

CONNECTING NEVADA PHASE II

Planning Our Transportation Future



Technical Memorandum #3

Public Involvement Plan

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I. Project Introduction

A. Connecting Nevada Purpose

The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) launched the Connecting Nevada Plan to provide a comprehensive, statewide multi-modal planning effort with the goal of improving communication and coordination among partner agencies, geographic areas, and planning efforts. The intent of the Connecting Nevada Plan is to develop a framework that coordinates and integrates the results of various state, regional, and local planning efforts into a unified, cohesive vision. The Connecting Nevada Plan will guide decisions and investments in the future, establish policies and guidance for identification and preservation of transportation corridors and recognize and encourage multi-modal opportunities.

B. Connecting Nevada Phase I

The Connecting Nevada Plan is mid-way through a two-part, multi-agency development process. The first phase of the Connecting Nevada Plan was completed in September of 2009 and included the contributions of 22 participating agencies and numerous stakeholders who represented a cross-section of the community; including local, regional, state, and federal government agencies; utilities; trade associations; private businesses; developers, and other interested groups. A series of working group meetings were held during 2008 and 2009 in Northern and Southern Nevada. The intent of the meetings was to draw on the knowledge and experience of stakeholders and to identify opportunities and challenges associated with a long-range, multi-agency, multi-disciplinary planning process.

Phase I was predicated on an understanding that functional realities must be understood and worked through in order to formulate a plan that is compatible with the intent

of Connecting Nevada. To that end, NDOT staff, consultants, and stakeholders collaboratively formulated growth scenarios and sample criteria to be considered during identification and preservation of transportation corridors. The final outcome of Phase I was a conceptual framework for the Connecting Nevada Plan that includes four core focus areas: structure, process, policy, and tools/resources. The framework represents a functional and deliberative tool comprised of topic areas that should be fully vetted and considered by NDOT staff, consultants, and stakeholders during Phase II of the Connecting Nevada Plan.

C. Connecting Nevada Phase II

Connecting Nevada Phase II will include elements of stakeholder and public participation that provide for ongoing collaboration, two-way information exchanges, and thoughtful, substantive deliberation of important topic areas impacting the Connecting Nevada Plan. In the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) the reader will find that our team recognizes the overall quality, utility, and long-term value of the Connecting Nevada Plan hinges directly on the level of involvement from community stakeholders and members of the public. Our PIP provides opportunities for stakeholders and the general public to be involved, not simply at critical junctures in the planning process, but along the continuum of activities planned for Phase II. The Connecting Nevada Plan must incorporate the knowledge, subject matter expertise, insights, and recommendations of stakeholder groups and the support of the general public if it is to serve the purpose for which it is intended over the long-term.

II. Public Involvement Program (PIP) Purpose

A. NDOT's Commitment To Public Involvement

NDOT's commitment to public involvement is embodied in the myriad of projects, plans, and studies currently underway across Nevada. NDOT has a long and recognized history of

proactive public involvement, applying new and innovative outreach methods to projects ranging from the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan to various large-scale infrastructure projects. The goals common to all public involvement programs initiated by NDOT are to identify and evaluate any concerns, suggestions, comments, and unique needs of transportation system users as they relate to proposed projects and studies.

The public outreach strategies employed by NDOT are often determined by the circumstances unique to individual projects and typically include a mix of public hearings, stakeholder meetings and listening sessions; information distributed via the NDOT website or project specific websites, surveys, newsletters, advertising, community events, and targeted presentations. NDOT's commitment to public participation is based firmly on the belief that public involvement fosters an open decision-making process that elicits active participation from affected individuals, groups, and communities.

B. Value of Public Involvement to Connecting Nevada

NDOT has tremendous federal and statewide knowledge and strong working relationships with local agencies and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). During the public involvement process of Phase II, NDOT's resources will be combined with the knowledge of community stakeholders to evaluate development patterns, trends, needs, and emerging issues. Broad based stakeholder participation will encourage thoughtful and balanced deliberation of issues discussed and will inform outcomes of Phase II at critical junctures throughout the planning process. During Phase II, emphasis will be placed on expanding stakeholder participation to include greater collaboration with economic development agencies, utilities and renewable energy developers, businesses and trade associations, and conservation groups. The motivation for expanding stakeholder participation is to draw upon the organizational strengths and subject matter expertise of stakeholder groups. The public will also be collaboratively engaged to provide comments and feedback on Phase II planning efforts. Through the processes and tools discussed below, our team will provide methods by which

NDOT and the consultant team will be able to engage awareness, interest, and active involvement from the general public. A long-term, cohesive and flexible plan for transportation corridor identification will infuse elements of predictability and expectation in terms of how transportation will impact economic development, community planning, infrastructure, and overall quality of life in Nevada's communities. By involving stakeholders and the public in collaborative ways and encouraging active participation in decision-making, Phase II will generate a sense of value and ownership of the Connecting Nevada Plan, an important element of planning processes that are intended to be sustainable and successful over the long-term.

C. Public Involvement Goals & Objectives

The purpose of this PIP is to provide a sound basis and justification, as well as a set of attainable goals and objectives for stakeholder and public outreach processes and tools that will be administered during Phase II. Additionally, the PIP will serve as a functional subset of tasks, activities, milestones, and deliverables that are directly linked to the technical and data-driven analysis that will be prepared for distribution to stakeholders and the public. In this way, NDOT and the consultant team will have a uniform understanding and expectation of how, when, and for what purpose stakeholders and the general public will be engaged during Phase II. Provided on the following page are the goals and objectives of the PIP, which taken together will result in a robust, informative, and mutually beneficial and educational program for involving stakeholders and the general public during Phase II.

Goal 1: Involve Broad Spectrum of Community Stakeholders

Objectives:

- Develop easily understood informational tools and collateral materials that stakeholders will be able to evaluate
- Clearly articulate the essence of partnership and the need for active stakeholder deliberations in response to plan elements
- Provide processes through which stakeholders can provide comments, feedback, and recommendations during critical planning milestones

Goal 2: Apply Stakeholder Knowledge & Expertise to Connecting Nevada

Objectives:

- Describe the incorporation of technical documents, existing plans and studies, and data-driven tools and their relationship to the plan
- Facilitate stakeholder workshops that allow subject matter experts to focus their knowledge and insights in ways that are applicable and meaningful to the plan
- Demonstrate how stakeholder input will be applied to the plan and how their feedback adds value

Goal 3: Generate Public Awareness of Connecting Nevada

Objectives:

- Create communication methods, materials and public outreach processes that clearly articulate the purpose and intent of the plan
- Proactively generate awareness of the plan through new media and community speaking engagements and presentation opportunities
- Consistently emphasize the importance of long-term transportation planning and the various benefits it brings to communities

Goal 4: Engage the Public in Meaningful Ways

Objectives:

- Provide opportunities for the public to learn about the plan and to procure information about planning processes
- Facilitate two-way information exchanges with the public through formal and informal meetings, project website, social media, project hotline, newsletters, and targeted speaking engagements and presentation opportunities
- Implement methods that clearly show the public how their comments, feedback, and concerns will be reflected in the plan

Goal 5: Be Accountable and Accessible to Stakeholders and Public

Objectives:

- Establish and coordinate processes that capture comments and feedback and that indicate actions taken in response to submissions
- Maintain communication mechanisms that allow for consistent communication with stakeholders and the public along the continuum of planning processes
- Document all phone calls, e-mails, website submissions, comment forms, and other methods through which stakeholders and the public provide input and route responses among consultant team and NDOT

III. Public Involvement Structure and Process

The public involvement program for Connecting Nevada Phase II will be implemented through a logical sequence of tasks, including administration of a Technical Advisory Committee and Steering Committee; identification of stakeholder groups; facilitation of two intervals of stakeholder focus groups; coordination of two public meetings; and recommendations for community speaking engagements and presentation opportunities. Each of these processes is described below in greater detail. The corresponding subject matter, timeline and implementation approach is also described for each process.

A. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) & Steering Committee (SC)

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – The TAC is comprised of Department staff, including District Engineers; representatives of four Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs); one non-NDOT representative from each of the three NDOT districts; and others as assigned by the Department. This group will meet eight times over the course of Phase II to review technical papers in advance of public outreach efforts and in preparation of major project milestones. The TAC will be asked to provide technical insight into the materials and processes employed as part of the project. The TAC will also assist in the identification of stakeholders and outreach opportunities.

Steering Committee (SC) – The SC consists of NDOT staff who will oversee Phase II tasks, direct the project team, and provide feedback and comments for work plan components. This group will meet 4 times at key junctures during the Phase II planning process. The SC may also be well suited to convene for implementation actions or Connecting Nevada Plan triggers, such as yearly updates, Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) updates, and state and federal legislation. A description of task assignments for coordination of TAC and SC meetings is provided in Section V – Public Involvement Responsibilities Matrix.

B. Identification of Stakeholders

Our team recognizes that a commitment to proactive stakeholder involvement and partnership through collaborative focus groups and consistent communication will instill a greater level of confidence, support, and ownership of the Connecting Nevada Plan. Phase I of the Connecting Nevada Plan offered many important insights and lessons with respect to partner agency and stakeholder involvement, not the least of which is the need for a robust, highly-coordinated and structured process by which information is collected, vetted, and applied to the long range transportation planning effort.

The consultant team will submit a database of prospective stakeholders representing a cross-section of the community that we intend to engage throughout Phase II. The stakeholder identification process will begin during July 2011 and will be consistently updated and augmented throughout the course of Phase II. The stakeholder identification process will include submission of a draft stakeholder database for review, comment, and feedback at the 2nd TAC meeting. The stakeholder identification process is of critical importance to Phase II planning and facilitation processes and a significant amount of attention will be paid to gathering the necessary names, contact information, and commitments of prospective stakeholder partners. The stakeholder identification process will include a regular update to TAC and SC members so that a broad, substantive, and robust stakeholder network is involved during Phase II.

C. Stakeholder Focus Groups

Stakeholder focus group meetings will be held to solicit feedback, comments, and recommendations during Phase II. The stakeholder focus groups will be held at two intervals, each consisting of a series of workshops held over a multiday period. The workshops will be structured to include stakeholders with certain common objectives or affinities, thereby allowing greater ability to deliberate on specific topics and providing for evaluation at higher

levels and with greater specificity. Our team will structure the stakeholder focus groups in ways that correspond with organizations and groups recruited during the stakeholder identification process. Each stakeholder focus group interval will be composed of several workshops organized as follows (potential aggregation of stakeholder groups):

- Multi-Modal/Commercial Interests (railroads, freight, trucking companies)
- Economic Development Authorities/Chambers of Commerce/Trade Associations
- Utilities and Renewable Energy Interests & Companies
- Gaming and Tourism Entities
- Conservation/Environmental Groups
- Local & Regional Government Agencies
- State & Federal Government Agencies

The first round of stakeholder focus groups is intended to reintroduce the Connecting Nevada Plan and review Phase I outcomes, proposed processes for Phase II, preliminary presentations from data collection efforts, and the identification of priority study areas for subsequent planning. It's important to note that more than a year has passed since Phase I was completed and that reconvening stakeholders will require effort to get all participants adequately updated. The first round of stakeholder focus groups is an opportunity to acknowledge previous investments, reinforce the value and necessity of participation, and to provide a summary of Phase I findings and process approaches for Phase II. The first round of stakeholder focus groups will be facilitated over a two-week period in November 2011. Up to 14 sessions may be facilitated, with sessions planned in both northern and southern Nevada.

The second round of stakeholder focus groups will be focused on reviewing findings from technical tasks and data analysis, reconciliation of any comments received during the first round of stakeholder focus groups, and a presentation of the preliminary Connecting Nevada Plan. The second round of stakeholder focus groups will be facilitated over a two-week period

in June of 2012. Up to 14 sessions may be facilitated, with sessions planned in both northern and southern Nevada.

A draft outline for the first round of stakeholder focus groups will be submitted to the TAC at their 2nd meeting for review and comment. A draft outline for the second round of stakeholder focus groups will be submitted during the March 2012 meeting of the TAC.

D. Public Outreach Meetings

The consultant team will plan and facilitate two public outreach meetings during Phase II of the Connecting Nevada Plan. The public involvement approach proposed by our team qualifies for the fact that NDOT has many constituencies throughout the state and serves rural, suburban, urban, and heavily urbanizing areas. The two public meetings will be held during the final 6 months of the project to present the draft Connecting Nevada Plan. The public meetings will follow a series of concerted efforts to actively generate awareness of the Connecting Nevada Plan through the project website, newsletters, media outreach, and community speaking engagements and speaking opportunities. The consultant team will host one public meeting in southern Nevada and one public meeting in rural Nevada during June 2012. A comprehensive facilitation plan for the public outreach meetings will be submitted to TAC for review and comment during March 2012 meeting of the TAC.

E. Community Presentations and Speaking Opportunities

Our team will propose a series of community presentation and speaking opportunities to NDOT for the purpose of proactively educating organizations, groups, and agencies about the Connecting Nevada Plan. The community presentations and speaking opportunities may be framed as a Connecting Nevada Program that begins in January 2012, the time period between

the two stakeholder focus group intervals, and culminating immediately before the two public meetings in June 2012. This program is intended to function as a targeted approach to public involvement, engaging unique constituencies in formats that are familiar to them, such as trade association luncheons, membership meetings, etc. The consultant team will submit ideas for community presentations and speaking opportunities to NDOT throughout the course of the project. The suggestions will include guidance received during the November 2011 stakeholder focus groups. NDOT will designate internal representatives to attend the community presentations and speaking opportunities.

IV. Public Involvement Tools

Phase II of the Connecting Nevada Plan will employ several important public involvement tools to ensure that stakeholders and the public are receiving accurate, timely and relevant information during planning processes. In addition to the tools mentioned below, our team will maintain a centralized comment management system to keep all members of the consulting team informed of requests for information, clarifications, and other requests submitted by stakeholders and the general public.

A. Stakeholder Database

A stakeholder database will be compiled by the study team to function as a centralized resource for communicating with Phase II stakeholders along the continuum of planning activities. The stakeholder database will include prospective organizations, groups, agencies, and individuals who will be targeted for participation in the stakeholder focus sessions. The stakeholder database will also function as an RSVP and attendance monitoring tool for meetings and events, a comment management tracking system, and record of quality assurance. The stakeholder database will include contact information for stakeholder entities in addition to key contact or contacts within each agency, beginning with those who participated

during Phase I. Stakeholders will be aggregated within the database according to their unique stakeholder focus group assignments. This will provide for streamlined communication with

unique stakeholder groups. The consulting team will submit a draft stakeholder database to the TAC and SC prior to the 2nd TAC meeting for input. However, it is anticipated that the stakeholder database will be regularly updated and revised during Phase II according to planning needs, issues, and goals.

B. Project Website

A project website for the Connecting Nevada plan will be constructed during Phase II. The project website will be of a user-friendly design and will include a project overview, meeting information, working papers, and other informational materials to help educate stakeholders and the general public. The project website will also include methods to facilitate two-way information exchanges with stakeholders and the general public, and will include contact information for project representatives, links to social media feeds, and scheduled community speaking engagements and presentation opportunities. Tools such as the project website and social media ensure that stakeholders and the general public have the opportunity to stay engaged and up to date in between public meetings and events.

C. Social Media

The concept of leveraging social media is consistent with the desire to develop innovative and meaningful ways to communicate sophisticated and complex planning processes with stakeholders and the general public. The consultant team will work with NDOT to leverage emerging technology to engage and educate the public at key intervals throughout Phase II. For example, social media platforms will be developed to share important developments, meeting announcements, and to provide opportunities to submit comments and feedback. The social media feeds may contain interesting facts, images, or updates related to the Connecting Nevada Plan. An emphasis will be placed on generating awareness of Connecting Nevada speaking engagements and presentation opportunities through social media announcements.

The consulting team will work with the NDOT Project Manager and Public Information Officer (PIO) to distribute social media updates over the course of Phase II via NDOT's existing

Facebook and Twitter pages. Ideas for proactive use of social media platforms will be shared with TAC members at their 2nd meeting.

D. Project Hotline

A distinct project hotline number will be set up to allow for stakeholders and the public to submit comments, questions, concerns, and to request additional information from project team representatives. The project hotline will be shown on the Connecting Nevada website and will be included on collateral materials for the project, including public meeting announcements, invitations to stakeholder focus groups, and on the project social media feeds. The outgoing message on the project hotline will be updated regularly during Phase II to correspond with major milestones and the facilitation of workshops and meetings. The project hotline will be set up immediately following approval of the PIP by the TAC. The Public Outreach Coordinator will be responsible for setting up the project hotline, monitoring calls received, and communicating call requests and outcomes to NDOT and members of the consultant team.

E. Media Outreach

The consultant team will compose and distribute media advisories and press releases for public meetings and support content development as needed for major project milestones, such as the launch of stakeholder focus groups, initiation of the community speaking engagements and presentation opportunities program, and the conclusion of the Connecting Nevada Phase II. The consulting team will work with the NDOT Project Manager and/or PIO as needed to identify media outreach opportunities during the course of Phase II planning processes.

F. Collateral Materials

The consulting team will compose informative materials such as FAQs, fact sheets, e-briefs, meeting packets for stakeholder focus groups and public meetings, and other materials as necessary to support public involvement activities. The consulting team will also assist NDOT with the compilation of an entry for NDOT’s “Plan It!” newsletter to correspond with major Phase II milestones. Collateral materials composed for stakeholder focus group materials will be drafted in accordance with the technical and informational needs of each session. Collateral materials compiled for the purpose of the public meetings will be clearly and succinctly articulated so as to resonate with a general public audience. The consulting team will submit detailed descriptions of collateral materials to be shared for the purpose of the project website, stakeholder focus groups, and public meetings to NDOT for review and comment.

V. Public Involvement Responsibility Matrix

The following matrix outlines the responsibilities of the consulting team and as they relate to tasks, materials, and deliverables for public involvement plan activities, processes, and tools. The responsibility matrix is intended to function as a logical sequence of tasks that each entity will satisfy within a reasonable timeframe to accomplish the goals and objectives of the public involvement plan.

Public Involvement Responsibility Matrix

Task/Activity	NDOT (TAC)	HDR/C-A	Strategic Solutions (Public Outreach Coordinator)
Project Website	Review/Comment	*Prepare/Manage	Review/Comment
Project Hotline	Review/Comment	Review Comment	*Prepare/Manage
Social Media	*Manage	Prepare/Assist	Prepare/Assist
Stakeholder Identification	Review/Comment	Review/Comment	*Prepare/Manage
Stakeholder Database	Review/Comment	Review/Comment	*Prepare/Manage
Community Presentations & Speaking Engagements	*Manage	Review/Comment	Assist
Stakeholder Focus Groups	Attend	Attend/Present	Attend/Assist
Session Locations, Invitations, RSVP Coordination, Comment Forms, Sign-In Sheets, Facilitation	Review/Comment	Review/Comment	*Prepare/Manage
Session Materials, Maps, Renderings, Data, Information Packets	Review/Comment	*Prepare/Present	Review/Comment/Assist
Group Summaries and follow up on comments/response	Review/Comment	Review/Comment	*Prepare/Distribute
Public Meetings	Attend	Attend/Present	Attend/Assist
Meeting Locations, Invitations, RSVP Coordination, Comment Forms, Sign-In Sheets, Media Outreach	Review/Comment	Review/Comment	*Prepare/Manage
Meeting Materials, Maps, Renderings, Data, Information Packets	Review/Comment	*Prepare/Present	Review/Comment/Assist
Group Summaries and follow up comments/response	Review/Comment	Review/Comment	*Prepare/Distribute

* Action Item