

# PUBLIC MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

## Description

Public meetings and hearings are one of the most common strategies for communicating with the public throughout the life of a transportation project. They are primarily used to disseminate information about project purpose, design, scheduling, benefits, and other relevant material. They are also used as a means to gather questions and comments from interested individuals. As with any other outreach strategy, the effectiveness of public meetings and hearings depends on the information that is conveyed and the effectiveness of that information in obtaining meaningful input from the

participants. Efforts should be made to make the experience as interactive as possible using a variety of mechanisms.

## Target Market

All types of programs and projects can be helped by holding public meetings and hearings. Individuals that are directly affected by a proposed project and who prefer to attend a live meeting with opportunities to interact with transportation planning professionals can provide useful information to aid project design and construction. A series of public meetings and hearings should be held in multiple locations of the study area during the initial phase of planning and again after alternative scenarios are developed to gain public input and support. Large and/or complex projects may require several opportunities for public meetings.

## How Will This Help?

Travelers are provided with current, accurate, and relevant information, as well as the opportunity to discuss information with those directly involved with the project.



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<b>Cost:</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>Short</b>
<b>Impact:</b>	<b>Local/Region</b>
<b>Who:</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>
<b>Hurdles:</b>	<b>Timing &amp; Location</b>

## Success Stories

- The Houston Galveston Area Council regularly hosts public meetings that clearly articulate the meeting's purpose and provide materials and/or videos to enhance the information. [http://www.h-gac.com/taq/regional%20goods%20movement/public\\_meetings/default.aspx](http://www.h-gac.com/taq/regional%20goods%20movement/public_meetings/default.aspx)
- The North Central Council of Governments holds periodic meetings to educate, inform, and seek input from the public on variety of transportation and air quality issues. <http://www.nctcog.org/trans/outreach/meetings/>

## Implementation Issues

Public meetings and hearings must be convenient and engaging. The information must be of value to the attendees, and they should have the opportunity to provide input in a variety of ways—by talking to a project team member, speaking in public, or leaving a comment card.