

Public Participation Plan



**Tri-County Regional
Planning Commission**

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Acknowledgments

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Executive Summary

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released guidance on public participation in October 2022 and updated it in November 2023 titled *Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision Making*. As a result of these recommendations, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (referenced here as TCRPC or Tri-County) updated its Public Participation Plan (PPP) to follow FHWA’s guide. The purpose of the guidance is to ensure that the planning process for Metropolitan Planning Organizations is equitable for the communities they serve.

The PPP is a document that outlines the strategies used to publicly distribute transportation planning information. This document includes TCRPC’s methodologies, projects, plans, and strategies to gather feedback on these projects. Tri-County works on or develops projects that have real impacts on communities, and because of this, it is necessary to involve community members and consider their input. The process that Tri-County took to evaluate and improve its engagement practices included conducting stakeholder interviews, distributing an online survey, and creating a story map.

The results of this outreach informed TCRPC that the most effective community engagement happens when people are approached where they are. This form of engagement can be achieved by physically going to typical gathering places of the target population or modifying engagement strategies to consider people’s ability to participate in the planning process. Once Tri-County staff concluded public outreach and analyzed feedback, TCRPC created a framework that would guide its practices for any future needed public participation.

The action plan that TCRPC developed focuses on establishing trust within the region and building partnerships with area leaders or trusted organizations. While not every Tri-County project will involve the same target population, the process will be guided by the following questions: (1) What is the level of engagement needed? (2) Who is the target population? (3) Which leaders and organizations should TCRPC partner with? and (4) How is success defined? Once these questions are answered, Tri-County can develop an engagement plan that incorporates metrics of success (outlined in this document) that can be measured after implementation. After staff performs an assessment of the metrics, Tri-County can then take steps to refine its process for future engagement opportunities.



Introduction

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (referenced here as TCRPC or Tri-County) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area. As the MPO, TCRPC is tasked with creating a performance-based multimodal transportation planning process that is continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C). This planning process is meant to incentivize an efficient surface transportation system that is safe, resilient, and fosters economic growth. By creating a transportation system with these principles, the goal is to build a network that meets the needs of the people and minimizes air pollution. This endeavor is accomplished by the development of MPO documents such as the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Another important MPO document is the Public Participation Plan (PPP), which outlines how the MPO will engage with the community during the planning process. The work that an MPO performs has a direct impact on the region; therefore, it is essential to gather public input throughout the entire planning process. These impacts make it necessary for an MPO to have an updated PPP because it ensures that the planning process is transparent and accessible.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released guidance on public participation in October 2022 titled *Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision Making*. Following the initial release of the guide, the FHWA conducted outreach, such as hosting webinars and continuously accepting public comments. As a result, the FHWA updated the document in November 2023 to include a new appendix on “Using Federal Funds for Meaningful Public Involvement Activities” with implementation examples.

The goal of Tri-County’s latest PPP update is to make TCRPC’s community engagement process more equitable. With the assistance of the FHWA’s new guidance on equitable planning practices and regional stakeholder engagement, TCRPC was able to re-evaluate its community outreach process to better serve the diverse voices within the region.



In a May 2023 workshop, stakeholders gathered in Peoria’s South Side to explore the walkability of its streets. Photo taken by Anthony Baumann

Snapshot of the Region

This section highlights the composition of the population and the varying diversity within the service area. The data gathered for this analysis came from the US Census using either the 2020 Decennial Census or 2021 American Community Survey five-year estimate data. The following section provides a brief analysis of the regional populace using several demographic factors such as age, race, language, household income, and educational attainment.

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission’s Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) spans three counties and incorporates 24 municipalities. The MPA is a combination of the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area (UZA) and the 20-Year Planning Boundary, the latter of which is the adjacent area expected to be urbanized within 20 years (Figure 1). The MPA is contained within the tri-County region of Tazewell, Woodford, and Peoria counties.

This analysis focuses on the UZA, which consists of 16 municipalities and services over 255,000 residents. The UZA spans all three counties and encompasses a diverse range of urban and rural jurisdictions. Accompanying this mixture of community types are municipalities with different needs, unique challenges, and different capacities for resources.



The Illinois River

2010 Urbanized Area and 20-Year Planning Boundary

Approved by PPUATS Policy Committee May 7th, 2014
Map Created November 2021

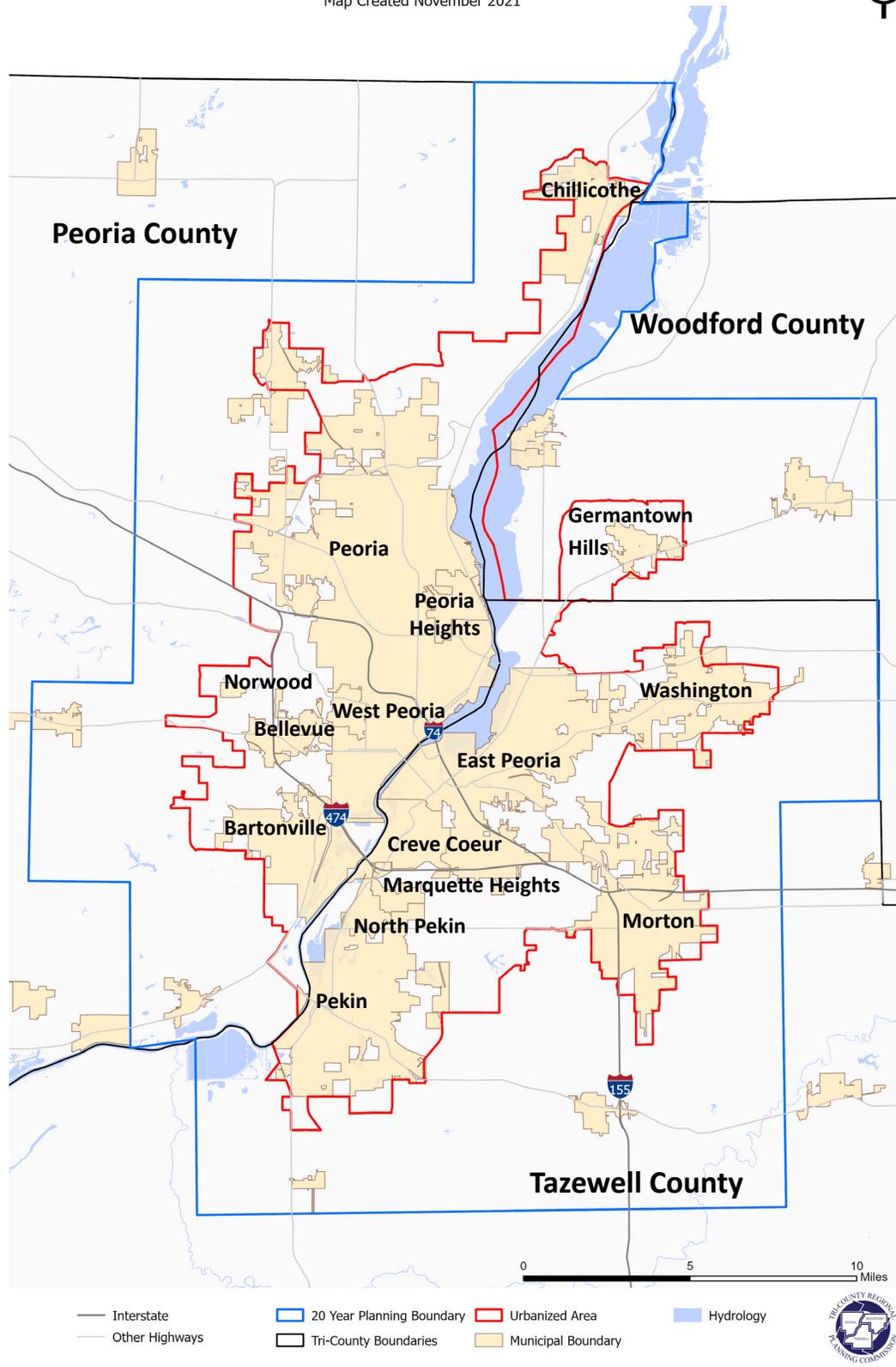


Figure 1: Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area

Age

A Population Pyramid (Figure 2) utilizing data from the 2020 Decennial Census shows the percentages of the age groups within the UZA based on sex. This data shows the UZA's population is relatively evenly distributed across all age brackets until age 65 and over. After this age bracket, the population starts to decline. This diversity in age is pertinent to the prosperity of a region, but at each life stage, there are different priorities and needs that a resident would require from their transportation system.



Figure 2: Population Pyramid of Peoria-Pekin UZA by percent

Language Spoken at Home

An examination of the different languages spoken in the region shows that 6.85% of the population speaks a language other than English. Of the 6.85%, the examination showed that Spanish (2.91%), Asian and Pacific Islander (1.78%), and other Indo-European Languages (1.89%) were some of the spoken languages in households that are limited English speaking (LES)(Figure 3). Identifying the various cultures within the region is an essential step to understanding how TCRPC can better serve the UZA. Equipped with this knowledge, Tri-County can begin gathering resources to mitigate communication barriers.

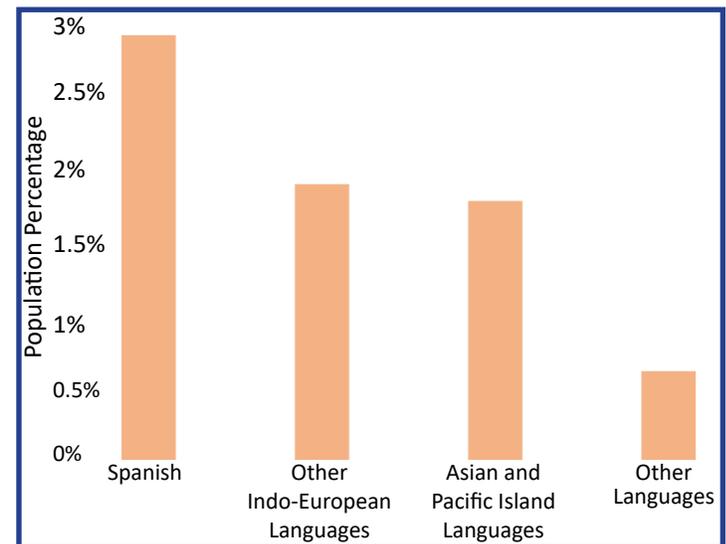


Figure 3: Language Spoken in Limited English Speaking Households within the Peoria-Pekin UZA

Race & Ethnicity

The racial composition of the urbanized area indicates that 26.5% of the population identifies as a racial minority (Figure 4). This 26.5% represents African American, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or people who identify with two or more races. The presence of these racial groups shows that the region's population is not uniform. Therefore, the MPO must be aware that collecting input from only the racial majority for the consensus on regional goals is not a true representation of regional priorities.

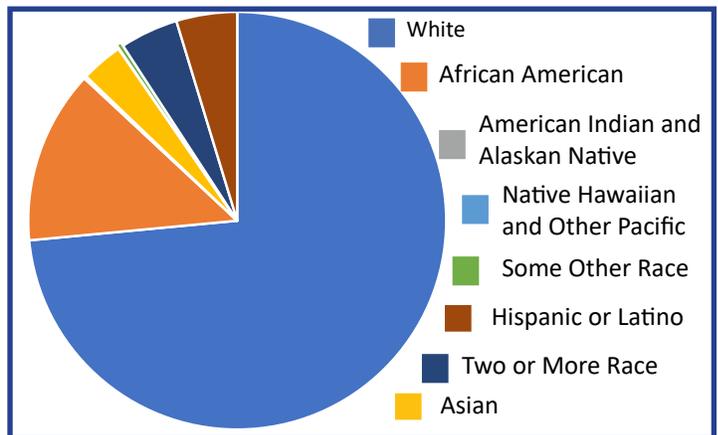


Figure 4: Racial Composition of Peoria-Pekin UZA

Income and Education

Tri-County evaluated household income and educational attainment to assess the socioeconomic status of the residents within TCRPC’s UZA. These indicators positively correlate with socioeconomic status; therefore, the higher the household income and/or educational attainment an individual obtained, the more likely they will have a higher socioeconomic status. Ten income ranges exist, from less than \$10,000 to more than \$200,000. Within those ranges, the income bracket that had the most people was between \$50,000 and \$74,999, with 19% of the population (Figure 5).

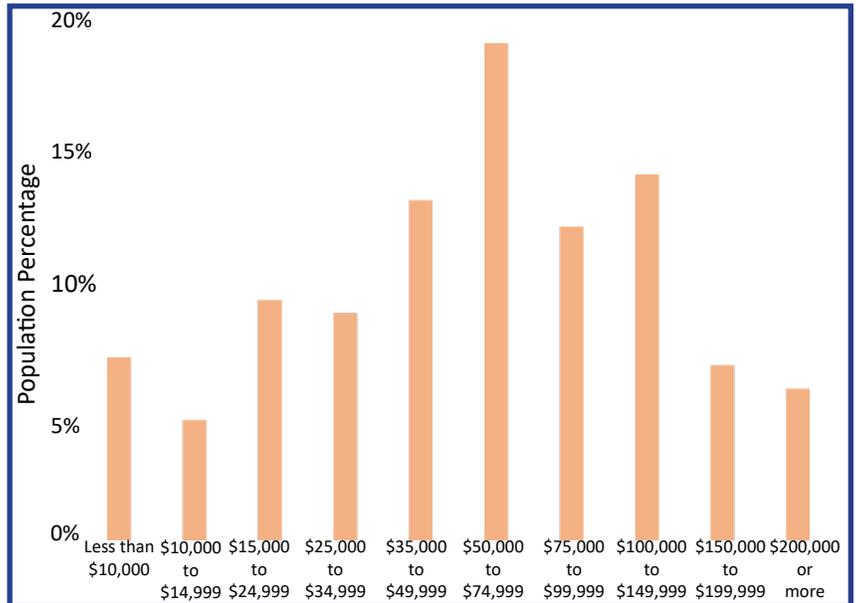


Figure 5: Household Income of Peoria-Pekin UZA

Regarding education levels, residents whose highest educational attainment was a high school diploma or equivalent were the largest population with 28.03% (Figure 6). An assessment of both household income and educational attainment shows that the region’s socioeconomic levels vary considerably. The acknowledgment of the varying levels of socioeconomic status is important because having a higher status leads to more access to resources, which can provide greater ease to participate in the planning process. Since the UZA contains people of all socioeconomic statuses, Tri-County must incorporate measures to mitigate barriers for individuals with less time and money to participate in the planning process.

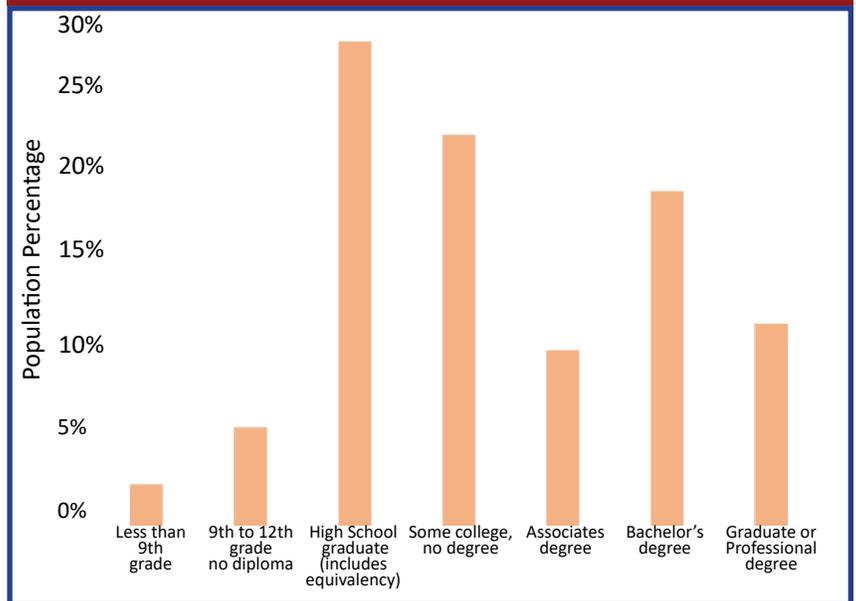


Figure 6: Educational Attainment of Peoria-Pekin UZA

Summary

The compilation of these demographic factors shows that TCRPC’s UZA is a diverse region on many different levels, from the types of communities within its boundaries to its residents. The diversity of the region makes it necessary that the engagement process is equitable for all parties. An individual should not be isolated from the planning process because they do not speak the language, or a community should not be highly favored because it is high income. As the MPO, Tri-County seeks to create an engagement process that mitigates barriers to participating in the planning and increases transparency.

The Planning Process



The Process

The planning process is meant to address issues within the community through collaboration. This process is based on the 3C transportation planning framework¹, which ensures that planning efforts are continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive. Following this framework ensures that the process considers a wide range of topics, issues, and strategies; the planning activities are conducted openly and transparently, allowing for participation by all interested organizations and members of the public; and the final document includes performance measures to understand the progress towards the identified goals, vision, and investments.

The transportation planning process answers the following five questions: (1) Where are we now? (2) Where do we want to go? (3) How will we get there? (4) What will it take? and (5) How did we do? These responses result in the development of a planning document that includes the following:



1. Develop a Regional Profile

The first step in the planning process is to gather information on the existing conditions to create a current regional snapshot. This helps build an understanding of the different forces that shape the region. Some examples of the data gathered for the regional profile are demographics, infrastructure such as roads or sidewalks, land uses, and employment opportunities. The collection of this data provides insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the tri-county region.



2. Establish a Vision

The vision for the planning process is the intended outcome that both stakeholders and the public want to see through the plan's implementation. Creating a vision is a collaborative process that involves engaging various regional partners, such as residents, elected officials, or employees. To establish a vision, TCRPC staff interviews regional partners, conducts surveys, and/or hosts public open houses.

¹ Building Links to Improve Safety: How Safety and Transportation Planning Practitioners Work Together. U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. [https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/tsp/fhwasa16116/mod2.cfm#:~:text=The%203C%20planning%20process%20\(continuing,a%20vision%20for%20the%20community](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/tsp/fhwasa16116/mod2.cfm#:~:text=The%203C%20planning%20process%20(continuing,a%20vision%20for%20the%20community).



3. Creating Action Items or Goals

The work completed in the visioning process helps inform the creation of action items. These are implementable goals or directives that reflect the public's interests and needs shown in the vision. These can come in the form of recommendations or best practices for certain initiatives to pursue.



4. Build a Financial Plan

The next step is to establish a financial plan, which aims to understand available funding sources, estimate funding amounts that are reasonably expected to be available, and develop a list of projects to achieve the vision and goals.



5. Establish a Performance Matrix

Next, TCRPC staff develops an evaluation matrix so planners can regularly assess the plan's performance.



6. Produce a Plan

Ultimately, Tri-County drafts a plan document that includes all items mentioned above in a format that is accessible to the public.



7. Engage the Public

A crucial element is for staff to initiate a comment period to allow the public to review the draft document and provide feedback before the plan is adopted. Typically, a public comment period lasts 30 days. However, in some cases, federal regulations require more time, such as the PPP, which calls for a 45-day public comment period².

Public Review: The Process

To the maximum extent practicable, TCRPC notifies the public of the comment periods. Tri-County's policy is to publish a legal notice in a local newspaper that widely circulates in the planning area, such as the Peoria Journal Star or Pekin Daily Times, before the start of the comment period. The legal notice provides information about the draft document, the duration of the comment period, how to access the draft plan, when a public meeting will occur, and how to submit a public comment.

During the comment period, TCRPC holds at least one public meeting to present the project, showcase the draft plan, and provide an opportunity for the public to ask questions and supply input. Additionally, the draft plan is available for review and comment at TCRPC's office and 20 public review sites (See Appendix), which are local libraries throughout the MPO region.

Lastly, interested parties can reach out directly to Tri-County staff by emailing input@tricityrpc.org; calling (309) 673-9330; or mailing or delivering to TCRPC at the following address: 456 Fulton Street, Suite 401, Peoria, Illinois 61602.



8. Adopt the Plan

Once the public comment period is over, TCRPC staff reviews and incorporates all feedback into the plan through edits and/or included in the Appendices and produces a final draft. The final draft is then presented and recommended for adoption at the MPO Technical Committee and presented and adopted at the Full Commission to become an official document.

² 23 CFR 450.316(a)(3), [https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-e/part-450#part-450.316\(a\)\(3\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-e/part-450#part-450.316(a)(3))

Planning Documents

As the MPO, it is the job of Tri-County staff to update federally mandated transportation planning documents. Below are some examples of the federally required MPO planning documents.

Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	<p>The LRTP serves as a guide for future improvements and maintenance in the regional transportation system over the next 25 years. The jurisdiction of the LRTP includes the urbanized area and the adjacent land expected to urbanize in the next 20 years, also known as the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The LRTP is updated every five years and must go through a 30-day public comment period.</p>
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	<p>The TIP is an annual document that lists all federally funded and regionally significant transportation projects planned for the next four years within the MPA. The document establishes the immediate implementation priorities by only including projects reasonably expected to receive sufficient funding. The TIP requires a 30-day public comment period.</p>
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	<p>The PPP is a document that sets TCRPC's policies and guidelines for involving stakeholders and the public in the transportation planning process. Tri-County updates its PPP every three years in conjunction with its Title VI Program update or whenever there are significant changes to the planning process, the MPA, or the approaches used to facilitate and encourage public involvement. The PPP goes through a 45-day public review period.</p>
The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	<p>The UPWP is an annual document that budgets for and directs the day-to-day work of TCRPC staff. The work program outlines the specific transportation planning activities planned for the program year that utilize federal pass-through funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) via the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). The UPWP does not require a public comment period; however, the public still has several opportunities to provide feedback by attending Tri-County's Technical and Full Commission meetings.</p>

Foundation of Community Engagement

Through the update of this PPP, Tri-County hopes to create a plan for public participation that is more effective and equitable. A review of FHWA's guidance on community engagement gave Tri-County insight into the essential components of an engagement process. Based on FHWA's guidelines, an effective engagement plan should include understanding the community demographics, building durable community relationships, recognizing the community's wants and needs, involving a broad representation of the community, using community-preferred engagement techniques, and documenting the community's impact on decisions.

The guidance provided by FHWA gave TCRPC a model for community engagement to work towards. By evaluating the previous PPP compared to FHWA's guidelines, Tri-County learned the gaps within its system. The components missing in TCRPC's engagement practices were having a process to review success and identify improvement areas, including steps to build capacity to perform equitable engagement, and incorporating efforts to build trust within the community.

Since community engagement success is not uniform, Tri-County sought out the best approach to incorporate FHWA's methodologies into the region. To do this, staff conducted stakeholder interviews and distributed surveys. Performing these tasks helped inform TCRPC on effective engagement strategies being done by various stakeholders and techniques preferred by the public.

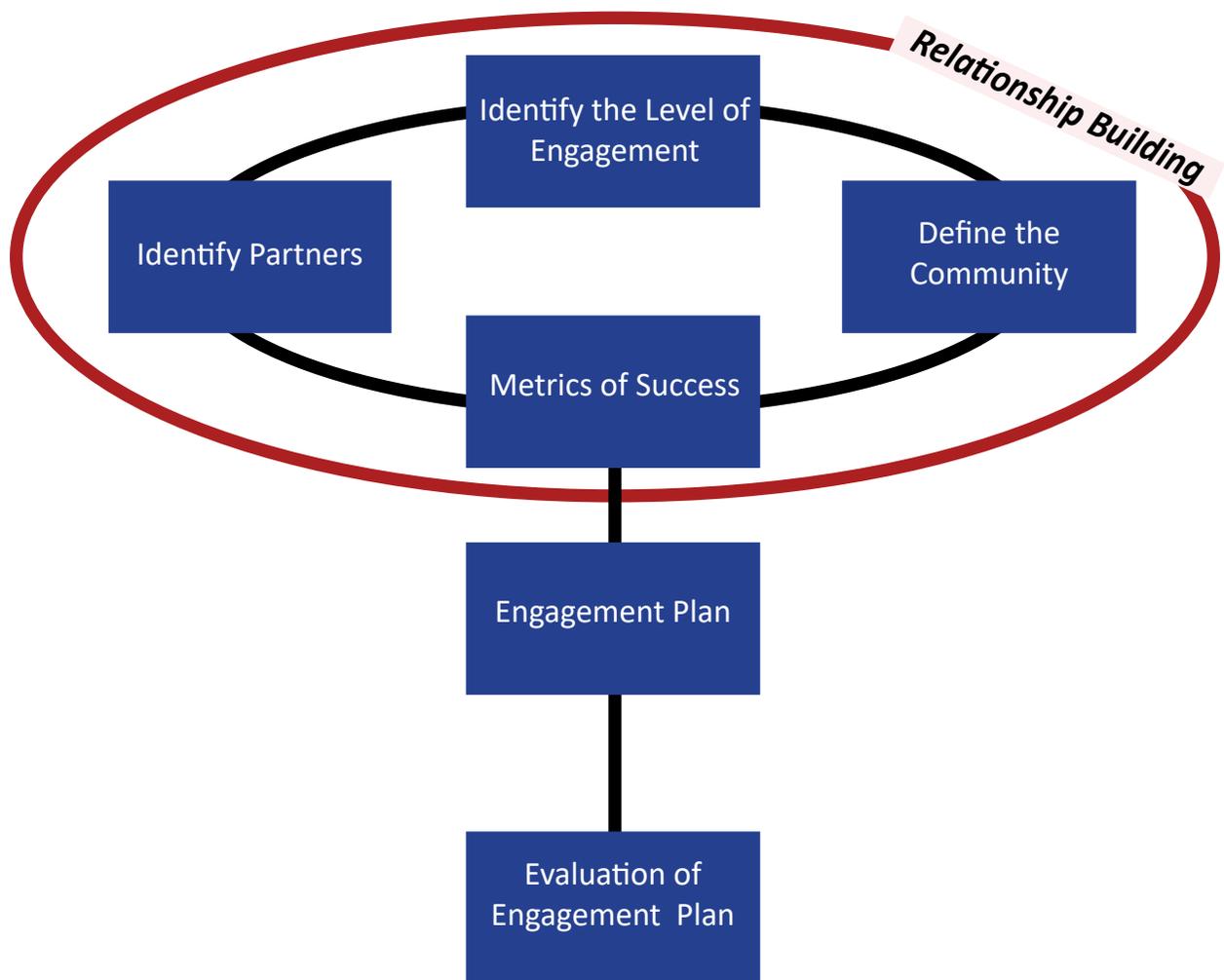
The engaged stakeholders were local leaders who work in public health, housing, economic development, social work, or transportation organizations. The goal of the interviews was to gain input from a diverse group to expand TCRPC's knowledge of engaging different types of communities. The stakeholder interviews were informative, providing insight into the challenges and conditions of the demographics that they serve. Therefore, they provided a deeper understanding of the various communities within the region and recommendations for the engagement process. These interviews reaffirmed much of FHWA's findings, but to increase the likelihood of success for participation within the tri-county region, the stakeholders emphasized the following points:

- Establish trust
- Meet people where they are
- Explain how the community will be impacted

Action Plan

The recently edited guidelines from FHWA spurred Tri-County’s development of this public engagement action plan, which is strengthened by local stakeholder input. This process explored ways to establish trust within the region by utilizing partnerships and aligning project needs with residents’ lives. The goal of following this step-by-step process is to expand access to regional transportation planning.

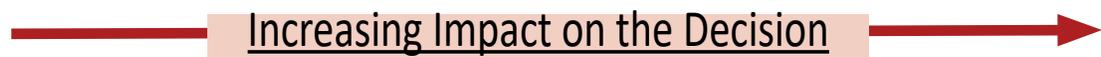
A public engagement strategy developed early in the process identifies the appropriate methods for informing the public and soliciting input. Below is a visual representation of the model TCRPC follows for community engagement.



Step 1. Identify the Level of Engagement

Identifying the level of engagement involves determining what type of feedback is needed and methods to be used for gathering feedback. There are different levels of participation: empower, collaborate, consult, involve, and inform³. Each level has different strategies to achieve its end goal, and determining what is needed will dictate the timing of the engagement process. If empower or collaborate is deemed necessary for a project, then the public needs to be incorporated at the very beginning of the process. In the early stages, a steering committee would need to be made representing the community or the involvement of elected officials would be necessary for the adoption or implementation of the plan or project.

If a lower level of participation is deemed necessary such as consult or involve, then engagement can happen later in the planning process. This level of engagement can be achieved by holding an open house, holding focus groups, or conducting surveys. Since informing is the level that takes the least amount of time and resources, this type of engagement can happen at any time in the planning process. Some examples of this type of engagement are distributing informational flyers or creating informative social media posts.



	<u>Inform</u>	<u>Consult</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Collaborate</u>	<u>Empower</u>
<u>Public Participation Goal</u>	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decision	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution	To place the final decision making in the hands of the public. development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution

³ Kandil.(July 5, 2023)Public Participation Guide:Selecting the Right Level of Public Participation.EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency. <https://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/public-participation-guide-selecting-right-level-public-participation>

Step 2. Define the Community

The question to ask at this point is, who is the target community for engagement? Depending on the project, the target community could be the entire region or residents of a particular neighborhood. The project's geographic scope typically determines the target audience, though the location is not the only consideration when defining the community. It is essential to understand the makeup of the target area by recognizing the demographic composition. Compiling this information informs TCRPC about places within the community to visit or groups of people to speak with.

Understanding the definition of "community" for each specific initiative will allow Tri-County to determine the scale of engagement needed. This provides insight into potential resources needed to make engagement successful and more impactful.

Step 3. Identify Partners

Tri-County relies on the help of partnerships to accomplish its goals and priorities. Partnerships are essential to the work because TCRPC is a small organization, and its size limits its capacity to perform large-scale engagement efforts. Due to the collaborative nature of Tri-County's work, it has an extensive list of partners within the region in terms of local agencies and consultants. But even though TCRPC's work is collaborative, the organization is not well known by the general public. Engaging the region as an unfamiliar entity can present challenges.

Tri-County recognizes that to mitigate these issues, it is necessary to partner with trusted community leaders or agencies to increase the likelihood of success for public participation. The benefits of creating such partnerships not only help make the engagement process more effective but also increase the capacity for larger-scale engagement efforts. If a partnership is deemed necessary for a project, TCRPC will explore its network for an appropriate partner. During this process, Tri-County will prioritize entities that have continued work or at least have worked within the target area and are in good standing within the community. If Tri-County does not currently have a partner that fits that description, TCRPC will take the initiative to build a new relationship with an entity that does. Once the new relationship is made, Tri-County will add the new partner to its contact list.

Step 4. Establish Metrics of Success

The strategies used to measure the success of public participation will change depending on the methods used. But in any case, the tools used to track success must be measurable. These measurables help inform TCRPC about who is providing feedback, where input is coming from, if there are any gaps in public participation, and indicate if new strategies are needed to fill those gaps.

A typical metric that TCRPC uses for public meetings, events, or workshops is taking attendance. This method provides staff insight into the number and type of people who interacted with the event. Collecting this information allows Tri-County to understand the success of an event in reaching the target audience.

During the public engagement process, TCRPC uses tools such as surveys, interactive maps, workshop activities, interviews, and focus groups. To measure the success of these tools during the engagement process, Tri-County will tally the number of comments and responses received. This information provides evidence that the public is participating in the process and gives staff feedback about the types of activities that bring the most engagement.

Strategies normally used by Tri-County to inform the community about planning efforts are flyers, brochures, email lists, newsletters, social media, press releases, and TCRPC's website. These methods help assess TCRPC's reach within the region. An evaluation of these strategies looks at the distribution of materials or the public's engagement with Tri-County's online presence.

For TCRPC's May 2023 community event, a metric for success was the attendance of at least 50 people. This was achieved through marketing, partner collaboration, and tracking attendance via sign-in sheet and registration. Photo taken by Anthony Baumann.



Step 5. Develop Engagement Plan

Equity is one of the guiding principles for TCRPC's community engagement; therefore, Tri-County will provide several opportunities for the public to give feedback during the planning process. These opportunities may take the shape of facilitating focus groups, conducting stakeholder interviews, hosting open houses, or distributing surveys. The methods used to engage the community will be a mixture of in-person and online strategies to help increase access to the planning process.

Tri-County will center its community engagement efforts around the idea of "meeting people where they are." This concept does not always mean physically meeting people but taking into consideration people's ability to participate and mitigating barriers to that participation. TCRPC will rely on its partners' knowledge to understand their clients' barriers and challenges and develop strategies to mitigate them. Tri-County will clearly explain how the project will impact the community and how the community's feedback will be used. This helps the residents understand the importance of the project and what is expected from them.

Finally, to increase the likelihood of success, TCRPC will strive to implement engagement methods in areas that are natural gathering places for community members. These could be physical locations that people visit or communication media where people consume information, such as a community Facebook page. This has the potential to increase participation because these locations are integrated into residents' routines and lessen the burden of travel. Specific tools and resources will be shared in the [Toolbox section](#).



TCRPC staff meeting to develop an engagement plan. Photo provided by TCRPC staff.

Step 6. Evaluate Engagement Plan

Throughout the planning process, Tri-County will hold internal meetings to assess the effectiveness of the community engagement effort. The goal of these meetings is to evaluate the public's feedback from surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups. The input gathered from these tools helps convey the public's needs, thus assisting TCRPC in developing a more informed plan.

Tri-County's reliance on feedback-gathering tools (Toolbox section) makes it imperative that these tools are distributed equitably. To assist in the process, TCRPC will perform frequent reviews of the metrics of success for the community engagement plan. The purpose of these meetings is to examine what went well and identify areas to improve. By regularly evaluating the engagement practices, Tri-County will refine and improve them for the next project.

Tri-County is dedicated to performing equitable and effective community engagement. Internally, TCRPC will evaluate its practices to ensure that engagement with the region is meaningful. However, TCRPC will not solely rely on internal judgment to improve its practices. Tri-County will also participate in workshops, webinars, and other professional development opportunities to learn how to be effective and equitable while performing community engagement.

Ongoing Process: Build Relationships

The key to successful engagement is trust between residents and the organization. Establishing trust with the target demographic can be time-consuming but necessary for effective and meaningful engagement. Not only is trust needed with the community, but it is also needed with potential partners. Staff must commit time to build relationships with new partners and strengthen existing ones. These efforts can take on many forms depending on the needs and capacity of either party. But Tri-County partners must know that collaboration is not one-way. Tri-County is always open to collaborating and promoting the initiatives of its partners.

Toolbox

This section will show a list of strategies and methods TCRPC currently uses to elicit feedback from the public. Tri-County acknowledges that every engagement opportunity is different and will present its own obstacles. Still, these challenges may provide TCRPC with an opportunity to be creative during the process. Due to the nature of community engagement, this list is a reference point and is liable to expand after the discovery and/or creation of new strategies and methods.

The tools used for community engagement do not guarantee successful public participation. The way that TCRPC implements these tools is equally as important as which tools are being used. During stakeholder interviews, community leaders overwhelmingly recommended meeting people where they are and aligning project activities with people's lives. Tri-County intends to incorporate these principles to increase the exposure of project activities to boost public participation.



Informational Tools

Informational tools exist to inform the public about an organization’s work. Information in such means should be framed to express the importance of the work and how it will affect members of the community. Informative flyers, social media posts, and other methods are most effective if they avoid professional jargon and simplify complex content to make the information as accessible and understandable as possible.

These resources are most effective in communicating the kick-off of a planning process, providing updates throughout, or displaying information during a workshop or focus group. Typically one-way forms of communication, these informative methods seek to inform the public about a particular event or an update that signifies movement within the process. Accompanied by other resources, these tools can turn into two-way forms of communication and prompt a call to action to provide feedback.

Examples	Potential Metrics of Success
TCRPC Website: Organization’s website that hosts information about TCRPC’s work, shows when meetings are held, and explains organizational structure	Reviewing website analytics for visitor traffic
Presentations: Facilitated discussions that provide staff the opportunity to share the importance of the work and how it affects the community	Attendance or number of presentations given
Visualization Techniques: Graphs, infographics, tables, charts, or maps that display information about the community or region	Number of graphs distributed
Online Geographic Information Systems Map: Computer software that uses geographic information to create maps (capable of being interactive)	Number of maps distributed or comments gathered
Public Service Announcement: A message shared with the public that raises awareness about an issue often to inspire the public to take action	Number of messages distributed

Examples	Potential Metrics of Success
Brochures and Flyers: Handouts used to provide a brief summary of products to the public	Number of handouts distributed
Newsletters: An electronic report containing news of current TCRPC activities	Number of readers engaging with newsletter
Public Notices: Information making citizens aware of government or government-related activities that may need public action	Number of public notices distributed
Press Release: An official statement issued to newspapers giving information on a particular matter	Number of stories picked up
Calendar of Events: Central location of dates for meetings or events	Number of events organized
Social Media: Interactive technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, and interests	Review analytics for post engagement

Feedback Gathering Tools

Feedback-gathering tools help understand residents’ wants and needs. The information gathered from these strategies assists to develop goals and objectives for planning documents. A variety of these methods will be used to increase the accessibility of the planning process. Collaboration with TCRPC partners will help make the implementation of these strategies more equitable, to ensure results more accurately represent the community.

These tools are two-way forms of communication that require interaction from the public. The aim of these resources is to obtain their thoughts and opinions from various stakeholders within the community to inform the planning process. These tools are most effective for situations where data collection and outreach need to be conducted. The use of these strategies are also adaptable meaning they can be modified to include a virtual component or be completely virtual. This increases the capacity of outreach efforts by easing the burden of travel.

Example	Potential Metrics of Success
Comment Forms: Forms aimed to solicit community input on specific topics or plans during events, workshops, or public review periods	Number of comments forms collected
Focus Groups: Facilitated group discussions with the aim to obtain detailed input from stakeholders on a variety of topics	Number of participants
Stakeholder Interviews: One-on-One discussions with stakeholders to obtain detailed input on a variety of topics	Attendance
Survey: A poll used to collect data on a variety of topics	Number of surveys collected
Innovation Board: A custom-built chalkboard by TCRPC staff used as a fun way to engage residents by having them respond to the presented prompt	Number of comments collected

Example	Potential Metrics of Success
Public Meetings: Meetings that are open to the public and allow the public to learn about draft plans and could provide comment (could be virtual or hybrid)	Attendance
Open Houses: Public events that teach the public about the planning process and collect their input through facilitated workshops	Attendance
Public Review Period: 30-day time window that allows the public time to review draft plan before adoption	Number of comments
Story Maps: Computer software that provides visual story telling capabilities	Analytics showing the number of views
Engagement Workshops: Facilitated activities aimed to gather the public’s feedback and comments on various topics	Number of participants
Planning in a Box: A template to hold facilitated meetings	Number of templates distributed

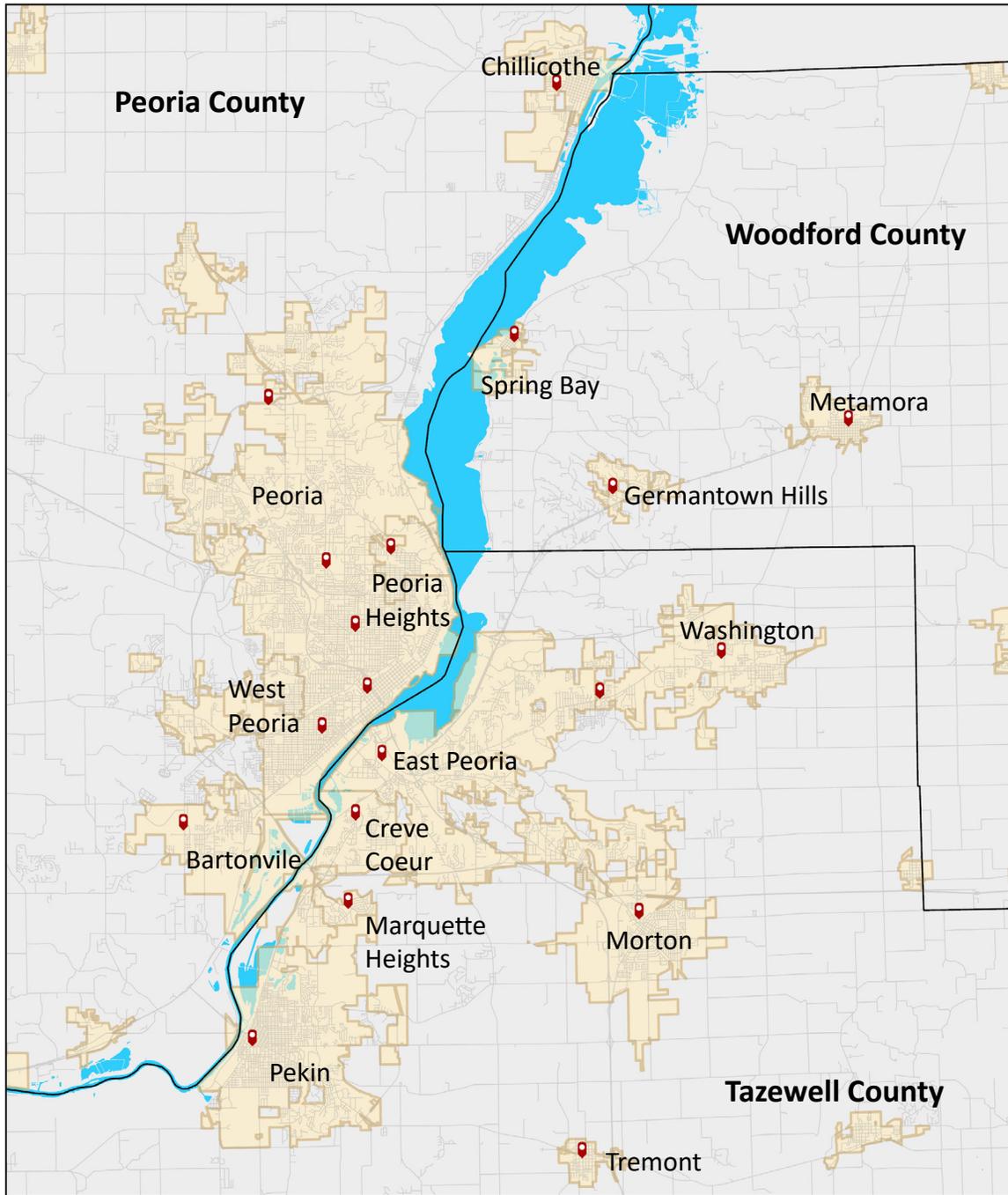
Distribution Channels

Distribution channels are channels of communication that spread information out to the public. Tri-County’s limited capacity makes the organization heavily dependent on these communication channels. To ensure that engagement is effective, TCRPC will work to sustain and improve these channels to expand its reach.

The benefits of having such tools are their ability to hold information and/or send information out to large groups of people. Making these resources ideal for sending out information about events, updates, or announcements. These tools are mostly electronic giving them the ability to send out information quickly using limited resources. But TCRPC recognizes that not everyone has access to the internet, therefore within our distribution channels we offer a physical location for the community to visit through our review sites ([See Appendix](#)). Within TCRPC’s review sites there is internet access and during public comment periods paper copies of draft plans.

Example	Potential Metrics of Success
<p><u>Social Media</u>: Forms of interactive technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, and interests</p>	<p>Analytics on post engagement</p>
<p><u>Partners’ Communication Network</u>: The distribution channels that our partners have at their disposal (for when TCRPC collaborates on an event or project)</p>	<p>Number of partners that share TCRPC content</p>
<p><u>Email List</u>: A collection of email addresses gathered from people that have agreed to receive emails from TCRPC</p>	<p>Number of emails sent out</p>

Appendix



Public Review Site Locations

Peoria Public Library-Main Library	107 NE Monroe St Peoria, IL 61602
Peoria Public Library-McClure Branch	315 W McClure Ave Peoria, IL 61604
Peoria Public Library-Lakeview Branch	1137 W Lake Ave Peoria, IL 61614
Peoria Public Library-Lincoln Branch	1312 W Lincoln Ave Peoria, IL 61605
Peoria Public Library-North Branch	3001 W Grand Pkwy Peoria, IL 61615
Peoria Heights Public Library	816 E Glen Ave Peoria Heights, IL 61616
Fondulac District Library	400 Richland St East Peoria, IL 61611
Washington District Library	380 Wilmor Rd Washington, IL 61571
Creve Coeur Public Library	311 N Highland St Creve Coeur, IL 61610
Alpha Park Public Library	3527 S Airport Rd Bartonville, IL 61607
Marquette Heights Public Library	715 Lincoln Rd Marquette Heights, IL 61554
Morton Pubic Library	315 W Pershing St Morton, IL 61550
Pekin Public Library	301 S 4th St Pekin, IL 61554
Germantown Hills Library	509 Woodland Knolls Rd Germantown Hills, IL 61548

Public Review Site Locations, continued

Dunlap Public Library	302 S 1st St Dunlap, IL 61525
Spring Bay Branch Library	411 Illinois St, Spring Bay, IL 61611
Illinois Prairie District Public Library	208 E Partridge St Metamora, IL 61548
Chillicothe Public Library District	430 N Bradley Ave, Chillicothe, IL 61548
Tremont District Library	215 S Sampson St, Tremont, IL 61568
Washington District Branch Library	16 Sunnyland Plaza Washington, IL 61571