

<p>OS-299 (7-08)</p> 	<p>TRANSMITTAL LETTER</p>	<p>PUBLICATION:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">295</p>
		<p>DATE:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">November 23, 2011</p>
<p>SUBJECT:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Publication # 295, Project Level Public Involvement Handbook</p>		
<p>INFORMATION AND SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:</p> <p>This revised Publication # 295, Project Level Public Involvement Handbook supersedes all previous versions of this Publication. The Project Level Public Involvement Handbook is intended to be a guide for Department personnel, consultants assisting PennDOT, and personnel from other administrative jurisdictions – such as local project sponsors – engaged in project development.</p> <p>The approach and techniques described in the Project Level Public Involvement Handbook provide the means to foster meaningful public involvement, while minimizing controversies that stop or delay projects, increase project costs and erode public trust.</p> <p>Below is a link to the revised handbook. This handbook will be effective on December 1, 2011.</p> <p>ftp://ftp.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20295.pdf</p>		
<p>CANCEL AND DESTROY THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>This handbook supersedes the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Publication # 295, Project Level Public Involvement Handbook that was dated August 26, 2008.</p>	<p>ADDITIONAL COPIES ARE AVAILABLE FROM:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> PennDOT SALES STORE (717) 787-6746 phone (717) 787-8779 fax ra-penndotsalesstore@state.pa.us</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PennDOT website - www.dot.state.pa.us <i>Click on Forms, Publications & Maps</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DGS warehouse (PennDOT employees ONLY)</p>	
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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

THE TRANSPORTATION PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Project Level Public Involvement Handbook

PUB 295 (11-2011)



Project Level Public Involvement Handbook

Overview of the Four Parts of the Handbook

The *Project Level Public Involvement Handbook* is [intended to be a guide](#) for Department personnel, consultants assisting PennDOT, and personnel from other administrative jurisdictions – such as local project sponsors – engaged in project development.

The handbook is comprised of four parts:

- [Part 1 – The Principles of Public Involvement](#)
This part describes the benefits of engaging the public in transportation project development and provides practical guidance for earning the public's trust and for managing conflict that might arise during project development.
- [Part 2 – Public Involvement & Hearing Procedures](#)
This part details PennDOT's public involvement and public hearing procedures in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (also known as NEPA) and associated implementing regulations.
- [Part 3 – How to Develop a Public Involvement Program](#)
This part details when to engage the public and the process of developing and carrying out a public outreach program, and describes the role of a Public Involvement Coordinator as an integral member of the Project Team.
- [Part 4 – The Toolbox of Public Involvement Techniques](#)
This part is a "toolbox" of ideas and techniques that can be applied to a variety of situations in which PennDOT interacts with the public throughout the development of transportation projects.

Additionally, the [Appendices](#) provide useful references and examples.

The approach and techniques described in the *Project Level Public Involvement Handbook* provide the means to foster meaningful public involvement, while minimizing controversies that stop or delay projects, increase project costs and erode public trust.



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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Project Level Public Involvement Handbook

Preface

The *Project Level Public Involvement Handbook* describes the principles, procedures and techniques for enhancing citizen participation in the development and subsequent implementation of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's (PennDOT's, also "Department") improvement projects. This handbook applies to all classes of environmental review actions: Categorical Exclusion Evaluations (CEEs), Environmental Assessments (EAs), and Environmental Impact Statements (EISs), and 100% state-funded projects cleared with an Environmental Evaluation Report (EER) and Environmental Documentation (ED). Thus, this handbook is a companion to PennDOT's guidance on these actions.

Throughout project development, PennDOT strives to build *consensus* - not only among resource and regulatory agencies, but also the public. PennDOT's public involvement efforts give Pennsylvania residents an important role in shaping the decisions that will affect their communities. This cooperative approach to transportation planning and project development involves PennDOT, elected officials, and citizens in a continuing dialogue about the communities' goals for the future. Together, PennDOT and local citizens discuss the specific transportation improvements needed to help communities achieve these goals. The result is a transportation project that best meets the project's transportation needs while balancing impacts and achieving compatibility with community goals.

Our efforts to involve the public meet the federal government's requirements for citizen participation, including the Federal Highway Administration's regulations [23 CFR Part 771.111\(h\)](#), the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) of 1990](#), the [National Historic Preservation Act](#), the [Clean Air Act Amendments \(CAAA\) of 1990](#), [Executive Order 12898](#) of 1994 concerning environmental justice for minority populations and low-income populations, and the [National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#) of 1969. The goal of PennDOT's public outreach programs, however, is not merely to satisfy the letter of the law. *We are genuinely committed to addressing the particular concerns and needs of local interests.* Additional guidance on collaborating with the public during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process can be found in the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) "[Collaboration in NEPA, A Handbook for NEPA Practitioners \(October 2007\).](#)"

The Principles of Public Involvement

Public Involvement Handbook Part 1

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1. What we Gain

The public's involvement in project development enables us to better fulfill the promise of our mission:

“Through the **active involvement of customers, employees and partners**; PennDOT provides services and a safe intermodal transportation system that attracts businesses and residents and stimulate Pennsylvania's economy.”

Public involvement can help guide project development to respond to transportation needs with a minimum of community and environmental impact.

Involving the Public

We have a responsibility to serve our customers, the public. But transportation is more than a product, and our customers are more than consumers. Transportation improvements, especially the construction of large scale facilities, can influence the overall economic and social development of a community.

In many cases, transportation improvements represent significant change with which communities will have to live for decades. Therefore, the public should be involved in developing these improvements. Local citizens should have the opportunity to participate fully in the dialogue to influence the decision-making process that can affect their individual lifestyles and shape their collective futures. Through an effective public outreach program we can:

- Hold an open dialogue with interested citizens
- Allow the public to help develop solutions for their community
- Assess the public's reaction to proposals
- Assimilate public views and preferences into decision-making and document their consideration
- Reach a consensus within the community on a recommended course of action

When we establish purposeful communication with a community, the result is nearly always productive. Effective public involvement engages the public early in the process, considers the community perspective, proactively identifies and resolves concerns and builds relationships that PennDOT can count on in the future. It also ensures adherence to a philosophy of “no surprises” whereby we can identify and address controversy before it erupts by actively engaging the public in the project development process.

Remember, public involvement does not cause public controversy, but the lack of public involvement certainly can.

Reaching Out

Reaching out to the community will demonstrate that we are a concerned, cooperative agency committed to customer service.

Openness is the fundamental ingredient of a successful public outreach program. It is not enough, however, to simply open the door and invite the public to participate. Careful thought must be given to ensure that a broad cross section of the affected community is represented. Stakeholders, those persons and groups with substantial interests in their communities, should have open access to participate in transportation decision-making. Openness is gained by approaching the public as partners during the earliest stages of project development.

Our consistent presence in the affected community provides public access and promotes openness in discussing the issues. It provides stakeholders with opportunities to adequately represent their interests. This enhances our understanding of citizens' concerns and provides a sense of shared responsibility for project development.

An open process builds public confidence in PennDOT. It is important to remember that the public wants timely access to information. Perhaps even more, they want access to decision makers. When we give them this access, we set the basis for credible and defensible decisions. In doing so, we recognize the basic human need for an individual to have some say in the changes that will affect his or her place in life and community. This approach also achieves loftier ambitions: it strengthens democracy and rebuilds people's faith in government.

Early and Often

Citizens may best represent their interests when they become involved at the earliest possible opportunity. Early involvement of the public is important and will:

- Minimize the spread of rumors.
- Prevent local leaders from feeling ignored and from becoming distrustful.
- Educate the community about project development.
- Shape public expectations regarding PennDOT's abilities and limitations.
- Develop a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

Effective public outreach does not just happen – it must be planned and must occur at key points throughout the project development process. A program of early and continuous coordination with the community will lead to a constructive, working relationship.

Public outreach efforts should be proactive and focus on the fundamentals of communication: listening to all stakeholders and responding to them honestly and in a timely manner.

Working Together

Working together fosters citizen participation in decision-making.

Cooperation between PennDOT and local interests will promote a healthy exchange of information that is beneficial. Local citizens, road users (commuters, through traffic, freight carriers, emergency service providers, etc.) and elected officials can help identify transportation needs that must be satisfied to make travel safer and more efficient. They can provide valuable information about local conditions and other factors that we otherwise might not have considered.

The public's input also helps to develop plans that are sensitive to vital community concerns. Our focus on technical issues alone may not lead to the best choice for the community, particularly when there is the potential for controversy. With the input of those who live within the project area, better project decisions can be made.

For a public involvement program to be successful, Project Team members must understand community values and opinions. We must work with citizens to more effectively identify and resolve environmental issues. We should ask citizens for meaningful input with the intent of listening and responding. By working with the community in this way, we can develop a widespread, shared sense of the long-term public interest.

Educate the Public

Communication is the cornerstone of an effective public outreach program. Since knowledge is a guide to action, the program must be informative and educate stakeholders on the transportation project development process.

It is our role to educate the public on transportation planning and development in general and specific projects in particular. We should clearly explain the relationship between transportation systems and the economic, environmental, and social well-being of the communities and regions served by them.

Information needs to be presented in a simple, easy to understand format for public use. Typically, however, it is the lack of quality and infrequency of interactions, and not the technical information, that stands in the way of community understanding.

Public acceptance, support, and confidence in decision-making can increase the likelihood of (and even expedite) implementing transportation improvement plans. The community's involvement in project development will lead to greater understanding of, and more positive reactions to, the proposed plans.

Our approach to public outreach recognizes that, in the long term, decisions made cooperatively are more workable and acceptable to the community.

Resolving Concerns

The development of transportation improvements, large-scale facilities in particular, can generate a great deal of public concern.

Unilateral decision-making may appear to be more efficient than a collaborative process. However, a disregard for public interests, needs and concerns can alienate us from our customer base and place at-risk the positive relationships that we forge over time and on which we come to count on whenever we deal with transportation challenges.

Unless we work with the local community, we will spend more time dealing with angry, unsupportive people than improving their transportation facilities. By communicating and collaborating, we can keep our projects on schedule, within budget and better meet customer expectations. Time invested early in the process to fully understand the issues and interests of the stakeholders can be invaluable in developing consensus around a solution.

Concerns that public involvement creates problems are largely unfounded. Many of our problems with the public result from inadequate efforts to involve them in project development. A closed process breeds public misinformation, misunderstanding, suspicion and resentment. If we do not provide enough meaningful opportunities for the public to express concerns and provide important information about their community, citizens may feel that we have failed them. They will certainly feel that they were not given a real say in determining their own community's future.

Without the "reality check" of extensive community involvement, we risk alienating those who should be our allies in the challenge to creatively address transportation needs. When the public is neglected, citizens are more likely to engage in efforts to delay or halt projects through organized opposition and even litigation. In a closed process, public outreach is a last resort used mainly for settling disputes rather than avoiding them.

In an open process, we work in partnership with the community at all stages of project development, inviting all sectors of the public to provide input. This approach creates a cooperative environment in which conflict and litigation are less likely to thrive. Members of the public who have invested time, effort, and money in the process will be less likely to be upset or delay the process through court action. An involved public may be more likely to participate in mediation to resolve conflicts and achieve compromise or other positive settlements.

Although public involvement in decision-making decreases the likelihood that a decision will be challenged, it does not eliminate that possibility. But in those events that are the exception, if lawsuits are filed, we will have generated a public record that will help to withstand the challenges of litigation.

Public Involvement versus Public Relations

Public relations are never a substitute for public involvement, but PI is always good PR. Through each we can work toward building consensus for transportation improvements.

Public Relations Sends a Message

Public relations is a broad field that includes public affairs, the type of specialized PR that involves community and government relations. Within the field of transportation public affairs, we use media relations, publicity and advertising techniques to shape and send important messages. Programs and policies – such as a work zone safety campaign or an initiative to boost ridesharing – lend themselves to PR programs designed to motivate, educate and persuade the public.

However, when it comes to developing transportation projects, the use of PR methods to shape and send messages can become controversial. For any project, when a number of alternative transportation solutions are being considered, and public involvement is being solicited, it is important to avoid sending the message that we have already made up our minds by trying to promote an intended, or “best”, transportation solution.

Public Involvement is Interactive

Public involvement is a collaborative sharing of information, ideas and plans. When done well, a collaborative process results in a “win-win” situation whereby all parties realize the benefits of their involvement. We go to the public early on and say, “We think there is a need for a project here, what do you think?” Then we present some possible solutions, and again, solicit the public’s input. Throughout, we share our findings, documents and data, and an understanding of the process and regulations within which we must work. At the same time we strive to listen and understand the public’s viewpoint and find solutions that address and balance all concerns.

Successful public involvement strategies will involve less “win-lose” conditions of compromise or negotiation where, for one person to receive benefit someone must give-up something in return.

2. Earning Trust & Credibility

Our credibility is won or lost daily on the frontlines of our operations where our customer comes into contact with our people or our services.

Communicating Effectively

Public involvement is one area in which we can “set the table” to provide the venue for a positive, meaningful customer interaction. Providing an effective two-way exchange of information that is open, honest and consistently competent will earn the public’s trust and confidence.

Representing PennDOT

First impressions can be lasting ones, making it very important to put our best people forward to interact with the public. If a staff person is understanding and responsive, the impression created can be one of an understanding and responsive agency. If the speaker seems cold, unsympathetic or defensive, so too will the Department.

Interpersonal vs. Technical Skills

Communities usually want to talk to those who know the technical aspects of the work and who have the authority to make decisions on their behalf. Be sure to send knowledgeable staff who also possess interpersonal communication skills and who may have background training in dealing with people. Do not send staff who lack sufficient understanding of the technical aspects of the project or who have little or no authority to speak for PennDOT. Sometimes it may be necessary to send a number of representatives to afford the public an opportunity to ask questions in different areas of expertise.

Hierarchy of Interpersonal Communication

Use two-way channels as frequently as necessary to provide updated information to interested groups or individuals as it develops, regardless of whether the news is good or bad. It’s always easier to deliver good news, but honesty, respect and sincerity are most recognized and appreciated when you care enough to directly share negative information. Remember that bad news is best communicated personally and directly (preferably in person); written correspondence – including e-mail – does not provide for effective feedback or response. Written communication masks the non-verbal clues like facial expression, vocal tones and body language that add depth of understanding to your conversation.

The key to successful interpersonal communication is to communicate directly, in-person whenever possible.

The Direct Approach

Communicate directly with the affected stakeholders. Deal with those who would be seriously affected privately or in small groups, rather than in large public meetings. Approach those who would be most seriously affected in person when possible.

Homeowners who would be directly affected by a project should have initial access to information from us. Rather than hearing about transportation projects that will personally affect them at a public meeting or in the news media, our customers deserve to hear about it directly from us before any decisions are final. Communicating directly with these individuals or groups enables us to better explain the situation and to understand the customer's specific concerns and perceptions of the project.

When preparing technical information to share with the public, keep it as simple as possible to avoid information overload. Focus on conveying "big picture" perspectives, free of technical jargon or data. Summarize information and use simple presentation tools like PowerPoint or easy-to-understand graphically formatted mapping and information.

Occasionally, incorrect information may be released or key information left out, causing people to then feel misled. Be sure to double and triple check all information for accuracy, quality and completeness. But when a mistake occurs, openly acknowledge it and correct it as soon as it is discovered. Trying to hide the error or explain it away will only jeopardize our credibility and trust within the community.

Positively reinforce the public's involvement and feedback anytime it is offered by explaining or showing how their information was used and how it may have benefited project development.

Top Ten

Ways to Gain Credibility

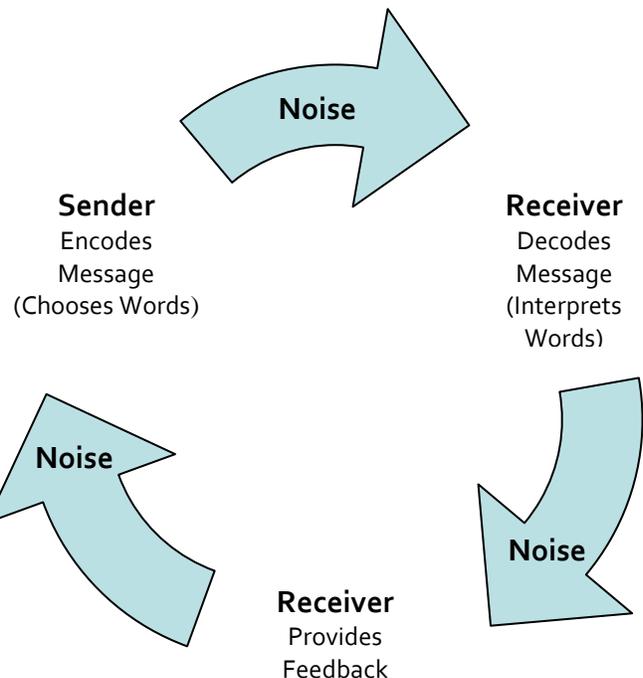
1. Involve people in decisions that will directly affect their lives.
2. Provide information that meets people's needs in a timely manner.
3. Listen to what people are telling you; respond appropriately.
4. Respect people's values and feelings.
5. Speak in plain language.
6. Be open and candid; respond in a personal way, not as a bureaucrat.
7. Make only promises you can keep.
8. Be honest; admit when you do not have the answers or when you have made mistakes, and do not get defensive.
9. Act consistently trustworthy.
10. Improve your interpersonal skills.

Effective Listening

Effective listening is the cornerstone of successful communication.

Regardless how, where or with whom we communicate, the potential exists for misunderstanding. Our customers each bring a unique perspective based upon their own life experience. Whether it's a distraction caused by an earlier event or a varying point of view associated with one's ethnicity or social, political or financial status, the differences that may seem to divide us are the very differences that can unite us for successful project outcomes if we take a more active listening role when we communicate.

Successful two-way communication requires that all parties express themselves clearly, have their messages understood accurately, and in return, receive and understand the messages of others. Being attentive, responsive and open-minded are three important skills in effective listening.



Being Heard

If you want to be heard, be prepared to carefully listen *first*. Focus your full attention on what is being said, and give people time to express themselves completely, without interruption. Identify emotional issues that may provide the foundation for negative attitudes and disagreement. Also listen for what is missing; maybe something is being left out on purpose. Examine the speaker's body language and other non-verbal clues to better understand what is being said.

Understanding Others

Be an active listener. Keep full attention on the speaker and focus on the heart of the subject. Don't simply wait for your chance to speak. Ask clarifying questions when you do not understand the speaker. Summarize the speaker's main points in your own words to be sure you do understand correctly. Always keep an open mind when listening to individuals or groups.

Separate your personal values or opinions from the presentation or discussion, but be aware of their effect on your ability to process the information being conveyed. Don't prejudge and always be mindful of your body language and the message it may convey. React to the ideas presented, not to the person presenting them.

Being Understood

Send a clear message. Make sure your point is being received accurately. Include background detail to make sure everyone is up-to-date and understands what you are talking about. Watch the words you use; words sometimes have different meanings for different people. Avoid the use of technical and bureaucratic jargon. If you are not sure whether your main points were understood, ask clarifying questions.

A constructive dialogue with the public promotes problem solving rather than adversarial relations, delays and frustration.

Top Ten Listening Skills

1. Stop talking. Make eye contact.
2. Give full attention to speaker; wait to prepare responses.
3. Listen for emotional content.
4. Ask clarifying questions.
5. Focus on the main points.
6. Summarize the speaker's main points in your own words to make sure you heard correctly.
7. Make no assumptions.
8. Recognize your own feelings, then put them aside. Show empathy.
9. React to ideas, not to the person presenting them.
10. Be aware of the speaker's body language.

Understanding Public Needs

Understanding the elemental needs of people can help reduce the potential for conflict.

An affected community will react to projects based on how responsive we are to their basic human needs. Positive relationships evolve with the public as we demonstrate our understanding of their needs, thus enhancing our credibility. Elemental needs may be described as basic quality of life issues and include the following:

Control

People expect to be involved in decisions that affect their property and quality of life. Establishing a formal relationship with the community and sharing timely information establishes a collaborative climate in which individuals may influence their community's future and be more accepting of project consequences.

Choice

Voluntary situations are more acceptable than those imposed upon the public. Focus on the content and merit of the proposal; allow the community to become involved in the decision-making process by soliciting input and comments early in a project, making them "investors" in the outcome. This will avoid conflict that can delay a project and increase costs.

Knowledge

All community segments have knowledge about the project area that may be significant based upon their own perspectives. Be sure to involve representatives of each stakeholder segment.

Trust

Trust can be established by being the first, best source of information about your project. A credible source is less likely to generate anger, hostility and a demand for justification. Be responsive to community concerns early on and communicate with stakeholders on a timely basis.

Fear of Loss

Managing conflict is often about dealing with anger, which arises from fear and a sense of loss. With many proposed transportation projects, people may feel threatened by a loss of control, the loss of a valued resource, the loss of property, or a reduction in their quality of life.

Understanding, Empathy

Taking time to learn and understand the community's perspective will convey a sense of empathy and will help facilitate your project's progress.

Fairness

People are concerned about being treated fairly and need to understand the benefits of proposed change. If the impact of a project on a community cannot be fairly distributed, then the affected public needs to understand how and why decisions were made.

Tips on Not Taking it Personally

When dealing with the public, remember that the people attending public meetings are concerned that their homes, jobs and ways of life may be changed by the proposed project. Do not take their reactions personally, but do remember that it is personal to them.

Dealing with Perceptions

Perception is reality. Regardless whether there is data to the contrary, if the public tells us there is a problem, then there is a problem. If people perceive that your project will alter their quality of life in some way, you must address those perceptions. For instance, if there is a perception that your project will add traffic to local streets or increase noise levels, don't just assume that the perception will go away after you tell the public that traffic volumes and noise levels are not expected to change. Provide an in-depth explanation of what can be expected to happen and why, including a summary of the work that was done to arrive at that conclusion.

Breaking down Stereotypes

The public may have perceptions about planners, engineers or state agencies that are stereotypes. Conversely, members of the project team may hold stereotypical views about certain communities or individuals. Use meetings to help people get to know each other better and build relationships. Communicate in terms that everyone can understand. Encourage all interests to explain their perspectives.

Overcoming Resistance

Resistance is a predictable reaction to change. Some project team members resist involving the community in project development, while the public may resist the change your project represents. Flexibility is important. Evaluate why parties are reluctant to consider other options. Look for specific concerns that can be addressed in the form of specific solutions. Remember to always offer solutions, not problems, to overcome resistance and be prepared to rethink and adapt your agenda and strategy as you go to be responsive to opportunity.

See the Project through Their Eyes

Understanding the public perception of your project is important in dealing with the public. Seeing the public's point of view and responding empathetically will positively influence perceptions.

Timing is Everything

Conflict can arise in even the most supportive community when a desired project is perceived as taking too long to develop. Providing prompt, relevant information will facilitate meaningful public involvement that can support decision making by PennDOT.

Announce milestone achievements as they happen, but recognize the protocol of providing information to public officials and some special groups in advance of the general public. Provide information to affected residents before providing it to the community at large.

Responding to Emotions

Some of the most difficult issues to publicly address are those that are emotionally charged.

Proposed new transportation projects often generate a great deal of emotion because of the potential change they represent to a community. Dismissing emotionally charged issues as unfounded will likely result in outrage and opposition. When we acknowledge people's feelings and are consistently fair and accommodating, we can diffuse "hot" issues.

Effectively listen to people's values and feelings. When people do not feel they are being heard, they feel frustrated, and may express their concerns more strongly or more loudly in order to be heard. They may exaggerate their position. As people turn up the volume, your voice is likely to go unheard. This type of interaction contributes to conflict between communities and PennDOT.

Also recognize that PennDOT has a diverse customer base, and different customers will respond to issues differently depending upon their own perspectives. If you treat everyone like they have the same concerns, people will feel that their issues have not been adequately addressed or that they have not been involved or heard.

Monitor the Community

Look for opportunities to deal with emotional situations – project opponents will. In cases where communities are angry, it is possible that PennDOT may have precipitated the hostility either by specific action or inaction. Activist groups will then take advantage of the opportunity to elicit support for their position. The Public Involvement Coordinator or Project Manager will need to closely monitor community issues and attitudes and convey this understanding to the Project Team so that people do not feel the need to shout to be heard. Look for ways to direct a community's emotional energy into constructive participation.

Be Consistent

Work proactively to ensure that information provided to the public is consistent regardless who may be delivering the message. Begin by anticipating what the public needs to know and will want to know in order to participate effectively and develop a list of questions that are likely to be asked. Develop honest, accurate responses to each question that are consistent with PennDOT's position. This information can be assembled in the form of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list with corresponding answers for coordination with the Project Team. This will guard against contradictory information that can happen when different members of the project team are responding to questions from different community members. Inconsistent information damages credibility.

Be Responsive

Trust and credibility take time to build. It can be gradually accomplished by being open, giving good information and remaining in continual contact with the community. To ensure continuity

with the community, designate a single contact person – someone residents and officials can call to directly discuss the project and voice their concerns. Establish a clear system for handling and documenting phone calls from the public so that the Project Team can be made aware of evolving concerns. Have a backup contact person who can provide answers when the primary contact is not available. The public should get prompt responses to their inquiries, if possible, and should not be made to wait.

Try to maintain continuity in project staffing. The public is naturally suspicious, and may feel betrayed, when someone they have trusted is taken off the project. The time it takes for a new person to “get up to speed” may be uncomfortable for the public and for the new person who will need to learn about the community and its needs.

Follow up with people. Show that you have done what you said you were going to do. If a group provides advice to PennDOT and then nothing happens for a long time, the spirit of participation and consensus building may dissipate.

By being responsive, you will find that public involvement becomes progressively easier. Opposition dwindles as the public finds that we have addressed its major concerns.

Just Part of the Job

When dealing with the public, remember that people are concerned that their homes, jobs and ways of life may be changed by the proposed project. Do not take their reactions personally, but do remember that it is personal to them. Be prepared to help them through the process.

Tips on Addressing an Emotional Public

1. When people are speaking emotionally, first respond to their emotions.
2. Acknowledge people’s feelings to indicate that you have heard what they said.
3. Do not discount their concerns.
4. Look for creative approaches to solutions that such exchanges can offer.
5. Do not merely respond with data or cool logic.
6. Use an impartial group to act as a buffer or intermediary between PennDOT and the public.
7. Recognize that a community’s values are as legitimate as ours.
8. Deal with people’s feelings and they are more likely to trust you.

3. Managing Conflict

As long as we propose change and as long as people will be affected by these changes, conflict is inevitable.

Planning Ahead

The goal of an open public outreach program is not to develop a majority that will agree with a proposed decision. Instead, the goal should be to develop a widespread, shared sense of the long-term public interest by acknowledging and accommodating differing points of view within the community.

During project development, conflict may be latent, emerging or fully in evidence. But understand that conflict is not always negative. Conflict can have a positive side, one that promotes communication, problem solving, and positive changes for the parties involved.

Minimize conflict by planning your public involvement approach from the start. Credible and open relationships established with the public early will enable the project team to anticipate public concerns and objections that can be analyzed to determine which concerns and objections can or cannot be addressed and why. Solutions can be collaboratively developed with the public.

A process to build consensus and avoid/minimize conflict should include:

- Careful scoping of the project to determine its probable impact on the community (See the discussion of [Community Impact Assessment](#)).
- Identification of interest groups and decision-makers who will have a stake in the project.
- Frequent and honest communication with local residents using methods that seem most appropriate for the project and the community's needs.
- Flexibility to include local recommendations in the project.
- A project team skilled in communication.

An approach for developing a Public Involvement Plan that will establish a positive working relationship with the community can be found in [Part 3](#) of this handbook. A variety of public involvement tools and techniques for effectively engaging the public can be found in [Part 4](#) of this handbook.

When Conflicts Arise

Conflicts can be effectively managed by assessing the controversy and developing a strategy to deal with it. Understanding conflict will require your direct interaction with the community to identify concerns and to help decide which conflict resolution techniques to use.

Assess the Conflict

Carefully assess conflict at its source by interviewing parties who are directly and indirectly involved to collect data regarding the substantive issues in question. Questions to consider include:

- Who are the key parties and spokespersons?
- Are there other less involved parties who have a role in finding a solution to the conflict?
- Are all the parties willing to work together?
- What is the basis for the conflict? Differing interests? Values? Perceptions?
- What are the central and secondary issues? Are they negotiable?
- What do the parties have in common? What separates them?

Design a Conflict Resolution Strategy

Use information from the assessment to design a strategy considering possible techniques or approaches and whether the level of expertise within your project team may require additional, outside expertise. Set clear goals for your strategy, including:

- Exchanging information
- Identifying issues and interests
- Developing acceptable options
- Reaching agreement on a preferred action

Implement the strategy by striking a compromise, accommodating each other's interests or negotiating an agreement.

Top Ten

Principles of Conflict Management

1. Pay attention to emotional content. It is as important as the technical or procedural content of the issues that has been raised.
2. Take time to understand all aspects of a conflict.
3. Plan a careful strategy and give it a chance to work.
4. Any process to develop solutions should be flexible.
5. Work hard at establishing and maintaining communications with disputing parties.
6. Have parties agree on the problem before beginning to find a solution.
7. Work collaboratively to find a solution.
8. Solutions should be based on the underlying interests of the parties.
9. Think ahead and consider possible stumbling blocks to the creation of a workable solution.
10. Do not make more problems.

Resolving Conflict

Transportation planners resolve most disputes without the use of attorneys. With experience, project managers and Department officials learn to practice diplomacy when dealing with elected officials, citizen's groups, and individuals.

Having a dispute resolution process that addresses issues before they arise can avoid a need to enter into formal negotiations. An effective dispute resolution process should:

- Address issues early
- Emphasize collective problem-solving, not adversarial behavior
- Rely on staff trained in conflict resolution
- Rely on staff members who understand community concerns

These and other dispute resolution approaches can help to maintain a good working relationship with the other party and can be used to develop solutions that meet their needs.

Facilitating Solutions

When a project team chooses to address conflict without the use of third party assistance, it is essential to have team members who can serve as facilitators, who are not afraid to openly discuss conflict. The facilitators should be able to identify signs of unexpressed disagreement and should attempt to identify the parties' feelings and requirements for satisfaction concerning the issue.

Don't stereotype one person or group as the "bad guys" or "opponents" because they disagree with you, and avoid assigning blame. Try to understand their needs, values, assumptions, previous experiences and goals. Remember that your goal is to collaboratively find a mutually acceptable solution that will allow the project to proceed.

No matter how intense the conflict is, never turn a disagreement over ideas, beliefs, procedures or outcomes into a personal attack. Attack the problem, not the person. Always define issues or problems in a shared sense. Say "We do not agree about the best location for the right-of way," rather than "Mr. Thompson does not agree with our administrator on the right-of-way location."

Concentrate on understanding the most important issues. This may appear to temporarily escalate the conflict, but it is necessary if the group is to understand and deal with the disagreement. Help the group to identify shared concerns and suggest working on issues that may have easier solutions to develop a sense of accomplishment on which to build.

It is easy to view conflict in mutually exclusive terms. Attitudes that reflect, "You are either for me or against me" may blind participants to the wide range of approaches, viewpoints and decisions that are available if they keep open minds.

Keep an Open Mind

You can best respond to conflict when you have an open mind. When differing interests meet, you can better watch the progress of their meeting and monitor adherence to the ground rules if you are non-partisan.

You can develop and express your opinion – an open mind is not an empty mind. However, if you refrain from making an immediate commitment to one side of an issue, you will be better able to objectively consider all information, have more time to consider the issue and offer constructive suggestions to meet the needs of all parties. You may also discover solutions that participants deeply involved in the discussion cannot readily see, all while building your credibility.

Explore Options for Mutual Gain

Develop several optional solutions for each key issue. Do not compromise too quickly. Solutions halfway between opposing viewpoints may seem to be the fairest or easiest way to end conflict, but may come up short due to the lack of in-depth discussion and consideration. The ideal solution to conflict is a creative one that finds a way to give everyone what they need most, achieving a win-win.

Tips on Resolving Conflict

1. Disagree with ideas, not with people.
2. Identify and prioritize the issues that are central to the conflict.
3. Avoid polarizing the conflicting positions.
4. Avoid adopting a position that allows for only one solution to meet your needs.
5. Brainstorm to identify solutions through which both parties may gain.

Reaching Agreement

In everyday life, people are motivated by their interests and needs. In the development of a transportation project, strong feelings about conflicting interests and needs can lead people into difficult positions resulting in arguments over those positions.

When parties in a dispute can avoid locking themselves into positions from which it is difficult to retreat, and understand each other's interests and need, problems can be resolved. Agreements can be reached collaboratively.

When to Negotiate

Negotiation is a problem solving process that people use to resolve differences by making concessions and searching for new alternatives to reach agreement. Through the process, the parties are educated about the issues and interests involved in a dispute. They then move from an adversarial bargaining strategy to one of cooperative problem solving. This shift is a key to managing conflict and channeling it into constructive directions.

The interests may be sentimental, political, economic or aesthetic. The party whose interest's conflict with ours may be a special interest group, an individual citizen, or a legislator. Before both our positions become fixed in the media and before the conflict becomes a threat to the project's future, it is time to negotiate.

Your Negotiating Style

Everyone has a personal style for dealing with individual or group conflicts. Your style of negotiation with the public can often mean the difference between creative solutions and rigid, inflexible positions. Recognizing your own negotiating style and learning about other options that are effective in different situations can help you to avoid some public conflicts.

Forcing is the style exhibited by someone who is assertive and makes quick decisions based on a position of power. In dealing with the public, forcing may be very effective in emergencies or when the issues are trivial, but it is not effective for generating ideas, support, or trust from the public.

Avoiding is the negotiating style used by someone who delays responding, diverts attention from the issues at hand, or is inaccessible. Avoiding may be used effectively when the issue is trivial or time is short and a decision is unnecessary. It is seldom effective in dealing with the public because it implies that little consideration is being given to public opinion. When used in public meetings it can lead to explosive outbursts and leave a residue of negative feelings.

Accommodating is the style used by someone who most often agrees, gives in, or placates others. Accommodating may help solicit appreciation and build relationships with some interest groups, but it can also frustrate those who are looking for an open dialogue on the issues.

Compromising is the style we observe when someone bargains for some equitable midpoint between differing views. Compromising may provide a quick agreement, an atmosphere of reason, and a solution that is understood by most people, but it does not allow for creative solutions to problems. Compromise may provide an agreement that patches the symptoms of a problem while ignoring the causes.

Collaborating is a style that relies on trust, skills, and creativity. Collaboration involves the assertion of individual views on an issue while encouraging others to also present their views. This style builds lasting, positive relationships with the public and encourages creative solutions to mutual problems. Using this style will require time and a commitment to a collaborative decision-making process.

Understanding your personal negotiating style and other options, you can choose the style that will help your team reach its goals. Forcing and avoiding are most likely to stifle a good public outreach program. Accommodating and compromising can be used effectively in some negotiations, but will not always meet all the needs of the public or PennDOT. A collaborating approach will enhance any public involvement effort and is most likely to leave all participants feeling positive about the project, the team and PennDOT.

Tips on Reaching Agreement

1. At times, the best tool for constructive resolution is a little quiet time.
2. It is important to let people express themselves, but if the atmosphere gets so argumentative that people are no longer listening to one another, take a break.
3. Come back to the table after the break, summarize the earlier discussion and ask for solutions that can bridge the differences the parties expressed.

Everyday Conflicts

There are some dynamics that you will recognize as recurring. You will find that public involvement (or customer service) can be time-consuming, and certain groups or individuals often demand more involvement than others. You will find that some problems with communication also tend to be repeated. Once you identify these common situations (like the five presented below), you can refine your methods for dealing with them.

The public is really your friend

The citizens group is well-organized and continually asks for information and offers suggestions. You have other priorities as the project begins and are finding it difficult to dedicate enough time to respond to them. Manage their involvement by:

- Acknowledging suggestions with gratitude. Negotiate reasonable times for information exchanges.
- Soliciting input early and often to avoid the inevitable surprise and continuous comments later on.
- Asking for suggestions rather than waiting for them. People appreciate being asked for their opinions.
- Acknowledging good ideas. The public can offer ideas and suggestions that you may not have considered.

Playing 'hide and seek'

A citizen may call frequently and talk for a long time. The caller may be critical of PennDOT and your project and may be argumentative. It may seem easier to postpone a return call than to deal with it right away, but consider these approaches to dealing with persistent callers:

- Negotiate a reasonable length for the calls: "Mr. Jones, I can only spend five minutes now."
- Respond promptly to phone calls or other requests for information. A quick response earns you good-will "bonus points" with the caller and tends to reduce the number of future calls. Delayed response leads the caller to all sorts of negative conclusions: "They have something to hide," "I am being ignored – because I am a minority," or "The decision is made already."
- If you cannot provide the requested information, state the reasons why or give them the name and phone number of a person who can or find the correct information and call back timely.
- Put the person on an "interested party" mailing list, and send them prepared materials about the project. Materials should be distributed prior to the public's predictable requests for information.

If it's worth saying once, it's worth saying ten times.

The group you are talking to does not seem to pay much attention to what you are saying. They have their own agenda. These approaches may help to get your message across:

- Learn the group's "agenda" and identify common needs and interests. Use this information to build your presentation.
- Repeat the information as often as necessary and in different ways-visually, verbally, in broad theoretical terms, in detailed and specific terms, and/or in terms of the individual or group.

Misinformation arises from too little – not too much – information.

The citizens group wants all the information about the proposed relocation of the utility line. You believe that they could not easily understand the data. These approaches may help to explain highly technical information:

- Ask for help from PennDOT staff or project team members and other experts who can help explain technical data in terms the general public can understand.
- Be sensitive to technical terms that may have more than one meaning. For example, "environment" is commonly understood to mean the natural world around us. When citizens hear the term "environmental studies," most do not think that they include impacts to socioeconomic or cultural resources.

Everyone should read from the same script.

At public meetings, different Department spokespersons speak to different people about a project. Based on their area of expertise, project staff may stress different aspects of the project. The public may come away with very different perspectives on the project. These approaches can be useful for handling the situation:

- Be aware of the varying interpretations that different people may construct from information presented by experts at public meetings. Meetings that are structured for one-on-one or small group discussions with experts may yield different answers to similar questions.
- Prepare a list of anticipated questions with suggested answers that can be shared with the team.
- Prepare the team. Have the team practice what they will say ahead of time.
- If small group discussions are planned, be sure that all of the spokespersons provide certain basic information before explaining the specifics.
- Know your audience. When speaking, ask the audience questions to be sure they understand the information correctly.

Public Involvement & Hearing Procedures

Public Involvement Handbook Part 2

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Acronyms Used in this Part of the Handbook

CE	Categorical Exclusion
CEE	Categorical Exclusion Evaluation
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EA	Environmental Assessment
ED	Environmental Documentation
EER	Environmental Evaluation Report
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
L RTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
ROD	Record of Decision
RPO	Rural Planning Organization
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
USC	United States Code

1. Purpose

Part 2 of the *Public Involvement Handbook* describes – and was developed for compliance with – the principles, procedures and techniques for enhancing stakeholder participation in the development of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's (PennDOT's) improvement projects, as required pursuant to NEPA, [23 CFR 771.111\(h\)](#), [40 CFR 1500-1508](#), and 23 USC 139.

The majority of Part 2 applies to EIS projects – denoted by (EIS) after the Section heading – but may be applied to EAs on a case-by-case basis unless otherwise noted. Also see the [Public Outreach Checklists and Documentation Forms](#). These checklists can serve as documentation that appropriate public outreach was conducted for a specific project.

Public involvement should be an open proactive process, initiated early in project development. The goal of a public outreach program is to engage the project stakeholders in meaningful ways to gain insight and input regarding what is most important to the community. This information can help to shape the transportation solutions under consideration. The public involvement process should be cooperative and collaborative and continue throughout project development.

2. Coordination with Local Interests and other Agencies

Local Governments

PennDOT will contact local government agencies, including Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), early in project development and keep them informed of the project progress. This applies to all levels of projects (EIS, EA and CEE).

Special Population and User Groups

PennDOT will conduct its public involvement programs so as to identify disproportionately high and adverse environmental effects on Environmental Justice (minority and low income) populations, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) communities. During scoping activities and throughout project development, PennDOT will identify, to the extent possible, special groups including persons with disabilities, minority community groups, and ethnic groups and organizations. Coordination with these groups at public meetings, through newsletters, at special interest group meetings, or through other means necessary to engage these populations, should occur periodically throughout transportation project development.

Additionally, PennDOT will coordinate, when appropriate with the public and private providers and users of unconventional mass transit services. These services may include school buses, transportation for the elderly, persons with disabilities, Head Start transportation programs, and other non-fixed route or unscheduled transportation services.

This applies to EIS, EA, and CE projects alike.

Interested Parties

During the planning process, each MPO/RPO must provide "Interested Parties" with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the LRTP, STIP, and TIP (see [Title 23 U.S.C. Section 134](#)). Interested Parties include, but are not limited to:

- Citizens
- 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
- Native American Tribes.

PennDOT will assist the MPO/RPO during the planning process and continue to consult with and involve the identified Interested Parties as appropriate throughout the NEPA process. To ensure that this reasonable opportunity is provided, each MPO/RPO must include in their transportation plan a "Participation Plan," which must be developed in consultation with interested parties (see [Part 3](#) of this handbook for more details).

Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating Agencies are Federal agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise related to a project. State and local agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise, or interested tribal governments, may also be invited to be Cooperating Agencies in the NEPA process as circumstances deem appropriate. Federal agencies with jurisdiction by law are required to become Cooperating Agencies for a project per [23 CFR 771.111\(d\)](#). Other Federal, State, and Local agencies with special interest/expertise or legal jurisdiction in the project may also be invited to become cooperating agencies. Additional detail on inviting Cooperating Agencies can be found in [23 USC 139](#) and in the SAFETEA-LU Environmental Review Process [Final Guidance](#).

Participating Agencies (EISs only)

Participating Agencies are those agencies with an interest of some kind in a project. They may be Federal, State or local agencies, but they must be an "agency." Participating agencies are invited to participate in the NEPA process for EISs by letter. Coordination is required between PennDOT and FHWA to decide which agency will send the invite letters. Invited Federal agencies are automatically considered Participating Agencies, unless they explicitly decline in writing to participate stating, with respect to the projects, that the agency has no

Tips on Coordination

The level of public involvement and agency coordination should be commensurate, not necessarily with the type and size of the project, but with the level of interest due to:

- the complexity of the project,
- the controversy it generates and
- the amount of inconvenience its construction may cause.

jurisdiction, no expertise, and does not intend to submit comments. State and local agencies invited to become Participating Agencies only receive official status if they respond affirmatively within the specified deadline given in the invitation. Additional detail on inviting Participating Agencies can be found in [23 USC 139](#) and the SAFETEA-LU Environmental Review Process [Final Guidance](#).

3. Environmental Review Process (for EISs only)

All transportation projects requiring an EIS for which the original Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the *Federal Register* after August 10, 2005 must follow the [Environmental Review Process](#) (ERP). The ERP includes the project development process for NEPA decision-making, as well as the process for compliance with applicable environmental permits and approvals.

To initiate the environmental review process for a project, notify FHWA about the type of work, termini, length, and general location of the proposed project. The notification must also provide a list of any other Federal approvals (e.g., Section 404 permits) anticipated to be necessary for the proposed project, to the extent that such approvals are known at the outset.

The ERP requires that a plan be prepared at the on-set of the project for coordinating public and agency participation and comment during the environmental review process. The Coordination Plan should be reviewed with the Cooperating and Participating Agencies and the public. Cooperating Agency means any Federal agency, other than a lead agency, that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposed project or project alternative. Federal, State, tribal, regional, and local government agencies that may have an interest in the project should be invited to serve as Participating Agencies.

It is strongly advised that a schedule accompany the Coordination Plan so that all project stakeholders are aware, up front, of PennDOT's expectations. Best results occur through consultation with the Participating Agencies on the Coordination Plan, because key elements of the plan may be setting expectations that require a commitment of their resources. Additionally, the Coordination Plan must be shared with the public and with Participating Agencies so that they know what to expect and so that any disputes are resolved as early as possible.

The ERP further requires that the Participating Agencies and the public have opportunities for input into the development of the project Purpose and Need and the range of alternatives to be developed for the project. The Coordination Plan will include information concerning when this input would occur and the methods of public involvement to be used.

The ERP may be applied to EA projects on a case-by-case basis, as determined through coordination with FHWA/FTA and PennDOT Central Office.

4. Project Initiation Letter and Notice of Intent (for EISs only)

Project Initiation Letters and Notices of Intent are not required for EA, CEE, EER, or ED projects.

Project Initiation Letter

A Project Initiation Letter is prepared by PennDOT and sent to the FHWA or FTA to indicate that PennDOT is ready to proceed with the NEPA phase of project development by devoting appropriate staff, consultant services, financial resources, and leadership attention to the project. This notification normally occurs prior to the publication of the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS in the Federal Register.

Notice of Intent

FHWA will prepare a Notice of Intent (NOI) when a decision has been made to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In accordance with [23 CFR 771.123\(a\)](#) and [40 CFR 1508.22](#), this notice will include:

- A brief description of the proposed action;
- A description of possible alternatives that may accomplish the goals of this action;
- A description of the proposed scoping process, including whether, when and where any scoping meetings will be held; and
- The name and address of the person to contact within PennDOT who can answer questions about the proposed action and the EIS.

PennDOT will forward a copy of the information for the Notice of Intent to the appropriate Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) office for publication in the Federal Register. This draft notice should be provided along with, or shortly after, the Project Initiation Letter is sent from PennDOT to FHWA or FTA.

5. Project Scoping

Projects will use a scoping process with appropriate Federal, State and local agencies to identify the substantial issues associated with a project and the range of alternatives to be studied. The scoping meeting or field view serves as an informational exchange between PennDOT, FHWA/FTA, and the appropriate federal and state agencies with an interest in or jurisdiction over some aspect of the proposed project.

An initial project scoping is to occur, under the direction of the MPO/RPO, prior to development of the TIP (See [Identifying Community Interests and Values](#)). PennDOT should obtain this pre-TIP scoping information and decide if it is adequate for project scoping. If not, as part of the project development process, PennDOT will hold a scoping meeting or field view, as appropriate.

If a scoping meeting or field view is not held, PennDOT will undertake other forms of communication with the appropriate agencies and the public to determine the substantial issues of the project and range of alternatives to consider.

On projects requiring an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Categorical Exclusion Evaluation (CEE), scoping with FHWA/FTA and appropriate federal and state agencies will be initiated to determine areas of potential concern.

Tips on Project Scoping

1. Formal scoping is a requirement for EIS projects.
2. Informal scoping is done for other projects (EAs and CEs) to determine document level and levels of effort for other activities, such as public involvement.
3. To assess need for public involvement, look for issues or features that might be important to the community, such as:
 - a. Parks
 - b. Bicycle and hiking trails
 - c. Pedestrian facilities
 - d. Playgrounds
 - e. Community facilities
 - f. Schools
 - g. Historic buildings
 - h. Views

6. Public Meetings

Purpose of Public Meetings

Public Meetings will be held, when appropriate, at various stages during project development, typically to:

- Introduce the project to the community
- Assess local issues and concerns
- Present project needs
- Present preliminary and detailed alternatives and their associated effects, and
- Present possible mitigation measures.

But meetings are held not solely to present information to the public, but rather to obtain information on the public's interests, concerns, priorities, and perceptions; and to clarify issues and concerns in order to reduce misunderstandings and conflict which might arise. General purpose public meetings will be held for the general public and, when needed, special purpose meetings may be targeted to specific stakeholder groups.

Public meetings on project needs and alternatives are highly recommended for EIS projects to satisfy the requirements of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act – a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Public meetings may involve formal or informal presentations; they will also include opportunity for information interaction and exchange of information with local residents.

Public meetings will be held at convenient times at reasonably accessible sites in the local community. General purpose public meetings conducted by PennDOT will be in accordance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#). When requested, PennDOT will assist persons with disabilities to enable such persons to participate in the meetings.

Meeting Notices

Reasonable notice will be given to announce general purpose and special purpose public meetings. It is recommended that a minimum two-week's notice be given prior to any public meeting. A notice should also be sent to the project area public officials, prior to the newspaper advertisement and mailings to the general public, to notify them of the upcoming meeting.

The notice of a general purpose public meeting will be made through a block advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation within the study area of the proposed project. This notice will include a request that persons with disabilities requiring assistance contact PennDOT so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

The notice of a special purpose public meeting will be made through an announcement tailored to the particular type of meeting to be held. The announcement may be made through formal or informal means. Publication of an advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation is not specifically required, although this would certainly be one means of accomplishing the task.

Other means may be used to reach interested or affected individuals and groups. These means include other forms of broadcast and print media including, but not limited to, direct mailings, fliers, road sign, and posters. More information on public meetings and the use of these additional tools is included in [Part 4](#) of this handbook.

7. Other Public Involvement Techniques

In addition to public meetings, a number of other techniques may be considered as means for informing and involving the public in project development. These techniques should be selected to fit the scope of the project and its impacts.

If appropriate, newsletters may be published to summarize relevant study progress, report on public and agency meetings, and announce future public involvement activities. Other techniques that will be considered include:

- Brochures
- Citizen advisory committees
- Direct mailings
- Field offices
- Fliers and posters
- Information lines
- Media relations
- Newspaper advertisements
- Public service announcements
- Road signs
- Surveys
- Visualization techniques
- Websites

More information on these additional tools and others is included in [Part 4](#) of this handbook.

8. Public Hearings

A Public Hearing is the official method for receiving public comments on the results of our environmental and engineering studies. A Public Hearing is unlike a public meeting in that it is formal, often held to meet legal requirements, and has a specific structure that mandates how it is to be conducted. Comprehensive guidance on preparing for and [conducting a Public Hearing](#) can be found in **Part 4** of this Handbook.

Determination of Need for Public Hearing

A Public Hearing must be held, or the opportunity for a hearing afforded, on all Federal-aid projects (see [23 CFR 771.111\(h\)](#)) when the project will:

- Require the acquisition of significant amounts of right-of-way;
- Substantially change the layout or functions of connecting roadways or of the facility being improved;
- Have a substantially adverse impact on abutting property;
- Otherwise have a significant social, economic, environmental or other effect; or
- When PennDOT, in consultation with FHWA or FTA, determines that a Public Hearing is in the public interest.

Public Hearings are held for all projects requiring preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. Public Hearings are typically not held for projects classified as Categorical Exclusions. For projects classified as Environmental Assessments, the *opportunity* for a Public Hearing is advertised; however, depending on the specific circumstances of the project PennDOT may forgo advertising the opportunity for a Public Hearing and simply opt to hold a Public Hearing following the required Public Hearing [advertising guidelines](#).¹

¹ For 100% state-funded projects, 23CFR771.111(h) does not specifically apply; however, PennDOT generally follows the same procedures for consistency and public expectation purposes, except the option is available to advertise the opportunity for a public hearing for even EIS-type projects; as opposed to just holding a Public Hearing.

Public Hearing Notice of Opportunity

For projects other than those that require an EIS, PennDOT may have to determine whether there is sufficient public interest in holding a hearing. To accomplish this, the Department publishes a Notice of Opportunity (and Notice of Availability, as discussed in the following section) in the local newspaper asking citizens to respond in writing with a request for a Hearing. In this display or block ad, state that written requests are to be received by a specific date – generally a maximum of 15 days after the notice is published. The community must respond to the notification within the stated timeframe. Also, in the notice, inform the public that a hearing will be scheduled only if two or more individuals/groups request a hearing and the concerns cannot be addressed without a hearing. If you receive a request for a hearing, work with the individual to resolve the issues of concern. A Public Hearing is warranted if at least two requests remain outstanding. If the interested party's concerns can be resolved, a hearing will not be necessary.

The Notice of Opportunity should also announce the availability of the NEPA document and where it may be obtained or reviewed (as discussed in the following section). An example of a Notice of Opportunity can be found in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices.

If there is no interest in holding a Public Hearing, PennDOT will certify to the appropriate FHWA or FTA office that a hearing opportunity was offered; this must be done for all EAs when a Public Hearing is not held.

Document Availability, Notices and Comment Periods

Environmental Impact Statements

PennDOT will distribute the Draft EIS to convenient locations within the project area. For projects requiring an EIS, have the document available for public review at the same time the document is provided to (filed with) the Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA publishes the notice of the document's availability in the *Federal Register*.

The Draft EIS comment period will begin on the day a notice of the document's availability appears in the Federal Register. The Public Hearing may not be held sooner than 15 days after the Draft EIS is available. The comment period will extend for a minimum 45-day comment period, the deadline for which will be specified in the Federal Register notice. A maximum comment period of 60 days is allowed for more complex, controversial projects.

A notice, which will be published as a block advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation within the study area of the proposed project, will announce the locations where the Draft EIS is available for public review; describe how copies of the document may be obtained, where comments should be sent, and list the deadline for comments.

Environmental Assessments

For projects requiring an Environmental Assessment (EA), PennDOT will first determine if a Public Hearing [will be held](#). If a Public Hearing is needed, the Draft EA must be available for public review for at least 15 days beforehand. PennDOT will distribute the document to convenient locations within the project area prior to beginning the comment period.

If a Public Hearing is needed, the EA comment period will begin on the day notice of the document's availability appears as a block ad in a newspaper of general circulation within the study area of the proposed project. The document will be available for review for a period of at least 15-days prior to the public hearing. The comment period will extend for a minimum of 30-days. If an Individual (non-programmatic) Section 4(f) Evaluation is included with the EA, an additional 15-days will be required for review and comment by the official(s) with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) resource; in this case the comment period would be 45-days for the officials with jurisdiction. In the Notice of Availability, announce the locations where the document is available for review, describe where information concerning the project may be obtained, and invite comments from the public, including where comments should be sent and the deadline for comments. Also, include information on the Public Hearing details (date, time and location).

If a hearing is not needed, advertise the availability of the Draft EA, using a block ad, and announce a 30-day public comment period beginning with the distribution of the document and Notice of Availability. Publish the block ad in a newspaper of general circulation within the study area of the proposed project.

Categorical Exclusion Evaluations

CEEs will generally not be circulated for public comment, but be sure to allow the public the right to review the information if requested.

Public Hearing Notices

Announce a Public Hearing by publishing a block ad in the local newspaper no less than 30 days in advance of the hearing (Notice #1). Publish a similar notice (Notice #2) 5-15 days in advance of the Public Hearing. These notices should additionally be used to announce that the NEPA document is available for review (as discussed in the previous section), indicate how copies may be obtained, where comments will be received, and the deadline for receiving comments. The notice should include a request that persons with disabilities requiring assistance contact PennDOT in order to obtain the appropriate arrangements. Ensure that the document has been distributed before placing the ad. Examples of a Public Hearing Notice can be found in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices.

If the Public Hearing has to be postponed for any reason, be sure to re-advertise. The block ad should make it clear that the hearing has been rescheduled.

Joint Public Hearings and Notices

If agreed upon during project scoping, FHWA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may conduct a Joint Public Hearing to satisfy both NEPA and Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 requirements. Joint Public Hearings will be held whenever possible to facilitate project development and planning. Joint Public Hearings must be conducted to meet the needs and mandates of the involved agencies, and are usually discussed between the agencies during the project scoping.

The Corps has their own requirements for the advertisement and conduct of hearings. These requirements are set forth in the Corps' regulations found in 33 CFR Part 327. When a joint NEPA/404 Public Hearing is held, a representative from the Corps must make a brief opening statement regarding Section 404 issues, which usually follows FHWA's/PennDOT's presentation. Anyone who wishes must be permitted to:

- Submit oral or written statements concerning the proposed action;
- Have others speak or submit written statements as part of their presentation (i.e., to call witnesses); and
- Present recommendations as to an appropriate decision.

The record of the public hearing must remain open for a period of not less than 10 days after the close of the hearing, during which time anyone who wishes must be permitted to present written statements, proposed findings and recommendations. The public hearing must be reported verbatim by a stenographer.

The Corps' regulations require that notice be given at least 30 days in advance of the public hearing (which is consistent with PennDOT's requirement for the first Public Hearing Notice). This notice must be given to all Federal agencies affected by the proposed action and to state and local agencies and other parties having an interest in the subject of the hearing. The notice must also be sent to all persons who requested a hearing, must be posted in appropriate government buildings, and must be provided to newspapers of general circulation for publication. PennDOT will still adhere to the requirement for publishing a second Public Hearing Notice.

Include information regarding the Section 404 issues in the Public Hearing Notices. Coordinate with the Corps on the exact language. The Corps' regulations require that the notice contain the time, place and nature of the hearing; the legal authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is held; and the location of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment. The notice should contain information for contacting the Corps and for presenting written comments (i.e., written statements, proposed findings and recommendations) for inclusion in the record of the hearing. The notice should also contain the cut-off date for presenting such written comments (not less than 10 days after the close of the hearing).

Public Hearing Presentation

Public Hearings will be held at convenient times, at reasonably accessible sites. Hearings conducted by PennDOT will be in accordance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#). When requested, PennDOT will assist persons with disabilities to enable them to effectively participate in the hearing.

At a Public Hearing, the District Executive presides as the moderator, providing an overview of information presented in the NEPA document including:

- A description of the project, including its purpose and needs;
- A description of alternatives studied and their major design features;
- A statement of the project's consistency with the goals and objectives of any local planning agency(ies);
- An explanation of the known or anticipated social, economic, environmental and other effects of the proposed project or alternatives;
- A description of the preferred alternative, if determined, and reasons it was identified as such;
- An explanation of the state's relocation assistance program and right-of-way acquisition process, along with an announcement of the name of the right-of-way representative and his/her location at the public hearing; and

In lieu of a full, formal presentation of the above information, one or a number of meeting handouts containing this information may be available at the hearing. The Moderator will identify the location of the meeting handouts and explain that these contain FHWA's/PennDOT's official statement.

Before opening the floor to the audience, the moderator must also:

- Explain the purpose of the hearing and why it is required;
- State the opening date of the NEPA document review;
- Cite the locations where the documents are available;
- Provide the closing date for submission of written comments;
- Describe how comments will be addressed;
- Describe the procedures that will be used for receiving both oral and written comments from the public, noting that oral testimony will be limited to a specific amount of time (typically five minutes) and that the testimony can be provided publicly or privately in a separate room; and
- Present a general schedule for further project development.

If necessary to receive all public testimony, the hearing may be extended to more than one meeting. Try to plan ahead when two days of testimony may be required based on previous public

interest, and advertise for a two-day hearing. When this is not possible or the unexpected occurs, a second hearing date should be scheduled and advertised in the same manner as the first hearing date.

Often, Public Hearings are preceded by plans displays with staff to answer questions. Non-professional engineers practicing engineering [must use caution](#) when dealing with the public face-to-face about issues that require engineering judgment.

At the conclusion of the testimony, the presenter should mention that PennDOT will accept additional written statements from the public until the closing date of the comment period. Any correspondence will receive the same consideration as comments offered at the Public Hearing and will be addressed in the Final EIS or in a comment response document if the project requires and EA. An example of remarks by a hearing moderator can be found in [Section 4](#) the Appendices.

Public Hearing Transcript

A stenographer records the Public Hearing proceedings and produces a verbatim hearing transcript of presentations and oral testimony. Written comments are also accepted and incorporated into the public record. PennDOT's official statement, whether presented orally or contained in meeting handouts, will be included in the Public Hearing Transcript. PennDOT will certify to FHWA/FTA that a Public Hearing was held and will forward a copy of the transcript to the appropriate FHWA/FTA office.

Responding to Comments

Citizens who participated in the Public Hearing should be aware that their comments are addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) or as part of the Environmental Assessment request for issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

At the close of the document comment period, FHWA/PennDOT reviews the hearing transcript, as well as correspondence and comments on the environmental document. It may be necessary to conduct a meeting with FHWA in order to jointly assess and consider comments received at the Hearing or during the comment period. In response to comments, PennDOT may need to take action in one of the following ways:

- By modifying alternatives, including the proposed action,
- By developing and evaluating alternatives not previously given serious consideration,
- By supplementing, improving or modifying the analysis,
- By making factual corrections or clarifications, or
- By explaining why the comments do not warrant further Department response.

In doing so, cite the sources, agencies, or reasons that support FHWA's/ PennDOT's position and, if appropriate, indicate the circumstances that would trigger an additional review of information (see [40 CFR 1503.4](#)).

Public Hearings for Supplemental NEPA Documents

While Public Hearings are the culmination of a public outreach program for the NEPA process, they do not conclude public involvement. Depending on particular project developments, new public involvement activities may be initiated. Sometimes after a hearing is held, supplemental information is generated. In cases where a supplemental NEPA document is required, a new Public Hearing may be held or the opportunity afforded as part of additional analyses or a re-evaluation of a project. PennDOT will consult the FHWA or FTA to determine whether changes in the project or new information warrant any additional public involvement activities.

If an additional Public Hearing is to be held, the hearing notification requirements for these hearings are the same as for the original public hearing.

9. Final EIS Availability, Notice and Review Period

PennDOT will provide copies of the Final EIS for public review at the same time it provides copies to the EPA along with a request for EPA to publish a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. PennDOT will distribute the document to the same locations, if appropriate, at which the Draft EIS was available. Additionally, PennDOT will, to the extent required by FHWA/FTA, forward the Final EIS to any persons, organizations, or agencies that made substantive comments on the Draft EIS and/or requested a copy of the final document.

The Final EIS review period begins on the day the notice of the document's availability is published in the Federal Register. The document must be available for public review for a period of 30 days. The federal notice should state the deadline.

To inform local citizens of the FEIS availability, publish a block ad in a newspaper of general circulation within the study area of the proposed project. This notice should announce the locations where the Final EIS is available for public review, indicate how copies of the document may be obtained, where any additional comments should be sent, and when the review period ends (An example of this notice can be found in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices).

10. NEPA and Act 120 Decision Notices

Announce receipt of a Record of Decision (ROD) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) by publishing a block ad in a local newspaper of general circulation within the study area of the proposed project. This notice should describe PennDOT's selected course of action, explain that the project will proceed into final design, and announce that the ROD or FONSI is available to the public upon request. Generally, PennDOT does not provide public notice for a Categorical Exclusion. An example of a Notice of Record of Decision can be found in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices.

All PennDOT EIS and EA projects, whether federally funded or 100% state funded, require an Act 120 Environmental Finding notice to be published in the *PA Bulletin* upon NEPA clearance. An Act 120 Environmental Finding notice is required for CEEs only if there is Section 4(f)/Section 2002 involvement.

Tips on

Section 2002 of PA Act 120, 1970

1. Applies to State-funded projects and to Federal-aid highway projects (in Federal-Aid projects there are still State funding and approvals).
2. States that

“No highway, transit line, highway interchange, airport, or other transportation corridor or facility, shall be built or expanded in such a way as to use any land from any recreation area, wildlife and/or waterfowl refuge, historic site, State forest land, State game land, wilderness area or public park unless:

 - *there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and*
 - *(ii) such corridor or facility is planned and constructed so as to minimize harm to such recreation area, wildlife and/or waterfowl refuge, historic site, State forest land, State game land, wilderness area, or public park.”*
3. Indicates that it must be shown that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the effects of the project and that all reasonable steps have been taken to minimize the [effects](#).

11. Statute of Limitations

When the lead federal agency makes a final decision on a permit, license or approval relating to a highway or public transportation capital project, the agency may invoke a 180-day Statute of Limitations by publishing notice of the final decision in the *Federal Register*. Essentially, this means that anyone who wishes to contest the final decision in court must file their litigation within 180-days or they are barred from doing so. This Statute of Limitations is intended to expedite the resolution of issues affecting transportation projects. This should reduce the risk of litigation occurring later in the project when delays may be more costly.

The 180-day limitation period established by [23 U.S.C §139\(l\)](#) applies to a permit, license, or approval decision by a Federal agency if:

1. The decision relates to a highway or public transportation capital project; and
2. A notice is published in the Federal Register announcing that Federal agencies have taken action that is final under the Federal law pursuant to which the action was taken (Examples of such notices for single and multiple projects can be found in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices.)

If no notice is published, the period for filing claims is not shortened from what is provided by other parts of Federal law. If other Federal laws do not specify a statute of limitations, then a six-year claims period applies. For more information on limitation on claims, see the [FHWA website](#).

The decision on whether to publish a notice is made by the lead federal agency (normally the FHWA) in consultation with PennDOT. Whether a §139(l) notice is needed, or is the best way to achieve such resolution on a project, is a risk management decision. A determination should include consideration of the actual risk of litigation, and the potential effects if litigation were to occur several years after the FHWA National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decision or other Federal agency decisions. A §139(l) notice can be used for a highway project regardless of the level of NEPA documentation. As a general rule, a notice should be published for projects that require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and for most projects that require an Environmental Assessment (EA). The notice process would not typically be appropriate for projects that qualify as categorical exclusions (CE) under NEPA, but publishing a notice should be considered if a CE project is controversial.

The FHWA and PennDOT encourage efforts to help stakeholders and the public to understand this change in the law. For that reason, it would be useful to include a statement summarizing §139(l) in future NEPA documents:

"A Federal agency may publish a notice in the Federal Register, pursuant to 23 USC §139(l), indicating that one or more Federal agencies have taken final action on permits, licenses, or approvals for a transportation project. If such notice is published, claims seeking judicial

review of those Federal agency actions will be barred unless such claims are filed within 180 days after the date of publication of the notice, or within such shorter time period as is specified in the Federal laws pursuant to which judicial review of the Federal agency action is allowed. If no notice is published, then the periods of time that otherwise are provided by the Federal laws governing such claims will apply.”

How to Develop a Public Involvement Program

Public Involvement Handbook Part 3

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Acronyms used in this Part of the Handbook

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
CE	Categorical Exclusion
CEE	Categorical Exclusion Evaluation
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIA	Community Impact Assessment
CRC	Community Relations Coordinator
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EJ	Environmental Justice
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LRTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
PennDOT	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
PI	Public Involvement
PIC	Public Involvement Coordinator
PIP	Public Information Plan
PMC	Program Management Committee (PennDOT)
RPO	Rural Planning Organization
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
STC	State Transportation Commission
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
STS	Smart Transportation Systems
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMP	Transportation Management Plan
TOP	Transportation Operations Plan
TYP	Twelve Year Program

1. Introduction

A public involvement program is used to engage citizens in all phases of transportation planning and project development). This handbook addresses the partnership between PennDOT and the public in preliminary design, final design, and construction of improvement projects for all NEPA classes of action.

The approach presented here would also apply to planning and programming activities conducted by PennDOT and other agencies, such as Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs). Additionally, the approach applies to routine maintenance activities, such as bridge painting, ditch cleaning, patching, and/or line painting.

An organized public involvement program identifies citizens' expectations early in transportation planning and project development, addresses their concerns throughout (see the [Public Participation Timeline](#)) and provides them with a better understanding of how transportation projects are developed and how transportation challenges may be addressed through active dialogue.

A public involvement program outlines the techniques and practices that can be used to assimilate the public's knowledge, viewpoints, and preferences into transportation planning and project development. It can be used to allocate staff and financial resources. It can also define the responsibilities of PennDOT and consultant staff in carrying out these efforts. The goals of the public outreach program are to:

- Identify project issues and potential problems
- Ensure broad community representation in project development
- Make projects sensitive to local community values
- Encourage public education on project issues
- Improve and support public decision-making in the project development process
- Generate alternatives and develop acceptable solutions
- Resolve controversies
- Avoid project delays due to public controversy
- Develop public acceptance and support for the project

It is not always possible to determine the appropriate level of public participation during the early project scoping phases. After all, scoping is a continuous process and an effective public outreach program must be allowed to evolve over time. The public outreach program reflects PennDOT's preliminary assessment of potentially controversial issues and the expected public reaction to these issues. Each program must be continually reassessed, because the public itself defines many

issues as a project progresses. The public outreach program must be flexible enough to effectively respond to unanticipated developments in projects that may last several years.

Tips on

Elements of an Effective Public Involvement Program

An **open process** that promotes involvement by:

- A project team skilled in interacting with the public.
- A diverse public representing a broad spectrum of interests.

A **fair process** that enhances understanding through:

- A project team that is informative and supportive of the public's need for understanding.
- A process that works constructively toward common objectives.

A **responsive process** that guides public debate by:

- A project team that facilitates discussion and a focus on important issues.
- A participating public that provides useful input via their knowledge.

An **interactive process** that allows for a myriad of idea exchanges through:

- Open communication.

2. When to Engage the Public

Transportation projects are developed through four phases: planning and programming; preliminary engineering and environmental approval; final design; and construction. Each phase includes its own public participation needs, as discussed in the following sections.

Planning and Programming

The first phase in the transportation project development process is planning and programming. Planning and programming is carried out in accordance with the Statewide Transportation Planning: Metropolitan Transportation Planning Final Rule – [23 CFR Parts 450](#) and [500](#). Planning and programming begins with development of the statewide long-range transportation plan. The current version is the [Pennsylvania Mobility Plan](#), which sets the direction for transportation investment for 2006 through 2030.

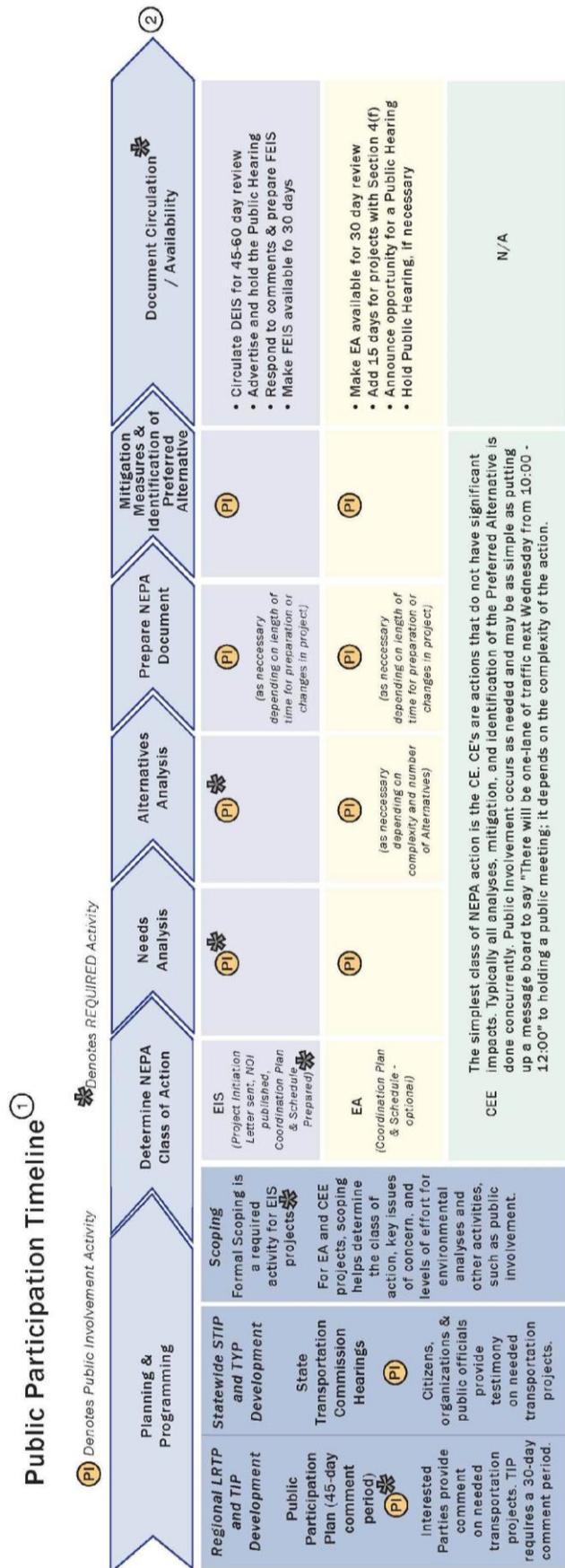
Regional Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP) are long range (20+ years) strategies and actions developed by each Metropolitan or Rural Planning Organization (MPO/RPO) to guide the effective investment of public funds in multi-modal transportation facilities and services within the context of the regional vision.

An MPO/RPO is a decision-making body made up of state and local government officials, modal agencies, and transportation stakeholders. This group is responsible for the development and periodic review of long range transportation plans, various planning studies, and transportation improvement programs within their region. One of the primary functions of the MPO/RPO is to encourage and promote the development of intermodal transportation systems that are best suited to deal with issues like economic development, congestion, air quality, and the environment.

The LRTP is developed and implemented by a region's MPO/RPO and must:

- Include a proactive and ongoing public participation process;
- Be consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Environmental Justice requirements of Executive Order 12898;
- Identify actions necessary to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990;
- Provide for the involvement of transportation advocacy groups, related agencies, authorities, private operators, and elected officials; and
- Provide for the involvement of local, state, and federal environment resource agencies, as appropriate.

Figure 1 – Public Involvement Timeline



① Public involvement for NEPA projects should occur early and be an open process that is continuous, collaborative, and cooperative.

② Public involvement should continue into final design and construction as necessary and as discussed in the Public Involvement Handbook.

The region's LRTP provides the context from which the MPO/RPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a four-year capital improvement program for implementing transportation projects, is drawn. TIPs in areas of serious, or above, non-attainment areas for air quality require a minimum 30-day public comment period before the TIP is adopted or a major amendment is enacted. Note that serious, or above (severe, extreme) are subsets of non-attainment areas. More information can be found on the [EPA website](#). All MPO/RPO TIPs are revised every two years, and require a minimum of one formal public hearing. All TIPs are combined to form the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). The projects on the STIP are prioritized to become the first four-years of the Commonwealth's Twelve Year Transportation Program (TYP), which is also updated every two years. A number of federal requirements affect the development of the TIPs and, hence, the STIP also must allow for public input and comment during development.

PennDOT's new [Transportation Program Development and Project Delivery Process](#) has, at its core, a goal of identifying public concerns about existing and future transportation problems as early as possible. It is important to identify and address those concerns as they may eventually affect a project's scope, schedule and resulting budget.

The Statewide Transportation Commission (STC) holds a series of biennial public hearings throughout the Commonwealth and accepts written testimony from the public and interested parties as input for the development of the Transportation Program. Public input is received as early as possible so that the program development process proceeds in accordance with the key participant's planning and programming cycles. In concert with development of the regional TIPs and STIP, an individual or group may, through working with the MPO or RPO, prepare to testify on behalf of projects at the biennial State Transportation Commission (STC)/Planning Partner Public Hearings for development of the TYP. Hearing locations and logistics are publicized prior to the hearing dates. The process owners in the TYP development process are the STC, MPOs, RPOs, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), PennDOT and the general public. All of these partners help to develop a TYP that meets the transportation needs of the Commonwealth and also fits within the funding allocated for projects.

The Commonwealth's TYP is Pennsylvania's official transportation program for the next twelve-year period. It covers all transportation modes for both passengers and freight, and includes consideration of public and private transportation systems, facilities, and operations. The Twelve Year Transportation Program is used to guide the planning and decision-making process toward meeting the Commonwealth's vision of a seamless transportation system.

Each MPO/RPO and PennDOT must provide "Interested Parties" with a reasonable opportunity to provide input and comment on their respective LRTP (learn more on the [FHWA website](#)). Interested Parties include citizens, 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 bicycles transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties, such as Native American Tribes.

To ensure that this reasonable opportunity is provided, each MPO/RPO and the Department must develop a "Participation Plan," which must be developed in consultation with interested parties. A minimum 45-day public comment period must be provided before the participation plan is officially adopted or revised. More information can be found in the [Code of Federal Regulations](#). The MPO/RPO Participation Plan should include public meetings held at convenient and accessible locations and times, employ visualization techniques, and consider use of electronically accessible data, such as websites. Specifically, [Title 23 CFR 450.316\(a\)\(i-x\)](#) requires:

- Early and continuous opportunities for public participation,
- Reasonable public access to technical and policy information,
- Public notice of public involvement activities,
- Public meetings at convenient times and locations that are accessible to the public,
- The use of visualization techniques to describe the proposed LRTP,
- Availability of information electronically (i.e. on the web),
- MPO/RPO responses to and consideration of public input,
- The use of techniques to seek out traditionally underserved populations (i.e. illiterate, low-income, elderly, etc.), and
- Periodic review and revision, as necessary, of the public involvement process.

The tools discussed in *The Toolbox*, Publication 295 D of this Handbook series can be used by the MPO/RPO to carry out their Participation Plan. Every 5 years, the Participation Plan should be reviewed as to its effectiveness ([23 CFR 450.210\(b\)\(1\)](#)).

The Federal Metropolitan Planning requirements are located on the [FHWA website](#).

Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Clearance

During preliminary engineering and environmental decision-making (National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA] process) it is imperative to identify the community, natural and cultural environmental features in your project area, to determine what the needs are of the community, and to develop ways to best fit the project into the surrounding environment, including the community (see [Identifying Community Interests and Values](#)). The public outreach program should be an active means of accomplishing these goals, particularly for complex EIS and EA projects. However, all PennDOT projects should include some form of public involvement at a level that is commensurate with the project type and size. See the [Public Outreach Checklists and Documentation Forms](#) (the Checklists) for more information and guidance.

It is important for a Project Manager and the project team to reach back to the materials and documentation from the Planning and Programming Phases, notably collecting the screening forms and associated documentation that comes from the public, municipal leaders, MPOs and RPOs, and PennDOT itself.

The documentation on screening forms has been developed to help focus activities that are undertaken in preliminary engineering. Knowledge of the activities and attitudes expressed in planning help the project team to focus the work to be done in preliminary engineering and environmental clearance phases, work which includes understanding and addressing public concerns.

The public recognizes that transportation projects support the economic vitality and quality of life of a community. But over the years it takes to plan, design, and construct new projects, their patience will be tried. Through foresight, by reaching out to the community early on and consistently working to carry out PennDOT's message, we can establish a sense of consideration for the common good.

Major preliminary engineering efforts, especially those requiring Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), necessitate the development of extensive public outreach programs. However, PennDOT also benefits from public participation in less complex engineering and environmental studies. Although maintenance projects do not call for high levels of coordination, informal programs may be appropriate to keep the public abreast of PennDOT's maintenance mission.

The level of required environmental documentation for a project is not the primary criteria for committing resources to a public outreach program. Large and small projects alike will require a thoughtful program. However, the project's environmental document level will determine the *minimal* level of effort required. See [Part 2](#) of this handbook and the [Checklists](#).

For all EISs with a Notice of Intent (NOI) issued after August 10, 2005, and for EAs at the discretion of the Department/FHWA, one major component of the Public Outreach Program is development of a [Coordination Plan](#) and schedule. The EIS Checklist can be used as the basis for developing the EIS Coordination Plan. Additionally, each of the [Checklists](#) can serve as documentation of the conducted public

Tips on

Communicating with the Public

The essence of public participation is communication, which may entail a simple press release or a full-scale roster of meetings, publications, advertisements, and a hearing.

Interactive public participation is not appropriate for all of PennDOT's undertakings. In some cases, the public outreach program may be a simple public information plan that gets the word out about PennDOT's work by explaining and informing the public of our intentions regarding the project.

outreach activities.

During the preliminary design and environmental phase of the transportation project development process, there are additional regulatory processes that must be followed and other initiatives to take into consideration. Many of these processes and initiatives have coordination requirements that need to be incorporated in to the Coordination Plan. Some of these processes/initiatives include: Context Sensitive Solutions, community scoping (Community Impact Assessment process), Environmental Justice, Native American Tribal coordination, the Section 106 process, and the Section 4(f) process. Each of these processes/initiatives has their own unique public participation requirements or needs that should be built into the public outreach program, as discussed in the following sections.

Community Impact Assessment (CIA)

Collaborative planning can be accomplished successfully through CIAs and the associated [Community Context Audit](#) Process. The first step in collaborative planning is to define the community context. The Community Context Audit Process can be utilized for all classes of actions (CE, EA, and EIS), but the level of effort should and will vary with each class, with the greatest level of effort required for an EIS.

Each of the varied relationships that help define a community (geographic, natural, physical, social, racial, ethnic, religious, or economic) contribute a sense of common unity and community cohesion that defines one's sense of place, in other words, the community context. The Community Context Audit Process is a part of CIAs. It should be performed early in the process and incorporate stakeholder views.

The Community Context Audit Process utilizes a [Community Context Audit Form](#) as a guide to identify community characteristics. The audit form should be started during the project planning phase and then be refined during the preliminary engineering and environmental clearance phase through fieldwork and the public outreach program. The audit is designed to consider the community's history, as well as present any anticipated conditions. Use the public outreach program to allow stakeholders to comment on these and other factors affecting the community such as mobility and access (motorized and non-motorized), safety, local and regional economies, aesthetics and overall quality of life.

Once the audit information is collected, the CIA process can be used to evaluate the effects of a proposed transportation action on a community and its quality of life. CIA should be conducted and refined as project development progresses.

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)

CSS involves developing transportation solutions that are sensitive to the context of the community. The context of the community can be determined through a [Community Impact Assessment \(CIA\)](#).

CSS is the collaborative identification of alternatives, mitigation measures, design elements, and implementation techniques and procedures that are compatible with the community context. Collaborative project development with all stakeholders through the public outreach process will aid in identifying transportation solutions that meet the needs of the community.

An effective public outreach program that is geared toward developing Context Sensitive Solutions will:

- Seek meaningful information and comments from the public on needs, alternatives, design options, etc. by holding an open dialogue with stakeholders;
- Carefully assess the public reaction to proposed alternatives and mitigation measures;
- Assimilate public views and desires into the project and document their consideration;
- Reach consensus with the community on the recommended course of action; and
- Provide useful, timely information to the community and access to the project team throughout the project development.

For more detailed information and CSS references, see the [Context Sensitive Solutions website](#). Also, see the definition of Smart Transportation Solutions (STS) in the [Glossary](#).

Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities

It has been PennDOT's, FHWA's, and FTA's longstanding policy to actively ensure nondiscrimination under [Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act](#) in Federally funded activities. Under Title VI and related statutes, any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance is required to ensure that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination under any such program or activity on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or religion. The [Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987](#) clarified the intent of Title VI to include all program and activities of Federal-aid recipients, sub-recipients, and contractors whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.

On February 11, 1994, President Clinton signed Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address [Environmental Justice](#) in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations. The Executive Order requires that each Federal agency shall, to the greatest extent allowed by law, administer and implement its programs, policies, and activities that affect human health or the environment so as to identify and avoid "disproportionately high and adverse" effects on minority and low-income

populations. An important objective of this order is to encourage public participation of these groups in the planning process.

Executive Order 12898 requires that a project be assessed to determine if it would involve a “disproportionately high and adverse effect” on EJ communities. Many times low-income and minority people/populations are not as easily ‘plugged in’ to government processes, and may not attend typical public meetings and other project events.

Environmental Justice (EJ) focuses on achieving equity in access to decision-making and to the benefits of transportation decisions. For this reason, your Public Outreach Program must be designed to meet the specific needs of EJ communities in your project area. Through the CIA process, community leaders, elected officials, religious leaders, and the general public can help identify EJ communities and even formulate strategies for involving them in project development.

One means of engaging EJ populations in the public outreach program would be to attend neighborhood meetings or address religious congregations in EJ areas to talk to people who might not attend a “typical” public meeting. Also seek out participation from Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations – a subset of minority populations. Advertise meetings and other project activities in schools, on public transit, cable access television, and public television stations to reach low-income and minority populations. Public events, such as fairs, farmers markets, ethnic and church festivals can also provide access to these persons/populations. PennDOT’s Office of Planning, “Every Voice Counts, Environmental Justice Plan (May 2004)” contains more detail on identifying and working with EJ communities, see PennDOT’s [Environmental Justice Plan](#). Also, refer to [FHWA’s](#) and the [EPA’s](#) Environmental Justice web pages for more information.

When developing a public outreach program, ensure that efforts to solicit input and allow reasonable involvement from the EJ community do not occur at

Tips on Environmental Justice

Historically, the number of low-income and minority households who have participated in the development of PennDOT’s projects has been disproportionately low. In many cases, this is due to a “this is not for us” or “they are not really interested” attitude held by many of these stakeholders. Additionally, there may be language or cultural barriers; problems related to communication styles, technical background, or literacy; discomfort or suspicion in working with government; or simply privacy issues. Therefore, it is not enough to assure that these stakeholders receive notices of meetings or other events and that all events are convenient in terms of time and location. Further efforts are needed to reach out to the disenfranchised and others traditionally under served in transportation planning and development.

the expense of other interests/publics. Also, remember to be respectful of differences and respect the fact that certain communities may not want to be identified as EJ. Each PennDOT District has an EJ Coordinator who is an available resource for EJ issues. The District EJ Coordinator should be consulted in decisions concerning the public outreach program.

Section 4(f)

Section 4(f) has been part of Federal law since 1966. It was enacted as Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act of 1966 and codified in [Title 49 United States Code \(U.S.C.\), Section 303](#). Section 4(f) resources include historic sites, publicly-owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges. On August 10, 2005, SAFETEA-LU amended the existing Section 4(f) legislation to simplify the process and approval of projects that have only *de minimis* impacts on lands impacted by Section 4(f). Current guidance on how PennDOT and the Pennsylvania Division of FHWA implements Section 4(f) can be found in [Publication 349](#) (August 2008).

The December 13, 2005 FHWA “Guidance for Determining DeMinimis impacts to Section 4(f) Resources” and the “Nationwide Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation for Projects that have a Net Benefit to Section 4(f) Resources” include specific requirements for public involvement. The *de minimis* guidance can be found on [FHWA’s website](#), and the Net Benefit Programmatic can also be found on [FHWA’s website](#). In Pennsylvania, both *de minimis* uses and Net Benefits can be documented using one of the Section 4(f) checklists developed by the FHWA Division office. PennDOT’s Section 4(f) checklists are available on the [CE Expert System](#) under Help (top right corner) in the “Section 4(f) Checklists” drop down menu.

For historic sites, a *de minimis* finding may be made if the project will have a “no adverse effect” or a “no historic properties affected” determination under the Section 106 process. This determination must have written concurrence from the State or Tribal Historic Preservation Office and ACHP, if applicable. In addition, the determination must consider the views of the Section 106 consulting parties identified for the project. This can be done through the Section 106 consulting process via a number of venues including public meetings, telephone calls, mailings, etc. The general public will typically be made aware of a *de minimis* finding during normal Section 106 coordination; therefore, additional public involvement is not necessary. PennDOT and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) have an agreement that the SHPO’s concurrence on a “No Historic Properties Affected” and “No Adverse Effect” satisfy agency concurrence on *de minimis* findings.

For public parks, recreation areas, wildlife refuges, and waterfowl refuges a *de minimis* impact finding may be made if:

1. The transportation use of the resource, together with any mitigation, does not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f),
2. The officials with jurisdiction over the resource have concurred in writing with the *de minimis* finding, and

3. The public has been afforded an opportunity for review and comment on the effects of the project on the Section 4(f) resource.

There are several methods that can be used to inform the public and gather comment on park/recreation area/refuge impacts. These could include, but are not limited to, providing/gathering information at a public meeting or public officials meeting, posting information at the park/recreation area, public notices in local papers, etc. In most cases, the public participation requirements related to the NEPA document/process will be sufficient to satisfy the requirements for the *de minimis* finding, **as long as the public is given notice that the FHWA intends to make a *de minimis* use finding**. For those actions that do not routinely require public review and comment (such as certain CEEs or Re-evaluations), a public notice and opportunity for review/comment may be required. In these cases, the type/level of public participation should be commensurate with the type and location of the Section 4(f) property(s), impacts, and public interest (see Question 3F of FHWA's *De Minimis* Guidance on [FHWA's website](#)) and [Publication 349](#).

For the Net Benefit programmatic, information on the proposed use of the Section 4(f) resource and solicitation of public comment shall be communicated at public meetings and the public hearing or through some other public involvement techniques or activity consistent with the requirements of [23CFR771.111](#).

Section 106 Process

Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires that Federal agencies consider effects on historic properties resulting from their undertakings and allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) a chance to comment. The regulations implementing Section 106 ([36 CFR 800](#), as amended) also require that public input be included in the Section 106 Process. Consulting parties are defined by 36 CFR 800 as parties that have consultative roles in the Section 106 process. The Section 106 regulations specify that the following parties may be consulting parties:

1. The State Historic Preservation Office;
2. Federally-recognized Native American Tribes;
3. Representatives of local governments;
4. Applicants for Federal assistance, permits (such as a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit), licenses, or other approvals;
5. Individuals and organizations with a demonstrated interest in the undertaking due to the nature of their legal or economic relation to the undertaking or affected properties, or their concern with the undertaking's effects on historic properties.

The District Cultural Resource Professional will, on behalf of the FHWA (or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers where they are the federal agency responsible for Section 106) and in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission), develop a list of and invite representatives of local governments, individuals, organizations, and Federally-

recognized Native American Tribes to request Section 106 consulting party status. The distinction that Section 106 makes between consulting parties and the public at large is discussed in [Publication 689](#), PennDOT's *Cultural Resources Handbook*, Chapter 6 (November, 2010).

The views of the public are essential to informed Federal decisionmaking in the Section 106 process. The federal agency shall seek and consider the views of the public in a manner that reflects the nature and complexity of the project and its effects on historic properties, the likely interest of the public regarding effects on historic properties, and confidentiality concerns of private individuals and businesses.

The PennDOT District Cultural Resource Professional (CRP), in consultation with FHWA, will determine what level and type of public involvement is necessary under the Section 106 Process for each individual project and should initiate all consultations (or will direct the efforts of a qualified cultural resource consultant). The public consultation should be appropriate to the scale of the undertaking. Where properties listed on the National Register, or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register may be affected by a project, appropriate steps *may* include, but are not limited to:

1. Information may be submitted to representatives of local governments, either as a separate letter or as part of standard correspondence, which notifies them of the potential for effects to historic properties and the opportunity for them or the public to apply to become a consulting party and/or provide input on the Section 106 process.;
2. In certain situations, the Notice of Intent to Enter letters may include an attached statement that there will be an opportunity to comment on cultural resources and/or apply to become a consulting party;
3. Informational displays or presentations at public meetings, in project newsletters, and through other means may be prepared by the District Cultural Resource Professional (or by a qualified cultural resource consultant at the direction of the District Cultural Resource Professional) to solicit additional qualified groups or individuals interested in applying to become a consulting party or participating as one of the public. An example of a Section 106 Consulting Party Solicitation Display can be found in [Section 6](#) of the Appendices. (Note that the display is just a sample and any Section 106/Cultural Resource boards must be prepared by or reviewed by a District Cultural Resource Professional or qualified cultural resource consultant).

Many of the public involvement techniques found in [The Toolbox](#) may be reasonably applied within the Section 106 consulting party or public comment process and should be discussed with the District Cultural Resource Professional.

Since November 2010, implementation of public involvement for the purposes of meeting Section 106 has been largely through [Project PATH](#), a partnership with Preservation Pennsylvania. Publication 689 and the Cultural Resources Administrative Procedures have established three levels of public involvement effort coming out of the scoping field view. For projects that are exempt, notification of the exemption is made through a listing in Project PATH that is updated

daily. If a project is not exempt, but does not anticipate affecting historic resources, the project information and finding is posted to Project PATH for each project. When historic resources are anticipated to be present or affected by the project, an active notification effort through pre-arranged e-mail lists is undertaken by the Cultural Resources Professional. The notification also solicits for potential consulting parties. Project information is posted to Project PATH in near-real-time, including findings of eligibility and effect, and supporting documentation.

At this time, Project PATH reaches all known potential consulting parties, the SHPO, FHWA, and those federally recognized Tribes that can receive information electronically. Project PATH does not notify local governments or landowners, and it is assumed that these groups are notified through the NEPA process. In the future, Preservation PA is exploring the possibility of adding local governments to the notifications list.

The current Section 106 Programmatic Agreement delegates authority to solicit and accept consulting parties to PennDOT cultural resources professionals. Refer to [Publication 689](#) for that process. Once consulting parties have been established, information concerning the project's Area of Potential Effect, historic resource eligibility determinations, and potential effects on National Register eligible or listed historic properties should be distributed to the consulting parties for their review and comment, when determined appropriate for the project as determined by FHWA in coordination with PennDOT. If the District Cultural Resource Professional determines it is appropriate, meetings with consulting parties will be held to discuss the project's effects on historic properties. Any project mailings and handouts (such as newsletters) should be provided to the consulting parties.

Tribal Coordination

Federally-recognized Native American Tribes or Nations are also notified per existing agreements or understandings under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. No Federally-recognized Tribes or Nations currently reside in Pennsylvania, but important historic properties may be located on ancestral, aboriginal, or ceded lands affected by PennDOT projects. PennDOT and FHWA and the Federally-recognized tribes with ancestral ties to Pennsylvania have developed specific requirements and consultation procedures for Native American Tribal Coordination (see the FHWA/ PennDOT [Pennsylvania Tribal Consultation Handbook](#) (Pub 591). There are currently 15 [Federally-recognized Tribes](#) that may have an interest in Pennsylvania projects. In addition, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation has guidance on [consulting with American Tribes](#). The Transportation Research Board has a newly issued *Guidebook for Successful Communication, Cooperation, and Coordination Strategies Between Transportation Agencies and Tribal Communities*, which can be found on the [Transportation Research Board's website](#).

Each Federally-recognized Tribe is a sovereign nation. Under Section 106, Federally-recognized Tribes have special status as a consulting party even for historic properties off tribal lands. Therefore, FHWA, as part of the Federal Government, engages in government-to-government relations with Tribes. These responsibilities are established by treaty. PennDOT's Cultural Resource Professionals have been delegated activities on behalf of FHWA and with the consent of the Tribes to begin consultation with Tribes and to transmit documentation and otherwise

coordinate with the tribes. These FHWA responsibilities and PennDOT activities cannot be further delegated to consultants or other parties, including MPOs and RPOs.

For more information on PennDOT's Cultural Resources Management Program see [PennDOT's website](#).

Final Design

During final design the project team should continue to coordinate with the community, including elected officials, community leaders and the public, to document any changing needs and to provide updates on the status of the project. It is equally important to communicate with emergency service providers, school districts, public transportation providers and business that may be affected by project construction (see [Making it Work](#), found later in this part of the handbook). Note that any public involvement commitments made during environmental clearance and included in the environmental document must be implemented/ addressed during this stage of the project. Some comments may be appropriately deferred to the construction phase as well. Public outreach during final design should be tailored to keep the public informed and up to date on what is happening with the project. It should be noted that more complex projects (Environmental Assessments or Environmental Impact Statements) typically have project [websites](#) that are developed during Preliminary Design and Environmental Decision-Making. These websites can be maintained throughout final design and even into construction as a means to continue to involve and inform the public.

Design Advisory Teams (DAT) can be used during Final Design on more complex and/or controversial projects to continue dialogue with the community on specific design features such as: mitigation measures, design treatments, landscaping, wall designs, etc. The DAT membership and organization can be developed in a manner similar to a [Citizens Advisory Committee](#).

Construction and Maintenance

Similar to Final Design, the public should be kept updated on projects during construction. This should be done particularly for those projects requiring lengthy detours, road closures, or substantial changes in existing traffic patterns. Note that any public involvement commitments made during environmental clearance and included in the environmental document must be implemented/ addressed during this stage of the project if not completed during final design. For more information on public outreach during construction, see [Making it Work](#).

Work Zone Safety and Mobility

In order to comply with FHWA's Work Zone Safety and Mobility Final Rule ([23 CFR 630 Subpart J](#)) and provide safe work zones for the traveling public, PennDOT has initiated the Work Zone Safety and Mobility Policy.

This policy affects those projects that are within a fully-controlled access interstate, PA Turnpike or freeway (interstate look-alike) with lane closures that are determined to have a "Significant

Project” status. According to PennDOT’s Traffic Engineering and Operations Manual ([Publication 46](#)), a “Significant Project” is one that alone or in combination with other concurrent nearby projects is anticipated to cause sustained work zone impacts that are greater than what is considered tolerable (over 20 minutes delay for two consecutive hours). The ‘Significant Project’ evaluation shall be conducted at various stages of the Project Development Process. A “Significant Project” requires the preparation of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP). A TMP consists of all three of the following components:

- Traffic Control Plan (TCP),
- Transportation Operations Plan (TOP), and a
- Public Information Plan (PIP).

For any “Significant Project”, the TMP must be attached to the Project Development Checklist in ECMS at the time the PS&E package is submitted to Central Office.

A Public Information Plan (PIP) is a plan that informs the public of the impacts on traffic and the general area during or prior to construction. The PIP shall be developed well in advance of the start date of the project, since much of the communications should be undertaken prior to start of construction. Therefore, development of the Public Information Plan may begin with the scoping field view. The level of detail included in the PIP will be commensurate with the size and complexity of the project as further explained in PennDOT’s Traffic Engineering and Operations Manual ([Publication 46](#)). See Section 6.3.5 for a checklist of what should be included in a PIP.

Top Ten

Ways to Provide Better Customer Service through Construction

1. Provide businesses, school districts, residents and commuters alike with timely information.
2. Be responsive to complaints.
3. Let drivers know what they can expect.
4. Have a foolproof plan for the maintenance and protection of traffic.
5. Have a thoughtfully conceived and clearly communicated crisis management plan.
6. Be familiar with Department policies and procedures regarding media relations.
7. Work with businesses to maintain access during construction.
8. Work to accommodate special community events.
9. When possible, restrict construction to non-peak traffic hours and times when school is not in session.
10. Complete work ahead of schedule.

3. Identifying Community Interests and Values

PennDOT cannot realistically address public concerns unless there is an understanding of the make-up and temperament of the community. “The public” consists of individuals with different life experiences, interests, education levels, and professions. Individual citizens have varied – and often conflicting - needs, values, and attitudes. They associate with each other through a number of formal and informal networks. An effective public outreach program distinguishes among the expectations and “agendas” of various publics.

Often conflicts with the public arise from differences between the community's and PennDOT's perceptions of priorities and values. Having assessed the transportation network and PennDOT needs, turn to the community and assess their needs and values. Identify community interests and gauge their attitudes toward the project. Consider the results of recent planning efforts, insights gained through earlier coordination, and current trends in local public opinion. Design a strategy for interacting with the local community as a whole, and develop unique approaches to dealing with specific interests. The [CIA](#) procedures discussed previously in this chapter provide an organized and complete method for scoping your community and identifying their needs. Finally, make sure that the effort put forth during planning to identify community issues and needs isn't lost, but rather is documented so that these issues are known throughout project development.

Identify Project Stakeholders

A stakeholder is a person or group with an interest or investment in the way an issue is resolved. Stakeholders include those Interested Parties identified during the planning stages by the MPO/RPO that have an interest in solving a transportation problem. In addition to the appropriate Interested Parties, Stakeholders for a project will include groups/individuals who perceive that they may lose or gain something of value as a result of a transportation improvement. Local officials, institutions, property owners, minorities, businesses, industries, churches, service groups, fraternal organizations, civic and neighborhood associations, and professional and trade organizations all may have a stake or interest in a project.

Seek out and consider the needs of groups traditionally under-represented in transportation planning and development, such as low-income and minority households, including Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations. See the section on [Environmental Justice](#) in the previous chapter. Make special efforts to reach out and accommodate populations that face hardships that impede their participation in PennDOT's work.

Identify organized special populations, including persons with disabilities, minority community groups, and ethnic groups and organizations. Coordinate with the public and private providers and users of unconventional mass transportation services. These services include:

- School buses
- Transportation for the elderly, persons with disabilities, and children in Head Start
- Other non-fixed route or unscheduled transportation

Typically, human service agencies provide dedicated transit services (such as vans or buses) to fill gaps in the mobility needs of participants in certain public and private programs. Seek their input on effective ways to address transportation problems since they have experience in serving many of the traditionally underserved.

If a project is located in an area with a large ethnic or minority population, the Project Team should have some expertise with these groups and preferably be reflective of these groups. For example, if a project will have an impact on a specific ethnic community or neighborhood, it would be advantageous to have members of that community on the Project Team to better understand the cultural and social concerns of the group.

Network with Local Leaders

As early as possible in project development, contact the local elected officials; school, community group, and religious leaders; and emergency service providers and invite them to contribute their advice and comments. Local governments, which are often active sponsors of proposed projects, can effectively assist in developing and conducting public participation. Take stock of prevailing public attitudes by networking with local leaders – from elected officials to neighborhood representatives. These sessions could be spontaneous and should be brief. Discuss facts and perceptions and avoid having them second-guess your work.

Throughout project development, maintain a working relationship with these community contacts. Group leaders can serve as conduits between their constituencies and PennDOT. Some of these groups have newsletters that they may use to disseminate

Top Ten Scoping Activities

1. Talk to local officials, emergency service providers, school officials and religious leaders.
2. Use the internet to search for local community groups.
3. Scan local newspapers.
4. Consult with MPOs and RPOs (see [Figure 2](#)).
5. Talk to industrial development corporations, economic development organizations and chambers of commerce.
6. Contact local colleges and universities.
7. Design and conduct surveys (use the CIA Scoping Form).
8. Consult the resource agencies.
9. Talk to local Councils of Government (COGs).
10. Contact historical societies.

information about the project. This type of networking is a relatively inexpensive way to open up communications with large numbers of people.

Coordinate with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs)

When implementing transportation projects, continuous coordination with the MPO, RPO, and/or the one independent county (refer to the [Figure 2](#)) is essential. PennDOT should reestablish the working relationship initiated during the [planning and programming](#) of projects and continue this coordination during project scoping and throughout project development. PennDOT should coordinate with the MPO/RPO to determine who was identified as Interested Parties for purposes of LRTP and TIP development. Also, for more complex Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Statement projects, PennDOT should review the MPO/RPO participation plan for use in developing the public outreach program (coordination plan) for the project.

As discussed earlier, MPOs and RPOs are required to conduct public participation activities and to provide opportunity for public comment when producing or amending LRTPs and TIPs for their region. It is PennDOT's responsibility to make sure that the MPO and RPO decision-makers and public involvement specialists have adequate and accurate information on PennDOT's proposed projects. Invite MPO and RPO members to participate in all aspects of project development. If a project is listed on the MPOs' or RPOs' long range plan and/or TIP, offer to provide informal tools such as project brochures and newsletters for the MPOs' and RPOs' use at their public meetings.

Think of the MPO and RPO as a partner throughout the transportation project development process. MPOs, RPOs, and state transportation planners have a common goal of increasing mobility in an environmentally sensitive manner while providing citizens with the most appropriate and economical transportation options possible.

Assess Changing Priorities and Values

Now that you have gathered facts and gained an understanding of concerns by talking to local leaders, you can anticipate the positions each interest group may take regarding the project. But, remember that they may shift their stance as the project develops. And new groups may coalesce around an issue previously considered insignificant.

Track the changing demographics of public meeting participants, which may reflect the evolution of community interests throughout the project.

4. Setting the Agenda

It is PennDOT's goal that decisions are made in the best overall public interest and that the public, and other agencies, be involved early enough to influence project decisions. The public outreach program is PennDOT's commitment to do so.

Clearly define the public's role in project development. Explain how their input will be factored into the final decision. Honestly admit that their authority over the project's outcome is limited to providing input and advice. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with PennDOT, make the final decisions, but assure the community that PennDOT thoroughly considers their interests and concerns before making the decisions.

An Open Process

We can improve PennDOT's relations with the community by explaining our internal workings to people outside PennDOT. Communities also need a better sense of the external regulations and pressures that influence PennDOT's actions. Fuller understanding of the transportation project development process will encourage more productive participation from the public. As early as possible in project development, explain:

- What problem or need the project addresses;
- Why PennDOT's overall transportation mission makes it imperative that we address the need;
- How we develop transportation projects;
- How decisions are made and how projects are approved;
- The status of the project, including current activities and the project schedule; and
- That we value their interests and opinions.

Describe how the public outreach program will work and the activities planned. Explain that the process will be as open as possible because the decisions to be made are public business.

Define Team Roles

Depending on the scope of proposed activities, a number of people may be needed to carry out the elements of the public outreach program. Only an interdisciplinary team of specialists has the breadth of knowledge and experience needed to address issues related to large, complex projects. Get the right people on-board to provide the necessary expertise in public information, public relations, and community involvement activities.

The District's Project Manager supervises the overall process of planning, developing, or implementing a phase of a given project. Additionally, the District Environmental Unit and Right-of-Way Unit are key players in understanding the project area community and the project's potential effects.

For some projects it may be beneficial to designate a Public Involvement Coordinator (PIC) to assist in carrying out the public outreach program. It takes special skills to effectively interact with the public. The Public Involvement Coordinator should have demonstrated skills and experience in coordinating public involvement activities.

The role of the District's Community Relations Coordinator (CRC) can vary greatly. At a minimum, the CRC should assist in formulating strategy, reviewing the products developed, and attending some public meetings. But the CRC takes a more active role when designated as the Public Involvement Coordinator for a specific project. While the CRCs' larger responsibilities preclude their involvement in every project, the CRC may be asked to oversee the public outreach program for larger or controversial projects.

For projects that demand intensive coordination or in cases where the District does not possess the necessary skills and expertise, consider hiring a consultant. Consider the support professional writers, graphic designers, and public relations professionals can provide PennDOT. The decision to seek outside help may be made during project scoping or at any time during project development. Districts often seek firms with expertise in public relations, graphic arts, and even meeting facilitation. The Project Manager, PIC, or CRC may direct a consultant's efforts.

All but the smallest programs will require project team members to assist the Project Manager, Public Involvement Coordinator, and CRC. Select staff with a mix of technical knowledge and interpersonal skills. Advanced training can be arranged to help team members develop special skills for dealing with

Tips on Finding Outside Help

Select a consultant according to the following criteria:

1. Qualifications of the firm and its personnel.
2. Experience on past and recent projects for the Department.
3. Technical competence of the firm.
4. Successful engagement with the public.
5. Graphic art and visualization capabilities.
6. Creativity and innovation in communicating ideas.
7. Problem-solving and facilitation skills.
8. Ability to meet deadlines.
9. Responsiveness to Department needs and changing requirements.

sensitive issues or publics. For the sake of continuity, designate individuals who are able to maintain their role for the duration of the project.

It is necessary for the Scope of Work to establish a clear management structure and name a single contact person to represent the project team in communications with the public.

It's Our Decision

Any individual or group that feels that they have a useful contribution to make to project development should have an opportunity to do so. This does not guarantee that there will be trust or agreement between us, but it does help to ensure that what conflict may take place will be over the real issues that have to be resolved, rather than over the question of whether an honest intent to resolve them is the real objective of PennDOT's public outreach program.

Unless the public's role in the decision-making process is clearly defined, there may well be tension between us. Stress that the earlier their concerns are made known, the more likely we can investigate potential ways to accommodate their concerns, but make it clear that we cannot please everyone. Explain that the opinions and ideas of the public are valued and will be given considerable weight in the final decision, but make it very clear from the outset that the final decision for highway projects rests with PennDOT and FHWA.

Reach Out to All Stakeholders

The supporters of a project tend to participate at a low level, if at all. They may believe that their assistance is not needed, and so may drop out of the process to direct their limited resources to other arenas where their values and interests appear more threatened. Opponents, on the other hand, participate at an intense level.

You cannot gather all the information needed by just one method of collection, nor by asking just one source. Develop forums that will encourage the exchange of multiple points of view and sources of information. Use the media to expand the effectiveness of your public outreach program by opening it to new audiences. Also, coordinate with the MPO/RPO on who they identified as Interested Parties during development of their LRTP and TIP.

Participants can be directly involved in defining the public outreach program. Explore this early in the study or, if possible, when scoping the community. Local officials may want to actively participate or simply be kept informed. Likewise, citizen groups may be able to help you define their role in the decision-making process.

Work with Opposing Views

If opposition groups are allowed to remain outside the formal process, they may never accept a community consensus on the project. Ensure that these interests become actively involved in PennDOT's on-going dialogue with the wider community. Meet with them frequently. Treat their

views with respect. Respond to their requests for information. Engage them in consensus building.

The Role of the Media

The media can be our allies. They are able to educate the public about project progress, issues, and participation opportunities. A positive relationship with the media can result in print and electronic coverage of the project, which, in turn, becomes an extension of PennDOT's public information effort.

The media also has the power to present coverage of opposition to PennDOT's projects in ways that may appear to be supportive. We cannot always control how information is released by others or presented by the media, but we can control the release of our own information. If a story leaks out and if we are not the first to present it, we can lose credibility with the public. The media are part of the public you include in setting the agenda. Develop a good relationship with the media and encourage their coverage of the project. Provide them with information before they ask for it. If you supply the media with comprehensive press kits and personal briefings at key times during project development, you can better control the accuracy of the articles published.

Think of ways to use the media formats to encourage more public participation. Maintain regular access to the media throughout the project's duration and perhaps even after its completion.

Tips on

The Level of Effort Needed for Public Involvement

The level of public involvement needed on a project is commensurate with:

1. The type and size of the project.
2. The complexity of the project.
3. The amount of controversy that will be generated.
4. The level of inconvenience that will be caused by construction.

5. Considering Your Options

To be effective, public outreach must generate the type of input and disseminate the type of output that is appropriate to each stage of project development. [Part 4](#) of this handbook describes a number of techniques commonly used to involve the public in the development of PennDOT's transportation improvements. But first, a few words on how to make them work.

A public outreach program should reflect the economic, social, and political environment of the project area. After assessing the situation, you can establish a set of objectives and build a program that meets these objectives.

Plan to involve the public in ways that will allow them to be active partners in, rather than reactive critics of, project development. Integrate public outreach activities with project milestones by identifying the key decisions to be made during project development. Refer to the [Public Participation Timeline](#). Then develop public outreach activities for each key decision point.

Formulate a Strategy

Once you have identified project stakeholders and assessed community values and priorities, you can begin to develop a public outreach strategy tailored to the specific project. Choose specific public participation techniques based upon the identified objectives and stakeholders. For EIS projects a coordination plan must be developed to ensure public and agency participation in and comment on the environmental review process.

Consider how effectively the techniques meet the information goals of the project. Do these techniques or communications approaches have credibility with the targeted public? How much lead time will be required to accomplish this task? What is the approximate cost for all phases of this technique? How is this technique coordinated with other anticipated public outreach activities?

While it is advantageous to develop a public outreach program in advance of each phase of project development, remember that the plan cannot be rigid. The program needs to be flexible in order to respond to the changing needs and priorities of the community.

The EIS, EA, and CEE [Checklists](#) will help determine and document the minimum effort that is required for each NEPA document level. In addition, the following outline suggests the elements that should be included in a Public Involvement Program:

- **Brief summary of project information:**
 - Project Purpose and Needs statements
 - Project cost and funding source
 - Anticipated construction let date and completion date
 - Anticipated traffic control measures
 - Interested Parties list from the Planning phase of the project as developed by the MPO/RPO
 - Add other appropriate stakeholders

- **Communications Plan with Timeline**
 - List standard communication tools to be used (see [The Toolbox](#))
 - List project specific communication tools to be used
 - Develop a timeline for when communication tools (newsletters, public meetings, websites, etc.) should be implemented and/or updated
 - Develop a list, with contact information, of responsible parties for each aspect of the plan
 - Identify Project Milestones for Plan implementation and updates

- **Action Plan for evaluation and update of the Public Involvement Program**
 - Planning
 - Preliminary Design/Environmental Clearance
 - Final Design
 - Construction
 - Post-Construction/ Maintenance

As stated, the [Checklists](#) and this outline provide an idea of the elements that should be included in a Public Outreach Program. The level of detail included in the plan and, hence, the types of communication tools used will be commensurate with the size and complexity of the project. However, some type of plan should be prepared and implemented for all PennDOT projects. It should be noted that projects requiring an EIS have specific public involvement requirements (See [Part 2](#) of this Handbook). All EISs with a Notice of Intent (NOI) published after August 10, 2005, and EAs at the discretion of PennDOT and FHWA, must follow the Environmental Review Process (ERP). The ERP requires development of a Coordination Plan and Schedule identifying when and how coordination will be conducted with the public and the resource agencies. The ERP further specifies involvement of the public in developing the project Purpose and Need and determining the range of alternatives to be studied. More detail regarding the ERP can be found in the [Final Guidance](#).

Develop Appropriate Forums

Different groups have different needs and concerns, as well as different ways of receiving information. In developing a program for public participation, consider how these groups may best be reached. Develop techniques and methods that can effectively identify and measure the

attitudes, values, and opinions of the disparate populations of the community. Consider how effectively these techniques can communicate information back to these groups.

Which forums will be most effective in raising and equitably resolving the public policy issues of concern? What level of public participation will be needed to manage any expected controversies? How will the program promote constructive participation?

The Public Outreach Program should target specific people or groups for information and involvement. Select forums that will provide opportunities for early and continuing involvement. These approaches should allow for full public access to key decisions, including reasonable access to technical and policy information used in the development of potential improvements. Will the activities being considered require resources greater than those of PennDOT?

Evaluate the Tools Available to You

Evaluate the tools available to you and select the appropriate techniques by considering the level of effort needed and the outcome desired (see [Table 1](#) in **Part 4** of this handbook). Certain mechanisms are appropriate for certain stages of a project.

Approaches that use different stakeholder involvement techniques at different phases of the project are likely to be more inclusive and capture the largest range of stakeholder views. It may be necessary, at times, to hold separate activities for specific stakeholder groups, such as the disabled or low-income households, but avoid isolating these groups from the majority of the community. Be aware that traditional media sources may not be effective in getting the word out in some Environmental Justice communities. So too, younger generations are more reliant on electronic, social media sources to get their information on the fly to support their mobile lifestyle.

Tips on PMC Clearance

PennDOT Project Managers need to determine whether PMC clearance is required for public meetings (typically required when preliminary or recommended alternatives are presented for EIS and EA projects) and if it is, to ensure that this clearance is obtained prior to making final meeting plans.

Get Your Money's Worth

An effective public involvement program provides the necessary focus to target transportation investments that can maximize project and budget effectiveness. Therefore, do not cut a public involvement program when funding is at a premium. Instead, recognize that effective public involvement need not be costly and, if done correctly, should not break the bank. For instance, consider simply posting plans and detour information at the local municipality as a way of informing the public on a project that has limited impacts to the community.

Your public involvement program needs to employ the communication tools that are most effective within the specific, affected community – not necessarily those that are most or least expensive.

In short, before scoping a project it is important to identify – with the affected community – how their population segments communicate, what communication channels they use, and how they are willing to participate and support our shared communication needs. Once a project begins, the orientation function of the initial round of stakeholder interactions should not be underplayed, as these provide excellent opportunities to “ask them” what will work best to ensure a two-way exchange of meaningful information.

In the end, it isn't about “cost”, but rather it's about “cost-effective” – with the emphasis on *effective!*

Evaluate the Program

Periodically review the effectiveness of the public outreach program to ensure that it is providing full and open access to all. A new issue may arise that may require that you modify your approach to public outreach. Do not assume that once a program is in place it can adequately engage all stakeholders on different issues that may develop. Revise the program if necessary.

Tips on

Carrying out Cost-Effective Public Involvement

1. Take advantage of already established communication networks. Have organizations in the area (including municipalities) distribute *our* project information to *their* members.
2. Produce communication pieces as electronic documents to save printing and postage costs.
3. Use websites and e-mail blasts to keep people informed.
4. Use social media to extend your reach in the community.
5. Go to where the people are. Display and hand out information in non-traditional settings where people will be congregating – places such as street fairs and churches (good for Environmental Justice communities).
6. “Piggy-back” your meeting onto another group's meeting, such as local public officials meetings.

6. Making it Work

Throughout planning, preliminary design and environmental clearance, and final design, the public is engaged to ensure their general acceptance of the final product – a well-designed, environmentally sound transportation project that meets PennDOT’s customer’s needs.

But even when your public outreach program has been successful and there is consensus concerning the need for the project, you must consider how the public will experience the period of construction, which – in the case of a large, complex project – could last for several years, testing PennDOT’s relationship with its strongest supporters.

By continuing to reach out and involve the public during construction, inconveniences can be minimized and the public’s attention kept focused on the larger picture and long-term benefits of the project.

Road construction may directly affect a resident or a business owner only once in a lifetime, but the impression we make on these citizens often forms their opinion of PennDOT and the Commonwealth for much longer. The driving public also tends to form opinions about PennDOT, but their opinion is based on a series of experiences over a longer period of time. The public’s impression of PennDOT, then, is constantly being affected by the way individual projects are handled.

Making it Work for the Community

Community leaders may be excited about improving access to their central business districts but also concerned about their community’s ability to endure long periods of parking restrictions, detours, and limited access. With careful planning in the pre-construction phase, communities can coordinate other public works projects, special events, and new economic initiatives with the transportation project. Multi-agency traffic planning committees can work with us to develop detour routes and traffic plans that best serve the community and support social resources, such as annual festivals and tourism attractions.

Making it Work for Businesses

Restaurants, gas stations, malls, car dealerships and other service industry businesses are often located along highways that are widened or otherwise reconstructed during an improvement project. Such businesses are particularly sensitive to changes in their access. If their customers cannot get to their business, or if it is just too much trouble to negotiate detours and temporary access, revenues quickly reflect the impact of road construction. Also, if supplies can not reach businesses easily, due to long detours or narrow construction zones that restrict tractor-trailer access, the businesses will suffer.

Reaching out to the business community early on allows us to work with local chambers of commerce and business owners to minimize this impact. If we understand their operations, we can accommodate the access needs of their customers and suppliers. Giving the business community good information about PennDOT's construction process and schedule allows them to formulate plans to cope with disrupted access to their businesses. They can then also arrange sales and other special construction promotions accordingly.

Making it Work for Users

While the community and its businesses may recognize the benefits of the completed maintenance or improvement project, users are less able to recognize what is to be gained and more likely to notice what is being lost – time, convenience, and their patience. We can gain knowledge about users' overall expectations for transportation improvements through [surveys](#) or [focus groups](#). We can then include their interests in our public outreach program. Make a special effort to provide all users – commuters, transit riders, truck drivers, and the driver who is just passing through – with comprehensive information about detours, alternate routes, ramp closures, and alternative modes of travel available to them.

In urban areas, we can work closely with the media, especially traffic reporters, to disseminate changing traffic information. Often print media will run regular "transit reports" in their papers. Some projects may also require the use of brochures to catch the long distance or interstate driver.

The traveling public has grown accustomed to driving through construction zones. Some projects, however, require drivers to take alternate routes, allow more travel time, or opt for transit during construction. If we ask the traveling public to voluntarily change their behavior, we are more likely to gain their cooperation when we have reached out to them well in advance of construction. Users who understand the need for the

Tips on Helping Businesses Survive Construction

1. Host meetings for the business community long before construction will begin.
2. Use detailed plans to discuss their access needs, both from a customer and supplier standpoint.
3. Urge them to work with their Chamber of Commerce or other business association during construction.
4. Encourage them to work together to develop special promotions, buy advertising and arranging special events to offset the inconvenience their customers may experience during construction.
5. Work with them to develop effective signing.

specific transportation improvements and the need to handle traffic efficiently during construction will have a higher tolerance for PennDOT's projects. We can sustain their level of tolerance throughout construction by providing them with reliable information on a regular basis.

Remain Responsive

New issues often arise during construction. Most are related to the construction process and can be addressed easily. The general public may have concerns about how traffic is being handled; while property owners or businesses may be concerned with the construction schedule.

Sometimes a community is surprised by a completed project, although they have seen plans and received a lot of information during the project's design. Even after a project has been constructed, citizens' groups may form around issues that concern them or that they feel were overlooked during design. This is why use of a design advisory team during final design can be an effective tool to help identify community design preferences before the project is constructed. Communities may complain about new visual elements of the project, or about lighting or noise. Sometimes they will find the project more acceptable as time passes and landscaping treatments can be appreciated. However, some issues that appear during or after construction may require thoughtful, creative responses from us.

7. Document Your Results

Almost every interaction with the public offers the opportunity for some documentation of the public's involvement. This is particularly important when a project is controversial and our public outreach program is being challenged.

Keep written documentation of all public outreach activities, whether undertaken for and EIS, EA or CEE. Consider use of the [Checklists](#). Copies of newsletters, news releases, flyers, posters, block ads, and brochures are proof of PennDOT's effort to reach out to the public and draw them into the transportation project development process.

Completed comment forms, surveys, meeting notes, hearing testimony, newspaper clips, and correspondence typically create a record of the public's involvement and input.

Many tools that are used to involve the public during a project's preliminary and final design phases also provide a record of the public's participation in project development. It takes very little additional planning time to structure meetings and workshops to include usable feedback. Even reactions of community leaders that are recorded on flip-charts during public officials' workshops can be summarized for the record.

The public outreach program and a summary of the results of the public outreach efforts are an important part of the environmental documentation.

8. Staff Training Needs

PennDOT Project Managers particularly those with less than five years' experience as a Project Manager should be trained as required in the necessity of public participation, particularly that which is to occur prior to NEPA clearance.

Consideration should also be given to training other staff as needed, such as those in the Environmental, Design, Traffic, and Right-of-way units. The training should include an introduction to this Handbook, including guidance on dealing with the public, developing a public outreach program, and what tools are available to successfully involve the public in PennDOT projects.

The Toolbox of Public Involvement Techniques

Public Involvement Handbook Part 4

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Acronyms Used in this Part of the Handbook

AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
CAC	Citizens Advisory Committee
CAD	Computer Aided Drafting (Design)
CEE	Categorical Exclusion Evaluation
CMS	Congestion Management Systems
CRC	Community Relations Coordinator
CSS	Context Sensitive Solutions
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EJ	Environmental Justice
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
PennDOT	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
PI	Public Involvement
PIC	Public Involvement Coordinator
PMC	Program Management Committee (PennDOT)
PR	Public Relations
PSA	Public Service Announcement
Q&A	Question and Answer Session
ROD	Record of Decision
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TT	Text Telephone
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
www	World Wide Web

1. Selecting Your Tools

There are a variety of tools and techniques from which to select when developing a public outreach and involvement program.

Make decisions about which tools to use based on the complexity of the project and its special needs, but also consider available resources by answering important questions such as: Do we have the project funds that may be required? Do we have the lead time necessary to effectively carry out the task? The selection of specific tools and techniques for involving the public is dependent upon numerous factors that include cost, demands on staff time, level of skills needed, past experience, and the autonomy with which they can be used by Department staff. [Table 1](#) on the following page may be used as a guide to help select tools and techniques for your project.

The table does not rank these tools in terms of their effectiveness. Largely, their success will depend upon the practitioners who use them. Media relations, a tool that costs almost nothing, can go a long way in getting our story to the community telling the public how they can participate in the process and responding to their concerns. On the other hand, an expensive paid advertising campaign, which might be used to direct drivers around and through an urban reconstruction project, might fail if it does not reach regional and interstate travelers.

Table 1 – Selecting Your Tools

Tools	Available Resources			Project Phases							
	Cost	Time	Skills	Planning	Preliminary Design/ Environmental Clearance			Final Design	Construction	Maintenance	
					CEE	EA	EIS				
Announcements											
▪ Direct Mail	●●	●●	○●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Flyers and Posters	○	○	○	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Newspaper Advertisements	○	○	○	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ E-Mail Announcements	○	○	●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ PSA's	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Road Signs	○	○	○	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Brochures	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Websites	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ BLOGS	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Citizens Advisory Committees	○	●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Field Offices/Project Offices	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Information Lines	○	○	○	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Media Relations	○	○	●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Newsletters	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Traditional Public Meetings											
▪ Formal Meetings	○	○	●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Open Houses	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Public Officials Meetings	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Special Purpose Meetings											
▪ Charettes	○	●	●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Focus Groups	○	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Neighborhood Meetings	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Workshops	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Non-Traditional Public Meetings											
▪ Web Conferencing	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Webinar	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Webcast	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Podcast	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Virtual Public Meetings	●●	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Public Hearings	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Public Officials Meetings	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Surveys	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Visualization											
▪ Computer Images	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ GIS	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Scale Models	●●	●●	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
▪ Videos	○	○	●●	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	○ Low	● Medium	●● High	X Potential Application							

2. Announcements

Announcements, formal public statements giving information or news, are a core of every public outreach and involvement program.

Public meetings and other events at which the Department and its customers interact are only effective if the community is represented. Timely, widespread publicity in the project area can encourage attendance by a cross-section of local citizens. A variety of media can be used to inform the public about opportunities for their involvement in project development and to inform them of Department actions, operations, or activities. This section will describe the following announcement techniques:

- Direct mailings
- Flyers and posters
- Newspaper advertisements
- e-mail blasts
- Public service announcements
- Road signs
- Web announcements

It is important to consider the characteristics of the community when selecting the announcement type. Certain techniques can reach a broad audience in urban and suburban areas, but other techniques may be more effective in more rural areas.

Meeting announcements should be tailored for the needs of the specific type of gathering. For instance, a general purpose meeting, designed for widespread community representation, may be best announced one to two weeks in advance through such formal means as the broadcast and print mediums. On the other hand, a smaller event, such as a special purpose meeting, may be effectively announced through a more informal gesture from community leaders who agree to “spread the word.”

Reaching Underserved Populations

Extra care should be taken to have announcements reach the neighborhoods of groups such as low-income and minority populations traditionally under-represented in transportation planning and development. Techniques and strategies to notify and inform these groups and individuals include notices in non-English language newspapers; public service announcements on radio stations that target their programming to a non-English speaking audience; and flyers and notices on public involvement opportunities distributed to senior citizens’ centers, religious institutions, and minority and low-income neighborhoods.

Direct Mail

In PennDOT's attempt to reach out to the public, there are times when our objective may be to open a line of communication with every household in the project area and other stakeholders. One method to achieve this objective is direct mail. Unlike other techniques that may not reach everyone in the project study area, direct mail can take a message into every home.

When using direct mail, be careful not to accidentally omit a zip code or portion of a community. When members of a group discover that they have been excluded, it may take some time to repair the feeling of being slighted by PennDOT.

Direct mail can communicate many types of messages using an array of print materials including meeting announcements, new policy information, project newsletters, brochures, surveys, and notification of planned project activities – such as hazardous waste removal, blasting or bridge closings.

Getting it There

Mailing lists may be developed by PennDOT, provided by local government or planning agencies, or purchased from commercial mail houses. Initial mailings using acquired mailing lists can be disappointing, sometimes resulting in a large rate of returned, undelivered mail. One way to avoid returned mail is to address it to “Mr. John Q. Public or Current Occupant.”

One of the best ways to avoid waste is to develop a “stakeholder” mailing list, which includes people who have attended public meetings or contacted the Department, along with local government and agency representatives who would be expected to have a stake in the project. The mailing list may also allow stakeholders to indicate whether they prefer direct mail or [e-mail](#) for receiving project information and updates.

Depending on the size of the study area, it may not be cost-effective to use direct mail. A less expensive method of distributing direct mail to a large population is “marriage mail,” in which your newsletter or flyer is inserted into a packet of materials that a mail house “marries” together with other circulars/flyers and distributes. The risk of using marriage mail is that it may be discarded as junk mail without even being seen.

Getting Results

When our objective is to receive something back from the public, we are sending “direct response” mail. To win cooperation in filling out a survey or taking some other action, the material we send must be especially well-written and designed.

A routine form of correspondence is the Intent to Enter Letter, which is sent to property owners when there is a need to perform work on their property. This traditional communication is really a piece of direct mail. A poorly written letter, or one written in “bureaucratese,” sends out the wrong message about PennDOT. If it is friendly and well-written, PennDOT's customer relations philosophy is expressed and the property owner's cooperation is more often willfully given.

Flyers and Posters

Since flyers and posters require little preparation time, they can be used to get the word out quickly. They can also be used to supplement or complement other announcement techniques to more completely publicize PennDOT's activities.

Direct mail or door-to-door distribution of flyers is one way to get the attention of newspaper readers or non-subscribers. Like newspapers, however, flyers are disposable. Posters, on the other hand, are visible to large numbers of people for long periods of time. They can be used in tandem with flyers to increase awareness of upcoming events.

One standard, letter-sized page should suffice for a flyer. Posters should be fairly large and easily readable, with as little text as possible. Highlight the following essential items in large, bold type:

- The official project name and logo;
- The date, time, and location of the event;
- Notice of access to people with disabilities; and,
- A phone number to contact for additional information.

Use bright colors to draw attention to your announcements, ensuring that they are easily noticed by the passerby.

Hang posters announcing public involvement activities in such public places as:

- Banks
- Hardware stores
- Supermarkets
- Municipal buildings
- Post offices
- Public libraries
- State and Federal buildings
- Laundromats
- Community centers
- Churches

These places may have "Community Bulletin Boards" specifically designated for announcements. Ask permission before hanging posters. Also, if possible, leave stacks of flyers near entrances and on countertops in stores and places where other free publications appear.

Newspaper Advertisements

Newspaper advertisements have proven effective in announcing project events. They are, and will continue to be, a prominent (and perhaps the predominant) method of notifying the public. There are two types of newspaper advertisements: display advertisements and legal notices:

- **Display advertisements** combine text and graphics to convey information about large-scale public involvement activities like general public meetings and Public Hearings. They are commonly called “block ads” because newspapers sell blocks of advertising space by the column inch.
- **Legal notices** are one-column text only ads, printed in the legal section of a newspaper.

What's your Intent?

A **Notice of Intent** is used to officially notify the public of the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The [Notice of Intent](#) should be prepared as discussed in **Part 2**.

Additionally, PennDOT may want to consider informing the local community about initiation of a project. One means to accomplish this is to publish a display or block ad in newspapers throughout the project area. This project introduction notice should:

- State the purpose and need of the project
- Describe, if appropriate, the range of possible alternatives
- Explain that subsequent announcements will provide notice of additional public involvement activities
- Provide the name of a Department staff person to contact for additional information
- Request that those wanting to be on the project mailing list to call or write

Additionally, this notice should include a map of the project area. The ad should be attractively designed to catch people's attention. While the Notice of Intent is published in the Federal Register to meet federal requirements, the project initiation notice is published in local newspapers because it is good business. Examples of this notice are found in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices.

Do not Bury It

Traditionally, legal notices have been published to announce Public Hearings and the availability of environmental documents for public review. Notices have been published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* for similar reasons. Legal ads were once the required form of announcing a Public Hearing. The general Public, however, does not regularly read the legal notices section of newspapers and is typically not aware of the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

PennDOT no longer requires the use of legal notices since display and block advertisements are more visible and effective. In order to attract attention, design display and block ads with an appealing layout, sharp headlines, and informative, easy-to-understand explanation of the event.

Announce those Meetings

Announce project events by publishing a block ad in a newspaper with the highest circulation in the project area. But consider that, in rural or suburban areas served by local newspapers (typically published weekly), many people may not subscribe to the daily “big city” newspaper that covers their region. Plan your advertising strategy to reach as many readers as possible. Also, where available, consider advertising in prominently established minority or ethnic publications.

In expansive project areas, two or more public meetings on the same subject might be held in different locations for the convenience of the residents. In such cases, be sure to target announcements to the communities involved.

Contact the display ad department (often separate from the classified ad section) for information on publishing deadlines and column widths. You should format ads according to each paper’s column width and length requirements. You may need to prepare more than one version.

In the meeting notice, request that disabled persons who require assistance contact PennDOT so appropriate arrangements can be made. Examples of public meeting notices can be found in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices.

Coordinate with Agencies

When developing an advertisement, it is important to ensure that the timing requirements of Cooperating Agencies are met. Guidelines will often vary with each agency. For instance, the Army Corps of Engineers requires that Joint Public Hearing notices be mailed to every potentially-affected landowner. An example of such a notice can be found in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices.

Cooperating Agencies should be asked about their public involvement needs during the development of the public outreach program; the program should be tailored to meet those needs. If a Joint Public Hearing is to be held, and if the notification period of the agency is different from the Department's, then the longer period for hearing notification will be used. PennDOT will still adhere to its requirement for publishing a second Public Hearing notice.

Prove It

It has been a regular practice of some Districts to document meeting advertisements with a Proof of Publication (POP). While not required, it is useful to ask the newspaper to provide a POP, which is a notarized statement of the date of advertisement (see example in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices). Newspapers usually charge a small fee for POPs. A copy of the published advertisement, along with the date of publication, can also be used to document the announcement.

e-Mail Blasts

An e-mail blast is an electronic mailing, sent all at once to a large mailing list to convey a message, provide project updates, announce a meeting or solicit feedback through a survey.

When compared to traditional direct mail, the expense of e-mail messages is pennies on the dollar due to the high cost of print, postage and other production factors. The effectiveness of e-mail stacks up favorably against direct mail campaigns. However, be aware that not everyone has internet or email access; therefore, other means of communication may be necessary.

More importantly, e-mail blasts have a personal feel about them by the nature of their delivery; the recipient has requested the information be delivered to their personal "virtual" mailbox. A well-designed e-mail campaign, with a predictable publication frequency can be highly effective in building credibility and a trusting relationship with residents and interested parties. This trust and credibility gives public involvement specialists an opportunity to maintain an ongoing relationship with the individual.

A collection of e-mail addresses can be obtained through voluntary sign-up at public meetings or via the website. These addresses can be stored in a database and referenced by a web application or batch e-mail process to deliver messages directly to stakeholders. These e-mails may be blocked through the spam filtering, however.

E-mail newsletter or announcements are highly accountable with respect to design and content. Studies have shown that users will often avoid signing up for newsletters because they feel crushed by information overload. It is the job of the newsletter publisher to design content that is easily scanned by the reader, is useful and quickly downloaded.

Writing good subject lines is especially important, both to encourage users to open the newsletter and to reduce the probability that it will be confused with spam and deleted. It is a good idea to include some actual content from the individual issue in each subject line. Also, make your privacy policy clear. State what you will and will not do with the information you collect.

Public Service Announcements

Newspapers, radio and television stations often donate air time or ad space to non-profit and government organizations. Through Public Service Announcements, the media carries our message. Therefore, they have the potential to reach a wide audience. Consider the use of Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for very large project areas or for projects on major arterials and interstates when the proposed project may affect more than just the surrounding community. PSAs can be made through the print or broadcast media.

Print PSAs are usually found in a "Community Events" or "Calendar" feature of a local newspaper. The announcements are often brief, limited to the time and date of the meeting. Some municipalities produce a quarterly newsletter or flyer for residents. With enough advance notice, it may be possible to have a Department event announced in this manner.

Broadcast PSAs have the potential to saturate a community. They are generally slated for 10, 30, or 60 second spots. You can supply copy already "timed" for a spot, but many stations will write spots for you. You can supply typed copy or a tape prepared by a studio. Allow time at the end of your message to identify PennDOT. End your message with the following sentence: "This message has been brought to you by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation."

The media's use of PSAs is by no means a given and many in the media do not view government in the same light as a charity fund-raising event or other non-profit organization in deciding who gets free space or air time. Often, PSAs are selected for use not only on the merits of the subject matter, but on how well they are done. In larger, more competitive markets, consider producing a more polished, professional product.

Television stations may run PSAs during morning and afternoon commercial breaks, or after the evening news, but not during prime time. PSAs are almost never used in the bigger TV markets by network affiliates, except as fillers during low viewer times. However, cable TV provides a good outlet for PSAs. Many areas are served by a community cable channel. Simple announcements of public meetings or road detours can be inexpensively aired on these channels.

Radio stations typically air PSAs about community activities soon after the hourly news reports. When selecting radio stations to run PSAs, keep in mind that different broadcast formats target different audiences. Choose music stations with wide appeal and remember that many people also tune into public radio or all-news AM stations at least once a day. If your project area includes large communities of non-English speakers, consider submitting a PSA to stations that broadcast in their language.

Road Signs

PennDOT uses road signs for a variety of reasons to inform, warn, or direct the motoring public. Limited road signing can also be used as a public outreach tool. When utilized, all signs along Pennsylvania highways must meet PennDOT design standards. To ensure compliance, coordinate with the PennDOT District Traffic Unit Signing Section and with FHWA, if necessary. Signs should not be used indiscriminately, but only when a real public service can be provided or public relations benefit achieved.

Web Announcements

Similar to newspaper advertisements, announcements of public meetings and other projects events can be made through the internet. If a project website is created, then an announcement can be prominently posted on the home page. Also look for opportunities to post an announcement on the websites of appropriate organizations: the local newspapers, local governments, and civic or other stakeholder groups.

The announcements can be simple text announcements or take the form of an eye-catching designed piece.

3. Brochures

A brochure presents information on a specific topic in a compact, manageable format like a book or folded pamphlet. Brochures present unique opportunities for communicating information creatively.

While a newsletter series provides time-sensitive reports on a specific project, brochures, which have a long shelf life, usually present background information about the transportation project development process or useful facts to guide drivers through construction. General topics that might be covered in a brochure include:

- The steps for preparing an EIS, EA or CEE.
- Environmental regulations and the roles of the resource and regulatory agencies.
- Public Hearing procedures.
- Information on Noise analysis and mitigation.
- Right-of-way acquisition and the relocation assistance program.
- Types of construction or maintenance projects and estimated timeframes.
- Contact information and website address if applicable.
- Subject specific information – targeted at key issues for project.
- Special information (e.g., how to drive in a roundabout).

The cost of writing, designing, and printing a typical color brochure may seem prohibitive, but think of it as a long-term investment. One brochure on Public Hearings, for example, may be used as a handout for all EIS projects. These brochures can also be published on the Department's webpage or on the project webpage, or mass distributed through [e-mail blasts](#).

While general information brochures may serve the purpose for low level environmental studies or reconstruction projects, complex or controversial projects may require more specific, higher detailed treatment. Such brochures might be used to:

- Summarize an especially long project history.
- Present an EIS "digest."
- Explain how mitigation and enhancement measures will be incorporated into the final design of the transportation improvement.
- Present the construction/detour calendar for the roadway reconstruction or bridge replacement.

However, the brochures will be of little use unless they are read by the audience for whom they were produced. Consider how to distribute the brochures to the project stakeholders. Rely on the project mailing list or use PSAs and advertising to announce the availability of the brochure. The standard folded size for a brochure is four by nine inches (10 by 23 centimeters). Always use standard size when distributing brochures through information centers. Anything larger will not fit into a display stand; a smaller brochure may be overlooked.

Keep convenience in mind when designing brochures for distribution at meetings and hearings. If a person cannot easily pocket the brochure, he or she might discard it on the way home.

Standard brochures fit perfectly in letter-size envelopes, but designing a brochure as a mailer allows for more flexibility.

Brochures are well-suited to presenting maps – from long, narrow corridors to panoramic study areas. A brochure “centerfold” also lends itself to the presentation of charts, graphs, and photos. [Commonwealth Media Services](#) is a resource for assistance in preparing brochures.

Tips on Making it Reader Friendly

- Use simple, direct, active language.
- Avoid technical jargon. If you must use it, explain it in simple terms.
- Use short paragraphs to facilitate reading.
- Use large, bold headings in the text to introduce new subjects.
- Use different fonts, symbols, frames, ruling lines or shading to set off items in the text that deserve special attention.
- Incorporate white space and graphics to break up the monotony of text.
- Make graphics simple and self-explanatory; use color wherever possible.
- Provide legends for maps.

4. Citizens Advisory Committee

Long a staple of representative public outreach, Citizens Advisory Committees (CACs) are comprised of members of various groups or interests likely to be affected by a transportation project or proposal.

CACs help us to identify problems and to articulate and clarify key issues. By meeting regularly to discuss and resolve project issues, CACs can provide guidance and direction to the Department.

CACs serve as a forum for public debate and discussion on transportation needs and solutions. The purpose of a CAC is to provide a comprehensive and orderly means of involving local community interests in a project. The role of the group is to advise PennDOT of community sentiment about a project. To do so equitably, the CAC must be democratic and representative of opposing points of view, with equal status for each participant in presenting and deliberating the views of their interests. By providing for representation of many different interests, a CAC can help to resolve conflicts between those interests.

With larger, more complex studies, a small, representative group of citizens may be needed as the focal point for public involvement. Working with a smaller group can enhance the exchange of information and opinions between the community and the project team. We can then achieve a greater appreciation of each other's positions and concerns. It is easier for us to attain CAC input/recommendations with a smaller group.

Representing All Viewpoints

To be effective, a CAC must include people who represent the varied and often divergent interests in the community. Membership should fairly represent the concerns of planners, local government officials, environmentalists, business organizations, neighborhood groups, different transportation modes, historic preservation groups, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, and other diverse interests. Community leaders and influential persons are almost always included among the members. Membership in a CAC does not require participants to have sophisticated communication skills or prior specialized knowledge.

Appoint members from a slate of individuals with particular qualifications and/or interests. The CAC should reflect the socioeconomic and political characteristics of the community. Be aware that a CAC may function best when elected officials are not members. The citizens may then be more receptive to an open discussion.

Members are generally selected in one of two ways. One way is to carefully identify all stakeholders, including the general public. It may be beneficial to have an impartial organization identify "charter members" based on consultations with local elected officials and existing civic

organizations. The other way is to identify key interests and allow these groups to appoint their own delegates to the committee. However, monitor their choices to ensure that the committee is not dominated by like-minded associates and followers. Once a core group is established, others may be invited to serve on the committee at any time.

Only a group representing the diverse viewpoints of all stakeholders will fully explore the issues, so carefully review your choice of candidates to reveal gaps in representation. A matrix provides an objective approach to group selection. Appoint additional members to represent any new interests that develop in the community as the project progresses. The general public may regard a CAC with suspicion if its membership does not keep pace with changes in the community.

Membership in a CAC should generally range from 10 to 35 people, including project team members and, if appropriate, a facilitator. Since smaller groups better promote discussion between members, a large CAC may be divided into subgroups. These subcommittees may explore specific issues and hold meetings between the regular sessions of the CAC. However, holding separate meetings limits interaction between interests. Develop procedures for bringing these issues back to the table for discussion by the whole committee.

The Role of CACs

A CAC is an advisory body with limited power and authority. CACs are not decision-making bodies. They vote only on procedural issues of the committee, never on project technical issues. Unless these limits are clearly defined and enforced, members may feel betrayed if a decision is made that is at odds with their recommendations.

The purpose of a CAC is to express the views of the community and to make recommendations in the community interest. All members should understand

Top Ten

Objectives of a CAC

1. To advise PennDOT on issues within the community.
2. To convey the concerns of local organizations, governments and businesses to the project team.
3. To relay information and proposals presented by the project team back to community groups.
4. To evaluate transportation deficiencies and needs and to recommend priorities for transportation improvements.
5. To strengthen public understanding of the project development process and its regulatory framework.
6. To discuss project progress, work efforts and activities.
7. To develop solutions collaboratively and build toward a CAC recommended course of action.
8. To facilitate broad-based public involvement.
9. To ensure that information is understandable to the public.
10. To provide continuing visibility and credibility for the public involvement program.

that, while we will give serious consideration to the group's input, FHWA, with PennDOT, is responsible for making decisions and setting policy.

A CAC should not mistake itself for an Executive Committee, a group formed to assist PennDOT in setting policy and making decisions. An Executive Committee comprises prominent community leaders and PennDOT. Environmental resource agencies may be represented as well. The role of the Executive Committee is to direct the work of the project team. Typically, an Executive Committee would receive regular reports from the CAC.

CACs provide input and opinions on various aspects of projects. Members become technically educated by participating in the group. The CAC's input weighs heavily in the decision-making but must be balanced with other factors such as permit requirements, costs, and other environmental factors.

Community Member Task Forces

When established early in project development, a CAC helps to monitor citizen reactions to Department proposals. We can become aware of opinions and stances on issues at an early point in project development before positions become solidified.

Working with a CAC, we can craft compromise positions through a give-and-take over a relatively short period of time. Because participation in a CAC can create in its members an emotional commitment or vested interest in the project, CACs can produce a political climate in which plans can be implemented.

Identify the people that are capable of providing you with the information you need at each stage of project development. Approach people whose participation will make the committee "visible" or "publicly credible." Leaders of visible interest groups often serve as surrogates for a much larger public that feels represented by the activities of that interest group.

Tips on Selecting CAC Participants

- When targeting specific interest groups, directly invite recognized community leaders and public officials. Other potential participants could be identified from the project stakeholders list.
- It is important to convene a group that is representative of the entire population of the study area. Also, the group needs to be interdisciplinary with a variety of skills and knowledge.
- The ideal working group consists of 10 to 25 citizens. Larger workshops should be broken down into small groups for activities and discussion.

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) may be established if technical advice is sought. A TAC comprises a small number of members from the Department and community who have recognized technical knowledge and expertise on transportation and planning issues. A TAC would report to the Executive Committee, if one exists, to the CAC, or directly to the project team.

A Task Force may be organized for the purpose of examining a specific issue. Typically, it focuses on technical issues, disbanding after its mission of advising PennDOT has been completed. A Task Force, or Fact-Finding Committee, is a hybrid between an advisory committee and a Technical Advisory Committee and may often be a subgroup of one of them. Its membership is small, appointed from a slate of individuals with particular qualifications and/or interests. Its role is advisory.

Finally, the most complex projects may need a Coordinating Committee to harmonize the activities of the other groups. A Coordinating Committee consists of a small number of representatives from other committees. The Committee's chief role is to facilitate communication among the groups.

Establish Ground Rules and Set the Tone

Ground rules should be established so that there is a general agreement in the group on how the committee and its individual members will function. Express this shared understanding of the group's purpose and define the committee's functions.

Using a workshop format for the meetings can minimize formal presentations and maximize discussion time. Establish a comfortable, informal atmosphere. An over-emphasis on parliamentary procedures can lead to time spent on formalities rather than substantive issues. Additionally, one of the purposes of the CAC is to reduce the barriers between citizens and PennDOT. Formal meeting procedures tend to exaggerate differences, rather than reduce them.

The first meeting of the CAC should be organizational in nature. Proposed ground rules should be reviewed and revised, if necessary. Agree on how group decisions will be made. Although an approach should be specified upfront, always allow for flexibility and responsiveness to participants' concerns. Basic ground rules for the group's behavior may include the following:

Purpose

- Members agree to use the CAC as a forum for the exchange of information and concerns between the community and the project team.
- Members agree that they are acting in an advisory capacity on the CAC, but are free to present their personal or group's views on the project in other forums.

Membership

- Each member will have a designated alternate to attend meetings when they are unavailable (Note: The group should establish at the outset whether alternates have full voting rights).

- Additional representatives may be added to the CAC with the consent of all the members.
- There will be an opportunity for non-member observers to comment at the conclusion of the meeting.

Meetings

- The agenda for each meeting is subject to alteration with the consent of the group.
- Decisions will be made using consensus, calling for the agreement of everyone present at the meeting.
- The facilitator will prepare a summary of comments and concerns without attribution.

Conduct

- Members agree to act in a reasonable and courteous manner.
- Members agree to assist the facilitator in enforcing the committee rules.
- Members agree to respect the facilitator's and the project team's responsibility to protect information provided them in confidence.

Their experience may be different and they may value issues differently. Give each member an opportunity to express his or her views. Use brainstorming to generate ideas. If a meeting facilitator is not being used, consider bringing in an outside specialist at any time to establish or resolve a particular or pressing problem.

The CAC meeting may or may not be open to the public. But only CAC members may participate in discussions, except during a designated public comment period.

Relating to the Media

Depending on the ground rules established, the local media may be welcome to attend CAC meetings; they may or may not be invited each time. CAC members agree that any views they express will be attributed to themselves as individuals or as a member of the group they represent and not the CAC, project team or the Department. The group may vote to issue prepared statements to the media that reflect the majority views of the CAC.

Prepare an Agenda

The timing and subject matter for each CAC meeting should be carefully planned. Time volunteered by participants is extremely valuable, precisely because it is volunteered.

Always plan CACs with a purpose in mind, expressed in an agenda. The meeting facilitator should prepare and distribute an agenda along with background information one week prior to the meeting. The agenda should include a discussion of items, presentations of information as necessary for clarification, and a determination of whether a consensus on each issue exists.

Minutes which record the points of view of participants should be distributed within two weeks after each meeting.

Meeting Organization

Organization of a CAC is a major undertaking. Provide sufficient staff support to ensure the CAC's effectiveness. Staff members assigned to work with the committee must have the necessary interpersonal communication and group dynamic skills, in addition to their normal technical qualifications.

A CAC is sometimes more effective as a problem-solving group when broken down into working groups or task forces. Project team members should help to organize the sessions and attend meetings to answer questions, make presentations, or to explain positions or provide analysis. Handouts may be prepared to summarize or supplement the presentations, but it may not be appropriate to release all information for take-home review.

Work together with the CAC officers to bring substantive issues before the larger group. Hold pre-meetings to plan the regular sessions and to draft policy goals. Ensure that the meeting format is suitable for discussion of the topics on the agenda. Arrange to have the necessary consultants or other technical experts in attendance. For tips on using non-professional engineers to work with the CAC see the [list](#) at the end of **Part 4** of this Handbook.

The location and time of meetings should be established based on the convenience of members, more than the convenience of PennDOT. The length of meetings should be specified and agreed upon. Usually, the meetings are no longer than 90 minutes to two hours. The meeting facility should be quiet and of sufficient size. Schedule meetings for a regular interval, even at the risk that they will not be needed. Unnecessary meetings can always be cancelled.

Between meetings, the facilitator should be available to answer the members' questions, or to direct them to someone with more information. Review these questions and answers at the next CAC meeting.

No Substitute for Equal Access

The CAC can be a mainstay of your public outreach program. But, since its basis is representative participation, it must be supplemented by a range of techniques for broad public involvement. A CAC can provide the continuity and visibility necessary to maintain the overall credibility of the public outreach process. This is particularly useful during the periods in a project when technical studies are underway and there is little to report to the public.

By combining the CAC with other, broader public activities, it is possible to obtain the advantages of continuity from the CAC, coupled with the large community acceptance of fair and equal public access to the project.

Making Decisions

The group will make a number of decisions – recommendations to PennDOT, actions to be taken or position statements to be developed. A CAC typically makes decisions by an informal process of consensus. Achieving consensus requires a skilled meeting leader who is able to summarize the sense of the meeting and obtain a general group agreement for this summary.

If consensus cannot be reached, a minority opinion or report may accompany the committee's majority recommendations. To build consensus, it is essential to share thoughts and feelings. This means that all members of the committee must strive to listen and understand differing views – each other's and the public's. It is through this process of active listening and understanding that problems will be identified and solutions found. Take time to solicit other's comments, especially the quiet members. Recognize that group thinking and the pressure for conformity can lead to premature settlement of an issue.

5. Information Lines

When instant access to the Department is a priority for the public, consider setting up an information line.

The public wants easy access to information about projects that affect them. What could be easier than calling us? District Office numbers are often published in meeting advertisements and project newsletters. However, without a line dedicated to public information, it could be very difficult for callers to get the answers they need. A toll-free “hotline” is the most basic technique, but technological advances are creating more sophisticated ways to use the telephone for interactive involvement.

Random calls to the main office number could result in frustrating games of “telephone tag” when project team members are busy. Establishing an information line means that either knowledgeable staff will be available to speak with the public at specified times or callers will receive basic information from a recording.

Information lines are particularly valuable for construction projects that affect thousands of people daily.

Consider ways of keeping the telephone number(s) in the public consciousness for the duration the service is available. This number should be included in newsletters and other project mailings, flyers or posters, on road signs, or announced through paid advertising.

A Wide Range of Options

The simplest telephone information formats are:

- **Auto Attendant Systems** - Provides callers with a recorded menu of options. Callers may elect to hear recorded messages or to speak with appropriate staff people.
- **Information Bureaus** - Consist of staff people who respond to requests for general project information like public meeting dates or detour routes.
- **Hotlines** - Staffed by project team personnel who are able to answer more complex questions about a project. A hotline may also be used to record comments for the public record.
- **Telephone Bulletin Boards** - Callers listen to a recorded message that provides timely project information. The message should be updated regularly.

PennDOT has been providing such telephone information services since the 1970s. Today, advances in telecommunications have expanded the range of options. In its guidance for transportation planning, the FHWA presents innovative multimedia techniques:

- In an electronic town meeting, a discussion topic or series of questions is presented to the public on a TV program. Citizens call the program with responses.
- Citizens on computer networks send comments and questions via electronic mail (E-mail).
- A FAX-on-demand system provides callers with a menu of project-related or general documents available by FAX and explains how to obtain them.
- Interactive cable TV allows people to access information screens or a video on a special channel, with a phone call.
- With an interactive voice response system, people can retrieve information from a central computer using telephones or terminals.

Accommodating Special Needs

The Hearing Impaired

A growing number of people with hearing disabilities use Text Telephones (TT) to communicate. These people can access your standard telephone hotline through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Text Telephone Relay Center at 1-800-654-5984. Include this phone number when distributing information about your hotline.

Hearing-disabled people using TTs simply call the relay center, give the operator the hotline number, and present their comments or questions as they would in a normal conversation. The operator will “do the talking” for the TT user and relay our responses.

The Non-English Speaking

In areas where few people speak English, make special efforts to communicate in the dominant language. If staff people are not fluent enough to converse in that language, consider professionally recorded messages.

Maintain Human Contact

Recordings are no substitute for a live conversation. When using an auto attendant system, always give callers the option of speaking with a staff person. A voice bulletin board also should provide the number of a contact person who can give more information. In the same vein, telephone conversations are no substitute for face-to-face contact. The techniques described here should only be used to supplement other involvement activities. In areas where large segments of the populace do not have telephones (like Plain Sect communities), these techniques may be inappropriate.

6. Media Relations

The news media's coverage of project-related events and issues keeps the public informed and, ideally, generates interest in project development.

As guardians of the public interest, the media are particularly attentive to community concerns and potential controversies. When a segment of the public is dissatisfied with a project, the media will be sure to publicize the conflict. It is our responsibility to provide the media with factual information that helps the public to fully understand the issues. A professional, cooperative relationship with the media is “good news” for your project and the Department's overall reputation.

Even before meeting with the public, introduce the project to local newspaper editors and broadcast news directors. Explain the project and its key issues and outline the public outreach program. Use press kits and news releases to package information for the media. Most importantly, respond promptly, accurately, and courteously to any inquiries.

The Power of the Press

The media can be powerful allies in our campaign to increase public awareness of, and involvement in, transportation project development. Print, radio and television news outlets spread information about our programs and policies to a broad audience. We provide the media with in-depth background information on projects to prevent misinformation from spreading and to promote the even-handed coverage of the issues.

These information sources not only report the facts, but also provide interpretation and analysis. News coverage amplifies and molds the public's perception of the Department. The media, especially newspapers, often critique our work and provide a forum in which members of the public can express their own views.

Clearly explain the public's role in project development to the media. Invite them to cover meetings, workshops, and hearings. Put them in touch with members of Citizens Advisory Committees. Provide them with the results of formal public surveys. In general, let the media know that we encourage the public's active participation.

Competing for Coverage

No matter where your study is located, consider meeting with the media during project development. Bring a press kit, including a project history, technical background information (including useful charts and graphics), news releases, newsletters, and brochures. If a Citizens Advisory Committee has already been established, consider bringing a member along to discuss public involvement.

Reporters for large news organizations are usually assigned to cover certain special topics, known as “beats.” Discuss the message you want to send to the public with your CRC. Contact beat reporters who cover transportation and environmental issues for the major daily paper, the all-news radio stations, and the local television stations in the study area. Reporters who cover specific neighborhoods also may be interested in covering public meetings and other forms of community participation.

Smaller dailies or neighborhood weeklies often do not have such a specialized staff. An editor may be your only constant contact person if many reporters are assigned to cover stories about your project.

Who's in the Loop?

It is important to present a united front and a consistent message when dealing with the media. Therefore, a network of public information officers, headed by PennDOT's Press Secretary, is primarily responsible for maintaining PennDOT's media relations. Each Bureau assigns one top level manager to be the Press Office Liaison. In Highway Administration, the Bureau Directors are the contact people; each has a designated alternate (usually the second-in-command). A Community Relations Coordinator (CRC) supervises media relations for each Engineering District Office, reporting directly to his or her District Executive.

All Districts centralize media relations activities under the CRC. However, when a Public Involvement Coordinator (PIC) is designated as the lead spokesperson for a project, that person may not be the CRC. Often the PIC may be an engineer who has been involved with the project since its inception and who has all of the background and technical understanding to be a well-rounded source of information.

Since the PIC can anticipate media involvement, including television interviews, taped radio interviews, and responses to newspaper reporters, the individual,

Tips on Media Contacts

Notify the District Press Office when:

- You have been contacted about a routine information request.
- You are unable to supply requested information.
- You receive complaints about service from a media representative.

Speak with your CRC when:

- Media inquiries indicate that an unanticipated story may be about to break in your District.
- You need guidance on how to respond to requests for official commentary.

Coordinate directly with the Press Secretary when:

- No other spokesperson (Bureau Liaison, District Executive or CRC) is available to provide official commentary.
- Media inquiries indicate that a third party (a legislator, a contractor, another agency) is also providing commentary on the same story.
- A story involves criticism or potential problems with programs, policies or procedures.
- A story may “surprise” the Department with good or bad news.

if not a CRC, should be an experienced public communicator who is reasonably comfortable with the media. This is especially important on larger projects that have significant public impact.

There are many people with different expertise involved in a project and, when appropriate, those individuals should respond to the media. But this only happens when a response is coordinated by the CRC/PIC. No member of the project team should respond to even a “routine” information request from the media without first getting approval to do so. Too often, the media contact is not routine, but a “fishing expedition.”

We have little control over editorial stances, public viewpoints, or a reporter's perspective on a news item. We only have control over our own responses to interpretive questions, so we must frame them carefully. A potentially controversial line of questioning should be handled by the CRC, Public Involvement Coordinator, or Project Manager. If they are unavailable, do not hesitate to say that you cannot answer the reporter's question. But remember, “No comment” is not an acceptable answer. Instead assure the reporter that a Department representative will get back to them. Then see that the response follows promptly.

How to Prepare Press Releases

Press releases are written announcements of upcoming events or recent developments in a project. Whenever possible, try to release information a week before an upcoming media event, to accommodate weekly newspapers' deadlines and to give reporters the opportunity to research a story in advance. Releases should be distributed to all the major print and broadcast media. You may want to email or fax news releases, and then follow the email or fax with a mailed copy of the release to ensure receipt of your message.

Tips on

What to do when Reporter Calls

- Respond promptly when a reporter leaves a message. He or she may have a deadline to meet.
- Discuss the inquiry and a response with the District CRC.
- When scheduling an interview, allow yourself enough time to prepare for it.
- Discover the reporter's “angle” or the focus of the news story. Is the reporter on a routine fact-finding mission or investigating controversy?
- Deal with facts, not opinions.
- Avoid technical jargon and “bureaucratese.”
- Remember that everything you say is “on the record.”
- Never argue; remain polite and professional.

Some newspapers may print releases verbatim, so a journalistic style is needed. You may never write a press release yourself, but as a transportation professional, you can benefit from knowing how your releases become news stories. Reporters always put the most important information in the first few paragraphs because editors tend to cut stories from the bottom. This is known as the “inverted pyramid” style. Pay particular attention to your lead (first) paragraph; it should grab the reader's attention. Remember to include “conversation”; that is, quotes from Department reps.

And remember, all press releases must be approved by the District Press Office.

Elements of PennDOT press release style include:

- Double spacing
- Short sentences and paragraphs
- Active voice
- Common language rather than technical jargon
- * * * centered at the end of the release.

Never split a paragraph between pages. Center the word “More” at the bottom of the page when you are continuing.

See sample news releases in [section 2](#) of the Appendices.

Holding a News Conference

A news conference should only be called when you have real news to report. Some possible reasons for holding a news conference include: announcing a significant new project; announcing substantive changes to a project schedule; or addressing an immediate crisis, such as a construction accident or hazardous waste issue.

News conferences should be timed carefully. Mondays are often days when the media are looking for stories.

Tips on

What to Include in a Press Kit

- News release.
- Text of spokesperson's prepared statement.
- Who's who on the project team.
- Reproducible maps and graphics that present simple interpretations of technical data.
- Public relations materials such as brochures and project newsletters.
- Project history and overview.

Avoid weekends and holidays when there are fewer viewers, listeners, and readers who will be exposed to your news. Also try to avoid “heavy news days” when you will be competing with other known planned events and major breaking news. Avoid favoring one media deadline over another. Think carefully about whether it is a good idea to schedule your news conference to coincide with live TV news. While it is exciting to know your event is being treated as immediate news, you may be disappointed by the superficial treatment given to your issues by reporters who have not had the time to grasp all the information you have provided and to carefully craft a story.

The location of your news conference is also important. Choose a site that is convenient for the media and that also makes sense for the story. Consider the appropriateness of the visual backdrop you are creating.

At a news conference, one or more speakers typically present a short statement and a question-and-answer session follows. Try to anticipate the questions that will be asked and practice your responses beforehand. Consider whether large graphic displays, slides or a short video would be useful visual aids. Prepare press kits that contain a transcript of the speaker's statement, along with general background information to all participants. This helps to ensure that the statement will be quoted accurately.

Other things to consider:

- Would it be appropriate to have a photographer from [Commonwealth Media Services](#) on hand to take promotional shots for later use?
- Is the location you have selected equipped to handle lighting and recording equipment?
- Have you chosen project team representatives and other participants carefully? Are they well-briefed, knowledgeable, and comfortable with speaking to the press?
- Have you invited all appropriate local officials, and state or federal agency representatives to attend?

Consult with the District CRC on whether a news conference is needed and for obtaining logistical and organizational support. You will need to send a media advisory to newspapers, radio/television stations at least a few days in advance of the news conference. Follow-up calls the morning of the day of the event also are helpful. For tips on using non-professional engineers when dealing with the media see the [list](#) at the end of **Part 4** of this Handbook.

Tips on Media Do's and Don'ts

Do

- Be as helpful as you can, especially during the first contact with a reporter. First impressions of our employees and representatives are very important and can result in a positive and lasting media relationship.
- Say you'll call back if you do not have the answer. Reporters appreciate factual information and will understand if we must first gather information. Call back as soon as possible with your answers.
- Be wary of the "waiting tactic." Some reporters may purposely pause after your response and leave a long, uncomfortable silence. This is done to get you to say more when there is nothing more to say. Just stay silent and wait for the next question.

Don't

- Answer a question with "No comment." The public will condemn you immediately because it sounds as if there's a cover up. Better to say "The matter is under review and we will make an announcement as soon as we have collected all the facts."
- Say it if you don't want it printed or broadcast. What you say to reporters becomes the public record. There is no such thing as "off the record."
- Speculate or give your personal opinion. You speak and work for PennDOT. If a reporter ask "Do you think the road surface may have caused the fatal accident?" respond with "I do not wish to speculate."
- Blame the problem on someone else. Pointing the finger lowers the level of professionalism. Be responsible and say PennDOT will work to resolve the problem with the other party.

7. Newsletters

Like newspapers, newsletters report on events and issues of interest in a timely manner.

These publications can be as brief as one page and should not exceed six pages. Newsletters are generally mailed to interested people or groups and also may be distributed as handouts at meetings and hearings.

When deciding whether to include newsletters in your public outreach program, consider:

- **The scope and anticipated length of the project**
Newsletters are most effective when published as a continuing series over an extended period of time. They fill in the gaps between public meetings and workshops. A series of several newsletters is typically prepared during the preliminary design of all major projects but this tool may be used at your discretion during preliminary design of small-scale projects. It may also be used to inform citizens of final design, construction, or routine maintenance activities.
- **The community characteristics of the study area**
Community characteristics need to be considered when deciding to publish a project newsletter, such as estimated literacy rates, whether languages other than English are spoken, ethnic needs and/or differences, where the community gathers, what groups in the community might be separated from the community as a whole (such as Plain Sect populations), etc. Depending on the community characteristics, additional project resources, such as translators, may be required. Also, if the project is in a community with a low estimated literacy rate, newsletters will not be very effective.
- **Your equipment, financial and human resources**
CRCs are skilled in the aspects of newsletter production, but not all CRCs have the time to personally prepare newsletters for every project. Some Districts assign these tasks to liaison engineers and other managerial staff instead. Not every District has the computer equipment or graphics programs necessary to produce an attractive newsletter. If the resources you need to produce a newsletter are unavailable in-house, consider using [Commonwealth Media Services](#) or hiring a consultant with expertise in graphic design and writing for the public. Final newsletter copy should be reviewed by the CRC.

Identify Your Readership

Community groups, interested individuals, local officials, legislators, and the media form your newsletter readership. The project mailing list, which may be compiled from public meeting attendance sheets, hotline caller logs, and correspondence, is the primary source of new “subscribers.”

Design informative, readable, attractive newsletters that will engage the interest of each distinctive audience. Keeping in mind the demographics of the project area, tailor your approach to your target community. The concerns of rural farmers, for example, differ from those of urban professionals. Likewise, each community may respond differently to certain techniques for presenting information. Your readership may include a large population of non-English speakers. You can provide information to these audiences more effectively if newsletters are written in their own language.

Publish Frequently

The people on your mailing list will look forward to receiving (via standard mail or email) the newsletter on a regular basis. The public outreach program should include a stated printing schedule for the project newsletter. As the project progresses, re-evaluate and revise this schedule. Publish when you have something important to communicate. Fairly sizable newsletters should be prepared at major milestones in preliminary design; for example, following the project needs analysis or alternatives analysis. If a project is progressing slowly, yielding little interesting news, send out brief fact sheets or status updates just to keep in touch. Simple but effective black-and-white newsletters can be produced frequently, even on a limited budget. If you have the resources, however, use eye-catching color whenever possible; a color newsletter is not much more expensive and is more likely to grab attention and get people to read the publication.

Tips on

The 5 Ws (and 1 H) of Journalism

- **WHAT** are the area’s transportation problems? What improvements are proposed to solve these problems?
- **WHO** runs the project? Who makes the decisions? Who can answer the reader’s questions? Who will appear at the public meeting?
- **WHEN** will alternatives be presented? When will decisions be made? When is the next public meeting? When will construction begin?
- **WHERE** does congestion cause delay? Where will the alternatives affect sensitive resources?
- **WHY** did PennDOT undertake this project? Why does the process take so long? Why conduct the environmental and other studies?
- **HOW** does PennDOT develop alternatives and choose a course of action? How can the public get involved? How can the public get more information about the project?

Set an Agenda for Each Issue

The purpose of a newsletter depends on the type of project for which it is used and the stage of project development in which it is published. Newsletters can be used to:

- Keep the public abreast of recent District activities.
- Gather information that could guide project studies.
- Solicit comments and opinions from the public.
- Document the public's contribution to project development.
- Respond to the public's questions and concerns.
- Announce future public involvement activities.
- Provide a timeline for upcoming studies.
- Summarize information to be presented at a meeting or hearing.

By prioritizing these goals, you can easily decide which topic(s) should receive front page coverage.

Establish Production Deadlines

A single-sheet, black-and-white newsletter can be turned around in a matter of a couple weeks. However, a newsletter of four to six pages, professionally printed in two or more colors, could require several weeks. The first edition, since you are grappling with design issues, could take even longer to develop. Because an error-free publication reflects PennDOT's overall commitment to quality, provide ample time for a thorough review.

Getting the Right Person for the Job

The newsletter should be the responsibility of an experienced writer or public relations expert. Depending on the background of that person, and the sophistication of the audience, consider the assistance

Checklist

for Newsletter Writing

- Tell a timely, interesting story.
- Use simple, direct language and avoid technical jargon.
- Use brief paragraphs and frequent headings.
- Design an attractive layout.
- Use bold, uncluttered graphics.

of a graphic designer. Few people have both talents. It is less time consuming and therefore, more cost effective to have a professional do it right the first time than to have to go through several rounds of review to improve an inferior product.

In your review of the draft newsletter; address how well it incorporates the fundamentals of newsletter writing and design which are:

- **Informative Contents**

The goals you set for each issue (will determine the topics covered). Focus on recent developments in a project(s). Essentially, your newsletter should answer the five W's and H of journalism (see above). If newsletters are published more than two to three months apart, consider providing a brief review of the information presented in the last issue to refresh the reader's memories.

- **Objective Reporting**

Although each newsletter should have a specific agenda, we will lose the reader's trust if a newsletter is perceived as biased. Report the bad news – delays, controversies, setbacks – along with the good news.

- **Accessible Writing Style**

An effective newsletter tells a story. It should not read like a formal status report. As in a newspaper article, the lead paragraph should present the news item that will grab and keep the reader's interest. Because the latest developments are usually the most engaging to the reader, a strictly chronological order is not necessarily the most effective mode of presentation.

To reach a broad audience with diverse educational backgrounds, newspaper journalists write on a level that the average sixth grader can understand. Follow their example: use simple, direct language, avoid technical jargon, and do away with wordiness. An active voice engages reader interest.

Brief paragraphs promote easier reading (as a general rule, a paragraph should be no longer than it is wide). Bullet points allow the reader to skim quickly through long lists of summaries of complex information.

- **Attractive Layout**

Standard newsletter format is two columns on letter-sized paper, but a number of variations are possible. In general, maintain a consistent format within each newsletter series.

Pages of unbroken print overwhelm the reader. You can use typography to alleviate monotony and facilitate reading. Use headlines with large, bold fonts to introduce "articles." Compose short, simple sentences with active verbs for the main headlines. One or two-word subheadings in smaller fonts effectively introduce new topics within an article. Frames and shading may be used to set off nuggets of information.

Text should occupy no more than half of each page. Good layout incorporates adequate white space, pertinent photos with informative captions, charts, tables, and other graphics.

Design

Design a striking title/logo that will be carried throughout the newsletter series. Your readership will identify the project with this image. Like a newspaper or magazine, a newsletter should be dated and consecutively numbered. A large, bold, active headline should top the “lead.” Include a photo or graphic for further visual appeal. Consider other important aspects of design:

- **“Mailer” Layout**
Most newsletters are folded into mailers, which means that readers will actually see the back page first. Consider using this space to list what's inside, highlight upcoming events or provide contact information.
- **Inside Layout**
Did you ever notice that your eye is drawn to the right-hand (odd number) page when you open a magazine? Because of that tendency, these pages are considered prime space by advertisers. You can use them to “advertise” public meetings or hearings. Photos, graphic, and other visually appealing features also appear to their best advantage here.
- **Centerfold**
The double-page spread allows ample room for maps showing alternatives or environmental features, flow diagrams, charts and so on.
- **Straightforward Graphics**
Create graphics for a few important concepts that are easily translated into images. Each graphic should have a narrow focus; label just one or two sensitive resources on a map, rather than showing every feature in the study area. Use readable type, no smaller than nine point. Avoid flow diagrams; their complex branchings intimidate the average reader. An effective graphic gets its point across to the reader in about five seconds. If it requires a narrative explanation, it is too complicated.

Tips on

Proofreading, Printing & Punctuation

- Check grammar, punctuation, spelling and overall style.
- Remember to proofread headlines, captions, charts, tables and maps.
- Review the newsletter to ensure that it addresses all pertinent issues and clearly explains any technical issues.
- You will receive a better product if you also allow sufficient time for printing rather than asking for a “rush” job. Check with your vendor or inside printing office.
- Continually update the mailing list, including e-mail addresses for people interested in receiving updates electronically.
- The tedious tasks of folding, labeling, stamping and mailing takes about a day for a batch of 250 to 300 newsletters. Remember that newsletters can also be distributed electronically via e-mail and even made available on a project website.
- If you plan to use the newsletter to notify stakeholders of a meeting, it should reach its destination 10 days to two weeks before the meeting.

Talking Back

Do not “talk at” readers. Rather, invite them to join in a meaningful dialogue. You can gather valuable information and gauge public opinion by:

- Including mail-back questionnaire forms.
- Asking readers to express interest in joining advisory committees, focus groups, etc.
- Soliciting “Letters to the Editor.”

Some words of caution when using “Letters to the Editor.” Be sure to print a representative sample of all viewpoints. Any imbalance could be perceived as an expression of bias, damaging PennDOT's credibility.

If you have received input from the public on various issues, acknowledge their contributions in the newsletter. Print the results of surveys and questionnaires, perhaps in chart or graph form. List concerns raised at public meetings, and respond to them. A Question & Answer (Q&A) format allows you to carry on such a conversation in print. Based on input received through public meetings and correspondence, prepare a list of typical questions that define critical issues. Provide clear, succinct responses to these questions.

Tips on

Rules for Accepting Letters to the Editor

- Establish submission guidelines at the outset. Remind readers of these rules in each issue.
- Request a name and an address for each submission.
- Do not accept anonymous letters.
- Set a length limit. Letters exceeding this limit may then be shortened by the editor.
- Only a few letters may be published in each issue because of space constraints.

8. Project Offices or Drop-in Centers

Project offices are temporary offices established in the community where a project or issue has the potential for significant impact, such as a complex or very large project with multiple alternatives.

A project office or drop-in center offers the public an ongoing, open forum for both individual discussion and group meetings. It provides a setting for frequent walk-in community involvement, a departure from the traditional emphasis on “public events.” A project office for public involvement purposes differs from and should not be confused with a construction field office, which is used to administer the construction contract.

Being a Good Neighbor

Project offices allow us to take a project more directly into the life of the community. Interested citizens can stop by to get information about plans and programs at their convenience. People can study the proposals at their leisure and get explanations in a more relaxed, comfortable setting.

Project offices allow us to reach groups that may be under-represented at public meetings. This is especially important when the affected community is large or populated by cultural groups, such as the Amish, which do not typically participate in such public events. These “outposts” allow for informal interaction with local residents, commuters and other users of transportation facilities.

Such offices are a tangible expression of our good intentions toward the community. They communicate the value we place upon community concerns. They provide an opportunity for us to get to know and better understand one another.

Two-way Communication

Project offices can be used to disseminate information and to gather and document public opinion. We can use a project office to distribute brochures, maps and project updates; provide access to internet resources; and to accommodate displays, such as large maps and plans. Project offices can also serve as reference centers, housing copies of environmental documents, back issues of project newsletters, project videos and relocation information.

It is easy to recognize their value as outlets of information, but we sometimes overlook the opportunity they present for gathering information from the community. During a project's design, project offices also offer the opportunity to solicit and document public comments. Visitors can be asked to complete comment forms, and project office staff can maintain a written record of public contact, including phone calls. This documentation will enable us to track issues, and respond accordingly.

Setting Up the Project Office

Typically, a project office is located in a highly visible part of the community – such as a downtown storefront or suburban shopping center – to be convenient to the largest number of people. In locating a project field office, consider locations that are accessible, visible and that provide ample parking or are convenient to transit stops. Consider sharing space with another government agency or a neighborhood organization that provides similar services to lessen the cost of operating the center. Look for locations that will attract walk-in visitors.

A project office can operate for a substantial duration of the design or construction phases. Or it can remain open only for a short period of time – perhaps preceding some major procedural event like a public hearing. In general, keep a center open during the period in project development when you expect neighborhood interest and anxiety to peak.

The type of space you select should be based not only on availability, but also on the functions the office will serve. Will the field office serve only as a communications outlet or will you want to move part of the actual planning team into the community? Do you intend to use the field office as a meeting center? If you are combining construction management with information distribution, make sure the public will feel welcome in a construction field office.

Getting the Word Out

Consider holding one or more publicized open houses at the project office. Plan them to be relaxed, informal events. Advertise in papers, through announcements, posters, press releases, the project newsletter and by using other techniques as described in this handbook.

Adjust the hours of operation to the needs of the community, but be sure to advertise and maintain posted hours.

Tips on Having a Project Office

- A project office can serve as the community base or headquarters for implementing a public involvement program.
- Project offices can be stationary (an office or commercial location) or mobile (a trailer).
- As the focal point for participation in the study, it can be a local meeting place for workshops, task force meetings, open houses or other events.
- Department and consultant staff can use it as a base from which to conduct fieldwork.
- The project team can staff a toll-free project information line located in the office.

People Who Know People

Staff the project field office with people who are capable of answering questions and soliciting opinions from the local community. It is important to present qualified staff members who can explain plans and programs, and make a good impression on the community.

One of the primary benefits of using a project office is its physical presence in the community. We become a neighbor. By being in the community, we maintain frequent, informal contact with local residents who will provide us with a better understanding of community needs, perceptions, concerns and desires. It is vitally important that this information then be effectively and efficiently transmitted to other members of the project team.

9. Public Meetings

The public meeting is the foundation of the Department's efforts to involve communities in projects that affect them.

Only personal interaction allows us to build a relationship of real trust and cooperation with the public. Such a relationship is essential to the realization of our primary goal: to provide transportation improvements that respond to the needs of our customers.

Public Meetings should be held, when appropriate, at various stages during project development as a means to inform the public, to obtain information on the public's interests, concerns, priorities and perceptions, and to clarify issues and concerns in order to reduce misunderstandings and conflict. Public meetings should be held within the local community at convenient times, at reasonably accessible sites that are in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. PennDOT will assist persons with disabilities to enable such persons to participate in any public meetings.

In advance of holding a public meeting or public hearing, permission to do so must be obtained by the Program Management Committee (PMC). This process differs by project and best practice is to coordinate this effort with the Project Manager.

PennDOT meets frequently with communities at every stage of preliminary and final design, and even during construction. Proposals for improvements are first brought before the public during project [planning and programming](#). Well before detailed studies begin, we meet with citizens to gain insight into local transportation needs. These early meetings lay the foundation for the difficult process of building consensus on appropriate improvement alternatives. Throughout preliminary design, dialogue with the public focuses on:

- Identifying intangible values and tangible resources important to the community.
- Modifying alternatives to minimize impacts to these resources.
- Facilitating compromise, resolving conflict, and building consensus on environmentally sensitive improvements that satisfy identified needs.

Meetings may continue through final design as the Department refines mitigation and enhancement measures that affect the community.

All public meetings conducted by PennDOT must be in compliance with the [American with Disabilities Act of 1990](#). [Table 2](#) presents a sample Action Plan for use in planning public meetings.

General or Traditional Public Meetings

Most PennDOT meetings are widely publicized and open to all residents of a project area. General public meetings allow PennDOT to interact with a cross-section of the population, and they bring together interest groups who might otherwise be isolated from each other.

Formal meetings use structured programs to inform or solicit comments from the public. Typically, such meetings incorporate a slide or video presentation with a question and answer session.

Open houses are unstructured meetings which rely on one-on-one discussion of project issues. Citizens can look at a wide range of visual displays and proceed at their own pace.

Dual formats combine formal and informal elements into the same meeting. Typically, an open house or plans display will precede a formal presentation.

These meeting types have two broad objectives:

- To present general information regarding recent project developments, and
- To learn the community's views on all aspects of the project.

Ideally, all sectors of the public are represented at these larger public meetings. But in reality, individual community leaders and well-organized special interest groups can drown out the voices of average citizens, and hostile opposition parties tend to steer large meetings away from discussion into confrontation. Project Teams must be prepared to cope with these difficult situations. Since large meetings are more conducive to problem identification than problem solving, PennDOT often seeks other ways to develop compromises and build consensus.

For tips on non-professional engineers interacting with the public see the [list](#) at the end of **Part 4** of this Handbook.

Formal Meetings

In a formal meeting, a Project Team representative delivers a presentation to the assembled citizens. Sometimes a panel of specialists addresses topics in their fields of expertise during the presentation. A question and answer session follows in which citizens take turns at the microphone before the entire audience. The meeting leader recognizes those who wish to speak, passes questions to the appropriate panel members, and generally maintains order during this period. The mood of these meetings can be either formal or informal.

Table 2 – Public Meeting Preparations Action Plan – Sample

(PROJECT) PUBLIC MEETING PREPARATIONS ACTION PLAN (MEETING DATE)				
Time Prior to Public Meeting	Activity to be Completed	Responsible Person / Group	Anticipated Completion Date	Date Completed
8 Weeks	Purpose of Meeting Defined			
	Meeting Location(s) Identified			
6 Weeks	Meeting Location(s) reviewed and selected			
	Draft Meeting Plan			
	Draft Block Ad			
	Prepare Sign-in Sheets			
	Develop Name Tag List			
4 Weeks	Final Block Ad			
	Draft News Release			
	Draft Brochure			
	Draft Floor Plan/Meeting Layout			
	Draft Boards and Displays			
	Draft Invitation Letter (mailing list, public officials, and agencies)			
	Draft Comment Form or Questionnaire			
	Meeting Presentation Outline			
	Final Meeting Plan			
2 Weeks	Final News Release			
	Final Brochure			
	Final Floor Plan/Meeting Layout			
	Final Boards and Displays			
	Final Invitation Letter			
	Prepare Name Tags			
	Final Comment Form or Questionnaire			
	Meeting Staffing Assignments			
	Dry Run Meeting Presentations			
Meeting Day	Arrange Meeting Rooms			
	Staff Briefing			

A formal atmosphere sometimes hinders productive give-and-take between PennDOT and the public. However, giving a formal presentation is the easiest way to ensure that all participants have access to the same basic knowledge about the project. This approach has proven especially useful in the earliest stages of project development, when introducing the Project Team and explaining the range of improvements to be considered and the types of studies required.

Air It Out

There are some advantages to airing issues in open question and answer sessions. Some communities value the opportunity to hear the opinions and concerns of their neighbors. Public exchange of this kind often helps people to articulate their own ideas, and may lead them to raise issues that they would not think to discuss on their own.

Over the years, formal public meetings have been supplemented by more innovative techniques for engaging the public in dialogue about issues of community concern. In general, PennDOT has found that informal meetings are more effective than such highly structured formats. However, formal meetings can be very effective for providing participants with a consistent message, background, or status. Citizens may also benefit from hearing their own or their neighbor's concerns addressed in the Question and Answer Session.

Avoid Information Overload

Consider inviting participants to view an informational "plans display" before the formal presentation. A plans display consists of graphics and text boards that illustrate and explain key concepts. The display should be on view at least two hours before the presentation. Project personnel should be available to answer any questions about the display. Consider calling a break before the Q&A session, so the audience can clarify any fuzzy points in the presentation by reviewing the display boards.

People can assimilate only a limited amount of information from a formal "lecture" presentation. Make the information as accessible as possible by using common language (no technical jargon). Large-scale reproductions of maps or charts from the plans display could be used to illustrate important concepts. A PowerPoint presentation, slide show, or brief video could also add variety to the presentation.

The audience's attention begins to lessen after 20 or 30 minutes, even when the presentation is accompanied by visual aids. Therefore, a tight focus is essential. Covering too many complex topics at one meeting leads to information overload. Consider preparing a handout (maybe the most recent newsletter will do) that summarizes and graphically illustrates the material. This will reinforce the main points of the presentation and give the participants a place to record their observations as well.

Q&A - Constructive or Chaotic?

The size of the group and the collective attitude of the participants determine whether a Q&A session is fruitful. Depending on turnout and the number of individuals wanting to speak, time constraints may limit the number of participants whose comments can be addressed.

The Q&A session is meant to be a free discussion of general issues. If one topic becomes the subject of debate, or one stakeholder group dominates the discussion, other important issues may not receive the attention they deserve.

Unfortunately, the most vocal participants are often those who oppose some aspect of the project. If participants become hostile or confrontational, they may intimidate less assertive speakers, or those who feel their comments would be considered "insignificant." Those who do not have the opportunity to speak may leave the meeting dissatisfied.

Select Speakers with Care

Sometimes the most knowledgeable Project Team members may not be the most accomplished public speakers. Try to select savvy speakers and personnel with good interpersonal skills when staffing a meeting. A relaxed presentation that seems spontaneous (yet does not ramble) requires either natural talent or extensive practice. If several people are presenting, make sure that everyone stays within predetermined time limits.

Open Houses

Department personnel greet each participant at the entrance, briefly explain the format and purpose of the meeting, distribute handout materials, direct participants to exhibits, and point out other staff members who are available to speak with them in detail.

The plans display, which is merely a prelude to a formal meeting, is actually the central focus of citizen participation and discussion in the Open House format. A series of display boards presents pertinent project information in a logical sequence. Project Team members are assigned to exhibits that pertain to their areas of expertise. Other personnel may be available to mingle with those who are not perusing the exhibits.

Participants can proceed through the display at their own pace. Throughout the meeting, participants are encouraged to discuss their reactions, concerns, and questions with any of the staff members.

Once the community becomes familiar with a project and is aware of PennDOT's commitment to involving the public in its development, citizens may be more comfortable with an informal approach. As a project progresses into detailed engineering and environmental studies, more and more specialized information must be discussed at each public meeting. By using displays and speaking one-to-one with participants, the Project Team can effectively cover a wide variety of topics that could seem overwhelming when presented in a formal "lecture."

"Touring" through Project Information

Participants should be able to proceed through the displays at their own pace. Exhibits should follow a logical sequence – thematically moving from general to specific information, and perhaps chronologically moving through project development. Consider distributing maps depicting the layout of the meeting room, and maybe even identifying the staff assigned to each exhibit.

While the whole display should tell a cohesive "story" about the project, each individual exhibit should be self-explanatory. An exhibit should have a descriptive heading in large bold type. Knowledgeable personnel who can answer detailed questions about specialized subjects should be assigned to each exhibit. However, the information presented on the display boards should be simple enough that participants can comprehend it without the staff's assistance. Graphics that appear to be too "technical" may seem inaccessible to many participants.

Some topics warrant a more highly detailed presentation versus others. Consider creating a brief (10-15 minute) video to cover a topic of special interest. This could be played at regular intervals throughout the meeting so that participants can watch it at their convenience throughout the meeting.

Consider preparing handouts highlighting key topics. Participants may not have time to read the material at the meeting, but may appreciate reading it later.

Record Public Input

Staff members can take notes during discussions with participants, jotting down the names of those who offer opinions. Consider distributing questionnaires or comment forms that participants can complete at the meeting or mail in afterwards. A summary of verbal and written comments should be included in the meeting report.

Tips on Creating Effective Meeting Displays

- Each bar on a graph should depict only one type of value; for example, show either Average Daily Traffic (ADT) or Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), not both.
- Many people find tables difficult to interpret, probably because they rely heavily on text.
- Pie charts are the easiest graphics to understand.
- Renderings may be preferable to engineering cross-sections when depicting the features of improvement alternatives.
- Photos should be large, preferably in color, and explained by simple captions.
- Include a legend, scale and North arrow on all maps and aerial photographs.
- Use common language rather than technical jargon. Limit text to the bare minimum necessary.

Generate Awareness of Key Issues

PennDOT gains much valuable information from the individual and small group discussions that take place at Open House meetings. However, some of the give-and-take among community members themselves is lost when topics are not put on the table for general discussion by the whole assembly. Participants in one group may feel that they are missing important discussions taking place in other parts of the room. One way to maintain awareness of key issues is to record public input on flipcharts placed around the room. Participants then have the opportunity to “see” the topics that their neighbors raised as they spoke with Project Team staff. The words and phrases on the flipcharts may prompt participants to initiate further discussion of related topics.

Evaluate Your Performance, Public Reaction

It is difficult for individual staff members to have a full understanding of all that takes place at an Open House. Each person only experiences a small part of the meeting. Depending on the roles they played at the meeting, Project Team members could have very different perceptions of how people interacted and what the prevailing public opinion was. The post-meeting “debriefing” session is especially important in evaluating an Open House.

Tips on Getting People Actively Involved

- Attendance and participation are not synonymous. Encourage people to do more than just view the displays; give them opportunities to actively contribute.
- The most basic level of participation is conversation. Ask people for their views on the project and record their comments.
- Participants view a project in terms of its effect on their own homes and surrounding environs. Create activities that capitalize on this natural tendency. For example:
 - i. Ask citizens to identify where they live on a map of the project area and mark their property with pins.
 - j. Allow people to label sensitive environmental features, community resources or other areas of concern on a map of the project area. Residents of the area are well aware of nooks crannies that even the most thorough project team may have overlooked.
 - k. If some express a concern about a resource or particular feature of an alternative, explore “why” they have that concern.

Public Officials Meetings

Public Officials Meetings are an integral part of any project that has the potential to affect a community. These briefings encourage a free exchange of information among local elected officials, planning authorities, and the Department. Typically, briefings precede large Public Meetings or Hearings that local officials would be expected to attend.

Citizens assume that local officials are very knowledgeable about improvements proposed in their jurisdictions and they expect these officials to represent the community's concerns to PennDOT.

In carrying out their responsibilities, these officials are on the "hot seat," often without information and the tools to make the necessary judgments expected of them. It is in PennDOT's best interest to provide local officials with all the data they need to discuss projects intelligently with their constituents. In turn, public officials provide PennDOT with information on transportation needs, the socioeconomic environment, sensitive community resources, local interest groups, and public opinions.

Develop Contacts in the Community

Identify key public officials and get them involved early in the process. Develop a working relationship with county and municipal officials, and regional, county, and local planning commissions; these contacts form the core group that is invited to public officials meetings. State Senators and Representatives may also be invited depending on the scope of the project or the agenda of the meeting. Consider asking task force members and community group leaders to join certain sessions as needed. When notifying officials of a briefing, keep in mind the primary goal of the meeting and invite individuals who will most effectively accomplish this goal. Limit groups to no more than 20 people.

Make Convenience a Top Priority

Because public officials tend to have very full schedules, coordinate with them before setting the time, date, and location for the meeting. Follow up on these discussions by sending notices two or more weeks in advance to confirm these arrangements. Briefings are often held on the day before or the day of a Public Meeting. For example, officials might be invited to come to the meeting facility in the late afternoon to preview the information to be presented that evening. The Project Team should meet with local officials as needed.

As their name implies, briefings should be brief. In order to make the best use of public officials' time, give a short presentation, followed by a question and answer period. Highlight potential sources of conflict and relate how the officials may assist PennDOT in its efforts.

Gain Support, Discourage Political Grandstanding

Municipalities often pass resolutions supporting (or opposing) proposed transportation improvements and planning commissions may cite them in their comprehensive plans. The

support of these authorities can significantly strengthen a statement of project needs or guide the selection of a preferred alternative.

However, municipalities within a project area may have conflicting interests. Lay the foundations for compromise, before holding meetings with individuals or groups who disagree. Choose a neutral location for mediation sessions or discussions with rivaling factions. Make every effort to avoid situations in which politicians are required to make demands or promises.

Set a Specific Agenda

Go into each meeting with an agenda, and maintain your focus. You may meet with public officials to:

- Preview Public Meetings,
- Gather information on community concerns and planning goals,
- Discuss special topics or controversial issues, and
- Obtain local government consensus on specific aspects of a project.

Checklist for Meeting with Public Officials

- Establish a time and date.
- Arrange for a meeting location.
- Develop a mailing list of involved public officials.
- Send out notices.
- Prepare an agenda, displays and handouts.
- Obtain needed audiovisual equipment.

Special Purpose Meetings

Some sensitive, controversial, or localized issues are best handled in smaller groups. At special purpose meetings discussion centers on very specific topics and PennDOT engages in joint problem solving with members of interested or affected publics.

By their very nature, special purpose meetings are exclusionary. To be successful, they require small groups of people who are committed to active participation. Citizens may even be hand-picked by the Department in consultation with community leaders.

However, it is essential to keep the process open: consider permitting the general public to observe at special purpose meetings and use project newsletters to report any information gathered or conclusions reached. Take steps to provide minority and low-income populations with greater opportunities for involvement and access to information.

Special purpose meeting include:

- **Focus Groups**
These are a research tool that gathers public opinion on a single topic such as a policy, project, or program.
- **Neighborhood Meetings**
These are used to reach a group with very specific needs or interests, such as residents affected by a transportation improvement proposal.
- **Workshops**
These are informal working sessions that address a specific task or problem. Typically, workshops are aimed at generating ideas for a project's design features.

At special purpose meetings, PennDOT might discuss efforts to avoid cultural resources with historic preservationist groups, identify access issues in consultation with farmers or business people, or generate ideas for alternative transportation modes with trail associations and bicycle clubs. Even more importantly, small group meetings allow PennDOT to interact on a more personal level with residents in the neighborhoods who would be most affected by transportation improvements. Make every effort to adapt presentations and displays to the group's level of knowledge.

Focus Groups

As a survey method, the focus group regards transportation as a product and offers transportation planners a way to assess policy directions and program objectives.

A focus group is a research tool that gathers public opinion. The market research industry has applied focus group research to glean opinions on everything from soap to political candidates.

With today's emphasis on customer satisfaction, focus groups are increasingly being used by government. There are a number of uses for focus groups in transportation planning and the delivery of transportation services.

Can We Talk?

In a focus group, a small number of selected individuals are brought together to discuss a limited number of questions on a single topic. The focus group discussion is lead by a professional leader, who explores the participants' opinions in depth. The setting is informal, the mood spontaneous, the questions open-ended and the format free of criticism. The facilitator makes sure that everyone's opinions are aired and that no one dominates the group.

The people who participate in a focus group may be randomly-selected, selected to represent a particular homogeneous group, or selected to provide expert opinion. The people who facilitate focus groups may be trained Department staff or outside professionals.

Focus groups have been used to gauge opinion on a variety of programs, policies, and services. Focus groups might be used to determine customer satisfaction with motor vehicle departments, to understand why transit services are under-utilized, to explore public sentiment on work trip reduction programs, or to understand how the public feels about transportation spending.

Listening and Learning

The content of a focus group discussion is analyzed to identify major points of agreement and divergence of opinion within the group and in comparison with other focus groups. For example, attitudes of city dwellers can be compared with suburbanites, and transit users opinions can be compared with those of customers who never use transit. The substance of these discussions can help identify user needs, define preferences, gauge reaction to policies, give

Tips on Conducting a Focus Group

- Limit participants to 12 or fewer individuals.
- Select a neutral location for the meeting.
- Decide whether to use an outside moderator or trained facilitator from within PennDOT.
- Develop a list of five or six questions that will solicit a cross-section of opinions, perspectives and sentiments.
- Have recording equipment and displays on hand.
- Limit the group discussions to no more than three hours.

representation to underrepresented groups, and supplement other citizen input.

The input we gain from focus group research is qualitative. It does not replace quantitative responses. It cannot be scientifically used to project representative attitudes. But we can use focus groups to quickly identify and learn more about issues of concern.

Neighborhood Meetings

“Neighborhood meeting” is a generic term for a meeting with a stakeholder group (usually geographically based). The Department may seek out and initiate informal, one-to-one communication with stakeholder groups, or we may express our willingness to meet with these groups at their convenience.

Neighborhood meetings range in style from informal discussions in private homes to structured meetings at the township hall. This category encompasses meetings with:

- Residents of a neighborhood, retirement village, or public housing facility,
- The local business community (e.g. Main Street Association, Central Business District),
- Agricultural interests,
- Individual property owners who would be affected by right-of-way acquisition,
- Groups of carpoolers, ride-sharers, or transit users traveling within a designated area, and
- Other interest groups like historical societies, environmental conservation groups, bicycle clubs, etc.

These groups and individuals may request informal neighborhood meetings with PennDOT to:

- Gather information on a specific topic, like the relocation assistance program,
- Discuss community concerns about a proposed alternative,
- Present a proposal developed by the citizens themselves, and
- Provide input for the development of enhancement or mitigation measures.

Civic organizations like the Kiwanis Club or Rotary Club sometimes ask Department representatives to give brief presentations at their regular meetings. Such speaking engagements usually focus on general rather than project-specific topics.

When members of the community call a meeting, they – not PennDOT – set the agenda. This is especially true of open Town Council sessions and municipally-sponsored formal public meetings. Our role is usually limited to presenting information and responding to questions, and moderators from the sponsoring organization will most likely facilitate any discussion. In some such situations, it may be inappropriate for PennDOT to conduct surveys, pass out newsletters or handouts, or gather names for the project mailing list.

If we wait for interested citizens to come forward, opportunities to head off conflict may be lost. Identify stakeholder groups in scoping and plan to meet with them throughout project development.

Do not hide the fact that you are meeting separately with a stakeholder group, and make it clear that PennDOT is prepared to meet with any other group. It should not appear as if PennDOT is using neighborhood meetings to enlist the support of some groups in an effort to combat other, opposing groups.

Sometimes it is appropriate to discuss sensitive issues with potentially affected stakeholders privately before releasing information to the press or the general public. For example, potentially affected homeowners should not learn that their property may be acquired by reading about it in the newspaper. Eventually, everyone should have access to the same information.

Never walk into someone else's meeting without a strategy. Always discuss the agenda with the sponsoring group in advance. Remember, you don't have to participate if the meeting is designed to put the Department on the defensive. Other hints:

- Draft a list of potential discussion topics in advance.
- Develop a presentation that fits within the framework established by the meeting sponsors.
- Send Project Team members with good interpersonal skills.

Workshops

Workshops are informal working sessions that deal with a specific task or problem and aim at reaching a definitive goal or objective. The design workshop is a small group session that involves participants in structured activities aimed at generating ideas for the design of improvements, enhancements, and mitigation features. Brainstorming and role playing are just two of the many techniques that may be used

Tips on

Laying the Foundation for Group Decision-making

- Workshop participants cannot provide meaningful input unless you give them the appropriate background information. Before beginning any activities, explain the project development process, review the project history and explain (in layman's terms) the technical requirements that govern our design efforts.
- You may need to jump-start the creative portion of the program by presenting a list of potential issues and alternatives. The group may build on these suggestions or develop ideas of their own.
- Wrap up by evaluating the technical feasibility, costs and potential impacts of the group's alternatives.

to focus small group discussion of issues that concern interest groups or the general public.

Workshops are procedurally informal, but thematically structured. When setting the agenda for a workshop, clearly define the topics open for discussion and develop activities that will bring the group toward a satisfying resolution of the prominent issues. A workshop might be held to:

- Identify the community's transportation, development, and residential lifestyle needs,
- Discuss how PennDOT might minimize potential impacts,
- Assess participants' knowledge of the project and correct misinformation,
- Facilitate understanding of complex studies, and
- Promote compromise among divisive interests and the Department.

Although this handbook separates neighborhood meetings and workshops into separate categories, in reality, a workshop could be used to open discussion between the Department and stakeholder groups in the community. A workshop could also gather a cross-section of community residents and local motorists to delve deeper into issues raised at larger public meetings.

Putting Community Ideas on the Map

When giving directions to someone face to face, do you find yourself reaching for a pad and pencil and drawing a map? If so, you, like many of our customers, are probably more visually than verbally-oriented. Design workshops use visualization to promote the exchange of information and ideas between the public and the Department. Residents can help us “find our way” around their communities by pointing out the areas they value most. And PennDOT can help residents to regard alternatives in the context of the total community, thus broadening their perspectives.

The design workshop does not involve citizens directly in formal decision-making. Rather, participants identify key features in the existing community landscape, discuss their “ideal” vision of transportation improvements, and formulate preliminary design concepts with the help of Department staff.

Participants in these workshops feel that they are making a real contribution to the design effort. By giving citizens the tools with which to conceptualize alternatives, PennDOT signals that we plan to give their ideas serious consideration.

What You Can Gain From Citizen Designs

Design workshops have been used in both preliminary and final design to:

- Identify sensitive natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resources
- Assess the community's values, its expectations regarding improvements, and its perceptions of potential impacts

- Get reaction to alternatives and allow citizens to suggest modifications
- Identify opportunities for enhancements such as bike lanes, pedestrian paths and landscaping
- Enlist participation in the design of such mitigation measures as noise barriers and agricultural access roads.

Maximizing Citizen Participation

Workshops should last no more than two hours. Limit PennDOT's introductory presentation to allow more time for activities and discussion.

Consider selecting a community chairperson to facilitate discussion and record participants' input.

Survey the public to determine the level of interest in design workshops. Distribute questionnaires at general public meetings, or send them to affected neighborhoods, community organizations, and stakeholder groups. If the response is generally favorable, consider conducting a workshop at the earliest opportunity.

Citizens, who express an interest in attending, as well as recognized community leaders and public officials, should be directly invited. Try to limit personal invitations to 15 or 20 people per session, because the community at large should also be asked to participate. A group of 25 to 30 is optimal for such a workshop.

"Color" Their World

Color mapping is the most commonly used technique for involving the community in selecting potential locations for new transportation facilities.

Provide participants with topographical maps (or aerial photos) of the study area and an array of colored pencils and markers. Major landmarks, recognized neighborhoods, bodies of water, and street names should already be clearly labeled, and the boundaries of the study area should be clearly shown on the maps.

Tips on Brainstorming

- Keep the group small.
- Make sure the topic is well-defined.
- Create an informal and free-wheeling atmosphere. Get everyone to contribute.
- Listen carefully.
- Expand on each other's ideas.
- Do not evaluate ideas as they're being generated.
- Do not look for the "right" answer.
- List ideas so that all participants can see them.
- Recognize that people are capable of coming up with solutions to most problems.
- Validate their willingness to participate in the effort of creating solutions.

Ask the participants to label other significant community features and to highlight areas according to usage (coloring parks and recreation areas green, for example).

Once participants have defined the various components of their community, lead them through the development of several improvement alternatives. They could use removable colored tapes to indicate where roadways might run through the study area.

Thinking up a Storm

Use brainstorming to generate new ideas or approaches to resolving an area's transportation needs.

Brainstorming frees people to think creatively by separating the act of developing ideas from the act of deciding on them. Workshop participants share all of their thoughts on a subject – even the most extreme or unrealistic schemes – without fear of criticism.

Place a small group (about 8 to 10 people) “classroom style” facing a large flip chart or blackboard. This seating arrangement focuses participants on the ideas themselves rather than on who says what. The goal of the brainstorming exercise is to generate as many ideas as possible without stopping to analyze or comment on them. Participants should feel free to build on or propose variations of other people's ideas. The group moderator records all the ideas on the flip chart or blackboard, no matter how unreasonable they seem. When the group runs out of steam the brainstorming is over and the moderator initiates an evaluation of the ideas. Unpopular or unreasonable concepts are discarded. The group ranks the feasible ideas that remain, reviews the top ideas in detail, and refines them into “recommendations.”

Non-Traditional Public Meetings

In today's world of two-career families, juggling work, home, child care, school and extracurricular activities makes free time both rare and precious. Spending the evening at a public meeting related to a transportation project is unlikely to be the choice for that free time. This does not mean that citizens aren't interested in the project and that they do not want to provide input. The reality is that we live in a fast paced world, jam-packed with options for spending time. Laptop computers, palm pilots, blackberries, and cell phones that access the Internet are commonplace. Recognizing this and employing alternatives to the traditional public meeting will result in a broader spectrum of public participation and valuable input. Taking the public meeting directly into the citizen's home, office or anywhere in between using technology such as a Virtual Public Meeting or a Webcast Public Meeting addresses both the need for convenience and input.

Technology and the Internet are changing the landscape of traditional public meeting requirements. Shareware, wireless technology, and video/Internet are just a few of the technologies leading the meeting revolution. Public outreach efforts can be expanded to include online public information meetings or web-based virtual meetings that may include PowerPoint presentations, video, or other interactive multimedia. Meeting transcripts, presentations, online quizzes and polls, related project information and display materials can be downloaded and reviewed prior to, and after the public meeting.

This is a substantial tool to bring an audience together from many different locations and present critical and/or project information to citizens who may have special needs due to a disability. With shared access, discussions can be conducted in real-time and are more collaborative and productive.

A myriad of online meeting providers are available to provide secure and reliable online meeting facilitation technology. Listed below are brief overviews of several non-traditional meeting ideas.

Web Conferencing

Web conferencing is designed for many-to-many interaction. It can combine the ease of audio conferencing with the interactivity of video conferencing directly from a desktop computer. In a web conference, each participant sits at their own computer, and is connected to other participants via the internet through an application that a "host" company provides and charges for its use. This can be either a downloaded application on each of the attendees' computers or a web-based application where the attendees will enter a "URL" or website meeting address to enter the live meeting or conference. With a few clicks of a mouse and the right network connections, viewers can watch a presentation the minute it's submitted online.

Webinar

A webinar is a type of web conference, although the direction of the presentation is primarily one way from the presenter to the audience, a webinar can be designed to be interactive between the presenter and audience. A webinar is 'live' in the sense that information is conveyed according to

an agenda, with a starting and ending time. In most cases, the presenter may speak over a standard telephone line, pointing out information being presented on screen, and the audience can respond over their own telephones, preferably a speakerphone.

Webcast

A webcast is a live media file distributed over the Internet using streaming media technology. Essentially, webcasting is broadcasting over the Internet. A webcast uses streaming media technology to take a single content source and distribute it to many simultaneous listeners/viewers.

The broadcast of a public meeting live over the internet is one option that works well if meetings must take place in different locations simultaneously. Citizens may attend the Webcast Public Meeting at the broadcast location or in the comfort of their home or office. Attendees at the meeting location and those attending via computer may view project maps and materials, ask questions of project team members, and complete a comment form.

Podcast

A podcast is a digital media file; a collection of files (usually audio and video) residing at a unique web "feed" address, that is distributed over the Internet using syndication feeds for playback on portable media players and personal computers. A podcast is distinguished from other digital media formats by its ability to be syndicated, subscribed to, and downloaded automatically.

People can "subscribe" to this feed by submitting the feed address to an "aggregator," or feed reader capable of reading feed formats – usually software that runs on the user's computer. When new "episodes" become available in the podcast they will be automatically downloaded to that user's computer. Unlike radio or streaming content on the web, podcasts are not real-time. The material is pre-recorded and users can check out the material at their leisure, offline.

The Virtual Public Meeting

The Virtual Public Meeting consists of the availability of Public Meeting display, handouts, and comment forms on the Internet for citizens to review anytime of the day at their leisure. The Virtual Public Meeting may be available for a period of time following and/or leading into the traditional public meeting.

Public Hearings

The Public Hearing is the official method for receiving public comments on the results of our environmental and engineering studies. [Part 2](#) of this handbook contains more specific information on the [legal requirements of a Public Hearing](#), including information on comment period time frames, public notice content, and PennDOT's official statement content. The following provides general guidance on how to make a Public Hearing a success.

A Public Hearing is not a forum for debate. Rather its purpose is to formally gather public and agency testimony before an alternative is selected for implementation.

The Public Hearing is the culmination of a cooperative project development effort. Before regular meetings, newsletters and other participation techniques became the norm, Public Hearing was virtually synonymous with Public Involvement. The hearing was sometimes the sole opportunity for citizens to express their views about a project and its potential impact on the community.

Today, a comprehensive public outreach program provides a number of opportunities to express public views and provide input into the project development process right from project initiation.

Think of the public outreach program as a well-orchestrated movement building to a crescendo with the hearing as a final note in a rich symphony of public outreach activities. Like previous meetings, hearings should be designed to inform the public on every aspect of the transportation improvement proposal and enable the public to express their views on the project.

Building Consensus

PennDOT is committed to ongoing interaction with area residents. An effective public outreach program gathers meaningful input from the community at every stage of project development, and, ideally, builds consensus on sensitive issues. During project development, citizens and community groups are forming their opinions and developing positions. By being aware of these views, they can be considered in development of the project. Early coordination reduces the chance for any surprises at the hearing.

By the time we release the environmental document for review, our public involvement effort should have produced informed consent. With informed consent, the majority of the public recognizes the need for the project and realizes that PennDOT has made every effort to accommodate varying interests. They realize that the proposal before them is a product of the larger community, and that hundreds or even thousands of key people, local officials, agencies, and organizations have been involved in the project development process.

Public Hearing Objectives

- **Environmental disclosure** – To ensure that the public is aware of the information contained in the environmental document.
- **Decision making** – To allow members of the community to express their views on the project before an alternative is selected.
- **Public accountability** - To provide a mechanism for addressing the public's questions and concerns.

When Hearings are Required

Per *PennDOT NEPA Public Involvement/Public Hearing Procedures*, a Public Hearing will be held for each project requiring an EIS and only when necessary for projects other than those requiring an EIS. See [Part 2](#) of the Handbook for more information.

An example of a Public Hearing Notice and Notice of Opportunity can be found in [Section 3](#) of the Appendices.

It's a Matter of Timing

Additionally, as discussed in detail in [Part 2](#), for projects requiring an Environmental Impact Statement, have the document available for public review in advance of the Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS being published in the Federal Register and at the same time the document is provided to (filed with) the Environmental Protection Agency.

If a Public Hearing is needed for an EA or CEE, the comment period will begin on the day notice of the document's availability appears as a block ad in the local newspaper. If a hearing is not needed, a 30-day public comment period will begin with the distribution of the document and Notice of Availability. CEEs will generally not be circulated for public comment, but be sure to allow the public a right to review the information if requested.

Tips on Moderating a Hearing

- Rehearse prepared comments before the Hearing. Be sure you know how to pronounce the names of officials and others you may introduce.
- Try to make people comfortable. Welcome them and acknowledge the effort and interest inherent in citizen participation. Acknowledge the special effort people might have made to attend in inclement weather.
- Give those who wish to speak the opportunity to provide the pronunciation of their names on registration materials.
- Remind participants that time limits have been established to provide everyone who registered an opportunity to speak.
- You may delegate the job of watching the clock to another, but do not hesitate to cut off a speaker who has exceeded the time limit.
- Allow speakers to make additional comments after all the registered speakers finish.
- Do not allow hecklers to interrupt or harass speakers. Firmly state that disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. Intervene as soon as it begins.

Public Hearing Notices

Notices of public hearings must be published/distributed as discussed in [Part 2](#) of this Handbook

Public Hearing Format

In Pennsylvania, we use a hearing format that combines the best features of the formal and open house public hearing formats. This combined format includes venues for presenting testimony in conjunction with an opportunity to review plans and ask questions of the project's design team and right-of-way staff. With this format, hearing participants can clarify issues in the open house area before they speak in front of an audience, provide individual oral testimony, or provide written testimony in the formal hearing area. Project team members can address concerns in one-on-one discussions and perhaps diffuse tensions before testimony is given.

To facilitate this format, set up an area for viewing plans and display boards, staffed by technical experts. Make copies of environmental documents available for review. Also provide spaces for discussions with right-of-way representatives and, if appropriate, the viewing of any video material.

Reviewing displays and talking with the attending technical experts prepare the public to provide informed testimony. Therefore, the open house should be set up adjacent to, but separate from the formal hearing proceedings. Schedule the open house to begin an hour or more before the hearing. Announce the start of the formal session a few minutes before it is to begin and explain to the public that questions are not permitted nor are they responded to during testimony.

For projects with substantial public interest, consider having one or more stenographers available to take testimony in small room settings. Since many people fear public speaking, either out of shyness or anxiety about how their neighbors will react to their testimony, this format provides opportunities to

Checklist for Contents of Hearing Notices

- Official project name and logo.
- Simple project area map.
- Public Hearing date, time and location.
- Brief description of the project, the alternatives and their impacts.
- Impacts to floodplains, farmlands, wetlands and cultural resources.
- Indication that right-of-way acquisition, relocation assistance and construction will be discussed.
- Availability of the NEPA document for review and comment.
- Locations where public may review the environmental document.
- Deadlines for submitting comments.
- Statement of accessibility to persons with disabilities.
- Name, address and phone number of contact person.
- Contact information for ADA assistance.

present their comments in a quieter setting. Provide a collection point for written testimony and instructions for submitting comments at a later date. Make sure the public understands that such testimony, taken outside of the formal session, is also transcribed to the public record.

The public testimony portion of the hearing should begin with a brief (less than 20 minutes) presentation by PennDOT, typically followed by testimony of public officials who are in attendance, and then by time limited (typically five minutes) testimonials from the public in the order that they signed the register to testify.

Media Coverage

The plans display format provides television crews and print reporters with interview opportunities and a wide range of visual images. The resulting news coverage is likely to consist of “balanced” footage that combines lively testimony with project information.

Answering Questions

During a plans display expect citizens to ask highly detailed questions. Some citizens may ask the same question of several different Department representatives. If responses differ greatly from person to person, citizens may lose their trust in PennDOT. Compose a list of potential questions before the hearing and ensure that the staff prepares similar answers for them. Post a sign in the display area reminding citizens that questions will not be addressed in the hearing room.

Prepare for Success

In planning the Public Hearing, arrange for a location convenient to the majority of residents from the project area. If the project area is very large, consider holding hearings at more than one location. The location should have adequate parking and meeting space. The site should be well known and accessible. It should also be acceptable to the majority of attendees; consider any political ramifications of a meeting location. If the meeting is in the evening, the facility should be safe and well lighted. Education facilities and community centers are ideal.

Include a map, if necessary, in the display ad that advertises the meeting. Locate large and visible signs at the entrances and intersections of drives to direct participants to the appropriate parking lot and building entrance. Do not assume people will know where to go once they get there.

Plan for good attendance. Consider possible scheduling conflicts with other events in the community. Accommodate varying work schedules. Know the customs of the community and plan accordingly.

The meeting room should provide the proper setting. Auditoriums are good for formal presentations, but do not allow for much interaction with the public. Chairs should be comfortable. Check out the acoustics beforehand. Bring all the audiovisual equipment you may

need, including back-up equipment. Do not forget the spare bulbs and batteries. Well before the audience arrives, test your equipment and make appropriate adjustments.

Considering having someone available at the entrance to greet people and to direct them around the meeting room.

Enable the Disabled

Consider the needs of the disabled community when planning the hearing. It is reported that as much as 14 percent of the population of the United States has permanent hearing, vision, or mobility limitations. Furthermore, many other Americans are temporarily disabled during part of their lives.

The hearing (and all other public meetings) must be accessible to individuals with disabilities to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Before choosing a convenient location for the hearing, visit and view the site with disabilities in mind.

Designate a staff member trained in dealing with the special needs that must be met to set up public meetings and hearings.

Provide assistance to people with speech and hearing disabilities who wish to testify. Announcements circulated in advance should solicit requests for special assistance (see Announcements).

Say the Right Thing

PennDOT's Official Statement, an example of which is found in [Section 4](#) of the Appendices, must be presented either orally or in written format at the Public Hearing. Also, in accordance with Pennsylvania Act 120, Section 2002, the Public Hearing moderator (PennDOT District Executive) will state that the NEPA documentation considers the project's effects on:

Checklist for Accessibility

- Are primary entrances accessible?
- Are the facilities (phones, water fountains, restrooms) at wheelchair height?
- Is there parking for persons with physical disabilities?
- Is the meeting site accessible by public transit or paratransit?
- Is there circulation space available for wheelchairs throughout?
- Can the microphone be adjusted to wheelchair height?
- Is an interpreter available for people with hearing disabilities?
- Is there a Text Telephone available for use?
- Are handouts available in alternate formats?
- Is there a contact person identified to address accessibility questions?

- Residential and neighborhood character and location;
- Conservation, including air, erosion, sedimentation, wildlife, threatened & endangered species; and general ecology of the area;
- Noise, air, and water pollution;
- Multiple uses of space;
- Displacement of families and businesses;
- Replacement housing;
- Recreation and parks;
- Aesthetics;
- Public health and safety:
- Hazardous and residual wastes;
- Fast, safe, and efficient transportation;
- Civil defense;
- Economic activity;
- Employment;
- Fire protection;
- Public utilities;
- Religious institutions;
- Conduct and financing of government, including the effect on the local tax base and social service costs;
- Natural and historical landmarks;
- Archaeological resources;
- Property values;
- Education, including the disruption of school district operations;
- Engineering, right-of-way, and construction costs of the project and related facilities;
- Maintenance and operating costs of the project and related facilities; and
- Operation and use of transportation routes and facilities.

An example of remarks by a hearing moderator can be found in [Section 4](#) of the Appendices.

Informed Public, Meaningful Comments

Most members of the community will not take time to read the environmental document. They will rely on you to tell them what it presents. In order for the public to provide meaningful comments at the hearing, they should know about:

- The advantages and disadvantages of alternatives under consideration,
- anticipated impacts, and
- Plans for mitigation and enhancement

To give them the information they need, distribute a newsletter or executive summary that highlights key information from the EIS or EA soon after the document becomes available for review.

For complex or controversial projects, consider holding a pre-hearing public meeting to provide an overview of the alternatives and environmental studies. An open house format would encourage free discussion of issues and concerns that may be resolved before the hearing.

Possibly, with some modifications, alternative maps prepared for previous public meetings may serve as the Public Hearing displays. Use photos, renderings, cross sections, tables, charts, and other graphics to round out the visual presentation.

Responding to Comments

Citizens who participated in the Public Hearing should be aware that their comments are addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. PennDOT should respond to these comments as discussed in [Part 2](#) of this handbook.

Making It Final

Information on how and when to announce the availability of the final NEPA document is described in more detail in [Part 2](#).

Following Up

Individually acknowledging each participant's contribution is an important touch. If possible, forward a copy of the Final EIS (possibly on CD) to everyone who requests it, or send a copy to persons, organizations, or agencies that made substantive comments on the Draft EIS. Of course this approach would be impractical and costly in cases where hundreds of individuals provide detailed comments. In these instances, consider notifying residents directly that copies are available for review and how they may be obtained. To further reduce expenses, consider providing copies on CD or posting on web. Additionally, copies of the document in hardcopy or on CD could be offered at cost to the public.

Tips on Responding to Petitions

Often, community groups, in an attempt to gain and demonstrate support for their position (which may be in support of or in opposition to a Department proposal) will collect signatures on a petition. Or they may use a mailing of form letters to express a collective position. When this happens:

- Acknowledge receipt of the petition by writing to the group.
- Find out more about the group's position and how it may affect the project.
- Consider meeting with the group or its representatives to discuss their views. If the group has no formal organization, contact those individuals who organized the petition.
- Be aware that groups circulating petitions may be intentionally or inadvertently misinforming the public. Work to set the record straight.
- Prepare carefully when meeting with opponents and count on using conflict resolution skills.

If a petition is received in response to a NEPA document or hearing, each person who signed is counted as an individual commenter or requestor. Additionally, if the petition is received in response to the Public Hearing, the response to the petition would be provided in the Final EIS.

Selecting and Preparing for Meeting Types

The goals of the public outreach program will help to determine which type of meeting is best for a project. The following sections provide information that will help in selecting meeting types and appropriately planning for, setting up, scheduling and conducting the various types of meetings.

Anticipate Extra Involvement Needs

There is no recipe for the right mix of techniques, but the general public meeting is recognized as a basic ingredient of any public outreach program. For all projects, there should be a sufficient number of meetings planned to meet the informational needs of the affected community and its local officials. PennDOT requires at least three such meetings for an EIS project; complex projects may require more. Other types of improvement projects may not require such extensive public coordination.

If intense public interest, controversy, or opposition is anticipated, plan for special purpose meetings. As the project progresses, you may determine that these meetings are unnecessary. However, the scope should be flexible enough to accommodate the creative measures needed to manage potential conflict.

Prepare Well in Advance

Allow at least one month to plan and make arrangements for a typical public meeting. Within this time frame, you will likely need to consider PennDOT's interests as well as the community's. Variables may include the timeliness of project news; political changes, such as upcoming or recent elections; and the availability of the public to attend your meeting, which could be influenced by events such as holidays, school programs, hunting season or local sports tournaments. Local officials can provide you with information about competing community events.

Formulate your Meeting Objectives and Strategy

Do you want to go into a meeting or workshop with six preliminary alternatives and leave with a consensus about which three to carry forward into final design? Do you want to present results of a highly technical CMS study and have the public clearly understand why added highway capacity is still needed? Early on, you must identify your objective or desired outcome and select an appropriate meeting format that will ensure that you get your results. Carefully plan and structure the meeting to accomplish its intended purpose.

Secure an Appropriate Meeting Facility

Select a location that is well-known by the community and easily accessible. Public facilities, such as schools or municipal buildings, are often used for public meetings because they usually have large meeting spaces, are well-known, and do not charge a rental fee. Consider how many people might attend. A meeting in a large gymnasium attended by 50 people may seem poorly planned, even if it was well-advertised. Conversely, if 300 people are crowded into a municipal hall, people may not be able to see the displays and will also fault the meeting planners.

Develop a Meeting Agenda

Develop a specific agenda and presentation that will enable you to accomplish your meeting objectives. As you develop a meeting agenda, you determine the amount of time you will devote to each agenda item. Typical agenda items include: introductions, video or slide presentations that provide a project overview, technical presentations, question and answer sessions, and closures. It may be useful to use the meeting agenda as a handout.

Advertise the Meeting in Newspapers

Provide reasonable notice when announcing public meetings. Paid display ads and news releases should be timed to give the public enough notice to plan their personal schedules. If you are dealing with weekly papers, you have less flexibility than with dailies in the timing of announcements. Notices of public meetings should be made through a block ad advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation within the study area of the proposed project. This notice will include a request that persons with disabilities who require assistance contact PennDOT so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Notify Stakeholders, Perhaps through Newsletters, Posters or Flyers

Target announcements to the general public or specific groups, depending on the purpose of the meeting. Presumably, the people who are most interested in the project are already on the project mailing list. Project newsletters are often timed to announce upcoming meetings and to prepare the public for the meeting by giving them new information in advance.

Contact Public Officials

Public officials are often notified of planned meetings by personal letter well in advance of the event, even though they are also on newsletter and news release mailing lists. You may want to follow up a letter with a phone call a day or two before the meeting as a reminder and to determine whether they plan to attend.

Develop Ground Rules for the Meeting

Ground rules may help you achieve your meeting's objective. If you are trying to develop consensus, you may wish to build in more "give and take" discussions than if your objective is to present the results of technical studies. The objectives of your meeting, content of your presentation, and anticipated behavior of the public should dictate ground rules.

Develop Materials for Presentations, Displays and Handouts

The success of the meeting largely depends on how well you tell your story. Make sure that audio-visual shows, display boards, visualization techniques, and handouts are all telling a clear, consistent story and that they are easily viewed and understood.

Determine Staffing and Equipment Needs

The meeting should be staffed by people who can greet the public and answer their questions in a friendly, not defensive, manner. Decide in advance whether the public expects to talk with decision-makers in addition to technical experts. Develop a standard meeting checklist for equipment needs.

Conduct a “Dry-Run”

Your meeting is a production that deserves a rehearsal. Team members can critique and refine the presentation, if needed. The team can evaluate whether technical presentations are clear, and anticipate questions from the public and the media, so that responses can be developed. The team gains confidence from running through the agenda, previewing the displays and materials, and anticipating public concerns.

Allow Plenty of Time to Set Up

You will need to arrive early at the meeting site to set up displays, test equipment, mount directional signs, and become familiar with lighting and ventilation controls. Citizens often arrive early. If you are completely set up before they arrive, you can use your extra time to prepare staff on their roles and clarify key issues that might be raised by the public.

Take Note of Interested Citizens

One or more Project Team members should welcome participants as they enter the meeting. After explaining the meeting's format, agenda, and any special procedures, ask participants to sign in and provide contact information for future mailing lists. Keep a separate list handy in case participants wish to add neighbors who are not in attendance to the list of interested persons.

Attendance records are a valuable source of data. They allow us to quantify overall public participation, to pinpoint where future coordination activities should be focused, and to identify groups and individuals who may be interested in more in-depth involvement.

Design the Meeting Space

Your meeting objectives and agenda will shape how much space you need and how you will use the space that is available. Make the effort to visit the facility well in advance of the event to evaluate meeting space, parking capacity, restrooms, special purpose rooms, and access for the disabled.

Sign-in space should be planned to allow the public to move easily into the meeting room. Avoid blocking a hall with sign-in tables. Use more than one sign-in line to facilitate the movement of the public. Provide clear directions from the sign-in location to the other areas the public will visit. Do not locate the sign-in area near groups with petitions, as this may confuse attendees.

Consider how to make the most of your audio-visual presentations. A video playing in one corner of a school gymnasium does not give the public the opportunity to relax and concentrate on your message. Look for small rooms adjacent to larger meeting rooms where the public can quietly view project videos.

Formal meetings usually incorporate theater-style seating with presentations in the front of the meeting room. Slide shows, projected videos and other audiovisual formats must be seen and heard from all parts of the room. If a question and answer format is included in a formal meeting,

consider using a facilitator with portable microphone who can “work the room” talk-show style and give the public the opportunity to speak and be heard.

Open house meetings require generous display space and easy access to displays. Consider using duplicate displays when large crowds are expected to spread out the crowd and give them better access to the information they need. Use meeting handouts and effective signing to move the public from one display area to another.

Workshops require comfortable facilities since people are likely to spend several hours in one place. Workshop formats often require that participants work together on exercises and then present their results. To facilitate this objective, you might seat small groups at round tables, provide each table with an easel and flip chart, and incorporate a central “stage” area from which facilitators and participants can make presentations.

When attending special purpose meetings in private homes or offices where you cannot design the space to meet your objectives, consider which displays are critical, which can be reduced and how you can best accommodate your smaller audience's needs for information.

Follow Up on Public Concerns

Simply holding a meeting does not complete our obligations to the community. PennDOT must act on what it has learned from the meeting. Typical follow-up activities include:

- ***Conducting a "debriefing" session.*** Project Team members discuss issues raised at the meeting, determine the most appropriate response to these issues (including modifying project proposals), evaluate the meeting strategy, and formulate new approaches for future coordination.
- ***Preparing a meeting report.*** Although an official transcript is not prepared for each meeting, public input should be recorded so that the Project Team can identify the community's values and major concerns. It is also essential to document PennDOT's efforts to address community needs and concerns. Meeting reports form the basis for the “Comments and Coordination” section of the environmental document, which summarizes the project's public record.
- ***Updating the project mailing list.*** Everyone who participated should be placed on the mailing list for publications and announcements.
- ***Publishing a newsletter.*** This edition should summarize the issues discussed at the meeting, report on public comments, and present the findings of any surveys conducted at the meeting.
- ***Performing additional studies.*** If enough people bring substantive comment(s) on the findings, provide new information that should be investigated, or suggest new ideas that should be developed further. It may be reasonably appropriate to backtrack or to push ahead into new avenues of investigation. For example, we could conduct

additional studies to back up our appraisal of project needs, modify alternatives in response to community concerns, or develop entirely new alternatives on the basis of public input.

- ***Arranging special purpose meetings on key issues.*** Groups of participants may unite behind a “cause” (opposing one alternative or “saving” an environmental feature) or several individuals may independently express the same concerns. It is essential to open dialogue about sensitive issues before they create controversies. Small informational sessions may be enough to clear the air and alleviate concerns. When situations become critical, however, problem solving workshops or conflict mediation may be necessary.

Tips on Analyzing Input from Public Workshops

Consider preparing a meeting report that outlines:

- Issues discussed,
- Interests stated by the participants at the outset,
- Changes in position as a result of the workshop,
- Suggested courses of action, and
- Consensus achieved (if appropriate).

Distribute this report to all participants and discuss findings/ outcomes in the project newsletter. If necessary, follow up by conducting additional studies.

10. Social Media

Social media includes various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the internet to share information and resources.

While social media is relatively new to the transportation industry, its use is quickly gaining popularity. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs have all been used by transportation agencies to get their message out. With clear objectives, these new public involvement tools are an effective, low-cost way to encourage interaction and the exchange of information between a project team and stakeholders. They have clear advantages over the cost and one-way communication of newspaper, radio and television advertising.

These social media can be used to create a stronger relationship with the public through an electronic conversation. Using them shows the public that we are accessible and concerned about their need for information.

Social media can enhance communication on a project, but it does not replace the need for face-to-face meetings with the public. Another downside to these social media is that a fair amount of time may need to be spent frequently monitoring these websites to see what is being said and respond accordingly.

Blogs

A blog is a frequently updated, personal website featuring diary-type commentary with the intent to deliver a message. Comments can be posted daily or at scheduled intervals. Blogs function as vehicles for discussion, providing commentary and perspectives on particular subjects or events. A typical blog combines text, images and perhaps links to other web pages related to its topic.

Blogging allow us to control the message, provide the information and resources customers want or need, address misconceptions and gather input on the topics citizens are most interested in. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of all blogs. Through blogging, we can measure the value of an idea or concept and see what kind of response we get before making decisions.

Blogs have other important benefits. They:

- Get more people engaged in dialogs about projects and plans
- Provide the public and media with greater convenience to information
- Establish a credible source of project information
- Allow for quick responses to rumors or inaccuracies in media reports

At the same time, blogs have notable drawbacks. Blogging is:

- Time consuming since it requires regular postings and responses to user comments
- Dependent on freshness and creativity of material to keep readers engaged and coming back
- Prone to negative or political postings by users
- Inequitable, since lower income populations may not have good access to the internet

When blogs are used a part of the public outreach program, assign a moderator to screen posts before they go live (if possible), provide comments that require a response to the Project Manager, and log any responses to the comments.

Facebook and Twitter

These two forms of social media are used in similar ways by transportation agencies to communicate with the public quickly and in a more personal way to:

- Promote events
- Provide project news
- Supply travelers with construction, accident and traffic information

Facebook (www.facebook.com) is a social networking service and website. Users may create a personal profile, add other users as “Friends” and exchange messages, including automatic notifications when they update their profile. Additionally, users may join common interest user groups. While Facebook was initially created to allow family and friends to network, corporations and government agencies now maintain a presence on Facebook and are expanding their following of Friends with whom they interact through frequent posts of text and/or pictures. PennDOT has its own [Facebook page](#).

Twitter is a micro-blogging service (www.twitter.com) that lets a user publish or “tweet” short messages of up to 140 characters in length, which often includes a link to additional information such as a web article or their Facebook site. Others can choose to “follow” the sender in order to receive the messages, which can be received online or on mobile devices such as cell phones. PennDOT has its own [Twitter page](#).

Many legislators are using Facebook and Twitter to talk to their constituents. In a similar way, these social media permit us to control our message to the public, as well as direct the public to additional information by providing links to other useful websites. The two media tools can also be used to solicit feedback on a concept, plan or alternative, as well as enable us to participate in a discussion with the public regarding their comments.

Pennsylvania media outlets have incorporated social networking as a way to get leads and provide information. If we post information about projects through these social media this will raise media awareness and potentially reduce the amount of incorrect information that would otherwise be published or broadcast.

YouTube

YouTube allows people to discover, watch and share originally-created videos. The website (www.youtube.com) provides a useful forum for us to post project or public service announcement videos. Search for “transportation”, “Department of Transportation” or other related terms on the website to see what transportation agencies are doing on YouTube. Search for “diverging diamond interchange animation” to better understand the value of this social media site to project development.

11. Surveys

The survey is the only technique that allows us to accurately measure the opinions and sentiments of the study area population.

Surveys can be designed to test the public's knowledge of the facts about a project, but more often they are geared toward gathering opinions, attitudes and sentiments. *Opinions* are beliefs held with confidence, but not based on positive knowledge. These are subject to change as people learn more about a subject. An *attitude* is a general state of mind regarding some matter. *Sentiments* are attitudes based more on emotion than reason. We need to understand all three types of viewpoints.

Surveys are often used to:

- Increase public awareness of a project
- Gauge customer expectations
- Rank the public's transportation needs
- Present alternatives and gather reactions
- Search for new design concepts
- Measure changes in the public's attitudes and opinions at various stages of a project
- Gauge customer satisfaction.

Participants must understand that a survey is not a "vote." Make it clear that while their views are taken into consideration, PennDOT must weigh many factors in making its decisions. Great care must be taken to write survey questions that ask for meaningful input, are easy to understand, and do not slant toward a particular outcome.

A systematic, population-wide survey can give the "silent majority" a voice. This technique allows us to reach those who may not choose to actively participate in public meetings, workshops, or advisory committees. However, a survey is a very limited form of public participation. We ask the questions, and the public supplies the answers – without a chance for in-depth discussion. A survey does nothing to satisfy the public's curiosity or to ease their concerns. Never substitute a survey for active involvement.

Survey Formats

A self-administered survey provides the respondent with time to think carefully before answering. The Department often distributes questionnaires at general public meetings, workshops and CAC meetings. Respondents are asked to either mail in the completed questionnaire or to place it in a drop box.

Self-administered surveys are the least expensive to perform. And depending on the scope of the survey, few staff members are usually required to tally the responses. Unfortunately, the response rates for self-administered surveys are generally low. A 25-30% response rate is generally considered acceptable.

Telephone and personal surveys, on the other hand, tend to have higher response rates because people feel more compelled to respond to other people. Although these types of surveys can be expensive to conduct – often requiring the use of a market research firm – they offer another advantage: the surveyor may explain or rephrase questions that the respondent does not understand.

Statistical Sampling vs. Informal Surveys

A randomly selected, statistically valid sample is necessary to gather opinions that accurately reflect those of the population as a whole or those of a target group (like individuals with disabilities, for example). This type of survey is most effective in reaching the “silent majority” in a large study area population. If this is your goal, consider hiring an experienced firm that is qualified to design and conduct the survey and to analyze the results scientifically. Most of PennDOT's surveys are geared toward a “self-selected” sector of the population - those who are already very active in the project development process. Outside assistance is normally not required when completing this type of survey. [PennDOT's Press Office](#) can also provide guidance on developing surveys.

Tips on

Crafting Effective Surveys & Questionnaires

- Define your objectives precisely. Ask yourself what problems will the results of your questionnaire solve? What do you want to know? How will the results be incorporated into decisions?
- Determine the type of information you want to collect. Be specific when formulating your questions.
- Develop a brief introduction that gives the reason for the questionnaire and instructions on how to complete it.
- Be straightforward and clear when creating questions. Use simple language and don't write questions in a way that can be misinterpreted.
- Limit the number of responses for each question. Making it multiple choice will make it easier to calculate the results.
- The length of your questionnaire will affect your response rate and willingness to participate in your surveys in the future. Try to limit the number of questions and keep the entire survey to one page.
- Remember that it is the quality of the information collected – not the quantity – that matters.

12. Visualization Techniques

Visualization is the creation of visual imagery with the intention of conveying concepts or designs to the masses.

PennDOT's mission to involve the public in the development of transportation projects is facilitated through a variety of "Show-and-Tell" techniques. The public are consumers of transportation projects and consumers want to see what they are getting. The act of showing them how the project will look is an art that can be improved through technology and good judgment.

When a new transportation project is proposed, people begin to imagine how their community might be changed. Their first instinct is to visualize the changes. They look at plans and aerial photographs to understand the big picture, but what they are often concerned about is:

- How the new facility will look as they drive or walk through familiar places
- How the altered landscape will appear
- What they will see from the windows of their homes

What Will It Look Like?

Even when people have an understanding of the physical space that will be used for a project, they may react differently to a proposal when they can visualize the texture of sound walls, the color of a steel bridge, the aesthetics of old-fashioned harp lights, or the enhancements of landscaping.

Today's public is aware of the technical advances that make it possible to visualize a new project before it is built. Computer-generated images can present increasingly realistic depictions of how a building, bridge, or highway can fit into the existing viewscape. The public also equates technological sophistication with expense, however, and there are many traditional methods of helping people to see what is proposed that are still highly-effective. Artists' renderings, models, and photo montages are "lower tech" tools to involve the public in a realistic appreciation of the proposed project.

Video is a format that can condense other media into a single medium so that large amounts of visual and auditory information can be conveyed in a short length of time. DVDs to store, present and distribute visualizations and documents can be a very useful tool.

Computer-Generated Images

An audience needs to see the before and after effects of a design. Today's technology makes it possible to simulate a completed project. These images help facilitate communication between a designer and the public.

Almost everything around us is three-dimensional and almost everything is designed in three dimensions. With recent advances in technology, designers can now take advantage of the third dimension and open up a world of communication possibilities. Even in two dimensions, new imaging techniques have enhanced our ability to see into the future.

Computer-Enhanced Photographs

This imaging technique allows the computer technician to add structural design elements, such as a bridge or enhancements like sound walls, decorative retaining walls or landscaping, to a photograph. The resolution of the modified image may be so fine it is barely perceptible as an enhanced photograph. Computer enhanced photographs are especially effective when an audience needs to see a "before and after" effect of a design.

Computer-Generated 3-D Design

Designing in 3-D allows for the creation of simulated models of high accuracy and detail. Three-dimensional capabilities in CAD can help avoid problems that are sometimes overlooked when using 2-D visualization techniques. In the design phase, 3-D models can form the foundation of the whole design process. The computer can generate a variety of views, altering the placement of lights, textures, shadows and shading to achieve photorealistic quality. Two dimensional construction drawings, such as plans, sections, and elevations can all be extracted from a 3-D model.

The difference between an artist's rendering and a computer-generated illustration is that the latter lacks the human touch. An artist's rendering, whether the medium is watercolor or marker, colored pencil or acrylic, is impressionistic and conveys the artist's style and feel for the imagined scene. With a computer-generated image, measurements and values have been translated into a 3-D image. While the illustration is, from an engineering standpoint, an exciting, accurate form of visualization, it may project flatness. The public may be more attracted to artist's illustrations that they recognize as "less real."

3-D Animation

One of the most powerful tools in 3-D presentation is computer-generated animation. This use of 3-D wire- frame models and photorealistic renderings allows for the creation of a computer simulated animation of a real world 3-D model of an area. For example, a user of this technology can drive down a highway, fly over a proposed project, see a 3-D overview of existing and future traffic patterns, or witness vehicle accident recreations.

Geographic Information Systems

Geographic information systems (GIS) represent a set of tools for analyzing and displaying spatial information. GIS is a powerful medium for presenting site-specific environmental and socioeconomic information to the public. It can be used to present constraints mapping, viewshed modeling, and slope mapping. GIS applications can be used to present very specific, two-dimensional geographic information about an area. For example, GIS could be used in a small meeting with public officials and planners who have a need to examine and discuss in detail the available mapped information for a site.

Scale Models

Sometimes even the best graphic cannot adequately convey a project's features to the intended audience. Then, a technique that relies on three-dimensional visualization is needed. Models of a project, built to scale, offer a clear picture of a built project in context of existing surroundings.

Suppose that a new freeway interchange, located near a mixed residential and commercial area, will be built on fill and will be 35 feet higher than the existing surface streets. The new interchange with its sound walls and high mast lighting will dramatically alter the landscape. It might change the view that people have from their homes and the amount of light that is spilled onto their properties. Local businesses that were once visible from the freeway may no longer be seen from the new elevation.

"Flat art" cannot capture the real space this project will occupy in the community. By building a model of the new project and soliciting the public's response, planners will involve citizens in a realistic evaluation of a proposal. The consequences of not helping them to visualize a project may include surprise, outrage, and organized opposition during and after construction. In central business districts of urban areas, models can help the public – including downtown interested parties – to visualize how transportation structures will be integrated into the city. The public may be pleasantly surprised to see how unobtrusively a new facility will exist alongside downtown buildings and green space.

Scale models can provide a realistic depiction of design elements. The profile of a proposed roadway, for instance, might be difficult for the public to imagine.

Models can be built in-house, by architectural or consulting engineering firms, or freelance model-makers.

Videos

A well-developed video presentation will not only attract, but also maintain an audience's attention. Many people, especially those under forty, have been sensitized by television to receive information in a fast-paced, colorful, lively "package" and may prefer such packaging to a "live" oral presentation that's not well-rehearsed.

On the other hand, some viewers may be turned off by what they regard as "slickness." Viewers may make this interpretation when the use of an authoritative narrator, fancy graphics, an aggressive music track, and a persuasive tone in the video script combine to sell a project rather than to simply inform.

Since an audience is more likely to recall what they have both seen and heard, it makes sense to use video to introduce a project to the public. Video can incorporate field views of the study area, including footage that illustrates the need for improvements, such as congestion or sharp curves; presentation graphics that summarize data; and mapping techniques that present alternative alignments for a proposed project.

Because transportation projects serve human needs and are not just about concrete and asphalt, video presentations can also reflect PennDOT's understanding of a community. They can include footage of community landmarks, on-camera interviews with local residents, and other "human interest" material that balance the engineering of the project with the community's values.

Videos are a public information tool that may be used at Public Meetings, Workshops, Field Offices, and Public Hearings. Multiple copies of a video that describes a project or policy – such as right-of-way acquisition – can be loaned to civic groups to reach out to the broadest possible audience. Local municipalities, community libraries, video stores, or Chambers of Commerce are often glad to provide the public service of distributing videos we produce.

Producing a Video

Producing an effective, high-quality video is no small task. A professional video company can provide technical and creative assistance that exceeds in-house capability. Scripting the video, however, will require good communication and interaction between the Department and the video production vendor.

Before you can work successfully with a producer, you must be able to identify the objective, scope, and audience of your video.

The objective of your video may be to educate a public that knows little or nothing about a project; to persuade a sophisticated audience that all the issues have been addressed; to engage a disinterested or apathetic public that has not been involved in a project's development; to report new findings; or perhaps to clarify issues when a project is complex or has been in development for a long time.

Your objective may be to create a video for a single use, or to have a product with the flexibility of being easily modified for extended use. Whatever your objective is, you must be clear about it before you begin the scripting process.

The scope of your video determines what will be included and what will not. For example, do you want to include every bit of project history, results of all studies, and a lengthy discussion of all the alternatives that were ever investigated during a project's development, or do you want to make a tight, 8-minute video that focuses on the reasons for choosing a preferred alternative? Restating your objective will help you define the scope of your product.

You must define and understand your audiences before you create a successful script. Consider what they already know and do not know about PennDOT, the transportation project development process, and the subject project. Consider what terminology needs to be explained, and how you can avoid jargon.

When you understand your objective, scope, and audience, you can convey this understanding to any media producer and work together to produce a high-quality product within a reasonable time frame.

Tips on Making a Video

- Who writes the script? Few video production companies will have the insider's knowledge and point of view to be able to explain a transportation project or policy with a complete understanding of the subject. However, their creative staff might have a better handle on how to explain an idea in more understandable terms. It is important that the script be a joint effort of PennDOT and the video company.
- To avoid extra cost and wasted time, spend more time "in the field" and thinking about when and where you want your videographer to shoot footage. For example, if you want to illustrate congestion, scope out the conditions yourself before you send out a camera crew that may return with weak footage.
- If you want your video to be used over a long period of time, avoid using statistics, names and phone numbers of Department contacts, and information that may become quickly outdated.

13. Websites

The website is an important resource in the public quest for facts, information and points of contact for a project.

Any larger public outreach effort should include an online presence. Individuals can then access information at their convenience. A good website is a cohesive blend of design, writing, interactivity, technology and usability.

Websites can be static or dynamic. A static website is one that has web pages stored on the server in the same form as the user will view them. A dynamic website is one that has frequently changing information or collates information “on the fly” – each time a page is requested. A dynamic website connects to a database to pull page information and assembles the information in a pre-defined format, resulting in a rendered web page.

When developing a website you will want to:

- Obtain a domain name
- Register the URL with the major search engines
- Outline specific goals for the website
- Develop a site map
- Collect graphics, mapping and multimedia
- Outline/develop written content
- Choose a hosting plan that includes a full demographic and usage statistics component

Provide answers to questions such as:

- What is the goal of the project?
- When and where are public meetings?
- How will this project affect my concerns or issues?

Tips on Using Key Words and Meta Elements to your Advantage

Key words and phrases are the terms that your audience uses to search for the project website or project information on the internet. Meta elements provide information about a given webpage, most often to help search engines categorize them correctly.

Tips on Developing Written Content for Websites

People rarely read web pages word by word. Instead, they scan the page, picking out individual words and sentences. A good rule of thumb is to use half the word count of conventional writing of the same content. Try to keep to one idea per paragraph and be sure to use highlighted keywords that are hypertext links to more information.

Credibility is Important

For Web users, credibility is important, since it is unclear who is behind information on the Web and whether a page can be trusted. Credibility can be increased by high-quality graphics, good writing, and effective use of hypertext links.

When outlining written content for a project web site consider:

- What information is important to your audience's understanding of the project?
- What do you want visitors to contribute (if anything)?

When outlining functionality for a project web site ask:

- Do the project area demographics reveal a level of median household income that would support an advanced use of internet technologies?
- What is the estimated percentage of residents with regular access to the internet within the project area?
- Is there sufficient public access to the internet in the project area?

Design and Development

- Choose colors, fonts and graphics to keep a consistent tone and support the message
- Develop a navigation scheme (based on the site map) and keep it consistent throughout the site, consider existing web conventions
- Optimize graphics to facilitate rapid download time
- Test on different platforms and browsers
- Beta test with representatives from your target audience

Tips on Gathering Feedback on Websites

Enable visitors to provide feedback or request more information through form submissions. Create a top-level "Contact" page that includes a mailing address, and fax and phone numbers. Consider a form to request more specific information or a publications order form.

Follow Up/Maintenance

- Keep information up-to-date
- Review content at regular intervals (monthly, etc.)
- Remove old announcements
- Make sure that there are no broken links
- Follow up on comments submitted
- Monitor web stats: What pages do people visit and how long do they stay?
- Advertise the project website; include URL on all products

Tips on Non-Professional Engineers Interacting with the Public

- A non-professional engineer practicing engineering must use caution when dealing with the public face-to-face about issues that require engineering judgment, such as traffic analysis and design of alternatives.
- It is understood that it may not always be practical to have a professional engineer (PE) present information and respond to questions in these licensed areas.
- There may be situations when a non-PE is presenting information on – or is asked questions about – an engineering topic.
- This is acceptable if the individual identifies himself as a non-PE and clearly relays in his presentation or responses that the information was developed by a PE.
- It is important that the non-PE not make any engineering judgments.
- If a citizen presents a question that the individual cannot answer by relaying the information developed by the PE, then the non-PE should either:
 - Bring in a PE, if one is available, or
 - Tell the citizen that he/she will forward the question to a PE who will provide a response.

The Principles of Public Involvement

Public Involvement Handbook Appendices

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1. Laws Regulations and Policies

[Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) of 1990](#)

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that individuals with disabilities be provided equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from public services, programs, and activities. When designing and implementing a public involvement program, transportation planners must give consideration to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

An effective public involvement program should be designed to actively seek out those individuals who are often under-represented in the Transportation Project Development Process. By encouraging the involvement of individuals with disabilities, transportation planners are afforded a valuable perspective on the attitudes and needs of an important component of the community for whom the transportation improvement projects are implemented.

To accommodate individuals with hearing, speech, vision or mobility limitations, accessibility requirements include providing accessible routes and facilities as well as providing auxiliary aids or services needed for effective communication and participation. Additional requirements include:

- Ensuring accessibility to all public meetings and hearings for individuals with physical disabilities. This includes both the facility and the format of the meeting or hearing.
- Providing assistance to people with speech and hearing disabilities who wish to testify at public meetings.
- Providing a telephone number for a contact representative on public meeting and hearing notifications so that individuals with special needs can be accommodated at meetings/hearings.

It is estimated that approximately 43,000,000 Americans have one or more disabilities that limit hearing, speech, vision, or mobility. Injury, illness, or pregnancy may temporarily restrict other individuals. A Public Involvement Program should actively seek to include these individuals. Doing so ensures that we are maintaining a user friendly, highly accessible transportation system that is more responsive to the needs of the entire public.

[Clean Air Act Amendments \(CAAA\) of 1990](#)

The Clean Air Act Amendments require that transportation planners in non-attainment areas develop transportation projects in conjunction with air quality plans. Nonattainment areas are geographic regions that have failed to meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In these designated areas, state transportation improvement projects must not increase emissions.

Extensive public education and involvement can prove very beneficial in the implementation of CAAA regulations. Conformity with CAAA requirements often necessitates changes in the daily lives of the public by altering driving patterns or encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation. Through the use of public involvement tools such as newsletters, pamphlets, videos, and public meetings, transportation planners can educate and involve the public prior to and during the implementation of these mandatory changes in transportation patterns. Surveys may also be helpful in gauging the public's attitudes and preferences.

A primary goal when designing a Public Involvement Program within a non-attainment area should be to make the Clean Air Act Amendments understandable to the public while demonstrating how CAAA requirements affect the Transportation Project Development Process. By involving the public early and often, transportation planners can not only dispel potential conflict and confusion, but also gain valuable insight into which emission reduction techniques would be most effective and least disruptive.

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)

Title VI, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Under Title VI and related statutes, each Federal agency is required to ensure that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or religion. The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 clarified the intent of Title VI to include all program and activities of Federal-aid recipients, sub-recipients, and contractors whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.

If a recipient of federal assistance is found to have discriminated and voluntary compliance cannot be achieved, the federal agency providing the assistance should either initiate fund termination proceedings or refer the matter to the Department of Justice for appropriate legal action. Aggrieved individuals may file administrative complaints with the federal agency that provides funds to a recipient, or the individuals may file suit for appropriate relief in federal court. Title VI itself prohibits intentional discrimination. However, most funding agencies have regulations implementing Title VI that prohibit recipient practices that have the effect of discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

To assist federal agencies that provide financial assistance, the wide variety of recipients that receive such assistance, and the actual and potential beneficiaries of programs receiving federal assistance, the U.S. Department of Justice has published a Title VI Legal Manual. The Title VI Legal Manual sets out Title VI legal principles and standards. Additionally, the Department has published an Investigation Procedures Manual to give practical advice on how to investigate Title VI

complaints. Also available on the Coordination and Review Website are a host of other materials that may be helpful to those interested in ensuring effective enforcement of the Title VI Statute.

[Executive Order 12898 of February 11, 1994.](#)
[Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations](#)

The intent of this Executive Order is to avoid disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations with respect to human health and the environment. The order requires each federal agency to develop a specific agency-wide strategy for achieving environmental justice. The environmental justice strategy shall consider revisions to public participation processes to provide minority and low-income populations with greater opportunities for involvement and access to information.

To comply with this order, each federal agency must work to ensure that public documents, notices, and hearings relating to human health or the environment are concise, understandable, and readily accessible to the public. Whenever practicable and appropriate, each federal agency may translate crucial public documents, notices, and hearings for limited English-speaking populations.

The U.S. Department of Transportation is committed to embracing the principles of environmental justice by enforcing all applicable environmental regulations and legislation, and by promoting non-discrimination in its programs, policies, and activities that affect human health and the environment. The U.S. Department of Transportation is also committed to bringing government decision-making closer to the communities by promoting greater public participation in decisions relating to human health and the environment.

An active public involvement program is key in providing opportunities for persons living in low-income neighborhoods and minority populations to participate more effectively in governmental decisions and programs.

The new emphasis on environmental justice coincides with U.S. DOT's previously announced intent to become a model transportation agency by putting people first and protecting and enhancing the environment. According to the Secretary, a major objective of U.S. DOT is to increase the harmony between transportation policy and environmental concerns. In turn, State DOTs must now become environmental leaders and demonstrate sensitivity both to the natural environment and to neighborhoods and communities in everything they do.

[Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users \(SAFETEA-LU\)](#)

On August 10, 2005, the President signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU represents the largest surface transportation investment in our Nation's history. The two landmark bills that brought surface transportation into the 21st century—the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) shaped the highway program to meet the Nation's changing transportation needs. SAFETEA-LU builds on this firm foundation, supplying the funds and refining the programmatic framework for investments needed to maintain and grow our vital transportation infrastructure.

SAFETEA-LU addresses the many challenges facing our transportation system today – challenges such as improving safety, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency in freight movement, increasing intermodal connectivity, and protecting the environment – as well as laying the groundwork for addressing future challenges. SAFETEA-LU promotes more efficient and effective Federal surface transportation programs by focusing on transportation issues of national significance, while giving State and local transportation decision makers more flexibility for solving transportation problems in their communities.

Under SAFETEA-LU, transportation planners are required to provide the public with the opportunity to participate in and comment on the development of transportation projects. This public involvement process should not only educate and inform the public of upcoming events and project developments, but should also demonstrate that the views and concerns voiced by the public and private sector have been seriously considered.

[National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\) of 1969](#)

The National Environmental Policy Act is the broadest environmental legislation in the nation. NEPA applies to all federal agencies and the many activities they undertake, regulate, or fund that would affect the environment. It requires these agencies to disclose and consider the environmental consequences of their proposed actions before deciding a course of action.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) represents one example of NEPA documentation. Federal agencies are required to prepare an EIS for major federal actions which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The Council for Environmental Quality's (CEQ) *Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the NEPA* defines an EIS as a detailed written report that provides:

"Full and fair discussion of significant environmental impacts and [informs] decision-makers and the public of the reasonable alternatives which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment."

A Categorical Exclusion (CE) is prepared for those-projects that do not significantly affect the environment and an Environmental Assessment (EA) is required for those projects in which the significance of the environmental impact is not clearly established. According to the CEQ's NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6), public participation is a cornerstone of the NEPA process. Therefore, CEQ regulations require an agency to make "diligent efforts to involve the public." The success of the act depends on informed participation by private organizations, public-interest groups, and citizens concerned about the environment – the more the public understands about the environmental review process, the more effectively they can participate. Citizen participation is an integral part of NEPA's procedural requirements: public scoping meetings, the opportunity for public hearings on those projects which involve public controversy, publication of NEPA notices in the *Federal Register* (available in public libraries), and public comment periods for various documents.

[Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act \(NHPA\) of 1966, as amended in 1992](#)

Under Section 106 of the NHPA, PennDOT must account for the effects of transportation improvements on historic resources, which include structures and archaeological sites that are listed on, or are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The NHPA established the National Register to recognize properties of local and state significance – in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture – worthy of preservation. Section 106 requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on these historic properties, and to afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings. The Advisory Council's regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR Part 800, 2001), guide implementation of Section 106.

In simple terms, the Section 106 review process is as follows: federal agencies identify historic properties their actions could affect, determine whether there could be a harmful (adverse) effect, and if so, try to avoid or reduce it. The federal agency consults with the State Historic Preservation Officer, and in many cases with the Advisory Council to accomplish this goal. This consultation process normally results in a legally-binding agreement that spells out how to avoid or reduce the adverse effects of an undertaking on historic properties.

The Section 106 review process provides for active participation by the public. The general public must be notified of an agency's actions under the regulations. Organizations and individuals concerned with the effects of an undertaking on historic properties (defined in the regulations as "interested parties") are to be involved in the review process in various ways, depending on their particular interests.

Under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, consultation means ***"the process of seeking, discussing, and considering the views of others, and, where feasible, seeking***

agreement with them on how historic properties should be identified, considered, and managed.” Consultation is built upon the exchange of ideas, not simply providing information.

As part of the section 106 process, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) work with consulting parties. Consulting parties include: the State Historic Preservation Officer (Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission), Federally-recognized Indian Tribes, local governments, as well as other individuals and organizations with a demonstrated interest in the project.

Interest is demonstrated by the nature of a legal or economic relation to the project or affected properties, or concern with the project’s effects on historic properties. A landowner and a local preservation group are examples of an individual and organization with a demonstrated interest.

In May 2010, a *New Statewide Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) and Cultural Resources Administrative Procedures* went into effect. The Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) delegated certain section 106 responsibilities to PennDOT for implementation of the Federal-aid Highway Program in Pennsylvania.

The new Programmatic Agreement and Procedures were established to improve transportation project delivery by streamlining section 106 review. PennDOT partnered with Preservation Pennsylvania to create this website to provide interested individuals and consulting parties with online access to documents that support milestones in the section 106 process.

The Programmatic Agreement permits PennDOT to address multiple steps in the section 106 process as long as consulting parties and the public have an adequate opportunity to express their views.

2. Press Releases

Sample Press Releases for each of these purposes can be found on the following pages:

- **Project Initiation**
- **Field Work**
- **Community Advisory Committee**
- **Public Meeting**
- **Public Hearing**



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNDOT District 9
1620 North Juniata Street, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
David L. Sherman, PE, District Liaison Engineer
814-696-7170 or fax 814-696-7173



FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

Contact Asbury W. Lee Community Relations Coordinator
at 814-696-7101

May 15, 2002

PR # 02-63

Studies underway on Route 219, Meyersdale to I-68

Project Team begins work on Transportation Improvement

MEYERSDALE (May 15) Engineering and environmental studies are underway on the portion of U.S. 219 from Meyersdale, Somerset County, Pa. to Interstate 68 in Garrett County, Md. by PENNDOT's District 9 and its partners the Maryland State Highway Administration and Federal Highway Administration.

U.S. 219 is a major north-south route through western Pennsylvania. It links I-68 in Maryland to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and I-80 providing important access to small cities, towns and rural communities throughout the corridor.

In recent years, portions of U.S. 219 in southwestern Pennsylvania have been upgraded to a four-lane, limited access facility. When this southernmost section is completed, it will provide a much needed transportation improvement for this region of the state.

McCormick, Taylor & Associates Inc. of Harrisburg along with a team of engineering and environmental consultants, has been retained to prepare an environmental document and preliminary engineering for the project. The preliminary design work is expected to be completed late 2004 or early 2005.

According to Earl Neiderhiser, district engineer for PENNDOT, the project team will study the area and develop several preliminary corridor alternatives.

“Through environmental and engineering studies and public involvement activities, the team will narrow the alternatives until a preferred alternative is identified,” Neiderhiser said.

PENNDOT has recently mailed 'Intent to Enter' letters to all property owners within the project study area. The purpose of the letters is to inform residents that PENNDOT and members of the consultant team may be entering area properties to perform environmental research and other studies vital to the project.

Neiderhiser said, “Receipt of a letter does not mean a property is or will be required for the project. The studies are being conducted to help determine the best location for improvements to Route 219.

All team members will be wearing an identification badge stating that they are with the project team. If residents or property owners have any questions, they should be directed to Dave Sherman, PENNDOT’s district liaison engineer, at 814-696-7170.

To complete this project, the team will utilize PENNDOT's Ten-Step Project Development Process. This process ensures that transportation projects will be developed in an environmentally-sensitive manner that reflects community, state and federal resource agency input. Throughout the Ten-Step Process, the project team will collect public input regarding the interests that are important to the community – preserving a healthy environment while meeting community needs.

Neiderhiser said, “Information sharing and community input throughout project development is important to the success of any transportation project.”

The project team will be providing information to the public through the project website (www.us219.com), newsletters, information outposts in local communities, educational outreach programs, and public meetings.

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PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Engineering District 1-0

P.O. Box 398

Oil City, PA 16301

PR # **xx-xx** October 2, 2006

Contact: Deborah L. Schreckengost
District Press Officer
(814) 678-7095
dschrecken@state.pa.us

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****PennDOT Schedules Field Work along Broadway Avenue**

OIL CITY (October 9, 2006) Beginning October 9, 2006, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) will be conducting field work as part of the S.R. 0060, Broadway Avenue Improvement Project located within Wheatland Borough, the City of Farrell and the City of Sharon.

The public can expect to see survey crews and drill rigs along S.R. 0060, Broadway Avenue (Martin Luther King Boulevard) between Council Avenue (S.R. 0418) and Connelly Street (Bus. S.R. 0062) within the next few weeks. Drilling is being conducted by geotechnical engineers to investigate the soil, determine subsurface engineering properties, and identify how soil conditions will impact the proposed construction. The results of the drilling will help determine the design and the type of pavement to be used. Survey crews will be gathering supplemental information to assist in completing environmental studies.

Field work may require the workers to enter private property. Property owners directly affected by the drilling will be notified by letter in advance.

With the drilling and numerous other engineering and environmental studies underway and/or completed, PennDOT is in the process of preparing the environmental document for the Project. The draft environmental document is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2006.

- more -

The environmental document will identify Alternative 2 as the preferred Alternative. Alternative 2 includes a three (3) lane curbed roadway, one lane in each direction with a center turn lane its entire length. The roadway will generally follow its existing alignment with improvements to curves and grades to meet criteria, and minor shifts in the road to minimize property impacts. A sidewalk will be provided on one side of the roadway for its entire length with additional sidewalk at locations where it presently exists, or is justified. Improvements will also include upgrades to the drainage system and highway lighting system.

Once the environmental document is approved, the project will proceed to Final Design and then Construction. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2008.

For more information on the Broadway Avenue Improvement Project, contact Mr. Michael L. McMullen, PennDOT's Project Manager, at (814) 678-7077.

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
 PENNDOT District 9
 1620 North Juniata Street, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
 David L. Sherman, PE, District Liaison Engineer
 814-696-7170 or fax 814-696-7173



FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

January 16, 2003

Contact Asbury W. Lee Community Relations Coordinator
 at 814-696-7101

Community Advisory Committee meets with PENNDOT team *PENNDOT listens to community concerns*

SALISBURY (January 16) PENNDOT with its partners Maryland State Highway Administration (MDSHA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) invited members of the project area to participate in a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) on Thursday, January 16, 2003 at the Salisbury Borough Building, Salisbury, Pennsylvania. This project involves the section of US 219 from Meyersdale, Somerset County, PA to I-68 in Garrett County, Maryland.

The nineteen CAC members were selected to represent various segments of the community including local government, residence, business, economic development, agriculture, environment, education, fire and EMS, coal mining, trucking, chamber of commerce and the historical society from Pennsylvania and Maryland.

The purpose of the CAC is to provide an additional method of communication between the project team and the local communities, and to provide input into project development. The CAC will serve as an advisory group to the Project Team so that important local interests and concerns are considered in a timely manner.

At Thursday's introductory meeting, members of the project team provided an overview of the project's history and an update on project events. CAC members were asked to share information with members of their community and provide feedback at the next CAC meeting.

Information shared at the CAC meeting will be available at the Public Meeting Open House February 25, 2003 at the Holiday Inn in Grantsville, Maryland. The public is invited to attend between 5 and 8 P.M.

This is an opportunity for the public to review project relation information, including proposed improvement corridors. Project Team members will be on-hand to answer questions and provide information. A survey will be conducted at the Public Meeting.

The meeting location is accessible to persons having disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Anyone who needs additional information, has special needs, or requires special aids should contact David Sherman, P.E., PENNDOT's project manager at (814) 696-7170.

U.S. 219 is a major north-south route through western Pennsylvania. It links I-68 in Maryland to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and I-80 providing important access to small cities, towns and rural communities throughout the corridor.

In recent years, portions of U.S. 219 in southwestern Pennsylvania have been upgraded to a four-lane, limited access facility. When this southernmost section is completed, it will provide a much needed transportation improvement for this region of the state.

McCormick, Taylor & Associates Inc. of Harrisburg along with a team of engineering and environmental consultants has been retained to prepare an environmental document and preliminary engineering for the

project. The preliminary design work is expected to be completed late 2004 or early 2005.

The project team will be providing information to the public through the project website (www.us219.com), newsletters, information outposts in local communities, educational outreach programs, and public meetings.

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2003

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Engineering District 1-0

P. O. Box 398

Oil City, PA 16301

PR # 82-2006

Contact: Deborah L. Schreckengost
District Press Officer
(814) 678-7095
dschrecken@state.pa.us

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****PennDOT Schedules a Public Meeting for the
Scrubgrass Creek Bridge (S.R. 3005) Replacement
Project****Public Provided the Opportunity to Comment**

OIL CITY (July 20, 2006) The Department of Transportation (PennDOT) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), will hold a Public Meeting for the Scrubgrass Creek Bridge Replacement Project.

The Scrubgrass Creek Bridge Replacement Project is located on Pine Hill Road (S.R. 3005) between Clintonville and Kennerdell in Clinton Township, Venango County, Pennsylvania. The project will replace the existing closed Scrubgrass Creek Bridge with a new bridge structure.

The Public Meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 1, 2006 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Clintonville Volunteer Fire Department, Emlenton Street, Clintonville, PA. The meeting will follow an open-house format, with a formal presentation beginning at 6:30 p.m. The purpose of the meeting is to introduce the project to the public, provide information on the current status of the project, discuss the development of proposed alternatives, present preliminary environmental findings, receive public input regarding Section 106 (cultural resources information) and provide the public an opportunity to provide feedback on the project.

This meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. Anyone requiring special assistance should contact Jennifer Threats at (412) 922-6880. For more information on the Scrubgrass Creek Bridge Replacement Project, contact Mike McMullen, PennDOT's Project Manager at (814) 678-7077.

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PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 ENGINEERING DISTRICT 10
 2550 Oakland Avenue
 Indiana, Pennsylvania 15701
 Joseph P. Dubovi, P.E., District Executive
 RLS 000 2007 Route 228 Public Hearing
CONTACT: Mark E. Hillwig
 Community Relations Coordinator
 Office: (724) 357-2829 Cell: (724) 422-1130
 E-mail: mhillwig@state.pa.us
 Website: www.dot.state.pa.us

May 29, 2007
 For Immediate Release:

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED OF ROUTE 228 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

INDIANA, Pa. – PennDOT Engineering District 10 in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration will host an open house plans display and Public Hearing for the Route 228 Improvement Project, Thursday, June 7, at the Mars Area High School in Mars, PA.

The open house plans display will be held from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the high school cafeteria. Representatives from PennDOT and its consultant team will be on hand to provide information and answer questions about the project, which is proposed to improve Route 228 in Cranberry, Adams and Middlesex townships and Seven Fields and Mars boroughs in southern Butler County.

A Public Hearing will begin at 6 p.m. in the high school's auxiliary auditorium. Members of the public will have the opportunity to provide formal comment on the proposed improvements. Comments on the project's Environmental Assessment (EA), which has been made available for review, will also be accepted at the hearing.

There will be three options for giving testimony at the hearing. Public testimony will be taken in the auxiliary auditorium. Comments will be limited to five minutes or less. Those giving public testimony are asked to register ahead of time by calling Betsy Stewart at 412-922-6880. A classroom will be available for citizens to provide private

-- more --

testimony to a stenographer, and facilities will also be available for those wanting to provide written testimony.

A copy of materials to be on exhibit at the June 7 open house plans display are available online at www.route228.com. The web site also includes a detailed page of questions and answers about the project.

The meeting location is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Persons requiring special assistance to attend the meeting should contact Betsy Stewart at 412-922-6880 prior to the meeting.

- end -

3. Advertisements

Sample Advertisements for each of these purposes can be found on the following pages:

- **Public Meeting Notices**
- **Public Hearing Opportunity Notice**
- **EA (or EIS) Availability Notice**
- **Public Hearing Notice**
(Note: requires an Initial Announcement and a Second Announcement. The Second Announcement can be the same as the Initial, or it can include text that the Initial Announcement was published 30-days prior, or on a specific date.)
- **Joint Public Hearing Notices**
- **Final EIS Availability Notice**
- **Record of Decision Notices**
 - FHWA Example – 139(l) Notice
 - FHWA 139(l) Single Project Sample Form
 - FHWA 139(l) Multiple Projects Sample Form
 - FHWA 139(l) Post-ROD Federal Agency Decision Sample Form
- **Proof of Publication**
- **Correction of Prior Notice**



Central Bradford County

Traffic Improvement Project



The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, will initiate an Environmental Impact Statement for improvements to the highway system in Central Bradford County, Pennsylvania. The purpose of these engineering and environmental studies is to evaluate the possible traffic, environmental, social, and economic impacts of various highway alternatives in the Central Bradford area.

Input from the public throughout the design process will help ensure the success of this project. A Citizen Advisory Committee will be formed to keep the public informed and involved.

In an effort to continually update the public, a direct mailing list of interested citizens is being compiled. If you wish to receive future mailings, please complete and return the attached coupon to Leon Liggitt, P.E.

.....

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

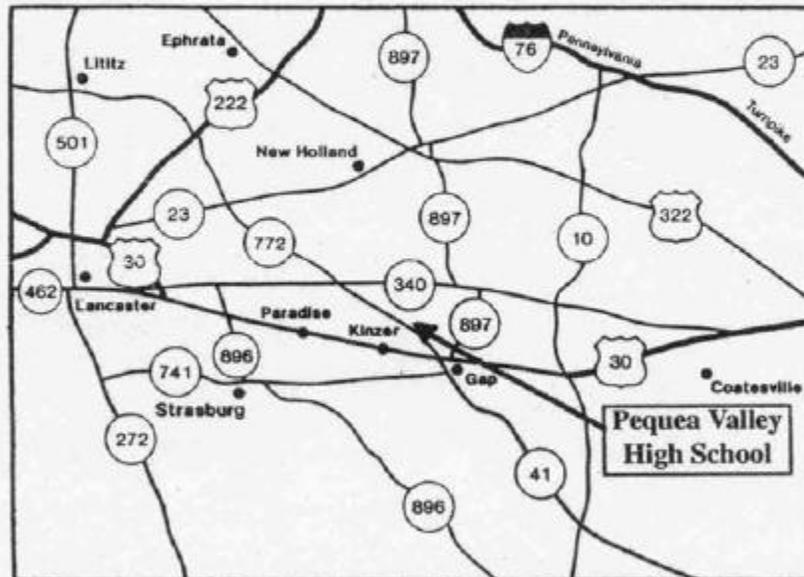
ZIP: _____

MAIL TO: PennDOT Engineering District 3-0
715 Jordan Avenue
Montoursville, PA 17754-0214

U.S. Route 30 Corridor

Open House
April 15, 1993

Pequea Valley High School
4033 East Newport Road (S.R. 772)
7 - 9 PM



The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, is initiating a Corridor Improvement Study and Environmental Impact Statement of U.S. 30 from the intersection with S.R. 896 in East Lampeter Township to the intersection with S.R. 897 in Salisbury Township. Generally, the proposed improvements will widen portions of the existing roadway to four or five lanes. The relocation of U.S. 30 to another corridor will not be considered.

The purpose of this Open House will be to inform the public of the proposed study. Representatives of PennDOT will be available to explain the project to individuals and solicit public opinion about present conditions along the Route 30 Corridor.

The Open House location is accessible to persons having disabilities. Anyone who needs additional information, has special needs, or requires special aids should contact Mike Keiser PennDOT District 8-0 at (717) 787-7883 by April 12 so that special disability needs may be accommodated.

In an effort to continually inform the public, a direct mailing list of interested citizens is being compiled. If you wish to receive future mailings, please call (717) 540-6040.

S.R. 88/837

OPEN HOUSE

PUBLIC MEETING

Date: November 14, 2006

Open House: 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

Location: New Eagle Borough Building
157 Main Street
New Eagle, PA 15067

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) District 12-0 invites you to attend an Open House Public Meeting to review final plans for the construction of the S.R. 0088 and S.R. 0837 Intersection Improvement Project. The project is intended to provide increased safety and mobility to the S.R. 88/837 intersection.

During the Open House Public Meeting, the public will:

- Receive an update on the current status of the project, including the schedule.
- Have the opportunity to provide feedback on the project.

This meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. Anyone requiring special assistance should contact Betsy Stewart at 412-922-6880.



PENNDOT District 12-0

BROADWAY  avenue

Public Open House

with presentation

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PENNDOT) District 1-0 **invites you** to attend an Open-house Public Meeting regarding the Broadway Avenue Improvement Project.

The purpose of the meeting is to introduce the improvement alternatives under consideration, to present the findings of the alternatives analysis, environmental investigations and public input, to receive input regarding Section 106 (cultural resources) information and consider public comment.

project overview

Broadway Ave. (S.R. 60) is a two-lane highway located in the Borough of Wheatland, the City of Farrell, and the City of Sharon in Mercer County, Pennsylvania. The S.R. 60 corridor is an industrial and commercial area in need of improvements due to increasing traffic volumes and travel demands. To improve the existing conditions and help revitalize the area, the Project Team has conducted a number of preliminary engineering, environmental and community studies to determine a range of roadway improvement alternatives. These studies and alternatives will be further refined after receipt of public comments following this public meeting.

date:

June 24, 2004

time:

Open-house:
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

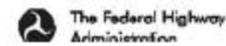
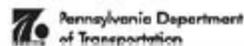
Presentation:

6:30 p.m.

location:

Sharon City Building
155 West Connelly Blvd.
Sharon, PA 16146

The meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. Anyone with special needs or requiring assistance should contact Jennifer Vanderburgh at 412-922-6880.





Fayette County Airport Authority, Fayette County, Pennsylvania

PUBLIC HEARING OPPORTUNITY

The Fayette County Airport Authority (FCAA) plans to improve the 5/23 Runway at the Connellsville Airport (VVS) located in Lemont Furnace, Fayette County, Pennsylvania.

Preliminary plans for the runway are available for review at the Connellsville Airport Manager's Office located along Route 119.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) for the runway improvement is also available for review by the public. The EA is a document that details the environmental impacts of the runway improvement. This project may involve minor property impacts.

The EA is available for review at the following locations until March 3, 2005:

**Connellsville Airport
Manager's Office**
874 Airport Road
(Along Route 119)
Lemont Furnace, PA

**City of Connellsville
Municipal Building**
110 North Arch Street
Connellsville, PA

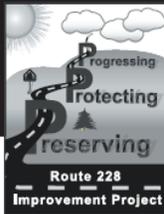
**Penn State University
Eberly Campus (Fayette County)**
Library
Route 119 North
Lemont Furnace, PA

North Union Township
7 South Evans Station Road
Lemont Furnace, PA

Interested parties may request a public hearing in order to present testimony concerning the specific location, major design features, the reconstruction and realignment, and the social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed project. Requests for a public hearing, must be made in writing to: Mr. Fred K. Davis, P.E., Chairman of the FCAA, by February 17, 2005. Requests should be sent to 874 Airport Road, Lemont Furnace, PA 15456.

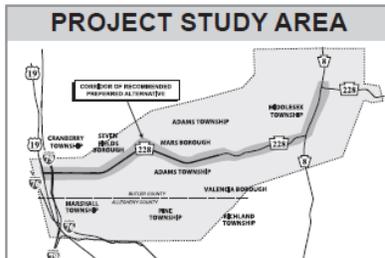
Written comments on the EA will be accepted through March 3, 2005. Please send a letter stating the nature of your comment/concern to: Mr. Fred K. Davis, P.E., 874 Airport Road, Lemont Furnace, PA 15456.

If the FCAA and PennDOT Bureau of Aviation determine there is sufficient public interest to hold a hearing, a notice will be published announcing the date, time and location.



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ROUTE 228 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING & ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



PUBLIC HEARING

DATE:

Thursday, June 7, 2007

LOCATION:

Mars Area High School
520 Route 228, Mars, PA

TIMES:

Plans Display – 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Public Hearing – 6:00 p.m.

Interested parties are encouraged to schedule a time to testify in advance. To schedule a time please call Betsy Stewart at (412) 922-6880. Speakers may also register at the sign-in table the day of the hearing. Up to five minutes will be allotted to each speaker. An opportunity for private testimony will also be available.

The Public Hearing location is accessible to persons with disabilities. Anyone with special needs or requiring aid should contact Betsy Stewart at (412) 922-6880 by May 24, 2007.

See www.route228.com for additional project information.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is conducting a Public Hearing for the Route 228 Improvement Project.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) and draft Section 4(f) document evaluates proposed improvements to Route 228 (S.R. 0228, Section 290) in the municipalities of Cranberry, Seven Fields, Adams, and Middlesex. Alternative 1 is identified as the Recommended Preferred Alternative because it meets the project needs, addresses public input, and best balances and minimizes environmental impacts overall. This alternative follows existing Route 228 from Route 19 to the northern intersection of Route 8 and Route 228.

The EA document reviews the broad range of alternatives considered and analyzes Alternatives 1 and 4 that were studied in detail. Alternative 4 diverges from existing Route 228 to the south near Brick Yard Road.

Copies of the EA and draft Section 4(f) document are available for public review at the following locations:

- Adams Township – 690 Valencia Road, Mars, PA (724-625-2221)
- Butler County – 124 West Diamond Street, Butler PA (724-285-4731)
- Cranberry Township – 2525 Rochester Road, Suite 400, Cranberry Township, PA (724-776-4806)
- Mars Borough – 598 Spring Avenue, Mars, PA (724-625-1858)
- Mars Public Library - 107 Grand Avenue, Mars, PA (724-625-9048)
- Marshall Township – 525 Pleasant Hill Road, Warrendale, PA (724-935-3090)
- Middlesex Township – 133 Browns Hill Road, Valencia, PA (724-898-3571)
- Northland Public Library – 300 Cumberland Road, Pittsburgh, PA (412-366-8100)
- PennDOT Engineering District 10-0 – 2550 Oakland Avenue, Indiana, PA (724-357-2800)
- Pine Township – 230 Pearce Mill Road, Wexford, PA (724-625-1591)
- Richland Township – 4011 Dickey Road, Gibsonia, PA (724-443-5924)
- Seven Fields Borough – 220 Garden Drive, Suite 100, Seven Fields, PA (724-776-3090)
- Valencia Borough – 70 Magee Avenue, Valencia, PA (724-625-3430)

Written comments on the EA and draft Section 4(f) document should be submitted to the District Office by June 22, 2007. Comments on the document will not be accepted via the website or email. Please address all correspondence to:

Mark Rozich, P.E., Project Manager
PA Department of Transportation
Engineering District 10-0
2550 Oakland Avenue
Indiana, PA 15701
Telephone: (724) 357-2852

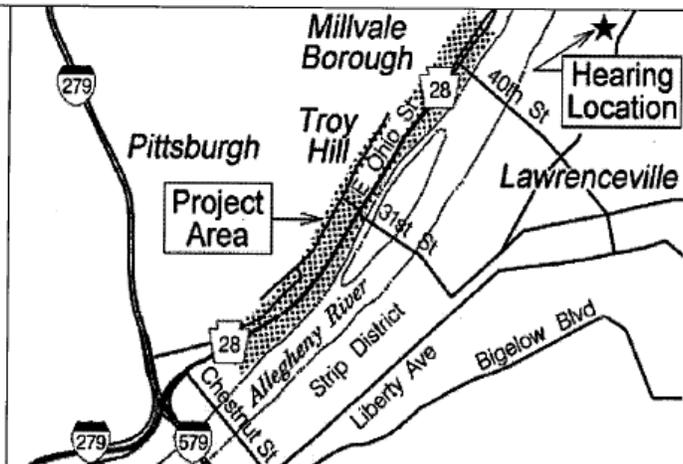


PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
- NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING -
East Ohio Street Improvement Project

Chestnut Street to Millvale Interchange
 State Route 28 (Section A09 & A10)

Date: October 12, 2006
 Plans Display: 3:00 to 6:00 PM
 Public Hearing: 6:30 PM

Location:
 Teamsters' Temple Local 249
 4701 Butler Street
 Pittsburgh, PA 15201



The PA Department of Transportation (PENNDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are conducting a Public Hearing for the East Ohio Street Improvement Project (SR 0028). The project proposes to improve safety and reduce congestion between the Chestnut Street overpass and the Millvale interchange.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to obtain formal comment (public or private & verbal or written) on the project's Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA report presents preliminary designs for each roadway alternative and the results of the environmental, traffic & engineering studies.

The Preferred Alternative 7 will widen the roadway toward the railroad; preserve Saint Nicholas Church; maintain the current Rialto Street location; and minimize impacts to residents, historic and archaeological resources, and the Troy Hill hillside. The EA was approved for circulation by the FHWA on August 29, 2006. The EA is available for public review and comment at the following locations:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| [1] Millvale Borough Bldg.
501 Lincoln Ave.
Millvale, PA 15209 | [2] Carnegie Library of Pgh.
4400 Forbes Avenue
Pgh., PA 15213 | [3] City Planning Dept.
200 Ross Street, 4 th Floor
Pgh., PA 15219 |
| [4] Carnegie Library of Pgh.
(Lawrenceville Branch)
279 Fisk Street
Pgh., PA 15201 | [5] County Dept. of Public Works
County Office Building
542 Forbes Avenue, Room 501
Pgh., PA 15219 | |

Additional copies of the EA will be available at the PENNDOT District 11-0 Office (address below) and the FHWA Office in Harrisburg. Comments on the EA will be accepted by PENNDOT through October 27, 2006, at the address below. The location of the Hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. If you require special accommodations, or additional information, please contact:



Jeffrey Clatty, P.E.
PENNDOT, District 11-0
45 Thoms Run Road
Bridgeville, PA 15017
(412) 429-4864





**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Pittsburgh District

**U.S. 422/SR 66 & 28
KITTANNING BYPASS**

**SR 6028, SECTION 015
ARMSTRONG COUNTY, PA**

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1959, and in cooperation with the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, have prepared a *Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Section 404 Permit Application* for the Kittanning Bypass, State Route 6028, Section 015 in Armstrong County, Pennsylvania.

The Kittanning Bypass is an approximate 2.4-mile long proposed improvement to Traffic Routes 28/66 and US 422. The project will extend from the high level bridge over the Allegheny River (Graff Bridge) north to the intersection of Traffic Route 85.

Three alternative alignments have been developed. Descriptions of these alternatives and the results of the engineering, traffic, and environmental studies, have been documented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Draft EIS will be available on January 13, 1995 for review and comment for a period ending on March 3, 1995. Copies of the Draft EIS will be available at: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's Engineering District 10-0 office (Indiana, PA); Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's Engineering District 10-0 office (Kittanning, PA); the Federal Highway Administration (Harrisburg, PA); Armstrong County Department of Planning and Development (Kittanning, PA); Armstrong County Chamber of Commerce, 2 Butler Road, the Prothonotary, Armstrong County Courthouse (Kittanning, PA); Kittanning Borough Building (Kittanning, PA); Kittanning Public Library (Kittanning, PA); Kittanning Senior High School (Kittanning, PA); Ford City Borough Building (Ford City, PA); Ford City Public Library (Ford City, PA); Ford City Junior-Senior High School (Ford City, PA); Lenape Vo-Tech School (Ford City, PA); Lenape Elementary School (Ford City, PA); Armstrong School District Administration Building (Ford City, PA); Penn State Cooperative Extension Office (Kittanning, PA); Community Action Agency (Kittanning, PA); Kittanning Township Elementary School (Kittanning, PA). A copy of the report will be available for review during regular business hours at each of these locations.

This document will also serve as the documentation for an application for a Section 404 and/or Section 10 Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the proposed discharge of dredged, excavated and/or fill materials into Waters of the United States associated with the proposed highway. The decision whether to issue the Section 404 and/or Section 10 Permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed project on the public interest. The decision will reflect the national concern for the protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposed project must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposed project will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof: among those are conservation values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Draft EIS document contains a Congestion Management System analysis as an appendix. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission is a cooperating agency with the Department. Comments are being accepted for the Congestion Management System analysis during the comment period for the Draft EIS.

A public hearing will be held jointly to satisfy the public hearing requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has identified jurisdictional wetlands and/or other waters of the United States which are regulated by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. This hearing provides the opportunity to present views, opinions, and information that will be considered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in evaluating a Department of the Army permit for the proposed project. This public hearing will also provide an opportunity to present comments, opinions, and/or information on the Congestion Management Systems Analysis prepared by the Department, in cooperation with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission.

This public hearing will be conducted at the United States Army Reserve Center located along State Route 85 in Rayburn Township on February 16, 1995. The Department of Transportation official testimony will begin at 4:00 p.m. followed by public testimony, until all testimony is received.

At the public hearing, testimony may be given by the following means:

1. Oral testimony in the meeting room
2. Oral testimony in private
3. Written testimony presented at the hearing, and
4. Written testimony presented during the comment period following the hearing.

All comments will become part of the formal record of the hearing. Oral comments will be limited to five minutes or less to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak. Anyone can submit additional written comments in support of their oral testimony.

Copies of any written comments expressing concerns for aquatic resources may be submitted to:

US Army Corps of Engineers, Chief Regulatory Branch, 1000 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222
ATTN: E. Raymond Beringer

Written comments concerning other issues may be submitted to:

Donald R. McNeal, P.E., District Engineer, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Engineering District 10-0, PO Box 429, Route 286 South, Indiana, Pennsylvania 15701, ATTN: Tim Jablunovsky, Environmental Manager

Following the public hearing, a Final Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared to describe and evaluate a recommended alternative and to address those comments received. The Final EIS will be circulated to all groups and individuals who make substantive comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS and to all those who send a written request for a copy. Availability of the Final EIS will be published in area newspapers.

The public hearing location is accessible to people with disabilities. If you need special accommodations or would like information, please contact:

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Engineering District 10-0, PO Box 429, Route 286 South, Indiana, Pennsylvania 15701
ATTN: Tim Jablunovsky, Telephone: (412) 357-2982, Howard Yerusalem, P.E., Secretary of Transportation



US Army Corps
of Engineers

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION**

**US ROUTE 220 IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT BETWEEN THE TYRONE EXPRESSWAY IN BLAIR COUNTY AND THE
MT. NITTANY EXPRESSWAY IN CENTRE COUNTY.**

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and in cooperation with the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the United States Environmental Protection Agency, have prepared a *Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Section 4(f) Evaluation (EIS)* for the Route 220 Improvement Project proposed between the Tyrone Expressway at Bald Eagle Village in Blair County and the Mt. Nittany Expressway in Centre County.

The project will focus on the eighteen mile section of US Routes 220 and 322 between the Tyrone Expressway near Bald Eagle to the Mt Nittany Expressway. The goals of the project include improving the level of safety for motorists traveling in the corridor, accommodating heavy truck traffic and projected traffic volumes and patterns, and providing an acceptable level of service along the mid-block sections and at intersections and interchanges in the corridor. The Draft EIS describes and evaluates alternative alignments, interchange locations, and local road connections in this area.

The Draft EIS will be available beginning Friday, December 23, 1994 for a review and comment period ending on February 20, 1995. Copies of the report will be available during regular business hours at the following locations: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation District 2-0 office (Clearfield, PA), the Federal Highway Administration (Harrisburg, PA), Blair County Planning (Hollidaysburg, PA), Centre County Planning Commission (Bellefonte, PA), Centre Regional Planning Commission (State College, PA), Centre Regional Council of Governments (State College, PA), Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (Bellefonte, PA), Moshannon Valley Economic Development Partnership (Phillipsburg, PA), Patton Township Municipal Building (Tyrone, PA), Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (Altoona, PA), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (State College, PA), United States Postal Service (Port Matilda, PA), Patton Library (The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA), Schlow Memorial Library (State College, PA), and Tyrone-Snyder Public Library (Tyrone, PA).

This document will also serve as the documentation for an application for a Section 404 and/or Section 10 Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the proposed discharge of dredged, excavated, and/or fill materials into Waters of the United States associated with the proposed highway. The decision whether to issue the Section 303 and/or Section 10 permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts including cumulative impacts of the proposed project on the public interest. The decision will reflect the national concern for the protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposed project must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposed project will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife value, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, and the general needs and welfare of the people.

A joint Pennsylvania Department of Transportation/United States Army Corps of Engineers Public Hearing will be held to provide interested persons the opportunity to testify concerning the effects of the project, including its social, economic, environmental, and other effects.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the United State Army Corps of Engineers, has identified jurisdictional wetlands and/or other waters of the United States which are regulated by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. This Hearing provides the opportunity to present views, opinions, and information which will be considered by the United States Army of Engineers in evaluation a Department of the Army Permit for the proposed project. This Public Hearing will be held at State College Junior High School (Park Forest Junior High School) on Wednesday, February 1, 1995 and at the Bald Eagle Fire Hall on Thursday, February 2, 1995. The Public Hearings will be conducted from 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. and from 6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. with introductory remarks to be given by a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation official at 1:00 P.M., with introductory remarks to be given by a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation official at 1:00 P.M. and at 6:00 P.M. At the Public Hearing, testimony may be given by the following means:

1. Public or oral testimony,
2. Oral testimony transcribed by a stenographer in private,
3. Oral testimony tape recorded, and
4. Written testimony.

All comments received will become part of the formal record of the hearing. Oral comments will be limited to five minutes or less to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak. Anyone can submit additional written comments in support of their oral testimony. Copies of any written comments expressing concerns for aquatic resources may be submitted to:

Mr. Richard Spencer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
CENAB-OP-RX
Post Office Box 1715
Baltimore, Maryland 21203-1715

Written comments concerning other issues may be submitted to:

PennDOT District 2-000
1924-30 Daisy Street
Post Office Box 342
Clearfield, Pennsylvania 16830
Attention: Mr. James R Bushurst, P.E.

A Final Environmental Impact Statement will then be prepared to describe and evaluate the recommended alternative and to address those comments received. The Final EIS will be circulated to all persons and associations having made substantial comments on the Draft EIS and to all those requesting, in writing, a copy of the final document. A further notice on the availability of the Final EIS will be published when this document is completed.

The Public Hearing location is accessible to people with disabilities. If you need special accommodations or would like additional information other than oral testimony reservations, please contact: Mr. Robert Jaconski, Assistant Liaison Engineer, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, 1924-30 Daisy Street, Post Office Box 342, Clearfield, Pennsylvania 16830.

Howard Yersulim, P.E.
Secretary of Transportation

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY - ROUTE 33 EXTENSION**

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation officially announces the availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and the designation of the Selected Alternative for the Route 33 Extension project in Northampton County, Pennsylvania.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was approved by the Federal Highway Administration on January 4, 1990. A Public Hearing was held on March 8, 1990. The comment period for the Public Hearing and DEIS closed on March 30, 1990.

Three Alternatives for the Route 33 Extension were assessed in the DEIS. Environmental impacts in the areas of land use, population, displacements, neighborhoods, community facilities and services, transportation and energy, visual resources, air quality, and noise were presented. Subsequent to circulation of the DEIS, Alternative 1 was modified to reduce farmland impacts. This alternative was labelled Alternative 3 and is the Selected Alternative presented in this document. A comprehensive discussion of all the alternatives studied during the project development process for this project is contained in Section II of the FEIS.

The FEIS was approved by the Federal Highway Administration for public review on May 9, 1993. The FEIS is available for public review at the following locations between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM:

Federal Highway Administration
Pennsylvania Divisional Office
Mr. Phil Ouellet
District Engineer - East
228 Walnut Street
P.O. Box 1086
Harrisburg, PA 17108

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Engineering District 5-0
Mr. Walter Bortree, P.E.
District Engineer
1713 Lehigh Street
Allentown, PA 18103

Joint Planning Commission
Lehigh-Northampton Counties
Mr. Michael Kaiser
Executive Director
961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310
Allentown, PA 18103-9397

Bethlehem Township Board of Commissioners
Township Manager
2740 Fifth Street
Bethlehem, PA 18017

Lower Saucon Municipal Building
Mr. Bruce Davies, Solicitor
R.D. #3, Philadelphia Pike
Bethlehem, PA 18015

Northampton County
Mr. Gerald E Seyfried
County Executive
Government Center
7th and Washington Streets
Easton, PA 18042

Palmer Township Board of Commissioners
Municipal Building
Box 3039
3245 Freemansburg Avenue
Palmer Township, PA 18043

The comment period on the FEIS will be closed on August 20, 1993. All comments on the document received by August 23, 1993 in the PennDOT, District Engineering 5-0 Office will be addressed, and if required, incorporated into the project's final plans, specifications, and estimate package.

If there are any questions about the project's Designated Alternate or the FEIS, please contact John Porter, Project Manager, at 215-798-4146.

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
RECORD OF DECISION NOTICE**

**Lackawanna Valley
 Industrial Highway**

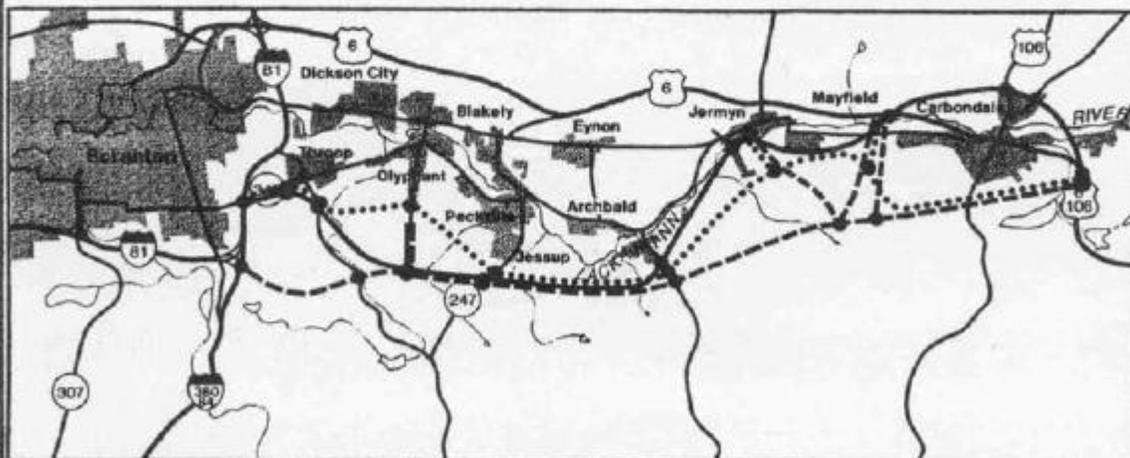
Notice is hereby given that the Department of Transportation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has received the approval of the Division Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration (Federal Building, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania) for the location and design of the Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway (S.R. 3027, Section A00) in Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania.

The approved design and location is for Alternates A-2, A-1, CRC-4 and CRC--4 in Segments 1,2,3, and 4 respectively.

Plans, maps, sketches, as well as all other information concerning the approval, are available for public inspection at:

District Engineer's Office
 Department of Transportation
 O'Neill Highway
 Dunmore, Pennsylvania

Howard Yerusalim, P.E.
 Secretary of Transportation



PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES

February 1982



- Alternative A
- - - Alternative B
- Alternative C
- Interchange

Note: Alternatives will be combined by segment to achieve the best overall location.

FHWA EXAMPLE - 139(I) NOTICE

[Scenario: EIS project, all Federal agency decisions have been completed.]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION [4910-22-P]

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Final Federal Agency Actions on Proposed Highway in Your state

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT

ACTION: Notice of Limitation on Claims for Judicial Review of Actions by FHWA and Other Federal Agencies

SUMMARY: This notice announces actions taken by the FHWA and other Federal agencies that are final within the meaning of 23 USC §139(I)(1). The actions relate to a proposed highway project, U.S. Route 10, Milo to Freeport, in Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln Counties in the State of Your state. Those actions grant licenses, permits, and approvals for the project.

DATES: By this notice, the FHWA is advising the public of final agency actions subject to 23 USC §139(I)(1). A claim seeking judicial review of the Federal agency actions on the highway project will be barred unless the claim is filed on or before [Insert date 180 days after publication in the Federal Register]. If the Federal law that authorizes judicial review of a claim provides a time period of less than 180 days for filing such claim, then that shorter time period still applies.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Arthur Davis, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, 3000 Federal Drive, Capital City, Your state 00000-0000; telephone: (888) 888-0000; e-mail:

Arthur.Davis@fhwa.dot.gov. The FHWA Your state Division Office's normal business hours are 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. (eastern time). You may also contact Mr. Benjamin Smith, P.E., Your state Department of Transportation, 10000 State Street, Capital City, Your state 00000-0000; telephone: (888) 888-1111.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that the FHWA and other Federal agencies have taken final agency actions by issuing licenses, permits, and approvals for the following highway project in the State of Your state: U.S. Route 10 from Milo to Freeport in Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln Counties. The project will be a 79.8 km (49.7 mi) long, four-lane freeway with grade separations at all intersecting roadways (i.e. a fully access-controlled facility). It will begin northwest of Milo near the existing intersection of YS Route 64 and U.S. Route 10. It will then proceed to the north and east of Milo, north of Berlin and south of Darby. It will end northwest of Freeport, tying into the western end of the U.S. Route 10 Freeport Bypass. The proposed freeway will be on new alignment. The actions by the Federal agencies, and the laws under which such actions were taken, are described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the project, approved on August 10, 2005, in the FHWA Record of Decision (ROD) issued on November 18, 2005, and in other documents in the FHWA administrative record. The FEIS, ROD, and other documents in the FHWA administrative record file are available by contacting the FHWA or the Your state Department of Transportation at the addresses provided above. The

FHWA FEIS and ROD can be viewed and downloaded from the project Web site at www.dot.yourstate.gov/env/us10feis.htm or viewed at public libraries in the project area.

This notice applies to all Federal agency decisions as of the issuance date of this notice and all laws under which such actions were taken, including but not limited to:

1. General: National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) [42 USC 4321-4351]; Federal-Aid Highway Act [23 U.S.C. 109].
2. Air: Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 7401-7671(q).
3. Land: Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 [49 U.S.C. 303]; Landscaping and Scenic Enhancement (Wildflowers), 23 U.S.C. 319.
4. Wildlife: Endangered Species Act [16 USC 1531-1544 and Section 1536], Marine Mammal Protection Act [16 U.S.C. 1361], Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act [16 U.S.C. 661-667(d)], Migratory Bird Treaty Act [16 U.S.C. 703-712].
5. Historic and Cultural Resources: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended [16 U.S.C. 470(f) et seq.]; Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1977 [16 U.S.C. 470(aa)-11]; Archeological and Historic Preservation Act [16 U.S.C. 469-469(c)]; Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) [25 U.S.C. 3001-3013].

6. Social and Economic: Civil Rights Act of 1964 [42 U.S.C. 2000(d)-2000(d)(1)]; American Indian Religious Freedom Act [42 U.S.C. 1996]; Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) [7 U.S.C. 4201-4209].
7. Wetlands and Water Resources: Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1251-1377 (Section 404, Section 401, Section 319); Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), 16 U.S.C. 4601-4604; Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), 42 U.S.C. 300(f)-300(j)(6); Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, 33 U.S.C. 401-406; Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, 16 U.S.C. 1271-1287; Emergency Wetlands Resources Act, 16 U.S.C. 3921, 3931; TEA-21 Wetlands Mitigation, 23 U.S.C. 103(b)(6)(m), 133(b)(11); Flood Disaster Protection Act, 42 U.S.C. 4001-4128.
8. Executive Orders: E.O. 11990 Protection of Wetlands; E.O. 11988 Floodplain Management; E.O. 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations; E.O. 11593 Protection and Enhancement of Cultural Resources; E.O. 13007 Indian Sacred Sites; E.O. 13287 Preserve America; E.O. 13175 Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments; E.O. 11514 Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality; E.O. 13112 Invasive Species.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Authority: 23 USC §139(l)(1)

Issued on: **[date signed]**

Arthur Davis
Division Administrator
Capital City

FHWA 139(I) SINGLE PROJECT SAMPLE FORM

[Scenario: All Federal agency decisions, including §404, have been completed.]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION [4910-22-P]

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Final Federal Agency Actions on Proposed Highway in *[fill in state name]*

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT

ACTION: Notice of Limitation on Claims for Judicial Review of Actions by FHWA and Other Federal Agencies

SUMMARY: This notice announces actions taken by the FHWA and other Federal agencies that are final within the meaning of 23 USC §139(I)(1). The actions relate to a proposed highway project, *[fill in highway name/number and starting and ending cities or other points]* in the County *[fill in county name(s)]*, State of *[fill in state name]*. Those actions grant licenses, permits, and approvals for the project.

DATES: By this notice, the FHWA is advising the public of final agency actions subject to 23 USC §139(I)(1). A claim seeking judicial review of the Federal agency actions on the highway project will be barred unless the claim is filed on or before [Insert date 180 days after publication in the Federal Register] *[previous phrase must be included as written, including the brackets, since it is an instruction to the Federal Register]*. If the Federal law that authorizes judicial review of a claim provides a time period of less than 180 days for filing such claim, then that shorter time period still applies.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: *[fill in FHWA contact information, including name, title, agency name, office address and regular office hours, telephone, and e-mail]* or *[fill in State contact information, including name, title, agency name, office address and regular office hours, telephone, and e-mail]*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that the FHWA and other Federal agencies have taken final agency actions by issuing licenses, permits, and approvals for the following highway project in the State of *[fill in state name]*: *[Fill in very brief description of project (target is no more than 3-5 sentences): project location, project/construction type, length of project, general purpose, FHWA project reference number]*.

The actions by the Federal agencies, and the laws under which such actions were taken, are described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the project, approved on *[fill in date]*, in the FHWA Record of Decision (ROD) issued on *[fill in date]*, and in other documents in the FHWA administrative record. The FEIS, ROD, and other documents in the FHWA administrative record file are available by contacting the FHWA or the *[fill in name of State agency]* at the addresses provided above. The FHWA FEIS and ROD can be viewed and downloaded from the project Web site at *[fill in the link]* or viewed at public libraries in the project area *[delete text on electronic and library access if not applicable]*.

This notice applies to all Federal agency decisions as of the issuance date of this notice and all laws under which such actions were taken, including but

not limited to ***[Insert the key laws under which Federal agencies have made final, documented decisions about the project; drafters should not list any law for which the Federal agency decision is not final.]***

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Authority: 23 USC §139(l)(1)

Issued on: **[date signed]**

[Signatory Name]
[Signatory Title]
[City]

FHWA 139(I) MULTIPLE PROJECTS SAMPLE FORM

[Scenario: Projects involve a variety of NEPA categories and some have not yet received final decisions on permits from other Federal agencies.]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION [4910-22-P]

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Final Federal Agency Actions on Proposed Highways in [fill in state name]

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT

ACTION: Notice of Limitation on Claims for Judicial Review of Actions by FHWA and Other Federal Agencies

SUMMARY: This notice announces actions taken by the FHWA and other Federal agencies that are final within the meaning of 23 USC §139(I)(1)-(2) *[delete the “-(2)” if the notice does not cover any SEIS projects]*. The actions relate to various proposed highway projects in the State of **[fill in state name]**. Those actions grant licenses, permits, and approvals for the projects.

DATES: By this notice, the FHWA is advising the public of final agency actions subject to 23 USC §139(I)(1)-(2) *[delete the “-(2)” if the notice does not cover any SEIS projects]*. A claim seeking judicial review of the Federal agency actions on any of the listed highway projects will be barred unless the claim is filed on or before [Insert date 180 days after publication in the Federal Register] *[previous phrase must be included as written, including the brackets, since it is an instruction to the Federal Register]*. If the Federal

law that authorizes judicial review of a claim provides a time period of less than 180 days for filing such claim, then that shorter time period still applies.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: *[fill in FHWA contact information, including name, title, agency name, office address and regular office hours, telephone, and e-mail] or [fill in State contact information, including name, title, agency name, office address and regular office hours, telephone, and e-mail].*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that the FHWA and other Federal agencies have taken final agency actions by issuing licenses, permits, and approvals for the highway projects in the State of *[fill in state name]* that are listed below. The actions by the Federal agencies on a project, and the laws under which such actions were taken, are described in the documented categorical exclusion (CE), environmental assessment (EA), environmental impact statement (EIS), or supplemental EIS (SEIS) issued in connection with the project *[delete here, and elsewhere, references to any document types that are not included in this notice]*, and in other documents in the FHWA administrative record for the project. The CE, EA, FEIS, or SEIS, and other documents from the FHWA administrative record files for the listed projects are available by contacting the FHWA or the *[fill in name of State agency]* at the addresses provided above. FEIS, SEIS, and ROD documents can be viewed and downloaded from the FHWA Division's Web site at *[fill in the link]* or viewed at public libraries in the relevant project area *[delete text on electronic and library access if not applicable]*.

This notice applies to all Federal agency decisions on the listed projects as of the issuance date of this notice and all laws under which such actions were taken, including but not limited to ***[Insert the key laws under which Federal agencies have made final, documented decisions about the projects subject to this notice; drafters should list only those laws under which a Federal agency made a final decision for at least one (or more) of the projects covered by this notice.]***

The projects subject to this notice are:

1. Project Location: ***[fill in city name, county name, highway number]***.
Project Reference Number: ***[fill in FHWA project number]***. Project type: ***[fill in very brief description of project (target is no more than 3-5 sentences): project location, project/construction type, length of project, general purpose,]***. NEPA document: ***[fill in NEPA document type and ROD/FONSI (if applicable), date of issuance, and Web address if electronically available]***.
2. Project Location: ***[fill in city name, county name, highway number]***.
Project Reference Number: ***[fill in FHWA project number]***. Project type: ***[fill in very brief description of project (target is no more than 3-5 sentences): project location, project/construction type, length of project, general purpose,]***. NEPA document: ***[fill in NEPA document type and ROD/FONSI (if applicable), date of issuance, and Web address if electronically available]***.

3. Project Location: ***[fill in city name, county name, highway number]***.
Project Reference Number: ***[fill in FHWA project number]***. Project type:
[fill in very brief description of project (target is no more than 3-5 sentences): project location, project/construction type, length of project, general purpose,]. NEPA document: ***[fill in NEPA document type and ROD/FONSI (if applicable), date of issuance, and Web address if electronically available]***.
4. Project Location: ***[fill in city name, county name, highway number]***.
Project Reference Number: ***[fill in FHWA project number]***. Project type:
[fill in very brief description of project (target is no more than 3-5 sentences): project location, project/construction type, length of project, general purpose,]. NEPA document: ***[fill in NEPA document type and ROD/FONSI (if applicable), date of issuance, and Web address if electronically available]***.
5. Project Location: ***[fill in city name, county name, highway number]***.
Project Reference Number: ***[fill in FHWA project number]***. Project type:
[fill in very brief description of project (target is no more than 3-5 sentences): project location, project/construction type, length of project, general purpose,]. NEPA document: ***[fill in NEPA document type and ROD/FONSI (if applicable), date of issuance, and Web address if electronically available]***.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205,

Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive

Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Authority: 23 USC §139(l)(1)-(2) [*strike “-(2)” if no SEIS project is listed*]

Issued on: [date signed]

[Signatory Name]
[Signatory Title]
[City]

FHWA 139(I) POST-ROD FEDERAL AGENCY DECISION SAMPLE FORM

[Scenario: FHWA previously published a notice for its NEPA and other decisions, this notice covers USACE and other Federal agency decisions since the first notice.]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION [4910-22-P]

Federal Highway Administration

Final Federal Agency Actions on Proposed Highway in [fill in state name]

AGENCIES: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT

ACTION: Notice of Limitation on Claims for Judicial Review of Actions by Army Corps of Engineers, (USACE), DOD, and Other Federal Agencies

SUMMARY: This notice announces actions taken by the USACE and other Federal agencies that are final within the meaning of 23 USC §139(I)(1). The actions relate to a proposed highway project, **[fill in highway name/number and starting and ending cities or other points]** in the County of **[fill in county name(s)]**, State of **[fill in state name]**. Those actions grant licenses, permits, and approvals for the project.

DATES: By this notice, the FHWA is advising the public of final agency actions subject to 23 USC §139(I)(1). A claim seeking judicial review of the Federal agency actions that are covered by this notice will be barred unless the claim is filed on or before [Insert date 180 days after publication in the Federal Register] **[previous phrase must be included as written, including the brackets, since it is an instruction to the Federal Register]**. If the Federal law that authorizes judicial review of a claim provides a time period of

less than 180 days for filing such claim, then that shorter time period still applies.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: *[fill in FHWA contact information, including name, title, agency name, office address and regular office hours, telephone, and e-mail], [fill in USACE contact information, including name, title, agency name, office address and regular office hours, telephone, and e-mail], or [fill in State contact information, including name, title, agency name, office address and regular office hours, telephone, and e-mail].*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On *[fill in date]*, the FHWA published a "Notice of Final Federal Agency Actions on Proposed Highway in *[fill in state name]*" in the Federal Register at *[fill in FR reference]* for the following highway project: *[Fill in very brief description of project (target is no more than 3-5 sentences): project location, project/construction type, length of project, general purpose, FHWA project reference number, type(s) of FHWA NEPA document(s), and date(s) issued]*. Notice is hereby given that, subsequent to the earlier FHWA notice, the USACE has taken final agency actions within the meaning of 23 USC §139(l)(1) by issuing permits and approvals for the highway project. The actions by the USACE, related final actions by other Federal agencies, and the laws under which such actions were taken, are described in the USACE decisions and its administrative record for the project, referenced as *[fill in USACE permit*

number(s). That information is available by contacting the USACE at the address provided above.

Information about the project also is available from the FHWA and the ***[fill in name of State agency]*** at the addresses provided above. The FHWA ***[insert references to FHWA NEPA documents, such as FEIS and ROD or EA and FONSI]*** can be viewed and downloaded from the project Web site at ***[fill in the link]***, or viewed at public libraries in the project area ***[delete text on electronic and library access if not applicable]***. The USACE decision can be viewed and downloaded from the project Web site at ***[fill in the link]*** or viewed at public libraries in the project area ***[delete text on electronic and library access if not applicable]***.

This notice applies to all USACE and other Federal agency final actions taken after the issuance date of the FHWA Federal Register notice described above. The laws under which actions were taken include, but are not limited to ***[Insert the key laws under which Federal agencies have made final, documented decisions about the project since the date of the first §139(I) notice; drafters should not list any law for which the Federal agency decision is not final or that is not a key Federal law under which USACE or another Federal agency made decisions or determinations on the project after the issuance date of the first §139(I) Federal Register notice]***:

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Authority: 23 USC §139(l)(1)

Issued on: **[date signed]**

[FHWA Signatory Name]
[FHWA Signatory Title]
[City]

16186

Federal Register / Vol. 71, No. 61 / Thursday, March 30, 2006 / Notices

Subject: Mail Vote 477—Resolution 010f; TC3 Japan, Korea-South East Asia; Special Passenger Amending Resolution between Japan and China (excluding Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR).

Intended effective date: 21 March 2006.

Docket Number: OST–2006–24174.

Date Filed: March 10, 2006.

Parties: Members of the International Air Transport Association.

Subject: PSC/RESO/129 dated February 28, 2006; Finally Adopted Resolutions & Recommended Practices r1–r22; PSC/MINS/015 dated February 28, 2006; Minutes.

Intended effective date: June 1, 2006.

Renee V. Wright,

*Program Manager, Docket Operations,
Federal Register Liaison.*

[FR Doc. E6–4630 Filed 3–29–06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–62–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Final Federal Agency Actions on Proposed Highway in Pennsylvania

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of limitation on claims for judicial review of actions by FHWA and other federal agencies.

SUMMARY: This notice announces actions taken by the FHWA and other Federal agencies that are final within the meaning of 23 U.S.C. 139(l)(1). The actions relate to a proposed highway project, SR 6247 from SR0247 to SR 1012 (Salem Road) Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania and those actions grant licenses, permits, and approvals for the project.

DATES: By this notice, the FHWA is advising the public of final agency actions subject to 23 U.S.C. 139(l)(1). A claim seeking judicial review of the Federal agency actions on the highway project will be barred unless the claim is filed on or before September 26, 2006. If the Federal law that authorizes judicial review of a claim provides a time period of less than 180 days for filing such claim, then that shorter time period still applies.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karyn Vandervoort, Environmental Program Manager, Federal Highway Administration, 228 Walnut Street, Room 508, Harrisburg, PA 17101–1720, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., (717) 221–2276, karyn.vandervoort@fhwa.dot.gov or Stephen J. Shimko, P.E., District Executive, Pennsylvania Department of

Transportation, Engineering District 4–0, 55 Keystone Industrial Park, Dunmore, PA 18512; telephone: (570) 963–4061.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that the FHWA have taken final agency actions by issuing licenses, permits, and approvals for the following highway project in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: Construction of a new 2-lane road providing access from State Route 0247 (S.R. 0247) in Jessup Borough to Salem Road (S.R. 1012) in Archbald Borough in Lackawanna County. The proposed roadway would begin on S.R. 0247 south of the S.R. 0247 interchange with the Robert P. Casey Highway (S.R. 0006), traverse the proposed Valley View Business Park property, cross the Robert P. Casey Highway (S.R. 0006) then utilize an existing Archbald Borough roadway within the PEI Power Park. The project will pass through abandoned mine land with second growth forest. The roadway will provide access to the Robert P. Casey Highway (S.R. 0006) supporting regional and local development. The actions by the Federal agencies, and the laws under which such actions were taken, are described in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project, approved on January 7, 2004, in the FHWA Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) issued on November 30, 2004, and in other documents in the FHWA administrative record. The EA, FONSI, and other documents in the FHWA administrative record file are available by contacting the FHWA or the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation at the addresses provided above. The FHWA EA and FONSI can be viewed at public libraries in the project area or at the PennDOT District 4–0 Office at 55 Keystone Industrial Park, Dunmore, PA. This notice applies to all Federal agency decisions as of the issuance date of this notice and all laws under which such actions were taken, including but not limited to:

1. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) [42 U.S.C. 4321–4351].
2. Federal-Aid Highway Act [23 U.S.C. 109].
3. Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 [49 U.S.C. 303]; Landscaping and Scenic Enhancement (Wildflowers), 23 U.S.C. 319.
4. Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 7401–7671(q).
5. Endangered Species Act [16 U.S.C. 1531–1544 and Section 1536]; Marine Mammal Protection Act [16 U.S.C. 1361]; Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act [16 U.S.C. 661–667(d)]; Migratory Bird Treaty Act [16 U.S.C. 703–712].

6. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended [16 U.S.C. 470(f) *et seq.*]; Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act [16 U.S.C. 469–469c].

7. Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1251–1377 (Section 404, Section 401, Section 319).

8. Executive Orders: E.O. 11990 Protection of Wetlands; E.O. 11988 Floodplain Management; E.O. 12892 Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations; E.O. 11514 Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality; E.O. 13112 Invasive Species.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 139(l)(1).

James A. Cheatham,

Division Administrator, Harrisburg.

[FR Doc. 06–3070 Filed 3–29–06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–22–M

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

March 23, 2006.

The Department of Treasury has submitted the following public information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling the Treasury Bureau Clearance Officer listed. Comments regarding this information collection should be addressed to the OMB reviewer listed and to the Treasury Department Clearance Officer, Department of the Treasury, Room 11000, 1750 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20220.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before May 1, 2006 to be assured of consideration.

Bureau of Public Debt

OMB Number: 1535–0118.

Type of Review: Extension.

Title: Disposition of Securities Belonging to a Decedent's Estate Being Settled Without Administration.

Form: BPD PD F 5336.

Description: Used by person(s) entitled to a decedent's estate not being administered to requested disposition of securities and/or related payments.

Proof of Publication Notice in The Morning Call

Under Act No. 587, Approved May 16, 1929, and its amendments

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY OF LEHIGH

SS:

COPY OF NOTICE OR ADVERTISEMENT

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION U.S. 222 CORRIDOR LOCATION STUDY

Notice of Availability For The Draft Environmental Impact Statement

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration have completed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the U.S. 222 Corridor Location Study and are making it available for public review and comment. This report documents the results of the engineering and traffic studies along with the natural, socioeconomic and cultural resources studies completed for this project.

A total of five alternatives were considered in detail in this DEIS, including the No-Build Alternative, and Build Alternatives A, B, C, and D. Alternative A would include widening and improvements to existing roadways; Alternatives B, C, and D would include the construction of a new roadway, in addition to widening and improvements to existing roadways. The DEIS presents the results of the technical studies including engineering, traffic and transportation, and natural, socioeconomic and cultural resources. One of the many topics studied were wetlands. In summary, Alternative A would impact 0.59 acre of wetlands while Alternatives B and C would impact 0.52 acre. Alternative D would impact 0.07 acre of wetlands. All of these impacts would involve a combination of palustrine and riverine wetlands.

Following circulation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, a Public Hearing will be held. Subsequent to the Public Hearing and a comprehensive review of the comments received from the public and the resource agencies, PennDOT will identify a preferred alternative.

The U.S. 222 Corridor Location Study DEIS has been available for review since October 18, 1993 at the following locations:

- Lower Macungie Township Office
5836 Indian Creek Road
Macungie, Pennsylvania 18062
- Upper Macungie Township Office
RD 1, Box 404
Breinigsville, Pennsylvania 18031
- Joint Planning Commission
ABE Airport Government Building
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18103
- Lehigh County Courthouse
County Executive Office
455 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18101

Additionally, copies of the DEIS will be at the PennDOT District 5-0 Office in Allentown and the Federal Highway Administration Office in Harrisburg. Beginning October 18, 1993, comments on the DEIS will be accepted. Written comments should be sent to:

Walter Borries, P.E.
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Engineering District 5-0
1713 Lehigh Street
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18109

ATTENTION: Timothy M. Hill
Project Manager

Copies of the DEIS will be made available for a 30-day public review period. Comments must be sent to PennDOT District 5-0 by December 3, 1993.

Any interested party can attend the Public Hearing for this project, which will be held on November 18, 1993, at Eyer Junior High School located on Buckeye Road in Macungie. During this hearing, both written and verbal testimony will be recorded and then addressed in the Final EIS for this project.
#28719 - Oct. 21, 24

Daniel F. McKinley, Controller

of THE

MORNING CALL, INC., of the County and State aforesaid, being duly sworn, deposes and says that THE MORNING CALL is a newspaper of general circulation as defined by the aforesaid Act, whose place of business is 101 North Sixth Street, City of Allentown, County and State aforesaid, and that the said newspaper was established in 1888 since which date THE MORNING CALL has been regularly issued in said County, and that the printed notice or advertisement attached hereto is exactly the same as was printed and published in regular editions and issues of the said THE MORNING CALL on the following dates, viz.:

October 21st

and the 24th day of October 1993 A.D.

Affiant further deposes that he is the designated agent duly authorized by THE MORNING CALL, INC., a corporation, publisher of said THE MORNING CALL, a newspaper of general circulation, to verify the foregoing statement under oath, and that affiant is not interested in the subject matter of the aforesaid notice or advertisement, and that all allegations in the foregoing statements as to time, place and character of publication are true.

Controller

Designated Agent, THE MORNING CALL, INC.

SWORN to and subscribed before me this 25th day of

October 19 93

Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

Notarial Seal
Marie Bissois, Notary Public
Allentown, Lehigh County
My Commission Expires May 13, 1997

*S RECEIPT FOR ADVERTISING COSTS
THE MORNING CALL, a newspaper of general circulation, hereby acknowledges and certifies that the same have been duly paid.

THE MORNING CALL, INC. a Corporation
Publishers of THE MORNING CALL
A Newspaper of General Circulation

By



**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE
US ROUTE 220 IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT
BETWEEN THE TYRONE EXPRESSWAY IN BLAIR COUNTY
AND THE MR. NITTANY EXPRESSWAY IN CENTRE COUNTY**

CORRECTION TO PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE

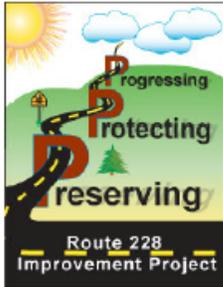
All interested persons are advised that the schedule for the joint Pennsylvania Department of Transportation/US Army Corps of Engineers public hearing for the US Route 220 Improvements project has been changed since the previously published notice.

The public hearing will be held at State College Area Junior High School (Park Forest Junior High School) on Wednesday, February 1, 1995 from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm and at the Bald Eagle Fire Hall on Thursday, February 2, 1995 from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm and from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Introductory remarks will be given by a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation official at 5:00 pm on February 1 and at 1:00 pm and at 6:00 pm on February 2, 1995.



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Baltimore District

4. Public Hearing Presentation



**Route 228 Improvement Project
Public Hearing
June 7, 2007
Testimony Script**

Slide 1

Ken Rich, McCormick Taylor: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I am pleased to welcome you to the Public Hearing for the Route 228 Improvement Project. The Route 228 Improvement Project is being undertaken by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. I am Ken Rich and I will be acting as the Public Hearing Moderator. The Public Hearing is scheduled from 6:00pm to 8:30pm. I would like to remind those in attendance that detailed information regarding the project is available throughout the hearing in the cafeteria at the Open House Plans Display. I would now like to introduce Mr. Joe Dubovi, District Executive for PennDOT's Engineering District 10-0 and Hearing Officer for tonight's Public Hearing.

Slide 2

Joseph P. Dubovi, III, P.E., District Executive: Thanks Ken. On behalf of Governor Ed Rendell, Secretary of Transportation Allen Biehler and Federal Highway Administration Administrator James Cheatham I would like to welcome you here tonight. I would also like to introduce some of my Team who are here this evening on behalf of PennDOT. Some of these folks may still be over at the Open House Plans Display, among them are Brian Allen, Assistant District Executive for Design; Mark Rozich, the Project Manager; Tom Baltz,

Environmental Manager; Bill Young, Right-of-Way Administrator; Paul Koza, Traffic Engineer; Scott Snyder, Permits Engineer; and Mark Hillwig, our Community Relations Coordinator. Karyn Vandervoort is here to represent the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Also here tonight are our consultants; Scott Sternberger, the Consultant Project Manager, from KCI Technologies and other representatives from KCI Technologies and McCormick Taylor, Inc.

At this time, I would like to recognize some key individuals that are present tonight including.... [recognize legislators present].

As Ken mentioned earlier, this project is being undertaken by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has the primary responsibility for initiation and implementation of the state highway program, for conducting studies of feasible alternative locations, holding Public Hearings, selecting routes and designing and constructing transportation projects.

The Federal Highway Administration is responsible for the review and approval of the projects on the interstate, primary and urban systems, and provides reimbursement for portions of the cost of the projects. If the Federal Highway Administration agrees with PennDOT's recommendation on the preferred alternative, they will prepare the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Slide 3

The purpose of this hearing is for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to present project details and collect written and verbal testimony regarding the Route 228 Improvement Project. This Public Hearing is being conducted in compliance with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Act of 1970, and Section 128 Title 23 of the United States Code.

This Public Hearing gives interested parties an opportunity to participate in the process of determining a specific location and major design features of the proposed improvements. In addition, this hearing provides a forum for presenting concerns about social, economic and environmental impacts of the transportation improvement alternatives. We are asking for your comments so that we can address and present all facts to the Federal Highway Administration.

Slide 4

The legal notice for this Public Hearing appeared in the *Butler Eagle* and the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette North* on April 30, 2007 and the *Cranberry Eagle/News Weekly* on May 2, 2007. It also appeared in these papers a second time about a week ago.

Slide 5

The Route 228 Improvement Project *Environmental Assessment (EA)* document has been made available for public and agency review concluding on June 22, 2007. Your comments on the document and the project are welcomed as part of this Public Hearing. The public has 15 days remaining to comment. All substantive issues raised at this hearing or received during the comment period, will be reviewed and addressed by PennDOT and FHWA. Based on the results

of the study and input received at this Public Hearing, FHWA will decide on the issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The FONSI represents environmental clearance for the project, allowing PennDOT to proceed with Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction.

Slide 6

The Transportation Project Development Process is PennDOT's procedure for advancing a transportation improvement project from concept to design. The ultimate goal is to select, design, and construct the most reasonable, practical, cost effective, technically sound and environmentally sensitive transportation improvement option.

Slide 7

A project brochure has been prepared for your information. If you have not yet received one, copies are available at the sign-in table. The brochure summarizes information related to this project and includes a description of the proposed improvements as well as an environmental summary. Please review this brochure to aid your understanding of tonight's presentation.

Slide 8

The Route 228 Improvement Project is located in southern Butler County, PA. Local municipalities directly affected by this project are: Cranberry Township, Seven Fields Borough, Mars Borough, Adams Township, and Middlesex Township.

Slide 9

The Route 228 Improvement Project Purpose and Need was identified through the evaluation of existing transportation facilities, the social and economic

conditions of the project area, consultation with the community, input from the public and business community, and input from environmental resource agencies.

The needs identified for this project include:

- Capacity – Without improvements, excessive delay and congestion are forecasted along the Route 228 corridor.
- Access – As the traffic volumes continue to increase, vehicles accessing Route 228 will experience greater delays.
- Safety – Due to the high usage of Route 228 and the conflicts between local and through traffic, safety along this roadway is a concern.

Aside from transportation oriented problems, there was also a recognition to design the new Route 228 to compliment the existing community and growing business sector. PennDOT used non-traditional methods to better understand the public's desired outcome for the quality of life issues that pointed to the need for improving Route 228, such as, offering alternative modes of travel like bike, pedestrian, or transit and creation of a parkway or boulevard to compliment the landscape.

Slide 10

Scott Sternberger will now discuss the alternative development process including the environmental and engineering studies undertaken, the Environmental Assessment and the Recommended Preferred Alternative.

Scott Sternberger, KCI Technologies: Thank you, Joe.

Before this Public Hearing began, many of you had the opportunity to review the Environmental Assessment, attend the plans display and read the handout that described the alternatives that have been studied in detail. These alternatives were also compared to a No-Build Alternative as part of the process.

Slide 11

Public involvement and public input has been integral to the development of this project since its start. The Public Involvement Program has contributed greatly to the development of this project. Ongoing communication with the general public and various stakeholders involved in the project has helped in determining that the Preferred Alternative satisfies the project needs and compliments the quality of life within the surrounding community. We have held four public meetings, five public officials' meetings, and over 60 special interest group meetings. A project website with current information has also been available since the project began.

Slide 12

Due to the length of the project and complexity of issues in the corridor we established a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) at the onset of the project. The CAC includes approximately 40 volunteers, who represent various segments and interests in the project area; such as: residential, local government agencies, business owners, emergency services providers, educational institutions, environmental organizations, community facilities and other segments of the community and region. I would like to personally thank those Community Advisory Committee members who continue to assist us through the process.

The CAC helped the Project Team to make informed decisions and recommendations. The Community Advisory Committee members have contributed a tremendous amount of time to this project having met with our Project Team eleven times thus far.

Slide 13

During the Preliminary Alternatives Analysis phase of the project, the Project Team conducted studies on 18 different alignments. These alternatives included a range of new alignments to the north and south of Route 228 from the eastern termini to the west; and a range of options to improve existing Route 228 on alignment where possible.

Slide 14

Through the Project Development Process, the potential effects of the alternatives on sensitive features were evaluated, traffic and engineering studies were conducted and the number of alternatives was reduced until the alignments that best balance environmental impacts remained in Detailed Studies.

After working with the CAC and the public we learned that in general, the project stakeholders agreed with the alternatives that were carried on to Detailed Studies. However, the majority of the community participants were not in favor of median barriers, jughandles nor controlled access on Route 228. During this process, offline alternatives in Cranberry Township and at Route 8 were not studied further because they had high environmental impacts and did not draw adequate traffic from Route 228 to relieve congestion and improve safety. In addition, mixed opinions remained on the alternatives around the schools.

Slide 15

After extensive studies, the Project Team presented some new concepts to the CAC and the public that included an urban boulevard design without jughandle turn-arounds and the concrete median barrier.

Slide 16

In working with the public and special interest groups, PennDOT continued to enhance the design, shape and scale of the project considering several principals or performance measures. These include:

- Meet project needs,
- Reduce project costs,
- Integrate land use planning,
- Enhance quality of life, and
- Integrate other modes of transportation.

Slide 17

There are over 40 environmental laws that are applicable to transportation projects. The National Environmental Policy Act requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision making. Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 is intended to preserve publicly owned parklands, waterfowl and wildlife refuges, and significant historic sites. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act helps protect historic resources and archeology. There are numerous laws that protect agriculture, wetlands, threatened and endangered species, waterways, and there are standards for

noise and air. SAFETEA-LU was a new federal law signed in 2005. One provision established in SAFETEA-LU to streamline the environmental process is relative to the Section 4(f) law. This directly affected our project. As such, FHWA has decided to apply a de minimis finding to this project.

Slide 18

For this project, studies were conducted for natural resources, community resources and cultural resources in the study area. The potential impacts that the build alternatives, and the No-Build alternative would have on these resources were analyzed. The potential effects of these alternatives on safety and mobility; air, noise and vibration; waste sites; and Section 4(f) resources were also evaluated and documented. The project was able to stay consistent with local planning efforts and best balance impacts in part through the formation of a Land Use Task Force.

PennDOT recognizes the need to accommodate the economic growth of the area and provide a facility that addresses it now and in the future. The Project Team with the assistance of the Land Use Task Force is out in front with designing and locating a solution that compliments the land use changes. PennDOT has worked for approximately six years to optimize the design and location.

Slide 19

During further Detailed Studies, Alternative 1 and Alternative 4 had the least amount of impacts and were carried forward with the urban boulevard design.

Alternative 1 minimizes natural resource impacts as compared to Alternative 4. Alternative 1 would impact five fewer wetlands resulting in 0.3-acre less wetland impacts, approximately 1,941 fewer feet of stream impacts (including new crossings, extension of existing crossings, and relocations), and 4.16 acres less forestland impacts.

Alternative 1 impacts 4.7 less acres of designated Agricultural Security Areas than Alternative 4 and 5.1 fewer acres of productive agricultural land.

Alternative 1 and Alternative 4 differ in the accommodation of pedestrians in the schools area. Alternative 4 would relocate Route 228 away from the Mars Area School District facilities situated on both sides of Route 228; existing Route 228 would remain as a local roadway in this area. Alternative 4 would bisect a privately-owned pedestrian trail linking the John Quincy Adams residential development to the high school, and mitigation to maintain pedestrian access to the trail would need to be considered during final design. Alternative 1 would remain on-line in the schools area, and would include a sidewalk on the south side of Route 228, channelization of pedestrian movements through the use of vegetation and crosswalks, and adjustments of the traffic signal at Route 228 and Three Degree Road to accommodate pedestrian-only phasing. Pedestrian access and safety will continue to be a priority during final design.

Both alternatives would displace similar numbers of residences, businesses and public facilities such as the EMS facility located near Brickyard Rd. It is

anticipated that sufficient replacement housing and structures will be available for residents, businesses and public facilities displaced by the project. PennDOT will coordinate with the EMS facility to ensure there is no interruption in service. No negative impacts to response times will result from construction of this project.

Slide 20

This project is still in Preliminary Design, and it should be noted that the effect of the project on properties will be further studied and could be changed during Final Design. All property necessary for this project will be acquired in accordance with PennDOT's Relocation Assistance Program. Information about the right-of-way acquisition process can be found in two informational pamphlets entitled: *Bulletin 47, Relocation Assistance Information*, and *Publication 83, When Your Land is Needed for Highway Use*. Both pamphlets are available in the Open House Display Area for this evening's public hearing. PennDOT's Right-of-Way Administrator Bill Young is also available at Station 6 in the Display Area to answer any questions you might have about the property acquisition process.

Slide 21

Alternative 1 meets the project needs, addresses public input, and balances and minimizes environmental impacts overall, while accommodating the quality of life issues identified by the CAC. Some of the quality of life issues identified by the CAC include things like: sidewalks offering alternate modes of getting from here to there, an online alternative that reduces property takes, less new access

points along the corridor to support planned and desirable growth, and an alternative that is landscaped as an urban boulevard. The project was able to achieve the performance measures and reduce construction costs making the probability of its construction greater in the short-term.

Slide 22

PennDOT has identified Alternative 1 as the Recommended Preferred Alternative for the Route 228 Improvement Project. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), as the lead federal agency, will make the final decision, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental laws and regulations.

Slide 23

During detailed engineering studies, engineers looked at several options for the type of roadway that would be designed and constructed. The roadway is being designed for 50mph and will be posted at 45mph. With the proposed Urban Boulevard design there will be four 12 ft. lanes, two 10 ft. shoulders, and a 10 to 30 ft. median that varies depending on location. Turn lanes will be provided at select locations. Due to public concerns the Project Team is investigating ways to reduce the amount of right-of-way required to minimize impacts to property owners.

Slide 24

In final design the footprint of the roadway improvement will be minimized and design modifications may occur. The final product is envisioned as a shared corridor with pedestrians, cyclists, and automobiles operating efficiently and safely side-by-side. Pedestrian access such as, the exact location of sidewalks

and/or trails, and crosswalks, will also be considered in more detail during Final Design.

PennDOT District 10-0 is leading this project with a heavy emphasis on the quality of life issues that are impacted by how transportation and land use planning decisions are connected and dependent on the other. This project is being designed with PennDOT's Smart Transportation Principles in mind. PennDOT is working with the land use group to identify growth patterns that will sustain the economy while not jeopardizing the new capacity and safety features of the Route 228 Improvements. Please refer to your handout for a list of PennDOT's Smart Transportation Principles.

Ken Rich will now detail tonight's hearing procedures.

Ken Rich, McCormick Taylor: Thanks, Scott.

Slide 25

First, if you have not done so already, please register to present testimony at the registration table, located at the entrance.

Speakers will be called to the podium in the order in which they registered. Testimony will be limited to five minutes in order to be fair and to give everyone present an opportunity to speak. To assist you in pacing your presentation, Bill Dennis will notify you, by holding up a yellow card, when there is one minute remaining so that you can summarize your remaining testimony. Bill will raise a red card, when your five minutes have ended and I will advise you accordingly.

Please respect all present by staying within the five minutes. If your five minutes expires, you may re-register to speak again, or provide private or written testimony.

Written testimony may also be submitted to supplement your 5-minute oral presentation. Please place your written testimony at the stenographer's table upon completing your oral testimony.

There will be no cross-examinations, questioning or responses to any witness either from the floor or the chair. Rather, the procedure allows you to enter your opinions regarding the effect of the proposed highway alternatives directly into the public record.

Please make statements only.

Slide 26

Please be courteous and refrain from commenting during others' testimony, regardless whether you agree or disagree with another person's comments. If anyone has already testified and addressed an issue you were prepared to speak about, please be brief in repeating it.

For those of you who prefer to present testimony in a separate room, in a less public setting, you may do so in Room 101. Private testimony is available on a first come, first served basis. Please limit your comments to five minutes or less. Your testimony will be recorded by a stenographer.



Route 228 Public Hearing

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation • Federal Highway Administration

Mars Area High School - June 7, 2007

WELCOME!

PURPOSE OF THIS HEARING

Welcome to the Public Hearing for the Route 228 Improvement Project sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Tonight's Public Hearing gives the public the opportunity to provide formal comment on the proposed improvements to the highway system in southern Butler County. Today's Public Hearing moderator is Mr. Joseph P. Dubovi III, P.E., District Executive for PennDOT Engineering District 10-0.

The Route 228 Improvement Project Environmental Assessment (EA) has been made available for public and agency review (see page 8 for a list of locations). Your comments on that document and the project are welcomed as part of this Public Hearing.

The testimony received today, as well as all comments received during the agency review and public comment period that ends June 22, 2007 will be reviewed and addressed by PennDOT and FHWA. Based on the results of the EA and input received at this Public Hearing, PennDOT and FHWA will decide on the issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), which represents environmental clearance for the project. As funding is secured, Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction will begin in sections.

This Public Hearing is in compliance with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Act 120 of 1970 and Section 28 Title 23 of the United States Code. The legal notice for this hearing appeared in the Butler Eagle and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette North on April 30, 2007 and the Cranberry Eagle/News Weekly on May 2, 2007.



TODAY'S PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA

5:30 – 8:30 P.M. - OPEN HOUSE PLANS DISPLAY (CAFETERIA)

This forum allows you to leisurely review the plans of the alternatives, the potential impacts of each alternative, and discuss the information with Project Team members.

STATION 1: PROJECT OVERVIEW & SCHEDULE

This area displays a project overview with a project map and project timeline. The Environmental Assessment and its review locations are available here. Project Team members will be available to discuss funding and the next phases of the project.

STATION 2: LAND USE & TRAFFIC PLANNING

Here you will find information regarding the Land Use Task Force and their work to establish a vision for the future of the corridor by working now to preserve access points and consider linkages to other modes of transportation.

STATION 3: ALTERNATIVES

Project Team members are available at this station to discuss how the alternatives were developed, narrowed, and compared. This area also includes alternatives mapping and information on environmental impacts.

STATION 4: ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

This area shows information about historic and archeological resources (Section 106).

STATION 5: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Attendees are able to discuss the project with members of the team and the Community Advisory Committee and review a chronology of our Public Involvement activities on the project.

STATION 6: RIGHT-OF-WAY INFORMATION

Representatives from PennDOT's Right-of-Way Unit are available to answer questions about the process for property impacts. Informational handouts are provided as a resource to you.

6:00 P.M. - PUBLIC HEARING BEGINS (AUXILIARY AUDITORIUM)

A presentation of project information will be provided by PennDOT as the official statement. Immediately following PennDOT's testimony, the following three options to provide testimony will be available:

PUBLIC TESTIMONY (AUXILIARY AUDITORIUM)

Citizens who register to present testimony will be called upon by the hearing moderator in the order in which they have registered. Please limit your comments to five minutes or less. The hearing moderator will notify you when you have one minute remaining. Please make statements only. There will be no responses to questions raised during testimony. All testimony will be recorded by a stenographer.

PRIVATE TESTIMONY (ROOM 101)

An opportunity to provide private testimony will be available immediately following PennDOT's testimony. Private testimony is available on a first come, first served basis. Please limit your comments to five minutes or less. Your testimony will be recorded by a stenographer.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY (REGISTRATION)

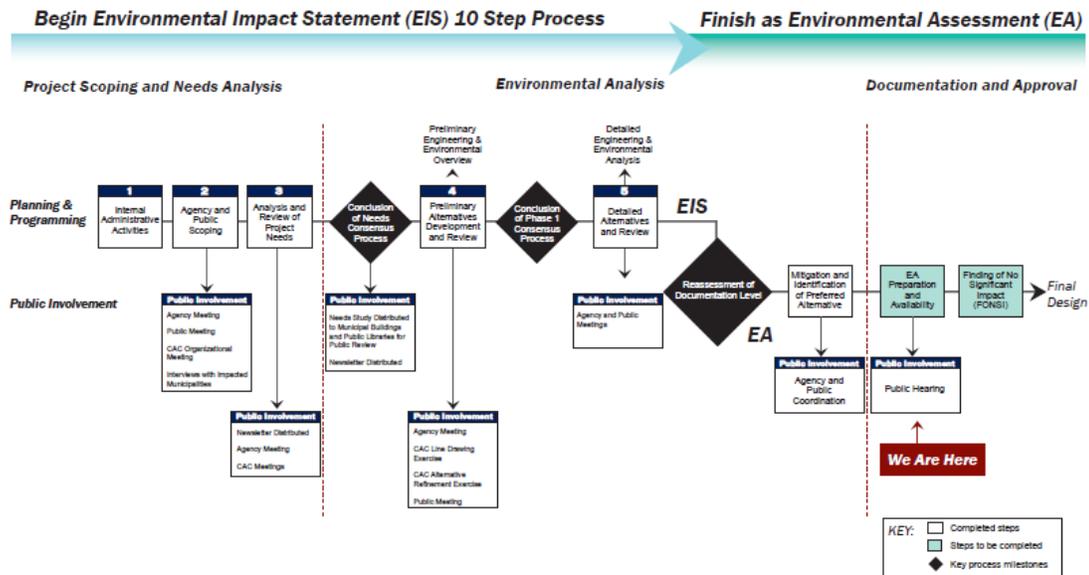
If you would like to submit written testimony, please complete a registration form at the sign-in table in the lobby and place your prepared statement in the box. You may also mail your written testimony, post-marked no later than June 22, 2007 to: Mark S. Rozich, P.E., Project Manager PA Department of Transportation, Engineering District 10-0, 2550 Oakland Avenue, P.O. Box 429 Indiana, PA 15701

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Transportation Project Development Process is PennDOT’s procedure for advancing a transportation improvement project from concept to design. The ultimate goal is to select, design, and construct the most reasonable, practical, cost effective, technically sound, and environmentally sensitive transportation improvement option.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

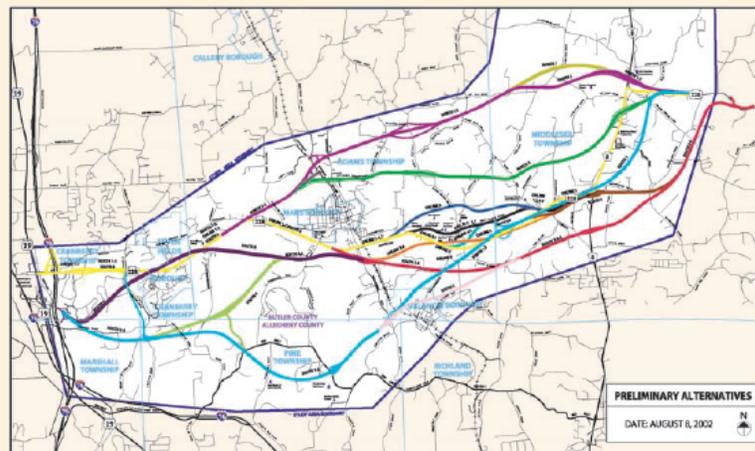
The project purpose and need was identified through the evaluation of existing transportation facilities, the social and economic conditions of the project area, consultation with the community, input from the public and business community, and input from environmental resource agencies. The purpose and need identified for this project includes: Capacity, Access, and Safety.



PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES

During the Preliminary Alternatives Analysis phase of the project, the Project Team worked with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and public to identify a wide range of alternatives for preliminary consideration. The Project Team conducted studies on 18 different alignments. These alternatives included a range of new alignments to the north and south of Route 228 from the eastern termini to the west; and a range of options to improve existing Route 228 on alignment where possible.

This information was presented to the public and the CAC for comments during the second Public Meeting on August 8, 2002. In general, the community felt that the Project Team had considered a significant number of preliminary alternatives and no new feasible alignments were suggested that the team hadn't already considered. As a result of the Public Meeting, citizens sent petitions and letters opposing the Red and Blue alternatives to the east of Route 8 and there was much opposition to the southern alternatives that stretched into Allegheny County. Extensive studies indicated that most of the alignment options would not attract a significant amount of traffic from Route 228, thus they would not meet the project needs. The preliminary alternatives included online improvements with new alignment suggestions in Cranberry Township, the Mars school area, and near Route 8. Subcommittees to the CAC were formed to gain more detailed feedback in these areas. This feedback helped the Project Team make decisions as the project progressed.



This map from 2002 shows the Preliminary Alternatives for the Route 228 Improvement Project.

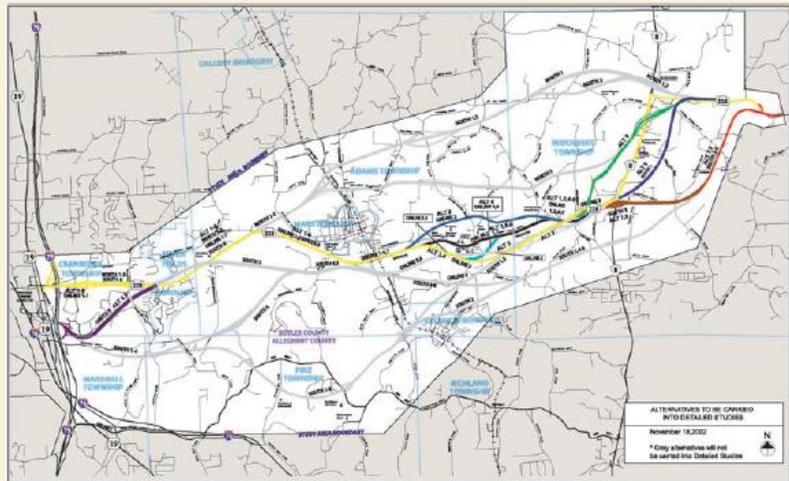
DETAILED STUDIES

Continuing through PennDOT’s Project Development Process, the potential effects of the alternatives on sensitive features were evaluated and the number of alternatives was reduced until the alignments that best balance community and environmental impacts remained in Detailed Studies.

The options that were studied in detail included:

- Yellow/Black;
- Brown to Red;
- Blue;
- Turquoise;
- Green; and
- Purple.

In general, the project stakeholders agreed with the alternatives that were carried on to Detailed Studies. During this process, stakeholders agreed that no further studies were required on Purple, Brown to Red and Blue segments that had high impacts and did not draw adequate traffic from Route 228. Based on public comments, studies on the Green, Yellow/Black and Turquoise segments continued. The majority of the community participants in the process were not in favor of median barriers, jughandles nor controlled access on Route 228.



This map displays the alternatives that were considered during Detailed Studies.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In working with the public and special interest groups, PennDOT continued to enhance the design, shape, and scale of the project considering several principals or performance measures. These include:

- Meet project needs,
- Reduce project costs,
- Integrate land use planning,
- Enhance quality of life, and
- Integrate other modes of transportation.

After extensive studies, the Project Team presented new concepts to the CAC and public that included an urban boulevard design without jughandle turn-arounds and a median barrier. Community feedback strongly favored the concept for this area and PennDOT began detailed work with a Land Use Task Force to prepare for the project.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The public was involved from the very beginning of the Route 228 Improvement Project using various outreach methods. Input was gathered at:

- Four public meetings,
- Five public officials’ meetings,
- Eleven Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings,
- Twelve Land Use Task Force meetings,
- Over 60 Special Group Meetings,
- Seven newsletters, and
- A project website - www.route228.com.

The goal of the public involvement efforts was to provide the public and local stakeholders with the tools and opportunities to offer informed comments and feedback to foster a shared vision for the corridor. The Public Involvement Program has contributed greatly to the development of the Route 228 Improvement Project. Ongoing communication with the general public and various stakeholders involved in the project has helped to ensure that the Preferred Alternative satisfies the project needs and compliments the quality of life within the surrounding community.

PennDOT and the entire Project Team appreciate the efforts of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). These volunteers include representatives of residential, local government agencies, business owners, emergency services providers, educational institutions, environmental organizations, community facilities, and other segments of the community and region that have given up their time to provide detailed input into the project.



DETAILED STUDIES CONTINUE

During further Detailed Studies, Alternative 1 (Yellow/Black) and Alternative 4 (Turquoise) had the least amount of impacts and were carried forward with the Urban Boulevard Design (two lanes in each direction divided by a grassy median). In addition, the No-Build Alternative was also carried forward as a point of comparison. The Route 228 Environmental Assessment (EA) details the studies conducted.

Alternatives 1 and 4 would both upgrade the existing roadway, except in the vicinity of the Mars Area School District and Mars Home for Youth properties near Three Degree Road. In this area, Alternative 1 is an on-line widening of Route 228 and Alternative 4 is a bypass south of the Mars Area High School. With Alternative 4, existing Route 228 would remain a local roadway. The difference in impacts to environmental resources, is limited to this area of divergence. Both Alternatives meet the needs of the project and correct the horizontal curvature of Ball's Bend. The No-Build Alternative fails to meet the established project needs. The following summarizes the impacts of both:

NATURAL RESOURCE IMPACTS

Through Detailed Studies, it was determined that:

- Alternative 1 minimizes natural resource impacts as compared to Alternative 4,
- Alternative 1 would impact five fewer wetlands resulting in 0.3 acres less wetland impacts,
- Approximately 1,941 fewer feet of stream impacts (including new crossings, extension of existing crossings, and relocations),
- 4.2 acres less forestland impacts, and
- Alternative 1 impacts 4.7 fewer acres of designated Agricultural Security Areas and 5.1 fewer acres of productive agricultural land.

PEDESTRIAN IMPACTS

Alternative 1 and Alternative 4 differ in the accommodation of pedestrians in the schools area. Alternative 4 would relocate Route 228 away from the Mars Area School District facilities situated on both sides of Route 228; existing Route 228 would remain as a local roadway in this area. Alternative 4 would bisect a privately-owned pedestrian trail linking the John Quincy Adams residential development to the high school, and mitigation to maintain pedestrian access to the trail would need to be considered during final design. Alternative 1 would remain on-line in the schools area, and would include a sidewalk on the south side of Route 228, channelization of

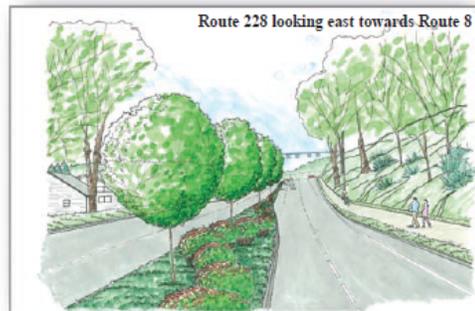
pedestrian movements through the use of vegetation and crosswalks, and adjustments of the traffic signal at Route 228 and Three Degree Road to accommodate pedestrian-only phasing. Pedestrian access and safety will continue to be a priority during final design.

PROPERTY IMPACTS

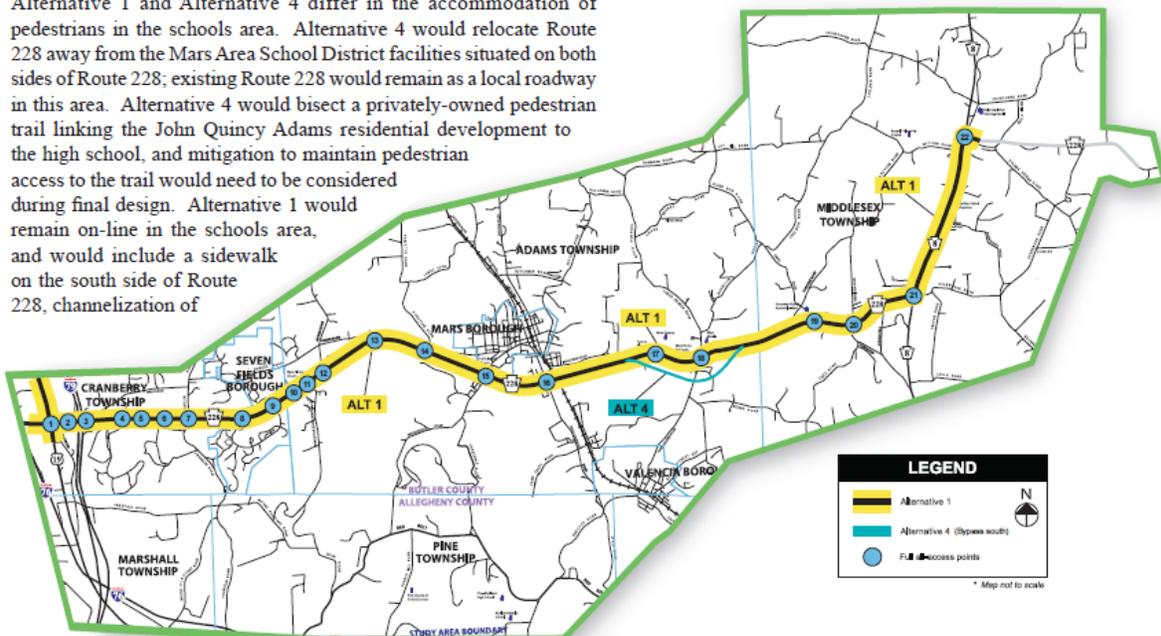
Both alternatives have de minimis use of lands protected by Section 4(f); meaning that no historic properties will be adversely affected by this project.

Both alternatives would displace similar numbers of residences, businesses, and public facilities. It is anticipated that sufficient replacement housing and structures will be available for residents, businesses, and public facilities displaced by the project.

No interruption in service from the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) facility and no negative impacts to response times will result from construction of this project.



This rendering does not represent the actual design of the corridor but potential visions created in cooperation with the Land Use Task Force.



RECOMMENDED PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

After extensive analyses, PennDOT has identified Alternative 1 as the Recommended Preferred Alternative. This widening and improvement of the existing alignment of Route 228 meets the projects needs, addresses public input and balances and minimizes environmental impacts overall. More specifics regarding the impacts of Alternative 1 are noted on the chart below.

Alternative 1 Impact Details Full Alignment (Route 19 to Route 8)		
RESOURCE	UNIT OF MEASURE	Alt 1 (yellow-black-yellow)
Natural Resources		
Wetlands	Number / Acres	24 / 1.3
Floodplains (FEMA)	Acres	14.8
Stream Crossings		
Existing (extension)	Number / Feet	53 / 4513
New crossing	Number / Feet	2 / 124
Relocation	Number / Feet	36 / 7198
Bridge Crossing	Number / Feet	2 / 722
Agricultural Security Areas	Acres	3.8
Productive Agricultural Farmland	Acres	10.4
Forest Land	Acres	44.2
Socioeconomic Resource		
Section 2002 Involvement:		
Recreation Areas	Number	0
Historic Resources	Number	2
Section 4(f) de minimis finding:		
Parklands/Rec,	Number	0
Historic Resources	Number	2
Residential Property Displacements	Number	37 (including 20 mobile homes)
Commercial Structure Displacements	Number	9 (encompassing 13 businesses)
Community Facilities	Number	2
Planned Developments		
Residential	Number	0
Commercial	Number	0
Institutional	Acres	2.1
Historic Resources		
National Register Listed/Eligible Properties Adversely Affected	Number	0
Archaeological Sensitivity		
High	Acres	25.0
Construction Cost		
Estimated Construction Cost	\$ Million	88.8

There are 15 days remaining to comment on the Environmental Assessment (EA). After public comments are considered and addressed where necessary, a final decision will be made by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). FHWA is the lead federal agency that makes the final decision as directed in the National Environmental Policy Act and other environmental laws and regulations.

SMART TRANSPORTATION PRINCIPLES

PennDOT District 10-0 is leading this project with a heavy emphasis on the quality of life issues that are impacted by how transportation and land use planning decisions are connected. This project is being designed with Pennsylvania’s Smart Transportation principles in mind.

The principles are associated with the following quality of life needs addressed with the proposed Route 228 Improvements:

CORRIDOR AND ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Alternative 1 identifies existing and future access points to Route 228.

STREET DESIGN

A local Land Use Task Force (see article on page 7) helped to establish a consistent vision for the design of the corridor.

NETWORK CONNECTIVITY AND CAPACITY ISSUES

As the primary east/west corridor in Butler County, Route 228 was designed to handle anticipated future traffic while maintaining an urban boulevard design.

PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE AND FARMLAND

Targeting improvements to the existing alignment of Route 228 preserves land from the impacts that a new alignment would have on the landscape.

DEVELOPING THE BEST TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY AND REGION

Working with the community and following PennDOT’s transportation development process, led to the recommendation of Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative for the corridor.

SMART TRANSPORTATION PRINCIPLES	
1.	Money Counts
2.	Choose projects with high value price ratio
3.	Enhance the local network
4.	Look beyond level of service
5.	Safety first, and maybe safety only
6.	Accommodate all modes
7.	Leverage and preserve existing investments
8.	Build towns and not sprawl
9.	Understand the context; plan and design within context
10.	Develop local governments as strong land use partners

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOUR PROPERTY IS IMPACTED

All property necessary for this project will be acquired in accordance with PennDOT's Relocation Assistance Program, which conforms to the policies and procedures established by FHWA. A more detailed statement of these policies and procedures appear in the pamphlets available for distribution at this Public Hearing: Bulletin 47, entitled Relocation Assistance Information, and Publication 83, When Your Land is Needed for Highway Use (The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation).

It is the policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation that no person shall be displaced by any federal or federally assisted construction project unless and until adequate replacement housing has already been provided for or is built. If any person, family, business or farm operation is required to move as a result of highway construction, they will receive written notice at least 90 days in advance of the intended vacation.

BENEFITS OFFERED

All persons, families, businesses, and farm operations required to move will receive the benefits of the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1971, as amended, and the Pennsylvania Eminent Domain Code. Every eligible displaced person, whether owner or tenant, is entitled to receive actual reasonable expenses incurred in moving their family, business, or farm operation; or, in the case of a move from a dwelling, may elect to receive a moving allowance based on the number of rooms in the dwelling.

A person or family who has owned and occupied a dwelling for not less than 180 days prior to receiving the Department's written offer or written notice of intent to acquire the dwelling for the highway is eligible to receive a replacement housing payment of up to \$27,000 based on the amount over the price paid by the Department for the acquired dwelling that is needed to purchase a comparable dwelling that is decent, safe and sanitary, and adequate to accommodate the displaced owner and his family. Such person or families are also eligible to receive transfer expenses on the replacement property, including recording fees, transfer taxes, and similar settlement costs, plus any increased interest costs of a new mortgage, as compared with the mortgage on the acquired property, based on the outstanding amount and remaining term of the existing mortgage.

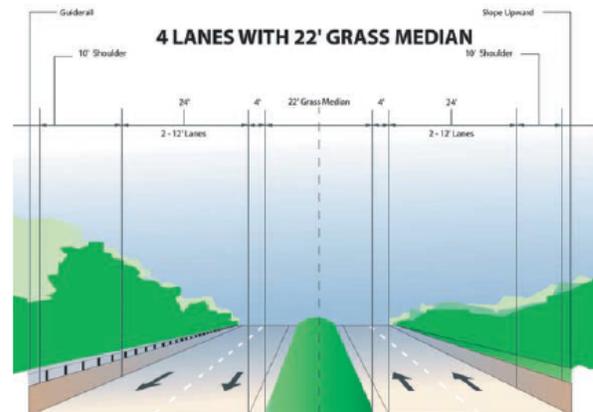
An owner-occupant or tenant who occupies a dwelling prior to the Department's written offer or notice is eligible to receive a payment not to exceed \$6,300 based on the difference between the amount required to rent a decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling for 42 months and the rental or the fair rental value of the acquired dwelling. In lieu of the foregoing payments, any owner-occupant or tenant for at least 90 days prior to the Department's written offer or notice is eligible to receive a payment to be applied toward a down payment and closing costs of a decent, safe, and sanitary replacement. This payment is not to exceed \$6,300.

In addition to moving costs and relocation payments, the Department will pay transfer expenses on the acquired property, including any penalty for prepayment to the old mortgage, as well as its pro rata share of the real estate taxes on the acquired property for the balance of the taxable year. The Department may reimburse the cost of up to twelve months storage of personal

property. A business, farm or nonprofit organization that cannot be relocated without a substantial loss of profits may qualify for an actual reasonable moving and related expenses payment, personal property loss payment, business re-establishment expense payment, and searching cost payment, each having its own eligibility requirements. Two of the four payments have limits to the amount of the payment -- \$12,000 for business re-establishment and \$2,500 for searching costs. Relocates may also qualify for a business dislocation payment based upon the average annual net income of the business, farm, or nonprofit organization, of not less than \$3,000 or more than \$60,000. These benefits can apply whether the business, farm or non-profit organization is discontinued or re-established at a new location.

Any person dissatisfied with the relocation assistance payments offered by the Department may appeal their case to a higher authority within the Department, as well as to a Board of Viewers or to the County Court of Common Pleas. To assure that each displaced individual family and business received adequate relocation advice and assistance, the

TYPICAL ROADWAY DIMENSIONS



As Route 228 is improved, the typical section of the road will be expanded, impacting properties throughout the corridor. Outside of Cranberry Township, existing Route 228 varies from 28' to 44'.

Department will have listing of properties for sale and for rent, as well as information relating to services offered by other agencies in the housing field. The Department will also supply information concerning the Federal Housing Administration Home Acquisition Program, the Small Business Administration, and other similar state and federal programs.

PENNDOT SUPPORT

The Department's relocation specialists will work with all displaced persons and families, individuals, businesses, and farm operations to help them find satisfactory replacement housing or business and farm locations, and will assure that within a reasonable time prior to displacement, safe and sanitary dwellings will be available to all dislocated persons and families at rents or prices within their means.

Relocation payments are payable only to those persons who are in occupancy when the Department makes its written offer to the intent to acquire a particular property. Persons who move in advance of such a written notice will forfeit their rights to relocation assistance and payment.

The Department estimates that a maximum of thirty seven residents (including 20 mobile homes) and a maximum of nine commercial structures encompassing 13 businesses would be acquired. It is the opinion of the Department that sufficient replacement housing will be available to provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing for all individuals and families to be displaced by this project.

Whether or not the relocation of a person, family, business or farm operation is involved, each property owner or other interested party will be offered the full measure of just compensation provided under the Eminent Domain Code for property required for the highway. State law now provides a sum toward reimbursement of fees paid to appraisers, attorneys, and engineers by any owner or tenant of property required for the project who wishes to obtain professional advice to assure him or herself of the fairness of the Department's offer. The elements of just compensation and the procedures involved in determining and paying it are also described in the pamphlets available at this hearing.

RIGHT-OF-WAY INFORMATION

Bill Young

Right-of-Way Administrator

PennDOT District 10-0

2550 Oakland Avenue

P.O. BOX 429

Indiana, PA 15701

(724) 357-4808

LAND USE TASK FORCE

A **Land Use Task Force** was established to work with PennDOT on a Transportation and Land Use Strategy Plan for the Route 228 Corridor and the Recommended Preferred Alternative.

Discussions of this **Land Use Task Force** are focused on access management, aesthetics, intermodal and pedestrian connectivity, inter-municipal cooperation, and interconnectivity between varying land uses in a manner that promotes safety and community cohesion.

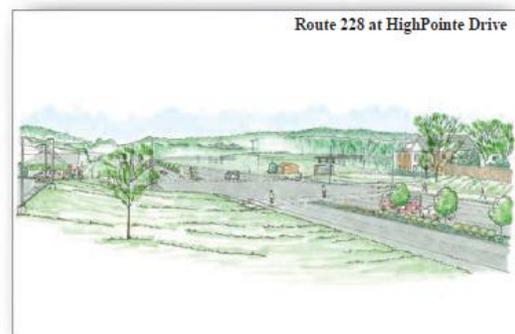
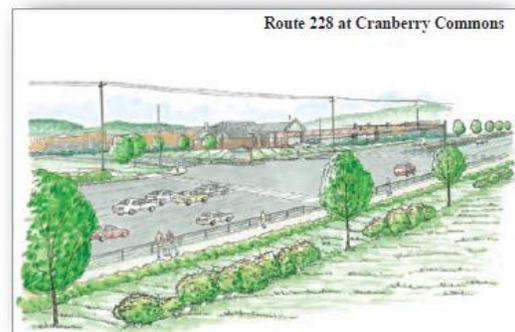
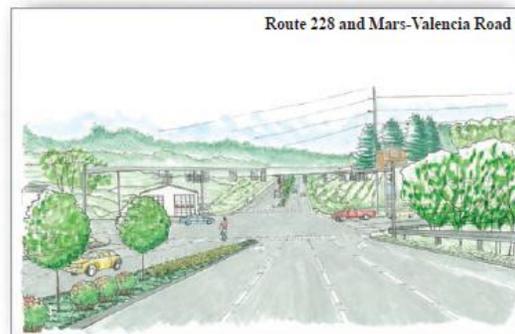
The Task Force will continue to meet to shape the preferred vision for the Route 228 Corridor. A Visioning Survey was recently completed by members of the Task Force. Based on the survey results, renderings were developed to illustrate how the Route 228 Corridor may look when completed (*see the artist's renderings on this page*).

Members of the **Land Use Task Force** include:

- Adams Township,
- Butler County Planning Commission,
- Butler Transit Authority,
- Clinton Township,
- Cranberry Township,
- Mars Area School District,
- Mars Borough,
- Middlesex Township,
- Seven Fields Borough,
- Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, and
- Valencia Borough.

The mission of the **Land Use Task Force** is to enhance the quality of life within the Route 228 Corridor by improving the understanding of the inter-relationship between land use and transportation, and to develop a tool box of strategies for consideration by the partnering municipalities.

These renderings do not represent the actual design of the corridor but potential visions created in cooperation with the Land Use Task Force.



15 DAYS LEFT TO COMMENT ON THE EA!

THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT IS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW UNTIL JUNE 22, 2007 AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

Adams Township
690 Valencia Road
Mars, PA
724-625-2221

Butler County
124 West Diamond Street
Butler, PA
724-285-4731

Cranberry Township
2525 Rochester Road, Suite 400
Cranberry Township, PA
724-776-4806

Mars Borough
598 Spring Avenue
Mars, PA
724-625-1858

Mars Public Library
107 Grand Avenue
Mars, PA
724-625-9048

Marshall Township
525 Pleasant Hill Road
Warrendale, PA
724-935-3090

Middlesex Township
133 Browns Hill Road
Valencia, PA
724-898-3571

Northland Public Library
300 Cumberland Road
Pittsburgh, PA
412-366-8100

PennDOT Engineering District 10-0
2550 Oakland Avenue
Indiana, PA
724-357-2800

Pine Township
230 Pearce Mill Road
Wexford, PA
724-625-1591

Richland Township
4011 Dickey Road
Gibsonia, PA
724-443-5921

Seven Fields Borough
220 Garden Drive
Suite 100, Seven Fields, PA
724-776-3090

Valencia Borough
61 Almira Street
Valencia, PA
724-625-3430

The EA is the decision making document that has been prepared to evaluate transportation improvements in the Route 228 Corridor. The EA presents the alternatives that have been considered to date through extensive environmental and engineering studies and public input. The document discusses the rationale for PennDOT's recommendation.

Written comments on the Environmental Assessment may be submitted to PennDOT's District Office by June 22, 2007. Please address all correspondence to **Mark Rozich, P.E.** at the address below:

PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

PROJECT INQUIRIES

Mark Rozich
PennDOT District 10-0
2550 Oakland Avenue
P.O. Box 429
Indiana, PA 15701
(724) 357-2852
mrozich@state.pa.us

MEDIA INQUIRIES

Mark Hillwig
PennDOT District 10-0
2550 Oakland Avenue
P.O. Box 429
Indiana, PA 15701
(724) 357-2829
mhillwig@state.pa.us

WHAT'S NEXT

FINAL DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The next step in the process is to work through the final design phase, which includes Right-of-Way Acquisition. The project has been separated into sections for Final Design & Construction to allow the project to progress as construction funding becomes available. The sections of the project are:

Route 19 to Myoma Road

Currently private developers are working with PennDOT to determine how to partner in this section of the corridor. When the details are settled, the next steps for Final Design and Construction will be established.

Myoma Road to Mars-Valencia Road

Final design is expected to begin later this year with the Right-of-Way Acquisition process anticipated to begin in 2010, depending on funding availability.

Mars-Valencia Road to Route 8

As funds are secured, this section of the corridor will be divided into two sections for Final Design & Construction. The schedule for this portion of the project is dependent on the availability of future funding. Design work is not expected to begin before 2012.

HOW YOU CAN HELP?

This project is not fully funded for Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, Utilities, and Construction. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) is the regional planning agency serving the Pittsburgh 10-county area and providing essential services to the region. SPC works closely with PennDOT to determine how to match the limited available funding with the most important projects in the region. Here is what you need to know:

1. The Route 228 Improvement Project is partially funded for Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition and Construction.
2. SPC is beginning the next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding update for 2009 to 2012. This update will be finalized in 2008.
3. Let SPC and your local representatives know what you think about funding for this project at the upcoming **Public Participation Panel Workshop** in Butler County on:

JUNE 20, 2007

7:00 p.m.

**Butler County Government Center
Public Meeting Room**

Project information is available online at:

www.route228.com

5. Public Outreach Checklists and Documentation Forms

Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation Forms for each NEPA Class of Action can be found on the following pages:

- **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**
- **Environmental Assessment (EA)**
- **Categorical Exclusion Evaluation (CEE)**

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Project Name: _____

Project Location: _____

Project Limits: _____

Project Sponsor(s): _____

Lead Agency(ies): _____

Brief Project Description: _____

Date of Project Initiation Letter: _____

Date of Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS: _____
(see Chapter IV of the PI Handbook)

Cooperating Agencies

(see Chapter IV of the Publication 295, Public Involvement Handbook)

Date invite letters sent: (Attach letter and list of agencies) _____

List of those agencies who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Want Cooperating status in Project	Declined Project Cooperating status	Declined Cooperating status, but want project updates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Participating Agencies

(see Chapter IV of the Publication 295, Public Involvement Handbook)

Date invitation letters sent: (Attach letter and list of agencies) _____

List of those agencies who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Want to Participate in Project	Declined Project Participation	Declined Active Participation, but want project updates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: federal agencies participate unless they send a letter declining and other agencies (state, local, etc.) must reply affirmatively to be considered a Participating Agency

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Coordination Plan and Schedule

How/When was the Coordination Plan/Schedule shared with the public?: _____
 How/When were Participating Agencies consulted on the Coordination Plan and Schedule?: _____

Project Needs Analysis

Describe public outreach for needs

(note: if more than one type of outreach completed, may use multiple copies of this form to document)

Type of outreach activity:
(i.e. public meeting, CAC, etc.) _____

Date held: _____

If public meeting, date of 1st newspaper advertisement : (2 weeks prior to meeting) _____

If public meeting, date of 2nd newspaper advertisement: (week of or prior to meeting) _____

Location (if applicable): _____

Location ADA* accessible? Yes

Briefly describe results: _____

Handouts/ Sign-in-Sheets / Other pertinent information:
(list and/or attach copies) _____

Other forms of public involvement used: _____

* ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Project Alternatives Development

Describe public outreach for Alternatives Development

(note: if more than one type of outreach completed, may use multiple copies of this form to document)

Type of outreach activity:
(i.e. public meeting, CAC, etc.) _____

Date held: _____

If public meeting, date of 1st
newspaper advertisement :
(2 weeks prior to meeting) _____

If public meeting, date of 2nd
newspaper advertisement:
(week of or prior to meeting) _____

Location (if applicable): _____

Location ADA* accessible? Yes

Briefly describe results: _____

Handouts/ Sign-in-Sheets /
Other pertinent information: _____
(list and/or attach copies) _____

Other forms of public
involvement used: _____

* ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Draft EIS (DEIS) Circulation and Public Hearing

Date of DEIS Circulation Approval: _____

Date DEIS made available for public review
at local depositories: _____
(must be on or before date DEIS is provided to EPA with Federal Register Notice)

Technical Support Data (TSD) files were
available at the following locations specified in _____
the DEIS at the same time as the DEIS is _____
made available for public review: _____

List of local DEIS depositories:
(make sure locations are ADA accessible) _____

Date of Federal Register Notice:
(attach copy) _____

Publication date of first DEIS
circulation/public hearing advertisement:**
(in local newspaper of general circulation) _____

Publication date of second DEIS
circulation/public hearing advertisement:**
(in local newspaper of general circulation) _____

Attach copy of published ad to this checklist/documentation, check when done.

Date Comments on DEIS are due: _____
(Comment period is minimum 45 days from date of Federal Register Notice; maximum comment period is 60-days)

Date of Public Hearing: _____
(no sooner than 15 days after first DEIS circulation/public hearing ad is published)

Location of Public Hearing: _____

Check if Public Hearing Location is ADA Accessible (required)

Check if a stenographer(s) has been contracted for the public hearing (required)

Brief summary of Public Hearing and DEIS
comments from the comment period: _____

Date of Federal Register Notice:
(attach copy) _____

** See Chapter VI of the PI Handbook (Publication 295) for sample ads

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Final EIS (FEIS) Availability

Legal Sufficiency Review Complete

Date of FEIS Circulation Approval: _____

Date FEIS & TSD available at designated depositories: _____

Date FEIS available to commenters: _____

List of FEIS depositories: _____

Publication date of FEIS availability:
(in local newspaper of general circulation) _____

Attach copy of ad

Date FEIS review period closes:
(30 days from the Federal Register Notice) _____

Date of Federal Register Notice:
(attach copy) _____

Date of Record of Decision (ROD):
(attach copy) _____

Date of Federal Register Notice of ROD:
(attach copy)** _____

Statute of Limitations Date:
(180-days from publication of ROD date in Federal Register) _____

Date of Act 120 Finding Publication: _____

**Note that not all RODS will be published; this is a judgment call made through coordination with FHWA.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Other Public Outreach Activities conducted for this project:

Other Public Meetings, list date(s) & purpose: _____
* Remember if there is a de minimis Section 4(f) use to a public park or recreational facility – the public must be notified. A display at a public meeting is an easy way to do this. _____

Public Official Meetings, date(s): _____

Newsletters, date(s): _____

Special Interest Group Meetings, date(s):
(in space below, list purpose/group) _____

Website, list web address: _____

Other? Describe: (i.e. for Environmental Justice, Section 106, or other purposes)

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Section 106 Consulting Parties

Date of FHWA invitation to ACHP to participate in consultation: (required when there is an "Adverse Effect" to a historic resource) _____

Date Consulting Party Invite Letters sent: (Attach letter and list of those invited) _____

List of those parties who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Requested Consulting Party Status	Declined Consulting Party Status	Requested Future Consideration, project updates	Accepted as a Section 106 Consulting Party
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Consulting Party Coordination/Meetings*</i>		
Type of Coordination	Date	Purpose

*typical coordination points: Determination of Eligibility, Alternatives Development, Effects Determination, & Development of Mitigation.

Native American Indian Tribal Coordination

Date Tribal Notification Letters sent: (Attach letter and list of federally recognized tribes) _____

List of those Tribes who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Want to Participate in Project	Declined Project Participation	Declined Active Participation, but want project updates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Tribal Coordination/Meetings</i>		
Type of Coordination	Date	Purpose

Environmental Assessment (EA) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Project Name: _____

Project Location: _____

Project Limits: _____

Project Sponsor(s): _____

Lead Agency(ies): _____

Brief Project Description: _____

Cooperating Agencies

(see Chapter IV of the Publication 295, Public Involvement Handbook)

Date invite letters sent: (Attach letter and list of agencies) _____

List of those agencies who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Want Cooperating status in Project	Declined Project Cooperating status	Declined Cooperating status, but want project updates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Following the Environmental Review Process? Yes No

If **Yes**, complete the following sections on Participating Agencies & Coordination Plan and Schedule.

Participating Agencies

(see Chapter IV of the Publication 295, Public Involvement Handbook)

Date invitation letters sent: (Attach letter and list of agencies) _____

List of those agencies who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Want to Participate in Project	Declined Project Participation	Declined Active Participation, but want project updates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: federal agencies participate unless they send a letter declining and other agencies (state, local, etc.) must reply affirmatively to be considered a Participating Agency

Environmental Assessment (EA) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Coordination Plan and Schedule

How/When was the Coordination Plan/Schedule shared with the public?: _____
 How/When were Participating Agencies consulted on the Coordination Plan and Schedule?: _____

Project Needs Analysis

Describe public outreach for needs

(note: if more than one type of outreach completed, may use multiple copies of this form to document)

Type of outreach activity:
(i.e. public meeting, CAC, etc.) _____
 Date held: _____

If public meeting, date of 1st newspaper advertisement :
(2 weeks prior to meeting) _____

If public meeting, date of 2nd newspaper advertisement:
(week of or prior to meeting) _____

Location (if applicable): _____

Location ADA* accessible? Yes

Briefly describe results: _____

Handouts/ Sign-in-Sheets / Other pertinent information:
(list and/or attach copies) _____

Other forms of public involvement used: _____

* ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

Environmental Assessment (EA) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Project Alternatives Development

Describe public outreach for Alternatives Development

(note: if more than one type of outreach completed, may use multiple copies of this form to document)

Type of outreach activity:
(i.e. public meeting, CAC, etc.) _____

Date held: _____

If public meeting, date of 1st
newspaper advertisement :
(2 weeks prior to meeting) _____

If public meeting, date of 2nd
newspaper advertisement:
(week of or prior to meeting) _____

Location (if applicable): _____

Location ADA* accessible? Yes

Briefly describe results: _____

Handouts/ Sign-in-Sheets /
Other pertinent information: _____
(list and/or attach copies) _____

Other forms of public
involvement used: _____

* ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

Environmental Assessment (EA) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

EA Circulation and Public Hearing

Date of EA Circulation Approval: _____

Date EA made available for public review at local depositories: _____
(must be on or before date of first ad, below)

Technical Support Data (TSD) files were available at the following locations as specified in the EA at the same time as the EA is made available for public review: _____

List of local EA depositories: _____
(make sure locations are ADA accessible)

Publication date of first EA circulation/public hearing advertisement:** _____
(in local newspaper of general circulation)

Publication date of second EA circulation advertisement:** _____
(in local newspaper of general circulation)

Attach copy of published ad to this checklist/documentation, check when done.

Date Comments on EA are due: _____
(Comment period is minimum 30 days from publication date of first EA availability ad, unless the EA includes a Section 4(f) Evaluation then an additional 15 days is required for the Section 4(f) resource Official(s) with Jurisdiction for a total 45-day comment period – see Chapter IV of Publication 295)

Does EA circulation advertisement include either:

Opportunity for a public hearing, if checked then: _____ Advertisement of a public hearing to be held, if checked, complete public hearing information below.

Date when requests due: _____

Number of requests received: _____

Can requests be resolved without a public hearing? Yes, no requests are outstanding No requests remain outstanding

If yes, then no hearing is required, if no, please complete public hearing information below.

PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION:

Date of Public Hearing: _____
(no sooner than 15 days after EA is made available)

Location of Public Hearing: _____

Check if Public Hearing Location is ADA Accessible (required)

Brief summary of Public Hearing and EA comment period: _____

** See Chapter VI of the PI Handbook (Publication 295) for sample ads. Note that this ad must either advertise for the availability for a public hearing, and include a date for deadline of submissions of requests for a public hearing and the location where requests must be sent, or include the date, time, and location of the public hearing that will be held for the project.

Environmental Assessment (EA) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Other Public Outreach Activities conducted for this project:

Other Public Meetings, list date(s) & purpose: _____
* Remember if there is a de minimis Section 4(f) use to a public park or recreational facility – the public must be notified. A display at a public meeting is an easy way to do this. _____

Public Official Meetings, date(s): _____

Newsletters, date(s): _____

Special Interest Group Meetings, date(s):
(in space below, list purpose/group) _____

Website, list web address: _____

Other? Describe: (i.e. for Environmental Justice, Section 106, or other purposes)

Environmental Assessment (EA) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Section 106 Consulting Parties

Date Consulting Party Invite Letters sent: _____
(Attach letter and list of those invited)

List of those parties who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Requested Consulting Party Status	Declined Consulting Party Status	Requested Future Consideration, project updates	Accepted as a Section 106 Consulting Party
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Consulting Party Coordination/Meetings*</i>		
Type of Coordination	Date	Purpose

*typical coordination points: Determination of Eligibility, Alternatives Development, Effects Determination, & Development of Mitigation.

Native American Indian Tribal Coordination

Date Tribal Notification Letters sent: _____
(Attach letter and list of federally recognized tribes)

List of those Tribes who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Want to Participate in Project	Declined Project Participation	Declined Active Participation, but want project updates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Tribal Coordination/Meetings</i>		
Type of Coordination	Date	Purpose

Categorical Exclusion Evaluation (CEE) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Project Name: _____

Project Location: _____

Project Limits: _____

Project Sponsor(s): _____

Lead Agency(ies): _____

Brief Project Description: _____

Public Outreach Activities conducted for this project: **(see last page for tips on selecting activities appropriate to project scale)*

	Date	Purpose		1 st	2 nd	
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Meetings, date(s) and meeting purpose (i.e. project introduction, needs, alternatives, etc.: (note: must be held at an ADA* accessible location)	_____	_____	Dates of 1 st and 2 nd local newspaper of general circulation ads:** (note: 1 st ad two weeks prior to meeting date, 2 nd ad week of or prior to meeting date)	_____	_____	
	_____	_____		_____	_____	
	_____	_____		_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____		_____	_____	_____
** Remember if there is a de minimis Section 4(f) use to a public park or recreational facility – the public must be notified. A display at a public meeting is an easy way to do this.						
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Official Meetings, date(s): _____						
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Interest Group Meetings, date(s): (in space below, list purpose/group) _____						
<input type="checkbox"/> Other? Describe: _____						

* ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act
 ** Attach copies of published ads to this form

Categorical Exclusion Evaluation (CEE) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Section 106 Consulting Parties (if applicable) Check here if not applicable

Date Consulting Party Invite Letters sent:
(Attach letter and list of those invited) _____

List of those parties who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Requested Consulting Party Status	Declined Consulting Party Status	Requested Future Consideration, project updates	Accepted as a Section 106 Consulting Party
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Consulting Party Coordination/Meetings*</i>		
Type of Coordination	Date	Purpose

*typical coordination points: Determination of Eligibility, Alternatives Development, Effects Determination, & Development of Mitigation.

Native American Indian Tribal Coordination (if applicable) Check here if not applicable

Date Tribal Notification Letters sent:
(Attach letter and list of tribes) _____

List of those Tribes who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Want to Participate in Project	Declined Project Participation	Declined Active Participation, but want project updates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Tribal Coordination/Meetings</i>		
Type of Coordination	Date	Purpose

Categorical Exclusion Evaluation (CEE) Public Outreach Checklist and Documentation

Cooperating Agencies (if applicable) **Check here if not applicable**

(see Chapter IV of the Publication 295, Public Involvement Handbook)

Date invite letters sent: (Attach letter and list of agencies) _____

List of those agencies who responded: (List names/organizations below)	Want Cooperating status in Project	Declined Project Cooperating status	Declined Cooperating status, but want project updates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tips on selecting Public Involvement (PI) activities for CE Project Type and Scale:

- Very small CE projects (typically Level 1a) may not require any formal PI activities.
- Put yourself in the public's place;
 - ⇒ Does the project require a substantial detour? Or affect access to community facilities? Or affect a resource important to the community? If yes, then consider a public plans display/meeting to present and discuss the impacts.
 - ⇒ Does the project impact one segment of the community, i.e., one neighborhood, businesses, a church? If yes, then consider holding a Special Interest Group meeting with the affected community segment.
 - ⇒ Does the project have few impacts, but is located in a highly visible area of the community? If yes, consider a presentation at a regularly scheduled municipal meeting or consider a flyer to get word out about the project.

6. Section 106 Consulting Party Solicitation Display



Section 106



What is Section 106?

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of projects on historic and archeological resources. The Section 106 Process seeks to accommodate historic preservation concerns with the needs of Federal projects through consultation among parties with an interest in the effects of the project on historic and archeological resources. The goal of Section 106 is to identify historic and archeological resources potentially affected by the project, assess the effects, and seek ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse effects on these resources.

What is a Consulting Party?

Certain individuals and organizations with a demonstrated interest in the project may participate as a Consulting Party due to the nature of their legal or economic relation to the project or affected properties, or their concern with the project's effects on historic properties.

How do you become a Consulting Party?

Interested individuals or organizations may submit in writing a request to become a Consulting Party to PennDOT District 1-0, describing their relevance or interest to the project. These requests will be evaluated by the Federal agencies in concurrence with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the appropriate Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO). If approved, the individual or organization will become a Consulting Party to the Section 106 Process.

Requests to become a Consulting Party should be sent to:

Tom Minnich,
District Environmental Manager
PennDOT District 1-0
255 Elm Street
Oil City, PA 16301



Reference: Federal Register, Volume 64,
No. 95 - Title 36, Chapter VIII, Part 800




7. Glossary

A

Act 120 - A Pennsylvania Legislative Act passed on May 6, 1970, which in part created the PA Department of Transportation and granted it certain powers, duties, and responsibilities. The act also orders the Department of Transportation to coordinate highway and transportation development projects with other public agencies and authorities. Section 2002 of the Act states that the Department must issue specific findings whenever lands from recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, historic sites, forest, wilderness, gamelands, and public parks are needed for highway or transportation purposes.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - Passed in 1992, this federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in the services, programs, or activities of all State and local governments. Under the provisions of ADA, the Department must take steps to make all public involvement activities related to the Transportation Project Development Process accessible to persons with disabilities. This includes providing services and/or auxiliary aids to those with special needs.

B

Brainstorming - An exercise which encourages participants to voice new ideas and recommendations by spontaneously suggesting as many ideas as possible in a certain time frame without stopping to analyze or comment on them.

Brochure - A brief informational pamphlet that describes a particular facet of a project (e.g. project history, regulations, the Transportation Project Development Process). Brochures can be distributed at Public Meetings, Hearings, or Workshops.

C

Categorical Exclusion (CE) - 1. A classification given to federal aid projects or actions that do not have a significant effect on the environment either individually or cumulatively. Categorical Exclusions do not require extensive levels of environmental documentation. 2. The written documentation to support a Class of Action that satisfies federal criteria describing non-significant impacts.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) - A group of residents, community leaders, and public officials called together by the agency to represent the ideas and attitudes of the study area public. The CAC represents community interests and contributes valuable information to project sponsors about the location, design, and implementation of proposed transportation improvements.

Color Mapping - A workshop technique in which participants are given a topographic map and asked to label significant community features and highlight areas according to usage.

Comments and Coordination - A section of the environmental document which summarizes the project's public involvement.

Comment Period - Usually two weeks or longer during which a document (e.g. . the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements) is reviewed by agencies and the public, who may submit verbal or written comments.

Community Relations Coordinator (CRC) - A representative from the Department responsible for maintaining citizen awareness and participation throughout the Department's projects and activities.

Conciliation - The process through which a third party helps conflicting parties to begin negotiating an agreement by improving the quality of communications, helping explore options, and quieting tensions.

Consultant - An individual, partnership, or firm with qualified expertise in engineering or environmental disciplines that is contracted by the Department to provide technical services for design and study purposes.

Cooperating Agencies - Federal agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise related to a project. Other federal, state, local, and tribal agencies may be invited to become cooperating agencies as circumstances deem appropriate.

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) - The agency responsible for the development of national environmental policy and the oversight of federal agencies implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The CEQ was created by NEPA.

D

Debriefing Session - A meeting at which a work group or study team discusses the outcome of a public meeting, presentation, or some other activity where studies or proposals related to transportation development are reviewed; usually takes place within a short period following a scheduled event.

Department - Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Display Advertisements - Also known as "block ads," these print advertising tools combine text and graphics to convey information about large-scale public involvement activities such as general public meetings and Public Hearings.

Dispute Resolution - A formal or informal, collective approach to problem-solving that recognizes the validity of all viewpoints. Successful dispute resolution is predicated upon an individual's or group's willingness to compromise. Alternatives include formal negotiation or litigation.

E

Environmental Assessment (EA) - A public document that analyzes the environmental impacts of a proposed federal action and provides sufficient evidence to determine the level of significance of the impacts. An EA determines if an EIS or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) should be prepared.

Environment Documentation (ED) – The documentation required by PennDOT for 100% state-funded projects that do not have a significant effect on the environment this would include projects that would otherwise qualify as a CEE.

Environmental Evaluation Report (EER) - The documentation required under PA Act 120 for 100% state-funded projects that has the potential to significantly affect the environment. This would include projects that would otherwise be an EA or EIS.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - The detailed statement required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 when an agency proposes an action that significantly affects the environment.

Environmental Justice - Efforts to avoid disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority populations and low-income populations with respect to human health and the environment.

Environmental Manager - A professional in each of the Department's eleven District Offices involved in overseeing and coordinating District efforts related to environmental issues, operations, and evaluations.

Environmental Overview - A preliminary assessment of environmental features in a study area, usually performed during early environmental activities.

F

Facilitation - A process in which a neutral guide (a facilitator) works collaboratively with a group to accomplish a specific task or reach a certain goal, without making substantive comments or providing input.

Fact Finding - A method of resolving disputes that draws upon information provided by the disputing parties, as well as independent research by the fact finder who recommends a resolution. This is usually a non-binding method of conflict resolution.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) - An agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation responsible for carrying out federal highway and transportation mandates through a network of regional offices and a Division Office in each state.

Field Office - A temporary or permanent office established at an accessible location in the project community which is designed to facilitate active communication between project personnel and the affected public.

Final Design - The development of detailed working drawings, specifications, and estimates for approved transportation improvement projects. Final design can begin once environmental clearance, that is NEPA approval, is obtained.

Focus Group - A group of individuals, typical of a particular constituency, gathered together to discuss a specific topic, subject, or item in order to generate a clear image or understanding of the groups' perceptions of the subject. The focus group responds to a set of ideas in order to give a sense of how the larger constituency is apt to respond.

I

Impacts - Positive or negative effects upon the natural or human environment resulting from transportation projects.

Information Lines - Telecommunication devices which are used by the public to acquire information or forward comments and opinions. Examples include toll-free telephone hotlines, electronic mail systems, electronic town meetings, etc.

Interest - A basic underlying concern which a party seeks to address.

Interested Parties – Citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation users and employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other parties, such as Native American Tribes.

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) - Signed in 1991, this federal legislation established the policy of developing an economic, efficient, and environmentally sound national transportation system. To further this goal, ISTEA conceives transportation enhancement activities and requires that transportation policy advance the objectives of regional and metropolitan planning by considering the "overall social, economic, energy, and environmental effects" of improvement projects.

Issue - The substantive matter about which an agreement is needed.

L

Legal Notice - One-column text advertisements printed in the “legal” section of a newspaper that announce activities such as Public Hearings and the availability of environmental documents for public review.

M

Mailing List - A list maintained by the Public Involvement Team containing the names and addresses of persons or organizations desiring information or notification about project activities.

Mediation - A voluntary and non-binding approach to resolving disputes in which a neutral party helps parties reach a settlement. This settlement usually serves as an agreement which defines future behavior for the parties.

N

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) - Federal legislation that requires states to document the environmental impact of transportation projects. To comply with NEPA, PennDOT’s Transportation Project Development Process has been developed to address all potential environmental, social, cultural, and economic impacts of a proposed transportation project before decisions are reached on design. Public Involvement is an integral component of the NEPA Process.

Negotiation - A solving process between two or more parties used to resolve differences by making concessions and searching for new alternatives.

Neighborhood Meeting - A special purpose meeting held for a specific neighborhood or community that will be, or has the potential to be, affected by the project.

Newsletter - Periodic informational publications that announce upcoming events and outline important issues throughout the development of a project. Generally, newsletters are mailed to interested parties, and also may be distributed at Public Meetings.

O

Ombudsman - A third party who investigates complaints. An ombudsman may take actions such as bringing apparent injustices to the attention of high-ranking officials, giving advice to complainant, or proposing a settlement to resolve disputes.

Open House Meeting - An informal public meeting usually consisting of informational tools such as project display boards, brochures, and audio/visual presentations to convey project

information. Department and consultant personnel are on hand to answer the public's questions.

P

Participating Agencies - Agencies with an interest of some kind in a project. They may be federal, state, or local; but must be an "agency".

Participation Plan (MPO/RPO) - A plan developed by the MPO or RPO to ensure that Interested Parties have a reasonable opportunity to provide input and comment on the region's Long Range Transportation Plan.

Plans Display - A public exhibit of graphics depicting pertinent project information usually available at Public Meetings, Open House Meetings, and Public Hearings.

Position - A particular strategy adopted to achieve the interest, or to attempt to identify and satisfy interests.

Preliminary Design - The engineering and environmental studies associated with the development and comparison of alternate locations, alternate alignments, detailed analysis, ongoing public and agency interaction, project review, and final selection of a project alternative. Preliminary design occurs concurrently with the NEPA process and concludes with environmental clearance, that is NEPA approval.

Press Kit - A packet of information distributed to members of the media for the purpose of providing them with up-to-date detailed information on a particular project.

Press Release - A written announcement to the media of an upcoming event or recent development.

Project Manager - The supervisor of the overall process of planning, developing, or implementing one or more phases of a given project.

Project Team - The group of professionals representing specific disciplines who work together for a designated period of time to perform the tasks in the development of a project. For a transportation project, a Project Team consists of the Department and its consultants, PennDOT Central Office, FHWA, and cooperating agencies.

Public - The members of the general community including residents, business owners, civic associations, special interest and minority groups, and local governments and their elected officials.

Public Hearing - The official method for gathering public comments on project alternatives and environmental impact statements. The format of this Hearing may be formal or informal

and the purpose is to afford the public the fullest opportunity to express support or opposition relevant to a transportation project in an open forum. A verbatim record (transcript) of the proceedings will be part of the project record.

Public Involvement Coordinator - A designated assistant to the Project Manager who is responsible for the coordination and completion of tasks outlined in the Public Involvement Program.

Public Involvement Program - An outline of activities and practices which can be used to assimilate the public's knowledge, viewpoints, and preferences into project development.

Public Meeting - An informal meeting held by the Department at any level of project development to provide the public with updated information.

Public Officials Meeting - Conducted by transportation officials, this meeting is held to inform and advise local public officials and other governmental authorities of particular details and schedules associated with a given project.

Public Relations - The art and science of evaluating public attitudes, identifying the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization with the public interest, and planning and executing a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.

Public Service Announcement (PSA) - Blocks of air time donated by radio stations, television stations, and advertising agencies to announce upcoming community activities sponsored by non-profit and government organizations.

S

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) – On August 10, 2005, President George W. Bush signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009. SAFETEA-LU represents the largest surface transportation investment in our Nation's history. The two landmark bills that brought surface transportation into the 21st century—the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)—shaped the highway program to meet the Nation's changing transportation needs. SAFETEALU builds on this firm foundation, supplying the funds and refining the programmatic framework for investments needed to maintain and grow our vital transportation infrastructure.

Scope of Work - A detailed list of tasks written in advance to define the activities that must be completed by the Project Team throughout the course of project development.

Scoping - The process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action.

Section 404 - of the Clean Water Act of 1972 (as amended 1977) - The act requires permits for the discharge of dredged or fill material into non-tidal waterways, adjacent wetlands, isolated wetlands, forested wetlands and lakes. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) jointly administer the Section 404 Permit Program. The Corps has the sole authority to issue or deny these permits, while the EPA assists in the development of the program's environmental standards and is responsible for enforcement along with the Corps. In addition, the EPA can veto the Corps' decision to issue a Section 404 permit.

Smart Transportation Solutions (STS) - Recommends a new approach to roadway planning and design, in which transportation investments are tailored to the specific needs of each project. The different contexts – financial, community, land use, transportation, and environmental – determine the design of the solution. The best transportation solution arises from a process in which a multi-disciplinary team, considering a wide range of solutions, works closely with the community. Inclusive of context-sensitive solutions (CSS), STS also encompasses network connectivity, and access and corridor management. STS will help both states and communities adapt to the new financial context of constrained resources.

Stakeholder - An individual or group with an interest or investment in the way an issue is resolved.

Study Area - A designated geographic area that has been determined to be adequate in size to evaluate engineering and environmental information pertaining to the development of a transportation project.

Survey - A method of collecting data and gauging public attitudes about a proposed project. Surveys are primarily conducted through mailed forms, handouts at Public Meetings, or sessions of questions over the phone.

T

Task Force - An offshoot of the Citizens Advisory Group composed of representatives from the major interest groups in a project area. Its goals are to guide the Project Team throughout project development, solve problems in a collaborative fashion, and build consensus on a course of action.

Transcript - A typewritten record, usually prepared by a certified stenographer, providing a verbatim account of the official proceedings that take place at all Public Hearings and some Public Meetings. This transcript will be made a permanent part of the project record.

W

Workshop - An informal working session at which individuals are given information about specific project issues and asked to generate possible solutions and recommendations.

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