

**Lake Havasu Metropolitan
Planning Organization**

900 London Bridge Road – Building “B”

Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404

(928) 453-2824

www.LHMPO.org



Public Involvement Plan **For Transportation Planning**

Amended June 7, 2022

**Adopted on July 8, 2014 by the Lake Havasu Metropolitan Planning Organization
Executive Board**

LAKE HAVASU METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	
Lake Havasu MPO	3
Lake Havasu MPO Planning Boundary (Figure 1)	4
Introduction	5
Background	5
Public Involvement Process	
Process Steps	7
Guidelines	
Techniques	7
Welcoming Attitude	7
Meeting Schedules and Locations	7
Notification	8
Presentation of Information	8
Written and Personal Communication	8
Ongoing Communication	8
Other Entities	8
Transportation Interests	8
Opportunities for Input	8
Use of Public Comments	9
Decision Making	9
Public Notification Methods... ..	10
Evaluating Public Participation Activities... ..	10
Development, Adoption and Revisions of the Public Involvement Plan	
Stages of Participation	12
Revisions to the Plan	12
Lake Havasu MPO Commitment	13
Lake Havasu MPO Contact Information	13
Appendix	
Appendix "A" Compliance Information	14
Appendix "B" Comments on Plan and Responses	15

LAKE HAVASU METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (LHMPO)

Lake Havasu Metropolitan Planning Organization (LHMPO) is the Federal and State designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization for Lake Havasu City Urbanized Area. It was created in 2013 in response to a Federal mandate that requires an urbanized area with a Census-designated population of 50,000 or more residents to form such an organization in order to be eligible for Federal transportation funds. The urbanized area meeting this population level includes Lake Havasu City and portions of Mohave County.

LHMPO is comprised of the city limits of Lake Havasu and the unincorporated area of Mohave County that includes Horizon Six and Desert Hills. The planning boundary (see Figure 1.) covers 99.06 square miles and almost 53,000 City residents.

LHMPO's objective is to provide the long-range transportation planning needed for enhancing the region's transportation system. LHMPO engages in cooperative decision-making through working relationships and financial partnerships among the member governments, the Arizona Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration.



LHMPO Planning Boundary

Figure 1

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, governmental agencies have come to recognize the increasing importance of involving the public as they plan, organize and implement transportation projects. Involving interested parties generally results in a more effective project overall. Taking time at the beginning to communicate with potentially affected interests, carefully explaining the proposal, and gathering input, can enhance the project and potentially reduce the time and effort for implementation.

The goals of this Public Involvement Plan are to ensure that:

- I. The public body is given the opportunity to participate in the transportation planning process.
- II. The issues and concerns of residents are given consideration in the selection of transportation investments.
- III. Transportation investments do not disproportionately burden any population with adverse impacts.

Developing an effective public participation plan involves the identification of techniques designed to meet the needs of a given situation relating to the development of a transportation plan, program, project or the need for public input regarding the operation and management of a transportation facility.

This plan outlines the importance of, and specific guidelines for, involving community members, organizations, governments, transportation professionals and others in ongoing and future LHMPPO projects, plans and programs. Included is information about the value of public Participation, how it will be accomplished, and what will be done with the results.

It is important to note that a Public Involvement Plan needs to incorporate a broad array of interested parties. These include agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historical preservation. Involving all the potentially affected interests, including the traditionally underserved populations, can significantly increase a plan or project's efficiency and effectiveness. By following the process outlined in this plan, LHMPPO will be able to better ensure inclusive and meaningful public involvement. The agency list includes, but not limited to the following:

- ❖ Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)
 - ❖ Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR)
 - ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - ❖ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - ❖ Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
-

- ❖ Arizona State Land Department
- ❖ Arizona State Historic Preservation Office
- ❖ Arizona Game and Fish Department
- ❖ Chemehuevi Indian Tribe

Background

The Census Bureau designates a new list of Urbanized Areas (UZAs) every 10 years, following the conclusion of each decennial census. The designation of UZAs by the U.S. Census Bureau has significant implications for the metropolitan planning process.

Federal transportation legislation requires that a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) be designated for each urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 people in order to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process, as a condition of Federal aid.

The 2010 United States Census indicated that Lake Havasu City had surpassed the 50,000 population threshold thus requiring the establishment of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). On January 8, 2013, the Lake Havasu City Council adopted Resolution Number 13-2697 approving the establishment of the Lake Havasu Metropolitan Planning Organization and Resolution Number 13-2698 establishing the boundaries of LHMPPO. On March 26, 2013, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer sent a formal letter to the Federal Highway Administration requesting establishment of the Lake Havasu Metropolitan Planning Organization. Articles of Incorporation were signed by the newly formed MPO Executive Board on September 30, 2013, and filed with the Corporation Commission February 5, 2014.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires outreach to underserved groups and in 1994 Presidential directive dictates, "Each federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, 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 groups impacted are the low-income and minority populations, which may include sub-groups of elderly and disabled.

Public participation implies an open process. This means that anyone who is potentially affected, or is just interested in the process, is welcome to participate. Some of the reasons for encouraging this openness are:

1. Project leaders may gain new information.
2. Participants, who want a project to be completed, can provide additional resources in the form of assistance, goods, or services.
3. Public participation can be a forum for dispute resolution.
4. Progress can be made and implementation occur because:
 - The project itself will be better designed with public input.
 - The community better understands what the project is about.
5. Input can be a warning mechanism for potential problems.
6. Participant comments help the project leaders understand areas where additional people may have concerns or misunderstandings. This can be used to provide better information to others who are not participating.

Guidelines

❖ Techniques:

There are numerous and varied techniques/activities to provide the opportunity for public participation. Any combination and number of these may be used depending on the specific plan, program or project. LHMPO will select from the various activities to provide the most effective public participation in each particular situation.

❖ Welcoming Attitude:

Public participation is welcomed and encouraged by LHMPO. All questions and statements are valuable and will be treated as such. Participants will be treated with respect. Meetings will abide by basic ground rules that enforce civil discussion. Anyone who feels that these rules have not been followed should contact LHMPO staff at (928) 453-2823.

❖ **Meeting Schedules and Locations:**

Meetings and hearings, which are open for public involvement, will be scheduled to allow the best opportunity for attendance by the general public and other entities. The meeting locations will be convenient and ADA accessible.

In addition to general meetings, events and activities, reasonable special efforts will be made to reach those who are particularly affected, the underserved or others who request LHMPO come to them. These options are open to any group or individual and it is the policy of LHMPO to “go where people are” whenever possible. Locations and meeting times for these activities will be designed according to the specific needs.

LHMPO’s Executive Board meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every other month. Their Technical Advisory Committee meets on the 4th Tuesday of every other month. The Annual Meeting Schedules are posted on the LHMPO website: www.LHMPO.org. Agendas for each meeting are posted at LHMPO’s office, 900 London Bridge Road, Building B, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404. LHMPO website a minimum of 48 hours in advance of each meeting. Executive Board Agendas are also posted at the Lake Havasu Police Department 2360 McCulloch Blvd. N. Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403.

The following statement is conveyed on each Meeting Schedule as well as on each agenda,

“Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and other nondiscrimination laws and authorities, LHMPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Persons that require a reasonable accommodation based on language or disability should contact LHMPO’s Title VI Coordinator at hembreej@lhcaz.gov; or by phone (928) 453-2823. Requests should be made as early as possible to ensure LHMPO has an opportunity to address the accommodation.”

Virtual Meetings – Virtual public involvement is a new opportunity for information sharing and public involvement in the transportation planning, programming, and project development process. These new opportunities include, but are not limited to techniques, such as telephone town halls and online meetings, pop-up outreach, social meetings/ meeting-in-a box kits, story maps, quick videos, crowdsourcing, survey tools, real-time polling tools, social media following, and visualization. Virtual public involvement methods will be used along with traditional methods to increase opportunities and access to LHMPO planning activities. All virtual meetings will have a call-in option for those that may have limited or no access to the internet. In lieu of a physical posting of the Title VI notice to the public, and in order to meet compliance, the LHMPO reads allowed the Title VI notice at the beginning of each virtual public meeting/event. In addition, a link to the Title VI public notice and a link to Self-Identification Surveys (English and Spanish) has been added to all meeting agendas and posted in the chat box of the virtual meeting space (e.g. Zoom, Teams, WebEx, etc.).

❖ **Notification:**

Notices will follow the general Open Meeting Law of the State of Arizona. Information about meetings, events and other opportunities for participation will be made in a timely manner. (This is especially important for the physically and mentally challenged as extra time may be needed to arrange for accommodations to meet their needs.) This notification will be easy to understand and provide adequate information or explain where the information can be obtained.

❖ **Presentation of Information:**

In order to help citizens better understand Transportation Planning, efforts will be made to show how presented information specifically relates to the public in both the near future as well as long term. Visualization enhancements such as color, animation, physical props, pictures, 3-D models, etc. will be incorporated as appropriate and as budgets allow.

❖ **Written and Personal Communications from LHMPO:**

Technical and policy information from LHMPO will be written so that it is clear and understandable to the public. All relevant information will be open for public consideration. Knowledgeable people will be available to answer questions at meetings and respond to phone questions in a timely manner.

❖ **Ongoing Communications:**

LHMPO will use mailings, media and electronic technology such as e-mail and web sites to have ongoing communication with the public and other entities. Members of the staff are also available via the phone for questions, concerns and suggestions.

❖ **Other Entities:**

The needs and interests of other public and governmental entities will be solicited as appropriate. Coordination, cooperation and teamwork among all the agencies are vital to the success of any plan, program or project.

❖ **Transportation Interests:**

LHMPO will solicit input from transportation-related groups such as freight interests, City transportation provider, private providers of transportation, chambers of commerce, and others.

❖ **Opportunities for Input:**

Opportunities for input will vary depending on the project, program or plan. For larger projects, such as the 25-year Regional Transportation Plans, there could be several rounds of public participation. There would be the opportunity for initial comments on what projects citizens would like their transportation system to include, prior to the start of any work. Comments on the first draft would be collected and incorporated as appropriate in the final draft. Finally, if there were significant changes to the final draft, there could be another call for input. In each of these stages a variety of techniques

would be used to involve all the stakeholders. This will be determined by the extent and nature of the project.

❖ **Use of Public Comments:**

A complete record of public comments will be retained for public review. In specific cases, identified by federal regulations, the public comments could be a part of the final document, as is the case with the Regional Transportation Plans and the Transportation Improvement Program. Additionally, individual questions will receive a response in a timely manner.

❖ **Decision Making:**

All final transportation decisions (other than those requiring a vote of the people) are made by one or more groups of elected or appointed officials. Public meetings allow comments to be collected and may identify a consensus. The final decision, however, will be up to the elected and/or appointed officials based on a consideration of all related information.

Prior to each key decision point, ample opportunity will be offered for input and that input will be shared with the decision-makers.

Public Notification Methods

Notification and Participation Techniques	RTP*	MTIP**
Printed Notification	*	*
Newspaper Advertisement	*	*
LHMPO Web Site	X	X
Articles	*	*
Press Release	*	*
TV/Radio	*	*
Public Service Announcement	*	*
Interviews	*	*
Public Cable Channels	*	*
Community Forums	*	*
Public Information Meetings	X	X
Advisory Committee	X	X
Public Hearings	X	X
Group Presentations	*	*

X Planned * Encouraged

*Regional Transportation Plan

**Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program

Evaluating Public Participation Activities

A continuing focus on evaluation and enhancement of the public Participation process should help to improve the outcome of each new LHMPO plan, project or program. Evaluating public participation is a multi-dimensional task. First, there is the quantitative aspect which uses measurements such as the number of activities held, the number of notices sent, and/or the number of people who participated. While valid and important, these factors may not show the complete picture.

Second, it is important to evaluate the qualitative aspects relating to perceptions, attitudes and effectiveness.

Third, is the question of how the public input was used. This information needs to be recorded and made available. It also needs to be considered in the decision-making process. Fourth, is the need to evaluate the reason something happened. Understanding why there was good (or poor) participation is important to assessing effectiveness.

The ultimate point to consider in an evaluation is the existence of respect and trust. LHMPO intends to earn this by being fair and open with everyone at all times.

DEVELOPMENT, ADOPTION AND REVISION OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

This Public Involvement Plan has gone through several stages during its development. These are:

- a. Preparation of a preliminary draft plan.
- b. Evaluation of this plan to ensure compliance with all Federal regulations.
- c. Review of the plan by stakeholders including the general public, governmental entities and transportation professionals/businesses.
- d. Revision of the plan based on the above reviews.
- e. Completion of a final draft plan.
- f. Circulation of the draft plan for at least 45 calendar days. This includes notice to all potentially affected interests that this final draft plan is available for review, including placement at the MPO office and the LHMPO web site. (www.lhmipo.org)
- g. Review and evaluation of any further recommended changes.
- h. Ongoing implementation of the plan by LHMPO.
- i. Availability of alternative formats i.e. large prints, Braille, audio/video cassettes (as appropriate) upon request for individuals who are blind or individuals with hearing/vision impairments.

Revisions to the Plan:

- a. The plan will be officially reviewed at a minimum of every 5 years. This re-evaluation will involve significant public input and a minimum 30 calendar day review period prior to adopting any changes. All efforts to involve the public and other organizations will follow the steps outlined in the current plan.
- b. Other periodic revisions may occur, as new and better approaches are determined. Each time any significant content revisions are made (other than technical or grammatical revisions) the public will be given a 30 calendar day review and comment period prior to implementing the changes.

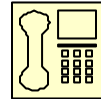
LAKE HAVASU MPO COMMITMENT

This plan contains background material, guidelines, and commitments that LHMPO is undertaking to incorporate an effective public process into future plans, projects, and programs. Specifically LHMPO is committed to:

- Inclusive and meaningful public involvement.
- Open and honest communications with all individuals and entities.
- Timely public notice.
- Full public access to information and key decisions.
- Creating a sense of shared responsibility and ownership for regional transportation/congestion problems and a shared sense of pride in the development of solutions to those problems.
- Helping form partnerships between member entities, and the private and public sectors to plan and implement transportation/congestion solutions.
- Establishing policies and prioritizing needs based on valid data and using objective, fair and consistent processes.
- Providing information and gathering input so that decision makers will be able to make informed decisions.

Contact:

Justin Hembree, Metropolitan Planning Manager
900 London Bridge Road –Bldg. “B”
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404
Phone: (928) 453-2824
Email: Hembreej@lhcaz.gov
www.LHMPO.org



APPENDIX A:

COMPLIANCE INFORMATION

This plan services a variety of federal requirements relating to public involvement on transportation projects. These requirements include:

- 1) The requirements found in the Code of Federal Regulations on Highways (23CFR) section 450.316(b) (1) titled: Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process: Elements b1. This section outlines ten specific requirements that have all been incorporated in the specifics of this plan.
 - 2) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements to provide equal access to people with disabilities.
 - 3) Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
 - 4) Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) Section 1203 (h) (1) (B) & Section 1203(h) (4) requiring Metropolitan Planning Organizations to provide “Opportunity for Comment” and “Notice and Comment” when working on the Transportation Improvement Program.
 - 5) Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 1994 which requires each federal agency to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission.
 - 6) National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) which focuses on providing for “all Americans’ safe, healthful, productive and esthetically pleasing surroundings,” and developing a “systematic, interdisciplinary approach” in community environmental decision making.
 - 7) U.S. DOT Order 5610.2: Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, April 1997 which summarizes and elaborates on the Executive Order 12898.
 - 8) Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – DOT Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients’ Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Persons (December 14, 2005). Title VI and its implementing regulations require that FTA recipients take responsible steps to ensure meaningful access to the benefits, services, information, and other important portions of their program and activities for individuals who are Limited English Proficient.
-

APPENDIX B:
COMMENTS ON PLAN AND RESPONSES
“NONE RECEIVED”