

**Environmental Justice Analysis
for the Blair Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Fiscal Years (FYs) 2025-2028
[October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2028]**

Introduction

With the use of federal funds for highway, bridge, and transit projects, the MPO must prepare an environmental justice analysis to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 12898 of 1994, and US DOT Orders 5610.2 (a) and 6640.23A of 2012.

Environmental Justice refers to Executive Order 12898 that directs procedures to be put in place to identify and address any disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations and has the following principles:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects or *burdens*, on minority populations and low-income populations.
- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income populations.

The Core Elements Approach to Environmental Justice

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have encouraged PennDOT and MPOs to incorporate the Core Elements Approach of Environmental Justice into the transportation planning process in consideration of regional needs, demographics, and staff capacity. The basic core elements approach steps are as follows:

1. Identify a.) low-income populations and b.) minority populations.
2. Assess the condition of pavements and bridges and safety in areas with higher low-income and minority populations and identify needs.
 - Pavement condition of federal-aid and state-owned roadways.
 - Bridge condition of state and local bridges over 20 ft. in length.
 - Safety conditions to prevent vehicle and non-motorized crashes.
 - Access to fixed-route transit services.

3. Prepare the draft Blair MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
4. Identify and evaluate the possible benefits and burdens that draft TIP projects could have including disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects and social and economic effects on low-income and minority populations.
5. If draft TIP projects are found to cause burdens including disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low-income and minority populations, the issues will be addressed by working with the affected groups, PennDOT, FHWA, and FTA to identify and document strategies to avoid, mitigate or minimize impacts.

The US DOT *Orders 5610.2 (a) and 6640.23A* defines low-income and minority populations as follows:

Low-income - A person whose median household income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines.

Low-income population – Any readily identifiable group of low-income persons who live in geographic proximity, and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who will be similarly affected by a proposed U.S. Department of Transportation program, policy, or activity.

Minority - A person who is: – (1) Black – (2) Hispanic or Latino – (3) Asian American – (4) American Indian and Alaskan Native – (5) Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.

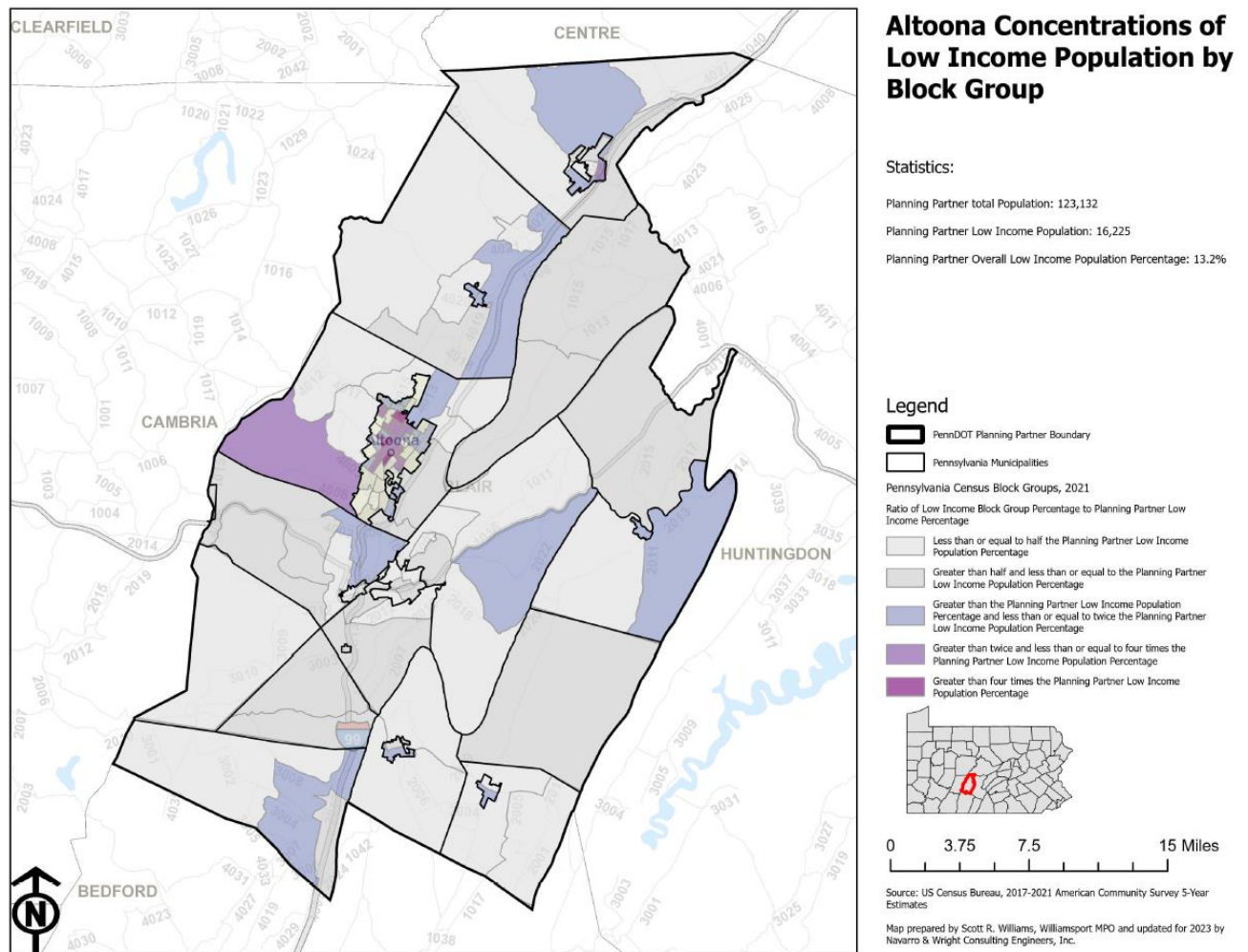
Minority population – Any readily identifiable groups of minority persons who live in geographic proximity, and if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons (such as migrant workers or Native Americans) who will be similarly affected by a proposed U.S. Department of Transportation program, policy, or activity.

1. a.) Identify low-income populations.

Low-income populations were identified by using data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) five year estimates 2017-2021 that show 16,225 persons or 13.2% of Blair County’s population is at or below the poverty level.

The percentages of low-income people at or below the poverty level are shown by census block groups in the map in Figure 1.

Figure 1.



Also identified are low-income population by the numbers and percentages in each municipality shown in table 1.

Table 1.
Number and Percent of Population Below the Poverty Level

Municipality	Total	No. Below Pov.	% Below Poverty
Blair County	119,234	15,739	13.2
Allegheny Twp	6,276	754	12.0
Altoona City	42,760	8,254	19.3
Antis Twp	6,346	722	11.4
Bellwood Boro	1,675	292	17.4
Blair Twp	4,669	223	4.8
Catharine Twp	574	71	12.4
Duncansville Boro	1,153	80	6.9
Frankstown Twp	7,259	414	5.7
Freedom Twp	3,019	300	9.9
Greenfield Twp	3,764	547	14.5
Hollidaysburg Boro	5,350	364	6.8
Huston Twp	1,485	125	8.4
Juniata Twp	960	52	5.4
Logan Twp	11,543	1,217	10.5
Martinsburg Boro	1,531	97	6.3
Newry Borough	194	40	20.6
North Woodbury Twp	2,238	132	5.9
Roaring Spring Boro	2,512	380	15.1
Snyder Twp	3,291	284	8.6
Taylor Twp	2,265	99	4.4
Tunnelhill Boro	98	25	25.5
Tyrone Boro	5,309	658	12.4
Tyrone Twp	2,036	172	8.4
Williamsburg Boro	1,202	199	16.6
Woodbury Twp	1,725	238	13.8

Source: S1701 Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months; 2018-2022: ACS 5-Year Estimate Subject Tables

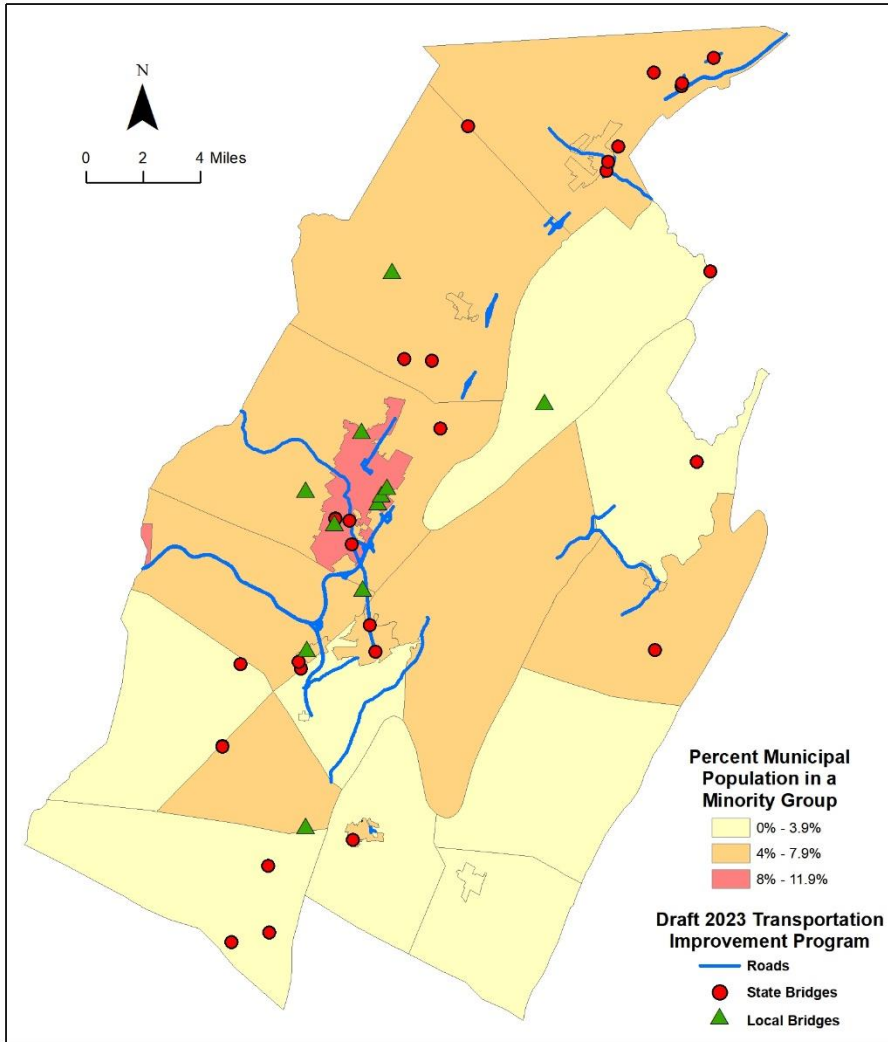
1. b. Identify minority populations.

Minority populations are identified by using the U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Redistricting Data for each municipality, which gives a county total of 9,204 persons or 7.5% of the county population. The map in Figure 2. shows colors indicating which municipalities are *lower than*,

near, or above the county minority group population. We used the 2020 Census data instead of the latest five year American Community Survey data because minority population estimates differed widely from the 2020 Census data in a few municipalities.

Figure 2. locates the current 2023-2026 TIP roadway and bridge projects in relation to the minority population.

Figure 2.



Percent Minority Population by Municipality

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Redistricting Data and PennDOT One Map MPMS Draft TIP
Blair County, Pennsylvania

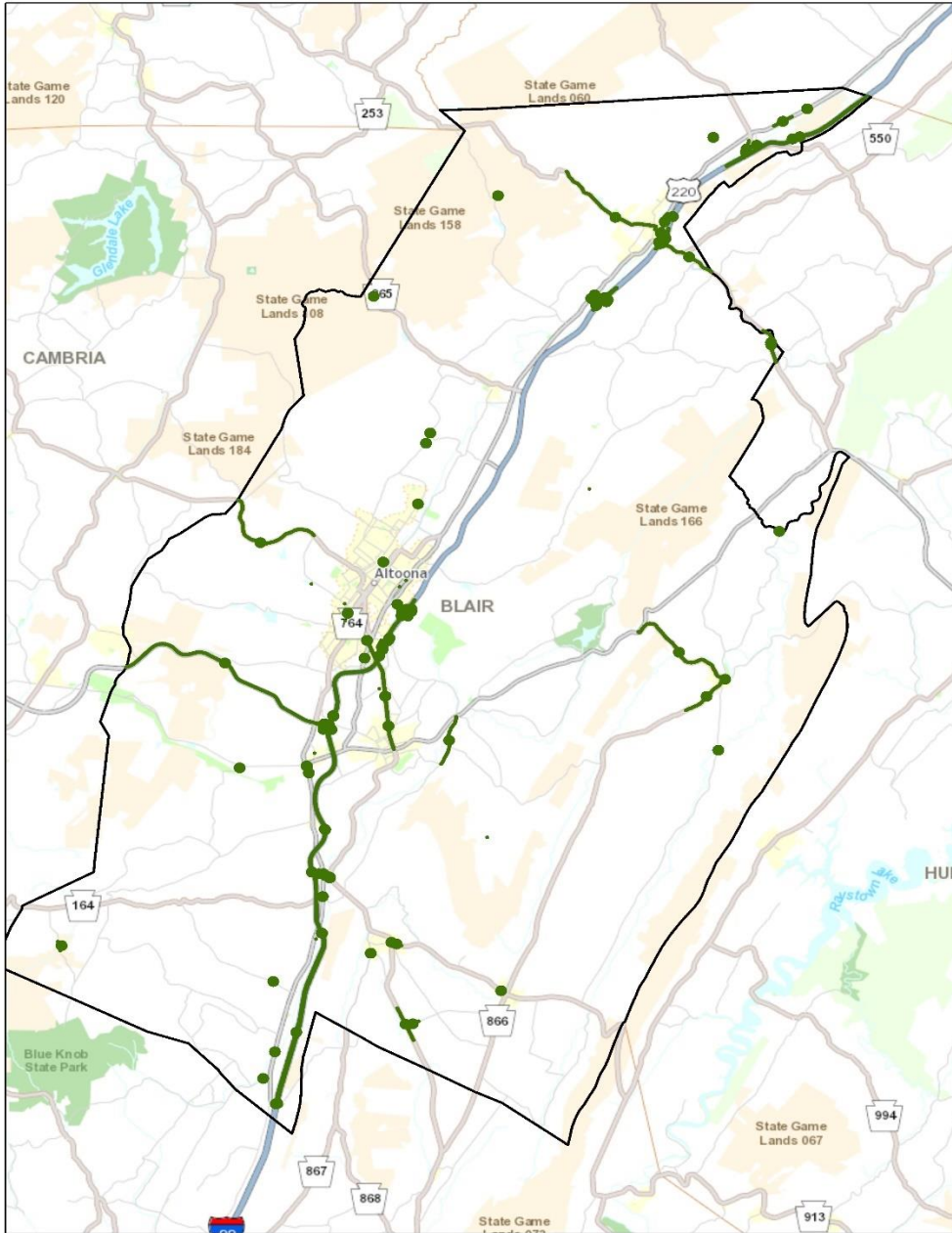


The locations of the fifty-five total draft 2025-2028 TIP roadway and bridge projects are shown on the map in Figure 3. Thirty-eight of the projects are carryovers from the current TIP and seventeen are new projects: three roadway projects and fourteen bridges.

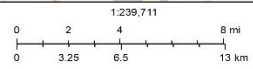
Figure 3.



Highway and Bridge Projects Draft 2025-2028 TIP



March 21, 2024



wbarrier@blairplanning.org
PennDOT

The minority population by the numbers and percentages in each municipality shown in table 2.

Table 2.
Number and Percent Population in a Minority Group

Municipality	Total	Number Minority	Percent Minority
Blair County	122822	9204	7.5
Allegheny Twp	6585	438	6.7
Altoona City	43963	4914	11.2
Antis Twp	6478	280	4.3
Bellwood Boro	1827	112	6.1
Blair Twp	4783	152	3.2
Catharine Twp	771	25	3.2
Duncansville Boro	1255	82	6.5
Frankstown Twp	7399	380	5.1
Freedom Twp	3002	137	4.6
Greenfield Twp	3788	148	3.9
Hollidaysburg Boro	5641	340	6.0
Huston Twp	1252	31	2.5
Juniata Twp	968	34	3.5
Logan Twp	12413	977	7.9
Martinsburg Boro	1876	69	3.7
Newry Borough	230	8	3.5
N. Woodbury Twp	2433	77	3.2
Roaring Spring B	2384	109	4.6
Snyder Twp	3344	152	4.5
Taylor Twp	2296	62	2.7
Tunnelhill Boro	108	11	10.2
Tyrone Boro	5480	322	5.9
Tyrone Twp	1876	74	3.9
Williamsburg Boro	1233	62	5.0
Woodbury Twp	1437	59	4.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171)

2. Assess pavement, bridge, safety conditions for low-income and minority populations, and access to fixed-route transit.

The latest PennDOT 2022 Annual Performance Measures Report for Blair County shows that 29 miles or 5.4% of state roads have poor pavement smoothness and 509 miles or 94.6% have an excellent to fair rating. This includes the National Highway System (NHS) Interstate miles that have 0.0% poor and the NHS Non-interstates with 2.3 miles or 2.8% poor pavement smoothness.

The PennDOT 2022 Annual Performance Measures Report for Blair County shows that 7 bridges or 2.2% of state bridges (of 8 feet in length or greater) are in poor condition by count or 0.5% by deck area and 0.0% in poor condition on the NHS. The poor condition of the local bridges (20 feet in length or greater) in the county is 34 bridges or 30.4% or 17.3% by deck area.

As a result of 94.6% of the state roadways and 97.8% of the state bridges being in fair to excellent condition, and those that are in poor condition being evenly distributed across the county, the burdens and benefits of draft TIP projects in relation to people in low-income and minority groups would be similar to that of other groups.

In addition, PennDOT and the MPO have adopted safety performance measures and targets for nonmotorized users. Through PennDOT Connects interviews, PennDOT asks municipalities about plans for walking and bicycling facilities prior to the design of roadway or bridge projects. Municipal representatives often request that existing walking facilities like sidewalks and crosswalks be preserved during roadway resurfacing and bridge projects. The following are draft 2025 TIP projects that contain sidewalk improvements in areas with average or above average low-income or minority populations:

- PA Route 453 Sink Run Culvert, in Tyrone Borough, includes retaining the sidewalks and curb ramps.
- PA Route 453, I-99 to Beastons Road, in Tyrone Borough, includes retaining the sidewalks and curb ramps.
- Logan Blvd./SR 4003 Bridge over Mill Run, in the City of Altoona, includes retaining the sidewalks. This portion of Logan Blvd. is an Amtran Bus Route.
- Logan Blvd./SR 4003 Bridge over Norfolk Southern, in the City of Altoona, includes retaining sidewalks. This portion of Logan Blvd. is on the Crosstown Amtran Bus Route.
- PA Route 36 from US Route 22 to Plank Road Resurface, in Hollidaysburg Borough, Allegheny and Logan Townships and the City of Altoona, includes retaining sidewalks. This portion of Logan Blvd. is on the Hollidaysburg Amtran Bus Route.
- PA Route 866, Williamsburg Drainage and Resurface, Williamsburg Borough, and Woodbury and Catherine Townships, includes retaining sidewalks in Williamsburg.

- 8th Street Bridge/SR 4013 over NFS Railroad, City of Altoona, includes retaining sidewalks and improving sidewalk to ADA standards. There are Amtran Bus Routes that frequent the streets on both ends of the bridge.
- North 4th Avenue/SR 4013 Bridge over Crab Run, City of Altoona, includes retaining sidewalks. The route is not a current Amtran Bus Route.

3. Prepare the Blair MPO's Draft Transportation Improvement Program

During the planning process to update the transportation improvement program (TIP), the Blair MPO works with PennDOT, Amtran, the Blair County Planning Commission, elected officials, the public and other stakeholders to identify transportation priorities as candidate projects.

The information considered when selecting the draft TIP candidate projects comes from the following categories:

- Carryover projects (projects included in the current TIP that need further funding).
- Transportation Asset Management Plan that contains Performance Management, Measures, and Targets for Bridges and Roadways on the National Highway System.
- PA Strategic Highway Safety Plan.
- Blair MPO Long Range Transportation Plan.
- County and municipal bridge and other priorities from the Blair County Planning Commission survey and PennDOT Connects interviews.
- Other state and regional plans and studies like the PA Freight Movement Plan.
- Equitable Distribution/Environmental Justice.

After considering the project evaluation criteria from the above, PennDOT District 9-0 prepares a fiscally balanced list of candidate highway and bridge projects for the highway and bridge portion of the draft TIP. Altoona Metro Transit prepares the candidate projects for the public transit portion of the draft TIP. The MPO Technical and Coordinating committees then review and approve the draft highway/bridge and transit TIPs and forward the projects to the PennDOT Program Center for further review.

Blair Planning also provides the organizations that represent the people of low-income and minority groups and the Nations and Tribes with copies of the draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and invites their comments on proposed highway, bridge, and transit projects.

4. Identify and evaluate the possible benefits and burdens that the draft TIP projects could have including disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects and social and economic effects on low-income and minority populations.

Figures 2 and 3 show that the draft 2025 TIP highway and bridge projects are evenly distributed among the municipalities and in relation to people of low-income and minority communities.

Because the road and bridge projects of the draft 2025 TIP are mostly maintenance and preservation activities and the four draft 2025 Interstate TIP projects are interstate maintenance projects, those types of projects would not create disproportionate impacts on people in low-income or minority groups. People in these groups will benefit from the road and bridge maintenance projects and sidewalks as well as from the new buses and transit projects also contained in the transit TIP.

The four draft 2025-2028 TIP projects that have improvements beyond roadway preservation are as follows:

- **Frankstown Road/SR 1009 from Amelia Avenue to PA Route 36 Project**, in City of Altoona, and Logan Township. The project will add a left turn lane on Frankstown Road at the intersection of Plank Road. The roadway is without existing walking facilities, but a sidewalk is to be included along the City side of the route. A portion of this roadway is on the Amtran Early Bird and Night Owl bus routes.
- **PA Route 36 – PA Route 164 Intersection Improvements**, in Roaring Spring Borough and in Taylor Township. The project includes adding two left turn lanes at the intersection. The roadways are not on fixed-route transit routes and do not have high concentrations of low-income or minority persons.
- **Corridor Safety Improvements on Route 36/PA 164 Charger Highway** from the I-99 Overpass to Old Mill Lane in Freedom Township. The project includes signage and widening of left and right turn lanes without taking additional right-of-way. The roadways are not on fixed-route transit routes and do not have high concentrations of low-income or minority persons.
- **PA Route 36 and Cross Cove Road/SR 2004 Safety Intersection Improvement** in Taylor Township. The roadways are not on fixed-route transit routes and do not have high concentrations of low-income or minority persons.

5. If draft TIP projects are found to cause burdens including disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low-income and minority populations, the issues will be addressed by working with the affected groups, PennDOT, FHWA, and FTA to identify and document strategies to avoid, mitigate or minimize impacts.

Since the draft 2025 TIP projects are mostly maintenance and preservation projects, except for those noted above, the projects are not expected to cause disproportionate and adverse impacts to the people in low-income and minority groups.

An example of the letter below was emailed with copies of the draft 2025 TIPs and draft Title VI Program, and a copy of the Public Comment Period and Meeting Notice were emailed separately to the following:

**Blair Metropolitan Planning Organization
Blair County (Altoona MSA)**

ALSO THE
COORDINATING
COMMITTEE OF THE
ALTOONA AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY
(AATS)

**Blair County Courthouse
423 Allegheny Street, Suite 046
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648**

**(814) 693-2080
FAX (814) 696-3490**

VINCENT GREENLAND, P.E.
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DENNIS IGOU
EDWIN FRONTINO
JAMES PATTERSON
SCOTT G. CESSNA

DAVID W. MCFARLAND, III, AICP
SECRETARY

April 24, 2024

John R. Johnson, Governor
Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of OK
2025 S. Gordon Cooper Drive
Shawnee, OK 74801

Re: The Public Comment Period for the Draft 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program
and the
Draft Title VI Program

Dear Mr. Johnson:

With respect to the special status of Federally Recognized Tribes and Nations, the purpose of this letter is to provide you with notice of the 30-day public comment period for the Blair Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) draft FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and supporting documents and a 45-day public comment period for the Draft Title VI Program to meet the Federal Highway Administration's regulations, 23 CFR part 450.316. With this letter, the Blair MPO invites the Delaware Tribe of Indians to contribute comments from April 26 through June 10, 2024. In addition, a public meeting about the documents is scheduled for Thursday, May 30, 2024, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Other interested parties, including governmental agencies and the public are also receiving this notice.

The TIP includes the transportation projects in Blair County that will use federal transportation funds within the four-year period. When such projects advance past the planning phase, you will be consulted for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act process. This project specific outreach will occur regardless of your participation in the TIP public comment period.

For your convenience, please find attached copies of the draft Title VI Program and the draft 2025-2028 TIP documents while the TIP supporting documents (Environmental Justice, Transportation Conformity, and Modification Procedures) will be available electronically by May 10 at www.blairplanning.org/transportation-program.

An additional resource for viewing draft TIP information is available using PennDOT's One Map that is a web-based GIS mapping tool for accessing highway and bridge project data and other

asset information and boundary layers. One Map can be accessed by visiting this website: <https://gis.penndot.gov/OneMap>, or by the project links in the attached Draft 2025 TIP spreadsheet.

Public Comment Period
April 24 2024
Page 2 of 2

If you wish to comment on the Blair MPO's draft FY 2025-2028 TIP, draft Title VI Program, or the other documents mentioned, please provide comments to Wes Burket, (814) 693-2080 Ext. 2, or wburket@blairplanning.org, or Blair County Planning Commission, 423 Allegheny St., Suite 046, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648.

A copy of the notice for the public comment period, public meeting, and the MPO meeting for the documents is attached. All comments will be taken into consideration and provided to the MPO prior to document approval. A full summary of the process, comments, and responses will be made available upon request.

If you have questions or desire additional information, please email or phone.

Sincerely,
BLAIR COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION



Wesley L. Burket, AICP
Transportation Planner

Enclosures

Susan Bachor, THPO, Delaware Tribe of Indians, sbachor@delawaretribe.org.

Deborah Dotson, Tribal President, Delaware Nation, Oklahoma, ec@delawarenation.com

William Fisher, Chief, Seneca-Cayuga Nation, wfisher@sctribe.com

Cassie Harper, Tribal Administrator, Shawnee Tribe, cassie@shawnee-tribe.com

John R. Johnson, Governor, Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, Governor@astribe.com

Glenna Wallace, Chief, Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, gjwallace@estoo.net

**Blair Metropolitan Planning Organization
Blair County (Altoona MSA)**

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DAVID W. MCFARLAND, III, AICP
SECRETARY

Memorandum

To: Maria Brandt, Executive Director, The Arc of Blair County
Andrea Holsey, President, Blair County Chapter, National
Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Cathy McFee, Regional Vice President, Skills of Central PA, Inc.
George Palmer, III, Executive Director, Center for Independent Living of
South Central PA
Tina Walters, Executive Director, Blair/Clearfield Association for the Blind
Dennis Wisor, Transportation Manager, Blair Senior Services, Inc.

From: Wesley L. Burket, AICP, Transportation Planner
Blair County Planning Commission

Date: April 25, 2024

Subject: Public Comment Period for the Draft 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement
Program and
the Draft Title VI Program

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide organizations that serve low income and minority populations with the notice of a 30-day public comment period for the Blair MPO's draft FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and a 45-day public comment period for the Draft Title VI Program and invite your organization to contribute comments from April 26 through June 10.

In addition, a public meeting to review the documents is scheduled for Thursday, May 30, 2024, 2:00-3:00 p.m. at Trolleyworks. If you cannot attend the public meeting and wish to discuss the documents or a transportation issue, please contact us.

The TIP includes the transportation projects in Blair County that will use federal transportation funds within the four-year period. This notice helps meet the requirements of Title VI, Executive Order 12898 that requires Federal agencies to achieve environmental justice by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including the social and economic effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations, as well as US DOT Orders 5610.2 (a) and 6640.23A.

For your convenience, please find attached copies of the draft Title VI Program and the draft 2025-2028 TIP documents and the TIP supporting documents (Environmental Justice, Transportation Conformity, and Modification Procedures) will be available electronically on May 10 at www.blairplanning.org/transportation-program.

Public Comment Period

April 25, 2024

Page 2

An additional resource for viewing draft TIP information is available using PennDOT's One Map that is a web-based GIS mapping tool for accessing highway and bridge project data and other asset information and boundary layers. One Map can be accessed by visiting this website: <https://gis.penndot.gov/OneMap>, or by the project links in the attached Draft 2025 TIP spreadsheet.

If you wish to comment on the Blair MPO's draft FY 2025-2028 TIP, draft Title VI Program, or the other documents mentioned, please provide the comments to Wes Burket, (814) 693-2080 Ext. 2, or wburket@blairplanning.org, or Blair County Planning Commission, 423 Allegheny St., Suite 046, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648.

A copy of the notice for the public comment period, public meeting, and MPO meeting for the documents is attached. All comments will be taken into consideration and provided to the MPO prior to document approval. A full summary of the process, comments, and responses will be made available upon request.

If you have questions or desire additional information, please contact us.

cc: William Hall, Chairperson, Blair County Planning Commission

MEETING NOTICE

Public Comment Period & Meetings for the Blair MPO's Draft Title VI Program, Draft 2025-2028 TIP, and Draft Conformity Documents

The Blair Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) invites public comments on the following draft documents: the draft Title VI Program, the draft 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) of federally funded highway, interstate, and public transit projects, the draft Transportation Conformity Determination Report, the draft TIP Modification Procedures and Environmental Justice Analysis available at <https://www.blairplanning.org/transportation-program>. Please submit comments to the Blair County Planning Commission (BCPC), wburket@blairplanning.org, or to 423 Allegheny St, Suite 046, Hollidaysburg, PA, 16648, today through Thursday, June 13, 2024.

A public meeting to review and receive comments on the draft documents is scheduled for Thursday, May 30, from 2:00 to 3:00 PM at Trolleyworks, 3316 5th Ave., Altoona, PA. A meeting of the MPO to consider approval of the draft Title VI Program, the draft TIP and documents will be held Monday, June 17, 2024, at 2:30 PM, at Trolleyworks. The MPO will provide services for persons with language, speech, sight or hearing impediments and people with disabilities provided the request for assistance is made (5) days prior to the meetings by contacting the Blair County Planning Commission at (814) 693-2080 or 711. A call number to attend the meetings will also be provided upon request. David W. McFarland, III, AICP, MPO Secretary.

April 29, 2024

Public Meeting to review the Draft Title VI Program/Public Participation Plan,
the Draft Environmental Justice Analysis, the Draft Conformity Determination Report, and the
Draft 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Programs

Date: Thursday, May 30, 2024

Time: 2:00 – 3:00 PM

Place: Trolleyworks, 3316 5th Avenue, Altoona, PA

Agenda

Item

1. Opening Remarks.
2. Review of the following:
 - Draft Title VI Program/Public Participation and Limited English Proficiency Plans.
 - Draft Core Elements Environment Justice Analysis for the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program.
 - Draft Transportation Conformity Determination for the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program and the 2045 Long Range Plan.
 - Draft MPO Procedures for Modifications to the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program.
 - Draft 2025-2028 TIP:
 - Highways and Bridges
 - Public Transit
 - Interstate.
3. Public Comment.
4. Adjournment.

Public Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 30, 2024

Those in attendance: PennDOT Engineering District 9-0, Blair County Planning Commission.