
2040 MTP/SCS Draft Public Involvement Plan

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

September 2015



Contents

I. Introduction.....	1
II. Goals and Objectives.....	3
Public Participation Plan	3
Title VI Plan	5
III. Public Engagement.....	7
Face-to-Face Interactions	7
Online Tools and Surveys	9
IV. Consultation and Coordination Efforts.....	10

I. Introduction

Development of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) will be a multi-year effort that begins in 2015. A comprehensive Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to support the 2040 MTP/SCS is a key part of the process. The purpose of this PIP is two-fold: (1) to support the development of the 2040 MTP/SCS by providing every available opportunity for the general public, partner agencies, and stakeholders to provide feedback; and (2) to further improve transportation decision making in the region by reaching out to underserved communities within the Monterey Bay Region more effectively.

A critical component in preparing the 2040 MTP/SCS is to provide guidance in the structuring of regional transportation planning processes to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, interagency consultation and public participation were an integral and continuing part of the regional transportation decision making process. The participation policies and procedures described in this PIP are structured to enable all participants the ability to express their genuine regional values and interests in the shaping and implementation of regional policies and decisions regarding the transportation system.

SB 375 requires AMBAG to adopt a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the development of the SCS and must include the following public involvement activities¹ and techniques:

1. Outreach efforts to encourage the active participation of a broad range of stakeholder groups in the planning process, consistent with AMBAG's 2015 Public Participation Plan², including, but not limited to, affordable housing advocates, transportation advocates, neighborhood and community groups, environmental advocates, transportation disadvantaged representatives, home builder representatives, broad-based business organizations, landowners, commercial property interests, and homeowner associations.
2. Consultation with congestion management agencies, transportation agencies, and transportation commissions.
3. Workshops throughout the Monterey Bay region to provide the public with the information and tools necessary to provide a clear understanding of the issues and policy choices. At least one workshop shall be held in each county in the region. Each workshop, to the extent practicable, shall include urban simulation computer modeling to create visual representations of the SCS and the alternative planning strategy.
4. Preparation and circulation of a Draft SCS and an alternative planning strategy, if one is prepared, not less than 55 days before adoption of a final regional transportation plan.

¹ Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)(iii)

² 2015 AMBAG Public Participation Plan: <http://www.ambag.org/programs-services/planning/public-participation-plan>

5. At least three public hearings on the Draft 2040 MTP/SCS and alternative planning strategy, if one is prepared. To the maximum extent feasible, the hearings shall be in different parts of the region to maximize the opportunity for participation by members of the public throughout the Monterey Bay region.

6. A process for enabling members of the public to provide a single request to receive notices, information, and updates.

The public participation policies and procedures described in this PIP are structured to comply with all applicable federal and state legislation, rules, and express the genuine regional value and interest for all residents of the Monterey Bay region to participate in the shaping and implementation of the 2040 MTP/SCS. In pursuing its mission, "AMBAG provides strategic leadership and services to collaboratively analyze, plan and implement regional policies for the benefit of the Counties and Cities of the Monterey Bay region balancing local control with regional collaboration." AMBAG strives to inform and involve its local jurisdictions and all members of the general public throughout its 2040 MTP/SCS development process.

II. Goals and Objectives

AMBAG and partner agencies in the Monterey Bay region seek the participation of a diverse set of communities with an interest in regional planning efforts, including low income households, minority populations, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations, persons with disabilities, representatives from community and service organizations, tribal organizations, and other public agencies.

A. Public Participation Plan

The *2015 Public Participation Plan's* identifies a more in-depth overview of AMBAG's public involvement process, which includes seven guiding principles. These principles provide the framework for this PIP, which are as follows:

1. Valuing public participation and promoting broad based involvement by members of the community
2. Providing varied opportunities for public review and input
3. Treating all members of the public fairly, and respecting and considering all public input as an important component of the planning and implementation process
4. Promoting a culture of dialogue and partnership among residents, property owners, the business community, organizations, other interested members of the public, and public officials
5. Involving underserved communities and community groups, as well as other organizations
6. Encouraging active public participation throughout the entire process
7. Providing communications and agency reports that are clear, timely and broadly distributed

AMBAG has established a set of activities and goals to achieve each of our seven guiding principles by creating a framework and action plan for each outreach goal. These goals are agency wide and can also be utilized and implemented in all major plans and projects within the Monterey Bay region, such as the 2040 MTP/SCS. The activities and goals include:

1. Broad Based Involvement

Goal: Value public participation and promoting *broad based involvement* by members of the community.

Activity: In addition to having a list of stakeholders and working collaboratively with our partner agencies, AMBAG will also interact and outreach to community groups within the Monterey Bay Region, as input from a variety of perspectives helps to enhance the process and results. AMBAG structures its major planning initiatives and funding decisions to provide for meaningful opportunities to help shape outcomes. For example, because AMBAG's 2040 MTP/SCS is the blueprint for both new policies and investments for the Monterey Bay Region, updating and developing the MTP/SCS is one of the best projects for interested persons to get involved.

2. Opportunity

Goal: Provide varied *opportunities for public review and input*.

Activity: AMBAG will engage with partner agencies, committees, working groups, and the public to obtain comments and suggestions during the development of future updates to the MTP/SCS and MTIP. When the drafts of our major plans, programs, and documents are released, the public review period for each document vary from 30-55 days. AMBAG will announce these public review periods through various media outlets, thereby providing as many opportunities as possible for the public to read and provide comments on the drafts of our major documents to be implemented in the future. Below is a list of potential ways that AMBAG will make this information available to the public:

- Websites
- News Releases
- Articles
- Press Conferences
- Radio and Television
- Newsletters, Brochures and eNews
- Agency Reports
- Posters and Inserts
- Project Flyers and Folders
- Advertising
- Online Social Media Networks
- Mapping

3. Environmental Justice

Goal: Treat all members of the public fairly, and *respect and consider all citizen input* as an important component of the planning and implementation process.

Activity: AMBAG plans to actively reach out to the traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities within the Monterey Bay Region and enhance efforts to involve rural communities in all major transportation planning processes. AMBAG will undertake specific strategies to involve all members of the general public in AMBAG's regional transportation planning and investment decisions. AMBAG's 2015 Title VI Plan delves into

these strategies in the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan found in Appendix E of the Title VI Plan, which outlines how we plan to outreach to underserved and underrepresented groups. One size does not fit all as input from diverse perspectives enhances the process.

4. Engagement

Goal: Promote a *culture of dialogue and partnership* among residents, property owners, the business community, organizations, other interested individuals, and public officials.

Activity: Early engagement is best. Create support materials that are easy to understand and visually engaging in both print and electronic format and make them accessible at meetings and on AMBAG's website³. Plan workshops and/or public hearings at convenient venues and times across the region and/or provide virtual participation if feasible; and ensure such events are fully accessible to the general public, including low income, minority, and rural communities, disabled and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations.

5. Involvement of Underserved Communities

Goal: *Involve underserved communities and local community groups*, as well as other organizations.

Activity: Reach out to local community groups and smaller/rural communities that feel like they don't have a voice and involve them in the public participation process as much as possible. An open and transparent public participation process will help empower affected low income communities and communities of color to participate in the decision making process. Engaging interested persons in regional transportation issues is challenging, yet possible, by making it relevant, removing barriers to participation, and translating material for Limited English Proficiency individuals, when possible.

6. Encouragement

Goal: *Encouraging active public participation* throughout the whole process.

Activity: Ask thought provoking questions in workshops and outreach meetings and engage audiences in strong discussions. Public participation is a dynamic activity that requires teamwork and commitment from all of the Monterey Bay region's agencies, from the regional level to the local level. Include engagement exercises to maximize participation.

7. Clear Communication

Goal: Providing communications and agency reports that are *clear, timely and broadly distributed*.

³ AMBAG website: <http://www.ambag.org/>

Activity: Make all types of communication clear, accessible, and easy to understand. Potential methods include: add a translation link in Spanish for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals through a Google Translation Widget on our website, and distribute all flyers, online notices, announcements and other materials in both English and Spanish. The Monterey Bay Region is home to a significant Spanish speaking population. AMBAG will also provide hearing and/or visually impaired individuals assistance in online and physical media distributions through physical outreach materials printed in larger font and in braille, upon request. Effective public outreach and involvement requires collaborating with regional local governments, stakeholders and advisory groups such as our partner agencies.

B. Title VI Plan

The *2015 Title VI Plan*⁴ is a comprehensive document that guides AMBAG in the Title VI process. Title VI is a Federal statute and provides that no person shall, on the grounds 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.

The *2015 Title VI Plan* emphasizes the AMBAG Title VI process and procedures, including the use of public outreach techniques and innovative strategies to specifically include Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Populations throughout the region. The LEP population we have identified in our LEP Plan will help set a precedent for future public workshops and events throughout the Monterey Bay region. A Title VI Plan is the required guide for all Title VI related activities conducted by AMBAG, this PIP will stay consistent with the *2015 Title VI Plan* and will incorporate the procedures, strategies and techniques that will be used by AMBAG for increasing public involvement and make more of an effort to include LEP populations in the 2040 MTP/SCS process.

⁴ AMBAG 2015 Title VI Plan: <http://www.ambag.org/programs-services/planning/title-vi-plan>

III. Public Engagement

AMBAG will engage the community throughout the development of the 2040 MTP/SCS. These activities include:

- Community workshops and events
- Public hearings
- A project website
- Visual graphics and media techniques
- Interactive surveys in English and Spanish (other languages as needed)
- Preparation of handout materials, flyers, information sheets, frequently asked questions (FAQs), etc.
- Consultation with the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC), a group of key stakeholders made up of environmentalists, business leaders, community activists, and other members of the public will be conducted.

A. Face to Face Interactions

Public Outreach

Public Workshops

Workshops will be held throughout the Monterey Bay region at key milestones throughout the 2040 MTP/SCS development process. Materials will be provided in English and Spanish; and translation services will be available at the workshops. These workshops will be held outside of typical work hours and at more convenient locations to make them more accessible to the public.

In addition, pop-up community events will be conducted to further interact with members of the public to learn about, give feedback on, and engage in the process of developing the 2040 MTP/SCS. These pop-up events may take place at popular locations such as farmer's markets, First Friday art gatherings, neighborhood block parties, church events, etc.

Public Hearings and Comment Forms

Public hearings will be conducted to receive comments on the Draft 2040 MTP/SCS Plan. The public hearings will be held at various locations throughout the region and will be advertised in local newspapers, flyers, press releases and email announcements to reach a wide variety of audiences who may be interested in receiving an opportunity to provide their input on the Draft 2040 MTP/SCS.

Comment forms will be provided to capture additional comments. Participants are encouraged to give these forms to those who could not attend the workshops. Comment forms can be folded for easy mailing, or participants could send comments to info@movingforwardmb.org or through the project website⁵.

Public Information

AMBAG will create and distribute clear, concise, and engaging information to support public involvement efforts. These materials will have a consistent look and feel, reflecting the branding that will be developed for the 2040 MTP/SCS.

Below is a menu of materials that may be used to provide information about the 2040 MTP/SCS and its components; the development process; why this process is relevant to the region's residents; and information about how, when, and why stakeholders should get involved. All materials will be written in easy-to-understand terms with limited jargon/acronyms, and will be provided in a variety of languages and formats as needed. Materials will be distributed via a range of channels, including electronically (e-mail and website); at presentations, meetings, and events; at community locations (libraries, recreation centers, senior centers, and stores); and in the media (notices and advertisements). Materials will be updated as needed throughout the process.

Project Fact Sheet

A project fact sheet will be created to provide basic information about the 2040 MTP/SCS, its components, purpose, timeline, and information on how the general public can get involved in the process.

Flyers and Press Releases

Each flyer will have engaging images, a summary of opportunities for public involvement, key messages, and basic information about the 2040 MTP/SCS and its timeline. Flyers and notices will be prepared in English and Spanish. These flyers will be distributed to local agencies and those who plan to sign up for email updates on the website. A press release will be sent to local television, radio, and newspaper media outlets.

Public Notices

Notices for public meetings and opportunities for public comment will be published via:

- Online media outlets (project website, partner agencies websites, social media)
- Printed materials (advertisements in newspapers, printed flyers posted at strategic locations, etc.)
- Announcements (radio, meetings)

⁵ Moving Forward Monterey Bay MTP/SCS Website: <http://www.movingforwardmb.org/project.html>

In addition, to stay consistent with AMBAG's 2015 Title VI Plan, all public notices will be printed and uploaded in English, Spanish, and Tagalog to ensure all Limited English Proficiency populations within the Monterey Bay region will be included in the 2040 MTP/SCS process.

B. Online Tools and Surveys

Project Website

A project website will be the central portal for information about the project and upcoming events. The website address will be provided on all outreach materials and will be updated regularly to maintain current content and will be the primary portal for public information about the 2040 MTP/SCS, incorporating interactive elements to provide opportunities for broad participation. Direct communication and website information will be synched from the project website and the AMBAG website for easier accessibility.

Media Outlets

Social Media

Online publication and web based comment of plans/programs will be created during the 2040 MTP/SCS process, including an increased use of illustrations on affiliated social media networks, such as Twitter and Facebook.

AMBAG staff and board members will also increase emphasis on public access television, radio and internet radio, coordinate media stories between our partner agencies and media outlets, and target marketing/notices highlighting how planning documents may impact them throughout the 2040 MTP/SCS process.

Newspapers and Newsletters

AMBAG will prepare and forward news releases to print and broadcast media on the 2040 MTP/SCS and advertise through display ads in local newspapers throughout the Monterey Bay region. AMBAG's monthly e-newsletter will report progress, encourage participation, and provide up to date information about opportunities for participation.

Surveys

Surveys will be conducted as needed for the 2040 MTP/SCS, which also can help us design future outreach strategies. These surveys will be conducted at key milestones of the planning process. To help increase awareness and to reach more people than conventional workshops, surveys will be created in English and Spanish (and other languages as needed), at critical points throughout the development of the 2040 MTP/SCS.

IV. Consultation and Coordination Efforts

A variety of committees and boards will be consulted throughout the planning process and at key milestones to solicit feedback, provide project updates, and relay community input from the workshops and surveys. These committees and boards are made up of elected officials, staff from local jurisdictions and agencies, local leaders and organizers, and members of the general public.

AMBAG Board of Directors

The AMBAG Board of Directors consists of 21 jurisdictions within Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties. An elected official from each jurisdiction is appointed by that jurisdiction's City Council or Board of Supervisors. Each of the 18 cities are represented by one member and each of the three counties by two members, forming the 24 member AMBAG Board of Directors. A representative from the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC), San Benito County Council of Governments (SBtCOG) Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), Santa Cruz METRO, Monterey-Salinas Transit, Caltrans, and the Monterey Unified Air Pollution Control District each serve as an ex-officio member.

The AMBAG Board meets monthly and sets policy. Day-to-day oversight is provided by the Executive Director, who is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Directors.

The AMBAG Board will meet often throughout the planning process to receive project updates, provide policy direction, determine hybrid and preferred scenarios, and ultimately to adopt the MTP/SCS. Board members will be encouraged to take leadership positions on the MTP/SCS to encourage public understanding and engagement.

Planning Directors Forum

The Planning Directors Forum (PDF) consists of planning directors and staff from the 21 jurisdictions within Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties, the three regional transportation planning agencies, the two transit operators, Caltrans District 5, and AMBAG; as well as other stakeholders. The PDF will meet regularly to address regional land use and transportation planning issues. The PDF will meet throughout the planning process and at key milestones to identify priorities, help establish initial scenario development, review draft workshop materials, and to receive project updates including feedback from the community workshops and online surveys.

Regional Advisory Committee

The Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) consists of environmentalists, business leaders, community activists, and local planning commissioners. The RAC meets regularly to provide input on land use and transportation issues. The RAC will meet throughout the planning

process and at key milestones to collaboratively identify priorities, provide input on the development of the 2040 MTP/SCS, and to receive project updates.

Regional Transportation Planning Agencies

In the Monterey Bay region, there are three Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs): San Benito County Council of Governments (SBtCOG), Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC). Each of these three RTPAs consists of agency staff and board members, including staff from local jurisdictions, elected officials, and appointed members. The RTPAs Boards of Directors set policy and provide a source of funding for transportation planning projects within each county. AMBAG staff will meet with the three RTPAs' Boards at key milestones to present findings, provide project updates, and receive input on the MTP/SCS development, project identification, and priorities.

Technical Advisory Committees

The Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) are made up of staff from local jurisdictions and agencies, including local transit service providers and the RTPAs. The TACs review and provide technical guidance and advice on transportation projects and programs within each county, and makes recommendations to the RTPA boards or directors. AMBAG staff will meet with the TACs at key milestones throughout the planning process to confirm transportation priorities, projects, and funding sources.

Stakeholder Contact List

A master stakeholder contact list will be maintained for distribution of press releases, flyers, and project updates. This list includes members of the AMBAG Board, the Planning Directors Forum, Regional Advisory Committee, and other related groups. In addition, media outlets, local organizations, and workshop and survey participants who provided a valid email address will be included.

Please refer to Appendix D in AMBAG's 2015 Public Participation Plan for the current list of stakeholders within the Monterey Bay region.