



Indiana Department of Transportation  
Technical Planning & Programming Division

# DRAFT Planning Public Involvement Plan (PPIP)



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# List of Acronyms

**ACS:** American Community Survey

**ADA:** Americans with Disability Act

**APDP:** Annual Program Development Process

**BIL:** Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

**CFR:** U.S. Code of Federal Regulations

**CN:** Construction

**CO:** Central Office

**DOT:** Department of Transportation

**EPA:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**ERC:** Employee in Responsible Charge

**FHWA:** Federal Highway Administration

**FHWA-IN:** Indiana Division of the Federal Highway Administration

**FTA:** Federal Transit Administration

**GIS:** Geographic Information System

**HSIP:** Highway Safety Improvement Program

**HUD:** Department of Housing and Urban Development

**ICG:** Interagency Consultation Group

**INDOT:** Indiana Department of Transportation

**ITAP:** INDOT's Technical Applications Pathway

**LPA:** Local Public Agency

**L RTP:** Long-Range Transportation Plan

**MAP-21:** Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act

**MPO:** Metropolitan Planning Organization

**MTP:** Metropolitan Transportation Plan

**NEPA:** National Environmental Policy Act

**OMB:** Office of Management and Budget

**PE:** Preliminary Engineering

**PEL:** Planning & Environmental Linkage

**PIPM:** Public Involvement Procedures Manual

**POP:** Planning Outreach Procedure

**PPIP:** INDOT's Planning Public Involvement Plan

**RPO:** Regional Planning Organization

**RW:** Right of Way

**STIP:** Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

**SURP:** Small Urban and Rural Program

**TAMP:** Transportation Asset Management Plan

**TIP:** Transportation Improvement Program

**TPR:** Transportation Planning Region

**USC:** United States Code



# 1. Public Involvement & Transportation Planning Overview

## Introduction

Indiana is facing exciting and challenging times for transportation. Indiana's multimodal transportation system is key to a vibrant and globalized state economy. Transportation investments create and enhance access to jobs and freight movement, support increased trade and improve Indiana's economic competitiveness. Public and stakeholder participation is a key ingredient in planning for and developing a viable multimodal transportation system today and in the future.

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is responsible for conducting several planning activities, from Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) and State Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs) to specific modal, freight, corridor and safety plans. INDOT is committed to conducting these activities in an open and transparent manner, providing the public and stakeholders with opportunities to learn about transportation issues and participate in planning processes.

## Purpose of the Planning Public Involvement Plan

The purpose of the INDOT Planning Public Involvement Plan (PPIP) is to provide information to educate the public and stakeholder groups on participating in the transportation planning and programming processes. Information is provided about INDOT, stakeholders, the transportation planning and programming processes, public involvement tools/techniques, why public involvement is key and how the public can get involved.

INDOT's previous Public Involvement Plan was developed in 2012 and satisfied Federal public involvement and consultation requirements for statewide planning and programming as outlined in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). The 2023 update built upon the previous document and addresses the "what, why, how, and

when" of public involvement activities within the context of INDOT transportation planning as well as Federal requirements established by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The 2025 Plan update is to align the plan with Executive Orders and other changes required resulting from Federal and State level administration changes and to reflect updates to the public involvement process.

While all INDOT plans and planning processes must meet Federal and state requirements for public involvement, the approaches to engaging the public vary depending on a plan's unique objectives. This PPIP provides guidance to conduct public engagement as required, while allowing for the flexibility to use public outreach approaches that are most appropriate for each individual plan.

### *Public Participation Matrix*

The Public Participation Matrix demonstrates the types of participation: Inform, Consult, Involve, and Collaborate. Each of the four levels of participation has specific techniques for public participation, as shown in the Matrix on the following page.

As required by federal regulations specific to statewide and non-metropolitan transportation planning (23 USC 135), states are required to have a statewide and non-metropolitan transportation planning process that is continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive to the degree appropriate, based on the complexity of the transportation problems to be addressed.

INDOT uses the input gathered from the public to identify the issues, needs, opportunities and priorities for a better multimodal transportation system. This information is used to make informed decisions on transportation improvements and strategies with limited funding. These collaborative and inclusive discussions during the planning process result in planning and programming that consider all transportation modes, both construction and non-construction solutions, and the needs of all users of the system.

Figure 1: Public Participation Matrix

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate
<i>Participation Goal:</i>			
Provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.	Obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	Work diligently with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	Partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution
<i>Examples of Techniques to Consider:</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brochures, fact sheets</li> <li>• Websites</li> <li>• Social media notifications</li> <li>• Press releases</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Open houses</li> <li>• Mailing postcards, letters, door hangers, yard signs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official request for public comment during specific time periods which are advertised through email and social media notifications and posted on the website.</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Public meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Community event participation</li> <li>• Stakeholder meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen advisory committee/groups</li> <li>• Community working groups</li> <li>• Technical committee/task force</li> </ul>

## Creating INDOT's Plans

Transportation planning involves examining the long-term and strategic transportation goals of the state and specific areas within the state, studying respective demographic characteristics and travel patterns, assessing existing and possible future transportation assets, looking at how these considerations and factors interrelate, forecasting possible changes over multiple years, estimating resources and funds potentially available to address transportation concerns, and evaluating alternatives for meeting current and future transportation needs to bring the area closer to achieving its vision. Transportation planning is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive process. It establishes a vision for transportation investments, examining critical trends, issues, and future-year needs to provide Hoosiers the highest level of safety and mobility possible to meet the needs of economic development and quality of life.

INDOT planning documents must meet Federal and State requirements for public involvement, but otherwise the approaches to engaging the public vary depending on the plan's unique objectives and the needs of the target audiences. This PPIP provides the guidance to obtain sufficient public engagement as required by Federal and state regulations, while allowing for the flexibility to adapt public outreach approaches that are most appropriate for each individual plan.

## Public Outreach Procedure Tiers

To better guide public involvement and to ensure the appropriate level of outreach, INDOT's plans are categorized into three tiers. Each tier has two different actions: (1) Developing and publishing a new plan or (2) full update of a plan or amending a plan. Based on which action is occurring, this will result in different outreach strategies.

If the first action occurs, a plan is either published for the first time as a new plan or is going through a major update that occurs on a regular schedule (i.e.: annually, every 2 or 4 years, etc.). This requires a high level of public engagement that covers all four levels of the Public Participation Matrix. Efforts are made to reach the public through all forms of public involvement listed in the table on the following page and individuals are encouraged to sign up to continue to receive information via email, text, phone, mail or social media.

By contrast, the second action, a plan amendment, is a change that can be made as needed to keep plans current and accurate. Because there has already been a major public outreach effort when the plan was

published, this action will typically only reach the levels of Informing and Consulting and notifications are sent out via the communications channels built up during initial public outreach (email, text, phone, mail) as well as posted on websites, distributed to planning partners to share with their community contacts and stakeholders, and advertised on social media.

It is important to note that outreach activities in the figure represent the baseline level of outreach that will occur for each tier of plans. Additional activities may occur outside of those indicated in the INDOT Public Outreach Procedures figure above. Likewise, public comment periods may be extended beyond the baseline shown, if warranted by the individual planning initiative.

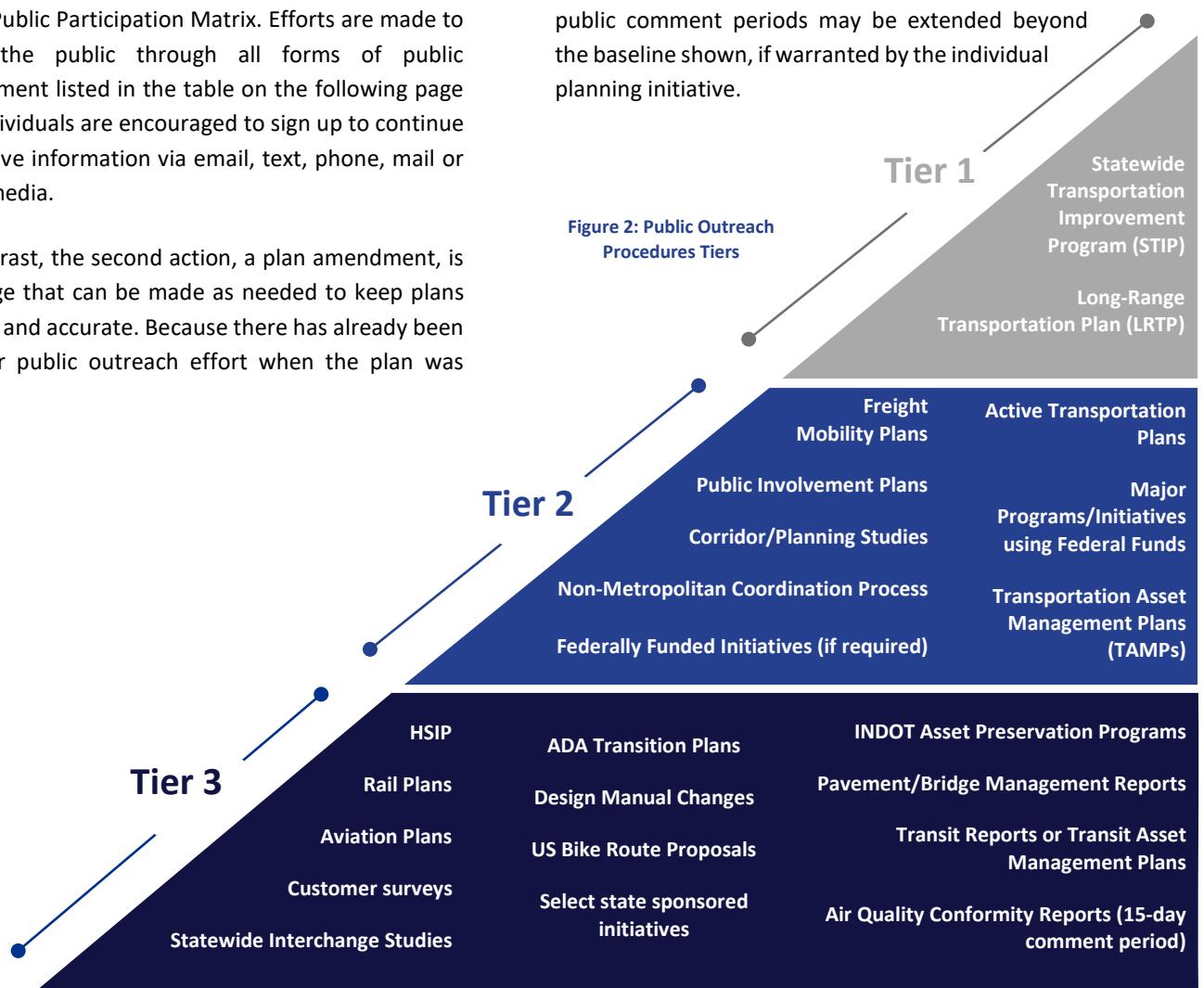


Figure 3: INDOT Public Outreach Procedure

	Tier 1 Plans		Tier 2 Plans		Tier 3 Plans	
	New Plan/ Update	Plan Amendment (minor changes)	New Plan/ Update	Plan Amendment (minor changes)	New Plan/ Update	Plan Amendment (minor changes)
<b>Inform</b>						
Email Notifications to Marketing Cloud ListServ and Stakeholder/interested public contact list	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Press Releases/Media Advertisement	✓					
Public Comment Summary Memo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fact Sheets/Printed Material Available	✓	✓	✓			
Information on Website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social Media Notification	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Consult</b>						
Internal/Planning Partner/Federal Review	✓		✓		✓	
Legal Public Notice	✓					
Public Comment Period	45 days	3 <sup>1</sup> -7 <sup>2</sup> days	30-60 days	7 days	7-30 days	7 days
Public Surveys	✓		optional		optional	
Public Meetings/Open House	✓		optional		optional	
<b>Involve</b>						
Public Events	✓					
Stakeholder Meetings	✓		optional		optional	
<b>Collaborate</b>						
Community Working Groups	optional					
MPO/RPO Meetings	✓		✓		✓	

<sup>1</sup> 3 days for amendments made to MPO projects in STIP.

<sup>2</sup> 7 days for amendments made to non-MPO projects in STIP.

## The Benefits of Public Involvement

The two-way communication process between INDOT and the public results in proactive public involvement. Public involvement early on enhances INDOT's decisions, especially for context-sensitive solutions,

and creates a better final product – a transportation system that meets the transportation needs of Indiana and its visitors. INDOT's Public Involvement Principles are listed below.

Figure 4: INDOT's Public Involvement Principles



### Early and Continuous Involvement

Provide timely information about transportation issues and decision-making processes to stakeholders early and throughout the process.



### Information Accessibility

Provide planning and programming information in a variety of forms including visual/print, digital, web-based, and social media, allowing stakeholders easy access to inform and influence decisions. Additionally, planning materials can be translated into Spanish or other languages for non-English speakers. Please view our [Standard Operating Procedures for the Coordination and Arrangement of Support Services for Americans with Disabilities and Limited English Proficiency Stakeholders document](#).



### Process Review

INDOT reviews and solicits comments periodically from all interested parties on the effectiveness of the public involvement process and any proposed changes.



### Reasonable Access

Provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, upon request and ensure meeting locations are accessible per the Americans with Disabilities Act.



### Diversified Approach

Understanding that no single method or technique is optimal for every stakeholder group, INDOT considers stakeholder needs in providing communication flexibility and innovation to ensure easy and equitable access to information.



### Enhancing Stakeholder Relationships

INDOT appreciates the comments and input received through outreach efforts. Comments are considered and incorporated, as appropriate and help guide planning, programming, and outcomes.



### Timely Response

INDOT staff strives to respond to comments quickly and let stakeholders know how input is used.

## Partners & Stakeholder Groups

INDOT engages the public and a wide variety of external stakeholder groups to help in its transportation planning decision-making process and plan creation. Some of these plans include INDOT's State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Statewide Corridor Planning Study, multimodal studies and planning for major transportation needs such as, safety improvements, added travel lanes, new interchanges. INDOT begins to engage the public and other stakeholder groups at the beginning of its

transportation planning and project development process and continues to solicit feedback throughout the process. Planning partners and stakeholders are typically defined as individuals and groups who are/may be impacted by a project or have an interest in a project. In some cases, federal regulations specifically define who stakeholders are. The following pages list typical stakeholders.

Figure 5: INDOT Stakeholder Groups

	<b>Pedestrian and Bicyclist Interest Groups:</b> Community leaders, non-profit organizations, and advocates for bike and pedestrian initiatives, policies, safety, enforcement, public health, quality of life, and environmental considerations.
	<b>Federal Agencies (Highway, Transit, &amp; Aviation):</b> Oversees federal regulatory requirements, programs, funds/grants, aviation and transit operations/facilities, actions, and ensuring the use of federal funds or required actions meet federal requirements, safety, environmental standards.
	<b>Freight Advisory Council (Truck, Rail, Marine, Aviation):</b> Serves as a forum for agency transportation decisions, future planning, policies, permitting and identifying issues/concerns affecting Indiana freight mobility, safety, and livability. The council includes a cross-section of public and private sector freight representatives for ports, rail carriers, shippers, carriers, parcel delivery, pipeline carriers, third-party freight logistics providers, freight industry workforce, university researchers, advocates, economic development representatives, and others).
	<b>Indiana Economic Development Corporation/Indiana Destination Development Corporations:</b> Focuses on encouraging businesses to launch, expand, and locate their existing operations within the state with performance-based tax credits, workforce training grants, innovation/entrepreneurship resources, public infrastructure assistance, talent attraction/retention, and other incentives authorized by the state.

	<p><b>INDOT Districts:</b> Serve as the frontline coordination and outreach with elected officials, stakeholders, and partners in tandem with the Central Office divisions in Indianapolis to serve Indiana's transportation needs. INDOT Districts are directly responsible for state facility (interstates, US highways, and state routes) infrastructure asset management, maintenance, and construction activities. See page 73 of the Appendix for a map of the six INDOT Districts.</p>
	<p><b>Local Government &amp; Elected/Appointed Officials:</b> Continuous and cooperative coordination with local elected officials is a crucial aspect of effective transportation planning. Coordination occurs at district level and at Central Office via the Intergovernmental and Legislative Affairs Team.</p>
	<p><b>Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs):</b> Federally required bodies that serve the transportation planning and outreach needs of urbanized areas with populations of 50,000 or greater. MPOs are comprised of elected and appointed officials and technical staff. MPOs develop several federally required planning documents; manage both local and state projects in their respective areas; and perform various support related to transportation planning activities. Together with INDOT Central Office Planning Staff and District Offices, MPOs serve as a primary source for local and public input as fundamental cooperating partners in the mode-specific planning and program implementation process.</p>
	<p><b>Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs):</b> RPOs serve the transportation planning and outreach needs of small urban and rural areas of the state. RPOs perform planning activities to provide planning support to local communities.</p>
	<p><b>Non-MPO/RPO Areas:</b> These include small towns and cities not included in an MPO or RPO area. In non-metropolitan areas, INDOT district offices coordinate transportation planning activities and develop lists of projects to be included in the STIP. INDOT consults with the Regional Planning Organizations, rural area local elected officials, local government agency representatives, special interest groups, and other key transportation stakeholders.</p>
	<p><b>Resource Agencies:</b> Government agencies with regulatory authority over environmental resources and have some sort of stake in transportation-related improvements. It is critical to get the resource agencies involved in transportation decision-making early to ensure potential issues are resolved and documented. Examples of resource agencies include the following: Indiana Department of Agriculture, Energy Management, Dept of Health, Dept of Natural Resources, State Historic Preservation Officer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Census Bureau, Coast Guard, and Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Services, Natural Resources Conservation Services.</p>

	<p><b>Public Transit &amp; Passenger Rail Advisory Committee:</b> Serves as a forum for discussing and identifying public transportation issues and solutions and providing advice to the INDOT Office of Transit on policy, system performance targets, asset management, and funding areas that affect public transit users and providers.</p>
	<p><b>Transportation Special Interest and Advocacy Groups (Urban &amp; Rural):</b> Community and business leaders, non- profit organizations, and advocates for various aspects of transportation decision-making, investments, safety, enforcement, policy, corridor beautification, clean air/water, economic development, public health, quality of life, and environmental considerations.</p>
	<p><b>Tribal Governments:</b> As the State of Indiana is the ancestral homeland of federally recognized tribal nations, INDOT must consult tribes if planned work affects locations with religious or cultural significance to the tribal nation(s).<sup>3</sup></p>

#### **Federal Regulations that Guide Public Involvement:**

**Federal Requirements are the foundation of public involvement activities and provide guidance to state departments of transportation. See Appendix 1 for a list of Federal Regulations regarding public involvement in transportation planning.**

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<sup>3</sup> More details can be found in the *Memorandum of Understanding Among the Federal Highway Administration, Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer, Indiana Department of Transportation, and Federally Recognized Tribes Interested in Indiana Lands Regarding Tribal Consultation Requirements for the Indiana Federal Transportation Program*, or the “Tribal MOU.” Source: [P2-Chapter-2-FHWA,INDOT-Section-106-Consultation-Process-Overview\\_UpdatedOct2021.pdf](https://www.indot.state.in.us/transportation-planning/consultation-process/section-106-consultation-process-overview-updated-oct-2021.pdf)



## 2. Approaches to Public & Stakeholder Engagement

INDOT is committed to the continual expansion of its public engagement strategies to help inform and educate the public about transportation planning and provide opportunities for input and feedback. Various methods are used to involve public and stakeholders in the transportation planning process and they are explored in detail in this chapter. Different methods and levels of public involvement are used based on the type of planning work and goals a plan seeks to accomplish.

For projects and planning studies, INDOT will publish content online on a website and on social media, hold public meetings for non-amendment activities, hold open public comment periods and receive comments via email, social media, web forms and telephone. The following list of public involvement tools and techniques may be used within the appropriate context for maximum effectiveness. INDOT considers the appropriateness and practicality of a wide range of tools and techniques, which may include a combination from the following list, but are not limited to only these methods.

Figure 6: Public Involvement Tools

Internet	Social Media
<p>INDOT, to the maximum effort practicable, makes public information accessible in electronic formats via the Internet and uses innovative techniques to communicate complex information and improve comment solicitation. Through a combination of text, video, audio, and interactive elements, the Internet can be an excellent tool to communicate with the public. Visit the <a href="#">INDOT Communications</a> website for more info.</p> 	
<p><b>Digital Presentations</b></p> <p>INDOT employs PowerPoint and other presentation platforms to help display and communicate information to stakeholder groups, citizens, elected officials and others. These presentation tools can be used to deliver information in-person, remotely, or via the web and allow the public to consume information at their own pace.</p> 	
<p><b>Public Comments</b></p> <p>INDOT values the comments received through all public involvement efforts. INDOT strives to adhere to the following guidance regarding public comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documenting and recording all comments</li><li>• Providing timely written responses to public comments</li><li>• Recognizing that all people are important and can contribute valuable perspectives</li><li>• Providing clear, definitive responses to substantive comments; differentiating between philosophical and factual differences; and providing an explanation of why one approach or option was selected over others</li><li>• Ensuring that all public comment becomes a part of the public record for any transportation planning or programming effort and are available for public viewing</li></ul> <p>INDOT4U Customer Service is used to keep &amp; address public comments for the Planning team. At the project level, public comments are managed on a project-by-project basis. Some projects may use INDOT4U but others use their own software documenting and tracking systems. For planning documents or studies, comments &amp; responses are listed in the appendix.</p>	

## Community Events

INDOT may participate in fairs, farmers markets and other community events to solicit input related to planning, programming, and other programs. These events are opportunities to engage the public and receive valuable input.



## Telephone Town Halls

A telephone town hall can be used to poll a large number of participants to provide input on transportation policies, projects or improvements. The telephone town hall allows participants to ask questions of INDOT staff over the phone and make participation convenient while reducing the need to travel to a public meeting.

## Interactive Electronic Voting

Interactive electronic polling devices may be used at public meetings where participants are asked questions on a variety of transportation issues and are able to respond in real time using handheld electronic keypad devices. The electronic keypads register participants' responses and project them graphically on a screen providing the opportunity for discussion and capturing public opinions in real time.



## Stakeholder Meetings

information on public perceptions of the Indiana transportation system. In addition, INDOT may conduct focus groups/create Community Advisory Committees to identify transportation needs and perceptions of how well transportation services are being delivered to minority and low-income groups to improve INDOT's ability to include minority and low-income groups in the transportation planning process and decision-making on future system improvements.

## Public Information Materials

Public information materials quickly communicate INDOT's message. They are often visually appealing and often do not require a great level of detail. Examples of public information materials are:

- [Advertisements \(displays and legal notices\)](#)
- [Newsletters and brochures](#)
- [Summary of Reports/Dashboards of Performance](#)
- [Fact Sheets](#)



## LISTSERV

INDOT maintains email contact lists to provide public information, meeting notices, and other information to interested parties. Check out [INDOT's Marketing Cloud Page](#) to subscribe.

## *Public Notification*

Notification of a public/stakeholder meeting should occur no less than 15 days prior to the meeting, and according to [Indiana Open Door Law](#), notification must occur no later than 24 hours in advance of a meeting. Notification of a comment period or online survey should occur no later than the first day that comment period opens or survey goes live. Notifications, at minimum, will be published in local newspapers/online news sites via legal ad, sent to stakeholders via email and posted to social media outlets and on the INDOT website. Public meeting notifications must contain a link to a live-stream

Teams meeting to satisfy Indiana Open Door Law. For more requirements and FAQ regarding Open Door Law, please see appendix 5.

All notifications, comments received, and responses will be recorded in the planning initiative's [Public Outreach Log](#) or otherwise recorded, along with review and coordination points with Federal, State and Local partners during the development process. This documentation will be published and distributed along with the final plan for which the outreach effort supported, typically as an appendix.

## *Non-discrimination Assurances for Public Involvement*

### **INDOT Civil Rights Title VI Non-Discrimination Policy Statement**

INDOT values everyone's civil rights and wishes to provide meaningful access for everyone within our state. As a recipient of federal funds, INDOT is required to conform to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and all related statutes, regulations, and directives, which provide that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) on the grounds of race, color or national origin, or limited English proficiency (LEP).

INDOT adheres to all federal rules, regulations, and policies enacted by the USDOT FHWA and FTA. For more information regarding INDOT processes visit the [Nondiscrimination at INDOT webpage](#).

### **Overview**

Title VI seeks to prevent and eliminate existing discrimination and ensure that public funds are used for public benefit. Federal funds stem from tax dollars paid by all people and the programs and facilities developed by them must benefit everyone equally. This is Title VI in a nutshell. The Assurances

must be signed by those who receive federal funds to create a mechanism for accountability to ensure these funds are spent accordingly.

The Title VI obligation to not discriminate and to assess, address, and eliminate discrimination stems from the fact that we are recipients or subrecipients of federal funds designing, building, and implementing programs and facilities for the beneficiaries (the general public) of these programs and facilities. It does not matter if a particular program or facility we are developing uses federal funds or not. Once they receive even \$1 of federal funds, a city, town or other entity must continually comply with Title VI. (See the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987).

The full text of Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Since Title VI was passed, additional regulations and executive orders have extended that list to also include prohibitions for discrimination against others on the basis of: sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, religion, income status, or limited English proficiency.

Recipients of federal funds are required to have a Title VI Program Manager, grievance procedure & complaint log, evidence of regular Title VI training,

signed Assurances of Nondiscrimination, evidence of subrecipient monitoring, and an Annual Title VI Implementation Plan demonstrating that they have integrated Title VI requirements into their programs to remain eligible to receive federal funds.

#### **INDOT's Title VI Implementation Plan**

INDOT has outlined its Title VI Program in its [Title VI Implementation Plan](#). The most recent plan(s) are posted [online](#). In addition to the Title VI Implementation Plan, INDOT now posts separately its [Annual Goals & Accomplishments Report](#). This

document addresses specifically what INDOT has accomplished in the previous program year and what INDOT plans to accomplish during the upcoming year.

#### **INDOT Demographic Survey**

A voluntary public involvement survey 23 CFR 200.9(b)(4) assists INDOT in gathering data to ensure its programs and activities comply with Title VI. The voluntary survey is made available via the INDOT website and is available at the [Public Involvement page](#) under Accessibility Materials<sup>1</sup>.

## **Measures of Effectiveness**

One of the most important questions asked at the end of a planning process is “how effective was the process?” It is important to determine whether goals were met, how the information received was used, and how best to improve the process. Figure 7 shows sample measures INDOT will use to determine if its approaches and techniques used during the planning process were effective. INDOT will also use surveys to engage with planning partners, including MPO, RPO, LPA, stakeholders and the public and inquire about the effectiveness of the planning processes (STIP, LRTP or other). Surveys can be sent at key times, for example, upon the completion of a new STIP or LRTP.

Participation in the planning process will be compiled, allowing INDOT to chart trends over a number of years. This information will inform INDOT whether the techniques used to provide outreach to the public are effective, or whether different or additional strategies are needed.

**Figure 7: Sample Measures of Effectiveness**

<i># of visitors to the webpage</i>	<i># of subscribers to the listserv, distribution lists, social media likes, and impressions</i>	<i># of comments received or posted during comment periods</i>	<i># of individuals signed up and/or participated in public meetings/town halls (in-person and virtual)</i>
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## Emergency Public Involvement Procedures



An emergency situation would occur when the Governor and/or President declares a health or other emergency and/or a local government jurisdiction determines that an in-person public hearing and/or in-person inspection of documents should be limited out of concerns for public health and/or safety. As federal, state and local municipalities issue guidance related to any current emergency situations, in-person viewing locations may change from normal operations.

When in-person locations change in availability for use as project document repositories (i.e., public libraries, municipal offices, community centers), the currently available locations should be listed in public notices. The notice must also list any restrictions, limitations and/or any modified procedure that would apply. INDOT will continue to monitor these situations and related guidance at both the national and local levels. Planning staff should closely monitor local jurisdiction guidance for their assigned areas to determine the status of emergency restrictions and how these

restrictions will impact public involvement activities specific to the STIP, LRTP, and other transportation planning documents.

It is important to remember to include a statement in a public notice that offers the public the opportunity to request planning document information be mailed to them upon request. It is also required to offer the public the opportunity to request a public meeting in your notice. It may be that certain emergency situations may restrict how a public meeting will be held, however opportunities to interact with the public virtually may assist in reaching out to those that may not be able to attend in person as a result of the emergency conditions.

Please visit the INDOT website for [more information regarding public involvement during emergency situations.](#)



## 3. State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

### STIP Overview

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a federally mandated planning and construction document that includes all state and local transportation projects funded with federal highway and/or federal transit funding along with 100% state-funded transportation projects such as highway, pedestrian, rail, freight, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit, and projects in the national parks deemed Regionally Significant in Indiana. The STIP is a programming document that is prepared in cooperation with local government entities throughout Indiana, including MPOs, Tribal Governments, Non-Metropolitan Local Governments,

and RPOs, and engages the public during development.

The STIP document is intended to provide the public with information on how INDOT plans to spend federal and state funds on upcoming transportation projects annually over the next four-year period. Projects listed within the STIP typically originate from local and/or state-approved plans.



Figure 8: STIP Threshold Requirements



The STIP is developed on a two-year cycle and coincides with the Indiana General Assembly two-year state budget cycle. Following opportunities for public review and comment, the Indiana STIP is forwarded to

FHWA and FTA for federal approval. The table on the following page describes INDOT's general process when developing the STIP.



Figure 9: STIP Development Process Overview

- 01 FHWA/FTA and INDOT meet to review the STIP development schedule and STIP evaluation checklist of basic elements required for inclusion in the STIP, and to establish recurring coordination meetings.**
  - FHWA/FTA revises the STIP evaluation checklist based on agreed-upon negotiations with INDOT, as needed.
- 02 INDOT's STIP Administration Office publishes the STIP development process and timeline to the INDOT website and creates the initial STIP template.**
- 03 FHWA/FTA develops funding targets for the STIP and provides to INDOT, to include both state and federal funding.**
  - The Finance Division of FHWA/FTA reviews the levels and basis for the funding targets.
- 04 INDOT's Finance Department provides revenue projections for the STIP, and the STIP Administration Office generates a draft STIP project listing for fiscal constraints.**
  - It is the responsibility of INDOT Finance to ensure that the STIP and TIPs demonstrate fiscal constraint.
- 05 Early coordination meetings occur to review projects for fiscal constraint.**
  - Meetings will include MPOs, RPOs, and INDOT Central Office.
- 06 The MPOs and RPOs review the draft STIP project lists with INDOT and begin to add the draft project list to the MPO TIPs.**
  - As projects are identified that are in nonattainment or maintenance areas, MPOs submit requests for informal consultation with the ICG for air quality conformity.
  - The ICG reviews projects during the informal consultation process and provides feedback, as needed.
- 07 The finalized lists of STIP projects are confirmed.**
  - MPOs and RPOs coordinate with INDOT's STIP Administration Office, Districts, and Asset Management Teams to confirm the finalized lists of STIP projects.
- 08 INDOT's Office of Technical Planning conducts a review of the TIPs for air quality conformity.**
- 09 The STIP Administration Office submits a first draft STIP to FHWA/FTA for an early review.**
  - FHWA/FTA review the STIP initial draft and provide feedback, as needed.
  - INDOT & MPOs incorporate any feedback provided by FHWA/FTA.



10

**The TIPs & STIP are posted for public review and comment.**

- The MPOs post the TIPs for public review and comment, and the INDOT STIP Administration Office posts the STIP for public review and comment.

11

**Public Involvement meetings are conducted.**

- The draft STIP and TIPs are presented at District public meetings and undergo a 45-day review and comment period.

12

**After the public involvement period is complete, the draft TIPs are sent to INDOT for review.**

- The STIP Administration Office, Office of Technical Planning, and Finance Division review the draft TIPs and STIP collectively, as the parties responsible for overseeing the MPOs and responsible for reviewing each MPO's TIP to ensure compliance with the requirements outlined 23 CFR 450.326.

13

**INDOT's STIP Administration Office sends the draft STIP to FHWA/FTA for a second-level review and comment.**

- If any feedback from FHWA/FTA is provided, the INDOT STIP Administration Office, Office of Technical Planning, and Finance Department compile the comments and send them back to MPOs to address and incorporate.
- MPOs incorporate any final comments into the TIPs.

14

**MPOs present the TIPs at the MPOs' Policy Boards for approval.**

15

**After securing Policy Board approval, the MPOs submit a request to FHWA to initiate the formal consultation process with the ICG for air quality conformity.**

- While the ICG review process is occurring, MPOs send the final draft TIPs to INDOT.
- The INDOT STIP Administration Office then incorporates the changes into a final draft version of the STIP.

16

**FHWA coordinates with the ICG to conduct the formal consultation process.**

- The FHWA formal consultation review period with the ICG includes a 30 calendar day period when a conformity emissions analysis is required and 15 calendar day period in 1997 ozone-only conformity areas where no emissions analysis is required.
- After the 30-day and/or 15-day period is completed for projects requiring a conformity emissions analysis and/or projects where no emissions analysis is required, FHWA reaches out to the other ICG agencies requesting concurrence on whether a conformity determination be made. ICG agencies have another 30 calendar days to reply (or 15 calendar days in 1997 ozone-only conformity areas).



17

### After the ICG concurs, FHWA issues a conformity determination letter.

- Issuing a conformity determination letter demonstrates approval that the TIP complies with conformity requirements. The Final Draft of the STIP cannot be submitted to FHWA/FTA for review and approval until after all Conformity Determination Letters have been administered (by June 30).

18

### INDOT conducts a final review of the STIP and TIP to ensure compliance with the federal regulations.

- INDOT's STIP Administration Office reviews the STIP and TIPs to ensure the project listings match, and to ensure the accuracy of the project elements.
- INDOT's Finance Department reviews the TIPs and STIP to ensure both meet fiscal constraint requirements.
- INDOT's Office of Technical Planning reviews the TIPs to ensure the TIPs are a subset of the MPOs' MTPs, ensure projects match within the STIP/TIP, projects listed in the TIP show estimated total cost, air quality conformity and that Conformity Determination Letters have been provided, demonstration of how projects impact performance measurements, ensure TIPs have Policy Board Approvals, and that self-certifications have been provided.

19

### The INDOT STIP Administration Office recommends approval of the MPOs' TIPs and secures the Governor's Approval Letter for the TIPs.

- The INDOT Commissioner signs the approval letter on behalf of the Governor.

20

### The INDOT STIP Administration Office sends a consolidated package of the final draft STIP document to FHWA/FTA for final review/approval.

- The final draft STIP document includes the STIP narrative, financial documents, project lists, TIPs, and Governor's Approval Letter.
- The INDOT STIP Administration Office notifies the MPOs that the final draft STIP was submitted to FHWA/FTA for review and approval and which version of the MPOs' TIPs were used in the final draft document.

21

### FHWA/FTA collectively review and approve the final STIP document.

- After approval, FHWA/FTA issue an approval letter to the INDOT Commissioner.
- After the FHWA/FTA approval letter has been secured for the STIP, the INDOT STIP Administration Office notifies the MPOs that the STIP has been approved.

22

### The MPOs publish the TIPs to their websites, and the INDOT STIP Administration Office publishes the final STIP document and associated documents to the INDOT website.

- As amendments/modifications are made to the STIP, these are also updated on the STIP website on a continuous basis.



## Public Involvement in the STIP

Proactive public involvement is a key component of the state's transportation planning processes. There are a variety of opportunities for the public and stakeholders to have a voice in the STIP process. The

most effective way to be involved is to participate in the project discussion early and frequently. The figure below demonstrates the key public involvement opportunities during the STIP process.

Figure 10: STIP Public Involvement Opportunities

### Public Involvement in the STIP Process

#### Public Involvement / Outreach Events

- Up to 4-8 events conducted when a draft STIP is produced (typically every 2 years).
- May include public meetings, open houses, or virtual public meetings/outreach events.
- Public meetings or outreach events may be held in both MPO and non-MPO areas within each of INDOT's six district areas
- Local officials, transportation stakeholders, and the public within an MPO areas are encouraged to meet with their respective MPO office between July-September to discuss transportation needs and challenges. MPOs will document and meet with INDOT Planning to discuss challenges and needs. For the public outside of MPO areas, they are encouraged to meet with their respective INDOT district office or RPO office.

#### Public Review & Comment Periods

- INDOT provides notification via legal ad in local newspapers statewide and via press release to local media, sending notice via email distribution groups, posting information on INDOT website and sharing via social media.
- 45-day minimum public review period is held when a STIP is developed
- Public Review Period is held for monthly STIP amendments. Three days for MPO projects and seven days for non-MPO projects.

#### Maintaining a STIP Website

- INDOT [STIP Website](#)
- Visit INDOT's [Public Involvement Website](#) for access to public involvement procedures, events, documents, and links to various related resources.
- Visit the INDOT [Planning Website](#) for information on planning documents, interactive tools, outreach information, and links for public comment and involvement.
- Visit the INDOT [Media Room website](#) to sign up for agency listserv emails to receive news, updates, program and project correspondence to learn of opportunities for participation.



### *STIP Public Comment Period*

During the 45 day public comment period, public comments may be submitted in person at a STIP Public Meeting, by mail, email, [public comment form](#), [public survey](#) (implemented in 2025 and only able to accept submissions during STIP comment period) or the [INDOT4U](#) link. INDOT Customer Service Team coordinates within the agency to respond to all comments received. All comments and responses are listed in the appendix of the STIP. To make comments regarding the STIP outside of the public comment period, [INDOT's Public Involvement Survey](#) or INDOT4U can be used.

### *MPO Board Meetings*

Another way the public can be involved in the STIP process is by attending MPO Policy and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings. INDOT Planners, Engineers, and Project Managers often meet with MPO Board Members and Technical Advisory Members to discuss project concepts and answer questions related to new projects or changes to existing projects. Depending on the MPO, these opportunities may occur every 2-4 months.





## INDOT Public Comment Period for Air Quality

Regionally Significant (air quality non-exempt) Transportation projects located in isolated rural non-attainment or maintenance areas that are not a part of a metropolitan area must undergo an air quality conformity determination before they can be added into the INDOT STIP. Regionally Significant, non-exempt projects are projects that add capacity to a roadway system, such as an added travel lanes or a new roadway project. The air quality conformity finding process requires INDOT to prepare the project's air quality conformity report and make the report available to public for review and comment.

INDOT's public involvement process for the regionally significant projects located in isolated rural air quality non-attainment or maintenance areas is to provide a two-week/14-day opportunity for the public to review and submit comments on the report. The comment period is, at minimum, advertised on the INDOT website, via social media, and through strategies targeted to the local area of the project. INDOT may utilize any of the public outreach strategies mentioned in the *Approaches to Public & Stakeholder Engagement* chapter to make the public aware of a project undergoing an Air Quality Conformity Review.

## Changes to the STIP (Amendments vs. Administrative Modifications)

Periodically, changes are made to projects, such as a project's scope, cost, or year of proposed construction. When these changes occur, we determine if the change requires an amendment or an administrative modification to the STIP. INDOT has developed specific guidelines to define requirements for STIP amendments and modifications. It is important to note that while amendments to the STIP require FHWA and FTA approval, administrative modifications do not.

### Minor Changes (Administrative Modification)

Minor changes to a LRTP, TIP, or STIP require an administration modification, which typically consist of minor revisions or changes. These changes do not require approval from FHWA, FTA, or the MPO Policy Board. Examples may include, but are not limited to, project advancements or deferment without changes to the project scope or cost, splitting a project, typographical corrections, non-significant changes in cost, etc.

### Major Changes (Amendments)

An amendment means a major change to a project included in a LRTP, TIP, or STIP including, but not limited to, changes to phases of work, major project scope changes, project work type, or significant change in cost. An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment, and demonstration of fiscal constraint. Amendments require a formal process and must be approved by FHWA and FTA and the MPO's Policy Board for TIP amendments.

Differences in what defines an amendment and administrative modification vary by MPO; however, the MPOs are required to meet the regulatory definitions at a minimum. For more information regarding the STIP document, please visit INDOT's [STIP Website](#).



**Examples of major changes to the STIP that require an amendment:**

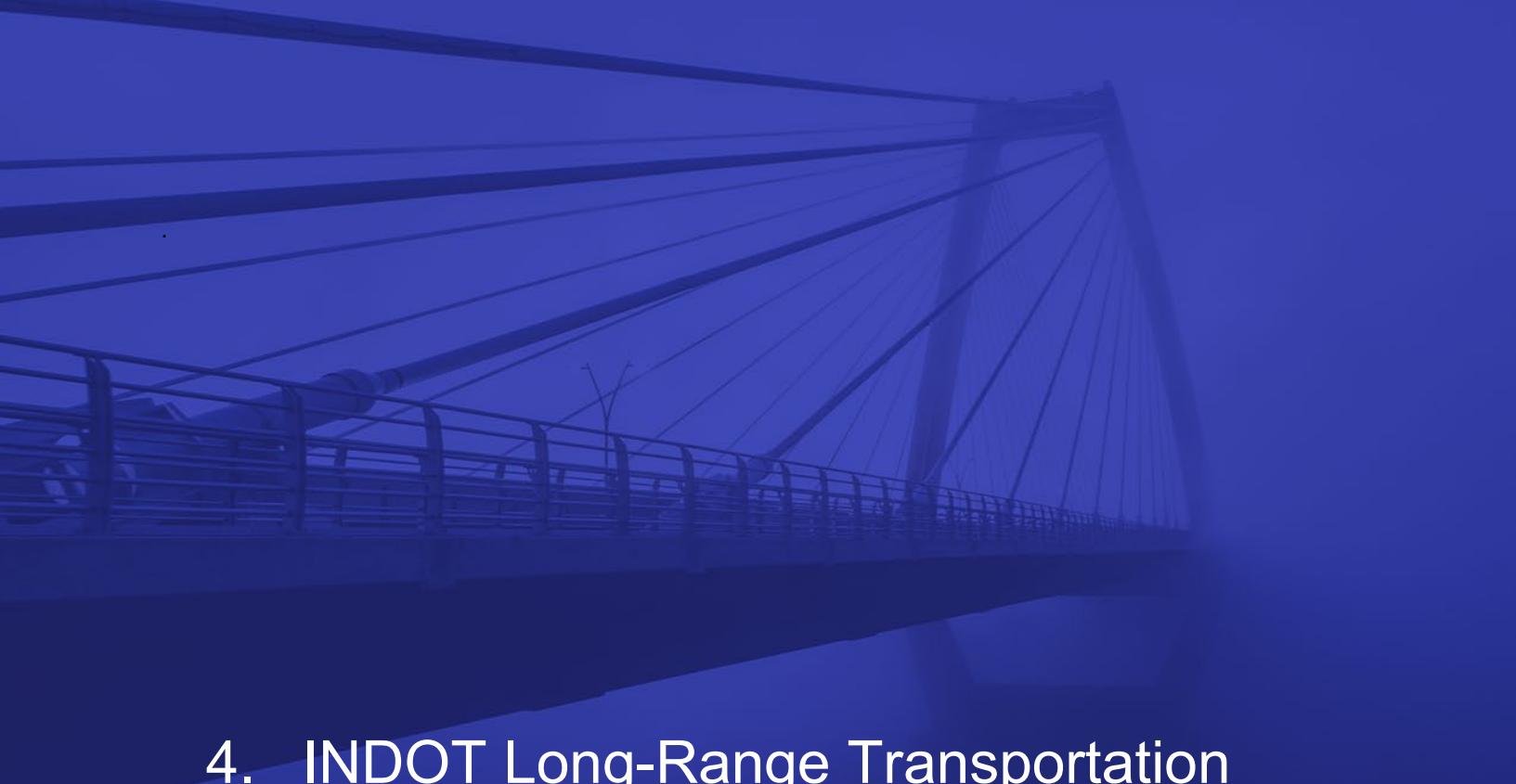
- Adding a new project
- Adding a new phase of a project (preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, construction)
- A significant increase or decrease in project cost
- A change in project scope
- Changes to Regionally Significant projects regardless of funding source
- Changes to projects impacting fiscal constraint

**Examples of minor changes to the STIP that require an administration modification:**

- Change of years for a project within the current STIP
- Change in years of a Regionally Significant project within a current STIP
- Non-Significant funding changes

### *Public Outreach for STIP Amendments*

INDOT welcomes public input regarding draft amendments to the STIP. Draft STIP amendments are posted to the INDOT STIP Public Comment Webpage for a period of 3-days for amendments made to MPO projects and 7-days for amendments made to non-MPO projects. Draft amendments are posted monthly, typically during the third week of each month. Additional outreach for STIP amendments takes place in accordance with Tier 1 plan amendments described in detail in the *Approaches to Public & Stakeholder Engagement* chapter.



## 4. INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Multimodal Plans, & Planning Environmental Linkage (PEL)

### Introduction

The [INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan \(LRTP\)](#) was developed and is maintained under 23 CFR 450.216, which requires states to develop and periodically update statewide transportation plans with a minimum of a 20-year planning horizon. The purpose of LRTP is to assure that the transportation

infrastructure network will adequately serve future needs.

The plan links to various multimodal and asset management planning documents and programs including:

Figure 11: LRTP Links

INDOT's 10-Year <a href="#">Transportation Asset Management Plan</a>	Indiana's <a href="#">Bike &amp; Pedestrian/Active Transportation Programs</a>	
INDOT <a href="#">Multimodal Documents</a>	<a href="#">Indiana's State Transportation Improvement Program</a>	<a href="#">State Highway Safety Plan</a>

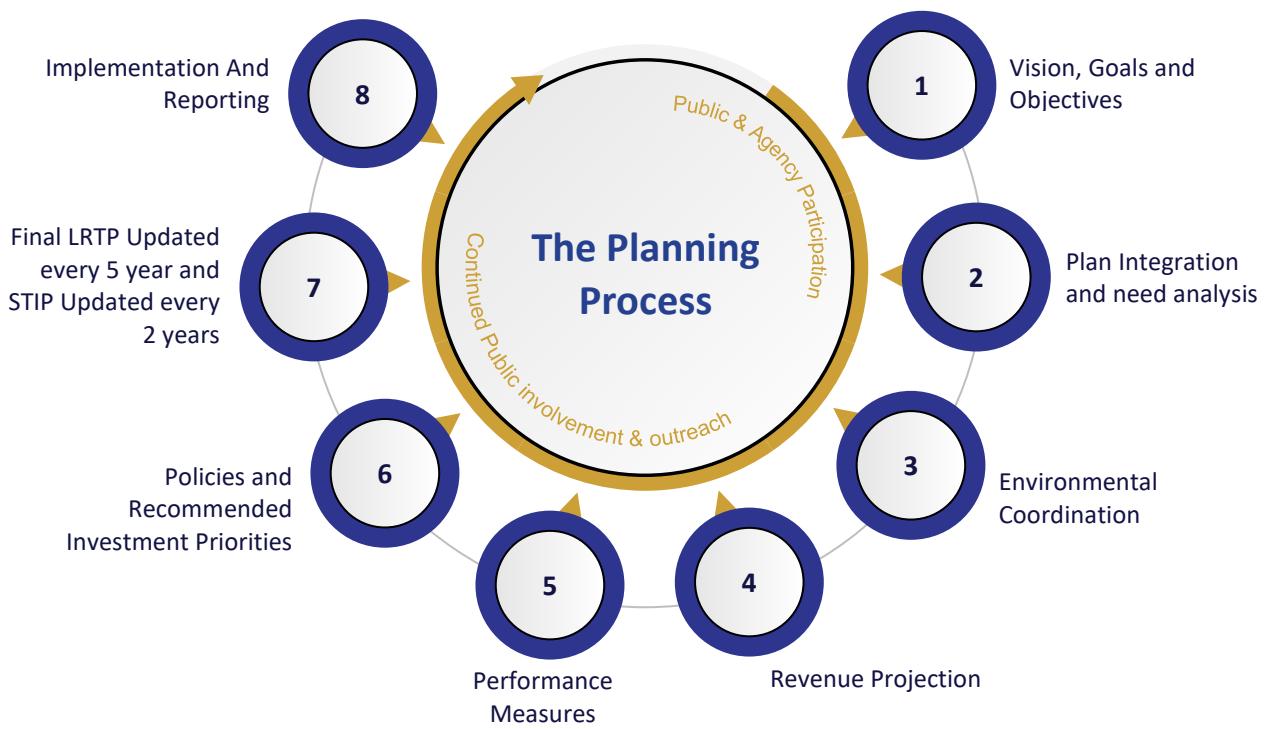


INDOT has adopted a non-project specific, broad-based policy document that is used to guide the development of Indiana's transportation system<sup>4</sup>. The document identifies emerging challenges, trends, future transportation needs, establishes long term goals and performance measures and describes overarching strategies and opportunities to

accomplish future results. This approach will provide a flexible and opportunistic framework for addressing transportation issues and needs for the next 20-25 years.

Figure 12 shows INDOT's Long-Range Transportation Plan Process.

Figure 12: Long-Range Transportation Plan Process



<sup>4</sup> Before improvements in the state transportation system can be made, projects must be identified, and project funding allocated in Indiana's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

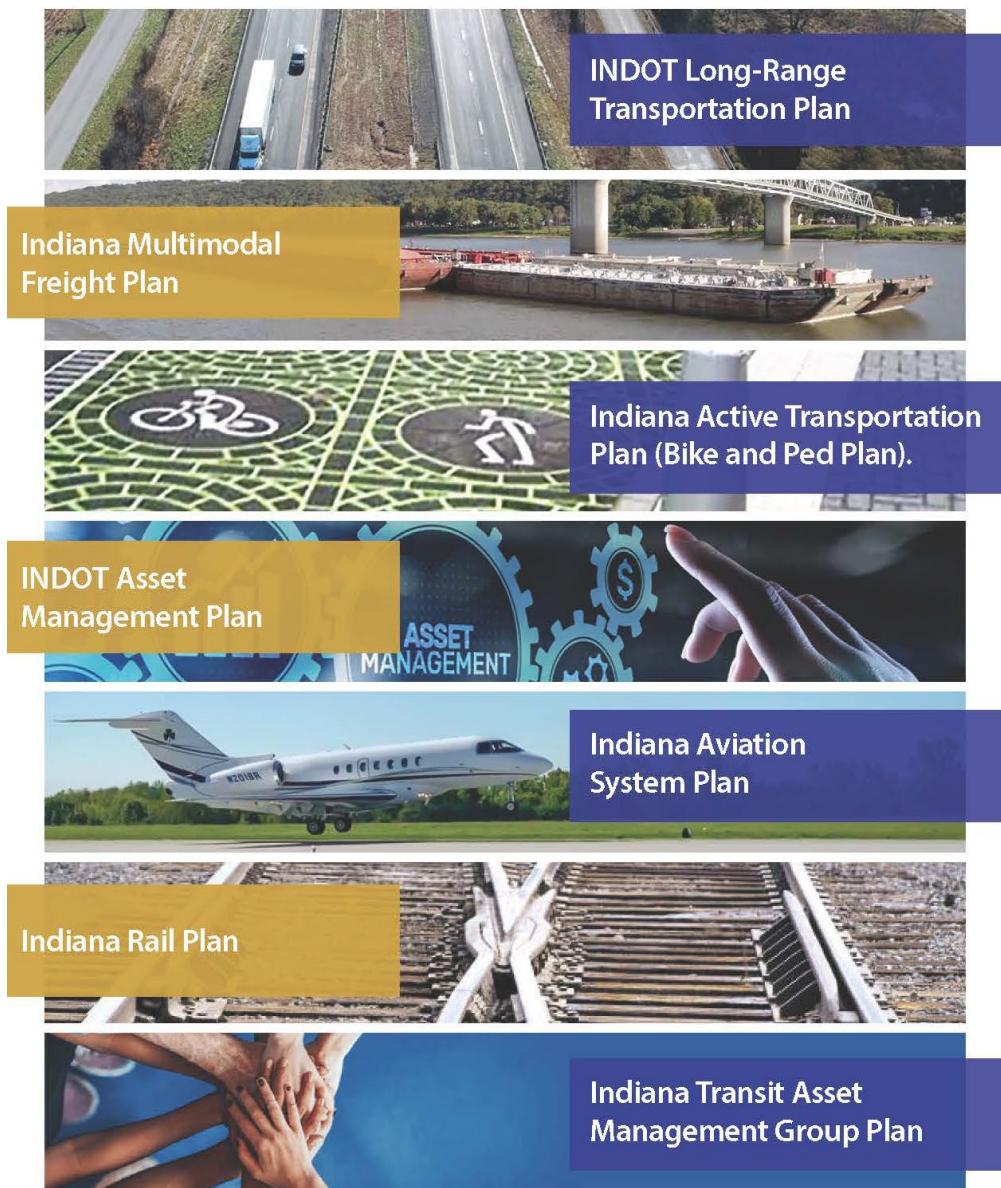


## Public and Stakeholder Involvement, Multimodal Plans

Stakeholder and public outreach is critical in the development of INDOT's suite of Multimodal Transportation Plans. These plans are often associated with policies and strategic actions and are updated every 3-5 years based on need and/or federal requirements. The graphic below lists INDOT's State multimodal transportation plans and programs. Hyperlinks to the applicable plans are listed here:

- ✓ [2045 INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan](#)
- ✓ [INDOT: Freight](#)
- ✓ [Transportation Asset Management Plan](#)
- ✓ [INDOT: 2022 Indiana State Aviation System Plan & Airport Economic Impact Study](#)
- ✓ [INDOT: Railroad](#)
- ✓ [Transit Asset Management Group Plan](#)

Figure 13 : State Plans and Programs





INDOT utilizes several outreach strategies in the development and major updates of these planning documents including:

**Figure 14: Planning Document Update Outreach Strategies**





## Planning and Environmental Linkage Study (PEL)

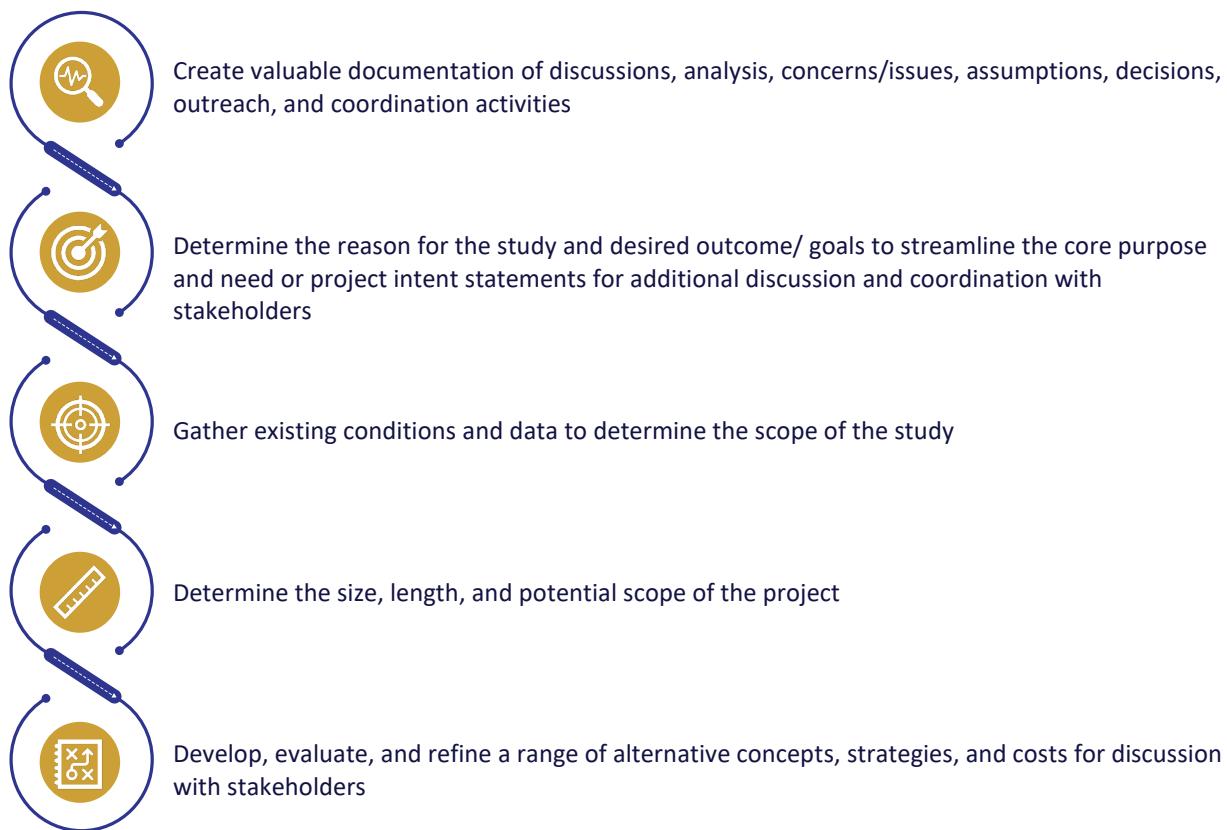
Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) is a federally recognized pro-active study process approach that can be used to identify transportation issues, priorities, and environmental concerns in a corridor or a specific location. It is generally conducted before any project construction phasing is identified, and before specific problems and solutions are known.

PEL is a coordinated, systematic approach that weaves together environmental review elements into transportation planning process. The overarching goals of PEL include creating a seamless decision-making process for needed transportation improvements and programs in a manner that

minimizes duplication of effort, builds public and stakeholder support, reduces costly unexpected project delivery delays, and considers the impact to the environment. The PEL approach is intended to establish coordination early, starting with transportation problem identification in planning and continuing through the rest of the project delivery process in such a way that environmental, community, and economic issues and concerns are appropriately considered and addressed.

The PEL process can be applied to make planning decisions and perform planning level analysis that can be used to:

Figure 15: PEL Process Benefits





PEL lays the foundation for a broad consensus on goals and priorities when developing solutions for the complex issues surrounding the management and construction of the transportation system. The PEL process can be useful to discover needs and desires when a corridor crosses multiple jurisdictions and can be used as a prioritization tool. For example, a PEL study for a corridor could result in identification of multiple potential projects (i.e., capacity improvements for a portion of a corridor, and intersection improvements). Those can then be prioritized for implementation. PEL studies should be able to link planning to environmental issues and result in useful information that can be carried forward into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The adoption and use of a PEL study in the NEPA process is subject to determination by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).



### *Public and Stakeholder Input in PEL*

Planners should meet with project development teams early in project scoping process to fully explain the nature and sensitivity of public and other stakeholder concerns. Project managers should consult any planning reports that have been produced to better understand what issues were identified and explored, as well as any complexities associated with those issues. Transportation planners should provide opportunities for the public to help define transportation problems that need resolution, help identify possible alternatives, and to understand why possible alternatives may not be viable.

Public involvement plans for PEL efforts should consider the life of the project/s during both the planning effort as well as the NEPA effort. Be considerate of the NEPA process which will follow. Involve the public strategically and work to avoid stakeholder burnout by holding meetings at key decision points.

### *Outcomes*

PEL studies must be able to link planning to environmental issues and result in useful information that can be carried forward into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. These studies must address some aspects of NEPA to be valid for incorporation into a future NEPA analysis (although the PEL study should cost less and take less time than a NEPA process).

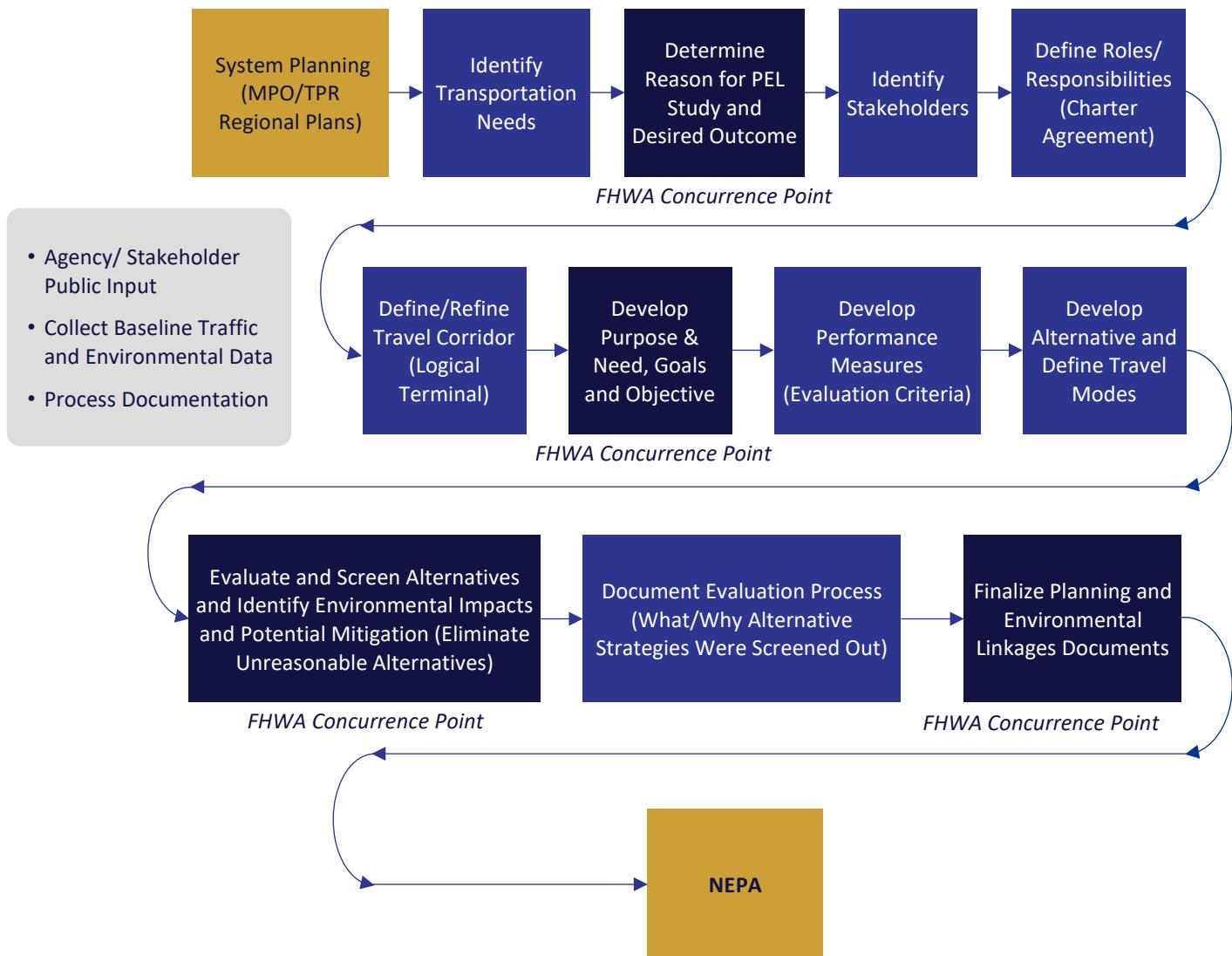
A PEL Study that is carried out in a manner consistent with FHWA or FTA PEL Guidance will result in:

- A comprehensive list of specific project goals
- A detailed corridor description that identifies issues and constraints
- Stakeholder involvement, including public and agency outreach.

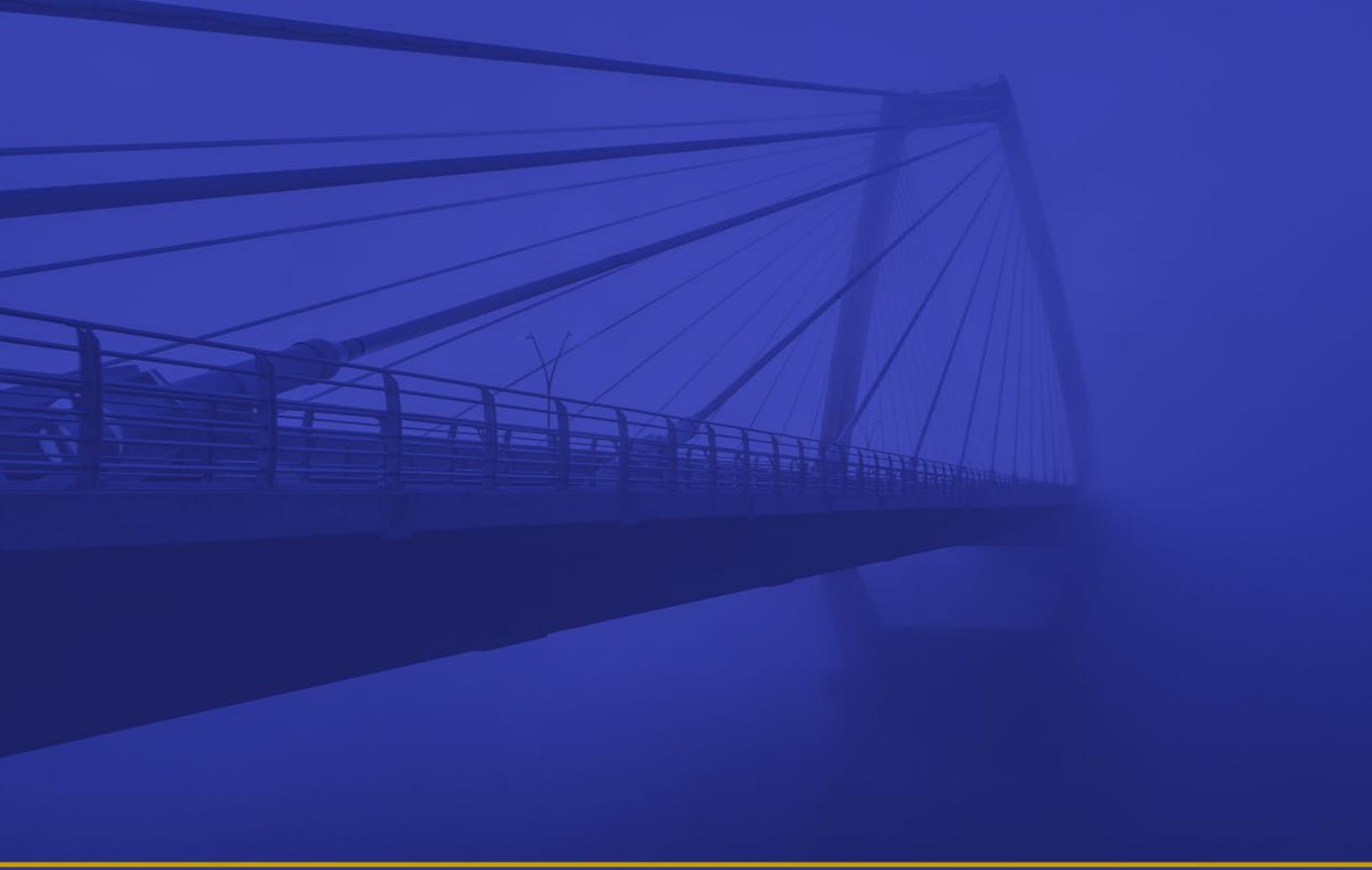
Find more information on INDOT's [PEL Website](#). Below is a flowchart displaying the PEL process and showing the four FHWA concurrence points that are required.



Figure 16: Planning & Environmental Linkage (PEL) Corridor Planning Process<sup>5</sup>



<sup>5</sup> Sourced from the Colorado Department of Transportation



## 5. INDOT District Coordination & Interagency Planning for MPOs, RPOs & LPAs

### **INDOT Coordination for Public Involvement**

Public meetings are useful tools to effectively engage the public at various stages of project and/or program development. INDOT hosts multiple meetings to enable the public to learn about and comment on all planning documents/initiatives. Planning public involvement meetings are organized by the Technical Planning team but are held in coordination with district staff and include MPO, RPO and LPA participation as well.

The goal of public meetings is to provide information to the public and discuss the planning, selection, and programming of current and future transportation

projects (for STIP public meetings), or to coordinate on planning studies (for initiatives such as an Active Transportation Plan or Freight Plan).

These meetings solicit overall public and stakeholder input on transportation needs which inform all the planning work INDOT does, such as the STIP, Long-Range Transportation Plan, Corridor Planning Studies, multimodal plans, and any other planning initiatives underway.

Organizational details for these meetings are listed on the following page.



Figure 17: Meeting Organizational Details

<b>Public Outreach</b>	INDOT conducts an extensive public outreach effort to inform the public of meetings.
<b>Notification</b>	The INDOT Planning Program Outreach Manager sends notification of these meetings to local agencies, jurisdictions, organizations, and individuals on its general mailing list.
<b>Press Releases/ Social Media</b>	The INDOT Planning Program Outreach Manager sends out press releases (Tier 1 plans) and uses social media to notify the public of meetings.
<b>INDOT Website</b>	Information on public meetings can be found on our <a href="#">Public Involvement</a> webpage or the plan websites for <a href="#">INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan</a> and draft <a href="#">STIP</a> .
<b>Comment Form</b>	Public comments may be submitted online via interactive map survey or by using INDOT4U or the <a href="#">INDOT Public Comment Form</a> for STIP comments.

***Meeting formats may include a combination of:***

An open house session where the public can view displays and talk with INDOT representatives about specific issues and projects	A more formal presentation session of the INDOT Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan, the STIP, and the APDP, followed by a comment and question and answer period
An opportunity to submit written questions, comments, and requests on comment sheets	If deemed appropriate, holding two sessions during the day.

### ***Annual Planning Coordination Meeting***

INDOT holds Annual Planning Coordination meetings in each district with MPOs, RPOs, economic development representatives, appointed local officials, business leaders and other key stakeholders. These meetings are a chance for INDOT to hear about regional needs related to growth, safety, infrastructure and any other topic of importance to INDOT's regional and local partners.

While the meetings are not open to the public, a public survey is available during the time of the Annual Planning Coordination Meetings and comments and data from that survey are discussed and recorded along with meeting minutes. The information is then shared with participants and made available on INDOT's website for review and/or comments.



## Coordination with MPO Planning Partners

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) are policy boards of organizations created and designated to carry out metropolitan transportation planning processes. Indiana has a total of 14 MPOs. MPOs develop several federal planning documents; assist with the oversight for local projects; assist with the development and analysis of state jurisdictional projects in their respective areas; and perform various support related to transportation planning activities.



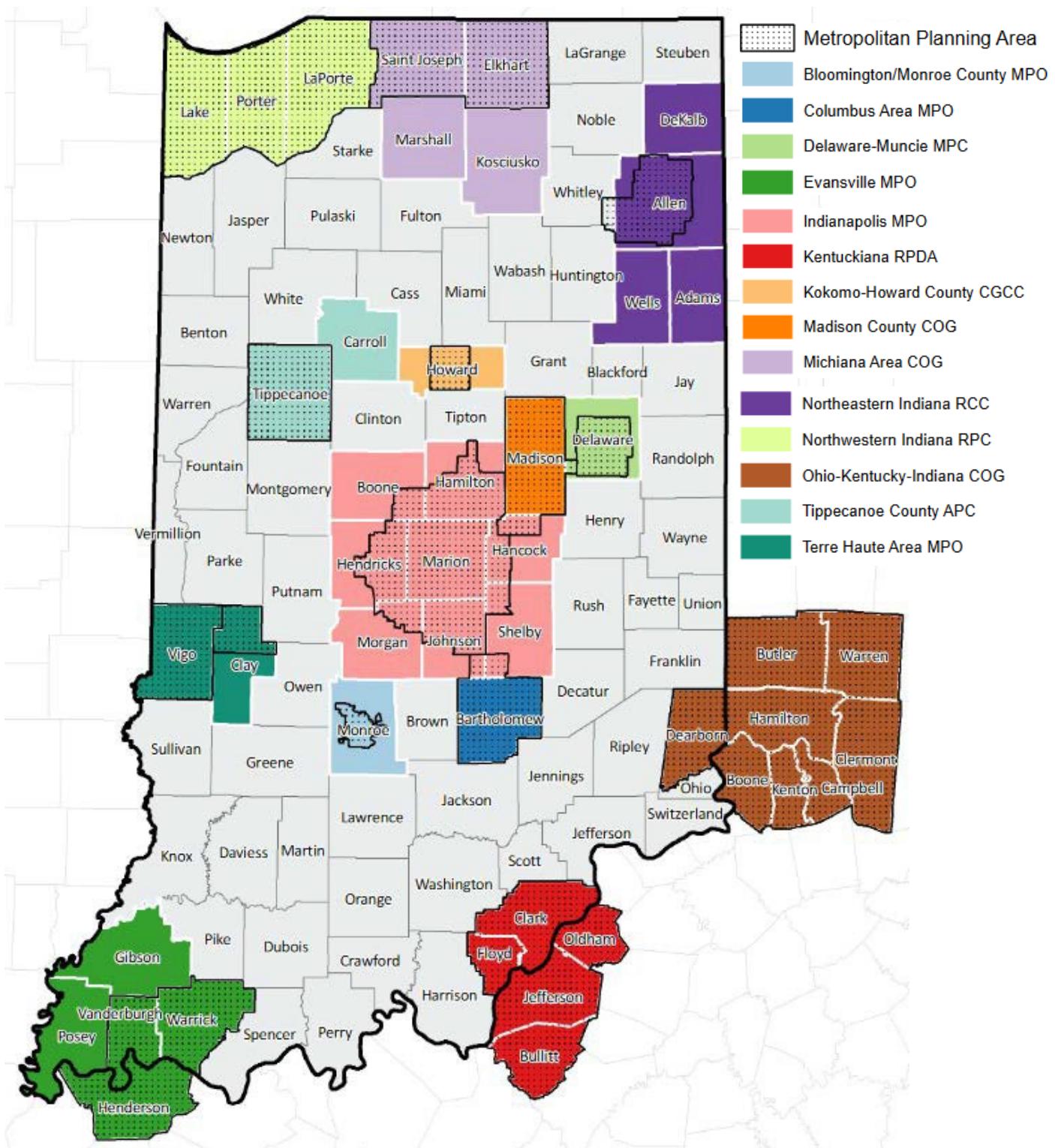
They play a vital role in the planning and development of transportation projects and services throughout the urbanized areas of the state. Together with the INDOT District Offices, they serve as primary sources of local input and as fundamental cooperating partners in the multi-modal transportation planning and program

implementation process. The development process of INDOT's planning documents considers detailed local knowledge and insight of Indiana's MPOs.

MPOs serve as a forum for local governments to provide short- and long-term plans to address transportation-related concerns in the area. 23 CFR 450 states that each MPO must prepare and regularly update a metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) that has a planning horizon of no less than 20 years from its formal approval date which establishes the long-term transportation investment, service, and policy agenda for the region. MPOs are also to routinely develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which is a listing of all transportation projects planned and funded for a minimum of four years. The TIP is the document that translates the policies, strategies, and directions of the MTP into specific decisions on project and investments during the short-term TIP time horizon. INDOT coordinates and cooperates with the MPOs in the development of the INDOT Long-Range Plan and the STIP. The MPO TIPs are incorporated by reference into the INDOT STIP. In urban areas with over 50,000 residents, INDOT coordinates with [Indiana's MPOs](#) to accomplish its public involvement responsibilities. MPOs are [mapped](#) in Figure 18.



Figure 18: Map of MPO Areas





INDOT's projects are included in the MPO MTPs and TIPS and are subject to public involvement through the MPO public involvement process. MPOs are responsible for conducting a public involvement process that brings views of the public into MPO planning and programming decisions. Each MPO has a

Public Participation Plan posted on their website. Links can also be found on INDOT's [website](#). The regulations for MPO responsibility for public involvement are found at 23 CFR 450. In particular, 23 CFR 450.316(a) and state:

*The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.*

1. *The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:*
  - I. *Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP*
  - II. *Provide timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes*
  - III. *Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs*
  - IV. *Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats, via the internet*
  - V. *Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times*
  - VI. *Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP*
  - VII. *Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services*
  - VIII. *Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan of TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts*
  - IX. *Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning, public involvement and consultation process.*
  - X. *Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.*
2. *When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan or TIP, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and TIP.*
3. *A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be posted via the internet, to the maximum extent possible.*



Each MPO develops, implements, and periodically updates its public involvement process, which is reviewed and approved by INDOT, to solicit public input and comments on a comprehensive transportation plan and transportation projects within the given MPO area. MPOs employ numerous proactive public involvement strategies, including newsletters, website information, and public meetings.

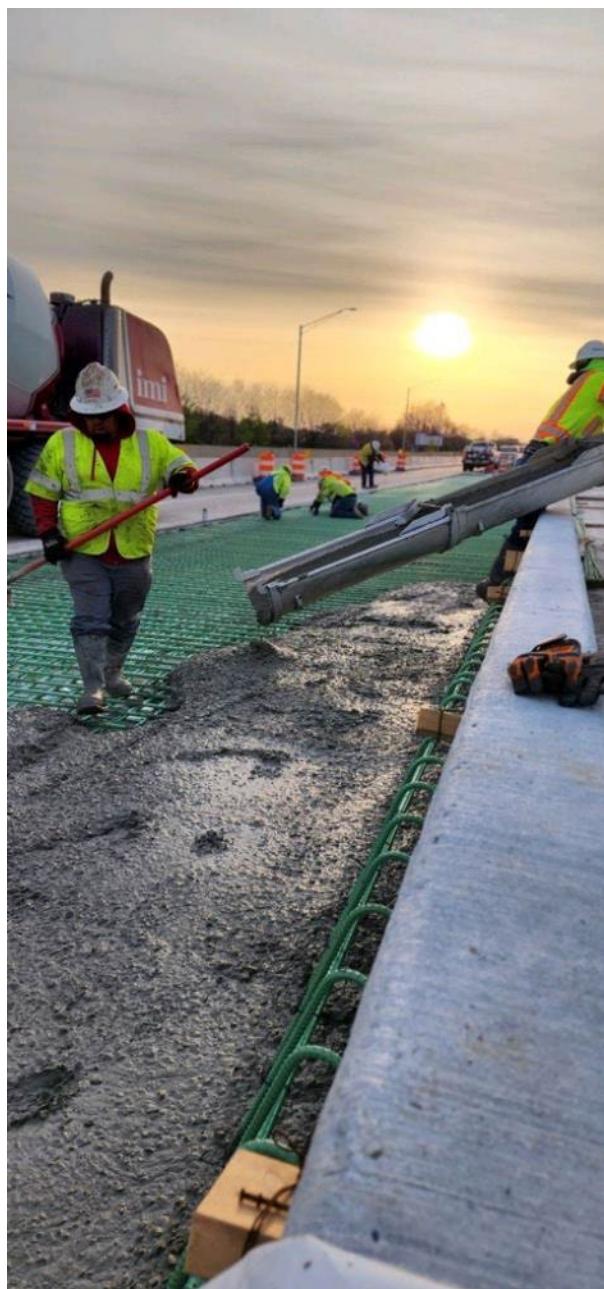
In addition, INDOT relies on the MPO public involvement activities to fulfill the requirements of the Clean Air Act and the Transportation Conformity Rule. The Clean Air Act requires that transportation plans and programs conform to air quality standards established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas.

The Transportation Conformity Rule 40 CFR Part 93.105 (e) Public Consultation Procedures states:

*Affected agencies making conformity determinations on transportation plans, programs, and projects shall establish a proactive public involvement process which provides opportunity for public review and comment by, at a minimum, providing reasonable public access to technical and policy information considered by the agency at the beginning of the public comment period and prior to taking formal action on a conformity determination for all transportation plans and MPO TIPs, consistent with these requirements and those of 23 CFR 450.316(a).*

Any charges imposed for public inspection and copying should be consistent with the fee schedule contained in 49 CFR 7.43. In addition, these agencies must specifically address, in writing, all public comments for a regionally significant project paid for with non-Federal transportation funding.

ICG concurrence must be reflected in the emissions analysis supporting a proposed conformity finding for a transportation plan or TIP. These agencies shall also provide opportunities for public involvement in conformity determinations for projects where otherwise required by law.





## INDOT Requirements

As stated previously, in urban areas with more than 50,000 residents, MPOs conduct public involvement programs on the MPO transportation plans and TIPs, which include INDOT projects. INDOT is responsible for public involvement in the remaining areas of the state. Citizens who wish to provide input on

transportation projects in non-metropolitan areas are encouraged to do so through their local elected officials who participate in consultation meetings with INDOT and through activities and methods set forth in this Public Involvement Plan.

*In carrying out the statewide transportation planning process, including the development of the long-range transportation plan and the STIP, the State shall develop and use a documented public involvement process that provides opportunities for public review and comment at key decision points.*

*The state's public involvement process at a minimum shall:*

- I. *Establish early and continuous public involvement opportunities that provide timely information about transportation issues and decision-making processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, providers of freight transportation services and other interested parties;*
- II. *Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the long-range transportation plan and STIP*
- III. *Provide adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed long-range transportation plan and the STIP*
- IV. *To the maximum extent practicable, ensure that public meetings are held at convenient and accessible locations and times*
- V. *To the maximum extent practicable, use visualization techniques to describe the proposed long-range transportation plan and supporting studies*
- VI. *To the maximum extent practicable, make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information*
- VII. *Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the long-range transportation plan and the STIP*
- VIII. *Provide for the periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all interested parties and revise the process, as appropriate.*



During planning and programming, INDOT is required to provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information and opportunity for public review and comment on plans and programs. Federal law sets forth expectations for public involvement for initial development and major revisions of the long-range plan and the statewide transportation improvement program (23 CFR 450.210):

The planning regulations 23 CFR 450.210(a)(2) further state that the INDOT shall have a period of time for public comment on the existing and proposed processes for public involvement in the development of the statewide long-range transportation plan and the STIP. At a minimum, the state shall allow 45 calendar days for public review and written comment before the procedures and any major revisions to existing procedures are adopted.

## Coordination with Regional Planning Organizations

Also known as Rural Planning Organizations, RPOs serve the transportation planning needs of small urban and rural areas of the state. RPOs perform eligible planning activities to provide planning support to local communities. The planning activities of RPOs are aimed at supporting INDOT Central and district office planning staff with public outreach, technical assistance to local officials and the collection of transportation-related data.

RPOs are also responsible for transportation planning funds in the form of a matching grant to regional planning commissions. Non-MPO areas include small towns and cities not included in an MPO area. In non-metropolitan areas, INDOT district offices conduct transportation planning and develop partial lists of

specific projects to be advanced in the STIP. INDOT consults with RPOs, rural area local elected officials, local government agency/representatives, special interest groups, and other key transportation stakeholders.

INDOT cultivates relationships with its transportation planning partners by working cooperatively to identify solutions to transportation challenges statewide. The activities performed by planning partners such as RPOs enable INDOT to acquire the data and information necessary to make well-informed transportation infrastructure investment decisions.

## Non-MPO Local Official Consultation Process

23 CFR 450.210(b) states:

*"The State shall provide for non-metropolitan local official participation in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP. The State shall have a documented process(es) for consulting with non-metropolitan local officials representing units of general purpose local government and/or local officials with responsibility for transportation that is separate and discrete from the public involvement process and provides an opportunity for their participation in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP. Although the FHWA and the FTA shall not review or approve this consultation process(es), copies of the process documents(s) shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes."*



Starting February 24, 2016, every 5-years INDOT formally solicits comments on the current non-metropolitan official consultation procedures related to the statewide planning process to ensure non-metropolitan local officials are included in an established consultation process. This gives non-MPO local officials the opportunity to comment on and participate in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP.

INDOT may use surveys and a 60-day comment period to solicit comments strictly from nonmetropolitan local officials. All comments received through this process will be documented and addressed in the plans, or if not addressed, the reasons for that decision will be provided to the nonmetropolitan local officials or their associations.

Figure 19: Non-MPO Local Official Consultation Process





## *Implementation of Planning & Programming Public Involvement Requirements*



Public involvement in the planning and programming process is carried out through a combination of MPO, INDOT district office, and INDOT statewide efforts. Decision-making is an iterative process, as input from MPOs, non- metropolitan elected officials, and the public is factored into the updating of plans and programs which are then brought forward for the next review and revision. Whereas INDOT relies on the MPO public involvement process in metropolitan areas, INDOT district offices take the lead in conducting outreach and public involvement in non-metropolitan areas.

The district offices play an important role in planning and programming activities, including coordination with the MPOs in their districts, consultation with local officials in rural areas of Indiana that are not within a metropolitan planning area, and conducting public involvement activities for the whole district.

The map in Figure 20 showcases the boundaries for each RPO in the State of Indiana.





**Figure 20: RPO County Boundaries**

## Legend

## **Regional/Rural Planning Organization**

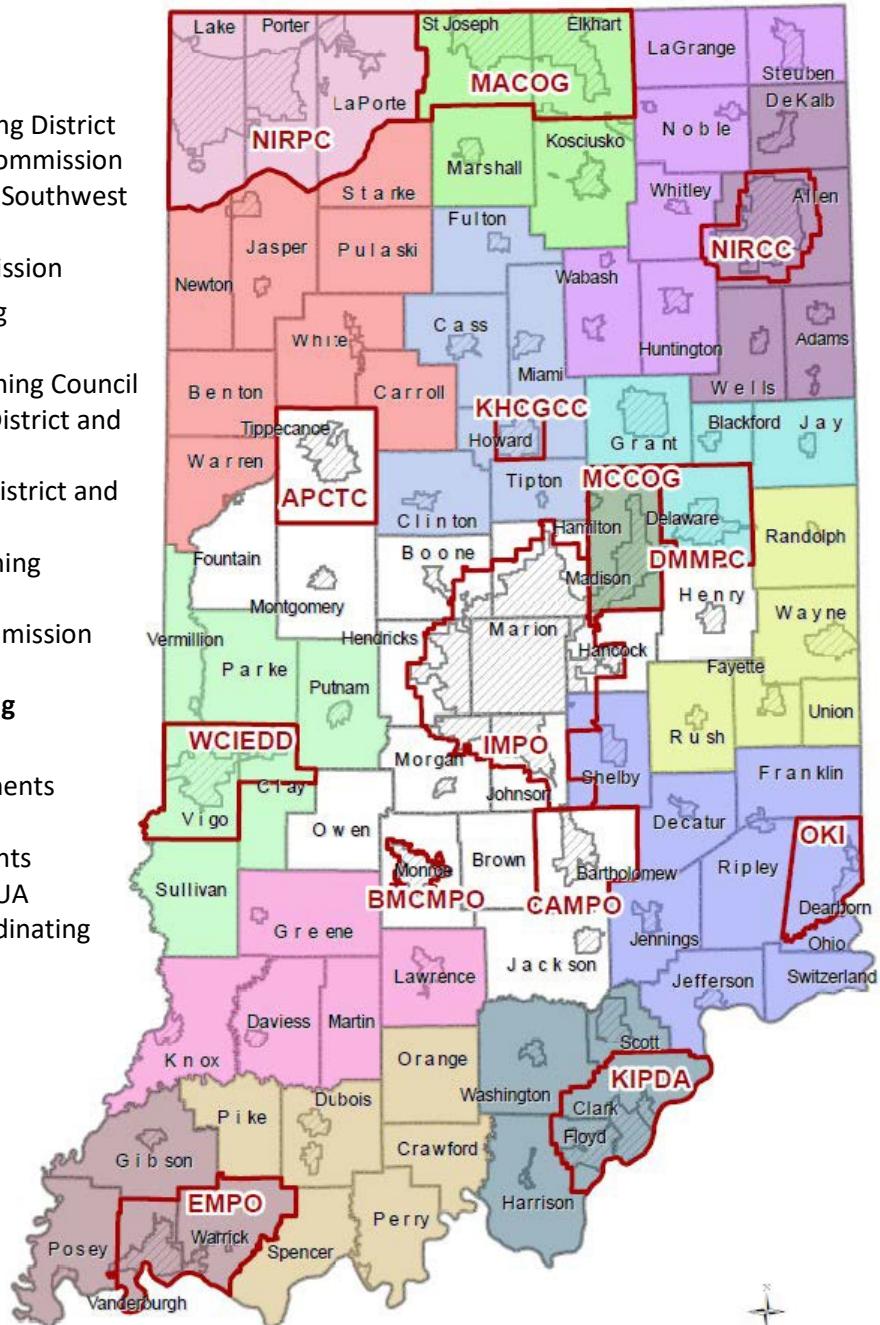
-  East Central Indiana Regional Planning District
-  Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
-  Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana
-  Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission
-  Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning Commission
-  North Central Indiana Regional Planning Council
-  Region 3A Economic Development District and Regional Planning Commission
-  River Hills Economic Development District and Regional Planning Commission
-  Southeastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
-  Southern Indiana Development Commission

## Combined Rural and Metropolitan Planning Organizations

-  Madison County Council of Governments (MCCOG) – Anderson UA
-  Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) – South Bend and Elkhart UA
-  Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC) – Fort Wayne UA
-  Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) – Chicago UA, Michigan City/LaPorte UA
-  West Central Indiana Economic Development District (WCIEDD) – Terre Haute UA
-  Urban Area (UA) Boundary
-  County Boundary

## Metropolitan Planning Organizations

- Area Plan Commission of Tippecanoe County (APCTC) – Lafayette UA
- Kokomo Howard County Governmental Coordination Council (KHGCC) – Kokomo UA
- Delaware – Muncie Metropolitan Planning Commission (DMMPC) - Muncie UA
- Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (IMPO) – Indianapolis UA
- Bloomington-Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMCMPO) – Bloomington UA
- Columbus Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) – Columbus UA





## Local Public Agency Project Development Process for Local Federal-Aid Projects

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) assists Local Public Agencies (LPAs) by providing financial resources for constructing, preserving and improving transportation on all of Indiana's roads. INDOT is held accountable in ensuring the highway projects approved for federal funding are consistent with all applicable laws, regulations and policies. The mission of the INDOT LPA Program is to provide stewardship and technical assistance to Local Public Agencies through education and collaborative relationships to ensure safety; plan, build, and maintain a superior transportation system that promotes economic growth; and comply with all local, state, and federal regulations.

INDOT develops and maintains the [LPA Project Development Process Guidance Document](#) for Local Federal-Aid Projects. The primary objective of this document is to empower the LPA's in managing and developing a local federal-aid project, as described in Figure 21.

A designated Employee in Responsible Charge (ERC) serves as the liaison for the LPA and local boards or administrative body regarding financial and managerial decisions that affect the project. The ERC is responsible for early coordination, public involvement activities, and completing INDOT district and/or MPO quarterly tracking reports, while ensuring the project meets all state and federal laws.

Figure 21: Local Federal Aid Project LPA Empowerment



Empowering the LPAs through Stewardship and Technical Assistance to have legitimate authority over their projects. A Stewardship-Oversight Agreement, requires each LPA to have at least two full-time LPA employees assigned as an Employee in Responsible Charge (ERC) with outlined roles and responsibilities of the ERC. The Stewardship-Oversight Agreement also describes INDOT's approval and responsibilities regarding locally administered federal-aid projects.



Providing the necessary knowledge and resources toward the management of transportation projects leading to the active involvement of the LPA ERC throughout the life of the project. INDOT ensures that local projects utilizing federal funds made available by INDOT are appropriately utilized in a timely manner and in compliance with all federal and state regulations.



Identifying the important and the required legal, primary and process elements.



## *LPA Call for Projects*

In order to apply for federal-aid funds, the Local Public Agency's Employee in Responsible Charge (LPA ERC) must be enrolled in [INDOT's Technical Applications Pathway \(ITAP\)](#). If assistance is needed in obtaining a user account, please contact the District Local Program Director. The LPA ERC will receive a user identification number to log in to request the necessary applications.

The LPA ERC must certify to INDOT during the project application process that they are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Title VI before they can receive federal-aid funds. Completion of the ADA Self-Assurance Survey is required every year and is accessed through ITAP. The time period for completion of the ADA survey is normally July 1st through September 1st of each year. The ERC must also request access to the Local Quarterly Report to meet reporting requirements.

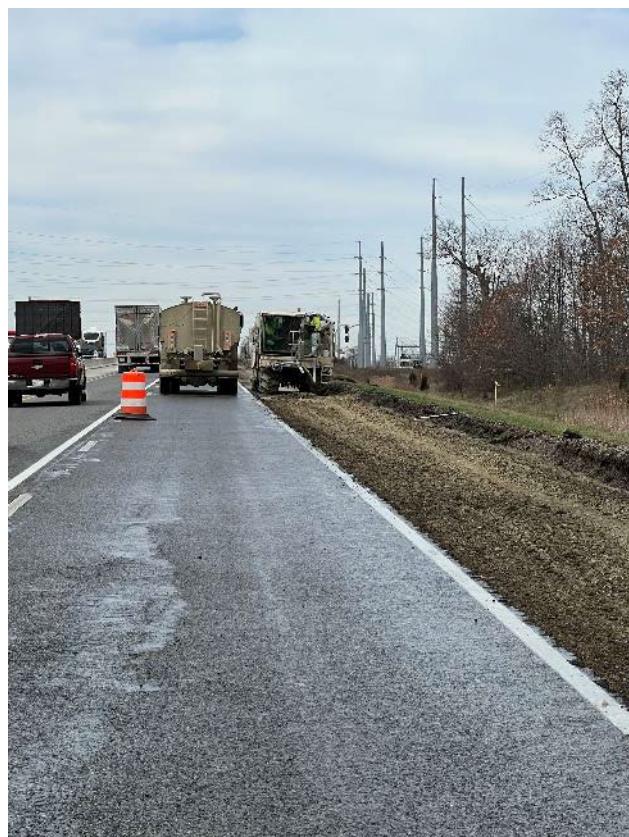
## *LPA and the Indiana Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*

After the LPA project has been awarded, it must be included in the STIP with each phase and estimate listed for the year in which funds are expected to be obligated prior to requesting federal funds authorization. Projects listed in the STIP are broken down into three phases. These phases are Preliminary Engineering (PE), Right-of-Way (R/W) and Construction (CN).

Projects located within an MPO's Planning Area (MPA) must first be included in that MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prior to being included in the [STIP](#). The process for including projects in the STIP/TIP is completed by INDOT in cooperation with the MPO as applicable. The LPA shall request inclusion in the TIP before INDOT will issue a contract. The project is then automatically processed by the MPO and INDOT for inclusion in the STIP.

When funding changes occur during the life of the project, it is the responsibility of the LPA to notify the

MPO to have the TIP amended. Each project phase intended to use federal funding must be amended into the STIP. Under federal regulations, the MTP, TIP, and STIP must be fiscally constrained (estimated year of expenditure costs cannot exceed reasonably expected revenues from all sources by year and include a financial plan to implement programmed projects. Further, prior to STIP approval, INDOT will seek public comment from interested parties and citizens following procedures contained in the INDOT Public Involvement Plan.





## LPA Early Coordination Meeting

The “Early Coordination Meeting” is a requirement for any LPA selected for a new federally funded project. The ERC must request the early coordination meeting with the District Local Program Director within 30 days of receiving the award notification. Failure of the LPA

to request the Early Coordination Meeting within 30 days from award may result in the loss of funding. The purpose of the Early Coordination Meeting is to discuss and review:

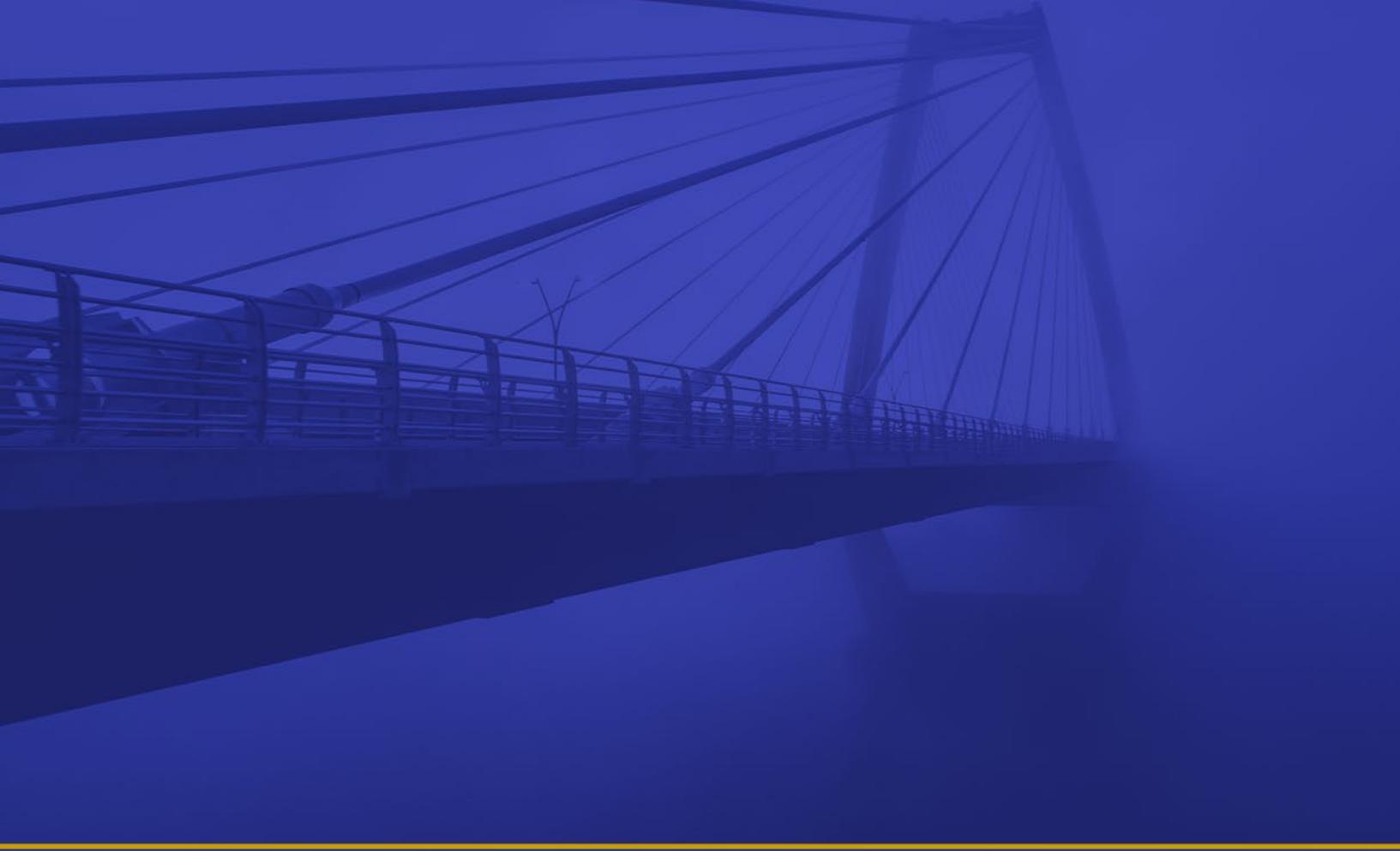
Figure 22: LPA Early Coordination Meeting Topics

Early Coordination Meeting Topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Project requirements</li><li>✓ Consultant selection procedures and the Request for Proposals (RFP) process</li><li>✓ INDOT-LPA Contract</li><li>✓ Other relevant topics such as planning and programming, scope, schedule and budget, right-of-way and utilities, and project development</li></ul>

This meeting is invaluable to the ERC as it is designed to help him or her better understand all the requirements of their specific project and to identify key resource people. One of the most important aspects of this meeting is the discussion of the INDOT – LPA Contract in preparation for signing. While it is a requirement of the ERC to request an early coordination meeting, it is the role of the District Local Program Director to coordinate with the LPA to schedule the meeting and to invite relevant INDOT staff. For projects within an MPO Planning Area, the

ERC should also extend an invitation or provide meeting information to the MPO.

The meeting agenda is an Early Coordination Meeting Checklist. This agenda is a topical list that is signed by both the LPA’s ERC and the District Local Program Director at the close of the meeting to verify all topics were discussed. For more information on LPA program and procedures, please visit [INDOT’s LPA website](#). Additionally, INDOT’s website provides information on [LPA training, tools, and resources](#).



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## Appendix

INDOT □ PLANNING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN (PPIP)

# 1

## Federal Requirements

Federal Requirements are the foundation for public involvement activities and provide guidance to state

departments of transportation. Find legal citations and Federal requirements in Appendix 1.



Figure 23: Federal Requirements

Legal Citation	Federal Requirements
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(1)(i)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Establish early and continuous public involvement opportunities that provide timely information about transportation issues and decision-making processes to stakeholders.”</li></ul>
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(1)(ii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in development of the long-range statewide plan and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.”</li></ul>
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(1)(iii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Provide adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed long-range statewide transportation plan and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.”</li></ul>
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(1)(iv)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“To the maximum extent practicable, ensure that public meetings are held at convenient and accessible locations and times.”</li></ul>
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(1)(vi)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“To the maximum extent practicable, make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information.”</li></ul>
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(1)(vii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input during the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs.”</li></ul>
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(1)(viii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Include a process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.”</li></ul>
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(1)(ix)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Provide for the periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all interested parties and revise the process, as appropriate.”</li></ul>
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“At a minimum, the State shall allow 45 calendar days for public review and written comment before the procedures and any major revisions to existing procedures are adopted. The State shall provide copies of the approved public involvement process documents(s) to the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration for information purposes.”</li></ul>
23 CFR 450.210 (a)(1)(v) 40 CFR 93.105 (e)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“To the maximum extent practicable, use visualization techniques to describe the proposed long-range statewide transportation plan and supporting studies.”</li><li>“Establish a proactive public involvement process which provides opportunity for public review and comment by, at a minimum, providing reasonable public access to technical and policy information considered by the agency at the beginning of the public comment period and prior to taking formal action”</li></ul>

# 2

## Summary of Planning & Programming Activities

The following tables on pages 71-73 contain a list of different planning documents, their contents, public

involvement criteria, as well as the primary organization that prepares the document.



Figure 241: Planning Documents

Document Type	Prepared By	Contents and Public Involvement
Metropolitan Transportation Plans	Metropolitan Planning Organizations <a href="http://www.indianampo.com">http://www.indianampo.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A minimum of 20-years of projects or identified needs as part of local land-use plans. Plans are typically updated every 2-4 years or as needed.</li><li>• Typically requires 30-day public comment period</li></ul>
State Long-Range Transportation Plans	INDOT Transportation Planning Division <a href="https://www.in.gov/indot/3714.htm">https://www.in.gov/indot/3714.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum of 20-years of identified needs or high priority corridors. Plans are typically updated every 2-4 years or as needed.</li><li>• Requires public involvement activities; a 30-day comment period once draft is made available for public review</li></ul>
Statewide Transportation Improvement Program	INDOT Transportation Planning Division <a href="https://www.in.gov/indot/2348.htm">https://www.in.gov/indot/2348.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Federally mandated and required at least once every 4 years; INDOT produces an updated STIP every 2 years</li><li>• INDOT requires a 45-day public comment period and public involvement activities (including public meetings) to solicit input on STIP</li></ul>
Environmental Policy and Air Quality	INDOT Planning and Environmental Services <a href="#">INDOT: Engineering: Environmental Policy</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transportation Conformity Reports prepared during Planning Process; Air Quality also evaluated during NEPA (when applicable)</li><li>• Requires 15-day public comment period</li></ul>
Statewide Bike and Pedestrian Reports/ Documents	INDOT Planning Department MPOs, RPOs, State Department of Health, Natural Resources, and Tourism as well as special interest groups <a href="http://www.in.gov/indot/2828.htm">http://www.in.gov/indot/2828.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Links to regional and local bike and pedestrian plans/reports, state trails, recommendations, goals, and objectives specific to non-motorized forms of travel.</li></ul>
Americans with Disabilities Act Program and Initiatives	INDOT ADA Office in coordination with local cities and counties <a href="https://www.in.gov/indot/3583.htm">https://www.in.gov/indot/3583.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifies improvements and schedules for addressing pedestrian accommodation issues and obstacles that limit the accessibility of individuals with disabilities.</li></ul>
New or updated Public Involvement Procedures	INDOT Transportation Planning Division <a href="https://www.in.gov/indot/2366.htm">https://www.in.gov/indot/2366.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum 45-day public comment period; Written responses to public comments must be issued and documented prior to PIP approval.</li></ul>



Document Type	Prepared By	Contents and Public Involvement
Roadway /Bridge Management System	<p>INDOT Roadway Asset Management Group <a href="https://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/asset-data-collection/roadway-assets/">https://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/asset-data-collection/roadway-assets/</a></p> <p>INDOT Bridge Asset Management Group <a href="https://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/asset-data-collection/bridge-asset-management-office/">https://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/asset-data-collection/bridge-asset-management-office/</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Condition/performance reports, maps, and location of deficient roadway segments, infrastructures, identification major road construction and resurfacing projects.</li></ul>
Congestion Management Programs Transportation Asset Management Plan	Mobility Asset Management Group and Traffic Management Center <a href="http://www.in.gov/indot/3231.htm">http://www.in.gov/indot/3231.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Condition/performance reports, maps, and location of deficient large in small infrastructures and recommended strategies including operational improvements and intelligent transportation system implementation</li></ul>
State Initiatives and Programs	INDOT Planning Division and Project Sponsors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Specifically funded projects that vary.</li></ul>
Freight Mobility Report/ Plan	INDOT Multimodal Division <a href="http://www.in.gov/indot/3198.htm">http://www.in.gov/indot/3198.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Various recommended improvement strategies on roadways, rail lines, and marine ports to address freight bottlenecks. Plans are typically updated every 2-4 years or as needed.</li></ul>



## INDOT Planning Activities and Public Involvement

Figure 25: Planning Activities

INDOT Planning Activities	Public Involvement
Update of INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) LRTP requires a minimum 30-day public comment period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The MPOs' public involvement processes support INDOT's outreach efforts for the MPO TIP. TIP projects are coordinated with the INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)</li><li>District-wide Early Coordination Meetings</li><li>District public meetings</li><li>Publication, distribution, and website posting of INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan</li><li>Website and online comment mechanisms</li></ul>
STIP and amendments to the STIP INDOT STIP produced every 2 years, includes an amendments process; each requires public involvement A minimum 45-day public comment period is required for the STIP Update of Non-MPO Local Officials Consultation Process (every 5 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Public participation through appropriate MPO (District or RPO in non-MPO areas)</li><li>The MPOs' public involvement processes support INDOT's outreach efforts for the MPO TIP. TIP projects are coordinated with the STIP.</li><li>District-wide Early Coordination Meetings with affected non-metropolitan local officials with transportation responsibilities.</li><li>District public meetings – presentation of draft STIP for public review and comment</li><li>Publication of draft STIP and ultimately final STIP</li><li>Availability of STIP and amendments thereto on INDOT's Website</li><li>Additional proactive outreach as needed</li><li>Minimum of 60-day public comment period on effectiveness of existing consultation process and proposed modifications</li></ul>

# 3

## Public Comment Period Feedback & Responses

The 2023 INDOT Planning Public Involvement Plan (PPIP) provided a 45-day public comment period from November 2, 2020 to December 24, 2020 per 23 CFR 450.210 (a)(2). The INDOT PPIP was available on the INDOT Public Involvement website at <https://www.in.gov/indot/4103.htm>. Comments could be sent by email or through standard mail.

Notification of the availability of the INDOT PPIP was provided weekly/bi-weekly to the Public Meetings & Hearings listserv and Environmental Services listserv

which has over 15,000 subscribers. Additionally, social media was utilized to notify the public through INDOT Facebook pages.

Below is a summary of the comments received during the 45-day public comment period and INDOT's response to the comment. Comments that were not related to the INDOT PPIP were sent to INDOT Transportation Services Call Center for resolution by INDOT customer service representatives.



Figure 26: Public Comment Feedback & Response

Public Comment Received	INDOT Response
Please connect Profile Parkway north of Gates Drive to West Industrial Park Drive!	CS0367072-Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. The Indiana Department of Transportation is responsible for designing, constructing and maintaining State Roads, US Routes, and Interstates across Indiana. The road you are referring to is maintained by the City of Bloomington, you can contact them at 812-349-3448.
This initiative is long overdue. The public should have more sway over project planning.	CS0368644-Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation with your Planning Public Involvement (PPIP) comment. This comment has been documented for public record. We appreciate your feedback.
We really appreciate the CC Funds that enabled our little community to repair our streets. Now our big need is to repair our sidewalks. We have a handicapped lad who goes around in a motorized wheel chair IN THE STREETS because the sidewalks are in such disrepair and our budget does not provide enough funds to spend on sidewalks. If the rules could be changed to permit sidewalks it would help our smaller communities tremendously.	CS0368647-Kathy Eaton-McKalip will be talking to customer
Please keep up-to-date on freshly striping our roads	CS0368663- Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. We appreciate receiving your feedback on how we can better maintain roadways. (This customer has no contact information)
There is a small retaining wall along Highway 50 on the east side of the road just past High Street that is crumbling and very unsightly. I imaging it has been in place since the highways was built in the early 1900s. Please consider replacing this wall in your future plans.	CS0368670- Case created for investigation of maintenance
We drive through your state often, i65 is a death trap, needs more lanes and semis and cars need to be closer in speed differential. One of the most dangerous freeways in the country. Also build the illiana by pass in the nw corner. It also is a death trap !!! Move i80 traffic south a bit on a bypass, please stop killing innocent people !!!!	CS0369973- I called the customer and left them a voicemail explaining that there are projects planned for I-65 to address safety concerns.



Public Comment Received	INDOT Response
The plan looks good to me! Indiana libraries are happy to partner with INDOT. Please let our office know if we can help disseminating information to the public libraries.	CS0368672-Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on INDOT's draft Planning Public Involvement Plan. We greatly appreciate the offer to partner with you to share information to the public libraries. I will continue to be in touch as we strive to do our best to reach the public and give everyone a voice in our transportation planning process.
When it comes to Indiana Infrastructure, there is no place where Stake or shareholders have any say whatsoever. This is our Monies and it is solely up to the People of Indiana.	CS0369976-No customer contact information for response. Comment has been recorded. Resolution for case recorded: Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. Indiana's infrastructure funding is outlined by state law, which is established by our elected lawmakers. Constituents are encouraged to reach out to their state and federal elected officials on the use and distribution of their tax dollars.
8155435XXXX	CS0369977- Comment recorded as blank.
Internet access is incredibly slow here south of Scottsburg but very important	CS0369981-Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. INDOT has launched a broadband corridors program in order to accelerate the deployment of broadband infrastructure across the state. This program removes barriers preventing broadband providers from accessing right-of-way along Indiana interstates and limited access highways. Broadband infrastructure refers to the building of cable, internet, and other telecommunications infrastructure in order for these services to be readily available to all Hoosiers. The most recent and up to date version of the INDOT broadband corridor map can be found on the INDOT public website at <a href="https://indot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=1212df60f0b04e02b54521ad0212db2f">https://indot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=1212df60f0b04e02b54521ad0212db2f</a> You may search your local area and see where designated broadband corridors exist (shown in green).



Public Comment Received	INDOT Response
<p>1) Under chapter 2 regarding public input and communication. There are many ways listed to communicate messages and solicit feedback from constituents, but a modern digital marketing strategy is not included. Posting things to social media, website, etc. have become fairly static ways to communicate and current methodologies of follow-up ads and effective use of cookies, targeted by zip code could produce a much high rate of engagement and a more localized message. 2) Several years ago INDOT transferred ownership of certain roadways to the counties in Indiana with capital to help support maintenance of the roads, with the expectation that the counties and municipalities would be wise stewards of these funds. Unfortunately, time has proven that the funds were not invested properly to create an endowment for capital improvements to transportation infrastructure and now that the infrastructure is in need of repairs, they money isn't there and INDOT has wiped their hands of it. How is this plan addressing these needs and issues other than just pointing fingers?</p>	<p>CS0369983- Response for #1) INDOT has hired a Planning Public Outreach Manager who is working with INDOT Office of Communications to create a more robust digital marketing strategy that includes targeting areas by zip code and providing more localized messages. #2) We appreciate receiving your feedback. Local public agencies are still receiving funds for these roadways as they are included in their formula funding distributions, both state and federal. INDOT, however is not in charge of LPA asset management.</p>
When was public hearing Highway 46/ Smith Rd intersection Bloomington?	CS0369986-Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. There was no Public Hearing for SR 46 and Smith Rd intersection in Bloomington.
Why was IN 46 from 446 to College Mall changed from 4 lanes to 2 lanes? Since the change I have only seen bikes in bike lane less than 5 times. Wouldn't a Share the Road sign work better? With all the new apartment construction 900+ apartments soon to be finished why not just repaint lines and go back to a much better traffic flow.	CS0369990- The intent of the most recent construction on SR 46 (3rd St) was to extend the life of the pavement by providing an HMA Overlay. No additional property acquisition was intended with this project. While reviewing the corridor for additional improvements, it was decided that two-way left turn lanes would provide additional safety for the traveling public as there was a pattern of rear end crashes and excessive speeds. This decision was made through coordination and input from the City of Bloomington, as well as traffic modeling completed by a consultant hired by the City. The existing road was not wide enough for 5 lanes. Therefore, two through lanes and a left turn lane was preferred over the existing 4 through lanes and no left turn lanes. The bike lanes were incorporated due to the additional pavement left over from the modifications. It was also in Bloomington's long-range plan to have bike lanes along this route. We monitored the crashes along the corridor and after a 3-year crash review (comparing crashes before and after the construction), total annual crashes were down 34% and injuries were down 50%. These



Public Comment Received	INDOT Response
	<p>lane reconfiguration changes also did not cost any additional taxpayer dollars because the corridor was already scheduled to be resurfaced. There is an additional project in development to construct left turn lanes along Smith Rd to relieve congestion at that traffic signal and the corridor. This project is currently scheduled for spring of 2023.</p>
How can INDOT support communities for broadband expansion that effects rural areas and county roads?	<p>CS0369994-Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. INDOT has launched a broadband corridors program to accelerate the deployment of broadband infrastructure across the state. This program removes barriers preventing broadband providers from accessing right-of-way along Indiana interstates and limited access highways. Broadband infrastructure refers to the building of cable, internet, and other telecommunications infrastructure in order for these services to be readily available to all Hoosiers. The most recent and up to date version of the INDOT broadband corridor map can be found on the INDOT public website at <a href="https://indot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=1212df60f0b04e02b54521ad0212db2f">https://indot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=1212df60f0b04e02b54521ad0212db2f</a>. You may search your local area and see where designated broadband corridors exist (shown in green).</p>
Discussions with the public should begin MUCH EARLIER in the process. INDOT has already designed the project and are well into the implementation phase before the public has any knowledge there is a project to talk about.	CS0370001- Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. The goal of this PPIP is to ensure that public involvement happens at all stages of project development, especially early planning stages, and that the agency is reaching all citizens with its outreach efforts.
There are not enough buses that run in Fort Wayne, people have a hard time getting around because of it	CS0370002-Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. The Fort Wayne bus system is not maintained by INDOT, you will need to contact your local municipality for better assistance.
We have several potholes on Hwy. # 37 thru Harlan, IN.	CS0370006-Case was sent to district for repairs. Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation regarding your concern on SR 37. The potholes at this location have been filled. If you should have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at 855-INDOT4U or visit us at <a href="http://www.INDOT4U.com">www.INDOT4U.com</a>



Public Comment Received	INDOT Response
I went through the plan thinking I might see some sort of future architecture or plan about things like you want another 1000 miles of bike routes but I didn't see that level of detail. I've done Transportation and IT Strategic Planning and I was looking for your As IS Architecture, Your To Be Architecture and the Roadmap to get there.	CS0370007- Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. The goal of this PPIP is to increase the level of and guide public involvement during the planning phase of projects and for other planning initiatives. You may be interested to review INDOT's 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan, <a href="https://www.in.gov/indot/resources/planning-studies/technical-planning/2045-indot-long-range-transportation-plan">https://www.in.gov/indot/resources/planning-studies/technical-planning/2045-indot-long-range-transportation-plan</a>
State Road 14 East road surface condition between Rochester and Akron. First off, I used to work for INDOT years ago and I understand the political red tape. This stretch of roadway is in need of resurfacing with state code hot mix. It is almost like driving across a cornfield in most areas.	CS0370008-Case was sent to district for investigation and repairs to roadway. Response: "Thank you for reaching out to the Indiana Department of Transportation regarding the condition of State Road 14 between Rochester and Akron. Hopefully you'll be pleased to hear that we'll be doing some work on that stretch of SR 14 later this year. Typically, a road like SR 14 with comparatively low traffic volumes would have a resurface done approximately every 20 years. This stretch of SR 14 was last resurfaced in 2009, which would put it on track for resurfacing somewhere around 2029. During that time, we'd perform various maintenance activities on the road (such as crack sealing, etc.) in order to get that longer life out of the pavement. What was scheduled for this year was a chip seal treatment, which is effective at preserving the surface of the road, helping us achieve that longer lifespan. However, due to the condition of the corridor, we're going to be doing some additional patching before the chip seal treatment to shore up some of the structural issues that are causing the rough ride you and others have pointed out to us. That work will take place this upcoming spring/summer, so we anticipate a smoother ride ahead! Hopefully you find this information useful. If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the INDOT Transportation Services Call Center at 855-463-6848 or online at <a href="http://www.indot4u.com">www.indot4u.com</a>
Tolls on the Ohio River bridges are applied too heavily on local residents. Discount program is not functioning as promised.	CS0370053-Good Morning Mr. Storz, We have reached out to the Director of Tolling for the Ohio River Bridges and he has provided the following information regarding your account.  Customer Account Customer has 3 active vehicles on the account, two of which occur the majority of the tolls. One of the vehicles does have some vTolls, which could indicate odd placement of the transponder, or potential issues with the lane where they are crossing. However, those vTolls do not appear to have caused any issues on the account.  Escalation The complaint is:



Public Comment Received	INDOT Response
	<p>"Tolls on the Ohio River bridges are applied too heavily on local residents. Discount program is not functioning as promised"</p> <p>Ultimately, on this account, the discount program is functioning as I would expect. It's possible the customer is expecting the COMBINED tolls on both vehicles on the account to count towards the 40 limit – but the program is designed to be 'per vehicle'. This account has hit the 40 transaction threshold 3 times (March 2022, April 2022, and May 2022) and the discounts were properly applied in all 3 months. The tolls have never had an impact on the application of the frequent user discount, as the transactions COMBINED for that vehicle are still &lt; 40 txn for the month. Screenshot below of customer's toll transactions by month, by vehicle. The below indicates the months that FUD was met (and applied). The orange yellow indicate the vehicle that has some transactions split between transponder and Toll transactions -- but you can see they never total more than 40 for any month</p>
Step 1) ensure racial conscience inclusion Step 2) utilize social media and publicize in Black owned media and radio 3) partner with local active not for profits and businesses such as those within the Alliance and add several local organizations onto working group	CS0370054- Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. The three steps you suggest are objectives the agency is striving to accomplish through the PPIP. Cat Seely, Planning Program Outreach Manager, will be following up with you to talk about building partnerships for future public involvement efforts.
We will send a document to the Cat Seely at indot@indot.in.gov	CS0370055- Responses to document submitted by Rethink Coalition are in the letter following this table.
it would be nice if more train routes were put in to connect everyone to Indy . trains started America and will keep traffic off highway	CS0370056- Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. In early 2019 Amtrak posted an official notice that the Hoosier State service would be canceled on June 30, 2019 if the Indiana General Assembly did not include funding in the biennium budget. Money was not found within the budget and the service was subsequently ended. While there are no official funding plans to have the Hoosier State Train return, Indiana legislators in partnership with Amtrak have and will continue to review this possibility.



Public Comment Received	INDOT Response
We must demand a large shift to public projects and public transportation. Local and statewide projects are important to connect us efficiently, environmentally, and economically. We need trains, buses, and trams. No more highway expansion!	CS0370060- Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. In early 2019 Amtrak posted an official notice that the Hoosier State service would be canceled on June 30, 2019, if the Indiana General Assembly did not include funding in the biennium budget. Money was not found within the budget and the service was subsequently ended. While there are no official funding plans to have the Hoosier State Train return, Indiana legislators in partnership with Amtrak have and will continue to review this possibility. As far as buses are concerned, those would be specific to your local area and would be something that would be handled through them.
Please resurface Masters Road. It's never been done in the 16 years I've lived on it. Only pothole filling. The road odd in very poor shape.	CS0370061- Thank you for contacting the Indiana Department of Transportation. The Indiana Department of Transportation is responsible for designing, constructing and maintaining State Roads, US Routes, and Interstates across Indiana. The road you are referring to is maintained by the City of Indianapolis. You can contact the Mayor's Action Center at (317) 327-4622 to report the issue. Thank you!
While coordinating with the MPOs to reach underserved populations is a good/recommended practice, INDOT should also be sure to engage the underserved populations in areas of the state that are not covered by MPOs.	Engaging the underserved populations outside of MPO areas is a goal of this Plan and means to do so have been included in the document.
What format can the public participate in STIP involvement during the Call for Projects? Please describe.	This is a work in progress. The agency is looking at how the public can be better informed at this stage and will implement changes to the current process.
Various edits to formatting of the document.	All completed.
When we say "INDOT" could we or should we be more specific as to who at INDOT we are referring to.	Document was reviewed to make changes to this language where appropriate.



## COMMENTS TO INDOT PLANNING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN (“PPIP”)

### OVERALL IMPRESSIONS, CONCERNS, RECOMMENDATIONS

a. **INTENDED AUDIENCE:** We assume the PPIP is a primarily a guide for INDOT staff and partnering/implementing agencies. It also seems to be written for the public regarding how and when to interface with INDOT on program and project development. It's confusing to have one document serving both purposes if that's the intent.

**Recommendations:** If agency guidance is primary, clearly state or differentiate terms like shall rather than encouraged to. 23 CFR 450.10 guidance is clearer about the distinction. Also, pull forward subsections into the narrative in a consistent and prominent format [boxed exhibit for each major/relevant section] rather than leaving them in the appendix in excerpted form. For example:

23 CFR 450.210 Interested parties, public involvement, and [consultation](#).

In carrying out the statewide transportation planning process, including [development](#) of the [long-range statewide transportation plan](#) and the STIP, the [State](#) shall develop and use a documented public involvement process that provides opportunities for public review and comment at key decision points.

Each subsection of the PPIP should directly follow the sequenced CFR subsections/paragraphs and reference them in the same format, i.e.:

23 CFR 450.210      The [State](#)'s public involvement process at a minimum shall:

[paragraphs relevant to section]

b. **THE PUBLIC AUDIENCE:** Currently, PPIP's opportunities and responsibilities for public involvement are commingled with agency and partner processes. Public involvement can be better served by adopting one of the following recommendations to improve the Plan's clarity as an educational tool and build trust and engagement with various constituencies:

**Recommendation 1:** Create a companion document with clear guidance on (1) how and when people can interface with INDOT at each stage of program and project development; (2) how to access applicable resources including a program or plan's statement of purpose and need, graphic representation of location and scope, and technical documents to the degree developed; and (3) contact information for ERC or project-specific PIO and local CAC representative[s].

**Recommendation 2:** Keep the content in Recommendation 1 as part of the PPIP but improve the Public Outreach Matrix/Tiers table and consolidate the content in marked subsets of each category.

**Recommendation 3:** The best option would be to do Recommendation 1 (create the standalone public engagement document) and Recommendation 2 (integrate public guidance into the primary agency-oriented primary document as demarcated subsets to each section or typology).



- c. **GLOSSARY:** The Plan uses multiple technical terms and acronyms. Sometimes they are described in the narrative but often not.

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**Recommendation:** Create a linked glossary of terms based on FHWA descriptions.

- d. **TRANSPARENCY:** The Plan needs to be more transparent about the obligation to make public information (technical and policy information, etc.) available early in the planning and project development process. That information is essential to an informed consideration of alternatives and planning too often advances to Stage 1 completion without the information being made available.

Project Intent Reports and Stage 1 plans are public information but obtaining them has often required going through burdensome Public Information Requests. Concealment of plans is a transparency issue that can raise questions of Major Project segmentation, a serious issue with FHWA and the NEPA.

**Recommendation:** Require making relevant technical plans available early in the public involvement process with “early” meaning before key decisions such as ranking of alternatives have occurred. This is an important distinction and a purpose of the overall process.

- e. **ANTECEDENT PLANS:** Many of the feedback concerns cited regarding the 2021 INDOT Project Development Public Involvement Procedures Manual [PIPM] cited on page 51 [appendix], have not been addressed in this Plan. Of particular concern is the claim that Technical Planning has no jurisdiction to mandate policy on District level public involvement procedures. That contravenes federal guidance.

**Recommendation:** Clarify the applicability of the Plan to all INDOT jurisdictions.

- f. **READABILITY/ACCESSIBILITY:** The document is difficult to read. Issues include header-body text contrast [color values, grayed text], reading order, and use of infographics derived from other documents that are inconsistent with the format and style of this document [different fonts, font sizes, lower resolution]. These are both ADA compliance and general readability issues that reduce the document’s overall utility.

**Recommendations:** Perform an accessibility check for readability and eliminate the blocks and text that are unreadable by many.

- g. **GRAPHIC CONTENT:** The document is populated with graphics that vary in quality, readability, and relevance and appear to be taken from not always relevant sources [see pages 5, 11, 19, 20, 24, 29, 31, 37/42 and appendix 47-50].

**Recommendation:** Create a document-specific series of infographics that are consistent in format and relate to, but don’t duplicate, the narrative discussions.

#### **COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM RETHINK PARTNERING NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS**

The following is a summary of comments we have received from Rethink partnering neighborhood groups.

1. An over-reliance on web information, subscriber lists, social media, and online notifications will continue to miss core constituents who do not have internet access or are not literate in those technologies. Those constituents are often the underrepresented who are most impacted by transportation decisions. Using alternative lists, such as BMV lists, and conventional approaches, such as door hangers and yard signs, can be effective.



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2. There is a lack of performance measures to determine the effectiveness of public outreach efforts. Most of the document is written so that district offices, MPO's, and local jurisdictions can implement their own procedures without accountability. It doesn't appear there are requirements by INDOT to meet certain thresholds of effectiveness. Social media hits do not equate to participation.
3. Understand and more clearly emphasize the primary goal of the PPIP is public education regarding project purpose and need along with informing INDOT of legitimate public needs and preferences.
4. Another stated goal should be to increase social and economic opportunity for equity-focused communities with development of a transportation cost burden measure. See attached one-page USDOT document titled "Expanding Access", available at this link:  
<https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/equity/equity-action-plan/expanding-access>
5. The INDOT central office should develop performance standards to measure the effectiveness of the public input processes at the state, MPO and local jurisdictional level. According to the USDOT "Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts" website:  
[<https://usdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d6f90dfcc8b44525b04c7ce748a3674a>], Indiana has 321 disadvantaged census tracts, many of them in rural areas. One measurement could be measuring how effective INDOT's outreach is to those census tracts. Rethink Coalition is available to partner with INDOT on developing additional performance measures.

#### **COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS TO SPECIFIC PAGES OF THE PPIP**

Below are specific comments on noted pages in the Plan. Attached is a PDF of the "Expanding Access" guidelines from USDOT, as reference.

##### **Pg 4, 1st column: "A word to INDOT staff"**

- This page states that INDOT staff is encouraged to use the PPIP. Shouldn't they be required to use it?

##### **Pg 5, 1st column: "INDOT's Public Participation Matrix"**

- Under the Inform column, add mailing to property owners, neighborhood groups, and associations using US mail databases. Don't rely just on subscriber lists. Utilize postcards or letters.
- Distribute beyond immediate areas "designated as impacted". Impact usually affects beyond the designated area.
- Require a community "push" to get people signed up so they receive the info.
- The Outreach Matrix infographic in relationship to the adjacent Three Tier bulleted list is confusing. The terms are technical and point to the need for a glossary of the PPIP's terminology. In many cases those can be hyperlinked.

##### **Pg 6, bottom of page: INDOT Public Outreach Procedure Tiers**

- Please clarify "Plan Amendment - 7 days"
- The INSCOPE portal for documents needs revamping to be more user-friendly and accessible.
- Instead of sending the public and stakeholders to search INSCOPE for documents, INDOT could attach accessible links online within their project websites and in any electronic communications. These links could be printed on



flyers, letters, and presentation slides, as well. If some of the documents are truly too big to attach, INDOT could link them to a Dropbox, or other file management system, to increase accessibility.

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**Pages 7-8 (Benefits of Public Involvement)**

- Public engagement calendars need to begin months earlier than the current standard.
- If INDOT is contracting out CRM content to an out-of-state firm for Section 106 reviews, a local subcontractor should be appointed in some capacity. INDOT is missing critical facts by not having a boots-on-the-ground strategy. Ultimately, content is missed or INDOT has to revise materials. This erodes the public trust and wastes the public's tax dollars.
- Shouldn't a benefit be to work toward more innovative traffic solutions to problems and taking a critical look at the pattern of adding highway lanes and their impact on communities and the environment
- There should be an official standard for traffic data. Any project over \$100 million should require citing traffic data from the last 12 months and not rely on outdated/old data.

**Pages 10-12**

- To address the underinvestment in disadvantaged communities, every INDOT project needs an Environmental Justice and Equity Committee.

**Pg 11, 2nd column, last paragraph**

- “INDOT strives to provide ... decision-making process in every stage of planning and development” – this should be emphasized with requirements that help ensure early public involvement.

**Pg 12, 1st column: “How? Notification Sources”**

- Add US Mail databases

**Pg 14, 1st column: “Public Meetings”**

- Time of day is another important factor. Convenience to stakeholders, not paid staff, should be a priority in scheduling meetings.

**Pg 17, 2nd column: “INDOT Planning Documents”**

- The second paragraph sounds great, but how does this happen in practical terms?

**Pg 18, 2nd column: “Early Consultation Meetings”**

- How are key stakeholders determined?

**Pages 17, 29-32**

- Gaps in infrastructure can be addressed through multimodal transportation planning. How can INDOT better collaborate with organizations already doing multi-modal transportation work?

**Page 23**

- “(the) STIP website containing all related processes, documents and updates of current and archived STIP information that is available for public review and inspection.”
- The availability of this and all such information and documents should be available in simple
- Links that can be clicked on and downloaded.



#### Page 23-24

- In effecting outreach, connection, and involvement with underserved communities, INDOT should maintain an Environmental Justice and Equity Team to guide how they plan and proceed

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#### Page 24-26

- In conducting public informational meetings, “educate” is an excellent value. The public needs better education about how INDOT and the State Government think and operate and about their goals, priorities, and agendas. This will foster better participation and help INDOT learn more about the public’s interests.

#### Page 29

- The public needs better education about the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). It needs to be taught, explained, and made more widely known in the state regions, towns, and communities.
- How do changes in technology affect the Long-Range Transportation Plan, which is already in place and covering communities until 2045? How should stakeholders partner with INDOT in the LRTP with, for example, the acceleration of vehicle electrification and predictions about human and auto traffic being unsustainable?

#### Page 30-32

- The Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) program is wonderful. If INDOT embraces the process and works to educate and engage the community and institutional stakeholders on how they can participate, this could be the way to a much better future.

#### Pg 35 “District-Wide Public Involvement Activities”

- How are the brief summary reports shared and distributed? Can the MPO distribute reports to their stakeholders?

#### Pg 35 “District Public Meetings, Open Houses, & Virtual Meetings”

- The PPIP doesn’t state how the District Public Meetings, Open Houses and Virtual Meeting participants are reached. What is the method of outreach to under-represented populations? Are the in-person meetings arranged so that they are convenient for underrepresented populations to attend? There needs to be more definition about how INDOT will conduct its extensive public outreach to inform the public of the meetings.

#### Pg 36

- There should be a central office that develops a performance standard for measuring effective outreach efforts. According to the USDOT “Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts” website, <https://usdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d6f90dfcc8b44525b04c7ce748a3674a>, Indiana has 321 disadvantaged census tracts. One measurement could be measuring how effective INDOT’s outreach is to those census tracts. There are probably other measures.

#### Pg 37

- There seems to be an overreliance on digital interface with the web in making information available. What are the measurements to determine if the information is accessible to underserved populations? INDOT needs to establish performance standards for MPO’s.

#### Pg 40 1st Column, bottom

- There’s an incomplete statement.



Pg 47

INDOT should develop performance measures to gauge the effectiveness of compliance with the federal citations listed



## Comments to the INDOT Planning Public Involvement Plan “PPIP”

DATE: 2/2/20

TO: Brenda Freije, Charles Richardson and Russell Menyhart with Rethink Coalition

FROM: Cat Seely, INDOT Planning Program Outreach Manager

RE: Comments to the INDOT Planning Public Involvement Plan “PPIP”

Thank you for your time reviewing and commenting on the 2022 Planning Public Involvement Plan (PPIP) Draft. We greatly appreciate the input from the Coalition. Please read further for responses to the ways in which INDOT will implement your suggestions in this and future PPIP updates.

In response to the Overall Impressions, sections a & b, we recognize that using one document to communicate to two audiences may complicate the message, and will address that comment, including the recommendations 1-3 in the next update to the PPIP. We will keep this PPIP update on track without major formatting changes at this time so that we can begin using the document within the agency to emphasize the importance of public outreach in planning and begin to familiarize our internal team with a standard process, as reflected in Chapter 2 and tools such as the POP Checklist and Companion Document, for reaching out to the public and facilitating efficient public involvement in our planning processes. As noted in this section, we have performed a review of the document to identify instances where language such as “are encourage to” could be changed to “shall.”

In response to section c, we will work on creating a glossary that can be added to the PPIP for clarity of terms.

In response to section d, we intend for this PPIP to be a living document and as we work to identify best practices for improving our methods of early information sharing related to planning, the document will evolve. It is important to note that this document is related to planning efforts and the early project development process at INDOT and separate from the NEPA process for specific projects. INDOT Technical Planning will share this comment and subsequent recommendation with INDOT Environmental Services Division who works more directly with the project-level NEPA process.

In response to section e, INDOT Technical Planning will be working with Central Office and all INDOT Districts so that this PPIP is recognized, useful and referred to as the tool to guide all planning public outreach efforts. It will not be a document to simply sit on a shelf.

In response to section f and g, INDOT will perform an accessibility check for readability and is currently working to acquire additional software to assist in providing improved infographics, etc. for use by INDOT Technical Planning.

In response to Comments from Rethink Partnering Neighborhood Groups, comment 1, INDOT strives to reach as many people as possible and will continue to increase outreach via methods that do not require internet access. We currently partner with Indiana libraries to provide hard copies of documents and for posting notices and utilize newspaper advertisements. Direct mail and door hangers/signage has been added to the document as an additional strategy to pursue. Thank you for the suggestion.

Per comments 2, 4 & 5, INDOT continues to work on developing performance measures to better understand the effectiveness of our public involvement efforts. Once adopted, the PPIP will be used to as a guide to align practices



within the agency and with our partnering agencies, and is a step toward better accountability and effectiveness. The links and resources shared are appreciated and we will work to better incorporate those concepts into the next PPIP update. Regarding mapping of disadvantaged census tracts, our GIS team is using census data to create maps that will help guide our public outreach strategies to and within disadvantaged areas.

Comment 3 is in line with the idea of the comments in section a & b above regarding being more specific with intended audiences, goals and messages. INDOT will work to clarify this as well in subsequent PIPP updates.

In response to the Comments and Questions on Specific Pages of the PPIP, those comments have been addressed throughout the document. Some comments have been shared with INDOT Environment Service and Project Management as they can benefit from some suggestions that are also NEPA and project related. Some comments have not yet been reflected in this version of the PPIP as they will require additional thought and refinement to ensure successful implementation within the agency.

Thank you again for the time and effort spent reviewing the draft 2022 PPIP. We will continue to use the thoughtful review you have provided as we begin our next PPIP update and look forward to opportunities to partner in public involvement efforts to come.

# 4

## INDOT District Map and Contact Information



Figure 27: INDOT District Map & Contacts

INDOT LaPorte District  
315 E. Boyd Blvd.  
LaPorte, IN 46350

INDOT Fort Wayne  
District  
5333 Hatfield Road  
Fort Wayne, IN 46808

INDOT Crawfordsville  
District  
41 West 300 North  
Crawfordsville, IN  
47933

INDOT Greenfield  
District  
32 South Broadway  
Greenfield, IN 46140

INDOT Vincennes  
District  
3650 South U.S.  
Highway 41  
Vincennes, IN 47591

INDOT Seymour District  
185 Agrico Lane  
Seymour, IN 47274

INDOT Central Office  
100 North Senate  
Avenue, Room N758  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
46204

To contact INDOT via  
phone or online, please  
use 1-855-INDOT4U or  
INDOT4U.com





# 5

## Indiana Open Door Law



# INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

## Open Door Law Guidance and Best Practices

*Version 1: July 23, 2025*

**DRY RUNS and TESTING are the keys to success. And, when in doubt, stream the meeting.**

- If your meeting/hearing is open to the public, you are not exempt from streaming requirements – please follow guidance and best practices to successfully meet Indiana Code requirements.
- Testing is a crucial part of preparation – specifically if you are partnering with a consultant.

**Best practice for acknowledging comments:**

- It is appropriate to simply acknowledge that we've seen the comment.
- You do not have to read the written comment out loud.
  - A good way to address comments is "Thank you for your comment. All comments will be reviewed by the project team and will be recorded as part of the final environmental document. We appreciate your feedback."

**Co-organizers:**

- Add any INDOT employee affiliated with your meeting or hearings as a co-organizer (PRD, DSS, PM).
- Only co-organizers can edit meeting details.
- Please add [KSimmer@indot.in.gov](mailto:KSimmer@indot.in.gov) for Kieran to be able to pull the recording and post it on YouTube.

**Technology:**

- The bare minimum that you will need to stream a public meeting/hearing will be your laptop.
  - IT is working on technology options in terms of audio/visual equipment that go beyond using a laptop.
- Pre-recorded presentations are okay, but you must screen share to the livestream in real time.
- Technology issues can happen. That does not invalidate the meeting, but streaming must be attempted.
  - Technology issues, including the inability to stream, must be noted in the memo.

**Navigating Teams:**

- If you choose to use Teams Webinar, your participant will first fill out the registration, then they will receive an email that holds the link to join the meeting.
- We do not control external Teams user settings, so what is available to us may not be available to viewers who are accessing our Teams meetings through their company Teams account.
- The Q&A feature is recommended for public comments over the chat since the Q&A feature can be moderated.

**Public Notice:**

- Public notices should be sent no later than 48 hours before the meeting/hearing. The link to the stream must be included in the notice. An example of this is below.
  - ***Notice of Livestreamed Public Meeting/Hearing***  
*In accordance with Indiana Code 5-13-1.5-2.9, the Indiana Department of Transportation*

(INDOT) is offering livestreams of all public meetings and hearings. You can access the livestream at the following link starting at [insert time] on [insert date]:  
**[Insert Livestream Link]**

A recording of the livestream and the presentation will be posted on INDOT's website in the following 48 business hours after the meeting/hearing. The recording will be available online for up to 90 days.

- Notices should also include information regarding how comments will be accepted via livestream, as well as information regarding accommodations. An example of this is below.
  - Livestream audience comments will only be accepted in electronic form, not verbally. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with disabilities requiring assistance and/or accommodation, or persons of limited English proficiency (LEP) requiring accommodation related to accessibility to documents and participation at the public meeting venue or on the livestream, are encouraged to contact INDOT at (855) 463-6848, or NAME OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE at least 72 hours prior to the public hearing for additional assistance.*
- INDOT Central Office Communications can help districts access interpretation services through an approved vendor.

## Step-By-Step Schedule

Timing	Tasks
≥ 48 hrs before	<input type="checkbox"/> Create meeting link, add Kieran Simmer ( <a href="mailto:KSimmer@indot.in.gov">KSimmer@indot.in.gov</a> ) as co-organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Submit web request to post meeting notice with date/time/place and Teams stream link. <input type="checkbox"/> Comms uploads to website.
At the door	<input type="checkbox"/> IF there's an agenda, tack it up.
During meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Start Teams stream. <input type="checkbox"/> Fill out memorandum template as you go. <input type="checkbox"/> If the stream crashes, keep rolling; note it in the memo.
After meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit memo (and agenda/minutes, if any) to web request form. <input type="checkbox"/> Comms uploads to website
Long term after	<input type="checkbox"/> Stays on-line ≥ 90 days, then follow INDOT records schedule.



## INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Open Door Law FAQs

*Version 1: July 23, 2025*

**Q:** Do districts need to make a web request via the Communications Form ticketing system to have the recording uploaded or is sharing the memo enough to get that process rolling?

**A:** Yes, for now you need to submit a Video Request (and add [KSimmer@indot.in.gov](mailto:KSimmer@indot.in.gov) as a co-organizer in the Teams meeting) in addition to submitting a Web Request for the memo. So for now, video requests and memo requests need to be separate requests. In the coming weeks, there will be a sub-request type under Web Requests dedicated to all things Public Meetings and Hearings. When that ticket type launches, any requests related to Meetings and Hearings can funnel through that option.

**Q:** Do project DES numbers need to be included in meeting notices, titles, etc.

**A:** No. This is not required, but if you include the DES number in the project name, it will help the public locate your project.

**Q:** Can consultants be added as co-organizers?

**A:** No, they can only be co-presenters. We are exploring alternative solutions, to this, but they will have most of the same abilities as an organizer. See the next question/answer for more details.

**Q:** What is the difference between a co-presenter and a co-organizer?

**A:** For INDOT, the biggest difference is that the presenters cannot edit the meeting settings. Presenters can, however, moderate the Q/A feature and start/end meetings. If a presenter is an external consultant, theoretically they should have the same settings as an internal co-presenter, but it is company dependent. When in doubt, test before your live event.

**Q:** I have Googled certain settings with Teams webinar, why are our settings different than what the Microsoft website shows?

**A:** Microsoft Teams webinar features and attendee limits can be restricted by agency-defined policies and

settings. These limitations can affect who can schedule webinars, who can attend, and the number of attendees allowed. Many settings are controlled by the Indiana Office of Technology.

**Q:** What are some of the key differences between Teams webinar and Teams Town Hall?

**A:** Webinars are capped at 1,000 attendees (versus 10,000 for Teams Town Halls). Additionally, webinars require first name, last name, and email to enter the event, as opposed to Teams Town Halls which only require a name to participate. Indiana Office of Technology's preferred option is Teams Webinar.

**Q:** If no one registers for the event in advance, do we still have to stream the event?

**A:** Yes, preregistration is not required. Attendees can register at the start time of the event, or even during the event. As soon as they register, they will receive an e-mail with the link to access the livestream.

**Q:** What is the 48-hour notice?

**A:** The 48-hour notice is another name for the public notice (legal notice/news release) that you are already sending out. The only difference is that your public notice must include a link to the stream, and it must be posted to INDOT's website at least 48-hours in advance of the meeting. This requirement is not new and was originally put in place in a code that dates back to 1977. Please continue to put this notice on the project webpage.

**Q:** How soon in advance can we schedule a stream?

**A:** You can schedule a stream/generate a meeting link several months in advance. As long as it is posted 48 hours or MORE prior to the meeting, you've met the requirement.

**Q:** Can districts come up with their own SOPs and best practices (as long as all the boxes get checked)?

**A:** Yes. Please share these best practices with INDOT Central Office Communications to help us continue to develop this new program.

**Q:** How should we handle posting links for projects with external web pages — primarily major projects?

**A:** Submit a Web Request through our Communications Request Form. There will be a page dedicated to documents for major projects linked directly from the Major Projects page.

**Q:** Who can request documents to be submitted to an INDOT webpage?

**A:** Primarily for public meeting documents, we receive requests from Public Relations Directors, Capital Program Management Directors, Directors of Stakeholder Services, and INDOT project team members.

**Q:** Do we have any responsibilities in terms of documentation after we submit the form?

**A:** No. Once the documentation is submitted through the INDOT Communications Request Form, you should receive a confirmation number, and your steps are complete. If you do not receive a confirmation number your request did not go through. Turnaround can be same day or next day for these items, depending on when they are submitted.

**Q:** Once I hit the yellow “Start Meeting” button, can I never restart the meeting? What if I hit it early?

**A:** This was a glitch that has been addressed by Microsoft. You can rejoin the same meeting and hit “Start Meeting” multiple times. You will receive a separate recording for each time you start the meeting.

**Q:** What is the difference between chat and Q&A?

**A:** The chat cannot be moderated – only turned on or off. The Q&A can be moderated so that other attendees cannot see what has been asked or comments that have been made without approval.