

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3.1) OVERVIEW

The public participation plan outlines a process for involving the public in the transportation planning process. The plan also allows for the Farmington MPO to meet the requirements of Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act - a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which calls for a “proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans.” Through the public involvement program and detailed technical analysis, transportation needs were identified and consensus was developed on system improvement strategies. A good public participation plan allows planners to identify and understand aspects of the transportation system directly from the users, the general public. This process was integrated into the overall development of the MTP update. A summary of public comments received during the MTP update process is found in Appendix A.

3.2) KICK-OFF MEETING

In November 2008 shortly after the MTP update process started, the MPO hosted a kick-off public meeting to introduce the public to the various elements that would be analyzed and developed. The presentation explained what the MTP is and how the public can play an integral part in its development. Further discussion explained the planning process with regards to roadways, transit, bicycle/pedestrian, and other issues.



3.3) MTP SURVEYS

MPO residents were invited to participate in the development of the MTP by completing two surveys. Through March and mid-April of 2009, the MPO issued two surveys to solicit public input on general travel characteristics, public transit services, and improvements needed for our regional transportation system. Overall, 639 surveys were received: 248 were transit surveys and 391 were surveys on general transportation characteristics and needed improvements. The surveys were available through a link on the MPO website and paper copies were provided at many public destinations including libraries, city halls and community centers. A summary of the survey results is provided in Appendix A.

Top transportation improvements identified by the public included:

- More sidewalks and bicycle facilities
- Engineering improvements
- Signal synchronization
- Expanding the transit system
- Making transit service more convenient for travel

3.4) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public meetings were held at various locations at key points in the development of the plan (Table 3-1).

TABLE 3-1 - Public Meetings held by the Farmington MPO

WHEN	WHERE	WHAT
November 12, 2008	MPO Office, 100 W. Broadway	Open House presentation introducing the MTP Update
February 18, 2009	Farmington Public Library	Identification of needed improvements for all modes
February 19, 2009	Aztec Commission Chambers	Identification of needed improvements for all modes
February 23, 2009	Bloomfield Cultural Center	Identification of needed improvements for all modes
August 11, 2009	Farmers Market, Farmington	Identification of the public’s preferred improvements
August 12, 2009	Connie Mack World Series, Ricketts Park	Identification of the public’s preferred improvements
August 14, 2009	San Juan County Fairgrounds, McGee Park	Identification of the public’s preferred improvements
August 26, 2009	San Juan College Graphics Art Court	Identification of the public’s preferred improvements
August 26, 2009	San Juan College Health & Human Performance Center	Identification of the public’s preferred improvements

WHEN	WHERE	WHAT
January 25, 2010	San Juan College Graphics Art Court Bloomfield Cultural Center	Present the draft MTP document
January 26, 2010	Aztec Public Library	Present the draft MTP document
January 27, 2010	Farmington Public Library	Present the draft MTP document

The MPO website was continually updated with new information, maps, and data as it was prepared by staff, reviewed by the entities, and approved by the Policy Committee. Quarterly newsletters summarized key accomplishments during the development of the update.

3.5) STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

During the MTP update, staff met with several stakeholders to seek input and provide information on the development of the plan. Some of the stakeholder groups included:

- Northwest Regional Planning Organization (NWRPO)
- San Juan Center for Independence (SJCI)
- Local Councils and Commissions
- Navajo Nation DOT
- New Mexico Environmental Department (NMED)
- San Juan County Office of Emergency Management

MPO Staff was asked by several organizations to give presentations on the MTP Update (Table 3-2). These presentations were targeted to the audiences and allowed staff to hear specific concerns from members of these public groups.

TABLE 3-2 - Farmington MPO Presentations to Local Organizations

WHEN	WHERE	WHAT
April 8, 2009	Northwest New Mexico Seniors, Farmington	An MPO Overview was presented to the members at the Northwest New Mexico Seniors Meeting. Surveys were handled out to members to take back to their agencies and have patrons fill them out.
April 25, 2009	Earth Day Event - Aztec Ruins	The MPO had a booth to educate the public on the Bicycle Pedestrian Plan.
April 27, 2009	Elks Lodge, Farmington	The MPO was invited to present a description of projects and programs that the MPO administers in order to meet federal requirements.
May 5, 2009	San Juan Center for Independence-Farmington	An MPO Overview and a discussion on transit was presented to the San Juan Center for Independence, which is a community based nonprofit agency that was established by people with disabilities for people with disabilities.
May 27, 2009	Kiwanis Club - Farmington Meeting	The MPO Planner presented an overview of the public survey results for the MTP Update.
May 30, 2009	SRTS Bike Rodeo - San Juan College, Farmington	MPO Staff set up an information booth with pamphlets relating to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan, the Access Management Plan, and the MTP.
October 19, 2009	San Juan Center for Independence-Farmington	Presentation on an initial needs assessment and identification of transit expansion routes for Red Apple Transit.