

Headquarters–Caltrans Planning Horizons Presentation: Public Participation

Project Summary

Daniel Iacofano, founding principal of MIG, Inc., made the presentation “Getting the Most Out of Public Involvement” as part of the Caltrans Office of Professional Development Planning Horizons series on April 22, 2009. Mr. Iacofano’s presentation provided an overview on the purpose and value of public involvement, reviewed a number of successful District and Headquarters projects recently completed or underway, and identified strategies and tools for improving public involvement efforts. The 45 minute presentation was followed by questions and discussion with a variety of Caltrans planning staff. A video presentation of the entire session and a copy of the presentation are available on the Caltrans Public Participation and Engagement (PPEC) Website at www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ocp/pp.html, and is also archived on Caltrans’ Past Planning Horizons Presentation website (Presentation #55) at www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/opd/pastpresentations.html.



Presentation Summary

The presentation began with an overview of Caltrans’ legal and legislative requirements for public involvement, including SAFETEA-LU, Title VI, and Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice).

Mr. Iacofano explained that beyond these requirements, public involvement activities are an opportunity for Caltrans staff to improve project design and implementation. Public involvement accomplishes the following:

- Fulfills legal requirements
- Meets community expectations for review and consideration
- Provides critical information about proposed projects and related impacts
- Allows community to state preferences and priorities for alternative proposals
- Creates opportunities to mediate conflicting interests and priorities

When done well, public involvement activities can improve projects and build credibility and trust in Caltrans.

Mr. Iacofano presented a variety of important elements in public involvement, including:

- Reaching All Stakeholders
- Providing Project Information
- Getting Feedback

- Resolving Conflict
- Quantifying Results
- Achieving Outcomes

Project case studies included Benton Community Visioning, the SR 46 East Comprehensive Corridor Study, Kroy Pathway Conceptual Improvement, the *Public Participation Plan for the CTP and FSTIP*, and Public Involvement for CSMPs.

Environmental Justice Community Involvement

Mr. Iacofano reviewed a variety of methods for satisfying and exceeding Environmental Justice (EJ) requirements, including materials translation, ways to recruit EJ and underprivileged groups, and coordination with local community groups.



Lessons Learned

Caltrans works with a broad base of diverse stakeholders across the state and pro-active efforts to improve and innovate public engagement efforts will continue to distinguish Caltrans nationally. Convening staff from Headquarters and District offices provided a unique opportunity to reflect on recent engagement efforts, lessons learned, and identify future focus areas.



Results

The training provided Caltrans staff with a variety of techniques and strategies for using public involvement to develop stronger projects and an overview of recent successful public involvement efforts across the state.

- Improved partnerships
- Goals for collaboration

This project also assisted Caltrans in meeting SAFETEA-LU public engagement requirements, as specified under Section 450.210.



Deliverables

PowerPoint Presentation