

LAND OF SKY

**RURAL
PLANNING
ORGANIZATION**

Land of Sky Rural
Transportation
Planning
Organization

(LOSRPO)

Public Involvement Policy (PIP)

Adopted by the Land of Sky RPO
Rural Transportation Advisory Committee
August 17, 2023

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Land of Sky RPO

1. Overview

The establishment of Rural Transportation Planning Organizations (RPOs) is similar in concept to the urban Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organizations (MPOs). The RPOs provide rural areas the opportunity to work in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation toward development of sound, short-range and long-range transportation planning for rural areas.

In 1998 Congress recognized the transportation needs of the rural areas and presented similar opportunities afforded to the urban areas as part of the statewide planning provisions of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). TEA-21 calls for enhanced consultation with rural local officials and encourages states to use existing regional development organizations to facilitate the participation of elected officials.

Locally based rural transportation planning gives communities the opportunity to make transportation investment decisions that enhance economic and community development goals. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) have the federal authority to implement their plans, but the Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) are voluntary in North Carolina and have been given authority by the state.

RPO's are governed by a Transportation Advisory Committee that is advised by a Technical Coordinating Committee. Each committee consists of elected and appointed officials representing Buncombe County, Haywood, Madison and Transylvania Counties; and the municipalities of Brevard, Hot Springs, Marshall, and Rosman.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Land of Sky Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RPO) Public Involvement Policy (PIP) is to provide guidance and policy in engaging the public in the transportation planning process. This plan seeks to accomplish the following:

- Create a well-informed public that effectively contributes to transportation decision making.
- Engage the public early and continuously in the transportation planning process.
- Develop a public education program on Land of Sky RPO activities.
- Assist the Land of Sky RPO in developing specific transportation projects that reflect the interest and needs of the community.
- Gain the support and trust of the public.
- Satisfy the requirements of N.C.G.S. § 136-212 regarding duties of a RPO and federal transportation legislation.

The Policy is not intended to preempt any public involvement activities conducted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) or any local governments within the Land of Sky RPO region.

3. Goals and Objectives

- Bring a broad cross-section of the public into the public policy and transportation planning decision-making process.
- Maintain public involvement from the early stages of the planning process through detailed project development.
- Use different combinations of public involvement techniques to meet the diverse needs of the general public.
- Determine the public's knowledge of the rural transportation system and the public's values and attitudes concerning transportation.
- Educate citizens and elected officials in order to increase general understanding of transportation issues.
- Make technical and other information available to the public.
- Establish a channel for an effective feedback process.

4. State Requirements

The Public Involvement Policy has the following objectives as provided in N.C.G.S. § 136-212:

- Develop, in coordination with NCDOT, transportation plans.
- Provide a forum for public participation in the transportation planning process.
- Develop and prioritize suggestions for projects that the organization believes should be included in the State's Transportation Improvement Program.
- Provide transportation-related information to local governments and other interested organizations and persons.

5. Policy Elements

The LOSRPO's Public Involvement Policy is comprised of a number of sub-policies. All planning programs and activities are required to go through the Transportation Advisory Committee's public process, with the exception of minor formatting or technical corrections to the policy content pages. In addition, the RPO will initiate public involvement programs for the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), The Prioritization List, (Formally the Priority Needs List (PNL)), the Air Quality Conformity Determination (if needed), and the Planning Work Program (PWP), and the RPO's provisions for American with Disabilities Act (ADA). The final component of the Public Involvement Policy is the policy review element designed to ensure that the programs are meeting their goals.

II. REGULAR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A. TAC Meetings

The TAC holds advertised meetings on a regular schedule. These meetings are open to members of the public and, upon request, anyone can be placed on the TAC mailing list. At the beginning of each regular meeting, the TAC provides time to receive public comments as a set part of its agenda. The public and concerned parties are welcome to provide public comment through telephone, email and in writing to RPO staff at anytime.

B. Public Comment

The TAC typically acknowledges public comments in one of the following two ways. The TAC may incorporate a summary of public comments and the RPO's response, as an appendix, into the specific planning document. Depending on the number of comments, the TAC may instruct RPO staff to respond directly by letter. Acknowledging public comments is a way to let the public know that its comments are being addressed and is part of the public involvement feedback process.

III. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TOOLS

Public Outreach is the process of informing the public about the transportation planning process, specific transportation projects, and activities of the Land of Sky RPO. Typical public outreach strategies include, but will not be limited to, the following:

A. Identify and Build Relationships with Stakeholders

In order to create and implement transportation plans with long-lasting benefits, appropriate stakeholders must be identified. RPO staff will seek to identify stakeholders that are critical to the success of a specific transportation plan or policy. 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 they are affected.

Stakeholders may include:

- The general public
- Business/industry organizations
- Environmental organizations
- Neighborhood organizations
- Public agencies
- Civic organizations
- Transit providers
- Motor freight carriers
- Taxicab companies

Stakeholder groups will be identified and may be included on a mailing list for notices of public hearings, workshops, etc.

B. Publicize LOSRPO Activities

Activities of the LOSRPO will be advertised by utilizing various media and social outlets. These activities may include distributing press releases to the media, inviting the media to regular TAC and TCC meetings, conducting radio interviews, posting public involvement activities on the RPO website, and presenting drafts of plans at social events. RPO staff will develop publicity strategies appropriate to the scope and timeframe of the specific project or plan.

Specifically, articles, news releases and or media alerts will be disseminated to announce public review and comment periods for the LOSRPO's Comprehensive Transportation

Plans, the Comprehensive Transportation Plan amendments, State Transportation Improvement Program, Planning Work Program, Public Involvement Plans and other major activities. All Press Releases shall be approved by either the Chair or Vice-Chair of the LOSRPO TAC prior to publication.

A current list of media outlets such as mainstream, local and ethnic radio stations, newspapers and small community based publications, will be established and maintained. Our current list is available in Appendix B.

C. Partner with Outreach Professionals

In an effort to maximize public involvement, RPO staff may collaborate with outreach professionals. Such professionals have long-standing relationships with the public and are aware of the various concerns expressed by the citizens they represent. Utilizing their resources to publicize RPO events and programs will promote increased levels of public participation.

Presentations will be made to interested civic organizations on Land of Sky RPO activities, the transportation planning process in general, or specific transportation projects. Presentations will be made by Land of Sky RPO staff and/or NCDOT staff.

D. Develop and Implement a Plan to Reach Non-Participating Minority, Low-Income, Limited English-Proficiency and Low-Literacy Populations

RPO staff will make concerted efforts to engage communities that have traditionally not been participants in the transportation process. Traditional non-participants are persons who are low-income, minority, elderly and disabled, have no vehicles, are low literate or have limited English proficiency. RPO staff will identify opportunities and strategies that will provide these communities greater access to the transportation planning process. These opportunities will allow RPO staff to build relationships with key leaders and organizations within the communities.

Public Outreach activities will include efforts to involve traditionally underserved groups (i.e., minorities, elderly, low-income persons) in the transportation planning process. These efforts may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Identifying areas in the Land of Sky RPO region with concentrations of minority, elderly, and low-income populations
- Including organizations that deal directly with minority groups on the Stakeholder list
- Posting notification of meetings, public hearings, and open houses in County Health Departments and Senior Centers
- Publishing notification of meetings, public hearings, and open houses in Spanish

E. Develop an Outreach and Education Program

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

F. Establish a Speaker's Bureau

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

G. Maintain Website

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

H. Produce and Distribute Newsletters

The LOSRPO may produce a newsletter with items to keep the general public and local agencies informed of RPO activities. The newsletter material will be distributed through e-mail. Archives may be accessed through the RPO website. Citizens and agencies have the opportunity to remain engaged in the public involvement process through updates provided in our newsletter.

I. Create and Maintain New Forms of Technology and Media

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

J. Produce and Distribute Brochure

A brochure may be established and created to provide interested parties with information about the LOSRPO and the planning process. Copies of the brochure will be made available to identified stakeholders and online. Spanish translations will be maintained. RPO staff may find it appropriate to develop a brochure specific to a project, RPO policy or plan.

K. Hold Open Houses and Information Workshops

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

L. Provide for Public Input at LOSRPO meetings

Formal RPO business is conducted during TAC and TCC meetings. RPO TAC and TCC meetings agendas provide time for public comment. These public comments are documented and become a part of the meeting minutes. In the event that an individual seeks to address a specific agenda item, they must sign up prior to the meeting to comment on that specific agenda item. The individual may also contact the secretary prior to the meeting to sign up for the public comment list. At the conclusion of a public comment period, a public hearing will be held in which public comments received in writing will be read by RPO staff. Members of the public may comment on specific agenda items, prior to their discussion by the TAC as an agenda item. The chair has the discretion to address anyone wishing to speak at the meeting whose name is not on the list previously mentioned. The maximum time allotted to a public comment is 15 minutes on each item. In the event that the public is unable to make comments during a meeting time, comments may be submitted in written, verbal or electronic form.

M. Conduct Surveys

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

IV. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRUCTURE

A. Open Meetings

All RPO meetings will be open to the public and subject to the North Carolina Open Meetings Law. All materials presented during RPO committee meetings will be public record and made available for review at the Land of Sky Office. Copies of archived records can be distributed upon request.

B. Access by Persons with Disabilities

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

C. Adequate Notice

The LOSRPO will provide adequate notice of meetings subject to the North Carolina Open Meetings Law. Meeting notices will be posted on the LOSRPO's website and publicized during LOSRPO events.

D. Public Comments

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

Any comments received during a meeting of the Land of Sky RPO's TCC or TAC will be included in the meeting minutes. Also, any comments received during a public hearing held by the Land of Sky RPO's TAC will be included in the meeting minutes. Comments received during workshops, open houses, or presentations to civic organizations will be summarized, presented to the TCC and TAC, and kept on file. Results of surveys will be compiled, summarized, presented to the TCC and TAC, and kept on file.

Public comments may be included as appendices in formal documents or plans for which they were made. The RTCC or RTAC may direct Land of Sky RPO staff to respond directly to public comments via letter. All correspondence should be directed to: 339 New Leicester Hwy | Suite 140 | Asheville, NC 28806 and faxed to: (828) 251-6353.

E. Time Period for Public Comments

Public comments will be taken no later than the close of the business day specified in requests for public comment; unless otherwise specified.

F. Format of Public Meetings

Public meetings allow RPO staff the opportunity to interact with citizens that may be directly affected by specific transportation plans. LOSRPO staff seeks to conduct meetings in a format conducive to generating public feedback. The general format of public meetings may include; a presentation by LOSRPO staff; a question and answer period and a summary of materials covered. Meetings may also include using maps to identify where citizens are located, and an interactive activity.

V. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Public involvement strategies will vary depending on the particular issue or project for which public comment is desired. Typical actions for specific activities of the Land of Sky RPO may include, but are not limited to:

Minimum Transportation Plan Public Involvement Procedure

The Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization will provide an opportunity for meaningful public involvement in the development and update of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The public comment period will be for a minimum 28-day period, effective from the date of the public notice publication. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the LOSRPO. The LOSRPO will assemble all comments and forward them to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC shall hold at least one public hearing for the Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The availability of the Plan will be publicized using media resources provided in the Appendix.

Purpose of Public Involvement Process

The purpose of the public involvement policy is to develop and implement strategies to inform and involve citizens in the development and update of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). Public ownership of the Transportation Plan is critical to its success; the goal of the program is to ensure that policy decisions will reflect the values, needs, and priorities of those affected by the decisions (i.e. the public).

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

Objectives

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

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

VI. OPTIONAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TECHNIQUES (COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN)

As a method for increasing public involvement and participation in the process, the public involvement for the CTP may also include any or all the following techniques:

1. Information dissemination, notification of meetings and publication of proposed plans will be integral elements of the public involvement process.
2. Proactive participation techniques may be employed to involve citizens and provide fuller access to information and technical data on the Transportation Plan. These techniques may include, but not be limited to, public meetings/hearings, surveys, focus groups, newsletters, public service announcements, charrettes, transportation advisory group, mass media, etc.
3. Public meetings may be held to formulate a vision for the Transportation Plan Development, provide the public background information on the metropolitan transportation system and other issues as well as the proposed framework of the Transportation Plan update process, and to receive citizen input.
5. Public meetings (forums) designed to solicit public comment may be held at various locations around the RPO area to encourage the greatest public participation. Public meetings should be held at a location which is accessible to persons with disabilities and preferably located on a transit route.
6. Copies of the draft Transportation Plan will be distributed to the member jurisdictions, citizen groups and agencies. Notification of the draft Transportation Plan may be provided through various media outlets. The notification will inform the public of the availability of the draft Comprehensive Transportation Plan for review and comment where to send written comments, and addresses and phone numbers of contact persons. The notices also will include an announcement that states that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (i.e. having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator, or other provisions as requested). Additionally, the notice will inform the public that copies of the draft Transportation Plan are on file for public review at the Land of Sky Regional Council Office, the member government's municipal offices, available in a PDF format for downloading from the LOSRPO homepage.

7. The public comment period will be for a minimum 28-day period, effective from the date of the public notice publication. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the LOSRPO. The RPO's contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice.
8. Any significant revisions to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan will also be subject to a public comment process as described in this policy.
9. Involvement of the public in key decision points may be desirable. Decision points are those stages where the TAC may consider endorsement of the work in progress or take action on particular work elements. These may include some of the following:
 - Formulation of vision, goals and objectives
 - Review of multi-modal goals and elements
 - Review and approval of socio-economic and demographic projections
 - Review and determination of transportation deficiencies
 - Evaluation of alternatives and selection of preferred option

VII. PRIORITIZATION LIST AND LOCAL PRIORITIZATION METHODOLOGY PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

The Prioritization List serves as the bridge between the long term plans (such as, CTP, and locally-adopted transit, bicycle and pedestrian and other transportation plans) and the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). The LOSRPO TCC will develop a draft Prioritization List from the local project priorities of the RPO jurisdictions as reflected in the CTP and in the locally-adopted plans. Each RPO municipality and county should provide to the RPO their priorities for consideration, and an indication of the plan where those projects are reflected (CTP or locally-adopted plan). First priority will be given to the projects in the CTP prioritized list of projects. Other modes of projects that may not be listed in the CTP specifically may be selected (i.e. transit, bicycle, pedestrian, enhancement projects included in locally-adopted plans). These may be developed as each governing agency sees fit (for example, they may come from staff, the elected boards, or the elected boards with public involvement). The Local Prioritization Methodology, developed within NCDOT guidelines, will be used for ranking and applying points to projects making up the Prioritization List. Public Involvement Process for the Prioritization List and Prioritization Methodology will include the following steps:

- After consideration by the TAC, the draft Prioritization List will be published for a minimum two-week (14-day) public comment period and the notice will be advertised using our media resources provided in Appendix B.
- A Committee of TCC members was created to develop a local point methodology. After consideration by the TAC, the draft Prioritization Methodology

will be published for a minimum four-week (28-day) public comment period and the notice will be advertised using our media resources provided in Appendix B.

- The notices for the public comment period and the public hearing will include an announcement stating that persons with disabilities will be accommodated. Special provisions will be made if notified 48 hours in advance (i.e. having available large print documents, audio material, someone proficient in sign language, a translator or other provisions as requested). The Prioritization List and Prioritization Methodology will be on file for review at the Land of Sky Regional Council Office, and available in a PDF format for downloading from the LOSRPO homepage. Written comments will be received during the comment period and will be directed to the LOSRPO. The LOSRPO's contact person, phone number and e-mail address will be included in the public notice. The LOSRPO will assemble all comments and forward comments to the TAC.
- The RPOTAC will hold a public hearing on the draft Prioritization List and the Prioritization Methodology. The public hearing will be held at a location which is accessible to persons with disabilities. The RPOTAC will approve a final Prioritization List and Prioritization Methodology after considering the public comments received. The public review periods for the Prioritization List and the Prioritization Methodology will sometimes be concurrent and sometimes will run separately, depending upon which schedule is more practical. The Prioritization List shall be submitted to NCDOT. The RPOTAC may elect to open a dialogue with the State on specific project priorities.

VIII. PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (PWP)

Introduction

The PWP must identify the RPO planning tasks to be undertaken with the use of federal transportation funds, including highway and transit.

Purpose

The purpose of public involvement in the PWP process is to keep the public apprised of and to receive input on the planning activities to be undertaken by the Rural Planning Organization.

Public Involvement Process

- The TAC meetings are open to the public and comments on the PWP may be received at this time.
- LOSRPO compiles a draft Planning Work Program (PWP) for the upcoming fiscal year, considering tasks requested by local government members.
- The draft Planning Work Program is sent to the NCDOT Transportation Planning Division (TPD) for comments.
- The draft PWP is reviewed by the TCC/TAC at the regularly scheduled meeting and public comments may be provided at this time.
- The final PWP is approved by the TAC. Upon TAC approval, the PWP is forwarded on to the State.

IX. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) PROVISIONS

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

A motion to adopt Amendments to this Public Involvement Policy was put forth by

Larry Chapman

and seconded by Kevin Ensley, and adopted by the
Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization (LOSRPO) Transportation Advisory Committee

on October 19, 2023



CHAIRPERSON, TAC



Vicki Eastland, Land of Sky RPO Director

APPENDIX A. TRANSPORTATION GLOSSARY

Transportation Planning Acronyms and Glossary	
3-C	Continuing, Cooperative and Comprehensive Planning Process
A	
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
Administrative Modification	A minor revision to a long-range statewide transportation or metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP that includes minor changes to project/project phase costs, minor changes to funding sources of previously included projects, and minor changes to project/project phase initiation dates. An administrative modification is a revision that does not require public review and comment, redemonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (in nonattainment and maintenance areas).
Amendment	A revision to a long-range statewide or metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, or STIP, that involves major change to a project included in a MTP, TIP, or STIP, including the addition or deletion of a project or a major change in project cost, project/project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or design scope (e.g., changing project termini or the number of through traffic lanes). Changes to projects that are included only for illustrative purposes do not require an amendment. An amendment is a revision that requires public review and comment, redemonstration of fiscal constraint, or a conformity determination (for MTPs and TIPs involving "non-exempt" projects in nonattainment and maintenance areas). In the context of a long-range statewide transportation plan, an amendment is a revision approved by the state in accordance with its public involvement process.
Area Sources	Small stationary and non-transportation pollution sources that are too small and/or numerous to be included as point sources but may collectively contribute significantly to air pollution (e.g., dry cleaners).
Attainment Area	Any geographic area in which levels of a given criteria air pollutant (e.g., ozone, carbon monoxide, PM10, PM2.5, and nitrogen oxide) meet the health-based National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for that pollutant. An area may be an attainment area for one pollutant and a nonattainment area for others. A "maintenance area" (see definition below) is not considered an attainment area for transportation planning purposes.
BTS	Bureau of Transportation Statistics
C	
CAA	Clean Air Act
Capacity	A transportation facility's ability to accommodate a moving stream of people or vehicles in a given time period.

Capital Program Funds	Financial assistance from the transit major capital programs of 49 U.S.C. Section 5309. This program enables the Secretary of Transportation to make discretionary capital grants and loans to finance public transportation projects divided among fixed guideway (rail) modernization; construction of new fixed guideway systems and extensions to fixed guideway systems; and replacement, rehabilitation, and purchase of buses and rented equipment, and construction of bus-related facilities.
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	A colorless, odorless, tasteless gas formed in large part by incomplete combustion of fuel. Human activities (i.e., transportation or industrial processes) are largely the source for CO emissions.
CE	Categorical Exclusions
Clean Air Act (CAA)	The original Clean Air Act was passed in 1963, but the national air pollution control program is actually based on the 1970 revision of the law. The Clean Air Act as amended in 1990 made major changes and contains the most far reaching revisions of the 1970 law.
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program
CMP	congestion management process
CO	carbon monoxide
COG	Council of Governments
Comprehensive Transportation Plan	Formerly known as the thoroughfare plan, this document has its basis in State law. The law states that these plans must be multi-modal and based on land use plans. The CTP is a series of maps for highways, public transportation and rail, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation. The maps are an agreement between the State and the local area of the long-term "vision" for the transportation system. The plan is not financially constrained.
Conformity (Air Quality)	A CAA (42 U.S.C. 7506[c]) requirement that ensures that federal funding and approval are given to transportation plans, programs and projects that are consistent with the air quality goals established by a State Implementation Plan (SIP). Conformity, to the purpose of the SIP, means that transportation activities will not cause new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The transportation conformity rule (40 CFR part 93) sets forth policy, criteria, and procedures for demonstrating and assuring conformity of transportation activities.
Congestion Management Process (CMP)	A systematic approach required in transportation management areas (TMAs) that provides for effective management and operation, based on a cooperatively developed and implemented metropolitan-wide strategy of new and existing transportation facilities eligible for funding under title 23 U.S.C. and title 49 U.S.C. through the use of operational management strategies. Provides information on transportation system performance and finds alternative ways to alleviate congestion and enhance the mobility of people and goods, to levels that meet state and local needs.
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program	A federal-aid funding program created under ISTEA. Directs funding to projects that contribute to meeting national air quality standards. CMAQ funds generally may not be used for projects that result in the construction of new capacity available to SOVs (single-occupancy vehicles).
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSS	context sensitive solutions

CTP	Comprehensive Transportation Plan
D	
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Department of Transportation (DOT)	When used alone, indicates the U.S. Department of Transportation. In conjunction with a place name, indicates state, city, or county transportation agency (e.g., Illinois DOT, Los Angeles DOT).
DOT	Department of Transportation
E	
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EJ	Environmental Justice
Emissions Budget	The part of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) that identifies the allowable emissions levels, mandated by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), for certain pollutants emitted from mobile, stationary, and area sources. The emissions levels are used for meeting emission reduction milestones, attainment, or maintenance demonstrations.
Environmental Justice (EJ)	Environmental justice assures that services and benefits allow for meaningful participation and are fairly distributed to avoid discrimination. (See also "Title VI.")
Environmental Mitigation Activities	Strategies, policies, programs, actions, and activities that, over time, will serve to avoid, minimize, or compensate for (by replacing or providing substitute resources) the impacts of to or disruption of elements of the human and natural environment associated with the implementation of a long-range statewide transportation plan or MTP. The human and natural environment includes, for example, neighborhoods and communities, homes and businesses, cultural resources, parks and recreation areas, wetlands and water sources, forested and other natural areas, agricultural areas, endangered and threatened species, and the ambient air. The environmental mitigation strategies and activities are intended to be regional in scope, and may not necessarily address potential project-level impacts.
(EPA) Environmental Protection Agency	The federal regulatory agency responsible for administering and enforcing federal environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, and others.
F	
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FBRMPO	French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
(FHWA) Federal Highway Administration	A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the federal-aid highway program, providing financial assistance to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads, and bridges. The FHWA also administers the Federal Lands Highway Program, including survey, design, and construction of forest highway system roads, parkways and park roads, Indian reservation roads, defense access roads, and other Federal Lands roads.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers federal funding to transportation authorities, local governments, and states to support a variety of locally planned, constructed, and operated public transportation systems throughout the U.S., including buses, subways, light rail, commuter rail, streetcars, monorail, passenger ferry boats, inclined railways, and people movers.
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
Financial Plan	The documentation required to be included with a MTP and TIP (optional for the long-range statewide transportation plan and STIP) that demonstrates the consistency between reasonably available and projected sources of federal, state, local, and private revenues and the costs of implementing the proposed transportation system improvements.
Financial Programming	A short-term commitment of funds to specific projects identified in both the regional and the statewide Transportation Improvement Program.
Fiscal Constraint	Making sure that a given program or project can reasonably expect to receive funding within the time allotted for its implementation. The MTP, TIP, and STIP must include sufficient financial information for demonstrating that projects in the MTP, TIP, and STIP can be implemented using committed, available, or reasonably available revenue sources, with reasonable assurance that the federally supported transportation system is being adequately operated and maintained. For the TIP and the STIP, financial constraint/fiscal constraint applies to each program year. Additionally, projects in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas can be included in the first two years of the TIP and STIP only if funds are "available" or "committed."
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
Formula Capital Grants	Federal transit funds for transit operators, allocated by FTA, and used to purchase rolling stock (e.g., buses and trains) as well as design and construct facilities (e.g., shelters, transfer centers, etc.).
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
G	
(GIS) Geographic Information System	Computerized data management system designed to capture, store, retrieve, analyze, and display geographically referenced information.
H	
HC	hydrocarbons
(HOV) High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)	Vehicles carrying two or more people. The number that constitutes an HOV for the purposes of HOV highway lanes may be designated differently by different transportation agencies.
I	
I/M	Inspection and Maintenance
IHS	Interstate Highway System
IM	Interstate Maintenance

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	Electronics, photonics, communications, or information processing used singly or in combination to improve the efficiency or safety of a surface transportation system. The National ITS architecture is a blueprint for the coordinated development of ITS technologies in the U.S., providing a systems framework to guide the planning and deployment of ITS infrastructure.
Intermodal	The ability to connect, and connections between, differing modes of transportation.
Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)	Legislative initiative by the U.S. Congress that restructured and authorized federal funding for transportation programs; provided for an increased role for regional planning commissions/ MPOs in funding decisions; and required comprehensive regional and statewide long-term transportation plans.
Interstate Highway System (IHS)	The specially designated system of highways, begun in 1956, which connects the principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers of the United States. Also connects the U.S. to internationally significant routes in Canada and Mexico.
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems
L	
Land Use	Refers to the manner in which portions of land or the structures on them are used (or designated for use in a plan), i.e., commercial, residential, retail, industrial, etc.
Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan (LRSTP)	The official, statewide, multimodal transportation plan covering no less than 20 years developed through the statewide transportation planning processes.
(LRTP) Long-Range Transportation Plan	A document resulting from regional or statewide collaboration and consensus on a region's or state's transportation system, and serving as the defining vision for the region's or state's transportation systems and services. In metropolitan areas, this is the official multimodal transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon that is developed, adopted, and updated by the MPO through the metropolitan transportation planning process. (See also MTP)
LOS	Level of Service
LOSRC	Land of Sky Regional Council
LRSTP	Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan
M	
M&O	Management and Operations
Maintenance Area	Any geographic region of the United States that the EPA previously designated as a nonattainment area for one or more pollutants pursuant to the CAA Amendments of 1990, and subsequently redesignated as an attainment area subject to the requirement to develop a maintenance plan under section 175A of the CAA, as amended.
MAP 21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (Current Federal Transportation Authorizing Legislation)

Merger Process	Merger is a process to streamline the project development and permitting processes, agreed to and supported by stakeholder agencies and local units of government. The Merger Process allows agency representatives to work more efficiently (quicker and comprehensive evaluation and resolution of issues) by providing a common forum to discuss and find ways to comply with key elements of their agency's mission.
Metropolitan Planning Area	The geographic area determined by agreement between the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the area and the Governor, in which the metropolitan transportation planning process is carried out.
(MPO) Metropolitan Planning Organization	The policy board of an organization created and designed to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process for urbanized areas with populations greater than 50,000, and designated by local officials and the Governor of the state.
(MTP) Metropolitan Transportation Plan	Formerly LRTP. The official multimodal transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon that is developed, adopted and updated by the MPO through the metropolitan transportation planning process.
Mode	A specific form of transportation, such as automobile, subway, bus, rail, air, bicycle, or foot.
N	
NADO	National Association of Development Organizations
(NAAQS) National Ambient Air Quality Standards	Federal standards that set allowable concentrations and exposure limits for various pollutants. The EPA established these standards pursuant to section 109 of the CAA. Air quality standards have been established for the following six criteria pollutants: ozone (or smog), carbon monoxide, particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, lead, and sulfur dioxide.
National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)	Established requirements that any project using federal funding or requiring federal approval, including transportation projects, examine the effects of proposed and alternative choices on the environment before a federal decision is made.
NCAMPO	North Carolina Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
NCDOT	North Carolina Department of Transportation
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NHS	National Highway System
NOI	Notice of Intent
(NAA) Nonattainment Area	A geographic region of the United States that has been designated by the EPA as a nonattainment area under section 107 of the CAA for any pollutants for which an NAAQS exists, meaning that federal air quality standards are not being met.
NOx	nitrogen oxide
O	
Operational and Management Strategies	Actions and strategies aimed at improving the performance of existing and planned transportation facilities to relieve congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods.

Ozone (03) Ozone is a colorless gas with a sweet odor. It is a secondary pollutant formed when VOCs and NOx combine in the presence of sunlight. Ozone is associated with smog or haze conditions. Although the ozone in the upper atmosphere protects us from harmful ultraviolet rays, ground-level ozone—resulting from human and natural sources—produces an unhealthy environment in which to live.

P

Particulate Matter (PM-10 and PM 2.5) Particulate matter consists of airborne solid particles and liquid droplets. Particulate matter may be in the form of fly ash, soot, dust, fog, fumes, etc. These particles are classified as "coarse" if they are smaller than 10 microns, or "fine" if they are smaller than 2.5 microns. Coarse airborne particles are produced during grinding operations, or from the physical disturbance of dust by natural air turbulence processes, such as wind. Fine particles can be a by-product of fossil fuel combustion, such as diesel and bus engines. Fine particles can easily reach remote lung areas, and their presence in the lungs is linked to serious respiratory ailments such as asthma, chronic bronchitis, and aggravated coughing. Exposure to these particles may aggravate other medical conditions such as heart disease and emphysema and may cause premature death. In the environment, particulate matter contributes to diminished visibility and particle deposition (soiling).

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

(PL) Planning Funds Primary source of funding for metropolitan planning administered by the FHWA.

PM particulate matter

PPM parts per million

Prioritization List Previously known as the Priority Needs List. The PNL is the regional list of high priority projects.

Steps in the Project Development Process:

Identify the Need

Show the Project on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)

Program the Project in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Evaluate the project for SPOT Prioritization criteria and list it on the Prioritization List

Program the project in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at the State and MPO level.

Determine funding sources

Complete Environmental Documentation and Review (time-consuming and complicated)

Design, Right of Way, and Construction

PTD Public Transportation Division of NCDOT

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

R

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

ROD	Record of Decision
RPO	Rural Planning Organization
S	
(SAFETEA-LU) Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users	The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU authorized the federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009.
SHSP	Strategic Highway Safety Plan
SIB	State Infrastructure Bank
SIP	State Implementation Plan
Sources (Pollution)	Refers to the origin of air contaminants. Can be point (coming from a defined site) or nonpoint (coming from many diffuse sources). Stationary sources include relatively large, fixed facilities such as power plants, chemical process industries, and petroleum refineries. Area sources are small, stationary, non-transportation sources that collectively contribute to air pollution, and include such sources as dry cleaners and bakeries, surface coating operations, home furnaces, and crop burning. Mobile sources include on-road vehicles such as cars, trucks, and buses; and off-road sources such as trains, ships, airplanes, boats, lawnmowers, and construction equipment. Common mobile source related pollutants are carbon monoxide (CO), hydrocarbons (HC), nitrogen oxides (NOx), and particulate matter (PM-10 and PM 2.5).
SOV	Single-Occupancy Vehicle
SPOT	Strategic Planning Office for Transportation (NCDOT's) Project Prioritization Office) SPOT is also sometimes used to refer to the prioritization process used to add projects to the State TIP.
SPR	State Planning and Research Funds
Stakeholders	Individuals and organizations involved in or affected by the transportation planning process. Include federal/state/local officials, MPOs, transit operators, freight companies, shippers, users of the transportation infrastructure, and the general public.
State Implementation Plan (SIP)	The portion (or portions) of the implementation plan (as defined in section 302[q] of the CAA), or most recent revision thereof, which has been approved under section 110 of the CAA, or promulgated or approved under section 301(d) of the CAA and which implements the relevant requirements of the CAA. Although the SIP is produced by the state environmental agency (not the MPO) to monitor, control, maintain, and enforce compliance with the NAAQS, it must also be taken into account in the transportation planning process.
State Infrastructure Bank (SIB)	A revolving fund mechanism for financing a wide variety of highway and transit projects through loans and credit enhancement. SIBs are designed to complement traditional federal-aid highway and transit grants by providing states increased flexibility for financing infrastructure investments.
State Planning and Research Funds (SPR)	Primary source of funding for statewide long-range planning, administered by the FHWA.

(STIP) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program	A statewide prioritized listing/program of transportation projects covering a period of four years that is consistent with the long-range statewide transportation plan (LRSTP), metropolitan transportation plans (MTPs), and transportation improvement plans (TIPs), and is required for projects to be eligible for funding under title 23 U.S.C. and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.
STP	Surface Transportation Program
(STI) Strategic Transportation Investment	The Strategic Transportation Investments Bill (HB817), which was signed into law on June 26, 2013, will help to make it possible to better leverage existing funds to enhance the state's infrastructure, providing greater opportunity for economic growth.
(STP) Surface Transportation Program	Federal-aid highway funding program that supports a broad range of surface transportation capital needs, including many roads, transit, sea and airport access, vanpool, bike, and pedestrian facilities.
T	
TAC	Transportation Advisory Committee: governing body of an MPO or an RPO, made up of elected officials from local governments plus the representatives from the NC Board of Transportation. FBRMPO TAC has been renamed the "Board" in May of 2013.
TCC	Technical Coordinating Committee
TCM	Transportation Control Measure
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century
Technical Advisory Committee	Staff representatives from the 18 local governments, staff from the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and representatives from other local and State Agencies.
Telecommuting	Employment utilizing electronic communications (by telephone, computer, fax, etc.) with a physical office, either from home or from another site, instead of traveling to and working in the office.
TIFIA	Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 1998
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
Title VI	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in any program receiving federal assistance. (See "Environmental Justice.")
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TMIP	Travel Model Improvement Program
TOD	Transit-Oriented Development
TPB	Transportation Planning Branch
Transportation Control Measure (TCM)	Any measure that is specifically identified committed to in the applicable SIP that is either one of the types listed in section 108 of the CAA or any other measure for the purpose of reducing emissions or concentrations of air pollutants from transportation sources by reducing vehicle use or changing traffic flow or congestion conditions. Notwithstanding the above, vehicle technology-based, fuel-based, and maintenance-based measures that control the emissions from vehicles under fixed traffic conditions are not TCMs.
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)	Programs designed to reduce demand for transportation through various means, such as the use of public transit and of alternative work hours.

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)	Legislated in 1998, TEA-21 authorized approximately \$217 billion in federal funding for transportation investment for FYs 1998- 2003. Used for highway, transit, and other surface transportation programs.
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	A prioritized listing/program of transportation projects covering a period of four years that is developed by an MPO as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process, consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan (MTP), and required for projects to be eligible for funding under title 23 U.S.C. and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.
Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 1998 (TIFIA)	A federal credit program under which the DOT may provide three forms of credit assistance— secured (direct) loans, loan guarantees, and standby lines of credit – for surface transportation projects of national or regional significance. The fundamental goal is to leverage federal funds by attracting substantial private and non-federal co-investment in critical improvements to the nation's surface transportation system.
Transportation Management Area (TMA)	An urbanized area with a population of 200,000 or more, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and designated by the Secretary of Transportation, or any additional area where TMA designation is requested by the Governor and the MPO and designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.
TRB	Transportation Research Board
Trust Fund	A fund credited with receipts that are held in trust by the government and earmarked by law for use in carrying out specific purposes and programs in accordance with an agreement or a statute.
U	
(UA) Urbanized Area	Urbanized area: defined every ten years by the Census Bureau. An urbanized area includes an area within a population of at least 50,000 that meets minimum population density requirements.
(UC) Urban Cluster	Similar to urban area, with a population between 2,500 and 50,000.
(UPWP) Unified Planning Work Program	A statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area. At a minimum, a UPWP includes a description of the planning work and resulting products, who will perform the work, time frames for completing the work, the cost of the work, and the source(s) of funds.
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
V	
V/C	Volume/Capacity Ratio. This indicator ranges from 0 to 1.0 and is used to measure congestion on the roads.
Visualization Techniques	Methods used by states and MPOs in the development of transportation plans and programs with the public, elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders in a clear and easily accessible format such as maps, pictures, and/or other displays to promote improved understanding of existing or proposed transportation plans and programs.
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound

APPENDIX B: MEDIA CONTACTS

Mount Express Community Calendar	http://mountainx.com/old_events/submission
WLOS	http://events.wlos.com/createevent
Mountain Area Information Network	http://main.nc.us/calendar/webcal.add.pl
WNCW	http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/wncw/events.eventsmain?action=submitEvent
Asheville Citizen Times- Community Calendar	http://search.citizen-times.com/localevents/add_event/
Asheville Citizen Times	bponder@citizen-times.com
Urban News	info@urbannews.com
Transylvania Times	news@transylvaniatimes.com ; jlanier@transylvaniatimes.com
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