



P-13-01

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

for the

**MID-REGION METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

June 21, 2013

Mid-Region Council of Governments
809 Copper Av NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102

I. DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

This document establishes the procedures for public participation for developing the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area (AMPA). It provides an overview of the procedures, and then describes how each aspect of the procedures will be accomplished. Many federal requirements are outlined in Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) and codified in Title 23 Part 134 of the Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 134). These Public Participation Procedures (PPP) replace the PPP of January 3, 2010.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING PROCESS

[23 CFR 450]

Federal law requires every urbanized area with a population over 50,000 to have a designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to qualify for receipt of federal highway and transit funds. In urbanized areas with a population over 200,000 a Transportation Management Area (TMA) shall be designated. The Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area (AMPA) is the designated TMA. (See map in Appendix C.) The Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) is an association of local governments in the vicinity of Albuquerque and central New Mexico. The Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRMPO) is administratively housed within the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) and is an intergovernmental forum that provides for the discussion of local and regional transportation issues and for the development of transportation policies and programs. As the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) MRMPO is responsible for surface transportation planning in the AMPA. This includes developing the twenty-year Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the short-term Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). To that end, MRMPO staff work with members of local government staff, tribal governments, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), all local transit providers as well as other local agencies and stakeholders. MRMPO is committed to carrying out a continuous, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process (3C process). The development process is accomplished under the direction of the Metropolitan Transportation Board (MTB) of the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area which serves as the governing body of MRMPO.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Metropolitan Transportation Board:** The MTB sets policy direction, fosters and participates in public involvement initiatives, and considers the outcomes of public participation when making key decisions.
2. **Transportation Coordinating Committee:** The TCC acts as a technical advisory body to the MTB for project and policy decisions in the AMPA; it makes recommendations to the MTB on behalf of the agencies implementing projects and participating in MRMPO's 3C process.
3. **Public Involvement Committee:** The PIC acts as an advisory body to the MTB for public involvement concerns in the AMPA; it makes recommendations to

the MTB on behalf of the general public regarding transportation plans, processes, and programs for the MPA.

4. **MRMPO staff** encourages public participation by:
 - Providing easily accessible information
 - Identifying parties likely to be affected by or interested in an MTB 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 MTB of public sentiment.
5. **Implementing Agencies:** Bear full responsibility for fulfilling public participation and environmental justice requirements as outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

ADVISORY BODIES

The MTB's advisory bodies provide key opportunities for stakeholder and public participation. They allow members, representing a cross-section of key stakeholder groups in the region, to shape regional transportation plans and policies. The MTB appoints members of the general public, local elected officials professionals with technical knowledge or experience, or representatives of statute-identified groups, according to the responsibilities of particular advisory bodies. Advisory bodies may conduct studies, recommend action to the MTB's standing committees, and/or provide expert advice.

1. Transportation Coordinating Committee: Advises the MTB on technical matters involving the regional highway, public transit and airport systems; helps the MTB, NMDOT, counties and cities carry out transportation planning and programming for the region as designated in state and federal laws; participates in developing the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and its amendments before they are approved by the MTB. Its members include staff members from municipal agencies, transit agencies, NMDOT, school districts, flood control and water conservancy districts, and Indian pueblos (see TCC Roster, Appendix E).

2. Public Involvement Committee: The PIC acts as an advisory body to the MTB for public involvement concerns in the AMPA; it makes recommendations to the MTB on behalf of the general public regarding transportation plans, processes, and programs for the MPA. The members of the PIC represent various municipal jurisdictions (typically city council or county commission districts), interest groups, Sandia National Laboratories, and representatives of various advocacy groups (see PIC Roster, Appendix F).

From time to time, the TCC and PIC form *ad hoc* subcommittees to work on specific planning and programming projects, e.g. programming the TIP and establishing regional bicycle and pedestrian projects for the MTP. These subcommittees may bring in experts from outside the planning process to assist them as needed on specific topics.

IV. MAJOR PRODUCTS

The MPO requires public participation in the formation of the following products. Elements of public participation for each product are described in turn in this document.

- The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
- The Transportation Improvement Program
- Public Participation Procedures
- Title VI Plan
- Special studies.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan is the primary planning document for the AMPA. Because the MTP includes all regionally significant projects in it, public participation in the creation of the document is the most comprehensive and sustained effort undertaken by MRMPO staff.

Development of the MTP is divided into three general stages: (1) analysis of existing conditions, identification of needs, and statement of goals; (2) evaluation of alternatives to meet the needs identified and achieve the goals stated; and (3) final selection of projects to be included in the MTP. Each stage of MTP development contains its own element of public participation. Inevitably there is some overlap between the stages, and comment into the planning process is never rejected as being out of turn. However, at each stage, input is solicited to maximize public impact on the planning process.

At all stages, extensive use of charts, graphs, maps, and forecasts are shared with the public at public meetings and on the MRCOG website.

Stage 1: Existing Conditions, Goals, and Needs

Early public participation in development of the MTP is centered on measuring satisfaction with the transportation system, identifying present and future transportation needs, and establishing the Plan's goals. Kickoff meetings bring together policymakers, staff, and the public to establish a regional vision for what the MTP should accomplish. Base year data is often shared at these meetings so that the public can weigh in on what it sees as the region's most critical transportation needs. Thirty-seven people signed in at the kickoff meeting for the 2035 MTP

During development of the 2035 MTP, an online survey was conducted to evaluate the level of satisfaction with all modes of the transportation system. The survey was offered online and via hard copy, and in English and Spanish. The survey was promoted to member agencies to publicize on their websites, local media covered the survey in print and on the radio, and various demographic areas (large employers, students, advocacy

groups) were specifically targeted. Over 3,600 individuals responded to the survey, and what MRMPO learned from the survey was incorporated into the MTP. Survey responses were shared with Metropolitan Transportation Board so that the policy decisions they made could best respond to public sentiment. Results of this survey were also reported in the 2035 MTP and in separate standalone documents available on the MRMPO website. Online surveys are a low-cost way to gather public sentiment, but they are subject to selection bias since the sample population is not selected at *random*. However, online surveys can be used successfully, so long as policy makers are aware that the survey is but one tool to assess public opinion.

MRMPO's specific performance objectives for Stage 1 of MTP participation are to

- Increase attendance at kickoff meetings
- Have more than one kickoff meeting to discuss goals and present conditions
- Increase use of social media and other new methods of public outreach
- Increase survey response for both English and Spanish language versions
- Increase promotion of surveys into hard-to-reach EJ populations
- Increase the geographic and demographic diversity of the responding group
- Increase the incorporation of survey results into the adopted MTP
- Analyze the survey responses in such a way and in a timely manner so that respondents' perceptions and identification of needs can be shared with the MTB and incorporated into the MTP.

Stage 2: Evaluation of Alternatives

The second stage of MTP development requires the most intensive use of staff resources to analyze the costs and benefits of various means to address the needs identified in the earlier stage. Public participation is essential at this stage to address the tradeoffs concerned between the different approaches to solving regional transportation needs.

Public participation in this stage of 2035 MTP development included a "mini-survey" which asked the group assembled to allocate a percentage of fixed resources to addressing an identified transportation need: increasing mobility across Albuquerque's limited bridge crossings. Individual responses to the survey were kept confidential, but an average of the group was calculated compared to the responses of previous groups.

Twelve different groups participated in the mini-survey, ranging from neighborhood associations, transportation engineers, public advocacy groups, etc. A total of 274 responses were collected. In each iteration of the mini-survey, the responding group was able to see the different allocations of all the other groups to take the survey. This approach allowed the group present to see that its voice (or its voices) was being heard and that there were other voices providing input to the planning process.

Responses to the mini-survey were shared with subsequent groups taking the survey (after they had participated), policymakers, and ultimately were included in the MTP as

one of the justifications for a major policy initiative (setting aside fixed percentages of surface transportation money to meet transit mode targets on bridge crossings).

MRMPO's performance objectives for Stage 2 of MTP participation process are to

- Increase the number of groups to whom various alternatives are presented
- Increase the total number of responses to alternatives
- Analyze the responses in such a way that informs the selection of alternatives
- Share results with the MTB
- Incorporate results into the MTP.

Stage 3: Final Draft Approval and Project Selection

The final stage of MTP development is the only one where a draft version of the document as a whole is available for review. At this stage, public participation is focused on revising and improving draft document. Copies of the draft are made available to neighborhood groups and at public meetings where the MTP is being discussed. Comments on the MTP are more specific to what is included and omitted in the draft MTP, and careful consideration is given to those comments that are made at this point.

During the public comment period, a final series of public meetings are held, usually one each in Sandoval County, Bernalillo County, and Valencia County. Drafts are made available to attendees at the meetings. Also during the final public comment period, the draft MTP is sent out to libraries and the clerks of jurisdictions and tribal governments in the AMPA. Press releases are sent out to promote the meetings and the existence of the Review Draft MTP.

MRMPO's performance objectives for Stage 3 of the MTP participation process are to:

- Increase the number of places where the MTP is available to the public
- Increase the number of responses to the Review Draft during public comment period
- Increase attendance at the public meetings during the public comment period.

Amending the MTP

Amending the MTP can take the form of additions to the list of federally eligible or regionally significant projects or removals from that list. Other amendments may include the addition of appendices and technical documentation.

MRMPO makes every attempt to anticipate all regionally significant or potentially federally funded projects in the MTP, but in the event that a project must be added to the MTP, MRMPO staff will initiate participation to accommodate the revision. At a minimum, the MRMPO will designate a minimum 30 day public comment period and send out press releases to the local media on the proposed change(s) to the MTP. In addition, at least one public meeting will be held (in conjunction with either the PIC or

the MTB) where the public may provide comment to the staff and/or the board and committee members present. Areas most directly affected by the proposed change to the MTP will be specifically targeted through the media, public meetings, and direct mail.

Deletions from the MTP for outer-year projects (*i.e.* those not programmed in the TIP) can be made at the next revision of the MTP, since the MTP will be revised before the TIP programming period ends. Projects programmed in the TIP can be moved into the outer years of the MTP through a TIP amendment, and once in the outer years they may be dropped from the MTP at its next revision.

Transportation Improvement Program

MRMPO makes every attempt to involve the public in TIP development. TIP projects necessarily come out of the MTP, and so reflect the priorities the public establishes in that document. This section will describe public participation in TIP's adopted at the same time as the MTP, TIP's adopted in intervening years, and TIP Amendments. For a complete reference on the TIP development process, please refer to MRMPO's *TIP Policies & Procedures*. The Public Participation Process established in this document is not a substitute for participation and analysis required of member agencies when implementing projects contained in the TIP.

TIP's Adopted Simultaneously with the MTP

MRMPO revises the Metropolitan Transportation Plan every four years, as required in 23CFR450. Projects in the TIP are consistent with the MTP and its goals, and comments received on the MTP are used to inform the TIP as well. This process typically occurs late in the MTP development cycle. By having the TIP formal comment period and the MTP formal comment period occur simultaneously, the public may respond either to the programming question or short-term necessity of a given project, or its inclusion in the MTP in the first place. By scheduling TIP participation alongside MTP participation, both the MPO's resources and the public's attention is maximized. The policy board and staff may consider the comment in the context of the MTP or TIP, or both.

TIP's Adopted Separately from the MTP

In years when there is not an MTP adoption (and, hence no MTP public participation), MRMPO staff engages the public in a standalone participation effort. Elements of TIP public participation for TIP's adopted in non-MTP years include, at a minimum: press releases to local media in the entire Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area; a public comment period of no less than 30 days; at least one public meeting at a location easily accessible to public transportation; and outreach to various advocacy and neighborhood groups in the Metropolitan Planning Area.

TIP Amendments

TIP amendments occur most often on a quarterly basis. Occasionally the TIP will need to be modified sooner than the next quarterly session, in which case an out-of-cycle amendment may be made.

In all cases of a TIP Amendment, the Amendment is discussed at posted and advertised meetings of the Transportation Coordinating Committee and the MTB (both of which are open to the public, and whose meetings are advertised in the local newspaper of record). In addition, a public comment period of no less than 15 days is held. All proposed and adopted modifications to the TIP, including administrative modifications, are posted on the MRMPO website.

Public Participation Procedures

Per 23CFR450, modifications to this document must also go through a public participation process. Comments on previous updates to the Public Participation Procedures have been very scant; typically the groups who are advised of revisions to this document support the principles and specific strategies included in it. However, a lack of comment should not be taken to indicate support or opposition to the documentation of participation procedures in the AMPA.

At a minimum, public participation in updates to the Public Participation Procedures include

- A minimum 45 day formal comment period
- Press releases are issued by the MRMPO
- A public meeting of the Public Involvement Committee
- Public adoption of the Public Participation Procedures by the MTB at a public meeting

Extensive use of charts and graphs is made to assist the public with visualizing the scope and scale of public participation.

Title VI Plan

The MRCOG Title VI Plan documents MRCOG's policy to insure that no person "shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, or sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

The major elements of the MRCOG Title VI Plan are

- Data collection
- Annual Title VI Report
- Annual Review of the Title VI Plan

- Dissemination of information related to the Title VI Program
- Resolution of complaints

These topics are addressed in depth and detail in the MRCOG Title VI Plan. Communications and Public Involvement is one of the designated Program Areas in the MRCOG Title VI Program. The purpose of this program area is to insure that MRCOG seeks input from historically disadvantaged groups and responds to them.

Transportation Planning and Programming is a separate program area in the MRCOG Title VI Plan. The purpose of this program area is to insure that the benefits and burdens of the transportation system are distributed equitably, and that no groups are denied access to transportation improvements.

Public participation in development of the MRCOG Title VI Plan shall, at a minimum, include opportunities to comment upon a Draft document at both PIC and MTB meetings. The MTB will approve Title VI Plans after a minimum 30 day public comment period. The Title VI Plan will also be posted on the MRCOG website and comments on it shall be included in the Annual Review of the Title VI Plan.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION

In addition to involving local governments in regional transportation planning processes through its advisory bodies, MRMPO actively seeks participation by local governments informally and early in its decision-making process. MRMPO policymakers and staff obtain input from local governments through a variety of venues, several of which are integral to MRMPO's statutory obligations under 23CFR450.

Participation Methods: MTB and MRMPO staff may participate in professional networks or meet with their peers and other agency contacts to discuss regional policy and program issues, as well as day-to-day services and community issues, concerns, and needs.

1. ***Discussion, Educational and Outreach Meetings:*** The MTB and MRMPO staff may customize forums, workshops, focus groups, and other participation processes to encourage participation by representatives of local governments.
2. ***Local Government Meetings:*** The MTB and MRMPO staff may attend municipal meetings to inform local officials about MRMPO activities, listen to local concerns, or solicit participation in public activities.
3. ***Review process:*** MRMPO staff use a formal review process to comment on updates and amendments to local comprehensive plans, Environmental Assessment Worksheets, Environmental Impact Statements, and Surface Transportation Referrals. It consults with local governments about how their development plans relate to the MTP and TIP, and Roadway Access Policies.
4. ***Staff assistance:*** To assist local governments with facilities and service planning related to regional issues and MTB activities, MRMPO provides designated staff experts and periodic technical assistance opportunities to local governments.

MRMPO staff act as first contacts for assigned communities and meet regularly with local officials and staff members. Staff assistance develops relationships with local governments throughout the region, enhancing the MTB's ability to identify and address local issues in regional decisions.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Formal Public Meetings

MRMPO 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."

- **Business and Committee Meetings** – The PIC, TCC, and MTB meetings are always open to the public and encourage stakeholders to provide public comments and observe the way it conducts its business. Business and committee meetings are listed on the MRCOG website, advertised in the newspaper. They typically 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.
- **Public Meetings** – provide formal public input on issues and business of regional interest. In accordance with state law, MRMPO publishes notices advertising public meetings in the local newspaper and on its website. MRMPO may also issue news releases and highlight events on its website to promote participation at public meetings.

Surveys

Online and in-person surveys were used to inform the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Surveys are one technique by which entire populations, rather than vocal minorities, can present their viewpoint. Surveys also give policymakers the information they need to make policy decisions that affect the entire planning area.

Online surveys are a low-cost approach to gather opinions from a broad cross-section of the population, though care must be taken to insure that the population responding to survey matches the population being surveyed.

At public meetings, mini-surveys are used to gather the sentiment of the assembled group. Survey results can be compared to other groups that have taken the survey and the universe of respondents more generally. Results may also be aggregated for all respondents.

Education and Outreach Meetings

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

- *Forums* – Including online forums, elicit stakeholders’ and communities’ ideas and perspectives on regional issues, projects and initiatives. Usually held in series, forums are often used to encourage continuous feedback/input. While formal minutes are optional, MRMPO staff record public comment.
- *Workshops* – Include meetings or series of meetings designed to share knowledge or information, educating the audience on a topic of regional interest or importance. MRMPO’s workshops provide technical assistance to local communities, help it increase public awareness or promote public involvement. MRMPO records public responses or additional questions/concerns for later use by staff or the MTB.
- *Special Events* – MRMPO may develop special events to announce, highlight or initiate its outreach about an issue, project, initiative, or news event. MRMPO generally publicizes its special events through the media, its website, and direct mail.
- *Open Houses* – MRMPO may provide meetings/tours/receptions specific to locations that interest the public, in order to highlight an initiative, project or facility.
- *Conferences* – Provide opportunity for MRMPO to enhance its regional reputation for leadership and innovation by providing professional education, participating in policy discussions and forums, or networking with stakeholders who are interested in similar issues or technically skilled in areas of MRMPO business.
- *Focus Groups* – Solicit in-depth information about issues, activities or public perceptions from small groups of stakeholders. Often held in series, focus groups allow MRMPO to obtain detailed information and responses by asking questions that may build upon knowledge discovered during the course of the meetings or prior public interaction.
- *Key Person Interviews* – MTB members or MRMPO staff may meet individually with designated opinion leaders, such as Chamber of Commerce officials or members, mayors, advisory body members, non-profit agency representatives, religious leaders, business owners or individual constituents potentially impacted by an MTB decision.
- *Civic and Community Meetings* – MRMPO provides updates to city councils and other elected bodies, and speakers on topics of interest to groups hosting meetings in the region. MRMPO representatives establish relationships with host organizations and may attend the organization’s meetings and events.
- *Social Media* – MRMPO staff uses social media to engage the public in its planning products.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES, STRATEGIES, AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

Public participation activities obtain information, identify public sentiment, and inform the public how to influence and guide the planning process. The public assists the MTB build support and trust. Although the goal is always better decisions, the level of public influence on a decision and the tools used to inform and involve the public varies depending on the groups targeted and the decision at hand.

Public participation is designed to provide stakeholders with meaningful access to key decisions. The stakeholder groups shall at a minimum include those described in 23CFR450.316(a) (MTB Roster attached to this document as Appendix G). These stakeholder groups are organized to varying degrees and thus different approaches are required to involve them. In the past, MRMPO has worked extensively with neighborhood group coalitions in pursuit of geographic diversity; brought advocacy groups “to the table” to assist directly in planning activities for bike and pedestrian facilities; met with representatives of freight carriers and shippers; and has formed ad hoc committees composed of agency staff, representatives of advocacy groups, and MRMPO staff. In addition, MRMPO have solicited comment from chambers of commerce, service groups, and university students.

The objective of MRMPO’s public participation activities is to solicit as much comment from the broadest cross-section of the public as it can and to provide visibility to MRMPO as the coordinating body for the 3C process. Past efforts have generated a great number of comments, many coming from more or less organized interest groups. Although these comments are helpful to MRMPO staff and the MTB, individual responses and concerns are especially valued.

At a minimum, public participation for metropolitan transportation plans shall include:

- Public meetings in Sandoval, Bernalillo, and Valencia counties, at locations accessible to transit and the handicapped
- Outreach to neighborhood coalitions in Bernalillo County and neighborhood associations in Sandoval and Valencia counties
- Press releases to news media in advance of the formal public comment period preceding local adoption of the Plan.

PUBLIC NOTICE

MRMPO informs the public about its meetings and opportunities for comment, as well as milestones and outcomes of the meetings. The MRMPO website hosts working drafts of the MTP and TIP as appropriate, and solicits comments from the public and stakeholders on the website via comment forms and email links. 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 MRMPO will reasonably accommodate people with disabilities or limited English proficiency.

MRMPO provides notices in the newspaper, by mail, and by email of opportunities to provide comment on the MTP and TIP. The notices include, at a minimum, the following information:

- Name of the event
- Sponsoring organization
- Subject of Meeting
- Action to be taken and by whom
- Day, date, time and location of meeting
- Brief summary of the proposed action or plan
- Start and end dates for public comments
- Where and how to obtain copies of the plans or materials, and how to provide comments
- A designated contact for more information
- Offer to provide accommodations for people with limited English proficiency
- Offer to provide accommodations for people who are disabled

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

MRMPO 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

MRMPO 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
- Scenario planning exercises
- 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.

ELECTRONIC FORMATS

The MRMPO public participation team is composed of planners and professional designers who develop public participation materials. MRMPO periodically updates and distributes an extensive array of fact sheets, policy summaries, brochures, and topical print and electronic publications. At the time of PPP adoption, the following materials were available at the MRCOG offices and electronically on the MRMPO website:

- 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (entire document and linked chapters, appendices, and maps)
- 2012-2017 Transportation Improvement Program with Amendments and Administrative Modifications
- TIP Policies and Procedures
- Annual Traffic Flow Maps
- Public Participation Procedures
- Socioeconomic Estimates and Forecasts
- Municipal Population Estimates
- Land Use Maps
- Census Data Summary Documents
- General Crash Data and Trends, 2000-2007
- Intelligent Transportation Systems Regional Architecture
- Current Functional Classification of Roadways

In addition, the MRMPO website is used as a venue for public comment. Dedicated email addresses for comments on the TIP and MTP are used regularly to solicit comment. Additionally, MRMPO staff may develop other printed and electronic documents about the planning process generally and more specifically about how the public may get involved.

MEETING ACCESSIBILITY

MRMPO provides a variety of opportunities for face-to-face and interactive public meetings at ADA-accessible venues. Typically, public participation activities range from public meetings of the MTB to informal events such as open houses. In most cases, a short presentation outlines the process and decision-making points and what steps are to follow after the meeting. All comments are recorded and transcribed as part of the final MTP or TIP.

To the greatest reasonable extent, MRMPO holds its public meetings at times and places convenient to its stakeholders. To encourage maximum participation, MRMPO typically considers:

- Locations easily accessed by transit riders
- Holding meetings in different areas of the region
- Holding meetings at non-traditional locations such as schools and community centers

- Partnering with community or service organizations or transit providers to promote or host participation events
- Holding meetings outside of traditional business hours
- Holding meetings on different days of the week and/or at different times of the day
- Avoiding potential conflicts with participation opportunities hosted by other units of government in the region.

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 MTP or TIP.

CONSIDERING TRADITIONALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

MRMPO actively attempts to recruit representatives of groups traditionally underserved in regional transportation policymaking and provide enhanced participation opportunities to encourage people who belong to underrepresented groups to share their unique perspectives, comments, and suggestions. MRMPO staff typically:

- Participate in community events and organizations to build relationships , e.g. UNM’s “Transportation Day”
- Prepare culturally-sensitive outreach materials and meeting plans, such as:
 - Use of appropriate language (e.g. “people with disabilities” instead of “the disabled”)
 - Use of graphics that appeal to target groups
 - Incorporation into art and photos of people of diverse cultures, ages, abilities, and economic status
 - Demonstration of respect for cultural sensitivities and prohibitions.

MRMPO’s analysis of traditionally-underserved populations, and policies to insure that no one is denied equal access to is contained in the MRCOG Title VI Plan.

OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON SUBSTANTIAL REVISIONS

Should the MTP or TIP be substantially revised from the form in which it was last presented to the public, MRMPO staff will insure that the public will have adequate time to comment on the revisions. Individual project revisions do not normally constitute substantial revisions, however revisions that apply broadly to the Plan (such as those regarding air quality) would.

COORDINATION WITH STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

MRMPO works extensively with the New Mexico Department of Transportation's General Office and District 3 to insure that its planning efforts are consistent with the Statewide Transportation Plan and that the public and stakeholders are given reasonable opportunity to review and comment upon major studies undertaken by NMDOT within the AMPA.

PERIODIC REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF PARTICIPATION EFFORTS

This document is consistent with both federal regulation and the actual practices of MRMPO. Substantial revisions to this document require a public review and comment period of no less than 45 days. The effectiveness of public participation efforts may be evaluated by

- The number and variety of public meetings
- Attendance at public meetings
- The total number of comments and responses to the document
- The total number of unique comments and responses to the document
- The breadth of interests expressed in the comments
- The geographical distribution of individuals responding to the document.

Appendix A:

Public Participation Plan for the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, 2016-2021 Transportation Improvement Program, and 2018-2023 Transportation Improvement Program

Public Participation Plan for the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and 2016-2021 Transportation Improvement Program

MRMPO seeks the highest level of public participation for the MTP, since only projects included in the MTP are eligible for funding in the TIP. In the AMPA, MTP adoption years coincide with TIP adoption years. As information is known about the TIP during MTP development it will be shared with the public so that the public may comment upon both programming and planning processes and decisions.

MRMPO staff schedule informal educational and outreach meetings (described above) throughout MTP development. Owing to the relative infrequency of meetings of various community groups such as neighborhood coalitions, MRMPO staff present the latest information available at the time of those meetings. There are several important milestones during MTP development at which MRMPO staff brings together large groups to review and comment upon the MTP:

- July 2013: Agency Kickoff Meeting
- September 2013: Public Kickoff for the 2040 MTP
- April 2014: Solicit feedback of MTP Projects List
- October 2014: Public Meeting on the Preliminary Draft of 2040 MTP
- March-April 2015: Public Meeting on the Public Review Draft of 2040 MTP

Local approval of the 2040 MTP will take place only after the formal public comment period which will be at least 30 days long. The formal public comment period for previous MTP's has been 45-60 days.

The public interact with elected officials at these meetings, as well as with agency and MRMPO staff.

Public Participation for the 2014-2019 Transportation Improvement Program

For TIP's developed in years where an MTP is not underway, MRMPO will typically host at least one well-publicized public meeting in order to assess public sentiment toward the selection of projects for the TIP. Stakeholder participation is extensive during TIP development, and TCC, PIC, and MTB meetings where the TIP is discussed are open to the public. MRMPO staff makes itself available to present information and receive comment on the TIP at any point in its development.

Appendix B: Abbreviations Used in this Document

23 CFR 450: Title 23 Part 450 of the Code of Federal Regulations

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

AMPA: Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area

MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century

MPA: Metropolitan Planning Area

MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization

MRCOG: Mid-Region Council of Governments

MRMPO: Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

MTB: Metropolitan Transportation Board

MTP: Metropolitan Transportation Plan

NEPA: National Environmental Policy Act

PIC: Public Involvement Committee

PPP: Public Participation Plan

SAFETEA-LU: Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, a Legacy for Users

TCC: Transportation Coordinating Committee

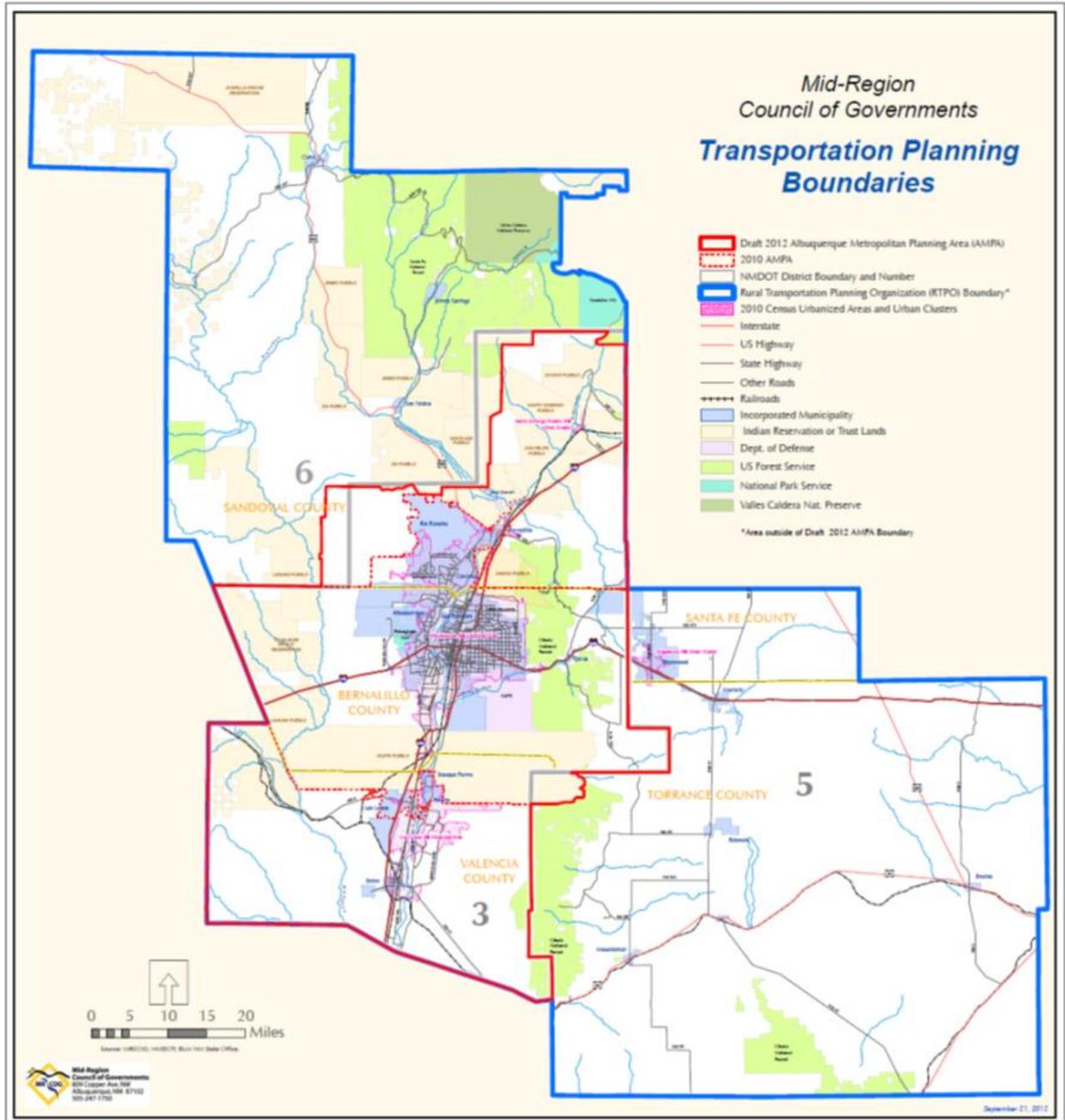
TIP: Transportation Improvement Program

TMA: Transportation Management Area

VHT: Vehicle Hours Traveled

VMT: Vehicle Miles Traveled

Appendix C: Map of Transportation Planning Boundaries



Appendix D: Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 450.316 “Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation”

§ 450.316 Interested parties, participation, and consultation.

(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

(1) The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

(i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;

(ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;

(iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;

(iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;

(v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;

(vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;

(vii) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;

(viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;

(ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and

(x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

(2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.

(3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.

(b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs shall be developed with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:

(1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;

(2) Governmental agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and

(3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 204.

(c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(1) (e) MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c),

and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under §450.

Appendix E: Technical Coordinating Committee Membership Roster



Mid-Region Council of Governments
**METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION BOARD'S
 TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER (revised 3/21/12)**

ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
City of Albuquerque, Council Services	Tom Menicucci	Kara Shair Rosenfield
Bernalillo County	Steve Miller	Mary Murnane
New Mexico Department of Transportation	Ken Murphy Tony Abbo	Nancy Perea Antonio Jaramillo
City of Albuquerque, Planning	Russell Brito	Maggie Gould
City of Albuquerque Environmental Health Department	Margaret Nieto	Neal Butt
City of Albuquerque Municipal Development	Debra Bauman, <i>Chair</i>	Ted Korbin, Chuck Thompson, Jim Hamel
City of Albuquerque Traffic Engineering	John Kolessar	Ted Korbin, Chuck Thompson, Jim Hamel
City of Albuquerque DMD	Melissa Lozoya	Ted Korbin, Chuck Thompson, Jim Hamel
City of Albuquerque Planning Department	Richard Dourte	Tony Loyd
City of Albuquerque-ABQ Ride/Transit	Andrew de Garmo	Tony Flores
Albuquerque Public Schools Property Management	Martin W. Eckert	Roger Garcia
Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority	Jerry Lovato	Lynn Mazur
Town of Bernalillo-Planning & Zoning	Maria Rinaldi	Jack Torres
Bernalillo County-Public Works Department	Richard Meadows	Richard Mobarak
Bernalillo County-Parks & Recreation	Grant Brodehl	Clay Campbell
Village of Corrales-Administration	Cynthia Tidwell	John A. Avila
Village of Los Lunas	Christina Ainsworth	Diana Crowson
Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque Building and Planning	Mary Homan	Kelly S. Ward
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Environmental Planning	Leonard Utter	Ray Gomez
City of Rio Rancho, Development Services	John Castillo	Vacant
City of Rio Rancho	George Bootes, <i>Vice-Chair</i>	John Korkosz
Rio Rancho Public Schools	Maurice Ross	Vacant
Isleta Pueblo	Shawna Ballay	Simon Shima
Laguna Pueblo	Gaylord Siow	Sharon Hausam
Sandia Pueblo	Lucille Baca	Karie Smith
Sandoval County	Phil Rios	Fred Marquez Makita Hill
Southern Sandoval County Arroyo Flood Control Authority	Vacant	Trevor Alsop Don Rudy
Village of Tijeras	Vacant	Vacant
NON-VOTING ADVISORY MEMBERS		
ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
City of Albuquerque, Aviation Department	Jack Scherer	Jim Hinde
Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board	Jack "Sully" Sullivan	Stephen S. Baca
Bernalillo County Transportation Development District	Vacant	Vacant
Federal Highway Administration	Rodolfo Monge Oviedo	Marcus Wilner
Greater Albuquerque Bicycling Advisory Comm	Vacant	Vacant
Kirtland Air Force Base	Vacant	Vacant
Transit Advisory Board	Vacant	Vacant
Santa Ana Pueblo	Nathan Tsosie	

Appendix F: Public Involvement Committee Membership Roster



Mid-Region Council of Governments
**METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION BOARD'S
 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE
 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER (Revised 9/8/10)**

ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
City of Albuquerque – District 2	Susan Johnson	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 4	William Tallman	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 1	Kris McNeil	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 3	Johnn Osborn	Florencio Baca
City of Albuquerque – District 5	Antonio Sandoval	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 6	J.W. Madison	Vacant
City of Albuquerque -- District 7	Vacant	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 8	Aaron Ranstrom	Vacant
City of Albuquerque – District 9	Rob Mangold	Vacant
Town of Bernalillo	Vacant	Vacant
Bernalillo County – District 1	Colin Hart	Vacant
Bernalillo County – District 2	Rip Anderson	Orlando Olivas
Bernalillo County -- District 3	Vacant	Vacant
Bernalillo County – District 4	Anita Miller	Robert Prendergast
Bernalillo County – District 5	Bob Morrell	Vacant
Village of Corrales	Richard Foote	Vacant
League of Women Voters	Helen Wright	Vacant
Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque	Frank Mangano	Vacant
NM/National Association of Industrial and Office Parks	Vacant	Kerry Davis
City of Rio Rancho	Eric Wrage	Eric Maddy
City of Rio Rancho	Todd Hathorne, <i>Vice Chair</i>	Eric Maddy
Sandia National Laboratories	Ted Wolff, <i>Chair</i>	Ed Tooley
Sandoval County	Kim Hedrick	Phillip Sapien
Village of Los Lunas	Bob Anderson	Vacant
AARP	Alan Feldman	Vacant
Rails, Inc.	John Perry	
NON-VOTING ADVISORY MEMBERS		
ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
Intel		
Kirtland Air Force Base		
NMDOT	Frank Esparza	
Sierra Club		
Greater Albuq Bicycling Adv Committee		
Greater Albuq Rec Trails Committee		
NMPIRG		

Appendix G: Metropolitan Transportation Board Membership Roster



Mid-Region Council of Governments
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION BOARD
MEMBERSHIP ROSTER (Revised 3/11/13)

ORGANIZATION	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque	Larry Abraham	Don Lopez, Kelly Ward
City of Albuquerque	Rey Garduño, Councilor Michael Cook, Councilor Roxanna Meyers, Councilor Ken Sanchez, Councilor Don Harris, Councilor Isaac Benton, Councilor, <i>Chair</i> Richard Berry, Mayor Robert Perry	Other Councilors, Tom Menicucci, Laura Mason, Michael Horanburg, Andrew Garcia and policy analysts Michael Riordan, Gregory Smith, Matt Conrad
Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority	Ron Brown, Board Member	Other board members
Albuquerque Public Schools	Kathy Korte	Martin Eckert
Town of Bernalillo	Jack S. Torres	Maria Rinaldi, Ida Fierro
Bernalillo County	Debbie O'Malley, Commissioner Maggie Hart Stebbins, Commissioner, <i>Vice-Chair</i> Art De La Cruz, Commissioner	Other Commissioners Steve Miller, Mary Murnane, Tom Zdunek, Jarvis Middleton, Richard Mobarak
Village of Corrales	Ennio Garcia-Miera	John Alsobrook
Village of Los Lunas	Richard Lovato	Christina Ainsworth
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District	Karen Dunning	Subhas Shah
New Mexico Department of Transportation	Tamara Haas Kathryn Bender	Tony Abbo Max Valerio
City of Belen	Rudy Jaramillo	David Carter
City of Rio Rancho	Tamara Gutierrez, Councilor Lonnie Clayton, Councilor	John Castillo Scott Sensanbaugher
Rio Rancho Public Schools	Vacant	Don Schlichte
Rio Metro Regional Transit District	Terry Doyle	Tony Sylvester Connie Meadowcroft
Laguna Pueblo	Marvin Trujillo, Councilman	Charles Poncho, 1 st Lt. Gov. Robert Analla III, Councilman
Sandia Pueblo	Malcolm Montoya	Scott Paisano, Karie Smith
Sandoval County	Don Chapman, Commissioner	Makita Hill
Southern Sandoval County Arroyo Flood Control Authority	Charles Thomas	Andrés Sanchez
Village of Tijeras	Vacant	Vacant
Isleta Pueblo	Vacant	Frank Lujan, Paul Torres, Antonio Chewiwi
NON-VOTING ADVISORY MEMBERS		
MEMBER	ORGANIZATION	ALTERNATE
City of Albuquerque Aviation	Jim Hinde	
Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board	Jack Sullivan	Stephen Baca
Federal Highway Administration	Rodolfo Monje-Oviedo J. Don Martinez	
Federal Transit Administration	Robert Patrick	Pearlie Tiggs
Kirtland Air Force Base	Vacant	Vacant
New Mexico State Transportation Commission	Vacant	Vacant
Santa Ana Pueblo	Vacant	Vacant