Public Involvement Plan

NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 22, 2022

PROGRAM, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (PFAC)

RESOLUTION #548
2022 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley; and

WHEREAS, per 23 CFR 450.316 (a), the MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.; and

WHEREAS, the input and participation of the public is critical to transportation planning and investment decision-making and to developing Regional Transportation Plans, Transportation Improvement Programs and other federally required planning products; and

WHEREAS, NYMTC has developed the draft 2022 Public Involvement Plan as an update and enhancement of its 2019 Plan developed for the same purpose; and

WHEREAS, the draft 2022 Public Involvement Plan is guided by specific public involvement goals and presents outreach practices and enhanced strategies to accomplish those goals; and

WHEREAS, the 2022 Public Involvement Plan fully meets the requirements set forth in 23 CFR 450.316 and has been publicly reviewed for 45 days, as required.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that PFAC adopts NYMTC's draft 2022 Public Involvement Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that PFAC directs NYMTC staff to implement the practices and strategies in the Plan for the metropolitan transportation planning process.

This resolution shall take effect on the twenty-second day of September two thousand and twenty-two.

ADOPTED: September 22, 2022

"I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of Resolution #548, 2022 Public Involvement Plan, and was motioned by Kelly Sheehan, representing the Mid-Hudson South Transportation Coordinating Committee, and seconded by Jack Schmidt, representing the New York City Transportation Coordinating Committee. This Resolution was adopted and passed unanimously."

Lynn Weiskopf

Lynn Weiskopf, PFAC Chair

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Introduction

Transportation is a major factor in the quality of life and economic vitality of any city, state, or municipality. It becomes an even greater factor in a region as complex as the New York Metropolitan region, where the stewardship of the transportation system requires extensive coordination among the major transportation providers. These include state and city agencies, authorities, and county governments. The federal government recognized this need when it required that urban areas over 50,000 in population establish a metropolitan planning organization (MPO). An MPO functions as a council of governments, overseeing the distribution of transportation funds in a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive fashion.

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) was established in 1982 and it is the designated MPO for New York City, Long Island, and the Lower Hudson Valley. Some 12 million people live in this region, which represents 64.48% of New York State's population based on 2020 Census counts. The size of this population **makes NYMTC the second largest MPO in the country**, following the Southern California Association of Governments. NYMTC is responsible for selecting projects and enabling the **distribution of tens of billions of dollars in federal, state, and local funds for transportation investments** in roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects.

Public input is an important consideration for NYMTC as it undertakes its project selection and long-term planning responsibilities. Every day, people in the NYMTC region are acutely aware of how well the transportation system is working – and areas for potential improvement – with knowledge and insight into the needs of their communities. Finding better ways to interact with the people who live in, work in, and travel to the NYMTC planning area will improve awareness of

How to reach NYMTC

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- Like us on Facebook at Facebook.com/NYMTC
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- Like us on LinkedIn at Linkedin.com/company/nymtc
- Send email comments to nymtc-web@dot.ny.gov
- Write to us:
  New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
  25 Beaver Street, Suite 201
  New York, NY 10004

What is a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)?

Federal planning regulations (23 USC 134(d)) require the designation of an MPO for urbanized areas with populations of more than 50,000 individuals. MPOs are regional councils consisting of state and local elected officials, officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation within the metropolitan area, including representation by providers of public transportation, and appropriate state transportation officials. MPOs coordinate a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process.

transportation problems and needs.

Federal regulations require NYMTC to develop a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) that is inclusive and robust and seeks engagement of a broad range of interested parties in the transportation planning process. Best practices among MPOs nationwide include increasingly more innovative methods to carry out this engagement. These best practices include combining traditional outreach methods with new opportunities made available through digital communication technologies, as well as new approaches to engaging diverse communities.

Through this PIP, NYMTC has updated the strategies it uses to expand and augment outreach practices in the context of NYMTC's Shared Vision for Regional Mobility, as presented in its Federal Fiscal Years 2022-2050 Regional Transportation Plan, titled *Moving Forward, Your Region Connected*. This PIP also includes background information on NYMTC's organizational make-up, mission, key products, and regulatory responsibilities.

NYMTC's PIP will be reviewed periodically to determine its effectiveness. NYMTC will hold a forty-five (45) day public review and comment period before the adoption of the PIP. Copies of the document are available on NYMTC's website, www.nymtc.org, via social media, in its office, and by request.

NYMTC Background

What is the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC)?

NYMTC is the designated MPO for the five boroughs of New York City; Nassau, and Suffolk counties on Long Island; and Westchester, Rockland, and Putnam counties in the Lower Hudson Valley. NYMTC provides a collaborative planning forum to address transportation-related issues, develop regional plans, and make decisions on the use of transportation funds for its planning area.

NYMTC is comprised of nine voting principal members and seven advisory members who make up the Council. The Council meets annually to address issues relating to NYMTC's requirements under federal planning regulations and consider regional transportation issues and needs, as well as any related business.

In addition, the principal and advisory members designate representatives for NYMTC's **Program, Finance and Administration Committee (PFAC)**, which is responsible for overseeing the organization's day-to-day activities and acting on NYMTC business delegated to it by the Council.

NYMTC is also comprised of three geographically based standing committees known as Transportation Coordinating Committees (TCCs):

- **New York City TCC**, which includes the five boroughs of New York City;
- **Mid-Hudson South TCC**, which includes Westchester, Rockland, and Putnam counties, and
- **Nassau/Suffolk TCC**, which includes those counties.

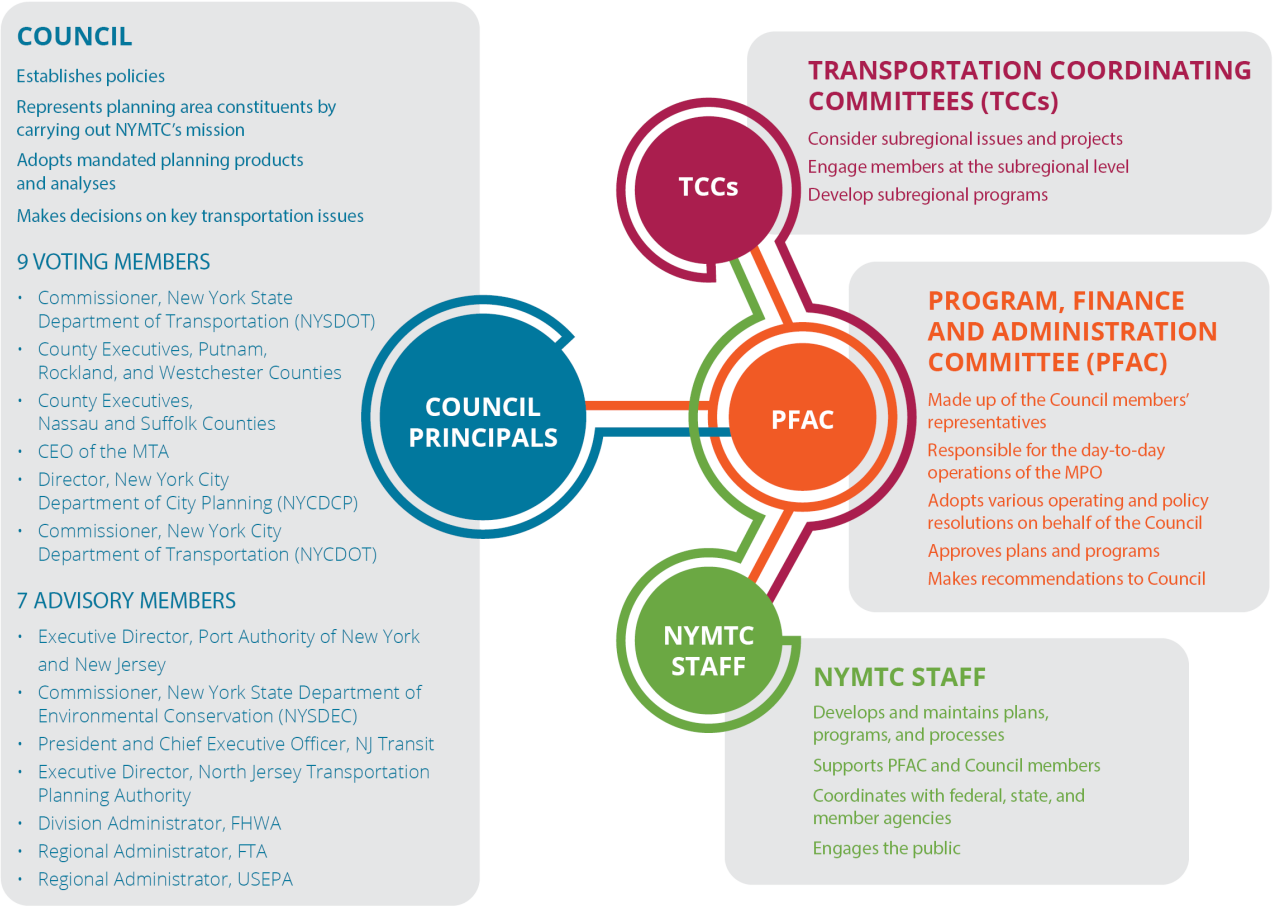
The TCCs are responsible for developing and recommending transportation plans and programs within their respective subregional planning areas.

NYMTC's staff is comprised of a Central Staff and staffs which support the TCCs. The work program of the Central Staff and TCC staff is determined annually by the members through the adoption of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). NYMTC Central Staff is housed in the headquarters office in lower Manhattan and coordinates regional activities that support the responsibilities of PFAC and the Council, as well as the development of the mandated planning products. The TCC staffs are housed in New York State DOT regional offices and oversee activities that support the responsibilities of the TCCs.

What is NYMTC's Mission?

- To serve as the **collaborative forum** to address transportation-related issues from a **regional perspective**;
- **Facilitate informed decision-making** within the Council by providing sound technical decisions;
- Ensure the region is positioned to **capture the maximum federal funds** available to achieve the goals of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Regional Transportation Plan (the Plan), and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); and
- Focus the collective planning activities of all Council members to achieve **a shared regional vision.**

NYMTC Organization Structure



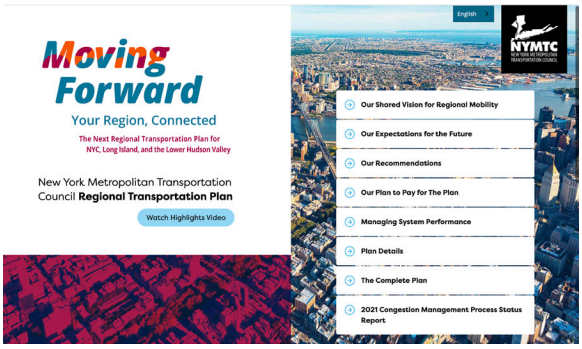
NYMTC's Required Planning Products

NYMTC studies existing transportation networks, forecasts future needs, and maximizes the planning activities of its member agencies by pooling resources to develop a shared strategic vision for transportation in the region.

NYMTC produces several key products used to guide the development, maintenance, and operation of facilities, and funding of transportation projects in the region. Public input is critical to the development of each of these products.

- A long-range **Regional Transportation Plan** (the Plan) provides a vision of the region's transportation system and needs over a minimum 20-year planning horizon. The Plan establishes priorities for transportation investments. The Plan is updated every four years. In 2021, NYMTC adopted its current Plan titled *Moving Forward, Your Region Connected*.
- A medium-range **Transportation Improvement Program** (TIP) identifies all proposed federally funded transportation improvement projects for various modes and facilities.
- An annual **Unified Planning Work Program** (UPWP) defines the planning priorities in the region, describing all transportation-related planning activities anticipated within a given year.
- **Transportation Conformity Determinations** include regional emissions analyses of mobile sources of pollutants identified by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. Conformity determinations include all transportation projects in designated non-attainment areas which impact travel capacity, and they are undertaken for each update of the Plan and the TIP.
- A **Congestion Management Process** (CMP) forecasts traffic congestion at the county and regional levels in NYMTC's planning area that inform strategies and projects in the Plan and the TIP that mitigate congestion. A CMP Status Report is produced in conjunction with the adoption of each Plan.
- A **Public Involvement Plan** (PIP) includes recommendations for better involving the region's residents and employers in the transportation planning process and is routinely revised to address changing needs of the region.

These products are available on www.NYMTC.org.



NYMTC's Shared Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles

The state and local officials who make up NYMTC recognize that mobility—the ability of people and goods to move easily and safely to, from, and between locations—is crucial to the lives of people of all abilities who live in, work in, or visit the NYMTC planning area. Therefore, NYMTC aspires to (1) ensure that the mobility provided reaches everyone in a sustainable, healthy, and equitable manner; (2) invest efficiently for these transportation needs; and (3) respond effectively to changes in transportation and mobility needs and capabilities.

When these state and local officials come together as NYMTC, they form a regional council that is the federally required MPO for New York City, Long Island, and the Lower Hudson Valley. NYMTC will pursue a shared vision through the metropolitan transportation planning process built from the regional transportation plan. To do this, NYMTC envisions a transportation system that:

- Ensures the safety and security of people and goods across all uses and modes;
- Is maintained, operated, and coordinated to better enable inclusive, reliable, easy, accessible, and seamless travel across the region while striving to enhance equity in the services provided;
- Efficiently serves today's population and plans for the growing number of residents, workers, and increasing amount of goods;
- Minimizes its greenhouse gas emissions and other impacts on the environment, especially the effects of climate change; and
- Is resilient and can mitigate, adapt to, and respond to chronic and acute stresses and disruptions.

As NYMTC pursues these goals through the regional transportation planning process, the guiding principles described below inform its planning. NYMTC will:

- Consider the needs of all users in NYMTC's planning area throughout the planning process;
- Make the best use of federal resources for the regional transportation system and increase them where practical, while leveraging local resources as efficiently and effectively as possible;
- Monitor the performance of the regional transportation system as a means of prioritizing improvements and investments;
- Support multi-agency approaches that enhance the integration of independently operated components of the regional transportation system;
- Engage the public and community stakeholders; and
- Harness technological advancements to improve the transportation system.

These guiding principles inform NYMTC's approach to public involvement. They speak to NYMTC's commitment to engaging the public and community stakeholders as it pursues its shared vision. And they establish NYMTC's obligation to consider the needs of all users in NYMTC's planning area throughout the planning process.

Relevant Objectives for Public Involvement

The vision goals laid out in the vision statements above establish the parameters of the shared vision. Each have objectives and recommendations that are relevant to NYMTC's public involvement approach as defined through the guiding principles. Related program recommendations presented in *Moving Forward* may be carried out by member agencies or NYMTC staff.

Vision Goal 1: Safety and Security

A transportation system that ensures the safety and security of people and goods across all uses and modes.

Relevant Objective for Public Involvement

- Coordinate safety management, training, and education across jurisdictional borders.

Vision Goal 2: Reliable and Easy Travel

A transportation system that is maintained, operated, and coordinated to better enable inclusive, reliable, easy, accessible, and seamless travel across the region while striving to enhance equity in the services provided.

Relevant Objective for Public Involvement

- Promote equitable transportation opportunities for all populations regardless of age, ability, race, ethnicity, or income.

Vision Goal 3: Planning for Changing Demand

A transportation system that efficiently serves today's population and plans for the growing number of residents, workers, and increasing amount of goods.

Relevant Objective for Public Involvement

- Expand the reach of the system to Communities of Concern and emerging markets, addressing passenger transportation as well as access to goods and freight services.
- Encourage walking and biking, transit-oriented development, complete streets, parking and curb management, and other long-term sustainable land use strategies that support passenger and goods movement.

Vision Goal 4: Reducing Environmental Impact

A transportation system that minimizes its greenhouse gas emissions and other impacts on the environment, especially the effects of climate change.

Relevant Objective for Public Involvement

- Encourage alternatives to Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) trips.
- Encourage lower emissions alternatives to trucking.
- Promote responsible environmental stewardship in transportation projects.
- Address unequal impacts of transportation emissions on communities.

Vision Goal 5: Resiliency

A transportation system that is resilient and can mitigate, adapt to, and respond to chronic and acute stresses and disruptions.

Relevant Objective for Public Involvement

- Improve regional coordination on emergency and long-term responses to systemwide climate impacts.
- Enhance the transportation network's resiliency by increasing travel options and redundancies.

NYMTC and Public Involvement

NYMTC is committed to public involvement as it is essential to successful transportation planning. The more people and communities are involved, the better the result. Public participation is designed to involve people and groups that may be affected by a planning project, issue, or long-range plan, including those who are not aware they may be affected.

NYMTC's public involvement efforts strive to bring varied stakeholders into the process and enhance the level of collaboration and meaningful input. This ensures that future transportation investments reflect the needs, interests, and concerns of those who are most affected. NYMTC seeks to involve stakeholders in the development of all its planning products. This is done through public meetings and review periods, workshops, and webinars, informal "brown bag" presentations, open houses, its website, social media, and by regularly reaching out to interested and active members of the public to gather ideas and feedback. This input helps NYMTC find workable solutions to the challenges of planning the region's transportation future.

As the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic continues, NYMTC continues to maintain public outreach efforts safely. Virtual techniques, including online webinars, webcasts, and surveys, will take precedence when in-person meetings and events are not possible. NYMTC selects online, in-person, or a hybrid combination of public involvement based on the context of the setting, audience, and current social distancing policy to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the goals and strategies outlined in this PIP.

Requirements that Govern Public Involvement for MPOs

This PIP is guided by federal laws, regulations, and Executive Orders that govern public involvement procedures for MPOs including:

- Highway Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 450.316)
- Code of Federal Regulations Title 40 (CFR Title 40)
- Code of Federal Regulations Title 49 (CFR Title 49) for Transportation
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Environmental Justice (EJ) Executive Order 12898
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Executive Order 13166

For further details on these requirements, see Appendix C.

NYMTC Public Involvement Strategies

Below is a list of strategies and associated engagement elements NYMTC uses to achieve the shared vision and goals noted above. Each strategy is enhanced by a variety of public engagement elements targeted to the communities within which NYMTC engages. Additional information is available via the NYMTC Compendium of Agreements and Operating Procedures document.

NYMTC's Engagement Elements

Below each strategy are the current engagement elements and planned or enhanced outreach practices that NYMTC will undertake in support of the strategy.

STRATEGY 1

Provide a robust, creative, multi-pronged, and inclusive outreach process for all populations within the region, including employers, local municipalities, and tribal nations, with opportunities to engage in meaningful discussions between NYMTC and the public about transportation planning issues and activities.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 1A

Public Meetings

Ongoing year-round opportunities currently exist for all populations in the region to know about and participate in NYMTC's planning process. Meetings of NYMTC's committees and Advisory Working Groups, the NYMTC Regional Trends Series Brown Bag Seminars, technical study advisory committees and workshops, open houses, and public review meetings related to NYMTC's required planning products provide a rich variety of participation opportunities. The purpose of these meetings and events is to present and discuss information, solicit ideas and feedback, and gather input from the public on specific topics or plans. As discussed below, opportunities are provided at meetings for the public to comment and ask questions. Meeting information is available two weeks before the meeting and is listed on the NYMTC website calendar.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, and for any period when the public health situation may not allow in-person engagement, NYMTC has used and will continue to use alternative methods to meeting and engaging in person. Virtual and hybrid public meetings, workshops and focus groups have been the primary methods. These virtual events take place entirely online with options for participants to call into the meeting or join via the meeting platform which can be accessed using a web browser or cell phone application. Hybrid meetings are meetings or events that feature at least one group of in-person/face-to-face attendees connecting virtually with other meeting attendees. Virtual attendees joining a hybrid meeting can participate in the same way they would an entirely virtual meeting. The difference between hybrid meetings and virtual meetings is the fusion between the live event and the virtual event that creates different types of attendees.

During virtual and hybrid meetings, provisions are made for participants to voice any comments, suggestions, or questions, either through the webinar platform itself or through online polling platforms, such as Poll Everywhere. This is an audience response service that allows presenters to ask participants questions and receive

responses in real-time via cell phone or web browser. Both the question and the participants' responses are displayed live during the webinar.

Public Meetings of NYMTC's Principal Members and Standing Committees

Public meetings of NYMTC's principal members and its four standing committees are major avenues of participation in the workings of NYMTC and its planning process. The principal members meet as the NYMTC "Council" a minimum of once each year. Public meetings of NYMTC's PFAC are held typically every two months to act on NYMTC business as delegated by the Council. NYMTC's three geographically based TCCs meet publicly at a minimum during each development cycle for the TIP.

Agendas and materials distributed to the NYMTC members for each public Council and committee meeting are posted on the NYMTC website before the meeting, and additional copies are available at the meeting. Meeting minutes and a link to a recording of the meeting are posted on the NYMTC website two weeks after the meeting. These committee meetings are posted on NYMTC's YouTube channel.

Public Council and committee meetings are often attended by concerned citizens, commuter groups, advocacy and community groups, planners, engineers, business and labor leaders, academics, state, and federal agency representatives, neighboring MPO staff and members, and media representatives, among others. Public participants may address any transportation-related topic during time set aside for public comment during each meeting. Those wishing to provide public comment can sign up to speak via email or in person before the meeting, and a three-minute time limit is placed on the length of comments. All public comments received during these meetings are included in the meeting synopses. Written comments are responded to in coordination with the member agencies. See Engagement Element 1I below for more details regarding public comments.

Public Council and committee meetings are publicized through NYMTC's distribution list, social media posts, and the NYMTC website. A calendar of meetings, agendas, and minutes from previous meetings are available on the NYMTC website.

NYMTC offers simultaneous interpretation in other languages for these meetings upon request. Meeting agendas and materials can be translated using a widget on the NYMTC website.

NYMTC Committees and Advisory Working Groups

Permanent Committees	Ad Hoc Subgroups	Advisory Working Groups	Megaregional
Program, Finance and Administration Committee (PFAC) Transportation Coordinating Committees (TCCs) • New York City • Long Island • Lower Hudson Valley	Freight Regional Plan Active Transportation Demand Management Designated Recipients	Forecasting Freight Safety Mobility (regional and lower Hudson Valley)	Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum • Multi-State Freight Metropolitan Mobility Network (MMN)

Public Meetings of NYMTC's Advisory Working Groups

NYMTC has established several Advisory Working Groups that allow stakeholders and the public to get involved with NYMTC in specific topical areas. These Working Groups support NYMTC's planning efforts and data collection activities by providing guidance and advice to NYMTC's members in the development of projects, programs, and policies. At certain junctures, the Working Groups listed below hold meetings which may be open and accessible to the public. More information for each of these groups can be found at nymtc.org:

- **Forecasting Working Group**: Convened by PFAC to engage the NYMTC members, including NYSDOT, MTA, NYCDOT and the counties of Nassau, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, and Westchester, in the development of socio-economic and demographic forecasts for use in the development of the Plan.
- **Freight Transportation Working Group:** Established to expand and enhance the freight planning process in the region.
- **Safety Advisory Working Group** (SAWG): Created to facilitate interagency discussion, exchange information, address safety, and advise its members on issues dealing with transportation safety.
- **Metropolitan Mobility Network** (MMN): Established to advise and inform NYMTC on areas of Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO). An adjunct body, the Lower Hudson Valley Mobility Advisory Forum, has been established by NYMTC's Mid-Hudson South TCC.

NYMTC's Regional Trends Series Brown Bag Seminars

Continuing the commitment to keeping stakeholders throughout the region informed, NYMTC hosts Regional Trends Series Brown Bag Seminars. These informational meetings occur periodically around lunchtime for an hour. They offer people an opportunity to participate in presentation-style seminars given by experts, including presentations on transportation planning activities and studies undertaken by the NYMTC members. These experts discuss best practices in the transportation planning field, transportation policy, or innovative transportation

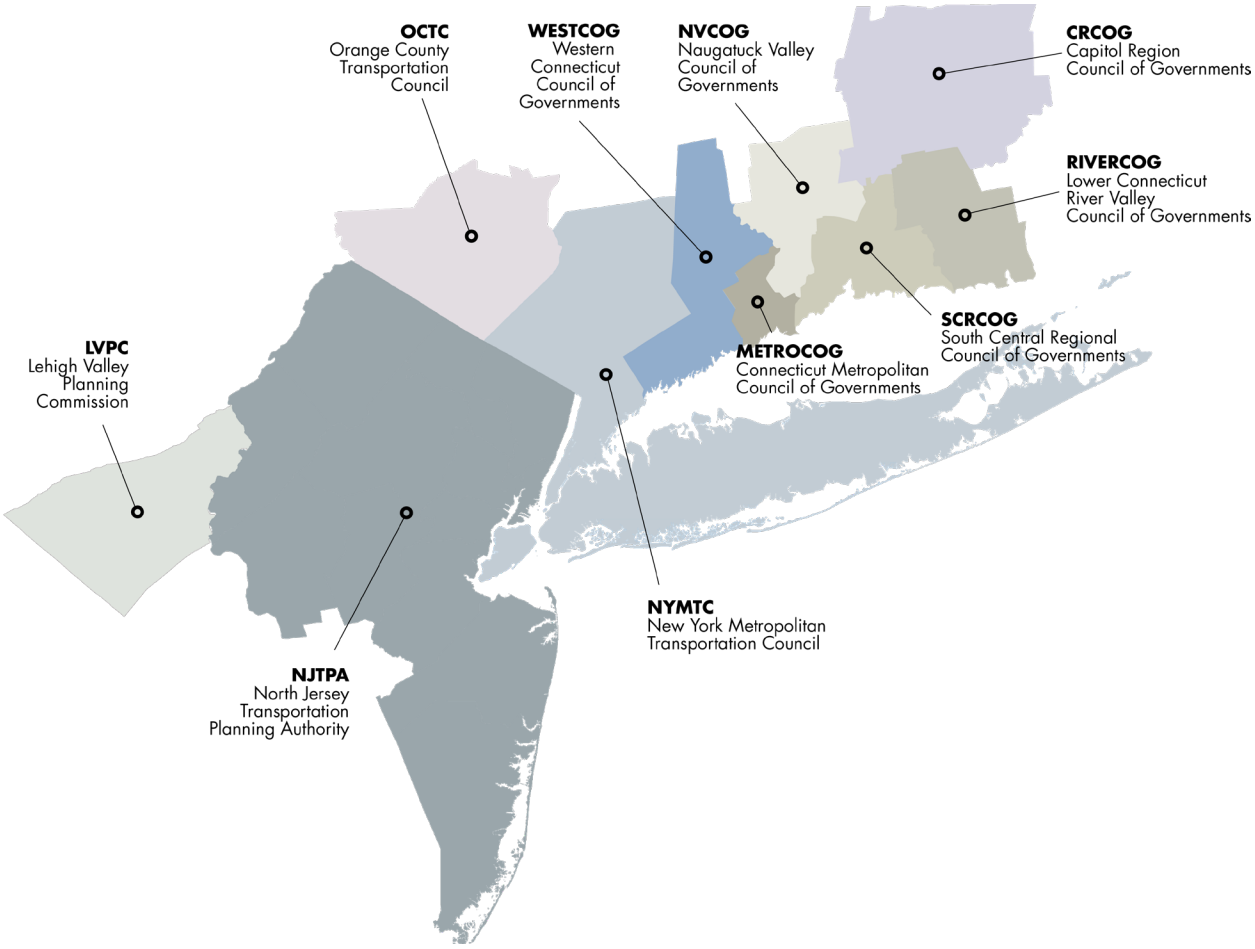
products and services impacting the NYMTC region. These seminars promote dialogue and information sharing among the presenter and participants. Presentations are typically 30-40 minutes, with the remainder of the time allotted for questions and comments by the audience members. These meetings are in-person and/or live streamed via Webex. All participants are given an opportunity to make comments and ask questions in person or via the Webex Chat function.

NYMTC Regional Trends Series Brown Bag Seminars are advertised on NYMTC's website, via social media, and via the mailing list, and webinar recordings of the meetings are provided on the NYMTC website and NYMTC's YouTube page.

Public Meetings of the MAP Forum

NYMTC is a member MPO of the Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum, which is a consortium of 10 MPOs and Councils of Government (COGs) in the multi-state New York City metropolitan region, including Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. MAP Forum members have entered into an agreement to better coordinate planning activities in the multi-state region. Public meetings of the MAP Forum and its working groups (currently freight and resiliency, as well as participation in the MMN) are open and accessible to the public. These meetings are hosted on a rotating basis by the member agencies of the MAP Forum for both in-person participation as well as virtual access. Information about these meetings is posted on the NYMTC website two weeks prior to the meeting date and distributed to its contact list.

New York Metropolitan Regional MPOs and COGs



Pop-up events

As a proposed future technique for public meetings, NYMTC will explore the use of "pop-up" events. Pop-ups are a powerful and cost-effective outreach technique for spreading the word and generating interest and visibility for NYMTC. They function as a mobile meeting to draw regional stakeholders who would typically not attend a formal public meeting. Pop-ups may take place during established events, such as festivals or farmers' markets, or at other gathering places such as transit hubs during peak travel times. In some cases, a pop-up may take place with specific community stakeholder groups. Pop-up events may contain NYMTC-related materials and interactive activities such as surveys and can travel to targeted public events throughout the region. Materials for a pop-up event may include an interactive banner or project materials like a bookmark or one-page fact sheet. These types of meetings have been used successfully for past Regional Transportation Plan outreach in neighboring MPO regions before COVID-19.

Focus Groups

For *Moving Forward*, NYMTC convened focus groups to ensure that diverse and representative input was obtained from Communities of Concern and users of coordinated human transportation services, within each of the NYMTC geographies. As proposed future public outreach techniques, NYMTC will continue to facilitate these types of smaller community meetings, to understand transportation issues, challenges, and needs for specific populations that need more targeted engagement.

Online Engagement

During the COVID-19 pandemic, NYMTC pivoted engagement programs to focus on remote and virtual forms of outreach, with great care to ensure that diverse and representative input could be obtained. As a proposed future technique, NYMTC will continue to explore and expand the use of online engagement platforms, to enhance the overall volume, quality, and diversity of feedback throughout the NYMTC planning area, and to complement in-person engagement.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 1B

Guidance Programs

In keeping with the recommendations of *Moving Forward*, guidance programs are a means to engage local municipalities in considering regional goals and strategies in a more local context. Policies and decisions made by 200 local municipalities in the NYMTC planning area both define and influence regional mobility needs. Guidance programs can also help to coordinate public information in the NYMTC planning area.

Based on NYMTC's Shared Vision for Regional Mobility, examples of guidance programs might include resources to coordinate and enhance equitable safety-related traffic programs in the vicinity of schools; or guidance to fully integrate suburban transit mapping and trip planning resources into regional public information portals. Additional guidance programs for each vision goal are highlighted in *Moving Forward*.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 1C

Education and Training Programs

Moving Forward also recommends the development of education and training programs as a means of public messaging and engaging local municipal professionals for sharing best practices and emerging techniques. For instance, *Moving Forward* recommends development of education and training programs to expand safety education programs and public awareness campaigns. Additional education and training programs are included in *Moving Forward.*

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 1D

Accessibility

Title VI

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, any agency receiving federal financial assistance is required to ensure that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. NYMTC's Title VI Program establishes a framework for compliance with Title VI and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities.

NYMTC's current Title VI Program considers and incorporates the needs of persons with disabilities in the planning process by ensuring the accessibility of meeting venues and online meeting platforms, which are accessible both by phone and online. Reasonable accommodations at meetings for persons who are disabled are provided to the greatest extent feasible with advance notice. Rich text format is employed for NYMTC's website.

As equity and inclusion are at the forefront of policy initiatives, NYMTC is exploring these practices as possible additions to its Title VI program:

- Enhanced public engagement practices;
- Improved translation services; and
- Improved website accessibility.

Limited English Proficiency and Language Access Program

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English must be able to participate in the planning process if they choose to do so. As a step toward a more inclusive planning process, NYMTC's Language Access Program provides translation services for people who are not fluent in English. The Language Access Program is a further enhancement to NYMTC's public involvement efforts to increase the accessibility of information about and input into the regional transportation planning process.

Translation to multiple languages via an online widget is available on www.nymtc.org. NYMTC translates its core products such as the UPWP, CMP, TIP, and Transportation Conformity into its Language Access Program languages, based on Census information. Real-time oral and ASL translation services is available for public meetings and workshops in person, at NYMTC's central office location, or via webinar upon request made verbally or in writing 72 hours prior to the meeting in question. In addition, NYMTC staff members are fluent in multiple languages and are available to serve as ambassadors to non-English speaking community members at public meetings and events.

NYMTC provides public notice of LEP assistance through the following mechanisms:

- Instructions on the NYMTC website and via phone message from the main phone number;
- Notices placed with local, non-English language media directed at individuals with LEP and via their languages; and
- Informational brochures distributed at public meetings, at the main office, and through NYMTC's distribution lists and lists of other related organizations.

Americans with Disabilities Act

In accordance with federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines, all public meetings conducted by NYMTC take place in locations that are accessible to persons with mobility limitations, as well as online via webinar. Language interpretation services, including American Sign

Language (ASL), are available upon request 72 hours prior to the start of the meeting. NYMTC makes every effort to ensure that people and groups are not disadvantaged by their level of access to online outreach platforms by providing language access services similar to those at in-person venues. NYMTC's online outreach platforms are also accessible via telephone. NYMTC is exploring additional means to improve accessibility.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 1E

Reaching out to Communities of Concern

As part of its planning practices, NYMTC has developed an approach to determine the locations of minority populations and low-income households, which are collectively identified as Communities of Concern (COC). NYMTC's Title VI program, which includes this methodology, assesses the impacts of its planning projects on these populations.

For the purpose of this assessment, COC in NYMTC's planning area are defined as census tracts that meet both of the thresholds related to minority status and income:

- Minority population, as defined in the U.S. Census, makes up more than 57 percent (the NYMTC planning area average) of the tract population; and
- More than 14 percent (the NYMTC planning area average) of the total population live in households at or below the poverty level as defined in the U.S. Census.

All census tracts within the boundaries of the NYMTC planning area are analyzed using the parameters described above.

As a key component of NYMTC's public involvement, NYMTC uses the Federal Transit Administration's *Circular 4702.1B Title VI Requirements and Guidelines* as guidance in developing its strategies for reaching out to COC.

Local Community Partners

Collaborating with local community-based organizations can enhance the depth of participation by community residents in the regional planning process. NYMTC has developed a network of partnerships with community leaders and community-based groups to increase public participation. This network assisted in the development of *Moving Forward* and provides an avenue for future engagement in assisting NYMTC in both expanding its outreach and increasing public input. Collaborating with local community partners can fill in gaps both geographically and demographically to ensure incorporation of broad-based input.

Engagement with Seniors and People with Disabilities

Older adults and those with disabilities have unique transportation needs. As the population of seniors increases, their mobility needs for services beyond the traditional automobile will increase as well. NYMTC's member agencies serve these populations, working with paratransit providers to better include these populations in transportation decision-making.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 1F

Media Engagement

NYMTC will continue to strive for greater interaction with the media to disseminate information and engage a wider level of participation. The NYMTC media list includes current points of contact for dissemination of media releases to publications in additional languages beyond English, per the Language Access Program. This list includes print and electronic media, as well as radio and television stations.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 1G

Stakeholders and Communication

NYMTC maintains communications with stakeholders that include, but are not limited to, government agencies and organizations, local elected officials, neighborhood groups, interested individuals, transportation advocates, civic organizations, private transportation providers, environmental justice organizations, and community service groups. NYMTC's planning area includes one federally- designated tribal nation, the Shinnecock Indian Nation, and one New York State recognized tribal nation, the Unkechaug Nation, which is seeking federal recognition. These tribal nations are included in NYMTC's outreach. Outreach databases currently include all the categories of stakeholders required by governing regulations for MPOs.

Individuals and organizations can sign up to receive communications via the website, via email, and at meetings and events, to receive information about NYMTC's activities, its products, public involvement opportunities, and regional studies and activities.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 1H

Product-Specific Outreach

Public participation is built into the development of the federally required planning products and analyses from beginning to end using the current methods and techniques described below. Additional information is available via the NYMTC Compendium of Agreements and Operating Procedures document.

Regional Transportation Plan (Plan)

NYMTC's Plan development features a public outreach program prior to drafting the Plan. These programs generally include the following outreach elements:

- Public workshops;
- Online surveys;
- Explanatory video;
- Focus groups; and
- Public advisory working groups.

NYMTC received significant input for the development of *Moving Forward* through these methods as well as feedback through social media from the public, community-based advocacy groups, COC, and other stakeholders. NYMTC member agencies also provided links to the Plan development on the individual agency websites to promote engagement.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

NYMTC seeks public input during TIP development cycles through public review meetings during the public comment period prior to adoption.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

NYMTC holds public review meetings during the annual UPWP comment period.

Congestion Management Process (CMP)

Public comment periods and public review meetings for CMP Status Reports are done in conjunction with those for Plan adoptions.

Transportation Conformity

NYMTC holds a public review meeting on Transportation Conformity Determinations during the public comment period prior to adoption.

Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

The PIP is updated every four years. A public review meeting is held during the 45-day comment period prior to adoption.

Title VI Program

NYMTC's Title VI program is updated at a minimum every four years. A public review meeting is held during the public comment period prior to adoption.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 1I

Public Comments

Public comment periods on NYMTC's products include timeframes and contacts for a response. The public is encouraged to submit comments/questions verbally, via e-mail, or in writing (verbal comments, although welcome, should be supported in writing) and in-person when NYMTC hosts review meetings. NYMTC documents all comments received, and responses to all comments are developed promptly in conjunction with member agencies.

Public comments received during review periods are shared with NYMTC's member agencies, if applicable, for consideration and response or action. Summaries are incorporated in the final documents.

Documents are available on NYMTC's website, www.nymtc.org, during public comment periods.

See Appendix B for a summary of public comment periods.

STRATEGY 2

Educate all populations within the region, including employers, local municipalities, and tribal nations, so they can purposefully participate, know how to provide input, and be encouraged to do so by:

- *Adopting strategic techniques to involve different audiences; and*
- *Developing a greater understanding of how NYMTC functions as an organization and the roles and responsibilities of Council members and staff.*

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 2A

Website

NYMTC's website explains the MPO planning process, makes products and analyses available for download, spatially displays data and information on programmed projects, and provides calendar information on meetings and events. It also serves as an archive for past products and materials. The site includes the Transportation Information Gateway (TIG), an interactive, collaborative website that provides NYMTC members and the public with an easily accessible online data warehouse. Users can use the TIG to locate, query, visualize, and download transportation planning data.

The website includes features to comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, as well as to engage LEP populations, including the following:

- Color contrast settings that ensure readability for users with low vision;
- Color settings on interactive maps to ensure enough contrast for people with color blindness;
- Accessibility-friendly labels on user interface elements and images throughout the site, such as the search bar and NYMTC logo;
- Alternative text tags on all News and Events images as well as numerous other images throughout the site to ensure they are accessible to screen readers;
- Semantic labels on form fields to allow for easy navigation and form completion with assistive devices;
- Applicable translation tool that allows the site to be translated into multiple languages; and
- Manual audits to ensure compliance.

The NYMTC website can also be used to publicize events and opportunities for comment on transportation planning activities of the NYMTC members.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 2B

Publications

NYMTC Video

NYMTC has a short video that has been prepared for *Moving Forward*. This video can be viewed by visiting nymtcmovingforward.org.

NYMTC Bookmark

NYMTC is creating a bookmark for use in in-person settings. The bookmark includes information about the website address; other contact information; and a QR code for viewing the NYMTC video.

NYMTC Notes

NYMTC periodically develops and distributes NYMTC Notes, a newsletter of news and activities, providing an update on regional NYMTC staff and member projects, successes, and meetings held and attended. It is advertised on the NYMTC website and on the NYMTC social media platforms and distributed via the NYMTC mailing list. NYMTC is exploring possibly replacing this newsletter with blog posts that could be e-blasted to the mailing list, as well as posted via social media.

Other Publications

NYMTC collects and analyzes data which are used in publications and reports that focus on improving the region's transportation infrastructure and identifying the future needs of the New York metropolitan area. Publications produced by NYMTC provide stakeholders with critical data related to mobility, infrastructure, financing, safety, and other essential planning topics. Reports, tables, and figures help identify needs and trends, and provide NYMTC with the tools to educate and inform the public on the needs of the region.

Sample publications include:

Regional Transportation Statistical Report

This report presents data spanning a 10-year period, providing a technical review of transportation and demographic trends in selected counties in the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region. The report contains statistical information related to mobility, infrastructure, financing, safety, and airport access, among other areas.

Hub Bound Travel

This annual document presents a detailed analysis of travel to and from the Manhattan Central Business District (CBD, or "Hub") both by person and by vehicle. The CBD is defined as that portion of Manhattan lying south of 60th Street. The data are collected on a typical fall business weekday.

Travel Patterns

NYMTC summarizes yearly, quarterly, and monthly weekday ridership on the region's buses, rail, subways, and ferries, and vehicular traffic crossing the area's waterway bridges.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 2C

Social Media

NYMTC's social media strategy is a low-cost, high-reach tool to augment traditional methods of reaching the public, while supplementing and reinforcing information. Social media provides a virtual way for citizens to directly engage on their own time with NYMTC's planning process and activities. It demonstrates that NYMTC is committed to full and transparent outreach to affected citizens and municipalities by providing a virtual mechanism for interacting with the public. NYMTC's social media campaign seeks to educate the public about the transportation planning process, engage stakeholders through timely notice of events, increase opportunities to provide input, and create awareness of regional transportation projects and activities.

NYMTC currently uses Facebook (facebook.com/NYMTC), Twitter (twitter.com/NYMTC), and LinkedIn (linkedin.com/company/nymtc) to provide relevant information and update the public on NYMTC activities. NYMTC regularly reposts information from member agency social media platforms. The social media posts have also featured products such as the Hub Bound annual report, including graphic representations of the data trends.

Analytics of varying degrees can be found on the three social media platforms employed by NYMTC. These data provide insight into the total engagement reach of each post, the number of impressions or times the content is shared or

displayed, and the link clicks for a post. Using this information, NYMTC continues to adapt and modify its social media strategy to effectively reach the region.

A potential additional social media tool that NYMTC will consider is Instagram, a user-friendly, visually focused format that drives visitors towards website content. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority has a robust Instagram feed as example: instagram.com/mta. This additional platform would assist NYMTC in reaching a younger audience of social media users.

Social Media Ads

NYMTC will continue to explore the use of social media advertisements to further the PIP goals. Facebook advertising can be a highly effective method for raising awareness of an agency or planning effort through the platform's ability to post highly targeted advertisements within users' social media feeds. Currently this type of advertising can be included in consultant contracts, as NYMTC is precluded from this type of paid advertisement.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 2D

Visualizations

Federal requirement 23 CFR § 450.316 directs that MPOs employ visualization techniques to develop and describe transportation plans and programs with the public, elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders. To promote improved understanding of existing or proposed transportation elements, these communications need to be in a clear and easily accessible format. Examples include GIS- or web-based surveys, inventories, maps, pictures, and/or displays identifying features such as roadway, transit, intermodal, and non-motorized transportation facilities, historic and cultural resources, natural resources, and environmentally sensitive areas.

NYMTC uses visualization techniques, such as ArcGIS online, to illustrate its mappable programs and plans. NYMTC researches best practices and software that can be employed to improve how NYMTC displays information visually in its public materials. When possible, mapping applications are used on NYMTC's website to locate projects in maps for planning products, such as the TIP.

As mentioned previously, www.nymtc.org features the TIG, which is an interactive tool that allows site visitors to see the TIP projects mapped across the region.

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT 2E

Speakers' Bureau

NYMTC staff offers presentations to civic organizations, clubs, schools, neighborhood associations, and other organizations to educate them on, and engage them in the transportation planning activities of the MPO. The speakers provide information on the purpose, process, and products of the MPO and seek continued participation and comments from the public.

As part of this PIP, NYMTC will explore more opportunities to work with schools to educate students at all levels about the transportation planning process, with specific emphasis on the educational institutions that are partners in the September 11th Memorial Scholarship Program.

STRATEGY 3

Evaluate current and ongoing public involvement activities on a periodic basis to identify successes and areas for improvement.

NYMTC quantitatively and qualitatively evaluates its public involvement activities on an on-going basis to determine the effectiveness of PIP techniques. Performance metrics that may periodically be reviewed include number of website visits, number and type of social media subscribers, number of social media posts, video viewings, survey responses, number of events, event attendees and number of comments, media releases, and media mentions.

NYMTC's PIP is a living document that will be continually assessed and updated based on trends in public involvement, evaluation of the effectiveness of NYMTC's outreach efforts, and changes to communication technologies.

Appendix A

Acronyms

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

ASL – American Sign Language

CBD – Central Business District

CFR – Code of Federal Regulations

CMP – Congestion Management Process

COC – Communities of Concern

COG – Council of Governments

EJ – Environmental Justice

FHWA – Federal Highway Administration

FTA – Federal Transit Administration

GIS – Geographic Information System

LEP – Limited English Proficiency

MAP – Metropolitan Area Planning as in 'MAP' Forum formed by NYMTC and four neighboring metropolitan planning organizations

MMN – Metropolitan Mobility Network

MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization

MTA – Metropolitan Transportation Authority

NYCDCP – New York City Department of City Planning

NYCDOT – New York City Department of Transportation

NYMTC – New York Metropolitan Transportation Council

NYSDEC – New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

NYSDOT – New York State Department of Transportation

PFAC – Program, Finance and Administration Committee

PIP – Public Involvement Plan

RTP – Regional Transportation Plan (the Plan)

SAWG – Safety Advisory Working Group

SOV – Single Occupancy Vehicle

TCC – Transportation Coordinating Committee

TIG – Transportation Information Gateway

TIP – Transportation Improvement Plan

TSMO – Transportation System Management and Operations

UPWP – Unified Planning Work Program

USEPA – United States Environmental Protection Agency

Appendix B

NYMTC Comment Period Summary

Document Updates	Public Comment Periods	Additional Notes
Regional Transportation Plan (the Plan) and Congestion Management Process (CMP) Status Reports		
Plan Updates	30 calendar days	Updated every four years
Amendments	10 calendar days	Updated as needed
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)		
Program Updates	30 calendar days	Typically every two to three years
Amendments	10 calendar days	Updated as needed
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)		
Program Updates	30 calendar days	Updated annually
Amendments	10 calendar days	Updated as needed
Conformity Determination	30 calendar days	As needed
Public Involvement Plan/Public Participation Procedures	45 calendar day public review	Updated every five years or as needed

Appendix C

Requirements That Govern Public Involvement for MPOs

Governing Regulations

Regulations in Highway Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 450.316) detail a number of requirements for MPOs including:

- development of a public participation plan;
- adequate public notice for public participation activities;
- identification of the types of stakeholders for whom MPOs must provide reasonable opportunities to be engaged;
- employment of visualization techniques;
- making information available electronically;
- holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- seeking out and considering the needs of Communities of Concern, those traditionally underserved by transportation systems; and
- providing adequate opportunities for public comment.

Code of Federal Regulations Title 40 (CFR Title 40)

CFR Title 40 addresses mainly environmental regulations promulgated by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and requires that local plans, such as those developed by MPOs, conform with the same EPA guidelines as required of state and federal plans.

Code of Federal Regulations Title 49 (CFR Title 49) for Transportation

CFR Title 49 for Transportation sets forth the rules and regulations issued by the Departments of Transportation and Homeland Security regarding transportation and its related security.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 specifies that programs and activities funded with federal dollars are prohibited from discrimination based on disability. ADA encourages the involvement of people with disabilities in the development and improvement of transportation and paratransit plans and services.

Title VI

Title VI under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that no person in the U.S. shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order #12898 of 1994 directs federal agencies to develop strategies to address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs on minority and low-income populations. 23 CFR 450.316(a)(l)(vii) requires that the needs of those "traditionally underserved" (Communities of Concern) by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and/or minority households, be sought out and considered.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Executive Order 13166 of 2000 requires federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with LEP, and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. The Executive Order also requires that the federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries. The LEP requirement applies to NYMTC and its member agencies as designated recipients of federal transit funds.