

Connecticut River Estuary Metropolitan Planning Organization

Public Participation Guidelines for Transportation Planning

What is this report?

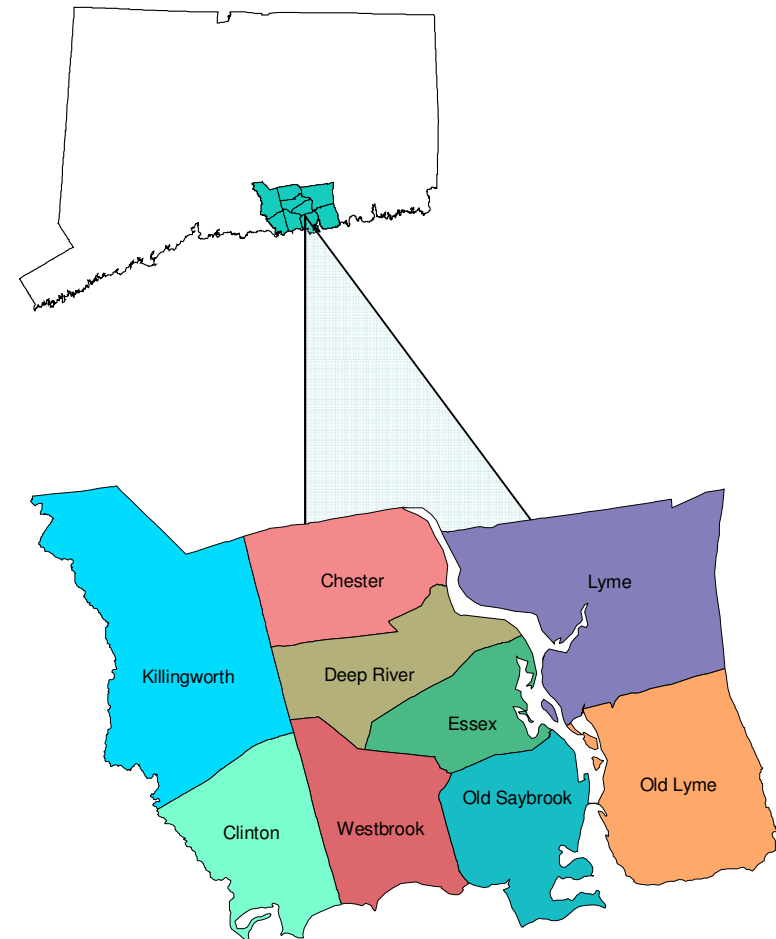
The purpose of this report is to document the actions carried out by the Connecticut River Estuary Metropolitan Planning Organization (CREMPO) for public participation in transportation planning, pursuant to Title 23CFR 450.316. It contains the policies and methodologies of involving the public in the transportation planning process. This document also provides a brief explanation of how the transportation planning process is conducted in the region.

What is the CREMPO region?

The CREMPO region is comprised of nine towns in the Connecticut River Estuary. These towns are:

Chester	Clinton	Deep River	Essex
Killingworth	Lyme	Old Lyme	Old Saybrook
Westbrook			

60,051 residents live in the region with Clinton having the largest population, 13,094. There are approximately 25,496 jobs in the region. With Old Saybrook having the largest number of jobs 5,813. The following map depicts the CREMPO planning area



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What does CREMPO do?

CREMPO brings together local governments to cooperate on a variety of topics related to transportation planning including: land use, transit, roads, conservation and environmental quality analysis, economic development, and demographics

CREMPO is dedicated to:

- Enabling towns, through regional cooperation, to work together to accomplish projects they cannot do as efficiently or cost effectively by themselves
- Creating a sense of pride in the region by aspiring to the highest quality of life and economic well being through transportation planning
- Increasing voluntary cooperation in the region to achieve productive results in transportation issues

CREMPO is responsible for allocating federal transportation funds in the region. In cooperation with CTDOT, CREMPO produces a short range Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and the Unified Planning Work Program. These documents represent unified goals and objectives of long range planning in region and promotes projects that best benefits the overall goals of the town and the region.

How is CREMPO organized ?

CREMPO is organized according to federal legislation (23USC 134(b): 49 USC 5303)) which requires the designation of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for each urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 population. The policy board of the MPO shall consist of (A) local elected officials, (B) officials of local agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation within the area, and (C) appropriate State officials

CREMPO is comprised of the nine First Selectmen from each of the region's towns, their designated alternates, a member from the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency (CRERPA) and a member of the Estuary Transit District and their respective alternates. The MPO board can also accept additional new membership from transportation related entities within the region by a majority vote of the board.

The following table displays the membership (December 2008) of the MPO board.

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Town	Member	Title	Alternate
Chester	Tom Marsh	1 st Selectman	
Clinton	Willie Fritz	1 st Selectman	
Deep River	Richard Smith	1 st Selectman	
Essex	Philip Miller	1 st Selectman	
Killingworth	Richard Cabral	1 st Selectman	
Lyme	Ralph Eno	1 st Selectman	
Old Lyme	Timothy Griswold	1 st Selectman	
Old Saybrook	Michael Pace	1 st Selectman	William Peace
Westbrook	Noel Bishop	1 st Selectman	
CRERPA	Bruce Edgerton	Chairman	
Estuary Transit District	Rich Cabral	Chairman	Ralph Eno

CREMPO MEETINGS

The CREMPO board meets the second Wednesday of each month at 8:30am at the CRERPA office unless otherwise noted on the yearly calendar which is filed in each of the town offices, with the Secretary of State, and is posted on the CRERPA website at www.crerpa.org.

These meetings are open to the public and are informal to encourage public participation. Public comment period is set at the beginning of the meeting so that members can discuss public concerns during the meeting.

CREMPO will periodically form subcommittees to evaluate special issues outside of the regular meeting, One existing standing committee is the “Transit Sub-Committee”

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How does the planning process work?

The CREMPO transportation planning process involves the preparation of regional long range plans, transportation improvement programs, citizen brochures, coordination with land use and town programs and administrative documents. Public interest varies depending on the product and intensity of the issue. The purpose of the CREMPO public participation process is to recognize differences in public interests and provide opportunities for involvement to meet the needs of various interests. This public participation guideline constitutes a general framework rather than a specific program.

The transportation planning process begins with the regional long-range transportation plan which was endorsed in November 2005. The plan includes fiscally constrained highway and transit projects that are expected to be funded in the next 25 years. While this plan is update every four years, an update or plan evaluation continue in 2006 to be adopted in 2007 to ensure adequate public comment period and town participation.



Who exactly is the public ?

- Residents
- Property Owners
- Business Owners
- Interest Groups
- Freight shippers and carriers
- Elected and appointed officials
- News and other media
- Drivers in the region
- Transit Users in the region
- Others interested in transportation



What types of organizations need outreach?

- Human Services
- Community Development
- Economic Development
- Health – Emergency Management
- Business
- Employer
- Disability Rights
- Minority
- Environmental
- Neighborhood Groups
- Others

What are the federal requirements of public participation?

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), signed into law in August 2005, requires that transportation planning be “continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive to the degree appropriate [23 USC SEC.134 (c) (3)]. The public participation process should include those key stakeholders who have not traditionally been involved. In other words, transportation planning must be conducted in conjunction with state and local officials, transit operators, and the public.

The joint Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration Joint Planning Rule (23 CFR part 450, 49 CFR part 613) requires MPOs to conduct a locally developed public participation process. The public involvement process must provide complete information timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and TIPs [23CFR part 450.316 (b) (1)]

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What are CREMPO policies for public participation?

CREMPO has four policies related to public participation.

1. Conduct pro-active outreach

CREMPO staff at CRERPA are responsible for continuously seeking to involve organizations and individuals with potential interests in transportation planning efforts. In short, CREMPO's goal is to inform and present information on transportation planning products and process to the public.

2. Conduct outreach to traditionally underserved individuals and communities, which include but are not limited to low income, minority and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons.

CREMPO will identify potential communities in the region, add them to the transportation mailing lists, define methods to engage them in transportation programs and projects. These efforts will be in accordance with Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Minority Populations and Low Income Populations" dated February 11, 1994, and Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency" dated August 11, 2000

3. Permit substantive interchange.

CREMPO will encourage substantive interchange between:

- Members of the public and staff
- Members of the public with one another at public meetings, open houses, and other events where any public is present; and
- Members of the public and members of CREMPO and associated subcommittees to encourage broad participation in all of its meetings.

4. Consider public input in decision making.

CREMPO will consider public input in its decision making. CREMPO staff will consider public input as it is drafting and refining documents, plans, and programs. Most importantly, proposals and viewpoints will be considered in advance of decisions.



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How does CREMPO carry out its public participation policies?

CREMPO provides information to the public by the following methods:

Advertising – CREMPO uses display advertisements in the Main Street News, Pictorial Gazette, Valley Shore News for TIP and Transportation Plan notifications. CREMPO takes out legal notices for updates to the Public Participation Guidelines

Memos and Reports – Memo and reports share board proposals, analyses, plans and programs. Monthly agendas and new releases announce publications. CREMPO information is also reported in the Estuary Forum, a newsletter of CRERPA.

Website: Information on about CREMPO and transportation Issues are maintained on the CRERPA website - www.crerpa.org.

News Releases – Before major CREMPO actions, news releases may be mailed to regional newspapers, and public service cable channels

Meeting Notices – Direct mailings for CREMPO provide interested persons meeting agendas and relevant background materials. Non-governmental parties are added to the mailing lists upon request.

Mailing List – Any member of the public requesting to be placed on the mailing list will receive a basic agenda for each of the above meetings.

Special Needs - All meetings announcements suggest that closed audio loops and/ or sign language interpreter will be available upon request. CREMPO requests two weeks notice to secure a closed audio loop and to secure a sign language interpreter, via the Connecticut Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired.

Foreign language translation currently is not provided at meetings. However, CREMPO has identified Asian and Spanish speaking interpreters to translate transportation planning related information to other relevant languages.

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CREMPO staff also seeks opportunities to meet with persons, groups, and/or organizations relative to transportation planning and programming efforts. There are several types of meetings that CREMPO will conduct to foster public participation. They include:

- **Periodic Work Sessions** – Late afternoon or early evening work sessions permit interested people and organizations to address current planning and programming efforts. Work sessions will be scheduled as needed for informal interchange between staff town organizations, board members and interested parties.
- **Transportation Plan/ TIP Meetings** – Public work sessions conducted for the development of these plans assist in developing goals, estimates, alternatives, and proposals. The CREMPO staff will also provide outreach at meetings in the nine towns as needed to facilitate understanding of municipal needs and local land use.
- CREMPO staff will also participate in meetings as requested by non-profit organizations and special interest groups.

How can you get information?

- Log onto the CRERPA website at www.crerpa.org and view the meeting schedules, agendas, publications, and the Estuary forum
- Contact the CRERPA office by phone at (860- 388-3497)
- Sign up to be on the mailing list.

How can you participate?

- Send your comments in writing to CRERPA/CREMPO at 455 Boston Post Road, P.O. Box 778, Old Saybrook,CT 06475
- Send your comments by email addressed to CREMPO BOARD to crerpa@snet.net
- Comment by telephone at (860) 388-3497 or FAX at (860-395-1404.
- Offer input/ discussion at CREMPO meetings or workshops
- Share your views with your First Selectman