

## **Rural Consultation in Arizona**

Federal legislation calls for state transportation agencies to conduct consultation sessions with elected officials in non-metropolitan areas. The consultation process provides local officials with an opportunity to gain information and offer input in a relaxed format at meaningful points in the process of planning and programming transportation improvements. In other words, meetings are scheduled so that officials can provide input before decisions are finalized. The legislation also requires that consultation be “separate and discrete” from general public involvement activities.

Each year, ADOT will visit each region of the State to present the Draft Tentative Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program. ADOT staff will be on hand to discuss the distribution of highway funds and the methodology used to determine how projects are selected. Attendees will also be informed of opportunities to provide comment to the State Transportation Board.

In addition, ADOT will conduct consultation sessions with rural elected officials in areas where planning studies are underway. These meetings are designed to solicit input from officials prior to the finalization of any plans.

All rural elected officials, as well as appointed officials who deal with transportation issues, are encouraged to participate in consultation.