

WHAT IS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION?

Public participation is the process of involving all parties including citizens, agencies, policy-makers and technical staff in the transportation planning process from inception to completion. Public involvement benefits all participants by bringing a variety of viewpoints to the transportation planning process. The earlier the public is involved in the planning process, the better the plans can address the community's needs for today and the future.

Public participation is integral to FAMPO's transportation planning success. With participation, it is possible to make a long-lasting contribution to an area's economic vitality and quality of life. Public involvement is more than an agency requirement and more than a means of fulfilling a statutory obligation – it is central to good decision-making.

The fundamental objective of public participation programs is to ensure that the concerns and issues of everyone with a stake in transportation decisions are identified and addressed in the development of the policies, programs, and projects being proposed in their communities.

FAMPO regularly evaluates and refines the public participation process to provide a wide variety of opportunities for people to get involved in transportation planning. Details are listed in the Public Participation Goals and Strategies section of this document.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

FAMPO carries out the following practices for effective communication with the public. These guidelines have been derived from Federal Regulation Code 450.316.

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 jurisdictional concerns).
2. **Provide reasonable public access** to technical and policy information used in the development of the Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), the Transportation Improvement Program (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 CLRP, 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 FAMPO 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. **Provide a public comment period of not less than 30 calendar days** prior to adoption of the CLRP, TIP, UPWP, Transit Development Plans, any formal amendments or updates, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects.
5. **Provide a public comment period of 45 calendar days** prior to the adoption of this PPP 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 forty-five day comment period. Notice will also be sent to the entire FAMPO contact list prior to the start of the comment period.
6. **Respond in writing**, when applicable, to public input. When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan, a report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan.
7. **Solicit the needs of those traditionally underserved**, including, but not limited to, the transportation disadvantaged, minorities, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and low-income households. (SAFETEA-LU legislation 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).)
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.