

FRENCH BROAD RIVER

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

A PROGRAM OF
**LAND
of
SKY**
REGIONAL COUNCIL



Ongoing Public Involvement Efforts

Public involvement is an essential aspect of the transportation planning process. Throughout every stage of the development process, the public is consulted or given opportunity to provide input about a plan or transportation project.

The FBRMPO developed Public Involvement Program (PIP) in 2012 to establish parameters and ensure public involvement is included in a meaningful way. The PIP sets guidelines on the amount of time to for public comment before TIP Amendments, the adoption of the TIP, adoption and amendments to the PWP, adoption and amendments to the MTP, and other planning documents the MPO is responsible for developing and maintaining. The PIP also sets requirements on the type of media that should be used to connect with the greatest number and diversity of the public as possible: whether that is through regional newspapers, the MPO’s website, or other methods.

The steering committee for the MTP, also known as the MTP Executive Committee was established by the MPO TCC and approved by the MPO Board on January 23, 2015. The committee is made-up of members of the TCC, MPO Board, Citizens Advisory Committee, and volunteers. The



individuals chosen to participate on the committee were approved by the MPO Board at a later date.

The MTP Executive Committee began meeting in May, 2014 to give guidance to MPO staff during the development of the MTP. The committee’s recommendations were then passed to approval by the MPO TCC and MPO Board. Members of the committee were instrumental in helping to develop the mission, vision, and goals of the MTP as well as providing general guidance and review of the planning process and the results of analyses.

As part of the process to involve input from the general public in the development of the MTP, the FBRMPO staff visited various community events in order to engage people with opinions and concerns about transportation in the region, but may not have been likely to attend a public meeting. These events were typically community celebrations or gatherings that included vendors or service providers and were expected to garner considerable attendance.

The events in Table 4.1 have been attended by the FBRMPO staff to engage the public about transportation planning in the region.

At these events, FBRMPO staff gave the public an option of quickly leaving input on the MTP’s goals or doing a more in-depth survey. Staff found this option important because many people at these events were with children or were in a rush and did not have much time. In such a case, a poster with the MTP’s Draft goals was presented and participants were asked to select one transportation goal they felt was most important to them. This method of input was considerably more popular at events than asking for prolonged input.

If participants elected to leave more input, a survey was presented that asked 10 questions about goals, concerns, and preferences for travel in the region. Some of the questions were multiple choice, others were open-ended. In some instances participants offered

Table 4.1: FBRMPO Public Attendance

Municipality	Event	Date
Canton	Canton Holiday Parade	December 2, 2014
Hendersonville	Ye Olde Christmas	December 5, 2014
Asheville	Transit Rush Hour	December 18, 2014
Asheville	Festival of Neighborhoods	March 15, 2014
Weaverville	Weaverville Tailgate Market	May 6, 2014
Waynesville	Block Party	May 23, 2015

specific comments such as problems with traffic, the engineering of on-ramps, or the behavior of bus drivers. Specific comments like these were recorded by the participants on the survey forms (or by FBRMPO staff, if needed.)

In total, more than 285 participants took part in giving input on the MTP's Draft goals at these events. Of those who provided input, most chose "Improve Multi-Modal and Non-Motorized Transportation Options" as the goal that was most important to them. This does

not negate the other goals or mean that they are unimportant to transportation in the region, but may be more difficult for participants to connect to their daily lives.

Table 4.2 below summarizes the results of public input gathered by MPO staff at local events for MTP draft goals. For event-by-event results, see the Appendix D.

Besides attending events, the MPO also facilitated open house events at each of the four major counties in the MPO's jurisdiction (Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, and Madison.)

While parts of Transylvania County are in the MPO, specific outreach was given to Transylvania County stakeholders to attend the Henderson County MTP Open House.

An additional round of public outreach events was scheduled to solicit public input for the final draft of MTP 2040, with public input scheduled from August 27 - September 17, 2015. See Table 4.3 below for a listing of events held in August and September. A public comment form was also available online. See Appendix D for a summary of public comments received.

Table 4.2: MTP Goals

Goal	Most Important
Improve Multi-Modal and Non-Motorized Transportation Options	24%
Improve and Expand Community and Public Involvement	6%
Improve Safety on Surface Streets and Highways	16%
Address Congestion and Bottlenecks on Surface Streets and Highways	14%
Improve Public Transit Options	21%
Ensure Changes Respect Our Unique Places and Environments	15%
Maintain and Improve Safe Freight Movement Within and Through Our Region	4%

Table 4.3: Draft MTP Public Outreach Events, August - September 2015

Date	Public Comment Opportunity
August 28th, 4 PM-7 PM	Vendor Booth at Haywood County Fair, Waynesville, Haywood County
September 1 st , 3 PM-7 PM	Pack Memorial Library Public Meeting, Asheville Downtown, Buncombe County
September 3 rd , 4 PM-7 PM	Henderson County Library Public Meeting, Hendersonville Downtown, Buncombe County *input from Henderson and Transylvania County residents solicited
September 8 th , 10 AM-2 PM	Mars Hill Public Input at Mars Hill Town Hall, Mars Hill Downtown, Madison County
September 8 th , 5 PM-6:30 PM	Haywood County Public Input at Waynesville Town Hall prior to the Board of Aldermen meeting, Waynesville Downtown, Haywood County
September 11 th – 12 th (Friday 5 PM-7 PM; Saturday 11 AM-3 PM)	Vendor Booth Goombay Festival of African and Caribbean Culture, Asheville Downtown, Buncombe County
September 17 th , 5 PM-7 PM	Vendor Booth at Rhythm and Brews Festival, Downtown Hendersonville, Henderson County *input from Henderson and Transylvania County residents solicited