



# **2021 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)**

ADOPTED BY THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE ON JULY 1, 2021

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CORPUS CHRISTI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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In cooperation with:

The U.S. Department of Transportation

The Federal Highway Administration

The Federal Transit Administration

The Texas Department of Transportation

The Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority



U.S. Department  
of Transportation



CORPUS CHRISTI REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

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## SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) were formed specifically to empower local citizens and their communities with a strong voice in achieving their transportation goals and improving regional transportation. MPOs exist throughout the United States in all urbanized areas of more than 50,000 people and have the authority to plan, prioritize, and program federal funding for transportation projects in urban/metropolitan areas. The Corpus Christi MPO Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) is the designated forum for municipalities, counties, transit agencies, tribal governments, state and private agencies to address regional transportation issues.

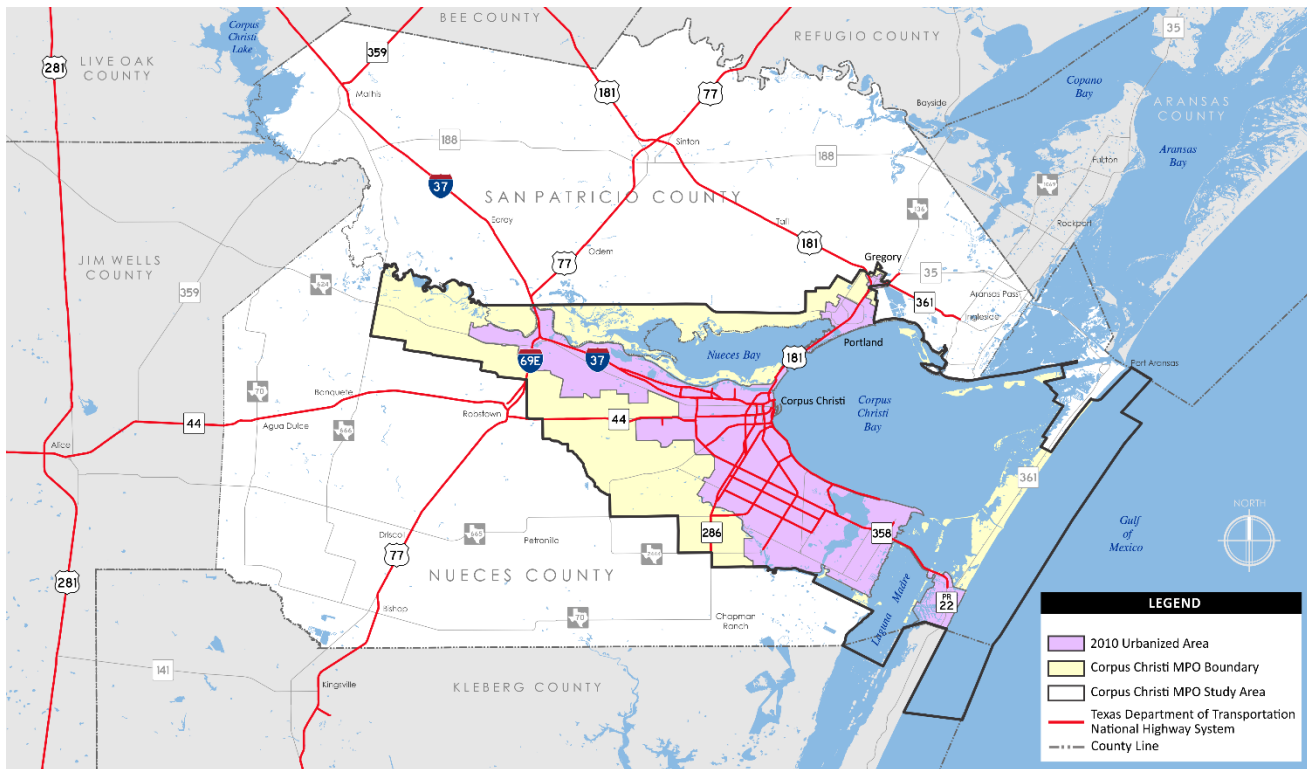
The Corpus Christi MPO is comprised of committees and participating organizations that collaborate and create partnerships to address the region's complex transportation needs. The Corpus Christi MPO encompasses portions of Nueces and San Patricio counties and is illustrated in Exhibit 1. The Corpus Christi MPO's original members (City of Corpus Christi, City of Portland, Nueces County, San Patricio County, and the Texas Department of Transportation – Corpus Christi District) became the Corpus Christi MPO's initial member agencies in 1973. To develop a more multi-modal transportation planning process, the Corpus Christi MPO now includes the Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority and the Port of Corpus Christi Authority.

The Corpus Christi MPO and its Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) are responsible for conducting the cooperative, comprehensive, and continuing (3C) transportation planning process. The six foundational requirements of a metropolitan planning organization are:

1. Involve the public in the transportation decision-making process.
2. Develop and maintain the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP);
3. Develop and maintain the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP);
4. Develop and maintain the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP);
5. Develop and maintain the Congestion Management Process (CMP); and
6. Coordinate the development of these products with the State's planning process

As the designated metropolitan planning organization, the Corpus Christi MPO is responsible for carrying out the: *"...continuing, cooperative and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a metropolitan transportation plan and a transportation improvement program (TIP), that encourages and promotes the safe and efficient development, management, and operation of surface transportation systems to serve the mobility needs of people and freight (including accessible pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) and foster economic growth and development, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution" (23 CFR 450.300)."*

**Exhibit 1. Map of the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Area**



As required by the federal rules for metropolitan transportation planning (23 CFR 450.316) and FHWA guidelines; MPOs shall develop and use a documented Public Participation Plan (PPP). This PPP defines the processes that the Corpus Christi MPO will use to provide any interested or potentially impacted citizens, public agencies, representatives of public transportation, freight shippers, private providers of transportation, users of public transportation, users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, the disabled, and all other interested parties, with reasonable opportunities to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning and programming processes. This PPP identifies the outreach and involvement activities for the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Planning process and updates to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program process beginning July 1, 2021 and ending September 30, 2025. The policies put forth in this document are:

1. The Corpus Christi MPO shall actively engage the public in the transportation planning process according to State and Federal law and the policies outlined in this plan.
2. The Corpus Christi MPO shall keep the public informed of ongoing transportation-related activities on a continuous basis.
3. The Corpus Christi MPO shall encourage the involvement of all area citizens in the transportation planning process.
4. The Corpus Christi MPO shall strive to continuously improve public participation.
5. The Corpus Christi MPO as a recipient of federal assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, shall ensure that no person, on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any agency programs or activities. These prohibitions extend from the MPO to its sub- recipients (i.e., contractors, consultants, local governments, colleges, universities, etc.). All programs funded in whole or in part from federal financial assistance are subject to Title requirements.

## CORPUS CHRISTI MPO 2021 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

Engaging the public has gotten increasingly difficult for the Corpus Christi MPO and most other transportation agencies. Across many public involvement efforts, low levels of participation can be traced to a lack of awareness about the importance of participation, as well as an increase in interests and obligations that compete for people's time. These challenges are magnified when trying to engage traditionally hard to reach populations such as people with limited English language proficiency and low-income and minority communities. Additional challenges include time and mobility constraints, social isolation, and distrust of and cynicism about government. Finding ways for to overcome these challenges and meaningfully engage the public is critical as the Corpus Christi MPO enhances the performance-based planning and programming process.

The International Association of Public Participation (IAPP) has developed a Spectrum of Participation that defines the public's role in any public engagement process.

	inform 	consult 	Involve 	collaborate 
Plan Public Participation 	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternative and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decision.	To work directly with the public through-out the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
Promise to the Public 	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporating your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
Example Tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• Websites</li> <li>• Open houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public comment</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Public meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Deliberate polling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen Advisory Committees</li> <li>• Consensus-building</li> <li>• Participatory decision-making</li> </ul>

The core values of public participation promoted by the IAPP, and followed by the Corpus Christi MPO, are:

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
3. Public participation improves decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.

6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

At the heart of all approaches is building trust and a reputation for being open and transparent. Ultimately, the behavior of the Corpus Christi MPO staff, consultants and Committees will determine the success or failure of the public participation effort. Behaviors cannot be faked; they must represent the sincere intent of the team to conduct effective public outreach. Important behaviors for public participation include the following:

- Transparency to open up the process and allow all of the parties to understand how decisions are being made and the information that is being considered, and to approach problems as colleagues in order to understand the issues and solve the problems.
- Openness to different stakeholders, ideas, input, and ways of working with people, regardless of race, color, national origin or income.
- Humility in order to suspend judgment and assumptions, value the contributions of others, and take the attitude of a learner.
- Respect for individuals, for their experience, points of view, emotions, and needs, and provide validation of each individual's experience and values.
- Honesty to always provide truthful and timely information.
- Reliability to put forth the effort it takes to make a participatory process work and to do what you promise.
- Flexibility to recognize that all contingencies cannot be anticipated, and the processes will have to adjust on the fly.
- Resiliency to move the process forward even through difficult and controversial circumstances.

## SECTION II. FEDERAL AND STATE REQUIREMENTS

Several Federal and State laws and regulations guide the public participation efforts of the Corpus Christi MPO and ensure that input into its various planning and programming activities is received. Laws and legislation relevant to this Public Participation Plan include:

### **FIXING AMERICA'S SURFACE TRANSPORTATION (FAST) ACT**

The FAST Act was signed into law on December 4, 2015. The FAST Act reauthorized the federal-aid highway program through fiscal year 2020 while consolidating the number of federal programs to focus resources on key national goals and reduce duplicative programs. The Act also emphasizes expedited project delivery.

The FAST Act continues the previous transportation act's commitment to public participation, directing Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to have a public participation plan that provides people, *"affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, 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 a reasonable opportunity to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process."*

The FAST Act directs MPO public participation plans to *"be developed in consultation with all interested parties,"* and *"provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan."* It further directs MPOs *"to the maximum extent practicable" to "hold any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times," to "employ visualization techniques to describe plans," and to "make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information."*

### **TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964**

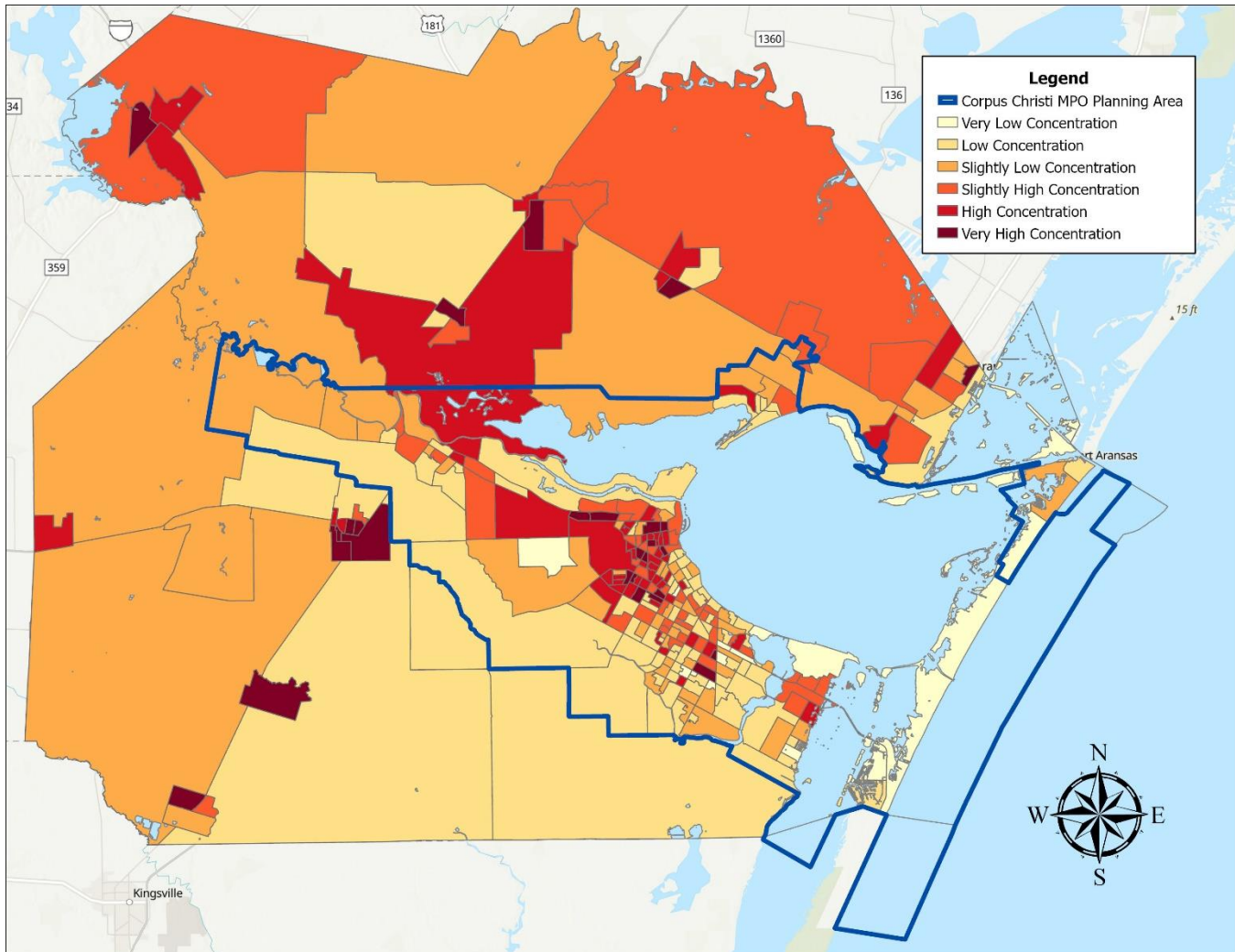
Additional detail regarding Anti-Discrimination practices of the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization are found in the 2021 MPO Program For Addressing Discrimination (PAD) document located here:

[https://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org/02\\_about\\_ppp.html](https://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org/02_about_ppp.html).

The Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that transportation planning and programming be nondiscriminatory on the basis of race, color, national origin or disability. The federal statute was further clarified and supplemented by the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and a series of federal statutes enacted in the 1990s relating to the concept of environmental justice. The fundamental principles of environmental justice include:

- Avoiding, minimizing or mitigating disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations.
- Ensuring full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- Preventing the denial, reduction or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income communities.



**Exhibit 2. Map of Disadvantaged Populations****AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) stipulates involving the community, particularly those with disabilities, in the development and improvement of services. The Corpus Christi MPO fully complies with these requirements through its policies by making meeting room facilities accessible with wheelchair ramps, and restrooms and elevators that are wheelchair accessible. The Corpus Christi MPO facilitates public participation in transportation activities by people with disabilities using the following guidelines:

- Meetings, public hearings, and formal events are held in facilities accessible by persons with disabilities.
- Public notices of meetings and events include a notice of accommodations for individuals who are disabled. Such accommodations will be provided by request with a minimum 24-hour notice.
- Persons needing to arrange for ADA accommodations at the Corpus Christi MPO meetings and events may call 361-884-0687 within 24 hours of the event.
- In collaboration with transit stakeholders, the Corpus Christi MPO can provide transportation for individuals with disabilities to attend public meetings and events at the MPO offices.

## **EXECUTIVE ORDERS**

An Executive Order is an order given by the President to federal agencies. As a recipient of federal revenues, the Corpus Christi MPO assists federal transportation agencies in complying with these orders.

- I. Executive Order 12898 - Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations:** In February 1994, President William Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, which requires that disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations be identified and addressed to achieve environmental justice. Since the establishment of Title VI, Environmental Justice has been considered in local, state, and federal transportation projects. Section 42.104 of Title VI and related statutes require Federal agencies to ensure that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or religion.
- II. Executive Order 13166 - Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP):** Executive Order 13166 requires Federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. The Executive Order also requires that the Federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of Federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries.
- III. Executive Order 13175 - Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Governments:** Executive Order 13175 states that *"in formulating or implementing policies that have tribal implications, agencies shall establish regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials to reduce the imposition of unfunded mandates upon Indian tribes."* The Corpus Christi MPO metropolitan planning area is home to 7 federally recognized tribal governments, the Corpus Christi MPO will actively seek to keep tribal governments informed of major decisions affecting their geographic area.
- IV. Executive Order 13985 – Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government:** Executive Order 13985 states that *"the Federal Government should pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. ...Consistent with these aims, each agency must assess whether, and to what extent, its programs and policies perpetuate systemic barriers to opportunities and benefits for people of color and other underserved groups."*

## **CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS**

A Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) includes a codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

- I. 23 CFR §450.316 Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation.**
  - (a) The MPO shall 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, 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.

- (1) The MPO shall develop the participation plan in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:
    - (i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
    - (ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.
    - (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe MTPs and TIPs.
    - (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the Internet.
    - (v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times
    - (vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the MTP and the TIP.
    - (vii) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.
    - (viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final MTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts.
    - (ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and,
    - (x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.
  - (2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft MTP and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93, subpart A), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final MTP and TIP.
  - (3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised public participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved public participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the internet to the maximum extent practicable.
- (b) The MPO shall 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, 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.

- (1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53
  - (2) Governmental agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and,
  - (3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 201-204.
- (c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPOs shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the MTP and the TIP.
- (d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPOs shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the MTP and the TIP.
- (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.

## **II. 23 CFR §450.324 Development and Content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

- (j) The MPOs shall provide 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 a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan using the public participation plan developed under §450.316(a). The MPOs shall publish or otherwise make readily available the MTP for public review, including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the internet.

## **III. 23 CFR §450.326 Development and Content of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

- (b) The MPOs shall provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP as required by §450.316(a). In addition, in nonattainment area TMAs, the MPOs shall provide at least one formal public meeting during the TIP development process, which should be addressed through the participation plan described in §450.316(a). In addition, the MPOs shall publish or otherwise make readily available the TIP for public review, including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the internet, as described in §450.316(a).

### **SECTION III. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CORPUS CHRISTI MPO**

The Corpus Christi MPO is a collaborative assembly of municipalities and organizations creating partnerships to address the region's complex transportation needs. Nueces County is the fiscal agent for the Corpus Christi MPO. The Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) was designated as the governing Board for the Corpus Christi MPO in June 2000. Key players in this organizational structure include:

#### **TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE (TPC)**

The Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) is established by federal regulations (CFR 23 § 450.104) and is composed of principal elected officials of general-purpose local governments. Most of the members are elected public officials from the local governments that have authority for project implementation, in accordance with Bylaws and Procedures for the Corpus Christi MPO TPC. All entities listed below are represented on the TPC. Members of the TPC are responsible for giving the MPO overall transportation policy guidance in the transportation planning and programming process. All voting members of the Corpus Christi MPO TPC shall have one vote. A TPC member shall not be allowed to have or appoint a proxy member or representation.

The Corpus Christi MPO TPC has seven voting positions (4 are Elected, 3 are Appointed) and up to 10 non-voting members. The seven Voting Members of the Transportation Policy Committee are:

1. Mayor, City of Portland
2. Mayor, City of Corpus Christi
3. County Judge, San Patricio County
4. County Judge, Nueces County
5. An Official Designated by the Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority
6. An Official Designated by the Port of Corpus Christi Authority
7. An Official Designated by the District Engineer, Texas Department of Transportation, Corpus Christi District

There are ten potential Non-Voting Members of the Transportation Policy Committee, they are:

1. One representative of the Federal Highway Administration
2. One representative of the Federal Transit Administration
3. One representative of the Coastal Bend Council of Governments
4. One representative of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
5. United States Congress, Texas 27th District: (Michael Cloud)
6. Texas State Senate District 20: (Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa)
7. Texas State Senate District 21 (Judith Zaffirini)
8. State Representative District 34: (Abel Herrero)
9. State Representative District 32 (Todd A. Hunter)
10. State Representative District 43 (J. M. Lozano)

Rules of the Corpus Christi MPO (Bylaws) are maintained by the organization. The Rules and other documents noted above are kept on file and are readily available for review at the Corpus Christi MPO office and on the Corpus Christi MPO website:

[https://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org/02\\_bylaws/corpuschristimpo\\_bylaw\\_20170316.pdf](https://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org/02_bylaws/corpuschristimpo_bylaw_20170316.pdf)

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The Corpus Christi MPO TPC's responsibilities, defined in the Bylaws are:

1. Approve goals and objectives of the transportation planning process.
2. Review and adopt changes in transportation planning concepts.
3. Review and approve the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
4. Review and adopt the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) including project priorities and approve any changes in the priority schedule.
5. Review and adopt the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and its revisions.
6. Ensure the efficient and effective use of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) planning funds.
7. Encourage the development, implementation, and surveillance of plans to reduce transportation generated air pollution within the study area.
8. Serve as liaison representatives between various governmental units in the study area to obtain optimum cooperation of all governmental units in implementing various elements of the plan.
9. Ensure citizen participation in the transportation planning process through a proactive policy.
10. Hire, terminate, evaluate, and supervise the Transportation Planning Director.
11. Establish for the MPO staff the salary, salary range, annual or more frequent personnel performance reviews and salary increases based on performance and cost of living indices.
12. Adopt personnel policies and procedures adapted from the personnel policies and procedures of Nueces County for the conduct, rights, and responsibilities of the MPO Staff.

The Corpus Christi MPO responsibilities listed in the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Agreement with TxDOT, are:

1. Document planning activities in a UPWP to indicate who will perform the work, the schedule for completing it, and all products that will be produced. In cooperation with the Department and public transportation operators as defined by 23 CFR Part 450, the MPO must annually or bi-annually develop a UPWP that meets federal requirements.
2. Prepare and submit to the Department an annual performance and expenditure report of progress no later than December 31 of each year. A uniform format for the annual report will be established by the Department, in consultation with the MPOs.
3. Use funds provided in accordance with 43 Texas Administrative Code 16.52 and Article 2 of this agreement to develop and maintain a comprehensive regional transportation planning program in conformity with the requirements of 23 USC 134, 49 USC 5303 and the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Uniform Grant Management Standards.
4. Develop a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and a UPWP for the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), all of which are consistent with the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan (SLRTP), as required by the state and federal law. At a minimum, the MPO shall consider in their planning process the applicable factors outlined in 23 USC 134.
5. Assemble and maintain an adequate, competent staff with the knowledge and experience that will enable them to perform all appropriate MPO activities required by law.
6. Forecast, collect, and maintain appropriate socio-economic, roadway, and travel data on a timely basis, in cooperation with the Department.
7. Prepare all required plans, programs, reports, data, and obtain required certifications in a timely manner.

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8. Share information with the Department and information sources concerning transportation planning issues.
9. Use provided funds in accordance with regulations to develop and maintain a comprehensive regional transportation planning program in conformity with requirements of 23 USC Section 134(f) and 49 USC Section 5303.
10. Develop and adopt an MTP that meets federal and state laws, a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that is incorporated without modification into the STIP, and a UPWP, along with other planning documents and reports required by state and federal laws and regulations.

The Corpus Christi MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) includes seven voting members and up to 10 non-voting members could be appointed by the TPC. The Technical Advisory Committee reports directly to the Transportation Policy Committee and works closely with the MPO staff. To aid in the process of creating transportation policies and programming plans for long and short-range planning documents, the TPC has created the following committees:

### **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

Each Transportation Policy Committee member appoints a person from the organization being represented by the Transportation Policy Committee member to assist in decision-making process. Each member is appointed based on the technical ability needed to perform transportation planning activities of the MPO. Currently, this seven-member committee, known as the Technical Advisory Committee, is the technical body of the organization.

The Technical Advisory Committee reports directly to the Transportation Policy Committee and works closely with the MPO staff. The Technical Advisory Committee has the following responsibilities:

1. Assist the Transportation Policy Committee with technical tasks associated with developing the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and recommend its adoption by the Transportation Policy Committee.
2. Review transportation-related studies within the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Area and make recommendations to the Transportation Policy Committee and other agencies.
3. Provide technical support in the preparation of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and recommend its adoption by the Transportation Policy Committee.
4. Review the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and other high priority projects. Recommend its adoption by the Transportation Policy Committee.
5. Advise the Transportation Policy Committee on technical matters and, if specifically authorized by the Transportation Policy Committee, on the policy matters with accompanying recommendations and supporting rationale.
6. Act as the Regional Freight Advisory Committee as needed.

### **OTHER ADVISORY, SPECIAL TASK FORCE OR AD HOC COMMITTEES**

Additional Advisory or Ad hoc committees of the membership of the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) may be established and appointed by the Chairperson to assist the TPC in the performance of its function. Special Committees or Task Forces may be established and appointed by the Transportation Policy Committee to undertake special assignments. These committees may consist of TPC members, public officials, citizens, and other individuals the TPC deems appropriate. Standing committees may have separate bylaws, which must be ratified by the Transportation Policy Committee.

## **SECTION IV. POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

Public involvement processes must be appropriate, accessible, transparent, accountable, meaningful and inclusive of the region's diverse population and its needs. This Public Participation Plan (PPP) guides the public participation process of the Corpus Christi MPO. The PPP provides the Corpus Christi MPO policies and principles outlining communications and coordination with interested parties such as: residents, neighborhood associations, private and public agencies, and transportation providers, and other members of the public. Additionally, the PPP is a tool for planners and decision-makers to engage residents, community groups, organizations, and businesses in the process of planning the transportation system.

### **GOALS AND POLICIES OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) is to include residents, community and neighborhood groups and associations, non-profit groups, business sector groups, transportation providers, federal, state, and local government agencies, and many others to participate in a proactive, predictable planning effort that provides full access to making key transportation decisions early and throughout the process. Accomplishing the task of planning for current transportation needs and for needs five, ten and even twenty years from now requires the Corpus Christi MPO to coordinate and collaborate with many types of public and private groups to provide mobility to housing, schools, jobs, recreation, and freight movement. Involving the public in the planning process helps reduce the time and cost of creating short and long-range plans and projects while providing a forum for public input and collaboration with planning agencies. This allows the public the opportunity to voice their ideas, concerns, issues, and opinions and to help guide decision-makers in determining the transportation system of the future.

### **POLICIES OF THE CORPUS CHRISTI MPO'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

**Policy 1: The MPO shall actively engage the public in the transportation planning process according to State and Federal law and the policies outlined in this plan.**

**Policy 1.1 - Informing Interested Parties:** The MPO shall make a good faith effort to inform those who are interested in or affected by transportation decisions about reasonable opportunities to provide input on the metropolitan planning process. To accomplish this, the MPO shall maintain up to date contact information for the following:

- Citizens expressing an interest,
- Elected officials
- Local government staff
- Transportation agencies
- Local media (TV, radio, print, etc.)
- Home-owners associations
- Civic groups
- Representatives of public transportation employees
- Providers of freight transportation services
- Representatives of users of public transportation
- Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities
- Representatives of individuals with disabilities
- Economic development organizations
- Special interest groups (other interested parties)
- Libraries (for public display)
- Native American Tribal Council
- Faith-based organizations
- Private freight shippers



## CORPUS CHRISTI MPO 2021 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

- Private providers of transportation including intercity bus operators and employer-based community programs (such as carpools, vanpools, shuttle, transit benefits, parking cash-out, or telework programs)

**Policy 1.2 - Consultation with Agencies and Officials:** The MPO shall make a good faith effort to consult with agencies responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation as well officials responsible for other planning activities. This shall include Federal, state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, conservation and historic preservation, emergency response, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, environmental protection and other environmental issues. To accomplish this, the MPO shall maintain up to date contact information for the following:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Coast Guard                                     | • National Marine Fisheries                           |
| • Homeland Security                               | • Texas Parks and Wildlife                            |
| • National Parks Service (Department of Interior) | • Texas Historical Commission                         |
| • US Fish and Wildlife Service                    | • General Land Office                                 |
| • US Environmental Protection Agency              | • Texas Commission on Environmental Quality           |
| • US Geological Survey                            | • Local Emergency Planning Committee (Corpus Christi) |
| • Bureau of Indian Affairs                        | • Corpus Christi Convention & Visitors Bureau         |
| • Bureau of Land Management                       |   |
| • Forest Service (US Department of Agriculture)   |   |

**Policy 1.3 - Coordination with Agencies and Officials:** The MPO shall make a good faith effort to coordinate its metropolitan transportation planning process with other planning activities affected by transportation including:

- Statewide transportation planning, public involvement, and consultation activities.
- Any other planning activities affected by transportation.

**Policy 1.4 - Visualization Techniques:** The MPO shall employ visualization and communication techniques that depict transportation plans. Examples may include charts, graphs, photo interpretation, maps, use of GIS systems, artist renderings, physical models, and/or computer simulation.

**Policy 2: The MPO shall keep the public informed of ongoing transportation-related activities on a continuous basis.**

**Policy 2.1:** The MPO shall make all publications and work products available electronically to the public via the internet at the MPO's web homepage and in hardcopy at the MPO offices.

**Policy 2.2:** MPO staff shall be available to provide general and project-specific information at a central location during normal business hours and after hours at the request of the community interest group with reasonable notice.

**Policy 2.3:** The MPO shall maintain an internet web site that will be compliant with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act for individuals with disabilities.

- **Policy 2.3.1:** The web site shall be updated and maintained to provide the most current and accurate transportation planning information available.

**Policy 3: The MPO shall encourage the involvement of all area citizens in the transportation planning process.**

**Policy 3.1:** Target audiences shall be identified for each planning study conducted by the MPO including residents, traditionally underserved/underrepresented populations, but not limited to low-income, individuals with disabilities and minority households and business/property owners within the study area.

**Policy 3.2:** The MPO shall make a good faith effort to hold public meetings at a site convenient to potentially affected citizens.

**Policy 3.3:** The MPO shall make a good faith effort to attend and participate in existing group meetings and coalitions serving these communities.

**Policy 4: The MPO shall strive to continuously improve public participation.**

**Policy 4.1:** The MPO shall continuously evaluate and retool the public involvement strategies and techniques to better engage the public.

**Policy 4.2:** The Public Participation Plan shall be reviewed and adopted with appropriate revisions at least every three (3) years in an effort to improve the effectiveness of public involvement.

**Policy 5: The MPO, as a recipient of federal assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, shall ensure that no person, on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any agency programs or activities. These prohibitions extend from the MPO to its sub- recipients (contractors, consultants, local governments, colleges, universities, etc.). All programs funded in whole or in part from federal financial assistance are subject to Title VI requirements.**

**Policy 5.1:** The MPO shall establish a procedure under which complaints alleging discrimination in MPO provisions, service or MPO activities can be made by persons who are not employees of the MPO.

**Policy 5.2:** Any person who believes the MPO, or any entity who receives federal financial assistance from or through the MPO, has subjected them or any specific class of individuals to unlawful discrimination may file a complaint of discrimination.

**Policy 5.3:** The MPO shall follow timelines set forth in guidance from the Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the Department of Justice for processing Title VI discrimination complaints.

The Corpus Christi MPO PPP is compliant with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requirements. This plan update, approved by the Corpus Christi MPO TPC in April 2018, describes the Corpus Christi MPO's ongoing coordination with the Port of Corpus Christi Authority as well as private providers of transportation in the interest of enhanced integration and connectivity, as required by the FAST Act. The plan meets the standard for public participation in a transportation planning process per the principles of Environmental Justice and Title VI of the Civil Rights (Title VI) Act of 1964. The transportation planning process requires early and proactive public involvement by citizens and requires decision-makers to allow them the opportunity and time to offer input and make informed decisions. The Corpus Christi MPO continuously reviews the PPP and Anti-Discrimination Program and strives to improve the effectiveness of public involvement and outreach.

As defined by Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The MPO's LEP Plan helps identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency who wish to access information

provided. The plan outlines how to identify a person who may need language assistance and specifies the ways in which assistance may be provided. Public meetings for MPO's short- and long-range plans are conducted in accordance to Title VI to foster participation by low income and minority populations. Locations selected for public meetings comply with the Americans with Disability (ADA) Act of 1990 and are accessible and close to public transportation.

Environmental Justice (EJ) Orders described in Section II (above) Environmental Justice, strengthen support of Title VI regulations by requiring that each federal agency identify and address, disproportionately high adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. TxDOT and MPOs are responsible for developing procedures to collect statistical data (race, color, religion, sex, and national origin) of participants in, and beneficiaries of state highway programs (relocated or affected citizens and affected communities). Recipients of federally assisted programs shall keep documentation for federal review, demonstrating the extent to which members of target populations are beneficiaries of such programs.

Regional transit partners have procedures to uphold the requirements of the ADA. The CCRTA operates a complimentary paratransit service in compliance with ADA and FTA regulations. Both CCRTA fixed route and paratransit revenue vehicles, along with other facilities are accessible by persons with disabilities. The CCRTA's paratransit service is provided in all areas within a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of the fixed-route service for those who cannot access the fixed route system due to physical barriers or a disability. Public meeting locations are chosen with this information in mind.

The CCRTA Committee on Accessible Transportation (RCAT) provides guidance and insight to CCRTA Board of Directors on the development and operation of public transportation services that promote the inclusion and integration of people with disabilities. The CCRTA, Nueces County and the City of Corpus Christi work collaboratively to implement ADA compliant projects, which may include constructing curb cuts, sidewalks, and striping in order to provide accessible ramps for improved pedestrian access to and from bus stops.

## **SECTION V. REVISIONS TO MPO DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS**

Any Corpus Christi MPO member agency may request the consideration of a revision to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Congestion Management Process (CMP), or Public Participation Plan (PPP) on its own behalf or on the behalf of a non-member agency or private group, business or individual. Private parties must work through the MPO member agency that represents them to request a revision to the Planning document. All such requests shall be submitted to the MPO Transportation Planning Director in writing. A revision to the above-mentioned documents may be initiated by the Corpus Christi MPO Transportation Planning Director to ensure that it remains in conformance with all applicable federal, state and regional policy requirements.

### **AMENDMENTS**

In the course of the life of MPO documents, revisions to the content are made to provide ensure current programming and/or changes to policies adopted by the TPC. A revision is a change to the MTP, TIP, UPWP, CMP, or PPP that occurs between scheduled periodic updates. The Corpus Christi MPO follows the TxDOT STIP revision processes. As summarized below, Corpus Christi MPO acknowledges three types of revisions to its documents. The definitions of these various revisions are:

**Tier 1: Primary Amendment** – a major revision to MPO documents. This type of amendment requires one-month public review and comment period and a demonstration of fiscal constraint.

- Major change, more than 10% or \$1.5 million, whichever is greater, in project cost:
  - Adding federally funded projects
  - Adding regionally significant state-funded projects
  - Significant change in funding for a project (as defined by the TPC)
  - Change to or from state or local funding category to or from federal funding.
- Projects making significant change to the approved scope of the project including changing project limits or other changes that would alter a project's evaluation score.
- Addition or deletion of a project
- Changes in a project's design concept or design scope that would alter the score or the project, and
- Changing a project/project phase initiation date to a different fiscal year.

A primary amendment is also at the judgment and direction of the TPC depending on particularities of a project and the forecasted final effects of the implementation of a project. Primary amendments must be presented to the TPC for approval.

**Tier 2: Administrative Amendment** – a minor revision that does not significantly change the scope of the approved project, alter the funding for a project, or excessively change the locations or limits of a particular project from the original limits this includes, but is not limited to:

- Change in CSJ or Control Number (CN),
- Change in letting date unless it changes fiscal year,
- Minor changes to funding sources of previously included projects,
  - Change in estimated federal funding resulting in a final total project cost of less than \$1.5 million,
  - Change from one state funding category to another state funding category,
  - Change in one federal funding category to another federal category,
- Change in the project limits for a wholly state-funded project not on the NHS,
- Change in TIP year for a wholly state-funded project not on the NHS,
- Addition of a project to a Statewide Program (using a Statewide CSJ and CN)
- Minor changes to project/project phase costs (less than 10% of total project cost or \$1.5 million whichever is greater), and
- Minor changes to project/project phase initiation dates (does not change fiscal year).

Administrative amendments do not require a one monthly public review or comment, a demonstration of fiscal constraint, nor do they need to be presented to the TPC. These changes should be presented as an information item for the TPC.

**Tier 3: Editorial Adjustment** – a minor revision required to correct typos or add grammatical or format errors that do not change the content of the document. Grammatical and format amendments are not required to be presented to the TPC nor do they require a formal one-month public review or comment, or a demonstration of fiscal constraint.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION DURING DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATE OF CORPUS CHRISTI MPO DOCUMENTS**

Public involvement for the Corpus Christi MPO documents varies for different document stages and the status of the document undergoing public review. Public review of all documents must be posted at least 72 hours in advance of a scheduled meeting (Texas Open Meetings Act, p. 62). Public review of a new planning or programming document is the minimum of one month between scheduled TPC meetings (except for the PPP which requires a 45 calendar days review period). Most updated and amended documents will have the opportunity to have a one-month review; however, updated and amended documents will have a minimum of a seven days' review before adoption by the TPC, if necessary.

With increased focus on expediting project implementation and funding allocation, there may be rare occasions in which issues arise that require urgent modification of the MTP, TIP, UPWP, CMP, and PPP due to funding requirements or timeliness. In these cases, exceptions to the one-month comment period may be required in order to avoid not being able to secure funding. In these cases, there will be adequate public notice and clear communication of the abbreviated time period. An abbreviated comment period will be at least seven days. Longer comment periods are preferred and will be offered whenever possible. These actions will be emphasized on the TPC meeting agenda which is posted at least 72 hours prior to the TPC posted meeting.

### **I. Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a long-range transportation plan with 20-year minimum horizon. The MPO is required to develop this plan every four years. The minimum length of public comment period is the one month between regularly scheduled TPC meetings for each item seeking communication with the public. The same one-month period is used whenever an MTP is developed, updated, or amended. Communication with the public is not needed for editorial adjustments.

### **II. Transportation Improvement Program**

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a short-range, fiscally constrained program that covers a four-year horizon period. The MPO is required to develop this plan every four years. The minimum length of public comment period for each item seeking communication with the public is the one month between regularly scheduled TPC meetings. The same one-month timeframe is used whenever a TIP is developed, updated, or amended. Communication with the public is not needed for editorial adjustments.

### **III. Unified Planning Work Program**

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a document detailing the transportation planning work to be accomplished by the MPO staff in a two-year period and is developed every two years and amended as necessary. The minimum length of public comment period is the one month between regularly scheduled TPC meetings whenever a UPWP is developed, updated, or amended. Communication with the public is not needed for editorial adjustments.

### **IV. Congestion Management Process**

The Congestion Management Process (CMP) is a document where existing and future traffic-congested links are identified throughout the region's transportation infrastructure and is updated continuously; projects from this document are selected for congestion reduction and new congested links are added as traffic patterns change. The minimum length of public comment period is the one month between regularly scheduled TPC meetings whenever a CMP is developed. Communication with the public is not needed for editorial adjustments.

## V. Public Participation Plan

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) provides the Corpus Christi MPO policies and principles that guide its communications and coordination with the public. The minimum length of public comment period is 45 calendar days whenever a PPP is developed or amended.

Corpus Christi MPO Document	Length of Comment Period	Minimum Notification of Opportunity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)</li> <li>Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)</li> <li>Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)</li> <li>Congestion Management Process (CMP)</li> </ul>	One Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MPO website and social media announcement</li> <li>Known media outlets</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Participation Plan (PPP)</li> </ul>	45 Days [23 CFR 450.316 (a)]	

## VI. Annual or Bi-annual Reports

Documents such as the Annual Project Listing or the Annual Safety Performance Measures that report status of the regional conditions do not need a formal public outreach program. They are presented to the Advisory and Policy Committees and placed on the website for public use and information.

## SECTION VI. ACHIEVING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

*“Public participation is any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and uses public input to make decisions.”*

International Association for Public Participation

Public participation is a process, not a single event. It is a series of activities and actions over the full lifespan of a planning process that both informs the public and obtains input from them. Conducting **meaningful** public participation involves seeking public input at specific points or specific issues where input will shape the decision or action. It is not appropriate or useful to simply ask the public “what do you want?” Broad questions only raise expectations and likely move input toward subjects where no influence is possible. Sometimes the opportunity for influence is quite small, while at other times the public can greatly influence an outcome.

It is increasingly difficult to engage the public in transportation planning. The vast majority of community members are not familiar with transportation planning agencies, the planning processes, technical transportation terms and they also have many other, more enjoyable, things competing for their attention. Effective public participation depends on the MPOs willingness and ability to involve the public in the decision processes.

It is no less important that the public develop the capacity to participate effectively in MPOs decision processes. A well-designed and sincere participation process will not fulfill its potential if the public lacks the necessary participation skills. Therefore, it is important for Public Participation Plans to include methods to build the public’s participation capacity.

Also, it is necessary to understand that there is no “general public”. Rather, the various publics consist of a range of stakeholders holding often diametric views and conflicting concerns on many issues. When conducting meaningful public participation, the Corpus Christi MPO needs to gather input from the full spectrum of stakeholder interests. This produces a wide range of views and concerns. Giving fair treatment and meaningful involvement to all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and decisions made through the transportation planning process is paramount. The job of the Corpus Christi MPO is to acquire and provide this information to the Transportation Policy Committee to inform TPC decisions and then report back to the publics how their diverse concerns were considered.

### **GENERAL APPROACH**

The Corpus Christi MPO will use public outreach and communication to increase transparency and enhance the Corpus Christi MPO’s credibility in the eyes of policymakers and the publics. This includes the day-to-day responses to the publics (via email and/or phone), monitoring social media, conducting community outreach and public meetings/hearings as needed with emphasis on Environmental Justice and other at-risk or protected class populations. The Corpus Christi MPO will:

- monitor, evaluate and implement Title VI Civil Rights / Environmental Justice compliance, guidance and requirements for plans and programs,
- continue to collect and analyze data related to minority or low-income populations and the effect of the transportation programs and system on those populations,
- identify ways to mitigate impacts of the system and programs on the identified populations,
- expand the database of citizens and businesses in low-income or minority areas to facilitate effective outreach to those Populations.

- Use visualizations to help translate data into more easily understood graphics and images and more effectively communicate information. Visualizations can present the complex nature of trade-offs between investing in various types of transportation projects and programs.

General information about MPO activities and events are posted publicly and list the opportunity for stakeholders to provide comments. This Public Participation Plan facilitates participation by a range of community members, especially at-risk and traditionally under-served groups including minorities, low-income populations, seniors and individuals with disabilities. Implementing the tactics outlined below will provide an array of opportunities for meaningful public involvement and ensure compliance with all applicable federal regulations. Outreach efforts on individual projects are undertaken by the sponsoring agency in support of transportation planning activities as they occur.

### **PLANNING FOR PARTICIPATION**

Research indicates that it is better to perform limited stakeholder input efforts well than to do large-scale efforts poorly. With this in mind, and in order to have clear and meaningful public participation, it is important for all stakeholders to fully understand the planning process. Within a performance-based planning and programming process, the standard is providing objective information so that different audiences can understand the issues and trade-offs. This may require that decision-makers, the public and other interested parties receive information on issues in different ways. Creating a visual representation of when, where, and how different information procedures are used is helpful because both internal and external stakeholders must have the same understanding and expectations. The following are general steps used.

1. Layout the entire process and how and when stakeholders will participate. Meaningful participation requires that outreach activities are integrated into each step in the decision process. It is essential to start public participation early so that stakeholders and decision-makers are on the same participation curve. Most important, it is essential that stakeholders have equal opportunity to identify goals, needs, and solutions to problems and the criteria that will be used to arrive at decisions. These early activities are critical to obtaining meaningful input and an overall understanding of the final decision.
2. Identifying the target audiences and communities is a key element in a public participation strategy. The Corpus Christi MPO will identify target audiences for engagement using data collection and consultation with key stakeholders. Consultation often entails working with elected officials, advisory committees, partner agencies, and other stakeholders to identify important groups and issues. Internal data from customer survey results and ridership statistics also provide significant help in defining the target audience. Finally, institutional knowledge and information from previous studies give agencies further clarification on whom to engage. This knowledge informs and shapes the outreach approach and allows an agency to tailor techniques to the specific cultural, linguistic, historic, or socioeconomic contexts of the community. This process is also important for understanding differing views and opinions that frame the topic(s).

A “stakeholder” typically refers to anyone with a “stake,” or interest, in the project. Broadly defined, this is synonymous with the public. However, in most cases, it is a subset of the public who have an elevated interest in the topic or represent key constituents from whom ideas and opinions are desired. To accomplish this, the MPO shall maintain up to date contact information for the following:

- Citizens expressing an interest in transportation planning activities
- Elected or appointed officials



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- Local government staff or committee members
- Homeowners associations
- Civic groups
- Special interest groups (other interested parties)
- Libraries (for public display)
- Representatives of users of public transportation
- Representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities
- Representatives of individuals with disabilities
- Economic development organizations
- Private providers of transportation including intercity bus operators and employer-based community programs (such as carpools, vanpools, shuttle, transit benefits, parking cash-out, or telework programs)
- Native American Tribal Councils
- Faith-based organizations
- Private freight shippers
- Representatives of public transportation employees
- Providers of freight transportation services

After the full range of interests that want or need to be engaged are identified, along with the specific groups and individuals that can represent those interests, it is important to begin to understand stakeholders' views and building relationships. No effective participation process can be designed without first learning about and developing some level of relationship with the stakeholders that will be engaged. Meeting with stakeholders at the beginning of a project will help you to know your public, make them more accepting of you and the information you provide and help design the public participation program that responds to their needs and concerns.

3. The most direct and effective process is to interview likely stakeholders during the start-up of process planning. Efforts to find stakeholders representing all interests is important. The interview process involves going directly to stakeholders and asking them about their concerns, interests, and values. Get to know them as people and let them get to know the Corpus Christi MPO as well. It is important to understand how stakeholders view transportation issues. This will also help identify and plan for possible cultural and language differences in the community.

**Engage Local Leaders:** In 2021, 2022 and 2023 the MPO will hold sub-regional meetings for local elected officials and municipal staff with the purpose of informing them about the Corpus Christi MPOs role in the region and their communities' role within the MPO and soliciting input on the region's transportation needs and long-range plan. Staff will have ongoing one-on-one meetings with newly elected officials and provide opportunities for all elected officials to engage with Corpus Christi MPO decision-making.

**Engage vulnerable populations:** The public involvement processes used to develop the transportation plan and investment programs must include a process for "seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services." These groups do not know or trust the Corpus Christi MPO yet. In these low-trust situations, it is necessary to begin by partnering with a trusted third-party individual or group to help create and distribute information. The primary goal is to build trust, the secondary goal is to increase both the participation of each stakeholder and increase the number of involved stakeholders or participants.

**Identify and Collaborate with Stakeholder Agencies:** The Corpus Christi MPO shall make a good faith effort to consult with agencies responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation as well officials responsible for other planning activities. This shall include Federal, State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, conservation and historic preservation, emergency response, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, environmental protection and other environmental issues. To accomplish this, the MPO shall maintain up to date contact information for the following:

- National Parks Service (Department of Interior)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Geological Survey
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service (US Department of Agriculture)
- National Marine Fisheries
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Homeland Security
- Texas Parks and Wildlife
- Texas Historical Commission
- General Land Office
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- Local Emergency Planning Committee (Corpus Christi)
- Corpus Christi Convention & Visitors Bureau

#### **PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING ROADMAP**

In order for the Corpus Christi MPO to gain useful information from the various stakeholders, and in order for the public to provide the most impactful input, these potential participants must understand where and how they can best influence the decisions that they most care about, well before those decision-points are reached.

Performance-based Planning and Programming (PBPP) is a decision-support process that has a predictable roadmap of key decisions. It is important to note that no roadmap is perfect, and the reality of on-going interactions among multiple groups with multiple competing and conflicting interests mean that the actual process will diverge from the initial roadmap as both foreseen and unexpected factors change. This means that for the planning and programming roadmap to be effective, it must be updated and edited as schedules and processes change. It also requires that the various publics are informed about these changes in a transparent and logical way. The following are the Key Decision Points, roughly in the order that they will occur, during the Corpus Christi MPO Planning and Programming Process. Any changes that diverge significantly from these steps will be noted and relevant documents updated.

**Socio-economic Control Totals Adoption** – One of the initial critical steps in developing a Metropolitan Transportation Plan is forecasting the amount, type and location of population and jobs for the time frame of the plan (Years 2025-2050). There are several sources for these forecasts and all of them will be wrong. However, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each forecast will create a useful set of information that can bookend uncertainty and reduce inaccuracy. For example, the 2018 forecast to 2050 from the State Demographer projects Nueces County to have 511,454 people and 252,940 full-time equivalent jobs. Woods and Poole, the most sophisticated commercial socio-economic forecast agency, has the 2050 forecast for Nueces County at 494,692, with employment at 317,102 total jobs. However, the Coastal Bend Regional Water Plan forecast shows a 2050 population of approximately 425,000 in Nueces County. A task force of stakeholders in the region will be convened to help resolve data issues in this highly technical process. There is not opportunity for general public participation, although the information will be provided on the website.

The current schedule for the Texas State Demographer to update their forecast based on the 2020 Census is February of 2022. The Woods and Poole forecast is updated every October. The 2020 Census will be available in October 2021. A similar baseline dataset of employment will be acquired from commercial sources for the same time period as the Census (April 2020). Control totals for these forecasts should be agreed upon before the process begins. Additional what-if scenarios can be developed later to reduce uncertainty and create possible futures.

**Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary Update** – Growth in population and expansion of developed areas identified in the 2020 Census will lead to adjustment in the Census Designated Urban Area and may lead to adjusting the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Boundary. It is within the Corpus Christi MPO boundary (approved by the Texas Governor) that the TPC will use performance to competitively select projects for the federal transportation funds allocated to the Corpus Christi MPO. By federal requirement, the boundaries of a metropolitan planning area (MPA) shall be determined by agreement between the MPO Transportation Policy Committee and the Governor of Texas. The MPA boundary shall encompass the entire designated urbanized area (provided by the Bureau of the Census) plus the contiguous area forecast by the Corpus Christi MPO using the adopted control totals, to achieve urban density by 2050. Adjacent areas not within this Metropolitan Planning Area are part of the rural, state-wide performance area for funds distributed by TxDOT. The total population within the Census Urban Area is part of the criteria used to determine the levels of federal funding in the Corpus Christi MPO. A task force of stakeholders in the region will be convened to help with this technical process. There is not opportunity for general public participation, although the information will be provided on the website.

**Functional Classification of Roads** – Following the 2020 Census, State DOTs are required to review the Functional Classification of the roadway system and make any necessary changes due to urban boundary changes, addition of new roadways or changes in the function of the roadways. The Federal Functional Classification process is a hierarchal system of classification that helps to ensure a comprehensive roadway system that provides logical connectivity and continuity across the entire network. The process groups roadways into classes (freeways, arterials, collectors, locals), based on the role they play in the overall roadway system. Roadway classes are determined based on the following factors:

- Connectivity
- Function
- Land use
- Trip length
- Spacing
- Service to Urban Activity Centers
- Traffic Volume
- VMT (vehicle miles of travel)
- Mileage ratio of each class

The process of classification determines which roads are eligible for federal funding such as the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) emergency relief program. Also, performance goals are primarily directed at the National Highway System, so classification onto this system is needed to score well in achieving performance goals. Changes to a roadway's functional class can be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for approval at any time. However, it is essential to provide required data that establish a roadway's eligibility for proposed reclassification.

The Corpus Christi MPO will create a Functional Class Working Group made up of City, County, and TxDOT staff to review the data and propose updates to the Regional Roadway Functional Classification System. This system will be released for public comment and the MPO Transportation Policy Committee will review Public Comments and hold a public hearing before approving submission of the proposed changes to FHWA. TxDOT will collect all

proposed changes from across the state and review them before creating a recommendation as part of the statewide system classification that is submitted to FHWA.

**Coordinated Human Service Plan** – The public outreach during creation of modal plans will mirror the overall outreach of the regional MTP. There will be opportunities for input available during each step. It is likely that one public outreach event will serve the purposes of more than one modal plan and also will likely include opportunities for input on the overall MTP. Any public transportation service or human service agency transportation program that focuses on transportation needs of people with a disability, seniors, low-income persons or veterans. This plan is, as of May 2, 2021, currently being updated. The expected adoption of this updated plan is October 2021. The steps used to develop the 11-county Coastal Bend Coordinated Plan, of which the Corpus Christi MPO CMP is a part, are:

1. Develop Goals and Objectives.
2. Inventory Existing Providers and Resources.
3. Assess unmet needs and Identify Gaps in Service.
4. Develop Strategies and Coordination to address Gaps.
5. Prioritize Strategies and Projects.
6. Draft Plan Implementation concept.
7. Use Performance Measures to Evaluate Effectiveness.
8. Approve Plan.

**Regional Safety Plan** – The public outreach during creation of modal plans will mirror the overall outreach of the regional MTP. There will be opportunities for input available during each step. It is likely that one public outreach event will serve the purposes of more than one modal plan and also will likely include opportunities for input on the overall MTP. The primary goal of regional safety planning is to reduce crashes, especially fatal and serious injury crashes, on all public roads. This result of this extremely technical analysis of data is a plan with little room for public input and participation. Stakeholder input is primarily from law enforcement agencies and local roadway or utility maintenance organizations. There is opportunity for school administrators to participate as part of the Safe Routes to School program. The following describes the safety planning approach utilized by the Corpus Christi MPO:

1. Analyze regional crash data to identify clusters of crashes exceeding expected crash rates or severity.
2. Investigate high accident locations using detailed crash data, roadway data and field examinations to identify potential solutions. Solutions may include engineering, education, and enforcement strategies.
3. Implement solutions through normal maintenance or operational activities or through a specific capital project.
4. Examine the effect of the project on safety.

**Micro-mobility (Non-motorized / Active Mobility) Plan** – The public outreach during creation of modal plans will mirror the overall outreach of the regional MTP. There will be opportunities for input available during each step. It is likely that one public outreach event will serve the purposes of more than one modal plan and also will likely include opportunities for input on the overall MTP. Micro-mobility services encompass all small fully or partially human-powered vehicles (both personal and shared-use fleets) such as bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters, as well as specialized vehicle types such as cargo bikes, mobility-assistance devices, wheelchairs, accessible bikes, skateboards and other vehicle types needed to move people over relatively short distances. This mode of travel is an excellent solution to address the first-mile / last-mile problem with transit. A Micro-mobility Transportation Plan is a comprehensive resource that documents existing conditions and guides the planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of programs, policies, guidelines, and infrastructure improvements. Collectively

dubbed micro-mobility, these services are unsuitable for sidewalks, which are the domain of pedestrians, wheelchairs, and certain very-low-speed vehicles. They are also unsuitable for using on vehicle-occupied roads dominated by cars and trucks capable of highway speeds. This plan may be developed concomitant with the MTP. The steps in micro-mobility planning are similar to the steps in an MTP, except focused on one type of travel:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Define the Scope                         | 7. Estimate Project Costs                    |
| 2. Engage the Community                     | 8. Identify Funding Sources                  |
| 3. Develop Vision and Goals                 | 9. Develop and Evaluate Performance Measures |
| 4. Assess Existing Conditions and Needs     | 10. Create an Implementation Strategy        |
| 5. Identify Proposed Networks and Amenities |  |
| 6. Prioritize Proposed Projects             |  |

**Regional Freight Plan** – The public outreach during creation of modal plans will mirror the overall outreach of the regional MTP. There will be opportunities for input available during each step. It is likely that one public outreach event will serve the purposes of more than one modal plan and also will likely include opportunities for input on the overall MTP. The purpose of this effort is to identify the region’s freight and trade-related transportation needs and opportunities impacting the Statewide Multimodal Freight Network and regional economic competitiveness.

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Collect data from stakeholders                    | 4. Collect stakeholders feedback   |
| 2. Review information                                | 5. Assess current and future needs |
| 3. Analyze Freight System Conditions and Performance | 6. Collect Public Outreach         |

**Congestion Management Process** – The public outreach during creation of modal plans will mirror the overall outreach of the regional MTP. There will be opportunities for input available during each step. It is likely that one public outreach event will serve the purposes of more than one modal plan and also will likely include opportunities for input on the overall MTP. A Congestion Management Process (CMP) is a systematic and regionally accepted approach for achieving congestion reduction goals and provides accurate, up-to-date information on transportation system performance. All projects that physically add roadway capacity must resolve from the adopted CMP. This promotes efficient use of existing transportation infrastructure and allows limited funding to benefit a wider area. A CMP should be conducted concomitant with the MTP. The steps used to develop the Corpus Christi MPO CMP are:

1. Identify Regionally Significant Corridors. This is a subset of the National Highway System.
2. Define congestion for roadways and intersections.
3. Identify currently congested locations.
4. Determine the causes of recurring and nonrecurring congestion.
5. Develop a toolbox of policies and projects to manage the congestion.
6. Evaluate the potential of these policies and projects for each identified corridor.
7. List performance measures and adopt specific targets to assess the effectiveness of policies and projects against.
8. Establish a program for data collection to measure system performance; and
9. Set priorities among projects for both the 25-year Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the 4-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

**Approve Process for Updating the MTP** – This step will develop a common understanding about how and where the MTP process is conducted, with some specific discussions about the information relevant to transportation, community, and environmental decision-making. The outputs of an MTP process are the foundation that investment programming, corridor planning and environmental review processes must build upon. Systematically documenting the MTP processes and decisions, including the information used and the results of each step, is critical to conducting transparent public involvement and enabling the information and decisions made during long-range planning to be carried into the NEPA process. Proper documentation of both the technical and decision-making processes from long-range planning is the mechanism that ensures that this information is useful and useable in ensuing planning processes, and particularly during NEPA.

The proposed process steps, with detail beyond what is found in this document, will be released for 30-day public comment. In addition, stakeholder groups and disadvantaged communities will be solicited for suggestions on possible process enhancements.

**Adopt Vision and Goals** – During this Key Decision, significant outreach will target regional stakeholders and disadvantaged communities to provide their values to guide updating or refining the 2045 adopted Vision and Goals. This is the first opportunity for public stakeholders to inform the process or provide their input into the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). A visioning process actively involves the public, the business community, and elected officials on a broad scale, informing them about growth trends, current system performance, and trade-offs between investments. The vision often consists of a preferred future development and transportation network improvements. The vision is directly connected to the goals and objectives found in the metropolitan transportation plan. The vision and goals approved in the 2050 MTP will influence both which transportation projects are built and how they are built. For example, a goal may be to include off-road trails along all arterial roadways to enhance micro-mobility and/or autonomous retail package delivery.

Through this process, the Corpus Christi MPO will collect input regarding values and priorities and translate the input into desired future performance and evaluation criteria that can prioritize projects and also shape scenario themes. After the outreach to update the vision and goals there will be an additional 30-day outreach seeking comments on the proposed 2050 Vision and Goals prior to formal adoption.

**Scenario Development** – A defining characteristic of successful public sector scenario planning is actively involving the diverse publics, the business community, and elected officials. This rigorous outreach effort will inform them about growth in population and jobs, along with identifying trade-offs between performance and how some goals can reinforce other goals while some goals produce countervailing outcomes. Using scenario-based planning reduces uncertainty and risk by determining common transportation needs irrespective of the future locations of households and employment or identifying when one investment theme also aids other goals areas. Using a scenario planning process to identify and assess outcomes associated with adopted goals, the Corpus Christi MPO will incorporate the key issues that are most meaningful and relevant to participating interest groups or communities. Each scenario will possess a set of characteristics that exemplifies certain ideas revealed as desirable during the public involvement process. Scenarios each describe a future that planners, the public, and stakeholders use to prioritize different interventions (policy and investment options). Using scenarios is especially useful to introduce plausible possibilities that overcome natural human tendencies to:

- Give more weight to recent events,
- Deny evidence that does not support our views,
- Overestimate the probability of desirable events,
- Disregard futures that have aspects very different from what we have now,

- Underestimate uncertainties,
- Overestimate our ability to influence events beyond our control, and
- Be overconfident about our own knowledge and ability.

The types of scenarios that can be developed are:

- Transportation intervention philosophies — exploring different sets of transportation solutions, such as fixing infrastructure before adding new infrastructure, or making critical infrastructure “harder” to damage during disasters, or prioritizing safety projects, etc.
- Land use patterns — exploring different distributions of population and employment, often in combination with supporting public policies or private investments.
- External factors — exploring factors that are outside the control or influence of transportation and land use planning agencies (e.g. broad economic trends, such as pandemic accelerated work from home policies).
- Performance levels — exploring desired futures and what is required to achieve them, such as a scenario to outfit all regionally significant congestion corridors with Smart Technology, or to attain zero fatalities on public roads.
- Funding levels — exploring different scenarios based on levels of funding that might be available.
- Some scenario planning methods also help explore the potential opportunities and impacts associated with emerging technologies.

Some type of outreach, probably more than one type, will create a reasonable number of scenarios from a broad spectrum of the public to represent the interests and desires of different communities or stakeholders. A multi-criteria analysis approach will identify and compare the tradeoffs among scenarios and focus on performance relative to the adopted goals. This framework alerts decision-makers to tradeoffs and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges from different philosophies of transportation system interventions. The most beneficial characteristics of the scenarios will be integrated into one Preferred Scenario that is identified as least undesirable, while still meeting federal and state requirements.

**Approve Evaluation Criteria and Weighting** – Evaluation criteria and performance measures are used to compare how well interventions attain the vision and goals. The criteria used in long-range planning will influence those used during the environmental (NEPA) review. The evaluation criteria, methods and measures are developed with input and data from the public, planning partners and stakeholders, and includes interagency consultation. Land use, environmental protection and economic development plans are also analyzed so that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is consistent with these other plans. This is the decision point where the relative importance of the measures are discussed and approved. Weighting relative importance allows decision-makers to identify tradeoffs and to compare both individual projects and complete investment portfolios and how they attain the vision and goals.

A survey will allow individuals or groups to rank and rate each goal or performance measure against every other goal or performance measure. The results of this effort will appear on the website for future reference. The evaluation process used in long range transportation planning informs both corridor planning and environmental review in order to ensure consistency across the entire transportation decision-making process.

In cases where multiple criteria analysis (MCA) is used to prioritize projects, such as transportation planning and programming, confusion and suspicion can arise if a formal and well-structured decision-making process is not followed. Given the complexity of the transportation decision-making process, with more than 5 performance

measures, the ability to communicate and document how the decisions were reached is as important as the decisions themselves. MCA's ability to separate the decision elements and depict the decision-making process makes it ideally suited to communicate the basis of each decision. Specific strengths of MCA in transportation project assessment are:

- Facilitate understanding by each individual/participant on the importance of each measure to their interests.
- Assess the relative importance of individual measures to each other in order to select the set deemed most significant to the group.
- Aggregate all the scores to arrive at a defensible decision.

**Approve Regional Deficiencies** – This is a formal effort based on the needs identified both by other planning processes (land-use, environmental protection, economic development, historical preservation, etc.) plus those transportation needs identified for each scenario. It is likely that a customer survey for specific transportation issues and problem locations will be part of this effort, although it will begin closer to initial public outreach, possibly continuing through scenario development depending on the schedule for the other transportation mode planning, such as the micro-mobility plan, the freight plan, the safety plan, etc. During this decision stage the public and other planning agencies identify key locations that they either hope or are concerned will be changed by transportation interventions. There will be an additional 30-day outreach at the end of the step seeking comments on the list of identified deficiencies.

Transportation deficiencies are both where the current conditions are substandard and where the future system is forecast to be substandard relative to the adopted goals. The approved list of deficient locations is the basis for developing a universe of needed interventions (interventions can be either projects or policies). This effort, when combined with the Congestion Management Process, results in an approved toolbox of projects specific to each corridor, and other projects that are needed for non-CMP roads. The full range of deficiencies and opportunities within identified corridors and around the region are defined. Deficiencies and opportunities extend beyond transportation, and for this reason, the Key Decision is coordinated with other planning processes such as land use planning and natural environment planning. Fiscal constraint will prevent all deficiencies from having a funded intervention, but all should be listed as needs.

**List Interventions to Address Regional Deficiencies** – Interventions (both projects and policies) are developed to address the deficiencies identified earlier. These interventions can include transportation, community, and environmental projects or policies that impact roads or other aspects of the regional transportation system. It is likely that some of the interventions were proposed during other public outreach. These should all be collected and combined with interventions provided by local governments and planning partners. These interventions may change existing or future land use, or may add new transportation system capacity through technology or added pavement infrastructure. During this step Resource Agencies are consulted to develop a combined map of conservation priorities, economic development areas, land use development and project areas, if available. Identified projects will avoid impacting partner agency priority areas in order to maintain consistency with their planning efforts.

At this Key Decision, a full range of possible project alternatives that could meet the purpose of and need for a project are identified. Generally, the most expensive option should be included to ensure fiscal constraint requirements are met. Although care must be taken not to presuppose a specific alignment. However, **it is possible to document the alternatives that were eliminated from consideration.** This elimination can be carried forward if the analyses used to eliminate it was rigorous, outreach was sufficient, and all of this is well



documented. Otherwise, during future corridor or NEPA studies the range of options will be narrowed and eventually a preferred project will be selected. At all times the cost of the project listed in the plan must be sufficient to fully implement the desired action. In order to meet permitting requirements, the alternatives approved to be carried forward must include those that avoid and minimize impacts to natural resources to the greatest extent possible. This list of possible interventions is provided to the Transportation Policy Committee and maintained on the MTP website.

**Approve Project Scoring and Ranking** – The outcome of this Key Decision is a prioritized and sequenced list of projects that reflects the weighted goals. This project list should be developed in horizon years so that future phases and project sequencing is logical and transparent. The project scoring and ranking will be released for 30-day public comment that requests additional information that could be considered in scoring, both to raise and reduce individual project scores. It will also be noted that any new information that comes to light will be applied to ALL pertinent projects if rescoring is necessary. Significant changes to the list will result in an additional 30-day comment period.

This step is extremely important to ensure that the projects going into the MTP are selected using a competitive selection process with the performance of each project ranked against the performance of other projects seeking funding. It is necessary during this process to ensure that the prioritization process is inclusive and equitable, with both customized outreach and customized documentation describing the prioritization process appropriate for each of the disadvantaged populations. This includes sharing evaluation criteria, analysis methods and performance measures, along with relevant information from environmental and historic preservation, economic development, and land-use plans.

**Financial Plan** – A task force of transportation funding experts will be convened to help with this technical process. There is not opportunity for public input during the process, although discussions will be provided on the website. The Transportation Policy Committee will formally approve the financial plan after a 30-day public comment period. This Decision Point will result in a chapter of the MTP that lists information confirming Fiscal Constraint. A fiscally constrained plan only “spends” transportation funds that are reasonably expected to be available for use in the Metropolitan Planning area. A Financial Plan describes “reasonably available” funding from: federal sources, the Texas state government, regional and local sources, the private sector, and user charges. This includes federal funds for public transportation facilities (CCRTA), intercity bus facilities (Greyhound), multimodal (Corpus Christi Airport) and intermodal facilities (Port of Corpus Christi), and nonmotorized transportation facilities that function in an integrated metropolitan transportation system. Emphasis is on those facilities that serve important national and regional transportation functions such as both the Corpus Christi airport and Port of Corpus Christi.

The Corpus Christi MPO, the Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority, and the Texas Department of Transportation shall cooperatively develop estimates of funds that are reasonably available. These reasonably available funds are future funds derived from an existing source that was historically used for transportation purposes. For Federal funds, authorized and/or appropriated funds and the extrapolation of formula and discretionary funds at historic rates of increase are considered “reasonable.” A similar approach should be used for State, regional, local and private funds that are or were historically used for transportation purposes.

The Financial Plan must then balance the reasonable revenues for transportation using an inflation rate that reflects “year of expenditure dollars” (inflation per year, compounding). This inflation rate must be based on reasonable financial principles and developed cooperatively by the Corpus Christi MPO, the Texas Department of Transportation and the Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority. The MTP will include the costs to build,

operate, and maintain the transportation systems between Years 2025 and 2050. For information purposes, using a 4% inflation rate means that a project that costs \$1 in 2025 will cost \$2.67 in 2050. Using a 3% inflation rate, which may not be reasonable given recent rates of inflation, a \$1 project in 2025 will cost \$2.09 in 2050.

The MTP must also acknowledge the restrictions and requirements associated with each funding source prior to applying them to an expenditure. In order for the adopted MTP to meet the fiscal constraint requirement, this information must be approved by the Transportation Policy Committee as the basis for the MTP fiscal constraint. A financial plan shall include recommendations on additional financing strategies to fund needed projects and programs that are not included in the fiscally constrained list. This may include an assessment of the appropriateness of innovative finance techniques such as tolling, retroactive price indexing, bonding, public private partnerships, or other strategies.

**Developing Constrained Portfolios** – The base scenarios will be developed using extensive public outreach, with each successive set of refinements available on the web for comment. Corpus Christi MPO staff will also be available to present and discuss the tradeoffs and advantages and disadvantages of each generation of portfolio until the regionally least unacceptable portfolio is identified. A scenario comparison approach will identify and compare the tradeoffs between the performance of fiscally constrained portfolios of interventions against the adopted goals. Collaboration with partners from other planning processes is important at this stage as scenarios will likely involve strategies that encompass land use, economic development, community desires, and other components. Each scenario is developed using harmonious philosophies of growth and development policies and projects. The scenarios will reflect the broad interests of the region and be different enough to contrast performance and highlight tradeoffs using the evaluation criteria. This step begins the iterative process of refining scenarios in order maximize benefits and minimize negative outcomes.

During the initial development of scenarios, there will be a scenario designed to target each of the approved goals and address, as much as possible, the identified deficiencies. This is conducted to help reduce the public providing “failure to consider” comments. It also helps develop an understanding of the trade-off decisions that are specific to the Corpus Christi MPO region. Scenarios should be identified (named) in terms that can be easily understood by the public, decision-makers, planning partners, and other stakeholders; i.e. *Maintenance Only*, *Safety First*, etc.

**Regionally Preferred Portfolio Outcome Analyses and Mitigation Plan** – The product of this effort is the prioritized list of projects with associated costs, sequencing, and applicable revenue considerations for implementation as funds become available, over the 25 years of the MTP. In order to accommodate Year of Expenditure requirements, this project list will detail the first 10 individual years, with the final 15 years grouped into three 5-year periods, using the central year for inflationary calculations. The analyses will describe anticipated system performance and impacts. This includes both the performance that is attained and when the performance does not meet the goals. It also includes anticipated secondary and tertiary impacts on communities and the environment that will be mitigated and the concepts for mitigation to reduce the impacts. Finally, the documentation will also indicate consistency with, or any red flags against, partner agency plans that must be mitigated. This report will be shared with planning partners, placed on the website and presented to other interested stakeholders.

The purpose of mitigation is maintaining or enhancing both social communities and natural ecosystems while also accommodating growth and development. Federal regulations require a metropolitan transportation plan to discuss mitigation measures that protect, enhance, and restore social, economic, and ecological functions that are impaired as the unavoidable result of transportation projects (23 CFR 450:322). In the context of an MTP, a mitigation plan will discuss strategies, policies, programs, and actions that will avoid, minimize, mitigate, and

remediate impacts to the human and natural environments resulting from implementing the metropolitan transportation plan. The Corpus Christi MPO will create a task force of technical experts to review forecast impacts of the MTP interventions and create a Coordinated Regional Mitigation Plan that is consistent with other plans in the region. This plan will be circulated for a 30-day public comment period.

Accomplishing coordinated regional mitigation requires being as deliberate in developing and coordinating mitigation activities as we are in developing transportation projects. With this in mind, it is necessary to collaborate among local governments, non-profit organizations, and state and federal resource and regulatory agencies. This specifically includes diagonal collaboration among federal, state, and local levels along with collaboration between disciplines such as transportation, economic development, land development, and wildlife conservation efforts because the interventions from any individual entity will impact other individual interests. A desired outcome of regional diagonal collaboration is a metropolitan transportation plan that integrates and coordinates with land use, economic development, and natural resource planning and management.

**Metropolitan Transportation Plan Adoption** – The formal adoption of the MTP will include a Public Hearing and extensive availability of Corpus Christi MPO staff to present both the process and the outcome (fiscally constrained project list) to community organizations and interested stakeholder groups. There will be a 30-day public comment period prior to adoption. If there are comments that make significant changes to the MTP then there will be an additional 30-day comment period conducted.

**TIP Development Approve Eligible Project List from MTP** – This Key Decision establishes the universe of projects that are eligible to request funding in the TIP process. If local entities wish to fund projects that are not included in the federally funded and fiscally constrained project list of the 2045 MTP, then they must provide that information to the Corpus Christi MPO staff and 2045 MTP must be amended in order to make those projects eligible to request federal funding. This MTP amendment process must include performance analyses of the proposed project. Because the MTP must maintain fiscal constraint, this amendment process also entails removing a project(s) of similar cost and likely rescoring of projects performance if amending the list. Improvements to be funded with non-transportation revenue are not included in the funded project list. This project list is circulated for a 30-day public comment. The initial list is released as it exists in the adopted MTP, the opportunity for public input includes statements suggesting how additional projects could be considered. If projects are added to the MTP fiscally constrained list then the public outreach necessary to amend the MTP will begin.

**TIP Development Verify Criteria Weighting** – This is the step in the project evaluation process where the relative importance of evaluation measures are re-verified. This step allows decision-makers to update the MTP analyses to take into account any changed conditions and compare the individual projects against each other. Public outreach is extensive and arguably this point is when input is most influential. Surveys or other methods of obtaining relative importance of each evaluation criteria from the different stakeholders and communities should be performed. In order to ensure consistency across the entire transportation decision-making process the weighting should start with the weighting used during the MTP and be adjusted if some update in the ratios is needed. The Transportation Policy Committee should formally approve the weighting before projects are submitted by local municipalities.

**TIP Development Project Scoring and Ranking** – The outcome of this Key Decision is a prioritized list of projects that reflect the sequencing of projects listed in the MTP. The approved project list is prioritized using a methodology that maintains consistency between the MTP and the TIP. It will include costs for preconstruction and construction activities, mitigation costs, project phasing and sequencing, and other applicable revenue

considerations. This project list should be developed in horizon years so that future phases and project sequencing are considered. The project scoring and ranking will be released for 30-day public comment that requests additional information that could be considered in scoring, both to raise and reduce individual project scores. It will also be noted that any new information that comes to light will be applied to ALL pertinent projects if rescoring is necessary.

**TIP Adoption and Outcome Estimation** – After capital investment projects are assessed and the preferred portfolio of interventions assembled, both the process and the results are presented to the public for a one-month comment period. The process should be transparent and questions about selection addressed in the documentation provided.

Federal regulations require that the TIP "...shall include a description of the anticipated effect of the TIP toward achieving the performance targets identified by the MPO in the MTP." In a performance-based planning and programming system, where conditions are monitored and strategies evaluated, the anticipated effect is compared against actual existing conditions data to inform changes in later versions of plans and programs. For instance, strategies could be revisited or revised based on performance information, new performance measures may be selected to better reflect preferences of the public, or targets may be adjusted to reflect new financial realities, or other external factors that impact transportation.

## SECTION VII. METHODS OF OUTREACH AND PARTICIPATION

Outreach and participation at MPOs are as diverse as the communities and publics that the agencies serve. There is no standard or prescribed method of conducting outreach. What works for one community for a certain type of project or process may not work for in another region or even for the same agency in a different community or for a different process. This lack of consistency requires flexibility from the Corpus Christi MPO to tailor outreach to match the unique set of circumstances around the region. The specific public involvement techniques, and the methods used to perform public involvement strategies, are constantly evolving and bounded only by the needs of each community.

The Corpus Christi MPO strives to use proactive or collaborative engagement when possible. This can take many forms: attending festivals, farmers markets, local fairs, flea markets, or other special events; speaking at community organizations, resident or business associations, or clubs; engaging the public at transit centers, malls, and other gathering places; canvassing neighborhoods; engaging elected officials; or partnering with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or places of worship. The concept is to take the message of the Corpus Christi MPO directly to the public and broaden the number and diversity of people reached by using established local communication and support networks. These efforts are particularly effective at targeting the disabled community, minorities, and those with limited English proficiency with the purpose of integrating their viewpoints into the decision-making process: A unifying factor in the outreach is the Corpus Christi MPO outreach team needs to:

- Make personal connections in the target communities to build trust and credibility for the agency.
- Identify the audience that needs to give or receive information.
- Ensure that the events are interesting and engaging enough to make the effort worthwhile for participants.
- Engage partner organizations that have contacts in the target communities and use their trust and community standing to promote and encourage attendance.

The techniques described provide an overview of some of the ways that agencies have tried to engage the public. None of these techniques is “the solution” for public participation. Each is part of a larger overall strategy that relies on multiple outreach approaches and techniques. As technology evolves and changes the ways our society communicates and interacts, so too will the application of these techniques. By offering information in a variety of formats, the Corpus Christi MPO will include more people in the planning process than relying on a limited number of strategies and opportunities.

### **OUTREACH METHODS**

The Corpus Christi MPO needs to get the attention of stakeholders who live in a world where advertisers can customize messages to each person’s specific interests and companies work to have a message seen seven times. Breaking through this noise is almost impossible and getting harder.

**Local Media Outlets** – All public participation notices are sent to the Corpus Christi Caller-Times to ensure regional coverage. When needed, radio and television can reach a larger audience. Smaller local newspapers can distribute targeted information and solicit targeted responses. These newspapers include The Island Moon, Corpus Christi Church Press, News of San Patricio, Corpus Christi Light News, Corpus Christi Business News, Record Star and Wingspan.

**Websites and the Internet** – The Corpus Christi MPO website ([www.corpuschristi-mpo.org](http://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org)) is the official platform to inform the public of activities. It provides an easy access to information about the plans, programs and policies of the MPO. The website features the latest information on public meetings, its schedules, agendas, presentations, handouts, flyers and minutes, as well as media releases, public surveys, electronic versions of plans, reports, policies and program information, and a calendar of events. It also solicits requests for proposals and requests for qualifications for professional services to the MPO's planning activities. The site includes a search feature that allows users to find specific documents or other information using key words.

Websites have replaced television as the primary source of information for the public and a key medium for content delivery. With cell phone and Internet access nearing ubiquity, the public has increased their sophistication and understanding of the web's capabilities, which in turn has increased their expectations of information available on the Internet. The convenience afforded by the Internet in allowing users to participate from the location and time of their choosing has pushed online participation above the total combined participation of in-person meetings. Most agencies are beginning to host web-based workshops that mirror the information and interactive opportunities available at in-person meetings.

Public information is released for public review and comment and is available at <http://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org>. This address is included on all communications announcing the public review and comment opportunity. This site includes the physical and mailing address of the Corpus Christi MPO office, phone numbers, and staff e-mail addresses as well as the contact us form.

**Social Media** – The Corpus Christi MPO currently manages a Twitter and Facebook profile to post announcements on public meetings on a frequent basis. Through the social media profiles, the MPO also distributes the live streaming of its TPC meeting. Social media also provides an opportunity for the MPO to reach more of the public for their input into the MPO's ongoing planning process.

Social media, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram can personalize the agency by projecting a "human" face. It also allows direct communication, in real-time and unfiltered by the media, which can foster an interactive dialogue with the public. From a marketing perspective, it offers a less-expensive alternative to traditional advertising and can reach more people faster, build brand awareness, and drive traffic to agency websites through links to additional information. Social Media outreach can provide interested stakeholders with project information, announcements, documents, and opportunities for input or discussion. Social media, such as Twitter, WhatsApp, and Facebook, allows for the use of a wide variety of media formats, including video. Social media allow stakeholders to share and obtain information quickly, effectively, and at low cost. Social media platforms provide the chance to inform a wide range of people about issues and to invite users to become involved in a variety of ways. Social media platforms provide opportunity for greater involvement of stakeholders and should be used to compliment other outreach activities. Not all stakeholders have access to the internet and this must be taken into account in its use and application.

**Local Civic Groups** – Involving local agencies with specific interests can solicit potential stakeholders using those agencies lines of communication. This can be email lists, meeting announcements, etc.

## **METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT**

The traditional public meeting—including hearings, open houses, and town hall meetings—is the outreach technique most widely used; although a significant level of doubt about their usefulness exists. The meetings are criticized as ineffective at engaging and interacting with the public, failing to attract sufficient numbers of participants, encouraging only the most vocal opponents to attend, ignoring the time and financial constraints

that limit the public's ability to participate, and serving as an agency formality to meet legal requirements rather than an honest and open forum to gather meaningful input. The public often leaves these meetings feeling unsatisfied with the process and that their opinions will not have any influence over final decisions. Worse still, the public meeting format has the potential to antagonize the public, where avid supporters and opponents are vehemently pitted against each other. All of this serves to further discourage public participation. Several alternative methods that the Corpus Christi MPO will use are described below.

Upon request, language translation, including sign and foreign language interpreters and handouts in large print or Braille, will be available. Additionally, staff will make every effort to accommodate requests from persons with disabilities. A minimum of ten calendar days advance notice is required for these arrangements to be provided. Public meeting notices will provide the telephone number and e-mail address to request special arrangements. When the MPO is not able to host in-person public meetings, it will provide online participation opportunities such as virtual public meetings to gather input from the community.

**Regularly Scheduled Policy Committee and Advisory Committee Meetings** – TPC and subcommittee meetings will serve as public comment forums for any draft document and their updates, in addition to all other public meetings. TPC meetings are announced through the Corpus Christi MPO's website.

#### **VIRTUAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

This outreach technique expanded rapidly as a result of the Pandemic. The concept is to inform the public through collateral, e-dashboard, website, media and social media methods. As the Corpus Christi MPO gathers increasing amounts of data and expands our analysis capabilities, staff will work to provide this wealth of information to the public in an interactive way. Having readily accessible information about performance can drive performance-based planning and strengthen outreach to stakeholders and other agencies. By enhancing the website, users can efficiently access MPO materials, including meeting agendas, reports and studies. Staff will continue to engage with the media on the progress of the regional priorities and other transportation issues impacting transportation. The Corpus Christi MPO will develop and maintain a data dashboard that provides members with transportation data specific to their municipalities and the region.

**Video** – One of several visualization techniques, video can increase understanding of complex transportation plans, policies, and programs. Video recordings of Transportation Policy Committee meetings are posted online at <https://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org/index.html>, according to the Texas Government Code § 551.128.

**Workshops** – Workshops (including intense and often lengthy “charrette” sessions) and small group meetings provide a more interactive format that allows for greater public discussion and interaction with agency staff and decision-makers. These allow stakeholders and station tenants to share information and ideas and improve the overall experience. Splitting attendees of large workshops into small groups to work through specific problems is an effective way of capturing creative ideas from the public.

**Task Forces** – Task forces are any agency-created or sanctioned group meant to represent diverse opinions and aid in planning or operations decision making. These committees go by various names, such as working groups or citizen, community, technical, or steering advisory committees. If a vocal or powerful group begins to monopolize the public dialogue creating a Task Force can provide balanced representation and ensure that all sides are expressed in the public conversation. Often it is necessary to the success of these efforts to hire a neutral facilitator to run the meetings.

**Speakers Bureau** – A number of communities have established speakers bureaus with staff, or other effective speakers, that are available to make presentations on local government programs or topics. Since many service organizations, school classrooms, and other community organizations need short programs or speakers on a regular basis, it is a great opportunity for local jurisdictions to get the word out about some great services and programs, emerging issues, or to discuss plans on the horizon. It also helps stay connected with the community in a positive way, and often, to learn of interests or concerns of the community groups.

**Community Surveys** – Surveys can take many forms and use various methods of delivery including intercept surveys, printed surveys, web-based surveys, phone surveys, and short message service or text message surveys (for cell phones). For surveys to work the MPO will ensure the messages are both engaging and of interest to the targeted public and reach the appropriate populations. Understand residents' priorities through public opinion research includes both qualitative and quantitative information. A common example is ranking priority for different goals or outcomes to help support making tradeoffs and prioritizing investments.

**Focus Groups** – Focus groups are most often used when agencies desire information about specific issues. Critical to the success of a focus group is having balanced representation and keeping the group at a manageable number so that each person contributes to a substantive discussion. This can take the form of having statistically valid representation based on gender, race, age, income, or home or work location. It can also take the form of having increased representation from disadvantaged or marginalized groups in order to provide them a forum for their voices to be specifically represented.

**Crowd Sourcing** – An emerging Internet technology that has significant potential for public involvement is crowdsourcing. The term is a merger of “crowd” and “outsourcing.” It harnesses the collective intelligence and creativity of online users to generate concepts and ideas that are then reviewed and critiqued by other members of the online community. These types of efforts may require a neutral moderator in the same way as a task force.

**Appreciative Inquiry** – Appreciative Inquiry is a facilitated process to discover past and current practices that inform and inspire participants as they strive to collaboratively create and implement an ideal future. Unlike many decision-making processes that focus on what is not working, Appreciative Inquiry focuses on what is already working or and where people want to increase what is working. It does not focus on the identification or solving of problems, but rather envisioning and creating a positive future. This is an excellent method to begin developing scenarios. When using Appreciative Inquiry at the regional level it is important to make sure participants represent all communities and groups and that very broad access is created to include as many people as possible. Follow the 4-D cycle for implementing the Appreciative Inquiry process.

1. **Discovery:** craft questions, develop interview guide, train interviewers, conduct interviews, share stories from interviews about best practices, map the core of the findings.
2. **Dream:** reflect on a focal question, engage in a dream dialogue, clarify the collective dream, creatively enact the dream, determine common themes, create an organizational dream map and document the dream.
3. **Design:** identify a meaningful social architecture, select relevant and strategic design elements, identify organizational design preferences, craft provocative propositions.
4. **Destiny:** review, communicate and celebrate accomplishments, generate a list of potential actions, and self-organize for inspired action.



**Citizen Juries** – Citizen juries involve creating a “jury”; a representative sample of citizens (usually selected in a random or stratified manner) who are briefed in detail on the background and current thinking relating to a particular issue or project. The issue they are asked to consider is one that has an effect across the region and where a representative and democratic decision-making process is required. The “jury” is presented with a range of possible alternatives. Citizen jurors consider the alternatives and make a judgment as to the most attractive alternative for the region. They present their decision as they would in legal juries, often in the form of a report. The report may include recommendations for future actions or directions. In most cases, the responsible agency agrees in advance that it will implement whatever decision the citizen jury makes. Citizen juries involve the wider community in the decision-making process in a representative fashion. Participants are engaged as citizens with no formal alignments or allegiances. The random selection is intended to prevent strong advocates for any particular outcome to lobby for inclusion. Citizen jurors are expected to bring with them an intrinsic worth in the good sense and wisdom born of their own knowledge and personal experience. Citizen juries provide the opportunity to add to that knowledge and to exchange ideas with their fellow citizens. The result is a collective one, in which each juror has a valuable contribution to make.

**Telephone Townhall** – The telephone town hall (TTH) technology allows a region to efficiently call tens of thousands of residents to invite them to participate in a call-in meeting. The TTH technology connects people from all corners of the region to the public meeting, so, it's a particularly useful way to hear from a cross-section of the region on issues that affect people throughout the region. It makes it easier to hear from those who don't always speak up, since all have equal opportunity to speak without the glare of a spotlight. Although there won't be time for everyone to speak, and there isn't much opportunity for give and take, all who call in may leave a comment, and receive a reply later. It's also common to intersperse some polling questions to get a response from all listeners on some important questions.

**Consensus Conference** – A consensus conference is a type of public meeting that allows stakeholders to be involved in assessing an issue or proposal and working together to find common ground and deliver consensus-based input. The consensus conference is a dialogue between experts and citizens. It is open to the public and the media. This is an opportunity to include all stakeholders, especially marginalized communities. Formal consensus conferences are generally last several days and include the following activities:

- Panelists hear experts' responses to questions
- After hearing these responses, panelists ask follow-up questions
- The audience is given an opportunity to ask questions
- The panel deliberates and prepares a position statement to achieve consensus on the issue
- Panelists present outcomes
- Planning committee prepares a report of the outcomes and distributes to panelists, media, and decision-making bodies

**Citizens Panel** – The citizens panel plays a role by formulating questions or issues discussed at a consensus conference (above) for a selection of experts to answer. The citizen panel has specific meetings to prepare for the Consensus Conference. An advisory/planning committee has the overall responsibility for making sure that all rules of a democratic, fair, and transparent process are followed. Consensus conferences are used where the topic being investigated concerns topics with issues about leadership, science, or technology. They require a strict adherence to the rules of implementation to be successful. Where members of the community feel their views go unheard, the consensus conference offers a participatory technique for democratic participation.

**Stakeholder Interviews** – Interviews with stakeholders are one-to-one conversations about a specific topic or issue. The primary purpose of these interviews is to obtain project-relevant information and elicit stakeholder reactions and suggestions. Stakeholders are likely to have knowledge, wisdom, and insight that can help an agency in its decision process. Stakeholder interviews provide a broad overview of the interviewees’ opinions about a specific topic that may reveal hidden concerns or ideas that would not be expressed in response to a set number of specific questions. These are especially useful when interview regional leaders that are elected, appointed or accepted as leaders.

**Study Circle** – Study Circles are voluntary groups of 8-15 people who meet three to six times to explore a subject or issue. A Study Circle process often involves numerous individual Study Circle groups meeting during the same time period to discuss issues of common concern. Each Study Circle group meeting commonly lasts 2-3 hours and is directed by a moderator whose role is to aid a lively but focused dialogue. Between meetings, participants read materials they were given at the end of the last meeting. These materials are usually compiled by the sponsor or organizer of the particular study circle and used as springboards for dialogue. By encouraging people to formulate their own ideas about issues and to share them with others, Study Circles help overcome people's lack of information and feelings of inadequacy in the face of complex problems. At the end of a Study Circle process, participants from all the individual Study Circles may come together in a large meeting to work on the action items from different circles.

**World Café** – A World Café is a meeting process that involves a series of simultaneous conversations around a particular issue or topic. A World Café typically lasts 2-3 hours and consists of numerous table conversations involving 3-5 persons per table. Each table has a “host” who stays at the table during the entire event and keeps the table discussion on task. During the course of a World Café, participants change tables numerous times and discuss the same general topic with a variety of other participants, delving more deeply into the topic during each subsequent conversation. This enables ideas to flow around the room and participants to connect with a larger group of individuals and hear new perspectives. World Café questions begin at a general level and move toward more specific questions with each group rotation. Through this process, participants are able to identify common themes or common ground in response to each question.

**Public Meetings** – The category of “public meetings” encompasses any technique where an agency hosts an event at a specific date, time, and location. Included are formal public hearings, regularly occurring public meetings, open houses, workshops, charrettes, and small group meetings. These provide a structured environment for the public to interact with the sponsoring agency, receive information and provide input.

The Corpus Christi MPO will host these events to gather input and build consensus among various transportation stakeholders. To facilitate greater participation in public meetings, the following criteria are considered when selecting meeting locations. Ideally, the meetings are held in person; however, under certain circumstances, an in-person meeting may not be feasible, the MPO will hold virtual public meeting(s). These criteria also reflect Environmental Justice considerations.

- 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 of 1990.
- Presentations and supporting documentation are available at meetings.

## APPENDIX A. TRANSPORTATION LEXICON

**3-C** - Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive: planning process.

**AADT - Average Annual Daily Traffic:** The number of vehicles passing a fixed point in a year, averaged over 365 days.

**Accessibility:** A measure of how easy it is to reach (and interact with) destinations or activities around a city or county.

**ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990:** Federal law that requires public facilities (including transportation services) to be accessible to persons with disabilities including those with mental disabilities, temporary disabilities, and the conditions related to substance abuse.

**ADT - Average Daily Traffic:** The number of vehicles passing a fixed point in a day, averaged over a number of days. The number of count days included in the average varies with the intended use of data.

**AMPO - Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations:** Nonprofit membership organization serving the interests of metropolitan planning organizations nationwide.

**AVO - Average Vehicle Occupancy:** The ratio of person trips to vehicle trips; often used as a criteria in judging the success of trip reduction programs.

**AVR - Average Vehicle Ridership:** The number of employees scheduled to start work during specified period divided by the number of vehicles arriving at the site during that same period.

**CCRTA - Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority:** "The B" as it is locally known, is the urban public transportation service provider. Operations began in January 1986 with services to the citizens of the Coastal Bend, including the cities of Agua Dulce, Banquete, Bishop, Corpus Christi, Driscoll, Gregory, Port Aransas, Robstown, and San Patricio City.

**CMP - Congestion Management Process:** A systematic process that addresses congestion in the metropolitan area. It emphasizes effective management and operations, and shall include methods to monitor and evaluate the performance of the multi-modal transportation systems, identify causes of congestion, identify and evaluate alternative actions, provide information supporting the implementation of actions, and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of implementation actions.

**CSJ - Control Section Job Number:** TxDOT assigned number for projects entered into the Project Development Program (PDP). This number is unique to each individual project.

**DOT - Department of Transportation:** Agency responsible for transportation at the local, state, or federal level. For title 23 U.S.C. federal-aid highway actions, this would mean the Federal Highway Administration and for federal-aid transit actions under title 49 U.S.C, this would mean the Federal Transit Administration.

**EIS - Environmental Impact Statement:** A National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document that explains the purpose and need for a project, presents project alternatives, analyzes the likely impact of each, explains the choice of a preferred alternative, and finally details measures to be taken in order to mitigate the impacts of the preferred alternative.

**EJ - Environmental Justice:** Describes the impact of transportation plans or projects, either positive or negative, on a particular community or population. Derived from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Environmental Justice strives to ensure public involvement of low income and minority groups in decision making, to prevent

disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low income and minority groups, and to assure that these groups receive equal benefits from transportation improvements.

**ETJ - Extraterritorial Jurisdiction:** Geographic area subject to urban municipality ordinance and platting requirements.

**FAST ACT – Fixing America’s Surface Transportation:** The federal law passed in 2015 to provide long-term funding for surface transportation infrastructure, planning and investment. It expires on September 30, 2020. It is likely that continuing resolutions will be necessary to extend past this expiration date.

**Federal Aid Highway:** Those highways eligible for assistance under Title 23 of the United States Code (U.S.C), which does not include those functionally classified as local streets or rural minor collectors.

**FHPP - Federal High Priority Projects:** Discretionary projects earmarked by the U.S. Congress as high priorities at the federal level during the Congressional appropriations and reauthorization process. This amounts to roughly 5% of the total transportation budget.

**FHWA - Federal Highway Administration:** U.S. Department of Transportation Division responsible for administering federal highway transportation programs under title 23 U.S.C.

**Fiscal Constraint:** A requirement, that all plans be financially – constrained, balanced programmed expenditures are not more than the reasonably expected sources of funding over the period of the TIP or Long-Range Transportation Plan.

**FTA - Federal Transit Administration:** Federal entity responsible for transit planning and programs under title 49 U.S.C.

**Funding Category:** The Texas Transportation Commission (Commission) and TxDOT use the UTP as TxDOT’s ten-year plan to guide transportation project development and construction. The UTP has two major components: Preservation & Safety and Mobility.

**F. CLASS – Functional Class:** Categorizes streets and highways according to their ability to 1) move traffic, and 2) provide access to adjacent properties. It also determines eligibility for federal funds. There are three main functional classes as defined by the United States Federal Highway Administration: arterial, collector, and local. In addition to mobility and access, other factors can help determine the proper category to which a particular roadway belongs - such as trip length, speed limit, volume, and vehicle mix.

**FY - Fiscal Year:** A federal fiscal or budget year; runs from October 1 through September 30 for the MPO and the federal government.

**Goals:** The description of a desired outcomes. The purpose toward which funding is directed. (e.g., provide safe and secure transportation across modes.)

**HOV - High Occupancy Vehicle:** In Texas, vehicles carrying two (2) or more people receive this designation and may travel on freeways, expressways and other large volume roads in lanes designated for high occupancy vehicles.

**IMS - Incident Management System:** A systematic process first required under SAFETEA-LU, and continued under the FAST Act to provide information on accidents and identify causes and improvements to the Transportation system to increase safety of all users.

**Intergovernmental Agreement:** Legal instrument describing tasks to be accomplished and/or funds to be paid between government agencies.

**Indicator:** A performance measure that is used to identify relevant background conditions and trends.

**ITE - Institute of Transportation Engineers:** An international society of professionals in transportation and traffic engineering; publishes Trip Generation (a manual of trip generation rates by land use type).

**ITS - Intelligent Transportation Systems:** A range of advanced computer and communications technologies that improve mobility, enhance safety, maximize the use of existing transportation facilities, conserve energy resources and reduce adverse environmental effects.

**LCA – Lifecycle Cost Analysis:** A methodology for assessing the sum of project costs for all stages of the lifespan of a transportation project. This includes planning, design, construction, environmental impact mitigation, operations, preventive maintenance, and reconstruction.

**LEP - Limited English Proficiency:** Clarifies the responsibilities of recipients of federal financial assistance and assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities to LEP persons, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations.

**LOS - Level of Service:** A qualitative assessment of a road's operating condition, generally described using a scale of A (little congestion) to E/F (severe congestion).

**MAP-21 - Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act:** Enacted July 6, 2012, the federal law creates a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991.

**MPA - Metropolitan Planning Area:** Encompass the entire existing urbanized area and the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within a 20-year forecast period for the metropolitan transportation plan.

**Maintenance:** Activities undertaken to keep transportation infrastructure and equipment operating as intended, to eliminate deficiencies, and to extend or achieve the expected life of facilities before reconstruction is needed. These include routine or day-to-day activities (e.g., pothole patching, mowing, litter removal, guardrail repair and striping, routine bus inspection and maintenance, and periodic dredging of channels) and periodic major projects (e.g., resurfacing roadways and runways and rehabilitating bridges).

**Measures:** Indicators of how well the transportation system or specific transportation projects will improve transportation conditions. Used in assessing relevant background conditions and trends to aid identifying projects for funding and trajectory toward desired future conditions.

**MG - Minimum Guarantee:** A funding category created in TEA-21 that guarantees a 90% return of contributions on formula funds to every state.

**Mobility:** The ability to move or be moved freely and easily. It is typically used in conjunction with accessibility. This term is also used by TxDOT for one of the major groups of transportation funds. funds.CAT 7: Metropolitan Mobility and Rehabilitation; CAT 9: Transportation Enhancements; CAT 10: Supplemental Transportation Projects; CAT 11: District Discretionary; CAT 12: Strategic Priority.

**MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization:** The forum of local elected officials responsible for cooperative transportation decision-making; required for urbanized areas with populations over 50,000.

**MTP - Metropolitan Transportation Plan:** 25-year forecast required of MPOs and state planning agencies; considers a range of social, environmental, energy, and economic factors in determining overall regional goals and how transportation can best meet these goals.

**NHS - The National Highway System:** Consists of roadways important to the nation's economy, defense, and mobility. The NHS includes the following subsystems of roadways:

- **Interstate:** The Eisenhower Interstate System of highways retains its separate identity within the NHS.
- **Other Principal Arterials:** These are highways in rural and urban areas which provide access between an arterial and a major port, airport, public transportation facility, or other intermodal transportation facility.
- **Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET):** This is a network of highways which are important to the United States' strategic defense policy and which provide defense access, continuity, and emergency capabilities for defense purposes.
- **Major Strategic Highway Network Connectors:** These are highways which provide access between major military installations and highways which are part of the Strategic Highway Network.
- **Intermodal Connectors:** These highways provide access between major intermodal facilities and the other four subsystems making up the National Highway System. A listing of all official NHS Intermodal Connectors is available.

**Operations:** The implementation of policies, projects, and technologies to improve road performance. The overriding objectives of operations programs include minimizing congestion (and its side effects), improving safety, and enhancing overall mobility.

**Performance Based Planning and Programming:** The process developed to evaluate and select transportation projects. This includes monitoring progress toward achieving goals and objectives at the agency strategic, decision-making and project delivery levels.

**Officials:** Are people who have governmental decision-making, planning or administrative responsibilities that relate to MPO activities.

**Phase:** Project phase for federal funding - PE: Preliminary Engineering; ROW: Right of Way Acquisition; CON: Construction; T: Transfer.

**PMS - Pavement Management System:** A systematic process utilized by state agencies and MPOs to analyze and summarize pavement information for use in selecting and implementing cost-effective pavement construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance programs; required for roads in the National Highway System as a part of ISTEA; the extent to which the remaining public roads are included in the process is left to the discretion of state and local officials; criteria found in 23 CFR 500.021-209.

**Preservation & Safety:** funding category of the UTP includes maintenance and rehabilitation projects to maintain the existing transportation system and to improve certain safety aspects. Categories are: CAT 1: Preventive Maintenance and Rehabilitation; CAT 6: Structures Replacement and Rehabilitation (Bridges); CAT 8: Safety.

**PROJ ID - Project Identification:** Identification number assigned by the MPO for local tracking and identification. Used to relate projects to the MTP.

**PTMS - Public Transportation Facilities and Equipment Management System:** A systematic process utilized by state agencies and MPOs to collect and analyze information on the condition and cost of transit assets on a

continual basis; data is to be used to help people choose cost effective strategies for providing and keeping transit facilities and equipment in good condition; process must be developed in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs); the use of CMS in non-TMAs is left to the discretion of state and local officials.

**PPP - Public Participation Plan:** Is an integral part of a planning or major decision-making process. It provides opportunities for the public to be involved with the MPO in an exchange of data and ideas. Citizen participation offers an open process in which the rights of the community, to be informed to provide comments to the Government and to receive a response from the Government, are met through a full opportunity to be involved and to express needs and goals.

**Public:** Includes citizens, public agencies, advocacy groups and the private sectors that have an interest in or may be affected by MPO activities.

**RCAT - CCRTA Committee on Accessible Transportation:** Members act as ambassadors on transportation ridership issues related to transportation disadvantaged riders and services.

**Resurfacing:** Projects that are intended to preserve the structural integrity of highway pavements by rehabilitation, minor reconstruction, and pavement milling and recycling.

**ROW - Right-of-Way:** Real property that is used for transportation purposes; defines the extent of the corridor that can be used for the road and associated drainage.

**Routine Maintenance:** Operations that may be predicted and planned in advance. These operations (e.g.: cleaning and debris removals, regular inspections, mowing, preventive maintenance, etc.), which may be preventive or corrective in nature, should be conducted on a regularly scheduled basis using standard procedures.

**RTDM - Regional Travel Demand Model:** This is a tool for forecasting impacts of urban developments on travel patterns as well as testing various transportation alternative solutions to traffic patterns. The travel patterns are determined from US census results and in simple terms tell where residents live and where they go to work or school on a regional wide basis.

**Safety Analysis:** A comprehensive assessment of safety outcomes with and without a specific project under consideration, including a general analysis of historical crash data on the facility under consideration, a detailed review of fatal crashes and their causes.

**SHSP – Strategic Highway Safety Plan:** A Federally required plan to reduce crashes on all public roads adopted by TxDOT in 2019. The current plan includes 7 emphasis areas.

**SIB - State Infrastructure Bank:** Method of financing large capital projects by taking advantage of borrowing against future state revenues.

**SMP - Statewide Mobility Plan:** TxDOT's 10-year plan for adding capacity to the system by using the Mobility Category Funds of Federal and State Transportation funding.

**Sponsoring Agencies:** Organizations or governmental units, which enter into agreements with the MPO to undertake transportation related activities.

**SPP - Statewide Preservation Plan:** TxDOT's 10-year plan for maintaining the system using the preservation categories of Federal and State Transportation funding. It is one half of the overall 10-year Unified Transportation Plan.

**Stakeholders:** Individuals and groups with an interest in the outcomes of policy decisions and actions.

**STIP - State Transportation Improvement Program:** The TxDOT Five Year Work Program as prescribed by federal law. It incorporates the TIPs from all MPO in the state without modification. Projects included in the STIP must be consistent with the regional and state long-range transportation plan.

**TAC - Technical Advisory Committee:** A standing committee of most metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs); function is to provide advice on plans or actions of the MPO from planners, engineers, and other staff members (not general citizens).

**TCEQ - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality:** The TCEQ is the environmental agency for the state.

**TCI - Texas Congestion Index:** An index to measure the magnitude of congestion in a single performance measure across the state. The index measures the mobility of people and goods in each Texas metropolitan area, with attention to the delay time experienced by drivers.

**TIP - Transportation Improvement Program:** A priority list of transportation projects developed by a metropolitan planning organization that is to be carried out within the four (4) year period following its adoption; must include documentation of federal and state funding sources for each project and be consistent with adopted MPO long range transportation plans and local government comprehensive plans.

**Title VI - Civil Rights Act:** As a recipient of federal funds, the MPO ensures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any agency programs or activities.

**TMA - Transportation Management Area:** An area designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation given to all urbanized areas with a population over 200,000 (or other area when requested by the Governor and MPO); these areas must comply with special transportation planning requirements regarding congestion management systems, project selection and certification; requirements identified in 23 CFR - 450.300-33.6.

**TMMP - Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan:** This is a state-based requirement intended to serve as a framework for identifying unmet transportation needs in the state's larger metropolitan areas. The TMMP is a needs-based plan which quantifies transportation needs beyond the fiscal constraint barrier.

**TPC - Transportation Policy Committee:** The decision-making body for the MPO. This committee was created to serve as spokespersons for the citizens of the metropolitan area and to prioritize and direct federal transportation funds to local projects. The TPC is comprised of elected officials from the cities and two counties in the urbanized area, along with TxDOT, RTA, and Port Authority. TPC meetings are open to the public on the first Thursday of each month at 1:30 P.M. at the Corpus Christi City Hall, City Council Chambers.

**Transportation Disadvantaged:** People who are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation due to disability, income status or age.

**Transportation Alternatives Program:** A funding program that includes the federal Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Program. These funds may be awarded for the following activities: Construction of sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic-calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Construction of infrastructure-related projects that provide safe routes for non-drivers. Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrian, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users. Construction of infrastructure-related projects to improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school.



**TSMO - Transportation Systems Management and Operations:** Strategies to improve the efficiency of the transportation system through operational improvements such as the use of bus priority or reserved lanes, signalization, access management, turn restrictions, etc.

**TTI - Texas Transportation Institute:** A legislatively created research center, located at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, whose purpose is to conduct and facilitate research and serve as an information exchange on issues related to urban transportation problems in Texas.

**TxDOT - Texas Department of Transportation:** State agency responsible for transportation issues in Texas.

**UZA - Urbanized Area:** A Census-designated area consisting of a central core and adjacent densely settled territory with populations of 50,000 residents or more.

**UPWP - Unified Planning Work Program:** Developed by MPOs to identify transportation and planning activities anticipated within the next one to two years, including a schedule for the completion of the identified tasks and activities.

**UTP - Unified Transportation Plan:** This is the state's 10-year Transportation Plan with the first 10 years programmed and the second 15 years of projects under design. This document has two parts. The two parts are: The SMP and SPP, respectively.

**V/C Ratio Volume over Capacity Ratio:** This is a roadway performance measure to show how a highway volume compares with a highway's capacity.

## APPENDIX B. TITLE VI COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Detailed information is found in a separate document, the *Adopted 2018-2020 Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan*: [https://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org/02\\_about\\_titlevi.html](https://www.corpuschristi-mpo.org/02_about_titlevi.html)

### INTRODUCTION

As a recipient of federal financial assistance and under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related Title VI statutes, The Corpus Christi MPO ensures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any agency programs or activities. All programs funded in whole or in part from federal financial assistance are subject to Title VI requirements. The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 extended this to all programs within an agency that receives federal assistance regardless of the funding source for individual programs.

This policy is intended to establish a procedure under which complaints alleging discrimination in Corpus Christi MPO's provisions, services, or Corpus Christi MPO activities can be made by persons who are not employees of Corpus Christi MPO. Any person who believes Corpus Christi MPO, or any entity who receives federal financial assistance from or through Corpus Christi MPO (i.e., sub-recipients, sub-contractors, or sub-grantees), has subjected them or any specific class of individuals to unlawful discrimination may file a complaint of discrimination. The Corpus Christi MPO will follow timelines set forth in guidance from the Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and the Department of Justice for processing Title VI discrimination complaints.

### WHEN TO FILE

A complaint of discrimination must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged act of Discrimination, or discovery thereof; or where there has been a continuing course of conduct, the date on which that conduct was discontinued. Filing means a written complaint must be postmarked before the expiration of the 180 calendar day period. The filing date is the day you complete, sign, and mail the complaint form. The complaint form and consent/release form must be dated and signed for acceptance. Complaints received more than 180 calendar days after the alleged discrimination will not be processed and will be returned to the complainant with a letter explaining why the complaint could not be processed and alternative agencies to which a report may be made.

### WHERE TO FILE

In order to be processed, signed original complaint forms must be mailed to:

Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Transportation Planning Director  
602 N. Staples Street, Suite 300  
Corpus Christi, TX 78401

Upon request, reasonable accommodations will be made for persons who are unable to complete the complaint form due to disability or limited-English proficiency. A complaint may also be filed by a representative on behalf of a complainant.

Persons who are not satisfied with the findings of the Corpus Christi MPO may seek remedy from other applicable state or federal agencies.

## REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF A COMPLAINT

In order to be processed, a complaint must be complete and submitted in writing and contain the following information:

- Name, address, and phone number of the complainant.
- Name(s) and address(es) and business(es)/organization(s) of person(s) who allegedly discriminated.
- Date of alleged discriminatory act(s).
- Basis of complaint (i.e. race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability).
- A statement of complaint.
- A signed consent release form.

## COMPLAINT PROCESS OVERVIEW

The following is a description of how a discrimination complaint will be handled once received by Corpus Christi MPO.

1. **A complaint is received by the Corpus Christi MPO:** Complaints must be in writing and signed by the complainant or their designated representative. If the complainant is unable to complete the form in writing due to disability or limited-English proficiency, upon request reasonable accommodations will be made to ensure the complaint is received and processed in a timely manner. Complainants wishing to file a complaint that do not have access to the Internet or the ability to pick up a form will be mailed a complaint form to complete. The complainant will be notified if the complaint form is incomplete and asked to furnish the missing information.
2. **Complaint is logged into tracking database:** Completed complaint forms will be logged into the complaint tracking database; basic data will be maintained on each complaint received.
3. **Determine jurisdiction:** The Corpus Christi MPO Transportation Planning Director will complete an initial review of the complaint. The purpose of this review is to determine if the complaint meets basic criteria.

Criteria required for a complete complaint:

- Basis of alleged discrimination (i.e. race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age or disability).
- Determination of timeliness will also be made to ensure that the complaint was filed within the 180 day period requirement.
- The program in which the alleged discrimination occurred will be examined to ensure that the complaint was filed with the appropriate agency. During this process, if a determination was made in which the program or activity that the alleged discrimination occurred is not related to the Corpus Christi MPO program or activity, every attempt will be made to establish the correct agency. Whenever possible and assuming consent was granted on the Consent/Release form, the complaint will be forwarded to the appropriate agency. If the complaint is a transportation related discrimination complaint and the Corpus Christi MPO or its sub-recipients are named as the respondent, then the complaint shall be forwarded to TxDOT Civil Rights Division, 125 E. 11th Street, Austin, Texas, 78701.

Thereafter, the procedures will follow through as indicated here.

4. **Initial written notice to complainant:** Within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint, the Corpus Christi MPO will send notice to the complainant confirming receipt of the complaint; if needed the notice will request additional information, notify complainant that the activity is not related to a Corpus Christi

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MPO program or activity, or does not meet deadline requirements. Conclusions made in step three will determine the appropriate response to the complaint. If any additional information is needed from the complainant, it will be communicated at this point in the process. A copy of the written response, as well as the complaint form, will be forwarded to the Texas Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, Contract Compliance Section for informational purposes only.

5. **Investigation of complaint:** The Corpus Christi MPO Transportation Planning Director will confer with the program Manager to determine the most appropriate fact-finding process to ensure that all available information is collected in an effort to reach the most informed conclusion and resolution of the complaint. The type of investigation techniques used may vary depending on the nature and circumstances of the alleged discrimination. An investigation may include but is not limited to:
  - Internal meetings with Corpus Christi MPO staff and legal counsel.
  - Consultation with state and federal agencies.
  - Interviews of complainant(s).
  - Review of documentation (i.e. planning, public involvement, and technical program activities).
  - Interviews and review of documentation with other agencies involved.
  - Review of technical analysis method (if applicable).
  - Review of demographic data.
6. **Determination of investigation:** An investigation must be completed within 60 days of receiving the complete complaint, unless the facts and circumstances warrant otherwise. A determination will be made based on information obtained. The Corpus Christi MPO Transportation Planning Director and/or designee will render a recommendation for action, including formal and/or informal resolution strategies in a report of findings to the Corpus Christi MPO Transportation Planning Director.
7. **Notification of determination:** Within 10 days of completion of an investigation, the complainant must be notified by the Corpus Christi MPO Transportation Planning Director of the final decision. The notification will advise the complainant of his/her appeal rights with state and federal agencies if he/she is dissatisfied with the final decision. A copy of this letter, along with the report of findings, will be forwarded to the Texas Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, Contract Compliance Section for information purposes.