



**Permian Basin**  
**MPO** Metropolitan  
Planning  
Organization

**“Solving Midland and Odessa’s Transportation Challenges”**

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

**9601 Wright Drive  
Midland, Texas 79706  
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432-617-0129**

**Reviewed and Approved by the Policy Board **DATE.****

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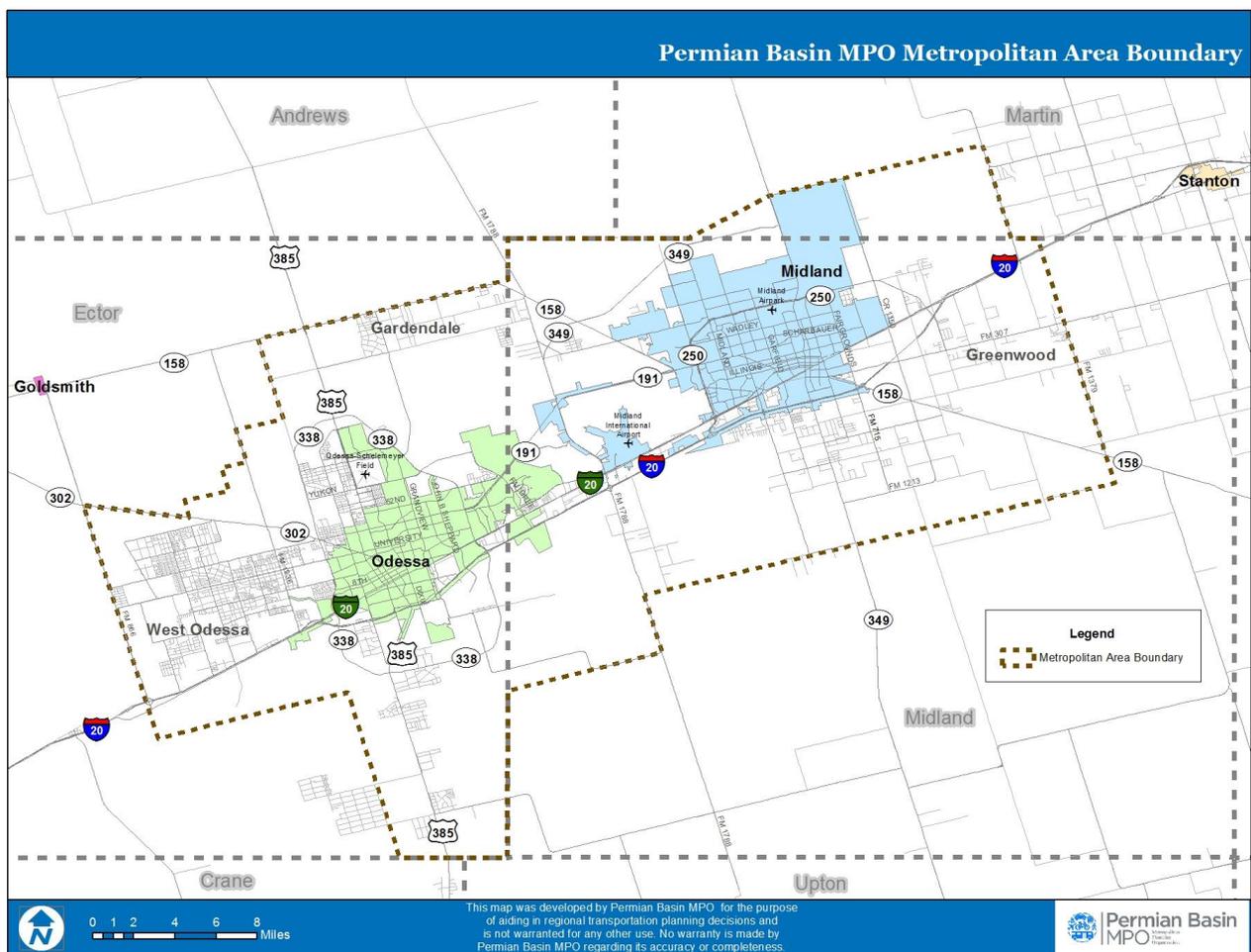
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## INTRODUCTION

The Permian Basin Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the regional transportation planning organization responsible for working with local, state, and federal governments, as well as the private and public sectors, to coordinate the transportation and land use planning processes in the Metropolitan Area Boundary (MAB). The MAB, shown below, includes the Cities of Odessa and Midland and portions of Ector, Martin, and Midland counties. The Permian Basin MPO is the organization that sets the transportation priorities by bringing together government entities within the urban area boundary to make *continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive* transportation decisions. The Public Participation Process (PPP) emphasizes the importance of early, on-going public involvement in the transportation planning process. Early public involvement enables the MPO to make more informed decisions, improve quality through collaborative efforts, and build mutual understanding and trust between the MPO and the public. The PPP outlines various tools and schedules for public involvement in the development of various planning documents.



It is the intent of the Permian Basin MPO that the PPP provides the greatest possible involvement in the transportation planning process and that it be implemented in a continuous, proactive manner and adheres to the principles of Environmental Justice and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Representatives from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Ector County, Martin County, Midland County, City of Odessa, City of Midland, Midland-Odessa Urban Transit District (MOUSD), and the public are represented on various committees that are a part of the Permian Basin MPO:

- **Permian Basin MPO Policy Board** – This is the governing body for the MPO and provides a forum for cooperative decision making and policy guidance. The Policy Board sets the priorities for the transportation projects in the Permian Basin MPO MAB. They also provide direction to the Permian Basin MPO Executive Director.
- **Permian Basin MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** – This group is composed of technical staff of key local transportation partners. Meetings are held to discuss transportation related issues and to provide technical analysis of planning activities for the Policy Board.
- **Permian Basin MPO Staff** – The MPO Staff is responsible for performing the administrative and technical services necessary to effectively and efficiently operate the MPO on a day-to-day basis.

The Permian Basin MPO Policy Board and TAC meet once per month at the Permian Basin MPO offices located at 9601 Wright Drive, Suite 1, Midland, Texas.

### Mission and Vision Statements

#### **Permian Basin MPO Mission Statement**

*Provide leadership to the region in the planning, funding, and development of a safe, efficient multimodal transportation system.*

#### **Permian Basin MPO Vision Statement**

*To develop a sustainable multimodal transportation system that meets the future needs of all users.*

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

### General Guidelines

The PPP is intended to provide direction for public involvement activities to be conducted by the Permian Basin MPO and contains the policies and techniques used by the MPO for public involvement. In its PPP, the Permian Basin MPO will:

1. Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by

transportation plans, programs and projects (including, but not limited to local jurisdiction concerns).

2. Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plans (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and other appropriate transportation plans and projects, and conduct open public meetings where matters related to transportation programs are being considered.
3. Give adequate public notice of public participation activities and allow time for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of the MTP, the TIP, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects. If the final draft of any transportation plan differs significantly from the one available for public comment by the Permian Basin MPO and raises new material issues, which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revisions will be made available.
4. When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan (including the financial plan for the MTP and TIP) as a result of the PPP or the interagency consultation process required under MAP-21 and the FAST Act report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan.
5. Solicit the needs of those under-served by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to the transportation disadvantaged, minorities, elderly, persons with disabilities, and low-income households. MAP-21 and the FAST Act require that the MPO shall provide reasonable opportunities for affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation planning process.
6. Provide a public comment period of 45 calendar days prior to the adoption of the PPP and/or any amendments. Notice of the comment period will be advertised in the *Midland Reporter-Telegram* and the *Odessa American* prior to the commencement of the 45-day comment period.
7. Provide a public comment period of not less than 30 calendar days prior to adoption of the MTP and the TIP, and a public comment period of not less than 10 calendar days prior to the adoption of any amendments.
8. Coordinate the PPP with statewide participation processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans and programs, and reduce redundancies and costs.

### **Environmental Justice**

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) states, “No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to the discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” The Executive Order issued on Environmental Justice in 1994 further amplified Title VI by providing that, “each federal agency shall make achieving Environmental Justice part of its mission by identifying, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.” The Executive Order requires all federal agencies to establish internal policies to meet these requirements.

During the adoption of transportation plans, policies, and programs, it is Permian Basin MPO’s policy to ensure fair and full participation in the transportation planning process by all citizens who may be potentially affected. Public outreach to low-income and minority populations will be made by maintaining a distribution mailing list of community organizations and leaders to invite them to participate in the transportation planning process.

Prior to the adoption of any update to the MTP, the MPO will identify low-income and minority populations by traffic analysis zones (TAZs) or by census tracts, so the effects or burdens of transportation programs on these groups can be reviewed and addressed to ensure transportation programs are distributed through the planning area in a fair and equitable manner.

### **Limited English Proficiency Plan**

As a federally funded agency, the Permian Basin MPO recognizes the requirements for and benefits of developing and implementing a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan as part of the PPP. Doing so will bring the MPO in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations. Title VI states that no person shall be subjected to discrimination due to their race, color, or national origin. Executive Order 13166 entitled “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English” further states that differing treatment based on a person’s inability to speak, read or write English is a type of national origin discrimination and directs all federally funded agencies to public guidance to prevent such discrimination. (FTA Circular 4702.1B dated October 1, 2012.)

In 2013, the Permian Basin MPO updated the PPP, including developing an LEP Plan. The development process involved identification of population segments for which English is not the primary language. The LEP Plan includes elements such as addressing bi-lingual accommodations for written and verbal communications between the public and the MPO, how the “Four Factor Analysis” will be addressed, dissemination of documents, staff training, and continual monitoring and updating.

These communities include minorities, transit dependent citizens, low income, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Staff activities will include, but not be limited to:

- participation in groups and coalitions serving within these communities;
- targeted communications with local media outlets;

- outreach meetings conducted at times and locations that are accessible to transit dependent or non-driving individuals when possible;
- publication of MPO documents in non-technical, web-based, or other easily accessible formats as necessary and appropriate for purposes of obtaining input and comments regarding the regional transportation planning processes.

The Permian Basin MPO's goal will be to ensure that all citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

## **PROCEDURAL NOTICES AND PROCESSES**

### **Policy Board**

All meetings of the Permian Basin MPO Policy Board and all public meetings shall be held in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act as amended. Minutes of public meetings shall be retained by the MPO for a period of three (3) years. Current minutes of the public meetings will be maintained on the website ([www.permianbasinmpo.com](http://www.permianbasinmpo.com)). The public will be given an opportunity to comment during every Policy Board and public meeting. All persons attending the Policy Board meeting or other public meetings will be asked to sign a roster that will be retained by the MPO. On a quarterly basis, the MPO may host the Policy Board meetings at a location within the stakeholder communities. These meetings provide transit-dependent citizens access to the Policy Board meetings since they are held on a designated transit route and begin at 3:00pm.

Notification of all Policy Board meetings and public comment periods shall be placed at least 72 hours in advance in the *Midland Reporter-Telegram* and the *Odessa American* newspapers and on the MPO website.

### **Public Participation Process**

A minimum public comment period of 45 days will be established prior to the PPP adoption or amendment. The PPP shall be periodically reviewed by the MPO in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all.

Copies of the draft PPP will be placed at the Ector and Midland County Libraries, the City Secretaries' Offices of the Cities of Odessa and Midland, Martin County Courthouse, TxDOT Odessa District office, and on the Permian Basin MPO website ([www.permianbasinmpo.com](http://www.permianbasinmpo.com)) during the 45-day public comment period. The draft PPP will also be made available during regular business hours at the Permian Basin MPO office located at 9601 Wright Drive, Suite 1 Midland, Texas 79706. The adopted PPP will remain on the website for ongoing reference by the public.

### **Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a long-range planning document which identifies transportation projects and programs for the next 25-years. The MTP addresses various aspects of transportation, such as major streets and highways, traffic operations,

maintenance, public transportation, freight, pedestrian and bicycle transportation. A new MTP is developed every five years.

At least one public meeting shall be held to present a new or amended MTP a minimum of 30-days prior to adoption. A 30-day public comment period shall be required for a new MTP and a 10-day comment period for amendments.

Copies of the draft MTP will be placed at the Ector and Midland County Libraries, the City Secretaries' Offices of the Cities of Odessa and Midland, Martin County Courthouse, TxDOT Odessa District office, and on the Permian Basin MPO website ([www.permianbasinmpo.com](http://www.permianbasinmpo.com)) during the 30-day public review period (10 days for amendments to the MTP). The draft MTP will also be made available during regular business hours at the Permian Basin MPO Office located at 9601 Wright Drive, Suite 1 Midland, Texas 79706 throughout the 30-day public review period for a new MTP and 10-day public review period for amendments to the MTP. The adopted MTP will remain on the website for ongoing reference by the public.

### **Transportation Improvement Program**

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) identifies and schedules transportation projects to be implemented in the Permian Basin MPO MAB. The TIP is updated every two years. At least one public meeting shall be held to present a new or amended TIP a minimum of 30-days prior to adoption. A 30-day public comment period shall be required for a new TIP and a 10-day comment period for amendments. All public notifications regarding a public TIP review and comment period will contain the following language: *"This public notice will satisfy the Program of Projects public participation requirement as part of the FTA's Section 5307 funding grant"*

Copies of the draft TIP will be placed at the Ector and Midland County Libraries, the City Secretaries' Offices of the Cities of Odessa and Midland, Martin County Courthouse, TxDOT Odessa District office, and on the Permian Basin MPO website ([www.permianbasinmpo.com](http://www.permianbasinmpo.com)) during the 30-day public review period (10 days for amendments to the TIP). The draft TIP will also be made available during regular business hours at the Permian Basin MPO office located at 9601 Wright Drive, Suite 1 Midland, Texas 79706 throughout the 30-day public review period for a new TIP and a 10-day public comment period for amendments to the TIP. The adopted TIP will remain on the website for ongoing reference by the public.

## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act**

In July 2012 the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) was signed into law. With guaranteed funding for highways, highway safety, and public transportation, the bill authorized transportation programs and projects for the two-year period of 2012-2014. The three previous landmark bills that brought surface transportation into the 21st century – the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), shaped the highway program to meet the nation's changing transportation needs.

MAP-21 addressed the many challenges facing our transportation system today – challenges such as improving safety, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency in freight movement, increasing intermodal connectivity, and protecting the environment – as well as laying the groundwork for addressing future challenges. MAP-21 required the MPO to consider planning strategies that will serve to advance eight transportation planning factors identified under MAP-21 as follows:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation; and
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

### **Fixing America's Surface Transportation**

On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed into law Public Law 114-94, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). The FAST Act funds surface transportation programs—including, but not limited to, Federal-aid highways—at over \$305 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2016 through 2020. It is the first long-term surface transportation authorization enacted in a decade that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation. This summary reviews the policies and programs of the FAST Act administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

MAP-21 included provisions to make the Federal surface transportation more streamlined, performance-based, and multimodal, and to address challenges facing the U.S. transportation system, including improving safety, maintaining infrastructure condition, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency of the system and freight movement, protecting the environment, and reducing delays in project delivery. The FAST Act builds on the changes made by MAP-21.

The FAST Act—

- *Improves mobility on America's highways*
- *Creates jobs and supports economic growth*
- *Accelerates project delivery and promotes innovation*

The FAST Act continues requirements for a long-range plan and a short-term transportation improvement program (TIP), with the long-range statewide and metropolitan plans now required to include facilities that support intercity transportation, including intercity buses. EZ-Rider is an important member agency of the MPO; a contract between themselves and Greyhound bus service was completed in 2017. Intercity and interstate bus operations are now underway at EZ-Rider's multi-modal location near Midland International Air and Space Port. The statewide and metropolitan long-range plans must describe the performance measures and targets that States and MPOs use in assessing system performance and progress in achieving the performance targets. Additionally, the FAST Act requires the planning process to consider projects/strategies to: improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system, stormwater mitigation, and enhance travel and tourism. Finally, in an effort to engage all sectors and users of the transportation network, the FAST Act requires that the planning process include public ports, and private transportation providers, and further encourage MPOs to consult during this process with officials of other types of planning activities, including tourism and natural disaster risk reduction. The Permian Basin MPO is aware that several hotels run courtesy shuttles to and from Midland International Air and Space Port and that McDonalds corporation and Schlumberger have also provided van services to pick up and deliver employees to work sites. The MPO staff will continue to determine how many private service providers exist. Further, the MPO does not currently have a cash-out program or a transit benefits program.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS POLICIES**

In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO will consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities.

The Permian Basin MPO shall maintain an up-to-date database of contacts including the following stakeholders to provide reasonable opportunities to be informed and to comment on the transportation planning process:

- Elected Officials and staffs of Member Entities
- Representatives of Public Transportation Entities and Private Providers
- Local Media
  - Including Spanish language
- Homeowners Associations
- Civic Groups and Fraternal Organizations
- Special Interest Groups (Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission and MOTRAN)
- Consultation with Federal, State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, tourism, and historic preservation.
- Consultation with parties that would have an interest in the planning and development of the transportation network including affected public agencies in the MAB.

- Private Freight Shippers including railports
- Representatives of Users of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Facilities
- Representatives of the Disabled

The Permian Basin MPO staff shall, when feasible, electronically mail meeting announcements to the MPO contact list or to targeted groups for upcoming activities. The MPO Staff will also conduct meetings, when possible, with the above-referenced groups.

The Permian Basin MPO shall employ visualization techniques to depict transportation plans. Examples of visualization techniques include: charts, graphs, photo interpretation, maps, use of GIS systems, artist renderings, physical models, and/or computer simulation.

The Permian Basin MPO will conduct workshops when practical and feasible in order to educate/update the public and various stakeholders on transportation planning issues within the Permian Basin MPO MAB.

Target audiences shall be identified to encourage the involvement of all area citizens in the transportation planning process. This will include residents, business and property owners, underserved and under-represented populations, including, but not limited to low income and minority households. Outreach opportunities will include the leadership/membership of non-government organizations including, but not limited to:

- MOTRAN
- Midland Development Corporation
- GROW Odessa
- Odessa Economic Development Corporation
- Midland Chamber of Commerce
- Odessa Chamber of Commerce
- Service Organizations (Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Leadership Midland, Leadership Odessa)
- Housing Authorities
- School/PTA Organizations

The Permian Basin MPO will provide adequate public notice for all Permian Basin MPO regular Policy Board Meetings. A public comment period is offered at each Policy Board Meeting. Public Notice for all Policy Board Meetings will be given 72 hours prior to the meeting. The Permian Basin MPO will, whenever feasible, hold public meetings at a site convenient to potentially affected citizens.

All Permian Basin MPO meeting agendas, documents, maps, plans and programs will be made available in electronic format on the Permian Basin MPO website. There is a comment section on the Permian Basin MPO website for the public to ask questions or to make any comments/recommendations.

The MPO website will be updated and maintained to provide the most current and accurate transportation planning information available. The website ([www.permianbasinmpo.com](http://www.permianbasinmpo.com)) shall, at a minimum, contain the following information:

- Contact information (mailing address, phone, fax, and e-mail)
- Current MPO Membership
- Meeting calendars and agendas
- Work products and publications (MTP, TIP, UPWP, PPP, CMP, Title VI/EJ Program, Annual Listing of Projects and Annual Performance Expenditure Report)
- Comment/Questions Form
- Links to transportation related agencies/entities

The Permian Basin MPO staff will be available to provide general transportation information at their business offices located at 9601 Wright Drive, Suite 1 Midland, Texas 79706, phone number 432-617-0129, fax number 432-617-0165.

Informational outreach will include the leadership/membership of community groups including:

- African-American Chambers of Commerce in the Cities of Midland and Odessa
- Hispanic Chambers of Commerce in the Cities of Midland and Odessa
- Midland-Odessa Urban Transit District (MOUSD)

The Permian Basin MPO will make every effort, when it is deemed necessary and feasible, to provide an interpreter for meetings.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES**

Public participation is a mandated activity of the Permian Basin MPO and is an ongoing and integral part of corridor studies, the MTP and TIP, and scenario planning. This section contains descriptions of public participation tools that could be used by the Permian Basin MPO:

**Comment Forms** – Comment forms will be used to solicit public comment on specific issues being presented at public meetings or workshops. Comment forms can be very general in nature or can ask for very specific feedback.

**Community Events** – The Permian Basin MPO staff will maintain a database of events attended throughout the community. These events include those hosted by the Chambers of Commerce, cities, counties, TxDOT, and other planning partners.

**Connections and Sharable Content** – The MPO staff regularly shares transportation news, articles, and/or relevant information on social media to allow stakeholders easy access to pertinent content. Permian Basin MPO may also share links via e-mail with planning partners to notify them of valuable information.

**Database** – The Permian Basin MPO staff will maintain a master database of business, federal, state and local agencies and interested members of the public to enhance public involvement activities. The database will include committee membership, mailing information, phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses and web sites. The database will be used for maintaining up-to-date committee membership lists, special interest groups and homeowner

association contacts. The database will be used to establish and maintain a list of e-mail contacts for electronic meeting notification and announcements.

**Direct Mailings** – Activities for which direct mailing may be utilized may include project-specific meetings, scenario planning workshops, open houses, corridor studies, small-area studies, and other planning studies or major activities. An area may be targeted for a direct mailing because of potential impacts from a project. Groups are targeted that may have an interest in a specific issue, for example avid cyclists and pedestrians may be targeted for pathways and trail projects.

**Display Ads** – The Permian Basin MPO may use publication of larger ads to promote public meetings that are not regularly scheduled, such as those conducted for the TIP and MTP. They will be published in the *Midland Reporter-Telegram* and the *Odessa American* newspapers in order to reach a larger audience than those that typically read legal notices. These ads will provide public awareness of project specific meetings, workshops, or open houses.

**E-Mail Announcements** – Meeting announcements and MPO information will be e-mailed to interested persons.

**Legal Notices** – In accordance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, the MPO posts notice of the Permian Basin MPO Policy Board meetings and public meetings. These notices are posted in the *Odessa American* and *Midland Reporter-Telegram* newspapers, and agendas of the meetings are posted at the Permian Basin MPO Offices. The MPO plans to begin posting agendas of Policy Board meetings at the City Halls of Midland and Odessa.

**Media** – Opportunities may be sought to contribute MPO articles to other newsletters produced by municipalities, homeowners’ associations, church groups, civic groups, or others that may have an interest in transportation issues. The MPO will seek opportunities to participate on radio talk shows, provide television news highlights, and to utilize public service notices to create community awareness of transportation planning activities.

**Newsletter** – The Permian Basin MPO Staff may produce a periodic newsletter. The newsletter will be used to promote regular and special meetings, planning studies, publications, work products and board and committee member interviews.

**Permian Basin MPO Branding** – A logo representing the MPO will be used to identify work products and publications of the MPO. A logo will help the public become familiar with the different activities of the MPO by providing a means of recognizing MPO products. The following tag line will also be utilized to create a community awareness of the MPO goals: “Solving Midland and Odessa’s Transportation Challenges.”



**“Solving Midland and Odessa’s Transportation Challenges”**

**Posters and Flyers** – Posters and flyers may be used to announce meetings and events and may be distributed to public places such as City Halls, libraries, and community centers for display. The announcement may contain a brief description of the purpose of a meeting, the time(s), location(s) and contact information. Posters and flyers may be used to reach a large audience that cannot always be reached using direct mailings and/or newsletters.

**Press Releases** – Formal press releases will be sent to local media to announce upcoming meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues being considered by the Permian Basin MPO or their board/committees.

**Project Workshops/Open Houses/Presentations** – Targeted public meetings will be conducted that will generally be open and informal, with project team members interacting with the public on a one-on-one basis. Short presentations may be given by the MPO staff at these meetings. The purpose of project-specific meetings will be to provide information to the public and to solicit public comment and obtain a sense of public priorities. Opportunities will also be sought to present to civic and social agencies.

**Public Meetings** – Public meetings will be conducted to solicit public comment on projects or work products being considered for adoption by the MPO Policy Board. The public meetings provide a formal setting for citizens to provide comments to the MPO prior to the final adoption of work products. Notices of the public meetings will be published in the *Midland Reporter-Telegram* and *Odessa American* newspapers.

**Social Media** – The MPO will utilize Facebook and Twitter as a way to inform the general public on projects, studies, and other pertinent information. These sites will also be an avenue to publicize the public comment period on plans and programs and to release relevant agency news.

**Surveys** – Surveys may be utilized when very specific input from the public is desired such as whether a person supports a specific alignment in a corridor study.

**Website** – The MPO website ([www.permianbasinmpo.com](http://www.permianbasinmpo.com)) was established to provide basic information about the MPO process, members, meeting times and contact information. Work products such as the TIP and MTP are available on the site and citizens are encouraged to submit comments. The site provides links to other transportation related sites at the local, state and national level. This site will be used to list current and topical information on both regular and special meetings, planning studies, publications, related public events and work products.

The Permian Basin MPO staff will continually monitor the public participation outreach efforts to identify those methods that are the most efficient and effective.



## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS EVALUATION**

### **Introduction**

The Federal Highway Administration and the Texas Department of Transportation require that the Permian Basin MPO continue to evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement activities. By continually evaluating public involvement activities, it is possible to improve or add new public involvement activities to the MPO program and to discontinue activities that are ineffective.

The purpose of this section of the PPP is to provide guidelines for the evaluation of public involvement techniques. The Permian Basin MPO public involvement activities outlined in this document include descriptions of various public involvement techniques that could be used by the MPO. This plan should be reviewed periodically to ensure that appropriate changes are being implemented by the MPO. Any significant changes to the Permian Basin MPO's PPP will be advertised and made available for 45 days for public review and comment before final adoption. Administrative modifications, i.e. language, may be completed by the Policy Board without public review.

### **Improvement Strategy**

The Permian Basin MPO continues to strive for improved public involvement. Improvements should be made to increase public awareness and to improve the quantity and quality of information provided to the public. The decisions made by the MPO affect the entire population, both residents and visitors of the Cities of Midland and Odessa and surrounding areas. Therefore, seeking public input on these decisions is vital to the success of the MPO as the lead agency responsible for transportation planning. Each time a public involvement evaluation is performed, a list of improvement strategies needs to be identified for implementation. If improvement is needed for an ongoing public involvement task, such as the Permian Basin MPO website, a reasonable completion date should be established.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation</b>	<b>Desired Evaluation Outcomes</b>
<b>Website and Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website visits</li> <li>• Source of web traffic/referring websites</li> <li>• Time spent on web pages</li> <li>• Navigation on web pages</li> <li>• Search terms</li> <li>• Language/Translation</li> <li>• Browser/device</li> <li>• Geography</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of trends and changes for website usage over time.</li> <li>• Understanding of how other outreach and communications strategies may influence website use.</li> <li>• Prioritization of and increased accessibility to information and opportunities for input most important to the public</li> </ul>
<b>Social Media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions and engagement</li> <li>• Audience</li> <li>• Content views</li> <li>• Geography</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broader distribution of information and public involvement opportunities through shareable content, interactions and engagement.</li> <li>• Increased feedback and public input.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Meetings, Community Workshops, &amp; Speakers Bureau</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of events hosted/Presentations requested</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Input received</li> <li>• Type of information distributed and shared</li> <li>• Geographic representation</li> <li>• Demographic information</li> <li>• All events hosted at locations accessible to individuals with disabilities</li> <li>• Notification of how to request language translation or special accommodations at a public meeting</li> <li>• Communications strategies through which people learned about the event</li> <li>• Communication strategies used to announce event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planned opportunities for the public to interact directly with staff.</li> <li>• Meaningful opportunities to present MPO information for individuals to learn about and provide input on plans, programs and policies.</li> <li>• Notification of events through a variety of strategies.</li> <li>• Live and recorded video online complement in-person events, making information more accessible.</li> </ul>
<b>Print and Digital Publications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantity of publications distributed</li> <li>• Distribution plan, e.g., accessibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information is available in multiple formats and accessible to all communities.</li> </ul>

	<p>of information in print and online</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variety of publication formats</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication content encourages continued involvement in transportation planning.</li> <li>• Publications enhance understanding of plans, programs and policies</li> </ul>
<b>Media Relations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media coverage</li> <li>• Media requests</li> <li>• Number of news releases</li> <li>• Media contact list characteristics, e.g., number of reporters, types of news sources, regional diversity, inclusion of minority news sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive media relations and communication of Metropolitan Planning Organization news, policies, programs and opportunities for public involvement.</li> <li>• Understanding of local, regional, statewide and national media coverage of transportation stories relevant to the Midland-Odesa area.</li> </ul>
<b>Surveys and Keypad Polling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response rate</li> <li>• Completeness of responses</li> <li>• Percent of respondents who would participate in a public involvement activity again</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback and public input.</li> <li>• Relevant, accessible and simple opportunities to gather feedback and public input.</li> <li>• Information about public understanding, awareness and priorities.</li> <li>• Results facilitate further discussion and inform decisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Advertising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impressions/number of people potentially reached</li> <li>• Comments received noting advertising</li> <li>• Diversity of advertising placements, e.g. minority news sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad regional distribution of opportunities for public input.</li> </ul>
<b>Mail &amp; E-Mail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of contacts</li> <li>• Number of new contacts</li> <li>• Number of unsubscribes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All interested individuals, organizations and communities receive regular communication from the MPO.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of events attended</li> <li>• Location of events</li> <li>• Number of events held/attended that provided opportunities for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for the public to interact directly with staff in an informal setting.</li> <li>• Makes information accessible</li> </ul>

	<p>strengthening relationships with environmental justice populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event attendance</li> <li>• Interactions</li> </ul>	<p>where people are already gathering instead of requiring people seek it out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending events throughout the region is important in the large planning area.</li> </ul>
<b>Connections and Sharable Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Article and social media content sent to partners, local governments, community groups and other organizations</li> <li>• Content published by partners, local governments, community groups and other organizations</li> <li>• New audiences reached through established connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended reach of messaging about transportation and air quality issues and opportunities for public input.</li> <li>• Sustained engagement of connections who influence/conduct outreach.</li> <li>• Communication in a format that facilitates sharing with others.</li> </ul>

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## COMMONLY USED TRANSPORTATION TERMS AND ACRONYMS

**ADA – Americans With Disabilities Act Of 1990:** Federal law that requires public facilities (including transportation services) to be accessible to persons with disabilities including those with mental disabilities, and temporary disabilities

**CMP – Congestion Management Process:** The purpose of the CMP is to improve the transportation system performance and reliability by reducing adverse impacts of congestion on the movement of people and goods. The resulting CMP network will reflect corridors currently experiencing congestion. The CMP is a tool that may be used in the MTP project selection process. A draft CMP will be shared with the staff members of Permian Basin MPO member agencies prior to adoption.

**CONSIDERATION:** One or more parties take into account the opinions, action, and relevant information from other parties in making a decision or determining a course of action.

**CONSULTATION:** One or more parties confer with other identified parties in accordance with an established process and, prior to taking action(s), considers the view of the other parties and periodically informs them about action(s) taken. This definition does not apply to the “consultation” performed by the States and the MPOs in comparing the long-range statewide transportation plan and the metropolitan transportation plan, respectively, to State and Tribal conservation plans or maps or inventories of natural and historic resources.

**COOPERATION:** The parties involved in carrying out the transportation planning and programming processes work together to achieve a common goal or objective.

**COORDINATION:** The cooperative development of plans, programs, and schedules among agencies and entities with legal standing and adjustment of such plans, programs, and schedules to achieve general consistency, as appropriate.

**EJ – Environmental Justice:** Describes the impact of transportation plans or projects, either positive or negative, on a particular community or population (derived from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964). Environmental Justice strives to ensure public involvement of low income and minority groups in decision making, to prevent disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low income and minority groups, and to assure that these groups receive equal benefits from transportation improvements.

**FAST ACT – Fixing America’s Surface Transportation:** Legislation enacted on December 4, 2015. The FAST Act funds surface transportation programs—including, but not limited to, Federal-aid highways—at over \$305 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2016 through 2020. It is the first long-term surface transportation authorization enacted in a decade that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation. The FAST Act builds on the changes made by MAP-21.

**FHWA – Federal Highway Administration:** Division of the U.S. Department of Transportation responsible for administrating federal highway transportation programs under Title 23 U.S.C.

~~**ISTEA – Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991:** Federal law which restructured transportation planning and funding by requiring consideration of multimodal solutions, emphasis on the movement of people and goods as opposed to traditional highway investments, flexibility in the use of transportation funds, a greater role of MPO's and a greater emphasis on public participation.~~

**MAP-21 – Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act:** Legislation enacted July 6, 2012. Map-21 is a funding and authorization bill to govern United States federal surface transportation spending thru FY 2014. MAP-21 continues the successful Highway Safety Improvement Program, doubling funding for infrastructure safety, strengthening the linkage among modal safety programs, and creating a positive agenda to make significant progress in reducing highway fatalities. It also continues to build on other aggressive safety efforts, including the Department's fight against distracted driving and its push to improve transit and motor carrier safety.

**MOU/D – Midland-Odessa Urban Transit District:** Also known as EZ-Rider, it is the urban transit system for the cities of Midland and Odessa.

**MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization:** The forum for cooperative transportation decision making; required for urbanized areas with populations over 50,000.

**MTP – Metropolitan Transportation Plan:** A 25-year forecast plan required of state planning agencies and MPOs; which must consider a wide range of social, environmental, energy, and economic factors in determining overall regional goals and consider how transportation can best meet these goals.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Is an integral part of a planning or major decision-making process. It provides opportunities for the public to be involved with the MPO in an exchange of data and ideas. Citizen participation offers an open process in which the rights of the community to be informed, to provide comments to the Government, and to receive a response from the Government, are met through a full opportunity to be involved and to express needs and goals.

**REVISIONS:** ~~The Final Rule defines as~~ Involve a change to a long-range statewide or metropolitan transportation plan, TIP or STIP that occurs between scheduled periodic updates. A major revision is an "amendment" while a minor revision is an "administrative modification". Amendments require public review and comment, and a demonstration of fiscal constraint. Administrative modifications allow minor changes without such actions.

~~**TEA 21 – Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century:** Enacted in July 1998 and successor to ISTEA, TEA 21 is the landmark legislation that clarified the role of the MPOs in the local priority setting process. TEA 21 emphasizes increased public involvement, simplicity, flexibility, fairness, and higher funding levels for transportation.~~

**TIP – Transportation Improvement Program:** A priority list of transportation projects developed by a metropolitan planning organization that is to be carried out within the four (4)

year period following its adoption; must include documentation of federal, state, and local funding sources for each project and be consistent with adopted MPO long range transportation plans.

**UPDATE:** The Final Rule defines as “making current a long-range statewide transportation plan, metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP, through a comprehensive review.” Updates are significant events and require public review and comment, re-establishment of a 20-year horizon year for metropolitan transportation plans and long-range statewide transportation plans, a re-established four-year program period for TIP’s and STIP’s, and demonstration of fiscal constraint.

**UPWP – Unified Planning Work Program:** Developed by Metropolitan Planning Organizations, it identifies all transportation planning activities and funding anticipated within the next one to two years, including a schedule for the completion of the identified tasks and activities.

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