



Public Involvement Plan - DRAFT

January 2018

Prepared by



2018 BILLINGS URBAN AREA LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the public involvement plan (PIP) for the 2018 Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Public involvement and agency coordination during this plan is critical for plan development, acceptance, and adoption by the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC), Yellowstone County Planning Board (YCPB), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), and City of Billings. The PIP was developed based on past public involvement efforts for the 2014 LRTP and to be consistent with the public involvement elements of the YCBP Participation Plan (2009) and MDT's Public Involvement Plan (2018). The following topics are covered:

- **Approach and Goals**
- **Agency Involvement**
- **Tools and Resources**
- **Public Involvement Action Plan**

The LRTP will include four key items: 1) changes to the Billings transportation network, land uses, and socioeconomic characteristics that have occurred since the 2014 plan; 2) integration of completed pedestrian, bicycle, transit, freight, roadway and security plans; 3) evaluation and prioritization of future infrastructure investments, and 4) incorporation of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), MDT's statewide planning requirements, and local requirements.

Designated Public Information Contact

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APPROACH AND GOALS

A collaborative and context-sensitive public engagement process is proposed with this plan. The project team is committed to a public involvement approach that strives to achieve the goals listed below.

- Facilitate an open, honest, and transparent decision-making process conducted through constructive two-way communication between the project team, agencies, and the public.
- Provide early and continuous opportunities for the public to share values, understand the opportunities and constraints within the study area, develop potential solutions, and raise issues and concerns to be considered.
- Inform and encourage community participation.
- Improve the public involvement process by measuring the effectiveness and modifying methods based on evaluation.

This PIP outlines how and when interested parties and stakeholders can provide and receive information throughout the life of the LRTP.

AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Steering Committee (SC): Includes the MPO staff, City of Billings staff, Yellowstone County staff, MDT staff, MET Transit staff, Lockwood Steering Committee, and elected officials from the City of Billings City Council, County Commission, and YCPB;

- Role: Attend monthly meetings with the consultant team. Review and provide comments on the project deliverables. Provide guidance and decision making to the plan development.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): Includes staff and representatives from the MPO, City of Billings, Yellowstone County, MET Transit, and MDT.

- Role: Provide a technical resource and sounding board to the plan development.

Elected Officials: Billings City Council, City/County Planning Board, Yellowstone County Board of Planning, and Yellowstone County Commission.

- Role: Provide insights to the project and support for plan adoption.

Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC): Includes the Board of Yellowstone County Commissioners, City of Billings Council, Yellowstone County Board of Planning, MDT, and FHWA.

- Role: Provide insights to the plan development and adopt the plan.

Resource Agencies (RA): Resource agencies provide experience and knowledge that is vital to developing a successful, community-driven, multimodal plan. These agencies will be notified of all public involvement opportunities and given the option for interviews/in-person meetings.

- Role: Provide insights to the plan development.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Branding and Logo

Consultant will develop a logo, color scheme and reporting templates in order to develop brand awareness and cohesiveness with plan materials.



- Evaluation: Branding implemented in all plan materials

Webpage

The primary purposes of the website are to provide a public, 24-hour source for project information and to act as a location for the public to provide comments. The website will be used to post draft and final deliverables, host links to online surveys and mapping, invite and record public comments, and information on upcoming meetings. This will be an update to the existing website:

www.BillingsLRTP.com

- Evaluation: Number of website visits

Media Coordination

Outreach will be conducted to appropriate media outlets, to disseminate information regarding information on the plan and advising the community of public involvement opportunities.

- Evaluation: Number of news articles and media events

Print Materials

The consultant team will prepare two (2) meeting mailers for each public informational meeting (PIM). The meeting mailers will introduce the project, overall schedule, and identify the date and location for the meetings. The two meeting mailers will be postmarked and distributed by the MPO. With input from the consultant team, the MPO will develop four (4) news releases for notifications about the plan development.

Youth Engagement

Involving elementary, middle, and high school teachers is a good way to inform and involve not only students, but also their parents. Social studies and government classes provide a good connection to this planning effort. Youth involvement is also a recommendation of Environmental Justice/Title VI best practices. The consultant team plans to provide outreach to two schools during the plan development.

- Evaluation: Number of students participating.

Online Engagement

A combination of online surveys and an interactive web map will be developed using the tool MetroQuest to solicit input from the public and stakeholders on the existing transportation deficiencies and successes and proposed projects included in the plan. This online survey will be linked to the website and available leading up and during the two PIMs. The survey questions will be the same ones used at the PIMs.

Two interactive maps/surveys will be developed. The first will occur during the goal setting & needs identification phase and the second map will be used during the project identification phase to present proposed projects for comment and prioritization.

- *Evaluation: Number of unique comments received*

Stakeholder Interviews

Consultant will set up, attend, and summarize one-on-one meetings with individuals and groups who have a key interest or stake in the plan. The purpose of these meetings will be to:

- Introduce the plan
- Identify existing transportation deficiencies and/or concerns that should be addressed with the plan
- Gather input on the proposed projects included in the plan

Meetings will be scheduled with several organizations. Consultant will coordinate with the MPO to identify organizations and attend these stakeholder interviews.

- *Evaluation: Feedback collected from stakeholders; stakeholders continued involvement.*

Public Informational Meetings

Two (2) public informational meetings (PIMs) are planned during the development of this plan. **These meetings are tentatively scheduled for Spring and Summer 2018.**

The Spring PIM will provide the public an opportunity to review and provide input on the following three items:

1. What transportation projects have been completed since the 2014 LRTP?
2. What transportation deficiencies exist today?
3. What would you like to see for the future transportation system?

The Summer PIM will provide the public an opportunity to review and provide input on the following items: project list, evaluation, prioritization, and funding.

The PIMs are planned to be held in the study area. Summary documents of each PIM and the public comments received will be prepared for each PIM. The consultant team will work with the MPO to ensure the PIMs are appropriately and effectively advertised to the public through a project mailer, news releases, and project website.

- *Evaluation: How many attendees; How they heard about the meeting; Demographics of participants (age, gender, race); Number of comments received*

Social Media (Plan and online survey engagement)

Social media content and graphics will be developed and provided to MPO to publish on their existing social media networks to provide updates on the plan and to promote meetings and opportunities for online engagement.

- *Evaluation: Number of social media engagements*

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Activity	Major Task	Responsibility
SC Meetings	Member Recruitment	MPO
	Schedule meeting locations, date & time	MPO with KAI support
	Prepare meeting materials and meeting summaries	KAI
	Facilitate and lead meetings	KAI with MPO support
TAC/City Council/P&Z/PCC Meetings	Schedule meeting locations, date & time	MPO with KAI support
	Prepare meeting materials, facilitate and lead meetings and prepare meeting summaries	KAI
Branding and Logo	Prepare plan logo, color scheme, and document templates	KAI
Webpage	Update and maintain	KAI
Youth Engagement	Identify school and classroom opportunities	MPO with KAI support
	Develop materials and meeting summary	KAI
Media Coordination	Develop and distribute media releases	KAI with MPO support
Print Materials	Develop project flyer and meeting announcements	KAI with MPO support
Online Engagement (including MetroQuest)	Develop two online survey, mapping tools and comment summaries	KAI
Stakeholder Interviews	Develop stakeholder list	MPO with KAI support
	Schedule, conduct and summarize interviews	KAI
Public Information Meetings	Schedule meeting location, date & time	MPO with KAI support
	Notifications and media releases	KAI with MPO support
	Technical and written materials and displays, sign in and comment sheets, facilitate and lead meeting, and prepare meeting summaries	KAI
Social Media	Prepare social media content and graphics	KAI
	Post and public content and provide analytics	MPO with KAI support

TIMELINE FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The proposed timeline for public involvement was developed to meet the LRTP plan adoption deadline of Fall 2018.

