Regional Transportation
Community Engagement Plan

Community Engagement: Values, Techniques, and Process

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Federal law requires all metropolitan areas with populations greater than 50,000 people to designate a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to develop transportation plans for the region. It also requires that a Public Participation Plan be created that affords the public a reasonable opportunity to participate in and comment on transportation plans. This plan is intended to fulfill those requirements outlined in 23 Code of US Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450.210 and 450.316. The content of this publication reflects the views of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the Department of Transportation, State of Georgia, or the Federal Highway Administration. Additionally, as reflected in Section VI of the 2009 Atlanta Quad Party Agreement (Memorandum of Agreement for Transportation Planning Coordination and Cooperation in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area (MPA) between the Atlanta Regional Com-mission, Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, and Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority), this Public Participation Plan satisfies the region's Program of Transit Projects (POP) public participation requirements for the Urbanized Area Formula Program required in Section 9 of the Federal Transit Act Title 49, U.S. Code Section 5307 (b)(1) through (7) for the Atlanta Regional Commission and transit operators within the MPO area (Cherokee Area Transit, Cobb Community Transit, Douglas County Rideshare, Gwinnett County Transit, Henry County Transit, Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, Spalding County, and GRTA (Xpress)). It is the policy of the Atlanta Regional Commission that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any operation of the Atlanta Regional Commission as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes. Any questions or concerns about discrimination may be referred to the ARC Title VI Officer at bzwald@atlantaregional. org or 470.463.1494. Publication is prepared in cooperation with the Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration.

The "Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan" for the Atlanta Metropolitan Region consists of the following modules:

- *Resident's Guide to Regional Transportation Planning*
- *A Guide to Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Basics*
- *Community Engagement Values, Techniques and Process*

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ARC

Community engagement is more an art than a science. At ARC, community engagement is based in our values to have an open, transparent, and engaging transportation planning process.

This guide will help you learn more about:

- How to Get Involved: Where do I share my input?
- How to Choose an Engagement Technique: What Steps Should a Planner Consider?
- What are ARC's Public Participation Policies for Transportation Planning?

This guide is part of a series developed by ARC to demystify the transportation planning process.

Here's a list of all the guides – check them out!

- A Resident's Guide to Regional Transportation Planning
- A Guide to Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Basics
- Community Engagement: Values, Techniques, and Process

RELEVANT ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ARC	Atlanta Regional Commission
ATL	Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority
CAA	Clean Air Act
CDR	Conformity Determination Report
CEN	Community Engagement Network
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CMS	Congestion Management System
CTP	Comprehensive Transportation Plans
DCA	Department of Community Affairs
DRI	Developments of Regional Impact
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPD	Environmental Protection Division
ETA	Equitable Target Areas
FAST	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GDOT	Georgia Department of Transportation
GRTA	Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
HST	Human Services Transportation
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
LCI	Livable Centers Initiative
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MARTA	Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
POP	Program of Projects
RC	Regional Commissions
RTC	Regional Transit Committee
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
SRTA	State Road and Tollway Authority
TAMG	Transportation Access and Mobility Group
TAQC	Transportation and Air Quality Committee
TCC	Transportation Coordinating Committee
TDM	Transportation Coordinating Committee
TMA	Transportation Demand Management
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TOS	Transit Operators Subcommittee
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation

How to Get Involved: Where do I share my input about transportation?

There's more than one way to be a part of the transportation process. Check out this overview and pick what works best for you!

"FORMAL" ENGAGEMENT

Attend ARC committee meetings, give input at public hearings, submit comments at public meetings

Any written or verbal comments submitted at public hearings or during plan public review periods become part of the written record of the plan's development

Formal engagement is often related to a specific plan or policy

"EVERYDAY" ENGAGEMENT

Attend informational meetings, like open house sessions, forums, or panel discussions

You can visit a meeting one time, take an occasional online survey, or you can find opportunities for sustained involvement and on-going conversations

There are many opportunities for engagement around policies and vision setting to guide the specific plans that follow

Connect with ARC via social media or subscribe to an online newsletter for regular information on latest happenings

More About Public Involvement Opportunities

Where to Share Your Input	Involvement at ARC	Events to Share Your Input
Master/Comprehensive Plan Meetings To find out more about these meetings check your city/county website for information	**Attend ARC Meetings or Events**	**VOTE - in every election!**
City/County Council Meetings To find out more about these meetings check your city/county website for information	**Join ARC Advisory Group**	**Open Houses** Check city/county website and social media for events
Neighborhood Associations Research about your local area to find where these meetings take place and when meetings are taking place	**Sign up for ARC newsletters and follow social media**	**Local Plans** Check city/county website and social media for events and info
	Submit Written or Verbal Comments to ARC	**Surveys/Studies** Check city/county website and social media for events

What is Community Engagement: ARC Community Engagement Values

The Atlanta Regional Commission is committed to "Regional Impact, Local Relevance." Effective community engagement is an essential component of this commitment and of good regional stewardship. ARC defines community engagement as a range of strategic, continuous, and collaborative interactions aimed at building substantive long-term relationships in order to provide objective information, facilitate shared decision-making, and grow collective will to implement those decisions.

Effective community engagement:

- Enhances mutual trust
- Ensures better decisions that more effectively respond to the needs and priorities of the region's residents
- Engages community members and community resources as part of the solution
- Engages the broader diversity of the region – especially people who have not been engaged in the past
- Increases understanding of and support for regional plans, policies and programs

The following principles represent a road map to guide ARC in establishing consistent, effective, and high quality community engagement practices. They also tell the region about what to expect from ARC.

- **Sustained Partnership and Mutual Accountability** Community members have a right and a responsibility to be involved in decisions that affect them. Residents can influence decision-making and receive feedback on how their input was used. The ARC Board and staff serve as responsible stewards of regional resources, working with residents to establish a culture of cooperation, engagement, and accountability.
- **Transparency** Decision-making processes are accessible, open, honest, and understandable. Community members receive the information they need and with enough lead time to participate effectively. Residents can influence decision-making and receive feedback on how their input was used.
- **Inclusiveness and Equity** Dialogue and decision-making processes intentionally identify, reach, and encourage participation of the region in its full diversity. Processes respect a range of values and interests and the knowledge of those involved. Historically excluded individuals and groups are included authentically in processes, activities and decision and policymaking. Potential impacts, including costs and benefits, are identified and distributed fairly. Barriers to participation are identified and efforts are made to ensure participation.
- **Early Involvement** Community engagement is an early and integral part of issue and opportunity identification, concept development, design, and implementation of regional plans, policies, programs, and projects. Community members help shape engagement processes and participate in framing issues.

Continued

- **Quality Process Design and Implementation** Community engagement processes and techniques are well designed to appropriately fit a plan, program, policy, or project. Processes adapt to changing needs and issues as they move forward and include best practices such as deliberative conversations and neutral facilitation.
- **Building Relationships and Regional Capacity** Community engagement processes invest in and develop long-term, collaborative working relationships and learning opportunities with residents, community partners, and other stakeholder organizations.
- **Continuous Improvement** Ensuring meaningful community engagement across the agency includes working together to evaluate our efforts, using what we learn to improve our practice of community engagement, and sharing what we learn.

Based on the City of Portland's Public Involvement Principles (2005 and 2010).

How Does ARC Engage the Region: Our approach to partnerships

In a planning region that encompasses much of northern Georgia, including 20 counties and approximately 5.5 million people, there are immensely diverse opinions and perspectives. The different of viewpoints, visions, and goals can be a challenge for developing regional consensus on key issues, but this same diversity is a valuable asset and a hallmark of our region.

Metro residents value their individual community needs and place a high premium on options for personal lifestyle and community choices. Because of this, it can be challenging to see the interconnections between these local communities and issues of regional importance. In response, ARC, emphasizes "Regional Impact, Local Relevance".

Regional planning must have a core understanding of community input, and proposed solutions should reflect what the community wants and needs. This input also adds value to the development of the plans and enhances the quality of final work products. Therefore, community engagement must leverage work done in adds value to the development of the plans together for collective solutions.

DECIDING ON ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Community engagement is a philosophy and a process that is developed over time and through efforts that demonstrate that ARC cares about making a connection with the community. This cannot be manufactured and there is no one-size-fits-all for regional plans and programs – each activity seeks creative and sustained relationship building.

Robust community engagement often requires utilizing a variety of techniques, and engagement should be an ongoing continuous effort throughout the transportation planning process. While there is no magic formula for what works best in which situation, there are some basic best practices to consider:

Who are we trying to reach?

The Atlanta Region's Plan participation process involves anyone expressing interest in its activities and outcomes; however for planning purposes, three broad audiences are identified within the jurisdictions served by ARC:

- **Policy-making elected/appointed officials** from local, regional, and state jurisdictions; as well as public planning partner staff who prepare jurisdictional plans, provide background information, and advise other public officials;
- **State and local private and non-profit sector leadership** and interested people within special interest groups that consistently engage in issues addressed within The Atlanta Region's Plan; and
- **Individuals or groups** that participate in ARC activities in any number of ways. Participation may be on-going or may be related to a specific project or plan. Individuals or groups can also participate at various levels of commitment, whether it is through serving on a serving on a committee, attending a pop-up open house, or joining an event.

Keep in mind, the importance of partnering with other organizations and agencies to maximize participation, with an emphasis on groups that are typically underrepresented in planning processes.

Communications:

What do they want to know from us?

When reaching out to community members of any nature, from actively involved stakeholders to people who have never heard of the planning agency, it is essential to consider the various specific perspectives. In order to capture an audience's attention, the engagement message should address content that interests the group. Messages and activities should be developed with this perspective in mind.

Because planners are engaged in their subject matter on a daily basis, it is essential to get feedback on communication materials before distribution in order to simplify and update messages in a way that demonstrates why the public should be involved in the planning process.
This can be done via in-person reviews, like interviews and focus groups or via surveys to larger groups of people. Key considerations are: How much background information is necessary is necessary for understanding the issue? Is the information presented and written in a way that is easy to understand? Information should be regularly updated and made readily available to the public.

What do we want to know from them?

- Format of activities
- Key questions to ask
- Timing for asking questions
- Incorporating a feedback loop
- Type of feedback

Activity Selection: What is the best way to exchange this information?

- Format of activities
- Implement a community engagement strategy that incorporates a complementary mix of smaller, community-based forums, large-scale public forums and online opportunities for engagement
- Simplicity
- Transparency: Be accountable to participants by reporting back to them at regular intervals, and provide a means for all interested individuals to track The Atlanta Region's Plan progress
- Reach of perspectives/people
- Knowing what and why
- Incorporating a feedback loop
    - Report back. Be accountable to participants by reporting back to them at regular intervals, and provide a means for all interested individuals to track The Atlanta Region's Plan progress
    - Encourage people to be involved in the full continuum of public involvement opportunities for the lifecycle of a project – including involvement local, regionally, and statewide – as appropriate to their interest and needs

How Do We Do It?

What are your resources?

There are a wide range of engagement techniques available and each requires a range of resources. For example, face-to-face meetings typically require more personnel time and expense, but can also yield a higher level of dialogue. On the other hand, social media outreach is quick, easy, and can have a wide reach, but does not allow for an in-depth conversation. Another consideration is the amount of time available to receive feedback. Is quick, simple feedback enough, or does the question at hand need more in-depth conversation and analysis? When thinking about the appropriate engagement techniques to incorporate into the process, some resources to consider include financial and human capital, the time available for the process overall, and the type of responses that are needed.

What are the goals of engagement?

There is a realization that regional planning depends on a core understanding of community input. A primary objective in gathering community input is to listen and learn from a broad spectrum of the population. Engagement can also provide a number of other functions as well, including education about the planning process and key decisions, sharing of information, and increasing coordination between ARC and other community partners.

Understanding the goals of the outreach can help inform which techniques are most appropriate.

What are the expectations?

It is important to set realistic understanding and expectations about how public input will be used in the regional planning process. Incorporating the results of community input into the final work product not only produces better outcomes, but also helps to build trust in the community that their voices matter and their input does influence the process. Likewise, if there is a popular idea that is not technically sound or cannot be funded with available resources, sharing the reasons why can help keep the community engaged and informed.

How will you evaluate your success?

Knowing which engagement technique works best in a specific situation and learning how to improve the public involvement process is invaluable. Some techniques are inherently easier to evaluate – for example, it is easy to track how many views a website receives or how many surveys are completed. However, part of evaluation also includes understanding the quality of the input received and how effective the strategies employed in reached the intended audiences. Effective engagement is inclusive, making a deliberate effort to reach and include people who are typically harder to reach or have been disenfranchised due to any number of factors, such as socio-economic status, age, race, ethnicity, or location.

Deciding what to measure (some key questions):

Did you provide enough preliminary information?

Did you engage traditionally underserved populations?

Did you reach all people potentially affected by the plan?

Did you learn why people participated or decided not to participate?

Did you understand participants' satisfaction with aspects of the activity and process?

Did you provide for equitable stakeholder participation?

Ways to gather data

Qualitative

- Telephone interviews
- Face-to-face interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys, comment cards, or oral comments
- Event debriefs

Quanitative

- Website and social media metrics
- Participation counts
- Number of comments submitted
- Geographic representation of participants

TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUE	TITLE OF ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUE	STAFF	TIME	FINANCIAL
Face-to-Face	Community Meetings	4	4	3
	Open Houses	4	4	3
	Neighborhood Meetings	3	3	1
	Focus Groups	3	3	1
	Presentation/ Speakers Bureau	1	1	1
	Stakeholder Interviews	4	4	1
Technology	Social Media	2	2	1
	Website	3	4	1
	Online Town Hall Meetings	1	2	1
	Surveys (online or paper)	1	2	1

How Do We Do It?

FACE-TO-FACE

In general, face-to-face engagement offers the highest level of dialogue for obvious reasons – it is based on conversation! There are various types of face-to-face meetings, such as those shown below.

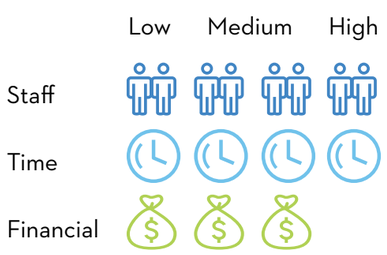
COMMUNITY MEETINGS

A community meeting can be formatted in many ways and may or may not include a formal presentation, break-out groups, and interactive exercises.

Points to Consider:

- Fosters the sharing of consistent information (i.e., through a presentation)
- Allows for conversations amongst community members and with staff
- Can be held at an easily accessible location
- Time-specific, so may not fit all schedules
- If not formatted carefully, can allow dominant voices to control
- May not engage those less comfortable with speaking in a group

Resource Needs:



Evaluation Techniques:

- Number of attendees
- Demographics of attendees
- Meeting Summary
- Meeting attendee evaluation/survey

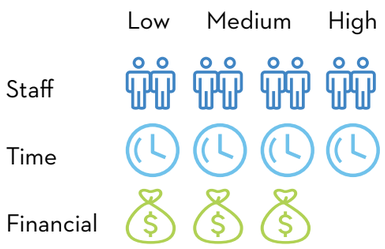
OPEN HOUSES

An open house is like a community meeting, but is a 'drop-in' format so people can attend according to what is most convenient for their schedule. These can be held as a formal, stand-alone event, or more casually as a 'pop-up' event in a public location or as part of another event.

Points to Consider:

- Fosters the sharing of consistent information (i.e., through displays)
- Allows for conversations amongst community members and with staff
- Can be held at an easily accessible location
- Although somewhat time/date-specific, allows for more flexibilities for attendees
- Allows attendees to stay for the length of time desired, rather than a set meeting schedule
- Date and somewhat time-specific, so may not fit all schedules
- May not engage those less comfortable in speaking in a group

Resource Needs:



Evaluation Techniques:

- Number of attendees
- Demographics of attendees
- Meeting Summary
- Meeting attendee evaluation/survey

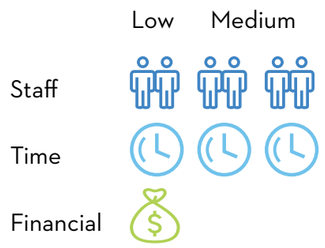
NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

Since neighborhood meetings are typically held on a regular basis, they can provide an easy way to fit into an existing outreach mechanism.

Points to Consider:

- Allows for conversations between community members and with staff
- Meets people where they are
- Allows for conversation around issues most important to each neighborhood
- Date and somewhat time-specific, so may not fit all schedules
- May not engage those less comfortable in speaking in a group

Resource Needs:



Evaluation Techniques:

- Number of attendees
- Demographics of attendees
- Meeting Summary

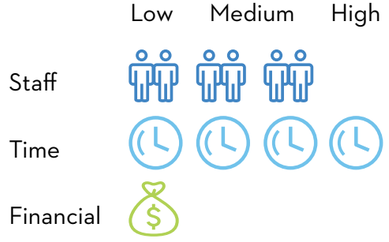
FOCUS GROUPS

A focus group can be established around a variety of variables – business, key issue interests, demographics (such as age, ethnicity, etc.). Focus groups can be especially useful in ensuring that feedback is gathered from people who may be less likely to participate in more traditional public engagement methods.

Points to Consider:

- Allows for conversations amongst peers and with staff
- Ensures input from a specific perspective
- Allows for conversation around issues most important to the particular focus group
- Date and time-specific, so may not fit all schedules, although focus groups can usually work together to find a time that maximizes participation
- May not engage those less comfortable in speaking in a group

Resource Needs:



Evaluation Techniques:

- Number of attendees
- Demographics of attendees
- Meeting Summary
- Meeting attendee evaluation/survey

PRESENTATIONS / SPEAKERS BUREAU

One of the benefits of community engagement is sharing information and educating the community so they are better equipped to get involved in the process. Establishing set presentations can allow ARC staff to easily plug into existing social networks, such as civic groups, religious organizations, advocacy groups, etc.

Points to Consider:

- Fosters the sharing of consistent information (i.e., through a presentation)
- Can reach a wide range of audiences
- Provides a way to respond quickly and efficiently to requests for information
- More effective for sharing information than receiving feedback
- Reaches a limited audience

Can be staff intensive if trying to reach a fairly large group

Resource Needs:

Evaluation Techniques:

- Number of attendees
- Demographics of attendees

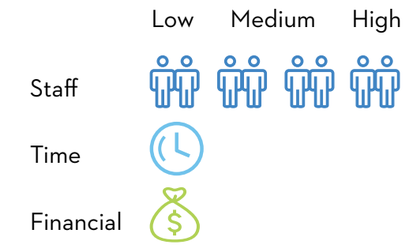
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

One-on-one stakeholder interviews or small group meetings can allow staff to ask specific questions. These are typically informal and provide a higher comfort level for those who are not comfortable speaking in a large group.

Points to Consider:

- Allows for in-depth conversations and specific questions
- Highly personal
- Can establish rapport and sense of trust
- Limited only to those in the interview

Resource Needs:



Evaluation Techniques:

- Interview Summary
- Demographics of attendees

How Do We Do It?

TECHNOLOGY

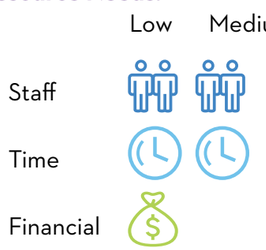
SOCIAL MEDIA

A good social media campaign should be actively managed, not just left to the whims of the users. Engaging across various social media platforms can increase the diversity of the audience reached.

Points to Consider:

- Ability to reach a very wide audience
- Easy for people to share with friends and colleagues
- Good for sharing quick information
- Doesn't allow for face-to-face conversation
- Can lead to the spread of misinformation
- Not well-suited for complex issues

Resource Needs:



Evaluation Techniques:

- Number of respondents (tweets, posts, likes, etc.)
- Demographics of survey respondents

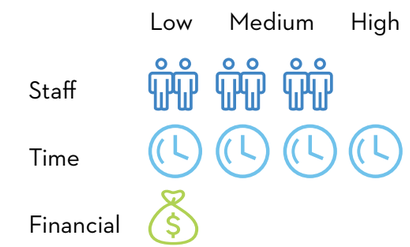
WEBSITE

Just as social media and online surveys build upon the inclusion of technology in our everyday lives, other online platforms can maximize engagement by allowing people to access information at their convenience. Today, a website is an absolute must. Websites allow people to access information and can also incorporate feedback loops, such as online surveys and social media channels.

Points to Consider:

- Ability to reach a very wide audience
- Easy for people to share with friends and colleagues
- Good for sharing quick information
- Doesn't allow for face-to-face conversation
- Limits input; more for information sharing

Resource Needs:



Evaluation Techniques:

- Number of site visits

ONLINE TOWN HALLS

A hybrid between the traditional community meetings and social media, online town halls provide the value of a community meeting with the convenience of participating from the comfort of your own home or office space. Various platforms can support an online town hall. For example, Facebook Live allows a presenter to speak and the viewers to post comments, questions, or share emojis in response to specific points.

Points to Consider:

- Ability to reach a very wide audience
- Easy for people to share with friends and colleagues
- Good for sharing quick information
- Limited to those with high-speed internet access
- Allows limited input; more for information sharing

Resource Needs:

Evaluation Techniques:

- Number of participants
- Quality of conversation

SURVEYS

Surveys are a tried and true way to receive feedback and opinions on a wide array of issues. They should be thoughtfully designed to ensure that questions are clear, concise, and unbiased. It can also be helpful to share the expected amount of time a survey will take to complete.

Typically, surveys are offered online. Paper copies can also be provided in public locations, such as city halls, schools, and libraries. However, someone then must input all that data manually!

In some instances, a scientific survey is warranted to ensure a diverse cross-section of the population is reached. In the past, these surveys were often conducted by phone. As more people chose to abandon a home landline and move to cell phones only, this becomes more of a challenge. However, technology is quickly filling that gap through analytics.

Points to Consider:

- Ability to reach a very wide audience
- Consistency in questions asked
- Easy for people to share with friends and colleagues
- Doesn't allow for face-to-face conversation
- Limited in allowing people to raise questions or comments not already mentioned in the survey

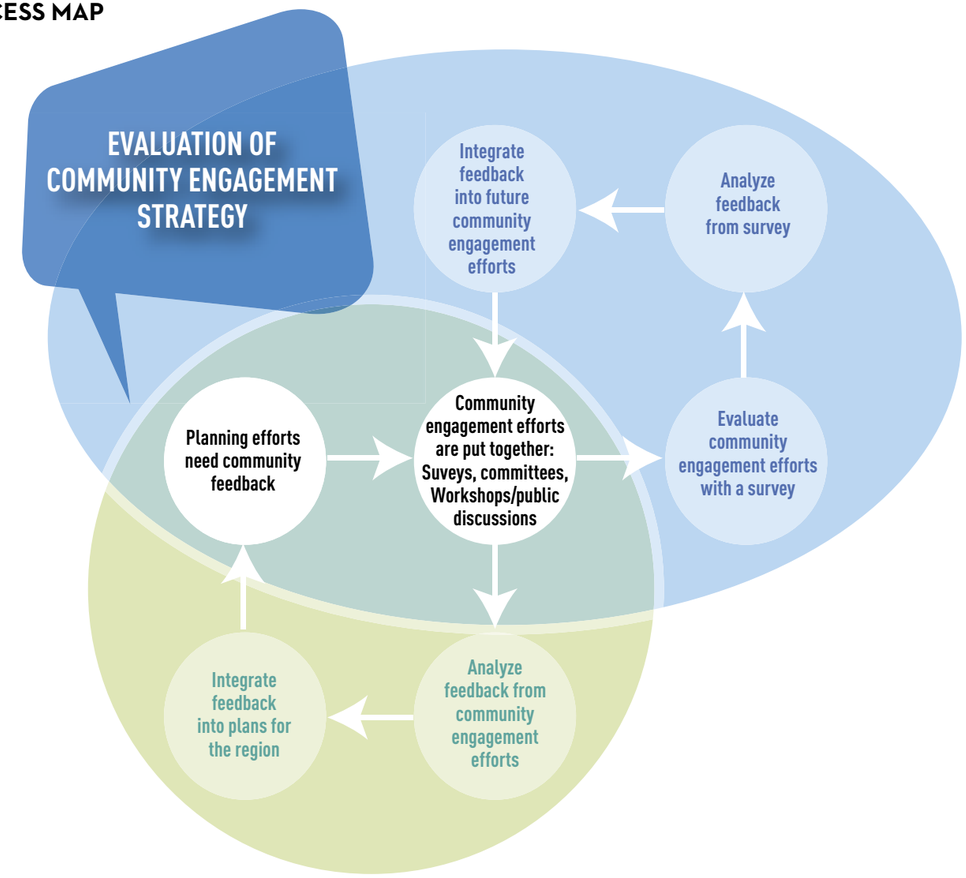
Resource Needs:

	Low	Medium	High
Staff			
Time			
Financial			

Evaluation Techniques:

- Summary and analysis of data
- Number of survey respondents
- Demographics of survey respondents

PROCESS MAP



EXPLANATION OF PROCESS MAP:

When a project or plan needs to be evaluated, community engagement is a part of that plan. On the previous page is the process map for how community engagement is used to evaluate a plan and then how that feedback from community engagement can be incorporated moving forward.

This process map was created with the purpose to show that evaluations should be informing the work that is done in the realm of community engagement and planning. Each process circles back to how community engagement or plans can be changed or modified based on the feedback that is collected. When it comes to specifically integrating the feedback from the community, the feedback itself often determines who should use it and for what.

The Blue Circle

Step 1: The beginning of the process starts with a plan or project

Step 2: Community engagement efforts are created to review the plan or project and to help inform citizens about the process.

Step 3: The community engagement efforts are analyzed to understand the public's feedback

Step 4: A report is written about themes of the feedback and used to guide changes where necessary.

Then the process starts over again with a new plan or project that needs community input.

The Red Circle

Step 1: The beginning of the process starts with a plan or project

Step 2: Community engagement efforts are created to review the plan or project and to help inform citizens about the process.

Step 3: The community engagement effort, whether it is a survey, public forum/work shop, or committee, then is evaluated using a survey**(These are included in this document)

Step 4: A report is written based on the feedback that is gathered from each community engagement activity.

Step 5: The report is used to help make changes to any future community engagement efforts. Each report has to be analyzed to understand how to incorporate the feedback into future efforts and documented as to how efforts. Changes to the plan are documented for future reference.

DETERMINE TIMELINE

The first step in the process is realizing that a plan is needed for community engagement. The second is to determine the best course of engagement and create a plan (surveys, committees, or public discussions or workshops). Finally, the feedback from those community engagement efforts is analyzed and used to make changes for the future.

Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures ARC uses for community engagement are determined by the rules and regulations set forth in federal legislation and policy. A list of the federal guidance is included in this section. But community engagement is more than just a requirement. For ARC, it is a critical element of our planning process. Therefore, ARC has a Policy for Public Input adopted by the ARC Board.

Community Engagement Process

Community engagement occurs continuously, not just around a planning process. In this way, relationships are built over time and knowledge is current and useful to all concerned. The following components are essential steps in public involvement. These components do not represent all of the possibilities for outreach and discussion – only the major components.

- Public dialogue about the needs in the community
- Public consideration and discussion of a proposed project
- Review and comment on a proposed project
- Public input on regional policies, goals and strategies that will determine how the project will look in the future
- Public review of a plan's technical framework during its development
- Public review of testing results for financial constraints and air quality conformity to federal and state requirements
- Public review of draft plan
- Feedback to public on how their input influenced the planning effort
- Plan presented to ARC committees for consideration and adoption with public comment period
- Formal public hearing on major plan changes
- Plan is adopted by governmental agencies and projects within the plan are then available for funding

Policies and Procedures

ARC's Policy for Resident Input

Public Comment at ARC's Regularly Scheduled Board andPolicy Committee Meetings

ARC welcomes advice, suggestions and ideas about regional issues from interested citizens and groups. There are many opportunities and levels of involvement for citizens related to public policy development. ARC encourages citizens to be involved throughout the decision-making process, including local government levels where early stages of policy formation often occur. The ARC Board and its policy committees have regularly scheduled meetings. Each of these meetings is open to the public and includes an opportunity for citizen input as noted on the meeting agenda. The following policy describes what the public can expect in terms of notification, agendas, public comment procedures, presentation materials, and documentation of public comment. All meetings are conducted pursuant to the Georgia Open Meetings Laws.

Public Notification

Public notification of ARC Board meetings is provided in advance of the meeting. ARC publishes annual year-at-a-glance and monthly month-at-a-glance calendars of planned meeting dates and keeps these documents current throughout the year. The meetings-at-a-glance materials are emailed to ARC board members and local jurisdictions as well as posted on ARC's website at https://atlantaregional.org/arc-board-and-committees/.

The annual calendar of meetings remains fairly constant from year-to-year. The Board meeting is scheduled at 1:00 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month, January through October, and on the first Wednesday in December. Dates and times of meetings are also included in each Board meeting agenda.

Policy committee meeting calendar details are posted on each committee page on the ARC web site, and changes that occur to the planned meeting schedule are posted on these same pages at least one week in advance of the meeting unless emergency conditions dictate otherwise.

Agendas

Per ARC Bylaws, board meeting agendas are mailed or sent electronically to board members and are posted on ARC's website at least seven days in advance of all regularly scheduled meetings. Changes to the agenda may be made up to the day of the meeting; however, no major action or decision items may be added to the agenda within three days of the meeting. If action or decision items are added after the agenda packet is sent, all Board members are notified of the changes at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Items added within three days of the meeting must be for discussion purposes only. The board must declare an emergency to make exceptions to these provisions.

Policy committee agendas are also mailed or sent electronically to committee members and posted on the website at least seven days in advance of meetings.

Public Comment

A public comment period is part of each meeting of the Board and policy committees. Public comment can lead to board discussion, which is often incorporated into recommendations and decisions. To make a public comment, it is necessary to sign in during the 30 minutes prior to the start of the meetings. Sign-in cards will be available at each meeting.

Prior to the ARC Board meeting, commenters are encouraged to provide written comment, via fax, e-mail, or U.S. mail addressed to the ARC Office of the Executive Director, for distribution to board members as part of their agenda packet. Prior notification of intent to request to speak is also encouraged and should be directed to the ARC Office of the Executive Director, preferably no fewer than five days before the meeting. The ARC Board meetings are open to the public and time is allowed for the public to ask questions or offer comments. Ten (10) minutes at the beginning of the Board meeting are designated for public comments without obtaining a vote of the board, based on the commenter signing up to speak prior to the meeting. Each speaker is allotted two minutes for their comments.

This time allotment and the overall time allowed for public comment can be modified by the ARC Board Chair or a majority vote of the Commission members present. If unable to speak to the Board due to time restrictions, commenters are encouraged to provide their comments in writing.

ARC policy committees serve as the working committees of the ARC Board. These groups meet to consider specific subjects required by regulation, referred to them by staff, the Commission or initiated by the committee itself. All policy committee meetings are open to the public and time is allowed for the public to ask questions or offer comments. Ten (10) minutes at the beginning of each committee meeting are designated for the public to address the committee on any agenda item without obtaining a vote of the committee. If unable to speak to the committee due to time restrictions, commenters are encouraged to provide their comments in writing. Any change to the designated time allotment requires committee discussion and action.

When public comments are heard by the policy committees, a summary of public comments presented to a committee will be made part of the committee meeting notes. At the discretion of the committee chair, a brief verbal summary of such comments will be brought to the Board's attention.

Sometimes regulatory requirements prescribe official public review and comment periods where public input is solicited on plan or policy documents. In these instances, ARC will host official public review and comment periods to obtain input on draft plans and programs.

When the planning process requires a formal public hearing, one of the hearings will be held before the pertinent policy committee or full Board at the beginning of their regularly scheduled meeting(s).

Comments are generally accepted either in writing during the comment period or orally at public hearing(s). In instances when an official public review and comment period is held, the full Board and policy committee, as appropriate, will be given the opportunity to discuss the comments received prior to making any decisions or voting to adopt the plan or policy.

Policies and Procedures

Presentation Materials

ARC uses presentation materials, such as maps, charts, graphs, illustrations, PowerPoint slides, and videos to explain data and concepts at Board meetings. ARC may also use handouts and posters to display visual information. The ARC boardroom is equipped with projectors, and sound systems for displaying visual and audio information, including the microphone system used to make discussions during the meeting clearly audible. Materials are available electronically during each meeting and attendees are encouraged to use their personal digital assistant (PDAs) to access materials during the meeting.

Documentation and Posting of Information

A summary of ARC Board meeting actions is prepared and posted on the ARC website, www.atlantaregional.org/about-us/board--committees/arc-board, within two business days of the meeting. A draft final meeting summary, based on details obtained from court reporter transcripts, is posted approximately three weeks after the meeting, at the same time the agenda for the next meeting is posted. The meeting summary is adopted by the Board at their next meeting. This final summary contains an overview of oral comments received from the public. Any written public comments received prior to the ARC Board meeting will be posted on the ARC website with the two day summary.

There are specific procedures for public comments received during regulated planning processes. These comments are documented and shared with the policy committee and posted on the ARC website prior to adoption of the plan or policy. In many cases, substantial comments are included within the plan itself.

For committee meeting schedules, please go to the ARC website at www.atlantaregional.org or call the ARC offices at 404.463.3100.

Environmental Justice and Social Equity Considerations

ARC considers social equity environmental justice principles throughout planning and decision-making processes. This information is critical during the development of programs, policies, and activities, using the principles of federal statutes, regulations and guidance that address or affect infrastructure planning and decision-making; social, economic, or environmental matters; public health; and public involvement. Environmental justice considerations apply to planning and programming activities, and early planning activities are a critical means to avoid disproportionately high and adverse effects in future programs, policies, and activities. Activities with the potential to have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on human health or the environment will include explicit consideration of the effects on minority populations and low-income populations. ARC procedures provide meaningful opportunities for community engagement and access to public information by members of minority populations and low-income populations during the planning and development of programs, policies, and activities. This information will address the concerns of minority and low-income populations regarding the health and environmental impacts of any planning proposals. ARC provides for considerable participation activity towards this environmental justice goal. A major component is opportunity, both formal and informal, for minority and low-income residents to share their ideas and concerns through-

and decision-making process. The utilization of a range of formats for community engagement includes planning teams, advisory groups, special surveys and studies, and strategic partnerships with community-based organizations. All planning work (whether the components of the plans themselves or the engagement processes employed to develop plans) includes provision for the following:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, caused by our programs, policies or activities on minority populations and low-income populations.
- To ensure the full and fair participation of all potentially affected communities in the decision-making processes.
- To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.
- To make sure information and locations for ARC-sponsored meetings meet ADA accessibility requirements.

Equitable Target Areas (ETAs)

In early 2011, ARC developed the Equitable Target Area (ETA) Index to identify environmental justice communities in the Atlanta region. This index is utilized to measure the impacts of plan investments and programs on ETA communities. The ETA index can be further employed for project prioritization and evaluation, resource allocation, and decision-making at the regional and local levels. ETA communities serve as the starting point for environmental justice engagement. ARC will strive to understand the ETA communities in a deeper way through community interaction along with community organizations and seeks to expand its index to additional parameters to facilitate better policy decisions.

Specific Engagement Assurances related to Social Equity Utilizing the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan and the ETA Index, the following are specific ways in which ARC will engage environmental justice communities:

- Ascertain geography of environmental justice populations and design outreach activities to represent a diversity of communities.
- Develop relationships within populations through grassroots organizations to gain a direct understanding behind the data.
- Utilize the types of activities that most relate to population culture and characteristics to make sure the participants obtain value for their time and input.
- Provide communities information that is accessible and relatable to their lives and needs to underpin the dialogue and feedback from the community.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

In keeping with the above principles of social equity and consistent with Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," ARC has developed a plan to assist persons with limited English skills so that they will not be disadvantaged in

the engagement process. Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type of service, benefit or encounter. ARC seeks to remove communication barriers and to make a targeted effort to overcome linguistic, institutional, cultural, economic, historical, or other barriers that may prevent minority and low-income persons and populations from effectively participating in a decision-making process. As a recipient of federal funding, ARC has taken a broad range of steps to ensure meaningful access to the planning process, as well as to the information and services it provides. The LEP plan ensures that where substantial numbers of residents of the Atlanta region live who do not speak or read English proficiently, these LEP individuals will have access to planning processes and published information. And, that the production of multilingual publications and documents and/or interpretation at meetings/ events will be provided to the degree that funding permits. The LEP plan is located on the ARC website.

Americans with Disabilities

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), ARC strives to provide reasonable accommodations and services for persons who require special assistance to participate in its engagement activities in the community. Services are available, with a reasonable notice for requests, for persons with hearing or speech loss, who have a physical disability, who are visually disabled, or reading disabled. Access to participation is fundamental to the outcomes stated in this plan.

Federal Guidance for Public Input

Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act

This important legislation was signed into law on December 4, 2015. As stated by FHWA's website, "It is the first law enacted in over ten years that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation, meaning States and local governments can move forward with critical transportation projects, like new highways and transit lines, with the confidence that they will have a Federal partner over the long term."

As with previous federal legislation, public involvement remains a high priority. The rules for public engagement are provided in CFR 450.316 Interested parties, participation, and consultation, as shown below. MAKES NO SENSE

(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing individuals, 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 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 MPO shall develop the participation plan 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 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;

(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 that 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, subpart A), 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, tourism, natural disaster risk reduction, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, the MPO(s) shall develop the metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs 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. 201-204.

(c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO(s) 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(s) 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.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs

"Title VI prohibits exclusion from participation in, denial of benefits of, and discrimination under federally assisted programs on grounds of race, color, or national origin." (Pub. L. 88-352) (Title VI) (42 USC 2000)

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), as a federal grant recipient, conforms to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its amendments. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds 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. Presidential Executive Order 12898 addresses environmental justice in minority and low-income populations. Presidential Executive Order 13166 addresses services to those individuals with limited English proficiency.

ARC is committed to enforcing the provisions of Title VI and to taking positive and realistic affirmative steps to ensure the protection of rights and opportunities for all persons affected by its programs. The Title VI Program and Plan is available on ARC's website.

In addition to Title VI, there are other nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protection. These statutes include the following: Section 162 (a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 USC 324) (sex), Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (age), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (disability). Taken together, these requirements define an over-arching Title VI / Nondiscrimination Program. It is important to also understand that Title VI and the additional nondiscrimination requirements are applicable to federal programs in addition to programs receiving federal financial assistance due to the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

CHAPTER 126 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The Congress finds that:

(1) physical or mental disabilities in no way diminish a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of society, yet many people with physical or mental disabilities have been precluded from doing

so because of discrimination; others who have a record of a disability or are regarded as having a disability also have been subjected to discrimination;

(2) historically, society has tended to isolate and segregate individuals with disabilities, and, despite some improvements, such forms of discrimination against individuals with disabilities continue to be a serious and pervasive social problem;

(3) discrimination against individuals with disabilities persists in such critical areas as employment, housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, communication, recreation, institutionalization, health services, voting, and access to public services;

(4) unlike individuals who have experienced discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, or age, individuals who have experienced discrimination on the basis of disability have often had no legal recourse to redress such discrimination;

(5) individuals with disabilities continually encounter various forms of discrimination, including outright intentional exclusion, the discriminatory effects of architectural, transportation, and communication barriers, overprotective rules and policies, failure to make modifications to existing facilities and practices, exclusionary qualification standards and criteria, segregation, and relegation to lesser services, programs, activities, benefits, jobs, or other opportunities;

(6) census data, national polls, and other studies have documented that people with disabilities, as a group, occupy an inferior status in our society, and are severely disadvantaged socially, vocationally, economically, and educationally;

(7) the Nation's proper goals regarding individuals with disabilities are to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for such individuals; and

(8) the continuing existence of unfair and unnecessary discrimination and prejudice denies people with disabilities the opportunity to compete on an equal basis and to pursue those opportunities for which our free society is justifiably famous, and costs the United States billions of dollars in unnecessary expenses resulting from dependency and nonproductively. No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, 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 such entity.

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations

This order was signed by President Clinton in 1994 and reinforced the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights of 1964 that focused federal attention on the environmental and human health conditions in minority and low-income communities:
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.

Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency

Executive Order 13166 was created 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 …" Federal agencies were directed to provide guidance and technical assistance to recipients of federal funds

as to how they can provide meaningful access to limited English proficient users of federal programs. Consistent with Executive Order 13166 and U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) guidance, ARC has developed a Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP) in order to ensure meaningful input opportunities for persons with limited English proficiency. ARC's LEP plan is available on the agency's website.

ARC's Public Participation Procedures:
Administrative Modification and Amendment Process

ARC maintains a regular update schedule for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) / Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). With this goal in mind, ARC works with its planning partners to accommodate revisions to the TIP/RTP as expeditiously as possible within the limits imposed by federal guidelines and regulations. The TIP/RTP revision process should be considered a continual process, with requests accepted at any time and held for processing at the next scheduled opportunity.
There are two types of revisions: administrative modifications and amendments. Administrative modifications are minor routine changes that occur during the project development process and are unlikely to be controversial in nature. Amendments are more significant changes that impact air quality conformity and fiscal constraint. Therefore, they are processed with a higher degree of formality. Depending on the classification assigned to the change request, the timing, public participation, and approval processes can vary substantially.

Administrative Modifications

Administrative modifications to the TIP are processed by staff with no official action required by the ARC Board or its subcommittees. Advance disclosures of the proposed changes will be coordinated with vested stakeholders. ARC will release a list of proposed changes within three weeks following the deadline defined for that submittal cycle. The list of the changes along with updated TIP and RTP project lists will be published on the TIP website within one week of being processed. Fact sheets will be available three weeks after processing. Administrative modifications are reviewed and processed in accordance with these procedures, provided that:

- The modification does not affect the air quality conformity determination for the Atlanta nonattainment area.
- It does not impact financial constraint.
- It does not require public review and comment.

Occasionally, administrative modifications may be deemed time-sensitive and unable to be postponed until the next scheduled modification opportunity. At the request of the project sponsor, ARC staff reviews the proposed change to determine eligibility of a special administrative modification for processing. Once the change has been reviewed, the special administrative modification is processed. An email describing the change is sent to partner agencies and the project sponsor. A copy of the page of which the project appears in the updated RTP/TIP is attached to the email. An updated project list with the processed change may be immediately posted to the ARC website upon distribution of the notification of the special administrative modification.
In other cases, the change does not appear in the TIP project list until the next administrative modification opportunity.

Typical administrative modifications include:

- Revising a project description without changing the overall project scope and intent (e.g., less than 10% total change in centerline miles of an exempt project), conflicting with the environmental document (e.g., number of lanes, distance, description/title of project), or changing the conformity finding. Projects where locations are moved to a new area or corridor will be considered a scope change and processed as an amendment.
- Splitting or combining projects if there are no changes to the original termini points and the overall scope of the phased or consolidated project(s) remain consistent and do not impact air quality conformity.
- Changing from one federal funding category to another federal funding category or from a federal fund category to a state or local fund source.
- Making routine changes in lump sum allocations for transit programs.
- Increasing the federal share of existing project phases by less than $2 million or less than 20% of the single-phase amount to be authorized. If there are more than one phase types programmed, the aggregate of the federal amount will be considered and calculated to determine eligibility of this threshold. Discretionary award funded phases are an exception as the federal share is not typically increased.
    - If the TIP amount is $10,000,000 or less, the cost may be increased up to $2,000,000.
    - If the TIP amount is greater than $10,000,000, the cost may be increased by a maximum of 20%. However, projects that may be controversial will be further reviewed and required to be handled via amendment regardless of the cost increase amount.
- Delaying or advancing one or more phases of a project within the timeframe of the TIP, contingent on the change having no impact on the model network year for projects in the air quality conformity analysis.
- Breaking out and funding projects from lump sum programs, provided the projects are consistent with policies and priority networks/areas associated with those programs and do not impact the air quality conformity analysis. Projects must also have had an appropriate level of advanced review by policy committees responsible for approving the TIP.
- Addition of new lump sum line items without impacting fiscal constraint.
- Programming of an additional Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase without impacting fiscal constraint where a previously authorized PE phase is older than seven years old.
- Programming of new federal discretionary funds. Competitive grant programs, selected by USDOT, that give projects additional funding opportunities apart from traditional funding sources as funds must be reflected in the TIP before they can be obligated.

Policies and Procedures

Amendments

Amendments affect the TIP/RTP conformity determination due to a scope change that alters the travel demand modeling and air quality conformity analysis and/or impacts fiscal constraint through cost adjustments, requiring the opportunity for formal review and comment. ARC attempts to minimize the number and scale of amendments made outside the context of a full TIP/RTP update due to the length of time and amount of effort involved. ARC will work with sponsors on a case-by-case basis to determine the most appropriate method in which to handle change requests.

Typical amendments include:

- Adding or deleting a federally-funded or regionally-significant project.
- Adding a new federally-funded phase to a project, excluding the addition of lump sum program line items. Exceptions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Advancement of a phase from Long Range into the TIP period or shifting federally funded phases in or out of the TIP period if the model network year is impacted and/or impacts fiscal constraint.
- Increasing the cost of existing project phases in excess of the thresholds described in the Administrative Modification section.
- Making a major change to the magnitude of the scope of work to an existing project such as altering the original intent of the project.

Unlike administrative modifications, TIP/RTP amendments must undergo a required public involvement process and be formally approved through the ARC committee structure. GRTA (acting as signatory for the Governor of Georgia) approves the TIP and USDOT must make a conformity determination. A formal comment period is required to process amendments and participation procedures will vary as to the content of the amendment. ARC staff will make this determination based on the project change and its impact on the planning process. At all times, however, the interested public, policy makers and agency partners may obtain the full extent of information about each project change as well as engage the project sponsor or ARC staff.

The following public participation process will be provided:

- Full advance disclosure of the proposed changes, via appropriate communication channels, to all agencies and the interested public concerning affected projects. Those channels will include announcements at ARC transportation committee meetings, on ARC transportation website pages, emails to ARC distribution lists, and through other media as appropriate, including ARC newsletters and social media.
- Formal notification of amendments will be published in the Fulton County Daily Report.
- Additional notification of amendments will be made via inclusion in Spanish language publications, such as Mundo Hispanico, and other methods as appropriate.
- Disclosure of proposed changes will include, at a minimum: current status of project, extent of proposed change, and the nature of the proposed change.

Policies and Procedures

- ARC consults with the Interagency Consultation group by providing a project list of the proposed amendment. Transportation partners are then provided with the list of all amendments to be considered.
- Public review periods for amendments will be at a minimum of 10 calendar days to a maximum of 30 days, depending on the nature of the amendment and its impact. The length of the comment period will also consider the scheduled meetings of the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) and the Transportation and Air Quality Committee (TAQC). All amendments requiring a technical evaluation for conformity will have at least 15 and up to 30-day comment period.
- For all amendments deemed controversial in nature, there will be thorough participation opportunities to hear from the public and agencies regarding their views on the proposed changes. Determination of what is considered controversial will be based substantially on direct communication by ARC staff with other stakeholder agencies, even if those agencies are not the official sponsor of record, or in consultation with the members of the TCC.
- All comments received on amendments will be addressed with the project sponsor and other interested parties and reported to the public as well as the approving transportation committees as to content and resolution.
- Comments will be considered and addressed prior to ARC's approval vote.
- There will be presentations to the TCC and TAQC outlining proposed changes.
- Amendment changes will be considered by and approvals are required from the TCC and the TAQC, which serves as the MPO Policy Board.
- Upon TAQC approval, the amendments will be brought before the GRTA Board for approval on behalf of the Governor of the State of Georgia.
- Regardless of the character of the amendment, a conformity determination will be required from USDOT in consultation with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA).
- Upon GRTA Board approval and receipt of a conformity determination from USDOT, the TIP, as amended, will be incorporated into the Statewide TIP by GDOT.

QUICK VIEW

Implementation of procedures related to these guidelines for ARC's planning and participation processes in accordance wtih polices, include:

- Public notice of review and comment period through a legal organ, the ARC website, media advisories, and extensive mailing list;
- Reasonable opportunity for review and comment inclusive of a 10 to 30-day review and comment period, depending upon the nature of the amendment and comment period;
- Comment documentation and distribution to policy makers and the general public;
- Opportunities for citizens to participate through focus groups, listening sessions, task forces, and planning teams;
- A formal ARC committee structure for approvals and recommendations; Transportation Coordinating Committee, Transportation and Air Quality Committee, and ARC Board;
- Opportunities for oral and written comment by email, survey responses, fax, phone calls, regular mail, telephone conversation, public hearings, or face-to-face conversations; and,
- A participation evaluation process to assess the effectiveness of public outreach activities.

Atlanta Regional Commission

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