

APPENDIX: STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC OUTREACH



The development of NMDOT's PIP update included a stakeholder and public outreach effort to get input on issues and considerations. Because the PIP is primarily an internal NMDOT document, engagement focused on NMDOT staff and their planning partners, though the general public had the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft plan during a 45-day comment period.

In addition to the public review period, public outreach took the form of an online survey distributed to Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (MPOs/RTPOs) and their member entities, and interviews with NMDOT staff and MPO representatives.

The contents of this appendix include the following:

1. A survey results summary;
2. A stakeholder interview summary; and
3. The public comment period press release.

The results from the survey and the information gained from the interviews informed the development of the plan update.¹ This outreach helped the consultants identify the biggest challenges for transportation planners in New Mexico, as well as the public involvement activities that they perceive to be most effective. The plan addresses these issues in order to provide a more practical tool for NMDOT staff and the Department's planning partners.

¹ NMDOT did not receive any public comments during the PIP public review period, although the Department did receive comments from some planning partners.

NMDOT Public Involvement Plan - Survey Results

Introduction

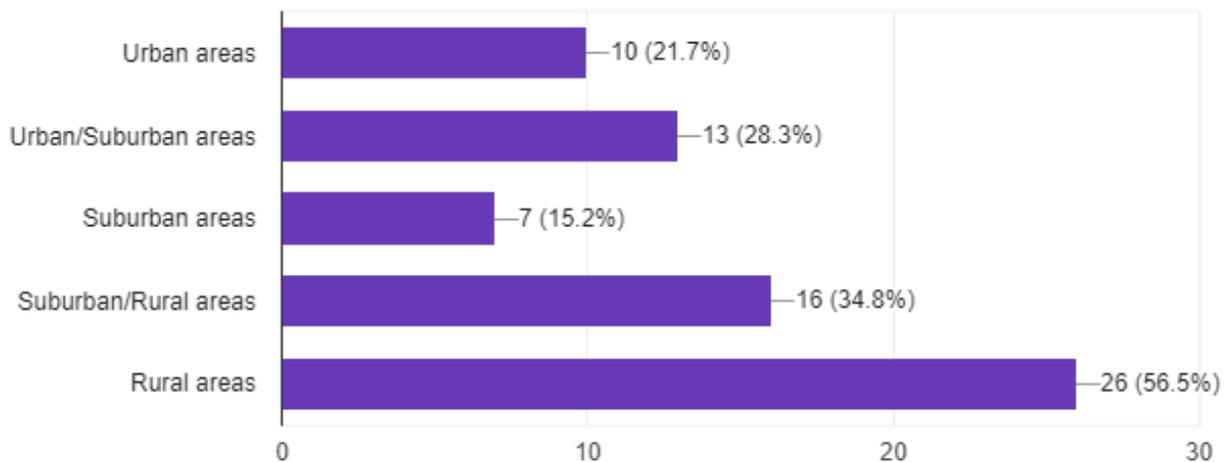
This memorandum details the results from the online survey distributed by the New Mexico Department of Transportation as part of the planning process for the 2018 update of the NMDOT Public Involvement Plan. The intent of the survey was to gather input from NMDOT’s planning partners on their opinions regarding public input for transportation and planning projects in New Mexico. Specifically, the survey was distributed to Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), and local planning agencies to collect user responses on what public involvement approaches work well or poorly based on geography and planning activity or topic. This memo summarizes the input collected through the online survey.

General Survey Results

The four-question survey distributed to New Mexico MPOs and RPOs was available from May 23rd to June 13th of 2018 and received 44 responses from representatives of 37 organizations. These survey results provided insight into the experiences of the respondents and informed the development of the Updated Public Involvement Plan. Users were asked to identify one or more geographic areas where they primarily conduct planning work, choosing from Urban, Urban/Suburban, Suburban, Suburban/Rural, and Rural Areas.² Respondents were then asked to rate public involvement activities by their general effectiveness in eliciting useful feedback. They were given the choices of Not Effective, Somewhat Effective, Effective, Very Effective, and Unsure. The survey also provided the opportunity to share comments on any other public involvement activities not included in the survey.

Out of the 44 people who took the survey, the majority (80 percent) conduct at least part of their planning work in rural areas, with 19 people reporting to solely serve rural areas. Comparatively, nine people work only in Urban or Suburban areas.

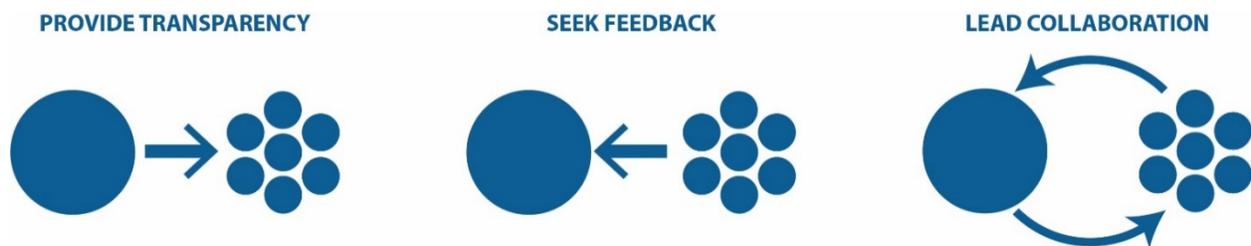
Figure 1. Survey Responses by Geographic Area



² People could select more than one geographical area.

The survey asked respondents to consider 22 different public involvement strategies that can be categorized into three types of engagement: Provide Transparency, Seek Feedback, and Lead Collaboration. The primary objective of Transparency activities is to provide transparency in the planning process. They inform the public about a planning activity or event, but do not elicit feedback or have an impact on plan decisions or deliverables. The main objective of Feedback activities is to obtain feedback on specific plans, alternatives, or decisions. The intention is to present a proposed idea or action to the target audience and provide people with the opportunity to give input. Collaboration activities are those where the organization works with the target audience throughout the planning process to ensure their concerns are heard and directly influence decisions and final products. For these activities, the audience advises and guides the planning process.

Figure 2. Types of Engagement



Of the Transparency activities, the majority of people reported Project Website, Periodic Email Updates, and Social Media Posts to be Effective or Very Effective, with relatively small percentages finding them to be Not Effective. Advertisements were the least effective Transparency activity, with 27 percent of people reporting them to be Effective or Very Effective and 24 percent considering them to be Not Effective. Table 1 lists the Transparency activities and the percentages of people who found them to be Effective or Very Effective and Not Effective.

Table 1. Survey Responses for Transparency Activities

Public Involvement Activity	% Effective or Very Effective	% Not Effective
Project Website	56%	7%
Periodic Email Updates	52%	2%
Social Media Posts	50%	4%
Project Info Sheet with contact information	48%	9%
Media Interviews (TV, newspaper, radio, etc.)	43%	9%
Press Releases	39%	11%
Advertisements (TV, newspaper, radio, etc.)	27%	24%

Of the Feedback activities, an In-Person Targeted Survey was found to be the most effective, with 53 percent of people rating it as Effective or Very Effective. Forty-eight percent of people found Roadshow Presentation and Project Information Station to be Effective or Very Effective. Online Public Survey was also rated Effective or Very Effective by 48 percent of people, and 13 percent reported it as Not Effective. Telephone Town Hall was the found to be the least effective Feedback activity, with 26 percent of people reporting it as Effective or Very Effective, and 13 percent rating it as Not Effective. Table 2 lists the Feedback activities and the percentages of people who found them to be Effective or Very Effective and Not Effective.

Table 2. Survey Responses for Feedback Activities

Public Involvement Activity	% Effective or Very Effective	% Not Effective
In-Person Targeted Survey	53%	2%
Roadshow Presentation	48%	0%
Project Information Station	48%	4%
Online Public Survey	48%	13%
Statistically Valid Public Survey	46%	9%
Online Input Map	45%	7%
Public Review Period	42%	11%
Comment Forms (paper or electronic)	35%	4%
Telephone Town Hall	26%	13%

Of the Collaboration activities, people reported that a Targeted Interview/Focus Group is the most effective activity, with 87 percent rating it Effective or Very Effective. This was followed by In-Person Public Meeting with Interactive Workshop (74 percent), and Committee/Working Group Meetings (67 percent). Virtual Open House received the fewest ratings of Effective or Very Effective, but few people (four percent) rated it as Not Effective. Comparatively, 41 percent of people rated Public Open House as Effective or Very Effective, while a relatively high proportion (15 percent) reported it to be Not Effective. Table 3 lists the Collaboration activities and the percentages of people who found them to be Effective or Very Effective and Not Effective.

Table 3. Survey Responses for Collaboration Activities

Public Involvement Activity	% Effective or Very Effective	% Not Effective
Targeted Interview/Focus Group	87%	0%
In-Person Public Meeting with Interactive Workshop	74%	4%
Committee/Working Group Meeting	67%	2%
Public Open House (Presentation with Q & A)	41%	15%
Pop-Up Exhibit	39%	2%
Virtual Open House	37%	4%

Urban and Rural Response Comparison

One intent of the survey was to determine if people had different opinions regarding the effectiveness of public involvement activities depending on the context in which they conduct planning work. For the purposes of this analysis, responses from people who reported working solely in *urban or suburban areas* were compared to responses from those reported working only in *rural areas*. Key findings of this comparison included:

- **Targeted Interview/Focus Group, Committee or Working Group Meeting, and In-Person Public Meeting** with Interactive Workshop were reported to be the most effective input activities, regardless of urban/suburban or rural context.
- People who work in urban or suburban areas reported **Statistically Valid Survey** as one of the most effective activities (with 67 percent reporting it as Effective or Very Effective), while people in rural areas reported it to be one of the least effective (with 53 percent reporting it as Not Effective or Somewhat Effective).
- People who work in urban or suburban areas rated **Public Open House** as one of the least effective activities, with 78 percent of people rating it as Not Effective or Somewhat Effective, compared to 37 percent of people from rural areas.

- **Project Info Sheets** were reported as considerably less effective by those from urban or suburban contexts (with 78 percent reporting it as Not Effective or Somewhat Effective) than people from rural areas (with 32 percent reporting it as Not Effective or Somewhat Effective).
- People from urban and suburban areas reported **Project Website** as somewhat more effective (with 67 percent reporting it as Effective or Very Effective) than their rural counterparts (with 58 percent reporting it as Effective or Very Effective).

Open-ended Survey Responses

Users were given the opportunity to add other public involvement activities they find to be effective that were not included in the survey. Additional public engagement activities include:

- Community Participatory Mapping Events, such as a Community Walk Audit
- Charrettes Series
- Traffic Message Boards that inform the public of meetings
- Notices posted on community message boards at the post office, community centers, etc.
- In-person Informal Discussions
- Weekly Project Update Meetings that are held at the same time and place

A number of people included strategies that they have found to be effective when engaging in public involvement activities. Such strategies included:

- Asking other organizations to participate in public meetings by handing out promotional plan materials
- Advertising that there will be door prizes and handing them out at public meetings
- Including surveys with water or utility bills
- Inviting stakeholders to public meetings directly via phone or email
- Scheduling meetings after work hours
- Providing refreshments at meetings

Conclusion

Overall, the survey results suggest that using a mix of public involvement activities is important. They also suggest that New Mexico-based planning organizations perceive in-person, collaborative public involvement activities, such as Targeted Interviews/Focus Groups and In-Person Public Meetings with Interactive Workshops, to be the most effective tools to elicit feedback from the public. While this was consistent across contexts, there were some discrepancies between the types of activities that were reported as effective or ineffective, depending on whether the respondents work solely urban or suburban areas versus those who work only in rural parts of the State. Notably, Public Open Houses were considered to be significantly less effective in urban/suburban areas compared to rural areas. And Statistically Valid Surveys were seen as considerably more effective in urban/suburban areas than rural ones. This indicates that, when possible, in-person collaborative activities are best for obtaining meaningful feedback from the public, but that it is also important to consider the context when selecting public involvement activities.

NMDOT Public Involvement Plan – Stakeholder Interviews

Introduction

As part of the public involvement approach for the NMDOT Public Involvement Plan update, staff from Alta Planning and Design conducted interviews with 13 stakeholders from NMDOT and other New Mexico planning organizations. Interviewees included one NMDOT staff member for each planning activity that is listed in Section 3.4 of the PIP. Additional interviewees included the NMDOT Tribal Liaison, representatives from the Albuquerque and Santa Fe MPOs, and an NMDOT planner who has significant experience working in the southern region of the state.

The majority of the interviews were approximately one hour in length and occurred in-person, though some took place over the phone due to time and travel constraints. The general purpose of the interviews was to gain an understanding of the effectiveness of different public involvement activities from each individual’s perspective. Alta staff also sought to gather feedback to refine the PIP as a practical tool for developing individual public involvement approaches.

Interviewees

Table 1 lists each interviewee, their title, organization, and the plan or topic area that was covered, as well as the interview date.

Table 1. Stakeholder Interviews

Interviewee(s)	Title	Organization	Plan or Topic Area	Interview Date
Bill Craven	Rail Bureau Manager	NMDOT	Rail Plan	April 6, 2018
Caeri Thomas & Tara Cok	GIS & Orthoimagery Coordinator; Transportation Planner	MRCOG/ABQ MPO	MPO Engagement	May 18, 2018
Erick Aune	Senior MPO Planner	Santa Fe MPO	MPO Engagement	May 22, 2018
Jane Lucero	Airport Development Administrator	NMDOT	Aviation System Plan	May 18, 2018
Jessica Griffin	Planning Bureau Chief	NMDOT	SHSP, HSP, & SLRP	May 17, 2018
Jolene Herrera	Planner	NMDOT	Southern Region	May 31, 2018
Kevin Olinger	Transit Bureau Chief	NMDOT	Public Transportation Plan & CPTHS Plans	May 30, 2018
Linda Ramos	ADA/Title VI Coordinator	NMDOT	ADA/Title VI	May 17, 2018
Paul Sittig	Freight Planning Supervisor	NMOT	Freight Plan	May 17, 2018
Rebecca Maes	STIP Coordinator	NMDOT	STIP	May 17, 2018
Ron Shutiva	Tribal Liaison	NMDOT	Tribal Consultation	May 17, 2018
Tamara Haas	Asset Management & Planning Division Director	NMDOT	TAMP	June 11, 2018

Interview Agendas

The interviews were designed to be open-ended so that conversations could flow naturally. However, loose agendas were developed to help guide the discussions. Though the agendas varied for each interview, they typically included the following general questions:

- Can you give a brief summary of the relevant plan, including its overarching goal and goals for public involvement?
- What public involvement activities were used? What was successful and what was unsuccessful?
- In the future, would you do anything differently?
- Do you use the PIP to plan the public involvement process?
- How can the PIP be updated to be more useful going forward?

Interview Findings

Some consistent themes regarding public involvement emerged from the interviews, including:

- Traditional public meetings are not considered to be very effective; going to locations and events where people tend to congregate is generally preferable.
- Engaging a community representative of LEP/EJ populations as a point person is key to successfully engaging those populations.
- MPOs and RTPOs can assist NMDOT in reaching their respective communities.
- It is important to be aware of the audience's perception of NMDOT when conducting outreach.
- There is room to improve the connections between actions and plan goals.
- Messaging is an important component of many public involvement approaches that can be difficult to develop effectively.
- Guided questions often elicit more useful feedback.
- Short timelines are often barriers to more extensive public involvement.
- Advocates and special interest groups are good resources for engaging with specific communities.
- The technical nature of some plans can be a barrier to public engagement.
- When people understand the purpose of a public involvement activity and their role in it, they seem to provide more useful feedback.
- It can be difficult to engage people in the planning process when there is no clear benefit for their participation.
- Different groups require different public involvement approaches.

Conclusion

The PIP is intended to be a tool for staff to use when planning for public involvement. As such, the stakeholder interviews were an important component of the planning process to ensure a useful deliverable. Specifically, the interviews provided the project team with a better understanding of the effectiveness of different public involvement activities in New Mexico, including some common barriers to engagement and strategies for conducting meaningful outreach. These findings helped inform the content and recommendations of the PIP.



Susana Martinez
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Cabinet Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 30, 2018

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NMDOT RELEASES “PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN” FOR 45-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT

Santa Fe, NM – The New Mexico Department of Transportation released the Draft of the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for public review and comment. This 45-day public comment period will run from Oct. 29, 2018 through Dec. 13, 2018. The Draft plan is now available on the NMDOT Statewide Planning Bureau webpage: http://dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/planning/NMDOT_PIP_2018_draft.pdf or <https://tinyurl.com/NM2018PIPdraft>.

The NMDOT PIP provides requirements and guidance for conducting public outreach and involvement for various planning products produced by NMDOT, including:

- Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan
- Various modal plans (e.g. bicycle, transit, rail, aviation, etc.)
- Freight Plan
- Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

NMDOT with High Street Consulting and Alta Planning + Design developed the PIP over the past nine months. PIP development included extensive internal outreach and interviews with NMDOT staff; interviews with select staff from the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs); a survey for MPOs, staff from Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs), and staff from tribal and local public agencies; and extensive research into public involvement best practices and new techniques.

NMDOT invites public comment on the PIP, available on the NMDOT website: <https://tinyurl.com/NM2018PIPdraft>. Please send comments to Rosa Kozub at rosa.kozub@state.nm.us.

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