

FINAL

Public Involvement Plan

(Documentation of the Transportation Planning
Public Involvement Process)

Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization
August 2008

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For the Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

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Part I.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

1.0 General Overview of the Planning Process

Each metropolitan planning area, as a condition to receiving Federal highway and transit capital or operating assistance, is required to have a transportation planning process. The transportation planning process requires the development of a *Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*, a short range *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*, and an annual *Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)* to address current and upcoming planning and project development activities. Special efforts must also be made to plan public mass transportation for the disabled and to address transportation issues in the area.

Annual certification that the planning process is being carried on in conformance with these requirements is necessary for the receipt of surface transportation program, national highway system, interstate maintenance, state bridge replacement, and transit capital and operating funds.

The state's Metropolitan Planning Organizations are responsible for planning in the 13 urbanized areas in Alabama. The Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the group of local elected officials responsible for adoption of the required transportation plans, program and projects for Montgomery, Autauga, and Elmore Counties. Each MPO follows the 3 C's planning process (Continuous, Cooperative, and Comprehensive) to develop plans, projects and programs that will be undertaken over time.

Public involvement is a process by which agencies search out the public and solicit responses from them concerning transportation projects. Public involvement is a vital part of the metropolitan planning process, because it gives the MPO and other transportation officials an opportunity to gather ideas from the public concerning transportation plans and programs for the Montgomery Metropolitan Area.

Public involvement shall be conducted for the following transportation planning activities identified in 23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613:

- (1) *Long Range Transportation Plan* adoptions and subsequent revisions or amendments.

- (2) Four (4) year *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* and modifications thereto which (1) result in a project with design concept and scope significantly different from that in the transportation plan or TIP, and (2) are not fiscally constrained according to the metropolitan planning regulations of 23 CFR Part 450. A public involvement meeting need not be conducted for minor amendments to the *Transportation Improvement Program* to include the addition of work scopes not anticipated in the original document, changes in funding categories, changes in year programmed, and changes in estimated costs.
- (3) Other major transportation policy plans or programs (i.e. transit, bicycle/pedestrian, corridor studies).

The Montgomery MPO, when necessary, through MPO staff will coordinate public involvement activities with statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes conducted by the State Department of Transportation.

Citizens must be offered the opportunity to be involved in the early stages of the development of a new transportation plan, or the update of a current transportation plan. The public involvement procedures outlined in this document are the ones used by the Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization in the development of transportation plans and programs for the Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Area of Montgomery, Autauga, and Elmore Counties.

There are two committees that provide information and advisory recommendations to the Metropolitan Planning Organization—the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The **Technical Coordinating Committee** advises the MPO on the feasibility of proposed projects. The TCC is comprised of planners, project engineers, and other local parties who support the comprehensive Montgomery Area Transportation Planning Process. The **Citizens Advisory Committee** provides an organized forum for local citizens to be involved in the transportation planning process.

1.1 Public Involvement Procedures Manual Organization

This document is divided into six sections. The first section is the Introduction. The second section cites the federal Safe Accountable Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (**SAFETEA-LU**) guidelines for maintaining public involvement in the transportation planning process. The third section illustrates each step involved in the public involvement process. The fourth section highlights ways for citizens to participate in the planning process and provide comments/suggestions for consideration by the MPO and/or its Committees. The fifth section explains how the MPO planning staff can evaluate

the public involvement process and document it. The final section, the Appendix, provides reference forms and additional information.

The purpose of this document is to:

- ❖ Familiarize the public with the transportation public involvement process.
- ❖ Identify the federal guidelines which govern the transportation planning process.
- ❖ Discuss some common myths and facts concerning public involvement and the transportation planning process.
- ❖ Invite the public to become more involved in the planning process, and explain how to do so.

Part II.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Federal Regulations

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCEDURES FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

**(Adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization August 28, 2008)
(Supersedes January, 2003 MPO Public Involvement Procedures)**

2.0 Purpose

These procedures document the public involvement process to be used by the Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization in developing transportation plans and programs for the Montgomery Metropolitan Study Area (portions of Montgomery, Autauga, and Elmore Counties).

The Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization subcommittee structure is described in the following paragraphs. The MPO has two (2) advisory committees—a Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

The Citizens Advisory Committee provides an organized forum for local citizens to be involved in the transportation planning process. These procedures further define the applicability, notification procedure, conduct and documentation of public involvement meetings.

2.1 Legal Authority for Public Involvement

The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Regulations under 23 CFR, 450.316, Paragraph (b) state that the metropolitan transportation planning process shall include a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and *Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs)* and meets the requirements and criteria specified further in subparagraphs i-xi.

An agreement, executed on March 3, 1995, is used to administer the urban transportation planning process in the Montgomery Urbanized Area under the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. This

agreement is between the Alabama Department of Transportation, City of Montgomery, City of Prattville, City of Millbrook, City of Wetumpka, Town of Coosada, Montgomery County, Autauga County, Elmore County, and the Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission.

Included in the Agreement is the provision for a representative Technical Coordinating Committee and for a representative Citizens Advisory Committee. The Technical Coordinating Committee is a required part of the planning process. The Citizens Advisory Committee is not required. The TCC and the CAC are both charged with the following responsibilities:

- (1) Make recommendations to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regarding the documents and materials necessary for the MPO endorsements.
- (2) Make recommendations to the MPO regarding the elements of the metropolitan planning process necessary to meet the requirements for certification.

Note: The elements of the metropolitan planning process include the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, the Unified Planning Work Program, and the Public Involvement Plan.

2.2 Citizens Advisory Committee Responsibilities and Membership

The Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization adopted *RES-03-2002* on October 18, 2001, establishing the 25-member Montgomery Area Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). This Resolution also adopted the CAC Bylaws (available in a separate document upon request) and a plan for proportional representation based on the 2000 Census. Under the plan for proportional representation, no MPO member jurisdiction has less than one (1) member, and members are distributed as follows:

<i>Member Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Number of Representatives</i>
❖ City of Montgomery	16
❖ City of Prattville	2
❖ City of Millbrook	1
❖ Town of Coosada	1
❖ City of Wetumpka	1
❖ Autauga County	1
❖ Elmore County	2
❖ Montgomery County	1
❖ Total:	25

2.3 Citizens Advisory Committee Responsibilities

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Regulations under 23 CFR, 450.316, Paragraph (b) state that the metropolitan transportation planning process shall include a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and that supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and *Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs)* and meets the requirements and criteria specified further in subparagraphs i-xi. The Citizens Advisory Committee will have the following responsibilities:

- ❖ Make recommendations to the Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regarding planning transportation improvements for their respective jurisdictional area within the Study Area, and for the Study Area at large.
- ❖ Make recommendations to the MPO regarding methods for achieving maximum public involvement for their respective jurisdictional areas within the Study Area, and for the Study Area at large.

2.4 Notices for Public Involvement Meetings or Comment Periods

A public involvement meeting shall be held for the following transportation planning activities:

- (1) *Long-Range Transportation Plan* adoptions and subsequent revisions or amendments.
- (2) Four (4) year *Transportation Improvement Program* and modifications thereto which (a) result in a project with design concept and scope significantly different from that in the transportation plan or TIP, and (b) are not fiscally constrained according to the metropolitan planning regulations of 23 CFR Part 450. A public involvement meeting need not be conducted for minor amendments to the *Transportation Improvement Program* to include the addition of work scopes not anticipated in the original document, changes in funding categories, changes in year programmed, and changes in estimated costs.
- (3) Other major transportation policy plans or programs (i.e., Unified Planning Work Program or Congestion Management System Plan).

Public Notice—Publication shall be in newspapers of general circulation in Montgomery, Autauga, and Elmore Counties and by additional means and methods. At least 14 calendar days notice shall be provided, when possible, but no less than 7 days (State law). The information to be distributed at the public involvement meeting shall be available to the public at the time of notice. Information may be placed on the MPO web site www.montgomerympo.org. Any person requiring special arrangements related to the Americans with Disabilities Act shall notify the Metropolitan Planning Organization no less than 72 hours prior to the date of the scheduled meeting so that necessary special arrangements can be made in order to facilitate participation.

Transportation Mailing List or Email—The transportation mailing list or email will consist of the MPO Policy board, Technical Transportation Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee and other interested citizens and groups that request to be put on the mailing list at a minimum. Notification of meetings will be done by using the transportation mailing list or email.

The public involvement process for transportation plans and programs shall include the activities of the Citizens Advisory Committee as documented in Sections 2.0 and 3.0.

2.5 Conduct of Public Involvement Meetings

The public involvement meetings shall be sponsored by the Metropolitan Planning Organization, done by MPO staff and be conducted in a format structured to provide (1) presentation and discussion in a group setting, or (2) individual discussion with MPO Planning Staff and with Metropolitan Planning Organization members if present. Comment Forms will be available for individuals who wish to provide comments in writing.

2.6 Documentation of Public Involvement Meeting Results

The process used to address individual comments will first include documenting the written comments provided by those attending the public involvement meeting or comments received outside of meetings. A name and address shall be provided in order for a comment to be documented. Comments by the public concerning the material provided at a public involvement opportunity shall be on a Comment Form, email, fax, or by separate letter before the closing date identified for the public involvement period. The comments shall be summarized by the MPO Planning Staff and a response prepared and documented in a written report.

The written report for the public involvement meeting or meetings shall include a record of attendance, a summary of the background material distributed at the public involvement meeting, a summary of each comment, the number of persons making the summary comment, and a response to the summary comment.

The written summary of the public involvement meeting(s) and the written comments received shall then be provided to the Metropolitan Planning Organization prior to the MPO decision on the public involvement subject. Comments are made available to the MPO prior to any action being taken on the final plan or proposal.

The written summary of the public involvement shall also be available to the public at the MPO Staff Office or on the MPO website at <http://www.montgomerympo.org>.

2.7 Open Meetings

All regularly scheduled and special called meetings of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Citizens Advisory Committee, and Technical Coordinating Committee shall be open to the public. General meeting locations shall be: The City of Montgomery Intermodal Facility Conference Room located at 495 Molton Street, Montgomery, AL 36104 or at 103 North Perry St, 2nd Floor, Mayors Conference Room, Montgomery, AL 36104

2.8 MPO Adoption

The development of the *Transportation Improvement Program*, *Long Range Transportation Plan* and other activities for which public involvement is conducted shall result in adoption by the Metropolitan Planning Organization by resolution, by official action recorded in the minutes of the meeting. A copy of the Metropolitan Planning Organization's official action shall be included in each appropriate document.

2.9 Public Access to Information

The Metropolitan Planning Organization shall provide public access to technical and policy information used to develop *Long Range Transportation Plans* and *Transportation Improvement Programs*. Timely information about transportation

issues and processes shall also be provided to citizens, affected public agencies, private transportation providers, and other segments of the community.

2.10 Planning Process Factors

The Transportation Planning Process has the following goals which are identified in the Safe Accountable Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU):

- (1) Support the **economic vitality** of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- (2) Increase the **safety** of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- (3) Increase the **security** of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- (4) Increase the **accessibility and mobility** options available to people and for freight;
- (5) Protect and enhance the **environment**, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, promote **consistency** between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- (6) Enhance the **integration and connectivity** of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- (7) Promote efficient **system management** and operation; and
- (8) Emphasize the **preservation** of the existing transportation system.

2.11 Revisions to Public Involvement Procedures

When the Public Involvement Plan is amended for any reason, it shall undergo a minimum 45 day public comment period as required by the current Federal regulations 23 CFR 450.316(2), and subsequent regulations.

2.12 Federal Requirements

The emphasis on public involvement has continued with the passage in 2005 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Previously, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 required states and MPOs to involve the public to a much greater extent in transportation decision-making than under previous law. When ISTEA expired in 1998, it was replaced by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), which continued to place strong emphasis on public involvement. SAFETEA-LU retains all of the public involvement language from the previous acts and adds new requirements, including the development of an MPO Public Participation Plan in consultation with interested parties; the addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities users and the disabled as interested parties; public meetings held at convenient times and accessible locations; and the use of electronic methods and visualization techniques to provide information to the public.

These regulations are found in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 450.210 and 450.316 to guide the development of statewide, local and metropolitan plans and programs. These regulations also include the following:

- Early and continuous public involvement opportunities throughout the planning and programming process;
- Timely information to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, private sector transportation entities and other interested parties, including segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs, and projects;
- Reasonable public access to information;
- Adequate public notice of public involvement activities and ample time for public review and comment at key decision points;
- Explicit consideration and response to public comment;
- Consideration of the needs of the traditionally underserved, including low-income and minority citizens;
- Periodic review of public involvement efforts by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to ensure full and open access to all;
- Review of public involvement procedures by the FHWA and FTA when necessary; and

- Coordination of MPO public involvement processes with statewide efforts whenever possible.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) established a national policy for the protection of the environment. NEPA requires the consideration of potential impacts on social and natural resources during transportation decision-making.

In addition, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires reasonable efforts be made to accommodate citizens with disabilities who wish to attend public meetings.

2.13 Interested Parties, Participation and Consultation

As required in the Federal Regulations 450.316 (b)-(e):

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, or freight movements) 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 nonprofit 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 23U.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. (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.

The Montgomery MPO will comply with 23 CFR 450.316 section **b** through **e**, and, when and where applicable comply with involving all planning agencies in

the MPO area and coordinating work with other agencies or individuals receiving Federal assistance.

2.14 Provision for Additional Public Opportunity for Public Comment on Long Rang Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Program Documents

As required under 23 CFR 450.316 (a)(1)(viii), the Montgomery MPO will hold a 7 to 14 day public comment period, place documents at document review sites, notify committee members, and other interested persons on the mailing list, place public meeting notices in general circulation newspaper(s) and hold a public hearing in a centralized meeting location that is accessible to persons with disabilities for Long Range Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs that differ significantly from the original or amended version made available for public comment.

PART III.

**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

For the transportation community, involving the public in planning and project development poses a major challenge. Many people are skeptical about whether they can truly influence the outcome of a transportation project, whether highway or transit. Others feel that transportation plans, whether at the statewide or metropolitan level, are too abstract and long-term to warrant attention. However, public involvement is a two-way street. In order to participate effectively in transportation project development and planning, citizens need avenues to get information from a transportation agency as well as avenues to give information back to the agency.

Developing an effective public involvement process is a strategic effort that requires assembling a selection of techniques that meet the needs of a given transportation plan, program, or project. Citizens are necessary to the transportation decision making process, because when residents are directly involved in the process, new points of view, new ideas, and a community perspective are infused into the process, thereby giving decisions more validity. The overall process should convince citizens that active involvement is worthwhile because their input has a direct and meaningful impact on decisions made concerning transportation plans, programs, or projects.

Before a public involvement meeting can occur, there are several phases that must take place. Depending upon the degree of importance associated with the proposed transportation project or plan, the Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization staff solicits local interest in public involvement meetings in a variety of ways, which include a general mailing, public information materials, as well as the utilization of media strategies. One of the most important phases in the process is the outreach and notification process. Outreach and notification is the process by which the MPO Planning Staff notifies the community of an upcoming public involvement meeting or event. Outreach is essential because it allows for a more broad and varied representation of potential participants. Outreach and notification is a three step process, which may appear simple. However, it is rather complex and it calls for an extensive amount of initial planning.

The primary focus of outreach and notification is to include all segments of a community in the transportation planning process. Participation is also sought from the disabled, the elderly, the young, ethnic minorities, and any other segment of the community that might have unique transportation needs. The MPO Planning Staff makes contact with these groups and determines their individual needs through outreach services. Outreach services involve developing contacts, mailing lists, and other means of communication with a broader cross-section of the community.

3.0 Outreach and Notification

- (1) The first step is the preparation of a flyer, or announcement, which notifies the community of an upcoming meeting. The intent of the flyer is to provide an attractive, eye-catching announcement which will convey the purpose of the public involvement meeting.
- (2) The second step is the compilation and updating of the mailing list. The mailing list is a collection of names of organizations, residents, media, elected officials, agency personnel, interest groups, and others who are affected or interested in transportation projects or plans. The list includes addresses and other contact information used to reach the community with announcements of upcoming events, meeting invitations, newsletters, summary reports, and other information about MPO activities.

The Montgomery MPO mailing list and email is comprised of the TCC, CAC, and MPO committee members along with other individuals that request to be included on the mailing list as needed.

- (3) The third step is the distribution of the public involvement meeting flyers to each entity on the mailing list or email.

3.1 Outreach and Notification Target Dates

For Regular MPO meetings Public Notices are advertised in several circulation newspapers from 7 days to 14 days prior to any MPO, TCC, or CAC meeting.

Public Involvement Procedure for MPO Documents such as TIP, LRTP, Congestion Management, or UPWP.

- ❖ Flyers (Display Public Notice Advertisements), Technical Summaries and/or transportation documents are displayed at the designated public involvement sites. These flyers (Display Public Notice Advertisements) are to be posted in conspicuous places for easy observation by members of the community. A display advertisement/flyer will also be placed at the public involvement meeting site. A Public Display Notice Advertisement will be published in general circulation newspapers announcing public involvement opportunities concerning MPO documents as well as being available at the sites listed below. Public involvement sites will be evaluated annually, at the beginning of each fiscal year, and then revised if necessary. The list of current public involvement sites is as follows:

Montgomery City/County

- Montgomery City/County Library, Main Branch, 245 High Street
- Montgomery City Hall Annex 2nd Floor, 27 Madison Ave.
- Montgomery Intermodal Facility, 495 Molton Street
- Rosa Parks Library, 1276 Rosa Parks Ave.
- Montgomery Housing Authority, Main Office, 1020 Bell Street
- Rufus Lewis Library, 3095 Mobile Highway
- ALDOT 6th Division, 1525 Coliseum Blvd.
- EL Lowder Library, 2590 Bell Road

City of Prattville/Autauga County

- Prattville/Autauga County Library, 254 Doster Street
- Prattville U.S. Post Office, 502 Greystone Way

Elmore County (Millbrook, Wetumpka and Coosada)

- Millbrook Library, 3650 Grandview Road
- Millbrook U.S. Post Office, 4431 Main Street
- City Hall of Wetumpka, 212 South Main Street
- Town of Coosada U.S. Post Office, 5798 Coosada Road

ONE WEEK PRIOR TO MEETING DATE

- ❖ A bulk mailing and emails are done to distribute to each person, agency, organization, etc. on the MPO mailing list.

3.2 Open Meetings

All regularly scheduled and special called meetings of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Citizens Advisory Committee, and Technical Coordinating Committee shall be open to the public at all times. Subcommittee meetings shall also be open to the public at all times.

3.3 Conduct of Public Meetings

The public meetings shall be sponsored by the Metropolitan Planning Organization and be conducted in a format structured to provide a presentation and discussion in a group setting or followed by individual discussions with MPO Planning Staff and with Metropolitan Planning Organization members if present. Comment Forms will be available for individuals who wish to provide written comments. Visualization technique(s) to be used during public meetings will be in the form of maps displaying information about projects or other techniques.

3.4 Documentation of Public Involvement Meeting Results

The process used to address individual comments will first include documenting the written comments provided by those attending the public involvement meeting. A name and address shall be provided in order for a comment to be documented. Comments by the public concerning the material provided at the public involvement meeting shall be on a Comment Form, email or by separate letter before the closing date identified for the public involvement period. The comments shall be summarized by the MPO Planning Staff and a response prepared and documented in a written report. If the assistance of other parties is required in order to respond to a public comment, the parties shall be notified in writing by the MPO Planning Staff.

The written report for the public involvement meeting or meetings shall include a record of attendance, a summary of the background material distributed at the public involvement meeting, a summary of each comment, the number of persons making the summary comment, and a response to the summary comment.

The written summary of the public involvement meeting(s) and the written comments received shall then be provided to the Metropolitan Planning Organization prior to any action being taken on the final plan or proposal.

The written summary of the public involvement shall also be available to the public at the MPO Staff Office or on the MPO website.

3.5 Metropolitan Planning Organization Adoption

The development of the *Transportation Improvement Program, Long Range Transportation Plan*, and other activities for which public involvement is conducted shall result in adoption by the Metropolitan Planning Organization by resolution, by official action recorded in the minutes of the meeting. A copy of the Metropolitan Planning Organization's official action shall be included in the appropriate document.

3.6 Public Access to Information

The Metropolitan Planning Organization shall provide public access to technical and policy information used to develop *Long Range Transportation Plans* and *Transportation Improvement Programs*, in accordance with the *Guidelines for Public Release of Data* adopted by MPO Resolution *RES-06-2002* on January 17, 2002 (see *Appendix*). Timely information about transportation issues and processes shall also be provided to citizens, affected public agencies, private transportation providers, and other segments of the community.

3.7 Summary Documents

A written report for each public involvement effort is compiled after the close of the public involvement period. The report includes a record of attendance, a summary of the background material distributed at the public involvement meeting, a summary of each comment, the number of persons making the summary comment, and a response to the summary comment.

Comments on public involvement can be e-mailed to rsmith@montgomeryal.gov

3.8 Available Transportation Planning Documents

Some documents include:

Sept. 2007

“FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program”.

“List of FY-07 Authorized Transportation Projects (10/1/07 to 9/30/08)”

June, 2005

“Montgomery Study Area 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan”

September, 2003

“Montgomery Study Area Congestion Management System Plan, 2003-2007”

3.9 Outreach and Notification to Environmental Justice Communities

Environmental Justice Communities often find it difficult to participate in public planning activities, yet they may have greater needs for services to get to work, school, shopping and other day-to-day activities. These groups are a growing part of the population, but social, economic and cultural barriers often hinder their participation. Increasingly, public agencies are assuming responsibility for reaching out to and including these communities in the decision-making process with customized, innovative approaches designed to assure basic, equitable access to the process. *Environmental Mitigation and Consultation are addressed with in the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan as required.*

Strategies that can be used to do Outreach and Notification to E.J. communities:

- Identify environmental justice-related stakeholders to include in the process, such as transit groups, community-based organizations, minority academic institutions, religious groups, civic clubs, homeowner associations, neighborhood organizations and others.
- Meet with community leaders when appropriate to provide information on plans, projects and transportation issues, develop relationships, and become familiar with community issues.
- Seek opportunities to partner with community groups, private companies or non-profit organizations to sponsor or co-host events or activities. Enlist their assistance in notifying and communicating with their communities and offering low-cost perks such as food, transportation and day care to provide incentives to encourage participation.

Communication and Notification Strategies

- Identify media outlets that target environmental justice communities for the dissemination of notices, public notices, newsworthy events, public service announcements, mailings and advertisements. Develop relationships with these outlets to heighten interest in the process.
- Use facilitators that are sensitive to, or trained in, environmental justice groups (i.e., social services offices, laundromats, YMCA's, Boys and Girls Clubs, neighborhood schools, doctors' offices, etc.).

- Ensure that public information materials are culturally sensitive and in language geared toward the specific ethnic community.

3.10 Employing Visualization Techniques in the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program Documents

Visualization technique(s) to be used from the conception to completion of the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program documents and other related documents will be in the form of maps at a minimum, displaying information about projects, or other types of visualization techniques that can be employed and as appropriate.

Part IV.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Citizen participation is vital to the success of local and statewide transportation planning. It is the goal of the Metropolitan Planning Organization and its staff to increase the level of awareness and participation among citizens. Transportation initiatives are designed to find more efficient and effective methods to ensure that citizen's lives are safe, healthy, and fulfilling. Transportation infrastructure is a uniquely public responsibility and investment. Public involvement and widespread citizen participation are essential if transportation officials are to meet the needs of the people.

Citizens can participate in Transportation Planning Process in a variety of ways.

4.0 Written Comments – by Mail or Email

- ❖ Type or write legibly, type or print your name under your signature, include your complete address.
- ❖ Be brief and to the point. Be courteous, but firm.
- ❖ Keep a copy for your records.
- ❖ Send written comments to the following address:

Mr. Robert Smith, Senior Transportation Planner
City of Montgomery Planning and Development Department
Transportation Planning Division
495 Molton Street
P.O. Box 1111
Montgomery, AL 36104-1111
(334) 241-2249
(334) 241-2326-Fax Number
Email: rsmith@montgomeryal.gov

- ❖ The MPO Planning Staff's physical address is 495 Molton Street Montgomery, AL 36104.

4.1 Attend Public Meetings

Public Involvement Meetings are opportunities for citizens to be brought up to date on the details of the plan or program being presented at the meetings. Citizens will also be provided with details regarding the next steps to be taken prior to the next meeting or public hearing. Citizens are expected to provide meaningful comments regarding the plan or program being presented. A public involvement meeting will be held prior to crucial decision-making points in the MPO transportation planning process. Watch the local newspaper for public involvement meeting announcements, or contact the MPO Planning Staff at (334) 241-2249 for information on upcoming meetings.

4.2 Public Opinion Surveys

Public opinion surveys assess widespread public opinion. Surveys are administered to a sample group of people via a written questionnaire or through interviews in person, by phone, or by electronic media. Survey results give transportation officials a fairly accurate prediction of public positions or reactions to transportation policies or initiatives. From time to time public opinion surveys may be used in the transportation planning process.

Increased public opinion in transportation planning will have numerous benefits. If the public becomes more involved in the planning process, it will promote a better understanding on their part of the tasks involved in implementing transportation improvements. If elected officials perceive an increase in citizen participation in this process, it will provide them with a keener sense of direction in terms of the concerns of their constituents. Finally, by making an effort to encompass a diversity of people in the planning process, transportation officials will be laying the groundwork for a more comprehensive transportation system in the 21st Century.

Part V

Evaluation/Documentation of the Public Involvement Process and Activities

5.0 Evaluation of Public Involvement Activities

The following indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, may be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Montgomery Area MPO Public Involvement activities associated with a particular plan, program, or project. To effectively evaluate the public involvement program, activities will be monitored and assessed on a yearly basis as appropriate and within staffing and other resource constraints.

Useful Quantitative Indicators

1. Attendance
 - Number in attendance
 - Number attending previously at this location (if applicable)
2. Requests to add to mailing list
3. Calls to the MPO Planning Staff Office
4. Website hits
5. Oral and written comments received, categorized by gender, age and race (if known)
6. Evaluation of advertising participation and responses (legal notices, press releases, flyers, newsletters, invitations)
7. Listing of articles and the various publications where they appeared
8. Association with advocacy groups
9. Membership on MPO related committee (TCC, CAC)
10. Consultant or other agency associated with the transportation planning Process

Qualitative Indicators

1. Met legal requirements
2. Clearly articulated goals and objectives
3. Identified concerned or affected publics
4. Identified specific techniques for engaging the public in the process
5. Developed effective notification procedures for target affected groups
6. Delineated clear roles and responsibilities for participants
7. Developed educational techniques that increased public understanding of transportation issues and allowed for mutual learning.
8. Integrated input and followed through on questions and requests to demonstrate serious consideration of public input
9. Integrated public involvement into the decision-making structure
10. Demonstrated impact of public input on decision-making process
11. Increased understanding and awareness of transportation issues

Monitoring and Reporting

Successfully evaluating the effectiveness of a public involvement program requires standardized reporting procedures that allow for evaluating efforts and progress in achieving objectives and tracking outreach follow-up needs. Responsibilities and procedures should be clearly established to minimize duplication of effort and maximize the value of the public outreach program.

The monitoring and reporting process should capture the following types of information:

1. Date, time and location
2. Number of attendees
3. Written comments or questions
4. Assessment of local community perception of the need for public involvement for the proposed transportation activities
5. Suggestions on how the event/activity might be improved
6. Follow-up questions
7. Requests for information
8. Media activity
9. Response to media outreach
10. Controversial issues or projects

Reasonable efforts will be made by the MPO to evaluate the vision of the Public Involvement Plan to ensure that measures that are being undertaken for particular public involvement activities to be effective.

Appendix

Appendix

6.0 Citizens Advisory Committee Membership Form

The MPO Planning Staff coordinates the activities of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC provides recommendations concerning tri-county transportation programs and projects to the elected officials on the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Citizens Advisory Committee membership is comprised of representatives from the following geographic areas:

<i>Member Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Number of Representatives</i>
❖ City of Montgomery	16
❖ City of Prattville	2
❖ City of Millbrook	1
❖ Town of Coosada	1
❖ City of Wetumpka	1
❖ Autauga County	1
❖ Elmore County	2
❖ Montgomery County	1
❖ Total:	<input type="text" value="25"/>

If you would like to be notified of the quarterly meetings and be considered for membership, please complete the information below and return to the MPO Planning Staff, P.O. Box 1111, 495 Molton Street, Montgomery, AL 36101, Attn: Robert Smith.

Name : _____

Mailing Address : _____

Telephone : _____

Fax Number : _____

E-mail Address : _____

6.1 Sign-up Sheet for Public Involvement Mailing Notification List

Your Name : _____

Mailing Address : _____

Fax Number : _____

E-Mail Address : _____

Would you like to be added to our Public Involvement Notification List?

Yes _____

No _____

How did you hear about this meeting?

Your Comments:

Please return to the MPO Planning Staff at this meeting or mail the form to: P.O. Box 1111,495 Molton Street, Montgomery, AL 36101, Attn: Robert Smith.

6.2 Year 2007 Meeting Schedule

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

Agenda items requiring MPO approval should be reviewed by the transportation committees on the following cycle:

Citizens Advisory Committee	3 rd Tuesday of each quarter
Technical Coordinating Committee	3 rd Tuesday of each quarter
Metropolitan Planning Organization	3 rd Thursday of each quarter

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee will be held on the third Tuesday of each quarter, unless otherwise noted, at 2:00 p.m.

Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee will be held on the third Tuesday of each quarter, unless otherwise noted, at 10:00 a.m.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Montgomery Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will be held on the third Thursday of each quarter, unless otherwise noted, at 10:00 a.m.

All meetings, unless otherwise noted, shall be held at the City of Montgomery Intermodal Transportation Facility conference room, 495 Molton Street, Montgomery, AL 36104 or in the Mayors Conference room, 103 N. Perry St 2nd Floor, Montgomery, AL 36104. This and all MPO meetings are held at ADA accessible locations and are open to the public. For additional information on meeting agendas and locations, please contact the MPO Planning Staff at 241-2249.

6.3 Guidelines for Public Release of Data

1. *Working Data Provided to MPO Subcommittees*—Data will be released to the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) on an on-going basis as MPO projects progress toward completion. Internal data used to create plans and programs will be provided to the various Committees in order for them to have sufficient information to make appropriate recommendations to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

2. *Working Data Available to the General Public*—Data provided to the TCC and the CAC will be provided to the general public upon request with time to assemble documents and or information requested by MPO Staff.

3. *Planning Documents*—Information provided to the general public will comprise all documents required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as routine planning documents (documents detailing planning work). These currently include the following:
 - 2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Subsequent UPWPs
 - 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Subsequent TIPs
 - 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and subsequent LRTPs
 - List of Authorized Transportation Projects by Fiscal Year
 - 2003-2007 Congestion Management Plan and Subsequent Documents
 - Other planning and programming documents or information as they are completedThese documents will be provided at no charge as requested on a per individual basis. Individuals requiring more copies will be advised there is no copyright and they are free to reproduce as many documents as they need. Documents may also be accessed via the internet at www.montgomerympo.org.

4. *Other Information Available*—Staff will inform the general public of transportation websites with other data available (FHWA home page, FTA home page, etc.).

5. *Electronic Format*—Some digital data may not be available to Committee members or to the general public, due to data sharing agreements made with the Montgomery Water Works and Sanitary Sewer Board, Montgomery County, and with participating MPO jurisdictions.

6.4 Acronym and Abbreviations List

AL/SR Alabama Highway or State Route
ALDOT Alabama Department of Transportation
BR Bridge
BSP Base and pave
CAC Citizens Advisory Committee
CAP Transit Capital
CARPDC Central Alabama Regional Planning & Development Commission
CARE Critical Analysis and Reporting Environment
CN Construction
CR County Road
EJ Environmental Justice
FCS Functional Classification System
FHWA Federal Highway Administration
FTA Federal Transit Administration
GDB Grade, drain, and bridge
GPB Grade, drain, base, pave, and bridge
GIS Geographic Information System
HES Hazard Elimination and Safety (Discretionary competitive STP funds)
IM Interstate Maintenance
ITS Intelligent Transportation System
LRTP Long Range Transportation Plan (20 Year Plan)
MATS Montgomery Area Transit System
MP Mile Post
MPO Metropolitan Planning Organization
MT Maintenance program
MUTCD Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
NHS National Highway System
OTH Other
PE Preliminary Engineering
PL FHWA Planning Funds
RW Right of Way
SAFETEA-LU Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
Section 5303 FTA Metropolitan Planning Funds
Section 5307 FTA formula funds for urbanized areas
Section 5309 FTA capital program funds (currently earmarked by Congress)
Section 5310 FTA Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program funds
Section 5311 FTA Formula Funds for Rural Transportation Programs
Sixth Division ALDOT Division consisting of eight counties (**Autauga**, **Bullock**, **Butler**, **Dallas**, **Elmore**, **Lowndes**, **Macon**, and **Montgomery**)
SOV Single Occupancy Vehicle
SR State Road
STIP State Transportation Improvement Program
STP Surface Transportation Program
TAZ Traffic Analysis Zone
TCC Technical Coordinating Committee
TE Transportation Enhancement
TIP Transportation Improvement Program
TMA Transportation Management Area
UA Urbanized Area (identified by the Census Bureau)
UC Urban Cluster (identified by the Census Bureau)
UPWP Unified Planning Work Program
UT Utility Work

MPO Resolution Adopting Final Public Involvement Plan

WHEREAS, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and MPO have reviewed the draft and final Public Involvement Plan;

WHEREAS, public notice was published in a newspaper of general circulation and a draft *Public Involvement Plan document* and comment forms were available at specified sites for a 45 day public involvement period and a public hearing was held in a central location to solicit comments regarding the public involvement process; and

WHEREAS, a *Summary documentation of public involvement* was completed on the *Public Involvement Plan* and was provided to members of the MPO, TCC and CAC, prior to final consideration of the *Final Public Involvement Plan*; and

WHEREAS, the *MPO Public Involvement Plan*, adopted January 22, 2003, is hereby updated by the August 28, 2008 Public Involvement Plan document; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Montgomery MPO adopts the *Final Public Involvement Plan* dated August 28 2008, as written.

ADOPTED THIS THE 28th DAY OF August, 2008.

Mayor Bobby N. Bright, MPO Chairman

Attest:

Kenneth J. Groves, MPO Secretary

