

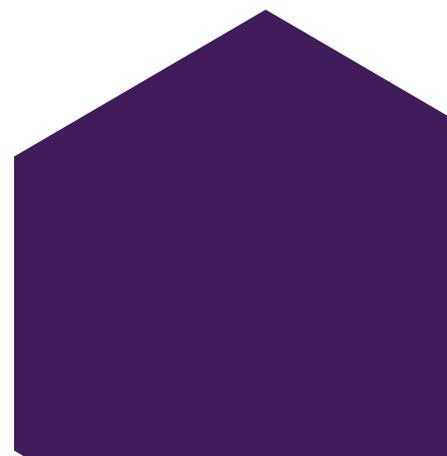
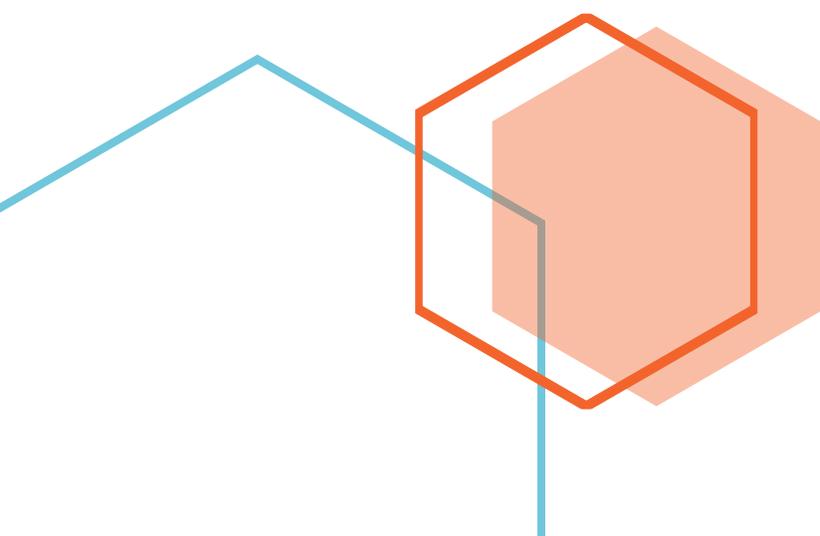


PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

**Texarkana Metropolitan
Planning Organization**

Adopted Amendment #3

June 16, 2021



This report was prepared by the
Texarkana Metropolitan Planning Organization
in cooperation with the:
Arkansas Department of Transportation
Texas Department of Transportation
US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration

The preparation and publication of this document was financed in part by funds provided by the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration. The provision of Federal financial assistance should not be construed as denoted U.S. Government approval of plans, policies, programs, or projects contained herein.

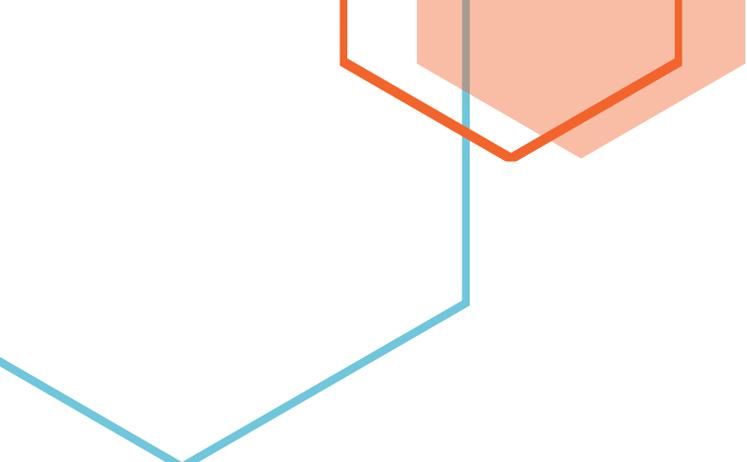
NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Texarkana Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) makes every effort to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal equal opportunity laws and therefore does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, age, national origin, religion or disability, in admission or access to and treatment in MPO programs and activities, as well as the MPO's hiring or employment practices.

Complaints of alleged discrimination and inquiries regarding the MPO's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to Jo Anne Gray, Planner – EEO/DBE (ADA/504/Title VI Coordinator), P.O. Box 1967, Texarkana, TX 75504, (903) 798-3927, (903) 798-3773 (fax), or the following email address: joanne.gray@txkusa.org.

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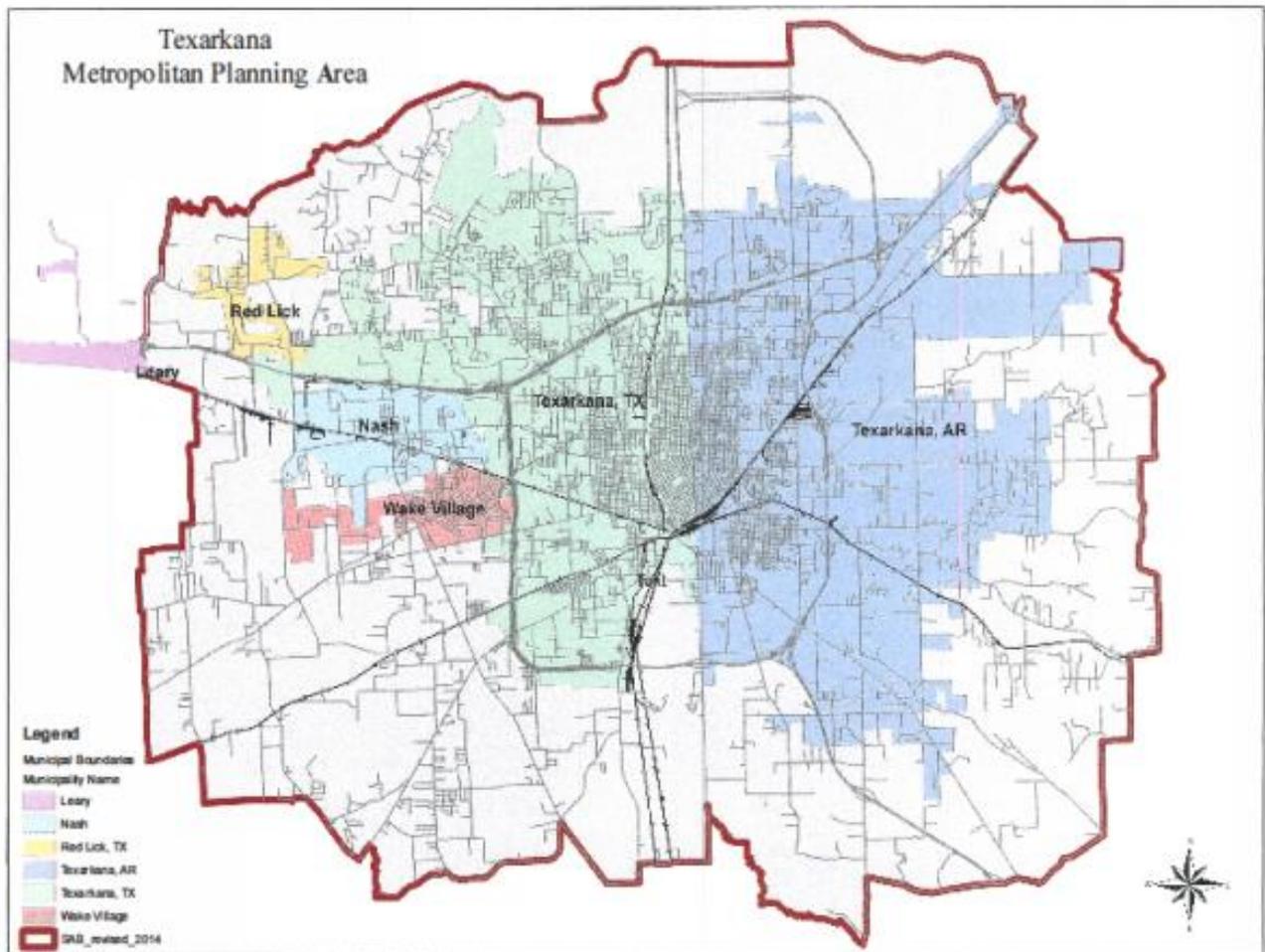


Understanding the Texarkana MPO



MPO BOUNDARY

The MPO serves the cities of Texarkana, Arkansas, Nash, Red Lick, Texarkana, and Wake Village, Texas, and portions of Leary, Texas, Miller County, Arkansas and Bowie County, Texas, and is responsible for continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated transportation planning within the MPO Study Area. The MPO study area is comprised of approximately 195 square miles in northeast Texas and southwest Arkansas.



What is the Texarkana MPO?

Federal Regulations require that an MPO be designated to carry out a comprehensive, continuing, and coordinated (3-C) transportation planning process for urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or more. The Texarkana Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was created in 1999 in order to comply with federal requirements that all area over 50,000 population must incorporate local input into decisions involving federal highway or transit funds.

Governing the MPO is a fifteen (15) member policy board consisting of elected officials and other representatives from the cities of Texarkana, Arkansas, Nash, Texarkana, Wake Village, Texas, Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG), Miller County, Arkansas, Bowie County, Texas, Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT), and Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT). Assisting the Policy Board (PB) is the MPO staff and the Technical Advisory Board (TAC) by producing drafts of necessary plans and programs and providing technical expertise to the PB. The MPO staff also administers the public involvement procedures for the MPO and ensures that public concerns are voiced to the MPO PB.

Texarkana MPO Major Activities

The Texarkana MPO is responsible for four major transportation plans and programs, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Public Participation Plan (PPP). In addition, the Texarkana MPO is responsible for conducting special transportation plans and studies, as needed, and the creation of the Annual Project Listing (APL) and the Annual Performance and Expenditure Report (APER).

Major Transportation Plans and Programs

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):

A fiscally constrained twenty (20) year long range metropolitan transportation planning document, which is updated every five (5) years. The Texarkana MPO produces an MTP identifying and analyzing existing and future multi-modal mobility needs for the Texarkana planning area. It identifies needed transportation network improvements to meet mobility requirements for a 20-year period.

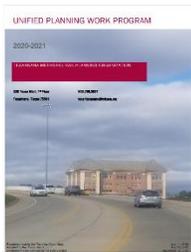


The MTP is prepared through active public engagement. The MTP reflects policies and priorities of the Texarkana MPO Policy Board and it serves as the blueprint from which future mobility projects are developed. Only those projects that can be realistically funded during the 25-year planning period may be included in the MTP, and to be eligible for federal funding each project must be identified within the document. ([23 CFR 450.322](#))

Each project considered for inclusion in the MTP is scored and ranked through project evaluation criteria. The selection and prioritization of MTP projects are generally determined using the project score, Policy Board considerations, and fiscal constraint.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

The TIP is a short range four (4) year metropolitan transportation planning document, which is updated every two (2) years. The TIP is used to identify the transportation projects that will be pursued during the next four years. The TIP serves as the financial programming document for the Texarkana MPO. Top priority projects from the MTP are proposed for inclusion within the TIP. Once programmed into the TIP, projects are cleared for phased implementation. This means that necessary environmental and engineering studies and acquisition of any necessary right-of-way may commence, followed by project construction. ([23 CFR 450.326](#))



Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP):

The UPWP is a biennial budget report that identifies specific work tasks and mobility planning studies the Texarkana MPO and its partner agencies will undertake during the next two years. The work identified in the UPWP assist in further defining the comprehensive and multimodal transportation plans for the Metropolitan Planning Area. The funding source, responsible agency, and schedule of actives are identified for each work task. ([23 CFR 450.308](#))

Annual Reports

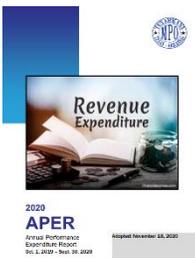
Publication of Annual Project Listing (APL):

The APL is an annual listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which Federal funds were obligated under [23 USC](#) or [49 USC Chapter 53](#) in the preceding year. The document shall be published, made available to the public and posted on the MPO web page (www.texarkanampo.org.net.or.com). ([23 CFR 450.332](#))



Publication of Annual Performance and Expenditure Report (APER)

The APER is an annual report which details the work that the MPO accomplished, and the funds that were apportioned and expended during the past fiscal year. This document is available to the general public on the MPO website. This document is also sent to Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT), Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for review and approval. ([23 CFR 450.316](#) (**Appendix A**))

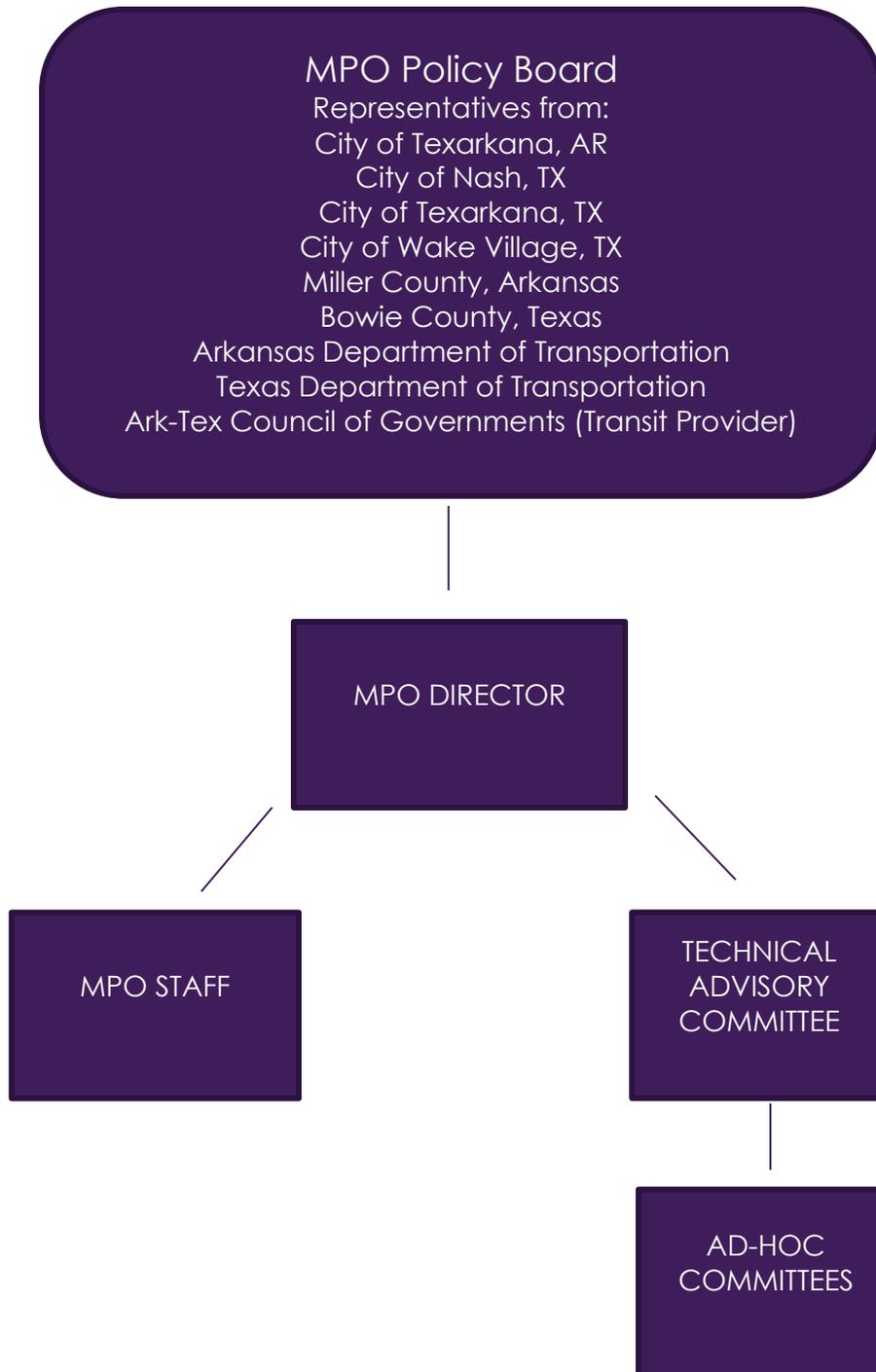


Special Reports

Special Reports are not required by law. However, the MPO does produce special reports for the benefit of the Texarkana Area. Past special reports include a Sidewalk Inventory, a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan, the Texarkana Freight Mobility Plan, a Socioeconomic and Demographic Data Update, and the Stateline Avenue/US 71 Corridor Study.



MPO Organizational Chart



The Texarkana MPO is governed by the Texarkana Policy Board (PB), which consists of principal elected officials and representatives of the jurisdictions and transportation agencies participating in the Texarkana MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process. The Texarkana Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is responsible for advising and assisting the Texarkana PB on matters of planning.

The **Policy Board** (PB) provides a forum for cooperative decision making and policy. This group is composed of elected and non-elected officials.



The **Technical Advisory Committee** (TAC) is a group composed of technical staff of key metropolitan transportation related planning agencies for the region that meet to discuss transportation related issues and to provide technical analysis of planning activities to the PB. TAC representatives include personnel from the PB agencies plus staff members from Texarkana Urban Transit District (TUTD), and Texarkana Regional Airport. Representatives from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are also represented on the TAC as non-voting members.



The **MPO Staff** works under the leadership of the MPO Director to provide assistance to the PB by preparing technical documents, fostering interagency coordination, engaging the public and managing the planning process.

Supporting Legislation

The most recent transportation bill, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act ([Pub. L. 114-94, FAST](#)) supersedes the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act ([MAP-21](#)).

As a recipient of funding from surface transportation programs, MPOs are subject to the legislation and regulations set forth under the FAST Act and preceding the federal transportation

bills and are specifically subject to the regulations outlined under [23 United States Code \(USC\) Section 134](#), [23 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) Part 450](#), [49 U.S.C. Section 5303](#), and [49 CFR Part 613](#).

In order to meet the requirements of the aforementioned regulations, MPOs must develop a participation plan that defines a process for providing various individuals, agencies, organizations, and interested parties, as defined under 23 CFR 450.316, with reasonable opportunities to be included in the metropolitan transportation planning process. In an effort to fulfill federal requirements and ensure that its planning products reflect the needs of the region, the Texarkana MPO employs a variety of outreach strategies designed to involve the public and other interested parties in its planning process and the development of its plans and programs.

Consultation Agencies

The Texarkana MPO continues to maintain constructive and cooperative relationship with federal, state, and local partner agencies. Partner agencies are consulted frequently and are responsible for providing guidance and oversight in the development of the MPO's plans and programs. The Texarkana MPO coordinates with and solicits feedback from partner and consultation agencies using various methods of communication, including, but not limited to email, conference calls, webinars, and in-person meetings.

In addition, the Texarkana MPO frequently distributes information regarding the MPO's plans, programs, and activities to partner and consultation agencies digitally and by mail. Various agencies and jurisdictions are voting members of the MPO's PB and TAC, and also serve on advisory committees and ad hoc steering committees that support specific planning efforts. These committees are also used as a forum for consultation agencies to provide guidance in the development MPO plans and programs.

Lead Federal Agencies

The **Federal Highway Administration** and the **Federal Transit Administration** are responsible for providing oversight of the State DOTs and MPO processes and management practices, including those involved in carrying out the approvals and related responsibilities under applicable federal laws and regulations. FHWA and FTA provide oversight to all areas relating to financial integrity and project delivery, and regularly review MPO processes, programs, activities, and plans to ensure compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations.

The Texarkana MPO will continue to seek consultation from FHWA and FTA in the development and administration of its processes, programs, activities, and plans. To continue to maintain compliance with federal laws and regulations, the Texarkana MPO will incorporate and implement input, feedback, guidance, and direction from FHWA and FTA in the development and administration of its processes, programs, and plans.

Lead State Agencies

The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) are responsible for providing oversight, technical assistance, and supporting the development and maintenance of various MPO plans, programs, and activities.

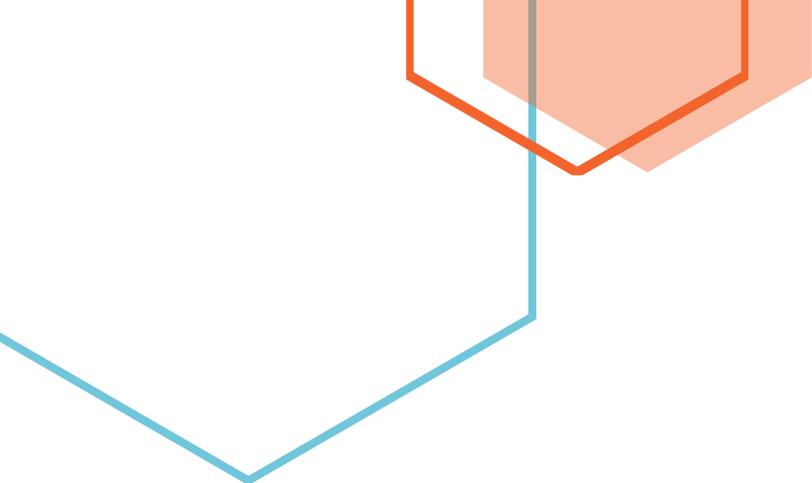
The Texarkana MPO will continue to involve, coordinate with, and seek consultation from ARDOT and TxDOT in the development of its plans, and programs, and will provide them with the opportunity to review, provide input, and provide oversight at key decision points in the development of major plans and programs. Input, feedback, and guidance from ARDOT and TxDOT will be considered and incorporated or implemented if, when, and where appropriate and consistent with regional goals.

Public Transportation Agencies

The Texarkana Urban Transit District (TUTD) is the public transportation provider and direct recipient of FTA funds for the Texarkana area. TUTD is responsible for participating in MPO activities to represent public transit interests and ensure awareness and consideration of public transit plans, programs, projects, and policies in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

The Texarkana MPO will continue to involve and coordinate with TUTD in the development of applicable plans and programs and will provide TUTD with the opportunity to review and provide input at key decision points in the development of these plans and programs.

See **Appendix G** for a list of public transportation providers.



Public Involvement Outreach



Participating with the Texarkana MPO

The Texarkana MPO provides easy access to information regarding its plans, programs, and activities in a timely manner. The MPO prepares and publishes various planning documents, public notices, and other materials in both digital and printed formats, and distributes these documents both by mail and electronically.

The MPO makes every effort to hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations. This includes near transit routes where available, at reasonable times where the working and non-working public can attend and including translation services as needed. If special accommodations are needed, individuals are informed and advised to contact the MPO to make arrangements.

The MPO uses any combination of the following strategies to promote, educate, and engage the public, as need, on a project-by-project basis.

Legal Notices/Classifieds

Notices will be published for all MPO PB meetings as well as for public review and comment periods of required MPO plans and products in the local newspaper (Texarkana Gazette). Notices shall be posted consistent with the approved Public Participation Plan (PPP).

MPO Logo and Branding

The MPO has made an effort to cultivate a consistent brand identity to increase public awareness of the MPO. A logo representing products and publications by the MPO is used to provide a uniform and consistent look of all MPO documents.



Contact List

The MPO maintains email contact lists of relevant federal, state, and local agencies, as well as stakeholder groups and interested residents. These lists are used for meeting notification and project announcements. Contacts may be added based on survey responses or public meetings or removed based on undeliverability/bounces.

Flyers/Postcards/Brochures

Flyers, postcards and/or brochures may be used to announce upcoming meetings or promote involvement on a current project. They can be distributed to public places for display in order to reach a larger audience that other notifications may not reach. As appropriate, information will be provided in Spanish.

Comment Periods

Updates, drafts, and revisions of the various planning documents are made available for the public to review and comment on. A copy of the document is made available at the MPO office and on the MPO web page. The amount of time allowed for review and comment varies from document to document. For more detailed information see **Appendix H** of this document.

Policy Board Meetings

The MPO PB meetings are generally held at a minimum of three to four (3 to 4) times per year or as necessary to perform its functions and are open to the public. Agendas are sent out by e-mail, a minimum of seventy-two (72) hours prior to the scheduled meeting, to all PB members, and to individuals of the general public that have requested to be on the MPO's Public Notification List (**Appendix E**). A notice of the meeting, which includes the location, date, time, and agenda, is posted at nine (9) publicly accessible locations, released for broadcast on public access television and area radio stations, posted on the MPO web page, and a legal advertisement is placed in the Texarkana Gazette a minimum of seventy-two (72) hours prior to the meeting date. Meetings can be held via Zoom, Teams and/or WebEx if necessary, as in the year 2020 and COVID-19 Pandemic.

Focus Groups

Focus groups may be formed to address specific concerns related to transportation issues such as conservation, economic development, freight, or public transportation, etc.

MPO Speakers

The MPO staff makes presentations to civic organizations, clubs, schools, neighborhood associations, and other organization who are interested in the metropolitan transportation planning activities of the MPO. Speakers provide information on the purpose, process, and products of the MPO and seek continued participation and comments from the public.

MPO Web Page (www.texarkanampo.org)(.net and .com)

The MPO is committed to providing a web page with current MPO related information including agendas, primary planning documents, links to outside agencies, and other appropriate transportation related material.

Public Meetings

The MPO staff and other stakeholders participate in metropolitan transportation planning forums to obtain or exchange information. In particular, forums are held to present updates, revisions and/or drafts of various planning documents to the public for review and comment.



Studies and Reports

The studies and reports published by the MPO provide information on the MPO composition, metropolitan transportation planning process, major documents and data produced by the MPO. Material is available on the MPO web page for viewing or downloading and hard copies may be made available to the public upon request.

Surveys

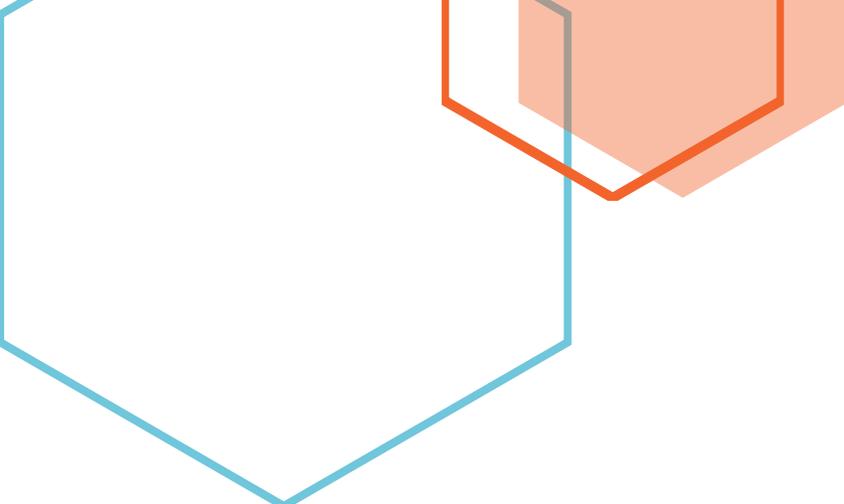
The MPO staff will engage the public through the use of survey instruments covering various aspects of the transportation system, its performance, and the public's opinion on policy, projects, and performance.

Traditionally Under-Served Populations

All public meetings are held at ADA accessible locations. Upon request, the MPO will make every effort to provide auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the deaf and hearing

Live Polling

For specific projects, the MPO may conduct live polling using online applications to gather live feedback from participants at public meetings.



Public Involvement Requirements for Core Plans



Program Administration Guidelines

The Texarkana MPO is responsible for four (4) major transportation plans and programs, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Public Participation Plan (PPP). In addition, the Texarkana MPO is responsible for conducting special transportation plan and studies as needed.

The transportation planning process is a complex system that relies on continuous public engagement. Each of the MPO's plans incorporates public input received during their development. As themes become apparent, they are addressed and incorporated into each document and reevaluated each update. The four major transportation plans and programs each require their own federally mandated process. The summaries listed below and on the following pages provide an outline of the development process and the major guidelines for each. For more specific information on milestones for the MPO's core planning documents, see **Appendix H**.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

The MTP is the long-range plan covering 20+ years into the future. It is developed to identify long range transportation goals and specific long- and short- range investment strategies. The plan is multimodal, covering all modes of transportation, and is fiscally constrained and conforms to air quality regulations.

Things to Remember

- Public meetings will be held to formulate a vision for the MTP, present needs identification, and present the draft MTP.
 - Consultation agencies, TAC and PB members will be afforded the opportunity to review the draft MTP concurrently with ARDOT and TXDOT.
 - Written/oral comments received on the draft MTP will be documented in the final plan. If significant written/oral comments are received, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of the comments will be included in the final plan.
 - If the final MTP differs significantly from the draft MTP presented to the public, additional opportunities for public input will be afforded.
 - The MPT will conform to air quality regulations and processes,
 - The final MTP will be available on the MPO's website.
- Development:** MPO staff works with stakeholders and the public to develop a draft MTP reflective of the region's needs.
- State and Federal Review:** ARDOT, TXDOT, FHWA, and FTA review the draft MTP for compliance with regulations.
- Public Review:** the draft MTP is made available online, in the office, and at public meetings for review and comment.
- Adoption:** The Texarkana PB adopts the MTP after considering public comments.
- Approval:** FHWA and FTA makes a conformity determination on the MTP.
- Maintenance:** MPO staff works with local, state, and federal partners to process amendments and modifications to the MTP.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is a 4-year, short-range program, which provides a prioritized list of federally funded multimodal transportation project within the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The TIP supports the vision of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Things to Remember

- Public meetings will be held to present the draft TIP.
- Local agencies applying for funds in the TIP are required to hold a public meeting before application submittal.
- Consultant agencies will be afforded the opportunity to review the draft TIP concurrently with ARDOT and TxDOT
- TAC and PB members will be afforded the opportunity to review the draft TIP concurrently with ARDOT and TxDOT.
- Written/oral comments received on the draft TIP will be documented in the final plan. If significant written/oral comments are received, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of the comments will be included in the final TIP.
- If the final TIP differs significantly from the draft TIP presented to the public, additional opportunities for public input will be afforded.
- The MTP will conform to air quality regulations and processes,
- The final TIP will be available on the MPO's website.

Development: MPO staff works with stakeholders and the public to develop a draft MTP reflective of the region's needs.

State and Federal Review: ARDOT, TxDOT, FHWA, and FTA review the draft MTP for compliance with regulations.

Public Review: The draft TIP is made available online, in the office, and at public meetings for review and comment.

Adoption: The Texarkana PB adopts the TIP after considering public comments.

Approval: FHWA and FTA makes a conformity determination on the TIP.

Maintenance: MPO staff works with local, state, and federal partners to process amendments and modifications to the TIP.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP outlines the transportation planning priorities and work tasks that will be performed by the Texarkana MPO.

Things to Remember

- TAC and PB members will be afforded the opportunity to review the draft UPWP concurrently with ARDOT and TxDOT.
- The final UPWP will be available on the MPO's website.

Development: MPO staff assess funding availability/planning needs with planning partners to develop a draft UPWP.

State and Federal Review: ARDOT, TxDOT, FHWA, and FTA review the draft UPWP for compliance with regulations.

Public Review: The draft UPWP is made available online, in the office, and for review and comment.

Adoption: The Texarkana PB adopts the UPWP after considering public comments.

Approval: FHWA and FTA approves the Final UPWP.

Maintenance: MPO staff works with local, state, and federal partners to process amendments and modifications to the MTP.

Public Participation Plan (3P)

The 3P outlines the MPO's public participation methods, the strategies for public engagement and outreach, and state and Federal regulations regarding public participation. The PPP provides the general public with an overview of opportunities to be engaged.

Things to Remember

- Consultant agencies will be afforded the opportunity to review the draft TIP concurrently with ARDOT and TxDOT
- TAC and PB members will be afforded the opportunity to review the draft TIP concurrently with ARDOT and TxDOT.
- Written/oral comments received on the draft PPP will be documented in the final plan.
- The final PPP will be available on the MPO's website.

Development: MPO staff evaluates the effectiveness of the outreach strategies to develop a draft 3P.

State and Federal Review: ARDOT, TxDOT, FHWA, and FTA review the draft 3P for compliance with regulations.

Public Review: The draft PPP is made available online, in the office, and at public meetings for review and comment.

Adoption: The Texarkana PB adopts the 3P after considering public comments.

Approval: The Final 3P is forwarded to FHWA and FTA for their records.

Maintenance: MPO staff works with local, state, and federal partners to process amendments and modifications to the 3P.

Annual Project Listing (APL)

The APL lists which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year as a record of project delivery and a progress report for public information and disclosure. The report identifies all transportation projects in the Texarkana MPO Planning Area that were obligated during the previous fiscal year.

Within ninety (90) days after the end of the fiscal year, the APL will be made publicly available on the MPO's website and shared with the members of the TAC and PB.

The MTP, TIP, UPWP, and 3P may be amended or administratively modified at any time consistent with the procedures agreed to by the cooperating parties for developing these programs and the federal requirements in 23 CFR Part 450 concerning their development and public involvement requirements. All amendments and administrative modifications to the MTP and TIP must maintain the fiscal constraint requirements for these documents. All amendments and administrative modifications to the TIP must be consistent with the MTP. Amendments and

administrative modifications to any of these documents must be consistent with Federal Title VI requirements and consider the effect on congestion, safety, air quality, quality of life, and opportunities for economic development. Detailed descriptions of Amendments and Administrative Modifications are provided as follows:

Amendments to the MTP, TIP, UPWP, and 3P

Amendments require a formal process including approval by some or all of the following entities: TC, PB, ARDOT, TxDOT, FHWA and FTA.

The following changes are examples of changes made through a MTP Amendment:

- Adding or deleting a project.
- Changes in the type of work, length, termini, or project design concept or scope.
- Changes from non-federal to federal funds.

The following changes are examples of changes made through a TIP Amendment:

- Adding or deleting major regionally significant highway or transit projects.
- Changes in projects estimated cost that are not greater than 50% and results in a revised cost estimate that is less than \$1,500,000; and the change in the cost estimate is not caused by a change in the project design concept or scope or limits.
- Funding increases or decreases that are more than 20% of the TIP project estimate for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funded projects.
- Changes in the type of work, length, or termini of a regionally significant highway or transit project from its original TIP description.
- Changes from non-federal to federal funds involving regionally significant highway or transit projects.

The following changes are examples of changes made through a UPWP Amendment:

- Adding or deleting a task.
- Changes in the amount of funds programmed within a fiscal year.

Any changes other than typographical errors or updating references to regulatory requirements in the Public Participation Plan (3P) are considered to be an Amendment.

Administrative Modifications to the MTP, TIP, UPWP, and 3P

The approval of Administrative Modifications has been delegated to the MPO Study Director, the TxDOT District Engineer and the ARDOT Director of Planning and Research through their written approval upon formal adoption of the 3P.

Administrative Modifications to the MTP, TIP, UPWP, and 3P may be made as long as the change does not adversely affect its timely implementation, financial constraint, or the public's'

opportunity to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning process. These changes may include:

- Minor data entry or typographical errors and changes in terminology or definitions;
- Changes in Federal, State, or Local funding sources or the project sponsor (not including those MTP or TIP actions that involve changes from non-federal to federal funds);
- Moving a project and its funding from one fiscal year to another within the stated period of the program;
- Any non-regionally significant highway or transit project-related change to projects funded from a “grouped” category.
- Any other changes require an amendment.

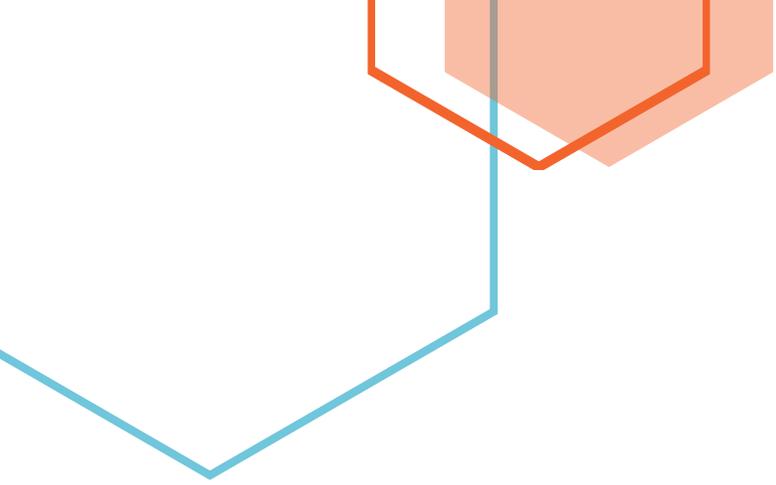
MTP Amendment Request Procedure

Any MPO member agency may request the consideration of an amendment to the MTP on its own behalf or on the behalf of a non-member agency or private group, business, or individual. Private parties must work through the MPO member agency that represents them to request an amendment to the MTP. **ALL** such requests shall be submitted to the MPO Study Director in writing. The MPO Study Director may initiate an amendment to the MTP in order to ensure that the MTP remains in conformance with all applicable federal, state, and regional policy requirements.

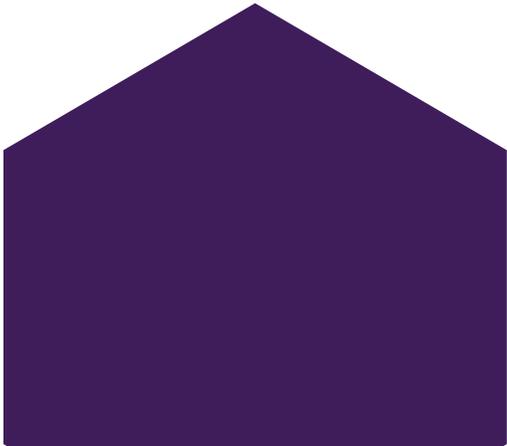
TIP Amendment Request Procedure

To request a TIP amendment, the project sponsor must submit the proposal to the MPO Study Director for review. MPO staff will review the submitted request for compliance with Federal regulations, statute, and regional policy, including funding completeness, impacts to air quality, congestion mitigation, safety, quality of life, and opportunities for economic development, financial constraint and for compliance with other Federal, state, and regional requirements before approving the submitted request. If the proposal is found not to conform to the MPO adopted guidelines as shown herein or is inconsistent with the financial constraint of the TIP the proposal may not be approved. Proposed amendments to projects contained in the TIP must also conform to the rules of the funding program involved. The MPO Study Director may initiate an amendment to the TIP in order to ensure that it remains in conformance with all applicable Federal, state, and regional policy requirements.

See **Appendix H** for chart associated with public participation periods for the MPO documents.



Inclusion for all in Transportation

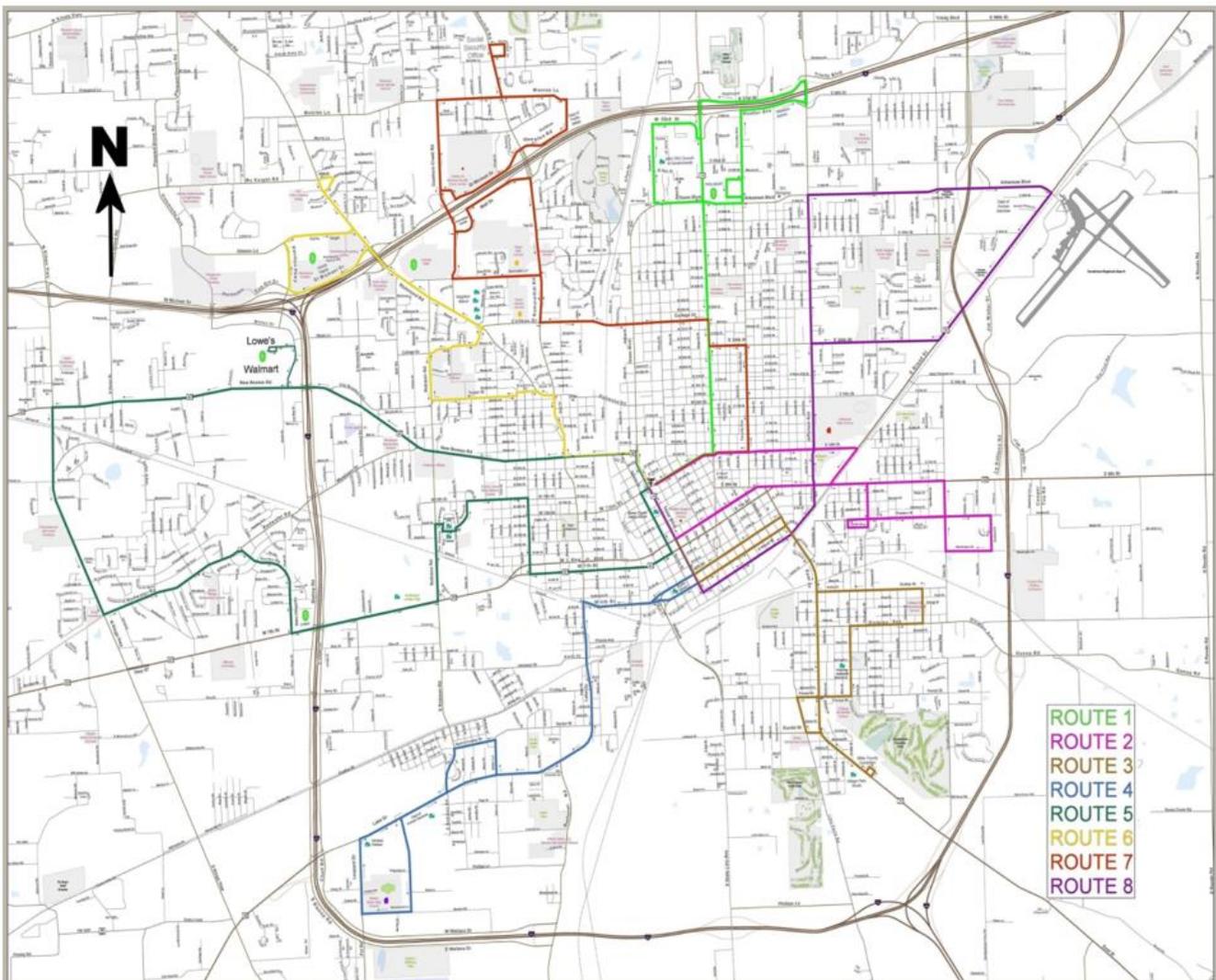


Transit Service Profile

When scheduling public meetings and identifying potential meeting locations, the Texarkana MPO staff reviews the location's access to surrounding transit routes, where available, to maximize meeting attendance and provide access to a wider audience.

The Texarkana Urban Transit District (TUTD) is the primary provider of public transit and paratransit services in the Texarkana metropolitan area. TUTD operates eight (8) fixed-route bus routes, branded as T-Line. T-Line also provides ADA Complementary Paratransit Service within the city limits of Texarkana, Arkansas, and Nash, Texarkana, and Wake Village, Texas. The agency also operates, in coordination with the Ark-Tex Council of Governments, Rural Public Transit District, which provides connecting services to Cass, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River and Titus counties in Texas, in addition TUTD's primary service area.

Local route maps and fares can be found by visiting www.t-linebus.org/plan-your-trip/



Nondiscrimination Legislation

The Texarkana MPO will adhere to all applicable nondiscrimination legislation. The policies and programs of the MPO should avoid disproportionately negative impacts on minority and low-income populations. Emphasis will be placed on providing equitable distribution of benefits of employment, education, and community to traditionally underrepresented communities and protected groups.

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act

Title VI of the 1954 civil rights Act states that "no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination under any program or activity that is a recipient of federal financial assistance." (<https://www.justice.gov/crt/fcs/TitleVI>)

The Title VI regulations apply to all organization (government or not-for-profit) that receive federal funds. The Arkansas and Texas Departments of Transportation (ARDOT and TXDOT) receive federal funds from the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) and distribute these federal funds to MPOs throughout their respective states. As a result, all MPOs and transportation planning activities that are federally funded must comply with Title VI.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act, which became law in 1990, is the first comprehensive civil rights law passed by U.S. Congress prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities in all areas of public life, including but not limited to: employment, government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation. (https://www.ada.gov/2010_regs.htm)

The aforementioned legislation guides the Texarkana MPO's and its member agencies' effort to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not denied access to, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the MPO.

Environmental Justice (EJ), Executive Order 12898

A 1994 Presidential Executive Order directed every Federal agency to make Environmental Justice (EJ) a part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on "minority populations and low-income populations." The MPO's EJ initiatives will strive to accomplish this by involving the potentially affected public through public involvement. (<https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-executive-order-12898-federal-actions-address-environmental-justice>)

FHWA defines three fundamental EJ principles:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.

- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision making process.
- To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP), Executive Order 13166

On August 11, 2000, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13166. Executive Order 13166 requires any agency receiving federal funding to examine the services it provides, identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency, and develop and implement a system by which Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons can meaningfully access those services without unduly burdening the fundamental mission of the agency. (<https://www.justice.gov/crt/executive-order-13166>)

According to the guiding policy, there are four factors to consider in determining "reasonable steps." These four factors, as they apply to the MPO include:

- Factor 1: the number or proportion of LEP Persons served or encountered in the eligible service population;
- Factor 2: the frequency with which LEP individuals may come in contact with MPO programs, activities, or services;
- Factor 3: the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the MPO;
- Factor 4: the resources available and overall cost to the MPO.

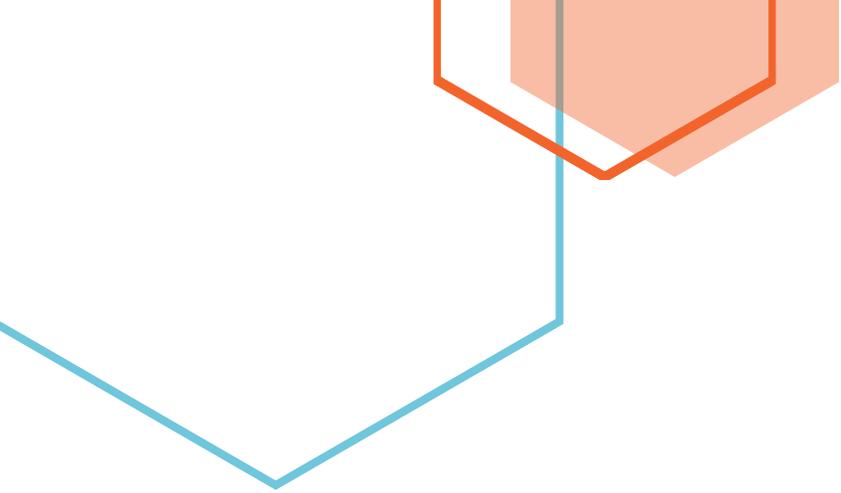
Additional Nondiscrimination Legislation

Additional non-discrimination legislation which the MPO is subject to, and that has broadened the groups and communities that are protected, includes:

- [1970 Uniform Act](#)
- [Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)
- [Section 162\(a\), Federal Aid Highway Act of 1973](#)
- [Age Discrimination Act of 1975](#)
- [Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987](#)

Requesting an Accommodation

Requests for reasonable accommodations, including meeting accommodations or to receive materials in alternative formats, should be directed to the Title VI Coordinator, at 220 Texas Boulevard, Texarkana, TX 75501 or by phone at 903.798.3959, or by email to joanne.gray@txkusa.org.



Appendices



Appendix A – 23 CFR 450.316

Requires eleven elements be addressed. Each requirement and the method in which it is met, is listed below. ([23 CFR 450.316](#))

1. Development of a public participation plan.
One public meeting and a period of at least forty-five (45) days, from date of posted notice, for public comments will be provided prior to its adoption. Comments may be made in writing, in person, by phone, fax or email. Comments are reviewed, and provided to the TC for consideration prior to final approval by the BP.
2. Provide timely information on transportation issues.
Information is disseminated through a variety of measures, including a web page, email, press releases, public meetings, focus groups, presentations, social media, and visualization tools.
3. Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans.
The MPO provides this access through public meetings, open and accessible committee meetings and public comment periods.
4. Facilitate public involvement in developing the TIP and MTP.
The various outreach tools will be employed in encouraging input into the development of these planning documents.
5. Public comments to be considered as an integral part of the planning process.
The public has an opportunity to comment on all plans released by the MPO. Comments may be made in writing, in person, by phone, fax or email. Comments are reviewed and provided to the TC for consideration prior to final approval by the PB.
6. Seek out and consider needs of historically under-served.
A comprehensive public notification list is maintained and includes groups that provide outreach to these under-served populations. Translators are made available, if requested. Additionally, special arrangements can be requested for the physically disabled and hearing or visually impaired.
7. For areas of non-attainment, significant public comments will be part of the final TIP and MTP.
The Texarkana MPO Study Area is in attainment. However, public comments on the TIP and MTP are addressed and included in the documentation.
8. Revisions to the TIP and MTP based on public comments will be made available to the public.
These types of revisions will be subject to the same, open meeting requirements.
9. Periodic Reviews of the 3P.
The MPO staff and TC will review the 3P as needed.

10. FHWA and FTA review of the 3P.

The 3P will be forwarded to FHWA and FTA in accordance with these federal mandates.

11. Coordination with statewide public involvement processes.

The MPO coordinates its activities with ARDOT and TxDOT.

Appendix B – COVID-19 Pandemic Public Involvement

Temporary Virtual Public Involvement During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Question #1: Can project sponsors hold virtual public hearings to satisfy public involvement requirements during the project development process?

Answer #1: Yes. In response to the various measures being taken by public health authorities due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, including closures of public meeting venues and social distancing, FHWA will temporarily permit all public involvement activities previously conducted in-person to exclusively use virtual technologies and techniques that fulfill the essential purposes of the in-person public involvement. Consistent with applicable State, local and tribal requirements, continued in-person involvement should be allowed in cases where a suitable physical location is available, and the State has determined that such meetings can be safely conducted. This temporary policy includes public meetings conducted as part of project development to comply with the 23 U.S.C § 139 environmental review process, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act, as well as public hearings conducted to comply with 23 U.S.C § 128. This guidance does not affect any State, local or tribal requirements that apply to recipients or subrecipients.

Question #2: Why is the FHWA issuing this guidance?

Answer # 2: The FHWA is issuing this guidance to address the unusual and extraordinary circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, including steps taken by public health officials concerning closures of public meeting venues and social distancing. These steps affect FHWA recipients' and subrecipients' ability to provide an in-person setting where decisionmakers and member of the public are physically present in the same location.

Question #3: How should Virtual Public Involvement covered by this guidance be conducted?

Answer #3: Virtual Public Involvement (VPI) merely represents a change in the means of public involvement. The objective of these events – informed public participation – remains unchanged. To the maximum extent practicable, recipients and subrecipients should plan and conduct VPI in a manner that provides the same opportunity for public involvement as otherwise occurs in traditional in-person settings. For example, public hearings should include a presentation by the agency on the proposed highway project and allow participants an opportunity to publicly express their views to agency representatives and other citizens participating in the hearing. There must be a transcript of the hearing. Recipients and subrecipients will continue to comply with the public involvement requirements outlined in 23 U.S.C §§ 128 and 139, and 23 CFR 771.111(h).

Question #4: Are there any issues for special consideration when using VPI as described in this guidance?

Answer #4: Yes. Project sponsors must provide full, fair, and meaningful opportunities for participation, including participation by minority and low-income populations. Measures should be implemented to ensure accommodations are provided to non-English speakers and

participants with disabilities. Project sponsors should provide telephone or similar alternative participation options for individuals with limited or no internet access. Technical assistance to address these and other project-specific concerns is available, and additional information on using VPI can be found on FHWA's website at: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/public_involvement/vpi/.

Question #5: Do I need to change my FHWA-approved public involvement procedures before I can use the flexibilities in this guidance?

Answer #5: No. This temporary guidance was developed to address the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important not to delay implementation of this guidance. The FHWA is not requiring State to revise their public involvement procedures adopted and proved under 23 CFR 771.111(h) before using the flexibilities provided in this guidance. However, FHWA will work with their respective recipients to ensure the procedures used to conduct VPI are consistent with this guidance.

Question #6: Does this guidance apply when FHWA in-person public involvement is being used to satisfy public involvement requirements for other Federal agencies?

Answer#6: This guidance will apply only to the extent the other relevant Federal agency approves the use of VPI to satisfy its particular requirements.

Question #7: For how long is this guidance in effect?

Answer #7: This guidance is effective immediately and will remain in effect until the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency Declaration pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford disaster relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (the "Stafford Act") ends (<https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210121/covid-19-emergency-declaration>).

Except for the statutes and regulations cited, the contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Appendix C – Public Comments

A 45-day public review and comment period was provided for this document beginning on XXXX xx, 2021 and ending on XXXX xx, 2021.

Comments Received:

Appendix D – Question and Comment Form

TEXARKANA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS
QUESTION/COMMENT FORM

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Daytime Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Project name: _____

Question/Comment: _____

Please mail, e-mail, or fax to:

Texarkana MPO
P.O. Box 1967
Texarkana, Texas 75504-1967
Fax: (903) 798-3773
joanne.gray@txkusa.org

Appendix E – Public Notification Request Form

TEXARKANA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION REQUEST

Please add my name to the Public Notification List

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

E-mail _____

Please mail, e-mail, or fax to:

Texarkana MPO
P.O. Box 1967
Texarkana, Texas 75504-1967
Fax: (903) 798-3773
joanne.gray@txkusa.org

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN – AMENDMENT THREE

Texarkana MPO

Resolution 13-2021

TEXARKANA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RESOLUTION # 13-2021

A RESOLUTION BY THE POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE TEXARKANA URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY FOR THE THIRD AMENDMENT OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (3P) FOR THE TEXARKANA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION AND AUTHORIZING ITS SUBMISSION TO THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ARDOT), THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (TXDOT), THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA), AND THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA).

WHEREAS, the Texarkana Urban Transportation Study (TUTS), as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Texarkana study area, is responsible for preparing and submitting a Public Participation Plan (3P) to the ARDOT, TXDOT, FHWA, and FTA.

WHEREAS, pursuant to 23 CFR 450.316, the Texarkana MPO is responsible for development of a Public Participation Plan (3p) for the region; and

WHEREAS, the Texarkana MPO staff recommends for adoption and submission of the Third Amendment to the Public Participation Plan (3P) to ARDOT, TXDOT, FHWA, and FTA.

WHEREAS, the Technical Committee recommended for adoption and submission of the Public Participation Plan (3P) to ARDOT, TXDOT, FHWA, and FTA.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Policy Board of the Texarkana MPO that:

SECTION 1: That the Third Amendment of the Public Participation Plan (3P) for the Texarkana Metropolitan Planning Organization is hereby adopted.

SECTION 2: That the Study Director of the Texarkana Metropolitan Planning Organization is hereby authorized to submit the Third Amendment of the Public Participation Plan (3P) to ARDOT, TXDOT, FHWA, and FTA.

SECTION 3: That this Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

ADOPTED in Regular Session on the 16th day of June 2021.

Tom Whitten, Bowie County Commissioner
Policy Board Chairman
Texarkana MPO

"I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of Resolution 13-2021: Public Participation Plan (3P) Amendment Three and was motioned by _____, representing _____ and seconded by _____, representing _____. This Resolution was passed unanimously in regular session on June 16, 2021".

Rea Donna Jones, Director
Texarkana MPO

Appendix G – Public Transportation Providers

Public Transportation Providers	Comments
TRAX Rural Public Transportation 4808 Elizabeth Street Texarkana, TX 75501 903-832-8636	Provides low-cost transportation for residents of Bowie, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River and Titus counties from their homes or other designated pick-up points.
Greyhound: Bus Station 405 E. 51 st Street Texarkana, AR 71854 870-774-5163	Provides resident of this area to other parts of the country.
T-Line 818 Elm Street Texarkana, TX 75501 903-794-8883	Provides a fixed route system Monday through Friday. Serves Texarkana, Wake Village, Nash, TX and Texarkana, AR.
Texarkana Amtrak Station 100 East Front Street Texarkana, AR 71854-5907	Provides resident of this area to other parts of the country.
Texarkana Arkansas School District (TASD) 3512 Grand Ave Texarkana, AR 71854 870-772-3371 870-773-2602	Provides transportation for public school students during the school year.
Texarkana Texas School District (TISD) 4241 Summerhill Road Texarkana, TX 75503 903-794-3651	Provides transportation for public school students during the school year.
Airtranz Xpress Airport Shuttle & Taxi 101 US HWY 59 South Texarkana, TX 75501 903-865-7000	Provides taxi, airport transportation, roadside service, courier & delivery service, shuttle service to residents. Open 24 hours
Artex Transport & Courier 1320 main Street Texarkana, TX 75501 903-255-7914	Provides taxi service to residents.
City Taxi Company 1401 Spruce Street Texarkana, TX 75501 903-794-8294	Provides taxi service to residents with regular hours Monday – Sunday: open 24 hours.

Appendix H – Public Participation Period for Documents

DOCUMENT	ALTERATION TYPE	FREQUENCY	PUBLIC MEETINGS	COMMENT PERIOD
PPP	Update	As needed	N/A	45 days
	Amendment	As needed	N/A	45 days
MTP	Update	Every 5 years	60 and 30 days prior to adoption	30 days
	Amendment	As needed	30 and 15 days prior to adoption	30 days
TIP	Update	Every 2 years	N/A	10 days
	Amendment	Quarterly, if needed	N/A	10 days
UPWP	Update	Every 2 years	N/A	10 days
	Amendment	As needed	N/A	10 days
ALL documents	Administrative Modification	As needed	N/A	N/A
OTHER PUBLIC INFORMATION				
Notices	Notices are posted 72 hours prior to public meetings and comments periods.			
Technical Assistance	Available upon request.			
Presentations	Available upon request.			
Publications	Available on the MPO web page and at the MPO office.			
Policy Board Meetings	Meetings are scheduled quarterly or as needed and opened to the public.			

Appendix I – Open Meeting and Records Procedures

The Texarkana MPO will abide by Texas Open Meetings Act requirements:

- The MPO adheres to the requirements for open meetings and notices of meetings. All meetings where public business is conducted, which have a quorum, are open to the public. Notice of meeting is given at least seventy-two (72) hours beforehand through posting the agenda at Miller County, AR Courthouse; Texarkana, AR City Hall; Nash, Texarkana, and Wake Village, TX City Halls; Southwest Community Center; Texarkana Library; Collins Memorial Center; TUTD Office, and the MPO web page (www.texarkanampo.org (.net or .com)).
- All open meetings will be sound recorded, and the soundtrack maintained for a minimum of two (2) years. A summary of proceedings (minutes), including a roster of those who attended, will be made available at the MPO office, usually within thirty (30) days of the meeting. Minutes are maintained for a minimum of four (4) years and will be made available to the public upon request in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.
- Meetings may go into executive session following the rules of the Texas Open Meetings Act.
- All MPO meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities. Reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate those with special needs if request is given at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting. For individuals with hearing and/or visual impairment, auxiliary aids, and services such as interpreters, and readers and taped text will be made available.
- The MPO adheres to the requirements of the Public Information Act. Records, as defined by the law, are made accessible to the public. Upon receiving a written request for a record, the MPO responds to the request in the most appropriate manner. Standard paper copies will be provided for \$0.10 per page fee (each side with recorded information is considered a page). Additional fees may apply depending on the materials onto which the information is copied, labor charges for locating, compiling, and reproducing the requested information and postal or shipping charges in accordance with Texas Administrative Code §§ 70.3. Access to records may be denied in those rare instances permitted by law, such as confidential personnel matters or negotiations.