

# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AMENDMENTS

## OVERVIEW

### **What's being amended?**

An addition to Chapter 4 of the MTP- "Public Involvement"- that focuses on engaging the public to provide feedback about a plan or transportation project. The original section can be seen on pages 25-27 of the original 2040 MTP. The additions below, added in red, are to be included in the current "Ongoing Public Involvement Efforts" section, after the second paragraph covering the Public Involvement Program (PIP).

### **Why is this being amended?**

Since the 2040 MTP was passed, federal mandates have been put in place that require engagement with groups of the public that were not previously accounted for.

## ONGOING PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT EFFORTS

Public involvement is an essential aspect of the transportation planning process. Throughout every stage of the development process, the public is consulted or given opportunity to provide input about a plan or transportation project.

The FBRMPO developed Public Involvement Policy (PIP) in 2012 (last updated in March 2016) to establish parameters and ensure public involvement is included in a meaningful way. The PIP sets guidelines on the amount of time to for public comment before Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments, the adoption of the TIP, adoption and amendments to the Planning Work Program (PWP), adoption and amendments to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and other planning documents the MPO is responsible for developing and maintaining. The PIP also sets requirements on the type of media that should be used to connect with the greatest number and diversity of the public as possible: whether that is through regional newspapers, the MPO's website, or other methods.

FBRMPO will make efforts to include all interested parties with an opportunity to comment early and continuously on the transportation plan updates, including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. These stakeholder groups include but are not limited to the following agencies and community groups:

- affected public agencies
- representatives of public transportation employees
- freight shippers
- providers of freight transportation services
- private providers of transportation (intercity bus operators)

- employer-based commuting programs such as carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, shuttle program or telework program)
- representatives of users of public transportation
- representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities
- representatives of the disabled
- other interested parties (such as local Chambers of Commerce, local non-profit agencies serving on the Transportation Advisory Boards for community transportation providers, universities, hospitals and other entities which express an interest in regional transportation planning issues)

Outreach to these groups will be an ongoing task. Part of that outreach will be ensuring these groups are on FBRMPO distribution lists (email, telephone, and mailing) and that contact is maintained. Public documents and notifications of meetings will be posted on the FBRMPO website so all applicable parties may view them.

All applicable users and groups will also included in efforts relating to updating the FBRMPO Public Involvement Policy.

## INTERCITY BUS OPERATORS

As a private transportation provider, Greyhound Lines, Inc. operates intercity bus service in Asheville from a terminal on Tunnel Road. This service provides connections to multiple destinations in North Carolina and the United States. FBRMPO will maintain contact with Greyhound, along with any other major transportation providers in the region and will involve them in our planning efforts.

## FREIGHT SHIPPERS AND FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

French Broad River MPO will continue to work with WNC Transportation Alliance Group and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce to ensure that freight providers in the region are aware of and can provide feedback for transportation planning initiatives. As an example of this ongoing coordination, FBRMPO, WNC Transportation Alliance and NCDOT held a meeting at Land of Sky Regional Council offices in November of 2016 to discuss transportation issues of importance to the freight providers and companies shipping large volumes of freight in western North Carolina. The results were incorporated into the North Carolina Multimodal Statewide Freight Plan completed in December 2017.

## COMMUTING PROGRAMS

GO Mountain is the Regional Transportation Demand Management program housed at Land of Sky Regional Council. The mission of GO Mountain is to increase ridesharing and sustainable commuting, while decreasing congestion and emissions. GO Mountain supports workforce transportation solutions like carpool incentive programs, vanpools, active transportation plans, transit connectivity, and alternative fuel fleet vehicles. FBRMPO staff will coordinate with GO

Mountain and any additional commuting programs that might be created in the region in the future as part of long range and short term transportation plan updates.