Conducting Public Meetings

Design Update Training
Public involvement is two-way communication aimed at incorporating the views, concerns and issues of the public into the decision-making process.

Part of FDOT’s mission and value statement

Our Vision
Serving the people of Florida by delivering a transportation system that is fatality and congestion free.

Our Values
The fundamental principles which guide the behavior and actions of our employees and our organization.

Integrity
“We always do what is right”

Respect
“We value diversity, talent and ideas”

Commitment
“We do what we say we are going to do”

One FDOT
“We are one agency, one team”

Trust
“We are open and fair”

Customer Driven
“We listen to our customers”
“… it is the policy of the Florida Department of Transportation to promote public involvement opportunities and information exchange activities in all functional areas using various techniques adapted to local area conditions and project requirements.” #000-525-050-f
Previous Public Involvement

- If PD&E was done, talk to the PD&E project manager to learn about the community and potential issues.

- In Design, Public Involvement begins with the Community Awareness Plan (CAP) and this may have already been written/completed.

- Look for recommendations and commitments made previously and include in Scope.
Community Awareness Plan

Public Involvement effort based on project level:

- **Level 1** – Non-controversial with minimal impact on accessibility or traffic
- **Level 2** – General public acceptance with little impact on accessibility or traffic (i.e. urban resurfacing or bridge repair projects)
- **Level 3** – May be controversial with significant impact on accessibility or traffic (i.e. roadway widening or major reconstruction projects)
- **Level 4** – Involves interstate work and all projects that require temporary or permanent total closure
Elements of a Public Meeting

Activities BEFORE a Meeting

- Identify meeting location
- Free parking
- ADA compliant
- Easy to find
- No public, K-12th educational facilities (Jessica Lunsford Act)
- For hotel locations, must use Green Lodging facility
Elements of a Public Meeting

Activities **BEFORE** a Meeting

- **Prepare mailing list**
  - Some Districts provide this through the PIO office
  - Consultant may be responsible for compiling list
  - Need to include renters/tenants

- **Notification letters/brochure**
  - Send notification to elected officials and government representatives a few days before distribution to public

- **Press releases**
  - Submit through District PIO office
Elements of a Public Meeting

Activities BEFORE a Meeting

◆ Advertise in Florida Administrative Register
  ✓ Required by Chapter 120, F.S., 7 days in advance of meeting
  ✓ May be prepared by PIO or consultant
  ✓ www.flrules.org

◆ Advertise on FDOT’s Public Notice Website
  ✓ http://www2.dot.state.fl.us/publicsyndication/PublicMeetings.aspx
  ✓ Notice posted through FDOT INFONET site

◆ Advertise in newspaper
  ✓ At least 15 days before but no more than 30 days before
  ✓ Example ad provided in Chapter 11 of PD&E manual
Elements of a Public Meeting

Activities BEFORE a Meeting

- Prepare meeting materials
  - Sign-in sheets
  - Comment sheets
  - Handouts
  - Display boards
Activities BEFORE a Meeting

- Hire Off-duty Police Officers?
  - Case-by-case basis
  - Depends on level of controversy
  - Too many officers at an event may send the wrong message
  - Can be hired for parking control
  - Talk about it within your team
Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status.

Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact _______ at _______ at least seven days prior to the meeting.
Plain Language Initiative

- Executive Order 07-01
- Requires clear language containing only necessary information presented in a logical sequence
- Short sentences written in the active voice that make it clear who is responsible for what
Elements of a Public Meeting

Activities DURING a Meeting

- Don’t over-dress
- Prior to start time, discuss with team members specific roles and responsibilities
- Have everyone sign-in
- Use plain language when explaining the project
  - No acronyms
  - No technical language
- No clumping
- Be courteous and respectful
Elements of a Public Meeting

Activities **AFTER** a Meeting

- Document and summarize the meeting
  - Scan and file all comment and sign-in sheets
  - Create a PDF of all display materials and handouts

- Hold a debrief meeting with the team to discuss any significant comments
Don’t Forget These Mandatory Requirements

◆ Use current Title VI language
◆ Advertise meeting in Florida Administrative Register 7 days in advance
◆ Post notification on FDOT’s public notice website
◆ Do not hold meeting at public educational facilities
◆ Ensure meeting location is ADA accessible
◆ Make sure to invite or notify renters/tenants in addition to property owners
Questions?