

# Question Guide

Transportation Planning and Programming Division (TPP) Public Involvement Section

This questions guide is meant to encourage brainstorming and discussion of considerations to develop an online engagement strategy that best fits your unique project or study. This is not a comprehensive list; you are encouraged to consider how the questions below apply to your engagement needs and to include additional information as you deem necessary.

It is recommended that you use this document to guide conversations with your planning team, identify priorities and concerns in planning for stakeholder engagement, and to share and discuss your answers with your PI Specialist to help in developing an online engagement strategy that best meets your team's goals.

## PI Planning Considerations

### Who will the outreach target?

- Who are the stakeholders you're trying to reach? Be as specific as possible.
- What are potential engagement barriers, such as Limited English Proficiency (LEP), internet connectivity and ADA accessibility factors?
- How do you think your stakeholders will feel about this project? Do you expect opposition or disagreement? Why or why not?
- What outreach has already been done? Who took part, and do they have a continuing role?

### What are your expectations and desired outcomes?

- What key information do you want shared? Can you share this information in a way that the public can understand and find relevant to their interests? Why or why not?
- What topics do you need feedback on? What form should that feedback take?
- How do you want to engage stakeholders to create a two-way dialogue?
- What benefits and challenges do you see in using online engagement versus other methods? How does this fit in with your overall Public Involvement Plan?

### When will outreach occur?

- Keeping in mind that at least six weeks is needed for design, when is your ideal outreach start and end date?
- Do you have all of the information, visuals, photos, content ready to build your engagement site? If not, when will this information be available?
- What are your long-term plans for online engagement? Are you planning for a single phase or for ongoing efforts and/or additional phases later on?
- Are there any important deadlines and events to account for during the engagement process?

**How:** Identify and plan the engagement platform that best fits the project by scheduling a meeting with your TPP PI Specialist.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*How long does it take to prepare activities for Bang the Table, Social Pinpoint, or MetroQuest?*

The TPP PI Section asks that you give at least six weeks of lead time to design, test, and review, surveys and activities for these platforms. This may take longer depending on factors such as size and complexity.

*What are the differences between Bang the Table, Social Pinpoint, and MetroQuest?*

All three platforms have their own unique features, strengths, and limitations, and your TPP PI Specialist will help choose which one is right for your needs. To learn more about the key differences between the three, a Comparison Guide is available here [Link to comparison guide].

*How do these platforms handle my expected engagement barriers, such as language differences and accessibility concerns?*

Both Bang the Table and Social Pinpoint meet current web accessibility standards to facilitate common means of ADA accessibility, such as the use of screen readers. They also both support manual translations of materials and can integrate Google Translate to offer automated translations into dozens of different languages if perfect accuracy is not a concern. MetroQuest does not meet current web accessibility standards, but there are workaround options, and has limited translation capabilities.

*We anticipate some controversy or disagreement with our project, should we avoid using tools that promote public discussion?*

Both Bang the Table and Social Pinpoint provide activities that can allow the public to share their opinions and respond to each other and the project team. While objectionable and unhelpful content is a legitimate concern, both provide tools to assist in the moderation of discussion. However, we encourage you to remember that disagreement and debate is still an important part of public feedback and even a questionable comment online is no different than a questionable comment made at a live meeting.

*Once the engagement tool goes live, can anything be reviewed or changed prior to the end?*

All three platforms allow for real-time monitoring of responses and review of preliminary results. However, only Bang the Table and Social Pinpoint allow for edits to be made to in-progress engagement; MetroQuest surveys cannot be changed once launched.

*After I have reviewed the informational material on these three platforms, what comes next?*

You are encouraged to contact your TPP PI Specialist as soon as possible to begin the process of choosing a platform and planning for design. This document should help in preparing for this discussion, and additional information on the three platforms is available [here](#). You should also begin to prepare and compile written and visual materials related to the project that can be shared with the public.

## For More Information

Please contact your [local TPP PI Specialist](#) for more information and to begin the next step in planning. Consultant partners, please reach out to [Susan.Howard@txdot.gov](mailto:Susan.Howard@txdot.gov).