

DRAFT Public Participation Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area



February 2023



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

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Chapter 1 — Introduction

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is committed to a transparent decision-making process that is informed by meaningful public consultation and community engagement. MTC wants people in the San Francisco Bay Area to be involved in the regional planning process. As such, MTC aims to give the public ample opportunities for early and continuing participation in important projects, plans and decisions, and to provide full public access to key decisions. This Public Participation Plan outlines the many opportunities available to get engaged in MTC’s work.

The policies and investments made by MTC influence the lives of people who live and work in the Bay Area every single day. To help inform those decisions, MTC is committed to providing ample, accessible opportunities for members of the public to engage with our policymakers about ongoing programs and projects. This Public Participation Plan defines our mission and vision for public engagement and participation, along with the processes for communicating with the public about our programs, plans, projects and decisions. This plan seeks to provide Bay Area residents with the information necessary to participate in and influence the regional policy development and decision-making processes.

What is MTC?

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. MTC supports the region’s network of streets, roads, highways, public transit systems, airports and other transportation resources, including the movement of goods through ports and freight rail lines. MTC was created by the California Legislature in 1970 to plan the Bay Area’s transportation system. The federal government later designated MTC as the Bay Area’s metropolitan planning organization (MPO) charging it with the task of coordinating and deciding how to spend federal transportation dollars that are suballocated to the region. Over the years, MTC’s work has expanded through state legislation to address other regional issues, including administration of toll bridge revenues, the environment and housing.

MTC’s role has expanded into multiple authorities — created by state law or as a joint powers authority to carry out specific duties or projects for residents of the Bay Area. These authorities include:

- [Bay Area Toll Authority](#) (BATA) – manages the toll revenues from the Bay Area’s seven state-owned bridges. BATA also manages FasTrak®, the electronic toll payment system established in state law.
- [Service Authority for Freeways and Expressways](#) (SAFE) – operates the freeway service patrol tow trucks and the emergency roadside call box programs. State law established the framework for establishing a SAFE as well as their funding sources; MTC is the Bay Area’s SAFE.
- [Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority](#) (BAIFA) – oversees the financing, planning and operation of MTC Express Lanes and related transportation projects. BAIFA was established as a joint powers authority of MTC and BATA to administer express lanes and other toll facilities.
- [Bay Area Housing Finance Authority](#) (BAHFA) – established in state law, BAHFA is a first-of-its kind regional authority created to address the Bay Area’s chronic housing challenges.
- [Bay Area Headquarters Authority](#) (BAHA) – manages and maintains the Bay Area Metro Center building in San Francisco where ABAG and MTC are housed. BAHA was established as a joint powers authority of MTC, ABAG, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission — all co-located in the Bay Area Metro Center.

Two Boards, One Staff

In 2008, Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg) was enacted and called upon regional agencies to link together their transportation and land use plans more closely to help achieve climate goals — specifically, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the transportation sector. This law linked MTC’s work more closely with that of the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the Bay Area’s regional planning agency responsible for land use planning.

ABAG is a joint powers authority of the nine counties and 101 cities in the region that works to strengthen cooperation and collaboration among them to build healthier, stronger communities. ABAG helps local governments plan for new housing development and adapt to change while addressing sustainability, energy, resilience and equity. In 2017, the staffs of both agencies merged, and they now work as one integrated organization reporting to two boards to promote better collaboration and integration on common Bay Area goals.

Public Participation Plan Purpose

Two key planning efforts prompt the bulk of the Public Participation Plan: the [Regional Transportation Plan](#) (RTP) and the [Transportation Improvement Program](#) (TIP).

However, the work of MTC expands beyond these two planning efforts to encompass a range of plans, projects and programs that work together to improve the quality of life for all Bay Area residents as well as our natural environment. As such, this Public Participation Plan details MTC’s decision-making process and highlights other opportunities for getting involved and influencing the regional decision-making process. The federal and state requirements for public participation related to the RTP and TIP are included as *Appendix A. Public Participation Procedures for the Regional Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program*, and *Appendix B. Public Participation Plan for Plan Bay Area 2050+*.

Public Participation Opportunities

While MTC and ABAG work on a myriad of plans, projects and programs with a wealth of engagement opportunities, below is a sampling of the major efforts.

- [Plan Bay Area](#) – The long-range regional plan for the Bay Area is focused on transportation, housing, economic development and environmental resilience, and serves as the region’s RTP and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). Federal regulations require MTC to engage in a planning process that creates opportunities for public involvement, participation and consultation throughout the development of the RTP. As such, the public participation procedures for the RTP are thoroughly detailed in Appendix A. Furthermore, SB 375 requires MTC and ABAG to develop a Public Participation Plan for developing the RTP/SCS. See Appendix B for the complete Public Participation Plan for the next update of Plan Bay Area.
- [Transportation Improvement Program](#) (TIP) – The TIP is a federally-required comprehensive four-year regional spending plan for near-term transportation projects, programs and investment priorities. Federal regulations require MTC to engage in a planning process that creates opportunities for public involvement, participation and consultation throughout the development of the TIP. The public participation procedures for the TIP are thoroughly detailed in Appendix A.
- [Overall Work Plan](#) (OWP) – The OWP describes the annual budget, allocation and use of federal and state transportation planning funds in the Bay Area. The OWP is developed each fiscal year and details the agency’s planning and budgetary priorities for the following fiscal year.

- [Bay Area Housing Finance Authority](#) (BAHFA) – BAHFA is a first-of-its-kind regional authority created to address the Bay Area’s chronic housing challenges. It offers a powerful new set of financing and policy tools to promote housing affordability and address the region’s housing crisis. BAHFA is a separate legal entity but is governed by the same board as MTC.
- [Regional Housing Needs Allocation](#) (RHNA) – Establishes a blueprint for how each city and county in the state must plan for housing. Required by state law, RHNA is updated every eight years by ABAG.

Who We Engage

MTC represents the entire nine-county San Francisco Bay Area in all its economic, geographic and demographic diversity. The agency is committed to engaging and using input from a range of stakeholders, including:

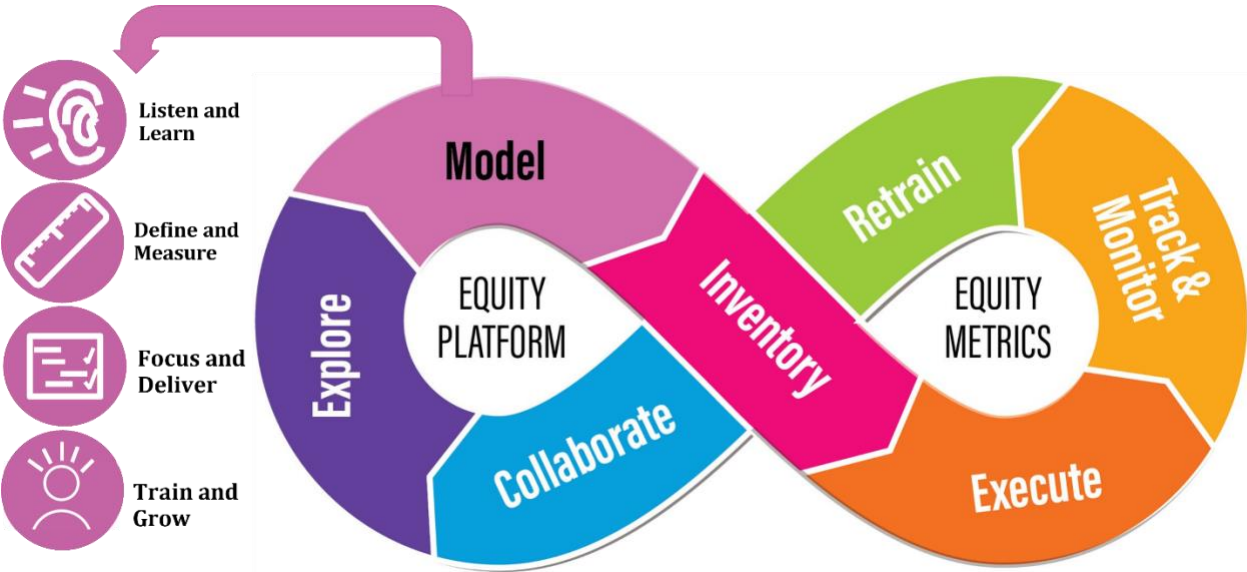
- **General Public** – all residents of the region, with special consideration for the needs of systemically excluded groups, including people of color, communities with low-incomes, persons with disabilities, youth, communities with limited English proficiency and elderly individuals.
- **Community Organizations** – especially those that serve Equity Priority Communities and other groups such as environmental advocates, special interest nonprofit organizations, neighborhood groups, homeowner associations and others.
- **Government Agencies** – public agencies like local transit operators, cities and counties, other regional agencies like the Air District, public health agencies, water districts, county transportation agencies (CTAs), the region’s ports and airports, and agencies at the state and federal levels.
- **Business Community** – private-sector entities whose work intersects with transportation and land use planning, including business associations, private transportation providers, freight shippers, consulting firms, technology developers and non-profit business interest groups.
- **Elected Officials** – elected representatives at all levels, including city councils and mayoral offices, county supervisors, and state and federal legislators.
- **Tribal Governments and Communities** – federally recognized Tribal governments within the Bay Area and California Native American Tribes with Tribal cultural resources in the region.

See chapter six for a full list of partners that MTC aims to engage with.

Chapter 2 — MTC’s Commitment to Participation

Equity Platform

MTC defines equity as “inclusion into a Bay Area where everyone can participate, prosper and reach their full potential.” The agency strives to advance equity through carefully considered investments and policies that can support historically underserved and systemically marginalized groups, including people with low incomes and communities of color.



The Equity Platform, adopted by MTC (Resolution No. 4559) in January 2023, provides a framework for how MTC addresses equity challenges and approaches complex systems and environments. It is grounded by four pillars:

- Listen and Learn
- Define and Measure
- Focus and Deliver
- Train and Grow

The Equity Platform is an ongoing, iterative process that guides staff to create and design solutions that focus on affected communities; increase opportunity for those people most affected by exclusion; shift decision-making power to the people who are affected by policies; and invest in training and education to advance goals for fairness and inclusion. Additional information about MTC’s Equity Platform is available at mtc.ca.gov/about-mtc/what-mtc/equity-platform.

Operationalizing our Equity Platform in our public and community engagement means revising policies and implementing processes that lift the voices of those who have been systemically excluded from the regional decision-making process, including people of color, communities with low incomes, persons with disabilities, seniors and people who speak languages other than English.

Guiding Principles: Our Vision for Engagement

MTC’s guiding principles for engagement serve as our vision for public participation and are rooted in our mission to advance equity in the Bay Area by investing resources in engagement strategies that lift the voices of those who have been historically left out of the decision-making process, and working to ensure systemically excluded communities can meaningfully influence decision-making.

1. Effective engagement has a clear purpose.

Defining the purpose for engaging the public, understanding the context and identifying the audience of those affected is imperative to ensure meaningful engagement from the standpoint of the agency and the participants.

2. Effective engagement requires two-way education and relationship building.

Acknowledging the expertise that exists within a given community and boosting engagement with activities that increase mutual education fosters more productive conversations. Ongoing, mutual education improves outcomes and requires cultivating relationships with partners and communities to build trust and achieve consensus.

3. Effective engagement is not one-size-fits-all.

Efforts must be tailored to each unique project and audience to enhance community engagement while making every effort to increase participation opportunities for those most impacted by past and current decisions.

4. Clear communication is essential in effective engagement.

Public engagement must be conducted through clear and compelling communications that are appropriate for the intended audience. Leveraging inclusive storytelling builds shared understanding.

5. Effective engagement demands accountability.

Informing the public of opportunities to participate in the process and clearly demonstrating how community voices have influenced planning and policy decisions builds confidence in the public process.

6. Engagement requires openness and transparency.

An open and transparent public participation process empowers low-income communities and communities of color to participate in decision-making that affects them (adopted as an environmental justice principle by the Commission in 2006).

Engagement Strategies

Our strategies describe the iterative process MTC follows when implementing public engagement programs and inform *how* we conduct engagement.

Strategy 1: Engage Early and Often

MTC structures major planning initiatives and funding decisions to provide the public with ample opportunity to help shape outcomes. MTC provides timely information to raise awareness of upcoming projects, key milestones and opportunities to influence the policy development and decision-making processes.

Strategy 2: Enable Access for All

MTC works to provide all Bay Area residents with opportunities for meaningful participation, regardless of ability, age or income. This strategy aims to increase activities that reach communities who have been historically left out of policy decisions that affect them. Further, MTC recognizes that individuals should not need to be a transportation professional to understand our work.

Strategy 3: Prioritize Co-creation and Plain Language

MTC aims to conduct engagement activities that design and create solutions in partnership and collaboration with communities affected by policies and decisions. MTC strives to create clear content to foster informed, productive dialogue throughout the engagement process.

Strategy 4: Respond and Report Back

MTC is committed to responding to all correspondence received and summarizing comments heard from participants on impending actions, so decision-makers and the public have a clear understanding of the depth and breadth of opinions on a given issue. MTC also strives to inform participants about how their input and feedback help shape or contribute to key decisions and actions. When outcomes do not correspond to the views expressed, every effort is made to explain why.

Strategy 5: Assess Impact

MTC evaluates our engagement activities in an effort to inform and improve future engagement. Evaluation helps determine who was missing from the process and identifies opportunities for improvement and corrective action.



Chapter 3 — Opportunities for Ongoing Participation

Policy Committees

MTC conducts its work through various committees that provide planning, policy and funding recommendations to the full [Commission](#). Much of the substantive work of the agency is done at the committee level. As such, MTC encourages the public to participate at this stage when decisions are being debated.

All meetings are open to the public. A complete calendar of meetings is available on the MTC website: mtc.ca.gov/meetings-events. Additionally, the public can receive email updates about individual committee meetings by contacting the MTC Public Information Office at info@bayareametro.gov or (415) 778-6757 and requesting to be added to a committee's distribution list.

Members of the public can watch meetings via webcast on the [MTC website](#), or they can participate in meetings via Zoom or in-person. (Note: to actively participate in a meeting, members of the public must join the meeting via Zoom or in person.) To participate in live meetings, visit the main Meetings & Events page (see above) and click on the name of the meeting. There, you will find the details to participate in the meeting via Zoom.

MTC Committees

The following committees make recommendations to the Commission:

- [Administration Committee](#) – Oversees and approves administrative tasks, including staff oversight, consultant contracts, budgeting and financial policies, reports and audits. Has final decision-making authority over most items.
- [Joint MTC-ABAG Legislation Committee](#) – A joint committee of MTC and ABAG that oversees both agencies' legislative advocacy priorities, including positions on state bills and budget requests.
- [Operations Committee](#) – Oversees MTC's public-facing programs like Clipper®.
- [Planning Committee](#) – Oversees MTC's planning studies, including updates to Plan Bay Area. Typically meets jointly with the ABAG Administrative Committee.

- [Programming and Allocations Committee](#) – Develops the policies and recommendations about how to spend regional, state and federal funds, and allocates funding to specific projects.

In addition, BAHFA and BATA have their own oversight committees:

- [BAHFA Oversight Committee](#) — Oversees BAHFA’s work to address the Bay Area’s chronic housing challenges.
- [BATA Oversight Committee](#) – Oversees policies and funding decisions related to BATA, including FasTrak, the region’s electronic toll collection system.

Furthermore, MTC believes that strong collaboration creates better transportation systems for the Bay Area and has several [interagency committees](#) that work with many partners to manage a transportation network that ranges from sidewalks to regional rail, and that is owned and operated by dozens of government agencies.

ABAG Committees

MTC’s work is sometimes conducted jointly with ABAG. For example, ABAG’s [General Assembly](#) periodically receives updates on [Plan Bay Area](#), and the Legislation Committee is a joint committee of ABAG and MTC:

- [Joint MTC-ABAG Legislation Committee](#) – A joint committee of MTC and ABAG that oversees both agencies’ legislative advocacy priorities, including positions on state bills and budget requests.

Full information on ABAG’s policy committees is available at abag.ca.gov/about-abag/what-we-do/how-we-govern.

Policy Advisory Council

MTC’s [Policy Advisory Council](#) — made up of 27 Bay Area residents — advises MTC on current and future transportation policies. The Policy Advisory Council reflects MTC’s commitment to including the public in an open and transparent process of making transportation decisions for the Bay Area. [Current Council members](#) are selected for a 4-year term with the current term ending in 2025. Members of the public are encouraged to apply to become a member of the Policy Advisory Council during its next open recruitment process.

The Policy Advisory Council meets the second Wednesday of each month, and its meetings are open to the public. To be notified about Policy Advisory Council meetings, contact the MTC Public Information Office at (415) 778-6747 or info@bayareametro.gov and request to be added to the Council’s distribution list.

Other Engagement Activities

Public Meetings and Events

Public meetings on specific issues are held as needed. These meetings can range from large in-person open houses and community workshops to small group discussions or focus groups to webinars or online workshops. To solicit comments on various plans, projects and programs, MTC holds meetings online or throughout the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Meetings are located and scheduled to maximize public participation (including virtual, evening meetings, etc.). MTC provides [notice of upcoming meetings and events on the MTC website](#). If appropriate, e-mail announcements and news releases are also sent to the public and local media outlets, respectively.

Public Hearings

Public hearings are sometimes required by law for certain policy decisions. Notice of these public hearings is placed on [MTC's website](#), and — when required by law — in the legal section of numerous newspapers in the region, including newspapers circulated in historically disadvantaged communities of the Bay Area. Materials to be considered at public hearings are posted online and made available to interested persons upon request. To be notified when public hearings are scheduled, contact the MTC Public Information Office at (415) 778-6747 or info@bayareametro.gov and request to be added to the public hearing distribution list.

Virtual Engagement

Websites

MTC's website — mtc.ca.gov — is targeted to audiences ranging from transit riders to transportation professionals, elected officials and news media seeking information on particular programs, projects and public meetings. Updated daily, the site provides information about MTC's projects and programs, the agency's structure and governing body, and upcoming public meetings and workshops. It contains the names, e-mail addresses and phone numbers for staff and Commission members; all of MTC's current planning and funding documents; information about the MTC-ABAG Library and a link to the library catalog; as well as detailed facts about the region's travel patterns. It also includes important links to partner government agencies as well as to other MTC sites such as the Bay Area's 511.org, ClipperCard.com, and BayAreaFasTrak.org.

The Vital Signs website — vitalsigns.mtc.ca.gov — provides a wealth of data on Bay Area travel and commute patterns. Vital Signs tracks trends related to transportation, land and people, the economy, the environment and social equity. This data-driven website compiles dozens of indicators; each is presented with interactive visualizations that allow readers to explore historical trends, examine differences between cities and counties, and even compare the Bay Area with other peer metropolitan areas.

The ABAG website — abag.ca.gov — is targeted to local government staff and elected officials. The site provides information on ABAG’s work, as well as the agency’s structure and governing body; upcoming public meetings and events; and technical assistance resources for local staff.

Social Media Channels

MTC has a plethora of social media channels that help to engage the Bay Area’s nearly eight million residents.

MTC’s main social media channels

- Facebook, [MTCBATA](#)
- Instagram, [MTCBATA](#)
- Twitter, [@MTCBATA](#)
- YouTube, [MTCBATA](#)
- Nextdoor, [MTCBATA](#)
- LinkedIn, [MTCBATA](#)

Other MTC social media channels

- Clipper
 - Facebook, [BayAreaClipper](#)
 - Twitter, [@BayAreaClipper](#)
 - YouTube, [BayAreaClipper](#), [Clipperonyourphone4742](#)
- FasTrak®
 - Facebook, [BayAreaFasTrak](#)
 - Twitter, [@fastrakbayarea](#)
 - Vimeo, [bayareafastrak](#)
- 511
 - Facebook, [511SFBay](#)
 - Instagram, [511sfbay](#)
 - Twitter, [@511SFBay](#)

Bay Link Blog

The Bay Link blog is a source for news and insights from MTC and ABAG. The blog compiles news headlines about transportation, housing, the environment and the economy from around the Bay Area and shares original content about MTC’s and ABAG’s work. The blog is available at: blog.bayareametro.gov.

e-News

MTC maintains several distribution lists used to send out announcements, e-newsletters, meeting agendas, project updates, and much more. To sign up to receive updates from MTC, visit mtc.ca.gov/about-mtc/public-participation/get-involved. To be added to the distribution lists of MTC committees, contact the MTC Public Information Office at info@bayareametro.gov or (415) 778-6757 and request to be added to the individual committee distribution list.

As required by state statute, Plan Bay Area and BAHFA offer a simple way for the public to register to receive updates. Plan Bay Area has an e-newsletter that is sent monthly, and as needed, delivering project updates and announcements during the plan development process. To sign up to receive Plan Bay Area updates, visit planbayarea.org/get-involved/mailling-list.

As its work ramps up, BAHFA will begin to send updates to interested individuals who register to receive news on their projects and engagement opportunities. To sign up to receive BAHFA updates, visit abag.ca.gov/our-work/housing/bahfa-bay-area-housing-finance-authority.

Public Information Office

MTC's commitment to public participation includes staff dedicated to involving the public in our work. In addition to the components of MTC's public outreach program detailed in this plan, public information staff can:

- request translation services or ADA accommodations for members of the public who speak languages other than English or are visually- or hearing-impaired.
- offer assistance and make available to the public any item on its websites (including meeting notices, agendas, meeting materials, etc.) when a person does not have Internet access.
- work with interested organizations to arrange for staff and/or Commissioners to make presentations to community groups.
- respond to inquiries from the public and media received by:
 - Telephone: (415) 778-6757
 - Mail: 375 Beale Street, Suite 800, San Francisco, CA 94105
 - E-mail: info@bayareametro.gov

Multilingual Phone Lines

Members of the public can reach public information staff in various languages:

- English: (415) 778-6757
- Chinese: (415) 778-6689
- Spanish: (415) 778-6656

Plan Bay Area Comment Line

Plan Bay Area has a dedicated listening line that allows members of the public to participate in the plan update process via phone. Participants can record their comments to be entered into the official record. Callers can leave Plan Bay Area-related comments in English, Cantonese, Mandarin and Spanish by calling (415) 778-2292.

Library

The [MTC-ABAG Library](#) provides access to both a digital and physical collection of materials on transportation planning, housing, demographics, economic trends, public policy issues and more. The library, located at 375 Beale Street, offers a collection of publications from MTC and ABAG, as well as research on current topics, historical documents from transit agencies and local governments, and more.

The digital collection can be accessed [through the library catalog](#), and the physical collection can be accessed by making an appointment to visit the library. Call or email our American Library Association-accredited librarian for reference assistance or to make an appointment to visit the library's physical collection at (415) 778-5236 or library@bayareametro.gov. MTC also offers a searchable, complete digital archive of reports, plans and more at mtc.ca.gov/digital-library.



Chapter 4 — Engagement Techniques

MTC uses various techniques to engage the public. A menu of the participation methods we employ is outlined below and includes traditional approaches as well as opportunities to engage virtually. These techniques are informed by outreach we conducted in advance of updating this plan.

Traditional Methods

- Conduct meetings, workshops and open houses at varied times of day, including evening/weekend meetings, to encourage participation.
- Present to existing groups and organizations, co-host events with community groups, business associations, etc.
- Participate in community events.
- Contract with community-based organizations in Equity Priority Communities for focused outreach.
- Use “pop-up” workshops/meetings in public gathering places. These are on-the-spot meetings or workshops held in locations where the public is already gathered.
- Organize small-group discussions such as focus groups with participants recruited randomly from telephone polls or recruited by stakeholder interest groups.
- Sponsor a topical forum or summit with partner agencies, the media or other community organizations.
- Host question-and-answer sessions with planners and policy board members.

Virtual Engagement

- Virtual workshops/open houses hosted via online meeting platforms like Zoom.
- Provide remote access to meetings by webcasting meetings via Facebook, YouTube, websites, etc.
- Host telephone town halls or online webinars.
- Provide asynchronous opportunities for participating (e.g., webinar recordings with online comment forms, interactive games, etc.).
- Online interactive surveys, polls.

- Use social media and paid digital promotion to reach a larger audience.
- Post video recordings of past public meetings/workshops.
- Post written or display materials from in-person meetings online.
- Encourage interaction among participants via web (e.g., online discussion boards, etc.).
- Provide access to planning data (such as maps, charts, background on travel models, forecasts, census data, research reports, etc.).
- Post information online in advance of public meetings.

Visualization Techniques

- Maps
- Charts, illustrations, photographs
- Table-top displays and models
- Electronic voting at workshops
- PowerPoint slide shows
- Videos (traditional, animated, simulation)

Polls/Surveys

- Statistically valid telephone polls (Plan Bay Area)
- Electronic surveys via web and SMS-based (text) surveys
- Intercept interviews/surveys where people congregate, such as at transit hubs.
- Printed surveys distributed at meetings, transit hubs, on-board transit vehicles, etc.

Online and Printed Materials

- User-friendly, accessible documents (including use of executive summaries)
- Review of publications to ensure use of plain language
- Post cards, mailers, etc.
- Maps, charts, photographs and other visual means of displaying information
- Use of the Bay Link blog to share important or complex information in an accessible manner

Targeted Mailings/Flyers

- Work with community-based organizations to distribute flyers/information via their channels.
- Periodic e-newsletters, e-announcements, etc.
- E-mail to targeted distribution lists
- Distribute “Take One” flyers to key community organizations
- Place notices on board transit vehicles and at transit hubs

Local Media

- Issue news/press releases
- Invite reporters to news briefings.
- Conduct media roundtables to educate reporters on complex topics.
- Meet with editorial staff.
- Submit opinion pieces/commentaries to local news media.
- Purchase display ads.
- Negotiate inserts into local printed media.
- Visit ethnic media outlets to encourage use of MTC/ABAG news releases.
- Place speakers on radio/TV talk shows.
- Public Service Announcements on radio and TV.
- Develop content for public access/cable television programming.
- Develop civic journalism partnerships.

Notification of Meetings and Events

- Maintain an updated Meeting & Events online calendar.
- Post meeting and events announcements on websites.
- Use paid digital promotion to promote events and meetings.
- Use of the Bay Link blog to promote events and meetings.
- Distribute e-mail blasts to share important announcements, project updates, etc.
- Disseminate information through partnerships with local government, transit operators and community-based and interest organizations.
- Distribute periodic e-newsletters.
- Disseminate information via social media channels.
- Disseminate information via local media.

Techniques for Involving Low-Literacy Populations

- Use plain language in all materials and presentations.
- Train staff to be alert to and anticipate the needs of low-literacy participants in meetings, workshops, etc.
- Robust use of visualization techniques to communicate about complex topics, including maps and/or graphics to illustrate trends, choices being debated, etc.
- Personal interviews or use of audio recording to obtain oral comments.
- Use of a listening line for participants to submit audio comments via phone.

Techniques for Involving Low Income Communities and Communities of Color

- Presentations and discussions with MTC’s Policy Advisory Council.
- Paid partnerships with community-based organizations that are trusted by the relevant communities with whom we are trying to engage to co-host meetings and remove barriers to participation by offering assistance, such as childcare, meals, translation services, etc.
- Distribute “Take One” flyers on transit vehicles and at transit hubs.
- Outreach in the community (such as pop-up meetings at flea markets, libraries, health centers, etc.).
- Use of community and ethnic media outlets to announce participation opportunities.
- Paid informational stories in ethnic media.

Techniques for Involving Limited-English Proficient Populations

See also MTC’s Final Revised Plan for Special Language Services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Populations, which can be found in English, Spanish and Chinese on MTC’s website at mtc.ca.gov/about-mtc/public-participation/language-assistance.

- Conduct meetings entirely in languages other than English (e.g., Spanish, Chinese).
- Train staff to be alert to, and to anticipate the needs of participants who speak languages other than English at meetings and workshops.

- Personal interviews or use of video/audio recording to obtain oral comments in languages other than English.
- Use of social media channels used by persons who speak languages other than English.
- Translated documents and web content on key initiatives.
- Translated materials; have translators available at meetings, upon request.
- Include information on meeting notices about how to request translation assistance.
- Translated vital news releases and outreach to non-English media, such as radio, television, newspapers and social media.
- When conducting statistically valid polls, surveys or focus groups, offer the information in other languages.
- Follow the guidance in the [language assistance plan](#).

Techniques for Involving Native American Tribes

- Send Tribal governments and relevant Tribal representatives, organizations or groups timely and adequate public notices and announcements.
- Connect with Tribal governments and establish an expected level of communication.
- Actively seek Tribal government input on MTC projects and programs through direct contact with Chairpersons and/or Tribal representatives, as appropriate.
- Respond to all Tribal government comments.
- Respond to all consultation requests from Tribes.
- Intentionally create engagement opportunities for Tribes to be involved in the regional planning process.
- Present information to Tribal leaders and representatives at a Tribal Summit (see chapter 5).

Techniques for Reporting on Impact

- Present/share information on what was heard with decision-makers.
- Report how public input influenced the process to decision-makers.

- Summarize key themes of public comments in staff reports to policy committees.
- Notify participants when reporting how public input influenced the process and/or when sharing information on what was heard.
- Use e-newsletter articles to report back to participants.
- Post comments, key themes and how feedback influenced the process online.



Chapter 5 — Partners

MTC aims to meaningfully engage those affected by its policies, actions and decisions and to tailor engagement efforts to each project and its respective audience.

Below is a sample list of partners MTC strives to engage in its work as required by federal and state law:

- affected public agencies
- affordable housing advocates and organizations
- airport operations
- bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations
- broad-based business organizations
- chambers of commerce
- city managers
- commercial property interests
- communities with low-incomes
- community development agencies and organizations
- community-based organizations
- county transportation agencies
- economic development agencies
- educational community and institutions
- elderly and retired persons
- elected officials
- environmental advocates
- environmental protection agencies
- Equity Priority Communities
- federal land management agencies
- freight interests
- general public
- health and wellness representatives
- home builder representatives
- homeowner associations
- landowners
- limited English proficiency communities
- local government staff
- local planning departments
- natural disaster risk reduction agencies/organizations
- neighborhood and community groups
- neighborhood councils
- organizations serving rural area residents
- parent organizations
- persons with disabilities
- private providers of transportation
- private sector
- providers of freight transportation services

- public agencies
- public health and wellness representatives
- public ports
- public sector
- regional government agencies
- renter/tenant advocacy organizations
- representatives of public transportation employees
- representatives of the disabled
- representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities
- representatives of users of public transit
- state agencies
- students and youth
- tourism interests
- transit agencies
- transportation and transit advocates
- transportation commissions
- Tribal governments and Indigenous communities



Chapter 6 — Tribal Government Consultation and Engagement with Native American Tribes

MTC acknowledges that the land that makes up the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area has been home to diverse groups of Indigenous peoples with unique cultures and deeply rooted relationships to the land for over 10,000 years. MTC acknowledges these diverse groups of Indigenous peoples as the traditional caretakers of the land that makes up the Bay Area. We honor their connection to the land and the deep respect they hold for this region.

MTC is committed to furthering meaningful partnerships with the Tribes of this region and consulting with Tribal governments prior to making decisions, taking actions, or implementing programs that may impact their communities. Our work will strive to ensure programs and activities avoid or minimize adverse impacts to cultural and other important Tribal resources.

Federally Recognized Tribes

There are six federally recognized Native American Tribes in the San Francisco Bay Area:

- Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians
- Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians
- The Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
- Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria
- Lower Lake Rancheria Koi Nation
- Lytton Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians

MTC is committed to consulting with the region’s Tribal governments in our major plans and in projects of priority to Tribes. However, MTC encourages the Tribes to request government-to-government consultation at any time and on any project, program, action or decision. MTC commissioners and executive staff will participate in government-to-government consultation with Tribal governments and will conduct consultation and/or engagement activities in locations convenient for the Tribal governments.

The groundwork for engagement and consultation with our region’s Tribal governments will occur early in an engagement process and will be conducted according to Tribal preference. MTC will continue to host Tribal Summits as an opportunity for Tribes to collaborate with MTC and ABAG and other regional and local partners. Staff will work with Tribal leaders and their representatives to co-create agendas and will present topics of interest to the Tribes. Additionally, MTC commits to conducting individual meetings with each Tribe, upon request.

California Native American Tribes

It is important to note that there are many other Tribes with connections to the lands that make up the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, including Tribes that are not recognized by the federal government. MTC recognizes these Tribes as important stakeholders in the regional planning process who are also affected by our work and decisions. As such, MTC is committed to building relationships with and engaging the many Tribes connected to our region, including:

- Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
- Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista
- Big Valley Rancheria/Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Cachil Dehe Band of Wintun Indians of the Colusa Indian Community
- Coastanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe
- Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Guidiville Rancheria
- Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan
- Ione Band of Miwok Indians
- Kletsel Dehe Band of Wintun Indians
- Mishewal-Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley
- Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area
- North Valley Yokuts Tribe
- Pinoleville Pomo Nation
- Potter Valley Rancheria
- Redwood Valley Rancheria
- Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians
- Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- The Confederated Villages of Lisjan
- The Ohlone Indian Tribe
- Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
- United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria
- Wilton Rancheria
- Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

Furthermore, MTC will provide written notification to all Tribes in the region, including federally recognized Tribes and all California Native American Tribes on the Native American Heritage Commission list with Tribal Cultural Resources in the Bay Area, about the opportunity for engagement in the long-range regional plan update process, as required by Assembly Bill 52.



Chapter 7 — Revising the Public Participation Plan

MTC’s Public Participation Plan is not a static document, but rather an ongoing strategy that is periodically reviewed and updated to reflect changing circumstances and current best practices. Additionally, as part of every public engagement program developed for Plan Bay Area, MTC sets performance measures to gauge the effectiveness of the engagement program. This evaluation serves to inform and improve future engagement programs, including future updates to this Public Participation Plan.

Furthermore, this Public Participation Plan may be subject to minor changes from time to time. Minor changes will be noticed and posted on the MTC website. Any major updates will be released for public review and comment for a period of 45 days and also will include review by MTC’s Policy Advisory Council, the Joint MTC-ABAG Legislation Committee and approval by the Commission. MTC will extend the public comment period by an additional 45 days in instances where major revisions are proposed in response to comments heard.

