



Caltrans Statewide Transportation Plan  
And Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan

## Public Participation Plan Focus Groups Summary

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## ***I. Introduction***

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is responsible for developing the Statewide Transportation Plan (CTP) and for preparing the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP) on regular cycles. State and federal guidelines prescribe that these planning processes be undertaken with broad, inclusive participation of key stakeholder groups as well as members of the general public.

To ensure compliance with these guidelines, the Department will be developing a comprehensive Public Participation Plan. And to make certain that public, private and civic organizations, as well as individual citizens, have the opportunity to shape the manner in which they will be engaged, the Department is seeking input from those individuals and groups through a multi-strategy outreach and involvement process.

This document summarizes the results of one such strategy, the use of a focus-group-style technique to solicit input from members of the general public on the type and extent of engagement they would like to have with respect to the transportation planning processes for the CTP and FSTIP.

## ***II. Objectives of the Focus Groups***

Overall, the focus group objectives were:

- to determine the level of knowledge, awareness and interest members of the general public have with regard to the CTP and FSTIP documents and processes;
- to identify preferred methods for outreach and engagement related to the CTP and FSTIP;
- to identify opportunities to build outreach, information and engagement strategies upon existing community conduits.

## ***III. Recruitment Methodology***

In order to sample public opinion from representative populations statewide, four focus group workshops were held, one in each of the following cities: Oakland, Sacramento, Fresno and Long Beach. MIG, Inc., the Department's public involvement consultant, recruited the participants electronically by placing an advertisement on Craigslist, [www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org), in the various communities in which the focus groups were to be held. MIG's goal was to recruit 12-15 participants from the immediate area for each of the four groups. The ad offered a \$60 stipend for participating, and specified that we were looking for active participants with an interest in learning about issues and stating their opinions. No compensation for transportation or parking was offered for the Fresno, Sacramento, or Oakland groups; however, due to the expense of parking in downtown Long Beach, MIG arranged for that location to validate parking for participants. Refreshments were also provided.

Applicants were asked to answer a series of questions regarding demographics and their preferred modes of transport (see Appendix F). Participants were then selected on the basis

of ensuring as wide a representation of demographic variation and choice of transportation modes as possible. Follow-up phone calls were made to further screen participants and confirm that they could commit to attending. An attempt was also made in Fresno and in Sacramento to fulfill Caltrans' inclusion requirements by recruiting directly from local Native American reservations or Rancherias. Staff in Rancheria business offices were provided via email with flyers so they could publicize the focus groups on-site. This had considerable success in Fresno but in the Sacramento area, it elicited no response.

A number of participants dropped out of each group on the day of the meeting for various reasons, but there were still from ten to fourteen participants in each focus group.

#### **IV. Focus Group Methodology**

Each of the focus groups was held from 6:30 to 8:30 pm on a weeknight, at a local community facility, and was staffed by a facilitator and an assistant who took notes. They were also attended by one or two Caltrans staffers who were introduced as interested observers but who did not participate in the conversation.

Participants were invited to sit around a conference table in comfortable chairs, with the facilitator and assistant at one end, and observers positioned outside the table. The facilitator opened the sessions by explaining the purpose and structure of the meeting and describing the groundrules for participation. Attendees were then invited to introduce themselves and say a little about what community they live in, how long they've lived there, and what transportation issues they're particularly interested in.

Next, the level of participant knowledge was assessed by asking what they knew about how transportation projects are prioritized and funded in their region and statewide. After they'd done so, the facilitator made a brief presentation explaining the CTP and FSTIP processes (see Appendix A). This was followed up by a series of questions regarding the degree of interest they have in these processes, what would motivate them to participate, what participation methods would be most attractive to them, and which method of informing them of participation opportunities would be most useful. They were also asked how interested they thought others in their community would be, and what methods of recruitment, information, and participation would work best for others. Finally, they were asked to state how, if they were responsible for getting people to participate in these processes, what they would do, and encouraged to add any further comments. Participants gave feedback both by filling out a feedback form and also by participating in discussion. At the end of the session, the sponsor of the effort was revealed as Caltrans, and the Caltrans representatives introduced themselves, spoke briefly about the history and details of public participation in these processes, and invited questions or comments from the group.

## V. Overall Focus Group Summary

Following is a summary of overall results from all four focus groups.

A. *Describe what you know about how transportation projects are planned and paid for in your region and statewide.*

**Approximately half of the participants in all groups said that they knew nothing, or very little, about how transportation projects are planned.** All but a couple of participants made more or less educated guesses, and some knew more than others (particularly in the Long Beach group), but no one demonstrated comprehensive understanding of the full process from start to finish. Most participants either knew or guessed that local, state and/or federal governments have planning authority, and that funding comes primarily from taxes, as well as being raised through bond measures, and that some federal funds are available. A few were aware that input is gathered from the public regarding transportation planning. Some cynicism with the process was expressed, with a few participants mentioning a sense that taxpayers support a disproportionate percentage of the burden, that the process is slow and contractors overpaid, and that the needs of higher-income areas are prioritized over those of lower-income areas.

B1. *Based on what you now know about the California Transportation Plan process, how interested would you say you are in it?*

**The majority of participants were interested in the CTP process** – 22 stated that they were very interested, and 20 said they were somewhat interested. Only three participants described themselves as somewhat to fairly disinterested, and only one was not at all interested.

Those who were interested gave one or more of the following reasons:

- They would like the opportunity to inform transportation planners of specific areas needing improvement, and were aware that these needs might not be met if they didn't speak up.
- They would like to be better informed about how transportation projects are planned and prioritized, whether planning is consistent and equitable for all areas.
- They are aware that transportation needs to improve to keep up with California's economic and population growth and the rising cost of oil.
- It affects their everyday life.
- Their areas need better public transportation.
- They were pleased to learn that involvement is possible on a higher than local level.
- They are concerned about the impact of transportation on the environment.

Those whose interest was somewhat qualified mentioned the following concerns:

- Feeling that their input won't make a difference
- Distrust of the government
- Length of CTP timeline – how long projects take to get completed

- The process needs to be made comprehensible. Except for the outcome of votes on bond measures, the process is mysterious to most people.
- The appeal of getting involved in the process is limited to those who benefit from it; it must be relevant to their specific interests.

Those who were disinterested didn't say very much about why this was so. Reasons briefly mentioned included not trusting the government, only being interested in the local process rather than the state, that it would take too long to research and wouldn't affect their way of living, and that they found it boring.

B2. *How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the California Transportation Plan process?*

**Opinions regarding the interest of others in the CTP process were somewhat more variable than participants' assessment of their own interest.** Only 11 thought others in their community would be very interested, and 17 thought others would be somewhat interested. Eight participants overall thought others would be somewhat disinterested, three thought others would be not at all interested, and five had no opinion.

The following were seen as reasons for others in participants' communities to be interested in the CTP process:

- The chance to state their opinions
- People would like more information on transportation plans and how their tax money is spent.
- Dissatisfaction with transportation in their areas
- Need for better public transportation in their areas
- Dislike of crowded freeways
- Expectation that Bay Area residents will be active and concerned
- Concern about the impact of transportation on the environment

The expectation was that others' interest would be limited because people are not interested in researching transportation planning and are too concerned with their daily activities to devote a lot of time to the CTP process.

Those participants who expected others in their communities to be disinterested in the CTP process thought that people are either apathetic or cynical about whether their input will make a difference. They said that people are too busy with their own lives. Even if people are concerned, they would rather not spread themselves too thin over public causes, and would only care if they were personally affected by a specific plan. Otherwise, participants felt, they'd want to leave "distant matters" to experts.

Those who had no opinion were either not confident speaking for others or said that they don't talk to enough neighbors to have a sense of their interest.

*C1: Based on what you now know about the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program process, how interested would you say you are in it?*

**The majority of participants (37) were either very or somewhat interested in the FSTIP process, in about equal proportion, although there were a few more claiming disinterest than with the CTP.** Four were somewhat disinterested, three were not at all interested, and two had no opinion.

Participants gave the following reasons for their interest in the FSTIP process:

- They wanted more information on what transportation projects are planned. Several participants asked about specific projects in their area. They would like to know how these projects will influence their lives, how projects are prioritized and why, how the list of projects changes, and where their tax dollars are going.
- They wanted the opportunity to voice their opinions.
- They felt there was more immediacy to the planning at this level and greater possibility of being effectual.
- It seemed that there would be more interpretation offered with this document than with CTP.

Participants' interest was qualified by the following concerns:

- Cynicism as to whether their input will make a difference or how effective it will be in the short term.
- They would want to know that their region was included in the plans.
- They are more interested in short-term results than in plans for 20-25 years in the future.
- Whether the document would be comprehensible.

They also commented that their interest would probably be increased by having more information on the projects, their status and how tax dollars are spent on them.

Reasons for participants' disinterest in the FSTIP process included:

- Cynicism about their input being heard
- Doubt about the effectiveness of FSTIP – they don't see much change in their areas.
- Lack of personal impact because plans in the FSTIP are so long-term

The minimal comments made as to why participants had no opinion centered on ignorance of the process or the fact that transportation problems vary so much throughout the state, so they don't know how the FSTIP will be useful.

*C2: How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan process?*

**Once again, there was greater divergence of opinion among participants as to how interested others in their communities would be in the FSTIP process.** Only eight thought others would be very interested, while 18 thought others would be somewhat

Interested. Eleven expected others to be somewhat disinterested, five thought they'd be not at all interested, and two had no opinion.

The reasons participants thought that others in their communities would be interested were much the same as with the CTP: getting their opinions heard, receiving more information on what projects are under construction, how they would change the landscape, and the impact on their quality of life; and learning how tax dollars are spent. They felt that greater awareness of the process and its effect on short-term plans would help increase interest in it.

Participants thought that others would only be somewhat interested in the FSTIP because they have limited time and only care about their own areas; they're curious about the outcome but not interested in the process; they might have difficulty understanding the document.

Reasons given for expecting others to be disinterested in the FSTIP process were also similar to the CTP: Apathy; a lack of time and interest in political affairs; lack of faith in government or the planning process; a need to see changes made; interest in results but not in the process; little patience for complexity; and difficulty understanding the process.

Both those who thought others would be somewhat interested or those who expected disinterest again mentioned that people would drive no matter what public transportation improvements were made.

*D1: What would it take to get you to participate in these processes?*

**The same four major themes were repeated throughout participants' answers to this question and to the previous questions regarding their interest in the processes.** First of all, **they need to be clearly informed about the process**, with information given in a clear and comprehensible fashion, before they would get involved. **They would need to be assured that their input would make a difference**, that they would have access to decision-makers, and to understand how their input would be taken into account. **Public engagement would have to be made convenient.** Finally, **many noted that they would have to know how the projects being discussed affected them personally.** A few participants in each group noted that **some compensation would be helpful**, so that people feel their time is being valued, but this didn't seem nearly as important.

Specific methods suggested included announcements on public access TV or discussion on talk radio, emails, surveys sent through the mail (the more topic-specific, the better), distributing DVDs, an interactive website with a Q&A section and maps, and meetings or forums. Another participant suggested a citizen review panel be randomly selected, in a manner similar to the jury selection process, which would ensure a broad range of Californians giving input.

*D2: What methods of participation would be most attractive to you? Rank the following in order of preference.*

**An interactive website was the most preferred method of participation overall, with email running a fairly close second.** These more "high-tech" methods were seen as

offering convenience – they can be done on one’s own time - and appealing to the majority who prefer electronic communication. **Opinion on the other methods was quite divided. A fair number of people ranked mail-in questionnaires as second or third choice, but no one named it their first choice. Many other participants felt that community meetings and presentations to community groups were effective methods for getting people involved on a local level,** and liked that they are somewhat more personal than electronic communications. **A phone poll was probably the least popular method;** although it received a handful of rankings in the top 3, a larger number ranked it as least preferred.

Although no one ranked an alternative method of participation as their first choice, many alternatives were suggested, including chat groups, electronic voting, text messages, billboards, TV, radio, newspapers and other media, and focus groups.

*D3: Of the methods listed, have you participated in any of these in the past six months? If so, what was your experience of these?*

**Thirty people indicated that they had not participated in these methods recently, or at all. For those who had participated, methods and experiences varied.** Three had experienced email surveys and four had used interactive websites – they liked these because they could complete them at their own convenience. Five talked about participating in phone polls, which were mostly seen as invasive and/or useless. Four or five had been involved with community meetings or presentations to community groups. Most thought these methods are useful and effective because they’re more interactive than others, provide individuals opportunities to speak and receive information. A couple of others were discouraged by lack of participation or found it to be a waste of time. One participant who hadn’t experienced any of these methods before commented that this focus group session opened her eyes to how the transportation planning process works. Two participants had experienced other participation methods: webinars with call-in responses (which seemed cost-saving and very effective), and communicating with elected representatives by email.

*D4: Regarding community meetings, what types of features or formats would you find most appealing? (Check all that apply).*

**There was no one feature or format for community meetings that was most appealing to participants.** All received roughly equal numbers of votes, with structured presentations very slightly in the lead. **Many seemed to feel that using multiple methods would be most effective – for instance, a structured presentation followed by electronic voting.** Those who found the open house format appealing liked its casual feeling and ease of participation, but some thought it was too distracting and chaotic to have people coming and going. Many liked structured presentations with community discussion, the open house format, and small group discussions because they allow citizens to actively engage; whereas those who favored electronic voting appreciated the ability to vote right then and there yet remain anonymous. Participants liked the visual aspect of interactive graphics, which allows them to filter information well. Three participants proposed alternative methods: an internet-based presentation that allowed public input; TV discussions with an interactive feature (e.g. text messaging); and a ballot by mail.

*E1: What is the best way to reach you to let you know about these participation opportunities? Rank the following in order of preference.*

**Email was clearly participants' first choice for letting them know about participation opportunities, by a wide margin (approximately 75% of responses).** A mailer was the second most popular choice – for a few it was better than email, due to the large amount of junk email they receive, although others stated that mailers go straight to recycling. It seemed that both emails and mailers would need to be employed to catch everyone. Newspaper announcements were the third most popular choice. Several mentioned not looking at newspapers because they get their news online. Less than a quarter of all participants listed “other” as a top choice; the alternative methods they suggested included phone calls, TV or radio ads, announcements on public transit, Craigslist, billboards, and contact from a person in their area.

*E2: What is the best way to keep you informed about the CTP and FSTIP processes? Rank the following in order of preference.*

**Again, email was clearly the most popular method for keeping participants informed about the CTP and FSTIP processes - approximately half of all participants voted it first choice. A mailer was a strong second choice, and newspaper ads were the third choice.** Many also suggested alternatives, such as a website (possibly along with mailing a postcard with the website link), TV ads or PSAs, phone calls, announcements on public transit, billboards, Craigslist, and other media. In most cases, these alternatives were not the first choice.

*E3: If you were responsible for getting people to participate in these planning processes, what would you do?*

**Participants suggested a mixture of methods to target different groups of people. They overwhelmingly emphasized the importance of informing the public about these processes, giving them ongoing opportunities to participate, keeping communication going, and making it clear that their involvement would make a difference.** They felt that the public will respond when given an opportunity to contribute their input. They would seek support from **local and regional leadership programs, homeowners' associations, cities and counties, church groups, and neighborhood organizations** in speaking to people one-on-one and encouraging them to participate. Door to door campaigns, setting up booths at public events, tying into community or neighborhood activities, and using the college system to raise awareness were suggested as further methods of reaching the public. Repeating focus groups similar to these was seen as useful. Participants repeated many suggestions made previously, including email contact, newspaper announcements, mailers, TV commercials, websites, marketing involving live speakers (perhaps celebrities), and ads or flyers at public transportation stops (along with drop boxes for comments). Additional ideas were forming a meet-up group on Craigslist, playing videos at gas station pumps and aboard airplanes, and even ads or distributing flyers in bathroom stalls.

**There was some disagreement as to the use of incentives**, such as cash, gas cards, a tax break, a FasTrak or public transportation passes. Some thought it would be necessary, at least until people develop a genuine interest in the issues, and that capturing the largest possible participant pool would be a useful budget expenditure. Others didn't like the idea of incentivizing involvement. In particular, the participant who suggested a compulsory "jury system" for involvement had several others in agreement, since it would be an easier way to get people involved and would assure feedback from a cross-section of the populace.

*E4: Is there anything else you would like to add?*

**The additional statements made most often repeated several themes that have already been mentioned as important: making a better effort to inform the public; beginning at the local or community level as the best way to reach people, and clarifying how transportation plans will affect them directly; emphasizing that public input will make a difference; ascertaining that improvements are planned for all areas in an equitable and consistent manner; and using the web to keep people informed and provide an additional venue for feedback.**

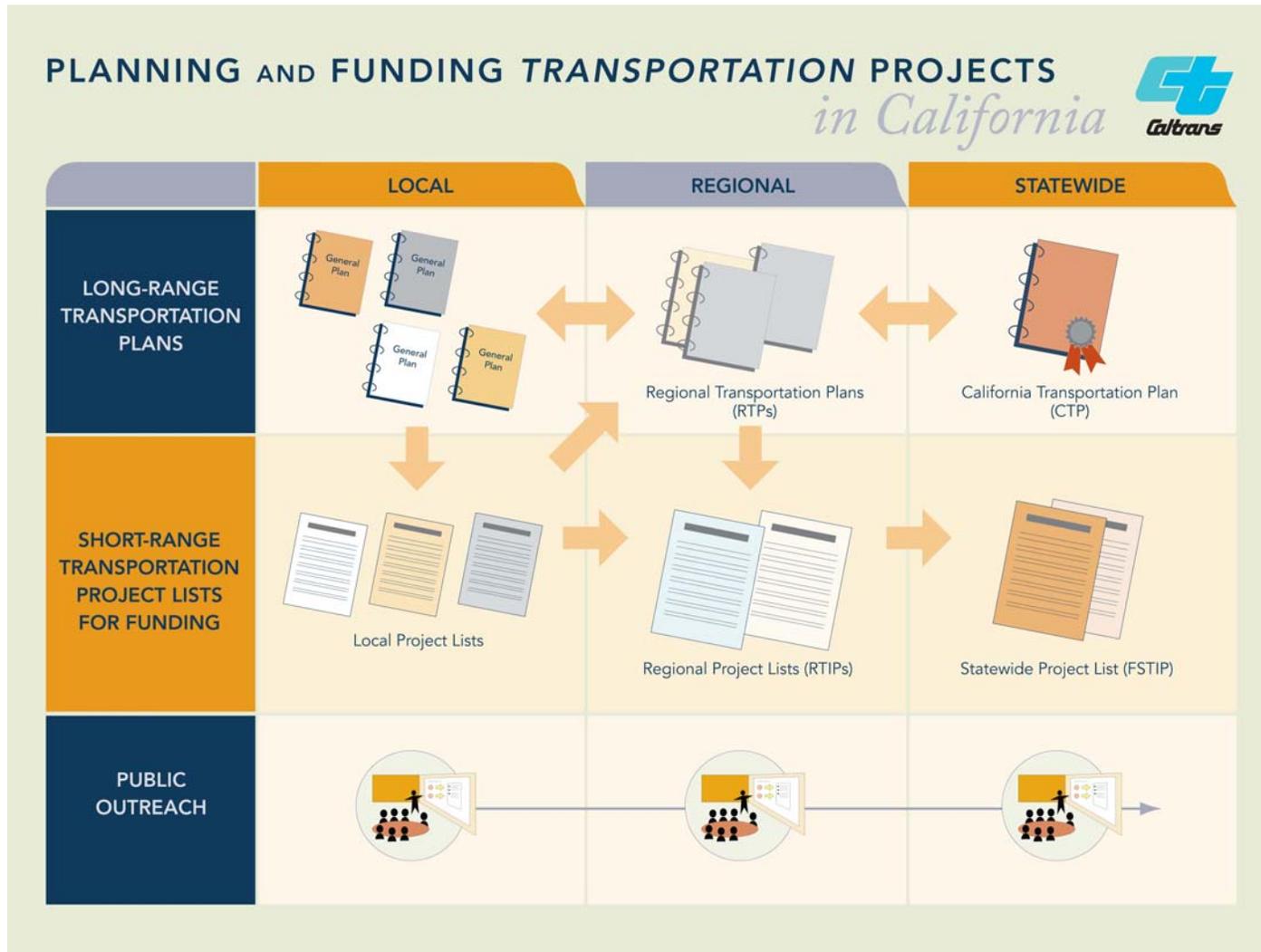


Caltrans Statewide Transportation Plan  
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**Public Participation Plan Focus Groups Summary  
Appendices**



**Appendix A: CTP/FSTIP Process Graphic**





## **Appendix B: Individual Focus Group Summaries**

### **B1. Fresno Focus Group Summary**

The focus group meeting in Fresno was held at the Fresno County Central Free Library on December 6th, 2007. Lou Hexter (MIG) facilitated the meeting. Daniel Krompholz (MIG) took notes. Eleven participants attended the meeting and turned in feedback forms, and two guest listeners from Caltrans attended. The following summary is a synthesis of the participants' oral and written responses to the questions they were asked in the meeting.

*A. Describe what you know about how transportation projects are planned and paid for in your region and statewide.*

Several participants said they knew nothing, or very little, about how transportation projects are planned and funded. However, most thought that city, county or state planners determine specific projects for their jurisdictions to meet current and growing needs; sometimes plans also arise from citizen demand. They were aware that projects are paid for through statewide general or transportation funds and bond measures, which are in turn funded by the collection of gasoline, property and sales tax, etc. A couple participants also mentioned that they thought these projects sometimes qualify for federal funding. One participant noted awareness that "growth in an area requires expansion of public transportation."

*B1. Based on what you now know about the California Transportation Plan process, how interested would you say you are in it?*

All participants were interested in the CTP process, six of them very interested and five only somewhat. Those who were very interested talked about how transportation is very relevant to them since it affects daily life. One participant mentioned the importance of transportation's effect on the environment, and another noted that the state's economic strength is dependent on good transportation. One other pointed out that given California's growth rates and rising oil costs, current transportation plans will have a great impact on the next 20-25 years. A participant who lives in a nearby rural area noted that she needs a car to get into town or anywhere, and would like to see public transit improved. All would like to have the opportunity to inform transportation planners of areas that need work, and recognized that their needs might not be met if they didn't speak up. Those who were only somewhat interested were concerned that their voice wouldn't make much of a difference. One said that her interest would depend on the specific topic.

*B2. How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the California Transportation Plan process?*

Opinions diverged a little more for this question. Four participants thought others would be very interested, three thought others would be somewhat interested, and the remaining three expected others to be somewhat disinterested. (One participant did not give an answer to this question.) Those who thought others would be very interested noted that a lot of people are dissatisfied with transportation in Fresno, and would like more information on

both short and long-term plans. Also, those in nearby rural areas need transportation to and from the cities. One participant had discussed transportation needs with friends and neighbors on numerous occasions and thus was certain of their interest. There weren't many comments made to articulate why participants thought that others would only be somewhat interested. One participant noted that she wasn't comfortable speaking for others. The reasons given for expecting others to be somewhat disinterested focused on apathy and cynicism – most people are only interested in their immediate needs and problems such as the high cost of gas, not plans for 20-25 years in the future. Some of these participants saw others are too busy with consumerism to spend time on meaningful concerns. Other participants saw people in their communities as concerned but convinced their voice won't make a difference, or reluctant to spread themselves too thin among the huge number of causes and issues at hand.

*C1: Based on what you now know about the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan process, how interested would you say you are in it?*

Interest in the FSTIP was far less universal among the participants. A couple seemed confused about how this differed from the previous questions (B1 and B2). There were still six who were very interested, but only two were somewhat interested, one was somewhat disinterested, and two had no opinion. Those who were very interested liked the opportunity for public input. They were also particularly interested in short term plans and goals for their areas. One participant specifically noted the need for roads in Fresno to be widened. Another said that she'd love to get involved but information on how and where is hard to come by. Two asked specific questions about what was included, i.e., Measure A, funding for Highway 99, and the airport project. One of the participants that was somewhat interested would want to know if his region was included in the plans. The other generally didn't find herself in agreement with the majority regarding funding and priorities, was irritated by this, and thus is only slightly interested. The participant who was somewhat disinterested didn't give a reason. Of those who had no opinion, one felt he didn't really know how the document works or what goes on; the other "didn't know about the statewide project because the whole state varies with their transportation problems."

*C2: How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan process?*

Only two participants thought others would be very interested in the FSTIP. Five thought others would be somewhat interested. One thought others would be somewhat disinterested, two had no opinion, and one did not answer this question. Of the two who expected others to be very interested, one was the participant who'd already mentioned numerous discussions regarding transportation needs with her friends and neighbors, and the other thought people would appreciate the right to say what needs improvement in their area. The participants who expected others to be only somewhat interested gave a variety of reasons. One repeated that people don't know how to become involved, and greater awareness of this would make a difference. Another thought her community would be curious about the outcome, but perhaps not as interested in the process. The rest felt that there would be

some interest among their communities, particularly among those who are concerned with having their opinions be heard, as well as those who want to know what landscape features would be forever erased by transportation improvements.

*D1: What would it take to get you to participate in these processes?*

One participant thought that a public announcement, the ability to vote, and some way to move to the next step would ensure his participation. Another wanted to know that her opinion matters, and a third would only participate if it affected her personally. A couple others said it would take a stipend and possibly food.

*D2: What methods of participation would be most attractive to you? Rank the following in order of preference.*

An interactive website received four #1 rankings, followed closely by community group presentations and community meetings with three #1 votes apiece. Two participants liked email surveys best, only one liked the idea of a phone poll, and no one made a mail-in questionnaire their first choice. Rankings for second place and onward were fairly evenly divided. One participant wrote “NO” next to both the phone poll and the email survey. No comments were made by any of the participants regarding these preferences, and no alternative suggestions were made.

*D3: Of the methods listed, have you participated in any of these in the past six months? If so, what was your experience of these?*

The majority of the group had no experience of these public participation methods. The two participants who had attended community meetings had sharply different experiences. One found it to be a waste of time. The other, while aggravated and discouraged by limited participation from her community, found it very effective for those who did show up. The only other experienced participant had participated in some webinars which involved looking at a presentation online and then calling in with responses. She felt that it was very effective and cost-saving. Finally, one attendee who hadn't participated in any of these methods commented that community meetings or presentations are better because they are more interactive than the other methods, which aren't personal enough.

*D4: Regarding community meetings, what types of features or formats would you find most appealing? (Check all that apply).*

The group liked the format of a structured presentation the most; all but one checked that option. Interactive graphics were second most popular – people liked the visual aspect. Small group discussion appealed to the majority of the group as well, although one person was concerned that they can be “too chaotic.” About half the group liked the concept of electronic voting; one pointed out that it can work well following a structured presentation. The open house format was the least popular option, although a number of participants liked the idea.

*E1: What is the best way to reach you to let you know about these participation opportunities? Rank the following in order of preference.*

The majority of participants favored either email notices or various alternative suggestions, although two thought a mailer was the best way to reach them. (One participant's opinion differed sharply; that person thought that email should never be used.) No one marked the newspaper as their first choice, although it received a high number of second and third place votes, as did mailers. Alternative suggestions made included publicity involving celebrities, PSAs, TV ads or announcements, billboards, phone calls, notices on Craigslist, advertising on non-profit websites, spreading info through colleges or church groups, promotional demos along transportation routes, use of volunteers, and people in their area promoting these opportunities.

*E2: What is the best way to keep you informed about the CTP and FSTIP processes? Rank the following in order of preference.*

Five participants picked a mailer as their first choice of method for keeping them informed. Three ranked email as #1, although one participant thought that email should not be used. No one ranked the newspaper as a first choice, though it and email were the most popular second-choice methods by far. Not everyone ranked these methods; a couple of participants just checked off their favored methods. There were two check marks for each of email and newspaper, and one for mailer. One person's first choice was the alternative method of TV news announcements; specifically Fox News, because "I don't watch any other stations." Other alternative methods suggested included PSAs and phone calls, although these were third- or fourth-ranked choices in each case.

*E3: If you were responsible for getting people to participate in these planning processes, what would you do?*

Suggestions made by the group included email contact, newspaper announcements, word of mouth, mailers, door-to-door campaigns (perhaps passing out free ink pens or other items), and similar focus groups that repeat. They emphasized the importance of talking to people one-on-one and discussing why their participation is important. One participant suggested advertising on free/non-profit websites and using the college system to raise awareness. Marketing was another popular idea for raising public awareness, using live promotional demonstrators, perhaps celebrities to attract extra attention.

*E4: Is there anything else you would like to add?*

- I would like to be able to navigate to planning/funding website for resources/announcements.
- That my opinion/time and efforts will amount to something, otherwise the whole thing is bogus!
- REPEAT – redundant persistence...maybe this issue is a passing fancy. To really hit home keep up with people.
- Thank you for the sandwiches, and for allowing me to participate in this focus group.
- I believe more community involvement would decrease major mistakes in engineering and gaps in construction.

## **B2. Sacramento Focus Group Summary**

The focus group meeting in Sacramento was held in a meeting room at the Sacramento YMCA Administrative Building on December 13th, 2007. Nancy Kays (MIG) facilitated the meeting, Daniel Krompholz (MIG) took notes, twelve participants attended the meeting and turned in completed feedback forms, and two guest listeners from Caltrans attended. The following summary is a synthesis of the participants' oral and written responses to the questions they were asked in the meeting.

*A. Describe what you know about how transportation projects are planned and paid for in your region and statewide.*

From the written responses to this question, many claimed they were only making educated guesses since they were not certain how transportation projects got planned and funded. Most respondents offered partial explanations, mentioning involvement at some form of governmental level and the reliance of tax dollars. None of the answers demonstrated the level of understanding comparable to the illustrative diagram that Nancy revealed soon after the respondents finished answering this question. Nancy used the diagram to briefly explain how California plans and funds transportation.

*B1. Based on what you know about the California Transportation Plan (CTP) process, how interested would you say you are in it? Give some reasons for your answer.*

While respondents were very interested in talking about transportation issues and recognized the CTP process as a very important tool for transportation planning and funding, they also discussed how the CTP's appeal is limited to those who directly benefit from it. The feedback forms revealed that two people were very interested, eight were somewhat interested, and two were somewhat disinterested. The people who were very interested in the CTP said they care about their region and would like to be informed about how it is planned. Those that were somewhat interested gave reasons why transportation planning affects their everyday life and expressed a general interest to learn more about it and improve it. One person commented that they were only somewhat interested since it takes effort to learn about it and it's not convenient. The comments from the two people who marked somewhat disinterested said that they were not personally involved in the transportation planning process and have issues with the government.

In discussion, one respondent suggested that while the CTP is something on which everybody has an opinion, it needs to be targeted to appeal to certain interests or broken down to be comprehensible. This idea was generally well accepted. Another respondent said that a major obstacle he thinks discourages people from caring about the CTP is some kind of proof that public input makes a difference. Others had concerns about the time it takes for the CTP to make changes to the transportation system.

*B2. How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the California Transportation Plan process?*

The feedback forms showed that three people thought others would be very interested, three somewhat interested, one between somewhat interested and somewhat disinterested, two somewhat disinterested, one not at all interested, and two with no opinion. The people who indicated very interested said that the community would be interested if the planning process was understood, that Californians care in one way or another about the environmental implications with regards to transportation, and would like to know where our tax dollars go. The three people that marked somewhat interested commented that while most people aren't interested in looking up information and researching transportation planning, "everybody has a say, opinion and issue with transportation in general." The respondent who marked between somewhat interested and disinterested remarked, "in the community where I live my neighbors are elderly" - with the implication that the CTP is long-range and they wouldn't have as much a stake in it. The two respondents who checked somewhat disinterested commented that most people would only be interested if they were personally affected, and most people don't have time or the inclination to pay attention to the plan. The respondent who thought the community would not be interested at all said people are busy enough handling day to day affairs. Respondents with no opinion said they didn't know many of their neighbors or people in California.

*C1. Based on what you know about the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP) process, how interested would you say you are in it? Give some reasons for your answer:*

Most people responded very to somewhat interested, two were disinterested, and one person responded not at all interested. Their reasons for being interested echoed aforementioned comments including liking to be informed about the planning process, understanding how tax dollars are spent, and seeing how the process influences their lives. The two people who were somewhat disinterested doubted the effectiveness of the FSTIP and said they didn't know much about it.

*C2. How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the FSTIP process?*

Two people marked very interested, three were somewhat interested, four were somewhat disinterested, and three were not at all interested. People who showed some level of interest said that other people are interested in transportation planning and funding, but only have limited time. Those respondents who marked somewhat disinterested doubted people's interest in the FSTIP since it wouldn't affect them, or they wouldn't be educated enough to have the ability to participate in any planning. Those respondents who marked not interested at all said that most people don't have the time or interest, especially with something at the federal level.

*D1. What would it take to get you to participate in these processes?*

Respondents generally said they needed to be informed about the transportation process before they could get involved and ask questions. Some ideas that were mentioned to educate the public included raising awareness on college campuses, having a website people could go to with a Q&A section and interactive map, providing testimonials from people who spoke up and made a difference, emails, discussion on talk radio, distributing DVDs, and providing information via regular mail. Respondents emphasized the need to relate the process to people's interests, for information to be easily comprehensible, and to make public engagement as convenient as possible. One respondent said that if participating is something he can do on "my time," he is much more likely to be involved.

*D2. What methods of participation would be most attractive to you? Rank the following in order of preference.*

While there was some dissent among respondents, most preferred participating through an interactive website and email. Some respondents favored more personal means of participation including community meetings and telephone conversations while others promoted less personal high-tech methods such as chat groups and electronic voting.

*D3. Of the methods listed have you participated in any of these in the past six months? If so, what was your experience of these?*

Eight respondents had not participated in any of the aforementioned participation methods. One respondent commented that this focus group session really opened up her eyes to how the transportation system works. The four other respondents who had participated had done so by a phone poll, a website, and a mail-in.

*D4. Regarding community meetings, what types of features or formats would you find most appealing? (Check all that apply).*

There wasn't one type of format that was most appealing to respondents. Their responses seemed to indicate that using multiple methods to get public feedback would be the most effective approach. One respondent suggested an additional approach, an internet-based presentation that allowed public input.

*E1. What is the best way to reach you to let you know about these participation opportunities? Rank the following in order of preference.*

Most respondents indicated email as their top choice, and fewer people selected newspaper and mailer as a top choice. Some other ways that respondents suggested notifying the public were using TV, radio, a website, and shopping bag fliers, and changeable message signs on freeways.

*E2. What is the best way to keep you informed about the CTP and FSTIP processes? Rank the following in order of preference.*

Again, most responses indicated email as the preferred method of staying informed, and websites were listed as an alternative method of engagement.

*E3. If you were responsible for getting people to participate in these planning processes, what would you do?*

Many respondents chose to employ a mix of the aforementioned outreach methods to target different groups of people. Many respondents favored an interactive website, while one suggested forming a meet-up group on craigslist. One respondent mentioned creating an incentive to participate, and another suggested capturing the greatest participant pool with the budget.

*E4. Is there anything else you would like to add?*

- The website has to look jazzy!
- There should be a feedback section on the website.
- Educate through schools.
- I just don't think transportation is a "hot button" subject unless it is something locally that impacts individuals.
- Get rid of carpool lanes
- (3) Create an incentive for people to participate; make it inviting
- I would like to learn more about this process.
- I am a real proponent of the internet-based approach.
- Our community has a place to host a speaker to inform the community on these issues.

### **B3. Long Beach Focus Group Summary**

The focus group meeting in Long Beach was held in a conference room on the third floor of the World Trade Center on December 13th, 2007. Nancy Kays (MIG) facilitated the meeting, Daniel Krompholz (MIG) took notes, thirteen participants attended the meeting and turned in completed feedback forms, and two guest listeners from Caltrans attended.

The following summary is a synthesis of the participants' oral and written responses to the questions they were asked in the meeting.

*A. Describe what you know about how transportation projects are planned and paid for in your region and statewide.*

Since the responses to this prompt were not discussed at the meeting, only the feedback forms provided information regarding their knowledge of transportation funding and planning. Most respondents attributed some transportation planning authority to either local, state, or federal governments. They also generally identified the main source of transportation funding from taxes. A few respondents went more in-depth, describing the agencies involved and mentioning measures that contributed to transportation funding, and two respondents admitted they didn't know or have any idea. While some responses conveyed a better overall understanding of transportation funding and planning than others, none of these demonstrated a comprehensive understanding from start to finish how transportation projects get carried out. Soon after the respondents finished answering this question, Nancy used a diagram to briefly explain how California plans and funds transportation.

*B1. Based on what you know about the CA Transportation Plan process, how interested would you say you are in it?*

Ten respondents indicated they were somewhat interested, two very interested, and one between somewhat disinterested and not interested at all. Respondents who were very interested said that the CTP would affect projects that they cared about. Respondents who indicated somewhat interested were discouraged by how long the planning process takes, and were concerned that their feedback wouldn't make a difference. One respondent said, "some of the things we vote on never come to fruition because of the long-term scope of the CTP, which gives us the impression that it's all a lie." Another respondent called the CTP "kind of a mystery," saying that the public doesn't know much about the political process outside of the window of time before and after elections. Overall, many respondents expressed skepticism over the government's plans and called for more political transparency and true public involvement. However most respondents did express interest to understand how statewide plans would improve local and state transportation problems. The respondent who marked somewhat disinterested said he was not interested in the state's transportation system – only the local one, the CTP would take too long to research, and his opinion wouldn't affect his way of living.

*B2. How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the California Transportation Plan process?*

Three respondents marked very interested, five somewhat interested, one somewhat disinterested, two not at all interested, and two had no opinion. Respondents who indicated very interested reasoned that people would want to know about public transportation projects and want to know how their tax dollars are being spent. Respondents that marked somewhat interested said while people are concerned a little too much with their day to day activities to put a lot of faith in the CTP, they would generally be interested in the state's plans to fix local problems and provide better public transportation. The respondent who marked somewhat disinterested said most people would be apathetic towards the CTP since their transportation issues are not being addressed at the state level. The two respondents who marked not at all interested commented that the public's feedback wouldn't be of much use, and a language barrier would prevent people from their community from being interested. Another concern raised in discussion of this question was that not many people would take the time to research the CTP. The respondents who marked no opinion said they could not speak for anyone but themselves.

*C1. Based on what you know about the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP) process, how interested would you say you are in it? Give some reasons for your answer:*

Five respondents marked very interested, six somewhat interested, and two not interested at all. Those respondents who indicated very interested said they would want to know what projects are being funded and built in their region, where their money is going, and ensure that projects are justifiable and helpful to the community. Respondents who marked somewhat interested commented that they would like to see improvements to all levels of transportation in California, know what projects are being planned and constructed, and to find out the projects will impact them. However, some respondents were skeptical about how effective the FSTIP is at addressing transportation needs over the short-term. One respondent said he might be more interested in FSTIP if he could see list of projects, their status, and how his tax dollars were being spent. After discussion, it was clear that respondents were more interested in a plan that produced results over the short-term than the FSTIP which projects transportation projects twenty years into the future. The respondents who marked not at all interested commented that any federal transportation plans are long-range and would have less of an impact on them.

*C2. How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the FSTIP process?*

Three respondents marked very interested, three somewhat interested, four somewhat disinterested, two not at all interested, and one no opinion. Respondents who marked very interested and somewhat interested said people would be interested to learn about where their money is being spent, what transportation projects are under construction, and how projects will impact their quality of life. Those that marked somewhat disinterested said they have no faith in the government, and people would not be able to appreciate the FSTIP unless they see small changes and improvements. Respondents who marked not at all

interested criticized the public's lack of interest in political affairs, and said people are interested in positive changes and results – not so much the process that brings these about. The respondent with no opinion said he did not know how to respond to the question.

*D1. What would it take to get you to participate in these processes?*

Respondents suggested meetings, forums, emails, public access TV, and an interactive website that spread awareness of the processes and importance of participating. Some respondents said they would only participate under certain conditions; they would participate if it was convenient for them, didn't take too much time, and their feedback was well-received.

*D2. What methods of participation would be most attractive to you? Rank the following in order of preference.*

Most respondents preferred the interactive website, and email and mail were the next most preferred choices. Other methods of participation suggested included interactive workshops, text messages, billboards, focus groups, TV, radio, newspapers, and other media.

*D3. Of the methods listed have you participated in any of these in the past six months? If so, what was your experience of these?*

Seven respondents said they had not participated while those that did said they answered mail and email questionnaires, provided feedback on interactive websites, and were involved in community meetings.

*D4. Regarding community meetings, what types of features or formats would you find most appealing? (Check all that apply).*

Respondents favored the open house format, structured presentation with community discussion, and electronic voting. One respondent commented that TV discussions with a way to interact with the public (e.g. text messaging) would appeal to him.

*E1. What is the best way to reach you to let you know about these participation opportunities? Rank the following in order of preference.*

Most respondents indicated email as their top choice, and second most preferred method was mail. Some respondents suggested TV, announcements on public transit, phone calls, billboards, craigslist, and other media.

*E2. What is the best way to keep you informed about the CTP and FSTIP processes? Rank the following in order of preference.*

Again, most respondents preferred email over mailers and the newspaper. Other suggestions included TV, announcements on public transit, a website, billboards, a post card with a website link, craigslist, and other media.

*E3. If you were responsible for getting people to participate in these planning processes, what would you do?*

Many respondents employed a mix of the aforementioned outreach methods to target different groups of people. A few respondents said they would seek support from local and regional leadership programs, cities, and counties to inform the public and encourage them to participate. Other ideas proposed included establishing a list of local homeowners' associations and community groups and having a team of individuals that lobbied these groups, setting up booths at public events such as fairs and community events, having incentives for people (i.e. gas cards), distributing fliers in bathroom stalls, imprinting toilet paper, and playing videos at gas station pumps and onboard airplanes.

*E4. Is there anything else you would like to add?*

- Thank you for the opportunity to know more about this topic.
- I am glad the state is trying to inform people about plans that will affect them.
- People won't participate unless there is a sort of incentive. Offer some sort of coupon to capture people's interests.
- The CTP should have as many Southern CA representatives as Northern CA representatives so Southern CA gets its fair share.
- By educating the public and having forums for discussion, transportation plans can be carried out effectively and expediently.
- Knowledge is power!
- Get the local activists involved. Tie it in to the environment and other issues.

## **B4. Oakland Focus Group Summary**

The focus group meeting in Oakland was held at the Cesar Chavez Branch Library on December 18th, 2007. Lou Hexter (MIG) facilitated the meeting. Maria Mayer (MIG) took notes. Ten participants attended the meeting and turned in feedback forms, and Leslie Snow and Pam Korte of Caltrans attended as listeners. The following summary is a synthesis of the participants' oral and written responses to the questions they were asked in the meeting.

For this group, "transportation" seemed chiefly to mean "public transit," and the balance of their comments focused on that. Although there was some mention of congestion on freeways, driving was mostly considered as an inferior alternative to public transit.

*A. Describe what you know about how transportation projects are planned and paid for in your region and statewide.*

Several participants mentioned not knowing much about this process, although most offered at least partial explanations. They were aware that transportation improvements are paid for at least partly through revenues from state taxes, bridge tolls, and public transportation fares, and partly through federal or state transportation or general funds. A couple of participants also mentioned bond initiatives as a source of funding, and their sense that some transportation plans are voted on, with the process sometimes beginning as a voter initiative. Others thought that plans are usually formulated on the state level by the DOT or Caltrans, focusing on congested areas and considering how to resolve the issues, or by specific local transit agencies. They guessed that professional planners do most of the planning and implementation, but that public meetings are often held to get feedback from the community.

A few negative perceptions were noted. One participant mentioned his perception that during the current state administration's tenure, a much larger part of the burden is supported by taxpayers than used to be the case. Another suggested that the contractors involved in the work are overpaid, and that they rarely get finished on schedule, leading to higher costs yet. Several also had a sense that projects such as freeway improvements in higher-income, suburban areas are given priority over projects that chiefly benefit lower-income or more urban areas (BART and Bay Area bridges were the examples specified).

*B1. Based on what you now know about the California Transportation Plan process, how interested would you say you are in it?*

The majority of participants were interested in the process – four said they were very interested and five others said they were somewhat interested. They felt plans for transportation were crucial given California's rising population, and were eager for the opportunity to voice their opinions. They also wanted to learn how transportation planning is prioritized – whether it's in line with what the public feels is needed, as well as consistent over the long-term and decided equitably. A few participants voiced some cynicism about how much public input is taken into consideration in making transportation planning decisions. Others were pleasantly surprised to learn that citizen involvement was possible at a regional or statewide level, as opposed to just local, and that CTP was connected to and

affected by the regional level. Although most of the group seemed to focus on public transportation, one person commented at this point that we're also talking about moving goods. Only one participant was not at all interested – the only reason mentioned was that they found the presentation boring.

*B2. How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the California Transportation Plan process?*

In general, the group gauged the interest level of others in their communities as slightly lower than their own. Only one felt that others would be very interested; six felt that others would be somewhat interested, two thought they'd be somewhat disinterested, and one had no opinion. Those who thought others would be interested believed that those who need to use public transportation frequently, or who live in areas without adequate public transport, would be most likely to participate, and would appreciate the opportunity to voice their opinions. A couple participants mentioned that they expect Bay Area residents to be active and concerned with community issues, particularly since no one likes dealing with our crowded freeways. Those who thought others would be disinterested, on the other hand, said that people generally expect that their voices won't be heard at a state level, and are so overwhelmed that they'd rather leave "distant" matters to the experts. Several participants also noted California's love affair with cars – they thought most people would drive no matter what, and, as long as they have a reliable car, wouldn't feel they had any transportation issues. Note that once again, most participants presumed that we were primarily talking about public transportation. The participant who had no opinion said that "transportation is a topic I never discuss with others."

*C1: Based on what you now know about the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan process, how interested would you say you are in it?*

The majority of participants were interested – only one claimed to be very interested, with seven others somewhat interested. Only one participant was somewhat disinterested. As with the CTP process, participants liked the idea of being able to voice their opinion, and also learn more about what projects get prioritized and why. They wanted to know which projects are being worked on, what's being spent on them, and how the list changes when it's updated. One participant felt that there was more immediacy and a greater possibility of being effectual at this level of the process since it involved short-range funding decisions. Another assumed that a higher level of interpretation would be provided with this document than with CTP, and that raised his interest. However, another was concerned that the document would be incomprehensible to the general public, and several again mentioned a level of cynicism about how effective public input would be. The participant who was somewhat disinterested said that it was because "I haven't seen any progress on a few areas that need major help with traffic congestion – they've been that way for years and I don't have a lot of faith in the process making a difference."

*C2: How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan process?*

Participants' expectations of others' interest level was similar to their own. One thought others would be very interested, seven thought others would be somewhat interested, and only two thought others would be somewhat disinterested. The reasons given were also similar to those that participants gave for their own interest (the opportunity to give input and to receive information). They felt that the short-term nature of this process would increase community members' interest. The note of cynicism was still present, however, with participants feeling that community members would only care what was happening in their own areas, would have difficulty interpreting the document, and will continue to drive no matter what. The participants who felt that others would be somewhat disinterested echoed this last point – everyone they knew had a car and drives no matter what the options are. Plus, they thought that most of their fellows had little patience for this level of complexity.

*D1: What would it take to get you to participate in these processes?*

Participants wanted more information for public review, given in a reasonably clear fashion. They noted that the public isn't made aware of these processes – one participant said that this was the first they'd heard about this, despite being a lifelong Bay Area resident. They also felt that they would need some kind of assurance that their participation would truly make a difference – some accountability from the state of California, plus open and consistent access to transportation planners and decision-makers. They would like an understanding of how public input would be processed. Two participants noted that surveys to complete, sent through the mail, would be a useful method. They felt that the more topic-specific the survey, the better – if the subject matter affects or speaks to them directly, they'd be happy to participate regardless of the format. One participant also noted that token compensation would be a good idea, so people feel their time is being valued - at least to start, until more such involvement becomes standard. Another suggested a citizen review panel be randomly selected, in a manner similar to the jury selection process. That would ensure a broad range of Californians giving input.

*D2: What methods of participation would be most attractive to you? Rank the following in order of preference.*

Email surveys were the most popular method of participation, with an interactive website a fairly close second. Participants liked that these methods could be done on one's own time, and also felt that people prefer to do electronic communication. It's also easy to reach a lot of people with just one email to all the members of a given group. The group was quite divided on the value of mail-in questionnaires, and presentations to community groups, and community meetings. Those who work with or for community groups placed those options high – they felt that people on a neighborhood level aren't aware of these processes, won't answer their phones or fill in mail-in questionnaires, so it's the only way to get them informed and involved. Others were more dubious about the value of community meetings and/or presentations. A phone poll was the least popular method – it received one vote

each for the first four rankings, but the balance of the votes all placed it last. One participant added “other” as the least favored option, although they neglected to identify what their proposed alternative would be.

*D3: Of the methods listed, have you participated in any of these in the past six months? If so, what was your experience of these?*

Several members of the group had not participated in any of these methods recently (or at all). Those who had participated had the following comments:

- Interactive website/email surveys – I prefer these methods because I can complete them at my own convenience.
- Interactive websites of other kinds – I would love to discover these for public policy matters!
- Phone polls:
  - I participated out of politeness, but I found it “invasive” of my private time.
  - They seem useless (and mostly one gets called by organizations asking for money!).
  - I didn’t participate – called on a bad day.
- Community meetings and presentations to community groups. My experience is that they provide individuals opportunities to speak and receive info to raise awareness and involvement in issues affecting neighborhoods.
- Have had experience with surveys and phone polls (from radio stations, etc.). Has been in community meeting presentations. It would be hard to pick people to target – you don’t want too many people in one area, as would happen with community groups, because you only get local opinions.
- I’ve communicated with my elected representatives by email; I have not, however, worked with the state or federal administration.

*D4: Regarding community meetings, what types of features or formats would you find most appealing? (Check all that apply).*

The open house format appealed to more participants than any other option – eight people checked it off. They liked the casual feeling of this. However, a couple of participants thought it was a bad idea, too distracting and chaotic with people coming and going, and noted their preference for a more structured presentation. Electronic voting came in a close second with seven check marks. Participants liked the idea of getting to vote right then and there, plus being able to remain anonymous. Five participants liked the idea of small group discussions, allowing citizens to actively engage and make sense of the issues. Four approved of structured presentations. Only three checked off interactive graphics – those who did commented on appreciating it because they were “visual people” and could filter information best when given in that format. One person suggested a ballot by mail as an alternative method.

*E1: What is the best way to reach you to let you know about these participation opportunities? Rank the following in order of preference.*

Once again, email was by far the most popular method – the majority of the group ranked it at number one. One participant noted that of the methods listed, email is the only one she accesses. A mailer was second most popular. One participant preferred a mailer to emails because she receives too many random emails and might not read the notice. Newspaper ads were a relatively distant third. One participant suggested ads in the Chronicle; another liked the idea of using alternative papers such as the Guardian, but a third noted that the dispensers for the free papers are often empty. Other methods suggested were notification by phone, perhaps automated phone call alerts of some kind (rankings for this varied from #2 through #4), and TV commercials. A couple participants said that although phone calls are a bad idea in general, they wouldn't mind if it was about something they were already involved in – and that since they get their news online, they don't look at newspapers, and mailers go straight to recycling.

*E2: What is the best way to keep you informed about the CTP and FSTIP processes? Rank the following in order of preference.*

The responses to this question were very similar to the last question – email the most preferred, mailers second choice, and newspaper ads third. Other methods suggested were notification by phone, perhaps automated phone call alerts of some kind; a website that could be checked on a monthly basis (ranked number 2); and TV commercials (the participant who suggested this last idea ranked it as number one).

*E3: If you were responsible for getting people to participate in these planning processes, what would you do?*

The one factor that participants emphasized most strongly was informing the public about these processes, and making it clear that their involvement would make a difference. Success stories linking tangible results to public participation would be helpful. They would talk to people in their community – at church, neighbors, family and friends, etc. - about how much their opinion would count. Public outreach could be planned to tie into community/neighborhood activities. They thought that it's very important to keep communication going, and give people ongoing opportunities to participate. Equalitarian involvement is also very important – making certain that a representative cross-section of the population is being reached and inspired to get active.

Specific methods suggested included TV commercials, collecting email addresses, ads/announcements on public transportation systems and posted at major stops as well as drop boxes for comments, and flyers distributed at public transportation stops. One participant suggested that the flyer be kept simple, with an attention-grabbing header, i.e. “don't throw this away – we need your opinion to improve public transportation!” Another pointed out that when you give the public an avenue to give their input, they respond – a few years ago when MUNI put up a complaint line and advertised it through a PSA, it was called so frequently they had to take it down again.

There was a divergence of opinion regarding the use of cash and other incentives for participation. Several members of the group thought that paying people, at least initially until they develop a genuine interest, would be necessary. Perhaps a tax break, a FasTrak or public transportation passes would be appealing. However, the participant who had previously suggested a randomly selected transportation “jury” disagreed – he felt it shouldn’t be incentivized, but compulsory. A couple other participants agreed, saying that using the jury system would be an easier way to get people involved, and would also assure feedback from a true cross-section of the populace.

*E4: Is there anything else you would like to add?*

- I really believe in order to reach people, you need to start at the local level – introduce topics/open up discussions about their personal modes of transportation. State-level issues are too conceptual for most people to take interest in.
- I don’t think the freeways will ever catch up with the driving population.
- Transportation is an important issue and I’d be interested in comparisons between what ours and other counties’ plans are.
- I am a software developer, and so I know how difficult it is to deploy a computerized solution which is both PUBLIC and SECURE. Things like online e-voting solutions would be extremely problematic because of the possibility of astroturfing (“stuffing the ballot” by getting people on a political message board or blog to give the answers you want, for example) or technological fraud (using a proxy to vote multiple times, or the agency involved “losing” results that aren’t what their administrators want).
- I’m curious who is funding this group, and why! Must be Caltrans...but what is the motivation? Most cynically, I imagine more support of bond ballot measures is desired...
- Higher taxes (help with public transportation) on: Expensive SUVs, expensive cars, polluters, petrol/gas companies!!
- This was very educational after all.

## **Appendix C: Demographic Profile of Focus Group Participants**

Following is an overall profile of participants in all four focus groups, broken down by the demographic and transportation use categories that were specified in the recruitment questionnaire.

### **Age:**

Less than 21: 1  
21-40: 20  
41-65: 24  
Over 65: 1

### **Gender:**

Female: 26  
Male: 20

### **Residential Area Size:**

Large Urban (>250,000): 27  
Moderate Urban (50,000 - 250,000): 13  
Small City or Town (<50,000): 4  
Rural: 2

### **Race:**

African American/Black: 9  
African American/Hispanic: 1  
Asian: 4  
Asian/Other Pacific Islander: 1  
Hispanic/Latino: 8  
Hispanic/European: 1  
Hispanic/Native: 1

Native American: 2  
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander: 1  
White (non-Hispanic): 16  
White/Hispanic: 1  
Other (unidentified): 1

### **Education:**

High School Graduate: 3  
Currently in College: 6  
Some College: 4  
Associate Level Degree or Technical Certification: 9

Bachelor's Degree: 17 (1 currently a grad student)  
Post-Graduate Degree: 6  
Missing information: 1\*

### **Mode of Transportation/Frequency of Use**

(Note: Most participants utilized more than one form of transportation, on average about three. Only four participants named a single form of transportation used - driving their own automobile on a daily basis. All of these were Fresno residents.)

#### **Auto:**

Daily: 26  
3-6 times/week: 11  
1-3 times/week: 6  
Seldom: 1

#### **Walking:**

Daily: 15 (one with assistive device)  
3-6 times/week: 12  
Once or twice a week: 7  
Occasionally or seldom: 2

#### **Public Transit:**

Daily: 5  
5 times/week: 4  
3-5 times/week: 5  
Once or twice a week: 6  
Once or twice a month: 6  
Less than once a month: 9

#### **Bicycle:**

Daily: 5  
3-5 times/week: 5  
Once or twice a week: 10  
Less than once a week: 3  
Seldom: 3

\*Note: Some items of demographic information were lacking from one of the participants.

Following are individual demographic profiles of each of the four focus groups.

## **Fresno Focus Group Demographics**

### **Age:**

Less than 21: 1  
21-40: 3  
41-65: 7

### **Gender:**

Female: 8  
Male: 3

### **Residential Area Size:**

Large Urban (>250,000): 8  
Small City or Town (<50,000): 2  
Rural: 1

### **Race:**

African American/Black: 1	Hispanic/Latino: 3
Asian: 1	Native American: 2
Asian/Other Pacific Islander: 1	White (non-Hispanic): 3

### **Education:**

Currently in College: 2	Bachelor's Degree: 4
Some College: 1	Post-Graduate Degree: 1
Associate Level Degree or Technical Certification: 2	Missing information: 1*

## **Mode of Transportation/Frequency of Use**

### **Auto:**

Daily: 7  
3-6 times/week: 2  
Twice a week: 2

### **Walking:**

3-6 times/week: 2  
Once or twice a week: 1  
Occasionally: 1

### **Public Transit:**

Once a month: 1  
Less than once a month: 2

### **Bicycle:**

Daily: 2  
3-5 times/week: 1 (for exercise)  
Once or twice a week: 3

\*Note: Some items of demographic information were lacking from one of the participants. This participant was selected on the basis of fulfilling Caltrans' inclusion requirements for Native American participation.

## Sacramento Focus Group Demographics

### Age:

21-40: 4

41-65: 7

Over 65: 1

### Gender:

Female: 6

Male: 6

### Residential Area Size:

Large Urban (>250,000): 5

Moderate Urban (50,000 - 250,000): 5

Small City or Town (<50,000): 1

Rural: 1

### Race:

African American/Black: 2

Hispanic/Latino: 2

Hispanic/Native: 1

White (non-Hispanic): 6

White/Hispanic: 1

### Education:

High School Graduate: 1

Currently in College: 2

Some College: 1

Associate Level Degree or Technical  
Certification: 3

Bachelor's Degree: 3

Post-Graduate Degree: 2

## Mode of Transportation/Frequency of Use

### Auto:

Daily: 7

3-6 times/week: 1

1-3 times/week: 1

Seldom: 1

### Walking:

Daily: 62

3-6 times/week: 2

Once or twice a week: 3

### Public Transit:

Daily: 3

3-5 times/week: 1

Once or twice a week: 2

Once or twice a month: 1

Seldom: 1

### Bicycle:

3-5 times/week: 2

Once or twice a week: 2

Less than once a week: 1

Seldom: 1

## Long Beach Focus Group Demographics

### Age:

21-40: 6

41-65: 7

### Gender:

Female: 7

Male: 6

### Residential Area Size:

Large Urban (>250,000): 7

Moderate Urban (50,000 - 250,000): 5

Small City or Town (<50,000): 1

### Race:

African American/Black: 4

Asian: 2

Hispanic/Latino: 3

White (non-Hispanic): 3

Other (unidentified): 1

### Education:

Currently in College: 2

Some College: 1

Associate Level Degree or Technical  
Certification: 2

Bachelor's Degree: 7 (1 currently a grad  
student)

Post-Graduate Degree: 1

## Mode of Transportation/Frequency of Use

### Auto:

Daily: 6

3-6 times/week: 7

### Walking:

Daily: 6 (one with assistive device)

3-6 times/week: 4

Once or twice a week: 1

### Public Transit:

Daily: 1

5 times/week: 1

3-5 times/week: 1

Once or twice a week: 3

Once or twice a month: 2

Less than once a month: 4

### Bicycle:

Daily: 1

3-5 times/week: 2

Once or twice a week: 2

Less than once a week: 2

Seldom: 2

## Oakland Focus Group Demographics

### Age:

21-40: 7

41-65: 3

### Gender:

Female: 5

Male: 5

### Residential Area Size:

Large Urban (>250,000): 7

Moderate Urban (50,000 - 250,000): 3

### Race:

African American/Black: 2

African American/Hispanic: 1

Asian: 1

Hispanic/European: 1

Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander: 1

White (non-Hispanic): 4

### Education:

High School Graduate: 2

Some College: 1

Associate Level Degree or Technical

Certification: 2

Bachelor's Degree: 3

Post-Graduate Degree: 2

## Mode of Transportation/Frequency of Use

### Auto:

Daily: 6

3-6 times/week: 1

1-3 times/week: 3

### Walking:

Daily: 3

3-6 times/week: 5

Once or twice a week: 1

Occasionally or seldom: 1

### Public Transit:

5 or more times/week: 3

3-5 times/week: 3

Once or twice a week: 1

Once or twice a month: 2

Less than once a month: 1

### Bicycle:

Daily: 2

Once or twice a week: 3



**Appendix D: Feedback Form**

**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING FOCUS GROUP**

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**FEEDBACK FORMS**

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*Thank you very much for being part of  
this focus group on transportation!*

*Your active participation in tonight's discussion  
and your honest responses to the questions posed  
are of great value to the sponsors of this effort.*

- 
- A. Describe what you know about how transportation projects are planned and paid for in your region and statewide.**

---

**B1. Based on what you now know about the California Transportation Plan process, how interested would you say you are in it?**

<b>Very Interested</b>	<b>Somewhat Interested</b>	<b>Somewhat Disinterested</b>	<b>Not at all Interested</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Give some reasons for your answer:**

---

**B2. How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the California Transportation Plan process?**

<b>Very Interested</b>	<b>Somewhat Interested</b>	<b>Somewhat Disinterested</b>	<b>Not at all Interested</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Give some reasons for your answer:**

---

**C1. Based on what you now know about the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program process, how interested would you say you are in it?**

<b>Very Interested</b>	<b>Somewhat Interested</b>	<b>Somewhat Disinterested</b>	<b>Not at all Interested</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Give some reasons for your answer:**

---

**C2. How interested do you think others in your community – neighbors, co-workers, etc. – would be in the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program process?**

<b>Very Interested</b>	<b>Somewhat Interested</b>	<b>Somewhat Disinterested</b>	<b>Not at all Interested</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Give some reasons for your answer:**

---

**D1. What would it take to get you to participate in these processes?**

---

**D2. What methods of participation would be most attractive to you? Rank the following in order of preference.**

- Phone poll
- Email survey
- Interactive website
- Mail-in questionnaire
- Presentation to Community Groups
- Community Meeting

---

**D3. Of the methods listed, have you participated in any of these in the past six months? If so, what was your experience of these?**

---

**D4. Regarding community meetings, what types of features or formats would you find most appealing? (Check all that apply.)**

- Open House format – drop in as you can
- Structured presentation with community discussion
- Electronic voting
- Small group discussions
- Interactive graphics

---

**E1. What is the best way to reach you to let you know about these participation opportunities? Rank the following in order of preference.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Email**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Newspaper announcement**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Mailer**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Other** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**E2. What is the best way to keep you informed about the CTP and FSTIP processes? Rank the following in order of preference.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Email**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Newspaper announcement**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Mailer**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Other** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**E3. If you were responsible for getting people to participate in these planning processes, what would you do?**

---

**E4. Is there anything else you would like to add?**

## **Appendix E: Recruitment Summary**

MIG recruited the transportation focus group participants electronically by placing an advertisement on Craigslist, [www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org), in the various communities in which the focus groups were to be held. MIG's goal was to recruit 12-15 participants from the immediate area for each of the four groups. The ad offered \$60 for participants to participate, and specified that we were looking for active participants with an interest in learning about issues and stating their opinions. No compensation for transportation or parking was offered for the Fresno, Sacramento, or Oakland groups; however, due to the expense of parking in downtown Long Beach, MIG arranged for that location (the World Trade Center) to validate parking for participants. Refreshments were also provided.

Applicants who replied to the initial ad were emailed and asked to answer a series of questions regarding demographics and their preferred modes of transport (see Appendix D). Participants were then selected on the basis of ensuring as wide a demographic variation and choice of transportation modes as possible. An attempt was also made in Fresno and in Sacramento to fulfill Caltrans' inclusion requirements by recruiting directly from local Native American reservations or Rancherias. This had considerable success in Fresno but in the Sacramento area, it elicited no response.

A number of participants dropped out of each group on the day of the meeting for various reasons, but there were still from ten to thirteen participants in each focus group.



## **Appendix F: Recruitment Advertisement Text**

### **Initial Ad Text**

The advertisement initially placed on Craigslist was as follows:

#### **Earn \$60 for participating in our Transportation Focus Group**

We are seeking residents of the Bay area to participate in a study regarding transportation planning. Participants must be willing to attend a two-hour focus group that will be held the evening of Tuesday, December 18 from 6:00-8:00 pm in downtown Oakland. Participants will receive \$60 at the end of the focus group for attending; food will also be provided. People of color are strongly encouraged to apply. To be considered, please provide ALL of the following contact information:

Name:

Address:

Phone (Daytime number, if possible):

E-mail:

NOTE: This is a one-time opportunity for the evening of December 18th ONLY. We are not a staffing or employment firm and are not planning any other focus groups. We are seeking active participants – people who are interested in learning about issues and stating opinions. Please apply only if you are interested in actively participating. You will be contacted initially by email to further determine if you meet the criteria for this study.

### **Follow-up Questionnaire**

Respondents to the initial advertisement were sent an email with the following text, and participants chosen from among those who responded to the questionnaire.

Hello,

Thank you very much for responding to our ad.

We'd like a little more information about you. Could you please reply to ALL of the following questions? We are seeking to involve as diverse a group as possible, and this will help us make that determination. (Some of you have already answered some of these questions in your original email; if so, apologies for asking you to repeat the information. It will help us if you can do so.)

Please keep the following in mind:

- This is a one-time opportunity for a focus group on the evening of Tuesday, December 18th ONLY. The focus group takes place from 6:00-8:00 p.m. that evening in downtown Oakland. You must attend for the entire time period to receive your payment.
- Follow-up calls will not be made until the week of December 3-7, or possibly early the next week. If you are interested, please hold the date until that time has passed.
- As we mentioned in the original ad, we are seeking active participants – people who are interested in learning about issues and stating opinions. While of course we won't force you to speak, if your intention is to sit quietly and collect a paycheck at the end of the evening, please don't bother replying.
- We will not be holding any other focus groups; once you've replied to this message, please do not send follow-up emails. If you don't hear from us by phone, that indicates that you did not meet the criteria or that the group is full.

What is your gender?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Male
- \_\_\_\_\_ Female

What is your age?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Less than 21
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21-40
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41-65
- \_\_\_\_\_ Over 65

What is your racial or ethnic background?

- \_\_\_\_\_ White (non-Hispanic)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino
- \_\_\_\_\_ American Indian/Native American
- \_\_\_\_\_ African American/Black
- \_\_\_\_\_ Asian
- \_\_\_\_\_ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Rank these modes of transportation in order of your most frequent use, and state how frequently you use them (daily, 3-5 times a week, weekly, monthly, seldom, etc.)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Auto - How frequently? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bicycle - How frequently? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Public transit - How frequently? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Walking - How frequently? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Motorcycle/other motorized vehicle - How frequently? \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the following subgroups BEST describes your occupation or title? (Please check only one.)

- Elected/Appointed Official
- Private Citizen
- Public Agency Staff
- Metropolitan Planning Organization/Regional Transportation Planning Agency
- Community Based Organization
- Environmental Group Representative
- Tribal Government
- Business Community
- Retired
- Unemployed
- Other – describe: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your highest level of education?

- Grade school
- Attended high school
- High school graduate
- Attended trade school
- Currently in college
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Masters degree
- Ph.D or M.D.
- Other – describe: \_\_\_\_\_

How would you characterize the area that you live in or represent?

- Rural
- Small city or town (<50,000)
- Moderate sized urban area (50,000 – 250,000)
- Large urban area (>250,000)

And finally, could you give your email and phone number once again? This'll save us time, thanks...

Once again, thanks very much for your interest. We will be contacting you by phone if we are interested in your participation, and will confirm the location at that time.

Sincerely,

Maria M.  
MIG, Inc.