CAPE COD
COMMISSION

Cape Cod Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Public Participation Plan

Amended September 19, 2022

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Introduction

This Cape Cod Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Public Participation Plan (PPP) sets up the process by which the MPO solicits public involvement and cooperative decision making as part of the regional transportation planning process. The MPO strives to share information and collect ideas through public meetings and other strategies in order to improve the planning process and the Cape Cod transportation system.

In accordance with state and federal law requirements[1], including but not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin) and DOT Title VI regulations at 49 CFR Part 21 (entitled Non-discrimination in Federally-Assisted Programs of the Department of Transportation-Effectuation of the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), and 28 CFR section 50.3 (U.S. Department of Justice Guidelines for Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), public processes are designed to provide equal opportunity and access and to provide assurances that there is no discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin (including limited English proficiency), that no person is denied the benefits of, or is otherwise subjected to discrimination under and program or activity for which Federal financial assistance is received from the US DOT, including the FHWA, and to ensure inclusive and accessible public engagement processes for transportation decision making, the Cape Cod MPO has developed this PPP. This Plan will serve to guide agency public participation efforts, including populations that potentially have been underserved by the transportation system and/or have lacked access to the decision-making process. This Plan guides the MPO in its continued efforts to offer early, continuous, and meaningful opportunities for the public to help identify social, economic, and environmental impacts of proposed transportation policies, projects and initiatives across the MPO's jurisdiction.

The Plan is based on federal and state requirements for encouraging and ensuring community participation. It describes the MPO's overall goals, guiding principles, and strategic approach to achieving stated objectives. The Plan also defines how the MPO proposes to incorporate public participation into its transportation decision-making processes, and how the agency ensures access for people with disabilities and the inclusion of low income and minority stakeholders.

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[1] See also the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12250, Leadership and Coordination of Nondiscrimination Laws (November 2, 1980), 28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart F), Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice In Minority Populations And Low-Income Populations (February 11, 1994), Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (August 11, 2000), Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (January 20, 2021), and Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (February 1, 2021).

Specifically, the Plan states the methods that the MPO will use to reach out to persons who are low-income, minority, Limited English Proficient (LEP), or have a disability, and other traditionally underrepresented populations. Because different transportation decisions to be made require different techniques for reaching the public, this Plan provides a toolbox of techniques to be applied, as appropriate, to achieve effective participation.

This Plan is a living document that will change and grow to help the MPO deepen and sustain its work to engage diverse community members throughout the Cape Cod region. Therefore, the MPO will modify its public participation methods and activities over time, based on ideas and feedback from community members and the MPO's evaluation of its public participation effectiveness and any update to the Plan will be given a 45-day public comment period. The Plan will be reviewed at a minimum every five (5) years; however, periodic review may be taken up at any time. The Plan is being developed based on guidelines provided through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and federal guidance documents. It is intended as a document that will govern the MPO's public participation activities, but also serve as a useful guide for the metropolitan planning organizations and cities and towns the MPO works with, as well as for the consultants we contract with for public engagement support.

The Plan also empowers the public through its clear definition of how the MPO conducts its public participation activities. There may be occasions where facts or circumstances may not allow for absolute adherence with the protocols and policies stated. It is important to note that some areas within the MPO have pre-existing and approved policies for public engagement that are unique to the functions they carry out or the targeted audiences served, and in such instances, there may be departures from this Plan that are legitimate and reasonable.

CAPE COD MPO STRUCTURE

The Cape Cod Metropolitan Planning Organization (Cape Cod MPO) is the regional governing body established by federal law to oversee regional transportation planning and recommend the distribution of transportation funds locally. This includes the responsibilities for conducting an inclusionary "3C" planning process (continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive) for transportation planning in the 15 towns of Cape Cod for all modes of travel, including roadways and highways, public transportation, bicycles, pedestrians, connections to air, ferry, and railroads.

The MPO is responsible for endorsing a number of Federal certification documents that include the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Discussion of these documents is included later in this section of the plan. The MPO is made up of eleven voting members that meet five to ten times annually. The membership is outlined in the following table.

TABLE 1: CAPE COD MPO MEMBERSHIP

Agency	**MPO Signatory**
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)	Secretary of Transportation
MassDOT Highway Division	Administrator
Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA)	Chairman
Cape Cod Commission (CCC)	Chairman
Barnstable County Commissioners	Commissioner
Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe	Tribal Chairman
Town of Barnstable	Town Council President
Sub-region A (Bourne, Falmouth, Mashpee, Sandwich)	Select Board Member
Sub-region B (Dennis, Yarmouth)	Select Board Member
Sub-region C (Brewster, Chatham, Harwich, Orleans)	Select Board Member
Sub-region D (Eastham, Provincetown, Truro, Wellfleet)	Select Board Member

The MPO also includes non-voting Ex-Officio Members: Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service/Cape Cod National Seashore, the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority, and the Chair of the Cape Cod Joint Transportation Committee.

The staff of the CCC, CCRTA, and MassDOT, along with staff of the local towns, participates in the process through preparation of the documents for MPO action.

The transportation planning area covered by this plan includes the 15 towns of Barnstable County: Barnstable, Bourne, Brewster, Chatham, Dennis, Eastham, Falmouth, Harwich, Mashpee, Orleans, Provincetown, Sandwich, Truro, Wellfleet, and Yarmouth.

Massachusetts Department of Transportation

Establish in 2009, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is responsible for transportation planning as well as construction and operation of transportation infrastructure for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The organization oversees four divisions: Highway, Rail & Transit, Aeronautics and the Registry of Motor Vehicles, as well as the Office of Planning and Programming.

The MassDOT mission is to deliver excellent customer service to people who travel in the Commonwealth, and to provide our nation's safest and most reliable transportation system in a way that strengthens our economy and quality of life. A seven-member Board of Directors appointed by the Governor with expertise in transportation, finance and engineering oversees

the organization. MassDOT is administered by a Secretary of Transportation, appointed by the Governor to serve as Chief Executive Officer.

MassDOT has two voting representatives on the Cape Cod MPO: one representing the MassDOT Secretary/Chief Executive Officer and the other representing the MassDOT Highway Division Administrator. The officials may designate another official from within their respective agency to regularly represent the agency. As the implementing agency an affirmative vote is required by the MassDOT representatives to endorse federal certification documents.

Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority

The Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA) is one of 15 Regional Transit Authorities within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and has been providing public transportation services since 1976 to residents and visitors as well as consumers of state agencies and human service organizations for all 15 Cape Cod communities. The CCRTA mission is to provide excellent customer service through efficient, reliable, safe, and affordable transit options to all of our customers and communities. The CCRTA Board has representatives from the fifteen towns of Barnstable County.

Cape Cod Commission

The Cape Cod Commission (CCC) is the regional planning and regulatory authority for Barnstable County. The CCC representatives consist of the fifteen towns and a County Commissioner, a Minority Representative, a Native American Representative, and a Governor's Appointee. The CCC mission is to keep a special place special and to protect the unique values and quality of life on Cape Cod by coordinating a balanced relationship between environmental protection and economic progress.

The CCC carries out this mission by leading, supporting, and enforcing the development of regional plans, policies, regulations, and infrastructure to guide and manage growth, and by supporting the 15 Cape Cod towns with professional and cost-effective planning and technical support services. The CCC staff also serves as staff to the Cape Cod MPO.

Barnstable County Commissioners

The three Barnstable County Commissioners are elected at large and serve four-year staggered terms. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, direction of county agencies (including the CCC), preparation of budgets for submission to the Assembly of Delegates, care of county property and finances, proposing ordinances to the Assembly of Delegates, and appointment of the County Administrator.

Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe is one of two federally recognized tribes of Wampanoag people in Massachusetts. Recognizing the importance of their representation and participation in regional transportation planning, a Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal representative was added to the Cape Cod MPO following their federal recognition as a tribe in 2007. The Tribe currently consists of more than 1,400 enrolled members and is led by the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council. The Tribal Chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council serves as the representative on the Cape Cod MPO, but may designate an official from within the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe to regularly represent the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.

Town of Barnstable

The largest town on Cape Cod, the Town of Barnstable, is represented by one of the eleven voting members on the Cape Cod MPO. The Barnstable Town Council, a thirteen member elected body is the legislative and policy-making branch of town government. The council develops, adopts and enacts policies and ordinances, which it believes promote and enhance the general welfare of the town. The President of the Barnstable Town Council serves as the representative to the Cape Cod MPO, but may designate an official from within the Town of Barnstable to regularly represent the Town of Barnstable.

Sub-Region Representatives

The Sub-Region Representative to the MPO is an elected member of a Select Board from the designated Sub-Region. The interests of the local officials and the public in the other 14 towns on Cape Cod are heard through four sub-region representatives. The sub-region representatives are elected to a three-year term by the Select Board members in their respective sub-region. Sub-region representatives may select another Select Board member or town official to serve as an alternate in his/her absence.

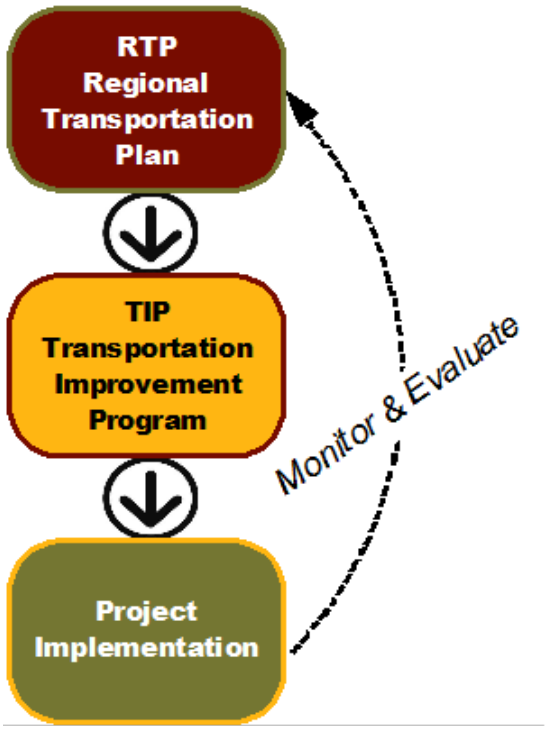
Cape Cod Joint Transportation Committee

The Cape Cod MPO has established a committee of technical professionals known as the Cape Cod Joint Transportation Advisory Committee (CCJTC) to serve as the transportation advisory group to the MPO. The CCJTC Members consist of representatives of the fifteen towns of Barnstable County: Barnstable, Bourne, Brewster, Chatham, Dennis, Eastham, Falmouth, Harwich, Mashpee, Orleans, Provincetown, Sandwich, Truro, Wellfleet, Yarmouth, and a Bicycle Representative. In addition, Ex-officio Members include:

- The Administrator of the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority,
- The Executive Director of the Association for Preservation of Cape Cod,
- The Division Highway Director of the MassDOT Highway Division District 5 Office, and
- The Cape Cod Liaison of the MassDOT Office of Planning and Programming.

CAPE COD MPO PLANNING PRODUCTS

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), along with updates on other major studies or documents under development, are included on the JTC and MPO meeting agendas. Cape Cod MPO staff presents to the MPO interim updates, draft documents for public comment release and final documents for endorsement. Documents are also presented to the JTC for recommendation on MPO action.



The Cape Cod Commission staff frequently updates a meeting calendar with proposed agendas and links to all documents are available on the Cape Cod Commission website (http://www.capecodcommission.org/). Materials can also be made available via hard copy with 24-hour notice from the Cape Cod Commission by contacting the front desk at 508-362-3828.

Regional Transportation Plan

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) provides goals, policies, and objectives for the transportation system over the next 20 years. It is the long range view of transportation based on existing system data and needs. Through the RTP effort, the Cape Cod MPO strives to assess the existing transportation system and its federal aid components—whether transit, highway, pedestrian, or other—and endeavors to improve the transportation system and its connections for better mobility for residents, commuters, and visitors. The seven goals of the 2020 RTP include: Safety, Environmental and Economic Vitality, Livability and Sustainability, Multimodal Options/Healthy Transportation, Congestion Reduction, System Preservation, and Freight Mobility. The RTP sets the long-range framework for the region, not only through specific projects, but also through the consensus on general direction and policies. The RTP development process is a very important time for the public to communicate ideas for improving general issues that need to be addressed.

The MPO staff must update the RTP every four years, and additional specific studies may occur in the interim. Once the MPO approves the RTP, they submit it for review by state and federal authorities. The most recent RTP was approved in 2020. The next RTP is set for 2024.

Unified Planning Work Program

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) describes annual activities related to the transportation planning on Cape Cod. This includes data collection, development of the

planning products, staff support for the MPO and JTC, and transportation studies to undertake in the region.

The UPWP is developed each year at public meetings of the MPO for the federal fiscal year that begins on October 1. Although the primary staff involvement is the Cape Cod Commission, the staff activities of the CCRTA and MassDOT relating to Cape Cod are also included.

Corridor and Area Plans

MPO staff also prepares corridor and area planning studies, as identified in the UPWP, to identify transportation issues and develop potential solutions. The studies identify the transportation issues by closely examining the existing and expected future conditions within each study area. Elements evaluated include the design of the existing transportation facilities, transit services available, accommodation of non-motorized modes of transportation, traffic volumes, levels of congestion, and potentially unsafe conditions.

Recommendations developed from these studies are generally assigned to one of two groups based on a number of factors including overall cost and expected impacts. The projects with relatively low costs and few impacts are generally more short-term, with an expected implementation time frame of 5 to 10 years. The projects with a relatively high construction cost and more impacts are generally more long-term, with an expected implementation time frame of more than 10 years.

These studies help to inform the MPO in its transportation decision-making role for the region.

Transportation Improvement Program

From the RTP, proponents of projects and programs move items toward implementation. Following evaluation by the MPO staff, the JTC, and the MPO, projects graduate to the list of funded items. While the RTP process requires covering a minimum of 20 years, the TIP comprises five years of projects.

The TIP includes both "highway" and transit projects. "Highway" projects are typically construction projects which include projects such as intersection improvements, roadway reconstruction, multi-use path construction, bridge repairs, and various maintenance activities. A list of transit projects for inclusion in the TIP is prepared by the CCRTA. All projects programmed in the TIP must be within the anticipated funding available from federal, state, and other identified funding sources.

The CCRTA prepares a Program of Projects (POP) that outlines the planned projects for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The Program of Projects (POP) is included in the TIP. The public discussions of the TIP at CCJTC, MPO, and transportation meetings satisfies the POP public hearing requirements of the FTA and are structured to comply with federal and state laws, regulations, executive orders, and related provisions requiring nondiscrimination in public engagement. This includes, but is not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI),

the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the MA Public Accommodation Law. Public meeting notices for CCJTC and MPO will also include a statement confirming compliance. .

CAPE COD MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOALS

The MPO has the following public participation goals that agency representatives and those working in concert with the MPO on transportation projects and initiatives should strive to achieve:

1. Obtain Quality Input and Participation

   Comments received by the MPO are to be encouraged and reviewed to the extent they can be useful, relevant, and constructive, and contribute to better plans, projects, programs, and decisions.

2. Establish Consistent Commitment

   The MPO strives to communicate regularly and develop trust with communities, while helping build community capacity to provide public input, as needed.

3. Increase Diversity

   Participants who are encouraged to participate in public engagement processes should represent, as appropriate to a project or those impacted, a range of socioeconomic, ethnic, and cultural perspectives and include people from low-income and minority neighborhoods, people with limited English proficiency, and other traditionally underserved people.

4. Ensure Accessibility

   Every effort should be made to ensure that participation opportunities are physically, geographically, temporally, linguistically and culturally accessible.

5. Provide Relevance

   Issues are framed clearly and simply such that the significance and potential effect may be understood by the greatest number of participants.

6. Foster Participant Satisfaction

   The MPO should encourage the public to participate in project and initiative related discussions, recognizing that people who take the time to participate feel it is worth the effort to join the discussion and provide feedback.

7. Clearly Define Potential for Influence

The process clearly identifies and communicates where and how participants can have influence and direct impact on decision making.

8. Establish and Maintain Partnerships

   The MPO develops and maintains partnerships with communities and community-based organizations through the activities described in the PPP.

9. Provide Opportunities to Build Consensus

   The MPO should ensure that discussions, particularly where there are conflicting views, are structured to allow for levels of compromise and consensus that will satisfy the greatest number of community concerns and objectives. The MPO recognizes that processes which allow for consensus to be achieved are critical to enable public support for recommended actions.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT THE CAPE COD MPO

The MPO recognizes the following principles in achieving its goals for public participation:

1. Promote Respect

   All transportation constituents and the views they promote should be respected. All feedback received should be given careful and respectful consideration. Members of the public should have opportunities to debate issues, frame alternative solutions, and affect final decisions.

2. Provide Proactive and Timely Opportunities for Involvement

   Avenues for involvement should be open, meaningful, and organized to let people participate comfortably, taking into consideration accessibility, language, scheduling, location and the format of informational materials. Meetings should be structured to allow informed, constructive dialogue, be promoted broadly and affirmatively; and be clearly defined in the early stages of plan or project development. Participation activities should allow for early involvement and be ongoing and proactive, so participants can have a fair opportunity to influence the MPO decisions. Opportunities for comment both during a standard comment period as well as after significant changes will be provided.

3. Offer Authentic and Meaningful Participation

   The MPO should support public participation as a dynamic and meaningful activity that requires teamwork and commitment at all levels. Public processes should provide participants with purposeful involvement, allowing useful feedback and guidance.

   Participants should be encouraged to understand and speak with awareness of the many competing interests, issues, and needs that lead to transportation ideas and projects.

4. Provide a Clear, Focused, and Predictable Process

The participation process should be understandable and known well in advance. This clarity should be structured to allow members of the public and officials to plan their time and use their resources to provide input effectively. Activities should have a clear purpose, the intended use of input received made clear, and all explanations described in language that is easy to understand.

5. Foster Diversity and Inclusiveness

   The MPO should proactively reach out to and engage people with disabilities, as well as low-income, minority, limited English proficient disabled and other traditionally underserved populations.

6. Be Responsive to Participants

   The MPO meetings should facilitate discussion that addresses participants' interests and concerns. Scheduling should be designed to meet the greatest number of participants possible and be considerate of their schedules and availability. Informational materials provided should be clear, concise and responsive to known community concerns, while avoiding misleading or biased suggestions or solutions.

7. Record, Share and Respond to Public Comments

   Public comments, written and verbal, should be given consideration in the MPO decision making processes and reported in relevant documents. Specifically, public comments provide an opportunity for shared knowledge among the MPO departments and transportation partners. Clear responses that are documented are crucial to demonstrate that community input was in fact addressed. The MPO should communicate the impact of the public input on decisions at a broad summary level, describing the major themes, the decisions reached, and the rationales for the decisions.

8. Self-evaluation and Plan Modification

   The effectiveness of this Plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure it meets the needs of the public, and will be revised to include new strategies and approaches.

Cape Cod MPO Approach to Public Participation

Transportation decision making and project development processes follow set procedures, including the need to give the public opportunities to participate. These public involvement objectives are further shaped by the MPO's commitment to civil rights related obligations, such as removal of barriers to participation, diversity, and inclusive outreach. This Public Participation Plan describes participation opportunities generally and includes specific protocols and resources that are designed to facilitate diverse and inclusive public outreach and involvement. The plan is a flexible and an evolving document. As necessary, the MPO will revise the PPP based on recurring assessments of successes and/or challenges associated with outreach, as well as suggestions made and the results of public engagement processes.

In this chapter, a general description of the MPO's public participation activities is presented. The next chapter contains the specific civil rights protocols utilized by the MPO for all public outreach activities, categorized by types of communication formats, including large group discussions targeted group engagement and one-on-one interactions. The next chapter also contains the MPO Accessible Meeting Policy. The view is that if these objectives and standards are consistently applied to the different types of public meetings the MPO convenes or participates in, the resulting discussions and resolution of issues will be inclusive and accessible to all.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

The MPO takes pride in its work to maintain a collaborative relationship with community and municipal stakeholders and has strategically developed this Public Participation Plan to foster collaboration in an all-inclusive manner. The MPO public outreach effort rests on utilizing multiple communication channels to distribute information to and solicit input from affected constituencies. The MPO typically communicates with the general public through one or more of the following methods:

- The Cape Cod MPO section of the Cape Cod Commission website, http://www.capecodcommission.org/mpo
- Public Media (including local minority and non-English newspapers, radio stations, and television stations)
- Press releases
- Posters, display boards, and flyers
- Project fact sheets
- Brochures
- Newsletters
- Public service announcements
- Public comment period on draft documents
- Mailing and email lists
- Information stands at local events

- Social media tools, including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, email distribution lists, and other new media venues
- Legislative briefings
- Presentations, public meetings, public hearings, open houses, and workshops
- Civic advisory committees and working groups

Public Comment on Draft Documents

The Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) prepared for the Cape Cod MPO are be presented to the MPO as draft and released by vote for a 21-calendar-day public comment period. At this time Cape Cod MPO Staff distributes the draft document and announces the beginning of the public comment period. Comments received by staff are documented, presented to the MPO and may result in changes to the document. After the 21-calendar-day public comment period the MPO can endorse, reject or rerelease the draft for an additional comment period by vote. The comment period for these documents may be abbreviated as determined by the MPO. Public comment periods for significant changes to the Public Participation Plan are for 45 calendar-days.

MPO interested parties

The Cape Cod MPO seeks to define a process in this plan that ensures affected stakeholders are included in the process, including citizens, affected public agencies, the business community representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportations services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled and other interested parties have reasonable opportunities to be involved in the transportation planning process.

The Cape Cod MPO Webpage

The transportation section of the Cape Cod Commission website is a resource for people wanting information about the MPO programs, projects, and activities. Public notices of all the MPO meetings, public hearings, and public comment periods are posted on this site, along with information about the MPO programs, projects, and activities. Some programs and projects have dedicated webpages include:

- Information about upcoming meetings
- Project presentations and fact sheets
- Summary notes for meetings/workshops on the project
- Process to be added to the project's electronic distribution list

The Cape Cod MPO webpage can be accessed at: http://www.capecodcommission.org/mpo.

Project websites are important tools for people who cannot attend meetings. Members of the public can review presentations and meeting summaries and provide comments through emails and letters to the MPO staff. People who cannot attend meetings may also review information on the website and submit comments to the MPO.

Meeting Notice Content and Distribution

The MPO announces all meetings, public hearings, open houses, workshops, and public comment periods through press releases, email, mailings, and/or the distribution of informational meeting flyers as well as placing meeting information on the MPO website and posting on the Cape Cod Commission and County bulletin boards as may be required by the Massachusetts open meeting law. Notices are published in local English newspapers, and if the project has an impact on low income or minority populations, an effort is made to place notices in media that serves local, minority and non-English speaking communities in regions across the Commonwealth. Meeting notices will include information about getting to a meeting location using public transportation, when transit is available. The MPO notices also let people know they can request foreign language assistance, and that sign-language interpreters and other accommodations are available on request for people with disabilities (with timely notification).

There is also information that advises people who to contact with questions or concerns. The information for these meetings and the informational materials provided at the meetings can be translated into languages other than English, as needed.

Public Meetings, Open Houses, and Workshops

Public Meetings

Public meetings are held to present information to or about the MPO and provide the public with an opportunity for input from community residents. Meetings provide a time and place for face-to-face contact and two-way communication. One method that may be used is comment cards. They are generally tailored to specific issues or community groups and can be either informal or formal. Public meetings are used to disseminate information, provide a setting for public discussion, and receive feedback from the community.

Open Houses

Open houses are informal settings where people can obtain information about a plan, program, or project. They do not have formal agendas, and no formal discussions or presentations take place. At open houses, people receive information informally from exhibits and staff, and they are encouraged to give opinions, make comments, and state preferences to staff, orally or in writing. Informal presentations, slide shows, and one-on-one discussions take place continuously throughout the event, which usually includes a series of stations: a reception area; a presentation area for slide shows or short talks; areas for one-on-one discussions between community and agency staff members; and displays of background information, activities to date, workflow, and anticipated next steps, accompanied by an array of primary subject panels.

Since there is no fixed agenda, open houses are usually scheduled for substantial portions of a day or evening, so that people can drop in at their convenience and fully participate.

Note that Open Houses often involve one-on-one discussion of issues or concerns between meeting participants and MPO representatives. The content and nature of these informal exchanges is not easily captured in documents such as meeting summaries or notes. Thus, the meeting participants with whom the MPO representatives have such an exchange are instructed to relay the content to both the MPO and the Title VI Coordinator so that these issues are catalogued and tracked, as needed.

Workshops/Community Charettes

Workshops and Community Charettes are organized around a particular topic or activity and typically involve a relatively small group of people (more for charettes) who want to participate intensively. These events are usually one to three hours in duration, and small groups work on a specific agenda. The MPO staff members provide information, answer questions, and participate as individuals in workshops. Workshops are inherently participatory and encourage a "working together" atmosphere.

Public Hearings

A public hearing is more formal than a public meeting. The public hearing is an opportunity for members of the public to make recorded statements of their views immediately before project decision making. The MPO views the hearing as a specific, observable administrative benchmark for public involvement.

A public hearing is held prior to a decision point, to gather community comments and hear the positions of all interested parties for the public record and input into decisions. Public hearings are required by the federal government for many transportation projects and have specific legal requirements.

Meeting Facilities and Accessibility

The MPO is required to hold meetings, open houses, and workshops in accessible facilities that are, wherever possible, at locations close to or served by fixed route transit service. For facilities not located on fixed route transit service, potential participants should be made aware of the door-to-door paratransit service offered by the CCRTA know as DART (Dial-a-Ride Transit). Meeting planners must conduct an analysis of the demographics of the area where the meeting is to be held to determine whether notices should be translated into languages other than English. The availability of handout materials in alternative formats——as well as other accommodations (language interpreters, sign language interpreters, CART translators, etc.) must be indicated in the meeting notices along with specific information on how to request these accommodations.

MPO meeting planners should research and make every effort to select the location, size, and setup of meeting facilities based on the specific characteristics of the audience and the type of

information to be presented. Whenever possible, hearings, meetings, open houses, and workshops should be held in places that are centrally located to the project and likely to attract a cross section of the people, businesses representative, and other community stakeholders. County and local government buildings, public libraries, public schools, and community centers are often used.

The MPO meeting staff members that are charged with the coordination of any meeting are responsible for coordinating resources, including free accessibility assistance and language assistance as outlined in this plan, to ensure that the event is accessible to all people and to provide the greatest opportunity for participation by interested parties.

Tailoring Outreach to Underserved People

Along with scheduling a room, posting notices and ensuring accommodations are in place for a meeting to be well attended; meeting planners are also obligated to conduct outreach to encourage attendance, including groups protected by anti-discrimination laws.

Many people in minority and low-income communities, as well as those with low literacy and/or limited English proficiency, have traditionally been underserved by conventional outreach methods. Outreach to traditionally underserved groups helps ensure that all constituents have opportunities to affect the decision-making process. It sets the tone for subsequent project activities and promotes a spirit of inclusion. The greater the consensus among all community members, the more likely the position agreed upon will aid in decision making for the plan, program, or project. Inclusive outreach efforts are particularly useful because they:

- Provide fresh perspectives to project planners and developers
- Give the MPO firsthand information about community-specific issues and concerns
- Allow the MPO to understand potential controversies
- Provide feedback to the MPO on how to get these communities involved
- Ensure that the solutions ultimately selected will be those that best meet all of the communities' needs

By interacting with community members, the MPO staff will gain insight into the reasons why community members agree or disagree with proposed plans or projects. The perspective of traditionally underserved people can inform the goals and outcomes of planning and project development. Such individuals can suggest fresh approaches to transportation issues that otherwise might not be raised. The MPO's public outreach efforts are designed to accommodate the needs of low-income, minority, Limited English Proficiency, and other traditionally underserved people throughout all phases of any public participation process.

Traditional techniques may not be the most effective. It is important to use a variety of public involvement techniques when working with underserved populations and communicating with community leaders to find out the best techniques for working with a particular group.

MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Cape Cod MPO seeks to define a process in this plan that ensures that affected stakeholders are included in the process, including, but not limited to community members, racial and ethnic minority communities, including limited English proficient populations and other constituencies historically underserved by transportation programs, affected public agencies, the business community, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportations services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of individuals with disabilities, and other interested parties.

In order to better understand how the MPO is meeting its commitment to foster public engagement in all MPO planning activities, it is important to have a series of measurements to better understand the effectiveness of the public outreach efforts. It is through the tracking of the efforts made to engage these and other constituencies, whether in person, virtual, electronic, through social media or through other methods, that the MPO can discern if its public outreach efforts are delivering the desired results. The results of these public outreach efforts will be contained within a Measurements of Effectiveness (MOE) analysis at least every other year.

The Measurements of Effectiveness report will track the following efforts:

- Number of CCMPO, CCJTC meetings held
- Number of outreach events held
- Meeting attendance
- Number of individual and group contacts sent agendas, hearing and meeting notices
- The number of group and individual invitees from underrepresented population in meetings, including outreach efforts.
- Number of materials translated into the LEP safe harbor clause language Portuguese
- Number of responses to documents received through outreach efforts (including the number of instances individuals responded through social media, surveys and questionnaires, direct mailings, email, and at public workshop, through written, verbal, or other communication)
- Number of announcements and documents distributed to the public (includes Plans, Programs, Press Releases, Emails, Flyers, Letters, Newsletters, Social Media. Website.)

Title VI and ADA Protocols, Policies, and Resources

The civil rights protocols set forth in this document are a baseline for holding inclusive, accessible and responsive public meetings and hearings.

The MPO conduct and participate in many meetings and hearings within the course of their operations. These Protocols are designed to support the basic form and structure of existing operations.

These protocols include steps and strategies to implement prior to holding a public meeting or other such activity during the course of the public process.

Community Participation goals should be stated at the outset, including a description of the proactive strategies, procedures and desired outcomes. There should be identified points in the planning process during which participation is solicited from affected communities and community response are considered and incorporated into planning and decision making.

Meetings should be tailored to the special needs of the community, and/or the target audience and subject matter to be addressed. Effective public participation from a civil rights perspective includes awareness of the local population (demographics) or individuals to be engaged, including languages spoken, represented cultural groups, community organizations and leaders and key players. Measures should be taken to engage in focused and direct outreach with key stakeholders, advocacy groups, community-based organizations and other representatives of affected or potentially affected communities. Equally critical to an effective meeting are well communicated (effectively circulated across types of media, and translated when needed) and timely notice, early response and coordination on requests for language assistance for limited English proficient individuals or reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities.

Federal nondiscrimination obligations, through Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) include the categories of race, color, national origin (including LEP), age, sex, and disability. These protocols are designed to ensure that sufficient consideration of outreach to and inclusion of these groups is incorporated into the MPO's public engagement procedures. These protocols will also sufficiently address State-level nondiscrimination obligations. State level protections include the federal protections plus ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, ancestry, veteran's status (including Vietnam-era veterans), and background.

CIVIL RIGHTS PROTOCOLS BY TYPE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The following represent the three types of public engagement most commonly encountered by the MPO employees:

- Meetings for the general public
- Targeted outreach gatherings
- Open houses

An introduction to each of these three types of public engagement is provided below. Familiarity with the following descriptions will help inform the user on how they should navigate the protocols set forth in this document.

Meetings for the General Public

Public meetings and hearings, both at the project level and more broadly, are an opportunity for members of the public to engage in the transportation decision making process. The civil rights considerations described in this section are designed to inform and guide all the MPO staff involved in planning and conducting such events. Incorporation of these processes and utilization of these resources when planning or participating in public meetings/hearings will help ensure that these events are Title VI compliant.

Open Houses

At times, MPO staff may interact with members of the public through "open house" sessions prior to meetings/hearings. These sessions afford members of the public an opportunity to view design plans for projects that will be discussed at the formal public outreach event.

The MPO staff is on hand to discuss particular details of interest with members of the public. While the interactions during these sessions are informal, critical issues are often raised. The MPO staff strives to address these issues accurately and effectively during these sessions.

Targeted Outreach Gatherings

At times, the complexity of a project, controversial issues, or the reality of having multiple large Title VI groups to address may require engaging targeted audiences of stakeholders. Similarly, the MPO may at times convene selected people within advisory committees, research efforts, and/or focus groups. The general work of understanding the demographics of people in a locality or project area still apply to determine what Title VI groups are impacted by an initiative, as described above. However, there may be a need to include strong and possibly visible community leaders within Title VI populations; this can require more subtle and challenging efforts to secure their participation and needed contribution to discussions or deliberations.

One-on-One Interactions

The MPO staff members interact directly with the public by virtue of the public facing programs, services, and activities the organization provides. These interactions can include planned meetings, such as those with property and business owners directly impacted by transportation projects, and spontaneous interactions with members of the public. These interactions, whether in person, over the phone, or electronic, present particular civil rights related risk factors that can be mitigated through the strategies articulated herein.

Preliminary/Ongoing Considerations to ensure compliance with Title VI

1. Identify the population and composition of the individuals/communities impacted by the MPO program, service, or activity by considering the following:
    a. Project parameters, such as location, areas that will be impacted by construction phases, areas that may benefit from the completed project, and the areas that may be burdened by the completed project;
    b. Where applicable, the owners of any property to be taken, and the persons or businesses to be displaced, relocated, or adversely affected, as a result of the program or activity currently and/or at some foreseeable time in the future;
    c. Where applicable, the present or proposed membership of any planning or advisory body which an integral part of the program or activity;
    d. Where applicable, the proposed location and alternative locations of any facilities to be constructed or used in connection with the program or activity, together with data concerning the composition by race, color or national origin (including limited English proficiency) of the affected communities surrounding such facilities;
    e. The nature of the program, service, or activity (is it connected to the project development process? is it statewide, regional or local?)
2. Identify whether the program will have a disparate impact on the basis of race, color or national origin (including limited English proficiency). Where a disparate impact is found, mitigation measures are taken to eliminate or minimize the disparity. Where a disparate impact cannot be eliminated, ensure that the activity will only be undertaken if a substantial legitimate justification for the activity exists and is documented and that is the least discriminatory alternative. The following factors should be considered in determining the impact of the program or activity:
    a) To what extent does the program or activity expand opportunity;
    b) If persons or businesses are to be displaced, relocated, or adversely affected, whether the displacement will be equitably shared by the affected communities;
    c) The historical background of the program or activity over time, including its design, construction or modification;
    d) Any related preexisting disadvantages of the affected community, and any action taken to alleviate these disadvantages; and
    e) An analysis of the comparative negative impacts of alternative approaches

3. Determine the Title VI features of the community to be engaged by reference to the MassDOT Environmental Justice Populations online viewer (https://mass-eoeea.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1d6f63e7762a48e5930de84ed4849212), which include the limited English proficient (LEP), low income and minority populations across the Region.

    Additionally, the following maps and resources should be consulted:

    a. US Census Bureau Language - Explore Census Data Portal (https://data.census.gov/cedsci)

b. MassDOT “Engage” (https://gis.massdot.state.ma.us/engage)

4. Identify key Title VI-related and other community-based organizations and community leaders. It may be helpful to utilize well established connections with individuals and groups. These instructions provide the steps to identify previously unknown points of contact to diversify outreach:
    a. Use the Civil Rights Constant Contact database that has been developed through IT, and codes organizations by e-mail, county. (pending completion by Mass DOT)
    b. Utilize the MPO’s expanded contacts list that includes social service, health care, and other community-based organizations that may have connections with traditionally underserved populations.

5. Maintain a record of community engagement, including to the extent feasible, demographics of attendees at events and comments from affected communities. This record should be updated as community outreach is conducted and made available to the public upon request.

MEETINGS FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Meeting Location and Time

1. Title VI Considerations
    a. Consult with community leaders and community-based organizations that have been identified to identify any aspects of the community which may be central in determining the time and location of the public engagement activity. Doing so informs the cultural, ethnic, religious, gender, and political histories/experiences of the demographic groups in the locale which better inform meeting planning.
    b. Consider factors such as cultural sensitivities and/or professional and academic commitments in setting the number of meetings. Multiple meetings can be held at various locations and times if doing so promotes meaningful access to the public engagement opportunity.
    c. Where possible, select a meeting location near public transportation options. For meeting locations not located on fixed route transit service, potential participants should be made aware of the door-to-door DART paratransit service offered by the CCRTA.

2. ADA Considerations
    a. Identify a venue for the public meeting that is ADA compliant and accessible to people with disabilities.
        i. The Cape Cod MPO will maintain an Accessible Facilities Database that contains updated information regarding venues that have been previously assessed for ADA compliance.
    b. If an appropriate venue cannot be identified in the database, the following resources can identify public meeting venues that may be accessible:

i. The Massachusetts Office on Disability http://www.mass.gov/anf/employment-equal-access-disability/oversight-agencies/mod/
ii. The Disability Commissions https://www.mass.gov/doc/current-list-of-active-massachusetts-commissions-on-disability/download
iii. The Independent Living Centers http://www.masilc.org/membership/cils

c. Take the opportunity afforded by early communication with venue staff to identify pre-existing accessibility accommodations, such as assistive listening devices and Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART) equipment.

Virtual Meetings

a. The novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has changed the way people can meet, with the CCMPO meetings moving to a virtual, or online platform. The expansion of the open meeting law and the ability for a quorum of members to meet virtually allowed the CCMPO and CCJTC meetings to be held online.
b. Generally, such meetings are held using a link to the online meeting on the web. Directions for how to access the meeting link and the platform (such as Zoom) are provided on both the CCMPO website and the meeting notice homepage. Directions on how to participate in the meeting are provided directly on the meeting agenda and are repeated aloud at the outset of each meeting for those participating by telephone and others who may only have audio.
c. Google translate is provided for translation of these directions and the meeting agendas and materials in over 100 languages. A dedicated link for direct translation to Portuguese is also provided. The CCMPO provides a live translator within the Zoom app who provides real time translation as needed and/or requested.
d. Internet/Broadband access and connectivity are a recognized priority when conducting meetings using this technique. Alternate options for accessing this type of meeting, including instructions on how to access that same meeting utilizing a telephone or in person alternative should be included in meetings or hearings using a virtual platform. Directions on how to access the alternatives provided should be included on any agenda or hearing/meeting notice.
e. Virtual tools can offer opportunities to those who do not have access to resources that facilitate attendance (transportation, child care, etc.) at in-person meetings to participate. in traditional approaches to public involvement.
As well as utilizing the CCMPO website and social media platforms, VPI methods such as online videos, webinars, interactive maps, and other similar forums can be used in an effort to reach additional populations and a greater number of people in the hopes of receiving more information and input. Among the broad range of VPI methods available are online meetings, survey tools, mobile apps, real-time polling, mapping tools, and story maps.

Coordinating Public Notice

1. Draft the public meeting notice document, either utilizing existing approved templates or creating a new one, ensuring that the following civil rights related components are included:
    a. Notice of Nondiscrimination
    b. Availability of language services and reasonable accommodations
    c. Contact information and procedures for requesting the above services, additional information, or to express a concern, including how to file a Title VI complaint
    d. International Symbol of Accessibility http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Symbol_of_Access
2. Public meeting notices must be accessible, in clear, plain language, including in languages other than English, to affected communities.
3. Address language needs and utilize non-English language outreach resources in the dissemination area if individuals who have limited proficiency in English are present as has been identified by the LEP maps.
    a. Identify non-English language media (print, TV, radio, online, etc.) and sites with a strong presence of individuals who have limited proficiency in English (transportation facilities, community centers, libraries, commercial/employment/educational establishments, places of worship, cultural centers, etc.) that may be effective in communicating notice to individuals who have limited proficiency in English. The following resources may be consulted:
        i. The MassDOT Office of Diversity and Civil Rights https://www.mass.gov/nondiscrimination-in-transportation-program
        ii. The MassDOT Public Affairs
        iii. Community Leaders
        iv. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) https://www.mass.gov/service-details/regional-planning
        v. Regional Transit Agencies (RTAs) https://www.mass.gov/info-details/public-transportation-in-massachusetts#map-of-transit-authorities-in-massachusetts-
        vi. Public Libraries http://www.publiclibraries.com/massachusetts.htm
        vii. Schools/Universities http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_colleges_and_universities_in_Massachusetts
        viii. Chambers of Commerce http://masshome.com/cofc.html
        ix. Local Legislators
    b. Develop translated version(s) of the notice document or other related announcements, as needed, based on the extent of LEP need and available media sources. If there is a large population of individuals who are LEP in the meeting or project locale, consider translating the meeting notice in full. If it is less likely to be individuals who are LEP, include the single line of text into the languages other than English. This could include:
        i. Full translation of the notice into the languages indicated

ii. The inclusion of the following statement translated into the appropriate languages into the English language version of the notice:

> "This notice describes the date, time, and location of a public meeting or hearing on a transportation project in this area. If you need this notice translated, contact the Cape Cod MPO's Title VI Coordinator at 508-362-3828."

iii. Translated versions of print, TV, radio, and online announcements related to the meeting, as applicable.

c. Consult the following resources for translation needs:
   i. UMass Translation Center
   ii. https://www.umass.edu/translationNew England Translators Association
   iii. https://nneta.wildapricot.org/Local Interpretation Services

4. The final dissemination of public notice should incorporate the following:
   a. The dissemination of public notice has occurred sufficiently in advance of meeting to ensure adequate processing time for language and accessibility accommodation requests.
   b. The public notice/announcement materials have been delivered to non-English language outreach resources and sites, as need is identified in the language access plan's four factor analysis.
   c. The public notice has been delivered directly to individuals, organizations, and other stakeholders that represent Title VI populations in the region. Notice may be sent to the entities below with the instruction that they forward the notice among their own distribution lists and/or post it.
      i. The MassDOT Office of Diversity and Civil Rights, https://www.mass.gov/nondiscrimination-in-transportation-program
      ii. The MassDOT Communications
      iii. Community Leaders
      iv. Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority, http://capecodrta.org
      v. Public Libraries, http://info.clamsnet.org/
      vi. Schools/Universities
      vii. Chambers of Commerce, https://www.uschamber.com/co/chambers/massachusetts
      viii. Local Legislators

Preparation for the Meeting

1. It is important to consider the following questions:
   a. Are there civil rights implications in the background/history of the project;
   b. What public involvement has already been accomplished and did it illuminate civil rights concerns;
   c. What are the known benefits and burdens of the MPO program, service, or activity on Title VI populations? Consult the following resources:
      i. Public meeting/hearing transcripts
      ii. Written public comments

iii. The MPO staff involved in planning and/or conducting prior related meetings

2. Meeting planners should maintain an ongoing dialogue with the individuals and organizations in order to remain well informed on the level of community interest and likely involvement in the public outreach event.
3. Electronic documents related to the subject of the public meeting intended for public dissemination and review should be accessible**.** Adobe Acrobat Professional and Microsoft Word have built-in "accessibility checkers." The following provides instruction on developing accessible documents:
    a. Best practices for text and color contrast considerations when preparing hardcopy and electronic visual aids (such as maps, posters, plans, PowerPoint templates/graphics, charts, graphs, etc.) http://www.lighthouse.org/accessibility/design/accessible-print-design/
    b. Creating accessible Word documents: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d
    c. Creating accessible Excel workbooks: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-excel-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6cc05fc5-1314-48b5-8eb3-683e49b3e593
    d. Creating accessible PowerPoint presentations: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25
    e. Creating accessible PDFs with Microsoft Office products through "Tagging": https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/create-accessible-pdfs-064625e0-56ea-4e16-ad71-3aa33bb4b7ed
    f. General information on accessibility from Adobe: http://www.adobe.com/accessibility/
    g. Adobe Acrobat X Accessibility Guide: https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/create-verify-pdf-accessibility.html
    h. Video on preparing accessible InDesign files: https://www.adobe.com/accessibility/products/indesign.edu.html
4. The period between notice dissemination and the meeting date should be used to identify and arrange accommodations and produce meeting materials in alternate languages and formats (such as large-print), if requested.
    a. Alternate formats can be obtained by contacting:
        i. MBTA System Wide Accessibility https://www.mbta.com/projects/system-wide-accessibility-improvements
        ii. MA DOT's Central Transportation Planning Staff
    b. The nature and extent of accommodations that may be needed can be identified by:
        i. Direct requests
        ii. Feedback from community leaders, stakeholders, advocacy groups, etc.
        iii. The Cape Cod MPO Accessible Meeting Checklist (Appendix A)

c. Foreign language document translation can be provided by:
    i. UMass Translation Center
d. https://www.umass.edu/translationIf unsure how to provide a particular accommodation or for guidance on recommended accommodations, consult:
    i. The MassDOT Office of Diversity and Civil Rights https://www.mass.gov/nondiscrimination-in-transportation-program
    ii. The Massachusetts Office on Disability https://www.mass.gov/doc/current-list-of-active-massachusetts-commissions-on-disability/download
    iii. The Disability Commission, http://www.cityofboston.gov/Disability/
    iv. The Independent Living Centers http://www.masilc.org/membership/cils
e. Funding Considerations
    i. All accommodations must be provided to the public free of charge.
    ii. For public outreach events which are necessitated by the project development process, each project contains an administration budget that should be utilized, if available.

Meeting Set-Up

1. ADA considerations in public outreach are fully articulated in the MPO Accessible Meeting Policy later in this plan. Meeting setup is addressed in the "Accessibility Checklist for Meeting Planners" as included in Appendix A of this plan.
2. Title VI considerations can be addressed through the following:
    a. Based on identified language needs, has signage in other languages been posted?
    b. Is the space allotted to foreign language interpreters clearly visible to the entire audience?
    c. Has space been given to foreign language interpreters to sit with individuals who need language assistance?
    d. Have Title VI related materials been made available at the welcome desk and/or in the meeting packet? This should include:
        i. "I speak" language cards http://www.lep.gov/ISpeakCards2004.pdf
        ii. Translated versions of the written comment form, as applicable

During the Meeting

1. At the official start of the meeting, make the following statements. If a foreign language translator(s) is present, instruct them to repeat.
    a. (Insert language here, address: general statement regarding nondiscrimination and availability of language and accessibility accommodations, including assistance in providing written comments)
    b. Include instructions on site-specific accessibility considerations, such as accessible emergency exits.
2. The MPO is required to "demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input" (23 CFR 450.316). During a public outreach event, this requires affording

attendees with opportunities to voice comments, questions, and concerns and provide an adequate response at the event or by following up in writing or at subsequent public outreach opportunities.

Post Meeting

1. All public comments (written and oral), testimonials, and sentiments expressed during the public outreach event have been gathered/documented by MPO staff that attended the meeting and passed on to the designee**:**
2. Once received, the designee catalogues all public comments. Every person who sends a comment to the MPO or to MPO staff will receive a response indicating that the comment has been received and the comment will be forwarded to the MPO members.
3. The CCC staff for the MPO is responsible for coordinating responses to public comments because direct impacts require direct communication. (23 CFR 450. 316)
    a. Methods of responses can include:
        i. Individualized written responses
        ii. General distribution written statements (web, email, newsletter, newspaper, etc.)
        iii. Postings to project specific website, if available
        iv. In-person or telephonic follow-ups with individuals/organizations regarding the topics of discussion at the public outreach event
    b. The MPO staff reviews the public comments to determine which MPO program areas should be consulted with or assigned the responsibility of drafting a response that "demonstrate[s] explicit consideration… to public input" (23 CFR 450. 316)
    c. The MPO staff should prepare a summary grid for the MPO compiling the list of comments and notation on the responses that are made/proposed to make.
        i. This may be in the form of a table that contains who made the comment, summary of the comment itself, whether there was a change and if not, what was the response
        ii. If comments refer to or implicate adverse or disproportionate impacts or limited access to the process by any person protected under Title VI and the non-discrimination statutes, these comments should be forwarded using the MPO's outreach database to solicit further comment on the issue raised. Public Comment should be sought on these comment(s) for a minimum of an additional seven (7) calendar-day period by the MPO and should be specifically referenced in the summary grid and a response made as required by this section.
4. In instances where the MPO will draft a written response to a public comment, the content of the response itself can "demonstrate explicit consideration" by:
    a. Describing changes to the recommended design prompted/requested by the comment and how they will be considered
    b. Describing alternate designs prompted/requested by the comment and how they will be considered

    c. Describing mitigation measures prompted/requested by the comment and how they will be considered
    d. Describing the MPO program areas that were consulted in formulating the response
    e. Noting whether the comment is novel or previously encountered
    f. Noting whether the comment has been received from a multitude of sources
5. Responses should also contain:
    a. Contact information for additional information and follow-up
    b. Notice of upcoming related public engagement opportunities
6. If significant changes are made to the Regional Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Plan, or the Unified Planning Work Program in response to a public comment, a minimum of an additional seven (7) calendar-day comment period shall be allowed to solicit public comment on that significant change.

OPEN HOUSES

Title VI Considerations

1. "I Speak" language cards have been provided at the welcome desk. http://www.lep.gov/ISpeakCards2004.pdf
2. If the MPO is providing interpretive services at the public meeting/hearing session, then they should also be available during the open house session and their availability should be made clear through signage and/or announcements. After the session, the MPO staff in attendance should relay the nature of questions and concerns identified through interaction with the public to the MPO (or designee). It is important for the MPO staff working on all stages of project development to know community concerns. Written descriptions of items on display may need to be translated depending on requests received and/or the anticipated level of LEP participation.

ADA Considerations

1. The open house should be set up in an ADA compliant manner. Please see the MPO Accessible Meeting Policy later in this plan.
2. Consider the following when setting up the open house venue:
    a. Consult the following guide on best practices for text and color contrast considerations when preparing hardcopy and electronic visual aids (such as maps, posters, plans, PowerPoint templates/graphics, charts, graphs, etc.) https://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/museums/files/Accessibility%20Resources.pdf
    b. Pathways that guide attendees to display materials or the MPO staff and consultants should be clear of obstructions.
    c. Proper heights and viewing angles of display materials to make them accessible.
    d. Horizontal surfaces used for display should be at a height accessible to individuals that are short of stature and/or rely on assistive mobility devices.

    e. Similarly, materials displayed vertically should not be at an excessive height nor at an angle that makes them difficult to view.
3. The MPO staff and consultants should be prepared to describe displays to blind or visually impaired attendees.
4. Alternate versions, (large print, etc.) of public documents (such as informational packets) should be available if requested with sufficient lead time prior to the date of the meeting.

TARGETED OUTREACH GATHERINGS (SMALL GROUP MEETINGS/COMMITTEES/TASK FORCES/STUDIES)

Strategic Planning for Title VI Group and Individual Inclusion

Strategic planning for the involvement of Title VI community members on special purpose meeting groups or committees is essential to an inclusive and successful effort.

Preliminary Steps:

1. Identify and analyze the location affected by the project or initiative at issue to determine the Title VI populations in the area.
2. Establish a clear objective and role for the envisioned targeted group, including the nature of community involvement and particular skills which may be needed for fruitful discussion or deliberations.
3. Create an outline or public participation matrix to identify the different types of community representation and interests that reflect the community affected by a project or initiative with careful attention to Title VI populations. Types of organizations or interests that may include representatives of Title VI populations:
    a. transit-dependent community
    b. affected businesses
    c. civic organizations (women, seniors, youth, people with disabilities)
    d. freight interests
    e. the disability community
    f. neighborhood association
    g. schools
    h. churches

Beyond demographic data and identification of the types of Title VI related groups or individuals in the community, there are certain key questions to help define the individuals or groups to invite. Consider meeting with a small group of internal staff and/or managers from among MPO departments who know the community and who can help answer these key questions:

1. Who can represent these diverse groups and constituencies in a credible and responsible way?
2. Who needs to be at the table for the work to be accomplished?

3. What is the history of relationships between stakeholder representatives and groups? Is there any past tension that may be a deterrent to participation? If so, are there other community leaders who could help mediate to encourage participation despite differences?
4. If known from past experience, are there stakeholders critical to the process who may be reluctant to participate? How can this reluctance be alleviated? What would be the impact of their refusal to participate in the process? Is there an alternative to their participation?
5. What commitments do you want from participants?
6. Other than known stakeholders, what other individuals or groups could have an interest in the project that are not in the immediate project area, and/or are not otherwise represented in the outreach strategy?
7. Do any necessary parties have possible concerns about participating? How can those concerns be alleviated?

Consult Statewide Resources

State resources include the following:

1. Massachusetts Department of Transportation - Office of Civil Rights 10 Park Plaza Boston, MA 02116
2. Phone: 857-368-8580 Fax: 857-368-0602 Email: MASSDOT.CivilRights@state.ma.us http://www.mass.gov/anf/employment-equal-access-disability/oversight-agencies/hrd/office-of-diversity-and-equal-opportunity.html
3. Executive Office of Administration and Finance - Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity One Ashburton Place, Room 213 Boston, MA 02108
4. Phone: (617) 727-7441 Fax: (617) 878-9830 E-mail: Sandra.Borders@state.ma.us https://www.mass.gov/diversity-and-affirmative-action-programsConduct Targeted Research

Research the communities involved and the groups and individuals who have been identified.

If a meeting planner is not aware of the racial, ethnic or national origin background of the individual or group being engaged, it is similarly possible to research Title VI groups individually, using query strings to the group or individuals and Massachusetts, the regional area or the locality where the group or individual is based. This information is useful in gaining a basic understanding of traditions, values, beliefs, holidays and relationship to government and/or transportation which may impact participation.

Reaching out to Potential Title VI Group Members – Anticipating Potential Obstacles to Participation

1. Outreach approaches:
    a. Look for formal and informal opportunities to engage, collaborate, and build relationships, including calls of introduction made by volunteers who are trusted in the community.

b. Use multiple outreach methods
c. Tailor materials to the audience, including translations
d. Identify existing channels of communication through communities
e. Experiment and reflect on the effectiveness of new approaches

In Title VI communities, a range of factors lead to reluctance to participate for individuals and groups that could be helpful in a transportation planning or development process. For example, many times natural leaders are either the heads or well-placed leaders of agencies or community groups; this limits their ability to participate because there are many demands on their time, resources and commitment.

2. Identify the factors that would encourage participation and involvement before reaching out, to be in the best position to explain how it is important for this individual or group to participate. If there is a possibility of grant funding to support participating groups, this can certainly provide an incentive for participation.
3. The following are some common barriers to participation, and reasonable responses that a meeting planner should anticipate, understand and be able to articulate to encourage potential participants to get involved:
    a. Limited English language skills and/or limited literacy – it is first important to know that the MPO has the ability and obligation to fund translation and interpretation support and to convey this message. It would be ideal to have a colleague or staff person who speaks the language or is of the culture in question to support the outreach effort, or to use a translator as an intermediary.
    b. Lack of trust due to past experiences - it is important to be in a position to respond with as much information as will demonstrate that both participation and the project are being honestly and openly addressed.
    c. Lack of experience with transportation decision making processes – if this process is not well understood or the meeting convener has a difficult time explaining the process, it is important to have a representative from Planning involved to explain the process.
    d. Economic barriers – transportation costs, work schedules – meetings should be sited in the community to avoid cost factors, and they should be timed to meet the schedule of the majority of participants, after due consideration of all schedules, suggested alternatives and needs.
    e. Cultural barriers – there may be intergroup dynamics that make bringing groups together problematic due to class, racial ethnic or political differences. Early research will help build understanding of this possibility and suggest whether a mediated way of bringing the groups together is an option, or there is a need to have separate meetings.
    f. Common barriers – time, other demands. The key to this element is making sure that the importance of an effort is clear and well stated to the candidate, including the benefit to an individual or group representative being recruited.

Responding to a Refusal to Participate from a Potential Title VI Participant

1. If a person or group declines to participate in a particular effort, consider that the group may wish to participate on another occasion.
2. Consider sending the individual or organizations updates on the effort that are sent to others. This effort could be informative and demonstrate a good faith effort to be inclusive.

Documenting the Effort to Achieving Title VI Compliance, Achieve Diversity and Next Steps

While it may not be possible to achieve a perfectly diverse committee for purposes of transportation planning, it is still important to document efforts made for outreach for Title VI inclusion purposes.

Reported Outcomes: As part of targeted Title VI outreach, a narrative statement should be prepared describing: (1) the steps taken to produce meaningful engagement with affected communities; (2) the results of those efforts; and (3) how the affected communities' comments and views are or have been incorporated into the decision-making process. If a decision is made about an existing or proposed project that receives Federal financial assistance, affected communities shall be notified of that decision and the underlying reasons, including whether alternatives existed, the substance of such alternatives, and the reasons for their rejection. This notification shall be made using effective communications other than English as needed, consistent with Title VI.

These steps may include the following:

1. The meeting planner should keep a file on available resources and methods used to identify individuals and groups, the nature of the outreach effort, the people invited and the results of a recruitment effort. Possible resources:
    a. Lists of potential invitees who were considered and/or accepted
    b. Samples of research conducted and/or consultations made for recruitment
    c. Copies of invitation e-mails or other correspondence
    d. Group membership lists, with indications of the Title VI communities represented
    e. Meeting sign in sheets
    f. Correspondence from invited individuals
2. Meeting planners should plan to discuss with the members of the group that is ultimately recruited the efforts made to reach out and recruit individuals, including the potential need that may remain after the fact for additional participation by certain Title VI group members or related organizations.
3. Effective management of the group that is ultimately formed is key to the productivity and longevity of relationships with Title VI community members. Following-through with stakeholders to demonstrate that input was considered and/or had an impact on project parameters, study outcomes, and planned activities can demonstrate to

participants the value added to their interests and communities through continued involvement in these activities

ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

Communicating with Individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

If a member of the public is attempting to interact but there is a language barrier, the following procedures are recommended.

1. In-person (such as the MPO reception areas, etc.)
    a. The first step is to identify the preferred language of the individual. The following resources are available:
        i. "I Speak" cards, http://www.lep.gov/ISpeakCards2004.pdf
        ii. Google Translate (http://translate.google.com/) or a similar real-time free online language translator can be used to identify the language. If the member of the public is directed to type on the webpage in a language other than English, the software can "Auto-Detect" which language is being used and provide real-time translations. Assistance from co-workers in your unit that may be able to identify the language.
        iii. Language Line (https://www.languageline.com/)
    b. Once the language has been identified, the methods used to address the needs of the individual will change depending on the circumstances.
        i. Simple inquires may be addressed informally on-the-spot with the aid of multi-lingual staff or Google Translate (http://translate.google.com/) or a similar product. [Example: providing directions around the building/office to an LEP individual.]
            An employee and an LEP individual may type or speak into Google Translate software and to carry out a rudimentary conversation. This should remain limited to incidental interactions.
        ii. More complex issues may require professional translators/interpreters. Complex issues are those that affect the legal rights of the individual and therefore depend on the accuracy of translations/interpretations. The following services are available in those instances:
            Language Line (https://www.languageline.com/)
            UMass Translation Center (https://www.umass.edu/translation)
        iii. Should time be needed to secure professional language services (such as scheduling a meeting with an interpreter or sending out documents to be translated) This should be communicated with the help of Google translate or translated cards of key phrases staff may have for this issue
2. Electronically (includes email, website comment form, etc.)
    a. For correspondence in a language other than English, Google Translate may be used (http://translate.google.com/)

b. More complex issues may require professional translators/interpreters referenced above.

The Cape Cod MPO Accessible Meeting Policy

PURPOSE

This policy outlines criteria that must be fulfilled in order to ensure that all the MPO public meetings are fully accessible to persons with disabilities. This document will also address issues related to attendees with limited English proficiency.

The ability to access and participate in state government, including participating in public meetings, is a fundamental right protected by both State and Federal law. The Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law and the Americans with Disabilities Act mandate that persons with disabilities must not be denied participation in public meetings, and that reasonable accommodation requests made by attendees shall be honored. For these reasons, when planning and executing public meetings, the MPO personnel must ensure that all aspects of the meeting are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Commonwealth Executive Order 526, the MPO must also ensure that programs and activities do not discriminate based on race, color or national origin, age, disability and sex, among other protected categories. A public participation plan is being developed for Title VI purposes, which should be consulted by meeting planners in coordination with this Accessible Meeting Policy to ensure that the MPO includes Title VI constituencies in transportation programs and activities. The method for determining whether and/or what non-English languages need to be translated or interpreted is called a “four factor analysis.” Essentially, to determine whether translation is needed, meeting planners must analyze the number of limited English proficiency persons (LEP) by language group where a meeting will be held, the frequency of contacts with the program, the importance of the program and cost factors.

This document will provide guidelines for ensuring the accessibility of public meetings hosted by MPO. Components such as the meeting location, room setup, alternate formats and translations of handouts, and the requirement to provide CART and/or sign language and/or foreign language interpreters upon request will be discussed.

Definitions of terms used in this policy are available in Appendix C of this plan.

SCOPE

All public meetings hosted by, or on behalf of, Cape Cod MPO.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the MPO staff charged with the coordination of the public meeting to ensure that the public meeting is accessible to all. The local contacts for the meeting facility, in

conjunction with the responsible MPO staff, are responsible for filling out the "Accessibility Checklist for Meeting Planners" in Attachment 6.1 to ensure the space is accessible prior to the meeting.

POLICY

General Considerations

1. Public meeting planners shall identify at least one person who is responsible for making sure that the public meeting is accessible for all attendees. This individual shall serve as the contact for attendees requesting reasonable accommodations. See the appendix for a Checklist for Meeting Planners.
2. Public meetings should be planned and publicized as early as possible— ideally, 21 calendar-days, but no less than 14 calendar-days in advance. Revised agendas shall be posted no less than 48 hours in advance of a public meeting.
3. Meeting notices should include a date by which attendees should request reasonable accommodations—typically ten calendar-days before the meeting.

Note: After the cutoff date, staff must still try to provide an accommodation but should not guarantee the provision of the requested accommodation. Attendees shall not be charged for any reasonable accommodation provided.

Choosing a Location

1. Access to Nearby Transportation. All public meetings should be within ¼ mile of an accessible bus stop or rail station, where feasible. For meeting locations not located on fixed route transit service, potential participants should be made aware of the door-to-door DART paratransit service offered by the CCRTA. If neither of these criteria is possible given unique geographic or temporal challenges, has every reason attempt been made to allow interested parties to attend the meeting through alternative means?
    a. The path of travel from the transit stop to the meeting location shall be accessible. Specifically, it should be:
        i. At least three feet wide
        ii. Unobstructed (not blocked by trash cans, light poles, etc.)
        iii. Free of steps, drop-offs or curbs
2. Parking. If parking is available to meeting attendees, meeting planners shall ensure that the number of accessible parking spaces available complies with state and Federal regulations.
    a. The path of travel from the accessible parking to the meeting location shall be accessible. Specifically, it shall be:
        i. At least three feet wide
        ii. Unobstructed (no trash cans, light poles, etc.)
        iii. Free of steps, drop-offs or curbs

3. Identifying the Accessible Entrance. If the main entrance to the building (in which the public meeting is being held) is not the accessible entrance, a sign containing the universal symbol of accessibility with an arrow appropriately pointing to the accessible entrance shall be posted at the main entrance.
4. Ensure the alternate accessible entrance is unlocked and available to be used independently and that the path of travel to the alternate entrance is well lit (if the meeting is taking place at night). If the door is locked and intercom service or another format is used to gain access, an attendant must be at the door to accommodate deaf or hard of hearing individuals, as well as others with disabilities.
5. Accessible Restrooms. If restrooms are available for use by the public then all public meetings shall have at least one accessible restroom for men and one accessible restroom for women, or one accessible gender neutral restroom.
    a. The accessible restrooms shall be within reasonable proximity to the meeting room.
6. Accessible Telephones. If two or more public payphones are available at the meeting facility, at least one should be:
    a. Equipped with TTY
    b. Mounted no higher than 48" from the floor and provide clear floor space 30" wide and 48" wide (so that attendees using wheeled mobility can properly access the phone).
7. The Meeting Room: The meeting room in which the public meeting will take place shall be made accessible for persons with disabilities. The following shall be provided:
    a. An integrated seating area for wheeled mobility device users shall be made available.
    b. If possible, meeting planners should remove several chairs to accommodate potential attendees who use wheeled mobility devices.
        i. If possible, remove a chair to the side and to the rear of the designated space to ensure enough room for the wheeled mobility device.
        ii. Such spaces for wheeled mobility device users shall be dispersed throughout the room, and not clustered all in one section (e.g. all in the front or all in the back). This allows attendees using wheeled mobility a variety of seating/viewing options.
8. Space for Sign Language, CART and Foreign Language Interpreters
    a. A well-lit area and chairs facing the audience shall be made available for sign language interpreters at the front of the room (likely just off to one side of the main presentation area). If a CART provider is to be used, a small table for the laptop and space for a screen and projector should be provided near an electrical outlet.
    b. Priority seating at the front of the audience and in direct line of sight of the interpreters/CART provider shall be provided for attendees who are deaf/hard of hearing.
    c. For foreign language interpreters, there is a need for space where they can sit with the individuals who require language assistance.
9. Aisles within the meeting room shall be

    a. Clear of tripping hazards (e.g. electric cords) to the greatest extent possible. Where cords or other obstacles must cross an aisle to power communications or other device, the hazard should be minimized with tape or other appropriate means.
    b. At least 3 feet wide.
10. Microphones. The microphones used at public meetings shall be available on a stand that is adjustable in height.
    Note: While wireless microphones have become popular, some attendees with disabilities will not be able to hold a microphone independently. In this situation, allowing an attendee use of a microphone stand adjusted to their height is almost always preferable to holding the microphone for them. Alternatively, and particularly for larger meetings, staff with a floating microphone would be preferable to facilitate communication.
11. Podiums. If any attendee may have an opportunity to speak at a podium, meeting planners shall ensure that either:
    a. The podium is height adjustable, or a small table is provided to the side of the podium.
    b. If a microphone is provided at the podium, one shall also be provided at the small table.
12. Raised Platforms. If any attendee may have an opportunity to move onto a raised platform or stage during the meeting, the raised platform or stage shall be accessible by:
    a. A ramp that
    b. Is at least 3 feet wide, and/or
    c. Platform lift
13. High Speed Internet Connection. Public meeting rooms shall provide for a high speed internet connection to allow attendees who rely on video remote interpreting or CART. There should also be a conference capable telephone with a speakerphone function available.

<u>American Sign Language and Foreign Language Interpreters, Assistive Listening Devices, CART and Video Remote Interpreting</u>

1. American Sign Language and/or foreign language interpreters shall be provided at all public meetings upon request provided request is made to the Title VI Coordinator at least 10 days prior to the date of the meeting.
    a. To ensure their availability, interpreters should be requested at 10 days in advance of the public meeting.
    b. Meeting attendees will not be charged for costs associated with sign language or foreign language interpretation.
2. Assistive Listening Devices. Assistive Listening Devices for attendees who are hard of hearing shall be provided at all public meetings upon request. See, Attachment 6.5 for information on how to provide assistive listening devices.
3. CART services shall be provided at all public meetings upon request (See Attachment 6.6 for information on how to provide CART services.). Staff should schedule or make

requests for CART services at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, and preferably as soon as an attendee makes this need known. When remote CART services are to be used (the CART reporter is not in the room), staff should try to provide the reporter any technical terms or acronyms to be used, as well as the names of key meeting attendees before the meeting date.

4. Video Remote Interpreting shall be provided at all public meetings upon request via a computer/laptop with a webcam and high speed internet connection.

Note: Video Remote Interpreting is a relatively new form of technology and may be an adequate alternative to providing ASL interpreters in certain situations. However, if an attendee requests Video Remote Interpreting, ASL interpreters will be an adequate substitute, if the meeting planner cannot secure the requested technology.

Alternative Formats and Translation of Handouts/Presentation Material

These requirements are the same with respect to translation into foreign languages, where the language requested is identified through application of the four factor analysis process, set forth in the MPO Title VI Language Assistance Plan. When a language group is small, defined as 5% or 1,000, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be affected or encountered, foreign language translations of "vital documents" should be provided, and non-vital documents may be orally translated. This requirement does not affect the requirement to provide meaningful translation to one or more in a small group of LEP individuals through competent oral interpreters or translation where language services are needed and are reasonable.

Large Print Version

If requested to the Title VI Coordinator at least 24 hours before the meeting, any text-based printed material to be handed out during the meeting shall be made available in large print.

Large print meeting materials shall:

1. Be created using "Arial" font with a font size of 16 pt.
2. Have the same information as the original handout.
3. Have the highest contrast possible (e.g. black on white).
4. If graphics (such as images, tables, or graphs) are used in the original document, the same graphics shall be included in the large print version of the document.
    a. If graphics are used in the large print document, a brief description of the image shall be provided. Image descriptions shall be brief and provide the viewer of the document with a general idea of what is in the image.
    b. If tables or graphs are used in the large print document, a summary of the table or graph shall be provided.

Braille Version

If a Braille version of materials is requested to the MPO Title VI coordinator at least 10 days in advance of the meeting, this version shall be available for the meeting, if no advance request is made but rather is requested at or after the meeting, then Meeting materials shall be made available in Braille within 14 calendar days of the request.

Foreign Language Version

If a common foreign language version of materials is requested to the MPO Title VI Coordinator at least 10 days in advance of the meeting, this version shall be available for the meeting, if no advance request is made but rather is requested at or after the meeting, then Meeting materials shall be made available in the language requested within 14 calendar days of the request.

Other requests for alternate formats

Individual attendees may have unique specifications for alternate formats. Best efforts will be made to honor all reasonable requests.

Meeting attendees will not be charged for any cost affiliated with the creation of alternate formats of meeting material.

Publicizing the Meeting

Public meetings shall be publicized as early as possible—ideally 21 calendar days in advance, but not less than 14 calendar days in advance. This allows attendees time to submit requests for reasonable accommodations and for meeting planners to set deadlines for accommodation requests to be made in a timely manner. The meeting publicity also needs to be translated into the languages that are identified through application of the four factor analysis set forth in the MPO Title VI Language Assistance Plan.

All meeting notices shall include:

1. The statement "This location is accessible to persons with disabilities"
2. A brief listing of accessibility features that either are available or may be made available upon request during the public meeting (e.g. sign language, CART, assistive listening devices and/or foreign language interpreters).
3. Information on how to request reasonable accommodations by phone, e-mail or fax and the deadline for requests.
4. Information on how to request foreign language interpreter assistance.
5. See Attachment for a sample meeting posting.

Additional Considerations

1. Within 48 hours, meeting planners shall follow-up with attendees who have requested reasonable accommodations to let them know their request has been received and will be honored to the extent possible.

Note: Especially in the case of ASL interpreters, the meeting planner may not know of their availability until 24 hours prior to the meeting. It is reasonable to let people know their request has been received and that it is in the process of being put in place, however if no interpreter is available people need to be notified and alternate plans must be made – such as CART or Video Relay.

2. When opening a public meeting, presenters shall announce
    a. The presence and function of sign language interpreters (if interpreters are in the room), and/or CART providers
    b. That assistive listening equipment is available
    c. The location of accessible restrooms
3. When presenting, presenters at public meetings shall:
    a. Speak slowly and clearly so that the sign language interpreters have time to interpret.
    b. Verbally describe information presented visually (e.g. PowerPoint) so that attendees with visual impairments can access the information.
    c. Ensure that any videos/DVDs shown during the meeting are encoded with closed captioning and are shown on a closed caption compatible device. Subtitles are an acceptable alternative.

Ensuring adequate accessible parking

1. See http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/dps/aab_regs/521023.pdf for Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) regulations.
2. See https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-aba-standards/guide-to-the-aba-standards/chapter-5-parking for Americans with Disabilities Act Architectural Guidelines (ADAAG).

Accessible Restrooms

1. See http://www.mass.gov/eopss/docs/dps/aab-regs/521030.pdf for Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) regulations

Sign Language Interpreters

How to request sign language, CART Providers or foreign language interpreters:

1. Complete and submit an on-line request for interpreting services through the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's (MCDHH) website
    a. Go to http://mass.gov/mcdhh
    b. Click on "Interpreter/CART referral services"
    c. Select "Request an Interpreter on-line"
2. Requests should also be submitted to the MPO's Title VI Coordinator no later than 10 calendar days in advance of the meeting to ensure interpreter availability.

3. If the meeting is cancelled or rescheduled, interpreter requests must be canceled at least 48 hours advance in order to avoid being billed for the service. CART providers must be cancelled no later than 72 hours in advance of the event.
4. Interpreters' invoices are billed as a minimum of two hours.
5. For meetings that are anticipated to last more than 75 minutes, two interpreters shall be provided. In most situations, one CART provider is sufficient if the meeting is no longer than three hours.

CART Providers

How to reserve CART providers:

1. Complete and submit an on-line request for interpreting services through the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's (MCDHH) website
2. Go to http://mass.gov/mcdhh
3. Click on "Interpreter/CART referral services"
4. Click on "CART (Communication Access Real-time Translation) Providers" Click on "Request a CART Provider" and follow listed directions

Foreign Language Interpreters/Translators

The MPO's policy combines the use of bilingual staff, interpreter services and translated materials to communicate effectively with persons who are not fluent in English. When a request for oral interpretation is made, or a significant language speaking population is expected to attend a public meeting, the following steps should be reviewed and carried out to ensure compliance with Title VI requirements.

1. Conduct a four-factor analysis as to the kind of meeting in question and the populations that are in the affected communities, using the language group maps that are contained in the Language Assistance Plan.
2. Identify the languages that are likely to be needed and consult with the MA Office of Diversity and Civil Rights Title VI Coordinator and/or Specialist for assistance with any problems concerning the language groups that may require interpreter services.
3. Identify the source for interpreter services, recognizing that most providers require one-two weeks advance notice of a meeting, based on the language(s) to be interpreted.

Request and cancellation timeframes

1. Requests should be submitted at least 10 calendar days in advance of the meeting to ensure interpreter availability
2. If the meeting is cancelled or rescheduled, interpreter requests must be canceled at least 48 hours advance in order to avoid being billed for the service
3. Interpreter invoices vary by provider but may have a minimum of two to three hours.

4. For meetings that are anticipated to last more than 75 minutes, two interpreters shall be provided.

How to reserve assistive listening devices

To reserve an assistive listening device, contact the Cape Cod Commission at 508-362-3828 or the MassDOT Facilities at 857-368-9560.

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Accessibility Checklist for Meeting Planners

Appendix B: Sample Meeting Posting

Appendix C: Definitions

Appendix A: Accessibility Checklist for Meeting Planners

Meeting Date: _____

Meeting Time: _____

Subject of Meeting: _____

Location: _____

☐ The MPO Attendees: Is there at least one person or Department who is responsible for ensuring that the public meeting is accessible for all attendees?

Print Name/Department: _____

Publicizing Meeting:

☐ Has the public meeting been publicized at least 2 weeks in advance?

☐ Has the meeting been publicized on the MPO section of the Cape Cod website and posted on the Cape Cod Commission noticed board and Barnstable County public notice board?

☐ Has the meeting been publicized in the required foreign languages and ethnic newspapers for the relevant populations in the community where the meeting is to be held, if applicable?

☐ Does the public meeting notice include accessibility information, how to request a reasonable accommodation, relevant dates for making requests and information on whom to contact to request a reasonable accommodation?

☐ Does the public meeting notice include information on how to request foreign language interpreters?

Facility: _____

Date of Facility Assessment: _____

☐ Is the meeting location 1/4 mile or less from the nearest accessible bus stop or rail station, and/or will CCRTA DART service be available at the time of the meeting? If neither of these criteria is possible given unique geographic or temporal challenges, has every reasonable attempt been made to allow interested parties to attend the meeting through alternative means?

☐ Where applicable, is there an accessible path of travel provided from the public transportation stop to the meeting location and meeting room?

- [ ] If parking will be available at the meeting location, are there accessible parking spaces available (review # of car and van accessible spaces)?
- [ ] Is there an accessible path of travel provided from the accessible parking area to the meeting area?
- [ ] If the main entrance to the building is not accessible, is there directional signage towards the accessible entrance?
- [ ] Is the accessible entrance unlocked and able to be used independently? If the meeting is taking place at night, is the path leading to the alternate entrance well lit?
- [ ] If there are restrooms that are open to the public, is there a pair of accessible restrooms available within close proximity of the meeting area? If not, is there at least one accessible gender neutral restroom?
- [ ] If there are public phones, is there at least one accessible (TTY and within appropriate height range) telephone available?
- [ ] If a stage or platform will be used during the public meeting, is it accessible?
- [ ] If a podium will be used during the public meeting, is the podium height- adjustable? If not, is there a small table (between 28 and 34 inches in height) provided to the side of the podium?
- [ ] Is there a high speed internet connection within the meeting space?

Ensuring Appropriate Accommodations:

- [ ] Have sign language and foreign language interpreters, if requested, been reserved for the public meeting?
- [ ] Have CART services, if requested, been reserved for the public meeting?
- [ ] Are Assistive Listening Devices available for the public meeting? Does someone know how to use the device? Have you checked the devices at least 24 to 48 hours before the meeting and rechecked immediately before the meeting starts? (Note: For large meetings, to avoid the loss of equipment, it is reasonable to ask for a driver's license or other ID as collateral.)
- [ ] If requested, are large print copies of meeting handouts available?
- [ ] Are printed materials available upon request, in alternative formats and/or relevant foreign languages?
- [ ] Are film or video presentations closed captioned and audio described?

Facility/Room Setup (prior to meeting):

☐ If the main entrance to the building is not accessible, is the accessible entrance unlocked?

☐ Is there an integrated seating area for individuals who use a wheeled mobility device in the meeting room?

☐ Is there seating available for attendees who are deaf or hard of hearing, and have requested an accommodation, near the front of the meeting room so that attendees may see the interpreter/captioner, or lip read?

☐ Is there an appropriately lit area in the front of the room for sign/foreign language interpreters and/or CART providers?

☐ Are the aisles at least three feet wide and clear of obstacles or tripping hazards?

☐ If microphones are used during the public meeting, are adjustable microphone stands available for attendees? Can staff be used as floaters with microphones as an alternative?

For recordkeeping and reporting purposes, the meeting planner should submit a copy of this completed checklist along with a copy of the meeting agenda to the Title VI coordinator. The Title VI coordinator will submit these checklists to the following along with the annual Title VI submission to:

Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Office of Diversity and Civil Rights
10 Park Plaza, Suite 3170
Boston, MA 02116

Appendix B: Sample Meeting Posting

Agenda

DATE: <DATE OF EVENT>
TIME: <TIME OF EVENT>
PLACE: <PLACE OF EVENT>

- Agenda item
- Agenda item
- Agenda item




This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. The Cape Cod Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print, as available). For accommodations or language assistance please contact the Cape Cod MPO by phone: (508) 362-3828, fax (508) 362-3136, Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS), dial 711 or email frontdesk@capecodcommission.org.

Title VI Notice of Nondiscrimination: The Cape Cod MPO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related federal and state statutes and regulations. It is the policy of the Cape Cod MPO to ensure that no person or group of persons shall on the grounds of Title VI protected categories, including race, color, national origin, or under additional federal and state protected categories including sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, ancestry, veteran's status (including Vietnam-era veterans), or background, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity administered by the Cape Cod MPO. To request additional information about this commitment, or to file a complaint under Title VI or a related nondiscrimination provision, please contact the MPO's Title VI Coordinator by phone at (508)362-3828, Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS), dial 711, fax (508) 362-3136 or by e-mail at mhevenor@capecodcommission.org. If this information is needed in another language, please contact the MPO's Title VI Coordinator by phone at (508)362-3828.

Caso estas informações sejam necessárias em outro idioma, por favor, contate o Coordenador de Título VI da MPO pelo telefone 508-744-1299. The public discussion of the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) at CCJTC, MPO, and transportation meetings satisfies the Program of Projects (POP) public hearing requirements of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Appendix C: Definitions

Public Meeting - Any meeting open to the general public, hosted by or on behalf of the MPO, during which information is shared.

Attendee - An individual attending a public meeting.

Reasonable Accommodation - Any reasonable service, aid, modification or adjustment to the public meeting that gives a person with a disability the opportunity to be an active participant in the meeting process.

Path of Travel - A continuous, unobstructed way of pedestrian passage by means of which an area may be approached, entered, and exited.

TTY (Text Telephone) - An electronic device for text communication via a telephone line, used when one or more of the parties has a hearing or speech-related disability. Public payphones equipped with TTY have a small keyboard that pulls out underneath the phone. Note: TTYs are gradually phasing out for many people due to the increased use of voice and video relay, but they will remain in use for some period into the future.

Clear floor space - The minimum unobstructed floor or ground space required to accommodate a single, stationary wheelchair and occupant.

Wheeled Mobility Device - Means by which some individuals with physical disabilities travel throughout their environment. Commonly refers to such devices as wheelchairs (manual and motorized) and scooters. Non- traditional wheeled mobility devices may include Segways and bicycles.

American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter - An individual trained to facilitate communication between a deaf American Sign Language user and hearing individuals via American Sign Language.

Assistive Listening Device - An electronic device used by individuals who are hard of hearing to amplify sound. The assistive listening device is usually used as a system where the audio source is broadcast wirelessly over an FM frequency. The person who is listening may use a small FM Receiver to tune into the signal and listen at their preferred volume. There are other forms of Assistive Listening Devices that exist and could be used as alternatives.

CART (Computer Assisted Real-time Transcription) - A trained operator uses keyboard or stenography methods to transcribe spoken speech into written text. This may be done either on site or remotely by using a voice connection such as a telephone, cell phone, or computer microphone to send the voice to the operator and the real-time text is transmitted back over an Internet connection. For meeting rooms without an internet connection, it is possible to establish connectivity via a WIFI router connection or by using a wireless “hot spot.”

Video Remote Interpreting - A contracted video service that allows individuals who are Deaf to communicate over webcams/video phones with hearing people in real-time, via a sign language interpreter.

Video and Telecommunication (Voice) Relay Services - Video Relay Service (VRS) is a form of Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) that enables persons with hearing disabilities who use American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate with voice telephone users through video equipment, rather than through typed text. Video equipment links the VRS user with a TRS operator – called a "communications assistant" (CA) – so that the VRS user and the CA can see and communicate with each other in signed conversation. The VRS caller, using a television or a computer with a video camera device and a broadband (high speed) Internet connection, contacts a VRS CA, who is a qualified sign language interpreter. They communicate with each other in sign language through a video link. The VRS CA then places a telephone call to the party the VRS user wishes to call. The VRS CA relays the conversation back and forth between the parties – in sign language with the VRS user, and by voice with the called party. No typing or text is involved.

Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) is a telephone service that allows persons with hearing or speech disabilities to place and receive telephone calls. TRS uses operators, called communications assistants (CAs), to facilitate telephone calls between people with hearing and speech disabilities and other individuals. A TRS call may be initiated by either a person with a hearing or speech disability, or a person without such disability. When a person with a hearing or speech disability initiates a TRS call, the person uses a teletypewriter (TTY) or other text input device to call the TRS relay center, and gives a CA the number of the party that he or she wants to call. The CA in turn places an outbound traditional voice call to that person. The CA then serves as a link for the call, relaying the text of the calling party in voice to the called party, and converting to text what the called party voices back to the calling party. VRS and TRS are overseen by the Federal Communications Commission and private contractors who perform the intermediary communication service are reimbursed for this service.

Closed Captioning - A term describing several systems developed to display text on a television, computer or video screen to provide additional or interpretive information to viewers/listeners who wish to access it. Closed captions typically display a transcription of the audio portion of a program (either verbatim or in edited form), sometimes including non-speech elements.

Descriptive Video/Described Narration - A feature that makes television programs, videos, films, and other visual media accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired by providing descriptive narration of key visual elements in programs. Key visual elements in a program that a viewer who is visually impaired would ordinarily miss are described by voice. Actions, costumes, gestures and scene changes are just a few of the elements that, when described, engage the blind or visually impaired viewer with the story.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) - Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be

limited English proficient, or “LEP.” These individuals may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter.

Four Factor Analysis - Federal DOT guidance outlines four factors recipients should consider to assess language needs and decide what steps they should take to ensure meaningful access for LEP persons:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by a program, activity, or service of the recipient or grantee
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program.
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the recipient to the LEP community.
4. The resources available to the MPO and overall cost.

In each instance, this analysis will enable the MPO staff to determine the extent of language assistance that must be provided to enable LEP individuals to participate in a program or activity. For further information, including answers to specific situations that meeting planners may encounter; planners should consult the ADA Coordinator, the Title VI Specialist and/or the Language Access Plan.

Vital Document - A vital document is determined by the context of a program, service or activity, and can include but not be limited to an application, notice, complaint form, legal contract, and outreach material published by a covered entity in a tangible format that informs individuals about their rights or eligibility requirements for benefits and participation.

Language Access Plan - Under Federal Executive Order Executive Order 13166, each Federal agency is required to prepare a plan to improve access to its federally conducted programs and activities by eligible LEP persons. Each plan is required to be consistent with the standards set forth in related guidance, and shall include the steps the agency will take to ensure that eligible LEP persons can meaningfully access the agency's programs and activities.

The Cape Cod MPO’s Language Assistance Plan is available on the Cape Cod MPO webpage at: https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/vital-docs/