

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 20, 2006

TO: CAC Members

FROM: Mary Frye, Transportation Planner

SUBJECT: 2008-2035 Regional Transportation Plan Development:
Formation of Public Participation Working Group

ACTION REQUESTED: Recommend Formation of Public Participation Working Group

SUMMARY:

Federal law requires that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) make provision for early, continuous, pro-active public involvement in the development of transportation plans and transportation improvement programs. PPACG will develop the 2008 through 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) over the course of the next 10 to 12 months. A consultant team, led by Catalyst Consulting, has been selected to implement the public participation activities to develop the 2008 through 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. On December 1, PPACG staff members met with the consultant team to initiate the project, identify early tasks, iron out a schedule, and chart roles and responsibilities.

In order to enhance community involvement and information dissemination, the consultant has proposed assembling a working group to supplement on-going committee input and technical assistance for the 2008 through 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. All recommendations on policy, projects, and process would continue to be taken through the current advisory committee structure. The working group would be disbanded at the completion of the 2008 through 2035 Regional Transportation Plan.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION:

The PPACG Board of Directors adopted the PPACG's Regional Transportation Planning Public Involvement Procedures on October 10, 2005. This project is intended to implement those procedures in the development of the 2008 through 2035 Regional Transportation Plan

BACKGROUND:

The Public Participation Working Group would be composed of representatives from existing agency and community transportation organizations such as Colorado Springs Citizens Transportation Advisory Board and El Paso County's Highway Advisory Commission. The Working Group's main purpose would be to facilitate two-way communication with key transportation stakeholders in the region. The Working Group's responsibilities would be to assist in the development of public involvement methods and products that will be designed to:

- Facilitate public outreach and communication,
- Obtain representative viewpoints of the region's citizens,
- Provide factual information on transportation planning topics, and
- Generate interest in the 2008 through 2035 Regional Transportation Plan development process.

Participants in the Working Group will be recruited from the following advisory committees, commissions, and boards who have interest in transportation planning:

- PPACG Advisory Committees:
 - Community Advisory Committee (CAC),
 - Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC),
 - Transportation Enhancement Subcommittee (TES),
 - Specialized Transportation Advisory Subcommittee (STAS),
 - Air Quality Technical Committee (AQTC), and
 - PPAAA Regional Advisory Council (RAC);
- City of Colorado Springs Citizen's Transportation Advisory Board (CTAB); and
- El Paso County's Highway Advisory Commission (HAC).

The Working Group would provide an integrated approach to public participation and serve as an informal Working Group that supplements the current advisory committee structure. All recommendations on policy, projects, and process would continue to be taken through the current advisory committee structure. The Working Group is expected to meet four or five times during the Regional Transportation Plan process. The Working Group would be disbanded upon completion of the 2008 through 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. This proposal will be reviewed by the PPACG's Transportation Advisory Committee and the Community Advisory Committee this month with a goal of providing a recommendation on it to Board of Directors in January.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

PPACG staff support and consultant support for these activities were budgeted in the FY-2006 through FY-2007 Unified Planning Work Program. The consultant contract is for \$191,191 and extends through November of 2007.

STAKEHOLDER PROCESS:

The public participation plan goal is "To provide an environment encouraging pro-active and continuous public involvement while establishing and maintaining trust in the planning process. This is to be achieved through disseminating complete and timely information and providing full public access." Consultant services will be used to implement this goal through enhanced public participation activities and widespread information dissemination. This memorandum was published on PPACG's website as part of the CAC agenda posting procedures on December 13, 2006.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Recommend formation of Public Participation Working Group as outlined above to assure timely implementation of public participation in the development of the 2008-2035 Regional Transportation Plan.
2. Recommend delay in formation of the Public Participation Working Group at this time pending additional input from advisory committees. It should be noted that this option

would postpone implementation of public participation activities, thus limiting PPACG's ability to obtain early input in the development of the Plan.

3. Recommend that Public Participation Working Group not be formed.

RECOMMENDATION:

PPACG staff recommends that CAC forward a recommendation to the PPACG Board of Directors to establish the Public Participation Working Group as outlined above.

PROPOSED MOTION:

The CAC recommends that a Public Participation Working Group be formed to carry out the responsibilities described under "Background" in this memorandum.

ATTACHMENTS: None