



Federal 5310 Program

Statewide Public Involvement Plan

Public Transportation Division

September 2020

This public involvement plan is a living document. The plan may be updated to add or remove objectives, stakeholders, strategies or methods as needed to adapt to new and changing circumstances as project development progresses.

Program Description and Background

The Federal Section 5310 Program is a flexible, state-managed program that helps connect seniors and individuals with disabilities to their communities. Formula funds are apportioned to TxDOT based on the state's share of the population for rural and small urban areas. In a competitive process, TxDOT awards funding to eligible nonprofit organizations,



Public involvement for the 5310 program in San Angelo

local government authorities and public transportation providers, known as sub-recipients.

Program Goal

The Federal Section 5310 Program provides funding to assist sub-recipients in meeting the transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when existing alternative service is unavailable, insufficient or inappropriate.

Purpose of Public Involvement Plan

Because people are at the center of everything we do, we will maximize our efforts to gather input from providers, local stakeholders and the general public in our decisions regarding Federal 5310 funding to reflect the needs of the community and serve the mobility needs of its seniors and individuals with disabilities.

TxDOT understands that communication and transparency are critical to building trust with stakeholders and the public. Stakeholders are those who affect change and those who are affected by it and may include: community or neighborhood leaders and groups; those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems as defined in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, such as low-income, minority, and non-English speaking households who may face challenges accessing employment and other services; transportation partners, passengers and advocates; human services and workforce agencies; and others such as emergency management agencies. The aim of inclusiveness makes the identification of stakeholders important; excluding a stakeholder can undermine the process.

This plan will be implemented by a project team comprised of Public Transportation Division (PTN) headquarters and field staff (PTC), the Public Involvement (PI) section of the Transportation Planning and Programming Division (TPP) and the Jacobs consultant team.

Public Involvement Objectives

The approach to public involvement for the Federal Section 5310 Program will be to collaborate with communities on the identification and prioritization of issues and needs to inform the application scoring process through exchange of information to increase the public awareness and outreach concerning available transportation services.

1. Ensure that public participation opportunities are accessible and held at convenient times (in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990);
2. Include measures for seeking input from and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems as defined in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), such as low-income, minority, and non-English speaking households who may face challenges accessing employment and other services; and
3. Provide for the periodic review of the public engagement process to ensure the effectiveness of TxDOT's public engagement efforts and revise the process as appropriate.

Identification of Issues

Listening sessions provide information to the transportation providers, which are responsible for proposing projects to supplement public involvement for the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation (CPT-HST) planning process. For this process, federal, state, regional, and local policy makers, providers, and advocates consistently engage in outreach efforts to enhance the coordinated process.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders will be added to this list as the project progresses. Stakeholders would represent such entities as: providers, non-profit organizations, elected officials, emergency management services, churches and schools. Providers would RSVP as each has an opportunity to give a brief overview of their services at the meeting. The following is an initial list of types of stakeholders, which may be updated as the public involvement effort progresses.

Neighborhood leaders
Individuals with Disabilities
Senior citizens
Public transportation partners
Public transportation passengers
Public transportation advocates
State Human Services agencies

Local Human Services Agencies
State Workforce agencies
Local Workforce Agencies
Chambers of commerce
Places of worship
Police/Fire/EMS
Colleges and universities

School districts
Community colleges
U.S. Sen. John Cornyn
U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz
Local elected officials
State elected officials

Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities
Businesses and other organizations that serve seniors and individuals with disabilities
Medical providers
Community Centers

Tactics, Tools, Roles, Responsibilities

Tactics

Through a series of regional listening sessions, the project team will guide the public in identifying issues for transportation providers to consider. Meeting dates will be determined by the project team with input from TxDOT's regional public transit coordinators (PTCs). The session will be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Information and notice about the session will be made public through outreach communications.

Two important components of this process are:

- TxDOT's ability to utilize online surveys focused on issues and needs identification and prioritization
- Making information about the Federal 5310 program accessible to all stakeholders

Techniques

1. ***Virtual public listening sessions***: A series of up to **18** virtual regional listening sessions will target regions determined by the project team, with input from the PTCs. The facilitated sessions will be at times convenient to the public. Accommodations for special needs (Spanish interpreters, sign language or audio for visually impaired, for example) will be available at meetings upon request. Each session will include the same pre-recorded narrated presentation, followed by a live discussion. The Survey link will be available through the session platform.

DRAFT Agenda

1. Welcome and Ground Rules (PTN)
2. Providers in attendance give an overview of their services
3. Video - Brief overview of 5310 Program (PTN)
4. Identification of needs and issues (PTN)
 - a. begin with a list of needs and issues derived from the (CPT-HST) plan
 - b. ask group to add issues not mentioned and to expound on identified issues
 - c. Conversation about issues and needs—clarifications and suggestions
5. Prioritization of issues and needs (PTN)
6. Debrief and Closing (PTN)

2. **Surveys**—An online engagement survey in English and Spanish will be developed through the SurveyMonkey tool and will be available online and throughout public involvement effort. The survey will include questions seeking input from participants on their priorities. The survey will be part of data collection, review, and assessment of current demands and needs – taking into consideration the comment gathered during the public session.
3. **Voicemail**— mailbox will be established for any member of the public to call in and leave comments as well as ask questions, which will be answered within 48 hours.
4. **Online Feature**—Each of the meetings will have a WebEx component so that interested members of the public can gain information and give input on their personal device or at a community location such as a public library or community center.
5. **Outreach**— TxDOT and the consultant team will use traditional participation methods and media to engage, solicit comments, and actively encourage online participation. The outreach strategy will be tailored to reflect the regional communities as well as the transit services offered and will include:

- a. **Outreach via PTCs**

Flyers—A single informational flyer announcing all the scheduled listening sessions will be developed. It will be in English and Spanish and will give a brief overview of the program, the logistics of the sessions, a link or QR code for the online survey and contact information for questions or accommodations requests. PTCs will partner with providers to assist with distribution, either through their email address databases or by physically distributing the flyers.

The PTCs will prepare mailing lists for email blast messages and public session notifications that will be distributed via email. Throughout the public participation process, additional stakeholders and individuals will be added to the electronic contact list.

- b. **Outreach by PI Section**

An email invitation containing the same information as the flyer will be sent via GovDelivery to stakeholders. Additionally, the PI Section will post notices for each session on the TxDOT.gov Hearings and Meetings page.

- c. **Outreach by Program Manager**

The 5310 program manager will send a separate email to the transit providers serving the area of each meeting. The email will include:

- Logistical information about the upcoming session(s);
- The goal of the sessions;
- Agendas for the listening sessions.

d. Outreach by PIOs

The project team will work with district PIOs to execute strategic public information methods such as social media, news releases, and media interviews.

Timeline

Implementing this public involvement plan will be a combined effort by the PTN, TPP/PI Section, and Consultant team.

Task	Responsible Party	Assisting Party	Deadline
Develop PIP	PI Section	PTN Program Manager	Oct. 2
Present plan to PTCs	PI Section	PTN Program Manager	Oct. 9
Finalize best times to host the meeting (WebEx capabilities, accessibility)	PTN Program Manager	PI Section	Oct. 12
Toll-free number for comments	PI Section		Nov. 16
Develop stakeholder list (emails)	PTN Program Manager, PTCs	PI Section	Nov. 16
Draft text of email	PTN Program Manger	PI Section	Nov. 16
Post meetings on TxDOT hearings and meetings page	PI Section	PTN	Nov. 16
Develop meeting flyer (translate)	Consultant Group, PI Section	PTCs	Nov. 1
Develop Presentation and video	PTN Program Manager, Consultant Group	PI Section, Communications Team	Nov. 9
ASL Interpretation for presentation video	Consultant Group	PI Section	Nov. 16
Electronic sign-in sheet	Consultant Group	PI Section	Nov. 16
Public meetings outreach	PIO, PI Section, Consultant Group	PTCs	Nov. 16-27
Arrange for interpreters	Consultant Group	PI Section	Nov. 16-27

Meeting run through	PTN Program Manager	PTCs, PI Section, Consultant Group	Nov. 20-23
Public meetings week 1	PTN Program Manager	PI Section	
Public meetings week 2	PTN Program Manager	PI Section	
Public meetings week 3	PTN Program Manager	PI Section	
Public meetings week 4	PTN Program Manager	PI Section	
Public meetings week 5 (if needed)	PTN Program Manager	PI Section	
Public meeting week 6 (if needed)	PTN Program Manager	PI Section	
Meetings summaries	PTN Program Manager	PI Section	One week after meeting
Voicemail comments	PTN Program Manager	PTCs	After meetings

As the public involvement effort continues, tasks and timelines may be added to this chart.

Evaluation

- Number of listening sessions conducted
- Attendance at virtual listening sessions
- Survey responses
- Comments left in voicemail and responses

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