

**FINAL**  
**Auburn-Opelika Metropolitan Planning Organization**  
**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN (PIP)**

10 September 2008

**Goal**

The Auburn-Opelika Metropolitan Planning Organization (AOMPO) has developed this Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to document and define its 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, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

**Legal Authority**

The legal authority for public involvement in the transportation planning process arises from the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU calls for proactive public involvement processes in the Auburn-Opelika Urbanized Area under Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and Environmental Protection Agency Programs. The funding agreement for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is established among the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, Alabama Department of Transportation, Lee County Transit Authority and Lee-Russell Council of Governments (LRCOG).

**Public Outreach Process**

This PIP has been developed by the AOMPO in consultation with all interested parties to include procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

- 1) 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 transportation plan;

Procedure: A display ad will be run in the local newspaper with the largest circulation in the AOMPO Urbanized Area and flyers will be placed at municipal libraries and the AOMPO office prior to the committee meeting date. Depending on the type of document or public meeting, additional public notice strategies may be implemented, such as community bulletins, websites and radio.

Strategy: By following the above procedure the public will be sufficiently advised as to new or revised planning documents.

Desired Outcome: An informed public as to public participation activities.

- 2) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;  
Procedure: The AOMPO will provide public access to transportation issues and processes through newspaper display ads, posting flyers, hardcopy documents available at municipal libraries and AOMPO offices and on the AOMPO section of the LRCOG website.  
Strategy: Through multiple avenues of open access to transportation issues and processes the public will have ample opportunity to be informed.  
Desired Outcome: An informed public as to current transportation issues and processes.
- 3) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation planning documents;  
Procedure: GIS software will be utilized to create maps of AOMPO projects.  
Strategy: Maps are an outstanding visualization technique for describing AOMPO projects.  
Desired Outcome: Easy identification of the size, scope and location of AOMPO projects.
- 4) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;  
Procedure: The AOMPO will place all public information, such as technical info and meeting notices, on the AOMPO website in PDF format.  
Strategy: The AOMPO website will provide the public easy, unlimited access to transportation information.  
Desired Outcome: Simple, unlimited access to AOMPO transportation documents in PDF format.
- 5) Holding any meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;  
Procedure – Transportation Planning Meeting: The AOMPO will hold transportation planning meetings in the LRCOG conference room during normal business hours.  
Strategy - Transportation Planning Meeting: The LRCOG conference room has ample seating and is centrally-located within the AOMPO study area.  
Desired Outcome - Transportation Planning Meeting: An accommodating, accessible and centrally-located site for transportation planning meetings.  
Procedure - Public Comment/Involvement Meeting: When multiple meetings are required, the AOMPO will hold public comment/involvement meetings at varying times and locations to best accommodate all schedules. If a single meeting is required, the AOMPO will hold that meeting at a time and place that best accommodates the majority of schedules.

Strategy - Public Comment/Involvement Meeting: Utilization of sites and times that are most advantageous to the public at large.

Desired Outcome - Public Comment/Involvement Meeting: Public comment/involvement meeting times and locations that provide the public the maximum opportunity for participation.

- 6) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of metropolitan transportation planning documents;  
Procedure: The AOMPO will document all public comments and post those comments on the AOMPO website with responses. In addition, the AOMPO will strive to deliver responses to those individuals who commented.  
Strategy: The AOMPO will be responsive to public comments on metropolitan transportation planning documents.  
Desired Outcome: A public that is confident their comments are seen and considered in the transportation planning process.
- 7) 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;  
Procedure: The AOMPO will place transportation meeting flyers in areas where low-income and minority households are known to exist.  
Strategy: Placing flyers in areas where the traditionally underserved live to inform those persons of upcoming transportation meetings.  
Desired Outcome: Informing the traditionally underserved of the opportunity to be involved in the transportation process.
- 8) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation planning document differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;  
Procedure: The AOMPO will open a new comment period using the same policies and procedures used for the draft version.  
Strategy: The AOMPO will open a new comment period if the final document differs significantly from the draft version.  
Desired Outcome: Providing the public opportunity to comment on final transportation documents that show a significant difference from the draft document.
- 9) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes with other planning entities and officials;  
Procedure: The AOMPO will, to the maximum extent feasible, communicate and coordinate with entities responsible for state and local planned growth,

economic development, environmental protection, airport operations and freight transport.

Strategy: The AOMPO will strive to communicate and coordinate with other planning agencies and officials.

Desired Outcome: A local planning process that coordinates with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPO area.

10) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process;

Procedure: AOMPO staff will review the PIP annually and consider ways to improve public participation in the transportation process.

Strategy: Annual review of the procedures and strategies of the PIP will ensure its effectiveness.

Desired Outcome: A PIP that continually ensures the public of full and open participation in the transportation planning process.

**Public Involvement Plan Effectiveness –  
Methods, Goals and Measures**

<b>Involvement Method</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Performance Goal</b>	<b>Goal(s) Methodology</b>
Display Ads & Newspaper Notices	Number of e-mail, letters and telephone calls received	Timely submission of a concise & informative display ad or notice	Improve location, increase size, enhance appearance
Targeted Mailings	Number of e-mail, letters and telephone calls received from recipients	Timely submission of a concise & informative mailing	Modify volume and content to best target intended areas
Press Releases	Number of e-mail, letters and telephone calls received	Timely submission of a concise & informative press release	Encourage the publication and announcement of MPO press releases
E-mail List	Number of responses to mailings	Timely submission of a concise & informative message	Promote the availability of the e-mail list
Informational Displays	Number of responses to displays	At least 5 citizens sign-in and/or take materials	Promote display availability and convenience

Citizen Advisory Committee	Involvement of CAC members	N/A – Appointed Committee	Maintain contact; keep CAC positions filled
Special Request Meetings	Attendance, questions, comments & suggestions	N/A – Held by request	Highlight relevant procedures, methodologies and projects to attendees
Public Meetings	Attendance, questions, comments & suggestions	At least 5 citizens in attendance	Promote meetings; hold meetings at convenient times & locations
PIP	Quantity and character of feedback	N/A	Refine regularly to ensure best functionality
MPO Webpage	Quantity of e-mail received	Number of 'hits' per month	Promote webpage in other MPO materials & documents
Surveys	Number of responses	10% response rate	Brief, simple & direct survey format; encourage comments

### **Written Comments**

When significant written and oral comments are received on draft metropolitan transportation planning documents (including the financial plan) a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final document.

### **Required PIP Comment Period**

The AOMPO will observe a minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days before an initial or revised PIP is formally adopted. In addition, the AOMPO will provide copies of the approved PIP to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and will post the PIP on the AOMPO section of the LRCOG website.

### **Incorporation of Other Planning Entities and Officials**

As outlined above (Public Outreach Process, #9), and detailed further here, while developing metropolitan transportation planning documents the AOMPO will strive to consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPO Study Area. The primary focus will be on those affected by transportation including state and local planned growth, economic

development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements.

In addition, the AOMPO will develop metropolitan transportation planning documents with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by: (1) Recipients of assistance under the Federal Transit Administration (Title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53); (2) Governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and (3) Recipients of assistance under the Federal Lands Highways Program (Title 23 U.S.C. 204).

The AOMPO shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process as part of the LRTP & TIP that outlines roles, responsibilities and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies.

### **Auburn-Opelika MPO Contact Information**

#### Address

2007 Gateway Drive  
Opelika, AL 36801

#### Telephone/Fax

334-749-5264 (Phone)  
334-749-6582 (Fax)

#### Webpage

<http://www.lrcog.com/mpo.html>

### **Auburn-Opelika MPO Meeting Times and Location**

The AOMPO meets approximately three to five times per fiscal year. Meetings are typically held in the LRCOG conference room at the address above. Notice of upcoming meetings will be posted on the webpage above. For months when meetings are held, the meeting times are as follows:

- Citizen Advisory Committee – second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM
- Technical Advisory Committee – second Tuesday of the month at 1:30 PM
- MPO Policy Board – 9:00 AM on the Wednesday following the CAC & TAC meetings