On January 20, 2025, President Trump signed Executive Order (E.O.) 14148 --Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions and E.O. 14154 – Unleashing American Energy. The E.O.s revoked E.O. 13990 – Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis (January 20, 2021) and E.O. 14008 – Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (January 27, 2021). Subsequently on January 29, 2025, Secretary Duffy signed a Memorandum for Secretarial Offices and Heads of Operating Administrations – Implementation of Executive Orders Addressing Energy, Climate Change, Diversity, and Gender. On February 25, 2025, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) published an Interim Final Rule removing the CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing regulations, effective April 11, 2025 (90 Fed. Reg. 10610). As a result of these actions, FHWA will not include greenhouse gas emissions and climate change analyses in the federal environmental review process. Any purported greenhouse gas emissions and climate change impacts were not considered in the federal decision. Accordingly, no greenhouse gas emissions or climate change analyses are included in this EA.

Also on January 20, 2025, President Trump signed Executive Order (E.O.) 14148 --Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions and E.O. 14154 – Unleashing American Energy. The E.O.s revoked E.O. 14096 – Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All (April 21, 2023). Subsequently on January 21, 2025, President Trump signed E.O. 14173 – Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity. This E.O. revoked E.O. 12898 – Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (February 11, 1994). On February 25, 2025, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) published an Interim Final Rule removing the CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing regulations, effective April 11, 2025 (90 Fed. Reg. 10610).

As a result of these actions, all federal environmental justice requirements are revoked and no longer apply to the federal environmental review process. FHWA, FTA and FRA's Joint NEPA regulations (23 CFR part 771) and the agencies Interim Final Guidance on "Section 139 Environmental Review Process: Efficient Environmental Reviews for Project Decision-making and One Federal Decision" (12/17/2024) do not require an environmental justice analysis. Accordingly, no analysis of environmental justice is included in this EA. Any purported environmental justice impacts were not considered in the federal decision. Social, economic, and community impacts will continue to be disclosed where applicable in accordance with 23 CFR 771.

As a result of E.O. 14148, E.O. 14154, E.O. 14173, and the removal of the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations, all federal environmental justice requirements are revoked and no longer applicable to the federal environmental review process. Accordingly, this EA does not consider public comments regarding environmental justice.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY COORDINATION PLAN

I-24 SOUTHEAST CHOICE LANES
DAVIDSON AND RUTHERFORD COUNTIES

Updated September 2025

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ISSUE AND REVISION RECORD

Revision	DATE	Preparer(s)	GEC Reviewer(s)[1]	GEC Approver[2]	Description/ NOTES
			TDOT REVIEWER(S)	TDOT APPROVER	
0	6/3/25	Macy Miller, Robert Flagler	Theresa McClure, Joy Riley, Erin McGehee		Working DRAFT submittal
	8/5/25	Macy Miller, Robert Flagler	Theresa McClure, Joy Riley, Erin McGehee		Working DRAFT comments
1	8/5/25	Macy Miller, Robert Flagler	Theresa McClure, Joy Riley, Erin McGehee		DRAFT submittal
	8/7/25	Macy Miller, Robert Flagler	Rebekah Hammonds, Paige Heintzman	Rebekah Hammonds, Paige Heintzman	DRAFT submittal review
2	9/15/25	Macy Miller, Robert Flagler	Theresa McClure, Joy Riley, Erin McGehee		DRAFT FINAL submittal
					No review requirement
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TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Choice Lanes	Choice Lanes are priced managed lanes that use pricing to proactively manage demand and improve travel-time. Choice Lanes allow motorists to maintain consistent travel speeds even when the adjacent existing lanes are congested. Choice Lanes are new lanes and typically operate at around 45 mph during rush hours when traditional lanes are barely moving or even at a standstill during peak periods.
Choice Lanes Program	An urban congestion program that leverages private-sector partners and generates revenue to help reduce its reliance on state funding, allowing the state to fund more projects across Tennessee with traditional revenues.
Environmental Assessment (EA)	An interim decision document prepared for an action where the significance of social, economic or environmental impact is not clearly established. If the action is determined to have significant impact, an Environmental Impact Statement is then prepared. If no significant impact is determined, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is prepared.
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)	Federal law that requires an analysis of environmental impacts of federal actions (including the funding of projects). NEPA is a decision-making process that engages with the public on potential environmental impacts, collects and integrates public feedback in decision-making and informs the public of how decisions are made with regards to proposed impacts to the environment. The NEPA process involves an evaluation of a set of alternatives and their associated environmental impacts.
Project	The proposed I-24 Southeast Choice Lanes project.
Project Area	The area where the proposed Project is being studied. The I-24 Southeast Choice Lanes project would extend along I-24 from approximately I-40 to I-840.

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TERM	DEFINITION
Project Delivery Network (PDN)	The Project Delivery Network (PDN) is TDOT's guide for those involved with the delivery and management of a project to maintain the scope, schedule and budget. The PDN outlines the stages, activities, tasks, deliverables and (links to) references to accomplish these ends.
Project Team	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) and TDOT's consultants.
Public Involvement Management Application (PIMA)	PIMA is a web-based application that includes a subscription form, comment form, survey, events and public portal. The Project Team will use PIMA to track and analyze survey data, respond to the feedback and comments gathered, manage stakeholder data, manage and host meetings, send emails and use analytic tools to identify gaps in engagement and make real-time adjustments to strategies.
Public-Private Partnerships (P3s)	Partnerships formed between public entities like TDOT and private companies, allowing Tennessee to better allocate the limited resources for transportation projects by leveraging private-sector innovation and capital. Private-sector partners would design, build, finance, operate and maintain Choice Lanes projects. P3s allow for shared risks, accelerated project delivery, provide access to additional capital, enable a longer-term view of asset management and can reduce public cost and any debt could be privately financed without obligations to the state.
Speakers Bureau	A list of qualified speakers of TDOT staff, who are knowledgeable about the proposed Project who can speak to interested stakeholders about the proposed Project at community events, organizational meetings and other speaking opportunities.
Stakeholder	For this Project, stakeholder will be defined as an individual is any individual, group or organization that has an interest in or may be affected by the planning, design, construction, operation or maintenance of the Project. Stakeholders could include, but are not limited to federal, state and local agencies, elected officials, non-governmental organizations, community/advocacy groups, special interest groups, major employers and community leaders or influencers.

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TERM	DEFINITION
Transportation Modernization Act (TMA)	Legislation passed in April 2023 that allows TDOT to enter into P3s to deliver Choice Lanes, expands its alternative delivery capabilities and creates parity between electric vehicle and combustion engine vehicle owners.
Transportation Modernization Board (TMB)	The TMA established Tennessee's first Transportation Modernization Board (TMB). The TMB is authorized to exercise powers and duties to approve the development and operation of TDOT's proposed Choice Lanes projects.
Virtual Public Meeting (VPM)	An online public meeting is a digital platform designed to complement in-person meetings or hearings by offering the same materials, information and opportunities for public engagement. Participants can review content, ask questions and submit comments online. These meetings may take the form of static websites available 24/7 or scheduled sessions conducted via teleconferencing or other virtual communication tools.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the Public Involvement and Agency Coordination Plan

The Interstate 24 (I-24) Southeast Choice Lanes Public Involvement and Agency Coordination Plan (PIACP) has been developed by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), to guide public involvement and stakeholder engagement efforts throughout the life cycle of the proposed I-24 Southeast Choice Lanes project ("Project"). This PIACP details strategies and tools the Project Team will use to effectively inform and collect feedback from the public and stakeholders to inform the environmental review process. This PIACP is consistent with the public involvement requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Title 23, Part 139 of the U.S. Code and other federal and state plans and policies, including TDOT's Public Involvement Plan (PIP) and TDOT's Environmental Guidelines on NEPA.

The NEPA process involves a detailed evaluation of a set of alternatives and their associated environmental impacts to the human and natural environment for any project requiring federal action. The Project Team determined the proposed Project's class of action would be an Environmental Assessment (EA) in June 2024. NEPA mandates meaningful public involvement in the environmental review process. Based on TDOT's statewide PIP, Environmental Guidelines and NEPA, the Project Team is conducting public involvement activities for a Level Three (3) project. TDOT's statewide PIP describes Level Three projects as those that generally would have some, but no significant impacts to the local human and natural environment and would be moderately sized and require less time for planning, design and construction. However, due to the complex nature of the proposed Project, the Project Team will conduct enhanced public involvement efforts that could include targeted mailings, community outreach events, translation services and various methods of digital outreach. The strategies and tactics for public involvement are described in greater detail in **Chapter 4**. **Table 1-1** below lists members of the Public Involvement team.

Table 1-1: Public Involvement Team

NAME	POSITION	ORGANIZATION	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Bryan Ledford	Assistant Chief Engineer – Alternative Delivery and P3	TDOT	Bryan.Ledford@tn.gov
Paige Heintzman	Director of P3 Delivery	TDOT	Paige.Heintzman@tn.gov
Rebekah Hammonds	P3 Communications Officer	TDOT	Rebekah.Hammonds@tn.gov
John Davis	P3 Statewide Project Manager	TDOT	john.r.davis@tn.gov
Erin Zeigler	Regional Communications Officer	TDOT	Erin.Zeigler@tn.gov
Theresa McClure	PMC Communications Director	Consultant	tmcclure@hntb.com
Robert Flagler	I-24 PMC Task Lead	Consultant	rflagler@hntb.com
Macy Miller	I-24 PMC Coordinator	Consultant	macmiller@hntb.com

1.2 Project Overview

1.2.1 Project Overview

The proposed I-24 Southeast Choice Lanes project would be the first Choice Lanes in Tennessee and aims to increase capacity and improve travel times for passenger and commercial vehicles along approximately 26 miles of I-24 between I-40 south of downtown Nashville and I-840 near Murfreesboro.

The proposed I-24 Southeast Choice Lanes project would be the first Choice Lanes in Tennessee and aims to increase capacity and improve travel times for passenger and

commercial vehicles along approximately 26 miles of I-24 between I-40 south of downtown Nashville and I-840 near Murfreesboro. The stretch of I-24 between I-40 and I-840 is one of the most congested corridors in Tennessee. Upwards of 174,000 vehicles travel the corridor daily, and in the five years between 2019-2023 more than 23,700 crashes were recorded in the Project corridor. With congestion only expected to increase in the future, TDOT identified Choice Lanes as a strategic solution to address the rising traffic congestion.

Based on stakeholder feedback in Spring 2025, there has been a desire to evaluate heavy commercial vehicles (HCV) utilizing the proposed Choice Lanes. The Project Team is in the process of evaluating the inclusion of HCVs and the potential impacts to environmental resources. This will include additional design refinements and plans to conduct public meetings to collect additional input from the public and stakeholders. This PIACP was also updated to reflect the design and environmental refinements and support the Project Team's continued commitment to a comprehensive review process that includes public input.

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Figure 1-1: Project Location Map
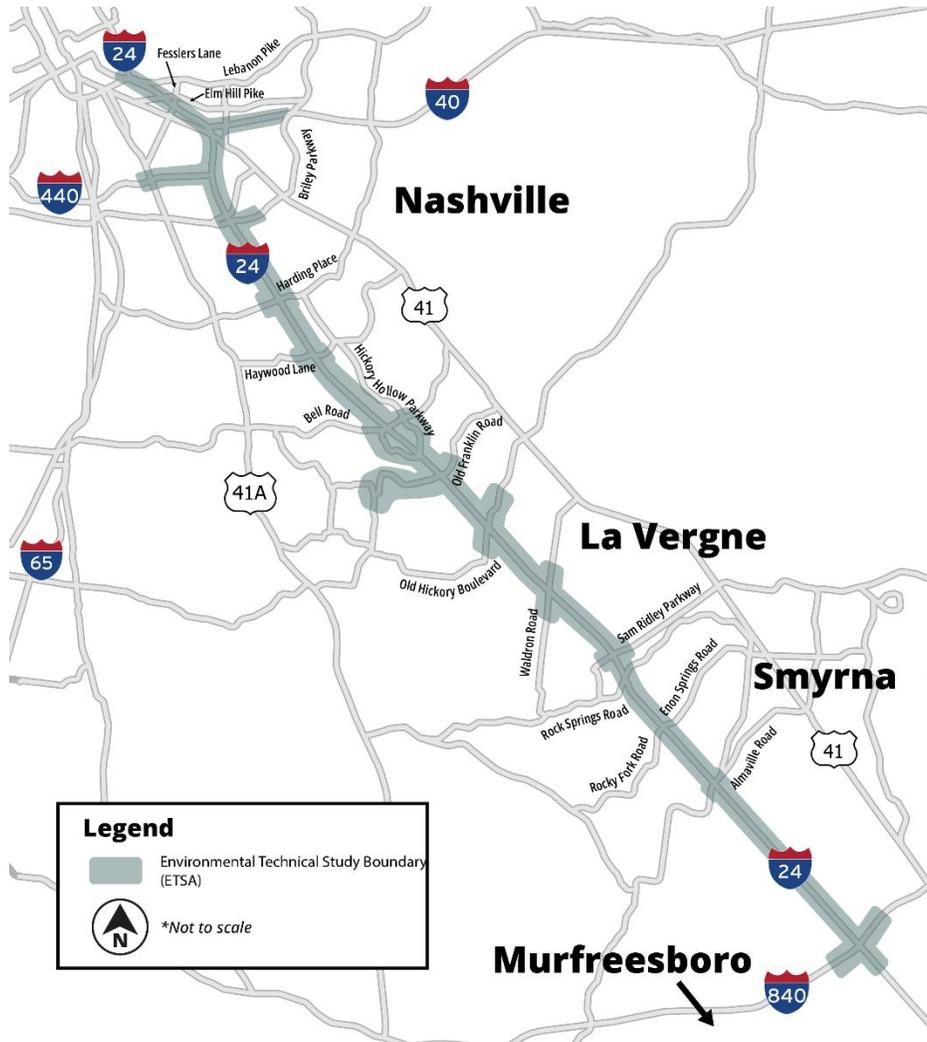
Source: Project Team, 2025

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1.2.2 Transportation Modernization Act

In early 2023, Governor Bill Lee signed the Transportation Modernization Act (TMA) into law, providing the state of Tennessee with $3 billion in transportation revenue and authorizing the development and operation of user-fee facility projects (Choice Lanes) to address traffic congestion across the state. The TMA allows TDOT to expand its alternative project delivery methods, including the utilization of **Public-Private Partnerships (P3s)** and Choice Lanes to deliver its urban congestion reduction improvement projects.

> **Public-Private Partnerships** are partnerships formed between public entities like TDOT and private companies, allowing Tennessee to better allocate the limited resources for transportation projects by leveraging private-sector innovation and capital. Private-sector partners would design, build, finance, operate and maintain Choice Lanes projects. P3s allow for shared risks, accelerated project delivery, provide access to additional capital, enable a longer-term view of asset management and can reduce public cost. Any debt from Choice Lanes projects could be privately financed without obligations to the state.

Choice Lanes are priced managed lanes that use pricing to proactively manage demand and improve travel time. Choice Lanes allow motorists to maintain travel speeds even when the adjacent existing lanes are congested. Choice Lanes are new lanes and typically operate at around 45 miles per hour (mph) during rush hours.

The additional state funding provided through the TMA expands TDOT's financial resources and accelerates urban congestion projects, including Choice Lanes. TDOT's 10-Year Project Plan identified the I-24 corridor southeast of Nashville between I-40 and I-840 as a priority urban congestion relief project to deliver as Tennessee's first Choice Lanes project.

1.2.3 Public Involvement Goals

The primary goal of this PIACP is to establish a clear framework to guide the Project Team in informing, educating and engaging the community and stakeholders throughout the environmental review and design process. This framework also lays the foundation for continued engagement in future phases of the proposed Project. Recognizing that meaningful public involvement is a critical component of the planning process, the Project Team is committed to engaging the public early and continuously to better understand community needs, values and preferences and to allow these perspectives to inform Project decisions.

To support these commitments, the Project Team has identified a set of goals that define its approach to public and stakeholder engagement. These goals prioritize building trust, enhancing transparency, supporting broad access to information and participation

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opportunities and maintaining open lines of communication. Together, these efforts aim to foster a public involvement process that elevates community voices and strengthens the overall quality and responsiveness of the proposed Project. The goals include:

- **Fostering Trust and Collaboration**: Build and maintain trust with the community and stakeholders through respectful, transparent and authentic engagement.
- **Providing Timely Information**: Share clear, consistent and ongoing information about the proposed Project and the NEPA process.
- **Facilitating Open Communication**: Maintain open, two-way communication between the community and the Project Team to identify concerns, issues and potential impacts.
- **Encouraging Convenient and Authentic Engagement**: Host meetings at strategic locations and times that provide multiple opportunities for public input through various formats.
- **Monitoring and Responding to Community Input**: Continuously track public feedback and adjust engagement strategies to address evolving community concerns.

1.2.4 Strategies

To achieve the goals outlined above, the Project Team has identified the following strategies to achieve the PIACP's goals. The approaches found in chapters four, seven, eight and nine of the PIACP support these strategies.

- Use digital communications methods (e.g., social media, newsletters and virtual meetings) for populations that are more digitally friendly or have digital preferences.
- Use traditional communication methods (e.g., printed flyers, neighborhood posters or in-person community meetings) for communities that may not have reliable or easy access to digital communication methods or prefer non-digital communications.
- Assist communication (e.g., translated materials) at engagement events and public meetings as needed or requested.
- Establish a distribution list and stakeholder database to provide information and updates, which could include newsletters, toolkits and mailings.
- Provide information early, often and timely that is easy for the audience to understand.
- Maintain a formalized process that tracks public input regarding decision-making and record-keeping.
- Develop champions with residents, businesses and community leaders to support outreach efforts.
- Provide partner agencies with timely information during every stage of project development.

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- Conduct robust outreach to share information and gather feedback from the public, stakeholders and agency partners.

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2. NEED AND PURPOSE

The purpose of the proposed Project is to provide a cost-feasible[1] transportation option that offers travel time advantages with user participation for both passenger and commercial vehicles[2] along I-24, between I-40 south of downtown Nashville and I-840 near Murfreesboro by addressing the following transportation issues:

1. Capacity
2. Travel times
3. Limited funding and accelerate project delivery

Based on the issues above, the proposed Project is needed to address increasing urban congestion caused by insufficient capacity which can be defined and measured by slow travel speeds accompanied by high travel demand, weaving issues due to traffic density and geometric constraints at system-to-system interchanges and bottlenecks in critical areas along the corridor. I-24 in Nashville is a major corridor that connects the rapidly growing areas of Nashville to Chattanooga. In 2023, the Nashville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) added 86 people a day to its population,[3] which represents substantial population growth.

Recognizing Tennessee's policies have generated economic opportunity, bringing job creation and an overall increase in population, this growth is outpacing the state's transportation system to provide the necessary mobility and infrastructure for its commuters and tourists who may travel along I-24. There are limited funding and financing options as gas tax revenues decline mainly due to inflation and more fuel-efficient vehicles, which means fewer projects, slower progress and less benefit to communities and economies. As a result, the duration of congestion has increased with travel speeds and travel times worsening in recent years.

In 2022, TDOT developed CAPs as a coordinated, statewide response to formally strategize congestion management on freeways and major arterials. Following the passage of the TMA, TDOT's traffic and revenue studies, and industry outreach with private-sector partners, resulted in recommending the section of I-24 between Nashville and Murfreesboro for Tennessee's first Choice Lanes Project. The Need and Purpose Memorandum (**Appendix B**) includes more detailed information and justification for the

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[1] Cost-feasible is defined as the alternative financing mechanism (i.e., P3) that would allow for the proposed Project to progress into final design and construction phases. This terminology should not be confused with user fees, or the rates in which motorists who choose to use the Choice Lanes would pay.

[2] FHWA vehicle classes 1-10 would be allowed to use the proposed Choice Lanes.

[3] Press Release: Chamber Announces Nashville MSA Grew by 86 People Per Day in 2023.

proposed Project's need and purpose, including an outline of Measures of Effectiveness for analyzing the proposed Project's need.

3. PROJECT AREA POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

The proposed Project is located along I-24 between Nashville and Murfreesboro, within Davidson and Rutherford counties. This PIACP uses demographic and socioeconomic data for Davidson and Rutherford counties from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 Census and American Community Survey (ACS). These counties have a combined population of 1,057,370 according to the 2020 Census. Along I-24 in Davidson County, Census Tracts 113, 118, 156.2, 161, 181.01 and 193 qualify as both areas of Persistent Poverty.

> The U.S. Census Bureau defines an **Area of Persistent Poverty** as having greater than or equal to 20 percent of the population living in poverty.

To understand the community and create tailored public involvement strategies, the Project Team investigated certain factors that would impact outreach strategies, specifically those of education (**Figure 3-1**), household incomes falling below the poverty line (**Figure 3-2**) and household language (**Figure 3-3**). Based on this review, the Project Team identified potential engagement barriers that will require additional consideration for outreach and engagement efforts. These potential barriers included:

- Language barriers
- Limited access to the internet or other technology
- Income and educational attainment levels

To address the identified barriers, the Project Team will:

- Determine if translation or interpretive services are required for outreach and engagement efforts.
- Develop public-facing materials using plain language at or below a seventh-grade reading level to promote reaching a broad audience.
- Provide hard copies of Project materials as needed or as requested for individuals with limited or no access to technology and the internet.
- Identify appropriate times and opportunities to engage communities with non-traditional work hours to accommodate shift workers or households with limited childcare opportunities.
- Engage community organizations and stakeholders to identify the best methods and opportunities to engage targeted communities.

Davidson and Rutherford counties exhibit similar education attainment patterns, with slight variations between the two. Davidson County has a marginally higher percentage of residents who completed high school and attended some college. Rutherford County has a slightly larger percentage of individuals holding bachelor's degrees **(Figure 3-1).** Based on the education attainment levels, federal guidance and communications best practices, the Project Team will develop public-facing communications at a seventh-grade reading level.

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Figure 3-1: Education Attainment
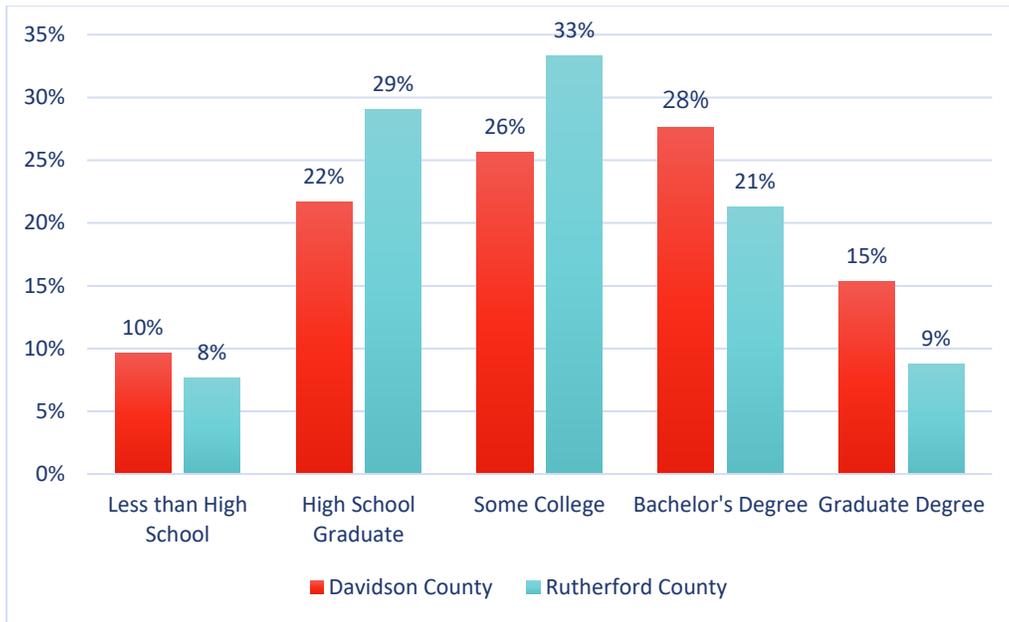
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1501, 2022

The proposed Project passes through and between areas with a high rate of poverty (**Figure 3-2**) and Historically Disadvantaged Communities and connects traffic to a large swath of urbanized land designated as an Area of Persistent Poverty (**Figure 3-4**). These communities often face unique challenges that can hinder access to essential resources and information, making tailored outreach strategies critical. Many residents in these areas may work non-traditional hours, lack consistent internet access, depend on public transportation or experience obstacles related to childcare and scheduling. Outreach efforts must be designed to accommodate these circumstances, providing a variety of communication channels and flexible engagement opportunities.

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Figure 3-2: Percent of Household Incomes Below Poverty in Davidson and Rutherford Counties

Legend:
- Household Incomes Below Poverty in Davidson County - 9.7%
- Household Incomes Below Poverty in Rutherford County - 3.3%
- Household Incomes Above Poverty - 87%
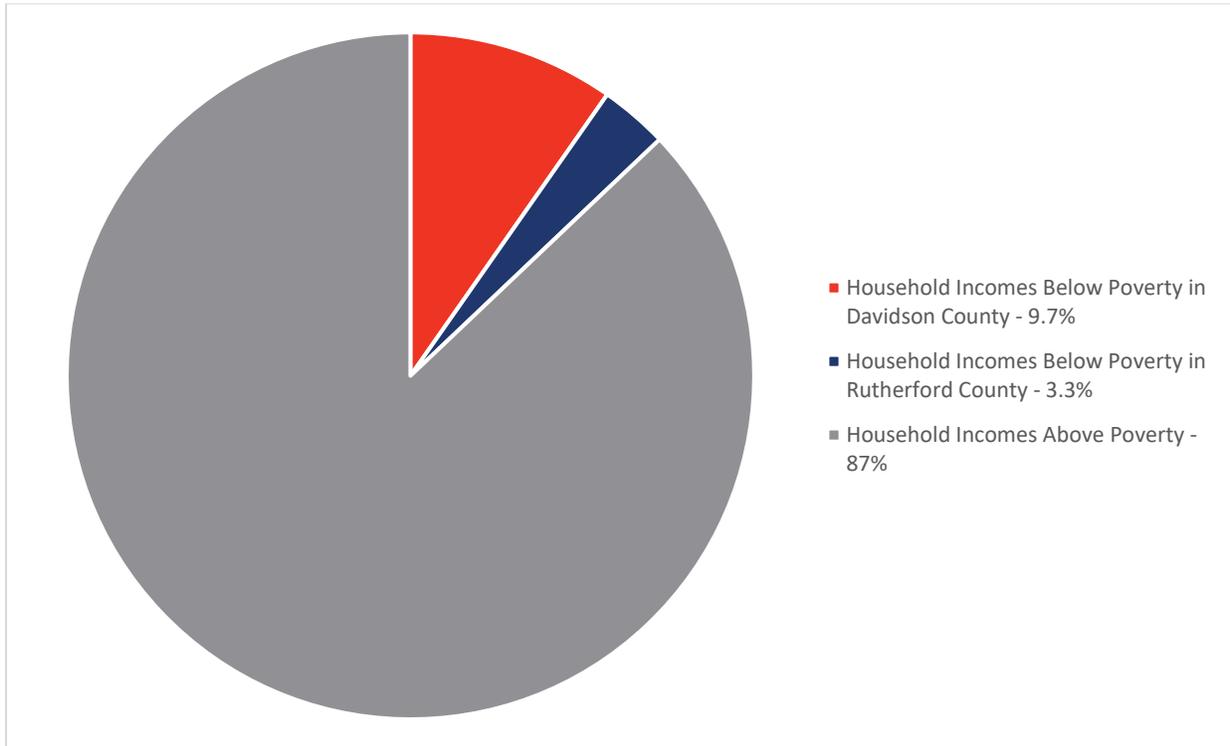
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1501, 2022

A majority of households in Davidson and Rutherford counties speak English as their primary language, with a small percentage speaking Spanish **(Figure 3-3)**. Based on the household languages, Project materials will be prepared in English, with translation services available as needed or upon request. The Project Team will include language explaining how the public can request these services on appropriate public-facing materials like legal advertisements, postcards, public notices and more.

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Figure 3-3: Household Language in Rutherford and Davidson Counties

- English Only - 96%
- Spanish - 3%
- Asian-Pacific Island - <1%
- Indo-European - <1%
- Other - <1%
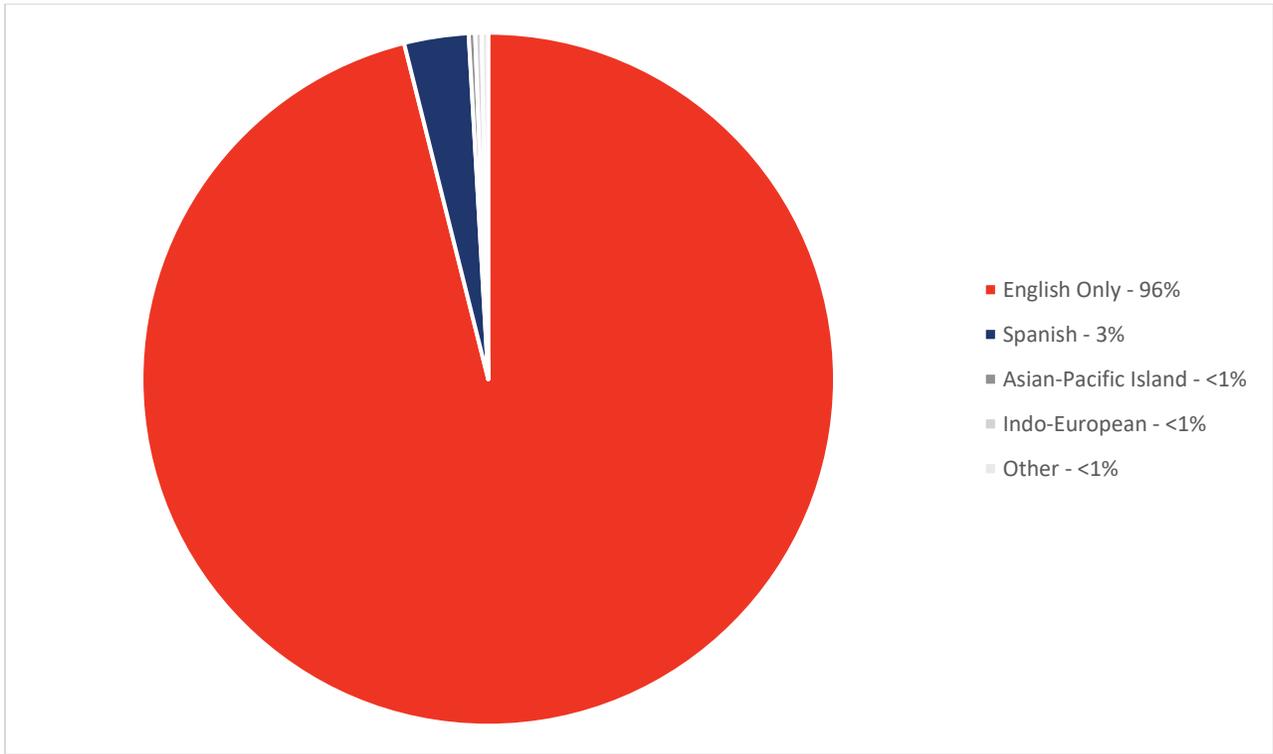
ACS 5-Year Estimates Selected Population Detailed Tables, Table B16002

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Figure 3-4: Areas of Persistent Poverty

Areas of Persistent Poverty Census Tracts

I-24 Corridor

Areas of Persistent Poverty

Source: TDOT, Tennessee Roadway Information Management System (TRIMS), USDOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer, US Census Bureau

Miles
0   2.5   5
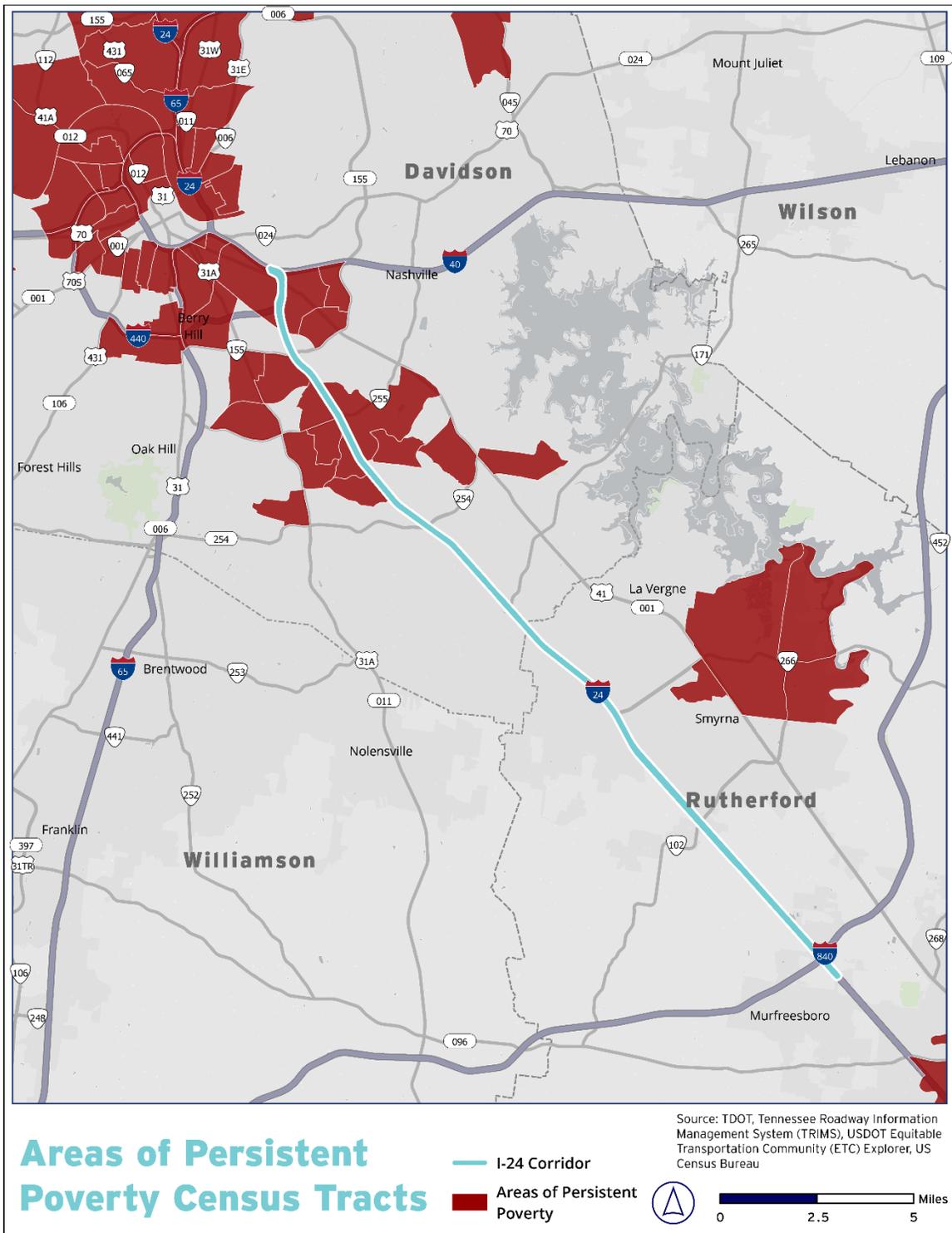
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4. PUBLIC OUTREACH TOOLS

The following public outreach tools and techniques will provide a detailed outline of the process used to inform, consult and collaborate with the public and stakeholders. These tools may change based on performance and feedback from the public and stakeholders to maximize effectiveness and incorporate community preferences for engagement techniques.

4.1 Digital and Social Media

An effective digital and social media presence for the proposed Project will broaden outreach, increase awareness and provide engagement opportunities to stakeholders and other members of the public who might not otherwise participate. The Project Team will use tools such as social media, digital advertisements, visualizations and videos, newsletters and more to share Project information, engage the public and achieve the goals of this PIACP.

4.1.1 Social Media

The Project Team will leverage TDOT's existing social media channels to highlight major milestones of the proposed Project, inform followers of public involvement opportunities, share updates and other informational campaigns and promote opportunities to share feedback about the proposed Project. There will be no standalone social media accounts for the proposed Project.

Organic social media leverages TDOT's existing social media channels to engage current followers while expanding reach to new audiences. **Table 4-1** shows TDOT's current social media channels and the reach of each channel.

Paid social media will be used, when appropriate, to expand reach by targeting specific demographics, including age, gender, ZIP codes and interests. Utilizing platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and X, along with Google Display ads, TDOT will focus efforts on individuals directly along the I-24 Southeast corridor. Paid promotions enable a strategic approach, helping messages reach the right audience efficiently and maximize engagement.

The Project Team will create and share social media content on an as-needed basis and include recommendations for tagging and following other agencies, organizations, local influencers and relevant accounts to further amplify engagement and extend the reach of posts where appropriate.

Social media will be used as an interactive tool to share information and receive input about the proposed Project. While comments and questions on social media are welcome, they will not be treated as official public comments. The Project Team may encourage users

to submit official comments through designated channels like the Project email, website, hotline and other methods.

All social media comments will be monitored. Draft responses will be prepared by the Project Team and approved by TDOT before being posted. Responses will address the commenter's questions or concerns and include guidance on how to submit an official comment.

A generic social media response is below but will include tailored content to address specific topics or questions in a comment or message.

> *Your feedback is valuable and helps us shape the conversation. Social media comments are not official comments, but you can submit an official comment on our Project website!*

Table 4-1: TDOT Social Media Channels & Audiences

PLATFORM	HANDLE	FOLLOWERS (AS OF 5.21.25)
Facebook	@myTDOT	135K
Instagram	@my_tdot	20K
X	@myTDOT	39.3K
LinkedIn	Tennessee Department of Transportation	21.8K

4.1.2 Digital Advertisements

Digital advertisements, including Google Display ads, offer a strategic way to enhance public engagement and promote the proposed Project. These ads will reach audiences as they browse websites, watch YouTube videos, check email or use mobile apps, strengthening visibility in everyday digital interactions. The Project Team will use digital advertisements to complement both online and print outreach efforts, strengthen connections with target audiences and maximize engagement opportunities.

4.1.3 Visualizations and Video

The Project Team will use visualizations and videos as a dynamic way to inform, educate and engage a wide range of audiences by combining visuals, narration and animation to simplify complex Project information and make it easier for the public to understand key details about the proposed Project. The visualizations and videos will be shared across multiple platforms, including social media, the Project website, virtual public meetings and in-person events. Their flexibility allows them to reach people where they are—on their

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phones, computers or at community gatherings—making them especially useful for increasing awareness and encouraging participation.

Video formats will range from short clips designed for social media to longer segments suitable for public presentations or online engagement. Content may include fly-through animations, visualizations of proposed alignments and ramps or overviews of potential benefits, safety improvements and Project milestones. As the proposed Project moves forward, videos will help explain next steps, share updates and direct viewers to opportunities for public input. Because videos are engaging and easy to share, they play a key role in making the public involvement process more transparent and engaging. With features like closed captioning and translated subtitles, these videos can reach wider audiences, such as individuals with hearing or visual impairments.

4.1.4 Project Newsletter

The Project Team will distribute an electronic newsletter to provide updates and relevant information on the proposed Project, highlight upcoming milestones and recap public involvement efforts. Individuals can subscribe via the Project website or during public outreach events to receive relevant information. Previous issues of the newsletter will be available on the proposed Project website. Printed newsletters can be distributed to specific organizations or locations as needed or requested.

The newsletter will be distributed at appropriate intervals during the project development process, then shift to a more regular schedule as updates become more frequent. Ahead of major milestones, newsletters aim to encourage participation and attendance.

4.1.5 Website

The Project website (https://www.tn.gov/tdot/projects/region-3/interstate-24-choice-lanes-.html) will provide a central, easy-to-navigate homepage for Project information and serve as a hub for the public to access Project materials, such as key documents, educational materials and public meeting resources. The site will be regularly updated by the Project Team with accurate and relevant information. It will also offer opportunities for public input and feedback while adhering to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

4.1.6 Project Email

The Project Team will use a dedicated Project email (TDOT.24ChoiceLanes@tn.gov) as a channel for the public to request hard copies of Project information, submit questions and share formal comments. The inbox will be actively monitored, following protocols outlined in **Chapter 6**. When applicable, the email address will be included in Project materials and displayed on the Project website for public awareness.

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4.1.7   Project Hotline

A toll-free telephone hotline will be available for the public and stakeholders to request information or provide comments and feedback about the proposed Project through the platform, DialPad. By dialing (615) 451-8039, callers will hear a Project-specific voicemail and instructions on how to record a comment. Additional extensions will be available to provide information on upcoming public meetings, request hard copies of materials and request translation or accommodation services. Callers will receive an acknowledgment of their call within 24 business hours, when possible, and the Project Team will address each call within 10 business days. The Project Team will document, track and log hotline calls in the Project database and hotline comments will be included in the response process during official comment periods around public meetings or hearings.

4.1.8   Surveys

To gain robust and meaningful feedback during the development of the proposed Project, the Project Team will create and distribute surveys through various communications channels, including meetings, social media, email distribution lists, the Project website and others as needed. The Project Team will leverage paper surveys sent through certified mail or distributed at community meetings as needed. Distribution efforts will include newsletters, social media, the Project website and potential outreach via local media. To enhance engagement tracking, QR codes will be incorporated into printed materials when appropriate, providing data on scan locations and associated materials.

Questions will gather input on community preferences, thoughts and priorities during comment periods as well as determine preferred communications methods. Survey responses will be logged and analyzed to inform Project decisions, though they will not be classified as official public comments.

4.2   Printed Materials

Printed materials, such as flyers and direct mail postcards, will be shared to learn more about the proposed Project, keep communities where access to digital media may be limited informed and advertise upcoming public engagement activities. When appropriate, printed materials will include a trackable QR code leading readers to the Project website so the Project Team can track the success rate of the individual materials.

When using printed materials to advertise public engagement events, public meetings or hearings, the date, time, location and other Project specifics will be included. Information on how to request accommodations or printed materials will be included, when appropriate, on printed materials.

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4.2.1 Targeted Mailings

The Project Team will use targeted mailings to reach larger audiences along the I-24 Southeast corridor, including residents and businesses. Targeted mailings include letters or postcards sent via EveryDoor Direct Mailing (EDDM). Targeted mailings will be used to promote upcoming engagement opportunities like public meetings or hearings and will include information on events or milestones, encourage public participation and include details on how to access Project information through the Project website and QR codes when appropriate.

4.2.2 Flyers

Informational flyers will keep the public in and around the proposed Project Area updated on the latest information regarding the proposed Project. The flyers will be distributed at locations along the I-24 Southeast corridor at locations like as community centers, libraries, restaurants, businesses and grocery stores to broaden awareness of the proposed Project and promote engagement opportunities like public meetings and hearings. This strategy is beneficial to those with limited internet access and expands reach to individuals who may be unaware of the proposed Project.

4.3 Media Strategies

The Project Team will use proactive and targeted media relations strategies to reach target audiences within the proposed Project Area and provide ongoing information about the proposed Project. Proposed Project-specific media outreach and engagement resources include the following:

- Comprehensive media FAQs to cover expected message points, benefits and potential issues
- Media-friendly graphics
- Media briefing strategy with an introduction to the proposed Project and key team members, positioning the Project Team as an expert source
  - State/local, government and trade/industry publications
  - Editorial board briefings
- Strategy for driving traffic to public engagement events
- Responsive media management strategies and tactics
- Crisis communications guidelines

Media outreach will include:

- Media briefings or preview events prior to major proposed Project announcements and activities

- Coordination with news outlets for media events, appointments for interviews and public service announcements (PSAs)
- Media presentations and talking points
- Coaching and preparation sessions for the Speakers Bureau

The Project Team will conduct media monitoring and provide a monthly media monitoring report, which will include a record of media articles and activities associated with the proposed Project. These reports will track media sentiment trends and inform proactive engagement and education of the media.

4.3.1 Print Media

The Project Team will use advertisements, public notifications and legal advertisements in local newspapers to announce public engagement events and to keep the community informed about Project updates, milestones and next steps. The Project Team will maintain a list of newspapers relevant to the proposed Project Area and its audiences.

Legal advertisements are required and will be strategically placed to optimize outreach and engagement. Their placement will be tailored to the local area, maintaining distribution across a select number of identified publications.

Local and regional newspapers include:

- The Tennessean, Nashville and Middle Tennessee's daily newspaper
- The Tennessee Tribune, Nashville and Middle Tennessee's Black community daily newspaper
- Nashville Banner, Nashville and Tennessee non-partisan newspaper
- Axios Nashville, Nashville, daily digital newsletter
- Murfreesboro Daily News Journal, Rutherford County's sole daily newspaper
- Nashville Scene, Nashville and surrounding counties (print Thursdays)
- Murfreesboro Pulse, Middle Tennessee digital news for art, entertainment and culture news
- Nashville Post, Nashville digital newspaper
- Murfreesboro Post

4.3.2 Television

The Project Team will consider the local television news programs below to raise awareness of the proposed Project and promote upcoming public engagement events. The Project Team will determine the best methods to utilize television news programs, whether it is paid advertisements or participating in interviews.

- News Channel 5+, Nashville
- 10 News, Nashville

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- WKRN, Nashville
- News Channel 5, Nashville
- News 2, Nashville
- WSMV 4, Nashville

4.3.3 Radio

Radio stations will be utilized to advertise upcoming public meetings and hearings. Public service announcements will be delivered on popular stations and music streaming services to promote increased engagement with the proposed Project.

- 97.9 WSIX-FM, Nashville
- 107.5 WRVW, Nashville
- 105.9 WNRQ, Nashville
- 90.3 WPLN News, Nashville Metropolitan Area
- 91.1 WNXP, Nashville
- 103.9 WQJZ-LP, Murfreesboro
- 1510 WLAC, Nashville
- 96.7 LEL JEFE, Nashville

4.4 Community Meetings

The Project Team will actively engage with the community through a variety of events, such as speaker bureaus and community meetings. These smaller group meetings and presentations provide a more personalized approach to informing the public and gathering valuable input.

4.4.1 Community Events

The Project Team will attend community meetings and host vendor booths at various events to promote awareness of the proposed Project and advertise upcoming public meetings and public hearing opportunities. Pop-up banners with Project information, interactive activities and giveaways may be included at the events to engage with the public when applicable. Engaging with the public will be key to getting valuable feedback and insight into community opinions. Attending established community events allows the Project Team to "meet the community where they are" and interact with individuals who may otherwise not engage with the proposed Project. These events could include neighborhood block parties, neighborhood meetings, community field days, parades, festivals and more.

4.4.2 Speakers Bureau

The Project Team will establish a Speakers Bureau, which includes a list of qualified Project Team speakers who can speak to interested stakeholders, organizations and groups about

the proposed Project. Members of the Speakers Bureau will receive training on presentation best practices for stakeholder and community meetings, as well as working with the media. The Project Team will identify and select the speaker based on the presentation subject matter (e.g., Project overview, noise or right-of-way impacts), audience and the speaker's availability. The Project Team will provide members of the Speakers Bureau with talking points and a branded presentation for consistent messaging at each meeting.

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5. STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

Stakeholder engagement plays a key role in successful project delivery, especially when introducing a new project where many audiences may not be familiar with the type of project being proposed. A key component of engagement is the involvement of broad community representation. To achieve this broad representation, the Project Team is committed to robust and successful stakeholder engagement efforts. Engaging stakeholders early and often throughout the life cycle of the proposed Project will:

- Encourage their participation in public engagement events.
- Build trust and support with the Project Team.
- Identify opportunities to improve or refine public involvement efforts.
- Create champions and supporters who will tout the benefits of the proposed Project.
- Assist in identifying community concerns and issues early in the process.

The Project Team will develop an initial roster of proposed Project stakeholders by collaborating with established local connections and partner agencies, coordinating with past and ongoing initiatives within the proposed Project Area, conducting field assessments, researching property owner databases and consulting with TDOT's Community Resource Division. As new stakeholders emerge, the Project Team will continue to add them to the database throughout the duration of the proposed Project.

The stakeholder list will include the following audiences:

- Business/economic development organizations
- Partner agencies
- Elected officials
- Community groups
- First responder organizations
- Special interest/community groups
- Cultural organizations or institutions
- Large employers

A preliminary list of stakeholders has been included in **Appendix A**.

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6. STAKEHOLDER & CONTACT MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL AND DATABASE

Documentation is not only important to a successful public involvement effort, but also a NEPA requirement. Recognizing the importance of a robust Project database and documentation process, the Project Team will use the Public Involvement Management Application (PIMA) to document relevant communications, coordination and engagement activities for the proposed Project. This includes:

> **PIMA** is a web-based application that includes a subscription form, comment form, survey, events and public portal. The Project Team will use PIMA to track and analyze survey data, respond to the feedback and comments gathered, manage stakeholder data, manage and host meetings, send emails and use analytic tools to identify gaps in engagement and make real-time adjustments to strategies.

- Tracking and documenting public, stakeholder and agency comments and responses.
- Tracking and documenting public engagement efforts and outreach events (i.e., community events, public meetings, etc.).
- Tracking and documenting surveys and survey responses.
- Tracking and documenting email responses, invitations, communications and outreach efforts.
- Organizing and managing Project contacts and mailing lists.
- Reporting and analysis of engagement efforts, metrics and results.

6.1 Contact and Engagement Tracking

A Database Manager (DBM) will be identified and is responsible for logging outreach, engagement and administrative record activities in PIMA, forming a complete Project history. These entries should be thorough and detailed. The Comment Management Team (CMT) is made up of subject matter experts (SMEs) and technical leads who assist in the development of comment responses. The Comment Manager (CM) will engage members of the CMT as needed during comment response development to provide assistance and review on technical aspects of the proposed Project. To aid in reporting efforts, each comment will be assigned specific comment codes to track the topics and main themes of each comment. Topics can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Congestion
- Cost
- Daily Commute
- Safety

- Transit
- Design

Comment Documentation

Each comment recorded should include:

- Date received
- Stage/phase received (e.g., public meeting or public hearing)
- Method of receipt (e.g., email, phone, mail, etc.)
- Commenter's name and contact info
- Comment text and applicable codes
- Relevant agencies or organizations
- PDF copy of the comment or phone summary (if possible)
- Detailed phone call logs (including call return details)
- Any responses sent (or reason for no response)
- Other relevant information

Outreach & Event Documentation

Key events documented in PIMA include:

- Public meetings/hearings, stakeholder meetings, agency meetings and community presentations
- Festivals, fairs, pop-up meetings, mailings and newsletters
- Phone calls, legal advertisements and conversations

Each entry should capture:

- Event name, type, date, time and location
- Attending Project Team members
- Associated stakeholders, agencies or organizations
- PDF summaries/reports of activities
- Communications and outreach efforts (e.g., social media, flyers or mailers)
- PDFs of event materials (e.g., presentations, handouts, displays, etc.)

Table 6-1: Comment Management Team (CMT)

NAME	ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Rebekah Hammonds	CMT	TDOT P3 Communications Lead – Reviews comment responses to verify that language and writing are appropriate, compliant and consistent with TDOT standards.
John Davis	CMT	TDOT P3 SME – Reviews comment responses to verify that responses addressing P3s are accurate and appropriate.

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NAME	ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Paige Heintzman	CMT	TDOT P3 SME – Reviews comment responses to verify that responses addressing P3s are accurate and appropriate.
Tammy Sellers	CMT	TDOT Environmental SME – Reviews comment responses to verify that responses addressing environmental concerns are accurate and appropriate.
Erick Hunt-Hawkins	CMT	TDOT Environmental SME – Reviews comment responses to verify that responses addressing environmental concerns are accurate and appropriate.
Macy Miller	Database Manager (DBM)	DBM – Responsible for logging comments and responses, meeting summaries, event summaries and other Project events or communications into the database. Also tracks metrics and produces reports as needed. Responsible for maintaining the accuracy and quality of the database.
Syrees Gillens Oliver	Comment Manager (CM)	CM – Responsible for overseeing the comment response process from beginning to end. Drafts initial responses, identifies members of the CMT to engage for input on specific topics, oversees the review process and maintains the timeliness of responses. Verifies that the DBM receives the comments and responses for documentation. Serves as the hub for incoming comments by regularly checking the comment tools outlined in **Section 2.4**.
Joy Riley	CMT	I-24 Southeast CL Project Manager – Oversees and approves comment responses before sending to TDOT.
Theresa McClure	CMT	Public Involvement SME – Provides review and consultation to verify that comment responses are compliant and appropriate for applicable public involvement requirements and practices.

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NAME	ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Jennifer Halstead	CMT	NEPA & Environmental SME – Provides review and consultation to verify that comment responses with technical information on NEPA or environmental efforts are accurate.
Erin McGehee	CMT	NEPA & Environmental SME – Provides review and consultation to verify that comment responses with technical information on NEPA or environmental efforts are accurate.
Chris Fuentes	CMT	Technical Editor – Verifies that language/writing is compliant and consistent with Project standards.
Robert Flagler	CMT	Comment Response Review – Provides an initial review to verify comment responses are appropriate and ready for review with the larger team.

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7. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OUTREACH STRATEGIES

7.1 Targeted Outreach

The Project Team will use targeted outreach strategies to engage various stakeholders and collect feedback for the proposed Project. Targeted outreach will include stakeholder-specific newsletters, briefings and communications to share relevant updates, information and developments for the proposed Project. The Project Team will also develop accurate and informative materials for stakeholders to share with their networks via social media, email or any other communications channels as needed. This content will provide accurate information for stakeholders to champion the proposed Project and raise general awareness in the community.

7.2 Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder meetings will be conducted to facilitate engagement and coordination with stakeholders at key milestones or as needed. These meetings, held in-person, virtually or in a hybrid format based on stakeholder needs, will provide targeted opportunities for discussion beyond broader public meetings and hearings with tailored presentations and materials aligned with stakeholder interests and Project developments. The frequency of these meetings will be determined as the proposed Project progresses.

Stakeholder meetings will be for a selected group of individuals that can provide valuable insight, support outreach efforts and/or represent specific interests within the community. These stakeholders could include elected officials, community leaders, large employers, community groups or organizations, advocacy groups, agency partners and others as appropriate. A preliminary list of stakeholders has been included in **Appendix A**; this will be updated as the proposed Project progresses.

7.2.1 Elected Officials Briefings

Prior to public meetings and hearings, the Project Team will hold personalized, in-person briefings with elected officials to raise awareness of the public meetings and hearings and provide a first look at materials. These briefings will remain compliant with open record laws regarding meeting notifications.

7.2.2 One-on-One Meetings

Individual stakeholder meetings will be scheduled upon request to foster authentic engagement and collaboration with key participants. These personalized sessions, conducted in person, will offer focused opportunities for discussion beyond larger public

forums. Meeting materials, including tailored presentations and educational resources, will align with stakeholder priorities and evolving Project developments. For consistency, the Project Team will use an adaptable presentation deck.

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8. AGENCY COORDINATION

Agency coordination is a critical component of the proposed Project due to the size and complexity of the I-24 Southeast corridor. As required by the NEPA process, a lead agency must be identified, along with cooperating and participating agencies. These agencies play key roles in defining the Project's need and purpose, establishing the study area and reviewing environmental documentation. The roles and responsibilities of these agency partners are outlined in the following section.

8.1 Lead Agency

FHWA and TDOT are serving as Joint Lead Agencies for the proposed Project and overseeing the preparation and accuracy of the environmental documentation, including the identification of Cooperating and Participating agencies to engage during the environmental review. Partnering as joint lead agencies is provided for under Title 23 of the U.S. Code (USC) 139. The lead agencies are responsible for NEPA compliance for transportation projects, including the responsibility of identifying the status and level of involvement of other agencies.

TDOT and FHWA are responsible for the distribution of invitations and confirmations to agencies identified as Cooperating and Participating. Agencies will be asked to provide a written confirmation of their status as a Cooperating or Participating Agency or formally decline the status. The agency responses will be documented within the Project database and administrative record. Once the Cooperating and Participating agencies are determined, the Joint Lead Agencies will be responsible for distributing materials for review to collect comments and feedback.

Other responsibilities for the Joint Lead Agencies, in consultation with Cooperating Agencies, will include:

- Establishing a plan for agency and public participation in the review process.
- After consultation and concurrence of each Participating Agency, setting a schedule for completion of the review, permit or authorization required to carry out the proposed agency action.
- Involving the Cooperating Agencies in the development of the need and purpose, the alternatives analysis and development and the designation of a Preferred Alternative.
- Meeting with agencies upon request to discuss their concerns and identify potential solutions.
- Notifying the agency responsible for issuing such a review, permit or authorization of discrepancies in meeting the approved schedule and requesting that the agency take appropriate measures to comply with the schedule.

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- Conducting required reporting to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate on the progress of the agencies in the execution of this agency coordination plan. This reporting is facilitated by an FHWA internal project tracking database as well as regular coordination with the FHWA Headquarters staff.

8.2 Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating agencies are federal, state or local agencies that either have jurisdiction over the Project Area or possess special expertise related to potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. A lead agency may invite another agency to serve as a cooperating agency. If the invited agency has jurisdiction by law, it is required to accept the designation. If it has relevant expertise but not jurisdiction, it may choose to accept the role. Agencies may also request to be designated as cooperating agencies.

While the roles of cooperating and participating agencies often overlap, cooperating agencies are granted a greater level of authority, responsibility and involvement in the environmental review process under NEPA. A list of potential cooperating agencies is provided in **Table 8-1**.

8.3 Partnering Agencies

Participating agencies are federal, state, tribal, regional or local government agencies that may have an interest in the proposed Project that may not have direct jurisdiction but can provide valuable input based on their areas of expertise or concern.

The Project Team has and will continue to actively consult with participating agencies to maintain consideration of their perspectives throughout the NEPA process. This collaboration helps the analysis and documentation to reflect relevant agency interests, make effective use of their knowledge and meet both substantive and procedural requirements. A list of potential cooperating and participating agencies is provided in **Table 8-1**.

Table 8-1: Lead, Participating & Cooperating Agencies

AGENCY*	ROLE
FHWA	Lead
TDOT	Lead
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District	Cooperating

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AGENCY*	ROLE
Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation (TDEC)	Cooperating
Tennessee Valley Authority*	Cooperating
U.S. Coast Guard*	Cooperating
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Participating
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Participating
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service*	Participating
National Park Service	Participating
TDEC Division of Natural Areas	Participating
Tennessee State Historic Preservation Office	Participating
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency	Participating
Tennessee State Parks	Participating
Native American Tribes	Participating

Indicates agency declined to participate in coordination efforts.

8.4 Other Agencies

Due to the size and complexity of the proposed Project and the potential regional impacts that may not be obvious in the early stage of a project's initiation, it is possible additional agencies may have interests or require roles as additional information is gathered. The Project Team is committed to a transparent and collaborative approach to agency coordination and will keep agencies engaged and informed throughout the life of the proposed Project. **Table 8-2** includes other agencies that may be invited to participate at a later date, as additional information and developments are revealed.

Table 8-2: Other Agencies

INFORMED AGENCIES IN TENNESSEE	
U.S. Department of Energy	U.S. Geological Survey

INFORMED AGENCIES IN TENNESSEE	
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	Federal Railroad Administration
Federal Emergency Management Agency	Tennessee Historical Commission
Tennessee Department of Agriculture	Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development
Tennessee Department of Education	Tennessee Department of Tourism
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	Tennessee Department of Labor
Tennessee District Attorney General	Tennessee Department of Human Services
Greater Nashville Regional Council	Davidson County
Rutherford County	

8.5 Native American and Tribal Consultation

Native American Tribes may be invited to participate in the agency coordination, as determined by the lead federal agency. The Joint Lead Agencies will contact each tribe individually to provide an overview of the proposed Project and decide through these individual conversations whether the tribe has an interest in the Project Area and whether they need to be invited to participate in formal agency coordination meetings in addition to regular tribal consultations that will also occur during NEPA.

As part of the proposed Project, the Project Team will coordinate with the appropriate Native American Tribes as required by 23 CFR 450.212 and 23 CFR 450.318. A list of relevant Native American Tribes with interests in the Project Area has been included further in this section. In addition to the federal regulations above, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Lead Agencies or a designee to identify the appropriate parties that need to be involved in the process of identifying the effects of a proposed Project on historic resources and working through the Section 106 process with such parties. This involvement is referred to as "consultation." The requirements of Section 106 further necessitate the engagement of Native American Tribes in the proposed Project.

The Native American Tribes that were identified to have interests within the Project Area are:

Davidson County

- Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians in Oklahoma
- Cherokee Nation
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma

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- Kialegee Tribal Town
- The Muscogee (Creek) Nation
- Shawnee Tribe
- Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
- United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
- The Chickasaw Nation

Rutherford County

- Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians in Oklahoma
- Cherokee Nation
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
- Kialegee Tribal Town
- The Muscogee (Creek) Nation
- Shawnee Tribe
- Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
- United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
- The Chickasaw Nation

A total of 11 native tribes were invited as Participating Agencies, with two tribes, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Shawnee Tribe, accepting the invitation and participating in Section 106 consultation.

8.6 Concurrence Points

Concurrence points were sought at various points during the NEPA process for the proposed Project. The Joint Lead Agencies requested written concurrence from Cooperating and Participating agencies on the following points:

- Plans and the schedule for public involvement and agency coordination efforts
- Project's Need and Purpose statements and Project Study Area
- Reasonable range of alternatives/alternatives to be carried forward into NEPA for the proposed Project
- Draft Environmental Document and Preliminary Mitigation Plan for the proposed Project
- Draft Final Mitigation Plan for the proposed Project

The proposed Project will also include several additional coordination points from those above to allow Cooperating and Participating agencies to review points due to the complexity and the importance of these milestones to the project decision-making process. These additional coordination points include:

- NEPA Analysis of Project Alternatives for I-24 Southeast Choice Lanes

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- Selection of the Recommended Preferred Alternative for I-24 Southeast Choice Lanes

The Cooperating Agencies will need to concur on the concurrence points above; however, to confirm that concerns are addressed during the NEPA process, the Joint Lead Agencies will request acknowledgment from Participating Agencies. Concurrence requires written acknowledgement of concurrence from every relevant Cooperating and Participating agency to be submitted to the Project Team. These concurrence letters are acknowledged and documented by the Project Team and included in the administrative record and EA.

The Joint Lead Agencies provided a Project Coordination Package, which included an Agency Coordination Request Letter, the plan for agency coordination and a copy of this PIACP. This package outlined how input from agencies, stakeholders and the public would be solicited and considered, discussed coordination planned throughout the NEPA process and provided a schedule (including comment/review timeframes) for the major Project milestones. Where applicable, the package included invitations to be cooperating or participating agencies for the proposed Project. In total, the package was distributed to the previously identified agencies, officials and organizations.

8.7 Opportunities for Agencies to Provide Input

Recognizing the importance of agency coordination, the Project Team has and will continue to facilitate multiple opportunities for agencies to provide input and play a role in the development and approval of the environmental document. To facilitate this process, the Joint Lead Agencies will:

- Provide thorough information throughout the development of the NEPA document for the proposed Project in a timely manner to the relevant agencies as needed to satisfy.
- Ask each Cooperating and Participating agency to provide a primary and alternate representative for formal agency coordination and who will be requested to attend monthly Project agency coordination meetings.
- Supply the involved parties with specific timelines and schedules to maximize the quality and efficiency of the coordination.
- Provide opportunities for input on the NEPA document from the Cooperating and Participating Agencies, as well as any other Informed or relevant agencies, interested stakeholders and the public, in accordance with 23 CFR 771.119(b) and TDOT statewide PIP.

8.7.1 Formal Agency Coordination

The Agency Coordination Request Letter and associated PIP and agency coordination plans and schedules for the proposed Project will be distributed to Cooperating Agencies and Participating Agencies by the Joint Lead Agencies. Cooperating and Participating agencies

will be invited to monthly agency coordination meetings, where they will be informed on the progress of the Project development and provide feedback to the Project Team to identify early Project concerns and provide informal reviews of Project information during these regular meetings throughout the project development process. These meetings will help the Project Team to be more effective in the efforts to avoid, minimize and mitigate Project impacts to the natural and human environment and can help streamline formal reviews. The Joint Lead Agencies will conduct several agency workshops at the monthly agency coordination meetings to walk the agencies through the alternatives analysis and selection of the preferred alternative, as well as the development of any necessary environmental mitigation plans.

8.7.2 Environmental Assessment

Once the final environmental document has been reviewed and approved, the Joint Lead Agencies will distribute it to the Cooperating and Participating Agencies, as well as Non-Governmental Organizations and federal/state/local officials via email with a link to a digital copy of the final environmental document, unless otherwise requested.

8.7.3 Other Opportunities for Agency Involvement

The Project Team will maintain and update the database of agencies, officials and organizations developed during early coordination efforts throughout the environmental documentation process. Those agencies, officials and organizations that respond during coordination/scoping and those that participate in public meetings and/or provide input/comments during the preparation of the environmental document will receive regular Project updates and notification of the availability of the environmental document for review and comments.

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9. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Project Team is committed to offering transparency and establishing an open line of communication with the public through hosting public meetings and hearings. To provide ample opportunity for stakeholders and the public to participate in the proposed Project, the Project Team will organize, publicize, facilitate and host public meetings and public hearings throughout the environmental review process to share Project information and collect feedback from the public. Each in-person meeting and hearing will have a corresponding virtual public meeting (VPM) that provides the same information, materials and opportunities to submit feedback throughout the public comment period. If any translation or accommodation services are required, TDOT and the Project Team will make necessary accommodations, including, but not limited to, translating materials, providing hard copies to individuals as requested, having on-site translation services and other reasonable accommodations as needed.

9.1 Public Meetings

The public meetings will be conducted in an open-house format (with no formal presentations) and take place at ADA-compliant locations along the I-24 Southeast corridor at convenient times and dates to encourage greater attendance. If multiple public meetings are planned along the I-24 Southeast corridor, the same information and engagement opportunities will be available at each public meeting location, including virtual options. These meetings will occur over a multi-hour timeframe to provide flexibility for adequate public attendance. Each public meeting will include a dedicated comment station that is easily identifiable for attendees to submit comments to the Project Team.

Information presented at the public meetings, as well as posted on the VPM, will include:

- Project Need & Purpose
- Environmental studies
- Traffic analyses
- Design alternatives
- NEPA process

9.2 Visual Impact Assessment

The Project Team will conduct a Visual Impacts Assessment (VIA) workshop to collect feedback on visual impacts at key locations along the I-24 Southeast corridor. Exercises will include:

- Validating the degree of visual impact locations identified in the EA and VIA report by using digital and/or printed maps, with opportunities for the public to provide input on specific areas along the corridor.

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- A visual preference survey seeking input on visual impacts of the proposed Project, mitigation and enhancement options in the areas of impact, or what specific areas should be sustained. The survey will be available in digital and printed formats to encourage greater participation.

9.3 Public Hearings

The Project Team will host public hearings along the I-24 Southeast corridor at convenient locations, times and dates to encourage greater attendance from the public. Multiple public hearings will be held, but each hearing will provide the same information, materials and opportunities for the public to engage the Project Team. Public hearings have specific requirements outlined in TDOT's PIP and Environmental Guidelines, particularly around public notifications and distribution of environmental documents. The Project Team will follow these requirements by publishing a Notice of Opportunity for a Public Hearing in local newspapers at least 15 days prior to the first hearing and distributing copies of the EA to libraries, city halls and other locations. The EA will also be available on the Project website for the public to access and review prior to the public hearing.

The public hearings will include a presentation on the proposed Project and the approved NEPA document and a formal question-and-answer session. Following the public hearing presentation, a question and answer and formal verbal comment session will take place. Individuals interested in asking questions of the Project Team or making formal verbal comments will be encouraged to sign up on designated forms prior to the public hearing beginning. A public hearing officer will allow registered speakers up to two minutes to make formal verbal comments and/or direct questions to a TDOT Project panel. The public hearing officer may open the floor to individuals who did not sign up, depending on available time. A certified court reporter will record the formal public hearing and will be available to transcribe public comments for those who would prefer to dictate their formal comment. Following the formal public hearing presentation, members of the Project Team will be available at stations for members of the public to engage, view materials and submit comments.

Information presented at the public hearings, as well as the virtual engagement option, will include:

- The approved EA
- A meeting handout
- Meeting boards
- Corridor maps
- Visualizations for smart screens
- Comment forms and sign-in sheets
- Project videos
- Hearing presentation/video

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- VIA workshop interactive materials

9.4 Virtual Engagement

The Project Team will develop VPMs to complement in-person meetings and hearings to expand outreach to individuals who may face barriers to attending due to transportation, mobility, caregiving responsibilities or time constraints.

The VPMs will provide the same information and materials as in-person meetings and hearings and be viewable 24/7. The Project Team will develop strategies and materials to promote and encourage the public to visit the VPMs throughout the formal public comment periods. The VPMS will also be available after the formal comment periods to provide a record of the project development process and allow visitors to review previous meeting and hearing materials.

9.5 Public Notifications

To encourage attendance and participation, the Project Team will execute a robust outreach and notification effort that not only meets but exceeds requirements for public notifications.

Each public meeting and hearing will include the publication of a Notice of Public Meeting in a newspaper of general circulation in the vicinity of the proposed effort at least 15 days prior to the date of each meeting. Notices will adhere to the requirements in TDOT PIP and Environmental Guidelines.

In addition to the public notification, the Project Team will execute advertising and promotion tactics for the public meetings and hearings, including:

- Flyer distributions along the corridor
- Targeted EDDM mailings
- Organic and paid social media posts
- Digital advertisements
- Project newsletters

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10. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Per TDOT's 2025 Title VI Implementation Plan, the Civil Rights Division (CRD) may assess the proposed Project's public involvement and engagement performance based on the following objectives:

- Provide opportunities for citizens and transportation users to help shape the future of the state's transportation system through a public involvement process that begins early, is convenient and meaningful.
- Develop partnerships with local community leaders, groups and organizations to provide an integrated, environmentally aware and multimodal approach to transportation needs and desires.
- Integrate citizen concerns and needs into the project development process.
- Build credibility and trust between TDOT and those for whom it exists to serve.

The Project Team will use both quantitative and qualitative measures to evaluate the public involvement activities for the proposed Project. Quantitative measures are useful in providing information concerning the type and level of involvement. Qualitative measures are useful in determining the level of educational value of the activities, Project sentiment, increases in awareness and the receipt of input for the proposed Project. The Project Team will use this information to systematically monitor the public involvement tools and update the process accordingly to maximize benefit and effectiveness.

Table 10-1: Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

STRATEGY	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
Stakeholder Identification	- Number of contacts - Number of engagements - Number of meetings & level of participation
Meetings with Agency Partners and Community Organizations	- Number of agencies/organizations engaged - Number of meetings & level of participation - Range of different interests c - Feedback on the quality of information presented - Degree of participation of members (e.g., amount of input and issues identified)
Speakers Bureau Events	- Number of presentations - Number of attendees - Number of new contacts added to the stakeholder database - Feedback on the quality of information presented - Types of questions asked

STRATEGY	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
Public Meetings and Hearings	• Range of advertising methods • Number of attendees • Number of comments received • Feedback on convenience of meeting/hearing location/time, knowledge of staff, presentation of material, notification methods
Public Notifications	• Number of notices distributed • Location of notices • Dates notices were distributed
Documents and Informational Materials	• Number of materials distributed • Reading level of materials • Feedback on quality and clarity
Media	• Number of media stories • Sentiment
Digital and Social Media	• Number of social media posts • Impressions and engagement of posts • Highest- and lowest-performing posts • Number of clicks on trackable links • Number of text messages sent • Newsletter opens and link clicks
Surveys	• Number of surveys distributed • Number of surveys completed • Number of locations targeted in identified geographic areas

10.1 Media Monitoring Report

A monthly media monitoring report will track media coverage, social media metrics, website visits, average time on site, media mentions, newsletter open rate and subscribers and any other relevant information for the month. Tracking metrics can measure the effectiveness of media efforts, allowing efforts to pivot if strategies are not performing as expected or to continue strategies that are performing well.

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11. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION MONITORING TOOLS

The following table shows the various tools the Project Team can use to measure and monitor outreach and engagement efforts. These tools will provide metrics to understand the performance of individual outreach efforts and identify potential refinements or improvements for future efforts.

Table 11-1: Communication Monitoring Tools

TOOL	DESCRIPTION
Public Involvement Management Application (PIMA)	PIMA is a web-based application that enables agencies to manage the public involvement and engagement process consistently and efficiently and can include a subscription form, comment form, survey, events and public portal. PIMA will serve as the Project database and will house Project Team communications with the public. PIMA has a built-in reporting system the Project Team will use to track engagement efforts, public comments, stakeholder engagement and other outreach efforts.
Project Website	Website analytics, including page visitor counts and average time spent on site, will be tracked and reviewed monthly. These insights will help assess public engagement with Project information and materials available on the website.
Virtual Public Meetings	The VPMs will collect analytics and performance data from what is available from the platform. These tools track and measure how users interact with a website and capture a wide range of data, including the number of visitors, how users found the site (such as through search engines, social media or direct links), the pages they visited, how long they stayed and what actions they took—such as clicking on links, downloading files or submitting forms. This information identifies which content is most engaging, trends in user behavior and informs data-driven decisions to improve reach and overall effectiveness of online public involvement efforts.
Social Media	The Project Team will be responsible for monitoring comments. Each platform has an internal analytics tool to measure the reach and engagement of each post.

TOOL	DESCRIPTION
Project Newsletter	The Project Team will monitor and report on key metrics like how many recipients open the newsletter, which links are clicked and how users engage with the content. This data identifies which topics resonate with the audience and refinements for future outreach to improve engagement and transparency.
Media Monitoring	Reports on traditional and digital/social media coverage, including sentiment, number of articles/stories and platform (e.g., online or TV)

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12. SCHEDULE

Below is a tentative schedule regarding the proposed Project's public involvement activities. The Project Team will update the schedule as it confirms the proposed Project's technical milestones. Ongoing activities include stakeholder and community meetings, as well as deploying digital media tactics to introduce and educate stakeholders and the public on the proposed Project.

Table 12-1: Public Involvement Milestones

TIMEFRAME	MILESTONE
Q3 2025	Updated Purpose & Need
Q4 2025	Public Meetings & Visual Impact Workshops
Q1 2026	Revised EA Approval
Q1 2026	Public Hearings
Q2 2026	FONSI Approval

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APPENDIX A. STAKEHOLDER ROSTER

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