



JONESBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

A grayscale illustration of a meeting. Five stylized human figures are seated around a large, dark, oval table. They are looking at documents or laptops on the table. The figures are simplified, with no facial features, and are wearing business attire. The background is plain white.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Este documento está disponible en español.

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Jonesboro Area MPO
Public Participation Plan

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Glossary of Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CPT-HSTP	Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan
DOT	Department of Transportation
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EJ	Environmental Justice
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
JETS	Jonesboro Economical Transit System
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
PIP	Public Involvement Policy
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program

*Jonesboro Area MPO
Public Participation Plan*

PURPOSE:

Seeking meaningful public participation is important for sharing concerns of communities. The Jonesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is committed to proactively involve the public in identifying and addressing transportation issues. The goal is to foster improved two-way communication and trust between the MPO and its customers. Although a federal requirement, the MPO feels that local contribution to transportation planning is vital for the metropolitan area. The citizens of this area deserve the advantages of better transportation planning that cannot be done without public participation at a very early stage.

This plan is intended to ensure that public participation is an integral and effective part of MPO activities and that decisions are made with the benefit and consideration of important public perspectives. This plan provides a mechanism for bringing a broad range of viewpoints and values into the MPO decision-making process. Early public participation enables the MPO to make informed decisions, improve quality through collaborative efforts, and build mutual understanding and trust between the MPO and the public it serves.

Certain levels of public participation are required by the prevailing federal legislation. Effective transportation decision making depends upon understanding and properly addressing the unique needs of different socioeconomic groups. The Jonesboro MPO is committed to a comprehensive and inclusive approach by involving the public in developing transportation plans and programs that fit harmoniously within the community without sacrificing safety or mobility.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION REQUIRING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

SAFETEA-LU:

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (Pub. L. 109-59, 119 Stat. 1144; as amended) emphasizes participation by interested parties:

- A. In General: Each metropolitan planning organization shall provide 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 pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan.
- B. Contents of Participation Plan: A participation plan:
 - i. shall be developed in consultation with all interested parties; and
 - ii. shall provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents on the transportation plan.

- C. Method: In carrying out subparagraph A, the metropolitan planning organization shall, to the maximum extent practicable:
- i. hold any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
 - ii. employ visualization techniques to describe plans; and
 - iii. make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public information under subparagraph A.

NEPA:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (Pub. L. 91-190, 83 Stat. 852; as amended) outline an environmental review process for implementing projects from a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). NEPA has its own set of public participation requirements pertaining to review periods and the notification of interested parties on a project basis. These requirements are not a substitute for early participation at the planning and programming stages.

ADA:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-336, 104 Stat. 327; as amended) encourages the participation of people with disabilities in the development and improvement of transportation and paratransit plans and services. In accordance with ADA guidelines, all meetings conducted by the MPO will take place at accessible facilities so as to accommodate persons with mobility limitations.

CAAA:

The Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-549, 104 Stat. 2399) require the transportation community to improve air quality while, at the same time, sustaining adequate mobility for transportation users. CAAA and the transportation planning provisions of SAFETEA-LU (Section 6011 – Transportation Conformity) are intended to ensure that integrated transportation and air quality planning occurs in the areas designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as nonattainment or maintenance areas. CAAA calls for reasonable notice and public hearing concerning State Implementation Plans to manage pollution in designated areas, and for local compliance with those plans.

Title VI – EJ:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1974 (Pub. L. 88-352, 78 Stat. 241; as amended) sets standards that authoritatively outlaw discrimination in the conduct of all federal activities. *Environmental justice* (EJ) refers to the right of all people to fair treatment and meaningful involvement in the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental policy, including the right to equal protection from the environmental and public health hazards. *Environmental justice* (EJ)

refers to the right of all people to fair treatment and meaningful involvement in the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental policy, as well as the right to equal protection from environmental and public health hazards.

The Presidential Executive Order 12898 of February 11, 1994, directs every federal agency to make EJ part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on “minority populations and low-income populations.” The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) issued its Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations in 1997. That DOT Order accomplishes this goal by involving the potentially affected public in developing transportation projects that fit harmoniously within their communities without sacrificing safety or mobility.

GOALS:

1. Offer opportunities for groups and individuals to participate in the decision-making process for the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the TIP, and the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP).
2. Provide open and continuous communication to inform citizens of the transportation planning activities of the MPO.
3. Identify venues for public participation and provide adequate time for stakeholders and the public to participate.
4. Provide opportunities for citizens to participate in the meetings of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Transportation Policy Committee.
5. Offer timely response to comments and concerns with the aim of educating the public about transportation programs and issues. Each employee of the MPO shares the responsibility of promoting, practicing, and improving public participation.
6. Extend the MPO’s outreach efforts by consulting with and encouraging comments from groups and individuals belonging to minority populations, low-income populations, and other groups with special needs.
7. Review the Public Participation Plan annually, and update the Plan as needed.
8. Produce reports and documents understandable to the average citizen.

OUTREACH TECHNIQUES:

The Public Participation Plan of the MPO ensures that citizens have the opportunity to participate by using a number of approaches for reaching out to organizations and individuals through media outlets, radio, television, newspapers, the Internet, and flyers to raise awareness of issues, to schedule

meetings, and to provide opportunities and outlets for review and comments. Distribution to media outlets primarily serving low-income and minority groups is emphasized.

The MPO's unique logo:



and slogan: **Transportation planning...**
 We cannot do it without you!

provide identity to the MPO.

1. Committee Meetings:

The Transportation Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee meet regularly to take action on various agenda items. Subject to rescheduling or cancellation, the Transportation Policy Committee meets at 10:30 a.m. on the third Tuesday of February, May, August and November, while the Technical Advisory Committee meets at 10:30 a.m. on the first Tuesday of January, April, July and October. The meetings of these committees are open to the public, and members of the public are encouraged to speak on any matter related to transportation planning whether it is on the agenda or not. Persons with disabilities needing auxiliary aids or services are requested to contact the MPO office 48 hours in advance of a meeting to make appropriate arrangements for their attendance of a meeting.

All meeting **agendas** are posted on the MPO website – www.jonesboro.org/MPO/mpo.htm – no less than 72 hours before a scheduled meeting. The posting of agendas complies with the requirements of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act of 1967 (Act 93 of 1967; as amended). The posting states the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

2. Transportation Planning Forums:

The MPO staff and other professionals participate in transportation planning forums to obtain information at the time of updating or revising the MTP. The forums are held in locations that are dispersed throughout the MPO area and are accessible to a broad cross section of the community.

The first round of forums provides an opportunity for citizens to be briefed on the MTP or TIP process. To encourage optimum participation, meetings are held at times convenient to as many members of the public as possible and publicized through the media, direct mailing, and the Internet. Notices of such meetings are also published in *La Ventana*, the weekly newsletter of Hispanic Community Services, Inc., to reach the Hispanic population.

After the MPO staff has had an opportunity to review the comments and suggestions that were received during the first round of transportation planning forums, a second round of forums is scheduled. During this second round of planning meetings, the MPO staff discusses the comments and suggestions that were received and describes how those comments and suggestions were taken into account in preparing the draft MTP or TIP. The purpose of this second round of meetings is to provide the public with an opportunity to discuss the draft recommendations before final recommendations are developed.

Legal Notices are published in the local daily newspaper, *The Sun*, regarding transportation planning forums and public meetings prior to the preparation and amendments of:

1. the TIP;
2. the MTP; or
3. the CPT-HSTP.

3. Transportation Focus Groups:

Meetings with transportation focus groups are scheduled to discuss special transportation needs of communities such as environmental justice, freight movement, and other special projects of the targeted groups.

4. Electronic Mailing List:

An electronic mailing list of organizations, public agencies, elected and appointed officials, transportation providers, neighborhood interest groups, radio and television stations, newspapers, special interest groups, civic organizations, individuals interested in transportation issues, and others has been developed. The organizations and individuals on this list are asked to review and disseminate information and provide comments from their associations. The mailing list is periodically updated to keep the list current.

5. Newsletter:

Metro-Mobility Talks, the newsletter of the Jonesboro MPO, is periodically printed to provide information on transportation planning activities. The newsletter is distributed to the addresses on the e-mailing list and through the MPO website:

www.jonesboro.org/MPO/mpo.htm.

6. Information Material:

Information material is a key component of the public participation process. The pamphlets and brochures published by the MPO provide information on the composition of the MPO, the transportation planning process, and the major documents and data produced by the MPO. The information material developed by the MPO includes: “ABCs of MPO” (English),

“ABCs del MPO” (Spanish), “Transportation for tomorrow” (English), “Transportación para mañana” (Spanish), “Profile” (English), and “Perfil” (Spanish).

In addition, the MPO has prepared PowerPoint presentations that include: “Get to Know Your MPO” and “Transportation Plan: Why and How?” Information material is mailed upon request and distributed during MPO meetings and forums.

7. MPO Website:

The MPO website, located at www.jonesboro.org/MPO/mpo.htm, provides convenient electronic access to information about MPO products and activities. The website links to important MPO documents, such as legal notices and the current MTP, TIP and CPT-HSTP. The site also serves as portal for participating in various surveying efforts related to MPO activities.

8. MPO Speakers:

The MPO provides speakers to civic organizations, clubs, schools, neighborhood associations, and other organizations that are interested in the transportation planning function of the MPO. The speakers provide information on the purpose, process, and products of the MPO and seek continued participation and comments from the public.

9. Targeted Activities for Traditionally Under-Served Communities:

Contacts with traditionally under-served communities are very important. The MPO contacts minorities, persons with disabilities, and members of other traditionally under-served communities to exchange information regarding transportation planning. The MPO publishes TIP and MTP revision notices in *La Ventana*, the weekly newsletter of Hispanic Community Services, Inc., to reach the Hispanic population.

10. Written Correspondence:

The MPO receives letters and comments from the public on a regular basis. These letters are always read and answered. This is an invaluable tool for maintaining an ongoing relationship with those members of the public motivated to write. Correspondents are placed on the mailing list.

11. Advisory Groups:

The MPO staff meets with boards and commissions and advises participating local governments on matters relating to land use, zoning, transit, bicycle routes, and goods movement. In addition, the MPO staff meets with associations representing different interest groups: the Downtown Jonesboro Association, the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the Jonesboro Board of Realtors.

12. News Releases:

At times, the MPO distributes news releases to all local radio stations, television stations, and newspapers.

13. Government Access Channel:

The MPO posts its activities on the government access channel (channel 24). The information is periodically updated.

REVIEW OF DRAFT MATERIAL FOR PREPARATION AND AMENDMENTS TO MTP, TIP, AND CPT-HSTP:

The public is informed through electronic and other media about the preparation and revision of the MTP, the TIP, and the CPT-HSTP. Copies of draft documents are posted on the MPO website and placed at specified public libraries, town halls, the county court, and other public offices. The public is given 15 days from the time when the legal notice is published in the newspaper of general circulation in the metropolitan area (*The Sun*) to review documents and call, mail, fax, or e-mail their comments.

After the public comment period, the draft documents along with a summary of comments are presented to the Technical Advisory Committee for review and recommendation. The revised final drafts are presented to the Transportation Policy Committee for approval.

Renotice:

An additional period of at least ten days for public review and comment on the MTP, the TIP, and the CPT-HSTP will be provided in the event that significant changes are made after the original comment period. Notice for the 10-day period will be provided through the publication of a notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the metropolitan area (*The Sun*).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN REVIEW AND REVISION:

The MPO reviews its Public Participation Plan annually and revises the document periodically. The public is given 45-days from the time when a legal notice is published in the newspaper of general circulation in the metropolitan area (*The Sun*) to review and comment on the initial or revised Public Participation Plan.

The MPO's original Public Involvement Policy (PIP) was adopted on May 18, 2004. On June 29, 2007, the PIP was replaced with the Public Participation Plan. This document is a revision of the original Public Participation Plan.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PROCEDURES:

Records:

The MPO adheres to the requirements of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act. Records, as defined by the law, are made accessible to the public. Upon receiving a written request for a record, the MPO responds to the request in the most appropriate manner. Minimal copying (less than 25 pages) is provided free of charge. Beyond that, a \$0.25 per page fee is charged for photocopies. Other reproduction has a fee based on the actual cost. Access to records may be denied in those rare instances permitted by law, such as confidential personnel matters or negotiations.

Meetings:

The MPO adheres to the requirements for open meetings and notices of meetings. All meetings where public business is conducted, which have a quorum, are open to the public. Notice of meeting is given no less than 72 hours beforehand through e-mailing the agenda and posting it on the MPO website.

Meetings may go into executive session following the rules of Arkansas Freedom of Information Act. All MPO meetings are held in barrier-free sites. Persons with disabilities needing auxiliary aids or services are requested to contact the MPO office 48 hours in advance of a meeting to make appropriate arrangements for their attendance of a meeting.

Minutes:

Minutes are maintained of all the Transportation Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee meetings. Minutes are made available to the public upon request in accordance with the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

MPO PLANNING RULE REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS OF COMPLIANCE:

FHWA's Metropolitan Transportation Planning Final Rule (23 CFR 450.316 – Interested parties, participation, and consultation) requires that:

- a. *The MPO 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, 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 MPO 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;*

Notice of public involvement activities is achieved through the MPO's extensive e-mailing list, legal notice in *The Sun*, web posting, and press releases. A period of at least 15 days for public review and comment on the MTP, the TIP, and the CPT-HSTP is provided before adoption. The 15-day period begins when a notice indicating where draft documents may be obtained and where comments are to be sent is placed in a newspaper of general circulation in the metropolitan area (*The Sun*). Additional notices are provided to interested groups.

ii. *Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;*

As indicated above, notice is e-mailed to interested parties. Information and relevant documents are available on the MPO website, the offices of the MPO, city halls, and the county court, giving citizens the opportunity to review and comment upon MPO activities and processes.

iii. *Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;*

In order to inform citizens of MPO transportation planning activities, the MPO extensively uses charts, graphs, maps, photographs and drawings in its published documents and makes use of PowerPoint presentations during forums and other meetings.

iv. *Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;*

All MPO meeting notices and publications are available on the MPO website for easy public access to this information. The MPO website also provides links to websites of other agencies involved in transportation planning.

v. *Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;*

The Transportation Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee hold regular meetings to take action on various agenda items. Subject to rescheduling or

cancellation, the Transportation Policy Committee meets on the third Tuesday of February, May, August and November, while the Technical Advisory Committee meets on the first Tuesday of January, April, July and October. Meetings are held at 10:30 a.m. on the consent of all elected and appointed officials. For the past six years, the MPO has not received a single complaint about this time.

The MPO holds public forums and meetings at various community centers in the evening when most citizens can attend these meetings. All regular and specially-arranged meetings of the MPO are held in accessible locations. Persons with disabilities needing auxiliary aids or services are requested to contact the MPO office 48 hours in advance of a meeting to make appropriate arrangements for their attendance at a meeting.

vi. Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;

The MPO receives public input through written suggestions and oral comments made at transportation planning forums and committee meetings. All correspondence is answered, and public-meeting comments and their responses are summarized. Summaries of comments made during planning forums and committee meetings are included as appendices to TIPs and the MTP.

vii. 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;

The MPO works closely with the Jonesboro Department of Community Development that is responsible for the administration of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. CDBG is responsible for improving living conditions of minorities and low income population.

The MPO's mailing list includes organizations that represent traditionally under-served communities. The MPO contacts minorities, persons with disabilities, and members of other traditionally under-served communities to exchange information regarding transportation planning. The MPO publishes TIP and MTP revision notices in *La Ventana*, the weekly newsletter of Hispanic Community Services, Inc.

viii. Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP 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;

An additional period of at least ten days for public review and comment on the MTP and the TIP will be provided in the event that significant changes are made to either document after the original comment period. Notice for the 10-day period will be provided through the publication of a notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the metropolitan area (*The Sun*).

- ix. Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and*

The MPO coordinates its public participation activities with the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department.

- x. Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.*

The MPO has developed the Public Participation Evaluation Guidebook listed below to evaluate the effectiveness of each participation tool and take remedial measures for effective public participation in the transportation planning process.

- 2. When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft 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.*

The MPO receives public input through written suggestions and oral comments made at transportation planning forums and committee meetings. All correspondence is answered, and public-meeting comments and their responses are summarized. Summaries of comments made during planning forums and committee meetings are included as appendices to TIPs and the MTP. However, being attainment for ambient air quality standards, the MPO does not have to comply with EPA transportation conformity regulations.

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

A period of at least 45 days for public comments will be provided prior to the adoption of the Public Participation Plan. The 45-day period will begin when a notice indicating where the document may be obtained and where comments are to be sent is placed in the newspaper of general circulation in the metropolitan area (*The Sun*).

Additional notice will be provided through e-mail and posting the notice on the MPO website. A summary of comments received and their disposition will be included with the final version of the document. The Public Participation Plan will not be adopted any earlier than 45 days following the onset of the activities listed above. Copies of the plan will be provided to FHWA and FTA.

- b. In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs shall be developed 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 title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;*

The MPO has prepared a CPT-HSTP to coordinate the services provided by all the recipients of various transit funds.

- 2. Governmental agencies and non-profit 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*

The MPO has prepared a CPT-HSTP to coordinate the services provided by all the transportation providers who receive other federal funds to provide transportation assistance to its clients.

- 3. Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 204.*

The MPO and its adjoining areas do not receive Federal Lands Highway Program funds.

- c. When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.*

This provision is not applicable to the MPO because there are no Indian Tribal lands within the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA).

- d. *When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.*

This provision does not apply to the MPO because there are no federal public lands within the MPA.

- e. *MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under § 450.314.*

The roles, responsibilities and relationships of and between the relevant governmental parties – the cities of Jonesboro, Brookland, Bono and Bay; Craighead County; the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department; and Jonesboro Economical Transit System (JETS) – in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process are set forth in memoranda of agreement between those parties. JETS and the MPO are collaborating with private transit operators to coordinate the provision of transit services, and it is expected that additional memoranda of agreement will be prepared to formalize that arrangement.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN EVALUATION GUIDEBOOK:

Introduction:

The FHWA requires that the Jonesboro MPO continuously evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement activities. By continuously evaluating public participation activities, it is possible to improve or add new public participation activities to the MPO program and to discontinue activities that are ineffective. The purpose of this guidebook is to provide guidelines for the evaluation of the public participation techniques contained in the Public Participation Plan.

The Public Participation Plan includes various public involvement techniques that could be used by the MPO. This guidebook describes public participation techniques, outlines the steps to be taken to evaluate those techniques, identifies measures to quantify success rates, and outlines strategies to improve the MPO's public participation process.

Evaluation Methods and Performance Goals:

To determine the effectiveness of the public participation tools, they must be evaluated and compared to established performance goals. The typical methods for evaluating the effectiveness of public participation are surveys and statistical analysis. This section briefly describes evaluation methods used by the MPO. For each public involvement tool, performance goals and methods for meeting those goals have been identified.

Surveys:

Surveys typically consist of short, specific questions regarding public participation tools that are ongoing or that were used on a specific project. Surveys can be conducted in person, by phone, mail or e-mail. Face-to-face and telephone surveys provide quick responses and can be used when a respondent's answer may lead to a follow-up question. For example, respondents may be asked if advertisements are an effective notification tool. If the response is "no," the surveyor can ask those respondents why advertisements are not effective and also what other tools they would prefer. In-person and telephone surveys can target specific areas or groups, or participants can be selected through random sampling.

Mail surveys may be used to provide a written record of respondents' answers. Mail-back surveys can be distributed at meetings, inside other publications, or by mailing questionnaires to potential respondents. Respondents can be a targeted group, such as members of special interest groups or residents of specific areas, or they can be selected randomly. Return postage for mail surveys can be pre-paid by the MPO or can be the responsibility of the respondent.

Like mail surveys, electronic surveys, such as those distributed via e-mail or posted on the World Wide Web, provide a written record of responses. Unlike mail-back surveys, there is little to no reproduction or distribution cost to the MPO to send out electronic surveys, and little to no cost to respondents to return a response. To use e-mail surveys, it is necessary to have e-mail addresses for the targeted respondents, and random distribution is not an option.

Statistical Analysis:

Statistics can be used to determine the “return on investment” of public participation tools. For example, the number of persons attending an activity can be compared to the number of persons that were notified of the activity. This type of evaluation can be an indicator of whether or not the tools used for public participation are actually reaching the intended audience, or which tools had a greater response rate.

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goal	Methods to Meet Goal
Public Participation Plan	No measure; PPP should reflect the practices of the MPO	N/A	Update at least every 3 years to incorporate the improvement strategies resulting from public participation evaluation.
MPO Website	Number of hits	Minimum of 30 hits per month; 2% increase in hits per quarter	Use other public involvement tools to increase advertisement of the website.
Quarterly Newsletter	Calls, letters; Number of returns	N/A	Continue items that receive favorable comments, and correct and improve mistakes.
E-mail Announcements	Calls, letters; Number of persons reached	Minimum of 2% of meeting attendees state that they received an e-mail announcement	Increase e-mail list.
Internet Message Boards	Calls, letters; Number of persons reached	Minimum of 2% of meeting attendees state that they saw a message on Facebook or Twitter	Increase internet messages.
MPO Logo	Calls, letters; Number of persons reached	Recognition of the logo	Use the MPO logo on all MPO publications.
Public Hearings	Calls, letters; Number of persons reached	3% to 5% of the affected population are in attendance	Use other participation tools to increase participation.
Surveys	Calls, letters; Number of persons reached	Minimum of 15% return	Encourage responses by explaining the importance of receiving feedback to improve the planning process.
Government Access TV	Calls, letters; Number of persons reached	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicate that they saw the meeting notice	Provide information to government access TV as soon as it is available to increase airtime. Encourage government access TV to make messages prominent.
Posters and Flyers	Calls, letters; Number of persons reached	Minimum of 5% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw a poster	Increase distribution to common areas visible to the general public.

Improvement Strategies:

Each time a public participation evaluation is performed, a list of improvement strategies should be identified for implementation. If an improvement is needed for an ongoing public involvement task, such as the MPO website, a reasonable completion date should be established to implement the changes. If improvement is needed for one-time activities, such as corridor studies, the improvement should be implemented where appropriate on future activities.

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

If you have any comments, suggestions, or questions, you may contact any member of the MPO staff:

Jonesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization
P.O. Box 1845
Jonesboro, Arkansas 72403-1845

Phone: (870) 933-4623
Fax: (870) 933-4626
Website: www.jonesboro.org/MPO/mpo.htm
E-mail: mpo@jonesboro.org

**APPENDIX A
ELECTRONIC MAILING LIST**

*Jonesboro Area MPO
Public Participation Plan*

For a complete list, contact the MPO office and request the e-mailing list maintained by the MPO for the Public Participation Plan and newsletter. The e-mailing list is continuously updated to include new organizations and individuals.

MPO Transportation Policy Committee	MPO Technical Advisory Committee	JETS Advisory Board
Jonesboro City Council	Brookland City Council	Bono City Council
Bay City Council	Craighead Quorum Court	Legislators
Boards and Commissions	Public Libraries	Neighborhood Interest Groups
Senior Citizen Centers	Recreation Centers	Board of Realtors
Chambers of Commerce	Business and Civic Groups	Persons with Disabilities
Bikeway and Walkway Committee	Environmentalists	Cyclists
Freight Operators	Transportation Providers	Citizens
Historic Preservation Organizations	Television Station	Radio Stations
Newspapers	Other Agencies	Arkansas MPOs
Minority Groups	Low Income Groups	Environmental Resource Agencies
University Heights Lions Club	Hispanic Community Services, Inc.	

*Jonesboro Area MPO
Public Participation Plan*

**APPENDIX B
REVISION NOTES**

*Jonesboro Area MPO
Public Participation Plan*

1. On May 18, 2004, the Transportation Policy Committee adopted the PIP for the Jonesboro MPO.
2. On June 29, 2007, the Transportation Policy Committee voted to replace the PIP with the Public Participation Plan in compliance with SAFETEA-LU; FHWA regulations codified at 23 CFR 450 and 500; and FTA regulations codified at 49 CFR 613.
3. On August 17, 2010, the Transportation Policy Committee adopted the revised Public Participation Plan.