

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN 2017 - 2020





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5-9
--------------------------------	------------

CHAPTER 1: PRINCIPLES OF WMATA’S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Guiding Principles	11
WMATA’s Goals and Objectives for Public Participation.....	12
WMATA’s Influencers of the Public Participation Plan.....	13
Service Area Demographics.....	14-15
WMATA Customer Demographics	16

CHAPTER 2: GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH FOR PLANNED PROJECTS

PPP Project Identification	17
Roles & Responsibilities	18
PPP Process - Collecting Project Information.....	19
Developing a Project Communication & Outreach Plan (PCOP).....	20
Language Access Plan Requirements.....	21
Performance Measure Reporting	22
Annual Public Participation Plan Measurement Review Template	23
Event Feedback Form Examples.....	24

CHAPTER 3: 2014-2017 PPP REVIEW

2014-2017 PPP Years in Review Snapshot	25
The Creation of the 2014-2017 Public Participation Plan.....	26
Key Findings.....	27
2014-2017 Primary Recommendations.....	28-36
2014-2017 Additional Recommendations	36-41

CHAPTER 4: 2017-2020 RECOMMENDATIONS

2017-2020 Recommendations.....	43-44
--------------------------------	-------

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Federal and Compact Requirements Review
- Appendix B: Demographic Profile Data
- Appendix C: Peer Agency Review
- Appendix D: Public Participation Management System
- Appendix E: Outreach Activity Review



WMATA's Public Participation Plan (PPP) was first developed in 2013 through a year-long, multi-step process led by a cross-departmental team. The comprehensive development process included a review of federal requirements, a best practice review of 10 transportation agencies around the country, staff and Board Member group interviews, outreach to Community Based (CBO) Organizations serving Title VI and other hard-to-reach populations in the WMATA service area, and a general public outreach campaign. The PPP was approved by the WMATA Board of Directors in September 2014 and the Federal Transit Administration in January 2015.

This 2017-2020 edition of the Public Participation Plan has been updated to reflect WMATA's evolution in public communication and outreach since then, including direction from new management, successes and lessons learned, and changes in organizational structure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) strives to lead transit-oriented public participation, outreach and communication. WMATA's Public Participation Plan (PPP) serves as a guiding tool to guarantee high-quality two-way communication, provide feedback from all those impacted by planned projects and to fulfill federal obligations.

As a recipient of federal funds and per Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, WMATA must submit to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) a Public Participation Plan that details the Authority's plans and strategies to engage minority and Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations in its planning and programming activities. Though this plan was developed to satisfy the Title VI requirement, its framework is designed to be applied to all Authority outreach efforts, whether "required" or not.

Guiding Principles

WMATA's Public Participation Plan has established guiding principles, goals, and objectives that demonstrate the Authority's philosophy toward, and larger commitment to, public participation, equity, and excellent public service. For projects that trigger the Public Participation Plan, these principles should be followed.

WMATA's Four Guiding Principles for Public Participation



Inclusive

Actively facilitate the involvement of all communities that may be affected in the public participation process.



Collaborative

Work jointly with the community throughout the planning and project development process.



Responsive

Proactively link public feedback to outcomes in order to build trust.



Consistent

Ensure established guidelines from the Public Participation Plan are followed throughout WMATA.

Developing a PPP Project Communications & Outreach Plan

Based on recommendations from the first edition of the PPP and input from stakeholders, WMATA has now adapted a standardized public participation planning process. By following this process, compliance and consistency is ensured for all planned project communications and outreach methods.

WMATA has a wide variety of projects and initiatives that trigger the compliance of the Public Participation Plan. Overall, any planned project that has a customer impact or a project that requires public feedback must follow PPP guidelines.

WMATA's Office of External Relations along with other partner offices work with department project managers and points-of-contact to ensure a streamlined and timely PPP process. This includes collecting critical information about a project, including the scope/timeline, demographic information of the impacted population, budget, and communication and input purpose. Once project information has been shared, the Office of External Relations

works with the Project Manager and others to create a Project Communication & Outreach Plan (PCOP) specifically tailored for that project. Each plan pays special attention to impacts on Title VI communities and verifies that it follows WMATA's Language Access Plan requirements.

Since the implementation of the Public Participation Plan in 2015, WMATA now tracks the implementation of all Project Communications and Outreach Plans through discrete reporting measurements. These performance measures are tracked through WMATA's new PPP online tracking tool called the Public Participation Management System (PPMS), a tool that provides a new way to track PPP projects and creates one large database for FTA monitoring and compliance reporting.

2014-2017 Review

WMATA's 2014-2017 Public Participation Plan was developed through a year-long, multi-step process and led by a cross-departmental team with representation from offices and departments that currently engage in public outreach activities.

Since the Public Participation Plan was developed, more than 35 planned projects have followed the PPP process with over 1,000 activities completed, including pop-up events, Community Based Organization visits, surveys, open houses and other engagement strategies.

Key findings found in the original development of the Public Participation Plan still hold true for the 2017-2020 edition. These findings have been used to shape communication and outreach plans and provide a strong base for many of the successes over the past few years.

- 1 To involve Title VI populations, go where they are.** Holding events where minority, low-income, and LEP population are — like transit centers, CBOs, shopping centers, and festivals — is the most effective method for reaching these populations.
- 2 Demonstrate cultural sensitivity.** Know your audience and bring the appropriate WMATA personnel (subject matter, cultural, and linguistic expertise) to events and meetings.
- 3 Make it convenient to attend events and tailor event formats to the preferences of groups whose input is sought.** Meeting formats should be tailored to the preferences of individual groups or communities – this includes in-person and virtual. Considerations should also be made to include children, like providing activities for children allowing parents to attend and participate in the meeting.
- 4 Translate materials and use graphics.** Informational materials should be available in the target population's language of preference and should be culturally appropriately designed by taking into consideration the intended audience and by creating a clear message with the use of graphics and effective use of text.
- 5 Use media in different languages and vary distribution outlets.** Materials should be distributed through various outlets and to locations that many riders frequent, including on the bus, at bus stops, and at Metrorail stations. Materials should also be distributed to locations that are not necessarily transit related, such as Community Based Organizations, libraries, grocery stores, and residences. Newspaper advertising also still works and is a preferred way for many people to receive community information.
- 6 Acknowledge and use input.** It should be explicitly evident how public input will be used in decision making.
- 7 Establish an institutional framework for public participation that includes a lead department.** A department should be specifically tasked with overseeing public participation and/or a process that facilitates the involvement of several departments.

continued on next page

- 8 **Work with Community Based Organizations to build relationships and trust across diverse populations.** These nonprofit groups support local communities and are among the most effective resources available to a transit agency for facilitating the frequent contact that is needed to build trust and mutually beneficial relationships.
- 9 **Use a variety of tactics to get the word out.** Consider employing other techniques, such as using student report card distribution times to get information to families or door-to-door outreach in targeted areas.
- 10 **Use technology appropriately.** While it has its place in public participation, technology should supplement other forms of outreach.
- 11 **Use a recurring public forum to allow members of the public to provide feedback to WMATA regarding issues of concern to them.** This feedback will supplement existing opportunities to comment on specific projects, proposals, and plans.

Recommended Strategies & Implementation from the 2014-2017 PPP

Per FTA requirements for the PPP, WMATA identified proactive strategies that engaged minority, low-income, and Limited English Proficient (LEP) communities, created a process and set of procedures that will facilitate inclusive participation; and developed a set of performance measures that track whether the agency is reaching its desired outcomes. The 2014-2017 PPP included four primary strategies that ensured WMATA's public participation activities were effective, efficient, and compliant with federal requirements for inclusive public participation. The PPP also included additional secondary recommendations, many that were addressed through the initiatives of the primary strategies.

WMATA was accountable to the FTA for ensuring that the procedural strategies adopted by the Authority in the PPP were successfully implemented. Below are the four primary recommendations proposed in the 2014-2017 PPP and a brief description on how WMATA fulfilled those recommendations during the reporting period.

Public Participation Toolkit & Project Communications/Outreach Plan

The PPP recommended that WMATA design a toolkit to help staff plan effective outreach with a Project Communications/Outreach Plan (PCOP) that every WMATA project would use to plan public participation activities. The PPP also recommended WMATA establish a Community Based Organization (CBO) Outreach Committee as a way of collaborating with local CBOs to develop strategies that are tailored to specific project proposals, to ensure meaningful, broad-based public participation, and to build a new avenue for knowledge transfer between WMATA and the CBOs.

The Office of External Relations worked closely with the Web Applications Group within the Department of Information Technology to transfer the toolkit laid out in the 2014-2017 PPP into a web-based, user-friendly project tracking tool. This tool, called the Public Participation Management System (PPMS), has the ability to export on-demand performance measure and activity reports, provides project managers the ability to collaboratively develop a PCOP along with the Office of External Relations, and allows for demographic information and participation metrics input. Based on a review of Peer Agency best practices, this toolkit may be a first of its kind in transit public participation.

The development of WMATA's first Community Based Organization Outreach Committee began in 2015 as an initiative led by the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEEO). The first CBO Outreach Committee planning meeting was held in December 2015. Seven representatives from local CBOs attended and provided insight on how to further cultivate and sustain the committee. Since the first two planning meetings, the CBO Outreach Committee meetings have been used to focus on Metro-related topics. The group has also communicated through email and regularly receive project information and opportunities to provide input.

2014-2017 Primary Recommendation

1

2014-2017 Primary Recommendation

2

Performance Measures

The PPP recommended performance measure data that focused on participant demographics, participant feedback, and participant follow-up be collected for each public participation project along with an annual performance report that aggregate measures from individual projects and the results of an annual survey of CBOs.

The implementation began in mid-2015 with the roll-out of the new Public Participation Management System (PPMS). More than 1,000 activities have been tracked in the PPMS system in 2015 and 2016. Each of these activities include all relevant participation metrics, feedback types, and how impacted Limited English Proficient populations were addressed. Based on the projects that have been tracked in the new PPMS system, WMATA has reached an average score of 98 percent among all of the performance measures tracked.

2014-2017 Primary Recommendation

3

Public Participation Training

To ensure the successful, uniform adoption of the Toolkit and an Authority-wide understanding of Title VI requirements for public participation, the PPP recommended that WMATA staff involved in public outreach be required to use the Toolkit and receive training.

Since the PPP was implemented, WMATA has trained over 100 project managers during four scheduled trainings between May 2015 and August 2016. Training binders were provided to all attendees, and the materials, along with an “Introduction to the Public Participation Plan” video, are also available to WMATA employees on Metroweb, WMATA’s Intranet.

2014-2017 Primary Recommendation

4

Centralized Public Participation Office

In addition to the Toolkit, the PPP recommended that WMATA establish a centralized office to manage public outreach. The Office of External Relations (EREL) was tasked with providing expert assistance to project/planning staff for individual projects, managing all project-based public participation activities, and providing oversight and coordination for public participation within WMATA. The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEEO) was tasked with additional functions related to managing relationships and outreach with Community Based Organizations (CBOs).

WMATA created a Public Participation Programs team within the Office of External Relations which included reallocating one staff member to manage the program and hiring two additional staff members in the spring/summer of 2015. The current structure under the Director of External Relations includes a Manager of Public Participation Programs and two Outreach Specialists/Special Project Officers.

Since the implementation of this team in 2015, they have coordinated more than 1,000 planned projects’ communication and outreach activities throughout the agency, working closely with other internal departments to coordinate projects and ensure compliance. Two additional positions, a Translation Coordinator and Project Coordinator, hope to be added to the team but are currently on hold due to budget constraints.

The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity also hired a new staff member to manage relationships with Community Based Organizations and is currently working to revitalize CBO activities.

Moving Forward: 2017-2020 Recommendations

Over the last few years, WMATA has transformed the way it communicates and collects feedback from the public. With new projects beginning every week and thousands of riders impacted, WMATA continues to try to find more efficient, effective ways to talk to customers, especially those that are in hard-to-reach communities.

As a result of an assessment of lessons learned, a review of best practices of peer agencies, rider and employee feedback, an understanding of Metro's direction and its budget constraints, two new recommendations have been proposed.

Expand strategies and internal processes for reaching Limited English Proficient (LEP) communities.

WMATA made huge progress with the development of the 2014-2017 Public Participation Plan in reaching LEP communities. For all planned projects, target populations were considered when developing the communication and outreach plans and all had a LEP component. Bilingual outreach teams, translated signs, ads and materials became standard for all PPP activities. However, with the increase in workload, it became clear that new strategies needed to be implemented to manage the outsourcing of translations for multiple projects, quality checking the work, and understanding the trends in communications and media placement for LEP populations. In order to tackle these issues, along with new requirements from the Language Access Plan, WMATA should consider the following strategies:

1. Build stronger relationships and collect feedback from Community Based Organizations (CBOs) specializing in Limited English populations about recommendations for communications and outreach. This includes exploring technology and communications alternatives that may better engage busy CBO representatives and working closing with the CBO Outreach Committee to review strategies for individuals that need language assistance.
2. Establish a Translation Project Coordinator position to provide a central point of oversight for all PPP translations and language requirements.
3. Secure on-call assistance for professional translation and interpretation vendors to be contracted for PPP projects.

Consider new and innovative ways to collect feedback and communicate about planned projects to hard-to-reach communities, especially those techniques that save resources.

New, inventive communication tools have been developed over the last few years that may prove useful for some target communities. Though it has been proven that in-person outreach is a more effective tactic when reaching Title VI populations, the digital divide is shrinking at even faster rates with cheaper technology and programs to ensure access to the Internet. There may be other ways to "go where they are" through technology. *Amplify*, WMATA's online community portal, demonstrated an interest for these types of digital engagements. Below are a couple of strategies that WMATA should explore:

1. The use of geo-location technology as an alternative mode to disseminate information and collect feedback from customers in an affected area. Using this technology, whether through surveys or notifications, is essentially going to where people are "virtually" located.
2. Identification of new methods to collect feedback, including emerging trends in online discussion forums, touch-screen kiosks and Twitter pools.

Conclusion

WMATA's Public Participation Plan is a comprehensive document that includes detailed guidelines for executing inclusive, consistent, collaborative and responsive public outreach. In creating this plan, WMATA set out not only to be compliant with FTA requirements, but also to become a leader in progressive public participation.

2017-2020 Recommendation

1

2017-2020 Recommendation

2



CHAPTER 1:

PRINCIPLES OF WMATA'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Introduction

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) strives to lead transit-oriented public participation, outreach and communication. WMATA's Public Participation Plan (PPP) serves as a guiding tool to guarantee high-quality two-way communication, provide feedback from all those impacted by planned projects and to fulfill federal obligations.

As a recipient of federal funds and per Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, WMATA must submit to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) a Public Participation Plan that details the Authority's plans and strategies to engage minority and Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations in its planning and programming activities. Though this plan was developed to satisfy the Title VI requirement, its framework is designed to be applied to all Authority outreach efforts, whether "required" or not.

Recipients of federal funds have "wide latitude" to decide "how, when, and how often specific public participation activities should take place," but these determinations should be supported by demographic analysis and the results of input (e.g., outreach and qualitative research) received through the development of the public participation plan.

By developing and utilizing strategies that improve the accessibility of WMATA's outreach for those groups with constraints and/or barriers that may limit their participation, the accessibility of outreach for all persons, regardless of minority status, income level, or the ability to speak English, will improve. Public participation activities are designed to be accessible to all persons.

Guiding Principles

WMATA's Public Participation Plan is grounded in the principle that public participation activities will be conducted through a reasonable, inclusive, and collaborative process that seeks to gain rider and non-rider input into WMATA decision-making about its policies and services.

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), the leader in promoting and improving the practice of public participation throughout the world, has developed IAP2 Core Values to help make better decisions that reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities. Many of these Core Values reflect the intent of WMATA's goals towards all public outreach and participation, including:

- Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

Following these Core Values and through a robust vetting process during the creation of the PPP, WMATA has established guiding principles, goals, and objectives that demonstrate the Authority's philosophy toward, and larger commitment to, public participation, equity, and excellent public service. For projects that trigger the Public Participation Plan, these principles should be followed.



WMATA's Goals and Objectives for Public Participation



Goal 1 Inclusive

Actively facilitate the involvement of all communities that may be affected in the public participation process.

Objectives

- Provide materials and translation services that meet the needs of the communities WMATA serves, including (but not limited to) Limited English Proficient (LEP), low literacy, and individuals with disabilities.
- Ensure that minorities and LEP communities see their ethnicity, race, and languages reflected at outreach events and in materials.
- Include methods that consider the needs of low-income communities.
- Include multiple methods of engagement that recognize and address other barriers to access (e.g., physical, financial, technological, and cultural).



Goal 2 Collaborative

Work jointly with the community throughout the planning and project development process.

Objectives

- Foster sustained and meaningful relationships with community-based organizations, including non-profits, cultural groups, and tenant/neighborhood organizations.
- Obtain early input to inform decision-making.
- Communicate detailed, easy-to-understand information in a timely manner that allows the public to provide informed input.
- Use accessible and diverse strategies that facilitate feedback from all members of the community.
- Ensure local jurisdiction partners and WMATA Board members are engaged with, and included in, outreach activities when their communities are affected.



Goal 3 Responsive

Proactively link public feedback to outcomes in order to build trust.

Objectives

- Provide updates and results of participation directly to the participants within a reasonable timeframe.
- Clearly communicate how public input was used in the development of final recommendations.
- Create opportunities for public feedback on general items of interest or concern.



Goal 4 Consistent

Ensure established guidelines from the Public Participation Plan are followed throughout WMATA.

Objectives

- Ensure consistency and quality in planning for and conducting public participation activities through WMATA's Office of External Relations.
- Conduct fiscally responsible and practical public outreach.
- Communicate the results of public involvement to all relevant staff and WMATA Board of Directors.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach outcomes with the performance measures established by WMATA and implement corrective measures as appropriate.

WMATA's Influencers of the Public Participation Plan

Federal and WMATA Compact Requirements

FTA's Circular 4702.1B "Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients" is the primary source of federal requirements and guidance for Title VI compliance, but it is not the only federal regulation that provides guidance on full, fair, and meaningful public outreach.

As a recipient of FTA urbanized area formula grants, WMATA must also provide opportunities for public hearings and make information available to the public. FTA and the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) also direct transit agencies to incorporate environmental justice principles into their planning, projects and activities to prevent disproportionately high adverse effects on minority and low-income populations. The USDOT, like other federal agencies, requires public involvement in environmental review processes under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

WMATA's Compact also provided guidance on public participation requirements, including information about public hearing requirements and guidelines. Additional details about the Federal and WMATA Compact requirements can be reviewed in *Appendix A: Federal and WMATA Compact Requirements Review*.

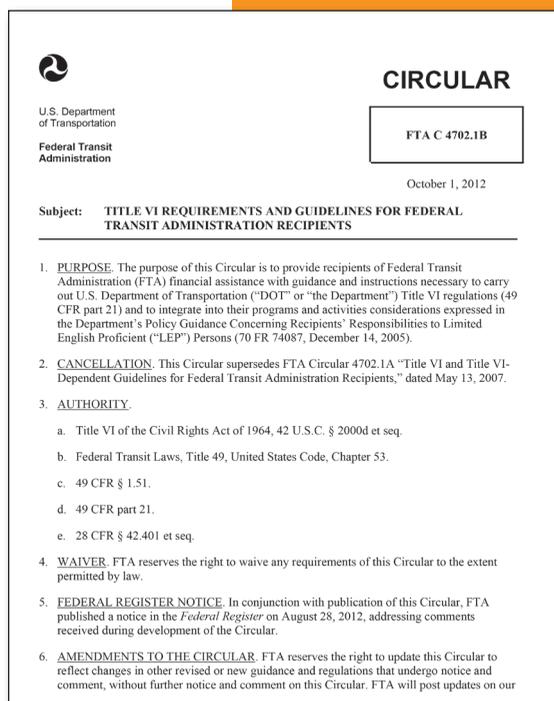
Current Leadership Initiatives

Since the inception of the PPP in 2014, the organizational structure of WMATA has changed considerably with a new General Manager/CEO and Executive Management team as well as new members of the Board of Directors. With this influx of change, the new management is determined to return Metro to the world-class transit system it once was. This means restoring trust in safety, making the trains and buses run on time, and managing effectively and efficiently as stewards of customer fares and public assets.

Programs introduced under the new leadership include:

- The General Manager's "Customer Accountability Report" (CARE), a comprehensive list of improvements with progress reports.
- "Back2Good", a pledge of initiatives focused on safety, service and financial management to complete within a year.
- SafeTrack, an accelerated track work plan to address safety recommendations and rehabilitate the Metrorail system to improve safety and reliability.

The General Manager, WMATA's Board of Directors, and members of WMATA's leadership have sent a very clear message about the critical role that the public's input has on the success of Metro's initiatives, and the importance of transparency in project communication.

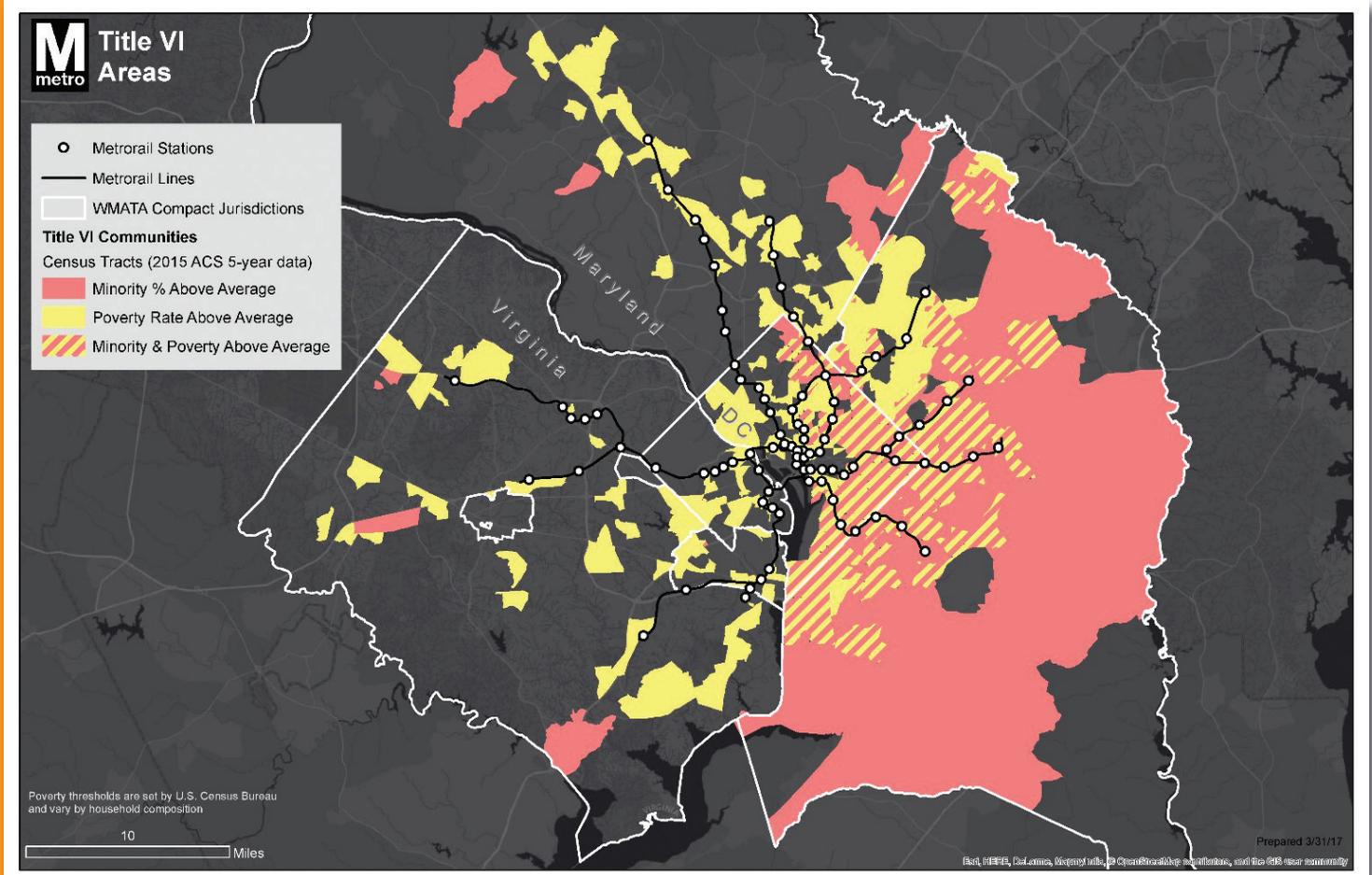


BACK2GOOD
SafeTrack

Service Area Demographics

Understanding the nature and extent of Title VI protected populations within WMATA's service area provides context for a culturally-sensitive, customized approach to outreach.

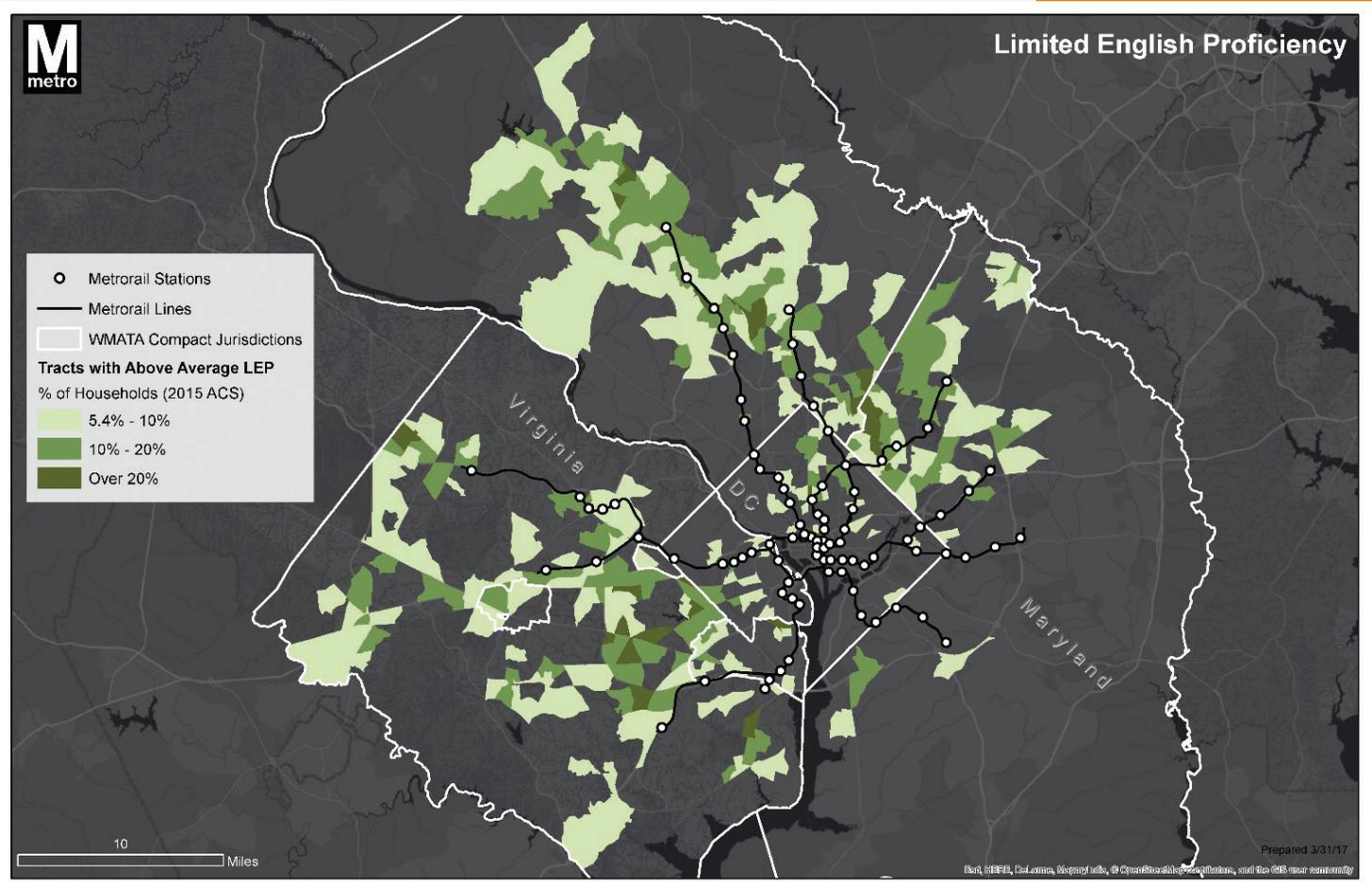
WMATA serves a population of four million within a 1,500 square-mile service area. The transit zone consists of the District of Columbia, the Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George's, the Northern Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church. Overall, 45% of those working in the downtown core – Washington and parts of Arlington County – use public transit. The demographic profile of this service area is 58% minority, and 8% of the households in the service area are at or below the poverty thresholds (see below).



Minority and Low-Income Populations in WMATA Service Area

WMATA's service area also includes many limited English speakers belonging to various linguistic minorities. According to the U.S. Census 2015 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 11.5% of the population, five years of age and older, residing in the service area is limited English proficient (LEP).

Spanish-speaking households make up 60% of the total LEP households in the service area. Other top languages include Mandarin Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, African Languages, French, Tagalog and Arabic (see below).



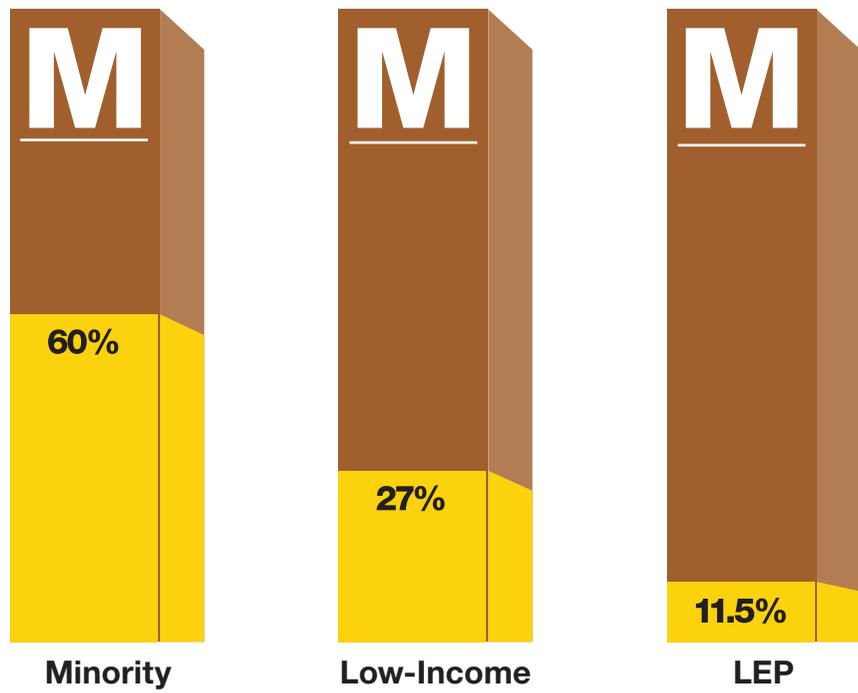
Linguistically Isolated Households in WMATA Service Area

WMATA Customer Demographics

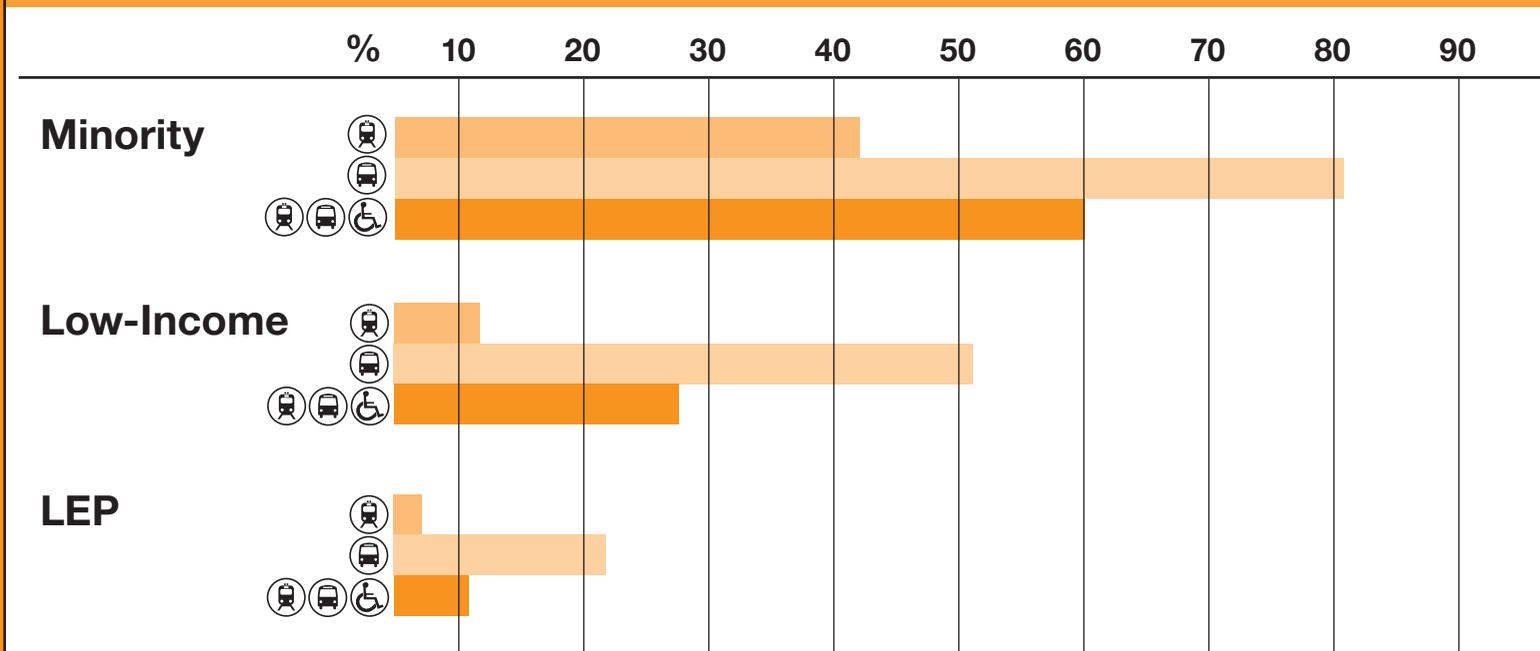
WMATA regularly measures the customer composition and demographics of bus and rail ridership by conducting intercept surveys at rail stations and on-board buses. This program, run by the Office of Customer Research, is known as Travel Trends and follows federal timelines for completion.

Based on this information collected, WMATA has organized minority and low-income demographic profiles by system and by mode of transportation (Metrorail, Metrobus and MetroAccess). Low-income is considered a household income of less than \$30,000. WMATA has also developed language profiles for these stations and lines based on LEP households data within a certain radius. More detailed information about these demographic profiles can be viewed in *Appendix B: Demographic Profile Data*.

Metro Customer Demographic Profile, ALL MODES



Metro Customer Demographic Profile, BY MODE



Legend

- Metrorail
- Metrobus
- MetroAccess

Demographic Groups				
Minority	45%	81%	81%	60%
Black/African-American	26%	58%	71%	39%
Hispanic	8%	13%	4%	10%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7%	5%	2%	6%
Low-Income	13%	52%	28%	28%
LEP	5%	24%	5%	11.5%

CHAPTER 2:

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH FOR PLANNED PROJECTS

Introduction

In 2013, WMATA began experiencing a rapid increase of public participation activities due to both the number and scale of projects requiring public participation and the new Title VI requirements that ensure inclusive participation and renewed commitment to engaging public outreach. Once WMATA's Public Participation Plan was fully implemented in 2015, communication and outreach plans for over 35 planned projects throughout the agency followed these new guidelines.

Based on recommendations from the first edition of the PPP and input from stakeholders, WMATA has now adapted a standardized public participation planning process. By following this process, it ensures compliance and consistency of all planned project communications and outreach methods.

PPP Project Identification

WMATA has a wide variety of projects and initiatives that trigger the compliance of the public participation plan. Overall, any planned project that has a customer impact or a project that requires public feedback must follow PPP guidelines. This means non-emergency projects that impact the public will follow the PPP. Project types can include, but are not limited to:

- **Planning Projects:** Examples include long-range strategic planning, station area planning projects or short-term planning. *Bus studies/Momentum/etc.*
- **Amenities & Infrastructure Projects:** Examples include new systems and structures. *New fare gates/fare media types/etc.*
- **Environmental Analyses:** Examples include reviews of environmental evaluations. *New buildings/joint development/etc.*
- **Service Changes:** Examples include changing routes or frequency of service, especially those that require an equity analysis. *Metrorail or Metrobus service changes/new bus routes/etc.*
- **Policy Alternatives:** Examples include policy changes with customer impacts. *Budget/fare changes/etc.*
- **Public Information Campaign:** Examples include required and planned work with customer impacts. *Temporarily shutting down a Metrorail station or line/Metrobus detours/station entrance closure/elevator or escalator replacements/etc.*

Any project that requires a Compact public hearing automatically triggers the PPP and must comply with PPP and WMATA Compact standards. If projects require a Scope of Work (SOW) that includes any communication or outreach task, the scope must include task items that follow the PPP. The Office of External Relations should review any SOW with communications/outreach components to verify that the tasks comply with the PPP.

Roles and Responsibilities

In order to ensure a streamlined process and ensure that deadlines are met, all staff must do their part in the PPP process.

Key Roles	Description and Responsibilities
PPP Departmental Point-of-Contact (POC)	Appointed by the Executive Management Team or leadership to serve as the liaison between a department and the Office of External Relations (EREL) for all PPP-related matters. The POC is responsible for identifying any new planned projects that trigger the PPP and notifying EREL to be part of the planning process.
Project Manager (PM)	Serves as the subject matter expert and is responsible for communicating project information and timelines to EREL. The PM is included in the creation of a communications and outreach plan for the project, but is still responsible for the management of the project (i.e. Board action items, approvals and reports).
Office of External Relations (EREL)	Responsible for the creation and implementation of the Project Communication & Outreach Plan (PCOP) for a project. EREL serves as a “communication project manager” and coordinates with other departments on tasks assigned in the PCOP. EREL is also responsible for drafting public communications and input information for FTA-required equity analysis and triennial reports.

Many other key departments within WMATA have a large role in ensuring compliance with Title VI regulations, the WMATA Compact, and the PPP.

Other WMATA Departments	Description and Responsibilities
Office of Planning (PLAN)	Responsible for the technical analysis related to Title VI compliance, including evaluating Title VI impacts of service and fare changes. Advises on demographic and census data use and is responsible for preparing equity analysis reports.
Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEEO)	Responsible for Title VI policy and compliance. Advises on language access and translation needs and manages relationships with Community Based Organizations.
Office of Customer Research (RESR)	Responsible for oversight on qualitative and quantitative research to identify customer preferences and opinions, and provides customer input on Metro policy decisions. Advises on best methods to collect public input and analysis of results.
Office of Board Secretary (SECT)	Responsible for the coordination, review and distribution of Metro Board materials, arranging public hearings and serving as the liaison between the WMATA Board of Directors. Advises on Compact compliance for all projects.

PPP Process – Collecting Project Information

Departmental Point-of-Contacts (POC) and Project Managers (PM) are responsible for notifying the Office of External Relations (EREL) about a project that triggers the PPP. Various information about a project is needed to begin the PPP process.

Project Information Needed	Collection Details
Scope and Timeline	<p>Details about the project, including approximate start/completion dates and anticipated timeframes for public participation and Board action items. The sooner that the POC or PM can share information about the project, the more likely it is that all tasks can be completed and deadlines met.</p>
Demographics	<p>Any population that will be impacted by the project, including demographic information like minority, low-income and limited English proficient. If the POC or PM doesn't have this information, EREL will work with the appropriate offices to gather it.</p>
Budget	<p>Dollar amount allocated for public communications and outreach and what type of money is to be spent (Capital, Operational, Reimbursable, etc.). All projects that fall under the PPP should include budgeted funding for communications and outreach. If a budget hasn't been allocated yet, EREL will help provide a budget estimate.</p>
Additional Information and Documentation	<p>Any presentations, Board materials, or marketing materials that already exist, even if created by other jurisdictional partners or contractors. Reference materials of any other similar projects previously done or other contingent projects are also useful.</p>
Public Communication and Input Purpose	<p>Information on why public communication and input are being sought and what the goals are for the communications and feedback – what would WMATA/PM like to learn from the public? Defining these goals is required for each project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration: WMATA/PM wants to collaborate with the public on the project, including working directly with them on analysis, alternatives, and/or decision-making with the public. May include the development of alternatives and identification of preferred solutions. • Consultation: WMATA/PM wants to consult with the public on the project, including obtaining feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions that have been developed by project staff or the Board. • Information: WMATA/PM wants to inform the public on the project, including providing facts and context for consideration to inform them about the policy, problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions. The timeline is key for these types of projects. If information is the only purpose why communication is being sought, the project should have already been through an inclusive public participation process or is a "Public Information Campaign" project type.

Developing a Project Communication & Outreach Plan (PCOP)

Once project information has been shared, the Office of External Relations will work with the Project Manager and other departments to create a Project Communication & Outreach Plan (PCOP) specifically for that project. EREL will serve as the PCOP Project Manager to ensure that all tasks are completed so that the PM no longer has to coordinate communication and marketing pieces with different departments. PMs are still responsible for submitting reports, Board action items, briefings, presentations and standard project documentation for their project.

When developing a PCOP, all project information provided by the PM must be considered.

Project Information Needed	PCOP Considerations
Scope and Timeline	This information defines the breadth of how robust a PCOP should be. For example, different approaches may be taken if the scope of a project impacts riders for one day versus one month. Timelines, especially for those projects that require multiple materials to be created, contracted staff to be secured, or have Board review and approval dates, are extremely important to fully develop a plan.
Demographics	Understanding who is impacted by the project will help frame the communications and outreach strategies. This information helps guide decisions like feedback types, event types and locations, materials, media choices, and staffing. The 2014-2017 edition of the PPP included a large study in the preferences of different demographic groups – these preferences, along with learned experiences and other feedback, must be considered.
Budget	Understanding what money is available for a project – as well as the timeline – may determine what can be done with internal or external resources. For example, most projects that require translated materials or the hiring of bilingual individuals will need to be externally sourced. Benefits to the PPP process are that internal resources and staffing may be pooled to complete tasks that were previously outsourced. If funds for PPP compliance have not been identified, the Assistant General Manager of Communications and Marketing along with the Chief Financial Officer will identify funding sources.
Public Communication and Input Purpose	Messaging around a project and the development of any type of feedback vehicle is based on the purpose and goals of the communications and input.

Targeting Hard-to-Reach Communities

Different tactics must be used when the impacted communities are hard-to-reach, especially those part of Title VI communities, to ensure successful communications efforts. The following tactics shall be followed:

Meet people where they are.

Never expect riders or other members of the public to “come to us” in order for them to provide feedback or know about a project that may impact them. Communicate and collect input where the impacted customers will be, whether it’s at their bus stop, local organization, on the platform at the Metrorail station, or at a local community festival.

Use a variety of tactics to get the word out.

Use a number of approaches and activities to inform the public about opportunities for engagement. This may be a mix of Community Based Organization outreach, stories through the media, posting signage, ads in multi-language newspapers, attending local events or hosting pop-up events. Considerations in low literacy, limited English proficient, and physical and mental disabilities should all be considered when developing tactics.

Use technology appropriately.

The use of technology can be extremely beneficial and should be part of the strategy in public participation. However, WMATA must be cautious and use it as appropriate and never as the only way to communicate. Using a mix of technology and other methods considers all populations, regardless of socio-economic status. This is especially important to consider with feedback collection.

Language Access Plan Requirements

The creation of each Project Communications & Outreach Plan must comply with WMATA's Language Access Plan (LAP). The LAP considers FTA's Four Factor analysis when assessing required languages for communication and community engagement projects.

Four Factor Analysis – Language Access Plan

- 1** Data collection on the Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons served or encountered by the transit authority. Identification of their language of preference when interacting with Metro to provide information and services in-language.
- 2** Identification of major points of contact with LEP individuals and frequency of interaction LEP individuals have with the transit authority's programs, activities, or services. Assessment of those points of contact to provide access in their preferred language during those encounters.
- 3** Identification and assessment of essential services for LEP populations and most effective service provision in-language of preference. Maintaining collaboration and obtaining feedback on essential services with/from various Metro partners, CBOs, and stakeholders.
- 4** Assessment of resources and outreach materials available, and development of new pertinent in-language information for LEP individuals. Assessment of costs of outreach materials and proactive sharing of available outreach information between the transit authority, LEP populations, advocacy groups, and government agencies.

Based on these factors and Metro's known LEP ridership, the language(s) identified should be heavily considered when developing a specific Communications Project & Outreach Plan using the language(s) of preference.

Tracking & Performance Measures

Since the implementation of the Public Participation Plan in 2015, WMATA began tracking all Project Communications and Outreach Plan (PCOP) implementation. WMATA is dedicated to Authority-wide performance monitoring and evaluation at all levels, including the key performance indicators (KPI) program that monitors ongoing and long-term programs towards WMATA's strategic goals. To reflect WMATA's commitment to performance measurement and to meet its requirement of updating its Title VI program every three years, a performance measurement framework was developed for both the PPP and individual projects.

The PPP performance measures align with guidelines used by WMATA's Office of Performance that tracks performance measurement across all departments.

WMATA's performance measure data is collected through four discrete reporting measurements. Details are on the following page.

Performance Measure Reporting

Project Communication & Outreach Plans (PCOP)

Many tasks that are listed in a PCOP, including event locations, language accessibility, and ADA accessibility, are tracked and fed directly into the performance measures.

Post-Activity Summaries

A summary of each outreach activity, such as a survey, pop-up event, open house, focus group, or CBO meeting, is written to include the following information when applicable:

- Purpose of activity type
- Estimated/actual participation or interactions. This may include number of surveys collected, materials distributed, emails sent, or number of attendees or participants, depending on the type of activity.
- Population demographics. I.e. minority, low-income, LEP, etc.
- Ratings based on survey/feedback forms
- Marketing/advertising. This should include what media tactics were used, where materials were placed, what languages were considered, etc.
- Outcome/did purpose succeed?
- Lessons learned about activity type or topic

Post-Project Evaluations

At the end of each project, all outreach activity summaries are aggregated into a post-project evaluation.

Annual PPP Performance Measurement Review

The results of the post-project evaluations throughout the year will feed into the annual PPP performance measurement review.* These criteria are listed on page 22.

**This has been updated since the first edition to not include an annual CBO survey after implementation of more effective initiatives and alternative feedback opportunities. More information about this change can be found on page 31.*

Based on the recommendation from the first edition of the PPP, WMATA developed a robust PPP online tracking tool called the Public Participation Management System (PPMS). This tool provides a new way to track PPP projects and creates one large database for FTA monitoring and compliance reporting. This system, managed by the Office of External Relations, provides access to project managers to track their project's progress and includes features for inputting all information listed in the Performance Measures Reporting table above. This tool also provides the ability to see if targets are met. More details about this tool can be found in *Appendix D: Public Participation Management System*.

In order for participants of outreach activities to evaluate their experience and for Metro to collect important demographic information for Title VI purposes, feedback and evaluation forms at outreach events should be used when applicable. Feedback forms take the place of the standard Title VI comment card and should offer opportunities for participants to provide additional input about the topic at hand and recommend improvements for future outreach.

WMATA is fully incorporating the performance measure framework into its agency-wide performance measure tracking system. Consistent and regular monitoring and reporting of PPP performance measures are available to use for the FTA Triennial Report and other types of reports, including Board memos and equity analysis reports. The Office of External Relations is responsible for drafting this information for these types of reports and works with the Offices of Planning and Equal Employment Opportunity to submit all appropriate content to the FTA.

Strategy	Action	Performance Measures, Targets & Sources
<p>Methods & Information</p> <p>What steps were taken to reach the project populations? (LEP, low-income and minority groups)</p>	<p>Outreach events are physically accessible to participants.</p> <p>Translated outreach event materials are accessible to LEP populations.</p> <p>Event information, including marketing & promotional materials, is accessible to participants.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [__%] of projects where all outreach events were within ¼ mile of Metrobus or Metrorail lines, or shuttle service provided. <i>(Source: PCOP)</i> 2. [__%] of projects where all outreach events were ADA accessible. <i>(Source: PCOP)</i> 3. [__%] of projects where all outreach materials were translated into all key languages identified in the Project Communication & Outreach Plan (PCOP) <i>(Source: Post-Project Evaluation)</i> 4. [__%] of projects where all event advertisements and notices were placed in non-English language media identified in the Project Communication & Outreach Plan. <i>(Source: Post-Project Evaluation)</i>
<p>Participation & Event Feedback</p> <p>Did participation rates match the project demographics?</p> <p>Did the public and staff view the outreach as effective?</p>	<p>Other than meetings designed for small groups, project outreach events should be well-attended.</p> <p>LEP, low-income and minority participation in outreach accurately reflects project population.</p> <p>Outreach event participants had a positive experience and were satisfied with opportunities to provide input.</p> <p>Key lessons were learned from outreach process.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. [__%] of projects where all outreach events met the attendance goal. <i>(Source: Post-Project Evaluation)</i> 6. [__%] of projects where participation rates by LEP, low-income and minority groups in project outreach met or exceeded the demographics of the project populations. <i>(Source: Post-Project Evaluation)</i> 7. [__%] of projects that received an average of “good” or higher rating from post-event feedback forms or surveys. <i>(Source: Post-Project Evaluation)</i> 8. [__%] of projects where the project manager summarized key lessons learned for future outreach events. <i>(Source: Post-Project Evaluation)</i>
<p>Follow-up</p> <p>Provides a clear opportunity for all public outreach participants to receive follow-up information about the project, including event results and implementation.</p>	<p>All event outreach participants are informed of event results, project results and implementation of project results.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. [__%] of applicable projects where project managers summarized key recommendations from the public and explained why or why not the recommendations were implemented. <i>(Source: Post-Project Evaluation)</i> 10. [__%] of applicable projects where recommendations and outcomes were communicated with outreach participants who provided an email address and CBOs that requested follow-up, providing the summarized key recommendations to the participants. <i>(Source: Post-Project Evaluation)</i> 11. [__%] of applicable projects that identified a process for maintaining contact with outreach participants and CBOs in the period between project planning and implementation. <i>(Source: PCOP)</i> 12. [__%] of applicable projects that identified a clear process for re-informing the public (including the key demographic groups from the project) when elements of the project are implemented. <i>(Source: PCOP)</i>

Event Feedback Form Examples



Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Plans for the Proposed Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Feedback Form

Thank you for attending today's public hearing. Please take a few minutes to tell us a little about you and your experience and provide us with any additional feedback you have on the draft environmental impact statement and plans for the proposed Potomac Yard Metrorail Station.

Please provide us feedback about your experience today.

How well did today's public hearing work for you?

	Excellent	Very Well	Good	Fair	Poor
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Time of Day	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Useful information presented	<input type="checkbox"/>				

How satisfied are you with your opportunity to provide feedback today?

Extremely Satisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Just a few questions about you. This information is for reporting purposes only.

Do you consider yourself to be Hispanic/Latino?

Yes No Prefer not to answer

Which one of the following best describes your race?

American Indian/Alaska Native Asian/Pacific Islander
 Black/African American White/Caucasian
 Other Prefer not to answer

What is your annual household income?

Less than \$30,000 \$30,000 or greater Prefer not to answer

Do you have anything you wanted to add to the conversation? Please let us know anything else you have to share here:

OPTIONAL: Include contact information below if you would like it to be shared.

Name:	Mailing address:
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>

Thank you for attending today's public hearing. All information gathered of Directors when amending the mass transit plan to include Potomac



Metrobus 60s Lines Focus Group Routes 60, 62, 63 and 64

To be filled out by staff

Date:
Time:
Moderator:

Thank you for participating in our Focus Group! All information gathered tonight will be used for this study's purposes only. Please take a few minutes to tell us a little about you and your experience.

- Did you feel comfortable sharing your thoughts in the group?
 Yes No
- Was there anything you wanted to add to the conversation that you were not able to?
 Yes No

If yes, what else did you want to share?

- How well did today's focus group work for you?

	Excellent	Very Well	Good	Fair	Poor
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Time of Day	<input type="checkbox"/>				

- Please rate how likely you think your input on these Metrobus lines will be implemented:

Very Likely	Quite Likely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Quite Unlikely	Very Unlikely
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Do you consider yourself to be Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?
 Yes No Prefer not to answer
- Which one of the following best describes your race?
 American Indian/Alaska Native Asian/Pacific Islander
 Black/African American White/Caucasian
 Other Prefer not to answer
- What is your annual household income?
 Less than \$30,000 \$30,000 or greater Prefer not to answer

Please provide any additional comments or suggestions to improve Metro future focus groups.

Both forms were made available in Spanish.

CHAPTER 3: PPP IN REVIEW

Introduction

Since the Public Participation Plan was developed as part of the 2014-2017 Title VI Triennial, WMATA has been driven to become a leader in the transit public participation practices. More importantly, many of the new projects and initiatives instituted since its implementation have been refined based on the feedback received from members of the public.

2014-2017 PPP Years in Review Snapshot

- The PPP's first edition was approved by the WMATA Board of Directors in September 2014 and by the Federal Transit Administration in January 2015.
- In 2015 and 2016, more than 35 planned projects have followed the PPP process. This includes large and small scale projects, such as the SafeTrack maintenance plan, changes in Metrorail Operating Hours, openings of new bus transit centers, escalator replacements, joint development projects and many more. More about these projects, including a full activity list and key highlights from a few high-profile projects, can be found in *Appendix E: Outreach Activity Review*.
- More than 40,000 surveys or interviews were completed as part of the PPP process in 2015-2016.
- More than 1,000 activities, including pop-up events, Community Based Organization visits, surveys, open houses and other engagement strategies, were completed under the PPP in 2015-2016.
- WMATA's Public Participation Plan received the 2014 Award for Distinction in Community Outreach and Engagement from the National Capital Area Chapter of the American Planning Association.
- WMATA was selected to participate in the Public Involvement Poster session to discuss the implementation of the PPP to the Metrobus Annual State of Good Operations at the 2016 Transportation Research Board (TRB) Annual Meeting.
- WMATA's Manager of Access Planning and Policy Analysis presented an overview of the PPP creation and key findings at the American Planning Association's webinar "Equity Issues in Transportation Planning: Getting More Voices into the Conversation" in December 2015.



WMATA staff and FourSquare receiving the 2014 Award for Distinction in Community Outreach and Engagement at NCAC APA chapter.

The Creation of the 2014-2017 Public Participation Plan

WMATA's 2014-2017 Public Participation Plan was developed through a year-long, multi-step process and led by a cross-departmental team with representation from offices and departments that currently engage in public outreach activities.

The PPP development process included five major activities designed to identify industry best practices in this area, as well as public preferences regarding outreach and engagement specific to the WMATA service area. WMATA staff and Board of Director interviews provided a comprehensive look at public participation practices at the agency today, as well as ideas for future practices.

At the heart of the project was a robust and multi-faceted public outreach campaign – Speak Up! It's Your Ride – designed to obtain information about communications and public participation preferences from diverse groups in the WMATA service area. Audiences included many minority, immigrant, and other diverse groups, the disability community, seniors, the homeless, and economically disadvantaged individuals.



2014-2017 PPP Development Process

Step 1

Federal Requirements Review

Documented Metro's Public Participation Requirements related to Title VI. This included a thorough review of FTA Circular 4701.2B, as well as other federal guidance.

Step 2

Best Practice Review

Conducted phone interviews with 10 peer transportation agencies and catalogued their inclusive public participation strategies.

Step 3

WMATA Staff and Board Interviews

Interviewed 57 Metro staff members and four Metro Board members to understand the roles of current staff members in public participation and their desires for enhanced community engagement.

Step 4

Community-Based Organization (CBO) Outreach

Surveyed 87 CBOs operating in the WMATA service area regarding their constituents' transit usage and information preferences. Held 15 in-depth focus groups with 41 of the 87 CBOs.

Step 5

Speak Up! It's Your Ride Survey and Outreach Campaign

Held 23 outreach events in a variety of formats ('pop-up,' community meeting, focus group, festival participation) throughout the WMATA service area. Obtained 3,513 responses to a public survey about information preferences, with 69% minority, 28% low-income, and 10% LEP participation.



The information collected throughout the process provided key findings and recommendations for WMATA as it built its public participation program.

Key Findings

The key findings found in the original development of the Public Participation Plan still hold true for this edition. These findings have been used to shape communication and outreach plans and provide a strong base for many of the successes over the past few years. Below is an edited version of the key findings that WMATA should still follow today.

- 1 To involve Title VI populations, go where they are.** Holding events where minority, low-income, and LEP population are — like transit centers, CBOs, shopping centers, and festivals — is the most effective method for reaching these populations.
- 2 Demonstrate cultural sensitivity.** Know your audience and bring the appropriate WMATA personnel (subject matter, cultural, and linguistic expertise) to events and meetings.
- 3 Make it convenient to attend events and tailor event formats to the preferences of groups whose input is sought.** Meeting formats should be tailored to the preferences of individual groups or communities – this includes in-person and virtual. Considerations should also be made to include children, like providing activities for children allowing parents to attend and participate in the meeting.
- 4 Translate materials and use graphics.** Informational materials should be available in the target population's language of preference and should be culturally appropriately designed by taking into consideration the intended audience and by creating a clear message with the use of graphics and effective use of text.
- 5 Use media in different languages and vary distribution outlets.** Materials should be distributed through various outlets and to locations that many riders frequent, including on the bus, at bus stops, and at Metrorail stations. Materials should also be distributed to locations that are not necessarily transit related, such as Community Based Organizations, libraries, grocery stores, and residences. Newspaper advertising also still works and is a preferred way for many people to receive community information.
- 6 Acknowledge and use input.** It should be explicitly evident how public input will be used in decision making.
- 7 Establish an institutional framework for public participation that includes a lead department.** A department should be specifically tasked with overseeing public participation and/or a process that facilitates the involvement of several departments.
- 8 Work with Community Based Organizations to build relationships and trust across diverse populations.** These nonprofit groups support local communities and are among the most effective resources available to a transit agency for facilitating the frequent contact that is needed to build trust and mutually beneficial relationships.
- 9 Use a variety of tactics to get the word out.** Consider employing other techniques, such as using student report card distribution times to get information to families or door-to-door outreach in targeted areas.
- 10 Use technology appropriately.** While it has its place in public participation, technology should supplement other forms of outreach.
- 11 Use a recurring public forum to allow members of the public to provide feedback to WMATA regarding issues of concern to them.** This feedback will supplement existing opportunities to comment on specific projects, proposals, and plans.

Recommended Strategies & Implementation

Per FTA requirements for the PPP, WMATA identified proactive strategies that engaged minority, low-income, and LEP communities; created a process and set of procedures that will facilitate inclusive participation; and developed a set of performance measures that will track whether the agency is reaching its desired outcomes. The 2014-2017 PPP included four primary strategies that ensured WMATA's public participation activities were effective, efficient, and compliant with federal requirements for inclusive public participation. The PPP

also included additional secondary recommendations, many that were addressed through many of the primary strategy initiatives.

WMATA was accountable to the FTA for ensuring that the procedural strategies adopted by the Authority in the PPP were successfully implemented. Below are the recommendations proposed in the 2014-2017 PPP and a brief description on how WMATA fulfilled these recommendations during the reporting period.

2014-2017 Primary Recommendation

1

Public Participation Toolkit and Project Communications/Outreach Plan

The PPP recommended that WMATA design a toolkit to help staff plan effective outreach. The centerpiece of the Toolkit was the Project Communications/Outreach Plan (PCOP) that every WMATA project should use to plan public participation activities. The PCOP included matrices that would enable staff to select events, venues, media, and other activities that effectively reach target populations for a particular project. The Toolkit also included population-specific media outreach lists, a CBO database, and a comprehensive list of annual festivals and other events in WMATA’s service area.

The PPP also recommended WMATA establish a Community Based Organization Outreach Committee as a way of collaborating with local CBOs to develop strategies that were tailored to specific project proposals, ensuring meaningful, broad-based public participation, and building a new avenue for knowledge transfer between WMATA and the CBOs. The Committee membership would be a cross-section of the service area both geographically and by type of CBO.

Also refers to additional 2014-2017 PPP recommendations in Chapter 4:

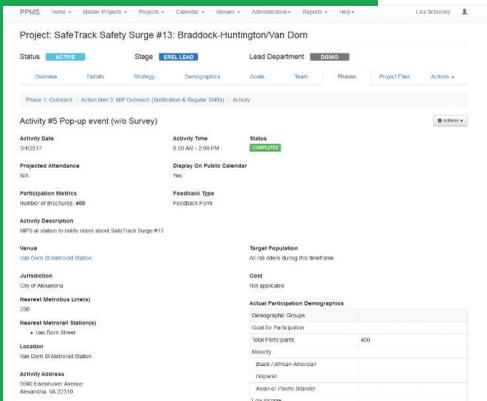
- Strategy 1A “Implement the Public Participation Toolkit and Web-Based Resource Portal”
- Strategy 3B “CBO Outreach Committee”
- Interview Recommendation “Incorporate Inclusive Strategies Consistently”

Implementation

The implementation of this recommendation was extremely complex, but the outcomes completely shaped the process of public participation at WMATA.

Toolkit Implementation

The Office of External Relations worked closely with the Web Applications Group within the Department of Information Technology to transfer the toolkit laid out in the 2014-2017 PPP into a web-based, user-friendly project tracking tool. This tool called the Public Participation Management System (PPMS) has the ability to export on-demand performance measure and activity reports, provides project managers the ability to collaboratively develop a PCOP along with the Office of External Relations, and to input demographic information and participation metrics. Based on a review of Peer Agency best practices, this toolkit may be a first of its kind in transit public participation.



- The PPMS takes the project manager and EREL lead step-by-step through the PCOP development process. By following a standard process to create a project communications and outreach plan, it allows for WMATA to incorporate inclusive strategies consistently. This includes following the main strategies from the key findings of the 2014-2017 PPP, such as developing plans to “go where people are,” considering Title VI and LEP population preferences and using a variety of tactics to get the word out.
- The PPMS includes an enhanced internal calendar to track public events, WMATA outreach, and other jurisdictional outreach at Metro locations. This upgraded calendar is used internally to coordinate outreach and as a planning tool for track work. The Office of External Relations is responsible for updating the calendar with all large public events and PPP outreach. Staff from other WMATA departments are trained and responsible for posting their own outreach information. More information about the PPMS can be read in *Appendix D: Public Participation Management System*.

- The PPMS includes a venue database that tracks the use of various location sites for outreach. It also provides the opportunity for staff to add information about the venue, like ADA accessibility and nearby transit options, and upload pictures and diagrams.
- WMATA has a separate, searchable central database that contains contact information for local stakeholders around Metrorail stations. Since the implementation of the PPP, the database has expanded to include CBO contact information and the ability to categorize by different “Populations Served” topics. The database also includes a notes section where staff can track communication with the CBO.

CBO Outreach Committee Implementation

The development of WMATA’s first Community Based Organization Outreach Committee began in 2015 as an initiative led by the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEEEO). The process began by contacting those CBOs that previously signaled interest during the development of the 2014-2017 PPP. An initial group of CBOs were surveyed and convened prior to launching the pilot CBO committee and were asked their interest in serving on the CBO Outreach Committee, and if so, how often, and what times and locations would be most suitable. WMATA’s Rider’s Advisory Council (RAC) and Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) coordinators were also consulted on the development of the CBO Outreach Committee and shared valuable input regarding logistics, process and selection criteria. In addition, the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) was briefed about the CBO Outreach Committee pilot plan.

The first CBO Outreach Committee planning meeting was held in December 2015. Seven representatives from local CBOs attended and provided insight on how to further cultivate and sustain the committee. Since the first two planning meetings, CBO Outreach Committee meetings have been used to focus on Metro-related topics. The group has also communicated through email and regularly receives project information and opportunities to provide input.

CBO Outreach Committee Meetings

Date	Location	Agenda
December 14, 2015	WMATA Headquarters 600 5th St NW Washington DC	Kick-off planning meeting to discuss the formation of the committee and topics of interest, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of transportation • Language access • Transit service for midnight/early morning shift employees • Difficulty of registering SmarTrip® cards for persons without an email address
February 22, 2016	Arlington Central Library 1015 Quincy St Arlington, VA	Discussion about the FY2017 Budget, including a proposal to eliminate the ability to add value to a SmarTrip® card on Metrobus
April 7, 2016	Maryland Multicultural Youth Center 8700 Georgia Ave Silver Spring, MD	Discussion about the outcome of the FY2017 Budget items based on public input, system ridership demographics and committee representation, and SelectPass/SmarTrip® card registration campaign.
June 2, 2016	Carlos Rosario School 1100 Harvard St NW Washington DC	Discussion about SafeTrack maintenance program
August 9, 2016	Arlington Central Library 1015 N Quincy St Arlington, VA	Discussion about Metrorail 15-minute grace period, student passes, how to identify new CBOs.
January 25, 2017	WMATA Headquarters 600 5th St NW Washington DC	Discussion about the FY2018 Budget, including fare and service proposals.

2014-2017 Primary Recommendation

2

Although there have been challenges to engage CBOs face-to-face, WMATA has seen the level of interaction with CBOs increase dramatically in all areas of communication since the inception of the CBO Committee, believed to be a direct result of the empowerment of CBO committee members serving as liaisons for WMATA. In 2015, WMATA staff interacted with approximately 10-15 CBOs regularly, but due to the large number of WMATA initiatives in 2016 and addition of a staff member, staff increased site visits, directly targeted hard-to-reach communities and all 300+ CBO's were contacted numerous times throughout the year about different projects.

WMATA OEEEO staff has participated in several events sponsored by CBOs to provide information on CBO engagement, fare and service changes and Title VI compliance. Staff has also followed up with telephone contact to organizations about projects that needed or required direct feedback.

Still work to do:

- The Public Participation Management System (PPMS) continues to be rolled out to new users along with the intended project workflow functionality, which begins with the Departmental Point-of-Contact and Project Managers. User training and enforcement of the POC/PM PCOP initiation process will develop this process to become the standard use of the PPMS.
- Though many CBOs have expressed an interest in receiving and sharing input, many do not have the staff or the time to participate in-person and are interested in ways to participate more efficiently. Metro is in the process of reviewing a variety of alternative methodologies to communicate and interact with CBOs to improve participation.

Performance Measures

The PPP recommended that performance measure data focused on participant demographics, participant feedback, and participant follow-up be collected for each public participation project. An annual performance report would aggregate measures from individual projects and the results of an annual survey of CBOs. The annual performance report would provide an overview of outreach activities throughout the year, identify practices or locations that were successful, and draw conclusions for future outreach based on lessons learned.

Also refers to additional 2014-2017 PPP recommendations in Chapter 4:

- *Strategy 4B "Performance Measurement"*
- *Strategy 4C "Monitor and Update the PPP"*

Implementation

- Since its rollout in mid-2015, the Office of External Relations has tracked all required performance measure data into the PPMS system.
- More than 35 projects were tracked in the new PPMS system in 2015 and 2016.
- More than 1,000 activities were tracked in the PPMS system within this timeframe. Each of these activities include all relevant participation metrics, feedback types, and how LEP populations were addressed.
- Based on the projects that were tracked in the new PPMS system, WMATA reached an average score of 98 percent among all of the performance measures tracked. The Overall Performance Measurement Report from 2015-2017, exported from the PPMS, is on page 30.
- Within the PPMS, staff is required to close out each activity and project with information about successes and lessons learned. This information is used, along with staff feedback from the PPP training and feedback forms from events, to monitor the success of the PPP and improve upon gaps in current practices.

Overall Performance Measures Report

Report Start Date: 1/1/2015

Report End Date: 1/1/2017

Strategy	Action	Performance Measures, Targets and Sources
1. METHODS AND INFORMATION		
What steps did you take to reach the project populations (LEP, low-income and minority groups)?	Outreach events are physically accessible to participants.	1. 100% of outreach activities were within 1/4 mile of Metrobus or Metrorail line.
		2. 99.86% of venues for outreach activities were approved by WMATA ADA staff.
	Activity information, including marketing and promotional materials, is accessible to participants.	3. 98.64% of outreach materials were translated into all key languages identified in Project Communications and Outreach Plan.
		4. 97.68% of activities utilized Ethnic media to advertise activity information.
		5. 99.9% of outreach materials were developed at least two weeks before event.
2. PARTICIPATION AND EVENT FEEDBACK		
Did participation rates match the project demographics? Did the public and staff view the outreach as effective?	Other than meetings designed for small groups, project outreach events should be well attended.	6. 97.92% of outreach activities that met the attendance goal for that type of event.
	LEP, minority and low-income participation in outreach accurately reflect project population.	7. 96.32% of participation rates by minority and low-income groups in the outreach activity met or exceed the demographic range of the project population identified in the Project Communications and Outreach Plan.
	Outreach event participants had a positive experience and were satisfied with opportunities to provide input.	8. 97.3% of outreach activities received an average of "good" or higher ratings from post-event comment card or survey for each project activity.
	Key lessons learned from outreach process.	9. For 89.25% of outreach activities the project managers summarized the key lessons learned for future outreach.
3. FOLLOW UP		
Provide a clear opportunity for all public outreach participants to receive follow up information about the project, including recommendations and plans for implementation.	All event outreach participants are informed of event results, project results and implementation of project results.	10. For 99.72% of outreach activities the project manager summarized the key recommendations from the public and explained why or why not these can be implemented.
		11. For 99.66% of outreach activities recommendations/results were communicated back to outreach participants and stakeholders/CBOs who provided contact information (who requested to stay in touch).
		12. 99.71% of outreach activities where there is a process in place for keeping in touch with outreach participants and stakeholders/CBOs in the period between project planning and implementation.
		13. For 99.27% of outreach activities there is a clear process for re-informing the public (including the key demographic groups from the project) when elements of the project are implemented.

2014-2017 Primary Recommendation

3

Still work to do:

Community Based Organization engagement ramped up after the implementation of the PPP, including surveying CBO contacts about their preferences for the formation of the CBO Committee. CBOs were also invited to join WMATA's *Amplify*, an online customer community led by the Office of Customer Research, as a structured environment for riders to share their opinions through surveys, polls and discussion forums. Based on these new initiatives over the last two years and with the creation of more frequent opportunities to provide feedback, the annual CBO survey as a performance measurement was deemed unnecessary. However, additional ways to survey CBO representatives such as a needs/service assessment, is underway. Metro is also considering other ways to include CBOs in the Overall Performance Measures.

Public Participation Training

To ensure the successful uniform adoption of the Toolkit and an Authority-wide understanding of Title VI requirements for public participation, the PPP recommends that WMATA staff involved in public outreach be required to use the Toolkit and receive training on the use of the Toolkit and the PPP.

Implementation

WMATA held trainings in 2015 and 2016 introducing project managers to the public participation plan.

- Since the PPP was implemented, over 100 project managers attended a PPP training. Four trainings were completed between May 2015 and August 2016.
- PPP training binders were provided to all attendees and new project managers to the agency who manage PPP projects. Binders included the following sections:
 - 2014-2017 PPP Executive Summary
 - Demographics, including current Metrorail and Metrobus information
 - Building a Project Communications & Outreach Plan
 - Reporting
 - Resources (includes Feedback, Event and Media Type Preference Matrices)
- PPP training materials, along with a short "Introduction to the Public Participation Plan" video produced by the Office of External Relations, are also available on the Public Participation Plan page on *Metroweb*, WMATA's Intranet.



Session	Number of Participants	Agenda	Feedback Results
<p>KICK-OFF INTRO TO THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN Friday, May 29, 2015 10:00 a.m. - Noon Jackson Graham Building 600 5th St NW, Washington DC</p>	<p>50+ project managers and other staff associated with communications and outreach</p>	<p>Introduction to Public Participation Plan video Understanding Your Target Audience: Demographics Building a Project Communications & Outreach Plan Reporting & Tracking Results Interactive diversity activity</p>	<p>70% felt they had none to some type of understanding of the PPP prior to the training. 100% felt they understood the PPP a lot or were an expert after the training. 98% felt their time was valued. <i>Suggestions for improvement:</i> Shorten and add project examples</p>
<p>INTRO TO THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN Wednesday, July 20, 2016 2:00 - 2:45 p.m. Jackson Graham Building 600 5th St NW Washington DC</p>	<p>40+ new or current project managers that were unable to attend last year's meeting</p>	<p>Introduction to Public Participation Plan video Understanding Your Target Audience: Demographics Building a Project Communications & Outreach Plan</p>	<p>50% felt they had none to some type of understanding of the PPP prior to the training. 75% felt they understood the PPP a lot or were an expert after the training. 100% felt their time was valued. <i>Suggestions for improvement:</i> End with an interactive activity if time permits</p>
<p>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN 2ND ANNUAL TRAINING FOR PROJECT MANAGERS Wednesday, July 20, 2016 3:00-4:15 p.m. Jackson Graham Building 600 5th St NW Washington DC</p>	<p>70+ project managers and other staff associated with communications and outreach</p>	<p>Overview of WMATA's First Year of the PPP Time to Track: Overview of Project Communications & Outreach Tracking Tool The Project Manager Perspective: Case Studies (Metrobus REX Study and Tenleytown Station Access Study) Getting Input Early: How Customer Research and Public Input Can Help Your Project Interactive Limited English/ Language activity</p>	<p>66% attended last year's PPP training. 75% has been part of a project team within the last year that followed the PPP 83% felt they understood the PPP a lot or were an expert after the training. 100% felt their time was valued. <i>Suggestions for improvement:</i> Executive Leadership involvement</p>
<p>INTRO TO THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN Wednesday, August 17, 2016 9:00 - 9:45 a.m. Carmen Turner Facility 3500 Pennsy Drive Hyattsville, MD</p>	<p>12 project managers from the Office of Joint Development and Adjacent Construction</p>	<p>Introduction to Public Participation Plan video Understanding Your Target Audience: Demographics Building a Project Communications & Outreach Plan Overview of WMATA's First Year of the PPP Interactive Limited English/ Language activity</p>	<p>N/A</p>

2014-2017 Primary Recommendation

4

Still work to do:

As the PPP becomes better known throughout the agency, there may be opportunities to integrate PPP training into other standard training programs. Training project managers on the new PPMS system is also a priority for 2017-2020. If staffing and resources become available, additional trainings or workshops could be added throughout the year.

Centralized Public Participation Office

In addition to the Toolkit, the PPP recommended that WMATA establish a centralized office to manage public outreach. The Office of External Relations (EREL) was tasked with providing expert assistance to project/planning staff for their individual projects. Additionally, the office would manage all project-based public participation activities, as well as provide oversight and coordination for public participation within WMATA. EREL would ensure consistency across the Authority, quality control of communications and outreach materials, coordination with Marketing around advertising, and PPP compliance. The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEEO) would be tasked with additional functions related to managing relationships and outreach with CBOs.

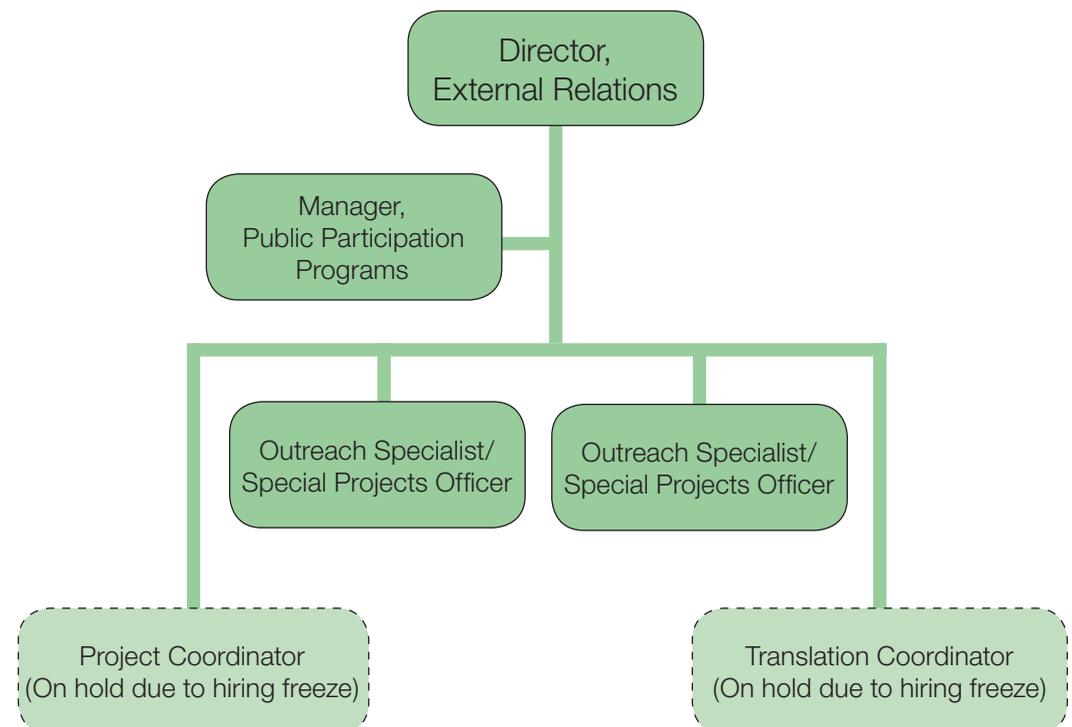
Also refers to additional 2014-2017 PPP recommendations in Chapter 4:

- Strategy 2A “Public Participation Manager”
- Strategy 2C “Expand the Office of External Relations with the creation of a Public Outreach branch”
- Strategy 3A “Ongoing, Organized Community Based Organizations Engagement”
- Strategy 4A “Implement Performance Measurement – Public Participation Manager Role”

Implementation

WMATA created a Public Participation Programs team within the Office of External Relations which included reallocating one staff member to manage the program and hiring two additional staff members in the spring/summer of 2015.

New Public Participation Programs Staffing Structure as of April 2017



PPP Team Position Descriptions

Manager, Public Participation Programs

This position oversees and measures performance on all project-based public communications and outreach plans, serving as the staff resource for WMATA and working closely with WMATA offices and jurisdictional partners on public participation activities. This position is responsible for program development consistent with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements and supports the Authority's public participation process by managing the implementation and ongoing execution of the Public Participation Plan aimed at internal and external audiences. This position is also responsible for managing a broad range of tasks that directly assist in the daily operations of the office and for the development and implementation of communications projects and programs for WMATA customers.

Outreach Specialist/Special Projects Officer

This position assists with the implementation of the Public Participation Plan to improve two-way communication to boost inclusiveness of the public for all major initiatives. This position develops communication and outreach plans and hosts opportunities for riders and the public to provide feedback. This position schedules, coordinates and tracks public activities to ensure outreach is conducted in the appropriate service areas, engaging traditionally hard-to-reach populations. This position also serves as a brand ambassador for Metro at a wide variety of events, including setting up events, giving presentations, collecting surveys and other communication strategies.

Translation Coordinator - *on hold*

This position would be responsible for managing the translation process for Metro, including but not limited to conducting and preparing accurate written translations of documents, materials, brochures and signage in hard copy and electronic formats in a manner that maintains the integrity and meaning of the material.

Project Coordinator - *on hold*

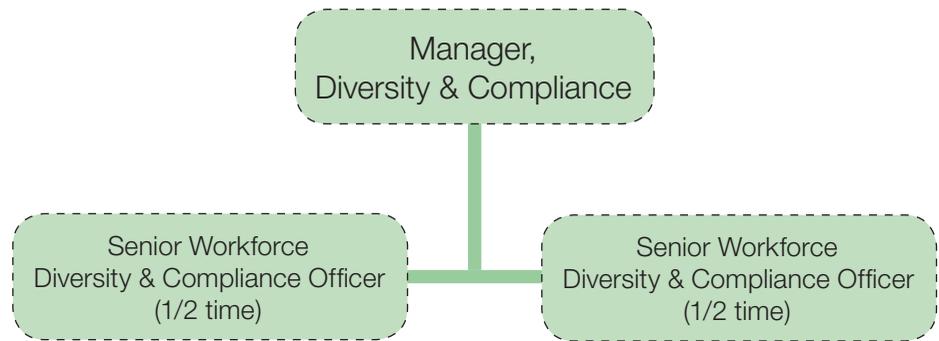
The position would serve as the task manager for the PPP team. This coordinator would work closely with the Outreach Specialists to ensure deadlines are met as well as maintaining records and the PPP database. This position will support the team at outreach events, assist with the completion of surveys and data collection.

Since the implementation of the team in 2015, the team has coordinated more than 1,000 planned projects' communication and outreach initiatives throughout the agency.

The PPP team works closely with other internal departments to coordinate projects and ensure compliance. The team meets with representatives from the Offices of Marketing, Media Relations, and Customer Research regularly to discuss upcoming projects and define communication strategies. The PPP team also meets with representatives from other partner offices – the Office of Planning and the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity – to confirm demographic and Title VI compliance for current and upcoming projects.

The recommendation from the 2014-2017 PPP also included staffing within the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEEEO) to manage relationships with Community Based Organizations. In spring 2015, OEEEO hired a new staff member to build this activity within WMATA. This staff member was able to build and maintain relationships with over 300 Community Based Organizations in the area and created the framework of the Community Based Organization Committee. Staff turnover idled activity for a short while; however, two new staff members now share the CBO relationship management activity. New staff, along with existing staff members, have embarked upon revitalizing CBO activity, broadening WMATA's reach to new community serving organizations and regional locations, and are implementing plans to more effectively and efficiently touch limited English proficient (LEP) and low income populations.

Community Based Organization Staffing Structure as of April 2017



Still work to do:

Due to the large number of projects going on at WMATA at one time, staff can be stretched thin to ensure compliance and completion of each Project Communications and Outreach Plan (PCOP). The recommended staffing plan in the 2014-2017 PPP included six outreach specialists but was not fulfilled due to budget restraints. As the program continues to grow, WMATA hopes to add additional staff if resources allows.

2014-2017 Additional Recommendation

1

Solicit General Feedback

The PPP suggested the creation of a recurring forum to allow members of the public to provide feedback to WMATA about issues they were concerned about – such as fare increases or their interactions with WMATA staff – in addition to the existing opportunities to comment on WMATA's projects, proposals and plans. The PPP also suggested establishing regularly occurring community outreach events that featured no structured agenda and making use of online resource to facilitate rider-led suggestions and feedback.

Also refers to additional 2014-2017 PPP recommendations in Chapter 4:

- Strategy 5A "No Agenda Community Outreach"
- Strategy 5B "Online Forums"

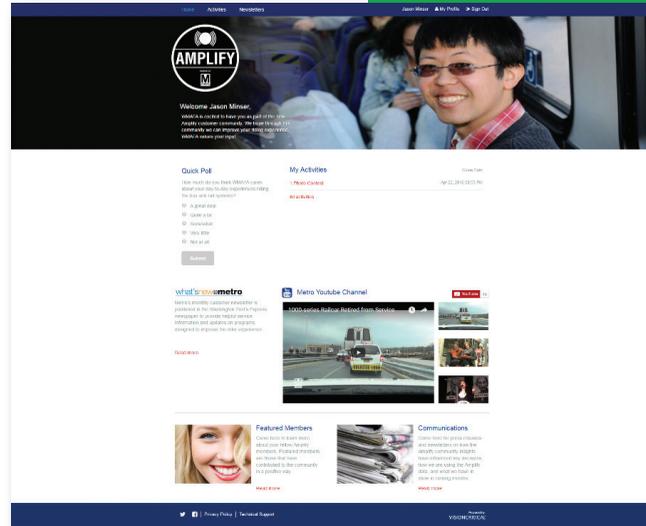
Implementation

WMATA took two initiatives in providing opportunities for public feedback that weren't directly related to a specific project.

Metro created a social media team within the Office of Customer Service to respond directly to customers on social media channels. Four new staff members, each with previous experience from the private sector, now engage with customers in real-time through Twitter, Facebook and chat, track feedback and develop trends. In the first three months of 2017 alone, the team had responded to more than 8,500 inquiries through social media channels. The Office of Customer Service continues to also collect feedback through the phone and online forms.

Metro also launched *Amplify*, Metro’s first-ever online “customer community”, on October 15, 2015 as a new way for customers to share opinions and shape Metro initiatives. This new digital tool was developed to allow for ongoing engagement with riders and generate rapid customer feedback at a reduced cost through a structured environment of online surveys, polls and discussion forums.

- Within one month of the launch date, *Amplify* had recruited more than 1,800 members. As of March 2017, *Amplify*’s community includes nearly 3,500 members.
- Community members were recruited to ensure Title VI populations were represented using various strategies. Only members of local Community Based Organizations were allowed to join during the soft launch, diverse recruitment ads were placed on Metrobus and at Metrorail stations with high Title VI ridership, and street teams were deployed to recruit members at high Title VI ridership stations.
- The feedback gleaned from *Amplify* has been shared with WMATA’s Executive and Board Members and has helped develop several initiatives, including developing new fare payment options, prioritizing areas with the greatest impact on the rider experience, developing best practices for improving communications with riders during service disruptions.
- Not only has *Amplify* become the “go to” tool for feedback for WMATA’s leaders, but staff has calculated that *Amplify* has allowed WMATA to save nearly \$300,000 in contracted research studies.



Still work to do:

Since *Amplify* has proven to be such a useful tool in collecting feedback, Metro will continue to work to grow the community with the ultimate goal of 5,000 members. Metro plans to take similar tactics during the original recruitment and accomplish this through a combination of ad campaigns, street teams deployment and direct email invitations.

Build a Culture of Public Participation

The PPP suggested that WMATA would need broad support and the explicit endorsement of WMATA’s leadership for a new centralized public participation office. Could WMATA take a similar approach in incorporating transparency and public participation into agency culture like safety? Recommendations included involving WMATA Board Members in public engagement activities, empowering the new public participation office with the authority needed to change the project-by-project culture among individual offices, creating a liaison position within the new office to coordinate efforts with marketing, advertising, communications and language support, recognizing that WMATA has to go to the public and not ask the public to come to the agency, and institutionalizing a culture of public participation and the need to go beyond the standard public hearing requirements. The PPP also suggested that each department, where applicable, integrate outreach into their own departmental business performance plans, ensuring that every department with public engagement responsibilities within WMATA was accountable for public participation outcomes.

Also refers to additional 2014-2017 PPP recommendations in Chapter 4:

- Strategy 4D “Departmental Business Plan”

2014-2017
Additional
Recommendation

2

Implementation

WMATA's commitment to public participation was immediately seen with the development of the new Public Participation Team within the Office of External Relations (EREL). With the support of the Assistant General Manager (AGM), resources were reallocated within EREL to create a team of staff members to manage the implementation of the PPP, as shown in the organizational chart (see page 31).

The General Manager (GM) and the AGM were powerful advocates to engage the WMATA Executive Management Team. In early 2015, all Executive Management Team members identified a Point-of-Contact (POC) within their department to be the liaison between the PPP team and their respective offices. This was reiterated at the kick-off training for project managers, and the team continued to meet one-on-one with POCs and project managers throughout the agency to understand their current process and how it needed to be adjusted in order to comply with the PPP. Since then, the PPP team has immersed themselves into the offices of Bus Planning, Elevator/Escalator, Management and Budget, Joint Development/Adjacent Construction, Real Estate and Parking, and numerous others to become an integral part of their business practices and culture.

The key to this success was the support from the GM, AGM, Chief of Staff and Board Secretary's Offices. This plan far exceeded previous processes and Compact requirements, and provided a new standard to evaluate each project and make communications decisions in the best interest of the public. Through a collaborative effort amongst other offices, the new PPP team has been able to leverage resources in a timely manner. This has successfully changed the way WMATA communicates with the public with a consistent process and methodology. Each office is expected to follow the process and they have a liaison within the office of External Relations who serves as their point of contact. The ability to support project offices is essential to the success of the PPP.

Board members have also embraced WMATA's new way of public participation. Through regular meetings with the Board Secretary's office, updates and outreach schedules are provided to Board Members, and staff look forward to opportunities when Board members are able to attend outreach sessions. In fact, Board members have participated at numerous pop-up events in stations and attended open houses since the implementation of the PPP. Board members have also been vocal about the positive change in the communications and public input reports they have received since the PPP was implemented. A true testament to their commitment was during the Metrorail operating hours public hearing in November 2016. Metro proposed to change Metrorail operating hours during late night hours and weekend early mornings. In order to provide an opportunity for those impacted riders who may work or travel during those hours to participate in the public hearing, Board members agreed to host a 10-hour public hearing that began at noon and lasted until 10:00 p.m. As local and federal representatives, Board members understand the importance of communicating with riders, thus they support this plan.

Still work to do:

With continuous change and growth, new Board members, and departmental reorganizations, it is important to continually educate employees about the PPP and how it can be intergrated into their departments and projects. With the help of the Assistant General Manager of Customer Service, Communications and Marketing and the Director of the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, the importance of public engagement and PPP compliance will continue to be supported and encouraged by leadership so that it becomes instilled within WMATA's culture of best practices.

Expand and Enhance Supplemental Staffing

The PPP suggested an enhancement to WMATA's Metro Information Persons (MIPs) program and the use of an on-call contract.

MIPs are employee volunteers who assist customers during major track work and special events. The PPP suggested an enhancement to the existing MIPs program was needed to identify staff who were native or fluent speakers of languages other than English who are willing to assist with public participation.

The PPP also suggested that WMATA issue an on-call contract for consultant assistance with public participation to provide additional public participation expertise, staffing like "street teams", specific marketing and communications needs like illustrations and infographics, and professional translation and interpretation services. This service was also needed to allow WMATA to meet the Title VI obligations of its Language Assistance Plan, which requires that all vital documents and outreach documents be translated in the foreign languages spoken by large numbers of limited English proficient populations in the WMATA service area.

Refers to additional 2014-2017 PPP recommendations in Chapter 4:

- *Strategy 2D "WMATA Information Persons Program Enhancement"*
- *Strategy 2E "On-Call Consultant Assistance"*

Implementation

Staff immediately went to work to secure and enhance supplemental staffing to support the PPP.

Staff updated the Metro Information Person (MIP) sign-up form to include a field for volunteers to list other languages they were fluent with besides English. Based on this information, MIPs with linguistic skills were placed strategically at locations with high Limited English Proficient populations. These volunteers have also been asked upon occasion to review marketing materials in different languages for accuracy.

The "on-call" consultant assistance recommendation was broken up into three contract initiatives: outreach teams, strategic communications & graphic design and translation services.

Outreach teams. Due to the volume of projects throughout WMATA that require public outreach, the ability to schedule outreach teams under short notice and within a tight deadline, and the diverse needs of the type of outreach culturally or linguistically, outside support staffing was needed. The Office of External Relations worked with the Office of Procurement and awarded a contract for an on-call outreach team contractor in January 2016. The scope of work for this contract includes:

- Ability to conduct surveys to gather feedback at public outreach events using a variety of tactics, including tablet/electronic and paper collection methods at various locations throughout the region, in seven languages.
- Ability to serve as WMATA project ambassadors at events and other outreach initiatives
- Ability to provide public engagement support for WMATA staff, which may include event/outreach planning and coordination, event design, event location research and booking, feedback analysis and reporting
- Ability to create professional teams of individuals based on the needs of the project which may be based on gender, race, ethnicity, and languages spoken (Street Teams). Language needs include, but are not limited to, Spanish, French, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, or Amharic.
- Ability to document and create reports based on verbal or written feedback, possibly including data entry of written surveys or comment cards.

Within the first year of implementation, the contract was utilized 14 times for many high-profile projects, including SafeTrack, proposed changes to Metrorail's operating hours and a bus transit center opening. A list of projects that used this contract since it began, including language needs that were fulfilled, is on the following page.

2014-2017 Additional Recommendation

3

Outreach Team Projects 2015-2016	Type of outreach	Bilingual Staffing
Rail Passenger Survey April-May 2016	Rail passenger survey collection assistance	Spanish
SafeTrack Surge #1 June 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surge #1: Continuous Single Tracking between East Falls Church and Ballston-MU	Spanish
SafeTrack Surge #2 June-July 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surge #2: Line Segment Shutdown between Eastern Market and Minnesota Ave/ Benning Rd	Spanish
SafeTrack Surge #3 & 4 June-July 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surges #3 & 4: Line Segment Shutdown between National Airport and Braddock Rd/ Pentagon City	Spanish
SafeTrack Surge #5 July 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surge #5: Continuous Single Tracking between East Falls Church and Ballston-MU	Spanish
SafeTrack Surge #6 July-August 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surge #6: Continuous Single Tracking between Takoma and Silver Spring	Spanish Amharic
SafeTrack Surge #7 August 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surge #7: Continuous Single Tracking between Shady Grove and Twinbrook	Spanish Chinese (Mandarin)
SafeTrack Surge #8 August-September 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surge #8: Continuous Single Tracking between Franconia-Springfield and Van Dorn St	Spanish
SafeTrack Surge #9 September-October 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surge #9: Continuous Single Tracking between Vienna and West Falls Church	Spanish Korean
Metrorail Operating Hours October 2016	Notification outreach and survey collection for the proposed change in Metrorail Operating Hours	Spanish Amharic Chinese (Mandarin)
SafeTrack Surge #10 October-November 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surge #10: Line Segment Shutdown between Fort Totten and NoMa-Gallaudet U	Spanish Amharic American Sign Language
SafeTrack Surge #11 November-December 2016	Notification outreach and customer assistance about SafeTrack program & Surge #11: Continuous Single Tracking between East Falls Church and West Falls Church	Spanish Korean
Takoma Langley Crossroads Transit Center December 2016	Notification outreach and customer service for the opening of the Takoma Langley Crossroads Transit Center and associated bus stop location changes	Spanish French

Strategic communications & graphic design. It was noted in the PPP that WMATA needed simple, clear and well-designed strategic communications materials that appeal to targeted communities. WMATA determined that outside staffing with relevant expertise was needed to produce specialized maps, charts, illustration, video and infographics. The Office of External Relations worked with the Office of Procurement to create a Request for Proposal. However, no proposals received from the process aligned with the needs and skill sets required to complete the work. WMATA continues to rely on internal resources and other contracts to cover some gaps, but the need still exists. The team will continue to evaluate next steps and alternative options.

Translation services. After several years of managing translations of documents through informal internal means and multiple short-term vendor relationships, WMATA has begun the process to establish a formal contract vehicle with pre-selected vendors to fulfill the Authority's departmental requests for translation of vital (and other) documents. Though not yet in place, the contractual requirements will call for the vendor to be in direct communication with the author(s) of the original document, or subject expert at WMATA, to maximize accuracy conveying the original intent and purpose of the translated text. WMATA will also be formalizing internal procedures to request translation services by utilizing best and well researched practices within similar organizations that have been established to ensure reliable, complete, accurate and culturally appropriate translations. WMATA plans to have this contract in place in 2017 and managed by the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity.

Still work to do:

There is still a need for additional translation support, specialized graphic design and communication expertise to better support PPP projects. With new systems and processes getting put into place to recruit new vendors to work with WMATA, there may be an opportunity to update the original RFP and attract the expertise needed, or consider alternative options to secure this needed talent on an on-call basis.

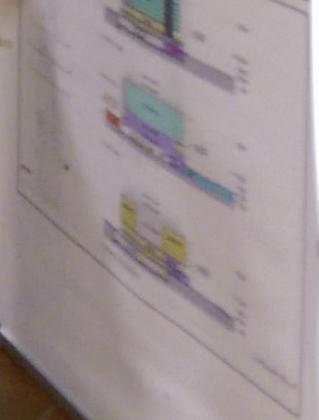
Greenbelt Joint Development Project

Proyecto de Urbanización Conjunta en Greenbelt

Greenbelt Joint Development Project

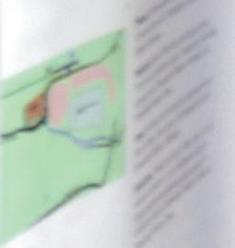
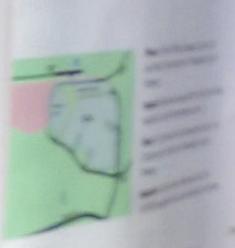
Proyecto de Urbanización Conjunta en Greenbelt

Proposed Greenbelt Transit Facility Plan
Plan de las instalaciones de Greenbelt



Proposed Greenbelt Construction Phase
Fase de construcción propuesta para Greenbelt

Proposed construction phases will include the construction of the station and transit facility.



Construction phases will include the construction of the station and transit facility.



GREEN LINE
BRONX AVENUE
LEAVING STATIONS

GREEN LINE
BRONX AVENUE
LEAVING STATIONS



CHAPTER 4: 2017-2020 RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the last few years, WMATA has transformed the way it communicates and collects feedback from the public. With new projects beginning every week and thousands of riders impacted, WMATA continues to try to find more efficient, effective ways to talk to customers, especially those that are in hard-to-reach communities.

WMATA also strives to serve as a leader in transit public participation. Although there have been many accomplishments and lessons learned over the last few years, there is still work to do, as it was indicated in the follow-up items in the 2014-2017 plan's recommendations.

As a result of an assessment of lessons learned, a review of best practices of peer agencies, riders' and employees' feedback, and an understanding of Metro's direction and its budget constraints, two new recommendations have been proposed. First, Metro needs to expand strategies and internal processes to better reach LEP communities, and second, it needs to explore and implement innovative ways to collect feedback and communicate about planned projects to hard-to-reach communities.

Expand strategies and internal processes for reaching Limited English Proficient (LEP) communities.

WMATA made huge progress with the development of the 2014-2017 Public Participation Plan in reaching LEP communities. For all planned projects, target populations were considered when developing communication and outreach plans and all had a LEP component. Bilingual outreach teams, translated signs, ads and materials became standard for all PPP activities. However, with the increase in workload it became clear that new strategies needed to be implemented to manage the outsourcing of translations for multiple projects, quality checking the work, and understanding the trends in communications and media placement for LEP populations. In order to tackle these issues, along with new requirements from the Language Access Plan, WMATA should consider the following strategies:

Build stronger relationships and collect feedback from Community Based Organizations specializing in Limited English populations about recommendations for communications and outreach.

The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity plans to build upon the initial launch of a Community Based Organization (CBO) Outreach Committee from the 2014-2017 PPP and has set three main initiatives for the 2017-2020 reporting period:

- A)** Increase public engagement with CBOs by using technology to provide alternative participation opportunities, such as webinars, Skyping, and conference calls to engage busy CBOs. The program will also explore communication alternatives through other electronic modes, such as newsletters, and other visual media.
- B)** Work with the CBO Outreach Committee on three important initiatives over the next triennial period: 1) Increasing its dissemination of information to multilingual communities, 2) Improving its monitoring of language assistance measures, and 3) Increasing the participation of LEP individuals in customer surveys, open houses, public hearings, and other events that allow for greater understanding and engagement in the transit decision making process. The monitoring will involve collecting feedback from CBOs to identify areas of improvement and develop solutions. Metro anticipates this will be an interactive process, where input from the CBOs helps tailor language assistance information materials and ensures that the distribution of language assistance information meets the organizations' and LEP customers' needs.
- C)** Continue partnering with the D.C. Language Access Coalition, and distribute surveys among member agencies to collect additional feedback on their clients' language assistance needs to help better design future plans and initiatives related to Metro's Language Assistance Plan.

Hire a Translation Project Coordinator to provide a central point of oversight for all PPP translations and language requirements.

This position would be responsible for ensuring that all LEP strategies, procedures and performance reporting requirement are successfully met and would be responsible for:

- A)** Conducting and preparing accurate written translations of documents, materials, brochures and signage in hard copy and electronic formats in a manner that maintains the integrity and meaning of the material.

2017-2020 Recommendation

1

2017-2020 Recommendation

2

- B)** Coordinating the translation process using professional translation services, including final quality checks.
- C)** Creating and managing specialized internal language review teams for top translated languages, including recruitment, testing and retention of these teams.
- D)** Interacting with customers and participating in outreach events.

This position will not only ensure consistency in LEP communications throughout WMATA, but would save money by translating more materials professionally in-house, especially those with quick turnaround times. A requirement would include that the position be a Certified Translator. This position would be assigned to the Office of External Relations as part of the Public Participation team.

Secure on-call assistance for professional translation and interpretation vendors to be contracted for PPP projects. This was part of a recommendation from the 2014-2017 Public Participation Plan that the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity plans to have in place within the reporting period.

Consider new and innovative ways to collect feedback and communicate planned projects to hard-to-reach communities, especially using techniques that save resources.

New, inventive communication tools have been developed over the last few years that may prove useful for reaching some target communities. Though it has been proven that in-person outreach is a very effective tactic when reaching Title VI populations, the digital divide is shrinking at even faster rates with cheaper technology and programs to ensure access to the Internet. There may be other ways to “go where they are” through technology. *Amplify*, WMATA’s online community portal, demonstrated an interest for these types of digital engagements. Below are a couple of projects that WMATA should consider:

A) Geo-location technology

Geo-location technology is now popularly used for targeting specific customer markets. A person entering a “geo-fenced” environment can be notified of discounted items, promotions, and events. Based on an internal WMATA study conducted in 2015 measuring technology access and usage with a representative sample of the Compact area, currently more than 80 percent of regular customers had access to a smartphone with minority populations accessing the Internet from mobile technology at a higher rate than other groups.

The growth in these geolocation technology applications, such as WiFi, GPS, and IP locations, may provide an alternative mode to disseminate information and collect feedback from customers in affected areas. This information can be extremely beneficial when targeting customers geographically; for example, those who live around a study area or Metrorail station. Using this technology, whether through surveys or notifications, is essentially going to where people are “virtually” located. Currently, the reach of these virtual panels is limited for full implementation; however, WMATA should consider piloting this technology to determine feasibility and scalability for public participation projects.

B) Identify new methods to collecting feedback

WMATA has taken strides over the last three years in testing new ways to collect feedback on multiple projects. For example, WMATA has experimented with “ballot boxes” and placed them in Metrorail stations for customers to conveniently drop off surveys later. WMATA also transferred the use of feedback email addresses into online forms. Online forms expedited the categorization process, saving a significant amount of labor hours that were previously dedicated to these tasks. In addition to these approaches, WMATA continues to explore emerging trends in online discussion forums, interactive websites, Skype/FaceTime/live chat participation, touch-screen Kiosks and Twitter polls. These methods could provide alternative methods for WMATA to interact with riders.