

DRAFT 2019

Public Participation Plan

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

I. Introduction

Background Summary

The *2019 Public Participation Plan* has been prepared in collaboration with the Council of San Benito County Governments (SBtCOG), the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 5, with additional input and review by Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST), Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (Santa Cruz METRO or SCMTD), San Benito County Express/Local Transportation Authority (LTA) and the cities and counties in the tri-county Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) metropolitan planning region.

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance to our partner agencies and local jurisdictions in the structuring of regional transportation planning processes to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, interagency consultation and public participation are an integral and continuing part of the regional transportation planning and decision making process.

The public participation policies and procedures described in this plan are structured to comply with all applicable federal and state legislation, rules, and express the genuine regional value and interest for all residents of the Monterey Bay region to participate in the shaping and implementation of regional policies and decisions regarding the region's multimodal transportation system.

The *2019 Public Participation Plan* was developed to conform to the 2015's *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act* (FAST Act) legislation, and pursuant to changes in the California Government Code 65080 that occurred with the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 375 in 2008.

The "Monterey Bay region" covers the 18 cities and three counties within AMBAG's tri-county area of Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties (Figure 1-1).

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) is a federal designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and also serves as the regional forum for the study and discussion of regionally significant issues, which include but are not limited to: housing, transportation, energy efficiency, water conservation, and environmental quality. Elected officials within the Monterey Bay region's 18 cities and three counties form the AMBAG's Board of Directors.

In pursuing its mission, "AMBAG provides strategic leadership and services to analyze, plan and implement regional policies for the benefit of the Counties and Cities of the Monterey Bay region balancing local control with regional collaboration." AMBAG strives to inform and involve its local jurisdictions and the general public throughout its various programs, projects, and work activities conducted by the agency.

AMBAG and our partner agencies in the Monterey Bay region seek the participation of a diverse set of communities with an interest in regional planning efforts, including low income households, minority populations, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations, persons with disabilities, representatives from community and service organizations, tribal organizations, and other public agencies.

The seven guiding principles for public participation are as follows:

1. Valuing public participation and promoting ***broad based involvement*** by members of the community
2. Providing varied ***opportunities for public review and input***
3. ***Treating all members of the public fairly***, and respecting and considering all public input as an important component of the planning and implementation process
4. Promoting a ***culture of dialogue and partnership*** among residents, property owners, the business community, organizations, other interested members of the public, and public officials
5. ***Involving underserved communities and community groups***, as well as other organizations
6. ***Encouraging active public participation*** throughout the entire process
7. Providing communications and agency reports that are ***clear, timely and broadly distributed***

AMBAG and our partner agencies perform a broad range of public participation and stakeholder engagement activities, such as:

- Conducting public meetings
- Establishing standing and ad hoc committees
- Partnering on studies and projects
- Providing educational and informational programs in accordance with statutory and regulatory directives

All of the activities listed above are open to public involvement and review.