

Public Involvement Plan for the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Vision Statement

It is the vision of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to have a community that understands the transportation planning process and actively participates in the process.

Goals

I. Open Process: It is the goal of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to have an open planning process that encourages early and continued public participation.

II. Information Access: It is the goal of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to provide complete and timely information regarding the plans, programs, procedures, policies, and technical data produced or used during the planning process to interested parties and the general public.

III. Notice of Activities: It is the goal of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to provide timely and adequate public notice of hearings, meetings, reviews, and major document availability.

IV. Public Input and Organization Response: It is the goal of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to demonstrate consideration and recognition of public input and to provide appropriate responses to public input.

V. Inclusive Process: It is the goal of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to encourage participation in the planning process by low-income groups, minorities, persons with disabilities, and the elderly; and to consider the needs of these groups when developing programs and plans.

Strategies

A. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will maintain a citizens advisory committee. The committee will serve as one of the standing committees of the transportation planning process. (The standing committees are the Metropolitan Planning Organization - Policy Committee, the Technical Coordinating Committee, the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee.)

Goals Addressed: I, II, III, IV, V

B. All meetings of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will be open to the public and will allow participation by those who are not committee members. The meetings will be held at convenient and accessible locations and times. Generally the Policy Committee meets on the last Monday of even-numbered months at 2:00 p.m., the Technical Coordinating Committee meets on the third Thursday of even-numbered months at 10:00 a.m., the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee meets on the third Tuesday of even-numbered months at 5:00 p.m., and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee meets on the third Monday of even-numbered months at 10:00 a.m. All meeting dates and times are posted on the West Alabama Regional Commission website.

Goals Addressed: I, IV, V

C. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will provide a notice for all meetings of the standing committees of the transportation planning process. The notice will include the agenda, date, time, and location of the meeting. The notice will be provided at least two weeks prior to the meetings. The notice will be provided to local media representatives and groups that address the needs of low-income groups, minorities, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. The notice will request that interested individuals, who need special accommodations, notify the West Alabama Regional Commission at least 2 days prior to the date of the meeting so necessary arrangements can be made. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will follow all of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The notice will also be posted on the World Wide Web.

Goals Addressed: I, II, III, V

D. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will do the following, as a means to seek out and consider the needs of the traditionally underserved (low-income individuals, minorities, persons with disabilities, and the elderly):

- a. provide a notice to meetings of the standing committee of the transportation planning process to groups that address the needs of the traditionally underserved

- b. provide a notice to public meetings related to the long-range transportation plan and the Transportation Improvement Program to groups that address the needs of the traditionally underserved
- c. upon request, provide transportation planning process meeting notices to any individual
- d. allow anyone to participate in any transportation planning process meeting
- e. follow all requirements in the Americans with Disabilities Act while conducting the transportation planning process
- f. prepare an equity report as part of the long-range transportation plan
- g. if feasible and appropriate, modify the transportation planning process and any plan, program, or document developed as part of the process to meet the needs of the traditionally underserved

Goals Addressed: I, II, III, IV, V

E. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will hold an annual training session. The training session will review the transportation planning process and the functions of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. The training session will be open to the general public.

Goals Addressed: I, II, V

F. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will consider all legitimate inquiries and comments regarding transportation planning activities. When warranted a written response will be provided. All public inquiries and comments received regarding the development of the Transportation Improvement Program and the long-range transportation plan will be included in the final document with the corresponding responses provided by the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Goals Addressed: I, IV, V

G. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will maintain a record of public involvement. The record will document the public involvement activities of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization for a 1-year period.

Goals Addressed: I, II, IV

H. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will make available to the general public and government agencies all documents and appropriate technical data produced for the transportation planning process. The documents and technical data, as appropriate and feasible, will be available in paper copy, digital copy, and on the World Wide Web.

Goals Addressed: I, II, IV, V

I. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will provide public notification of the Transportation Improvement Program and the long-range transportation plan development. The notification will be provided at least two weeks

prior to any scheduled meetings or reviews. The draft documents will be available for public review and comment for at least 45 days prior to final adoption.

Goals Addressed: I, II, III, IV, V

J. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will hold a public meeting for the draft Transportation Improvement Program and the long-range transportation plan prior to the final adoption of the documents. Notification will be provided at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The meetings will be held at convenient and accessible locations and times.

Goals Addressed: I, II, III, V

K. If a long-range transportation plan or Transportation Improvement Program varies significantly from the version that was initially made available for public comment, the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will hold an additional public meeting prior to the final adoption of the documents.

Goals Addressed: I, II, III, IV, V

L. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will use visualization techniques, as appropriate and feasible, to describe long-range transportation plans and Transportation Improvement Programs.

Goals Addressed: I, II, V

M. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, when appropriate and feasible, will coordinate public involvement activities with statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultations processes conducted by the Alabama Department of Transportation.

Goals Addressed: I, II, III

N. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will encourage the publication of news articles on the transportation planning process.

Goals Addressed: I, II, III, V

O. The staff of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will be available for speaking engagements concerning the transportation planning process.

Goals Addressed: I, II, III, IV, V

P. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will publish the Public Involvement Plan and any amendments to the plan and allow 45 days for written comment prior to approval.

Goals Addressed: I, II, III, IV, V

Q. The Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will review the Public Involvement Plan at least every 5 years to evaluate the relevance of the vision statement and goals and to determine the effectiveness of the strategies.

Goals Addressed: I, II, IV

Performance Measures

1. What was the attendance percentage of the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee?

Strategy Measured: A

2. How many citizens who were not committee members or transportation agency employees attended standing committee meetings? What was the ratio of citizens to members and employees?

Strategy Measured: B

3. What was the ratio of standing committee meetings to meeting notices provided?

Strategy Measured: C

4. How many standing committee meeting notices were posted in the local newspapers?

Strategy Measured: C

5. Was the mailing list updated annually or more frequently?

Strategy Measured: C, ~~D~~

6. What was the ratio of requests for special meeting accommodations to special arrangements made? Were there any complaints or requests for change related to special accommodations?

Strategy Measured: B, D

7. How many persons with disabilities attended standing committee meetings and the annual training session? What percentage of meeting attendees were persons with disabilities?

Strategy Measured: D

8. How many people attended the annual training session? Standing committee members? Transportation agency employees? General public? How do these numbers compare with previous years?

Strategy Measured: E

9. How many complaints regarding the transportation planning process were received?

Strategy Measured: F

10. What was the ratio of inquiries or comments to responses?

Strategy Measured: F

11. Was the record of public involvement produced?

Strategy Measured: G

12. How many documents were produced?

Strategy Measured: H

13. How many documents were available on the web site?

Strategy Measured: H

14. How many requests for information were received (in-person, by telephone, and by mail)?

Strategy Measured: H

15. How many documents were distributed?

Strategy Measured: H

16. How many hits did the web site of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization receive?

Strategy Measured: H

17. Was public notice regarding Transportation Improvement Program and long-range plan development provided? Were there any complaints or requests for change related to the public notice efforts?

Strategy Measured: I

18. Were Transportation Improvement Program and long-range plan draft documents available? Were there any complaints or requests for change related to the availability of these documents?

Strategy Measured: I

19. Were public meetings held for the Transportation Improvement Program and the long-range transportation plan prior to adoption? Were there any complaints or requests for change related to the public meetings?

Strategy Measured: J

20. Was notification of the public meetings for the Transportation Improvement Program and the long-range transportation plan provided at least two weeks prior to the meetings? Were there any complaints or requests for change related to the public meetings notification?

Strategy Measured: J

21. Were the Transportation Improvement Program and the long-range transportation plan public meetings held at convenient times and accessible locations? Were there any complaints or requests for change related to the time or location of the public meetings?

Strategy Measured: J

22. If the Transportation Improvement Program and the long-range transportation plan varied significantly from the version that was initially available for public comment, was an additional public meeting held? Were there any complaints or requests for change related to the public meetings?

Strategy Measured: K

23. Were visualization techniques used to describe the Transportation Improvement Program and the long-range transportation plan? Were there any complaints or requests for change related to the visualization techniques?

Strategy Measured: L

24. Were Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization public involvement activities coordinated with Alabama Department of Transportation planning and consultation processes? Were there any complaints or requests for change related to the coordination efforts?

Strategy Measured: M

25. How many newspaper articles were published on the transportation planning process in the local newspapers?

Strategy Measured: N

26. How many speeches or presentations did the staff provide?

Strategy Measured: O

27. Was the Public Involvement Plan produced / updated?

Strategy Measured: P

28. Did the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization provide 45 days for public comment prior to adopting the Public Involvement Plan or any amendments?

Strategy Measured: P

29. How frequently was the Public Involvement Plan reviewed?

Strategy Measured: Q

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RESOLUTION

MPO 08-10

WHEREAS, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations to develop and adopt a public participation plan, and

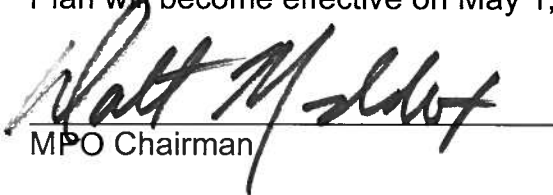
WHEREAS, the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization adopted a public involvement plan in 2003, and

WHEREAS, the staff of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization updated the Public Involvement Plan to include the public participation requirements of SAFETEA-LU, and

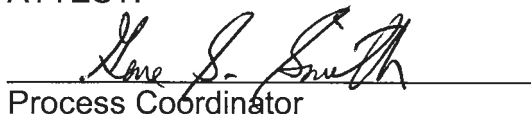
WHEREAS, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Technical Coordinating Committee have passed recommendations in support of adopting the updated Public Involvement Plan.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, this **25th day of February 2008**, that the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization does hereby adopt the Public Involvement Plan as a draft document to allow for public review.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if no comments that require the plan to be substantively changed are received during the public review period, the updated Public Involvement Plan will become effective on May 1, 2008.


MPO Chairman

ATTEST:


Process Coordinator