



# 2017 Public Participation Annual Report



April 2018

## Contents

Introduction.....	3
2017 Public Participation Activities .....	3
Evaluation Indicators .....	5
Issues .....	6
Actions.....	6
Summary.....	8
Appendix A: Public Event Formula Documentation .....	10
Appendix B: Citizens Advisory Committee Formula Documentation .....	11

*The preparation of this document was financed in part with funding from the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) and Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT). The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent USDOT, NDOR or Iowa DOT.*

April 2018

## Introduction

The Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) Public Participation Plan outlines how MAPA will work to achieve public participation in all planning activities. The plan specifies how MAPA conducts public outreach and how the public can be involved throughout the planning process.

The 2014 Public Participation Plan (PPP) committed MAPA to completing an annual status report on the public participation activities of the prior year. The PPP stated successful evaluation of the effectiveness of the Plan requires incorporating public input and an annual evaluation process. Therefore, this 2017 Public Participation Report was completed in April 2018.

## 2017 Public Participation Activities

Five projects were completed in 2017. The projects which were completed are shown in Figure 1. Several projects had work started on them in 2017 and will be finished in the future (Figure 2).

**Figure 1: Projects Completed by MAPA in 2017**

### Sarpy County Transit Study

- Study to determine potential future transit system options for communities in Sarpy County.

### Transportation Improvement Program

- Every year the TIP is developed. It lists all federally funded and 'regionally significant' transportation projects programmed for the next four fiscal years. The TIP includes federally funded projects for roadways, trails, public transit, and aviation projects throughout the Omaha-Council Bluffs region.

**Figure 2: Ongoing Projects by MAPA in 2017**

Coordinated Transit  
Plan

2018-2022

- This is a stakeholder document which sets out the goals and strategies for the Coordinated Transit Committee over the next 4 years and determines the funding selection criteria for 5310 funding..

Pottawattamie County  
Transportation Plan

2016-2018

- The Pottawattamie County Transportation Plan examines the present state transportation in the county and provides options for its growth in the future. It contains recommendations in ten year increments for paving and infrastructure improvements.

Public Involvement Plan

2017-2018

- The PIP outlines MAPA's outreach philosophy, goals, and methodologies for public involvement. The plan provides a framework on how to conduct outreach efforts for planning and program documents as well as information for the public on ways to meaningfully interact with MAPA.

## Evaluation Indicators

The following eight evaluation methods were included in the 2014 Public Participation Plan. They shall be used in each year's annual report to evaluate the public participation process. This will facilitate the discovery of trends.

**Table 1: Public Participation Evaluation Methods (Table 7.1 from the PPP)**

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	2017 Indicator	Goal Achieved
<b>Public Participation Plan</b>	Required by law - No measure	Update at least every 3 years	Amended in January 2015	Yes
<b>Newspaper Advertisements</b>	Required by law - No measure	Increase number of participants/ respondents indicating they saw the advertisement	Published public comment period and public meeting advertisements.	Yes
<b>Website</b>	Number of website hits	Increase number of web hits over the course of each year	In 2017 we were unable to accurately count the new websites page hits.	Due to the changes in the website we were unable to meaningfully collect this data for 2016 and 2017.
<b>Newsletter</b>	Feedback from public; number of returns	Maximum of 2% return rate per mailing	Currently there are 489 addresses on the newsletter list. On average there are 2-4 returned newsletters each time, which are promptly corrected for the next mailing. This is a .004% return rate.	check with Sue
<b>Brochures</b>	Number distributed during the year	Distribute throughout the MAPA Region, including key regional libraries in 1 <sup>st</sup> year; increase by 2-4 locations annually	Distributed Heartland 2050, LRTP, Little Steps Big Impact, and Sarpy County Transit Study brochures and flyers describing public workshops, surveys, to public libraries, post offices, and various coffee shops.	Yes
<b>Public Forums/ Open House/ Public Information Meeting/ Public Hearing</b>	Public Attendance*[Transit Access (10 pts) + ADA Accessibility (10 pts)] = N	Goal of 1,000 annual points for public forums/ open house/ public information meeting/ public hearing	Held public meetings/open houses for several projects. See Appendix A for the supporting mathematics.  total point	Yes (2,555)

<b>Planning Document Distribution</b>	Number of distribution sites	100% distribution of vital documents to necessary parties	Distributed documents and flyers to targeted organizations and worked to promote online information sources	Yes
<b>Citizens' Advisory Council</b>	Formula: Public Attendance + (Quorum or less [10 pts] or Greater than Quorum [20 pts])	Goal of 150 total annual points for the Citizens' Advisory Council	The CAC did not meet in 2017, several of the members moved out of their jurisdictions and new participants were not identified	No

As shown in Table 1, not all of the indicators were achieved. A discussion of each unachieved indicator is listed below with the action taken to complete the goals in subsequent years described in Table 2.

### Issues

- ❖ Newspaper Advertisement goal of increasing the number of participants/respondents indicating they saw the advisement. MAPA began tracking this information in 2015. This is more fully explained in Table 2.
- ❖ CAC the CAC has not been active in 2017, as MAPA reviews its planning processes and updates the PIP the role of the CAC and the membership requirements will be reevaluated

### Actions

MAPA will complete the actions listed in Table 2 to improve the public participation process and the likelihood of meeting the goals in future years.

**Table 2: Action to Achieve Goals**

<i><b>Public Participation Tool</b></i>	<i><b>Corrective Action Plan</b></i>
<b>Public Participation Plan</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to implement the Plan.</li> <li>2. Strengthen outreach to historically disadvantaged populations</li> </ol>
<b>Newspaper Advertisements</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will continue to track outreach efforts with a check box to public meeting sign in sheets that states, "How did you hear about the meeting? Email, Newspaper Article, Newspaper Ad, Facebook/ Twitter, Website, Friend, Other".</li> <li>2. Work on developing closer relationships with press and media for earned media opportunities.</li> <li>3. Develop an agency-wide communications strategy</li> </ol>
<b>Website</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to put MAPA's website on all documentations and point people to the site to find information.</li> </ol>
<b>Newsletter</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to update any returned addresses in the database.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Develop a “Sign up for our E-Newsletter” button on the MAPA website.</li> <li>3. Send the newsletter through electronic mail, as well as physical mail.</li> </ol>
<b>Brochures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to develop/update brochures and flyers.</li> <li>2. Continue to distribute project brochures and flyers.</li> </ol>
<b>Public Forums/ Open House/ Public Information Meeting/ Public Hearing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to hold public meetings in transit and ADA accessible locations. Implement the Public Participation Plan to ensure people are aware of meetings and have the opportunity to attend.</li> <li>2. Use friendlier and highly trafficked alternative meeting locations to attract people to attend meetings.</li> <li>3. Have outreach during existing partner meetings to increase participation and not have redundant meetings in the area</li> <li>4. Use the contact information provided by citizens at public meetings to establish more comprehensive lists of citizens interested in transportation issues</li> <li>5. Expand EJ and translation services at meetings.</li> </ol>
<b>Planning Document Distribution</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to deliver documents and flyers about the opportunity to comment to necessary parties. Utilize flyers rather than full documents to save paper.</li> <li>2. Include document distribution on the checklist for each planning process that MAPA will create to implement the Public Participation Plan (the first row of this table).</li> <li>3. Use language that better connects people to the issues being covered at public meetings</li> </ol>
<b>Citizens’ Advisory Council</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the roles of the CAC in the planning process</li> <li>2. If the CAC is continued revise the membership requirements</li> </ol>

### Key Action Steps for 2018

- ❖ MAPA staff will work on developing an agency wide communications strategy that will inform the update of the PPP and ongoing efforts to increase intra-agency communication on plans and initiatives.
- ❖ MAPA staff will continue to work on holding meetings in conjunction with other agencies public meetings to help increase foot traffic at the meetings, decrease ‘planning fatigue’, and make public meetings more high impact and relevant to the region
- ❖ MAPA will expand upon efforts to locate and hold meetings in easily accessible locations where people do not have to take time out of their daily routines to provide input
- ❖ MAPA will continue to develop its social media presence and increase advertising for events and plans through social media and the website

April 2018

- ❖ MAPA will continue to work on integrating online engagement tools into the public participation process
- ❖ MAPA will continue to use adopted plans to highlight implemented projects and continue the planning process by building narratives or 'stories' to explain issues
- ❖ MAPA staff will continue to work on efforts to provide ongoing updates of activities for MAPA and partner agencies through weekly emails and bimonthly newsletters
- ❖ MAPA will continue to work to provide appropriately translated meeting materials online and at all public meetings in a timely manner
- ❖ MAPA staff will continue to encourage participants to sign in at meetings and provide contact information as a part of surveys
- ❖ More training through IAP2 and other public involvement groups
- ❖ MAPA partnerships to provide public participation services on other local projects (leveraging H2050 relationships/networks etc.)
- ❖ Update the Public Involvement Plan to more accurately reflect planning goals
- ❖ Update Title VI, LEP, and ADA plans to give the most accurate data on historically disadvantaged populations in the MAPA region

## Summary

In 2017 much of MAPA's public involvement activities focused on reviewing and revising internal agency policies and working with partner agencies on joint efforts. Staff participated in the creation of a local chapter of public involvement professionals to further regional outreach efforts and work to create a culture of public involvement.

This past year (2016) was a busy year for MAPA and many of the Public Participation Plan evaluation methods were achieved. Staff from several different departments received training on public participation theory and methods to help improve MAPA's outreach efforts. These efforts have included strategic planning with both the board and staff members and through this work key steps to coordination were identified including:

- ❖ Strategic Communications Plan
- ❖ Project Workflow Program
- ❖ Central public meeting database for all departments

It is MAPA's goal to continue to improve the public participation process and implement the Public Participation Plan successfully. MAPA staff will use this 2017 Public Participation Annual Report to recall participation goals and augment future public participation activities.



MAPA staff will review the applicable Public Participation Annual Reports prior to the development of the new Public Participation Plan in January of 2018. The review will evaluate goal accomplishment, which will be used to alter the goals in the subsequent Public Participation Plans.

Appendix A: Public Event Formula Documentation

--



Total 0


--	--	--	--	--

Transportation Improvement Program				
Event	Public Attendance	Transit Access	ADA Accessibility	Total
6/08/2017 –MAPA	3	10	10	300
Total				300
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>2,555</b>

## Appendix B: Citizens Advisory Committee Formula Documentation

Formula: Public Attendance + (Quorum or less [10 pts] or Greater than Quorum [20 pts])
--

There were no CAC meetings held in 2017.