



METROPOLITAN **PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

LAS CRUCES DOÑA ANA COUNTY MESILLA

Public Participation Plan

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Introduction

The Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a transportation planning organization whose primary role is to involve the public in the planning process. Public involvement is not a discrete incident, but a continual focus of the MPO's entire work program. In order to maintain a proactive presence in the community, and be a resource for the public and other entities, the MPO strives to be both an educational organization and a quality resource center.

This Public Participation Plan is intended to provide a guide for public participation activities to be conducted by the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization. The Public Participation Plan contains the goals of the MPO for public participation, as well as specific processes and tools to encourage and facilitate public and stakeholder participation.

Background

The Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the agency responsible for transportation planning within Las Cruces, Mesilla, and central Doña Ana County. Federal regulations require the designation of an MPO to carry out a coordinated, continuing, and comprehensive transportation planning process for urbanized areas with a population of more than 50,000. The Mesilla Valley MPO has been in existence since 1982, and it operates under the guidance of a Policy Committee. The Policy Committee is comprised of elected officials from the City of Las Cruces, Town of Mesilla, Doña Ana County, and the district engineer from the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) who make decisions to plan for the future transportation needs of the region.

Public Participation

Requirements

Federal Transportation Regulations

Federal laws outlined in 23 U.S.C. 450.306.a.1-8 require MPOs to conduct a planning process that considers transportation projects and strategies that will do the following:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

In order to accomplish this planning process the MPO has developed this Public Participation Plan in accordance with federal laws outlined in 23 U.S.C. 450.316.a.1.i – x.

Federal Transit Regulations

The public participation procedures outlined in this Plan also serve as the public participation process required for the development of transit projects as per Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 9030. The MPO will implement the following strategies to reduce participation barriers for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP):

- The MPO will actively engage and provide

accommodations for LEP populations in the short term by providing interpretative services, utilizing visual techniques, handing out language cards, exploring appropriate locations for distribution of materials on MPO meetings and processes, using word of mouth, and training staff members to look for clues that members of the public cannot read English.

- The MPO will work with the City of Las Cruces, as the MPO's Administrative Agent, to develop a formal LEP policy. The policy should include an analysis of the number or proportion of persons with LEP in the jurisdictions, the specific language needs of those individuals, and the potential frequency of contact with persons with LEP.
- Lastly, the MPO will assess the resources available and costs associated with providing different language service options.

Title VI and Environmental Justice

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or religion. This prohibition against discrimination is in effect whether the effect is intentional or unintentional. Following this, in February 1994, Executive Order 12898 was signed requiring federal agencies to establish internal policies to ensure compliance in all agency activities, including public involvement.

The Mesilla Valley MPO will strive to address environmental justice issues at all stages of the planning process. The MPO will implement the following strategies to reduce participation barriers for low income and minority populations and improve access to

services for persons with disabilities:

- When possible, public meetings will be held in locations that are convenient to low and moderate income neighborhoods and are accessible to disabled populations and public transit users. Such locations include community centers, senior centers and schools. Holding meetings in familiar and accessible neighborhood locations may be more culturally sensitive and help residents feel more comfortable about the public participation process.
- The Mesilla Valley MPO will strive to provide a predictable planning process that is understandable and known in advance in order to make the planning process coherent and comprehensive.
- All MPO work products and documents will be available in alternative formats, including Braille, large type and languages other than English. The following statement will be included in all MPO documents:

The Mesilla Valley MPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, color, ancestry, serious medical condition, national origin, age, or disability in the provision of services. The Mesilla Valley MPO will make reasonable accommodation for a qualified individual with a disability who wishes to attend this public meeting. Please notify the Mesilla Valley MPO at least 48 hours before the meeting by calling 528-3222 (Voice) or 528-3157 (TTY). This document can be made available in alternative formats by calling the same numbers listed above. *Este documento está disponible en español llamando al teléfono del Departamento de Desarrollo de la Comunidad: 528-3222 (Voz) o 528-3157 (TTY).*

- The location of low income and minority populations will be identified and mapped as a tool for gauging the impact of proposed transportation projects on these areas. This map will be updated every five years. See Appendix B.
- Agencies and organizations that represent low income and minority populations will be identified and included in MPO mailings.
- The MPO will provide a complaints process to deal with any issues regarding Title VI compliance. See Appendix D.

State Open Meetings Act

In order to ensure adequate public notice and provision of timely information, all meetings of the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee and its advisory committees are subject to the provisions of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, as amended. Policy Committee meeting notices are published in the *Las Cruces Sun News* 10 days prior to the meeting date. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting notices are posted at least three business days prior to the meeting date. All meeting notices are posted at Las Cruces City Hall, Doña Ana County Government Complex, Branigan Library, the Mesilla Town Hall, and the MPO website. Upon request, all notices will be available in Spanish and alternative formats.

State Inspection of Public Records

All Mesilla Valley MPO work products are available for public inspection. Because the City of Las Cruces is the fiscal and administrative agent for the Mesilla Valley MPO, inspection of MPO documents follows the City of Las Cruces Inspection of Public Records, Ordinance 2265. A copy of this ordinance is available upon request.

Proposed documents and proposed document amendments will also be available

for review, free of charge, at the following locations:

- MPO Office, Las Cruces City Hall, 700 N. Main Street
- Reference Desk, Branigan Library, 200 East Picacho Avenue
- NMDOT District One Las Cruces Project Office, 750 North Solano Drive
- Town of Mesilla Town Hall, 2231 Avenida de Mesilla
- Community Development Department, Doña Ana County Government Complex, 845 North Motel Boulevard
- Mesilla Valley MPO website: <http://mvmpo.las-cruces.org>

All documents, in whole or part, will be available upon request in Spanish and in alternative formats.

MPO Work Products

According to the federal transportation regulations, the Mesilla Valley MPO is required to create and maintain the following transportation planning documents:

- Metropolitan Transportation Plan (23 U.S.C. 450.322);
- Transportation Improvement Program (23 U.S.C. 450.324);
- Unified Planning Work Program (23 U.S.C. 450.308); and
- Public Participation Plan (23 U.S.C. 450.316); and
- Annual List of Obligated Projects (23 U.S.C. 450.332).

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan contains both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that guide multi-modal transportation planning, construction, and maintenance of an integrated transportation network for the Las Cruces Urbanized Area.

The MTP is developed through a shared vision for the region involving extensive interaction with and education of the public, stakeholders, and the MPO Committees. The Plan covers no less than a 20-year planning horizon. The Metropolitan Transportation Plan is updated every five years.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Transportation Improvement Program is a six-year, financially constrained list of transportation projects within the MPO area, including regionally significant projects and all transit projects funded by FTA. The TIP is developed in cooperation with residents, local governments, and the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and in compliance with the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan. The Transportation Improvement Program is completely updated bi-annually.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The purpose of the Unified Planning Work Program is to outline intermodal transportation planning activities to be conducted within the Mesilla Valley MPO Planning Area within a financially constrained budget. The UPWP contains MPO work projects, budgets, and staff assignments for the upcoming fiscal year. The UPWP must comply with the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan. The Unified Planning Work Program is updated bi-annually.

Public Participation Plan (PPP)

The Public Participation Plan is intended to provide a guide for public involvement processes to be conducted by the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The Public Participation Plan contains the goals of the MPO for public involvement, as well as specific public involvement procedures for various MPO

activities. The Public Participation Plan will be updated every five years.

Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

In metropolitan planning areas, on an annual basis, no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operator(s), and the MPO shall cooperatively develop a listing of projects for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.

Mesilla Valley MPO staff shall make this list available to the public.

Area and Corridor Plans

Area and corridor plans are undertaken in areas that are in need of intensive study to determine potential transportation needs. These plans can be initiated if a member jurisdiction identifies a transportation issue not previously discussed in the LRTP or when a proposed TIP project is not in compliance with the LRTP. These are conducted on an “as-needed” basis.

Public Participation Process

Goals

The goals of the Public Participation Process are as follows:

- Maintain a continuing, cooperative, comprehensive (3-C) planning process;
- Pursue access to transportation options for all residents;
- Consider a broad range of options to address transportation challenges;
- Ensure a transparent, interactive, bottom-up transportation planning process;
- Provide a high level of education on transportation related subjects;
- Encourage residents and a variety of stakeholders to contribute ideas and comments at every stage of the process; and

- Engage traditionally underserved populations, including low income and minority households and persons with disabilities.

Four-Step Process

In order to achieve these goals the MPO has developed a four-step public participation process:

- Identify Needs and Challenges;
- Generate Options;
- Evaluate and Prioritize Options; and
- Develop an Implementation Strategy.

Identify Needs and Challenges

Identify Needs and Challenges means taking a comprehensive look at the regional transportation system or a potential transportation project. In this era of rising gas prices, identifying public concerns about transportation is particularly important. In

order to conduct a comprehensive identification of transportation needs and challenges, the MPO must solicit information from the public, stakeholders, and MPO committees. This effort requires listening to comments and integrating suggestions made concerning the regional transportation network.

The public participation tools listed in this plan will be used to collect the public's comments about their daily transportation experiences, the regional transportation system as a whole, their suggestions for potential projects, and their vision for the future.

In addition to the general public, the MPO staff will also solicit the concerns of a broad range of stakeholders such as local jurisdictions, transportation providers, and



land use agencies. Listening to stakeholders means gathering information about the services they provide and the impacts that the transportation system or potential projects will have on their services. MPO staff then discusses with its committees the information gathered from the public and stakeholders.

MPO staff is responsible for planning a transportation network that safely and efficiently moves people and goods throughout the region. Therefore, at this stage in the process, the MPO staff is also responsible for gathering information on current, relevant transportation conditions, such as crash data, traffic volumes, access management, adjacent land uses, and topography. For example, crash data may be gathered for a later analysis of safety conditions, and land use data may be used to determine impacts on the transportation system. Other considerations that will be discussed are the potential impacts to places deemed historically, environmentally or culturally important.

Generate Options

Generate Options means generating a list of proposed options based on input from the public, stakeholders, and MPO staff and merging them with best practices from transportation professionals. This process may be accomplished by using neighborhood or community audits, design tables, and other focus groups. Also evaluated in this step are the data gathered on current transportation conditions and existing transportation options, such as transit routes and bicycle lanes. This step of the process provides a balanced approach to updating MPO work products or evaluating potential projects.

The data gathered, along with the comments expressed by the public and stakeholders, will be analyzed for potential benefits and

drawbacks. Monetary costs and technical feasibility of a project may also be considered in this step. Some of the tools that the MPO uses to analyze data are travel demand modeling, spatial geographic analyses, and other visualization techniques.

Then, MPO staff will discuss the data and proposed approaches with its committees to solicit further feedback. MPO staff will also continue to receive written comments from the public and stakeholders.

Evaluate and Prioritize Options

Evaluate and Prioritize Options means asking the question “Does a proposed approach help resolve the identified transportation concerns?” Specifically, the MPO will assess each proposal based on estimated costs, potential benefits and drawbacks, and technical feasibility. Potential benefits and drawbacks are based upon transportation principles and the participation received from the public and stakeholders. For example, a benefit of a proposed update may be community or neighborhood support, but a drawback may be that the approach does not improve the regional transportation system.

Next, the public may be asked to weigh their preferred options through techniques such as option or project ranking. In order for the public to effectively rank options, the MPO must clearly explain the processes used during the first two steps and define the regional significance of any proposed approach.

Therefore, a detailed matrix of the estimated costs, potential benefits and drawbacks, and technical feasibility of each proposal will be made available, as needed, in order to facilitate the ranking process. The MPO staff will also summarize the input from the public, stakeholders, and committees. To the extent possible, the MPO will also use visual techniques to explain completed analyses.

Develop Implementation Strategies

Develop Implementation Strategies means creating a report or work product that provides information on how to implement proposals. This written document will contain a summary of the entire four-step process, including written comments from the public and stakeholders, and will provide recommendations on an implementation strategy.

The implementation strategy may include determining:

- Whether an approach is a short term or long term project;
- The entity or entities responsible for implementation;
- Available funding; and
- Any other recommendations, such as design techniques or further analyses.

The draft of proposed implementation strategies will be discussed with MPO committees and presented to the public and stakeholders for their final feedback. Final action on proposed options or plan updates is reserved for the MPO Policy Committee.

Public Participation Tools

Introduction

In order to maintain a proactive presence in the community, and an early and continuous public involvement process, the MPO strives to be both an educational organization and a quality resource center. To accomplish this goal, the MPO uses a toolbox of involvement techniques in their public participation processes. See Appendix A for the complete Public Participation Matrix.

Participation Meetings

MPO staff continually works on adjusting and improving the format of public meetings to encourage participation from all people in attendance. Interactive meetings are held early in the transportation planning process.

This interaction is important so that the public is involved prior to any decisions being made. Below is listed the types of meetings that MPO Staff uses in different stages or settings of the Public Participation Process.

MPO Committee Meeting

The MPO has regular meetings of their Technical Advisory Committee, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Policy Committee. The advisory committees provide input to the Policy Committee on planning and engineering issues that affect the transportation decision-making process. All MPO committee meetings are open to the public. Residents and stakeholders are encouraged to attend the meetings and discuss the transportation challenges that they face. The meeting schedule, agendas and full packets for each committee meeting will be posted on the Mesilla Valley MPO website. Agendas are also distributed through the MPO Master Mailing List.

Traditional Public Participation Meeting

Traditional Public Participation Meetings are appropriate when MPO staff is asked to provide information on a specific topic, conduct an educational seminar, or present final results of a plan update or corridor study. These meetings provide an opportunity for question-and-answer sessions with the public, but are less interactive than charette-style meetings.

Charette-Style Meeting

Charette-Style public meetings engage the public in an interactive brainstorming process to develop ideas to address transportation needs and challenges. This process ensures that dynamic dialogue throughout the process is an integral part of assessing proposals and plans. Ideas that come out of this visioning process can be further analyzed for technical feasibility and for incorporation into a potential range of final solutions. Much of the four-step process

outlined in this public participation plan is derived from the successes of conducting Charette-Style meetings.

Open House Meeting

Open houses are an informal type of public meeting that take transportation issues to the public rather than asking the public to come to us. This process is often less intimidating than a traditional participation meeting. An Open House meeting is generally set up at a familiar site in the community where people already congregate, for example, at the Farmer's Market, the local mall, or a University campus.

Sometimes traditional or even Charette-Style public meetings do not work well because people have busy schedules and may not have the time or the availability to attend these meetings. The Open House forum offers the public more opportunities to learn about transportation issues by providing meetings at several different locations and during different times of the day allowing flexibility and sensitivity to culturally appropriate methods. The MPO may set up a booth with brochures, maps, and other materials, and will provide opportunities for public comments.

Stakeholder Consultation

The MPO does not stand alone in regional transportation issues. The MPO coordinates and consults with local, regional, and national agencies, such as the MPO area jurisdictions, El Paso MPO, South Central Council of Governments, New Mexico Department of Transportation, the South Central Regional Transit District, the Viva Dona Ana Consortium, and land management agencies. For example, the MPO integrates data from the Census Bureau and land use agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management, into their planning process. Through this coordination the MPO is able to present a comprehensive

picture of the transportation system to the public.

Involvement Techniques

MPO staff continually utilizes the following involvement techniques to solicit public participation and ideas, as well as educate the public, stakeholders, and the MPO Committees. New techniques may be introduced and tested prior to inclusion in this document.

Brainstorming and Visioning

Brainstorming is a cooperative, open process geared toward sharing ideas, proposing alternatives, and building consensus. Visioning is also a cooperative group effort through which participants create a set of principles that lead to shared goals and strategies. Both can be used to build a shared vision, collect ideas, and provide direction on a comprehensive strategy for implementation. A visioning exercise may include participants using index cards to write down concepts that they think are most important to their community and sharing these concepts (if they so choose) with the group. The index card can then be used to inform the current planning process.

Visualization

Visualization techniques, such as maps, flow charts, traffic simulations, travel demand modeling, and video are used to help explain technical terms and transportation planning concepts to the public and stakeholders. Visualization techniques are applied throughout MPO documents and the MPO website. For example, the MPO's traffic count program is available in map form, Geographic Information System (GIS) files, and on the MPO website. Also, the MPO is using video to provide a visual of transportation challenges during drop-off and pick-up times at schools.

Neighborhood and Community Audits

Neighborhood and Community Audits are used to educate the community and encourage them to get involved with issues that are close to home, yet affect the regional transportation system. Sometimes transportation concerns are more easily resolved through first hand experience. An audit can provide a constructive forum for gathering information and encouraging public involvement. For example, Safe Routes to School is an emerging issue for neighborhoods. Improving conditions for children on their routes to and from school may best be understood and observed through a walk along these routes.

Neighborhood and Community Audits are generally done in the field, but can be conducted using aerial maps as well. If a walking audit is not a possibility, then audit participants may draw on large maps to inventory valuable aspects of the transportation system and identify transportation challenges and potential solutions.

Public Events

Participating in Public Events accomplishes the tasks of educating the public, and finding multiple ways to encourage their participation. Sometimes the public may not have time to attend public meetings, but has already made an event a part of their schedule.

Focus Groups

Focus Groups are generally used to explore a specific aspect of a project or transportation challenge in a more in depth manner. Individuals who are knowledgeable about or have an interest in a transportation related topic may be invited to participate in a Focus Group.

Comment Forms

Comment forms are open-ended requests for

feedback on transportation related topics. Comment forms are available on the MPO website, at public meetings, or at MPO offices. Feedback from comment forms will be included in documents as either a verbatim appendix or a summary.

Surveys

Surveys are direct requests for feedback on specific transportation issues. In some cases, quantified results will be used to guide transportation decision making and help formulate overall goals for the transportation system.

Education and Resource Center

MPO Staff Availability

MPO staff is available during business hours to discuss the MPO transportation planning process or other transportation-related matters with residents and other interested parties. By prior arrangement, MPO staff is available to meet with stakeholders and other organizations during and after normal business hours.

Orientation Workshops and Materials

The MPO must educate our committee members and the general public on the basics of what the MPO does and why. In order to achieve this goal, the MPO provides both workshops that can be set up on an as needed basis and written materials that summarize the MPO's goals, regulations, and processes. The MPO is working on a presentation and handbook titled "MPO 101" to distribute to all Committee members and anyone else who is interested.

Master Mailing List (MML)

The Mesilla Valley MPO maintains a Master Mailing List which includes neighborhood associations, community groups, business and professional groups, environmental groups, special interest groups, elected and appointed officials, affected agencies, and interested residents. This list will be used to:

- Coordinate regional planning efforts;
- Distribute TIP Call for Projects letter
- Provide MPO documents for review;
- Notify interested parties of upcoming meetings and other MPO activities;
- Communicate with members of the public, private entities, and governmental agencies; and
- Invite interested parties to comment on transportation planning issues.

The MML will be customized so only items of particular interest will be mailed to list recipients. The MML is continuously updated.

Library

MPO staff maintains a library of documents that are available for review during normal business hours. The MPO library contains past and current transportation planning studies and materials, paper and digital versions of maps, MPO plans, and study area reports. Copies of library materials are available at reproduction and postage costs.

Website

The Mesilla Valley MPO maintains an internet website to provide the most current information available including committee meeting agendas and packets, work products, current projects, staff contact information, and links to other transportation sites. The MPO also utilizes the website for public outreach and education through regular updates and notifications. Public comments are encouraged and welcomed through the feedback page that allows anyone to submit comments regarding transportation planning issues at any time. The MPO will improve public participation through the MPO website by conducting surveys on specific issues.

E-Newsletter – Intersections

The Mesilla Valley MPO will produce a monthly e-newsletter that will contain staff

contact information, upcoming meeting schedules and agendas, results of technical activities, information on policy issues, current project status reports, and links to other relevant transportation-related sites. The MPO will also solicit from the public, stakeholders and committees, topics that they would like to learn more about. The e-newsletter will be distributed via email to all parties on the Master Mailing List that have indicated an interest in receiving the e-newsletter. It will also be available as a printed handout upon request. For interested parties that do not have internet they may request that a copy be mailed to them or use a computer at the MPO office.

MPO Logo

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

Media Advertising

The Mesilla Valley MPO will work with the local media to inform the public of significant transportation activities and issues. Public participation meeting advertisements will be published in either the *Las Cruces Sun News* or the *Las Cruces Bulletin*, or both, in order to inform the largest number of residents possible and solicit their participation. MPO staff will also attempt to have MPO meetings appear on the community calendar. As appropriate, the MPO will send legal notices and/or press releases, conduct interviews, and submit articles to the local news media. Radio public service announcements will be used as appropriate. The MPO will work with the *Las Cruces Bulletin* to include a list of Committee meeting schedules.

Marketing Materials

Marketing materials may include brochures or flyers. Marketing materials may be

provided for education or for advertising events that are applicable to transportation issues. For example, the MPO has produced a Bicycling Suitability Map that contains information on suitable bicycling routes, rules of the road, and other ways to promote safe bicycle riding in the MPO area.

Social Media

Mesilla Valley MPO staff shall investigate various types of social media for the purpose of disseminating relevant information and performing social outreach.

Evaluation of the Public Participation Process

The Public Participation Plan will be reviewed for effectiveness every five years when the Public Participation Plan as a whole is reviewed and updated.

Consideration of effectiveness may be made on the following factors:

- Level of public participation
- Level of event attendance
- Use of website
- Public reaction to MPO efforts and activities

As a result of this evaluation the Public Participation Plan may be periodically modified as deemed necessary.

APPENDIX A

Public Participation Matrix

<u>Public Participation Matrix</u>	Public Meeting Date	Minimum Comment Period	Public Participation Tools	Additional Comments
MPO Work Product Processes				
Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	Kick Off meeting required with all MPO Committees Draft LRTP: At least 30 days prior to Policy Committee final action	180 days during LRTP process 30 days on Final Draft LRTP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four-Step Process • Participation Meetings • Involvement Techniques • Education and Resource Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated every 5 years • All public comments received and staff responses will be included in the LRTP
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	Call for projects letter at least 60 days prior to TIP final action At least 30 days prior to Policy Committee final action	30 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TIP Process • Call for Projects Letter • Participation Meetings • Involvement Techniques • Education and Resource Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated every two years • BPAC and TAC may serve as public participation meetings • All public comments received will be included in the documentation for the TIP
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	At least 30 days prior to Policy Committee final action	30 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation Meetings • Involvement Techniques • Education and Resource Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated every year • BPAC and TAC may serve as public participation meetings • A summary of all public comments will be provided to the Policy Committee
Public Participation Program (PPP)	At least 30 days prior to Policy Committee final action	45 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation Meetings • Involvement Techniques • Education and Resource Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated every 5 years • BPAC and TAC may serve as public meetings • A summary of all public comments will be provided to the Policy Committee

<u>Public Participation Matrix</u>	Public Meeting Date	Minimum Comment Period	Public Participation Tools	Additional Comments
Area and Corridor Plans	At least 30 days prior to Policy Committee final action	30 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four-Step Process • Input Meetings • Involvement Techniques • Education and Resource Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target notification area determined (Min. 300') • Notice sent regular mail • Sign posted on property • At least one public meeting held in location convenient to affected residents
Long Range Transportation Plan Amendments	At least 30 days prior to Policy Committee final action	30 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four-Step Process • Participation Meetings • Involvement Techniques • Education and Resource Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one public meeting will be held • BPAC and TAC may serve as public meetings
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendments Public Participation Plan (PPP) Amendments	At least 15 days prior to PC final action	30 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation Meetings • Involvement Techniques • Education and Resource Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TIP amendments include those which are not exempt from the public participation process. • BPAC and TAC may serve as public meetings
Input Meetings				
MPO Committee Meetings	Varies	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal or Posted Notice, as applicable • E-Newsletter • Website 	See MPO Meeting Calendar in Appendix D

APPENDIX B

Map of Low Moderate Income Areas

APPENDIX C

General Time Line for MPO TIP and STIP Development and Amendments

General Time Line for MPO TIP and STIP Development

Development Milestones	Even-numbered Calendar Year												Odd-numbered Calendar Year											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Open Call for Projects																								
NMDOT provides financial estimates and submittal and approval dates to MPO																								
MPO Draft TIPs developed and submitted to NMDOT																								
MPO Public and District Review																								
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Review, Project Ranking, and Final Recommendation by TAC																								
MPO Policy Committee Final Ranking and Adoption																								
District, RPO, and MPO Final TIPs submitted to General Office																								
General Office Compiles STIP																								
STIP Public Review																								
Concurrent Federal Review																								
State Transportation Commission Review and Approval																								
General Office submits STIP for Federal Review and Approval																								
Final Federal Review and Approval																								
Amendment Cycles	Even-numbered Calendar Year												Odd-numbered Calendar Year											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Advisory Committee Review and Recommendation																								
MPO Technical Advisory Committee Review and Recommendation																								
MPO Policy Committee Final Action																								
State Transportation Commission Review and Approval																								
Federal Review and Approval																								

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 signifies a submittal or approval occurring during the month

NMDOT STIP Development section to provide financial estimates to Districts, RPOs, and MPOs. Actual submittal and approval dates within the development cycle will be provided at the same time.

Draft TIPs due the 1st business day of the month.

Final TIPs due the 1st business day of the month.

State public review to be completed during June/July time period to allow for State Transportation Commission (STC) approval in July.

Actual date is determined by the approved STC meeting schedule.

The STIP should be ready for submittal for Federal review as soon as it is approved by the STC.

Target for Federal approval is October 1st, which begins the Federal fiscal year.

Amendments to the **current** STIP, actual date is determined by the approved STC meeting schedule.

Amendments to the **newly approved** STIP, actual date is determined by the approved STC meeting schedule.

MPO TIP Amendment Cycle 1

MPO TIP Amendment Cycle 2

MPO TIP Amendment Cycle 3

MPO TIP Amendment Cycle 4

MPO TIP Amendment Alternate Cycle 4

APPENDIX D

Title VI Compliance

Mesilla Valley MPO Title VI Compliance

Introduction

As a recipient of federal assistance, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Mesilla Valley MPO must ensure that no person shall, 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 agency programs or activities. All programs funded in whole or in part from federal financial assistance are subject to Title VI requirements. The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 extended this to all programs within an agency that receives federal assistance regardless of the funding source for individual programs.

This policy is intended to establish a procedure under which complaints alleging discrimination in the Mesilla Valley MPO's provision of services or activities can be made by persons who are not employees of the Mesilla Valley MPO. Any person who believes the Mesilla Valley MPO, or any entity who receives federal financial assistance from or through the Mesilla Valley MPO (i.e. sub-recipients, sub-contractors, or sub-grantees), has subjected them or any specific class of individuals to unlawful discrimination may file a complaint of discrimination. The Mesilla Valley MPO will follow timelines set forth by the New Mexico Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the Department of Justice for processing Title VI discrimination complaints.

When to File

A complaint of discrimination must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged act of discrimination, or discovery thereof; or where there has been a continuing course of

conduct, the date on which that conduct was discontinued. Filing means a written complaint must be postmarked before the expiration of the 180-day period. The filing date is the day you complete, sign, and mail the complaint form. The complaint form and consent/release form must be dated and signed for acceptance. Complaints received more than 180 days after the alleged discrimination will not be processed and will be returned with a letter explaining why the complaint could not be processed and alternative agencies to which a report may be made.

Where to File

In order to be processed, signed original complaint forms must be mailed to:

Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
Tom Murphy, MPO Officer
P.O. Box 20000
Las Cruces, NM 88004

Upon request, reasonable accommodations will be made for persons who are unable to complete the complaint form due to disability or limited-English proficiency. A complaint may also be filed by a representative on behalf of a complainant. If complainant has no means of obtaining a complaint form, a complaint form will be mailed to them.

Persons who are not satisfied with the findings of the Mesilla Valley MPO may seek remedy from other applicable state or federal agencies.

Required Elements of a Complaint

In order to be processed, a complaint must be in writing and contain the following information:

- Name, address, and phone number of complainant

- Name(s), address(es), and organization of person(s) who allegedly discriminated
- Date of alleged discriminatory act(s)
- Basis of complaint
- A signed statement of complaint
- A signed consent release form

Complaint Process Overview

1. When a complaint is received by Mesilla Valley MPO, the form will be checked for completeness and then if complete be logged into a database.
2. The Mesilla Valley MPO Officer will complete an initial review of the complaint to determine if the complaint meets basic criteria.

Criteria required for a complete complaint:

- Basis of alleged discrimination (race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability)
 - Determination that the complaint was filed within the 180 day time period
 - Determination that the Mesilla Valley MPO is the appropriate contact for filing the complaint
3. Within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint, the Mesilla Valley MPO will send notice to the complainant confirming receipt of the complaint; if needed notice will be sent requesting additional information, notify complainant that the activity was not related to MVMPO programs or activities, or does not meet the appropriate deadline. Also, if the Mesilla Valley MPO is directly named in the complaint, notice will be sent within 10 working days to the New Mexico Department of Transportation for investigation.
 4. Investigation of complaint: the MPO Officer will confer with the City of Las

Cruces Community Development Director and New Mexico Department of Transportation to determine the most appropriate fact finding process to ensure that all available information is collected in an effort to reach the most informed conclusion and resolution of the complaint. The type of investigation techniques used may vary depending on the nature and circumstances of the alleged discrimination. An investigation may include but is not limited to:

- Internal meetings of Mesilla Valley MPO staff and legal council
 - Consultation with state and federal agencies
 - Interviews of complainant(s)
 - Review of documentation (i.e. planning, public involvement, and technical program activities)
 - Interviews and review of documentation with other agencies involved
 - Review of technical analysis method (if applicable)
 - Review of demographic data
5. Determination of investigation: an investigation must be completed within 60 days of receiving the complete complaint, unless facts and circumstances warrant otherwise. The determination will be made based on the information obtained.
 6. Notification of determination: within 10 working days of the completion of the investigation, the complainant must be notified in writing by the Mesilla Valley MPO Officer of the final decision. The notification will advise complainant of his/her appeal rights with state and federal agencies if he/she is dissatisfied with the final decision. The letter and a report of the findings will be submitted to the New Mexico Department of Transportation.



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

SERVING LAS CRUCES, DOÑA ANA COUNTY, AND MESILLA

P.O. BOX 20000 | LAS CRUCES NM | 88004

PHONE (575) 528-3222 | FAX (575) 528-3155

<http://mvmpo.las-cruces.org>

MESILLA VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM

The Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO) serves as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Las Cruces Urbanized Area. As a recipient of federal financial assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, the MVMPO will ensure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in agency programs or activities. These prohibitions extend from participation in, being denied the benefits of, or otherwise being subjected to discrimination under any agency programs or activities. These prohibitions extend from the MVMPO, as a direct recipient of federal financial assistance, to its sub-recipients (e.g. contractors, consultants, local governments, colleges, universities, etc.) All programs funded in whole or in part from federal financial assistance are subject to Title VI requirements.

MVMPO is required to implement measures to ensure that persons with limited-English proficiency or disability have meaningful access to the services, benefits, and information of all its programs and activities under Executive Order 13166. Upon request, assistance will be provided if you are limited-English proficient or disabled. Complaints may be filed using an alternative format if you are unable to complete the written form.

The filing date is the day you complete, sign, and mail this complaint form. Your complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days from the most recent date of the alleged act of discrimination. The complaint form and consent/release form must be dated and signed for acceptance. You have 30 calendar days to respond to any written request for information. Failure to do so will result in the closure of complaint.

Submit the forms by mail to:

Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization

C/O Tom Murphy, MPO Officer

P.O. 20000

Las Cruces, NM 88004

If you have any questions or need additional information, please call (575) 528-3043 or e-mail mpo@las-cruces.org.

Please review the information on this page carefully before filling out the complaint form.



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MESILLA VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM

Please review the information on the cover page carefully before you begin.

First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone Number

Email Address

Who do you believe discriminated against you?

First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name, Position in Organization

Name of Business/Organization

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

When did the alleged act(s) of discrimination occur? Please all dates in mm/dd/yyyy format.

Date(s)

Is the alleged discrimination on-going? ☐ Yes (Sí) ☐ No

Where did the alleged act(s) of discrimination occur? (Attach additional pages as necessary.)

Name of Location

Indicate the basis of your grievance of discrimination.

☐ Race:

☐ Color:

☐ National Origin:

☐ Sex:

☐ Age:

☐ Disability:

☐ Religion:

Describe in detail the specific incident(s) that is the basis(es) of the alleged discrimination.

(Describe each incident of discrimination separately. Attach additional pages as necessary.)

Please explain how other persons or groups were treated differently by the person(s)/agency who discriminated against you.

Please list and describe all documents, emails, or other records and materials pertaining to your complaint.

Please list and identify any witness(es) to the incidents or persons who have personal knowledge of information pertaining to your complaint.

Have you previously or otherwise complained about this incident or related acts of discrimination? If so, please identify the individual to whom you made the report, the date on which you made the report, and the resolution. Please provide any support documentation.

Please provide any additional information about the alleged discrimination.

If an advisor will be assisting you in the complaint process, please provide his/her contact info

First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone Number

Email Address

This complaint form must be signed and dated in order to address your allegations. Additionally, this office will need your consent to disclose your name, if needed, in the course of our investigation. The Discrimination Complaint Consent/Release form is attached. If you are filing a complaint of discrimination on behalf of another person, our office will also need this person's consent.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information I have provided is accurate and the events and circumstances are as I have described them. I also understand that if I will be assisted by an advisor, my signature below authorizes the named individual to receive copies of relevant correspondence regarding the complaint and to accompany me during the investigation.

Signature (Firma)

Date (Fecha)



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MESILLA VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT CONSENT/RELEASE FORM

Please review the information on this page carefully before you begin.

First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

As a complainant, I understand that in the course of an investigation it may become necessary for the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization to reveal my identity to persons at the organization or institution under investigation. I am also aware of the obligations of the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization to honor requests under the Freedom of Information Act. I understand that as a complainant I am protected from retaliation from having taken action or participated in action to secure rights protected by nondiscrimination statutes and regulations which are enforced by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Please check one:

- ☐ **I CONSENT** and authorize the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO), as part of its own investigation, to reveal my identity to persons at the organization, business, or institution, which has been identified by me in my formal complaint of discrimination. I also authorize MVMPO to discuss, receive, and review materials and information about me from the same and with appropriate administrators or witnesses for the purpose of investigating this complaint. In doing so, I have read and understand the information at the beginning of this form. I also understand that the material and information received will be used for authorized civil rights compliance activities only. I further understand that I am not required to authorize this release and do so voluntarily.
- ☐ **I DENY CONSENT** to the MVMPO to reveal my identity to persons at the organization, business, or institution under investigation. I also deny consent to have MVMPO disclose my information contained in the complaint with any witnesses I have mentioned in the complaint. In doing so, I understand that I am not authorizing MVMPO to discuss, receive, nor review any materials and information about me from the same. In doing so, I have read and understand the information at the beginning of this form. I further understand that my decision to deny my consent may impede this investigation and may result in the unsuccessful resolution of my case.

Signature (Firma)

Date (Fecha)