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**PEOPLE, PLANNING, AND PREPARING FOR THE  
FUTURE: YOUR 25 YEAR TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

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**TECHNICAL REPORT #3: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT  
STRATEGY**

**February 9, 2009**

# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE 2035 CAMPO PLAN

*Prepared by Group Solutions RJW for the  
Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)  
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## INTRODUCTION

February 2009 will mark the launch of CAMPO's planning process for the year 2035. The process will include three junctures at which public input will be solicited. In round one, residents of Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop and Caldwell counties will be invited to provide input regarding their transportation and mobility needs. In round 2, residents will be asked to provide input on alternative transportation and mobility scenarios. The process will culminate in round 3, when CAMPO will once again reach out to the community to present a draft of the 2035 Plan.

In December 2008, CAMPO contracted with Group Solutions RJW (with support from Estilo Communications) to lead these three phases of the public involvement effort. Group Solutions RJW proposed both "high touch" and "high tech" methods to target the wide and diverse community of the five-county area. Woven into this multi-faceted approach is a concerted effort to reach out to environmental justice (EJ) populations (low income and minorities). Following is the strategy that Group Solutions will employ to orchestrate the public involvement effort for CAMPO's 2035 Plan. This plan is supplemented by Attachment A: Environmental Justice Action Plan.

## I. OBJECTIVES OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

The objectives of the public involvement process are straightforward. They are to:

- To disseminate information so that the public is aware of the 2035 CAMPO planning process and has the opportunity to participate in the development of the CAMPO 2035 Plan
- To obtain input from a diverse cross-section of the population within the CAMPO planning area, including EJ populations.

## II. APPROACH

Achieving both of these objectives will require both creativity and flexibility. This means approaching the public involvement process in the following ways:

- Use high tech and high touch methods to solicit input and disseminate information
- Focus public involvement opportunities around three designated milestones in the planning process (i.e., three rounds of public involvement)
- Encourage interactive, participatory workshops as an important component of the outreach program
- Offer ways for those not attending the workshops to provide input into the planning process
- Use respected leaders and organizations to help disseminate information and solicit public input

- Encourage participation by members of EJ groups as well as the general public and, to the degree feasible, document the participation of EJ groups in the process

### III. MEDIA OUTREACH AND PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS

A strong public involvement campaign begins with a far-reaching and compelling public information campaign. The community needs to 1) know what the 2035 Plan is, 2) know that CAMPO needs public input to formulate that plan, and 3) know when, where and how they can get involved. Group Solutions' will disseminate information using techniques identified below.

- Develop for the project a current list of media outlets in the five county planning area
- Plan, promote and execute a media launch event in February 2009
- Create and distribute news releases and public service announcements to the media, including media with Spanish-speaking, African-American and Asian audiences
- In Round 1, place an ad to announce upcoming workshops in the newspaper with the highest circulation in each of the targeted counties
- Suggest story ideas to the media to promote public involvement activities and public participation
- Utilize chambers of commerce, civic organizations, environmental groups and others to distribute information and encourage participation in outreach activities. (Seek 10-15 organizations spanning the five county area willing to forward information to their members through newsletters, website, mailings, meetings, e-mails, etc.)
- Distribute information to environmental justice populations using flyers in locations frequented by these populations
- Enhance opportunities for environmental justice populations to receive information by providing information to targeted churches, organizations, and neighborhood associations
- Disseminate information to transportation blogs, CAMPO transportation partners, elected leaders, CAMPO Transportation Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee
- Prepare and mail a post card notice of workshops and survey to the CAMPO mailing list, which may be refined for 2035 Plan targeted involvement
- Develop a mailing list of meeting attendees and self-identified others and, in addition to the approaches noted above, use the list to make these stakeholders aware of public involvement opportunities in rounds 2 and 3

### IV. TECHNIQUES TO SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT

Equally as creative are the techniques Group Solutions will use to elicit widespread and meaningful input for the 2035 Plan.

*Workshops and Surveys.* Up to 13 public workshops will be held over the three round process, with five (5) in the first round, four (4) in the second round, and four (4) in the third. Round 1 workshops will generally begin with a brief presentation and open discussion, followed by group breakouts. Round 2 workshops should emphasize small group or individual involvement to solicit specific ideas. Round 3 workshops should share the draft plan concepts and solutions, seeking consensus-building as a group. Additionally, at each round of the planning process, information will be placed on the CAMPO website. Surveys will be posted on Survey Monkey for the first two rounds to solicit feedback. These surveys will be simple, short (4-5 questions) and preferably in multiple-choice format.

*Organizational Collaborations.* Group Solutions will develop a list of up to 40 stakeholder organizations and advocacy groups, including groups and organizations representing EJ populations, and offer the opportunity for a CAMPO speaker to appear before these groups and/or for these groups to receive information and solicit input from their members and constituents. Examples of relevant advocacy groups and organizations include Envision Central Texas, Texas Bicycle Coalition, Georgetown Cyclopaths, Gary Job Corps Center, Capital Metro's transit union, Sierra Club, Dove Springs Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Council of Austin, East Wilco Organization, Meals on Wheels, and Georgetown Housing Authority.

*Collaborations with Regional Transportation Partners.* Group Solutions will work with CAMPO to utilize its regional transportation partners (e.g., Capital Metro, Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, Capital Area Rural Transit Authority, City of Austin, Williamson County, etc.) to solicit input from transportation audiences. Possible options include hosting a meeting to solicit input from regional transportation planners, submitting information for partners' newsletters and websites, soliciting input from transportation employees and advisory group members, and interviewing riders on buses and other public transit vehicles.

*Electronic Newsletter.* As a way to maintain interest throughout the 19-month project, Group Solutions will produce up to four electronic newsletters for circulation to transportation providers, elected leaders, and interested others on the project's mailing list.

*Blogs and Social Networks.* Group Solutions plans to develop a list of up to 10 local (and regional) blogs and social network sites and utilize those sites to disseminate information about upcoming public involvement opportunities.

*Community Viz and You Tube.* A strong visual component to the planning process will assist the public in "seeing" and understanding the transportation options available to the region. Group Solutions RJW recommends that CAMPO staff use Community Viz to create virtual scenarios. We recommend, minimally, that visualizations be created to facilitate more meaningful input in Round 2 of public involvement, although visualizations can provide useful assistance in each round of public involvement. Visualizations can be used in public workshops, posted on the CAMPO website, and posted on You Tube to encourage broader distribution of information and participation. These techniques will be tied to active on-line surveys and other techniques to document public input through on-line media.

## **V. ROLES**

In order to ensure a successful public involvement program, Group Solutions RJW and CAMPO staff will work collaboratively, each tasked with appropriate roles and responsibilities. In general, CAMPO is responsible for project guidance; technical analysis, expertise, information, and staff presentations; and, for providing information, presentation materials and needed equipment for presentations. Group Solutions RJW is responsible for implementing the public involvement strategy and EJ action plan including media outreach, project communications, and public involvement activities. Public involvement activities include outreach to environmental justice populations. Specifically:

CAMPO will provide updated logos and templates, databases and stakeholder lists, as requested, to Group Solutions RJW; create brief survey questions to facilitate public input at each round of the planning process and manage the on-line survey; post information to the CAMPO website, including survey(s), visualizations, and other project information; create

project visualizations using Community Viz, or other relevant, software; provide information for electronic newsletters, blogs, social networking sites, etc.; coordinate with CAMPO transportation providers, introducing Group Solutions RJW and seeking leverage opportunities; and, prepare and make presentations at public involvement events, recording public input, as staff are available.

Group Solutions RJW will conduct media outreach; place survey inserts in newspapers (Round 1); distribute links to survey(s) and links to visualizations; post other information on blogs, social networking sites, and You Tube; get the word out about the media launch and subsequent public involvement opportunities; review CAMPO-produced materials for public communication; produce and distribute the electronic newsletter and flyers for gathering places; secure locations and handle logistics for public workshops; translate materials, as agreed, and provide summary reports after each round of public involvement.

## **VI. DELIVERABLES**

- a. Public Involvement Strategy
- b. EJ Action Plan
- c. Media Kick-off Event
- d. News releases for project launch and all three rounds of public involvement
- e. Flyers/mailers to get the word out about public involvement opportunities
- f. Public involvement workshops and events
- g. Electronic newsletters
- h. List of organizational stakeholders
- i. Summary report on Round 1 outreach results
- j. Summary report on Round 2 outreach results
- k. Summary report on Round 3 outreach results