

Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization
2018-2041 Regional Transportation Plan
Draft Public Involvement Plan
January 18, 2016

Introduction

This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) describes the public involvement approach and activities that will be conducted as part of the Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO) 2018-2041 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Public involvement is an essential component of producing an RTP that is well informed, publicly supported and can be implemented.

The RTP will identify regional long-range multimodal needs, evaluate potential solutions, and identify projects that will be included within the cost-constrained RTP implementation plan.

The PIP will guide an inclusive and proactive public outreach approach that follows requirements outlined in MAP-21, Title VI, and Environmental Justice. The PIP will ensure participation opportunities are convenient and easy for the general public, the community is informed about the RTP's purpose and progress, and public and stakeholder input on the regional vision and proposed RTP transportation elements are actively pursued and incorporated.

The PIP will provide for broad and inclusive engagement regardless of geographic area, language, individual interests, income level, schedule, or preferred method of receiving information and participation.

Public participation is a vital part of the planning process. It is particularly important to engage potentially affected stakeholders early on, when decisions can still be influenced, and identify critical stakeholder opportunities and issues that can produce the most favorable outcome for everyone involved. Continuing the engagement throughout the planning process helps maintain open lines of communication, build relationships, encourage mutual understanding, improve outcomes and help reach consensus.

This PIP is designed to fulfill the “Involve” promise of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation “To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.”

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Close communication with the RTP Technical Advisory Committee (RTP TAC) and YMPO member-jurisdictions, including the cities of San Luis, Somerton and Yuma, the Town of Wellton, Yuma County, the Cocopah Indian Tribe, and the Arizona Department of Transportation, will be critical to the success of this study.

Public Outreach Approach Overview

Efforts to secure further participation will be targeted to stakeholders who are individuals or entities that could be significantly influenced by the RTP recommendations or could significantly influence implementation. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to, the general public; low-income, minority and disabled communities; neighborhood representatives; tribal representatives; chambers of commerce; special transportation interests, such as freight shippers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicycle organizations; local officials; military installations; and federal and state transportation agencies.

This PIP incorporates mobile displays, contact with stakeholders and interested parties, intercept surveys, newsletters and a variety of communications methods to inform the community about the RTP's purpose and progress and actively seek input. This plan also outlines agency and consultant responsibilities.

Effective public involvement can be challenging in the YMPO region – the area is large and diverse. Typical traditional public meeting attendance is low. With this in mind, this PIP combines established best practices with creative outreach methods that are customized for the YMPO region and designed to result in the best engagement.

To augment outreach efforts and to solicit greater input from the people in the community in a cost-efficient way, potential outreach methods include:

- a. Leveraging communications channels and regional and civic events already utilized by local jurisdictions, chambers of commerce, business groups, and other agencies and organizations within the study area
- b. Distributing newsletters via stakeholder email list
- c. Placing study web pages on the YMPO website and linking with organization partners' websites
- d. Distributing press releases to inform the media of study milestones and reach a broader portion of the public

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- e. Presenting mobile displays at outreach opportunities, events and public meetings
- f. Conducting intercept surveys, in conjunction with the mobile displays, at key community locations

The following table summarizes public involvement activities that will be completed, the purpose of the outreach, and the methodologies that will be employed with each round.

Public Engagement Round	Purpose	Online Materials and Survey	Mobile Display	Executive Board Meeting (considered public meeting)	Intercept Surveys with paper copies	Presentation to Elected Officials
Round 1	Input on goals and objectives and trends and conditions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Up to three locations (in one day)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Round 2	Present draft RTP and alternatives and benefits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Up to three locations (in one day)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Round 3	Present Final RTP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Mobile Outreach with Displays and Intercept Surveys

While public meetings are a traditional way to reach out to the affected community, they may not always be the most effective method in reaching certain segments of the population. The team recommends utilizing alternative outreach methods that would help elicit more engagement and feedback from the community, especially those not traditionally attending public meetings.

Our public involvement practices emphasize taking into account the public's busy schedules. To get a broad representation and facilitate involvement of all demographics, particularly young families, the team will engage the public where they already congregate.

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In conjunction with rounds 1 and 2 of public involvement, the Kimley-Horn team will set up mobile displays with RTP information at key locations within the community. The mobile RTP displays, staffed by team members, will be set up for a period of one to two hours at various locations within the community – for example, at a mall or a busy shopping center. The Kimley-Horn team will conduct two mobile outreach efforts (at different locations) within the course of a day.

The Round 1 and Round 2 mobile displays will be supplemented with the use of intercept surveys and conducted at several large community events:

Round 1 Public Outreach:

- Saturday, Feb. 13, 2016 - Silver Spur Rodeo Parade, or
- Saturday, Feb. 27, 2016 - Patriot Festival

Round 2 Public Outreach:

- Date and Event TBD – October 2016 (Purpose is to Review draft RTP document).

The intercept survey will be administered by the team engaging members of the public, requesting their opinion on a few brief but pertinent questions appropriate to the phase of the RTP. To gather information easily and quickly, a short survey will be crafted and used digitally on two electronic tablets and traditionally with paper copies.

The initial intercept surveys will be focused on determining public perception of the goals, existing conditions and deficiencies, plus educating the public about the regional transportation planning process. A secondary purpose of the mobile display and intercept survey outreach would be to invite people to the public meetings for more information and involvement. The team will work with the YMPO to determine the best locations for the mobile displays/intercept surveys and to identify possible enticements or give-a-ways to the public for survey participation.

Online Materials

The YMPO will also gain additional participation and input by inviting community members to complete the surveys via a web link distributed to stakeholders. RTP elements and informational materials will also be posted online so that they are available for review to as many stakeholders as possible.

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The team is very experienced at implementing digital and online surveys but we also realize that not everyone can or will participate in electronic surveys, so we will also make paper copies available. Furthermore, the team will provide the community with the opportunity to participate in English or Spanish, including providing bilingual materials.

Public Meetings

Traditional evening public meetings will not be included for Round 1 and Round 2. The team's past experience with public meetings indicates that despite proactive publicity efforts, the result is often, if not always, very low attendance. Therefore, our approach to public outreach will be focused on mobile workshops/surveys and online materials. The Executive Board Meeting will be advertised and considered the final public meeting/hearing on the completion of the survey.

Mobile outreach locations and availability of digital and print materials will be advertised in the Yuma Sun and Bajo El Sol. The team will also write a press release and follow up with reporters to see if there is interest in a feature story.

Presentation to Elected Officials and Commissions

Kimley-Horn will make up to four presentations to elected officials, boards, or commissions. The first presentation may be made at the beginning of the study process to introduce the study team, explain the methodology and understanding of the project goals, solicit ideas from the elected officials and commissions about their specific goals and respond to questions about the process. A second presentation may be given mid-project to update the elected officials and commissions on the project progress. The third presentation will be made upon completion of the draft final RTP. A fourth presentation may be given if necessary.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

As part of the project review process, Kimley-Horn will utilize the established YMPO TAC, plus additional key stakeholders as determined by the YMPO project manager, to review the work in progress and provide input from their perspectives. During the course of the project, the Kimley-Horn team will make up to eight presentations to the TAC during their regularly scheduled monthly meetings at the YMPO's office. The purpose of

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these presentations will be to review work in progress and discuss issues that arise during the course of the project. The TAC members will be responsible for briefing their respective agencies and commissions and representing their positions and views in the TAC meetings.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PRODUCTS:

- a. Public Involvement Plan
- b. Three rounds of bilingual public involvement/outreach, including distinct public presentations, intercept surveys, mobile displays, and materials including notices, newsletters, displays and comment forms
- c. Up to four presentations to elected officials, boards or commissions
- d. Up to eight TAC meetings