



Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization

Public Participation Plan



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Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Policy Board*

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Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Participation Plan

Introduction

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) guides public participation activities conducted by the Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization (the “MPO”). According to Federal law, a metropolitan planning organization must be designated for each urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or more. The MPO serves as a forum for a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process and its Transportation Policy Board (the “Policy Board”) is the authority in approving how Federal transportation dollars are spent in the region.

The process outlined in the Public Participation Plan is the basis for the development of the twenty-five year Metropolitan Transportation Plan and its amendments. The process shall result in plans and programs that consider all transportation modes and supports metropolitan community development and social goals. These plans and programs shall lead to the development and operation of an integrated, multimodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient, economic movement of people and goods. The memorandum of agreement between the New Mexico Department of Transportation and the Santa Fe MPO clearly identifies the MPO’s responsibilities for carrying out transportation planning and programming.

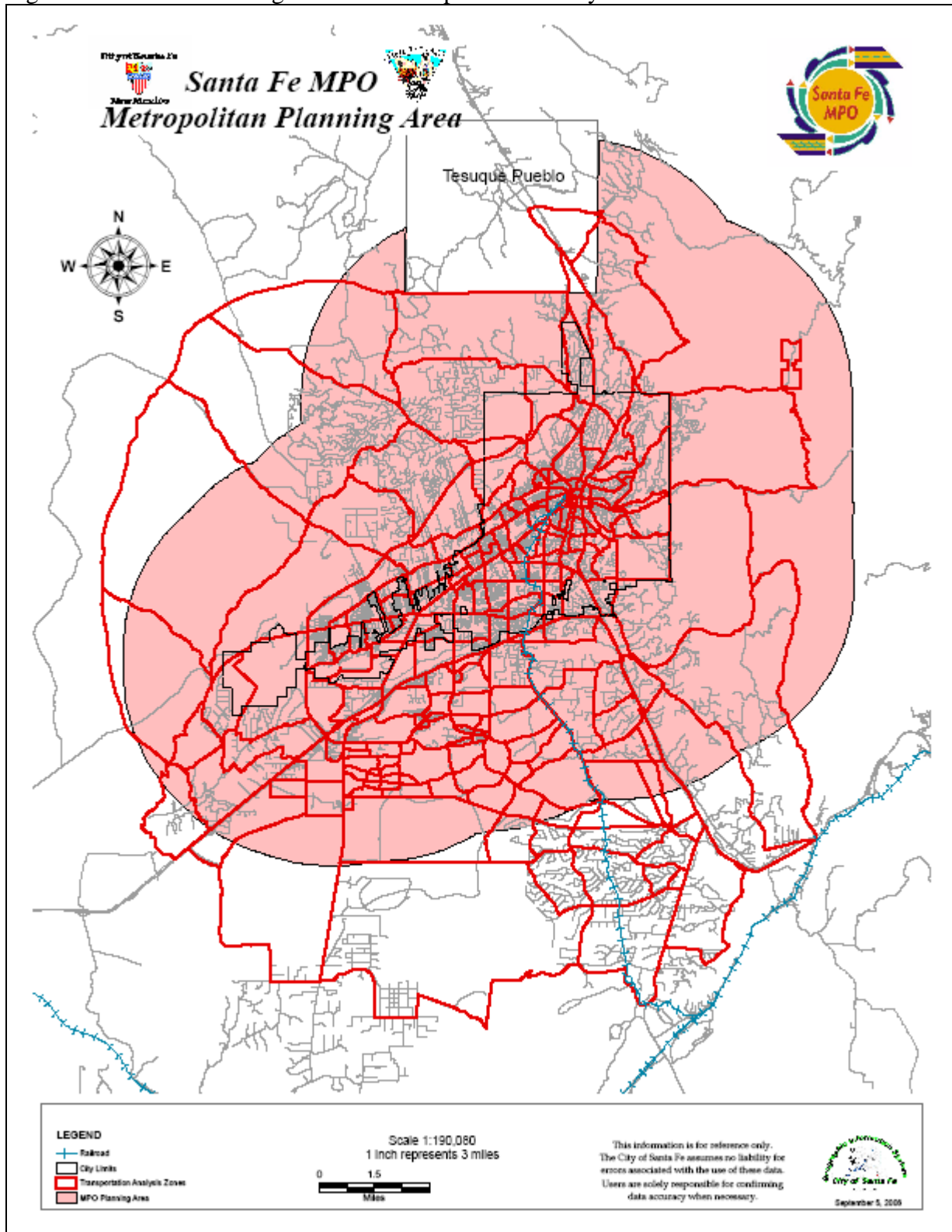
Background

The Santa Fe MPO has existed since 1982. The MPO Transportation Policy Board, which is comprised of local elected officials, sets MPO policy; however, other groups such as non-profit organizations, community organizations, or environmental organizations, can influence the direction of the MPO. On a day to day basis, MPO staff facilitates the transportation planning process, and is responsible for the development and preparation of all plans and associated documents. Staff also performs data analysis and carries out studies at the direction of the Policy Board. The City of Santa Fe is the fiscal and administrative agent for the MPO and currently, the Santa Fe MPO Office is located in City Hall.

The Public Participation Plan encourages active public participation in identifying and commenting on transportation issues, programs and projects at every stage of the planning process. Specific public participation procedures are outlined for various MPO planning work products in this document. Every effort is made to reach traditionally underserved populations, including low income and minority households and persons with disabilities.

The Santa Fe MPO Boundary (see Figure 1) covers the urbanized area of the City of Santa Fe and a five mile extraterritorial boundary to include areas that have developed and will develop in the next twenty years. The Santa Fe MPO involves the City of Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, Santa Fe Trails, New Mexico Department of Transportation, Federal Highways Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. It also will consult with Tesuque Pueblo and affected State and federal agencies in developing planning documents and in notification of public meetings. The PPP is in coordination with the statewide transportation planning, public involvement, and consultation process.

Figure 1: SFMPO Planning Area and Transportation Analysis Zonal Boundaries.



Goals

Federal law has identified eight broad areas as *planning factors* to be considered in the metropolitan transportation planning process that will:

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* options available to people and freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve *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.

MPO Transportation Policy Board

The Santa Fe MPO Transportation Policy Board (“TPB”) was formed through a joint powers agreement between the city and county. Currently, the TPB has six members consisting of the Mayor and two elected officials from the Santa Fe City Council and three elected officials from the Santa Fe County Commission, with a rotating chair and co-chair. Advisors include representatives from the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the New Mexico Department of Transportation. The TPB is responsible for the review and adoption of all MPO planning work products such as the Public Participation Plan (PPP), Unified Planning Work Plan (UPWP), Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Area Studies/Corridor Plans and proposed amendments to adopted plans and programs.



Policy Board meetings are held to disseminate information and provide for discussion at the appropriate intervals in the transportation planning process. A public hearing is held when the Policy Board takes action on an item (i.e. vote on adopting the Metropolitan Transportation Plan). The Policy Board has full authority to make key transportation decisions for the community, applicable to contracts and State and Federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to 23 CFR 450. All meetings will have time allotted for public comment. The MPO Policy Board is required to meet quarterly, yet generally meets more often. Contact the MPO Office at 955-6605 to inquire about meeting times and agendas.

Technical Coordinating Committee

The Technical Coordinating Committee (“TCC”) discusses current transportation issues and provides recommendation to the Policy Board. The TCC has voting members from the city and county, and non-voting advisory members from Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transportation Administration and New Mexico Department of Transportation.

- The TCC generally meets on a monthly basis.
- The MPO Officer or any committee member may initiate items for discussion.
- Citizens may contact MPO staff or committee members concerning transportation issues to be addressed at TCC meetings. The Santa Fe MPO Office can be reached at 955-6605.
- Upon request, MPO staff will provide contact information for committee members.
- Recommendations from committee members will be summarized and presented to the Policy Board.
- All meetings will have time allotted for public comment.

Citizens and the Transportation Decision-Making Process

The Santa Fe MPO strives to offer a proactive public participation process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing participation of the public in developing plans and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). *Citizens are encouraged to contact MPO staff at 955-6605 with their transportation concerns.* Citizens are welcome to attend TCC and Policy Board meetings or MPO staff may voice their concerns. If the MPO is the correct forum for further activity, MPO staff will assist in guiding through the transportation planning process.

Open Meetings

All meetings of the MPO Policy Board and its Technical Coordinating Committee are subject to the provisions of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act. The New Mexico Open Meetings Act requires reasonable notice to public meetings where public policy is formulated, public business is discussed, or authorized actions are taken.

Policy Board meetings notice requirements

- Notice to the public of any and all public meetings shall be given at least seven (7) days in advance of any meetings of a quorum of members of the Policy Board.
- A notice containing the board’s name, date, time, meeting location, and detailed agenda will be posted in the Santa Fe New Mexican seven (7) days prior to the meeting.
- The same notice will be posted in conspicuous and appropriate locations at City Hall, the County Administration Building, and city libraries at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.
- Sometimes special and emergency meetings must occur.
- Meeting packets will be made available at the MPO Office and the City Clerk’s Office. Copies will be made available at cost of reproduction and postage.

Technical Coordinating Committee meetings notice requirements

- Meetings will be held at least seven (7) days before the scheduled Policy Board meeting.

- Agendas for Technical Coordinating Committee meetings will be posted in conspicuous and appropriate locations at City Hall, the County Administration Building, and City libraries at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.
- Meeting packets will be made available at the MPO Office and the City Clerk’s Office. Copies will be made available at cost of reproduction and postage.

Access to Information

The transportation planning process includes preparation of technical and other reports to assure documentation of the development, refinement, and update of the transportation plan. Citizens have the right to reasonable public access to technical and policy information. Reasonable public access to information will be made through the following specific actions:

1. The MPO will maintain a library of past and current transportation planning studies and documents that are available for review during normal business hours. (8am-5pm M-F; closed 12pm to 1pm)
2. Draft or proposed documents and amendments will be made available at the following locations:
 - Santa Fe MPO Office, City Hall, City of Santa Fe, 200 Lincoln Avenue
 - Santa Fe County Land Use Department, 102 Grant Avenue
 - Main Library, 145 Washington Avenue
 - Oliver La Farge Branch Library, 1730 Llano Street
 - Southside Library, 6599 Jaguar Drive
3. Meeting packets will be made available at the MPO Office and the City Clerk’s Office.
4. Copies of materials will be available for the cost of reproduction and postage.
5. Upon request from the public, documents or portions of documents will be transcribed into alternative formats.

Santa Fe MPO follows the requirements of the City of Santa Fe Request for Public Records Policy, 1900-9-1, and the Inspection of Public Records Act, 14-2-1 NMSA 1978 (Available at City Clerk’s Office)

MPO Planning Work Products

The intensity, scope and duration of public participation will vary depending on the MPO planning work product.

The **Public Participation Plan** (“PPP”) is the foundation for a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process in the Santa Fe metropolitan area.

- Public participation processes will be periodically reviewed by the MPO in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to all.
- According to Federal law, a minimum public comment period of forty-five (45) days is required before the Public Participation Plan is initially adopted or revised.
- An updated Public Participation Plan will first be presented to the MPO Technical Coordinating Committee for review and recommendation to the Policy Board.
- The MPO will hold at least one public meeting to involve interested parties in the plan update process.

- The Policy Board is responsible for review and adoption of updated plans.
- All MPO planning work products, and major amendments to adopted plans and programs, must follow the notice and procedural requirements outlined in this plan.

The **Unified Planning Work Program** (“UPWP”) is a document for MPO planning activities to be performed with planning funds provided by Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. MPO staff, in cooperation with the State and transit operators, prepares an annual UPWP under the Federal guidelines. The UPWP is approved by the Policy Board, FHWA and FTA. The UPWP contains the following elements:

- The planning tasks and studies that will be conducted over a one- to two-year period;
- All federally funded studies as well as all relevant state and local planning activities conducted without federal funds;
- Funding sources identified for each task;
- A schedule of activities;
- The agency responsible for each task or study; and
- Product of each work item.

The **Metropolitan Transportation Plan** (“MTP”) is the official multimodal transportation plan that is developed and adopted through the metropolitan transportation planning process for the MPO. The MTP addresses at least a twenty year planning horizon and includes both long-range and short-range transportation strategies/actions including a financial plan to demonstrate the consistency of proposed transportation investments with already available and projected sources of revenue. The MTP is updated at least every five years to confirm its validity and its consistency with current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends and to extend the forecast period. The MTP shall:

1. Identify the projected transportation demand of persons and goods in the metropolitan planning area over the period of the plan;
2. Identify congestion management strategies;
3. Identify pedestrian walkway facilities;
4. Identify road improvements for bicyclists and other bicycle transportation facilities;
5. Assess capital investment and other measures necessary to preserve the existing transportation system;
6. Reflect a multimodal evaluation of the transportation, socioeconomic, environmental, and financial impact of the overall plan, including all major transportation investments;
7. Identify corridors and sub areas;
8. Indicate, as appropriate, proposed transportation enhancement activities;
9. Provide adequate opportunity for public officials (including elected officials) and citizen participation in the development of the transportation plan before it is approved by the Policy Board.

MTP public participation procedures

- The draft MTP will be presented to the MPO Technical Coordinating Committee for review.
- The draft MTP will be readily available for public review and comment.

- MPO staff will host at least two public meetings to solicit public comment for the development of the MTP. The meetings will target comment on specific transportation concerns (i.e. bicycle/pedestrian issues, highway corridor, transit, freight).
- A formal public comment period for the draft MTP will last a minimum of thirty (30) days.
- The final draft MTP will be presented to the MPO Technical Coordinating Committee for recommendation to the Policy Board.
- Public comments received will be presented to the Policy Board at the time the MTP is considered for adoption. All public comments received will be made part of the final adopted document.
- The Policy Board will adopt the final MTP.
- The final MTP document will be made available for public use at the MPO Office and city libraries.

The **State Transportation Improvement Program** (“STIP”) is a staged, multiyear, statewide, multimodal program of transportation projects which is consistent with the statewide long-range plan and with metropolitan plans and programs.

The **MPO Transportation Improvement Program** (“TIP”) is a staged, multiyear, multimodal program of transportation projects which is consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan. The TIP is developed for the metropolitan planning area by MPO staff in cooperation with the State and public transit operators. After the TIP is approved by the MPO Policy Board and the Governor, the TIP is included without modification, directly or by reference, in the statewide TIP program. The basic federal requirements for the TIP are as follows, but not limited to:

1. The TIP must be updated at least every two (2) years.
2. The frequency and cycle for updating the TIP must be compatible with the STIP development and approval process. Since the TIP becomes part of the STIP, the TIP lapses when the FHWA and FTA approval for the STIP lapses.
3. The TIP covers a period of not less than three (3) years, but may cover a longer period if it identifies priorities and financial information for the additional years. The TIP must include a priority list of projects to be carried out in the first three years.
4. Federal law requires that there is reasonable opportunity for public comment.
5. The TIP is financially constrained by year and includes a financial plan that is developed by the MPO in cooperation with the State and transit operators.

TIP public participation procedures

- The MPO will advertise a Call for Projects at least sixty (60) days before the TIP adoption date. MPO staff will prepare information including project name and location, project description, lead agency, estimated cost and funding source(s).
- MPO staff, in conjunction with the Technical Coordinating Committee, will prepare a draft TIP for public review.
- The public comment period on the draft TIP will last for a minimum of thirty (30) days.

- MPO staff will host at least one formal public meeting to solicit comments and to evaluate the projects proposed for inclusion in the final document. The public meeting will occur toward the end of the public comment period.
- After review and recommendation of the final draft by the Technical Coordinating Committee, the TIP will be presented to the Policy Board for final review and adoption. The final TIP document will be made available for public use at the MPO Office and city libraries.

<i>October November December</i>	<i>Issue call for projects; MPO member entities develop projects and prepare project identification forms(PIF)</i>
<i>January</i>	<i>Governmental entities review and prioritize their project lists through their governing bodies</i>
<i>February</i>	<i>MPO Technical Coordinating Committee reviews projects and develops a recommended TIP. A thirty (30) day comment period is advertised for the draft TIP</i>
<i>March</i>	<i>MPO Policy Board approves draft TIP and submits it to NMDOT District Engineer for comments by March 31</i>
<i>April</i>	<i>NMDOT District Engineer provides comments on draft TIP to MPO. MPO submits final TIP to NMDOT Planning Division by April 29</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>MPO TIP is sent to Governor for approval</i>

Area Studies and Corridor Plans

From time to time, the MPO will undertake area studies and corridor plans where there is a specific need of intensive study to determine potential transportation needs. Involving persons who might be affected directly by the study results will be accomplished through the following process:

- Notice will be sent by regular mail to those residing within or owning property within the study area and those 300 feet outside of the study area.
- At least one public input meeting will be held at a location convenient to the affected persons.
- The Technical Coordinating Committee will make a recommendation to the Policy Board.
- The Policy Board will review and take action in regard to the area study or corridor plan.
- All area studies and corridor plans will be made available for public use at the MPO Office and city libraries

Amendments to Adopted Documents

Amendments to documents such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program are occasionally necessary after they have been adopted. Most amendments will use the following process:

- The MPO will announce the proposed amendment
 - At the Technical Coordinating Committee meeting.
 - Through a newspaper advertisement in the Santa Fe New Mexican stating the availability of the amendment.
- The public comment period will last a minimum of thirty (30) days.

- Amendments will be reviewed by the MPO Coordinating committees with a recommendation to the Policy Board for adoption.
- A formal public hearing to accept public comment will be held before the Policy Board takes action on the proposed amendment.

Amendments Exempt from Public Participation Procedures

MPO staff may request the Policy Board to authorize administrative adjustments for the following types of issues:

- Emergency projects, necessary for the safety and welfare of the citizenry.
- Minor revisions or technical adjustments, such as:
 - Minor cost changes;
 - Changes in cost shares;
 - Splitting projects;
 - Typographical corrections;
 - Other administrative (lead agency, contingency, funding source).

Federal Laws

Federal and state laws set certain requirements and guidelines for public notice, public access to information, the provision of timely information, and the inclusion of traditionally underserved segments of the population. The Santa Fe MPO will take specific actions to comply with statutory requirements and to promote active public participation in the transportation planning process (re: sections from Federal Regulations §CFR450.212, §CFR 450.316, §CFR 450.322, §CFR450.324, §CFR450.334, and Executive Order 12898).

Environmental Justice

The needs of those traditionally underserved by the existing system will be sought and considered by the Santa Fe MPO. The following actions are meant to reduce the barriers for participation in the decision-making process by low income, minority or disabled individuals.

1. When possible, public meetings will be held in locations that are convenient to low and moderate income neighborhoods and accessible to disabled populations. Such locations include community centers, senior centers and schools.
2. Upon request, all MPO work products and documents will be made available in alternative formats, including Braille, large type and languages other than English.
3. The following statement will be included in all MPO documents:

The Santa Fe MPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in the provision of services. This document can be made available in alternative formats by calling the Santa Fe MPO Office at 955-6605.

4. Agencies and organizations that represent low income, minority and disabled populations will be identified and included in MPO mailings.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is a civil rights statute which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in all aspects of life. ADA therefore calls for

transportation facilities to be accessible to persons with disabilities. People with disabilities are encouraged to get involved in the development and improvement of transportation and paratransit plans and services. All public meetings conducted by the MPO will take place at locations which are accessible facilities so as to accommodate persons with mobility limitations. The following statement will be included in all meeting announcements:

The meeting room and facilities are fully accessible to persons with mobility disabilities. If you plan to attend the meeting and will need an auxiliary aid or service, please contact the Santa Fe MPO Office at 955-6605 at least 5 days prior to the meeting so that arrangements can be made.

Public Participation Tools and Activities

The Santa Fe MPO will use a variety of tools to educate and inform the public. The efficacy of these tools and activities in educating and involving the public will be evaluated continuously.

Stakeholder Outreach

A stakeholder is defined as any person or group that is affected by a transportation plan, program, or project, including those who may not be aware they are affected. Stakeholders include the general public; environmental, health, freight, transit, neighborhood, citizen, and civic organizations; traditionally underserved populations such as people with disabilities, low-income, and racial and ethnic minorities; and affected public agencies and tribal governments whether or not they are members of the MPO. Stakeholders are identified and are included in public outreach activities. The MPO will consult and compare transportation plans with available State, tribal governments and other resource management agencies' conservation plans and maps and/or compare with available inventories of historic or natural resources.

Master Mailing List

A master mailing list will be used to notify interested parties of upcoming meetings and events. The mailing list will include neighborhood associations, community groups, business and professional groups, environmental groups, special interest groups, elected and appointed officials, affected agencies and interested citizens. The list will be customized so that recipients receive only items of particular interest. *The mailing list will be continuously updated.*

Media Contacts and Advertising

Members of the media are critical in getting information to the public of significant transportation activities and issues. The MPO will maintain ongoing communication with the media through various means, including press releases, interviews, and submitting articles to the local news media. The Santa Fe New Mexican will be used as the primary print media for advertising transportation issues of interest to the general population. Public service announcements and interviews may be broadcast on local radio stations.

Record Archiving

Copies of plans and studies produced by the MPO will be made available for review and/or comment at the following locations: Santa Fe MPO Office, Santa Fe Main Library, Oliver La Farge Branch Library and the Southside Library. Draft and short-term documents will be kept in

the reference section of the libraries on a temporary basis. Permanent records will be kept at the Santa Fe MPO Office.

Open Public Meetings

Public meetings are used to both inform the public and solicit their input on specific plans, studies or projects. Time for general public comment on transportation-related items will be included on the agenda at all Policy Board and Technical Coordinating Committee meetings.

Public Comment and Response to Comments

The Santa Fe MPO welcomes public comment from citizens in the form of letter, fax or email. MPO staff is available to meet and listen to citizen concerns. All public comments will be documented by MPO staff. Please send hand-written or typed comments to:

MPO Officer,
Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization
P.O. Box 909
200 Lincoln Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87504-0909

Public comments received during the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan will be summarized and presented to the Policy Board at the time it is considered for adoption. All comments will be included as part of the final adopted document.

Workshops

Information workshops are held on topics associated with the regional transportation planning process. Such workshops are designed to educate participants on specific MPO topics. Information workshops are conducted on an as-needed basis.

MPO Newsletter

A newsletter will be produced approximately twice a year. It will be distributed to all parties on the master mailing list. Each issue will contain staff contact information, meeting schedules, project highlights, results of technical activities, information on policy issues and decision making activities, and current planning project status reports.

MPO Web Site [<http://www.santafenm.gov/hottopics/sfmpo/sfmpohome.asp>]

The Santa Fe MPO will develop and maintain an Internet website. The website will be updated and maintained to provide the most current information available. The website contents are expected to include:

- Meeting calendars and agendas
- Work products and publications
- Current MPO and Technical Coordinating Committee information
- Contact information
- Links to related agencies

Santa Fe MPO Logo

A logo representing the Santa Fe MPO has been developed that will assist the public in recognizing MPO products and activities. The logo will be used on all products and publications of the Santa Fe MPO.

Santa Fe MPO Participation Plan Procedures and Tools

Public Involvement Component/Product	Meetings	Comment Period	Public Involvement Techniques/ Postings	Additional Comments
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	Public input Meetings Public meetings on draft plan Technical Coordinating Committee Transportation Policy Board	30 days	Newspaper display ads Website/e-mail Comment forms	Updated every 5 yrs Next due in 2009; Copies at City & County offices; libraries
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	Public meetings: Technical Coordinating Committee Transportation Policy Board	30 days	Newspaper display ads Website/e-mail	Updated every 1-2 years; Copies at City & County offices, libraries
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	Public meetings: Technical Coordinating Committee Transportation Policy Board	45 days	Newspaper display ads Website/e-mail	Updated as necessary; Copies at City & County offices; libraries
Amendments to Adopted Documents (MTP,TIP,PPP)	Public meetings: Technical Coordinating Committee Transportation Policy Board	30 days	Newspaper display ads Website/e-mail	For amendments not administratively adjusted; Copies at City & County offices, libraries
Area Plans and Corridor Studies	Public input meetings Technical Coordinating Committee Transportation Policy Board	30 days	Legal notice Newspaper Newsletter Website/e-mail	Public meetings at locations convenient to those affected
Technical Coordinating Committee (public meeting)	Meets the first Thursday of each month	monthly	Agendas posted at City & County offices Forum for comments	1:30 pm at City of Santa Fe Council Chambers
Transportation Policy Board (public meeting)	Meets the second Thursday of each month	monthly	Newspaper display ads Agendas posted at City & County offices Forum for comments	3:00 pm at City of Santa Fe Council Chambers

SFMPO website- [www.santafenm.gov/hottopics/sfmpo/sfmpohome.asp]