



Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization

7501 E. Civic Circle
Prescott Valley, Arizona 86314

Public Participation Plan **For Transportation Planning**

**Revision Adopted on June 6, 2011 by the Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning
Organization Executive Board**

CENTRAL YAVAPAI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CYMPO)

Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization (CYMPO) is the Federal and State designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization for the urbanizing portions of Central Yavapai County. It was created in 2003 in response to a Federal mandate that requires an urbanized area with a Census-designated population of 50,000 or more residents to form such an organization in order to be eligible for Federal transportation funds. The urbanized area meeting this population level includes parts of the City of Prescott, the Town of Prescott Valley, and unincorporated Yavapai County.

CYMPO is comprised of 6 member governments (Yavapai County, City of Prescott, Town of Prescott Valley, Town of Chino Valley, Town of Dewey-Humboldt, and the State of Arizona Transportation Board.) The planning boundary (see Figure 1.) covers 400 square miles and almost 140,000 central Yavapai County residents.

CYMPO's objective is to provide the long-range transportation planning needed for enhancing the region's transportation system. CYMPO engages in cooperative decision-making through working relationships and financial partnerships among the member governments, the Arizona Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration.

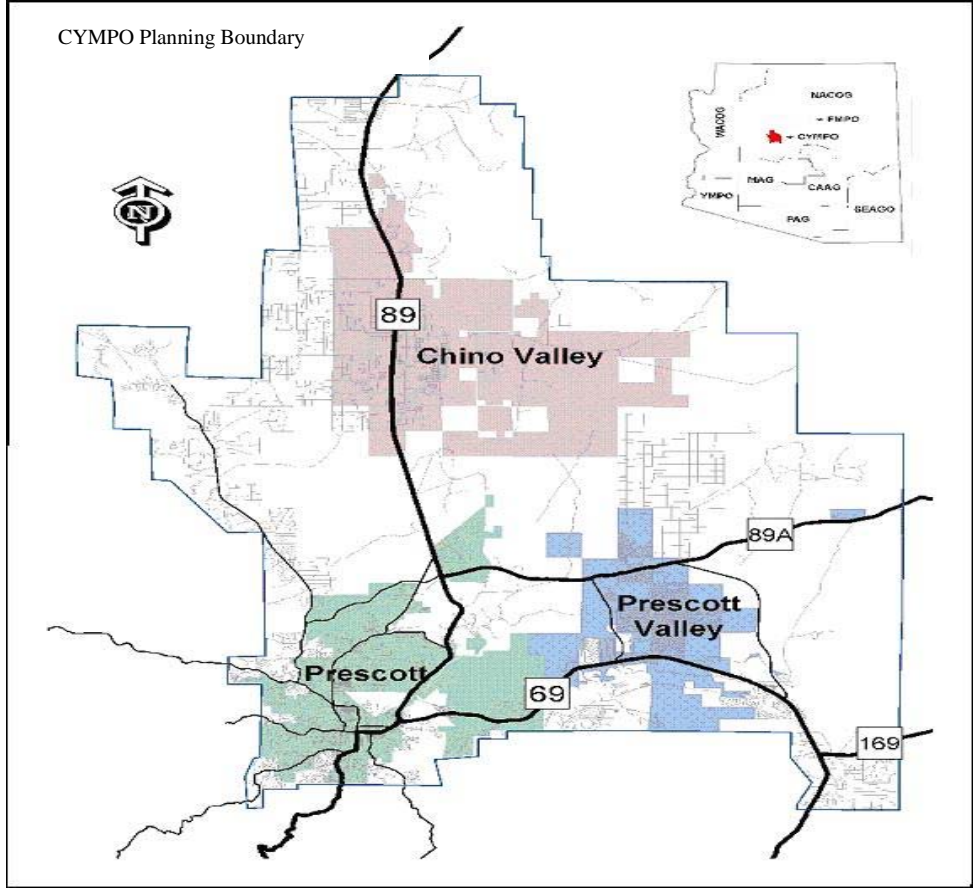


Figure 1.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, governmental agencies have come to recognize the increasing importance of involving the public as they plan, organize and implement transportation projects. Involving interested parties generally results in a more effective project overall. Taking time at the beginning to communicate with potentially affected interests, carefully explaining the proposal, and gathering input, can enhance the project and potentially reduce the time and effort for implementation.

The goals of this public involvement are to ensure that:

- Residents are given the opportunity to participate in the transportation planning process.
- The issues and concerns of residents are given consideration in the selection of transportation investments.
- Transportation investments do not disproportionately burden any population with adverse impacts.

This plan outlines the importance of, and specific guidelines for, involving community members, organizations, governments, transportation professionals and others in ongoing and future CYMPO projects, plans and programs. Included is information about the value of public participation, how it will be accomplished, and what will be done with the results.

It is important to note that a Public Participation Plan needs to incorporate a broad array of interested parties. These include agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historical preservation. Involving all the potentially affected interests, including the traditionally underserved populations, can significantly increase a plan or project's efficiency and effectiveness. By following the process outlined in this plan, CYMPO will be able to better ensure inclusive and meaningful public involvement.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Public participation implies an open process. This means that anyone who is potentially affected, or is just interested in the process, is welcome to participate. Some of the reasons for encouraging this openness are:

- Project leaders may gain new information.
- Participants, who want a project to be completed, can provide additional resources in the form of assistance, goods, or services.
- Public participation can be a forum for dispute resolution.
- Progress can be made and implementation occur because:
 - The project itself will be better designed with public input.
 - The community better understands what the project is about.
- Input can be a warning mechanism for potential problems.

- Participant comments help the project leaders understand areas where additional people may have concerns or misunderstandings. This can be used to provide better information to others who are not participating.

Underserved

Just opening the process to the “public,” is not enough. There are numerous populations that are not likely to get involved unless a special effort is made to reach out to them. In this Plan, groups that need a more focused effort to get involved are referred to as “underserved populations”. These include, but are not limited to:

- Minority (Hispanic and/or non-white) community members.
- Low-income community members.
- Physically and mentally challenged community members.
- People who may rely on alternative transportation.
- People with limited English proficiency.

By making a reasonable extra effort to include these populations, CYMPO hopes to ensure that the interests and input of all residents are given equal consideration.

Guidelines

- **Techniques:**

There are numerous and varied techniques/activities to provide the opportunity for public involvement. Any combination and number of these may be used depending on the specific plan, program or project. These techniques/activities are defined in detail in Appendix A. CYMPO will select from the various activities to provide the most effective public participation in each particular situation.

- **Welcoming Attitude:**

Public participation is welcomed and encouraged by CYMPO. All questions and statements are valuable and will be treated as such. Participants will be treated with respect. Meetings will abide by basic ground rules that enforce civil discussion. Anyone who feels that these rules have not been followed should contact CYMPO staff at (928) 759-5520.

- **Meeting Schedules and Locations:**

Meetings and hearings, which are open for public participation, will be scheduled to allow the best opportunity for attendance by the general public and other entities. The meeting locations will be convenient and ADA accessible.

In addition to general meetings, events and activities, reasonable special efforts will be made to reach those who are particularly affected, the underserved or others who request CYMPO come to them. These options are open to any group or individual and it is the policy of CYMPO to “go where people are” whenever possible. Locations and meeting times for these activities will be designed according to the specific needs.

- **Notification:**
Notices will follow the general Open Meeting Law of the State of Arizona. Information about meetings, events and other opportunities for participation will be made in a timely manner. (This is especially important for the physically and mentally challenged as extra time may be needed to arrange for accommodations to meet their needs.) This notification will be easy to understand and provide adequate information or explain where the information can be obtained.
- **Presentation of Information:**
In order to help citizens better understand Transportation Planning, efforts will be made to show how presented information specifically relates to the public in both the near future as well as long term. Visualization enhancements such as color, animation, physical props, pictures, 3-D models, etc. will be incorporated as appropriate and as budgets allow.
- **Written and Personal Communications from CYMPO:**
Technical and policy information from CYMPO will be written so that it is clear and understandable to the public. All relevant information will be open for public consideration. Knowledgeable people will be available to answer questions at meetings and respond to phone questions in a timely manner.
- **Ongoing Communications:**
CYMPO will use mailings, media and electronic technology such as e-mail and web sites to have ongoing communication with the public and other entities. Members of the staff are also available via the phone for questions, concerns and suggestions.
- **Other Entities:**
The needs and interests of other public and governmental entities will be solicited as appropriate. Coordination, cooperation and teamwork among all the agencies are vital to the success of any plan, program or project.
- **Transportation Interests:**
CYMPO will solicit input from transportation-related groups such as freight interests, private providers of transportation, chambers of commerce, and others.
- **Opportunities for Input:**
Opportunities for input will vary depending on the project, program or plan. For larger projects, such as the 20-year Regional Transportation Plans, there could be several rounds of public participation. There would be the opportunity for initial comments on what projects citizens would like their transportation system to include, prior to the start of any work. Comments on the first draft would be collected and incorporated as appropriate in the final draft. Finally, if there were significant changes to the final draft, there could be another call for input. In each of these stages a variety of techniques would be used to involve all the stakeholders. This will be determined by the extent and nature of the project.

- **Use of Public Comments:**

A complete record of public comments will be retained for public review. In specific cases, identified by federal regulations, the public comments could be a part of the final document, as is the case with the Regional Transportation Plans and the Transportation Improvement Program. Additionally, individual questions will receive a response in a timely manner.

- **Decision Making:**

All final transportation decisions (other than those requiring a vote of the people) are made by one or more groups of elected or appointed officials. Public meetings allow comments to be collected and may identify a consensus. The final decision, however, will be up to the elected and/or appointed officials based on a consideration of all related information.

Prior to each key decision point, ample opportunity will be offered for input and that input will be shared with the decision-makers.

Evaluating Public Involvement Activities

A continuing focus on evaluation and enhancement of the public participation process should help to improve the outcome of each new CYMPO plan, project or program. Evaluating public participation is a multi-dimensional task. First, there is the quantitative aspect which uses measurements such as the number of activities held, the number of notices sent, and/or the number of people who participated. While valid and important, these factors may not show the complete picture.

Second, it is important to evaluate the qualitative aspects relating to perceptions, attitudes and effectiveness. Did the people who participated feel they were heard? Were all the potentially affected interests (including the underserved) actually represented? Were the materials provided easy to understand? Were announcements received in a timely manner?

Third, is the question of how the public input was used. This information needs to be recorded and made available. It also needs to be considered in the decision-making process. Fourth, is the need to evaluate the reason something happened. Understanding why there was good (or poor) participation is important to assessing effectiveness.

The ultimate point to consider in an evaluation is the existence of respect and trust. It is not possible to please everyone, but it should be possible to proceed forward with an atmosphere of respect and trust and CYMPO intends to earn this by being fair and open with everyone at all times.

DEVELOPMENT, ADOPTION AND REVISION OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

This Public Participation Plan has gone through several stages during its development. These are:

- Preparation of a preliminary draft plan.
- Evaluation of this plan to ensure compliance with all Federal regulations.
- Review of the plan by CYMPO's Multimodal Technical Advisory Committee and Transit Technical Advisory Committee.
- Review of the plan by stakeholders including the general public, governmental entities and transportation professionals/businesses.
- Revision of the plan based on the above reviews.
- Completion of a final draft plan.
- Circulation of the draft plan for at least 45 calendar days. This includes notice to all potentially affected interests that this final draft plan is available for review, including placement at public libraries throughout the region.
- Review and evaluation of any further recommended changes.
- Adoption of the plan by June 30, 2011.
- Ongoing implementation of the plan by CYMPO.
- Availability of alternative formats i.e. large prints, Braille, audio/video cassettes (as appropriate) upon request for individuals who are blind or individuals with hearing/vision impairments.

Revisions to the Plan:

- The plan will be officially reviewed at a minimum of every 5 years. (The first review would be in 2016.) This re-evaluation will involve significant public input and a minimum 45 calendar day review period prior to adopting any changes. All efforts to involve the public and other organizations will follow the steps outlined in the current plan.
- Other periodic revisions may occur, as new and better approaches are determined. Each time any significant content revisions are made (other than technical or grammatical revisions) the public will be given a 45 calendar day review and comment period prior to implementing the changes.

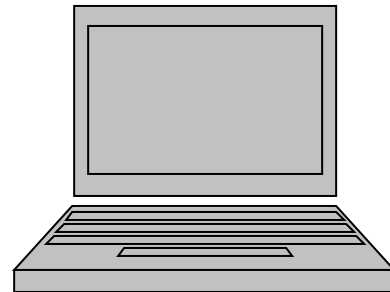
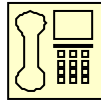
CYMPO COMMITMENT

This plan contains background material, guidelines, and commitments that CYMPO is undertaking to incorporate an effective public process into future plans, projects, and programs. Specifically CYMPO is committed to:

- Inclusive and meaningful public involvement.
- Open and honest communications with all individuals and entities.
- Timely public notice.
- Full public access to information and key decisions.
- Creating a sense of shared responsibility and ownership for regional transportation/congestion problems and a shared sense of pride in the development of solutions to those problems.
- Helping form partnerships between member entities, and the private and public sectors to plan and implement transportation/congestion solutions.
- Establishing policies and prioritizing needs based on valid data and using objective, fair and consistent processes.
- Providing information and gathering input so that decision makers will be able to make informed decisions.

Contact:

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En español:

Para mas informacion, a esta interesado en participar en el planeamiento del proceso de transporte en su comunidad y necesita asisencia con idioma, por favor comuniquese:

Señor Christopher Bridges, Administrador
 Teléfono: (928) 759-5516

APPENDIX A:

TOOLKIT OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TECHNIQUES

Activity	Description	Comments
Brochure	Written material to distribute generally contains more information than a flier. It is often folded to create a small piece for distribution.	
Charrette	An intensive brainstorming session using visual methods to define alternatives.	These can last anywhere from a few hours to a few days.
Conference	A meeting with two or more people where the participants confer and discuss. (This can also be a series of meeting and/or events focused on a unifying subject.)	
Contact lists	Create contact lists for interested parties.	
Display	Information and materials are displayed in an informal setting where people are free to move about and consider whatever is of interest to them.	These are typically held at malls, city halls, banks, etc.
E-Mail	Using the internet to contact people with Electronic-mail addresses	This is very inexpensive and a quick way to contact people. It is, however, important to find other ways to communicate with people who do not have access to computers.
Flier	A written communication piece that provides the most basic information.	Multiple fliers can be produced for one event, plan or project with each flier designed to communicate with different groups. These can be produced in various languages.

Activity	Description	Comments
Focus Group	A small carefully selected group of individuals who meet together to give feedback to the organizer on a specific topic.	Because this is a selected group, people who are not selected may be suspicious of the information gathered.
Forum	A public meeting that is designed to help attendants better understand a subject by hearing different points of view. Usually several people with differing opinions, each make a short presentation and then answer questions. It is not designed for decision making.	It is most helpful if a disinterested party moderates. It also might be helpful, especially in some communities, if some of the “experts” were local and trusted by the community. If a forum is used, it would need to be in Spanish for the Spanish speaking community members.
Games and Contests	These include a wide variety of activities including such things as board games, role playing, computer simulations, etc.	Use of these is an unusual and creative way to actively involve people.
Grocery Store	Contacting people at the grocery store, either by printing information on a grocery bag, dropping information into a grocery bag, staffed information tables or by displaying fliers or posters in the store.	This is a way to reach a larger and possibly diverse group of people.
Information Booths	Place an information exhibit at fair-type events.	
Key Person Interview	This question and answer session is with a specifically targeted person who has been identified as someone with whom it would be particularly important or useful to speak.	This may be useful as a first step in reaching minority or other interest groups.
Meetings	These are opportunities for larger groups of people to get together for a multitude of purposes. The general intent is to allow people to interact on a person-to-person basis. Meetings can be held for a wide variety of reasons from working on an issue to making a presentation.	To be most effective, a meeting should inform the participant prior to coming: what type of meeting it will be, what their role will be, and the expected outcome of the meeting.
Modeling	Computer and/or physical modeling can be used to help people better visualize or better understand a particular concept or project.	

Activity	Description	Comments
Newspaper Advertisement	Information that a newspaper prints in their paper that is not part of the news. The person/group placing the advertisement has control of the content.	These are generally purchased, and are used to announce meetings, events, etc.
Newsletter	A regular communication for a predetermined group of individuals/groups. These can be mailed or sent electronically.	This is a standard way to keep interested individuals and entities informed on a regular basis.
Open House	Information and materials are displayed in an informal setting where people are free to move about and consider whatever is of interest to them. Informed people are available to answer questions and take comments and suggestions.	This is a commonly used tool which has now been expanded to locations such as the local mall, in addition to places such as the lobby at city hall.
Organization Contact	Contact with an organization could take the form of a presentation, question & answer session, brainstorming, etc.	
Postcard Notices	A postcard mailed to a predetermined mailing list to announce an event or activity or provide other specific information.	This is an inexpensive but personal announcement.
Posters	A large written announcement posted in a public place.	These can be placed at numerous locations and designed to appeal to different groups or underserved populations. Posters must be displayed in conspicuous and accessible locations.
Presentation Meetings	These meetings allow the organizer to provide information and answer questions for a large group at once.	The presenter generally does not present any side of the issue other than their own. (If possible the style of the meeting should be adapted to the audience. For example certain audiences may prefer posters to a power point presentation.)
Press Releases	This official release tells the press there is news they might be interested in reporting. It generally follows a specific format and includes who, what when, where and a contact for more information.	Information that is reported as "news" gets more attention and credibility than paid advertising.

Activity	Description	Comments
Public Hearings	This is a legal meeting that is often required to make sure there is some opportunity for public comment. It is normally done with elected officials sitting at the front and allowing community members to speak under very specific conditions.	These are a poor setting for getting input as they are generally late in the process and can easily erupt into confrontation.
Public Notice	These are official notices posted prior to meetings.	These are required for meetings where 3 or more elected officials from the same governing body will be present.
Public Service Announcements	These are short announcements usually on radio or television, for which there is no charge and announce something important for the public to know.	
Radio Talk Show	A longer discussion, on the radio, of a particular subject. It usually involved a talk show host and one or more additional people. Sometimes there is an opportunity for people to call in questions.	This is an opportunity for providing more in-depth information on a certain topic.
School Presentations	In order to reach the youth, presentations can be made at the schools, including presentations to clubs, student council and specific classes.	Suggested classes would be: civics, economics (or other senior level classes) and transportation classes. (Whatever is presented to the kids needs to be short and to the point with a source of additional information such as a web site.)
School TV/News Stations	Some schools have a local school TV station for sharing information with the students. This could be used to reach a larger spectrum of youth.	Whatever is presented to the kids needs to be short and to the point with a source of additional information such as a web site.
Speakers Bureau	This is an organized effort to provide speakers to various groups and events on one or more specific subjects. This generally consists of several speakers who are used as needed.	This allows more flexibility and a broader outreach.

Activity	Description	Comments
Survey - General	This type of survey is open to anyone who wants to participate. (This can be in traditional or electronic formats.)	While the information is useful and important, it cannot be stated as representing a larger group. To be representative the survey must be statistically valid. (Surveys should be offered in Spanish as well as English.)
Survey - Statistically Valid	This is a survey that collects information from specific people who have been chosen on a random basis according to a specific formula. With this type of survey the results can be stated as representing the group from which the random sample was taken.	These are very expensive but can be useful in certain circumstances. (Any Survey should be offered in Spanish as well as English.)
Town Meeting	This is usually a semi-formal meeting designed to be open to everyone in a community. It often includes both the public and elected officials with an opportunity for comments back and forth.	
TV Advertisements	These are usually 30 or 60 second spots on TV during breaks in a regular show.	With cable television, it is not too expensive to run these. The main expense is in producing the spot.
Web Site	A series of "pages" on the internet that relate to a specific subject. They can be reached by anyone who has access to the internet by typing a particular address or by doing a search.	This is an easy and inexpensive place to keep the most recently updated information and it is becoming an increasingly popular way to communicate.
Working Meetings	Generally these are meetings designed to work through issues when there can be give and take among all the participants.	
Workshop	Meetings to inform and solicit input on specific issues, plans or projects.	These usually allow a smaller group of people to participate more intensively.

In using all the above tools the following overall factors need to be considered:

- People need to understand that Transportation Planning is relevant to them. Maintaining public interest as decisions are made is critical to gathering effective public input. Therefore:
 - With each contact, efforts will be made to present information that is relevant and show how this information relates to the public in both the near future as well as long term.
 - As any of the above tools are used, CYMPO will keep in mind the importance of making whatever it is as interesting as possible. Color, animation, physical props, pictures, visualization, 3-D models, etc. will be incorporated, as budget allows, to enhance the experience for the public.
 - Public notices must include reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities with special needs, e.g. sign language interpreters. CYMPO will include point of contact person, telephone number, email address and timeframe for response from those with special needs.
 - Pertinent materials will be available in alternative formats, i.e. large print, Braille, audio/video, for persons with special needs.

APPENDIX B:

COMPLIANCE INFORMATION

This plan services a variety of federal requirements relating to public involvement on transportation projects. These requirements include:

- 1) The requirements found in the Code of Federal Regulations on Highways (23CFR) section 450.316(b) (1) titled: Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process: Elements b1. This section outlines ten specific requirements that have all been incorporated in the specifics of this plan.
- 2) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements to provide equal access to people with disabilities.
- 3) Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
- 4) Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) Section 1203 (h) (1) (B) & Section 1203(h) (4) requiring Metropolitan Planning Organizations to provide “Opportunity for Comment” and “Notice and Comment” when working on the Transportation Improvement Program.
- 5) Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 1994 which requires each federal agency to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission.
- 6) National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) which focuses on providing for “all Americans’ safe, healthful, productive and esthetically pleasing surroundings,” and developing a “systematic, interdisciplinary approach” in community environmental decision making.
- 7) U.S. DOT Order 5610.2: Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, April 1997 which summarizes and elaborates on the Executive Order 12898.
- 8) Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – DOT Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients’ Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Persons (December 14, 2005). Title VI and its implementing regulations require that FTA recipients take responsible steps to ensure meaningful access to the benefits, services, information, and other important portions of their program and activities for individuals who are Limited English Proficient.

APPENDIX C:
COMMENTS ON PLAN AND RESPONSES