

Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study

Participation Plan

FY 2010-2013



Prepared By:
Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study

In Cooperation With:

Federal Highway Administration
Georgia Department of Transportation

Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study

Participation Plan

FY 2010-2013

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Invitation for Public Comment

The draft version of this document was submitted for public review between May 28, 2010 and July 16, 2010. This document was made available on our web site and at our office in paper form. The comment period for the draft document was advertised in the Ledger-Enquirer, via our departmental web site, at our citizen's advisory committee meeting, via our e-mail news list (known as In-Touch). Additionally, copies of the document were distributed to the C-PCMPO Citizens Advisory Committee, the Technical Coordinating Committee and the Policy Coordinating Committee at their May, 2010 meetings. No comments were received from any entity during this comment period.

An electronic copy is available at the C-PCMPO web site at www.columbusga.org/planning. Paper copies are available on request from the Columbus Planning Department.

RESOLUTION
COLUMBUS-PHENIX CITY TRANSPORTATION STUDY
POLICY COMMITTEE
ENDORSEMENT OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2010-2013
FINAL PARTICIPATION PLAN

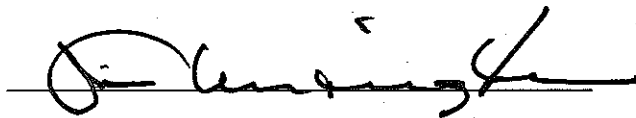
WHEREAS the Governors of Georgia and Alabama have designated the Columbus Department of Planning as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (C-PCTS) for the Columbus-Phenix City (C-PCTS) urban area;

WHEREAS it is necessary to adopt the 2010 Participation Plan as a necessary update to the Public Involvement Process.

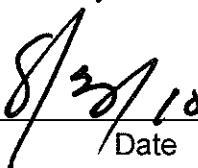
WHEREAS the public has had the opportunity to review the draft version of this Participation Plan and submit comments concerning it to the C-PCTS during a fixed time period which was advertised;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Columbus-Phenix City Study Policy Committee approves the endorsement of the final version of the 2010-2013 Participation Plan;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the C-PCTS Policy Committee finds that the requirements of laws and regulations regarding urban transportation planning have been met and authorizes its chairman to execute a joint certification of this fact with the Georgia Department of Transportation, the Alabama Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.



Mayor Jim Wetherington, Chairman
Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study
Policy Committee


Date

Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study

Participation Plan

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Purpose

The Participation Plan (PP) is intended to provide a guideline for public involvement activities to be conducted by the Columbus Consolidated Government Planning Department. The plan is intended to identify a proactive public involvement process for the planning activities of the Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study (C-PCTS). It is also intended to enhance decision-making and to ensure that residents of Columbus, Georgia, Phenix City, Alabama and surrounding areas are invited and encouraged to participate in the transportation planning process.

The PP contains goals, objectives and policies of the public involvement process. The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidelines for the evaluation of the public involvement techniques.

The obligation to provide information and consider public input in decision - making is explicit under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The true test of a public participation plan is the level of public awareness and feedback. Too often, public participation does not occur until after the community at large becomes aware of an unpopular decision, at which point large citizen efforts become necessary to change decisions after the fact. A planning process that involves the average citizen early makes the public a participant in any decision that is ultimately made.

This report outlines an introduction to public involvement, participation by the C-PCTS, public involvement requirements, recommended goals, objectives, policies and public involvement activities. This Plan fulfills requirements set forth within the June 9, 2006 proposed rulemaking for public participation procedures for metropolitan planning organizations, which incorporate changes to the Code of Federal Regulations due to the passage of SAFETEA-LU. The final rule was put in place in 2007.

Introduction

The Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study (C-PCTS) is responsible for providing transportation policy and overseeing the federal transportation process for the Columbus region, which includes full and fair participation from the public. The C-PCTS jurisdiction consists of the counties of Muscogee and Chattahoochee in Georgia, sections of Russell and Lee counties in Alabama as well as the Georgia Department of Transportation and the Alabama Department of Transportation.

There are three major pieces of legislation that have outlined requirements for public participation in the transportation planning process carried out by the C-PCTS. These include the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA).

Below is language from the June 9, 2006 proposed rulemaking that includes SAFETEA-LU changes.

23 CFR 450.316: Interested parties, participation and consultation

(a) The C-PCTS shall develop and use a documented Participation Plan that defines a process for providing 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, agencies or entities responsible for safety/security operations, providers of non-emergency transportation services receiving financial assistance from a source other than title 49, U.S.C, Chapter 53, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

(1) The Participation Plan shall be developed by the C-PCTS in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

- (i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
- (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web; Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- (v) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (vi) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
- (vii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was initially made available for public comment;
- (viii) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and
- (ix) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the Participation Plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

(2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.

(3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised Participation Plan is adopted by the C-PCTS. Copies of the approved Participation Plan shall be provided to FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.

Further, in 1997, the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) issued an "Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low Income Populations". Environmental justice refers specifically to whether low-income and minority populations may bear disproportionate adverse impacts resulting from government decisions. This order applies to all policies, programs and other activities that are undertaken, funded, or approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and other US DOT components including statewide and metropolitan planning.

Consistent with the direction provided by the federal transportation law, the SAFETEA-LU legislation of 2005, the mission of the C-PCTS is to develop, promote and ensure implementation of a regional transportation plan that:

1. Supports the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency;
2. Increases the safety of the transportation system or motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increases the security of the transportation system or motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increases accessibility and mobility options available to people and freight;
5. Protects and enhances the environment, promote energy conservation and improve quality of life and promotes consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
6. Enhances the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promotes efficient system management and operation; and
8. Emphasizes the preservation of the existing transportation system.

Activities performed by the C-PCTS to comply with this mission include:

- Organizing, overseeing and managing the planning process in compliance with the current federal requirements.
- Providing direction to and receiving policy related support from the Technical coordination Committee of the C-PCTS

- Providing policy direction and oversight to meet Federal and State environmental requirements for attaining air quality standards as required by the Federal Clean Air Act (as amended).

Therefore, in order to carry out this mission in a fully open process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continued involvement, as mandated by Federal law, the C-PCTS has developed and adopted this document to ensure that the appropriate consideration and steps are being taken.

Public Participation Goals, Objectives and Policies

The effectiveness of any program and policy plan depends upon its success in meeting the expectations of the public. As stated earlier, plans and programs need to be reassessed periodically to determine if the public's evolving needs and expectations are adequately provided for through the plan. In order to ensure that this occurs, the public must be kept informed of activities, and must be given meaningful opportunity to participate in the development and review of public policy. Thus it is important to have an ongoing program to involve citizens through the use of the Citizens Advisory Committee, public workshops, press releases and other public outreach activities.

Public Participation Goal - To provide the public with thorough information and full access to key decisions on the transportation planning services and project development in a convenient and timely manner.

Objective 1: Public Access

The public shall be provided timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.

Policy 1.1 All C-PCTS plans and documents shall be made available for the public to review at the C-PCTS office. Single copies of the current C-PCTS plans and documents shall be provided free of charge upon request. Copies of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and C-PCTS plans shall be distributed to all other participating agencies. The public will have a 30-day window in which to review the document and submit comments that will be considered by the C-PCTS for incorporation into the final document. . All relevant public comments will be published with brief responses from the C-PCTS concerning their merits in the final document.

Policy 1.2 The C-PCTS shall provide reasonable access to technical and policy information used in the development of plans and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Policy 1.3 Assistance shall be provided upon request and 48-hour notice to the hearing and visually impaired, those not fluent in English or others required special assistance at all C-PCTS meetings and hearings. The C-PCTS is fully committed to the spirit and intent of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). All meetings, public hearings and formal events of the C-PCTS shall be held in facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities.

Objective 2: Public Outreach and Education

Opportunities shall be created for all segments of the public to learn and become informed about issues under consideration by the C-PCTS, particularly those who can be expected to be directly affected by the outcome or with special needs that may be well served by the existing transportation system.

Policy 2.1 Information pertaining to the adoption, revision or amendment of all C-PCTS plans and transportation project priorities shall be provided to the media two weeks prior to the date of the final action.

Policy 2.2 Inform the public about issues and proposals under construction through town meetings, newsletters or other techniques, during the deployment of each of the transportation studies and projects for which the C-PCTS is responsible.

Policy 2.3 The C-PCTS maintains a list of civic and public service organizations and interested or potentially interested persons for the purpose of disseminating information about its planning activities. Special attention shall be given to include members of potentially underserved groups.

Policy 2.4 The C-PCTS has identified and involved groups that are traditionally underserved in the C-PCTS area in the transportation planning process. The C-PCTS will create and initiate a method (through census, GIS or other similar means) to identify those communities with high concentrations of minority, low-income, disabled or elderly populations. The C-PCTS will also meet with the community leaders to identify ways of reaching these groups and involving them in the transportation planning process. In addition, the C-PCTS will also identify media that serves these communities and maintain a mailing/contact list to notify these media outlets of all regularly scheduled C-PCTS Committee meetings. The C-PCTS shall also include the representation of minority, low income, disabled and elderly persons on the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

The following are a list of strategies to be carried out in order to enhance and support public outreach and education in the regional transportation planning and decision making process.

Objective 3: Public Input

Consideration of public input shall be an integral part of the C-PCTS decision-making process.

Policy 3.1 The C-PCTS shall conduct public hearings prior to the adoption of each of the transportation plans and programs for which it is responsible, including the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), other transportation improvement priorities, and on substantive amendments and annual updates thereof.

Policy 3.2 Provide all significant previously received public comments pertaining to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the transportation plans, studies and projects for which the C-PCTS is responsible to the C-PCTS and its committees prior to any action being taken on the planning products that are to be adopted or amended.

Policy 3.3 Provide an opportunity for the public to comment during the public meetings of the C-PCTS prior to any final action.

Policy 3.4 Provide all C-PCTS subcommittees with results of public feedback during the C-PCTS meetings.

The following are strategies to support and achieve input into the regional transportation planning and decision making process.

Citizens Advisory Committee

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is a subcommittee of the C-PCTS established to provide broad regional community input throughout the long-range transportation planning process. The CAC is comprised of individuals representing a balanced cross-section of the region's populations including environmental, business and civic organizations, as well as low-income, minority and disabled populations.

Public Hearings

At least one public hearing shall be conducted by the C-PCTS prior to the adoption or amendment of each of the following planning products. All public hearings are advertised to the general public in the legal notice section of the classifieds of the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer at least four weeks prior to the time of the hearing and shall include the project identification number, date, time and place of the hearing. Public hearings are advertised to the general public similar to public meetings. These public hearings may be held for the:

- C-PCTS Long Range Transportation Plan adoption
- FHWA Recertification of the C-PCTS

The C-PCTS shall encourage the public to provide feedback at these hearings as well as through the C-PCTS website.

Public Information/Town Meetings

Public meetings will be used to disseminate information and provide a setting for informal public comment and discussion at appropriate levels in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as well as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development processes. Public meetings consist of a formal presentation as well as a question and answer period. C-PCTS members are in attendance to listen to public comments and concerns. All public meetings are advertised to the general public in the form of newspaper ads in the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer and Columbus Times two weeks prior to the time of the meeting and shall include the project identification number, date, time and place of the meeting.

Participation Plan

The development, adoption and amendment of the C-PCTS plans and programs shall be subject to the PP. The PP shall be reviewed every three years to ensure the C-PCTS's planning process provides full and open access to the general public. The PP shall also be reviewed as part of the quadrennial certification process conducted by the FHWA and during the annual certification process that is required for each C-PCTS. Copies of the participation plan and public meeting will be at a central location that is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and preferably is situated on a transit bus route.

A public comment period of 45 days shall be provided prior to the adoption or amendment of the PP. Notice of the 45 day comment period shall be published in the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer, Columbus Times (a minority owned newspaper) and posted on the Columbus Consolidated Government web site. A summary of the feedback and comments received from the public, along with brief responses from the C-PCTS concerning their merits will be included as an appendix to the final document.

Identifying Stakeholders in the Process

A 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; traditionally underserved communities such as people with disabilities, low income, and racial/ethnic minorities, as well as affected public agencies. Networking with local jurisdictional outreach professionals will help ensure that all stakeholders are identified. Also, it shall be necessary to assess the existing mailing list. The C-PCTS will use current Census information to identify stakeholders.

In providing reasonable opportunities to comment, the C-PCTS shall, to the maximum extent possible:

- hold any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times
- employ visualization techniques to describe plans;
- make public information available in an electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, videos concerning projects and other planning activities on the web site Youtube, publicly accessible electronic mail group lists such as Constant Contact and dedicated channels on social networking forums such as Facebook, as appropriate to afford reasonable consideration of public information.

Web Site

The web site will contain basic information about different transportation projects. This may include documents such as the Congestion Mitigation Process (CMP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) by downloading from the site. The site may also provide links to other transportation related sites from the local and national level. The web site will also be advertised on all display ads and publications from the C-PCTS.

Resources Consultation

Sections 6001 of SAFETEA-LU requires that MPOs “shall consult, as appropriate with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of a long-range transportation plan,” and that this consultation “shall involve, as appropriate:

- A comparison of transportation plans with state conservation plans or maps;
- A comparison of transportation plans to inventories of natural or historic resources if possible.

In addition the Secretary shall encourage each C-PCTS to consult with officials responsible for other types for planning activities that are affected by transportation in the area including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, and freight movement.”

To meet consultation requirements listed above, the agencies (that are listed in appendix A and B in this document) were identified during the “Agency Consultation Process” recently initiated by the GDOT. C-PCTS will contact these agencies directly or indirectly and will compare available plans, maps, and inventories from state and local

resources, as appropriate. In addition, C-PCTS will provide resource agencies in the region reasonable opportunities to review and provide comments on documents including the TIP, the LRTP, and this Participation Plan.

In addition, C-PCTS will continued to coordinate with local, regional and State agencies responsible for military activities, economic development, planned growth, airport and freight movement.

Display Ads

Display ads will be used to promote meetings that are not regularly scheduled, such as corridor study workshops. They are published in the local section of the newspaper in order to reach a larger audience than those that typically read the legal advertisements in the classifieds section.

Posters and Flyers

Posters and flyers are used to increase distribution to the public in common areas such as libraries, community centers or other areas where they might have increased visibility.

TV Message Boards

The Columbus Consolidated Government television (CCG-TV) will be used to announce meetings, transportation projects and other information to the general public in the form of a scrolling message board.

E-mail Announcements/Internet Message Boards

Through the use of other Public Involvement tools, the availability of e-mail announcements will be advertised as a way for the public to receive announcements electronically. The e-mail announcements will rely upon an e-mail address database that will be compiled by the C-PCTS. The C-PCTS presently utilizes the Constant Contact system to disseminate information via e-mail to interested individuals. The C-PCTS also has an openly viewable page on the social networking channel Facebook on the internet.

Direct Mailings

Direct mailings will be used to announce upcoming meetings or activities or to provide information to a targeted area. Direct mailings can be post cards, letters or flyers. An area will be targeted for a direct mailing because of potential impact from a proposed project.

Press Release

Formal press releases are sent to local media (newspaper, Columbus Consolidated Government television, local television stations and radio stations) to announce upcoming meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues related to transportation planning.

Project Specific Web Pages

Project specific web pages will be used to give a more detailed description of larger projects in the Columbus-Phenix City area. Video footage concerning projects and/or meetings can be displayed on behalf of the C-PCTS via the YouTube internet video web site.

Surveys

The C-PCTS will encourage responses to surveys by explaining the importance of receiving feedback. Surveys will be handed out at all public meetings and be offered in various forms on the web site. See Appendix C for an example of a survey we have utilized.

Monthly C-PCTS Meetings

Monthly C-PCTS meetings will be held on the Tuesday of the second full week of the month at a location determined by the Chairperson. These meetings will be advertised in the Columbus Ledger Enquirer and the Columbus Times 30 days in advance and shall include a brief summary of the nature of the meeting. They are also listed on the web site for the C-PCTS, in our newsletter, on our Facebook site and also via the Constant Contact e-mail system. The public will be provided the opportunity to comment or be heard on any matter pertinent to the planning process before action is taken by the C-PCTS.

Public Review and Comment Periods

Public review and comment periods shall be for a minimum of 30 days. Public review and comment periods for Participation Plan updates shall be held for 45 days. The C-PCTS shall consider longer public review and comment periods, as necessary. Formal public review and comment periods shall be held, at a minimum for:

- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Participation Plan (PP) Updates
- C-PCTS Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Any amendment to the TIP, UPWP or LRTP.

Public comments may be provided in the following ways: verbally at the public hearing (if applicable), during the public participation opportunity of a regularly scheduled C-PCTS meeting occurring within the formal review and comment period, in writing, and via electronic mail. All verbal testimony must be accompanied by written testimony in order to ensure a written response.

Comments Received Concerning Draft of this Participation Plan

This Participation Plan update was prepared following the aforementioned guidelines. Copies of the draft version was disseminated to members of the Citizen's Advisory Committee at their May 11, 2010 meeting, to Technical Coordination Committee members at their meeting on May 13, 2010 and to members of the Policy Coordination Committee at their meeting on May 28, 2010. Additionally, the draft Participation Plan was uploaded to the C-PCTS web site for public review and comments as well as made available in paper copy at our office. This availability and invitation for public comments was made known to the public via advertisements in the classified section of the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer on a weekly basis.

Comment Forms

Comment forms are issued to solicit public comment on specific issues presented at public meetings. Comment forms can ask for very specific feedback or be very general in nature. Comment forms shall be used at all public/town meetings to provide feedback on specific projects, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

Evaluation of the Public Involvement Process and Improvement Strategies

The Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study shall continually strive to improve public involvement. Improvements will be made to increase public awareness and to improve the quantity and quality of information provided to the public. The decisions made by the C-PCTS affect the entire population, both residents and visitors, of the Columbus area. Therefore, seeking public input on those decisions is vital to the success of the C-PCTS as the agency responsible for the transportation planning in the Columbus and Phenix City region.

Within one month after the completion of an activity or milestones during an activity evaluation of public involvement shall occur. For on-going activities, evaluation will occur at least quarterly.

Each time a public evaluation is performed, a list of improvement strategies shall be identified for implementation. If improvement is needed for an on-going public involvement task, such as the C-PCTS web site, a reasonable completion date will be established. If improvement is needed for one-time activities, such as corridor studies, the improvement will be implemented where appropriate on future activities.

The Transportation Planning Division of the Planning Department will make a continuous effort in evaluating the effectiveness of the public involvement process. Evaluation of the public involvement process effort will be based on achievements of objectives and feedback from the public. By continuously evaluating the public involvement activities, it is possible to discontinue activities that are ineffective and to improve or add new public involvement activities.

In order to determine the effectiveness of the public involvement techniques, there must be a concept of evaluating the established performance goals and objectives. Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of the public involvement process can be done with a variety of means. The Transportation Planning Division will continue to research and work with a variety of components in this area to develop better evaluation techniques and incorporate new measures. The following section briefly describes evaluation methods used by the C-PCTS. For each public involvement tool, performance goals and methods for meeting those goals are identified in **Table 1**.

The following checklists will be utilized to determine what public involvement methods will be undertaken.

Table I
Public Involvement Checklist
Public Involvement Methods Used for Special Studies

Project: _____
Date: _____

Public Involvement Tool	Description	Method Used
Participation Plan	Document of strategies and evaluation criteria	YES
Transportation Planning web site	Public web site for dissemination of information	YES
Transportation Planning Feedback Database	Database that compiles feedback for evaluation	YES
Identify Stakeholders	Method used to identify different groups that would be affected by a project	YES
Display Ad	Newspaper or print advertisements	YES
Direct Mailings	Used to more accurately target affected areas.	YES
Press Releases	Press releases to announce meetings, projects, et cetera.	YES
TV Message Boards	Government access channel announcement board.	YES
Project specific web sites	For use with other tools to provide detailed information	YES
Social Networking Sites	Utilized as a public outreach and information tool.	YES
Citizen Advisory Committees	Committee which is part of most planning studies.	YES
Small Group Meetings	Meetings that are held at the request of affected groups.	YES
E-mail Announcements	Used with other tools to increase public announcements	YES
Public Hearings	Used for the adoption of documents such as the TIP or UPWP.	
Comment Forms	Used to solicit public feedback and used for evaluation purposes.	YES
Surveys	Used to solicit public feedback on specific issues	YES
Posters and Flyers	Distributed in public areas to increase visibility	YES
Visualization Techniques	Drawing/sketches, aerial photography, pictures, "visual choice" surveys. Using YouTube web site to post videos of projects and/or meetings.	YES
Public information	Available in an electronically accessible format (e.g. PDF documents)	YES
Public meetings	Held at convenient and accessible locations and times.	YES

Public Involvement Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Press Releases	Calls, letters, etc.	No standard. Format may be modified based on specific comments received.	Encouraged publication of press releases by keeping the media informed.
TV Message Boards	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw the meeting notice.	Provide information to CCG-TV as soon as it is available to increase airtime. Encourage CCG-TV to make announcements prominent.
Project Specific web pages.	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of hits (visits) on the web site.	Minimum of 25 hits per month. Increase at least 10% over the life of the project. Expectation may be higher depending on the size of the study area.	Use other public involvement tools to increase advertisement of the web site.
Citizen Advisory Committees	Calls, letters, etc.; Attendance	N/A These committees are part of most planning studies. Elected officials in the study area appoint members.	The C-PCTS staff and any consultant staff should encourage appointed members to attend meetings.
Small Group Meetings	Calls, letters, etc.; attendance	N/A. These meetings are held at the request of affected groups.	The C-PCTS staff and any consulting staff should be available in a timely manner to hold small group meetings regarding any C-PCTS activity or issue. The meetings should be formatted to provide specific information requested by the group and should highlight issues that are of interest to the group

Public Involvement Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
E-mail Lists Internet Message Boards	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of persons 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.
Public Hearings	Calls, letters, etc.; Attendance	3% to 5% of affected population (based on study area) in attendance.	Schedule hearings at convenient times and locations. Use other public involvement tools to increase awareness of hearings.
Posters and Flyers	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of persons reached.	Minimum of 15% meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated they saw the poster.	Increase distribution to common areas where posters will be more visible to the general public.
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.
Participation Plan	No measure- PP should reflect the policies and practices of the C-PCTS		Update at least every 3 years to incorporate the improvement strategies resulting from public involvement evaluations.
Transportation Planning Web Site	Number of 'hits' (visits)	Minimum of 60 hits per month with a 5% increase in hits per quarter.	Use other public involvement tools to increase advertisement of the web site.

Public Involvement Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal(s)	Methods to Meet Goal(s)
Identifying stakeholders			Creating a database of different groups that would be affected by certain projects.
Display Ad	Calls, letters, etc.; 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.
Direct Mailings	Calls, letters, etc; number of persons reached.	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents that indicated that they received the mailing.	Increase/decrease mailing to more accurately target affected areas. Use the most up-to-date information from the Columbus Consolidated GIS Division to maintain the mailing list.

Measuring the Effectiveness of the Public Involvement Process

Appropriate measures for evaluating the public involvement activities are currently limited, but the Transportation Planning Division recognizes that simple counts of the number of comments received on a particular issue, and attendance at a particular meeting; are only two means of monitoring the effectiveness of public involvement.

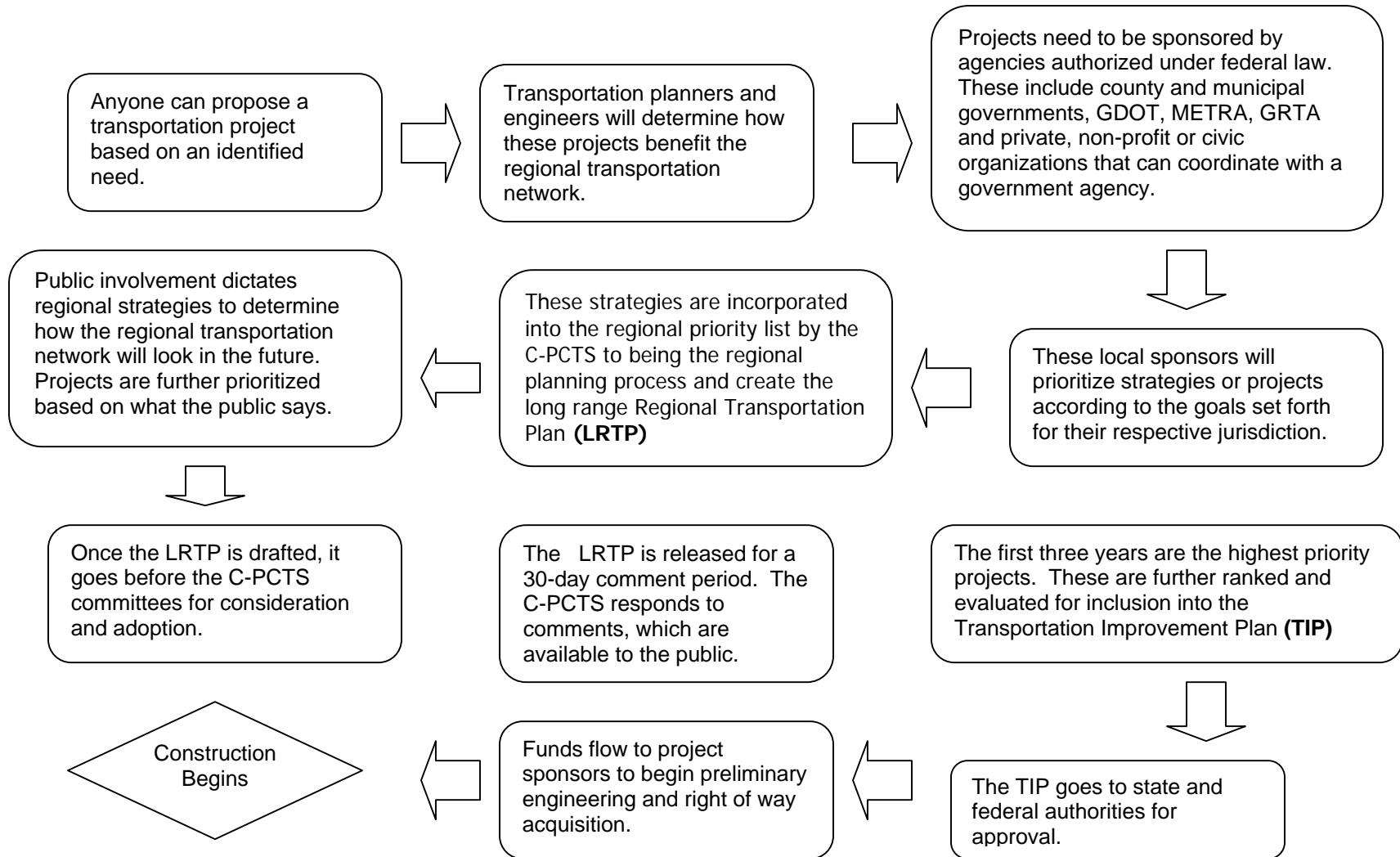
Comment cards, newspapers, web sites, press releases, radio, local government television, mailing lists, and other components can and will be compared to determine the effectiveness of the public involvement process. Measuring what is most effective will have to be continuously monitored by quantitative and qualitative measures. This process will include continued research and cooperative efforts from our citizens and transportation experts to help develop better evaluation techniques and incorporate new measures in monitoring the effectiveness of our public evaluation process.

Environmental Mitigation

Section 6001 of SAFETEA-LU requires as well that planning documents “shall include a discussion of the types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the [transportation] plan,” and that these planning-level discussions “shall be developed in consultation with Federal, State, and Tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies.”

To comply with these requirements, C-PCTS provided environmental resource agencies an opportunity to actively participate during the development of the 2035 LRTP. In addition, C-PCTS will continue to coordinate iteratively with Fort Benning representatives and send general information will be sent to resource agencies on major planning and corridor studies. The goal of these activities will be to identify potential environmental mitigation activities early during the development of long-range transportation plans

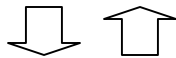
Diagram of Transportation Planning Process for Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study



Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study
Committee Roles

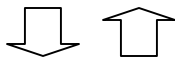
Policy Coordinating Committee

- Responsible for review and approval of the Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study and all aspects including goals, objectives, plans, and programs developed by the Study.
- Responsible for insuring that the Study is kept up-to-date, that timely reports are made to inform the public of progress of the Study, that a complete multi modal unified work program is developed for all aspects of the Study and that the respective agencies, jurisdictions, or commissions are kept informed of Study progress.
- Serves as a liaison representative between governmental units in the study area in order to obtain optimum cooperation of all governmental units in providing information and in implementing various elements of the plan.
- Has the authority to determine and alter from time to time the membership of the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC).
- Has the authority to determine and alter from time to time the membership of the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) with the intended purpose of providing a broad cross-section of citizen participation.



Technical Coordinating Committee

- Collects, maintains, and analysis data for transportation planning;
- Prepares transportation plan and advises the Policy Committee on changes in the plan and programs;
- Evaluates transportation system improvements and recommends changes to decision makers in the government;
- Prepares the Unified Planning Work Program and the Transportation Improvement Program.



Citizens Advisory Committee

- Reviews current year transportation improvements and recommends a UPWP for the next year;
- Makes transportation recommendations to PCC and TCC;
- Reviews policy and procedural matters and makes appropriate recommendations to PCC and TCC; and
- Assesses public opinion through opinion polls and interviews, and conveys public needs to PCC and TCC.

Appendix A State Resource Agencies

Organization	Address	Phone	Website(s)
Georgia Dept. of Community Affairs	60 Executive Park South Atlanta, Georgia 30329	404.679.4940	http://www.dca.state.ga.us/
Georgia Dept. of Economic Development	75 Fifth Street, NW, Suite 1200 Atlanta, GA 30308	404-962-4000	http://www.georgia.org/
Georgia Ports Authority	P.O. Box 2406 Savannah, GA 31402	912.964.3806	http://www.gaports.com
Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources	Suite 1252 East Tower 2 Martin Luther King SE Atlanta, GA 30334	404.656.3500	http://www.dnr.state.ga.us
Historic Preservation Division of Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources	34 Peachtree Street, Suite 1600 Atlanta, GA 30303	Reception: 404.656.2840 Mgt. & Info Unit : 404.651.5180	https://www.itos.uga.edu/nahrgis
Environmental Protection Division, of Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources	Suite 1152, East Tower 2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Atlanta, GA 30334	404.657.5947	http://www.gaepd.org
Wildlife Resource Division, of Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources	Headquarters Office 2070 U.S. Highway 278 S.E. Social Circle, GA 30025	Fisheries: 770.918.6146 Game: 770.918.6400 Gen. Info: 770.918.6408 Wildlife: 770.761.3035	http://www.georgiawildlife.com/

State Parks & Historic Sites,
of Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

2 Martin Luther King Dr
East Tower – Suite 1352
Atlanta, GA 30334

404.656.2770

<http://www.gastateparks.org/>

Coastal Resources
of Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

One Conservation Way
Brunswick, GA 31520

912.264.7218

<http://crd.dnr.state.ga.us/>

Georgia Dept. of Transportation

One Georgia Center
600 West Peachtree NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

404.631.1990

<http://www.dot.ga.gov>

Appendix B Geographic Information Systems Data Libraries

Organization & Website URL

Information Available:

National Geospatial Data Clearinghouse

Over 250 spatial data servers with digital geographic data that can be searched through a single interface based on descriptions or metadata

<http://clearinghouse1.fgdc.gov>

GIS Data Depot

Library can be searched for data layers by state and county.

<http://data.geocomm.com>

Available layers include:

Topographic Maps, Aerial Photos, Environmental/Natural Resources, National Wetlands Inventory, Hydrograph, Transportation/Infrastructure Data

Geospatial

Geospatial One-Stop E-Gov Initiative

Cultural, Society, and Demographic, USFWS Regional Ecosystem Coverage, Land Cover, Natural Resources, and Watersheds

<http://www.geodata.gov/gos>

US Geologic Survey

Data Libraries offers paper and digital maps such as:

<http://edcwww.cr.usgs.gov>

Aerial Photos, Biodiversity/Ecological Maps, Coastal & Marine Flood Maps, Historical Maps, Water Resource Maps, Wetlands

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

National Wetlands Inventory, Migratory Bird Conservation Data Center, USFWS Regional Ecosystem Coverage

<http://www.fws.gov/data/>

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places and National Archeological Databases

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/research/nris.htm>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

GIS layers: National Watershed Data

<http://www.epa.gov/OST/BASIN>

Georgia GIS Data Clearinghouse

Available Data Layers:

<http://gis.state.ga.us>

Environmental, Flood, Aerial Photography, Wetlands and Streams

USGS Center for Spatial Analysis Technologies

Available Data Layers:

<http://csat.er.usgs.gov>

Conservation Lands, State Parks and Historic Sites, Land Use

Appendix C
Citizen Survey for
2035 Columbus-Phenix City Transportation Study
Long Range Transportation Plan

Example only – Do Not Complete

1. To have the quality of life and economic vitality that is desirable, what are the biggest areas of concern?
 - A. Traffic congestion and mobility.
 - B. Perceived lack of regional coordination
 - C. Sprawl development.
 - D. Inadequate revenue to support needs.

2. How do you anticipate BRAC will impact the region's transportation network, e.g. where will new residents live and work?
 - A. It will increase traffic congestion significantly.
 - B. It will increase traffic congestion moderately
 - C. It will not noticeably affect traffic congestion.

3. Is METRA an option you use or have seriously considered for your daily commuting?
 - A. Yes, I regularly ride METRA buses.
 - B. I have ridden it on occasion.
 - C. No, I have never ridden METRA.

4. If you don't ride METRA, why not?
 - A. Traffic congestion isn't a problem for me in Columbus.
 - B. Routes are too circuitous.
 - C. Time of trips would be too lengthy.
 - D. Perception.

5. Do you now fly or have you in the past flown out of/into the Columbus airport?
 - A. Yes, I prefer flying commercially out of Columbus to connect to Atlanta.
 - B. Yes, I have flown out of Columbus in the past and might do so in the future.
 - C. No, I don't find the Columbus Airport to be a practical option.

Example only – Do Not Complete

6. How do you find the signage leading to and around the Columbus region?
 - A. It is easy to navigate around town and destinations are well marked.
 - B. It is hard for me to identify where I am or guide visitors around sometimes.

7. How did last summer's spike to \$4 a gallon gas change your transportation habits?
 - A. I traveled much less and canceled trips that normally I would have taken.
 - B. I decided to change my vehicle to something that was more fuel efficient.
 - C. I didn't change my driving habits, but instead chose to sacrifice in other areas to continue it.
 - D. It didn't affect me.

8. What would be the most important connection to improving bicycle connectivity in this community?
 - A. Better access across the Chattahoochee River.
 - B. Completing the Riverwalk.
 - C. Continued expansion of the Warm Springs trail.
 - D. Constructing major corridors with wider shoulders for bicycle usage.

9. How should we pay for transportation improvements? Should we consider new sources of revenue or regional efforts?
 - A. Higher gasoline tax.
 - B. Higher sales tax.
 - C. Higher licensing fees.
 - D. User fees (tolls)

10. What areas do you anticipate will be locations for future development?
 - A. Northwest Columbus/Harris County
 - B. Panhandle
 - C. South Columbus/Chattahoochee County
 - D. Russell County/Lee County, Alabama

Example only – Do Not Complete

11. What changes would you like to see in the Phenix City area regarding transportation?
- A. Better zoning and access management.
 - B. Improving traffic signalization.
 - C. Intersection improvements.
 - D. New construction.
12. How do you view freight in our region and nation at the present time?
- A. We need to encourage increased usage of freight by train.
 - B. We need to improve accessibility for freight truck traffic.
 - C. We have adequate facilities for both modes of transport.
 - D. Fine, as long as I don't have to hear or see them.
13. Do you see teleworking as a viable alternative to in the office employment?
- A. Yes, it is something I or my employer uses or have considered.
 - B. It is something that I would consider in the future with improving technologies.
 - C. It is not something I could apply in my field.
14. What observations do you have concerning school students and their transportation system usage?
- A. Too much reliance on private vehicles.
 - B. Many would walk if it were practical or safe.
 - C. Most seem to ride the school bus.
 - D. Haven't noticed.