



The community attends a public meeting to preview Complete Streets information. - photo by Darrell Riley

The purpose of the CR MPO Public Participation Policy is to have a proactive public participation process that provides complete information, timely public notice, and full public access to MPO activities at all key stages in the decision-making process. This Policy is designed to ensure that the involvement of communities most affected by particular plans or projects are afforded ample opportunity to participate in the development of these plans and that transportation decisions will reflect public priorities.

Public Involvement General Objectives

- Bring a broad cross-section of the public into the public policy and transportation planning decision-making process.
 - Maintain public involvement from the early stages of the planning process through detailed project development.
 - Use different combinations of public involvement techniques to meet the diverse needs of the general public.
 - Make special efforts to increase the involvement by groups of people who do not generally participate, particularly low-income and minority populations.
- Determine the public's knowledge of the metropolitan transportation system and the public's values and attitudes concerning transportation.
 - Ensure that technical information is available to the public in an understandable form and that all segments of the population are afforded access to this information.
 - Maximize the use of communications technology to facilitate the exchange of information, including use of the MPO website and other electronically accessible formats (dropbox, e-mail, etc.).
 - Establish a channel for an effective feedback process.
 - Evaluate the public involvement process and procedures to assess their success at meeting requirements specified in the FAST Act, NEPA and the FTA/FHWA Guidance on Public Participation.

Public Involvement for the MTP

With regard to the multi-modal Metropolitan Transportation Plan, public review and participation process is designed to provide early and adequate opportunities for citizens and public officials (including elected officials) to be involved in the Cabarrus-Rowan (CR) Metropolitan Transportation Plan development. This public participation program is designed to involve all parties in the early stages of plan development and the subsequent update process. It is also designed to provide gradual progression from the general information (vision setting and formulation of goals, objectives and policies) pertaining to the plan to very specific information regarding alternatives and plan selection.

Public Involvement Commitments

1. The Cabarrus-Rowan (CR) Metropolitan Planning Organization will provide opportunity for early and meaningful public involvement in the development and update of the MTP.
2. Proactive participation techniques will be employed to involve citizens and provide full access to information and technical data. These will generally include, but not be limited to: public meetings/hearings, surveys, charrettes, mass media, etc. Visualization techniques shall be used to enhance the public's understanding of MPO plans and programs. The techniques will be used in an appropriate manner when presenting and describing MPO plans and programs.
3. Information dissemination, notification of meeting, publication of proposed plans will be integral elements of the public involvement process.
4. The MPO will initiate the MTP update process as required by the FAST Act, the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) and subsequent federal regulations. Elements of the Transportation Plan, and/or amendments will meet all current Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) requirements.

5. The public comment period for all elements of the MTP will be for a minimum 30 day public comment period, effective from the date of the public notice publication. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the MPO. The contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice.

6. Public meeting(s) will be held to: formulate a vision for the MTP development; provide the public background information on the metropolitan transportation system and other issues as well as the proposed framework of the Transportation Plan update process; and to receive citizen input.

7. All public meetings (forums) designed to solicit public comment will be held at various locations and times of day around the metropolitan area to encourage the greatest public participation. Public meetings will be held at locations accessible to persons with disabilities. Outreach activities will be conducted to inform minority and low-income groups and limited English-speaking groups of the opportunity for public comment. At least one-quarter of these meeting shall be held in minority and/or low income areas and within ¼ mile walk of a transit route in an easily accessible area.

8. The Cabarrus-Rowan MPO will maintain a website which shall include information on the MTP, meetings, other programs and appropriate information. The MPO staff shall post on the CR MPO website draft documents that are subject to the MPO's public review process for review and comment. Staff will also use the website to distribute information to the MPO membership.

9. The MPO shall assess the distribution of impacts on low-income and minority groups for investments identified in the MTP and publicize these findings on the MPO website.

10. The TCC will assemble all comments and forward comments to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC may choose to hold a public hearing before adopting the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

11. Any significant revision and amendment to the MTP will be subject to the public review process as outlined above.

12. The public participation component of the MTP will generally follow the same citizen input and review as outlined in this policy. Public input will be solicited to review and comment on any major MTP amendment proposal as well as analyses conducted as part of the amendment request. Adequate opportunity will be provided for public involvement in the amendment of the MTP, and any significant revisions to the MTP will also be subject to public comment period as described in # 5 of this policy.

13. The CR MPO will endeavor to involve the public at key decision points of the MTP development. Decision points are those stages where the TAC will be required to endorse or take action on

particular work elements. These include, but are not limited to:

- Formulation of vision, goals and objectives
- Policy development
- Review and approval of socio-economic and demographic projections
- Review of land use information and scenarios
- Review and determination of transportation deficiencies
- Identification of transportation (facility) needs
- Evaluation of alternatives and selection of preferred option
- Development of the Financial Plan
- Plan recommendation and adoption

For a copy of the MPO's Public Involvement Policy, contact the MPO office, at (704) 795-7528



Concord City Hall - Photo by Peter Franzese