



INVOLVEMENT PLAN

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South Jersey
Transportation
Planning Organization

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English

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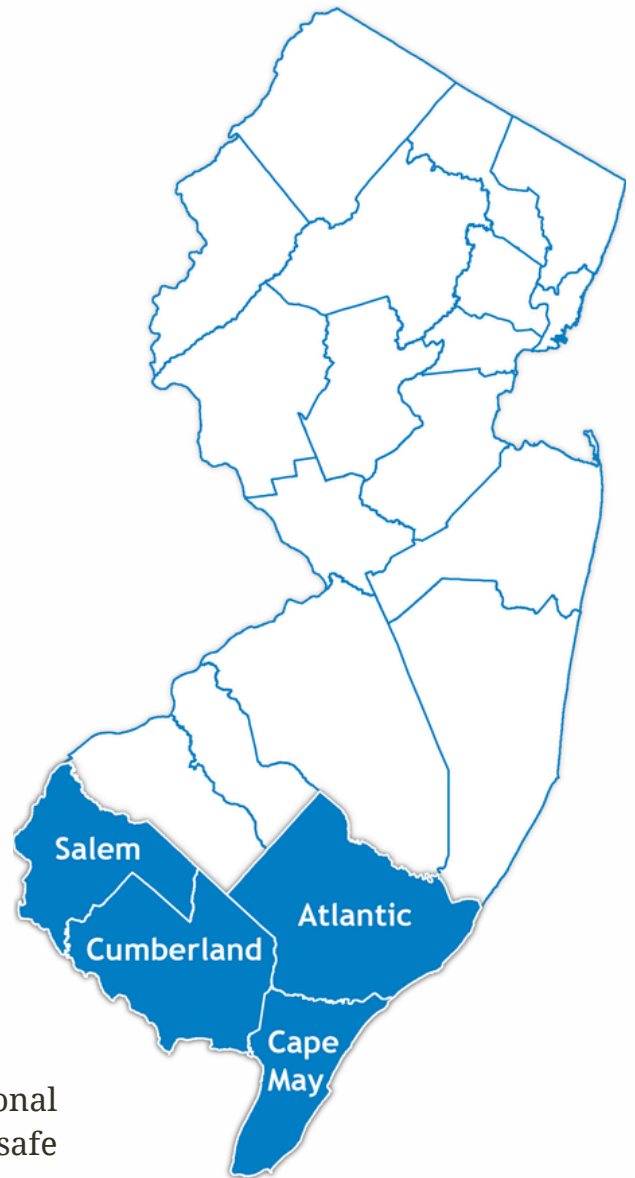
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South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization

WWW.SJTPO.ORG

SJTPO is the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the southern New Jersey region, serving Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. Under federal law, the formation of an MPO is required for any urbanized area (UZA) with a population greater than 50,000, permitting the MPO to carry out transportation planning and decision-making for the UZA(s). Formed in 1993, SJTPO replaced three smaller existing MPOs and incorporated areas not previously served. The formation provided a stronger regional approach to solving transportation problems and brought new opportunities to southern New Jersey. SJTPO is vital to the region, as the MPO serves as a technical resource, provides access to funding, and works to provide a regional approach to address transportation planning and engineering issues.



Four counties, one mission:

to create a transportation system, based on regional collaboration that moves people and goods in a safe and efficient manner, inclusive of all modes and users.

Title VI Compliance / SJTPO fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related nondiscrimination mandates in all programs and activities. SJTPO's website, www.sjtpo.org, may be translated into multiple languages. Publications and other public documents can be made available in alternative languages and formats upon request. SJTPO's public meetings are always held in ADA-accessible facilities and, whenever possible, in transit-accessible locations. SJTPO will work to accommodate all reasonable requests for translation, interpretation, or auxiliary services. Please submit requests at least seven days before public meetings so we can secure the services. Other translation requests, such as those for larger documents, will be provided as quickly as possible and may take up to three weeks. Requests may be made by emailing languageaccess@sjtpo.org or calling (856) 794-1941. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by SJTPO under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with SJTPO's Title VI Compliance Manager and/or the appropriate state or federal agency within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information on the SJTPO Title VI program or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, please visit www.sjtpo.org/Title-VI, call (856) 794-1941, or email TitleVI@sjtpo.org.

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UPDATES TO THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

- [May 28, 2019] This updated plan replaced the PIP adopted in January 2010. This PIP resulted from extensive research into the public engagement best practices of various MPOs across the county.
- [November 23, 2020] This updated plan replaced the PIP adopted in May 2019. The edits to this PIP better reflect how SJTPO engages with under-represented populations within the SJTPO region that fall under the civil rights umbrella.
- [May 24, 2021] This updated plan replaced the PIP adopted in November 2020. The edits to this PIP emphasized how SJTPO engages with under-represented populations within the SJTPO region that fall under Civil Rights umbrellas by detailing the Multilingual Outreach Services contract. During this time, SJTPO could also hold virtual public meetings for the PIP, which were not held for the PIP adopted in November 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- [May 23, 2022] This updated plan replaces the PIP adopted in May 2021. The edits to this PIP further emphasize the work SJTPO is doing related to under-represented populations. Specifically, this PIP details the translation and interpretation services now offered at SJTPO and includes information on SJTPO's new committee, the Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC), and references the new Accessibility Brochure.
- [September 25, 2023] This updated plan replaces the PIP adopted in May 2022. The edits to this PIP better reflect the relationship between the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), outline when revisions to the documents are necessary, and the approval of each document.
- [May 28, 2024] This updated plan replaces the PIP adopted in September 2023. The edits to this PIP seek to better clarify SJTPO's public outreach process and reflect modifications to SJTPO's best practices for public outreach based on updated guidance from SJTPO's federal partners. This latest PIP identifies a change to public meeting requirements associated with the Congestion Management Process (CMP). It also includes refinements to the list of libraries to which specific documents are sent so that there is now at least one library in each county where specific documents are available for in-library viewing.

1. INTRODUCTION

The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) is the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the southern New Jersey region, serving Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. Under federal law, the formation of an MPO is required for any urbanized area (UZA) with a population greater than 50,000, permitting the MPO to carry out transportation planning and decision-making for the UZAs. In 1993, SJTPO replaced three smaller existing MPOs and incorporated areas not previously served. The formation provided a more robust regional approach to solving transportation problems and brought new opportunities to southern New Jersey. SJTPO is vital to the region, as the MPO serves as a technical resource, maintains the eligibility of member agencies for federal transportation funds, provides a forum for cooperative decision-making, and coordinates the planning activities of participating agencies to provide a regional approach to addressing transportation planning and engineering issues.

Federal funding for transportation projects and programs is channeled through the transportation planning process, and an MPO is responsible for maintaining a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process, often referred to as the three Cs. An MPO also provides a forum for cooperative decision-making among responsible state and local officials, public and private transit operators, and the public. An MPO coordinates the planning activities of participating agencies and adopts a long-range transportation plan (RTP) to guide transportation investment decisions. Further, an MPO is responsible for capital programming through a multi-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), updated every two years, which contains all federal and state funding for surface transportation projects and programs.

Other critical activities of an MPO include promoting transportation improvements needed in the region and project development while keeping the public engaged in the planning process. An MPO must ensure the region's compliance with federal regulations affecting transportation decisions, such as the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. In meeting federal requirements, an MPO maintains the eligibility of its member agencies and transit operators for federal transportation funds for planning, capital improvements, and operations.

For an MPO, such as SJTPO, with a regional population greater than 200,000, the Transportation Management Area (TMA) designation is assigned. This designation stipulates additional planning requirements, creating a strong regional voice in setting priorities and implementing projects. The designation also provides access to other resources that can be pooled to address regional problems and qualifies SJTPO for specific shares of federal transportation funds.

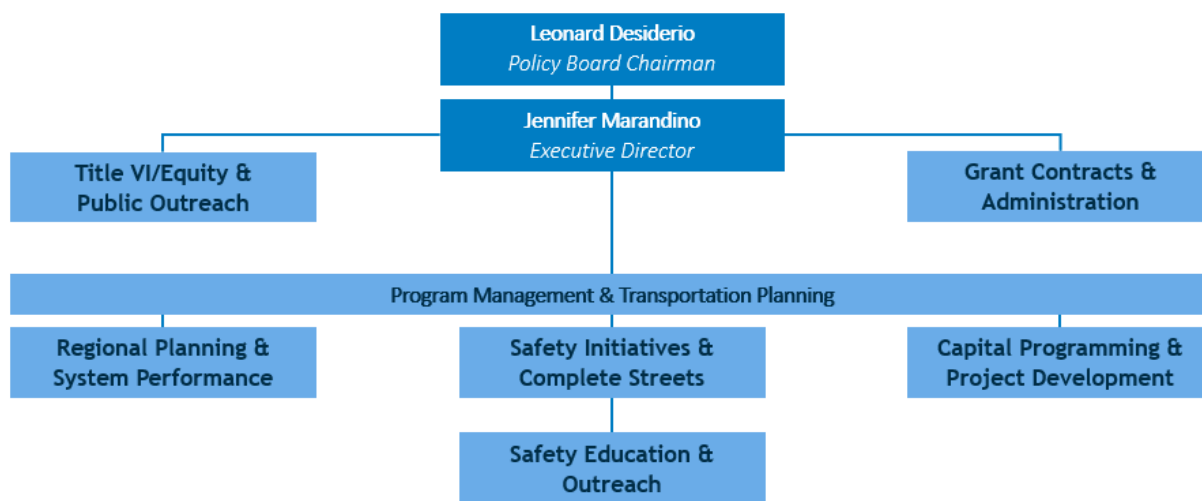
SJTPO Structure

The governing body of SJTPO is the Policy Board. It consists of eleven voting members: one elected official from each county government, one municipal elected official from each county, specifically including the Mayors of Atlantic City and Vineland, and one representative each from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), New Jersey Transit Corporation (NJ TRANSIT), and the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA). The Policy Board is informed by recommendations of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), a committee of planning and engineering experts in the region.

The TAC is a thirteen-member committee comprised of each Policy Board member’s staff and representatives of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJTA) and the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), South Jersey Economic Development District (SJEDD), Cross County Connection Transportation Management Association (CCCTMA), and the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy (NJOPA) each have one non-voting representative on the TAC.

The Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC) enhances the scope of SJTPO’s public outreach and ensures that decision-making processes are based on diverse, inclusive, and equity-based information and viewpoints. To the greatest extent possible, members reflect the racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, age, geographic, ability, and economic diversity of the four-county region. Members come together at various times throughout the year to discuss critical transportation-related issues and share information through their networks.

The SJTPO Organizational Chart identifies the organization of staff members. Revisions to the Organizational Chart are subject to the review and approval of the Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Board. As such, the chart below is displayed for illustrative purposes only and represents a change from what was initially approved by the SJTPO Policy Board on September 25, 2017.



2. PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

This update replaces the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) adopted in September 2023. The edits to the PIP seek to better clarify SJTPO's public outreach process and reflect modifications to SJTPO's best practices for incentivizing public outreach based on updated guidance from SJTPO's federal partners. Edits were made to public meeting requirements associated with the Congestion Management Process (CMP). Additionally, the list of libraries where specific documents are sent for in-library viewing was refined to include at least one library per county.

SJTPO actively seeks to provide a transparent process to ensure that plans and programs include the public to the greatest, reasonable degree. SJTPO also aims to create a more meaningful and proactive process. To accomplish this, SJTPO offers reasonable access to information to all segments of the region's population, timely public notice of meetings and comment periods, full access to key decisions, and support for early and continued involvement in the development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), PIP, and other major plans and programs. In addition, SJTPO understands the inherent need to develop public understanding and support of its activities. To achieve this, SJTPO maintains public involvement procedures, which meet and exceed federal guidance and support the following major goals:

- Define a transparent set of guidelines the Organization adheres to when conducting public involvement;
- Establish the tools and techniques used to reach the public; and
- Undergo periodic evaluations to determine the effectiveness of SJTPO's outreach practices and updates of the PIP, as needed.

There are two intended audiences for the PIP. First, the PIP is an essential reference for transportation professionals who interact with the public and are responsible for implementing a transparent and inclusive planning process. Transportation professionals in the SJTPO region include Policy Board members, TAC members, and SJTPO staff. Second, the PIP serves as a guidebook for the public to help them determine when and how to participate in the transportation planning process. In addition to the PIP, another valuable resource for the public is the Public Engagement Guide (www.sjtpo.org/Guide), which provides an overview of how transportation planning in South Jersey occurs and details how the public can participate in the process.

The PIP is organized into several sections:

- **Serving the Public: SJTPO's Responsibilities**

This section outlines the process and procedures SJTPO follows when conducting public involvement efforts. It includes information, such as the federal regulations that help shape the involvement process, how the public can submit comments, what SJTPO will

do with the comments received, and how members of the public can become involved in SJTPO's process, among other topics.

- **Opportunities to Engage with SJTPO**

This section details the tools and techniques SJTPO uses to inform and engage the public in the regional transportation process for the four-county region. More specifically, it includes details on where to find information, types of meetings SJTPO hosts, and other actions the public can take to be more involved, such as requesting a safety education program with one of SJTPO's Traffic Safety Specialists.

- **Addressing Civil Rights in Our Outreach Process**

This section details SJTPO's efforts to seek out and consider the needs of groups traditionally not well-served by the existing transportation system. It details efforts related to SJTPO's Title VI Implementation Plan, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, and Environmental Justice (EJ) Report.

- **Having Your Say: Policies and Procedures for Public Comments**

This section explains how the public can voice opinions and share ideas with SJTPO. It also highlights the minimum number of days a comment period must be open to the public for each major planning document and how the comments received will be used.

- **Evaluating Our Effectiveness**

This section identifies the tools used to measure both the quantity and quality of interactions with the public.

- **Appendices**

This section provides information and links to more resources related to the planning process and federal guidance.

3. SERVING THE PUBLIC: SJTPO'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Financial support to sustain and advance South Jersey's transportation system comes mainly from federal transportation dollars, which the region's public contributes to through federal fuel taxes. Public involvement in the planning process is necessary to address the needs and concerns of all residents in the four-county region.

To ensure opportunities for meaningful and proactive participation that improves the decision-making process and contributes to the overall quality of life in the region, SJTPO's public involvement process complies with federal requirements and goals, as described below.

- **Provide adequate and timely notice of public participation activities, public review, and comment on key decisions.**

The public must be informed in a timely manner regarding all public involvement opportunities in the region. This information will be provided in plain language, allowing the public to comprehend the information they need easily or are asked to review. Further, SJTPO will notify the public at least 12 days before any public involvement opportunity through email, social media, and print media (i.e., newspapers) when necessary.

- **Seek out and consider the needs of the people traditionally underserved by the existing transportation system, including low-income and minority households.**

Transportation planning is most effective when decision-makers consider and seek input from those whose daily lives are largely impacted by how efficiently and safely they can get to work, school, home, stores, and services. To ensure meaningful involvement of persons and groups traditionally underserved in the SJTPO region, such as the elderly population, Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations, single or zero vehicle households, and minority and low-income households, SJTPO drafts an Environmental Justice (EJ) Report (www.sjtpo.org/EJ).

- **Hold public meetings at convenient times and locations that are accessible to all people.**

Consideration of residents' schedules is vital when hosting public meetings. Apart from the Policy Board and TAC, meetings take place after typical workday hours to maximize access. Further, SJTPO works to hold meetings in facilities that are ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible and in locations that are transit accessible when meetings are in-person to the greatest feasible degree. SJTPO makes it standard practice to offer a virtual attendance option for members of the public to participate in meetings hosted by the MPO. SJTPO also provides a toll-free call-in option so members of the public are not charged calling fees for participating in meetings.

- **Use visualization techniques to further explain the planning process.**

Transportation planning and engineering processes are complex and require many steps. Information about these processes must be presented and discussed intuitively to allow anyone to understand and give feedback. To maximize public involvement and minimize misunderstanding, SJTPO provides information in plain language with as little jargon as possible and often incorporates visuals, such as charts and images. For instance, rather than only using the term Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), SJTPO often supplements with “List of Projects” to help clarify the purpose of the TIP to the public.
- **Provide timely and reasonable access to information about transportation planning.**

The public must be provided reasonable access to information necessary to offer meaningful feedback on matters related to the transportation decision-making process. When one of SJTPO’s Core Documents (PIP, RTP, TIP, UPWP, Access for All Transit Plan, Congestion Management Process (CMP), Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, Title VI Implementation Plan, and Transportation Conformity) is substantively revised, SJTPO makes the draft version available for public review for 30 days, except for the PIP, which is made available for 45 days. In addition, most core documents also require a public meeting to be held. If public comments cause any of the core documents to greatly differ from the versions previously made available to the public, comment periods may be extended for at least ten days to ensure the public has the opportunity to review the latest versions before Policy Board approval. Comment periods and public meeting requirements are detailed further in [Section 6](#). Each document is available on SJTPO’s website (www.sjtpo.org). SJTPO also makes certain documents available for in-library reviewing at select libraries. These documents include the PIP, RTP, TIP, UPWP, Access for All Plan, CMP, LEP Plan, Title VI Implementation Plan, and Transportation Conformity. To be mindful of library staff resources and limited space, document appendices (unless necessary), executive summaries, and amendments, if applicable, will not be printed and transmitted to the libraries. Language is included in the Table of Contents, informing readers that these materials can be accessed on the plan-specific webpages (i.e., if an amendment is made to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the amendment will be available on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org/UPWP)). To view the list of libraries where the planning documents are shared, please see [Appendix B](#).
- **Provide information in electronic formats for accessibility and sustainability purposes.**

SJTPO makes all major documents available on its website (www.sjtpo.org) for the convenience of the public and sustainability purposes, as many documents are hundreds of pages long. SJTPO’s online Document Library (www.sjtpo.org/Library) is continuously updated as documents and other items become available.

- **Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input through a two-way communicative process.**

To maintain an effective and meaningful public involvement process, SJTPO respects and considers all input received. SJTPO collects public input in many ways, including online comment forms, email, fax, direct messaging of SJTPO via its social media accounts, and by US Mail. All comments received during a comment period are recorded in the final document, along with responses from SJTPO and other transportation agencies. Further, SJTPO encourages two-way communication between members of the public and key decision-makers to allow multiple perspectives to be considered. Examples of two-way communication include attendance at Policy Board and Committee meetings, public workshops, and active participation on SJTPO's social media platforms. SJTPO continuously works to clarify for the public the best time to provide comments and the best entity to offer comments to in hopes that the public can maximize the impact of their comments.

- **Comply with federal laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and various Executive Orders.**

SJTPO operates without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, age, ancestry, nationality, gender, disability, religion, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, income level, ability to read, write or speak English, and adheres to all applicable federal laws. SJTPO will work to accommodate all reasonable requests for translation, interpretation, or auxiliary services but encourages requests to be made at least seven days before public meetings to ensure that SJTPO can secure requested services. Other translation requests, such as those associated with larger documents, will be provided as quickly as possible and could take up to three weeks. Accommodations may include but are not limited to translation services, interpretation services, and closed captioning, among others. For a list of the federal laws, please see the following subsection, Federal Laws for Public Involvement. For a description of each federal law, please see [Appendix C](#).

- **Coordinate with the state and local transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes.**

SJTPO consults and coordinates with agencies and officials when completing various transportation planning activities that are appropriate to the activity. These regularly include the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The roles, responsibilities, and key decision points of this consultation and coordination process are detailed in the RTP and TIP. Similarly, SJTPO coordinates with state and local public involvement processes to increase effectiveness and minimize duplication when possible. SJTPO's public involvement procedures for the TIP also serve as the State TIP (STIP) procedures.

- **Coordinate with Federal and Non-federal Tribal Nations.**

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historical Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (16 U.S.C. 470) (NHPA) and its implementing regulations [found at 36 CFR Part 800], federal agencies, such as SJTPO, must consult with any Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization regarding undertakings occurring on or affecting historic properties on its tribal lands. When the SJTPO Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) have been prepared, SJTPO coordinates with Federal and Non-federal Tribal Nations via email to inform them of the opportunity to review the documents. SJTPO also offers the opportunity to meet and discuss any questions or concerns the Federal and Non-federal Tribal Nations may have. When the TIP/STIP have been approved, SJTPO makes the Federal and Non-federal Tribal Nations aware via email and provides a link to where the documents can be found online. Similarly, when drafts of SJTPO's PIP, RTP, and UPWP have been approved, SJTPO makes the Federal and Non-federal Tribal Nations aware via email and provides a link to where the documents can be found online. Draft documents of the PIP, RTP, and UPWP are not shared with the tribal nations, consistent with guidance provided by the FHWA-NJ Division. SJTPO keeps an internal database of its communication with the Federal and Non-federal Tribal Nations.

- **Periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the PIP.**

The PIP is a living document. As such, it is updated as needed to ensure effectiveness and consistency with federal guidance. The public is also involved in providing periodic feedback on the SJTPO's procedures and strategies. In addition, SJTPO has identified methods to evaluate the effectiveness of its public involvement process, as described in [Section 7](#).

Federal Laws for Public Involvement

To conduct public involvement outreach, a core function of an MPO, SJTPO complies with federal regulations and programs. These regulations and programs help shape the involvement process and make its implementation more successful. For a description of each regulation and program listed below, please see [Appendix C](#).

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991
- Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21) of 1998
- Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005

- Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) of 2012
- Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) of 2015
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) or Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021
- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §450
- Code of Federal Regulations. Title 23, §771.111
- Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations”
- Executive Order 13166, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency”
- Executive Order 13985, “Advancing Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government”

4. OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE WITH SJTPO

There are a variety of strategies utilized by SJTPO to enhance public involvement for a specific activity or assist in meeting particular public involvement goals. Staff regularly review and modify these strategies to sustain a productive and all-encompassing public involvement process. The strategies used help disseminate information in both digital and print form to make information accessible to anyone interested.

Where to Find Information

Public input is essential to SJTPO's planning process, and the public can learn about or influence transportation decisions in many ways. SJTPO uses various channels to ensure a broad audience is reached. The recurrent channels used to announce news, updates, and reminders about meetings and events include:

[SJTPO Website \(www.sjtpo.org\)](http://www.sjtpo.org)

The primary tool SJTPO uses to disseminate information is its website (www.sjtpo.org), which can be translated into many languages. The SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org) includes an overview of the transportation planning process, funding programs, core regional planning documents, an extensive document library, planning studies, and other technical details. Opportunities for public involvement are also available online and can be found on the Public Comment webpage (www.sjtpo.org/Comment).

[E-list \(Electronic Mailing List\)](#)

SJTPO has two e-lists – the Requests for Proposals e-list and the General Information e-list. The RFP e-list is primarily of interest to consultants interested in being informed of when SJTPO releases Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or other project-related work opportunities. The General Information e-list is primarily of interest to members of the public and other interested organizations who want to be informed of public meetings and comment opportunities, special events, the release of SJTPO's *On-the-Go* bi-monthly newsletter (www.sjtpo.org/news), career opportunities, among other happenings. Approximately three to four emails are sent to the General Information e-list subscribers each month.

To subscribe to SJTPO's RFP and/or General Information lists, individuals can locate the "Join Our Mailing List" at the bottom of every SJTPO website webpage (www.sjtpo.org). The e-lists are free to join, and subscribers can unsubscribe anytime.

[Social Media](#)

SJTPO maintains various social media platforms as an additional method to reach the public and highlight key activities and initiatives. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are the three primary

forms of social media used by SJTPO to disseminate information regarding upcoming meetings and events, newsletter issues, reminders about public comment periods, and share the activities of staff members and other regional transportation planning matters.

At this time, any comment SJTPO receives via social media that adheres to SJTPO’s “Social Media Policy,” found on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org) and in [Appendix D](#), will be treated equally to any other comment added to the public record, and responded to, as appropriate.



Facebook www.facebook.com/sjtpo



Twitter www/twitter.com/sjtpo



LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/company/sjtpo



YouTube www.youtube.com/channel/UCzdoMUOQ4-umcnlWB5lCxGQ

[On the Go, the Official Newsletter of SJTPO](#)

On the Go is an electronic publication released every two months, with six issues produced each year. The newsletter is distributed through SJTPO’s e-list. To receive the newsletter, locate the “Join Our Mailing List” at the bottom of each SJTPO website webpage (www.sjtpo.org). Archived and current issues are also available on the News (*On the Go*) webpage (www.sjtpo.org/News). The website version of the newsletter features a translation tool powered by Google Translation, which allows readers from all backgrounds to stay current on all SJTPO matters.

Topics covered in each newsletter issue vary depending on what activities are occurring at SJTPO. Readers can expect to learn about projects, programs, meetings, events, public outreach opportunities, and more.

[Newspapers](#)

SJTPO utilizes newspapers that continue to send physical newspapers to reach sectors of the region’s population that rely on print media to receive information. The two local newspapers that send physical newspapers are The Press of Atlantic City and The Daily Journal. Specific days of publication are considered when advertisements are made in the respective newspapers. As appropriate, SJTPO utilizes these local newspapers to publicize meetings, events, and other SJTPO projects and programs. Meeting schedules for Policy Board meetings are publicized in local newspapers at the beginning of each calendar year. Special meetings are publicized at least seven days before each meeting date, as needed.

SJTPO maintains a working list of regional stakeholders (i.e., county members) and media contacts (i.e., staff writers). This list is primarily used internally by staff when issuing press

releases or wanting to spread awareness of public outreach opportunities and other transportation planning events taking place at SJTPO.

How to View or Request Documents and Records

To provide reasonable public access to documents and records, SJTPO makes all final draft and final approved plans, programs, and studies produced by SJTPO available for viewing on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org) and at the SJTPO office. SJTPO also makes certain documents available for free in-library reviewing at select libraries. These documents include the PIP, RTP, TIP, UPWP, Access for All Plan, CMP, LEP Plan, Title VI Implementation Plan, and Transportation Conformity. To be mindful of library staff resources and limited space, document appendices (unless necessary), executive summaries, and amendments, if applicable, will not be printed and transmitted to the libraries. Language is included in the Table of Contents, informing readers that these materials can be accessed on the plan-specific webpages (i.e., if an amendment is made to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the amendment will be available on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org/UPWP)). A list of libraries where the planning documents are shared, with complete addresses and contact information, can be found in [Appendix B](#).

If an individual cannot view documents on SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org), the SJTPO office, or any participating library in the SJTPO region, noncolor copies may be requested, where practical. Copy fees are \$0.05 per letter page or \$0.07 per legal page. Copies may be picked up at the SJTPO office for no additional charge or mailed at the receiver's expense. SJTPO may waive totals under \$1.00. The receiver must pay printing and postage costs before mailing. Checks or money orders must be made out to the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA). Cash is not accepted. Interested parties can make a request via an [online form](#), also found in [Appendix E](#), or by calling (856) 794-1941.

Attend Public Meetings

Throughout the year, there are numerous opportunities for the public and stakeholders to be engaged in SJTPO's planning process. These meetings provide information and a setting for receiving formal comments. SJTPO works to hold meetings at centralized locations, when held in person rather than virtually, and at convenient times, including evenings, to maximize participation from a wide range of the region's public, including those traditionally underserved. Other accommodations will be provided to the greatest degree feasible when requested at least seven days before a public meeting. Accommodations may include but are not limited to translation services, interpretation services, and closed captioning, among others.

SJTPO utilizes GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar virtual conferencing platforms. GoToMeeting is helpful for small group meetings in which staff and stakeholders need to engage in discussions and decision-making matters, such as Policy Board and TAC meetings. GoToWebinar is most

appropriate when convening large meetings where information is shared with attendees, such as public meetings for draft plans.

In January of each year, a schedule of Policy Board meetings for the year ahead is placed in The Press of Atlantic City and The Daily Journal. Meeting dates are also posted on the SJTPO website's Calendar (www.sjtpo.org/Calendar). As the year progresses and meetings approach, reminders are posted on SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org), sent to e-list subscribers, and posted on social media.

Policy Board Meetings

Policy Board meetings are open to the public. Policy Board meetings are often attended by local elected officials from county government, planners, engineers, federal agency representatives, and concerned individuals, among other stakeholders. A complete list of Policy Board members is posted on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org/Board). Members of the public are given the opportunity to comment at the start of the meeting, with each commenter allotted three minutes to speak. Policy Board meetings are usually held at 10:00 AM in the SJTPO Conference Room, with the option to attend virtually. Policy Board meetings are usually held on the fourth Monday of every other month beginning in January. Updates and additional information are available on SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org/Board).

Information for Policy Board meetings is publicized through the e-list, social media, SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org/Board), and annual paid public notices in The Press of Atlantic City and The Daily Journal in January. To allow for adequate notice, agendas and materials are distributed at least 12 days before each meeting through the above channels. Agendas and meeting minutes are obtainable on SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org/Board). If there is a change to the approved annual schedule, either the cancelation of an existing meeting or the scheduling of a new meeting, notice and advertisement will be made at least 48 hours before the date of the canceled meeting or new meeting. This will include advertisements in two local newspapers (The Press of Atlantic City and The Daily Journal) and updates on the SJTPO website.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings

TAC meetings are open to the public and are usually held at 10:00 AM in the SJTPO Conference Room, with the option to attend virtually. TAC meetings are usually held on the second Monday of every other month beginning in January. Technical workshops may be scheduled during the "off" months. The committee consists of staff (typically planners and engineers) of each Policy Board member and representatives of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, and the Delaware River and Bay Authority. Various other agencies are also invited to participate in the TAC, with specific organizations noted as non-voting members. A complete list of TAC members is posted on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org/TAC). Members of the public are given the opportunity to comment on agenda items at the start of the meeting,

with each commenter allotted three minutes to speak. Meeting notices, agenda packets, and minutes are also available for public viewing on SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org/TAC).

Information for TAC meetings is publicized through social media and SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org/TAC). To allow for adequate notice, agendas and materials are distributed at least 12 days before each meeting through the above channels.

Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC) Meetings

COEC meetings are open to the public. Meetings will be scheduled in advance, but there will be no regularly occurring meeting schedule. An anticipated schedule of COEC meetings in support of major planning products and processes will be made available on the COEC webpage (www.sjtpo.org/COEC) at the beginning of each calendar year. Other meetings will be scheduled as needed, with public notice made at least 12 days before a meeting date.

Public Workshops

SJTPO hosts in-person and virtual workshop-style meetings that are open to the public as needed. These workshops allow attendees to learn about transit, roadways, bicycle and pedestrian access, freight, or other transportation matters in a greater capacity using presentations, displays, posters, and other informational materials. Workshop-style meetings foster one-on-one interactions between members of the public and transportation professionals. Attendees will have the opportunity to comment. All comments will be recorded, and a written summary, analysis, and report on all significant comments received will be prepared and used accordingly.

Other Ways to be Involved

SJTPO welcomes public input at any time. Members of the public can readily contact SJTPO by calling the office (856-794-1941), filling out the General Comment form on the Public Comment webpage (www.sjtpo.org/Comment), emailing info@sjtpo.org, faxing (856) 794-2549, direct messaging SJTPO via its social media accounts, and by US Mail. Additionally, the following are more ways the public can engage with SJTPO and participate in the transportation planning process.

Request a Safety Program

SJTPO offers a robust series of no-cost safety education programs. Run by SJTPO Traffic Safety Specialists, these programs are designed with a target audience in mind and in conjunction with other organizations, such as the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (NJ DHTS). Each program is intended to educate roadway users – drivers, passengers, bicyclists, and pedestrians – of the many dangers they could encounter on roadways and to impart easy-to-remember methods to improve safety. To view the entire list of programs offered or to request a program, visit www.sjtpo.org/Education or the [Safety](#) tab on SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org).

Attend Meetings of County Transportation Boards or Committees

Public involvement at the local, county, and subregional levels is also crucial, as these entities own most roadways. Thus, much of the transportation planning process occurs at these levels. SJTPO suggests that the public attend meetings and events hosted by county transportation committees or municipal planning boards. A complete list of transportation contacts is located in [Appendix F](#).

5. ADDRESSING CIVIL RIGHTS IN OUR OUTREACH PROCESS

SJTPO is committed to making a special effort to seek out and consider the needs of groups traditionally not well-served by the existing transportation system. These include, but are not limited to, the elderly population, minority populations, Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations, zero vehicle households, and low-income households. SJTPO has formal plans/reports on Title VI, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and Environmental Justice (EJ). The plans/reports outline the appropriate outreach tools and methods necessary to ensure adequate participation of the groups previously mentioned.

Title VI

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) and [Executive Order 12898](#) protects individuals from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities.

SJTPO's Title VI Implementation Plan is available on the Title VI webpage (www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI). The webpage also provides background on Title VI, SJTPO's policy statement, complaint procedure and form, and the United States Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Assurances.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

[Executive Order 13166](#), "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," relates to public engagement of LEP individuals. An LEP person does not speak English as his/her/their primary language and has a limited ability to read, talk, write, or understand English.

SJTPO's LEP Plan outlines the responsibilities of SJTPO regarding the LEP persons and establishes a process for providing assistance to LEP persons for SJTPO programs, activities, and services.

Translation options are available on SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org). To select a language other than English, locate the dropdown menu at the top of each webpage. Translation is provided for linguistic populations of 1,000 or more that speak English less than very well in the SJTPO region. Further, if translation or interpretation is necessary for a member of the public to participate in a public meeting, public event, or any other public involvement opportunity, SJTPO has a translation and interpretation firm under contract. SJTPO will work to accommodate all reasonable requests for translation, interpretation, or auxiliary services but encourages requests to be made at least seven days before public meetings to ensure that SJTPO can secure requested services. Other translation requests, such as those associated with larger documents, will be provided as quickly as possible and could take up to three weeks. For more information, see the

Accessibility Brochure located in [Appendix A](#). The Accessibility Brochure is also available on the Public Involvement Plan webpage (www.sjtpo.org/PIP).

Environmental Justice (EJ)

The federal government defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs, and policies.

The SJTPO EJ Report and English and Spanish Executive Summaries are available on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org/EJ). The EJ Report evaluates TIP projects for overlap into EJ areas and broadly discusses other planning products. At the core of this report is the recognition of every person's right to have a safe, accessible, affordable, and healthy transportation system in his/her/their community.

Strategies to Serve Under-Represented Populations

The Title VI Implementation Plan, LEP Plan, and EJ Report detail in a comprehensive manner the strategies necessary to incorporate under-represented populations in SJTPO’s transportation planning process. The strategies to include are as follows:

Identification of Under-Represented Populations using Census Data

SJTPO uses regional, county, municipal, and Census Block Group data to identify Title VI, LEP, and EJ populations. The information collected helps SJTPO and its subregional partners target outreach needs to under-represented groups. Outreach efforts shall occur throughout all planning efforts, including location-specific projects, plans, and studies.

Engagement of Under-Represented Populations using Targeted Strategies

SJTPO is committed to reducing barriers to public engagement, specifically for the under-represented groups in the SJTPO region. Barriers for the under-represented groups can include language barriers, wariness of public forums, scheduling conflicts, and lack of transportation availability, among other challenges.

To ensure greater accessibility to the non-English speaking public, SJTPO has secured a firm that can provide translation and interpretation services on an on-call basis. To help make the public aware of these services, an Accessibility Brochure was created. The Accessibility Brochure is located in [Appendix A](#) and available on the Public Involvement Plan webpage (www.sjtpo.org/PIP).

Children and Teens

SJTPO is proud to offer a robust series of traffic safety education programs, many of them geared toward elementary, middle school, and high school students. Such programs include the *Most Dangerous Place on Earth*, *Share the Keys*, *Belts, Bones, and Buses*, and *Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety*. The programs, presented by SJTPO's Traffic Safety Specialists, are designed to bring awareness to the many risks relative to children and teens on area roadways and to teach them simple ways to improve safety. The programs are fun, accessible, designed for the appropriate age group, and are presented to students in school districts throughout the region.

Since SJTPO's Traffic Safety Specialists have established connections with regional school districts, SJTPO would like to expand upon these traffic safety education programs by incorporating content related to planning efforts.

Young Adults

Young adults are often under-represented in planning efforts and civic affairs due to inexperience, school-life balance, and limited opportunities. Engagement opportunities for young adults should be social, brief, and held in locations young adults frequent. Engaging young adults through social media is also encouraged.

The SJTPO region is home to several universities and colleges. Stockton University, located in Atlantic County, offers a Sustainability Program. SJTPO aims to establish a relationship with professors and students of the program, informing them of coursework-related efforts. Additionally, though outside of SJTPO's region, Rowan University in Gloucester County offers degrees in Planning and Engineering. Establishing a relationship with professors and students of the Planning and Engineering Programs may be beneficial. Rowan University is primarily a commuter-based school with individuals traveling from the SJTPO region to work and attend the university.

Older Adults

Older adults are often involved in community efforts. Regardless of community involvement, older adults may be under-represented in planning efforts for many reasons, such as mobility challenges and transportation conflicts. Outreach to older adults should include a variety of formats, both in-person and digital. If in-person events are to be held, scheduling the events during daylight hours and in convenient, ADA-accessible venues is most appropriate.

Individuals with Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities may experience any number of cognitive or physical disabilities. Due to the range of possible needs being so broad, SJTPO staff aim to make themselves aware of how individuals with disabilities can be excluded from public engagement activities and how to rectify such instances of exclusion.

Outreach to individuals with disabilities should be compliant with ADA requirements. Public meetings and events hosted by SJTPO are always held in ADA-accessible locations. Furthermore, for website management and support, SJTPO works with a developer that prioritizes accessibility for all people.

Immigrants and Individuals with Limited-English Proficiency

Approximately 9.3% of the population in the SJTPO region reports speaking English “less than very well.” Outreach to these individuals should be approachable, highly visual, and conducted in their native language, if feasible. The content made available to these individuals should be easy to share with others through word-of-mouth and relative to their needs.

SJTPO is committed to ensuring events and publications are accessible and available to all individuals in the region, regardless of their level of English proficiency or native languages. When public meetings and event notices are distributed, SJTPO includes information on requesting accommodations, such as translation services. SJTPO will work to accommodate all reasonable requests for translation, interpretation, or auxiliary services but encourages requests to be made at least seven days before public meetings to ensure that SJTPO can secure requested services. Other translation requests, such as those associated with larger documents, will be provided as quickly as possible and could take up to three weeks. Please see the Accessibility Brochure, located in [Appendix A](#), for more details. Further, SJTPO’s website (www.sjtpo.org) can be translated into multiple languages.

Racial and Ethnic Groups

Racial and ethnic minorities include people who do not racially identify as white and who face limited opportunities to engage in civic affairs due to a variety of barriers. Racial and ethnic minority groups may include Black, Latino, Asian, Middle Eastern, and Native American, among other multiracial populations.

Racial and ethnic minorities in the SJTPO region are diverse and communicate and engage in varying styles and levels. Outreach to these minority groups should be community-focused, coordinated with local groups and organizations, and consider family needs.

Low-Income Residents

Many low-income people within the SJTPO region balance multiple jobs and face shelter, food, and transportation insecurities. Information related to planning efforts is likely to be received through word-of-mouth, community organizations, and social media. Effective outreach to low-income people should be convenient and held during varying hours of the day to take into consideration work and public transit schedules. Additionally, conducting outreach in partnership with Family Success Centers, Community Centers, and other familiar local organizations is advised.

The Use of Federal Funds for Public Involvement Activities

Based on [Methods to Improve and Sustain Outreach Equity in the SJTPO Region](#), it is considered a generally accepted best practice to be able to provide modest incentives to attract participation at in-person public meetings. These incentives may include:

- food, both in recognition of the limited and precious time of participants as well as acknowledging the fact that most outreach activities conflict with mealtimes;
- childcare, to allow parents to participate without having to make difficult decisions regarding childcare and to allow parents to participate with reduced stress; and
- small stipends, not only in recognition of the limited and precious time of participants but also to accommodate the costs associated with transportation to attend in-person events.

SJTPO utilizes federal funds for all its activities as a federally designated organization. The [“Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making,”](#) a United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) publication, states, “Public involvement and participation activities are eligible expenses for most USDOT programs, including both formula and discretionary grant programs.” The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [§ 200.432 Conferences](#), [§ 200.438 Entertainment Costs](#), and [§ 200.75 Participation Support Cost](#) outline the appropriate awarding of funds for incentive-based purchases. In general, federal funds may be used for public involvement activities. However, the public involvement activities must be “necessary” and “reasonable.”

SJTPO will evaluate the necessity and reasonableness of incentivizing public outreach activities on a case-by-case basis. As appropriate, documentation will be made as part of the internal working files for each project or public outreach effort. Incentives may be offered for public involvement activities whose primary purpose is to disseminate technical information “beyond” the MPO Board/Committee. These external activities may include training workshops, public engagement meetings for a draft planning study, or documents in which public outreach is sought or where special outreach activities seek engagement with EJ populations or communities.

Below are illustrative examples of when SJTPO could consider documenting the use of federal funds to incentivize public outreach activities. Documentation will be provided as appropriate, regardless of whether the public outreach is being led by SJTPO or a consultant as part of a larger technical study.

Providing Food at Public Meetings

SJTPO aims to hold public meetings outside of typical workday hours to maximize access. In recognition of the limited and precious time of participants and acknowledging that most public involvement activities conflict with typical dinner-time hours, SJTPO staff may determine it appropriate to provide light refreshments at public meetings. To provide light refreshments, SJTPO staff must document that the refreshments are necessary, reasonable, and allocable to

the purpose of the public meeting. To document that light refreshments are a necessary cost, SJTPO staff may note that without refreshments, involvement from the public would be unlikely. SJTPO staff may also compare when refreshments were provided or not provided in the past or document the expense participants may be burdened with should they have to purchase refreshments nearby before or after the public meetings. To demonstrate the reasonableness of providing refreshments, staff may consider the type and cost of refreshments compared to the time commitment and timing of the public meetings. Food at public meetings may be an allocable cost if public involvement is required or recommended during the transportation planning process.

Providing Childcare Services at Public Meetings

An often-underrepresented group at public meetings is parents/guardians of young children. To allow parents/guardians to participate without making difficult childcare decisions and to enable parents/guardians to participate with reduced stress, SJTPO staff may determine it appropriate to offer childcare services during public meetings. Childcare services may include making SJTPO staff members available to help engage the children in activities (i.e., coloring and drawing) while the parents/guardians participate in the meetings. To provide childcare services, SJTPO staff must document that the childcare is necessary, reasonable, and allocable to the purpose of the public meeting. To demonstrate that providing childcare services during public meetings is necessary, SJTPO staff may note a lack of public involvement from parents and guardians of young children at past public meetings. To indicate that the childcare services are reasonable, SJTPO staff may consider the cost of providing childcare with the anticipated increase in public involvement. Childcare services at public meetings may be an allocable cost if public involvement is required or recommended during the transportation planning process.

Providing Financial Incentives or Reimbursement for Public Involvement Activities

It takes effort and time for participants to take part in the transportation planning process. To show recognition of the meaningful value participants provide and to accommodate the costs associated with transportation to attend public meetings, staff may determine it appropriate to offer financial incentives or reimbursement for public involvement. To provide financial incentives or reimbursement, SJTPO staff must document that the financial incentives or reimbursement are necessary, reasonable, and allocable to the purpose of the public involvement activities. To demonstrate that providing financial incentives or reimbursement for public involvement is necessary, SJTPO staff may consider if participation would be inadequate or unrepresentative without the financial incentives or reimbursement. Conversely, SJTPO staff may consider that financial incentives or reimbursement would ensure adequate or more representative public involvement. To indicate that the financial incentives or reimbursement are reasonable, SJTPO staff may consider the costs of providing the financial incentives or reimbursement with the anticipated increase in public involvement. Financial incentives or reimbursement for public involvement activities may be an allocable cost if public involvement

is required or recommended during the transportation planning process. Financial incentives may include a gift card for participating in a survey or reimbursement for modest travel-related expenses.

Translation of Vital Documents

As mentioned in [Section 6](#), SJTPO has nine core documents. Core documents require public comment periods, and most require public meetings to be held when substantively revised. Related to this, SJTPO also has documents that are referred to as vital documents. These documents help residents and stakeholders understand SJTPO's purpose and importance in the four-county region and will be proactively translated into Spanish and other languages upon request. These documents are as follows:

- **Access for All Transit Plan Executive Summary:** The Access for All Transit Plan Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/AccessForAll.
- **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Executive Summary:** The RTP Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/RTP.
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Executive Summary:** The TIP Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/TIP.
- **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Executive Summary:** The UPWP Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/UPWP.
- **Public Involvement Plan (PIP) Executive Summary:** The PIP Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/PIP.
- **Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan:** The LEP Plan is available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/LEP.
- **Environmental Justice (EJ) Report Executive Summary:** The EJ Report Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish upon completion at www.sjtpo.org/EJ.
- **The Public Engagement Guide to Transportation Planning in South Jersey:** The Guide is available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/Guide.
- **Title VI Complaint Procedures:** Materials that allow the public to understand and exercise their rights under Title VI with regard to SJTPO are available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI.
- **Title VI Notice:** The Title VI Notice is SJTPO's commitment to the public to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, and related nondiscrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The Title VI Notice is available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI.

- **Title VI Complaint Form:** The Title VI Complaint Form is available and must be completed if a person or group of persons believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by SJTPO under Title VI. The form is available in English and Spanish at www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI.

In SJTPO's four-county region, five languages or language groups are spoken by at least 1,000 LEP persons each, fall under the Safe Harbor provision. One of these is "Other Indic Languages," which SJTPO understands may include Bengali, Hindi, Nepali, Urdu, and Punjabi, bringing the total number of potential languages to nine. 2005 USDOT guidance contends that "it would be unrealistic" to provide translations in all nine languages. However, SJTPO remains committed to ensuring meaningful access for all LEP persons, regardless of the language spoken at home. While SJTPO will continue to focus its proactive translation efforts on the Spanish-speaking community as the primary LEP population, it will also aim to use ACS data and input from member governments and community organizations to predict contact with LEP persons for area-specific projects, studies, and programs. For more information, visit the LEP webpage (www.sjtpo.org/LEP).

Limiting Obstacles of Involvement

SJTPO has established the following efforts to remove obstacles to involvement, including language, mobility, and temporal, among others.

Convenient Meeting Times

Consideration of individuals' schedules is vital when hosting in-person and virtual public meetings. SJTPO disseminates meeting information, including location, time, and materials, at least 12 days in advance to allow interested parties to make necessary arrangements. Further, apart from the Policy Board and TAC, meetings take place after typical workday hours to maximize attendance.

Transit-Accessible Meetings

SJTPO staff work to select locations that are transit accessible to the greatest feasible degree if hosting in-person meetings. Policy Board and TAC meetings take place in the SJTPO Conference Room, which is accessible by New Jersey Transit buses and is within an EJ area. Additionally, most public meetings offer a virtual and toll-free call-in option.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Provisions

All public notices for planning activities include an announcement that states persons with disabilities will be accommodated. SJTPO will work to accommodate all reasonable requests for translation, interpretation, or auxiliary services but encourages requests to be made at least seven days before public meetings to ensure that SJTPO can secure requested services. Other translation requests, such as those associated with larger documents, will be provided as quickly

as possible and could take up to three weeks. Special provisions may include making available large print documents, audio material, and someone proficient in sign language.

Online Engagement Opportunities

SJTPO will continue to offer online engagement opportunities to accommodate individuals who cannot provide feedback in person. All engagement opportunities will be listed on the Public Comment webpage (www.sjtpo.org/Comment). Staff will also notify social media (i.e., Facebook (www.facebook.com/SJTPO), Twitter (www.twitter.com/SJTPO), and LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com/company/SJTPO)) followers and e-list subscribers of opportunities. To subscribe, individuals can locate the “Join Our Mailing List” at the bottom of any SJTPO webpage (www.sjtpo.org).

Pop-up/Partnering Events

SJTPO will continue participating in pop-up events, such as farmers markets and fairs, as appropriate. Pop-up events benefit members of the public, as they are not asked to travel to a specific location at a particular date and time. Instead, staff travel to locations and supply all appropriate materials necessary to garner feedback. The appropriateness of pop-up events will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, depending on the topic, being conscientious and respectful of the public’s time and purpose for attending the event.

SJTPO will also work to better coordinate with community partners in the SJTPO region. Community partners may include churches, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and Community Centers. Much like pop-up events, coordinating with community partners is beneficial as a relationship, as the audience already trusts the community partners.

Preventing Discrimination by Establishing Proper Documentation Procedures through SJTPO’s Title VI Implementation Plan

As mentioned, SJTPO is required to develop a Title VI Implementation Plan. The Title VI Implementation Plan ensures SJTPO’s commitment to prevent discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, age, ancestry, nationality, gender, disability, religion, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, income level, and the ability to read, write, or Speak English in any of its plans and programs. Further, the Title VI Implementation Plan provides information on implementing a complete complaint procedure. The complaint procedure identifies the reporting requirements for the Complainant (i.e., the individual(s) or group(s) that believe a discriminatory action has taken place) and the Organization (i.e., SJTPO). SJTPO’s Title VI Implementation Plan and the complaint procedure are available on the Title VI webpage (www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI).

6. HAVING YOUR SAY: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

SJTPO encourages public comments and provides the public with many ways to voice opinions and share ideas with SJTPO.

Public Comment Periods and Public Meetings

A major opportunity for the public to share opinions and ideas is during a public review period. A comment period of **at least 30 days** will be held to review drafts of SJTPO's core documents. As stated in [Section 3](#), SJTPO has nine documents, often called core documents, as they require public comment periods, and most require public meetings to be held when substantively revised. Specific details for each of the core documents are noted below.

Additionally, information necessary for the public to thoroughly understand and comment on each document will be available. This can include public-friendly executive summaries, information posted to SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org), PowerPoints, printable flyers and/or project sheets and reports, and links to project or sponsor websites for comprehensive information.

- **[Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\)](#)**: The RTP is a long-term transportation plan that identifies a high-level vision and outlines transportation projects for at least 20 years. It is the result of extensive outreach, collaboration, and consensus. The RTP is updated every four years. Draft documents will be available for at least 30 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **[Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#)**: The TIP is an agreed-upon list of projects for which state and federal funds are expected to be spent. The TIP is updated every two years. Draft documents will be available for at least 30 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **[Unified Planning Work Program \(UPWP\)](#)**: The UPWP details all anticipated transportation planning activities to be performed by SJTPO staff, subregions, and member agencies during the fiscal year. The UPWP is updated every year. Draft documents will be available for at least 30 days of public comment.
- **[Access for All Transit Plan](#)**: Federally required to be updated every five years, the Access for All Transit Plan identifies the unmet transportation needs and recommends methods to increase service quality and reduce the cost of providing services to the transportation-disadvantaged population in the region. Draft documents will be available for at least 30 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.

- **Congestion Management Process (CMP)**: The CMP is a federally required process documented in a methodology report that guides how to manage and operate South Jersey's transportation network safely and effectively. Draft documents will be available for at least 30 days of public comment.
- **Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP)**: The LEP Plan is a federally required document, updated as needed, that identifies the LEP populations in the region and how SJTPO will work to accommodate their needs in SJTPO's process. Draft documents will be available for at least 30 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **Title VI Implementation Plan**: The Title VI Implementation Plan is a federally required document, updated as needed, that indicates how SJTPO will meet its requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Draft documents will be available for at least 30 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **Transportation Conformity**: The Transportation Conformity document demonstrates transportation conformity of the TIP and RTP with the 2015 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Draft documents will be available for at least 30 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **Public Involvement Plan (PIP)**: The PIP is a federally required document, updated as needed, that articulates the rules SJTPO will follow and the processes by which the public can engage in the MPO transportation planning process. Draft documents will be available for at least 45 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.

As noted in [Section 3](#), consideration of residents' schedules is vital when hosting public meetings. SJTPO works to hold meetings in facilities that are ADA accessible and in locations that are transit accessible when meetings are in-person to the greatest feasible degree. SJTPO makes it standard practice to offer a virtual attendance option for members of the public to participate in meetings hosted by the MPO. SJTPO also provides a toll-free call-in option so members of the public are not charged calling fees for participating in meetings.

Policy Board and TAC agendas and materials are available 12 days before each regularly scheduled meeting. Opportunity for public comment is provided at all regularly scheduled meetings.

If public comments cause any of the core documents to greatly differ from the versions previously made available to the public, comment periods may be extended for at least ten days to ensure the public has the opportunity to review the latest versions before Policy Board approval. Substantive changes that may justify an additional ten-day comment period include the addition or removal of a section, adjustments to public forms, updates to federal regulations, and other changes that SJTPO deems substantive enough to ask for additional public comment.

Additional Information About the RTP and TIP

The RTP is a long-term transportation plan that identifies a high-level vision, outlines transportation projects for at least the next 20 years, and results from extensive outreach, collaboration, and consensus. The RTP is updated every four years. Draft documents will be available for at least 30 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.

The TIP is an agreed-upon list of projects for which state and federal funds are expected to be spent. The TIP is updated every two years. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.

The RTP is the guiding document for the TIP, and all federally funded projects in the TIP must be included in the RTP. Each project or phase included in the TIP must be consistent with the approved RTP.¹ To maintain consistency between both documents, the RTP must be revised whenever a revision to the TIP is required.

As outlined in a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), SJTPO, NJDOT, and New Jersey Transit, found on SJTPO's TIP webpage (www.sjtpo.org/TIP), there are three types of revisions: Major Amendments, Minor Amendments, and Modifications. While the MOU was established for revisions to the TIP, SJTPO will use the same procedures for RTP revisions. To provide full transparency and recording, all Modifications and Amendments will be posted on the SJTPO website in separate RTP and TIP Trackers found on the respective SJTPO webpages.

Major Amendment

A Major Amendment in the TIP, which must be approved by the SJTPO Policy Board, FHWA, and the FTA, occurs when any TIP/STIP action affects the air quality conformity and requires a new regional conformity determination. The MPO and Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) group determines if the change or addition of the project would affect the following as per the Transportation Conformity Rule.

- Addition of a new project that is non-exempt from conformity analysis unless it is deemed Not Regionally Significant (NRS) or subject to a project-level analysis that would not change the conformity finding;
- Changes the project scope so that it becomes non-exempt from conformity analysis; and
- Changes the project completion date and impacts the conformity analysis year.

¹ As specified in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.306 (i).

Public Outreach Procedures for a Major Amendment:

Public outreach for a Major Amendment will include the following steps:

- Institute a 30-day public comment period on the amendment, during which the public can submit written comments.
- Place notification of the public comment period in the legal section of the local newspapers. Notification will include information on the public comment period, how to access relevant information on the SJTPO website, how to submit comments, and any additional information, as necessary.
- Place notification of the public comment period on the SJTPO website with an option to submit comments via e-mail.
- Provide similar notification to interest groups (i.e., COEC, Tribal Nations) in the region as appropriate.
- Distribute the document(s) under consideration to the SJTPO's designated libraries.
- A summary of oral and written comments received during the above procedures shall be provided, with responses and staff summaries, in the final Policy Board-approved document(s).
- Following approval by the SJTPO Policy Board, SJTPO will forward the amendment package via [e-STIP](#) to NJDOT or New Jersey Transit, requesting approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Minor Amendment

A Minor Amendment, which also must be approved by the SJTPO Policy Board, FHWA, and the FTA, occurs when a change to the TIP does not affect air quality conformity and does not require a new regional conformity determination. This includes the following circumstances:

- Addition of a new project or program that uses federal funds or available prior year balances;
- Deletion of a project or program that uses federal funds in its entirety;
- Addition of a development phase to a project that results in moving all major phases of work out of the TIP;
- Change of funding source for a project in the TIP from the use of non-federal funds to the use of federal funds;
- Exchange of FHWA or FTA funds for a commensurate amount of non-federal funding between the NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT; or
- Cost increase of more than \$15,000,000 to any phase of work of a project.

Public Outreach Procedures for a Minor Amendment:

- A proposed minor Amendment will be listed on the agenda for meetings of the SJTPO Policy Board, which are open to the public and advertised at the start of the year in the local newspapers. The Policy Board meeting agendas and supporting documentation will

be available for public review 12 days before the meeting dates on the SJTPO website, and notification of online availability will be sent to the SJTPO's e-list.

- At meetings of the SJTPO Policy Board, the public will be provided with an opportunity to comment on proposed minor TIP Amendments before the Policy Board takes action.

Modification

A Modification refers to any other smaller revision that does not affect conformity. There are three classifications or modifications, as defined in the MOU, and they are not listed here because they do not require public comment.

How to Submit Comments

SJTPO prefers comments in written form (as identified below) to accurately respond to all comments. For assistance to submit a written comment, please contact the SJTPO office at (856) 794-1941 or info@sjtpo.org.

Please send all written comments using any of the following methods:

- **Fax:** (856) 794-2549
- **Email:** pip@sjtpo.org
- **Mail:** The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization
817 East Landis Avenue, 2nd Floor, Vineland, NJ 08360
- **Online form:** General comments are welcomed through the "Contact Us with Your General Comments" form found toward the bottom of the Public Comment webpage (www.sjtpo.org/Comment) under the Get Involved tab
- **Social media:** Facebook (www.facebook.com/SJTPO), Twitter (www.twitter.com/SJTPO), and LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com/company/sjtpo)*
* See [Appendix D](#) for more information about SJTPO's social media practices.

The public can also comment in person at the following meetings:

- **Policy Board meetings** (scheduled bi-monthly, beginning in January)
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings** (scheduled bi-monthly, beginning in January)
- **Public meetings** (scheduled as needed)

Visit the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org) or call (856) 794-1941 to discuss comments with SJTPO staff or for a current schedule of meetings in which to offer comments. All comments must be received by the close of the comment period to be explicitly addressed and included in the final

plan. SJTPO welcomes general comments at any time and will work to address any comments or questions received.

How Your Comments will be Used

To maintain an effective and meaningful public involvement process, SJTPO will appropriately consider all public comments. SJTPO is responsible for coordinating a prompt response to comments. A written summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of all significant comments received during the public comment periods on the nine core documents (PIP, RTP, TIP, UPWP, Access for All Transit Plan, Congestion Management Process (CMP), Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, Title VI Implementation Plan, and Transportation Conformity), and Major Amendments to the TIP will be provided as part of the final document. All final documents are available on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org).

7. EVALUATING OUR EFFECTIVENESS

SJTPO recognizes the need to periodically review the effectiveness of its public involvement programs and methods. A variety of tools will be used to measure both the quantity and quality of interactions SJTPO has with the public in the four-county region. The evaluation results will be used to modify the practices, as appropriate, to ensure maximum effectiveness. The following are tools that will be used by SJTPO staff to evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement:

Questionnaires, Polls, and/or Surveys

Questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys may be used to provide feedback on various topics, such as the usefulness of public meetings or events and the practicality of techniques utilized. These materials will be developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the public involvement goals.

Examples of when or what type of questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys may be utilized are listed below.

- **During a comment period to gather input** – Staff may make surveys available through SJTPO’s website (www.sjtpo.org), e-list, etc., to provide the public with an easy and readily accessible way to submit comments on transportation activities. Polling questions may be used during public meetings to gather input and keep attendees engaged in the material.
- **Public Involvement Questionnaire** – Staff may distribute a periodic questionnaire to gauge the public’s expectations of meetings and events, the effectiveness of current outreach practices, suggestions for improvement, etc.

Assessment of Outreach Tools

SJTPO staff have numerous performance measures that can be used to assess its outreach process and effectiveness. SJTPO will monitor the following on a six-month (biannual) basis:

Tool	Sample Evaluation Measure
Website	Number of users; number of new users; number of sessions; number of page views; average session duration
Social media (per account)	Number of followers; change in followers; number of posts; number of impressions; number of mentions; number of clicks
E-list	Number of subscribers; change in subscribers; number of emails sent; number of bounces; percent of emails opened; percent of emails clicked

Public meetings and events	Number of meetings and events; number of individuals notified; number of attendees; location of meetings and events
News “On the Go” articles	Number of articles posted; when posted; topics posted
Questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys	Number of questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys sent; percent completed
Press releases	Number of press releases distributed and published

Consult with Members of the Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC)

The Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC) aims to enhance the scope of SJTPO’s public outreach and ensure that SJTPO’s decision-making processes are based on diverse, inclusive, and equity-based information and viewpoints. Through its collective membership, the COEC provides staff with a direct channel for public and special interest groups to provide input on important subjects such as developing a safe, effective, and efficient multi-modal transportation system in the SJTPO four-county region. When appropriate, members will work with staff to adapt the organization’s public outreach strategies to the specific needs of the SJTPO region's diverse communities and provide feedback on SJTPO plans, activities, and processes.

Staff Debriefings

In addition to biannual evaluations, staff will aim to meet on an ongoing basis to review outreach and engagement efforts. The intention of these meetings will be to determine if improvements and/or the development of new strategies are needed to enhance the public outreach process. Similarly, staff may periodically meet with consultants to discuss outreach and engagement efforts. The reason is that consultants are sometimes hired through a competitive process for some planning documents and/or projects and may be tasked with exploring new public outreach strategies and/or conducting outreach efforts. As such, it may be beneficial to meet with consultants to ensure SJTPO’s outreach requirements are being met and/or exceeded.

APPENDIX A. ACCESSIBILITY BROCHURE

Las adaptaciones, realizadas en la medida en que los recursos lo permitan, incluyen:

- **MATERIALES DESARROLLADOS** para informar al público sobre las actividades de la SJTPO y los productos de planificación de transporte.
- **MATERIALES INFORMATIVOS TRADUCIDOS** o intérpretes de idiomas en reuniones públicas.
- **EVENTOS CELEBRADOS EN LUGARES** accesibles para personas con discapacidades y a los que se puede llegar por transporte público cuando las ubicaciones lo permitan.
- **PARA LAS PERSONAS CON DISCAPACIDAD AUDITIVA**, las solicitudes de asistencia deben hacerse por lo menos con siete (7) días hábiles de antelación.
- **LOS COMENTARIOS PÚBLICOS SE PUEDEN ENVIAR** por teléfono, correo electrónico, formulario de comentarios en línea, redes sociales y eventos en persona.
- **EL SITIO WEB DE LA SJTPO** ofrece un “*widget* de accesibilidad” para personas con discapacidades y ofrece una herramienta de traducción en línea para personas que no hablan inglés.

Hay información adicional disponible sobre las políticas de participación pública y no discriminación de la SJTPO en el Plan de participación pública (PIP) y el Plan de implementación del Título VI, que están disponibles en el sitio web de la SJTPO en www.sjtpo.org.

Para solicitar ayuda para acceder a información o asistir a una reunión o evento público, llame al **(856) 794-1941** (de 8:00 a.m. a 5:00 p.m. entre semana) o envíe un correo electrónico a TitleVI@sjtpo.org.



Accessibility at SJTPO: Equitable Access Throughout all Phases of the Transportation Planning Processes



The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization strives to ensure members of the public can participate in projects and programs, and this includes making accommodations for individuals with disabilities and those with limited English Proficiency.



South Jersey
Transportation
Planning Organization



Accesibilidad en SJTPO: Acceso equitativo en todas las fases de los procesos de planificación del transporte



Accommodations, made to the extent that resources allow, include:

- **MATERIALS DEVELOPED** to inform the public about SJTPO activities and transportation planning products.
- **TRANSLATED INFORMATIONAL** materials or language interpreters at public meetings.
- **EVENTS HELD IN VENUES** that are accessible for individuals with disabilities and reachable via public transportation when locations permit.
- **FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED**, requests for assistance should be made at least seven (7) business days in advance.
- **PUBLIC COMMENTS CAN BE SUBMITTED** via phone, email, online comment form, social media, and in-person at events.
- **SJTPO WEBSITE** offers an “accessibility widget” for those with disabilities and features an online translation tool for non-English speaking persons.

Additional information on the SJTPO’s public involvement and nondiscrimination policies is available in the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) and Title VI Implementation Plan, which are available on the SJTPO website at www.sjtpo.org.

To request assistance in accessing information or attending a public meeting or event, call **(856) 794-1941** (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays) or email TitleVI@sjtpo.org.

La Organización de Planificación del Transporte de South Jersey se esfuerza por asegurar que los miembros del público puedan participar en proyectos y programas, y esto incluye hacer adaptaciones para personas con discapacidades y aquellos con un dominio limitado de inglés.



South Jersey
Transportation
Planning Organization

APPENDIX B. LIST OF LIBRARIES IN WHICH TO VIEW SJTPO DOCUMENTS

County	State Depository Library
Atlantic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic County Library – Mays Landing Branch; Reference Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mays Landing; 40 Farragut Avenue; Mays Landing, NJ 08330 ○ Website: www.atlanticlibrary.org/ • Richard E. Bjork Library at Stockton University; Government Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 101 Vera King Farris Drive; Galloway, NJ 08205-9441 ○ Website: library.stockton.edu/welcome
Cape May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cape May County County Library; Reference Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 30 W. Mechanic Street; Cape May Court House, NJ 08210 ○ Website: www.cmclibrary.org
Cumberland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumberland County Library; Reference Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ County Complex; 800 E. Commerce Street; Bridgeton, NJ 08302 ○ Website: www.cclnj.org
Salem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salem Free Public Library; Circulation Desk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 112 W. Broadway; Salem, NJ 08079 ○ Website: www.mysalemlibrary.org/ • Michael S. Cettei Memorial Library at Salem Community College; Reference Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 460 Hollywood Avenue; Carneys Point, NJ 08069 ○ Website: www.salemcc.edu/library/

APPENDIX C. FEDERAL LAWS FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement in transportation planning has long been a federal requirement for MPOs. Over the years, the regulations, performance standards, and expectations have been amended and reinforced through additional legislation. The purpose of these federal laws is to guide MPOs to seek thoughtful and proactive feedback from individuals and to address issues of environmental injustice. The following are the federal laws SJTPO complies with:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) is one of the principal laws that serves as the foundation for SJTPO's public involvement outreach. This act states, "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any programs or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

The second principal law that serves as the foundation for SJTPO's public involvement outreach is the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) of 1990](#). This landmark civil rights legislation ensures equal opportunity for people with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, and state and local governmental programs and services. The ADA also requires MPOs to host public involvement activities in ADA-compliant facilities and allow individuals access to the information presented.

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991

Signed by President George H.W. Bush in December 1991, the [Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act](#) (ISTEA) established metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) as they exist today. ISTEA also authorized \$155 billion in highway and transit funding over fiscal years 1992-1997.

Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21) of 1998

The [Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century \(TEA-21\)](#) of 1998 authorized the Federal surface transportation programs of highways, highway safety, and transit from 1998 to 2003.

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equality Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005

The [Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equality Act: A Legacy for Users](#) or SAFETEA-LU, signed into law by President George W. Bush, was a federal transportation bill that

authorized the federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period, 2005-2009.

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) of 2012

[MAP-21](#), the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century, was a law that authorized federal surface and transportation spending and programs. Signed by President Obama, the law expired in September 2014.

Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) of 2015

President Obama signed the 2015 [Fixing American’s Surface Transportation \(FAST\) Act](#), the federal legislation that provided long-term funding certainty, outlined the public involvement requirements and provided long-term funding certainty for MPOs through Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020. In terms of public involvement, the FTA summarized the requirements as follows: “A metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is required to engage in a metropolitan planning process that creates opportunities for public involvement, participation, and consultation,” including throughout the development of its long-range RTP and its TIP. Further, as mandated, the MPO is to provide “adequate public notice of public participation activities; review and comment at key decision points in the development of the [RTP] and TIP; and multiple, accessible participation formats, including electronic and in-person.”

MPOs are also required to “develop a collaborative and comprehensive Public Participation Plan, in full collaboration with the public and stakeholder communities, to be used in the development of the [RTP] and TIP, as well as to frame the strategies for public and stakeholder communication and collaboration in all phases of the planning process.” To allow the public ample time to review and provide feedback, the MPO must make the PIP available for a 45-day comment period. The comments received are to be documented.

When holding public meetings, the locations must be accessible and convenient if being held in person. Further, sufficient notice must be given, with information available online. The notices must also solicit the needs of the traditionally underserved population, and the MPO must thoroughly consider the input received.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) or Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021

Signed by President Biden in November 2021, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), is a \$1.0 trillion infrastructure bill. In addition to expanding infrastructure investment beyond transportation, it increases investment and provides long-term funding certainty into the transportation system through the federal fiscal year 2026.

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §450

The [Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §450](#), provides planning standards for transportation projects. Specifically, §450.316 states that an MPO must develop and abide by a participation plan that thoroughly engages the public, agencies, and other transportation stakeholders. Further, the federal law notes that the plan should address the MPO's procedures for notice of public participation activities, including how the MPO plans to reach all segments of the population, as well as how the MPO seeks to receive public comments.

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §771.111

According to the [Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §771.111](#), all states that receive federal highway funding must provide the public with "early and continuing opportunities" while a project is in the developmental stages to ensure that "social, economic, and environmental impacts" are identified. A public hearing must be held if a Federal-aid project requires substantial changes to right-of-way, road layouts, or functions, negatively impacts an abutting property, or results in any other significant impacts. The public must have reasonable notice of the public hearing. The notice must explain why the hearing is being held, such as the project's purpose, possible alternatives, anticipated impacts, and the procedures for receiving oral and written public comments.

Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations"

[Executive Order 12898](#), "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," directs federal agencies, including federally funded MPOs, to evaluate the health and environmental impacts of their proposed programs and actions on minority and underserved populations. Further, the order promotes nondiscrimination within programs. It ensures that communication related to human health and the environment is readily accessible, understandable, and translated into other languages "whenever practicable and appropriate."

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

[Executive Order 13166](#), "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," relates to the public engagement of individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP). The order states that a "Federal agency shall prepare a plan to improve access to its federally conducted programs and activities by eligible LEP persons." The order gives an agency substantial freedom when crafting its LEP plan. However, to assist, the U.S. Department of Justice issued a policy guidance document, "Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - National Origin Discrimination Against Persons with Limited English Proficiency," also known as the [2002 LEP Guidance](#).

Executive Order 13985, “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government”

[Executive Order 13985](#), “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government,” was issued on the first day of the Biden-Harris administration. The order states that converging economic, health, and climate crises have exposed and exacerbated inequities. The Biden administration will pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, particularly by fighting systemic racism. By promoting the federal government's equality, we can generate chances to strengthen historically neglected neighborhoods that benefit everyone.

APPENDIX D. SJTPO SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENT POLICY

The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) is a government agency that guides the transportation planning process in Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. SJTPO utilizes social media platforms, the primary platforms being Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, to provide an opportunity to inform interested parties on matters regarding SJTPO.

The following information may be posted on applicable social media pages:

- SJTPO Policy Board meetings and agendas
- Information as it relates to major planning documents, such as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Long Range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Release of Request for Proposals (RFPs)
- Outreach event information and images
- Roadway-related information and statistics
- *On the Go* publications
- Other information, as deemed appropriate by SJTPO staff.

SJTPO encourages the public to share thoughts related to regional transportation on these platforms with the understanding that the comments and opinions expressed do not reflect SJTPO or its employees. All public comments on SJTPO's social media platforms are reviewed and screened in accordance with this policy and may be taken down if deemed necessary.

External User Guidelines

- SJTPO does not allow graphic, obscene, explicit, racial, or otherwise discriminatory comments or submissions, nor does the agency allow comments that are abusive, hateful, or intended to defame anyone or any organization.
- SJTPO does not endorse, support, or promote any private or commercial entity or the information, products, or services on websites that may be reached through external links from SJTPO's social media pages.
- SJTPO does not allow comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity.
- All SJTPO social media authors and public commentators must be identified. Anonymous postings are not allowed. Personal responsibility for comments is assumed according to the username and any information provided.
- SJTPO reviews all comments and reserves the right to remove inappropriate messages.

As social media is a fast-evolving means of public interface, this policy statement is subject to amendment or modification at any time to ensure its continued use is consistent with its intended purpose as a limited forum. Questions or concerns regarding SJTPO's presence in

various social media channels should be directed to Melissa Melora at mmelora@sjtpo.org or (856) 794-1941.

APPENDIX E. DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS REQUEST FORM

The Documents and Records Request form is not a New Jersey Open Public Records Act (OPRA) form, as SJTPO Legal Counsel determined SJTPO is not subject to the Act.

SJTPO makes all final plans, programs, and studies produced by the organization available for examination on its website (www.sjtpo.org) and at the SJTPO office upon request.

SJTPO also makes certain documents available for in-library reviewing at select libraries (see [Appendix B](#)). These documents include the Public Involvement Plan (PIP), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Access for All Plan, Congestion Management Plan (CMP), Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, Title VI Implementation Plan, and Transportation Conformity. To be mindful of library staff resources and limited space, document appendices (unless necessary), executive summaries, and amendments, if applicable, will not be printed and transmitted to the libraries. Language is included in the Table of Contents, informing readers that these materials can be accessed on the plan-specific webpages (i.e., if an amendment is made to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the amendment will be available on the SJTPO website (www.sjtpo.org/UPWP)).

If you are unable to view documents on SJTPO's website (www.sjtpo.org), the SJTPO office, or at select libraries in the SJTPO region, you may request noncolor copies, where practical. Copy fees are \$0.05 per letter page or \$0.07 per legal page. Copies may be picked up at the SJTPO office for no additional charge or mailed at the receiver's expense. SJTPO may waive totals under \$1.00. The receiver must pay printing and postage costs before mailing. Checks or money orders must be made out to the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA). Cash is not accepted. Interested parties can make a request by completing the form below, filling out an [online form](#), or by calling (856) 794-1941.

The Documents and Records Request Form can be found on the next page.



South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization

*Serving Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland,
and Salem Counties since 1993.*

Leonard Desiderio, *Chairman*

Benjamin H. Laury, *Vice Chairman*

817 East Landis Avenue, 2nd Floor
Vineland, New Jersey 08360

www.sjtpo.org
(856) 794-1941
(856) 794-2549 (fax)

Jennifer Marandino, P.E.
Executive Director

John W. Risley, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Access to Documents and Records Form

Please complete and send to SJTPO by email (info@sjtpo.org), U.S. Mail, fax, or in-person at SJTPO's office.

Date requested: _____

Request submitted by: Email U.S. Mail Fax In-person

Name of Requester (Required): _____

Street Address (Required): _____

City/State/Zip (Required): _____

Telephone (Optional): _____

Email (Optional): _____

Records Requested: *Please provide as much specific detail as possible so that SJTPO can identify the information. Please use additional sheets if necessary.*

Do you want to be notified in advance if the cost exceeds \$10.00? Yes No

For SJTPO Use Only

Date Received by: _____

Response Deadline: _____ Date Response Provided: _____

Executive Director Signature: _____

APPENDIX F. TRANSPORTATION CONTACTS

The ensuing is an excerpt from SJTPO's Public Engagement Guide, viewable at www.sitpo.org/EngagementGuide.

SJTPO Subregions

Atlantic County

Department of Regional Planning and Development

Phone: (609) 645-5898

www.atlantic-county.org

Cape May County

Planning Department

Phone: (609) 465-1080

www.capemaycountynj.gov

Cumberland County

Department of Planning

Phone: (856) 453-2175

www.co.cumberland.nj.us

Salem County

Planning Board

Phone: (856) 935-7510 x8414

www.salemcountynj.gov

City of Atlantic City

Department of Planning and Development

Phone: (609) 347-5300

www.acnj.gov

City of Vineland

Division of Planning

Phone: (856) 794-4000

www.vinelandcity.org

Implementing Agencies

Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA)

P.O. Box 71

New Castle, Delaware 19720

Phone: (302) 571-6300

www.drba.net

New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT)

P.O. Box 600

Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0600

Phone: (609) 530-2000

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation>

New Jersey Transit (NJ TRANSIT)

One Penn Plaza East

Newark, New Jersey 07105

24-hour transit information: (973) 275-5555

www.njtransit.com

New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJTA)

P.O. Box 5042

Woodbridge, New Jersey 07095-5042

Phone: (732) 750-5300

www.njta.com

South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA)

P.O. Box 351

Hammonton, New Jersey 08037

Phone: (609) 965-6060

www.sjta.com

Local Public Transportation Services

Atlantic County Transportation Unit

201 Shore Road – Rear Building, 2nd Floor

Northfield, New Jersey 08225

Phone: (609) 645-7700

www.atlantic-county.org/intergenerational-services

Local Public Transportation Services (Continued)

Cape May County Fare Free Transportation

4 Moore Road
Cape May Court House, New Jersey 08210
Phone: (609) 889-3700
www.capemaycountynj.gov/446/Fare-Free-Transportation

Cumberland Area Transit System

800 East Commerce Street
Bridgeton, New Jersey 08302
Phone: (856) 691-7799
www.co.cumberland.nj.us/aging/CATS

Cumberland County Dept. of Workforce Development

P.O. Box 1500
3322 College Drive
Vineland, New Jersey 08362-1500
Phone: (856) 696-5660
www.co.cumberland.nj.us/workforcedevelopment

Mid-Atlantic States Career and Education Center (Salem County)

111 South Broadway
Pennsville, New Jersey 08070
Phone: (856) 514-2200
wegrowpeople.org

NJ TRANSIT Access Link

One Penn Plaza East, 7th Floor
Phone: +1 (800) 955-ADA1 (2321)
TTY: +1 (800) 955-6765
<https://www.njtransit.com/accessibility/access-link-ada-paratransit>

Pearl Transit (Salem County)

105 Spillway Drive
Salem, New Jersey 08079
Phone: (856) 279-2000

Salem County Office on Aging and Disability Services

110 5th Street, Suite 900
Salem, New Jersey 08079
Phone: (856) 339-8644
health.salemcountynj.gov/human-services/office-on-aging

Federal Partners

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) New Jersey Division

840 Bear Tavern Road, Suite 202
West Trenton, NJ 08628
Phone: (609) 637-4200
www.fhwa.dot.gov/njdiv

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region II

One Bowling Green, Room 428
New York, New York 10004
Phone: (212) 668-2170
www.transit.dot.gov/about/regional-offices

Transportation Management Association (TMA)

Cross County Connection

4A Eves Drive, Suite 114
Marlton, New Jersey 08053
Phone: (856) 596-8228
www.driveless.com

Travel and Traffic

511NJ

Phone: Dial 511
www.511nj.org

APPENDIX G. KNOWING WHO TO CONTACT

The following information is taken from SJTPO's Public Engagement Guide, which is available on the Public Engagement Guide webpage (www.sjtpo.org/Guide).

From time to time, we all experience issues with the transportation system. We may notice a pothole, a damaged sign, a malfunctioning signal, or overgrown vegetation that blocks the view of an intersection, or we may have a suggestion to improve a roadway or intersection. Knowing the proper organization to contact is the difference between getting an issue resolved and continuing to be frustrated. This information is meant as a starting point to help identify the correct organization to contact. Your specific issue may best be addressed by speaking to local public works staff or attending a board or committee meeting.

State-Owned Roadways

The State owns and is responsible for 394 miles of interstate highways (such as Interstate 295), US highways (such as Route 40), and State highways (such as Route 49) in our region. Any roadways with the signage types shown at right are in the jurisdiction of the State of New Jersey. The state generally maintains the intersection when a state-owned roadway intersects with a county or municipal roadway. For an issue on one of these roadways, contact the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) at 1-800-Pothole or visit <https://www.njdotproblemreporting.com/> for the online form.



Authority-Owned Roadways

Authorities own and operate three significant roadways in our region. These roadways are separate from the state-owned roadways managed by NJDOT. The Garden State Parkway and New Jersey Turnpike are owned by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (www.njta.com/), which can be reached at (732) 750-5300. The Atlantic City Expressway is owned by the South Jersey Transportation Authority (www.sjta.com/sjta/), which can be reached at (609) 965-6060.



County-Owned Roadways

Counties own and are responsible for all roadways numbered in the 500s, 600s, and 700s, which total over 1,400 miles in our region. Any roadways marked with signs similar to the one shown here are owned and maintained by a county. Where a county-owned roadway intersects with a state roadway, the state generally maintains the intersection. However, the county generally maintains the intersection where a county route intersects with a municipal roadway. On the next page are contacts for the county planning departments in our region.



Municipally-Owned Roadways

Municipalities generally own and are responsible for all of the roadways not addressed above. With over 3,200 miles of roads, if the roadway does not have any of the signage previously shown, it is likely owned by a municipality. Where a municipally owned roadway intersects with a county or state roadway, the county or state generally maintains the intersection. With 68 municipalities in the SJTPO region alone, we cannot list contacts for each municipality here, but the State maintains a list of municipal websites (www.state.nj.us/nj/gov/county/localgov.html).

APPENDIX H. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

The comment period for the Draft 2024 PIP was open from Tuesday, March 12, 2024, through Friday, April 26, 2024.

SJTPO hosted a hybrid (in-person and virtual) public meeting on Wednesday, April 10, 2024. The public meeting recording is available to view on the [SJTPO YouTube channel](#).

Given that no comments were received prior to the public meeting or at the public meeting, SJTPO created an online survey to gain a better understanding of how it could strengthen its public outreach efforts. The 11-question survey was available from Friday, April 12, 2024, through Friday, April 26, 2024. The survey was distributed via the SJTPO e-list and social media (Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn), posted to the PIP and Public Comment Period webpages, and emailed to county partners and members of the Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC) for distribution to their audiences. The final results from the survey are included below, and screenshots of the survey can be found on the following pages.


- Question 1: Have you attended any SJTPO public meetings in the past year?
 - 80% indicated that they have not attended a meeting in the past year, whereas 20% indicated that they have attended a meeting in the past year.
- Question 2: Why were you interested in attending the SJTPO public meetings?
 - 50% indicated that the public meeting topics were of interest. 25% indicated they could easily attend because they had no prior commitments. 25% indicated that they attended because they wanted it known that Upper Township needs a bike path.
- Question 3: Do you prefer to participate in public meetings in person or virtually?
 - 80% of respondents indicated they prefer to participate both in person or virtually, whereas 20% prefer to participate virtually.
- Question 4: What times work best for you to attend public meetings?
 - The majority of respondents indicated that early evening (4:00 PM to 6:00 PM) is the best time for them to attend public meetings. The next best time to attend is late evening (6:00 PM to 8:00 PM). Early morning (8:00 AM to 10:00 AM), early afternoon (noon to 2:00 PM), and mid-afternoon (2:00 PM to 4:00 PM) were tied, with one response for each option. No one voted for the mid-morning option (10:00 AM to noon).
- Question 5: How do you usually find out about SJTPO public meetings?

- 60% of respondents noted that they find out about SJTPO public meetings through social media (Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn). The remaining 40% find out about SJTPO public meetings through the SJTPO e-list.
- Question 6: How important is it that food is offered to you at SJTPO public meetings?
 - 60% indicated that being offered food is very unimportant. 40% indicated that being offered is somewhat unimportant.
- Question 7: If having food offered to you at SJTPO public meetings is important, what types of foods do you think should be provided? Examples include mini sandwiches, individual chip bags, and juice boxes.
 - Of those who answered this open-ended question, one responded that water and a fun snack would be a nice offering. Another responded that they would like to see fruit offered at public meetings.
- Question 8: How important is it that childcare is offered at SJTPO public meetings?
 - 80% of respondents indicated that offering childcare at SJTPO public meetings is very unimportant, whereas 20% indicated that childcare being offered is neither very important nor very unimportant.
- Question 9: If having childcare offered to you at SJTPO public meetings is important, what types of childcare activities do you think should be provided? Examples include coloring, games, or puzzles.
 - Of those who answered this open-ended question, one responded and listed multiple examples, including that attendees could bring their own games or a reading circle or art project, which may be nice. The other respondent listed games or puzzles as activities for children.
- Question 10: How important is it that you are financially compensated for attendance at SJTPO public meetings?
 - 60% of respondents indicated that it was very unimportant for them to be financially compensated for attending SJTPO public meetings. 20% reported that being financially compensated for attending SJTPO public meetings was somewhat unimportant. The remaining 20% reported that being financially compensated for attending SJTPO public meetings was neither very important nor very unimportant.
- Question 11: If being financially compensated for attending SJTPO public meetings is important, what types of compensation should be offered? Examples include a gift card for participation or reimbursement for modest travel-related mileage.
 - One respondent answered this open-ended question. This person stated that no gift cards should be provided. SJTPO should stand on the merit of the content. However, themed food might be good to tie into the content, especially if the meeting is a general meeting.

In addition to the survey, comments were able to be submitted via the following methods:

- **Online comment Form:** www.sjtpo.org/PIP
- **Email:** PIP@sjtpo.org
- **Direct message** on Facebook (www.facebook.com/SJTPO) or Twitter (www.twitter.com/SJTPO)
- **Fax:** 856-794-2549
- **Mail:** PIP Comments, C/O Melissa Melora, 817 East Landis Avenue, 2nd Floor, Vineland, NJ 08360

Strengthening SJTPO's Public Outreach Efforts

B *I* U  

SJTPO staff is in the process of updating its [Public Involvement Plan](#) (PIP), which documents the rules SJTPO will follow and identifies methods that SJTPO will utilize to ensure that planning efforts include the region's public to the greatest degree reasonably possible. The questions below have been created to help staff gain a better understanding of how it can strengthen its public outreach efforts. If you prefer to answer the questions by phone, please call the SJTPO office at (856) 794-1941 and ask for Melissa Melora, the Public Outreach Coordinator. A summary of responses may be included in the Final 2024 PIP. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Have you attended any SJTPO public meetings in the past year? *

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Why were you interested in attending the SJTPO public meetings?

- Topic of interest
- No prior commitments/easily able to attend
- Other...

Do you prefer to participate in public meetings in person or virtually? *

- In person
- Virtually
- Both in person and virtually

What times work best for you to attend public meetings? *

- Early morning (8:00 AM to 10:00 AM)
- Mid-morning (10:00 AM to Noon)
- Early afternoon (Noon to 2:00 PM)
- Mid-afternoon (2:00 PM to 4:00 PM)
- Early evening (4:00 PM to 6:00 PM)
- Late evening (6:00 PM to 8:00 PM)

How do you usually find out about SJTPO public meetings? *

- Subscriber of SJTPO email list
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)
- Flyer prepared by SJTPO
- Word of mouth
- Other...

How important is it that food is offered to you at SJTPO public meetings? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Unimportant

If having food offered to you at SJTPO public meetings is important, what types of foods do you think should be provided? Examples include mini sandwiches, individual chip bags, and juice boxes.

Long answer text

How important is it that childcare is offered at SJTPO public meetings? *

Very important 1 2 3 4 5 Very unimportant

If having childcare offered to you at SJTPO public meetings is important, what types of childcare activities do you think should be provided? Examples include coloring, games, or puzzles.

Long answer text

.....

How important is it that you are financially compensated for attendance at SJTPO public meetings? *

Very important 1 2 3 4 5 Very unimportant

If being financially compensated for attending SJTPO public meetings is important, what types of compensation should be offered? Examples include a gift card for participation or reimbursement for modest travel-related mileage.

Long answer text

.....

APPENDIX I. POLICY BOARD RESOLUTION

SOUTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RESOLUTION 2405-10: Adopting the SJTPO Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

WHEREAS, the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated under Federal law for the southern region of New Jersey, including Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties; and

WHEREAS, SJTPO is responsible for the development and implementation of a plan that describes its public involvement process and how it involves the public in SJTPO's various planning documents and programs; and

WHEREAS, SJTPO's current Public Involvement Plan was adopted on September 25, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Planning Regulations require that the Public Involvement Plan be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, the Public Involvement Plan was updated to better clarify SJTPO's public outreach process and reflect modifications to its best practices for incentivizing public outreach based on updated guidance from federal partners; and

WHEREAS, the latest version of the Public Involvement Plan identifies a change to the public meeting requirements associated with the Congestion Management Process; and

WHEREAS, the list of libraries where specific documents are sent for in-library viewing was refined to include at least one library per county; and

WHEREAS, a 45-day public comment period was held from March 12, 2024, to April 26, 2024, meeting the required minimum 45-day public comment period associated with the Public Involvement Plan; and

WHEREAS, a hybrid (in-person and virtual) public meeting was held on April 10, 2024 with light refreshments offered to attendees participating in person in appreciation of their commitment to the transportation planning process and in recognition of the public meeting overlapping with dinner; and

WHEREAS, members of the public, including members of disadvantaged communities, affected public agencies, private transportation providers, and all interested parties have had the opportunity to participate and have their views considered in the development of the revisions to the SJTPO Public Involvement Plan; and

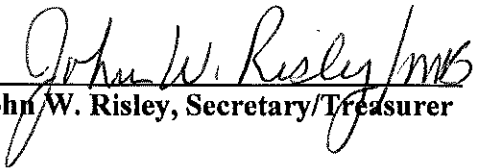
WHEREAS, SJTPO created an online survey to understand better how it could strengthen its public outreach efforts given that no comments were received before or after the public meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Policy Board of the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization hereby adopts the SJTPO Public Involvement Plan.

BE IT, FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Policy Board authorizes the Executive Director to review and approve subsequent changes to the Public Involvement Plan, as needed, to adhere to federal guidance, and to implement the Public Involvement Plan accordingly.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct and true copy of a resolution adopted by the Policy Board of the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization at its meeting on May 28, 2024.


John W. Risley, Secretary/Treasurer