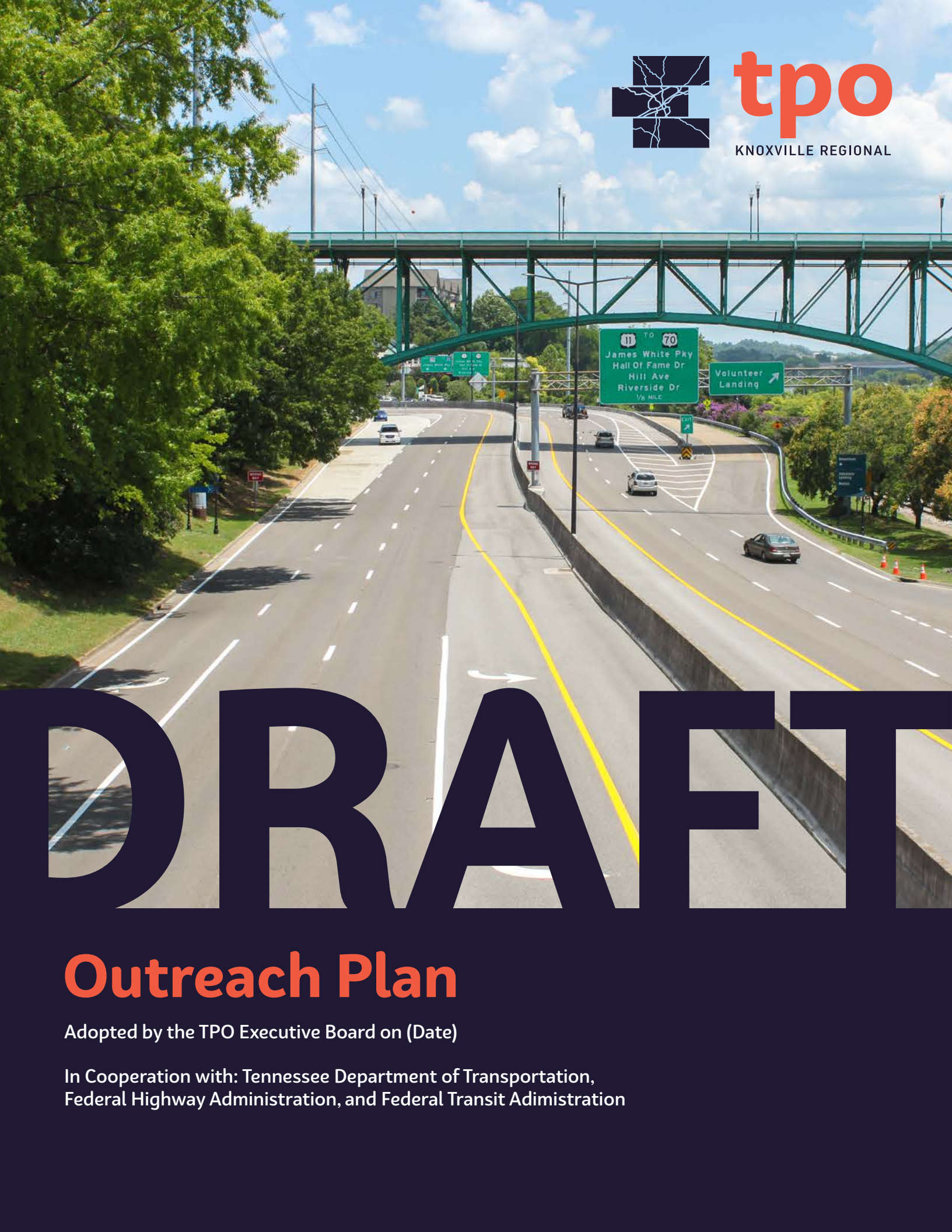




**tpo**

KNOXVILLE REGIONAL



# DRAFT

## Outreach Plan

Adopted by the TPO Executive Board on (Date)

In Cooperation with: Tennessee Department of Transportation,  
Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration

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## SECTION I: OVERVIEW

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) works with the public in developing transportation plans and programs. Significant public outreach results in greater community support for plans that help achieve the region's goals for the future. The Outreach Plan fulfills federal requirements and also serves as a working tool for TPO staff to refer to with each new plan to ensure that adequate public notice is given and the community is engaged throughout the project. Community members can also use it to learn about the TPO and opportunities for involvement.

### GOALS FOR OUTREACH:



While the TPO strives to involve the public whenever possible, outreach in transportation planning poses major challenges. The transportation planning process is complex; discourse is heavy with jargon; and often the public struggles to understand central documents, such as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or the Regional Mobility Plan, and their interrelatedness. These factors often make it difficult to get meaningful input.

The duration of the transportation planning process can also be a barrier to engagement – some transportation projects take 10 or more years to be completed. How does a transportation agency attract and hold public interest, convince them that involvement is worthwhile, and provide the means for them to have direct impact on decisions?

Another challenge is that a transportation planning organization (TPO) is responsible for distributing funding, but doesn't manage projects. Projects are managed by other agencies, such as the Tennessee Department of Transportation and city and county governments.

Furthermore, the best ways to reach out to the public are always changing – sometimes due to the project and other times as a result of changing technology, preferences, or circumstances. Because of this, a TPO's outreach structure must allow flexibility for staff to experiment with ways to increase and improve engagement.



## WHAT IS A METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)?

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization is our region's designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The 1962 Federal-Aid Highway Act required the formation of an MPO for all urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000. MPOs were established to ensure that federal funding for transportation projects and programs was based on a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative (3-C) planning process. MPOs consist of an Executive Board, made up of local government officials; a Technical Committee, comprising local engineers and planners; and TPO staff. The Executive Board makes the ultimate decision on how to distribute federal transportation funds within the planning area for road, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects as well as other transportation-related studies and projects.

### The Five Core Functions of an MPO:

- 1) **Establish a Setting:** Establish and manage a fair and impartial setting for effective regional decision-making in the urbanized area.
- 2) **Evaluate Alternatives:** Evaluate transportation alternatives that are scaled to the size and complexity of the region and realistically achievable.
- 3) **Maintain a Long-range Regional Mobility Plan:** Develop and update a long-range regional mobility plan for the urbanized area with a planning horizon of at least twenty years. The Mobility Plan should be a multimodal, fiscally constrained plan that fosters mobility and access for people and goods, promotes efficient system performance and preservation, conforms to air quality standards, and enhances the area's quality of life.
- 4) **Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** Develop a short-range capital improvement program based on the long-range Regional Mobility Plan. The TIP is designed to promote the area's transportation goals by programming projects that address capacity needs, congestion reduction, transit service needs, air quality improvements, and transportation enhancements.
- 5) **Involve the Public:** Involve the general public and affected special interest groups in the four above-listed essential functions.

### The Planning Process

Figure 1 shows an overview of the TPO planning process. Figures 2 and 3 show more details related to both the planning and project implementation phases of the overall process.

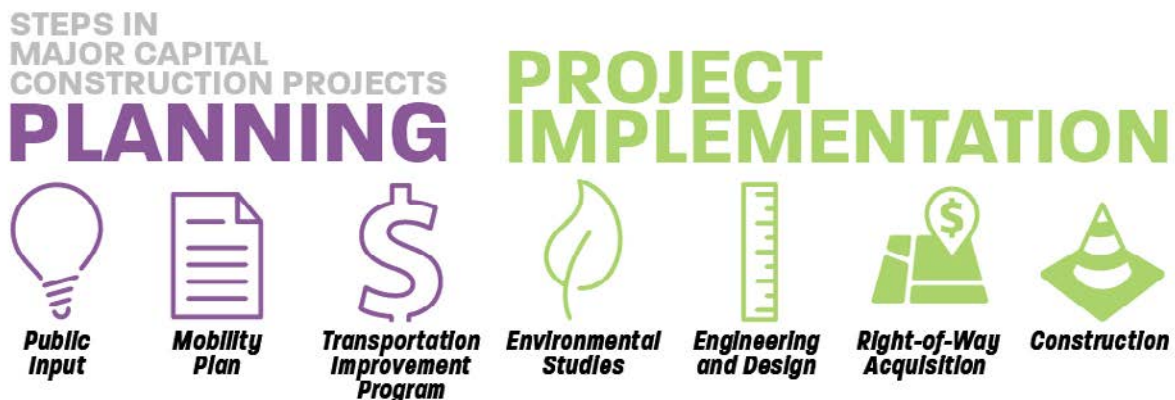


FIGURE 1. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

STEPS IN  
MAJOR CAPITAL  
CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

# PLANNING 2 YEARS

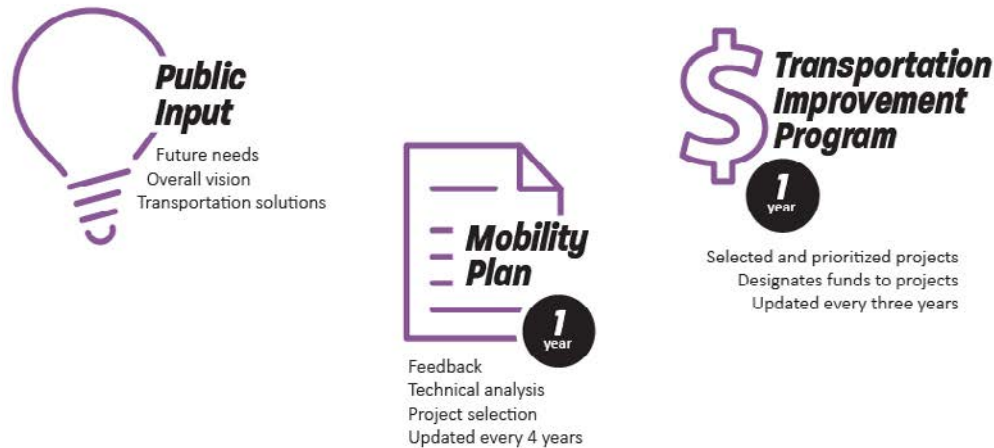


FIGURE 2. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS – PLANNING PHASE

STEPS IN  
MAJOR CAPITAL  
CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

# PROJECT 4-11 YEARS IMPLEMENTATION

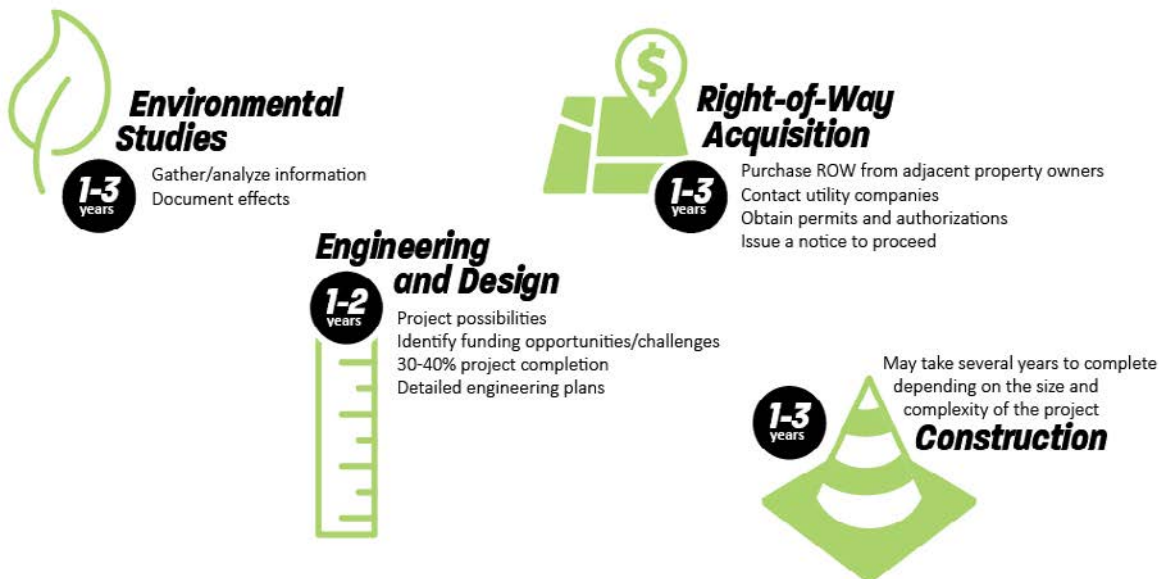


FIGURE 3. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS – PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

## ABOUT THE KNOXVILLE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

### Mission

Advise and assist our region to improve and expand transportation choices by involving residents and decision makers in our plans, forums, and outreach.

### Core Principles

- Preserve and manage our existing system
- Link transportation and land use
- Plan and build for all transportation modes and people
- Develop our region's potential

The Knoxville Regional TPO was established in 1977. Today, the TPO is housed within Knoxville-Knox County Planning and the two groups share administration and staff. The urbanized area was initially made up of the City of Knoxville and a surrounding portion of Knox County. It has grown significantly over time to cover all of Knox County and parts of Anderson, Blount, Loudon, Roane and Sevier counties, including several cities and towns shown in the map in Figure 4.

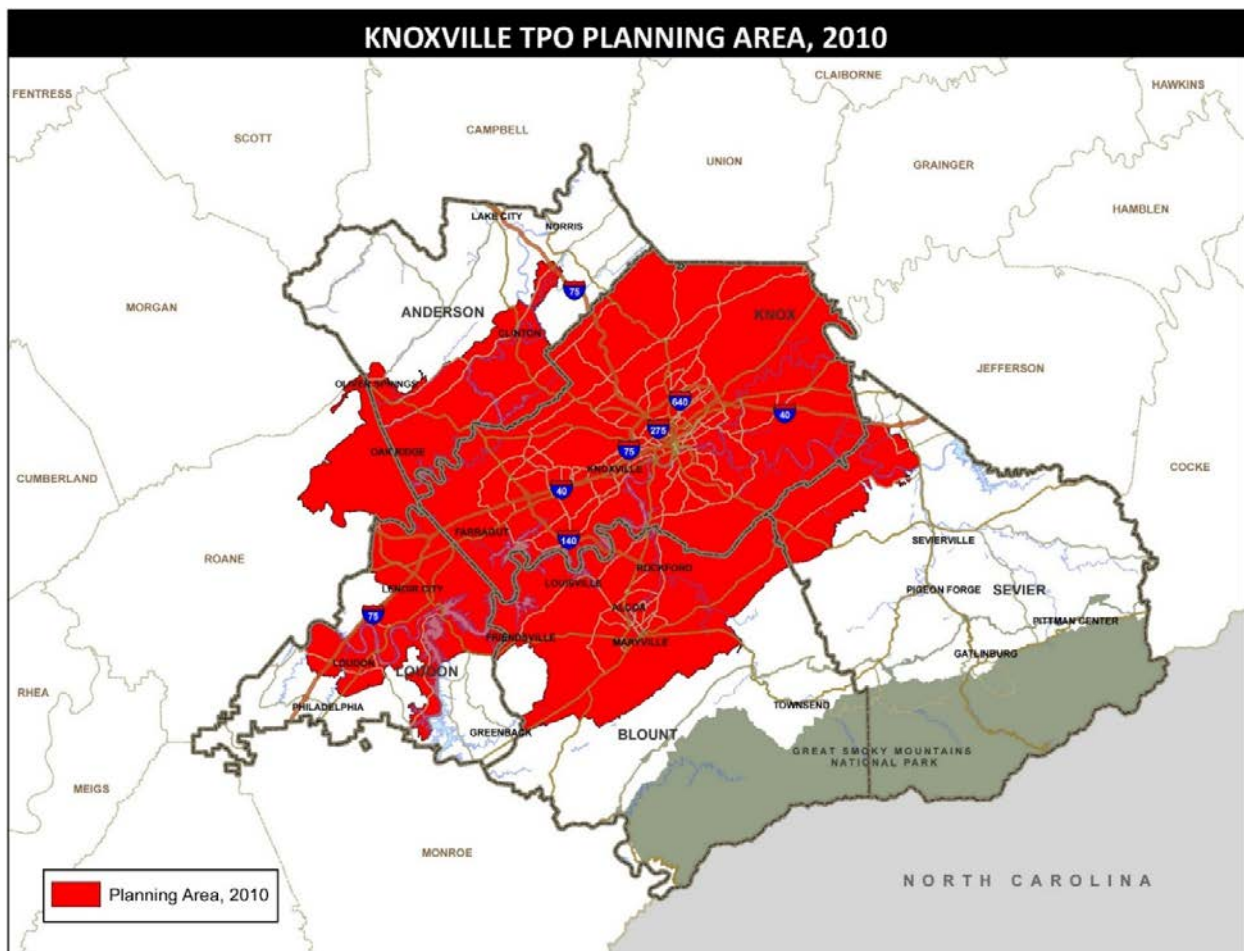


FIGURE 4. TPO PLANNING AREA MAP

Current federal transportation legislation, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, requires the TPO to produce and oversee certain plans. The TPO is responsible for developing a long-range mobility plan, which is updated every four years. The plan identifies and prioritizes improvements for all types of transportation over the next 20 to 30 years. Project costs cannot exceed the funding that is expected to be available. A proposed transportation project must meet the goals of the Plan in order to be selected for funding.

The TPO also develops a four-year schedule of projects that is updated every three years. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prioritizes projects based on how much federal, state, and local funding the region expects to receive within the next four years. Projects that are included must be consistent with an approved Mobility Plan. These plans require adequate public outreach in their development.

### OUTREACH AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PUBLIC

General policies in the Outreach Plan guide how public outreach is approached for all plans and programs and are based on regulations and requirements, allowing the public to offer input, increase accountability, and maximize transparency. Guidelines for individual plans allow the TPO to go above and beyond the general policies by outlining measures taken for specific projects based on needs and potential impact.

Another way the TPO answers to the public is through the Technical Committee and Executive Board. The Technical Committee is primarily made up of planners and engineers from member cities and counties. They review plans and policies before they are sent to the Executive Board and are active in implementation of plans and programs. Elected and appointed officials from city and county jurisdictions within the TPO planning area serve as Executive Board members. These locally elected officials are directly accountable to their constituents and are authorized to act on TPO plans and other matters related to the TPO planning and programming processes.

## SECTION II: FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

Public outreach in metropolitan transportation planning is federally mandated. Federal law includes specific requirements and performance standards and expectations for state departments of transportation and MPOs during transportation planning. Additional transportation legislation, environmental legislation, related regulations, and orders addressing environmental justice and persons with disabilities must also be met. The specifics of these requirements are outlined below.

### FAST ACT

Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was signed into law in December 2015. Transportation planning under the FAST Act must be performed in conjunction with state and local officials, transit operators, and the public. MPOs are encouraged to consult or coordinate with planning officials responsible for other types of planning activities affected by transportation, including planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, airport operations, and freight movement. [23 USC 134(g)(3)(A)].

The TPO consults with other planning agencies and considers other planning activities in the MPO largely through interaction with the Technical Committee. These agencies are represented on the committee and the TPO relies on these representatives to share information presented to them with their agencies and contacts. Whenever possible, the TPO expands its reach beyond this group to involve specific jurisdictions, the state, and others on special projects and to host conferences, symposiums, and other events that foster collaboration.

FAST Act also requires expanding public outreach to include traditionally underrepresented stakeholders: users of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, disabled populations, and others, are specifically included in FAST Act as parties to be provided with the opportunity to participate in the planning process.

Finally, the TPO must develop an outreach plan in consultation with interested parties that provides reasonable opportunities for all parties to comment on it. Relevant excerpts of the FAST Act can be found in Appendix A.

### CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

The TPO planning process requires a broad outreach and engagement effort to fulfill federal planning requirements, strengthen the decision-making process, and develop community support for the resultant plans. As identified in 23 CFR 450, agencies/groups the TPO strives to engage in the metropolitan transportation planning process include, but are not limited to:

- Affected Public Agencies
- Representatives of Public Transportation Employees
- Representatives of Public Ports
- Freight Shippers and 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
- Other Interested Parties



Stakeholder involvement is achieved through the techniques, practices and plan-specific guidelines further described in sections III and IV. The TPO Executive Board, Technical Committee and Mobility Plan Advisory Committee are all venues with representation from identified stakeholders.

The TPO maintains an ongoing and cooperative relationship with federal, state and local public agencies, many of which are represented (as voting or non-voting members) on the TPO Executive Board or Technical Committee. Additional coordination is achieved through TPO staff participation in non-TPO committee meetings, workshops and other sessions related to planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, public transit, active transportation, freight movement, and state planning efforts.

Indicative of this interagency cooperation is the partnership with TDOT in support of major planning documents. Both TDOT's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the TPO's Mobility Plan and TIP are the result of iterative cooperation from plan initiation through completion. This consultation may include modeling and financial assumptions, project priority lists, comment solicitation and review of draft work products. TPO and TDOT staff regularly participate in planning meetings and events held for one another's plans.

#### EXECUTIVE ORDERS

In addition to federal transportation legislation, the TPO must comply with Executive Orders that are relevant to the work of the transportation process. Executive Order (EO) 12898 reinforces the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and focuses attention on the environmental and human health conditions in minority and low-income communities. Executive Order (EO) 13166 requires federal agencies and any other entities that receive federal funds via grants, contracts, or subcontracts to make their activities accessible to non-English speaking persons.

More detail on these Executive Orders can be found in Appendix A.

#### AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires coordination with people with disabilities during the development and improvement of transportation services. Planners, engineers, and builders must provide access for the disabled at sidewalks and ramps, street crossings, and in parking or transit access facilities. Individuals with disabilities must also be able to access sites where public involvement activities occur and where information is posted or presented.

#### TITLE VI AND TPO'S NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Knoxville-Knox County Planning and the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 42 USC 2000d; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

The TPO receives Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding and is therefore required to maintain a Title VI program that is compliant with FTA Circular 4702.1B – Title VI and the Title VI-Dependent Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients. A significant portion of the requirements concern how the TPO seeks to engage those persons who are traditionally underrepresented in the transportation planning process. The TPO's Title VI plan focuses primarily on minority, low income, and limited English proficient populations.

The Title VI Report is updated every three years. The Report is available in draft form on the TPO website and in the Knoxville-Knox County Planning library for 14 days prior to the TPO Technical Committee meeting. During this time, it is available for public comment, and additional comments are welcomed prior to the Executive Board meeting that follows. The final report is also available on the website and in the Planning library.

Excerpts from the TPO's most recent FTA Title VI Report, including the TPO's Language Assistance Plan (LAP), are in Appendix B.

## SECTION III: GENERAL GUIDELINES

The Outreach Plan seeks to establish a realistic and forward-thinking philosophy for public outreach in the TPO region. To do this, the Plan defines requirements and promotes a culture in which staff continue to push the envelope to experiment with and identify new best practices. There are many techniques that the TPO uses that are core components to engaging the public, such as public comment periods, comment cards, surveys and the use of websites. However, the needs of the public, as well as the circumstances and expectations for community engagement, are continuously changing. This requires an agency that is constantly rethinking how it engages with those it serves, and one that is committed to flexibility and making changes that can positively benefit those it serves. This approach led to the TPO's expanded use of videos, interactive maps, and commitment to regularly update its websites.

It is important to note that not all practices are always appropriate and should be used only when it best complements the process.

### PUBLIC MEETING PRINCIPLES AND TYPES

#### Principles

Public meetings are scheduled for a specific plan or project and are held for a variety of reasons. The purpose of these meetings is threefold:

- 1) To confirm the purpose and intent of the plan or project;
- 2) To present trends and forecasts for the area or region; and
- 3) To gather public input.

Because the regularly scheduled meetings of the Technical Committee and Executive Board are always advertised and are open to the public, they can also be used for the reasons listed above. Actions of meetings may result in the adoption or amendment of the Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Regional Mobility Plan. Other actions include adoption or approval of resolutions for amendments, adjustments, endorsements, special plans, and reports.

#### Meeting Types

The following is a list of meeting options that the TPO currently uses to reach stakeholders. Detailed descriptions are available in Appendix C.

It should be noted that all of these meeting types can be held in-person or virtually. At times, hybrid models, which allow some participants to gather in person while others join the group virtually, may also be used. Virtual and hybrid meetings have proven necessary at times due to public health concerns. Even when such concerns are not present, these meeting types are great tools to reach more people. They allow individuals to participate in transportation planning processes who otherwise might not be able. This is especially true for regional projects where the public might need to travel greater distances to attend meetings in person.

- Public hearing
- Public meeting
- Charrette/workshop
- Pop-up meeting
- Open house
- Small group meeting

- Town hall meeting
- Technical Committee and Executive Board meetings

### **Accessibility**

The TPO strives to be accessible to all those living in our region. The organization is committed to holding meetings at times and locations that are convenient and accessible. When there is a series of public meetings being held throughout the region, a special effort will be made to offer a portion of these meetings at locations that are accessible by public transportation (note: fixed route transit service is available only within the City of Knoxville). When possible, meetings will also be offered on both weekdays and weekends and at different times of day to give the widest range of groups an opportunity to attend, regardless of their schedules. In legal notices and advertisements, the public is invited to contact the TPO if accommodations are needed. This can be found in Appendix C under the definition of legal advertisements and notices.

In addition to making meetings physically accessible, the TPO is also working on accessibility measures that impact other areas of the organization's work. These include website accessibility, documents that are screen-reader friendly, providing translation services, and more. Web accessibility will be measured based on varying internet speeds, browsers, and screen sizes. This is particularly important as virtual meetings become more common and sometimes necessary.

## **OUTREACH TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES**

### **Tools**

Outreach tools are those that enable the TPO to share information and solicit input from the public. The following is a list of outreach tools that the TPO currently uses. Detailed descriptions are available in Appendix C.

- Community or stakeholder advisory committee
- Comment forms/cards
- Contact person
- Public comment period
- Speakers bureau
- Stakeholder and community interviews
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Symposiums
- Task force
- Visual preference survey

### **Alternative Outreach Methods**

The TPO has incorporated unconventional forms of community engagement in their outreach efforts. Examples of this include going to popular neighborhood locations, like coffee shops and breweries, asking community members to host meetings and invite their friends, and holding pop-up meetings at community events. These types of outreach can be effective for reaching underrepresented groups and those who do not normally show interest in the planning process.

### **Early Outreach**



Early outreach to local community leaders helps to determine suitable meeting forums and information formats to foster valuable input, especially when soliciting input from target populations. This is done by meeting with those leaders to determine the best way to engage the populations they represent instead of taking a one-size-fits-all approach. By taking advice from those who have a deeper understanding of the community, engagement is more likely to be thorough and ongoing.

### **Direct Outreach**

TPO staff provide direct outreach to priority populations and underrepresented stakeholders, as well as other residents in a study or project area. Priority populations are identified in the Mobility Plan as those living in areas with fewer income and educational opportunities, reduced accessibility to safe places for being active, and greater vulnerability to leading a healthy and economically sustainable life. Because these populations are more likely to have health problems and are more dependent on transit, walking and bicycling for transportation, identifying them allows their needs to be incorporated into the projects identified in the TIP and Mobility Plan.

To reach these groups, meeting notices are published in local newspapers, including those targeting minority communities. Information is also shared on the TPO and partnering agencies' websites and on social media, including on pages of community groups of particular interest for a specific plan or program. The TPO has recently started using paid social media advertisements in specific zip codes. Surveys are distributed and comments are sought by participating in standing meetings or providing a pop-up booth at events held in the affected community. While these types of broad outreach are always attempted, the most reliable method for inclusion of these populations is through direct outreach and collaboration between the TPO and local community groups and their leaders. These trusted leaders are able to reach out on behalf of the TPO to encourage participation in planning efforts.

### **Targeted Marketing**

Smart Trips, an incentive-based program that promotes alternatives to driving alone, has used a variety of advertising methods to reach specific target audiences. These include billboard advertising, sponsorship spots on popular radio stations, and a combination of print and online ads with local media. Additional efforts to reach populations who may be unaware of the program, such as posters placed on Knoxville Area Transit buses to encourage those already making alternative trips to participate, have been used as well. The program also generates challenges to recruit new members and encourage ongoing participation among those already enrolled. Prizes are given as an incentive, and the program has tried giving away a variety of items to see what is most appealing.

### **Partnerships**

Smart Trips enjoys excellent working relationships with area businesses. Among the most successful partnerships are those with Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Department of Energy's Y-12 National Security Complex, Pellissippi State Community College, and the University of Tennessee. These facilities and schools work closely with Smart Trips to feature the program at worksite events and in their newsletters.

These relationships are examples of how the TPO, both generally and through specific programs, can work with organizations, groups, and individuals to make the agency's work more wide-reaching. Leveraging partnerships allows the TPO to reach additional audiences and meet people where they are.

## INFORMATION TOOLS

The following is a list of information tools that the TPO currently considers when selecting methods to share information with the public. Detailed descriptions are available in Appendix C.

- Community TV
- Databases and distribution lists
- Direct and email mailings
- Door-to-door canvassing
- TPO general email address
- Exhibits, displays, signs and bulletin boards
- Newsletters
- Fact sheets and brochures
- Legal advertisements and notices
- Paid advertisements
- Posters and flyers
- Media releases
- Presentations
- Social media
- TPO, project and program websites
- QR codes
- Videos

## TRANSPARENT, USER-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS AND PROCESSES

### **Understandable and Interesting Language / No Jargon**

Meeting notices and materials will use appropriate, understandable language. We will avoid acronyms and other technical jargon as much as possible (for a helpful Transportation Planning Glossary, see Appendix E). We strive to create advertising, project campaigns, and slogans that generate the most interest possible. The TPO makes reasonable efforts to address identified language barriers in order to provide meaningful access to information on its plans and programs. We use tools such as the Flesch Reading Ease Score and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Score to evaluate readability of plans and information on the TPO website.

### **Use of Shorter Documents or Executive Summaries**

Planners are known for writing documents that are lengthy and dense, often read by few people. This reduces transparency and drastically diminishes the effectiveness of the planning process. We are challenged to create products that are clear and succinct, that highlight what is important, and that invite people to see how the planning process affects their lives. The most recent update to the long-range plan, Mobility Plan 2045, is a good example of this. While still a lengthy document with substantial appendices, the plan itself is shorter than previous iterations. Additionally, we produced executive summaries in both English and Spanish to communicate the central concepts to the public and refer them to the main document for comprehensive information.

### **Use of Visual Tools**

We use visualization techniques to enhance the public's understanding of the TPO's work whenever possible. This includes using graphics, video, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which are all very effective ways to communicate complex technical material and ideas in an easily digested format.

While the use of visual tools to clarify complex work has become more common in the TPO's daily work, it is worth noting the importance of these practices, especially in the Mobility Plan and the TIP. The most recent version of the Mobility Plan included visuals throughout. Instead of simply providing a list of projects, an interactive map was made available that allowed the public to search for projects of interest based on location. It also allowed individuals to comment on that project directly on the map to provide an easier way to participate in project selection and encourage a greater number of comments.

Videos are another tool that were once used occasionally and have recently become more commonplace. The global pandemic was the catalyst to begin using this tool more, but staff recognized how effective the medium can be in getting increased participation in general. Staff created informational videos for Mobility Plan 2045 and shared meeting videos for meetings related to the Mobility Plan as well as for standing Technical Committee and Executive Board meetings. Mobility Plan specific videos were viewed more than 1,000 times, and standing meeting videos were viewed more than 550 times.

## SECTION IV: PLAN-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

In addition to the general guidelines for all TPO activities, there are specific guidelines that outline the outreach process for specific TPO products. While the following overview outlines public outreach requirements for each of the TPO's key documents, additional methods may be used to better access and inform the public of the agency's work as needed.

Key documents produced by the TPO:

- Regional Mobility Plan;
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP);
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 & 5339 – Program of Projects (POP);
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310;
- Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP);
- Annual Listing of Obligated Projects;
- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Solicitation; and
- Outreach Plan.

### REGIONAL MOBILITY PLAN

The Regional Mobility Plan is a long-range (20+ year) multimodal strategy and capital improvement program developed to guide the investment of public funds in transportation facilities. The Mobility Plan is updated every four years and may be amended as a result of changes in projected funding, project scopes, or other reasons. Supplementary information may also be incorporated into planning documents by way of an addendum, described in Appendix E. The current Mobility Plan is available for viewing online as well as at the TPO office.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has outlined several key decision points that should be met by the TPO during the development of this long-range plan. The chart below lists key decision points and methods for public engagement for each. The TPO is committed to engaging the public and will use the methods outlined below. The TPO may choose to engage with the public through additional opportunities beyond what is listed.



	<b><i>Standing Meeting (Technical Committee, Executive Board, Advisor Committee)</i></b>	<b><i>Additional Public Meeting/ Event</i></b>	<b><i>Surveys/ Questionnaires</i></b>	<b><i>Media Release</i></b>	<b><i>Social Media</i></b>	<b><i>News Item on TPO Website</i></b>	<b><i>Include in TPO Newsletter</i></b>
<b><i>Endorse Vision &amp; Goals</i></b>	X				X	X	X
<b><i>Approve Socioeconomic Data Projections</i></b>	X				X	X	X
<b><i>Approve Evaluation Criteria</i></b>	X				X	X	X
<b><i>Evaluate Transportation Deficiencies</i></b>	X	X	X		X	X	X
<b><i>Evaluate Performance Measures</i></b>	X				X	X	X
<b><i>Evaluate Plan Scenarios</i></b>	X				X	X	X
<b><i>Adopt Preferred Plan Scenarios/ Project List</i></b>	X	X	X		X	X	X
<b><i>Make Conformity Determination by TPO</i></b>	X				X	X	X
<b><i>Adopt RMP by TPO</i></b>	X			X	X	X	X

The TPO continues to solicit input from the public after the draft Mobility Plan has been developed. Outreach methods used to take the Plan from the initial draft to final adoption are outlined below.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Technique(s)</b>
<b>Draft Document:</b>	Drafts are made available online ( <a href="http://www.knoxmobility.org">www.knoxmobility.org</a> ) and at the TPO office.
<b>Comment Opportunities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At public meetings</li> <li>• At events throughout the region</li> <li>• Via e-mail</li> <li>• By USPS mail to the TPO office</li> <li>• By phone on a dedicated voicemail line</li> <li>• In person at the TPO office</li> <li>• During standing meetings (Technical Committee, Executive Board, and public meetings held specifically for Mobility Plan updates)</li> <li>• Through mail- or web-based surveys and questionnaires (may be used to gather information about specific projects in some cases)</li> </ul>
<b>Comment Period:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 30 days is given prior to adoption for updates and amendments.<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• The public comment period begins with public notice.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Meeting(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public meetings are held during the public comment period.</li> <li>• Separate meetings are held for the draft plan and the final Mobility Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Meeting Notice:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten to 14 days prior to the public meeting, announcements will be disseminated. Seven to 10 days prior to the public meeting, a media release may be sent. Meetings may also be posted on community calendars.</li> <li>• Ten to 14 days prior to the public meeting, paid media advertisement and/or a public notice may be published in appropriate local newspapers.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Amendment Notice:</b>	Amendment notices will be sent through web announcements, public notice in appropriate local newspapers, and regularly scheduled meetings.
<b>Summary of Comments Received:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All public comments will be made available online.</li> <li>• A public comment summary memo will be made available prior to the Executive Board meeting for the Mobility Plan update.</li> <li>• Written and verbal comments are summarized and incorporated into the final Mobility Plan.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Meeting and event summaries, comments and responses, survey reports, and more will be reported on the Mobility Plan website.</li> </ul>
<b>Final, Adopted Document:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The final document is made available on the Mobility Plan website and at the TPO office.</li> <li>• Upon adoption of the final document, interested parties will be notified that the document is available on the Mobility Plan website. Information will also be shared on the TPO website, on social media, in the TPO newsletter, and with partnering agencies and organizations.</li> </ul>

<b><i>Evaluation Technique(s):</i></b>	Success of the Regional Mobility Plan outreach is measured by number of views on the TPO website, circulation of the newspapers in which public notices were placed, social media reach, number of survey respondents, number of comments received, and number of citizens reached through public meetings and events.
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The Mobility Plan incorporates community input that is received from development of the Plan through final adoption. This is done through project prioritization that is determined based on feedback from public comments and surveys and the Technical Committee. The TPO keeps track of all comments and will respond to specific questions. Comments are shared with the public on the Mobility Plan website and in the Appendices of the final document.

### TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

The TIP is a four-year plan that lists all regionally significant and federally funded projects and services in the MPO planning area. This includes highway and street projects, public transit projects, major corridor studies, and bicycle/pedestrian projects. Projects that are included in the TIP must be consistent with the approved Regional Mobility Plan. Additionally, the TIP must have funding mechanisms already in place for all projects and strategies.

The TIP can be amended or adjusted as a result of changes in funding or need. Administrative adjustments to the TIP do not require a specific outreach plan as they are minor changes. Clarification on which changes are considered adjustments and amendments can be found in Appendix E. Supplementary information may also be incorporated into planning documents by way of an addendum, described in Appendix E. The current TIP is available for viewing online as well as at the TPO office.

The FHWA has outlined several key decision points that should be met by MPOs during the development of the TIP. The chart below lists key decision points and methods for public engagement for each.

	<b><i>Standing Meeting (Technical Committee, Executive Board, Advisor Committee)</i></b>	<b><i>Surveys/ Questionnaires</i></b>	<b><i>Media Release</i></b>	<b><i>Social Media</i></b>	<b><i>News Item on TPO Website</i></b>	<b><i>Include in TPO Newsletter</i></b>
<b><i>Call for Projects with Local Governments and Public</i></b>	X		X	X	X	X
<b><i>Approve Project List from RMP</i></b>	X					

<b>Approve Project Prioritization</b>	X	X		X	X	X
<b>Reach Consensus on Draft TIP</b>	X			X	X	X
<b>Adopt TIP by MPO</b>	X		X	X	X	X

The TIP also incorporates community input through project prioritization that is determined based on feedback from public surveys and the Technical Committee through the Mobility Plan process. The TPO continues to solicit input from the public after the draft TIP has been developed. Outreach methods used to take the Plan from the initial draft to final adoption are outlined below. Methods are also outlined for the amendment process. Staff reviews all comments as they are submitted, responds to specific questions, and shares them in the Appendices of the final document.

#### Adopting a New TIP

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Technique(s)</b>
<b>Draft Document:</b>	Drafts are made available online ( <a href="http://www.knoxtpo.org">www.knoxtpo.org</a> ) and at the TPO office.
<b>Comment Opportunities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At public meetings</li> <li>• Via e-mail</li> <li>• By USPS mail to the TPO office</li> <li>• In person at the TPO office</li> <li>• During standing meetings (Technical Committee, Executive Board, and public meetings held specifically for TIP updates)</li> <li>• Online questionnaires (may be used to gather information about specific projects in some cases)</li> </ul>
<b>Comment Period:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 30 days is required prior to adoption for TIP updates.<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• The public comment period begins with public notice.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Meeting:</b>	Public meetings may be held during the public comment period.
<b>Public Meeting Notice:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten to 14 days prior to the public meeting, web announcements will be posted. Seven to 10 days prior to the public meeting, a media release may be sent.</li> <li>• Ten to 14 days prior to the meeting, public notice may be published in various regional, local, and minority newspapers.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Comments Received:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A public comment summary memo will be made available prior to the Executive Board meeting for the TIP update.</li> <li>• Written and verbal comments are summarized and incorporated into the final TIP.<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Final, Adopted Document:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The final document is made available online (<a href="http://www.knoxtpo.org">www.knoxtpo.org</a>) and at the TPO office.</li> <li>• Information will also be shared on social media, in the TPO newsletter, and with partnering agencies and organizations.</li> </ul>



<b>Evaluation Technique(s):</b>	Success of TIP outreach is measured by meeting attendance, number of comments on the project, number of views on the TPO website, social media reach, and circulation of the newspapers in which public notices were placed.
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#### Amending the TIP

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Technique(s)</b>
<b>Draft TIP Pages:</b>	Draft TIP project pages are made available online ( <a href="http://www.knoxtpo.org">www.knoxtpo.org</a> ) and at the TPO office.
<b>Comment Opportunities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via e-mail</li> <li>• By USPS mail to the TPO office</li> <li>• In person or at the TPO office</li> <li>• During standing meetings (Technical Committee, Executive Board, and public meetings held specifically for TIP updates)</li> </ul>
<b>Comment Period:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For projects exempt from air quality conformity, the public comment period for TIP amendments will be ten to 14 days prior to the public meeting.</li> <li>• A minimum of 30 days is required prior to adoption for TIP amendments that involve projects non-exempt from air quality conformity and projects that require a short air quality conformity determination.</li> <li>• The public comment period begins with public notice. <sup>4</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Public Meeting:</b>	Technical Committee and Executive Board meetings scheduled during the comment period are open to the public and serve as public meetings.
<b>Public Meeting Notice:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten to 14 days prior to the meeting, a web announcement will be posted. Meetings also may be posted on community calendars.</li> <li>• Ten to 14 days prior to the meeting, public notice may be published in various regional, local, and minority newspapers. <sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Amendment Notice:</b>	Amendment notices will be posted on the TIP project page on the TPO website.
<b>Summary of Comments Received:</b>	A public comment summary memo will be made available prior to the Executive Board meeting for the TIP update.
<b>Evaluation Technique(s):</b>	Success of TIP outreach is measured by meeting attendance, number of comments on the project, number of views on the TPO website, social media reach, and circulation of the newspapers in which public notices were placed.

#### FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) SECTION 5307 & 5339 — PROGRAM OF PROJECTS (POP)

The City of Knoxville is the designated recipient of FTA Section 5307 (Urban Area Formula) and 5339 (Bus & Bus Facilities) funds. A POP is a list or program of projects utilizing FTA funds. As per the FTA Circular 9030.1D, the public participation requirements for the TIP may be used in lieu of a local process when developing the POP. The first-year of an approved TIP constitutes a list of “agreed to” projects for FTA purposes. To make it clear to the public, the public notice for the POP will state the TIP process is being used and it satisfies the FTA public involvement requirements for developing a POP.

### FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) SECTION 5310

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is the designated recipient of the FTA Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) funding. TPO's goal is to have an annual call for projects. However, this is contingent on Congress passing a transportation budget and the Knoxville urban area allocation being published in the Federal Register.

Once the funding amount is published, TPO staff initiates the application process. The application process may or may not occur at the same time as the TIP call-for-projects and depends on when funding is available. The TPO holds a publicly advertised call-for-projects and posts the application on the TPO website. Applications are then evaluated and scored using established criteria.

TPO staff, working with a sub-committee of the Technical Committee, prioritize 5310 projects in keeping with the recommendations in the Knoxville Regional Human Services Transportation Coordinated Plan. The sub-committee's ranked list of all eligible applications is then presented to the full Technical Committee for consideration. Finally, the recommendation of the Technical Committee is presented to the Executive Board for final approval and inclusion in the TIP. The TPO's Section 5310 Program Management Plan provides additional guidance on applying for funding and lists project eligibility.

### TRANSPORTATION PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (TPWP)

The Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) is a two-year plan developed by staff to focus work and planning funds anticipated in the upcoming fiscal year. All federally funded planning activities must be in the TPWP and must be developed with economic vitality, safety, mobility options, and other planning factors in mind. The TPWP is reviewed and discussed at the regularly scheduled Technical Committee and Executive Board meetings along with being made available on the TPO website. Public comments on the draft TPWP are welcomed and can be submitted online or in person at the Technical Committee and Executive Board meetings. If any comments are received, a summary is made available on the TPO website and provided to the Technical Committee and Executive Board.

### ANNUAL LISTING OF OBLIGATED PROJECTS

Ninety days after the end of the fiscal year, the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects will be made publicly available. Notice will be given through appropriate local newspapers. The Listing will be distributed and discussed at the regularly scheduled Technical Committee and Executive Board public meetings along with being made available online and at the TPO office. Public comment is welcomed, and a summary is then reported on the TPO website.

### SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT (STBG) AND TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) SOLICITATION

After the Executive Board determines available funds, staff will solicit qualified government entities for new STBG, TAP, and any other TPO controlled (or sub-allocated) federally funded projects. The solicitation cycle will typically last 90 days. The selected projects will be added to the TIP.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Technique(s)</b>
<b>Comment Opportunities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At public meetings</li><li>• Via e-mail</li><li>• By USPS mail to the TPO office</li><li>• In person or at the TPO office</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During standing meetings (Technical Committee and Executive Board)</li> </ul>
<b>Comment Period:</b>	A minimum of 14 days is required.
<b>Public Meeting:</b>	Public meetings may be held during the public comment period.
<b>Public Meeting Notice:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ten to 14 days prior to the meeting a web announcement will be posted. Meetings also may be posted on community calendars.</li> <li>Ten to 14 days prior to the meeting, public notice may be published in various regional, local, and minority newspapers.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Comments Received:</b>	A public comment summary memo will be made available prior to the Executive Board meeting for the final project selection.
<b>Final, Adopted Document:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The final document will be made available online and at the TPO office.</li> <li>Upon adoption of the final document, interested parties will be notified that the document is available on the TPO website.</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Technique(s):</b>	Success of STBG, TAP, and any other regionally managed federal grant funded project outreach is measured by meeting attendance, number of comments on the project, number of views on the TPO website, and circulation of the newspapers in which public notices were placed.

## OUTREACH PLAN

The Outreach Plan outlines the strategies used to provide and receive information from the public on transportation planning and programming processes, including funding for projects, studies, plans, and committee actions.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Technique(s)</b>
<b>Draft Document:</b>	A draft of the plan is made available online ( <a href="http://www.knoxtpo.org">www.knoxtpo.org</a> ) and at the TPO office.
<b>Comment Opportunities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At public meetings</li> <li>Via e-mail</li> <li>By USPS mail to the TPO office</li> <li>In person or at the TPO office</li> <li>During standing meetings (Technical Committee or Executive Board)</li> </ul>
<b>Comment Period:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of 45 days is required prior to adoption.</li> <li>The public comment period begins with public notice.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Meeting:</b>	Public meetings may be held during the public comment period.
<b>Public Meeting Notice:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ten to 14 days prior to the meeting, a web announcement will be posted. Meetings also may be posted on community calendars.</li> <li>Ten to 14 days prior to the meeting, public notice may be published in various regional, local, and minority newspapers.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Comments Received:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A public comment summary memo will be made available prior to the Executive Board meeting for the Outreach Plan update.</li> <li>Written and verbal comments are summarized and incorporated into the final Outreach Plan.</li> </ul>

<b><i>Final, Adopted Document:</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The final document will be made available online and at the TPO office.</li> <li>• Upon adoption of the final document, interested parties will be notified that the document is available on the TPO website.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Evaluation Technique(s):</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Outreach Plan will be evaluated regularly by TPO staff in consultation with ongoing input received from the public on the outreach process.</li> <li>• All comments and suggestions made by the public will be recorded and taken into consideration when improvement strategies are discussed.</li> <li>• Success of plan outreach is measured by number of comments received, social media reach, number of views on the TPO website and circulation of the newspapers in which public notices were placed.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> If there are significant changes to the final draft Mobility Plan or TIP from the one made available for public comment, an additional opportunity will be provided for public comment on the revised changes. The TPO director shall determine when changes are significant and warrant additional opportunity for public comments.

<sup>2</sup> Comment periods can be noticed separately from public meetings. When the amount of time required for a comment period is longer than the amount of time required for a public meeting notice, the comment period will be noticed separately from the public meeting.

<sup>3</sup> When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft Mobility Plan or draft TIP as a result of the public involvement process or the interagency consultation process required under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's conformity regulations, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final Mobility Plan or TIP.

<sup>4</sup> Unexpected needs and circumstances sometimes necessitate amendments to the TIP. To accommodate these needs, amendments can be presented to the Technical Committee at a regularly scheduled meeting and adopted by the Executive Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Both meetings are open to the public. The proposed amendment will be included in any public meeting notices published for the Executive Board meeting. The public comment period will begin with public notice and conclude at the Executive Board meeting at which the change is adopted.

## SECTION V: EVALUATING OUR PERFORMANCE

The Outreach Plan establishes a set of meaningful minimum requirements, based on federal guidance and sound logic. It then sets the tone for a professional culture that continuously seeks out new best practices. This philosophy reflects the need for planning processes that respond to the public rather than just doing the bare minimum.

### BEST PRACTICES

The best way to evaluate our performance is a real-world approach. The TPO and its programs will continue to look to other organizations as well as internal ideas to identify and test new practices in addition to fulfilling a set of meaningful minimum requirements. This will allow the TPO to evaluate performance by testing the effectiveness of a method. How many people did the method reach? Do they have a better understanding of our process as a result? Did this method reach people new to our process? These and other questions determine the effectiveness of a method and its potential value moving forward.

### READABILITY OF PRODUCTS

The TPO will utilize tools such as the Flesch Reading Ease Score and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Score to evaluate the readability of products and, especially, information on the TPO website. These scores will be used to evaluate TPO performance and identify where complex materials need to be supplemented with summary materials that are easier for the public to understand.

### EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

In addition to a commitment to using these general methods for engaging the public, the TPO will track outreach efforts for specific plans and projects as outlined in Section V in order to measure the effectiveness of these methods for achieving the goals for outreach, listed in Section I. The TPO includes an overview of this information in Planning's Annual Report, including some of the information listed below for both the TPO as a whole and specific programs.

#### Measuring Visibility

- Number of TPO newsletters sent
- Number of newspaper advertisements/public notices placed
  - Number placed in newspapers with minority audiences
- Number of publications available on TPO website
- Number of meetings broadcast on Community Television of Knoxville
- Number of press releases sent
- Number of media mentions
- Number of social media followers

#### Measuring Participation Opportunities

- Number of surveys sent
- Number of public meetings and events held
- Number of participants at meetings and events
- Number of views of meeting recordings
- Number of standing monthly Technical Committee and Executive Board meetings

- Number of draft plans made available for comment on TPO website
- Number of participation opportunities held in communities identified as a priority populations

### **Measuring Public Interest & Feedback**

- Number of comments received on TPO website
- Number of comments received on social media
- Number of written and oral comments received
- Number of visitors to the TPO website
- Number of survey responses

### **COMMENTS ON OUTREACH PLAN**

The final draft of the Outreach Plan will be developed in consultation with interested parties as required by federal rules and regulations through input received during the comment period. Before its adoption, the plan will be made available for public review and comment for a minimum of 45 days. Any resulting public input will be addressed and incorporated as appropriate. These procedures for public outreach have been formally enacted, reviewed, and certified as being in compliance with all applicable federal rules and regulations. The TPO welcomes additional comments about the public outreach process and this plan. The TPO will keep comments on file and use them to evaluate and revise outreach procedures in the future.

In addition to being made available to the public, the TPO will share the draft plan with the Technical Committee and Executive Board at standing meetings. These groups are encouraged to share the information with their contacts and constituents to comment on the plan. The TPO also submits the draft plan to TDOT, FHWA and FTA for comments. All comments are addressed and a summary of those comments will be made available to the Technical Committee and Executive Board before they adopt the final plan.

Please submit comments to:

#### **Ally Ketron, Communications and Outreach Coordinator**

Knoxville Regional TPO

400 W. Main St., Suite 403

Knoxville, TN 37902

Phone: (865) 215-3234

E-mail: [ally.ketron@knoxplanning.org](mailto:ally.ketron@knoxplanning.org)

Or comment in person:

- Technical Committee Meeting September 14, 2021

This meeting is located in the Small Assembly Room of the City/County Building, 400 W. Main St., Knoxville, TN at 9:00 a.m.





**tpo**  
KNOXVILLE REGIONAL



# DRAFT

## Outreach Plan

APPENDICES



## APPENDIX A: FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE GUIDANCE

This Appendix includes excerpts of federal legislation that guides the activities of the Transportation Planning Organization, its process, and products.

### FIXING AMERICA'S SURFACE TRANSPORTATION (FAST) ACT

The following are relevant metropolitan planning regulations under the FAST Act. For full regulations see [www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact)

#### § 450.316 Interested parties, participation, and consultation.

- (a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), 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.
  - (1) The MPO shall develop the participation plan in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:
    - (i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
    - (ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
    - (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
    - (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
    - (v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
    - (vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
    - (vii) Seeking out and considering 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;
    - (viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;
    - (ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and
    - (x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

- (2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93, subpart A), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.
  - (3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.
- (b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, the MPO(s) shall develop the metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:
- (1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;
  - (2) Governmental agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and
  - (3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 201- 204.
- (c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO(s) shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
- (d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO(s) shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.
- (e) MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under § 450.314.

[81 FR 34135, May 27, 2016, as amended at 81 FR 93473, Dec. 20, 2016; 82 FR 56544, Nov. 29, 2017]

### EXECUTIVE ORDER (EO) 12898

Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations was signed by President Clinton in February 1994. The EO reinforced the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and focused federal attention on the environmental and human health conditions in minority and low-income communities.

The Knoxville Regional TPO is guided by the three guiding principles of EP 12898:

- 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, reduction of or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

#### EXECUTIVE ORDER 13166

Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, was signed by President Clinton in August 2000. EO 13166 required federal agencies and any other entities that receive federal funds via grants, contracts, or subcontracts to make their activities accessible to non-English speaking persons. Persons with limited English proficiency are those with a primary or home language other than English who must, due to limited English fluency, communicate in that primary language if they are to have an equal opportunity to participate effectively in or benefit from any aid, service, or benefit in federally funded programs and activities.

EO 12898 and 13166 are directed at project level decision making in the engineering and design phases of projects as well as long-range and project programming activities.

#### THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires coordinating with disabled communities in the development and improvement of transportation services. Planners, engineers, and builders must provide access for the disabled at sidewalks and ramps, street crossings, and in parking or transit access facilities. Persons with disabilities must also be able to access the sites where public involvement activities occur as well as the information presented.

## APPENDIX B: TITLE VI & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

This appendix contains excerpts from the TPO's FTA Title VI Plan. A complete copy of the plan can be found on the TPO's website at [www.knoxtpo.org](http://www.knoxtpo.org).

### FTA TITLE VI REPORT

The TPO strives to be sure that all programs or projects planned under the TPO's responsibility consider Title VI and Environmental Justice impacts. The TPO monitors these efforts by analyzing project selection, project location, funding distribution, and possible project impacts, especially social and environmental impacts with regards to Title VI and Environmental Justice populations. The TPO maintains a set of adopted objectives which state that all plans and programs must consider Title VI impacts and include a proactive public involvement process that seeks to engage members of low income, minority groups, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations early in the planning process. The TPO believes part of its role is to alert the responsible jurisdiction that there are community concerns, to help inform the community about the project, and to act as a liaison between the community and the jurisdiction.

### Public Involvement

Each project's public involvement plan must consider Title VI issues and look to include opportunities for persons protected under Title VI to participate. Each plan's level of public involvement can vary depending on the magnitude of the project, its potential impact on the community, and its budget. Every TPO staff member is reminded to consider Title VI issues and plan the necessary outreach accordingly. Examples and techniques the TPO staff consider in designing a public involvement process with regards to Title VI are as follows.

- Hold meetings geographically in Title VI areas.
- Use a variety of meeting locations and different start times to encourage participation.
- Hold meetings during times that public transit services are available.
- Hold virtual meetings to allow people with limited time or access to transportation to attend.
- Make virtual meeting recordings available on the TPO website so that people with limited time or access to transportation can view the meeting when it is convenient to them.
- Post all meeting dates and times and all draft Plans on the TPO website.
- Advertise meetings and post legal notices in the Knoxville News Sentinel, The Enlightener (high Minority readership), The Knoxville Focus (free publication), and on websites with high Spanish speaking readership. When necessary and appropriate, notices will be placed in additional regional newspapers.
- Send meeting announcements to neighborhood groups, community groups, churches and special interest groups when appropriate.
- Utilize other agency meetings to communicate with the public. When possible, agencies and organizations representing disadvantaged populations, including but not limited to, minority, low-income, and Hispanic populations will be targeted.
- Accept written comments in order to help those who may not feel comfortable talking or approaching a staff member. Participating in a public meeting can be intimidating and Planning/TPO recognizes that individual comfort levels with attendees vary.
- Ensure all reports and documents include a Title VI statement of protection or information on how to access Title VI information. Planning/TPO posts the Title VI notification on its website, [www.knoxtpo.org](http://www.knoxtpo.org).

- Make an extra effort to reach out to low income, minority, and Hispanic communities by holding special meetings at locations such as malls, YMCAs, schools, museums, grocery stores, neighborhood centers, local fairs, transit transfer points, and even on buses.
- Distribute the TPO's Title VI Brochure, which explains what Title VI is and how citizens are protected.

#### **Title VI: Language Assistance Plan (LAP)**

Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals are persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. LEP persons are entitled to language assistance under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with respect to a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter. Recipients of Federal funding are required to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by LEP persons. Knoxville-Knox County Planning's LAP Plan provides the following opportunities:

- The TPO will publish notice of opportunity to comment or participate in meetings or plans on the Mundo Hispano website, the regional Hispanic online newspaper.
- The TPO will work with other associated agencies and non-profits (such as the Hispanic Chamber and the Health Department) to find alternative methods to get the word out about meetings or plans.
- Whenever possible, the TPO will participate in community outreach activities to build a stronger rapport with the Hispanic community. This effort will help the TPO identify better ways of conducting successful public outreach.
- The TPO has access to a telephone language interpreter service. One service is attainable through the City of Knoxville and another is through a private service the TPO can utilize for a fee.
- If notified within a reasonable time frame, TPO can offer free interpreter services at meetings or at the office.
  - The TPO will be proactive in providing interpreters for meetings when attendance of persons who may not speak English well is anticipated.
  - If meetings or services are in areas where there is a known concentration of persons who do not speak English well, TPO will look to partner with other agencies or organizations in those areas. An example may be meeting with Centro Hispano or the Knox County Health Department.
  - The TPO will post signs at entry points to meetings notifying the public of translator services when attendance of persons who do not speak English well is anticipated.
- The TPO can offer written translation of vital documents if requested. Multiple copies can be made available if financially reasonable. Notification of this service will be stated in outreach documents. If documents cannot be translated, verbal assistance from an interpreter will be offered to explain the contents of the document.
  - The TPO website will continue to allow users to translate information into the language of their choice.
- TPO staff will receive regular Title VI training and training to be sure they know about TPO's LEP policies and procedures.

- TPO staff will work with member jurisdictions, agencies, and sub-recipients to be sure they understand the TPO policies. Also, TPO staff will work with member jurisdictions, agencies, and sub-recipients to provide Title VI and LEP training, planning, and mapping.

## APPENDIX C: OUTREACH TOOLKIT

This section of the Plan lists public outreach tools, separating them into three categories: Meeting Types, Outreach Tools, and Information Tools. This is a comprehensive list of tools that can be used to involve community members in transportation planning. It is not intended to imply that every project or plan will require all of these tools or that the TPO presently uses all of these methods.

The type of public outreach efforts employed for a particular project will be determined based on the project's overall regional and local impact. Highly localized projects may require more specialized outreach within the project's area of influence, rather than the broad outreach efforts required by others. Extensive outreach efforts throughout all areas of the region are conducted in order to assemble a broad cross-section of input into the decision-making process, including traditionally underserved areas. The TPO's outreach efforts in these areas will continue to provide these residents with an opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns.

The TPO will continue to conduct, sponsor, and participate in special and community events that reinforce the mission and strategic plan of the organization, educate the public, and provide opportunities for public input.

### OUTREACH TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

#### Meeting Types

- Public hearing
- Public meeting
- Charrette/workshop
- Pop-up meeting
- Open house
- Small group meeting
- Town hall meeting
- Technical Committee and Executive Board meetings

#### Public hearings

These are public meetings used to solicit public comment on a project or issue being considered by the TPO. Hearings provide a formal setting for citizens to provide comments to the TPO or other decision-making body. They are recorded and transcribed for the record. All major TPO activities, such as the Transportation Improvement Program and the Regional Mobility Plan, require a public hearing as part of the adoption process.

#### Public meetings

Public meetings are different from public hearings. Public hearings are regulatory requirements that provide a formal opportunity for the public to present comments and oral testimony on a proposed agency action. Public meetings, on the other hand, are less formal: there are no formal time limits on statements and the agency and/or the facilitator usually answers questions. The purpose of the meeting is to share information and discuss issues, not to make decisions. Due to their openness and flexibility, public meetings are preferable to hearings as a forum for discussing complex or detailed issues. Comments made during a public meeting do not become part of the official administrative record as they do during a hearing. Public meetings provide two-way communication, with community members asking questions and the agency/facilitator providing responses.



**Charrettes/workshops**

These are seminars or gatherings of small groups of people, usually between 10 and 30, led by a small number of specialists with technical expertise in a specific area. In workshops, participants typically discuss a specific project or design where citizens comment on proposed actions and receive information on the technical issues associated with the project. Experts may be invited to explain certain aspects of the project. Workshops may help to improve public understanding and to prevent or correct misconceptions. Workshops also may identify citizen concerns and encourage public input.

Charrettes and workshops are generally open and informal, with information displays, handouts and project team members interacting with the public on a one-on-one basis; are usually set up on a drop-in basis, but may include short presentations; and are used for a wide range of TPO activities. The purpose is to provide project information to the public and to solicit public comment. An attendance record is kept and attendees are given the opportunity to sign up for the mailing list.

**Pop-up meeting**

A pop-up meeting is another alternative to traditional public meetings. It is a unique, interactive way to encourage community engagement with people who are not usually included by meeting them where they already are. Displays, surveys, visuals, and handouts can be used to draw in people's attention at whatever location is selected. Planners often go to parks, festivals, markets or other events that already have a crowd of people in attendance. They then engage with those people, giving a voice in the planning process to those who might not have been heard otherwise. This is a good tool for reaching underrepresented groups.

**Open houses**

Open houses are informal meetings in a public location where people can find out more about all sides of an issue through conversations with agency officials, staff, and representatives of involved interest groups and civic organizations. The meetings allow citizens to ask questions and express their concerns directly to project staff through one-on-one conversations. This type of interaction is often less intimidating than standing up in front of a crowd of people to ask a question. They also tend to last longer than a traditional meeting, allowing people to stop in whenever it is convenient.

**Small group meetings**

These are meetings with small groups that have an interest in projects such as planning studies. Meetings could be with homeowners or neighborhood groups, civic groups, special interest groups, or other groups of affected or interested parties. The meetings generally include a presentation by staff followed by a question and answer period. Staff follows up on questions and comments by responding back to the group and documenting the comments through meeting notes.

**Town hall meetings**

These meeting formats are more informal than board meetings and allow the public and members of the representative organization to interact. The main purpose of this type of meeting is to develop open communication between the members and those individuals who control the organization or committee.

**Technical Committee and Executive Board meetings**

The Technical Committee is made up of planners and engineers from jurisdictions represented by the TPO Executive Board and Regional Transportation Planning Council, with additional members representing local transportation and planning agencies. The committee reviews plans and policies

before they are sent to the Executive Board and is active in the implementation of plans and programs. The Executive Board is made up of elected and appointed officials from the member cities and counties. They are responsible for setting regional transportation policy, and adopting plans and programs.

State and federal transportation planning regulations require advertisement of any public meeting where a decision could be made or that may be attended by more than one elected official. The TPO advertises meetings of the TPO Executive Board and the TPO Technical Committee at least 14 days in advance of the meetings. Ads are placed in major regional newspapers including one that is free, one that serves the African American community, and one that serves the Hispanic community. They invite the public to visit the website for the full agenda, which is available 5 to 7 days prior to each meeting. The public is invited to contact TPO staff if they would like a hard copy of a final agenda.

### **Outreach Tools**

- Community advisory committees
- Comment cards and comment forms
- Contact person
- Public comment period
- Speakers bureau
- Stakeholder and community interviews
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Symposiums
- Task force
- Visual preference surveys

**Community advisory committees:** Community Advisory Committees are often formed for a specific update or study. These groups provide input from community members representing potentially affected areas or special interest groups and can be used on an ad hoc or ongoing basis. Elected officials usually appoint the members of the committee. Representatives of neighborhoods or groups with a vested interest are encouraged to be members of the committee along with representatives of traditionally under-served groups.

### **Comment cards and comment forms**

Comment cards are made available at every public meeting and all participants are encouraged to fill one out. Comment forms are often used to solicit public comments on specific issues presented at a workshop, open house, or other public meeting or hearing. They are similar to comment cards, but are usually more detailed and ask for specific feedback. For example, a comment form may ask for comments on specific recommendations considered during a corridor study or may ask for a person's general feelings about any aspect of transportation. Comment forms can also be included in publications and on websites to solicit input regarding the subject of the publication or the format of the publication or website.

In addition to gaining feedback from these cards and forms, the TPO can also build its database of those interested in the TPO if the participants are willing. Anyone who submits a comment is asked to sign up for email lists, both general and for the specific plan or project on which they are commenting.

### **Contact person**

This is a designated staff member who is responsible for responding to questions and inquiries from the public and the media. A contact person is assigned to each plan or project and listed on distributed materials, on information published on the website, and on press releases.

### **Public comment period**

These are designated time periods in which citizens can formally review and comment on the agency's proposed course of action or decision. The public comment period begins with public notice, and public meetings are held within this timeframe, generally 30 days for most TPO activities.

### **Speakers bureau**

This tool involves assembling a group of speakers available to make presentations to committees, civic or interest groups, and other organizations. The TPO also proactively requests agenda time to make such presentations. The format usually consists of a presentation, informational handouts, and a discussion period. Speakers bureau presentations can be used for ongoing communication with key interested parties and concentrated outreach for large projects, such as updating the Regional Mobility Plan. Attendees are encouraged to sign up for the mailing list.

### **Stakeholder and community interviews**

Stakeholder and community interviews are informal, face-to-face or telephone interviews held with local residents, elected officials, community group representatives and other individuals to determine community members' concerns and attitudes. Interviews are particularly helpful in situations where there is perceived controversy or there is potential to receive high levels of public interest. Information obtained through these interviews is typically used to assess the community's concerns and information needs and to prepare a public participation plan, which outlines a community-specific strategy for responding to the concerns identified in the interview process.

### **Surveys and questionnaires**

Surveys are used when specific input from the public is desired. An attitude and awareness survey can measure public awareness about transportation choices. Other uses for surveys include gathering information about daily travel patterns, gathering input on proposed strategies or alternatives, and asking the public about the best way to involve them in transportation planning. Surveys are usually written and distributed online. Though less common, they can also be oral, conducted in person, distributed by mail or left at locations such as libraries and community centers. They are often distributed widely, but can be given to specific segments of the community or to representative samples. Informal surveys can be short questionnaires that are included on a comment sheet or asked verbally at a sign-up table to gauge the group's sentiment on an issue.

### **Symposiums**

A symposium is an intense, half- to full-day, in-depth session or series of sessions with an invited group of participants who represent a comprehensive cross-section of the community who have a vital interest in the project or process. A series of symposiums is a way to achieve sustained public involvement over the course of a long project. Symposiums expedite the exchange of information among interest groups, public officials and staff. The format consists of in-depth presentations of technical material followed by discussion groups. Small group work can be designed to focus on a variety of things, such as brainstorming and ranking issues, or providing input on plan concepts and direction.

Sometimes less formal symposiums are open to the public and used to present material that is less technical. They still involve elected officials, staff and experts, but are designed to be more accessible to those who are not involved in transportation planning.

### **Task force**

A task force is made up of invited participants with a high level of knowledge about a proposed project or community and a willingness to commit to what is usually an extended meeting or series of meetings. The work of the task force is in depth and often technical in nature. The role of this type of group often focuses on identifying and evaluating strategies for achieving the goals and objectives of a specific plan; providing input on ways to reduce demand on the transportation system; or evaluating strategies for urban development that reduce the need to rely on automobiles. A task force requires a high level of involvement on the part of both participants and staff, but provides more extensive and in-depth input than possible with outreach techniques that target the general public.

### **Visual preference survey**

A visual preference survey asks participants to rate images of development and facilities based on their initial reaction. A primary goal of this technique is to offer those who are not experts in transportation planning a way to participate by evaluating the desirable and undesirable physical, visual, and spatial features of transportation systems and development. An accompanying questionnaire obtains a demographic profile of the participants.

### **Information Tools**

- Community TV
- Database and distribution lists
- Direct and email mailings
- Door-to-door canvassing
- TPO general email address
- Exhibits, displays, signs and bulletin boards
- Newsletters
- Fact sheets or brochures
- Legal notices and advertisements
- Paid advertisements
- Posters and flyers
- Media releases
- Presentations
- Social media
- TPO, project and program websites
- QR codes
- Videos

### **Community TV**

Community Television of Knoxville (CTV) maintains a public access cable channel that broadcasts select meetings, most frequently the TPO Executive Board and TPO Technical Committee meetings.

### **Databases and distribution lists**

TPO staff maintains databases of all contacts, both business and public, that are updated on a continuous basis. The databases include committee membership, mailing information, email addresses

and phone numbers when known. The databases are used for maintaining up-to-date committee membership lists, interested parties, special interest groups, homeowners association contacts and the newsletter email list. Other lists that are maintained include elected officials; federal, state, and local government contacts; local media; organized environmental groups; and civic, religious, and community organizations. These lists allow the TPO to distribute information about meetings and announcements to interested parties.

### **Direct and email mailings**

Direct and email mailings are used to announce upcoming meetings or activities or to provide information to a targeted area or group of people. Direct mailings can be postcards or letters. Emails notifying individuals and groups are also sent to the addresses maintained in the TPO's email databases. Meeting reminders are sent at the end of each week as a reminder about the upcoming week's meetings to those who have opted into receiving them. Mailings may announce project-specific meetings, public hearings, workshops, open houses, corridor studies, small-area studies, special events, or major activities. An area may be targeted for a mailing because of potential impacts from a project and efforts are made to include low-income, minority, disabled, and Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) populations.

In order to continue expanding the database, members of the public will be asked if they would like to be included on it when comment forms are dispensed and collected at public meetings. In addition to the notices that are distributed to the local media, e-mail messages are sent to individuals and groups notifying them of meetings.

### **Door-to-door canvassing**

Door-to-door canvassing is a way to collect and distribute information by calling on community members individually and directly. Public interest groups have long used such techniques and they also may be useful for facility owners as a way to gauge public interest during the community assessment stage. During these interactions, canvassers can field questions about activities, discuss concerns, and provide fact sheets or other materials. Some citizens may want to find out more about the activity by signing up for mailing lists or attending an upcoming event.

### **TPO general email address**

Using email for communication with the public has become an integral part of public outreach. Having a general e-mail address makes it easier for citizens to contact the TPO with questions, requests for documents or other information and informal and formal comment. Staff monitors the inbox, responds, and follows up as appropriate.

### **Exhibits, displays, signs and bulletin boards**

A variety of exhibits and displays can provide general information, such as introducing a large project, or specific information. Locations for the displays include community workshops, public locations and public events designed to attract those who would not have otherwise seen it.

Signs can also be a useful means of public notice. Posters are usually placed on community bulletin boards in community centers, town halls, grocery stores, on heavily traveled streets, etc.

### **Newsletters**

Email newsletters are used for ongoing communication as well as to send out updates or notifications on an as needed project-specific basis. Distribution can be general or targeted. The general mailing list

includes interested parties, municipalities, media, and other agencies who have voluntarily added their name and address to the list. The newsletter can be used to highlight major TPO projects or activities, such as the adoption of project priorities and report information regarding significant transportation issues, TPO awards and other one-time activities. The newsletter can also be used to inform the public of upcoming decisions to be made by the TPO or other agencies, so that they have time to prepare meaningful comments prior to the decision being finalized.

Placing a notice in or sharing an article with a newsletter distributed by a local government, a community organization, neighborhood association, or in other free publications is an inexpensive way to target a specific audience or segment of the community.

### **Fact sheets and brochures**

Fact sheets and brochures provide summary information regarding programs and projects. Fact sheets can be distributed at public meetings, on the website, at grocery stores and in public places such as libraries and community centers. Brochures are usually more general to the agency or program and do not focus on a specific project or plan. They can also be distributed at libraries and community centers, as well as at conferences, seminars and other educational events. Fact sheets and brochures should be brief, easy to read and understand, written for the eighth-grade reading level, avoid acronyms and jargon and include graphics to help deliver the message.

### **Legal advertisements and notices**

State and federal transportation planning regulations require advertisement of any public meeting where a decision could be made or that may be attended by more than one elected official. The notice used for regular meetings of the TPO Executive Board and the TPO Technical Committee can be found below. The TPO places notices in the Knoxville News Sentinel, Knoxville Focus, The Enlightener, or on Hispanic focused social media outlets. In cases when it is appropriate to appeal to more targeted markets, notices may be placed in the Blount Daily Times, Mountain Press, Oak Ridger, Clinton Courier or News Herald.

Technical Committee/Executive Meeting Notice:  
Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization  
Technical Committee Meeting, m/d/yr

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Technical Committee/Executive Board will meet on Tuesday/Wednesday, m/d at 9 a.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building, 400 Main Street, Knoxville, TN. The full Agenda will be available on the TPO website 5-7 days prior to the meeting and can be found here: [www.knoxtpo.org/boards-and-committees](http://www.knoxtpo.org/boards-and-committees). If you would like a copy of the final agenda please contact the TPO. If you need assistance or accommodation for a disability please notify the TPO three business days in advance of the meeting and we will be glad to work with you in obliging any reasonable request.

865-215-2506 or [laura.edmonds@knoxplanning.org](mailto:laura.edmonds@knoxplanning.org).

### **Paid advertisements**

Various projects may require more advertising than a standard public notice. Newspaper ads may be placed in the papers TPO traditionally places public notices such as the Knoxville News Sentinel, Knoxville Focus, The Enlightener, or Mundo Hispano. In cases where it is appropriate to advertise in more targeted markets, these ads may be placed in the Blount Daily Times, Mountain Press, Oak Ridger, Clinton Courier or News Herald.

### **Posters and flyers**

Posters and flyers are used to announce meetings, events and occasional projects. They can be displayed in public places such as government centers, neighborhood shops, religious institutions, social service agencies, employment centers, bus stops/transit hubs, the interior of buses, senior centers, public health clinics, public libraries, community centers and popular meeting places. They also may be inserted into another publication, such as a neighborhood newsletter. The announcement may contain a brief description of the purpose of the meeting, the time, location, and contact information. Posters and flyers may be used to reach a large audience that would be reached using other forms of outreach.

### **Media releases**

These releases are official announcements written by the TPO and issued to the news media. They are most often used to announce public meetings, surveys and events, and to report the results of studies. Media releases are sent to a well-maintained database of local media contacts to ensure that interested parties and the press are up-to-date on news and information concerning TPO activities.

### **Presentations**

Presentations can be used as informational tools and to document public involvement events. They can be broadcast on Community TV, shown at public involvement events, shown to community groups, be part of presentations to public officials and used for speakers bureau presentations. These visual tools are an effective way to stretch staff resources and help generate interest in a topic.

### **Social media**

In recent years, social media has become a major medium by which the public receives and processes information. The TPO uses Facebook and Twitter on a regular basis. Other programs, Like Active Knox, Smart Trips, and I Bike KNX, have successfully used Instagram as well. Other platforms that have been used occasionally are Reddit and Next Door. Each of these is used as appropriate to communicate program information and activities to the public as well as to generate general interest through discussion among members of the public. Paid advertisements are sometimes used on social media, especially Facebook, to target specific populations.

The TPO has embraced this medium and will continue to utilize these tools to share information. TPO and Knoxville-Knox County Planning staff members have developed a Social Media Policy to better address how social media will be used; this Policy is included in **Appendix D**.

### **TPO, project and program websites**

The TPO's website is a tool for disseminating information on meetings, project updates, agency news and general background information.

The website contains, but is not limited to:

- Brief descriptions of current projects with available maps, photos, renderings, etc.;
- Work products and publications — RMP, TIP, TPWP, etc.;
- Draft and final documents for public review and comment;
- Calls for projects and requests for proposals;
- Links to related agencies and planning partners — TDOT, FHWA, etc.;
- Current operating procedures — including the Outreach Plan;
- A listing of current TPO member jurisdictions;



- Meeting calendars with agenda items; and
- Contact information — mailing address, phone, fax, and e-mail

Project and program websites are sometimes created separate from the TPO website if there is an abundance of information or outreach that takes place specifically for that project that is more easily maintained on its own. These sites have the same types of information as the TPO, but are specific to the project. There are calendars, news items, drafts, and other appropriate information. Examples of projects and programs with their own websites are the Regional Mobility Plan, Smart Trips and the Knoxville Regional Bicycle Program.

While web- and e-mail-based communication is both effective and desirable to many interested in the agency's work, not everyone in the TPO planning area has access to computers or smart phones. Plans and documents will continue to be made available through the TPO office. If staff is made aware that a resident wants to access an online tool or plan, accommodations can be made to print, mail, and discuss the needed document.

### **QR Codes**

QR codes are a type of bar code that allows users to scan them with a smartphone camera to navigate directly to a website or document without having to type in a URL. This is a useful tool to promote touch free practices, and also to easily get more information from a poster or promotional material.

### **Videos**

Videos are a useful informational tool and can also provide additional opportunities for the public to be involved in meetings and events. Produced videos can be shown at events, posted on social media, put on the TPO website, and shared with outside partners to spread information about a plan or project. Video recordings of meetings are another effective use of this medium. Posted recordings of meetings allow the public to view the meeting when it is convenient to them, opening up the information and resources shared at that meeting to a much wider audience. These tools can also be beneficial for those who are sight or hearing impaired because videos can be enhanced with subtitles, translations, and other tools to make them more accessible to all.

### Social Media Policy



### KNOXVILLE/KNOX COUNTY PLANNING POLICIES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

#### I. Purpose and Response

The intended purpose for Planning’s social media content is to provide relevant and timely information. Some tools may also serve as a forum for courteous public discussion of relevant planning issues. Persons submitting comments should not expect a direct response from Planning staff. For comments that require a direct response, users should contact Planning staff by phone at (865) 215-2500 or by email at [contact@knoxplanning.org](mailto:contact@knoxplanning.org). At its sole discretion, Planning staff may elect to disable features or capabilities, or alter or discontinue the use of any social media tool at any time.

#### II. Standards for Acceptable Comments

Planning reserves the right to delete unacceptable postings and may, at its discretion, block users for frequent or egregious violations. Postings containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed:

- A. Profane, violent, hateful, or obscene language or content;
- B. Libelous or defamatory content;
- C. Content that constitutes a personal attack or is intended to intimidate or harass;
- D. Content that misrepresents the commenter’s identity or affiliation or impersonates others;
- E. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, or sexual orientation;
- F. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- G. Solicitations of commerce;
- H. Off-topic or repetitive posts;
- I. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- J. Information that may compromise the safety or security of Planning, the public, or public systems;
- K. Confidential or non-public information; or
- L. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

#### III. Non-Endorsement Disclaimer

Knoxville-Knox County Planning does not endorse any comment or position stated or implied, other than those posted directly by Planning staff. This includes comments made by individual members of Planning staff that represent only his/her personal opinion as a member of the public. This also includes comments or positions stated or implied within content written by a third party that are posted or linked to by Planning for informational purposes. Furthermore, the agency does not monitor, nor does it endorse or take responsibility for, any comments, opinions, or agendas implicitly or explicitly stated within the profiles or personal pages of persons or groups who “like,” follow, or are linked in any way to Planning’s social media content.

**IV. Third Party Entity Disclaimer**

Social media sites are owned and maintained by third party entities. Planning assumes no responsibility for the maintenance of these services, nor for the privacy, security, or protection of any information submitted by users in any portion of a social media site.

**V. Right to Summarize**

Whenever possible, links will be provided to users to submit official comment. Information received via social media may be summarized and shared with the Planning Commission or committees as appropriate.

**VI. Adherence to Laws and Policies**

The use of social media will follow all federal, state, local, and Planning-related laws and/or policies regarding the sharing of information, copyright and ownership, and collection of data.

**VII. Collection of Data**

Planning will not collect or store the personal information (name, email, location, gender, etc.) of social media users except when required by law. Social media sites may have their own privacy policies that may differ from Planning’s.

**VIII. Public Record**

All content posted by either Planning or any member of the public to Planning social media pages is considered part of the public record. The State of Tennessee defines public records as follows:

"Public record or records" or "state record or records" means all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, microfilms, electronic data processing files and output, films, sound recordings, or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any governmental agency. (Tenn. Code Ann. § 10-7-503(a)(1)(A)(i))

## APPENDIX E: TRANSPORTATION GLOSSARY

### **American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)**

A nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing highway and transportation departments in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

### **Access/Accessibility**

The opportunity to reach a given end use within a certain time frame, or without being impeded by physical, social, or economic barriers.

### **Addendum**

Supplementary information in addition to a completed document. Addendums may be used to clarify and support the information in the original document, or to integrate planning requirements finalized after the document's approval.

### **Administrative Adjustment**

A minor revision to a Regional Mobility Plan (RMP) or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that includes minor changes to project/project phase costs, minor changes to funding sources of previously included projects, and minor changes to project/project phase initiation dates. An administrative modification is a revision that does not require public review and comment, a redemonstration of fiscal constraint, or an air quality conformity determination (in nonattainment and maintenance areas).

An adjustment is further defined as follows:

- A minor change in the total project cost (see total project cost table);
- A minor change in project description that does not change the air quality conformity finding in maintenance and/or non-attainment areas; or
- A minor change in the project description/termini that is for clarification and does not change the project scope; or
- Shifting funds between projects within a TIP (i.e., funding sources and projects already identified in the TIP) if the change does not result in a cost increase greater than the amendment threshold (see project total cost table) for the total project cost of all phases shown within the approved TIP; or
- Adding an amount of funds already identified in the STIP/TIP for the current or previous year(s) if the funds are currently identified in the STIP/TIP either in an existing project or as available funds and the change does not result in a cost increase greater than the amendment threshold (see project total cost table) for the total project cost of all phases within the approved TIP; or
- Moving projects from year to year within an approved TIP, except those that cross air quality horizon years; or
- Changes required to follow FHWA and FTA instructions as to the withdrawal of funds or reestablishment of funds withdrawn at the request of FHWA or FTA; or
- Moving funds between similarly labeled groupings, regardless of percent change; or
- Adjustments in revenue to match actual revenue receipts.

### **Amendment**

A revision to a Regional Mobility Plan (RMP) or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that involves a major change to a project, including the addition or deletion of a project or a major change in project

cost, project/project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or design scope (e.g., changing project termini or the number of through traffic lanes or changing the number of stations in the case of fixed guideway transit projects). Changes to projects that are included only for illustrative purposes do not require an amendment. An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment and a redemonstration of fiscal constraint. If an amendment involves “non-exempt” projects in nonattainment and maintenance areas, an air quality conformity determination is required.

An amendment is further defined as follows:

- A major change in the total project cost, excluding groupings (excluding groupings); or
- or adding a new project or deleting a project from the RMP/TIP; or
- A major change of project scope; examples include, but are not limited to, changing the number of through-lanes, adding/deleting non-motorized facilities, changing mode (e.g., rolling stock or facility type for transit), changing capital category (i.e., transit funding), or changing termini; or
- Any change requiring a new regional air quality conformity finding, where applicable (including a grouping).

### **Alternative Modes of Transportation**

Forms of transportation that provide transportation alternatives to the use of single-occupant automobiles. Examples include: rail, transit, carpools, bicycles, and walking.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

Federal civil rights legislation for persons with disabilities, signed into law in 1990 that prohibits discrimination specifically in the areas of employment, public accommodation, public services, telecommunications, and transportation. Transportation requirements include the provision of “comparable paratransit service” that is equivalent to general public fixed-route service for persons who are unable to use regular bus service due to a disability.

### **Arterial Street**

A class of street serving major traffic movements (high-speed, high volume) for travel between major points.

### **Attainment Area**

An area considered to have air quality that meets or exceeds the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) health standards used in the Clean Air Act. Nonattainment areas are areas considered not to have met these standards for designated pollutants. An area may be an attainment area for one pollutant and a nonattainment area for others.

### **Capacity**

A transportation facility's ability to accommodate a moving stream of people or vehicles in a given time period. The maximum rate of flow at which persons or vehicles can be reasonably expected to traverse a point or uniform segment of a lane or roadway during a specified time period under prevailing roadway, traffic and control conditions; usually expressed as vehicles per hour or persons per hour.

### **Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

A plan for future capital infrastructure and program expenditures that identifies each capital project, its anticipated start and completion, and allocates existing funds and known revenue sources for a given period of time. Most local governments have a CIP.

**Clean Air Act (CAA)**

Federal statutes established by the United States Congress which set the nation's air quality goals and the process for achieving those goals. The original Clean Air Act was passed in 1963, but the national air pollution control program is actually based on the 1970 version of the law. The 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments are the most far-reaching revisions of the 1970 law.

**Congestion**

A condition under which the number of vehicles using a facility is great enough to cause reduced speeds and increased travel times.

**Congestion Management Process (CMP)**

Systematic process for managing congestion. Provides information on transportation system performance and finds alternative ways to alleviate congestion and enhance the mobility of people and goods, to levels that meet state and local needs.

**Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)**

A categorical Federal-aid funding program created with the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Directs funding to projects that contribute to meeting National Ambient Air Quality Standards. CMAQ funds generally may not be used for projects that result in the construction of new capacity available to SOVs (Single-Occupant Vehicles).

**Context Sensitive Solution (CSS)**

A collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist.

**Design Standards**

Standards that are met when a new road is constructed, or when a deficient section is improved. These standards pertain to all relevant geometric and structural features required to provide a desired level of service over the life of the project. The life of the project is generally 20 years beyond its implementation.

**Environmental Assessments (EA)**

Prepared for federal actions under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) where it is not clearly known how significant the environmental impact might be. If, after preparing an environmental assessment, it is determined that the project impact is significant, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is then prepared. If not, a "finding of no significant impact" (FONSI) is documented.

**Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)**

Prepared for federal actions that have a significant effect on the human and natural environment. These are disclosure documents prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that provide a full description of the proposed project, the existing environment and analysis of the anticipated beneficial and adverse environmental effects of all reasonable alternatives. There are various stages — Draft EIS and Final EIS.

**Environmental Justice (EJ)**

Environmental justice is 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.

**Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

The federal regulatory agency responsible for administering and enforcing federal environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, and others. EPA is the source agency of air quality control regulations affecting transportation.

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**

A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the federal-aid Highway Program, providing financial assistance to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads, and bridges. The FHWA also administers the Federal Lands Highway Program, including survey, design, and construction of forest highway system roads, parkways and park roads, Indian reservation roads, defense access roads, and other Federal lands roads.

**Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**

A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that is the principal source of federal financial assistance to America's communities for planning, development, and improvement of public or mass transportation systems. FTA provides leadership, technical assistance, and financial resources for safe, technologically advanced public transportation to enhance mobility and accessibility, to improve the nation's communities and natural environment and to strengthen the national economy.

**Financial Planning**

The process of defining and evaluating funding sources, sharing the information, and deciding how to allocate the funds.

**Financial Programming**

A short-term commitment of funds to specific projects identified in the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

**Fiscal or Financial Constraint**

Making sure that a given program or project can reasonably expect to receive funding within the time allotted for its implementation.

**Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act**

In 2015, President Obama signed the FAST Act into law. It was the first federal law in over a decade to provide long-term funding certainty for surface transportation infrastructure planning and investment. The FAST Act authorizes \$305 billion over fiscal years 2016 through 2020 for highway, highway and motor vehicle safety, public transportation, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, rail, and research, technology, and statistics programs.

**Geographic Information System (GIS)**

Computerized data management system designed to capture, store, retrieve, analyze, and display geographically referenced information.

**High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)**



Vehicles carrying two or more people. The number that constitutes an HOV for the purposes of HOV highway lanes may be designated differently by different transportation agencies.

**Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)**

The application of advanced technologies to improve the efficiency and safety of transportation systems.

**Intermodal**

The ability to connect and the connections between modes of transportation.

**Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)**

The 1991 federal transportation law that introduced a more intermodal and collaborative process for planning and funding transportation projects and programs. Many of the provisions from ISTEA were continued and expanded in follow-up legislation.

**Knoxville Area Transit (KAT)**

The transit agency serving the Knoxville area.

**Level of Service (LOS)**

A qualitative rating of how well a unit of transportation supply (e.g. street, intersection, bikeway, etc) serves its current or projected demand. LOS A = free-flow condition (32 percent of capacity); B = reasonably free-flow conditions (51 percent); C = operation stable but becoming more critical (75 percent); D = lower speed range of stable flow (92 percent); E = unstable flow (100 percent); F = forced flow; >100 percent of capacity, stop-and-go operation.

**Maintenance Area**

Maintenance area is any geographic region of the United States previously designated nonattainment pursuant to the CAA Amendments of 1990 and subsequently redesignated to attainment subject to the requirement to develop a maintenance plan under section 175A of the CAA, as amended.

**Major Road Plan**

This plan views each road as part of the overall transportation system and identifies its functional classification. It assigns right-of-way requirements based on the purpose and function of the road, future road improvements, future pedestrian improvements, traffic counts, anticipated development, and policies and goals contained in adopted sector plans, Regional Mobility Plans, the Knoxville-Knox County General Plan, and/or other documents. The Major Road Plan is used in the regulation of land use and is identified in the Knoxville-Knox County Minimum Subdivision Regulations, Section 3.04.

**Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

Also known as a Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), an MPO is a planning agency established by federal law to assure a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process takes place that results in the development of plans, programs, and projects that consider all transportation modes and supports the goals of the community. Each urbanized area or contiguous urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, containing a population of greater than 50,000 is required to have an MPO. [Also see Transportation Planning Organization.]

**Mode, Intermodal, Multimodal**

Form of transportation, such as automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking. Intermodal refers to the connections between modes, and multimodal refers to the availability of transportation options within a system or corridor.

**National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)**

An established national environmental policy requiring that any project using federal funding or requiring federal approval, including transportation projects, examine the effects of proposed and alternative choices on the environment before a federal decision is made.

**National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)**

Law requiring federal agencies to consider the potential effect of a project on a property that is registered on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. If effects are identified, federal and state agencies and the public must identify means to mitigate the harm.

**Nonattainment**

Any geographic area that has not met the requirements for clean air as set out in the Clean Air Act of 1990. An area can at the same time be classified as in attainment for one or more air pollutants and as a nonattainment area for another air pollutant.

**Paratransit**

Alternative known as "special or specialized" transportation, which often includes flexibly scheduled and routed transportation services. These services use low-capacity vehicles such as vans to operate within normal urban transit corridors or rural areas. Services usually cater to the needs of persons whom standard mass transit services would serve with difficulty or not at all. Common patrons are the elderly and persons with disabilities.

**Planning (PL) Funds**

Primary source of funding for metropolitan planning designated by the FHWA.

**Regional Mobility Plan (RMP)**

A document resulting from regional or statewide collaboration and consensus on a region or state's transportation system and serving as the defining vision for the region or state's transportation systems and services. In metropolitan areas, the plan indicates all of the transportation improvements scheduled for funding over a minimum of the next 20 years. Also known as a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), or Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

**Right-of-Way (ROW)**

Public space legally established for the use of pedestrians, vehicles, or utilities. Right-of-way typically includes the street, sidewalk, and buffer strip areas.

**Rural Planning Organization (RPO)**

An organization similar to an MPO, composed of representatives of rural local governments and appointed representatives from the geographic area covered by the organization with the purpose of involving local officials in multi-modal transportation planning through a structured process.

**Stakeholders**

Individuals and organizations involved in or affected by the transportation planning process, including federal/state/local officials, MPOs, transit operators, freight companies, shippers and the general public.

**Surface Transportation Program (STP)**

Federal-aid highway funding program that funds a broad range of surface transportation capital needs, including many roads, transit, sea and airport access, vanpool, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

**Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)**

Agency created to protect and improve the quality of Tennessee's land, air, water and recreation resources. It administers a variety of programs to safeguard human health and the environment while ensuring natural resources meet healthful, regulatory standards.

**Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT)**

The state agency that manages the highway system within Tennessee. TDOT's mission is to plan, implement, maintain, and manage an integrated transportation system for the movement of people and products, with an emphasis on quality, safety, efficiency and the environment for Tennesseans. TDOT is the administrative agency that responds to policy set by the Tennessee Legislation.

**Title VI**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Prohibits discrimination in any program receiving federal assistance.

**Transportation Conformity**

Process to assess the compliance of any transportation plan, program, or project with air quality implementation plans. The conformity process is defined by the Clean Air Act.

**Transportation Control Measures (TCM)**

Transportation strategies that affect traffic patterns or reduce vehicle use to reduce air pollutant emissions. These may include HOV lanes, provision of bicycle facilities, ridesharing, telecommuting, etc. Such actions may be included in a State Implementation Plan if needed to demonstrate attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM)**

"Demand-based" techniques that are designed to change travel behavior in order to improve the performance of transportation facilities and to reduce the need for additional road capacity. Methods include the use of alternative modes, ride-sharing and vanpool programs, and trip-reduction programs and/or ordinances.

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

A staged, multiyear (typically three to five years) listing of surface transportation projects proposed for federal, state, and local funding within a metropolitan area. MPOs are required to prepare a TIP as a short-range programming document to complement its Regional Mobility Plan. TIPs contain projects with committed funds over a multiyear period (one to three years).

**Transportation Management Area (TMA)**

All urbanized areas over 200,000 in population and any other area that requests such designation. The MPO is responsible for transportation planning with a TMA.

**Transportation Planning**

A collaborative process of examining demographic characteristics and travel patterns for a given area. This process shows how these characteristics will change over a given period of time and evaluates alternatives for the transportation system of the area and the most expeditious use of local, state, and federal transportation funding. Long-range planning is typically done over a period of 20 years; short-range programming of specific projects usually covers a period of 3 to 5 years.

**Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)**

Also known as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), a TPO is a planning agency established by federal law to ensure that a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process takes place that results in the development of plans, programs, and projects that consider all transportation modes and supports the goals of the community. Each urbanized area or contiguous urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, containing a population of greater than 50,000 is required to have an MPO. [Also see Metropolitan Planning Organization.]

**Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)**

The management plan for the (metropolitan) planning program. Its purpose is to coordinate the planning activities of all participants in the planning process.

**Urbanized Area**

Area that contains a city of 50,000 or more population plus incorporated surrounding areas meeting size or density criteria as defined by the U.S. Census.

**Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)**

The sum of distances traveled by all motor vehicles in a specified region. A requirement of the state Transportation Planning Rule is reducing vehicle miles traveled per capita.

**Volume-to-Capacity Ratio**

It compares roadway demand (vehicle volumes) with roadway supply (carrying capacity). For example, a V/C of 1.00 indicates the roadway facility is operating at its capacity. It is often estimated based on assumed values for saturation flow.