:

- Consult with SEDA-COG Housing Development Corporation on locations of low-income housing populations.
- Utilize Census data to map low-income populations. This includes zero-car households as well as transit-dependent residents.
- Provide information and meeting notices at transit stops and stations, on transit vehicles, and at transportation hubs that connect various modes.
- Organize focus groups of low-income residents that offer opportunities for low-income residents to provide input and feedback regarding transportation needs.
- Establish a Public Participation Panel (to include low-income representatives) for:
   providing ongoing access to the regional planning and decision-making process, guiding
   various plan updates, reviewing current issues, serving as a conduit for SEDA-COG
   information to organizations across the region, assisting the MPO in implementing
   public outreach strategies, and empowering citizens to get involved in regional planning.
- Include information on website and meeting notices about how to request translation or other assistance.
- Provide extensive use of visualization techniques, including maps and graphics.
- Conduct an ongoing dialogue with groups that advocate for or represent low-income populations. This includes food banks, pantries, and soup kitchens; Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program participants; students enrolled in USDA free lunch or summer food service programs; nutrition programs for the elderly; job training centers; and welfare rights organizations.
- Notify agencies that work with low-income populations of agency activities.
- When multiple meetings are held for a single subject, efforts should be made to use a
  diversity of meeting locations in an effort to reach all segments of affected populations.
  This includes transit-friendly as well as walk-/bicycle-friendly locations.

- Seek opportunities to speak at meetings of groups involving low-income populations.
- Distribute press releases to media outlets that serve low-income populations to inform the public of meetings, open houses, and other SEDA-COG activities.
- Include language on all SEDA-COG press releases and other notices that SEDA-COG assures nondiscrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and that special accommodations can be arranged in advance.

# **Outreach to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Persons**

Traditional public involvement strategies, like public meetings and written media such as newspapers, e-mail, and websites, may not be effective for LEP populations. The following approaches could be considered instead:

- Include information on the SEDA-COG website and meeting notices about how to request translation or other assistance.
- Research LEP community behavioral and traditional communication methods.
- Announcements in minority news media such as radio programs.
- Posting of flyers or notices at community organizations in identified areas with high LEP populations.
- Provide extensive use of visualization techniques, including maps and graphics.
   Consider whether the LEP group is literate in English, their own language, or neither.
- Identify which LEP groups will be most impacted.
- Contact religious or community organizations as a way to reach out to LEP communities.
- Use small meetings that may be less intimidating for those unfamiliar with the public involvement process.
- Use of interpreters, translation headsets, telephone translation services, and automated written translation services like Google Translate.
- Provide pre-emptive written translation of "vital documents" in the language(s) most commonly spoken by LEP individuals.

#### **Outreach to Disabled Persons**

According to the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act, the following wording must be included in a Public Meeting Notice:

The meeting location is accessible to persons having disabilities. If you need accommodation due to a disability and want to attend the meeting, please call (XXX) XXX-XXXX at least 24 hours in advance so that arrangements can be made.

When selecting meeting venues, check to ensure that the following aspects are ADA-compliant:

- Parking spaces and curb ramps
- Doors and facility access
- Aisle-way width
- Emergency egress

- Signage
- Seats, tables, and counters
- Restrooms
- Drinking fountains
- Space for wheelchair turnaround
- Lack of obstructions on walls or floors that may inhibit cane or wheelchair use

If the facility does not meet an ADA requirement, there are barrier removal strategies that can be used to comply with requirements. A comprehensive checklist of ADA requirements, along with recommended barrier removal strategies, is available at <a href="http://www.ada.gov/racheck.pdf">http://www.ada.gov/racheck.pdf</a>. SEDA-COG MPO staff could also coordinate with disability advocates and IT experts to make electronic materials and SEDA-COG website content easier to access.

#### **Outreach to Zero-Car Households**

For citizens that do not have access to personal vehicles for travel, consideration should be given to providing public notices and information to these populations through existing transit providers, as well as through bicycle and pedestrian organizations. The following approaches could be considered:

- Utilize Census data to map zero-car households, as well as transit services and infrastructure, to sufficiently identify and catalog the locations of these populations.
- Provide information and meeting notices at transit stops and stations, on transit vehicles, and at transportation hubs that connect various modes.
- Contact organizations that serve bicyclists and pedestrians to reach these communities.
   This includes bicycle shops, local bicycle coalitions and clubs, transit providers, the
   National Center for Bicycling and Walking, and the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.
- Target areas frequented by bicyclists and pedestrians, such as multi-use paths and trails, and pedestrian malls.
- Provide information through public service announcements (digital, print, and broadcast), as well as through various news media outlets.

# **Outreach to Senior Persons**

For citizens who have reached the age of retirement, or who are 65 years or older, outreach should target media outlets and organizations that serve these populations. These include the following:

- Utilize Census data to map senior citizens to sufficiently identify and catalog the locations of these populations.
- Contact organizations and advocacy groups that serve seniors and the elderly. This
  includes National Council on Aging, the Retirement Housing Foundation, AARP, Meals on
  Wheels, area agencies on aging, elderly legal services, Alliance for Retired Americans,
  and medical service providers.

- Post information and meeting notices on paratransit and social services vehicles, and at retirement communities.
- Target areas frequented by seniors, such as senior centers, libraries, recreation centers, and shopping centers.
- Provide information through public service announcements (print and broadcast), as well as through various news media outlets.

#### **Sources and Resources:**

- Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision-Making, USDOT, 6/15/2015: www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/public\_involvement/publications/techniques/chapter01.cfm
- Public Outreach Strategies
   http://mpotransportationoutreachplanner.org/mpotop/strategies
- Spokane, WA, Transit Authority https://www.spokanetransit.com/files/content/2014 Title VI Plan .pdf

#### **APPENDIX R.4**

#### LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN

# Relationship of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

The SEDA-COG MPO is responsible to take steps that ensure meaningful access to the services, information, and other important portions of its programs and activities for individuals who are limited English proficient (LEP). In response to this responsibility, the SEDA-COG MPO has prepared a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan that complies with the federal guidance in addressing the following elements:

- a. <u>Four-Factor Analysis</u>, as a framework for identifying LEP populations residing in the MPO region and determining the specific language services that are appropriate to provide. The four factors encompass the following:
  - 1) The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or recipient.
  - 2) The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the program.
  - 3) The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to people's lives.
  - 4) The resources available to the recipient for LEP outreach, as well as the costs associated with that outreach.
- Language Assistance Plan (LAP), which applies the results of the Four-Factor Analysis in developing and implementing language assistance services in the MPO's program and conducting outreach to LEP persons

The following LAP text is a direct excerpt from the larger SEDA-COG MPO Limited English Proficiency Plan. It is repeated here within the SEDA-COG MPO Public Participation Plan as a resource appendix, because the LAP is an action-specific plan that identifies resources and describes techniques available to the MPO for implementation in the public participation process.

# **Language Assistance Plan**

Consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," and the USDOT implementing guidance, the SEDA-COG MPO is responsible for taking steps that ensure meaningful access to the services, information, and other important portions of its programs and activities for individuals who are limited English proficient. This includes the development of a Language Assistance Plan (LAP), which establishes an implementation program for providing meaningful access to LEP persons, based on the results of the Four-Factor Analysis. The Four-Factor Analysis evaluated the demography of the MPO region along with the frequency of contact with LEP persons, the importance of the MPO's services to LEP persons, and resources available for accommodating LEP persons.

The overarching goal of this plan is to deploy tools and services that will enable the MPO staff to communicate with a person who does not speak English. According to the Safe Harbor Provision, this plan addresses actions for LEP persons who read Spanish. Immediate assistance for Spanish interpretation and other languages may be provided if an available service can accommodate the language requested (e.g., telephone-based phone interpretation service, local interpreters, etc.). In the event that a request presented cannot be provided as stated due to legal, fiscal, or logistical complications, a documented interactive process will be applied to work with the requesting party. Should the requesting party wish to file a subsequent complaint regarding the accommodation request, the documented interactive process will be presented to demonstrate that the MPO engaged appropriately with the complainant and took all reasonable steps to provide services in an accommodating manner.

## Structure of the LAP

This Language Assistance Plan is organized around the five potential contact points where the MPO would interact with LEP persons during the course of its official planning activities:

#### **Primary Contact Points:**

- Public Meetings
- Office Walk-In
- Telephone Calls
- Webpage
- Written Correspondence

While each contact point presents certain unique language service challenges, a small set of language assistance tools is necessary to provide effective language support.

**Language Assistance Tools** 

**Notices and Advertisements** 

The SEDA-COG MPO uses various methods and conduits for providing notice and advertisement of the language assistance services it provides, as follows:

- Providing language taglines (see **Appendix H of the LEP Plan**) in primary plans to convey that language assistance is available by calling a specific phone number.
- Posting notices on the SEDA-COG website, which may be translated using Google Translate or another automated translation service.
- Posting translated notices in the SEDA-COG office.
- Hosting a Document Translation Request Form on the SEDA-COG website, which
  can be used by persons seeking MPO documents to be translated into a language
  other than English. This form can be found here: <a href="https://seda-cog.org/about/document-translation-request">https://seda-cog.org/about/document-translation-request</a>

The MPO will also use the following for certain outreach efforts and plans:

- Designing and distributing informational materials detailing SEDA-COG planning efforts, including flyers, posters, brochures, and bus advertisements.
- Radio or public service announcements in Spanish.
- Providing real-time translation services at public meetings or events with the use of headsets.
- Presenting information to community or faith-based organizations frequented by LEP individuals.

The occasions for using these methods and conduits are described in subsequent sections, where they are put into the context of the various contact points.

# Language Identification Card

The Language Identification Card is a one-page tool that states, in 36 languages, "Point to your language. An interpreter will be provided at no cost to you." Each language is also identified in English, so that an English-speaking person can accurately request interpretation services and engage an interpreter quickly. A sample Language Identification Card is provided in **Appendix E of the LEP Plan**. This appendix also includes a Language Identification Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau, for use where the written survey version may be more efficient. The card and survey will be a part of the materials maintained in the reception area or at the welcome/sign-in station of a public meeting.

# "One Moment Please" Tool

This LEP tool gives the English phonetic pronunciation for the phrase, "One moment please," in 18 of the most common LEP languages. This simple phrase may be useful to encourage an LEP person while an interpreter or interpreter service is contacted. This tool is provided in **Appendix F of the LEP Plan**.

# Telephone-Based Interpretation Service

SEDA-COG maintains a contract with LinguaLinx Language Solutions for on-demand telephone-based interpretation services. LinguaLinx provides interpretation services for SEDA-COG by telephone, as requested, and pays all costs associated with the interpreter except for the perminute usage fees charged to SEDA-COG. MPO staff take LinguaLinx procedures and language tip sheets to public meetings. With the increasing potential for interaction with LEP persons, the SEDA-COG MPO is prepared to utilize this service, and training is provided for the MPO staff persons who are anticipated to use it. According to the MPO's minimal need for interaction with LEP persons, this service should provide an adequate level of interpretation service for the MPO's needs.

Instructions for accessing the telephone-based service, along with tips for working with an over-the-phone interpreter, are provided in **Appendix G of the LEP Plan**.

The MPO staff person who is interacting with an LEP person calls the LinguaLinx phone number and the operator will assist in identifying the LEP person's language, if necessary. An interpreter will be connected, and the conversation can proceed in conference call or three-way call mode.

# **Translation Services for Written Material**

In compliance with the Safe Harbor Provision, the SEDA-COG MPO will provide human-translated versions of its vital documents preemptively in Spanish. Translated summaries of SEDA-COG's primary planning documents will be provided in alternative languages upon request. This encompasses the Long-Range Transportation Plan, Public Participation Plan, Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan, and Transportation Improvement Program. Translations of other MPO documents will be provided via human or automated translation upon request. The on-demand telephone-based interpretation service may also be engaged to facilitate follow-up discussion and responses to specific questions.

The following are methods of providing written translation of documents:

#### • Human Translation Services

Human translation (i.e., non-automated translation provided by human, multilingual translators) services are available both locally in the SEDA-COG MPO region and through Internet-based translation businesses who provide services nationally. A listing of selected providers is presented in **Appendix I of the LEP Plan**.

# Automated Translation

Online automated translation services, such as Google Translate (<a href="https://translate.google.com/">https://translate.google.com/</a>) or Bing Translator (<a href="https://www.bing.com/translator/">https://www.bing.com/translator/</a>), provide on-demand translation among multiple languages, as well as an application programming interface (API) that may be integrated into existing webpages. SEDA-COG has embedded a language drop-down menu on the entire SEDA-COG website, including the MPO's pages. In keeping with best practices for

making Web-based translation services accessible, SEDA-COG has implemented code that shows icons for the top 10 language groups in the SEDA-COG MPO's service area.

Prior verification of the SEDA-COG MPO's webpages using automatic Spanish translation revealed that the outputs were generally acceptable and provided enough information to be comprehended by Spanish-speaking individuals. Although some translational issues were identified, there were no substantive issues that would inhibit a speaker of Spanish from understanding the implied meaning of the text. If major website overhauls occur, the MPO may consider having the webpages again assessed for accuracy by a Spanish-speaking translator.

# The "Four I" Approach

The "Four I" Approach is a template for structuring the implementation process at each contact point, and is defined according to the following four groups of activities:

- 1. Inform

  Providing notice to LEP persons of the language assistance services available to them.
- Identify
   Recognizing LEP persons and identifying their preferred spoken language.
- 3. Interact

  Accessing and using resources for language translation and interpretation.
- 4. Instruct

  Training staff on the resources that will enable them to accommodate LEP persons.

# **Contact Points**

# **Public Meetings**

Public meetings are the formally announced and advertised meetings conducted by the MPO, in fulfillment of its Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Public Participation Plan (PPP). In large part, this encompasses the SEDA-COG MPO Board Meetings and periodic plan-specific public meetings for the Transportation Improvement Program, Long-Range Transportation Plan, Public Participation Plan, and Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan.

Public Meetings			
Inform	Legal Ad		
	Press Releases and Social Media		
	Webpage Ad		
	Notice of Language Services (venue)		
Identify	Contact SEDA-COG prior to meeting		
	Language Card		
Interact	Telephone-Based Interpretation Service		
	Designated Staff Person		
Instruct	Meeting Sign-In Process		
	Accessing/Using the Telephone-Based		
	Interpretation Service		

# Inform

The advertisement requirements for public meetings are prescriptive, with a legal advertisement in a "newspaper of general circulation" being the standard method for fulfilling the legal requirement for meeting advertisement. Press releases, website postings/announcements, and e-mail blasts to Interested Parties are supplemental advertisement techniques that the SEDA-COG MPO is committed to using, per its PPP.

The SEDA-COG MPO will provide notice of the availability of translation and/or interpretation services in legal ads, press releases, and website posts that announce or advertise a public meeting. The following sample text will be used and adapted, as necessary:

The meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. If accommodations are needed for those with special needs related to language, sight, or hearing, please call (570) 524-4491 at least five days in advance. For additional information, contact Steve Herman at the above phone number or e-mail <a href="mailto:sherman@seda-cog.org">sherman@seda-cog.org</a>.

# Identify

Whether or not an LEP person contacts the MPO prior to a public meeting, the key identification point will be the welcome/sign-in station provided at the meeting venue. It is preferable that LEP persons self-identify. The MPO will maintain a Language Identification Card and LEP Survey as standard material for the welcome/sign-in station.

#### Interact

At each public meeting, the SEDA-COG MPO will have at least one trained staff person designated to interact with the LEP person(s) in attendance. This person will be trained in accessing and using the on-demand telephone interpretation service, which will be used to facilitate discussion. An agency-maintained cell phone with speaker capability will be provided for this purpose. (Cell phone reception should be checked when evaluating venues as potential meeting sites.)

#### Instruct

Training for the public meeting contact point will address the following:

- Writing Legal Advertisements, Press Releases, and Webpage Postings Training may or may not be required for staff who draft and assemble the various announcements and other materials in which the availability of language services is advertised.
- Identifying LEP Persons Training is recommended for persons who will staff the welcome/sign-in station. These staff should be familiar with the use of the Language Identification Card.
- Interacting with LEP Persons Training is critical for the person who is designated to
  interact with the LEP persons. These staff should be familiar with the access process
  and credentials for the on-demand telephone interpretation service and have some
  experience with handling the dynamics of communication via interpreter. Learning
  through "shadowing" a person performing this function is recommended.

# Office Walk-In

An office walk-in involves an LEP person or group visiting the SEDA-COG MPO office in person. Although this method of contact may be infrequent, the purpose of such a visit may be more urgent and have a weightier purpose—such as a

Office Walk-In	
Inform	Language Reception Instructions (lobby)
Identify	Language Card
Interact	Telephone-Based Interpretation Service
Instruct	Reception Process

discrimination complaint. Walk-in visitors are typically unannounced, but may have called ahead to arrange a meeting with a certain staff person.

# <u>Inform</u>

Initial contact between the LEP person and SEDA-COG staff will likely occur in the SEDA-COG office lobby. Therefore, the receptionist's station in the lobby will contain materials describing the process that the SEDA-COG reception staff will use to identify the language spoken and call the telephone-based interpretation service. LEP interaction log sheets will also be maintained here.

## Identify

It is preferable that LEP persons self-identify. The MPO will maintain a Language Identification Card at the Reception Desk for use in determining the language being spoken.

#### Interact

In all likelihood, the SEDA-COG receptionist will be the first contact point. Each reception staff person will be trained in accessing and using the on-demand telephone interpretation service, which will be used to facilitate discussion.

# **Instruct**

Training for the SEDA-COG reception staff and the SEDA-COG MPO staff will address the following:

- Identifying LEP Persons Training will focus on the use of the Language Identification Card.
- Interacting with LEP Persons Staff will be informed about the credentials and access process for the telephone-based interpretation service. Instruction will also include general principles on interacting with an LEP person and the interpreter.

# Telephone Call

Telephone calls to the SEDA-COG MPO would likely come through the main SEDA-COG phone number, in which case, they would be answered by the SEDA-COG reception staff. In particular, phone calls regarding language assistance services

Telephone Call	
Inform	Explanation of Services Available
	(through phone service)
Identify	Through Phone Service
Interact	Telephone-Based Interpretation Service
Instruct	Phone Answering Process

may be expected in reply to advertisements and other notices that request notification in advance of a public meeting.

## Inform

An LEP person who places a phone call to the SEDA-COG office will, in all likelihood, be responding to an advertisement, website posting, or other announcement that solicits the call and provides notice about the availability of language assistance. In this case, the LEP person would be at least partially informed about the MPO's commitment to make information available in other languages. A more expansive explanation of the specific language services provided and the expectations for how they are provided would be communicated once the language of the LEP person is identified and interpretation services are initiated.

# <u>Identify</u>

The LEP person may not self-identify his or her preferred language, and the person taking the call may not be able to identify the language without help. In either case, assistance in identifying a caller's language can be handled via the telephone-based interpretation service.

# <u>Interact</u>

In all likelihood, the SEDA-COG receptionist will be the first contact point. Each reception staff person will be trained in accessing and using the on-demand telephone interpretation service, which will be used to facilitate discussion. Most interaction with the LEP person will occur with the interpreter's help. The receptionist may also transfer the call to the SEDA-COG MPO staff.

SEDA-COG is able to request account usage breakdowns from LinguaLinx for the telephone interpretation service. The data can be used to monitor the types and frequency of languages interpreted on behalf of SEDA-COG departments. To date, the MPO staff have not needed to use the service. However, between 2018 and 2021, there were eight telephone interpretation events (all for the Spanish language) completed on behalf of the SEDA-COG Administration and Weatherization departments.

#### Instruct

Training for the SEDA-COG reception staff and the SEDA-COG MPO staff will address the following:

- Identifying LEP Persons Training will focus on the process and expectations for how the telephone-based interpretation service will identify the LEP person's language.
- Interacting with LEP Persons Staff will be informed about the credentials and access
  process for the telephone-based interpretation service. Instruction will also include
  general principles on interacting with an LEP person and the interpreter. Instruction
  about the telephone system features and process necessary to transfer the conference
  call to another person should be given to both reception staff and MPO staff.

# Webpage

The SEDA-COG MPO's Web address is https://seda-

<u>cog.org/departments/transportation/seda-cog-metropolitan-planning-organization/.</u>

The site provides a platform for disseminating information about MPO meetings, plans and programs, upcoming

Webpage	
Inform	Webpage notice
Identify	Self-Identify
Interact	Google Translate
Instruct	Web Standards/Protocol

activities, and receiving input through a comment page. Contact with the SEDA-COG MPO through its website portal is one of the more likely contact points used by LEP persons, for many of the same reasons that non-LEP persons seek out a webpage. Information and answers to questions may be handled on a self-serve basis, which is typically more comfortable for most persons who are savvy with the Internet and computer technology. There is much information already on the SEDA-COG MPO webpage that may be readily accessed. Beyond this, for an LEP person, looking up a webpage can be far less intimidating than telephone or in-person contact.

SEDA-COG has embedded translate features on its entire website. In addition, certain human-translated "vital documents" (identified previously) are available on the website in Spanish.

### Inform

Stating the availability of language assistance and language taglines (Appendix H of the LEP Plan) will be integrated into the SEDA-COG MPO webpage.

#### Identify

Use of the SEDA-COG MPO webpage would be self-directed, therefore identification of the LEP person would be accomplished through the user's selection of language through the Translate tool.

## <u>Interact</u>

When an LEP person accesses the webpage, interaction occurs according to the user's preferences and access of the posted information. Translation of the webpage is automated, and interpersonal interaction is not expected. However, interactions with the webpage may be only an initial contact point, and may generate other contact points (phone call, walk-in, written correspondence, etc.).

## Instruct

Minimal instruction of staff is required for the webpage contact point. Instead, the webpage design and ease of use may need to be optimized for use by LEP persons. Training of the IT staff may be necessary for successful Translate tool enhancements and being able to track how much the tool is used by website visitors.

## Written Correspondence

Contact through written communication includes both paper and e-mail correspondence. Both contact points are likely with LEP persons, as these communication methods require minimal interpersonal interaction. Written correspondence may be very well-suited for certain purposes, such as identifying an

Written Correspondence	
Inform	Notice of Services Available
Identify	Language ID tools
Interface	Website Translate tools
	Translation services
Instruct	Translation services
	Other translation tools

issue of concern or providing specific comments on a plan or program. In other cases, written correspondence will serve as a starting point for additional contact, whether a phone call, face-to-face discussion, or a webpage visit.

# <u>Inform</u>

Written correspondence may be the most accessible and well-advertised contact point for LEP persons, as most materials published by the SEDA-COG MPO include the office mailing address and an e-mail address. On the SEDA-COG website, the office address appears at the top of every page, with SEDA-COG's general e-mail address (<a href="mailto:information@seda-cog.org">information@seda-cog.org</a>) under the Contact Us page. In addition, most persons—whether LEP or not—understand the concept of written correspondence and its usefulness for accessing information, providing comments/feedback, and asking questions.

Similar to those who make a phone call to the SEDA-COG office, an LEP person who provides written correspondence will, in all likelihood, be responding to an advertisement, website posting, or other announcement that solicits the call and provides notice about the availability of language assistance. In this case, the LEP person would be at least partially informed about the MPO's commitment to make information available in other languages.

# <u>Identify</u>

Identifying the language of a hard copy written document may require the contracted help of a translation service. The paper copy or electronic scan (PDF or other image format) would be provided to the translation service provider, which would identify the language and translate the document into English. A listing of translation service providers, including websites and contact phone numbers, is provided in **Appendix I of the LEP Plan**.

For e-mail or other written electronic correspondence, the contracted translation service may be used, or the "Detect language" function of Google Translate may be used to automatically detect the language. The electronic text would be copied into an automated translation tool (Google Translate, Bing Translator, etc.), which would detect the language, assuming that it is one that is supported by the tool. Even if the translation is not fully accurate, this method should be sufficient to identify the language. These instances would also be recorded in a log to maintain a list of these interactions.

### Interact

Some, but not all, of the correspondence from LEP persons will require a response, which would be the primary point of interaction. If the correspondence is simply providing feedback or comment on a plan or program, a response would be optional. Regardless, the response would be prepared in English and then translated into the language spoken by the LEP person. Because an accurate translation would be desired, the contracted help of a translation service would be used to prepare the response. Google Translate may be used if the message is simple and an immediate response is needed. However, since it is based on automated routines (as opposed to human translation), it may not accurately communicate the message desired.

#### Instruct

Training for the written communication contact point would focus on the selection and use of the various translation tools. The training will introduce the Google Translate tool and its capabilities, along with examples. The process for accessing the contracted translation service and the expectations for turnaround of a translation would also be described.

# **LEP Plan Coordination & Staff Training**

As part of the LAP, the SEDA-COG MPO has identified resources and tools that can be used in various contexts (i.e., contact points) to provide language assistance services. The resources and tools have been compiled into an *LEP Employee Resources Manual*, and staff expertise in using them will be developed through an LEP Employee Training Presentation. Steve Herman, the SEDA-COG MPO Transportation Program Director, has been designated as the Language Assistance Coordinator and will oversee the staff training activities.

#### **LEP Employee Training Presentation**

The Training Presentation has been prepared in Microsoft PowerPoint and includes two primary sections: 1) an overview of the LEP Plan, including the Four-Factor Analysis; and 2) an explanation of the tools and resources appropriated in the LAP. The presentation includes a hyperlink to an online 25-minute video presentation developed by the U.S. Department of Justice for laypersons who are learning about language access and assistance. With the video and a time for questions, the full training presentation can be completed in one hour.

# **LEP Employee Resources Manual**

The manual is a compilation of the various resources and tools available to the SEDA-COG staff for providing language assistance. The manual is comprised of tools and resources that are found in the appendices of the LEP Plan Document. Versions of these materials are maintained in electronic (PDF) format and paper copy. Each staff member who participates in the training presentation will receive a paper copy of the manual. Much of the material in the manual is self-explanatory and may be used for a variety of training formats:

- On its own for brief "crash course"
- With the guidance of a trained staff person for one-on-one training
- Alongside a copy of the training presentation for self-paced training

Paper copies of the manual will be maintained at the SEDA-COG receptionist's desk and at the welcome/sign-in station of SEDA-COG MPO public meetings, so that the language assistance materials are available for quick reference in serving LEP persons.

#### **Plan Evaluation Process**

The LEP Plan serves as a component of the MPO's overarching Title VI Program document. As such, the LEP Plan will be updated or reviewed for update every three years, as part of the Title VI Program maintenance schedule. The LEP Plan and its Language Assistance Plan will be evaluated by interested staff or a committee assembled by the Language Assistance Coordinator, in compliance with current FHWA and FTA guidance. Records on the frequency of contact with LEP persons (Factor Two of the Four-Factor Analysis) would likely drive the need for an update of the LEP more so than the availability of new demographic data from the Census Bureau.

The following materials are provided in **Appendix K of the LEP Plan** for use in the review process:

## LEP Plan Self-Assessment Checklist

The LEP Plan Self-Assessment Checklist may be used as the overarching template for the assessment. The checklist provides a series of questions designed to encourage discussion and critical thinking about the success of interactions (if any) with LEP persons, the usefulness of the plan provisions and LAP, and the evolving nature/growth of LEP populations and their needs in the SEDA-COG MPO region.

# **LEP Interaction Tracking Form**

The LEP Interaction Tracking Form has two components that are used in documenting interactions with LEP persons:

- The Record of Interactions collects information about each interaction with an LEP person. Each row represents an interaction. Multiple copies of this form may be used in a given year.
- The Annual Report Summary draws from the Record of Interactions and serves as a onepage annual report of the information collected about LEP interactions.

The record and annual report are intended to inform certain questions asked in the self-assessment.

#### Suggested LEP Plan Performance Measures

A listing of Suggested LEP Plan Performance Measures is provided as a starting point for implementing a performance-based approach to evaluations of the LEP Plan. While FHWA and FTA generally encourage this approach, no formal rulemaking has been completed.

#### Sources

Federal Government's Renewed Commitment to Language Access Obligations under Executive Order 13166.

http://www.lep.gov/13166/AG 021711 EO 13166 Memo to Agencies with Supplement.pdf

Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients (FTA Circular 4702.1B), Federal Transit Administration.

https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/FTA Title VI FINAL.pdf

*Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to LEP Persons,* U.S. Department of Transportation.

https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2005-12-14/html/05-23972.htm

Overview of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Department of Justice. <a href="https://www.justice.gov/crt/fcs/TitleVI-Overview">https://www.justice.gov/crt/fcs/TitleVI-Overview</a>

#### **APPENDIX R.5**

#### EVALUATION PROCESSES FOR THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

## Public Involvement Activity Portfolio

The portfolio provides a repository of material that documents its public involvement and participation activities, as a record of the PPP's implementation. The actual items collected for the portfolio will reflect the PPP requirements of the planning activity completed. The following is a listing of candidate items that may be collected, as appropriate:

- Event Site Checklist
- Outreach Activity Plan (e.g., Public Meeting Plan)
- Advertisement of public comment period (if applicable)
- Record of webpage postings (date posted, URL, date removed, number of unique hits)
- Review and evaluation of EJ and other Traditionally Underserved Population data, for the purposes of targeted outreach (if applicable)
- Advertisement of the activity
  - Proof copy for legal advertisement
  - o Press Release
  - Webpage announcements
  - E-mail & electronic notifications
  - Distribution list
- Copies of meeting materials
  - Handouts (information sheets, graphics, etc.)
  - Presentation materials (PowerPoint, audio/video)
  - Transcript of presentations
  - Copies/photos of boards, displays
  - Sample comment form
- Photos/video of meeting proceedings
- Meeting summary
- List of attendees (Sign-In Sheet)
- Completed comment forms (scan to PDF)
- Comments received from other sources (webpage, e-mail, mail, and paper copy reviews)
- Compilation and analysis of comments received
- Responses to comments received
- Media coverage of the activity (newspaper, webpage, blog, TV transcript)

The portfolio would be most efficiently maintained in an all-electronic format, with items scanned or printed to PDF or other widely used software formats.

The items may be organized under the primary planning activity to which they contribute (e.g., Long-Range Transportation Plan, TIP Update, etc.).

Public Participation Plan Review	Date of Review:		
Plan or Planning Activity:			
Reviewed by:			

Category	Element	Consistent	Notes
		with PPP	
	Placed a legal advertisement of the public comment period		
	and public meetings in <i>The Daily Item</i> newspaper:	☐ ☐ n/a	
	<ul> <li>Contained the required information</li> </ul>	☐ ☐ n/a	
	<ul> <li>Placed appropriately in advance of the public comment</li> </ul>	☐ ☐ n/a	
	period ending date and public meeting(s)		
Advertisements	Press releases made regarding the public comment period		
& Notifications	and public meetings:	☐ ☐ n/a	
& NOTHICATIONS	<ul> <li>Consistent with the legal advertisement</li> </ul>	☐ ☐ n/a	
	<ul> <li>Placed appropriately in advance of the public comment</li> </ul>	☐ ☐ n/a	
	period ending date and public meeting(s)		
	Interested Parties notified via e-mail at the proper time	☐ ☐ n/a	
	Web notification provided on the SEDA-COG webpage at the	☐ ☐ n/a	
	appropriate time		
	Primary Public Comment Period required?	☐ ☐ n/a	
5 1 11	Provided the primary Public Comment Period:	☐ ☐ n/a	
Public	<ul> <li>With the minimum or longer time period</li> </ul>	☐ ☐ n/a	
Comment	Additional Public Comment period required?	☐ ☐ n/a	
Period	Provided the additional Public Comment Period:	n/a	
	<ul> <li>With the minimum or longer time period</li> </ul>	☐ ☐ n/a	
	Materials posted on the webpage in an accessible format	n/a	
	<ul> <li>For the primary Public Comment Period</li> </ul>	n/a	
	<ul> <li>For any additional Public Comment Period</li> </ul>	n/a	
Document	Paper copy materials made available consistent with the legal	,	
Availability	advertisement:	☐ ☐ n/a	
,	<ul> <li>At the specified locations and times</li> </ul>	□ □ n/a	
	<ul> <li>For the primary Public Comment Period</li> </ul>	□ □ n/a	
	For any additional Public Comment Period	□ □ n/a	
	Conducted the minimum number of public meetings:	n/a	
Public	At an accessible location	□ □ n/a	
Meetings	<ul> <li>Consistent with the date, time, location specified in the</li> </ul>	n/a	
	legal advertisement	,.	
	Comments solicited and received via:		
	<ul> <li>Comment forms distributed at the public meeting(s)</li> </ul>	☐ ☐ n/a	
	Webpage comment portal or e-mail (electronic)	☐ ☐ n/a	
	<ul> <li>Postal mail or hand-delivered (written)</li> </ul>	□ □ n/a	
	Comments compiled and summarized	n/a	
Comments	Incorporated into FINAL plan document	n/a	
	Comment responses prepared	□ □ n/a	
	Incorporated into FINAL plan document	□ □ n/a	
	<ul> <li>Posted on the SEDA-COG webpage (or project-specific</li> </ul>	n/a	
	Web portal) within the required timeframe	,.	
Agency	FHWA & FTA provided with opportunity to comment	□ □ n/a	
Coordination	Presentation made at an Agency Coordination Meeting	□ □ n/a	
23014.11411011	Plan, amendment, update, etc., adopted at an advertised	□ □ n/a	
Adoption	MPO meeting	<b>— —</b> 11/a	
	Activity Portfolio contains relevant material to document the	☐ ☐ n/a	
Documentation	public participation process	, =	

Public Pa	articipatio	on Plan (PPP) Document Evaluation
Reviewe	d by:	
Date:		
Nood for	. Dublic Do	articipation Dian Undata
_		articipation Plan Update
<b>□</b> Yes	<b>□</b> No	Has new federal or state legislation been enacted or new guidance, regulation, or executive order been issued that adds, removes, or modifies the public participation requirements for metropolitan transportation planning?
☐ Yes	ON	Has new decennial Census data (100% data) become available, and are the necessary tabulations available for comprehensively refreshing the demographic data for EJ and Traditionally Underserved Populations? Or is the data used in the current PPP more than five years older than the currently available Census survey data (American Community Survey or equivalent)?
Yes	☐ No	Does a pending update or revision to another primary planning document (Long-Range Transportation Plan, TIP, UPWP, etc.) or another MPO agreement (TIP Amendment MOU) require the PPP to be updated for the sake of plan consistency?
Yes	□ No	Has a significant change occurred in the MPO geography or governance that impacts the implementation and/or effectiveness of the current PPP processes?
Yes	☐ No	Has FHWA or FTA issued a "corrective action" to the MPO, identifying a deficiency in the PPP?
☐ Yes	OS	Have the two previous triennial reviews identified provisions, stipulations, or commitments in the current PPP that are consistently not achieved or are onerous to implement consistently?
Yes	□ No	Have the past two triennial reviews identified substantial successful public involvement processes that are consistently implemented but not included in the current PPP?
Yes	ON	Have surveys or measures of satisfaction indicated consistent dissatisfaction with the plan itself or any of the plan elements, strategies of public involvement, performance measures, or the public involvement materials (visuals, graphics, organization of materials)?
Yes	☐ No	Is an update of the PPP warranted?  If an update is warranted, what degree of update will be pursued?  Full update / plan replacement (substantial changes to all parts of the PPP)  Selective update (substantial changes to certain parts of the PPP)
		<ul> <li>Technical update (update of supporting demographics data/mapping, addition of checklists, templates, and other materials used to implement the existing PPP, etc.)</li> <li>Minor administrative revisions (non-substantive corrections, clarifications, and changes that have no impact on the PPP content or processes)</li> </ul>

•	on Plan (PPP) Document Evaluation
Reviewed by:	
Date:	
Open-Ended Revie	
	To make the current PPP more effective, easier to implement, more understandable, or better
	organized:
	<ul> <li>What elements of the current PPP require refinement, clarification, or revision?</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>What materials, resources, tools information, or other elements could be added?</li> </ul>
	Additional comments: