

# **Staunton Augusta Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Participation Plan (PPP)**

City of Staunton | Augusta County | City of Waynesboro

**DRAFT DOCUMENT**



Staunton Augusta Waynesboro  
Metropolitan Planning Organization  
112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, VA 24401  
[sawmpo.org](http://sawmpo.org)

# Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) Members

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Devon Thompson - Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (non-voting)

Phil Thompson - Virginia Regional Transit (non-voting)

Steve Wilson - Virginia Regional Transit (non-voting)

# Plan Documentation and Contact

## Title and Date

Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Participation Plan, 2026

## Authors

Paula Melester, Director of Transportation  
Zach Beard, Program Manager  
Garrett Bartholomew, Transportation Planner

## Contact Information

The public, stakeholders, and interested parties can contact the SAWMPO regarding the Public Participation Plan, the Title VI Plan, SAWMPO documents, and other public records. Submit written comments to the following address:

- SAWMPO  
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC)  
112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, Virginia, 24401

Written comments can also be made online, email, or fax:

- Online [sawmpo.org](http://sawmpo.org) inquiry form: [sawmpo.org/contact-us/](http://sawmpo.org/contact-us/)
- Email: [cspdc@cspdc.org](mailto:cspdc@cspdc.org)
- Fax: (540) 885-2687

Oral comments can be submitted by calling the CSPDC office and requesting SAWMPO staff at 540-885-5174. Comments may also be made in person at regularly scheduled SAWMPO Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee meetings. Check [sawmpo.org](http://sawmpo.org) for meeting details.

## Title VI Manager and Additional Assistance

Submit any Title VI inquiries or comments to the SAWMPO Title VI Manager at the above CSPDC contact information. Hearing and voice assistance are available from: Virginia Relay for Hearing and Voice Impaired: 7-1-1

## Disclaimer

The SAWMPO ensures non-discrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you have questions or concerns about your civil rights regarding this document, or if you need special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the SAWMPO. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, view the [SAWMPO PPP and Title VI Plans](#), or call the CSPDC office at 540-885-5174.

## Document Overview

The Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) Public Participation Plan (PPP) establishes the policies, procedures, and strategies for engaging residents, stakeholders, and partner agencies in regional transportation planning. The PPP ensures compliance with federal regulations requiring that MPOs provide meaningful opportunities for public input on transportation plans and programs.

This document describes the public engagement procedures for developing, adopting, and amending the SAWMPO's major planning documents. The PPP aligns with the SAWMPO Title VI Plan to ensure that historically underserved and disadvantaged populations have equal access to the planning process. The PPP establishes four primary goals: transparency and regulatory compliance, comprehensive and accessible public engagement, responsiveness to public input, and continuous improvement. The SAWMPO reviews the PPP as needed to ensure the document remains effective and responsive to community needs.

The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) administers and staffs the SAWMPO. SAWMPO staff prepared the PPP in coordination with the City of Staunton, City of Waynesboro, Augusta County, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The FHWA, FTA, VDOT, DRPT, and MPO localities provide financial support for SAWMPO planning activities and the development of the PPP.

## Resolution

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## Section 1: Introduction and Purpose

### Overview

The Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO), which includes the cities of Staunton, Waynesboro, and the urbanized portion of Augusta County, was established on March 26, 2012, as a result of the U.S. Census designation of the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Urbanized Area (UZA). Federal legislation requires that any urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000 have an MPO comprised of representatives of the local jurisdictions and state and federal transportation officials.

The SAWMPO, comprised of a Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), has the responsibility for transportation policy-making in the metropolitan planning area. The Policy Board is the decision-making body of the SAWMPO, and voting membership is comprised of elected representatives from each of the three SAWMPO localities and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). The TAC reviews and makes recommendations for Policy Board consideration, and voting membership is comprised of staff from each locality and representatives from VDOT and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT).

The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) administers and staffs the SAWMPO. Staff, in coordination with the SAWMPO localities and agencies, collect, analyze, and evaluate transportation data to inform Policy Board decision-making. Staff prepare materials and develop planning documents for the Policy Board and TAC meetings and administer the public involvement and Title VI processes. Staff review and consider revisions to the PPP as needed to ensure the MPO's planning processes meet current state and federal requirements.

### Purpose

The purpose of the SAWMPO PPP is to document the MPO's responsibilities, goals, and strategies for engaging the public in metropolitan transportation planning activities. Federal Regulation Code 450.316 mandates that the SAWMPO document public engagement processes in a PPP. The PPP identifies how the SAWMPO works to ensure federal code requirements are met and that all members of the public are notified of MPO activities specifically related to meetings and updates to major MPO governing documents such as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Title VI Plan, and other documents and processes.

Federal code also requires that MPOs conduct transportation planning through a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) process. The 3-C process means planning is ongoing rather than irregular, involves coordination among multiple agencies and stakeholders, and considers all transportation modes and factors that affect the regional transportation system. The SAWMPO ensures that transportation planning is based on the 3-C process and involves coordination among localities, agencies, stakeholders, and the public while considering all transportation modes affecting all people in the region.

The SAWMPO also emphasizes the value of public participation in informing transportation planning, programming, and decision-making. SAWMPO staff adhere to the American Planning Association (APA) American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct related to public

engagement. The Code notes providing timely, adequate, clear, and accurate information on planning issues to all affected persons and decision makers. Staff strive to ensure that the public has an opportunity to provide meaningful input on SAWMPO planning while providing special attention to how decisions affect disadvantaged communities.

### **How the PPP Informs Other Documents**

The SAWMPO maintains five key documents (see **Figure 1**). Three documents guide MPO transportation planning in the short and long-term: The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The remaining two documents, the PPP and the Title VI Plan, inform the SAWMPO's public engagement.

#### *LRTP, TIP, and UPWP*

The LRTP is a 25-year vision for the region's transportation system that identifies regional transportation needs, goals, and prioritized projects. The LRTP addresses all modes of transportation and must be fiscally constrained to reasonably expected revenues.

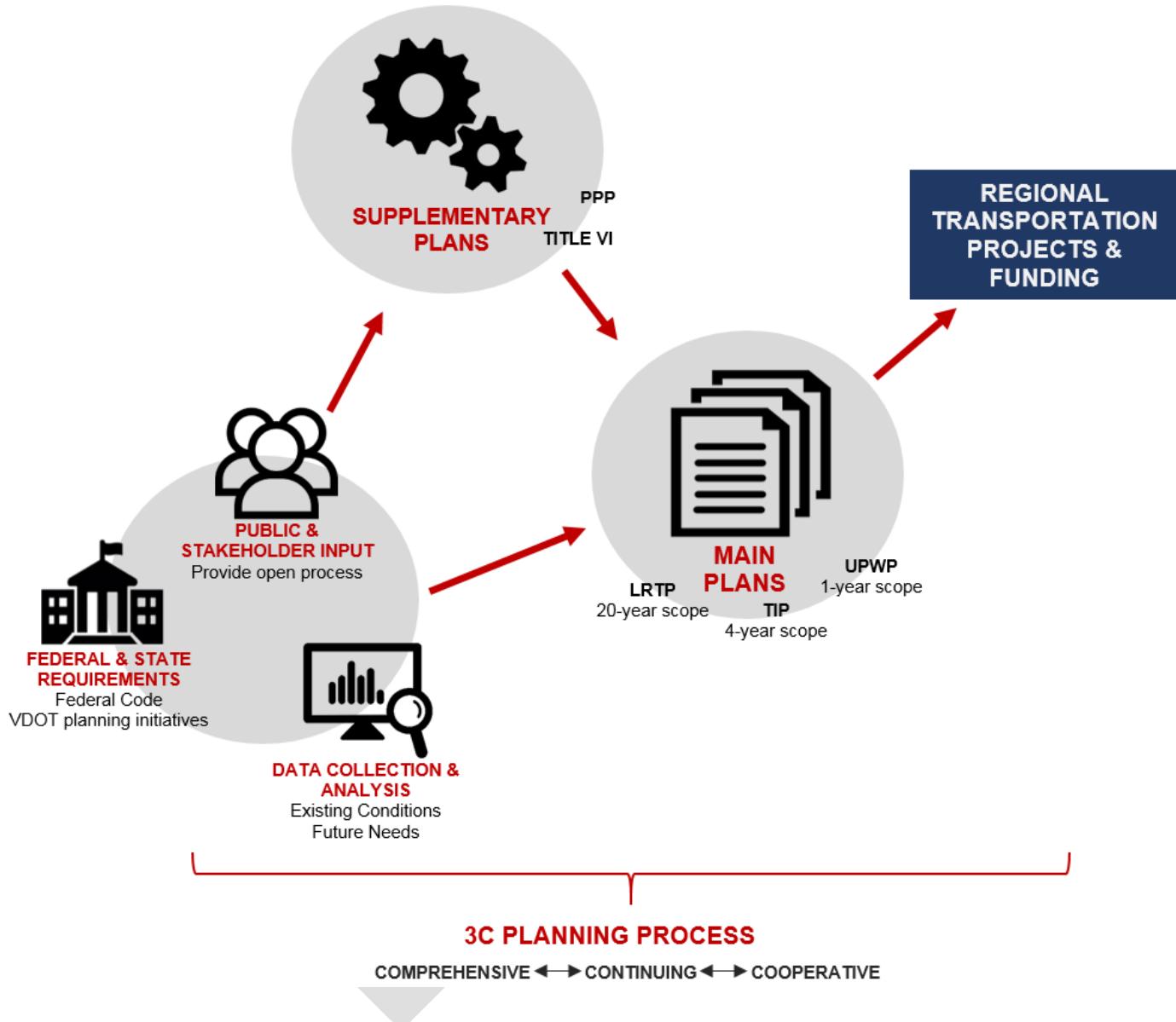
The TIP documents transportation projects that will receive federal funding over a four-year period. The TIP includes project descriptions, costs, funding sources, and schedules, must be consistent with the LRTP, and is updated as needed when the status of projects or funding changes.

The UPWP is the SAWMPO's annual budget and work plan that describes all transportation planning activities the SAWMPO will complete during the fiscal year. The UPWP identifies tasks, schedules, funding sources, and responsible agencies for each planning activity.

#### *Title VI and PPP*

The Title VI Plan and PPP are complimentary documents that ensure comprehensive public engagement. The PPP describes how the SAWMPO conducts public participation and the Title VI Plan ensures that the MPO is meeting federal Title VI requirements and that historically underserved and disadvantaged populations have equal access to the planning process. Federal regulations require that the PPP align with the Title VI Plan, which ensures compliance with Title VI and related non-discrimination regulations.

**Figure 1: Relationship of Foundational and Supplemental Documents in Relation to SAWMPO Planning**



## Goals, Desired Outcomes, and Performance Measures

The SAWMPO PPP establishes goals for engaging the public in transportation planning, describes the desired outcomes of engagement efforts, and identifies the performance measures used to evaluate the PPP's effectiveness. The public participation goals reflect federal requirements and the SAWMPO's commitment to transparent planning. The desired outcomes describe what successful engagement is in practice. The performance measures provide criteria for assessing effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. Combined, these elements create a public engagement framework for accountability and continuous improvement.

### *Goals*

The SAWMPO PPP goals for engaging the public are:

**Table 1: SAWMPO PPP Goals**

Goal	Description
<b>Goal 1: Transparency and Regulatory Compliance</b>	Provide complete and accessible information on SAWMPO activities and maintain full compliance with Title VI and all applicable state and federal requirements.
<b>Goal 2: Comprehensive and Accessible Public Engagement</b>	Connect with all members of the public through multiple notification methods and accessible meeting formats. Provide adequate public notice for review and input on the LRTP, TIP, UPWP, Title VI Plan, PPP amendments, and other planning activities. Conduct meetings at convenient times and accessible locations, with particular attention to populations traditionally underserved by transportation systems. Use visualizations and clear communication to make planning initiatives easier to understand.
<b>Goal 3: Responsiveness to Public Input</b>	Demonstrate thoughtful and timely consideration of public input received during development of the LRTP and all other planning activities.
<b>Goal 4: Continuous Improvement</b>	Regularly review the effectiveness of the PPP to ensure a full and open participation process and update as needed.

### *Desired Outcomes*

The SAWMPO PPP desired outcomes of successful public engagement are:

**Table 2: SAWMPO PPP Desired Outcomes**

Outcome	Description
<b>Outcome 1: Meaningful Public Participation</b>	An engaged and informed public that actively participates in and provides meaningful input on the metropolitan planning process.
<b>Outcome 2: Effective Partnerships</b>	Strong working relationships between the public, stakeholders, the SAWMPO Policy Board, TAC, and partner agencies that support collaborative decision-making.
<b>Outcome 3: Community-Responsive Plans</b>	Transportation plans and programs that reflect and address community needs and priorities and reflect industry best practices.

### *Performance Measures*

The SAWMPO performance measures for assessing how well the MPO is meeting PPP goals and desired outcomes are:

**Table 3: SAWMPO PPP Performance Measures**

Performance Measure	Description
<b>Measure 1: Public Responsiveness</b>	Respond promptly and within a reasonable time period to requests for information about plans under public comment and all SAWMPO activities. Comply with all Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements and provide timely responses.
<b>Measure 2: Participation Effectiveness</b>	Track public participation for plans under comment, including number of comments received through meetings, surveys, and written submissions. Identify and implement strategies to increase engagement if necessary.
<b>Measure 3: Staff Capacity and Training</b>	Staff complete annual Title VI training and attend other federal compliance training related to MPO operations as needed.
<b>Measure 4: Regulatory Compliance</b>	Address any federal PPP compliance findings promptly and maintain full compliance with Title VI and other applicable regulations. All major SAWMPO transportation plans (LRTP, TIP, UPWP, PPP, and Title VI Plan) receive appropriate state and federal approvals.

## **Section 2: Public Meeting Notice and Accessibility**

This section establishes the procedures for public meeting notification, providing advance notice of meetings and planning activities, and ensuring that all meetings are accessible to the public. Section 3 provides an overview of public communication, education, and outreach methods.

### **Public Meeting Locations and Guidelines**

#### *Location of Regular SAWMPO Policy Board and TAC Meetings and Public Information Meetings*

All regular Policy Board and TAC meetings and public information meetings will be held at locations within the region to inform residents and solicit feedback. Meeting locations and times will be publicly accessible and accommodate individuals with disabilities and ADA needs and served by public transportation.

#### *Public Comment Opportunity*

All SAWMPO Policy Board, TAC, and committee meetings will include a public comment period after the meeting is called to order and prior meeting minutes are approved. When major plans are on the agenda, an additional public comment period will be provided before action is taken. The public may also submit comments before meetings via email or mail. Staff will acknowledge the comments during the public comment period at Policy Board and TAC meetings.

### *Accessibility and Interpreter Availability*

All meetings are held in ADA-accessible facilities with public transit access. SAWMPO provides accommodations for individuals with disabilities upon request. Written materials will be available in accessible formats for the visually impaired, including large print, Braille, and audio upon request. Sign language interpreters and language interpreters are available upon request. Accommodation requests should be submitted at least three business days before a meeting to SAWMPO staff (see **Table 4**).

**Table 4: Summary of Accessibility and Language Services**

Accessibility and Language Services		
Service Type	Advance Notice Required	Response Commitment
Sign Language Interpreters	3 working days minimum	Provided if requested
Non-English Interpreters		
Large Print Materials		
Braille Documents		
Audio Recordings		

### **Public Notice of Meetings and Plans**

SAWMPO provides public notice for all public MPO meetings and major plans. Meeting notices include all Policy Board and TAC meetings, including regular, special, rescheduled meetings, and meeting venue changes, and changes from in-person to all-virtual; citizen advisory committee meetings or other committee meetings involving the public; and any meetings intended to gather public information or input. All notices include the meeting date, time, location, and meeting and document materials and are posted on sawmpo.org and also posted in newspapers or other outlets if necessary.

SAWMPO major plans such as the LRTP, TIP, UPWP, Title VI Plan, and PPP are approved or amended. An approval creates or replaces a complete document, while an amendment modifies an existing document. Approvals are comprehensive planning documents and typically require longer public comment periods than amendments, while amendments are specific modifications to an already-approved document that typically require shorter public comment periods.

For the SAWMPO, the LRTP is approved every five years and amended as needed when project priorities change. The TIP is approved every four years and amended when projects are added, removed, or significantly changed. The UPWP is approved annually, with amendments made when work tasks change. The Title VI Plan is approved every three years and amended as needed based on federal requirements and guidance. The PPP is approved when major revisions occur, with amendments made for procedural updates between major revisions.

**Table 5** provides a comprehensive summary of the SAWMPO public notice requirements for meetings and documents.

**Table 5: SAWMPO PPP Public Notice Requirements**

Public Notice Requirements		
Activity Type	Advance Notice Period	Publication Requirements
<b>Regular Meetings</b>		
Policy Board and TAC Regular Meetings Calendar	Published prior to January 1 of the next calendar year	Once in local newspapers and SAWMPO website
Policy Board and TAC Regular Meetings	Published one week prior to the scheduled meeting	SAWMPO website
<b>Other Meetings</b>		
Policy Board and TAC Special Meetings	7 calendar days minimum	Once in local newspapers and SAWMPO website
Policy Board and TAC Rescheduled Meetings	7 calendar days minimum	Once in local newspapers and SAWMPO website
Policy Board and TAC All-Virtual Meetings	7 calendar days minimum	Once in local newspapers and SAWMPO website
Special Community Meetings	14 calendar days minimum	Once in local newspapers and SAWMPO website
<b>Major Plan Approvals</b>		
LRTP Approval (approved every five years)	14 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website
TIP Approval (approved every four years)	14 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website
UPWP Approval (approved annually)	14 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website
Title VI Plan Approval (approved every three years)	14 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website
PPP Approval (approved as necessary)	45 calendar days minimum	Once in local newspapers and SAWMPO website
Other Major Plans Approval	14 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website
<b>Plan Amendments</b>		
LRTP Amendments	14 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website
TIP Amendments	7 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website
UPWP Amendments	14 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website
Title VI Plan Amendments	14 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website
PPP Amendments	14 calendar days minimum	Once in local newspapers and SAWMPO website
Other Major Plan Amendments	14 calendar days minimum	SAWMPO website

## Section 3: Public Communication, Education, and Outreach

The SAWMPO provides public access to records, plans, meetings, and activities, and educates the public about metropolitan transportation planning. Staff scale public outreach to match project scope and significance. Localized projects receive targeted outreach within the project area, while regional projects require broader engagement throughout the entire SAWMPO region, with particular attention to traditionally underserved areas.

### **Access to Information**

The SAWMPO will provide the public with reasonable and timely access to technical and policy information related to the data or content used in the development of transportation plans, programs, and projects. Documents are available for public review at the CSPDC office from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Major planning documents are available on [sawmpo.org](http://sawmpo.org).

### **Response to Public Input**

SAWMPO staff responses to questions and comments from the public concerning the public participation process, draft transportation plans, programs, or public agency consultation process will be made directly to the individual by email, letter, phone, or other appropriate means.

When significant written and oral comments are received on the LRTP, TIP, UPWP or other planning documents, SAWMPO staff will develop a summary and analysis of the comments and a report as part of the final document.

### **Public Outreach and Education Methods**

The SAWMPO uses a variety of communication and outreach methods to inform the public about transportation planning activities and encourage participation in the planning process. These methods are selected and tailored based on the type of activity, the audience, and the level of engagement needed. **Table 6** summarizes the primary communication and outreach tools used by SAWMPO staff, SAWMPO members, and partner stakeholders to inform the public and other stakeholders.

The SAWMPO will engage underserved populations through organizations and media outlets that serve these communities. Using GIS, the SAWMPO has identified the locations of these communities, as documented in the Title VI Plan.

**Table 6: Public Outreach and Education Methods**

Communication Method	Description	Frequency/Usage
<b>SAWMPO Website</b>	Staff perform routine maintenance, updating, and posting of materials including public notices for procurement, public comment, and meetings; policy documents; meeting schedules; events calendar; major transportation plans; and agendas and minutes for Policy Board and TAC meetings.	Ongoing
<b>Presentations</b>	SAWMPO staff, SAWMPO members, and partner stakeholders make presentations to citizen groups, public agencies, and local governmental bodies.	As requested
<b>Public Meetings and Events</b>	SAWMPO staff, SAWMPO members, and partner stakeholders attend public meetings and events to inform the public.	As necessary and appropriate
<b>Public Service Announcements</b>	SAWMPO staff, SAWMPO members, and partner stakeholders provide public service announcements and interviews on radio and local television channels to explain subject matter and promote public participation.	As appropriate
<b>News Articles and Press Releases</b>	Articles and press releases provided to local media.	As needed
<b>Open Houses, Roundtables, and Community Forums</b>	SAWMPO staff, SAWMPO members, and partner stakeholders provide information presentations at regional sites, open houses, roundtables, and other community forums.	As requested and appropriate
<b>Email</b>	Email provided to select individuals, groups, or organizations that have expressed interest or made comments at meetings.	When appropriate
<b>Flyers</b>	Informational flyers distributed in public locations.	When necessary and appropriate

## Section 4: Transit and Public Participation

The BRITE public transit program operates in and serves the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro region. BRITE chooses to integrate coordination with the SAWMPO and gives formal public notice in this PPP that the SAWMPO's TIP development process is being used to satisfy BRITE's public participation and public hearing requirements of Section 5307(c). All public transportation providers in the region may utilize the SAWMPO as an entity to augment their public participation process. To that end, the SAWMPO will comply with transit planning requirements. Each public notice will state that "public notice of public involvement activities and time established for the public review and comments on the TIP will satisfy the Program of Projects requirements," as presented in joint Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration environmental regulations "Environmental Impact and Related Procedures" 23 C.F.R. Part 771. A project that requires an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement will involve additional public involvement.