



Pueblo Area Council of Governments

**Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Transportation Planning Region (TPR)**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

**Pueblo Metropolitan Planning Organization
& Pueblo Transportation Planning Region**

Prepared By:

PACOG – Pueblo MPO/TPR – City of Pueblo
Urban Transportation Planning

In Cooperation With:

City of Pueblo
Pueblo County
Colorado Dept. of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration

**PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION
PLAN**



OUTREACH



INVOLVEMENT



COMMUNITY



PARTICIPATION

FEBRUARY 2014

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GLOSSARY

- Accountability:** To obtain documented input from the public, interest groups, environmental agencies, and citizen groups, elected officials and others who have participated in the transportation planning processes, and a structure for providing responses to issues, concerns, and questions raised by individuals and groups.
- MPO:** Metropolitan Planning Organization – an organization required by the United States Department of Transportation in areas over 50,000 population to provide a regional transportation-planning forum.
- PACOG:** Pueblo Area Council of Governments – the regional policy-making body empowered to decide regional transportation planning/programming issues. The PACOG consists of elected officials from the city and county, representatives from School Districts 60 and 70, and members from the Colorado City Metropolitan District, Pueblo West Metropolitan District, the Pueblo Board of Water Works and the Salt Creek Sanitation District.
- Public:** Individuals of the general public and groups of organizations, governmental entities and transportation professionals served by the transportation planning process as well as being users of the transportation system.
- Stakeholder:** Any individual, organization, governmental entity, transportation professional or member of the general public who has an interest in or who will be affected by the results of the transportation planning process.
- Underserved:** Any individual or group for which it is important to make a special effort to reach out due to particular needs or a lack of previous involvement. For example: people who do not have or cannot operate an automobile; those who are physically challenged; the low-come; and minority community members.

INTRODUCTION

Walking, riding a bicycle, hopping on a bus, driving a car or traveling by plane or rail require conscious choices on the part of the participant/s. How well each component functions or does not function within the entire system is where public input is needed to identify disconnects and plan improvements in an orderly, fiscally constrained manner. Public involvement in the transportation planning process doesn't just occur, it has to be a priority of staff, elected officials and the local citizenry. The purpose of the Public Involvement Program (PIP) is to identify ways in which the public may participate in the planning process.

OVERVIEW

The organization responsible for transportation planning and which involves both urban and rural planning in Pueblo County is the Pueblo Metropolitan Planning Organization/Transportation Planning Region (MPO/TPR). It is a part of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG) and supported by the city and county.

A metropolitan planning organization is a regional planning agency established by federal law to engage in a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative (3C) transportation planning and decision-making process for urbanized areas containing a population of 50,000 or more. The transportation-planning region includes the rural areas of Pueblo County including Avondale, Boone, Beulah, Colorado City, Rye and other rural communities. The urban and rural planning boundaries are shown on Figure 1.

A. Purpose

The Public Participation Program (PPP) outlines a general public involvement process for the Pueblo MPO/TPR. It describes how citizens, local policy makers, and other government agencies can become involved in the transportation planning process. Included are transit users, freight transportation providers, the Pueblo Memorial Airport, the elderly, disabled and anyone else who is interested in becoming a "planning partner".

The activities described herein are an overview of current efforts and upcoming activities new to the process in 2014. Figure 2 lists the public involvement process tools applicable to the Pueblo transportation planning area.

Each particular planning effort will result in a public involvement process tailored to that program. The PIP provides a general outline of activities that may be included in a specific program's public involvement plan, as appropriate.

B. Planning Programs

The PIP includes minimum public involvement procedures for the following:

1. Long Range Transportation Plan
2. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
3. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Long Range Transportation Plan:

A regional transportation improvement strategy for the Pueblo area and adopted by the Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG). The plan is updated every three to five years. Corridor improvements listed in the plan are intended to meet travel needs in the planning area for the next twenty-five years. The Plan addresses elements including roadways, air, rail, freight, transit, bicycles and pedestrians.

Transportation Improvement Program:

The TIP is a program that identifies federally funded and regionally significant projects by funding year/s. Projects include roadway improvements, new roadways, bridges, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, project feasibility and environmental studies. Projects in the TIP must have an identified, secure source of funding in order to meet the federal requirement for “fiscal constraint”. The purpose of the TIP is to implement the Long Range Transportation Plan. All projects in the TIP must also appear in the Long Range Transportation Plan. Pueblo’s TIP is updated every two years.

Unified Planning Work Program:

The UPWP is a guide for all planning related work to be completed or continued each year. Work performed by Pueblo MPO/TPR staff is outlined in each task and progress reported monthly to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). The work program is updated annually.

FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The transportation planning process carried out by MPOs must encourage and solicit stakeholder input. According to [Title 23 CFR 450.316](#), as amended in the MAP-21 of the federal regulations, “each MPO shall provide 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 a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan.” The transportation planning process must be “pro-active and provide complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and support early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans.

In addition, federal action was taken through [Executive Order 12898](#) in February 1994 to address environmental justice in minority populations and low-income populations. This order builds upon Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. All federal agencies must establish internal policies to ensure that there is no discrimination or disproportionate effects of federal programs, policies, or activities on minority or low-income populations.

In April 1995, the USDOT addressed the environmental justice policy objectives by issuing the following regulation: It states that “In determining the site or location of facilities, a recipient or applicant may not make selections with the purpose or effect of excluding persons from, denying them the benefits of, or subjecting them to discrimination under any program to which this regulation applies on the grounds of race, color, or national origin...(49 CFR 21.5 (b)(3)).

Information derived from Census data pertinent to the Pueblo planning region will be used to identify those with affected interests and the underserved including, but not limited to, Hispanic community members, low income community members, physically challenged community members, people without access to an automobile such as the youth or elderly and those community members who do not speak English. Appropriate efforts to encourage participation in the process can be determined based on the demographics of the affected populations.

STATE GUIDELINES

According to the Colorado Department of Transportation publication “[Guidelines for Public Participation in Statewide Transportation Planning & Programming](#)”, the Transportation Planning Regions and Metropolitan Planning Organizations are responsible for ensuring that verbal or written responses are produced in a timely manner to issues, comments and questions raised by the public during public participation activities.”

CDOT staff actively encourage the TPRs to communicate with the department throughout the process as well as with each TPRs’ respective stakeholders. “Direct citizen input and participation should be solicited early and continuously in both the regional and statewide transportation planning and programming processes. Opportunities for involvement such as public meetings, citizen advisory groups, surveys, focus groups, and other mechanisms should be provided.”

PROCESS ELEMENTS

The following methods are used to communicate with stakeholders in the Pueblo area: They comprise the “tools” for obtaining public input.

- A. PUBLIC MEETINGS
 1. PACOG
 2. TAC (TTC/CAC)
 3. Open Houses
 4. Meeting With Interest Groups
 5. Telephone Town Hall

All meetings of the PACOG and TAC are held on a regularly scheduled basis throughout the year. The PACOG meets on the 4th Thursday of each month: TAC

meetings are on the 1st Thursday. Meeting dates and locations are advertised in the Legal Notices section of the local newspaper at least twice prior to the meeting date. These meetings are open to the public and held in accessible locations. The meeting format is formal with a chairperson, printed agenda and recorded minutes. Persons requesting to speak must be acknowledged by the chair before addressing meeting attendees.

Open Houses are scheduled on an “as-needed” basis according to project specific requirements. Staff are available to respond verbally to questions posed by the public in a “one-on-one” format. Comment forms are provided for each individual to complete and either hand in or mail in. There are no formal presentations or agendas. Open Houses are advertised at least twice in the Legal Notices section of the local newspaper and held in locations that are accessible to the general public. Meeting attendees are free to move about the meeting room to view and comment on maps, posters, etc.

Staff will schedule meetings with interest groups such as Pueblo Active Community Environments, Pueblo ADA Committee, Pueblo Economic Development Corporation, Pueblo Downtown Association, and the Pueblo West Merchants Association to review transportation plans and answer questions about topics of interest.

A Telephone Town Hall will be coordinated through CDOT in which attendance will be acquired through telephone outreach giving citizens the opportunity to participate in a telephone conference. A verbal presentation will be given and participants will be able to provide feedback on their interest regarding the Transportation Plan.

B. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

1. Special Events
2. Neighborhood Meetings
3. Meeting with Large Scale Employers and Employees to Solicit Input on Transportation Issues

Staff also attends special events and neighborhood meetings to answer questions about topics of interest. Meetings will be scheduled with the Old Northside Neighborhood Organization, Bessemer Association for Neighborhood Development, and the Eastside Neighborhood Association. Responses may be verbal at the meeting or a follow-up written response may be provided if more information is needed. Staff will also use these opportunities for communication with the public to announce upcoming meetings and to distribute handouts about the planning process, as appropriate.

Meetings with Large Scale Employers and Employees to solicit input on transportation issues will be conducted by staff. The staff will use these meetings to gather and identify primary transportation needs and issues identified by company administrators that make up approximately 1/3 of Pueblo.

C. INTERNET

1. Notice of public meetings
2. Meeting Agendas
3. Minutes of public meetings
4. Links to CDOT, FHWA, FTA, and other sites

The Pueblo MPO/TPR has a web site on the internet. The address is <http://www.pacog.net>. Interested parties can easily access notices of PACOG and TAC meetings, agendas, and minutes of prior meetings as well as links to CDOT, FHWA, FTA and other transportation websites. Questions or comments can be sent to the Webmaster, at Pueblo_MPO@pueblo.us.

D. PUBLICATIONS

1. Brochures
2. Paid advertisements
3. Mapping products
4. Comment acknowledgement
5. Public Opinion Surveys

Paid advertisements are currently used to announce formal meetings and informal open houses to the public. Brochures describing the planning process and highlighting project successes will be developed for educational purposes. Public opinion surveys and comment forms will be used to assess how well the transportation planning and implementation processes are working from a public perspective. Maps and other visual displays such as PowerPoint presentations will be used to aid the public in understanding the scope of various projects.

VALUE OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & EVALUATION

Involving interested members of the community generally results in better planning overall. Gathering input from the public can help staff develop better technical information that, in turn, can help policymakers make better-informed decisions on behalf of the community or region they represent. It is important that the community understands how the transportation planning process works and how they can contribute to the Long Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program and the Unified Planning Work Program. The public's role is important in providing information that will help to avoid errors in or omissions of important facts.

Whenever interaction or outreach occurs, a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the discussion needs to be provided. Several methods that can be used to obtain feedback from participants include comment forms at meetings, workshops and displays; meeting evaluation forms, citizen letters (and responses), telephone comments, internet email and recorded comments at public meetings. All of this information will be maintained and made readily available to the public for on-going educational purposes and to establish an historical record.

FIGURE 1

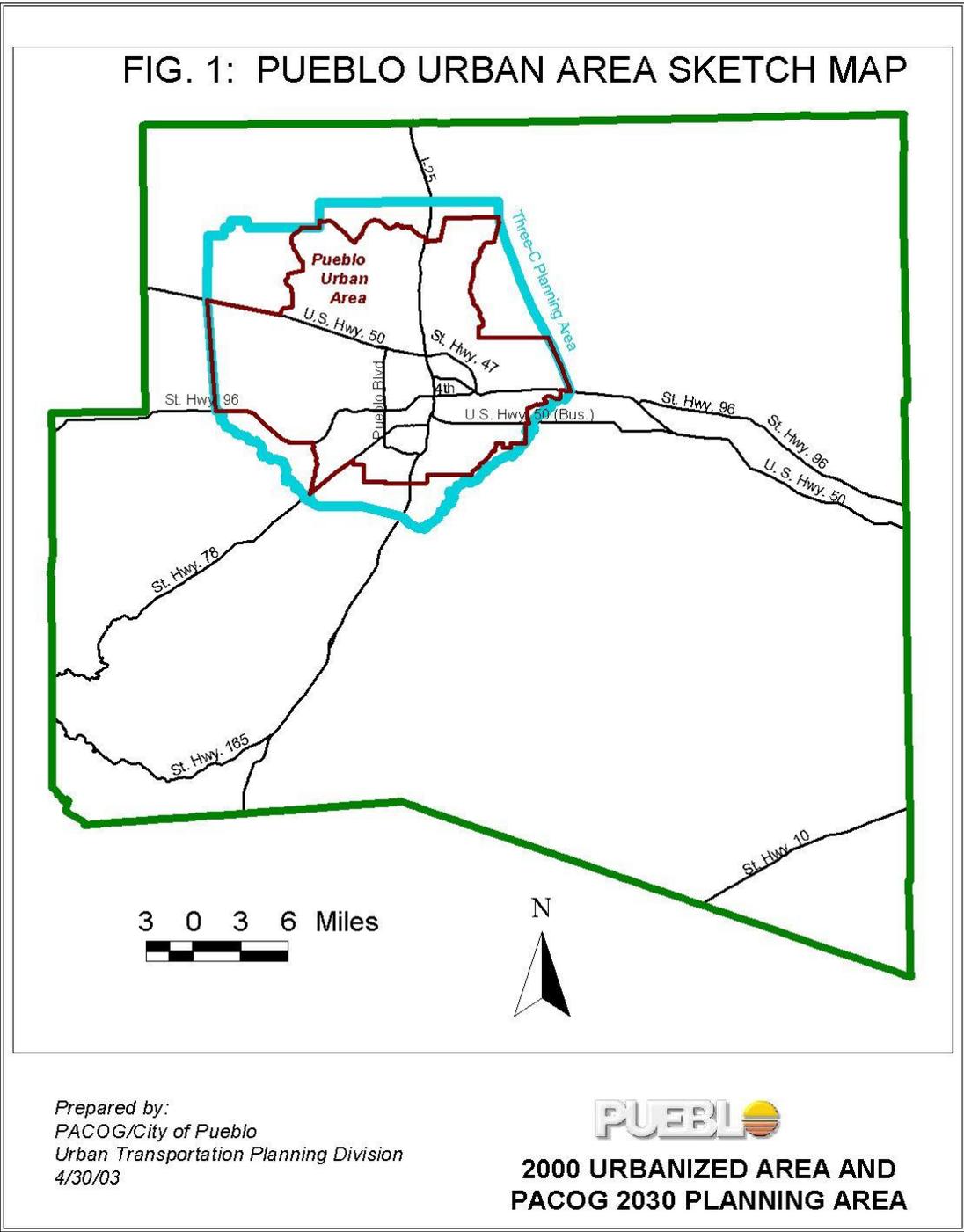


FIGURE 2
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TOOLS EVALUATION

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TOOL	EVALUATION CRITERIA	PERFORMANCE GOAL/S	ACTIONS
Public Involvement Plan	No Measure-PIP is a policy tool	N/A	Update every 3 years
MPO Web Site	Number of hits	Minimum of 60 hits /month	Use other tools to advertise
Legal Advertisements	No Measure-required by CDOT/FHWA/FTA	N/A	N/A
MPO Newsletter	Calls, letters, etc.	N/A	Respond to calls, letters, correct any errors
TAC	Attendance, calls, letters, etc.	N/A. The committee is comprised of staff & officials	Staff should encourage attendance & participation
MPO Logo	Calls, letters, etc.	Recognition of the logo	The logo should be used on all MPO documents
Public Hearings	Attendance, calls, letters, etc.	30 persons for sub-area plans and 50 persons for regional plans	Schedule hearings at convenient times & locations. Use other tools to increase awareness of hearings
Comment Forms	Number of responses	50% of meeting attendees completed & returned	Encourage responses by explaining importance of feedback
Small Group Meetings	Met the expectations of the group, calls, letters, etc.	N/A. Meetings are held at the request of the affected group	MPO staff available to speak to any group re: transportation issues or activities

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Participation in the transportation planning process is critical to building a desirable community. If you have questions regarding these policies, or if you would like to become involved in the transportation planning process, please contact one of the following persons.

Primary Contacts

Scott Hobson Asst. City Manager for Community Investment (E-mail: shobson@pueblo.us)	719-553-2244
Greg Severance Pueblo County Transportation Director (E-mail: severance@co.pueblo.co.us)	719-821-8853
Beritt Odom Senior Planner (E-mail: bodom@pueblo.us)	719-553-2339
Wade Broadhead Planner (E-mail: wbroadhead@pueblo.us)	719-553-2248
Pepper Whittlef Traffic Engineer (E-mail: pwhittlef@pueblo.us)	719-553-2946
Don Vest Senior Socioeconomic Planner (E-mail: dvest@pueblo.us)	719-553-2947
Sarah Snowberger Part-time Clerk (E-mail: ssnowberger@pueblo.us)	719-553-2321
Joan Armstrong Pueblo County Planning and Development Director (E-mail: armstron@co.pueblo.co.us)	719-583-6100
Alf Randall Interim Pueblo County Engineering & Public Works Director (E-mail: arandall@co.pueblo.co.us)	719-583-6040

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE PUEBLO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION AND PUEBLO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REGION WHICH INCLUDES PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCEDURES FOR THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN, TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, AND UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM; AND DIRECTING THE URBAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING DIVISION TO IMPLEMENT THOSE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES.

WHEREAS, the Pueblo Area Council of Governments is responsible for regional transportation planning within the Pueblo urbanized area as well as within Pueblo county boundaries; and

WHEREAS, public input is critical to the transportation planning process including the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program and the Unified Planning Work Program and is required by federal regulations and state guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Public Involvement Program defines PACOG's public involvement policies, tools and evaluation measures for determining the effectiveness of the program; and

WHEREAS, the Public Involvement Program has been reviewed and unanimously recommended for approval by the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC);

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS that:

SECTION 1.

The Pueblo Area Council of Governments hereby approves and adopts the Public Involvement Program; and

SECTION 2.

The Pueblo Area Council of Governments hereby directs the Urban Transportation Planning Division to implement the Public Involvement Program, as adopted.

INTRODUCED: February 27, 2014

APPROVED: _____
Chairperson
Pueblo Area Council of Governments

ATTESTED BY: _____
PACOG Recording Secretary