

O'ahu Regional Transportation Plan 2050

Public Engagement Plan Draft

Public Engagement Plan Draft	0
Introduction	2
COVID-19 Considerations	2
Purpose of Plan	2
Transportation Planning	3
Goals for Public Engagement	3
Decision Making Process	4
Title IV and Environmental Justice (T6EJ) Policy	5
Public Engagement Strategies	6
Stakeholder Outreach	7
Public Presentations	7
Open House	7
Incentives	8
Newsletters	8
Brochures, Fact Sheets, and other Dispersible Materials	8
Social Media	9
Informational Videos	9
Public Meetings	9
Pop-up/Partnering Events	9
Target Groups	10

Website	10
How Feedback Will Be Used	11
Evaluating Our Effectiveness	11
Questionnaires, Polls, and/or Surveys	11
Assessment of Outreach Tools	12
Staff Debriefings	13
Public Engagement Plan Schedule	13

Introduction

The O’ahu Regional Transportation Plan (ORTP) guides investment in the transportation system for the island of O’ahu over the next 25 years. It defines an overarching vision of the future of transportation for the island, establishes principles and policies that will lead to the achievement of that vision, and allocates projected funding to transportation programs and projects that reflect those principles and policies. It also guides development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is a short-range program of transportation improvements expected to be implemented in the near-term. Throughout the development of the ORTP, a comprehensive public engagement process is conducted to help develop and shape the plan.

COVID-19 Considerations

In writing this Public Engagement Plan, consideration must be given to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, it is not advisable to host in-person public meetings or events, thus ORTP outreach if conducted during the pandemic shall be done virtually. The strategies outlined in this plan can be reasonably employed virtually, except for pop up events.

Purpose of Plan

The purpose of this Public Engagement Plan (PEP) is to provide OahuMPO staff, supporting agencies, and the public a blueprint for how outreach will be conducted for the ORTP 2050. In essence, the PEP describes the strategies MPO staff will use to:

- Educate and inform the general public on ORTP planning and development processes, including the purpose of the discussion along with the areas in which the public can have the most impact;
- Reach out to groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in transportation planning or bear the consequences of transportation investments, e.g., minorities, youth, poor, elderly, non-native English speakers, etc.; and
- Build a collaborative and accountable relationship between the OahuMPO and the general public.

Transportation Planning

Transportation planning is done by various agencies on O‘ahu, including the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation, Department of Transportation Services, Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration. Federal law designates metropolitan areas with populations greater than 50,000 as a Transportation Management Area (TMA) and requires them to form a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). MPOs are tasked with coordinating the transportation planning for the region. One requirement is to afford the general public and targeted communities a reasonable opportunity to participate in and comment on transportation plans. This PEP is intended to describe how the MPO may fulfill these requirements.

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for O‘ahu, OahuMPO is responsible for carrying out the public participation during the development of the ORTP. Federal regulations call for a participatory process “for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transit, representatives 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 metropolitan transportation planning process,” (CFR 450.316(a)).

Goals for Public Engagement

The overall goal of the ORTP 2050 Public Engagement Plan is to support the planning process so that the metropolitan transportation plan reflects the needs and concerns of the public. Consistent with the draft OahuMPO Public Participation Plan, the ORTP 2050 Public Engagement Plan’s goals are:

- GOAL 1: The public will be involved early and continuously in the decision-making process. OahuMPO staff will work with the public to manage their expectations of the impact their input may have on the final outcome of a work product.
- GOAL 2: All residents and mandated stakeholders will be given the opportunity to participate.
- GOAL 3: The public will be provided with educational opportunities to build capacity for meaningful participation.
- GOAL 4: Selected public participation techniques will match the purpose.
- GOAL 5: Progress in achieving the above goals will be measured and results reported.
- GOAL 6: Outcomes of public participation will be communicated and managed in realistic and pragmatic ways.

Decision Making Process

There are several distinct entities that participate in the ORTP decision-making process. The final decision-making body is the Policy Board (PB), which is advised by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC).

The Policy Board provides policy guidance and overall coordination of the transportation planning activities within the region. The PB consists of 11 voting members including elected officials and agency representatives.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) reviews and evaluates work products, including the ORTP and provides its recommendations to the PB. The TAC is a designated body in OahuMPO's [Comprehensive Agreement](#), which is composed of representatives of transportation agencies with expertise in transportation and general planning. The members of the TAC shall be determined by the Policy Board based upon adopted bylaws that govern them, to assist with the coordination of the Transportation Improvement Program, Metropolitan Transportation Plan and other transportation planning activities.

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) serves as an advisory committee to the Policy Board. Per its bylaws, the CAC is intended to serve as a vehicle whereby public input can be solicited to advise the PB and OahuMPO Executive Director on transportation planning issues. It is comprised of 42 members representing non-governmental organizations and City and County of Honolulu neighborhood boards. The organizations that are represented are broadly based, including minorities and disadvantaged groups.

The ORTP Working Group oversees the ORTP's development and guides staff with technical recommendations and policy development. Staff and the ORTP Working Group meet periodically and formulate recommendations for the CAC, TAC and PB to consider.

The OahuMPO planning staff are responsible for the day-to-day activities associated with the ORTP's development. OahuMPO staff also facilitate the ORTP Working Group, CAC, TAC and PB meetings. With the exception of the working group meeting, these meetings will be held publicly with notice in accordance with Sunshine Law.

Title IV and Environmental Justice (T6EJ) Policy

Consideration of Environmental Justice in the transportation planning process stems from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and guiding regulations including the Executive Order (EO) 12898, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Order 5610.2(a), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Order 6640.23A, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Title VI Circular 4702.1B, and the [USDOT LEP Guidance](#). Title VI sets forth the need for transportation agencies to disclose to the public the benefits and burdens of proposed projects on minority populations. As a governmental entity that receives federal funding, the OahuMPO is responsible for implementing Title VI and conforming to federal Environmental Justice (EJ) principals, policies, and regulations. Specifically, the statute states that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Title VI not only prohibits intentional discrimination, but also unjustified disparate impact discrimination. While there is no evidence of intentional discriminatory actions or decisions, disparate impacts are those that result from policies and practices that are on the surface neutral but have discriminatory effects on protected groups.

The concept of Environmental Justice (EJ) is centered on fairness in the accessibility of a healthy living environment; it is an approach included in planning, to ensure that persons of racial or ethnic minority background, as well as other disadvantaged backgrounds, are fairly included in the decision-making processes that will affect their quality of life. The goal of the OahuMPO EJ process is, in essence, to make certain that the benefits and burdens of transportation projects (i.e., air pollution, noise, injuries, fatalities, division of communities) are distributed in a manner that will promote a just and equitable society. EJ is a concern when:

- Some communities benefit from improved access, high quality transit service and pedestrian and bike facilities, faster trips, and congestion relief, while minority or low-income communities receive fewer of these benefits;
- Minority or low-income communities are disproportionately impacted by transportation projects in terms of social, economic, and environmental burdens; or
- Minority or low-income communities are less represented in decision making.

Specifically, it is OahuMPO’s role to ensure that when transportation decisions are made, low-income and minority communities have ample opportunity to participate in the decision-making process; and that they receive an equitable distribution of benefits and not a disproportionate share of burdens. EJ groups will be solicited for input at all three stages of the ORTP development process. Specifically, OahuMPO will ask EJ groups to provide:

- Initial input to craft the vision and goals of the document;
- Feedback on preferred scenarios and the draft project and program list during the scenario development stage; and
- Comments on the draft versions of the final document.

Identifying characteristics of T6EJ communities include, but are not limited to:

- Poverty;
- Ethnic minority;
- Racial minority;
- Youth;
- Elderly residents;
- Zero-vehicle populations; and
- Limited-English Proficiency populations.

Public Engagement Strategies

To demonstrate OahuMPO’s commitment to informing, educating, and engaging the public, OahuMPO plans to review other strategies done by MPO’s in the nation, federal and state agency guidelines and consult with its partners regarding our approach. As we move forward, our guiding principles are as follows:

- The public should have input in decisions about actions that affect their lives.

- Public participation includes the promise that the public’s contribution will be considered in the decision-making process.
- The public participation process provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

Stakeholder Outreach

The project team will also leverage relationships with area partners such as universities, professional associations, business management districts, community-based organizations, chambers of commerce and others to engage their memberships and constituencies. These organizations provide a direct conduit to their membership and allow the OahuMPO staff to effectively expand the depth and breadth of ORTP 2050 outreach efforts. It is anticipated that conducting stakeholder outreach activities will help improve the feedback received during the ORTP planning and development process.

OahuMPO staff will also reach out to our agency partners, Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT), Department of Transportation Services (DTS), and the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transit (HART) to collaborate on outreach efforts, support each other as needed, and create a robust, and not duplicative, effort for the ORTP 2050 development and planning process.

Public Presentations

OahuMPO will offer a robust series of no-cost, transportation education presentations. Presentations will cover the process of developing the ORTP, including information on how the public can get involved. Each presentation will also educate roadway users – drivers, passengers, bicyclists, and pedestrians – of how to navigate public transit, the many dangers they could encounter on roadways, and methods to improve safety.

Open House

OahuMPO will hold a public Open House bi-annually for community members to attend and ask questions of the staff. These events will provide the community with an opportunity to learn more about the ORTP and how to provide input on work products.

Incentives

It is considered best practice to be able to provide modest incentives to attract participants at in-person public meetings. Incentives will be decided upon in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions. These incentives may include:

- **food**, both in recognition of the limited and precious time of participants, as well as acknowledging the fact that most outreach activities conflict with mealtimes; and
- **childcare**, to allow parents to participate without having to make difficult decisions regarding childcare and to allow parents to participate with reduced stress; and
- **gift cards**

OahuMPO will work with FHWA to approve MPO funds for such incentives.

Newsletters

Newsletters will be used to provide the public with detailed information about the ORTP, to announce opportunities for public input, and to chronicle project related milestones, feedback, and activities. The newsletters will contain up-to-date project information to assist the reader in understanding how decisions are made. The newsletters will be written in a clear, concise, and user-friendly language and will be widely distributed to the agency mailing list and posted on the project website. The newsletters will contain information on how to respond, comment, get involved, and join the mailing list. The target audience of the newsletters is the broader public and goes beyond those who regularly attend OahuMPO meetings and are involved in the transportation community. Ultimately, the newsletters will demonstrate that OahuMPO understands and values communication with the public. The project team will produce newsletters at quarterly intervals with content input and approval from OahuMPO leadership and staff. Newsletters will be distributed via MailChimp and housed in the Newsletters section of the website.

Brochures, Fact Sheets, and other Dispersible Materials

A series of concise and precise brochures and fact sheets will be prepared that address specific project issues. Fact sheet topics may include: Frequently Asked Questions, description of the ORTP effort; and opportunities for the public to get involved.

Other collateral materials will be developed to continue the messaging and graphic themes represented in the branding of the ORTP. Consistency in the look and feel of these pieces will promote the project

identity and increase market recognition among members of the general public and stakeholders. These materials include PowerPoint templates, letterhead, e-blast formats, and postcards.

Social Media

OahuMPO will make use of its Facebook page to announce events and updates regarding the ORTP.

Informational Videos

Communication of the ORTP project vision, goals, and objectives will be a key factor in building consensus on recommendations. A motion graphics video supporting the ORTP may help (a) explain the long-range transportation planning process; (b) present current mobility, economic and environmental challenges; (c) describe opportunities for public participation; and (d) once the plan is drafted, illustrate the results of the ORTP. Motion graphic videos are one way to facilitate delivery of a message in a visually-appealing “movie” format that evokes strong emotion and can be used to elicit a “call to action”. Motion graphics selectively combines live video, text and graphic animation, design visualization stills and animations, graphics, photography, narration, sound effects and music to deliver a compelling message in a “story” format.

Public Meetings

During ORTP 2050 outreach efforts, public meetings will be conducted to include daytime, weekend and evening meetings. The OahuMPO staff will organize and attend stakeholder meetings with individuals and groups from minority and limited English proficiency (LEP) communities, neighborhood groups, religious organizations, civic groups, school districts, elected officials, local governments, resource agencies, and professional associations. Public meetings will be conducted in English but will accommodate LEP populations as appropriate. Public meeting announcements will be posted on the OahuMPO webpage.

Pop-up/Partnering Events

OahuMPO will participate in pop-events, such as farmers markets and fairs, as appropriate in the COVID-19 context. Pop-up events are beneficial to members of the public, as they are not asked to travel to a specific location, at a specific date and time. Rather, staff travel to locations and supply all appropriate materials necessary to garner feedback where participants are already at.

OahuMPO will also work to better coordinate with community partners in the region. Community partners may include religious organizations, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and

Community Centers, among others. Much like pop-up events, coordinating with community partners is beneficial as a relationship building exercise, as the audience already has a level of trust with the partnering organization.

100 Days of Proposed Projects and Programs

Leading up to engaging the public in discussion and input collection, the MPO staff will coordinate and conduct 100 days of proposed projects and programs. This effort will allow the staff to shine light on the projects and programs in the ORTP 2050--- what they are, what they are for, and any other pertinent information. The purpose of this is to build the capacity of the community and educate people before seeking input.

Target Groups

In an effort to adequately address the needs of the stakeholders associated with the ORTP, public engagement will target specific groups. Potential target groups will be identified as follows:

- Environmental Justice Groups
- Citizen Groups
- Youth Groups
- Professional Organizations
- Business Leaders
- Elected Officials/Project Sponsors

Website

OahuMPO website will deliver timely, easily understood information, and actively solicit/gather stakeholder input. The website will allow the casual user to access basic information while providing navigable paths to more detailed information. OahuMPO will consider website updates in efforts to make the site more engaging and considerate of language needs.

The following features may be included on the website to improve information access, better clarify program messages, promote user interactivity, and facilitate stakeholder input:

- ORTP-related documents;
- ORTP-related meeting materials and meeting summaries;
- Public commenting capabilities;

- Social Media links;
- Online Survey;
- Video Library

How Feedback Will Be Used

To maintain an effective and meaningful public engagement process, OahuMPO will appropriately consider and respond to all public comments. OahuMPO is responsible for coordinating agency responses to comments regarding implementing agencies' projects, programs, and other related questions, in a timely manner. A written summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of all significant comments received during the public comment periods will be provided as part of the final document. All final documents are posted online at <https://www.oahumpo.org/plans-and-programs/oahu-regional-transportation-plan-ortp/>

Evaluating Our Effectiveness

OahuMPO recognizes the need to periodically review the effectiveness of its public engagement programs and methods. A variety of tools will be used to measure both the quantity and quality of interactions OahuMPO has with the public. The evaluation results will be used to modify the practices, as appropriate, to ensure maximum effectiveness. The following are tools that will be used by OahuMPO staff to evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement:

Questionnaires, Polls, and/or Surveys

Questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys may be used to provide feedback on a variety of topics, such as the usefulness of public meetings or events and the practicality of techniques utilized. These materials will be developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the public involvement process relative to the Public Participation Plan's goals.

Examples of when or what type of questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys may be utilized are listed below.

- During a comment period to gather input – Staff may make surveys available through OahuMPO's website (www.oahumpo.org), e-list, etc. to provide the public with an easy and readily accessible way to submit comments on work products. Polling questions may be used during public meetings to gather input, but also to keep attendees engaged in the presentation material.

- Public Engagement Questionnaire – Staff may distribute a periodic questionnaire to gauge the public’s expectations of meetings and events, effectiveness of current outreach practices, suggestions for improvement, etc.
- Satisfaction survey– Staff will develop a satisfaction survey for community members to provide feedback on their public engagement experience for the ORTP.

Assessment of Outreach Tools

The OahuMPO staff have numerous performance measures that can be used when assessing the Organization’s outreach process and its effectiveness. The OahuMPO will monitor the following on a quarterly basis:

Tool	Evaluation Measure
Website	Number of page views; number of posts to the website
Social Media	Number of followers; change in followers, number of posts; number of impressions; number of mentions; number of clicks
Mailchimp E-list	Number of subscribers; change in subscribers; number of emails sent; number of bounces; percent of emails opened; percent of emails clicked
Public meetings and events (pop up events, requested presentations, open houses, etc.)	Number of meetings and events; number of individuals notified; number of attendees; location of meetings and events
Participant demographics	Zip codes, number of cars per household, household structure, income bracket, age, and gender of participants will be collected (not required of participants, but highly encouraged)

	in efforts to provide a participant profile for the report and to help adjust efforts along the way if needed
Questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys	Number of questionnaires, polls, and/or surveys sent; percent completed; analysis of results
Press releases	Number of press releases distributed and published

Staff Debriefings

In addition to quarterly evaluations, OahuMPO staff will meet on an ongoing basis to review outreach and engagement efforts. During these meetings, staff will determine if improvements and/or the development of new strategies are needed to enhance the public outreach process.

Public Engagement Plan Schedule

The OahuMPO will be working with a consultant to establish a timeline for the engagement schedule. There are four major timepoints in the ORTP 2050 development process to note:

1. Development of Community Vision and Goals
2. Future Scenarios
3. Project Prioritization
4. Public and Intergovernmental Review

The timeline will be established and updated regularly on the ORTP 2050 Public Engagement webpage of the OahuMPO website.