

# Measure of Effectiveness

Measuring Public Participation Engagement  
Old Colony Metropolitan Planning Organization

70 School Street Brockton MA 02301

February 2023

Prepared Under MassDOT Contract #118969

# Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC)

## OCPC Officers

President	Valerie Massard, AICP
Treasurer	Rebecca Coletta
Secretary	Sandra Wright

COMMUNITY	DELEGATE	ALTERNATE
Abington	Steven Santeusanio	Alex Hagerty
Avon	Frank Staffier	John Costa
Bridgewater	Sandra Wright	
Brockton	Vacant	Preston Huckabee, P.E.
Duxbury	Christopher Ryan	George D. Wadsworth
East Bridgewater	Peter Spagone, Jr.	John Haines
Easton	Jeanmarie Joyce	
Halifax	John Bruno	Jonathan Selig
Hanover	Rhonda Nyman	Steve Louko
Hanson	Antonio M. DeFrias	Joe Campbell
Kingston	Valerie Massard, AICP	Paul Basler
Pembroke	Rebecca Coletta	Alysha Siciliano-Perry
Plymouth	Lee Hartmann, AICP	
Plympton	Christine Joy	
Stoughton	Marc Tisdelle	Craig Horsfall
West Bridgewater	Eldon F. Moreira	
Whitman	Noreen O'Toole	Daniel Salvucci
Delegate-at-Large	Iolando Spinola	

## OCPC Staff

Mary Waldron	Executive Director
Charles Kilmer, AICP	Deputy Director/Transportation Program Manager
Brenda Robinson	Fiscal Officer
Megan Fournier	Senior Executive Assistant
David Klein	AAA Administrator
Lila Burgess	Ombudsman Program Director
Jane A. Selig, LCSW	Ombudsman Program Assistant Director
Sean Noel	AAA Management Assistant
Gabrielle Sylvain-Jean	Assisted Living Program Ombudsman
Richard Henry	Ombudsman Assistant Director
Laurie Muncy, AICP	Director of Comprehensive Planning & Sustainability
Joanne Zygmunt	Senior Planner
Don Sullivan	Director of Economic Resiliency and Housing Equity
Dottie Fulginiti	Senior Planner
Andrew Vidal	GIS Manager
Raymond Guarino	Principal Transportation Planner
William McNulty, PTP	Principal Transportation Planner
Guoqiang Li, PTP, RSP1	Principal Transportation Planner
Kyle Mowatt	Senior Transportation Planner
Shawn Bailey	Senior Transportation Planner
Jay Song	Junior Planner

## Old Colony Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

The Honorable Robert F. Sullivan	Mayor, City of Brockton
Betty Cavacco	Chair, Select Board, Town of Plymouth
Meredith Anderson	Clerk, Select Board, Town of West Bridgewater
Daniel Salvucci	Vice Chairman, Board of Selectmen, Town of Whitman
Gina Fiandaca	Secretary and CEO, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
Jonathan Gulliver	Highway Administrator, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
Michael Lambert	Administrator, Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT)
Valerie Massard, AICP	President, Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC)

## Joint Transportation Committee (JTC)

### JTC Officers

JTC Chairman	Noreen O'Toole
JTC Vice Chairman	Daniel Salvucci

COMMUNITY	DELEGATE / ALTERNATE
Abington - Delegate	John Stone
Abington - Alternate	Bruce Hughes
Avon - Delegate	William Fitzgerald
Bridgewater - Delegate	Robert B. Wood
Brockton - Delegate	Patrick Hill
Duxbury - Delegate	Peter Buttkus
East Bridgewater - Delegate	John Haines
Easton - Delegate	David Field, P.E.
Easton - Alternate	Greg Swan, P.E.
Halifax - Delegate	Steven Hayward
Hanover - Delegate	Victor Diniak
Hanson - Delegate	Jamison Shave
Kingston - Delegate	Paul Basler
Pembroke - Delegate	Gene Fulmine
Plymouth - Alternate	James Downey
Plympton - Delegate	Robert Firlotte
Stoughton - Delegate	Marc Tisdelle
West Bridgewater - Delegate	Chris Iannitelli
Whitman - Delegate	Noreen O'Toole
Whitman - Alternate	Daniel Salvucci
Delegate-at-Large	Iolando Spinola

### Agency Representation

MassDOT	David Mohler, AICP
MassDOT	Raissah Kouame
MassDOT District 5	Mary-Joe Perry
MassDOT District 5	Pamela Haznar, P.E.
BAT	Michael Lambert
BAT	Glenn Ann Geiler
FHWA	Andrew Reovan
FTA	Leah Sirmin
FTA	Peter Butler
Brockton Traffic Commission	Captain Mark Porcaro

### OCPC Transportation Staff

Charles Kilmer, AICP	Deputy Director/ Transportation Program Manager
Shawn Bailey	Senior Transportation Planner
Raymond Guarino	Principal Transportation Planner
Guoqiang Li, PTP, RSP1	Principal Transportation Planner
William McNulty, PTP	Principal Transportation Planner
Kyle Mowatt	Senior Transportation Planner
Andrew Vidal	GIS Manager

# Notice of Nondiscrimination Rights and Protections to Beneficiaries

## Federal "Title VI/Nondiscrimination" Protections

The Old Colony Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) operates its programs, services, and activities in compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations. Title VI prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs and requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of **race, color, or national origin** (including **limited English proficiency**), be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance. Related federal nondiscrimination laws administered by the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, or both prohibit discrimination on the basis of **age, sex, and disability**. These protected categories are contemplated within the Old Colony MPO's Title VI Programs consistent with federal interpretation and administration. Additionally, the Old Colony MPO provides meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to individuals with limited English proficiency, in compliance with US Department of Transportation policy and guidance on federal Executive Order 13166.

## State Nondiscrimination Protections

The Old Colony MPO also complies with the Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law, M.G.L. c 272 §§ 92a, 98, 98a, prohibiting making any distinction, discrimination, or restriction in admission to or treatment in a place of public accommodation based on **race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or ancestry**. Likewise, the Old Colony MPO complies with the Governor's Executive Order 526, section 4 requiring all programs, activities, and services provided, performed, licensed, chartered, funded, regulated, or contracted for by the state shall be conducted without unlawful discrimination based on **race, color, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, disability, veteran's status** (including Vietnam-era veterans), or **background**.

## Additional Information

To file a complaint or to request additional information regarding Title VI and related federal and state nondiscrimination obligations, please contact:

Old Colony Planning Council  
Title VI/ Nondiscrimination Coordinator  
Mary Waldron  
70 School Street  
Brockton, MA 02301  
508-583-1833  
[mwaldron@ocpcrpa.org](mailto:mwaldron@ocpcrpa.org)

Title VI Specialist  
MassDOT, Office of Diversity and Civil Rights  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, MA 02116  
857-368-8580

TTY: 857-368-0603

[MASSDOT.CivilRights@state.ma.us](mailto:MASSDOT.CivilRights@state.ma.us)

*Complaint Filing*

To file a complaint alleging a violation of Title VI or related federal nondiscrimination law, contact the Title VI Specialists (above) within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory conduct.

To file a complaint alleging a violation of the state's Public Accommodation Law, contact the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination within 300 days of the alleged discriminatory conduct at:

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)  
One Ashburton Place, 6th Floor  
Boston, MA 02109  
617-994-6000  
TTY: 617-994-6196

## Translation

### **English**

If this information is needed in another language, please contact the MPO Title VI Coordinator at 508-583-1833.

### **Spanish**

Si necesita esta información en otro idioma, por favor contacte al coordinador de MPO del Título VI al 508-583-1833.

### **Portuguese**

Caso estas informações sejam necessárias em outro idioma, por favor, contate o Coordenador de Título VI da MPO pelo telefone 508-583-1833.

### **Chinese Simple**

如果需要使用其它语言了解信息，请联系Old Colony大都会规划组织（MPO）《民权法案》第六章协调员，电话508- 583-1833。

### **Chinese Traditional**

如果需要使用其他語言瞭解資訊，請聯繫Old Colony大都會規劃組織（MPO）《民權法案》第六章協調員，電話508- 583-1833。

### **Vietnamese**

Nếu quý vị cần thông tin này bằng tiếng khác, vui lòng liên hệ Điều phối viên Luật VI của MPO theo số điện thoại 508- 583-1833.

### **Haitian Creole**

Si yon moun bezwen enfòmasyon sa a nan yon lòt lang, tanpri kontakte Koòdonatè a Title VI MPO nan 508-583-1833.

### **French Creole**

Si yon moun vle genyen enfòmasyon sa yo nan yon lòt lang, tanpri kontakte Kowòdinatè MPO Title VI la nan nimewo 508-583-1833.

### **Russian**

Если Вам необходима данная информация на любом другом языке, пожалуйста, свяжитесь с Координатором Титула VI в МРО по тел: 508-583-1833.

### **French**

Si vous avez besoin d'obtenir une copie de la présente dans une autre langue, veuillez contacter le coordinateur du Titre VI de MPO en composant le 508-583-1833.

### **Italian**

Se ha bisogno di ricevere queste informazioni in un'altra lingua si prega di contattare il coordinatore MPO del Titolo VI al 508- 583-1833.

**Mon-Khmer, Cambodian**

ប្រសិនបើលោក-អ្នកត្រូវការបកប្រែព័ត៌មាននេះ សូមទាក់ទងអ្នកសម្របសម្រួលជំពូកទី6  
របស់ **MPO** តាមរយៈលេខទូរស័ព្ទ **508-583-1833**។

**Arabic**

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، يُرجى الاتصال بمنسق الفقرة السادسة لمنظمة التخطيط الحضري على الهاتف: 508- 583-  
.1833

*Updated October 2022*

*Old Colony Planning Council*

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## **Introduction**

Public Participation is a key ingredient in the Old Colony Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) transportation planning efforts. Public Participation not only leads to better projects, studies, and outcomes, but also helps spend limited funding in a manner in line with community and regional goals. In addition to helping develop better projects, public outreach fosters greater trust between citizens and Local, State, and the Federal Government and their representative entities like the Old Colony MPO. Lastly, the MPO is required by State and Federal partners to ensure it is including members of the public in the transportation planning process.

In order ensure the Old Colony MPO is meeting its public participation requirements, measures are necessary to determine whether its Public Participation Plan (PPP) is accomplishing its goals. Through a series of data collection efforts that take place during outreach efforts, the MPO obtains the ability to see where the PPP is succeeding and where there are opportunities for greater participation. This report explores outreach efforts and measures their effectiveness in expanding public participation to members of the public and outside organizations in MPO planning activities.

## **Measuring Public Participation**

In order to better understand how the MPO is meeting its commitment to fostering public engagement in all MPO planning activities, it is key to develop a series of measurements to understand the effectiveness of the public outreach efforts. It is through the tracking of public engagements, whether it be in person, via email, through social media or utilizing virtual public engagement, that the MPO can determine if its public outreach efforts are delivering the results that are desired and required.

## **Evaluation of Outreach Efforts**

The Old Colony MPO tracks all the outreach efforts it conducts. Public meeting attendance is recorded with additional attention given to attendees that are from Title VI protected classes. The MPO tracks the methods it employs in getting information to the public on upcoming meetings, the release of public documents, and the viewing and engagement of the public through its social media presence. Through the collection of this information the MPO gains greater clarity on where it is doing well and where there is a need to increase public engagement. The items tracked are known as Measures of Effectiveness (MOE). The MOEs are listed below:

### Measures of Effectiveness (MOE)

- Meeting attendance
- Number of LEP/Title VI protect class encounters
- Number of documents translated into the four LEP safe harbor clause languages
- Number of direct engagements with outside organizations
- Number of correspondence (social media, direct mailings, email, etc.)

## Engagement Overall

The Old Colony MPO engages in a number of public outreaches each year. Last year in 2022, OCPC either participated in or hosted a total of 70 outreach engagements, which was 9 more than 2021. Some of these engagements were public meetings for projects or initiatives. Other encounters were direct engagement activities with outside organizations or participation in other organization’s meetings or events to bring greater attention to the role of the MPO. The MPO also hosts a series of scheduled public meetings throughout the year. Two of those scheduled meetings are the Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting and the Joint Transportation Committee meeting, both of which take place most months throughout the year.

Figure 1: Overall Engagement by Year

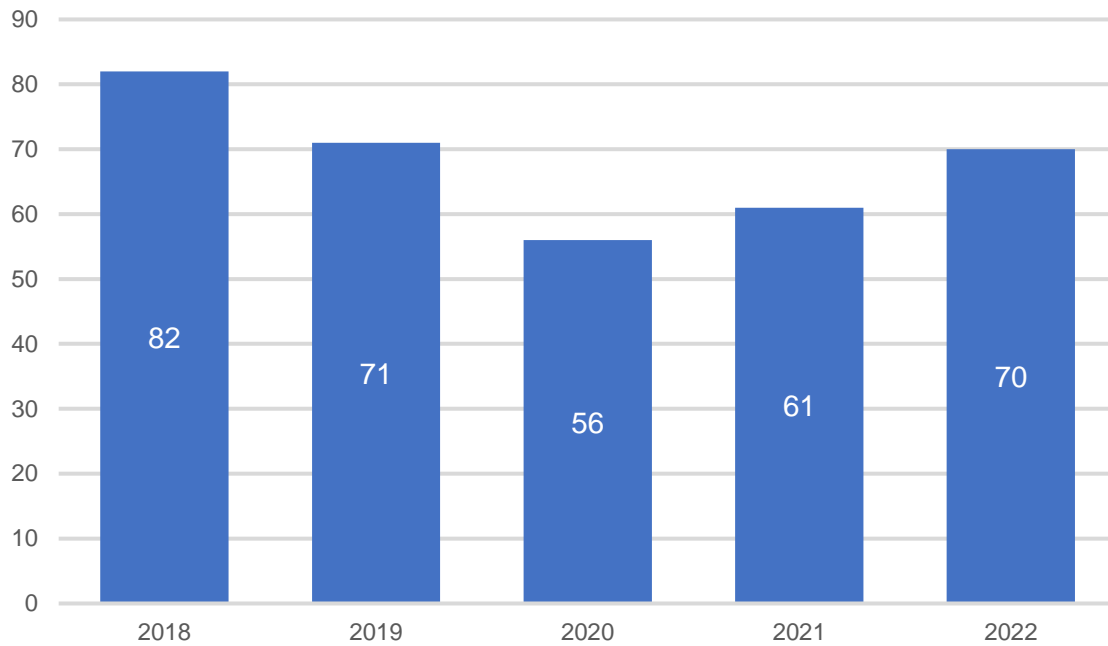


Table 1: 2022 Public Outreach – Meetings and Events

Date	Organization/Municipality	Location	Purpose
1/11/2022	Town of Kingston Select Board	Zoom	Route 27 at Lake and Station Streets Road Safety Audit (RSA) Presentation
1/13/2022	Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT)	Zoom	BAT Advisory Board Meeting
1/18/2022	Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC)	Zoom	Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting
1/26/2022	Massachusetts Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board (MBPAB)	Zoom	Board Meeting
1/26/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Board of Directors Meeting
2/3/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting
2/10/2022	MassDOT	Zoom	TIP Bridge Project 612188 Design Public Hearing

Table 1 Continued: 2022 Public Outreach – Meetings and Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Organization/Municipality</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
2/15/2022	OCPC	Zoom	MPO Meeting
2/16/2022	MassDOT	Zoom	TIP Project 607403 Design Public Hearing
2/18/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Duxbury RSA at Three Locations
2/23/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Abington RSA at Two Locations
2/26/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Board of Directors Meeting
3/3/2022	OCPC	Zoom	JTC Meeting
3/15/2022	OCPC	Zoom	MPO Meeting
3/30/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Board of Directors Meeting
4/5/2022	Transportation For Massachusetts (T4MA)	Zoom	Coalition Meeting
4/7/2022	OCPC	Zoom	JTC Meeting
4/19/2022	OCPC	Zoom	MPO Meeting
4/26/2022	MassDOT	Zoom	TIP Project 609410 Design Public Hearing
4/27/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Board of Directors Meeting
4/28/2022	BAT	Zoom	BAT Advisory Board Meeting
5/5/2022	OCPC	Zoom	JTC Meeting
5/6/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Brockton RSA at Two Locations
5/12/2022	MassDOT	Zoom	TIP Project 608195 Design Public Hearing
5/18/2022	MBPAB	Zoom	Board Meeting
5/19/2022	Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Zoom	Bus Network Redesign Public Meeting - Systemwide
5/19/2022	OCPC	Zoom	MPO Meeting
5/20/2022	OCPC	BAT Centre	Brockton Bike to Work Day
5/24/2022	MBTA	Zoom	Bus Network Redesign Public Meeting – South Suburbs
5/25/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Board of Directors Meeting
5/26/2022	BAT	Zoom	BAT Advisory Board Meeting
6/2/2022	OCPC	Zoom	JTC Meeting
6/6/2022	Old Colony Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (OCBPAC)	Zoom	Committee Meeting
6/7/2022	T4MA	Zoom	Coalition Meeting
6/16/2022	MassDOT	Zoom	TIP Project 607214 Design Public Hearing
6/21/2022	OCPC	Zoom	MPO Meeting
6/23/2022	T4MA	Zoom	Transportation Justice Community Session
6/29/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Board of Directors Meeting
7/5/2022	T4MA	Zoom	Coalition Meeting
7/14/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Bridgewater RSA – Route 18/28 at Grove Street

Table 1 Continued: 2022 Public Outreach – Meetings and Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Organization/Municipality</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
7/19/2022	OCPC	Zoom	MPO Meeting
7/27/2022	MBPAB	Zoom	Board Meeting
8/2/2022	T4MA	Zoom	Coalition Meeting
8/4/2022	OCPC	Zoom	JTC Meeting
9/1/2022	OCPC	Zoom	JTC Meeting
9/20/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Brockton RSA – Route 27/ Reynolds Memorial Highway
9/21/2022	MBPAB	Zoom	Board Meeting
9/22/2022	OCBPAC	Zoom	Committee Meeting
9/23/2022	Commuter Rail Communities Coalition	Zoom	Coalition Meeting
9/28/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Pembroke RSA – Route 139
9/28/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Board of Directors Meeting
10/4/2022	T4MA	Zoom	Coalition Meeting
10/6/2022	OCPC	Zoom	JTC Meeting
10/6/2022	BAT	Zoom	BAT Advisory Board Meeting
10/6/2022	MassDOT	Zoom	TIP Bridge Project 605294 Design Public Hearing
10/20/2022	MassDOT	Zoom	Beyond Mobility Virtual Public Meeting
10/26/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Board of Directors Meeting
11/1/2022	T4MA	Zoom	Coalition Meeting
11/2/2022	OCPC	Zoom	Bridgewater State University Class Visit
11/9/2022	MassDOT	Zoom	TIP Project 609883 Design Public Hearing
11/15/2022	OCPC	Zoom	MPO Meeting
11/16/2022	Metro South Chamber of Commerce	Brockton	Annual Meeting & Business Expo (2050 LRTP Outreach)
11/16/2022	Bridgewater State University (BSU)	BSU	GIS Day
11/17/2022	OCPC	Stoughton	Dawe Elementary School Safety and Mobility Audit (Stoughton)
11/30/2022	MBPAB	Zoom	Board Meeting
12/1/2022	OCPC	Zoom	JTC Meeting
12/5/2022	MBTA	Freetown	South Coast Rail – Freetown Station Event
12/8/2022	CHA Consulting, Inc.	Easton	RSA for TIP Project 612617
12/16/2022	OCBPAC	Zoom	Committee Meeting
12/20/2022	OCPC	Zoom	MPO Meeting

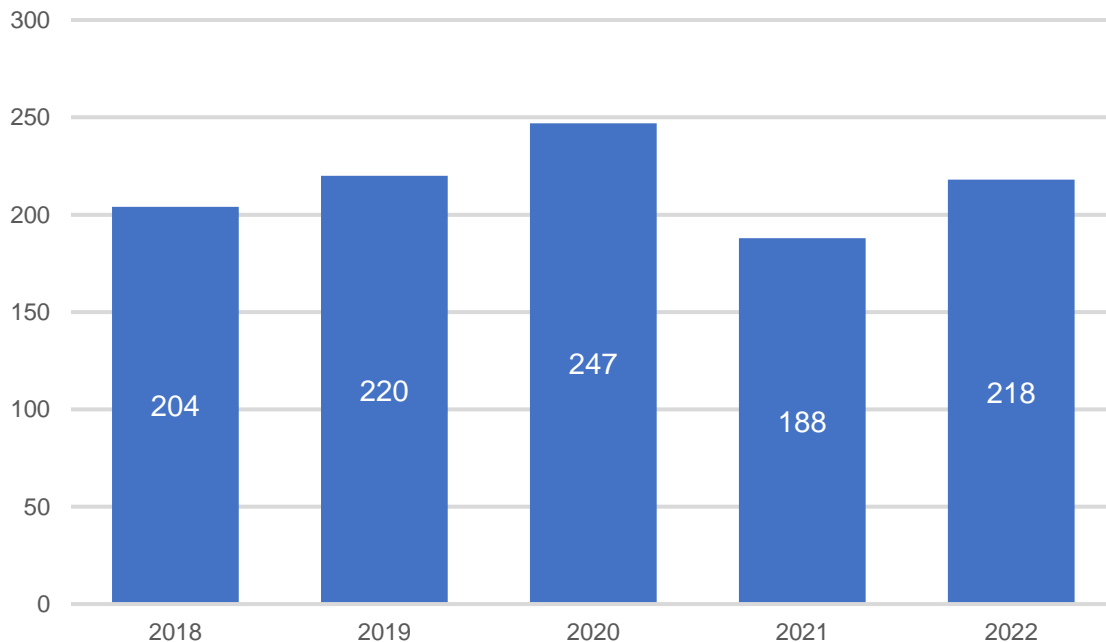
### **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meetings**

The Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting is where transportation policy decisions are discussed, and the Transportation Improvement Program's (TIP) list of projects are reviewed. The Old Colony MPO hosts on average of nine (9) MPO meetings throughout the year with an average

attendance of 24 persons per meeting during 2022, the same average as was yielded in 2021. Total attendance at MPO meetings has increased from 2018 to 2020, decreased in 2021, and then increased by 30 participants in 2022. In the year 2021, attendance yielded the lowest total of the five-year analysis, however it should be noted that 2021 had two fewer meetings than 2020 (10 meetings) and one fewer meeting than 2018, 2019, and 2022 (nine meetings each year). If there were two additional meetings in 2021 that had the average monthly attendance, then the total attendance would have been 236 people.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, correspondence from the MPO has been only digital via email. Meeting information and agenda are emailed to 364 individuals or various organizations on the Old Colony MPO's contact list. These emailings increased by 19 in 2022 due to added individuals and organizations as time has gone by and the continued use of Zoom to host virtual meetings. Meeting information, including the agenda, staff reports, minutes, and YouTube links to meeting recordings, are posted to the OCPC website.

Figure 2: MPO Attendance by Year



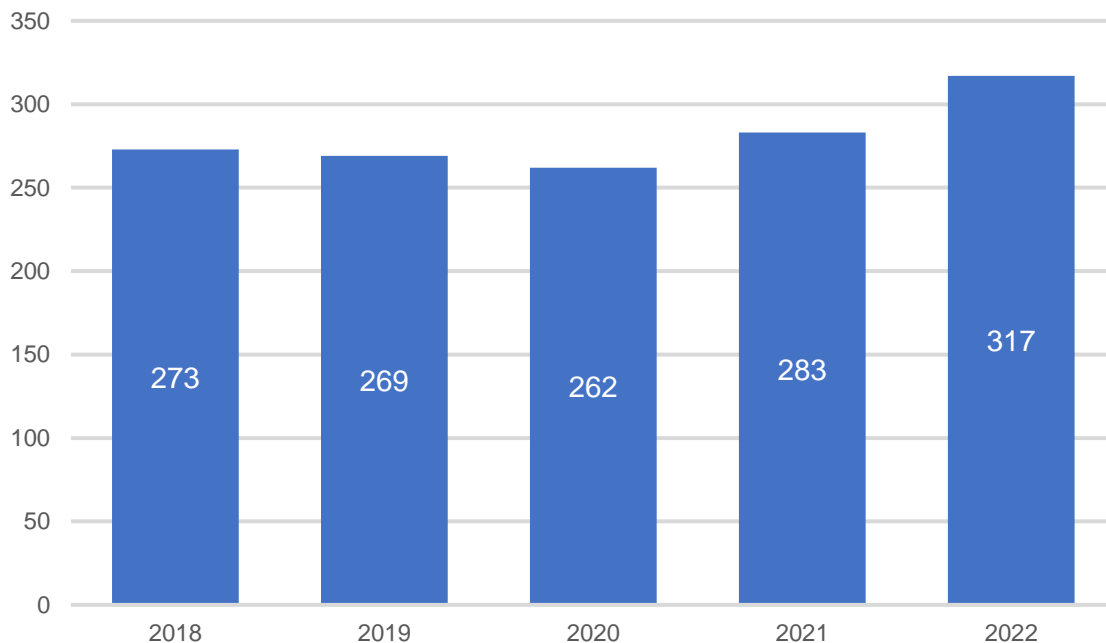
### **Joint Transportation Committee (JTC)**

The Old Colony Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) is an advisory committee to the Old Colony MPO. The JTC is a venue where the public can be involved in the scheduling of transportation projects to better utilize limited funding. These meetings tend to happen monthly with an average of 10 meetings per year. The average JTC meeting attendance was 29 participants for 2022 (an average of three additional participants over 2021), with an average of 28 participants over the last five years. From 2018 to 2020, the number of total yearly attendance decreased slightly each year, followed by an increase in each year in 2021 and 2022. Some of the decline can be contributed to weather events canceling JTC meetings and there may be other contributing factors, such as work/meeting schedule conflicts or other personal time constraints that keep members of the public from attending. It should be noted that there were two fewer meetings in 2019 and 2020 than in 2021. If there was one additional meeting in 2019 and 2020 that experienced that years' average attendance (30 and 29 attendees respectively), then the total

attendance would have been 299 attendees in 2019 and 291 attendees in 2020. There were also meetings in every month in 2021 except for July, which is a common month missed being the beginning of the Fiscal Year. It should be noted that attendance has increased since the initiation of virtual meetings allowing attendees to participate from home or their office.

As with the MPO, correspondence sent out to the public covering JTC meetings and the topics to be discussed is emailed as well. Meeting information and agenda are emailed to 318 individuals or various organizations on the Old Colony MPO's contact list. These emailings have increased above 2021 like the MPO because JTC shares the same email contact list. Meeting information, including the agenda, staff reports, minutes, and YouTube links to meeting recordings, are posted to the OCPC website.

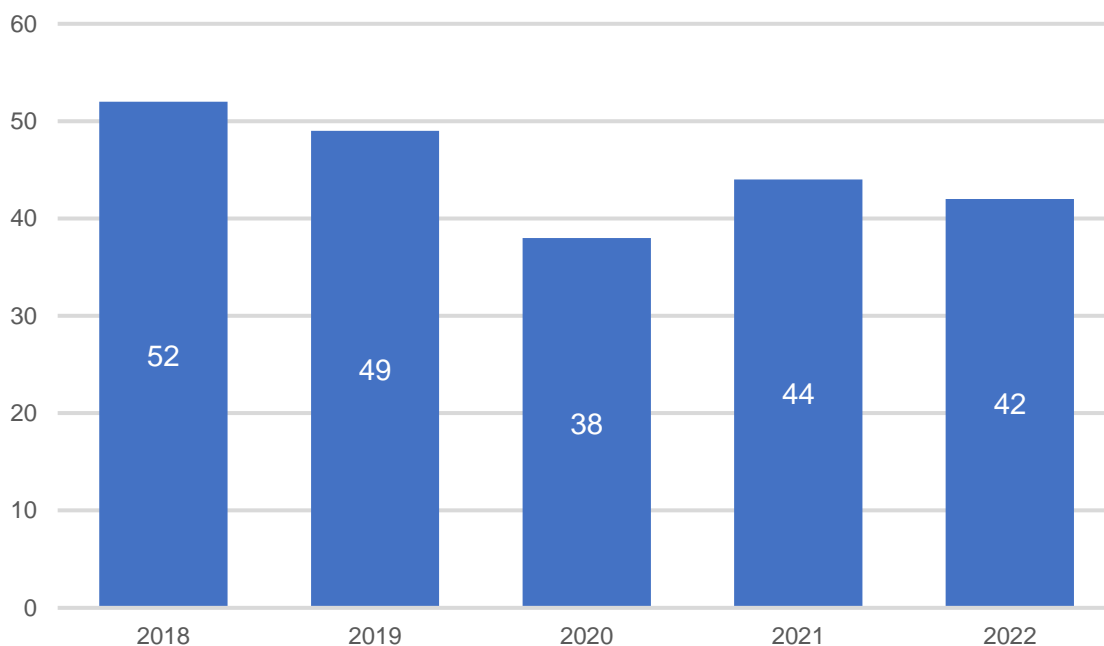
Figure 3: JTC Attendance by Year



## External Engagement

Each year the Old Colony MPO engages members of the region on a number of different planning initiatives. One of these initiatives in 2022 were Road Safety Audits at Multiple Locations. With such planning studies, public engagement is necessary to understand how the public feels about a project or initiative. In 2022, OCPC conducted and directly engaged in 42 external public engagement activities, two fewer than 2021. These external engagements ranged from hosting virtual Road Safety Audits to attending Select Board meetings to present on traffic safety studies and hosting Bridgewater State University students. In previous years (before COVID-19), all external engagements were held or conducted in person such as meeting directly with business associations such as Brockton's Downtown Business Association. A good portion of the engagements in 2018 and 2019 were related to the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The fluctuation in engagements over the previous five years is the result of the number of projects and initiatives in which the Old Colony MPO conducted or was involved. Since March 2020, all of the MPO's engagements have been held virtually with the exception of the June 2021 MPO Meeting, at which the signatories attended the meeting in-person while all other attendees attended virtually.

**Figure 4: External Public Engagement by Year**



### **Engagement of Protected Classes**

The MPO takes every effort to make sure individuals that are from traditionally underserved communities are a major part of the public participation processes. Before COVID-19 when all engagements were held in person, all public outreach event notices on the OCPC website were able to be translated into the four Limited English Proficiency (LEP) languages for the MPO's region using the Title VI Safe Harbor Clause. These four languages identified using the Safe Harbor Clause are French-Creole, Haitian-Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish.

As previously mentioned, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, all external engagements have been held virtually, thus eliminating the need to mail out meeting documents beforehand and provide printed materials at the engagements. The Old Colony MPO has continued to be prepared to provide any materials for any engagements in any language requested. However, the MPO did not received any requests for translations of documents in 2022 so there is no data to present. Should we receive any requests for translation requests, they will be documented in future reports.

Other services and resources that the MPO provides is the Old Colony Planning Council website can be translated into nine (9) different languages and the newsletter can be translated into 49 different languages. Per federal regulations, the Title VI Notice of Protections is included on all agendas which the Council hosts and is also on the website. For anyone who needs to file a Title VI complaint, the process is explained on the Title VI page on the OCPC website and has the phrase "If this information is needed in another language, please contact the MPO Title VI Coordinator at 508-583-1833" provided in 12 languages as well as downloadable complaint forms in the same languages as well. The Title VI webpage also has OCPC's updated Title VI Complaint Procedures and the recently completed Annual and Triennial Title VI Reports. The Title VI webpage can be found at <https://oldcolonyplanning.org/title-vi-ada/> for more information.

## **Correspondence**

The Old Colony MPO utilizes several different media to communicate with members of the public about current planning invites, upcoming outreach events and the release of public documents for a period of review and comment. The methods of correspondence span a wide range, from standard sources like the OCPC website and newsletter to social media such as Facebook and Twitter. As times have changed, the MPO relies more on social media platforms to engage members of the public and is always looking for new tools to keep the public engaged. For example, all public meetings such as the MPO and JTC meeting notices are published on the OCPC Facebook page and Twitter account. Since the beginning of COVID-19, OCPC has ceased the traditional method of mailing printed copies of agendas and notices for meetings and events and now sends the notices via email, the OCPC newsletter (which are faster and more convenient), as well as posts to the OCPC website. In 2019 (the last full year of utilizing mailings for notices), there were 3,600 direct mailings sent out for just the JTC and MPO meetings, not including other meetings and events that OCPC hosted.

### **Digital**

Digital correspondences, such as email, social media, and the OCPC website, are readily used by the Old Colony MPO in its outreach activities. Email is the primary method of communication used by MPO and is employed to send out meeting notifications and to respond to members of the public about MPO activities when utilized for public outreach purposes. Along with email, the MPO has establishing a strong social media presence. Currently the Old Colony MPO uses four different types of digital platforms in its outreach efforts. These four digital platforms are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and the OCPC website. It is through these digital platforms that the MPO seeks to raise awareness about its initiatives at a time when so many things are competing for people's attention. Also, the MPO seeks to get younger people involved in MPO activities and sees social media as the way to do it since this cohort tends to get most of their information through these platforms.

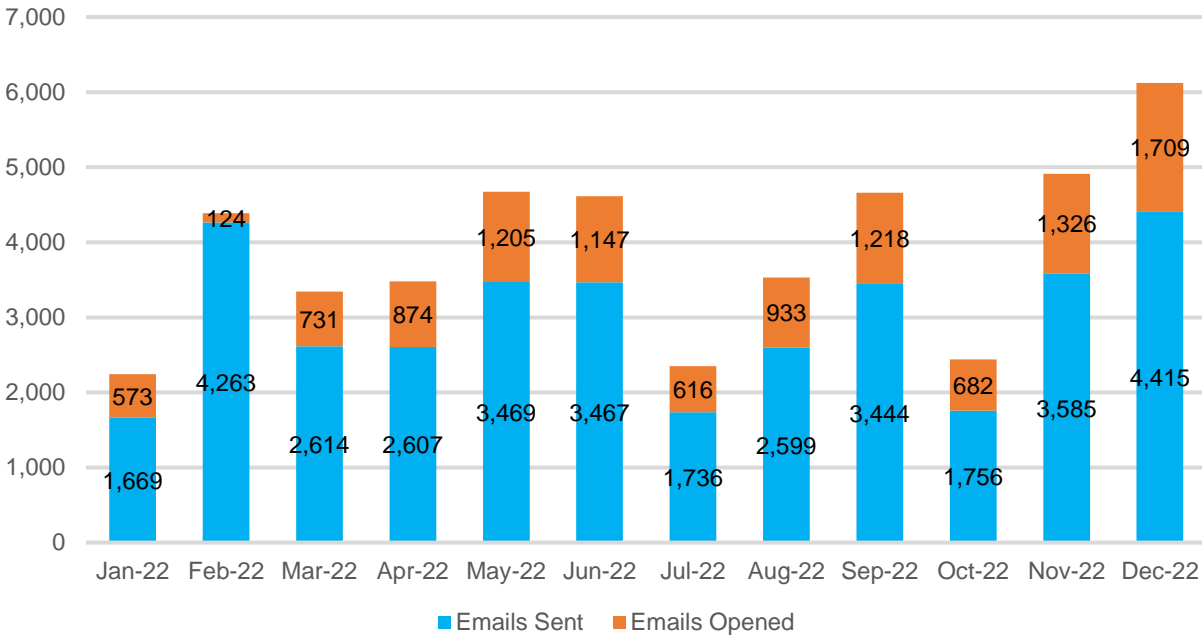
### **Email**

The Old Colony MPO sends out large number of emails every year as part of its public outreach efforts. In 2022, the MPO sent over 5,000 emails (which is calculated by emails sent times the number of recipients) to inform members of the public and their officials of planning initiatives being conducted by the MPO. Contained in such emails are meeting flyers, agendas, and additional information about who they should contact if they have any questions. Additionally, the MPO also solicits feedback from members of the public on publicly released documents such as the TIP, UPWP, and LRTP for which they can email in their comments and recommendations.

In 2020, OCPC started producing an organizational newsletter that is sent out to our 17 communities as well as partner organizations and stakeholders. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform the reader about what is currently happening at the Council. The newsletter touches upon recently released documents, grant opportunities, and other relevant information the Council believes our partners should know about. The following total amounts for newsletters (for both sent and opened) were calculated by multiplying the number of recipients by the number of newsletters. During 2022, OCPC sent out a total 35,624 newsletters and 11,138 (31.3%) were opened and read by the receiver. These numbers were significantly higher than 2021, with 19,525 newsletters sent and 6,689 (34.3%) opened and read. During 2022, there were an additional 341 recipients that were added to the newsletter list and brought the total to 948 people by the end of 2022. December 2022 was the month with the most newsletters sent with 4,415 as well as the most newsletters opened/read with 1,709. October 2022 yielded the highest open rate with 38.8%.



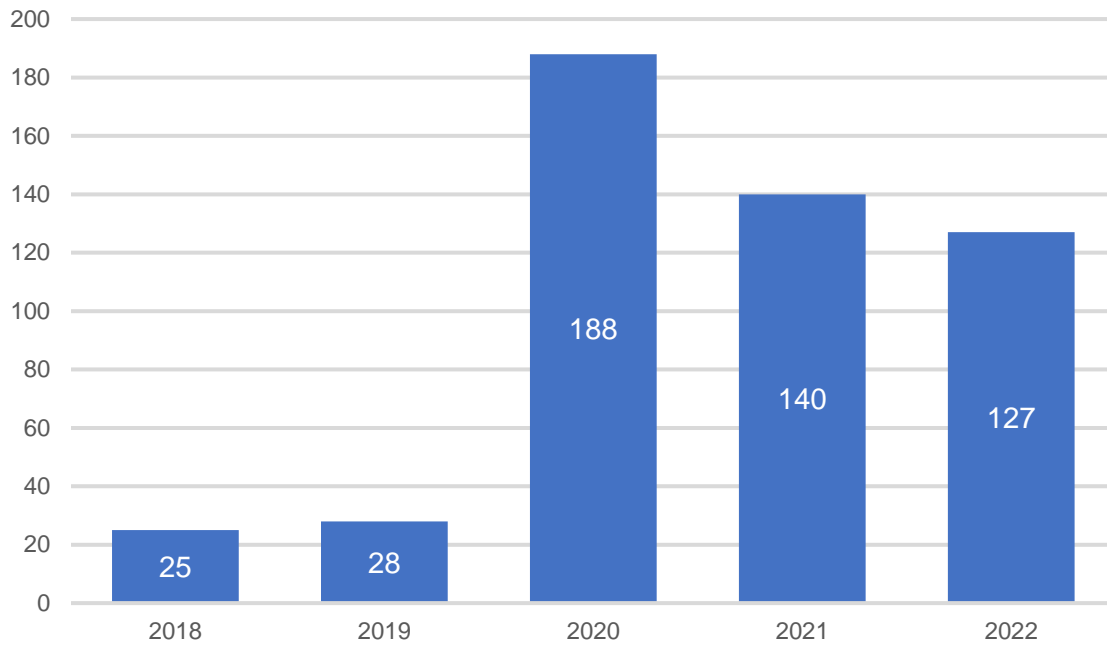
**Figure 5: OCPC Newsletter by Month**



**Social Media**

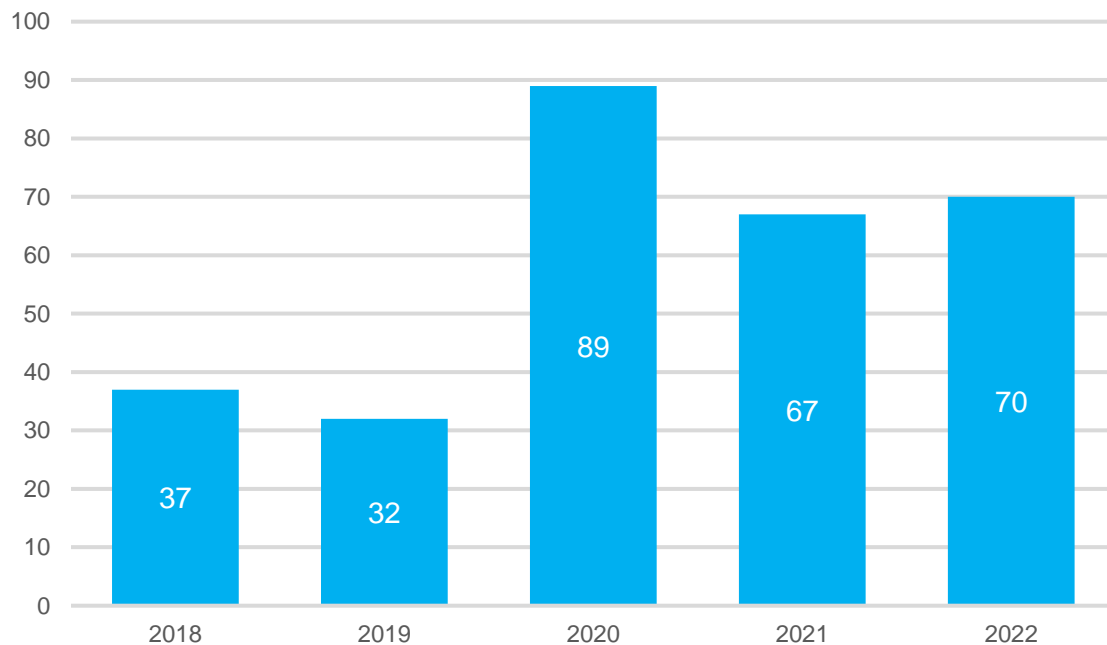
Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have become a larger part the Old Colony MPO’s go to for dissemination of public outreach notifications, especially since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, the MPO made 127 Facebook posts about public engagement events along with other regional and Commonwealth initiatives, which was 13 fewer than 2021, and those posts yielded 7,912 impressions (likes, reactions, comments, and shares). The use of Facebook by the MPO has dramatically increased over the last three years. This increase in Facebook utilization has to do with the number of projects needing a public participation component and some project requiring a higher degree of public engagement such as the Long-Range Transportation Plan, but also to have an additional platform to conduct outreach for the Council. Going forward the MPO sees a continued increasing usage of Facebook as a platform for public engagement.

Figure 6: Facebook Postings by Year



The MPO uses Twitter to send out information on upcoming outreach events, the release of public documents for review, and to disseminate other regional information to members of the public. Last year in 2022 the MPO sent out 70 Twitter notifications (three more than 2021) which yielded 6,247 impressions. Twitter impressions convey how many times a tweet has been viewed, retweeted, or liked. The use of Twitter by the MPO increased over the previous year but is the second highest when observing the last five-year period, similar to Facebook.

Figure 7: Twitter Utilization by Year



YouTube has been one of the social media platforms that historically has not been fully utilized by the MPO. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the MPO had only uploaded two informational videos which yielded 107 combined views. During COVID-19, businesses and organizations turned to Zoom to have their meeting, both internal and external. The benefit of using YouTube is that it gives members of the public a chance to see a presentation on a project or other planning initiative if they cannot make a public meeting. The Old Colony Planning Council has expanded the utilization of its YouTube channel and uploads videos for public meetings and engagements that it hosts. In keeping with this desire to use YouTube more, the Old Colony MPO uploads videos on a regular basis, including public meetings (e.g., monthly JTC and MPO Meetings), public engagements regarding UPWP Projects (e.g., Road Safety Audits), as well as specialized videos (e.g., the MBTA Communities Information Session with Secretary Kennealy meeting and Modernizing Municipal Policy to Support Local Business Webinar).

Over the course of 2020 affected by COVID-19, YouTube usage had significantly increased as the MPO has been conducting public meetings online with the use of tools such as Zoom the online virtual meeting platform and it has remained a highly utilized tool ever since. There were 14 videos posted in 2020 with a total of 420 views, 64 videos were posted in 2021 with 1,021 views, and 2022 had 77 videos posted with 717 views yielded. 2022 had a 20.3% increase in number of videos posted yet yielded a 29.8% decrease in views. This can be attested to two videos posted in 2021 that yielded a combined total of 421 views, one of which was the video of OCPC's new logo launch that had 239 views. The two videos that yielded the highest number of views in 2022 were the OCPC Presents: "Bridging the Digital Divide" video with 49 views and the MBTA Communities Information Session with Secretary Kennealy video with 31 views.

Figure 8: YouTube Posts by Year

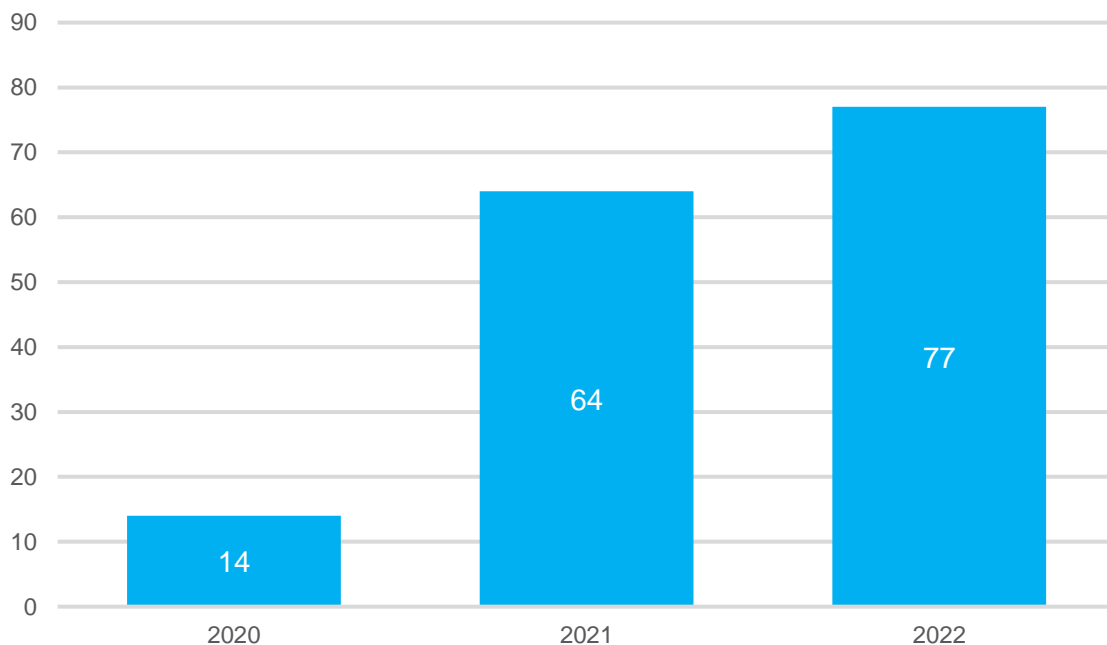
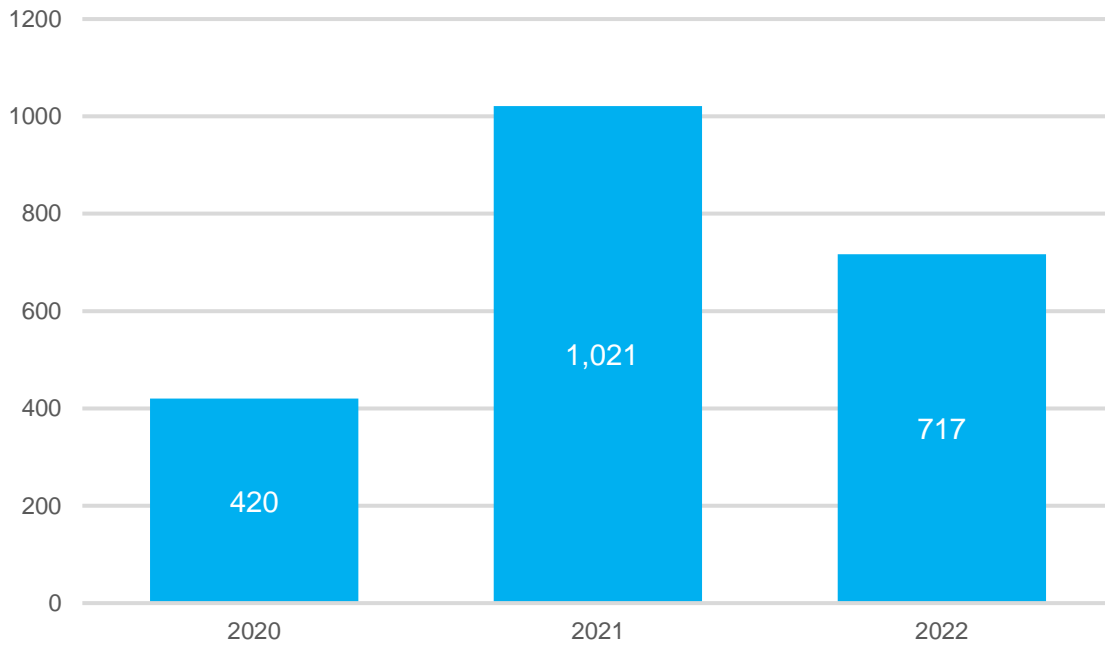


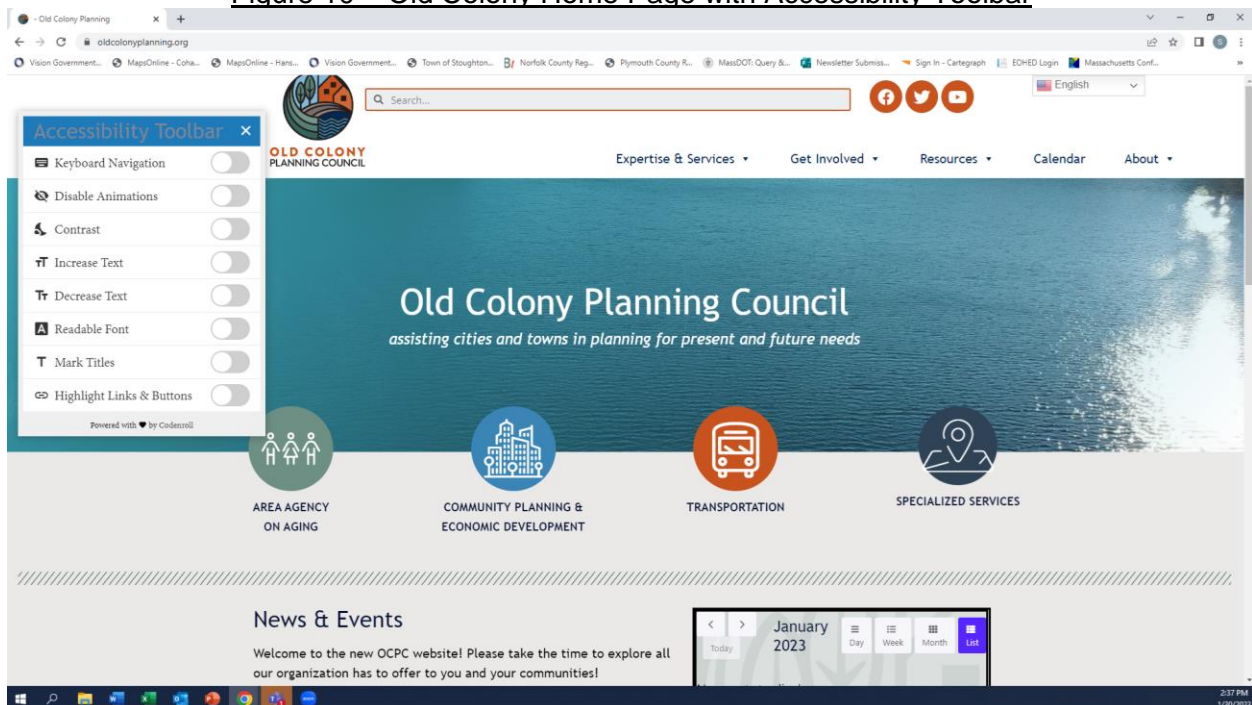
Figure 9: YouTube Views by Year



**Website**

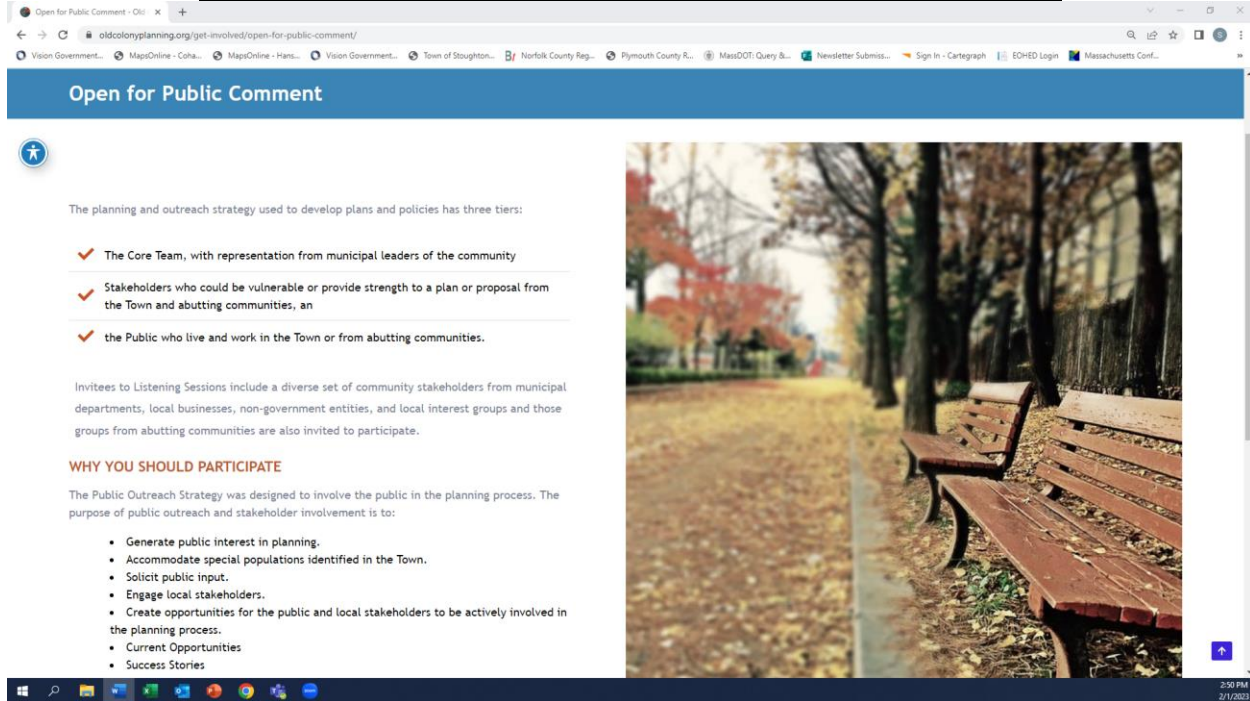
Old Colony Planning Council launched its new website in November 2022 and can be located at <https://oldcolonyplanning.org/>. It features an updated look with drone footage of the OCPC Region on the home page and has an accessibility toolbar pictured below which accommodates anyone that may have a visual impairment with tools such as changing text size, visual contrast, and keyboard navigation.

Figure 10 – Old Colony Home Page with Accessibility Toolbar



An addition that was made to the OCPC website last year is an online option for submitting a public comment on any item that is released for public review and comment period (i.e., the Public Participation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Unified Planning Work Program). When reports are released for public review and comment periods, they can submit a comment after reviewing the report at <https://oldcolonyplanning.org/get-involved/open-for-public-comment/>. For the Draft FFY 2023-2027 TIP (Transportation Improvement Program), there was one comment received via the online public comment submission portal. OCPC will continue to have this option available for public comments for all documents requiring a public review and comment period.

Figure 11 – Old Colony Online Public Comment Submission Portal



## Conclusion and Next Steps

Calendar years 2020 through 2022 have been great years for increased attendance at public engagements as well as increased utilization of OCPC's social media accounts.

The Old Colony MPO is diligent in its efforts to engage members of the public, especially those from underserved communities and populations. Using a multiprong approach to public engagement, the MPO has sought to bring more individuals and organizations into the planning process. However, despite the efforts to move the needle and increase public participation, participations rates have fluctuated over the last five years, with a recent spike in the previous three years due to virtual meetings. This fluctuation in public participation stems from the number of projects happening each year and the public appetite to participate which seems to be waning due to competing priorities and interest.

With the movement towards public participation taking place virtually on platforms such as Zoom due to COVID-19, the MPO has seen public participation increase. The addition of virtual meeting platforms is something the Old Colony MPO plans to continue using to provide greater access to members of the public and organizations to participate in public meetings even after COVID- 19

has passed. Allowing people to attend public meetings from the comfort of their homes or their offices seems to be a valuable tool going forward for the MPO to increase participation in the planning process.

After reviewing MOE Reports from the Hillsborough MPO<sup>1</sup> and the MPO and Planning Council for Pinellas County<sup>2</sup>, OCPC will look into the following recommendations to increase attendance at OCPC held events in the future as well as continue its desire to build more connections with underserved communities and populations:

- Increase live streaming options such as Facebook live or public tv broadcasts.
- Utilize short videos to inform with less attention commitment.
- Use local radio to inform public of upcoming events.
- Optical character recognition and alt text images on web accessible documents for visually impaired users.
- Work with human and social service agencies to identify issues and needs of underserved populations.

These recommendations could yield better results for attendance and participation and can create and strengthen bonds with communities, populations, and organizations. OCPC looks forward to the future of this Report and hopes to have more on which to report in the coming years.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://planhillsborough.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/MOE-Report-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://forwardpinellas.org/document-portal/public-participation-plan-evaluation-report/?wpdmdl=47524&refresh=622a161db08731646925341&ind=1613089511723&filename=Public-Participation-Plan-Evaluation-Report.pdf>