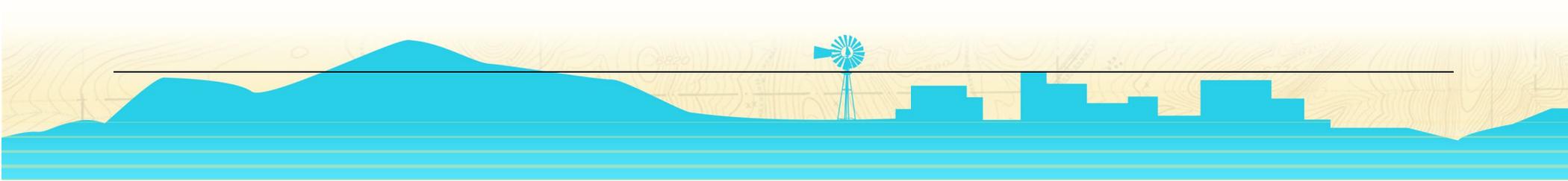


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# Appendix B: Public Participation Plan

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## Public Participation Plan (PPP)

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The Mid-Region Rural Transportation Planning Organization (MRRTPO) Public Participation Plan (PPP) describes how MRRTPO communicates and distributes information to the public as well as how the public can interact and provide comments to MRRTPO. The needs of those traditionally underserved by the existing system will be sought and considered by MRRTPO.

Through its public involvement efforts, MRRTPO will strive to achieve the following Title VI:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.
- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.

Title VI states that no person shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. MRRTPO will ensure that the input and feedback from all people will be considered in the development of RTPO planning documents and activities.

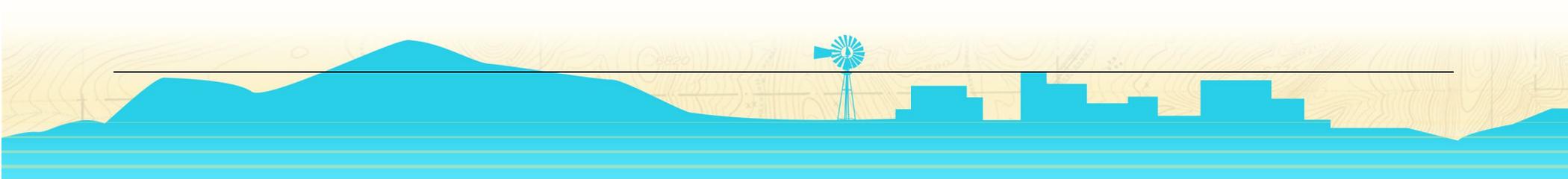
The following actions relating to Title VI are meant to reduce the barriers for participation in the decision-making process by low income, minority or disabled individuals.

1. When possible, public meetings will be held in locations that are accessible to disabled populations. Such locations include local government offices, community centers, senior centers and schools. Where possible, MRRTPO staff will meet at the locations of businesses, neighborhood groups, stakeholders, and other agencies.
2. Upon request, all MRRTPO work products and documents will be made available in alternative formats, including Braille, large type and languages other than English.
3. The following statement will be included in appropriate documents:

The Mid Region Council of Governments fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, please contact the MRCOG Title VI Coordinator, Claudia Patricia Merlo at (505) 724-3651 or email [cpmerlo@mrcog-nm.gov](mailto:cpmerlo@mrcog-nm.gov).

Section VI of this plan describes the procedures on how members of the public can request additional information regarding the *MRRTPO* Title VI obligation. This section also identifies the procedures to be followed by members of the public to file a discrimination complaint against the *MRRTPO*.

4. The following statement will be included in all meeting announcements:



*Anyone requiring special accommodations is requested to please notify the MRCOG office at 247-1750 at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.*

## **Communication and Notification to the Public**

MRRTPO informs the public about its meetings and opportunities for comment as well as milestones and outcomes of the meetings. The MRRTPO website hosts working drafts of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and other documents as appropriate, and solicits comments from the public and stakeholders on the website via [RTPComments@mrcog-nm.gov](mailto:RTPComments@mrcog-nm.gov) and email information.

Public Meetings provide formal public input on issues and business of regional interest. In accordance with state law, MRRTPO publishes notices advertising public meetings in the local newspaper and on its website. MRRTPO may also issue news releases and highlight events on its website to promote participation at public meetings. Public meeting notices are published a minimum of 72 hours in advance, with the agenda items or topics for discussion. Public meeting notices include statements that MRRTPO will reasonably accommodate people with disabilities or limited English proficiency.

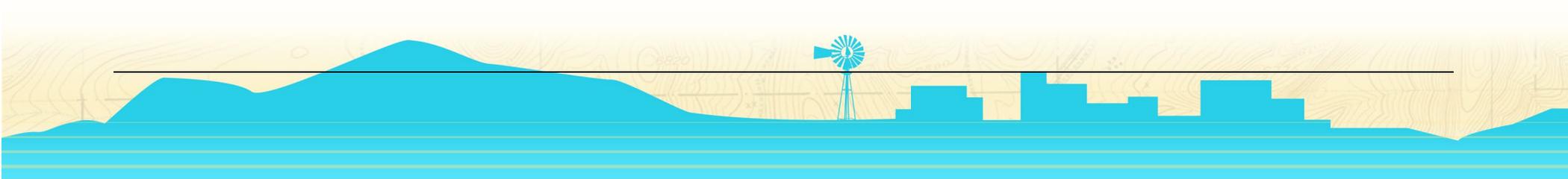
MRRTPO receives comment from stakeholders and the general public in multiple formats, including testimony, postal mail, email, voice mail, fax, and on forms provided for written or website comments. Guidelines for the content of accessible notices soliciting formal public comment are included under "Public Notices."

The MRRTPO will disseminate agenda and public meeting information to members of the public via accessible printed and electronic media, including postings on the MRRTPO website and in the Albuquerque Journal. Documents and agendas will be available at the MRCOG office at 809 Copper NW Albuquerque, NM 87102.

MRRTPO Committee Meetings are always open to the public and encourage stakeholders to provide public comments and observe the way it conducts its business. Committee meetings are listed on the MRCOG website and advertised in the Albuquerque Journal. They are held at the MRCOG building located at 809 Copper Avenue NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87102. The building is ADA compliant and is accessible via several major transit routes.

## **Organization and Staff Responsibilities**

The Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) is an organization with several different departments and is governed by the MRCOG Board of Directors. The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) contracts with MRCOG to provide transportation planning services to the non-metropolitan portion of the MRCOG region. The non-metropolitan portion of the region is known as the



Mid-Region Regional Transportation Planning Organization (MRRTPO). MRRTPO is a voluntary association of local governments and the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) that provides a forum for members to meet, plan, and work together on issues related to transportation in the middle Rio Grande region. It is made up of municipalities, counties, and pueblos in the non-metropolitan portion of the region and acts as the state-required Regional Planning Organization for the area (Torrance, northwest Sandoval and southern Santa Fe Counties). Its membership consists of elected officials and their designated alternates. Federal and state agencies with a responsibility for transportation planning and programs in the region are also represented on this committee in an advisory, non-voting capacity.

### *MRRTPO Staff*

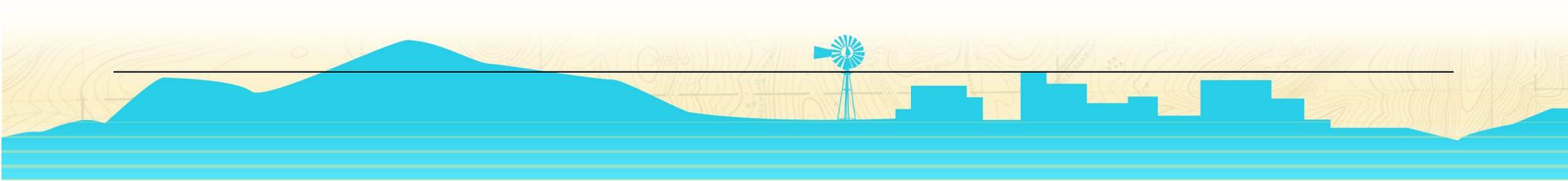
- Provide easily accessible information
- Identify parties likely to be affected by or interested in an MRRTPO decision
- Informing affected or interested parties about ways that they may participate
- Identifying opportunities to increase public participation
- Implementing public participation strategies
- Responding to public comment
- Informing the MRRTPO of public sentiment.

### *Education and Outreach Meetings*

MRRTPO implements a variety of face-to-face and interactive opportunities to ensure meaningful public participation and promote full understanding of MRRTPO initiatives. Education and outreach meetings provide information and may solicit input.

MRRTPO records public responses or additional questions/concerns for later use by staff or the MRRTPO Committee.

- Civic and Community Meetings – MRRTPO provides updates to city councils and other elected bodies, and speakers on topics of interest to groups hosting meetings in the region. MRRTPO representatives establish relationships with host organizations and may attend the organization’s meetings and events.
- Social Media – MRRTPO staff uses social media to engage the public in its planning products.



## Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (RTP) Public Involvement Plan

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### Formats and Methodology

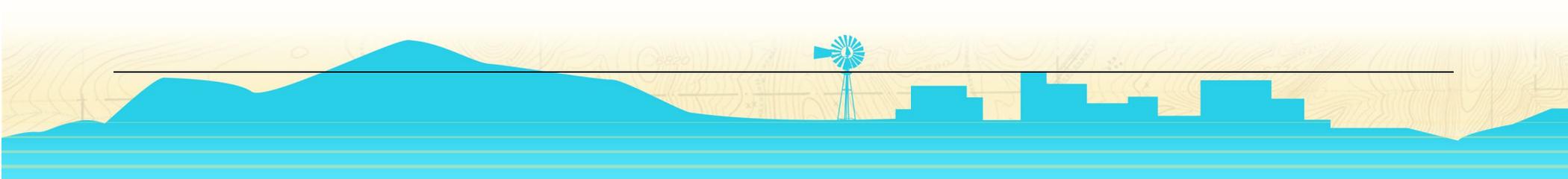
The goal of the public involvement program for this Regional Long Range Transportation Plan is to provide clear information to the public in a timely manner about the Plan and the planning process. In addition, public input will be responded to respectfully and the plan contents will be modified as appropriate to reflect public comment.

The process for public involvement program is as follows:

- Provide information to local media about the RTP and the points at which the public will be invited to comment
- Distribute public review information to MRRTPO Committee members and local governments for on-site review by citizens
- Provide a link to public review material on MRCOG's website. Identify the site in all materials pertaining to public review opportunities
- Provide formal public review opportunities at the following points in plan development
- RTP Recommendation
  - Approximately 30 day review period
  - Formal announcement that Plan has been completed and distribution of copies of completed Plan to local governments throughout the region
  - Thank you letters to all persons who commented on the Plan or participated in the planning process who provided names and addresses along with their input

### Comments

Comments received during the public review process for the draft plan were summarized and recommendations for addressing them were presented to the MRRTPO Committee at their August 9, 2015, meeting. The Committee approved the Plan with the recommended changes, and these changes have been incorporated into the present document. Table X <this table will come after public comments are received and organized. This table will be included in the final version of this RTP.> summarizes the comments received and the changes that were made in response.



## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

MRRTPO distributes policy documents and data sets that provide stakeholders and the general public with pertinent information about the planning and decision process. Copies of its draft and adopted policy and plan documents are typically provided free of charge upon request. Updates and revisions to draft documents, and comments made about them are posted on the MRCOG website.

## **VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES**

MRRTPO provides a variety of information to help participants understand competing proposals, impacts, and possible outcomes related to complex regional transportation projects and plans. MRMPO staff will typically use one or more of the following techniques to help the public and shareholders understand issues:

- Aerial photographs, alone and with mapping overlays
- Photo simulations of proposed projects
- Photographs of existing projects comparable to those proposed
- “Before and After” photos, simulations, maps, diagrams, or drawings
- Graphs, tables, and charts that show various types of information including socioeconomic and demographic data; safety; usage statistics; and financial information.

Materials are made available for review at public meetings and stakeholder sessions and provided upon request.

## **EXPLICIT CONSIDERATION OF AND RESPONSE TO COMMENTS**

All comments are responded to in the manner in which they were received, i.e. comments received by mail are provided a mailed response, emailed comments an email response, and so forth. In addition, printouts or photocopies of all comments and staff response to them is included as part of the final RTP.