

PARTICIPATION PLAN

MADISON ATHENS-CLARKE OCONEE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATIONAL STUDY



Prepared by:
ATHENS CLARKE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

In cooperation with:

*Madison County Department of Planning and Zoning
Oconee County Planning Department
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration
Georgia Department of Transportation*

DRAFT – February 14, 2018

www.macorts.org

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Draft – February 14, 2018

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**MADISON ATHENS-CLARKE OCONEE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION
STUDY
PARTICIPATION PLAN**

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MADISON ATHENS-CLARKE OCONEE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY PARTICIPATION PLAN

A. PURPOSE

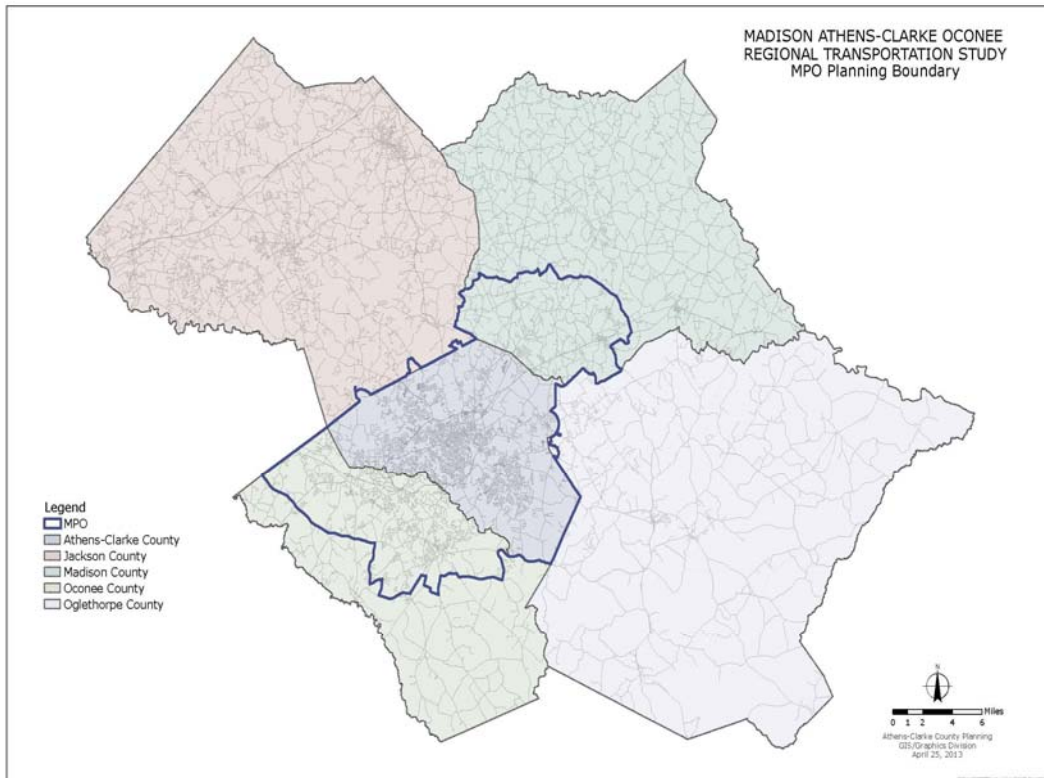
The Madison Athens-Clarke Oconee Regional Transportation Study (MACORTS) Participation Plan is designed to ensure timely and meaningful input into the metropolitan transportation planning process. The Participation Plan outlines the process to involve all interested parties in the regional transportation planning process and the development and amendment of major transportation studies undertaken as part of MACORTS. The overall objective is to provide a process that is proactive, provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and opportunities for early and continuing involvement. This most recent version of the Participation Plan has been updated to be compliance with the latest federal transportation legislation, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.

B. INTRODUCTION

The Madison Athens-Clarke Oconee Regional Transportation Study (MACORTS) is the transportation planning process established for the Athens, Georgia urbanized area. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 established the requirement for transportation planning in urban areas throughout the country. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), adopted in 1998, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), enacted on August 10, 2005, MAP-21, enacted on July 6, 2012, and FAST Act, enacted on December 5, 2015, are the most recent laws extending the federal requirement for transportation planning.

In keeping with the original federal mandate, the MACORTS planning process is cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive. The MACORTS planning process is cooperative because it brings together local elected officials, state and federal transportation personnel, citizens, and other interested parties to plan and program transportation projects. MACORTS participants continuously evaluate transportation needs and plan for long-term improvements. The MACORTS process is comprehensive because it considers all modes of transportation, including cars, trucks, buses, airplanes, railroads, bicycles, and pedestrians. The public involvement process for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is used to satisfy the Georgia Department of Transportation public participation process for the Program of Projects (POP).

The MACORTS area includes the urbanized part of the Athens region, as defined by the U. S. Bureau of Census, plus the area expected to become urbanized over the next twenty years. The study area now encompasses all of Athens-Clarke County and portions of Oconee, Madison, Jackson, and Oglethorpe. However, Oglethorpe and Jackson Counties have chosen not to participate in the transportation planning process. Therefore, those counties are not directly included in the Participation Plan. A map of the MACORTS boundary is included on the next page.



MACORTS Committees

The MACORTS planning process is guided by two committees: the Policy Committee (PC) and the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC). The Policy Committee meets monthly and is responsible for prioritizing projects and making final decisions on MACORTS planning and programming issues. The committee is comprised of local elected officials, Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) representatives, University of Georgia representatives, representatives of the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), and representatives of the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration.

The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) meets monthly and is responsible for completing all technical work related to the MACORTS planning process. The TCC maintains all of the required transportation related documentation, and is a recommending body to the Policy Committee. The TCC is comprised of transportation engineers, planners, citizen representatives, transit agency representatives, and managers from the federal, state, and local levels.

The CAC, as designated in the MACORTS bylaws, provides members from each participating member county to both the PC and TCC. Currently, the CAC for Athens-Clarke County is designated as the Athens-Clarke County Planning Commission. The CAC members for Oconee County usually come from the Oconee County Advisory Committee on Land Use and Transportation and are nominated by the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. The CAC for Madison County is designated as the Madison County Planning and Zoning Commission. Therefore, the CAC membership is comprised of citizens from throughout the urbanized area.

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MACORTS Staff

The Athens-Clarke County Planning Department is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the MACORTS region. The Director of the Planning Department is the Executive Director of MACORTS and Chair of the TCC and is responsible for overall supervision of staff work on the planning process. In addition to designated staff of the Planning Department, employees of the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) are directly involved in MACORTS planning activities. Planners with GDOT coordinate state-level aspects of any studies, assist with technical analysis, and play a major role in the development and utilization of the MACORTS travel demand model.

C. PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

The MACORTS Participation Plan encompasses five (5) components: Consultation, Public Access, Public Outreach and Education, Public Input and Evaluation.

CONSULTATION

OBJECTIVE: To ensure that major regional transportation documents, including the Participation Plan, are developed in consultation with the general public and other interested parties, and reflect existing and future plans for development of the region. This also involves efforts to identify and include all interested parties in the transportation planning process. The following strategies shall be used to achieve this objective:

Consultation Strategies

1. The MPO shall maintain and update a public mailing list composed of stakeholders and potential stakeholders. The purpose of the public mailing list is to disseminate information about MACORTS transportation plans and projects. Any member of the public residing within the MPO will be able to sign up for the mailing list at any MPO function, via phone, e-mail, and through the MACORTS website (www.macorts.org). Special attention shall be given to include members of potentially underserved groups.
2. The MPO has identified and involved groups that are traditionally underserved in the MACORTS area in the transportation planning process. MACORTS will create and initiate methods (through census, GIS or other similar means) to identify those communities with high concentrations of minority, low-income, disabled or elderly populations. In addition, the MPO will also identify media, where possible, that serves these communities and maintain a mailing/contact list to notify these media outlets of all MACORTS public meetings.
3. Any planning products that are required to go to the public for review and comment including the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) shall be prepared and / or amended by the MPO in consultation with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities in the study area. Consultation for these and other MACORTS documents that require public outreach shall include contacts with State, local, Indian Tribe and private agencies responsible for planned growth, economic development,

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environmental protection, airport operations, freight movements, land use management, natural resources, conservation and historic preservation.

During the development of the MACORTS LRTP and TIP the MPO will compare available plans, maps and inventories from state and local resource agencies to determine which resource will be directly or indirectly affected by the plan or program. The consultation process will include the following steps:

- An initial identification of the resources and responsible agencies likely to be affected by the plan or program
 - A review of available information (plans, maps and inventories) derived from agency websites
 - Consult with the responsible agency or agencies regarding the potential impact of the plan or program
 - Document action taken in the consultation process, including acknowledging the receipt of comments and suggestions from resource agencies, for inclusion in the MACORTS LRTP and TIP.
4. Planning products, including the LRTP and TIP, shall be prepared by the MPO with due consideration of governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation.
 5. The procedures for processing administrative modifications and amendments to the LRTP and TIP shall be the same as those published by the Georgia Department of Transportation in August 2013 or subsequent versions and included as Appendix G (as amended in August 2013).

PUBLIC ACCESS

OBJECTIVE: To ensure that the general public and other interested parties have timely and convenient access to agendas, meetings, documents and other information related to the regional transportation planning process. The following strategies shall be used to achieve this objective:

Public Access Strategies

1. All MACORTS plans and documents shall be made available for the public to review at the MACORTS office and/or on the MACORTS website (www.macorts.org). Copies of draft documents also will be available for public review in the planning offices of the participating member counties of MACORTS (see Appendix C for locations). Copies of the current MACORTS plans and documents shall be provided free of charge upon request in digital and/or hardcopy. Copies of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long Range Transportation Plan shall be distributed to all other participating agencies.
2. Updates to the LRTP and TIP will be available for a 30-day public review and comment period. A

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15-day public review and comment period will be provided for amendments to the LRTP and TIP documents.

3. The development of the MACORTS Participation Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan, and any future amendments to the plans, will be subject to a 45-day public review and comment period.
4. The development of the MACORTS Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and amendments to the UPWP are not subject to a public review period. They are, however, reviewed and approved through the MACORTS Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Policy Committee. Those meetings are open to the public, and the TCC meeting agenda includes a standing public comment item.
5. The MPO shall provide reasonable access to technical and policy information used in the development of planning products including the LRTP and TIP.
6. The MPO shall provide, upon request and 48-hour notice, assistance to those with special needs or limited English proficiency at MACORTS meetings.
7. Pages on the MACORTS website may be translated into any of several languages as chosen by the user to assist those with limited English proficiency.
8. Public meetings will be held at convenient and accessible locations and times. All meetings, public hearings and formal events of the MACORTS shall be held in facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities. Generally speaking, meetings will be held at public facilities (see Appendix C for locations), on weekday evenings and at locations that are handicapped accessible and served by public transit, where available.
9. If a Final Draft version of an MACORTS document/plan differs significantly from the Draft version that was provided to the public for review and comment, that document will be provided to the public again for review and comment for a minimum of 15 days (45 days for Participation Plan). Whether a document is ‘significantly different’ will be decided by the MPO Staff in coordination with the Georgia Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

OBJECTIVE: To use effective tools and techniques to provide information about the regional transportation plans and issues to the general public and other stakeholders. The desired outcome is that the public provides meaningful input on a transportation plan or issue based upon accurate and complete information and the potential impact of alternative actions. The following strategies shall be used to achieve this objective:

Public Outreach and Education Strategies

1. All MACORTS meeting agendas will be distributed a minimum of three (3) days in advance to all committee members, area media outlets, and other interested parties including the public mailing list. Agendas and minutes of meetings will be posted on the MACORTS web site.
2. Public meeting notices and notices of public review and comment periods will be published at least three (3) days in advance of the meeting date or the start of the review and comment period. The notices also will be posted on the MACORTS web site.
3. The MPO will provide the media with information pertaining to the adoption, revision or amendment of all MPO plans at least three (3) days prior to the date of the final action. Notice will be provided in the form of mailout materials pertaining to committee meetings.
4. The MPO will use the following tools and techniques to inform the media, general public and other interested parties about transportation plans, programs and activities:
 - a. **Press Releases** – Used to announce upcoming meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues related to transportation planning.
 - b. **Print Display Ads** – Used to advertise public meetings and review and comment periods for transportation plans and projects. Display ads are published in area newspapers throughout the MACORTS area. When available and as time permits, advertisements will be placed in the Spanish-language publications with circulation in the MACORTS region.
 - c. **Fact Sheets and Brochures**– Used to provide general information about MACORTS plans and programs, such as the LRTP, TIP, Participation Plan, Limited English Proficiency Plan, and Unified Planning Work Program. Fact sheets will be available in print at MACORTS public meetings and in electronic format on the MACORTS website. Brochures will be used to provide summary information about MACORTS and its transportation planning activities.
 - d. **Direct Mailings** – Used to advertise public meetings and review and comment periods for transportation plans and projects, or to provide information to a targeted group or area.

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- e. **MACORTS Website** – Used to display general information about MACORTS, copies of MACORTS transportation documents, committee meeting schedules, agendas and minutes, and other information about the MACORTS planning process. The website is also used to advertise public meetings and review and comment periods for transportation plans and projects. Comments can be sent directly from the website to MACORTS staff on an on-going basis. Individuals can sign up for the MACORTS public e-mail list directly from the website.
- f. **Speaking Engagements** – The MPO shall make staff available to speak to civic groups, neighborhood associations, and other interested parties about MACORTS transportation planning efforts and associated projects.

PUBLIC INPUT

OBJECTIVE: To obtain meaningful and diverse input from the general public and other interested parties on regional transportation needs, plans, programs and activities. Inherent in this objective is the MPO's responsibility to provide timely response to public input, to document the input, and to recommend changes / amendments to plans based on public comment.

Public Input Strategies

1. **Identify Interested Parties** – An interested party or 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 that they are affected. Stakeholders may include the general public, environmental, health, neighborhood, citizen, and civic organizations, as well as traditionally underserved communities such as people with disabilities, low income, and racial/ethnic minorities.
2. **Citizens Advisory Committee** – The MACORTS Citizens Advisory Committee representatives will continue to be a source of ongoing input on behalf of the general public.
3. **MACORTS Committee Meetings** – The MACORTS committee meetings will be a regularly-scheduled forum for the discussion of, and updates on regional transportation needs, plans, programs and activities. The TCC meeting includes a standing public comment opportunity.
4. **MACORTS Public Meetings** – MACORTS public meetings will be held in conjunction with the update or amendment of the LRTP, TIP, Participation Plan, Limited English Proficiency Plan, and the development of any special studies related to regional transportation issues.
5. **Comment Sheets** – Comment sheets will be distributed at public meetings to obtain feedback on regional transportation needs, plans, programs and activities. Comment forms will be made available on the MACORTS website and at the Planning Departments in the MACORTS region during any public comment period. A comment form is available for general comments/concerns of the public on the MACORTS website to provide continuous feedback.

6. **Surveys** – Surveys will be used to obtain information from the general public and other stakeholders as to the effectiveness of the public involvement activities. Surveys will be available at all MACORTS public meetings.
7. **Visualization Techniques** – The MPO will use GIS maps, sketches, drawings and similar tools at public meetings to both convey information and elicit public input about transportation plans and projects.
8. **MACORTS Website** – The MACORTS website will be used to provide information to the public about MACORTS and all of the transportation planning process and products. It will also provide a mechanism for dialogue with the public.

EVALUATION OF PARTICIPATION PLAN

OBJECTIVE: To evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies, tools and techniques used as part of the Participation Plan. The desired outcomes include increased public involvement in, and awareness of, the regional transportation planning process, and the use of tool and techniques that generate increased public input in regional transportation plans and programs.

Evaluation Strategies – The MPO will use the following mix of quantitative and qualitative criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of public participation tools and techniques used in the regional transportation planning process. After each update of the LRTP, the Participation Plan will be evaluated for effectiveness. Results of that evaluation will be used to guide what, if any, adjustments need to be made to the Participation Plan. The table included as Appendix F summarizes how these criteria apply to the various public participation tools and techniques used by MACORTS.

1. Number of phone calls, letters and e-mails received inquiring about specific projects and scheduled public meetings, or requesting more information about the regional transportation planning process.
2. Number of “hits” on the MACORTS website per month, or number of “hits” on the MACORTS website during a public comment period.
3. Number and type of public comments received regarding planning products and/or projects.
4. Number of issues / concerns expressed by the Citizens Advisory Committee representatives and the response to, or change resulting from, the issue or concern.
5. Number of newspaper articles / television interviews generated by press releases and other notices to the media.
6. Number or percent of public meeting attendees indicating how they became aware of the meeting (e.g. direct mail, newspaper display ad, television, website, word-of-mouth) on public

participation survey form.

7. Number of people attending public meetings regarding planning products and/or projects.
8. Number and type of plan / project changes resulting from public comments.

D. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF PARTICIPATION PLAN

1. The MACORTS Participation Plan shall be adopted by the MACORTS Policy Committee only after consultation with interested parties, a 45-day public review and comment period, and the consideration of any comments received from the general public and other interested parties.
2. Amendments to the MACORTS Participation Plan shall be adopted by the MACORTS Policy Committee only after consultation with interested parties, a 45-day public review and comment period, and the consideration of any comments received from the general public and other interested parties.
3. Appendices to the Participation Plan include supplemental information, such as comments received about the Participation Plan and a list of locations where MACORTS plans are available for public review. Updates to the appendices are not subject to the consultation and public review and comment requirements. Revisions to appendices will be distributed to all MACORTS committees, applicable federal, state and local agencies and other interested parties.
4. The MACORTS Participation Plan, and any amendments or updates to the plan, will be made available at public facilities throughout the study area, and will also be posted on the MACORTS web site.

APPENDIX A

**MADISON ATHENS-CLARKE OCONEE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY
RESOLUTIONS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE
ADOPTION OF THE MACORTS PARTICIPATION PLAN**

MACORTS Resolution Goes Here Once it's signed

APPENDIX B

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON PARTICIPATION PLAN DURING 45-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: MARCH 1 – APRIL 14, 2018

Note: Draft Participation Plan was posted on the MACORTS Website in its entirety on February 26, 2018 along with a public comment form that could be printed or e-mailed directly to MACORTS staff. Informational handouts were also posted on the website. All materials were available on CD in pdf as well as in hardcopy at the public meetings and at the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department, Oconee County Planning Department, and Madison County Planning Department.

Oconee County Public Meeting: March 13, 2018, 5pm – 7pm	Attendance:
Athens-Clarke County Public Meeting: March 14, 2018, 4pm – 6pm	Attendance:
Madison County Public Meeting: March 20, 2018, 4pm – 6pm	Attendance:

Total E-mailed Comments:
Forms Turned In At Public Meetings:
Comments Mailed In:
Comments Faxed In:
Other Comments:

Total Comments:

Comments Specific to Participation Plan:

Other Comments Received – Not Specific to Participation Plan:

APPENDIX C
PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETINGS & REVIEW OF MACORTS DOCUMENTS

LOCATIONS FOR POSTING NOTICES/ PUBLIC COMMENT MATERIALS

1. Athens-Clarke County Planning Department – 120 W. Dougherty Street, Athens, GA
2. Athens Transit System – 775 E. Broad Street, Athens, GA
3. Madison County Planning Department – 91 Albany Drive, Danielsville, GA
4. Oconee County Planning Department – 22 N. Main Street, Watkinsville, GA
5. MACORTS website – www.macorts.org
6. Athens-Clarke Co. Planning Dept. website – www.athensclarkecounty.com/planning
7. Oconee County website – www.oconeecounty.com/communitylinks/MACORTS

DOCUMENT LOCATIONS (DRAFT & FINAL DOCUMENTS)

1. Athens-Clarke County Planning Dept. – 120 W. Dougherty Street, Athens, GA
2. Athens-Clarke County Library – 2025 Baxter Street, Athens, GA (TIP & LRTP)
3. Madison County Planning Department – 91 Albany Drive, Danielsville, GA
4. Madison County Library – Highway 98, Danielsville, GA (TIP & LRTP)
5. Oconee County Planning Department – 22 N. Main Street, Watkinsville, GA
6. Oconee County Library – 1080 Experiment Station Road, Watkinsville, GA (TIP & LRTP)
7. MACORTS website – www.macorts.org
8. Athens-Clarke Co. Planning Dept. website – www.athensclarkecounty.com/planning
9. Oconee County website – www.oconeecounty.com/communitylinks/MACORTS

PUBLIC MEETING LOCATIONS

1. Athens-Clarke County Planning Department Auditorium – 120 W. Dougherty Street, Athens, GA
2. Danielsville Government Building Public Meeting Room – 91 Albany Avenue, Danielsville, GA
3. Oconee Veterans Park Community Room – 3500 Hog Mountain Road, Watkinsville, GA
4. Other community locations that are accessible and convenient and central to the affected community

APPENDIX D
EVALUATION CRITERIA AND RELATED TOOLS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Public Meetings	Calls, letters, and e-mails; number of attendees	Minimum _ people per meeting	Schedule meetings at convenient times and accessible locations. Use other public involvement tools to increase awareness of meetings
Display Ad	Calls, letters, and e-mails.; Number of persons that it reached.	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees /survey respondents that indicated that they saw the ad.	Pursue publication in a prominent location of the paper. Increase the size or modify the layout to make ads more visible.
E-mail Announcements /Internet Announcements	Calls, letters, and e-mails.; Number of persons that it reached.	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees /survey respondents indicated that they saw the announcement.	Increase e-mail list by advertising the availability of e-mail announcements using other public involvement tools.
Direct Mailings	Calls, letters, and e-mails.; Number of persons that it reached.	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees /survey respondents that indicated that they received the mailing.	Increase/decrease mailing to more accurately target affected areas.
TV Message Boards	Calls, letters, and e-mails; Number of persons that it reached.	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees / survey respondents that indicated that they saw the message	Increase frequency of use of government tv channel (only available in ACC)
Posters and Flyers	Calls, letters, and e-mails.; Number of persons that it reached.	Minimum of 5% meeting attendees /survey respondents indicated they saw flyer.	Increase distribution to common areas where posters will be more visible to the general public.
Press Releases	Calls, letters, e-mails from media and others	No standard. Press release format may be modified based on specific comments received.	Prepare and distribute press releases as necessary to advertise MACORTS meetings, review and comment periods, and milestones in specific projects.

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
MACORTS Website	Calls, letters, and e-mails.; Number of 'hits' (visits) on the web site	Minimum of 30 hits more during public comment period vs. other times	Use other public involvement tools and document to increase advertisement of the web site.
Fact Sheets	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Positive comments	
Surveys	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of responses	60% of contacted persons participate in the survey OR 20% of mail recipients return the survey.	Encourage responses by explaining the importance of receiving feedback. Offer incentives for returning surveys.

APPENDIX E

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CHECKLIST: TOOLS USED IN COMPLETING SPECIFIC WORK ELEMENT

Project: _____ Dates: _____

Public Participation Tool	Description	Method Used Yes / No
Transportation Planning web site	Public web site for dissemination of information	
Transportation Planning Feedback Database	Database that compiles feedback for evaluation	
Identify Interested Parties or Stakeholders	Method used to identify different groups that would be affected by a project	
Display Ad	Newspaper or print advertisements	
Direct Mailings	Used to more accurately target affected areas.	
Press Releases	Press releases to announce meetings, projects, et cetera.	
TV Message Boards	Government access channel announcement board. (Available in ACC only)	
Project specific web sites	Use with other tools to provide detailed information	
Citizen Advisory Committee Representatives	Committee which is part of most planning studies.	
Small Group Meetings	Meetings that are held at the request of affected groups.	
E-mail Announcements	Used with other tools to increase public announcements	
Public Hearings	Used for the adoption of documents such as the TIP or LRTP.	
Comment Forms	Used to solicit public feedback and used for evaluation purposes.	
Surveys	Used to solicit public feedback on specific issues	
Posters and Flyers	Distributed in public areas to increase visibility	
Visualization Techniques	Drawing/sketches, aerial photography, pictures, “visual choice” surveys	
Public information	Available in an electronically accessible format (e.g. PDF documents)	
Public meetings	Held at convenient and accessible locations and times.	

APPENDIX F

LISTS OF RESOURCE AGENCIES AND CONSULTATION CONTACTS

State & Local Planned Growth:

Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Madison County Planning & Zoning Department
Athens-Clarke County Planning Department
Oconee County Planning & Code Enforcement Department

Economic Development:

Athens-Clarke County Economic Development Department
Oconee County Chamber of Commerce
Madison County Chamber of Commerce
Athens-Clarke County Area Chamber of Commerce
Georgia Department of Economic Development

Tourism:

Athens Convention & Visitors Bureau
Oconee County Department of Tourism
Madison County Chamber of Commerce

Natural Disaster Risk Reduction:

Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency
Madison County Emergency Management Agency
Athens-Clarke County Emergency Management Agency
Oconee County Emergency Management Agency

Environmental Protection:

Georgia Forestry Commission
Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Natural Resources Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Historic Preservation Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Environmental Protection Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resource Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources – State Parks & Historic Sites Division
Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services
Oconee County Parks & Recreation Department
Madison County Recreation Department

Airport Operations:

Athens - Ben Epps Airport

Freight Movement:

McLane Trucking
Georgia Motor Trucking Association
SAIA Motor Freight Line Inc.
CSX Railroad

Private Providers of Transportation:

Groome Transportation
Stephens Limo Service Inc.
Bulldog Limo Service
Georgia Medical Transportation
Caring Man in a Van
Georgia Department of Human Services – Office of Facilities & Support Services
Athens Transit Taxi (not affiliated with Athens Transit System)
United Taxi

Bike / Pedestrian Facility Advocates:

Bike Athens
Georgia Bikes

Disabled Population:

Hope Haven of Northeast Georgia
Georgia Options
People First of GA, Inc.
Disabled American Veterans

Intercity Bus Operators:

MegaBus (American Coach Lines Inc.)
Southeastern Stages

Appendix G

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Process

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued the Final Rule to revise the Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning regulations incorporating changes from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST). The revised regulations clearly define administrative modifications and amendments as actions to update plans and programs. 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450.104 defines administrative modifications and amendments as follows:

- Administrative modification “means a minor revision to a long-range statewide or metropolitan transportation plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), or Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (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. Administrative Modification is a revision that does not require public review and comment, redemonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (in nonattainment and maintenance areas).”
- Amendment “means a revision to a long-range statewide or metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP that involves a major change to a project included in a metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP, including the addition or deletion of a project or 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, redemonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (for metropolitan transportation plans 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.”

The following procedures have been developed for processing administrative modifications and amendments to the STIP and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) TIPs and Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs). Processes described below detail procedures that are to be used to update an existing approved STIP or TIP and associated plan, if applicable. A key element of the amendment process is to assure that funding balances are maintained.

Administrative Modifications for Initial Authorizations

The following actions are eligible as Administrative Modifications to the STIP/TIP/LRTP:

- A. Revise a project description without changing the project scope, conflicting with the environmental document or changing the conformity finding in nonattainment and maintenance areas (less than 10% change in project termini). This change would not alter the original project intent.
- B. Splitting or combining projects.
- C. Federal funding category change.
- D. Minor changes in expenditures for transit projects.
- E. Roadway project phases may have a cost increase less than \$2,000,000 or 20% of the amount to be authorized.
 - o If the STIP amount is \$10,000,000 or less, the cost may be increased up to \$2,000,000.
 - o If the STIP amount is greater than \$10,000,000, the cost may be increased by a maximum of 20%.
- F. Shifting projects within the 4-year STIP as long as the subsequent annual draft STIP was submitted prior to September 30.
- G. Projects may be funded from lump sum banks as long as they are consistent with category definitions.

An administrative modification can be processed in accordance with these procedures provided that:

- 1. It does not affect the air quality conformity determination.
- 2. It does not impact financial constraint.
- 3. It does not require public review and comment.

The administrative modification process consists of a monthly list of notifications from GDOT to all involved parties, with change summaries sent on a monthly basis to the FHWA and FTA by the GDOT.

The GDOT will submit quarterly reports detailing projects drawn from each lump sum bank with remaining balance to the FHWA.

Amendments for Initial Authorizations

The following actions are eligible as Amendments to the STIP/TIP/LRTP:

- A. Addition or deletion of a project.
- B. Addition or deletion of a phase of a project.
- C. Roadway project phases that increase in cost over the thresholds described in the Administrative Modification section.
- D. Addition of an annual TIP.
- E. Major change to scope of work of an existing project. A major change would be any change that alters the original intent i.e. a change in the number of through lanes, a change in termini of more than 10 percent.
- F. Shifting projects within the 4-year STIP which require redemonstration of fiscal constraint or when the subsequent annual draft STIP was not submitted prior to September 30. (See Administrative Modification item F.)

Amendments to the STIP/TIP/LRTP will be developed in accordance with the provisions of 23 CFR Part 450. This requires public review and comment and responses to all comments, either individually or in summary form. For amendments in MPO areas, the public review process should be carried out in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Participation Plan. The GDOT will assure that the amendment process and the public involvement procedures have been followed. Cost changes made to the second, third and fourth years of the STIP will be balanced during the STIP yearly update process. All amendments should be approved by FHWA and/or FTA.

Notes:

1. The date a TIP becomes effective is when the Governor or his designee approves it. For nonattainment and maintenance areas, the effective date of the TIP is based on the date of U.S. Department of Transportation's positive finding of conformity.
2. The date the STIP becomes effective is when FHWA and FTA approve it.
3. The STIP is developed on the state fiscal year which is July 1 - June 30.
4. Funds for cost increases will come from those set aside in the STIP financial plan by the GDOT for modifications and cost increases. Fiscal Constraint will be maintained in the STIP at all times.