

# Public Participation Plan

MetroCOG Programs in Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield, Monroe,  
Stratford & Trumbull

GBVMPO Programs in Ansonia, Bridgeport, Derby Easton,  
Fairfield, Monroe, Seymour, Shelton, Stratford & Trumbull

Endorsed: October 25, 2018



**METROCOG**

Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments

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*MetroCOG staff and consultants presenting a study to the public.*

## Purpose of this Plan

The Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG) is committed to a continuous public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, and full public access to MetroCOG and the Greater Bridgeport Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization's (GBVMPO) activities at all key stages in the decision making process. Public involvement ensures that transportation decisions consider public needs and preferences, and that the public has ample opportunity to participate in the transportation planning process. By involving the public early and actively seeking out the involvement of communities most affected by particular decisions, plans or projects, we ensure that the concerns and issues of people with a stake in these decisions are identified

and addressed. Early and ongoing public involvement also brings diverse viewpoints into the decision making process, which supports better-informed decisions and mutual understanding and trust between MetroCOG and the public we serve.

Public interest varies depending on the product and the intensity of the issues. By recognizing differences in public interests and providing relevant opportunities to participate, MetroCOG supports a proactive and meaningful public involvement process.

MetroCOG is committed to actively involving all affected parties in an open, cooperative, and collaborative process that provides meaningful opportunities, via electronic and traditional methods, to influence trans-

portation decisions. Consistent with 23 CFR § 450.316, the Public Participation Plan (PPP) was developed in consultation with all interested parties and describes MetroCOG's procedures, strategies, and outcomes for:

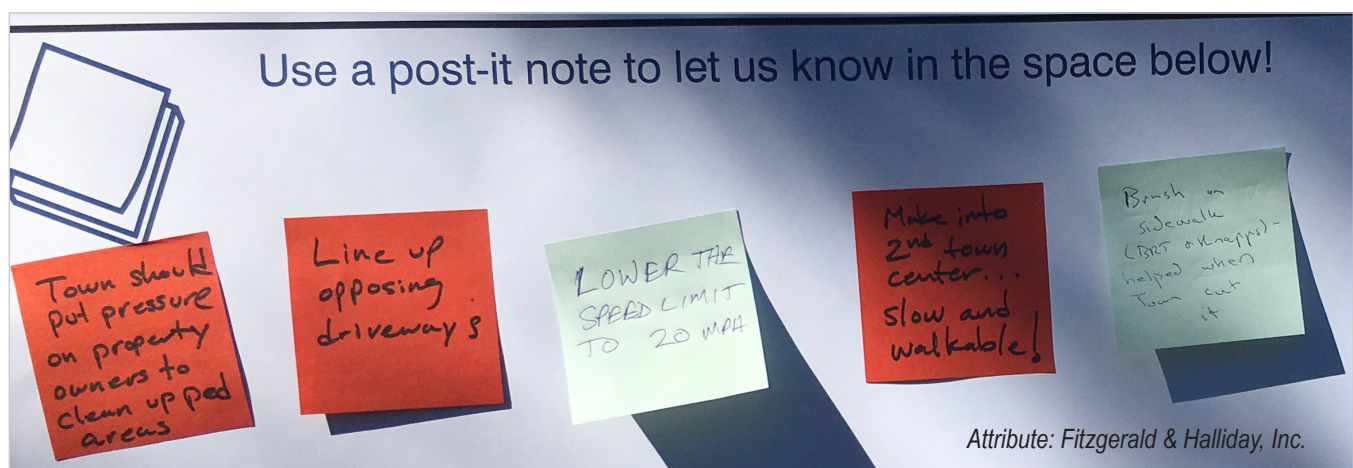
- Adequate public notice of activities and time for review and comment, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP);
- Timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- Visualization techniques to describe LRTPs and TIPs;
- Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the internet;
- Holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the LRTP and the TIP;
- Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
- Additional opportunities for public com-

ment, if the LRTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;

- Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes, including consultation with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including agencies with responsibilities for State and local planned growth, economic development, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements); and
- Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

### Title VI & Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

MetroCOG's public participation plan is aligned with our Title VI Program and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, which ensures that the level and quality of MetroCOG's planning services are provided in a nondiscriminatory manner and that the opportunity for full and fair participation is offered to the community. Through the LEP Plan, MetroCOG has examined the need for services and materials for



persons for whom English is not their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.

While it is a matter of principle that MetroCOG is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in the receipt of any of MetroCOG's services on the basis of race, color or national origin, the contents of this program have been prepared in accordance with Section 601 of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

MetroCOG's policies regarding Title VI and Limited English Proficiency are detailed in the Title VI Program & Limited English Proficiency Plan.

## About Us

### Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG)

The Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments, or MetroCOG is the Council of Governments for the six municipalities of the Greater Bridgeport Region: Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield, Monroe, Stratford and Trumbull. MetroCOG works closely with federal, state, and local agencies to facilitate a regional approach to transportation, conservation, economic development, natural hazard mitigation

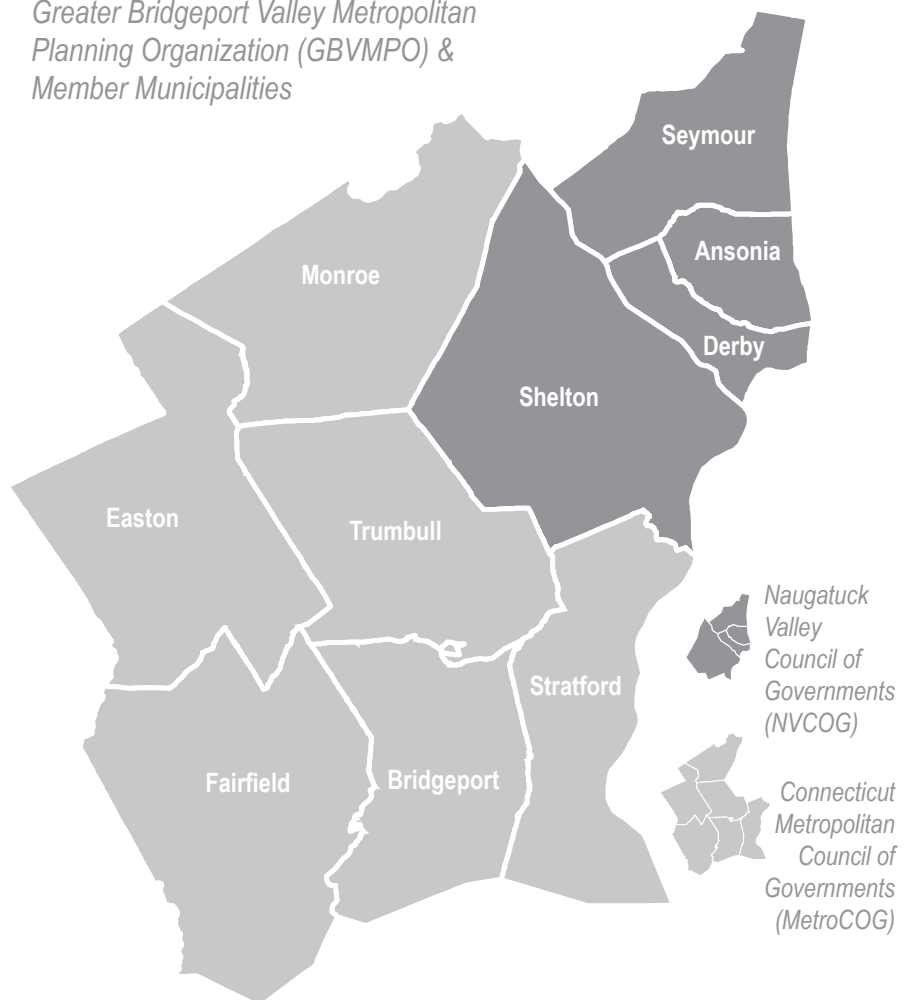
and land use planning, as well as municipal shared services.

Councils of Governments (COGs) are defined in Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 50 § 4-124i through § 4-124u. Each municipality (or member) in the Greater Bridgeport Region is represented by their Chief Elected Official, which makes up MetroCOG's Policy Board.

As a Council of Governments, MetroCOG is responsible for drafting, maintaining and periodically updating the Regional

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The Regional POCD makes recommendations for "land use, housing, principal highways and freeways, bridges, airports, parks, playgrounds, recreational areas, schools, public institutions, public utilities, agriculture and such other matters as will be beneficial to the area." (Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 127 § 8-35a). MetroCOG utilizes the plan in reviewing land use changes that may affect member municipalities (CGS Chapter 124 § 8-3b). Other regional programs that MetroCOG

### *Greater Bridgeport Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (GBVMPO) & Member Municipalities*





MPOs are responsible for performing six core functions:

1. Establish a setting for effective decision-making.
2. Identify and evaluate transportation improvement options.
3. Prepare and maintain a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).
4. Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
5. Identify performance measure targets and monitor whether implemented projects are achieving targets
6. Involve the general public and other affected constituencies.

provides a forum for communication, coordination and collaboration include:

- Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP)
- Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Brownfields Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment

### **Greater Bridgeport Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (GBVMPO)**

MetroCOG serves as the host agency for the Greater Bridgeport Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (GBVMPO), which includes MetroCOG's six members as well as Ansonia, Derby, Seymour and Shelton. GBVMPO oversees the regional transportation planning process and capital improvement program for this ten-town region. The membership of the GBVMPO consists of the Chief Elected Officials of the ten municipalities and the chairpersons of the region's two transit districts: Greater Bridgeport Transit and the Valley Transit District.

The MPO is federally authorized (23 United State Code § 134) and designated by the Governor to conduct transportation planning and policy-making and to endorse the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the portion of the Bridgeport-Stamford Urbanized Area covered by the MPO. The MPO ensures that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3-C) planning process. MPOs also cooperate with State and public transportation operators to set spending levels for Federal funds that are meant for transportation projects.

### **Key Products of the Transportation Planning Process**

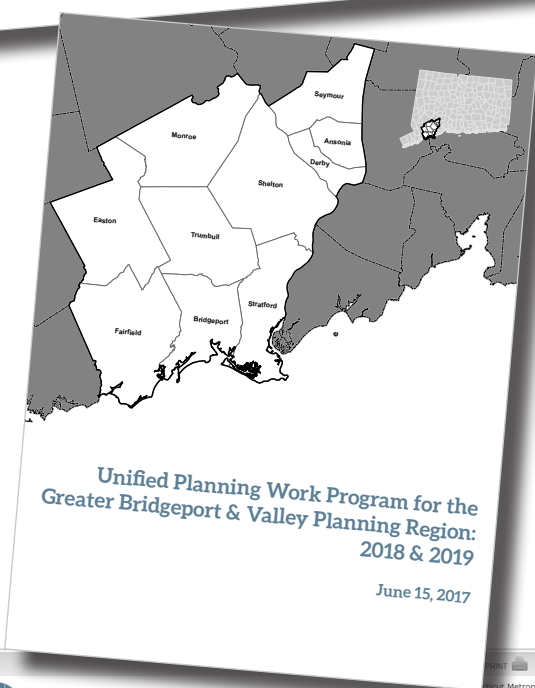
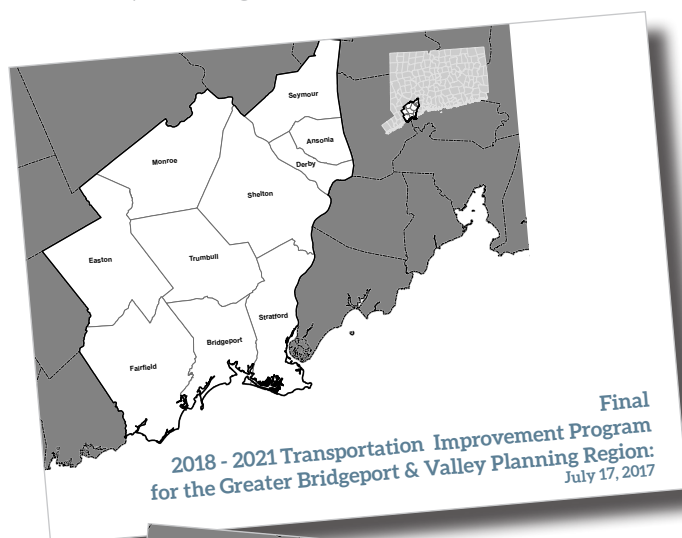
In addition to the Public Participation Plan, the following documents guide the transportation planning process, which the MPOs is responsible for maintaining and updating.

#### **Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):**

A 30-year vision for transportation system investments. The LRTP includes long-range and short-range strategies to support an intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods. Through public and stakeholder engagement, the LRTP identifies improvements to roadways, transit, non-motorized transportation, and connections between modes



to enhance the performance of the entire transportation system. The LRTP also evaluates performance measures and targets and whether the transportation system is meeting the adopted targets.



## Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

A fiscally constrained document that identifies transportation projects and strategies that will be pursued over the next four years. The TIP is the immediate program of investments that will go toward achieving the performance targets documented in the LRTP. All projects receiving Federal funding must be in the TIP.

## The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP):

Covering a one- to two-year period, the UPWP lists the transportation studies and tasks that MPO staff and members perform to support the metropolitan transportation planning process. The UPWP identifies the funding source for each project, the schedule of activities, and responsible agencies for each task or study. Elements typically include data and analysis tasks, public outreach activities, preparation of the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program, supporting studies and products resulting from LRTP and TIP activities, all federally funded studies, and relevant state and local planning activities conducted without federal funds.

## Annual listing of obligated projects:

No later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operators, and the GBVMPO cooperatively develops a listing of projects, including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, for which federal transportation funds were obligated in the preceding program year.

Minimum requirements for noticing and public comment are detailed in the next section. MetroCOG regularly utilizes additional methods of notifying the public detailed in the next section as well.

## Who are the Public?

The public includes any individual or group who resides, is employed, has an interest, or does business in an area potentially affected

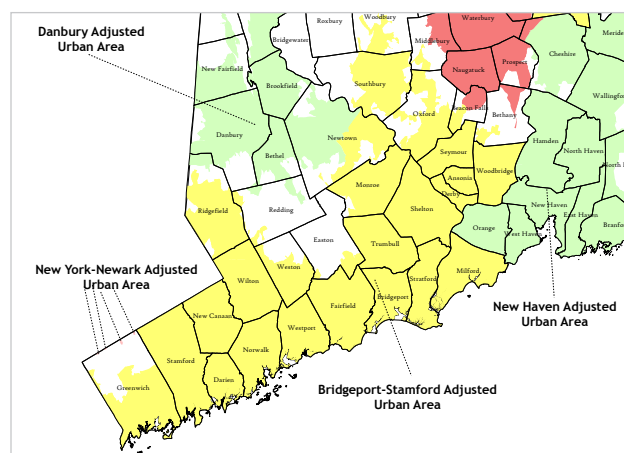
23 USC 134 § 450.316(a), defines the public as:

- Individuals
- Affected public agencies
- Public providers of transportation and paratransit services
- Representatives of public transportation employees
- Public ports
- Freight shippers and 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

by a transportation decision. To ensure that transportation decisions deliver equitable benefits to a variety of stakeholders, extra efforts may be needed to engage persons traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income populations or minority populations, the disabled and the elderly.

## Other Responsibilities

In addition to the activities above, the



*The Bridgeport-Stamford Urbanized Area (CTDOT).*

GBVMPO has responsibilities related to Air Quality conformity and as a Transportation Management Area.

## Air Quality

MetroCOG and GBVMPO are located in the Connecticut portion of the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island eight-hour ozone moderate Nonattainment Area (2008) and the PM<sub>2.5</sub> Attainment/Maintenance Area (2006). Due to this designation, GBVMPO's transportation planning process has additional requirements. The LRTP, TIP, and federally-funded transportation projects must conform to Connecticut's air quality plan, known as the State Implementation Plan (SIP). In Connecticut, CTDOT is responsible for conducting the Air Quality Conformity analysis and determining if transportation plans and projects are consistent with the SIP. The MPO reviews the analysis and makes the information available for public review and comment.

## Transportation Management Area

Over 900,000 people live in the Bridgeport-Stamford Urbanized Area (American Community Survey, 2016). UZAs with populations exceeding 200,000 typically have more complex transportation systems and associated challenges than smaller regions. These large UZAs have additional planning responsibilities and are designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs).



*MetroCOG's meeting room at 1000 Lafayette Boulevard in Bridgeport.*

# Regular Business & Day to Day Operations at MetroCOG

## Office & Staff

MetroCOG's offices are located at 1000 Lafayette Boulevard, Suite 925 in Bridgeport, CT (the ninth floor of the RBS building). Staff are available during regular work hours (Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm) and may also be reached by phone or email. In addition to a parking garage behind the building, the office is located within walking distance of bus, rail and ferry service. Building facilities are ADA accessible.

## Email Lists & Newsletters

MetroCOG maintains an e-mail list which includes elected officials (mayors, first selectmen, state representatives and councilmen), municipal staff, other providers of transportation services (both public and private), environmental and non-traditional transportation advocacy groups, trade and business organizations, and community/neighborhood action committees are included. Upon written request, members

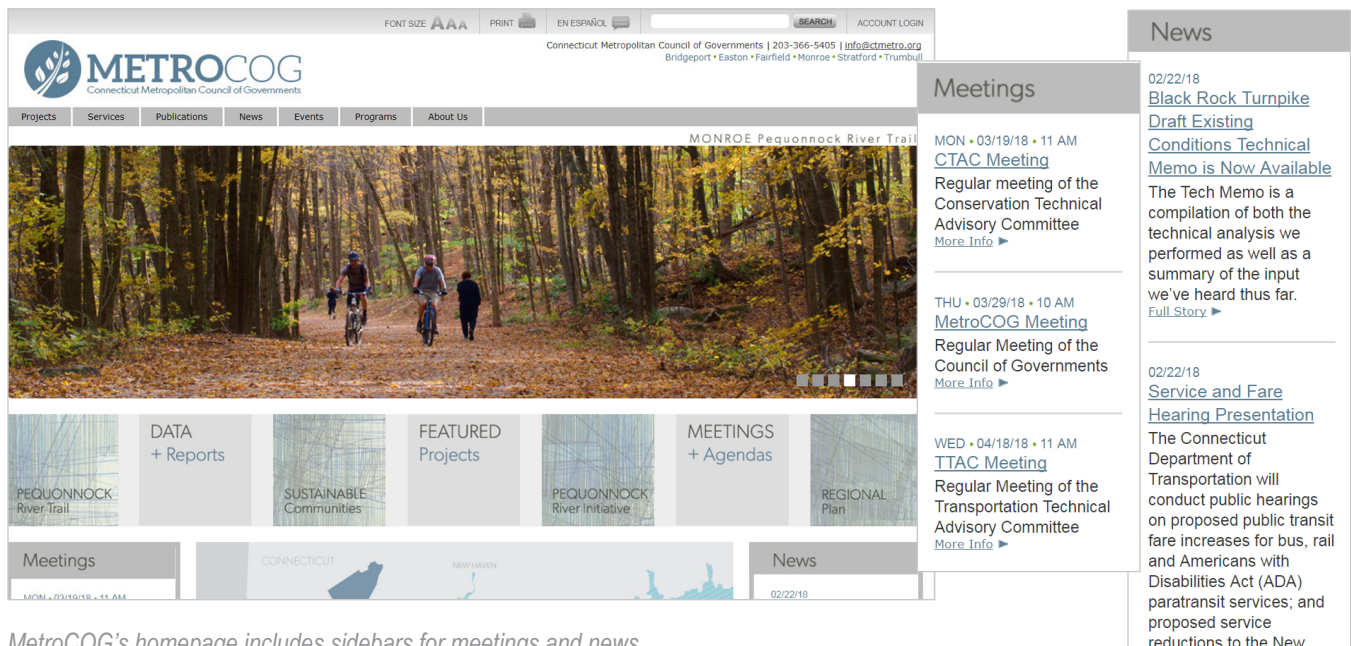
of the public and other stakeholders may be added to the e-mail list. General announcements, public meetings details, information about regional projects and periodic newsletters are sent to the list's subscribers. This includes:

- MPO meeting notice and agenda
- Council meeting notice agenda
- Public information meetings and hearings.
- Periodic newsletters
- Separate e-mail lists are developed and maintained for specific projects and plans.

## Meetings

Regular Board and MPO meetings are open to the public and held at MetroCOG's offices. Meeting schedules are developed annually. Upon the Board's approval, the date, time and location of regular meetings are posted to the website calendar at the beginning of each





*MetroCOG's homepage includes sidebars for meetings and news.*

year. The meeting schedule is also transmitted to CTDOT.

Regular meeting agendas are posted to the MetroCOG webpage at least twenty four hours prior to the meeting. The agenda is also transmitted to Board/MPO members, CTDOT and municipal clerks at this time. The meeting agenda may be distributed to members of the public and other stakeholders upon written request. Special meetings may be called up to 24 hours before the time set for the meeting. Agenda distribution follows the process of regular meetings.

All Board and MPO agendas include an opportunity for the public to participate.

For MPO meetings, the meeting agenda includes a list of proposed amendments to the TIP. A 30-day public notice period is pro-

vided for major actions, such as approval of the Long Range Transportation Plan or Transportation Improvement Program.

Draft meeting minutes are posted to the website within 7 days of the meeting. Upon approval of the Board or MPO (usually at the next regular meeting), final minutes are posted to the website.

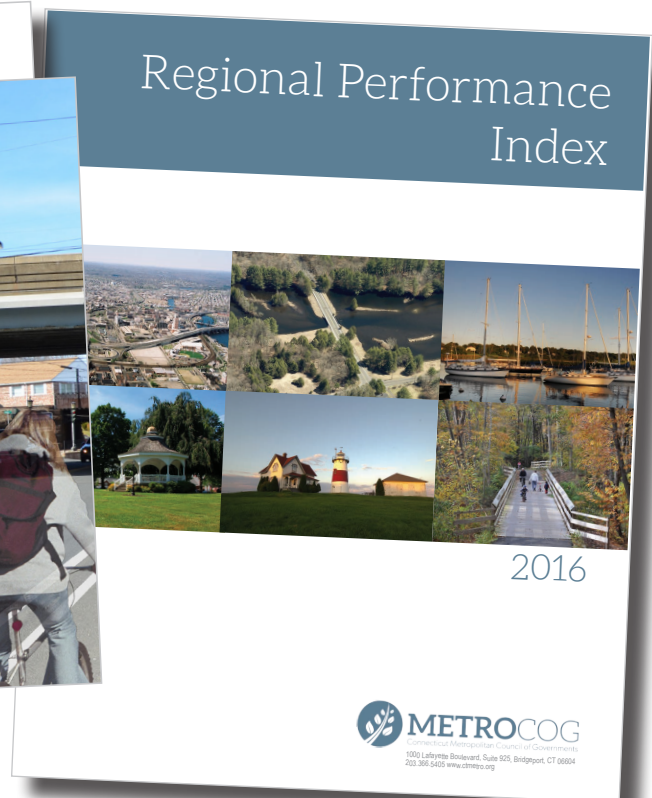
### Website: [www.ctmetro.org](http://www.ctmetro.org)

MetroCOG's website is a clearinghouse of data and information on MetroCOG programs, projects, plans, and events. Google Translate supports the translation of content into multiple languages. All documents posted to the MetroCOG website are in accessible, pdf format.

The main page of the website includes a calendar and news feed. The calendar provides the public with information on MetroCOG and GBVMPO meetings, as well as project-specific events, advisory committee meetings and other events that may be of interest. The news feed is updated regularly and keeps the public informed of recent activities, press releases, initiatives, and projects.

All publications, project reports and plans are posted to the MetroCOG website for public review and comment. After the document is first posted, a notice of availability is announced on the main page of the website. Individual project webpages are created for major plans and projects, which are discussed in the next section.

The website includes a



*Documents developed to inform the public of MetroCOG. The Complete Streets Executive Summary (ALTA, top left); the Regional Performance Index (top right) and the brownfields program brochure.*

general comment form and email registration form for viewers to submit comments and register for email updates. The webpages for major plans and projects include a comment form as well.

Interactive maps and accessible databases are also available on the website.

## Social Media

MetroCOG maintains accounts for Facebook and Twitter.

## Distributing Documents & Materials

On-line posting of reports, plans and summaries supports the distribution of up-to-date information to a broad audience. However,

not all members of the public have access to the Internet or are comfortable using it. Hard copies of plans and reports will continue to be available at MetroCOG's offices and provided to interested parties.

Transportation planning activities often result in long and highly technical plans and reports that may not be appropriate or useful to the general public. MetroCOG staff are responsible for ensuring that study findings are understandable to the non-technical public. Executive Summaries, newsletters, briefings, and brochures are regularly prepared for this purpose and to concisely explain projects to elected officials.

## Advisory Committees

MetroCOG hosts several standing Advisory Committees. These committees provide general guidance to the MPO Board, COG Board and COG staff. Meeting notices of MetroCOG's standing Advisory Committee are posted to the website's calendar. Group lists are maintained of members and members of the public

who have requested a notification. Meeting agendas are typically distributed 3-5 days prior to the meeting.

#### **Conservation Technical Advisory Committee (CTAC):**

The CTAC is made up of municipal staff and local Conservation Commissions. The CTAC provides a forum to share best practices, coordinate projects and promote a regional approach to conservation. CTAC members also keep their communities informed of MetroCOG's conservation initiatives. The CTAC meets quarterly.

#### **Economic Development & Tourism Advisory Committee; Brownfields Working Group:**

Made up of local and regional economic development stakeholders and Capital for Change (the statewide Community Development Financial Institution), the EDTAC and Brownfields Working Group aligns land use, conservation, and transportation planning with local economic development goals.

#### **Geospatial Technical Advisory Committee:**

The Geospatial Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC) serves as the regional forum for the discussion of the Regional Geographical Information Systems and related technologies. Each member of the GTAC is appointed by the municipality's Chief Elected Official and consists of staff members of municipal Public Works, Engineering, Assessment, Information Technology, Land Use, and Public Safety departments.

#### **Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC):**

The TTAC is made up of representatives from member municipalities, Greater Bridgeport Transit and CTDOT. The TTAC advises the COG Board and MPO Board on transportation issues, funding priorities and the status of projects. The TTAC meets at least quarterly.

## **Legal Notices**

MetroCOG follows all federal and state noticing requirements. This includes the agency's Title VI and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) policies. Some projects require a formal 30, 45 or 65 day public comment period and publication of a legal notice in a local newspaper(s). These newspapers are:

- CTPost: daily publication
- El Sol (Spanish): weekly publication

Notices include the project information, the meeting's date, time, location and purpose, contact information, and any other required information. In addition to following all noticing requirements, MetroCOG will continue to use their standard methods of distribution to enhance this process, such as sending periodic reminders to the agency's e-mail list.



# Projects, Plans & Studies

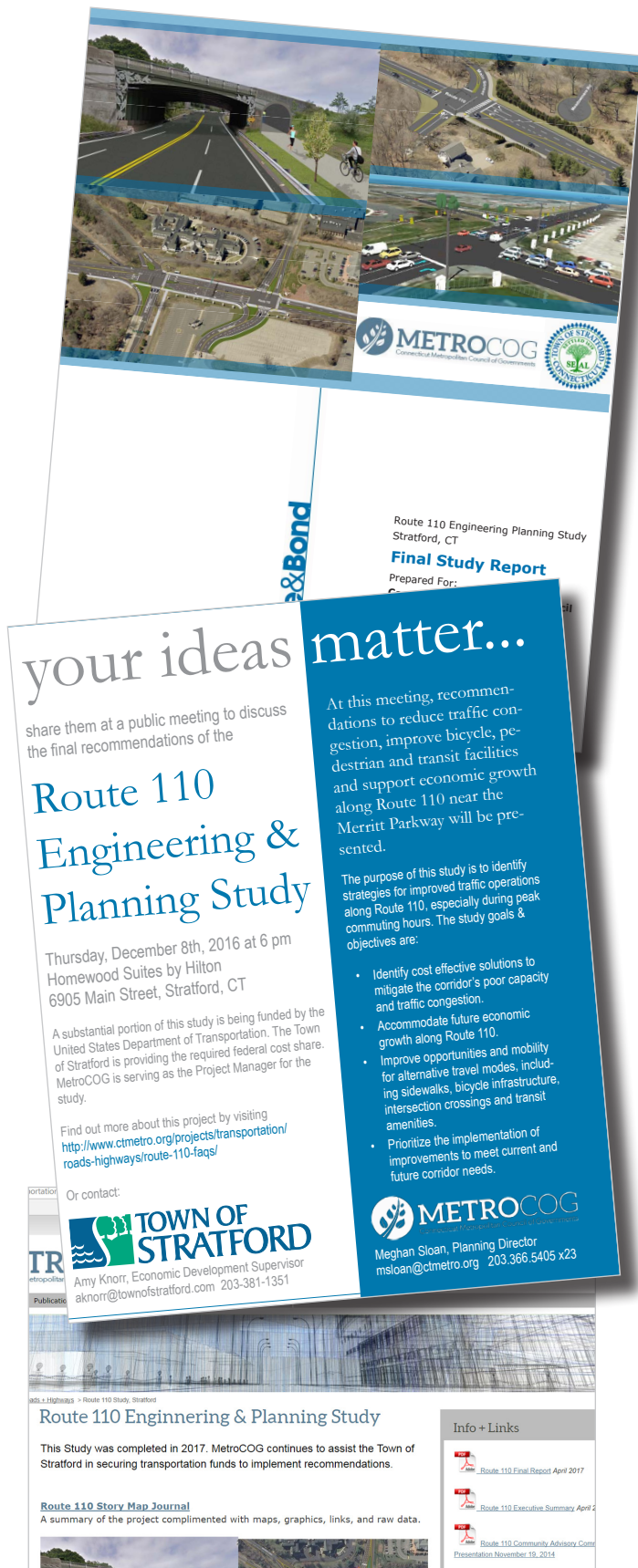
This section describes MetroCOG's public involvement approach for specific plans and projects. The Greater Bridgeport Region is an economically and ethnically diverse region made up of six municipalities. In addition to transportation planning, MetroCOG provides assistance with a variety of other planning disciplines, such as conservation, hazard mitigation, economic development and public safety. Therefore, it is imperative that involvement strategies are relevant to the topic and sensitive to the impacted community. Evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies should occur periodically throughout a project.

## Project E-mail List

An e-mail list of interested parties is maintained for the project. This includes the project team, known stakeholders and members of the public who request that they are added to the list. Project updates, events and other opportunities to participate are sent to the e-mail list.

## Project Webpage

The project webpage serves as the project's information repository. In addition to a description of the project, the webpage includes presentations from public meetings, reports and graphics. A comment box provides a mechanism for the public to ask questions, provide feedback and make recommendations anytime throughout the project. Visitors may also request that they are added to the project's e-mail list. Links to other means of participation, such as online surveys or a municipal website are included on the webpage. Draft reports are posted to the webpage prior to the final public meeting (or hearing) and the final version is posted at the project's completion. MetroCOG typically hosts the project



From top, the Final Route 110 Planning & Engineering Study (Tighe & Bond), an public meeting announcement, and the project webpage.



# Trumbull: Improvements to Local Roads

The Town of Trumbull and MetroCOG share a commitment to maintaining the Region's transportation infrastructure and keeping it in a state of good repair. As local connectors, Chestnut Hill Road, Moose Hill Road and Strobel Road are vital to an efficient transportation system in Trumbull.

MetroCOG coordinated with the Town of Trumbull and the Connecticut Department of Transportation to secure funding through the State of Connecticut's Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOT/CIP) for all of these projects, totaling over \$11 million.

Introduced in 2014, LOT/CIP funds local transportation construction projects. The goal of the program is to address regional transportation priorities through local capital improvements. As a program through the State of Connecticut, there are fewer constraints and requirements than federal programs. Municipalities may utilize their own local processes for these projects. 100% of construction costs are covered by LOT/CIP. The municipality is responsible for design costs.

LOT/CIP funds are allocated among the state's nine Council of Governments. MetroCOG is responsible for administering the program for the Greater Bridgeport Region. In 2014 and 2015, over \$4 million was programmed annually for local transportation projects. Due to the success of the program, this allocation was increased to over \$7 million annually for 2016 and 2017.

In addition to road improvements in Trumbull, LOT/CIP funds are being used toward a variety of projects in Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield, Monroe and Stratford. These projects include an extension of the Pequonnock River Trail, a planning and engineering study to address the Route 25 and 111 intersection in Trumbull and Monroe, and several bridge repair projects.

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Pavement rehabilitation, drainage improvements & road realignment.



Improved safety for children, young adults & parents walking to local schools.



Reduced traffic congestion, vehicle queuing & delays.



## Moose Hill Road

An interlocal thoroughfare that connects Trumbull to Shelton, a number of safety and drainage issues exist on Moose Hill Road. From Daniels Farm Road (3), Moose Hill will be reconstructed to the Trumbull/Shelton Town Line (4). Included in the project are roadway re-alignment, full depth roadway reconstruction and drainage improvements.



## Strobel Road

The 2 miles of Strobel Road between Daniels Farm Road and Booth Hill Road is in need of safety improvements and pavement rehabilitation. A traffic signal will be installed at the intersection with Daniels Farm Road which will reduce congestion, delays and vehicle queuing at Trumbull High School and Hillcrest Middle School.

## Return on Investment

For every \$1 the Town of Trumbull will invest in these projects, an estimated \$20 in state funds have been secured.

As the Council of Governments for the Greater Bridgeport Region, MetroCOG is responsible for allocating and approving LOT/CIP funding for projects in the region, as well as administrative oversight of the program. MetroCOG also provides assistance throughout the entire development of a project. MetroCOG and municipal staff work together on determining a project's scope and timeframe. Once an application has been submitted to the State of Connecticut's Department of Transportation, MetroCOG staff will assist with the procurement process and public outreach. This technical assistance throughout the length of a project reduces the administrative burden on local staff.

**\$597,000**

Estimated design costs for 3 LOT/CIP funded projects in Trumbull.

**Chestnut Hill Road = \$1,850,000**

**\$1,750,000 in state funding for construction.**

Trumbull design costs estimated at \$88,000.

**Moose Hill Road = \$4,700,000**

**\$4,485,000 in state funding for construction.**

Trumbull design costs estimated at \$225,000.

**Strobel Road = \$6,000,000**

**\$5,700,000 in state funding for construction.**

Trumbull design costs estimated at \$285,000.

**\$12 million**

State of Connecticut's LOT/CIP funds provide 100% of construction costs.

**Total Projects = \$13 million**

Information about road improvements in Trumbull.

webpage. However, if a greater number of stakeholders can be reached, a consultant or municipality may host the webpage instead.

## Project Summary, Frequently Asked Questions & Brochure

At the beginning of a planning project, a one to two page flyer is developed. The flyer includes a summary of the project, geography of the study area, funding information and contact information. The flyers are formatted for print and electronic distribution.

A list of frequently asked questions has also been found helpful, especially in the first few months of a project. Examples of questions include:

- What is the purpose of the Study?
- Who is involved and how can I participate?
- What are the final deliverables and how

will they be used in the future?

- Who should I contact with questions?
- Brochures are developed to provide an in-depth explanation of complex or multi-task projects.

## Project Specific Committees:

Two committees are typically formed for a project, a Community Advisory Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee. Additional committees or sub-committees may be formed as the need arises.

## Community Advisory Committee:

Community Advisory Committees (CAC) represent the communities and stakeholders who could potentially be impacted by a specific planning project. The CAC provides guidance, reviews projects deliverables and makes



*A seat drop distributed by Greater Bridgeport Transit helped to inform transit passengers of an upcoming meeting. Designed by Susan Rubinsky Marketing Consulting.*

recommendations to the Project Team. The CAC also serves as a means of interaction between the public and the project team. CAC members typically include residents, local businesses and their employees, property owners, neighborhood associations, parent-teacher associations, bicycle/pedestrian organizations, senior centers and other local advocacy organizations. CAC members are appointed by the local government(s) in which the planning project is occurring. MetroCOG emphasizes that CACs have diverse representation, and include groups that have been traditionally underserved by the transportation system.

#### Technical Advisory Committee:

Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) provide their professional expertise

and local familiarity with the technical aspects of a planning project. The TAC assesses project recommendations for their feasibility and implementation. The composition of the TAC varies by the focus of each project. Typically, a TAC is made up of staff from local Engineering, Public Safety, Conservation, Public Health and Planning departments, as well as representation from CTDOT and transit providers.

#### Public Notice

MetroCOG provides adequate notice of public meetings and opportunities for public comment. The availability of documents for review and public meetings are announced within a few weeks of the meeting. Reminders are periodically sent out as the meeting date approaches. The

meeting notice is posted in the events section of the MetroCOG website. E-mail notifications are sent to the project mailing list and members of the TAC and CAC. An initial press release and periodic updates are prepared for various media. Display ads in local newspapers are utilized when suitable. If required, a legal notice is published in a local newspaper (or newspapers) and the required, formal noticing process is followed.

If a project or plan recommendations could impact private property, the owner and abutting property owners are sent direct mailings of meeting notices (or e-mails upon request).

#### Reaching the Public

MetroCOG has found that an effective method of involving the public is to work with local governments, community organizations and individual stakeholders in distributing project information and opportunities to participate. All stakeholders are identified and contacted with the help of our partners (municipalities, transit districts, etc.) as well as through public outreach meetings and materials (brochures, pamphlets, etc.). We will hold public meetings and distribute outreach materials at various locations including public libraries, community centers, munic-



Above, a pop-up event at a local crafts fair (photo provided by Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc). To the right, a paper version of an online survey.

ipal offices, transit hubs, etc. We also translate outreach materials into LEP languages and if needed, have a translator present at public meetings.

MetroCOG will utilize an Evaluation Framework to review our outreach methods and determine what has been working and what has not. For the methods that are not effective, we will work to amend those methods so they reach our LEP communities, or implement new outreach strategies that will engage the community as effectively as possible.

Municipal electronic newsletters and announcements reach a wide audience and are often more familiar to the recipient than a regional communication. A link to the project webpage or a meeting flyer can be easily shared via social media, either to other interested individuals or neighborhood/special interest pages. MetroCOG often partners with Greater Bridgeport Transit to distribute project and event information to their riders via on-board seat drops. Identifying innovative

**BLACK ROCK TURNPIKE SAFETY STUDY**

**Survey**

We want to hear what you think!

Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this brief survey about the Black Rock Turnpike. Your responses will help guide improvements along the Turnpike to create a safer, more multi-modal corridor.

This survey is being conducted to help the project team for the Black Rock Turnpike Safety Study better understand the issues and opportunities for all those who travel along the Turnpike, including motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. The study is focused primarily on the section of Black Rock Turnpike from Tunxis Hill Cut-Off to Tahmore Drive.

More information about the study can be found at <http://bit.ly/blackrocksaferstudy>

1. What is the most common reason you travel along Black Rock Turnpike?

☐ I travel to destinations along Black Rock Turnpike. ☐ I use Black Rock Turnpike to get to other places in Fairfield. ☐ I use Black Rock Turnpike to travel to the Merritt or I-95.

2. If you travel to destinations along the Turnpike, what type do you visit? (select all that apply)

☐ Shopping ☐ Dining & entertainment ☐ Work ☐ Home

☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

3. If you use the Turnpike to travel to other locations in Fairfield, please indicate which areas (use the map above as a guide, the red line is Black Rock Turnpike).

☐ I. Eastern Fairfield ☐ II. Central Fairfield & Fairfield University ☐ III. Downtown Fairfield & Shoreline ☐ IV. Western Fairfield

☐ V. Northern Fairfield & Sacred Heart University

and alternative methods of public involvement should be utilized when suitable.

If the public is unfamiliar with the organization or topic, stand-alone public meetings, especially at the beginning of a planning process, are challenging to promote and can be poorly attended. A pop-up meeting takes place in a location where a community congregates and feels comfortable. A larger number of stakeholders can be reached, especially member of the public traditionally





*Attendees at a public workshop identify issues along Black Rock Turnpike (photo provided by Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc).*

underserved by the transportation system. Examples of these locations are:

- Shopping centers
- Neighborhood fairs and festivals
- Farmer's markets
- Community centers
- Sporting events

Another method to gather initial feedback is the use of electronic surveys and mapping software. SurveyMonkey and interactive maps provide an opportunity for the public to become familiar with a project and give feedback. Upon request, MetroCOG will adapt electronic surveys to paper versions.

These outreach efforts ensure residents who are not proficient in English can effectively participate in the trans-

portation planning process. Through MetroCOG's Title VI Program & Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan. All significant language groups are identified and incorporated into the Public Participation Plan. MetroCOG continues to conduct outreach to traditionally under-served individuals and communities, which include but are not limited to low income, minority and LEP persons. MetroCOG and GB-VMPO use appropriate methods to notify the public of its activities and of opportunities for public involvement. Determination of which methods to use must be done for each individual planning project or study.

At a minimum, all Board and MPO Public Meeting No-

tices (including Kickoff Events, Open Houses, Workshops, etc.), Meeting actions/minutes, notifications, documents, summaries, reports, outreach materials, etc. shall include a statement that translator services may be requested in advance. If a predetermination is made that the meeting and/or action may affect a significant non-English speaking population, the Notification will include a statement, in that language, that translator services may be requested in advance.

When the need exists, MetroCOG will translate documents and outreach materials in all LEP and Safe Harbor languages. These materials will also be translated to other languages, if requested, or if



MetroCOG determines that the outreach materials will affect a significant population other than a language identified as LEP or Safe Harbor.

## Face to Face Contact

Attendance at public meetings and other forums for face to face contact is greater when notification occurs early, often and via a diversity of channels. Therefore, MetroCOG holds public meetings outside of working hours and at a location within, or in close proximity to the impacted area. ADA and transit accessible locations are preferred. Innovative methods of providing feedback, such as electronic polling devices, will engage the public longer and allow all attendees to participate. After the meeting, follow-up communications such as electronically posting comments made during the meeting, will keep attendees updated of the project and encourage future participation.

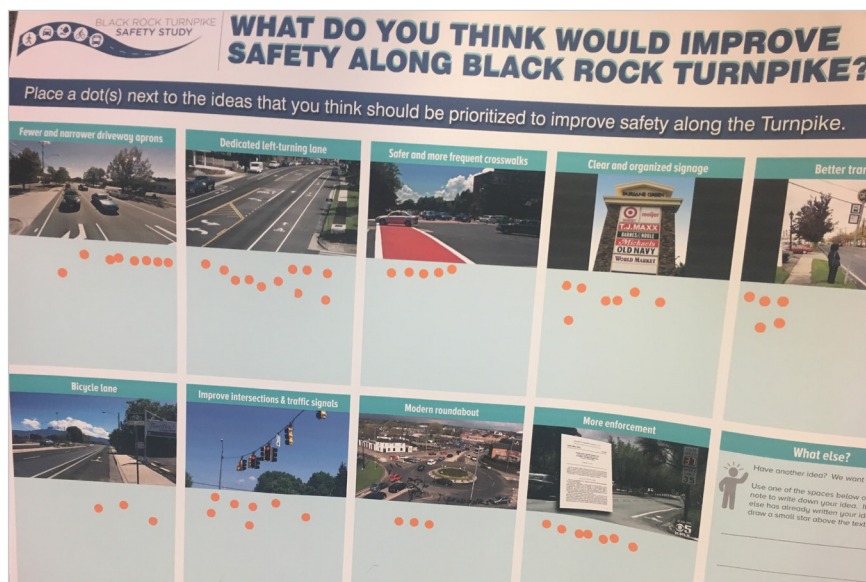
## Kickoff Event

A Kickoff Event is held at the beginning of the project. A public meeting, open house, workshop, or pop-up event early in the planning process emphasizes that the public is a partner in the project. The purpose of the event is to focus on the specific issue and for the public to express their concerns. Project team members emphasize that a solution or concept has not yet been identified. Rather, an open process is utilized and the project team works closely with the community

to identify the best possible solution. This first engagement encourages a proactive, rather than a reactive relationship.

## Public Meetings

Public Meetings provide an informal atmosphere to discuss the project and exchange ideas. These meetings include an informational presentation and an interactive question and answer session. Presentations include visuals such as display graphics, maps, and simulations of before and after conditions. Summaries of the meetings are pre-



Issues (bottom) and preferred solutions (top) indicated with stickers (photos provided by Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc).

pared and comments recorded.

### Open Houses

Open Houses are informal events for the public to speak with project staff, review project information, and provide feedback. Tables with presentation boards, project documents, maps, brochures, videos and other graphics allows for the public to review the project, ask questions and discuss concerns. Presentations are brief or do not occur. Rather, barriers are eliminated by providing an open environment where the public can discuss the project with staff and other attendees. Comment cards, visual preference surveys and maps are utilized to gather feedback.

### Workshops

Workshops are small group events organized around a particular topic or activity. Because they are relatively short and task-focused, workshops can be standalone events or part of a larger meeting. Often, break-out sessions during a public meeting utilize a workshop format, and include time for each group to report back to the larger audience.

As discussed earlier, pop-up meetings occur at existing community gathering places and local events, such as neighborhood festivals, shopping centers and community centers. The project team sets up a table with project displays, brochures and contact information to attract interested attendees. This format supports one-on-one interaction and are less

intimidating for people who may be uncomfortable during a traditional public meeting.

### Public Feedback & Comments

Opportunities for the public to provide feedback and comments are provided throughout a project period. To facilitate feedback, comment forms are provided at public meetings. Attendees are encouraged to contact the project team with additional comments. Online surveys, comment boxes and e-mails are also utilized to gather feedback. An end date for comments and feedback is included with these announcements. Comments may be transmitted via:

- Public information meeting: Orally or in writing.
- Via mail: typed or legibly written on 8½" x 11" paper.
- Via email: a specific e-mail address is provided.
- An online survey, comment box or social media.

MetroCOG responds to significant public comments, and explains why the comment was considered (or not) and how it was incorporated into the decision-making process. Public Feedback and Comments from Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons is encouraged. MetroCOG will work with our On-Call Translation Service Providers to respond to all questions, comments and feedback pro-

Product	Update	Public Hearing	Legal Notice	Comment Period
Long Range Transportation Plan*	4 years	1	Yes	30 days
Public Participation Plan*	Periodic	1	Yes	45 days
Regional Plan of Conservation & Development**	5 years	1	Yes	65 days
Transportation Improvement Program*	4 years	1	Yes	30 days
Unified Planning Work Program*	2 years	-	Yes	-
Title VI & LEP Plan*	Periodic	1	Yes	45 days

\*Approval occurs at MPO meeting \*\*Approval occurs at COG meeting

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vided in other languages. A summary of comments are included as an appendix of the plan or document.

## Public Hearings

Public hearings are more formal than public meetings and occur prior to adoption of a plan by the Council or MPO. A public hearing gathers community comments and positions for the public record and provides input for final decisions. Often, a public hearing is a state or federal requirement for a specific plan or project. A legal notice must be published, and sufficient time provided for the public to learn more about the action and to make comments. Often, the required public review period is 30 days. Minimum requirements for public notice, comment period and number of public hearings are below:

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# Appendix A



# Stakeholder & Contact Lists

Agencies, organizations and individuals from e-mail group lists maintained by MetroCOG. The list is periodically updated and subject to change.

## Local & State Stakeholders

### Bicycle & Pedestrian Advocates

Bike Walk Connecticut

East Coast Greenway Alliance

Fairfield Bicycle Pedestrian Committee Members

Fairfield's Representative Town Meeting Members

Stratford Planning Commission Members

### Business Community

Bridgeport Regional Business Council

Bridgeport Economic Development Corporation

Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District

Fairfield County Business Council

Fairfield Chamber of Commerce

### Community-Based Organizations

Big Brother Big Sisters of Southwestern Connecticut

Bridgeport YMCA

Bridgeport YMCA/Ralpho Taylor Community Center

Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust

Capital for Change

International Institute of Connecticut, Inc

Recovery Network of Programs-Prospect House Shelter & SRO Units

## Local & State Stakeholders

### Conservation

Beardsley Zoo

Connecticut Fund for the Environment

Groundwork Bridgeport

The Nature Conservancy

### Education\*

Housatonic Community College

University of Bridgeport

Fairfield University

Sacred Heart University

### Elderly & Disabled Organizations

Access Independence

Southwestern CT Agency on Aging

The Kennedy Center

### Employment

The Workplace

### Faith-Based Organizations

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

### Hospitals\*

Bridgeport Hospital

St. Vincent's Hospital

### Regional Policy & Planning

Regional Plan Association

## Local & State Stakeholders

### Transportation

Bridgeport & Port Jefferson Steamboat Company

CTRides

Greater Bridgeport Transit

Motor Transport Association of Connecticut

Transit for Connecticut

Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Valley Transit District

## Media\*

### Daily

CTPost

### Weekly

Easton Courier/Aspetuck News

El Sol (Spanish)

Fairfield Sun

Fairfield Citizen

Monroe Courier

Stratford Star

The Bridgeport News

Trumbull Times

\*pending email availability

## Municipal Departments

### City of Bridgeport

Department on Aging

Engineering Department

Harbormaster

Health & Social Services  
Department

Neighborhood Revitalization Zones  
(NRZs)

Office of Planning & Economic  
Development

Sikorsky Memorial Airport

### Town of Easton

Easton Senior Center

Engineering

Town Planning

### Town of Fairfield

Conservation

Economic Development

Engineering

Health Department

Social Services (Senior Center)

Town Plan & Zoning Department

### Town of Monroe

Community & Social Services  
(Senior Center)

Engineering

Health Department

Planning & Zoning Department

### Town of Stratford

Conservation Department

Economic Development

Engineering

Planning & Zoning

Senior Center

## Municipal Departments

### Town of Trumbull

Economic & Community  
Development

Engineering

Health Department

Human Services (Senior Center)

Planning & Zoning

### Libraries\*

Bridgeport Public Library

Easton Public Library

Edith Wheeler Memorial Library  
(Monroe)

Fairfield Public Library

Stratford Library Association

The Trumbull Library System

## State & Regional Agencies

### COGs & MPOs

Naugatuck Valley Council of  
Governments (NVCOG)

New York Metropolitan Transporta-  
tion Commission (NYMTC)

South Central Regional Council of  
Governments (SCRCOG)

Western Connecticut Council of  
Governments (WestCOG)

### State of Connecticut

Connecticut Port Authority

Department of Transportation

Office of Policy & Management,  
Office of Responsible Growth

Office of Tourism

State Historic Preservation Office

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# Appendix B

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**Public Outreach Process:**

- Legal Notice: Friday, September 7<sup>th</sup> in the CTPost and September 14<sup>th</sup> edition of *EISol*.
- Presented both plans at August 30<sup>th</sup> GBVMPO meeting
- E-mail notice to list of stakeholders (in plan) on September 7<sup>th</sup>
- Physical copies at MetroCOG and NVCOG
- Posted to MetroCOG and NVCOG's website
- Reminder e-mail notice to list of stakeholders on October 16<sup>th</sup>
- Public meeting Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> (no attendees)

**Plan Comments & MetroCOG responses:**

*September 7<sup>th</sup> email from Lynn Haig, Director of Planning, City of Bridgeport*

"Thank you for sharing. I did a quick read and only have one comment. Page 3 lists several bullets, two of which speak about making public information available electronically and holding convenient, accessible public meetings. Nothing is mentioned regarding obtaining input electronically so as to receive comments from those who cannot attend the public meetings. There is, however, mention of having project-based online surveys on page 18. Mentioning the electronic input early on shows that the means is used in both directions, and is a conscious decision to fully utilize electronic communication in both directions rather than just one."

*MetroCOG response: This comment was integrated into both versions of the Public Participation Plan.*

*Ken Shooshan-Stoller, Transportation Planner, Federal Highway Administration, Connecticut Division*

*October 3<sup>rd</sup> email:*

"Hi Patrick,

Our review is not yet complete, but I wanted reach out with one observation and question.

In the Title VI Program and Limited English Proficiency Plan's appendices, the maps' coverage area is confined to the MetroCOG communities. I know the Valley towns are covered in NVCOG's plan, but there seems to be a disconnect there, because the MetroCOG plan is designed for the Federal requirements for GBVMPO, yet the map data for the Valley towns is omitted. Please consider inclusion of those towns in some fashion, even though it might seem redundant by some perspectives."

*October 3<sup>rd</sup> reply from Patrick Carleton, MetroCOG:*

"Good Morning Ken:

Thank you for the feedback. We can certainly include the maps for the four NVCOG towns within the appendices of our Title VI and Limited English Proficiency Plans.



NVCOG has conducted the Four-Factor Analysis for their communities and the maps are located on pages 8-12 of the attached Title VI Plan. Do you mind if we insert those maps within our Plan or would you like our existing maps to be formatted to include all communities within one map?"

Thank you, and please let me know if you have any questions.

*October 3<sup>rd</sup> reply from Ken Shooshan Stoller:*

"I think the manner in which you accomplish the inclusion is up to you. Are the data parameters identical?"

For the reader of your plan, depending on how you wish to portray the maps, some kind of explanation may be warranted in that section even though it has been previously stated in the plan."

*MetroCOG response: NVCOG maps with Ansonia, Derby, Seymour and Shelton were integrated into the appendices.*

*Maritza Bond, MPH, Director of Health & Social Services, City of Bridgeport*

*October 16<sup>th</sup> email with comments in pdf of Title VI Program & Limited English Proficiency Plan:*

"Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on your LEP plan. I would like to commend you for your efforts on ensuring consumers with language barriers can have equitable access to the services offered. Attached you will find my comments for your review and consideration."

*Page 12:*

"I would recommend that a committee of individuals that represent the target language (i.e. Spanish) review the materials prior to publishing content. This will add a layer of quality assurance of the delivery of culturally and linguistically appropriate materials."

*MetroCOG response: We will request translation service providers to provide a secondary review of the completed translation.*

*Page 13:*

"As you consider translation services, please keep in mind to distinguish- interpreter ( spoken) services versus translation (written) of materials. In addition, I would recommend that you consider literacy of the individuals so that the content is readily understood by the consumer."

*MetroCOG response: Upon request, MetroCOG will arrange for interpreters at meetings or translation of written materials. Staff makes every effort to avoid overly-technical and ensure content is explained in simple, easy to understand terms.*

"I would recommend that appropriate posters of their rights to translator services are posted in respective areas. "

*MetroCOG response: Our Title VI Notice to the Public is posted in the entryway of the MetroCOG office, which includes this language. There are translations in Spanish, Portuguese and Haitian/Creole. At MetroCOG hosted public meetings (outside of the office), we will display these notices.*

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# Appendix C

**GREATER BRIDGEPORT AND VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**  
Ansonia●Bridgeport●Derby●Easton●Fairfield●Monroe●Seymour●Shelton●Stratford●Trumbull

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**RESOLUTION 2019-02**  
**ADOPTION: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**  
**FOR THE GREATER BRIDGEPORT AND VALLEY MPO**

**WHEREAS**, the Greater Bridgeport and Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (GBVMPO) is authorized by the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)* and related US Department of Transportation regulations as the transportation planning agency for ten municipalities within the Bridgeport-Stamford Urbanized Area, and conducts the transportation planning process in accordance with Section 134 of Title 23 of the United States Code, as amended by the *FAST Act* and related US Department of Transportation planning regulations;

**WHEREAS**, the GBVMPO is committed to actively involving all affected parties in an open, cooperative, and collaborative process that provides meaningful opportunities to influence transportation decisions;

**WHEREAS**, the GBVMPO prepared and adopted a Public Participation Program at its August 30, 1994, meeting and revised it at its July 31, 1997, and January 30, 2008 meetings;

**WHEREAS**, the GBVMPO has completed an evaluation of the current public involvement process and prepared an updated *Public Participation Plan* in accordance with 23 CFR 450.316;

**WHEREAS**, the draft *Public Participation Plan* was made available for a 45-day public review and comment period from September 7, 2018 to October 22, 2018, and a public meeting was held on October 22, 2018;

**WHEREAS**, the draft *Public Participation Plan* was revised to incorporate comments received during this period;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the GBVMPO adopts the *Public Participation Plan* as its official public participation plan and will adhere to and implement its procedures in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the MPO, by its action at this meeting, requires member municipalities to also adhere to the *Public Participation Plan* for every program and project for which it will receive federal transportation funding assistance.

This resolution shall become effective as of October 25, 2018.

We, the undersigned co-secretaries of Greater Bridgeport and Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Connecticut, do hereby certify that the resolution adopted by the MPO at a

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**Responsible Metropolitan Transportation Planning Agencies**

**CONNECTICUT METROPOLITAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

1000 Lafayette Boulevard, Suite 925  
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604-4902  
Phone: (203) 366-5405 Fax: 366-8437  
E-mail: mfulda@ctmetro.org

**NAUGATUCK VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

49 Leavenworth Street, Suite 301  
Waterbury, Connecticut 06702  
Phone: (203) 757-0535 Fax: 756-7688  
E-mail: rdunne@nvcogct.org

## **GREATER BRIDGEPORT AND VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

Ansonia●Bridgeport●Derby●Easton●Fairfield●Monroe●Seymour●Shelton●Stratford●Trumbull

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public meeting held on October 25, 2018, at which a quorum was present and that the same is a correct and true transcript from the original thereof.

Respectfully submitted,



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Matt Fulda, Executive Director  
MetroCOG – MPO Co-Secretary



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Richard T. Dunne, Executive Director  
NVCOG – MPO Co-Secretary

Date: October 25, 2018

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### **Responsible Metropolitan Transportation Planning Agencies**

#### **CONNECTICUT METROPOLITAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

1000 Lafayette Boulevard, Suite 925  
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#### **NAUGATUCK VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

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Phone: (203) 757-0535 Fax: 756-7688  
E-mail: rdunne@nvcogct.org



# Acknowledgments

## Council of Governments

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City of Bridgeport:  
Mayor Joseph P. Ganim



Town of Easton:  
First Selectman  
David Bindelglass



Town of Fairfield:  
First Selectwoman  
Brenda L. Kupchick



Town of Monroe:  
First Selectman Ken Kellogg,  
Chair



Town of Stratford:  
Mayor Laura Hoydick  
Vice Chair



Town of Trumbull:  
First Selectman Vicky Tesoro,  
Secretary

## MetroCOG Staff

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Planning Director



Governments (MetroCOG) in cooperation with the Region's stakeholders, developed the Title VI Program and Limited English Proficiency Plan..

MetroCOG staff are entirely responsible for the design and format of this report, using a style guide developed through SRMC (Susan Rubinsky Marketing Consulting). The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of MetroCOG and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the federal and state agencies through which MetroCOG is funded.



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Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments