

# **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

## LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)

**APPROVED BY THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE - APRIL 5, 2018**

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**Información en Español:** Si usted desea esta información en Español o si desea explicación sobre el contenido, por favor llámenos al teléfono (361) 884-0687 o comuníquese con nosotros mediante correo electrónico a [ccmpo@cctxmpo.us](mailto:ccmpo@cctxmpo.us). Nuestras oficinas están ubicadas en el 602 N. Staples St. #300, Corpus Christi, TX 78401. Copias se proveerán a petición.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN POLICY STATEMENT

It is a Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) policy to support and encourage early and continuous public participation and input to the planning process and to adhere to the principles of Environmental Justice and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act as part of the metropolitan “3-C” (continuous, comprehensive, and cooperative) planning process relating to transportation systems and facilities. The MPO’s public participation plan is designed to ensure early and continuous opportunities for the public to express its views on transportation issues and to become active participants in the regional planning and transportation “3-C” metropolitan decision making process.

A 1994 Presidential Executive Order directed every Federal agency to make Environmental Justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on "minority populations and low-income populations." The MPO's Environmental Justice initiatives will strive to accomplish this by involving the potentially affected public through a Citizens Outreach Program. This program consists of MPO staff activities designed to develop partnerships with, and enhance the participation in the transportation planning process, by groups and individuals of “traditionally underserved” communities.

These communities include minorities, transit dependent citizens, low income, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Staff activities may include nontraditional outreach and involvement strategies such as: web-based sessions, attendance and participation in existing group meetings and coalitions serving these communities. The MPO targets communications with local media outlets, conducts meetings in a manner most suitable for the audience being addressed, hosts meetings at times and locations that are accessible to transit dependent or non-driving individuals when possible, and we publish MPO documents in non-technical, web-based or other easily accessible formats as necessary and appropriate for purposes of obtaining input and comment into the short- and long-range transportation planning process. In carrying out the public participation plan, the MPO’s practice shall be to cultivate a culture of early and responsive outreach by welcoming the public’s involvement and input through the use of such methods as: (i) holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times; (ii) being sensitive in the use of industry terms and language so as to be understood by the lay stakeholders; (iii) employing stronger visualization techniques through the use of visuals and other tools as reasonably possible to describe short- and long-range transportation plans; (iv) providing a brief written summary of the meeting’s highlights and information offered at the meeting via online access for citizen’s unable to attend and (v) offering an electronically accessible response mechanism for two-way communication with the public when submitting a comment and receiving an acknowledgement of the receipt of information. The goal of the MPO’s Outreach Program is to ensure that all citizens regardless of race, color, religion, income status, national origin, age, gender, disability, marital status, or political affiliation, have an equal opportunity to participate in the MPO’s decision-making process.

### I. BACKGROUND

Formal transportation planning activities in the Corpus Christi metropolitan area began in the early 1960s, pursuant to the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962. The City of Corpus Christi and the Texas Highway Department, in cooperation with the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Public Roads, initiated a long-range comprehensive transportation plan for the Corpus Christi area. The purpose of this plan was to develop long-range highway plans and programs which were properly coordinated with plans for improvements in other forms of transportation and which were formulated with due consideration of their probable effect on the future development. The act stipulated that projects in urban areas of more than fifty thousand would not be approved unless planning for such projects was organized and directed by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) using a continuing, comprehensive transportation planning process, carried on cooperatively by states and local

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communities in conformance with the objectives of the act. The table below captures the evolution of changes surrounding plan development and partnerships in our study area:

Year	Event	Notes
1963-64	Corpus Christi Transportation Plan	State and city partnership formed to develop a study that established an adequate, long-term solution for future traffic in comprehensive urban development.
1972	May 1972 Agreement	Cities of Corpus Christi, Portland; counties of Nueces, San Patricio; and State of Texas participate in a Comprehensive, Cooperative, and Continuing (3C) planning process.
1973	July 1973 Agreement	Provided two committees to guide the Study: Policy Advisory Committee (composed of elected officials) and the Steering Committee (composed of designated representatives of the elected city and county officials, and locally-elected state officials).
1981	March 1981 State and MPO Agreement	“Prospectus” changed committee names from Policy Advisory Committee and Steering Committee to Transportation Planning Committee and Technical Advisory Committee, respectively.
1986	Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority	CCRTA joins the MPO and is represented on both committees.
1993	Port of Corpus Christi Authority	POCCA joins the MPO and is represented on both committees.
1995	April 1995 Bylaws and Operating Procedures	MPO adopts bylaws and operating procedures; Transportation Planning Committee name changes to the Transportation Policy Committee; each member entity on both committees is provided one vote.
2000	2000 Census	Corpus Christi Urbanized Area includes City of Gregory.
2004	Metropolitan Area Boundary Revision	MAB revised to include City of Gregory; San Patricio’s County Judge and the County Commissioner are representatives on the Transportation Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee, respectively.

The principal responsibilities of the MPO include the development of a 25-year long-range transportation plan (Metropolitan Transportation Plan - MTP) for the two county area that is constrained financially and a short-range transportation plan (Transportation Improvement Programs - TIP) for the urbanized area (Corpus Christi, Portland and Gregory and portions of the Corpus Christi’s Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (E.T.J.)) that is fiscally constrained within the projected federal funds available. Other planning activities include a Congestion Management Process, and studies or projects associated with the examination of travel and transportation issues necessary to provide demographic analysis, travel patterns, and trends in our community. Local transportation needs are re-evaluated annually. Based on this evaluation, project priorities are established and made part of the MPO’s TIP. This information is forwarded to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for inclusion into its State TIP (STIP). TxDOT then prioritizes and programs these projects by giving consideration to production schedules and funding constraints. By Federal and state law, regionally significant multi-modal transportation improvement projects, regardless of funding source, must be included in and be

consistent, to the maximum extent feasible, with the MPO's TIP and MTP in order to be eligible for federal-aid and state funding. The MPO's TIP is the primary plan that guides all state and federally funded transportation improvements in the urbanized area.

## **II. FEDERAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

### **A. Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21): January 6, 2012**

Map-21 creates a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991. The MAP-21 Act requires the MPO to provide for consideration of projects and strategies that will serve to advance eight (8) transportation planning factors identified under MAP-21 as follows [per 49 USC §5303(h)]:

- A. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- B. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- C. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized
- D. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
- E. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and economic consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- F. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- G. Promote efficient systems management and operation; and
- H. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

Under MAP-21, the MPO is encouraged to consult with other planning officials responsible for other types of planning activities that are affected by transportation in the area including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, and freight movements via Section 6001(g)(3). Further, the MPO's metropolitan planning process will serve to promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns as part of the long-range transportation plan update.

As part of the development of a long-range transportation plan update, MAP-21 requires that types of mitigation shall be discussed within the long-range planning document along with potential sites to carry out the activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the plan. The discussion of potential environmental mitigation shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with Federal, State, and tribal wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies.

The MPO shall consult with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation concerning the development of a MTP and TIP. The consultation shall involve as appropriate: (i) comparison of the long-range transportation plans with State conservation plans or maps, if available; or (ii) comparison of long-range transportation plans to inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

The 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 tourism, representatives involved with

natural disaster risk reduction, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the long-range transportation plan and TIP and major revisions.

The MPO's Public Participation Plan shall be developed in consultation with all interested parties; and shall provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the MTP and TIP updates and major revisions.

The Public Participation Plan is a living document and will be continually reviewed for possible revisions. Revisions to previous plans are summarized in Appendix A.

### **B. Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act: December 4, 2015**

The FAST Act is the first Federal law in over ten years to provide long-term funding certainty for surface transportation (for fiscal years 2016 through 2020). The FAST Act continues the Metropolitan Planning Program and authorizes \$305 billion for the Department's highway, highway and motor vehicle safety, public transportation, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, rail, and research, technology and statistics programs.

Under the FAST Act, MPOs must also provide public ports and private providers or transportation with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the long-range transportation plan and the TIP as well as consult with representatives responsible for tourism and representatives involved with natural disaster risk reduction about the MTP and TIP.

## **III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**

### **A. General Guidelines**

The MPO's Public Participation Plan is intended to cultivate a culture of early and responsive outreach by welcoming the public's involvement and input. Involvement activities are conducted in a manner that offers equal opportunity in the decision-making process to residents of the MPO's region. The policies, goals, objectives and techniques used for public involvement are:

1. Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including but not limited to local jurisdiction concerns).
2. Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the MTP, the TIP, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects, and conduct open public meetings where matters related to transportation programs are being considered.
3. Give adequate public notice of public participation activities and allow time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of the MTP, the TIP, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects. If the final draft of any transportation plan differs significantly from the one available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues, which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan shall be made available.
4. Respond in writing, when applicable, to public input and prepare for posting (online) a brief assessment of meetings hosted and attended. A summary of highlights and major accomplishments is made available for citizens unable to attend meetings to access for informational purposes. When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan (including the financial plan for the MTP and TIP developed in cooperation with the Regional Transportation Authority) as a result of the public participation process or the interagency consultation process required under MAP-21, a report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan.

5. Solicit the needs of those under-served by existing transportation systems, including - but not limited to - the transportation disadvantaged, minorities, elderly, persons with disabilities, and low-income households. MAP-21 requires that the MPO shall provide reasonable opportunities for 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 planning process via Section 6001(i)(5)(A).
6. Provide a public comment period of up to 45 calendar days prior to the adoption of the Public Participation Plan and/or any amendments. Notice of the comment period will be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation and various other publications prior to the commencement of the comment period. Notice will also be mailed to the entire MPO mailing list prior to the start of the comment period.
7. Provide a public comment period of not less than 30 calendar days prior to adoption of the MTP, the TIP, the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transit Development Plans, any formal amendments or updates, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects, except under circumstances of an unusual nature.
8. Coordinate the Public Participation Process with statewide Public Participation Processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans and programs, and reduce redundancies and costs.

## **B. Public Participation Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

**Goal:** To provide the public with thorough information on transportation planning services and project development in a convenient and timely manner.

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

The MPO shall actively engage the public in the transportation planning process according to State and Federal law and the policies outlined in this plan.

#### **Policy 1.1: Informing Interested Parties**

The MPO shall make a good faith effort to inform those who are interested in or affected by transportation decisions about reasonable opportunities to provide input on the metropolitan planning process. To accomplish this, the MPO shall maintain up to date contact information for the following:

- Citizens expressing an interest in transportation planning activities
- Elected officials
- Local government staff
- Transportation agencies (public ports, airports, transit, etc.)
- Local media (TV, radio, print, etc.)
- Homeowners associations
- Civic groups
- Special interest groups (other interested parties)
- Libraries (for public display)
- Native American Tribal Council
- Faith-based organizations

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- Private freight shippers
- Representatives of public transportation employees
- Providers of freight transportation services
- Representatives of users of public transportation
- Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities
- Representatives of individuals with disabilities
- Economic development organizations
- Private providers of transportation including intercity bus operators and employer-based community programs (such as carpools, vanpools, shuttle, transit benefits, parking cash-out, or telework programs)

### **Policy 1.2: Consultation with Agencies and Officials**

The MPO shall make a good faith effort to consult with agencies responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation as well officials responsible for other planning activities. This shall include Federal, State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, conservation and historic preservation, emergency response, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, environmental protection and other environmental issues. To accomplish this, the MPO shall maintain up to date contact information for the following:

- Coast Guard
- Homeland Security
- National Parks Service (Department of Interior)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Geological Survey
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service (US Department of Agriculture)
- National Marine Fisheries
- Texas Parks and Wildlife
- Texas Historical Commission
- General Land Office
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- Local Emergency Planning Committee (Corpus Christi)
- Corpus Christi Convention & Visitors Bureau

### **Policy 1.3: Coordination with Agencies and Officials**

The MPO shall make a good faith effort to coordinate its metropolitan transportation planning process with other planning activities affected by transportation including:

- a) Statewide transportation planning, public involvement, and consultation activities
- b) Any other planning activities affected by transportation

### **Policy 1.4: Visualization Techniques**

The MPO shall employ visualization and communication techniques that depict transportation plans. Examples may include: charts, graphs, photo interpretation, maps, use of GIS systems, artist renderings, physical models, and/or computer simulation.

**OBJECTIVE 2**

The MPO shall keep the public informed of on-going transportation related activities on a continuous basis.

**Policy 2.1:** The MPO shall make all publications and work products available electronically to the public via the internet at the MPO's web homepage and in hardcopy at the MPO offices.

**Policy 2.2:** MPO staff shall be available to provide general and project-specific information at a central location during normal business hours and after hours at the request of community interest group with reasonable notice.

**Policy 2.3:** The MPO shall maintain an internet web site that will be compliant with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act for individuals with disabilities.

**Policy 2.3.1:** The web site shall be updated and maintained to provide the most current and accurate transportation planning information available.

**Policy 2.3.2:** The web site shall contain the following information:

- a) Contact
- b) Current MPO committee membership (TPC and TAC)
- c) Meeting calendars and agendas for current year
- d) Work products and publications (MTP, TIP, UPWP, etc.)
- e) Comment / Question Form
- f) Links to related agencies
- g) Current By-Laws and Operating Procedures (including the Public Participation Plan and updates)

**OBJECTIVE 3**

The MPO shall encourage the involvement of all area citizens in the transportation planning process.

**Policy 3.1:** Target audiences shall be identified for each planning study conducted by the MPO including residents, traditionally underserved/underrepresented populations, i.e. but not limited to low income, individuals with disabilities and minority households and business/property owners within the study area.

**Policy 3.2:** The MPO shall make a good faith effort to hold public meetings at a site convenient to potentially affected citizens.

**Policy 3.3:** The MPO shall make a good faith effort to attend and participate in existing group meetings and coalitions serving these communities.

**OBJECTIVE 4**

The MPO shall strive to continuously improve public participation.

**Policy 4.1:** The MPO shall continuously evaluate and retool the public involvement strategies and techniques to better engage the public.

**Policy 4.2:** The Public Participation Plan shall be reviewed and adopted with appropriate revisions at least every three (3) years in an effort to improve the effectiveness of public involvement.

## OBJECTIVE 5

The MPO as a recipient of federal assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, shall ensure that no person, on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any agency programs or activities. These prohibitions extend from the MPO to its sub-recipients (i.e., contractors, consultants, local governments, colleges, universities, etc.). All programs funded in whole or in part from federal financial assistance are subject to Title requirements:

**Policy 5.1:** The MPO shall establish a procedure under which complaints alleging discrimination in MPO provisions, service or MPO activities can be made by persons who are not employees of the MPO.

**Policy 5.2:** Any person who believes the MPO, or any entity who receives federal financial assistance from or through the MPO, has subjected them or any specific class of individuals to unlawful discrimination may file a complaint of discrimination.

**Policy 5.3:** The MPO shall follow timelines set forth in guidance from the Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and the Department of Justice for processing Title VI discrimination complaints.

### C. Public Participation Techniques

Public participation, an ongoing activity of the MPO, is an integral part of one-time activities such as corridor studies and other regularly repeated activities such as the annual TIP process and MTP updates.

This section contains descriptions of public participation tools currently being used by the MPO:

#### MPO Web Site

Description: The site was established to provide basic information about the MPO process, members, meeting times and contact information. The site has been expanded recently to include information about specific projects undertaken by the MPO. Work products such as the draft and adopted Public Participation Plan, UPWP, TIP and MTP are available on the site. Citizens are able to submit comments and sign up for various distribution lists maintained by the MPO. The site provides many links to other transportation related sites at the local and national level.

The web site (address: [www.corpuschristi-mpo.org](http://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org)) is maintained and regularly updated by the MPO System Administrator. The site has been reviewed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to identify improvements that would make the site conform to W3C standards and also conform to web accessibility according to U.S. Section 508 Standards.

Activities: The web site is used to list current and newsworthy information on regular and special meetings, planning studies, publications, related public events and work products.

#### MPO Contacts Database

Description: MPO staff maintains a contacts database of business, federal, state and local agencies and interested public. The database includes committee membership, mailing information, phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses and web sites. The database is used for maintaining up-to-date committee membership lists, special interest groups and homeowner association contacts and other interested parties. The database will be used to establish and maintain a list of e-mail contacts for electronic meeting notification and announcements.

Activities: The database is used to provide adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key transportation decision points, including but not limited to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program.

### **MPO GIS Portal**

Description: The GIS Portal was established to provide data to the public, traditionally tubular, in a visual and interactive map format. The portal has various sub-websites – each focusing on a subject, i.e. Demographics, Current Project Locations, Environmental Justice, etc. Each sub-site provides links to other transportation related sites for data download. If a site does not have a link to download the related data, a request can be made for the MPO to provide said data. Public feedback and questions are encouraged so that the portal may conform to the public’s needs. The portal is maintained and regularly updated by the MPO GIS Manager.

Activities: GIS Portal is provided to enhance public access to data available through the MPO.

### **Public Notice**

Description: Texas Government Code, Chapter 551 requires posting a notice of any public meeting where a decision could be made or that may be attended by more than one elected official. The MPO regularly posts notice of the MPO’s public meetings.

Activities: Regular and other meetings seeking public input are posted.

### **Display Ads**

Description: Publication of ads that are used to promote meetings that are not regularly scheduled, such as corridor study workshops. They are published in selected newspapers in order to reach a larger audience than those that typically read legal notices.

Activities: Public awareness of project specific meetings, workshops, or open houses.

### **Other Media**

Description: Opportunities are sought for articles in other newsletters produced by municipalities, homeowners’ associations, church groups, civic groups, or others that may have an interest in the MPO. Opportunities are also sought to present to civic and social agencies, take part in radio talk shows, provide television news highlights and utilize public service notices to create community awareness of planning activities.

Activities: Increased opportunities to make the public aware of corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies or major activities.

### **Direct Mailings**

Description: Used to announce upcoming meetings and activities or to provide information to a targeted area or group of people. Direct mailings are usually post cards, but may be letters or flyers. An area may be targeted for a direct mailing because of potential impacts from a project. Groups are targeted that may have an interest in a specific issue, for example, cyclists and pedestrians may be targeted for pathways and trail projects.

Activities: Project-specific meetings, workshops, open houses, corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies or major activities.

### **Press Releases**

Description: Formal press releases are sent to local media (newspaper, TV and radio) to announce upcoming meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues being considered by the MPO or their committees.

Activities: Corridor or other planning studies, workshops, open houses, public hearings, and other MPO activities.

### **Project Workshops/Open-Houses**

Description: These are targeted public meetings that are generally open and informal, with project team members interacting with the public on a one-on-one basis. Short presentations may be given at these meetings. The purpose of project-specific meetings is to provide project information to the public and to solicit public comment and priorities.

Activities: Long range planning studies, prioritization of projects, and other major MPO activities.

### **MPO Logo**

Description: A logo representing the MPO is used to identify products and publications of the MPO. A logo helps the public become familiar with the different activities of the MPO by providing a means of recognizing MPO products.



Activities: A logo is used on all MPO publications; including those developed by consultants working on MPO sponsored projects to create a community awareness of the MPO deliverables.

### **Public Hearings**

Description: These are public meetings used to solicit public comment on a project or issue being considered for adoption by the MPO. Hearings provide a formal setting for citizens to provide comments to the MPO or another decision-making body. They are recorded and transcribed for the record.

Activities: MTP, TIP, corridor studies, project development & environmental studies, and other planning studies as needed for other MPO activities.

### **Comment Forms**

Description: Comment forms are often used to solicit public comment on specific issues being presented at a workshop or other public meeting. Comment forms can be very general in nature, or can ask for very specific feedback. For example, a comment form may ask for comments on specific alignment alternatives being considered during a corridor study or ask for a person's general feelings about any aspect of transportation. Comment forms can also be included in publications and on web sites to solicit input regarding the subject of the publication and/or the format of the publication or web site.

Activities: Public workshops, open houses, hearings and other meetings.

### **Surveys**

Description: Surveys are used when very specific input from the public is desired. A survey can be used in place of comment cards to ask very specific questions such as a person's support for a specific

alignment in a corridor study. Surveys are also used to gather technical data during corridor and planning studies such as daily travel patterns.

Activities: Conduct on-line surveys on issues and needs to provide input into the plans.

### **Posters and Flyers**

Description: Posters and flyers are used to announce meetings and events and are distributed to public places such as city halls, libraries and community centers for display. Bus cards may be used onboard RTA buses whenever possible and as allowed by CCRTA for various MPO events. The announcement may contain a brief description of the meeting's purpose, time(s), location(s), and contact information. This technique may be used to communicate with an audience that cannot be reached using direct mailings, newsletters or electronic communication alternatives.

Activities: Corridor studies, other planning studies, regular and special MPO activities.

### **Facebook**

Description: The MPO will maintain a Facebook page by posting pertinent information and notices on a frequent basis. This also provides another opportunity for MPO Facebook fans to provide public input to the MPO's on-going planning process.

Activities: Feasibility studies, other planning studies, regular and special MPO activities.

### **Twitter**

Description: The MPO utilizes Twitter to provide announcements and updates on current news, events and notices for Twitter users who elect to watch or follow our Twitter feed. We do not follow individual people back who follow us, but may follow other official government-sponsored Twitter accounts

Activities: Feasibility studies, other planning studies, regular and special MPO activities.

### **YouTube**

Description: The MPO utilizes YouTube to host videos that provide information about local and regional transportation projects and events.

Activities: Feasibility studies, other planning studies, regular and special MPO activities.

### **Grouping of Projects**

Description: MPO's make use of statewide project groupings in their TIP. TxDOT in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration developed statewide programs identified by a statewide project number that provides a more efficient method of programming and contracting for projects that minimizes the necessity for TIP revisions.

Activities: The MPO recognizes the use of these grouping categories and will use them as appropriate. Individual projects eligible for statewide project groupings may be included in the MTP / TIP for informational purposes only. The information only project lists will be clearly annotated as such and may be included as an appendix.

### **Education**

Description: The MPO recognizes projects present complexities and unknowns that may be alleviated by considering best practices/lessons learned from others in the industry. A method being utilized by staff to improve understanding/familiarity with is webinars. This presentation format is posted on the MPO web site for individuals who wish to access webinars from their personal computers. Should webinar sponsors provide information related to the webinar, the MPO shall post it on our website. Webinar subjects range from bicycle & pedestrian designs to evaluating multi-modal freight projects.

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Activities: Corridor studies, walkable communities studies, access management, and other planning studies.

**D. Summary Public Participation Policy Table\***

<b>Program Adoption</b>	<b>Comment Opportunity or Public Meetings</b>	<b>Comment Period</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	Two meetings prior to TPC approval	30 Days	A summary of comments will be provided to the TPC and made available for public review at the MPO offices and on the MPO web site.
Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)	Two meetings prior to TPC approval	30 Days	
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	1 meeting prior to TPC approval	30 Days	
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	N/A	45 Days	Three year updates of the PPP are recommended
Other program adoptions, plans, or studies	Optional: 1 meeting prior to TPC approval	30 Days	
<b>Program Amendments</b>			
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	Optional: 1 meeting prior to TPC approval	30 Days	
Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)	Optional: 1 meeting prior to TPC approval	30 Days	
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Optional: 1 meeting prior to TPC approval	30 Days	
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	N/A	45 Days	
<b>Open Meetings</b>			
Transportation Policy Committee (TPC)	Regular meeting on first Thursday of each month		Agenda posted four days prior to meeting date
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	Regular meeting on third Thursday of each month		Agenda posted four days prior to meeting date
Other Committees as assigned	Determined individually		

*\* Subject to exception due to public emergencies, action requests from other public agencies, and circumstances beyond the MPO's control*

## IV. LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN

### A. Introduction

This Limited English Proficiency Plan has been prepared to clarify the responsibilities of recipients of federal financial assistance and assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations.

Executive Order 13166, titled *Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*, indicates that differing treatment based upon a person's inability to speak, read, write or understand English is a type of national origin discrimination. It directs each agency to publish guidance for its respective recipients clarifying their obligation to ensure that such discrimination does not take place. This order applies to all state and local agencies which receive federal funds, including the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

### B. Plan Summary

The MPO has developed this *Limited English Proficiency Plan* to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) who wish to access services provided. As defined Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. This plan outlines how to identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training that may be required, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available.

In order to prepare this plan, the MPO used the four-factor LEP analysis which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the study area who may be impacted by the MPO.
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with MPO activities or programs.
3. The nature and importance of activities or programs provided by the MPO to the LEP population.
4. The resources available to the MPO and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.

The greater the number or proportion of eligible LEP persons; the greater the frequency with which they have contact with a program, activity, or service; and the greater the importance of that program, activity, or service, the more likely enhanced language services will be needed.

The intent of DOT's guidance is to suggest a balance that ensures meaningful access by LEP persons to critical services while not imposing undue burdens on small organizations and local governments.

Smaller recipients with more limited budgets are typically not expected to provide the same level of language service as larger recipients with larger budgets. The DOT guidance is modeled after the Department of Justice's guidance and requires recipients and subrecipients to take steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities to LEP persons.

A summary of the results of the four-factor analysis is in the following section.

## Meaningful Access: Four-Factor Analysis

### Factor 1: The Number or Proportion of LEP Persons

The Census Bureau uses four classifications of how well people speak English: “very well”, “well”, “not well”, and “not at all”.

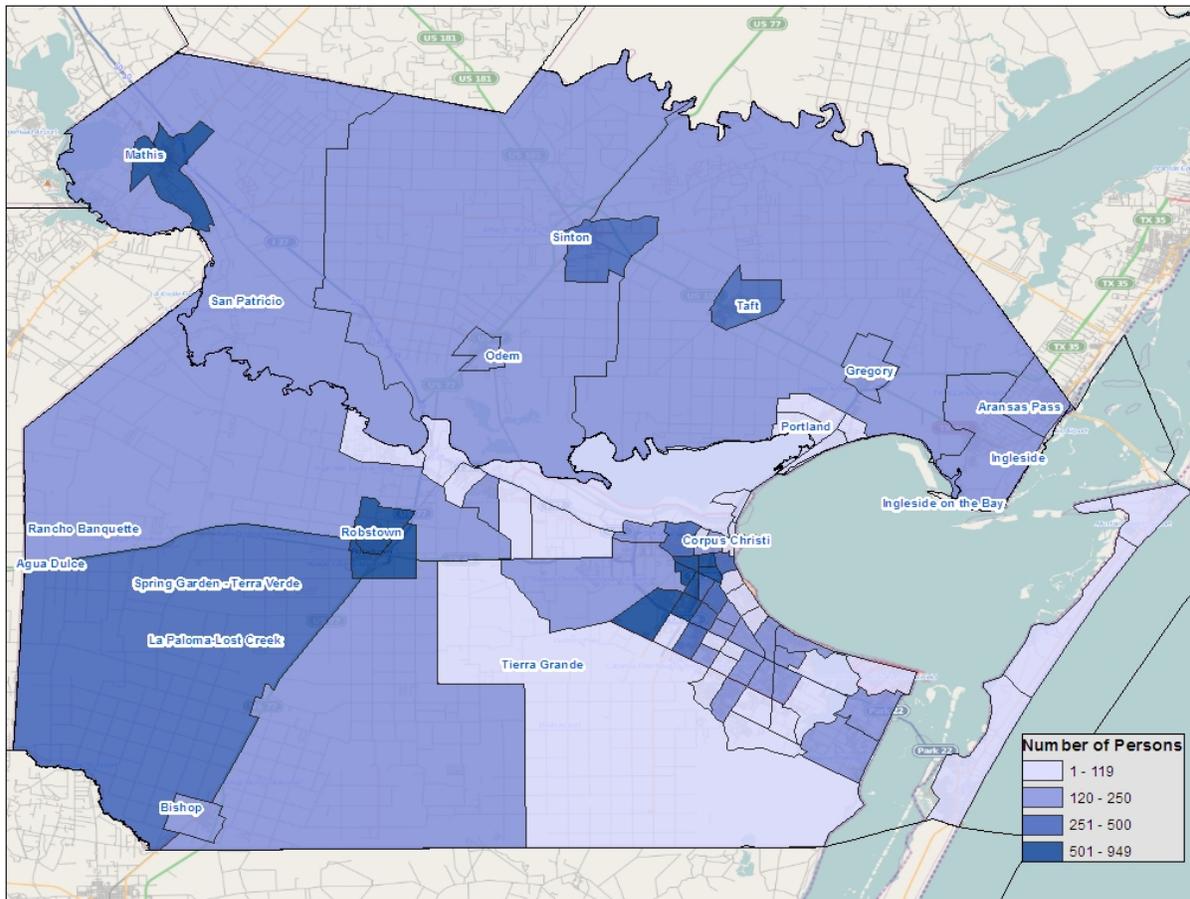
**Table 1: Limited English Proficient Persons in MPO’s Study Area**

County	Total Population	Population 5 Yrs old & older	Number of LEP Persons	Total Population % of LEP Persons
NUECES	313,645	289,673	14,586	4.65%
	Other Indo-Euro		208	1.4%
		Spanish	14,144	97%
		Asian/Pacific	221	1.5%
		All Other	13	.09%
SAN PATRICIO	67,138	61,822	3,005	4.48%
	Other Indo-Euro		40	1.3%
		Spanish	2947	98.1%
		Asian/Pacific	18	.60%
		All Other	0	0%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>380,783</b>	<b>351,495</b>	<b>17,591</b>	<b>4.62%</b>

Table 1 shows the English language skills for persons in municipalities and portions of the counties within the MPO study area. MPO staff reviewed U.S. Census data and determined that of the total population (380,783 persons) in MPO’s study area, 17,591 or 4.62% are LEP. That is, they speak a language other than English. Our table captures that portion of the population that speaks English “not well” or “not at all”.

Map 1 shows the distribution of LEP individuals in the MPO study area. A cluster of LEP persons appear in the urban area mostly on the west side of the City of Corpus Christi.

**MAP 1: Limited English Proficient Population Map by Census Tract**



**Factor 2: Frequency of Contact with LEP Individuals**

MPO staff reviewed the frequency with which the policy and advisory committees, and staff have or could have, contact with LEP persons. This includes documenting phone inquiries or office visits. To date, MPO has had no requests for interpreters and no requests for translated program documents. Historically, MPO has participated and continues to participate in meetings in the census blocks with the highest concentrations of LEP persons. MPO staff has found that no contact with LEP individuals has occurred at any public involvement meetings, other public presentations or in day to day activity.

**Factor 3: The Nature and Importance of Program or Activity to the LEP Community**

As the agency responsible for coordinating the regional transportation planning process, the MPO must make sure that all segments of the population, including LEP persons, have been involved or have had the opportunity to be involved with the planning process. The impact of proposed transportation investments on underserved and underrepresented population groups is part of the evaluation process. MPO provides oversight and helps ensure that LEP and other protected classes of persons are not overlooked in the transportation planning process.

MPO’s main function is to support cooperative, comprehensive, and continuing transportation planning as outlined in federal transportation acts. MPO develops three main documents – the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and as needed, other studies. The MTP provides direction for transportation investments out to 25+ years in the future. The TIP is a program or schedule of

short-range transportation improvements and activities intended to be implemented through a combination of State, Federal and local funding. The UPWP outlines tasks to be performed in the upcoming two year cycle.

Denial or delay of access to services or information provided by MPO would not have life threatening implications on a LEP individual. It is also believed that denial or delay of access to services or information provided by MPO would not have serious implications on a LEP individual, especially compared to the services, such as health, emergency transportation, water, sewer, fire protection, police protection and other emergency services, provided by MPO member organizations.

The majority of the population (57.7%) 5 years and older speak only English.

#### Factor 4: The Resources Available to MPO and Overall Cost

While MPO does serve few LEP persons and has very limited resources, it has been decided to include a LEP section in the Public Involvement Plan with the acknowledgement that current demographic trends indicate the number of LEP persons may increase within the MPO planning area.

Funds available for LEP services would be derived entirely from existing MPO operating funds, and compete with other operational requirements of MPO. It is deemed that written translations of core documents would be so burdensome as to defeat the legitimate objectives of our programs. It is appropriate for MPO to precede with oral interpretation options for compliance with LEP regulations.

### C. LEP Plan Outline

#### Language Assistance

A person who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English may be a LEP person and may be entitled to language assistance with respect to MPO activities. Language assistance can include interpretation, which means oral or spoken transfer of a message from one language into another language and/or translation, which means the written transfer of a message from one language into another language.

Guidance on examples of notification services available free of charge:

- Post notice of the availability of free language assistance with reasonable advance notice to MPO.
- Outreach documents and website postings will state that language services are available.
- Partner with community-based organizations and other stakeholders to inform LEP individuals of the availability of language assistance services.
- Use automated telephone voicemail attendant or menu to provide information on available language assistance service.
- Provide public service announcements on non-English-language radio and television stations on the available language assistance services.
- When MPO sponsors an informational meeting or event, an advanced public notice of the event shall be published including an offer for a translator (LEP) or interpreter (sign language for hearing impaired individuals).

#### Language Assistance Measures

Although the percentage of LEP individuals in the MPO's study area is low, an effort to offer the following measures will be made:

1. MPO staff will take reasonable steps to provide the opportunity for meaningful access to LEP people who have difficulty communicating in English.

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2. The following resources may be available to accommodate LEP persons with reasonable advanced notice to MPO:
  - Volunteer interpreters for the Spanish language are available and will be provided within a reasonable time period.
  - Language interpretation will be accessed for all other languages through a telephone interpretation service.

### Staff Training

The following training will be provided to all staff:

- Information on the Title VI Policy and LEP responsibilities.
- Description of language assistance services offered to the public.
- Documentation of language assistance requests.
- How to handle a potential Title VI/LEP complaint.

**All contractors or subcontractors performing work for MPO will be required to follow the Title VII/LEP guidelines.**

### Translation of Documents

MPO weighed the cost and benefits of translating documents for potential LEP groups. Considering the expense of translating the documents, the likelihood of frequent changes in documents and other relevant factors, at this time it is an unnecessary burden to have any documents translated. Due to the very small local LEP population, MPO will consider that when staff prepares a document or schedules a meeting for which the target audience is expected to include LEP individuals then, documents, meeting notices, flyers, and agendas will be printed in an alternative language based on the known LEP population.

### Monitoring

MPO will review and update the LEP Plan as required. At a minimum, the plan will be revised when complete data from the 2010 U.S. Census is available, or when it is clear that higher concentrations of LEP individuals are present in the MPO study area. Updates will include the following:

- The number of documented LEP contacts encountered annually.
- How the needs of LEP persons have been addressed.
- Determination of the current LEP population in the service area.
- Determination as to whether the need for translation services has changed.
- Determine if MPO's financial resources are sufficient to fund language assistance resources needed.
- Determine if MPO has fulfilled the goals of this LEP Plan.
- Document complaints concerning the agency's ability to meet LEP needs.

### **D. Dissemination of MPO's LEP Plan**

MPO will post the LEP Plan on its website at [www.corpuschristi-mpo.org](http://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org) . Any questions or comments regarding this plan should be directed to MPO.

Copies of the LEP Plan may be requested via:

- Phone: 361-884-0687
- In person or mail: 602 N. Staples St., Suite 300, Corpus Christi, TX 78401  
Email: [cctxmpo.us](mailto:cctxmpo.us)

## V. COMMONLY USED TRANSPORTATION TERMS AND ACRONYMS

**ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990:** Federal law that requires public facilities (including transportation services) to be accessible to persons with disabilities including those with mental disabilities, temporary disabilities, and the conditions related to substance abuse.

**ADT - Average Daily Traffic:** The number of vehicles passing a fixed point in a day, averaged over a number of days. The number of count days included in the average varies with the intended use of data.

**AMPO - Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations:** A national nonprofit membership organization serving the interests of metropolitan planning organizations nationwide.

**AVO - Average Vehicle Occupancy:** The ratio of person trips to vehicle trips; often used as a criteria in judging the success of trip reduction programs.

**AVR - Average Vehicle Ridership:** The number of employees scheduled to start work during specified hours divided by the number of vehicles arriving at the site during those same hours.

**CAAA - Clean Air Act Amendments:** 1990 amendments to the federal Clean Air Act which classify non-attainment areas and provide for rules dealing with air pollution in such areas; specifically brought transportation decisions into the context of air quality control.

**CIA - Community Impact Assessment:** Community impact assessment is “a process to evaluate the effects of a transportation action on a community and its quality of life.” It is a way to incorporate community considerations into the planning and development of major transportation projects. From a policy perspective, it is a process for assessing the social and economic impacts of transportation projects as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The assessment may address a variety of important community issues such as land development, aesthetics, mobility, neighborhood cohesion, safety, relocation, and economic impacts.

**CMAQ - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program:** A categorical funding program created under ISTEA, which directs funding to projects that contribute to meeting national air quality standards in non-attainment areas for ozone and carbon monoxide.

**CMP - Congestion Management Process:** A systematic process required under SAFETEA-LU for all TMAs that shall address congestion management through the metropolitan planning process that provides for effective management and operation, based on a cooperatively developed and implemented metropolitan-wide strategy of new and existing transportation facilities eligible for funding under title 23 and chapter 53 of title 49 through the use of travel demand reduction and operational management strategies. The CMP is required under 23 CFR 500.109 and shall include methods to monitor and evaluate the performance of the multi-modal transportation system, identify causes of congestion, identify and evaluate alternative actions, provide information supporting the implementation of actions, and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of implementation actions. The CMP is periodically reviewed for efficiency and effectiveness of the implemented strategies, the results of this evaluation shall be provided to decision-makers to provide guidance on selection of effective strategies for future implementation purposes.

**DOT - Department of Transportation:** Agency responsible for transportation at the local, state, or federal level. For title 23 U.S.C. federal-aid highway actions, this would mean the Federal Highway Administration and for federal-aid transit actions under title 49 U.S.C, this would mean the Federal Transit Administration.

**EIS - Environmental Impact Statement:** A National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document that explains the purpose and need for a project, presents project alternatives, analyzes the likely impact of each, explains the choice of a preferred alternative, and finally details measures to be taken in order to

mitigate the impacts of the preferred alternative.

**Environmental Justice:** Describes the impact of transportation plans or projects, either positive or negative, on a particular community or population. Derived from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Environmental Justice strives to ensure public involvement of low income and minority groups in decision making, to prevent disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low income and minority groups, and to assure that these groups receive equal benefits from transportation improvements.

**ETJ: Extraterritorial Jurisdiction:** Geographic area subject to urban municipality ordinance and platting requirements.

**FHPP - Federal High Priority Projects:** Discretionary projects earmarked by the U.S. Congress as high priorities at the federal level during the Congressional appropriations and re-authorization process. This amounts to roughly 5% of the total transportation budget.

**FHWA - Federal Highway Administration:** Division of the U.S. Department of Transportation responsible for administering federal highway transportation programs under title 23 U.S.C.

**Fiscal Constraint:** A requirement, originally of ISTEA, that all plans be financially –constrained, balanced expenditures to reasonably expected sources of funding over the period of the TIP or Long-Range Transportation Plan.

**FTA - Federal Transit Administration:** Federal entity responsible for transit planning and programs under title 49 U.S.C.

**Functional Classification:** Functional classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Basic to this process is the recognition that individual roads and streets do not serve travel independently in any major way. Rather, most travel involves movement through a network of roads. It becomes necessary then to determine how this travel can be channelized within the network in a logical and efficient manner. Functional classification defines the nature of this channelization process by defining the part that any particular road or street should play in serving the flow of trips through a highway network.

**FY - Fiscal Year:** A federal fiscal or budget year; runs from October 1 through September 30 for the MPO and the federal government.

**HOV - High Occupancy Vehicle:** In Texas, vehicles carrying two (2) or more people receive this designation and may travel on freeways, expressways and other large volume roads in lanes designated for high occupancy vehicles.

**IMS - Incident Management System:** A systematic process required under SAFETEA-LU to provide information on accidents and identify causes and improvements to the Transportation system to increase safety of all users.

**ISTEA - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991:** Federal law which restructured transportation planning and funding by requiring consideration of multimodal solutions, emphasis on the movement of people and goods as opposed to traditional highway investments, flexibility in the use of transportation funds, a greater role of MPOs, and a greater emphasis on public participation.

**ITE - Institute of Transportation Engineers:** An international society of professionals in transportation and traffic engineering; publishes Trip Generation (a manual of trip generation rates by land use type).

**ITS - Intelligent Transportation System:** Use of computer and communications technology to facilitate the flow of information between travelers and system operators to improve mobility and transportation productivity, enhance safety, maximize the use of existing transportation facilities, conserve energy resources and reduce adverse environmental effects; includes concepts such as “freeway management

systems,” “automated fare collection” and “transit information kiosks.”

**Intergovernmental Agreement:** Legal instrument describing tasks to be accomplished and/or funds to be paid between government agencies.

**LOS - Level of Service:** A qualitative assessment of a road’s operating condition, generally described using a scale of A (little congestion) to E/F (severe congestion).

**MG - Minimum Guarantee:** A funding category created in TEA-21 that guarantees a 90% return of contributions on formula funds to every state.

**MPO Activities:** Are plans, programs and projects related to the MPO process.

**MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization:** The forum for cooperative transportation decision-making; required for urbanized areas with populations over 50,000.

**MAP-21 - Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act:** Enacted on July 6, 2012, this federal law creates streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991.

**MTP - Metropolitan Transportation Plan:** A 25- year forecast plan required of state planning agencies and MPOs; which must consider a wide range of social, environmental, energy, and economic factors in determining overall regional goals and consider how transportation can best meet these goals.

**NHS - National Highway System:** Specific major roads to be designated September 30, 1995; the NHS will consist of 155,000 (plus or minus 15%) miles of road and represents one category of roads eligible for federal funds under ISTEA.

**Officials:** Are people who have governmental decision-making, planning or administrative responsibilities that relate to MPO activities.

**PMS - Pavement Management System:** A systematic process utilized by state agencies and MPOs to analyze and summarize pavement information for use in selecting and implementing cost-effective pavement construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance programs; required for roads in the National Highway System as a part of ISTEA; the extent to which the remaining public roads are included in the process is left to the discretion of state and local officials; criteria found in 23 CFR 500.021-209.

**PTMS - Public Transportation Facilities and Equipment Management System:** A systematic process (required under ISTEA) utilized by state agencies and MPOs to collect and analyze information on the condition and cost of transit assets on a continual basis; data is to be used to help people choose cost effective strategies for providing and keeping transit facilities and equipment in good condition; process must be developed in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs); the use of CMS in non-TMAs is left to the discretion of state and local officials.

**Public Participation:** Is an integral part of a planning or major decision-making process. It provides opportunities for the public to be involved with the MPO in an exchange of data and ideas. Citizen participation offers an open process in which the rights of the community, to be informed to provide comments to the Government and to receive a response from the Government, are met through a full opportunity to be involved and to express needs and goals.

**ROW - Right-of-Way:** Real property that is used for transportation purposes; defines the extent of the corridor that can be used for the road and associated drainage.

**RTDM - Regional Travel Demand Model:** This is a tool for forecasting impacts of urban developments on travel patterns as well as testing various transportation alternative solutions to traffic patterns. The travel patterns are determined from US census results and in simple terms tell where residents live and where they go to work or school on a regional wide basis.

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**SIB - State Infrastructure Bank:** Method of financing large capital projects by taking advantage of borrowing against future state revenues.

**Sponsoring Agencies:** Are organizations or governmental units, which enter into agreements with the MPO to undertake transportation related activities, which will be part of the MPO planning process.

**SAFETEA-LU - Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users** - legislation enacted August 10, 2005, as Public Law 109-59. SAFETEA-LU authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009.

**SMP - Statewide Mobility Plan:** TxDOT's 10 year plan for adding capacity to the transportation system using the Mobility Category Funds of Federal and State Transportation funding.

**SPP - Statewide Preservation Plan:** TxDOT's 10 year plan for maintaining the Transportation system using the preservation categories of Federal and State Transportation funding.

**STIP - State Transportation Improvement Program:** The TxDOT Five Year Work Program as prescribed by federal law.

**TAC - Technical Advisory Committee:** A standing committee of most metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs); function is to provide advice on plans or actions of the MPO from planners, engineers and other staff members (not general citizens).

**TCI - Texas Congestion Index:** This is an index to measure the magnitude of congestion in a single performance measure across the state. The index measures the mobility of people and goods in each Texas metropolitan area, with attention to the delay time experienced by drivers.

**TMMP - Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan:** This is a state based requirement intended to serve as a framework for identifying unmet transportation needs in the state's larger metropolitan areas. The TMMP is a needs-based plan which quantifies transportation needs beyond the fiscal constraint barrier.

**TPC - Transportation Policy Committee:** A standing committee created for the purpose of serving as spokespersons for the citizens of the metropolitan area and is the designated MPO to prioritize and direct federal transportation funds to local projects. The TPC is comprised of elected officials from the cities and two counties in the urbanized area. The TPC also has representatives from TXDOT, RTA, and Port Authority. The TPC is responsible for creating policies regarding transportation planning issues. The TPC meetings are open to the public and where any member of the public can address the MPO on any transportation issue.

The TPC meets on the first Thursday of each month at 1:30 P.M. The meetings are held at the Corpus Christi City Hall, City Council Chambers, 1201 Leopard Street in Corpus Christi, Texas.

**Transportation Disadvantaged:** People who are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation due to disability, income status or age.

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:** A federal law that protects individuals, groups and organizations from discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in federally assisted programs and activities. Since other nondiscrimination authorities have expanded the scope and range of Title VI application and reach, reference to Title VI includes other provisions of federal statutes and related authorities to the extent that they prohibit discrimination in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

**Transportation Enhancements:** Specific activities which can be funded with Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds; activities include pedestrian/bicycle facilities, acquisition of scenic easements and scenic historic sites, scenic or historic highway programs, scenic beautification, historic preservation, rehabilitation/operation of historic transportation structures, railway corridor preservation, control/removal of outdoor advertising, archeological planning/research and mitigation of highway

runoff water pollution.

**TEA-21 - Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century:** Federal Legislation authorizing funds for all modes of transportation and guidelines on the use of those funds. Successor to ISTEA, the landmark legislation that clarified the role of the MPOs in the local priority setting process. TEA-21 emphasizes increased public involvement, simplicity, flexibility, fairness, and higher funding levels for transportation.

**The Public:** Includes citizens, public agencies, advocacy groups and the private sectors that have an interest in or may be affected by MPO activities.

**TIP - Transportation Improvement Program:** A priority list of transportation projects developed by a metropolitan planning organization that is to be carried out within the four (4) year period following its adoption; must include documentation of federal and state funding sources for each project and be consistent with adopted MPO long range transportation plans and local government comprehensive plans.

**TMA - Transportation Management Area:** An area designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation given to all urbanized areas with a population over 200,000 (or other area when requested by the Governor and MPO); these areas must comply with special transportation planning requirements regarding congestion management systems, project selection and certification; requirements identified in 23 CFR - 450.300-33.6.

**TSM - Transportation Systems Management:** Strategies to improve the efficiency of the transportation system through operational improvements such as the use of bus priority or reserved lanes, signalization, access management, turn restrictions, etc.

**TTI - Texas Transportation Institute:** A legislatively created research center, located at Texas A & M University, whose purpose is to conduct and facilitate research and serve as an information exchange on issues related to urban transportation problems in Texas.

**TxDOT - Texas Department of Transportation:** State agency responsible for transportation issues in Texas.

**UTP - Unified Transportation Plan:** This is the state's 10 year Transportation Plan with the first 10 years programmed and the second 15 years of projects under design. This document has two parts. The two parts are: The SMP and SPP respectively.

**UPWP - Unified Planning Work Program:** Developed by Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPOs); identifies all transportation and planning activities anticipated within the next one to two years, including a schedule for the completion of the identified tasks and activities.

**V/C Ratio Volume over Capacity Ratio:** This is a roadway performance measure to show how a highway volume compares with a highway's capacity.

**VMT - Vehicle Miles Traveled:** This is an output of the travel demand model and is a measure of traffic flow over a highway segment. While 1000 vehicles traveling over a mile road and 1 vehicle traveling over 1000 miles are mathematically equal only the former 1000 vehicle mile means anything to the transportation planner.

## **VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN EVALUATION GUIDEBOOK**

### **A. Introduction**

The Federal Highway Administration and the Texas Department of Transportation require that the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) continuously evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement activities. By continuously evaluating public participation strategies, it is possible to improve or add new public involvement activities to the MPO program and to discard activities that are ineffective. The purpose of this guidebook is to provide guidelines for the evaluation of public participation techniques. The MPO's public participation activities are outlined in the Public Participation Plan (The Plan).

The Plan describes the roles and responsibilities of the MPO and other agencies in the public involvement process and the techniques that could be used by the MPO.

This guidebook describes public involvement techniques, outlines the steps to be taken to evaluate those techniques, and identifies measures to quantify success rates and outlines strategies to improve the MPO's public participation process. This is intended to be a "living" document, with additions and changes based on each evaluation that is performed. This guidebook should be reviewed at least every three years to ensure that appropriate changes are being implemented by the MPO.

### **B. Evaluation Methods and Performance Goals**

In order to determine the effectiveness of the public involvement tools, they must be evaluated and compared to established performance goals. The typical methods for evaluating the effectiveness of public involvement tools are surveys and quantitative statistical analysis. This section briefly describes evaluation methods used by the MPO. For each public involvement tool, performance goals/objectives and the methods for meeting those goals/objectives have been identified.

### **C. Surveys**

Description: Surveys typically consist of short, specific questions regarding public involvement tools that are ongoing or that were used on a specific project. Surveys can be conducted in person, by phone, mail or e-mail.

- Face-to-face and telephone surveys provide quick responses and can be used when a respondent's answer may lead to a follow-up question. For example, respondents may be asked if advertisements are an effective notification tool. If the response is no, the surveyor can ask the respondent why advertisements are not effective and also what other tools they would prefer. In person and telephone surveys can target specific areas or groups or can be random sampling.
- Mail surveys may be used to provide written record of respondent's answers. Mail-back surveys can be distributed at meetings, inside other publications, or by mailing directly to potential respondents. Respondents can be a targeted group, such as members of special interest groups or residents of specific areas, or they can be randomly generated. Return postage for mail surveys typically can be pre-paid by the MPO, or can be the responsibility of the respondent.
- E-mail surveys, like mail surveys, provide a written record of responses. Unlike mail-back surveys, there is little to no reproduction or distribution cost to the MPO to send out the surveys, and little to no cost to respondents to return a response. To use e-mail surveys, it is necessary to have e-mail addresses for the targeted respondents, and random distribution is not really an option.

### **D. Statistical Analysis**

Statistics can be used to determine the "return on the investment" of producing public participation tools. For example, the number of persons attending an activity can be compared to the number of

persons that were notified of the activity. This type of evaluation can be an indicator of whether or not the tools used for public participation are actually reaching the intended audience, or which tools had a greater response rate.

Statistical analysis is used to evaluate survey responses and the results of the analysis are compared to the evaluation measures to determine the rate of success of public involvement tools.

### **E. Improvement Strategies**

The MPO continually strives for improved public participation. Improvements should be made to increase public awareness and to improve the quantity and quality of information provided to the public. The decisions made by the MPO may affect the entire population – both residents and visitors – of Nueces and San Patricio Counties. Therefore, seeking public input on those decisions is vital to the success of the MPO as the agency responsible for transportation planning. Each time a public participation evaluation is performed, a list of improvement strategies needed should be identified for implementation. If improvement is needed for an ongoing public involvement task, such as the MPO web site, a reasonable completion date should be established.

If improvement is needed for one-time activities, such as corridor studies, the improvement should be implemented where appropriate on future activities.

**F. Public Participation Tools Evaluation Table**

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Public Participation Plan	No Measure / PPP should reflect the practices of the MPO	Update at least every 3 years	Update and incorporate improvement strategies resulting from public participation evaluations.
MPO Web Site	Number of Hits	Min. of 1,000 hits per month	Use other public participation tools to increase advertisement of the web site.
MPO Master Database	Number of returned items	Max. of 2% return rate per mailing	Make immediate corrections on returned items; verify list every 3 years.
Legal Advertisements	No Measure / Required by Texas Statutes	Remain compliant with Texas Statute	Publish legal advertisements as required
Quarterly Newsletter	Feedback from public; number of returns	Max. of 2% return rate per mailing	Seek news items that generate favorable review; evaluate items that receive negative feedback; correct or improve errors
Display Ad	Feedback from public; number of contacts	15% of mtg. attendees or survey respondents indicate they have seen ad. Ad formats may be modified based on specific comments received	Seek publication in a prominent location of paper; increase size or modify layout to make ads readily visible.
Project Specific Newsletters	Feedback from public; number of contacts	15% of mtg. attendees or survey respondents indicate they have received newsletter <b>-OR-</b> reaches 85% of persons <i>affected by a project.</i>	Increase/decrease distribution to accurately target an area that may be affected.
Press Releases	Feedback from public	No standard. Format may be modified based on specific comments received.	Encourage publication of press releases; keep media informed
Other Media (newsletters, electronic media news, etc.)	Feedback from public; number of contacts	Project featured in community newsletters, presence in electronic news, PSAs of public mtgs. elated to MTP process (?)	Provide publishers of newsletters with information. Consider newsletters that may reach affected areas.

Public Participation Tools Evaluation Table – continued

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Direct Mailings	Feedback from public; number of contacts	15% of mtg. attendees or survey respondents indicate they received mailing <b>-OR-</b> Reach 85% of persons <i>affected by a project.</i>	Increase/decrease mailing list to accurately target affected areas. Use up-to-date information from Nueces County Property Appraiser to maintain the mailing list.
TV Message Boards	Feedback from public; number of contacts	15% of mtg. attendees or survey respondents indicate they saw the meeting notice.	Provide information to the Govt. Access TV; encourage making announcements prominent.
Project Specific Web Sites	Feedback from public; number of hits	Min. of 30 hits/month; increase by 10% over the life of the project; expectations may be higher based on study area size.	Use other public involvement tools to increase advertisement of the web site.
Project Specific Open Houses/Workshops	Feedback from public; attendance	3%-5% of affected population (based on study area) in attendance.	Schedule at convenient times & locations; hold workshops; use other tools to increase awareness.
Small Group Meetings	Feedback from public; met group expectations	N/A; these mtgs. are held at the request of affected groups.	MPO/consulting staff is available to host group mtgs. regarding MPO activity or issue; mtg. formatted to provide information requested by the group; highlights issues of interest to group.
E-mail Announcements/ Internet Message Boards	Feedback from public; number of contacts	5% of mtg attendees & survey respondents indicate having seen announcement.	Increase e-mail list by advertising the availability of email announcements using other public involvement tools.

**Public Participation Tools Evaluation Table – continued**

<b>Public Participation Tool</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Performance Goal(s)</b>	<b>Methods to Meet Goal(s)</b>
Citizens Advisory Committees	Feedback from public; attendance	N/A. These committees are part of most planning studies. Members are appointed by elected officials in the study area.	MPO and consultant staff should encourage appointed members to attend committee meetings.
Fact Sheets	Feedback from public; number of contacts	Positive Comments.	
MPO Logo	Feedback from public; number of contacts	Recognition of the Logo.	The MPO logo should be used on all MPO products and publications, and on materials for all MPO sponsored activities.
Public Hearings	Feedback from public;	3%-5% of affected population (based on study area) in attendance.	Host at convenient & accessible times/locations; use other public involvement tools to increase awareness of hearings.
Comment Forms	Feedback from public; number of contacts	60% of attendees filled out form <b>-OR-</b> 2% of web site visitors submitted form <b>-OR-</b> 20% of mail recipients return the form.	Encourage responses as they improve the planning process.
Surveys	Feedback from public; number of responses	60% of contacted persons participate - <b>OR-</b> 20% of mail recipients return survey	Encourage responses as they improve the planning process.
Government Access TV	Feedback from public; number of contacts	15% of mtg. attendees or survey respondents indicate they saw mtg notice.	Provide information to Government Access TV; encourage prominent placement.
Poster and Flyers	Feedback from public; number of contacts	15% of mtg attendees or survey respondents indicate they saw poster.	Increase distribution to common area visible to the general public.

**APPENDIX**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Historical Updates and Amendments**

## Historical Updates and Amendments

- 1994 The Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) adopted the Public Involvement Policy (PIP) for the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in December 1994.
- 1999 The PIP is revised to add a section on Federal Requirements and Methods of Compliance and added new addresses in the Mailing List. Adopted by TPC in May 1999.
- 2001 The PIP is revised to improve its effectiveness and add private transit providers and users in mailing list. Adopted by TPC in October 2001.
- 2006 The PIP is revised and approved by TPC. The MPO's Public Participation Plan (PPP) is adopted by resolution on April 6, 2006.
- 2012 The PPP is amended to include Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Language in compliance with Executive Order #13166. Adopted by TPC on September 6, 2012.
- 2017 The PPP is administratively amended as follows on March 16, 2017:
- "Information Resource Manager" changed to System Administrator
  - "Transportation Planner II" changed to GIS Manager
  - YouTube description added "of Transportation Policy Committee meetings in compliance with SB 1237, related to internet broadcast of open meetings held by the policy board of certain MPOs"
  - Address change to 602 N. Staples, St, Suite #300, Corpus Christi, TX 78401
- 2018 The PPP is updated to address Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act requirements, including administrative updates to improve document flow. Public ports are added to the list of interested parties. The list of private providers of transportation is expanded to include intercity bus operators and employer-based community programs such as carpools, vanpools, shuttle, transit benefits parking cash-out, or telework programs. Agencies responsible for tourism (Corpus Christi Convention & Visitors Bureau) and natural disaster risk reduction (Local Emergency Planning Committee – Corpus Christi) are added to the list of agencies with whom the MPO makes a good faith effort to consult with regarding transportation planning activities. Adopted by the TPC on April 5, 2018.