

PURPOSE

RCRPC's Public Involvement Plan assures proper and thorough public involvement in the transportation planning and decision-making process. The RCRPC public involvement provides a meaningful planning process that seeks a range of representation in public input from different points of view, different needs, and different backgrounds. A strong general public input and focus-driven stakeholder input assures a great planning process and product.

The public involvement process accomplishes its purpose by establishing goals to be carried out at three distinct but interacting tiers, or levels of activity. These tiers can be described as ***Identify, Inform, and Involve***. Stakeholders and affected populations must first be ***identified***, then ***informed***, and finally ***involved***.

- RCRPC will **Identify** the appropriate stakeholders and actively make sure they have appropriate representation for projects being performed. The general public will always be a part of any planning effort and people with specialized interests will be targeted to be a part of stakeholder meetings.
- RCRPC will **Inform** the public of the projects or planning activities and give ample notice of the public involvement opportunities. This will be accomplished through various outreach tools listed in this plan and considered appropriate for the scope of the project.
- RCRPC will **involve** the public in projects and planning efforts throughout the process. Once the public and stakeholders are identified and informed of the projects or plans, then they will be provided ample opportunities to participate.

GOALS

The goals of the RCRPC relative to the public participation process are as follows:

1. Seek maximum public participation in the planning process

RCRPC will involve stakeholders very early in the planning process after affected individuals are identified in the planning process. RCRPC will strive to constantly have large and diverse stakeholder groups for their projects and plans. The same effort will be made involving the public in the planning process. The public will be notified

as early and often as possible by RCRPC to ensure plenty of opportunities for public input and for this input to be considered and incorporated into the decision making process.

2. Identify stakeholders with representation from affected parties and underserved populations.

The process of picking stakeholders for a project will be tactfully done with a specific

emphasis on getting members of the affected population and underserved populations. Underserved populations typically refer to racial and ethnic, disabled, or people living in poverty. Other interested parties are businesses, transportation providers, or organizations with specific transportation needs. RCRPC will maintain an up-to-date database of contacts to facilitate stakeholder engagement.

3. Pursue the most effective tools to inform about public involvement.

There will be certain tools to spread awareness to the general public that will be constantly used through all projects such as press releases to the local media outlets. The rest of the public outreach tools will be adjusted according to the project or plan being completed. This may involve using a combination of tools to reach the most people.

4. Inform and educate the public on the project to increase the quality of public input.

During the public involvement process, RCRPC will provide information and resources to help the public give informed responses as part of the public involvement. RCRPC will use a wide variety of visualization formats in print and online and make documents easily available to the public. All reports, plans will include executive summaries that relay information in simple, easy to understand language.

5. Conduct outreach that bridges language, cultural, and economic barriers.

RCRPC will keep in mind ways to reach out and get involvement from underserved populations. This includes having a Language Assistance Plan and informing staff on helping people with a language barrier participate in involvement. RCRPC will also hold meetings in locations with transit access, offer multiple times for public involvement, plus provide on-line access to involve the public who cannot attend in-person public meetings but want to participate in public involvement.

6. Provide reasonable accommodations for disabled populations to participate in public involvement.

RCRPC will have all of their public meetings in locations that meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Most meetings will take place at the RCRPC Office which is ADA compliant, however if for any reason the public involvement is moved then RCRPC will chose a locations that accommodates the disabled population.

7. Reevaluate the plan.

There will be a constant reevaluation of the plan and current methods used for public involvement. The plan should be updated when deemed necessary or new techniques are identified to improve the public involvement process.