



CHATS

CHARLESTON AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

2019

A Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments Program

Acknowledgments

Preparation of this document has been financed in part through funding from the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, the South Carolina Department of Transportation, and the local government members that consist of the Charleston Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Non-Discrimination

Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes he or she has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with BCDCOG.

For more information on BCDCOGs Title VI Policy and the procedures to file a complaint, contact the Title VI Designee Robin Mitchum at (843) 529-0400; email Robinm@bcdcog.com; or write to the Title VI Coordinator at 5790 Casper Padgett Way, North Charleston, SC 29406. For more information visit the Title VI Program document at www.bcdcog.com/transportation-planning.

A complainant may file a complaint directly with the SC Department of Transportation by contacting the Title VI Program Coordinator, P.O. Box 191, Columbia, SC 29201-0191.

If information is needed in another language, contact (843) 529-0400

~Si se necesita información en otro idioma llame al (843) 529-0400

Table of Contents

Purpose _____ 2

Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act _____ 2

Public Participation Plan Goals _____ 3

Plans, Programs, and Projects _____ 4

Monitoring and Evaluation _____ 4

Policy Meetings Procedures _____ 16

Public Meeting Principles _____ 17

Outreach Methods _____ 18

Title VI and LEP Outreach _____ 22

Interested Parties and Consultation _____ 23

Public Input _____ 24

RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CHATS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

WHEREAS, a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing transportation planning process is to be carried out in the CHATS Planning Area; and

WHEREAS, the Public Participation Plan describes a public review process of transportation planning activities to be undertaken by local, regional, or state agencies pertinent to CHATS; and

WHEREAS, the various state, local and regional agencies involved with transportation planning activities for CHATS have cooperatively developed a Public Participation Plan to be in compliance with FAST ACT requirements; and

WHEREAS, it is the function of the CHATS Policy Committee to adopt and approve a Public Participation Plan for the CHATS Metropolitan Planning Organization,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the CHATS Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization does hereby adopt and approve the Public Participation Plan.

READ AND ADOPTED the 23rd day of September 2019.


George Bailey, Chairman

Certified true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Charleston Area Transportation Study Policy Committee on September 23, 2019


Ronald E. Mitchum

Executive Director
Title

9/23/19
Date

Introduction

Federal law requires all metropolitan areas with populations greater than 50,000 people to designate a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to develop transportation plans for the region. It also requires that a Public Participation Plan be created to ensure adequate opportunities for the public to express its views on transportation issues and to become active participants in the decision-making process. This plan is intended to fulfill those requirements outlined in 23 Code of United States Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450.316.

Governor James Edwards appointed the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) to perform the planning and programming functions of the Charleston Area Transportation Study (CHATS) planning area as the region's MPO in 1977. BCDCOG/CHATS work with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to ensure that transportation planning in the region is a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive process.

The BCDCOG region includes all of Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties, while the CHATS planning area currently serves approximately 1,000 square miles spanning all three counties. The CHATS study area is comprised of the tri-county region's most urbanized areas as designated by the latest (2010) United States Census and other land expected to be urbanized within the next 20 years. Figure 1 shows both the BCDCOG and CHATS planning areas.



Figure 1 BCDCOG Region & CHATS Planning Area

Purpose

This document serves as the Public Participation Plan (PPP) for transportation planning activities by both the BCDCOG in the rural areas and the urbanized CHATS planning area. The regional transportation planning process is carried out by BCDCOG and its planning partners. The PPP describes the opportunities that will be made available to members of the general public and other interested parties to participate in planning activities and decision-making processes pertaining to the local expenditure of federal transportation funding. The plan sets forth guidelines that will be followed by BCDCOG/CHATS for public notification, the conduct of public meetings, and the adoption of federally-required transportation plans and programs. BCDCOG administers the transportation planning process on behalf of a federally-designated CHATS Policy Committee comprised of local elected leadership and state and regional transportation officials. The successful adoption of this plan, following a 45-day public review and comment period, satisfies the requirements set forth by Title 23 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, part 450.316 (23 CFR 450.316).

Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act

Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) was passed by the United States Congress and signed into law by President Obama in 2015. The FAST Act authorizes long-term federal funding towards transportation projects in the United States. The FAST Act defines ten specific planning factors to be considered when developing regional transportation plans and programs to ensure consistency with national goals and objectives.

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation;
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system;
9. Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate storm water impacts of surface transportation; and
10. Enhance travel and tourism.

The FAST Act is codified in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and published in the Federal Register by executive departments and agencies of the federal government. Title 23 of the United States Code contains rules and regulations for the regional transportation planning carried out by BCDCOG on behalf of the CHATS MPO (23 CFR Part 450, subpart C) with additional provisions provided in Title 49.

Public Participation Plan Goals

Goal 1: Inform the Public of its Role in the Transportation Planning Process

BCDCOG will educate and present information about the regional transportation planning process to the public as needed or requested. The transportation planning process includes plans, programs, and projects such as, but not limited to, the following:

1. **Plans** – Long Range Transportation Plan or the Congestion Management Process
2. **Programs** – Transportation Improvement Program or the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310)
3. **Projects** – Any specific transportation project of regional significance and/or that has federal funding attached, such as an interstate capacity project¹

Goal 2: Solicit Public Input and Facilitate the Information Flow between the Public and Decision-Makers

BCDCOG will strategically identify opportunities for public participation in the development of all transportation plans, programs, and projects. BCDCOG will schedule and organize meetings where the public can provide feedback on transportation plans, programs, or projects. BCDCOG is responsible for compiling public comments into complete and concise documents for presentation to the decision-makers. Likewise, all policy meetings, where decision-making is conducted, will be public and provide the opportunity for public comment.

Goal 3: Develop, Maintain, Evaluate, and Improve Outreach Methods

BCDCOG will employ strategies and techniques that ensure meaningful public participation, while establishing a process for evaluating and improving these outreach methods over time.

¹ While BCDCOG does not manage these projects, BCDCOG can help facilitate meetings between the lead agencies when appropriate.

Plans, Programs, and Projects

The BCDCOG Board of Directors and the CHATS Policy Committee are the decision makers for federally funded transportation projects in the region. Transportation decision-makers must take into account information that is brought forth by the public regarding transportation plans, programs, or projects.² The PPP formalizes the methods by which communication will occur and aims to enhance capturing public sentiment for transportation plans, programs, and projects. All transportation plans, programs, or projects can be found at <https://bcdcog.com/transportation-planning/> or by visiting the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments at 5790 Casper Padgett Way in North Charleston, SC 29406. The following items are the recommended minimum public participation strategies that should be followed during the planning process.³ BCDCOG has developed this PPP to reference both the urban and rural programs that it administers. "R" will delineate rural for all plans, programs or projects such as the Rural Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Transportation planning outreach activities will include an evaluation technique that will be used to determine the effectiveness of existing public involvement strategies. On an annual basis, the information collected through monitoring public outreach will be compiled and evaluated to assess the effectiveness of each type of outreach activity. This will include both a quantitative assessment of the number of participants, as well as a qualitative assessment of the level of interaction and information exchanged. The assessment will note the public involvement techniques used, the public's response, the public involvement objectives that were met (or not) by the activity, and any changes to consider when conducting similar transportation activities in the future. The evaluation will include recommendations for improvements, which will be implemented over the course of the following year.

Key

PC - CHATS Policy Committee
P – Public

EJ - Environmental Justice
BOD – BCDCOG Board or Directors

M - Minority Groups

ISG - Industry Specific Groups
R – Rural

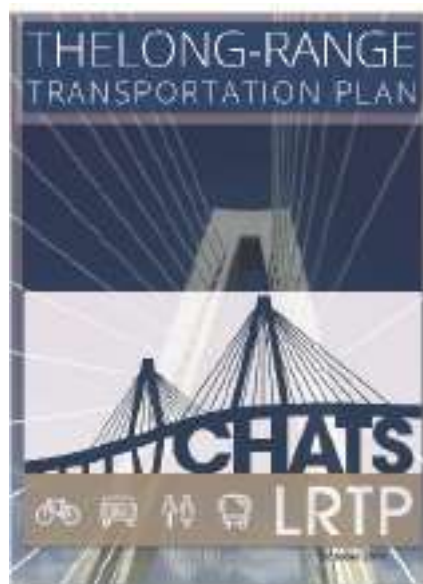
² Any plan, program, or project that receives substantial public comment that alters the information significantly, may need to go back through public comment period again. The Executive Director will make the determination if it needs to be resubmitted for public review.

³ Improved public participation techniques may be used in place of the prescriptions established in this PPP. If the PPP established processes are to be altered, they must first be approved by the BCDCOG Planning Director with written justification and signed off on by the Executive Director.

Long Range Transportation Plan

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a 20-year multimodal strategy and capital improvement program developed to guide the effective investment of public funds for transportation projects. The LRTP ultimately determines a list of fiscally constrained transportation projects that are ranked against various metrics. The fiscally constrained list of projects is then considered to be ready for submittal into the Transportation Improvement Program. The LRTP is updated at least every five years; however it may be amended as needed.

The Rural Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP) is a document used to prioritize federally funded projects in the rural areas of Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties. The BCDCOG Board of Directors is responsible for approving the RLRTP. The following tables present the typical activities, schedule and the techniques used to foster public involvement for each plan.



L RTP	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Notice
	PC	Project Introduction / Public Comment	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Email, Website, Social Media	21 Days
	Kickoff	Public Project Ideas / Existing Conditions	1 per County / 3 Meetings	Social Media, Website, Press Release	21 Days
	Pop Up	M/EJ Project Ideas / Existing Conditions	1 per County / 3 Events	Social Media, Website, Press Release	21 Days
	Stakeholder	ISG Project Ideas / Existing Conditions	BCDCOG / TBD	Email	N/A
	PC	Adopt Prioritization Metrics	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Email, Website, Social Media	21 Days
	P	Draft Review / Public Comment	1 per County / 3 Meetings	Social Media, Website, Press Release	21 Days
	PC	Document Adoption / Public Comment	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Email, Website, Social Media	21 Days
	PC	Amend LRTP / Public Comment	BCDCOG / As Needed	Email, Website, Social Media	21 Days
RL RTP	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Notice
	BOD	Project Introduction / Public Comment	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Email, Website, Social Media	21 Days
	Kickoff	Public Project Ideas / Existing Conditions	1 per County / 3 Meetings	Social Media, Website, Press Release	21 Days
	Pop Up	M/EJ Project Ideas / Existing Conditions	1 per County / 3 Events	Social Media, Website, Press Release	21 Days
	Stakeholder	ISG Project Ideas / Existing Conditions	BCDCOG / TBD	Email	N/A
	P	Draft Review / Public Comment	1 per County / 3 Meetings	Social Media, Website, Press Release	21 Days
	BOD	Document Adoption / Public Comment	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Email, Website, Social Media	21 Days
BOD	Amend RL RTP / Public Comment	BCDCOG / As Needed	Email, Website, Social Media	21 Days	

Significant written or oral comments received on draft Plans as a result of the participation process or the interagency consultation process will be summarized, analyzed, and responded to as part of the final LRTP document. Comments received from the public will be acknowledged as received and a response will be provided, if warranted. Substantive comments will be summarized and included in a memo to the Policy Committee or Board of Directors, as applicable for consideration during adoption of Plan.

	Activity	Purpose	Duration
RLRTP & LRTP	Establish Project Website	Project and Meeting Updates	Entire Project Cycle
	Establish Project Specific Email List	Collect Public Input	Entire Project Cycle
	Comment Cards	Collect Public Input	Public Meetings
	Web Surveys	Collect Public Input	As Needed
	Report Public Feedback	Provide PC or BOD with Information	PC or BOD Meetings
	Public Input Appendix	Document Public Input / Show How it Influenced Plan	Draft & Final Document

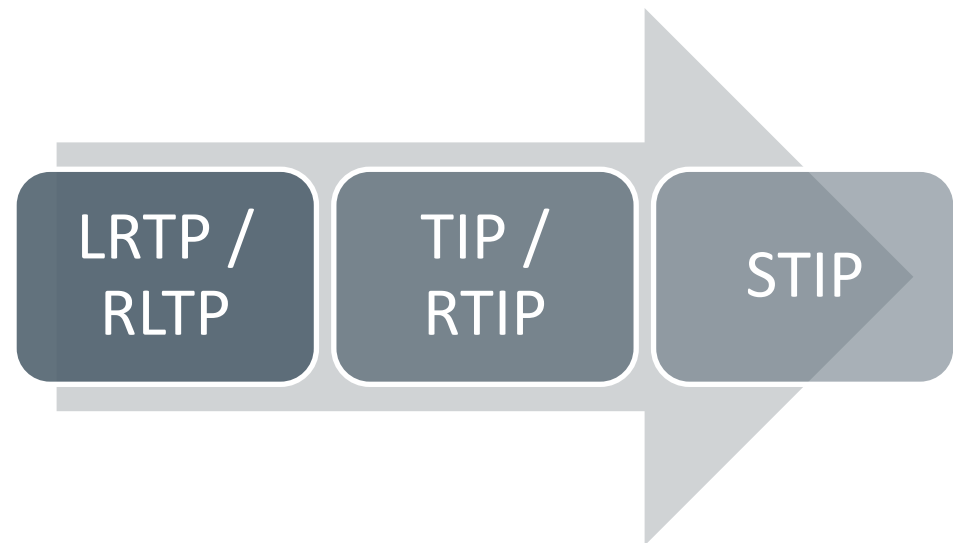
	Activity	Evaluation Technique
RLRTP & LRTP	Project Website	Use Website Analytics to Track Monthly Activity
	Project Email	Document Number of Emails Per Month
	Comment Cards	Document Number of Comments After Meeting
	Web Surveys	Document Number of Responses After Survey
	Pop Up Events	Document Number of Comments Received
	Stakeholder Meetings	Document Attendance / Number of Ideas
	Public Meetings	Track Attendance Through Software or Sign-Ins
	PC/COG Meetings	Track Number of Comments After Meeting

Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a six-year plan that lists all regionally significant and federally funded projects in the CHATS planning area. The six-year plan is updated every four years to move the program fiscal years forward. Projects that are included in the TIP are highway and roadway projects, public transit projects, major corridor studies, complete streets projects, transportation alternative; i.e. bicycle/pedestrian, projects, and other transportation related studies. Projects that are included in the TIP must be selected from the approved Long Range Transportation Plan. The projects in the TIP must be fiscally constrained and have funding mechanisms in place. For the TIP to be amended, the CHATS Policy Committee must approve the changes. Administrative corrections can be made to the TIP by BCDCOG staff and do not require a specific public participation process.

The Rural Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) is a six-year plan that lists regionally significant and federally funded projects in the BCDCOG rural areas. The RL RTP feeds the RTIP, which in turn pushes projects to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) ⁴. The same project categories that are allowed in the TIP are allowed in the RTIP. Amendments must be approved by the BCDCOG Board of Directors and administrative corrections can be done at the staff level with no public participation.

SCDOT maintains the STIP which shows the financial outlays for transportation projects across the state. Before a project can receive federal funds, it must be approved in the STIP. SCDOT will carry out public involvement in accordance with the SCDOT Public Participation Plan. The following tables present the activities and the techniques used to foster public involvement.



⁴ <https://www.scdot.org/inside/planning-stip.aspx>

TIP	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Notice
	PC	Approve Amendments to be placed in STIP; Allow Public Comment	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Website and Social Media	21 Days
RTIP	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Notice
	BOD	Approve Amendments to be placed in STIP; Allow Public Comment	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Website and Social Media	21 Days

RTIP & TIP	Activity	Purpose	Duration
	Draft Document	Use Email, Website, or Social Media to Notify Public that Draft is on Website for Public Review/Comment	21 Days before PC or BOD
	Report Public Feedback	Memo to PC or BOD, Summarize Public Comments Received	Day of PC or BOD
	STIP	DOT Commission Meeting - Follow State's PPP	TBD

RTIP & TIP	Activity	Evaluation Technique
	Draft TIP on Website	Use Website Analytics to Track Activity
	Memo Report	Track Number of Comments
	PC & BOD Meetings	Track and Count Public Comments Received

Significant written or oral comments received on draft Transportation Improvement Programs as a result of the participation process or the interagency consultation process will be summarized, analyzed, and responded to as part of the final TIP document or amendment to the document. Comments received from the public will be acknowledged as received and a response will be provided, if warranted. Substantive comments will be summarized and included in a memo to the Policy Committee or Board of Directors, as applicable for consideration during adoption of Plan.

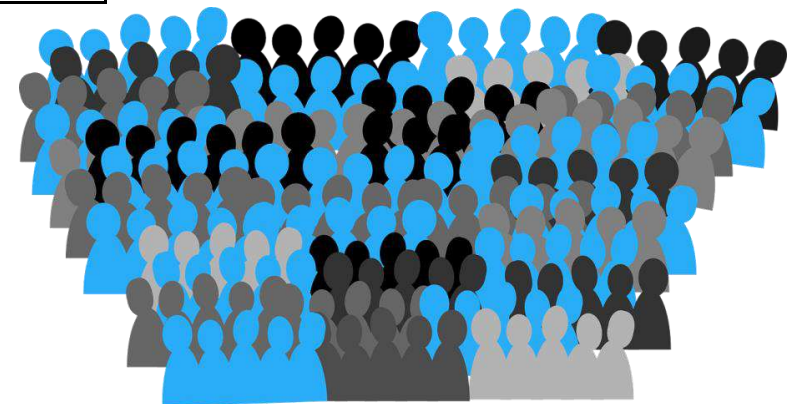
Public Participation Plan

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) outlines the strategies used to provide and receive information from the public on transportation planning and programming processes including funding for projects, studies, plans, and committee actions. The PPP will guide all urban and rural transportation programs. The PPP should be evaluated annually to see if the methods for receiving public input are working. The document should be minimally updated every five years or as needed.

PPP	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Public Comment Period Length (Days)
	PC	Allow Public Comment / Adopt Plan	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Website and Social Media	45

PPP	Activity	Purpose	Duration
	Draft Document	Use Email, Website, or Social Media to Notify Public that Draft is on Website for Public Review/Comment	45 Days
	Report Public Feedback	Memo to PC, Summarize Public Comments Received	Day of PC

PPP	Activity	Evaluation Technique
	Draft PPP on Website	Use Website Analytics to Track 45-Day Activity
	Memo Report	Track Number of Comments
	PC Meeting	Track and Count Public Comments Given



Unified Planning Work Program

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a two-year plan developed to outline the focus of work efforts and use of planning funds anticipated over the next two fiscal years. The UPWP is updated annually to ensure financial feasibility of planning work on an annual basis. All federally funded planning activities have to be included within the UPWP. The UPWP is approved by the CHATS Policy Committee annually.

The Rural Planning Work Program (RPWP) mirrors the UPWP in the application and adoption process.

UPWP	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Notice
	PC	Approve Amendments; Allow Public Comment	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Website and Social Media	21 Days
RPWP	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Notice
	BOD	Approve Amendments; Allow Public Comment	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Website and Social Media	21 Days

RPWP & UPWP	Activity	Purpose	Duration
	Draft Document	Use Email, Website, or Social Media to Notify Public that Draft is on Website for Public Review/Comment	21 Days before PC or BOD
	Report Public Feedback	Memo to PC or BOD, Summarize Public Comments Received	Day of PC or BOD

RPWP & UPWP	Activity	Evaluation Technique
	Draft Document on Website	Use Website Analytics to Track Activity
	Memo Report	Track Number of Comments
	PC & BOD Meetings	Track and Count Public Comments Received

Annual List of Obligated Projects

The Annual List of Obligated Projects (ALoOP) is mandated by Title 23 Section 450.334 of the US Code of Regulations. The Federal Highway Administration defines an obligation as the federal government's legal commitment to pay or reimburse states or other entities for the federal share of a project's eligible costs. Projects are not necessarily initiated or completed during the year their funding is obligated. The Annual List of Obligated Projects will be presented to the CHATS Policy Committee for informational purposes only. The document must be made publicly available no later than December 30th (ninety days after the end of the fiscal year) each year. Public comment is welcomed and will be recorded.

ALoOP	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Notice
	PC	Notify PC of the Annual List	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Website and Social Media	21 Days

ALoOP	Activity	Purpose	Duration
	Draft Document	Use Email, Website, or Social Media to Notify Public that Draft is on Website for Public Review/Comment	21 Days before PC
	Report Public Feedback	Memo to PC, Summarize Public Comments Received	Day of PC

ALoOP	Activity	Evaluation Technique
	Draft Document on Website	Use Website Analytics to Track Activity
	Memo Report	Track Number of Comments
	PC Meeting	Track and Count Public Comments Received

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program & Goal

The United States Department of Transportation's (US DOT) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program provides a vehicle for increasing participation by Minority Business Enterprise (MBEs) in state and local procurement. As a result, BCDCOG has established a DBE Program in accordance with regulations of the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT), 49 CFR Part 26. BCDCOG should strive to update the DBE Program every 5 years. The DBE Goal must be updated and is submitted to FTA by August 1st every three years.

DBE Program or Goal	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Notice
	BOD	Obtain Public Comment; Have BOD Approve to Submit to FTA	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Website and Social Media	30 Days

DBE Program or Goal	Activity	Purpose	Duration
	Draft Document	Use Email, Website, or Social Media to Notify Public that Draft is on Website for Public Review/Comment	30 Days before BOD
Report Public Feedback	Memo to BOD, Summarize Public Comments Received	Day of BOD	

DBE Program or Goal	Activity	Evaluation Technique
	Draft Document on Website	Use Website Analytics to Track Activity
Memo Report	Track Number of Comments	
BOD Meeting	Track and Count Public Comments Received	

Title VI Program and LEP

BCDCOG is committed to integrating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as part of the planning process in all its programs so that it may serve as a guide for public participation efforts. BCDCOG maintains a Title VI Program that ensures that it will not discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age or disability. The Title VI Program includes a Limited English Proficiency Plan as well to aid those who do not have English as a first language. The combined plan can be found at <http://bcdcog.com/transportation-planning/> and must be updated every four years.

Title VI & LEP	Meeting	Focus	Where / Frequency	Advertisement Options	Notice
	BOD	Obtain Public Comment; Have BOD Approve to Submit to FTA	BCDCOG / 1 Meeting	Website and Social Media	30 Days

Title VI & LEP	Activity	Purpose	Duration
	Draft Document	Use Email, Website, or Social Media to Notify Public that Draft is on Website for Public Review/Comment	30 Days before BOD
	Report Public Feedback	Memo to BOD, Summarize Public Comments Received	Day of BOD

Title VI & LEP	Activity	Evaluation Technique
	Draft Document on Website	Use Website Analytics to Track Activity
	Memo Report	Track Number of Comments
	BOD Meeting	Track and Count Public Comments Received

FTA Programs

FTA programs consist of, but are not limited to, transit grants from CFR Sections 5310, 5307, and 5339. The grants can either be a direct allocation or competitively awarded. Section 5310 is the transit program that funds activities in support of the mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Section 5307 can be used for eligible planning activities, engineering, design, capital investments, maintenance, and operations. The Section 5339 transit funding program supports capital projects in which replacement, rehabilitation, purchasing buses, and constructing bus-related facilities are eligible. These grants are awarded annually and will follow the procedures established for the TIP/RTIP. A program of projects (POP) will be used to advertise Section 5307 and Section 5310 projects during the current Federal Fiscal Year.

FTA Programs	Activity	Purpose	Duration
	Program of Projects (POP)	Use Email, Website, or Social Media to Notify Public that the POP is on Website for Public Review/Comment	21 Days before BOD
	Report Public Feedback	Memo to BOD, Summarize Public Comments Received	Day of BOD

General Transportation Related Studies & Plans

If the need arises to conduct additional studies, such as a corridor study or an access management plan, then the public procedures used for the LRTP should be followed. If there are other federal regulations such as NEPA that guide the public participation process in more depth, then those rules must be adhered to and would supersede any written policies herein.

Policy Meetings Procedures

Policy meetings made be held by the CHATS Policy Committee and the BCDCOG Board of Directors. All meetings are open to the public and will conform to the following procedures:

- A minimum of seven days' notice will be given to all members and interested parties (any citizen, affected public agency, representative of a transportation employer, private provider of transportation, and others who wish to be included upon request) for each meeting. An agenda will be sent out with the notice.
- Public Comment will be sought prior to each meeting for agenda items involving a plan, programs, or project, generally 21 days in advance of the meeting (See the Plans, Programs, and Projects Section) depending on the item that is set for review.
- All meetings will provide an opportunity during the meeting for public comment. The Chairperson may limit these comments to three minutes per individual. If more than one person is present representing an organization or group, the Chairperson may ask that the group select a spokesperson. In addition, whenever possible, individuals or spokespersons wishing to be recognized should alert the Chairperson or staff prior to the meeting.
- All meetings shall conform to the BCDCOG agency policy concerning the American Disabilities Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-336, 104 Stat. 327, as amended).
- Notices for these meetings will include:
 - “Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact **(insert staff name)** within two days of public meeting notice being published.”
 - “Si usted necesita la ayuda de un traductor del idioma español, por favor comuníquese con la **(insert staff name)** al teléfono (843) 529-2589, cuando menos 48 horas antes de la junta” which asks persons who need Spanish language assistance to make arrangements with the BCDCOG within two days of a public meeting notice being published.
- All efforts will be made to hold meetings in transit accessible locations.

Public Meeting Principles

Public meetings are held for a variety of reasons, and different levels of public input are expected for transportation plans, programs, and projects. Public meetings are generally considered ad hoc and will be scheduled as needed. The purpose of these public meetings is threefold:

1. To confirm the purpose and intent of the plan, program, or project;
2. To present the trends and forecasts for the region; and
3. To gather public input.

Early Involvement

Early involvement with local community leaders will help to determine suitable meeting forums and information formats to foster valuable input, especially when soliciting input from target populations.

Accessible Language

Meeting notices and materials will use appropriate, understandable language — acronyms and other technical jargon will be avoided to the extent that is possible to the subject matter. Efforts will be made to tailor advertising, project campaigns, and slogans to generate the most interest possible.

Inclusivity

Public meetings will be held at an accessible locations and convenient times in an effort to garner as much input by the affected populations as possible.

- All public meetings shall conform to the BCDCOG agency policy concerning the American Disabilities Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-336, 104 Stat. 327, as amended).
- Notices for these public meetings will include:
 - “Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact **(insert staff name)** within two days of public meeting notice being published.”
 - “Si usted necesita la ayuda de un traductor del idioma español, por favor comuníquese con la **(insert staff name)** al teléfono (843) 529-2589, cuando menos 48 horas antes de la junta” which asks persons who need Spanish language assistance to make arrangements with the BCDCOG within two days of a public meeting notice being published.

Document & Implement Public Feedback

Public input that is gathered will be documented and placed in an appendix in the final plan (ex. LRTP, PPP, etc.). All efforts should be made to show how the input that was received helped to affect the plan, program, or project.

Outreach Methods

The type of public outreach efforts employed will be determined based on the plan, program or project's overall local and regional impact. Highly localized projects may require more specialized outreach within the project's area of influence, rather than the broad outreach efforts required by others. Extensive outreach efforts throughout all areas of the region are conducted in order to assemble a broad cross-section of input into the decision-making process, including traditionally underserved areas. BCDCOG/CHATS outreach efforts in these areas will continue to provide residents with an opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns. BCDCOG/CHATS will continue to conduct, sponsor, and participate in special and community events that reinforce the mission and strategic plan of the organization, educate the public, and provide opportunities for public input. Visualization techniques will be used when necessary to enhance the public's understanding of transportation activities. The primary tools to disseminate information and garner public input will be used the most frequently, while the secondary tools will be used less frequently. BCDCOG/CHATS approach in publicizing its public meetings and sharing information may include the following tools:

Primary Tools

Website

The BCDCOG website, <http://www.bcdco.com>, will be used to disseminate information and collect public input regarding all transportation activities. The website may contain, but is not limited to:

- Meeting calendar and agendas
- Procurement opportunities
- Current project descriptions, with available maps, photos, or renderings
- Work products such as the TIP, UPWP, LRTP, PPP etc.
- Regional statistics and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capabilities
- Newsletter and information for sign up
- Links to social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- List of standing committees and a regional directory of participating jurisdictions
- Listing of BCDCOG staff and contact information

Project specific websites may be built and used for activities such as an LRTP update as well. These sites are used to attract a larger audience for specific topics and will be linked to from the BCDCOG website.

Social Media

Social media is an excellent tool to cultivate two-way digital communication which can lead to awareness of transportation plans, programs, and projects. The primary forms of social media that may be used are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. If other forms of social media transcend the current formats, those will be explored as well. Social media can be used to augment other efforts, such as building email lists as well.

Email Lists

Email is an effective tool to communicate quickly for transportation related activities. During public meetings, members of the public will be asked if they would like to be included on a mailing list to receive more information about the specific topic they are attending. Lists will be created and maintained for specific plans, programs or projects that are seeking public feedback. A specific email address for an individual transportation activity may be established on a project by project basis if needed.

Press Releases

Press releases will be released to local media to ensure the press is up-to-date on news and information concerning transportation activities and to prompt assistance with promoting events to a larger audience.

Newsletters

BCDCOG produces and distributes a periodic electronic newsletter that includes articles and other information of interest on MPO plans, programs, and projects.

Comment Cards

Comment cards will be used to gather feedback at public meetings.

Pop Up Meetings

Pop Up Meetings will be used gather public input at events or locations that attract people for a different reason. For instance, a high-school football game or a farmer's market could be a great way to solicit public feedback on a nearby transportation activity.

Secondary Tools

Advisory Committees

From time to time, an advisory committee may be established to help work through a transportation planning activity.

Paid Advertising

Various projects may require additional paid advertising in the form of newspaper, radio, or television ads.

Flyers/Posters

When appropriate, participation from target populations will be sought by posting flyers/posters and meeting notices in locations such as government centers, neighborhood shops, religious institutions, social service agencies, employment centers, bus stops/transit hubs, senior centers, public health clinics, public libraries, community centers and popular meeting places. Postcards and flyers may also be used to garner public feedback.

Surveys

Transportation activities may require surveys to understand public sentiment. Different applications may be used such as statistically valid telephone surveys and online surveys.

Online Interactive Maps

Interactive maps that are hosted online may be used to gather public feedback from time to time. An example of an online interactive map would be one where end users could draw preferred bicycle routes across a specific geography in an effort to either show the most used facilities or to add new facilities.

Public involvement needs to encompass the full range of community interests, yet people underserved by transportation often do not participate. Not only are they frequently unaware of transportation proposals that could affect their daily lives, but they also may have no means to get to a public meeting or have long work hours that preclude them from attending. Many citizens do not participate in public involvement activities, even though they have important, unspoken issues that should be heard. Some may have a deep mistrust for public officials and government offices, while others may be discouraged from participating due to cultural values. The following strategies for engaging minority and low-income populations (FTA Circular 4702.1B) will be employed.

- Scheduling meetings at times and locations that are convenient and accessible for minority and LEP communities
- Employing different meeting sizes and formats
- Coordinating with community- and faith-based organizations, educational institutions, and other organizations to implement public engagement strategies that reach out specifically to members of affected minority and/or LEP communities
- Considering radio, television, or newspaper ads on stations and in publications that serve LEP populations. Outreach to LEP populations could also include audio programming available on podcasts
- 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

Title VI and LEP Outreach

In an effort to consider the needs of the traditionally underserved, low-income, minority, and limited-English speaking populations with regards to transportation plans, programs, and projects within the region, BCDCOG maintains a separate Title VI and LEP Plan.⁵ The plan demonstrates BCDCOG's commitment to preventing discrimination, provides grievance procedures, discusses potential outreach methods, and provides options for those with limited-English speaking abilities.

It is imperative to conduct additional outreach to these affected communities to garner feedback. The Title VI and LEP Plan outline a table of the BCDCOG Board of Directors and the CHATS Policy Committee memberships by race. In an effort to communicate more efficiently with each community, those members may be reached to discuss the best opportunities that they think would be effective in their respective community. Opportunities to gather more feedback from disadvantaged and LEP communities that have been used in the past and will continue moving forward are, but are not limited to:

- Meetings held that are transit and handicap accessible locations
- Meetings are setup at convenient times
- Meetings held with the opportunity for multi-lingual assistance
- Pop-up information booths at planned events such as the Black Expo, Latin American Festival, and High School Football Games
- Seeking out community leaders or representatives to garner more participation (Church Leader, Council Member, etc.)
- Promoting events in other languages such as the flyer that was used in the 2040 LRTP (see image)
- Attending local community meetings within low income communities
- Providing presentations to affected communities by request
- Promoting engagement at public transit stops
- Minimizing transportation jargon to improve communication
- Continuously seeking creative methods to engage affected populations



⁵ <http://bcdcog.com/transportation-planning/>

Interested Parties and Consultation

The PPP will target these parties in the BCDCOG region: citizens, affected public agencies (federal, state and local), transit and freight entities, users of public transportation, users of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, military installations, land management agencies, and the disabled, elderly, low-income, and limited English speaking populations with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. Inclusiveness only stands to improve transportation facilities for all users and promotes the well-being of society over the long term.

Consultation with agency partners and interested parties will utilize many of the outreach methods contained within this PPP. Consultation with agencies to review and comment on plans, programs, and projects administered by CHATS/BCDCOG will be, at a minimum, subject to the comment period presented within each category. The goal will be to maintain a symbiotic relationship that ultimately crafts better transportation outcomes for all involved. When proper consultation is continuous and evolving, better outcomes occur. When better outcomes are achieved, project delivery is expeditious and judicious.

Ongoing coordination with interested parties and agencies will help identify effective mitigation strategies for potential impacts of transportation projects in the region. Interagency agreements may be maintained between CHATS/BCDCOG and other local and regional agencies. The interagency agreements will describe CHATS/BCDCOGs role and responsibilities in relation to the other agencies' work.

Public Input

AFFIDAVIT
OF PUBLICATION

The Post and Courier

State of South Carolina
County of Charleston

Personally appeared before me
the undersigned advertising Clerk of the
above indicated newspaper published
in the City of Charleston, County and
State aforesaid, who, being duly sworn,
says that the advertisement of

_____ copy attached _____
appeared in the issues of said newspaper
on the following day(s): 8/8/19

Subscribed and sworn to
before me this 9th day
of August
A.D. 20 19

[Signature]
NOTARY PUBLIC, SC
My Commission expires Sep 27, 2021

**THE CHARLESTON AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY
(CHATS) POLICY COMMITTEE**

The Metropolitan Planning Organization
(MPO) for the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester
Region announces availability of the following
document for public review:

2019 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

This document is available for public review
and comment from
August 8, 2019 to September 22, 2019
Monday-Friday between the hours of
9:00 am to 5:00 pm
at the
Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester
Council of Governments
5790 Casper Padgett Way,
North Charleston, SC
843-529-0400
Or at
<http://www.bcdcoog.com/transportation-planning/>

Contact Person: Kathryn Basha

The Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of
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status or disability in the admission or access to,
or treatment or employment in, its federally-assisted
programs or activities. Persons needing assistance
in obtaining information can call
RELAY SC #1-800-735-2905

Throughout the forty-five day comment period, no comments were received. Staff will continue to use these outreach techniques to engage the community and foster public participation.