

## CHAPTER 3: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

DVRPC firmly believes in the principle of public participation by reaching out to and satisfying as many populations as possible in an equitable and timely manner. Public participation is the only real way to ascertain the interests of a wide variety of citizens, including those who are under-involved and often unconcerned, the private sector, special-interest activists, mature citizens, educators and parents, public officials, and the physically and economically disadvantaged. While today's citizens are far more sophisticated and modern standards are more inclusive, the need for public involvement is inherent to sound decision-making.

Every citizen is responsible for becoming involved in regional issues and playing a role in the decision-making process; therefore, DVRPC strives to provide as many opportunities as possible for residents to be informed and aware of the decisions that will affect the future of this region.

The public comment period for the Draft DVRPC FY2018 TIP for New Jersey opened on Monday, August 14, 2017 at 5:00 PM (EST) and extended through Thursday, September 14, 2017, at 5:00 PM (EST). DVRPC invited the public to attend the meeting listed below to learn more about the Draft DVRPC FY2018 TIP and share with DVRPC and NJDOT their comments about the Draft TIP and Draft State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017**  
**6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. (EST)**  
**COLLINGSWOOD COMMUNITY CENTER**  
**30 WEST COLLINGS AVENUE**  
**COLLINGSWOOD, NJ 08108**

[www.collingswood.com/recreation/community-center](http://www.collingswood.com/recreation/community-center)

*The Community Center is ADA accessible and near public transit, and public parking is close by.*

While not required, those interested in joining the meeting were encouraged to RSVP by contacting 215-592-1800 or [public\\_affairs@dvrpc.org](mailto:public_affairs@dvrpc.org). The meeting was conducted jointly with NJDOT and served as an opportunity to also comment on the Draft FY 2018–2027 STIP that was available at [www.state.nj.us/transportation/capital](http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/capital). NJDOT does not hold a separate STIP public comment period or meeting and relies on DVRPC and other MPOs to serve as the vehicle for this federal requirement. Public comments on both the Draft TIP and STIP documents were addressed to the MPO, which the MPO then coordinated with the agency that is in the best position to respond to such comment (MPO, NJDOT, NJTRANSIT, DRPA/PATCO, county, city, or one of the remaining independent authorities). As in past years, a representative from NJDOT was available at the above-referenced public meeting on the Draft TIP and Draft STIP.

DVRPC's website ([www.dvrpc.org](http://www.dvrpc.org)) is a vital tool in public outreach and serves a useful purpose during the TIP update cycle. The entire Draft TIP document was available on the DVRPC website, including the date and location of the public meeting and other general information. Individuals can also download or access current TIP materials at any time. The best way to submit comments for the draft documents was online by using DVRPC's web-based TIP public comment application located at [www.dvrpc.org/TIP](http://www.dvrpc.org/TIP). Users could click on the "Submit a Comment on the Draft DVRPC FY2018 TIP for New Jersey" button to make general and project-specific comments. DVRPC staff then gathered responses from appropriate

agencies. Responses were provided only to comments that were submitted in writing during the public comment period. In addition, the public could submit comments via e-mail ([tip@dvrpc.org](mailto:tip@dvrpc.org)) during the public comment period, or forward written comments via U.S. mail to:

**TIP COMMENTS**  
**OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**  
**DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**190 N. INDEPENDENCE MALL WEST, 8TH FLOOR**  
**PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106**

DVRPC frequently employs social media ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)) during the public comment period to garner the public's interest and attention. For example, DVRPC highlighted different projects and facts about the Draft TIP via social media posts. For those without internet access, TIP documents were available at selected public libraries (see Table 10), including the DVRPC Resource Center at the DVRPC office in the American College of Physicians Building in downtown Philadelphia. Users could also submit comments by sending a fax transmittal to (215) 592-9125. Please call (215) 592-1800 for more information.

### **[3.1] PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDANCE**

DVRPC offered extended guidance in an effort to receive more substantive comments. Listed below are questions that DVRPC asked the public to consider during the review of the Draft TIP document.

- Given the projects in the TIP, are we heading in the right direction? Are we meeting the needs of the region? Are we following the intent of the FAST Act?
- Does the TIP contain the appropriate mix of projects with regard to (a) the amount of investment in highway projects versus the amount in transit projects, or (b) the types of improvements, such as maintenance and reconstruction of the existing system versus new capacity-adding projects; nontraditional projects (such as pedestrian, bicycle, or operational improvements); or freight improvements, versus the traditional highway and transit projects?
- Is this region getting its fair share of resources compared to other regions in the state or nation?
- Is the current transportation project development process, including environmental reviews and public input, effective?
- Given financial constraints, is this region investing money in the right types of projects?
- Is the TIP document easy to use? How can it be further improved?

Comments were not limited to the broader issues of concern above. DVRPC, as always, welcome opinions on specific projects contained in the TIP, the TIP development process, or any other topic of concern. However, we reminded those intending to recommend new projects for the TIP that in order to earn a place on the TIP, projects must first progress through the screening and planning processes described earlier. As a result, requests for new projects are generally referred to the appropriate agency for further investigation through their respective pre-TIP study efforts. These study efforts may lead to

the project winning a place on the TIP in some future year. DVRPC also made available, for the first time, a guide to help members from the public craft more effective comments on the Draft TIP. It is available online at [www.dvrpc.org/TIP/Draft/pdf/tips.pdf](http://www.dvrpc.org/TIP/Draft/pdf/tips.pdf).

**TABLE 10: LIBRARIES DISPLAYING THE DVRPC FY2018 TIP FOR NEW JERSEY**

<b>BURLINGTON COUNTY</b>		
<b>Burlington County Library</b> 5 Pioneer Boulevard Westampton, NJ 08060	<b>Moorestown Library</b> 111 West Second Street Moorestown, NJ 08057	<b>Burlington County Library- Bordentown Branch</b> 18 East Union Street Bordentown, NJ 08505
<b>CAMDEN COUNTY</b>		
<b>Camden County Library- M. Allan Vogelson Regional Branch</b> 203 Laurel Road Voorhees, NJ 08043	<b>Camden County Library- Gloucester Twp.-Blackwood Rotary Branch</b> 15 South Blackhorse Pike Blackwood, NJ 08012	<b>Camden County Library- Rutgers-Camden Branch</b> 300 North 5th Street Camden, NJ 08102
<b>Haddonfield Public Library</b> 60 Haddon Avenue Haddonfield, NJ 08033	<b>Cherry Hill Free Public Library</b> 1100 Kings Highway North Cherry Hill, NJ 08034	
<b>GLOUCESTER COUNTY</b>		
<b>Monroe Township Public Library</b> 713 Marsha Avenue Williamstown, NJ 08094	<b>Gloucester County Library System</b> 389 Wolfert Station Road Mullica Hill, NJ 08062	<b>Woodbury Public Library</b> 33 Delaware Street Woodbury, NJ 08096
<b>MERCER COUNTY</b>		
<b>Mercer County Library- Lawrence Branch</b> 2751 Brunswick Pike, U.S. Route 1 Lawrenceville, NJ 08648	<b>Trenton Public Library</b> 120 Academy Street Trenton, NJ 08638	
<b>PHILADELPHIA (PENNSYLVANIA)</b>		
<b>Free Library of Philadelphia</b> 1901 Vine Street Philadelphia, PA 19103	<b>Library for the Blind &amp; Physically Handicapped of Philadelphia</b> 919 Walnut Street Philadelphia, PA 19107	

SOURCE: DVRPC, 2017