

Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

Participation Plan

MARCH, 2016

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This document was prepared in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Georgia Department of Transportation.



Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO)

Participation Plan

Revision of the CORE MPO Participation Plan, as adopted March, 2002

Revised: October 2005
 April, 2007
 August, 2008
 February, 2010
 September, 2011
 October, 2012
 March, 2016

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**RESOLUTION
OF THE COASTAL REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CORE MPO)**

ADOPTION OF THE UPDATED CORE MPO PARTICIPATION PLAN (2016)

Whereas, federal legislation requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to “provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as a carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan” (USC Title 23, Section 134); and

Whereas, the legislation further states that a Participation Plan “(i) shall be developed in consultation with all interested parties; and (ii) shall provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan.”; and

Whereas the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) has been designated by the Governor of Georgia as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Savannah urbanized area; and

Whereas, CORE MPO adopted a Participation Plan in March of 2002 and has updated the Plan several times in response to changing requirements or conditions, most recently in October of 2012; and

Whereas, the reapportionment of CORE MPO in 2015 necessitated the update of the MPO’s plans, including the Participation Plan, to reflect the expanded Metropolitan Planning Area and revised composition of the MPO membership; and

Whereas, this update also provided the opportunity to clarify the method and frequency CORE MPO will follow in future evaluations of participation processes, as recommended in the federal certification of CORE MPO in 2013; and

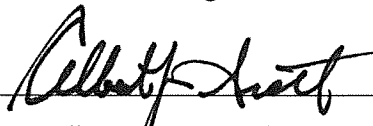
Whereas, the update also provided the opportunity to respond to the needs of planning partners and improve efficiency at multiple levels of government by streamlining the processes for amending the MPO’s Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program if the funding and timing of other planned or programmed projects are unaffected by such proposed amendments; and

Whereas, the process to update the Participation Plan was carried out in accord with the most recently adopted Participation Plan, including the required 45-day public comment period;

Now therefore be it resolved, that the CORE MPO adopts the attached updated Participation Plan.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Board at a meeting held on March 9, 2016.



Albert J. Scott, Chairman
Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

CORE MPO Participation Plan

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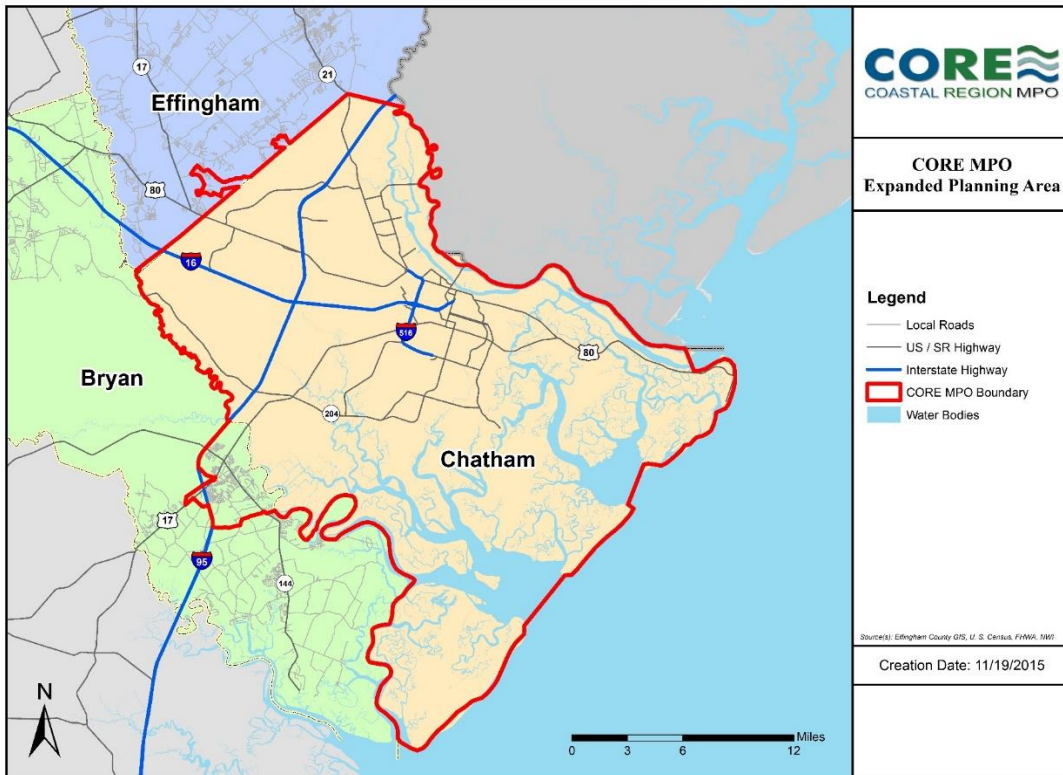
Section 1 – Introduction

The Participation Plan describes the strategies and techniques that the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) uses to inform and engage the public in transportation planning issues with the purpose of maximizing participation and effectiveness.

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) exists in every urbanized area in the U.S. that has at least 50,000 in population. A primary role of an MPO, acting through a policy board, is to provide a local forum to involve the public and all appropriate agencies and organizations in the decisions involving federal transportation funds (for highway and transit projects). MPOs that serve urbanized areas having a population of at least 200,000 are further identified as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). CORE MPO is one of the TMAs within Georgia. An area designated as a TMA enjoys certain benefits and incurs additional requirements beyond those of smaller urbanized areas (23 USC 134 (k)):

- Transportation plans and programs within a TMA must be based on a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative transportation planning process carried out by the MPO in cooperation with the State and transit operators.
- The transportation planning process must include a Congestion Management Process (CMP).
- The FHWA and the FTA must certify the transportation planning process no less often than once every four years.

The CORE MPO is the MPO for the Savannah (GA) Urbanized Area (as defined by the U.S. Census), plus area expected to become urbanized within 20 years. As shown in the map below, the current planning area includes all of the municipalities within Chatham County, the unincorporated area of Chatham County, small portions of Effingham County, and a small portion of Bryan County (including Richmond Hill).



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The Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) provides staff to the MPO and is responsible for administering the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). This MPO initially was established in 1963, and has grown and evolved to keep pace with federal transportation regulations. It was called Chatham Urban Transportation Study (CUTS) until 2009, when the name was changed in anticipation of a larger urbanized area reaching beyond Chatham County, which indeed occurred with the 2010 U.S. Decennial Census.

Each MPO is responsible for creating and maintaining a long-range plan and a short-range programming document, among other things, to address the transportation needs of people as well as freight in the planning area. This Participation Plan includes descriptions of the participation opportunities in the development of these long range and short range planning documents. These plans and programs are developed in partnership with multiple agencies and all interested parties, in a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) process. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), local governments, and transportation providers are a few of the MPO's key partners, in planning as well as in funding. A glossary of common MPO terms is found in Appendix A.

Public Participation Requirements of MPOs: Why have a Participation Plan?



In addition to the plans and programs mentioned above, which are oriented towards transportation solutions, MPOs also are required to adopt a Participation Plan, which inherently focuses more on the ongoing planning process itself. It was with the passage of the federal transportation authorization act in 1991, known as “ISTEA,” that the role of public participation in transportation decision-making was greatly enhanced. Subsequent legislation replaced ISTEA, most recently the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, but carried forward a strong federal emphasis on public participation programs.

The legislation requires MPOs to create a formal participation process and document the process in a plan resulting in opportunities for the public to participate in the transportation planning process. The legislation also requires the MPOs to periodically review the effectiveness of the Participation Plan and make revisions as necessary.

For more detail on the federal authority of MPOs and the federal requirements for participation, see Appendix B.

Overview of CORE MPO’s Participation Plan

CORE MPO adopted a public involvement plan in March 2002. The plan has been implemented since its adoption, providing participation guidance in the updates of the long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the short-range Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The public involvement plan itself has been updated several times to reflect changing regulations and CORE MPO characteristics, and is now known as the Participation Plan. CORE MPO aims to update the Participation Plan at least every five years. Most recently, an update was necessitated in 2015 by the finalization of the CORE MPO reapportionment process, which had revised CORE MPO composition and expanded the planning area, as

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Section 2 – CORE MPO Board and Advisory Committees

The MPO consists of five principal committees: the CORE MPO Board, the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), the Economic Development and Freight Advisory Committee (EDFAC), the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT). Additionally, CORE MPO creates ad hoc committees or stakeholder groups to guide various studies and plan development.

The MPO Board and advisory committees meet at the time and place specified in the annually established schedule, which is posted on the MPO web site. All meetings are open to the public. Taken all together, the committees' meetings cover a range of days and times in an effort to provide opportunity to learn about CORE MPO planning effort for people with various life and work schedules, including the environmental justice populations. MPO Board meetings are also televised on government channels.

Agendas and materials are provided on web pages at least one week ahead of the meetings. Audio recordings are posted under the CORE MPO section of the Meeting Minutes page on the web site.



The CORE MPO Board

The CORE MPO Board is comprised of elected and appointed officials from all of the member jurisdictions, as well as executives from the local and state agencies concerned with transportation planning. It serves as the forum for cooperative transportation decision-making and establishes transportation related policies in support of the area's overall goals and objectives. It reviews and approves all the MPO programs and studies. The CORE MPO Board prioritizes transportation projects recommended in the planning process. The following is a synopsis of the voting composition of the current CORE MPO Board.

- Chairman, Chatham County Commission
- Commissioner or designee, Chatham County Commission
- Commissioner or designee, Chatham County Commission
- Mayor, City of Savannah
- Councilman or designee, City of Savannah
- Councilman or designee, City of Savannah
- Mayor or designee, City of Bloomingdale
- Chairman or designee, Effingham County Commission
- Mayor or designee, City of Garden City
- Mayor or designee, City of Pooler
- Mayor or designee, City of Port Wentworth
- Mayor or designee, City of Richmond Hill
- Mayor or designee, Town of Thunderbolt
- Mayor or designee, City of Tybee Island
- Mayor or designee, Town of Vernonburg
- Commissioner or designee, GDOT
- Executive Director, CAT
- Chairman or designee, CAT Board
- Savannah Airport Commission
- Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC)
- Economic Development and Freight Advisory Committee
- Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT)

Technical Coordinating Committee

The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) is made up of key government and agency transportation staff members who are involved in technical aspects of transportation planning. The TCC reviews and evaluates all transportation studies and provides technical guidance and direction to the MPO. The following is the voting composition of the TCC.

- Director of Traffic Engineering or designee, City of Savannah
- County Engineer or designee, Chatham County
- Transit Planner, Chatham Area Transit
- Engineering Staff, Georgia Ports Authority
- Director of Engineering or designee, Savannah Airport Commission
- Executive Director, Metropolitan Planning Commission
- Director of Transportation Planning, Metropolitan Planning Commission
- Staff Representative, City of Bloomingdale
- Staff Representative, City of Garden City
- Staff Representative, City Pooler
- Staff Representative, City of Port Wentworth
- Staff Representative, Town of Thunderbolt
- Staff Representative, City of Tybee Island
- Staff Representative, Town of Vernonburg
- Staff Representative, City of Richmond Hill
- Staff Representative, Effingham County
- District Engineer or designee, Georgia Department of Transportation
- Transportation Planner, Georgia Department of Transportation
- Representative, Bicycle Advocacy Group
- Transportation Staff, Coastal Regional Commission

Economic Development and Freight Advisory Committee

The Economic Development and Freight Advisory Committee (EDFAC) is composed of key staff members of freight stakeholders and economic development agencies of the Savannah region. It informs and advises the CORE MPO Board on economic development and freight improvement decisions in terms of policy, planning, and projects

- County Manager, Chatham County
- County Manager, Effingham County
- City Manager, City of Savannah
- Garrison Commander, Fort Steward/Hunter Army Airfield
- President and CEO, Savannah Economic Development Authority
- President and CEO, Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
- Director, Bryan County Economic Development Agency
- Director, Effingham County Industrial Development Authority
- Representative, Manufacturing and Logistics Industry
- Representative, Georgia Ports Authority
- Representative, Savannah Airport Commission
- Representative, CSX Transportation/Railroad Industry
- Representative, Norfolk Southern/Railroad Industry
- Representative, Trucking Industry
- Representative, GDOT Freight Planner
- Representative, Environmental Group
- Representative, Emergency Management Agency
- Representative, Law Enforcement
- Representative, School Board

The Citizens Advisory Committee

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is made up of appointed local citizens and functions as a public information and involvement committee. It reviews MPO plans and studies and provides recommendations to the MPO Board. The CAC informs the MPO of the community's perspective while providing information to the community about transportation policies and issues. There are 15 CAC members, and terms are two years. Each local government member on the MPO Board nominates a CAC member to be approved by the appropriate governing body, as follows:

- Bloomingdale (1)
- Chatham County, unincorporated (3)
- Effingham County (1)
- Garden City (1)
- Pooler (1)
- Port Wentworth (1)
- Richmond Hill (1)
- Savannah (3)
- Thunderbolt (1)
- Tybee Island (1)
- Vernonburg (1)

The Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

The Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT) serves as the forum for cooperative decision-making with regard to accessible transportation related issues in the planning area. ACAT acts as a liaison between the transportation planning process and the traditionally underserved communities in the area (i.e., those communities with high concentrations of minority, low income, disabled and elderly populations).

ACAT helps ensure that the transportation planning process is current and responsive to all applicable laws, rules and regulations, especially, but not limited to, the following: Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); Executive Order 12898 (environmental justice); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended; and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. ACAT is comprised of representatives from the following agencies:

- Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT), Staff Representative
- Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC), Transportation Planner
- Coastal Center for Developmental Services, Staff Representative
- Economic Opportunity Authority for Savannah-Chatham County (EOA), Staff Representative
- Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), District 5 Staff Representative
- Georgia Infirmity Day Center, Staff Representative
- Goodwill Industries of the Coastal Empire, Staff Representative
- Housing Authority of Savannah, Resident Service Coordinator
- Interested Citizens (4)
- Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE), Inc., Independent Living Coordinator
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) - Savannah Chapter, Staff Representative
- National Federation of the Blind of Georgia - Local Chapter, Staff Representative
- Savannah Center for the Blind and Low Vision, Staff Representative
- Savannah – Chatham Council on Disability Issues (SCCDI)
- Savannah - Chatham County Fair Housing Council, Staff Representative
- Savannah Council of the Blind
- Senior Citizens Savannah - Chatham County Inc., Staff Representative
- Chatham County, Staff Representative
- Richmond Hill, Staff Representative
- Effingham County, Staff Representative

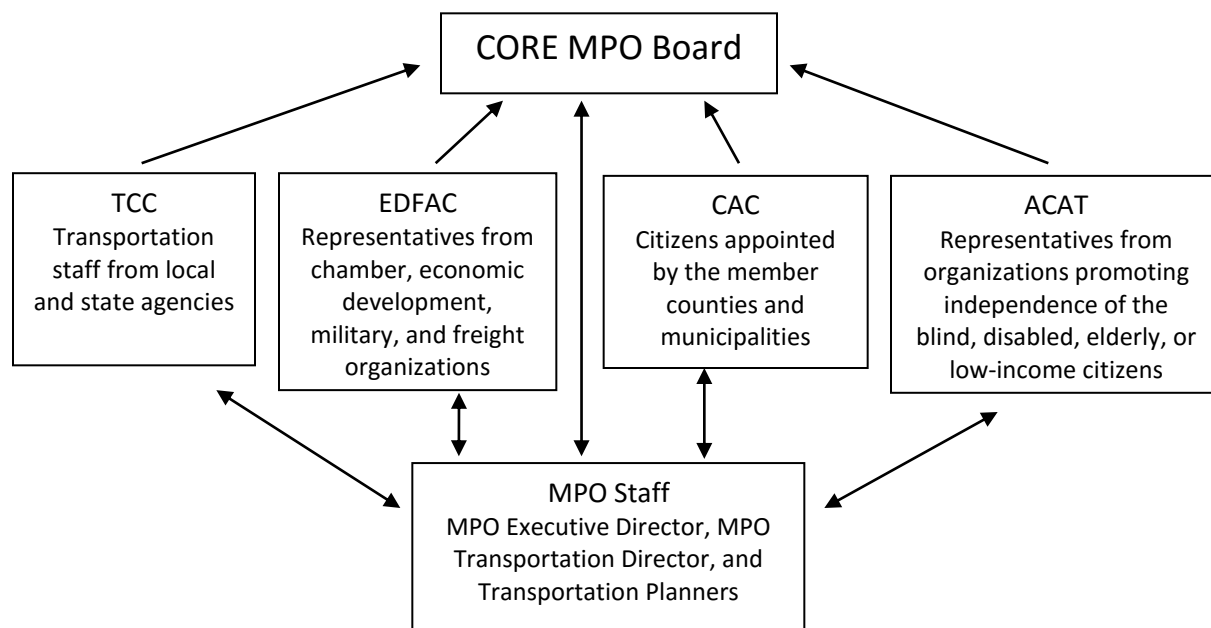
Ad hoc Committees

Occasionally ad hoc committees are created to examine specific technical issues, to serve as a liaison to other MPO committees regarding key recommendations and decisions, as well as to provide input to the development of the MPO plans and programs. The MPO also utilizes existing advocacy groups as ad hoc committees to help the MPO planning process. Some past examples of ad hoc committees have included the following.



- The Transportation Improvement Sub-committee of CAC
- Stakeholder committees formed for the MPO’s special studies: Transit Mobility Vision Plan; I-16 Exit Ramp Removal; SR 204 Corridor Study; SR 21 Corridor Study; US 80 Corridor Study; Wave Ecology Study; and the Victory Drive Corridor Study.

Working in concert, the MPO, its committees and staff carry out the 3-C planning process by continuously monitoring and evaluating the entire transportation system, and providing the forum for all government agencies, transportation providers and the public to participate in the development of transportation plans and programs. As local conditions change, transportation plans and programs are periodically reevaluated and updated to ensure that they continue to serve the needs of the community. The following chart shows this interactive process.



The CORE MPO Bylaws, which are posted on the MPO’s web pages (<http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Tran>), further explain the role, composition, and operation of the Board and each advisory committee.

Section 3 – Participation Goals and Objectives

The following section summarizes the goals and objectives that were developed through the completion of the CORE MPO’s Participation Plan under the guidance of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The most recent update in 2015 has modified objectives in the following ways: reworded or combined similar objectives; added new objectives to improve outreach; removed obsolete or impractical objectives.



The first step the CAC Public Relations/Program Subcommittee undertook in developing the first MPO Public Involvement Plan was to identify appropriate goals and objectives. The subcommittee used the “outreach activities” listed in the Public Involvement section of the Transportation Plan for Chatham County, Georgia (MPO, 1999) as the basis for developing more specific and functional goals and objectives. The subcommittee also reviewed goals and objectives developed by other MPOs for their participation plans.

A number of tools are available in designing effective participation activities. The choice of techniques is guided by the type of initiative underway (e.g., a Town Hall meeting, an update to the MTP, etc.) and the audience targeted. Appendix D includes descriptions of various participation techniques available for implementation. The tables were prepared by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). The list is comprehensive, but not exhaustive.

The CORE MPO Participation Plan has four goals, shown below. The bullets under each goal are the objectives specifying how the MPO meets the goal. As transportation planning is a continuing process, most of these activities are carried out on an ongoing basis, or as called for in relation to planned events.

Goal 1: Raise interested citizens'/parties' level of understanding of the MPO transportation planning process and identify how interested citizens/parties can become involved.

- Provide agendas for all MPO Committee Meetings to Committee members well in advance of the meetings.
- Post the MPO Committee Meetings’ agendas and minutes on the MPO web page.
- Maintain a database of MPO contacts that includes media outlets, committee members, partner agencies’ staffs, representatives of underserved populations, and interested parties.
- Notify media and interested parties/citizens (maintained as part of the MPO database) of the MPO Committee meetings prior to the meetings.
- Designate time on each MPO Committee meeting agenda for comments from interested parties/citizens.
- Maintain the MPO web page with information about regular meetings, program documents, and special studies.
- Develop informational materials and employ visualization techniques as appropriate for activities and studies in the MPO transportation planning process, e.g. web pages, fact sheets, newsletters, newspaper inserts, brochures, citizen guides, videos, etc.

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- Work with the media to inform and educate the public about transportation issues and the transportation planning process.
- Staff is available to attend local government and community meetings, by request, to discuss current planning initiatives as well as provide an overview of the MPO transportation planning process.

Goal 2: Ensure that the interested citizens/parties have been provided with adequate, appropriate and meaningful opportunities to participate in the decision-making process.

- Review by the CORE MPO Board and appropriate advisory committees of all updates and amendments to any MPO planning documents.
- Publicize all public meetings, public hearings and public review periods through media outreach and public notice advertisements.
- Provide public access to all draft plans at various local public agencies (e.g. libraries, community centers) in advance of plan adoption by the CORE MPO Board.
- Report through the MPO Committees all significant public comments on draft plans and reports.
- Provide MPO contact information for citizens to offer suggestions on transportation issues.
- When warranted, convene subcommittees, task forces, focus groups, etc., of interested citizens, planners, technical experts and others who have expressed an interest in a particular topic and involve them in the planning process.
- Provide fact sheets on specific projects (ongoing).
- Conduct surveys, at appropriate times, to inform the land use and transportation planning process.
- As resources allow, provide announcements, documents, materials, and notices in the language of populations reaching the Limited English Proficiency¹ threshold in the Savannah urbanized area.

Goal 3: Identify and involve traditionally underserved communities (those communities with high concentrations of minority, low-income, disabled or elderly populations) in the MPO transportation planning process.²

- Identify groups that represent or assist traditionally underserved communities and maintain contact/ mailing list.
- Maintain contact/ mailing list of media, notify them of all regularly scheduled CORE MPO committee meetings, and work with them to inform and educate underserved communities about transportation issues.
- Refer to the environmental justice geographic analysis maps when considering meeting locations and vary meeting times to provide opportunities for people with atypical schedules.
- To ensure meeting sites are accessible, use the checklist provided in the US DOT's *Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decisionmaking, 2015 Update*. (See Appendix E.)
- Work with ACAT to identify opportunities for their additional involvement in the MPO transportation planning process.
- Involve minority, low-income, disabled and elderly persons as members of ACAT.
- Provide voluntary opportunities for participants to indicate their inclusion in Title VI categories on comment cards and surveys.
- As resources allow, provide announcements, documents, materials, and notices in the language of

¹ CORE MPO Limited English Proficiency Plan is available at: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Plans>.

² CORE MPO Environmental Justice Report explains the process of assessing needs of the underserved and project impacts and benefits for those populations. See report at: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Plans>.

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populations reaching the Limited English Proficiency threshold in the Savannah urbanized area.

Goal 4: Utilize the CAC to its fullest extent to reach interested parties in the community including citizens within the planning area, the CORE MPO Board and local, state and federal transportation and public officials.

- Keep the CAC informed of MPO activities and studies.
- CAC will review all citizen concerns related to transportation policies, etc. as part of the MPO Committee review process.
- Keep the CAC informed of the progress of federally funded transportation projects, including transit projects.
- CAC will periodically review effectiveness of Participation Plan.
- Modifications to the Participation Process will be reviewed by the CAC before being approved by the CORE MPO Board.
- New CAC members will be provided with a current Orientation Manual and will be able to attend an orientation meeting on the MPO planning process.
- Invite CAC members to be added to the stakeholder lists for MPO studies of their choice and to share insight or information gleaned with the rest of the CAC and interested citizens as opportunities arise.

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Section 4 – Measures of Effectiveness

Evaluating the effectiveness of the participation process periodically is a desirable practice and is in fact required of the MPO by federal regulations. The measures should be quantifiable yet practical to obtain.

The 2015 update of the Participation Plan has made significant changes to the measures of effectiveness (MOEs) for the CORE MPO participation process. These changes were made to simplify evaluation and also to focus on outcomes, as recommended in CORE MPO’s most recent federal certification review. The frequency of evaluation is now specified as well.

Overall, the goals identified in the previous section are expected to generate outcomes in the form of awareness and dialogue about transportation in the planning area. Evidence that this is happening might be the presence of people at meetings, or written or verbal communication between the MPO, its partner agencies, and the public. The measures of effectiveness in this section focus on such evidence.

Measures of Effectiveness				
OUTCOMES MEASURED	UNIT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	2-YEAR AVG
Number of people attending meetings of MPO committees and other meetings that include MPO topics	Persons / Mtgs			
Number of meetings in EJ locations, at which MPO staff or consultants spoke	Each meeting			
Number of comments received	Comment card, email, etc.			
Number of people of Title VI populations (as voluntarily categorized*) submitting comments or surveys	Title VI pop. comment			
Number (and status) of Title VI complaints received **	Each complaint			

* An optional question may be included on comment cards or surveys to allow participants to voluntarily self-identify into the Title VI populations.

** Persons submitting a verbal complaint will be advised to put the same complaint in writing, in order to facilitate documentation of receipt and resolution. If such person is unable to write or have a companion write for them, MPO staff will log the verbal complaint, establishing an orderly one-by-one process as needed.

Once every two calendar years, the MPO will evaluate its participation outcomes, using the quantifiable measures above. Over time, the target is to see improved annual averages in the identified types of participation outcomes from one evaluation to the next. Appropriate records will be kept on an ongoing basis to allow efficient review. The measure will be **averages across the two-year period** (e.g. the average number of persons in attendance per meeting in the 2016-2017 evaluation period was ‘x’). The evaluation also may include additional detail associated with the actual metrics as needed, such as how comments or complaints (if any) were addressed, reasons people gave for attending meetings, or how they heard of meetings. An evaluation report will summarize the results the CORE MPO’s biennial measure of effectiveness.

If the evaluation reveals that changes are needed in CORE MPO’s participation methods, the Participation Plan will be revised, in accord with the adopted participatory procedures that are current at that time. At a minimum, CORE MPO aims to update the Participation Plan every five years. Updates may be triggered by other factors besides evaluation results; thus every Participation Plan update does not necessarily involve an evaluation of the effectiveness participation process, because evaluations are on the two-year schedule specified above.

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In the interest of simplified record-keeping, a formatted chart is stored electronically in a location on the file network where all MPO staff can easily access it to enter counts as events occur or as comments or complaints are received.

The documentation on CORE MPO's prior Measures of Effectiveness is included in Appendix F.

Section 5 – Overview of Participation Opportunities in CORE MPO Transportation Planning

This section allows interested parties to become familiar with the core activities in the MPO planning process. These are the most predictable activities and include: Regular meetings of the MPO Board and committees and development of and changes to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Congestion Management Process (CMP), the Title VI Program, the Participation Plan, and special studies. A chart at the end of this section summarizes the timing of public meetings, hearings, and review period for each type of MPO document discussed here.



Other than the opportunities described below, interested parties may contact CORE MPO staff at any time through the “Get Involved” link on the web site (at <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Tran>), or at the agency address and phone number provided at the end of this section. An example of the comment form on the “Get Involved” web page is provided in Appendix G.

Participation through CORE MPO Committees

The backbone of CORE MPO’s participatory process for decisions regarding the uses of federal transportation funding in the planning area, whether for projects or studies, consists of the meetings of the CORE MPO Board and its advisory committees, all of which are open to the public. The intent of these meetings is to provide a forum for the open discussion, among committee members, staffs, and citizens, about needs, proposals, comments, or concerns relating to transportation in the area. In this way, the MPO Board’s actions represent the collaborative, local decision on how to reflect the area’s interests in a transportation plan, project list, recommendation, program, or other effort, given the information received at the meetings or among the provided meeting materials.

The MPO develops a schedule for all the regular MPO committee meetings each year and posts it on the MPO website at www.corempo.org. At the time of the 2015 update of this Participation Plan, the schedule generally was set according to the following system:

- The CORE MPO Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of even-numbered months (i.e. February, April, etc.), at 10:00 a.m. in the MPC Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room, 112 E. State St., Savannah, Georgia.
- The Technical Coordinating Committee meets in the even-numbered months, on Thursday in the week prior to the MPO Board meeting, at 3:00 p.m. in the MPC Jerry Surrency Conference Room, 112 E. State St., Savannah, Georgia. This is often but not always the third Thursday of the month. Exceptions are noted on the annual meeting schedule.
- The Citizens Advisory Committee meets in even-numbered months, on the Thursday two weeks prior to the TCC meeting, at 5:00 p.m. in the MPC Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room, 112 E. State St., Savannah, Georgia. This is often but not always the first Thursday of the month. Exceptions are noted on the annual meeting schedule.

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- Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation meets in even-numbered months, on the Monday two days ahead of the MPO Board meeting, at 1:00 p.m. at CAT's Joe Murray Rivers, Jr. Intermodal Transit Center, 610 W. Oglethorpe Ave. Savannah, Georgia. This is often but not always the fourth Monday of the month. Exceptions are noted on the annual meeting schedule.

Additionally, subcommittees may be established within any of these committees, to address particular issues or projects. In rare circumstances, the regular committees may have special-called meetings, as explained in the CORE MPO Bylaws (available at: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Tran>).

All of the MPO and Committee meetings are open to the public and interested citizens/parties are encouraged to attend. At each meeting, the public is provided with an opportunity to address the Committee on any issue related to the transportation planning process. Anyone wishing to speak can sign-up at the beginning of the meeting or contact the MPO staff prior to the meeting (see Contacting CORE MPO at the end of this section). In addition, the public is permitted to engage in the discussion of all action items on the agenda prior to the formal vote. Public discussion during informational items is encouraged when time permits, at the discretion of the committee chairs.

Meeting agendas for the CORE MPO Board and advisory committees are posted on the MPO web site at least a week ahead of the meetings. Audio recordings of the MPO Board and advisory committee meetings are posted within a few days after each meeting, on the "Agendas and Minutes" web page for each committee, at: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Tran>.

Participation in Development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) contains the long-range planning elements of the transportation planning process. (It is sometimes called the Long Range Transportation Plan.) The MTP identifies policies, strategies, projects and programs to guide future transportation investments in the MPO planning area. CORE MPO typically sets aside funds in the MTP to conduct studies as well. MTPs cover at least a 20-year time period and must be financially constrained. According to metropolitan transportation planning legislation, a complete MTP update must be completed every 5 years for metropolitan areas, such as ours, that are attaining federal air quality standards. These are the steps that CORE MPO takes to encourage and allow participation in the MTP development:

- 1) The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) will facilitate the participation process during the development of the MTP.
- 2) The MPO will host at least one public meeting on the MTP early in the development process at a centralized, accessible location.
- 3) A legal notice will be published in the *Savannah Morning News* at least 10 days prior to any public meeting.
- 4) In addition to the *Savannah Morning News*, all other local media and the neighborhood associations as identified in Appendix H of the Plan, and the consultation agencies as identified in Appendix I of the Plan, will be notified of all public meetings. The meeting notice will also be posted on the MPO website.
- 5) Upon completion of a draft MTP, the MPO will hold a 30-day public review and comment period.
- 6) A legal notice will be published in the *Savannah Morning News* on the Sunday prior to the beginning of the public review and comment period. All the other contacts listed above will be notified as well.

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- 7) During the public review and comment period, copies of the draft MTP will be made available for review at the public agencies identified in Appendix J of the Plan, and will be posted on the MPO website.
- 8) The MPO will host at least one public meeting during the public review and comment period at a centralized, accessible location. The public meeting will be in advance of or in conjunction with the anticipated MPO meeting when the MTP will be adopted.
- 9) Public comments on the draft MTP must be provided in writing and will be included as an appendix to the final MTP.
- 10) Public comments shall be accepted no later than three working days after the public review and comment period ends.
- 11) At the close of the public review and comment period, the MPO staff will review comments and identify any significant comments.
- 12) Significant comments will be reviewed by the MPO Committees at their meetings and incorporated into the final MTP.
- 13) If the final MTP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, the MPO will re-start a 30-day public review period, whether during or after the initial 30-day public review period.
- 14) A legal notice will be published in the *Savannah Morning News* on the Sunday prior to the beginning of the public review and comment period. All the other contacts listed above will be notified as well.

A chart at the end of this section summarizes the timing of public meetings, hearings, and review periods.

Participation in Development of the Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the short-range programming element of transportation planning. The TIP lists the transportation projects and studies in the CORE MPO planning area that are programmed to receive federal funds over the next four years. Projects in the TIP are consistent with the MTP. Factors considered for a project's inclusion in the TIP include its readiness to proceed as well as the project's ability to positively impact/affect the regional transportation system. Planning studies, addressing the collaboratively identified needs in the community, also may be included in the TIP.

Under federal transportation planning legislation, the MPO is required to annually update the listing of obligated projects. By nature of programming funds, TIPs are financially constrained. The amount of federal funds available to the MPO is subject to the state's congressional district balancing. Only lump sum projects which do not affect the capacity of roadways are not subject to congressional district balancing.

Federal regulations require the preparation of a TIP at least every four years in order for federal agencies to authorize the use of federal transportation funds in the region. Historically, the MPO has updated the TIP on a yearly basis. The public involvement process for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is used to satisfy the Georgia Department of Transportation public participation process for the Program of Projects (POP).

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- 1) The CAC will facilitate the participation process during the development of the TIP.
- 2) As a Transportation Management Area (TMA), the MPO will host at least one public meeting on the TIP early in the development process, for the purpose of establishing project priorities. This meeting will be held at a centralized, accessible location.
- 3) A legal notice will be published in the *Savannah Morning News* at least 10 days prior to any public meeting/open house.
- 4) In addition to the *Savannah Morning News*, all other local media and the neighborhood associations as identified in Appendix H of the Plan, and the consultation agencies as identified in Appendix I of Plan, will be notified of all public meetings. The meeting notice will also be posted on the MPO website.
- 5) Upon completion of a draft TIP, the MPO will hold a 30-day public review and comment period.
- 6) A legal notice will be published in the *Savannah Morning News* on the Sunday prior to the beginning of the public review and comment period. All the other contacts listed above will be notified as well.
- 7) During the public review and comment period, copies of the draft TIP will be made available for review at the public agencies identified in Appendix J of the Plan, and will be posted on the MPO website.
- 8) The MPO will host at least one public meeting during the public review and comment period at a centralized, accessible location.
- 9) Public comments on the draft TIP must be provided in writing and will be included as an appendix to the final TIP.
- 10) Public comments shall be accepted no later than three working days after the public review and comment period ends.
- 11) At the close of the public review and comment period, The MPO staff will review comments and identify any significant comments.
- 12) Significant comments will be reviewed by the MPO Committees at their meetings and incorporated into the final TIP.
- 13) If the final TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, the MPO will re-start a 30-day public review period, whether during or after the initial 30-day public review period.
- 14) A legal notice will be published in the *Savannah Morning News* on the Sunday prior to the beginning of the public review and comment period. All the other contacts listed above will be notified as well.

A chart at the end of this section summarizes the timing of public meetings, hearings, and review periods.

Participation for Changes to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

While the MPO updates the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on a regular schedule, there will be many instances during the cycle when either administrative changes or amendments are required. Generally administrative changes are minor

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changes which do not alter the original project intent or require financial rebalancing of the plan, while amendments are changes that do have those types of impacts on the plan.

Because the TIP focuses on an immediate four-year time frame, it includes the more active phases of projects, and therefore requests for changes tend to focus on the TIP. However, the longer range MTP is the guiding document. As one can infer from the descriptions of the MTP and the TIP above, the TIP is a subset of projects (or certain phases of projects) listed within the MTP's financially constrained plan. In order to qualify for federal funds, new projects must be consistent with the MTP before they are eligible for inclusion in the TIP. Changes to projects that are already in the TIP (and thus also in the MTP) are documented in an addendum to the MTP.

Any person requesting project revisions, additions, or deletions to the CORE MPO TIP or MTP should send to CORE MPO staff written details of the request, including:

- Project description or changes in existing descriptions;
- Project location and termini or changes in existing location and termini;
- Costs of each phase of the project (new projects) or changes in existing costs;
- Expected authorization year of each phase or changes in those (if the request involves the immediate four-year TIP window);
- Funding sources or changes in funding sources (if the request involves the immediate four-year TIP window);
- Reason for change.

CORE MPO staff may request additional information if needed. Once all of the necessary information is received, MPO staff will use the information to determine whether the request is a TIP administrative modification (according to the description in GDOT's STIP amendment process in Appendix K), a TIP amendment that *does not* entail an MTP amendment, a TIP amendment that *does* entail an MTP amendment, or alternatively an MTP amendment that does not affect the TIP.

The guidelines below are used to distinguish between administrative modification and amendments.. While most TIP amendments can be accomplished in one MPO meeting cycle (a one-step process), note that MTP amendments require MPO Board action at two separate meetings. TIP amendments which also necessitate an MTP amendment, will therefore require at least two meeting cycles in order to accomplish the necessary MTP amendment prior to action on the TIP amendment. . The range of processes described below is intended to allow adequate review of requests, while recognizing that flexibility based on the context of the request will improve efficiency at multiple levels of government.

Procedures for Changes to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Administrative Modification

The following types of requests are considered administrative modifications to the TIP or MTP, as long as the requested change does not require public review and comment.

- Making a *minor* revision (as defined in Appendix K: GDOT's STIP Amendment Process) to a project that is already in the MTP's financially constrained plan;
- Adding, deleting, or modifying a project in the MTP's vision (illustrative) plan, provided that any added projects come from an adopted study accepted by the CORE MPO..

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When the CORE MPO staff determines that the request is an administrative modification, the process consists of the following steps:

- 1) Transmittal of Confirmation: MPO staff transmits a confirmation to GDOT.
- 2) MPO staff posts the updated portion of the document(s) on the MPO web site.
- 3) GDOT sends a monthly list of notifications about administrative modifications to all involved parties, with change summaries sent on a monthly basis to the FHWA and FTA.

Projects that use zero federal funding, and that are not expected to need federal funding in the future, are not required to be included in the CORE MPO MTP or TIP. If a requester nevertheless would like to have these projects listed, then they can be included in an addendum to the MTP, with CORE MPO Board notification. Such projects can be listed in the TIP through an administrative modification.

CORE MPO reserves the right to re-start the change process as an amendment, in cases where it is found that the modification is controversial.

One-step Amendment

The following situations are considered one-step amendments.

- The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); AND
- The request *would not* affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP's financially constrained plan or TIP.

The process consists of the following steps:

- 1) CORE MPO Board Meeting: At a CORE MPO Board meeting occurring no less than 21 days after receipt of the request, the recommendations of the MPO staff and the appropriate CORE MPO advisory committees will be provided to the CORE MPO Board. A public hearing will be held at that MPO Board meeting, unless held at an earlier date or time. The CORE MPO Board will decide at the conclusion of the hearing whether to reject the proposal, approve the proposal, or approve the proposal with modifications.
- 2) In instances where the project costs or other details differ from those listed in the adopted MTP, the updated project information will be noted in an addendum to the MTP.

Public participation procedures for one-step amendments include public advertisement, a public hearing, a 15-day comment period, and response to all comments, either individually or in summary form. Information about the comment period and public hearing also are posted on MPO web site and provided to the media contacts, neighborhood associations, and consultation agencies in the MPO contact database.

Two-step Amendment

The following situations are considered two-step amendments. The second step of the process may include a TIP amendment as well, in many cases:

- The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); OR
- The request *would* affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP's financially constrained plan (and TIP in many cases).

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The process consists of the following steps:

- 1) First CORE MPO Board meeting: The CORE MPO staff and the appropriate advisory committees will recommend to the MPO Board whether additional review of the amendment to the MTP is warranted. The CORE MPO Board will then decide either to reject the proposal or authorize further review of the proposal.
- 2) Second CORE MPO Board meeting: If further review is authorized by the CORE MPO Board in the step above, the MPO staff will obtain and review additional information and present its findings and recommendation to the appropriate CORE MPO advisory committees. The recommendations of the MPO staff and the committees will then be provided to the CORE MPO Board. A public hearing will be held at that CORE MPO Board meeting, unless held at an earlier date or time. The CORE MPO Board will decide at the conclusion of the hearing whether to reject the amendment to the MTP, approve it, or approve it with modifications. If the proposal also affects the TIP, then the CORE MPO Board may consider the TIP amendment at this same meeting or at a later meeting.

Public participation procedures for two-step amendments include public advertisement, a public hearing, a 15-day comment period, and response to all comments, either individually or in summary form. Information about the comment period and public hearing also are posted on MPO web site and provided to the media contacts, neighborhood associations, and consultation agencies in the MPO contact database.

TIP Amendment Only

If a project or study that is already consistent with the CORE MPO MTP, as determined by the Executive Director, requires a change that does not qualify as an administrative modification, as defined above, then a TIP amendment can be considered without the need for an MTP amendment. The TIP amendment process requires public advertisement, a 15-day comment period and response to all comments, either individually or in a summary form. There is no requirement for a public hearing. The amendment follows the usual MPO Committee process for action.

The use of federal funds requires completion of the environmental process in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Right-of-way negotiations may not take place until successful completion of the NEPA process. Final location and design of an amended project would be a function of the NEPA process. In Georgia, the Department of Transportation oversees the public participation in the environmental process. The MPO facilitates the participation process by providing early and continuous planning level input and by assisting GDOT in disseminating public meeting notices and project information.

A chart at the end of this section summarizes the timing of public meetings, hearings, and review periods.

Participation in the CORE MPO Unified Planning Work Program

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the CORE MPO describes the transportation planning activities supporting the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) to be performed during a given fiscal year with funds provided under Title 23 USC and the Federal Transit Act. The tasks in the UPWP may include special studies in addition to the work on the required documents. Participation during development of or amendments to the document follows the CORE MPO committee review process. See the section above for “Participation through CORE MPO Committees”. For the special studies, the MPO committees and any other interested parties participate in developing scopes of the studies. All of the committee meetings are open to the public.

Participation in the CORE MPO Congestion Management Process

A congestion management process (CMP) is a systematic and regionally accepted approach for managing congestion that provides information on transportation system performance and assesses alternative strategies for congestion management that meets state and local needs. Participation during development and updates of the CMP follows the regular CORE MPO committee review process. See the section above for “Participation through CORE MPO Committees”. All of the committee meetings are open to the public. Additional meetings or other outreach with partner agency staff, stakeholders, or the public may be conducted if needed, depending upon the issues and strategies identified as the CMP is developed.

Participation in Development of the CORE MPO Title VI Program

Title VI refers to the section regarding non-discrimination in the 1964 Civil Right Act. The CORE MPO Title VI Program document includes the following major components: Title VI summary report (including Title VI/Non-discrimination policy statement), Title VI notice to the public, Title VI complaint procedures and complaint forms, Records of Title VI complaints and lawsuits, Limited English Proficiency Plan, and Environmental Justice report. Participation during development and updates of the Title VI program follows the regular CORE MPO committee review process. See the section above for “Participation through CORE MPO Committees”. All of the committee meetings are open to the public. Additional meetings or other outreach with partner agency staff, stakeholders, or the public may be conducted if needed, depending upon the issues and strategies identified as the program is developed. A 45-day minimum public comment period is provided.

Modifications to the Participation Process/Participation Plan

This Participation Plan will periodically need revision, due to changes in federal legislation. Revisions may also be recommendations as a result of the MPO’s own evaluation of its processes, using the “Measures of Effectiveness” covered in a previous section.

All proposed changes to the MPO Participation Process/Participation Plan must be reviewed by the CAC and their recommendations forwarded to the CORE MPO Board for their consideration, but only after a 45-day review period during which citizens and consultation agencies are provided with the opportunity to comment on the proposed change(s). A chart at the end of this section summarizes the timing of public meetings, hearings, and review periods.

Participation in CORE MPO’s Special Studies

Special Studies are planning studies or projects other than the mandatory MPO planning documents. Such studies are typically conducted in cooperation with local governments, GDOT, CAT, and other groups with specific interest and/or expertise in transportation issues. These Special Studies support the ongoing development and refinement of the MTP and TIP. The scopes of such studies are developed collaboratively through the MPO committees, along with any other interested parties. These studies will have individually tailored participation programs, using a combination of participation techniques as outlined in Appendix D of the Plan.

Often the studies have stakeholder groups, advisory committees, or task forces to provide additional planning support. Stakeholders are initially identified by the MPO and the partner agencies conducting the study, but other interested parties may be added to the group as encountered during the study’s activities. The duration, formality and issues to be addressed by such groups will vary based on the input desired.

A chart at the end of this section summarizes the timing of public meetings, hearings, and review periods.

Additional Public Participation



To meet additional federal requirements (originating in SAFETEA-LU and carried through to the FAST Act) on consultation and coordination as well as environmental mitigation, draft copies of the MPO's transportation plans will be compared with conservation plans/maps and natural/historic resources, if available and when appropriate. The MPO will continue to coordinate, as appropriate, with local, regional and State agencies responsible for economic development, planned growth, resource conservation, airport and freight movement, tourism, and disaster risk reduction.

Besides affording the resource agencies listed in Appendix I the opportunity to actively participate in the MTP and TIP development process, general information on major planning and corridor studies will be sent to each agency to facilitate a dialogue and identify potential environmental mitigation activities early in the transportation planning process.

Contacting CORE MPO

CORE MPO
Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission
110 E. State Street
Savannah, GA 31401
Phone: 912-651-1440
www.corempo.org

Get Involved: Comments and questions may be submitted electronically on the web page:
<http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Tran>.

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Summary Chart for CORE MPO Public Meeting and Review Process

	Public Meeting or Hearing	Public Meeting Notice	Public Review Period	Public Review Notice
Development of MTP	Meeting: Early in the multi-month process of plan development.	At least 10 days ahead of public meeting	30 days min.	Sunday prior to public review period
MTP Amendment	Hearing: Held before or during MPO Board meeting at which the action is considered	Public meeting not required. Hearing notice: simultaneous with public review period notice.	15 days min.	Prior to or simultaneous with beginning of public review period
Development of TIP	Meeting: Early in the multi-month process of TIP development.	At least 10 days ahead of public meeting	30 days min.	Sunday prior to public review period
TIP Amendment	Public meeting not required. Public hearing not required.		15 days min.	Prior to or simultaneous with beginning of public review period
Development of UPWP	No special public meetings required. Reviewed at regular committee meetings, which are open to the public.		No special review period required. Listed on committees' agendas provided 7 days ahead of meetings, which are open to the public.	
Development of CMP	No special public meetings required. Reviewed at regular committee meetings, which are open to the public.		No special review period required. Listed on committees' agendas provided 7 days ahead of meetings, which are open to the public.	
Development of Title VI Program	No special public meetings required. Reviewed at regular committee meetings, which are open to the public.		45 days min.	Prior to or simultaneous with beginning of public review period
Participation Plan	CORE MPO uses its Citizen Advisory Committee as the working group for Participation Plan development and updates. Other CORE MPO committees, partners, and the public also may provide input at the meetings of any of the MPO's committees throughout the process. See description of CAC and other committees' meeting frequencies above.		45 days min.	Prior to or simultaneous with beginning of public review period
Special studies	Each special study uses individually tailored participation programs. The duration, formality and issues to be addressed by such groups will vary based on the input desired.			

In the case of any discrepancies between the process shown in this chart and the written descriptions above in this section, the written descriptions govern.

In the event of comments that require significant changes to the document during the public comment period, additional public outreach, tailored to the specific planning effort, will be carried out. The existence and duration of the extended outreach will be communicated with additional notices and correspondence to CORE MPO contacts and media. Federal legislation requires that the MPO provide “an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts” (Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart C,a,1,viii §450.316). As noted in the relevant sections above for development of MTP and TIP, CORE MPO would restart the 30-day review period and re-publish associated notices in the case of such significant changes during the comment periods for those two documents.

Appendix A – Transportation Glossary

You might encounter the following terms and acronyms while participating in the transportation planning process of the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO).

3C	Refers to the Continuing, Comprehensive, and Cooperative aspects of the transportation planning process.
AADT	The Average Annual Daily Traffic, which is a measure of the number of vehicles passing a roadway during a 24 hour period adjusted to represent an average day in the year the count was taken.
ACAT	Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation, which advises Chatham Area Transit on accessibility issues with the mainline and paratransit transit systems.
Access Management	The process of providing and managing access to land development while preserving the regional flow of traffic in terms of safety, capacity and speed.
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act, Federal legislation of 1990, which mandates changes in building codes, transportation and hiring practices to prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities. ADA requires transit operators to provide paratransit services in areas that are within 0.75 miles of the fixed route system.
Arterials	One of the functional classifications of streets, arterials are those which are primarily for through traffic and where access is carefully controlled.
Bikeway	A general term that captures many different types of bicycle facilities: paths, bike lanes, wide curb lanes, shared lanes, and others.
CAC	Citizens Advisory Committee
Capacity	A transportation facility's ability to accommodate a moving stream of people or vehicles in a given time period.
CAT	Chatham Area Transit Authority, the agency which provides fixed route public transportation services in Chatham County. Formerly called the Savannah Transit Authority.
CE	Categorical Exclusion, which is a type of action that does not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the human environment. A Categorical Exclusion does not require an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement.
Charrette	A meeting in which citizens are invited to participate in a full discussion of issues, interrelationships and impacts. Time limits challenge people to openly examine problems and produce tangible results.
Collectors	One of the functional classifications of streets, collectors are those which distribute trips from arterials and channel trips to arterials. Additionally, these roadways provide access and circulation within residential neighborhoods.
CMP	Congestion Management Process, which provides for effective management of new and existing transportation facilities through the use of travel demand reduction and operational management strategies. A CMP is required of all Transportation Management Areas (TMAs).

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Complete Streets	Describes streets that are designed to accommodate not only drivers of automobiles and trucks, but also bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. By accommodating many modes, the streets also serve users of a wider range of ages and physical abilities (e.g. youth, elderly, wheelchair users). The term is frequently used to describe the policy for accommodation, adoption of which is often necessary to achieve the change in practice of roadway design.
CORE MPO	Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization, which conducts the transportation planning process for the area currently covering all of Chatham County and small portions of Effingham County and Bryan County, including Richmond Hill.
CSD	Context Sensitive Design, a method of design for transportation projects that includes consideration of multiple modes, land uses, and community values.
CSS	Context Sensitive Solutions, a method similar to Context Sensitive Design, but intended to also describe the participatory process of defining context and identifying appropriate design solutions.
CUTS	Chatham Urban Transportation Study, which was the name of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Savannah urbanized area up until 2009.
Demand Response	A type of transit service in which passenger cars, vans or buses with fewer than 25 seats operate in response to calls from passengers or their agents to the transit operator, who then dispatches a vehicle to pick up the passengers and transport them to their destinations. Typically, the vehicles do not operate over a fixed route or on a fixed schedule and typically the vehicle may be dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pick-up points before taking them to their respective destinations. Also called paratransit.
Design Speed	The maximum safe speed that can be maintained over a specific section of roadway when conditions are so favorable that the design features of the roadway govern.
EA	Environmental Assessment, which is an interim decision document prepared for an action where the significance of social, economic or environmental impact is not clearly established. If the action is determined to have significant impact, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is then prepared. If no significant impact is determined, a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is prepared.
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement, a document, required under the National Environmental Policy Act, prepared for an action that is likely to have significant impact. This document summarizes the major environmental impacts, outlines issues, examines reasonable alternatives and arrives at a record of decision, identifying the selected alternative for the project.
EJ	Environmental Justice, which is a term referring to the Federal government's commitment to avoid, minimize or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority and low-income populations; to ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process; and to prevent the denial of, reduction in or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.
FAST Act	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, signed into law December 4, 2015, replaced MAP-21 as the congressional surface transportation authorization.

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FHWA	Federal Highway Administration, an agency of the U.S. DOT with jurisdiction over highways and bridges.
Fiscally Constrained	Federal regulations require that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan be financially balanced. All projects must have an identified source of funding that is reasonably expected to be available.
Fixed Route	A type of transit service provided on a repetitive, fixed-schedule basis along a specific route with vehicles stopping to pick up and deliver passengers to specific locations; each trip on a given route serves the same origins and destinations, unlike demand response service.
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact. A statement that follows an Environmental Assessment in which a project was found to have no significant impacts on the quality of the human environment and for which an Environmental Impact Statement will therefore not be prepared.
FTA	Federal Transit Authority, an agency of the U.S. DOT with jurisdiction over public transportation. Formerly called the Urban Mass Transit Administration.
Functional Classification	A system used to group public roadways into classes according to their purpose in moving vehicles and providing access. The main classes are typically Arterial, Collector, and Local.
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System uses satellite technology for accuracy in computer mapping.
GDOT	Georgia Department of Transportation, which administers the state-wide transportation planning processes in the State of Georgia.
GPA	Georgia Ports Authority, an agency that governs and directs the activities of the Port of Savannah.
HOV	High Occupancy Vehicle, which is a vehicle carrying a specified minimum number of persons, usually two or more. Freeways may have lanes designated for HOV use by carpoolers, vanpools and buses.
Intermodal	Relating to transportation by more than one means of conveyance during a single journey.
ISTEA	The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, a congressional transportation authorization that introduced a comprehensive approach to transportation problems by emphasizing innovation, intermodalism and flexibility. It also expanded the responsibilities of local governments, giving them a greater role to play. Subsequent reauthorizations (see TEA-21, SAFETEA-LU, MAP-21, FAST Act) have in turn replaced ISTEA but have continued much of the process.
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems describe technology that is designed to improve traffic flow, safety, toll collection, travel information, parking, accident/debris detection, and transit.
Land Use	The manner in which land or the structures on the land are used, i.e., commercial, residential, industrial, etc.
Local Streets	One of the functional classifications of streets, a local street is one whose primary purpose is to provide direct access to abutting properties and to roads of a higher

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functional classification. They provide the lowest level of mobility with through traffic movement being discouraged.

LOS	Level of Service, which is a qualitative measure describing the experience of the traveler by a given mode. (LOS A describes very good travel environment while LOS F describes a very poor one). It was first applied to motor vehicle travel, but now is applied to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel, with methods and measures appropriate to the mode.
L RTP	Long Range Transportation Plan. This may also be called a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The plan identifies the transportation problems expected in a horizon period of at least 25 years and the financially constrained solutions to address those problems.
M230 funds	The funding code, used within Georgia, to indicate Urban Area Attributable funds, which is a type of funding in the Surface Transportation Program, and for which the MPO has the discretion to allocate to transportation projects in the planning area.
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century, signed into law on July 6, 2012, replaced SAFETEA-LU as the congressional surface transportation authorization. MAP-21 in turn has been replaced by subsequent reauthorization.
Mitigation	To avoid, minimize, rectify or reduce an impact, and in some cases, to compensate for an impact.
Mode	A particular form of travel, e.g., walking or traveling by bicycle, automobile or bus.
Mode Share	Each modes portion of a total number of trips.
Mode Split	The process by which the number of trips that will be made by two or more modes of transportation is surveyed or estimated.
MPC	Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission, an agency which staffs the MPO, as well as other boards, and administers the MPO transportation planning process.
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization, designated by the governor, to serve a metropolitan area of 50,000 population.
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan. This may also be called a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The plan identifies the transportation problems expected in a horizon period of at least 25 years and the financially constrained solutions to address those problems.
Multimodal	Planning or infrastructure that reflects consideration of more than one mode to serve transportation needs in an area.
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act, which is a law enacted in 1969 that established a national environmental policy requiring that any project using Federal funding or approval, including transportation projects, examine the effects the proposal and alternative choices have on the environment before a Federal decision is made.
NHS	National Highway System, which is composed of approximately 160,000 miles of rural and urban roads. It includes the Interstate System, other routes identified as having strategic defense characteristics, routes providing access to major ports, airports, public transportation, intermodal transportation facilities, and routes of particular importance to local governments. The federal government allocates a

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	<p>certain amount of transportation funding to these routes, which is not to be used on “off-system” roadways.</p>
Non-Motorized	<p>In transportation planning, this term typically describes bicycling and walking used as a means of travel.</p>
Paratransit	<p>A type of transit service in which passenger cars, vans or buses with fewer than 25 seats operate in response to calls from passengers or their agents to the transit operator, who then dispatches a vehicle to pick up the passengers and transport them to their destinations. Typically, the vehicles do not operate over a fixed route or on a fixed schedule and typically the vehicle may be dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pick-up points before taking them to their respective destinations. Also called demand response service.</p>
Park-and-Ride Lot	<p>A parking area to which passengers drive their cars, leave them for the day and board transit vehicles or carpool for the rest of their trip.</p>
Participation Plan	<p>Provides an overview of the goals and objectives of the MPO participation process and the participation techniques the MPO is committed to conducting for specific transportation planning programs and products.</p>
PE	<p>Preliminary Engineering, which an early phase in a project’s development process.</p>
PL funds	<p>Planning funds apportioned from Federal Highway Administration through state DOTs to MPOs, for the purpose of carrying out activities in Section 134, Metropolitan Planning, of US Code Title 23.</p>
Public Hearing	<p>A formal event held prior to a decision that gathers community comments and positions from all interested parties for public record and input into decisions.</p>
Public Meeting	<p>A formal or informal even designed for a specific issue or community group where information is presented and input from community residents is received.</p>
ROD	<p>Record of Decision, which is a concise decision document for an environmental impact statement that states the decision (selected alternative or choice), other alternatives considered and mitigation adopted for the selected alternative or choice.</p>
ROW	<p>Right-of-way, which is the land needed for the construction and operation of a transportation facility. ROW acquisition is a middle phase of a project’s development process.</p>
SAFETEA-LU	<p>The Safe, Accountable, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users. Signed into law in August 2005, this was the federal re-authorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). SAFETA-LU in turn has been replaced by subsequent reauthorizations.</p>
SAGIS	<p>Savannah Area Geographical Information System, a regional Geographic Information System created by the MPC, City of Savannah, and Savannah Electric (now Georgia Power).</p>
Sec. 5303 funds	<p>Funds apportioned by the Federal Transit Administration, through the state DOT, to the MPO, for the purpose of carrying out activities in Section 5303, Metropolitan Transportation Planning, of US Code Title 49.</p>
SMSA	<p>Savannah Metropolitan Statistical Area, encompasses the Savannah Urbanized Area and all of Chatham County.</p>

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SOV	Single-occupancy vehicle, in contrast to ridesharing methods such as carpooling, vanpooling, and mass transit.
SPLOST	The Special Purpose Local Options Sales Tax, which is a one percent sales tax to fund a variety of projects including drainage improvements, open space acquisition, greenways/bikeways, roadway improvements and other capital outlay projects.
SRTA	State Road and Tollway Authority, the transportation infrastructure financing arm of the State of Georgia.
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program, prepared by GDOT, is a staged, multiyear listing of projects proposed for Federal, State and local funding encompassing the entire State of Georgia. It is a compilation of the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) prepared for the metropolitan areas, as well as project information for the non-metropolitan areas of the State and for transportation between cities.
STP	Surface Transportation Program, which is described in US Code Title 23, Section 133. It is typically amended somewhat in each congressional surface transportation authorization act, along with other sections of Title 23 and of other Titles.
TAP	Transportation Alternatives Program, which is the name of a program initiated in the MAP-21 authorization act, and which also describes projects similar to the former Transportation Enhancement projects in previous authorizations (bicycle, pedestrian, and certain other types of projects).
TAZ	Transportation Analysis Zone, which is a census-based geographical unit used to spatially organize socio-economic and land use data within traditional transportation planning models.
TCC	Technical Coordinating Committee, which provides the technical guidance and direction to CORE MPO.
TDM	Transportation Demand Management, which includes various strategies to reduce demands for roadway supply, such as encouraging transit and other ride-sharing, encouraging shifts to non-motorized modes, shifts in time of travel through staggered work hours, or trip elimination through telecommuting
TE	Transportation Enhancements, a program begun under TEA-21 that provides funding for a broad range of activities that enhance natural and cultural resources related to transportation, including bicycle and pedestrian projects. TEA-21 required that ten percent of STP funds be set aside for TE projects. MAP-21 replaced Transportation Enhancements with the Transportation Alternatives Program, which was no longer a ten percent set-aside. The FAST Act continued the Transportation Alternatives Program.
TEA-21	The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, signed into law in June 1998, was the congressional reauthorization of ISTEA. TEA-21 in turn has been replaced by subsequent reauthorizations.
Teleride	The local paratransit services operated by a third party under contract with CAT
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program – the short-range transportation planning document. Projects or studies in the Long Range Transportation Plan appear in the TIP when they have been designated by the MPO to receive funding for preliminary engineering (PE), right-of-way acquisition (ROW), utilities, or

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construction within the next four fiscal years (four-year range required by legislation).

TMA	Transportation Management Area, which is an urbanized area with a population of over 200,000 individuals.
Traffic Calming	Measures to slow traffic speeds, which include speed bumps, narrowing streets by putting striping on each side for bikes and pedestrians, traffic islands, roundabouts and curving streets. Their purpose is to make streets safer.
Travel Demand Forecasting	A process using statistical planning models/analyses to evaluate the demand for proposed transportation facilities, the impact of development on transportation facilities and consequences of transportation policies and actions.
TSM	Transportation System Management, which includes various tactics to improve operations of the existing transportation system, such as signal synchronization and intersection improvements. TSM is an alternative way to increase capacity without constructing additional through lanes or new roads.
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program, which outlines the MPO staff's budget and work in carrying out the transportation planning activities in a fiscal year.
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation, a federal agency created to assist state and local governments in the planning of all modes of transportation.
Vanpool	A formal travel arrangement in which a specific group of people regularly ride together in a van, usually for work commute. The riders share costs through seat "subscriptions." The driver is a commuter like the riders, and takes the van home. Often the driver is allowed limited personal use of the van and/or free or reduced seat subscription price. In some cases, employers help cover the costs of the seat subscriptions, as an employee benefit.
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled, which is a measure of roadway travel that totals the miles traveled by each vehicle in the region. It provides planners and decision-makers with an indication of current and future driving conditions for roadway segments.

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Appendix B – Authority, Statutes, Regulations, and Executive Orders

Federal Authority of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

The 1962 Federal-Aid Highway Act mandated that all urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000 establish a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3C) planning process in order to be eligible to receive U. S. Department of Transportation funding. The 1974 Federal-Aid Highway Act formalized the process further by mandating the creation of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for all areas required to have a 3C planning process.

In December 1991, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) was signed into law. ISTEA was landmark legislation that introduced a comprehensive approach to transportation problems by emphasizing innovation, intermodalism and flexibility. It also expanded the responsibilities of local governments, giving them a greater role to play. The approach begun under ISTEA was continued in 1998 with the passage of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), in 2005 with the passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), in 2012 with the passage of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 Century Act (MAP-21), and in 2015 with the passage of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. These authorizations affect MPO processes and transportation funding by amending various sections of Title 23 and Title 49 in the United States Code.

Statutes, Regulations, and Orders

While transportation agencies have great flexibility in developing public involvement plans, the following federal statutes, regulations, and executive orders provide general guidelines toward developing public involvement plans that work for all communities. These are arranged by topic. Several come from the federal transportation authorization acts mentioned above. Most of this information is an excerpt of the Appendix from the 2015 update of the US DOT’s *Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decisionmaking*.

Accessible Locations and Activities

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

“No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 7(20) shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service.”

Americans with Disabilities Act

Title II, Subpart D—Program Accessibility—§35.149

“Except as otherwise provided in §35.150, no qualified individual with a disability shall, because a public entity’s facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity.”

Early Coordination, Public Involvement, and Project Development

Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter H, Part 771, §771.111 (a)(1)

“Early coordination with appropriate agencies and the public aids in determining the type of environmental review documents an action requires, the scope of the document, the level of analysis, and related environmental requirements.”

Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter H, Part 771, §771.111 (h)(1)

“For the Federal-aid highway program, each State must have procedures approved by the FHWA to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program.”

Electronic Information

Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart B, §450.210 (vi)

“To the maximum extent practicable, make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information.”

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508, establishes requirements for electronic and information technology developed, maintained, procured, or used by the Federal government. Section 508 requires Federal electronic and information technology to be accessible to people with disabilities, including employees and members of the public.

Interested Parties

Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart C, §450.316 (a)

“Providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as a carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the transportation planning process.”

Limited English Proficiency

Executive Order 13166

“To improve access to federally conducted and federally assisted programs and activities for persons who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency (LEP).”

Prohibiting Discrimination

Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Title 23, Chapter 1, §109 (h)

“Assure that possible adverse economic, social, and environmental effects relating to any proposed project on any Federal-aid system have been fully considered in developing such project, and that the final decisions on the project are made in the best overall public interest.”

Executive Order 12898

“Each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.”

Title 42, §6101

“It is the purpose of this chapter to prohibit discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart B, §450.210 (viii)

“Include a process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.”

Public Hearings

Title 23, Chapter 1, §128

“Any State transportation department which submits plans for a Federal-aid highway project involving the by passing of or, going through any city, town, or village, either incorporated or unincorporated, shall certify to the Secretary that it has had public hearings, or has afforded the opportunity for such hearings, and has considered the economic and social effects of such a location, its impact on the environment, and its consistency with the goals and objectives of such urban planning as has been promulgated by the community.”

Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart B, §450.210 (iv)

“To the maximum extent practicable, ensure that public meetings are held at convenient and accessible locations and times.”

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Title 40, Chapter V, Part 1506, §1506.6 (b)

“Provide public notice of NEPA-related hearings, public meetings, and the availability of environmental documents so as to inform those persons and agencies who may be interested or affected.”

Government in the Sunshine Act, §552b (e)(I)

“In the case of each meeting, the agency shall make public announcement, at least one week before the meeting, of the time, place, and subject matter of the meeting, whether it is to be open or closed to the public, and the name and phone number of the official designated by the agency to respond to requests for information about the meeting.”

Government in the Sunshine Act, §552b (f)(II)

“The agency shall make promptly available to the public, in a place easily accessible to the public, the transcript, electronic recording, or minutes.”

Public Participation Plan

Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart C, §450.316

(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, public ports, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs, such as a carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

(1) The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

- (i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
- (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
- (v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;

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- (vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (vii) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
- (viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;
- (ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and
- (x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

(2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.

(3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.

(b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, freight movements, tourism, or disaster risk reduction) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs shall be developed with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:

- (1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;
- (2) Governmental agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and
- (3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 204.

(c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

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(d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(e) MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under §450.314.

Visualization

Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter E, Part 450, Subpart B, §450.210 (v)

“To the maximum extent practicable, use visualization techniques to describe the proposed long-range statewide transportation plan and supporting studies.”

Appendix C – History of the CORE MPO Participation Plan Development and Revisions

To provide a framework for ongoing MPO public participation activities and to facilitate a public dialogue at all stages of the MPO transportation planning process, CORE MPO adopted a Public Involvement Plan in March 2002. The plan has been implemented immediately after its adoption, providing participation guidance in the annual TIP development process and the MTP update process.



The Public Involvement Plan was revised in October 2005 to incorporate Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs) and was further expanded to a Participation Plan in April 2007 to incorporate the requirements of SAFETEA-LU. The Participation Plan was then revised in August 2008 to incorporate the changes incurred by the updated State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)/Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment process. The Participation Plan continued to be updated in 2010, 2011 and 2012 to incorporate the federal certification review recommendations, the Title VI components, federal and MPO program changes, contact information revisions, as well as other updates. In 2015, an update of the Participation Plan was necessitated by the finalization of the CORE MPO reapportionment process, which had revised CORE MPO composition and expanded the planning area, as a result of the 2010 U.S. Decennial Census. Measures of Effectiveness were also revised in that update, to address comments from the CORE MPO's federal certification review.

The MPO's goal is to complete a plan review and update at least every five years to ensure that appropriate changes are being implemented by the MPO.

The history of the Participation Plan development and update is listed below.

Development and Update Process of the CORE MPO Public Involvement Plan (2001-2005)

Guidance in developing and updating the CORE MPO Public Involvement Plan was provided by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and its Public Relations/Program Subcommittee. Key steps in the development and update of the plan are outlined below.

- Subcommittee set goals and objectives (August, 2001)
- Goals and objectives reviewed and approved by CAC (September, 2001)
- Subcommittee developed general strategies and specific public involvement techniques (October, 2001)
- Review and approval of Draft Public Involvement Plan by CAC (October, 2001)
- Review of Draft Public Involvement Plan by ACAT and TCC (November, 2001)
- Review and approval of Draft Public Involvement Plan by the MPO (November, 2001)
- Public Review and Comment Period (December 2, 2001 - January 29, 2002)
- Public Meeting (February 5, 2002)
- Incorporate Public Comments and Finalize Plan (February, 2002)
- Review of Final Plan by ACAT and TCC (March, 2002)

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- Review and Approval of Final Plan by CAC and the MPO (March, 2002)
- Subcommittee revised goals and objectives to incorporate Measures of Effectiveness (May and June, 2005)
- Review and approval of the revised goals, objectives and Measures of Effectiveness by CAC (June 2005)
- Public Review and Comment Period for the revised Draft Public Involvement Plan (July 3, 2005 – October 20, 2005)
- Incorporate Public Comments and Finalize the revised Plan (October, 2005)
- Review of the revised Final Plan by ACAT and TCC (October, 2005)
- Review and Approval of the revised Final Plan by CAC and the MPO (October, 2005)

Development and Update Process of the CORE MPO Participation Plan (2007-2008)

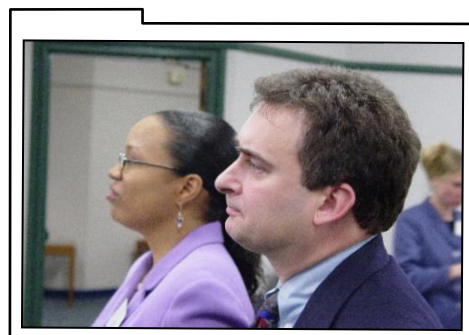
- Completed SAFETEA-LU revisions to the CORE MPO Participation Plan (February 2007)
- Advertised for Draft Participation Plan review and comment on Savannah Morning News (Sunday, March 4, 2007), other local media, consultation agencies, the MPO committees, and neighborhood associations (March 5, 2007)
- Start of Draft Participation Plan review and comment period (March 6, 2007)
- Advertised for Draft Participation Plan Public Meetings on Savannah Morning News (Sundays, April 8 and April 15, 2007), other local media, consultation agencies, the MPO committees, and neighborhood associations (April 8-10, 2007)
- Review of Draft Participation Plan by TCC and ACAT (April 18-19, 2007)
- Public meeting for Draft Participation Plan (April 19, 2007: CAC Public Hearing)
- Close of Draft Participation Plan review and comment period (April 19, 2007)
- Incorporated comments on Draft Participation Plan (April 20-24, 2007)
- Adoption of the Participation Plan by the MPO (April 25, 2007: PC Public Hearing)
- Completed revisions to the Participation Plan to incorporate the STIP/TIP amendment process and other minor updates (July 2008)
- Advertised for revised Draft Participation Plan review and comment period and public meetings (July and August 2008)
- Start of revised Draft Participation Plan review and comment period (July 13, 2008)
- Review of revised Draft Participation Plan by TCC and ACAT (August 20-21, 2008)
- Public meeting for revised Draft Participation Plan (August 21, 2008: CAC Public Hearing)
- Close of revised Draft Participation Plan review and comment period (August 26, 2008)
- Incorporation of all the received comments (July 14 – August 26, 2008)
- Adoption of revised Participation Plan by the MPO (August 27, 2008: PC Public Hearing)

Development and Update Process of the CORE MPO Participation Plan (2010 - 2013)

- Completed administrative revisions regarding the MPO's name change (February 2010)
- Completed revisions regarding the federal certification review recommendations on ad hoc committees (May, 2010)
- Completed revisions regarding reference to the Title VI program and revised MOE (September, 2011)
- Complete revisions to the Measures of Effectiveness (October, 2012 – 2013)
- Complete revisions regarding reference to 2010 Census and MAP-21 information (October, 2012 - 2013)
- Complete revisions to the contact informant included in the Appendix (2013)
- Conduct 45-day public comment period on plan update (2013)
- Adopt the revised Participation Plan (2013)

Development and Update Process of the CORE MPO Participation Plan (2015-2016)

- Sought CAC and ACAT input on participation methods to meet existing goals. Sought TCC input on plan amendment processes (August, 2015).
- Completed revisions necessary to reflect CORE MPO 2015 Reapportionment, as a result of the 2010 Census (August, 2015).
- Completed revisions to reflect relevant suggestions from the CAC (August, 2015).
- Completed revisions of Measures of Effectiveness to address comments from the 2013 federal certification review (August, 2015).
- Completed revisions to the MTP and TIP amendment and modification processes to increase project processing efficiency in circumstances where the MPO's financial balance is not affected, as suggested by the TCC (September, 2015).
- Review of Draft Participation Plan by GDOT and FHWA (September-October, 2015).
- Provided status on the update process to MPO committees (October, 2015).
- MPO staff response to state and federal comments on the Draft Participation Plan (October, 2015).
- Conduct 45-day public comment period on plan update (October-December, 2015).
- MPO staff response to follow-up comments from state (November, 2015).
- Review and endorsement of second draft Participation Plan by CAC (November, 2015).
- Review of second draft Participation Plan by TCC, ACAT, and MPO Board (December, 2015).
- Additional meeting for discussion of MTP amendment and modification processes with interested TCC members (December, 2015).
- Conduct 45-day public comment period on third draft (January-February, 2016).
- MPO staff response to comments from state during second public comment period (February, 2016).
- Review and endorsement/dooption of the revised Participation Plan by MPO committees and Board (February and March, 2016).



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Appendix D – Participation Techniques

Participation is an ongoing effort of the MPO. The following “toolbox” contains descriptions of various participation techniques available for implementation. The list is comprehensive, but not exhaustive. The tables are reprinted with permission from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

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AP2 Public Participation Toolbox

PASSIVE PUBLIC INFORMATION TECHNIQUES

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>PRINTED PUBLIC INFORMATION MATERIALS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fact Sheets - Newsletters - Brochures - Issue Papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KISS! - Keep It Short and Simple • Make it visually interesting but avoid a slick sales look • Include a postage-paid comment form to encourage two-way communication and to expand mailing list • Be sure to explain public role and how public comments have affected project decisions • Q&A format works well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can reach large target audience • Allows for technical and legal reviews • Encourages written responses if comment form enclosed • Facilitates documentation of public involvement process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only as good as the mailing list/distribution network • Limited capability to communicate complicated concepts • No guarantee materials will be read
<p>INFORMATION REPOSITORIES</p> <p>Libraries, city halls, distribution centers, schools, and other public facilities make good locations for housing project-related information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure personnel at location know where materials are kept • Keep list of repository items • Track usage through a sign-in sheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant information is accessible to the public without incurring the costs or complications of tracking multiple copies sent to different people • Can set up visible distribution centers for project information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information repositories are often not well used by the public
<p>TECHNICAL REPORTS</p> <p>Technical documents reporting research or policy findings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports are often more credible if prepared by independent groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides for thorough explanation of project decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be more detailed than desired by many participants • May not be written in clear, accessible language
<p>ADVERTISEMENTS</p> <p>Paid advertisements in newspapers and magazines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figure out the best days and best sections of the paper to reach intended audience • Avoid rarely read notice sections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially reaches broad public • May satisfy legal notification requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive, especially in urban areas • Allows for relatively limited amount of information
<p>NEWSPAPER INSERTS</p> <p>A "fact sheet" within the local newspaper</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design needs to get noticed in the pile of inserts • Try on a day that has few other inserts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides community-wide distribution of information • Presented in the context of local paper, insert is more likely to be read and taken seriously • Provides opportunity to include public comment form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive, especially in urban areas

AP2 Public Participation Toolbox

PASSIVE PUBLIC INFORMATION TECHNIQUES

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>FEATURE STORIES Focused stories on general project-related issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate visuals or schedule interesting events to help sell the story • Recognize that reporters are always looking for an angle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can heighten the perceived importance of the project • More likely to be read and taken seriously by the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No control over what information is presented or how
<p>BILL STUFFER Information flyer included with monthly utility bill</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design bill stuffers to be eye-catching to encourage readership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread distribution within service area • Economical use of existing mailings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited information can be conveyed • Message may get confused as from the mailing entity
<p>PRESS RELEASES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to hand deliver press releases or kits to get a chance to discuss project • Foster a relationship with editorial boards and reporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs the media of project milestones • Press release language is often used directly in articles • Opportunity for technical and legal reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally low media response rate • Frequent poor placement of press release within newspapers
<p>NEWS CONFERENCES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure all speakers are trained in media relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to reach all media in one setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to news-worthy events
<p>TELEVISION Television programming to present information and elicit audience response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cable options are expanding and can be inexpensive • Check out expanding video options on the internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used in multiple geographic areas • Many people will take the time to watch rather than read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High expense • Difficult to gauge impact on audience
<p>WEB SITES World wide web sites which contain project information, announcements, and documents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep it simple and easy to navigate • Use a logical site organization • Always keep site up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capable of reaching very large audiences with enormous amounts of information • Can be a very low cost way of distributing larger documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many people still cannot access the web • Information overload and poor design can prevent people from finding what they need

AP2 Public Participation Toolbox

ACTIVE PUBLIC INFORMATION TECHNIQUES

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>BRIEFINGS Use regular meetings of social and civic clubs and organizations to provide an opportunity to inform and educate. Normally these groups need speakers. Examples of target audiences: Rotary Club, Lions Clubs, Elks Clubs, Kiwanis, League of Women Voters. Also a good technique for elected officials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KISS - Keep it Short and Simple • Use "show and tell" techniques • Bring visuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control of information/presentation of individuals who may not have been attracted to another format • Opportunity to expand mailing list • Similar presentations can be used for different groups • Can build community good will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project stakeholders may not be in target audiences • Topic may be too technical to capture interest of audience
<p>CENTRAL INFORMATION CONTACT Designated contacts are identified as official liaisons for the public and media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible, list a person not a position • Best if contact person is local • Anticipate how phones will be answered • Make sure all recorded messages are kept up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People don't get "the run around" when they call • Controls information flow and promotes information consistency • Conveys image of "accessibility" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated contact must be committed to and prepared for prompt and accurate responses • May filter public message from technical staff and decision makers • May not serve to answer many of the toughest questions
<p>INFORMATION HOT LINE Identify a separate line for public access to prerecorded project information or to reach project team members who can answer questions/obtain input, also use email and web sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure contact has sufficient knowledge to answer most project-related questions • If possible, list a person not a position • Best if contact person is local • Use toll free number if not local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People don't get "the run around" when they call • Controls information flow and promotes information consistency • Conveys image of "accessibility" • Easy to provide updates on project activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated contact must be committed to and prepared for prompt and accurate responses
<p>TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE Providing access to technical expertise to individuals and organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The technical resource must be perceived as credible by the audience • Work with your technical people to make sure they understand public issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds credibility and helps address public concerns about equity • Can be effective conflict resolution technique where facts are debated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of technical resources may be limited • Technical experts may not be prepared for working with the public

AP2 Public Participation Toolbox

ACTIVE PUBLIC INFORMATION TECHNIQUES

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>SIMULATION GAMES Exercises that simulate project decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test "game" before using • Be clear about how results will be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be designed to be an effective educational/training technique, especially for local officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires substantial preparation and time for implementation • Can be expensive
<p>INFORMATION CENTERS and FIELD OFFICES Offices established with prescribed hours to distribute information and respond to inquiries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate staff to accommodate group tours • Use brochures and videotapes to advertise and reach broader audience • Consider providing internet access station • Select an accessible and frequented location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity for positive media coverage at groundbreaking and other significant events • Excellent opportunity to educate school children • Places information dissemination in a positive educational setting Information is easily accessible to the public • Provides an opportunity for more responsive ongoing communications focused on specific public involvement activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively expensive, especially for project-specific use • Access is limited to those in vicinity of the center unless facility is mobile
<p>EXPERT PANELS Public meeting designed in "Meet the Press" format. Media panel interviews experts from different perspectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunity for participation by general public following panel • Have a neutral moderator • Agree on ground rules in advance • Possibly encourage local organizations to sponsor rather than challenge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages education of the media • Presents opportunity for balanced discussion of key issues • Provides opportunity to dispel scientific misinformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires substantial preparation and organization • May enhance public concerns by increasing visibility of issues
<p>FIELD TRIPS Provide tours for key stakeholders, elected officials, advisory group members and the media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how many participants can be accommodated and make plans for overflow • Plan question/answer session Consider providing refreshments • Demonstrations work better than presentations • Make sure everything is safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to develop rapport with key stakeholders • Creates greater public knowledge of issues and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants is limited by logistics • Potentially attractive to protestors

AP2 Public Participation Toolbox

ACTIVE PUBLIC INFORMATION TECHNIQUES

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>OPEN HOUSES</p> <p>An open house to allow the public to tour at their own pace. The facility should be set up with several stations, each addressing a separate issue. Resource people guide participants through the exhibits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Someone should explain format at the door Ask participants to fill out a comment sheet Be prepared for a crowd all at once - develop a meeting contingency plan Set up stations so that several people (6-10) can view at once 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fosters small group or one-on-one communications Ability to draw on other team members to answer difficult questions Meets information and interaction needs of many members of the public who are not served by typical public meetings Builds credibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to document public input Protestors may use the opportunity to disrupt event Usually more staff intensive than a meeting May not provide the opportunity to be heard that some public will expect
<p>COMMUNITY FAIRS</p> <p>Central event with multiple activities to provide project information and raise awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All issues, large and small must be considered Make sure adequate resources and staff are available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses public attention on one element Conducive to media coverage Allows for different levels of information sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public must be motivated to attend Usually expensive to do it well Can damage reputation if not done well

Additional Active Public Information Technique (2015 Update)

<p>SOCIAL MEDIA</p> <p>Forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires frequent monitoring and interaction to remain useful. Make sure staffing levels are adequate for ongoing responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capable of reaching large audience. Allows immediate sharing of information, and in a variety of formats. Interested parties, or “friends,” are typically notified when a new “post” is shared. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certain populations are unlikely to have social media accounts, even if they have web access. Lack of agency activity in its own social media account can cause its messages to be buried among competing messages, due to site algorithms.
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SMALL GROUP PUBLIC INPUT TECHNIQUES

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>INTERVIEWS One-to-one meetings with stakeholders to gain information on public concerns and perspectives for developing or refining public involvement and consensus building programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where feasible, interviews should be conducted in-person, particularly when considering candidates for citizens committees • Take advantage of opportunity for public to input in how they participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity to get understanding of public concerns and issues • Provides opportunity to learn how to best communicate with public • Can be used to evaluate potential citizen committee members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling multiple interviews can be time consuming • Interviewers must engender trust or risk negative response to format
<p>IN-PERSON SURVEYS One-on-one "focus groups" with standardized questionnaire or methodology such as "stated preference"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure intended use of result is clear before technique is designed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides traceable data • Reaches broad, representative public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive • Focus Groups may have a marketing/public relations image
<p>COFFEE KLATCHES Small meetings within neighborhood usually at a person's home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure staff is very polite and appreciative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed setting is conducive to effective dialogue • Maximizes two-way communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a lot of labor to reach many people
<p>SMALL FORMAT MEETINGS Small meetings at existing groups or in conjunction with another event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand who the likely audience is to be • Make opportunities for one-one-one meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to get on the agenda • Provides opportunity for in-depth information exchange in non-threatening forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be too selective and can leave out important groups

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LARGE GROUP PUBLIC INPUT TECHNIQUES

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>RESPONSE SHEETS Mail-in-forms often included in fact sheets and other project mailings to gain information on public concerns and preferences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use prepaid postage • Include a section to add name to the mailing list • Document results as part of public involvement record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides input from those who would be unlikely to attend meetings • Provides a mechanism for expanding mailing list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not generate statistically valid results • Only as good as the mailing list • Results can be easily skewed
<p>MAILED SURVEYS & QUESTIONNAIRES Inquiries mailed randomly to sample population to gain specific information for statistical validation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you need statistically valid results before making investment • Survey/questionnaire should be professionally developed and administered to avoid bias • Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings • Provides input from cross-section of public not just activists • Statistically tested results are more persuasive with political bodies and the general public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response rate is generally low • For statistically valid results, can be labor intensive and expensive • Level of detail may be limited • May be perceived as a public relations tool
<p>TELEPHONE SURVEYS/POLLS Random sampling of population by telephone to gain specific information for statistical validation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you need statistically valid results before making investment • Survey/Questionnaire should be professionally developed and administered to avoid bias • Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings • Provides input from cross-section of public, not just those on mailing list • Higher response rate than with mail-in surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More expensive and labor intensive than mailed surveys • Bias is easily charged if questions not carefully constructed
<p>INTERNET SURVEYS/POLLS Web-based response polls</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be precise in how you set up site, chat rooms or discussion places can generate more input than you can look at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings • Provides input from cross-section of public, not just those on mailing list • Higher response rate than other communication forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally not statistically valid results • Can be very labor intensive to look at all of the responses • Cannot control geographic reach of poll • Results can be easily skewed
<p>COMPUTER-BASED PARTICIPATION Surveys conducted via computer network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate for attitudinal research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides instant analyses of results • Can be used in multiple areas • Novelty of technique improves rate of response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High expense • Detail of inquiry is limited
<p>PUBLIC HEARINGS Formal meetings with scheduled presentations offered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid if possible, otherwise try to use informal meetings immediate before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity for public to speak without rebuttal • meets legal requirements • puts comments on record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not foster dialogue • Creates us vs. them feeling • Many dislike public speaking

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SMALL GROUP PROBLEM-SOLVING TECHNIQUES

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>DESIGN CHARRETTES Intensive session where participants re-design project features</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best used to foster creative ideas • Be clear about how results will be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes joint problem solving and creative thinking • Effective for creating partnerships and positive working relationships with public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants may not be seen as representative by larger public • May not have lasting effect if used as a one-shot technique
<p>COMMUNITY FACILITATORS Use qualified individuals in local community organizations to conduct project outreach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define roles, responsibilities and limitations up front • Select and train facilitators carefully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes community-based involvement • Capitalizes on existing networks • Enhances project credibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be difficult to control information flow • Can build false expectations
<p>MEDIATION/NEGOTIATION The process of resolving disputes through compromise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be used typically as a last resort to solve specific problems with well-defined stakeholders groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes accountability on both sides • Focuses on specific issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty of defining who the parties are and whom they represent • Time and labor intensive
<p>CONSENSUS BUILDING TECHNIQUES Techniques for building consensus on project decisions such as criteria and alternative selection. Often used with advisory committees. Techniques include Delphi, nominal group process and public value assessment and many others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simplified methodology • Allow adequate time to reach consensus • Consider one of the computerized systems that are available • Define levels of consensus, i.e. a group does not have to agree entirely upon a decision but rather agree enough so the discussion can move forward • Make sure decision maker is committed to consensus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages compromise among different interests • Provides structured and trackable decision making • Focuses on solving problems with mutually satisfactory solutions • Can help avoid later conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not appropriate for groups with no interest in compromise • Consensus may not be reached
<p>FOCUS GROUPS Message testing forum with randomly selected members of target audience. Can also be used to obtain input on planning decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct at least two sessions for a given target • Use a skilled focus group facilitator to conduct the session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity to test key messages prior to implementing program • Works best for select target audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively expensive if conducted in focus group testing facility

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SMALL GROUP PROBLEM-SOLVING TECHNIQUES

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>ADVISORY COMMITTEES A group of representative stakeholders assembled to provide public input to the planning process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define roles and responsibilities up front • Be forthcoming with information • Use a consistently credible process • Interview potential committee members in person before selection • Use third party facilitation • Make sure members communicate with their constituencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides for detailed analyses for project issues • Participants gain understanding of other perspectives, leading toward compromise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General public may not embrace committee's recommendations • Members may not achieve consensus • Sponsor must accept need for give-and-take • Time and labor intensive
<p>TASK FORCES A group of experts or representative stakeholders formed to develop a specific product or policy recommendation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain strong leadership in advance • Make sure membership has credibility with the public • Make sure members represent diverse perspectives and will be independent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings of a task force of independent or diverse interests will have greater credibility • Provides constructive opportunity for compromise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task force may not come to consensus or results may be too general to be meaningful • Time and labor intensive
<p>PANELS A group assembled to debate or provide input on specific issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most appropriate to show different views to public • Panelists must be credible with public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity to dispel misinformation • Can build credibility if all sides are represented • May create wanted media attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May create unwanted media attention • Can polarize issues if not conceived and moderated well
<p>CITIZEN JURIES Small group of ordinary citizens empanelled to learn about an issue, cross examine witnesses, make a recommendation. Always non-binding with no legal standing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires skilled moderator • Commissioning body must follow recommendations or explain why • Be clear about how results will be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great opportunity to develop deep understanding of an issue • Public can identify with the "ordinary" citizens • Pinpoint fatal flaws or gauge public reaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource intensive
<p>ROLE-PLAYING Participants act out characters in pre-defined situation followed by evaluation of the interaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose roles carefully. Ensure that all interests are represented. • People may need encouragement to play a role fully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow people to take risk-free positions and view situation from other perspectives • Participants gain clearer understanding of issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People may not be able to actually achieve goal of seeing another's perspective

Tools and Techniques	Always Think It Through	What Can Go Right	What Can Go Wrong
<p>ELECTRONIC DEMOCRACY Internet, Websites, Televoting, On-line Dialogue, On-line Delivery of Government Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carefully plan how information will be presented and how feedback will be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitates interactive communication Convenient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not accessible to everyone Opportunity for manipulation/misinformation/incivility
<p>SAMOAN CIRCLE Leaderless meeting that stimulates active participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set room up with center table surrounded by concentric circles Need microphones Requires several people to record discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be used with 10 to 500 people Works best with controversial issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue can stall or become monopolized
<p>OPEN SPACE TECHNOLOGY Participants offer topics and others participate according to interest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important to have a powerful theme or vision statement to generate topics Need flexible facilities to accommodate numerous groups of different sizes Groundrules and procedures must be carefully explained for success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides structure for giving people opportunity and responsibility to create valuable product or experience Includes immediate summary of discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most important issues could get lost in the shuffle Can be difficult to get accurate reporting of results
<p>WORKSHOPS An informal public meeting that may include a presentations and exhibits but ends with interactive working groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know how you plan to use public input before the workshop Conduct training in advance with small group facilitators. Each should receive a list of instructions, especially where procedures involve weighting/ranking of factors or criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent for discussions on criteria or analysis of alternatives Fosters small group or one-to-one communication Ability to draw on other team members to answer difficult questions Builds credibility Maximizes feedback obtained from participants Fosters public ownership in solving the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hostile participants may resist what they perceive to be the "divide and conquer" strategy of breaking into small groups Several small-group facilitators are necessary
<p>FUTURE SEARCH CONFERENCE Focuses on the future of an organization, a network of people, or community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire a facilitator experienced in this technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can involve hundreds of people simultaneously in major organizational change decisions Individuals are experts Can lead to substantial changes across entire organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logistically challenging May be difficult to gain complete commitment from all stakeholders 2 – 3 day meeting
<p>DELIBERATIVE POLLING Measures informed opinion on an issue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not expect or encourage participants to develop a shared view Hire a facilitator experienced in this technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can tell decision-makers what the public would think if they had more time and information Exposure to different backgrounds, arguments, and views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource intensive Often held in conjunction with television companies 2 – 3 day meeting

Appendix E – Checklist for Accessible Meeting Locations

The following checklist, as found in the US DOT's *Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decisionmaking, 2015 Update*, can help agencies ensure that their meetings are accessible to the disability community:

Accessible meeting or hearing site

- Has the site been visited and viewed with physically disabled people in mind?
- Are primary entrances, such as doorways and steps, accessible by wheelchair?
- Is there circulation space for wheelchairs throughout the facility and at the front of the meeting area or hearing room?
- If there are microphones, are they available at wheelchair height?
- Is there an amplification system to aid hearing?
- Are water fountains, rest rooms, and public telephones accessible by wheelchair?
- Is the meeting site accessible by public transit or paratransit?
- Is there parking for persons with disabilities?
- Are there signs indicating accessible route to the meeting area?

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Appendix F – Prior Measures of Effectiveness of the CORE MPO Participation Processes

Note: The following section qualitatively summarizes CORE MPO's performance of its participation process, according to the goals, objectives, and measures that were developed through the completion of the CORE MPO's Participation Plan under the guidance of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

The first step the CAC Public Relations/Program Subcommittee undertook in developing the MPO Participation Plan was to identify appropriate goals and objectives.

Once a preliminary list of goals and objectives was developed and reviewed by the subcommittee and CAC, the subcommittee set about identifying strategies for implementing them. Specifically, the subcommittee identified when each of the objectives should be implemented, based on the amount of time and resources required for implementation. The time frame for implementation was updated in the 2007 Participation Plan development process, and are presented as either *ongoing*; i.e. already occurring; *immediate*, i.e. in next two years; *short-term*, i.e. in next three to five years; or *long-term*, five or more years out.

A number of tools are available in designing effective participation activities. The choice of techniques is guided by the type of initiative underway (e.g., a Town Hall meeting, an update to the LRTP) and the audience targeted. One resource are the tables prepared by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and provided in an appendix of the Participation Plan. The list is comprehensive, but not exhaustive.

The federal regulations require the MPO to periodically review the effectiveness of the participation process and make revisions as necessary. The MPO reviewed the measures of effectiveness (MOEs) of its participation process against the adopted goals and objectives in the 2005 Public Involvement Plan update process. Since different participation strategies have been implemented in response to the specific goals and objectives, the MPO amended the original goals and objectives to reflect this change under the guidance of the Citizens Advisory Committee. The MOEs were updated in the 2007 Participation Plan development process and in the 2008 Participation Plan update process to reflect the latest changes. During the 2009 federal certification review, it is recommended that the MPO not only evaluate the effectiveness of public participation, but also document associated results and outcomes. In the 2015 update of the Participation Plan, the MPO revised the MOEs to facilitate a more quantitative documentation of outcomes. Documentation on the new measures will be provided two years after the new measures begin to be implemented, given that new data must be collected.

Goal 1: *Raise Chatham County interested citizens'/parties' level of understanding of the MPO transportation planning process and identify how interested citizens/parties can become involved.*

Objectives:

- A) **MPO Committee Meeting Procedures**
- B)
 - Provide agendas for all MPO Committee Meetings to Committee members well in advance of the meetings (*ongoing*)

MOE: Twenty-four (24) MPO and committee meetings are held per year. MPO has implemented the E-Agenda system. The MPO normally posts agendas, minutes, staff reports, and

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associated documents to the website through E-Agenda with a notification of availability to all the committee members one week before the first committee meeting. Agendas and minutes are also sent to the visually impaired ACAT members via tape cassettes or email depending on the members' specific requests.

- Post the MPO Committee Meetings' agendas and minutes on the MPC web page (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO posts the meeting agendas, minutes, staff reports and all the associated documents on the MPC website.

- Notify interested parties/citizens (maintained as part of the MPO database) of the MPO Committee meetings prior to the meetings (*ongoing*)

MOE: The contact information of interested citizens/parties is maintained and continuously updated in the MPO database. The notifications – normally the agendas of the committee meetings and the public meeting announcements – are sent to the interested parties/citizens at the regular committee meeting mailing time. The MPO administrative assistant also calls each committee member one day before the meeting as a reminder.

- Designate time on each MPO Committee meeting agenda for comments from interested parties/citizens (*ongoing*)

MOE: Public participation opportunities are provided at all meetings of the MPO committees.

B) Public Informational Materials

- Produce a Traffic Volume Map as new data is made available by GDOT. Maps in digital format will be produced each year and posted on the MPC website. (*ongoing*)

MOE: The digital maps were produced and posted on the MPC website every year before 2007. However, this practice stopped since GDOT has been posting detailed interactive ADT maps and statistical data each year to the GDOT website since 2006. MPO staff directs customers to the GDOT website whenever a request comes and provides the direction on how to browse the site to get the needed information.

- Maintain the MPO web page which is a part of the MPC website (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO contributes to the development and update of the MPC website. The MPO web pages are developed as a part of the MPC website and assume a consistent look. All the latest information on transportation plans, programs, studies, reports, data, meeting notices, etc. is posted here.

- Develop informational materials and employ visualization techniques that correspond to schedule of events/milestones in the MPO transportation planning process as needed, i.e., newsletters, newspaper inserts, brochures, citizen guides, etc. (*ongoing*)



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MOE: The MPO developed informational flyers for the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan and the FY 2005 - 2007 Transportation Improvement Program. Several brochures have been produced for the Connecting Savannah process, which documented the study process, meeting summaries, findings, etc. The MPO, at request, also produces Socio-Economic Data by traffic analysis zone and Historic Traffic Volume Reports which include the latest available traffic counts and the future year traffic projections. The MPO posts draft planning documents such as LRTP and TIP reports on the MPC website for public review in advance of the MPO Policy Committee meetings where the plans are adopted. Final plans are posted to the website after they are adopted. Other visualization techniques including the use of project maps and renderings are employed by the MPO as appropriate to display transportation improvement projects. Traffic model simulations are also used on selected projects. Project fact sheets, renderings and videos are produced for various special studies such as SR 204 Corridor Study, I-16 Exit Ramp Removal, US 80 Bridges and Road Safety Project, etc.

- Evaluate public informational materials using quantitative and qualitative measures (*ongoing*)

MOE: The following criteria are used for evaluation of the effectiveness of the MPO public informational materials.

Informational Materials and Visualization Techniques	Qualitative Evaluation	Quantitative Evaluation
Newsletters Newspaper Inserts Brochures Traffic Count Maps Socio-Economic Reports Information on Website Project Maps and Renderings Traffic model simulations Videos	The information presented is well understood by all segments of the public. It is simple, clear, and non-technical.	# of estimated copies that have been distributed # of website hits

The informational materials distributed by the MPO are very popular. For example, around 100 paper copies of the traffic count map were distributed each month in previous years. Web hits on the MPC website increased ever since these maps were posted on the website. Around 800 flyers of the 2030 LRTP and more than 1000 flyers and reports on Connecting Savannah have been distributed. Feedback is also positive on the videos produced for the studies.

C) Media Relations

- Identify media outlets (print, radio and television) and maintain contact/ mailing list (*ongoing*)

MOE: All the media contact information is listed in the MPO Participation Plan and maintained in the MPO contact database. The contact information has been continually updated. New contacts are added as they are identified in the participation process. For instance, the Georgia Radio Reading Service has been added to the contact database at the request of the visually impaired



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ACAT members. The Hispanic Newspaper has been identified as a contact for reaching out to the Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons.

- Notify the media of all regularly scheduled MPO Committee Meetings (*ongoing*)

MOE: All the media contacts receive meeting agendas, flyers, and other public notifications for the MPO committee meetings and community meetings.

- Work with the media to inform and educate the public about transportation issues and the transportation planning process. (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO sends meeting notices and news articles on transportation planning and transportation studies to various news media, including newspapers, Community Calendar, journals, and TV and radio stations. The MPO has produced some media kits for the East-West Corridor Study and the Connecting Savannah process. The government reporter from the *Savannah Morning News* reports transportation issues in the newspaper occasionally. The Chatham County Public Information – Channel 16 also records the MPO meeting proceedings and broadcasts them to the Chatham County residents.

D) Staff Level Speaker

- Staff is available to attend local government and community meetings, by request, to discuss current planning initiatives as well as provide an overview of the MPO transportation planning process (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO staff has attended various neighborhood meetings on request to discuss various transportation planning projects and issues. The staff is willing to attend more meetings and talk to the public on the transportation planning process.

Goal 2: *Ensure that the interested citizens/parties of Chatham County have been provided with adequate, appropriate and meaningful opportunities to participate in the decision-making process.*

Objectives:

A) Public Forum/Public Meeting Procedures Related to Transportation Planning Initiatives (Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), etc.)

- Review by CAC, ACAT, TCC and the CORE MPO Board of *all* updates and amendments to any MPO planning documents (*ongoing*)

MOE: The CORE MPO Board and advisory committees are given the opportunities to review and comment on all the updates and amendments to the MPO planning documents.

- CAC will facilitate public information meetings on specific projects (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO staff is dedicated to carrying out the public participation activities in all of the MPO plans and programs. The staff coordinates public meetings with CAC on specific projects. A good example is the Tybee



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Town Hall meeting in 2002 to discuss the US 80 widening project. Nearly 300 citizens turned out to receive project status report and to provide written comments.

Under the guidance of CAC, the MPO staff held twenty-five (25) public meetings on the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan update, including ten (10) community meetings/open houses. Five (5) stakeholder/work group meetings and one (1) Public Information Open House were held for the Connecting Savannah process with many CAC members as participants. At least two (2) public meetings/open houses are held in conjunction with the Citizens Advisory Committee each year for the Transportation Improvement Program – both for project prioritization and draft TIP document review and comment. The Citizens Advisory Committee served as an important forum for public input during the Interim Long Range Transportation Plan update and the Year of Expenditure (YOE) update processes in 2007 as well. CAC provided community input on the development of the Total Mobility Plan through an interactive survey and on other special studies.

- Publicize all public meetings, public hearings and public review periods through aggressive media outreach and public notice advertisements (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO publishes legal notices for public hearings/meetings on the Sunday editor of the *Savannah Morning News* at least 10 days before the meetings. The notices are also sent to the



Community Calendar, radio and TV stations, local journals, neighborhood associations, and all the other local media listed in this Participation Plan. For the 2030 LRTP update and the Connecting Savannah process, the meeting notices

were also sent out by mass mailing and email. The meeting locations and public review periods are also advertised via Internet, on buses, and at the MPC offices and the offices of the MPO committee members. For the Interim LRTP update, 2035 Plan and Total Mobility Plan update, all the notices were sent to the federal, state and local consultation agencies as well.

- Provide public access to all draft plans at various local public agencies in advance of plan adoption by the CORE MPO Board (*ongoing*)

MOE: The draft plans are made available for public review and comment at the public review agencies which include all the branches of the Chatham County public libraries and the university libraries, the MPC offices, as well as others listed in this Participation Plan. The draft plans and comment submittal forms are also made available on the MPC website. The draft plans are normally made available for public review in advance of plan adoption depending on the comment period required. Draft Long Range Transportation Plan and the draft Transportation Improvement Program are made available for public review at least 30 days before their adoption. The draft LRTP/TIP amendment documents are made available to the public at least 15 days before their adoption. The draft Participation Plan is accessible to the public at least 45 days before its adoption.

- Report through the MPO Committees all significant public comments on draft plans and reports (*ongoing*)

MOE: The public comments and the staff responses are summarized and categorized for the MPO Committees. All comments, significant or not, go through the committees for review and are incorporated into the final plans.

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- Provide the MPO contact information for citizens to offer suggestions on important transportation issues (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO publishes its contact information on the MPO website as well as in all of its plans and programs.

B) Special Transportation Plans and Studies

- When warranted, convene subcommittees, task forces, focus groups, etc., of interested citizens, planners, technical experts and others who have expressed an interest in a particular topic and involve them in the planning process (*ongoing*)

MOE: Special transportation studies involve participation of a wide spectrum of people.

A good example for achieving this objective is the Transportation Amenities Plan and the Context Sensitive Design Manual development. The Savannah Tree Foundation, the Park and Tree Departments of both the City and the County, as well as interested citizens, the MPC planners, the GDOT/City/County engineers all put in a lot of efforts to identify canopied roadways, historically significant roadways, gateways to the communities, palm-lined causeways, and other roadway amenities. The work groups were also instrumental in defining context and developing Context Sensitive solutions.



In the development of Congestion Management Process (CMP), the MPO staff, the City of Savannah Traffic Engineering Director, the Chatham County Assistant Engineer, the Georgia Ports Authority Facilities Engineer, the Director Engineering of Savannah Airport Commission, the GDOT engineers and planners, the CAT Deputy Director, the FHWA Community Planner, as well as the representatives of the MPO Citizens Advisory Committee and of the MPC board all participated in the study process.

Another example is the citizen driven process. The Connecting Savannah work groups identified the problems, suggested solutions, and had the ownership of the final solutions. The I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study held a three-day workshop that attracted more than 200 attendants among which are architects, planners, community leaders and citizens who are interested in promoting economic development of Downtown Savannah .

- Provide fact sheets on specific projects (*ongoing*).

MOE: The achievement of this objective can be best reflected in the Connecting Savannah process, the I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study, SR 204 Corridor Study, SR 21 Corridor Study and the US 80 Bridges and Road Safety Study. The fact sheets, meeting summaries, brochures and other related information were posted on the MPC website and sent to all the work group members, neighborhoods, and the contacts in the database. Fact sheets were also produced for the US 80 widening project to Tybee for the Town Hall meeting.

- Conduct scientific surveys on significant transportation investments, at appropriate times, to produce statistically valid results to help identify the desires of the region (*ongoing*).

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MOE: The CORE MPO has been collecting bicycle and pedestrian counts at various locations across Chatham County for selected dates and periods since 2009. The data helps the MPO to understand the baseline of the bicycle and pedestrian travel in the Savannah area, paving way for developing the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and making improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

In order to carry out the follow-up study of the MPO's Connecting Savannah Process, the Project DeRenne team collected intersection and turning movement counts at various intersections along DeRenne Avenue. The data was used to analyze the congestion levels on different segments of DeRenne Avenue and provided the basis for the final solutions to the congestion problems.

The Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) works closely with the MPO and is a part of the metropolitan transportation planning process. Two surveys were conducted for CAT in 2000 as a part of the CAT Transportation Development Plan (TDP). One was a community survey conducted by telephone and the other a survey conducted on board CAT buses. In 2006 CAT conducted a new survey and various interviews at the bus stops to develop a five-year plan for the fixed route system. In 2007 CAT conducted a survey to facilitate plan development for demand-response services. In 2010 CAT conducted a survey to evaluate the transportation needs of the Limited English Proficient (LEP) transit users and used the data to develop the CAT's LEP Plan and improve the affected transit routes. CAT is conducting an on-board survey in late 2012 for the development of the 2013 TDP. The MPO has been coordinating with CAT and provided input on the survey questions in order to get a more comprehensive review of the transportation needs in the Savannah area.

C) Evaluation Measures

- Evaluate public outreach efforts using quantitative and qualitative measures (*ongoing*)

MOE: The evaluation measures are reflected by the advertisement efforts, meeting attendance, comments received, and the general participation process. For example, the community meeting attendance, the attendee contact information, and the comments received for the US 80 Corridor Study was stored in a database and the names and comments (but not the personal contact information) were included in an appendix of the study.

The following table outlines a general evaluation of the MPO public participation techniques.

Measures of Effectiveness for Public Participation Techniques

<i>PASSIVE PUBLIC INFORMATION TECHNIQUES</i>		
Techniques	Specifics	Results

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<p>Printed Public Information Materials and Visualization Techniques</p>	<p>Fact sheets for Connecting Savannah, SR 204 Corridor Study, SR 21 Corridor Study, US 80 Bridges and Road Improvement Study, and US 80 widening project Brochures for Connecting Savannah, Project DeRenne and I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study Informational flyers for 2030 LRTP update and FY 2005-2007TIP development Participation Plan LRTP Appendix Annual Reports Traffic Count Maps Historic Traffic Count Reports Socio-Economic Data by Traffic Analysis Zone Project Maps and Renderings Traffic Model Simulations</p>	<p>Reach large audiences; Promote understandings on projects and programs.</p> <p>Materials cannot reach all people.</p>
<p>Technical Reports</p>	<p>Long Range Transportation Plan Year of Expenditure Update Document Transportation Improvement Program Congestion Management Process Transportation Enhancement Plan Chatham County Bikeway Plan Context Sensitive Design Manual Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Technical reports of special studies</p>	<p>Provide thorough explanation on plans and programs.</p> <p>Only technical people are interested in details.</p>
<p>Advertisement</p>	<p>Newspaper: <i>Savannah Morning News</i> - Public Notice and Community Calendar; <i>Connect Savannah</i>; <i>Business Report</i> Journals: <i>Savannah Tribune</i> – minority owned PBS Station: <i>WVAN TV Channel 9 – Georgia Public TV</i> Public Radio: <i>WSVH – FM 91.1</i>; <i>Georgia Radio Reading Service</i> TV station news: <i>see below</i></p>	<p>Target potentially all the residents in Chatham and surrounding counties, even some visitors.</p>
<p>Press Release</p>	<p>Articles about Connecting Savannah Newspaper articles about LRTP and TIP projects</p>	<p>Instigate more public interest on the projects.</p> <p>May lead to some opposition because of the media coverage.</p>
<p>Television</p>	<p><i>WTOC TV Channel 11 – CBS</i> <i>WSAV-TV 3 (NBC)</i> <i>ABC 22 WJCL – TV</i> <i>FOX 28 WTGS</i> Cable TV: <i>Comcast Channel 7 – Town Crier</i> <i>City of Savannah Public Information – Channel 8 Chatham County Public Information – Channel 16</i></p>	<p>Government channels provide news for the community.</p> <p>TV stations are more interested in broadcasting more sensational news than meeting notices.</p>
<p>Websites</p>	<p>Meeting notices MPO and committee meeting agendas and reports Project information Data Technical documents Comment form</p>	<p>Can distribute large amount of information.</p> <p>Can only reach people with internet connections.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>ACTIVE PUBLIC INFORMATION TECHNIQUES</i></p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Techniques</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Specifics</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Results</p>

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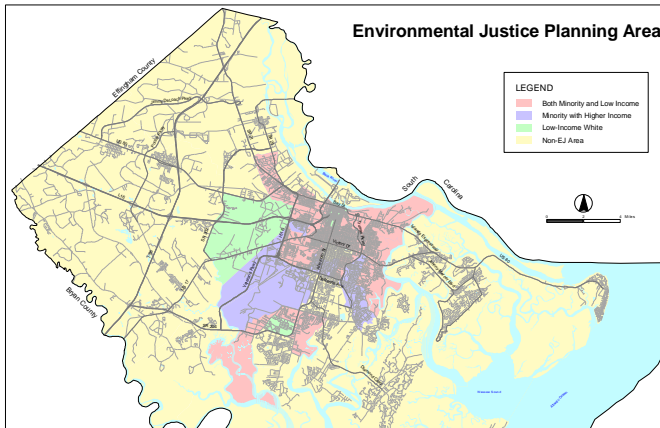
Technical Assistance	The MPO staff attends neighborhood meetings and agency meetings on requests; The MPO staff prepares maps and reports for the neighborhood meetings.	Build good relationship with the public. Facilitate the MPO planning efforts.
Briefing	Briefing of Special Studies at the MPO, MPC and committee meetings; Status reports of LRTP, TIP, CMP and other current projects; Informational reports of GDOT, County, and City projects.	Committees and interested citizens / parties get more familiarized with specific projects. Project sponsors are present to answer questions.
Field Trips	The MPO staff drove on the roadways to inspect where the concerned communities reported traffic problems such as Augusta Avenue, US 80, transit station sites, etc.	Staff gets personal sense of community concerns. Staff/time constraints limit more trips.
Open House	TIP public meetings in Open House format; LRTP open houses; Special Study Public Information Open House.	One-on-one communication with the public. Some public expects formal presentation.
Response Sheets	The MPO distributed response sheets/comment cards for the LRTP/TIP/Special Study meetings with mailing address and contact information. The sheets were distributed to meeting attendees and their neighborhoods.	Contacts added to the MPO mailing list. More comments were received because people know whom to contact for traffic problems. Response tends to concentrate on specific problems.
Computer-based Participation	The MPO makes it possible to submit comments from the MPC website.	Some people like this format because it's easier than mailing. It is also easier for the MPO to build and updated the contact database. Limited to people with computers and internet connections.
Public Hearing	The MPO conducted public hearings for LRTP update, interim plan update and TIP development/amendment where the MPO staff gave presentations followed by questions/answers. The MPO staff attended several neighborhood meetings for LRTP and special studies.	Attendance at the neighborhood meetings was the highest even though the MPO wasn't given a lot of time due to crammed agenda items. Attendance in the Mall was not as high as expected.
Community Facilitator	The MPO contacted some community members to set up meetings such as the ones held in Wilmington Island for the 2030 LRTP.	Community members are very good facilitators for the meetings.
Task Forces	The MPO has worked closely with the task force for the Connecting Savannah process and other special studies.	The group has the ownership of the final solution, so it's easier to build consensus.
Advisory Committee	The MPO organization includes TCC, CAC and ACAT that have advisory capacity. Various adhoc committees also serve as advisors and provide guidance.	This format proves successful for many programs. Committee member attendance is an issue.
Workshops	The I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study uses a combination of workshops, task forces, and focus groups. The Context Sensitive Design Manual development held several workshops. also had several workshop	Attendance shows the success of this participation technique.

Goal 3: Identify and involve traditionally underserved communities in Chatham County (those communities with high concentrations of minority, low-income, disabled or elderly populations) in the MPO transportation planning process.

Objectives:

A) Outreach Efforts

- Identify groups (GIS analysis) that represent or assist traditionally underserved communities and maintain contact/ mailing list (*ongoing- immediate*)



MOE: GIS analysis to identify the minority and low-income populations in Chatham County has been performed using the 2000 Census data in order to assess the impacts of the transportation system (highway, transit, etc.) on these communities and to carry out the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program so that the transit services can best meet the needs of these communities. The GIS analysis for comparison of the 2000 and 2010 census data has

been conducted to evaluate the changes in trends. GIS analysis was also conducted to find out the concentrations of the LEP persons to facilitate the MPO's development of the LEP Plan and to better serve the transportation needs of the LEP persons. For the Long Range Transportation Plan and TIP, analysis has been performed to assess equal benefits/burdens on these communities. For the JARC program, locations of entry-level jobs were identified, overlain with the transit routes/bus stops and the traditionally underserved communities /populations to plan for better transit services in these areas. As a part of the SAFETEA-LU requirement, the MPO and CAT have developed a Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan. The coordinated plan were completed through a process involving public, private, and non-profit transportation providers to better serve the elderly, the disabled and the economically challenged populations.

The MPO Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT) is composed of representatives of the traditionally underserved communities as well as the agencies that assist these communities. ACAT ensures that the MPO transportation planning process reflects the transportation needs of the traditionally underserved communities. The MPO maintains and updates the ACAT members' contact information in the database. The development of the coordinated plan has identified some additional agencies/persons to include in the database. The MPO staff has also identified the news media and community groups that help reach out to the LEP persons. The contact information of some of these traditionally underserved communities is to be obtained.

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- Identify ways of reaching underserved communities and involving them in the MPO transportation planning process (*ongoing*)

MOE: MPO provides staff support to ACAT.

During the LRTP update process, the MPO has enlisted the help of ACAT, the City of Savannah's Community Services Department, Economic Development Department, and the DBE/WBE coordinator in determining the community meeting locations so that the minority/low-income populations can be reached. For example, the ACAT members suggested that the community meeting could be held at the Williams Court Apartments which are located in the Environmental Justice (EJ) area and where senior citizens and people with disabilities reside. The paratransit services (Teleride) also have this location as a regular destination.

The MPO has enlisted the help of the Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) in distributing flyers and meeting announcements on buses which are the major transportation means of the low-income population, many minority people, and people with disabilities and language barriers. The ACAT members took the flyers back to their individual communities and agencies, helping the MPO to reach out to the traditionally underserved communities.

The visually impaired community was very active in participating in the Connecting Savannah process, making sure that pedestrian concerns were heard and the transportation needs of the disabled were met.

The MPO has translated some vital documents to Spanish and Chinese and will continue to explore ways to design picture information so that the LEP persons can understand the MPO's planning process and provide input.

- Identify media reaching underserved communities and maintain contact/ mailing list (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO database includes contacts of Savannah Tribune (minority owned journal) and Georgia Radio Reading Service (serving the visually impaired community) as well as others. This list expands as new contacts become available.

- Notify the media of all regularly scheduled MPO Committee meetings (*ongoing*)

MOE: All the media are notified of the regularly scheduled MPO Committee meetings as well as community meetings.

- Work with the media to inform and educate underserved communities about transportation issues (*ongoing*)

MOE: The media help advertise the MPO public participation opportunities, which is a very important step leading to educating the communities on transportation planning.

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B) Meeting Locations

- Choose meeting locations served by transit whenever possible. (*ongoing*)

MOE: The regular MPO committee meetings (CORE MPO Board, TCC, CAC and ACAT) are held at the MPC office that is located in downtown Savannah and served by various bus routes and Teleride services. The MPC office is also located in the environmental justice area. For the community meetings held on the LRTP update and the special studies, all the meeting locations are wheelchair accessible and most of them are served by bus services (for example, Oglethorpe Mall is located at the crossroads of several bus routes and is open to all the populations in this area).



- Ensure that meetings are held at locations accessible to persons with disabilities (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPC conference rooms and other community meeting locations are all accessible to wheelchairs.

C) ACAT Involvement

- Work with ACAT to identify opportunities for their additional involvement in the MPO transportation planning process (*ongoing*)

MOE: ACAT has proved most helpful in providing insights on ADA compliance issues in the MPO transportation planning process. ACAT has been advocating for construction of curb cuts, sidewalks, ramps & pedestrian walkways and has been advocating for wheelchair accessibility and transportation planning for disabled communities in general. ACAT has successfully coordinated with the CORE MPO Board and CAT to ensure that all the buses are wheelchair accessible and that the new bus stops are conveniently located and have ramps and curb cuts. ACAT is also responsible for updating the Teleride Handbook as well as commenting on making improvements to the paratransit services. Many of the ACAT members are bus users and Teleride users, so their suggestions are usually very pertinent to these services.



In addition, ACAT has passed a resolution in regards to sidewalk construction that has also been adopted by the MPO board. The resolution has been included in the TIP documents as well as others.

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- Implement bylaws to include representation of minority, low-income, disabled and elderly persons as members of ACAT (*ongoing*)

MOE: The ACAT composition reflects the membership of the minority, low-income, disabled and elderly communities as well as the agencies to serve these communities and populations. The ACAT bylaw was updated to reinstate and reactivate some of the membership. The following is a partial list of ACAT membership.

- NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – serve minority populations
- Goodwill Industries of the Coastal Empire – serve low-income/other populations
- Senior Citizens Savannah – Chatham County Inc. – serve elderly persons
- Living Independence for Everyone Inc. (LIFE) – serve disabled/other communities
- Coastal Center for Developmental Services – provide employment services to the retarded/disabled citizens
- Economic Opportunity Authority – serve minority/low income populations
- Federal/Savannah Councils of Blind – serve visually impaired populations
- TeleRide –paratransit service provider
- United Way of the Coastal Empire – non-profit organization dedicated to serve the traditionally under-served communities
- Kicklighter Resource Center - serve retarded citizens
- Savannah – Chatham County Fair Housing Council
- Housing Authority of Savannah – serve economically challenged populations
- Chatham Area Transit Authority – bus/ferry services provider

Goal 4: *Utilize the CAC to its fullest extent to reach interested parties in the community including citizens of Chatham County, the CORE MPO Board and local, state and federal transportation and public officials.*

Objectives:

A) Transportation Planning Process

- CAC will review *all* updates and amendments to the MPO planning documents as part of the MPO Committee review process. Require GDOT to include CAC as part of planning review process and require requesting agencies of TIP and LRTP amendments to make formal presentations to the CAC (*ongoing*)

MOE: CAC does review all updates and amendments to the MPO planning documents. CAC makes its recommendations about these documents to the CORE MPO Board.

Normally the MPO staff prepares the amendment/update materials and gives presentations at the CAC meetings. The requesting agencies provide information for these presentations. However, the project sponsors and their consultants do come to the CAC meetings and answer specific questions. It has also been made a routine that the City, County, GDOT, and CAT staff provides status reports on their current projects. The MPO staff forwards these reports to the CAC members with the regular MPO mailing. When CAC members submit questions to the MPO staff on any specific projects, the staff contacts the City/County/GDOT to try to get the answers and provide the requested information to the CAC at the CAC meetings. The MPO particularly changed the meeting times of TCC and CAC so that the technical staff can attend the CAC meetings if necessary.

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GDOT relies on CAC for its Interstate Needs Study as a part of its participation process in the Savannah area.

- CAC will review *all* citizen concerns related to transportation policies, etc. as part of the MPO Committee review process (*ongoing*)

MOE: The CAC reviews the MPO participation process for all the MPO programs. CAC also reviews the citizen concerns individually and in summary format and the responses prepared by the MPO staff to these concerns.

- CAC will be given opportunity to review and comment on all federally-funded transit projects (*ongoing*)

MOE: The Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) provides status reports of the CAT program for the CAC meetings by convention. The CAT staff has also given special presentations at the CAC meetings in regards to specific transit projects such as the downtown transit station and the Transportation Development Plan. CAC is very attentive to the transit projects that are of vital importance to the community such as the shuttle services in the downtown area.

B) Participation Planning Process

- CAC will oversee development of materials for public distribution (*ongoing*)

MOE: CAC has provided guidance on the development of the Participation Plan and has reviewed and provided comments on the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Unified Planning Work Program, and other planning documents for public distribution.

- CAC will annually review effectiveness of Participation Plan (*ongoing*)

MOE: CAC has provided guidance on developing the Measures of Effectiveness in the Public Involvement Plan update in FY 2006 and reviewed the measures in the Participation Plan development in FY 2007. CAC also reviewed the effectiveness of the measures in 2008 in the Participation Plan update process to incorporate the STIP/TIP amendment revisions.

- Modifications to the Participation Process will be reviewed by the CAC before being approved by the CORE MPO Board (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO has followed the participation process stipulated in the Participation Plan. Any changes to the plan must go through a 45-day public review and comment period and be reviewed / approved by CAC before adoption by the CORE MPO Board. In the LRTP and TIP update process, changes made have been reviewed with CAC and all the other committees.

- New CAC members will be provided with a current Orientation Manual and will be able to attend an orientation meeting on the MPO planning process (*ongoing*)

MOE: Since 2005 CAC members have been provided with briefing books provided by the FHWA Capacity Building Program and other orientation materials. The MPO staff has also arranged orientation sessions (provided by Wilbur Smith, FHWA staff and the MPO staff) to train existing and new CAC members.

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- CAC members' participation will be evaluated using quantitative and qualitative measures (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO maintains the CAC member attendance records. The inactive members are contacted by the CAC Chairman to encourage their active participation or to request their resignation. Their attendance records are sent to the appointing agencies with letters requesting the agencies to appoint active members. The CAC went through a thorough effectiveness evaluation in FY 2006-2007. Recommendations from the evaluation are being implemented.

C) The MPO Committee Members and Stakeholders Database

- Staff will oversee maintenance of the MPO database (contact/ mailing lists) of the MPO Committee members, media (radio, print and television) and members of the public, including CAC Town Hall meeting attendees, community groups, representatives of minority, low-income, disabled and elderly populations, key stakeholders and interested parties and citizens (*ongoing*)

MOE: The MPO maintains and updates the database. So far more neighborhood associations and media contacts have been added to the database.

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Appendix G – Example of CORE MPO Public Comment Form

This page shows just one example of a public comment form. For online submissions, a similar form is available on the CORE MPO web site at: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Tran>.

Different comment forms are typically customized for particular planning processes and studies. Not all CORE MPO comment forms are identical to the one shown here.

Get Involved

We would like to hear from you on how to improve the transportation in our area.

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Email:

Subject:

Message:

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Appendix H – Media List and Other Contacts

For media contacts, specific information, such as names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses are maintained for staff reference within the electronic CORE MPO contact database. Database entries categorized as Publishing contacts can be found in the existing query reports called “QryRosterPub-M” and “qry_public_notification.”

Print Media

Bryan County News (Weekly print and online)

Release: Thursday

Connect Savannah (Weekly print and online)

Release: Wednesday

Effingham Herald (Weekly print and online)

Release: Wednesday

Savannah Business Journal (Daily online)

Savannah Morning News (Daily print and online)

Deadline: Midnight

Savannah Tribune (Weekly print and online [Minority Owned])

Release: Wednesday

La Voz Latina (Monthly print)

Broadcast Media - TV

Chatham County Public Information - Channel 16

City of Savannah Public Information - Channel 8

ABC 22 WJCL – TV

FOX 28 WTGS

WSAV - TV 3 (NBC)

WTOC TV Channel 11 - CBS

WVAN TV Channel 9 - Georgia Public TV

Broadcast Media - Radio

Adventure Radio Group

Georgia Radio Reading Service (a service of Georgia Public Radio)

WSVH-FM 91.1 (Georgia Public Radio)

Neighborhood Groups and Associations

Contact information for these groups, if available, is maintained in electronic databases by MPO staff, MPC staff and/or local governments' staffs. The list includes groups throughout the MPO planning area (including a few in Effingham County or Bryan County). The majority of these are within the City of Savannah. City staff maintain a map showing locations of neighborhoods within the City.

<i>Ardsley Park Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Long Point Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Bacon Park Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Magnolia Park Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Baldwin Park Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Mainstreet Homeowners Association</i>
<i>Beach Institute Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Mayfair Subdivision</i>
<i>Benjamin Van Clark Park Association</i>	<i>Merritt at Whitemarsh</i>
<i>Brisbon Hall Homeowners Association</i>	<i>Metropolitan Community Organization</i>
<i>Cann Park Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Midtown Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Carver Heights Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Mulberry Homeowners Association</i>
<i>Causton Bluff</i>	<i>Oakland Park Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Cloverdale Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Ogeecheeton/Dawes Ave. Community Org.</i>
<i>Coffee Bluff Crusaders Neighborhood Watch</i>	<i>Paradise Park Neighborhood</i>
<i>Coffee Bluff Plantation Neighborhood Watch</i>	<i>Parkside Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Colonial Village Community</i>	<i>Peach Hollow Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Cuyler/Brownsville Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Peters Quay</i>
<i>Dixon Park Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Phyllis Drive Neighborhood Watch</i>
<i>Downtown Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Pine Gardens Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Dutch Island Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Pinpoint Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>East Savannah Community Association</i>	<i>Poplar Place Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Eastside Concerned Citizens</i>	<i>Richmond Hill Plantation Homeowners Assoc.</i>
<i>Edgemore/Sackville</i>	<i>River Oaks Homeowners Association</i>
<i>Fairway Oaks Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Rushing Street Station Homeowners Association</i>
<i>Feiler Park Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Sandfly Community Betterment Association</i>
<i>Feiler Terrace Community Organization</i>	<i>South Harbor Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Fernwood/Parkwood Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Southeast Chatham Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Ford Plantation Property Owners Association</i>	<i>Sterling Woods Homeowners Association</i>
<i>Forest Cove Property Owner's Association</i>	<i>Summerside Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Georgetown Community Service Association</i>	<i>Sunset Park Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Gordonston Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Sylvan Terrace Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Historic District Resident Association</i>	<i>Tatemville Community Improvement Association</i>
<i>Historic Victorian Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>The Landings Association</i>
<i>Holly Heights Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>The Landings Neighborhood Watch</i>
<i>Hoover Creek Plantation</i>	<i>The Marshes Homeowner's Association</i>
<i>Hudson Hill Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Thomas Square Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Islands Citizens for Logical Growth</i>	<i>Tremont Park Community Organization</i>
<i>Isle of Hope Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Turtle Hill Homeowners Association</i>
<i>Jackson Park Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Twickenham Neighborhood Organization</i>
<i>Jackson Woods Neighborhood Watch</i>	<i>Victory Heights Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Kensington Park Homeowners</i>	<i>West Savannah Community Organization</i>
<i>Kensington Park Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Wilmington Plantation</i>
<i>Liberty City, Southover, Richfield Community Association</i>	<i>Wilshire Area Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Live Oak Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Windsor Forest Neighborhood Association</i>
<i>Live Oak Park Organization Inc.</i>	<i>Woodville Community Organization</i>

Appendix I – Agency Consultation and Coordination – State Resource Agencies

**Georgia Department of
Community Affairs**

60 Executive Park South
Atlanta, GA 30329
404-679-4915

**Georgia Department of
Economic Development**

75 Fifth Street, NW
Suite 1200
Atlanta, GA 30308
404-962-4000

Tourism Division, DED

75 Fifth Street, NW
Suite 1200
Atlanta, GA 30308
404-962-4000

**Georgia Department of
Natural Resources**

2 Martin Luther King Jr, SE
Suite 1252 East Tower
Atlanta GA 30334
404-656-3500

**Environmental Protection
Division, DNR**

2 Martin Luther King Jr, SE
Suite 1152 East Tower
Atlanta GA 30334
404-657-5947

**Historic Preservation
Division, DNR**

34 Peachtree Street
Suite 1600
Atlanta GA 30303
404-656-2840

**State Parks & Historic Sites,
DNR**

2 Martin Luther King Jr, SE
Suite 1352 East Tower
Atlanta GA 30334
404-656-2770

**Wildlife Resource Division,
DNR**

2070 U.S. Highway 278, SE
Social Circle, GA 30025
770-918-6408

**Georgia Department of
Transportation**

600 W. Peachtree Street, NW,
Atlanta, GA 30308

**Georgia Emergency
Management Agency**

935 E Confederate Ave, SE
Atlanta GA 30316
404-635-7000

**Georgia Forestry
Commission**

5645 Riggins Mills Road
Dry Branch, GA 31020
478-751-2782

Note: The local resource, safety and security, and other consultation agencies are added to the MPO contact database as they are continuously identified throughout the planning process. Thus they are not listed in this Participation Plan.

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Appendix J – Locations for Public Review of Draft Documents

This list is comprised of public libraries, planning and transit agencies, and community centers within selected Environmental Justice areas (minority, poverty, age combination) which were not already covered by library locations.

Bryan County Libraries – Richmond Hill Branch

9607 Ford Avenue
Richmond Hill, GA 31324
912-756-3580

Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT)

610 W. Oglethorpe Ave
Savannah, GA 31401
912-629-3948; fax: 912-944-6058

Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC)

110 E. State St
Savannah, GA 31412-8246
912-651-1440; Fax: 912-651-1480

Grant Regional Community Center

1310 Richards Street
Savannah, GA 31401

Live Oak Public Libraries (for Chatham County and Effingham County access)

(17 copies to the main library, who will keep 2 copies at the main library and distribute 1 copy to each of the 15 branch libraries)

Bull Street (Main) Library - *Reference Library*
Contact: Diane Bronson/Acquisitions (912.652.3600)
2002 Bull St
Savannah, GA 31499-4301
912-652-3615; Fax: 912-652-3638

Carnegie Branch Library
537 E. Henry St
Savannah, GA 31401
912-232-1420

Forest City Branch Library
1501 Stiles Ave
Savannah, GA 31415
912-238-0614; Fax: 912-236-8879

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Garden City Branch Library
104 Sunshine Avenue
Garden City, GA 31405
912-629-5070; Fax: 912-629-5072

Islands Branch Library
50 Johnny Mercer Blvd
Savannah, GA 31410
912-897-6233; Fax: 912-897-1496

Oglethorpe Mall Branch Library
7 Oglethorpe Mall Annex
Savannah, GA 31406
912-925-5432; Fax: 912-925-2031

Ola Wyeth Branch Library
4 E. Bay St
Savannah, GA 31401
912-232-5488; Fax: (same)

Pooler Branch Library
216 South Rogers Street
Pooler, GA 31322
912-748-047; Fax: 912-748-4947

Port City Branch Library
3501 Houlihan Ave
Garden City, GA 31408
912-964-8013; Fax: 912-966-5142

Port Wentworth Branch Library
102 Aberfeldy St
Port Wentworth, GA 31408
912-964-0371; Fax: (same)

Rincon Branch Library
17th Street & Highway 21
Rincon, GA 31326
912-826-2222; Fax: 912-826-6304; TTY: 912-826-6304

Southwest Chatham Branch Library
14097 Abercorn Street
Savannah, GA 31419
912-925-8305; Fax: 912-925-8310

Thunderbolt Branch Library (and Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped)
2708 Mechanics Ave
Thunderbolt, GA 31404
912-354-5864; Fax: 912-354-5534; LBPH 800-342-4455

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Tybee Island Branch Library
403 Butler Ave
Tybee Island, GA 31328
912-786-7733; Fax: 912-786-7734

W. W. Law Branch Library
909 E. Bolton St
Savannah, GA 31401
912-236-8040; Fax: (same)

West Broad Branch Library
(West Broad YMCA)
1110 May Street Savannah
GA 31415
912-232-6395; Fax: 912-232-6395

Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce

Contact: Economic Development (912.644.6440)
101 E. Bay St
Savannah, GA 31401
912-644-6400; Fax: 912-644-6499

Tremont Neighborhood Center

2015 Paige Avenue
Savannah, GA 31415
912-651-4252

Windsor Forest Regional Center

414 Briarcliff Circle
Savannah, GA 31419
912-921-2105

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Appendix K -- State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Process

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued the Final Rule to revise the Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning regulations incorporating changes from the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) with an effective date of July 2012. The revised regulations clearly define administrative modifications and amendments as actions to update plans and programs. 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450.104 defines administrative modifications and amendments as follows:

- Administrative modification “means a minor revision to a long-range statewide or metropolitan transportation plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), or Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that includes minor changes to project/project phase costs, minor changes to funding sources of previously-included projects, and minor changes to project/project phase initiation dates. Administrative Modification is a revision that does not require public review and comment, redemonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (in nonattainment and maintenance areas).”
- Amendment “means a revision to a long-range statewide or metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP that involves a major change to a project included in a metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP, including the addition or deletion of a project or major change in project cost, project/project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or design scope (e.g., changing project termini or the number of through traffic lanes). Changes to projects that are included only for illustrative purposes do not require an amendment. An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment, redemonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (for metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs involving “non-exempt” projects in nonattainment and maintenance areas). In the context of a long-range statewide transportation plan, an amendment is a revision approved by the State in accordance with its public involvement process.”

The following procedures have been developed for processing administrative modifications and amendments to the STIP and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) TIPs and Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs). Processes described below detail procedures that are to be used to update an existing approved STIP or TIP and associated plan, if applicable. A key element of the amendment process is to assure that funding balances are maintained.

Administrative Modifications for Initial Authorization

The following actions are eligible as Administrative Modifications to the STIP/TIP/LRTP:

- A. Revise a project description without changing the project scope, conflicting with the environmental document or changing the conformity finding in nonattainment and maintenance areas (less than 10% change in project termini). This change would not alter the original project intent.
- B. Splitting or combining projects.
- C. Federal funding category change.
- D. Minor changes in expenditures for transit projects.

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- E. Roadway project phases may have a cost increase less than \$2,000,000 or 20% of the amount to be authorized.
- F. Shifting projects within the 4-year STIP as long as the subsequent annual draft STIP was submitted prior to September 30.
- G. Projects may be funded from lump sum banks as long as they are consistent with category definitions.

An administrative modification can be processed in accordance with these procedures provided that:

- 1. It does not affect the air quality conformity determination.
- 2. It does not impact financial constraint.
- 3. It does not require public review and comment.

The administrative modification process consists of a monthly list of notifications from GDOT to all involved parties, with change summaries sent on a monthly basis to the FHWA and FTA by the GDOT.

The GDOT will submit quarterly reports detailing projects drawn from each lump sum bank with remaining balance to the FHWA.

Amendments for Initial Authorizations

The following actions are eligible as Amendments to the STIP/TIP/LRTP:

- A. Addition or deletion of a project.
- B. Addition or deletion of a phase of a project.
- C. Roadway project phases that increase in cost over the thresholds described in the Administrative Modification section.
- D. Addition of an annual TIP.
- E. Major change to scope of work of an existing project. A major change would be any change that alters the original intent, i.e. a change in the number of through lanes, a change in termini of more than 10 percent.
- F. Shifting projects within the 4-year STIP which require redemonstration of fiscal constraint or when the subsequent annual draft STIP was not submitted prior to September 30. (See Administrative Modification item F.)

Amendments to the STIP/TIP/LRTP will be developed in accordance with the provisions of 23 CFR Part 450. This requires public review and comment and responses to all comments, either individually or in summary form. For amendments in MPO areas, the public review process should be carried out in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Participation Plan. The GDOT will assure that the amendment process and the public involvement procedures have been followed. Cost changes made to the second, third and fourth years of the STIP will be balanced during the STIP yearly update process. All amendments should be approved by FHWA and/or FTA.

Notes:

- 1. The date a TIP becomes effective is when the Governor or his designee approves it. For nonattainment and maintenance areas, the effective date of the TIP is based on the date of U.S. Department of Transportation's positive finding of conformity.

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2. The date the STIP becomes effective is when FHWA and FTA approve it.
3. The STIP is developed on the state fiscal year which is July 1-June 30.
4. Funds for cost increases will come from those set aside in the STIP financial plan by the GDOT for modifications and cost increases. Fiscal Constraint will be maintained in the STIP at all times.

Additional Funding Request After the Initial Authorization

Additional funding requests for all phases after the receiving initial authorization for those phases shall be a modification and be reported at each month's end except under the following conditions:

- A. The Initial Work Authorization for the phase is older than 10 years.
- B. The additional funding request exceeds the Initial Work Authorization by greater than \$10 million.