

Headquarters—Public Participation Plan for the CTP and FSTIP

Project Summary

Caltrans headquarters requested assistance from MIG to conduct research on the most effective public outreach methods appropriate for the California Transportation Plan (CTP) and the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP). The requirement was based on the passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) included changes to public involvement. In particular, 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 420.210 directed a coordinated public involvement process for the California Transportation Plan (CTP), as well as the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP). This federal law also called for broad, inclusive participation, including the participation of stakeholders and the general public. MIG spoke directly with individuals in a one-on-one setting, conducted small group discussions, and solicited opinions from people throughout the state using a web-based survey. The results of the research were used to develop a Public Participation Plan (PPP) for Caltrans' statewide transportation plans and programs. As part of this project, MIG edited and designed an attractive, user-friendly document: *PPP for the CTP and FSTIP* (dated June 2008).



Outreach Methods

The final PPP for the CTP and FSTIP recommends the following outreach methods:

- Attractive, easy-to-use website with a searchable online database of projects, organized by region
- An updated and comprehensive database of stakeholder groups, including underrepresented communities
- List of partner organizations that can distribute information and collect feedback on the CTP and FSTIP
- Newspaper announcements, flyers, posters, and other printed materials
- Statewide meetings in several locations
- Presentations by staff to local or statewide stakeholder groups
- A positive working relationship with the press

Early and continuous public involvement opportunities were provided.

Project Website

Information for the Public Participation Plan for the CTP and FSTIP is available online at: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/osp/ppp.html. This helped fulfill the SAFETEA-LU requirements

regarding community involvement and use of visualizations, as specified under Section 450.210.



Public Involvement Tools

Stakeholder Interviews

During October and November 2007, MIG undertook a phone survey of 41 representatives of stakeholder organizations (public agencies, non-profit organizations, and the private sector) from around California. The organizations included representation from the broad categories listed in 23 CFR, Section 450.210.

Focus Groups

Using an on-line recruiting tool, MIG recruited participants for focus groups held in Oakland, Sacramento, Fresno, and Long Beach. MIG carefully screened participants to ensure each group had participants reflective of the State's cultural and economic diversity.

Process Graphic

MIG created a concept diagram or "process graphic" to help participants understand Caltrans' approach for developing the CTP and FSTIP.

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Deliverables

Research Methods Reports
Final Report and
*Public Participation Plan
for the CTP and FSTIP*

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Web Survey

MIG developed an on-line survey to solicit feedback on a statewide basis. Participants were asked questions similar to those asked in the focus groups and interviews.

Environmental Justice Community Involvement

Focus Group participants were screened to ensure participation of ethnically diverse and low-income participants. Targeted outreach was done to recruit some participants from local tribes. A \$60 stipend was paid to all focus group participants. The web survey tracked demographic information of the survey respondents.



Results

Caltrans developed its PPP, which incorporated many of the methods and ideas of this research project, and launched a CTP 2035 web portal (www.californiainterregionalblueprint.org). A web survey on the Draft PPP (also sent out to tribes by mail) received mostly positive feedback. Interviewees from stakeholder groups were very cooperative in getting the word out to their constituents on the PPP and the new web portal.



Lessons Learned

The process to develop the *Public Participation Plan for the CTP and FSTIP* effectively demonstrated that communities throughout the state do have an interest in the policymaking activities of the Department of Transportation. Focus groups from representative areas were able to assist the Department in identifying important strategies for disseminating information to, and collecting input from, the general public and key stakeholders. The guidance captured in the PPP will help to ensure that California citizens have access to the CTP and FSTIP processes.