

# PLANNING OUTREACH PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

- For INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plans, STIPs, Planning Level Studies, & Regional Planning Coordination Meetings
- Serving all populations, including traditionally underserved



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## PHASE 1: PUBLISHING THE PLANNING DOCUMENT

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- Provide Federal Partners opportunity to review and comment on the draft planning document(s) and reasonably address comments prior to publishing the documents and starting the public comment period. (Document in Outreach Log described in *POP Companion 1.1*) **Date:**
- Contact MPOs, RPOs, Districts TSDs/CPMDs, & key INDOT staff (LPA, Title VI, Communications, Environmental Services, Transit, Freight, and Mobility Teams) and make them aware of the planning product to be published. Ensure all questions and concerns are addressed and the outreach plan is understood. (Document in Outreach Log described in *POP Companion 1.1*) **Date:**
- Leverage INDOT's Communications and/or Title VI Teams to invite and encourage participation of Limited English-Speaking communities and utilize their resources if accommodations such as American Sign Language (ASL), foreign language interpreter, documents in an alternative format (such as braille, large print or in a different language), or other are needed. **Date:**
- Update the INDOT Planning website that will house the planning product/documents. Ensure all links are active, point to the correct documents/partner sites, and contact information is accurate. **Date:**
- Include the following on the website:
  - Information on what is the STIP or LRTP and links to documents, materials, and comment period/forms
  - Outreach materials written and presented in a reader-friendly format and easy to understand graphics/infographics, maps, and other.
  - Documents and materials with file size reduced as much as possible for easier downloads and accessibility for non-high speed internet connections (See *POP Companion 1.2*).
  - General description of what has changed or been updated in the documents and what input is needed.
  - Options for the public to view hard copies of the document (see *POP Companion 1.3* for list), request physical copies of the document from INDOT, or print the document and materials themselves.
  - Explanation of why public comment/input is important, how to participate, options for providing comments, and a brief description of how comments are processed or handled.**Date:**
- Publish document on website and perform notification of public comment period per PPIP Chapter 2, Step 2.

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## PHASE 2: PLANNING THE PUBLIC EVENTS & COMMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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**Please note:** *Planning and scheduling meetings/events is an intense activity that often requires extensive coordination, time investments, early notifications, reservations, and other preparations. A minimum lead time of 30-45 days is recommended for proper planning, coordination, targeted outreach, website changes, sending out early notification, securing or reserving a location, assigning roles/responsibilities, developing and printing materials and related activities for an effective meeting/event.*

### Informal Meetings

INDOT will provide informal stakeholder and/or public outreach opportunities at the following key decision points in our planning process:

- **Long-Range & Active Transportation Planning** – Identifying needs, defining goals, objectives, & policy considerations
- **Statewide/Corridor Level Planning Studies** - Discussion of needs, visioning, and identification of alternatives
- **During and/or/End of the Annual Call for State Projects** – Identifying transportation needs
- **Project Programming** - Draft STIP Project Listing reviews

### Tribal Nations Meetings

INDOT requires that the principles of the Indiana Tribal Nations policy are to be considered at all phases of planning and project development in the establishment, development, operation, and maintenance of a comprehensive, integrated, and connected multimodal transportation system. The following steps will ensure Tribes have review and comment opportunities aligning with all state and federal laws, regulations, tribal laws, and the MOU.

- Coordinate with INDOT’s Cultural Resource Office (CRO) and follow guiding principles to promote successful consultation and collaboration between tribal governments and the state.
- Commit to meet annually with Indiana Tribal Nations to identify transportation priority issues and needs for meaningful communication and coordination between INDOT and tribal officials prior to taking actions or implementing planning decisions that may affect tribes or tribal interests. Meeting events can be in-person, virtual, or via telephone and will include consultation for INDOT 20-Year Asset Management Plan, Annual Regional Coordination Meetings, Changes to INDOT’s Planning Procedures, and State Level Planning Studies.
- Work through INDOT’s CRO to email tribal contacts the STIP website for review and notify tribal contacts by email when INDOT offers public comment periods or public meetings in the development of a new STIP document or LRTP update. **Date:**
- Add comments to Outreach Log starting during Phase 1

### Meetings & Public Events

INDOT will provide and document multiple engagement opportunities using a variety of methods to reach a broader audience (See *POP Companion 2.1* for a complete list of methods as outlined in detail in the PPIP).

- Identify your goal and objective for the meeting.
- Plan meetings and events so they are engaging and interactive using quick polling methods, surveys, kiosks, or by providing access to online applications that solicit input/educate public.
- Divide presentation materials into manageable segments or breakout sessions so people can stay engaged and discussions are focused. Develop a one-page information sheet with key information, major objectives and takeaways for meeting attendees who may arrive late or leave early.
- Allow access to project information, goals, objectives, policies, needs, project listings, maps, and provide QR codes for access to online information and materials.

- Work with INDOT Communications Department to determine if and how social media will be used to get out the message or link to information/surveys. Determine who will handle notifications, frequency of postings, who will monitor comments, how will comments be processed using INDOT’s Communications Policy, how will statistics be reported (See Draft Social Media Communications Worksheet in *POP Companion Appendix B*).
- Work with the INDOT Office of Communication, District PIO and Major Project Delivery Team for INDOT’s position on key issues topics, area projects, regional “hot” subjects/issues and who will be fielding questions for these items.
- Setup a minimum of 4 or up to 8-STIP physical or virtual meetings across the State. LRTP outreach meetings can be combined with meetings. Determine if these meetings format as combination of in-person open house or virtual town hall meetings.
- Hold meetings in transit accessible locations and vary meeting schedules to maximize attendance opportunities. (Please note most district offices are not transit accessible).
- Publish notices/press release in accordance with the schedule in Phase 3.
- Have printed materials available at in-person meetings/events for review and ensure presentation materials are self-explanatory and not too technical.
- Use visuals at public meetings/events and on related websites to enhance understanding of the planning documents, policies, supporting studies, and other related items and technical materials. Visual aids may include informational charts, animations, maps, infographics, videos, aerial photography, and other graphic explanations depending on the type of information to be conveyed.
- Capture attendance at meetings, record meeting minutes, and report performance efforts specific to the underserved populations to INDOT Communications, Title VI, ADA Team, and other external partners (if applicable).
- To support outreach efforts performed by our MPO or RPO partners specific to our planning documents, ensure INDOT planning staff are available, even if remotely, during MPO or RPO open house/public meeting sessions. (See *POP Companion Appendix C* for worksheet to document staff availability). If staff are not present and there are public questions specific to the STIP or LRTP, direct the MPO to ask the person to submit question(s) in a specific form that can be answered by INDOT staffers within 5-business days, or by submitting a comment via INDOT4U Customer Service (see *POP Companion 2.2* for contact information).

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### **PHASE 3: PERFORMING NOTIFICATIONS**

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- Publish notices/press releases at least 15 calendar days prior to the public engagement opportunity or no less than 2-days prior to the public engagement for comment on a published plan.
- In notice/press release, name the project, plan, or program; describe how to participate in the opportunity at hand; provide the location of events or how and where to submit comments; and provide the beginning and ending times and dates for all public comment opportunities.
- Describe how to request translators for LEP populations, interpreters, or services for those with a visual/hearing disability.
- Directly notify minority, low-income, people with limited English proficiency, aging populations over 64 years old, and rural populations of meetings and comment opportunities. Ensure there are maps that geographically display the study area and impacted groups. Add notifications to Outreach Log started in Phase 1.
- Avoid duplication of effort. Work cooperatively with MPOs and RPOs that may have an inventory of contacts for their underserved population. Ensure their process/procedure is federally compliant, properly documented and referenced, and leverage their outreach efforts. Document outreach that is done in partnership with outside organizations.
- Notification /press release distribution list includes, but is not limited to:

- **Planning Partners:** INDOT Districts, RPOs, MPOs, LTAP, Local Officials, Federal Land Management & Resource Agencies, FTA, FHWA, Economic Development Corporations, Indiana Tribal Nations Agencies, and Transit Operators.
  - **Social Services Providers:** Local Indiana Housing & Urban Development Offices, Local Libraries, Senior Citizen Centers, Health Care Providers, & Clinics.
  - **Special Interests Groups:** Agency Title VI contacts, Faith-Based/Community Organizations, Rural Community Centers (Farmers & Amish Communities Newsletters)
  - **Local Advertisement:** Official County, town, and/or city newspapers, TV & radio
- Documentation of the notification itself will be submitted with STIP update approvals, LRTP adoptions, and other planning level documents along with the documentation to be completed in the Outreach Log started in Phase 1.

## PHASE 4: POST OUTREACH ACTIONS/ACTIVITIES

- Post recorded general sessions and presentation slides from select meetings 2 business days after the last public meeting or event on the appropriate INDOT planning document website and request they be added to relevant MPO, RPO and/or local government websites. If applicable, also post to social media outlets. The links should remain live for the entire duration of the public comment period at minimum.
- Summarize comments and surveys results from planning level studies, STIP and LRTP outreach.
- Update Outreach Log started in Phase 1 to include information from public comments.
- Coordinate documented summary with planning partners, INDOT Office of Communication and relevant INDOT Districts. Include summary in the appendices of the document.
- For regional planning coordination meetings, provide breakout session notes to stakeholders for review and comment prior to making the notes official. Share copies of the notes with district TSDs and related staffers, asset and safety teams, traffic engineering team, MPOs, RPOs, freight mobility, and planning staff.

## PHASE 5: CLOSEOUT ACTIVITIES

- Provide a final package to FHWA on public/stakeholder outreach activities that includes:
  - Reference to comments documented in the appendices with page number of the document version and a link to the document.
  - A copy of the survey questions, results, and open/close period of the survey.
  - List of actions taken to reach the underserved population, including ways MPO and RPO partners assisted with that outreach. Include documentation of activities (See *POP Companion 5.1* for examples of documentation).
  - Summary of participation by the public, through the different outreach efforts conducted, highlighting participation by traditionally underserved.
- Monitor outreach process and conduct an annual evaluation. Identify barriers encountered specific to public participation efforts in the planning process and ways to mitigate barriers (See *POP Companion 5.2* for specific process guidance).
- Report findings and strategies to INDOT's Communications, Title VI, ADA Team, and other external partners (if applicable).

Procedure Checklist for: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Planning Document/study)

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name, Email, Job Title)

# PLANNING OUTREACH PROCEDURE CHECKLIST: COMPANION



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## PHASE 1: PUBLISHING THE PLANNING DOCUMENT

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1. Complete outreach log (Appendix A) to include:
  - Planning partners notified of opportunity to comment
    - FHWA, FTA, MPO, RPO, District staff, INDOT Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)
  - Comments provided by planning partners not incorporated into document and justification of decision
  - Explanation of level of participation that occurred vs level expected and whether level was appropriate or could be improved
2. If document file size on web is extremely large, consider providing an alternative version of document broken into sections or having documents with text/graphics separate to accommodate all types of internet connections.
3. Possible places to provide a hard copy of the document for viewing purposes: MPO, RPO, District, Library, Senior Center, Cultural or Community Center, Church, Local Government Agency, etc.

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## PHASE 2: PLANNING THE PUBLIC EVENTS & COMMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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1. Possible public meeting types:
  - Social Media
  - Online Surveys
  - Digital Presentations
  - Telephone Town Hall
  - Community Advisory Committee Meeting
  - Stakeholder Committee Meeting
  - Email Distribution Group Communication
2. INDOT4U Contact Information:
  - 1-855-463-6848 (INDOT4U)
  - [www.indot4u.com](http://www.indot4u.com)
  - [indot@indot.IN.gov](mailto:indot@indot.IN.gov)

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## PHASE 5: CLOSEOUT ACTIVITIES

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1. Documentation of outreach activities:
  - Emails
  - Distribution list memos/surveys
  - Distribution list/email recipients
  - Social media posts
  - Websites
  - Physical posted notices
  - In-person comment submittal locations
  - Public meeting agenda/minutes

2. Annual evaluation meetings are to be setup for the next 5-years with a tentative agenda, so it is on everyone's calendar and not an afterthought or last-minute scramble to setup the annual meeting and agenda. This annual meeting will review, discuss, and evaluate INDOT, MPO, RPO, consultant and other outreach activities specific to planning activities/products that have occurred or will be occurring to ensure we are meeting regulations, being effective, and leveraging best practices.



# INDOT Social Media Communications Strategy Worksheet

Use this worksheet to help you strategize about your audience, and the potential social media tools and channels you may want to use for your campaign or communication activity.



**Communications Lead:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Social Media To be Used:**  Twitter  Facebook  Facebook-Live  Instagram  YouTube  
 YouTube Live  INDOT Podcast  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Account Owner/Administrator Contact Information for Social-Media (name, email, and phone #):**

- **Twitter:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Facebook Accounts:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Instagram:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **YouTube:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Podcast:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Communication Project:**  STIP Update or Amendment  Long-Range Transportation Plan Update  
 Planning Survey  Planning Study  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**What event will be advertised via social media:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Communication Objective:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Target Audiences:**  General Public  
 Advocacy/Special Interest Groups: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Underserved Populations:  Low Income  Minority  ADA Groups  
 Ages Over 64  Community Centers  
 Limited English-Speaking Communities  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Message/Content to be Shared:**  
**Who will be responsible for sharing the contents, where are they located, and how will they be shared?**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Who will be managing the postings?**  
**Posting Activities:**

- **Expected Number of Postings:** \_\_\_\_\_ **When (Date & Time):** \_\_\_\_\_
- **What Channels:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What data analytics will be used to assess performance or effectiveness?**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Appendix C

**Outreach Staff Availability Worksheet**

MPO/RPO Outreach Event Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time (start/end) \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Event \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

MPO/RPO Staff Member Responsible \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

INDOT Staff Member to Attend \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_