



NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

RESOLUTION #486

ADOPTION OF NYMTC'S 2019 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

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

WHEREAS, in accordance with the federal metropolitan planning regulations 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1), each MPO is required to develop and employ a detailed Public Involvement Plan and must periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process; and

WHEREAS, federal regulations call for early and continuing public involvement throughout the planning and programming process with reasonable opportunity for public comment; and

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

WHEREAS, the 2019 Public Involvement Plan is guided by specific public involvement goals and presents outreach practices and enhanced strategies to accomplish those goals; and

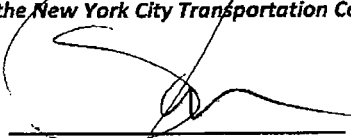
WHEREAS, the 2019 Public Involvement Plan fully meets the requirements set forth in 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1) and has been publicly reviewed for 45 days, as required.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Program, Finance and Administration Committee adopts NYMTC's 2019 Public Involvement Plan.

This resolution shall take effect on the sixteenth day of May two thousand and nineteen.

ADOPTED: May 16, 2019

"I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of Resolution #486, Adoption of NYMTC's 2019 Public Involvement Plan, and was motioned by Ms. Naomi Klein, representing the Mid-Hudson South Transportation Coordinating Committee and seconded by Mr. Jack Schmidt, representing the New York City Transportation Coordinating Committee. This Resolution was adopted and passed unanimously."



Ron Epstein, PFAC Chair

Introduction

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

Established in 1982, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is the designated MPO for New York City, Long Island, and the Lower Hudson Valley. Some 12.4 million people live in this region, which represents 64% of New York State's population based on 2010 Census counts. The size of this population makes **NYMTC the second largest MPO in the country**, following the Southern California Association of Governments. NYMTC is responsible for selecting projects and enabling the **distribution of tens of billions of dollars in federal, state, and local funds for transportation investments** in roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects.

The public plays a critical role in assisting NYMTC in its project selection and long-term planning processes. Every day, people in the NYMTC region are acutely aware of how well the transportation system is working – and areas for potential improvement – with knowledge and insight into the needs of their communities. Finding better ways to interact and converse with the people in the NYMTC region results in gaining valuable input about problems and needs in diverse communities. Insight into qualitative information, such as community values, will only enhance NYMTC's ability to facilitate more effective and productive discussion forums.

Federal regulations require MPOs to develop public involvement plans that are inclusive and robust, engaging a broad range of interested parties in the transportation planning process. Best practices among MPOs nation-wide are adopting increasingly more innovative methods to carry out this engagement,

Definition of Council

- an assembly or meeting for consultation, advice, or discussion
- a central body uniting a group of organizations

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

How to reach NYMTC

- Visit our website at www.NYMTC.org for contact information and directions
- Like us on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/NYMTC
- Subscribe to NYMTC Notes at nymtc-notes@dot.ny.gov
- Send email comments to nymtc-web@dot.ny.gov
- Write to us:
New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC)
25 Beaver Street, Suite 201
New York, NY 10004

combining traditional outreach methods with new opportunities made available through communication technologies.

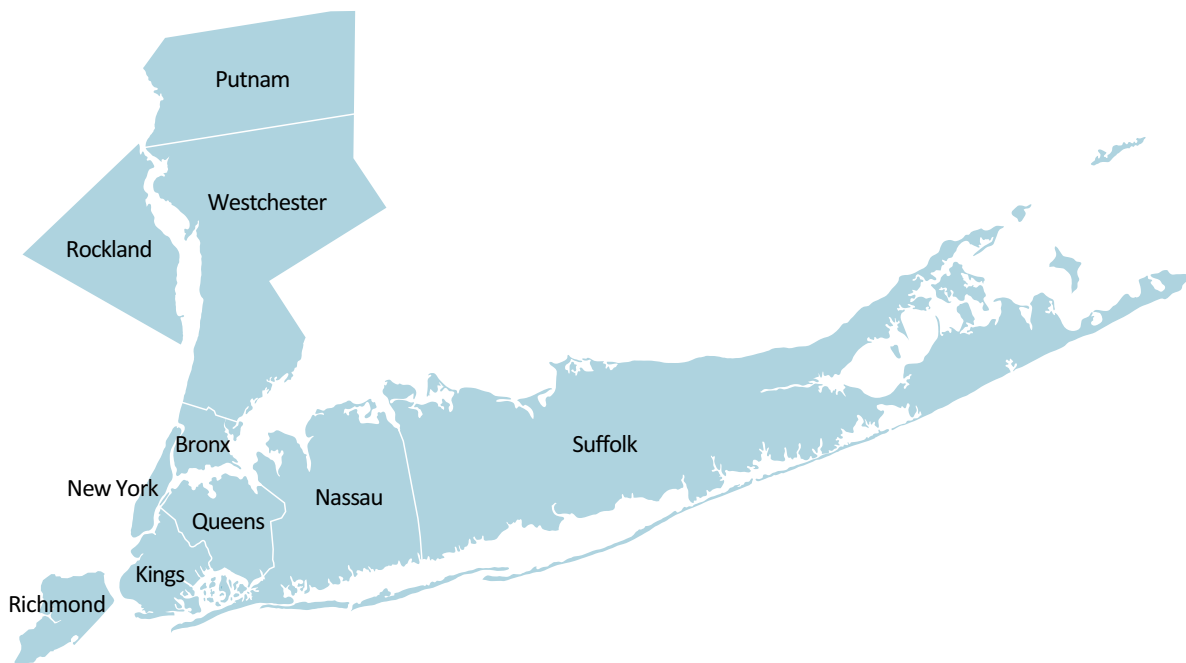
This document updates the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for NYMTC last adopted in 2012. It includes background information on NYMTC's organizational make-up, mission, key products, and regulatory responsibilities. NYMTC has updated its public involvement goals and this document lays out the strategies that are currently in place, and those that will be adopted to expand and augment outreach practices to achieve these updated goals. It is

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

What is a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)?

Federal legislation (23 USC 134(d)) requires the designation of an MPO for each urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 individuals. MPOs consist of local elected officials, officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation within the metropolitan area, including representation by providers of public transportation, and appropriate state transportation officials. MPOs coordinate a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) transportation planning process.

NYMTC Region



NYMTC Background

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

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

NYMTC is comprised of nine voting members and seven advisory members. NYMTC's Council members meet at least annually to address issues relating to NYMTC's requirements under federal planning regulations, as well as any related business. The primary actions of NYMTC's Council members include adopting the Regional Transportation Plan (the Plan), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which are federally-required products of the planning process.

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

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

The TCCs' responsibility is to develop and recommend transportation plans and programs within the sub-regions they comprise and to ensure proper coordination and consistency with formal requirements.

NYMTC's staff is comprised of a Central Staff and the staffs which support the TCCs. The work program of the Central Staff and TCC staffs is determined annually by the Council through adoption of the UPWP. NYMTC Central Staff is housed in the headquarters office in

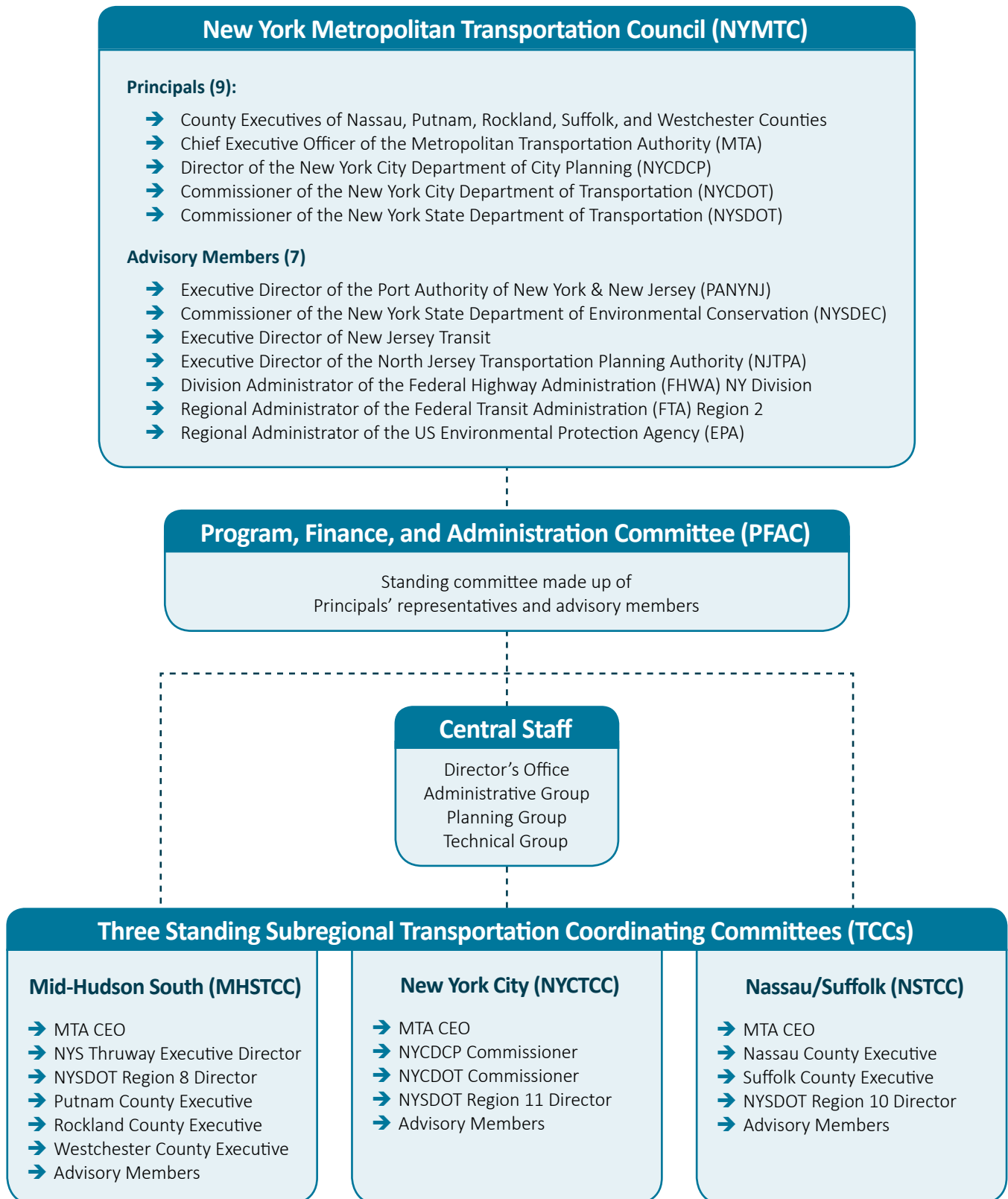
What is NYMTC's Mission?

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

lower Manhattan and coordinates regional activities that support the responsibilities of PFAC and the Council, as well as the development of the mandated planning products. The TCC staffs are housed in NYSDOT regional offices and oversee activities that support the responsibilities of the TCCs.

In addition, member agency representatives make up the **Program, Finance and Administration Committee, or PFAC**, which is responsible for overseeing NYMTC's day-to-day activities and acting on NYMTC business delegated to it by the Council.

NYMTC Organizational Chart



NYMTC's Major Work Products

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

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

- ➔ **A Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan**, or Plan, that provides a vision of the region's transportation system and needs over a minimum 20-year planning horizon and establishes priorities for transportation investments. The Plan is updated every four years.
- ➔ A minimum four-year **Transportation Improvement Program**, or TIP, that identifies all proposed federally-funded transportation improvement projects for various modes and facilities.
- ➔ An annual **Unified Planning Work Program**, or UPWP, that defines the planning priorities in the region, describing all transportation-related planning activities anticipated within a given program year.
- ➔ A **Transportation Conformity Determination** that includes a regional emissions analysis of mobile sources of pollutants required by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 for designated air quality non-attainment areas, and must include all transportation projects in designated non-attainment areas which impact travel capacity. This determination is made for each update of the Plan and the TIP.
- ➔ A **Congestion Management Process (CMP)** Status Report that provides an overview of forecasted traffic congestion at the county and

regional levels in NYMTC's planning area, and should result in strategies that can be reflected in the Plan and in the TIP. The CMP is updated every four years in conjunction with the release of the Plan.

Downloadable copies are available on www.NYMTC.org.

NYMTC's Collaborations

NYMTC manages planning studies in collaboration with member agencies in the region and hosts sessions in which members discuss issues and come up with solutions. NYMTC activities often include:

- ➔ Studying patterns of freight travel to identify needed highway improvements and new rail facilities to assure the efficient movement of goods;
- ➔ Examining pedestrian and bicycle trends to understand how to organize traffic patterns to support safe movement of people;
- ➔ Conducting in-depth reviews of travel corridors to plan transportation improvements;
- ➔ Coordinating planning meetings with neighboring states to maximize travel efficiency; and
- ➔ Exploring demand management programs to reduce congestion, improve air quality, and minimize energy consumption.

NYMTC coordinates its public participation processes wherever possible with the New York State Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (NYSAMPO). NYMTC has also entered into agreement with eight surrounding MPOs and councils of government in New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to better coordinate planning activities in the multi-state metropolitan area. This collaboration is the Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum.

NYMTC and Public Involvement

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

In preparation for this PIP update, a working group of NYMTC staff met to develop draft goals for the PIP. Below are excerpts from two brainstorming sessions in response to questions about NYMTC and its relationship to the public.

Why is NYMTC important to the public?

- ➔ NYMTC provides technical support and consulting value
- ➔ We work to meet the transportation needs of today without compromising those of tomorrow
- ➔ We help transportation decision-makers work together to improve the transportation solutions of the NY Metro region
- ➔ NYMTC is the “go-to” organization for transportation data and analysis

Why is public involvement important to NYMTC?

- ➔ Public involvement provides access to and opportunities for all constituents to have a voice in the planning process
- ➔ It offers an opportunity for ideas to be exchanged between policy makers and the public
- ➔ Public involvement actively involves all affected parties in an open, cooperative, and collaborative process that provides meaningful opportunities to influence decisions

- ➔ It offers transparency on the use of transportation funds

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

Requirements that Govern Public Involvement for MPO’s

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

- Fixing American’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) of 2015
- Highway Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 450.316)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Environmental Justice (EJ) Executive Order 12898
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Executive Order 13166

For further details on these requirements, see Appendix C.

NYMTC Public Involvement Goals

Developed in conjunction with NYMTC staff, PFAC members, and external stakeholders, these goals guide NYMTC's public involvement activities for the life of this PIP.

GOAL 1

Provide a robust, creative, and inclusive outreach process for all populations within the region, with opportunities to engage in meaningful discussions between NYMTC and the public about transportation planning issues.

GOAL 2

Educate the public so they can purposefully participate, know when to provide input, and be encouraged to do so by:

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

GOAL 3

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

NYMTC's Public Involvement Strategies

Below each goal are the current outreach practices and planned or enhanced strategies that NYMTC will undertake in support of the goal.

GOAL 1

Provide a robust, creative, and inclusive outreach process for all populations within the region, with opportunities to engage in meaningful discussions between NYMTC and the public about transportation planning issues.

STRATEGY 1A Public Meetings

Ongoing year-round opportunities currently exist for residents and stakeholders to be involved in NYMTC's planning process. PFAC meetings, the NYMTC Regional Trends Series Brown Bag Seminars, webinars, and public open houses provide various participation opportunities. The purpose of these meetings and events is to present and discuss information, solicit feedback, and gather input from the public on specific topics or plans. As discussed below, opportunities are provided at all meetings for the public to comment and ask questions. All meeting information is available

two weeks prior to the meeting and is listed on the NYMTC website calendar.

Program, Finance, and Administration Committee (PFAC) Meetings

PFAC public meetings are held typically every two months, to solicit public input, and take action on NYMTC business as delegated by the Council. These committee meetings are livestreamed on the NYSDOT website and are posted on NYMTC's YouTube channel.

Agendas and materials distributed to the PFAC members for each meeting are posted on the NYMTC website prior to the meeting, and additional copies are available at the meeting. Meeting minutes are posted on the NYMTC website.

PFAC meetings are often attended by concerned citizens, commuter groups, environmental advocates, planners, engineers, business and labor leaders, academics, state and federal agency representatives, neighboring MPO staff, and media representatives, among others. Meeting attendees are offered time to comment on specific action items before they are voted upon. These items are listed in the meeting agenda. Additionally, the public may address any topic during time set aside for public comment during each meeting. A sign-up sheet is provided to those wishing to provide public comment, and a three-minute time limit is placed on the length of comments.

Meetings are publicized through mailing lists, social media posts, and the NYMTC website. A calendar of meetings, agendas, and minutes from previous meetings are available on the NYMTC website. All PFAC meetings are held during the day at the NYMTC's offices in New York.

NYMTC's Regional Trends Series Brown Bag Seminars

Continuing the commitment to keeping stakeholders throughout the region informed, NYMTC hosts Regional Trends Series Brown Bag Seminars. These informational meetings typically occur bi-monthly around lunchtime for one-hour to offer people an opportunity to participate in presentation-style seminars given by experts who discuss best practices in the transportation planning field, transportation policy, or innovative transportation products and services impacting the NYMTC region. These seminars promote dialogue and information sharing among the presenter and participants. Presentations are typically 30-40 minutes, with the remainder of the time allotted for questions and comments by the audience members. These meetings are in-person and livestreamed via webinar. All participants are given an opportunity to make comments and ask questions.

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

Working Group Meetings

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

- ➔ Metropolitan Mobility Network (MMN) – A major objective of the group is to make the regional transportation system safer and more efficient.
- ➔ Multi-State Freight Transportation Working Group – The group was established to expand and enhance the freight planning process in the region.
- ➔ Safety Advisory Working Group (SAWG) – Critical to the SAWG members is assuring that safety planning is considered in NYMTC's planning process.
- ➔ Lower Hudson Valley Mobility Advisory Forum (MAF) – MAF provides a regional forum for proactive public outreach and input for all Mid-Hudson South TCC activities.
- ➔ Forecasting Working Group (FWG) – FWG is comprised of multi-state, multi-agency stakeholders who review the development of Socio-Economic and Demographic (SED) forecasts for the region.

Pop-ups

As a proposed future technique for public meetings, NYMTC will explore the use of "pop-up" events. Pop-ups are a powerful and cost-effective outreach technique for spreading the word and generating interest and visibility for NYMTC. They function as a mobile meeting to draw regional stakeholders who would typically not attend a formal public meeting. Pop-ups take place during established events, such as festivals or farmers' markets. In some cases, a pop-up may take place with specific community stakeholder groups. Pop-up events may contain NYMTC-related

NYMTC's Regional Trends Series: Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Plan

April 30, 2018

NEW YORK -The New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) offered a special presentation at the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) regarding the recently approved Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Plan.

As part of NYMTC's Regional Trends Series, Bronx Neighborhood Studies Manager Michael Parkinson and Conor Clarke, DCP's Transportation Project Manager, discussed the agency's holistic approach to neighborhood planning and presented outcomes of the planning process. These included transportation recommendations and recently adopted changes to zoning within a variety of neighborhoods in the southwest Bronx. The Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Plan was approved by the New York City Council on March 22.

Looking at current and future community needs, the Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Planning Study encompassed a two-mile stretch of Jerome Avenue, as well as the surrounding neighborhoods. The study was partly funded through NYMTC's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Serving as NYMTC's budget, it is the guiding document that helps NYMTC determine how federal funding will be spent each year for transportation-related planning activities.



NYMTC's Regional Trends Series provides the public with access to key industry leaders and offers information about trends and developments that are shaping the future of the transportation system.

Click here to download the presentation: [Jerome Ave Transportation Study](#)

Click here to view the meeting: [NYMTC's YouTube page](#)

Additional photos are available on [NYMTC's Flickr Page](#)

materials and interactive activities such as surveys and will travel to targeted public events throughout the region. Materials for a pop-up event may include an interactive banner or project materials like a bookmark

or one-page fact sheet. These types of meetings have been used successfully for Regional Transportation Plan outreach in neighboring MPO regions.

STRATEGY 1B Accessibility

In accordance with ADA guidelines, all meetings conducted by NYMTC take place in locations that are accessible to persons with mobility limitations. Language interpretation services, including American Sign Language (ASL), are available upon request with three days' notice to NYMTC. NYMTC works in collaboration with its member agencies to identify

locations throughout the region that are ADA-compliant and accessible to public transit. Additional locations are reviewed and added to a working list of locations on a regular basis. Whenever possible, webcasting and/or webinars are also used to further expand reach.

STRATEGY 1C Reaching out to Traditionally Underserved Communities

Engagement of communities traditionally underserved, including Environmental Justice (EJ) (i.e. minority or low-income) and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations, will be emphasized more broadly in these PIP activities than in the past.

As a step toward a more inclusive planning process, NYMTC's Language Access Program provides translation services for LEP populations. The Language Access Program is a further enhancement to NYMTC's public involvement efforts to increase the accessibility of information and input into the regional transportation planning process. In addition to providing translation to multiple languages on its website, and translation and interpretation services upon request, NYMTC translates its core products into the following languages: Spanish, Russian, and Simplified and Traditional Chinese. In addition, NYMTC staff members are fluent in multiple languages and are available to serve as ambassadors to non-English speaking community members at public meetings and events.

To understand and address EJ needs, as part of its Regional Transportation Plan update and Title VI Analysis, NYMTC performs an Assessment of the Planning Process that evaluates population trends and geographic locations of EJ populations, also referred to as Communities of Concern. This effort includes the identification of projects in areas with EJ and LEP populations.

In addition to the activities above, the following principles are adopted in this PIP to support involvement of these communities to broaden their participation:

- ➔ Documents, notices, and meeting presentations are concise, understandable, and readily accessible to the public;
- ➔ When appropriate, notices and meeting materials are provided in multiple languages;
- ➔ Public events are scheduled at convenient and transit-accessible locations and times;
- ➔ Meeting venues may include community centers or other known locations within the community rather than at city/county government offices;
- ➔ Public meetings are held over the course of several hours to accommodate people doing shift work or with multiple jobs;
- ➔ Pop-up outreach events are held at ethnic or cultural events as well as at community centers and senior centers;
- ➔ Community leaders and community-based groups are contacted to increase public participation of constituent communities;

- ➔ Activities for children at public meetings can be provided to accommodate parents who would like to attend but cannot afford childcare;
- ➔ Public involvement activities can be advertised through local non-English language media outlets; and

- ➔ NYMTC's mailing list includes libraries, English as Second Language (ESL) centers, community and cultural centers, job training centers, and community/civic/religious thought leaders to broaden participation and awareness of opportunities for engagement.

STRATEGY 1D Engagement with Seniors and People with Disabilities

Older adults and those with disabilities have unique transportation needs. As the population of seniors increases, their mobility needs for services beyond the traditional automobile will increase as well. NYMTC will consider partnerships with member agencies who serve these populations, as well as with paratransit

providers to better include these populations in transportation decision-making. This coordination will be reflected in the development of the Coordinated Human Services portion of the Regional Transportation Plan.

STRATEGY 1E Media Engagement

To support this goal, NYMTC will explore greater interaction with the media to disseminate information and engage a wider level of participation.

Media List Update

In preparation for this PIP, the NYMTC media list was updated throughout the NYMTC region to identify current points of contact for dissemination of media releases, and to include publications in additional languages beyond English, including Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Portuguese, French, Hungarian, Gujarati, Punjabi, Italian, Yiddish, Latvian, Urdu, Polish, Romanian, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, and Korean. This list includes print and electronic media, as well as radio and television stations.

Media Strategy

As part of this effort, NYMTC will look to other MPO best practices for expanded utilization of the media. In addition, NYMTC staff will partner with member agency Media Relations departments to publicize joint efforts.

Social Media Ads

NYMTC will consider the use of social media advertisements to further the PIP goals. Facebook advertising can be a highly effective method for raising awareness of an agency or planning effort through the platform's ability to serve highly-targeted advertisements within users' social media feeds.

- ➔ The ability to target audiences can allow NYMTC to select who will see the ad by geography and/or by demographics and interests. NYMTC can custom tailor an audience of all Facebook users within the NYMTC region or as the ads are rolled out, and fine tune the audience to focus on underrepresented groups.
- ➔ Ads can serve various functions. They can:
 - Raise awareness of the Plan update effort and NYMTC as an agency;
 - Serve as a call-to-action (i.e., attend a meeting or review a document); and
 - Offer a direct engagement opportunity, i.e., contain survey questions that can be completed within the Facebook platform.

- ➔ The reach of social media advertising is great; it is possible to reach very large numbers of users. For example, Facebook-wide click-rate conversions average around 1%, meaning that roughly 1% of Facebook users that see an ad will click the link that it includes. A

smaller percentage will complete a survey after following the link. This ratio may seem disappointing at first glance but with Facebook's large reach, these ads can be effective ways to drive participation and build awareness for an agency or planning effort.

STRATEGY 1F Mailing list

NYMTC maintains a contact list including, but not limited to, government agencies and organizations, local elected officials, neighborhood groups, interested individuals, special interest groups, civic organizations, private transportation providers, environmental justice organizations, and community service groups. The list currently includes all the categories of stakeholders required by governing regulations for MPOs.

Individuals and organizations can sign up for the mailing list via the website, and at meetings, in order to receive information about NYMTC's activities, its products, public involvement opportunities, and regional studies and activities.

NYMTC's planning area includes one federally-designated Tribal Nation, the Shinnecock Indian

Nation, and one New York State recognized Tribal Nation, Unkechaug Nation, which is seeking federal recognition. Contact information for these Tribal Nations is included in the mailing list, and NYMTC will undertake specific outreach to those governments in order to educate them about and engage them in the regional planning process.

Prior to completion of this draft PIP, an analysis was conducted of its mailing list. The mailing list was expanded to include the following types of organizations throughout the region: ESL centers; independent living centers; and veteran's organizations. In addition, stakeholder organization contact information was brought up to date.

STRATEGY 1G Product-specific outreach

Public participation is built into the development of the federally required planning products and analyses from beginning to end using the current methods and techniques described below.

Regional Transportation Plan (the Plan) and Congestion Management Process (CMP)

Plan 2045 was developed in part through a public involvement effort that engaged various constituencies in the NYMTC planning area. This included:

- ➔ Website and virtual public workshop;
- ➔ Online survey;
- ➔ Explanatory video;

- ➔ Public workshops;
- ➔ Focus groups;
- ➔ Public advisory working groups;
- ➔ Feedback through social media;
- ➔ Input gathered from the general public, community-based advocacy groups, communities of concern and other stakeholders; and
- ➔ Use of member distribution lists to broaden awareness of these activities.

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

For the next Plan update cycle, NYMTC will utilize expanded surveys and polling mechanisms, as well as pop-up events and virtual on-line meetings to attract greater input from the public.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Public solicitation is sought by NYMTC during TIP development cycles. This includes public input on project proposals under federal funding programs such as the Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) and the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities. Public input is sought prior to the development of the

TIP through public meetings held in each TCC. Comments on the TIP are solicited through regional distribution lists, social media, and the NYMTC website. Public information and review meetings are held in each TCC during the public review period. Additionally, a public review meeting on the related Conformity Determination is provided during each TIP development cycle.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

To gather public comment on the most recent UPWP, NYMTC held two public webinars during the public comment period.

STRATEGY 1H Public comments

Public comment periods on NYMTC's products include timeframes and contacts for response. Public review meetings are often scheduled to provide a venue for public comment. The public is encouraged to submit comments/questions verbally, via e-mail, or in writing (verbal comments, although welcome, should be supported in writing) and in person when review meetings are scheduled. Comments received are documented, and appropriate and fact-based responses to all comments are developed in a timely manner in conjunction with member agencies.

Public comments received during review periods are shared with NYMTC's member agencies for

consideration and response or action. Summaries are incorporated in the final documents, unless significant changes are made to the draft TIP, draft Plan and/or Status Report which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public participation efforts, at which time an additional ten (10) calendar day public comment period is initiated.

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

See Appendix B for a summary of public comment periods.

GOAL 2

Educate the public so they can purposefully participate, know when to provide input, and be encouraged to do so by:

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

STRATEGY 2A Website

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

The website includes features to comply with ADA's Section 508, as well as to engage LEP populations, including, but not limited to, the following:

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

STRATEGY 2B Publications**About NYMTC Brochure**

NYMTC currently has a one-page, English-language brochure which is available in print and on its website. This brochure describes the organization, mission, and major projects of NYMTC. NYMTC plans to develop an update to this brochure using more easily understood language, that would also be translated to Spanish, Russian, and Chinese languages.

NYMTC Notes

NYMTC Notes is a newsletter of news and activities distributed via the NYMTC mailing list. It provides an update on regional NYMTC staff and member projects, successes, and meetings held and attended. NYMTC Notes is advertised on the NYMTC website, and on the NYMTC social media platforms.

Annual Report

Prior to the NYMTC Annual Meeting, the Annual Report is created to provide an overview of events and activities from a regional perspective that occurred throughout the year. The report also includes the Council's vision for achieving its stated mission and goals. A theme is picked for the Annual Report, and completed regional projects are showcased, future challenges and drivers are featured, and transportation forecasting is highlighted. The Annual Report is made available in print at the NYMTC meeting, and online via the NYMTC website.

Newsletters/Fact Sheets

NYMTC is considering developing a series of newsletters and fact sheets that focus on member projects utilizing federal funds, regional trends, and advances in technology.

STRATEGY 2C Social Media

NYMTC's social media strategy is an excellent, low-cost, high-reach tool to augment traditional methods of reaching the public, while supplementing and reinforcing information. Social media provides a virtual way for citizens to directly engage on their own time with NYMTC's planning process and activities and demonstrates that NYMTC is committed to full and transparent outreach to affected citizens and municipalities by providing a virtual mechanism for receiving public comment and input.

NYMTC's social media campaign seeks to educate the public about the transportation planning process, engage stakeholders through timely notice of events, increase opportunities to provide input, and create awareness of regional transportation projects and activities.

NYMTC currently uses Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/NYMTC>), Twitter (<https://twitter.com/NYMTC>), and LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/nymtc>) to provide relevant information and update the public on NYMTC activities. Analytics of varying degrees can be found on the three social media platforms employed by NYMTC. This data provides insight to the total engagement reach of each post, the number of impressions or times the content is shared or displayed, and the link clicks for a post. Using this data, NYMTC continues to adapt and modify its social media strategy to effectively reach the region.

As part of this PIP update, best practices among MPO use of social media generated a number of

recommendations for NYMTC to consider as it expands its use of social media. Those recommendations include:

- ➔ Develop a consistent, identifiable style;
- ➔ Increase number of posts before and during events with unique content;
- ➔ Increase engagement during event lulls with interesting links and informational videos;
- ➔ Create a network of relatable topics by reposting/retweeting from related social media accounts;
- ➔ Continue posting photo galleries, videos, and virtual meeting summaries for those who could not attend events;
- ➔ Create profiles on major NYMTC-sponsored projects, continue noting next steps, and post related project information;
- ➔ Use different social media platforms based on use case. Facebook should be used for articles, informational posts, and photo galleries. Twitter should be used to provide a snapshot of a story linking to the NYMTC website. LinkedIn should only be used to announce hiring postings and to make network connections;
- ➔ Develop a comment protocol with information on comments received and responses sent; and
- ➔ Monitor social media analytics.

STRATEGY 2D Visualizations

NYMTC uses visualization techniques to illustrate its programs and plans and conducts a visualization scan to identify best practice techniques and software that can be employed to improve how NYMTC displays

information visually in its public materials. When possible, mapping applications are used on NYMTC's website to locate projects in maps for planning products, such as the TIP.

STRATEGY 2E Videos

As part of this PIP update, staff analyzed best practices for expanding the use of video in communications with the public. This generated a series of recommendations for NYMTC to consider as it expands use of this communication tool. These recommendations aim to guide NYMTC toward developing content that educates and engages the public on regional planning challenges. Videos also work towards increasing public awareness of NYMTC's role in the region. Professionally-developed videos may not always be the most cost-effective way to communicate. However, the popular content developed by peer MPOs suggests that NYMTC has potential to share its work with the region in a new and exciting way.

- **Develop a video that introduces NYMTC to the general public.** This introduction video should be located on the NYMTC website and posted in a prominent location on all social media platforms.
- **Consider the view counts of existing MPOs' videos.** Most videos have fewer than 50 views. Videos that capture large viewership tend to have high production quality, animation, or focus on a significant regional event (e.g., a hurricane, forest fire, or subway repairs). Lacking the budget for professional production should not deter NYMTC from pursuing video content, however, it should set realistic expectations about the number of views the video will receive.
- **Before determining video topics, have a conversation about why an individual would view and share it.** Videos should be framed in

a way that makes the content meaningful to the individual. They should include a call to action, a question worthy of discussion, or reference to additional engaging content. Topics such as safety, emergency response, and weather/climate resiliency are popular. Project and program success stories can also be of interest.

- **Don't use social media platforms as a board meeting archive.** Unless NYMTC plans to organize a specific channel for board meeting footage, leave board meeting footage off social media, and archive on the website instead. MPOs that post board meetings on social media create content overload and make it difficult for users to find the more engaging content.
- **Consider non-English speakers and people with hearing disabilities.** Videos should be available in languages other than English and should be subtitled.
- **Keep the videos short and versatile. Instagram and Twitter have maximum video lengths of 60 seconds and 140 seconds, respectively.** When creating a video longer than 60 seconds, consider ways in which the video can be split up into shorter increments.
- **Consider partnerships.** Developing videos with community non-profits, municipalities, and specific project teams can help generate interesting interviews or other exciting content.

STRATEGY 2F Member Committee on Social Media and Videos

As part of this PIP execution, NYMTC is considering establishing a committee of members and staff to meet on a semi-regular basis with a focus on social media and video development. The activities of the committee would be to:

- Work as a group to expand the breadth and reach of social media regarding transportation planning;
- Trade information on techniques that are effective, and lessons learned from those that are not;
- Stay apprised of trends in social media platform development and use;
- Build consensus on social media use policies regarding the submission of formal comments;

- ➔ Develop best practices for management of customer/constituent input and feedback via social media;
- ➔ Pool resources for development and distribution of video materials; and
- ➔ Help build a network among member agency public information officers to assist in communication efforts.

STRATEGY 2G Speakers' Bureau

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

As part of this PIP, NYMTC will explore more opportunities to work more with schools to educate students at all levels about the transportation planning process. NYMTC will also seek to participate in educational and jobs fairs to increase awareness of occupational training and employment opportunities.

GOAL 3 *Evaluate current and ongoing public involvement activities on a periodic basis to identify successes and areas for improvement.*

STRATEGY 3A **Evaluation Metrics**

Performance metrics to determine the effectiveness of PIP techniques can be both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative metrics include:

- ➔ Number of new subscribers
- ➔ Number of website visits
- ➔ Social Media subscribers
- ➔ Number of social media posts
- ➔ Video viewings
- ➔ Survey responses
- ➔ Number of events
- ➔ Event attendees and number of comments
- ➔ Media releases
- ➔ Media mentions

- ➔ Post-event attendee questionnaires
- ➔ Mailing list size

Qualitative metrics include:

- ➔ Have public comments been received early enough in the planning process to have an impact?
- ➔ How valuable have the comments been on key products and activities that NYMTC is responsible for?
- ➔ What impacts have public comments had on product development or study outcomes?

NYMTC will evaluate its public involvement activities using metrics similar to the list above to assess the goals and techniques included in the PIP on a regular basis.

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

Appendix A Acronyms

ADA	– Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
ASL	– American Sign Language
CFR	– Code of Federal Regulations
CMAQ	– Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement
CMP	– Congestion Management Process
EJ	– Environmental Justice
ESL	– English as Second Language
FAST Act	– Fixing American’s Surface Transportation Act of 2015
FWG	– Forecast Working Group
LEP	– Limited English Proficiency
MAF	– Mid-Hudson South Mobility Advisory Forum
MAP	– Metropolitan Area Planning as in ‘MAP’ Forum formed by NYMTC and four neighboring metropolitan planning organizations
MMN	– Metropolitan Mobility Network
MPO	– Metropolitan Planning Organization
NYMTC	– New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
NYSAMPO	– New York State Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
PFAC	– Program, Finance and Administration Committee
PIP	– Public Involvement Plan
RTP	– Regional Transportation Plan (the Plan)
SAWG	– Safety Advisory Working Group
SED	– Socio-Economic and Demographic
TCC	– Transportation Coordinating Committee
TIG	– Transportation Information Gateway
TIP	– Transportation Improvement Plan
UPWP	– Unified Planning Work Program

Appendix B

NYMTC Comment Period Summary

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

Appendix C

Requirements That Govern Public Involvement for MPOs

Fixing American's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) of 2015

Building on prior Federal transportation authorization bills: Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) of 1998; Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005; and Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) of 2012, FAST Act continues a strong emphasis on public participation in the metropolitan planning process. Ensuing regulations in 23 CFR 450.316 detail a number of requirements for MPOs including:

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

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

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

Title VI

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

Environmental Justice

Executive Order #12898 of 1994 directs federal agencies to develop strategies to address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs on minority and low-income populations. 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii) requires that the needs of those “traditionally underserved” by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and/or minority households, be sought out and considered.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

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

