

a program of Land of Sky

FRENCH BROAD RIVER

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT AMENDMENTS TO THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT POLICY (PIP)

WHEREAS, the Board of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization approved the Public Involvement Policy on October 31, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the French Broad River MPO Board has reviewed the proposed amendments and finds them satisfactory; and

WHEREAS, these proposed amendments to the French Broad River MPO Public Involvement Policy were made available for public comment for a 45-day period; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization adopt amendments to the Public Involvement Policy as summarized below and highlighted in the updated policy (see next pages):

ADOPTED: This the 28th Day of January, 2021



Larry Harris, FBRMPO Board Chair



Attest, Tristan Winkler, Director
French Broad River MPO



Public Involvement Policy (PIP)

**FRENCH
BROAD
RIVER**
METROPOLITAN PLANNING
ORGANIZATION

Adopted by the Board on March 27, 2014

Amended: March 24, 2016

February 28, 2019

January 28, 2021

Prepared by: French Broad River MPO Staff, Asheville
Regional Transit, Land of Sky Regional Council, and the
North Carolina Department of Transportation

Public Involvement Policy

**Adopted by the FBRMPO Board on 3/27/2014 with Amendments 3/24/2016,
2/28/2019, and 1/28/2021.**

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

	<p>CALL US 828-251-6622 during normal business hours 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday</p>
	<p>WRITE TO US French Broad River MPO 339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 140 Asheville, NC 28806</p>
	<p>EMAIL US General Inquiries: mpo@landofsky.org</p>
	<p>VISIT OUR WEBSITE http://frenchbroadrivermpo.org or http://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/get-involved/</p>
	<p>FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA On Twitter @FBRMPO On Facebook at French Broad River MPO</p>
	<p>COME TO AN EVENT French Broad River MPO hosts and participates in special events throughout the planning area for citizens to learn about projects where they live and work. Visit the FBRMPO website (Above) to view opportunities.</p>
	<p>PARTICIPATE IN PERSON Make a public comment at a FBRMPO Board or committee meeting. Meeting schedule and location on website.</p>

I. Introduction

A. French Broad River MPO

1) Overview

The French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) is a federally designated regional transportation planning entity for urbanized portions of Buncombe, Haywood, Madison and Henderson Counties, and a small urbanized portion of Transylvania County. In an effort to create intelligent and sustainable transportation systems, the agency seeks to find ways of including the public in all phases of planning. An effective public involvement process provides an open exchange of information and ideas between the public and transportation decision makers. Public Participation also includes education about the planning process and ongoing transportation projects.

The FBRMPO seeks public input with a diversity of techniques, including but not limited to public notices, comment periods, workshops, charrettes, public hearings, newsletters, surveys, media relations, and the use of committees and work groups with citizen representatives as appointed. The techniques employed vary depending on the specific planning task. The information and data collected through such techniques serve as a blueprint throughout the planning process.

The French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization's (FBRMPO's) Public Involvement Policy encompasses all MPO transportation planning and programming processes. These include the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP, also known as Long Range Transportation Plan or LRTP), the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Air Quality Conformity Determination (if needed), the Congestion Management Plan, the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the MPO's provisions for the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Public involvement is an integral part of the FBRMPO's planning efforts. It is our belief that sound transportation plans are a result of involving the public at multiple stages of the planning process. The MPO will hold a forty-five (45) day public comment period for amendments to the Public Involvement Policy and will seek input and feedback on the MPO's public involvement efforts.

2) Purpose, Goals and Objectives

The purpose of the FBRMPO Public Involvement Policy is to create an open decision making process whereby citizens have the opportunity to be involved in all stages of the transportation planning process. This policy is designed to ensure that transportation decisions will reflect public priorities. It seeks to promote an active role by the public in the development of transportation plans, programs, and projects from the early stages of the planning process to detailed project development. The MPO implements and designs a combination of different public involvement techniques to meet the diverse needs of the public.

The goals and objectives of the FBRMPO Public Involvement Policy include the following:

- Bring a broad cross-section of the public into the public policy and transportation planning decision-making process.
- Maintain public involvement from the early stages of the planning process through detailed project development.
- Use different combinations of public involvement techniques to meet the diverse needs of the public.
- Determine the public's knowledge of the metropolitan transportation system and the public's values and attitudes concerning transportation.
- Educate citizens and elected officials in order to increase general understanding of transportation issues.
- Make technical and other information available to the public.
- Establish a channel for an effective feedback process.
- Evaluate the public involvement process and procedures to assess their success at meeting requirements specified in the ISTEA, TEA-21, SAFTEA-LU, MAP-21 and the Interim FTA/FHWA *Guidance on Public Participation*.
- Carefully evaluate effectiveness of procedures used for public outreach and modify procedures following evaluation and public feedback.

3) Policy Elements

The FBRMPO's Public Involvement Policy comprises a number of sub-policies. All planning programs and activities are required to go through the MPO Board public process. In addition, the MPO will initiate

public involvement programs for the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), the Air Quality Conformity Determination (if needed), the Congestion Management Plan, the Planning Work Program (PWP) and the MPO's provisions for American with Disabilities Act (ADA). The final component of the Public Involvement Policy is the policy review element designed to ensure that the programs are meeting their goals.

B. Federal Requirements

The Federal laws and processes covering public participation in transportation planning include the following:

- FAST ACT: Fixing America's Surface Transportation
- MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (1994)
- Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (2000);
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the rehabilitation Act of 1973(Section 504), and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998(Section 508); and,
- The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.

1) MAP-21 and FAST Act

Under MAP-21 regulations, public involvement remains a hallmark of the planning process. Under Title 23, CFR 450.316 MPOs are required to require that MPOs establish, periodically review and update public involvement processes. Specific provisions should allow affected bodies with a reasonable opportunity to comment on transportation plans. These affected bodies include, but are not limited to, citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties. These federal regulations require an opportunity for public involvement to be provided throughout the planning process. MAP-21 requires that metropolitan area plans include a "participation plan", with a minimum public comment period of 45 days required when a Public Involvement Plan is updated. Plans involving federal participants must be made available for public review in an electronic format. The FAST Act continues all these federal regulations while explicitly adding public ports and certain private providers of transportation, including intercity bus operators and employer-based commuting programs to the list of interested parties that the MPO must provide reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation planning process.

2) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground 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." (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d). The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 clarified the intent of Title VI to include all programs and activities of Federal aid recipients and contractors whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not. Section 324 of the Federal Aid Highway Act, the enabling legislation of the Federal Highway Administration, prohibits discrimination based on sex. The French Broad River MPO works to ensure nondiscriminatory transportation planning in support of our mission to treat affected bodies equitably and to comply with federal law.

Effective public involvement is a key element in addressing Title VI in decision-making. This Public Participation Plan describes how the French Broad River MPO will disseminate vital agency information

and engage the public. We will seek out and consider the input and needs of interested parties and groups traditionally underserved by transportation systems who may face challenges accessing our services, such as minority and limited English proficient (LEP) persons. Underlying these efforts is our commitment to determining the most effective outreach methods for a given project or population.

General public involvement practices will include:

- Expanding traditional outreach methods. Think outside the box: Go to hair salons, barbershops, street fairs, etc.
- Providing for early, frequent and continuous engagement by the public.
- Use of social media and other resources as a way to gain public involvement
- Coordinating with community and faith-based organizations such as the Hispanic Liaison, educational institutions, and other entities to implement public engagement strategies that reach out specifically to members of affected minority and/or LEP communities.
- Providing opportunities for public participation through means other than written communication, such as personal interviews or use of audio or video recording devices to capture oral comments.
- Considering radio, television or newspaper ads on stations and in publications that serve LEP populations. Outreach to LEP persons could also include audio programming available on podcasts.

We will inform people of their rights under Title VI and related authorities with regard to our program. The primary means of achieving this will be posting and disseminating the policy statement and notice. Additional measures may include verbally announcing agency obligations and the public's rights at meetings, placing flyers at places frequented by targeted populations, and an equal opportunity tag-on at the end of radio announcements. The method of notification will be determined through an initial screening of the area.

Dissemination of Information

Information on Title VI and other programs will be crafted and disseminated to employees, contractors and subrecipients, stakeholders, and the general public. Public dissemination efforts may vary depending on factors present, but will generally include: posting public statements setting forth our nondiscrimination policy in eye-catching designs and locations; placing brochures in public places, such as government offices, transit facilities, and libraries; having nondiscrimination language within contracts; including nondiscrimination notices in meeting announcements and handouts; and displaying our Notice of Nondiscrimination at all our public meetings.

At a minimum, nondiscrimination information will be disseminated on our website and on posters in conspicuous areas at our office(s). Project-related information and our most current Title VI-related information will be maintained online.

3) Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (1994)

Executive Order 12898 requires federal agencies and their sub recipients achieve environmental justice as part of its mission. MPOs must identify and address as appropriate disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including interrelated social and economic effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations in the United States.

4) Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency

Executive Order 13166 requires public outreach to include people of limited English proficiency. Combined with nondiscrimination statutes, meaningful access would extend to people who cannot read and understand what is read: thus the need to include outreach to low-literate populations is needed as well. MPOs must work to provide “meaningful access” to their limited English proficiency applicants and beneficiaries.

5) The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 (Section 508)

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates that public facilities be made accessible to people with disabilities and has been the basis for requiring that transit buses and street curbs be retrofitted or reconstructed with appropriate equipment and design details. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) states that “no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under” any program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance. The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 (Section 508) states that Federal agencies must ensure that electronic and information technology is accessible to employees and members of the public with disabilities to the extent it does not pose an “undue burden.”

6) The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 establishes a timetable and program to improve the nation's air quality, emphasizes mobile source emissions, and requires the Environmental Protection Agency to invoke penalties if states fail to submit adequate plans to attain standards. Should the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) become designated as non-attainment for air quality, and become required to make conformity determination on its Transportation Plan, it will comply with the *Air Quality Conformity Public Involvement Procedure* found in Section V:E of this plan.

II. Regular Public Involvement Opportunities

A. MPO Board and TCC Meetings

The French Broad River MPO Board, formerly known as the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) holds advertised meetings on a regular schedule. These meetings are open to members of the public and, upon request, anyone can be placed on the MPO Board mailing list. At the beginning of each regular meeting, the Board provides time to receive public comments as a set part of its agenda. The public and concerned parties are welcome to provide public comment through telephone, email and in writing to MPO staff at anytime. The meeting schedule is established at the beginning of each year and approved by the MPO Board. It is accessible through the MPO website or by contacting MPO staff.

Formal MPO business is conducted during MPO Board (TAC) and TCC meetings. MPO Board and TCC meetings allot time for public comment. These public comments are documented and become a part of the meeting minutes. In the event that an individual seeks to address a specific agenda item, they must sign up at least ten minutes prior to the meeting to comment on that specific agenda item. The MPO will allow the opportunity for members of the public to provide comments during the allotted public comment periods.

The Chair may require that all public comments be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. The public will be made aware of any time limits before public comment commences, at the discretion of the Chair. This procedure is applicable for both general public comment periods and public hearings. The chair has the discretion to address anyone wishing to speak on a particular agenda item whose name is not on the list previously mentioned. In the event that the public is unable to make comments during a meeting time, comments may be submitted in written, verbal or electronic form. The Board will be made aware of written, verbal or electronic comments received prior to taking action on the applicable business item.

B. Public Comment Response

The MPO Board (formerly known as TAC) typically acknowledges public comments in one of several ways. The Board may incorporate a summary of public comments and the MPO's response, as an appendix, into the specific planning document. Or, depending on the number of comments, the MPO Board may instruct the planning staff to respond directly by letter. Acknowledging public comments is a way to let the public know that its comments are being addressed and is part of the public involvement feedback process.

MPO staff can separate requests for data submitted by the public from the public comments. MPO staff can respond to requests for data submitted by phone or in writing directly, without submitting those to the MPO Board for review. Where the distinction is not clear, MPO staff will present the comment to the Board.

III. Public Involvement Toolkit

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to public involvement. A variety of comprehensive and targeted public participation methods will be used to facilitate meaningful public involvement. Methods for engaging stakeholders and target audiences, including traditionally underserved and excluded populations (i.e. minorities, youth, low-income, the disabled, etc.) will include the following:

- A. Identify and Build Relations with Stakeholders
- B. Public Relations and Outreach
- C. Outreach to Non-Participating Minority, Low-Income, Limited English-Proficiency and Low-Literacy Populations
- D. Develop an Outreach and Education Program
- E. Establish a Speaker's Bureau
- F. Maintain Website
- G. Produce and Distribute Newsletters
- H. Create and Maintain New Forms of Technology and Media
- I. Produce and Distribute Brochure
- J. Hold Public Meetings, Open Houses and Information Workshops
- K. Hold Small Group Meetings
- L. Provide for Public Input at FBRMPO meetings
- M. Conduct Surveys

A. Identify and Build Relations with Stakeholders

In order to create and implement transportation plans with long-lasting benefits, appropriate stakeholders must be identified. MPO staff will seek to identify stakeholders that are critical to the success of a specific transportation plan or policy. MPO staff will create a Community Stakeholder Contact List. A Community Stakeholder is defined as any person or group that is affected by a transportation plan, program, or project, including those who may not be aware they are affected. In accordance with MAP-21, stakeholders will include "citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties. Citizens include the general public, environmental health, neighborhood, citizen, and civic organizations, and traditionally underserved communities such as people with disabilities, and /or low-income, minority, and elderly.

B. Public Relations and Outreach

Public relations and outreach (PRO) strategies aim to conduct well-planned, inclusive and meaningful public participation events that foster good relations and mutual trust through shared decision-making with the communities we serve.

- We will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected
- Public events will aim to be collaborative, fun and educational for all, rather than confrontational and prescriptive.
- Activities of the FBRMPO will be advertised by utilizing various media and social outlets. These activities may include distributing press releases to the media, inviting the media to regular Board and TCC meetings, conducting radio interviews, posting public involvement activities on the MPO website, and presenting drafts of plans at social events. MPO staff will develop publicity strategies appropriate to the scope and timeframe of the specific project or plan.
- A current list of media outlets such as mainstream local and ethnic radio stations, newspapers, and small community-based publications will be established and maintained. Our current list is available in Appendix C. A “listserv” is maintained that includes citizens, the clerks of each county and municipality and other stakeholders. Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization (LOSRO) activities are also publicized through this email list.
- Abstract objectives will be avoided in meeting announcements. Specific “attention-grabbing” reasons to attend will be used, such as “Help us figure out how to relieve congestion on (corridor name), Let us know on (date)”.
- Efforts will be made to show how the input of participants can, or did, influence final decisions.
- We will do our best to form decision-making committees that look like and relate to the populations we serve
- We will seek out and identify community contacts and partner with local community- and faith-based organizations that can represent, and help us disseminate information to, target constituencies
- Presentations will be made to interested civic organizations on French Broad River MPO activities, the transportation planning process in general, or specific transportation projects. Presentations will be made by French Broad River MPO staff and/or NCDOT staff.
- Public Outreach activities will include efforts to involve traditionally underserved groups (i.e., minorities, elderly, low-income persons) in the transportation planning process. These efforts may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - Identifying areas in the French Broad River MPO region with concentrations of minority, elderly, and low income populations
 - Including organizations that deal directly with minority groups on the Stakeholder List
 - Posting notification of meetings, public hearings, and open houses in county health departments and senior centers
 - Publishing notification of meetings, public hearings, and open houses in Spanish
- Demographic data will be requested during public meetings, surveys, and from community contacts and committee members.

C. Outreach to Non-Participating Minority, Low-Income, Limited English-Proficiency and Low-Literacy Populations

MPO staff will create and periodically update a Community Stakeholder Contact List. The Community Stakeholder Contact List will include neighborhood liaisons and representatives of organizations serving the populations historically underrepresented in the transportation planning process including

minority, low-income, Limited English Proficiency and Low-Literacy Population. MPO staff will consult with the Community Stakeholders on the list on methods and opportunities to better publicize transportation planning efforts and opportunities for public input in the future.

D. Develop an Outreach and Education Program

Public involvement is at its best when the general public is thoroughly informed of the complex issues surrounding a project. Such outreach will also include informing the public and other agencies about the roles and responsibilities of the MPO. When necessary, the MPO will develop outreach and educational programs to inform various parties of the public involvement process for a particular project or to provide technical framework. English and, when necessary, Spanish materials will be a part of this program. Adequate outreach also includes taking different meeting times and locations into consideration in an effort to reach a diverse cross section of the affected population.

E. Establish a Speaker's Bureau

The Speaker's Bureau will respond to requests from civic groups, professional organizations, neighborhood associations, and other groups for presentations about the regional transportation planning process and transportation plans. The Bureau will consist of MPO staff, TCC members, Land of Sky Staff and designated volunteers. The MPO will market the availability of the Bureau to local groups and organizations.

F. Maintain Website

The FBRMPO website is a tool that provides timely information to the public. Various Transportation plans are accessible through our website in conjunction with additional resources. Interested parties also have the ability to access updates on the status of specific plans and projects, along with the time remaining within public comment periods. A calendar is used to provide dates of upcoming meetings and public involvement opportunities. Anyone can access the FBRMPO website at www.frenchbroadrivermpo.org

G. Produce and Distribute Newsletters

The FBRMPO will provide information to be included as part of Land-of-Sky Regional Newsletter to keep the general public and agencies informed of MPO activities. The newsletter is distributed through e-mail on a monthly basis. Citizens and agencies have the opportunity to remain engaged in the public involvement process through updates provided in our newsletter. In addition to the newsletter, regular updates will be provided regarding upcoming events and projects through "e-news."

H. Create and Maintain New Forms of Technology and Media

MPO staff seek to utilize all available forms of media in an effort to increase public involvement. Government agencies are taking advantage of progressive and interactive media formats to communicate with citizens. Strategies to encourage public input may include social marketing mediums such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs. Such mediums are not a required aspect of each transportation public participation plan, but efforts to include them will be made when deemed appropriate.

I. Produce and Distribute Brochure

A brochure will be created to provide interested parties with information about the FBRMPO and the planning process. Copies of the brochure will be made available at FBRMPO offices and online. Additional translations will be maintained if deemed necessary. MPO staff may find it appropriate to develop a brochure specific to a project, MPO policy or plan.

J. Hold Public Meetings, Open Houses and Information Workshops

“Public meeting” refers to any meeting open to the public, such as hearings, charrettes, open houses and board meetings.

- Public meetings will be conducted at times, locations, and facilities that are convenient and accessible.
- Meeting materials will be available in a variety of predetermined formats to serve diverse audiences.
- An assortment of advertising means may be employed to inform the community of public meetings.
- Assistance to persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency will be provided, as required.

MPO staff may decide to hold open houses to provide the public with information regarding the transportation planning process, or to provide further information about a plan prior to a public hearing. These open houses are informal and allow the public to engage with the material in a relaxed format. The format may include but is not limited to maps of projects, PowerPoint presentations, and surveys. MPO staff will be available to facilitate questions from the public or organization representative. Open houses also provide an opportunity to expand the MPO mailing list. Information workshops are topic specific and conducted on an as-needed basis. These workshops are informal and allow MPO staff to gain immediate feedback that may be incorporated in a transportation plan.

MPO staff may hold public meetings virtually, remotely, or by means other than in-person as needed. Offering meetings by alternative means provides an additional and convenient way for citizens to provide input. When possible, recordings of the virtual public meeting(s) should be posted on the FBRMPO website. Adequate notice should still be given for alternative or virtual public meetings, including a link or means to access to access the meeting. If the meeting is held virtually, this would include a link to the meeting and a call-in option.

K. Hold Small Group Meetings

A “small group meeting” is a targeted measure where a meeting is held with a specific group, usually at their request or consent. These are often closed meetings, as they will typically occur on private property at the owner’s request.

- If it is determined that a targeted group has not been afforded adequate opportunities to participate, the group will be contacted to inquire about possible participation methods, including a group meeting with them individually
- Unless unusual circumstances or safety concerns exist, hold the meeting at a location of the target group’s choosing
- Share facilitation duties or relinquish them to members of the target group
- Small group discussion formats may be integrated into larger group public meetings and workshops. When this occurs, the smaller groups will be as diverse as the participants in the room.

L. Conduct Surveys

Surveys and focus groups allow MPO staff to directly collect feedback from the general public. Strategies for disseminating surveys will consider differences in language and technology access among affected citizens. Some methods may include inserting surveys in water or power bills, and providing links to surveys on government websites. MPO staff may also gather small groups of citizens to create focus groups that will provide feedback regarding a specific topic or transportation plan. The composition of a focus group may include residents of an affected neighborhood.

Surveys will be translated into languages other than English, when appropriate as outlined in the Title VI plan.

IV. Public Involvement Structure

A. Open Meetings

All MPO Committee meetings will be open to the public and subject to the North Carolina Open Meetings Law. All materials presented during MPO Committee meetings will be public record and made available for review at the Land-of-Sky office. Copies of archived records can be made available upon request. Emergency or special meetings, should they ever be needed, will follow the emergency meetings requirements of the law, as well.

B. Access by Persons with Disabilities

All MPO meetings will be held in facilities that are accessible to people with disabilities. The FBRMPO website will be in compliance with the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 (Section 508). Where permitted, clear directional signs will be posted at outdoor entrances to buildings.

C. Adequate Notice

The FBRMPO will provide at least a week notice to citizens and media outlets of meetings in accordance with North Carolina Open Meetings Law. Meeting notices will be posted on the FBRMPO website and publicized during FBRMPO events. The meeting schedule for the year is also posted outside of Land-of-Sky offices and on the FBRMPO website.

D. Public Comments

Public Comments may be obtained in a number of ways. The FBRMPO will accept comments in writing, through email, by fax, with TTY (teletypewriter) or TDD (telecommunications device for the deaf), verbally at a public meeting or during a MPO public outreach opportunity.

E. Online, Electronic, Alternative Meeting Formats

During States of Emergency or similar scenario, MPO meetings may be held online, electronically, or by other means than in-person. In such instances, the MPO must take reasonable steps to make the meetings publicly accessible. An electronic meeting is simply a regular, special, emergency, or recessed meeting conducted by electronic means.

To the extent feasible:

- If held virtually, meetings should be streamed live on an online platform that allows the public to see and hear the meetings.
- A phone number should be provided so that people without internet access can call to listen to the meetings.
- Meeting agenda, materials, and presentations should be posted online in advance of the meeting with adequate notice given

- If public comments can't be made in person, provide means for people to provide their comment by phone call, email, or video. The deadline for public comments should be no sooner than 48 hours prior to the meeting.

G. Online Public Participation Guidelines

The MPO uses online participation as a limited public forum for stakeholders and members of the public to conduct orderly and civil discourse. To promote that objective, the MPO will try to monitor, but cannot take responsibility for, all postings and comments on MPO social media. We ask that comments and/or postings be clean, respectful and truthful. Comments, postings, and links from non-MPO sources that appear on the MPO's sponsored social media or digital media sites (or links within those comments or postings) do not reflect views or act as an endorsement by the MPO of specific viewpoints, policies, practices, or products.

Specific questions submitted through our social or digital media platforms are not guaranteed a response. For questions or inquiries, please also use the MPOs contact information as posted on the website. The information will only be maintained as an active file as long as needed to respond to the request. However, information may be archived for historical purposes or made available for North Carolina Open Records Request, but will not be used beyond the stated purpose of the communication and will not be shared or distributed to third parties with any identifiable personal information.

When using our online platforms, we want people to feel safe in expressing diverse opinions and beliefs. Therefore, material that the MPO determines is in violation of this policy, including unlawfully disseminated materials or postings that constitute a possible crime in North Carolina, makes threats; abuses, or harasses or seeks to intimidate others; uses fear or disseminates misinformation, may be removed or archived. All social media platforms are subject to the laws of North Carolina. The MPO reserves the right to remove any comments or posts from their social media sites that contain the following:

- Vulgar, abusive, or threatening language
- Defamatory statements
- Nudity in profile pictures or attachments
- Personal attacks, hate speech, or offensive terminology that is targeted against individuals or groups of individuals
- Suggestions or encouragement of illegal activity
- Unsolicited business proposals, endorsements, promotion of commercial services, products, or entities
- Infringement of copyrights, trademarks, or other intellectual property
- Endorsement of political parties, candidates, or groups
- Off-topic comments/posts, spam or links to unrelated material

H. Use or Reuse of Information

Information may be printed or downloaded from the website for non-commercial, personal use only, provided all copyrights, licenses and other proprietary notices contained on the material are retained. The FBRMPO logo should not be reused without explicit written permission. No person may sell, distribute, modify, transmit, reuse, repost, use or create derivative works based on the content of the website in whole or part for any purpose without the written permission in each instance from FBRMPO staff or the owner of such content.

V. Implementation Plan

A. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP/LRTP)

1) Minimum MTP/LRTP Public Involvement Procedure

French Broad River MPO will initiate a major Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP, previously known as LRTP or Long Range Transportation Plan) update process as required by federal regulations. A Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP/LRTP) is updated at least once every five years in air quality attainment areas and once every four years for non-attainment areas. Elements of the Plan, and/or amendments will meet all current Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) requirements.

A work program and schedule for the MTP (LRTP) update process will be developed by the TCC and provided to the MPO Board for approval. It will be made available to the public for their information. The work program will detail the strategy for the Plan update process including work elements and a tentative schedule. The TCC and the Board may elect to receive public comment and involvement on the work program.

The French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization will provide opportunity for meaningful public involvement in the development and update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP/LRTP). At least one public meeting on the draft MTP/LRTP will be held prior to final approval. The public comment period will be for a minimum 30 day period, effective from the date of the public notice publication. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the FBRMPO. The FBRMPO's contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice. The FBRMPO will assemble all comments and forward them to the Board. The MPO Board shall hold at least one public hearing for the Transportation Plan. The availability of the Plan will be publicized using our media resources provided in Appendix C.

2) Purpose, Goals and Objectives of MTP/LRTP Public Involvement Process

The purpose of the MTP/LRTP public involvement process is to establish and implement strategies to inform and involve citizens in the development and update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP/LRTP). The Policy is meant to encourage public ownership of the Transportation Plan. The goal of the program is to ensure that policy decisions will reflect the values, needs, and priorities of those affected by the decisions (i.e. the public).

The public review and participation process is designed to provide adequate opportunities for citizens and public officials to be involved in the FBRMPO MTP/LRTP development. The public participation is designed to provide gradual progression from the general information (such as vision setting and/or formulation of goals, objectives and policies) pertaining to the plan to specific information regarding alternatives and plan selections. Each public forum or input technique will use information progressively collected at previous "forums" concluding with the adoption of the Transportation Plan. The goals and objectives of MTP/LRTP Public Involvement Process are as follows:

- Encourage citizens to take a proactive role in the development of Transportation Plans.
- Bring a broad cross-section of members of the public into the public policy and transportation planning decision-making process.
- Educate the public and elected officials in order to increase public understanding both the options and constraints in transportation alternatives.

- Determine public concerns and/or perceived impacts of Transportation Plan elements. Determine which elements of the Long Range Transportation Plan would support or diminish the citizens' desired lifestyle. Establish a channel for an effective feedback process.

3) MTP/LRTP Public Involvement Techniques

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan update will be subject to a public comment process which at a minimum will include the following:

- Posting a copy of the draft MTP documents throughout different stages of the planning process on the FBRMPO website
- Publicizing the MTP update and request for public input through local media outlets
- Holding a public comment period for a minimum of 30 days on the draft MTP
- At least one public meeting will be held during the 30-day public review and comment period
- Upon completion of a 30 day public review and comment period, a public hearing will be held at the MPO Board meeting prior to final adoption of the plan

As a method of increasing public involvement and participation in the process, the MTP Public Involvement techniques may also include any or all of the following techniques:

- Information dissemination, notification of meetings and publication of proposed plans.
- Proactive participation techniques may be employed to involve citizens and provide fuller access to information and technical data on the Transportation Plan. The techniques may include, but not be limited to, public meetings/hearings, surveys, focus groups, newsletters, public service announcements, charrettes, transportation advisory group, mass media, etc.
- Public meetings may be held to formulate a vision for the Transportation Plan Development, provide the public background information on the metropolitan transportation system and other issues as well as the proposed framework of the Transportation Plan update process, and to receive citizen input.
- Public meetings (forums) designed to solicit public comment may be held at various locations around the metropolitan area to encourage the greatest public participation. Public meetings will be held at a location which is accessible to persons with disabilities and preferably located on a transit route.
- Copies of the draft Transportation Plan will be distributed to member jurisdictions, citizen groups and agencies, and will be placed in the local libraries. The plan will also be accessible through the MPO website. Notification of the draft Transportation Plan may be provided through various media outlets.
- The notification will inform the public of the availability of the draft Transportation Plan for review and comment where to send written comments, and addresses and phone numbers of contact persons. The notices also will include an announcement stating that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (i.e. having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator, or other provisions as requested). Additionally, the notice will inform the public that copies of the draft Transportation Plan are on file for public review at the Land-of-Sky Regional Council Office, the member government's municipal offices, available in a PDF format for downloading from the FBRMPO website and at branch libraries throughout the area.
- The public comment period will cover a minimum 30 day period, effective from the date of the public notice publication. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the FBRMPO. The MPO's contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice.
- Involvement of the public in key decision points may be desirable. Decision points are those stages where the MPO Board may consider endorsement of the work in progress or take action on particular work elements. These may include some of the following:
 - a) Formulation of vision, goals and objectives

- b) Review of multi-modal goals and elements
- c) Review and approval of socio-economic and demographic projections
- d) Review and determination of transportation deficiencies
- e) Evaluation of alternatives and selection of preferred option

4) Amendments to the MTP/LRTP

Amendments to the MTP can occur outside of a five-year MTP/LRTP update cycle when funding sources change, a project moves between prioritization tiers, project scope and termini change and the purpose and need for a project change. Opportunities to comment on proposed amendments to the MTP/LRTP will be publicized by sending out a notice of the proposed amendments to the public.

Any significant revisions, or amendments, to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP/LRTP) will be subject to a public comment process which includes the following:

- Posting a copy of the proposed amendments on the FBRMPO website
- Publicizing the proposed amendment and request for public input through local media outlets
- Holding a public review and comment period for a minimum of 20 days
- Upon completion of a 20 day public review and comment period, public comments will be accepted at the MPO Board meeting prior to final MTP/LRTP amendments approval

5) Modifications to the MTP/LRTP

When a change that is administrative in nature is needed to update the MTP, a MTP modification takes place. This includes minor changes to project/project phase costs, minor changes to funding sources of previously-included projects, and minor changes to project/project phase initiation date. Additionally, this may include non-substantial items such as grammar edits and clarifying text. No public participation or hearing is required for administration modifications.

B. Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

1) Transportation Improvement Program Overview

The Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the document that describes the funding and scheduling of transportation improvement projects (highway, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit capital and operating assistance) using state and federal funds. The TIP serves as the project selection document for transportation projects and, therefore, is the implementation mechanism by which the objectives of the Transportation Plan are reached. The public participation process for the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program described here is also used to satisfy the public participation process for the FTA Transit Program of Projects for the following grantees: City of Asheville and Henderson County.

MAP-21 and the FAST Act mandates an opportunity for public review of the TIP. The following is the proposed public involvement procedure for the French Broad River Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program.

The Metropolitan TIP and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) must match exactly in projects, schedule, and scope, for projects to move forward with federal funding. It is therefore critical that close coordination be held with the State to assure that both parties are in agreement with the program and thus allow projects and programs (including transit elements) to move forward. The TIP and STIP are planning documents and do not include design details. It is critical to note that once programmed in the TIP and STIP, activities such as land use decisions by the public and private sectors, scheduling, environmental analysis, design and other activities begin take place. Therefore the program should be carefully thought out, and not casually changed.

The TIP and STIP updates operate on a two-year cycle in North Carolina. In the first year, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) will prepare a Prioritization List (previously known as Priority Needs List, or PNL), which lays out the projects desired to be included in the last years of the TIP program. FBRMPO will consider projects in the MTP, CTP and in the locally-adopted plans for inclusion on the Prioritization List first. Further, should the MPO desire to consider a change in the schedule or scope of a project, this should be clearly communicated at this time. As the TIP and STIP are fiscally constrained documents, any movement forward on or changes in current projects must identify a corresponding delay in projects also within the area.

The Prioritization List shall be provided to the State for consideration and inclusion in the draft STIP. The FBRMPO shall coordinate with the State with regards to the project changes and additions desired by the MPO. Upon development of the draft STIP, the State shall provide a subset of the STIP that covers the FBRMPO area to the MPO. It is anticipated that the resulting document be appropriate to be released as the draft TIP for public input.

Should there be substantial problems with the draft STIP in the eyes of FBRMPO, the MPO shall immediately open discussions with the State on the discrepancies. The TCC shall recommend to the MPO Board (TAC) what should be used for the TIP, and the public involvement process.

2) Minimum TIP Public Involvement Procedures

Prior to adopting a TIP, FBRMPO Board will consider and adopt a Prioritization list of projects. See section 3 below for additional information on Prioritization List.

A minimum public comment period for TIP adoption shall be 30 days. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the FBRMPO. The MPO's contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice. The FBRMPO public participation process will meet all FTA standards for public involvement in transit planning and will assemble all comments regarding transit and other transportation considerations for the MPO Board (TAC). FBRMPO shall advertise a draft TIP prior to adoption on the website and via regional newsmedia. The Board shall hold at least one public hearing for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prior to adoption of the draft TIP. Additional steps included in the TIP public involvement process will be as follows:

- The State shall produce a draft STIP and provide a subset of that document to FBRMPO for consideration as the draft TIP. The TCC will develop and review the document and recommend to the Board if it is appropriate to be used as the draft TIP. Should the TCC and Board approve the document, it will become the draft TIP.
- The FBRMPO Board will publish the draft TIP for public review and comment. Copies of the draft TIP will be distributed to TCC and Board members. Each jurisdiction will also have copies available for public review.
- The public comments will be assembled and presented to the FBRMPO TCC and the FBRMPO Board. The Board will hold a public hearing on the draft TIP. The public hearing will be held at a location which is accessible to persons with disabilities. Public comments will be addressed and considered in the adoption of the TIP.
- Written public comments and their responses will be published as an appendix to the final Metropolitan TIP.

3) Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

If a substantial change is made to the TIP, such TIP amendments will be available for public review and comment. A 20-day public comment period will be provided for a TIP amendment or substantial change before MPO Board (TAC) approval. Public comments can also be presented to the MPO Board at the meeting before adoption. Any comments received during the public review period will be summarized

and presented to the MPO Board. A TIP amendment is classified as substantial if one of the following criteria apply:

- Change in project cost beyond a predetermined threshold; increases in highway projects that exceed both \$2 million and 25% of the original cost and may affect fiscal constraint
- Change in federally-funded or state-funded regionally significant transit, bicycle or pedestrian project that exceeds either \$1 million or 25% of the project cost
- Any addition or deletion of a federally funded or state funded regionally significant project to the first 4 years of the TIP
- Change in the project design or scope that significantly changes the termini or project type, purpose, or number of through lanes on a non-exempt (for transportation conformity purposes) project
- Any addition, deletion or significant modification of non-traditional funding sources to a project (traditional sources of revenue include federal, state, or local government tax revenues. Non-traditional sources include state bonding and/or private participation)
- Project schedule shifts that move ROW, major capital acquisitions, or construction authorization dates either in or out of the 4 year TIP time window
- Project schedule shifts in years 1 through 4 that move project completion dates across Horizon Years as determined by the Long Range Transportation Plan
- Project schedule shifts to incorporate the project from an out-year into the current (four-year) TIP
- Modifications to a project's scope that will cause a revision of the NEPA documentation or will alter any NEPA determination

4) TIP Modifications

When a TIP change is not substantial enough to trigger a TIP amendment, a TIP administrative modification takes place. A TIP administrative modification is a process recommended in the FHWA/FTA/NCDOT Joint STIP Review in 2011 to streamline the project process. The MPO Board (TAC) will be notified about TIP Modifications for information purposes but they will not need to be approved by the Board. Additionally, a public hearing and public notice are not required for modifications that meet the criteria outlined below. A TIP administrative modification takes place under one of the following criteria:

- Any change to projects in years 5 or later
- Minor change to project descriptions, scopes, sponsor funding
- Minor cost increases in highway projects that do not exceed both \$2 million and 25% of the original project cost
- Minor cost change in federally-funded or state-funded regionally significant transit, bicycle or pedestrian project that do not exceed either \$1 million or 25% of the original project cost
- Funding source changes between traditional funding sources (i.e. substituting available Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds for FTA section 5307 formula transit funds)
- Projects approved for Emergency Relief funds do not generally have to be included in the TIP, so any changes made for emergency projects may be considered minor modifications.
- A change requested by NCDOT that is considered an administrative modification on their behalf that does not require NCDOT Board of Transportation approval
- Modifications to TIP projects, including a project as a phased improvement to a larger project, as long as the modifications do not materially change the project's intended function, nature, costs or environmental impact.
- Data entry or typographical errors.
- In accordance with federal rules and regulations, in the event that the State of North Carolina or the federal government declares a state of emergency, FBRMPO may process any TIP

modification or amendment that is related to mitigation of the emergency as an administrative modification.

C. Prioritization List Public Involvement Process

Prioritization List serves as the bridge between the long term plans (such as MTP, CTP, and locally-adopted transit, bicycle and pedestrian and other transportation plans) and the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan. The FBRMPO TCC will develop a draft Prioritization List from the local project priorities of the MPO jurisdictions as reflected in the MTP, CTP and in the locally-adopted plans. Each MPO municipality and county should provide to the MPO their priorities for consideration, and an indication of the plan where those projects are reflected (MTP, CTP or locally-adopted plan). Other modes of projects that may not be listed in the MTP specifically may be selected due to its ability to meet the intent of the MTP (i.e. transit, bicycle, pedestrian, enhancement projects included in locally-adopted plans). These may be developed as each governing agency sees fit (for example, they may come from staff, the elected boards, or the elected boards with public involvement).

Public Involvement Process for the Prioritization List will include the following steps:

- After consideration and preliminary adoption by the MPO Board (TAC), the draft Prioritization List will be published for a minimum two-week (14-day) public comment period and the notice will be advertised using our media resources provided in [Appendix C](#).¹
- The notices for the public comment period and the public hearing will include an announcement stating that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (i.e. having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator or other provisions as requested). The Prioritization List will be on file for review at the Land-of-Sky Regional Council Office, and available in a PDF format for downloading from the FBRMPO website. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the FBRMPO. The FBRMPO's contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice. The FBRMPO will assemble all comments and forward comments to the MPO Board.
- The Board will hold a public hearing on the draft Prioritization List. The public hearing will be held at a location which is accessible to persons with disabilities. The Board will approve a final Prioritization List after considering the public comments received. The Prioritization List shall be submitted to the NCDOT at or before the NCDOT public hearings for input into the STIP. The MPO Board may elect to open a dialogue with the State on specific project priorities.

D. Air Quality Conformity Determination

1) Air Quality Conformity Introduction

Should the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) become designated as non-attainment for air quality, and become required to make conformity determination on its Transportation Plan, the following shall apply. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) assists the MPO in making a conformity determination by performing a systems level conformity analysis on the highway portion of the fiscally constrained Transportation Plan. The Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program is a subset of the Transportation Plan and is therefore covered by the conformity analysis.

¹ Under NCDOT Strategic Prioritization Process known as SPOT,, a list of projects ranked by the MPO, with points assigned, will be considered the Prioritization List. The full list of projects initially submitted by the MPO for SPOT scoring will not be considered as the Prioritization List.

2) Public Involvement Procedure for the Air Quality Determination

The FBRMPO in conjunction and cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Transportation will prepare an air quality conformity analysis for the FBRMPO MTP and/or TIP. Air quality conformity analysis will include the following public involvement steps:

- The FBRMPO Technical Coordinating Committee will receive the draft Conformity Report from NCDOT, review it, and forward it to the MPO Board. The Board will then publish the draft Conformity Report and supporting or accompanying MTP and Metropolitan TIP for public review and comment.
- Copies of a draft Conformity Report will be distributed to the Board members. Each jurisdiction will also have copies available for public review. Notices regarding the draft Air Quality Conformity Report will be advertised by the FBRMPO using our media contact resources. The notice will inform the public that a draft Conformity Report has been published by the FBRMPO and that copies are available for review at the Land of Sky Regional Council office, at municipal offices of MPO member governments, available in a PDF format for downloading from the FBRMPO website, and in hard copy form at branch libraries throughout the area. The notices will include an announcement stating that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (i.e. having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator or other provisions as requested).
- The public review period will be a minimum 30 day period, effective from the date of public notice publication. Written comment will be received during the public review period, and will be directed to the FBRMPO. The FBRMPO contact person, phone number and e-mail will be included in the public notice.
- The public comments will be assembled and presented to the FBRMPO Board. The Board will hold a public hearing on the draft Air Quality Conformity Report. The MPO will strive to hold public hearings at a location accessible to persons with disabilities and located on a transit route. Public comments will be addressed and considered in the Air Quality Conformity Determination and included as an appendix to the report.
- The Air Quality Conformity Determination is valid for four years, unless changes are made to the Transportation Plan (or Metropolitan TIP) that would have an impact on the air quality analysis. If such changes are made a new analysis needs to be conducted, including the public involvement procedure outlined above.

E. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

MAP-21 requires that each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) prepare an annual work program known as the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The UPWP must identify the MPO planning tasks to be undertaken with the use of federal transportation funds, including highway and transit tasks.

The purpose of public involvement in the Planning Work Program process is to keep the public apprised of the planning activities to be undertaken by the Metropolitan Planning Organization and to encourage receipt of public input on these activities.

UPWP Public Involvement Process includes the following steps:

- The Distribution Formula for FTA Section 5303 (Formerly Section 8) and FHWA Planning Funds for the appropriate federal fiscal year are submitted to the MPO Board for approval. The MPO Board meetings are open to the public and comments on the Distribution Formula may be received at this time.
- The local jurisdictions will prepare a list of tasks and funding for the federal fiscal year according to the approved Distribution Formula. These lists are submitted to the FBRMPO for compilation into a draft Planning Work Program.
- The draft Unified Planning Work Program is reviewed by the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC). The TCC meetings are open to the public. The TCC then endorses a draft UPWP and

forwards the document to the MPO Board. No public hearing or public notice is required for the UPWP.

- The draft UPWP is then reviewed by the MPO Board. Public comments may be provided at this time. The draft is sent to the Public Transportation Division for comments.
- The final UPWP comes back again to the MPO Board for approval. Upon MPO Board approval, the UPWP is then forwarded on to the State and FHWA/FTA.

The MPO Board (TAC) will be notified about UPWP modifications and amendments.

F. Congestion Management Process and Congestion Management Plan (CMP)

A Congestion Management Plan (CMP) is a management system and process used by an MPO to improve traffic operations and safety by using strategies that reduce vehicle miles traveled during peak commuting hours and provide other congestion relief. A CMP usually identifies low-cost improvements with short timeframes (5-10 years), in comparison to traditional infrastructure projects that can cost significantly more and have longer timeframes.

The CMP is federally required to be updated and adopted every four years. The public involvement process for the CMP at a minimum will include:

- Holding and publicizing a 30-day public review and comment period; including posting a copy of the draft CMP document on the FBRMPO website
- Consultation with employers, private and nonprofit providers of public transportation, transportation management organizations, and organizations that provide JARC or job-related services to low-income individuals. This may take place during a public meeting and/or a small group meeting(s) as outlined in section III-J and III-K.
- Upon completion of the 30-day public review and comment period, the MPO Board will accept comments during the public comment period prior to final adoption of the plan
- The MPO Board (TAC) will be notified about CMP modifications and amendments. A public hearing and public notice are not required for CMP amendments and modifications.

G. Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP), Special Studies and similar planning programs

Various programs carried out by the MPO including but not limited to the LAPP and Special Studies are undertaken periodically to address specific modes, issues, target areas, or corridors. These studies are included and funded as part of the UPWP and typically identify issues, concerns, or desires that are relevant to a specific segment of the population or to a particular geographic area within the county. Each of these planning programs has a specific public engagement and outreach plan to involve the appropriate participants and stakeholders.

VI. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Provisions

All notices for planning activities of the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization will include an announcement that states that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (i.e. having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator or other provisions requested). Notices for the public comment period and the public hearing will be advertised using the media list described in Appendix C Public meetings will be held in locations accessible to persons with disabilities and will be located near or on a transit route if possible.

FBRMPO staff will utilize the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services database of sign language interpreters in our region to secure a sign language interpreter for a scheduled meeting upon request. Currently the database is available at <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dsdhh/directories.htm>

VII. Title VI Plan

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI provides that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground 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” (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

This plan is adopted by both the FBRMPO and the Land of Sky Regional Council as the LPA. The FBRMPO adheres to the plan for Title VI-related issues and includes the Title VI Plan in this document by this reference.

VIII. Limited English Proficiency Plan

This plan was developed to guide FBRMPO in its public outreach and comply with Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (2000) and is included in this plan by this reference.

Appendices

Appendix A

FBRMPO Public Participation Timelines (as amended 01/28/2021)

Type of Planning Document	Update	Amendment	Administrative Modification
<p align="center">Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP/also known as LRTP)</p>	<p align="center">Public Review and Comment Period to last 30 days prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">Public Review and Comment Period to last 20 days prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">No public participation required for administrative modifications</p>
	<p align="center">At least one public meeting during the 30 days public review period prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">Public Comments accepted prior to approval</p>	
	<p align="center">Public Hearing on the MTP/LRTP held during the MPO Board Meeting prior to final approval</p>		
<p align="center">Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)</p>	<p align="center">Public Review and Comment Period to last 30 days prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">Public Review and Comment Period to last 20 days prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">No public participation required for administrative modifications</p>
	<p align="center">Public Hearing on the TIP held during the MPO Board Meeting prior to final approval</p>	<p align="center">Public Comments accepted prior to approval</p>	
<p align="center">Prioritization List</p>	<p align="center">Public Review and Comment Period to last 14 days after initial MPO Board approval</p>	<p align="center">Public Review and Comment Period to last 14 days after initial MPO Board approval</p>	<p align="center">No public participation required</p>
	<p align="center">Public Hearing held during the MPO Board Meeting prior to final approval</p>	<p align="center">Public Comments accepted prior to approval</p>	
<p align="center">Public Involvement Policy (PIP)</p>	<p align="center">Public Review and Comment Period to last 45 days prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">Public Review and Comment Period to last 45 days prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">Committee Meeting; Public Comments accepted prior to approval</p>
	<p align="center">Public Comments accepted prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">Public Comments accepted prior to approval</p>	
<p align="center">Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)</p>	<p align="center">Committee Meeting; Public Comments accepted prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">Committee Meeting; Public Comments accepted prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">No public participation required</p>
<p align="center">Congestion Management Process (CMP)</p>	<p align="center">Public Review and Comment Period to last 30 days prior to approval; Public Hearing held during the MPO Board Meeting prior to final approval</p>	<p align="center">Committee Meeting; Public Comments accepted prior to approval</p>	<p align="center">No public participation required</p>

FBRMPO Public Involvement Policy Appendix B: Glossary

A

Administrative Modification A minor revision to a long-range statewide transportation or metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP that includes minor changes to project/project phase costs, minor changes to funding sources of previously included projects, and minor changes to project/project phase initiation dates. An administrative modification is a revision that does not require public review and comment, re-demonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (in nonattainment and maintenance areas).

Amendment A revision to a long-range statewide or metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP, that involves major change to a project included in a MTP, TIP, or STIP, including the addition or deletion of a project or a major change in project cost, project/project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or design scope (e.g., changing project termini or the number of through traffic lanes). Changes to projects that are included only for illustrative purposes do not require an amendment. An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment, re-demonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (for MTPs and TIPs involving "non-exempt" projects in nonattainment and maintenance areas). In the context of a long-range statewide transportation plan, an amendment is a revision approved by the state in accordance with its public involvement process.

Attainment Area Any geographic area in which levels of a given criteria air pollutant (e.g., ozone, carbon monoxide, PM10, PM2.5, and nitrogen oxide) meet the health-based National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for that pollutant. An area may be an attainment area for one pollutant and a nonattainment area for others. A "maintenance area" (see definition below) is not considered an attainment area for transportation planning purposes.

C

Capacity A transportation facility's ability to accommodate a moving stream of people or vehicles in a given time period.

Clean Air Act (CAA) The original Clean Air Act was passed in 1963, but the national air pollution control program is actually based on the 1970 revision of the law. The Clean Air Act as amended in 1990 made major changes and contains the most far-reaching revisions of the 1970 law.

Comprehensive Transportation Plan Formerly known as the thoroughfare plan, this document has its basis in State law. The law states that these plans must be multi-modal and based on land use plans. The CTP is a series of maps for highways, public transportation and rail, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation. The maps are an agreement between the State and the local area of the long-term "vision" for the transportation system. The plan is not financially constrained.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program A federal-aid funding program created under ISTEA. Directs funding to projects that contribute to meeting national air quality standards. CMAQ funds generally may not be used for projects that result in the construction of new capacity available to SOVs (single-occupancy vehicles).

D

Department of Transportation (DOT) When used alone, indicates the U.S. Department of Transportation. In conjunction with a place name, indicates state, city, or county transportation agency (e.g., Illinois DOT, North Carolina DOT).

E

Environmental Justice (EJ) Environmental justice assures that services and benefits allow for meaningful participation and are fairly distributed to avoid discrimination. (See also "Title VI.")

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) The federal regulatory agency responsible for administering and enforcing federal environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, and others.

F

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the federal-aid highway program, providing financial assistance to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads, and bridges. The FHWA also administers the Federal Lands Highway Program, including survey, design, and construction of forest highway system roads, parkways and park roads, Indian reservation roads, defense access roads, and other Federal Lands roads.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers federal funding to transportation authorities, local governments, and states to support a variety of locally planned, constructed, and operated public transportation systems throughout the U.S., including buses, subways, light rail, commuter rail, streetcars, monorail, passenger ferry boats, inclined railways, and people movers.

Financial Plan The documentation required to be included with a MTP and TIP (optional for the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and (STIP) that demonstrates the consistency between reasonably available and projected sources of federal, state, local, and private revenues and the costs of implementing the proposed transportation system improvements.

G

Geographic Information System (GIS) Computerized data management system designed to capture, store, retrieve, analyze, and display geographically referenced information.

H

I

Intermodal The ability to connect, and connections between, differing modes of transportation.

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of Legislative initiative by the U.S. Congress that restructured and authorized federal funding for transportation programs; provided for an increased role for regional planning commissions/ MPOs in funding

1991 (ISTEA) decisions; and required comprehensive regional and statewide longterm transportation plans.

L

Land Use Refers to the manner in which portions of land or the structures on them are used (or designated for use in a plan), i.e., commercial, residential, retail, industrial, etc.

Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan (LRSTP) The official, statewide, multimodal transportation plan covering no less than 20 years developed through the statewide transportation planning processes.

Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) A document resulting from regional or statewide collaboration and consensus on a region's or state's transportation system, and serving as the defining vision for the region's or state's transportation systems and services. In metropolitan areas, this is the official multimodal transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon that is developed, adopted, and updated by the MPO every five years, or every four years in an air quality non-conformity area. Also see MTP.

M

MAP-21 MAP-21, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (P.L. 112-141), was signed into law by President Obama on July 6, 2012 and is the current highway authorization bill, replacing SAFETEA-LU enacted in 2005. MAP-21 provides funding for surface transportation programs at over \$105 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2013 and 2014. By transforming the policy and programmatic framework for investments to guide the system's growth and development, MAP-21 creates a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991.

Metropolitan Planning Area The geographic area determined by agreement between the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the area and the Governor, in which the metropolitan transportation planning process

is carried out.

**Metropolitan
Planning
Organization
(MPO)**

The policy board of an organization created and designed to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process for urbanized areas with populations greater than 50,000, and designated by local officials and the Governor of the state.

**Metropolitan
Transportation
Improvement Plan
(TIP)**

The official multimodal transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon that is developed, adopted and updated by the MPO through the metropolitan transportation planning process.

**Metropolitan
Transportation
Plan (MTP)**

Previously known as LRTP, or Long Range Transportation Plan. This is a fiscally constrained, long range transportation plan for the MPO planning area, resulting from regional collaboration and consensus on, and serving as the defining vision for the region's transportation systems and services. In metropolitan areas, this is the official multimodal transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon that is developed, adopted, and updated by the MPO every five years, or every four years in an air quality non-conformity area.

Mode

A specific form of transportation, such as automobile, subway, bus, rail, air, bicycle, or foot.

N

**National
Environmental
Policy Act of 1969
(NEPA)**

Established requirements that any project using federal funding or requiring federal approval, including transportation projects, examine the effects of proposed and alternative choices on the environment before a federal decision is made.

**Nonattainment
Area (NAA)**

A geographic region of the United States that has been designated by the EPA as a nonattainment area under section 107 of the CAA for any pollutants for which an NAAQS exists, meaning that federal air quality standards are not being met.

O

P

Performance Measures Indicators of how well the transportation system is performing with regard to such measures as average speed, reliability of travel, and accident rates. Used as feedback in the decision making process.

Prioritization List The Prioritization List replaced what has been known as Priority Needs List, or PNL. This is the regional list of high priority projects. These are the projects that the MPO would like to see programmed in the TIP.

Steps in the Project Development Process:

- Identify the Need
- Program the Project in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Show the Project on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)
- List the project on the Prioritization List
- Program the project in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at the State and MPO level.
- Determine funding sources
- Complete Environmental Documentation and Review (time-consuming and complicated)
- Design, Right of Way, and Construction

Public Participation/Public Involvement The active and meaningful involvement of the public in the development of transportation plans and programs.

R

Regional Councils of Governments (COG) Regional councils of governments are multipurpose, multijurisdictional public organizations. Created by local governments to respond to federal and state programs, regional councils bring together participants at multiple levels of government to foster regional cooperation, planning and service delivery. They may also be called planning commissions, development districts, or other names, and may or may not include the structure and functions of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).

S

SAFETEA-LU The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU authorized the federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009 and further extended until July 2012. Replaced by MAP-21.

SPOT SPOT stands for NCDOT Strategic Planning Office of Transportation. NCDOT uses a transparent, systematic, and data-driven process for prioritizing the major transportation in the state and making investment decisions prior to adopting a State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). This process, developed in collaboration with key partners including MPOs and RPOs across the state, evaluates based on their merit through an analysis of the existing and future conditions, the benefits the project is expected to provide, the project's multi-modal characteristics and how the project fits in with local priorities. NCDOT's first strategic prioritization process (known as Prioritization 1.0 or SPOT 1.0) was implemented in 2009. SPOT prioritization process was subsequently codified into law in 2012.

Stakeholders Individuals and organizations involved in or affected by the transportation planning process. Include federal/state/local officials, MPOs, transit operators, freight companies, shippers, users of the transportation infrastructure, and the general public.

State Implementation Plan (SIP) The portion (or portions) of the implementation plan (as defined in section 302[q] of the CAA), or most recent revision thereof, which has been approved under section 110 of the CAA, or promulgated or approved under section 301(d) of the CAA and which implements the relevant requirements of the CAA. Although the SIP is produced by the state environmental agency (not the MPO) to monitor, control, maintain, and enforce compliance with the NAAQS, it must also be taken into account in the transportation planning process.

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) A statewide prioritized listing/program of transportation projects covering a period of four years that is consistent with the long-range statewide transportation plan (LRSTP), metropolitan transportation plans (MTPs), and transportation improvement plans (TIPs), and is required for projects to be eligible for funding under title 23 U.S.C. and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.

Surface Transportation Program (STP) Federal-aid highway funding program that supports a broad range of surface transportation capital needs, including many roads, transit, sea and airport access, vanpool, bike, and pedestrian facilities.

T

Transportation Advisory Committee (MPO Board) Transportation Advisory Committee, or TAC: MPO Board made up of elected officials from local member governments plus two representatives from the NC Board of Transportation. As of 2013 adoption of new FBRMPO MOU, FBRMPO Board is the new name chosen for FBRMPO TAC.

Technical Advisory Committee (TCC) MPO staff-level committee including staff representatives from the MPO member local governments, staff from the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and representatives from other local and State Agencies

Title VI Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in any program receiving federal assistance. (See "Environmental Justice.")

Transportation Control Measure (TCM) Any measure that is specifically identified committed to in the applicable SIP that is either one of the types listed in section 108 of the CAA or any other measure for the purpose of reducing emissions or concentrations of air pollutants from transportation sources by reducing vehicle use or changing traffic flow or congestion conditions. Notwithstanding the above, vehicle technology-based, fuel-based, and maintenance-based measures that control the emissions from vehicles under fixed traffic conditions are not TCMs.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Programs designed to reduce demand for transportation through various means, such as the use of public transit and of alternative work hours.

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) Legislated in 1998, TEA-21 authorized approximately \$217 billion in federal funding for transportation investment for FYs 1998- 2003. Used for highway, transit, and other surface transportation programs.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) A prioritized listing/program of transportation projects covering a period of four years that is developed by an MPO as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process, consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan (MTP), and required for projects to be eligible for funding under title 23 U.S.C. and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.

Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 1998 (TIFIA) A federal credit program under which the DOT may provide three forms of credit assistance— secured (direct) loans, loan guarantees, and standby lines of credit – for surface transportation projects of national or regional significance. The fundamental goal is to leverage federal funds by attracting substantial private and non-federal co-investment in critical improvements to the nation's surface transportation system.

Transportation Management Area (TMA) An urbanized area with a population of 200,000 or more, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and designated by the Secretary of Transportation, or any additional area where TMA designation is requested by the Governor and the MPO and designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

U

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) A statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area. At a minimum, a UPWP includes a description of of the planning work and resulting products, who will perform the work, time frames for completing the work, the cost of the work, and the source(s) of funds.

Urbanized Area (UA) A geographic area with a population of 50,000 or more, as designated by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. MPOs are assigned to these areas.

V

Visualization Techniques Methods used by states and MPOs in the development of transportation plans and programs with the public, elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders in a clear and easily accessible format such as maps, pictures, and/or other displays to promote improved understanding of existing or proposed transportation plans and programs.

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