

A Guide to Rhode Island's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development Process Federal Fiscal Years 2013—2016



August 2011



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Introduction

The Rhode Island State Planning Council/Metropolitan Planning Organization is launching the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for federal fiscal years 2013 – 2016. This guide provides assistance to stakeholders interested in development of Rhode Island’s TIP 2013 – 2016. Project proposal application forms and associated materials are available at www.planning.ri.gov/transportation/default.htm or by contacting Karen Scott, Assistant Chief of the Statewide Planning Program at karen.scott@doa.ri.gov or 401-222-4411 or Linsey Cameron, Supervising Transportation Planner at linsey.cameron@doa.ri.gov or 401-222-6479. All applications are due October 28, 2011.

Background on the TIP

The TIP is a list of transportation projects the State of Rhode Island intends to implement using United States Department of Transportation funds. For transportation projects to utilize federal funds it must be included in the TIP. The TIP lists projects by category which include: Bicycle / Pedestrian, Bridge, Congestion Management Air Quality (CMAQ), Enhancement, Highway, Interstate, Major Projects, Pavement Management, Planning, Study and Development, Traffic Safety, Transit - Bus, Transit - Rail, Administration, and Earmarks. Descriptions of these programs can be found in the current TIP at www.planning.ri.gov/tip/tip912.pdf. The TIP is the product of an extensive public planning and outreach effort to communities, public interest groups, and citizens throughout the state by agencies all involved in transportation planning and project implementation.

The State Planning Council, acting as the single statewide Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in Rhode Island, is responsible for adopting a new TIP every four (4) years. The TIP must present a four (4) year program, by year, and may present additional future year funding for projects. The TIP lists specific projects according to an anticipated phased schedule of expenditures. Project scheduling in the TIP denotes that implementation is expected to begin during the TIP’s four-year timeframe. However the TIP schedule of project implementation is not fixed, rather it serves as the best estimate for development at the time it is adopted. Sometimes projects cannot adhere to the TIP schedule and will be moved to a later year. Conversely, projects may also proceed faster than planned and can be advanced to an earlier year.

A project’s inclusion in the TIP is a critical step, implying that the project is a priority. However it does not represent an allocation of funds, obligation to fund, or grant of funds. Projects supported with federal dollars are only guaranteed funding after the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) or the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) or the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) reviews the design, financing, and environmental impacts of a project. Beyond this point, a project sponsor works with RIDOT, RIPTA, or the federal agencies to guarantee the federal funding identified in the TIP. This federal guarantee is referred to as an obligation.

The TIP must be fiscally constrained, meaning the list of projects in the TIP may not exceed the anticipated funding that is reasonably expected to be available over the four-year timeframe. In order to add projects to the TIP, sufficient revenues must be available, other projects must be deferred, or new revenues must be identified. As a result, the TIP is not a wish list but a list of projects with anticipated, but not guaranteed, funding commitments during the timeframe.

An approved TIP may be amended in order to add new projects, delete projects, advance projects, or accommodate changes in project scope, cost of construction, or phasing of a project. The State Planning Council requires public comment on major amendments to the TIP.

Process for Developing the TIP

The TIP is developed according to the State Planning Council's Rule IX, "Transportation Planning and Public Involvement Procedures, available at www.planning.state.ri.us/spc/spchome.htm and the State Planning Council/Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Participation Guide, attached as Appendix C. The Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program (RISPP) prepares the TIP in cooperation with the RIDOT and RIPTA, with the participation of interested cities, towns, and the public.

The State Planning Council's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) works with the staff in developing a draft TIP. Membership of the TAC reflects a diversity of geographic parts of the state and of the transportation interests, users, operators, environmental and economic development organizations, state and local officials, and interested citizens. Membership of the TAC can be found at www.planning.ri.gov/tac/default.htm.

Cities and towns, through their municipal executives, may submit project proposals. Citizens, state agencies, regional planning agencies, transportation providers and non-profit organizations may also submit proposals, provided the proponent notify the chief executive of the city or town in which the project is located. This notification process is outlined in New Project Proposals section of this document. All projects must be consistent with the local comprehensive plan.

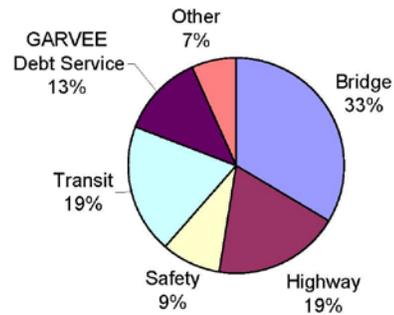
All proposals are required to be presented at one (1) of four (4) regional public hearings to be conducted by the TAC. Following the evaluation and scoring of proposals by the TAC, a draft TIP will be prepared, and opportunity for local and public comment will be provided. Following revisions to reflect public input, a final TIP will be presented to the State Planning Council for adoption. Please refer to the timeline provided in Appendix A.

Funding Constraints

Similar to many other states, Rhode Island is facing a transportation funding crisis. The funding constraints encountered during the preparation of the current FFY 09-12 TIP have not improved and both federal and state resources have become even further strained. For the current TIP, an average of

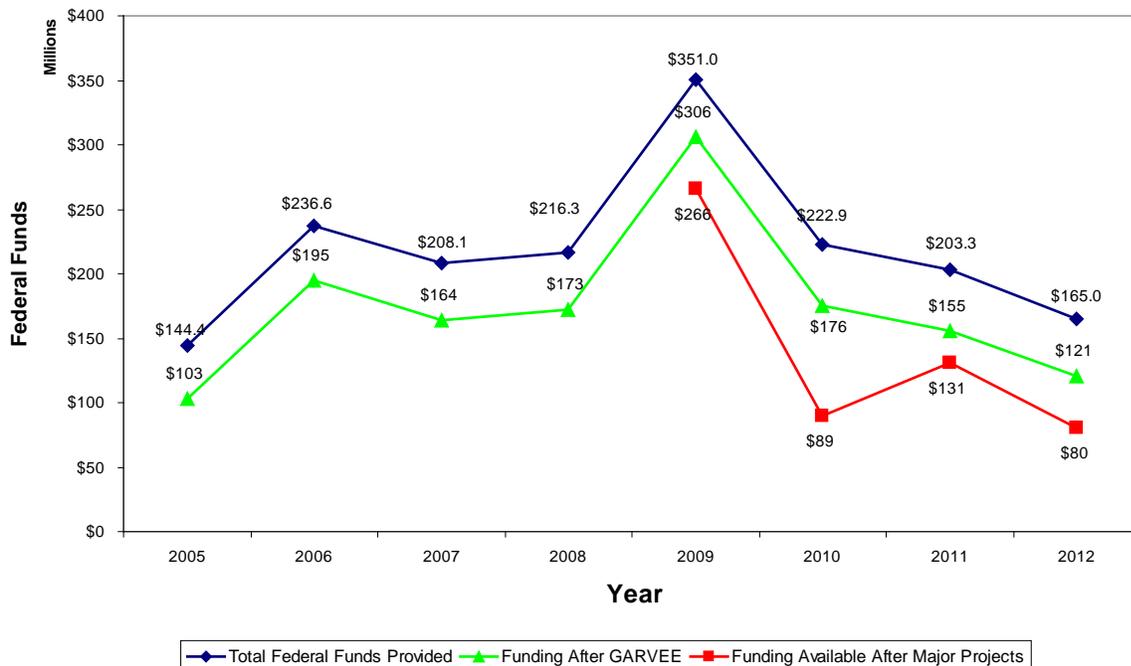
approximately \$210 million dollars in federal highway funding was available per year. The Federal Highway Administration estimates that Rhode Island is likely to receive significantly less federal funding and advised the State to use an allocation of \$160 million per year for future TIP planning, a decrease of 24 percent. Similar decreases are expected in transit funding. Unfortunately, the available funding for new transportation projects is further reduced by the State's current commitments, including annual debt service, existing major projects, and mandated and mission-critical operations of RIDOT and RIPTA.

TIP 2011 - 2012 Program Functional Categories



The projected decrease in funding is expected to take effect in federal fiscal year 2012, which begins October 1, 2011. The reduction will affect projects in the current FFY 09-12 TIP, as well as the number of projects to be included in the FFY 13-16 TIP. The state and national transportation funding crisis makes it more important than ever to ensure that our scarce resources are focused on priority projects.

Federal Highway Funding Projected Impact of GARVEE & Major Projects



TIP Preparation Workshops

The RISPP, RIDOT, and RIPTA will host two (2) workshops outlining the application process for the FFY 13-16 TIP. The workshops are being held to assist cities and towns, and other groups and individuals in developing transportation project proposals. These workshops will be held at:

Monday October 3, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.

Department of Admiration
William E. Powers Building
Conference Room A, 2nd Floor
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

Monday October 3, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

Department of Administration
William E. Powers Building
Conference Room A, 2nd Floor
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

Municipal Project Reprioritization

A status report of projects listed in the current TIP by municipality has been developed. This report can be found at www.planning.ri.gov/transportation/default.htm. Based on this report, you will be able to identify those projects that have been completed, those where the State is committed to implementation and those that are not likely to be implemented prior to the close of FFY 12 due to anticipated funding constraints. Those projects not likely to be implemented due to funding constraints represent projects that are ripe for reprioritization in the development of the FFY 13-16 TIP. In preparation of the FFY 13-16 TIP, the State Planning Council recognizes the need and benefit of direct municipal input into this reprioritization process. To assist with this effort, the State Planning Council/MPO is requesting that each municipality:

1. Review the list of projects in the current FFY 09-12 TIP that are not projected for implementation according to RIDOT's project status report to ensure that they are still relevant to the municipality's transportation goals.
2. If there is a priority project that is not listed in the current FFY 09-12 TIP, it may be submitted for consideration by completing an Application for New Projects.
3. Submit a single, prioritized list of projects on the Project Prioritization Cover Sheet that includes projects from the current FFY 09-12 TIP that you would like to move forward to the FFY 13-16 TIP, as well as any new project submissions. There is a column in each status report that specifically states whether or not the project must be included in your reprioritization list to be considered for inclusion in the FFY 13-16 TIP. No project from the FFY 09-12 TIP will be carried forward to the FFY 13-16 TIP unless it is specifically listed on the Project Prioritization Cover Sheet.

New project applications are not necessary for any project that is currently listed in the TIP. However, a modification to a project listed in the FFY 09-12 TIP will be considered a new project and must follow the application instructions for new projects listed below. **Any project in the existing TIP that an applicant would like to propose for inclusion in the FFY 2013-2016 TIP must be included on the Project Prioritization Cover Sheet. No projects listed in the FFY 09-12 TIP will be automatically carried over into the FFY13-16 TIP.**

New Project Proposals

There is a wide variety of projects that are eligible for listing on the TIP. These include but are not limited to:

Bike Path & Bike Lane Construction	Sidewalk Construction	Bridge Rehabilitation
Projects that Benefit Air Quality	Roadway Drainage Improvements	Park and Ride Lots
Highway Widening or Reconstruction	Intermodal Centers	Ferry Landings
Interstate Improvements	Resurfacing Projects	Corridor Studies
Study & Development of New Projects	Intersection Improvements	Signalization
Turning Lanes	Railroad Crossings	Roadway Striping
New Transit Initiatives	New Transit Vehicles	Rail Stations

Any resurfacing project must be proposed on Federal Aid System eligible roadways only. To see if a particular roadway is Federal Aid System eligible, please refer to www.dot.ri.gov/Local_Roads_Fed_Aid_System.asp.

In order to streamline the process for new project submissions, the amount of information initially required has been simplified. All projects submitted will be categorized by RISPP and RIDOT staff and reviewed by the TAC according to the Transportation Improvement Program, Project Evaluation Criteria and Guidance on Applying Criteria for Evaluation of Project Proposals (Appendix B). Those projects with the highest scores may be asked to complete a more detailed application for further review, if necessary. Please keep in mind the severe funding constraints that face the State as you prepare your new project submissions in terms of scope of work and number of proposals. New Projects included in the FFY 13-16 TIP will be significantly limited due to funding limitations so please prioritize your request accordingly.

All project proposals must be in conformance with the State Guide Plan, including the Land Use Plan, *Land Use 2025* and the Long Range Transportation Plan, *Transportation 2030*. These plans are available at <http://www.planning.state.ri.us/publist/online.htm>. Projects must also be consistent with the applicable Local Comprehensive Plan.

Project proposals must be submitted on the application forms available at www.planning.ri.gov/transportation/default.htm. For your convenience, these forms may be completed using Adobe Acrobat, which can be downloaded at <http://get.adobe.com/reader/otherversions/>. All application forms must be complete to be considered for funding. Additional pages beyond the required documents will not be considered during the initial project evaluation and should not be submitted. For any application submitted by a Regional Planning Agency, Non-Profit Organization, or member of the public, the Chief Elected Official of the municipality that the project is proposed in must sign the application or a separate letter acknowledging notice of the project must be attached. A map

must accompany each individual project application. This map must clearly indicate the project location with street names and/or route numbers. It is preferred that this map is 8 ½" x 11" in size.

For any municipality resubmitting projects from the FFY 09-12 TIP or any entity submitting new projects, a Project Prioritization Cover Sheet must be included. All projects (resubmitted projects from the FFY 09-12 TIP and new projects) must be listed in priority order on this sheet. **Submissions that are not accompanied by the Project Prioritization Cover Sheet will not be reviewed.**

Because of the very limited federal and state funds available, the willingness of a community to contribute financially to a project will be considered, and this information of commitment must appear on the Application form. In addition, extra points will be given to projects that provide essential access to or are planned in a designated Enterprise Zone. A listing of designated Enterprise Zones in Rhode Island can be found at www.riedc.com/business-services/enterprise-zones.

Public Participation

Local governments are urged to involve the public in the preparation of their TIP recommendations through advisory committees, public meetings, and other methods. Demonstrated public support and involvement affect project rankings. **At a minimum, city and town governments shall hold a public hearing on projects they intend to submit for the TIP.** Local Planning Boards and Commissions, Joint Municipal Planning Commissions established under Chapter 45-22.1 of the General Laws, Regional Councils of Local Governments established under Chapter 45-43 of the General Laws, and municipal and regional committees may also propose projects. Any proposals by such organizations shall be submitted through the chief elected official of the city or town in which the project is located and shall be subject to the local public hearing requirement. Public hearings shall be in accordance with local procedures and prior to the proposal submission deadline of October 28, 2011. Applications with public hearing dates after October 28, 2011 will not be accepted.

There will be several opportunities for public participation throughout the TIP development process. These opportunities include:

- Four (4) public hearings to present projects
- Public Hearing on draft TIP
- Attendance at any Transportation Advisory Committee, Technical Committee, and State Planning Council meeting

Final Project Application Submission

The following information constitutes a complete TIP submission package:

Eight (8) collated copies of all completed application forms and supporting materials including:

- Project Prioritization Cover Sheet, including a ranking of all projects proposed by the applicant

- Application for New Projects for each new project proposed, signed and completed
- Electronic file of the complete application (provided via e-mail to linsey.cameron@doa.ri.gov or on a CD)

This information must be received at Statewide Planning, to the attention of Linsey Cameron by **Friday, October 28, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.** Late applications will not be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Project Application Presentations

All applications must be presented at one (1) of four (4) regional public hearings to be conducted by the Transportation Advisory Council (TAC). These public hearing will be held in the following locations:

Monday, November 7, 2011 at 6:00 pm

South Kingstown Town Hall
180 High Street, Wakefield, RI

Tuesday, November 8, 2011 at 9:00 am

RI Department of Administration
William E. Powers Building
Conference Room A, Second Floor
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at 6:00 pm

John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley Corridor
Commission Office
One Depot Square, Woonsocket, RI

Thursday, November 10, 2011 at 6:00 pm

Middletown Town Hall
350 East Main Road, Middletown, RI

Presentation of an application can be done through an oral or written statement for the record, delivered at one of the hearings. This presentation must identify the proposal and briefly describing the project in terms of location and scope of work requested. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the hearing in the region in which your project is proposed. Although the public hearing dates are confirmed, if there are any changes due to a weather event or any other unforeseen circumstances, information will be posted <http://www.planning.state.ri.us/transportation/default.htm>. **Every applicant must attend one (1) of the public hearings listed above, including those applicants who may only be proposing a reprioritization of existing projects.**

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposed New Projects

All initial project submissions will be reviewed by the TAC according to the Transportation Improvement Program, Project Selection Criteria, attached as Appendix B. The scoring system permits a scale of negative five to positive five. Projects that would result in negative impacts could lose points. Guidance on applying criteria for evaluation to new project proposals has also been included in Appendix B. Once projects have been separated into appropriate funding categories by RIDOT and RISPP staff and

evaluated by the TAC, additional information may be sought on the highest ranked projects prior to selecting projects for inclusion in the draft FFY 13-16 TIP.

Preparation of the Draft TIP

After all reprioritized projects from the FY 09-12 TIP and all new projects have been reviewed and ranked, RIDOT and RISPP staff will prepare a draft TIP document. This document will include text outlining policies and themes of the TIP, the transportation planning process, the organization of transportation planning in Rhode Island, and an analysis of the projects included in the document for funding. In addition to the text, the document will also contain detailed tables listing projects eligible for federal funding by category. For most projects, a description, location, and estimated cost are provided. Also shown, for most projects, are the phases for which federal funding authorization is anticipated. Once this draft document is prepared, it will be presented to the TAC and a public hearing will be advertised. Following the public hearing, there will be an additional 30 day notice period during which public comment will be accepted. At the close of the public comment period, RISPP staff will prepare a summary of all input, which will be presented to the Technical Committee and the State Planning Council.

Finalization of TIP

After careful consideration of all public input received, RISPP and RIDOT staff will prepare a revised TIP to present to the TAC. The TAC will recommend a draft TIP to the Technical Committee and State Planning Council for adoption. The State Planning Council/Metropolitan Planning Organization will adopt the TIP at a regular meeting and forward the document to the Governor for final action and transmission to the United States Department of Transportation.

Additional Information

The Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program will be providing monthly announcements, updates, and reminders via Statewide Planning Program's electronic newsletter. Please subscribe at www.planning.ri.gov/misc/enews.htm.

We hope to work cooperatively with municipalities, transportation providers, area non-profit organization and members of the general public in preparing a TIP that results in a more efficient transportation system. If you have any questions about the TIP process, please contact Karen Scott, Assistant Chief of the Statewide Planning Program at 401-222-4411 or karen.scott@doa.ri.gov or Linsey Cameron, Supervising Transportation Planner at 401-222-6479 or linsey.cameron@doa.ri.gov.

Appendix A
TIP Timeline

Transportation Improvement Program 2013 - 2016 Timeline

August 15, 2011

TASK	2011								2012							
	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG
INTERNAL PREPERATION																
Determine Available Funding																
Finalize TIP Schedule																
Revise Project Solicitation Documentation																
Revise Public Announcements																
PROPOSAL SUBMISSION																
Public Notice / Solicitation to Officials																
Application Workshops (2)																
Submission Deadline (Oct. 28)																
PREPARE DRAFT TIP																
TIP Applications Public Hearings (4)																
Staff Review of Proposals																
TAC Subcommittee Scoring																
Supplemental Review																
Prepare Draft TIP																
REVIEW AND COMMENT																
Presentation of Draft TIP to TAC / TC																
SPC Authorize Public Hearing (March 8)																
Public Notice Period																
Draft Public Hearing																
Revise Draft / Extended Public Comment Period																
Distribute Final Draft (TAC, TC, SPC)																
ADOPTION																
Final Draft Adoption TAC																
TC / SPC (July 12)																

TAC = Transportation Advisory Committee, SPC = State Planning Council, TC = Technical Committee

Appendix B
TIP Project Evaluation Criteria
Guidance on Applying Criteria for Evaluation of Project Proposals

Page 1

**STATE PLANNING COUNCIL
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Transportation Improvement Program
Project Evaluation Criteria**

- 1. Mobility benefits**
 - a. number of travelers served, or volume of freight transported
 - b. level of service improved, congestion reduced; or efficiency of freight service improved
 - c. number of modes provided for (multimodal) and linkages among different transportation modes (intermodal)
 - d. regional scale and impact
 - e. mobility provided to transit users and people not using personal motor vehicles
 - f. improvement of user comfort, convenience, or information
 - g. promotes walkability and bikeability of neighborhoods; retains community and quality-of-life values
 - h. consistency with environmental justice for minority and low-income populations
 - i. improvement of urban and village centers and/or preservation of open space
- 2. Cost-effectiveness**
 - a. capital cost in proportion to travel benefit (time, distance, or delay reduced, etc.) or economic benefit
 - b. project uses innovative and low cost alternative designs
 - c. utilization and preservation of existing infrastructure (including improvement in pavement condition), consideration of future maintenance, operating, and capital costs
 - d. potential to leverage federal transportation funds with other public or private investment
 - e. project scaled back to achieve cost savings
- 3. Economic development**
 - a. support of state-designated enterprise zones
 - b. creation or retention of jobs, as by improving access to employment centers
 - c. facilitating the movement of goods
 - d. encourages tourism (by enhancing or improving access to historical, recreational, cultural, and scenic assets)
 - e. benefit to economically disadvantaged populations
 - f. results in rehabilitation of brownfield sites, reuse of a certified mill building(s), and/or is located in a state designated growth center
- 4. Environmental impact**
 - a. improves air quality
 - b. promotes energy conservation
 - c. improves water quality
 - d. protection and enhancement of environmental resources
 - e. preservation and enhancement of scenic and historic districts or viewscapes, or improvement of visual appeal
 - f. contribution to a greenways system
- 5. Degree of support to local and state goals and plans**
 - a. priority given by local government compared to other projects
 - b. past commitment such as completion of studies or design and provision of local funding share
 - c. linkage with other local projects
 - d. cooperation among two or more municipalities
 - e. implements land use, housing, and other goals and policies of local comprehensive plans
 - f. implements the state transportation plan and other State Guide Plan elements
 - g. degree of public support
- 6. Safety / Security / Technology**
 - a. corrects a significant safety problem or enhances safety
 - b. improves walking and bicycling safety on routes to schools and other public facilities, especially for children and the elderly
 - c. improves evacuation route
 - d. improves interstate diversionary route
 - e. serves hospital or other public safety facility
 - f. improves security of a critical asset or system
 - g. enhances Intelligent Transportation System network

Instructions:

1. Each measure can be scored on a scale of -5 to 5 (a negative score should be used when the project has a negative impact; zero should be used when there is no impact or the criterion is not applicable).
2. The sub-total in each category can not be more than 20 or less than -20.
3. The maximum total score is 120.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Guidance on Applying Criteria for Evaluation of Project Proposals

1. MOBILITY BENEFITS

a. Number of travelers served, or volume of freight transported

For highways, indicators are average daily traffic (ADT) and number of bus routes, runs, or passengers. ADT in Rhode Island typically ranges as follows:

heaviest urban Interstates	100,000-160,000
other 4-lane highways	20,000-100,000
most 2-lane highways	2,000- 20,000
low-volume 2-lane highways	less than 2,000

Traffic counts are not done for most low-volume roads. For bicycle/pedestrian facilities, an indicator is trip generation potential - e.g., number of people expected to use them (for example: near schools, tourist areas, elderly housing, etc.). For freight rail projects, indicators are number of trains, freight cars, or tons of freight per week. For passenger rail, indicators are number of trains, cars, or passengers.

b. Level of service improved, congestion reduced; or efficiency of freight service improved

For highways, this refers to ease of traffic flow. To have an effect on traffic congestion, a project has to involve widening, intersection improvements, or other work beyond resurfacing. A design study will include engineering calculations of level-of-service (LOS) improvement, "F" being worst and "A," best. For transit, an example of improved efficiency is construction of park-and-ride lots, which provide a single loading point. For rail, higher speeds improve efficiency.

c. Number of modes provided for (multimodal) and linkages among different transportation modes (intermodal)

Multimodal refers to serving more than one mode. Examples are a highway improvement that is on a bus route, widens shoulders for bicycles, or fixes sidewalks; or an intersection project that adds pedestrian signals; or an industrial highway that includes rail improvements. Points can be given for number, quality, or importance of multiple modes. Intermodal refers to transfer of travelers or goods between modes. Examples are projects that improve pedestrian access to a transit stop, or bus access to a bike path, or a rail connection to a port. Terminals (including airports and ferry) and park-and-ride (or satellite) lots are by definition intermodal and multimodal. More points could be given for a greater number of connections, or for quality or importance of connections. Improved signage, unless part of a larger project, should receive credit in item 1f.

d. Regional scale and impact

Effect on more than one community is the measure. At the highest level are projects that affect the whole state or southeastern New England; for example, major highways (often, interstate), rail lines, or passenger or freight terminals. Next are projects such as a new bicycle path or reconstructed highway that passes through three or more communities. Projects that complete links between transportation facilities should score well. Projects that are entirely within one community or that are located in two communities but have a minor impact (e.g., road resurfacing) would score lower.

e. Mobility provided to transit users and people not using personal motor vehicles

This criterion relates to transportation service for people who are getting around without the use of a personal motor vehicle (i.e., using transit, bicycling, or walking). Examples include transit service in areas with a low rate of auto ownership and bicycle/pedestrian facilities in areas with many students. The project data sheets make note of areas with low auto ownership: Census block groups that average less than 1.0 auto/household, 1990 (the statewide average was 1.67). The applicant should provide information on group, elderly, or student housing in the project area. This should encourage the use of alternate modes for those who currently rely on their own vehicles, as well as those who depend on alternate modes.

f. Improvement of user comfort, convenience, or information

This refers to increased ease of use or friendliness to travelers and applies to all modes. Examples are cutoff lighting fixtures, new bus shelters and information systems, and highway and intermodal information signs. For the walkers and bicyclists, this could include street furniture, plantings, traffic calming, or bike lanes that allow safer and more pleasant travel. The emphasis is on comfort, not efficiency, which is addressed in other criteria. (Related measures are reduced congestion, which should be credited in item 1b, and smoother pavement, which should be credited in item 2c.)

2. COST-EFFECTIVENESS

a. Capital cost in proportion to travel benefit (time, distance, or delay reduced, etc.) or economic benefit

This criterion gets at the scale of cost vs. the number of users benefiting. A project study may identify such measures. Otherwise, judgment has to be used to compare high, medium, or low cost against significant or minor improvement in travel. Projects that are hugely expensive, or save only a few minutes of travel time, or serve few people will tend to score low. Economic benefits can also be considered.

b. Project uses innovative and low cost alternative designs

Points can be awarded for inclusion of design features or materials that improve efficiency, performance, or durability/life expectancy. Examples may be new or innovative materials, use of stamped concrete rather than brick, or automation.

c. Utilization and preservation of existing infrastructure (including improvement in pavement condition and sidewalk surfaces), consideration of future maintenance, operating, and capital costs

A new facility would score low. High scores should be reserved for projects whose purpose is to restore facilities that are extremely dilapidated or unused and would be brought back to good condition and into active use, or projects that would have a notable effect in reducing maintenance costs. Most projects will score in the middle (typical road rehabilitation), according to needs to address pavement and other conditions. Based on the existing pavement condition rating provided by RIDOT, projects will be scored as follows: Failed condition = 5 points, Poor = 4 points, Fair = 3 points, Good = 2, Excellent = 0. In cases where RIDOT data is not available, this item will be scored subjectively. Negative points may be assigned to projects involving reconstruction of facilities that are less than 10 years old (e.g. built or re-constructed in past 10 years).

d. Potential to leverage federal transportation funds with other public or private investment

Points would be given if the project is proposed to be funded partly from other federal or state programs or from private sources. (Note that local share is covered in criterion 5b.) A suggested scale is:

>50% from other sources	5 points
25-49%	4 points
10-24%	3 points
5- 9%	2 points
1- 4%	1 point

e. Project scaled back to achieve cost savings.

This criterion can be used, most commonly, to give credit for proposals that scale back the cost of projects as once planned. More points can be given for more drastic cutbacks. A suggested scale is:

<10% of previous cost	5 points
10-25%	4 points
26-50%	3 points
51-75%	2 points
76-90%	1 point

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

a. Support of state-designated enterprise zones

If a project is in an enterprise zone, it should get 5 points; if not, 0.

b. Creation or retention of jobs, as by improving access to employment centers

An employment center can be an industrial park or area, one very large industrial use, a downtown or village, a major institution such as a college or hospital, or other place that has a large number of employees. In the case of a developing industrial park, potential employment can be considered. Points can be given according to the relative amount of employment and the significance of the project in improving access. "Main Street" and village center projects should be scored higher than strip retail areas. Also includes improved transit, walking or bicycling infrastructure. Points may be deducted for projects that support the relocation of jobs to remote areas not accessible to public transit

c. Facilitating the movement of goods

For highways, one indicator is percent truck traffic. To give a sense of numbers, more than 8 percent is high, 5-8 percent is medium, and less than 5 percent is low. A high score can also be given to projects that have a special role for goods movement, such as any freight rail project or a project serving a freight terminal.

d. Encouraging tourism (enhanced access to historical, recreational, cultural, and scenic assets)

More points can be given to projects that improve transportation service or that support tourist use of such an area. Examples are projects improving a road to a beach, or improving pedestrian or transit access to a park, or contributing to the revitalization of a historical area.

e. Benefit to economically disadvantaged populations

The applicant should demonstrate not only that low-income individuals reside or work in the project area, but also that they will benefit from the proposed improvements. Other benefits may also be considered, such as neighborhood improvement in a low-income area. The project data sheets identify low-income areas as follows:

5 points:	Less than 50% of the state median income (very low)
3 points:	50%-80% of the state median income (low)
1 point:	81%-99% of the state median income (moderate)
0 points:	equal or greater than state median income

f. Results in rehabilitation of brownfield sites, reuse of a certified mill building(s), or is located in a state designated growth center.

A state designated growth center receives 5 points. Brownfield sites and mill buildings should be scored according to overall scope, quality, and project impact.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

a. Improves air quality (emissions reduced)

If a study has been done quantifying air quality impacts, points can be given for any positive impacts shown. (For typical highway projects, these will be very small.)

Benefits can be presumed from synchronizing traffic signals, providing bicycle/pedestrian facilities, increasing transit service, improving vehicle inspection-maintenance programs, or other projects that make auto travel more efficient, reduce trips or vehicle miles of travel (VMT), or have particular air quality significance (such as alternative fuel vehicles). Projects can receive negative points for adverse impacts.

b. Promotes energy conservation (consumption reduced, as by fewer trips or reduced vehicle miles of travel)

Projects such as some of those just listed above will also have energy conservation benefits. New structures (such as terminals or stations) that use green design methods, solar energy, etc. will have benefits. Projects can receive negative points for adverse impacts.

c. Improves water quality (pollution impacts reduced)

Road projects can benefit water quality, and projects impacting this resource should demonstrate improved drainage control. Impacts must be mitigated, especially if the affected water body is a drinking water source. Projects can receive negative points for adverse impacts.

d. Protection and enhancement of environmental resources

This covers a variety of resources not named in other criteria; for example, wetlands, wildlife habitat (by the use of "critter crossings"), floodplains, farmland. A project description should indicate existing natural resources and the measures taken to protect them. Projects can receive negative points for adverse impacts.

e. Preservation and enhancement of scenic and historic districts or viewscapes, or improvement of visual appeal

RIDOT has designated eight scenic roadways in the state. Scenic landscapes in Rhode Island have been inventoried by the Department of Environmental Management. Historic districts have been identified by the Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission and by local commissions. A project description should indicate whether such areas are enhanced. The emphasis here is on entire neighborhoods or vistas, not just individual sites. Points can also be given for projects that beautify an area; for example, by redesigning cluttered streetscapes or providing landscaping along a highway. This applies to areas that are presently unattractive or in need of improvement, not just to designated scenic and historic assets. Projects can receive negative points for adverse impacts.

f. Contribution to a greenways system

Greenways have been recommended in the state Greenspace and Greenways Plan and by local plans and groups. A project might contribute to a greenway by improving access to it, for example. Projects can receive negative points for adverse impacts.

g. Promotes walkability and bikeability of neighborhoods, retains community and quality-of-life values

This refers to projects that make a special effort not to cut through existing neighborhoods, cause residential and commercial relocation, or damage the character of a place. On the positive side, a project could enhance community cohesiveness or character by providing pedestrian facilities and streetscape improvements, and incorporating traffic calming techniques. Projects can receive negative points for adverse impacts.

h. Consistency with environmental justice for minority and low-income populations

Federal Executive Order 12898 requires federal agencies whose programs affect human health or the environment to identify and avoid "disproportionately high and adverse" effects on minority and low-income populations. Existing conditions and impacts should be taken into account. In transportation programs, an example would be new highway construction disrupting low-income neighborhoods or reconstruction of an existing facility that has negative impacts. Thought should also be given to less obvious effects, such as support of industrial or commercial projects that draw jobs out of inner-city areas, or disproportionate subsidy of suburban transit service. Projects can receive negative points for adverse impacts.

i. Improvement of urban or village centers and/or preservation of open space

This criterion gives credit to projects that strengthen existing urban areas, as opposed to encouraging growth in rural or open areas with new highway interchanges. Projects can receive negative points for adverse impacts.

The project data sheets give population figures for the city/town involved. Points can be given, in descending order, for projects that support revitalization of

- large cities (Providence, Warwick, Cranston, Pawtucket, East Providence -- all over 50,000 in 1990),
- smaller, old cities (Woonsocket, Newport, Central Falls),
- the urban "downtown" centers or villages of large towns (such as Bristol, Wickford, North Providence, Wakefield, Westerly, West Warwick -- all over 20,000),
- village centers of smaller towns.

5. DEGREE OF SUPPORT TO LOCAL AND STATE GOALS AND PLANS

a. Priority given by local government compared to other projects

The project data sheets give the local priority number in relation to the total (e.g., #1 priority = 5 points, #5 priority = 1 point). No points should be awarded if the city/town did not prioritize their projects.

b. Past commitment such as completion of studies or design and provision of local funding share

The project data sheets usually mention the status of studies or design. Points can be given on a scale ranging from no work (new project), to preliminary or planning studies, to Environmental Assessment, to Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement (if applicable), to increasing percentages of design completed. Consideration can also be given to the extent/cost of study and design work invested.

Credit should be given if the city/town or sponsor offers to pay part of the cost of the project. More points would accrue for a greater share, ranging from design costs to the full non-federal match for design and construction (20 percent).

c. Linkage with other local projects

This refers to ways that the project and other local projects support each other. For example, points could be given if the transportation project complements urban revitalization efforts or is being coordinated with a sewer construction, recreation, "Main Street," or elderly housing project. The idea is that economies or increased benefits are desirable.

d. Cooperation among two or more municipalities

This criterion would come into play if two or more communities requested the same project or a linked project. More points could be given for evidence of active cooperation or for more than two communities' involvement.

e. Implements land use, housing, and other goals and policies of local comprehensive plans

It is required that projects be consistent with comprehensive plans. This criterion is to give credit where a project --beyond that -- carries out a specific recommendation of a comprehensive plan or is instrumental in achieving plan goals and policies. Zero to three points can be given according to the importance of the project in this regard. The locality should provide such information in its submission. Two additional points (for a total maximum of 5) can be awarded to communities with state approved comprehensive plans. Communities without a state-approved comprehensive plan may lose points.

f. Implements goals and policies of the state transportation plan and other State Guide Plan elements

Similarly, it is required that projects be consistent with the State Guide Plan; this is to give credit for the importance of a project in carrying out specific policies or recommendations. The applicant should cite specific goals and policies to receive maximum points.

g. Degree of public support

Points are awarded for projects that have received significant public support. This refers not to local government support but to support from the general public, the business community, or public-interest groups. Projects with public opposition may lose points. The scorer should differentiate between isolated “NIMBY-ism” or widespread opposition.

6. SAFETY, SECURITY AND TECHNOLOGY

a. Corrects a significant safety problem or enhances safety

5 points: project addresses safety in a segment / intersection where there are annual fatalities
(applicant should provide summary data)

1-4 points: project addresses safety in a segment / intersection where there have been fatalities and other injuries based on quality of data (i.e. crash data vs. anecdotal)

0 points: no safety or crash data provided

negative points: project undermines safety or creates new hazards

b. Improves walking and bicycling safety on routes to schools and other public facilities, especially for children and the elderly

5 points: top priority project identified in a community Safe Routes to School study

3-4 points: identified in comprehensive plan or other planning study

1-2 points: not identified in a study but demonstrates safety benefits

0 points: does not improve safety of walking / bicycling routes to facilities

negative points: project undermines safety or creates new hazards

c. Improves evacuation route (hurricane or otherwise) [map not yet available]

5 points: improves traffic flow on major designated hurricane evacuation route in high hazard / high population area

3-4 points: improves traffic flow on secondary evacuation roads or lower risk / lower population area

1-2 points: improves route to inland shelter

0 points: does not serve evacuation route or shelter

negative points: project allows for increased development in flood hazard areas or increases congestion on evacuation route

d. Improves diversionary route for Interstates and other major highways [see Emergency Response Network map in Transportation 2025]

5 points: improves traffic flow on designated diversionary route with Interstate AADT >125,000

3-4 points: improves traffic flow on designated diversionary route with Interstate AADT >75,000

1-2 points: improves traffic flow on designated diversionary route with Interstate AADT <75,000

0 points: not on a designated diversionary route

negative points: project increases congestion on diversionary route

e. Serves hospital or other public safety facility

5 points: project serves a hospital on Emergency Response Network map or multiple public safety facilities

1-4 points: project serves other hospitals or public safety facilities

0 points: no public facilities are served

negative points: project impedes access or increases congestion in and around public safety facilities

f. Improves security of a critical asset or system

5 points: project is on STRAHNET (Strategic Highway Network); protects bridges or reservoirs

3-4 points: hardening (blast-proofing) of infrastructure, passenger screening systems

1-2 points: fencing or surveillance of passenger or freight terminal

0 points: does not improve security

negative points: hinders security or creates a vulnerability or new risk

g. Enhances Intelligent Transportation System network

5 points: provides hardware and / or monitoring equipment to implement Rhode WAYS Strategic Deployment Plan or RIPTA ITS Plan (bus fareboxes, vehicle locators, etc.)

1-4 points: installation of fiber-optic cable on off-system highway; enhances dissemination of information; provides for shared use of equipment already in place

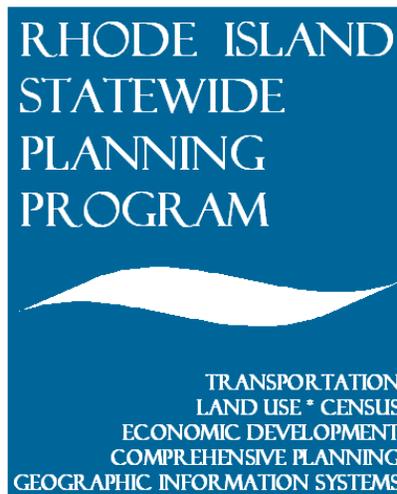
0 points: no ITS elements are part of the project

negative points: project is on a RhodeWAYS route that calls for ITS equipment, but equipment not provided

Appendix C
State Planning Council/Metropolitan Planning Organization
Public Participation Guide

RHODE ISLAND STATE PLANNING COUNCIL
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RI DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION OF PLANNING
STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM
TRANSPORTATION SECTION



PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION
GUIDE

APPROVED BY: RHODE ISLAND STATE PLANNING COUNCIL

DATE: APRIL 12, 2007

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GUIDE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rhode Island State Planning Council, the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), and the Statewide Planning Program actively seek public input in the transportation planning process, especially for these two projects:

- Long Range Plan (LRP): This is a plan for highways, bicycle paths, buses, ferries, trains, and pedestrian facilities. The LRP is also part of Rhode Island's State Guide Plan. This helps us to coordinate with other areas such as land use, economic development, and local planning.
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): This is the list of projects that can get federal highway and transit funding. If you have ideas for TIP projects, you should first contact your city or town, because most of our projects come from them. You can also propose projects directly.

How can you find out more about us and what we do?

- Visit the Statewide Planning website (www.planning.ri.gov): Meeting information, reports, technical information, committee membership, and links to other sites are posted on the Transportation home page.
- Get on our transportation mailing list by calling 401-222-1233. We will mail out announcements of our projects.
- Get on our e-mail list for the monthly E-newsletter to receive meeting information, and other announcements. You can sign up to receive the newsletter on our website.

How can you participate?

- Go to a TAC meeting: This is a great way to find out about transportation and let us know what is on your mind. Six of the 27 TAC members are from the public, including the Chairperson. TAC meetings are usually held once a month and are open to the public. We invite the public speak at the beginning and at the end of each meeting. Meetings are held in different places around the state (usually on a bus route). Meetings are almost always held in the evening so more people will be able to come.
- Attend a Public Workshop: We host workshops as needed for certain projects, like the LRP, TIP, and some other projects. These announcements are posted on our website.
- Attend a Public Hearing: A hearing is more formal than a workshop. A public hearing report is prepared, and the State Planning Council gets this report before they make their decisions.
- Write to us: If it is during an official comment period, it will be included in the public hearing report. If it isn't, we are still interested in your ideas, comments, and concerns as they may be helpful to us in updating our plans and programs.

We work very closely with the RI Department of Transportation and the RI Public Transit Authority in planning and choosing projects. It is also very important for people who live in Rhode Island to be active in planning, because this helps to decide how we spend our transportation money (the gas tax we all pay!). This can benefit you and your family and also help your city or town.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program consists of the State Planning Council (the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization [MPO] for the State of Rhode Island), the Council's advisory committees, and a staff unit with the RI Department of Administration Division of Planning. Federal transportation regulations require MPO's to carry out a coordinated, continuing and comprehensive transportation planning process for areas with an urbanized population of 50,000 or more, as determined by the Census Bureau. This document was developed pursuant to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GUIDE (PPG)

The purpose of the PPG is to update our public participation activities and document them such that our constituents can more effectively participate in the transportation planning process. Public participation is an integral part of the process, and decisions are made with the benefit and consideration of public perspectives. This guide describes how we bring diverse viewpoints and values into the decision-making process. Early and continuous public involvement enables the MPO to make better informed decisions, improves quality through collaborative efforts, and builds mutual understanding and trust between the MPO and the public it serves. The PPG outlines various tools and time frames for public involvement in the development of various planning documents including the:

- ❖ Long Range Plan (LRP): A fiscally constrained 20-year transportation planning document, which is updated every four years. The LRP includes the following modes: highway, bicycle, pedestrian, bus transit, ferry transit, and commuter rail. The plan provides a goal, objectives, policies, strategies and performance measures for 14 different topic areas and also provides financial projections. The LRP is adopted as an element of Rhode Island's State Guide Plan, providing for policy coordination with other areas such as land use, economic development, and local planning.
- ❖ Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): A short-range 6-year transportation planning document, which is updated every four years. Major projects must be listed in the TIP in order to be eligible for federal highway and transit funding. Some smaller projects do not have to be listed individually and can be grouped together within certain line items. Projects in the TIP must be consistent with the LRP.
- ❖ Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP): An outline of the planning activities that will be conducted by or overseen by the Statewide Planning staff over the course of a one - year period which is updated annually. Other MPO's that have regular funding for contracted plans and studies will list these in the UPWP. Statewide Planning's funding stream limits the UPWP almost exclusively to staff activities, but also includes planning activities for RI Department of Transportation (RIDOT) and RI Public Transit Authority (RIPTA).

- ❖ Other planning projects undertaken by Statewide Planning, such as Walkable Community Workshops, the Travel Corridor Planning Initiative, Safe Routes To School, and Technical Papers for which outside input is desirable.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MPO

The State Planning Council (SPC) serves as the MPO for the State of Rhode Island. Its membership is specified by R.I.G.L. 42-10-11(e). It is governed by Rules of Procedure that have been adopted by the Council and filed with the Secretary of State. The SPC is the governing body for the MPO charged with approval of the LRP (also an element of the State Guide Plan¹), the TIP, and the UPWP.

The Technical Committee (TC) is an advisory body appointed by the SPC to review non-transportation related documents with a few exceptions.² Membership consists of city and town officials, state agency representatives, urban interests, and environmental groups.

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is also appointed by the SPC. Membership consists of key staff members of transportation agencies, city and town planning and public works staff, user groups, and members of the public. The TAC provides a forum for public participation and policy guidance. They are heavily involved in the preparation of the TIP and the LRP and provide recommendations to the SPC.

In addition to the TAC, the following advisory committees review and recommend transportation projects for specific programs: Safe Routes To School Steering Committee, Air Quality Transportation Subcommittee, transportation Enhancement Advisory Committee. These committees involve outside agencies and individuals with expertise in program areas.

The Statewide Planning unit of the RI Division of Planning / Department of Administration serves as staff to the MPO and the TAC. The Transportation Section currently has five staff members: a supervising planner, two principal planners, a principal research technician, and a senior planner. The staff is responsible for performing administrative and technical services necessary to operate the MPO on a daily basis.

In addition to its role as the MPO, the SPC has other functions and responsibilities that include adoption of other elements of the State Guide Plan (such as the Land Use Plan, Strategic Housing Plan, Solid Waste management Plan, etc.) as well as adoption of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and other policy statements. These multiple roles help with the coordination and integration of transportation planning with land use and other concerns relative to transportation planning.

A listing of organizations, agencies, and other individuals regularly involved in transportation planning through their participation in the committees listed above is included in Appendix D.

¹ The State Guide Plan is established by the Rhode Island General Law 42-11-10 (7)(d), which states that it “shall be comprised of functional elements or plans dealing with land use; physical development and environmental concerns; economic development; energy supply, access, use, and conservation; human services; and other factors necessary to accomplish the objective of this section. The state guide plan shall be a means for centralizing and integrating long-range goals, policies, and plans. State agencies concerned with specific subject areas, local governments, and the public shall participate in the state guide planning process, which shall be closely coordinated with the budgeting process.”

² The TC appoints the Air Quality Transportation Subcommittee to review projects submitted for the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. The TC also is responsible for approving the official Highway Functional Classification Map.

POLICY

Rule IX-1 Purpose, authority, and scope; Section 1.01 Purpose of the State Planning Council's Rules of Procedures "is intended to set forth procedures by which the public will be involved in transportation planning in Rhode Island, through a proactive process that is based on the following principles:

- opportunity for early and continuing public involvement;
- identification of, and contact with, as many persons and organizations as possible who are thought to be interested;
- seeking out and consideration of the needs of those traditionally underserved by transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households;
- inclusion of the general public by appropriate means, such as news releases;
- timely notice of meetings; and
- provision of complete information by the Division of Planning, and adequate staff support, given available resources."

HOW WE PREPARE AND UPDATE THIS GUIDE

This Public Participation Guide was prepared following a meeting of a Task Force that was convened for the purpose of reviewing our existing public participation procedures and providing recommendations on how we can better serve and communicate with the public. Appendix A lists the Task Force members and summarizes the meeting notes. A draft document was provided to the Task Force for their review and comment prior to releasing it to the public.

Rule IX of the State Planning Council Rules of Procedure establishes the procedures for preparing the TIP, LRP, and UPWP, including minimum public participation requirements. The Task Force reviewed Rule IX and concluded that no changes were necessary, but that certain activities could be enhanced. Rule IX remains in effect as the formal policy for public participation. The PPG is fully consistent with Rule IX, but focuses on public participation (rather than other staff procedures) in a manner that can be more easily understood by the public. The PPG also goes further than Rule IX inasmuch as Rule IX specifies bare minimums, but in practice, more outreach is undertaken.

The PPG is also consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding to Amend and Modify the TIP, signed by Statewide Planning, RI Department of Transportation and RI Public Transit Authority.

In 2002 Statewide Planning conducted a self-evaluation of our public participation techniques.³ Several recommendations from that evaluation are incorporated into the PPG.

A 45-day comment period was provided prior to the adoption of the PPG from January 12, 2007 to March 1, 2007. The document was posted on our website and in our office. Notice was given of document availability and of a hearing via the Providence Journal on January 12, 2007 and electronic newsletter on January 31 and February 27, 2007 (450 subscribers). Notice was also mailed to a "Public Hearing" list and "Transportation Contacts" list. A public outreach event for this guide was provided in combination with an

³ Assessment of Public Involvement Procedures for Transportation Planning, May 2002.

Open House for the long range plan update. The public hearing was held immediately following the Open House by the TAC on March 1, 2007. A summary of the comments received from the public and responses are provided in Appendix B. The PPG was approved by the State Planning Council at its scheduled meeting on April 12, 2007.

The approved document is posted permanently on our website, and a brochure was also developed for mass mailing. The PPG will be evaluated periodically for effectiveness, on a four-year cycle similar to other transportation planning documents.

SUPPORTING LEGISLATION

The following key pieces of federal and state legislation address specific requirements for conducting transportation planning in an open process that supports early and continued public involvement, provides complete information, timely public notice and full public access to key decisions. See Appendix C for more information on the requirements set forth in Title 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1).

- ❖ Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)
- ❖ The Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21)
- ❖ The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)
- ❖ Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- ❖ Environmental Justice (EJ) in Minority and Low-Income Populations, Executive Order 12898
- ❖ National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
- ❖ The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
- ❖ Rhode Island Open Meetings Act
- ❖ Rhode Island Administrative Procedures Act
- ❖ Rhode Island Public Records Act
- ❖ Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act
- ❖ Statewide Planning Program Enabling Legislation
- ❖ State Planning Council Rules of Procedure

OUTREACH, EDUCATION, AND INPUT TOOLS

To fulfill the objectives set forth in the federal mandates, the MPO may use a range of strategies to enhance and support public **outreach and education** in the transportation planning process, including, but not limited to:

- Statewide Planning website (www.planning.ri.gov): Notices, agendas, schedules, approved and draft documents, technical information, committee membership, and links to other sites are posted. Transportation has its own home page.
- Secretary of State “town crier” website (meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes)
- Direct mail
 - TAC list: (30 people, includes members and alternates)
 - TAC agenda list: (30 people, monthly in addition to TAC members)
 - Transportation list: (250 people, as needed for projects) A notification list of individuals, organizations, public agencies, elected and appointed officials, transportation providers, media, special interest and advocacy groups interested in transportation related issues has been developed. The MPO staff routinely encourages additional groups or individuals to be added to the notification list.
 - Public hearing list: (372 people, for all LRP and TIP hearings as well as non-transportation related hearings) This list also contains a wide variety of agencies, individuals, elected officials, municipal officials, and interest groups.
 - Numerous other mailing lists (see Figure A).
- E-newsletter: A monthly newsletter is sent out to more than 400 addresses with meeting information, announcements of publications and training workshops, etc. Several outside groups are invited to submit items for the newsletter. A new, easier way to sign up to receive the newsletter can be found on the website.
- Newspaper legal and display ads: All workshops and hearings are advertised in the legal section of the Providence Journal (statewide circulation). Display ads in regional Journal editions and other local papers are also used for special projects or regional events.
- Paper postings: Agendas, hearing, and workshop notices are posted in the vestibule of the Department of Administration, in the elevator lobby, and in our office.
- Studies and Reports: The studies and reports published by the MPO provide information on the MPO composition, transportation planning process, major documents and data produced by the MPO. Material is available on the MPO web page for viewing or downloading and hard copies may be made available to the public upon request. Many documents are available on CD in an effort to make documents with color graphics more widely available (as printing costs can be prohibitive).
- Quarterly Report: This is primarily used to report progress on major activities and key findings of planning studies. It is distributed by direct mail to 60 people and posted on the website.
- Visualization Tools: Various types of visualization tools are utilized to depict transportation information including charts, tables, photographs, maps, and videos. New technologies and techniques will be evaluated as necessary.
- ADA: Instructions for special accommodations are provided on all notices.

- Brochure: A brochure discussing public participation in transportation planning has been developed. It will be printed and widely distributed and also posted on the website. A Spanish version will also be made available.
- Public Appearances: Statewide Planning staff are often invited to speak at conferences, planning groups, high school and college classes, and other events.
- E-mail notification list: A list of e-mail addresses will be developed for the purpose of distributing notices to target groups to post on their own websites. This is part of an effort to reach underserved populations (non-English speaking, elderly, disabled, minorities, social services, etc).

Getting quality feedback is just as important as communicating and reaching out. The following techniques are used to obtain **feedback and input** on transportation issues.

- TAC Meetings – The TAC is our primary vehicle for public participation. Six of the 27 members represent the public, including the Chairperson. TAC meetings are generally held every month and are open to the public. A public comment period on the agenda items is provided at the beginning of each meeting. An unrestricted comment period is provided at the end of each meeting. Meetings are held in accessible buildings at various locations throughout the state (usually on a bus route). Meetings are almost always held in the evening to encourage maximum attendance. Afternoon meetings will be considered periodically, or when the agenda has items that may be of interest to the disabled community, as evening hours can be inconvenient for those individuals. Groups wishing to address the TAC on transportation planning related topics within the purview of the TAC may submit a written request to the Secretary summarizing the content of the material and the format (and length) of the presentation. The Secretary, at his/her discretion and based on the TAC's workload and priorities may opt to include such an item on the agenda.
- Public Workshops - The MPO staff and other stakeholders participate in transportation planning forums to obtain or exchange information. In particular, workshops are held to present updates, revisions and/or drafts of various planning documents to the public for review and comment, prior to a hearing. They are also used in the TIP project solicitation process to provide information and guidance on the submission of proposals. Regional travel corridor workshops and walkable community workshops are other examples of this technique. Typically, if a series of workshops is offered, we schedule afternoon and evening sessions in different regions of the state to maximize participation.
- Focus Groups - Focus groups are formed as needed to address specific concerns related to transportation issues such as emergency preparedness, freight, access management, public transportation, etc. These are often used in the development of the LRP or for special projects. The Public Participation Task Force convened for the purpose of this guide is an example of this.
- Public Hearings (30 day notice) – A hearing is a formal venue at which testimony is received. Hearings are recorded and a public hearing report is produced. Hearings are generally held by the TAC in the evening, and members of the public have access to top officials from RIDOT and RIPTA. For major projects, such as a LRP or TIP approval, two hearings are held (an afternoon and an evening session on the same day) to increase attendance. We will attempt to use this format more often in order to make it more convenient for elderly and disabled individuals to attend. Written summary reports of all public hearings are provided to the MPO prior to its taking action.

- Written Testimony - Updates, drafts and revisions of the various planning documents are made available for the public to review and comment on. A copy of the document is made available at our office and on our website. The amount of time allowed for review and comment is generally 30 days. This permits the public to submit meaningful written comments. Comments received as part of a formal comment period are summarized in the document along with the response.
- Surveys: The MPO staff will engage the public through the use of survey instruments covering various aspects of the transportation system, its performance, and public opinion on policy, projects, and performance.
- Local Public Hearings: Rhode Island's TIP process is unique in that the SPC rules require that a local public hearing be held on TIP proposals submitted by cities and towns. This affords residents an opportunity to participate at a local level in determining priorities for the TIP. It also allows local officials to hear directly from their own constituents.
- Consultations: As part of the air quality conformity process and part of the long range planning process, consultation with other agencies will occur on a regular basis. Specifically, the air quality consultation provides for regular coordination with environmental regulatory agencies. Additionally, an expanded effort on environmental mitigation in the long range plan will be accomplished through consultation with federal, state, and tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies. Transportation needs of military installations and emergency management agencies will also be considered as appropriate.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A comprehensive chart of outreach and notification for transportation planning documents appears in Figure A. It includes each step in the Plan, TIP and UPWP process where the public is notified, and specifies which of our multiple mailing lists are used. It also includes regular mailings for TAC meetings and the process used in the development of this Guide.

FIGURE A. OUTREACH AND NOTIFICATION FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

PROJECT	ACTIVITY	NOTICE	LEGAL AD (Prov. Journal)	DISPLAY AD (local sections)	POSTING	WEBSITE	E-NEWSLETTER	EMAIL LIST (7)	MAIL	Transportation Adv. Comm.	TAC agenda only	Chief Executive Officer	Town Planners	Town PW Directors	Council Presidents	State Agencies - TIP letters (6)	Transportation List	Transportation Providers	Recent Transportation List	General Assembly Leadership	Congressional Delegation	Governor's Office	Greenways Council	Rivers Council	Social Advocacy Groups	State Planning Council	Technical Committee	Public Hearing List	Notice of Publication
										X	X																		
TAC	Regular Meeting Agenda (1)	10 days			X	X	X	X		X	X																		
TIP	Project Solicitation Package and Workshop Notice (2)	30 days	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X		X						X							
	Notification letter	30 days						X			X				X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
	Hearing notice to present proposals (min. of 3)	30 days			X	X	X	X		X	X								X								X		
	Subcommittee Meetings	7 days			X	X				X																			
	Draft TIP Hearings (3)	30 days	X		X	X	X	X		XR	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	XA		X	XA	X	X		
	Final TIP Distribution	n/a				X	X			X											X	X			X				
	Administrative Adjustment (4)	none				X				X															X				
	Minor Amendment (4, 5)	10 days			X	X	X			XA	X										X				X				
	Major Amendment Hearing (4)	30 days	X		X	X	X			XR	X					X		X			X				XA		X		
PLAN	Focus Groups or Workshops	7 days			X	X	X	X		X																			
	Draft Plan Hearings (3)	30 days	X	X	X	X	X	X		XR	X					X		X	X						XA	XR	X		
	Final Plan distribution	n/a				X	X			X											X						X		
	Amendment Hearing	30 days	X		X	X	X			XR	X								X						XA		X		
UPWP	Draft UPWP	n/a								XR															XA	XR			
	Final UPWP	n/a				X	X			X															X	X			
PPB	Brochure distribution	n/a			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	PPG Hearing Notice	45 days	X		X	X	X	X		XR		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	XA	X	X	
PPG	Public Participation Guide					X				X																			
OTHER	determined on a case by case basis																												

NOTES

- 1 Annual schedule adopted and posted at the beginning of the year
- 2 Workshops combined with DOT's Enhancements workshops
- 3 Following authorization by State Planning Council
- 4 Consistent with MOU on Procedures to Modify the TIP
- 5 Public comment period at TAC meeting - noticed with TAC agenda
- 6 Includes Narragansett Indian Tribe
- 7 List includes social groups, non-profits, and Town Clerks for paper and/or website postings

- X Receives Notification
- R Committee Provides Recommendations
- A Approval Authority
- TAC Transportation Advisory Committee
- TIP Transportation Improvement Program
- UPWP Unified Planning Work Program
- PPB Public Participation Brochure
- PPG Public Participation Guide

- BLACK Normal outreach procedures
- BOLD Specifically required by State Planning Council Rule IX
- RED Recommendation from Public Participation Task Force, 2006
- BLUE Recommendation from Assessment of Public Involvement Procedures for Transportation Planning, 2002

DISCLAIMER: This chart is not intended to fully document the procedures for preparation of these documents. It is intended only as a summary of public outreach.

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TASK FORCE

MEETING SUMMARY

SEPTEMBER 18, 2006

The first part of the meeting consisted of an overview and discussion of our current procedures for outreach, and a review of highlights of selected programs of other MPO's. A summary of the discussion by topic area follows. Items that are **bold** are strategies that could be implemented in the near term, because they are neither time nor resource intensive.

Website Improvements.

- **An interactive website that allows an individual to sign up electronically to receive information such as the “e-news letter”.**
- **Information on the website about our mailing lists and how to get names added to it.**
- A “searchable” web-based TIP, rather than a long pdf file.
- File size and dial-up access are areas of concern.

Partnering.

- **Canvas other agencies on their outreach programs and contacts.**
- **With non-profits or NGO's (such as AARP, etc.) to post notices on their websites.**
- With university Communications Departments.
- With the Rhode Island Foundation to do more extensive outreach.

Print Media.

- Public material should be visually based, free of technical jargon and has been “reading level checked”.
- Partner with DOT via project level informational brochures. One side is DOT project information and the other side could provide MPO information.
- **Produce a Public Participation brochure (one page in size) for wide distribution.**
- Produce a more detailed Public Participation Guide (booklet) suitable for some audiences.

Network Media.

- Government access channel is needed.
- Go on talk radio.

Public meetings.

- **Conduct public meetings in the afternoon and on a bus route. It is difficult for many in the disabled community to attend morning or evening meetings. Have refreshments available. Consider partnering with another public or non-profit agency.**
- **Carefully “target” your audiences and fashion your public event to them. Make sure to tell them what it is that you want them to tell you. Make it clear what you want to know.**
- **Schools and libraries are good locations.**

Other Potential Activities.

- Purchase Visualization software.
- Conduct an open house on April 15th when there is public traffic at DOA.
- A visual means of showing the result of a successful public participation process. Example: Document a project from beginning to completion (planning to construction).

Other general comments.

- As a special note: all future communication media should be as fully ADA compliant as possible.
- The local planning and public hearing phase of the TIP project solicitation is not working well.
- An examination of where and how the public program is lacking should be undertaken. Where is the problem? Example: Owners get notices while renters do not. Some neighborhoods are more organized than others.
- Is a statewide public access/participation plan needed? Example: Health and Housing.
- A telephone referral service (such as that established by DOH) might be useful.
- For short term planning, a closer link to operations issues (such as transit schedules) would prove successful.
- Sometimes the messenger of public planning should be someone other than the government.
- Federal government standard for printed material in other languages is the top 2 non-English languages (in RI that is Spanish and Portuguese).
- RIPTA is just beginning its coordinated Health and Human Services Plan.
- **As there are no elected officials on the TAC or State Planning Council, Statewide Planning should make an extra effort to reach out to them.**
- **Meet with the recently hired minority outreach coordinator at RIDOT.**

The Task Force also had suggestions for the Public Meeting that is required as part of this process:

- Should target staff from community-based agencies that represent special populations, as the general public is not likely to attend.
- Piggyback with another event more appealing.
- Hire a guest speaker in social justice and transportation circuit.
- Invite elected official(s), organization and agency heads.
- Hold the meeting during the daytime, on the bus line and provide food.

List of Attendees:

Ann Thacher, Transportation Advisory Committee, RI Department of Health
Jane Sherman, Transportation Advisory Committee
Harriet Holbrook, Transportation Advisory Committee, RI Public Transit Authority
Patrick McGuigan, The Providence Plan
Kelly Bishop, Center for Hispanic Policy and Advocacy
Leo Canuel, Pari Independent Living Services
Darlene Price, Office of Housing and Community Development
Dan DiBiasio, RI Department of Transportation
Ralph Rizzo, Federal Highway Administration
Michael Morris, Federal Highway Administration
George Johnson, Statewide Planning
Katherine Trapani, Statewide Planning
Michael Moan, Statewide Planning

APPENDIX B

PPG PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Public Review Draft dated January 12, 2007

Ref. #	Comment submitted by	Comment	Staff response
1.	Barry Schiller, TAC	Organized groups that have expertise on a particular topic should have the opportunity to address the TAC as part of the meeting.	Insert a sentence at the end of the “TAC meetings” bullet under the section “Outreach, Education, and Input Tools”. <u>Groups wishing to address the TAC on transportation planning related topics within the purview of the TAC may submit a written request to the Secretary summarizing the content of the material and the format (and length) of the presentation. The Secretary, at his/her discretion and based on the TAC’s workload and priorities may opt to include such an item on the agenda.</u>
		Paper meeting notices should be posted in more effective locations.	A new e-mail list has been developed for Town Clerks and target groups (EJ) for posting in municipal buildings and on websites. Will also add transportation agencies
2.	Jane Sherman, TAC	An Executive Summary should be provided.	Staff will prepare a 1-2 page executive summary.
3.	Ann Thacher, TAC	Font size is too small	Will be printed in a larger font.
		Concerned about reading level	A 1-2 page executive summary will be developed at 5th grade reading level, but as the full document is not intended for wide distribution, that will remain as is.
		Concerned about language barriers	The brochure and executive summary will be made available in Spanish, the most frequently spoken non-English language.
4.	Marilyn Cohen, TAC	Elaborate on SPC duties	p. 2, 6 th paragraph, after State Guide Plan insert: <u>“(such as the Land Use Plan, Affordable Housing Strategy, Greenways Plan, etc.); as well as adoption of the CEDS and other policy statements.</u>
		Text clarification	p. 7, 2nd bullet This affords residents <u>an opportunity</u> to participate at a local level in determining priorities for the TIP. It also allows local officials the opportunity to hear directly from their own constituents.
5.	Sue Barker, TAC	Add chambers of commerce and libraries to e-mail distribution list	Staff will research.
6.	Russ Chateaufneuf, TAC	Provide timely project information to the public	The TIP is posted on the web and searchable by Adobe. Additionally, RIDOT posts information on ongoing construction projects.

APPENDIX C

Consistency with FHWA/FTA Proposed Rule for Statewide Transportation Planning and Metropolitan Transportation Planning under SAFETEA-LU (issued Friday June 9, 2006)

The proposed rulemaking speaks to the Public Participation Plan for Metropolitan Planning Processes. The items below are paraphrased from page 33544 of the Federal Register. Each requirement and the method in which it is met, is listed below.

Section 450.316 Interested parties, participation, and consultation.

(a)(1) The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

(i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;	Figure A indicates notice given when and to whom for all relevant MPO activities.
(ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;	Figure A summarizes information that is mailed out. Additionally, as much information as possible is available on our website.
(iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;	Charts, tables, maps, photographs, and other techniques are routinely used in our publications and slide presentations.
(iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;	Our website, as shown in Figure A is used extensively for public and technical information and posting of approved documents.
(v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;	SPC and TAC meetings are held in ADA accessible buildings, on bus routes to the extent possible. The TAC meetings, hearings, and workshops are in the evening and/or afternoon hours.
(vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;	Public hearing reports are provided to the State Planning Council prior to their taking action. A Summary of comments and responses will be provided in the TIP and the Plan.
(vii) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;	A mailing list of Social Advocacy Groups exists and is used for TIP project solicitation notification letter and draft TIP hearing notices. Additionally, an e-mail list of Social Advocacy Groups for target audiences will be developed for the purpose of sending notices which agencies can then post on their own websites. Please refer to Figure A. A

	brochure will be sent to almost all of our mailing lists, and posted to our website. It will also be sent electronically to the e-mail list.
(viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was initially made available for public comment;	Although an instance of this can not be recalled, the MPO is committed to re-advertising a Plan or TIP that changes significantly and providing an additional 20 day comment period.
(ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and	Not applicable as the metropolitan and the statewide planning agencies are one in the same.
(x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.	This plan will be reviewed for effectiveness periodically once every four years, similar to the Plan, TIP, and Certification schedules.

APPENDIX D

**ORGANIZATIONS REGULARLY INVOLVED IN
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

Consistent with Sections 450.316(a), affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, agencies or entities responsible for safety/security operations, providers of non-emergency transportation services receiving financial assistance from a source other than title 49 USC 53, and other interested parties are afforded opportunities to participate in the Transportation Planning Process as follows:

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED ON THE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Public members (6)	Department of Transportation	Railroad Passengers
Cities and Towns (6)	Public Transit Authority	AAA - Southern New England
Greenways Alliance	Dept. of Environmental Management	Advocate for Disabled
Aquidneck Island PC	Economic Development Corporation	Construction Industries
Providence Foundation	Department of Health	RI Trucking Association
Sierra Club	Narragansett Indian Tribe	

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED ON THE STATE PLANNING COUNCIL

Governor's Office	Department of Administration	League of Cities and Towns
Cities and Towns	Department of Transportation	Federal Highway Administration
City of Providence	Solid Waste Management Corporation	Environmental Advocate
	Housing Resources Commission	Housing Development Corporation

**ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS, AIR QUALITY
TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE, TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE, SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL STEERING COMMITTEE, AND THE TECHNICAL
COMMITTEE (NOT PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED)**

Audubon Society	Water Resources Board	American Lung Association
Brown University	State Historic Preservation Office	Advocate for Children
Urban League	Environmental Protection Agency	Local School Officials
Grow Smart RI	Federal Transit Administration	Public Utilities Commission
State Police	RI American Planning Association	Department of Education
Nature Conservancy	Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor	Newport Preservation Society
