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 date

MetroCOG
Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments
1000 Lafayette Boulevard, Suite 925,
Bridgeport, CT 06604
203-366-5405  www.ctmetro.org
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 to influence transportation 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 comment, 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 provides a forum for com-
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.

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

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 PM2.5 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 (CTDOT). The Bridgeport-Stamford Urbanized Area (CTDOT).

The Bridgeport-Stamford Urbanized Area (CTDOT).
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
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 provided 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

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
The remediation plan is based on the end use of the site. Multiple cleanup options, their component parts, and their costs are analyzed, ranked, and evaluated to select one that best meets the project's needs. The Assessment Process consists of the preparation of a cleanup plan and the development of a detailed work plan. The presentation of the draft plan to the public is an opportunity to provide valuable feedback to the agencies. At various stages of the assessment process, public meetings are held to inform the public of the project and to solicit feedback.

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.

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**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.
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.
Trumbull: Improvements to Local Roads

The Town of Trumbull and MetroCOG share a commitment to maintaining the Region’s transportation infrastructure and keeping the region in a state of good repair. As local communities, Chestnut Hill Road, Moose Hill Road and Strobel Road are vital to an efficient transportation system in Trumbull. MetroCOG and the Trumbull Department of Transportation are working to secure funding through the State of Connecticut’s Local Transportation Cap Improvement Program (LOTCIP) for all of these projects, totaling over $31 million.

In addition to road improvements in Trumbull, LOTCIP funds are allocated among the state’s nine Councils of Governments. MetroCOG is responsible for administering the program for the Greater Bridgeport Region. In 2014 and 2015, over $6 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, LOTCIP funds are being used to implement a variety of projects in Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield, Monroe and Stratford. These projects include an extension of the Pequot Pomperaug River Trail, a planning, and engineering study to address the Route 25 and I11 intersection in Trumbull and Monroe, and several bridge repair projects.

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

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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 of 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-
principal 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 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
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 transportation 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 Notices (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-
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 allow 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-

<table>
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<th>Product</th>
<th>Update</th>
<th>Public Hearing</th>
<th>Legal Notice</th>
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<td>45 days</td>
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*Approval occurs at MPO meeting  ** Approval occurs at COG meeting
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:
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/Ralphoa 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

### 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 Transportation 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
Acknowledgements

Council of Governments

City of Bridgeport: Mayor Joseph P. Ganim

Town of Easton: First Selectman Adam W. Dunsby Secretary

Town of Fairfield: First Selectman Mike Tetreau Chair

Town of Monroe: First Selectman Ken Kellogg

Town of Stratford: Mayor Laura Hoydick Vice Chair

Town of Trumbull: First Selectman Vicky Tesoro

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