



Pikes Peak Area
Council of Governments
Communities Working Together

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

*Pikes Peak
Area
Council of
Governments*

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Public Participation Plan

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1: Introduction

As the Pikes Peak region’s designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the lead agency for air-quality planning in the Colorado Springs Urbanized Area, the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) is responsible for carrying out “a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a metropolitan transportation plan and Transportation Improvement Program.”

An MPO is a federally mandated transportation planning organization that is made up of representatives from local government and governmental transportation authorities. The MPO is mostly federally funded. MPOs were created to ensure regional cooperation in transportation planning. They are meant to focus on projects and plans that are expected to have a regional impact rather than on small local projects.

MPOs frequently collaborate with numerous regional stakeholders such as federal and state agencies, nonprofits, transit agencies, freight carriers, economic development and public health organizations, and others. They perform multimodal planning; that is, planning which encompasses all modes of transportation, including personal vehicle, public transit, rail, aviation, and bicycle and pedestrian travel. In addition, the MPO must ensure that adequate opportunity for stakeholders and the public to be involved with and comment on these planning processes. This document is intended to outline the broad strategies, tactics, and evaluation criteria by which PPACG will engage the public and foster participation.

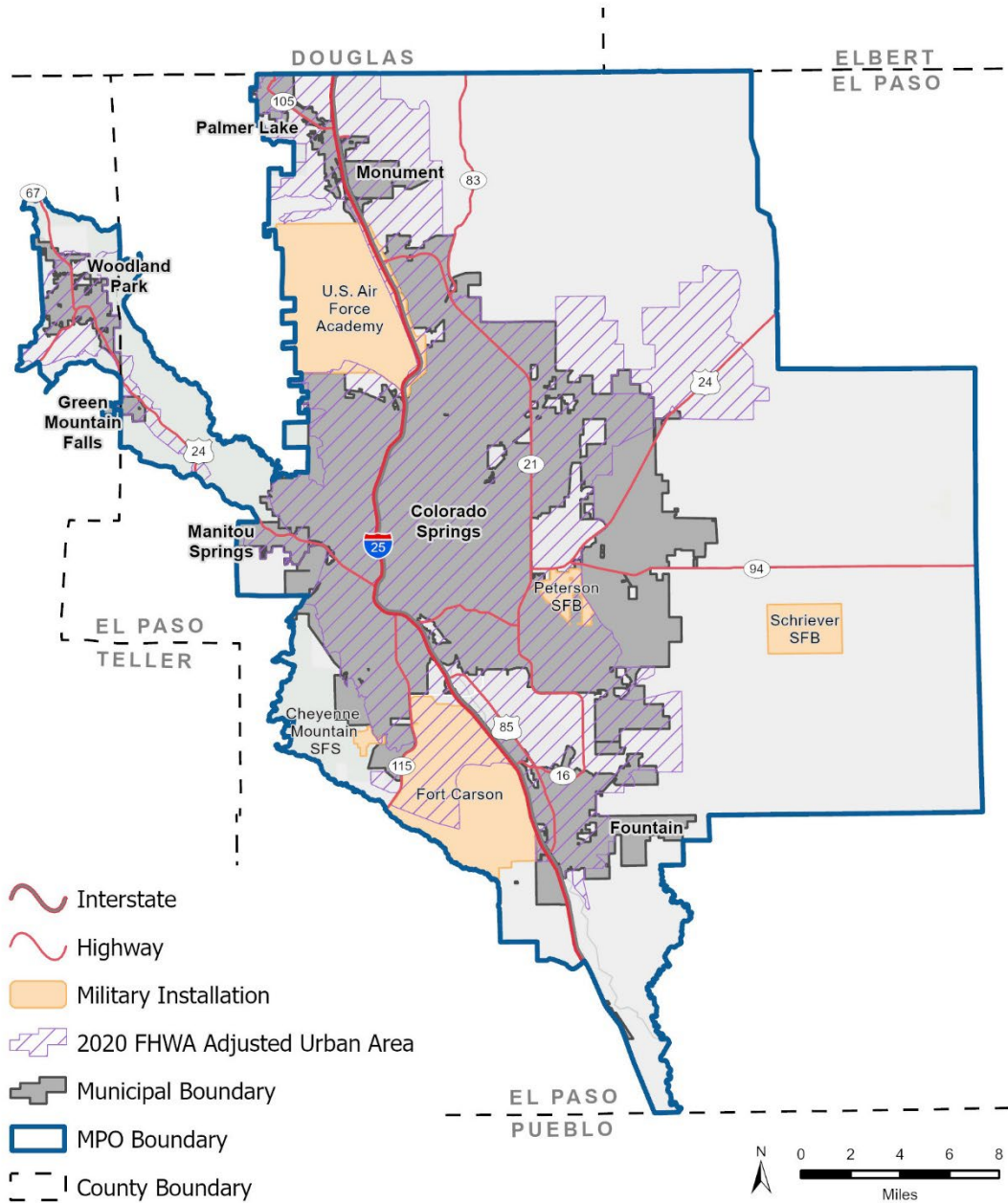
Transportation Planning Area

The Pikes Peak region planning area encompasses the Urbanized Area (as defined by the U.S. Census) plus the geographic area that is projected to develop to urban densities within 20 years. That currently includes portions of El Paso and Teller Counties. Figure 1 shows the transportation planning area.

Member governments within the planning area include the following.

- El Paso County
- Teller County
- Colorado Springs
- Fountain
- Green Mountain Falls
- Monument
- Palmer Lake
- Woodland Park
- Manitou Springs

Figure 1: Metropolitan Planning Organization Boundary



2: Transportation Planning Overview

PPACG is responsible for developing and maintaining a set of core planning products, which include a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which addresses transportation system needs, goals, and improvements for at least 20 years; a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which addresses transportation system improvements for a four-year time period; the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which describes the work to be done by the MPO during a given year; and the Public Participation Plan (PPP). These core planning products and their public participation elements are defined in greater detail in Section 7. These plans and programs are federally required and are governed by federal and state regulations. A robust public involvement process is required, and public participation is encouraged. PPACG's plans and programs should reflect the values and priorities of the region.

In addition to the core planning products, PPACG works on other transportation planning and safety-related products in concert with local, state, and federal partners, which may have differing levels of stakeholder and public participation.

For all of its work products, the PPACG uses a committee structure that provides subject matter knowledge, citizen and stakeholder participation, project guidance, and decision support. All committee meetings are open to the public.

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) provides technical advice on transportation issues, goals, plans, and programs to the PPACG Board of Directors and staff. It is the committee of origin for transportation-related work efforts and issues.

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is a nontechnical committee made up of volunteers who offer a citizen's perspective on issues such as transportation, the environment, economic development, and military impact planning in the Pikes Peak region.

The Mobility Coordinating Working Group (MCWG) coordinates transit grants and other resources and advises the PPACG board on current emerging issues related to public human service and job-access transit services in the region.

The PPACG Board of Directors is the policy and decision-making body for transportation and air-quality planning in the metropolitan planning area.

In addition, for the 2050 LRTP, PPACG developed a plan-specific committee called the Regional Transportation Plan Advisory Committee (RTPAC). The RTPAC brings together representatives from community organizations in order to provide transparency on the planning process, educate the community regarding the LRTP and coordinating plans, and solicit guidance and feedback on the plan and planning processes. Individual plans and processes conducted by PPACG may involve a similar stakeholder committee or steering committee as needed.

More information about how these committees support public engagement is included in the Standing Committees section of this document.

3: Public Participation Plan Purpose and Goals

Importance of Public Involvement in Transportation Planning

The needs, goals and projects identified in these documents should reflect the priorities of the community. Conducting a substantive and well-planned community process is essential to determine those priorities. A successful public involvement process increases community support for and ownership of goals and projects and leads to increased trust in local government. Conversely, poor public outreach efforts can cause stakeholders to view the process as merely “checking the box” after decisions have already been made, leading to limited participation, community adversity to plan goals, distrust of local government, and in extreme cases, legal action.

This plan seeks to develop a proactive public participation process for the PPACG region that:

- Provides well-researched, objective information on the state of the transportation system so that stakeholders are empowered to help shape the plan’s content and outcomes, resulting in a plan that reflects community goals and priorities.
- Creates opportunities for substantive two-way dialogue among transportation planners, elected officials, and citizens through widespread community involvement.
- Ensures that all citizens who wish to participate have an opportunity, and that all ideas are given fair consideration.
- Encourages participation by groups traditionally underserved by transportation investments, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Performs outreach to those particularly affected by specific alternatives and plan recommendations to involve them in the evaluation process.
- Coordinates public input for state, regional and local entity planning processes, including transit, as appropriate.
- Evaluates the effectiveness of the public involvement program on an ongoing basis.

PPACG also partners with Mountain Metropolitan Transit (MMT) to fulfill the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) requirements for public notification and involvement for FTA-funded programs and projects in the TIP and LRTP. To ensure the transit products identified above reflect the needs of the community, PPACG will make a particular effort to seek out and consider the needs of these stakeholders. PPACG meeting notifications will include language indicating that the public notice serves to meet FTA public participation requirements for MMT’s FTA-funded projects. PPACG’s public involvement process for the TIP or LRTP will be consistent with federal regulations and will serve to meet FTA public participation requirements for MMT’s program of projects. In addition, a member of the Board of Directors is designated as the regional transit representative and provides specific transit-related perspective at the Board level.

PPACG takes care to ensure that coordination occurs with the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), FTA, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and MMT to outline roles, responsibilities, and key decision points. This is particularly important for the LRTP and TIP, but it also considered for other planning efforts.

Public Involvement Best Practices

PPACG reviewed public participation guidelines and best practices from a number of federal, state, and regional agencies around the country and incorporated many into this plan. Applying the takeaways listed below is key to success, especially for communicating with populations that have been identified as disadvantaged or underserved.

Key takeaways include the following.

- Tailor outreach efforts to the community of interest when possible.
- Be aware that traditional public involvement techniques such as open houses and town hall meetings are not always the best forms of public engagement.
- Make use of new technologies and social media.
- Tap into community networks that already exist and go to where people are already meeting.
- Match public engagement techniques with goal and audience.
- Measure and assess the effectiveness of outreach techniques to determine the most efficient ways to allocate resources. What the agency decides to measure will depend heavily on its goals for the engagement process.
- Limit the amount of time required to complete surveys, or to provide feedback, to about five minutes, whenever possible.
- Ensure that public involvement and outreach messaging is relevant to your target audience.
- Phrase questions clearly and simply so that people understand what is being asked.
- Do not assume that the public has prior planning knowledge.

During the LRTP process, PPACG solicits feedback on the public participation process from the RTPAC, TAC, and CAC. Suggestions received by committee members have included:

- Foster a better public understanding of the use and impact of the plan.
- Better integrate and explain technical data.
- Simplify the information since too much complexity loses people.
- Hold open houses in varying locations and times to better support the opportunity for comment and education.
- Provide materials and an opportunity to comment online.
- Find more effective ways to address concerns raised by citizens.
- Tap into existing networks and engage specific neighborhood groups.
- Use individual or group-based hands-on activities that encourage meaningful engagement.

Target Audiences

The audience for regional planning efforts is by nature broad, diverse, and inclusive: those who impact and are impacted by transportation decisions.

Groups and individuals to involve in the planning process include the following.

- Members of the general public who live, work, or spend time in the MPO and are effected by the region's transportation system
- Neighborhood groups and representatives
- Minority groups and representatives (refer to PPACG's Title VI plan for additional detail)

- Business groups and representatives
- Transportation planners, engineers, and other technical staff
- Elected officials
- Military officials
- Bicycle and pedestrian groups
- Public transportation users and employees and their representatives
- People with disabilities and their representatives
- Private transportation providers
- Freight shippers and providers of freight transportation services
- First responders
- Schools and universities
- Older adults

4: Title VI Populations

Title VI

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

As stated in the Title VI Plan, to meet the requirements of Title VI, PPACG must:

- Ensure that the LRTP and the TIP comply with Title VI;
- Assess the needs of minority populations so the benefits and burdens of transportation are fairly distributed; and
- Ensure the public involvement process has no barriers that would prevent successfully engaging minority populations in regional decision-making.

49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 27 requires the designation of an employee responsible for coordinating Title VI efforts. Questions, concerns, or complaints should be sent to:

Jared Verner
Public Policy and Communications Manager
Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
719-471-7080 ext.139
jverner@ppacg.org

Any person who believes they have been subjected to or denied an opportunity of participation by a discriminatory practice prohibited under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with PPACG or directly with the Federal Transit Administration or US Department of Transportation.

Limited English Proficiency

Translation Services

For those with limited English proficiency (LEP), inclusion means providing both spoken and written translations of program materials and presentations. Translation will be provided for workshops, open houses, and public meetings when requested.

For communications concerning plans which will substantially impact areas where there is an identified LEP population, translated materials and/or translation services may be offered even if not requested. In this situation, planning staff will proactively attempt to engage support organizations and to discover advertising channels likely to reach persons in the area who speak limited English.

The procedure for requesting Spanish translation services for PPACG's regularly occurring committee and Board meetings will appear (in Spanish) on all meeting agendas as of the adoption of this plan.

Accessible Documents and Website

Due to limited budget and resources, PPACG is unable to translate all documents. It may translate core documents, or portions thereof, as suggested by four-factor analysis. Spanish translations of documents such as the "Title VI Complaint Form" and the "Notice to Beneficiaries of Protection Under Title VI" will be provided in English and Spanish. Executive summaries for the LRTP will also be provided in Spanish and English. Other plans and program documents may be translated if they are likely to have disproportionate impacts on an identified LEP population.

In 2024, PPACG launched a redesigned website to comply with the State of Colorado Accessibility Rule (8 Code of Colorado Regulations 1501-11), which requires compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA in response to Colorado House Bill 21-1108. The redesign included improved navigability and improved functionality for users; continuity of website architecture and branding; and removal of out-of-date and other unnecessary information while maintaining critical content and contacts for additional information. Perhaps the most significant improvement from a public engagement perspective is the integration of Spanish, German, and Korean languages into the website, as these are the most common languages in the Pikes Peak area after English.

Community Outreach

PPACG will rely upon community partners to gain the fullest reach to all communities and to help overcome barriers of communication and trust. This includes the Spanish-speaking community (others where appropriate). Their feedback on our engagement process and materials will also be sought along with advice on how to make improvements for the next planning cycle. Detailed information about Limited English Proficiency is identified in the Limited English Proficiency Plan available on PPACG's website.

Other Traditionally Under-Represented Populations

Older and younger people are also sometimes underrepresented in public process for transportation planning. Participation in interactive workshops and community events may be difficult for older people. Younger people may experience a relative lack of access due to generational barriers, school and work schedules, and a

historical lack of involvement. PPACG will work with its own Area Agency on Aging (AAA) as well as schools and colleges to promote increasing rates of participation by older and younger people in the region.

5: Access for People with Disabilities

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments is committed to accommodating the needs of persons with disabilities to ensure equal opportunities for participation in all transportation plans and programs.

PPACG’s metropolitan planning process will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which states “that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” This includes having an equal opportunity of participation in public involvement activities that are part of the metropolitan planning process.

PPACG will comply with 49 CFR 27.11, which outlines remedial action, voluntary action, and compliance planning for the provision of meaningful involvement opportunities for persons with disabilities. To date, PPACG has not been found to violate this rule. Current policies call for holding public meetings at locations accessible to persons with disabilities.

During the latest planning cycles, this accommodation has proved adequate for needs that have arisen, but review of the appropriateness and effectiveness of accommodation for persons with disabilities will be performed at the start of each LRTP. Data on the participation rate of persons with disabilities will be collected, along with information about whether accommodation was adequate.

In general, to improve engagement, PPACG will employ some or all of the following outreach methods:

- Hold public meetings or events at locations that are accessible to persons with disabilities and near transit routes;
- Hold public meetings at times when the working and non-working public can attend;
- Provide ample advanced notice of public meetings and events;
- Perform targeted outreach to community associations, churches and/or faith-based organizations, and other organizations that provide support for Title VI populations;
- Provide translated documents for limited English speakers and in-person language and deaf translators as needed or requested, with adequate notice;
- Provide any other assistance that is requested, within reason and with adequate notice of the need for assistance.

As previously mentioned, the 2024 website redesign moved the website into compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA. As staff moves forward with developing new planning products and materials, we will do so in an accessible manner, which will make it easier to facilitate online posting of materials.

6: Strategies

To achieve the goals outlined in section 2, PPACG should:

- Make public involvement opportunities as convenient as possible for those who wish to participate, using a variety of tactics to reach the wide variety of stakeholders in our region, rather than relying solely on public meetings.
- Determine how to best inform stakeholders of input opportunities and subject-matter priorities by conducting a stakeholder survey at the start of the long-range planning process.
- Encourage stakeholders to become engaged at the onset of the planning process so that their ideas and feedback can help guide plan formation.
- Solicit stakeholder input at times in the process when the public can have a meaningful impact, such as during plan visioning, goals, and objectives. Staff is less likely to seek public feedback on technical work products on which public input can have little bearing.
- Use visualization tools and reader-friendly content to present complex planning concepts to the public. Materials will be high-level and concise, providing an overview of key points and the implications of various plans and policies.
- Partner with other state and local agencies and organizations to increase our reach.
- Provide ample advance notice for all public input opportunities.

Tactics

Technology has made it easier and more convenient for the public to participate in the planning process. Online resources can be used to inform, educate, and facilitate dialogue about transportation planning at times and locations that are convenient to individuals' schedules. However, PPACG also recognizes that citizens have varying levels of access to, and familiarity with, different types of technology and that other tactics may create more meaningful engagement in some scenarios. Therefore, PPACG will consider the following tactics to reach target audiences as appropriate.

Print and Digital Publications

Various publications providing an overview of planning processes, plan chapter summaries, public input opportunities, timelines, and other relevant information may be emailed to PPACG'S contact lists, be made available at public meetings, community events, and regularly scheduled board and committee meetings, or distributed at public facilities and through partner agencies.

Care is taken to ensure that stakeholders and the public have adequate opportunity to contribute to and comment on PPACG publications. For large-scale, federally required documents like the LRTP and TIP a specific Public Involvement Plan is developed, which includes a formal public comment period; open houses and public hearings, when necessary; committee involvement; and stakeholder interviews or committees.

Additional publications, such as the Active Transportation Plan and Freight Study, are developed in coordination with stakeholders and local jurisdictions. They are shared with committees and have public comment periods when appropriate.

Publications may be converted into alternative formats or languages upon request.

Website

PPACG maintains a website that provides access to the organization's plans, programs, and policies. The website includes a calendar of events, board and committee agendas and minutes, and a library of key planning documents.

The LRTP, TIP, UPWP, and associated federally required documents are posted on the website. The website is intended to be a first stop for partners and members of the public seeking information regarding the MPO and related planning processes. In some cases, documents may not be produced for use on the website or may need remediation to ensure proper accessibility for the web. Additional information, including documents not posted to the website, may be obtained by contacting PPACG staff.

Some individual projects have had temporary websites dedicated to them in order to provide greater engagement and reach for the project; however, these are generally not maintained beyond the adoption or acceptance of the project as they can be expensive and difficult to maintain, particularly when provided as part of a consultant efforts.

PPACG also maintains a website for Drive Smart Colorado, which is a standalone non-profit entity under the umbrella of PPACG. While this effort and the information posted on the site are not part of the MPO's consolidated planning grant, we are mentioning it for transparency because staff engage and collaborate with Drive Smart Colorado when possible to support safe driving education efforts in the region.

PPACG's website also contains a Regional Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Planning Data page that supports public engagement, education, and transparency. The web maps, dashboards, web applications, and story maps posted allow decision makers and members of the public to view and interact with map-based information such as administrative boundaries, traffic crashes, the planning process, roadway network, transportation projects, past population growth, and forecasted regional growth.

During a formal public comment period, a web-based form is used to collect and consolidate comments. Comments are shared with the committees and others as needed and are reported in an appendix in the LRTP and TIP documents.

In future planning cycles, PPACG will continue to take advantage of evolving technologies to make its outreach efforts as successful and cost-effective as possible. However, differing levels of access to technology for different populations will be considered in designing outreach strategies. For example, older adults may feel less comfortable engaging with online methods; low-income households may have reduced access to computers. For these reasons, certain traditional outreach methods, while generating a lower rate of return, may not be entirely phased out for some time.

Social Media

PPACG maintains a social media presence to help inform residents about programs, projects, policies, and opportunities to provide input throughout the planning process. Staff monitors questions and comments as appropriate.

Standing Committees

PPACG's advisory committees provide an ongoing opportunity for the public to be involved in the regional transportation planning process. As mentioned in the Transportation Planning Overview section, the TAC is the committee of origin, the CAC provides citizen perspective, and the Board of Directors is the decision-making body. The Transportation and Community Advisory committees advise and support the board in its deliberations. Each committee serves a different function in public engagement by reaching varying levels of local leadership and expertise. In addition, committee meetings are open to the public, and the public is invited to share their views at every meeting.

The Board of Directors is composed of elected officials and other representatives from around the region.

The TAC is composed of planners, engineers, and other experts from MPO jurisdictions, CDOT, and local military installations and provides technical guidance on planning processes and work produced. The TAC also often includes representatives from organizations with which PPACG has metropolitan planning agreements, such as CDOT and MMT.

The CAC is the main internal group charged with reviewing PPACG's public process. The CAC is consulted early and regularly regarding any public process, such as for the TIP or the LRTP. In addition to providing reviews and public perspective on these processes, the CAC often reviews public comments, provides perspective from their communities, and shares PPACG's planning documents with their communities in order to encourage public engagement.

PPACG also hosts the Area Agency on Aging, which routinely deals with persons with disabilities as well as older individuals with specialized transportation needs. The AAA is relied upon when appropriate to contribute to planning process and product review regarding those populations.

In 2025, PPACG reviewed the structure and efficiency of several of its committee meetings. It was decided that the Mobility Coordinating Committee, previously housed under the AAA, would move under the Transportation Group and would transition into a working group. This change allows the group more flexibility, allowing for more focused coordination among staff-level members of local transit and specialized transportation organizations. It also supports better integration of mobility services and needs into the overarching transportation planning process while still maintaining close coordination with the AAA. For committee rosters, agendas, and meeting locations, visit <http://www.ppacg.org>.

Stakeholders and Community Partners

The scope of each individual project determines the relevant stakeholders and their level of involvement. Stakeholders and community partners are members of the community with a vested interest in the given project. They are often trusted members of their respective communities and can be of invaluable assistance in overcoming barriers of trust, understanding, language, and availability for public involvement. Representatives of member jurisdictions, military installations, state, and federal government entities such as federal lands personnel, economic/commercial organizations, faith-based organizations, human services and non-profit organizations, housing and neighborhood groups, and other community partners can assist with providing guidance and feedback, distributing surveys and materials, forwarding announcements, hosting events, and acting as ambassadors for PPACG's transportation programs. PPACG makes use of its existing

community partners and continually works to maintain and build relationships. Interaction with stakeholders and community partners may include, but is not limited to, participation in a committee or steering group, individual interviews, workshops, consultations, soliciting information for inclusion in a plan, or providing draft materials for review and feedback.

Most products developed at PPACG involved the convening of a stakeholder group and/or interviews. For the 2050 LRTP, PPACG convened an additional advisory committee. The RTPAC provided guidance on the plan methodology and development as well as the public participation process. The RTPAC included organizations and individuals representing a variety of categories, including education, housing, neighborhoods, bicycles/pedestrians, parks and recreation, public health, economic development, tourists, freight land development, aging issues, housing, transit, military, community interests, and local governments. More than 70 individuals and entities were engaged and consulted, when possible, to provide additional context and information. These include military installations, environmental and health organizations, the Central Federal Lands Highway Division, and other groups. The RTPAC also served as ambassadors to the community to education and engage others in the process.

Because there are many overlapping planning activities that take place throughout the region, both in scope and timing, PPACG should work to align with jurisdictional efforts when possible. This may include incorporating information from existing plans, coordinating for outreach efforts, etc.

Public Meetings

PPACG will host public meetings to gather input and build consensus among citizens and transportation stakeholders at key points in the planning process. To facilitate greater participation in public meetings:

- An open, collaborative environment will be cultivated, encouraging attendees to ask questions and submit comments.
- Presentations and supporting documentation will be made available at meetings.
- Meetings will be held in community gathering places at times that will encourage maximum participation.
- Meetings will be held in accessible locations, preferably near transit lines or routes.
- Meetings will be held in buildings that are in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and PPACG will accommodate attendees with special needs, with sufficient notice.

Committee meetings and meetings where three or more members of a committee may be present are noticed both online and physically on a bulletin board outside the PPACG office. Packets of meeting materials are generally posted online and distributed to committee members 5-7 days prior to the meeting to ensure adequate preparation time for committee members and interested members of the public. Space for public comments is included in meeting agendas. Meetings are generally held in a hybrid manner, with an in-person component usually occurring at the PPACG office, and a virtual option held via Microsoft Teams. In addition, meetings are streamed via YouTube and videos are posted to the PPACG website whenever possible.

In addition to regularly scheduled public meetings, PPACG holds a variety of public meetings and open houses to support individual projects and programs. PPACG may also attend public events sponsored by other agencies and organizations, which may be more successful than public events hosted by PPACG alone in terms

of attendance rates and overall participation. This approach may also be more successful among members of Title VI populations who may be more likely to participate in a familiar, trusted environment. This might include open houses, luncheons, fairs, church events, or events organized by community or neighborhood organizations. For example, PPACG has been added to the “Neighborhood University” program conducted by a local neighborhood organization, which has allowed staff to educate members of the public and engage them in current planning activities.

Verbal comments received during public meetings are summarized and reported in an appendix to the LRTP and TIP. Written comments will be published in the appendix as well. Comment forms should be made available for open houses when possible to provide multiple ways for the public to provide comment.

Media Relations

PPACG engages in proactive media outreach efforts, including coordinating with local reporters and news directors and providing timely and accurate information via news releases and interviews. PPACG’s public information officer maintains contact lists and relationships with various media contacts and participates in the development of any activities that will engage the media.

Surveys

PPACG conducts surveys throughout the planning process to garner public input on plan goals, objectives, policies, and other topics as appropriate. Surveys are provided electronically and in print to ensure widespread participation. Keypad polling may be used at open houses and other large events to gather input on community preferences and priorities. Surveys may be held to support specific projects or work efforts as needed.

Surveys may include questions about the public engagement process itself, such as which other types of public engagement opportunities the respondent would be interested/comfortable participating in. Care should be taken to understand the methodology and response rate of surveys to avoid unintentional bias in both the survey itself and how the survey responses impact the planning process and product.

Visualization

Maps, charts, diagrams, photographs, infographics, video, and other illustrations are excellent tools for helping the public better understand and engage in the planning process. These elements may be integrated in presentations, publications, and website content.

PPACG works to make documents visually appealing and well organized, making them easier for members of the public to read. Increasing the accessibility of the documents, such as providing alternate text for visual elements and organizational improvements, also supports members of the public with visual impairments.

In addition, PPACG develops and leverages several interactive tools that are available to the public. These tools have multiple audiences. While they are intended to assist the public with commonly asked questions regarding transportation and growth in the region, they are also valuable for area planners and decision makers.

E-mail

E-mail lists reach a wide variety of stakeholders. PPACG maintains distribution lists for various announcements and will continue to develop its distribution list for periodic updates, including input opportunities, educational brochures, project updates, and other relevant material.

Advertising

Paid advertising is used to announce public comment periods and relevant public meetings as during the planning process. Advertising will focus on reaching target audiences through strategically selected publications.

7: Core Planning Products

Along with various other plans and studies, PPACG produces several core planning products that form the backbone of all its activities: the LRTP, TIP, UPWP, and the PPP (this document). What follows is a brief description of each along with how and when public input opportunities will be available. It should be noted that while this overarching PPP provides a backbone for public engagement, individual processes often require more detailed plans. At the beginning of each LRTP and TIP cycle, a public involvement plan (PIP) specific to that planning cycle is developed. These PIPs should include specific methods for engagement, including schedules and dates as needed, and opportunities to engage should be posted online as part of the planning process whenever possible. These PIPs will be posted on the PPACG website under the page for their associated plan, e.g., the TIP PIP will be posted on the TIP webpage.

LRTP

The LRTP represents the long-term vision for the region's transportation system and includes information about current conditions and future projections, reasonably expected revenues and their sources, public input, transportation projects eligible for funding, and more. The plan looks ahead 25 years and is updated every 4 or 5 years. Most other plans and programs derive from or are directed by the LRTP.

The LRTP is the most far-reaching and extensive plan produced by PPACG and as such entails a variety of public involvement opportunities. In addition to the development of a specific stakeholder and community-organization committee, the RTPAC, to guide the plan, members of the public can expect public meetings or events either hosted or attended by PPACG, surveys, online and social media engagement, and notices through multiple channels. The public will be invited to comment on the overarching vision and goals for the future, on environmental and community concerns, and on the projects and initiatives they feel would best address the transportation needs of the region over the next 25 years.

As part of the overarching LRTP process, PPACG uses several coordinating plans and studies. These include the federally required Regional Transit Plan, Regional Specialized Human Services Transportation Plan (sometimes called the coordinated plan), and Congestion Management Process as well as other regionally driven efforts including active transportation planning efforts, jurisdictional master plans, freight studies, and other efforts.

TIP

The TIP is the short-term implementation program for the LRTP. The TIP is a program of projects consistent with the LRTP that are scheduled for funding by program type and year. PPACG's TIP looks ahead 4 years and is updated every 2 years, although amendments and administrative modifications occur more frequently as practical construction and funding schedules require adjustment. The TIP is also guided by a public process.

As the key program directing short-term funding, the TIP also entails a public input process. Members of the public are encouraged to comment on the short-term needs of the region and how best to implement the LRTP over the next few years through prioritizing different transportation projects. Typical public engagement opportunities include open public meetings, hosting an open house and public hearing, social media engagement, and online opportunities to review and comment.

Amendments to the TIP come in two forms.

- An administrative modification is a minor change to the TIP that does not trigger public process and are generally made to adjust funding that is not controlled by PPACG or to correct administrative issues.
- Substantive changes require a formal amendment, which does require an opportunity for public comment as noted below.

What constitutes a formal amendment or an administrative amendment is outlined in the TIP Policies and Procedures document, which is generally reviewed by staff and the TAC on an annual basis.

UPWP

The UPWP lists all of the major activities that will be undertaken by the MPO for a given year by funding program, giving a comprehensive look at the work of the agency. It also includes transportation planning efforts to be conducted within the region. It covers 1-2 years and is updated annually. Members of the public can give provide their comments on the UPWP at regularly scheduled public meetings and via the PPACG website.

8: Public Involvement Activities

Table 1 describes the minimum required public involvement activities by type and the minimum public comment duration for PPACG's planning products.

Please check PPACG's website at <http://www.ppacg.org/transportation/> for updates and additional opportunities to get involved. Plans, programs, and documents open for public review will be posted along with public notices and schedules of public involvement opportunities.

Table 1: Minimum Public Involvement Procedures for Plans and Programs

Plan or Program	Minimum Comment Period Duration for Completed Draft	Timeline and Reporting	Minimum Notifications and Public Process Activities
L RTP Formal Amendments	30 days	Summary, report, or analysis of public process results ¹ will be presented to the Board and relevant committees before approval	• Web page updates • Press release • Print media notice • Social media updates • Regular public meetings² • -Special public meetings and/or events² • Distribution list communication • Request partners forward or post notices • Public hearing at first Board meeting after public comment closes
Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	30 days	Same as LRTP	• Same as LRTP
Other Required Plans, such as the Specialized Human Services Plan	30 days	Same as LRTP	• Same as LRTP; however, this Plan may be led by MMT and have additional processes
Regional Transit Plan	30 days	Same as LRTP	• Same as LRTP; however, this Plan may be led by MMT and have additional processes
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	30 days	Same as LRTP	• Web page and eTIP updates • Print media notice • Social media updates • Regular public meetings² • Distribution list communication • Request partners forward or post notices • Open house • Public hearing at first Board meeting after public comment closes
TIP Formal Amendments	1 monthly committee cycle ³	Summary will be presented to the Board before approval	• eTIP updates • Regular public meetings²
Public Participation Plan	45 days	Results must be made available to the Board and	• Web page updates • Social media updates

Plan or Program	Minimum Comment Period Duration for Completed Draft	Timeline and Reporting	Minimum Notifications and Public Process Activities
Unified Planning Work Program	30 days	relevant committees before approval or recommendation is sought. Final plans must be shared with FHWA and FTA.	Regular public meetings²
UPWP Amendment Requiring Board Action	1 monthly committee cycle ³	Summary will be presented to the Board before approval	- Web page updates - Regular public meetings²
Other Non-required Planning Products, including those that are Component Plans for the LRTP such as an Active Transportation Plan, Freight Plan, etc.	2 monthly committee cycles ⁴	Summary will be presented to the Board before approval	- Web page updates - Social media updates - Regular public meetings²

¹ The full listing of comments received will be included in an appendix to the LRTP and TIP.

² Appropriate public notice will be given prior to any public meeting that will serve to meet these requirements.

³ Formal amendments will be presented to the TAC, CAC, and Board of Director with opportunities for public comment, but the duration of the public comment need not extend beyond the regular public meeting cycle. Since TAC meeting materials are posted approximately one week prior to the TAC meeting, this will generally provide for public comment opportunity spanning 30 days or more.

⁴ Due to the varied nature of these documents, the stakeholder development and public engagement opportunities should be tailored to the specific audience and nature of the document. Documents of a more technical nature may not be intended for public consumption; however, PPACG should always consider the general population and transparency to the public into account. All documents should, at minimum, go through the committee cycle twice (once for information and once for formal action) and be available as part of the regular public meetings.

Please see PPACG's website at <http://www.ppacg.org/transportation/> for fully updated and detailed information about opportunities to give us your input.

Addressing Public Comments

Public comments received during formal public comment periods will be documented in the plan for which they were received. This includes direct written comments and summaries of verbal comments. Comments may be addressed in plans in a variety of ways depending on their substance. In the case of minor administrative changes such as grammatical errors, the errors are addressed by staff. All other comments

should be reviewed with individual jurisdictions and the TAC to determine the appropriate changes to the document. Any changes that occur will be reported to the TAC, CAC, and Board of Directors.

When public engagement or comments lead to substantive changes such as significant changes to a project or changes to the outcome or vision of a plan, the plan must go through an additional public comment period. This period must, at minimum, be 1 monthly committee cycle in order to allow for additional public engagement and proper notification of stakeholders and decision makers.

General Public Comments

Aside from the formal public comment periods for specific plans and programs, the public is always welcome to provide comments by contacting PPACG staff. This may be done via email or telephone or in person at any of PPACG's meetings. These comments will be shared with PPACG staff, individual jurisdictions and organizations, and the TAC as appropriate. For example, comments made regarding specific projects or local concerns may be shared with the project sponsor or jurisdiction. Such information sharing helps ensure that input can be integrated by the appropriate entity at the proper time, as processes and subject matter experts may differ at each stage of transportation project development, planning, programming, design, construction, operations, and maintenance.

9: Plan Evaluation

As part of its 5-year planning cycle, PPACG formally evaluates its public engagement activities to determine if changes are needed to the MPO's public participation activities. Evaluation helps staff better understand how time and resources devoted to various public involvement tactics and strategies affect public involvement. The evaluation structure for this plan includes both quantitative and qualitative elements to ensure that both the level and quality of engagement are monitored. This evaluation then serves as guidance to improve and amend the PPP for the next cycle of planning processes.

PPACG evaluates the effectiveness of the public involvement tactics and strategies described in the previous section using the metrics summarized below. In addition, PPACG asks participants in planning processes and our committee members to evaluate outreach opportunities for effectiveness. PPACG also evaluates how various audiences have been reached. How public involvement influences plans, projects and policies will be communicated throughout the project and documented in final reports, as applicable.

Evaluation and examination of the public process is critical to gaining meaningful dialogue with the public. The change of a single advertising channel or reaching out to a single community organization can sometimes increase participation by orders of magnitude. It is therefore essential to see public involvement as a continual feedback process that involves risk taking (new approaches may fail, but it is important to try them), experimentation, new ideas, and to a lesser extent tracking certain key metrics.

In the past, there has not been sufficient collection of data or continuity of process in evaluating public outreach methods. One goal moving forward is to establish a permanent feedback process that uses both public comments and data about the public process to continually improve rates of participation and the meaningfulness of public involvement.

Community partners will also play a role in helping to shape the public engagement process by advising PPACG as to which public engagement methods are likely to be the most successful in their respective communities. Their input will be encouraged before, during, and after the public engagement processes for PPACG’s core plans and programs.

The two main goals of evaluation will be to 1. Discover which existing methods are increasing or declining in usefulness, and 2. Try new methods and maintain good information about the success or failure of those methods. Without proper and ongoing evaluation, the public involvement process will either stagnate or evolve randomly with irregular and unexplainable results. Appendix B provides the public participation evaluation for the fiscal year (FY) 2019-2025 planning cycle.

Evaluation of Public Process Tactics

This document is intended to be a living document, with additions and changes based on each evaluation that is performed. To determine effectiveness of the plan, the following set of evaluation metrics and outcomes was established for each tactic.

Table 2: Evaluation of Public Process Tactics in Future Planning Cycles

Tactic	Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation	Desired Outcomes
Publications	Quantity of publications distributed Quality and readability of publications Accessibility of information (print and online)	- Publications support community interests and needs - Information is provided in multiple, accessible formats recognizing that both online and other formats allow for better engagement with various segments of the public - Content encourages ongoing, meaningful public involvement in planning process - Publications enhance understanding of plans, programs, and policies - Publications are written for the broad audience whenever possible, using plain language and explanations - Publications include meaningful executive summaries and/or other summarized information when possible
Website	Publications, tools, and other information posted online Website analytics (e.g., visits, visit length, geographic location of users)	- Prioritize and increase accessibility of information and input opportunities most important to the public - Publish high-quality documents and tools on the website to enhance public engagement and understanding, including interactive applications, visual summaries, etc. - Identify trends in web usage Include ways for the public to make comment, stay informed, and attend meetings/open houses

Tactic	Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation	Desired Outcomes
Social Media	Level and quality of engagement Audience diversity	- Widely distribute information and involvement opportunities via shareable content, interactions and engagement - Provide increased opportunities for feedback and public input - Link social media engagement to websites, surveys, and other tools
Standing Committees	Quality of guidance and engagement Geographic representation Diversity of participation	- Create “buy-in” among PPACG member communities and committees - Provide accurate, supportive products for use by local planners, engineers, and decision-makers
Stakeholders and Community Partners	Geographic representation Diversity of participation	- Increased understanding of audiences and the region - Deeper understanding of community priorities - Enhanced understanding in the community of PPACG processes and products
Public Meetings	Event attendance Relevance of input received Accessibility to events (geographic/time/distance and ADA) How people learned about the event	- Provide meaningful opportunities for public to learn about and comment on plans, programs, and policies - Notify the public of events using a variety of strategies
Media Relations	Media coverage Media contact list diversity (number of reporters, types of news sources, inclusion of minority news sources)	Proactive media relations and communication of news, policies, programs, and opportunities for public involvement
Surveys	Response rate Completeness of responses Geographic representation	- Provide simple, accessible opportunities to gather input and feedback - Gather information about public understanding, awareness, priorities, and issues - Results inform future discussion and decisions - Grow survey completions for each successive plan or program
Visualization	Clear, well-designed products Use of visualization in presentations and publications and on website Demonstrated or stated understanding of ideas, concepts, plans, projects, or programs among intended audience	- Clean layout and design support ease of reading and entices engagement - Inclusion of clear images, infographics, graphs, and other visualization techniques leads to improved understanding of ideas, concepts, plans, projects, or programs among intended audience - Facilitates informed input
E-mail	Distribution list (e.g., number of contacts, number of unsubscribes) Newsletter development	Ensure that all interested stakeholders receive regular communication from PPACG
Advertising	Postings for required activities (e.g., open houses) Use of media campaigns	- Ensure notice of opportunities to provide public comment and other engagement - Leverage advertisements (e.g., safety media

Tactic	Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation	Desired Outcomes
		campaigns) to support other tactics such as website and survey engagement

Appendix A: Compliance with Federal Regulation

This document was developed in compliance with [23 CFR § 450.316](#) as indicated below.

Table 3: Compliance with Federal Regulation

Statute	Requirement	Fulfilled
§ 450.316 (a) 1	Develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing individuals, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), 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 reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.	This Public Participation Plan will be adopted in 2026. Specific requirements identified in the statute are addressed in the tactics section of this document and
§ 450.316 (a) 2	Significant written and oral comments received on the LRTP and TIP shall be reported in the final documents	Table 1 identifies this requirement.
§ 450.316 (a) 3	A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.	Table 1 identifies this requirement.

Statute	Requirement	Fulfilled
§ 450.316 (b)	The MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation or coordinate its planning process with such planning activities. In addition, the MPO shall develop the metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs with consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area.	This is discussed in the Stakeholders and Community Partners section under the Tactics subheading.
§ 450.316 (c)	Inclusion of Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.	This is not relevant for the PPACG Metropolitan Planning Area.
§ 450.316 (d)	When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.	This is discussed in the Stakeholders and Community Partners section under the Tactics subheading.
§ 450.316 (e)	MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under § 450.314.	This is included in the Importance of Public Involvement in Transportation Planning section.

Appendix B: Public Participation Plan Evaluation FY19-25

The purpose of this Public Participation Evaluation for FY19-25 is to evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the Public Participation Plan.

MPO Documents Published or Adopted

As the MPO, PPACG is responsible for carrying out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a metropolitan transportation plan and Transportation Improvement Program. In addition, the MPO produces a variety of plans, studies, databases, and other materials to support the region. Its jurisdictions, and our planning efforts. The resulting materials are made available to the jurisdictions and public either online or by request.

The following is a list of products completed by the MPO in the past 5-year planning cycle that are subject to federal public participation requirements:

- 2050 Pikes Peak Region Long Range Transportation Plan, adopted in 2025
 - Regional Transit Plan
 - Specialized Human Services Transportation Plan

- Fiscal Year 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program, adopted in 2024
- Fiscal Year 2023-2027 Transportation Improvement Program, adopted in 2022
- Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Transportation Improvement Program, adopted in 2021
- Fiscal Year 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program, adopted in 2020
- Title VI Plan, adopted in 2023
- Limited English Proficiency Plan, adopted in 2023
- Unified Planning Work Programs and associated amendments for Fiscal Years 2020-2021, 2022-2023, 2024-2025, and 2026-2027
- Annual Listing of Obligated Projects for each fiscal year

PPACG has also completed several products not subject to federal participation requirements but for which various levels of public participation were included.

- Regional Certified Safety Action Plan, to be approved in 2026 (in coordination with Woodland Park)
- Regional Complete Streets Toolbox, approved in 2025
- Active Transportation Plan, approved in 2024
- Regional Freight Mobility Study, adopted in 2024
- Serious Crash Study, completed in 2024
- Community Traffic Safety Education Review, adopted in 2023
- Pikes Peak Region Congestion Management Process, adopted in 2022
- PPACG Tri-County Transportation Study, approved in 2022
- Transportation Infrastructure Electrification Study, approved in 2022

In addition to the above PPACG has published or developed additional materials to support local jurisdictions and the public.

- Regional Certified Safety Action Plan, to be approved in 2026 (in coordination with Woodland Park)
- Mobility Guide: Guide to Getting Around the Pikes Peak Region, in coordination with the Area Agency on Aging
- Transportation Planning in the Pikes Peak Area story map
- PPACG Traffic Crashes Map and Dashboard
- PPACG Roadway Network Map
- Pikes Peak Area Growth and Development Application
- PPACG Census 2010-2020 Population Growth interactive map
- PPACG Transportation Projects Explorer interactive map
- PPACG traffic safety media campaigns, in coordination with Drive Smart Colorado
- Various articles, social media posts, etc. related to safe driving and traffic law changes

Evaluation of Public Process Tactics in FY19-25 Planning Cycle

The following table provides actions and outcomes from public process tactics identified in the previous PPP and the effectiveness of the metrics identified.

Table 4: Evaluation of Public Process Tactics

Tactic	Previously Identified Evaluation Metrics	Actions and Outcomes
Publications	- Quantity of publications distributed - Accessibility of information (print and online) - Website analytics for digital publications (number of downloads) - Variety of publication formats	- Staff produced successful federally required documents and developed several additional products in response to needs identified by the community. These are provided in a range of formats depending on use and audience. - Website was redesigned to enhance navigability and accessibility. Print documents are available via contacting staff. - Because information is now embedded into the website pages, downloads are not a viable metric for tracking.
Website	- Number of website visits - Source of web traffic - Time spent on web pages - Navigation on web pages - Search terms used - Geographic location of website users	- Data prior to the 2024 website reimagining was largely unavailable and/or inconclusive. - Redesign of website allows for easier navigation and more accessible content. Outdated and confusing information was also removed from the website. - Increasing the public's use of the PPACG website is dependent upon the inclusion of accurate, interesting, and user-friendly information and navigability. - Web pages devoted to individual projects were utilized when appropriate and financially supported. - Interactivity of the website was enhanced through the development of applications and mapping materials and other items.
Social Media	- Overall level and quality of engagement - Number of interactions (likes, comments, etc.) - Audience diversity - Click rates	- While social media proved effective for certain efforts, such as the safety media campaign, it was not effective in gathering quality or meaningful engagement on planning products. - PPACG's LinkedIn account has 377 followers, while the Facebook account has 1,500 followers. - In 2023 the safety media campaign resulted in 336,735 impressions and 2,316 clicks through Google and YouTube; and 630,946 impressions, 11,740 clicks through Facebook and Instagram. - PPACG experimented with paid content on Facebook, particularly for safety traffic related content. - Social media content is also shared as appropriate with partner agencies, including local counties, cities, and towns; Bike Colorado Springs; Pike Ride; Mountain Metropolitan Transit; and CDOT.

Tactic	Previously Identified Evaluation Metrics	Actions and Outcomes
Stakeholder interviews	• Geographic representation • Diversity of stakeholders interviewed	• Staff and consultants took great care to reach out to a wide variety of stakeholders for various planning efforts. This includes consideration of geographic, diversity, and organization type and interest. More than 70 individuals and entities were engaged and consulted, when possible, to provide additional context and information for the LRTP. • Planning documents leveraged and coordinated with other efforts around the region. For example, the LRTP includes an appendix on federal lands access in the area. • Staff encountered challenges in reaching some demographics or engaging in meaningful dialogue. Because overlapping efforts sometimes draw focus away from PPACG efforts, it is important to engage various populations in multiple ways and to coordinate with other efforts in the community to avoid volunteer fatigue.
Public Meetings	• Event attendance • Relevance of input received • Accessibility to events (geographic/time/distance and ADA) • How people learned about the event	• All committee and workshop meetings were noticed and open to the public. Many were live streamed and/or appear online for later viewing. • Additional open houses were added to the schedule for the LRTP and Specializes Transportation Plan to better accommodate a range of people and demographics. The LRTP held five open houses in varying locations and times, which caused an increase in overall attendance and comments.
Media Relations	• Media coverage • Media contact list diversity (number of reporters, types of news sources, inclusion of minority news sources)	• PPACG hired a dedicated public information officer to ensure press releases and other information were disseminated widely, including newspapers, television stations, and other media outlets.
Surveys	• Response rate • Completeness of responses • Geographic representation	• PPACG released a survey for the 2050 LRTP that generated more than 800 individual responses, which is an increase from that for the 2045 LRTP. Survey responses ranged 41 ZIP codes throughout the region.

Tactic	Previously Identified Evaluation Metrics	Actions and Outcomes
Visualization	• Use of visualization in presentations and publications and on website • Demonstrated or stated understanding of ideas, concepts, plans, projects, or programs among intended audience	• Staff and consultants have integrated maps, charts, diagrams, and other illustrations in planning projects as much as possible. • PPACG works to make documents visually appealing and well organized, making them easier for members of the public to read. • In addition, PPACG has developed several interactive tools that are available to the public, including the following. • A story map that walks users through an overview of the PPACG transportation planning area and process • Interactive maps of PPACG's roadway network and administrative boundaries • A web application of transportation infrastructure projects, including LRTP and TIP projects • A dashboard of crashes in the region, which locates individual crashes on a map and can be filtered several ways • A web application exploring population growth and residential construction 2010-2020 • A dashboard that depicts forecasted growth throughout the region, including population, housing, employment, and traffic volume.
E-mail	• Total number of contacts • Number of unsubscribes • Newsletter development	• The public information officer maintains the official distribution lists for PPACG. • PPACG products and other partner materials are shared with stakeholders, committee members, and Board members. These lists comprise approximately 3,000 individuals and organizations. • The public information officer also distributes a newsletter on a quarterly basis.

It should be noted that PPACG hired a consultant to assist with public outreach efforts to support the 2050 LRTP. Use of consultants dedicated to public outreach can be effective and should be considered for future efforts if funding allows.

Appendix C: Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAA	Area Agency on Aging
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
FHWA	Federal Highways Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FY	fiscal year
LEP	limited English proficiency
LRTP	Long-Range Transportation Plan
MCWG	Mobility Coordinating Working Group

MMT	Mountain Metropolitan Transit
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
PPACG	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
PPP	Public Participation Plan
RTPAC	Regional Transportation Plan Advisory Committee
TAC	Transportation Advisory Committee
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program