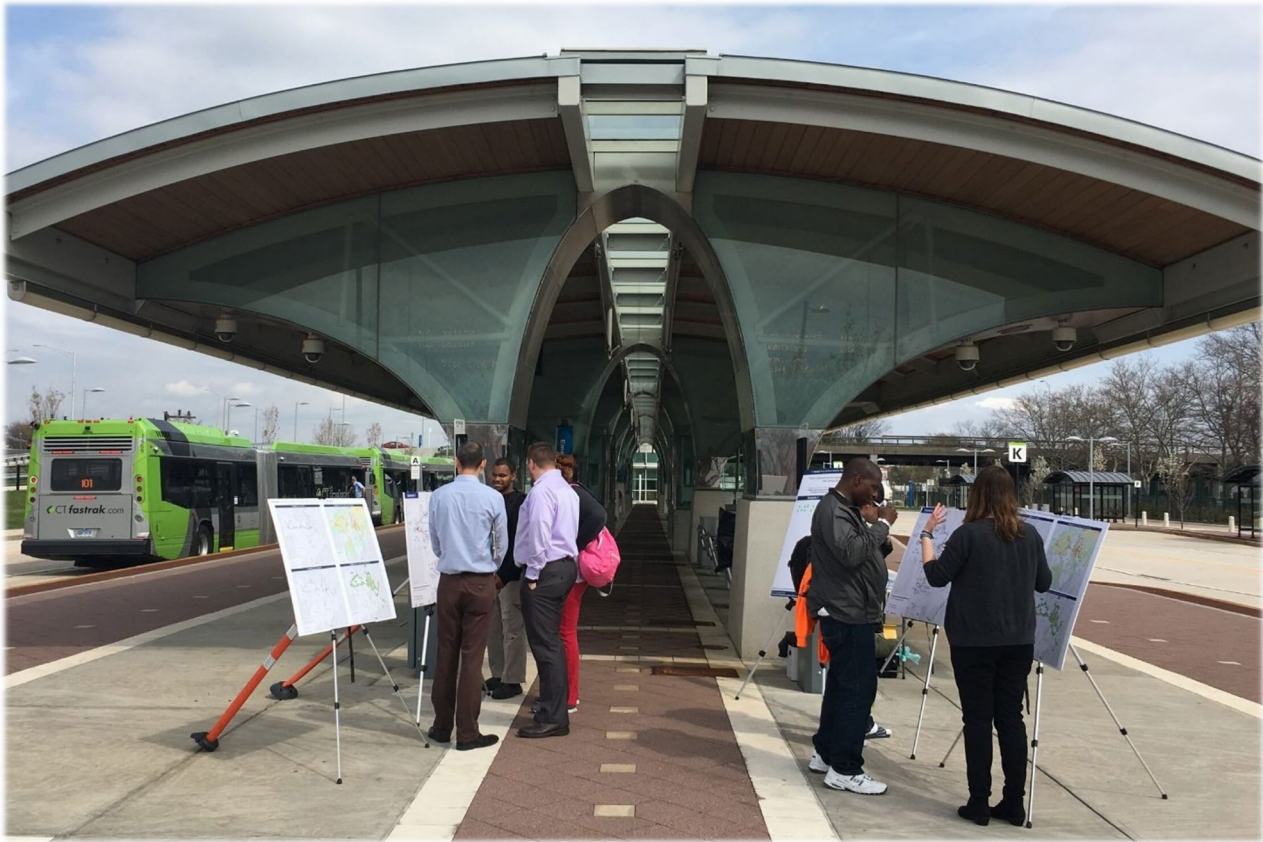


# Public Participation Plan



**ADOPTED: JUNE 25, 2025**

**CRCOG**  
CAPITOL REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

*Working together for a better region.*

## LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

For additional information or free language assistance, please call (860) 724-4293.

Para información adicional, o asistencia lingüística gratuita, por favor llame al (860) 724-4293.

Aby uzyskać dodatkowe informacje lub bezpłatną pomoc tłumacza, proszę dzwonić pod numer (860) 724-4293.

如需更多信息或免费语言协助，请致电 (860) 724-4293.

Para obter mais informações, ou para auxílio gratuito em outro idioma, ligue para (860) 724-4293.

Per informazioni aggiuntive o assistenza linguistica gratuita, chiamare il numero (860) 724-4293.

Si vous souhaitez en savoir plus ou bénéficier d'une assistance linguistique gratuite, merci de composer le numéro suivant (860) 724-4293.

Để có thêm thông tin hoặc hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí, vui lòng gọi (860) 724-4293.

بالرقم الاتصال يرجى، مجانية لغوية مساعدة على للحصول أو المعلومات من لمزيد (860) 724-4293.

கூடுதல் தகவல் அல்லது இலவச மொழி உதவிக்கு, தயவுசெய்து (860) 724-4293 என்ற எண்ணை அழைக்கவும்.

అదనపు సమాచారం కోసం లేదా ఉచిత భాషా సహాయం కోసం, దయచేసి (860) 724-4293 నంబర్కు కాల్ చేయండి.

Для отримання додаткової інформації або безкоштовної мовної допомоги телефонуйте (860) 724-4293.

অতিরিক্ত তথ্য, অথবা বিনামূল্যে ভাষা সহায়তার জন্য, অনুগ্রহ করে (860) 724-4293 নম্বরে কল করুন।

اضافی معلومات، یا زبان سے متعلق مفت معاونت کے لیے، برائے کرم کال کریں (860) 724-4293.

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## CAPITOL REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

350 CHURCH STREET, THIRD FLOOR

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## Who is this document for?

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The Public Participation Plan for the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) directs collaboration between **the public** and **CRCOG staff** in shaping the future of transportation for CRCOG’s 38 communities. CRCOG first adopted a public engagement plan in 2000, with updates in May 2005, February 2007, and April 2017. In this 2025 update, CRCOG’s Public Participation Plan incorporates current federal, state, and agency requirements related to outreach while reorganizing the document to identify guidance for the public and guidance for CRCOG staff.

The Plan serves as a guide for citizens to engage in regional transportation planning and decision-making. It also provides CRCOG staff with direction on required actions and timelines for public outreach and recommends best practices for meaningful public engagement.

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## How do I use this document?

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**Quickly identify guidance tailored to you.**

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**If you are a member of the public**, guidance tailored to you will be labeled “Public Guidance”:



Who, exactly, is “the public”? The public includes:

Member Communities	Landowners within or around a study area	Representatives of people with disabilities
Residents	Public and private transportation providers	Representatives of transportation agency employees or unions
Businesses	Freight shippers and carriers	Affected public agencies
Users of all transportation modes	Representatives of community groups	
News and other media		

This plan offers the public insight into CRCOG’s transportation planning work and how you can contribute to CRCOG’s decision-making process.

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**If you are CRCOG staff**, guidance specific to you will be labeled “Staff Guidance”:



CRCOG’s Public Participation Plan lays out an adaptable framework for CRCOG staff for meaningful public engagement, outlining tools and strategies designed to ensure transparency and accessibility throughout the decision-making process. Strategies are moldable to each plan, study, and initiative.

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# CRCOG and Your Transportation

A bit about CRCOG and the work we do that affects you.

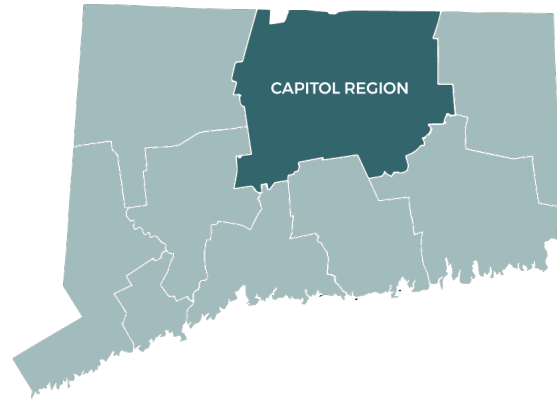


## Public Guidance

### What is CRCOG?

CRCOG is an association of 38 Metro Hartford municipalities that have collaborated for more than 50 years on regional planning and municipal services. CRCOG's work is guided by a Policy Board, which also functions as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

CRCOG's Policy Board is comprised of each municipality's chief elected official or their designee, with two representatives from the City of Hartford. In its role as the MPO, the Policy Board also includes representatives from the Connecticut Department of Transportation and the Greater Hartford Transit District. The Policy Board establishes policy, sets CRCOG's work agenda, and votes on transportation decisions.



As an MPO, CRCOG conducts regional transportation planning studies and selects projects to receive federal funding, including roadway construction projects, intersection improvements, bridge repairs and replacements, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, and more. CRCOG is also responsible for setting the region's transportation vision and goals as well as completing the long- and short-range plans needed to program federal transportation funds.

### CRCOG's Mission Statement

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) leads as a catalyst to enhance the quality of life, vibrancy, and vitality of the Greater Hartford region. CRCOG provides planning, programs, and services to its member municipalities and is the region's designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). CRCOG is a strong advocate for the region and regional solutions.

### Which municipalities are members of CRCOG?

Andover	Coventry	Glastonbury	New Britain	South Windsor	West Hartford
Avon	East Granby	Granby	Newington	Southington	Wethersfield
Berlin	East Hartford	Hartford	Plainville	Stafford	Willington
Bloomfield	East Windsor	Hebron	Rocky Hill	Suffield	Windsor
Bolton	Ellington	Manchester	Simsbury	Tolland	Windsor Locks
Canton	Enfield	Mansfield	Somers	Vernon	
Columbia	Farmington	Marlborough			

### Why isn't my town listed?

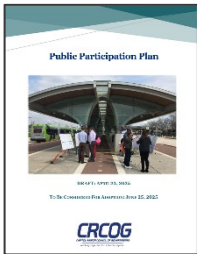
If your town is not listed, it is a member of a different regional planning organization, which will have its own public participation plan.

Find your regional planning organization on the CT Office of Policy and Management website:

<https://portal.ct.gov/opm/igpp/org/planning-regions/planning-regions---overview>

## CRCOG's Transportation Planning Program

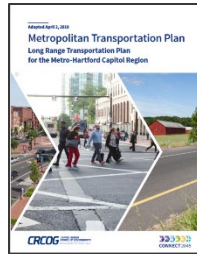
The **core documents** that guide CRCOG's regional transportation planning program are:



### Public Participation Plan

The Public Participation Plan describes CRCOG's procedures to ensure that all members of the public have access to information and opportunities to participate in the transportation planning process.

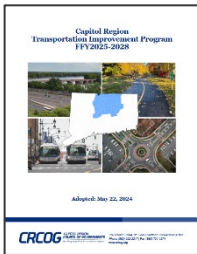
Public Participation Plan webpage: <https://crcog.org/public-participation-plan/>



### Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

The MTP provides a long-range (20+ year) overview of the anticipated major transportation improvements and investments in the Capitol Region. It provides general policy guidance by identifying the highest priority transportation needs in the Region and outlining projects and programs to address those needs. The MTP is updated every four years in conformance with federal regulations.

MTP webpage: <https://crcog.org/mtp>

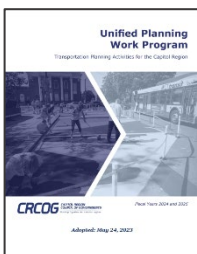


### Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is a list of transportation projects in the Region scheduled to receive federal funds within a four-year period. The TIP is prepared at least every four years and is amended frequently in the interim. The TIP is prepared in coordination with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), CRCOG and other agencies. CRCOG maintains a **TIP Project Tracker** on our website, which includes an interactive map that enables the public to learn about projects of interest.

TIP webpage: <https://crcog.org/tip>

TIP Project Tracker: <http://crcog.ecointeractive.com>



### Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP describes the transportation planning activities for CRCOG staff and identifies long- and short-range transportation planning objectives. The UPWP outlines specific activities needed to achieve these objectives, the budget necessary to sustain the overall planning effort, and anticipated deliverables and schedules. Specific work tasks within the UPWP reflect items and concerns originating from transportation agencies at the federal, state, and local levels.

UPWP webpage: <https://crcog.org/upwp>

**Additional transportation planning efforts** include transportation planning studies of specific corridors or on specific topics covering the whole region. More information about these efforts can be found at <https://crcog.org/plans-and-studies/>.



## Staff Guidance

### Defining and Guiding Legislation

#### **CRCOG as a Council of Governments**

CRCOG's role as a Council of Governments (COG) is defined in Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 50 § 4-124i through § 4-124u.

#### **CRCOG as a Metropolitan Planning Organization**

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Greater Hartford region as authorized by 23 CFR 450 for metropolitan areas with a population of 50,000 or greater, CRCOG conducts an extensive multi-modal transportation planning program that is guided by federal regulations. As the region's MPO, CRCOG is responsible for providing a "continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) transportation planning process that results in plans and programs that consider all transportation modes and supports metropolitan community development and social goals."

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued joint regulations for metropolitan transportation planning in a final rule on May 27, 2016 (23 CFR 450, Parts 450 and 771 and 49 CFR Part 613). The final rule outlines requirements for MPO public participation, including the requirement for a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing various parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan planning process. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Pub. L. 117-58 (Nov. 15, 2021) continues these requirements.

In addition to the defining legislation above, CRCOG must also be compliant with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance and FTA Circular 4702.1B, which provides guidance on effective practices for promoting inclusive participation. Similarly, CRCOG must adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which require that the locations for public participation activities and the information presented be accessible to persons with disabilities.

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# Connecting the Public and CRCOG

Collaboration opportunities and strategies for the public and CRCOG staff.

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## Public Guidance

### How can I interact with CRCOG's transportation planning program?

#### CRCOG Contact Information

Members of the public are always welcome to reach out to CRCOG staff. Materials and notifications related to specific studies, programs, and plan updates will include contact information for the lead CRCOG staff member. For general concerns or inquiries, the public can contact CRCOG as follows:

Mail	E-mail	Phone	Fax
350 Church Street 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Hartford, CT 06103	<a href="mailto:info@crcog.org">info@crcog.org</a>	(860) 522-2217	(860) 724-1274

#### Subscribe to the CRCOG Newsletter

**The CRCOG Connection** offers monthly updates on CRCOG's initiatives, including opportunities to offer your input related to CRCOG's efforts. You can subscribe at <https://crcog.org/newsletters/>. CRCOG can mail a printed copy of the CRCOG Connection upon request.

#### FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITIES

CRCOG's newsletter may include opportunities for the public to offer CRCOG feedback, including announcements related to:

- Polls and Surveys
- Public Information Meetings, Workshops, and Open Houses
- Public Comment Periods for Core Plans and Study Final Reports
- Upcoming Standing Committee and Sub-Committee Meetings

#### Read about CRCOG's Transportation Work on the CRCOG Website

CRCOG's website (<https://www.crcog.org>) is a comprehensive source of information on CRCOG's studies, programs, initiatives, and documents. CRCOG posts reports, plans, meeting notices, updates, and more on its website so that individuals can review documents online or download to their own device. CRCOG can make printed copies of documents available upon request. The **Latest News** section (<https://crcog.org/category/news>) highlights CRCOG's most recent initiatives. The website also offers a translation feature with multiple languages available.

#### FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITIES

Draft versions of Core Documents and Study Final Reports are posted for a Public Comment Period during which comments may be submitted in writing by mail or e-mail, over the telephone, and/or at a public information meeting or committee meeting.

Staff document and review all comments received during a Public Comment Period, consider them for incorporation, and provide a summary of responses to significant public comments received during the development of a plan or document. This summary can be produced as a separate report or included as a section in the final plan or document.

## Engage with CRCOG on Social Media

CRCOG regularly posts on various social media platforms:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CapitolRegionCouncilofGovernments/>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/capitol-region-council-of-governments/>
- X (formerly Twitter): <https://x.com/crcog1>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@thecrcogconnectionhartford599>

### FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITIES

CRCOG considers feedback on our social media accounts in our transportation planning process. You are welcome to react to CRCOG posts, share CRCOG posts with your networks, and comment directly on our posts. While engagements is encouraged and appreciated, CRCOG reserves the right to hide comments that threaten the safety of individuals or groups, are personal attacks, disclose personal information, or are otherwise inappropriate.

CRCOG's social media posts may include announcements related to:

- Polls and Surveys
- Public Information Meetings, Workshops, and Open Houses
- Public Comment Periods for Core Plans and Study Final Reports

## Attend Public Information Meetings and Committee Meetings

CRCOG holds public information meetings to provide opportunities for the public to learn more about transportation initiatives, studies, plans, and programs and to provide input that can help inform transportation planning and decision making for the Region.

CRCOG offers special assistance, including translation and interpretation services, upon request. Meeting notices include a statement in Spanish, Polish, and English on how to request translation and interpretation services in advance of a meeting. CRCOG also contracts with a language assistance hotline in case unanticipated translation services are needed at public meetings.

CRCOG's in-person public information meetings are held at ADA accessible locations. CRCOG makes every effort to ensure that meeting locations are also accessible by public transit. CRCOG's public meetings may also be offered in a virtual or hybrid format to maximize accessibility and participation. Meeting details, including access, parking, and transit information, if applicable, are posted in the Meetings and Events section of CRCOG's website at <https://crcog.org/meetings-and-events/>.

### Public Meetings for Plans and Studies

Types of public meetings include:

- **Public Information Sessions**, which generally include informational presentations and an interactive question and answer session.
- **Workshops**, which typically include a presentation, followed by small break-out groups for discussion and feedback on specific topics.
- **Open House Events**, which provide the public with the opportunity to speak with CRCOG staff, view study information, and submit feedback in a more informal setting.

### Feedback Opportunities

Public meetings may include surveys, comment cards, maps, engagement boards, and/or other interactive activities soliciting feedback on CRCOG's transportation work. These activities are designed to inform CRCOG staff on public opinion related to the study or plan that is the focus of the meeting. Staff document and review all comments received during public meetings and consider them for inclusion in final recommendations and documents.

## Standing Committee and Sub-Committee Meetings

All CRCOG standing committee and sub-committee meetings are open to the public. Meetings of the transportation-related committees—Policy Board, Transportation Committee, Bicycle/Pedestrian Sub-Committee, and Cost Review Sub-Committee—follow regular schedules and are typically held on the same day, time, and location on a monthly or quarterly basis. The annual schedule of meetings is filed with each Town Clerk’s office and posted on CRCOG’s website at the beginning of each calendar year. If changes to this schedule are necessary, CRCOG provides advanced notice.

Meetings may be held in-person or in a virtual or hybrid format. Access details are included on the meeting notice. Meeting notices are filed with Town Clerk offices, posted on CRCOG’s website, and distributed to mailing lists. Although CRCOG bylaws specify 24-hour notice, CRCOG makes every effort to post meeting notices five business days in advance. All CRCOG meeting notices include a statement, in English, Spanish, and Polish, that translation and interpretation services may be requested in advance.

### Policy Board

The Policy Board is comprised of each municipality’s chief elected official or their designee, with two representatives from the City of Hartford. In its role as the MPO, the Policy Board also includes representatives from the Connecticut Department of Transportation and the Greater Hartford Transit District. The Policy Board establishes policy and votes on transportation decisions.

### Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee is composed of representatives from member municipalities, the Greater Hartford Transit District, and the Connecticut Coalition for Economic and Environmental Justice. The committee advises the Policy Board on transportation issues and funding.

### Cost Review Sub-Committee

The Cost Review Sub-Committee is composed of representatives from member municipalities and advises the Transportation Committee on matters relating to project delivery, funding, and allocations.

### Bicycle/Pedestrian Sub-Committee

The Bicycle/Pedestrian Sub-Committee is composed of representatives from member municipalities, municipal bicycle and pedestrian interest groups, and other regional stakeholders. This sub-committee advises the Transportation Committee on bicycle and pedestrian matters.

#### **FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITIES**

Agendas for CRCOG’s Committee and Sub-Committee meetings include a “Public Forum” item reserved for members of the public to offer verbal comments, generally near the beginning of a meeting. When the Public Forum is announced, participants can indicate they are interested in offering comments.

Comments are not limited to items on the agenda. If the meeting has been identified as a place to offer comments on a document that is in its Public Comment Period, this is an appropriate time to offer those comments. Staff document and review all comments received during these meetings and consider them for inclusion in final plans, policies, and study documents.



## Staff Guidance

### CRCOG's Approach to Public Participation

Proactive engagement and integration of a broad range of stakeholder voices is a critical component of CRCOG's transportation planning process. Each plan or study's public involvement program should be tailored to the specific effort using the following process:

- Identify key stakeholders, including residents, businesses, municipalities, community groups, and transportation providers and users most likely to be affected by a plan or study
- Engage stakeholders with early and continued access to accurate and timely information
- Ensure that affected individuals are provided ample and regular opportunities for input at key stages in the decision-making process
- Provide timely public notice of meetings and opportunities to provide input
- Demonstrate consideration given to public input
- Assess study outreach efforts using CRCOG's standardized surveys
- Maintain relationships with stakeholders following study completion, continuing to educate them on CRCOG's transportation issues and regional transportation planning process

### Meeting Access

CRCOG meetings may be held in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid format.

**In-person meetings** are held at ADA accessible locations with handicapped parking. CRCOG makes every effort to ensure that meeting locations are also accessible by public transit. A list of community meeting spaces recommended by Public Outreach Survey respondents is available to CRCOG staff for their public outreach planning. Note that staff must confirm that a location is ADA accessible before scheduling a public meeting at any venue. Announcements for in-person meetings should include parking recommendations and identify public transportation options and nearby public transit stations or stops, if applicable.

**Virtual meetings** are held entirely online, consistent with provisions specified in Connecticut Public Act 22-3. Virtual meetings offer flexibility for individuals who face barriers to attending in-person. Access to online meeting details, including links, meeting IDs/passcodes, and dial-in instructions are posted on the CRCOG website, social media, flyers, press releases, and/or in targeted emails.

**Hybrid meetings** combine in-person and online participation and follow both sets of access standards discussed above.

### Technical Information

Staff should make an effort to present information in non-technical language appropriate for a general audience. See the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Plain Language web site for guidance: <https://www.opm.gov/information-management/plain-language/>.

### Visualizations

When feasible, CRCOG staff should incorporate graphics and visualization techniques to promote public understanding of plans, technical concepts, alternatives, and potential impacts. These techniques may include renderings, maps, photos, diagrams, infographics, or models. Visualization techniques may be included in presentations, displays, handouts, and/or website content.

## Universal Design

Universal Design is a concept in which products and environments are designed to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation. Following Universal Design principles, staff should endeavor to design public engagement that is useful to people with diverse abilities, is simple and easy to use, communicates necessary information effectively to the user regardless of ambient conditions or sensory abilities, may be used efficiently and comfortably with minimal fatigue, and utilizes appropriate size and space for approach.

## Public Engagement Tools

Robust public engagement should be tailored to each effort, selecting from a variety of outreach tools. The 2025 Public Outreach Survey soliciting feedback from those who live, work, and travel in the CRCOG region garnered 212 responses and offers insight into public preferences for learning about and giving feedback on CRCOG’s transportation planning studies and programs. The results of the survey are discussed in the following section and further summarized in Appendix C.

### Learning Preferences in our Region

Staff should consider learning preferences identified in CRCOG’s 2025 Public Outreach Survey when tailoring a public outreach program to each study or plan. Outreach processes related to the most popular learning preferences are as follows:

#### Public Meetings and Open Houses

Respondents show a clear preference for public meetings or open houses, with over 50% of respondents interested in online and a third interested in in-person options, contrasted against 15% who are motivated to attend a CRCOG committee meeting.

Public meetings should adhere to these standards:

- Noticed at least two weeks in advance:
  - Notice should include a statement on how to request translation and/or interpretation services in advance of a meeting
  - Posted with Town Clerks, CRCOG’s website, and CRCOG’s social media
  - Targeted emails to interested parties and/or other stakeholder list, if applicable
- Held at accessible locations and at convenient times
- Offer procedures for verbal and written comments from the public
- Have Language Line information on hand in case of unanticipated translation needs

#### Newsletters and Study-Specific E-mail Lists

CRCOG maintains a comprehensive stakeholder list representing a broad cross-section of our region’s population. This list is updated frequently, and individuals may be added upon request. The CRCOG Connection newsletter is emailed to stakeholders on this master list.

For each study, staff should also develop an interested parties list of those who may be impacted by or have a specific interest in a particular study. The interested parties list can be used to provide more detailed study communications by email—including meeting notices, updates, and documents—and to share opportunities for public feedback on that effort.

Learning Tools
<b>Most Preferred (55%)</b>
Online public meetings/open houses
A newsletter
<b>Moderately Preferred (29%-41%)</b>
Reading a summary of a draft plan
Social media posts
A study-specific e-mail list
In-person public meetings/open houses
Reading a draft plan
<b>Niche Preferences (&lt;25%)</b>
Information tables at community events
Focus groups
Outreach to neighborhoods, clubs, etc.
CRCOG committee meetings
Door-to-door outreach

## Draft Plans

Survey respondents suggested value in draft plans being released for review in both full and summary forms. CRCOG staff will make draft documents available on CRCOG’s website, by request via mail, and by request in-person at the CRCOG office. Staff should consider preparing summaries of draft plans when feasible.

## Social Media Campaigns

Social media enables CRCOG to announce public information meetings, workshops, and public comment periods, while also providing opportunities for input through surveys and interactive content. Staff should coordinate with CRCOG’s Senior Communications Manager to develop a social media campaign on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter/X, and/or Youtube as appropriate for a study or plan.

## Tabling at Community Events

Staff outreach at community events can broaden outreach, leverage established networks, and minimize scheduling conflicts for participants. This approach can foster trust, increase engagement, and allow discussions to occur in familiar settings. Pop-up events may contain CRCOG-related materials such as brochures, draft plans, and informational flyers, as well as interactive activities such as surveys, live maps, and engagement boards. CRCOG staff should have the agency’s Language Line information with them in case translation services are needed.

A list of events recommended by CRCOG’s Public Outreach Survey respondents is available to CRCOG staff for their public outreach planning.

## Outreach through Existing Organizations

Staff may consider broadening study awareness via the distribution of information through municipalities, neighborhood organizations, public libraries, community groups, other agencies, and/or public access programs, leveraging the reach of these networks for increased engagement.

## Feedback Preferences in our Region

Staff should provide multiple ways for the public to express opinions and share ideas on each study and plan. When tailoring a public outreach program, staff should consider feedback preferences as identified in CRCOG’s 2025 Public Outreach Survey.

Unsurprisingly, the top preferred feedback methods of respondents are taking an online survey, followed by sending in written comments by e-mail. While these online survey respondents are more likely to be technologically savvy, tools that enable and invite offline feedback are crucial to reach a broader constituency. More traditional means, such as public meetings, should also be offered.

## Public Comment Periods

Public comment periods are a key opportunity to provide input on transportation studies, plans, and programs. CRCOG allows reasonable time for public review and comment at key decision points in the transportation planning process. Specific contact information should be made available for individual plans and studies. Staff should accept feedback verbally or in writing by communicating online, via mail, fax, or over the phone. Minimum public comment period lengths are 30 days for Study Final Reports, the TIP, and the MTP. The Public Participation Plan requires a 45-day comment period.

When CRCOG initiates a public comment period for a core document, notice of the opportunity to comment must be placed in a legal ad in the area’s major daily newspaper and should also be placed in

<b>Feedback Methods</b> <i>Listed in order of preference</i>
<b>Fill out an Online Survey</b>
<b>E-mail written comments</b>
<b>Offer thoughts in a public meeting, open house, workshop, or round table</b>
<b>Participate in a focus group</b>
<b>Offer thoughts during the public comment period at a CRCOG’s committee meetings</b>
<b>Comment on social media posts</b>
<b>Fill out a mailed survey</b>
<b>Mail in written comments</b>
<b>Offer comments by telephone</b>

other local or alternative language newspapers as appropriate. For core plans and study final reports, notices should be submitted to the Town Clerk’s offices in the study/plan area, as news items on CRCOG’s website, in updates shared on CRCOG’s social media, in the CRCOG Connection newsletter, and as targeted email campaigns to relevant distribution list(s). Upon request, printed copies of meeting notices and other materials can be made available.

### **Integrating Public Feedback**

Public input and ideas should inform staff’s work throughout the study or plan lifecycle. Staff shall provide a summary of responses to significant public comments received. This summary can be produced as a separate report or included as a section in the final plan or document.

### **Assessing Outreach Efforts**

Staff should assess public engagement at the end of each plan or study in order to measure the success of CRCOG’s cumulative outreach over time as well as specific outreach techniques or initiatives. Staff should solicit feedback on each plan or study’s public outreach process from their interested parties mailing list and/or other stakeholders using the CRCOG Public Outreach Survey.

Feedback from CRCOG staff can also provide valuable input on techniques that worked well and areas for improvement. At the conclusion of an effort, the Project Manager for a plan or study, as well as support staff as deemed appropriate by the Project Manager, should fill out CRCOG’s Staff Self-Assessment Plan/Study Public Outreach Survey.

### **Additional Resources**

Staff can familiarize themselves with national best practices to better understand emerging and proven practices for MPO public participation, including [U.S. Department of Transportation’s “Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making”](#) and [U.S. Office of Personnel Management’s “Plain Language” guidance](#).

### **Core Plan, Study, and Meeting Timelines Summary**

	Frequency	Doc. Timespan	Min. Notice	Legal Ad	Min. Public Comment Period
Public Participation Plan	Updated every 4-5 years	4-5 years	45 days	Yes	45 days
Metropolitan Transportation Plan	Updated every 4 years	20+ years	30 days	Yes	30 days
Transportation Improvement Program	Updated every 4 years	4 years	30 days	Yes	30 days
Unified Planning Work Program	Updated every 2 years	2 years	N/A	No	N/A
Study Final Report	Variable	Variable	30 days	No	30 days
Policy Board	Monthly	N/A	24 hours*	No	Agenda Item
Transportation Committee	Monthly	N/A	24 hours*	No	Agenda Item
Public Meeting	Variable	N/A	14 days	No	Duration of Meeting

\*Note: CRCOG makes every effort to post meeting notices 5 business days in advance

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# Reassessment and Revision of this Plan

## Metrics and timeline for future updates.

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### Staff Guidance

## What is the plan for future updates to this document?

### Defining Success

When asked “What are the top three outcomes that would make you feel heard during a transportation planning project?” 66% of respondents to CRCOG’s 2025 Public Outreach Survey identified having their feedback used in the transportation planning process as their top priority, followed by 48% who said they would measure this by the degree to which their understanding of the transportation program or study improved after CRCOG’s outreach. Additionally, 44% said they would feel heard if their feedback was directly addressed by CRCOG, and 35% prioritized direct interaction with CRCOG staff. Fewer than 20% of respondents identified the number of people who attended a meeting or interacting with other members of the public as important.

While website usage, social media trends, and attendance levels at outreach events offer some indication of the success of CRCOG’s outreach efforts, regular and consistent data solicited from participants at the conclusion of each transportation plan or study can provide a more detailed indication of the changing public engagement needs and priorities. This data can also demonstrate the barriers to and successes in a healthy partnership between the public and CRCOG.

### Ongoing Data Gathering

CRCOG staff will be provided with two surveys to use to assess each study or plan: one for the interested parties mailing list and/or other stakeholders, and one self-assessment for staff who engaged in the effort. Questions for participants will include assessment of their understanding of the effort over time as well as their understanding of how or if public feedback was used.

Trends, barriers, and successes identified through these surveys will inform future Public Participation Plan updates.

### Major Update Schedule

CRCOG will conduct a review of the effectiveness of its public participation program at least every five years to ensure that its transportation planning process provides full and open access to everyone, to continue to update its outreach approaches and tools with current best practices, and to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.

### Metrics

Participant and staff public outreach assessment survey results can be aggregated into a history of such surveys across efforts in order to assist in gauging what is working well for CRCOG’s communities and where the agency can improve. Website usage, social media trends, attendance levels at public meetings, and number of outreach events can also be tracked over time, providing valuable feedback on the overall trends in CRCOG’s outreach and areas for improvement.

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# Appendix A: Opportunities for Input on this Plan Update

An accounting of the 2025 update of the Public Participation Plan.

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## Public Guidance

### Timeline for Public Input on the Draft 2025 Public Participation Plan

**February 14, 2025 PUBLIC OUTREACH SURVEY PUBLISHED**

**March 30, 2025 PUBLIC OUTREACH SURVEY CLOSED**

**April 23, 2025 DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN PUBLISHED:** This included an electronic posting on CRCOG’s website. Hardcopies were available upon request.

**April 24, 2025 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OPENED,** Comments on the Draft Public Participation Plan were accepted via e-mail, mail, phone, fax, and at CRCOG Transportation Committee and Policy Board meetings.

**LEGAL NOTICES:** Identidad Latina (English and Spanish), Hartford Courant (English), Hartford News (English and Spanish)

**PRESS RELEASE PUBLISHED:** This included a notice on CRCOG’s website, distributed to Town Clerks, and e-mailed to CRCOG’s contact lists.

**April 25, 2025 LEGAL NOTICE:** New Britain White Eagle (English and Polish)

**May 19, 2025 TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING,** public comment opportunity  
12:00pm; virtual meeting

**May 21, 2025 PUBLIC MEETINGS,** presentation and public comment opportunity  
12pm-1pm; virtual meeting / 6pm-7pm; virtual meeting

**MAY 28, 2025 POLICY BOARD MEETING,** public comment opportunity  
12:00pm; virtual meeting

**June 8, 2025 DEADLINE FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS TO RECEIVE FULL CONSIDERATION**

**June 23, 2025 TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING,** public comment opportunity  
**Endorsement**  
12:00pm; hybrid meeting

**June 25, 2025 POLICY BOARD MEETING,** public comment opportunity  
**Adoption**  
12:00pm; virtual meeting

## **Public Comments and CRCOG's Responses**

Federal regulations require at least a 45-day period for public comment prior to the adoption or amendment of a Public Participation Plan. For this update of the CRCOG Public Participation Plan, the time period from the first legal notice of opportunities to comment (April 24, 2025) until adoption by the Policy Board (June 25, 2025) was 63 days. CRCOG staff did not receive any comments on the DRAFT Public Participation Plan during the comment period. Had comments been received, they would have been listed here with CRCOG's responses.

## **Endorsement and Adoption**

The CRCOG Transportation Committee endorsed the DRAFT Public Participation Plan on June 23, 2025. The CRCOG Policy Board adopted this updated Public Participation Plan on June 25, 2025.

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## Appendix B: Acronyms and Abbreviations

A list of acronyms and abbreviations used within the Public Participation Plan.

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### Public Guidance

3C Planning Process	Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive Planning Process
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
COG	Council of Governments
CRCOG	Capitol Region Council of Governments
CTDOT	Connecticut Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
IIJA	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program

# Appendix C: Public Outreach Survey Results Summary

A summary of survey responses looking at public participation in the CRCOG region.



## Staff Guidance

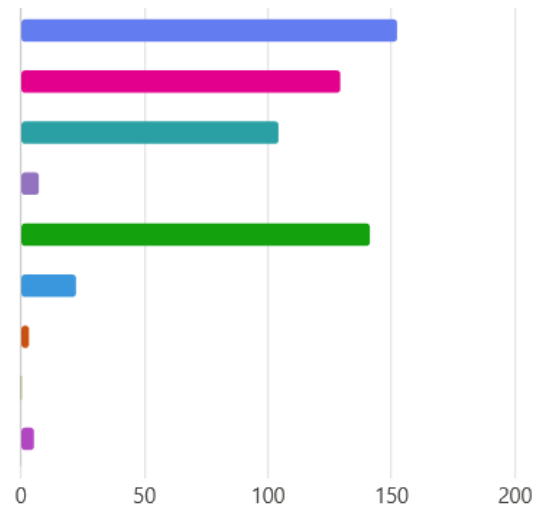
CRCOG conducted an anonymous online survey targeting members of the public who live, work, and travel in the CRCOG region. The survey ran between February 14, 2025 and March 30, 2025 with the goal of identifying collaboration preferences and barriers so that CRCOG staff can use this feedback in our transportation planning process and measure our outreach success.



Here is a summary of the 212 survey responses.

### What is your relationship with CRCOG? (Select all that apply.)

● I live in the CRCOG region.	152
● I work in the CRCOG region.	129
● I own property in the CRCOG region.	104
● I am an elected official in the CRCOG region.	7
● I regularly travel in or through the CRCOG region.	141
● I occasionally travel in or through the CRCOG region.	22
● I do not engage with CRCOG or the CRCOG region in any way.	3
● I prefer not to say.	0
● Other	5



### Demographics:

#### What is the 5-digit zip code where you live?

- 73% CRCOG Region
- 23% CT Outside of the CRCOG Region
- 4% Out-of-State

#### What is the 5-digit zip code where you work? If you are currently unemployed, please enter 00000.

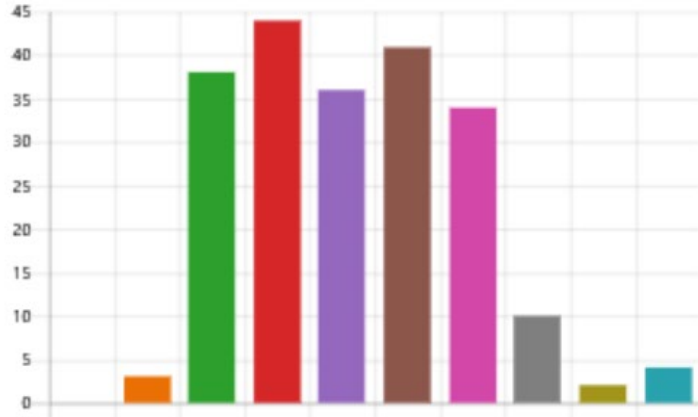
- 64% CRCOG Region
- 17% CT Outside of the CRCOG Region
- 9% Out-of-State
- 14% Retired or Unemployed

### What is your gender?

- 52% Male
- 45% Female
- 3% Other comment

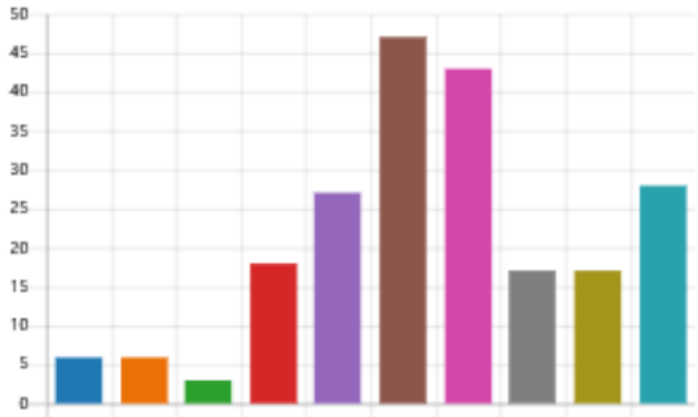
### What is your age?

● Under 18	0
● 18-24	3
● 25-34	38
● 35-44	44
● 45-54	36
● 55-64	41
● 65-74	34
● 75-84	10
● 85+	2
● I prefer not to say.	4



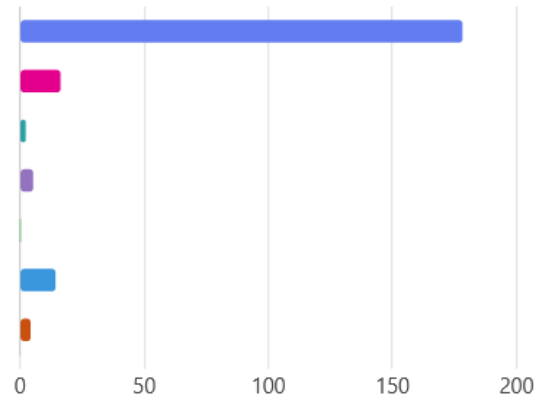
### What is your total household income (before taxes) in the previous year?

● Less than \$25,000	6
● \$25,000 to less than \$35,000	6
● \$35,000 to less than \$50,000	3
● \$50,000 to less than \$75,000	18
● \$75,000 to less than \$100,000	27
● \$100,000 to less than \$150,000	47
● \$150,000 to less than \$200,000	43
● \$200,000 to less than \$250,000	17
● \$250,000 and above	17
● I prefer not to say.	28



## How do you identify?

● White or Caucasian	178
● Black or African American	16
● American Indian or Alaskan Native	2
● Asian or Asian American	5
● Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
● I prefer not to say.	14
● Other	4



## Are you of Hispanic or Latino/Latina/Latinx origin? (Choose one.)

● Yes.	14
● No.	193
● I prefer not to say.	4



## Language:

### How well do you read English?

All 212 respondents reported reading English “very well.”

### How well do you understand spoken English?

211 respondents reported understanding spoken English “very well,” and one respondent reported understanding spoken English “not very well.”

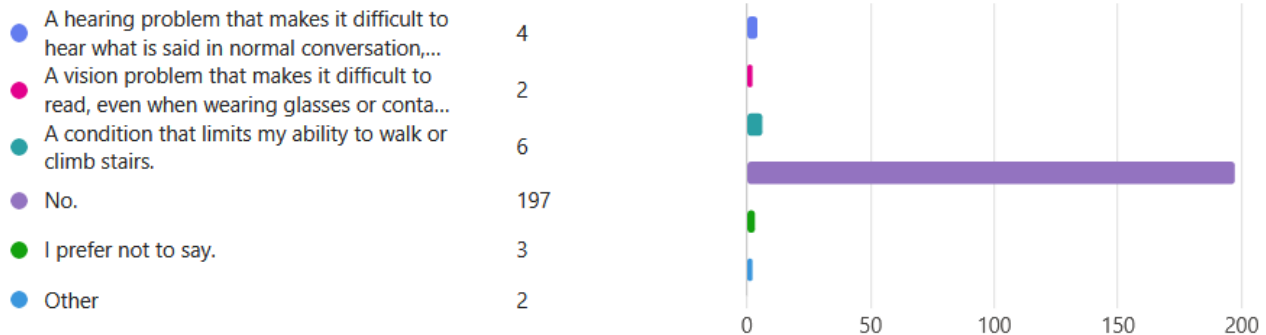
## What languages are spoken in your home? (Check all that apply.)

● English	210
● Spanish	11
● Polish	3
● I prefer not to say	1
● Other	7



## Participation Barriers and Preferences:

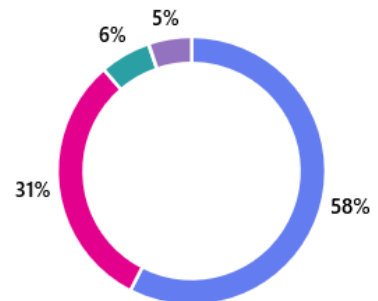
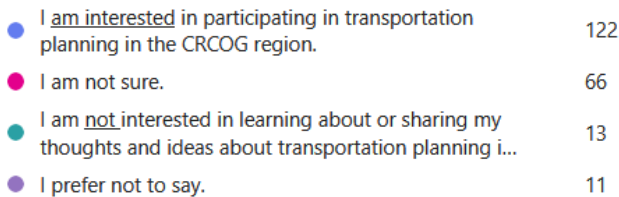
Do you have any of the following conditions that affect how you participate in public meetings, workshops, and round tables? (Check all that apply.)



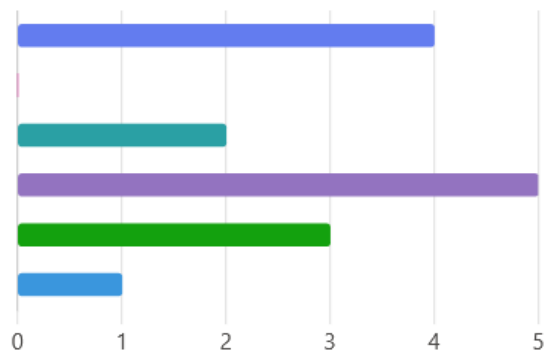
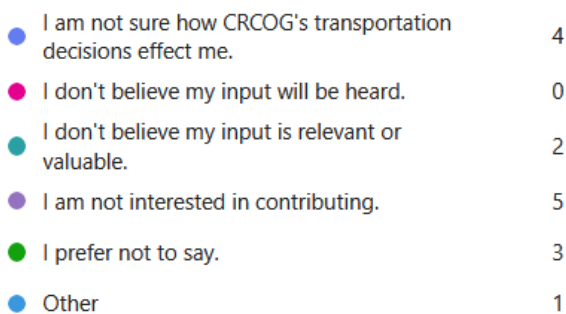
## Public Outreach Meeting Spaces and Events Recommendations

33 and 25 respondents, respectively, answered prompts to recommend events and community meeting locations in the region for CRCOG’s public outreach, yielding 17 unique event recommendations and 18 unique community meeting space recommendations. These lists are available to CRCOG staff for their public outreach planning.

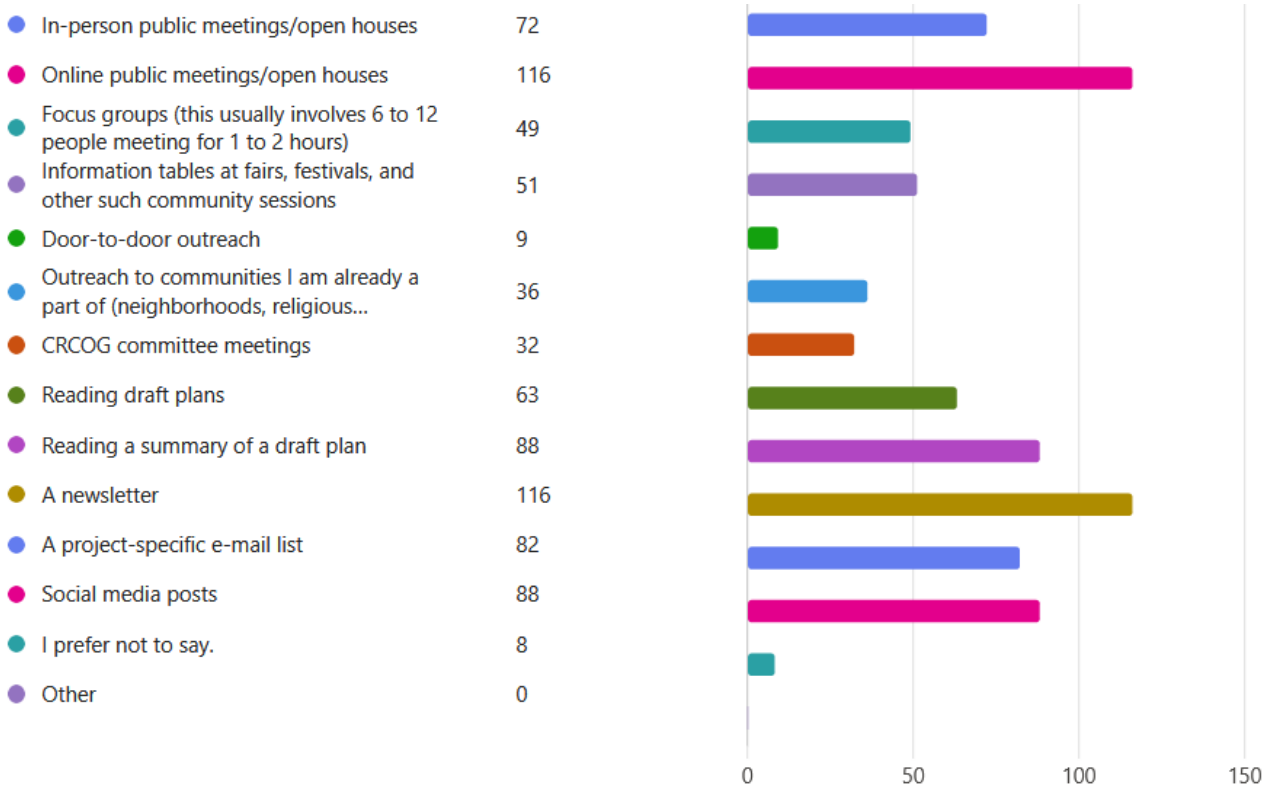
What is your level of interest in participating in CRCOG’s transportation planning process?



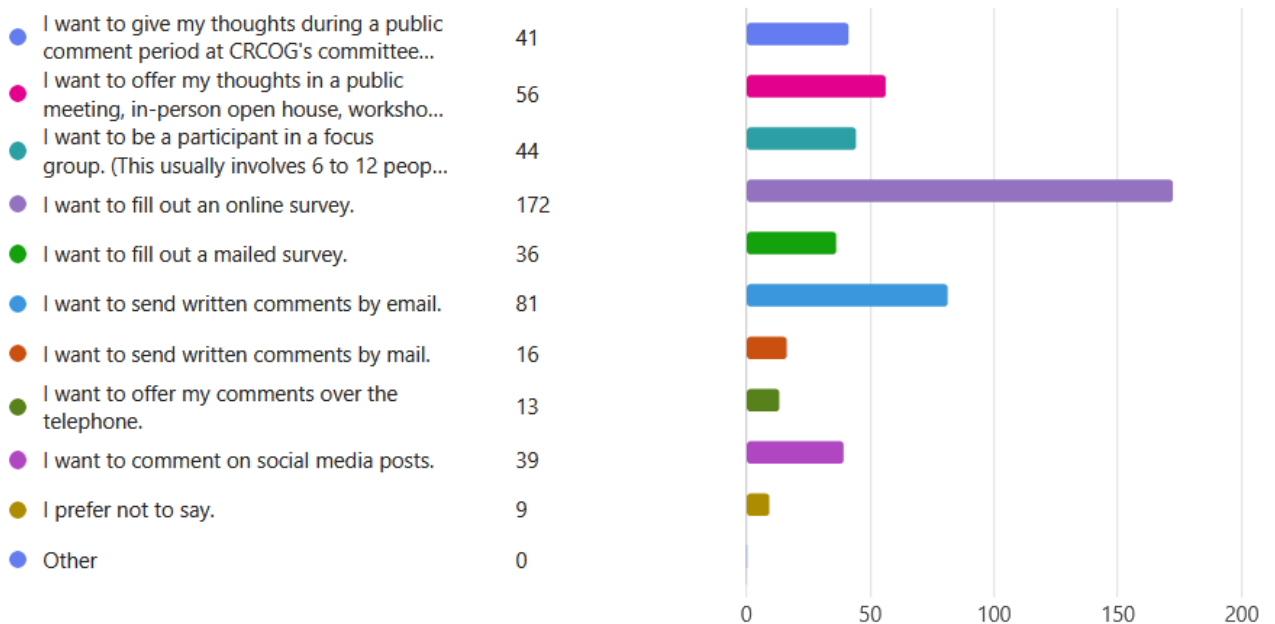
If you are not interested, tell us a little about why. (Check all that apply.)



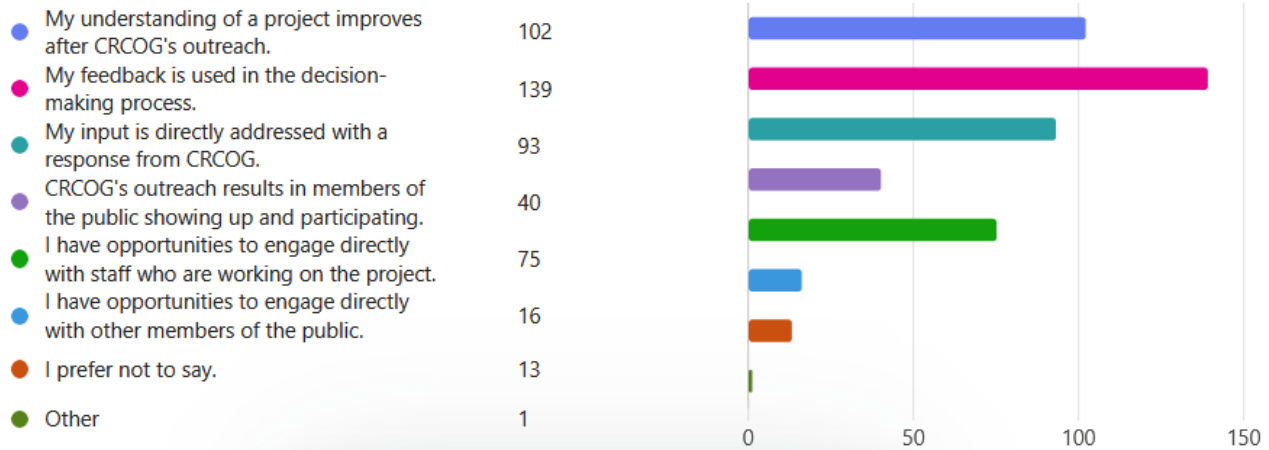
**If interested or unsure about participating in CRCOG’s transportation planning process, or if you prefer not to say, how do you prefer to learn about CRCOG’s transportation planning projects and programs? (Check all that apply.)**



**What method(s) do you prefer to use to give feedback on transportation projects? (Check all that apply.)**

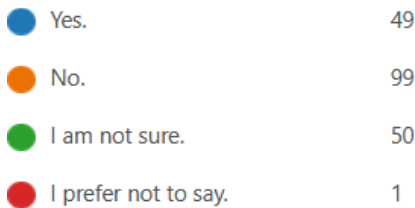


## What are the top three outcomes that would make you feel heard during a transportation planning project?

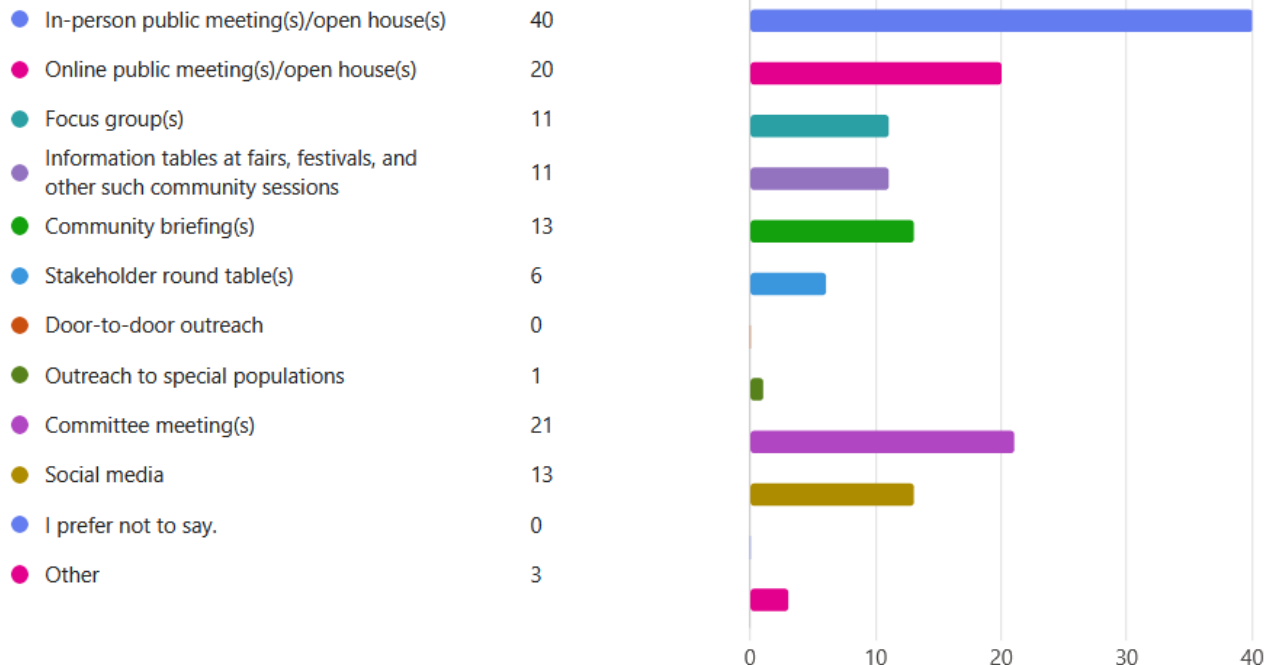


## Previous Experience with CRCOG Outreach

### Have you engaged in any of CRCOG's public outreach activities?



### What public involvement activities have you participated in with CRCOG? (Check all that apply).



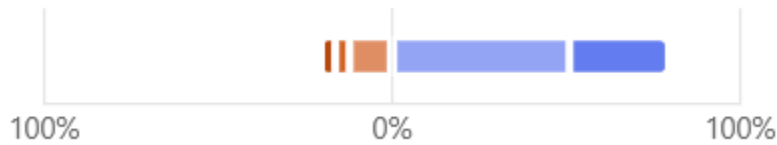
## How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

● Strongly disagree  
 ● Disagree  
 ● Neither agree nor disagree  
 ● Agree  
 ● Strongly agree  
 ● I don't know  
 ● I prefer not to say



**Overall, I have been satisfied with CRCOG’s public involvement process.**

● Strongly disagree ● Disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Agree ● Strongly agree ● I prefer not to say



**Participants in previous CRCOG public outreach activities were also asked an open-ended question regarding the first, second, and third most important thing CRCOG could have done to improve the public participation process.**

This inquiry yielded 59 suggestion related to education on CRCOG’s work, communication style, the collection and integration of public feedback, meeting execution, networking, promotion of activities and meetings, and other comments. Suggestions of note include:

- “[B]etter inform the public of CRCOG’s role in transportation planning or clarify this role.”
- “Whenever possible, use ‘plain language’ explanations in lieu of technical jargon that’s unfamiliar to the general public.”
- Send “shorter e-mails about the project I was interested in, but more frequently.”
- “Offer quick to read summaries, along with full access to all data.”
- “Provide public proxy voting on options and alternatives available to the project”... “it provides evidence of the public’s preference.”
- “Have individual community meetings in more municipalities.”
- “Provide food and drink and fun activities.”