

Best practices for engagement:

WAIA's most frequently utilized means for public engagement include press releases, social media posts, handouts, open meetings, and postings to the website.

As traditional outreach methods may only reach a subset of community members WAIA has developed the following practices for equitable engagement:

Content Creation

- Using multiple social media platforms paying specific attention to geo tagging, hashtags, and language.
- Creating a variety of outreach materials to appeal to a more diverse range of community members.
- Maintaining the ability to translate materials into common languages in project impacted communities
- Keeping text brief and avoiding acronyms.

Distribution

- Work with community based organizations to help reach community members.
- Allow for audience feedback or responses to be collected confidentially

Visuals

- Using photos, graphs, and visuals that are clearly labeled
- Using graphics that are easy to read, and are in plain text

Public comment periods for key decisions

Community feedback is highly encouraged for all projects. When WAIA is seeking public comment, WAIA may post a specific comment period to accompany the posting of project proposals and drafts. Grant requirements will be taken into consideration when determining the length of a review period.

How public comments are addressed

Public comments received during an official public comment and review period are reviewed and used as input for potential edits to plans and projects. All public input received will be compiled into a summary that will be made available on the WAIA website.

To protect the privacy of the individual(s) providing feedback, all personal identifiable information will be redacted before posted online.

In scenarios where the final document differs significantly from versions used for public comment, an additional time period for comment will be provided.

Figure 2 - Western Arkansas Intermodal Authority Participation Techniques

WAIA Activity	Participation Techniques
<i>Board Meetings</i>	<p><i>Seven (7) Days Notice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Posted on WAPDD.org/WAIA</i> - <i>Posted at the WAIA/WAPDD office, 1109 S. 16th Street Fort Smith, AR 72901</i> - <i>Emailed press release</i> - <i>Distribution to community stakeholders</i> - <i>Agendas will include a public comment line item.</i>
<i>Future Plans and Projects</i>	<p><i>Thirty (30) Day Public Comment Period</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Posted to WAPDD.org/WAIA</i> - <i>Posted at the WAIA/WAPDD office, 1109 S. 16th Street Fort Smith, AR 72901</i> - <i>Emailed press release</i> - <i>Distribution to community stakeholders</i>
<i>Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP)</i>	<p><i>Ten (10) Day Public Comment Period for Draft of Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Utilization of online surveys</i> - <i>Posted to WAPDD.org/WAIA</i> - <i>Distribution to community stakeholders</i>
<i>Public Participation Plan (PPP)</i>	<p><i>Ten (10) Day Public Comment Period for Draft of Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Posted to WAPDD.org/WAIA</i> - <i>Distribution to community stakeholders</i>
<i>Published Public Participation Plan, Refinements and Updates to Adopted Documents</i>	<p><i>Ten (10) Day Public Comment Period</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Posted to WAPDD.org/WAIA</i> - <i>Posted at the WAIA/WAPDD office, 1109 S. 16th Street Fort Smith, AR 72901</i> - <i>Emailed press release</i> - <i>Distribution to community stakeholders</i>

Evaluation and Update of the PPP:

WAIA's Public Participation Plan is not a static document but is instead an ongoing process that is periodically reviewed and updated as circumstances and needs change in the service area, as projects and plans develop, and as technology evolves.

The following shows the type of evaluation the public can reasonably expect to see:

Website/Social Media

Information collected:

- Site visits
- Comments made by users
- Search terms
- Analytics
- Stats tracked monthly

This information is used to improve the website and social media's interactions, to get information people are looking for on the website and on social media, and to determine if outreach initiatives are encouraging people to visit these outlets.

Meetings

Information collected:

- Attendance
- Comments made at/after meeting
- Results of discussion
- Title VI information

This information shows the effectiveness of public meeting notices, the level of interest on topics discussed at meetings, engagement with all populations represented in the service area, and provides direction for plans and programs.

Public Comment Periods

- Number of comments received
- Topics of comments received

Title VI

- Number of requests for other formats
- Number of participants in meetings

Updating the Plan

This Public Participation Plan will be periodically reviewed and may be subject to minor corrections. Minor corrections (i.e. spelling and grammatical errors, formatting, updates to contact information, etc.) may be made without making the plan subject to a public comment period. A dated copy of this plan will always be readily available online on the WAIA landing page. All major updates will be subject to a public comment period of ten (10) days, with public notice made. WAIA will extend the public comment period in instances where major revisions are proposed in response to comments heard and received.