

# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

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South Jersey  
Transportation  
Planning Organization

[www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)

817 East Landis Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor • Vineland, New Jersey 08360  
P: 856-794-1941 • F: 856-794-2549

LEONARD DESIDERIO, CHAIRMAN • JENNIFER MARANDINO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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# South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization

WWW.SJTPO.ORG

SJTPO is the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the southern New Jersey region, serving Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. Under federal law, the formation of an MPO is required for any urbanized area (UZA) with a population greater than 50,000, permitting the MPO to carry out transportation planning and decision-making for the UZA(s). Formed in 1993, SJTPO replaced three smaller existing MPOs and incorporated areas not previously served. The formation provided a stronger regional approach to solving transportation problems and brought new opportunities to southern New Jersey. SJTPO is vital to the region, as the MPO serves as a technical resource, provides access to funding, and works to provide a regional approach to address transportation planning and engineering issues.



## **Four counties, one mission:**

to create a transportation system, based on regional collaboration that moves people and goods in a safe and efficient manner, inclusive of all modes and users.

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## UPDATES TO THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

- [May 28, 2019] This updated plan replaced the PIP adopted in January 2010. This PIP was the result of extensive research into the public engagement best practices of various MPOs across the county.
- [November 23, 2020] This updated plan replaced the PIP adopted in May 2019. The edits to this PIP better reflected how SJTPO engages with under-represented populations within the SJTPO region that fall under Civil Rights umbrellas.
- [May 24, 2021] This updated plan replaced the PIP adopted in November 2020. The edits to this PIP emphasized how SJTPO engages with under-represented populations within the SJTPO region that fall under Civil Rights umbrellas by detailing the Multilingual Outreach Services contract. Additionally, during this time, SJTPO was able to hold virtual public meetings for the PIP, which were not held for the PIP adopted in November 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- [May 23, 2022] This updated plan replaces the PIP adopted in May 2021. The edits to this PIP further emphasize the work SJTPO is doing related to under-represented populations. Specifically, this PIP details the translation and interpretation services now offered at SJTPO and includes information on SJTPO's new committee, the Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC), as well as references the new Accessibility Brochure.
- [July 5, 2023] This updated plan replaces the PIP adopted in May 2022. The edits to this PIP better reflect the relationship between the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), outline when revisions to the documents are necessary, and the approval of each document.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the southern New Jersey region, serving Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. Under federal law, MPOs carry out transportation planning and decision-making for urbanized areas. Formed in 1993, SJTPO replaced three smaller existing MPOs and incorporated areas not previously served. SJTPO serves as a technical resource, provides access to federal funding, and works to provide a regional approach to address transportation planning and engineering issues.

MPOs are responsible for maintaining a Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive transportation planning process, often referred to as the three C's. MPOs provide a forum for collaborative decision-making among responsible state and local officials, public and private transit operators, and the public. They coordinate the planning activities of participating agencies and adopt long-range plans to guide transportation investment decisions. MPOs are also responsible for capital programming through a multi-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), updated every two years, which contains all federal and state funding for surface transportation projects and programs.

SJTPO ensures that planning activities involve consultation and coordination with relevant partners. This includes state, regional, and local partners and requires early engagement, direct outreach, information sharing, plan comparison, and evaluations to meet federal regulations. While these requirements apply directly to the [Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\)](#) and [Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#), these principles are applicable to a variety of planning activities, including outreach to maximize the effectiveness of SJTPO's efforts.

Other key activities of an MPO include promoting transportation improvements needed in the region and project development, while keeping the public engaged in the planning process. In addition, MPOs ensure the region's compliance with federal regulations affecting transportation decisions, such as the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. In meeting federal requirements, MPOs maintain the eligibility of their member agencies and transit operators to receive federal transportation funds for planning, capital improvements, and operations.

## SJTPO Structure

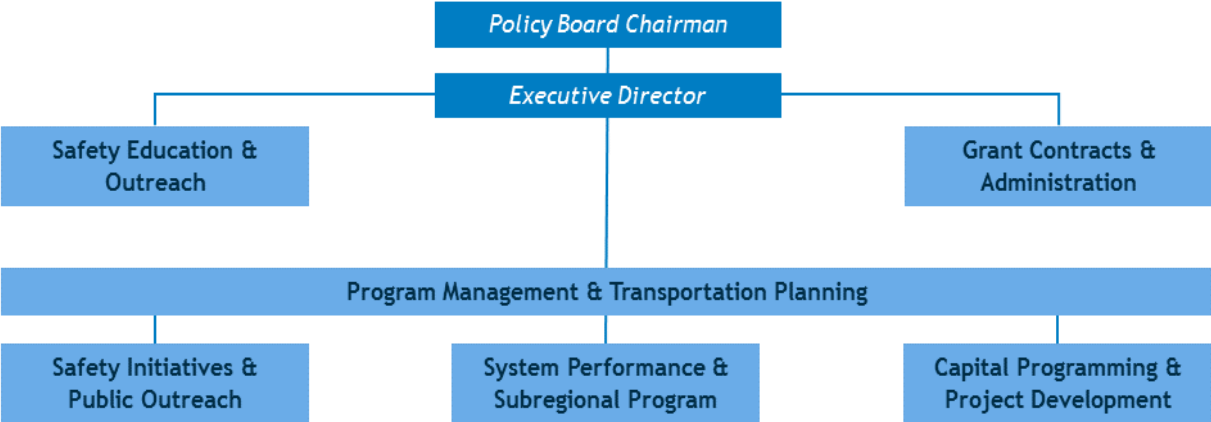
The governing body of SJTPO is the Policy Board. It consists of eleven voting members; one elected official from each county government, one municipal elected official from each county (specifically including the Mayors of Atlantic City and Vineland), and one representative each from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), New Jersey Transit, and the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA). The Policy Board is informed by recommendations of the

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), a committee of planning and engineering experts in the region.

The TAC is a thirteen-member committee comprised of staff of each Policy Board member (typically planners and engineers), as well as representatives of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJTA) and the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), South Jersey Economic Development District (SJEDD), and the Cross County Connection Transportation Management Association (CCCTMA) each have one non-voting representative on the TAC.

The Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC) serves as an open forum for input and discussion to better inform the regional planning and decision-making process through SJTPO’s major planning products and processes. Members of the COEC include representatives from a number of sectors, interests, and organizations, which help to make the COEC a diverse snapshot of the region’s public.

The SJTPO Organizational Chart, approved by the SJTPO Policy Board on September 25, 2017, identifies the organization of staff members. SJTPO’s organizational structure has three distinct areas under the Program Management & Transportation Planning umbrella, Safety Initiatives & Public Outreach, System Performance & Subregional Program, and Capital Programming & Project Development. The chart identifies Safety Education & Outreach and Grant Contracts & Administration as additional core functions within the MPO.





## 2. PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

This update replaces the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) previously adopted in May of 2021. The edits to the PIP reflect how SJTPO engages or plans to engage the under-represented populations within the SJTPO region that fall under these Civil Rights umbrellas. Specifically, the edits are in reference to translation and interpretation services now offered at SJTPO since the Organization has secured a firm to provide such services. Please see the Accessibility Brochure, included as [Appendix A](#), for more information. The Accessibility Brochure is also available on the Public Involvement Plan webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/PIP](http://www.sjtpo.org/PIP)).

SJTPO actively seeks to provide a transparent process to ensure that plans and programs include the public to the greatest, reasonable degree. The Organization also aims to create a more meaningful and proactive process. To accomplish this, SJTPO offers reasonable access to information to all segments of the region's population, timely public notice of meetings and comment periods, full access to key decisions, and support for early and continued involvement in the development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), PIP, and other major plans and programs. In addition, SJTPO understands the inherent need to develop public understanding and support of its activities. To achieve this, SJTPO maintains public involvement procedures, which meet and exceed federal guidance, and support the following major goals:

- Define a transparent set of guidelines the Organization adheres to when conducting public involvement
- Establish the tools and techniques used to reach the public
- Undergo periodic evaluations to determine the effectiveness of SJTPO's outreach practices and updates of the PIP, as needed

There are two intended audiences for the PIP. First, the PIP serves as an essential reference for transportation professionals who interact with the public and are responsible for implementing a transparent and inclusive planning process. Transportation professionals in the SJTPO region include Policy Board members, TAC members, and SJTPO staff. Second, the PIP serves as a guidebook for the public to help them determine when and how they can participate in the transportation planning process. In addition to the PIP, another valuable resource for the public is the Public Engagement Guide ([www.sjtpo.org/EngagementGuide](http://www.sjtpo.org/EngagementGuide)), which provides an overview of how transportation planning in South Jersey occurs and details ways in which the public can participate in the process.

The PIP is organized into several sections:

- **Serving the Public: SJTPO's Responsibilities**

This section outlines the process and procedures SJTPO follows when conducting public involvement efforts. It includes information, such as the federal regulations that help shape the involvement process, how the public can submit comments, what SJTPO will do with the comments received, and how members of the public can become involved in SJTPO's process, among other topics.

- **Opportunities to Engage with SJTPO**

This section details the tools and techniques SJTPO uses to inform and engage the public in the regional transportation process for the four-county region. More specifically, it includes details on where to find information, types of meetings the Organization hosts, and other actions the public can take to be more involved, such as requesting a safety education program with one of SJTPO's Traffic Safety Specialists.

- **Addressing Civil Rights in Our Outreach Process**

This section details SJTPO's efforts to seek out and consider the needs of groups traditionally not well-served by the existing transportation system. It details efforts related to SJTPO's Title VI Implementation Plan, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, and Environmental Justice (EJ) Report.

- **Having Your Say: Policies and Procedures for Public Comments**

This section explains the various ways the public can voice opinions and share ideas with SJTPO. It also highlights the minimum number of days a comment period must be open to the public for each major planning document and how the comments received will be used.

- **Evaluating Our Effectiveness**

This section identifies the tools used to measure both the quantity and quality of interactions with the public.

- **Appendices**

This section provides information and links to more resources related to the planning process and federal guidance.

### 3. SERVING THE PUBLIC: SJTPO'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Financial support to sustain and advance South Jersey's transportation system comes, in large part, from federal transportation dollars, which the region's public contributes to through federal fuel taxes. Public involvement in the planning process is necessary to ensure the needs and concerns of all residents in the four-county region are addressed.

To ensure opportunities for meaningful and proactive participation that improves the decision-making process and contributes to the overall quality of life in the region, SJTPO's public involvement process complies with federal requirements and goals, as described below.

- **Provide adequate and timely notice of public participation activities, public review, and comment on key decisions**

It is crucial for the public to be informed in a timely manner regarding all public involvement opportunities in the region. This information will be provided in plain language that allows the public to comprehend with ease the information they need or are asked to review. Further, SJTPO will notify the public at least twelve (12) days prior to any public involvement opportunity through email, social media, and via print media (i.e., newspapers) when necessary.

- **Seek out and consider the needs of the people who are traditionally underserved by the existing transportation system, including low-income and minority households**

Transportation planning is most effective when decision makers consider and seek input from those whose daily lives are largely impacted by how efficiently and safely, they are able to get to work, school, home, stores, and services. To ensure meaningful involvement of persons and groups traditionally underserved in the SJTPO region, such as the elderly population, Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations, single or zero vehicle households, and minority and low-income households, SJTPO drafts an Environmental Justice (EJ) Report ([www.sjtpo.org/EJ](http://www.sjtpo.org/EJ)). The EJ Report is then used to target outreach events in areas that are accessible to these underserved groups and tailor messaging and communication methods to try to maximize access for these populations.

- **Hold public meetings at convenient times and locations that are accessible to all people**

Consideration of residents' personal schedules is vital when hosting public meetings. Apart from Policy Board and TAC, meetings take place after typical workday hours to maximize access. Further, SJTPO works to hold meetings in facilities that are ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible and in locations that are transit accessible, when meetings are in-person rather than virtual, to the greatest feasible degree.

- **Use visualization techniques to further explain the planning process**

The transportation planning and engineering processes are complex with many steps and requirements. It is essential that information about these processes be presented and discussed in an intuitive manner to allow anyone the opportunity to understand and give feedback. To maximize public involvement and minimize misunderstanding, SJTPO provides information in plain language with as little jargon as possible and often incorporates visuals, such as charts and images. For instance, rather than only use the term Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), SJTPO often supplements with “List of Projects” to help clarify the purpose of the TIP to the public.

- **Provide timely and reasonable access to information about transportation planning**

It is important that the public is provided reasonable access to information necessary to offer meaningful feedback on matters related to the transportation decision-making process. When one of SJTPO’s Core Documents (RTP, TIP, UPWP, Access for All Transit Plan, Congestion Management Process (CMP), Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, Title VI Implementation Plan, and Transportation Conformity) is substantively revised, SJTPO makes the draft version available for public review for 30 days, with the exception of the PIP, which is made available for 45 days. In addition, most core documents also require a public meeting to be held. If public comments cause any of the core documents to greatly differ from the versions previously made available to the public, comment periods may be extended to ensure that altered versions remain available to the public for no fewer than 10 days, prior to Policy Board approval. Comment periods and public meeting requirements are detailed further in [Section 6](#). Each plan is available on SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)) and at a select list of libraries throughout the four-county region. To view the list of libraries, please see [Appendix B](#).

- **Provide information in electronic formats for accessibility and sustainability purposes**

SJTPO makes all major work products available on its website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)) for the convenience of the public, but also for sustainability purposes, as many documents are hundreds of pages in length. SJTPO’s online document library is continuously updated as reports and other items become available.

- **Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input through a two-way communicative process**

To maintain an effective and meaningful public involvement process, SJTPO respects and considers all input that is received. All comments received during a comment period are recorded in the final document with responses from SJTPO and other transportation agencies, if necessary. Further, SJTPO encourages two-way communication between all residents in the region and key decision makers to allow multiple perspectives to be considered. Examples of two-way communication include attendance at Policy Board and Committee meetings, public workshops, as well as active participation on SJTPO’s social

media platforms. SJTPO continuously works to clarify for the public the best time to provide comments and the best entity to provide comment to in hopes that the public is able to maximize the impact of their comments and minimize their frustration in the process.

- **Comply with federal laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964, and various Executive Orders**

SJTPO operates without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, age, ancestry, nationality, gender, disability, religion, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, income level, ability to read, write or speak English and adheres to all applicable federal laws. SJTPO will work to accommodate all reasonable requests for translation, interpretation, or auxiliary services, but encourages that requests be made at least seven days prior to public meetings to ensure that SJTPO is able to secure requested services. Other translation requests, such as those associated with larger documents will be provided as quickly as possible and could take up to three weeks. Accommodations may include but are not limited to translation and/or interpretation services and closed captioning, among others. For a list of the federal laws, please see the next sub-section, Federal Laws for Public Involvement. For a description of each federal law, please see [Appendix C](#).

- **Coordinate with the state and local transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes**

SJTPO consults and coordinates with agencies and officials when completing a variety of transportation planning activities, as appropriate to the activity. These regularly include the [Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\)](#) and [Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#). The roles, responsibilities, and key decision points of this consultation and coordination process are detailed in the RTP and TIP. Similarly, when possible, SJTPO coordinates with state and local public involvement processes to increase effectiveness and minimize duplication. SJTPO's public involvement procedures for the TIP also serve as the procedures for the State TIP (STIP).

- **Coordinate with Federal and Non-federal Tribal Nations**

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historical Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (16 U.S.C. 470) (NHPA) and its implementing regulations [found at 36 CFR Part 800], federal agencies, such as SJTPO, must consult with any Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization regarding undertakings occurring on or affecting historic properties on its tribal lands. SJTPO makes Federal and Non-federal Tribal Nations aware of opportunities for feedback and coordination during the planning process, including notice of public comment periods and public meetings.

- **Periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the PIP**

The PIP is a living document and is updated on an as-needed basis to ensure effectiveness and consistency with federal guidance. The public is also involved in providing periodic feedback on the SJTPO's procedures and strategies. In addition, SJTPO has identified methods to evaluate the effectiveness of SJTPO's public involvement process, which are described in [Section 7](#).

## Federal Laws for Public Involvement

To conduct public involvement outreach, a core function of an MPO, SJTPO complies with federal regulations and programs. These regulations and programs help shape the involvement process and make its implementation more successful. For a description of each regulation and program listed below, please see [Appendix C](#).

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991
- Transportation Equity Act of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) of 1998
- Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005
- Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) of 2012
- Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) of 2015
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) or Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021
- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §450
- Code of Federal Regulations. Title 23, §771.111
- Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations"
- Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency"
- Executive Order 13985, "Advancing Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government"

## 4. OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE WITH SJTPO

There are a variety of strategies SJTPO’s utilizes to enhance public involvement for a specific activity or assist in meeting specific public involvement goals. Staff review and modify these strategies on a regular basis to ensure a productive and all-encompassing public involvement process is sustained. The strategies used help disseminate information in both digital and print form with the intent of making information accessible to anyone interested.

### Where to Find Information

Public input is essential to SJTPO’s planning process, and there are many ways the public can be involved to learn about or influence transportation decisions. SJTPO uses a variety of channels to assure that a broad audience is reached. The recurrent channels used to announce news, updates, and reminders pertaining to meetings and events include:

#### SJTPO Website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org))

The main tool used by SJTPO to disseminate information is SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)), which can be translated into a multitude of languages. Information available on the SJTPO website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)) includes an overview of the transportation planning process, information about funding programs, core regional planning documents, an extensive document library, planning studies and other technical information. Opportunities for public involvement are also available online and can be found on the Public Comment webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/public-comment](http://www.sjtpo.org/public-comment)).

#### E-list (Electronic Mailing List)

Members of the public and interested organizations can sign up for inclusion on SJTPO’s e-list to receive information related to upcoming meetings, special events, public comment periods, project news and developments, and to receive issues of the *On the Go* newsletter. To subscribe, individuals can locate the “Join Our Mailing List” at the bottom of every webpage on SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)). Approximately three (3) to four (4) emails are sent each month. Subscribers can unsubscribe at any time.

#### Social Media

SJTPO maintains various social media platforms as an additional method to reach the public and highlight key activities and initiatives. Facebook and Twitter are the two primary forms of social media used by SJTPO to disseminate information regarding upcoming meetings and events, newsletter issues, reminders about public comment periods, as well as to share the activities of staff members and other regional transportation planning matters.

At this time, any comment SJTPO receives via social media that adheres to SJTPO’s “Social Media Policy,” found on the SJTPO website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)) and in [Appendix D](#), will be treated equal to any other comment, added to the public record, and responded to, as appropriate.



**Facebook** [www.facebook.com/sjtpo](http://www.facebook.com/sjtpo)



**Twitter** [www/twitter.com/sjtpo](http://www/twitter.com/sjtpo)



**YouTube** [www.youtube.com/channel/UCzdoMUOQ4-umcnlWB5lCxGQ](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzdoMUOQ4-umcnlWB5lCxGQ)



**LinkedIn** [www.linkedin.com/company/sjtpo](http://www.linkedin.com/company/sjtpo)

### [On the Go, the Official Newsletter of SJTPO](#)

*On the Go* is an electronic publication, released every two months, with six issues produced each year. Distribution of the newsletter is through SJTPO’s e-list. To receive the newsletter, locate the “Join Our Mailing List” at the bottom of each webpage on SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)). Archived and current issues are also made available on the News (On the Go) webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/OnTheGo](http://www.sjtpo.org/OnTheGo)). The website version of the newsletter features a translation tool powered by Google Translation, which allows readers from all backgrounds the ability to stay current on all SJTPO’s matters.

Topics covered in each issue of the newsletter vary depending on what activities are taking place in the Organization. Readers can expect to learn about projects and programs, meetings and events, public outreach programs, and more.

### [Newspapers](#)

As appropriate, SJTPO utilizes local newspapers to publicize meetings, events, and other SJTPO projects and programs. Meeting schedules for Policy Board meetings are publicized in local newspapers at the beginning of each calendar year, following the reorganization meeting. Special meetings are publicized at least seven (7) days prior to each meeting date, as needed.

SJTPO utilizes newspapers, a form of traditional media outreach, to reach sectors of the region’s population that rely on print media to receive information. SJTPO aims to expand its efforts to involve the local media in its affairs using press releases. The full list of media contacts SJTPO distributes information to can be found in [Appendix E](#).

### [How to View or Request Documents and Records](#)

To provide reasonable public access to documents and records, SJTPO makes all final draft and final approved plans, programs, and studies produced by the Organization available for examination on the SJTPO website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)), at the SJTPO office, and at select libraries throughout the four-county SJTPO region, listed below. These libraries make SJTPO documents



available for viewing by the public at no cost. A list of these libraries, with complete addresses and contact information can be found in [Appendix B](#).

In March 2021, SJTPO staff contacted the State Depository Libraries in the region to inquire about being able to accommodate SJTPO’s transportation planning materials and if they would like to remain on SJTPO’s distribution list. SJTPO staff heard from all State Depository Libraries, with the exception of the Michael S. Cetti Memorial Library at the Salem Community College in Carneys Point, New Jersey. The Michael S. Cetti Memorial Library remains on SJTPO’s distribution list, as per the decision of SJTPO staff. Of the remaining State Depository Libraries in the region, staff from the Cape May County Library in Cape May Courthouse, New Jersey requested to be taken off the distribution list. The reason being, no members of the public request to review SJTPO’s plans and materials, which are retained behind the Circulation Desk. Further, as a result of SJTPO staff contacting the State Depository Libraries, and in an effort to be mindful of library staff resources and limited space, language will now be added to the Table of Contents of each final, approved plan sent to the libraries to inform readers that appendices (unless necessary), executive summaries, and amendments, if applicable, will not be printed and transmitted to the libraries. These materials will be assessable on the plan-specific webpages (i.e., if an amendment is made to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the amendment will be available on the SJTPO website ([www.sjtpo.org/UPWP](http://www.sjtpo.org/UPWP)).

If an individual is unable to view documents on SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)), the SJTPO office, or any participating library in the SJTPO region, noncolor copies may be requested, where practical. Fees for copies are \$0.05 per letter page or \$0.07 per legal page. Copies may be picked up at the SJTPO office for no additional charge or mailed at the expense of the receiver. SJTPO may waive totals under \$1.00. Printing and postage costs must be paid by receiver prior to mailing. Checks or money orders must be made out to the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA). Cash is not accepted. Interested parties can make a request via an [online form](#), also found in [Appendix F](#), or by calling (856) 794-1941.

County	Participating Library
Atlantic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atlantic County Library – Mays Landing Branch; Reference Area</li> <li>• Richard E. Bjork Library at Stockton University; Government Documents</li> </ul>
Cumberland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cumberland County Library; Reference Department</li> </ul>
Salem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salem Free Public Library; Circulation Desk</li> <li>• Salem Community County College Library; Reference Department</li> </ul>

## Attend Public Meetings

Throughout the year, there are numerous opportunities for residents and stakeholders to be engaged in SJTPO's planning process. These meetings are typically meant to provide information and a setting for formal comments to be received. SJTPO works to hold meetings at centralized locations, when held in-person rather than virtual, and at convenient times, including evenings, to maximize participation from a wide range of the region's public, including those traditionally underserved. Other accommodations will be provided to the great, feasible degree when requested at least seven (7) days prior to a public meeting. Accommodations may include but are not limited to translation and/or interpretation services and closed captioning, among others.

SJTPO utilizes GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar virtual conferencing platforms. GoToMeeting is useful for small group meetings in which staff and stakeholders need to engage in discussions and decision-making matters, such as Policy Board and TAC meetings. GoToWebinar is most appropriate to use when convening large meetings in which information is shared with attendees, such as public meetings for draft plans.

In January of each year, a schedule of Policy Board meetings for the year ahead is placed in local newspapers, including The Press of Atlantic City, The Daily Journal, and South Jersey Times. Meeting dates are also posted to the calendar on SJTPO's website homepage ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)). As the year progresses and meetings approach, reminders are posted on SJTPO's website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)), sent to e-list subscribers, and posted on social media.

## Policy Board Meetings

Policy Board meetings are open to the public. Policy Board meetings are often attended by local elected officials from county government, planners, engineers, federal agency representatives, and concerned individuals, among other stakeholders. Members of the public are given the opportunity to comment at the start of the meeting, with each commenter allotted three minutes to speak. Policy Board meetings are generally held at 10:00 AM at Vineland City Hall or via the GoToMeeting conferencing platform, if being held virtually. Policy Board meetings are generally held on the fourth Monday of every other month beginning in January. Updates and additional information are available on SJTPO's website ([www.sjtpo.org/Board](http://www.sjtpo.org/Board)).

Information for Policy Board meetings is publicized through the e-list, social media, SJTPO's website ([www.sjtpo.org/Board](http://www.sjtpo.org/Board)) and paid public notices in local newspapers. To allow for adequate notice, agendas and materials are distributed at least twelve (12) days prior to each meeting through the above channels. Agendas and meeting minutes are obtainable on SJTPO's website ([www.sjtpo.org/Board](http://www.sjtpo.org/Board)).

### Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings

TAC meetings are open to the public and are generally held at 10:00 AM at Vineland City Hall or via the GoToMeeting conferencing platform, if being held virtually. TAC meetings are generally held on the second Monday of every other month beginning in January. Technical workshops may be scheduled during the “off” months. The committee consists of staff (typically planners and engineers) of each Policy Board member, as well as representatives of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, the New Jersey Highway Authority, and the Delaware River and Bay Authority. A wide variety of other agencies are also invited to participate in the TAC. Members of the public are given the opportunity to comment on agenda items at the start of the meeting, with each commenter allotted three minutes to speak. Meeting notices, agenda packets and minutes are also available for public viewing purposes on SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org/TAC](http://www.sjtpo.org/TAC)).

Information for TAC meetings is publicized through social media and SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org/TAC](http://www.sjtpo.org/TAC)). To allow for adequate notice, agendas and materials are distributed at least twelve (12) days prior to each meeting through the above channels.

### Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC) Meetings

COEC meetings are open to the public. Meetings will be scheduled in advance, but there will be no regularly occurring meeting schedule. These meetings include annual reorganization, as well as meetings in support of major planning products and processes. Public notice for meetings will be made at the beginning of each calendar year. Other meetings will be called on as as-needed basis, with public notice made at least 12 days prior to a meeting date.

### Public Workshops

SJTPO hosts in-person and virtual workshop-style meetings open to the public on an as-needed basis. These workshops allow attendees to learn about transit, roadways, bicycle and pedestrian access, freight, or other transportation matters in a greater capacity using presentations, displays, posters, and other informational materials. Workshop-style meetings foster one-on-one interactions between members of the public and transportation professionals. Attendees will have the opportunity to comment. All comments will be recorded and a written summary, analysis, and report on all significant comments received will be prepared and used accordingly.

### Other Ways to be Involved

The following are additional ways in which the public can engage with SJTPO and participate in the transportation planning process.

### Request a Safety Program

SJTPO offers a robust series of no-cost, safety education programs. Run by SJTPO Traffic Safety Specialists, these programs are designed with a target audience in mind and in conjunction with

other organizations, such as the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (NJ DHTS). Each program is intended to educate roadway users – drivers, passengers, bicyclists, and pedestrians – of the many dangers they could encounter on roadways and to impart easy to remember methods to improve safety. To view the entire list of programs offered or to request a program, visit [www.sjtpo.org/Education](http://www.sjtpo.org/Education) or the [Safety](#) tab on SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)).

### [Attend Meetings of County Transportation Boards or Committees](#)

Public involvement at the local, county, and subregional levels is also crucial, as most roadways are owned by these entities. Thus, much of the transportation planning process occurs at these levels. SJTPO suggests that the public attend meetings and events hosted by county transportation committees or municipal planning boards. A complete list of transportation contacts is located in [Appendix H](#).

## 5. ADDRESSING CIVIL RIGHTS IN OUR OUTREACH PROCESS

SJTPO is committed to making a special effort to seek out and consider the needs of groups traditionally not well-served by the existing transportation system. These include, but are not limited to the elderly population, minority populations, Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations, zero vehicle households, and low-income households. SJTPO has formal plans/reports pertaining to Title VI, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and Environmental Justice (EJ). The plans/reports outline the appropriate outreach tools and methods necessary to ensure adequate participation of the groups previously mentioned.

### Title VI

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) and [Executive Order 12898](#) protects individuals from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities.

SJTPO's Title VI Implementation Plan is available for viewing purposes on the Title VI webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI](http://www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI)). The webpage also provides background on Title VI, as well as SJTPO's policy statement, complaint procedure and form, and the United States Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Assurances.

### Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

[Executive Order 13166](#), "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," relates to public engagement of LEP individuals. An LEP person is one who does not speak English as his/her/their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.

SJTPO's LEP Plan outlines the responsibilities of SJTPO regarding the LEP persons and establishes a process for providing assistance to LEP persons for SJTPO programs, activities, and services.

Translation options are available on SJTPO's website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)). To select a language other than English, locate the dropdown menu at the top of each webpage. Translation is provided for linguistic populations of 1,000+ that speak English less than very well in the SJTPO region (2010 Census). Further, if translation or interpretation is necessary for a member of the public to participate in a public meeting, public event, or any other public involvement opportunity, SJTPO has a translation and interpretation firm under contract. SJTPO will work to accommodate all reasonable requests for translation, interpretation, or auxiliary services, but encourages that requests be made at least seven days prior to public meetings to ensure that SJTPO is able to secure requested services. Other translation requests, such as those associated with larger documents will be provided as quickly as possible and could take up to three weeks. For more

information, see the Accessibility Brochure located in [Appendix A](#). The Accessibility Brochure is also available on the Public Involvement Plan webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/PIP](http://www.sjtpo.org/PIP)).

## Environmental Justice (EJ)

The federal government defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs, and policies.

The 2021 EJ Report was approved by the Policy Board on September 27, 2021. The 2021 EJ Report evaluates TIP projects for overlap into EJ areas and broadly discusses other planning products, such as the RTP and Access for All Transit Plan. The 2021 EJ Report uses an EJ definition that more strictly aligns with the federal definition of EJ, including low-income and minority populations, and separately includes Transportation Justice (TJ) groups, which include elderly, zero vehicle households, and disabled populations. At the core of this effort is the recognition of the right of every person to have a safe, accessible, affordable, and healthy transportation system in his/her/their community. Further, a focus was made to research the impact of projects and discuss why some communities have been unable to take advantage of federal transportation funding and examine the associated equity concerns. SJTPO will also begin examining the system design (i.e., sidewalks, bus shelters, etc.) that serve EJ populations.

## Strategies to Serve Under-Represented Populations

The Title VI Implementation Plan, LEP Plan, and EJ Report detail in a comprehensive manner the strategies necessary to incorporate under-represented populations in SJTPO’s transportation planning process. The strategies to include are as follows:

### Identification of Under-Represented Populations using Census Data

To identify Title VI, LEP, and EJ populations, SJTPO uses data gathered at the regional, county, municipal, and Census Block Group level. The information collected helps SJTPO and its subregional partners target outreach needs to under-represented groups. Outreach efforts shall occur throughout all planning efforts, including location-specific projects, plans, and studies.

### Engagement of Under-Represented Populations using Targeted Strategies

SJTPO is committed to reducing barriers to public engagement, specifically for the under-represented groups in the SJTPO region. Barriers for the under-represented groups can include language barriers, wariness of public forums, scheduling conflicts, and lack of transportation availability, among other challenges.

To ensure greater accessibility to the non-English speaking public, SJTPO has secured a firm that is able to provide translation and interpretation services on an on-call basis. To help make the public aware of these services, an Accessibility Brochure was created. The Accessibility Brochure is located in [Appendix A](#) and available on the Public Involvement Plan webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/PIP](http://www.sjtpo.org/PIP)).

#### **Children and Teens**

SJTPO is proud to offer a robust series of traffic safety education programs with many of the programs geared towards elementary, middle school, and high school students. Such programs include the Most Dangerous Place on Earth; Share the Keys; Belts, Bones, and Buses; and Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety. The programs, presented by SJTPO's Traffic Safety Specialists, are designed to bring awareness to the many risks relative to children and teens on area roadways and to teach them simple ways to improve safety. The programs are fun, accessible, designed for the appropriate age group, and are presented to students in school districts throughout the region.

Since SJTPO's Traffic Safety Specialists have established connections with regional school districts, SJTPO would like to expand upon these traffic safety education programs by incorporating content related to planning efforts.

#### **Young Adults**

Young adults are often under-represented in planning efforts and civic affairs due to inexperience, school-life balance, and limited opportunities. Engagement opportunities for young adults should be social, brief, and held in locations young adults frequent. Engaging young adults via social media is also encouraged.

The SJTPO region is home to several universities and colleges. Stockton University, located in Atlantic County, offers a Sustainability Program. SJTPO aims to establish a relationship with professors and students of the program, informing them of efforts related to coursework. Additionally, though outside of SJTPO's region, Rowan University in Gloucester County, offers degrees in Planning and Engineering. SJTPO feels establishing a relationship with professors and students of the Planning and Engineering Programs is beneficial. Rowan University is largely a commuter-based school with individuals traveling from the SJTPO region to work and attend the university.

**Older Adults**

Older adults are often involved in community efforts. Regardless of their community involvement, older adults may be under-represented in planning efforts for a multitude of reasons, such as mobility challenges, transportation conflicts, among other reasons. Outreach to older adults should include a variety of formats, both in-person and digital. If in-person events are to be held, scheduling the events during daylight hours and in convenient, ADA-accessible venues is most appropriate.

**Immigrants and Individuals with Limited-English Proficiency**

Approximately 9.3% of the population in the SJTPO region reports speaking English “less than very well.” Outreach to these individuals should be approachable, highly visual, and conducted in their native language, if feasible. The content made available to these individuals should be easy to share to others through word-of-mouth and relative to their needs.

SJTPO is committed to ensuring events and publications are accessible and available to all individuals in the region, regardless of their level of English proficiency or native languages. When notices for public meetings and events are distributed, SJTPO includes information on how to request accommodations, such as translation services. SJTPO will work to accommodate all reasonable requests for translation, interpretation, or auxiliary services, but encourages that requests be made at least seven days prior to public meetings to ensure that SJTPO is able to secure requested services. Other translation requests, such as those associated with larger documents will be provided as quickly as possible and could take up to three weeks. Please see the Accessibility Brochure, located in [Appendix A](#), for more details. Further, SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)) has the ability to be translated in multiple languages.

**Racial and Ethnic Groups**

Racial and ethnic minorities include people who do not racially identify as white and who face limited opportunities to engage in civic affairs due to a variety of barriers. Racial and ethnic minority groups may include Black, Latino, Asian, Middle Eastern, Native American, among other multiracial populations.

Racial and ethnic minorities in the SJTPO region are diverse and communicate and engage in varying styles and levels. Outreach to these minority groups should be community focused, be coordinated with local groups and organizations, and take into consideration family needs.

**Low-Income Residents**

Many low-income people within the SJTPO region balance multiple jobs and face insecurities related to shelter, food, and transportation. Information related to planning efforts is likely to be received through word-of-mouth, community organizations, and social media. Effective outreach to low-income people should be convenient and held during varying hours of the day to take into



consideration work and public transit schedules. Additionally, conducting outreach in partnership with Family Success Centers, Community Centers, and other familiar local organizations is advised.

It is also considered a generally accepted best practice to be able to provide modest incentives to attract low-income residents at in-person public meetings. These incentives may include:

- **food**, both in recognition of the limited and precious time of participants, as well as acknowledging the fact that most outreach activities conflict with mealtimes;
- **small stipends**, not only in recognition of the limited and precious time of participants, but also to accommodate the costs associated with transportation to attend in-person events; and
- **childcare**, to allow parents to participate without having to make difficult decisions regarding childcare and to allow parents to participate with reduced stress.

SJTPO utilizes federal funds for all its activities and currently does not have other supplemental funds. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [§ 200.432 Conferences](#) and [§ 200.438 Entertainment Costs](#) outline the appropriate awarding of funds for incentive-based purchases. 2 CFR 200 also applies restrictions on federal funds to be utilized for food and/or beverages. There is, however, a high burden of proof to be met to allow federal funds to be utilized for food or other incentives. Federal approval is required on a case-by-case basis and is typically only reserved for meetings where food and/or beverage is determined to be both “necessary and reasonable” for the success of that specific meeting or event. With federal funds currently being SJTPO’s only funding source and the restrictions on using these funds, SJTPO must explore other opportunities to offer incentives essential to equitable involvement. This includes identifying and securing additional funding sources. In addition, SJTPO will evaluate how to leverage staff resources, or those in the local community, to provide low-cost activities for children at in-person meetings.

### **Individuals with Disabilities**

Individuals with disabilities may experience any number of cognitive or physical disabilities. Due to the range of possible needs being so broad, SJTPO staff aim to make themselves aware of how individuals with disabilities can be excluded from public engagement activities, and how to rectify such instances of exclusion.

Outreach to individuals with disabilities should be compliant with ADA requirements. SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)) offers an “Accessibility Widget.” The widget is designed to consider the needs of individuals with special needs. Features of the “Accessibility Widget” include keyboard navigation, reading of page content, color contrast, highlighting of links, bigger text, large text spacing, Dyslexia friendly features, among others.

### Translation of Vital Documents

SJTPO's "vital documents" are documents that help residents and stakeholders understand SJTPO's purpose and importance in the four-county region and will be proactively translated into Spanish and translated in other languages upon request. These documents are as follows:

- **Access for All Transit Plan Executive Summary:** The Access for All Transit Plan Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/AccessForAll](http://www.sjtpo.org/AccessForAll).
- **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Executive Summary:** The RTP Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/RTP](http://www.sjtpo.org/RTP).
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Executive Summary:** The TIP Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/TIP](http://www.sjtpo.org/TIP).
- **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Executive Summary:** The UPWP Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/UPWP](http://www.sjtpo.org/UPWP).
- **Public Involvement Plan (PIP) Executive Summary:** The PIP Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/PIP](http://www.sjtpo.org/PIP).
- **Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan:** The LEP Plan is available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/LEP](http://www.sjtpo.org/LEP).
- **Environmental Justice (EJ) Report Executive Summary:** The EJ Report Executive Summary is available in English and Spanish upon completion at [www.sjtpo.org/EJ](http://www.sjtpo.org/EJ).
- **The Public Engagement Guide to Transportation Planning in South Jersey:** The Guide is available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/EngagementGuide](http://www.sjtpo.org/EngagementGuide).
- **Title VI Complaint Procedures:** Materials that directly allow the public to understand and exercise their rights under Title VI with regard to SJTPO are available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI](http://www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI).
- **Title VI Notice:** The Title VI Notice is SJTPO's commitment to the public to assure full compliance with Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, and related nondiscrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The Title VI Notice is available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI](http://www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI).
- **Title VI Complaint Form:** The Title VI Complaint Form is available and must be completed if a person or group of persons believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by SJTPO under Title VI. The form is available in English and Spanish at [www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI](http://www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI).

In SJTPO's four-county region, there are five (5) languages or language groups that are spoken by at least 1,000 LEP persons each, and therefore fall under the Safe Harbor provision. One of these

is “Other Indic Languages,” which SJTPO understands may include Bengali, Hindi, Nepali, Urdu, and Punjabi, bringing the total number of potential languages to nine (9). 2005 USDOT guidance contends, “it would be unrealistic” to provide translations in all nine (9) languages. However, SJTPO remains committed to ensuring meaningful access for all LEP persons, regardless of language spoken at home. While SJTPO will continue to focus its proactive translation efforts on the Spanish-speaking community, as the primary LEP population, it will also aim to use ACS data and input from member governments and community organizations to predict contact with LEP persons for area-specific projects, studies, and programs.

### **Limiting Obstacles of Involvement**

The following are efforts SJTPO has established to remove obstacles to involvement, including those of language, mobility, and temporal, among others.

#### **Convenient Meeting Times**

Consideration of individuals’ personal schedules is vital when hosting in-person and virtual public meetings. SJTPO disseminates meeting information, including location, time, and materials at least twelve (12) days in advance to allow interested parties to make any necessary arrangements. Further, apart from Policy Board and TAC, meetings take place after typical workday hours to maximize attendance.

#### **Transit-Accessible Meetings**

SJTPO staff work to select locations that are transit accessible to the greatest feasible degree, if hosting in-person meetings. Policy Board and TAC meetings take place at Vineland City Hall, if not being held virtually via the GoToMeeting conferencing platform, which is accessible by New Jersey Transit buses and is within an EJ area.

#### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Provisions**

All public notices for planning activities include an announcement that states persons with disabilities will be accommodated. SJTPO will work to accommodate all reasonable requests for translation, interpretation, or auxiliary services, but encourages that requests be made at least seven days prior to public meetings to ensure that SJTPO is able to secure requested services. Other translation requests, such as those associated with larger documents will be provided as quickly as possible and could take up to three weeks. Special provisions may include making available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, among others.

#### **Online Engagement Opportunities**

SJTPO will continue to offer online engagement opportunities to accommodate individuals who are unable to offer feedback in-person. All engagement opportunities will be listed on the Public Comment webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/public-comment](http://www.sjtpo.org/public-comment)). Staff will also notify social media (i.e.,

Facebook ([www.facebook.com/SJTPO](http://www.facebook.com/SJTPO)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/SJTPO](http://www.twitter.com/SJTPO)) followers as well as e-list subscribers of opportunities. To subscribe, individuals can locate the “Join Our Mailing List” at the bottom of any webpage on SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)).

### **Pop-up/Partnering Events**

SJTPO will continue to participate in pop-events, such as farmers markets and fairs, as appropriate. Pop-up events are beneficial to members of the public, as they are not asked to travel to a specific location, at a specific date and time. Rather, staff travel to locations and supply all appropriate materials necessary to garner feedback.

SJTPO will also work to better coordinate with community partners in the SJTPO region. Community partners may include churches, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and Community Centers, among others. Much like pop-up events, coordinating with community partners is beneficial as a relationship, and thus an audience and a level of trust has already been established.

### **Preventing Discrimination by Establishing Proper Documentation Procedures through SJTPO’s Title VI Implementation Plan**

As mentioned, SJTPO is required to develop a Title VI Implementation Plan. The Title VI Implementation Plan ensures SJTPO’s commitment to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, age, ancestry, nationality, gender, disability, religion, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, income level, and the ability to read, write, or Speak English in any of its plans and programs. Further, the Title VI Implementation Plan provides information on the implementation of a full complaint procedure. The complaint procedure identifies the reporting requirements for the Complainant (i.e., the individual(s) or group(s) that believe a discriminatory action has taken place) and the Organization (i.e., SJTPO). SJTPO’s Title VI Implementation Plan, along with the complaint procedure, are available on Title VI webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI](http://www.sjtpo.org/TitleVI)).

## 6. HAVING YOUR SAY: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

SJTPO encourages public comments and provides the public with a multitude of ways to voice opinions and share ideas with SJTPO.

### Public Comment Periods and Public Meetings

A major opportunity for the public to share opinions and ideas is during a public review period. A comment period of **at least 30 days** will be held to review drafts of SJTPO's core documents. As stated in [Section 3](#), SJTPO has nine documents that are often referred to as core documents, as they require public comment periods and most require public meetings to be held when a plan is substantively revised. The core documents are as follows:

- **[Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\)](#)**: The RTP is a long-term transportation plan that identifies a high-level vision and outlines transportation projects for at least the next 20 years, and is the result of extensive outreach, collaboration, and consensus. The RTP is updated every four (4) years. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **[Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#)**: The TIP is an agreed upon list of projects, for which state and federal funds are expected to be spent. The TIP is updated every two (2) years. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **[Unified Planning Work Program \(UPWP\)](#)**: The UPWP details all anticipated transportation planning activities to be performed by SJTPO staff, subregions, and member agencies during the fiscal year. The UPWP is updated every year. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment.
- **[Access for All Transit Plan](#)**: Federally required to be updated every five (5) years, the Access for All Transit Plan identifies the unmet transportation needs and recommends methods to increase service quality and reduce the cost of providing services to the transportation disadvantaged population in the region. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **[Congestion Management Process \(CMP\)](#)**: The CMP is a federally required process documented in a methodology report that guides how to manage and operate South Jersey's transportation network safely and effectively. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.

- **Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP)**: The LEP Plan is a federally required document, updated as needed, that identifies the LEP populations in the region and how SJTPO will work to accommodate their needs in SJTPO's process. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **Title VI Implementation Plan**: The Title VI Implementation Plan is federally required document, updated as needed, that documents how SJTPO will meet its requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **Transportation Conformity**: The Transportation Conformity document demonstrates transportation conformity of the TIP and RTP with the 2015 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.
- **Public Involvement Plan (PIP)**: The PIP is a federally required document, updated as needed, that articulates the rules SJTPO will follow and the processes by which the public can engage in the MPO transportation planning process. Draft documents will be made available for at least 45 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.

If public comments cause any of the core documents to greatly differ from the versions previously made available to the public, comment periods may be extended to ensure that altered versions remain available to the public for no fewer than **10 days** prior to Policy Board approval. Substantive changes that may justify an additional 10-day comment period include the addition or removal of a section, adjustments to public forms, updates to federal regulations, as well as other changes that SJTPO deems substantive enough to ask for additional public comment.

Policy Board and TAC agendas and materials are made available twelve (12) days prior to each regularly scheduled meeting. Opportunity for public comment is provided at all regularly scheduled meetings.

Information necessary for the public to thoroughly understand and comment on each document will be made available. This can include items such as public-friendly executive summaries, information posted to SJTPO's website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)), PowerPoints, printable flyers and/or project sheets and reports, as well as links to project or sponsor websites for comprehensive information.

### Additional Information About the RTP and TIP

The RTP is a long-term transportation plan that identifies a high-level vision and outlines transportation projects for at least the next 20 years, and is the result of extensive outreach, collaboration, and consensus. The RTP is updated every four (4) years. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.

The TIP is an agreed upon list of projects, for which state and federal funds are expected to be spent. The TIP is updated every two (2) years. Draft documents will be made available for at least 30 days of public comment and at least one public meeting will be held.

The RTP is the guiding document for the TIP, with all federally funded projects in the TIP must be included in the RTP. Each project or project phase included in the TIP is required to be consistent with the approved RTP.<sup>1</sup> To maintain consistency between both documents, the RTP must first be revised whenever a revision to the TIP is required.

As outlined in a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), SJTPO, NJDOT, and New Jersey Transit, found on SJTPO's TIP webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/TIP](http://www.sjtpo.org/TIP)), there are three types of revisions: Major Amendments, Minor Amendments, and Modifications.

### Major Amendment

A Major Amendment in the TIP, which must be approved by the SJTPO Policy Board, FHWA, and the FTA, occurs when any TIP/ STIP action affects the air quality conformity and requires a new regional conformity determination. The MPO and Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) group determines if the change or addition of the project would affect the following as per the Transportation Conformity Rule.

- Addition of a new project that is non-exempt from conformity analysis unless it is deemed Not Regionally Significant (NRS) or subject to a project-level analysis that would not change the conformity finding;
- Changes the project scope so that it becomes non-exempt from conformity analysis; and
- Changes the project completion date and impacts the conformity analysis year.

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<sup>1</sup> As specified in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.306 (i).

**Public Outreach Procedures for a Major Amendment:**

Public outreach for a Major Amendment will include the following steps:

- Institute a 30-day public comment period on the amendment during which the public can submit written comments.
- Place notification of the public comment period in the legal section of the regional newspapers. Notification will include information on the public comment period, how to access relevant information on the SJTPO website, how to submit comments and any additional information, as necessary.
- Place notification of the public comment period on the SJTPO website with an option for submitting comments via e-mail.
- Provide similar notification to interest groups (i.e., COEC, tribal nations) in the region as appropriate.
- Distribute the document(s) under consideration to the SJTPO's designated libraries.
- A summary of oral and written comments received during the above procedures shall be provided, with responses and staff summaries, in the final Policy Board-approved document(s).
- Following approval by the SJTPO Policy Board, SJTPO will forward the amendment package via [e-STIP](#) to NJDOT or New Jersey Transit, requesting the approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

**Minor Amendment**

A Minor Amendment, which also must be approved by the SJTPO Policy Board, FHWA, and the FTA, occurs when a change to the TIP does not affect air quality conformity and does not require a new regional conformity determination. This includes the following circumstances:

- Addition of a new project or program that uses federal funds or available prior year balances;
- Deletion of a project or program that uses federal funds in its entirety;
- Addition of a development phase to a project that results in moving all major phases of work out of the TIP;
- Change of funding source for a project in the TIP from the use of non-federal funds to the use of federal funds;
- Exchange of FHWA or FTA funds for a commensurate amount of non-federal funding between the NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT; or
- Cost increase of more than \$15,000,000 to any phase of work of a project.

**Public Outreach Procedures for a Minor Amendment:**



- A proposed minor Amendment will be listed on the agenda for meetings of the SJTPO Policy Board, which are open to the public and advertised at the start of the year in the regional newspapers. The Policy Board meeting agendas and supporting documentation will be made available for public review twelve days prior to the meeting dates on the SJTPO website, and notification of online availability will be sent to the SJTPO's e-list.
- At meetings of the SJTPO Policy Board, the public will be provided with an opportunity to comment on proposed minor TIP Amendments prior to action being taken by the Board.

### Modification

A Modification refers to any other smaller revision that does not affect conformity. There are three classifications or modifications, as defined in the MOU, and because they not require public comment they are not listed here.

### How to Submit Comments

SJTPO prefers comments in written form (as identified below) to accurately respond to all comments. If assistance is needed to submit a written comment, please contact the SJTPO office at (856) 794-1941 or [info@sjtpo.org](mailto:info@sjtpo.org).

Please send all written comments using any of the following methods:

- **Fax:** (856) 794-2549
- **Email:** [pip@sjtpo.org](mailto:pip@sjtpo.org)
- **Mail:** The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization  
817 East Landis Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Vineland, NJ 08360
- **Online form:** General comments are welcomed through the "Contact Us with Your General Comments" form found toward the bottom of the Public Comment webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/Public-Comment](http://www.sjtpo.org/Public-Comment)) under the Get Involved tab
- **Social media:** Facebook ([www.facebook.com/SJTPO](http://www.facebook.com/SJTPO)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/SJTPO](http://www.twitter.com/SJTPO))\*  
\* See [Appendix D](#) for more information about SJTPO's social media practices.

The public can also comment in person at the following meetings:

- **Policy Board meetings** (scheduled bi-monthly, beginning in January)
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings** (scheduled bi-monthly, beginning in January)
- **Public meetings** (scheduled as needed)

Visit the SJTPO website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)) or call (856) 794-1941 to discuss comments with SJTPO staff or for a current schedule of meetings in which to offer comments. All comments must be received by the close of the comment period to be explicitly addressed and included in the final plan. SJTPO welcomes general comments at any time and will work to properly address any comment or question received.

### How Your Comments will be Used

To maintain an effective and meaningful public involvement process, SJTPO will appropriately consider all public comments. SJTPO is responsible for coordinating a response to comments in a timely manner. A written summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of all significant comments received during the public comment periods on the nine core documents (RTP, TIP, UPWP, PIP, Access for All Transit Plan, CMP, LEP, Title VI Implementation Plan, and Transportation Conformity), and Major Amendments to the TIP will be provided as part of the final document. All final documents are posted on the SJTPO website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)).

# 7. EVALUATING OUR EFFECTIVENESS

SJTPO recognizes the need to periodically review the effectiveness of its public involvement programs and methods. A variety of tools will be used to measure both the quantity and quality of interactions SJTPO has with the public in the four-county region. The evaluation results will be used to modify the practices, as appropriate, to ensure maximum effectiveness. The following are tools that will be used by SJTPO staff to evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement:

## Questionnaires, Polls, and/or Surveys

Questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys may be used to provide feedback on a variety of topics, such as the usefulness of public meetings or events and the practicality of techniques utilized. These materials will be developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the public involvement goals.

Examples of when or what type of questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys may be utilized are listed below.

- **During a comment period to gather input** – Staff may make surveys available through SJTPO’s website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)), e-list, etc. to provide the public with an easy and readily accessible way to submit comments on transportation activities. Polling questions may be used during public meetings to gather input, but also to keep attendees engaged in the material.
- **Public Involvement Questionnaire** – Staff may distribute a periodic questionnaire to gauge the public’s expectations of meetings and events, effectiveness of current outreach practices, suggestions for improvement, etc.

## Assessment of Outreach Tools

SJTPO staff have numerous performance measures that can be used when assessing the Organization’s outreach process and its effectiveness. SJTPO will monitor the following on a six-month (biannual) basis:

Tool	Sample Evaluation Measure
Website	Number of users; number of new users; number of sessions; number of pageviews; average session duration
Social media (per account)	Number of followers; change in followers, number of posts; number of impressions; number of mentions; number of clicks

<b>E-list</b>	Number of subscribers; change in subscribers; number of emails sent; number of bounces; percent of emails opened; percent of emails clicked
<b>Public meetings and events</b>	Number of meetings and events; number of individuals notified; number of attendees; location of meetings and events
<b>News “On the Go” articles</b>	Number of articles posted; when posted; topics posted
<b>Questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys</b>	Number of questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys sent; percent completed
<b>Press releases</b>	Number of press releases distributed and published

**Staff Debriefings**

In addition to biannual evaluations, SJTPO staff will meet on an ongoing basis to review outreach and engagement efforts. During these meetings, staff will determine if improvements and/or the development of new strategies are needed to enhance the public outreach process.

# APPENDIX A. ACCESSIBILITY BROCHURE

Las adaptaciones, realizadas en la medida en que los recursos lo permitan, incluyen:

- **MATERIALES DESARROLLADOS** para informar al público sobre las actividades de la SJTPO y los productos de planificación de transporte.
- **MATERIALES INFORMATIVOS TRADUCIDOS** o intérpretes de idiomas en reuniones públicas.
- **EVENTOS CELEBRADOS EN LUGARES** accesibles para personas con discapacidades y a los que se puede llegar por transporte público cuando las ubicaciones lo permitan.
- **PARA LAS PERSONAS CON DISCAPACIDAD AUDITIVA**, las solicitudes de asistencia deben hacerse por lo menos con siete (7) días hábiles de antelación.
- **LOS COMENTARIOS PÚBLICOS SE PUEDEN ENVIAR** por teléfono, correo electrónico, formulario de comentarios en línea, redes sociales y eventos en persona.
- **EL SITIO WEB DE LA SJTPO** ofrece un “*widget* de accesibilidad” para personas con discapacidades y ofrece una herramienta de traducción en línea para personas que no hablan inglés.

Hay información adicional disponible sobre las políticas de participación pública y no discriminación de la SJTPO en el Plan de participación pública (PIP) y el Plan de implementación del Título VI, que están disponibles en el sitio web de la SJTPO en [www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org).

Para solicitar ayuda para acceder a información o asistir a una reunión o evento público, llame al **(856) 794-1941** (de 8:00 a.m. a 5:00 p.m. entre semana) o envíe un correo electrónico a [TitleVI@sjtpo.org](mailto:TitleVI@sjtpo.org).



## Accessibility at SJTPO: Equitable Access Throughout all Phases of the Transportation Planning Processes



The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization strives to ensure members of the public can participate in projects and programs, and this includes making accommodations for individuals with disabilities and those with limited English Proficiency.



South Jersey  
Transportation  
Planning Organization



## Accesibilidad en SJTPO: Acceso equitativo en todas las fases de los procesos de planificación del transporte



Accommodations, made to the extent that resources allow, include:

- **MATERIALS DEVELOPED** to inform the public about SJTPO activities and transportation planning products.
- **TRANSLATED INFORMATIONAL** materials or language interpreters at public meetings.
- **EVENTS HELD IN VENUES** that are accessible for individuals with disabilities and reachable via public transportation when locations permit.
- **FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED**, requests for assistance should be made at least seven (7) business days in advance.
- **PUBLIC COMMENTS CAN BE SUBMITTED** via phone, email, online comment form, social media, and in-person at events.
- **SJTPO WEBSITE** offers an “accessibility widget” for those with disabilities and features an online translation tool for non-English speaking persons.

Additional information on the SJTPO’s public involvement and nondiscrimination policies is available in the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) and Title VI Implementation Plan, which are available on the SJTPO website at [www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org).

To request assistance in accessing information or attending a public meeting or event, call **(856) 794-1941** (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays) or email [TitleVI@sjtpo.org](mailto:TitleVI@sjtpo.org).

La Organización de Planificación del Transporte de South Jersey se esfuerza por asegurar que los miembros del público puedan participar en proyectos y programas, y esto incluye hacer adaptaciones para personas con discapacidades y aquellos con un dominio limitado de inglés.



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# APPENDIX B. LIST OF LIBRARIES IN WHICH TO VIEW SJTPO DOCUMENTS

County	State Depository Library
Atlantic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atlantic County Library – Mays Landing Branch; Reference Department               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mays Landing; 40 Farragut Avenue; Mays Landing, NJ 08330</li> <li>○ Website: <a href="http://www.atlanticlibrary.org/">www.atlanticlibrary.org/</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Richard E. Bjork Library at Stockton University; Government Documents               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 101 Vera King Farris Drive; Galloway, NJ 08205-9441</li> <li>○ Website: <a href="http://library.stockton.edu/welcome">library.stockton.edu/welcome</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Cumberland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cumberland County Library; Reference Department               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ County Complex; 800 E. Commerce Street; Bridgeton, NJ 08302</li> <li>○ Website: <a href="http://www.cclnj.org">www.cclnj.org</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Salem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salem Free Public Library; Circulation Desk               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 112 W. Broadway; Salem, NJ 08079</li> <li>○ Website: <a href="http://www.mysalemlibrary.org/">www.mysalemlibrary.org/</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Michael S. Cettei Memorial Library at Salem Community College; Reference Department               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 460 Hollywood Avenue; Carneys Point, NJ 08069</li> <li>○ Website: <a href="http://www.salemcc.edu/library/">www.salemcc.edu/library/</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

In March 2021, SJTPO staff contacted the libraries in the region to inquire about the libraries being able to accommodate SJTPO’s transportation planning materials and if they would like to remain on SJTPO’s distribution list. Staff from the Cape May County Library in Cape May Courthouse, New Jersey requested to be taken off the distribution list. The reason being, no members of the public request to review SJTPO’s plans and materials, which are retained behind the Circulation Desk.



## APPENDIX C. FEDERAL LAWS FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement in transportation planning has long been a federal requirement for MPOs. Over the years, the regulations, performance standards, and expectations have been amended and reinforced through additional legislation. The purpose of these federal laws is to guide MPOs to seek thoughtful and proactive feedback from individuals and to address environmental injustice issues. The following are the federal laws SJTPO complies with:

### Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) is one of the principal laws that serves as the foundation for SJTPO's public involvement outreach. This act states, "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any programs or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

The second principal law that serves as the foundation for SJTPO's public involvement outreach is the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) of 1990](#). This landmark civil rights legislation ensures equal opportunity for people with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, and state and local governmental programs and services. The ADA also requires MPOs to host public involvement activities in ADA compliant facilities and allow individuals to have access to the information presented.

### Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991

Signed by President George H.W. Bush in December 1991, the [Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act](#) (ISTEA) established metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) as they exist today. ISTEA also authorized \$155 billion in highway and transit funding over fiscal years 1992-1997.

### Transportation Equity Act of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) of 1998

The [Transportation Equity Act of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century \(TEA-21\)](#) of 1998 authorized the Federal surface transportation programs of highways, highway safety, and transit from 1998 to 2003.

### Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equality Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005

The [Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equality Act: A Legacy for Users](#) or SAFETEA-LU, signed into law by President George W. Bush, was a federal transportation bill that

authorized the federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period, 2005-2009.

### **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) of 2012**

[MAP-21](#), the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, was a law that authorized federal surface and transportation spending and programs. Signed by President Obama, the law expired in September 2014.

### **Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) of 2015**

Signed by President Obama, the 2015 [Fixing American’s Surface Transportation \(FAST\) Act](#) was the federal legislation which provided long-term funding certainty and outlined the public involvement requirements and provided long-term funding certainty for MPOs through Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020. In terms of public involvement, the FTA summarized the requirements as follows: “a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is required to engage in a metropolitan planning process that creates opportunities for public involvement, participation, and consultation,” including throughout the development of its long-range RTP and its TIP. Further, as mandated, the MPO is to provide “adequate public notice of public participation activities; review and comment at key decision points in the development of the [RTP] and TIP; and multiple, accessible participation formats, including electronic and in-person.”

MPOs are also required to “develop a collaborative and comprehensive Public Participation Plan, in full collaboration with the public and stakeholder communities, to be used in the development of the [RTP] and TIP, as well as to frame the strategies for public and stakeholder communication and collaboration in all phases of the planning process.” To allow the public ample time to review and provide feedback, the MPO must make the PIP available for a 45-day comment period. The comments received are to be documented.

When holding public meetings, the locations must be accessible and convenient, if being held in-person. Further, sufficient notice must be given, with information available online. The notices must also solicit the needs of the traditionally underserved population and the MPO must thoroughly consider the input received.

### **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) or Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021**

Signed by President Biden in November 2021, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) is a \$1.0 trillion infrastructure bill. In addition to expanding infrastructure investment beyond transportation, it also increases investment and provides long-term funding certainty into the transportation system through federal fiscal year 2026.

### **Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §450**

The [Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §450](#) provides planning standards for transportation projects. Specifically, §450.316 states that an MPO must develop and abide by a participation plan that thoroughly engages the public, agencies, and other transportation stakeholders. Further, the federal law notes that the plan should address the MPO's procedures for notice of public participation activities, including how the MPO plans to reach all segments of the population as well as how the MPO seeks to receive public comments.

### **Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §771.111**

According to the [Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, §771.111](#), all states that receive federal highway funding must provide the public with “early and continuing opportunities” while a project is in the developmental stages to ensure that “social, economic, and environmental impacts” are identified. In the event that a Federal-aid project requires substantial changes to right-of-way, road layouts or functions, negatively impacts an abutting property, or results in any other significant impacts, a public hearing must be held. The public must have reasonable notice of the public hearing. The notice must include an explanation as to why the hearing is being held, such as the project's purpose, possible alternatives, anticipated impacts, as well as the procedures for receiving oral and written public comments.

### **Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations”**

[Executive Order 12898](#), “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations,” directs federal agencies, including federally funded MPOs, to evaluate the health and environmental impacts of their proposed programs and actions on minority and underserved populations. Further, the order promotes nondiscrimination within programs as well as ensures that communication related to human health and the environment is readily accessible, comprehensible, and translated into other languages “whenever practicable and appropriate.”

### **Executive Order 13166, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency”**

[Executive Order 13166](#), “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency,” relates to public engagement of limited English proficiency (LEP) individuals. The order states that a “Federal agency shall prepare a plan to improve access to its federally conducted programs and activities by eligible LEP persons.” The order enables an agency to have substantial freedom when crafting its LEP plan; however, to assist, the U.S. Department of Justice issued a policy guidance document, “Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 -

National Origin Discrimination Against Persons with Limited English Proficiency," also known as the [2002 LEP Guidance](#).

### **Executive Order 13985, “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government”**

[Executive Order 13985](#), “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government,” issued on the first day of the Biden-Harris administration. The order states that converging economic, health, and climate crises have exposed and exacerbated inequities. The Biden administration will pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, in particular by fighting systemic racism. By promoting the federal government's equality, we can generate chances to strengthen historically neglected neighborhoods that benefit everyone.

## APPENDIX D. SJTPO SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENT POLICY

The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) is a government agency that guides the transportation planning process in Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. SJTPO utilizes social media platforms, the primary platforms being Twitter and Facebook to provide an opportunity to inform interested parties on matters regarding SJTPO.

The following information may be posted on applicable social media pages:

- SJTPO Policy Board meetings and agendas
- Information as it relates to major planning documents, such as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Long Range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Release of Request for Proposals (RFPs)
- Outreach event information and images
- Roadway-related information and statistics
- *On the Go* publications
- Other information, as deemed appropriate by SJTPO staff.

SJTPO encourages the public to share thoughts related to regional transportation on these platforms with the understanding that the comments and opinions expressed do not reflect SJTPO or its employees. All public comments on SJTPO's social media platforms are reviewed and screened in accordance with this policy and may be taken down if deemed necessary.

### External User Guidelines

- SJTPO does not allow graphic, obscene, explicit, racial or otherwise discriminatory comments or submissions, nor does the agency allow comments that are abusive, hateful, or intended to defame anyone or any organization.
- SJTPO does not endorse, support, or promote any private or commercial entity or the information, products, or services contained on websites that may be reached through external links from SJTPO's social media pages.
- SJTPO does not allow comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity.
- All SJTPO social media authors and public commentators must be clearly identified. Anonymous postings are not allowed. Personal responsibility for comments is assumed, according to the username and any information provided.
- SJTPO reviews all comments and reserves the right to remove messages containing inappropriate content.

As social media is a fast-evolving means of public interface, this policy statement is subject to amendment or modification at any time to ensure its continued use is consistent with its intended purpose as a limited forum. Questions or concerns regarding SJTPO's presence in various social media channels should be directed to Melissa Melora at [mmelora@sjtpo.org](mailto:mmelora@sjtpo.org) or (856) 794-1941.

## APPENDIX E. MEDIA CONTACTS

As part of SJTPO’s efforts to reach and inform residents in the region, SJTPO places paid advertisements in the larger, regional newspapers – The Press of Atlantic City, The Daily Journal, and the South Jersey Times – to announcement public meeting schedules, public comment opportunities, employment opportunities, etc.

Additionally, the SJTPO region is home to many smaller newspapers and television/radio outlets. At this time, SJTPO does not use these outlets for advertising purposes. Rather, when appropriate, SJTPO sends press releases. The outlets will then contact SJTPO if the information in the press releases is of relevance.

The table below details all media outlets in the region known to SJTPO. In **bold** are newspapers SJTPO uses for paid advertisements.

County	Media Outlet
Atlantic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Atlantic City Weekly</li> <li>Shore News Today</li> <li>The Hammonton Gazette</li> <li><b>The Press of Atlantic City</b></li> </ul>
Cape May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cape May Star &amp; Wave</li> <li>Shore News Today</li> <li><b>The Press of Atlantic City</b></li> </ul>
Cumberland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reminder Newspaper</li> <li>The Sentinel</li> <li><b>South Jersey Times</b></li> <li><b>The Daily Journal</b></li> <li>SNJ Today Newspaper</li> <li><b>The Press of Atlantic City</b></li> </ul>
Salem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elmer Times Company</li> <li><b>South Jersey Times</b></li> </ul>
Television/Radio Outlets	
62 Telemundo	
Ritmo Broadcasting (105.7 FM Vineland)	

## APPENDIX F. DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS REQUEST FORM

**The Documents and Records Request form is not a New Jersey Open Public Records Act (OPRA) form, as SJTPO Legal Counsel determined SJTPO is not subject to the Act.**

SJTPO makes all final plans, programs, and studies produced by the Organization available for examination on its website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)) and at the SJTPO office, upon request. Documents are also viewable at select libraries throughout the four-county SJTPO region (see [Appendix B](#)).

If you are unable to view documents on SJTPO's website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)), the SJTPO office, or at select libraries in the SJTPO region, you may request noncolor copies, where practical. Fees for copies are \$0.05 per letter page or \$0.07 per legal page. Copies may be picked up at the SJTPO office for no additional charge or mailed at the expense of the receiver. SJTPO may waive totals under \$1.00. Printing and postage costs must be paid by receiver prior to mailing. Checks or money orders must be made out to the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA). Cash is not accepted. Interested parties can make a request by completing the form below, filling out an [online form](#) or by calling (856) 794-1941.

The Documents and Records Request Form can be found on the next page.





# South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization

*Serving Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland,  
and Salem Counties since 1993.*

Leonard Desiderio, *Chairman*

Benjamin H. Laury, *Vice Chairman*

817 East Landis Avenue, 2nd Floor  
Vineland, New Jersey 08360

[www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)  
(856) 794-1941  
(856) 794-2549 (fax)

Jennifer Marandino, P.E.  
*Executive Director*

John W. Risley, *Secretary/Treasurer*

## Access to Documents and Records Form

*Please complete and send to SJTPO by email ([info@sjtpo.org](mailto:info@sjtpo.org)), U.S. Mail, fax, or in-person at SJTPO's office.*

**Date requested:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request submitted by:**     Email         U.S. Mail         Fax         In-person

**Name of Requester (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street Address (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**City/State/Zip (Required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone (Optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email (Optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Records Requested:** *Please provide as much specific detail as possible so that SJTPO can identify the information. Please use additional sheets if necessary.*

**Do you want to be notified in advance if the cost exceeds \$10.00?**                     Yes         No

---

### For SJTPO Use Only

**Date Received by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Response Deadline:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date Response Provided:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Executive Director Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Atlantic County | Cape May County | Cumberland County | Salem County  
City of Atlantic City | City of Sea Isle City | City of Vineland | Quinton Township  
NJDOT | NJ TRANSIT | SJTA

## APPENDIX G. TRANSPORTATION CONTACTS

The ensuing is an excerpt from SJTPO's Public Engagement Guide, viewable at [www.sjtpo.org/EngagementGuide](http://www.sjtpo.org/EngagementGuide).

### SJTPO Subregions

#### Atlantic County

Department of Regional Planning and Development

Phone: (609) 645-5898

[www.atlantic-county.org](http://www.atlantic-county.org)

#### Cape May County

Planning Department

Phone: (609) 465-1080

[www.capemaycountynj.gov](http://www.capemaycountynj.gov)

#### Cumberland County

Department of Planning

Phone: (856) 453-2175

[www.co.cumberland.nj.us](http://www.co.cumberland.nj.us)

#### Salem County

Planning Board

Phone: (856) 935-7510 x8414

[www.salemcountynj.gov](http://www.salemcountynj.gov)

#### City of Atlantic City

Department of Planning and Development

Phone: (609) 347-5300

[www.acnj.gov](http://www.acnj.gov)

#### City of Vineland

Division of Planning

Phone: (856) 794-4000

[www.vinelandcity.org](http://www.vinelandcity.org)

### Implementing Agencies

#### Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA)

P.O. Box 71

New Castle, Delaware 19720

Phone: (302) 571-6300

[www.drba.net](http://www.drba.net)

#### New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT)

P.O. Box 600

Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0600

Phone: (609) 530-2000

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation>

#### New Jersey Transit (NJ TRANSIT)

One Penn Plaza East

Newark, New Jersey 07105

24-hour transit information: (973) 275-5555

[www.njtransit.com](http://www.njtransit.com)

#### New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJTA)

P.O. Box 5042

Woodbridge, New Jersey 07095-5042

Phone: (732) 750-5300

[www.njta.com](http://www.njta.com)

#### South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA)

P.O. Box 351

Hammonton, New Jersey 08037

Phone: (609) 965-6060

[www.sjta.com](http://www.sjta.com)

### Local Public Transportation Services

#### Atlantic County Transportation Unit

201 Shore Road – Rear Building, 2nd Floor  
Northfield, New Jersey 08225

Phone: (609) 645-7700

[www.atlantic-county.org/intergenerational-services](http://www.atlantic-county.org/intergenerational-services)

## Local Public Transportation Services (Continued)

### Cape May County Fare Free Transportation

4 Moore Road  
Cape May Court House, New Jersey 08210  
Phone: (609) 889-3700  
[www.capemaycountynj.gov/446/Fare-Free-Transportation](http://www.capemaycountynj.gov/446/Fare-Free-Transportation)

### Cumberland Area Transit System

800 East Commerce Street  
Bridgeton, New Jersey 08302  
Phone: (856) 691-7799  
[www.co.cumberland.nj.us/aging/CATS](http://www.co.cumberland.nj.us/aging/CATS)

### Cumberland County Dept. of Workforce Development

P.O. Box 1500  
3322 College Drive  
Vineland, New Jersey 08362-1500  
Phone: (856) 696-5660  
[www.co.cumberland.nj.us/workforcedevelopment](http://www.co.cumberland.nj.us/workforcedevelopment)

### Mid-Atlantic States Career and Education Center (Salem County)

111 South Broadway  
Pennsville, New Jersey 08070  
Phone: (856) 514-2200  
[wegrowpeople.org](http://wegrowpeople.org)

### NJ TRANSIT Access Link

One Penn Plaza East, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Phone: +1 (800) 955-ADA1 (2321)  
TTY: +1 (800) 955-6765  
<https://www.njtransit.com/accessibility/access-link-ada-paratransit>

### Pearl Transit (Salem County)

105 Spillway Drive  
Salem, New Jersey 08079  
Phone: (856) 279-2000  
[www.pearltransit.org](http://www.pearltransit.org)

### Salem County Office on Aging and Disability Services

110 5th Street, Suite 900  
Salem, New Jersey 08079  
Phone: (856) 339-8644  
[health.salemcountynj.gov/human-services/office-on-aging](http://health.salemcountynj.gov/human-services/office-on-aging)

## Federal Partners

### Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) New Jersey Division

840 Bear Tavern Road, Suite 202  
West Trenton, NJ 08628  
Phone: (609) 637-4200  
[www.fhwa.dot.gov/njdiv](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/njdiv)

### Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region II

One Bowling Green, Room 428  
New York, New York 10004  
Phone: (212) 668-2170  
[www.transit.dot.gov/about/regional-offices](http://www.transit.dot.gov/about/regional-offices)

## Transportation Management Association (TMA)

### Cross County Connection

4A Eves Drive, Suite 114  
Marlton, New Jersey 08053  
Phone: (856) 596-8228  
[www.driveless.com](http://www.driveless.com)

## Travel and Traffic

### 511NJ

Phone: Dial 511  
[www.511nj.org](http://www.511nj.org)

## APPENDIX H. KNOWING WHO TO CONTACT

The following information is taken from SJTPO's Public Engagement Guide, which is available on the Public Engagement Guide webpage ([www.sjtpo.org/EngagementGuide](http://www.sjtpo.org/EngagementGuide)).

From time to time, we all experience issues on the transportation system. We may notice a pothole, a damaged sign, a malfunctioning signal, overgrown vegetation that blocks the view of an intersection, or simply have a suggestion to improve a roadway or intersection. Knowing the proper organization to contact is the difference between getting an issue resolved and continuing to be frustrated. This information is meant as a starting point to help identify the correct organization to contact. Your specific issue may best be addressed by speaking to local public works staff or attending a board or committee meeting.

### State-Owned Roadways

The State owns and is responsible for 394 miles of interstate highways (such as Interstate 295), US highways (such as Route 40), and State highways (such as Route 49) in our region. Any roadways



with the signage types shown at right are the jurisdiction of the State of New Jersey. Where a state-owned roadway intersects with a county or municipal roadway, the state generally maintains the intersection. For an issue on one of these roadways, contact the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) at 1-800-Pothole or visit [www.state.nj.us/transportation/commuter/potholeform.shtm](http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/commuter/potholeform.shtm) for the online form.

### Authority-Owned Roadways

Authorities own and operate three significant roadways in our region. These roadways are separate from the state-owned roadways managed by NJDOT. The Garden State Parkway and New Jersey Turnpike are



owned by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority ([www.njta.com/](http://www.njta.com/)), who can be reached at (732) 750-5300. The Atlantic City Expressway is owned by the South Jersey Transportation Authority ([www.sjta.com/sjta/](http://www.sjta.com/sjta/)), who can be reached at (609) 965-6060.

### County-Owned Roadways

Counties own and are responsible for all roadways numbered in the 500s, 600s, and 700s, which total over 1,400 miles in our region. Any roadways marked with signs similar to the one shown here is owned and maintained by a county. Where a county-owned roadway intersects with a state roadway, the state generally



maintains the intersection. However, where a county route intersects with a municipal roadway, the county generally maintains the intersection. On the next page are contacts for the county planning departments in our region.

### **Municipally-Owned Roadways**

Municipalities generally own and are responsible for all of the roadways not addressed above. With over 3,200 miles of roads, if the roadway in question does not have any of the signage previously shown, it is likely owned by a municipality. Where a municipally owned roadway intersects with a county or state roadway, the county or state generally maintains the intersection. With 68 municipalities in the SJTPO region alone, we cannot list contacts for each municipality here, but the State maintains a list of municipal websites ([www.state.nj.us/nj/gov/county/localgov.html](http://www.state.nj.us/nj/gov/county/localgov.html)).

## APPENDIX I. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

1. **COMMENT:** You mentioned being able to provide accommodations, when requested. Can you explain in further detail?

**RESPONSE: SJTPO:** *Providing accommodations is new to staff. A Spanish Civil Rights in Outreach virtual public meeting took place on Saturday, March 20, 2021. The interpreter was provided through the consultant for the Multilingual Outreach Services Study. When the Study concludes, staff will not have an interpreter or translator readily available. Thus, staff must research and contact professional translation providers to better understand how to establish a contract for such services. In terms of additional accommodations, staff is currently able to provide closed captioning, such as for a hearing impairment, through PowerPoint and GoToWebinar, which is the conferencing platform staff use for virtual public meetings. Researching how staff can provide an array of accommodations is imperative.*

2. **COMMENT:** You also have accommodations on your website, which is a great feature.

**RESPONSE: SJTPO:** *Thank you for mentioning the accommodations menu available on each page of the SJTPO website ([www.sjtpo.org](http://www.sjtpo.org)). The menu offers an array of accommodations, such as text spacing, bigger text, color contrast of the screen, and highlighting of links. The accommodations menu is provided by USERWAY, which ensures SJTPO's website is Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible.*

3. **COMMENT:** During the polling questions you mentioned in-person and virtual public meeting options. Once we are able to gather in-person safely, do you think you will continue to offer a virtual option?

**RESPONSE: SJTPO:** *At this time, staff intends to continue to offer a virtual option once it is safe to hold in-person public meetings. Staff understands that people are busy. The times staff schedules public meetings may not work for everyone. Additionally, members of the public may not want or be able to travel a certain distance from their home or workplace. However, moving forward from the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be important for staff to not rely solely on virtual outreach. Staff is concerned that not all segments of the public, specifically individuals that may not have access to reliable devices and internet, are able to have their voices heard. Once it is deemed safe to gather, staff will host traditional, in-person public meetings.*

4. **COMMENT:** How do I join the Community Outreach and Engagement Committee.

**RESPONSE: SJTPO:** Thank you for your interest in the Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC). The Committee is to be comprised of members that work with and are involved in local community organizations and non-profit groups that serve or otherwise represent the voices and needs of our diverse region. The main objective of the COEC is for members to provide feedback on SJTPO's public involvement opportunities as well as spread the word about these involvement opportunities. More information will be forthcoming.

5. **COMMENT:** Without any translation providers under contract, how would you translate documents in other languages?

**RESPONSE: SJTPO:** SJTPO's consultant for the Multilingual Outreach Services Study has assessed automated translations services. The consultant has deemed Google Translate as the most useful automated translation tool for facilitating conversations via the public participation and engagement process. SJTPO staff is cognizant of professional translation services remaining the best choice for accuracy, understanding, and cultural appropriateness. However, until a contract with such a vendor is able to be secured, SJTPO will utilize Google Translate to bridge the gap.

**Public Comment from Facebook:**

6. **COMMENT:** Does this mean you stand for equality or equity?

**RESPONSE: SJTPO:** Thanks for the question! For anyone else reading who might not know, in this context, equality would be to treat everyone exactly the same in trying to achieve our objective, in this case informing the public and getting feedback on our projects and programs. Equity would be doing what we (reasonably) can to give everyone an equal opportunity to learn about our work and give feedback, including making accommodations to meet the needs of a variety of different people. Some examples of this could include holding meetings at different times so people with different work schedules can attend, providing options for individuals with visual or audible impairments or those who may not be able to fully read and speak English. There are some specific federal guidelines that direct exactly how and when we need to do some of these things, which are discussed in the [Title VI Implementation Plan](#), [Limited English Proficiency \(LEP\) Plan](#), and [Public Involvement Plan \(PIP\)](#), but in short to work to not only meet our federal requirements but also serve our region's diverse population, we do our best to serve the region equitably.

7. **COMMENT:** Save tax dollars first. Lighten your director high paying jobs. Place the common man/woman [on] your board and committees. Then talk equality and equity. How many people currently in management are considered minorities[?] Time to step up to the plate. By the way[,] more bicycle lanes don't count as projects.

***RESPONSE: SJTPO:** Thank you for your comments. Regarding the spending of tax dollars, transportation improvement projects undergo various stages of scrutiny and work to make them a reality, including evaluations to ensure projects deliver the greatest benefit possible for their expenditure and to scrutinize costs against available funds. Unfortunately, projects, studies to develop projects, and staff with the expertise to implement both of those, are all expensive. That said, SJTPO staff are very focused on how to best utilize our federal funds in an efficient manner and leverage those funds to do the most and most valuable work possible for the region.*

*Regarding bicycle lanes, they are rarely, if ever implemented on their own, but are generally one of a series of proven safety improvements on a project, and often incorporated into repaving. As safety is a federal, state, and local priority, and bicycle and pedestrian crashes are greatly over-represented in New Jersey it is important that the safety of all users of our roadway network is addressed.*

*We agree, we would like to see more diversity among our staff. However, when advertising for open positions we have received limited diversity among applicants. We do have strong female representation on our staff, including our Executive Director, and in a male-dominated field, we are pleased with that. But your point is well-taken and we will look for ways to do better on our upcoming advertisements.*

*Regarding our committees, membership on our Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Policy Board are largely shaped by federal guidance. Our Policy Board members are generally elected officials of our jurisdictions who are not paid by SJTPO to participate. The TAC is primarily comprised of the planning and engineering staff of those jurisdictions. However, staff is currently in the process of developing a Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (COEC) that will be comprised of members that work with and are involved in local community organizations and non-profit groups that serve or otherwise represent the voices and needs of our diverse region.*



# **APPENDIX J. POLICY BOARD RESOLUTION**

**SOUTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**RESOLUTION 2309-39: Adopting the SJTPO Public Involvement Plan (PIP)**

**WHEREAS, the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated under Federal law for the southern region of New Jersey, including Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties; and**

**WHEREAS, SJTPO is responsible for the development and implementation of a plan that describes its public involvement process and how it involves the public in SJTPO's various planning documents and programs; and**

**WHEREAS, SJTPO's current Public Involvement Plan was adopted on May 23, 2022; and**

**WHEREAS, the Federal Planning Regulations require that the Public Involvement Plan be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness; and**

**WHEREAS, the Public Involvement Plan was updated to reflect the relationship between the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), outlining each document's revision and approval processes; and**

**WHEREAS, the updates were recommended to SJTPO by Federal Partners during the Federal Certification Review in March 2023; and**

**WHEREAS, a 46-day public comment period was held from July 5, 2023, to August 20, 2023, meeting the required 45-day public comment period associated with the Public Involvement Plan; and**

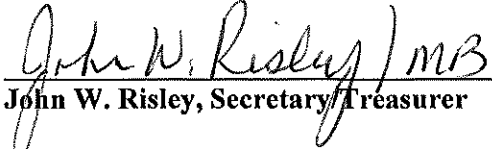
**WHEREAS, members of the public, including members of disadvantaged communities, affected public agencies, private transportation providers, and all interested parties have had the opportunity to participate and have their views considered in the development of the revisions to the SJTPO Public Involvement Plan; and**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Policy Board of the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization hereby adopts the SJTPO Public Involvement Plan.**

**BE IT, FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Policy Board authorizes the Executive Director to review and approve subsequent changes to the Public Involvement Plan, as needed, to adhere to federal guidance, and to implement the Public Involvement Plan accordingly.**

**Certification**

**I hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct and true copy of a resolution adopted by the Policy Board of the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization at its meeting on September 25, 2023.**

  
**John W. Risley, Secretary/Treasurer**