PLANNING OUTREACH PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

For INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plans, STIPs, Planning Level Studies, & Regional Planning Coordination Meetings

PHASE 1: PREPARING TO PUBLISH THE PLANNING DOCUMENT

Download the **Public Outreach Documentation Summary Form** and the **Comment Tracker** from the Public Involvement (PI) Toolbox, Templates Section. These documents will need to be filled out as public outreach occurs for the study and saved/submitted upon completion of the study.

Provide federal partners an opportunity to review and comment on the draft planning document(s) and reasonably address comments prior to publishing the documents and starting the public comment period. Document dates of emails sent in **Public Outreach Documentation Summary** and log any comments in the **Comment Tracker**.

Contact MPOs, RPOs, Districts TSDs/CPMDs, & key INDOT staff (LPA, Title VI, Communications, Environmental Services, Transit, Freight, and Mobility Teams) and make them aware of the planning product to be published. Document dates of emails and/or meetings in the **Public Outreach Documentation Summary** and comments/questions in the **Comment Tracker**.

Update the INDOT website that will house the planning product/documents. Ensure all links are active, point to the correct documents/partner sites, and contact information is accurate. If the product is an update to an existing plan, be sure to remove all links to old plan.

Include the following on the website:

- Description/purpose of the plan/study or what has been changed or updated if the study is not new.
- Links to documents, materials, and comment period/forms.
- Outreach materials written and presented in a reader-friendly/print friendly format and easy to understand graphics/infographics and maps. (File size reduced as much as possible for easier downloads and accessibility.)
- Options for how the public can request physical copies or view a hard copy of the document (see PI Toolbox, Public Engagement Tools for list of potential places to leave hard copies).
- Explanation of why public input is important, how to participate, options for providing comments, and a brief description of how comments are processed or handled.

PHASE 2: PUBLIC NOTICE PROCEDURES

Identify equity-focused communities (EFCs) in the study area using the PI Toolbox, Outreach to Equity-focused Communities section.

Create a plan to provide direct notification to EFCs and see the information required to be included in the notification in Notification and Outreach Section of the PI Toolbox. A list of possible stakeholders is available in the INDOT Public Involvement Teams Channel under the files tab. For access to this channel, please email Cat Seely. If new stakeholder groups are identified during a public outreach initiative, please add them to this list.

Leverage INDOT's Communications and/or Title VI Teams to invite and encourage participation of Limited English-Speaking communities and utilize their resources if accommodations such as American Sign Language (ASL), foreign language interpreter, documents in an alternative format (such as braille, large print or in a different language), or other are needed.

Publish notice of a public comment period no less than 2 days prior to its start date. This includes email notification, information posted on INDOT website and social media notifications, and could include news releases, paid advertising (newspaper, radio, tv ads) and/or direct mailings depending on the study/plan. See PI Toolbox, Templates Section for notification examples.

Publish notice of a public meeting or event at least 15 calendar days prior to the public meeting. Utilize the methods listed above and use Templates from the PI Toolbox.

Refer to the PI Toolbox, Planning for Public Engagement section for a list of stakeholder types to notify of public comment periods and public outreach events/meetings.

Coordinate with INDOT Communications Department for social media posts notifying the public of the meeting and to share project information, surveys, etc. Log social media posts and comments in the **Public Outreach Documentation Summary Form**.

Coordinate with MPO/RPOs to send public notice to their email lists and post notice on social media.

Log all comments/responses, document dates and types of public outreach activities and include copies of notices in the **Public Outreach Documentation Summary Form** and **Comment Tracker**.

PHASE 3: PLANNING PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETINGS & EVENTS

Please note: *Planning and scheduling meetings/events is an intense activity that often requires extensive coordination, time investments, early notifications, reservations and other preparations. A minimum lead time of 30-45 days is recommended for proper planning, coordination, targeted outreach, website changes, sending out early notification, securing or reserving a location, assigning roles/responsibilities, developing and printing materials and related activities for an effective meeting/event*.

Typical Public/Stakeholder Meetings
INDOT will provide informal stakeholder and/or public outreach opportunities at the following key decision points in our planning process:

- **Long-Range & Active Transportation Planning** – Identifying needs, defining goals, objectives, & policy considerations
- **Statewide/Corridor Level Planning Studies** - Discussion of needs, visioning, and identification of alternatives
- **During and/or End of the Annual Call for State Projects –** Identifying transportation needs
- **Project Programming** - Draft STIP Project Listing reviews

Tribal Nations Meetings
INDOT requires that the principles of the Indiana Tribal Nations policy are to be considered at all phases of planning and project development in the establishment, development, operation, and maintenance of a comprehensive, integrated, and connected multimodal transportation system. The following steps will ensure Tribes have review and comment opportunities aligning with all state and federal laws, regulations, tribal laws, and the MOU.

- Coordinate with INDOT's Cultural Resource Office (CRO) and follow guiding principles to promote successful consultation and collaboration between tribal governments and the state.
- Email INDOT's CRO to notify tribal contacts when the STIP website is ready for review, when INDOT offers public comment periods or public meetings in the development of a new STIP document, LRTP update or other planning study.
- Meet annually with Indiana Tribal Nations to identify transportation priority issues and needs for meaningful communication and coordination between INDOT and tribal officials prior to taking actions or implementing planning decisions that may affect tribes or tribal interests. Meeting events can be in-person, virtual, or via telephone and will include consultation for INDOT 20-Year Asset Management Plan, Annual Regional Coordination Meetings, changes to INDOT's Planning Procedures, and state level planning studies. (Coordinated effort with CRO.)
- Log all comments/responses, document dates of emails, meetings and phone calls and include copies of written/email notices in the **Public Outreach Documentation Summary Form** and **Comment Tracker**.

Prepare for a meeting or public event
See Meeting Types section of the PI Toolbox to decide the appropriate type of meeting to hold.

Identify the goals and objectives for the meeting. Use templates from the PI Toolbox, such as **agenda**, **comment form, fact sheet**, **flyer**, etc. to help prepare content for the meeting.

Use the **Public Meeting Plan Checklist** or **Virtual Public Meeting Plan Checklist** in the Checklist section of the PI Toolbox to get organized for the meeting. If meeting in person, use the **Facility Checklist** to help choose an ADA accessible location for the meeting that is on a transit line when possible.

Divide presentation materials into manageable segments or breakout sessions so people can stay engaged and discussions are focused. Use the **Fact Sheet** in the PI Toolbox, templates section to develop a one-page information sheet with key information, major objectives and takeaways for meeting attendees who may arrive late or leave early.

Plan meetings and events so they are engaging and interactive using quick polling methods, surveys, kiosks, or by providing access to online applications that solicit input/educate public. Provide QR codes for access to online information and materials.

Use visuals at public meetings/events and on related websites to enhance understanding of the planning documents, policies, supporting studies, and other related items and technical materials. Visual aids may include informational charts, animations, maps, infographics, videos, aerial photography, and other graphic explanations depending on the type of information to be conveyed. A PowerPoint **presentation template** is available in the PI Toolbox, templates section.

Have printed materials available at in-person meetings/events for review and ensure presentation materials are self-explanatory and not too technical.
Download **Public Meeting Summary** from PI Toolbox and use it to report details such as attendance, concerns, and other meeting details at public meetings/events. Each meeting held will have its own **Public Meeting Summary**, which are all to be compiled and attached to the **Public Outreach Documentation Summary Form** upon completion of the plan.

Record/transcribe meeting minutes and report performance efforts specific to the underserved populations in the **Public Outreach Documentation Summary Form**.

Coordinate with MPO/RPOs to perform public outreach for INDOT plans at their meetings. Be sure INDOT staff is in attendance to present materials and answer questions. Record meeting dates and comments in the **Public Outreach Documentation Summary Form** and **Comment Tracker**.

If the meeting is a stakeholder meeting, the Regional Planning Coordination Meeting, for example, provide meeting minutes to attendees for review and comment prior to making the notes official.

Conduct a post-meeting survey to measure the success of the meeting. See the Template section of the PI Toolbox for a printable **Virtual Survey** and **In-Person Survey** or access the online surveys via the link. For an in-person meeting, the survey should be distributed at the end of the meeting and a designated place to return the form upon exiting should be provided. Virtual surveys can be emailed following the meeting.

PHASE 4: POST OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Post recorded general sessions and presentation slides from select meetings 2 business days after the last public meeting or event on the appropriate INDOT planning document website and request they be added to relevant MPO, RPO and/or local government websites. If applicable, also post to social media outlets. The links should remain live for the entire duration of the public comment period at minimum.

Finalize **Public Outreach Documentation Summary Form,** summarize comments and survey results. Share final summary with planning partners, INDOT Communications and Districts and add document as an appendix to the plan/study.

Provide a final package to FHWA on public/stakeholder outreach activities that includes the **Public Outreach Documentation Summary** and appendices:

- **Comment Tracker**
- **Surveys** & results
- **Public notifications**
- Public outreach materials

Specify in Public Outreach Documentation Summary methods of outreach to equity-focused communities.

Hold annual evaluation meeting to review, evaluate and discuss INDOT, MPO/RPO, and consultant led public outreach to ensure regulations are met, the outreach is effective and best practices are being leveraged.