



# BAILEY AVE BRT

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## ENGAGEMENT PLANS

July 2025

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# Federal Disclaimer & Title VI Statement

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## Federal Disclaimer

The preparation of this report has been financed through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) in the interest of information exchange. The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors who are responsible for the facts and accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the FTA, FHWA or the State of New York. This report does not constitute a standard, specification or regulation.

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## Title VI Statement

NFTA is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and all related rules and statutes. NFTA assures that no person or group(s) of persons shall, on the grounds of race, color, age, disability, national origin, gender, or income status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any and all programs, services, or activities administered by NFTA, whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not. It is also the policy of NFTA to ensure that all its programs, policies, and other activities do not have disproportionate adverse effects on minority and low-income populations. Additionally, NFTA will provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency.

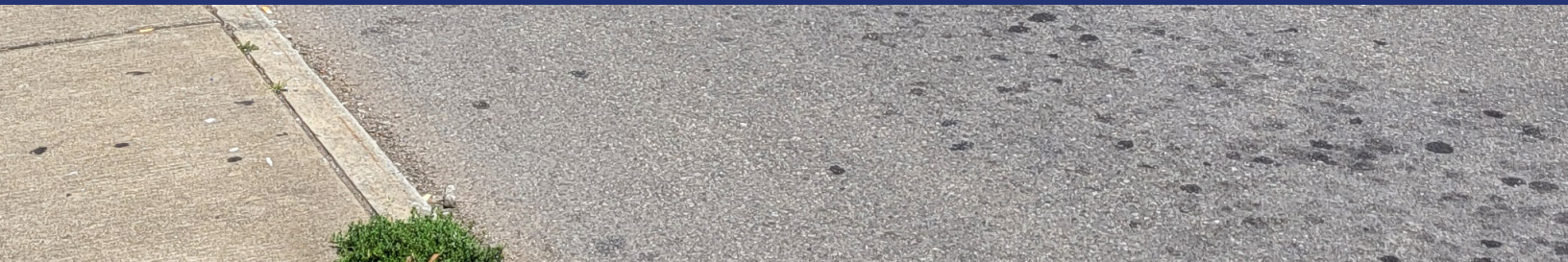




# BAILEY AVE BRT

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## PART I: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN



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# CHAPTER 1



# 1.0 Purpose of the Plan

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## 1.1 Overview

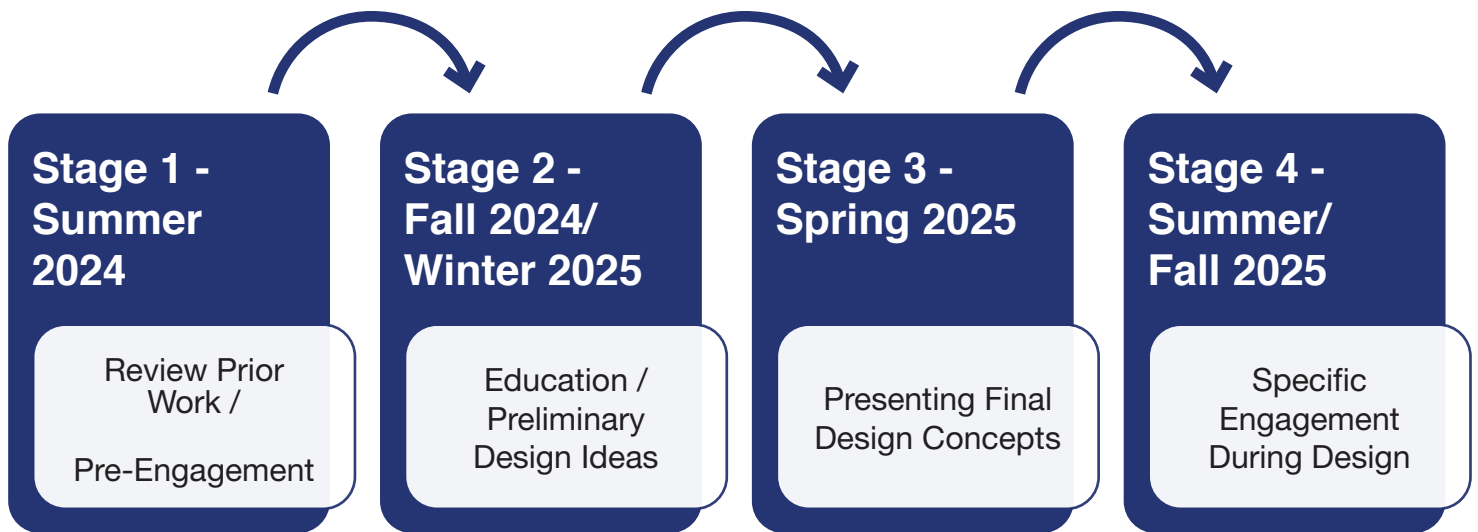
The Bailey Avenue Corridor Improvements Study (2021) conducted by the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), in partnership with the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) and the City of Buffalo, identified potential streetscape and transportation infrastructure investments to increase the level of transit service, encourage neighborhood revitalization; address infrastructure deterioration, unsafe pedestrian conditions, and inefficiencies in vehicle travel; and address racial equity and barriers to opportunity both past and present, including automobile dependence. Based on the recommendations included in the Bailey Avenue Corridor Improvements Study, NFTA-Metro intends to design and construct a bus rapid transit (BRT) line on Bailey Avenue from University Station in the north to Abbott and Bailey in the south.

The first and critical step for addressing equity and inclusion through this project is an Equity and Inclusion Plan and conducting the outreach and engagement outlined in the Plan. The Equity and Inclusion Plan will define an equitable vision and goal for the outreach and engagement process and layout how to gather key needs and priorities of the community. The Plan will develop outreach and engagement criteria and layout a program of activities for successful outreach and engagement with underserved communities. NFTA-Metro recognizes there are many individuals and institutions along Bailey Avenue who depend on access to high quality transportation options and supportive

infrastructure that connects to employment, healthcare and education opportunities throughout the corridor and surrounding areas. As a result, NFTA-Metro is dedicated to working closely with existing riders, interested and impacted parties (including historically underrepresented populations), community organizations, and the general public to choose a final design concept for the Bailey Avenue BRT.

This Public Participation Plan (PPP) defines key stakeholders and engagement tools and outlines a meeting schedule to engage a wide variety of stakeholders throughout the project. The PPP is designed to be a living document with purposeful flexibility. It may evolve over the course of the project as the effectiveness of engagement tools and techniques is evaluated. If necessary, the plan will be modified to better suit the needs of the project and broader community. Finally, this plan formalizes the commitment of the NFTA-Metro to solicit meaningful input and engage the public throughout the Bailey Ave BRT project.





*The Public Participation Plan will be implemented in four distinct stages.*

## 1.2 Vision for Engagement

The vision for the Bailey Ave BRT public engagement process is to actively and inclusively include those living, working, and traveling along the corridor and the Buffalo community in infrastructure improvements. Creation of a shared vision and community buy-in on design elements, station improvements, and pedestrian amenities, along with community feedback on design concepts, will result in a better project outcome for both NFTA and the community.

The EIP further explains the metrics that will be used to measure the degree to which each goal has been achieved.

The strategies discussed in the EIP will be woven throughout this PPP and, even when not specifically called out, will influence the design and implementation of all engagement activities. Please refer to the EIP for more detailed information.

## 1.3 Relationship to the Equity and Inclusion Plan

A separate document, the Equity and Inclusion Plan (EIP) defines equity and inclusion goals for this project's public engagement activities and outlines the strategies that will be used to achieve these goals.

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# CHAPTER 2





## 2.0 Engagement Project Team

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The engagement project team consists of the NFTA-Metro Project Manager, Creighton Manning Project Coordinator, Creighton Manning Deputy Project Manager/Task Lead, and the Highland Planning Project Manager. These contacts will be:

### NFTA-Metro

Project Manager  
Nicole Hill  
nicole.hill@nfta.com  
(716) 855-7618



### Creighton Manning

Deputy Project Manager/Task Lead  
Michael A. Amabile, AICP  
mamabile@cmellp.com  
(914) 800-9201



### Highland Planning

Project Manager  
Leanne Voit  
leanne@highland-planning.com  
(585) 549-2098





# CHAPTER 3



## 3.0 Committees

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Key committees and groups will be formed to help guide and inform the project. Many of these groups will also receive periodic updates on project progress. The committees and groups listed in this PPP are:

- Internal Steering Committee (ISC)
- Agency Partner Committee (APC)
- Elected Officials
- Key Stakeholder Group (KSG)
- Community Ambassadors

### 3.1 Internal Steering Committee (ISC)

The Internal Steering Committee (ISC) will provide oversight of the project, provide agency perspective from key NFTA departments, and review project deliverables as they are developed. Throughout the process, ISC members will engage with stakeholders and the general public through engagement activities detailed in Section 5.0 Engagement Activities.

*Meeting Frequency: Quarterly*

Internal Steering Committee (ISC)	
Name	Title
<b>Jeffery Amplement</b>	Planning Project Manager
<b>Nadine Chalmers</b>	Manager of Service Planning
<b>Jorge Cueto</b>	Engineering Project Manager
<b>Charles Dewey</b>	Manager of Metro Bus Maintenance
<b>Steven Duquette</b>	CIO
<b>Chris Fahey</b>	Director of Consumer and Governmental Affairs
<b>Samuel Gallivan</b>	Project Planner
<b>Tom George</b>	VP of Operations
<b>Rick Hanulewicz</b>	Manager Facilities & Property
<b>Nicole Hill</b>	Senior Transportation Planner
<b>Robert Jones</b>	Deputy Director of Public Transit
<b>Darren Kempner</b>	Director of Grants and Development
<b>James Lavelle</b>	Director of Health, Safety, and Environmental Quality (HSEQ)
<b>Rachel Maloney</b>	Manager, Bus and Special Service Operations
<b>James Morrell</b>	Director of Public Transit
<b>Mark Pereira</b>	Procurement/Materials Manager
<b>Jason Reilly</b>	Manager of System Administration
<b>Ashley Smith</b>	Assistant Manager of Grants and Development
<b>Helen Tederous</b>	Director of Public Affairs

*The names shown were in their roles at the time of production of the first version of this plan, September 2024. Updates, additions, and removals will occur as needed.*

## 3.2 Agency Partner Committee (APC)

The Agency Partner Committee (APC) will be comprised of NFTA staff and representatives from partner organizations, including the City of Buffalo, Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), and other local, regional, or state governmental agencies or entities. This group will provide input on project deliverables as they are developed and provide key insights from an agency perspective.

*Meeting Frequency: Quarterly*



<b>Agency Partner Committee (APC)</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Title</b>
<b>Nate Marton</b>	City of Buffalo	Commissioner of Public Works
<b>Todd Mcalister</b>	City of Buffalo	Buffalo Police Department – E District Chief
<b>Nolan Skipper</b>	City of Buffalo	Deputy Commissioner of Public Works
<b>Will Siegner</b>	City of Buffalo	Senior Planner
<b>Mike Davis</b>	GBNRTC	ITS
<b>Mike Finn</b>	GBNRTC	Director
<b>Matthew Grabau</b>	GBNRTC	Traffic & Data
<b>Amy Weymouth-Michaux</b>	GBNRTC	Project Point of Contact
<b>Jeff Amplement</b>	NFTA	Planning Project Manager
<b>Nadine Chalmers</b>	NFTA	Manager of Service Planning
<b>Chris Fahey</b>	NFTA	Director – Consumer and Government Affairs
<b>Sam Gallivan</b>	NFTA	Project Planner
<b>Nicole Hill</b>	NFTA	Senior Transportation Planner
<b>Rob Jones</b>	NFTA	Deputy Director – Public Transit
<b>Darren Kempner</b>	NFTA	Director - Grants and Development
<b>James Morrell</b>	NFTA	Director – Public Transit
<b>Ashley Smith</b>	NFTA	Assistant Manager of Grants and Development
<b>Athena Hutchins</b>	NITTEC	Executive Director
<b>Jennifer Michniewicz</b>	NYS DOT	Local Projects
<b>Roseleen Nogle</b>	Sewer Authority	Principal Sanitary Engineer
<b>Fouad Arab</b>	Water Authority	Engineer

*The names shown were in their roles at the time of production of the first version of this plan, September 2024. Updates, additions, and removals will occur as needed.*

### 3.3 Elected Officials

The project team will meet with local, state, and federal elected officials and/or their staff to seek their insights and keep them informed of the project's progress. Elected officials who represent the Bailey Avenue Corridor are listed in the following table.

*Meeting Frequency: As Needed*

<b>Elected Officials</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Title</b>
<b>Hon. Byron W. Brown</b>	City	Mayor of Buffalo
<b>Hon. Bryan J. Bollman</b>	City	President Pro Tempore, Buffalo Common Council
<b>Hon. Zeneta B. Everhart</b>	City	Masten District Council Member
<b>Hon. Leah Halton-Pope</b>	City	Majority Leader, Buffalo Common Council
<b>Hon. Mitchell P. Nowakowski</b>	City	Fillmore District Council Member
<b>Hon. Christopher P. Scanlon</b>	City	Common Council President
<b>Hon. Rasheed N.C. Wyatt</b>	City	University District Council Member
<b>Hon. Mark Poloncarz</b>	County	Erie County Executive
<b>Hon. April Baskin</b>	County	Erie County Legislator, Chair of the Erie County Legislature
<b>Hon. Lawrence J Dupre</b>	County	Erie County Legislator
<b>Hon. Timothy J. Meyers</b>	County	Erie County Legislator, Majority Leader of the Erie County Legislature
<b>Hon. Crystal People-Stokes</b>	State	Majority Leader, NYS Assembly
<b>Hon. Patrick Burke</b>	State	Member of the Assembly
<b>Hon. Monica P. Wallace</b>	State	Member of the Assembly
<b>U.S. Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer</b>	Federal	U.S. Senate Majority Leader
<b>U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand</b>	Federal	U.S. Senator
<b>Hon. Timothy M. Kennedy</b>	Federal	Member of Congress

*The names shown were in their roles at the time of production of the first version of this plan, September 2024. Updates, additions, and removals will occur as needed.*

## 3.4 Key Stakeholder Group (KSG)

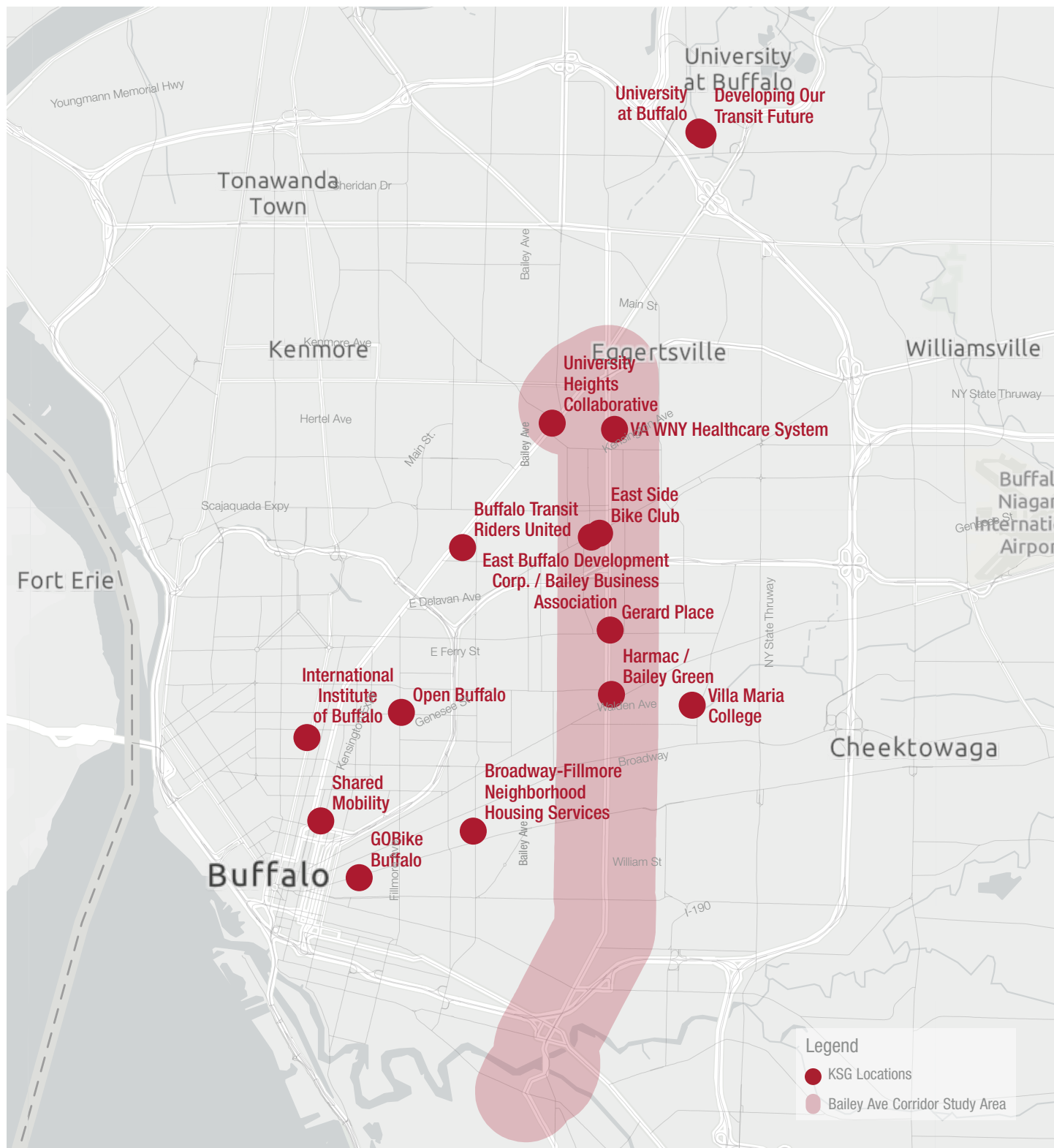
The Key Stakeholder Group (KSG) will be comprised of representatives from the City, region, and local community and will review project deliverables as they are developed and provide key insights from a community perspective.

*Meeting Frequency: Monthly (total of 12 meetings)*



Key Stakeholder Group (KSG)	
Name	Affiliation/Title
<b>Brandi Barrett</b>	Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood Housing Services, Director of Community Engagement / Developing Our Transit Future
<b>Sean Brodfuehrer</b>	University at Buffalo, Assistant Director of Campus Planning
<b>Ellen Burkhardt</b>	Harmac, Vice President of Administration
<b>Royce Calhoun</b>	VA WNY Healthcare System, Associate Medical Center Director
<b>Athenia Cyrus</b>	Solutionist/UB Doctoral Student, Developing Our Transit Future
<b>Jamal Davis</b>	Buffalo Transit Riders United
<b>Dominic Floro</b>	International Institute of Buffalo, Director of Language and Employment Services
<b>Linda Garwol</b>	University Heights Collaborative
<b>Jim Golden</b>	Open Buffalo, Clean Mobility Fellow
<b>George Johnson</b>	East Side Bike Club
<b>Shane Paul</b>	Shared Mobility
<b>Ann Rivera</b>	Villa Maria College, Provost
<b>Anita Sanders</b>	East Buffalo Development Corp. / Bailey Business Association
<b>Brendan Seney</b>	GOBike Buffalo, Planning Director
<b>Melissa Stephan</b>	Harmac/Bailey Green, Human Resources Manager
<b>Jen Tuttle</b>	University Heights Collaborative, President
<b>David Zapfel</b>	Gerard Place, President/CEO

*The names shown were in their roles at the time of production of the first version of this plan, September 2024. Updates, additions, and removals will occur as needed.*



The map above shows KSG locations overlaid on the project area.

## 3.5 Community Ambassadors

The project team will fund up to five community-based organizations or up to 15 individuals to serve as “Community Ambassadors” for the project. These ambassadors will conduct education, outreach, and surveys in the community and support the project team at all meetings, events, and pop-ups. More information about the Community Ambassador Program can be found in Section 5.0 Engagement Activities.

*Members:*

- TBD

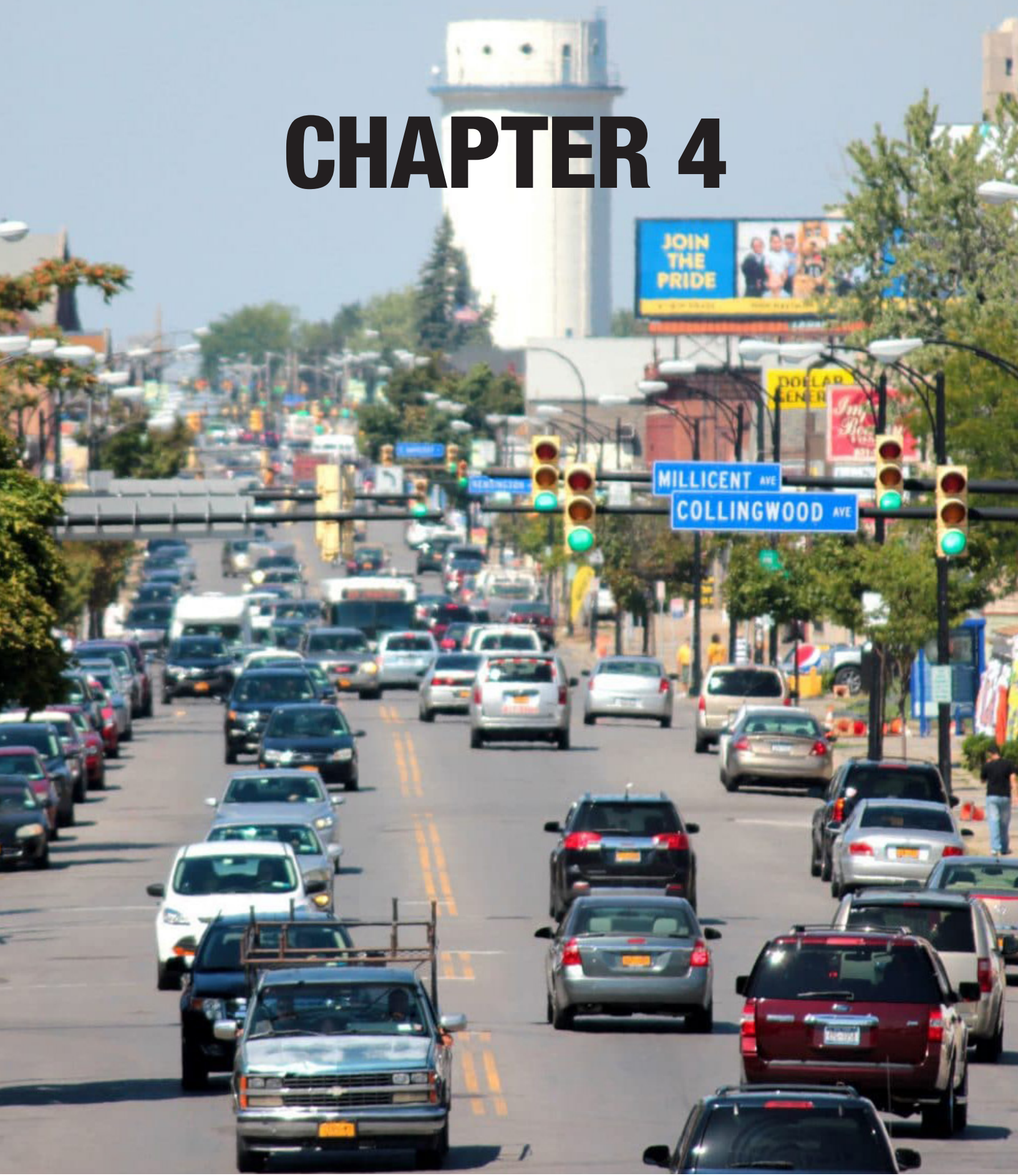
*Meeting Frequency: As needed.*



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# CHAPTER 4



## 4.0 Stakeholders

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The project team has identified a preliminary list of interested and impacted parties to engage throughout the project. Key populations include NFTA riders, residents, business owners, and members of various community groups with a vested interest in the project. The list will be modified as additional stakeholders are identified throughout the project.

The table below gives an overview of the different types of stakeholders and their roles and interests. All stakeholders will be emailed with updates and information on upcoming project events, and the project team will also seek to collaborate with stakeholders who can help promote input opportunities and otherwise expand the reach of the project.

Engagement of underrepresented groups is discussed in greater detail in the Equity and Inclusion Plan (EIP). Specific methods for encouraging participation can be found in Section 4.0 Goals, Strategies, and Metrics – Goal 1: Engage Diverse Populations.

Stakeholders	
Category	Examples
<b>Advocacy Groups</b>	1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers, Buffalo Transit Riders United, Citizens for Regional Transit, Coalition for Economic Justice, International Institute of Buffalo
<b>Business Organizations/ Major Employers/Local Businesses</b>	Bailey Business Association, Catholic Health Systems, Evergreen Health, Hallmark Planning & Development, Harmac, Imperial Market, M&T Bank, Northland Workforce Training Center, Palli Supermarket, Tops, University at Buffalo, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Walmart, Wegmans
<b>Community Organizations</b>	Bailey Green, Board of Block Clubs, Boys and Girls Clubs of Buffalo, Buffalo Go Green, Catholic Family Charities, Edward Saunders Community Center, GO Buffalo Niagara, GObike Buffalo, Jewish Family Services, Kaisertown Friends Association, Partnership for the Public Good, The Tool Library, University District Community Development Association, VA Hospital
<b>Higher Education</b>	Bryant & Stratton College, Buffalo State University, Canisius University, Daemen University, Erie Community College, University at Buffalo
<b>Municipalities</b>	City of Buffalo, Erie County
<b>NFTA Riders</b>	Frequent riders, occasional riders, paratransit riders
<b>NFTA Operators and Staff</b>	Operational Control Center, Operators, Service Planners, Transit Center Security, Vehicle Maintenance Workers
<b>Religious Institutions</b>	Baptist Minister's Conference of Buffalo & Vicinity, Calvary's Rock Fellowship Ministries, Dayspring Church of God of Prophecy, God's Temple of Grace Church, Masjid Al Salam, New Life Harvest Church, Our Lady of Bistrica Croatian Catholic Church, St Stephens Serbian Orthodox, Trinity Baptist Church
<b>Underrepresented Groups</b>	Low-to-moderate income (LMI) households, new Americans/new immigrants, people without access to cars/transit riders, seniors

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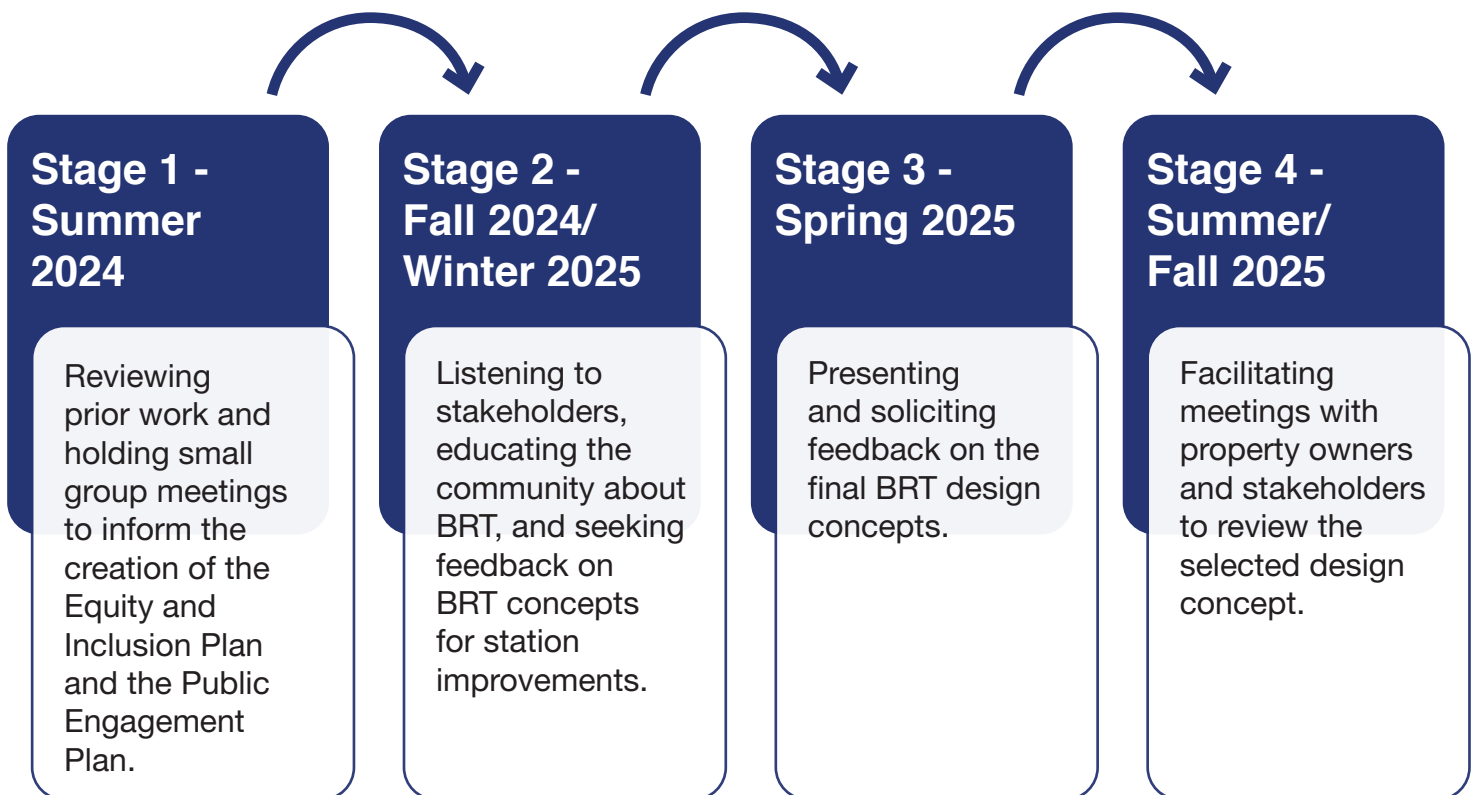
# CHAPTER 5



## 5.0 Engagement Activities

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Engagement activities will be organized in four (4) stages that correspond with the project’s technical scope of work.





## 5.1 Stage 1 (Summer 2024)

The goal of Stage 1 is reviewing prior work and holding small group meetings to inform the creation of the Equity and Inclusion Plan and Public Engagement Plan.

### 5.1.1 Stage 1 Engagement Activities

The purpose of engagement strategies during Stage 1 will be to inform the creation of this Plan and the Equity and Inclusion Plan. The Stage 1 engagement will include:

- Review previous outreach and engagement
- Conduct pre-engagement interviews
- Develop Equity and Inclusion Plan
- Create project website
- Create project Brand and Visual Identity Guidelines
- Key Stakeholder Group (KSG) meetings
- Small Group meeting
- Summer engagement activities

#### 5.1.1A REVIEW PREVIOUS OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

The consultant team will investigate, identify, review, and become familiar with public engagement conducted during previous and ongoing planning studies, transportation projects, capital projects, and other development plans pertaining to the Bailey Avenue corridor. The relevant studies and planning efforts to examine will include, but are not limited to:

- The Federal Transit Administration's Evaluation of Lane Reduction "Road Diet" Measures on Crashes

- The Bailey Avenue Corridor Improvements Study
- The Buffalo Sewer Authority Rain Check initiative
- Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC)'s Moving Forward 2050 regional transportation plan
- The Better on Bailey Infrastructure Plan
- The City of Buffalo's Green Code
- The City of Buffalo Energy Master Plan
- The Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan
- The Buffalo Main Street-Smart Corridor Plan
- The City of Buffalo Complete Streets Policy
- The Western New York Regional Economic Development Council (WNY REDC)'s A Strategy For Prosperity Plan
- The Buffalo Billion II: East Side Corridors Economic Development Fund

After reviewing all pertinent information, the consultant team will determine what additional outreach is necessary to educate residents, understand existing conditions, and develop a vision for the corridor that reflects rider, resident, and business-owner aspirations for Bailey Avenue. This outreach will become the basis for the PPP and EIP.

### 5.1.1B CONDUCT PRE-ENGAGEMENT INTERVIEWS

In order to gain the perspectives of interested parties and NFTA, the project team conducted seven (7) interviews with individuals identified as belonging to these groups to inform the creation of this Plan. The purpose of these preliminary interviews was to gain an understanding of how stakeholders are likely to perceive the project and what the possible issues will be. Interviewees included representatives from:

- East Buffalo Development Corp. / Bailey Business Association
- Gerard Place
- Hallmark Planning & Development
- International Institute of Buffalo
- NFTA
- Seneca-Babcock Block Club
- Tool Library

The interview questions were:

1. What has your experience been with transportation along the Bailey Ave. corridor?
2. What are your key concerns about the Bailey Ave. corridor and/or the BRT project?
3. What do you think are the biggest opportunities/best outcomes of this project?
4. What is the best way to reach people who cannot attend a public meeting?
5. Who else should we be sure to engage throughout the project (e.g., people, organizations, and populations)?
6. Are there any hot button issues we should be aware of before we start engaging the community?

Feedback from the pre-engagement interviews is summarized below.

- Engagement and survey fatigue exist in the general community
  - Groups not historically engaged as frequently, such as transit riders, new Americans, and LEP populations, are still eager to give feedback and share their thoughts
- Social media is a good communication tool, so are smart phones
  - Build a ‘virtual community’ where people can interact with the project
- Work with the Block Clubs to get the word out
- Bailey Avenue corridor needs more investment: road repairs, more frequent bus service, more bus shelters
- Communicate in multiple languages and remember those who cannot hear, see, and/or read
  - May also need to educate these groups on the history of the project in order to get input
- Make the corridor safer for pedestrians and bikes, as well as cars – it is currently problematic for all modes
- Ride the buses to engage with the community
- Make sure to improve the lives of people who live and own businesses along Bailey, not just the people who travel through
  - Include greenspace and amenities so that local people can enjoy the corridor

This feedback, the organizations and people who should be invited into the planning process, and a series of activities and further questions which delve further into the issues raised, will be incorporated into this Public Participation Plan and the Equity and Inclusion Plan.

### 5.1.1C DEVELOP EQUITY AND INCLUSION PLAN (EIP)

An Equity and Inclusion Plan (EIP) will be developed as a separate document in order to ensure that community engagement is equitable and accessible and that current strategies are evaluated and innovated to improve the overall engagement process.

The EIP will contain specific goals, targets, and metrics that will be used to track the success of the engagement, focusing on demographic considerations and best methods for diverse communications. Please see the NFTA-Metro Bus Rapid Transit Bailey Avenue Corridor Improvement Project Equity and Inclusion Plan for more information.

### 5.1.1D CREATE PROJECT WEBSITE

To enhance the reach and transparency of the public outreach for this project, the consultant team will create a website dedicated to the Bailey Avenue BRT project. The project landing page will be [NFTA-Metro | Bailey Avenue BRT \(baileyavebrt.com\)](http://NFTA-Metro | Bailey Avenue BRT (baileyavebrt.com)) and will include the following sections:

- g. Project Overview
- h. Background
  - i. Funding
  - ii. Emphasis on Equity
- c. Related Efforts
- d. Project Documents
- e. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- f. Get Involved (Comments / Feedback / Meeting Information)

The website will have the functionality to allow visitors to leave comments, sign up for the project database, and learn about upcoming events, etc.

The website will follow all project branding guidelines.

One additional piece of content developed in Stage 1 will be a basic Fact Sheet on the overall project. Additional “Fact Sheets” will be made on specific topics in other stages.

### 5.1.1E CREATE PROJECT BRAND AND VISUAL IDENTITY GUIDELINES

The consultant team will develop branding guidelines and graphics for the Bailey Avenue BRT project (NOT for NFTA BRT service). The brand identity will include:

- Color scheme
- Typography
- Map template
- Report Template (InDesign)

The branding guidelines will then be used to create branded materials and handouts for all stages of the project. Branding will also be used on the project website (shown below).



### 5.1.1F KSG MEETINGS

The project team will hold up to four (4) virtual KSG meetings during Stage 1. The purpose of these meetings will be to review and discuss the Public Participation Plan and the Equity and Engagement Plan. Feedback from the KSG will be used to inform both Plans.

The project team will coordinate these meetings, develop presentation materials (as necessary), facilitate discussion, capture feedback, and distribute meeting summaries.

The suggested meeting schedule is:

- KSG #1 – Late August 2024: Convene group, introduce project team, discuss project background, goals, and timeline, introduce PPP and EIP (assign review for “homework”)
- KSG #2 – Early September: Discuss comments on PPP and EIP and any suggested changes, begin discussing Stage 2 engagement events
- KSG #3 – Late September: Review “final” PPP and EIP, continue discussing Stage 2 engagement events and determining details of event locations, times, groups, etc.
- KSG #4 – to be replaced with meeting with the East Buffalo Development Corporation (see below)

During Stage 2 and Stage 3, the KSG will likely meet once a month or at strategic points.

## BUFFALO COMMUNITY CONNECTORS PROGRAM

The Community Connectors Program is a Smart Growth America initiative funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is intended to provide financial assistance in the form of grants to eligible applicants that will provide, on a “community-oriented connectivity” basis, broadband service that fosters economic growth and delivers enhanced educational, health care, and public safety benefits.

Local grant recipient, the East Buffalo Development Corporation (EBDC), is spearheading the series of summer initiatives to revitalize the Bailey community. Every effort aims to restore the vibrancy of this historic area – bringing together local organizations and leaders to produce impactful community events and projects that strengthen neighborly bonds, foster pride, and highlight the resilience of East Buffalo residents.

<https://buffaloconnectors.org/>



### 5.1.1G SMALL GROUP MEETING – EAST BUFFALO DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (EBDC)

In place of one (1) Stage 1 KSG meeting, the project team will meet again with staff from the East Buffalo Development Corporation to discuss the status of project, any issues that have come up since the pre-engagement interview, and other ideas they might have to help support the project.

The group will also discuss the ability and willingness of EBDC to assist with the Community Ambassador Program that will occur as part of Stage 2 engagement.

This meeting will take place during August or September 2024.

### 5.1.1H SUMMER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

NFTA staff will attend Community Connector (see box on previous page) events to begin listening to stakeholders and educating the community about BRT prior to the official kickoff of Stage 2 outreach in the Fall. Questions for the community will include:

- What have you heard about the Bailey Ave BRT project?
- Where did you hear about the Bailey Ave BRT project?
- What is the #1 thing you want to see included in this Bailey Ave project work?

Events will include the Kensington Farmers Market and the Eastside Youth Bike Rodeos. The Farmers Markets will take place from noon to 4:00PM and will allow the community to enjoy fresh produce from local farmers of color complete with live food demonstrations and samples – all at no cost to Bailey neighborhood

## FEEDBACK FROM STAGE 1 WILL BE USED TO INFORM:

### Future Engagement

- The Community Organizations we reach out to during Stage 2
- The location and/or format of engagement events in Stage 2
- Changes to engagement materials to make them easier to understand or more engaging

### Project Development

- Understand major issues related to transportation and infrastructure
- Identify specific locations/ intersections of concern
- Hear the priorities for investment in the corridor
- Learn what aspects of the project will require the greatest level of attention / education

residents.

The Bike Rodeos will be held in the evening (times vary) at local parks and will provide a safe space for children to learn bike-riding safety skills. Neighborhood youth will receive a free bike, helmet, and lock. Bike technicians will be on hand to provide one-on-one repair tips, free bike repair, and replacement parts.

The events that will be attended are:

- July 14 – Kensington Farmers Market
- July 28 – Kensington Farmers Market
- August 11 – Kensington Farmers Market
- August 25 – Kensington Farmers Market
- September 8 – Kensington Farmers Market
- September 22 – Kensington Farmers Market



*Kensington Farmers Market.*



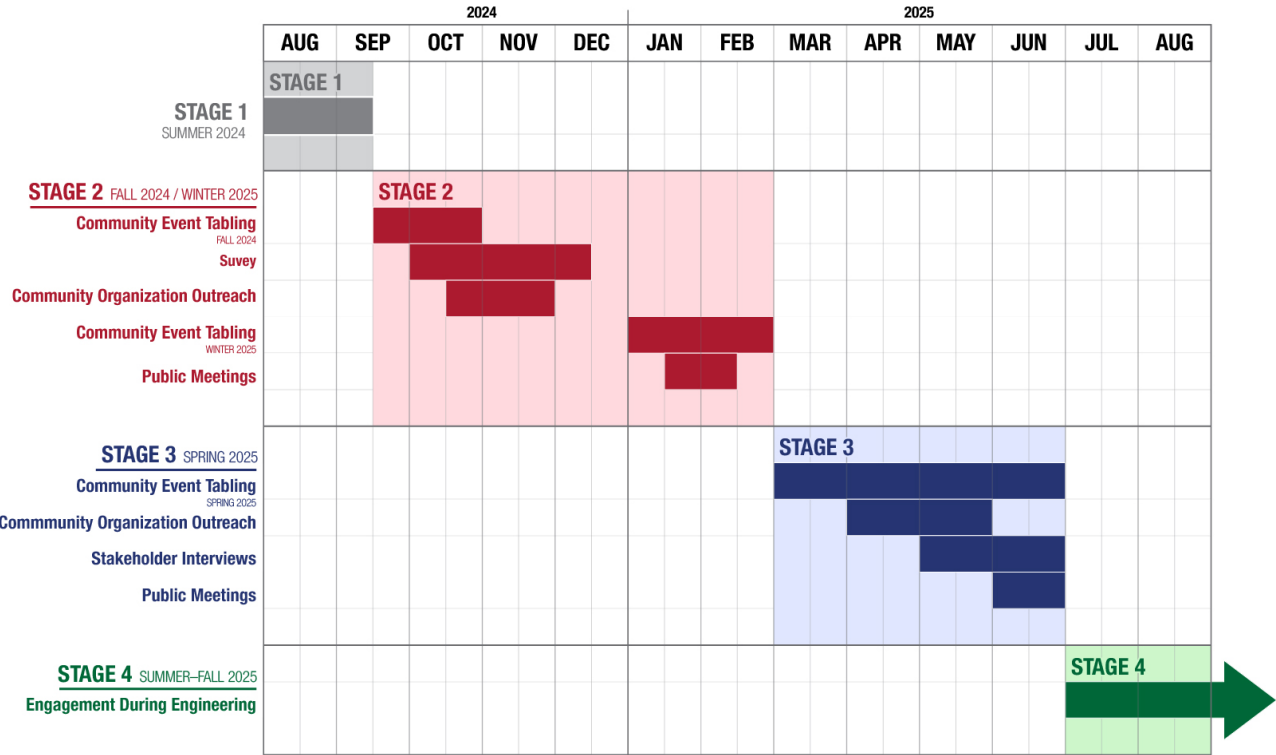
*Eastside Youth Bike Rodeos.*

BAILEY AVE BRT



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nfta.com

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVENT SCHEDULE



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS, VISIT [www.BaileyAveBRT.com](http://www.BaileyAveBRT.com)

## 5.2 Stage 2 (Fall 2024/Winter 2025)

The goal of Stage 2 is listening to stakeholders, educating the community about BRT, and seeking feedback on BRT concepts for station improvements. Preliminary designs will be shared, and the public will be invited to provide input on key items like station design and pedestrian amenities.

### 5.2.1 Stage 2 Engagement Activities

The Stage 2 engagement will include:

- Media engagement / project materials
- KSG meetings
- Interviews with stakeholders
- Meetings with community organizations
- Tabling at community events
- Community ambassadors
- Public meetings
- Survey

#### 5.2.1A MEDIA ENGAGEMENT / PROJECT MATERIALS

The goal of media engagement in Stage 2 is to communicate the purpose of the project and the project schedule, educate the community on BRT, and to encourage input through scheduled events and pop-ups. Tools to engage the media will include:

- Update project website

- Add Fact Sheets, Meeting Presentations, etc. to Project Documents
- Expand / update FAQs
- Monitor feedback
- Post dates of meetings
- Press releases
- Meeting flyers with QR codes and link to website
- Fact Sheets
- Better Bus Stops: BRT Stations and Amenities (Mobility Hubs)
- Make Buses Move Faster: Transit Priority Features
- Content for social media posts (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
  - *Consultant team will produce the content and NFTA-Metro will share via their accounts.*

Each of these will be drafted by the consultant team and distributed by NFTA. All municipal partners and community groups will receive press releases. Key elected officials will be informed of project progress on a regular basis by Government Affairs staff. Event information will be shared to help spread the word in respective communities. Helen Tederous, NFTA Director Of Public Affairs, will represent NFTA with the media.



### 5.2.1B KSG MEETINGS

The project team will hold up to six (6) virtual KSG meetings during Stage 2. The purpose of these meetings will be to review and discuss engagement activities and the BRT project itself. Feedback from the KSG will be used in the planning and development of future engagement events and the development of the design concepts.

Topics for the Stage 2 KSG meetings may include:

- Listening session – questions and concerns
- Engaging underrepresented groups
- Existing conditions and related efforts in the corridor
- Transit issues
- Safety issues
- Infrastructure issues
- Traffic and parking

KSG meetings will occur monthly and will be coordinated and facilitated by project team staff. KSG meetings will occur approximately once per month. Project consultant staff will coordinate these meetings, facilitate discussion, and create and distribute meeting summaries.

The suggested meeting schedule is:

- KSG #5 – September 2024
- KSG #6 – October
- KSG #7 – November
- KSG #8 – December
- KSG #9 – January 2025
- KSG #10 – February

### 5.2.1C COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

The project consultant staff will hire and manage Community Ambassadors that will conduct education and outreach in the community, administer surveys, disseminate information, and support the team at all meetings, events, and pop-ups. Project consultant staff will be present at all of these meetings, events, and pop-ups unless previously agreed to by the ambassador(s) and project consultant staff.

Ambassadors will also lead door-to-door outreach to promote upcoming public events and solicit feedback from residents regarding the Bailey BRT project. This work will commonly be done without the presence of consultant staff.

These ambassadors may be part of community-based organizations (CBO)s in the corridor, or they may be individuals. Project consultant staff will work to identify up to five (5) organizations or fifteen (15) individuals and set up contracts with each. Each organization or ambassador will be expected to provide approximately 60 hours of labor during Stage 2.

CBOs will be contracted by Highland Planning and will bill project consultant staff and then disperse payment to their staff. Individuals will be hired directly as part-time employees by Highland Planning. They will submit their time and be paid biweekly directly by project consultant staff.

Ambassadors are intended to provide geographic coverage through the Bailey Avenue corridor, so the composition of the team will need to ensure that all areas are represented. The ambassadors will also each be assigned a discrete target area along the corridor in which to conduct their outreach.

Community Ambassadors are intended to broaden public participation and ensure under-represented communities have the opportunity to participate in the project.

All ambassadors will meet for a 90-minute virtual training session run by project consultant staff. During this meeting project consultant staff will discuss:

- The BRT project
- What IS the Ambassador's job
- What IS NOT the Ambassador's job
- Methods of communication (HP email, list serv, etc.)
- Who to contact for questions/issues
- Bi-weekly meetings (may switch to monthly later in the project)

The project consultant staff will be responsible for determining high-level details for events (community groups to meet with, events at which to hold pop-ups) and developing all materials necessary to support the Ambassadors' outreach. The Ambassadors will assist with planning and scheduling outreach events, providing support staff for the events, and other duties as assigned.

### 5.2.1D SURVEY

Surveys can also be an effective way to raise project awareness, set expectations, and educate the public.

A survey will be developed that guides participants through the process of learning about the project and providing input. Intended goals of the survey are to ascertain what people already know about BRT and the Bailey Ave BRT project, collect input on a vision for the corridor, learn about community members, ask about issues in the corridor, and get feedback on and preferences for amenities at BRT stations. A list of potential questions can be found in Appendix A.

The consultant team will work with NFTA Metro and Creighton Manning on the survey design. NFTA will help to advertise the survey through various media outlets and emails. The team will notify members of the KSG, the stakeholder database, and the general public of the survey's availability through emails, press releases, content for the project website, and social media posts. Surveys will also be distributed at community events and meetings with community organizations.

The survey will be made available in multiple languages as determined by the community organization, consultant team, NFTA-Metro, and the KSG. The survey will also be made available in paper form for those who do not have access to a digital device.

### 5.2.1E TABLING AT COMMUNITY EVENTS

The project team will conduct up to fifteen (15) outreach activities in the community to connect with people who might not otherwise take part in the engagement process. These tabling events will occur throughout Stage 2. Each engagement activity will last two to three hours.

The purpose of tabling at these community events will be to educate the community on the Bailey Ave BRT project and bus rapid transit (BRT) in general. Preliminary designs will be shared, and the public will be invited to provide input on key items like station design and pedestrian amenities.

Outreach will be conducted in a “tabling” format. Materials will include information on the project, such as explanations of BRT, opportunities for input, a kiosk offering access to the survey, and handouts advertising public meetings.



Possible locations for engagement are listed below. Project consultant staff will work with NFTA-Metro to select up to fifteen (15) locations:

- East Buffalo Development Corporation Farmer’s Market
- Community Connector’s events
- Jazz at Richardson: Buffalo Jazz Festival
- Clinton Bailey Farmer’s and Flea Market
- WNY Refugee Film Festival
- Fall Fest at the Central Terminal
- Others TBD

The project team will identify dates and staff to attend pop-up events, coordinating with NFTA-Metro staff when requested. NFTA-Metro will help to advertise the engagement efforts through various media outlets.

Materials will be made available in multiple languages as determined by the consultant team, NFTA-Metro, and the KSG.

Project consultant staff will record the number of personal interactions with members of the public at each pop-up event, as well as new contacts for the stakeholder database and comments received.

### 5.2.1F MEETINGS WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

The project team will conduct up to ten (10) outreach activities with community organizations to connect with people who might not otherwise take part in the engagement process. The purpose of these meetings will be to educate the community on the Bailey Ave BRT project and bus rapid transit (BRT) in general. Design concepts may be shared to gather specific input on key items like station design and pedestrian amenities.

The length and format of each engagement activity will vary depending on the host organization. In most cases, the material will be presented in PowerPoint presentations, followed by question-and-answer sessions. However, interactive mapping exercises, dot voting / budgeting exercises, and ranking exercises, could also be used.

Materials will include information on the project, such as explanations of BRT, opportunities for input, information on how to access the survey, and handouts advertising public meetings.

Materials will be made available in multiple languages as determined by the community organization, consultant team, NFTA, and the KSG. Interpreters will be made available as needed for these meetings and attendees will be given the opportunity to request specific accommodations prior to each meeting.

The project team will record the number of personal interactions with members of the community at each organization's event, as well as new contacts for the stakeholder database and comments received.

Possible locations for engagement are listed below. Project consultant staff will work with NFTA-Metro to select up to ten (10) locations:

- Hennepin Senior Center
- International Institute of Buffalo
- University at Buffalo
- VA Hospital
- Gerard Place
- 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers
- Masjid Al Salam
- Catholic Charities
- Buffalo Go Green
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo
- Others TBD



### 5.2.1G INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Interviews with stakeholders during Stage 2 will be used to gain insight into the project on a one-on-one basis. These interviews will be used to educate stakeholders on the Bailey Ave BRT project and bus rapid transit (BRT) in general. Preliminary designs may be shared with interviewees to gather specific input on key items like station design, transit priority, or pedestrian amenities. The project team will also review outreach efforts with these stakeholders, where appropriate, and ask for input on additional individuals, organizations, and/or communities that should be engaged.

The consultant team will conduct up to fifteen (15) interviews, with at least eight (8) being virtual or by phone, and will work with NFTA to select these stakeholders.



The project team will arrange and conduct these interviews. The interview will be documented with attendee names, questions and answers, and any additional notes determined to be relevant to the project.

The project team will coordinate these meetings, facilitate discussion, and create and distribute meeting notes.



### 5.2.1G PUBLIC MEETINGS

The project team will hold up to three (3) public meetings near the end of Stage 2. At least one of these meetings will be in-person and at least one will be virtual. The in-person meetings (if more than one) will be spaced out geographically within the Bailey Avenue corridor.

These meetings will occur in late January or early February 2025, to allow sufficient time after the end-of-year holidays to begin advertising. Each meeting will be scheduled for a two-hour period, with meetings times and days of the week varying among the three meetings.

The content presented and shared during all three meetings held during Stage 2 will be the same, focusing on BRT education and preliminary design review, and will include a brief presentation followed by an open house/station format. Stations may include: a budgeting exercise, a dot exercise prioritizing transportation modes or amenities along the corridor, and an opportunity to discuss participants' experience with the corridor, issues and challenges, and opportunities for the project area.

Based on demographics and KSG/stakeholder input, interpreters will be made available as needed for the public meetings. Attendees will also be given the opportunity to request specific accommodations prior to each meeting.



## FEEDBACK FROM STAGE 2 WILL BE USED TO INFORM:

### Future Engagement

- The location, format, and/or target audience(s) of engagement events in Stage 3
- The work done by Community Ambassadors to fill in gaps connecting with underrepresented populations and geographic areas
- Changes to engagement materials to make them easier to understand or more engaging

### Project Development

- Priority locations for transit improvements
- Priority locations for pedestrian safety improvements
- Preferred aspects of BRT station area design
- Specific locations of concern



## 5.3 STAGE 3 (March-July 2025)

**Updated Goal:** The project team will work to maintain positive relationships with homeowners and business owners through continued communication and transparency to raise awareness about the project and advertise for the public meetings.

This Stage can be separated into two rounds, each with different goals:

**Round 1:** March-April will include continued education and raising awareness of the project. Keep momentum going during downtime between deliverables

**Round 2:** May-July will include Round 1 Goal as well as advertising for, and holding the public meetings

### 5.3.1 Stage 3 Engagement Activities

Outreach activities for Stage 3 will include:

#### Round 1 (March-April):

- Media engagement (NFTA)
- KSG meetings (1 scheduled by NFTA)
- Community Ambassadors (see attached Plan)
- Interviews with stakeholders (HP)
- Email blast 4/7

#### Round 2 (May-July):

- Media engagement (NFTA)
- KSG meetings (1-2, scheduled by NFTA)
- Tabling at community events (Ambassadors)
- Interviews with stakeholders (HP)
- Meetings with community organizations (HP and Ambassadors).
- Community ambassadors (see attached plan)

- One (1) project update event, one (1) virtual public meeting

### 5.3.1A MEDIA ENGAGEMENT / PROJECT MATERIALS

The goal of media engagement in Stage 3 is to continue to spread awareness, educate the public, and advertise for Public Meetings. Tools to engage the media will include:

- Update project website
  - Add Fact Sheets, Meeting Presentations, etc.
  - Expand / update FAQs
  - Post dates of meetings
- Press release in advance of Project Update event.
- Email blasts
  - meeting and tabling attendees will be encouraged to sign up for email list
  - NFTA will encourage people to sign up for the email list through social media.
- 2-3 portable posters for meetings and pop ups (plans and renderings)
- Meeting flyers with QR codes and link to website
- Content for social media posts (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
  - *Consultant team will produce some content and NFTA-Metro will share via their accounts.*

Please see the Media Engagement / Project Materials section in Stage 2 Outreach for more details.

### 5.3.1B KSG MEETINGS

The project team will hold up to three (3) KSG meetings during Stage 3. The purpose of these meetings will be to review and discuss

engagement activities and the BRT project itself. Feedback from the KSG will be used in the planning and development of future engagement events and the development of final design concepts. NFTA will schedule these meetings. Possible topics include:

- Engagement Plan Updates; how are we changing to improve outreach
- Review Engagement Summary; what have we heard, and how have the designs responded?
- Final Concepts/Changes

### **5.3.1C COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS**

This program will be a continuation of Stage 2. Existing ambassadors will be used, and no new ambassadors will be hired. Please see the attached Ambassador Plan for further details.

### **5.3.1D TABLING AT COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Highland Planning will schedule up to fifteen (15) tabling activities in the community to connect with people who might not otherwise take part in the engagement process. These events will be staffed by the Community Ambassadors with assistance from HP as needed.

Community Events may include Buffalo Public School Saturday Academies and Farmer's Markets, Masten District monthly meetings, other Council District meetings, school events.

### **5.3.1E MEETINGS WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

The project consultant team will conduct up to twelve (12) outreach activities with community organizations to connect with people who might not otherwise take part in the engagement process. The purpose of these meetings will be

to provide a project update. When relevant, the team can present the DRAFT final BRT design concepts for a few areas and solicit feedback. Locations for engagement will consider events held during previous public engagement stages.

Community Organizations may include the Bailey Business Association, Judge's Row Block Club, Delavan/Northumberland Block Club (and other Delavan block clubs). Other block clubs will be identified.

Members of the business community will be invited to attend the Project Update event to be held in June, with the goal to provide project updates.

### **5.3.1F INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

Interviews with stakeholders during Stage 3 will be largely focused on business and will be used to gain insight into the project on a one-on-one basis. The purpose of these interviews will be to present the DRAFT BRT design concepts and solicit feedback. The project consultant team will conduct up to fifteen (15) interviews, with at least eight (8) being virtual or by phone.

### **5.3.1G OPERATOR OUTREACH**

**As part of NFTA's Operator engagement strategy, operator engagement will continue at the three bus garages (Babcock, Frontier and Cold Spring). The engagement includes receiving feedback on draft design concepts (stations, end of line and intersections)**

### **5.3.1H PUBLIC MEETINGS**

The project team will hold one in-person Project Update event and one virtual Project Update event to provide project updates to the



general public, elected officials and business community. Attendees will be asked to provide their input on various elements of the project, and to provide additional input through the website/email. Following the public events, the presentation boards will be shared at four (4) tabling events held at various locations along the corridor. The events held during Stage 3 will focus on continued BRT education and final design review

The in-person and virtual Project Updates will be held in June, with the tabling events being completed by mid-July.

As per the previous open-house meetings, interpreters will be made available as needed. Attendees will also be given the opportunity to request specific accommodation prior to each meeting.

Advertising for the public meetings will be done through:

- Social Media (NFTA)
- Door to Door business outreach
- Flyers at events
- Press Release
- Email Blasts
- NFTA-Metro Rider Alerts

## FEEDBACK FROM STAGE 3 WILL BE USED TO INFORM:

### Future Engagement

- Ongoing messaging related to the project

### Project Development

- Specific issues or concerns related to plans (stations, transit priority, streetscaping, etc.)
- Additional analysis needed to support decisions

## 5.4 STAGE 4 (Summer/ Fall 2025)

The goal of Stage 4 is facilitating individual meetings with property owners and stakeholders to review the selected design concept and resolve any issues.

The main engagement tools for Stage 4 will be:

- Individual meetings with property owners or non-technical stakeholders
- Visual materials including maps, plans, figures, and renderings to communicate concepts and impacts property owners
- Meeting / Mailing Tracker to ensure all points of contact are documented

### 5.4.1A INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

The project team will schedule, plan, and execute meetings, as needed, after the submission of the Design Rational Report (DDR) during the period that the consultant team is working toward 30% design development. This will entail facilitating meetings with individuals or small teams who need additional engagement in order to resolve any issues with the selected design concept.

### FEEDBACK FROM STAGE 4 WILL BE USED TO INFORM:

#### Future Engagement

- Ongoing messaging related to the project

#### Project Development

- Critical issues to resolve before next design phase

## 5.5 Tracking Outreach and Engagement

The project consultant team will track outreach and engagement using a variety of metrics throughout the project. Once engagement activities conclude, the consultant team will produce an overall summary of the number of people contacted through different outreach methods, diversity of people contacted, and satisfaction with the outreach and participation process.

## 5.6 Other Outreach Tools

Several different tools will be employed to organize information, document input, and evaluate the stakeholder and public participation process. Additional outreach tools are described briefly in the following sections.

### *5.6.1 Stakeholder Database and Email Blasts*

A stakeholder database will be developed and maintained that includes the name, title, agency, address, phone number, and email address of each person or stakeholder that will be included in the stakeholder outreach efforts for the project. The consultant team will create and maintain a stakeholder database in Google, SharePoint (Excel), or AirTable to use in ongoing project communications with members of the public. The new contacts developed through outreach efforts will be added to the email addresses currently in NFTA-Metro's email list.

The project consultant team will generate email blasts to be sent out to tailored segments of the database in order to advertise surveys, public meetings, pop-up outreach opportunities, and updates to the project website.

### *5.6.2 Communication via Transit*

NFTA-Metro will collaborate with the project consultant team to create rail cards, Rider Alerts, and shelter ads to advertise project meetings and surveys.

These ads and rail cards will be designed and managed by NFTA-Metro using content developed by the project consultant team.

### *5.6.3 Facebook Ads*

The project consultant team will provide a schedule of Facebook posts and events every two weeks, which NFTA-Metro will "boost" using Facebook's ad services platform. This will ensure that a wide variety of community members will have a chance to learn about the BRT planning process.

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# APPENDIX A



# Appendix A - Sample Survey Questions

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- What are your priorities for Bailey Avenue? (Order from highest to lowest)
  - Public transit service
  - Pedestrian accessibility
  - Parking
  - Corridor safety
  - Bicycle accessibility
  - Reducing traffic congestion
  - Property/business accessibility
  - ADA/mobility device accessibility
- What is the purpose of your travel on Bailey Avenue? (Select all that apply)
  - Shopping
  - Residential
  - Work
  - Education
  - Worship
  - Other
- If you selected “Other” above, please describe.
- What form of transportation do you currently use? (Select all that apply)
  - Walking (including mobility devices)
  - Bicycle
  - Public transit
  - Taxi/Uber/Lyft
  - Personal vehicle
  - Carpool/Ride sharing
  - Truck/Commercial vehicle
- What form of transportation would you use if it was more accessible? (Select all that apply)
  - Walking (including mobility devices)
  - Bicycle
  - Public transit
  - Taxi/Uber/Lyft
  - Personal vehicle
  - Carpool/Ride sharing
  - Truck/Commercial vehicle
- What form of transportation would you use if it was safer? (Select all that apply)
  - Walking (including mobility devices)
  - Bicycle
  - Public transit
  - Taxi/Uber/Lyft
  - Personal vehicle
  - Carpool/Ride sharing
  - Truck/Commercial vehicle

- How often do you travel on Bailey Avenue?
  - Rarely/Never
  - Occasionally
  - Weekly
  - Daily
  - Multiple times per day
- Are you traveling on Bailey Avenue on weekdays, weekends, or both?
  - Weekdays
  - Weekends
  - Both
- When do you typically travel on Bailey Avenue? (Select all that apply)
  - Early morning
  - Morning rush hour
  - Midday
  - Afternoon rush hour
  - Evening/Late night
- Has a lack of reliable transportation ever prevented you from finding or keeping a job?
  - Yes
  - No
- Does a lack of reliable transportation prevent you from working now?
  - Yes
  - No
- If so, what are the reasons? (Select all that apply)
  - There are no transportation options near me
  - There are no transportation options to job sites
  - I cannot afford transportation to work
  - Buses are full and I cannot get a ride
- How would you describe your ideal commute?
  - Overall trip time is less than 20 minutes
  - Wait time between buses is less than 5 minutes
  - Buses always have empty seats
  - Buses come more frequently
  - Other:
- How often do you use transit?
  - Rarely/Never
  - Occasionally
  - Weekly
  - Daily
  - Multiple times per day
- Would higher frequency transit service on Bailey Avenue impact how you consider traveling along this corridor?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not sure

- Which bus routes do you use?
- Which destinations/areas on Bailey Avenue should have more frequent service?
- Mapping exercise: What barriers do you see along the corridor? (Please add markers to map)
  - Inadequate crosswalks
  - Missing sidewalks
  - Inadequate ADA facilities
  - Inadequate bicycle facilities
  - Inadequate lighting
  - No bus stop shelter/bench
  - Lack of parking near transit
  - Speeding/aggressive driving
- What is your home zip code?
- What is your work zip code?
- What is your age?
- What gender do you identify as?
- What is your race?
- Do you speak a language other than English as your primary language?
- Other comments about transit on Bailey Avenue?





# **BAILEY AVE BRT**

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## **PART II: EQUITY AND INCLUSION PLAN**



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# CHAPTER 1





# 1.0 Purpose of the Plan

## 1.1 Overview

The Bailey Avenue Corridor Improvements Study (2021) conducted by the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), in partnership with the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) and the City of Buffalo, identified potential streetscape and transportation infrastructure investments to increase the level of transit service, encourage neighborhood revitalization; address infrastructure deterioration, unsafe pedestrian conditions, and inefficiencies in vehicle travel; and address racial equity and barriers to opportunity both past and present, including automobile dependence.

Based on the recommendations included in the Bailey Avenue Corridor Improvements Study (BACIS), NFTA-Metro intends to design and construct a bus rapid transit (BRT) line on Bailey Avenue from University Station in the north to Abbott and Bailey in the south.

The primary funding source for the engagement efforts as part of this project is an Areas of Persistent Poverty (AOPP) grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The neighborhoods and ridership served by the current NFTA-Metro Route 19 – Bailey Avenue and the proposed BRT system have high poverty rates and are predominately low-income and minority.

As shown in the Figure 1 (see page 9), Census Tracts that meet the Federal Transit Administration's definition of an Area of Persistent Poverty border or encompass the entire proposed Bailey Avenue BRT, which travels along the same path as the current Bailey Avenue Route 19. An April 2021 on-board transit rider survey conducted by the NFTA and GBNRTC found that: (1) 86 percent of surveyed riders reported an annual income level of \$35,000 or less; (2) 77 percent of surveyed riders reported a race/ethnicity of





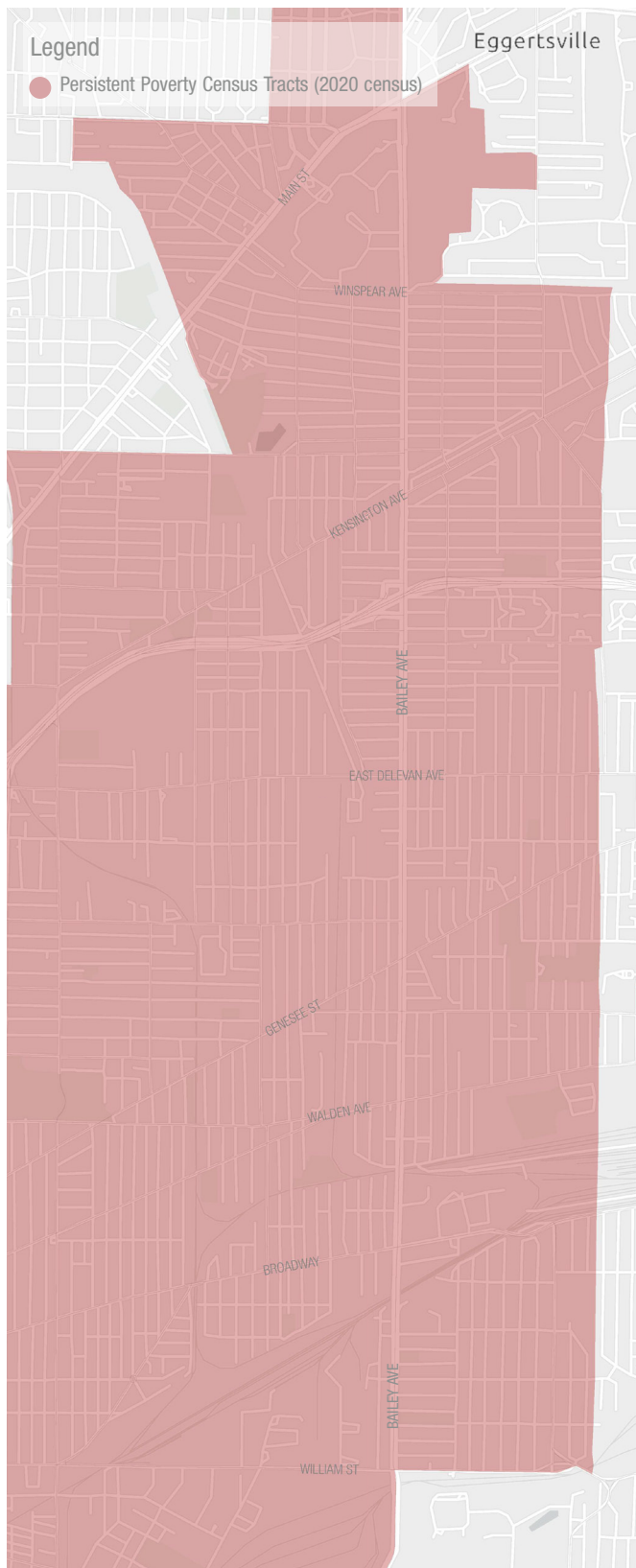


Figure 1. Census Tracts that meet the Federal Transit Administration definition of an Area of Persistent Poverty.

Black/African-American or Hispanic/Latino; and (3) 71 percent reported that there were not any working vehicles available to their household to make their current one way trip (see the attached “Bailey Avenue (Route 19) April 2021 On-board Survey”).

The first and critical step for addressing equity and inclusion through this project is an Equity and Inclusion Plan and conducting the outreach and engagement outlined in the Plan. The Equity and Inclusion Plan will define an equitable vision and goal for the outreach and engagement process and layout how to gather key needs and priorities of the community.

The Plan will develop outreach and engagement criteria and layout a program of activities for successful outreach and engagement with underserved communities.

NFTA-Metro recognizes there are many individuals and institutions along Bailey Avenue who depend on access to high quality transportation options and supporting infrastructure that connects to employment, healthcare and education opportunities throughout the corridor and surrounding areas.

As a result, NFTA-Metro is dedicated to working closely with existing riders, interested and impacted parties (including historically underrepresented populations), community organizations, and the general public to develop a final design concept for the Bailey Avenue BRT that meets the needs of each stakeholder.

NFTA-Metro is committed to building trust with underserved communities, and ensuring project needs and input from underserved communities are prioritized in the planning process and into and through project

construction and operation of the Bailey Ave BRT service.

For the purposes of this plan, historically underrepresented groups are defined as groups who have been denied access and/or suffered past discrimination in relation to contributing to public-realm projects via community engagement. Historically, there has been an imbalance in the representation of these groups within the total population that participates in engagement activities in comparison to the percentage these groups represent of the total population in the project area.

This Equity and Inclusion Plan (EIP) defines equity and inclusion goals for this project and outlines the strategies that will be used to achieve these goals. It further explains the metrics that will be used to measure the degree to which each goal has been achieved.

The EIP is designed to be a living document with purposeful flexibility. This approach

must include evaluating current strategies and innovating to improve the community engagement process. The EIP may evolve over the course of the project as the effectiveness of strategies is evaluated. If necessary, it will be modified to allow for input from the broadest possible array of interested and impacted parties.

Finally, this plan formalizes the commitment of the NFTA-Metro to create and implement an equitable and inclusive public participation process throughout the Bailey Ave BRT project.



Figure 2. Overall project timeline.



## 1.2 Relationship to the Public Participation Plan

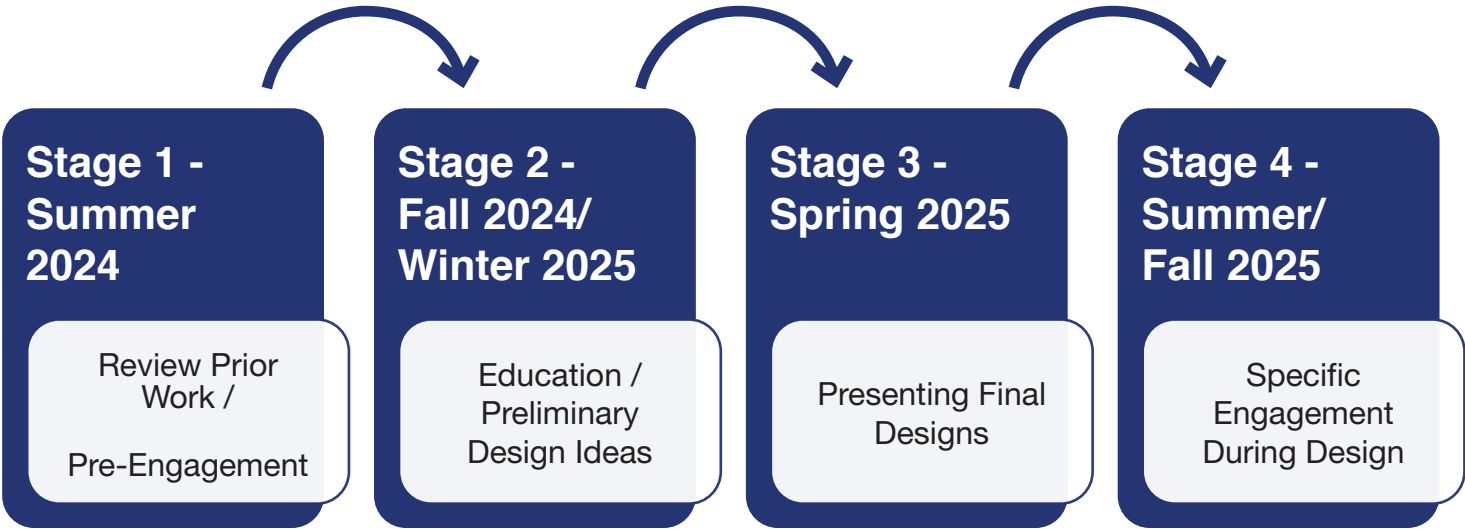
This EIP will include information relating to all four stages of engagement activities outlined in the Public Participation Plan (PPP) and illustrated in the diagram below.

The strategies discussed in the EIP will be woven throughout the PPP and, even when not specifically called out, will influence the design and implementation of all engagement activities. Metrics and goals will be measured across all engagement activities outlined in the PPP, as deemed appropriate by NFTA-Metro and the consulting team. Regular reporting on engagement metrics will be used to ensure transparency and accountability throughout the project.

## 1.3 Use of EIP Data

The data (see metrics in Section 4.0 Goals, Strategies, and Metrics) collected through the implementation of this plan will be used on an on-going basis throughout the Bailey Ave. BRT project to adjust engagement activities so that the feedback collected is as equitable and inclusive as possible.

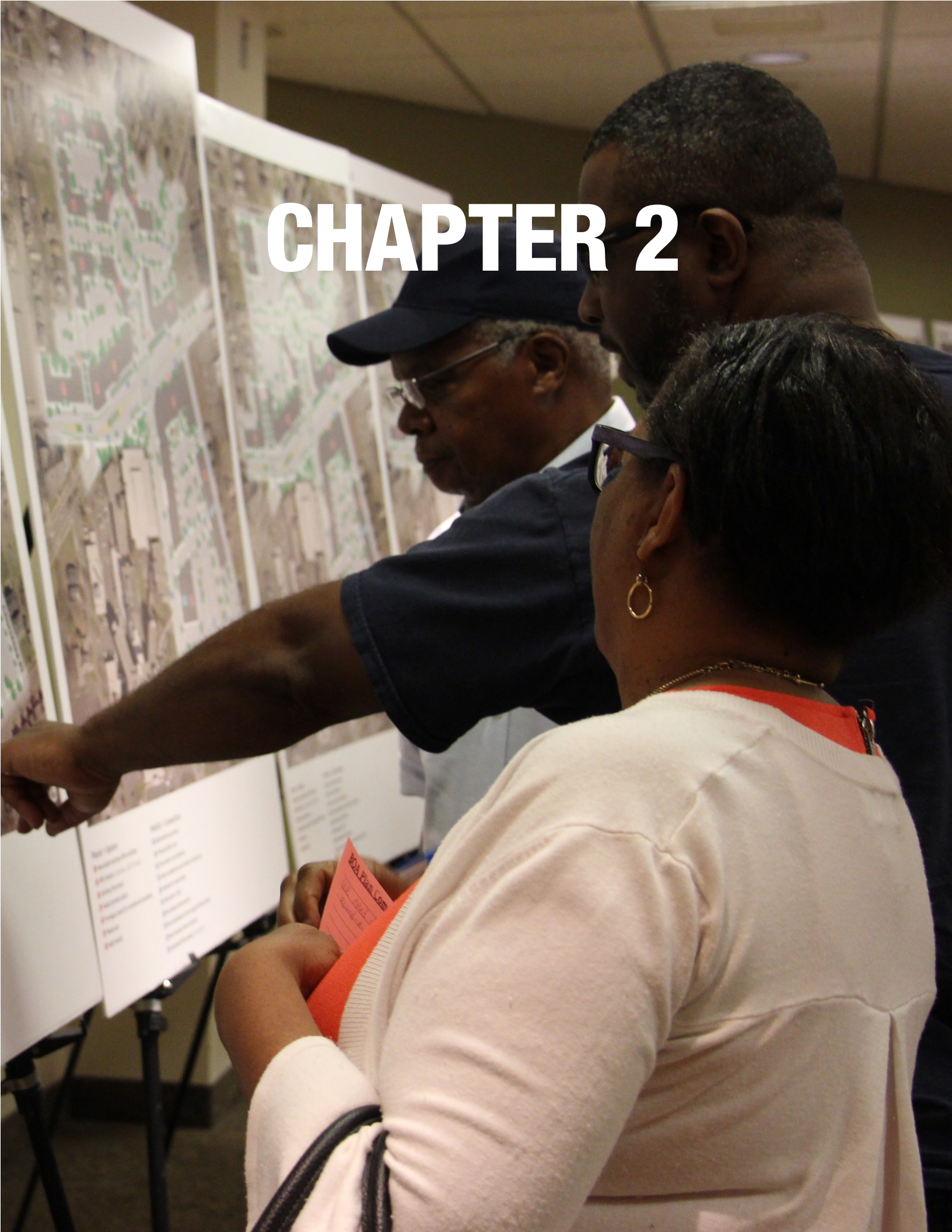
*The EIP and Public Participation Plan will be implemented in four distinct stages.*



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# CHAPTER 2



## 2.0 Engagement Project Team

The engagement project team consists of the NFTA-Metro Project Manager, Creighton Manning Project Coordinator, Creighton Manning Deputy Project Manager/Task Lead, and the Highland Planning Project Manager. These contacts are shown in the table below:

Name	Role	Contact
<i>NFTA-Metro</i>		
<b>Nicole Hill</b>	NFTA-Metro Project Manager	nicole.hill@nfta.com (716) 855-7618
<i>Creighton Manning</i>		
<b>Michael A. Amabile, AICP</b>	Deputy Project Manager/Task Lead	mamabile@cmellp.com (914) 800-9201
<i>Highland Planning</i>		
<b>Julie Boasi</b>	Project Manager	julie@highland-planning.com (585) 649-1291

Table 1. Engagement project team.



# CHAPTER 3





## 3.0 Equity and Inclusion Areas of Focus

Through the review of prior studies/reports, preliminary interviews, and conversations with NFTA-Metro staff, three (3) main areas of focus have been identified in relation to equity and inclusion for the project: underrepresented populations, geographic areas/neighborhoods, and languages. It is possible that this list may need to be expanded as the Project progresses. Examples of each focus area are listed in the table below.

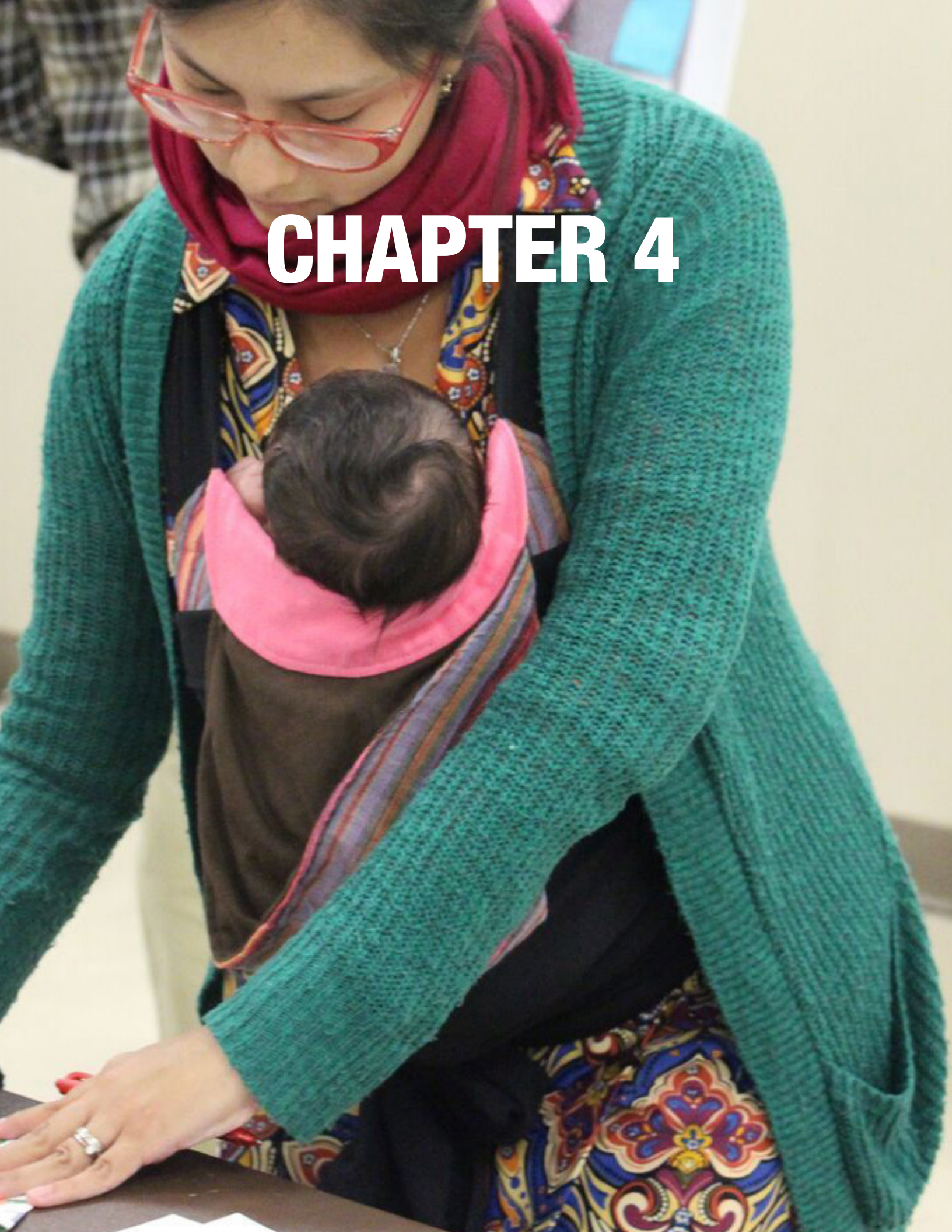
Category	Examples
<b>Underrepresented Populations</b>	Low-to-moderate income (LMI) households, underrepresented minorities (URM: Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, or American Indian), new Americans/new immigrants/limited English proficiency (LEP), people without access to cars/transit dependent riders
<b>Geographic Areas*</b>	Zip Codes: 14206, 14210, 14211, 14212, 14214, 14215, 14220, 14226
<b>Languages</b>	American Sign Language (ASL), Arabic, Bengali (Bangla), Burmese, non-seeing methods, Dari, Farsi, Karen, Kinyarwanda, Nepali, Pashto, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tigrinya

Table 2. Equity and inclusion areas of focus.

*\*Neighborhoods are another way to track geographic distribution. Although neighborhoods will not be considered an area of focus, engagement distribution by neighborhood will be taken into consideration when planning events. Local neighborhoods include Genesee-Moselle, Kenfield, Kaisertown, Kensington, LaSalle, Lovejoy, Schiller Park, Seneca-Babcock, and University Heights*



# CHAPTER 4



## 4.0 Goals, Strategies, and Metrics

Goals, strategies, and metrics are established in this EIP to describe and measure equity and inclusion throughout all stages of public engagement for the Project.

In the context of this EIP, goals will be described as desired outcomes, strategies as prescriptive plans or methods of achieving stated goals, and metrics as the standards of measurement that capture the efficacy, performance, or quality of the engagement.

The strategies and metrics for each goal of this EIP are described in the following sections.

### 4.1 Goal 1: Engage Diverse Populations

This goal aims to ensure representation from underrepresented populations (See Table 2 in Section 3.0) in public engagement. Census data will be used to determine the approximate percentage of each population within the study area and metrics will be set to ensure representative percentages are included in engagement outreach and feedback (See Table 3).



#### 4.1.1 Goal 1 Strategies

Strategies that will be used to engage diverse populations will include:

- **Hiring and managing Community Ambassadors in the corridor to conduct education and outreach that is a diverse representation of the Buffalo community.** Hire ambassadors that are representative of the underrepresented populations along the corridor.
- **Community-based organization outreach.** Work with community organizations that represent/work with the underrepresented populations along the corridor.
- **Community tabling (pop-ups).** Hold pop-up tabling events at ethnic grocery stores, places of worship, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, food pantries, senior centers, bus stations/shelters, libraries, etc.
- **Assess the demographics of survey respondents and adjust (either in collection or analysis methods) for qualitative data to be representative of the corridor.**

It should be noted that strategies such as hiring Community Ambassadors, working with community-based organizations, and community tabling are effective across many of the goals in this EIP and will appear throughout this section.



### 4.1.2 Goal 1 Metrics

Metrics used to measure the success of this goal are:

- ✓ **% of individuals engaged who identify as being from low-to-moderate income (LMI) households**
- ✓ **% of individuals engaged who identify as an underrepresented minority (URM: Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, or American Indian)**
- ✓ **% of individuals engaged who identify as new Americans/new immigrants/those with limited English proficiency (LEP)**
- ✓ **% of individuals engaged who identify as people without access to cars/transit riders**

Data collection outside of the survey will need to make certain assumptions about which underrepresented populations an individual might belong to, for example:

- NFTA on-board survey data percentage of riders that do not have access to a vehicle will be used to estimate the number people without access to cars/transit riders from the total number of riders engaged
- If consultants/ambassadors are holding a tabling event and an individual asks for language interpretation, that individual would be counted as having limited English proficiency

This data should be collected during every public engagement opportunity, if possible.

Percentage of individuals within the study area who:	
Live in LMI Households	26%
Identify as an URM	62%
Black/African American	53%
Hispanic/Latino	9%
American Indian	1%
Have Limited English Proficiency	2%
Do Not Have Access to a Car	23%

Table 3. Goal 1 metric targets were determined by the percentage of individuals within the study area that fell within the target population. Data Source: 2020 Census Data.

## 4.2 Goal 2: Engage Diverse Geographic Areas

The purpose of Goal 2 is to guarantee representation from all geographic areas along the Bailey Avenue corridor and will be measured by zip code. Census data will be used to determine the approximate population percentage (number of residents) in each of the identified zip codes. Metrics will then be set up to ensure representative percentages are achieved in engagement outreach and feedback.

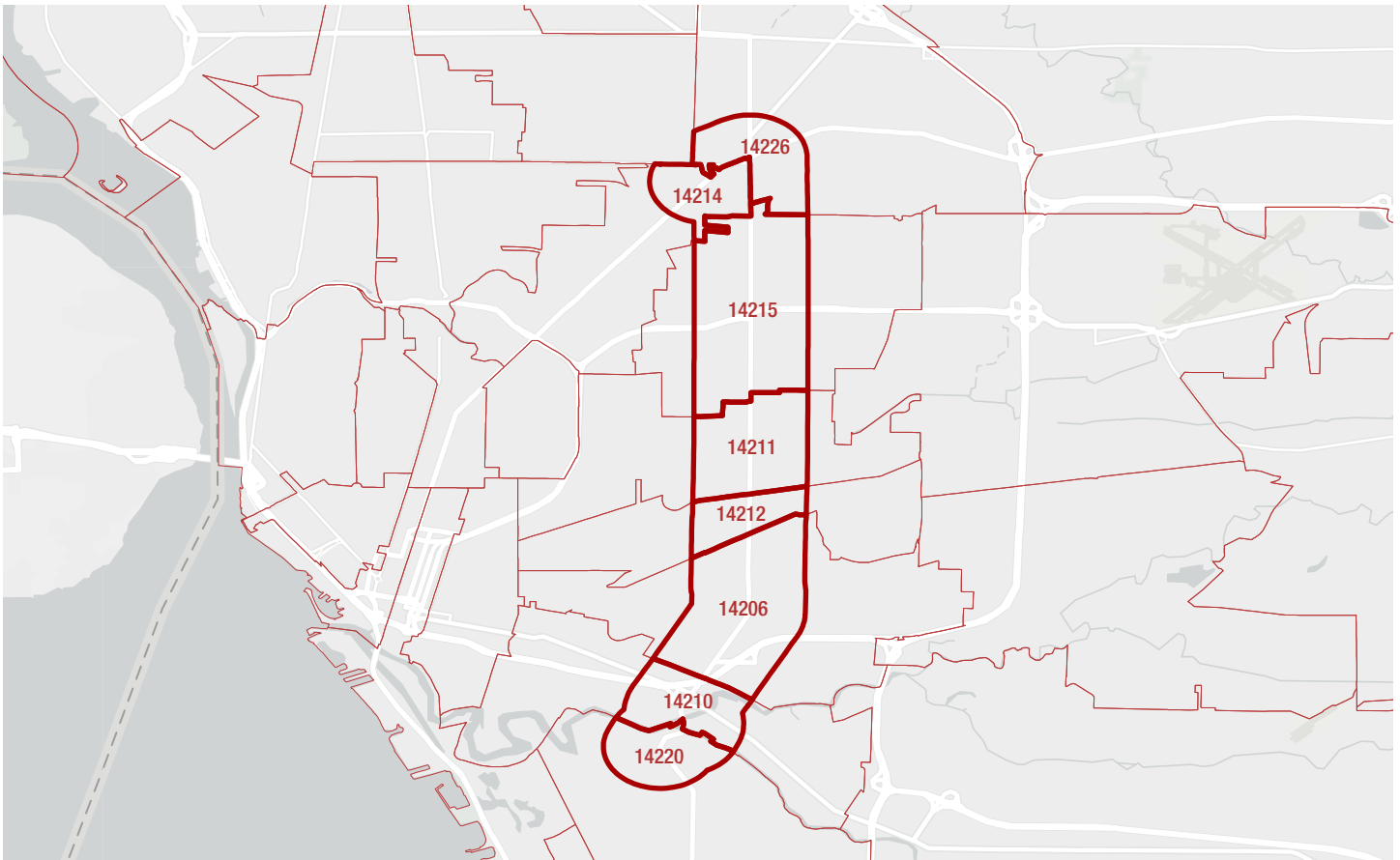


Figure 3. Map of zip codes in the project area.



### 4.2.1 Goal 2 Strategies

Strategies that will be used to engage diverse geographic areas or neighborhoods will include:

→ **Hiring and managing Community Ambassadors in the corridor to conduct education and outreach can effectively represent the different geographies along the Bailey Avenue corridor.** Hire ambassadors with connections to or the ability to effectively represent the geographic areas along the corridor.

→ **Community-based organization outreach**

- Work with community organizations, most notably Block Clubs, which represent/work with of the geographic areas along the corridor
- Explore having memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with key organizations to co-host engagement events, promote the project to their networks, and provide input

→ **Community tabling (pop-ups).** Hold at least one accessible pop-up tabling event in each of the identified zip codes

→ **Assess home neighborhood of survey respondents by zip code and adjust for qualitative data to be representative of the corridor**

→ **Include all local neighborhoods.** Ensure geographic diversity by ensuring engagement events are held throughout all local neighborhoods, including Genesee-Moselle, Kenfield, Kaisertown, Kensington, LaSalle, Lovejoy, Schiller Park, Seneca-Babcock, and University Heights

### 4.2.2 Goal 2 Metrics

Metrics used to measure the success of this goal are:



**% of individuals engaged who identify as being from each zip code:**

- 14206
- 14210
- 14211
- 14212
- 14214
- 14215
- 14220
- 14226

Metrics will track both the locations of events held and the locations with which each attendee identifies. This data will be collected during every public engagement opportunity, if possible.

#### Percentage of individuals within the study area who live in zip code:

<b>14206</b>	11.0%
<b>14210</b>	3.9%
<b>14211</b>	14.5%
<b>14212</b>	3.6%
<b>14214</b>	7.6%
<b>14215</b>	44.1%
<b>14220</b>	7.4%
<b>14226</b>	6.1%

*Table 4. Goal 2 metric targets were determined by the percentage of individuals within the study area who fell within each zip code boundary. Data Source: 2020 Census Data.*

## 4.3 Goal 3: Create Inclusion with Diverse Communication Methods

The purpose of this goal is to ensure that individuals with limited English proficiency or those who are deaf, blind, visually impaired, or illiterate can participate in Bailey Ave BRT engagement in the same way, and to the same degree, as the general public.

Needs may vary by underrepresented population or geographic area, but all languages should be available to all community members by visiting a website (and using a translate function), calling Language Line, or by pre-requesting an interpreter for an event. Verbal means of communication (in-person or via text reader) will be used when possible and braille documents will be produced, if possible, upon request. When needed, and to the extent possible, the consultant team will make a good faith effort to provide project information in the format most comfortable for the individual.



### 4.3.1 Goal 3 Strategies

Strategies that will be used to create inclusive communication through the use of various languages and accessibility tools include:

- ***Hiring interpreters (including American Sign Language [ASL]), as needed, for any interactions with the public, including community organization meetings, public meetings, pop-up events, and stakeholder interviews***
  - Opportunities will be offered for individuals to request interpreters prior to events
  - The consultant team and NFTA will make every attempt to predetermine additional language needs and have interpreters available via Language Line
- ***Producing written materials in various languages, specifically Spanish, Bengali (Bangla), Burmese, and Somali based on information from the International Institute of Buffalo and the Partnership for the Public Good***
  - Other languages needs may include Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, Italian, Karen, Kinyarwanda, Nepali, Pashto, Polish, Swahili, and Tigrinya
  - These materials may be posted in various languages depending on the neighborhood/demographic population, but all languages will be available upon request or by accessing the website

- **Disseminating project information via media platforms that target populations of interest (e.g., newspapers focused on one of the new American ethnic sub-groups)**
- **Designing the project website and project materials to be accessible to the same level of conformity as the NFTA website**
- **Provide alternatives to written materials, boards, handouts, etc. at engagement events and public meetings.** Have staff available to verbally explain materials and record feedback
- **Disseminating project information in various ways in addition to written materials: radio spots, automated phone calls (recordings), and social media videos with audio and closed captioning**

#### 4.3.2 Goal 3 Metrics

Metrics used to measure the success of this goal are:

- ✓ **Number of requests for interpretation services per total attendees at an event**
- ✓ **% of survey respondents who identify as primarily speaking a language other than English**
- ✓ **% of materials produced in languages other than English**
- ✓ **Number of ads or notices placed in a newspaper or radio station whose audience is mostly from one of the target populations**
- ✓ **% of individuals engaged who identify as blind, visually impaired, or illiterate**

Metrics will track both the availability of and the use of (where possible) information provided in non-English languages. This data will also be collected during every public engagement opportunity, if possible.

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# CHAPTER 5



## 5.0 Conclusion

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NFTA is committed to prioritizing an equitable and inclusive public participation process throughout the Bailey Ave BRT project. The success of this EIP will ensure that the project prioritizes feedback from communities that have been marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. This, in turn, will create a project that best serves communities most marginalized and overburdened by transportation, land use, and other past discriminatory policies.

# Credits

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**This document was prepared for:**



**This document was prepared by:**

