



## 2025 Public Engagement Plan

People-Centered Planning, Projects and Services

# What is the public engagement plan?

# A document for the public, informing people of:



DRCOG's public engagement philosophy.



The best ways to get involved.



DRCOG's policy process.



# A reference document for staff, outlining:



DRCOG policy.



Legal requirements.



Strategies and tips for success.



# Why is DRCOG updating the plan?



Adopted in 2019 and amended in 2021.



DRCOG has new plans and programs.



Update is in the Unified Planning Work Program.



Strive to make DRCOG's engagement better!



# How did we perform this update?

- **Assessed best practices** from peer organizations.
- **Drafted updates** over the past year.
- Comprehensively **reviewed by internal stakeholders**.
  - Communications and Marketing – co-lead.
  - Transportation Planning and Operations – co-lead.
  - Regional Planning and Development.
  - Area Agency on Aging.
  - Executive Office.



# Plan highlights

# Steps for public engagement

## 2 Define the goal of the project.

Think about the overall goal of the project. If the project has many phases, consider the approach and goal for each phase of the process. There may be a different goal for each project phase, so each phase may involve different levels of public engagement.

Think through these prompts:

- The goal of this project is to ...
- This project will result in ...
- The project will be successful if ...

If it is difficult to complete these prompts, consider revisiting the project plan with a focus on the role of public engagement.

## 3 Determine the goal of inviting public participation.

Why or how does public engagement contribute to the project's overall goal? The purpose of public engagement will become the foundation for choosing techniques.

Think through these prompts:

- The purpose of public engagement for this project (or phase) is ...
- Public engagement will be successful if ...

Refer to [Appendix B: Public engagement planner assistance form](#) (page 58) for a list of additional brainstorming prompts.

## 4 Determine the appropriate level of public engagement.

Each project is unique and may warrant a different level of engagement.

Consider the number of people who will be affected and the role of the public. If the project is likely to affect most of the region's residents or a wide range of people from various backgrounds, "inform" and "consult" approaches (detailed in the graphic on the following page) are likely most appropriate.

If the project will affect a smaller number of people, or those in specific neighborhoods, communities or with particular demographic characteristics, "involve" or "collaborate" approaches may be more suitable.



### Tip for success

Be willing to change the goals and level of engagement as a project develops. If a strategy is not effective, don't keep it!



# Public engagement techniques and metrics

## Choose appropriate public engagement techniques

Refer to the level of public engagement you chose in Step 4 of "How to prepare for public engagement." Consider the techniques that encourage the appropriate level of public engagement for the project.

Also consider the funding guidelines that apply to the project. Be sure to follow all rules related to the funds you are using. Refer to the latest DRCOG policies, and reach out to Administration and Finance if you have questions about the rules that apply to your funding source.

If you are not sure how to use a particular technique, please work with the public engagement planner.

Public engagement strategies can move up or down on the list on the following page depending on how the activity is designed. For example, an open house that has no opportunity for the public to comment (perhaps as an informational session at the end of the project) will be a "strategy that informs." On the other hand, a focus group hosted by staff who are constantly listening and reevaluating their project with feedback could be upgraded to a "strategy that collaborates."

### DRCOG's Communications and Marketing staff can help with:

- Placing timely public notices in mass and niche media (for example, publications serving non-English speakers).
- Ensuring that media alerts and releases are distributed to appropriate news outlets.
- Posting announcements to DRCOG's website and social media channels.

## Strategies that inform

**Strategy: Hold a news briefing or submit media releases**

Metric: Number of media who attend, number of stories as a result

**Strategy: Submit op-eds to local news outlets**

Metric: Number of op-eds published compared to number submitted

**Strategy: Develop a video to share online or on TV**

Metric: Number of views

**Strategy: Post on social media**

Metric: Number of reposts, likes or views

**Strategy: Host a website or page with information about the project and past meetings**

Metric: Number of visitors, visits or downloads

**Strategy: Report on final outcomes via mail or email**

Metric: Number of people reached

**Strategy: Send text blasts**

Metric: Number of people reached

**Strategy: Create a comment matrix, sharing how DRCOG staff used public feedback**

Metric: Number of views

### Tip for success

Use some of the "inform" strategies to get the word out about public meetings.

## Strategies that consult

**Strategy: Attend standing meetings of community, partner or faith-based organizations**

Metric: Number of meetings attended, number of post-meeting inquiries from attendees

**Strategy: Conduct open houses**

Metric: Number of attendees, number of comments received

**Strategy: Conduct a survey**

Metric: Number of responses

**Strategy: Create an interactive map**

Metric: Number of responses

**Strategy: Share draft plans and collect feedback from the public**

Metric: Number of comments, number of public meetings on draft plans

**Strategy: Attend community events such as farmers markets, festivals or block parties**

Metric: Number of events attended, number of incoming contacts

### Tip for success

Go to community events that are already happening instead of trying to host separate events.

# Information by topic

## Regional planning and other initiatives

### Requirements

DRCOG's regional planners have to follow many of the same requirements transportation planners do.

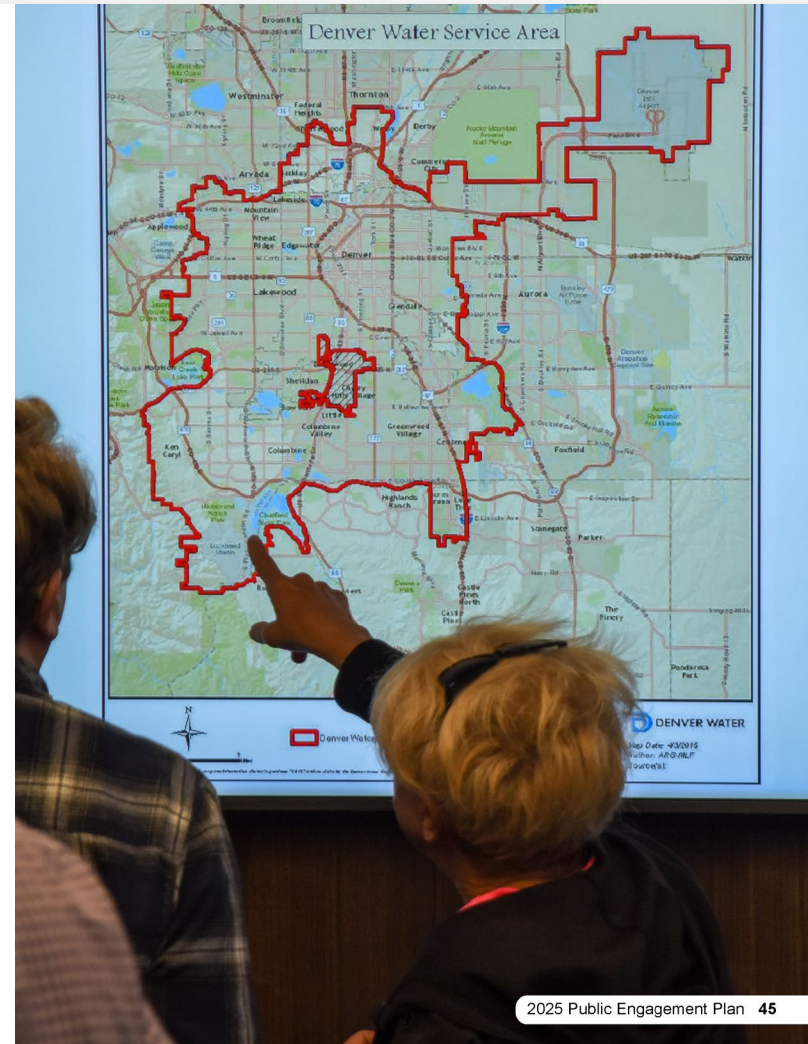
Regional planners work on Metro Vision, DRCOG's master plan. This comes with specific requirements that are often updated each cycle. DRCOG staff should research the latest requirements when updating the plan.

Metro Vision requires:

- A public hearing.
- Notice of public hearing. DRCOG to encourage public participation.
- Public comment to be considered in the planning process.
- DRCOG to try to harmonize the master plans of its member governments.

### Key regional plans and public engagement methods

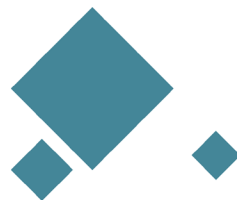
Project	Responsible organization	Typical engagement
Climate Pollution Reduction	DRCOG	Workshops and surveys
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	DRCOG	Targeted focus groups, stakeholder meetings, DRCOG committee review, public hearing, comment period, posting materials to website
Metro Vision	DRCOG	Public interest forums at key points, DRCOG committee review, public hearing and comment period, workshops, presentations, surveys, website
Other regional, corridor or small area plans	DRCOG	Focus groups, surveys, public meetings, pop-ups
Regional Housing Needs Assessment	DRCOG	Stakeholder engagement with housing professionals and municipal governments
Urban centers	DRCOG	Stakeholder roundtables



# Additional resources



## Appendix D: Additional resources



### Tools and resources for identifying and engaging underrepresented communities

Effectively engaging underrepresented communities requires a thoughtful approach and access to the right tools and resources. Use these resources to help identify groups, understand their needs and implement meaningful engagement strategies.

Additionally, the public engagement planner will continue to identify further resources and work directly with staff to help ensure many voices are heard and included in public engagement.

#### [Colorado Broadband Hub](#)

Access a state map of communities without broadband internet access. Use this source to determine where virtual engagement strategies will or will not work. (This version is less detailed than Federal Communications Commission National Broadband Map, but it loads faster.)

#### [DRCOG Equity Index](#)

Download or explore the data for more information on marginalized communities.

#### [DRCOG Maps](#)

Find various maps created by DRCOG staff. The most relevant to public engagement are the [DRCOG data tool](#) and [race and ethnicity map](#).

#### [Federal Communications Commission National Broadband Map](#)

Access a national map of communities without broadband internet access. Use this source to determine where virtual engagement strategies will/will not work. (More detailed than Colorado version, but loads slower.)

### Resources, examples, best practices

Use these items for brainstorming, additional details and further reading.

#### [Hemingway App](#)

Use this resource to test if your writing is concise as you prepare public-facing documents.

#### [IAP2 Engagement Toolbox](#)

Find more details on public engagement techniques, along with tips for success and common pitfalls.

#### [Readable](#)

Test if your writing is readable. Use this resource to test the readability of your writing as you prepare public-facing documents.

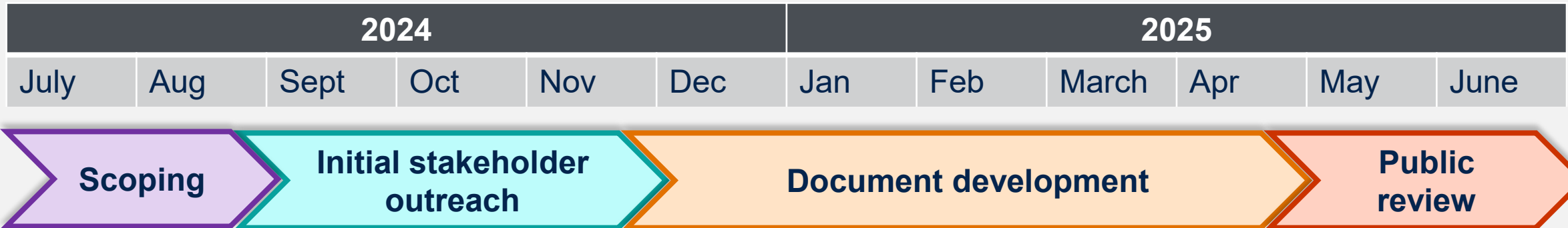
#### [Plain language](#)

Discover guides and examples from the federal government on how to write clearly.

#### [U.S. Department of Transportation's Plain Language Checklist](#)

Run your document through this checklist to make sure it's understandable to a general audience.

# What steps led us here?





# What happens next?

- Compile comments and incorporate edits: Now through mid-July.
- DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee recommends plan adoption: July 28.
- DRCOG Regional Transportation Committee recommends plan adoption: August 19.
- Board adopts plan: August 20.

# Thank you!

**Carolyn Klamm**

*Assistant Multimodal Planner*

[cklamm@drcog.org](mailto:cklamm@drcog.org)

**Angie Shelbourn**

*Public Engagement Planner*

[ashelbourn@drcog.org](mailto:ashelbourn@drcog.org)

If you need digital accessibility assistance, submit a request at [drcog.org/access](https://drcog.org/access) or call 303-455-1000. Please expect a response within 72 hours (three business days).