



## Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan (June 2019) – Update Process

### Appendix

As part of a continuous effort to increase public involvement and general outreach in the transportation planning process, the Atlanta Regional Commission developed an update to the *Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan* (adopted June 2019). The Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan serves the following three purposes: 1) as a regional planning community engagement guide for the public; 2) as the official participation policy for transportation planning for ARC; and 3) as an ARC response to the U.S. Department of Transportation directive to develop a participation plan for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). (23 CFR § 450.316)

This plan has been redesigned into a series of modules with simplified, visually appealing graphics to illustrate the transportation planning process. The primary purpose of the proposed changes is to: 1) reflect FAST Act planning language, 2) ensure consistency between MPO and state STIP definitions for TIP amendments and administrative modifications, and 3) provide a refreshed community-based plan exemplifying best state of practice in community engagement.

ARC began work to update this plan in 2017, first working with a team to identify necessary updates to the plan. Then after producing early draft documents, ARC coordinate a series of stakeholder focus groups in 2018 to receive additional feedback and workshop the documents. Updates and design edits were then made. Once in a polished draft form, ARC took the document before several more audiences and shared it extensively in digital form, while also hosting a 45-day public review.

### Engagement Plan

Identify	Who are the affected public & stakeholders & where are they located?	ARC Board & Committees	ARC Advisory Groups Partner agencies	ARC staff “general public” People who come into regular contact with ARC neighborhood/civic groups
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	How will we identify & target the affected public & stakeholders?	Discuss with ARC TAMG staff	Input from TEAG	Input from CLC
	How will we ensure we are reaching all affected populations, including traditionally underserved communities?	Discussion with TEAG	Do we establish some type of metric around this?	How will we know who we are missing?
Invite	What notification methods should we use?	Email invite to join a focus group (do these need to be target or open for any mix?)	Email send to review document	Email later sent with final document
	How do we involve stakeholders in each step of the process?	Get a small team to help identify and/or critique outreach plan	Report back to a small team of advisors about progress	
	How might characteristics of each stakeholder group and the affected public influence our outreach strategies?	Need to have targeted focus groups: -MPO guide: stakeholders, a TCC member & an advisory/public group -Residents guide: ARC staff, advisory/public group from TEAG, from TFA, from other? -CE Procedures: Liz, ARC TAMG staff	The “ask” for review may be more specific depending on group. Key stakeholders will need more pointed questions, while the general audience can have a broader question in addition to pointed (ie. What else would you like to see? Does this contribute to a stronger understanding?)	
Inform	What outreach methods should be used?	Small focus groups	Potentially an online survey during the final review, just before public comment	Extensive digital sharing; in-person presentations

	Should we employ different types of outreach depending on the types of stakeholders and the affected public?	Focus groups for key groups identified	Online for general	
	How will we solicit input on our public involvement plan?	Specific questions for focus groups	Streamlined questions for online survey	
	How will we solicit input on the various scenarios & potential recommendations?			
	What are the best ways to present recommendations for feedback?	General summary as well as specific points made – grouped by module		
Involve	What input & feedback are we looking for?	Does this read clearly?  Any unnecessary jargon?	What is missing that you still have questions about?	Did this increase your understanding of regional transportation planning?
		Background info for discussion	Purpose of this plan; Key barriers/challenges we attempt to address; Goals of plan	In what way is this plan different/same as before?
	What methods can we use to gather information?	See above		
	How should our outreach be structured?	Timeline for focus groups	Timeline for survey	
	How will we use stakeholder input & feedback?	To edit, add to, and change document	To understand how to distribute the final document	
Improve	How can we use stakeholder feedback to improve the public outreach plan?			

	How will we identify success?	Measure who, how many, and what contributions to the process, as well as outreach strategy(marketing)		
	How do we communicate the public involvement plan and move in to the next phase of the process?	<u>Phase one:</u> create draft plan <u>Phase two:</u> focus groups & targeted outreach <u>Phase three:</u> Synthesize feedback and refine plan, promote review of plan in person and digital	<u>Phase four:</u> public review period & extensive outreach <u>Phase five:</u> plan adoption <u>Phase six:</u> plan distribution	

### Update Timeline

<b>Phase one:</b>	Create draft plan	Review past documents and evaluations of previous community engagement; review guides and best practices nationally; create a vision for the plan; identify key elements to include	March – December 2017
<b>Phase two:</b>	Host focus groups and conduct targeted engagement	Create facilitators guide; identify necessary background info, key questions for input; identify key stakeholder groups; develop schedule for meetings; organize and host focus groups Groups: TAMG, CLC, TEAG, CEN	January - May 2018
<b>Phase three:</b>	Synthesize feedback and refine plan, promote review of plan in person and digital	Synthesize plan feedback; edit plan accordingly, redesign plan with updates; promote plan via stakeholder presentations and extensive digital outreach	May 2018 – May 2019
<b>Phase four:</b>	Public review period		April – June 2019
<b>Phase five:</b>	Plan adoption		June 2019
<b>Phase six:</b>	Plan distribution & education		June 2019 & on

## **ARC's Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan** **Stakeholder Focus Group/Facilitators Guide**

### **What is a MPO public participation plan, as defined by the FAST Act?**

FAST ACT requirement – “to develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing ... interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.”

“developed in consultation with all interested parties and share 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 plans 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 reasonable have foreseen form the public involvement efforts;
- ix. Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation process; and
- x. Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.”

### **How is this updated version of ARC's Transportation Community Engagement Plan different than before?**

1. This plan focuses explicitly on ARC's transportation planning focus. The previous plan, updated in 2014, was inclusive of all agency focus areas. This was left out to allow for the development of an agency-wide community engagement plan, serving audiences beyond transportation planning.
2. This updated plan is broken into a series of modules, in order to be useful most useful to a wide, but targeted variety of audiences: general public, community advocates, community leaders, elected official, local government staff, ARC staff

3. This updated plan is more concise, using less jargon, and more visual graphics
4. This plan is intended to be useful as separate pieces that can be shared with neighborhood groups and local governments

**What are the overall goals for this plan?**

1. This plan officially serves the public participation plan for the Atlanta Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is ARC. This plan outlines the procedures that ARC will follow to provide public review of the development of and any ensuing changes to the Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program. It also identifies procedures for how ARC will make information available about transportation plans, public meeting dates, agendas, presentations, and meeting notes.
2. The plan also has a goal to provide members of the public with the background information necessary to more effectively engage in the regional transportation planning process

**Why do you need my input right now?**

1. We want this plan to be the most useful possible to ARC and our local communities, and we need your perspective on whether we have achieved this goal
2. You can help identify aspects of these modules that are excellent and those where we can improve
3. You can let us know which questions we have not addressed, and therefore what content we still need to include in this plan before it is complete
4. You can let us know how we can make this plan most useful to you and the people you serve

**Key questions for your review:**

1. How readable did you find this?
2. Are there specific areas where we need more clarification? (add in questions about specific sections: Committee membership, RTP/TIP, etc)
3. What part was the most useful? Easy to understand?
4. What questions did you wish were answered?
5. Would you use this plan with the groups you work with?
  - a. All groups or only specific ones?
  - b. What else might be necessary/desired?
6. What else would you like to know about ARC as MPO?
7. Is this applicable to all regional stakeholder groups in your opinion (this may need to change based on which module is being reviewed)?

<b>Overview of Transportation Community Engagement Plan Modules:</b>			
	<b><i>MPO 101</i></b>	<b><i>RESIDENTS GUIDE</i></b>	<b><i>ENGAGEMENT VALUES &amp; PROCESS</i></b>
<b>Target audience</b>	Elected officials Local government Advanced advocates	Community members Neighborhood groups	ARC staff Local governments Advanced advocates & general public FHWA/FTA
<b>Purpose</b>	Articulate details about MPO & regional transportation planning & decision-making process	Provide basic info on regional transportation planning process and how to get involved both regionally & locally	Official policies and procedures for how ARC handles public review of TIP/RTP & this plan. Also shares info about ARC's community engagement values and PI techniques
<b>Notes</b>	Will also be a PPT presentation  Used as MPO orientation for committee members;  Used to inform community advocates/leaders  Used by local gvts to share with constituents/staff	Will also be a PPT presentation  Used to inform community advocates/leaders  Used by local gvts to share with constituents	Used by ARC staff as guidelines  Used by LCI sponsors as engagement guide  Used by local gvts as engagement guide
<b>Content</b>	acronyms	acronyms	acronyms
	Intro	Intro to ARC region	Engagement values
	What is a MPO?	RTP/TIP	Basic info on how to get involved
	Demographic change	Basic Committee graphic	Types of engagement techniques & resources needed
	Air Quality	Decision flow-committees	Information about evaluating community engagement
	TAQC, RTC membership	Ways to comment/have a voice	ARC policy for public input
	Committee structure	Formal & everyday engagement	Documenting/posting info
	Major work products: RTP/TIP/UPWP	How does money flow?	Regulations: FAST Act, Title VI, LEP, ADA, EJ,
	How projects are identified	Examples of types of projects	RTP procedures for admin mods, amendments, plans
	Public input graphic	Operations & maintenance	Quick view
		How to report a problem	
		FAQs	

## **LEGAL NOTICE PUBLISHED TO FULTON COUNTY DAILY REPORT AND MUNDO HISPANICO**

### **Atlanta Regional Commission Invites Public Review and Comment on an update to the Regional Community Engagement Plan**

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) will open a public review and comment period on Friday, April 12, 2019 to consider an update to the Regional Community Engagement Plan.

The Regional Community Engagement Plan has the following three purposes: 1) as a regional planning community engagement guide for the public; 2) as the official participation policy for transportation planning for ARC \*; and 3) as an ARC response to the U.S. Department of Transportation directive to develop a participation plan for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

As part of a continuous effort to increase public involvement and general outreach in the transportation planning process, the Atlanta Regional Commission has developed an update to the Regional Community Engagement Plan. This plan has been redesigned into a series of modules with simplified, visually appealing graphics to illustrate the transportation planning process. The primary purpose of the proposed changes are to 1) reflect FAST Act planning language, 2) ensure consistency between MPO and state STIP definitions for TIP amendments and administrative modifications, and 4) provide an refreshed community-based plan exemplifying best state of practice in community engagement.

A full copy of the proposed update to the participation plan is available on the ARC website at [www.atlantaregional.org](http://www.atlantaregional.org) or at the ARC offices.

Written, verbal or electronic comments concerning this document are welcome and should be given to ARC at [transportation@atlantaregional.org](mailto:transportation@atlantaregional.org) or by phone to 470-378-1563 (this number includes TTY) or faxed to 470-423-3548. If the public needs special assistance in understanding the contents of this amendment, please call ARC 470-378-1563.

The Public Review and Comment period will run through Monday, May 27, 2019, a 45-day public comment period. ARC must receive comments prior to midnight on this date in order to be considered in the official record of comments. A summary of all comments received during this period and responses to those comments will be presented to ARC's technical and policy committees and the ARC Board for their consideration before taking action on this update.

Please address your written comments on the proposed update to:

Mr. John Orr, Manager  
Transportation, Access and Mobility Division  
Atlanta Regional Commission  
229 Peachtree Street, NE, Suite 100  
Atlanta, GA 30303

\*Covering a planning area including the counties of Barrow (partial), Carroll (partial), Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dawson (partial), DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Newton (partial), Paulding, Pike (partial), Rockdale, Spalding (partial), and Walton (partial).



**ADOPTING RESOLUTION**



**DATE:** June 7, 2019

**ISSUE SUMMARY:                      REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2019**

<b>FROM:</b> Charlotte Nash, Transportation & Air Quality Committee
<b>IMPORTANCE:</b> <p>As part of a continuous effort to increase public involvement and general outreach in the transportation planning process, the Atlanta Regional Commission has developed an update to the <i>Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan</i>. The Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan serves the following three purposes: 1) as a regional planning community engagement guide for the public; 2) as the official participation policy for transportation planning for ARC; and 3) as an ARC response to the U.S. Department of Transportation directive to develop a participation plan for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). (23 CFR § 450.316)</p> <p>This plan has been redesigned into a series of modules with simplified, visually appealing graphics to illustrate the transportation planning process. The primary purpose of the proposed changes is to: 1) reflect FAST Act planning language, 2) ensure consistency between MPO and state STIP definitions for TIP amendments and administrative modifications, and 3) provide a refreshed community-based plan exemplifying best state of practice in community engagement.</p> <p>A 45-day official public review and comment period was held from April 12 to May 27, 2019. <u>No comments requiring substantive changes were received.</u></p>
<b>ACTION REQUIRED:</b> ARC Approval.



## A RESOLUTION ADOPTING:

### Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan 2019

WHEREAS, the Atlanta Regional Commission, pursuant to the Georgia Code Section 50-8-80 et seq., is the agency responsible for comprehensive regional planning, including transportation and land use planning for the ten-county Atlanta Region; and

WHEREAS, the Atlanta Regional Commission is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation planning in the Atlanta Metropolitan Planning Area which includes all or parts of eighteen counties; and

WHEREAS, the current surface transportation reauthorization – Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) - requires development, adoption and implementation of a transportation participation plan; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is committed to carrying out its responsibilities in a manner that provides ample opportunities for early, ongoing and meaningful involvement by federal, state and local government representatives, the private sector and the general public; and

WHEREAS, the Commission adopted the original *Atlanta Region Transportation Public Involvement Plan* on November 27, 1993, and updates or amendments in May 1999; February 2001; October 2002; January 2006; December 2006; September 2008; August 2012; June 2014; and

WHEREAS, as part of a continuous effort to increase public involvement and general outreach in the transportation planning process, the *Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan* has been redesigned into a series of modules with simplified, visually appealing graphics to illustrate the transportation planning process. The primary purpose of the proposed changes is to: 1) reflect FAST Act planning language, 2) ensure consistency between MPO and state STIP definitions for TIP

amendments and administrative modifications, and 3) provide a refreshed community-based plan exemplifying best state of practice in community engagement; and

WHEREAS, the regional community engagement plan update was evaluated by the appropriate technical and review processes, including a 45-day formal public review period; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regional community engagement plan update did not receive comments that require substantive changes to the draft document during the public review period.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Atlanta Regional Commission adopts the Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan, 2019 update.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Atlanta Regional Commission directs staff to begin efforts immediately to implement the provisions of the 2019 update of the Regional Transportation Community Engagement Plan.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, staff is authorized to make non-substantive changes to wording in this document to reflect the titles of federal transportation reauthorization bills and other regulations that govern the planning process, including updating maps of planning and air quality conformity boundaries, or names of ARC committees and transportation planning groups, as needed.