

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MARTIN  
MPO

Engaging communities and people in the making of  
transportation plans and projects





The **Martin MPO** in Stuart, Florida is a small MPO with a demographic that includes very wealthy retirees as well as struggling immigrants. We reached out with innovative, low- and high-tech public outreach activities during the development of our **2040 Long Range Transportation Plan**, setting the stage for future public involvement of other work products and planning studies.

Known as "*Moving Martin Forward*" our LRTP planning efforts were designed to reach and teach everyone in Martin County.

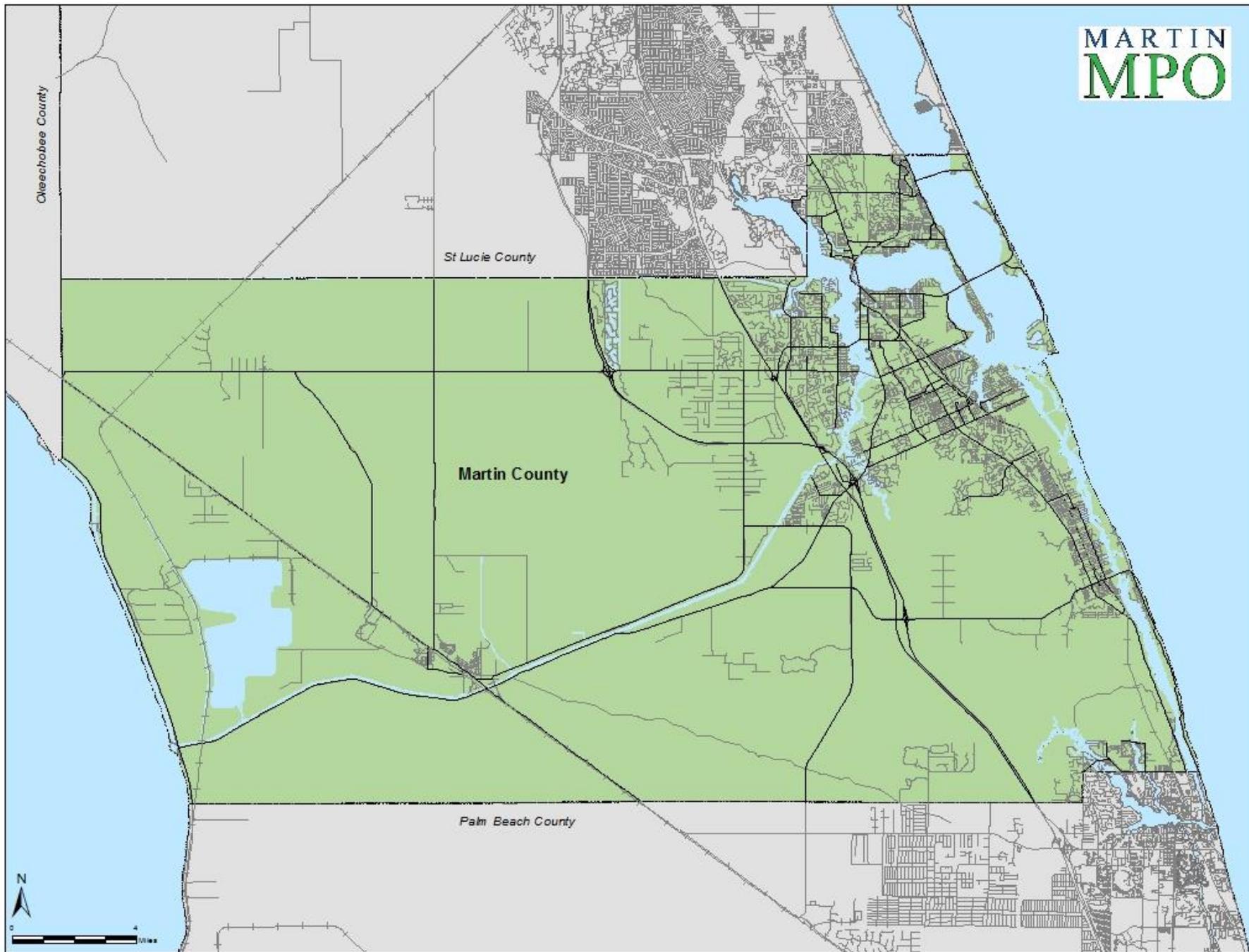


# Know Your Public

- ▶ The facts: US Census data
  - 2017 Community Characteristics Report
- ▶ Martin County
  - 30% age 65 and over; Median age 51
- ▶ Indiantown
  - 60% Hispanic; 25% HH below poverty
- ▶ Hutchinson Island
  - 60% hold Bachelor's degree or above; zero HH with public assistance



*Challenge: Small MPOs have small budgets –  
How do we engage everyone?*



Cleetchabee County

St Lucie County

Martin County

Palm Beach County



# Know Your Community



## Characteristics of Indiantown

- ▶ Many residents do not own cars, making walking and biking their primary modes of transportation
- ▶ SR 710
  - Runs through Town Center
  - Freight corridor on the State Strategic Intermodal System (SIS)
  - Model shows need for added capacity

*Challenge: How do you engage people from places where there is distrust of government?*

# Know Your Community

Understanding People (local facts not revealed by data)

- ▶ Elderly
  - Early Bird Special
- ▶ Time constraints
  - People getting off work before kids' soccer practice/night classes
- ▶ Input versus complaining
  - Existing meetings: CRA Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC)
  - Gathering places: libraries, churches, clubhouse



*Challenge: How do you encourage people to participate?*

# Know How to Engage Everyone

- ▶ Open Houses (not Workshops)
  - 4:00pm–7:00pm (Early Bird Special, getting off work)
  - Provide input whether you stay 10 minutes or 3 hours
- ▶ Techniques
  - Activities in which everyone (not just a few) can participate and learn...



# Martin Mobility Bucks

(many needs with limited funds)



# Interactive Polling

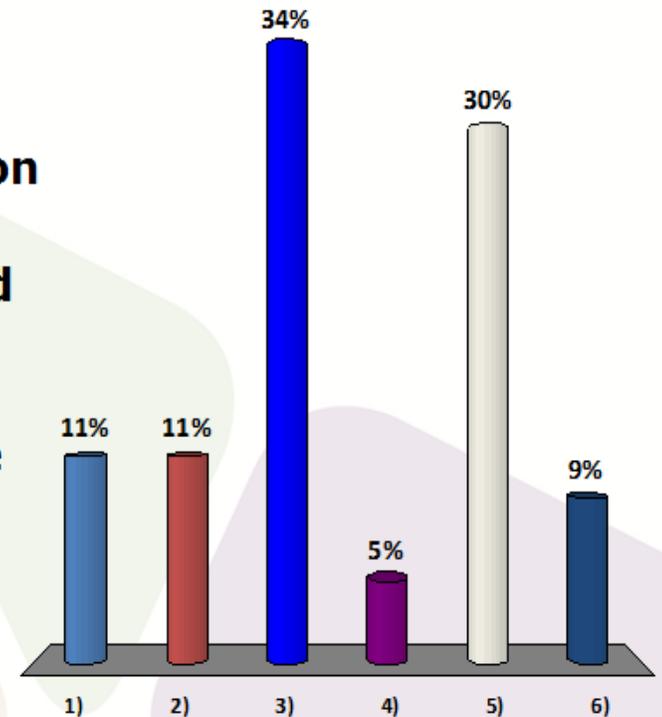
(everyone participates)



If you had control over the transportation budget, what is your highest priority improvement?



- 1) Neighborhood traffic safety and calming
- 2) Sidewalk construction and repairs
- 3) Bikeway construction on roads and greenways
- 4) Building new roads and bridges/roadway widening
- 5) Enhanced maintenance of existing roadway conditions
- 6) Public transit



# GIS Station (mapping their comments)



# Dot Game

(origins and destinations)

- Helps public understand why we survey



# Streetmix

(graphics tool)

- Free software
- Allows the public to envision and design Streets



## Transportation plan based on public input

By Lidia Dinkova  
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**MARTIN COUNTY** — The Metropolitan Planning Organization has proposed \$277.5 million worth of transportation work — such as bicycle lanes, road widening and maintenance — to be done over 25 years.

The public can give input on the long-range transportation plan at an

### OPEN HOUSE

**WHAT:** Martin Metropolitan Planning Organization open house on the 2040 long-range transportation plan  
**WHEN:** 3 to 6 p.m. Wednesday  
**WHERE:** Clare & Gladys Wolf High-Tech Center at Indian River State College, Chastain Campus, 2400 S.E. Salerno Road  
**INFO:** [www.martin2040.com](http://www.martin2040.com) or call 772-463-2860

open house Wednesday.

The transportation plan is based on the public's input, on recommendations made by the planning organization's board and

advisory committees and on a transportation model that outlines future roadway capacity based on population and employment projections.



It prioritizes work that would benefit bicyclists and pedestrians as well as road maintenance, said Beth Beltran, Martin Metropolitan Planning Organization administrator.

See **INPUT, 14A**

## Martin MPO hosts transportation plan open house

By Martin County BOCC  
YouNews contributor

**STUART** — The Martin County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) announced the date for the next Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Open House.

Updated every five years, the LRTP describes transportation projects in Martin County over the next 25 years.

The Open House is the public's opportunity to express their views and gain a better understanding of transportation planning.

"We have seen a great attendance at our Open Houses thus far. I hope this continues," said Troy McDonald, MPO Policy Board Chairman. "Our ultimate goal is to create a transportation network that connects communi-



Martin MPO hosts transportation plan open house from 3 to 6 p.m., Sept. 16 at Wolf High-Technology Center, Stuart.

ties; eases transportation challenges and makes transportation more accessible and safer for all modes: automobiles, bus riders, pedestrians and cyclists."

The Martin Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is having an Open House from 3 to 6 p.m. on Sept. 16 at Wolf High-Technology Center, Indian River State College, 2400 S.E. Salerno Road, Stuart.

This Open House is a follow-up to the meetings held in January that gathered general public comments and desires on transportation improvements.

At this planning stage, only projects anticipated to be funded for construction (also known as Cost Feasible) will be considered.

Participants will look at specific projects anticipated to be constructed

between now and 2040 for roads, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and public transportation. With the Open House format, the public can stop in any time between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. or stay the entire time.

There are bus routes to and from this location. For more information please call 772-463-2860.

All Martin County buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts and bike racks.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please visit the project website at [www.martin2040.com](http://www.martin2040.com).

## Confronting our angst

■ Stop fuming, start sharing ideas to improve transportation

Each of us has at least one pet peeve when it comes to navigating the Treasure Coast.

Some of us have dozens.

How about that interminably long traffic signal you encounter every day during your ride to work or school?



Or the places in your community where you have to walk in the street or on the shoulder because the sidewalk ends abruptly?

Or the absence of bike paths, adequate signs or dependable public transportation?

Motorists aren't the only source of frustration we confront moving from Point A to Point B. Shortcomings in the transportation system also engender feelings of angst and undermine our quality of life.

If you're tired of encountering the same problems again and again on Treasure Coast roads and highways, do something about it!

Every five years, transportation planners in Indian River, Martin and St. Lucie counties come out of their seeming hibernation and invade our communities — hosting meetings to solicit input from their most important stakeholders: YOU.

Members of the public will have multiple opportunities during the coming months to shape the future of transportation in their communities.

### LEARN MORE

Each Treasure Coast county has its own long-range transportation planning website that contains information on the process, meeting schedules and other resources:

Indian River: [www.irtp.com](http://www.irtp.com)  
Martin: [www.martin2040.com](http://www.martin2040.com)  
St. Lucie: [www.sltp.com](http://www.sltp.com)

Historically, public participation in the long-range transportation planning process has been poor.

Only about a dozen people attended the Martin County MPO's inaugural public meeting last week.

One solution may be expanding the use of social media. In addition to public meetings and their respective websites, some transportation planners have launched a social-media presence to inform residents and garner input. Officials in Martin and St. Lucie have created Facebook pages to broaden their reach.

Martin officials also are using interactive activities at their public meetings to engage attendees. For example, each attendee is given a clicker and asked to vote on a series of questions designed to help identify transportation priorities. The real-time results are displayed after each question, giving residents and officials a snapshot of the public's priorities.

The next few months are critical if you want to influence the future of transportation in our region.

County planners are listening. Whether they receive any input is up to you.



Kimley-Horn and Associates transportation analyst Lisa Juan watches Hobe Sound's Karan Kerwin (left) and Port Salerno's Ellen Aszelski (right) place stickers on maps of Martin County during the MPO's Metropolitan Planning Organization's open house Wednesday at Indian River State College's Chastain Campus in Stuart.

## Your traffic habits help formulate plan

By Lisa Broadt  
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**HOBESOUND** — The Martin Metropolitan Planning Organization wants to know where you go, how you get there and what could make your trip bet- ter.

About a dozen people Wednesday attended the planning organization's open house to learn more about long-term transportation planning and to provide input as the county begins the yearlong process of crafting its 2040 transportation plan.

"It's not the planners' plan, it's the people's plan," Senior Planner Bonnie Landry said Wednesday. "We want input."

To foster involvement at the event, the planning organization provided interactive activities.

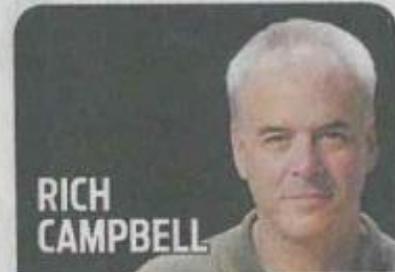
At tables around the room, attendees could invest play money in different transportation programs, an exercise that helps the planning organization identify the public's priorities, Landry said.

Attendees also could place stickers showing their home, work and frequently visited locations on a Martin County map, giving planners a better understanding of transportation patterns, Landry said. Participants also added their transportation ideas to a digital, interactive map.

Every five years, the planning organization is required by federal law to review and update its transportation plan.

The 2040 plan details how Martin County's transportation system will evolve over the next 25 years.

Public input will help create a vision, goals and identify needs, Landry said.



RICH CAMPBELL  
COLUMNIST

## Here's your chance to do something about traffic

In 25 years I will be — gulp! — 81 years old.

Where will I be in 2040? "Dead" is a possibility. So is playing with the great-grandchildren, residing in a nursing home or sitting at this same desk writing columns on growth- and transportation-related issues on the

# Engaging and Educating Everyone

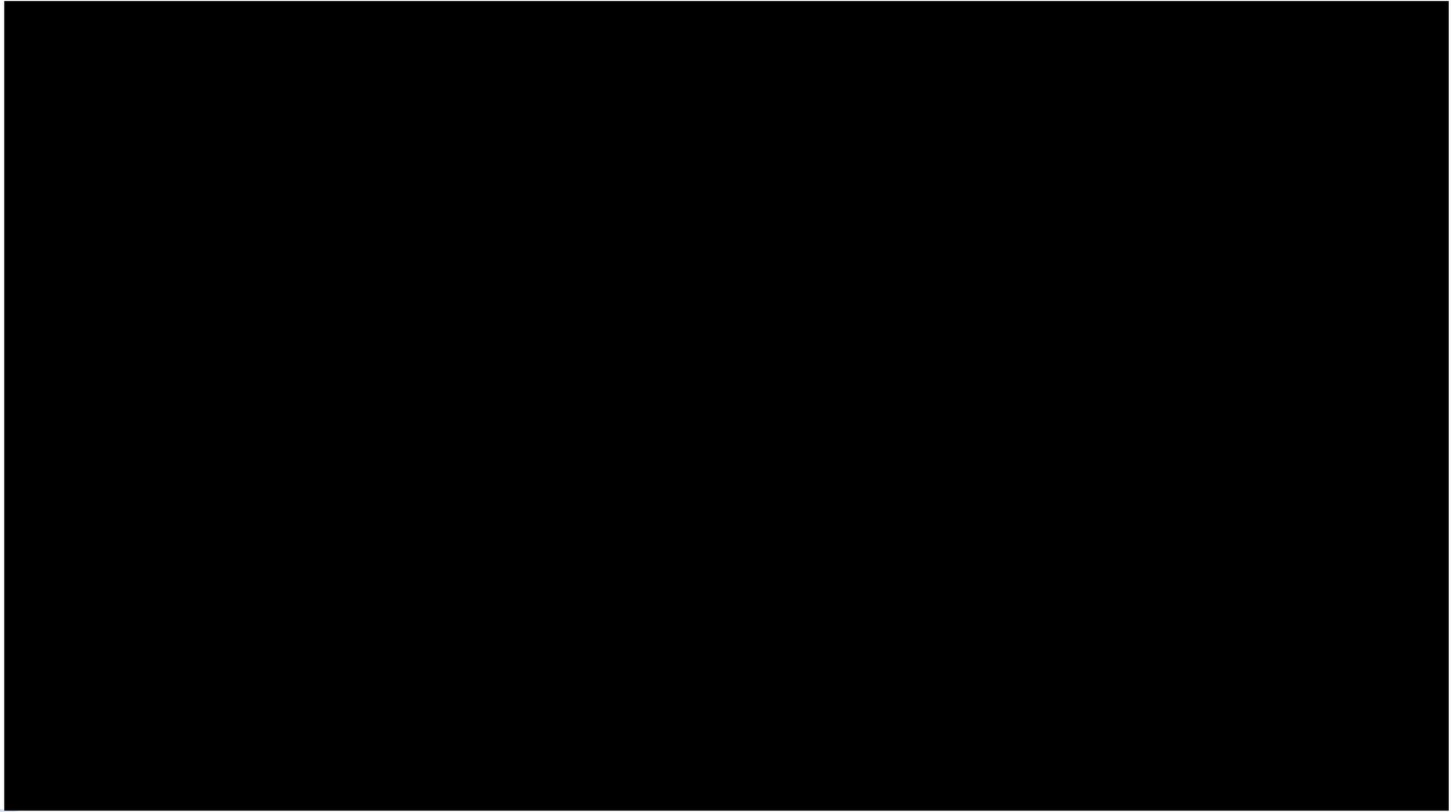
Focus Groups include:  
Council on Aging  
United Way  
Indianwood HOA



Facebook page reaching an average of over 2000 people weekly

Website to educate, survey and leave comments





Martin MPO LRTP - <https://youtu.be/TxZr56wjLP4>