



GOBIERNO DE PUERTO RICO
Autoridad de Carreteras y Transportación



Public Involvement Plan

In the **Transportation Planning Process**



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Puerto Rico Metropolitan Planning Organization
San Juan, Aguadilla and Urbanized Areas Under 200,000 Population

Department of Transportation and Public Works
Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority

-U.S. Department
of Transportation

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Introduction

Public involvement is an essential aspect of a good transportation planning process. The integration of the public at the different levels of the transportation decision making seeks to understand the concerns of everyone at stake in the transportation decisions as well as to promote better collaboration in the process. Developing an effective public involvement plan is a strategic effort that requires assembling a selection of techniques to meet the needs of a given transportation plan, program or project.

The organization responsible for the development of the transportation planning is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The MPO is responsible for actively involving all affected parties in an open, cooperative, and collaborative process. Moreover, the federal rule establish that the MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation services, private providers of transportations, representatives of users of public transportation, representation 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 transportation planning process (23 CFR. 450.316).

The Puerto Rico Metropolitan Planning Organization (PRMPO) comprised of three metropolitan areas, San Juan Urbanized Area (SJUA), Aguadilla Urbanized Area (AUA) and the Urbanized Areas Under 200,000 (UZAs) Population. PRMPO is the unified centralized entity that is in charge of developing, executing and revising the Public Involvement Plan (PIP). As it will be describe on the following sections, the head of the PRMPO is the Secretary of the Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW) and the designated recipient of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds is the Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority (PRHTA), therefore these two agencies facilitates the implementation of the activities describe in this document.

This PIP will **guide the public engagement in the transportation planning and programming process, meaning the development for the Puerto Rico Long Range Transportation Plan (PRLRTP), the preparation of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), as well as in the selection and prioritizing of transportation projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Statewide Improvement Program (STIP).**

In this context, the PIP seeks to provide guidance to planners, project managers, consultants, PRMPO members as well as the general public, on how the PRMPO achieve early and continuous public involvement.

Since the implementation of the transportation projects and actions can potentially affect the travel and the daily lives of citizens in terms of the quality of their lives and the environment, it is important that they have the means to provide input and comment in the planning process. That's why the public and the interested parties were consulted in the plan development, from: general orientation about the process, introduction to the transportation planning process, and the opportunity to get involved and provided input. As part of this consultation process, ad hoc committees were created, with representation of special population (the elderly, handicapped, and disadvantaged), as well as engaging freight interests, universities, municipalities, transit system users, regional economic development agencies, and professional organizations.

More than a Federal requirement, this PIP is a proactive process that promotes meaningful and ongoing participation from a broad cross-section of the public representing the diverse points of views on the issues. It is designed to reach a broad representation of the agencies, stakeholders, and citizens. This will facilitate dissemination of information and ideas in a two-way communication process, and will provide and open and ongoing channel for communication and dialogue throughout the course of the transportation planning process.

The plan is divided in six topics or chapters:

- The first section defines what is an MPO and who are the stakeholders of the transportation planning process
- The second section presents an overview of the federal regulations regarding public involvement
- Third section, presents the vision, goals, and objectives of this PIP
- Fourth, presents the public involvement strategies
- Fifth, describes the public involvement guide
- In the final section, it is mention the proposed evaluation process for this PIP

The following document constitutes the PRMPO Public Involvement Plan as prescribe by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) and upheld by the "Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century" also known as MAP-21. The public involvement process described herein applies, at a minimum, to the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and other significant transportation studies. As it will be discus in this document, some of the **specific outreach strategies** are: public meetings, public notices in local newspapers, posting announcements and documents at the agency website (<http://www.dtop.gov.pr>), contact database, email notices, special citizen advisory committees /groups, and a number of other of outreach activities.

The Transportation Planning Process and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Supporting public participation can contribute to better decision making and in the long run, improve the quality of life. Fundamentally, the purpose of the public participation is to ensure that the concerns and issues of the stakeholders in a transportation project are identified and addressed.

The following section will review the transportation planning process as required by the federal regulation. This review will be followed by the description of the organization and composition of the PRMPO and with a list of the groups with a stake in the transportation planning process.

Overview of the Transportation Planning Process

Continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive: Planning 3-c's

The Federal regulation 23 USC 450.316 requires a statewide and metropolitan planning process. In general the **transportation planning process is described as a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive process**. Some of the steps involving the transportation planning process consist of:

- Monitoring existing conditions,
- Forecasting future population and employment growth, including assessing land uses in the region and identify major growth corridors,
- Identifying current and projected future transportation problems and needs, and analyzing, through detailed planning studies, various transportation improvement strategies to address those needs,
- Developing long-range plans and short-range programs of alternative capital improvement and operational strategies for moving people and goods,
- Estimating the impact of recommended future improvements to the transportation system on environmental features, including air quality,
- Developing a financial plan for securing sufficient revenues to cover the costs of implanting strategies

Although there is no single agency or entity responsible for the entire transportation system, the transportation planning process is responsibility of the PRMPO.

What is an MPO?

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a transportation policy-making body made up of representatives from local government and transportation agencies with authority and responsibility in metropolitan planning areas. This organization is designated to carry out the metropolitan area's transportation planning process (FTA C 8100.1C).

This organization was required in an early 1970's Federal legislation. The legislation required the formation of an MPO for any urbanized area with population greater than 50,000, and was created in order to ensure that existing and future transportation expenditure followed the (3-C) planning process: comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative. All Federal funding for transportation projects and programs are channeled through the MPO.

According to FTA dispositions, some of the typical functions of an MPO are:

- Responsible for establishing a fair and impartial setting for all regional decision-making in the metropolitan area
- Identify and evaluate alternative transportation improvement options: use data and planning methods to generate and evaluate alternatives. The planning studies and evaluations are included in the UPWP.
- Prepare and maintain a Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Involve the public in the planning process.

However, the MPO has to coordinate the planning task with their respective state Department of Transportation (DOT), and produce the following documents:

The **Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**, means the official multimodal plan addressing no less than 20 years planning horizon, but is required to be updated every 5 years in air quality attainment area by the MPO through the transportation planning process. In Puerto Rico's case the **MTP or Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), is also called Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTPs), which includes the urbanized areas and its regions.**

The **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** is a prioritized listing/ program of transportation projects covering a period of four years that is developed and formally adopted by an MPO as part of the metropolitan planning process, consistent with the LRTP, and required for projects to be eligible for funding.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a program of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area. The planning activities and studies listed on this document have the purpose of complementing and help to implement the public policy and the strategic projects

recommended in the LRTPs. In the case of Puerto Rico, this document only includes FTA funded projects.

The state DOT must develop the Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

- The **Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan** is a policy oriented document addressing no less than 20 years planning horizon that may also include a list of specific projects. In the case of Puerto Rico, this plan is prepared by the DTPW and PRHTA, and is known as the Puerto Rico Long Range Transportation Plan (PRLRTP).
- The **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)** is a statewide (from Urbanized and Non Urbanized Areas) prioritized listing program of transportation projects covering a period of four years that is consistent with the Long-range Statewide Transportation Plan, metropolitan transportation plan and TIP's, this is required in order for projects to be eligible for federal funding.

Puerto Rico Metropolitan Planning Organization

The responsibilities of the PRMPO are generally to provide a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3C) transportation planning process that results in plans and programs consistent with the comprehensively planned development of the metropolitan planning area. This organization is the forum for cooperative decision-making by elected officials of local government. The specific duties to meet the requirements of the federal legislation include:

- A. Establishment of goals and objectives for the transportation planning process;
- B. To duly consider the recommendations of the Transportation Technical Group and Citizen's on issues relative to the LRTP, the TIP and other matters pertaining to furthering the transportation planning process;
- C. Develop, maintain, review and approval of the **PRLRTP**, LRTPs, UPWP, TIP, PIP;
- D. Promote the participation of the public or public involvement in the transportation planning process.
- E. Distribution and publication of the planning and programming document to the PRMPO members and the general public.

Purpose of the PRMPO

- A. To develop and direct a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process carried on by the PRMPO in coordination with the general public, public and private providers of transportation services and federal, state, and municipal governments in concurrence with Federal guidelines.
- B. To provide and develop a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process, in conjunction with the PRHTA and DTPW, that results in plans and programs consistent with development of the planning documents: the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

- C. To identify and evaluate alternative transportation improvement options: use data and planning methods to generate and evaluate alternatives. The planning studies and evaluations are included in the UPWP.
- D. To assist and involve the general public in the planning process.
- E. To provide transportation planning input into a regional development plan that includes transportation planning projects and strategies that will support economic vitality, increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users, increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and freight, protect and enhance the environment, enhance the integration connectivity of the transportation system, promote efficient system management and operation, and emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
- F. To act as a forum for cooperative decision-making by elected officials of the metropolitan area in cooperation with the State.

Transportation planning refers to the process of identifying transportation problems and creating appropriate long-term solutions to those problems, while **the programming process** refers to the process of scheduling and funding projects envisioned in the long-range transportation plans by committing expected revenues to transportation projects over several years. The PRMPO and the DTPW/PRHTA coordinates efforts to promote the public involvement in the elaboration of the planning and programming documents.

Transportation Planning Phase	Who is the responsible entity?	
	DTPW and the PRHTA	PRMPO
Planning	Puerto Rico Long Range Transportation Plan	Metropolitan and Regional Long Range Transportation Plans
Programming	State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)	Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Puerto Rico MPO Composition

According to the Census, Puerto Rico is organized in eleven (11) urbanized areas (see map below). Two of those urbanized areas are Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) of San Juan and of Aguadilla, which means these are urbanized area with a population of 200,000 or more. The other nine (9) urbanized areas (UZA), that have 50,000 or more in population, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (see map below), are: Arecibo UZA, Fajardo UZA, Florida-Imbéry-Barceloneta UZA, Guayama UZA, Juana Díaz, Mayagüez UZA, Ponce UZA, San Germán- Cabo Rojo- Sabana Grande UZA and Yauco UZA.

Definition of the 2010 Urbanized Area Boundaries

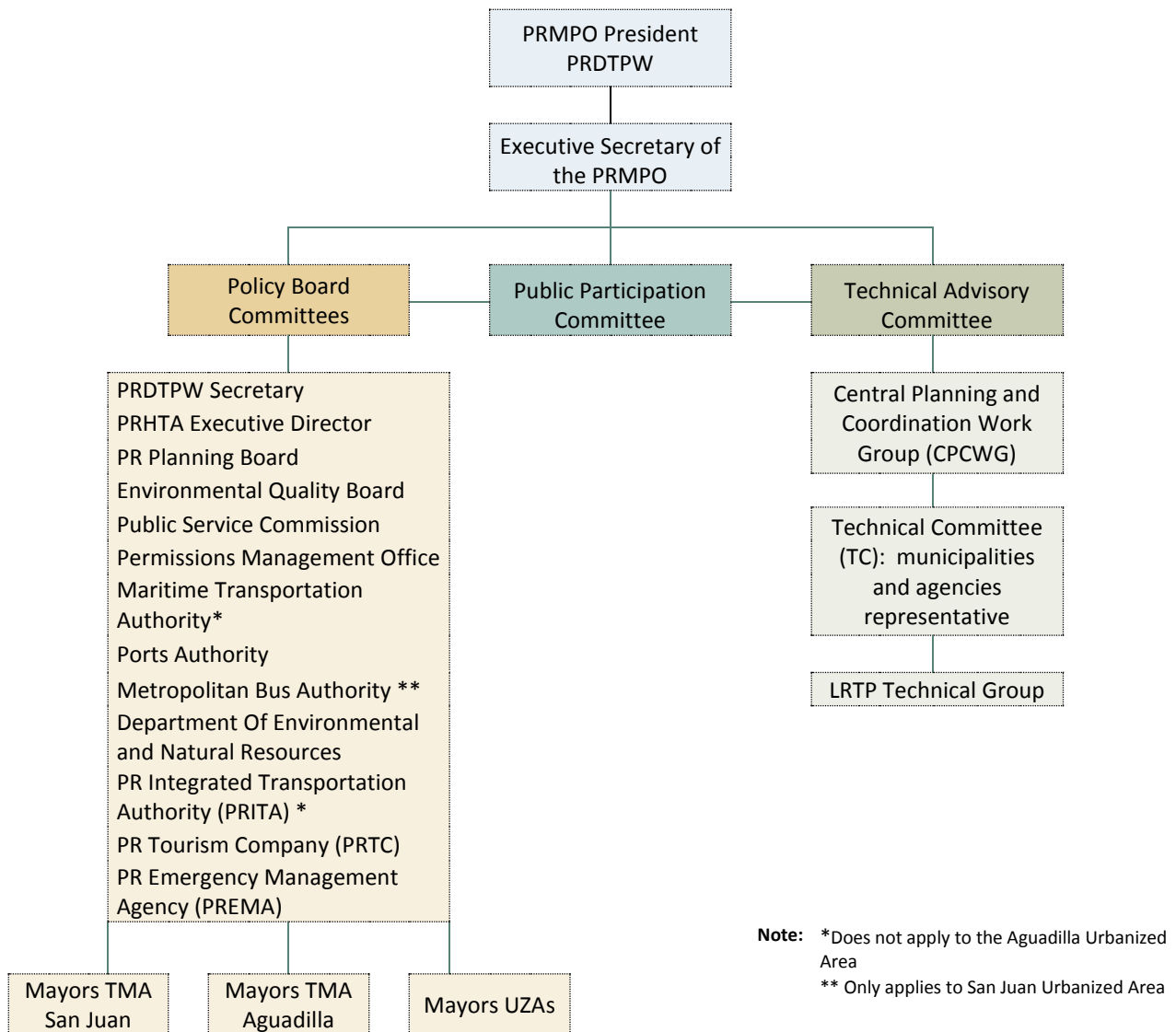


SEPTEMBER, 2013

Although there are eleven urbanized areas, there is one PRMPO. The PRMPO has a centralized structure in order to facilitate the administration and the metropolitan planning activities, as well as to maximize the human and financial resources, most of which comes from the federal funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Nonetheless, to respond to the specific needs of an area; the PRMPO organization incorporates a Policy Board branch divided in three committees, one for the SJUA, another for the AUA, and one that integrates the nine UZAs. The other two branches are Public Participation Committee and Technical Advisory Committee.

To assure a forum for cooperative decision-making in the planning process, the PRMPO has structured several committees to ensure that transportation planning is conducted in a comprehensive, continuous and cooperative manner.

The key elements of this structure are summarized below:



Policy Board Committees (PBC)

The PBC is the cooperative decision making body integrated by local officials (Mayors), local agencies related to transportation, representatives of various Federal agencies and the general public. For more information about the members, the voting members and non-voting members see the Rules and Operating Procedures of Puerto Rico Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The Policy Board Committee of the PRMPO scheduled at least two meetings per year. The **special (extraordinary) meetings** can be held at the request of the President or when at least six (6) voting members of PRMPO request it. The meeting must be notified **fifteen (15) calendar days** in advance of the meeting. The request for the meeting must specify the purpose of it. The **emergency meetings** may be held at any time the President deems it necessary or can be requested by the PRMPO members.

Public Participation Committee (PPC)

The PPC is responsible of implementing and updating this PIP. It is also responsible of promoting and facilitating the participation of representatives of local agencies, private entities related to transportation, community organizations and the general public, as well as to assure that the interests and social, economic and environmental concerns of the community are being considered in the planning process. Furthermore, to carry out this duty, the PPC can create other Committees, like the Citizen Advisory Committee in order to incorporate the representation of the different stakeholders in the development or update of the planning and programming documents. The PPC is composed by members of the Technical Advisory Committees and the general public.

Technical Advisory Committees

The Technical Advisory Committees is a branch of the PRMPO composed of a Technical Committee (TC), the LRTP Technical Group (LRTPTG) and the Central Planning and Coordination Work Group (CPCWG). This branch is integrated of non-voting members, which main responsibilities are to carry out the process of planning, developing and coordinating all activities that entails.

Central Planning and Coordination Work Group (CPCWG)

The CPCWG is composed of technical and management staff of the Executive Secretary of the PRMPO, the Strategic Planning Office (SPO), Federal Coordination Office (FCO), and Programming and Special Studies Office (PSSO) of PRHTA. The CPCWG is responsible for advising the Policy Board Committees and provide technical information through the PRMPO Technical Advisory Committees. It also provides support to the Executive Secretary so he can carry out his duties. The FCO and PSSO are responsible for preparing the UPWP and the TIPs, according to needs of the PRMPO members.

Within the CPCWG there is a sub-group called Interdisciplinary Pre-Planning Group (IPPG). The staff is composed of the Strategic Planning Office, Programming and Special Studies Office, Transit, Design Construction, Acquisition, and the Environmental Office. This IPPG is responsible for evaluate, recommend and prioritized the projects petitions with funds from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Technical Committees (TC)

The TC is composed of representatives of the municipalities and agencies belonging to the PRMPO. Members are professionals trained in the disciplines of transportation, land use, transit, public works, planning, and related fields.

LRTP Technical Group (LRTPTG)

The LRTPTG is a group of the PRMPO Technical Advisory Committee, whose purpose is to provide a participatory forum for the development of Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP). The LRTPTG comprises representatives from the DTPW, PRHTA, municipalities, and other agency representatives, certain private entities and consultants. The LRTPTG will coordinate with the PRMPO Technical Committees the activities of preparing and updating of the LRTPs. This group is responsible for preparing the LRTPs and the PRLRTP.

Public and Other Stakeholders: Interested and Affected Parties

Stakeholders are individuals or organizations involved in or affected by the transportation planning process. The first group of stakeholders are from the municipalities and local agencies, since many of those agencies have a statutory responsibility in different transportation issues (issuing permits, review environmental documents, e.g.). The Federal Agencies, like FHWA and the FTA, encourage that the MPOs and the States Departments of Transportations to collaborate and communicate, especially at the beginning of the transportation planning process in order to identify and address their concerns (U.S. Department of Transportation).

In Puerto Rico, the Mayors from each of the urbanized areas plays an essential role in the public participation process. Their office is often the first stop for citizens to voice their opinions and raise concerns about transportation issues in their towns and surrounding areas. The Mayors serve as a continuous link between the communities and the PRMPO to ensure access and communication with the public.

Public Sector	State Agencies	Department of Transportation and Public Works
		Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority (PRHTA)
		Ports Authority (PA)
		Metropolitan Bus Authority (MBA)
		Planning Board (PB)
		Public Service Commission (PSC)
		Environmental Quality Board (EQB)
		Maritime Transportation Authority (MTA)
		Permissions Management Office
		Department of Environmental and Natural Resources
	Federal Agencies	Puerto Rico Integrated Transportation Authority (PRITA)
		Transportation and Infrastructure Commission
		Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC)
	Municipal	Puerto Rico Emergency Management Agency (PREMA)
		Federal Highway Administration
		Federal Transit Administration
	Regional	Environmental Protection Agency
		Municipalities of the Urbanized and Rural Areas
		Regional Council: INTECO, DISUR, INSEC, INTENOR

Other groups identified as interested groups as well as affected parties are from the private sectors, non-profit organizations (NPO), and the general public. These groups of stakeholders include:

Private Sector	Interested Parties	Private Providers of Transportation (públicos operators, e.g.) Trucking Freight Industry Private Paratransit Operators Transportation consultants Baking Industry Cruise Industry Airports
	Interested Parties	Professional Groups (architects, planners, engineers, e.g.) Elderly and people with disability organizations (AARP, e.g.) Environmental organizations
General Public	Affected	Bicycle and pedestrians Minority and low-income populations Students (schools and universities) Transit System Users Veterans

As it will be discuss later on, these group of stakeholders are integrated in stages of the planning process, using different strategies, in order to use the input received from the public meetings, surveys, citizen advisory committee, and questionnaire handed at the meetings, to:

- Define of the vision and goals
- Identify the problems and necessities of the transportation system
- Provide recommendations
- Provide feedback

Good transportation planning recognizes the valuable input that the public can provide, in the development of the Puerto Rico Long Range Transportation Plan, as well as in the elaboration of the TIPs, UPWP, among others. The public input was considered for the development of the transportation vision, the recognition of the problems, necessities and in the exploration of the solutions. This input is gathered through questionnaire that are distributed in the meetings.



Public Involvement in the Federal Framework

Adopted in August 2005, Section 6001 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU (23 USC 139) provides guidance on both metropolitan and statewide planning processes, and specific requirements for public participation.

Per requirements, the public participation plan “shall be developed in consultation with all interested parties and shall provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plans.” In addition, SAFETEA-LU also required the following elements:

- Public meetings and workshops must be accessible.
- Generous use of visualization techniques to present plan information including maps, charts, graphs, and other methods.
- Public information must be made available in electronically accessible formats, such as the World Wide Web (internet).

There are also public involvement requirements concerning environmental justice. U.S. Executive Order 12898 defines environmental justice as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people – regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or education level – in transportation decision-making.

Public involvement activities related to environmental issues are carried out primarily by PRHTA's Office of Environmental Studies. This office has a Public Involvement Plan for the Environmental Process that provides a guidance and procedures for meeting public-involvement requirements for the Federal and State funded highway project during the environmental process phase. However, other offices such as the DTPW's Communications Office organize educational activities such as: Transportation Week, Environment Week, Fairs, workshops, and conferences, among others. Involving the public in environmental issues is an ongoing process, that extends to a variety of projects from an assessment of needs, an alternative evaluation phase, through the design, acquisition of rights-of-way, and construction phases, continuing on to after construction for example, in cases of environmental mitigation. In environmentally sensitive areas mechanisms have been established to regularly communicate with the public through forums, meetings, and letters to maintain them aware and receive their input.

In accordance with Executive Order 12898 of 1994, (Environmental Justice), the PRHTA has established procedures to avoid having negative impacts of transportation projects affecting poor or minority communities in a disproportionate way. It will assure that the needs of groups

traditionally underserved by the existing transportation systems, including all underrepresented groups (e.g. persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and low income families among others) are involved in the planning and programming process. To this end, the PRMPO through the DTPW/PRHTA seeks to identify and contact community organizations, neighborhood groups and interested citizens whom it will be invited to meetings, hearings and planning activities.

Public Involvement in the SAFETEA-LU

The Federal regulation¹ requires that the State as well as the MPO develop a public involvement plan (PIP). In general this plan should provide:

1. Early and continued public participation throughout the process of transportation planning and project programming;
2. Timely information about transportation planning issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs, and projects;
3. Reasonable public access to technical information and public policy used in the development of the UPWP, TIP and STIP
4. To the maximum extent practicable;
 - a. ensure that public meetings are held at convenient and accessible locations and time,
 - b. use visualization techniques to describe the proposed long-range statewide transportation plan and supporting studies,
 - c. make public information available in electronically accessible format and means.
5. Adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points.
6. Process for demonstrating explicitly consideration and response to public input during the planning and program development process;
7. Process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems;
8. Periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that the process provides full and open access to all and revision of the process as necessary.

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (Map-21) Planning Provisions

The federal law that contains the transportation policy of the Department of Transportation is called MAP-21, “*Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century*” (for more information visit: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/legislation/map-21/map-21>).

Under MAP-21, the MPOs of Transportation Management Areas must include transit officials on their Policy Boards. Explicitly requires representatives of public transportation providers to become voting members of MPO boards. Currently, the public transit operators are voting members in the San Juan and Aguadilla’s Policy Board, the two TMAs.

¹ Federal Register/ Vol. 72, NO. 30/ Wednesday, February 14, 2007/ Rules and Regulations

Furthermore, the designation of “Statewide Planning” has been renamed to “Statewide and Non-Metropolitan Planning” in order to integrate regional transportation organizations, comprised of volunteer local government officials, and to assist the State in addressing the needs of non-metropolitan areas.

Another relevant change brought by MAP-21 is the performance driven approach which required to MPOs to establish a performance targets to address USDOT established surface transportation system performance measures. In general the laws establish:

- Selection of performance targets by the MPO shall that be coordinated with relevant State and providers of public transportation to ensure consistency to the maximum extent practicable.
- Targets will be used to track progress towards attainment of critical performance outcomes for the MPO region.
- May adopt locally defined performance measures and targets
- Each MPO shall establish performance targets consistent with transportation system performance measures not later than 180 days after the date the State or public transportation provider establishes performance targets.
- The MPO shall integrate other performance based plans, either directly or by reference (goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets).

Once the FHWA and FTA adopts the final rulemaking for the performance measures, the PRMPO will revised this plan in order to tempered it as well as to developed the corresponding performance targets. Meanwhile, this PIP has established a vision, goal and objectives that will serve as the guide to develop the proposed activities presented in this document.

Fixed America’s Surface Act (FAST)

Currently, the federal law that provides funding to the Department of Transportation is called Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, signed by President Obama on December 4, 2015. The FAST Act maintains its focus on safety, keeps intact the established structure of the various highway-related programs we manage, continues efforts to streamline project delivery and, for the first time, provides a dedicated source of federal dollars for freight projects. FAST Act is the federal authorization for federal highway and transit programs. FAST Act creates a streamlined, performance-based, and multimodal program to address the many challenges facing the U.S. transportation system. FAST Act builds on and refines many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991 (for more information visit: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/fast>).

Vision, Goals, and Objectives of this PIP

An active public involvement process is more than just a Federal requirement. It is a good practice in decision-making to ensure that the concerns and issues of all transportation stakeholders are taken into account for the development of policies, programs, and projects, resulting in better public support.

In Puerto Rico, the public policy of the DTPW recognizes the public involvement as an essential aspect of the planning process. Consequently, the Puerto Rico Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was revised, in order to incorporate new public participation strategies to promote, getting people involve. The strategies considered in this PIP revision are consistent with those of 23 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 450.316, as discussed on the previous chapter.

The principles that frame this PIP are:

VISION

The vision of the PRMPO's Public Involvement Plan is to involve and enable agencies, the interested parties and the community to provide meaningful input to the transportation planning process.

Goals:

- **To consult with the public and stakeholders to gather their ideas for solutions to transportation needs.** This process is an opportunity for the community to voice concerns and opinions about current and future transportation policies, programs and plans across Puerto Rico.
- **To inform and involve the public throughout the process.** This plan is structured to inform, listen to, and learn from the public throughout the process.

Objectives:

1. Develop an early, proactive, and ongoing public participation process that includes the general public, stakeholders, and other governmental agencies at the commonwealth, regional and local levels.
2. Build an educative campaign to heighten the public's awareness about transportation issues, the role of DTPW and PRHTA and the PRMPO in the development of a long range transportation plan and the importance of the transportation plan as a mean to improving the Puerto Rico transportation system.
3. Create communications channels with the general public to encourage public participation and obtain input.

4. Use a variety of methods to involve and engage the public.
5. Plan and carry out activities geared towards educating the public about transportation-related issues including highway safety.
6. Encourage the participation of minority and low-income populations in the planning process.



The approach of this PIP as to accomplishing those goals and objectives includes the following components:

- Conform to Federal requirements and PRMPO PIP guidance for public involvement.
- Leverage the existing the PRMPO committee structure and PRMPO public involvement outreach activities.
- Augment PRMPO PIP with additional outreach and communication strategies.
- Provide regional accessibility for engagement of the general public across the island.
- Address environmental justice aspects of public involvement.



Public Involvement Strategies

The federal regulation (23 CFR 450.316) provide a guidelines for develop participation plan that define the process for providing all interest parties a reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. Therefore, this Plan has identified a series of communication tools and useful strategies that will support the public involvement process. This process will include outreach efforts, opportunity for public comments, documents available in accessible formats, and public meetings. For the public meetings, may use visual aid as Power Point presentations.

This chapter provides a guide of strategies can be used to engage stakeholders in the meetings or transportation planning activities of PRMPO. The PRMPO can use any combination of the following strategies.

Public Involvement Strategies Guide

Public Notice

The public notice of PRMPO meeting shall be published fifteen (15) calendar day's prior meeting. The notice is published in major local newspaper and the webpage to notify the public the opportunity to review and comment the draft of UPWP, TIP and LRTP, among other documents. The notice include: date, hour, location, the comments period and contact information. It is through public notices that the PRMPO informs to the population that the planning and programming documents are available in hard copy or digital format in the FCO or at the federal program office of the municipalities.



Webpage

The webpage located at www.dtop.gov.pr allows users to obtain the PRMPO documents. The general public can access PRMPO meeting dates, download electronic versions of UPWP, TIP, LRTP as well as others documents. Every time a planning or programming documents is amended or updated must be posted in the website. All of the informational materials is available for download in easy to use formats. In the near future, the PRMPO will create its website.



Link to Approved Documents: http://www.dtop.gov.pr/det_content.asp?cn_id=325

Link to Public Notices: http://www.dtop.gov.pr/carretera/det_content.asp?cn_id=347

Public Meetings of PRMPO

All meetings are going to be announced through public notice in the newspaper and website. The meeting agenda and the draft documents for approval are distributed fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the meeting. The meetings of the PRMPO includes a verbatim transcript. The PRMPO members are convened for meeting through letter or E-mail. The municipality, as member of PRMPO, will have available the draft document in hard-copy or in the PDF version for revision upon request. The meetings are open for the public. Members of public that desire to speak in the meeting shall address the chair person, state their name and the organization they represent.



Workshops

The workshop is a special meeting to inform people and solicit input on specific issues, plans, or projects. Workshops last from one to three hours. The PRMPO will use the workshops to provide information of the LRTPs and to get input of participant's necessities and problems of transportation. The workshops will be announced through public notice in newspaper and website.



Open House

An open house is an informal setting in which people get information about a plan or project. Information presented including graphics, maps, photos, models, videos, or related documents. Space is allocated for tables or booths, and information is mounted on walls. It is an opportunity for the public to give opinion of projects prioritization in plans. The staff members can interact individually with the public. The open house will be announced through public notice in newspaper and website.



Directory of Contact List

The FCO staff maintains a directory of members of Policy Board Committees of PRMPO, and the general public list. The directory of PRMPO includes committee members name, agency or municipality, postal mail, phone numbers and e-mail address. The general public list contains name and email of participants in workshops for LRTP or public meetings. The staff could share by email the draft documents and meetings notice, among others.

Reminder by E-mail

To promote participation, the staff will send a flyer by email to remind the meetings, workshops and other transportation planning activities.

Meeting Schedule of PRMPO

The annual meeting schedule of PRMPO will be posted at website.

Brochures

The staff of PRHTA maintains and distributes brochures of the PRMPO, the transportation planning process and how interested people can participate. The educational materials are available at website, in the Federal Coordination Office and Strategic Planning Office. Also, are handed out in the public participation meetings or workshops.



Project Fact Sheets

Fact sheets outlining key goals and progress throughout the development or revision of the LRTPs will be prepared. This fact sheet will incorporate information at an appropriate level of detail for the general public. The fact sheet will be distributed in the public meetings to the people get information from exhibits and encouraged to give opinions and comments orally or in individuals interested in the development or update of the LRTPs.



Video

Videos can be created to educate and inform the general public and stakeholders about planning process, plans and the PRMPO. The video could be used as a visual tool aid on meetings or activities to introduce topics of the transportation planning process. Also, could be used to introduce transportation plans elements and others planning products in an easy way to understand it. The video link could be shared by social media and website.



Social Media

The PRMPO will use the Facebook and Twitter of DTPW to notify the public of the transportation planning process and meetings. Also, there is a Facebook page for the LRTP to engage the general public and stakeholders in workshops, surveys and also, receive comments of the draft plans. This has been proven to be an effective way to reach general public.

Facebook of DTPW: <https://www.facebook.com/dtop/>

Twitter of DTPW: <https://twitter.com/dtop?lang=en>

Facebook of LRTP: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/Plan-de-Transportaci%C3%B3n-a-Largo-Plazo-141265473215259/posts/>

Survey

The staff of PRHTA and PRMPO may conduct by mail, in person, or web surveys to obtain public input of transportation planning or to measure public opinions regarding to planning issues.

Flyers

Flyers can be used to announce PRMPO meetings and activities related to transportation planning. This promotional tools can be distributed by email, in public places such as Train Stations, Bus Stations, Municipality Transit System or communities. The announcement may contain a purpose of the meeting, day, time, location and contact information. This strategy is an opportunity to reach a public who do not use email or the internet.

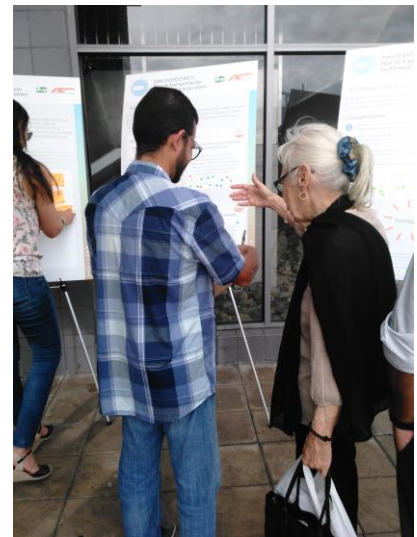
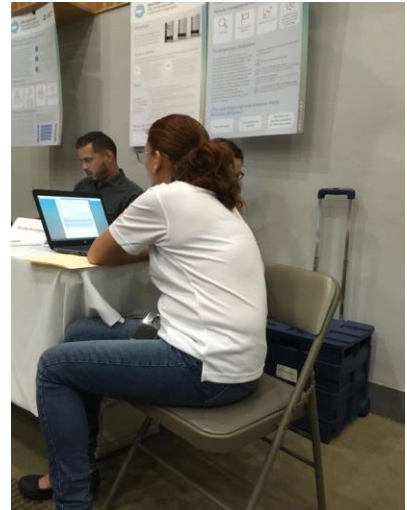
Communication through Visualization

The visualization technique can use a variety of maps, graphics, scenario modeling and images. For example GIS can be used to create maps of demographic and socioeconomic conditions, to display existing and proposed transportation conditions and improvements, and to identify the future land use scenarios. Also, can be use photographs of different transit vehicle types or the specific transportation improvements.

Newsletter

Newsletter is an electronic document to present information about recent activities of transportation planning and public involvement. The purpose of the newsletter is to publish results of the activities and enhance the public involvement. It is periodically distributed among the interest groups and PRMPO members.

As it will be discussed in the next chapter, these strategies are going to be used as part of the process to involve the public in the development and updating of the planning and programming documents.



Public Involvement Process

For the PRMPO and PRHTA, involving the public in the planning process requires a great effort, since this encompasses a comprehensive understanding of the necessities from different stakeholders, as well to engage in a cooperative process to foster the involvement by all the users of the system.

As explained before, this document has the purpose of describing the process and strategies to accomplish the public involvement used by the PRMPO and PRHTA, in the planning and programming of the transportation system as required by federal regulation. In general the participation process consists of the following activities:

- Educational activities
- Early and continued public participation
- Outreach activities

As noted in the first chapter, the State agencies and the MPOs are responsible of conducting the transportation planning process. Part of that process consists of preparing the Statewide Transportation Plan (STP) and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), as well as the elaboration of the short-range implementation of projects programs: UPWP, TIP, and STIP. For each one of these documents the public participation is an essential aspect of their development.

In Puerto Rico, the STP is known as Islandwide Long Range Transportation Plan or Puerto Rico Long Range Transportation Plan (PRLRTP), as from now on how is going to be referred to in the rest of this document. As for the MTPs, these are generally called Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP), plus the name of the Region (South, e.g.). Puerto Rico is divided in seven Transportation Planning Regions (TPR).

The following section describes the process used by Puerto Rico MPO and DTPW/ PRHTA to promote the participation of the public in the elaboration of the transportation plans and the programming documents.

I. Public Participation in the Long Range Transportation Plans

Different decisions warrant different strategies, so when it comes to planning for the long run, as it is the Long Range Transportation Plan, getting stakeholders to compromise through all the process, it is essential the coordination, communication, and using different public participation strategies. The PRMPO attempts to provide a “voice” to the public during the steps of the long range transportation plan (see Appendix 3).

Background

The PRHTA in coordination with the PRMPO prepares a Statewide PRLRTP with a 20-year horizon according to the Federal Regulations (specifically in 23 CFR 450.316). The plan contains short and long-range elements and provides for an integrated and intermodal transportation system

that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods for the entire Island. The plan includes capital improvement projects; important changes needed to existing transportation facilities; and an action plan for establishing long-range policies on transportation issues. The plan integrates the results of input and recommendations from non-metropolitan areas obtained through the planning process with metropolitan area plans to assure connectivity of the transportation system throughout the Island. The recommendations presented in the PRLRTP, form the foundation for the development of the STIP.

The MTP, also called Regional Transportation Plan, or Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs), prepared by PRMPO in coordination with the DTPW/PRHTA are:

1. **San Juan Long Range Transportation Plan**
2. **Aguadilla Long Range Transportation Plan**

In addition of the five regional's LRTPs, where the Urbanized Area Under 200,000 Population (UZA's) are distribute as follow (see map bellow)

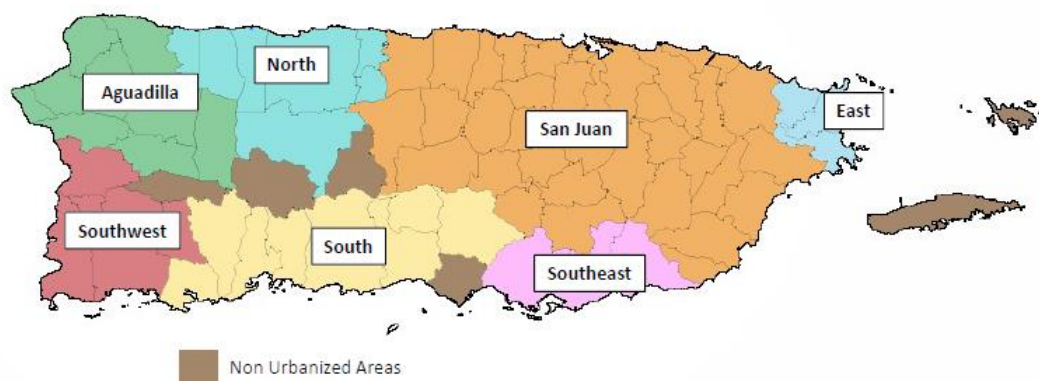
3. **South Region Long Range Transportation Plan**, which incorporates the municipalities *within the Yauco, Juana Díaz and Ponce Urbanized Areas* and the municipality of *Santa Isabel* from the *Non Urbanized Areas*.
4. **Southwest Region Long Range Transportation Plan**, which incorporates the *municipalities within the Mayagüez and San German – Cabo Rojo – Sabana Grande Urbanized Areas* and the municipality of *Maricao* from the *Non Urbanized Areas*.
5. **Southeast Region Long Range Transportation Plan**, which incorporates the *municipalities within the Guayama Urbanized Area*.
6. **East Region Long Range Transportation Plan**, which includes the municipalities *within the Fajardo Urbanized Area* and the municipalities of *Culebra and Vieques, both from the Non Urbanized Areas*.
7. **North Region Long Range Transportation Plan**, which includes the *municipalities within the Arecibo and Barceloneta Urbanized Area*, and the municipalities of *Adjuntas and Jayuya* from the *Non Urbanized Areas*.

These plans have to be updated at least every five years, with a 20 year (minimum) planning horizon. Based on these plans, every three years the PRMPO defines the use of yearly federal funding allocations through the TIP for the SJUA, the AUA and the UZAs. In general, without an appropriate updated long range transportation plan for a region, no federal funds may be programmed for improvements to its transportation system.

The current transportation planning regions are the ones that were defined as the result of the changes in the definition of the urbanized area boundaries in Puerto Rico, brought by the 2000 Census. **In response to that boundary definition, the DTPW and the PRMPO decided to restructure the Statewide, regional and metropolitan transportation planning process around the concept of Transportation Planning Regions (TPR)**, which are the regions mentioned above (see map below). Between 2003 and 2005, after the preparation of a travel

demand project and an extensive public participation process, the San Juan 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (SJLRTP), the Aguadilla 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (ALRTP), the Puerto Rico 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (PRLRTP) and the five LRTPs were released. Within the following years, those plans were amended and updated. While a new transportation model was developed, this resulted in the elaboration of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plans. Currently are carry-out the public involvement process for the update of LRTPs for 2045.

The following map shows the distribution of the boundaries of the seven transportation planning regions in Puerto Rico.



The process and activities to involve the public in the development, revision and update of the LRTPs

The following list summarized the main activities and products that will be part of this PIP process for the development, revision and amendments to the LRTP:

- Public meetings/ workshops: meetings shall be conducted across the seven planning regions, in the larger population areas. These meetings will be divided in three:
 - First round: these meetings has the purpose to present to the public a general overview, process and schedule, of the LRTP, as well as to collect input on the transportation issues.
 - Second round: to be held once transportation network problems are identified and options are proposed. Focus on transportation options, seeking public input on ways to address needs.
 - Third round: once there is a draft of the LRTP document, the meetings will focus on transportation choices- priorities, mode preferences, and funding capacity.
- Additional meetings/briefing: sessions with key officials, agency representatives, and others.
- Public Involvement Materials and Mechanisms: facts sheets, newsletter articles, contact list, press releases, media outreach activities, project website, contact person, introductory video, brochures, e.g.

Development of LTRPs

During the early stages of developing or revising each of the transportation plans, the PPC initial task is to coordinate the project elements of work and state the expectations of the deliverables manner. This task includes a kickoff meeting with PPC and the development of a work plan, in which the public participation meetings are scheduled. The group meets regularly during the course of the plan development and periodically once the plan is complete.

To assist in encouraging the participation of minority and low-income populations in the planning process, the PRHTA staff will work closely with municipal officials and PRMPO members in the study area. Municipal governments, as part of their Territorial Plans, generally have identified low income and disadvantaged areas and their input into the planning process will be key to assuring not only in identifying but in seeking the active participation of these groups. The PRHTA will also utilize socio-economic data produced by the 2010 Census.

Special Advisory Committee

The PPC can decide to create more specific committees to address the different necessities during the development of the LTRPs. The suggested committees are: Government Advisory Committee, Freight Committee, Resilience Transportation Infrastructure Committee, Socioeconomic Committee and Financial Committee and Citizen Advisory Committee (See Appendix 5). The objective of these committees is to evaluate public meetings and studies results in order to discuss and define infrastructure needs, alternatives, and strategies.

Composition of the Citizen Advisory Committee

This committee will be comprised of representatives from organizations and entities representing elderly, handicapped, low-income communities including non-urbanized, as well as experts from academia, professional organizations representing engineers, planners, architects and economists; and regional economic development organizations. The citizen's advisory committee will help with the study guidance through the identification of opportunities and constraints, as well as in the identification of additional community leaders to help disseminate and gather information to reflect community concerns, needs, and desires. The advisory committee could include groups representing the traditionally underserved.

Meeting Schedule and Locations

The Citizen Advisory Committee will meet several times during the course of the study. The meeting locations can vary throughout to provide a more convenient setting to discuss the plans progress.

Initial Questionnaires

A questionnaire can be use and distributed to the citizens and economic development groups. The forms will be returned at least one week prior to the meeting and the results will be recorded, summarized, and presented as a basis for discussion at the first advisory committee meeting. Those members that do not complete the questionnaire prior to the first meeting will have the opportunity to complete it for a period of time after the meeting. Issues that can be addressed in the questionnaire could include: opportunities

and constraints, public outreach techniques, stakeholder involvement techniques, media outlets, opportunities for their assistance in information dissemination and gathering, and other topics identified by the study team. The information gathered through questionnaire will provide valuable input for the review of the PIP.

Engaging the traditionally Underserved Population

To assist in encouraging the participation of minority and low-income populations in the planning process, the PPC and LRTPTG in collaboration with the municipalities will identify low income and disadvantaged areas. The PPC and LRTPTG will also utilize socio-economic data produced by the Census as well as the Title VI programs documents.



Special efforts will be made to reach out communities with racial and ethnic minorities, as well as populations with low educational attainment and income levels. These populations are recognized as key stakeholders for the transportation plans. Historically, minority and low-income populations have been underrepresented in the decision-making process. Thus, minority, disadvantaged, and low-income neighborhoods (determined by census tracts block group statistics) will be identified. Where necessary, a targeted outreach plan may be developed to improve communication with the stakeholders groups.

Low-income populations generally have less access to personal transportation and thus may not be able to travel to locations that require them to have personal transportation. They often work second-shift jobs or have two jobs and are not available for standard meeting times. Meetings may need to be held near their communities or transportation may need to be provided if they are going to participate. To accommodate these populations' needs and encourage them to participate in the transportation planning process, the PPC will develop the appropriate strategies according the activity.

PRMPO Coordination

Close coordination and communication with municipal officials is critical to the successful planning and implementation of these plans and projects. The PRMPO informs Mayors (usually through letters, emails and phone calls) and their liaison officials of the dates of any meetings to be held so that the Mayors can use their own means to communicate with the public. Many municipalities have or are in the process of developing local Land Use Plans together with the Planning Board and their input is valuable and essential. The Mayors' office is often the first stop for citizens to voice their opinions and raise concerns about transportation issues in the town and surrounding areas.

Transportation, land use and environment-related agencies, municipalities and the public in general are involved in the planning and development of the region's transportation plans

through their early participation in meetings and orientations, as well as through the opportunity to comment on draft and final copies of the plan. At least three (3) meetings (adequate advanced notice is provided) for each metropolitan area plan will be conducted as follows:

1. to discuss the planning development process, present and/or revise planning assumptions, goals and objectives, and provide general orientation to interested parties and the public;
2. to present study findings and alternatives being considered and obtain public input;
3. to present and discuss the draft plan which has incorporated comments and recommendations from the general public, municipalities agencies, etc;
4. additional meetings (optional) to discuss the plan and to present the final plan will be arranged according to the needs of the community and any particular circumstances of the plan.

The Environmental Studies Office of the PRHTA Planning Area reviews the draft of the Metropolitan Transportation Plans as well as any revisions to assure that they comply with the requirements of the Clean Air Act. They will review the impact that any recommendations in the Plan will have on environmentally sensitive areas to help ensure consistency with environmental policies and energy conservation goals and objectives.

Public notices will be published notifying the dates of the respective planning meetings as well as the availability of the draft plan for review. **A 30-day comment period will be provided.** A record of public comments received and the PRHTA and the PRMPO response to those comments will be kept on file and will remain available to the public. Likewise, when the plan is in final version, a notice will be published advising the public that it is available.

Once the Metropolitan Transportation Plan has been approved by the PRMPO, it will be forwarded to FHWA and FTA officials for their information. Simultaneously, it will be submitted to the Planning Board (PB) to be used as input in the development of their Regional Plans.

Revision Process of the LRTPs

The LRTPs are updated periodically and follows the same public involvement process discussed above to assure that the public from urbanized and non-metropolitan areas and relevant transportation-related agencies and entities are involved in any revisions to the document. This updating process comprises the following principal elements:

Surveillance – This is a continuous monitoring of all pertinent land used data, the re- evaluation of changing travel characteristics and community values, new economic changes, and a review of transportation improvements and planning implementation schedules. Generally, the public is not involved; however, this surveillance could result in an identified need for substantial revisions to the Plan in which case the above procedures would be implemented.

Reappraisal - A major review or update of the plans is made at a maximum five-(5) year interval. The PRHTA will follow the same public involvement process discussed above to assure that the public and relevant transportation related agencies and entities are involved in any revisions to the document.



Table 1: LRTP Period for Comments

Document	Revision Phase	Process	Days provided
Metropolitan (Regional) Long Range Transportation Plan	Amendments to the documents	A notice is published in major local newspapers informing the public of the opportunity to review the amendments.	15 calendar days
	Update or development of the new document	A notice is published in major local newspapers informing the public of the opportunity to review the updated documents	30 calendar days
Statewide (Islandwide) Long Range Transportation Plan	Amendments to the document	A notice is published in major local newspapers informing the public of the opportunity to review the amendments.	15 calendar days
	Update or development of the new document	A notice is published in major local newspapers informing the public of the availability of the plan.	30 calendar days

According to federal regulation (23 CFR 450.316) will be provided an additional opportunity for public comments, “if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and **raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen** from the public involvement efforts”. If as result of the public participation process is received significant oral and written comments on the draft of those documents, the CPCWG of PRMPO will do:

- A summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final planning and programming documents.
- The CPCWG will decide if the extent of the comments received represents a significant (substantive) change of those documents.
 - If the comments represents a significant change, then a new document will be prepared and a public notice will be published with a 15 calendar day comment period.
 - If the comments do not represent a significant change to the document, then this will be revised and the comments will be incorporated. The document will be presented to the members of the Policy Board of the PRMPO for their consideration and approval.



II. Public Participation in the Programming Phase

The transportation plans are a guide for implementing the transportation system improvements. Federal and local funds are provided on an ongoing basis to ensure the continuity of the transportation planning activities. The PRMPO assembled every four years an update TIP, which list the projects selected from the LRTP to be implemented during a four-year cycle. The UPWP has the purpose of outlining the planning projects that will assists in further defining the comprehensive and multimodal transportation plans, which is updated every two years. While, Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a program of transportation

projects based on the Puerto Rico Long Range Transportation Plan. The STIP is a four year project scheduling tool, which provides a list of transportation and highway improvement projects. The STIP includes projects for urbanized areas (this urbanized projects are the TIP's approved by the PRMPO Policy Board Committees) and non-urbanized areas. The STIP is prepared by the DTPW and PRHTA in consultation with officials from the affected areas and the public.

Once the STIP is approved and the funds for Section 5307 and 5310 are apportioned, the PRMPO and DTPW prepare a **Program of Projects (POP)**. A POP is a list of projects in the first-year program of the approved STIP which will utilize the Urbanized Area Formula Program (5307) according to MAP-21, from 2013 and onwards, and the list of project which will receive funds from Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (5310).

In the process of developing, revising and amending these and other documents, the public is informed on how and when they can provide their input and feedback. The process to disseminate information, identify issues, and receive the stakeholders concerns in the program of funding phase follows the following activities:

Initial Outreach Efforts and Public Participation Meeting

Around October/December in the third year of a four-year cycle (depending on the release of the Federal appropriations notice) the CPCWP publishes in newspapers of general circulation a public notice to inform the general public about the availability of federal funds to develop transportation and highway related projects for urbanized as well as small urban and rural areas;

- a. provide information on the date and location of the regional technical assistance and planning meetings to be held with urbanized and non-urbanized areas officials and the public; and
- b. Notify entities of the deadline to submit their petitions for projects utilizing federal funds including Section 5303, 5307, 5310, 5311, 5337 and 5339 of FTA and FHWA. The deadline for submitting petitions is on or about January last working day of each year. **Petition forms can be requested from the FCO in PRHTA Central Offices.** Also, the petition for each program can be found on the DTPW Webpage, or as requested, staff of the FCO can send it by e-mail or fax.

On the PRMPO's meetings, the CPCWP explains to the general public the transportation planning process, distribute information of the FTA and FHWA programs, informs the federal funds apportionment, and how to apply for those funds and the due date to submit the petitions.

✓ *PIP Public Involvement Strategies: The CPCWG use a power point presentation and brochures to facilitate the dissemination of the information. Newspaper and the website are other media aid used for the outreach and educational efforts.*

Technical Advisory Meeting: Proposal Application

1. Around March or April, the CPCWG and the TCs meets to discuss and revise the petitions that were submitted on the due date. If the CPCWG considers that more information is needed from the applicants, they will request to the TCs in those meetings. Other aspects that are discuss in the technical meetings are:
 - a. the transportation planning process
 - b. the UPWP planning process
 - c. the TIP and STIP programming process
 - d. the petition process to request funds from the various programs of FTA and FHWA.
2. Communication with the public in non-urbanized areas is maintained through phone calls and individual meetings held with officials and the public to clarify doubts and answer questions, etc.
3. Training seminars are carried out to non-urbanized areas to assist in transportation planning so that they may be able to better compete for federal funds.

Technical Advisory Meeting: Petition Recommended and Non-recommended list

1. This meeting is usually held on **April**. The purpose is to provide the list of the Recommended and Non-recommended petitions. The PRMPO Technical Committee members discuss:
 - a. the submitted petitions for projects with committee members and any questions they may have for the CPCWG. As part of the technical review process, on-site visits are carried out by the CPCWG in the affected areas to obtain specific information on the submitted petitions and which would help determine possible environmental or other effects.
 - b. after a technical review by the CPCWG the proposed transportation projects to be recommended in the TIP are presented and discussed among the PRMPO's Technical Committee members. The projects are then prioritized and incorporated into a draft programming document.
2. Comments and petitions submitted by municipal governments, public agencies, and transportation providers in urbanized and non-urbanized areas will be reviewed and discussed by CPCWG.
 - a. A list of criteria was established and an evaluation form is in place as to assess and prioritize the petitions. The CPCWG and the Pre-Planning Group (IPPG) are responsible of the evaluation and assessment of the petitions.
3. Individual technical assistance is provided to urbanized officials in developing process for projects financed by FTA and FHWA.

Endorsement of the Programming Documents Drafts and Urbanized Areas Policy Board Committee Meeting

1. The preliminary drafts of the TIP and UPWP are prepared and discussed by the CPCWG in consultation with the Technical Committee members at their 3rd meeting.

Non-attainment Area:

Once a TIP is prepared in draft form, the Environmental Studies Office of the PRHTA Planning Area conducts an air quality evaluation to determine if the TIP is consistent with the TP which was previously found to conform to air quality standards established in the CAAA. If studies indicate that the TIP complies with the CAAA, a conformity determination is prepared.

*At the meeting of the MPO Policy Committees, the draft UPWP and TIP together with a **conformity determination** are discussed, evaluated and endorsed by the members.*

After the conformity determination is adopted by the MPO, it is sent to FHWA and FTA for their review and approval. Once this has been approved, it is sent to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Environmental Quality Board for their endorsement.

2. A notice is published in major local newspapers informing the public of the opportunity to review and comment on the draft UPWP and TIP. **A 15 calendar day response period is provided.** The notice states that copies of said documents are available for review at the various municipalities, and at the PRHTA FCO. The notice also states the date and location of the PRMPO Policy Board Committee meeting.
3. A letter is sent to all PRMPO members advising them of the date of the PRMPO meeting, which includes copies of draft TIP and UPWP documents for their review and comments at the meeting.
4. At the meeting of the PRMPO Policy Board Committee, the draft UPWP and TIP are discussed, evaluated and endorsed by the voting members. Committee members clarify doubts or questions and propose any revisions they consider necessary. In addition, the planning process is certified.
5. The CPCWG prepares the documents incorporating suggestions and revision discussed at the PRMPO meeting, prepares the final TIP and the endorsed UPWP.
6. After the consultation process with affected local officials, including those in non-urbanized areas, the CPCWG in coordination with PRHTA staff, prepares the draft of the STIP where the projects for the rural areas are incorporated with the PRMPO approved TIPs.

Final Document Preparation and Approval

1. A notice is published in major local newspapers informing the public of the availability of the endorsed UPWP and TIP documents, as well as the draft STIP for review and comments. **The notice provides for a 15 calendar day comment period and informs the public that**

copies of said documents are available for review at the various municipalities and at the PRHTA FCO.

2. Based on the comments received, the DTPW determines if there is a need for a public hearing. If so, adequate prior notice will be provided to the public.
3. The endorsed TIP is sent to FHWA and FTA for their information, as well as the endorsed UPWP and the draft STIP are sent for their consideration and approval.
4. The final version of the STIP is prepared as approved by FHWA and FTA.
5. A notice is published in major local newspapers informing the public of the availability of the final version of the STIP.
6. The STIP and UPWP documents are distributed as follows:
 - a. Urbanized Areas: PRMPO Members will receive a copy of the final TIP, STIP and UPWP documents
 - b. Non-Metropolitan Areas: Each affected Mayor will receive a copy of the STIP.
 - c. Copies of the STIP and UPWP will remain available, in hard copy or digital format, to the general public for review at the PRHTA's FCO, or by accessing the DTPW web page, throughout the year.
7. A notice is published in major local newspapers informing the public of the availability of the POP for consider comment and review. **The notice provides for a 15 calendar day comment period.** If the proposed POP is not amended, the proposed program will be the final program. The notice will include a statement that the proposed program will be the final program, unless amended. The final POP will be available to the public.
8. Annually no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the DTPW and PRMPO shall cooperatively develop a list of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.

✓ *PIP Public Involvement Strategies: The CPCWG uses the newspaper and the DTPW webpage for informing to the stakeholders about the availability of the programming documents for their review and information.*

Amendments to the Documents

There are two types of revisions to the above documents, which can be performed at any time as necessary. A minor revision is considered an *administrative modification*, and a major revision is considered an *amendment*. The established procedures are consistent with 23 CFR 450.316 of the Statewide Transportation Planning; Metropolitan Transportation Planning; Final Rule.

- A. Any administrative modification or amendment request must be submitted by email or send by mail and should include a resolution or letter signed by Policy Board member. PRMPOs member should submit the document amendment or modification requests to:

Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works (PRDTPW)
Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority (PRHTA)
Director of Federal Coordination Office (1604) E-
mail: ocf@dtop.gov.pr
PO Box 42007
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00940-2007
Phone: (787) 721-8787 x: 1600 or 1601
Fax: (787) 724-3750

- B. The CPCWG determines if the amendment or modification is eligible one (i.e., contemplated in the applicable LRTP).
- If it is valid, the CPCWG determined if it qualifies for an administrative modification or amendment based by Federal Regulation as it is indicated in the *Rules and Operating Procedures of the PRMPO*.
 - The CPCWG can request additional information to the petitioner in order to complete the project petition (i.e., the number of traffic lanes, project cost, previous route, environmental, or studies).
 - If it is not eligible, the CPCWG will be send a letter to the petitioner explaining the reason for deny with ten (10) calendar days to appeal.
- C. The CPCWG, in coordination with the PRMPO member, submits the project for consideration of the PRMPO corresponding committee.
- D. The CPCWG will be informing by letter to the PRMPO corresponding committee any Administrative Modification.
- E. In all areas, changes that affect fiscal constraint must take place by amendment of the TIP/STIP or UPWP. Public participation procedures shall be utilized in revising the TIP, except that these procedures are not required for administrative modifications.
- F. For Administrative Modifications, the project is included in the STIP and then it is send to the corresponding PRMPO committee, for their information.
- G. For Amendments, after approval of the PRMPO corresponding committee, the project is included in the TIP or UPWP and then submitted to the Federal Agency for the consideration to be included in the STIP or UPWP.
- H. The PRMPO member will have a copy of all TIP/STIP or UPWP action/amendment updated documents.

More information about the document amendments can be found in the *Rules and Operating Procedures of the Puerto Rico Metropolitan Planning Organization*, which outlines the procedures for the Policy Board Committees of the PRMPO. The purpose of the procedure is to guide the revisions of the projects list on the approved Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Table 2: Period of Comments for the TIP and UPWP

Phase	Period of time*	Process	Duration of the comment period
Draft of the TIP & UPWP	Between May-June	A public notice is published in the major local newspapers to notify and invite the transportation providers (MPO members) and the general public about the opportunity to review and comment on the drafts of TIPS and UPWP . As indicated in the notice, the public will have 15 calendar days comment period.	15 calendar days
Approved TIP & endorsed UPWP by the MPO	June-July	After the MPO endorsed the UPWP and approved the TIP, a public notice is published in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the availability of the Final TIPS and the endorsed UPWP.	—
UPWP is sent to the FHWA/FTA	July-September	The endorsed UPWP document is sent to the federal agencies for their revision and approval.	—
Final UPWP	October-December	A public notice is published in a major local newspaper to inform the public and the transportation providers that the approved UPWP is available.	—
Amendment	Any time	The PRMPO members request a writing amendment to the President of the PRMPO. The amendment will be circulated to the PRMPO corresponded members. The amended document is published for public review. Public notice will be published in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the opportunity to review and comment on the revised version TIPS, and UPWP with the 15 calendar day comment period.	15 calendar days

*These period of time represents a regular cycle but these can be subject to change.

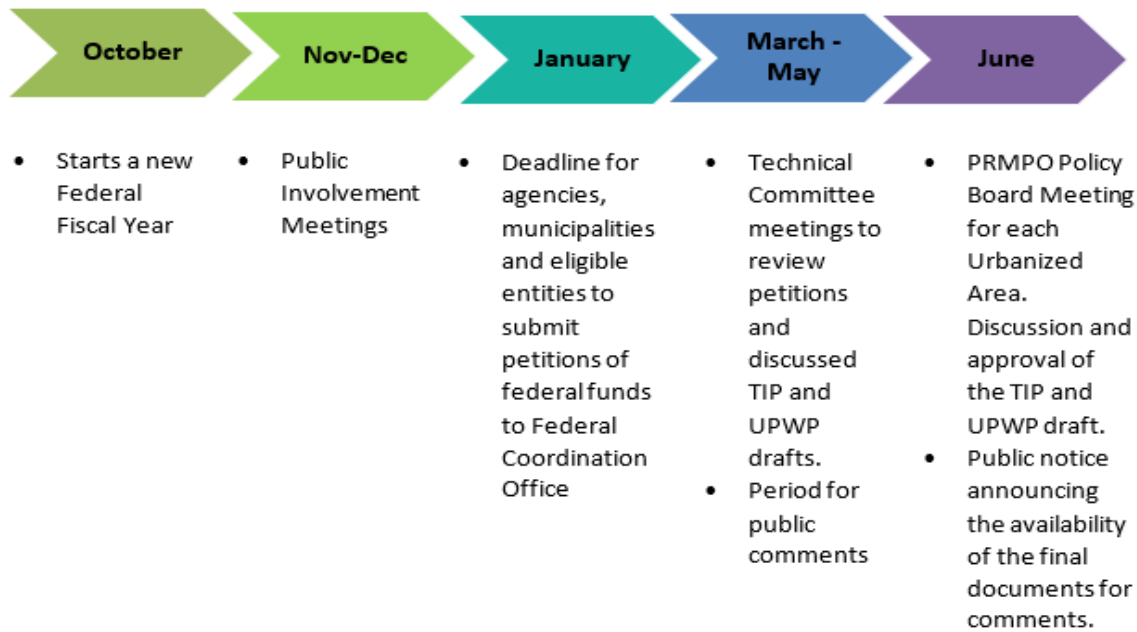
Table 3: Period of Comments for the STIP

Phase	*Period of time	Process	Duration of the comment period
Draft of the STIP	June-July	After the MPO endorsed the UPWP and approved the TIP, the draft of the STIP is prepared. This draft STIP is available for public review and comments in the same public notice that informs that the Final TIP and the endorsed UPWP are available. A 15 calendar day's comment period for the STIP is provided to the public.	15 calendar days
STIP is sent to the FHWA/FTA	July-September	Based on the comments received, if any, the DTPW determines if there is a need for a public hearing. If so, adequate prior notice will be provided to the public. If that is not the case, the draft STIP is sent to FHWA and FTA for their consideration and approval.	—
Final STIP	August-December	Once the comments of FTA and FHWA are incorporated to the document, the final version of the STIP is prepared. A Public notice is published in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the availability of the Final STIP.	
Amendment	Any time	Any Policy Board member that requests a revision to the STIP (amendment) must submit a letter requesting the amendment by mail or email to ocf@dtop.gov.pr The amendments are presented to the MPO members and a public notice is published informing to the general public about the proposed amendments. Based on the comments received, if any, the DTPW determines if there is a need for a public hearing. If so, adequate prior notice will be provided to the public. After the MPO reviews and approves the amendments, either in a meeting or by referendum, the final amended version of the STIP is sent to the federal agencies and a public notice is published notifying the availability of the document.	15 calendar days

*These period of time represents a regular cycle but these can be subject to change.

Table 4: Period of Comments for the Program of Project (POP)

Phase	Period of time*	Process	Duration of the comment period
Final	Once the STIP is approved and the total allocation of the funds are received	A public notice will be published in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the opportunity to review and comment on the POP. As indicated in the notice, the public will have 15 calendar days comment period.	15 calendar days
Amendment	Any time	If the STIP is amended, a new POP is published with the update.	15 calendar days

Regular Timeframe of the Activities

For a summary of the public participation process for the TIP/ UPWP and STIP, see Appendix 1.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of PIP

Evaluation of the effectiveness of public involvement efforts is a key aspect of developing a Public Involvement Plan. By continuously evaluating public involvement activities, it is possible to improve or add new participation activities and to discontinue activities that are ineffective. The typical methods for evaluating the effectiveness of public involvement strategies are surveys/questionnaire and quantitative statistical analysis.

Evaluation Methodology

Surveys and Statistical Data

The survey consist of short, specific questions regarding public involvement strategies that are ongoing or that were used in a specific project. Surveys can be conducted in person or by email. An evaluation form will be distributed to participants at public involvement activities and PRMPO meetings. The evaluation forms will ask,

- General information of the participant: place of residence, if the person represents an entity.
- How the person was informed of the activity
- How the person evaluates the promotion of the activity, the place and location, and the material used.
- Did the person had an opportunity to participate
- Did the person felt like his/her voice was heard?
- Did the PRMPO was responsive to the comments or inputs?
- Did the person was satisfied with the results of the activity?



Meeting of Committee for PIP Evaluation
December 2017

The PRMPO has evaluation forms to be used in the public involvement activities. Also, can be created new evaluation forms for a specific project or programs.

Evaluating outcomes of initiatives in public involvement can be difficult, especially the collection of quantitative data. After the activities of public involvement a summary of the evaluation results must be prepared. This evaluation results will support the creation of a data base. The data base is an information resource to comparing results, developing statistical analysis and monitoring it is possible to achieve the performance target.

The Public Participation Committee (PPC) of the PRMPO is committed to review continuously the comments received and evaluate this PIP, specially the outreach strategies. The PPC will periodically evaluate the public involvement efforts presented in this document to determine its effectiveness in reaching the public and assure full access to the PRMPO decision making processes.

Performance Measurement

Performance measurement is a valuable tool, as it provides essential information on how to improve upon past result. The performance measures help to explain whether or not public involvement objectives has actually been met. The performance measures are indicated in the following table.

Evaluation Program

Performance Measure	Target indicator
1.1 Geographic dispersion of involvement activities.	At least one public meeting/workshops is located in each urbanized areas. % of public meeting/workshops held per urbanized area.
1.2 Diversity of representation	% of participants by age, income, gender and people with disabilities.
1.3 Meetings facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities	100% of meetings are located in facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.
2.1 The public meetings/workshops and PRMPO meetings are announce with public notice in a major local newspaper.	The 100% of public meetings/workshops were announced with public notice in a major local newspaper. The 100% of PRMPO meetings were announced with public notice in a major local newspaper.
2.2 Participants are involved using multiple techniques	At least three (3) separate strategies are used to involve the stakeholder in decision making. At least 80% of the Policy Board Committees members are involved using two (2) strategies.
2.3 Participant's perception	Number of survey completed % of participants agree that website is useful in conveying meeting information. At least 80% of participants felt the public meeting/workshops were held at convenient time. At least 80% of participants felt the public meeting/workshops were held at convenient location.
3.1 The stakeholders and public has access to transportation planning documents.	The 100% of planning and programing documents were published at website. % of meeting attendees have visited website to access documents Number of visitors the website At least the 60% of documents available for revision and comments were announce in social media.
3.2 Attendance in public meetings/workshops, PRPMPO Meetings, Citizen Advisory Committee.	Percent of participants for urbanized area Number of participants At least two (2) meetings of PRMPO were held per year. At least the 55% of Policy Board Committee members participated in PRMPO meetings. Technical Committee meetings held with 55% of members. Citizen Advisory Committee held with 50% of members. Increase a 5% the participants in workshops/public meetings.

* Strategies are mentioned in the Chapter: Public Involvement Strategies.

The PIP will be modified based on plan performance, communication and outreach results. New strategies can be considered to be added as to ensure better public involvement.

Amending the PIP

The amendments to this document can take place in the following circumstances:

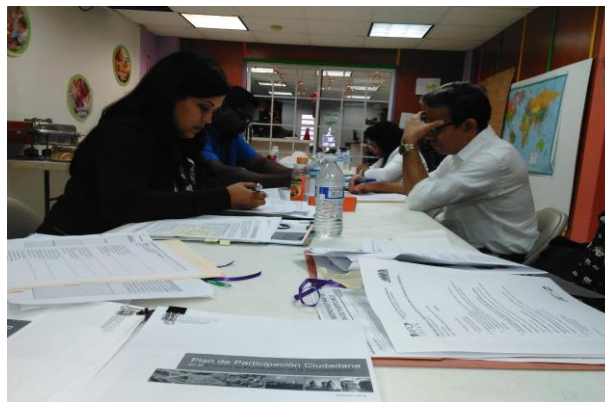
When FTA and FHWA provides new rulemaking or guidance

After the review and evaluation of the inputs received from the surveys distributed

In any of these cases, a revision for amendment the PIP could take place. The Public Involvement Committee will review periodically the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the PIP. Annually the Public Involvement Program of FCO prepare a PIP Evaluation Report and will share the results with PRMPO. The evaluation results of the PIP could help to identify which effective strategies were used and areas to improve. The Public Participation Committee will has municipality's representatives which collaborates in the evaluation process and the PIP revision.

The Public Participation Committee of the PRMPO and Public Involvement Program of FCO will incorporate the changes and prepare the draft of PIP amendment. Once the PIP is amended, the Public Involvement Program will prepare a public notice to notify the general public that the PIP was changed and that is available for comments. Also, the amended PIP will be available on the DTPW website. A period of 45 calendar days will be provided for comments.

The Public Involvement Program and PPC receives, evaluates and incorporates the comments received in the draft document. A public notice is prepared and published to announce the date and the location of the PRMPO meeting in which PIP draft is going to be presented for approval consideration. Once the PRMPO approved the PIP, it is sent to FTA and FHWA for their information.



Appendices

Appendix 1: TIP and UPWP Public Participation Process

TIP and UPWP Process		
Process/Activity	Time Frame*	Remark
Public notice publish	November	Public notice will be publish in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the availability of federal funds to develop highway and transportation related projects for urbanized, small urban and rural areas to discuss the planning process. The notice will be providing date, hour and locations of the public participation meetings. Also notify the deadline, contact person and where they need to submit the petitions for projects with funds of FTA and FHWA.
Public Participation Meetings	November/ December	The urbanized areas and rural areas will be invited by letter to public participation meetings. The purpose of the meeting is orientating and informing about the highway and transportation programs, the funding availability, how to apply for those funds, the deadline date and where they need to submit the petitions.
Deadline for Submission of all federal funds petitions	January 31	The petitions or proposals will be submitted in the Federal Coordination Office (FCO). The application form was distributed in the public participation meetings or as requested in the FCO.
Evaluation of the petitions	February	The submitted petitions will be revised by the CPCWG. The CPCWG provides technical assistance to municipalities and agencies or entities, as requested.
Technical Advisory Meeting I	March	The TCs will be invited by written to the PRMPO Technical Advisory Meeting with the purpose of discusses, revise and clarify doubts of the petitions that were submitted on the due date. If the CPCWG considers that more information is needed, they will request to the TCs in this meetings.
Recommendation Report	March	The CPCWG will be preparing the recommended and not recommended petitions report for the President and Executive Secretary of PRMPO.
Technical Advisory Meeting II	April	The TCs will be invited by letter to the PRMPO Technical Advisory Meeting with the purpose of discusses, revise and provide the list of the transportations and highway recommended and not recommended petitions.
Public notice of the drafts of the TIP and UPWP availability	May-June	Public notice will be publish in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the opportunity to review and comment on the drafts of TIP and UPWP with a 15 calendar days comment period. The notice also said that the documents are available for review at the various municipalities, agencies and at the PRHTA FCO. In additional, the notice mention the date and location of the PRMPO Policy Board Committees Meetings.
PRMPO Policy Board Committee Meeting	June	The Mayors and Agency Heads will be invited by letter to the PRMPO Policy Board Committee Meeting is held to discuss, evaluate and endorse the draft TIP and UPWP. In addition, the urban planning process is certified.
Documents Sent to FTA and FHWA	July	Final TIPs will be sending to the FTA and FHWA for information; and the endorsed UPWP will be sending for the consideration of approval.

Process/Activity	Time Frame*	Remark
Availability of the final documents for reviewing	July-August	<p>Once PRMPO members approved the TIPs and endorsed the UPWP, the CPCWG will be distributing the final TIP and endorsed UPWP to the PRMPO members.</p> <p>Also, the CPCWG incorporating the TIPs in the STIP to sending to FTA and FHWA, as draft STIP.</p> <p>Public notice will be publish in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public the final TIPs and endorsed UPWP. And the draft or STIP for 15 days period comments.</p>
Distribution of the documents to members of the PRMPO	August - September	<p>Once FTA and FHWA approved the UPWP and STIP the CPCWG will be distributing the final version to the PRMPO members.</p> <p>Public notice will be publishing in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the availability of these final documents.</p>

*Dates are subject to change.

Appendix 2: STIP Public Participation Process

STIP Process		
Process/ Activity	Time Frame*	Remark
Public notice publish	November	Public notice will be published in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the availability of federal funds to develop highway and transportation related projects for urbanized, small urban and rural areas to discuss the planning process. The notice will be providing the date, hour and locations of the public participation meetings. Also notify the deadline, to whom and where they need to submit the petitions for projects utilizing federal funds under FTA and FHWA. Invitation for to the Rural Areas to participate in the orientation meetings and/or public participation meetings.
Public Participation Meetings	November-December	The rural areas will be invited by letter to public participation meetings. The purpose of meetings is orientating and informing about the highway and transportation programs, the funding availability, how to apply for those funds, the deadline date and where they need to submit the petitions.
Deadline for Submission of all federal funds petitions	January 31	The petitions or proposal will be submitted in the Federal Coordination Office (FCO). The application form was distributed in the Public Participation Meetings or as requested in the FCO.
Evaluation of the petitions.	February	The submitted petitions will be revised by the CPCWG. The CPCWG provides technical assistance to municipalities and agencies or entities, as requested.
Technical Committee Reunion I	March	The CPCWG will be providing technical assistance to rural areas and entities related to preparing proposals for FTA and FHWA funds, as requested.
Recommendation Report	April	The CPCWG will be preparing the recommended and not recommended petitions report for the President and Executive Secretary of PRMPO, to revise projects under Section 5311 as well as Enhancement.
STIP Draft	July	The CPCWG will be preparing the draft of STIP. This document will be incorporating the TIPs which were approved by PRMPO.
Availability of the final documents for reviewing	July-August	Public notice will be published in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the opportunity to review and comment on the draft STIP with the 15 calendar days comment period.
Distribution of the documents to members of the PRMPO	August- September	Once FTA and FHWA approved the STIP, the CPCWG will be preparing and distributing the final STIP to the PRMPO members. Public notice will be published in the major local newspaper to notify the transportation providers and the general public about the availability of the final STIP.

*Dates are subject to change.

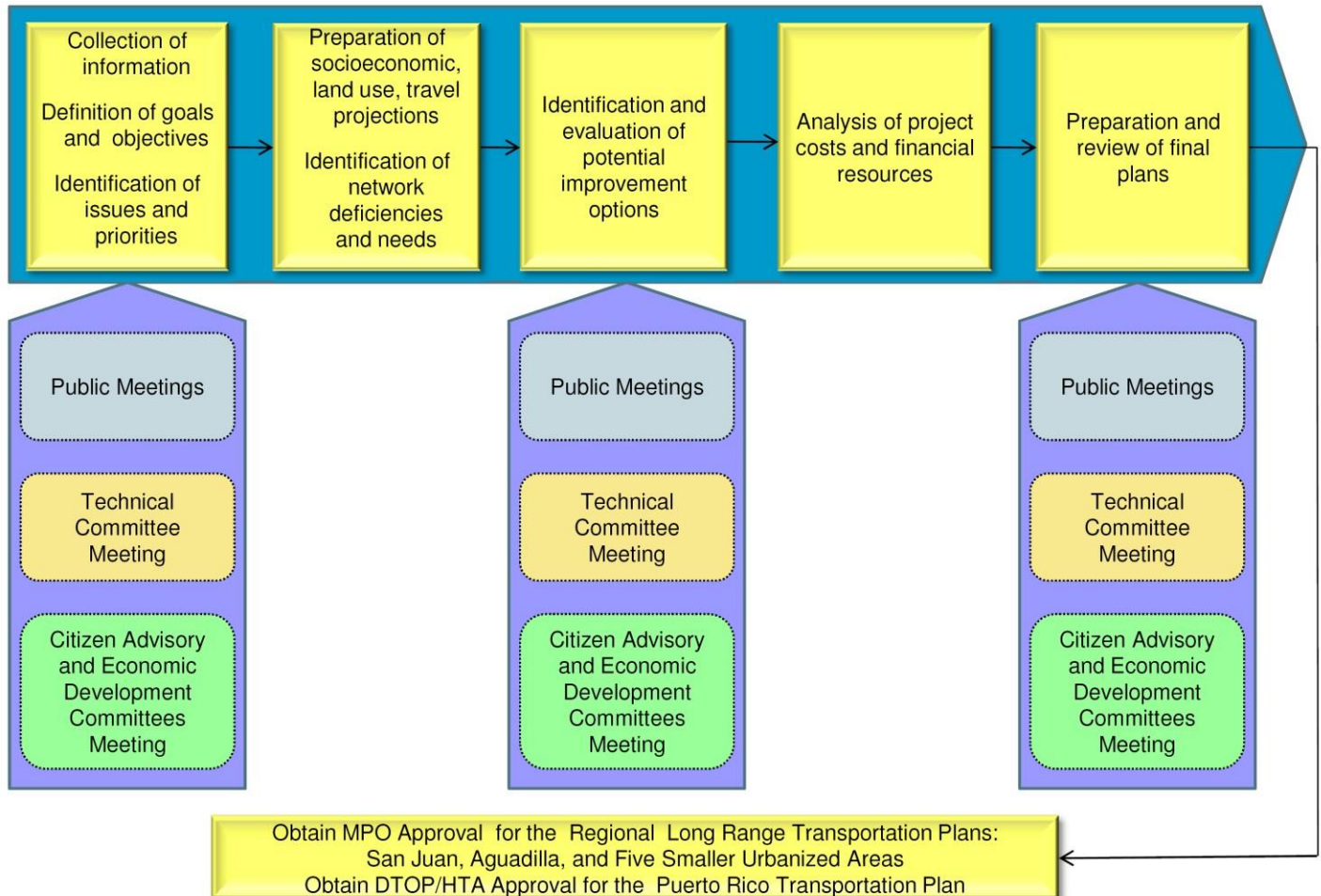
Appendix 3: Overview of the Transportation Plan Development Process

The chart below illustrates key steps of the transportation planning process that the MPO and the department of transportation coordinate. As this diagram shows, the transportation planning is a dynamic and comprehensive process, in which public involvement plays an important role in providing input, especially in the development of the vision and goals as well as in the evaluation and monitoring of the execution on the plan.



Source: Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. *The Transportation Planning Process: Key Issues*.

The graphic below illustrates the relation between the technical analysis tasks across the top and the public participation activities which inform the technical process at three significant points.



Appendix 4: Acronyms

Aguadilla Urbanized Area	AUA
Clean Air Act as Amended in 1990	CAA
Central Planning and Coordination Work Group	CPCWG
Federal Coordination Office	FCO
Federal Highway Administration	FHWA
Federal Transit Administration	FTA
Long Range Transportation Plans	LRTP
LRTP Technical Group	LRTPTG
Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century	MAP-21
Metropolitan Planning Organization	MPO
Metropolitan Transportation Plan	MTP
Policy Board Committee	PBC
Program of Project	POP
Programming and Especial Study Office	PESO
Public Involvement Plan	PIP
Public Participation Committee	PPC
Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works	DTPW
Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority	PRHTA
Puerto Rico Long Range Transportation Plan	PRLRTP
Puerto Rico Metropolitan Planning Organization	PRMPO
Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users	SAFETEA-LU
San Juan Urbanized Area	SJUA
Strategic Planning Office	SPO
Statewide Improvement Program	STIP
Statewide Transportation Plan	STP
Technical Advisory Committees	TAC
Technical Committees	TC
Transportation Improvement Program	TIP
Transportation Management Area	TMA
Unified Planning Work Program	UPWP
United States Department of Transportation	USDOT
Urbanized Areas Under 200,000	UZA

Exhibits

PROCEDURE ADOPTION

The Public Involvement Plan was adopted in _____, by the Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works and the Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority after a 45-day public comment period for revision and comments. The Plan has been presented and approved by each of the Puerto Rico MPO Policy Board Committee. This document will be review by the Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration as part of its Planning Certification Process to assure that there is public involvement in the PRMPO's planning process.

Carlos M. Contreras Aponte
President, Puerto Rico Metropolitan Planning Organization

Date

Alfredo Santiago Irizarry
Executive Secretary of the PRMPO

Date