



# Public Participation Plan – Limited Update

Listening Sessions and Public Hearing  
January 23, 2024

# Today's Agenda

2022 MPO Recertification Recommendations

Federal Requirements (pg. 11)

Division of Statewide Planning Website – 508 Compliance (pg. 17)

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General Participation – Primary Participation Activities and Virtual Public Feedback (pgs. 23, 24 & 27)

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Performance Measures - Virtual Polling (pg. 37)

Appendix D: Statement on Virtual Public Outreach in Response to COVID-19 (pgs. 47 & 48)

Next Steps

# 2022 MPO Recertification Recommendations

The RIDSP should ensure that the effectiveness of the PPP is evaluated on a regular basis and that the evaluation process is transparently coordinated with stakeholders.



# 2022 MPO Recertification Recommendations

While the planning partners have taken a multi-faceted approach to public engagement in their respective areas of responsibility, opportunities to enhance early outreach and education, processes for incorporation of comments received, and additional public and stakeholder outreach and engagement opportunities should be evaluated. The MPO should work to engage neighborhood organizations in the planning process as well.



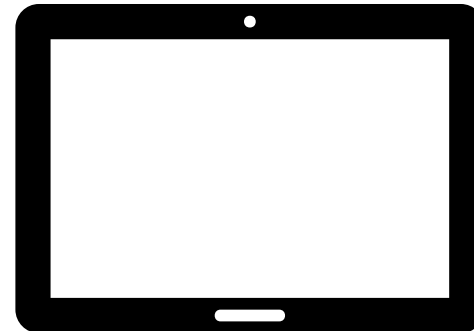
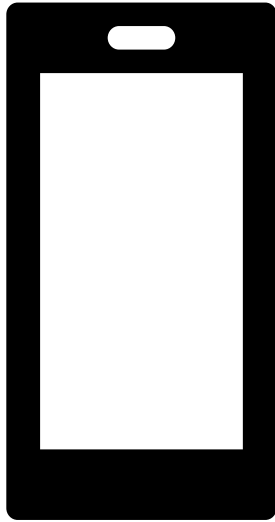
# Federal Requirements (Pg. 11)

- Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Governments
  - Requires each federal agency to conduct an equity assessment of high-priority, high-impact agency programs, policies, and processes as part of a holistic approach to addressing equity and systematic barriers assessing benefits and opportunities.
- EO 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (Justice40 Initiative)
  - Justice40 directs 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments to be directed to disadvantaged communities.



# Division of Statewide Planning Website – 508 Compliance (Pg. 17)

As of July 2022, [www.planning.ri.gov](http://www.planning.ri.gov) was updated to be 508 compliant with an interface that is more user-friendly on mobile devices and tablets.



# Information Dissemination

## Virtual Participation Opportunities (Pg. 20)

- **Virtual Public Comment Intake Platform**

- In 2020, RIDSP contracted with SmartComment for a web-based public comment intake tool.
- Comment entry portal offers more tools for RIDSP to analyze comments based on location and comment type.
- Quick exports of public comment reports for faster turnaround.
- Is accessible and 508 compliant per latest software updates.
- This has already improved the approach of public comment intake.



# Information Dissemination

## Virtual Participation Opportunities (Pg. 20)

- **Virtual Meetings Accessibility**

- Virtual meeting accessible platforms (e.g. Zoom and Microsoft Teams) have been used, specifically during the pandemic, for virtual meetings.
- Allows RIDSP to post meeting recordings and assists in taking minutes.
- Led RIDSP to be able to hybridize TAC and SPC meetings.
- Will continue to use Zoom/Microsoft Teams for more accessible public input for items such as STIP major amendments and stakeholder engagement.



# Targeted Consultation Public Participation Task Force (Pg. 23)

- Mission – To ensure that the State Planning Council is providing access to the transportation planning process, provide a forum to discuss and learn about timely issues, assist the Transportation Advisory Committee in implementing public outreach strategies, and to empower citizens to be a part of the planning process
- Will meet quarterly.
- Membership may be comprised of municipal planners or representatives, state committee members, and various non-profits.



# General Participation

## Primary Participation Activities

- Public Hearings (Pg. 23)

Staff continues to make efforts to expand the locations offered for public hearings to draw more public participation. This could include virtual offerings to better expand accessibility to rural and coastal locations, targeting the geography ... to ensure equal participation opportunities.

- Public Meetings (Pg. 24)

More public meetings allow for the SPC and its subcommittees to closely review agenda items up for approval and gathered public input. Subcommittees, such as the TAC, generally operate a more flexible location schedule in an attempt to provide public input opportunities at less represented locations (e.g. rural or coastal).



# General Participation

## Virtual Public Feedback (Pg. 27)

- Broadcasting public meetings via the web expands outreach efforts and accessibility for those that cannot physically attend public hearings and public meetings in-person.
- Virtual public intake platforms provide an additional option for public input, and its use is encouraged as a way for monitoring public input in a one-stop platform.



# Rhode Island's Population Living with Disabilities

## ADA Accessibility (Pg. 29)

- Conducting meetings in locations that are ADA accessible by:
  - Contact Governor's Commission on Disabilities to perform an ADA assessment of the proposed location.
  - Ensure virtual sessions are closed-captioned enabled.
  - Distribute documents up for review in screen-reader accessible formatting (such as plain text documents) as requested.



# Performance Measures

## Virtual Polling (pg. 37)

- The use of an exit survey at some meetings (including virtual polling during web/hybrid meetings) along with internal office records will assist in gathering data.



RI Division of Statewide Planning Attendee Feedback Survey		
Event Date:	Time:	
Event Description:		
Event Location:		
Providing information will assist the Division of Statewide Planning in improving our programs and services for all members of the public. The information you provide will be used to better understand who we serve. Responses are strictly voluntary and will remain anonymous. Thank you for participating at today's meeting.		
<b>Please Mark Your Responses</b>		
Was this meeting held at a good time for you? If No, why?	YES	NO
Was this meeting held at a convenient location? If No, why?	YES	NO
How did you find out about this meeting?	<input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Website <input type="checkbox"/> TV/Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Poster <input type="checkbox"/> Sec. State <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Were you provided adequate notice of this event?	YES	NO
Did you get a chance to participate during this meeting?	YES	NO
Do you feel that your ideas were considered?	YES	NO
Was today's event beneficial and information helpful?	YES	NO
If you requested special accommodation, were your needs met?	YES	NO Not Applicable
Were ADA accessible features satisfactory? If No, why?	YES	NO Not Applicable
<b>Race:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Some Other Race/Two or More		
<b>Ethnicity:</b> Hispanic / Latino: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
<b>Age:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 18 and under <input type="checkbox"/> 19-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and over		
<b>Family Income:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$14,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000-24,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000-34,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35,000-49,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000-74,999 <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$75,000		
<b>Sex:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		
<b>Is English your native language?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, Please tell us your native language: _____		
<b>How well do you speak English?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Very Well <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Very Well <input type="checkbox"/> Not Well		
<b>Disabled: *</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
<small>*Note: Individuals with disabilities are persons with a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities including caring for one's self, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, performing manual tasks, and learning. (Codified as 29 U.S.C. 794.)</small>		
<small>Your response to the questions above is optional and confidential. It will help us to better meet your needs.</small>		



# Appendix D: Statement on Virtual Public Outreach in Response to COVID-19 (Pgs. 47 & 48)

- **Summary –**

While public bodies have reverted back to in-person meetings for the time being, it may be necessary, such as in emergency situations when in-person meetings and events are not possible or practicable, virtual techniques, such as remote or hybrid meetings, will take precedence.

The continued evolution of online platforms for virtual public outreach may also provide new opportunities for the MPO to expand the reach and accessibility of its public outreach efforts.

RISPC will also make every effort to ensure that people and groups are not disadvantaged by their level of access to online outreach platforms.



# Next Steps

- November/December 2023 – Transportation Advisory Committee authorizes 45-Day Public Comment Period and Public Hearing
- January 2024 – Listening Sessions/Public Hearing
- February 2024 – Transportation Advisory Committee
- March 2024 – State Planning Council Adoption



# Questions?

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