



Atlanta Regional Commission



NOVEMBER 2025

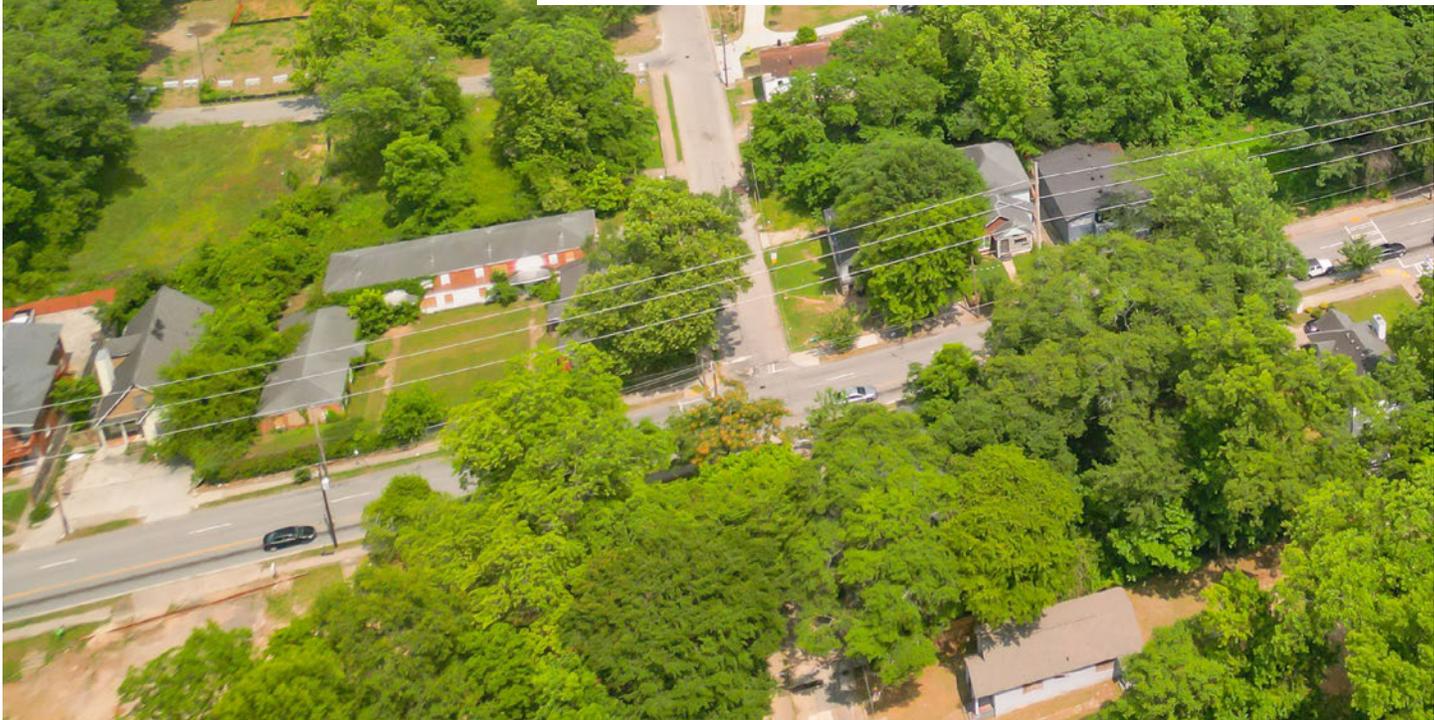
**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN APPENDIX B:
PUBLIC COMMENTS AND
PARTNER AGENCY REQUESTS**



Appendix B

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Purpose and Intent

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) is the main document ARC uses to guide its community engagement efforts. As the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for a 19-county region, ARC is responsible for developing and updating the PPP to meet federal planning requirements and address local needs.

Part of the PPP update process includes community outreach and interagency coordination to gather feedback on the draft plan. During the 2025 update, ARC received four written comments from the public and 58 partner agency requests to make further updates to the PPP draft. For transparency and accountability, this appendix includes all feedback ARC received from agencies and the metro-Atlanta community about the PPP update draft. It also describes how ARC responded to comments and incorporated these comments into the final PPP draft where possible and appropriate. This document will be shared with ARC Transportation Coordinating and Transportation & Air Quality Committee members for their review. Additionally, this document will be shared with respondents who submitted public comment and will be published to the PPP page of the ARC's website: AtlantaRegional.org

Public Comments

ARC published a full draft of the PPP and its appendices and received public comments through a dedicated [Public Input page](#) during a 45-day Public Comment Period, September 3 to October 18, 2025. The table below displays the comments received and ARC’s response to each.

COMMENTS NAME	COMMENT	ARC RESPONSE
Vladimir Shklovsky	It would be great to have a forum where children are encouraged to participate. E.g., I’ve heard children complain about not being able to bike because it’s not safe. Certainly many advocates and planners know that. But it’s intimidating to speak up in public. It’d be great if there were forums that explicitly welcomed children to speak for themselves, speaking as legitimate users of transportation infrastructure in their own right with details most relevant to them.	Thank you for this idea and encouragement to include youth in more intentional ways. We agree that the voice of children can add much to our transportation planning process. This year we had an arts-based “Imagination Station” activity at community events we attended, and we documented children’s visions for their ideal way to get around the region. We plan to continue this and/or similar exercises in the future. We will also find supportive and welcoming ways to invite youth into public engagement with specific plans wherever possible and appropriate. For example, we plan to incorporate youth in our upcoming long range, regional planning effort, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).
Anonymous	It isn’t clear how this will occur, “conduct intentional outreach to a variety of community members to encourage participation in advisory committees”. Will postcards be sent out asking for applications? I often feel those who end up on the advisory committees do because they happen to know a staff member conducting the search. How can we make it more equitable? Could meetings also be virtual to increase engagement and vary times throughout the day (like a lunch meeting) so parents are more likely to be involved as well.	Thanks for the comment and these questions to consider. For ARC, each project is different and intentional outreach is determined by that project’s scope and needs. As such, advisory committees are also plan or project specific. One way to expand the pool of potential committee members is by talking to local leaders outside of the project teams, specifically Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and other resident leaders within the project area for advisory board member suggestions. The specific suggestion to promote applications for advisory boards by sending postcards is a good one, and we will consider this as an option for notifying communities about advisory board opportunities for projects where appropriate. We also agree that having accessible meetings is key to meaningful engagement. Setting advisory board meeting times and determining between virtual, in-person, and hybrid options should be determined in collaboration with the advisory board members to make the meetings as accessible as possible for the group.
Anonymous	Fayette county residents do not want public transportation.	Thank you for your comment. Since this comment is about a specific transportation mode and service, it is relevant to our Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and we’ll forward it to the upcoming MTP process.

COMMENTS NAME	COMMENT	ARC RESPONSE
Wendy White Tiegren	This report is bold - thank you for this work and the opportunity to comment. While the report references ADA compliance and accessibility, more content on engagement for citizens with disabilities, those aging, and individuals living in poverty would be welcomed. The Focus Group and Roundtable sections could add targeted outreach through specialty agencies (like Community Service Boards for mental health and substance use services) to receive critical feedback from these often marginalized populations.	We will work these suggestions on accessibility into the Focus Group and Roundtable tactics as you suggested. Thank you so much for your comment.

Partner Agency Requests

As part of the PPP development, ARC consults with a variety of partner agencies involved with the transportation planning process. These agencies have opportunities to provide comments and requests for changes to the draft PPP, all of which are carefully reviewed by ARC staff and incorporated into the final draft document wherever appropriate and possible. The following pages include all requests received from partner agencies during both the interagency coordination process and the public comment period. Each agency received a response from ARC addressing how their requests were incorporated into the final PPP.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

- Page 1: Cover Page - The title of the document should be Participation Plan to reflect changes to 23 CFR 450.316.
- Please develop a checklist that aligns with 23 CFR 450.316 to ensure the plan alignment with regulations.
- Page 3 : TOC - The links in the Table of Contents link to outside websites and not to the page sections.
- Page 9: MPO Regulations - Please add language to the bullets regarding periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies to ensure a full and open participation process.
- Page 11 - How will ARC engage and consult others involved in the transportation process such as the 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) that are not participating in TCC?
- Page 40: Public Participation Policies and Procedures - This sentence is confusing, "In addition, the Mayor of Atlanta, as well as the ARC Board Chair or designated board members of ARC, MARTA, ATL, GRTA, and GDOT are members of TAQC." Should the "or" be replaced with "and"
- Page 40: Public Participation Policies and Procedures - TCC- Please provide a listing of TCC membership and their voting status.
- Page 40: Public Participation Policies and Procedures - Since IAC is discussed in the following pages, it should be added within this section. It would be beneficial to the reader to describe what IACs role is within regulations and the role that ARC envisions IAC to be.
- Page 40: Public Participation Policies and Procedures - Please break out the separate called meeting section as a separate header to make it easier for the reader to find that appropriate section.
- Page 45: MTP/TIP Updates - Please split this section apart as they are two separate planning documenting and updates. The regulations do not require a mid-cycle update of both documents.
- Page 46: MPO Studies that inform the MTP/TIP Update - Please include the CMP and all Plans identified in 23 CFR 450.324.
- Page 47: Amendments - Please use all the language from the STIP Amendment/Admin Mod procedures.
- Page 48: Amendments - Please change the term Discretionary Grants to Competitive Grants
- Page 48: Amendments - Please remove from the document the language, stating "Add a non-exempt project to the MTP/TIP that is funded with grant funds administratively without running the model."
- Page 48: Amendments - GDOT may not share the details of grant award if they are not involved. Congressional Directed Spending should not be within the appendix. Please update this paragraph with the current procedures.
- Page 49: Approvals - DOT does not issue a conformity approval if the amendment does not impact conformity.
- Page 49: Admin Mods - Please use all the language from the STIP Amendment/Admin Mod procedures.
- Page 53: Consultation - Please add the definitions of consultation and coordination from 23 CFR 450
- Page 53: Consultation - How will ARC coordinate with Federal Land Management Agencies within the ARC's MPA. See 23 CFR 450.316(d)
- Page 54: Evaluation - Who is responsible for collecting data evaluating it periodically, and how often does this evaluation occur?
- Appendix - Please add the entirety of 23 CFR 450.316 within the appendix

Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)

- Page 1: Cover Page - revise to Participation Plan
- Page 7: Introduction - revise to Participation Plan
- Page 12: Meaningful Community Engagement (3) Accountable - How will accountability be monitored?
- Page 14: Table 2 - Since this is a depiction of project timing, time stamps or anticipated time for completion of preferred tactics should be mentioned
- Page 15 - Provide a link of the project website
- Page 16 - Provide an example image of a blog post with easy-to-understand, non-technical language
- Page 37: Childcare and Food - Is this narrative needed if there are already individual dedicated narratives for Childcare and Food?
- Page 40: ARC board and Transportation Air Quality Committee - What happened to the Congestion Management Program?
- Page 41: Core MPO Deliverables - What happened to the Congestion Management Program?
- Page 47: MTP/TIP Amendments - Include the amendment financial thresholds
- Page 50: MTP/TIP Administrative Modifications - include the narrative of any new phases that are funded with non-federal dollars
- Page 53: MPO Consultation Process - Revise to "Cartersville-Bartow MPO" and "Gainesville-Hall MPO"

State Road and Tollway Authority / Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (SRTA/GRTA)

Document Design Comments – suggestions for conciseness, formatting, and user friendliness

- Within the Community Engagement Strategy section, pp11-39:
 - Consider introducing the Goals and Objectives earlier, immediately following Meaningful Community Engagement and before Preferred Public Participation Tactics. Having a sense of goals and objectives earlier in the document can help set up and clarify the distinctions among and value of the preferred tactics.
 - What is now Table 3 already contains half of the information available in what is now Table 1. Consider removing Table 1, and moving Table 3 earlier, along with Goals and Objectives section.
 - The icons for each engagement level—Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower—can be added to what is now Table 3.
 - The Tools row in what is now Table 1 is not required because the content is reflected in the existing Tools for Implementation subsection. You could add the engagement-level icons next to each relevant header in that later subsection for a visual linkage.
- Within the Public Participation Policies and Procedures section, pp. 41-58
 - The procedure graphics—Figures 3, 4, 5, and 6—are very helpful. Consider switching the placement of the stages/committees (from right to left) and the legend of icons (from left to right). This change in placement would make the left-hand column more navigational helpful for the reader.
 - In Figure 5 (MTP and TIP Revisions), the months shown in parentheses for the two annual amendments apply only to the action steps, not the full process. Consider either modifying these frequency headers by either:
 - Removing the parenthetical months; they could be moved to the body of the graphic or to a footnote, OR
 - Adding the word "Action" to the parenthetical notes, OR
 - Indicating the entire, multi-month timeline to the parentheses
 - The Definitions box (currently page 55) could be helpful, but it seems somewhat of an afterthought in its current location. It would be more helpful at the beginning of the overall section, before coordination and consultation

procedures are shown in detail.

- In Table 5: ARC Public Participation Outputs, consider re-ordering the bullet points for Public Engagement Touchpoints so that each data capture method is shown immediately next to the tactic(s) it is helping to measure.
- In the Appendix A, Participant Demographic section, pp 15-17, charts need some graphical clean-up:
 - The legends have percent symbols floating below the double-digit values.
 - It would be easier to reference the legends if categorical labels came before (to the left of) the percent values.
- In general, make sure that figures and tables are referred to in the text before they appear in the document. There are a few times that the draft plan shows tables or plans before they are first referenced, or without an explicit reference. This can be confusing for the reader.
- Double check page numbers for all tables of contents (overall, and for each section). I noticed one error in the table of contents currently shown on page 11.

Broader Impact Comments – some content recommendations, conceptual linkages, and thoughts for the future

- Preferred Tactics and Tools
 - The factsheets for each tool are helpful; I appreciate the consistent structure. It would be interesting to somehow track utilization of these factsheets, and the tactics they describe, not only at ARC but also among partner agencies (local and state).
 - Among the levels of engagement, the fewest tactics and tools are listed tagged to empower. Consider:
 - Both local government and CBO partnerships can be empowering, if these stakeholder groups are improved in the approvals stage of plan/project delivery.
 - Education and capacity building, currently listed under “tools to collaborate,” are inherently empowering.
 - Similarly, accommodating CBOs in the procurement process, and compensating them during project development, are empowering practices.
 - Among the project/plan development process stages, Table 2 associates many tactics with the “evaluation” stage, “the process in which the project management team can do initial analysis on ... impact [and] effectiveness...” However, it’s not fully described what sort of evaluation should be done, and how it can be used in future engagement. Initial analysis is only a start. Consider: the full impact