

2025



**CITY OF EL PASO
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**



Office of Title VI and ADA (Accessibility)

Introduction

The City of El Paso values public input in the planning process, recognizing its impact on residents and workers in the region. Committed to understanding community needs, the City ensures citizen voices are heard through public participation. The public participation plan outlines efforts to engage diverse audiences affected by City programs and initiatives. The City's public participation plan goals are to:

- Provide City departments with a framework to develop meaningful public participation.
- Provide opportunity for interested parties to identify environmental concerns and regional priorities.
- Encourage public participation opportunities in a wide and varied audience, including traditionally underserved groups.
- Publicize public participation opportunities and activities throughout the development of City projects and programs.
- Obtain meaningful public input and participation to inform the planning and decisionmakers.
- Inform and educate stakeholders and interested parties.

Ensuring Meaningful Public Participation

Public participation serves to inform residents about the nature and significance of City actions such as permit issuance, project approvals, or fee changes while providing an opportunity for public feedback. In turn, it is the understandable expectation of the public that City will fairly consider input and make adjustments when appropriate.

The ultimate goal is to build public trust in the process, best achieved by actively seeking and valuing public input. Below are key guidelines for Departments to ensure meaningful engagement:

- The Department must uphold strong accountability to its policies and implementation strategies.
- Ongoing outreach is essential for building relationships and fostering trust with residents and community groups.
- Communication should be two-way, ensuring the public can provide input while receiving meaningful responses and feedback.
- Traditional public comment periods often limit collaboration and hinder the development of innovative solutions to environmental challenges.
- Methods that erode trust should be avoided to maintain strong community relationships.
- Departments should leverage the different perspectives of staff to enhance communication with the public, fostering comfort and trust among residents.



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- Ongoing staff education is essential, covering the Non-Discrimination Plan, Public Participation Plan, Language Efficiency Plan, and Effective Communication strategies, including alternative and accessible formats.

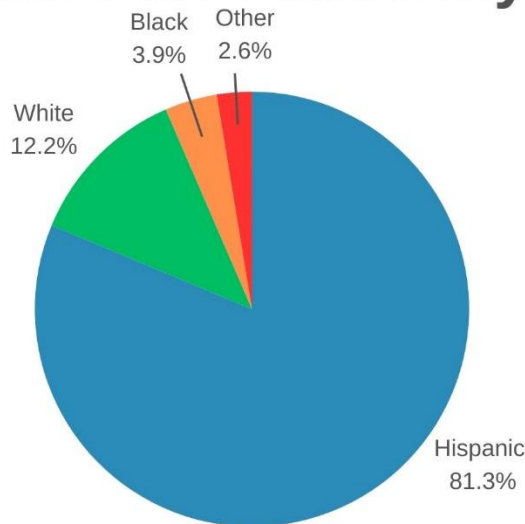
Demographics

The City of El Paso is cognizant of the demographics in our community. According to the 2019-2023 U.S. Census estimates, Hispanics comprise 81.33% of the city's population, underscoring the importance of providing documents in both English and Spanish.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of Hispanic or Latino residents within El Paso. Departments managing federal program areas must track demographic data for their participants.

Figure 1:

Race and Ethnicity



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice ensures fair treatment for all, promoting meaningful public involvement in government decision-making. An effective plan must actively engage communities in legal and policy discussions on environmental issues.

This public participation plan highlights the importance of including stakeholders in all matters that affect them. Agency programs, policies, and activities can lead to health and environmental disparities, often disproportionately impacting minority and low-income populations. Figure 2 illustrates household income distribution across El Paso.

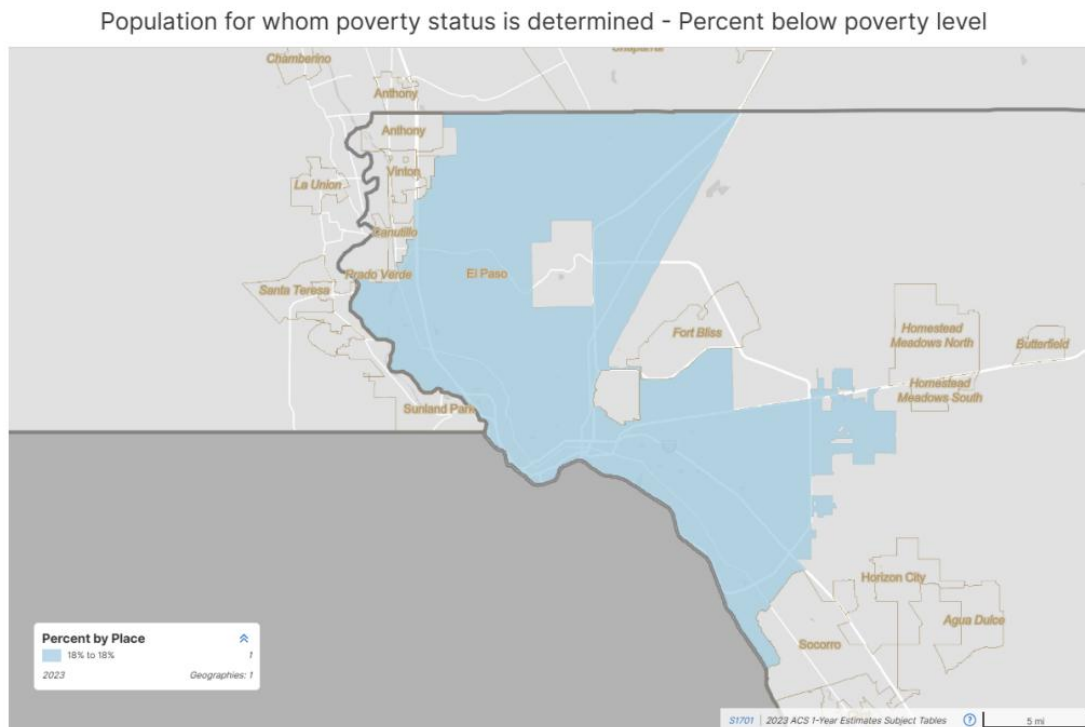


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Departments should evaluate the following factors when initiating a project or program:

- Assess existing environmental hazards in the impact area.
- Document considerations such as mitigation efforts and environmental assessments supporting the decision.
- Determine whether the impact disproportionately burdens or benefits a community.
- Record decisions made and analyze their effects on the community.
- Identify and engage affected communities using the principles outlined in this public participation plan.

Figure 2:



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2020



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Forms of Communication

To ensure a meaningful public participation process, impacted parties must be informed and educated about programs, planned projects, and ongoing initiatives.

The City employs various strategies to provide timely information in multiple formats, allowing each department to determine the most effective communication method for its programs.

Public Outreach

The methods of gathering and implementing public participation for a planning process may differ widely, depending on the type and scope of a project or program.

Partnerships and Community Based Organizations

Community-based organizations play a vital role in engaging specific audiences and reaching underrepresented groups. The city can collaborate with these organizations to share project information and encourage community involvement.

Community-based organizations are groups that serve a broad range of community interests. Organizations include the following:

- Senior centers
- Service providers for youth, families, persons with disabilities and many others.
- Civic groups
- Business organizations
- Community development corporations
- Faith-based organizations
- Service clubs
- Education institutions and programs

Websites

All City Departments websites have the translate language feature. Continuously updated information is provided -on city programs and services including providing the preferred language and accessible formats to ensure all residents have the resources to be informed.



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Publications

Departments should maintain a stakeholder list with contact information of organizations, partners and individuals. Electronic newsletters -, or email newsletters, are used to keep subscribed individuals informed about the City of El Paso department, their services, programs and to engage and build relationships. This is a cost-effective way to reach the community and keep them informed. The City releases a variety of newsletters that can be accessed via the website or a resident can subscribe to receive the newsletter(s) via email. Citizens can also subscribe via the same website.

Media Campaigns

A comprehensive regional media campaign can be used when outreach is needed to the broader community. A media campaign -may include press releases, public service announcements, ads in TV, radio or print, press conferences with community leaders, feature articles, or interviews depending on the nature of the project as well as the resources and funds available. -In some cases, media buys are needed to ensure various methods of reaching the community. Media Campaigns are coordinated and branded through the Strategic Communications Office Lead Communication Officer. -In order to stay within the city's branding and making sure the message is consistent; the Strategic Communication's Office Lead Communication Officer will approve and edit all talking points as well as any and all messaging to the community or within the department for all city campaigns.

Scheduled Community Meetings

The frequency of scheduled community meetings throughout a project's lifecycle will depend on its nature and community needs. For example, a construction project may require meetings at key stages, such as project initiation, development, design, and various phases of construction. Departments will determine the appropriate schedule based on the specific needs of the community.



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Selection of Meeting Places

Meetings are held at convenient, accessible times and locations for all community members, including traditionally underserved groups.

- Various meeting formats, such as town halls, are utilized to encourage engagement.
- Collaboration with community organizations, educational institutions, and other entities to implement outreach strategies targeting affected minority and underserved groups.
- Alternative participation methods, including one-on-one interviews and audio or video recordings, are available for public input beyond written communication.
- Meetings take place in ADA-accessible locations with proximity to public transit.
- Sign language interpreters, auxiliary aid requests, and translation services are provided upon advance request.

Visualization Techniques

Where appropriate, visualization techniques will be employed throughout the City's public participation activities. This will aid the public in understanding proposed plans. Examples of visualization techniques include, but are not limited to the following: sketches, drawings, artist renderings, physical models and maps, simulated photos, videos, computer modeled images, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) based scenario planning tools, and computer simulation.

Direct Notifications

The use of door to door of information should be used when required by City Ordinance or depending on the nature of the program, project, or activity and the resources available.

Social Media

The Strategic Communication Office utilizes social media to engage with residents, disseminate information about city services, programs, and events, and build a positive image for the city. It's a way to connect directly with the public, provide timely updates, and respond to inquiries. Social media platforms reach a broader audience than traditional methods and allows for two-way communication, enabling residents to engage with the city government and share their opinions.



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City Council Meetings

Citizens may be present during any of the City's meetings; a list of scheduled meeting agendas, times, and locations can be accessed at [El Paso, TX - Calendar](#).

The City Council offers the public an opportunity to bring topics and issues to Council's attention. Each regular City Council meeting the Council reserves 60 minutes at the beginning for public concerns. A citizen can sign up to speak and request an interpreter if desired. Interpreter services will be furnished at no cost as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

To sign up for the "Call of the Public" or to speak on items that are posted on the City Council agenda, a citizen can go to the City Clerk's website for the appropriate forms.

State and Regional Organizations

The City of El Paso receives funding through various state and federal agencies with their own public participation plans. Their process for ensuring public participation allows for additional vetting of City projects funded with federal awards.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

The MPO website notes that their Public Participation Program is to "serve as a program guide for the public participation process of the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization." The complete MPO Public Participation Program can be accessed at: [El Paso MPO - Title VI](#)

TxDOT

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) website states "public hearings and meetings allow you to participate in the transportation planning process and help you better understand the road, rail and aviation projects that affect your community." Further details about the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) public participation process can be found at: <http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/get-involved.html>

Use of Public Comment

All public input should be derived from a range of various sources. As appropriate and whenever possible, public comments should be used to revise work scopes, plans and programs.

City staff is responsible for responding to comments in a timely manner and/or for forwarding these comments to policy makers considering action.



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Effective Assessment

Departments should use the information obtained through its public outreach efforts to review the effectiveness and progress of its programs. In turn, the public participation plan should be updated periodically to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The office of Title VI will be responsible for coordinating any plan updates.

Record Retention:

The records shall be maintained for a period pursuant to the requirements of each program and/or the Texas Library Archives Records Retention Schedules, whichever is longer.