



Appendix B. Public Participation Plan



Public Participation Plan (PPP)

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:
4. 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, Thaddeus Lucero at (505) 247-1750-tel., (505) 247-1753-fax or email mrcog@mrcog-nm.gov or visit our website at www.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.



5. 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.

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, NM, 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 nonmetropolitan portion of the region is known as the Mid-Region Rural 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 a 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.