

Verbatim public and agency comments, with staff responses
COMPASS Integrated Communication Plan/Public Involvement Plan
Public Comment Period: April 17 – May 31, 2014

Quantitative results from public comment form (1 = "No, not at all"; 5 = "Yes, very well")

Question	Number of responses	Average Score
Does the Public Involvement Plan describe COMPASS' overall public involvement process?	4	4.5
Does the Public Involvement Plan describe how COMPASS will solicit public input during the following individual planning processes?		
Public Involvement Plan	4	4.5
Long-range transportation plan and amendments	4	4.5
Regional Transportation Improvement Program and amendments	4	4.5
Other COMPASS plans, programs, and projects	4	4.25
Does the Public Involvement Plan explain how public feedback will be used?	4	4
Does the Public Involvement Plan convey COMPASS' support of reaching out to traditionally underrepresented communities (e.g., low income and minority)?	4	4.25
Does the Public Involvement Plan convey COMPASS' commitment to an active public involvement process?	4	4.75

Commenters were asked "why or why not?" in response to their quantitative answers on the comment form, and offered the opportunity for open-ended comments. These comments, along with all other open ended comments, can be found on the following pages.

Comment	Staff Response	Zip Code and Name/affiliation (if included)	Format
Question 1. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan (Chapters 2 – 6, as summarized in Chapter 2, Table 1) describe COMPASS' overall public involvement process?			
This table is extremely helpful. It gives us an indication of what public comment/outreach activities will occur with each type of plan. The required activities make sense and seem appropriate for each type of plan.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
I think this entry describes why: [referring to "yes, very well"]: General public, Residents of Ada and Canyon Counties, Professionals in planning, transportation, and related fields, Local and national, Individuals, organizations, and companies, Media, Local print and broadcast media, Individuals and organizations, Industry-specific media and blogs, Elected officials, Cities, counties, regions, Local businesses and organizations, Local colleges and universities, Interest groups, Bike/pedestrian, Safety, Youth, Aging population, Public transportation users/ commuters	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form
It's obviously an attempt to be comprehensive, but few ordinary citizens have or will take the time to thoroughly read it all--it's simply too much in one monolithic document.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Robert Minch 83616	Online comment form
Question 2. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan describe how COMPASS will solicit public input during the following individual planning processes?			
It's obviously an attempt to be comprehensive, but few ordinary citizens have or will take the time to thoroughly read it all--it's simply too much in one monolithic document.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Robert Minch 83616	Online comment form
Question 3. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan explain how public feedback will be used?			
The process is clearly described and explains that comments will be considered and shared with decision makers.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
...I may not have read how feedback will be used in the draft plan.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form

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Question 4. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan convey COMPASS' support of reaching out to traditionally underrepresented communities (e.g., low income and minority)?			
I appreciate the effort made to reach LEP and low income populations. I think it is especially important to reach out to people in locations that are familiar and by providing comment opportunities at well attended community events both of which seem to be part of this plan.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
I don't think I read in the plan, how COMPASS is actively finding events or gatherings of "underrepresented communities" to dispense COMPASS's plan.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form
Question 5. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan convey COMPASS' commitment to an active public involvement process?			
Outreach efforts are varied and tailored to meet specific needs.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
The effort to reach me, is a sign COMPASS is committed to gain public involvement.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form
Question 6. Do you have any additional comments on the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan?			
Thank you!	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
Keep up the good work!	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form
As mentioned above, you've obviously made an attempt to be comprehensive, but few ordinary citizens have or will take the time to thoroughly read all your materials--it's simply too much in one relatively monolithic document or set of documents. Here's the most important suggestion I can make: Take your own advice and seriously explore much more innovative outreach methods. For example, let people opt in to FOCUSED communications about particular issues, particular geographic areas, and other factors that they are most interested in and most willing and able to provide feedback on.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Robert Minch 83616	Online comment form
At first glance, it seemed a little long, but after I looked at it, I everything seemed like it was needed or it wouldn't make sense, so I guess it's the right length. I like the "checklists" at the end of each chapter -- let me know what to expect from COMPASS at a glance. Some of that (like analyze demographic information) seems kind of "behind the scenes" for the public to care about.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83716	Online comment form

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Other Comments Received			
<p>Amy: I'm commenting on the subject document and, in particular, the component Public Involvement Plan (Chapters 2-6) by this email. If you would prefer, I can also complete the comment form.</p> <p>Integrated Communications Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is a wonderful document for tying together all facets of your communication process including both the federally prescribed Public Involvement Plan described in Chapters 2-6; the guidance and strategies for correspondence, media relations, and social media tools described in Chapters 7-9 and the education, marketing, and outreach activities described in Chapters 10-13. This plan not only fulfills a need identified during the 2014 Certification Review; it sets a new standard for what might be done by MPOs to address all of these related subjects in a single, comprehensive, document. 2. Chapter 8, Media Relations and Advertising, and Chapter 9, Web and Social Media are particularly noteworthy for the additional guidance they provide for making effective use of both traditional media and for tapping the tremendous potential available through the modern day electronic media. <p>Public Involvement Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chapter 2, Public Involvement Plan, Introduction and Federal Requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inclusion of the federally required 45 day comment period is good. Also, references to the various related Federal Orders and Acts on pages 7 and 8 is good. b. Table 1 is tedious and not likely to be of broad use or interest. Given that, I would tuck into the appendix unless you really want it in the main body of the document (your call). 2. Chapter 4, Long Range Plan PPP Process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. I support the strategy explained in paragraph 4 of Page 21 which, in essence, says that the comments and responses will be posted on the long range plan web page and linked from the plan document. The federal expectation with respect to reporting of comments is detailed in 23 CFR 450.316(a)(2) which reads as follows: <i>(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</i> 	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee; specific responses below.</p> <p>Table 1 was left in the body of the document (Chapter 2), based on a public comment that stated that the table was very helpful.</p> <p>Language was strengthened to clarify that a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments will be included <u>in</u> each plan document, that verbatim comments will be provided <u>in addition to</u> the summary and discussion in the document, and, when verbatim comments are linked from the document (long-range plan only), the links are readily apparent and included in a "virtual appendix."</p>	<p>Scott Frey, Transportation Engineer Federal Highway Administration, Idaho Division</p>	<p>Email</p>

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<p><i>summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.</i></p> <p>The challenge before us in this regard is ensuring that what you have described and what you intend can reasonably fulfill what the regulations describe. With that, we need to be careful that these “links” to the comments are readily apparent; not simply footnotes that largely go unnoticed or used. I would actually encourage that these comments be in an appendix to the plan with this and all other appendices being available as part of the “full document” by means of a single link. As for the highlighted phrase, above, I don’t have any criteria or general guidance to offer concerning how (of if) one might classify comments in terms of being “significant” or not. Suffice to say that not all comments need to be reported or responded to.</p> <p>Chapter 5, Public Participation Plan for the TIP, TIP Amendments, and Conformity:</p> <p>b. A thought to consider: Should we also include a paragraph or two on page 31 explaining what Administrative Modifications are (minor changes in cost, scope, and funding) and the corresponding minor public involvement (notification to the changes by the Director to the COMPASS Board at the next Board Meeting)? I think it would be helpful to make some brief mention of this in the document versus having to explain that, “these changes are so small that the document doesn’t apply to them”.</p> <p>c. Comments in the TIP (Page 30, second sentence): The wording here indicates that the final TIP will include a description of the public involvement process in the main document and that all verbatim comments, with responses, will be in an appendix. My expectations with respect to this are the same as previously described above for the Long Range Plan PPP Process (See Comment 2.a.)</p> <p>That’s all I have. Again, nice work on this Amy. Give a call if you would like to discuss this further and, also, let me know if you would like me to submit my comments through the official commenting form.</p> <p><i>(COMPASS staff followed up for clarification. The email below is in response to that follow-up discussion.)</i></p> <p>Thanks for your follow up explanation, Amy. I viewed the link you provided (CIM 2040) and am satisfied that we are meeting the range of interpretations of the regulations including not only yours and mine but also that of others in the Federal chain of command.</p>	<p>Language added.</p> <p>Language was strengthened to clarify that a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments will be included <u>in</u> each plan document, and that verbatim comments will be provided in an appendix in the TIP document in addition to the summary and discussion in the body of the document.</p>		

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<p>One tweak that would help reinforce our position that the public comments are a part of the LRTP [long-range transportation plan] and TIP would be to have the links to these comments serve as actual appendices. For example, have a page in both the Plan and TIP with a heading such as, "Appendix B, Complete Public Comments" followed by a link which takes you to these comments. A "virtual appendix" I'll call this....</p> <p>If you need further explanation on what I am describing or why the need for it, feel free to give me a call. Scott</p>	<p>Reference to a "virtual appendix" added; see above.</p>		
<p>Hi Amy –</p> <p>I thought I would take a moment to send some feedback on the COMPASS PIP. These are fairly high-level comments, but hopefully worthwhile.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In general, you have a very thorough public outreach approach, and I applaud you for tracking all of these various requirements and implementing them well. 2. When "Best Practices" are referenced, explain the source of the best practice recommendations (perhaps you did this, but I did not find the reference). One organization I like very much is IAP2 – the International Association for Public Participation. They have great information about new and old techniques and how to make them effective. Also, they have very extensive information and techniques for public involvement planning and best practices. 3. I was happy to see "use visualization techniques" in the list, but I believe these are referring to specific Community-Viz-type scenario planning tools. I am not sure if this is the case, but I would suggest including more visual communications in your public documentation, generally. For example, the graphic on page 5 is simple, but does a good job of explaining how the sections of the plan fit together. The rest of the document is fairly dense. Perhaps this is fine for this particular document, but, in general, it is good communication practice to use a mix of written, static and dynamic visual and auditory messages. Since I am not very familiar with all of COMPASS's outreach efforts, you might be doing this already. Either way, I think the COMPASS Board should consider adding a line or two about communication techniques into the "public involvement elements" chart that starts on page 9, and make this an explicit activity/goal for public involvement. To be clear, what I am talking about here is incorporating infographics and other information visualizations (maps, charts, diagrams, etc.) as part of all public documentation. 	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee; specific responses below.</p> <p>While many of the requirements and best practices listed are based on federal requirements and industry best practices, their inclusion as requirements/best practices in this document is to establish COMPASS policy of what COMPASS requires and recommends for its public involvement processes.</p> <p>Language was added to clarify that "visualization techniques" includes all means of visually displaying information, from simple graphics and maps to complex technical tools. Additional photos were added to provide visual examples of public input techniques.</p>	<p>Ellen Campfield Nelson, AICP Managing Associate Agnew::Beck</p>	<p>Email</p>

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<p>4. I would suggest thinking about how to best incorporate metrics for measuring the success of public outreach. As I'm sure you well know, fulfilling the requirements of public involvement activities is not always enough to actually achieve the level of public involvement desired. It is always challenging to figure out how to motivate people to be involved. One example of how to achieve this is to really distill down clearly for the public how the plan/project will directly impact them or be relevant to their lives. Another technique would be to always allow comment on entire documents, as I believe you do now, but then also to focus response on the specific areas where the public has expert content knowledge, and really try to elicit information on those narrow topics where their opinions matter the most. These are just some examples that can help you meet measured outreach goals (like "10% survey response rate," or "50% of affected organizations comment," etc.). The purpose, of course, in creating metrics is to help calibrate and adjust techniques during the process, as needed, and over time, and even perhaps to provide feedback to regulators who are requiring that you spend time on activities that do not seem to be effective. An additional benefit is that those involved may start to better understand how COMPASS's work is relevant to their lives, and find providing input easy and meaningful.</p> <p>I know you spend a lot of time and energy thinking about how to best involve the public, so I hope these comments are not taken as undue criticism of COMPASS, but are offered from a member of the public who cares about COMPASS's mission, efforts and effectiveness.</p> <p>Thanks, and good luck.</p> <p>~Ellen</p>	<p>COMPASS is continually seeking ways to better measure success of public outreach. We do agree that measuring "outputs" does not measure success. Within this plan, COMPASS commits to tracking "outcomes" (e.g., number of comments received, geographic distribution of participants, etc.) for our public participation processes and hope to develop more robust measurements in the update to this plan in 2018. COMPASS will be conducting a random household survey later in 2015 to collect baseline data on the public's awareness of and involvement with COMPASS to inform future updates to the Public Involvement Plan.</p>		

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<p>Amy,</p> <p>I've read through the plan again and I really don't have any major comment. I think the plan looks great. You've done a great job.</p> <p>I have one small comment about the footnote on page 27 about regionally significant and the corresponding text above that. In the footnote you say, "a regionally significant project is a transportation project that serves regional transportation needs, such as an improvement to an arterial...."</p> <p>I think it might be helpful to say in this footnote that regionally significant projects that are either federally funded or funded by a non-federal source. Or some other language. It's a little unclear as you read through the remainder of the footnote that non-federal projects of regional significance are included because of the air quality regs. I know you say that above in the text, but repeating that in the footnote would be helpful.</p> <p>I hope this isn't too confusing. Let me know if I need to clarify.</p> <p>Thanks, Lori</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee; specific response below.</p> <p>Language added to footnote 15.</p>	<p>Lori Porreca, PhD, AICP Federal Highway Administration, Idaho Division</p>	<p>Email</p>
<p>Public comments and public comment periods don't matter. The decisions have already been made anyway.</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee</p>	<p>"Nampa Girl"</p>	<p>Phone (Transcribed message)</p>
<p>ITD has reviewed the subject line document [Public Involvement Plan] and does not have any changes/comments to offer. Good job.</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee</p>	<p>Mark Wasdahl, Senior Planner Idaho Transportation Department</p>	<p>Email</p>
<p>Honestly, when I get a request for input from COMPASS it usually looks like info that is over my head and more (research) than my senior citizen-afflicted brain can absorb so I just blow it off. Just seems like some things need to be made simpler for the average citizen to respond to. Maybe I'm alone in this but I doubt it.--- Thanks</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee</p>	<p>Anonymous</p>	<p>Facebook</p>
<p>Please find FTA Region 10's comments attached in the PDF. Overall, the plan was very comprehensive and well put together. If you have any questions, please let Ned or I know. Thank you, Jeremy Borrego</p> <p>[Comments from referenced PDF are below]</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee; specific responses below.</p>	<p>Jeremy Borrego Transportation Program Specialist Federal Transit Administration Region 10 Seattle, WA</p>	<p>Email</p>

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<p><i>Page 6. RE: "During this public review period, comments were explicitly requested from the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Idaho Transportation Department, Valley Regional Transit (regional transit authority), local Tribal representatives, and members of traditionally underrepresented communities."</i></p> <p>Comment: Who are your local Tribal representatives and traditionally underrepresented communities? How did you engage them in this process?</p>	<p>Local Tribal representatives include the Native American Coalition of Boise, Intertribal Native Council (Boise State University), and the Red River PowWow.</p> <p>Within the COMPASS planning area, Latinos encompass 24% of the population in Canyon County and 7% in Ada County. In addition, the Boise area is a refugee resettlement community, home to a population of refugees of multiple ethnicities. In Canyon County, 16% of families have incomes below poverty level; 9% of Ada County families fall into this category.</p> <p>Representatives, advocates, and individuals were individually contacted via email and asked to review and comment on the plan and forward the plan to their constituents for review and comment. In addition, COMPASS promoted the opportunity for comment in <i>El Regional</i>, a local Spanish language newspaper.</p> <p>A more complete description of the public involvement process is described in the plan appendix.</p>		
<p><i>Page 7. RE: Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments</i></p> <p>Comment: There should be documented MPO processes on consulting with Indian Tribal governments and Federal land management agencies (to the extent practicable).</p>	<p>Table 1 of the Public Involvement Plan identifies when COMPASS will consult and coordinate with Tribes and "other" agencies (including land management agencies) and consult on environmental issues. The process for this shall be determined and documented within project-specific public participation outlines and stakeholder outreach matrices, based on the specific needs and issues of the individual programs, projects, and plans.</p>		

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<p><i>Table 1, Page 10. RE: Hold public meetings.</i> Comment: Are public presentations given at your public meetings? Are you thinking an open house or charrette vs. a traditional public meeting?</p> <p><i>Table 1, Page 10. RE: Give public presentations, "optional" for long-range transportation plan and amendments.</i> Comment: This is generally a BP (Best Practice)</p> <p><i>Table 1. Page 11. RE: Optional vs. Determine on a case by case basis.</i> Comment: What is the difference between "optional" and "determine on a case by case basis"?</p> <p><i>Page 15. RE: Invite and use feedback...traditionally underrepresented populations.</i> Comment: Please define this earlier in the document so that a reader knows who the traditionally underrepresented populations are in the COMPASS MPA. What about EJ populations?</p> <p><i>Page 16. RE: How COMPASS will compare demographic data from public comments to full demographic data to help determine if we are reaching the entire population.</i> Comment: Because this is a public review of your public involvement process, it might be helpful to include a sentence about any privacy policy you have covering people who comment.</p>	<p>"Public meetings" includes all types of meetings and may include open houses, presentations, workshops, or charrettes. The format of each meetings is designed based upon the topic, audience, and type of input being sought.</p> <p>Changed to "best practice."</p> <p>"Determine on a case by case basis" is noted for "other programs and projects" where the appropriate type of outreach is dictated by the nature of the issue. For example, placing legal notices is noted as "determine on a case by case basis" for "other programs and projects." Depending on the type of project, a legal notice may be required and for others it may not be. "Optional" indicates use of the outreach method is at the discretion of staff, based on circumstances.</p> <p>Additional information added in text box on Page 6.</p> <p>Information added to "Outcomes" sections of Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 to note that comments may be submitted anonymously and that names of commenters are not included unless comment is signed or commenter indicates he wants his name included.</p>		

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<p><i>Page 20. RE: Traditionally underrepresented populations.</i></p> <p>Comment: Please define here or earlier in document. What about EJ populations?</p>	<p>Additional information added in text box on Page 6.</p>		
<p>Hi Amy, I've looked through your PIP, and everything looks good to me! I'll follow up with FHWA to see if they have any comments for you. Russ Rivera</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee</p>	<p>Russ Rivera, MPA Compliance Officer Idaho Transportation Department – Office of Civil Rights</p>	<p>Email</p>

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