



Pima Association of Governments

Public Involvement Policy



Working together for a better future

Approved March 22, 2018

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Introduction

Pima Association of Governments (PAG), a nonprofit 501(c)4, is a council of governments (COG) and federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the region with a mission to drive effective regional planning decisions that enhance the quality of life for our citizens.

PAG works to build consensus among its members and the public in the planning areas of transportation, watershed, air quality and economic vitality.

A quality transportation infrastructure, healthy economy and sustainable environment are important to all of us, and to help achieve that vision, PAG is committed to conducting an open and inviting public involvement process for agency-wide planning and program efforts.

Public involvement helps to minimize negative impacts, identify shared regional values, build better relationships between the government and public, and enhance understanding of regional issues.

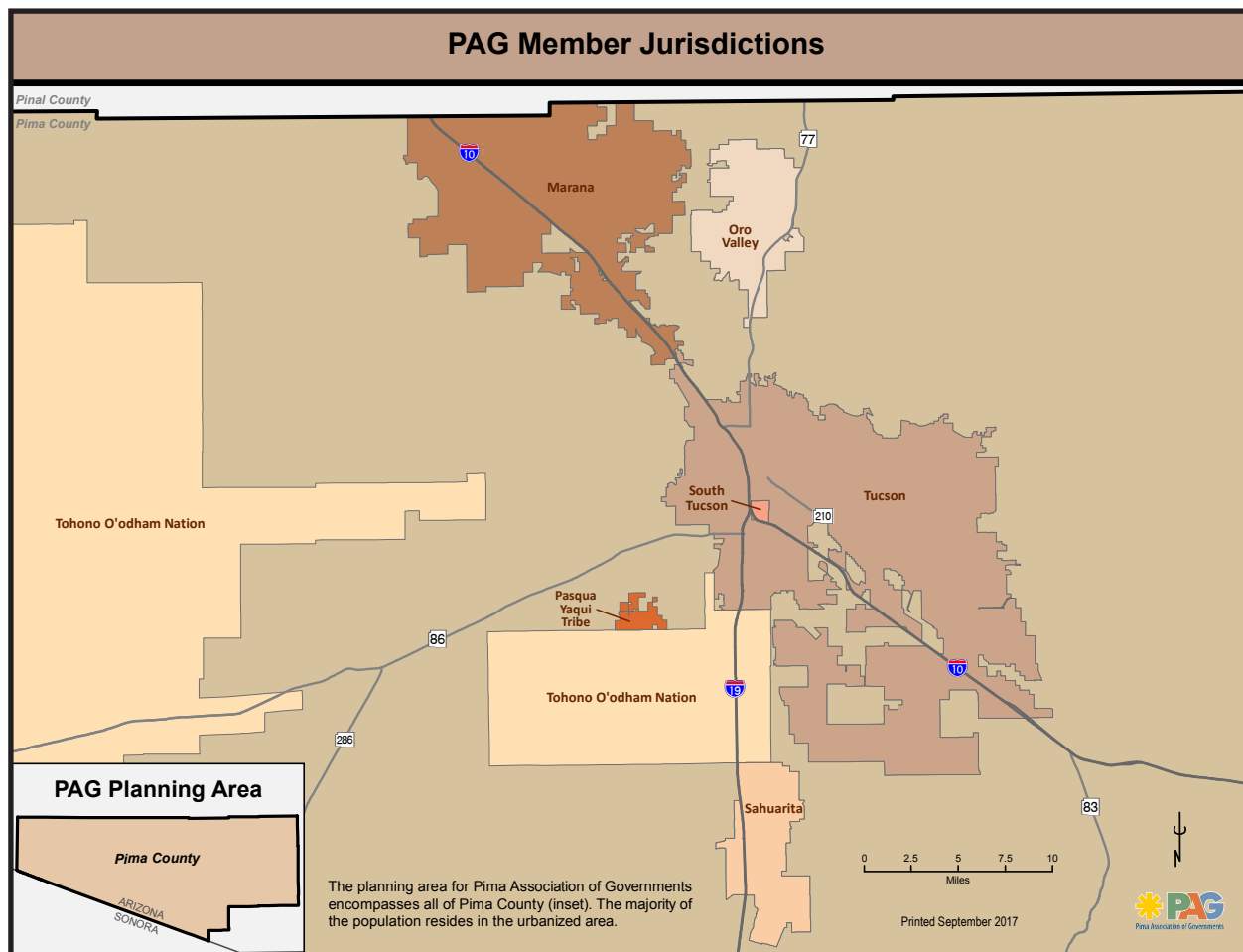
This Public Involvement Policy (hereafter referred to as the PIP) provides a structure for active public participation to help PAG better identify regional needs that can be addressed in our plans and policies. Properly designed and implemented public involvement efforts improve all levels of decision making.

PAG local, state and tribal members include Pima County, the Cities of South Tucson and Tucson, the Towns of Marana, Oro Valley and Sahuarita, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and the Tohono O'odham Nation. The Arizona State Transportation Board (ASTB) is represented through the ASTB member serving from Pima County. (See Exhibit 1 for map of PAG Planning Area.)

PAG MISSION STATEMENT

**To address regional issues through cooperative efforts
and pooled resources, and to provide accurate, relevant data
that leads to effective regional planning decisions.**

Exhibit 1: PAG Planning Area





Purpose of the PIP

The purpose of the PIP is to inform the public on how to be part of the regional planning process. The PIP outlines how PAG will conduct its public involvement efforts.

History of the PIP

This PIP, adopted by the PAG Regional Council on March 22, 2018, is an update to the PAG policy originally prepared in 1994 to meet Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations (23 CFR 450.316 [b] [1]). FHWA requires PAG to have a public involvement process to qualify for federal funds dedicated to advancing regional transportation planning efforts. PAG updated the policy in 2006 to include all PAG planning and program areas. In 2012, PAG amended the policy to satisfy the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) public participation process for transit projects.

Notification of a federally required 45-day public review period for this update was provided through a display ad in the *Arizona Daily Star*. The draft PIP was made available on the PAG website, at the PAG office and in jurisdictional offices.

This update to the PIP also considered PAG stakeholder feedback from a public involvement survey, conducted during April to June 2017, to better understand how the public prefers to receive communication about topics and plans that affect the community. In addition, this update considered feedback from public information officers from PAG member jurisdictions. The main theme that emerged from the responses was the necessity of ongoing outreach in order to obtain diverse public participation and interest.

The 2018 PIP builds upon the public involvement practices of the previous policy and best practices in current public involvement methods identified through public feedback, PAG member jurisdiction feedback and a review of public involvement best practices exercised by industry peers.

PAG's federally required planning responsibilities
PAG oversees long-range transportation planning and serves as
the region's water quality management planning agency,
lead air quality planning agency and solid waste planning agency.



Policy Statement

PAG is committed to involving members of the public throughout the region in the development and implementation of agencywide plans and programs. Public involvement processes must be appropriate, accessible, transparent, accountable, meaningful and inclusive of the region's diverse population.

This policy incorporates FHWA requirements for publication of the solicitation of public input in decision-making processes, including: (1) proactive solicitation of public comments (2) early and continuous solicitation of public comments, (3) explicit consideration and response to public comments and (4) a written summary and disposition of significant public comments received during the development of transportation planning and investment studies (23 CFR 450.316 [b] [1]).

This policy also addresses FTA requirements for a public participation process for the FTA-required Program of Projects (POP). The City of Tucson, as the designated Section 5307 Funds recipient primarily responsible for development of the POP (49 U.S.C. 5307[c]), has requested that PAG, as the MPO, integrate the POP and the PAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) public participation process per FTA Circular 9030.1D. PAG's public involvement process for the development of the TIP satisfies this request.

PAG recognizes that its state, local and tribal government partners also have their own public involvement policies, regulations and/or procedures for use in the development of their plans. PAG's regionally oriented public involvement efforts should be coordinated with the public involvement efforts of its partners.

Additionally, PAG will use a range of public involvement methods to ensure an appropriate level of public participation by the underserved/underrepresented, including low-income, minority, elderly and disabled populations.

The State of Arizona and PAG member jurisdictions also conduct public involvement efforts. When there are opportunities to partner and share public involvement resources, PAG will work together with the state and PAG member jurisdictions.

Scope of PIP

This PIP applies only to plan and program development for which PAG is the lead agency. The PIP applies agencywide and emphasizes a common framework in which public involvement for all PAG programs is to be developed and implemented. The PAG executive director will review and approve PAG's planning and program activities consistent with this policy.

PAG develops and adapts a variety of regional transportation plans and programs on an ongoing basis. (See Exhibit 2 for a list of PAG plans and programs.)

Exhibit 2: PAG Programs and Plans

Regional Mobility and Accessibility Plan	Intelligent Transportation Systems Strategic Plan
Transportation Improvement Plan	Areawide Wastewater Management Plan (208 Plan)
Regional Plan for Bicycling	Carbon Monoxide Limited Maintenance Plan
Regional Pedestrian Plan	Public Involvement Policy
Short-Range Transit Implementation Plan	Regional Travel Reduction Program
Regional Freight Plan	Regional Transportation Authority and Plan
Transportation Corridor Studies	Public Transit Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan

The public typically has at least a 30-day period to review and comment on draft plans, such as the long-range Regional Mobility and Accessibility Plan (RMAP) or the five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). A 45-day review and comment period is held for updates to the PIP.

PAG also periodically develops and adopts air quality plans, such as the 2008 Revision to the Carbon Monoxide Limited Maintenance Plan. PAG follows public involvement guidelines as specified in such laws as the Clean Air Act, as amended, and the Clean Water Act, as amended. Additionally, PAG manages the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), which is the fiscal manager of the 2006 voter-approved RTA plan.

Development and dissemination of public information regarding services and funding opportunities make PAG's Sun Rideshare and Travel Reduction Programs and regional Social Services Block Grant planning efforts subject to the PIP.

Use of the PIP may not be necessary for normal course of PAG business activities that do not significantly affect the public or alter public policy.



PAG Public Involvement Goal, Objectives and Strategies

Goal

Through effective implementation of the PIP, PAG's public involvement goal is for regional stakeholders and communities to be aware of PAG public participation opportunities and be actively and meaningfully engaged.

The intended result is a well-informed community that is involved in planning and helps to inform regional decision making.

Objectives

- Increase stakeholder and community awareness and understanding of PAG's programs and planning activities.
- Update and maintain a PAG contact database that reflects the region's diverse communities and stakeholders.
- Establish public feedback opportunities through PAG communication channels (See Exhibit 3).
- Conduct public open houses, public hearings or public comment periods as required during

- the planning process with early advance public notifications for participation.
- Develop and implement individual public participation plans as required.
 - Establish budgets for public participation plans and demonstrate sensitivity to budget constraints.
 - Evaluate individual public participation plans upon completion of planning activity.
 - Engage PAG stakeholders, including any potentially affected Title VI and Environmental Justice protected populations to the extent possible.
 - Distribute timely annual reports, public notices or other announcements via PAG communication channels to inform our stakeholders and communities of PAG planning and program activities.
 - Document public input.
 - Ensure fair and equal access to the process.
 - Communicate in a culturally sensitive manner (translate information as needed).
 - Collect public input and report results to decision makers and the public, showing how public input is being used in the decision-making process or why it is not used.
 - Communicate clearly who will be making decisions and how participation makes a difference.

Exhibit 3: PAG Communication Channels

MEDIA TYPE	PAG CHANNELS
Website – includes a calendar of events, meeting documents, program information	PAGregion.com; RTAmobility.com; TransView.org; SunRideshare.org
Email – newsletter and notice distribution	info@PAGregion.com, info@RTAmobility.com
Social media – information and announcements shared	Facebook, Twitter, YouTube
Documents	Annual reports, plans, brochures, etc.
Advertising – placed in regional media outlets as needed (print, radio, electronic and digital media)	Legal notices, display ads
Direct mail	Targeted distributions as determined
News releases – distributed to regional media outlets	Distributed as needed
Focus groups/surveys (electronic/print/telephone)	Conducted as needed
Public meetings/open houses, workshops, events – may include facilitation	Conducted as required or needed
Comment forms (electronic/print)	Made available online or at meetings



Strategies

- Notify the public of opportunities to participate in committees, task forces, working groups or public events.
- Schedule public meetings at times and locations that increase opportunity for stakeholder and general public attendance. When feasible, at least one meeting will be held on a transit route.
- Coordinate with statewide and PAG member jurisdiction public involvement processes.
- Invite the public to review drafts for new or updated PAG plans or programs and to submit comments that inform the regional decision-making process.
- Publish legal notices for formal public comment periods leading to a plan adoption or approval in the legal section of the local newspaper or publish a display ad in a prominent section as needed.
- Place public notices and draft documents for public review and comment on the PAG website, at the PAG office and other public places as appropriate.
- Encourage public involvement from our diverse stakeholders and communities, including from traditionally underserved audiences, to ensure fair and equal access.
- Identify Title VI and Environmental Justice protected populations and map threshold concentrations to consider their concerns and needs during plan development.
- Identify affected and interested parties early in the process so they may play a role in development of the plan.
- Attend stakeholder meetings and activities throughout the region to learn of issues being discussed so they can be better addressed through public involvement plans.
- Use PAG communication channels to distribute notifications and reach beyond our PAG contact database.
- Develop informational materials that are clear, concise, timely, accurate, relevant and accessible.
- Use a variety of visual techniques, such as maps, photos, charts or other graphics, to help the public understand the information presented.



- Make communication and information available in forms accessible to people with disabilities.
- Translate public information documents as needed or upon request.
- Provide bilingual staff at meetings that are intended for gathering input.
- Obtain feedback from stakeholders and the community to evaluate public participation efforts.
- Build relationships and partnerships with our members, and reach out to stakeholders and individuals in our communities to generate direct communication and input that further supports effective regional decision making.


PAG program directors are responsible for ensuring that the PIP is followed and that their program activities meet the most current legislative and regulatory requirements. The PAG communications department will manage the evaluation and update of the PIP, and oversee agencywide implementation of the PIP.



Levels of Public Involvement

The levels of public involvement and methods will vary depending on the scope of a particular planning or program effort. (Exhibit 4 identifies the level of public involvement for this PIP.)

Exhibit 4: Levels of Public Involvement

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT 					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
EXAMPLE TECHNIQUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheets • Websites • Open houses • Newsletters • Social media • Email notices • News releases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings/hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Deliberative polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen advisory committees • Consensus-building • Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated decision
EXAMPLE LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION	Sun Rideshare Program*	Transportation Improvement Program*	Transit Visioning Process*	2045 Regional Mobility and Accessibility Plan* Regional Transportation Authority Plan Development*	Voter-approved Regional Transportation Authority Plan*

Sources: International Association for Public Participation * Pima Association of Governments



We value diversity within the region. PAG's public involvement plan provides full and fair participation for all potentially affected communities.

PAG Stakeholders

As part of developing specific public participation plans, PAG looks at whom will be affected and/or who will be interested in the planning issue or policy being developed. Since PAG coordinates regional plans and programs, it must take into consideration all those people who are served by the jurisdictions and tribal governments that make up PAG. These stakeholders include but are not limited to:

- Affected public agencies
- Individuals
- Representatives of the disabled
- Freight shippers
- Providers of freight transportation services
- Persons with limited English proficiency
- Low-income communities
- Minority communities
- Other interested parties
- Representatives of users of all modes of transportation facilities
- Private providers of transportation
- Representatives of users of public transit services
- Representatives of public transportation employees

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Internal stakeholders include PAG member jurisdictions and PAG Regional Council members, who ultimately have final decision-making authority over PAG's planning and programming efforts.

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

External stakeholders include parties who will be affected by the plan or program under consideration and parties with an interest in the plan or program.

GENERAL PUBLIC

The general public includes the broad spectrum of populations who may or may not be directly impacted by or interested in a particular issue.

In the case of more localized planning studies for which PAG is the lead agency, the public is defined by the specific geographic areas for those studies. A common method for identifying additional stakeholders is to interview existing stakeholders to determine who else needs to be involved.



PAG maintains a contact database that includes individuals who have expressed interest in receiving notices of PAG activities. The database also includes diverse stakeholders, ranging from PAG committee members to regional elected officials, neighborhood representatives, partner agencies, social service agencies, and business and trade associations. The PAG contact database is continually reviewed to ensure it is up to date and reflects the diversity of people and groups in the region.

Role of the Public

Public input is an important element of regional planning. PAG encourages open and inclusive involvement of interested parties and actively seeks input from potentially affected people and organizations. The public participation process offers many ways in which the public may be involved in providing input on PAG planning or program activities. Below is a list of ways to get involved:

- Share thoughts and ideas during posted public comment periods or hearings.
- Seek membership on PAG committees and working groups.
- Attend public meetings to present or submit your comments.
- Attend open houses to learn and understand more about planning activities and share your comments.
- Ask to be added to the PAG contact database at info@PAGregion.com to receive newsletters, reports or other PAG notices.
- Participate in PAG public participation surveys.
- Visit the PAG website at PAGregion.com to learn more about PAG planning activities and programs and to view its calendar of meetings and events.
- Contact PAG at (520) 792-1093 or info@PAGregion.com for additional information or questions.

Comments in writing may be submitted to:

Mail: Pima Association of Governments, 1 E. Broadway Blvd., Suite 401, Tucson, AZ 85701

Fax: (520) 620-6981

E-mail: info@pagregion.com

Social Media: Comments related to PAG programs are accepted through official PAG social media pages.

Website: Comments may be submitted through PAG's online feedback form at www.PAGregion.com.



Ensuring Access for Everyone

We value diversity within the region. Our PIP provides for full and fair participation from all potentially affected communities. As a recipient of federal funding, PAG is subject to and compliant with the following legislation agencywide:

- **Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act** (42 U.S.C. 2000[d])

Pima Association of Governments is committed to ensuring that all people are protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI says that “No person in the United States shall on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in...any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

Because PAG receives federal funds for some programs, all of PAG’s programs are subject to Title VI. PAG’s Title VI plan is available on its website at PAGregion.com.

- **Executive Order on Environmental Justice** (No. 12898)

Executive Order 12898 directs federal agencies to make achieving environmental justice part of the agencies’ mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations as a result of the agencies’ activities.

- **Executive Order on Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency** (No. 13166)

Executive Order 13166 says that people with limited English proficiency (LEP) should have meaningful access to federally conducted and federally funded programs and activities. It requires agencies that receive federal funding to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with LEP, and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons may have meaningful access to them.

- **Americans with Disabilities Act** (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.)
The Americans with Disabilities Act addresses both physical and communication barriers that may hinder the attempts of the disabled to participate.

Each of these pieces of legislation has direct implications for public involvement.

Additionally, PAG includes a tagline in its public notices that PAG will make reasonable accommodations and will translate any materials in Spanish, or in other languages, as needed. PAG also makes Google translation services available on its website.

The following tagline is used on PAG and RTA public meeting or public notice documents to ensure that Title VI guidelines are met:

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The meeting room is accessible to persons with disabilities. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), those requiring special assistance, such as large-type face print, sign language or other reasonable accommodations, may request those through the administrative offices at: 1. E Broadway Blvd., Suite 401, Tucson, Ariz., 85701, (520) 792-1093, at least 24 hours before the meeting. Si necesita ayuda con traducción, llame por favor al 792-1093 y comuníquese con Nathan Barrett.

Public Comment Opportunities and Procedures

A key opportunity for the public to share thoughts and ideas is during public review and comment periods. Draft final documents for public review and comments are placed on the PAG website at the PAG office and other public places as appropriate. A review and comment period of at least 30 days will be held for the following:

Regional Mobility and Accessibility Plan (RMAP)

The RMAP is a long-range plan. It identifies projects, goals and performance measures for the transportation system of the Tucson metropolitan area over the next 20-30 years. PAG updates the RMAP every four years as mandated by the federal government.

Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)

The TIP is a five-year schedule and budget of proposed transportation improvements within eastern Pima County. The TIP development meetings are open to the public. Public input through meetings, presentations, correspondence and open houses is fundamental to the success of the final TIP document.

PAG's regional transportation open houses provide the public with an opportunity to speak



directly with jurisdictional staff, review the candidate projects, submit comments and rate the importance of project selection criteria. Public input is tabulated and distributed to decision-makers, and a proposed TIP document is developed and distributed for public review. Following a 30-day public comment period, the TIP is presented to the PAG Regional Council for adoption.

An important aspect of public involvement for all plans and programs is letting the public know how their input is being used. PAG staff designated as lead for a particular public involvement program — in consultation with the decision-makers and technical professionals — prepare written summaries on how public comments are used.

The following guidelines apply to the development of public participation plans for new or updated PAG programs or plans:

- Design the public participation process.
- Identify notification requirements (content, timing and methods).
- Distribute document for public review.
- Establish comment and review periods.
- Gather, record and distribute/consider public comments.
- Respond to public comments.
- Process document for official review and approval.
- Evaluate public participation process.

Complaints

Complaints about the adequacy of any public involvement efforts may be submitted to PAG communications staff via email at info@PAGregion.com or by calling (520) 792-1093. PAG communications staff will work with appropriate staff to resolve the issue or concern, and unresolved issues will be forwarded to the PAG executive director.

Evaluation and Update

It is important to gauge the effectiveness of our PIP. PAG will review and evaluate the workability and effectiveness of this policy every 10 years, or as directed, through input from PAG program directors and staff, members of the public, and representatives of PAG member jurisdictions and partners. Amendments to and/or updates of this PIP will require a 45-day public comment period prior to adoption.

PAG will measure its public participation activities based on the PIP's objectives and will make changes based on those results.

Public Review and Adoption of the 2018 PAG PIP

This PIP went through a 45-day public review process, beginning on October 17, 2017, as required under Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration regulations (23 CFR 450.316[c]).

PAG communications staff reviewed all comments, and modifications, as feasible, were made based on input received.

This updated policy becomes effective upon adoption by the PAG Regional Council on March 22, 2018.





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