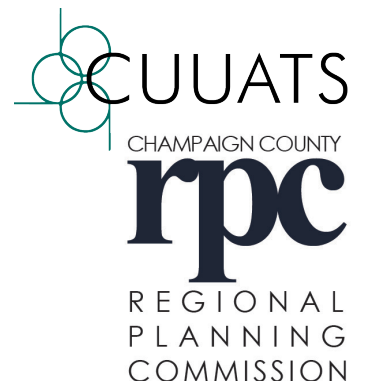


CUUATS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

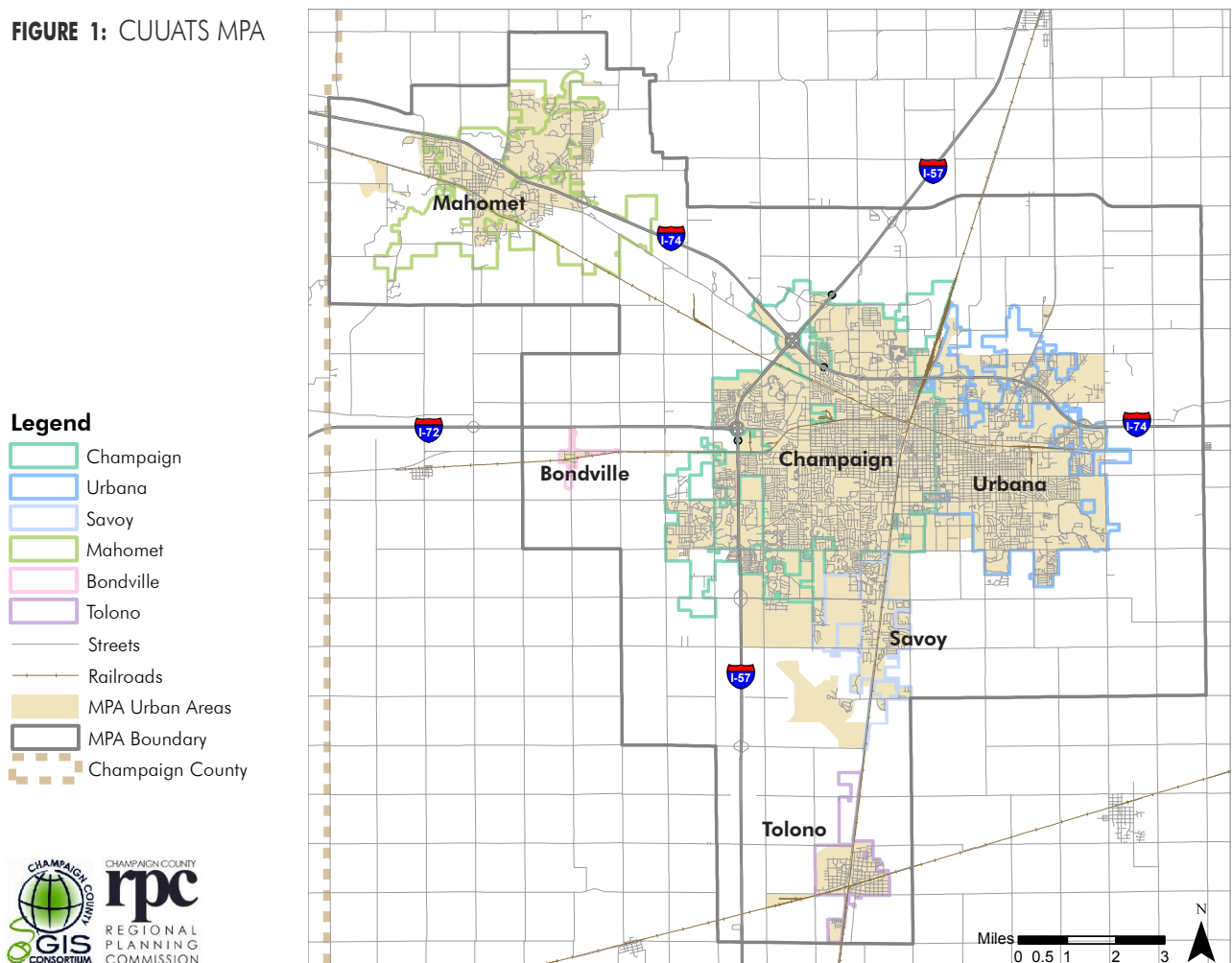
The Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Champaign-Urbana Urbanized Area. Within the CCRPC, the Champaign Urbana Urbanized Area Transportation Study (CUUATS) has been designated the transportation planning entity. CUUATS staff is responsible for updating federally mandated transportation planning documents including the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Unified Technical Work Program (UTWP). The purpose of this document is to present how CUUATS facilitates public participation in the transportation planning process as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations.

The following sections will highlight how CUUATS staff involve the public in different transportation planning processes and what staff undertake to gather, process, and utilize public input when creating plans. The first section will provide background on CUUATS followed by some of the federal and state requirements surrounding

public participation for MPOs. The next sections will cover CUUATS work products and public involvement strategies including specific strategies for engaging traditionally underserved populations. Finally, some of the methods for processing and utilizing public input will be discussed as well as how CUUATS evaluates public involvement strategies.

In all transportation planning processes, the input of residents and other interested parties are crucial to successful planning and project prioritization. The unique responsibility of regional transportation planners is to represent the needs and desires of the collective urbanized area without losing sight of the social, physical, and economic differences that exist within the urbanized area. To integrate local and regional issues, CUUATS staff use a variety of innovative methods and analyses to capture the mobility needs and desires of the diverse individuals and neighborhoods that make up the Champaign-Urbana urbanized area.

FIGURE 1: CUUATS MPA



CUUATS BACKGROUND

The transportation planning process began with Congressional approval of the Federal-Aid Highway Act on October 23, 1962. This legislation requires that in urbanized areas, programs for Federal-Aid Highway projects approved after July 1, 1965, must be based on a "...continuing and comprehensive transportation planning process carried on cooperatively by states and local communities." This required "three-C" planning process established the basis for metropolitan transportation planning used today.

As a result of the 1962 Act, an official body, the Champaign-Urbana Urbanized Area Transportation Study (CUUATS) was created in 1965 to build upon this planning effort and administer the area's three-C transportation planning process. In order to ensure that comprehensive regional planning efforts were achieved, the Governor of the State of Illinois designated the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in March 1974.

CCRPC administers CUUATS staff, and to avoid any duplication of effort, it has recognized CUUATS as its own transportation planning entity. CUUATS member agencies are: the Cities of Champaign and Urbana, Village of Savoy, Champaign County, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, and Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), all of which are voting members. The Villages of Bondville and Tolono were included in the Census-defined urbanized area in 2002 and 2010, respectively, which makes them eligible to be CUUATS member agencies.

In March 1979, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed by all member agencies of CUUATS, CCRPC and IDOT "...for the purpose of continuing and documenting the framework of a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process that results in plans and programs consistent with the comprehensively planned development of the Champaign-Urbana urbanized area." An updated Memorandum of Agreement was endorsed by all participating CUUATS member agencies in June 2011. This document delineates responsibilities and actions between CUUATS and the CCRPC.

The MPO is responsible for the following aspects of the transportation planning process:

- To give advice regarding development in the study area;
- To review and advise on proposed changes in transportation planning concepts;
- To serve as liaison between governmental units in the study area;
- To obtain optimum cooperation of all governmental units in providing information and in implementing various elements of the transportation plan.
- To design and set goals and objectives of the planning process and the long range transportation plan;
- To produce an annual Unified Technical Work Program (UTWP) listing the transportation planning activities CUUATS staff will undertake in the upcoming fiscal year from July 1 through June 30 of the following year.
- To produce and maintain an annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) listing anticipated transportation projects for the next four fiscal years for all CUUATS member agencies.
- To produce a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) every five years outlining how the Urbanized Area transportation system should evolve over the next 25 years.

CUUATS Organizational Structure

CUUATS operates under the principal direction of two committees - the Policy Committee and the Technical Committee. In its organizational structure, the Technical Committee acts as a working committee under the direction of the Policy Committee.

CUUATS Staff

The professional time and services for transportation planning in this cooperative effort is provided through a composite approach. It consists of CCRPC staff assigned to CUUATS as well as staff from IDOT and other member agencies. CUUATS staff perform the day-to-day operations of the agency, with technical expertise in transportation systems planning and other related areas. The staff, in conjunction with CUUATS member agencies, collect, analyze, and evaluate demographic, land use, and transportation data to determine the

transportation system requirements of the urbanized area. They also prepare materials for use at Technical and Policy Committee meetings and other meetings, as well as for any existing subcommittees. Staff members participate in all CUUATS meetings and provide expertise as needed. In addition, they represent the agency at other meetings of importance to planning activities within the region. The current CUUATS staff positions are as follows:

- CCRPC Chief Executive Officer
- CUUATS Transportation Planning Manager
- Transportation Engineer
- Transportation Planner
- Transportation Planner
- Transportation Planner
- HSTP Coordinator
- Administrative Secretary

CUUATS Policy Committee

The CUUATS Policy Committee consists of local elected and appointed officials of those agencies that have a primary interest in transportation. Each member is expected to reflect the official position of his or her constituent agency and/or the public interests they represent. This committee assumes the decision-making authority for CUUATS and establishes policies that guide and form the transportation planning process. The committee has a variety of responsibilities, which range from approving the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to helping establish the metropolitan planning boundary of the study area. CUUATS Policy Committee membership is currently composed of representatives of the following agencies:

- Mayor, City of Champaign
- Mayor, City of Urbana
- President, Village of Savoy
- Chair, Champaign County Board
- Chair, Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District Board of Trustees
- District Engineer, Illinois Department of Transportation, District 5
- Executive Director, University of Illinois Facilities and Services

CUUATS Technical Committee

The CUUATS Technical Committee consists of staff from all CUUATS participating agencies. It performs analyses and makes recommendations concerning

transportation issues to the Policy Committee for their approval. The actual technical work is performed by CUUATS staff and the CUUATS Technical Committee member organizations. CUUATS Technical Committee membership is currently composed of representatives of the following agencies:

- County of Champaign (2 voting members): County Engineer, Assistant County Engineer
- City of Champaign (2 voting members): City Engineer, Assistant Planning Director
- City of Urbana (2 voting members): Director of Public Works, Community Development Director
- Village of Savoy (2 voting members): Director of Public Works, Village Administrator
- University of Illinois (2 voting members): Director of Planning, Transportation Coordinator
- Mass Transit District (1 voting member): Managing Director of CUMTD
- Regional Planning Commission (1 voting member): Chief Executive Officer of CCRPC
- State of Illinois (2 voting members): Bureau Chief of Program Development (District 5), Federal Aid Coordinator (District 5)
- Technical Advisors (non-voting): FHWA Division Office; IDOT Central Bureau of Urban Program Planning; IDOT Public Transportation Division; Airport, Rail, and Freight Representatives; Village Representatives (Mahomet, Tolono, Bondville); Township Representatives (Somerset, Hensley, Champaign, Urbana)

REQUIREMENTS FOR A PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The FAST Act Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act

On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed into law the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or "FAST Act." The details of the act, including guidance and regulations for public participation, are still being worked out. The following text has been summarized from the U.S. Department of Transportation website: <https://www.transportation.gov/fastact/>

Overall, the FAST Act largely maintains current program structures and funding shares between highways and transit. It is a down-payment for building a 21st century transportation system, increasing funding by 11 percent over five years. The law also makes changes and reforms to many Federal transportation programs, including streamlining the approval processes for new transportation projects, providing new safety tools, and establishing new programs to advance critical freight projects.

PROJECT DELIVERY: The FAST Act adopted a number of Administration proposals to further speed the permitting processes while still protecting environmental and historic treasures and also codifying the online system to track projects and interagency coordination processes.

FREIGHT: The FAST Act would establish both formula and discretionary grant programs to fund critical transportation projects that would benefit freight movements. The Act emphasizes the importance of Federal coordination to focus local governments on the needs of freight transportation providers.

INNOVATIVE FINANCE BUREAU: The FAST Act establishes a new National Surface Transportation and Innovative Finance Bureau within the Department to serve as a one-stop shop for state and local governments to receive federal funding, financing or technical assistance.

TIFIA: The TIFIA Loan program provides important financing options for large projects and public-private partnerships. The FAST Act includes organizational changes that will provide an opportunity for important structural improvements with the potential to accelerate the delivery of innovative finance projects.

SAFETY: The FAST Act includes authority sought by the Administration to prohibit rental car companies from

knowingly renting vehicles that are subject to safety recalls. It also increased maximum fines against non-compliant auto manufactures, will help bolster the Department's safety oversight of transit agencies, and also streamlines the Federal truck and bus safety grant programs.

TRANSIT: The FAST Act includes a number of positive provisions, including reinstating the popular bus discretionary grant program and strengthening the Buy America requirements that promote domestic manufacturing through vehicle and track purchases.

LADDERS OF OPPORTUNITY: The Act includes allocating slightly more formula funds to local decision makers and providing planners with additional design flexibilities. Notably, FAST makes Transit Oriented Development (TOD) expenses eligible for funding under highway and rail credit programs.

Code of Federal Regulations

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) annual edition is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the departments and agencies of the Federal Government produced by the Office of the Federal Register (OFR) and the Government Publishing Office, (http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=f0dd6a1c4c6ae69bf8bb4134c0e65229&node=se23.1.450_1316&rgn=div8).

Title 23, Chapter 1, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart C defines the role and requirements of Metropolitan Planning Organizations including 450.316 which describes the contents of a participation plan:

(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a 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 transportation, 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.

(1) The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and

shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

- (i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
 - (ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
 - (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
 - (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
 - (v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
 - (vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
 - (vii) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
 - (viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;
 - (ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and
 - (x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.
- (2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under

the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.

(3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.

Title VI

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects persons from discrimination based on their race, color, or national origin in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance. As an MPO and recipient of federal funding, CUUATS is required to document compliance with Title VI in a Title VI Program which is submitted to the Illinois Department of Transportation every three years. The requirements of the Title VI Program include a public participation plan that includes an outreach plan to engage minority and limited English proficient populations, as well as a summary of outreach efforts made since the last Title VI Program submission. This Public Participation Plan will include the aforementioned Title VI requirements and be included in the CUUATS Title VI Program.

Illinois Open Meetings Act

The Illinois Open Meetings Act seeks “to ensure that the actions of public bodies be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly.” Public bodies, such as MPOs, must hold meetings that are open to the public, provide a period for public comment, and are advertised in advance of the meeting. Subcommittees of these public bodies that are all or in part subsidized by tax revenue must comply with the Act. In addition, the Act requires that agendas and minutes from the meetings be posted on the agency website and be available for review in the agency offices. The CUUATS Policy and Technical Committee meetings are open to the public with annual meeting calendars published in the News Gazette at the beginning of each calendar year and specific meeting agendas posted to the public website no less than 48 hours in advance along with minutes from the previous meeting. Agendas and minutes are also available in the CUUATS offices in Urbana.

CUUATS FEDERALLY MANDATED WORK PRODUCTS

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Public outreach for the LRTP: *Sustainable Choices 2040*, approved in December 2014, included a variety of ambitious and innovative methods to educate the public about the long range transportation planning process, raise awareness of existing transportation services, collect public input regarding the existing transportation system, and facilitate visioning sessions regarding the future of transportation in the MPA community. CUUATS staff places special emphasis on public input because the LRTP affects every resident, employee, and visitor in the community. LRTP 2040 public outreach efforts included 60 different public events and presentations augmented by informational videos, a website, a social media campaign, periodic newsletter updates, an outreach bus, and graphic recording. CUUATS staff recorded over 1,500 public comments regarding the LRTP between February 2013 and June 2014.

In order to educate the local community about the MPO and the purpose and content of the LRTP, CUUATS staff collaborated with local stakeholders to create two videos to show at outreach events and include on the LRTP website. The videos include local children, community leaders, and transportation stakeholders explaining the MPO functions and the LRTP planning process and how to get involved. CUUATS staff also collaborated with PACE Center for Independent Living to provide closed captions on the videos for Spanish speakers and the hearing impaired (<http://cuuats.org/lrtp/site-images/lrtp-video-final-draft/view>).

CUUATS staff created a website dedicated to the 2040 LRTP for the purposes of documentation and outreach. From the home page of the website, (<http://www.cuuats.org/lrtp>), users can access news and announcements, informational videos, LRTP event invitations, LRTP documents (including draft portions of the full plan and report cards that track progress made toward the objectives set forth in the 2035 LRTP), and opportunities to contribute input on the transportation system and the planning process itself. As part of the website, CUUATS staff created an online interactive map where users can input geographically specific information about any part of the local transportation system by travel mode. The interactive map currently contains over 600 pieces of publically accessible input collected since the LRTP kickoff meeting in February 2013 (http://cuuats.org/maps/results_map).

CUUATS staff used Twitter (@LRTP_SC_2040) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/SustainableChoices2040) to encourage people to visit the LRTP website and to promote public LRTP events. Facebook's tracking capabilities demonstrate that Facebook is an effective venue to reach more residents who live in rural areas and in municipalities outside of Champaign or Urbana, which are locations that are often underrepresented at traditional public meetings.

In addition to a public LRTP kickoff meeting and a public meeting to present and get feedback on the existing conditions portion of the plan, CUUATS staff held four public visioning meetings as part of the LRTP public involvement process in November 2013. The goal for these meetings was to facilitate conversations about what local residents want for the future of the community. The facilitation strategy for these meetings differed from similar meetings in the past in that a non-CUUATS member of the community facilitated the meeting dialogue while a graphic recorder drew the conversation as it was taking place on a four-foot-by-eight-foot piece of paper at the front of the room. Having a graphic recorder drawing live allowed the entire audience to visualize the conversation as it took place. Another benefit of graphic recording is the ability to have a tangible artifact from the meeting (the four-foot-by-eight-foot conversation poster created by the graphic recorder) to be able to post on the CUUATS website to share with others and solicit additional input.

The most ambitious part of the LRTP public outreach strategy was the LRTP 2040 Community Conversations Bus. In collaboration with the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (C-U MTD), CUUATS redesigned and repurposed an MTD bus to attend community events around the MPA for the purpose of LRTP outreach and input gathering. The bus allowed CUUATS staff to meet residents where they already were and collect much more public input than was previously possible. People who interacted with the bus had the opportunity to talk with CUUATS planners, read printed information about the LRTP process and existing transportation conditions, watch the locally-produced video about the LRTP process, and provide input about local transportation conditions and priorities via computers and/or paper surveys.

As part of the bus outreach, CUUATS staff collected public input related to strengths and weaknesses in

the current transportation system, project priorities for future system improvements, and basic demographic information of the participants. The input was collected in the method preferred by the participant, with options for verbal input, written input, and/or digital input. Additionally, CUUATS staff set up a kids' table where children could talk about and draw their own ideas about transportation and mobility. Engaging kids at different events was a productive way to get input from community members. Many kids were attracted to the LRTP bus to look inside and color at the table set up for them. As a result, their parents would also visit the bus and have time to talk to CUUATS planners and provide input about the LRTP while their kids drew pictures and learned about pedestrian and bicycle safety. As an incentive and gesture of appreciation, adults who donated their time providing input for the plan were given a Sustainable Choices 2040 water bottle, tote bag, and/or small potted plant. Kids who drew a transportation-related picture for the plan were given reflective snap bracelets, stickers, and/or erasers, and their drawings were posted inside the bus.

Many demographic measures of the individuals that gave input for the LRTP are comparable to the demographics of the overall MPA, with a few exceptions. The most prominent input deficit in the age category exists in the population that is 20-29 years of age (Figure A.1). This is due to the disproportionate number of university students in that age group living in the community. The residential locations of the participants were spread throughout the region. However there is an over representation of Urbana residents for two main reasons: first, it was easier to get permission to attend events in Urbana than in Champaign, and second, Urbana and Champaign both held many more public events than the smaller municipalities. In terms of race and ethnicity, people who identify as Asian were under represented, as well as those who identify as Caucasian (see chart on page 52), though the latter is less of a concern due to the large proportion of Caucasians in the MPA and in the respondent pool.

The demographic data were provided voluntarily and represent about 83% of total respondents who completed paper surveys at public outreach events. They do not include any of the individuals who provided input during other public LRTP information meetings, including the visioning meetings, nor do they include individuals who provided input via the LRTP online interactive map.

By utilizing the Community Conversations Bus to talk with people in their own neighborhoods and encouraging them to interact with the LRTP 2040 in the method they were most comfortable with, CUUATS staff were able to engage with many more members of the public in many more places throughout the community and better understand input from local residents that would not have been captured on a mail-in survey. The data collected was invaluable in identifying strengths and weaknesses in the local transportation network; defining the plan's guiding pillars, goals, objectives and performance measures; and which projects should be prioritized in the region's long range transportation vision for the future. The data collected clearly show how transportation infrastructure and behavior vary significantly throughout the Champaign-Urbana region. These differences can be difficult to address in a region-wide transportation plan. To bridge that gap, staff also incorporated the data collected in a new analysis tool: the Local Accessibility and Mobility Analysis (LRTP 2040 Appendix C: Local Affordability and Mobility Analysis). The purpose of this new analysis tool is to describe and map the regional variation in land use and transportation factors and to relate these differences to local travel patterns and transportation options at the neighborhood level. Although the LRTP 2040 has already been approved, CUUATS staff will continue to develop the Local Affordability and Mobility Assessment and strengthen the connections between the regional transportation planning process and local residents that were reinforced during the LRTP 2040 Public Outreach Campaign.



LRTP Community Conversations Bus in the Village of Savoy, 2013

The final review and approval of the LRTP included a 30-day public comment period where a digital version of the draft document was available on four different websites and physical drafts were available at seven different public locations around the urbanized area. Comments received during the public comment period are included in the LRTP document in Appendix A: *Public Involvement*.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The annual TIP approval process includes a 30-day public comment period on the draft document. The draft TIP is available on the CUUATS website and hardcopies are made available at several public locations, including public libraries, during the 30-day comment period. The comment period is announced on the website, in a flier directly mailed to all CUUATS mailing list recipients, and in a retail advertisement in the local newspaper. Any comments received during that time are communicated to CUUATS Technical and Policy members, who can request changes to the document based on these comments before it becomes final. Like the LRTP, interested parties also have the opportunity to comment on the document at CUUATS Technical and Policy Committee meetings.

Unified Technical Work Program (UTWP)

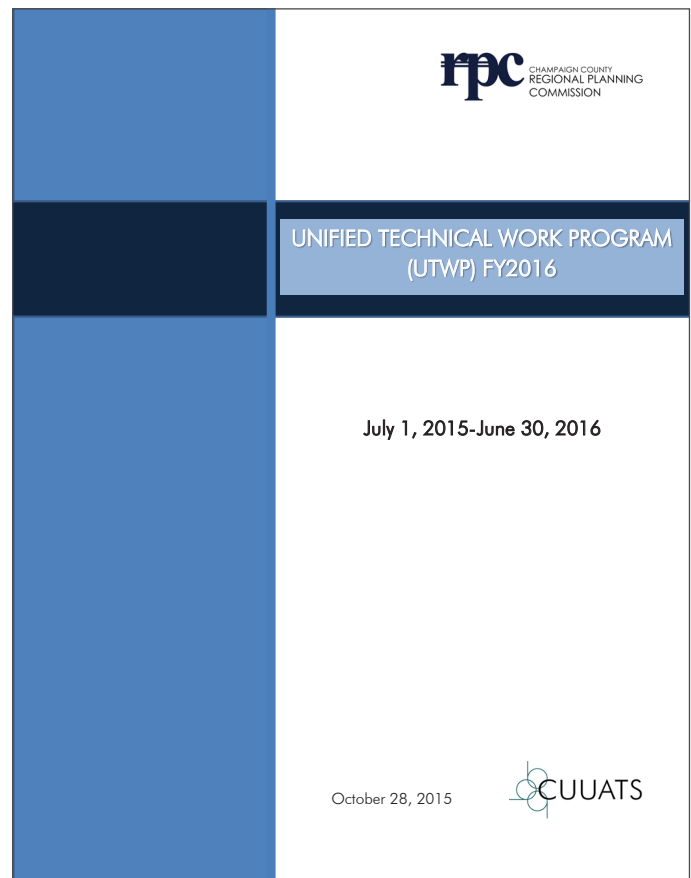
The CUUATS annual budget, the UTWP, does not require a public comment period like the previous two documents. Interested parties can comment on the document at CUUATS Technical and Policy Committee meetings before the document is approved.



LRTP 2040, approved December 2014
<http://cuuats.org/lrtp/documents/long-range-transportation-plan-sustainable-choices-2040-final>



TIP FY 2016-2019, approved June 2015
<http://www.ccrpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/TIP-fy2016-2019.pdf>



UTWP FY 2016, approved April 2015
<http://www.ccrpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/UTWP-fy2016.pdf>

CUUATS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

CUUATS staff utilize a variety of techniques to inform the public about CUUATS work products, gather input regarding specific plans, and raise awareness about the local transportation system. These techniques are loosely grouped under the categories of Connecting with People, Gathering Input, and Communication Tools. Table 1 summarizes which techniques CUUATS staff have used in different planning processes since the previous Public Participation Plan was approved in 2007.

Connecting with People

Public Meetings

CUUATS staff have hosted several different types of public meetings to serve the needs of different plans. Public meetings have taken the form of informal open houses, topic-specific forums, and project-based workshops. Typical elements of any public meeting are a presentation regarding the plan, project, or topic at hand; printed information boards and/or fliers; opportunities for verbal and written input from the public; and multiple staff members present to answer questions, document the proceedings, and/or provide language translation.

Informal open houses are often hosted at the beginning of a process to introduce the topic and calendar, or at the end of a process to summarize the topic and take comments regarding the final product. Workshops are more structured sessions where participants create a product such as thematic maps, future goals, and/or prioritized project lists.

Public meetings are included in the initial schedule for most CUUATS projects and plans in the form most appropriate for the given project. Additional public meetings and events are scheduled throughout the process as needed. For instance, during the LRTP 2040 outreach campaign, CUUATS staff tracked the demographics of outreach participants and scheduled subsequent events at strategic locations in order to engage underrepresented age groups, racial/ethnic groups, or municipalities.

All public meetings are preceded by advertisements at least two weeks in advance. Advertisements can include fliers distributed by direct mail and email, announcements on websites and social media, and advertisements in local newspaper, radio, and/or television stations.

Information Tables/Kiosks

Information tables or kiosks are generally used to convey information about a project in a public setting such as a mall, public agency, or community event. These tables or displays can be staffed or unstaffed depending on the setting, the information being conveyed, and whether information or input is being collected.

One of the biggest advantages of information tables and kiosks is the ability to connect with individuals at a time and place of their choosing. Information tables or kiosks are generally located at high traffic times/places for a particular group or groups of people to allow them to engage with the information at their convenience without interrupting their schedule or requiring them to travel to a different location. Another advantage of information tables is the ability for CUUATS to network with other agencies at different events. In the past, CUUATS has participated in several local events (including a disability expo, a teacher expo, a wellness fair, farmers markets, and neighborhood festivals) in collaboration with or in support of other local organizations.

Public Outreach Bus

In collaboration with the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District, CUUATS redesigned and repurposed an MTD bus to attend community events around the MPA for the LRTP: *Sustainable Choices 2040*. The outreach bus served as a large-scale information table or kiosk that included informational videos, a kids table, paper surveys, laptops, posters, informational fliers, voting boards, a wish tree, and a variety of thank you gifts for participants. The public outreach bus was a very successful but expensive form of outreach that will likely be reserved for use with larger-scale plans and projects, such as the LRTP.

Kids Table

CUUATS staff set up a table for kids at events whenever possible. Engaging kids at events is a productive way to introduce kids to basic transportation issues and safety information and to get input from their caregivers.

Presentations

CUUATS staff present information to the public and interest groups during all planning processes and by request. Presentations related to specific projects are available on the CUUATS website.

CUUATS Committee Meetings

All CUUATS Technical and Policy Committee meetings are open to the public as per the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Two opportunities for public participation are provided in the agendas for these meetings: one before committee discussion and one after. Meeting agendas are posted on the CUUATS website and at the meeting location approximately one week before meetings and 48 hours before special sessions. The approved yearly schedule of meetings is listed in News Gazette retail and legal ads at the beginning of each calendar year.

Project Working Groups

Working groups are utilized in the planning process to serve as advisory committees for specific projects or plans. Working groups are made up of representatives from agencies, organizations, or populations that are impacted by or otherwise relevant to the project or plan. Working groups help define the scope and goals of a project or plan and oversee the timeline and technical work associated with the project or plan carried out by CUUATS staff.

Stakeholder Interviews

CUUATS staff have interviewed key stakeholders during many planning processes in order to inform a particular plan or decision-making process. Key stakeholders can be consulted throughout a planning process, but are typically consulted early on regarding existing conditions, future opportunities, and/or goals for a given project.

Staff Availability

CUUATS staff are available at public meetings and during office hours. Staff contact information is available on the CUUATS website and at all public events. Staff accept any comments via email, phone, or regular mail and respond promptly to requests for information.

Gathering Input

Surveys

Surveys are a common way of collecting input from members of the public that can take many print and digital forms and be configured to fit different project budgets. Given their familiarity and flexibility, surveys are used during the process of many CUUATS plans and products. Survey results are processed and analyzed by CUUATS staff and included in final plan documents.

Comment Cards

Comment cards are made available at all project events and on the CUUATS website. Comment cards can be tailored to capture opinions about a certain topic or event, but also allow for open-ended answers/comments that may or may not pertain to a specific plan or event. All responses are reviewed by staff and working groups during the planning process. Significant or repeated comments are included in final plan documents.

Online Interactive Map

CUUATS staff created an online interactive map for the LRTP 2040 where users could input geographically specific information about any part of the local transportation system. The interactive map is archived on the LRTP website with over 600 pieces of publicly accessibly input collected during the LRTP 2040 planning process (http://cuuats.org/maps/results_map).

Graphic Recording

Graphic recording is a form of meeting facilitation that includes the live illustration of comments or discussion on a large paper or board in front of the meeting participants. The act of the live illustration serves to engage meeting participants while also allowing them to witness their input being recorded and visualize their input within the overall conversation. Graphic recording posters also serve as visual records of events that are publically accessible on the CUUATS website.

Voting Board

CUUATS staff has used voting boards as a form of public survey. For the LRTP 2040, participants filled out a confidential survey prioritizing future transportation projects, after which they were asked to voluntarily post their survey answers on a large voting board so other participants could get a sense of the collective priorities.

Wish Tree

A wish tree is an informal and visually appealing input gathering device that allows participants to add "leaves" to the tree with their written input. A wish tree was used in conjunction with the LRTP 2040 outreach bus as a way to gather input that was not captured or directly requested in the other LRTP input materials. The wish tree allowed participants of all ages and language abilities to contribute ideas for any transportation improvements regardless of the geographical, technological, or financial feasibility.

Public Comment Periods

Draft documents are provided online and in print at public locations for public comment and review at key decision points. The locations of the document and length of review (generally 30-45 days) depend on the plan contents and requirements. Comments provided during public comment periods are included in final plan documents. Additional opportunity for public comment is also provided if the final plan differs significantly from the version that was made available during the public comment period.

Tools for Communication

Videos

In order to educate the local community about the purpose and content of the MPO and the LRTP, CUUATS staff collaborated with local stakeholders to create two videos to show on public access television stations in advance of the LRTP 2040 outreach campaign. The videos were also shown at LRTP outreach events, accessible on the LRTP website, and continue to play regularly in the Brookens Administrative Center, a public facility that houses CUUATS, CCRPC, and other Champaign County offices.

Websites

The CUUATS website (<http://www.ccrpc.org/transportation/about/>) and specific project websites allow staff to make a variety of data, graphic visualizations, outreach materials, document drafts, and other work products available to anyone with an internet-enabled device. The main CUUATS website is part of the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission website, www.ccrpc.org. CUUATS staff maintains the site to include the most recent available information on:

- Upcoming meetings and agendas
- News
- Final documents
- Draft documents for review
- Public meeting documents and summaries
- Data (traffic counts, annual LRTP report cards, etc.)
- Committee and staff contacts
- Surveys and other participation opportunities

Direct Mail, Email, and Social Media

CUUATS staff uses direct mail, email, and a variety of social media outlets to distribute information to interested people as well as advertise events. The CUUATS mailing list consists of 835 people who have signed up to receive information about CUUATS in general or a specific CUUATS project by either direct mail or email. CUUATS has an additional 245 followers on Facebook and Twitter. The following products are shared via direct mail, email, and social media:

Event Advertisements CUUATS staff creates fliers to distribute at least two weeks before every public event. Event fliers are also posted on the CUUATS website as well as member agency websites when possible.

Newsletters CUUATS staff creates and distributes newsletters for longer-term planning projects such as corridor studies or the LRTP. Newsletters provide recipients with updates on the planning process, next steps in the process, and ways they can become involved. Newsletters are also posted on the CUUATS website.

Brochures/fact sheets CUUATS staff produce these for specific projects or events whenever necessary to communicate information related to a project or event. Brochures and fact sheets are distributed via direct mail, email, social media, and posted on relevant websites.

Television and Radio

Public Service Announcements are communicated to local radio and television stations to relay information about upcoming CUUATS events and draft document review periods. Each media outlet has the right to show or disregard the information.

Newspaper

All CUUATS public meetings and draft document review periods are advertised at minimum as a legal ad and usually also as a retail ad in the local newspaper. CUUATS also provides the newspaper with an annual list of approved meeting dates to run in January.

Yard Signs

Yard signs are used to advertise meetings to a targeted area of the community. They can be used in lieu of direct mailings when the target audience makes such a mailing cost-prohibitive. Yard signs are typically placed at intersections along principal roadways in the target community to maximize their effectiveness.

TABLE 1: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES, 2008-2015

Strategies		In Person	Print	Digital	Federal Requirements			Multiple Completed			Other Plans, Reports, and Studies						
					LRTP: Sustainable Choices 2040	United Technical Choices 2040	Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	Agency Policies and Guidelines	Traffic Impact Analyses	Corridor Studies	Safe Routes to School Maps and Plans	Urbana Bicycle Master Plan, 2008	University Sangamon Intersection Study, 2012	Champaign County Traffic Circulation Study, 2012	Transportation and Economic Development, 2013	Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow, 2015	Urbana Park District Trails Master Plan, 2015
Connecting with People	Public Meetings	•															
	Information Tables/Kiosks	•															
	Public Outreach Bus	•															
	Kids Table	•															
	Presentations	•		•													
	CUUATS Committee Meetings	•															
	Project Working Groups	•															
	Stakeholder Interviews	•															
Staff Availability	•		•														
Gathering Input	Surveys	•	•	•													
	Comment Cards		•	•													
	Online Interactive Map			•													
	Graphic Recording	•	•														
	Voting Board		•														
	Wish Tree		•														
	Public Comment Periods		•	•													
Tools for Communication	Videos			•													
	Website			•													
	Direct Mail, Email, Social Media		•														
	Television and Radio			•													
	Newspaper Ads		•														
	Yard Signs		•														

INCLUDING THE TRADITIONALLY UNDERSERVED

Federal law stipulates that MPOs must seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services. CUUATS staff completes a demographic analysis with every decennial Census and, more frequently, keep apprised of new growth and redevelopment areas in the urbanized area in order to determine where concentrations of the underserved or underrepresented reside. The data from this analysis informs the techniques in the three main outreach categories defined in the previous section (Connecting with People, Gathering Input, and Communication Tools).

Connecting with People

CUUATS staff places special emphasis on connecting with the public to garner local support and produce a plan that is grounded in a shared vision for the future. In order to ensure CUUATS plans consider all the needs within the planning area defined for a project or plan, including those of the traditionally underserved, the administration and staff take the following extra steps when connecting with people:

- Plan events/information displays in locations that are convenient to underserved populations in terms of proximity to employment or residence, as well as accessibility by modes most used by those populations
- Plan events/information displays at times that are convenient to any known schedules of underserved populations
- Seek out community leaders or representatives of underserved populations to participate in planning processes and working groups as appropriate
- Meet with and make presentations to organizations that represent underserved populations
- Utilize the age, ethnic, cultural, and language diversity of the CUUATS staff to make underserved individuals feel welcome and heard at events
- Provide language translation whenever possible and relevant
- Provide childcare or child engagement whenever possible or relevant so caretakers don't have to
- Use targeted advertising to encourage participation from known underserved populations in addition to wide advertising that encourages participation from as much as the public as possible
- Track the demographics of public participants whenever possible to ensure appropriate representation of underserved groups (without infringing on personal privacy)
- Continue to research creative methods of reaching underserved populations with information, documents, and invitations other than the techniques already listed in this document



From top to bottom: L RTP 2040 event at Latino church in Champaign, 2013; CUUATS staff diversity, L RTP 2040 event in Urbana, 2014; L RTP 2040 kids table in Champaign, 2013

Gathering Input

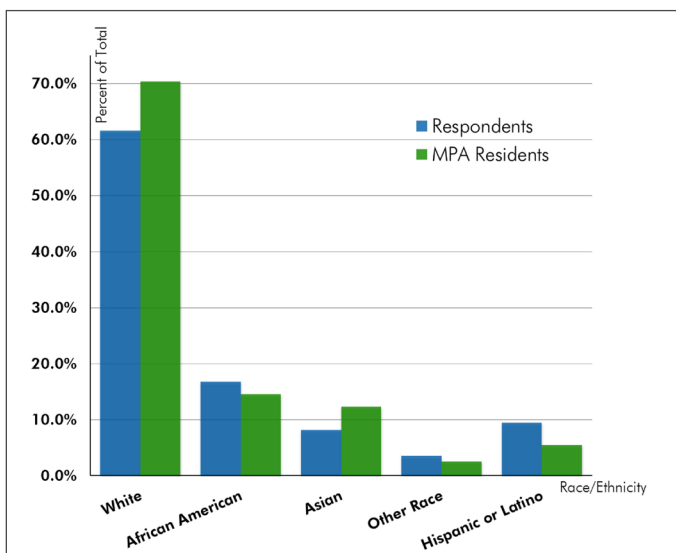
CUUATS staff works to demonstrate respect for the public by designing input processes that are clear to understand and easy to participate in. This means designing processes that can be adapted for different ages, physical abilities, technology comfort levels, language abilities, and time constraints. In order to ensure input methods are respectful toward underserved populations, CUUATS staff take the following extra steps when designing new input processes:

- Plan input gathering processes that are known to be familiar and accessible to underserved populations
- Make all draft documents available for public review online and in person at convenient public locations, including public libraries
- Translate input materials as well as information and planning documents into relevant languages when possible
- Public participant demographic information should be tracked when possible to identify underrepresented populations
- Continue to research creative methods of gathering input from underserved populations other than the techniques already listed in this document

Tools for Communication

Receiving useful public input relies on effective communication, particularly for underserved populations who could be less familiar with the people, agencies, and/or plans involved in CUUATS outreach processes. In order to ensure the communication tools used by CUUATS staff are appropriate for underserved populations, staff take the following extra steps when planning new education and advertising campaigns:

- Residents that express an interest by attending public meetings or notifying us by other means will be included in the mailing list to receive information about future events
- Methods of communication will be selected based on known methods that are popular in underserved populations (e.g., a popular Spanish language radio station or newspaper to reach the Latino community)
- All communication tools (videos, websites, direct mail, email, social media, public service announcements, newspaper advertisements, yard signs, etc.) will be translated into non-English languages when possible and relevant
- Continue to research creative tools for communication that would appeal to underserved populations other than the techniques already listed in this document



L RTP 2040 outreach respondent tracking, race and ethnicity, 2014

Sustainable Choices 2040
Long Range Transportation Plan

Encuesta Sobre las Condiciones de Transporte

Para proporcionar información adicional sobre las condiciones de transporte en nuestra comunidad, visite el mapa interactivo en nuestro sitio web:
<http://www.cuuats.org/maps/lrtp>

Cover of L RTP 2040 transportation conditions survey in Spanish, 2013

PROCESSING AND UTILIZING PUBLIC INPUT

CUUATS staff makes every effort to consider and use all public comments in CUUATS planning processes and interactions with CUUATS member agencies. The following methodologies are used in processing and utilizing public comments:

- All public comments are reviewed and considered by CUUATS staff. Input is collected and used for many different purposes depending on the project or plan. For the LRTP 2040, public input was a fundamental part of identifying existing strengths and weaknesses in the transportation system, defining guiding pillars of the goals and objectives for the 2040 vision, and selecting infrastructure improvement projects for the 2040 vision.
- If comments are related to the facilities or programs of a CUUATS member agency, staff forwards the comments on to that agency.
- If comments are related to a particular planning process, comments are forwarded on to the project working group for further review.
- When comments are sought for a draft document, staff compiles and reviews all comments, makes a summary of the comments for the decision making bodies, and makes relevant changes to the document as directed by the decision-making body. All comments (as well as responses when relevant) are included as an appendix to the final document.
- When necessary or relevant due to volume or subject matter, additional tools are used to analyze input, including:
 - Geocoding - mapping the location of input relative to other input or transportation system features
 - Text coding - tallying the occurrence of specific words or themes to identify popular issues
 - Graphic visualizations - using charts, infographics, digital renderings, or other illustrations to summarize or communicate the results of public input



Graphic recording poster from LRTP 2040 public visioning meeting, 2013

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Performance Measures

The Code of Federal Regulations requires that MPOs periodically review public participation procedures to ensure a full and open participation process. CUUATS maintains a list of basic performance measures that staff can use to guide the development of new or ongoing public participation strategies (Table 2).

Participant Demographics

Since 2008, the most immediate and effective strategy for measuring the effectiveness of participation strategies has been collecting and analyzing the demographic information of public participants. By continuously tracking how well participant demographics match the demographics of the planning area population, CUUATS staff can plan additional events and/or adjust the outreach techniques to target specific groups. This was done effectively for the LRTP 2040 outreach campaign as well as for a bicycle and pedestrian survey conducted for the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan. During the LRTP outreach campaign, the following additional events were scheduled in order to solicit opinions on the

existing transportation network from specific groups who were underrepresented among outreach participants: a Disability Expo, Spanish and Korean church services, a Latino supermarket, an African American neighborhood park party, an African American barbershop, and an outdoor welcoming event for students at the University of Illinois.

For the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan, a pedestrian and bicycle survey was mailed to residents in every traffic analysis zone (TAZ) in Urbana in an attempt to get a geographically representative sample of the Urbana population to answer the survey questions. When specific TAZs, as well as Latinos as an ethnic group, were identified as underrepresented in the survey results, CUUATS staff adjusted the survey methodology in order to get completed surveys from a more representative sample of the Urbana population. CUUATS staff went door-to-door in the underrepresented TAZs to help residents fill out the surveys in person. To engage the Latino population, bilingual staff went to an elementary school with high Latino enrollment and a popular Latino grocery store to help Latino residents complete the surveys in Spanish.

TABLE 2: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Public Involvement	Effectiveness MOE	Qualitative MOE	
Public Events	Number of events/opportunities for public involvement	Effectiveness of meeting format	
	Number of comments received	Public understanding of process	Quality of feedback obtained
	Number of participants	Meeting convenience: time, place, and accessibility	
	Planning area demographics v. participant demographics		
	Number of events scheduled for underserved populations		
CUUATS Policy and Technical Committees	Attendance	Meeting convenience: time, place, and accessibility	
	Quantity of feedback received	Effectiveness of meeting format	
	Number of comments received	How did the public's input impact the plan?	
CUUATS Mailing List	Number of contacts added/deleted	How and when contact is made	
	Number of groups/agencies		
Media Coverage	Number of news releases	Effectiveness of notification and communication tools	How and when contact is made
	Number of direct mailings		
	Number of public access TV spots		
	Number of avenues used for underserved populations		
Comment Forms/Surveys	% of meeting attendees who filled out comment forms	Input is collected and made available for consideration	
	Number of surveys/comment forms		
	Number of direct calls/letters/emails to staff		
CUUATS Website	Average traffic	Monitor effectiveness of website format/presentation	
	Number of comments/downloads through website		

Public Opinion Survey

In addition to requesting basic demographic information from public participants, CUUATS also asks for feedback about different outreach events on the same surveys and comment cards participants fill out with their input on the transportation system. For instance, a comment card at an LRTP information meeting will include questions about the LRTP as well as questions that ask the participant for feedback about the event itself - the format, timing, location, etc, as well as how they heard about the event. This information helps CUUATS staff better understand attendees' preferences for outreach events, evaluate the effectiveness of advertising methods, and adjust future strategies accordingly.

A previous method used to determine the effectiveness of different public involvement strategies was a short survey that was distributed to the CUUATS mailing list in 2007. The survey asked participants to gauge the effectiveness of existing CUUATS outreach techniques and provided an opportunity for respondents to offer new outreach ideas. Approximately 600 people received the survey, and 130 responded. Table 3 reflects the survey responses.

Though the survey results were informative at the time, communication technologies and public involvement techniques have changed enough in the past eight years that staff no longer use the survey results as guidance. The survey is included here as an example of a relatively quick and easy way to engage interested members of the public for the purposes of evaluating past techniques used for public participation, or for soliciting new ideas for additional techniques. The drawback of both of these methods, however, is that they are targeted at audiences who are already somewhat knowledgeable about and engaged with the transportation planning process as public meeting attendants and/or mailing list recipients. It would also be important to learn more about the people CUUATS has not yet been able to engage and what the barriers are to that engagement.

TABLE 3: 2007 PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY RESULTS

How effective are CUUATS public participation techniques at providing information?	
Method	Survey Answer
Direct mailings to advertise events, provide info	Very
Newsletters	Somewhat
Email to advertise events, provide info	Somewhat
Presentations (Powerpoint, overhead)	Somewhat
Public Service Announcements (radio, tv)	Somewhat
Fact Sheets	Somewhat
Brochures	Less
Flyers	Less
Website	Less
Newspaper advertisements	Less
Yard signs announcing meetings	Less
Information kiosks/booths	Less

How effective are CUUATS public participation techniques at gathering/sharing information?	
Technique	Survey Answer
Public Question and Answer Form	Somewhat
Public Workshops (formal agenda)	Somewhat
Comment Cards	Somewhat
Public Open House (no formal agenda)	Somewhat
Citizen Advisory Committees	Somewhat
Key Person Interviews	Somewhat
Website	Somewhat

Conferences, Workshops, and Trainings

CUUATS staff regularly attend conferences, workshops, and trainings to stay abreast of best practices and new developments in the field of transportation planning, as well as to maintain professional memberships and accreditation. At these events, staff often present CUUATS work products in order to share lessons learned and receive feedback about the effectiveness of our planning strategies (including public participation) from professional peers around the state, nation, and world.