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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

TxDOT has developed a public involvement process to provide opportunities for stakeholder and public input on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems. This chapter provides an overview of the process at both the state and regional levels.

STIP Public Involvement Process

The TxDOT public involvement process complies with 23 CFR 450.210, which requires that each state include the opportunity for public review and comment during the development of the STIP, emphasizes early and continuous public involvement opportunities, reasonable public access to technical and policy information, and adequate public notice of activities. TxDOT also follows the STIP public involvement process requirements as specified in 43 TAC § 16.103.

In addition, MPOs are responsible for conducting public involvement activities at the local level prior to adoption of their TIPs based on their established public involvement process (43 TAC §16.101). TxDOT districts are responsible for conducting public involvement at the local level prior to submitting Rural TIPs for inclusion in the STIP (43 TAC §16.102). TxDOT districts coordinate with regional planning organizations (RPOs), if applicable, in the development of their TIPs and associated public involvement. Documentation of TxDOT district public involvement processes are included in **Appendix A**.

Early public involvement opportunities are provided during the development of each TIP. These opportunities provide timely information about transportation issues and decision making processes to individuals, affected public agencies, ports, freight industry representatives, alternative transportation advocacy groups, and other interested parties.

Once the MPOs and districts have completed their TIPs, the project information is compiled electronically in the eSTIP to create the Draft STIP. The opportunity for public involvement continues during this phase, during which TxDOT holds a public hearing to solicit input on the Draft STIP.

A STIP public hearing notice is published in the Texas Register at least 15 days prior to the hearing being held, starting the 30-day public comment period. The public hearing notice includes methods for submitting written comments, speaking during the hearing, and instructions on requesting special communication or other accommodations. The public hearing notice and Draft STIP are posted on the TxDOT website.

The STIP public hearing is held virtually and allows for registered speakers to provide verbal comments on the STIP. Following the hearing, TxDOT TPP addresses any public comments received on the Draft STIP. Once the public involvement process is complete, the STIP is approved by the TxDOT Executive Director with authority delegated by the Governor. The approved STIP is made available electronically for public review at the TxDOT [STIP](#) webpage. Notices, sign-in sheets, comments, and responses (if applicable) related to the STIP hearing can be found in **Appendix D**.

At a regional level, each MPO and TxDOT district publish TIP public meeting notices in newspapers that serve the local community which includes information on requesting special communication or other accommodations. At the statewide level, e-mail blasts announcing the STIP public hearing are sent to a variety of stakeholders, including traditionally underserved communities and tribal governments, and the hearing is promoted on TxDOT's social media pages.

As noted earlier, TxDOT regularly updates guidance to reflect evolving best management practices and incorporate strategies found to be effective in encouraging broad participation reflective of the needs of the state's population. Details about TxDOT's guidance for meaningful engagement, including engaging Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency populations can be found on TxDOT's [Strategic Public Engagement Guidance](#) webpage.

STIP Revision Public Involvement Process

The STIP is updated periodically through either a formal Revision, for major changes, or through Administrative Amendments, for minor modifications. The public involvement process for STIP Revisions is the same as the process used for the initial STIP development as described above; which includes at least one public hearing and opportunity to provide comments. Administrative Amendments do not require public review or comment.

