



Public Outreach Plan

2018

(Updates made to Appendix A and B in October 2021)



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Introduction

The Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRMPO) is responsible for leading long-range transportation planning in the greater Albuquerque area. One of the key products produced by MRMPO is a long-range transportation plan, which is known as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) in our region. The MTP is updated every four to five years. This public outreach plan relates to the current update being undertaken, the *Connections 2040 MTP*.

Connections 2040 looks ahead by about 20 years at what our region's challenges and transportation needs will be in light of planned population and employment growth. The plan is produced in collaboration with MRMPO's member agencies, other transportation planning and government partners, and a broad and diverse assortment of stakeholders ranging from special interest groups to the general public.

The *Connections 2040 MTP* must be adopted by MRMPO's policy board, the Metropolitan Transportation Board, by April 2020 and must be approved by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration by June 30, 2020. *Connections 2040 MTP* will be the guiding plan for how we will develop, maintain, and enhance the region's transportation network. It will discuss how we want to grow (determined through a previous scenario planning process), what our regional transportation needs will be based on projected population and employment, and potential strategies for meeting those needs. In addition, special emphasis will be placed on gaps in the transportation network (for all modes) and how those can be closed with better connections (hence the title of the MTP, *Connections 2040*). The MTP will direct how transportation funds are invested through the development of a project list.



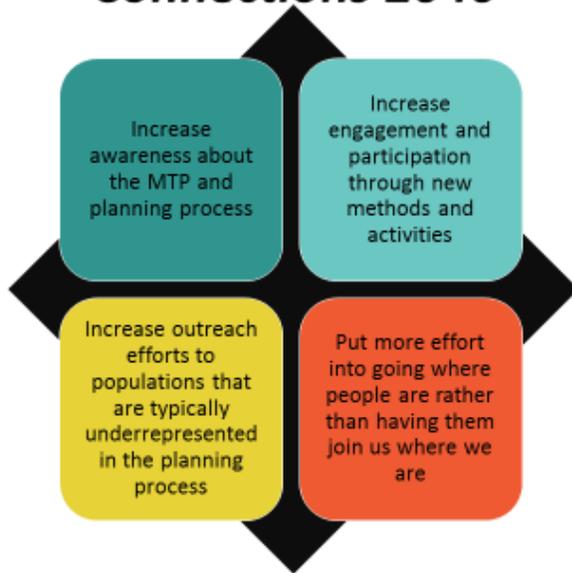
Public Participation for the *Connections 2040 MTP*

The MTP is a plan that affects everyone in the region. For this reason, it is vitally important to hear from as many people and to get participation from as broad a spectrum as possible. MRMPO is keen on reaching as many people as possible during the MTP planning process and engaging the public's interest to a greater degree than has been achieved in the past.

This public outreach plan discusses the planned activities, strategies, methods and timeline for outreach related to *Connections 2040*.

For this go-around, MRMPO plans on using new outreach techniques and methods in an effort to reach new and more varied participants. Particular focus will be paid to reaching groups that have not been heard from as much in past efforts, such as low-income and minority populations, tribes, and youth. For this reason, and to guide these efforts, a *Connections 2040* Public Participation Plan has been developed.

Outreach Goals for *Connections 2040*



The main goals for *Connections 2040 MTP* public outreach are to 1) increase awareness about the MTP and transportation planning process in our region, 2) increase overall engagement and participation through new outreach methods and activities, 3) increase outreach efforts to populations that are typically underrepresented in the regional transportation planning process, and 4) put more effort into going where people are rather than having them join us where we are.

Special efforts will be made to reach traditionally underrepresented populations in the planning process which includes low-income and minority populations and people with low-English proficiency. MRMPO's ideal is to have as many voices come to the table as possible, so reaching out to these

populations is an important part of that endeavor. Specific steps that MRMPO will undertake include the following: identify any advocacy group gaps (as well as individuals who represent low-income and minority areas) in our contacts database and work to fill those in (the database is used for sending out communications); provide essential information online and in printed materials in Spanish and in other languages as necessary, including contact information; attend varied community events and provide information and methods for receiving feedback at events (especially events with a diverse range of participants or at a range of events); ensure neighborhood coalitions with sizable environmental justice populations are contacted; prepare culturally sensitive outreach materials and meeting plans.

Methods and Practices for *Connections 2040* Outreach Activities

The following describes approaches that will be used by staff in outreach activities for the *Connections 2040 MTP* update.

Overall Outreach Approach

- Staff will use a less formal approach to public outreach. More casual approaches to gathering feedback will be used by making greater use of alternative strategies for outreach such as getting on the agendas of and presenting at existing meetings, using videos to help get the word out, attending community events, and hosting pop-up meetings in varied places.

- Staff will put more focus more on going to “where people are” as opposed to inviting people to join us where we are. This can help with targeted outreach, especially with groups and populations underrepresented in the transportation planning process.
- Extra effort will be made to ensure our planning process is truly open and that participant input is integrated.

New Outreach Methods

For the next MTP update, in addition to the methods described above, staff may try out different outreach methods including some of the following:

- Hosting “pop-up” events (where staff set up a booth at various locations around the region to get information out and collect feedback).
- Meet-a-planner events (where the public can meet staff at various locations, such as, perhaps, breweries, libraries, or even just at MRCOG to discuss planning-related topics).
- Attending more community events and meetings of other groups and organizations. Staff can either have information on hand to give out and/or give a presentation.
- Developing and disseminating surveys to collect data on specific questions or topics where public input is desired (for surveys, socioeconomic information will be asked for at the end of the survey).
- Developing a project webpage (for *Connections 2040*), enhancing project and public participation information presented online, and using additional forms of social media such as Twitter, hashtags, and text messages, etc., to solicit more input and provide multiple ways for people to give feedback.
- Forming and holding focus groups meetings, if needed.



Public Meeting Practices

The following public meeting practices should be adhered to for Futures 2040 outreach:

- For public meetings, establish meeting parameters early. Have designated facilitators and recorders at meetings (people who are visibly taking notes). Consider using non-MRMPO as facilitators when appropriate and possible.
- *Listen* at meetings, and repeat back what was said to make sure it was heard and understood correctly. Do not talk *at* people, and take in all ideas.
- Presentations should be no longer than 10 minutes.
- Use more interactive public participation methods whenever possible, such as discussion circles (where four chairs are placed in the middle of a circle of participants, and to talk, a person must wait for a chair to open up), post-it note exercises (where everyone at the meeting has to jot down and post their thoughts on a given topic and the ideas are later read out loud at the meeting), having participants demonstrate their opinions by standing in various parts of the room that signified different viewpoints, and using live, interactive polling.

- Be systematic about taking (and then recording and saving) input gathered at meetings and other venues. Follow established system for where to save notes and for tracking outreach activities (Save all meeting notes and record all meetings and events attended here: \\C08\w\Common\2040 MTP Update\Public Involvement\Outreach and Comments Log.) Summarize information from meetings and send back to participants and/or post on the website after major meetings.

Reaching out to Varied Populations

- Identify stakeholder gaps in the contacts database and groups we specifically want to reach (e.g., youth, students, tribes, AAA, ABQ RIDE citizens' advisory committee, chambers of commerce, etc.).
- Provide essential information in Spanish (and in other languages as necessary), including contact information.
- Publicize in meeting notices that special accommodations such as translation services can be provided upon request at public meetings. Note: Anyone requiring special accommodations is requested to notify MRCOG at 505-247-1750 or email bthomas@mrcog-nm.gov seven days prior to the meeting.
- Attend varied community events and provide information at events (especially events with a diverse range of participants or at a range of events).
- Ensure neighborhood associations and/or coalitions with sizable environmental justice populations are contacted.
- Keep in mind that there is still a digital divide (more so for age and level of education than for income) and conduct outreach accordingly.
- Strengthen outreach to tribal partners, ensuring northern, central and southern tribes are contacted and offered opportunities for presentations or other services.
- Hold meetings (especially key public meetings) in underserved areas when possible.

Recording and Responding to Comments

- All comments received will be logged, saved, and considered for integration in the plan. All written comments will be responded to when a response is requested and/or contact information is supplied. A comment log is saved under the project folder, in the public participation subfolder (\\C08\w\Common\2040 MTP Update\Public Involvement\Outreach and Comments Log). In addition, all outreach activity (presentations, attendance at events, etc.) should also be noted in the log in the same subfolder.

Notification and Public Review Periods

- Advance notification of at least three days will be given before the final draft MTP plan or MTP amendment goes before the MTB for adoption. Notice will also be given of the 30-day public review period for the initial draft MTP, final draft MTP, and any MTP amendment. Notice will be published in the newspaper of record as well as on the MRCOG website, at a minimum.

Connections 2040 MTP Update Outreach Plan

Outreach for the *Connections 2040* MTP update is divided into three phases, described below.

Outreach by Phase

Phase	Phase 1: Goals, Existing Conditions, Needs	Phase 2: Evaluation of Strategies and Project Selection	Phase 3: Draft Development, Review and Approval
Duration	May 2018 – January 2019	February 2019 – September 2019	October 2019 – April 2020
Outreach Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTP kickoff meetings • Gaps and connections workshop • Presentations given at other groups’ and organizations’ meetings • Survey (on needs, funding priorities, gaps and connections) • Wiki map • Pop up meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee meetings on strategies for meeting needs • Committee meetings on project selection • Surveys (strategies and project prioritization) • Presentations and/or information provided and feedback sought at other meetings and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public meetings for review draft MTP • Open house for Final Draft MTP • Presentations given on request
Feedback Gathered	Feedback on transportation needs, especially related to the Target Scenario and gaps and connections and also on funding priorities	Feedback on desired strategies and project prioritization	Feedback on review draft MTP and Final Draft MTP

Phase 1: Goals, Existing Conditions, and Needs (May 2018-January 2019)

Early public participation in the development of the *Connections 2040* MTP will be centered on identifying transportation needs and challenges, confirming the Plan’s goals and objectives, and updating the Target Scenario. For *Connections 2040*, particular attention will be paid to identifying existing gaps in the transportation system. Kickoff meetings will bring together member agencies, stakeholders, and the general public to establish an understanding about current and future needs and funding priorities. Base year data will be shared at these meetings and participants can comment on what they see as the region’s most critical transportation needs. The MTP development timeline and outreach timeline will also be shared.

Outreach methods to be used: Kickoff meetings in Bernalillo, Valencia, and Sandoval Counties; gaps and connections workshop; presentations given to community and neighborhood groups; booths set up at community events/meetings; social media messages; press releases sent out before kickoff meeting; email blasts sent to contacts database; survey disseminated; interactive (“wiki”) map for gathering feedback on gaps in the network; pop-up meetings held; feedback gathered, summarized, and sent back to participants and posted on website.

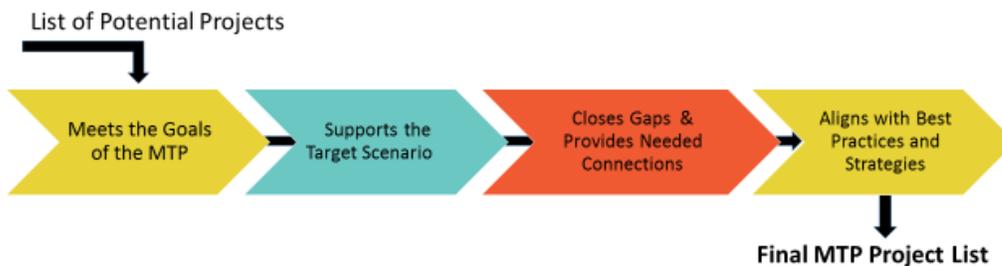
Feedback sought: Feedback on overall transportation needs; goals and objectives; any changes or adjustments to the Target Scenario; funding priorities; and identifying existing gaps and connections needed in the transportation network.

Phase 2: Evaluation of Strategies and Project Selection (February 2019-September 2019)

The second stage of outreach for *Connections 2040* will focus on potential strategies to address the needs identified in the earlier stage. An MTP project list will also be developed with agency and committee input. Projects that align with the goals of the MTP, the Target Scenario, and which help provide needed connections for existing gaps in the transportation network will be the aim. Public thoughts on the prioritization of the strategies will be sought. Earlier feedback on funding priorities will be used to help assess the final project list.

Outreach methods to be used: Discussion in committee meetings, online comment forms, surveys, presentations, feedback sought from presentations given at other meetings and events. Feedback will be gathered, summarized, and sent back to participants and posted on website.

Feedback sought: Feedback will be sought on potential strategies to address identified transportation needs as well as projects to meet needs and on the prioritization of strategies and projects.



Phase 3: Draft Development, and Approval (Oct. 2019-April 2020)

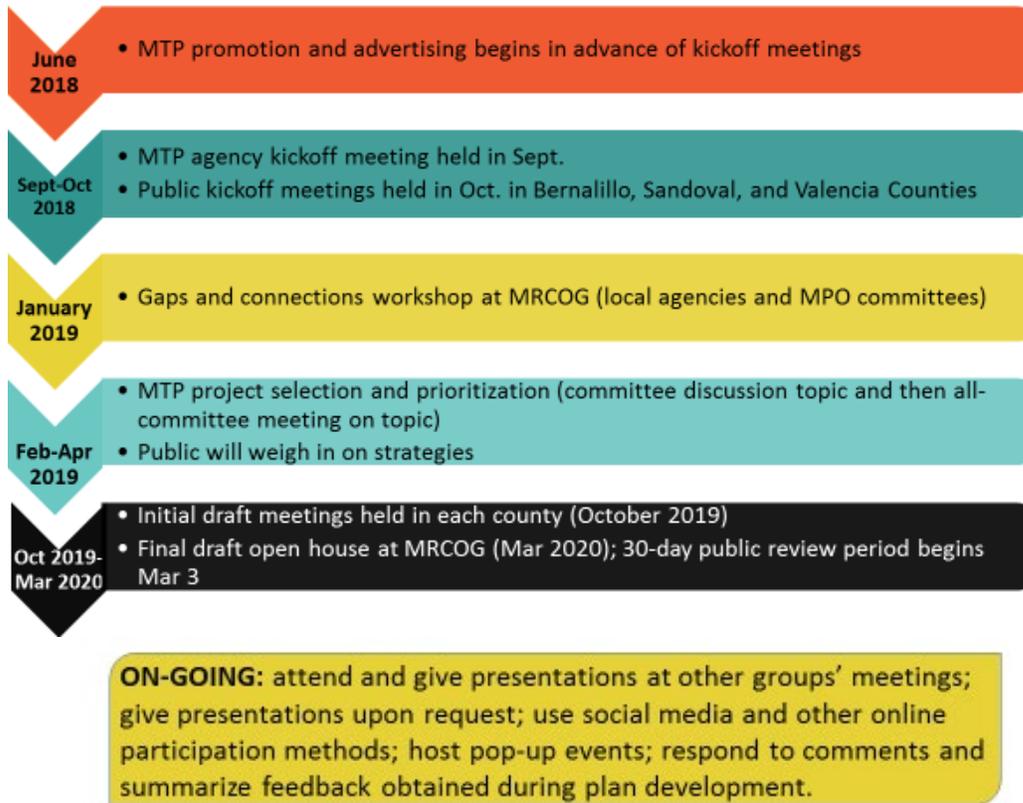
During the final phase of MTP development, an initial draft version and final draft version of the document will be made available for review. At this stage, public participation will be focused on reviewing and improving the draft document. Ideally, before this stage, agency, stakeholder, and public feedback have been integrated into the document. Copies of the initial draft plan will be made available on MRCOG’s website, and notice of the draft being available for public review will be broadcast in various ways (through email notice, ad(s) placed in newspapers, in MRMPO’s electronic newsletter, on the project Facebook page, and more). During the initial public comment period, a series of public meetings presenting the draft plan will be held in Bernalillo County, Sandoval County, and Valencia County.

During the final public comment period, the final draft MTP will be posted on the MRCOG website and also sent out to libraries and the clerks of jurisdictions and tribal governments in the AMPA. Press releases will be sent and notices on the MRCOG website and in the MRMPO newsletter and Facebook page will be posted. Emails will be sent to promote the final open house meeting and review opportunity for the final draft MTP.

Outreach methods to be used: Public meetings, open house, press release, email blasts, social media notifications, comment forms made available online, notification ads in papers. Presentations will be given upon request. Feedback will be gathered, summarized, and sent back to participants and posted on website.

Feedback sought: Feedback will be sought on the contents of the initial and final draft plans.

CONNECTIONS 2040 MTP SCHEDULE OF OURTEACH ACTIVITIES



APPENDIX A: *Connections 2040* MTP Outreach Objectives, Tasks, and Actions

Note: Appendix A and B were updated in August 2021 to document whether tasks were completed with related notes (Appendix A) and to record outreach activity benchmarks (Appendix B).

Objectives for the broad phases of the MTP development process are listed below. Each objective has associated tasks and strategies for meeting the objectives. At the end of each phase, staff will evaluate public outreach efforts to help maximize outreach efforts going forward.

Outreach objectives, tasks, and strategies

PHASE 1: Goals, Existing Conditions, Needs (approx. May 2018-January 2019)

	Objective 1: Formulate outreach strategies and begin outreach materials preparation	Completed?	Notes
TASKS	Review federal requirements related to public involvement.	Yes	
	Develop a detailed public participation plan for <i>Connections 2040</i> MTP.	Yes	Adopted by the MTB on 5/18/18
	Analyze community demographics to identify environmental justice areas for outreach purposes.	No	Previously identified environmental justice areas were used as reference for outreach purposes.
	Collect existing conditions data and other information for kick off meetings and prepare presentations.	Yes	
	Prepare and obtain materials for outreach including MPO and MTP flyers/postcards (and possibly other languages as necessary), an MTP logo, an events table, posters/banners.	Yes	Permanent posters/banners would still be good
	Create new <i>Connections 2040</i> MTP project website or webpage; develop hashtag, establish a Twitter account, Wiki map, and other new methods for gathering input from the public.	Yes and No	Project webpage was developed and hosted on MRCOG website; simplified URL developed; interactive map developed for outreach; hashtag not developed; Twitter acct. underutilized
	Develop a PowerPoint template to be used for all MTP presentations.	Yes	
	Revise/design MTP survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Update distribution list; send out survey to MTP list and also to other contacts 	Yes	Survey distributed in Aug. 2018-Dec. 2018
	Plan and organize agency and public meetings for MTP kick-off.	Yes	

	<p>Update contacts database</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify outreach gaps and how those population gaps will be addressed ○ Identify stakeholders and obtain contact information to include in database 	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No ○ Yes 	<p>“Outreach gaps” were not fully addressed; new contacts were added although usually more reactively (rather than proactively)</p>
	<p>Identify potential Spanish translators.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Staff member used for any interpretation needs at meetings and events and for key materials</p>

	Objective 2: Reach out—and expand reach—to agencies, stakeholders and the general public to begin generating awareness of MTP and MTP update (MTP Kickoff meetings)	Completed?	Notes
TASKS	Post MTP information about kickoff meeting on website on project webpage, Facebook page, Twitter, newsletter, send out media releases, and advertisements. Include Spanish speaker contact information.	Yes	Yes. All done except media releases. Spanish contact info provided on website
	Host agency and public kick off meetings that explain existing and forecast conditions, goals of the MTP, and Target Scenario. Meetings should be held in Bernalillo, Sandoval, and Valencia Counties.	Yes	
	Promote and distribute survey (includes gaps and connections questions). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include survey on MRCOG website and in newsletter • Employ other forms of survey (and MTP) promotion including advertisements, media release, sending out to contacts, etc. 	Yes	Survey was sent out to contacts and advertised in Water Authority mailer
	Post-meeting: summarize information collected from meetings and send to all participants via email and post in places such as website, newsletters, etc.	Yes	Yes, sent out via email
	Attend community events before kickoff to promote the MTP and kickoff meeting.	Yes	
	Host pop-ups to promote the MTP and kickoff meeting.	No	

	Objective 3: Solicit and encourage participation and feedback from all stakeholders, specifically on gaps and connections	Completed?	Notes
TASKS	Plan and promote Gaps and Connections workshop for agency staff and committees.	No	
	Host Gaps and Connections workshop for agency staff and committees.	No	
	Provide multiple opportunities for receiving feedback including but not limited to the following: Record oral comments from meetings; provide comment forms at meetings; provide comment opportunity on website and Facebook page and other social media; surveys; make known that MRMPO can present on MTP to groups.	Yes	
	Follow procedure for recording and responding to questions and comments received. Send emails out to participants recapping meetings and what was heard from the public.	No	Not done because Gaps and Connections specific workshop was not held.
	Provide information in Spanish (and potentially other languages) that includes that information can be translated (orally at meetings and in written form) if requested.	Yes	Spanish version postcards made to promote survey;

		Spanish contact info on website
Present the MTP to community groups as invited; seek opportunities to present to traditionally under-represented groups.	Yes	Yes, team presented at all meetings invited to; some presentations to underrepresented groups were coordinated
Attend community events; host “pop-up” meetings; attend meetings of other groups and organizations.	Yes, no, yes, respectively	Community events were attended but true “Pop up” meetings were not hosted. Perhaps the difference is debate-able. Nevertheless, this was found to be an effective way to reach out to a broader audience.
Consider how to integrate feedback into plan	Yes	Yes, however, further integration of feedback into future MTPs still being figured out.

PHASE 2: Evaluation of Strategies and Project Selection (approx. Feb. 2019 to Sept. 2019)

	Objective 1: Continue outreach efforts and sustain stakeholder interest and participation in the MTP development process	Completed?	Notes
TASKS	Provide opportunities for stakeholder and public input in this particular phase of MTP development (i.e., prioritization of strategies and project selection). This can be done through the following, and is not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to make comment forms available online, through a link on the project Facebook page and at events and meetings; make known that MRMPO can present on the MTP to groups attend meetings and community events; consider follow-up surveys specifically on strategies and project prioritization. Record oral comments from meetings 	Yes	Opportunities were still available to provide public comment, although this outreach was not focused on strategies and project selection.
	Send emails out to participants recapping meetings and survey results and what was heard from the public. Post information online, in the newsletter, and on Facebook.	No and Yes	Follow up not completed for survey. Recap of first rounds of meetings, including feedback gathered, was posted on the MRCOG website and in newsletter.
	Provide information in Spanish (and potentially other languages) that information can be translated (orally at meetings and in written form) if requested.	Yes	
	Present the MTP to community groups as invited; seek opportunities to present to traditionally under-represented groups.	Yes	
	Attend community events and/or meetings either as presenters or with hand out materials.	Yes	
	Assess outreach to under-represented populations and re-adjust outreach methods as appropriate.	No	
	Explore other promotional ideas not yet performed (i.e., Bike to Work Day synergies, etc.).	Some	

	Objective 2: Solicit and gather feedback on strategies and project prioritization	Completed?	Notes
TASKS	Coordinate with MPO committee leads to have committees work on strategies and project selection during their committee meetings during this phase.	Some	Some committees worked on this.

			The Active Transportation Committee provided feedback on strategies.
	Plan and organize all-committee meeting to discuss MTP project selection.	No	Did not occur.
	Host all-committee meeting on MTP project selection.	No	Did not occur.
	Present information on strategies and seek input and feedback on those at any public meetings and events.	Yes	Display board with strategies was included at meetings. Not much feedback received.
	Post information on website, Facebook page, Twitter, and newsletter and provide comment opportunity.	No	Feedback on strategies and projects not fully/well-implemented
	Summarize information collected and send back to participants and post onto project website.	No	Information was not collected
	Consider how to integrate feedback into plan	Some	Feedback that was gathered (for example, from the Active Transportation Committee) was integrated into the plan's suggested strategies

PHASE 3: Draft Development, Review, & Approval (approx. Oct. 2019-Apr. 2020)

	Objective 1: Present Initial Draft to Public and Provide Wide Opportunities for Review and Comment	Completed?	Notes
TASKS	Plan initial MTP draft review meetings in all three counties.	Yes	
	Promote MTP draft review notice on website, newsletter, Facebook page, email blasts, press/media release(s), and make available at libraries and other public places as appropriate.	Yes	
	Place legal notices before initial draft MTP comment period.	Yes	
	Present initial draft at meetings and seek feedback.	Yes	
	Provide 30-day formal comment period on draft MTP.	Yes	

	Provide multiple methods for obtaining feedback from public.	Yes	
	Respond to comments and integrate into plan.	Yes	

Objective 2: Present Final Draft to Public and Provide 30-day formal comment period		Completed?	Notes
TASKS	Plan final draft MTP open house at MRCOG.	Yes	Meeting switched to virtual format during the pandemic
	Place legal notices before final draft MTP comment period.	Yes	
	Provide 30-day formal comment period on final MTP.	Yes	
	Present final draft MTP at open house.	Yes	Note: meeting changed to virtual format due to pandemic
	Promote final draft review period.	Yes	
	Include consideration of comments in final draft MTP.	Yes	

Objective 3: Consider and Respond to Comments		Completed?	Notes
TASKS	Record and respond to comments.	Yes	
	Summarize comments and send summary to participants; submit comments to MTB; post to website.	Some	Comments compiled and submitted to MTB but not sent to participants or posted to website
	Include consideration of comments in draft MTP.	Yes	



APPENDIX B: MTP Outreach Benchmarks

The following indicators will be recorded as part of the *Connections 2040* outreach process to develop benchmarks for future outreach efforts and to help assess efforts.

OUTREACH ACTIVITY	BENCHMARK
Number of attendees at public kickoff meeting for MTP	35 (agency kick off); approx. 25 at three public kickoff meetings.
Number of community events attended during MTP outreach	15
Number of other groups' and organizations' meetings attended	8
Number of survey responses collected	631
Number of different zip codes of survey respondents	38
Number of map comments/edits made to interactive map	103
Number of MTP initial draft commenters	19 officially submitted
Number of MTP final draft commenters	14 officially submitted
Number of new Facebook followers	233 followers on Aug 1, 2019; 249 followers June 1, 2020; 282 followers, July 26, 2021
Number of new Twitter followers	155 following; 39 followers
New techniques tried (number and describe)	5-Interactive online map to record transportation gaps; interactive techniques to gather feedback (e.g., hard copy maps for recording gaps, voting with beans on how to spend transportation funds); shorter presentations at meetings to enable more feedback from public; more effort spent on going out to community events and other meetings rather than having the public come to our public meetings; virtual open house hosted on FacebookLive.
Outreach efforts performed aimed at underrepresented groups (number and describe)	5 (public meetings held in EJ areas when possible; attended events at UNM to gather feedback from younger participants; attended community events in EJ areas; provided promotional material in Spanish; publicized meetings in EJ areas)
Number of pop-up meetings hosted	0
Number of presentations given at Tribal locations	1-Presentation offered to all Tribal governments at MRCOG
Number of presentations given to groups representing low-income or minority groups	1 (International District Healthy Communities Coalition).
Number of attendees at draft MTP public meetings	26 at initial draft meetings in January; 11 at final draft open house on Facebook Live (likely more)

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APPENDIX C: MRMPO Clicker Instructions

MRMPO has a set of Turning Point Clickers, which are polling devices that electronically record people's votes/preferences and can visually display them at a meeting. There are 80 clickers, each with a sticker on the back that can be used to keep track of all the clickers. They are kept in the bottom large cabinet drawer in Tara's cube. If you would like to use the clickers for a meeting or event, please sign them out using the sign in sheet in the same drawer.

Installing Turning Point

To install Turning Point on a laptop, use the USB device in the clicker bag. It is in a zip-lock baggie.

When you have a second PowerPoint presentation open, there may be issues with Turning Point's functionality. The solution is to either only have a single PowerPoint with the clicker software open, or to open the clicker software first and keep it open to avoid corrupting the file.

Getting Started/Practicing

Plug the USB device into the computer prior to starting up the PowerPoint with the clicker polls. There are lots of ways to plug it in late and finagle it to recognize the clickers. Or you can just be sure to have it plugged in early.

The best way to learn it is just to play around with it a lot. It is pretty simple, but it has some key steps that you want to be sure about. You can play around with existing power point presentations if you go to the 2040 MTP folder and pull up a presentation that had polling. Several from the beginning of the MTP outreach had clicker polls. <https://www.turningtechnologies.com/pdf/userguides/Getting-Started-PC.PDF>

Support for the devices

There is a website that provides support for the devices: <https://www.turningtechnologies.com/polling-solutions/turningpoint>

Under the "support" tab on the top banner of the website there are lots of options to learn how to use the devices for either education or business. Here is the link to the business 'getting started' guide. You must first create an account to download it. The software is on the computer in the board room.

Contact person: Tara Cok-505-724-3627/tcok@mrcog-nm.gov

Remember!

It is easy for people to accidentally take the clickers with them after the meeting. Don't forget to remind them to turn them in before and after the presentation, and count the clickers both before and after the meeting to make sure there are 80.

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