

# **Public Involvement Plan: Title VI Expansion Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**Approved by the Mecklenburg-Union MPO  
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## **Abstract**

The Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) has been designated by the Federal Highway Administration as the federally mandated policy-making body for federally funded transportation initiatives in Mecklenburg and Union Counties in North Carolina. MUMPO, as the organization of local government officials representing the cities, towns and jurisdictions in the planning area, is responsible for oversight of the transportation planning process that is continuing, cooperative and comprehensive.

MUMPO is further required to ensure that transportation planning practices, policies and programs are developed, implemented and funded equitably throughout their urbanized area for the good of all communities and their residents without regard for race, nationality, religious preference, age or economic status.

In 2005, MUMPO adopted a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to increase public involvement in its planning process; the PIP was amended in 2009. Many of the initiatives outlined and recommended in that document have been initiated. Initiatives to increase and improve participation by residents from minority and low-income communities in the region, however, needed to be addressed in greater depth.

The following *Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO): Public Involvement Plan - Title VI Expansion* will provide the organization with:

1. Strategies for pro-actively engaging communities protected under Executive Order 12898 “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations” in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and
2. A database/ mailing list of community contacts specific to the MPO’s minority and low-income populations.

## Introduction

Transportation systems that are efficient, effective and inclusive are crucial to the sustainability, environmental health and public safety of our communities. Particularly in urban areas, accessibility to affordable housing, employment, education and commercial viability is inextricably tied to the mobility of all community residents.

While some communities may benefit from transportation development projects, others can bear a disproportionate burden – paying a high cost through physical dislocation, displacement, pollution and other health issues. Executive Order 12898, “*Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*” – was signed by President William Clinton in 1994 and restates the intent of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act...refocusing federal agencies’ attention on discriminatory practices in programs that receive federal funds.

Accordingly, transportation initiatives funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are required to meet these standards and certify:

1. That a strategy for involving minority and low-income communities was designed and implemented with the intention of providing those communities the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes;
2. That efforts were made to engage minority and low-income populations in a public outreach process and that issues and concerns raised in that process were documented; and
3. Those mechanisms are put in place to ensure that noted issues and concerns are appropriately documented and considered through the decision making-process.

The Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO), designated by the Federal Highway Administration to oversee planning for federally funded transportation projects developed within the two counties, has long been committed to developing planning processes that are both open and inclusive. In spite of their efforts to achieve compliance, participation from within minority and low-income communities remains low – as compared to other population levels in the planning area. MUMPO continues to consider ways to expand its outreach efforts to environmental justice (EJ) communities and increase opportunities for participation in MUMPO transportation planning initiatives.

The expansion of the 2009 MUMPO Public Involvement Plan is intended to design a process for public involvement that will provide minority – particularly Black, Latino and low-income residents – more opportunities for informed and meaningful participation in the transportation planning process as required by Executive Order 12898 and particularly as it relates to subsequent Executive Order 13166, “*Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency*” (2000). In addition, the expansion of the existing public outreach plan will focus on additional measures that should be taken to improve public participation. Most importantly, it will recommend

actions to be taken to achieve MUMPO’s goals and will provide lists of key individuals, organizations, agencies and institutions within the targeted communities with which relationship should be built and maintained.

The following diagram summarizes the direction of the public involvement plan expansion:

**Table 1: Summary Diagram**

Target	Description
Who	Black, Latino and Low-Income Communities in Mecklenburg and Union Counties
What	Improve/increase participation in MUMPO transportation meetings within target communities, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of participants in attendance</li> <li>• Quality of participation relative to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Participants’ knowledge of planning process</li> <li>○ Cultural awareness and sensitivity of staff</li> <li>○ Timely response to participating residents’ concerns</li> <li>○ Overcome or compensation for language barriers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Where	Appropriate community locations and gathering places within MUMPO’s planning area
When	Based on MUMPO project needs – consideration should be given to “standing” community organization or institution meeting times and dates.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing through appropriate and effective popular cultural media, highly utilized community outlets and institutions</li> <li>• Establishing a presence at community functions, celebrations and festivals – particularly smaller events that may or may not appeal to “mainstream” community residents - occurring along key transportation corridors</li> <li>• Building relationships through on-going information exchange with key community and neighborhood organizations.</li> <li>• Effective presentation techniques for educating minority and low-income residents (particularly within the Latino community) about MUMPO, transportation planning processes, sharing information and engaging residents meaningfully.</li> <li>• Provide implementation action steps, as appropriate.</li> </ul>

## Overview

In accordance with the Federal-aid Highway Act of 1962, urban areas with populations of 50,000 or more are required to designate a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to support and coordinate federally funded transportation projects with long range plans. MPOs were created to carry out their planning processes with the cooperation of their state and local jurisdictions. They are charged with providing a transportation planning process that “reflects the community’s vision for its future...[and] ...includes a comprehensive consideration of possible strategies; and evaluation process that

encompasses diverse points of view; includes relevant transportation-related agencies and organizations; [and includes] an open, timely and meaningful involvement of the public.” (USDOT, Federal Highway Administration: Metro Index)

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) designated the Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) as the planning entity responsible for the development and implementation of transportation plans and programs for the Charlotte Urbanized Area. MUMPO is charged with the development and implementation of a “3-C” transportation planning process that is *continuing, cooperative and comprehensive in nature*.

MUMPO believes strongly in the importance of open and inclusive planning processes. The organization continues to be committed to public participation that is impactful – giving the community a voice throughout the planning process. MUMPO understands that in order for participation to be meaningful...the public must be educated, well informed and given the opportunity for involvement at times and in locations that are set for the convenience of the public.

MUMPO’s Public Involvement Plan lists the following goals for public participation:

- Actively soliciting participation, not just waiting for it;
- Creating meaningful access to decision-making information, not just collecting it;
- Respecting and seriously considering input that is received, not just collecting it;
- Demonstrating that input is incorporated, not just filing it away; and
- Providing meaningful opportunities for input, not just fulfilling regulations.

The Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization operates with a staff of three (3) planning professionals. The community work needed to achieve these goals is extensive and will be difficult for a small staff. Consequently, MUMPO will need to prioritize the outreach initiatives that they determine to administer and provide their staff with the resources necessary to achieve them.

## **MUMPO**

The Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization includes all of Mecklenburg County and most of Union County. MUMPO representatives include members of the governing boards of Mecklenburg and Union Counties, the Cities of Charlotte and Monroe and the towns of Cornelius, Davidson, Huntersville, Indian Trail, Matthews, Mint Hill, Pineville, Stallings, Waxhaw, Weddington, Wesley Chapel and Wingate. The local representative of the NC Board of Transportation is also a voting member. All of the MUMPO planning area is located within the North Carolina Department of Transportation’s Division 10.

Non-voting members who participate in MUMPO deliberations include representatives from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Commission, Union County Planning Board, US DOT and the North Carolina Turnpike Authority.

## **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

A Memorandum of Understanding, last adopted in September 2003, guides the cooperative, comprehensive and continuing transportation planning process and outlines the collective organizational policies, structure, membership, roles and responsibilities

## **Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)**

The Mecklenburg Union Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) serves as an advisory body to the MPO. The TCC is made up of staff level representatives involved in the transportation planning process. Other relevant federal, state and local departments are also represented on the TCC as appropriate. Its primary role is to carry out the implementation of tasks outlined in the Unified Planning Work Program.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization is to ensure the implementation of a transportation planning process and support the Safe Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) planning process through:

- Support for the MUMPO region’s vitality;
- Increased safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increased accessibility and mobility options for people and freight;
- Protection of the environment, energy conservation and improved quality of life;
- Enhanced integration and connectivity of the transportation system across and between modes for people and freight;
- Promotion of efficient transportation system management and operation;
- Emphasis on the reservation of the existing transportation system; and
- Promotion of an efficient relationship between land use and transportation that maximizes the use of existing and future public programs and infrastructure

## **Responsibilities**

Key responsibilities of the Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization are:

- Oversight and management of the planning process in a manner that complies with Federal requirements; and

- Providing policy direction and oversight of activities to meet Federal and State environmental requirements for attaining air and water quality standards.

These activities culminate in the preparation and adoption of:

**The Long Range Transportation Plan (LTRP)** – the federally-mandated, long-term planning document that details the transportation improvements and policies to be implemented within the planning jurisdiction over a 20+ year planning period;

**The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** – a 7-year financial program that describes the schedule for obligating federal funds to state and local projects and contains funding information for all modes of transportation including highways, bikeways and transit capital and operating costs. The MPO updates the program every two years to reflect priority projects; and

**The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)** – a guide for transportation and air quality planning activities to be conducted over the course of a fiscal year. The UPWP includes detailed descriptions of the transportation and air quality planning tasks and a summary of the amount and source of State and federal funds to be used for related planning activities.

## **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

President John F. Kennedy said in 1963: *Simple justice requires that public funds, to which all taxpayers of all races [colors and national origins] contribute, not be spent in any fashion which encourages, entrenches, subsidizes or results in racial [color or national origin] discrimination.*

President Kennedy’s words were no less true thirty-one years later when President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order (EO) 12898, based on Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, in response to continued injustice and set the stage for federal agencies to respond in kind.

The EO states that each Federal agency *shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing...disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.*

Executive Order 12898 describes minority populations as belonging to any of the following groups:

- Black – persons having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa;
- Hispanic – persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race;
- Asian American – persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands; and

- American Indian and Alaskan Native – persons having origins in any of the original people of North America and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

Low-income populations are defined as those whose household incomes (or, regarding a community or group, whose median household income) is at or below the U S Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines.

The Executive Order also refocused attention on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a law that sets policy goals for the protection and enhancement of the environment. The goal of NEPA is to “ensure for all Americans a safe, healthful, productive, aesthetically and culturally pleasing environment”

The Department of Transportation (DOT) issued Order 5680.2 to address environmental justice in minority populations and low-income populations by establishing policies that promote environmental justice in all programs, policies and activities. The DOT Order specifically addresses environmental justice for minorities (defined as Black, Hispanic, Asian American, American Indian or Alaskan Native) and low-income populations.

## **MUMPO 2009 Public Involvement Plan Update**

In 2009, MUMPO adopted an updated plan for public involvement that provided a list of strategies to improve and support public outreach for and education about its regional transportation planning and decision-making process.

The plan recommends strategies and provides tools to help in the achievement of a public involvement process that is open and encourages involvement throughout MUMPO’s diverse planning area. The strategies included:

**Table 2: 2009 MUMPO Public Involvement Plan Recommendations**

Strategy	Description
Identify/Build Stakeholder Relationships	Identify those affected by transportation plans and develop data base for continued contact and interaction.
Develop/Implement Plan to Reach Minority and Low-Income Populations	Design strategies that encourage minority and low-income population participation in MUMPO planning processes
Outreach and Education Program	Provide educational pamphlets, brochures, in English and Spanish
Publicize MUMPO Activities	Cultivate media coverage within mainstream and ethnic media outlets. Maintain current list of media outlets.

Partner with Outreach Professionals	Utilize regional agency outreach professionals to develop in-roads to targeted communities.
Speakers' Bureau	Utilize MUMPO members, staff, or volunteers to "get the message" out about MUMPO initiatives at local meetings in targeted communities
Maintain Website	Providing on-line information about MUMPO and its initiatives that is easily accessible and current
Brochures	Develop informational brochures in English and Spanish
Newsletters	Quarterly distributed informational document produced in English and Spanish that is easily understood and can be accessed on line, in libraries and other key community outlets
Informational Workshops	Educational workshops to educated participants about the transportation planning process in general or specific initiatives that may affect their community.
Sponsor Open Houses	Provide opportunities for informal information sessions
Public Input at MUMPO Board Meetings	Allow and encourage public input at MUMPO meetings
Surveys	Use to gather information about community perceptions, preferences and practices.

## Outreach to Title VI – Environmental Justice Communities

North Carolina experienced a tremendous 18% growth rate over the last twenty years. Population growth within Mecklenburg and Union Counties was a significant part of that overall growth as Mecklenburg County experienced a 32% increase and Union County experienced 62.8% population growth.

Even more significant were increases in minority populations in the two counties during the period:

**Table 3: Minority Population and Rate of Change 2000 - 2010**

MUMPO Urbanized Area: Minority Population	2010 Population	Rate of Change 2000 - 2010	Percent of Total Population
Asian (includes Native American and Alaskan Native) Persons	50,122	307%	4%
Black Persons	306,797	107%	25%

<b>MUMPO Urbanized Area: Minority Population</b>	<b>2010 Population</b>	<b>Rate of Change 2000 - 2010</b>	<b>Percent of Total Population</b>
Latino/Hispanic Persons	133,131	1703%	12%

**Table 4: MUMPO Planning Area Poverty Indicators**

<b>MUMPO Urbanized Area: Low-Income Population Indicators</b>	<b>2009 Population</b>	<b>Rate of Change 1999 - 2009</b>
MUMPO Urbanized Area Population Poverty Levels	114,064	59%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	24,226	16%

The Black population in the planning area increased considerably during the period in actual numbers. Blacks represent more than 25% of the area's overall population. MUMPO staff is concerned that levels of participation by members of the Black community in MUMPO's planning processes are not representative of their population ranking.

The Latino community experienced phenomenal growth during the period and now represents 12% of the overall population in the area. It is the least involved in transportation planning processes and initiatives.

Finally, while the Asian population within the MUMPO planning area has increased considerably during the period - by 307% - it is currently less than 5% of the over all population. This population was not included in the focus of this Title VI expansion; however, MUMPO should begin now to consider appropriate cultural, language and community outreach strategies to meet the EJ needs of this growing population.

While these growth indicators are not surprising, they underscore MUMPO's need to expand its public involvement process in key areas to ensure that minority and low-income residents and communities are given all possible opportunities to be meaningfully involved in the planning process. MUMPO, conversely, needs to know the actual and perceived impact of their transportation planning initiatives on residents of these communities.

## **Barriers to Participation**

The Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization and its staff have demonstrated their intent to foster an open and meaningful planning process. The introduction of their improved website, the practice of sponsoring informational workshops and the printing of marketing and educational materials in English and Spanish, support their intent.

Nevertheless, levels of public involvement remain less than optimal from within low-income, Black and Hispanic communities. The following list of barriers to participation in MUMPO (and any other transportation planning initiatives) was developed from one-on-one conversations and focus groups with Black, Hispanic and low-income residents from around the MUMPO planning area during presentations at organizational meetings, interviews with key community organizations and cultural festivals.

### **Limited Information and/or Mis-information**

- Many community members are unclear on the relevance of transportation planning initiatives – particularly those within MUMPO’s purview – to their daily lives;
- Many respondents from within the Latino community, in Mecklenburg and Union counties, indicated that they had little or no knowledge of MUMPO and its relative planning process, programs or meetings;
- Within the Black community some members indicated they felt that their transportation concerns were not “heard” by staff and that staff decisions were made before staff met with communities;
- Latino community members indicated that the practice of “community involvement” on issues like transportation was a new concept to them.

### **Inaccessibility**

- Transportation to and from public meetings was a more prominent problem within the Latino community. In Mecklenburg County, Latino residents were more likely to be transit dependent than their Black counterparts. Income and/or cost of transportation were a factor, regardless of ethnicity in both counties;
- In Union County, transportation issues within the Latino community were of high concern. Those interviewed were particularly concerned about their mobility to come to meetings – and particularly – to get to and from work when their licenses expire in 2012.
- Low-income residents, regardless of race or ethnicity, find it difficult to leave their place of employment to attend transportation planning meetings – or meetings of any kind – even when transportation is available. Different/non-traditional methods of participation will need to be designed for them.

## **Distrust/Fear**

- Distrust within the Black community was not directed at MUMPO – but rather at frustrating public processes that are ineffective – by their estimation.
- Latino community members seemed much more reluctant than members of the Black community to participate in governmental public processes. Leaders from community based organizations like the Latin American Coalition, ENLACE and Tu Agencia Latina attributed that reluctance to immigration concerns. No questions were asked of individual community respondents regarding immigration, so empirical data does not exist here to support that supposition.

## **Understanding of the Planning Process**

- Planning processes – especially transportation plans – appear complicated to individuals that do not operate within that arena on a daily basis. When asked, many people had no idea how roadways, thoroughfares, bike paths or transit routes come to be. While they understand – to some degree – how they impact their lives, they do not feel they have enough information to maneuver effectively through the process on behalf of their communities. Further, Latino residents identified primarily with transit issues and indicated concerns about services to their communities by transit. For many of them, issues with transportation are primarily related to the Charlotte Area Transit System. They are concerned about:
  - Frequency of buses along transit routes;
  - Convenience and proximity of transit stops to major places of employment;
  - Their inability to communicate with some drivers in Spanish; and
  - Respectfulness of some transit drivers.
- Members of the Black community often had more experience with local government and were therefore willing to participate in the transportation planning process. More work should be done in clarifying the “timeliness” of the transportation planning - to - implementation process, however, so that communities know how to stay engaged with transportation processes from start to finish.

## **Language/Literacy Barriers**

- All translation is not equal! Members of the Hispanic community indicated that they have little regard for materials that are poorly translated for their use. Thoughts ranged from finding them comical to insulting – as indicators of the translator’s lack of concern for them, their community or their participation.
- Do not assume that all participants – can read the materials that are shared. There is a considerable illiteracy problem challenging the Latino community. The need for interpreters should become the “norm” at meetings where Latino participation is expected or desired.

## Old Wounds and Misunderstandings

- Government is government is government.... MUMPO should realize that to the extent that any government representative or official is disrespectful, condescending, or less than forthright regarding a resident or his/her community...it is (sometimes) as if all government employees acted in the same way.
- MUMPO and its staff will continue to be impacted by the reputation – good or bad – that their predecessors projected! Further, it should be remembered that community members may not discern the difference between Federal, State or local transportation planners and officials.

## Perceived Relevance/Importance to Daily Life Priorities

- Community members, particularly those within Environmental Justice communities, face multiple challenges on a daily basis. Facing issues like joblessness or underemployment, homelessness, day care issues, and in some cases, deportation.... participation in non-threatening transportation planning processes will – always – be low on the list of priorities.
- Making participation in the process relevant, convenient, efficient and welcoming is and will remain important to successful public involvement initiatives.

## Strategy for Enhanced Involvement of Minority and Low-Income Communities in MUMPO Planning Process

MUMPO and its staff have already implemented many of the strategies recommended in the Public Involvement Plan. Those strategies will be included here only if additional steps/actions are suggested based on community input during this plan expansion process.

Strategy	Description	Required Actions
Seek to Understand Cultural and Historic Context of Community Involvement with the Community	<p>Awareness of historic transportation issues within minority communities;</p> <p>Awareness of and sensitivity to cultural expectations and traditions during meetings: (may be as subtle as a handshake; asking permission before addressing an elderly black or Latino person by their first name)</p>	<p>Build relationships and seek assistance (as necessary) from key community agencies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latin American Coalition</li> <li>• Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee</li> <li>• ENLACE: Latin American Council of Charlotte</li> </ul>
Community Education and	Build on existing community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build relationships with</li> </ul>

<p>Marketing</p>	<p>education and marketing foundation. Direct focus to effective use of media.</p>	<p>key ethnic radio stations popular with the Black and Latino Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare “one-sheet” information brochure for community distribution – should be colorful, simply stated and culturally appropriate</li> <li>• Budget the cost of air time for use prior to key transportation initiatives</li> <li>• Create (as appropriate) 2-minute on-air radio scenarios for use as educational tools about MUMPO and its planning initiatives – in English and Spanish (Template Attached)</li> <li>• Utilize public access television to market MUMPO initiatives and their relevance to the community.</li> <li>• Establish relationship with community page editor for key new outlets including (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Charlotte Post</li> <li>➤ Charlotte Pride Magazine</li> <li>➤ El Progreso Hispano Spanish News Paper</li> <li>➤ HOLA Noticias Spanish Newspaper</li> <li>➤ La Noticia Spanish Newspaper</li> <li>➤ Que’Pasa - MiGente Spanish Newspaper</li> <li>➤ The County News</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Educate the “next generation” about transportation planning and public involvement</p>	<p>Partner with CMS and/or after school programs that serve low-income, Black or Latino populations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide Coloring Books or pages for children at festivals, etc. (Check with AASHTO, APA, etc. for available materials)</li> <li>• Develop crossword or other word puzzles using electronic puzzle builders to teach children planning</li> </ul>

		terminology
Utilize trusted informational outlets frequented by the community	Utilize churches, mosques, barbershops, hair salons, daycare and schools for information distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify key institutions and service or retail outlets along targeted corridors or neighborhoods.</li> <li>• Prepare notices for bulletins, programs, bulletin boards</li> <li>• Prior to vital transportation initiatives – request brief agenda time at “standing” community meetings ranging from Bible study groups to regular community gatherings such as alumni meetings, fraternity/sorority meetings, ESL sessions, etc.</li> </ul>
Establish a consistent presence in the community	Create an annual calendar of regional events in the Black and Latino Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request information quarterly from key organizations such as Mi Casa Su Casa, Charlotte Pride Magazine, Latin American Coalition, Black and Latin American Chambers of Commerce, etc. – about festivals, significant community rallies, fairs, etc.</li> <li>• Always provide “give-a ways” for distribution that will be “touched” often by those who receive them – ex.: water bottles, pencils or pens, bookmarks or crayon 3-packs, etc.</li> <li>• Request use of kiosks at key recreation outlets including Simmons, Johnston, McCrory, Stratford-Richardson YMCAs, Union County Library, Monroe YMCA, etc. for MUMPO information.</li> <li>• Utilize established retail markets, shopping centers, pharmacies and urgent care</li> </ul>

		clinics that serve the EJ communities as outlets for information sharing and MUMPO marketing materials.
Design Relevant Community Presentations	<p>Use pictures to tell the story, explain process and physical design alternatives or to inform community and create opportunities for dialogue.</p> <p>Use interactive games to encourage dialogue and participation in decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where feasible and affordable, utilize transportation simulation software to demonstrate transportation plans and design options. Diagrams and elevations are often difficult for the general public to understand.</li> <li>• Show “finished” design in proximity or relationship to properties, landmarks that they recognize.</li> <li>• Where simulation virtual design software is unavailable, use “before and after” drawings</li> <li>• Simulation programs should be provided in English and Spanish</li> <li>• Create a “Tool Box” of techniques to assist community groups in understanding the process involved in making transportation decisions and the difficulty in those choices. Interactive “games” promote ownership of the process and its end result.</li> </ul>
Take MUMPO to the community	Where possible, use standing meeting times and locations used by community organizations in Black and Latino communities on an on-going basis	Requesting placement on an existing meeting agenda reduces the work on staff in setting up meetings; also reduces marketing since the standing meeting may provide a “captive” audience.

## Sustainable Database of Minority and Low-Income Contacts

It is important that MUMPO and its staff continue to build viable relationships with residents within Black, Hispanic and low-income communities that are consistent and on going. In such communities, many residents are transient for reasons that range from improved economic condition to the impacts of gentrification. Individual addresses change but the address and location of long-time faith-based and social institutions are much more stable. Consequently, in addition to the addresses of individual residents that can be obtained at community meetings and (in Mecklenburg County) from the neighborhood leadership database maintained by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department – it is recommended that a database of key institutions, organizations and media outlets that serve and are trusted within minority and low-income communities be maintained.

The attached database should be continually revised and updated as organizations change or leave the area. As MUMPO expands its outreach into the Asian community, more organizations and contacts should be added.

Additionally, a list of Spanish interpreters and translation services should be developed and maintained. Differences in Spanish, as spoken throughout various Spanish speaking countries and regions, may be important to the relationship and trust building process.

## **Conclusion**

The MUMPO Planning Area will continue to grow and will, inevitably, become more diverse. These exciting changes, will bring the area into metropolitan distinction - but will also bring increased challenges and responsibilities related to its changing citizenry.

People from around the county and the globe will continue to flock to the area and, as they take on the role and responsibilities of “citizen”, will be entitled to and expect the protections and the quality of life that is afforded all residents.