Context

NYMTC AND ITS PLANNING AREA
A large, complex multi-state region . . .
PLANNING AREA
A “metropolitan planning organization” for New York City, Long Island & the Lower Hudson Valley

A regional council of governments consisting of nine voting & seven advisory members

An organization required by Federal legislation which authorizes funding for transportation

An organization responsible for the mandated metropolitan transportation planning process
Part of a multi-state metropolitan consortium
Public Involvement Plan

- Requirement under SAFETEA-LU
- First adopted in June 2007
  - Updated in 2012 and 2019
Public Involvement Operating Procedures

• Part of NYMTC’s MOU
• Reworked in 2008
Public Involvement in the NYMTC Planning Process
NYMTC’s
Current Public Involvement Goals (2019 Plan)

1. Provide a robust, creative, and inclusive outreach process for all populations within the region, with opportunities to engage in meaningful discussions between NYMTC and the public about transportation planning issues.

2. Educate the public so they can purposefully participate, know when to provide input, and be encouraged to do so by:
   • Adopting strategic techniques to involve different audiences; and
   • Developing a greater understanding of how NYMTC functions as an organization and the roles and responsibilities of Council members and staff.

3. Evaluate current and ongoing public involvement activities on a periodic basis to identify successes and areas for improvement.
Why is public involvement important to NYMTC? (2019 Plan)

• Public involvement provides access to and opportunities for all constituents to have a voice in the planning process

• It offers an opportunity for ideas to be exchanged between policy makers and the public

• Public involvement actively involves all affected parties in an open, cooperative, and collaborative process that provides meaningful opportunities to influence decisions

• It offers transparency on the use of transportation funds
Origination of the Corps

NYMTC established the Regional Planning Corps in 2005 as an innovative mechanism for:

• Providing advice on NYMTC’s public involvement activities

• Extending the reach of NYMTC’s contact and distribution lists

• Multiplying NYMTC’s effectiveness in alerting communities throughout the region to relevant transportation information and planning activities
What Was the Corps?

- Corps participants voluntarily agreed to serve as a distribution network for NYMTC’s information

- The Corps consisted of:
  - Community-based organizations,
  - Advocacy groups,
  - Local municipal officials and technical staff,
  - NYC community board members and staff, and
  - Professional associations
What Was the Charge to the Corps?

Mission:
To help foster greater community participation in the transportation planning process as a means of building consensus on prospective transportation improvements in our region.

Roles/Responsibilities:
• Distributing NYMTC information
• Serving as a sounding board
• Facilitating community, public input

Benefits to the Participants:
• Receipt of information on projects, studies
• Networking with other groups
• Integration into the process
• Preview NYMTC materials
How Effective Was the Corps?

- Initially recruited over 100 participating organizations
- A series of six meetings with the Corps were held in 2005 and early 2006
  - Developed a concept for the Corps and an initial assessment of NYMTC’s public involvement activities
  - Reviewed NYMTC materials and information and help to revise and/or develop materials, policies and procedures
- The Corps also helped to:
  - Evaluate NYMTC’s public involvement activities for the initial 2007 Public Involvement Plan and
  - Identified over 35 recommendations and possible solutions for consideration in this first plan
- Continued to serve as a network for distribution of NYMTC’s information
What Issues Arose Over Time?

• Over time, Corps participants became inactive
• Recruitment of new participants was limited
• Communication with the Corps members was insufficient to maintain interest and coherence
• Many organizations participating in the Corps had limited staff capabilities and significant staff turnover
• Communication with local municipalities was insufficient to maintain interest
• Local issues often took priority over regional process for the participating organizations
• NYMTC’s staff and resource limitations were a major barrier to maintenance of the Corps
STRATEGY 1C - Reaching out to Traditionally Underserved Communities

• Engagement of communities traditionally underserved, including Environmental Justice (EJ) (i.e. minority or low-income) and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations, will be emphasized more broadly in these PIP activities than in the past.

• NYMTC’s public involvement efforts strive to bring varied stakeholders into the process and enhance the level of collaboration and meaningful input.

• Community leaders and community-based groups are contacted to increase public participation of constituent communities.