

APPENDIX 2 TRANSPORTATION CONNECTION PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

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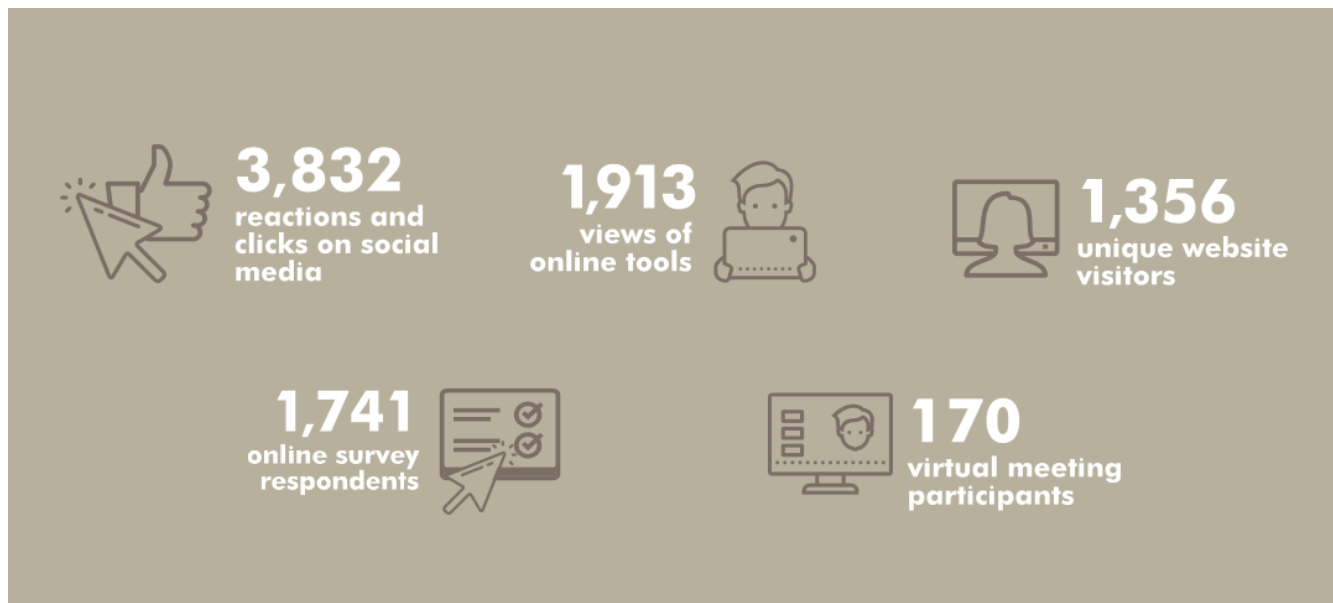
OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Outreach and engagement are core components of Transportation Connection. It has been a priority to maximize the number and diversity of voices contributing to the development process to ensure that this effort represented a wide array of issues, needs, and priorities for the future of transportation.

More than 1,500 North Dakotans contributed their opinions, ideas, and suggestions to Transportation Connection, and thousands more interacted with information related to the planning process. Through online surveys, virtual walkthroughs, public meetings, presentations at stakeholder events, and other activities, North Dakotans shared their ideas, expressed their concerns and needs, and discussed their concepts of North Dakota’s transportation future. More than 50% of respondents indicated that they had never participated in a statewide transportation plan before, indicating NDDOT received ideas and input from new voices in the planning process.

Figure 1 below summarizes the different ways in which North Dakotans contributed to and learned about Transportation Connection.

Figure 1: Transportation Connection Engagement By the Numbers



NDDOT used this diverse and expansive feedback to inform the development of Goals and Strategies that address the needs and priorities of North Dakota’s residents, businesses, and visitors. This section summarizes the different ways and tools that the Department used to solicit and gather input from stakeholders and the public.

Figure 2 shows a map of Internet Provider (IP) addresses for survey respondents, organized by counties in North Dakota and outside the state. This represents a geographic distribution of respondents’ location for all Transportation Connection surveys. It is important to note that limitations in IP address conventions may influence and limit the data and protect the privacy of survey respondents. For example, anyone who took the survey via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) or a central Internet connection (such as a Bismarck-based address for local branch offices of a company or organization headquartered in Bismarck) would report a Bismarck-based IP address even if they were completing the survey in a different part of the state.

Figure 2: Internet Provider Address Map

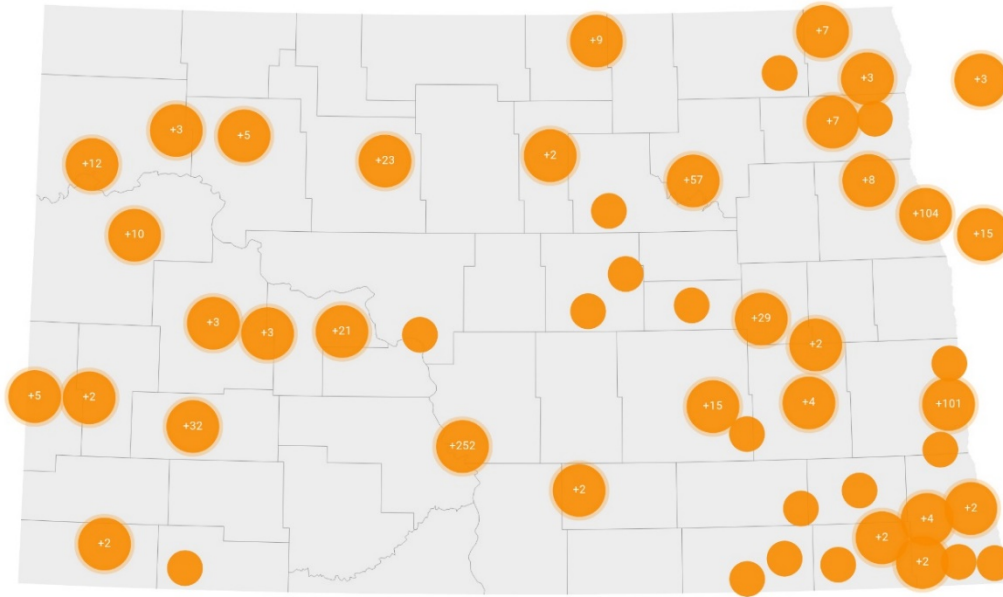
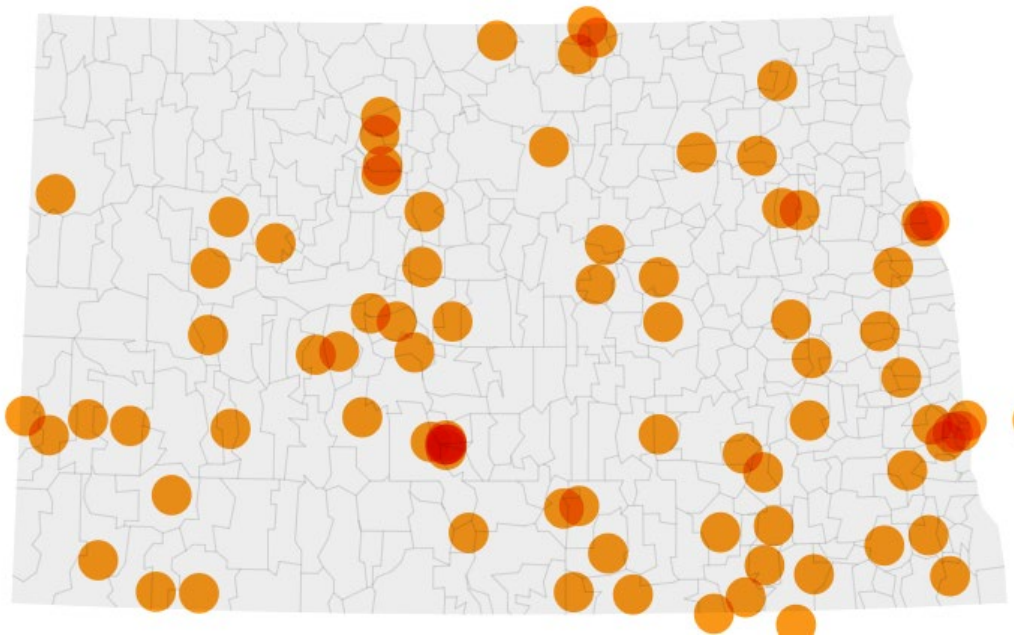


Figure 3 only shows a map of zip codes in North Dakota and outside the state that survey respondents provided voluntarily in surveys and input tools. Similar to Figure 2, this map represents the geographic distribution of respondents' location for all surveys.

Figure 3: Zip Code Map of Survey Respondents



TRANSPORTATION CONNECTION’S DEDICATED WEBSITE

From the initiation of the planning effort, NDDOT maintained a dedicated website for Transportation Connection at www.transportationconnection.org. This website served as a central hub for all information related to the plan, including surveys, walkthroughs, meeting announcements, and ways to contact the project team. While the website was hosted as a webpage on the NDDOT website, the Transportation Connection site had a distinct brand, including the project logo that was included on all branded materials.

The Department included references to the website on all project materials and presentations.

Figure 4 shows a screenshot of the website homepage as of March 2021.

Figure 4: Transportation Connection website homepage



TRANSPORTATION CONNECTION’S SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

From the very start of Transportation Connection, NDDOT understood how much social media had evolved since the development of TransAction III in 2012. Social media websites now represent critical locations for generating public awareness, encouraging civic engagement, and receiving feedback. NDDOT recognized the need to participate in these spaces to maximize the visibility of the plan.

Throughout the development process, NDDOT maintained dedicated accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The Department regularly updated these accounts and created posts on new surveys, upcoming events, and other activities for Transportation Connection and the broader transportation environment in North Dakota. The Twitter account served as a site for announcements related to project activities and events. The account also provided trivia and facts about transportation, such as National Defense Transportation Day. The Instagram and Facebook accounts served as sites for the same announcements. Members of the public also interacted with the Facebook account, submitting questions or comments on posts or via the Facebook Message function.

The Department also purchased targeted ad buys for high-priority posts, such as announcements about virtual public meetings, to increase the visibility and reach of these posts. The Department included references to the social media accounts on all project materials and presentations.

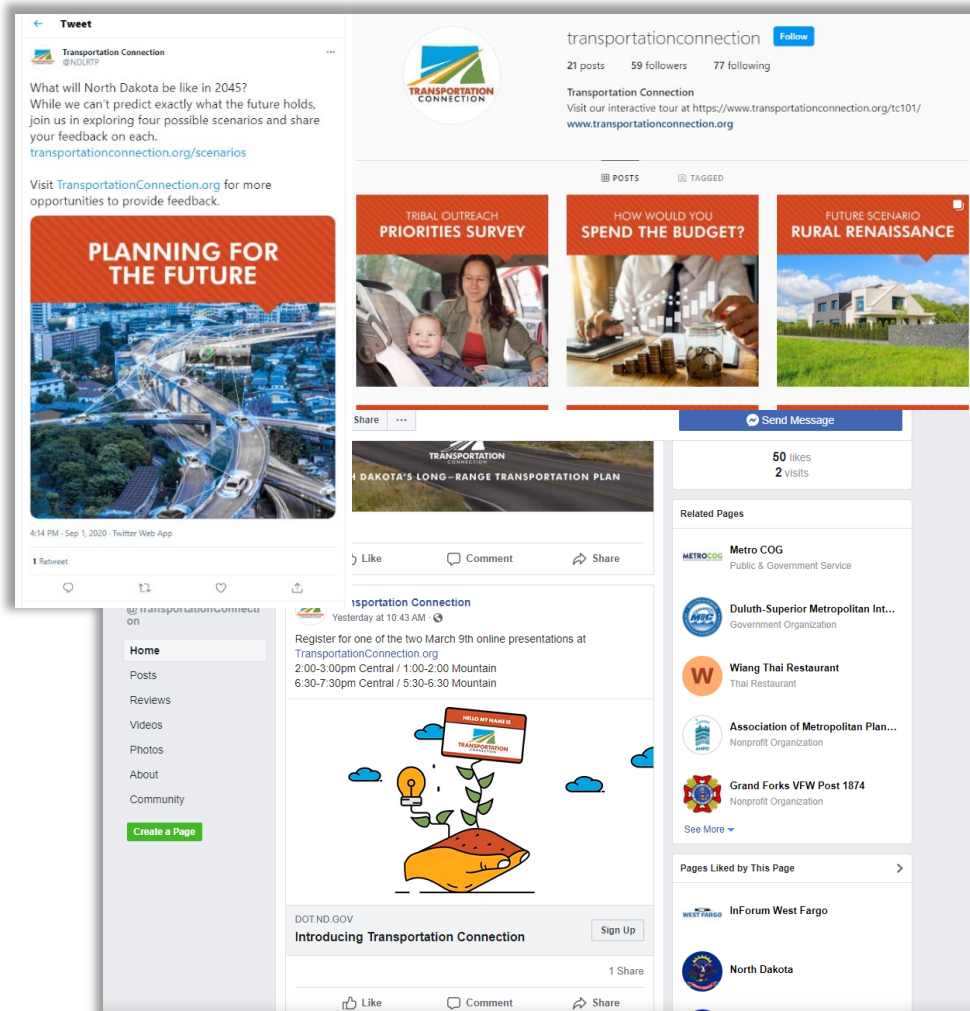
The project’s Facebook account had the greatest reach and generated the highest level of engagement, as demonstrated in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Social Media Account Engagements through 2020 (as of December 28, 2020)

Account	Reach	Reactions	Clicks
Facebook	118,423	745	3,008
Instagram	109	9	1
Twitter	5,095	69	0

Figure 5 shows a sample of posts from the Transportation Connection social media accounts.

Figure 5: Sample Social Media Posts for Transportation Connection



RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19

SHIFT TO VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

NDDOT initiated its stakeholder engagement activities in January 2020 and continued to solicit and obtain feedback from stakeholders and the public through May 2021.

In the beginning of 2020, NDDOT envisioned conducting a series of on-site Transportation Connection listening sessions and public presentations around the State, meeting with residents and businesses in their local communities for face-to-face discussion. NDDOT would present at county, city and state fairs, state events, local trade associations, and regularly scheduled town and city meetings.

The impacts of COVID-19 brought much of daily life to a standstill in North Dakota and led to the cancellation or postponement of many of the events that NDDOT had intended to attend. Additionally, the Governor’s Office

issued emergency orders directing North Dakota state agencies to move to remote operations and postpone or cancel public gatherings.

In March 2020, NDDOT paused its activities to take stock of the growing pandemic's impact. Over a six-week period, the Transportation Connection project team redesigned its outreach and engagement strategy and initiated a fully virtual approach to maximize opportunities for public and stakeholder input and minimize health risks to project team members, stakeholders, and the public. All outreach and engagement activities were conducted via online and telephone-based services, including public meetings and presentations to stakeholders.

NDDOT developed online walkthroughs that described key components of the approach and shared information about trends, issues, and emerging opportunities that impact North Dakota's transportation system. These walkthroughs allowed people to click through a series of webpages and tabs at their own pace and cycle back and forth through the content to absorb it.

NDDOT also shifted its stakeholder outreach and engagement activities, identifying and participating in virtual meetings and events hosted by stakeholders. During these events, NDDOT team members shared information and updates on the plan and facilitated discussions on the approach, content, and findings of project activities.

OUTREACH TO UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS

Engaging historically underrepresented groups has been a key component of NDDOT's stakeholder and public outreach process. NDDOT conducted regular and directed outreach to minority populations that have historically been disadvantaged in their opportunity to participate in the transportation planning process. NDDOT worked with stakeholder groups and community organizations that represent or interface with underrepresented groups to leverage existing community relations and meet minority populations where they are in established forums.

During these forums, NDDOT shared information about Transportation Connection and requested input on stakeholder members' priorities, needs, and concerns for the state transportation network. The Department maintained records of the feedback and incorporated it into the plan's components.

NDDOT regularly monitored the distribution of survey responses by age, ethnicity, and geographic location to ensure responses were representative of all groups. NDDOT adjusted its survey distribution processes to fill in gaps in the network of respondents, including the development and distribution of a Spanish-language survey and the use of targeted or boosted social media posts in specific area codes with lower response rates.

Additionally, NDDOT facilitated a Spanish-language forum and worked with the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDOH) to facilitate a community forum with the recently formed New Americans, Foreign-Born, and Immigrants (NFI) Advisory Board. These forums provided a space for ethnic minorities, immigrants, and Limited English-speaking people to engage with the plan content, share their experiences of the transportation system, and ask questions from their unique perspective. These activities are further discussed in other sections of this write-up.

Figure 6 shows a screenshot of the Spanish-language survey:

Figure 6: Spanish-Language Transportation Connection Survey

Encuesta Foro Virtual

¡Bienvenido!

Gracias por su su participación en esta breve encuesta.

El Departamento de Transporte de Dakota del Norte ("NDDOT") busca recibir sus ideas y comentarios para poder orientar las recomendaciones de "Transportation Connection", su plan de movilidad a largo plazo.

Todas las preguntas en esta encuesta son opcionales.

Para empezar la encuesta, favor de pulsar "Avanzar" en el botón de abajo.

Avanzar

33%

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

NDDOT sought input from a wide array of organizations and groups, ranging from the general public to public sector organizations to trade associations and advocacy groups, throughout the development of Transportation Connection. Stakeholder engagement began in January 2020 and continued through March 2021. NDDOT maintained a stakeholder database to manage stakeholder outreach and ensure that the Department's engagement was comprehensive and consistent.

DIRECTOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

NDDOT established a Director's Advisory Council (DAC) to provide strategic guidance on key issues, needs, futures, strategies, and actions. The DAC consisted of executives and leaders from a wide array of public and private sector organizations. This structure ensured that Transportation Connection would be informed by and address the priorities of all the sectors that interact with and rely on the transportation network. DAC membership consisted of the following organizations:

- North Dakota Association of Counties
- North Dakota League of Cities
- North Dakota Township Officers Association
- North Dakota Aeronautics Commission
- Federal Highway Administration
- North Dakota Pipeline Authority
- North Dakota Highway Patrol
- North Dakota Department of Commerce
- North Department of Commerce – Office of Tourism
- North Dakota Department of Agriculture
- North Dakota Department of Mineral Resources – Oil & Gas Division
- North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission

- North Dakota Legislature – Senate Transportation Chairman
- North Dakota Department of Parks and Recreation
- North Dakota Legislature – House Transportation Chairman
- North Dakota Active Transportation Alliance
- North Dakota Motor Carriers Association
- Association for the Advancement of Retired Persons – North Dakota
- Amtrak
- Dakota Transit Association
- Dakota, Missouri Valley & Western Railroad
- Impact Dakota
- Economic Developers of North Dakota
- Greater North Dakota Chamber
- MetroCOG
- North Dakota Council on the Arts
- North Dakota Association of Nonprofit Organizations
- North Dakota University System
- Minot Air Force Base
- Associated General Contractors of North Dakota
- American Council of Engineering Companies of North Dakota
- North Dakota Petroleum Council

The Transportation Connection project team met with the DAC throughout the process, engaging the members at key strategic points in the development of the plan. DAC members were engaged to provide feedback on the goals and objectives of the development process as well as the Vision Statement, Goals, and Strategies of Transportation Connection. In addition to the facilitated meetings, NDDOT requested DAC feedback on key strategic materials via email and phone discussions. The Department maintained records of the feedback and incorporated it into the plan’s components.

Table 2 shows the schedule of DAC meetings and the topics that were presented during those events.

Table 2: Director’s Advisory Council Meetings

DAC Meeting	Purpose	Meeting Format	Date
#1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of purpose, timeline, and key activities for Transportation Connection • Discussion and brainstorming of what transportation means to North Dakota 	Facilitated in-person presentation and discussion session with polling activity and brainstorming exercises	January 28, 2020
#2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of Transportation Connection engagement and outreach activities • Review of alternative future scenarios for North Dakota 	Facilitated online presentation and discussion session	August 11, 2020
#3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Transportation Connection materials, including summary document, funding & performance tool and public-facing materials 	Facilitated online presentation and discussion session	October 28, 2020

DAC Meeting	Purpose	Meeting Format	Date
#4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Transportation Connection vision statement, goals, and strategies 	Facilitated online presentation and discussion session	December 16, 2020

MPO COORDINATION

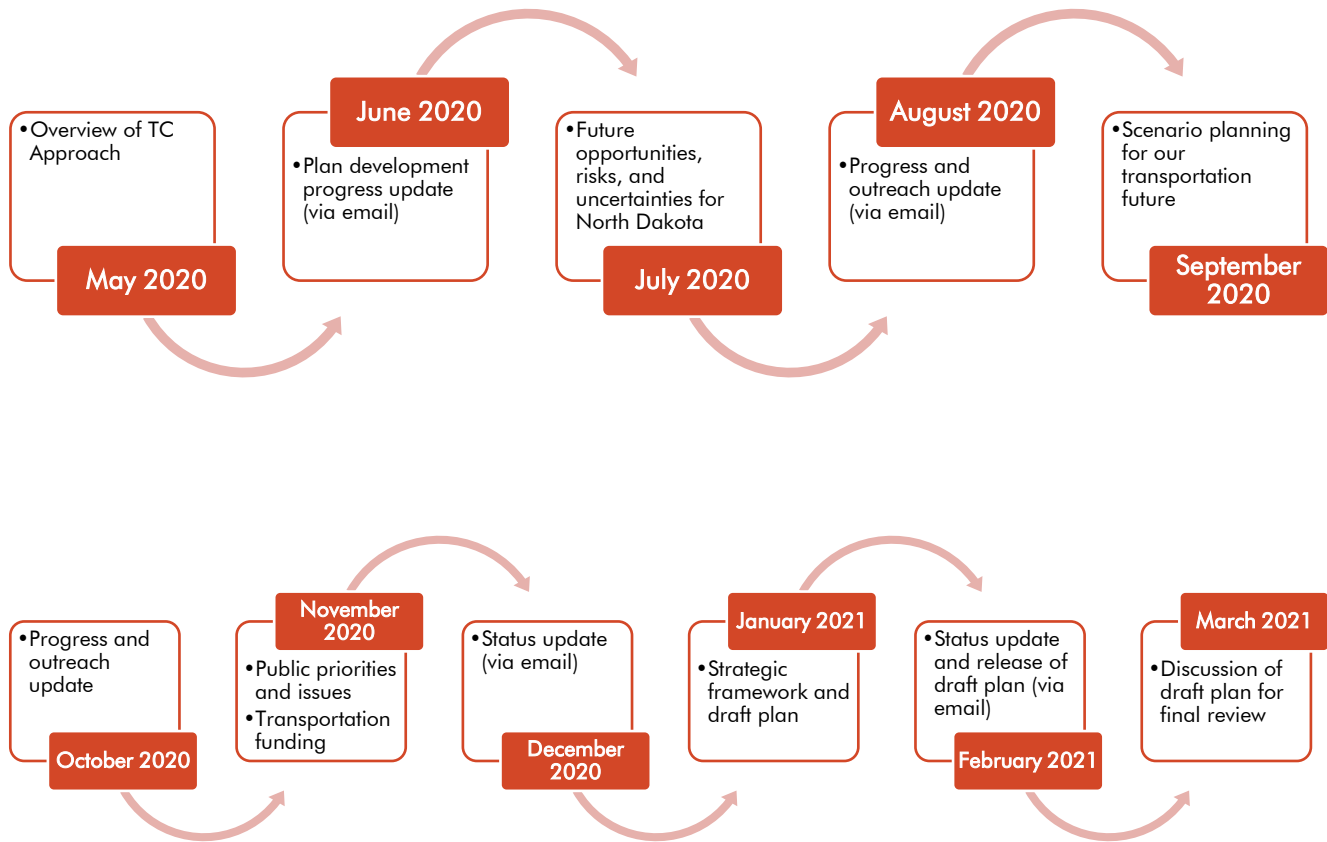
NDDOT maintained regular engagement with North Dakota’s three Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs): the Bismarck-Mandan Area MPO (Bis-Man MPO), Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG), and the Grand Forks-East Grand Forks MPO (the Forks MPO). These three MPOs are responsible for transportation and land use planning within their respective metropolitan areas and oversee the administration of Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs).

Because Federal regulations require MPOs’ and State DOTs’ planning efforts to align and support each other under a shared planning framework, NDDOT worked closely with these three MPOs throughout the development of Transportation Connection. This coordination would enable the MPOs to understand how the plan was created and what its strategies and actions would mean for the MPOs’ own planning efforts.

NDDOT participated in several of the monthly Technical Advisory and Technical Transportation Committees and Policy Board meetings that each MPO facilitates throughout the lifecycle of Transportation Connection. During these meetings, NDDOT gave a brief presentation on recent activities, summarized survey input, shared planning tools and materials, and took questions from MPO staff and Board members.

In some months, NDDOT chose not to participate in order to focus on project activities, such as the preparation of the Funding and Performance Tool or the development of the draft Transportation Connection document. In these months, NDDOT provided a status update via email to the MPO leadership. Figure 7 below presents the monthly engagement activities that NDDOT provided to the MPOs:

Figure 7: MPO Monthly Engagement Activities



STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

NDDOT facilitated and participated in multiple events with stakeholder groups from the public and private sector throughout the development of Transportation Connection. NDDOT was both proactive and responsive in its stakeholder engagement and participation.

NDDOT participated in stakeholder events which the NDDOT Planning/Asset Management Division had previously participated in to hear from stakeholders who were already engaged with North Dakota transportation issues. In these events, NDDOT presented Transportation Connection in the context of other NDDOT planning efforts, highlighting the alignment with, and improvement on, previous Long-Range Transportation Plans and other planning efforts.

NDDOT sought out new forums in which the Department has not previously participated and requested to give a presentation on the plan. In these events, NDDOT introduced the concepts of transportation planning and Long-Range Transportation Plans. NDDOT also explained how the Department would use Transportation Connection to guide future transportation decisions and how those decisions would impact the stakeholder groups and their constituents.

Additionally, NDDOT received requests from stakeholder groups with which the Department has not previously been involved. In these cases, NDDOT coordinated with the new stakeholder group to discuss the group’s interest in the plan and identify the information or content that was most relevant to the group’s priorities or jurisdiction.

During stakeholder meetings, NDDOT presented information on the plan and facilitated discussion on the information. This discussion focused on reacting to the information that was shared and identifying issues and priorities related to transportation needs and expectations. The Department maintained records of the feedback and incorporated it into the plan’s components.

Table 3 presents the stakeholder groups and events in which NDDOT participated to share information and updates about Transportation Connection.

Table 3: Transportation Connection Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder	Event	Purpose	Date
Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute (UGPTI)	North Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program (NDLTAP)	Introduce Transportation Connection	July 21, 2020
North Dakota Active Transportation Alliance (NDATA)	Statewide Active Transportation Summit	Introduce Transportation Connection and stakeholder input opportunities; Discuss multimodalism in Transportation Connection	July 23, 2020
North Dakota Department of Emergency Services (NDDDES)	Regional meetings with local / tribal hazard mitigation planning teams	Introduce Transportation Connection; Survey participants on future resiliency risks and priorities; Conduct walkthrough of scenario planning activities	June 22, 2020 (Southwest) June 24, 2020 (Northwest) June 25, 2020 (Southeast and Northeast, in separate meetings)
NDDDES– North Dakota State Hazard Mitigation Team	Annual Meeting	Introduce Transportation Connection; Survey participants on future resiliency risks and priorities; Conduct walkthrough of scenario planning activities	August 19, 2020
North Dakota Department of Health (NDDOH) New American / Foreign Born / Immigrant (NFI) Advisory Board	Listening Session requested by NDDOH	Introduce Transportation Connection and stakeholder input opportunities	August 20, 2020
North Dakota DOT Local Government Summit	NDLTAP	Introduce Transportation Connection and stakeholder input opportunities	October 29, 2020
Association of State Highway Engineers – Central Dacotah Chapter	Monthly Chapter meeting	Conduct walkthrough of Transportation Connection activities, including scenario planning, Funding and Performance trade-off tool,	January 12, 2021

Stakeholder	Event	Purpose	Date
		and Vision Statement, Goals, and Strategies	
North Dakota Association of Counties	North Dakota Association of County Engineers Conference	Introduce Transportation Connection, including stakeholder input opportunities and, Funding and Performance trade-off tool	January 27, 2021
Neighboring Borders planning meeting (State and Provincial DOT representatives)	Ad hoc multi-state / multi-province meeting convened by NDDOT	Discuss regional transportation concerns and Transportation Connection implementation plans	February 16, 2021

NFI BOARD LISTENING SESSION

The [New American/Foreign Born/Immigrant \(NFI\) Advisory Board](#) is an advisory body convened by the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDOH) in the wake of COVID-19 to provide ongoing recommendations from the perspective of NFI communities into policies and interventions led by NDDOH and other state and local agencies as needed.

The NFI Advisory Board is made up of forty individuals representing a diverse cross section of individuals and organizations with a tie to NFI communities. The Board provides a platform for NFI leaders to elevate concerns from NFI communities and provides a structure for ongoing dialogue with communities and other stakeholders.

On August 25, 2020 members of the Transportation Connection project team met with the full NFI Advisory Board. The project team provided an overview and introduction to Transportation Connection and solicited comments from attendees regarding issues experienced by NFI community members when accessing transportation as well as ideas for making improvements. Numerous responses were received; comments from the dialogue are included in the section below.

COMMENTS AND THEMES

- » Difficulty with intercity travel between Grand Forks and Fargo (for example, for citizenship exams) - people have to rely on friends and family, which can be burdensome
- » Intercity travel between Minot and other cities is difficult - there needs to be faster transit between cities
- » Weather and maintenance of streets and sidewalks make walking/biking risky, so people either drive or have to find alternatives
- » Reliable, efficient alternative transit would be particularly valuable for older people, for whom driving in the winter is more difficult
- » Intercity travel is difficult for health management (i.e. getting to doctors' appointments)

- » Need a tool or mechanism for helping to coordinate carpooling or rides that include members of different immigrant communities with language barriers between them - coordinating travel to needs (healthcare, shopping, etc.) across these communities for carpooling trips, particularly between cities, can be very difficult
- » Request for additional information about different community transportation resources that could be deployed
- » Possibility of hosting similar forums in other languages
- » Lack of Somali-language resources for learning about/engaging with transportation issues
- » Participants agreed with the comments received from NFI populations at Transportation Connection's Spanish-language workshop (see *Virtual Town Halls* section):
 - Difficulty in accessing drivers' licenses
 - English-only drivers' education materials
 - Inconvenient or inaccessible transit services
 - Pressing need for safety improvements for walking and biking

NEXT STEPS FOR NFI BOARD

There was enthusiasm among participants for continuing collaboration with NDDOT, including:

- » NFI Board members and leaders expressed great interest and participation in working with NDDOT on future forums or opportunities to involve members of NFI communities
- » Several members volunteered to translate materials and facilitate sessions for Transportation Connection or for additional NDDOT projects or planning efforts
- » Desire to continue and deepen relationship between the NFI Advisory Board and NDDOT

TRIBAL AUTHORITY COORDINATION

Five federally recognized tribal authorities are located (at least partially) within North Dakota: Spirit Lake Nation, the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, and the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara (MHA Nation).

Coordination on transportation planning issues with tribal authorities and community is critical to the safety and efficiency of the state transportation system. Not only are the tribal authority members important constituents, but the tribal authorities and the US Bureau of Indian Affairs own and maintain over 780 road miles in North Dakota. Managing system needs and responding to safety issues, transportation conditions, and travel demand priorities therefore requires that NDDOT work closely with the tribal authorities and share information across these jurisdictions.

NDDOT's Tribal Liaison team conducted regular outreach to the five tribal authorities and facilitated discussion sessions with representatives from the tribal authorities in winter 2020 and spring 2021. These discussion sessions consisted of an initial introductory session and a follow-up consultative session.

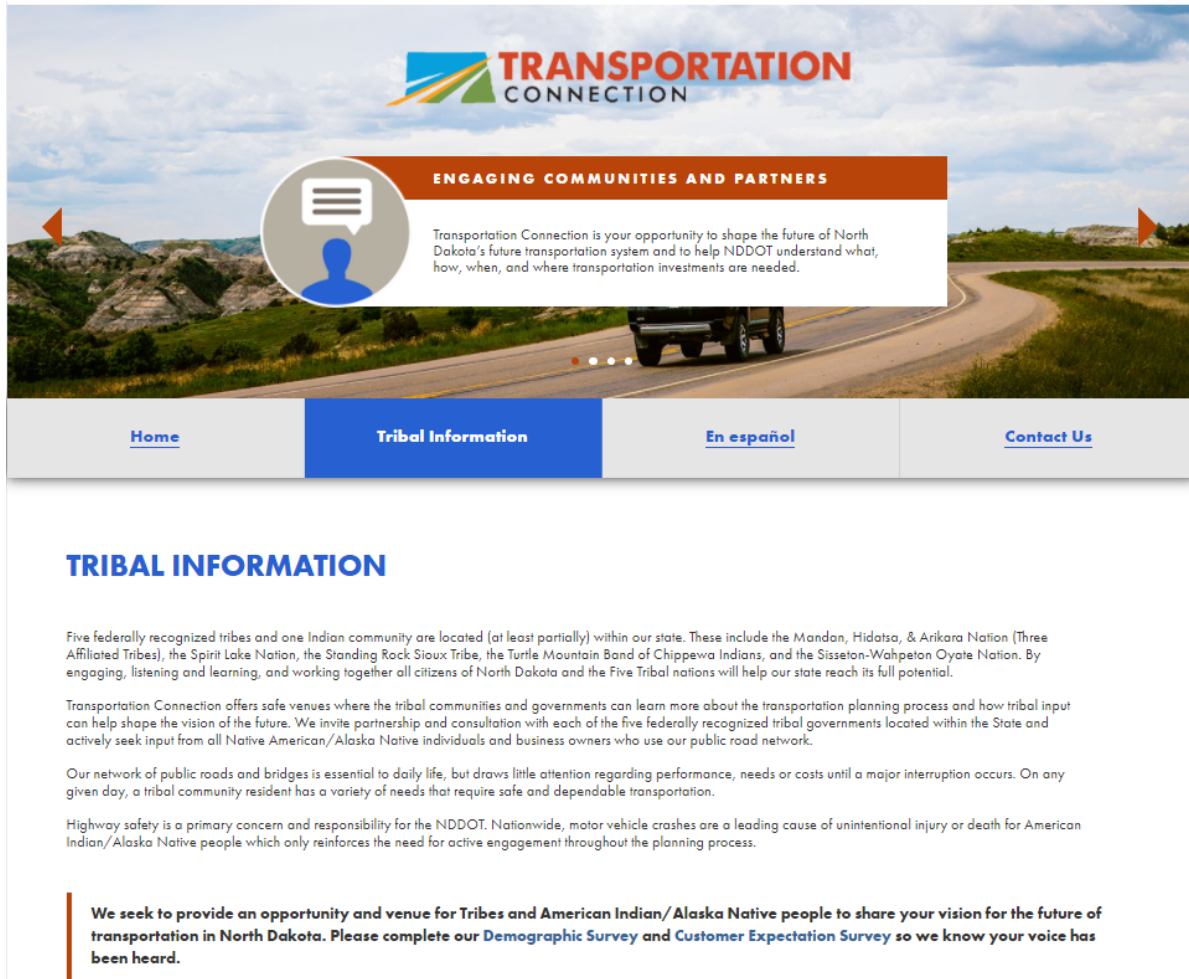
In the introductory session, the Tribal Liaison team presented an overview of Transportation Connection and its relationship to other Long-Range Transportation Planning efforts, including Tribal Transportation Plans. As of June 2021, introductory sessions have been conducted with all tribal authorities.

In the consultative session, the Tribal Liaison team facilitated a discussion on the tribal authority's needs, preferences, and priorities for the state transportation network and for coordinating on transportation planning across jurisdictional lines. As of June 2021, consultative sessions have been conducted with the Three Affiliated Tribes, the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians and Spirit Lake Nation. Coordination with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe will continue following the conclusion of the Transportation Connection development process.

Additionally, the Tribal Liaison Team prepared and distributed a Tribal Coordination survey to the tribal authorities for their responses on their needs and priorities, particularly as they relate to coordination on transportation issues between different government agencies. The Team also submitted the draft Transportation Connection document to the tribal authorities for their review.

NDDOT included a dedicated Tribal Information webpage on the Transportation Connection website that centralized information and survey materials related to the tribal authority engagement process. A screenshot of the website is presented in Figure 8 below:

Figure 8: Transportation Connection Tribal Information Webpage Screenshot



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

NDDOT reached out to the public regularly and consistently throughout the development of Transportation Connection to obtain public input on every component of the process, from issue identification to feedback on the content of the draft plan document.

SURVEYS

NDDOT prepared 16 surveys and distributed them throughout the development process. Surveys were designed to be brief and accessible, with language that was customer-focused and customer-centric rather than technical, to encourage participation and completion among survey audiences. Surveys requested stakeholder and public input on customer priorities and expectations for North Dakota’s transportation network and asked what they would change if they were NDDOT Director for a day. Additionally, surveys encouraged feedback and reactions to different scenarios presented in the Scenario Planning walkthrough and to the funding and performance analyses presented in the Funding and Performance walkthrough.

Surveys were accessible via the Transportation Connection website and were promoted via social media accounts. The Department boosted surveys regularly to encourage response rates. Surveys remained open from the date of their posting through February 16, 2021.

NDDOT partnered with other stakeholder groups and partner agencies to promote the distribution of surveys. NDDOT informed the MPOs about each survey following its release and encouraged them to share the survey links with their constituencies. NDDOT worked closely with tribal authorities, the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission, and North Dakota school administrators to distribute and promote the Tribal Coordination and Youth Surveys, respectively. Additionally, NDDOT partnered with the North Dakota Active Transportation Alliance (NDATA) to design, release, and promote a dedicated survey on bicycle and pedestrian issues.

Table 4 provides an overview of the surveys and the response counts. A detailed breakdown of the surveys, including individual responses to open-ended questions, is contained in the Survey Summaries document that accompanies this Appendix.

Table 4: Surveys

Survey Topic	Release Date	Responses
Standalone Title VI Demographic Survey	April 20, 2020	204
Transportation Connection 101 Virtual Walkthrough & Survey	May 8, 2020	51
Customer Expectations	May 19, 2020	12
Customer Priorities: Connectivity	June 5, 2020	39
Customer Priorities: Mobility	June 11, 2020	18
Customer Priorities: Infrastructure	June 17, 2020	34
ND Highway Map Customer Feedback	June 22, 2020	14
Customer Priorities: Operations	June 24, 2020	19

Survey Topic	Release Date	Responses
Customer Priorities: Safety	July 8, 2020	42
Customer Priorities: Multimodalism	July 22, 2020	23
Alternative Future Scenarios Virtual Walkthrough & Survey	September 1, 2020	23
Director for a Day: What would your top priority be?	September 14, 2020	144
Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues Survey ¹	September 17, 2020	830
Performance and Funding Virtual Walkthrough & Survey	October 22, 2020	75
Tribal Coordination	November 25, 2020	8
Youth Survey	December 7, 2020	205

VIRTUAL TOWN HALLS

NDDOT facilitated a series of virtual town halls that were open to the public, including a Spanish-language forum for Spanish-speaking North Dakotans. These town halls focused on raising awareness and understanding of the purpose and structure of the plan. The March 2021 virtual town halls also presented the draft Transportation Connection document to the public to initiate the 30-day public comment period required by the Federal Highway Administration and NDDOT.

The initial virtual town hall took place at 2:00 pm CT and 6:30 pm CT on Monday, August 31st. The Spanish-language forum was hosted on July 28th at 8pm CT.

The public comment virtual town hall was hosted on Tuesday, March 9th at 2:00 pm CT and 6:30 pm CT.

English-language and Spanish-language townhalls were advertised via promoted social media posts and in newspapers throughout North Dakota, including:

- Bismarck Tribune
- Devils Lake Journal
- Dickinson Press
- Fargo Forum
- Grand Forks Herald
- Jamestown Sun
- Minot Daily News
- Williston Herald

¹ Released in partnership with the North Dakota Active Transportation Alliance (<https://ndactivetransportationalliance.com/>)

Following the virtual town halls, NDDOT shared a recording of the 2:00pm CT Town Hall on the Transportation Connection website. The recording was viewed 35 times during the public comment period.

SPANISH LANGUAGE PUBLIC WORKSHOP

As part of the first phase of public engagement activities for Transportation Connection, the NDDOT project team held a Spanish-language version of the plan's virtual community meeting to receive ideas and comments from the state's Hispanic / Latino community.

The event was held on Tuesday July 28, from 8 to 9 pm, and was broadcast live via GoTo Meeting and Facebook Live. Comments were received via the meeting's chat feature and through spoken comments from participants.

Outreach for the meeting was additionally supported by networking and communications activities led by members of the North Dakota Department of Health's [New American/Foreign Born/Immigrant \(NFI\) Advisory Board](#) and by [Pueblos de Lucha y Esperanza \(PLE\)](#), a non-profit organization working with immigrant communities in North Dakota, Minnesota, and South Dakota on issues of advocacy, services and social justice.

Approximately 35 people participated during the live event, including several participants who joined through a Facebook feed hosted by PLE. All event activities, including presentation and facilitation of the event, were held in Spanish.

A shortened version of the Spanish-language workshop presentation was also recorded and distributed through the Transportation Connection website, at the site's [Spanish-language landing page](#), where it received several dozen views over the next few weeks.

During the live event, the project team provided an overview and introduction to Transportation Connection, and solicited comments regarding issues experienced by community members when accessing transportation as well as ideas for making improvements.

COMMENTS AND THEMES

Key comments and themes received during the meeting include:

- » Many community members are unable to access driving privileges (key for jobs, access to healthcare, shopping) because of documentation required
 - Being able to obtain a driver's license is key to accessing economic opportunity and better outcomes for their households
- » Drivers' education manuals are only available in English
 - This was the case during the time the workshops were held, this has been recently resolved by NDDOT through the development and publication of a new [Spanish-language Drivers' Manual](#)
- » Lack of options for traveling to nearby cities for the case of medical appointments
 - People have to rely on volunteers arranged by churches or community organizations
 - Not convenient and not conducive to maintenance of health

- » Transit is often not available for the destinations that are needed for work and shopping
 - Where transit is available, it often takes too long - what would be a fifteen-minute trip by car becomes a two hour trip by transit
- » Walking, transit and biking options are not available in many communities
 - Facilities often do not exist - and in cases where they do exist, they feel unsafe or are inconvenient
 - General agreement on the need to provide or improve walk/bike/transit options
- » These issues are not necessarily particular to the state's Hispanic population - these issues are affecting all immigrant communities

NEXT STEPS FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH SPANISH-SPEAKING NORTH DAKOTANS

Participants were enthusiastic about continuing the conversation with NDDOT:

- » Participants expressed appreciation towards NDDOT for the opportunity to learn about and offer comments for Transportation Connection
- » Participants would like to find other opportunities to contribute in future planning processes

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

On March 9th, 2021, NDDOT initiated a 30-day public comment period to receive feedback on the draft Transportation Connection document to run through April 12th. NDDOT posted a PDF version of the draft document and a feedback survey on the website. NDDOT promoted the public comment period through multiple media channels, including the Transportation Connection social media accounts.

During the public comment period, NDDOT shared the draft Transportation Connection document with stakeholders through direct outreach. NDDOT contacted DAC members, MPO leadership, and tribal authority leadership via email and requested their input on the content, graphics, and overall structure of Transportation Connection. Feedback from stakeholders was received via email and recorded.

NDDOT contacted an additional set of stakeholders to solicit their feedback on the draft Transportation Connection document directly. These stakeholders were as follows:

- United States Department of the Interior – Bureau of Land Management
- United States Department of Agriculture – US Forest Service
- Grand Forks Air Force Base
- North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality
- North Dakota Historical Society
- Dakota Resource Council
- Sierra Club – Dacotah Chapter

With the exception of the Grand Forks Air Force Base, these stakeholders represent or have jurisdiction over land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation. NDDOT contacted these agencies to provide an opportunity for stakeholder perspectives on environmental and cultural issues. NDDOT also contacted Grand Forks Air Force Base to solicit input on military transportation needs as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ENGAGEMENT

NDDOT's social media ad campaign reached over 32,000 individuals and generated more than 670 clicks on content related to Transportation Connection. The virtual input meeting was viewed over 35 times.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

NDDOT received several public comments from individual residents and organization representatives. Comments expressed appreciation for and interest in the ways in which NDDOT was incorporating changes in transportation technology into Transportation Connection. Respondents offered praise for the clarity and engaging visuals used in Transportation Connection. Representatives from bicycle and pedestrian safety organizations provided comments encouraging NDDOT to adopt more affirmative language regarding biking and walking safety and accessibility improvements, including more direct references to the ND Moves Active Transportation Plan, to make North Dakota the most bike-friendly state in the Country.