

A nighttime photograph taken from the driver's perspective inside a car. The view shows a multi-lane highway with traffic, illuminated by streetlights and building lights in the background. The car's side mirror and part of the dashboard are visible in the foreground. The image is set against a dark background with geometric shapes in shades of brown and orange.

mTPO

Metropolitan
Topeka
Planning
Organization

Public Participation Plan 2023

Introduction

On November 15, 2021, the president signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)(Public Law 117-58), also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law” BIL. Aside from increasing Safe and Accessible Transportation Options, the BIL also continues and expands provisions for equitable treatment, inclusion and access to all diverse populations with regards to multi-modal transportation applications. Aside from required adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) the BIL also explicitly addresses equity as follows:

- **Equity:** The BIL provides considerable resources to help States and other funding recipients advance transportation plans, programs, and projects that consider the unique circumstances affecting community members’ mobility needs and allocate resources consistently with those needs enabling the transportation network to effectively serve all community members. FHWA will work with States and MPOs to ensure consideration of using State Planning & Research (SPR) and Metropolitan Planning (PL) funds for transportation planning processes that proactively address racial equity, workforce development, economic development and remove barriers to opportunity, including automobile dependence in both rural and urban communities as a barrier to opportunity or to redress prior inequities and barriers to opportunity.

Federal-aid recipients, including recipients of SPR and PL funds, are responsible for involving the public, including traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations in transportation planning and complying with participation and consultation requirements in 23 CFR 450.210 and 23 CFR 450.316, as applicable. “Underserved populations” include minority and low-income populations but may also include many other demographic categories that face challenges engaging with the transportation process and receiving equitable benefits (see [FHWA’s Environmental Justice Reference Guide for additional information](#)). In addition, SPR-and PL-funded efforts can support the Justice40 Initiative, which establishes a goal that at least 40 percent of the benefits of federal investments in climate and clean energy infrastructure are distributed to disadvantaged communities. (See [OMB’s Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative or its successor for additional information](#)).

To assist with these public engagement efforts, FHWA expects States and MPOs to engage with all impacted communities and community leaders to determine which forms of communication are most effective. Recipients should gain insight on the unique circumstances impacting various disadvantaged and underrepresented groups so that new channels for communication may be developed. Additionally, the recipients should use this information to inform decisions across all aspects of project delivery including planning, project selection, and the design process. The Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization (MTPO) recognizes and adheres to all BIL equity requirements listed herein and otherwise.

The Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization (MTPO) has been designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the metropolitan Topeka planning area. As part of the planning process the MTPO periodically undertakes a variety of corridor studies and other specialized planning projects that require public input. It is necessary to solicit public input when making decisions on projects that could have major impacts on persons residing within the MTPO area. By considering both professional criteria (e.g. engineering standards, traffic engineering, right-of-way issues, funding limits, etc) and public comments, the MTPO has the opportunity to address professional criteria within a model planning process that is sensitive to neighborhood needs and uses public involvement effectively. Based on requirements within the planning regulations, this Public Participation Plan (PPP) outlines the process for public involvement in the development of the MTP, TIP, Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWP) and other major transportation studies by the MTPO. Federal legislation requires MPO's to produce documents that govern the regional transportation investments and planning activities. This plan will apply to all these activities.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY – STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES FOR MTPO REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

There are various public involvement methods discussed in this document which can be used to gain public input on draft MPO documents. Each method should be evaluated and adapted to best fit the needs of the communities from which input is being solicited. However, it is unlikely that all of the methods described herein will be used for every required MTPO document. The following sections outline the public participation procedures that will be utilized to provide a good faith effort to solicit public input before vital MTPO documents are approved. These public involvement procedures and opportunities will be conducted, as warranted, before a required MTPO document is approved and set as regional transportation planning policy. All meeting facilities used for public hearing as well as all other meetings will be ADA accessible and specialized assistance or document formatting can be provided with 24-hours prior notice. Meeting times will also be at locations and times that are convenient for the public, in order to allow for maximum public participation. These times will usually be in the early evenings or during regular meeting times of partner organizations.

Goal

The goal of the PPP is to provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation service, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

Objectives

The basic PPP Objectives of the MTPO are as follows:

- Develop simple yet numerous avenues for encouraging participation.
- Improve relationships between private and public sector groups at different levels of government and promote cooperative working groups.
- Utilize visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs.
- Provide timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.
- Provide adequate public notice of public participation activities, allowing time for public review and comments at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on all MTPO publication requiring public input.
- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.
- Coordinate with the statewide transportation and local governments planning public involvement and consultation processes.

INTERESTED PARTIES & TARGETED GROUPS INCLUSION IN PLANNING PROCESS

The MTPO through its public participation process will solicit the needs of those traditionally underserved by the existing transportation system, such as elderly, disabled, low income and minority households who may have difficulty accessing or participating in community planning activities. Other specialized groups that may be affected by the transportation plan and representatives of the general public will also be included in the planning process. When appropriate, some or all of the following entities shall be included, however, this list may expand as new target entities are identified. The processes used to accomplish these goals will be as follows:

1. Periodically solicit and present transportation issues at Topeka Neighborhood Improvement Association (NIA) and Neighborhood Associations (NA) meetings.
2. Periodically solicit and present transportation issues at the Topeka Community Advisory Council (CAC).
3. Periodically solicit and present transportation issues at the Topeka Independent Living Resource Center (TILREC)
4. Periodically solicit and present transportation issues at meetings of the Topeka-Shawnee County Paratransit Council.
5. Periodically solicit and present to representatives of the Kaw Valley Bicycle Club.
6. Periodically solicit and present transportation issues to local senior citizen organizations.
7. Consult local parks and recreation departments for trail planning information.
8. Periodically solicit and present to Public Health and Wellness organizations.
9. Seek out and solicit to any other appropriate entities that would be interested.

Including these groups in the public participation process will be accomplished by contacting representatives of the appropriate organizations when issues arise that may be of concern to them. These entities will be included on notification lists for new projects, and amendments to the TIP, and UPWP, as well as new MTPs. The MTPO staff will also make efforts to attend the regularly scheduled meetings of these organizations when deemed necessary.

Public Notices of MTPO Meetings

All announcements of MTPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and MTPO Policy Board (PB) meetings shall be released to the public through one or more of the City of Topeka's regular outlets: weekly calendar, on the City of Topeka/MTPO website, and via Channel 4 Public Access. Public meeting notices shall be posted at least one week prior to the meeting. In addition, the agendas and minutes for TAC and PB meetings will be posted on the MTPO website and be available for public inspection at the MTPO office soon after they are approved.

Announcements for public involvement meetings for proposed updates to the MTP, TIP, UPWP, PPP and any other required MTPO document shall be posted on the MTPO website at least one week before the meeting and also included on the weekly meeting calendar published by the City of Topeka. Other methods of announcing these meetings may also be used. The public will be apprised of this posting through our contacts and mailing lists.

Public Participation Toolbox

The following techniques for public participation may be utilized during the public participation process. These techniques are intended to enhance the public participation process; however, not all techniques will necessarily be used for every situation.

1. **Visualization techniques** When appropriate the MTPO will utilize GIS maps, charts, graphs, Power Point presentations, or pictures to illustrate plans or ideas used in plans or drafts. These tools may be used on the City of Topeka website, as well as hard copy presentation available for viewing at public meetings.
2. **Web Page** The city of Topeka maintains a web site that hosts the MTPO. Using this internet tool, the MTPO's planning documents, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, contact information, and a variety of other information is made available to the public. The website will also contain MTPO Policy Board members, Technical Advisory Committee members and other information for public review. Plans are also being considered to expand the interactive nature of the City of Topeka/MTPO website to include an interactive public mapping interface to view the locations of projects both on-going and those projected to be undertaken in the near future. The public is able to submit comments on these plans via email correspondence. The public can also request to be added to the Interested Parties Contact list as well.

3. **Planning Workshops** The purpose of the Planning Workshop is to have subject experts present information about the topic and to gain public reaction to it. The focus of the workshops is to educate the public and public leaders. Planning workshops should have a certain topic, but staff should be prepared to field other questions related to mobility in the region.
4. **Online Public Meetings** Online public meetings are a flexible alternative or in addition to in-person meetings. This option is important for those who would otherwise be unable to attend an in-person meetings for one reason or another. Online engagement opens up an additional avenue for a broader engagement that was not available before to many individuals.
5. **Public Access Television** The City of Topeka broadcasts regularly on its government access cable channel, Channel 4. The availability of a variety of city services and meeting announcements are broadcast on this channel. This television channel is available to all Topeka area residents who subscribe to Cox communications. The MTPO uses the Topeka Planning Department to staff its operations, and the MTPO staff can post information on Topeka Channel 4.
6. **News Media Contacts and Press Releases** The MTPO staff will work with the City of Topeka and local media outlets as needed to inform the new media of upcoming MTPO public involvement events. Press releases announcing the approval of major MTPO documents (MTP, TIP, etc.) and notices announcing public information meetings for draft MTPO products will be released through these public involvement methods.
7. **Surveys** The MTPO may similarly use survey instruments in conjunction with public involvement activities. Various types of survey instruments and distribution techniques will be considered in designing MTPO surveys.
8. **Pamphlets** The MTPO will consider preparing and distributing pamphlets that provide a general overview of the MTPO, and the processes for developing and modifying the MPO or TIP, and the rationale for preparing studies for a specific project (with assumed financial assistance from project sponsors for project related information). In addition, pamphlets may be available to the public at City and County offices, the Public Library, the internet, and other locations as deemed necessary and accessible.

The MTPO staff will be available to make presentations on the information contained in the pamphlets to the organizations identified or any other group that requests a presentation.

9. **Social Media** The MTPO staff has a Facebook and Twitter account. Staff will use these accounts to inform the public of various projects and meetings.
10. **Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (TMTA)** techniques used by TMTA:

Major Service Changes Examples: fare increase, fixed route changes, service cuts

Public notice detailing information (the proposal, ways to comment) and public meeting schedule (place, timeline) distributed 7-14 days in advance of 1st meeting at Quincy Street Station, TMTA website, on fixed route buses, and other locations specifically affected by the proposed change.

TMTA hosts at different locations (Quincy Street Station, community building, public library) two to three public meetings including a public hearing at the TMTA monthly Board Meeting. Meetings are scheduled to take place once a week beginning about one month prior to the scheduled monthly Board meeting.

Public comment is open from the time public notices are distributed through the close of the public hearing at the scheduled Board Meeting. Public comments are recorded and summarized to the Board before action is taken on the service change.

Press releases detailing the proposals/recommendations and all information pertaining to the service change are also distributed to local media outlets including television, radio, and newspaper.

Following action by the Board, TMTA distributes public notices at the above mentioned locations to announce the Board's decision, and any time schedule for implementing the Board's action.

Minor Service Changes Examples: detours, run cuts or expansion

These changes are continuous and do not require a public meeting or hearing. TMTA posts notices ASAP on the TMTA website and at Quincy Street Station stating the minor change.

PPP REVIEW PROCESS

The MTPO and partners will periodically (or at least every three years) evaluate the effectiveness of the public participation program, and make recommendations concerning the development of and modifications to MTPO transportation planning documents. If staff and partners determine that changes are needed to provide more effective public participation or to reflect changes to the current Transportation Bill, they will make the necessary amendments or revisions to the PPP document. Those amendments or revisions to the PPP will then be submitted to the TAC and Policy Boards, for final approval and ratification, following the public notice procedures outlined herein.

Basic Process for Public Input, Review and MTPO Approval of Required MTPO Documents

The MTPO, at a minimum, shall be subject to the following public involvement process for the review and approval of all federally required MTPO documents:

1. TAC shall be given an opportunity to review and comment on the draft and recommend its release for public comment.
2. The draft document shall be made available for public review through the placement of paper copies at the MTPO office (Topeka Planning Department Office) and the placement of an electronic copy on the City of Topeka/MTPO website. MTPO staff contact information will also be included with the draft document in case there are any further questions. Notice of document availability is provided through announcements posted on the website, and sent to public agencies, neighborhood groups, or other organizations that have expressed interest in the document.
3. After public information meetings and other public involvement activities are completed, the MTPO staff will prepare a hearing draft of the document, addressing any public comments that were received, if any, and present this draft document back to the TAC for their consideration.
4. After the TAC considers and approves the post- public comments hearing draft of the document it will then be sent on to the MTPO Policy Board for their review, possible revision, and approval.
5. When final MTPO Policy board action is taken on a required document the MTPO Staff shall send a letter requesting approval of the Board's action (i.e. approval of amendments, new TIPs and UPWPs) to the Kansas Department of Transportation. The MTPO Staff shall send those agencies copies of the MTPO approved document. In the case of the MTP once adopted by the MTPO the document becomes the official MTP for the metropolitan Topeka planning area, and requires no approval from any other agencies. This same document will also be forwarded to the City of Topeka, Shawnee County, KDOT, FHWA and FTA for informational purposes. The MTP may then be adopted by the City of Topeka and Shawnee County as the Transportation Elements of the comprehensive plans for those jurisdictions.
6. The approved document will then be posted on the City of Topeka/MTPO website for public viewing.

Additional Public Participation Standards and Procedures

In addition to the Standards discussed above, the MTPO will also provide other participation opportunities to the public. The following communication methods will be used when deemed necessary or appropriate.

The MTPO will maintain an up-to-date database of interested parties (as previously defined) so that they may be notified when plans and studies are being carried out, so that they may have reasonable opportunities to comment on these transportation plans and products and participate in planning activities, subcommittees, panels, and focus groups.

Public Comment Period

- Any significant modification or amendment to the PPP requires a forty-five (45) day public comment period.
- Adoption of the MTP will require a thirty (30) day public comment period.
- A change or addition to a major Federal Transit Administration funded project, a major Federal Highway Administration funded project, or the MTP requires a fourteen (14) day public comment period.
- TIP will require a twenty (20) day public comment period. A fourteen (14) day public comment period will be required for TIP amendments.
- Adoption of the UPWP will require a minimum of (20) days for public comment. UPWP amendments will require a fourteen (14) day public comment period.
- Other federally required documents needing approval by the MTPO will have a minimum fourteen (14) day public comment period.

Additional Public Comment Periods

If responses to public comments results in the MTPs, TIPs, UPWPs and other plan/program documents or amendments being significantly different from the draft document which was sent out for public review, an additional public comment period may be held. Determination of the need for an additional comment period will be made by the MTPO.

The public comment periods for the MTPO required documents will begin on the day that a public notice soliciting comments on the draft document is posted on the MTPO website and in paper form at the MTPO office. Public comment period notices may also be posted at other locations, run on Channel 4, printed in local newspapers, or announced at various meetings attended by MTPO staff.

Any press release/advertisement will contain:

1. A general description of the proposed policy, amendment or official action;
2. Where information on the policy, amendment or official action can be reviewed or obtained;
3. When the public comment period begins and ends;
4. Where comments on the policy, amendment or official action can be submitted;
5. When and where the discussion and/or public hearing on a proposed action is scheduled;
6. The specific dates and location for the review and recommendation by the MTPO TAC;
7. The name, title, and telephone number of a specific contact person.

Documented public comments and recommendations

An appendix containing any significant oral and written comments and responses will be made part of the final document.

Administrative Revisions

Non-amendment changes to planning documents requiring public input can be done using a simplified procedure. Such changes only require that notice of the change be included in the published agenda of the MTPO TAC and the Policy Board meetings where the change will be considered.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FOR OTHER MAJOR STUDIES

The PPP for preparing a major study is intended to provide a proactive, early, and continuous process that is tailored for each study and includes the public throughout the process from analysis to the final selection.

A study may be required for major metropolitan transportation investments. A major metropolitan transportation investment means a highway or transit improvement of substantial cost that is expected to have a significant effect on capacity, traffic flow, level of service, or mode share at the transportation corridor or sub area scale. Consultation among the MTPO, Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (TMTA), FHWA, FTA, and any other reviewing agencies may lead to the designation of other proposed improvements as major investments beyond the examples listed below. Examples of such investments could generally include but are not limited to; Major Corridor Studies, Major Transit Studies, or Major Bike/Pedestrian Studies.

When any implementing agency or the MTPO intends to prepare a major study, the public involvement process described herein will be followed at a minimum. The sponsor agency shall meet with MTPO staff for consultation and coordination to include:

The staffs of the implementing agency and MTPO will use a proactive approach for contacting local groups and citizens, neighborhood organizations and other local news agencies.

The notice of intent will contain a general description of the study and announce the time and location of a meeting to determine the extent of the analysis and public roles in the cooperative process.

COORDINATION

The MTPO, KDOT, TMTA and city and county departments will coordinate through regular consultation their metropolitan public involvement processes to enhance public consideration of issues, plans and programs and to reduce redundancies and costs.

Environmental Justice and MTPO Compliance Methods

The MTPO shall follow a public policy goal of ensuring that adverse human or environmental effects of governmental activities do not fall disproportionately upon minority or low-income populations. Environmental Justice became federal policy in 1994 when President Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, which directed all major federal agencies to ensure that the spirit of the order is reflected in all of their activities.

Environmental Justice (EJ) at the Federal Highway Administration means identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse effects of the agency’s programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations to achieve an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens.

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations was issued to ensure that all federally funded transportation-related programs, policies, or activities having the potential to adversely affect human health or the environment involves a process that explicitly considers the impacts on minority and low-income populations. An extensive explanation of Environmental Justice can be found in the current TIP.

In compliance with EJ standards and to assure that the public has access to full information concerning human health and environmental impacts, the MTPO will include representatives of local Neighborhood Improvement Associations (NIA’s) and the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) on its contact list for project proposals and public hearing announcements.

Consultation Procedures

<u>Contact</u>	<u>Agency Role</u>	<u>Involvement</u>
Topeka Planning Department, Planning departments of member jurisdictions	Representatives of State and local land use entities	Agency representatives will be engaged in consultation at the initiation of both the MTP and TIP document development, with ongoing communication until approval.
Visit Topeka, Go Topeka	Economic development representatives	
Kansas Department of Health and Environment, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, United States Army Corps of Engineers	Environmental protection and resource agencies	Participation representatives will have the opportunity to review and comment on draft material prior to approval
Greyhound, Taxi Companies	Private providers of transportation	
Topeka Airport Authority	Airport Representatives	
Kansas Motor Carriers Association, Railroad operators in the area	Freight Representatives	Consultation will match the public review and comment timeline and procedures outlined starting on page 6.

Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

The federal government provides and funds an array of services that can be made accessible to otherwise eligible persons who are not proficient in the English language. The federal government is committed to improving the accessibility of these services to eligible LEP persons, a goal that reinforces its equally important commitment to promoting programs and activities designed to help individuals learn English. To this end, each federal agency shall examine the services it provides and develop and implement a system by which LEP persons can meaningfully access those services consistent with, and without unduly burdening, the fundamental mission of the agency, each federal agency shall also work to ensure that recipients of federal financial assistance (recipients) provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries. To assist the agencies with this endeavor, the Department of Justice issued this general guidance document (LEP Guidance), which sets forth the compliance standards that recipients must follow to ensure that the programs and activities they normally provide in English are accessible to LEP persons and thus do not discriminate on the basis of national origin in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and its implementing regulations. As described in the LEP Guidance, recipients must take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by LEP persons.

For more information; <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/Pubs/eolep.htm>

The MTPO will evaluate the need for improving access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). LEP compliance will extend to all MTPO public involvement communication media. The MTPO will provide adequate services for LEP populations given 24 hours advanced notice. These services may include, but will not be limited to, utilization of an interpreter or translated documents. In compliance with Title VI equal opportunity provisions, language pertaining to equal opportunity and access to all will be printed on all public notices announcing MTPO meetings, events, or solicitations for input.

CIVIL RIGHTS ACT AND AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The MTPO will ensure that the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, are met and that appropriate actions are taken during all phases of public involvement to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, an attempt will be made to seek out representation for both the MTPO and the Citizens Review Committee from segments of the population who are traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including, but not limited to, low-income and minority households.

APPENDIX

A: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT DEFINITIONS

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)	The legislation defining the responsibilities of and requirements for transportation providers to make transportation accessible to individuals with disabilities. (FTA1)
Complete Streets Advisory Committee (CSAC)	The CSAC was created by merging the Bikeways Advisory Committee (BAS) and other interest groups in the community. This group is intended to share information, raise issues, review draft products and recommend solutions relating to implementing complete streets.
Environmental Justice (EJ)	Environmental justice assures that services and benefits allow for meaningful participation and are fairly distributed to avoid discrimination.
Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT)	The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) coordinates and develops statewide transportation systems. KDOT also acts as a conduit for Federal funding sent to MPO's and local governments for transportation projects. Virtually all major transportation projects that occur within the Topeka Area are coordinated between the MTPO and KDOT.
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)	The creation of Metropolitan Planning Organizations was first mandated under the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962, was again mandated by the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), and is also required under the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century (TEA-21). MPO's are mandated for urbanized areas with populations over 50,000 and are intended to make determinations regarding funding of improvements to the region's transportation system outside the local political arena. The MPO sets regional transportation policies and priorities.
MAP 21	The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, MAP-21, is a funding and authorization bill to govern United States federal surface transportation spending. It was passed by Congress on June 29, 2012 and President Barack Obama signed it on July 6.
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	<p>The Metropolitan Transportation Plan comprises the federally required regional transportation plan for the Topeka Area. This plan sets the vision and policies for the region's multi-modal transportation system. The purpose of the MTP is to provide an overview of transportation needs in the community, now and in the future, and to provide policy guidance in developing projects and the programming of transportation funding. It provides at least a twenty-year horizon, must be based upon a traffic model that accurately reflects conditions in the planning region, and must be based on reasonable estimates of future funding. The Plan is reviewed annually, and updated at least once every five years.</p> <p>This plan may also be adopted by local governments and become the Transportation Element of the Topeka Comprehensive Plan and/or the Shawnee County Comprehensive Plan.</p>
Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization (MTPO)	In the Topeka area the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization (MTPO), and the Topeka Planning Department provides staff support to the MTPO.

Section 508, Rehabilitation Act	An Act amended by Congress in 1998 to require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities.
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	<p>The MTPO has one standing technical advisory group called the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC meets regularly and is composed of local government and transportation agency staff. This group is charged with providing the best professional transportation planning recommendations to the policy board for consideration. The TAC along with the MTPO staff is also charged with implementing the policies set by the MTPO Policy Board. However, the TAC can also be used in the public involvement process and is often the group that arranges and coordinates the various public involvement activities undertaken by the MTPO. The TAC can provide the MTPO Policy Board and staff with recommendations on how to effectively run a public participation program which is in conformance with federal and state regulations.</p> <p>Specifically, the TAC reviews and makes recommendations regarding draft transportation planning documents, including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). During the course of developing these documents, public involvement activities take place.</p>
Title VI	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Prohibits discrimination in any program receiving federal assistance.
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) provides a multi-year listing of transportation projects that are federally funded, are of regional significance, or both. The TIP document is developed by the MTPO in cooperation with KDOT, TMTA, and City and County governments. The TIP is federally required to be a minimum four- year span listing of projects and be updated at least every four years.
Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (TMTA)	The Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority is the transit partner of the MTPO, which provides regional transit planning activities for the MTPO area.
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	The MTPO adopts a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) annually. This document outlines work tasks and staffing responsibilities, describes activities to be completed during upcoming year, and lists the status of current and recently completed planning activities. It contains a budget identifying planning priorities for the year.
United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)	The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) is the primary federal department responsible for national transportation development and funding. The USDOT includes under its agencies the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as well as other federal transportation-related agencies. The FHWA and the FTA review the transportation planning and project activities of both metropolitan planning organizations and state transportation departments. These two USDOT agencies provide funding for highway and transit projects as well as for transportation planning activities.

B: Targeted Groups Definitions

<p>Kaw Valley Bicycle Club</p>	<p>The Kaw Valley Bicycle Club is a bicycle touring organization of the Topeka Kansas area. They sponsor annual tours and weekly bike rides. Membership is open to the public through their website. Members of this group currently participate on MTPO advisory boards.</p>
<p>Heartland Healthy Neighborhood (HHN)</p>	<p>Heartland Healthy Neighborhoods is the community health coalition in Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas. The monthly workgroup meetings focus on mobilizing people, ideas and resources around topics and issues identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment and the Community Health Improvement Plan.</p>
<p>Heartland Visioning (HV)</p>	<p>Heartland Visioning facilitates community change to improve our quality of life in Topeka and Shawnee County. Heartland Visioning is an LLC within the Topeka Community Foundation 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Heartland Visioning is made up of a Management Committee, Steering Committee Visionary Volunteers, two and a half Heartland Visioning Staff, and the public.</p>
<p>Justice, Unity, and Ministry Project (JUMP)</p>	<p>Topeka JUMP is a non-profit coalition of 19 congregations in Shawnee County, Kansas. JUMP’s mission is to build people-based power to influence local decision-makers to consider policy and funding changes that address systems which may unintentionally perpetuate poverty and injustice.</p>
<p>Neighborhood Improvement Associations (NIA’s)</p>	<p>Topeka’s target redevelopment area is divided into 21 territories called Neighborhood Improvement Associations (NIA’s). Each NIA has elected officers and holds monthly meetings. These meetings provide a forum for communicating local needs and concerns as well as advising city government officials about plans and policies the neighborhood is considering. Recommendations from the NIA’s are considered in setting priorities for the provision of city services such as street paving, zoning changes, drainage issues, and traffic controls. Neighborhood Improvement Associations have initiated and supported the development of community centers, senior citizen centers and housing units, parks, and special neighborhood incentive programs. These groups have also been very active in neighborhood planning efforts undertaken in the last several years. Traffic and circulation issues have been discussed during those planning projects.</p> <p>Neighborhood Improvement Associations also provide a forum to reach out to low-income parts of the community and inform residents in those parts of Topeka about MTPO activities taking place that may impact their lives. In the past, the Topeka MPO has made special efforts to inform the NIA’s through the CAC about major MPO projects. Using the NIA’s as a tool to reach low-income residents with information about the regional transportation planning process will continue in the future.</p>

Neighborhood Associations (NA's)	Similar to an NIA, the Neighborhood Associations (NA's) provide representation for residents in areas of the community that do not meet the low/mod. Income guidelines for NIA's, but serve many of the same functions. There are 23 Neighborhood Associations in Topeka. These groups represent distinct neighborhoods that are often facing transportation related issues. These groups are a tool for outreach to other neighborhoods in Topeka that are not low-income areas but have concerns about mobility.
Paratransit Council Inc.	A committee of Coordinated Transit District #2 addresses transportation needs of riders with special needs. Paratransit services are coordinated through the Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (TMTA). Members of this group currently participate on MTPO advisory boards.
Senior Citizen Centers	Topeka has various senior centers throughout the city. They include The East Topeka Senior Center, The Topeka LULAC Multipurpose Senior Center Inc., Papans Landing Senior Center, and many others. Efforts will be made to reach out to representatives of these organizations. Members of this group currently participate on MTPO advisory boards.
Topeka Community Cycle Project (TCCP)	TCCP is a place to learn new skills and develop a community of cyclists in and around Topeka. TCCP is a not-for-profit community organization that is entirely volunteer-run. Their mission is to broaden access to cycling in Topeka through hands-on education and bike repair and other various programs.
Topeka Branch NAACP	The Topeka Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is an organization made up of primarily minority individuals and has over 300 members in the Topeka area. The NAACP is on the MTPO email list and receives all information with regards to Transportation issues within the MTPO Area. The MTPO staff also give period presentations to the NAACP group at their monthly meetings. Members of this group currently participate on MTPO advisory boards.
Topeka Bikeways	<p>Topeka Bikeways is a group that is working toward providing a safer riding environment in Topeka by providing public with information and updates regarding bicycling.</p> <p>This group is also responsible for the fundraising done to support the Bikeways Master Plan. "The Topeka Bikeways Fund" (the Fund) purpose is to cover expenses relating to building, maintaining, and supporting the bicycling infrastructure and related programs in Topeka and Shawnee County.</p>
Topeka Independent Living Resource Center (TILREC)	The Topeka Independent Living Resource Center (TILREC) is an organization which assists Topekans with disabilities. The MTPO will work with this organization to solicit information of the needs of the local ADA populations with regards to mobility within the Topeka area. Members of this group currently participate on MTPO advisory boards.