

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

FOR THE

**ROCK HILL – FORT MILL AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY**



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List of Acronyms

RFATS	Rock Hill – Fort Mill Area Transportation Study	Page 3
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization	Page 3
L RTP	Long Range Transportation Plan	Page 3
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program	Page 3
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration	Page 3
FTA	Federal Transit Administration	Page 3
SCDOT	South Carolina Department of Transportation	Page 3
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users	Page 3
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act For the 21 st Century	Page 3
IIJA	Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act	Page 3
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program	Page 4
PPP	Public Participation Plan	Page 4

INTRODUCTION

The Rock Hill - Fort Mill Area Transportation Study (RFATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization is a federally mandated transportation planning process for the urbanized areas of York and Lancaster counties, and those adjacent areas expected to become urbanized over the next 20 years. In accordance with Federal and State regulations, RFATS goal is to plan the most efficient, reliable, safe, and cost-effective transportation system for the movement of people and goods in its planning area. With this goal in mind, it is the policy of the MPO to support and encourage active public participation throughout the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process. The MPO has therefore adopted this public participation plan in order to ensure that specific opportunities exist for the public to offer input and provide feedback as active participants in the decision-making process.

As the lead planning agency for RFATS, the City of Rock Hill is also the direct recipient of Federal Transit Administration funds, specifically 5307 urbanized area funds. With this designation, the City of Rock Hill is required to have a Public Participation Plan in place to ensure that all interested parties have an opportunity to review and offer comments on federally funded transit projects. FTA Circular 9030.1C encourages transit providers (such as the City of Rock Hill), to rely on their local MPO's Public Participation Plan for the development of the Programming of Projects (POP) if the transit system provider has coordinated with the MPO to ensure that the public is aware that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development process is being used to satisfy the POP requirements. Consequently, it has been determined that RFATS Public Participation Plan does satisfy these supporting public participation requirements.

I. BACKGROUND

RFATS is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (designated by the Governor of South Carolina) responsible for coordinating the transportation planning process for the Rock Hill Urbanized Area as well as the limited extension of the Charlotte Urbanized Area into the Lake Wylie Area of York County. The membership of RFATS includes the Town of Fort Mill, the cities of Rock Hill and Tega Cay, the unincorporated urban areas of York and Lancaster counties, and the Catawba Nation. The RFATS Policy Committee is composed of fifteen (15) voting members representing each of the RFATS communities, legislative representatives from the South Carolina House and Senate; and an ex-officio member from the SCDOT Commission.

II. GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS

With the passage of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998, the 15 metropolitan and 23 statewide planning factors from the old regulations were consolidated into seven factors. With the passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the factors were expanded to include "...promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns." Under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), these planning factors remained unchanged. With the passage of the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act, the eight (8) planning factors were expanded to 10; and are as follows:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;

4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation, and;
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system
9. Improve system resiliency and reliability; reduce stormwater impacts
10. Enhance tourism and travel

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

A. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The RFATS Public Participation Plan is designed to provide direction for public participation activities to be conducted throughout the MPO planning area, and contains the vision, objectives and techniques used by RFATS. Specifically, the Public Participation Plan will seek to accomplish the following:

1. Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, pedestrian walkways, bicycle facilities, those with special needs, as well as any other interested parties within the communities affected by the transportation plans, programs and / or projects undertaken by RFATS.
2. Provide public access to policy and technical information used during the evaluation and development of the LRTP, TIP and any other transportation related plans; additionally, open public meetings will be held where matters relevant to transportation planning and programs are being considered.
3. Provide adequate notice of public participation activities and allow time for public review and comments for the LRTP, TIP, UPWP and any other transportation plans, programs or activities occurring within the RFATS Study Area. It should be noted, that if a final draft of any transportation program or plan should contain substantive differences from an earlier version made available for public review, then an additional public comment period will be scheduled.
4. Respond to all applicable public input. When significant written and oral comments are received on draft documents as a result of the public participation process – a summary and analysis will be included as part of the final plan approval.
5. Reach out and / or otherwise “go to” those traditionally underserved by the existing transportation system, including but not limited to minorities, elderly, persons with disabilities or special needs, language barriers, low-income, and disadvantaged residents.

6. Provide a public comment period of 45 calendar days prior to the adoption of the Public Participation Plan. Notice of the 45-day comment period will be advertised in newspapers of

general circulation, minority community newspapers (if available) as well as on the RFATS website.

7. Provide for a public comment period of not less than 30 calendar days prior to the adoption of the LRTP and TIP as well as any significant updates to these transportation plans or programs. Provide for a public comment period of not less than 21 calendar days for amendments to the TIP and approval of other plans, programs and projects.
8. Coordinate the Public Participation Process with statewide Public Participation Processes where opportunities exist to enhance public consideration of the issues, projects and plans under discussion or review.
9. Periodically review and update the Public Participation Process to ensure it provides open access and opportunity to all.

B. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POPULATION

Virtually all of the residents, businesses, agencies, and organizations of the RFATS Study Area are part of the affected citizens that make up the Public Participation population, including but not limited to:

1. Work commuters to and from the urbanized areas of York and Lancaster counties to Charlotte, NC.
2. Local work commuters within the urbanized areas of York and Lancaster counties and the respective population centers.
3. Student populations from local colleges and universities.
4. Elderly, handicapped, minority, low-income, and disadvantaged residents.
5. Commercial / industrial enterprise activity; including freight.
6. All non-commuting travelers.

The type of transportation presently used by the majority of these populations is the single passenger automobile. Some smaller groups are currently served by commercial trucks; fixed route transit service with the Study Area; limited express bus service to and from Charlotte; demand response transit service; van pool arrangements and some bicycle / pedestrian facilities.

The rapid growth across the RFATS Study Area is generating higher volume of traffic and operating demands across the transportation system, resulting in a challenging environment for the movement of people and goods. These challenges will impact every community in the RFATS Study Area. Future growth will require a sustained commitment of transportation system investments, as well as incorporating a broader range of transportation improvement strategies.

Since the quality of life and cost of future travel will be impacted by transportation plans and decisions, active public participation and sound decision-making are critical to the realization of RFATS goal and mission.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN: VISION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The vision for public participation is that the public will be provided information on transportation planning services and project development in a convenient and timely manner. To this end, the following goals and policies have been established.

Goal I: To actively engage the public in the transportation planning process according to the policies contained in Federal and State law as well as in this Public Participation Plan.

1. RFATS will maintain a current database of contacts and / or interested parties:
 - Federal, state and local agencies responsible for planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, land use management, and historic preservation
 - Elected Officials
 - Local Government Staff
 - Tribal Governments
 - Organizations representing freight movement in the planning area
 - Organizations / agencies representing those traditionally underserved
 - Local Media
 - Homeowners Associations
 - Libraries (for public display)
 - Interested members of the general public
2. RFATS will (when feasible), electronically send meeting notices to all interested parties (RFATS contact list and / or targeted group mailing, etc.).
3. RFATS will employ visualization techniques to illustrate transportation plans / projects. Examples of visualization techniques include charts, graphs and maps.

Goal II: RFATS shall keep the public informed of on-going transportation related activities on a continuous basis.

1. RFATS will make publications and work products available to the public.
2. RFATS staff will be available to provide general and project specific information at a central location during normal business hours (and after hours when deemed appropriate) and with

reasonable notice.

3. RFATS will maintain an accurate website with current transportation planning and project activity descriptions / summaries, including:

- Updated list of Policy Committee members
- Current schedule for RFATS meetings and events
- Public display ads and notices
- Copies of the LRTP, TIP, UPWP, PPP, and other documents / studies
- Opportunity for public comment
- Opportunity to request updates for notices and announcements
- Civil Rights / Title VI Information
- Glossary of commonly used terms and phrases
- Interactive Mapping available via ArcGIS Online
- Staff Contact Information

RFATS will maintain and update social media accounts with current planning and project activity in an effort to broaden public awareness.

Goal III: RFATS shall encourage the participation of all citizens in the transportation planning process.

1. RFATS will utilize a "Public Participation Communications Venue" matrix (appendix – Exhibit I) which lists the stakeholder groups and communication mediums (both direct and indirect), to provide the greatest opportunity to participate in the process.

Goal IV: RFATS shall strive to improve public participation by continuously monitoring and evaluating public participation techniques.

1. The Public Participation Plan will be reviewed at least every three (3) years.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

Public Participation is an ongoing activity of the MPO. An effective public participation process is characterized by techniques and procedures that enable citizens to become well informed. This section contains descriptions of public participation tools that RFATS currently uses and proposes to use in the future:

- Citizens Advisory Committee
- Community Based Public Events / SC Visitors Center
- Community Town Hall Meetings
- Comment Forms
- Consultation
- Direct Mailings / Postcards
- E-mail Notifications / Announcements

- Flyers
- Legal Advertisements and Display Ads
- Library Distribution
- Limited English Proficiency Populations (Translation Services)
- LRTP Brochure
- MPO and Local Government Websites
- Media / Press Releases
- Personal Interviews
- Public comment period during Policy Committee Meetings
- Responding to comments or questions (written, telephone, meetings)
- Small Group / Public Meetings
- Social Media
- Summary of Comments Received
- Surveys
- Title VI and Environmental Justice
- Virtual Meetings (based on public health and / or other extenuating circumstances etc.)
- Visualization

Citizens Advisory Committee

Description: This is a standing committee established to ensure that meaningful public participation is organizationally incorporated into the formal transportation planning process. Specifically, this committee reviews and provides input on the development of programs and projects within the RFATS communities, including the Public Participation Plan. Additionally, this committee considers the needs of those traditionally underserved by the existing transportation system. Staff will track issues and concerns voiced by the members of the CAC as a method to be more accountable to the public.

Activities: Core work products of the MPO to include the UPWP, LRTP, TIP, PPP and grant programs as well as all other major MPO activities.

Comment Forms

Description: Comment forms are often used to solicit public comment on specific issues being presented at a workshop or other public meeting. Comment forms (Exhibit II) can be very general in nature or can ask for very specific feedback. For example, a comment form may ask for comments on specific alignment alternatives being considered during a corridor study or may ask for a person's general feelings about any aspect of transportation planning and services. An electronic comment form is also available via the RFATS Website under the Public Participation section.

Activities: Public Workshops, open houses, hearings and other meetings, general MPO activities.

Community Based Public Events / SC Visitors Center

Description: Surveys may be used at region wide community events in the RFATS Study Area. RFATS will continually evaluate public events to participate in as an additional opportunity to expand public participation and community outreach.

Activities: Project specific meetings, workshops, open houses, corridor studies and other major MPO activities.

Community Town Hall Meetings

Description: These are public meetings that are generally open and informal with RFATS and the general public. Short presentations may be given at these meetings. Fundamentally, the primary purpose of Community Town Hall Meetings is to provide a forum to share project / planning information to the public and solicit input.

Activities: Corridor studies, LRTP update, certification review and other major MPO activities.

Consultation

Description: As part of federal and state regulations encouraging more cooperative planning, RFATS will consult, as appropriate, with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation within the RFATS Study Area. To coordinate the planning function to the maximum extent practicable, such consultation will involve LRTPs and TIPs as they are developed with the plans, maps, inventories and planning documents developed by other agencies. This consultation will include, as appropriate, contact with the following groups: State, local, Tribal, private / public agencies (Interagency Consultation & CRAFT members) responsible for planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, freight operations and historic preservation. It should be noted that RFATS will also consult with these groups, as appropriate, during the transportation conformity process – in order to ensure that transportation planning activities are ultimately consistent with the air quality goals for the RFATS Study Area.

Activities: Public hearings / meetings, copies of this plan on the RFATS website, meetings between RFATS staff and state / federal agency personnel.

Direct Mailings / Postcards

Description: Direct mailings are used to announce upcoming meetings and activities and / or to provide information to a targeted area. Direct mailings are usually post cards, but could include letters and / or fliers. An area may be selected for a mailing because of the potential impact from a particular project. An area may be selected to further broaden outreach to those traditionally underserved.

Activities: Project specific meetings, open houses, workshops and other MPO activities.

E-mail Notifications / Announcements

Description: Meeting announcements and MPO information will be e-mailed to interested persons. In addition, notices regarding plan updates, programs, and amendments will be sent to interested parties. Those interested in receiving e-mail notifications and announcements can request to be added to the distribution list via the sign-in sheet used for public meetings. Interested parties of particular note include community organizations such as neighborhood associations and non-profit organizations.

Activities: Public meetings, workshops, and other major MPO activities, such as LRTP and TIP updates and amendments.

Flyers

Description: Flyers are developed to announce public meetings and other events. These flyers are distributed electronically to the RFATS Contact List, and paper copies are posted in public buildings such as libraries and town halls.

Activities: Public hearings / meetings, project specific meetings, open houses, workshops, and other MPO activities.

Legal Advertisements / Display Ads

Description: RFATS requires a minimum 30-day advertisement period prior to the adoption of major plans such as the LRTP and TIP. That said, more routine TIP amendments are advertised for a minimum 21-day period. Ads are therefore published to solicit public comment and / or review of the requested change or plan update. The ads provide a description of the proposed change, including contact information. The ads can be made available in Spanish upon request. Ads will be placed in newspapers of general circulation.

Activities: Corridor studies, small area studies, updates to the LRTP and TIP, grant programs, UPWP, as well as other major MPO planning activities.

Library Distribution

Description: RFATS will distribute website information to access copies of key planning documents such as the Long Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Small Area Studies and upcoming meetings to libraries throughout the planning area. The name, location, and telephone number of each library are included in Appendix IV.

Activities: Updates and amendments of the LRTP, new study initiatives, etc.

Limited English Proficiency Populations

Description: RFATS will provide non-English language translated documents for limited English speakers upon reasonable request, provide large print versions of other documents, and provide in-person language and deaf translators as needed upon request.

Activities: Public meetings, workshops, and other major MPO activities, such as LRTP and TIP updates and amendments.

LRTP Brochure

Description: RFATS utilizes a color brochure that describes the history of the MPO, the structure and purpose of the Long Range Transportation Plan, and the role of public participation in the planning process as well as a contact list of elected officials who serve on the Policy Committee.

Activities: LRTP, TIP and other MPO activities.

Media & Press Releases

Description: Formal press releases are sent out to local media (newspapers, radio, local television programming, etc.) to announce upcoming special meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues being considered by the MPO. Interviews are often conducted as a method to convey information to the public via written, audio, or visual media.

Activities: Specific corridor studies, workshops, open houses, public hearings and other special MPO activities.

MPO & Local Government Website(s)

Description: The RFATS website provides information about the planning activities of the MPO, the decision-making process and purpose, membership, meeting schedule as well as committee and contact information. MPO work products such as the UPWP, TIP, LRTP, and Public Participation Plan are available for downloading from the site. Agendas and Summary Minutes of the Policy Committee meetings are also available. Interactive Mapping is available to provide project specific information via ArcGIS Online. Additionally, residents are able to submit comments and request inclusion on the distribution list maintained by RFATS. This website is maintained and frequently updated as appropriate. The Google Translator pull-down menu provides access to this information in over 100 languages. The official website address for RFATS is

www.rfats.org. Additional RFATS information is available from the websites of the Town of Fort Mill, the City of Tega Cay, the City of Rock Hill, York County, and Lancaster County.

Activities: Website utilized to advertise regular and special meetings, planning studies, public comment notices, and MPO work products.

Personal Interviews

Description: Personal interviews with key community leaders and senior staff of stakeholder organizations can serve a useful purpose during the information gathering stage of the transportation planning process. Therefore, RFATS will conduct one-on-one interviews with so-called "key individuals" in an effort to gather constructive input in a meaningful way on specific topics.

Activities: Corridor studies, small area studies, transit service plans and other MPO activities.

Public Comment Period during Policy Committee Meetings

Description: RFATS has an established time at the beginning of each Policy Committee meeting to invite members of the public to address the members directly. Comments will be considered by the Policy Committee members and be recorded in the official minutes.

Activities: Time set aside during RFATS Policy Committee meetings for public comment.

Responding to Comments or Questions

Description: RFATS will make an effort to respond to all comments and questions received within a reasonable amount of time. This response may be by telephone, e-mail, social media, and / or a written letter.

Activities: E-mail, website and social media.

Small Group / Public Meetings

Description: Periodically, meetings will be held with small groups that have an interest in a particular project. Representative meetings would include homeowners and / or neighborhood associations, civic groups as well as other groups of affected or interested parties.

Activities: Corridor studies, small area studies, transit service plans and other major MPO activities.

Social Media

Description: RFATS maintains a Facebook account that will be periodically updated with meeting notices, links to public notices, traffic alerts, and transportation information affecting the RFATS Study Area. This will not only allow RFATS to provide planning updates, but also increase the opportunity for more frequent public interaction.

Activities: Social Media is utilized to highlight upcoming meetings, planning studies, public comment periods, as well as additional opportunities to provide input on key MPO work products.

Summary of Comments Received

Description: A summary of public comments received will be provided to the Policy Committee after the completion of a required public comment period. Written and verbal comments will be summarized and incorporated into the necessary documents as appropriate.

Activities: Corridor studies, small area studies, updates to the LRTP and TIP, grant programs, UPWP, as well as other major MPO planning activities.

Surveys

Description: Surveys may be used where specific input from the public is desired. A survey can be used in place of comment cards to ask very specific questions such as whether a person supports a particular transportation improvement or transit alignment. Surveys may also be utilized to gather technical data during planning studies.

Activities: Small area studies, LRTP development, planning studies and other MPO activities.

Title VI & Environmental Justice

Description: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs and activities. In 1994, Presidential Order 12898 directed every Federal agency to make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of programs, policies and activities on "minority populations and low-income populations."

In complying with Federal law, RFATS will proactively reach out to those who either cannot or are unlikely to attend traditional meetings due to a lack of transportation or for other reasons such as a disability or language barrier to ensure that meaningful opportunities to participate are realized.

Additionally, RFATS will maintain an established complaint processing procedure (Exhibit IV) and will designate an MPO staff member to serve as the lead person and / or liaison with the RFATS Policy Committee and SCDOT regarding the documentation, compliance and reporting requirements of Title VI.

Activities: LRTP update and other major MPO activities.

Virtual Meetings

Description: RFATS meetings are typically held in person, but may be held virtually if circumstances warrant, including during a declared State of Emergency; under the threat of, or confirmed natural or public health event; or in response to guidance issued by emergency response, public health or government officials. Virtual meetings allow the MPO an interim manner in which to maintain progress in meeting transportation system needs during these periods.

Activities: Public hearings / meetings, project specific meetings, open houses, workshops, and other MPO activities.

Visualization

Description: RFATS recognizes that an important element of public participation is to provide the public, when possible, visual as well as written descriptions of transportation planning efforts and / or projects. Through visual imagery, the complex features of proposed transportation plans, policies and programs can be portrayed at appropriate scales (regional, local, etc.) and from different perspectives. With this understanding in mind, RFATS will utilize various visual and design approaches (GIS, sketches, mapping, etc.) to usefully illustrate transportation planning projects and ideas under review and / or consideration by the MPO.

Activities: Planning studies and other major MPO activities.

Future Considerations

RFATS will consider creating project-specific newsletters that briefly describe progress made on major projects in the RFATS Study Area to be released by e-mail and posted on the website.

V. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

RFATS utilizes social media as a method to communicate information to interested members of the public. RFATS intends to promote effective communication and maintain respectful communication via social media. In that spirit, the rules for posting external comments on the RFATS social media sites are intended to maintain a productive and open forum for public discussion. RFATS applies these rules to ensure that posts and comments are constructive and suitable for all readers, while respecting a range of opinions and points of view.

RFATS social media sites are created for the sole purpose of serving the public interest. Comments /

Posts made by the public will be seen by other interested members of the public. Anyone using or posting to the RFATS social media sites, will, by doing so, accept, agree and understand that there is no legal liability to RFATS as a result of any posting or comment on the RFATS social media sites and all persons using the RFATS social media sites agree to fully hold RFATS harmless for any content, postings, comments or interpretations conveyed about any content, postings, or comments which occur on the RFATS social media sites, which are administered by RFATS.

RFATS reserves the right to delete submissions that violate this policy. All content, postings, and comments made on the RFATS social media sites must comply with the following rules and regulations:

- Comments and posted content must be civil and may not contain slanderous, libelous, malicious, offensive, threatening, profane, vulgar, abusive, defamatory, or insulting language.
- Comments or posted content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation are not permitted.
- Comments or posted content that references the personality of individuals, personal attacks, or potentially libelous statements are not permitted.
- Advertising or promotional announcements are not permitted.
- Comments and posted content must be within the scope of the topic under discussion.
- Comments and posted content cannot include personally identifiable information, such as an address, phone number, social security number or other sensitive information.
- Comments or posted content of a sexual nature or links to sexual content are not permitted.
- Comments and posted content cannot represent a person other than the one posting the comment.
- Comments or posted content containing links to other web sites or pages must be relevant to the topic.
- Comments and posted content cannot serve electoral campaign purposes. Political messages will not be published.
- Comments or posted content encouraging illegal activity are not permitted.
- Solicitations of commerce are not permitted.
- Participants are responsible for what they post. Comments and posted content must not breach any law, confidentiality, trademark or copyright.
- RFATS may remove any and all postings and comments at its discretion.

Any opinions, views, or content that is posted on the RFATS social media sites by a third or external party do not represent or demonstrate the position of, policies, or opinions of the MPO; RFATS does not support, have responsibility for or possess any ownership in any content generated externally but posted to the RFATS social media sites.

RFATS will delete any comment or posting that violates the guidelines outlined above, and users may be blocked and / or reported to the applicable owner of the social media site. In addition, users that violate the social media site terms and conditions may be reported to the applicable social media site and blocked from the RFATS social media sites.

RFATS respects the intellectual property of others and we ask users of the RFATS social media sites to do the same. In accordance with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act ("DMCA") and other applicable law, RFAS has adopted a policy terminating, in appropriate circumstances and in RFATS' sole discretion, users who are deemed to be repeat infringers. RFATS may also, in its sole discretion, limit access to the RFATS

social media sites and / or block users who infringe intellectual property rights of others. If you believe that any material on the RFATS social media sites may infringe upon any copyright which you own or control, or that any link on the RFATS social media sites direct users to another website that contains material that infringes upon any copyright which you own or control, you may file a notification of such infringement with the designated agent as set forth below. Notifications of claimed copyright infringement must be sent to the designated agent for notice of claims of copyright infringement. The designated agent for RFATS may be reached as follows:

RFATS MPO

ATTENTION: RFATS Director

P.O. Box 11706

Rock Hill, South Carolina 29731

VI. EVALUATION METHODS AND MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

In order to determine the effectiveness of various public participation tools and techniques, they must be evaluated on a regular basis. Therefore, after our communication venues are utilized, a PPP Consensus Report (Exhibit III) will be prepared. The Consensus Report will track the following measures of effectiveness:

- Media inventory of newspaper articles, internet media, television and radio coverage;
- Number of public forums, workshops and community meetings that occur and the geographic diversity of the planning area covered as well as public comments received;
- Number of requests or inquiries regarding basic mobility transportation options, accessibility or special accommodation assistance;
- Number of requests for language translated and / or large print planning documents;
- Number of phone, fax, mail, email, and social media inquiries or comment cards received;

This document tracks public participation activity; and in particular, the form of outreach undertaken allowing RFATS to recognize patterns in participation, such as which media reach the most people and are the most popular with residents within the study area. RFATS will undertake a participation evaluation every three years to incorporate additional outreach strategies with each PPP update.

VII. IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES / EFFORTS

RFATS continually strives to maintain a meaningful and effective approach to public participation in the transportation planning process. Indeed, because the decisions made by RFATS affect the entire population within the MPO planning area, (for both residents and visitors alike), seeking and securing public input is viewed as an integral part of achieving success as a planning organization. Therefore, each time a public participation evaluation is performed, improvement strategies may be generated. If improvements are needed for an

ongoing public participation task, a reasonable completion date should be established. If improvements are needed for one-time activities such as corridor studies, the improvements should be implemented where appropriate on future activities.