

MTPO 2025 Title VI Annual Report

Purpose & Background

The mission of the MTPO's Title VI program is to implement compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This Act ensures that no person is excluded from participation in; denied the benefits of; or is subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation. The MTPO will provide leadership and guidance to promote and engage the participation of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability or socioeconomic status. The reporting period for this report is from September 2024 through August of 2025. These public participation and outreach techniques are also in accordance with the MTPO's current Public Participation Plan (PPP).

As outlined in the MTPO's PPP, the MTPO encourages the public to participate in the transportation planning process through a variety of public participation techniques. One of the roles of the MTPO is to provide information to the public and to facilitate active participation in the transportation decision-making process. The MTPO utilizes maps that depict areas of the MTPO Planning Area that have higher concentrations of persons that may fall under the protection of Title VI.

2025 Title VI Compliance Activities and Current MTPO Projects

During this reporting period, the MTPO, with the assistance of consultants, completed the update to the Pedestrian Master Plan, a process that began in fy 2024. As part of the outreach and information gathering process for the Pedestrian Plan Update, hundreds of surveys/questionnaires were distributed, downloaded, or submitted via the Project website, to the public. Direct emails were also sent to the Neighborhood Improvements Associations (NIA's), Neighborhood Associations (NA), and the City's ADA Advisory Council. The information gathered through these surveys was paramount to the success of achieving the objectives of the Ped. Plan Update, which is to ultimately provide pertinent information to the City of Topeka and the Metropolitan Planning Area MPA on the prioritization and placement of future sidewalks and sidewalk maintenance projects. This information in conjunction with the recently adopted Safe-Routes-to-School Plan will enhance the City's over multi-modal accessibility and Complete Streets initiatives. The Planning process included a consulting team of planners conducting assessments of over 700 miles of current sidewalks and side paths, providing imaging and a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) rating for all walkways. During fy 2025, the following public outreach events took place:

- Meeting and presentations to Neighborhood Improvement Associations and ADA Council.
- Pedestrian Plan Updates given at Heartland Healthy Neighborhood (HHN) monthly meetings.
- Data collection to determine locations of and conditions of existing sidewalks, as well as noting those locations where there are gaps in sidewalk connectivity.
- Sharing Sidewalk condition dashboard, to utilize in decision making process for sidewalk inclusions within other proposed city and non-city projects.
- Evening public meeting (public meeting #2) at the Public Library with Staff, and Consultants, which included the use of Power Point presentations, online surveys, mapping exercises, and hardcopy surveys.
- Consultant update presentations given to the Complete Streets Advisory Committee, the MTPO Policy Board and the Technical Advisory Committee.

MTPO Core Documents and Amendments:

The following is a list of MTPO documents that were adopted/amended during the 2024 fiscal year:

1. 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) was amended four (4) times during the 2025 fiscal year.
2. The 2025 UPWP was approved and amended two (2) times. Each instance included participation procedures as outlined in the MTPO Public Participation Plan. Activities associated with the approval processes included both in-person and virtual meetings, with notices directly emailed, posted online, advertised on the City's Television network, and printed in the Official City newspaper. In addition to meeting materials, direct mailings also included ZOOM meeting information and information regarding accessibility accommodations.

Notification Groups

All Neighborhood Improvement Associations (NIA's). NIA designation, by definition, includes disadvantaged socioeconomic status as described by the department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the purpose of distribution of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which are those individuals or families making less than 80% of the Area median income, or "Low-Moderate Income (LMI) households. All NIAs meet this income qualification guideline. Therefore, for EJ and Title VI compliance purposes, all NIAs are within our EJ target area.

Other groups included on our contact list include the Topeka Independent Living Resource Center (TILRC), an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) organization; Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (TMTA) and Paratransit organizations; Kansas American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today (ADAPT); the Topeka Branch NAACP; and the Topeka Justice Unity and Ministry Project (JUMP). Social media outlets utilized to reach Title VI groups included Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and NextDoor. The MTPO has representatives from all the target populations listed above, and they are on our direct mailing list for all public notices for document updates and associated activities.

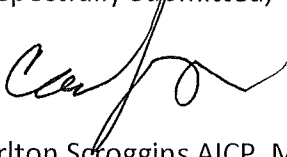
2025 Annual Bike Counts

Utilizing volunteers from the community, the MTPO gathered bike/pedestrian data from 14 locations throughout the MTPO Area, for the purpose of bikeways and trail usage. This data serves as a useful tool when determining where and which routes may need to be added or improved.

Heartland Healthy Neighborhoods (HHN)

MTPO staff attended, via ZOOM, monthly meetings of the Heartland Healthy Neighborhood and Heartland Visioning meetings. People representing various interests among the City including business, education, recreation, health and transportation attend these meetings. These meetings provide a platform to espouse transportation and healthy lifestyle issues and in turn give the MTPO an opportunity to gather opinions and concerns from a broad and diverse representation of the community. Many of the people in these groups also serve on MTPO transportation committees.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carlton Scroggins AICP, MTPO Manager