



Public Participation Plan

A Tiered Approach

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www.CAMPOTexas.org

CAPITAL AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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Disclaimer

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Providing a Fair and Equal Opportunity to Participate

Transportation planners have a responsibility to serve the community and stakeholders, and meaningfully engaging the public in decision-making is a key role that the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) performs. We invite participation in development of the regional transportation plan and programs, in major decision points for funding, and in meetings of our governing Transportation Policy Board.

Federal transportation planning laws and guidance¹ require open participation, regardless of geographic location, economic class, educational status or race. This plan responds to the requirements set by federal guidance, and attempts to enhance participation through the use of various methods of communicating and receiving information to improve our region's transportation planning process.

Limited English Proficiency and Environmental Justice

As a federally sponsored agency, CAMPO must incorporate policies and procedures of Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency into its transportation programs. CAMPO incorporates these issues into the required programs, and will address the applicable populations on a context-sensitive basis with public involvement initiatives.

- Executive Order (E.O.) 13166 “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency” challenges federal agencies to “implement a system by which [limited English-proficient or “LEP”] persons can meaningfully access... services consistent with, and without unduly burdening, the fundamental mission of the agency”².
- Additionally, Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations” directs every Federal agency to make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. The Federal Highway Administration summarizes this charge to metropolitan planning organizations to “Evaluate and - where necessary - improve their public involvement processes to eliminate participation barriers and engage minority and low-income populations in transportation decision making”³.

¹ Such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Orders 12898 and 13166

² Federal Highway Administration. n.d. Limited English Proficiency.

³ Federal Highway Administration. 2000. An Overview of Transportation and Environmental Justice. Publication No. FHWA-EP-00-013.

Participation Objective and Strategies

This document acts as the update to the 2007 CAMPO Public Participation Program (2007 PPP) and serves to ensure that all citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in the CAMPO decision-making process. Recognizing the importance of public involvement throughout the transportation planning process, this Public Participation Plan (PPP) is intended to actively engage people in the process, providing a voice in planning and decision making⁴.

Objective: Provide citizens with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan planning process⁵

To accomplish this objective, CAMPO staff works with transportation agencies and jurisdictions to identify and notify appropriate communities and stakeholders of proposed new or amended regional transportation plans and programs. The following strategies are adapted from federal planning rules, guiding how we implement the public participation plan.

Strategies:

- a. Provide public notice of public participation activities using appropriate methods and time for public review and comment at key decision points.
- b. Notify and provide access to information about transportation issues and processes in a timely fashion, using electronically accessible formats.
- c. Use visualization techniques such as mapping to describe proposed changes.
- d. Hold public meetings at convenient times and locations.
- e. Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the regional transportation plan and transportation improvement program.
- f. Seek out low-income and minority “environmental justice” households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.
- g. If a final regional transportation plan and transportation improvement program varies significantly from the public comment version, provide additional opportunities for public comment.
- h. Coordinate with statewide participation processes.
- i. Evaluate effectiveness of participation methods.
- j. Review and update this participation plan as needed to ensure a full and open process.

This update uses a 4-tiered approach, where each tier is designed to define those elements that lead to effective outreach and participation in a successful public participation plan. Each tier represents those minimum outreach methods, which may be expanded upon and refined as deemed appropriate for each initiative. Where appropriate, the PPP Toolbox (Appendix) may be used to refine select elements of an overall outreach strategy based on the recommendations

⁴ Sanoff, Henry. 2007. Participation. In *Planning and Urban Design Standards*. Eds. F. Steiner, K. Butler and E. Sendich. John Wiley & Sons: Hoboken, New Jersey.

⁵ See Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations, §450.316 Interested parties, participation, and consultation.

of each tier. As programs and participation techniques continue to grow, the toolbox is intended to be expanded and revised, and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of planning tools.

Our Drivers – Federally Mandated Transportation Programs:

Public Participation Plans (PPPs) are federally required⁶ to guide participation in metropolitan planning organizations, including the region’s Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): This document is adopted as a policy document, and provides guidance to the Transportation Policy Board (TPB). Under current federal regulations, the RTP is updated at least every 5 years. Projects listed in the plan are designed to meet travel needs within the 5-county CAMPO region for at least the next 20 years. The RTP addresses elements including congestion management, public transportation, roadways, freight, and a fiscally constrained finance plan for the projects included. As federally required, the RTP must also highlight pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facility projects. Intentions to build such facilities must be provided within the RTP and included within the TIP (defined below).

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): The TIP outlines those projects within CAMPO planning boundaries that have secured funding sources for implementation. All projects in the TIP must first appear in CAMPO’s Regional Transportation Plan as well as be in compliance with the planning area’s Congestion Management Process. The TIP must be updated every 2 years and must contain:

- Roadway, transit and grouped⁷ projects
- Financial Plan
- Descriptors including type of work, termini, length, etc.

The CAMPO *Public Participation Plan* policies in regards to the TIP serve as the public participation process for the following entities’ FTA Programs of Projects, including but not limited to FTA Section 5307:

- Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro)
- Capital Area Rural Transportation System (CARTS)
- City of Round Rock
- CARTS Urban, San Marcos UZA

⁶ 23 CFR Part 450.314

⁷ Project groupings currently in the TIP include preliminary engineering, preventative maintenance and rehabilitation, bridge replacement and rehabilitation, railroad grade separations, safety, landscaping, intelligent transportation system deployment, and bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Participation at CAMPO Transportation Policy Board Meetings

The Transportation Policy Board provides policy guidance and direction for transportation planning in our region. Ultimate responsibility for the total transportation planning process includes, but is not limited to, review and approval of the recommended transportation plan and transportation improvement program. Opportunities for participation are regularly scheduled in transportation policy board meetings. The Board adopts bylaws which guide their meetings and public participation, and may be referred to for specific guidance on participation. (www.campotexas.org)

Tiered Approach to Public Participation

As a regional transportation governing body, CAMPO coordinates a number of projects, studies and plans which solicit the need for public participation at varying scales. As summarized below, CAMPO uses a four-tiered approach to its PPP where higher level tiers are representative of potential changes benefiting from the highest levels of public participation. Internet-based methods are emphasized to increase opportunities for people to participate within CAMPO's limited public involvement resources. Following are general definitions of amendment types, but each planning document be consulted for the complete definition:

- Administrative amendments could include changes in funding source or non-substantive alterations, and are approved by the CAMPO Director. No explicit participation process is required, but the public is notified through Internet posting of TPB meetings.
- Tier 1 amendments often include changes to funding amounts or changes in scope of a project already approved in the Regional Transportation Plan or TIP.
- Tier 2 amendments to documents include substantial increases of federal funding or scope alterations.
- Tier 3 is reserved for adoption of a new Regional Transportation Plan and requires an approach that maximizes opportunities for public involvement.

Table 1. Minimum Standards of Participation for CAMPO Programs (Higher levels can be pursued depending on resources available).

Program	Tier
Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Adoption (every 5 years)	3
- Tier 2 Amendments (definition in RTP)	2
- Tier 1 Amendments (definition in RTP)	1
- Administrative Amendments (definition in RTP)	Administrative
Public Participation Plan (PPP) Adoption	2
- Amendments (PPP p. 10)	1
- Administrative Amendments (PPP p. 10)	Administrative
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Adoption (every 2 years)	2
- Tier 2 Amendments (including calls for project funding, definition in TIP policies)	2
- Tier 1 Amendments (definition in TIP policies)	1
- Administrative Amendments (definition in TIP policies)	Administrative

CAMPO uses a mix of public involvement strategies intended to maximize engagement opportunities. This plan includes emphasis on electronic notification to spread the word of important actions, seeking opportunities to meet with the public face-to-face, and adding opportunities for community feedback. The following table lists some of the major techniques, which are explained further in the Appendix: Participation Toolbox. Each tier includes the previous tier, so Tier 3 includes all of the strategies.

Table 2. Minimum Standards for Participation Methods (each level includes the previous strategies)

Tier & minimum comment period	Strategies			
	<i>Getting the Word Out</i>	<i>High-Touch</i>	<i>High-Tech</i>	<i>Communicating Results</i>
Admin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following approval, notification in Transportation Policy Board (TPB) meeting materials online Meet Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency requirements 	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tier 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website posting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication at TPB action meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online comment opportunity (e.g. email or questionnaire) Social media posting linking to info. on website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of comments received and TPB action in meeting minutes
Tier 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> News release (at least 1) email notification through online newsletter or regular email to list subscribers postal mail notification to list subscribers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speakers bureau events as requested and staff is available At least one community meeting held in the vicinity of the project(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visualization of the project(s), at least via online map, if map-able 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of comments received provided to TPB 7 days in advance of action Adopted document will include a summary of comments and how they were addressed
Tier 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed planning of public participation strategies, posted on the CAMPO website. Innovative event coordination such as a 'transportation fair' of multiple agencies and issues. News releases (at least 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community meetings held in each CAMPO county. Speakers bureau events actively pursued Fairs and public venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinars or video Graphics explaining significant concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public involvement report posted to website at least one week before TPB action.

Administrative Tier

This administrative tier is provided as a means to address those planning procedures that do not require public comment and approval by the Transportation Policy Board. These changes are reflected in documentation, and cannot result in a functional change to the transportation system.

Administrative Tier Flowchart (no timeline):



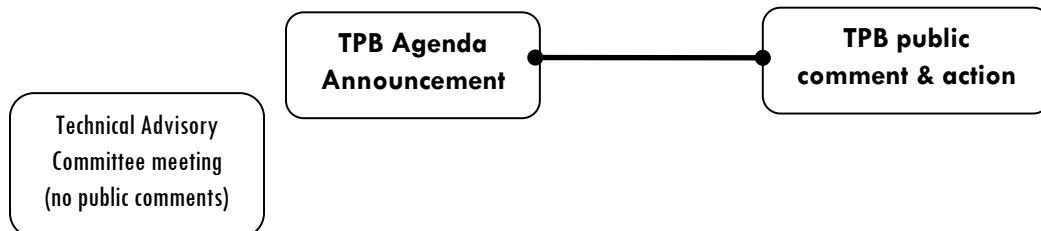
Examples of administrative amendments would include:

- Fixing typographical errors
- Decreasing project funding without changing its scope

Tier 1

These amendments are small in scope, and may affect a relatively small geographic area. Unlike the Administrative Tier, Tier 1 amendments can result in changes to the transportation system. Although not in every case, Tier 1 amendments are characteristic of existing plan updates or amendments of larger Tier 2 or Tier 3 amendments which require some public input, but not to the same degree as higher tiered changes.

Tier1 flowchart:



Document Accessibility: Documents open for public review must be provided for public access at least 72 hours prior to meetings of the Transportation Policy Board.

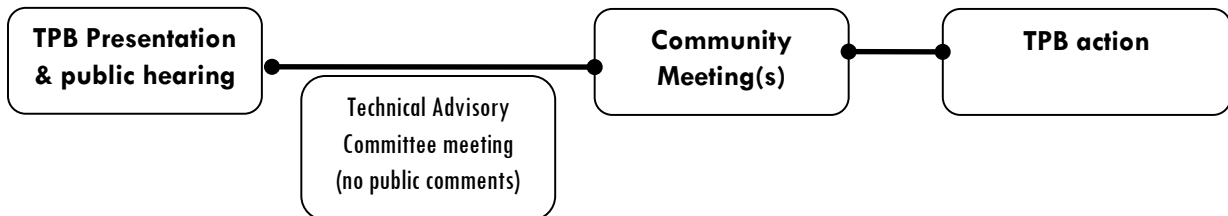
Comment Processing: Comments will be reviewed and summarized to be presented to TPB for their consideration. Where appropriate, comments will be included verbatim or summarized in the adopted document.

Meeting: Community meetings are not required at this level, but TPB meeting includes opportunity for public comment.

Tier 2

These changes include all the strategies as specified in Tier 1 of this plan. However, the geographic scope of the projects may involve multiple jurisdictions, often resulting in a higher level of coordination across multiple stakeholder groups and a higher desire for additional opportunities for public input. Increased efforts to seek input from minority and low-income populations are also of greater concern within this tier.

Tier 2 flowchart:



Document Accessibility: Documents open for public review must be provided for public access at least 72 hours prior to meetings of the Transportation Policy Board.

Public Notification for Comments: At least one (1) press release must be issued within the boundaries of the project area. The medium in which the release is provided should be in a format that best meets the needs of the project.

Additionally, notifications may be expanded to include formalized announcements, ads or posters placed at highly visible and easily accessible locations throughout the project area

including those areas which serve traditionally low-income or minority area include:

- Capital Metro service centers, transfer hubs, and onboard buses, where possible.
- Bulletin boards in public facilities
- Public recreation centers in minority or low-income communities near the project.
- Multi-Service Centers that are operated by state agencies

Meetings: Two or more public meetings are required for all Tier 2 project types, including one Transportation Policy Board meeting. At least one community meeting should be provided at a location accessible by the population affected by the proposed change.

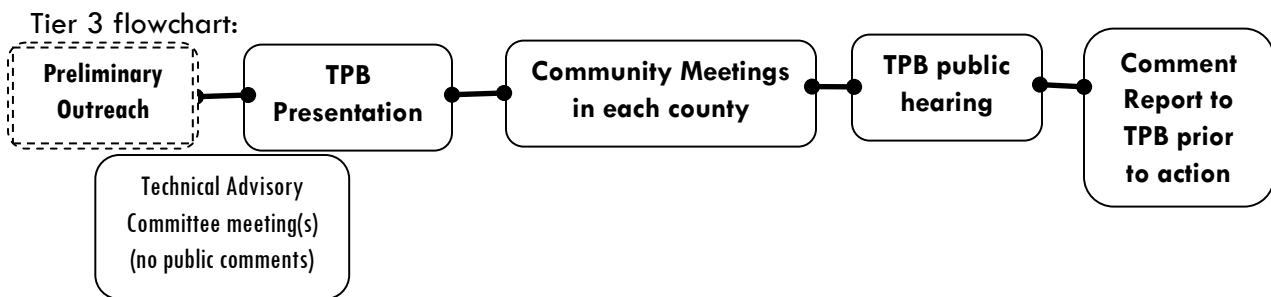
Quick Action Option

Amendments to the TIP or RTP requiring quick action due to impending federal or state requirements or deadlines (or for other reasons deemed in the community's best interest) may be accomplished by a 75% vote of the Transportation Policy Board members present to waive the Tier 2 process. In these cases, the Transportation Policy Board will hold a special public hearing within its normal meeting agenda to solicit public comment on the proposed amendment(s). These actions will be included on the meeting agenda posted on the CAMPO website prior to the Transportation Policy Board meeting thus encouraging public attendance and comment on the action prior to adoption by the Policy Board.

- Project sponsors should be notified up to 14 days prior to the planned community meeting. Their participation at community meetings allows attendees to ask project-specific questions and receive immediate feedback.
- Meeting location and times should be accessible to the general public, including those individuals who may not have access to an automobile.
- For Tier 2 changes, special services such as translation for non-English speakers, materials for the visually impaired, and services for the deaf and hard of hearing, shall be available when requested by those needing them, subject to availability of services. If special services are needed, the services must be requested with five business days advance notice to CAMPO staff. The availability of these services should be mentioned in the meeting notice.

Tier 3

The third tier of involvement is for development of the regional transportation plan, and provides for extensive outreach tailored to multiple communities within our region.



Adoption of a new Regional Transportation Plan must be taken through the Tier 3 process.

Detailed Participation Strategy: Given the increased scope of this Tier, a Detailed Participation Strategy must be provided. Strategies are to be designed around the requirements of this plan and overall project goals and objectives. Further, strategies must define a preliminary project timeline as well as the public outreach tools to be utilized for public participation. Participation plans must also include a calendar of events which must be published and made available on the project website or where appropriate.

Public Notification for Comments: In addition to those elements outlined in Tier 1 and 2, progress updates or newsletters should be generated as needed to keep interested public participants abreast of the latest project developments or successes. Additionally, where appropriate, notification flyers should be expanded to include more neighborhood specific locations such as community centers.

- **Meetings:** Five or more public meetings must be provided at this level and are subject to all Tier 1 and 2 requirements. Additional notification locations in this Tier could include locations accessible by public transit, such as neighborhood community centers or publicly operated recreation centers.

Performance Objectives & Monitoring

The following metrics will be recorded by staff on a continuous basis to monitor success of participation strategies. Since the magnitude of participation in transportation issues is driven by both the organization's efforts and the level of public interest, these metrics focus on actions within staff purview. Results will be reported in the CAMPO Annual Performance and Expenditure Report (www.campotexas.org).

Table 3. Performance Objectives (non-RTP outreach year)

Metric	Annual Objective
# of community meetings held	10
# of electronic newsletters sent	6
# of social media updates	100
# of surveys developed	2
# of media releases distributed	2

Table 4. Regional Transportation Plan Adoption Year Performance Objectives

Metric	Annual Objective
# of community meetings held	15
# of electronic newsletters sent	12
# of social media updates	150
# of surveys developed	3
# of media releases distributed	3

In addition, CAMPO monitors survey responses, web site traffic, CAMPO meetings, and social media.

Revising this Document

This Public Participation Plan is a living document, and should be revised to reflect improvements in participation methods. CAMPO staff welcomes comments via phone (512) 974-2275, or by email to campo@campotexas.org.

Administrative amendments to the PPP include changes to Toolbox strategies, revision of references to applicable regulations, mis-spellings, omissions or typographical errors. These updates are performed by staff, with no notification required.

Amendments to the Participation Plan include any other changes that do not fit the administrative definition above. A Tier 1 participation process is used for consideration, and 45 days of public comment are required before adoption. If the document changes significantly due to public comments, an additional 45-day comment period is required.

Development of a new Public Participation Plan follows a Tier 2 participation process, and also requires a 45 day comment period.

Appendix- Participation Toolbox:

The Tiers as presented are not meant to be finite and instead define those minimum requirements which are considered essential for a successful Public Participation Plan (PPP). Where project needs or local stakeholders/agencies deem appropriate, outreach efforts may be expanded to include additional outreach tactics. The following toolbox provides an array of tools, which may be utilized to further enhance the outreach strategies outlined within each Tier. The provided list is not exhaustive, and is intended to be updated. This toolbox includes:

Identifying Demographics of Study Area: *Refine and select public participation tools that are appropriate for identified population within the designated study area.*

Demographics such as income and English proficiency of the area potentially affected by a project are important to understand regarding participation for two reasons: low-English proficiency populations may need translation or other services, and low-income communities may need additional community meeting access provisions or other assistance.

CAMPO's existing environmental justice analyses may be useful in identifying these communities, or specialized analysis of geographic information may be appropriate.

Visualization Techniques: *Encourage universal communication tactics which help to simplify concepts and transcend language, economic and educational barriers.*

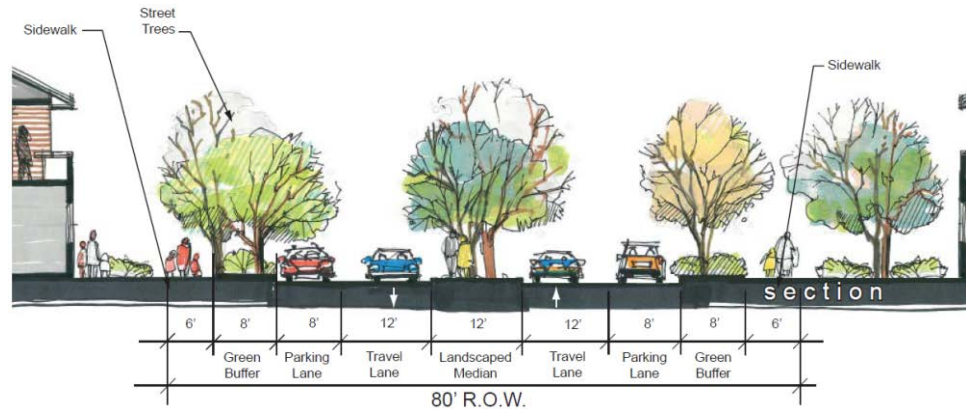
CAMPO strives to provide information regarding transportation-related issues in a manner which are easy to interpret. Visualization tools allow for the display of complex ideas via graphics with limited to no text. Examples include:

Photo Simulation: To enhance community understanding of proposed project designs, photographs of existing conditions will be integrated with 3-D design files depicting an alternate desired outcome. Examples include the addition of planted medians, left-hand turn lanes, rapid transit bus lanes, etc.



San Jacinto Street, currently lined with parking garages, is envisioned as a mixed-use, pedestrian and transit-oriented street from City of Austin's Downtown Austin Plan

Illustrations: Where data is not yet available, hand drawn or rendered illustrations may be used to show future design concepts. Examples include the illustration of a transit oriented development site design or the rendering of a proposed cross section of a modified roadway.



Boulevard Street Section example in Heart of Hutto Oldtown Master Plan

Mapping: Allows for the spatial depiction of where projects are to be implemented and how it relates to the surrounding region. If warranted, GIS technology can be merged with visualization tools to demonstrate what a proposed treatment might result in.

Utilizing High Tech Outreach Tactics: Reach sectors of the population more apt to communicate via electronic media.

Website: Over the last decade, access to the World Wide Web has increased exponentially within the general population and is seen as a portal to engaging a generation that relies on and is most comfortable with the Internet for information. To ensure transparency, all projects should provide the following information:

- **Defined Purpose:** Defines the general intent of the project including the expected role of stakeholders within the public participation process.
- **Project Timelines:** Are intended to provide participants an understanding of where the project is currently located in terms of completion. Key milestones should be listed but exact dates are not required for this general overview.
- **Calendar of Events:** A calendar of events provides potential and current stakeholders an indication of the time commitment involved from community participants. Committee meeting dates should be included in this schedule as well as related deadlines for citizen participation in such events.
- **Topical Mailing List Signup:** The intention of this signup list is to receive updates of the current or similar projects that share similar points of interest whether regional, local or project specific.
- **Staff Contact Information:** Provided for project specific inquiries.

Radio/Television: Where warranted, project kickoff events should be announced with a press release to the local media. Where televised, recordings are provided on the CAMPO website.

Social Media: Updates, dissemination of information, survey distribution, and discussion topics may be employed by CAMPO and project sponsor staff. This can also be accomplished by working with local

agencies and advocacy groups to carry messages or links to the CAMPO website through their established social media network, thereby increasing the broadcasting abilities of CAMPO in reaching interested stakeholders. Where demographics warrant, staff should make every effort to advertise project updates and notifications on Spanish-oriented social media. Planners should remain engaged with developments in social media, as specific websites may change in their usefulness by the public over time.

Electronic Newsletter: Intended to provide summary updates on the types of activities taking place at all levels of transportation planning. Newsletter articles are required for any Tier 2 or greater public involvement strategy. All other program or project types may be updated in the quarterly or annual newsletter as needed.

Electronic Contact Database: The electronic notification list will include transit providers within the area, affected local and state agencies, freight transportation providers, Native American tribes who have requested to be on the mailing list and any private citizen or agency who request notification. Requests to be added to CAMPO's mailing list may also be made by telephone, e-mail, fax, or in person by visiting the CAMPO office if desired. All organizations/individuals will remain on the mailing list until they request to be removed or are known by CAMPO not to desire further inclusion.

At a minimum, the following information is recommended from all interested parties:

- *Name:* Participants' first and last names must be provided to actively participate in the planning process. Submissions containing only first names will not be denied, but those participants will be limited to general project updates and will not be solicited for participation within the planning process. This allows for community members to remain abreast of general planning updates while maintaining a degree of anonymity. Profiles may be updated at any time via potential participants email addresses or by contacting project staff.
- *Email:* Email notifications are intended to serve as the primary form of project and program updates. Where email is not available, participants may elect to have mail sent directly to residential addresses.
- *Zip Code:* Zip code information is provided for local or project specific programs which do not require mass, regional distribution of project updates. Zip code information is used primarily to solicit public participation for local or corridor specific project based on citizen defined areas of interest (Described below).

Utilizing High Touch Outreach Tactics: *Reach sectors of the populations that do not have access to or are not familiar with high-tech outreach tactics*

Brochures/Maps: Brochures and maps act as quick reference documents that summarize the purpose of an associated program and related goals and objectives. Text should be minimal and where possible, graphics or rendering should be used. Project websites and appropriate staff contact information should also be provided.

Print Media: All print media publications should make efforts to accommodate EJ populations where required. Where advertisements are made, staff should keep a record of the entity which was responsible for its publication, the date in which it was published and the population in which it was intended to serve to assist with future outreach efforts.

Community Meetings/Open Houses: CAMPO staff will conduct open houses and/or community meetings as part of the planning processes for the Plan and adoption of the RTP and TIP and other major funding and project definition opportunities. These sessions will provide opportunities for the exchange of information

between citizens and staff. Staff also work with CAMPO's Transportation Policy Board members to identify active community leaders throughout the CAMPO area and contact these leaders to learn how to better reach the different communities.

Informational Outreach: CAMPO staff is available to present programs and/or provide materials at the request of civic or community groups. Requests for presentations must be made at least two weeks in advance to appropriate CAMPO staff. When resources are available, staff will seek opportunities for informational outreach in the affected communities.

Display Booths: Display booths provide a quick snap shot of a program type using project boards, posters and other visualization graphics. Project booths are mobile and may be set up throughout the project area. Brochures, newsletters, comment cards and other informational packets may be provided in conjunction with display booths. Display booths may be used in combination with other meeting or where high pedestrian traffic corridors are expected. Given their ease of access, display booths offer a great opportunity to receive informal feedback on project ideas, progress, or implementation tactics which will be recorded and summarized.

Speakers Bureau: CAMPO offers a speakers bureau program to allow groups to request a speaker on a number of topics. The speaker is most often a member of CAMPO staff, but others may be sought if needed. Following are a list of topics commonly requested, but other issues can also be arranged:

- CAMPO Primer
- Air Quality and Transportation Planning
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning
- Commute Solutions
- Congestion Management and Data Collection
- Land Use and Transportation Planning
- Long-range Transportation Planning
- Public Involvement in Transportation Planning

Project Booklets: Project booklets may maintain an executive summary, factsheets, visualization tools, and related staff contact information. Upon request, these materials may be printed and distributed in a three ring folder (or as appropriate). Further project booklets may be provided at project kickoff meetings or other related transportation planning events. Where warranted, certain key materials should be available in Spanish or other languages.

Project Oversight and Committee Use: *Enhance public input in planning process via incorporation of stakeholder advisory committees.*

All projects must be presented to the TPB at some stage within their process as outlined within the 4-tiered approach of the PPP. Committee meetings are intended to provide a formalized process for document review. All CAMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings are open to the public and are held two weeks prior to TPB meetings. Ad hoc committees or subcommittees may be created to investigate and report on specific subject areas of interest. Membership lists, committee terms, vacancies, meeting times and locations are to be made available on the CAMPO website.

The TAC may serve as an advisory committee for the completion of all transportation studies, plans, development and programming recommendations required under state or federal laws pertaining to all surface modes of transportation and transportation support facilities. The TAC also serves as a forum and

working group for regional project coordination across jurisdictional boundaries. Where warranted, projects may elect to request an ad hoc or smaller subset of committee member be used for preliminary review of certain documents before final review by the TPB.

However, projects may elect to utilize full committees, ad hoc committees, citizen advisory groups or steering committees as they see fit. These sub committees may be used for preliminary technical review of findings and/or recommendations, or may act as a gauge to certain recommendations or processes as it relates to potential reactions by the general public resulting in a less controversial and cost effective results.