

Regional Transportation Commission- Washoe County

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

2025

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Executive Summary

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC) is required to develop and adopt a Public Participation Plan (PPP), in accordance with Federal Statute 23 CFR 450.316. Additionally, 23 CFR 450.316 (1) (x) requires, “Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.” This PPP updates and replaces the 2022 PPP with changes including enhanced plan specific requirements and new website accessibility standards. The 2025 PPP was developed in compliance with 23 CFR 450.316 (3) and included a 45-day public comment period.

The PPP describes the RTC policies and processes that provide reasonable opportunities for involvement by interested parties in regional transportation planning. The PPP is used as a guide for all RTC public participation activities related to regional transportation planning, including development of the following federally required planning documents:

- The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- The Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Public Participation Plan (PPP)

RTC has developed the following nine Public Participation Policies, and corresponding procedures and strategies, that comply with 23 CFR 450.316 (1) and ensure full and open participation as part of the regional transportation planning process.

1. Seek valuable public participation throughout the planning process.
2. Seek Board and elected-representative involvement to ensure coordination with high-level regional and statewide plans.
3. Use effective, accessible, and equitable avenues for distributing information and receiving comments while engaging traditionally underserved populations.
4. Inform and educate the public during the planning and decision-making processes using accessible in-person and virtual tools.
5. Design participation initiatives that will support and encourage effective participation.
6. Conduct outreach that bridges language, cultural, and economic differences.
7. Provide reasonable accommodation(s) and access to people with disabilities, so that everyone can easily participate in the regional planning process.
8. Consider, evaluate, and respond to public input.
9. Evaluate the public participation process regularly.

1.0 Introduction

The Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC) serves the Truckee Meadows region through three core functions: 1) RTC is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) conducting collaborative, comprehensive, and continuing regional transportation planning, 2) RTC operates the public transportation system providing fixed route bus service, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), FlexRIDE and other public transportation services, and 3) RTC designs and builds roadway projects and other multimodal facilities as part of a street and highway program.

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) is used as a guide for RTC public participation activities related to regional transportation planning. As the MPO, RTC is required to develop and adopt a PPP in accordance with 23 CFR 450.316. Federal law and regulations also require RTC to develop a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Additional plans, studies, and MPO efforts inform and are reflected in the RTP and RTIP.

RTC also utilizes this PPP to ensure standards for public participation are met in connection with the development of public transit plans and programs such as the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CTP), FTA Section 5307 Program, FTA Section 5310 Program, and other public transit plans and programs. As the operator of the regional public transportation system, RTC has responsibilities for transportation planning specifically related to public transit and other transportation services. As both the MPO and the public transportation operator, per 23 CFR 450.314, RTC staff have mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. Among other cooperative efforts, RTC planning and transit staff work together to develop plans and studies, financial plans that support the RTP and RTIP, and the annual listing of obligated federally funded projects.

2.0 Federal Regulations

Public participation has been a part of federal transportation legislation since the enactment of the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and has been included in all transportation authorizing legislation since then. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, states that “no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” As much of the work of RTC is federally funded, RTC must comply with Title IV which requires RTC to engage minority and limited-English proficiency (LEP) populations to provide meaningful access to planning and programming activities.

The federal regulation pertaining to the development of a PPP, 23 CFR 450.316 (a), requires that, “The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public

transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.”

23 CFR 450.316 (1) states that, a PPP shall be developed in consultation with all “interested parties.” “Interested parties” include individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, the freight industry, private providers of transportation, users of public transportation, users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled community, and others.

Further, 23 CFR 450.316(1)(e) requires that “MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop documented processes(es) that outline roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies.” RTC processes that outline roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies are discussed in this PPP in the Outreach section under Stakeholder Engagement.

2.1 Federal Action Items and RTC Compliance

23 CFR 450.316 (1) requires that a PPP describe the procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for ten actions. These ten actions and descriptions of RTC compliance are provided below.

1. **Federal Action Item:** “Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.”
 - **RTC Compliance:**
 - **Procedures and Strategies** – This PPP describes required and recommended procedures and strategies for notification and public comment in the Plan Specific Requirements section.
 - **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy # 1, “Seek valuable public participation throughout the planning process,” describes the desired outcomes of this federal action which are: the incorporation of identified local, regional, state, and federal priorities and needs pertaining to all modes of transportation into plans and studies, and fostering project transparency and understanding.

2. **Federal Action Item:** “Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.”
 - **RTC Compliance:**
 - **Procedures and Strategies** – This PPP describes the required and recommended procedures and strategies for providing timely public notification in the Plan Specific Requirements section. Each plan has a required or recommended notification procedure. Procedures and strategies to ensure reasonable access are described in the RTC Public Participation Policy #3, “Use effective, accessible, and equitable avenues for distributing information and receiving comments while engaging traditionally underserved populations” and in Policy #7, “Provide reasonable accommodation(s) and access to people with disabilities, so that everyone can easily participate in the regional planning process.”
 - **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy #7, “Provide reasonable accommodation(s) and access to people with disabilities, so that everyone can easily participate in the regional planning process” describes the RTC desired outcome of this federal action item which is to : “Ensure everyone has access to the information they need to participate in the planning process for our community.”
3. **Federal Action Item:** “Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs.”
 - **RTC Compliance:**
 - **Procedures and Strategies** – RTC Public Participation Policy #5, “Design participation initiatives that will support and encourage effective participation” includes the following strategy: “Utilize visualization and online tools to describe transportation plans when warranted. Policy #4, “Inform and educate the public during the planning and decision-making processes using accessible in-person and virtual tools” includes an additional strategy: “Use ADA-accessible visualization techniques and virtual tools.”
 - **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy #5, “Design participation initiatives that will support and encourage effective participation” describes the RTC desired outcome which is effective public participation.
4. **Federal Action Item:** “Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web.”
 - **RTC Compliance:**
 - **Procedures and Strategies** – This PPP describes the procedures and strategies for providing public notification, via electronically accessible formats and means, in the Plan Specific Requirements section. Additionally,

Policy #6, “Conduct outreach that bridges language, cultural, and economic differences” includes two strategies: “Provide technical information and meeting notices online,” and “Utilize social media to disseminate information about RTC initiatives and to seek input including virtual public meetings.”

- **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy #5, “Design participation initiatives that will support and encourage effective participation” describes the RTC desired outcome which is effective public participation.

5. **Federal Action Item:** “Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times.”

- **RTC Compliance:**

- **Procedures and Strategies** – RTC Public Participation Policy #4, “Inform and educate the public during the planning and decision-making processes using accessible in-person and virtual tools” includes the following strategy: “Hold public meetings at ADA- compliant buildings, convenient locations and times, in buildings that are on RTC transit routes, within project limits when possible, and engage the public through virtual meetings to provide for greater convenience.”
- **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy #5, “Design participation initiatives that will support and encourage effective participation” describes the RTC desired outcome of effective public participation. RTC Public Participation Policy #7, “Provide reasonable accommodation(s) and access to people with disabilities, so that everyone can easily participate in the regional planning process” describes an additional desired outcome which is to: “Ensure everyone has access to the information they need to participate in the planning process for our community.”

6. **Federal Action Item:** “Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.”

- **RTC Compliance:**

- **Procedures and Strategies** – RTC Public Participation Policy #8, Consider, evaluate, and respond to all public input” describes the following procedure: “In-person, online, and survey public input will be summarized and include responses that explain the consideration of the planning decisions or course of action. This includes public comments submitted in-person during meetings and online submittals from virtual meetings and surveys.”
- **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy # 1, “Seek valuable public participation throughout the planning process,” includes the following strategy: “Offer early, continuous, and equitable opportunities for the public

to be involved in the identification of social, economic, and environmental impacts of proposed transportation decisions.” This strategy describes the RTC desired outcome of this federal action which is to ensure the public is involved in the identification of potential impacts of proposed transportation decisions and that those potential impacts are considered during the planning process.

7. **Federal Action Item:** “Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.”
 - **RTC Compliance:**
 - **Procedures and Strategies** – RTC Public Participation Policy # 3, “Use effective, accessible, and equitable avenues for distributing information and receiving comments while engaging traditionally underserved populations” includes the following procedures and strategies: “Seek out and consider the viewpoints of vulnerable road users and stakeholders including seniors, minorities, low-income individuals, LEP groups, and people with disabilities during public outreach” and “Utilize available data sources to assist in the identification of underserved and disadvantaged populations.”
 - **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy # 1, “Seek valuable public participation throughout the planning process,” describes the desired outcome of this federal action which is: the incorporation of identified local priorities and needs pertaining to all modes of transportation into plans and studies.
8. **Federal Action Item:** “Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts.”
 - **RTC Compliance:**
 - **Procedures and Strategies** – This PPP describes the procedure for public comment and notification in the circumstances described by this federal action in the Plan Specific Requirements Section.
 - **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy # 1, “Seek valuable public participation throughout the planning process,” describes the desired outcomes of this federal action which are: the incorporation of identified local priorities into plans and studies, and fostering transparency and understanding.
9. **Federal Action Item:** “Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part.”

- **RTC Compliance:**
 - **Procedures and Strategies** – RTC Public Participation Policy # 3, “Use effective, accessible, and equitable avenues for distributing information and receiving comments while engaging traditionally underserved populations” includes the following procedure: “The RTC’s stakeholders include not only the general public and local and tribal units of government, but businesses, industries, and transportation service providers as well as organizations that represent people with specific transportation needs and different outreach needs.” Additionally, RTC Public Participation Policy # 2, “Seek Board and elected-representative involvement to ensure coordination with high-level regional and statewide plans” includes the following additional procedure: “Refer to the Nevada Department of Transportation’s Public Involvement Plan when coordinating with State-led plans, projects, and programs.”
 - **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy # 1, “Seek valuable public participation throughout the planning process,” describes the desired outcomes of this federal action which are: the incorporation of identified local, regional, state, and federal priorities and needs pertaining to all modes of transportation into plans and studies, and fostering transparency and understanding.
10. **Federal Action Item:** “Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.”
- **RTC Compliance:**
 - **Procedures and Strategies** – RTC Public Participation Policy # 9, “Evaluate the public participation process regularly” includes the following procedures and strategies: “Evaluate the PPP to confirm that the participation process is open and accessible to everyone, and that plan policies and guidance are implemented in accordance with state and federal regulations (as outlined in 23 CFR 450.316)” and “The RTC encourages public participation throughout the plan/project. Ongoing input requires continuous review and updates to the public participation process to ensure that the policies and procedures meet federal requirements”
 - **Desired Outcomes** – RTC Public Participation Policy # 9, “Evaluate the public participation process regularly” describes the desired outcomes of this federal action which are: “...the participation process is open and accessible to everyone, and that plan policies and guidance are implemented in accordance with state and federal regulations.”

3.0 Public Participation Policies

The following nine RTC Public Participation Policies reflect the desired outcomes for public participation and support successful development and implementation of RTC's transportation plans.

1. Seek valuable public participation throughout the planning process.
 - Utilize public involvement in the development of transportation plans and studies. Incorporate identified local, regional, state, and federal priorities and needs pertaining to all modes of transportation.
 - Offer early, continuous, and equitable opportunities for the public to be involved in the identification of social, economic, and environmental impacts of proposed transportation decisions.
 - Provide opportunities for all affected individuals and entities to participate in the planning process.
 - Encourage proactive participation to denote early and continuous involvement in important policy or project decisions before they are finalized.
 - Engage the public in early stakeholder participation to foster project transparency and understanding.
2. Seek Board and elected-representative involvement to ensure coordination with high-level regional and statewide plans.
 - Ensure that the decision makers are equipped with the information they need to make critical decisions for the future of our community.
3. Use effective, accessible, and equitable avenues for distributing information and receiving comments while engaging traditionally underserved populations.
 - The RTC's stakeholders include not only the general public and local and tribal units of government, but businesses, industries, and transportation service providers as well as organizations that represent people with specific transportation needs and different outreach needs.
 - Seek out and consider the viewpoints of vulnerable road users and stakeholders including seniors, minorities, low-income individuals, LEP groups, and people with disabilities during public outreach.
 - Utilize available data sources to assist in the identification of underserved and disadvantaged populations.
4. Inform and educate the public during the planning and decision-making processes using accessible in-person and virtual tools.
 - Include information on agendas to inform the public how they can request additional assistance if needed.
 - Use ADA-accessible visualization techniques and virtual tools.

- Hold public meetings at ADA- compliant buildings, convenient locations and times, in buildings that are on RTC transit routes, within project limits when possible, and engage the public through virtual meetings to provide for greater convenience.
5. Design participation initiatives that will support and encourage effective participation.
 - Utilize visualization and online tools to describe transportation plans when warranted.
 6. Conduct outreach that bridges language, cultural, and economic differences.
 - Provide technical information and meeting notices online.
 - Utilize social media to disseminate information about RTC initiatives and to seek input including virtual public meetings.
 - Utilize the "select language" tool on the RTC website which translates content into five different languages.
 7. Provide reasonable accommodation(s) and access to people with disabilities, so that everyone can easily participate in the regional planning process.
 - Ensure everyone has access to the information they need to participate in the planning process for our community.
 8. Consider, evaluate, and respond to public input.
 9. In-person, online, and survey public input will be considered, may be summarized and may include responses that explain the consideration of the planning decisions or course of action. Evaluate the public participation process regularly.
 - Evaluate the PPP to confirm that the participation process is open and accessible to everyone, and that plan policies and guidance are implemented in accordance with state and federal regulations (as outlined in 23 CFR 450.316)."
 - The RTC encourages public participation throughout the plan/project. Ongoing input requires continuous review and updates to the public participation process to ensure that the policies and procedures meet federal requirements.

4.0 Outreach Strategies

RTC outreach strategies, for the purposes of this PPP, will be grouped into two categories, engagement and promotion. Engagement includes activities designed to coordinate with, or gain feedback and participation from interested parties, governments and agencies. Promotion includes activities and products that notify or disseminate information about transportation issues, processes, or participation opportunities.

This PPP describes procedures and strategies for public participation as well as techniques for bridging language, cultural, economic, and accessibility differences that affect participation. RTC adheres to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (the "ADA") and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Section 504 requires that information and technology be accessible to people with disabilities. Title II of the ADA requires nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in public accommodations and in commercial facilities by ensuring that buildings and facilities, in

terms of architecture and design, transportation, and communication are made accessible to individuals with disabilities. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, states that “no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Title VI requires engagement with minority and limited-English proficiency (LEP) populations to provide meaningful access to its planning and programming activities.

As with past public participation plans, RTC will periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in this PPP to continue to ensure a full and open participation process as required by 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x). This PPP is intended to ensure minimum standards for public participation are met. When appropriate, and as needed, RTC may use additional public participation procedures and strategies not listed here.

4.1 Engagement

RTC has a toolbox of strategies that can be used to coordinate with, or gain feedback and participation from interested parties, including citizens, governments, agencies, and other stakeholders. Examples of RTC engagement strategies include:

1. RTC advisory committee meetings
2. Regional task force meetings
3. RTC Board meetings
4. City and County governing body meetings
5. City and County advisory committee meetings
6. Stakeholder meetings/interviews
7. Door-to-door and business-to-business canvassing
8. Pop-up events
9. Tabeing at community events
10. In-person public meetings
11. Virtual public meetings
12. Public hearings
13. Surveys in English and Spanish (or other appropriate language)
14. Focus groups

4.1.1 Accessible Engagement Strategies

RTC utilizes translators to help everyone understand the information and communicate their feedback. RTC also holds its public meetings at locations where reasonable accommodation and access can easily be provided for individuals with disabilities. Public meeting locations are chosen for accessibility to public transportation routes.

Examples of typical RTC public meeting locations include:

- RTC Administrative Offices
 - 1105 Terminal Way, Reno, NV 89502
- RTC 4th Street Station
 - 200 E. 4th Street, Reno, NV 89501
- RTC Centennial Plaza
 - 1421 Victorian Avenue, Sparks, NV 89431
- Public institutions, such as schools, community centers, or university campuses

4.1.2 Stakeholder Engagement

23 CFR 450.316(1)(e) requires that an MPO shall, to the extent practicable, develop documented processes that outline roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies. Roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for coordination with the Nevada Department of Transportation are identified in a Metropolitan Planning Agreement. In addition, all RTC planning processes include coordination with local governments, agencies, and other stakeholders. The type of planning product determines the appropriate extent of stakeholder involvement and the group of relevant stakeholders with which to coordinate.

At minimum, local governments, agencies, and other stakeholders play a role in the planning process through the following: identifying local needs and providing feedback on proposed recommendations. Per Public Participation Policy #1, of this PPP, RTC is responsible for seeking feedback from local governments, agencies, and other stakeholders on important policy or project decisions before they are finalized. Key decision points for consulting with local governments, agencies, and other stakeholders occur, at minimum, during the initial stages of plan development and during a public comment or plan review period.

4.1.3 Regional Stakeholders

RTC coordinates with the following interested parties in the region to include them in the transportation planning process. This is a non-exhaustive list of stakeholders and depending on the type of outreach effort or specific plan/program, additional stakeholders may be involved.

- Municipal Governments and Agencies
 - City of Reno
 - City of Sparks
 - Washoe County
 - Northern Nevada Public Health-Air Quality Management Division
 - Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority
 - Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency
- Schools
 - Washoe County Schools

- Truckee Meadows Community College
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Tribal Governments
 - Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe
 - Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
- Federal Agencies
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - Environmental Protection Agency
 - Federal Highway Administration
 - Federal Transit Administration
- State Agencies
 - Nevada Department of Public Safety
 - Nevada Department of Transportation
 - Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
 - State Historical Preservation Office
- RTC also seeks to engage those directly and indirectly affected by the transportation plans, programs, and projects in the region, which includes but is not limited to:
 - Directly and indirectly affected public
 - Elected officials, policymakers, and decision-makers
 - Local, regional, state, and federal public agency staff
 - Property owners, including those of abutting properties and those in the vicinity of a proposed project
 - Freight operators via rail, air, and highway routes
 - Providers/users of private transportation services, such as taxis, shuttle buses, limousines, and vanpools
 - Providers/users of public transportation services
 - The business community
 - Advocacy groups, such as neighborhood groups, Chambers of Commerce, homeowners' associations, public-interest groups for bicycle/pedestrians, civil rights, non-profit and senior citizen organizations
 - Traditionally underrepresented communities, such as people with disabilities, youth, elderly, low-income, and ethnic minorities
 - Members of the public with LEP
 - Media serving LEP
 - Emergency service providers and users
 - Project-specific community working group

4.1.4 RTC Committees

RTC establishes advisory committees as needed to provide input and recommendations to RTC staff, including two standing committees that provide feedback on planning items, the

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Citizens Multimodal Advisory Committee (CMAC). The TAC and CMAC review plans and studies as required or as determined necessary and appropriate by RTC staff. The purpose of these committees is to provide information and advice to RTC staff, which is then considered and incorporated in staff recommendations to the RTC Board of Commissioners.

Committee meetings will be held regularly, and/or on an as-needed basis, and will be open to the public. RTC will provide timely public notice of the meetings and reasonable access to agendas for the meetings per 23 CFR 450.316(1)i) and (ii). Materials will be provided in electronically accessible formats and means per 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)iv). Materials will be available upon request and will also be available on the RTC website. Public comment will be accepted, either verbally or in writing, at committee meetings. Notifications for committee meetings dates and locations as well as meeting minutes will be available at rtcwashoe.com.

4.2 Promotion

RTC has a toolbox of strategies that can be used to notify or disseminate information about transportation issues, processes, or participation opportunities. Examples of RTC promotional strategies include:

1. Press releases
2. Fliers
3. Graphics and infographics
4. Signage
5. Project renderings and video simulations
6. RTC website alerts and posts
7. Project-specific websites
8. Text and App notifications
9. Newspaper advertisements in English and Spanish
10. Weekly stakeholder email updates for large transportation projects
11. Social media campaigns, updates, and interactions
12. Videos
13. Media relations
14. The RTC Board eNews monthly electronic newsletter
15. Television segments
16. Advertising
17. Mailers

4.2.1 Accessible Promotion Strategies

RTC ensures marketing and communication printed and electronic materials meet ADA standards. Printed marketing, communication, and outreach materials include high-contrast visual elements, 14-point or greater font size, and are produced in English and

Spanish. PDF documents are made accessible, searchable, and fillable. RTC will also provide documents with larger font sizes upon request.

4.2.2 Website

The RTC website is Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) based. An HTML-based website provides people with disabilities, who use screen readers and speech-to-text tools, the ability to easily read and comprehend critical information.

RTC meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) by making PDFs accessible, providing imagery tags, and maintaining HTML-coded public transportation bus schedules. The RTC website has an accessibility menu that allows users to change the contrast, font size, text spacing, line height, cursor size, and saturation. RTC extends further vigilance by manually reviewing and testing the site to ensure all elements of the website comply with ADA standards. RTC is also working to refresh its website to comply with WCAG 2.2 by 2026.

4.2.3 Social Media

On social media, for people who have low vision or are blind, RTC provides alternative text for all images to facilitate e-reader utilization, and narrated videos are provided. For people who have hearing loss or are deaf, closed captioning is available.

5.0 Plan Specific Requirements

As the MPO, RTC develops federally required documents including the following:

- The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- The Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Public Participation Plan (PPP)

A summary of specific public participation requirements and recommendations for the plans listed above are included in Table 1. RTC will provide a copy of its adopted, updated, or revised RTP, RTIP, UPWP, and PPP to NDOT, FHWA, and the FTA.

RTC also develops and engages in other plans and studies that inform and are reflected in the RTP and RTIP. All plans, studies and efforts are identified for a two-year period in RTC's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

As the operator of the regional public transportation system, RTC develops federally required documents related to public transit and public transportation services including the following:

- The Program of Projects required for the FTA Section 5307 program
- Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (required for the FTA Section 5310 program)

- Transportation Optimization Plan Strategies (RTC's 5-year, short-range transit plan)

Table 1. Plan Specific Public Participation Requirements

	Public Comment Period	Public Hearing	Newspaper Notice	Website Notice	Committee Review
RTP Adoption	21-day public comment period required prior to public hearing	Required	Required	Required	Required
RTIP Adoption	21-day public comment period required prior to public hearing	Required	Required	Required	Required
RTP or RTIP Amendment	7-day (or 21-day if conformity analysis is required) public comment period required prior to public hearing	Required	Required	Required	Required
UPWP	21-day public comment period recommended	Not required	Not required	Recommended	Recommended
PPP	45-day public comment period required	Not required	Not required	Recommended	Required

5.1 RTP and RTIP

RTC has established requirements regarding the public participation process for the RTP, and RTIP consistent with U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) requirements. Note, the public notice process and time established for public review and comments on the RTIP comply with FTA Section 5307 Program of Projects (POP) requirements.

5.1.1 Amendments to the RTP

Amendments to the RTP are completed to address significant changes. Instances when an amendment to the RTP is needed include the following:

- a. The addition or deletion of a regionally significant project
- b. Substantial changes to project scope that would result in an air quality conformity determination
- c. A significant change in anticipated revenues which would require a re-demonstration of fiscal constraint

5.1.2 Administrative Modifications to the RTIP

RTIP changes that are considered non-substantive in nature (administrative modifications) will not be subject to the public comment and public hearing process cited herein. These actions will be processed through the electronic Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (eSTIP) and include the following:

- a. An increase of less than 25%, or any decrease or removal, of the federally funded portion of a project
- b. Minor adjustments to project limits
- c. Addition or deletion of a phase without major change to the scope
- d. Movement of projects between fiscal years included in the RTIP
- e. Minor changes to funding sources
- f. Changes made to an existing project's non-federal funding amounts
- g. Addition of a regionally significant project that does not require air quality conformity and is programmed with 100% non-federal funds

5.1.3 Amendments to the RTIP

In the event that a change in the RTIP falls outside of the criteria for an administrative modification, RTC will amend the RTIP and follow the process outlined above.

Amendments will also be processed through the eSTIP for the following actions:

- a. Addition or deletion of any federally funded project
- b. An increase of more than 25% of the federally funded portion of a project
- c. Substantial changes to the scope that would result in an air quality conformity determination
- d. A change in a funding source for a project from non-federal to federal

5.1.4 Revisions to the Draft RTP or RTIP

In instances where the final RTP or RTIP differs significantly from the draft that was made available for public comment and/or raises new substantive issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the draft, RTC shall provide additional opportunities for public review and comment, in accordance with 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(viii). The RTC will, at a minimum, issue a second notice allowing for an additional 21-day public comment period.

5.1.5 Committee Review

The TAC and CMAC will review the RTP, RTIP, and any amendments to these documents.

5.1.6 Public Comment Period

RTC will provide at least 21 days for public review and comments on updates to the RTP and RTIP prior to an RTC Board public hearing. For an amendment to the RTP or RTIP, a seven (7) day public comment period will be held. However, if an amendment requires a transportation conformity analysis, a 21-day public comment period will be provided.

Notice of the opening of the public comment period and the availability of the document for review will be published in local newspapers of general circulation and on the agency's website. The public comment period will begin on the date noted in the published notice.

5.1.7 Public Hearing

A formal public hearing will be conducted prior to RTC approval/adoption of the RTP and RTIP, and any associated amendments, including accompanying air quality conformity determinations, as required by federal regulations. Notice of the public hearing will be published in local newspapers of general circulation and on the agency's website.

5.1.8 Comment Summary

RTC will prepare a summary analysis and report on the disposition of all applicable comments received during the public comment period and at the public hearing for the RTP and RTIP, and any associated amendments.

5.2 UPWP

A 21-day public comment period, website notice of the public comment period, and review by the TAC and CMAC are recommended for the UPWP. RTC will prepare a summary analysis and report on the disposition of all applicable comments received during the public comment period.

5.3 PPP

A public comment period of 45 days is required before the PPP is initially adopted or revised as required by 23 CFR 450.316(a)(3). The TAC and CMAC will review the PPP and provide feedback. RTC will prepare a summary analysis and report on the disposition of all applicable comments received during the public comment period.