

# **2021 Public Participation Plan (PPP)**

## **Mobile Area Transportation Study (MATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**



Prepared by  
**SOUTH ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
Mobile, Alabama

In Cooperation With  
**THE WAVE TRANSIT SYSTEM ALABAMA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION U.S.**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

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To be Adopted by  
the  
**Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization**  
on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021



# **Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

## **Public Participation Plan**

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## **Mobile Area Transportation Study, MPO Members, January 2021**

Mayor, City of Mobile - Hon. Sandy Stimpson (**MPO Chairman**)  
Mobile County Commissioner - Hon. Connie Hudson  
Mobile County Engineer - Mr. Bryan Kegley  
Councilman, City of Mobile - Hon. John Williams  
Councilman, City of Mobile - Hon. Fred Richardson  
Mayor, City of Prichard - Hon. Jimmie Gardner  
Councilman, City of Prichard – Hon. George E. McCall, Jr.  
Mayor, City of Chickasaw - Hon. Barry Broadhead  
Mayor, City of Saraland - Hon. Howard Rubenstein  
Mayor, City of Satsuma - Hon. Mark Barlow  
Mayor, Town of Creola - Hon. Don Nelson  
Mayor, City of Bayou La Batre – Hon. Henry Barnes, Sr.  
Mayor, City of Semmes – Hon. Brandon Van Hook  
General Manager, the Wave Transit System – Mr. Damon Dash  
Southwest Region Engineer, ALDOT - Mr. Matt Ericksen  
Member, SARPC - Mr. Rob Middleton  
Bureau Chief, Local Transportation, ALDOT (Non-voting) – Brad Lindsey  
Division Administrator, FHWA (Non-voting) - Mr. Mark Bartlett  
Executive Director, SARPC (Non-voting) - Mr. John F. “Rickey” Rhodes

## **Mobile Area Transportation Study**

### **Metropolitan Planning Organization Joint Technical / Citizens Advisory Committee Members**

Alabama Legislative Rep. - Hon. Margie Wilcox  
Alabama State Docks - Mr. Bob Harris  
ALDOT Southwest Region Planning - Mr. Edwin Perry  
At Large - Mr. John Blanton  
Citizen - Mr. Donald Watson  
Citizen - Mr. John Murphy  
Citizen - Mr. Merrill Thomas  
City of Bayou La Batre – Mr. Frank Williams  
City of Chickasaw - Mr. Dennis Sullivan  
City of Mobile - Mr. Nick Amberger  
City of Mobile - Ms. Shayla Beaco  
City of Mobile - Ms. Mary Beth Bergin  
City of Mobile - Mr. James DeLapp  
City of Mobile - Ms. Jennifer White  
City of Prichard - Mr. Essie Johnson  
City of Prichard - Mr. Fernando Billups  
City of Prichard - Mr. James Jacobs  
City of Saraland - Mr. Logan Anderson  
City of Saraland - Ms. Shilo Miller  
City of Satsuma - vacant  
City of Semmes – Mr. Jason Franklin  
Freight - Mr. Brian Harold  
At-Large - Mr. Jeff Zoghby

Mobile Airport Authority - Mr. Chris Curry  
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce - Ms. Nancy Hewston  
Mobile Bay Keeper - Ms. Casi Callaway  
Mobile County - Mr. Ricky Mitchell  
Mobile County - Ms. Kim Sanderson  
Mobile County - Mr. Richard Spraggins  
Mobile County Health Dept. - Dr. Laura Cepeda  
Mobile United, Executive Director - Ms. Christienne Gibson  
Partners for Environmental Progress - Ms. Jennifer Denson  
Private Transit Provider - Vacant  
SARPC - Mr. John F. "Rickey" Rhodes (TCC/CAC Chairperson)  
The Wave Transit System - Mr. Gerald Alfred

**Mobile Area Transportation Study  
Metropolitan Planning Organization Bicycle / Pedestrian Advisory Committee Members**

John Blanton, Mobile Bike Club Urban Assault (BPAC Chairperson)  
Edwin Perry, Alabama Department of Transportation, Southwest Region  
Daniel Driskell, Alabama Department of Transportation, Southwest Region  
Daniel Otto, City of Mobile Parks and Recreation Department  
Jennifer White, City of Mobile Traffic Engineering  
Marybeth Bergin, City of Mobile Traffic Engineering  
Butch Ladner, City of Mobile Traffic Engineering  
Jennifer Green, City of Mobile  
Bill Finch, Cyclist  
Fred Rendfrey, Downtown Mobile Alliance  
Carol Hunter, Downtown Mobile Alliance (BPAC Vice-Chairperson)  
Ted Flotte, Health Department, Mobilians on Bikes  
Richard Spraggins, Mobile County Engineering  
Timothy Wicker, Mobile County Engineering  
Brad Wittmann, Mobile County Engineering  
Ashley Dukes, Midtown Mobile Movement  
Stephanie Woods-Crawford, Mobile County Health Department  
Meredith Driskin, Mobile Baykeeper  
Green Suttles, Mobile United  
Dorothy Dorton, AARP  
Dr. Raoul Richardson, Citizen  
Ben Brenner, Mobilians on Bikes  
Mark Berte, Alabama Coastal Foundation/ Livable Communities Coalition  
Allison Reese, City of Satsuma  
Debi Foster, The Peninsula of Mobile  
Linda St. John, the Village of Springhill

Resolution page

## Table of Contents

<i>Title and Contacts and Committee Membership iv Table of Contents</i>	<i>i MPO ii Resolution v</i>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	1
<b>1.0 Introduction</b>	2
1.1 Purpose	2
1.2 Interagency Coordination and Approval	2
1.3 MPO Organizational Structure	2
1.4 Livability Principles and Indicators	2
<b>2.0 Public Participation Process</b>	4
2.1 Goals and Objectives	4
2.1.1 Describing the Ideal	4
2.1.2 Achieving the Ideal	4
2.1.3 Developing Workable Solutions	4
2.2 Federal and State Requirements	4
2.2.1 Review of Title 23 USC 134 and 135	5
2.2.2 Review of MAP-21, Public Law 112-141, July, 2012, Section 1201	5
2.2.3 Review of 23 CFR Part 450.316 Public Involvement	5
2.2.4 Review of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC 2000d, et seq.	5
2.2.4.1 23 USC 324 Sexual Orientation	5
2.2.4.2 29 USC 794 Non-discrimination federal grants and programs	5
2.2.4.3 Executive Order 12898 Low Income and Minorities	5
2.2.4.4 Limited English Proficiency Persons (LEP) and Language Assistance Plan	5
2.3 MPO Public Outreach Strategies	6
2.3.1 Contact List	6
2.3.1 Meetings	6
2.3.3 Public Notice	6
2.3.4 Availability of Documents for Public Review	7
2.3.5 Traditionally Underserved Consideration	7
2.3.6 Visualization	8
2.3.7 Other Means for Information Dissemination	8
2.3.8 Social Media	8
2.3.9 Surveys	8
2.3.10 Weekly E-Newsletter	8
2.3.11 Virtual Meetings	8
2.3.12 Resolution of Public Input	9
2.3.13 Accommodation of Physically Challenged	9
2.3.14 Revised Proposals	9
2.3.15 Public Involvement through Community Development Programs	9
2.3.16 Meeting Time and Location	9

2.3.17 Review and Revision of Procedures	9
2.4 MPO Work Products and Corresponding Public Participation Techniques	10
2.4.1 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	10
2.4.2 Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan	11
2.4.3 Congestion Management Process (CMP)	11
2.4.4 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	12
2.4.5 Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan (HSCTP)	12
2.4.6 Public Participation Plan (PPP)	13
2.4.7 Air Quality Conformity Report	13
3.0 Roles and Relationships	13
3.1 MPO Staff	13
3.1.1 MPO Committees	14
3.2 ALDOT	14
3.3 Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration	15
4.0 Documentation	15
4.1 Public Participation Activities and Outreach	15
4.1.1 Photographic and Audio Records	15
4.1.2 Attendance Records	15
4.1.3 Summaries and Annual Reporting	15
4.1.4 Phone Calls, Office Visits, US Mail, and Email	15
5.0 Effectiveness of the Public Participation Process	16
5.1 Why Assessment is Necessary	16
5.2 Data Collection	16
5.3 Evaluation Criteria (or Indicators), Performance Objectives, and Strategies	16
5.4 Continuing Assessment	16
Tables:	
Table 1: Assessment of Effectiveness of the PI Techniques to Achieve Informing the Public Objective	17
Table 2: Assessment of Effectiveness of the PI Techniques to Achieve Educating the Public Objective	18
Table 3: Assessment of Effectiveness of the PI Techniques to Achieve Involving the Public Objective	20
Appendices:	
A. Abbreviations and Acronyms	A-1
B. MPO Planning Area Map	B-1
C. MPO Structure	C-1
D. Livability Indicator Data	D-1
E. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan	E-1
F. Samples	F-1
1. Sign-in Sheet	
2. Public Comment Form	



## **Executive Summary**

The Public Participation Plan (PPP), as prescribed in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or "FAST Act", mandates the involvement of the public in transportation planning efforts of the MPO. The continuing regulatory provisions under 23 CFR 450 stress that the most effective public participation process is one in which the public has access to information and the ability to act on that information before decisions are finalized, in a variety of ways and in such a manner as to allow for effective influence over the outcome of project decisions. In addition to addressing federal mandates, the Mobile MPO will continue to update its policies, as it has done in the past, in order to conform to new regulations, account for changing technology and trends, and to maintain effective public participation strategies.

The goal of public participation is to ensure that the plans of the MPO reflect community values and equally benefit all communities within the planning area and to provide an active and representative form to all segments of the Mobile Urban Area. In order to achieve this goal, the objectives of public participation are as follows:

- Inform the public of transportation meetings and other events in a timely manner and stage at a convenient location
- Educate the public regarding their role in the transportation planning and decision making process
- Involve the public by providing opportunities early and often
- Reach all communities to inform and involve the public
- Improve the public participation process

In addition to the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Plan as described in this PPP, the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization staff developed public participation strategies for other transportation plans developed by the MPO. Strategies for public involvement range from a technical memorandum to an outline, which at a minimum addresses the objectives of the public participation strategy, the target communities, and the public participation techniques used. They may take the form of press releases, public notices, fliers, workshops, and outreaches. The public participation strategy is documented as part of the plan.

The MPO staff continues to document and report public participation activities as required by the Alabama Department of Transportation and the Alabama Division of the Federal Highway Administration.

The staff of the MPO uses yearly assessments to measure the effectiveness of public participation techniques. Results of the assessments are used to modify the public participation processes of the MPO in order to achieve the goal of ensuring that transportation plans reflect community values and benefit all communities in the planning area.

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) is to ensure that the transportation planning process encourages active public participation. The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the authorized entity that was established to conduct the federally-required transportation planning process in Mobile, Alabama. The PPP describes how the MPO incorporates the public into the process.

### **1.2 Interagency Coordination and Approval**

To the extent practicable, the MPO will consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the Study Area that are affected by transportation when developing the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This includes Federal, State and Local agencies responsible for:

- Economic growth and development
- Environmental protection
- Airport operations
- Freight movement
- Land use management
- Natural resources
- Conservation
- Historic preservation
- Human service transportation providers

A contact list of these officials and agencies has been compiled and is maintained. These agencies will be invited to attend all MPO TCC/CAC and Policy Committee meetings so as to be involved in the transportation planning process continuously. In addition, a request to these agencies will be made to compare the draft LRTP and TIP with their plans, maps, and inventories. The MPO will document what agencies and officials were contacted and how, the responses received, the results of the comparison of plans, maps and inventories, and how this information might affect the LRTP and TIP.

### **1.3 MPO Organizational Structure**

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is composed of four committees. The Policy Committee is the official decision making body of the process. The Policy Committee is served by three advisory committees: A joint Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (BPAC). A more detailed description of the MPO can be found in Appendix B.

### **1.4 Livability Principles and Indicators**

FHWA, with ALDOT concurring, requires that the Mobile MPO continuously evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement activities in the study area "...to ensure a full and open participation process." [23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(X)]. Through periodic review and adjustment, it is possible to improve or add new public participation efforts to the MPO program and discontinue efforts that are ineffective.

Increasingly, federal and state agencies are using Performance Measures as a way of ensuring greater accountability for the expenditure of public funds in an ever-growing number of programs and activities across a variety of disciplines. Within the transportation sector and the planning processes associated with transportation infrastructure development, ALDOT has adopted the *Livability Principles and Indicators* as a sustainability measurement against future actions.

The Livability Principles and Indicators are described in the narrative and individual task sections of each draft and final version of the Unified Planning Work Program. The **Principles** shown cannot be changed. However, Alabama MPOs are encouraged to employ or adapt those **Indicators** they feel best reflects their local conditions and needs and that can be easily tracked over time and presented in tables, charts, or GIS mapping within the following planning. Increasingly, federal and state agencies are using Performance Measures as a way of ensuring greater accountability for the expenditure of public funds in an ever-growing number of programs and activities across a variety of disciplines. Within the transportation sector and the planning processes associated with transportation infrastructure development, ALDOT has adopted the Livability Principles and Indicators as a sustainability measurement against future actions. All planning tasks must be measured against these Livability Principles:

- 1) Provide more transportation choices
- 2) Promote equitable, affordable housing
- 3) Enhance economic competitiveness
- 4) Support existing communities
- 5) Coordinate policies and leverage investment
- 6) Value Communities and neighborhoods

As a measure of the sustainability of these principles, the MPO will provide the following Livability Indicators data in the Long-Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Plan, the Bicycle Pedestrian Plan, the Public Participation Plan, the Congestion Management Plan and the Air Quality Conformity Report (if applicable):

- 1) Percent of jobs and housing located within one-half (1/2) mile of transit service
- 2) Percent of household income spent on housing and transportation
- 3) Percent of workforce living within a thirty (30) minute or less commute from primary job centers
- 4) Percent of transportation investment dedicated to enhancing accessibility of existing transportation systems
- 5) Percent of transportation projects where more than one federal funding source is utilized
- 6) Percent of housing located in walkable neighborhoods with mixed use destinations located nearby

## **2.0 Public Participation Process**

### **2.1 Goals and Objectives**

The goal of public participation is to ensure that the plans of the MPO reflect community values and equally benefit all communities within the planning area. In order to achieve this goal, the objectives of public participation are as follows:

- Inform the public of transportation meetings and other events in a timely manner and stage at a convenient location
- Educate the public regarding their role in the transportation planning and decision-making process
- Involve the public by providing opportunities early and often
- Reach all communities to inform and involve the public
- Improve the public participation process

#### **2.1.1 Describing the Ideal**

Ideal public participation occurs when the public is involved in the development of solutions versus merely voting on solutions developed by planners. When ideal public participation occurs, transportation plans better reflect community values.

#### **2.1.2 Achieving the Ideal**

Ideal public participation would take place in the following scenario in which planners:

- Identify deficiencies in transportation facilities with the help of models, MPO committee members, and the public
- Present data graphically for easy interpretation
- Identify communities impacted by the deficiencies with the help of committee members, information in GIS, and the public
- Determine most effective mix of public participation techniques (workshops, focus groups, etc.) to encourage public participation
- Determine goals and objectives with MPO committees and public
- Discuss alternative solutions with the public and MPO committees
- Ask for recommendations from the public and MPO committees
- Present recommendations from the public and MPO committees to the MPO members. At this point, if alternatives were developed that did not have public support the alternatives should be presented to the TCC/CAC members as well

#### **2.1.3 Developing Workable Solutions**

In developing the MPO's Public Participation Plan the goals are to maximize the participation opportunities, to make the process as accessible and friendly as possible, and to minimize complaints regarding the process. With public input throughout the process, workable solutions can be obtained.

### **2.2 Federal and State Requirements**

The following is a brief summary of the relevant federal laws, regulations, and executive orders that direct state departments of transportation regarding public participation matters. This text was

prepared by the Bureau of Transportation Planning at the Alabama Department of Transportation and modified by the MPO staff to address MPO functions.

**2.2.1** Title 23 United States Code (USC) 134 and 135 – 23 USC 134 is codification of the law establishing planning policy, defining MPO organizational structure, and delineating MPO and State responsibilities in the transportation planning process.

**2.2.2** Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) – This is the most recent transportation legislation, signed into law by President Obama on December 4, 2015. This law amends, modifies, and adds to existing 23 USC 134 and 135.

**2.2.3** 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450 – 23 CFR 450 is FHWA/FTA interpretation of 23 USC 134 and 135, providing specific requirements and actions for MPOs and the state implementing agency, the DOT. The applicable language for both is found, respectively, in 450.210(1)(i and others) (“..the state shall..”) and 450.316(1)(vii and others) (“..the MPO shall..”).

**2.2.4** Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC 2000d, et seq. 42 USC 2000d prohibits exclusion from participation in any federal program on the basis of race, color, or national origin. This is the seminal or shaping expression of the law.

**2.2.4.1** 23 USC 324 – This is the law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, adding to the landmark significance of 2000d. This requirement is found in 23 CFR 450.334(1).

**2.2.4.2** 29 USC 794 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1992. These are laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of a disability, and in terms of access to the transportation planning process.

**2.2.4.3** Executive Order 12898 – Executive Orders by the President as the head of the Executive Branch typically carry the weight of law. This is not actually true unless the order has been given discretionary power through an Act of Congress, or a later act gives congressional weight to the order. Significant orders by Presidents in the past affect the ability segments of the population to gain access, and in this case, access to the planning process. Order 12898, often simply called “Environmental Justice,” requires federal agencies to identify “disproportionately high and adverse human and health environmental effects of its programs on minority populations and low-income populations...” and prohibits actions that would adversely affect a disproportionately high number among these populations. Section 5-5 addresses the public involvement part of the order.

**2.2.4.4** Limited English Proficiency Persons (LEP) and Language Assistance Plan - As required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, and FTA Circular FTA C4702.1B, October 2012, the MPO has completed a Four Factor Analysis of the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Area to determine requirements for

compliance with the Limited English Proficiency Persons (LEP) provisions. Based on the analysis, the MPO has identified a population within the MPA that may require MPO assistance in participating in the planning process. A Language Assistance Plan has been developed as follows:

- The Hispanic population of the Mobile MPA is approximately 2.4% of total population, thereby requiring the development of a Language Assistance Plan.
- The MPO provides language assistance services by having on staff personnel that is fluent in Spanish. Other languages would be available upon request.
- Notice of the availability of language assistance to LEP persons is provided through the MPO staff and the Public Participation Plan.
- The MPO monitors, evaluates, and updates the Plan annually through update of the PPP Plan and staff reports.
- Training of MPO staff to provide language assistance is done under guidance of the Alabama Department of Transportation.

The MPO periodically reviews the above steps to ensure that inadvertent discrimination on the basis of national origin is not occurring. In addition to the above actions, the MPO will provide the following:

- Notice of MPO meetings and hearings in the secondary language as requested.
- Translation services for meetings or hearings on request.
- Translation services, verbal only, of planning documents, subject to 2-week notice.
- Title VI Complaint Form(s) in the secondary language as requested.

### **2.3 MPO Public Outreach Strategies**

These procedures have been developed to seek out a combination of outreach, inclusion, and engagement of the public in the transportation planning process. The Mobile MPO, in an effort to develop and implement a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process, will continually pursue innovative and effective Public Participation Plan.

#### **2.3.1 Contact List**

The MPO maintains a contact list of Policy Board members, TCC/CAC members, BPAC members, stakeholders and other interested parties. The list facilitates outreach during the transportation planning process.

Anyone wishing to be included in the MPO's contact list should notify the MPO.

#### **2.3.2 Meetings**

All MPO meetings are open to the public, and all material to be brought before the MPO is available for public inspection and review on request. Fees may be charged for photocopies.

#### **2.3.3 Public Notice**

Prior to MPO consideration for approval, the development process and the draft of the new

or formally amended Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), a new or formally amended Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Public Participation Plan (PPP), Bicycle Pedestrian Plan, Congestion Management Process (CMP) and, if and when appropriate, a new Air Quality Conformity Report, will be advertised for public review, comment, and/or input in a Mobile County general circulation newspaper. This notification procedure will also apply to any new or substantially revised federal transportation project proposed for implementation in the study area and anticipated to have significant impact (examples include most TIP modifications). The notice will briefly describe the proposed action, when public hearings/meetings will be held, when the MPO will meet to consider the action, and where more detailed information can be reviewed or obtained (see paragraph 4 following). The intent of this procedure is to provide a means for involvement and input from all interested parties at the earliest possible time prior to MPO decisions or action. Therefore, public notice of the proposed meeting or action will be made as soon as possible, but in no event less than two weeks prior to the date the MPO is scheduled to act on the proposal.

The public notice will appear in the two major newspapers in the Mobile Urban Area along with being posted on our website and social media platforms.

#### **2.3.4 Availability of Documents for Public Review**

The public notices described above will specify that a more detailed explanation of the proposed action can be obtained from the SARPC Transportation Planning staff and will include the office mailing address and phone number. When entire documents are involved (i.e., TIP or LRTP, etc.), the notice will also state that hard copy of documents can be reviewed at the SARPC office, the Wave Transit System office, all local libraries, SAIL Centers in the Urban Area and/or public housing offices. The project documentation available at each site will include comment forms with instructions on how to contact SARPC for additional information and where to submit written comments. In addition, the documents will contain a checklist where the public can place a check that they have reviewed the document without having to leave their name. The documents will also be made available on the Mobile MPO's Website.

In the event of circumstances (such as major storm events or quarantine) that hinder the dissemination of hard copy of documents to any or all of the locations listed above, a notice of where the documents may be found will be posted online and through news media.

#### **2.3.5 Traditionally Underserved Consideration**

The MPO seeks out and considers the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, i.e. low income and minority households by first identifying those areas that have high populations of low income and minorities based on census block data. These areas are targeted and canvassed with public notices, hard copies of documents for review, and comment forms at places frequented by the public such as, the libraries, public housing board offices, public transit facilities and the like. All MPO committee meetings are open to the public and invitations are posted at the public housing board offices, senior citizen activity centers, and libraries. In addition, MPO staff is available to do presentations on the Transportation Planning Process for advocacy groups in low income and minority populated areas.

### **2.3.6 Visualization**

Provisions of the FAST Act require that the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) include visualization techniques to describe projects. To meet this requirement the LRTP and TIP include maps of the road projects that are identified as part of the Mobile Area Transportation Study. The MPO also utilizes visualization tools such as large paper maps and poster boards and PowerPoint presentations in the various presentations to the community. All documents developed by the MPO are posted on the internet at [http:// www.mobilempo.org](http://www.mobilempo.org).

### **2.3.7 Other Means for Information Dissemination**

MPO staff will utilize other available media (including public service announcements, billboards, and/or signs on public transportation vehicles) to encourage early and continuous involvement of citizens in the planning process and in the promotion of ongoing programs. Summary copies of most elements of the Long-Range Plan are available free of charge from the SARPC office. The Mobile MPO also maintains a home page on the World Wide Web at [http:// www.mobilempo.org](http://www.mobilempo.org). Information on the MATS program, including the long-range street plan and bicycle plan, is posted there and additional data can be obtained through the electronic mail address [transportation@sarpc.org](mailto:transportation@sarpc.org). MPO staff will maintain mailing lists, including area of interest if available. Upon request, notification of document availability, public hearings or meetings, or pending MPO action will be mailed to individuals who have indicated interest in related matters and have provided a current mailing address within the study area. Community involvement efforts will be used to help establish new contacts to add to the mailing list.

### **2.3.8 Social Media**

The MPO posts various information on its social media platform including public notices and links to proposed plans.

### **2.3.9 Surveys**

The MPO has developed voluntary and anonymous surveys in conjunction with some plans. For example, in the development of the most recent Long-Range Plan, a survey was posted online using **Survey123** to encourage public participation and comments.

### **2.3.10 Weekly E-Newsletter**

The MPO sends out a weekly E-newsletter. A database of email addresses is maintained to send the newsletter. The newsletter contains information on upcoming meetings, projects and other transportation related items.

Anyone wishing to receive the newsletter should notify the MPO.

### **2.3.11 Virtual Meetings**

In the event of circumstances (such as major storm events or quarantine) that hinder in-person meetings, a virtual meeting may be deemed necessary. Information on how to participate in the virtual meeting will be posted online and through news media.



### **2.3.12 Resolution of Public Input**

All comments received on draft plans or proposals, whether submitted in writing or orally to MPO staff independently or at public meetings or hearings, will be documented and made available to the MPO prior to any action being taken on the proposal. All relevant comments and their responses will be included in the final plan/proposal adopted by the MPO. All responses to public comments will be made in a timely manner.

### **2.3.13 Accommodation of Physically Challenged**

Access to meetings or information will be available to physically challenged persons by notifying the MPO staff at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date or date the information is desired so that adequate time is available to complete any special arrangements necessary to accommodate the individual's physical challenge.

### **2.3.14 Revised Proposals**

Should any draft plans or proposals be substantially modified after being advertised for public comment, either due to such comment or otherwise, the public notice cycle will be repeated and the new proposal will be made available for public comment.

### **2.3.15 Public Involvement through Community Development Programs**

SARPC and the MPO staff will continue to increase communication and expand public awareness through their involvement in several community improvement initiatives and organizations (e.g. Mobile United, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, etc.). These programs are all consensus-building efforts made up of concerned citizens targeting all types of social awareness and community development, including infrastructure in general and transportation in particular. Representatives of each of these organizations, in turn, will continue to serve on the MATS Technical/Citizen Committee and to have direct input to the MPO decision-making process. MPO staff will continue to assist in the establishment and implementation of these organization's goals and methodologies for transportation strategies in the region. The products and goals of all of these community-based efforts will continue to be integrated into all MPO plans and decisions.

### **2.3.16 Meeting Time and Location**

The MPO committees have a standard meeting location, day and time. That is the SARPC board room in the GM&O Building in Mobile, Alabama at 10:00 a.m. on a Wednesday. However, the MPO board does not have a standard meeting date due to possible unforeseen conflicts; generally, the meetings are once a quarter. The GM&O building is located on a transit route.

In the event of circumstances (such as major storm events or quarantine) that hinder in-person meetings, a virtual meeting may be deemed necessary. Information on how to participate in the virtual meeting will be posted online and through news media.

### **2.3.17 Review and Revision of Public Participation Plan**

The MPO staff will review the Public Participation Plan with respect to changes in local, state and federal legislation and in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to the public. This review will be completed annually for the

prior fiscal year. The current procedures will be assessed with respect to their success in meeting the performance requirements specified in the appropriate regulations pertaining to metropolitan system planning, project development, and/or certification reviews. The review will include the number of comments/responses received, citizen attendance at meetings, the number of citizens who actually review the documents distributed throughout the region, and the amount spent on public notices and advertisements. The results of this review will be summarized in a written report and presented to the MPO upon completion. If the MPO determines that the Public Participation Plan is inadequate, additional involvement techniques will be developed and utilized; this might include alternate or new media resources. Should the MPO determine that it is necessary to revise these procedures; a 45-day notification/comment period will be given prior to MPO adoption of the proposed modifications.

## **2.4 MPO Work Products and Corresponding Public Participation Techniques**

Prior to MPO consideration for approval, the development process and the draft of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and any updates of the Long-Range Transportation Plan will be advertised for public review, comment, and/or input in a Mobile County general circulation newspaper. This notification procedure will also apply to any new or substantially revised federal transportation project proposed for implementation in the study area and anticipated to have significant impact (examples include most TIP modifications). The notice will briefly describe the proposed action, when public hearings/meetings will be held, when the MPO will meet to consider the action, and where more detailed information can be reviewed or obtained (see paragraph 4 following). The intent of this procedure is to provide a means for involvement and input from all interested parties at the earliest possible time prior to MPO decisions or action. Therefore, public notice of the proposed meeting or action will be made as soon as possible, but in no event less than two weeks prior to the date the MPO is scheduled to act on the proposal.

The public notices described above will specify that a more detailed explanation of the proposed action can be obtained from the SARPC Transportation Planning staff and will include the office mailing address and phone number. When entire documents are involved (i.e., TIP or LRTP, etc.), the notice will also state that the document can be reviewed at the SARPC office, the Wave Transit System office, all local libraries, SAIL Centers in the Mobile Urban Area and public housing offices. The project documentation available at each site will include comment forms with instructions on how to contact SARPC for additional information and where to submit written comments. In the event of circumstances (such as major storm events or quarantine) that hinder the dissemination of hard copies of documents to any or all of the locations listed above, a notice of where the documents may be found will be posted online and through news media.

### **2.4.1 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**

The purpose of the long-range transportation plan is to (1) identify current transportation needs, (2) forecast future transportation needs, and (3) establish strategies and projects that address the needs. The federal regulations (23 CFR Part 450.322) related to this topic state that the strategies and projects should “lead to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods”.

The LRTP is developed over the course of several years. During that time the MPO holds

several committee meetings. All meetings of the MPO committees are preceded by public notices indicating the time, date, and place of the meeting. Any person who attends the MPO committee meetings is given an opportunity to participate. A non-committee member may participate during any discussion. The public notices indicate that if a person needs special assistance to attend the meeting they may contact the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) 48 hours prior to the meeting. The MPO provides an additional opportunity for public participation by holding a public meeting regarding the LRTP. Information on the public meeting is included in public notices placed in the Mobile Urban Area newspaper outlets. Copies of the draft LRTP are made available at the SARPC office and other local government offices and libraries in the urban area. The draft LRTP is also placed on the Mobile MPO website. In addition, digital and paper copies of the plan are available by request.

#### **2.4.2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan:**

By FHWA directive, bicycle and pedestrian planning components have been required in the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program documents for some time. Inclusion in Alabama MPO planning documents took place in 2010. ALDOT joined other state DOTs and approved and implemented a Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in the same year.

As a result of the 2010 action, the ALDOT required that MPOs in the FY 2012 cycle either have Bicycle/Pedestrian Plans in their UPWPs or be working on a Plan, with approval for no later than the Summer of 2013. The Mobile MPO completed the first Mobile County Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan in FY 2011. During the development of the plan, charrettes and public meetings were held for public input. The Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan has been and continues to be periodically updated as part of the Long-Range Transportation Plan. The MPO will hold a public review and meeting for significant changes to the bicycle plan. Notices will be given through legal notices, the website, and press releases of meetings held.

#### **2.4.3 Congestion Management Process (CMP):**

The CMP is developed over the course of several years and is a data intensive, highly technical document. During that time the MPO holds several committee meetings. All meetings of the MPO committees are preceded by public notices indicating the time, date, and place of the meeting. Any person who attends the MPO committee meetings is given an opportunity to participate. A non-committee member may participate during any discussion. The public notices indicate that if a person needs special assistance to attend the meeting they may contact the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) 48 hours prior to the meeting. The MPO provides an additional opportunity for public participation by holding a public meeting regarding the LRTP of which the CMP is part of the LRTP. Information on the public meeting is included in public notices placed in the Mobile Urban Area newspaper outlets. Copies of the draft CMP as part of the overall LRTP are made available at the SARPC office and other local government offices and libraries in the urban area. The draft CMP is also placed on the Mobile MPO website. In addition, digital and paper copies of the plan are available by request.

#### **2.4.4 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a prioritized list of transportation projects. The projects on the TIP are taken from the Mobile Area Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) with the exception of certain level-of-efforts projects. The LRTP covers a 20 to 25-year time frame, while the TIP extends over four years. The TIP is often considered the short-range plan of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The TIP breaks down the Plan projects into phases (e.g. preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and construction) and assigns a start date to each phase. The purpose of the TIP is to schedule the various phases of transportation projects for implementation.

The public is given several opportunities to review and comment on the draft TIP prior to its adoption. Draft TIPs are discussed during MPO committee meetings. Copies of the draft TIP are available at these meetings, on the Mobile MPO website, at the SARPC office, and other locations including city halls and libraries in the urban area. The MPO committee meetings are open to the public and the public is allowed to participate. Notices for the meetings are sent to local media contacts, special interest groups, and to anyone who requests to be on the mailing list. The special interest groups include agencies or organizations that have contact with persons with disabilities, low-income individuals, minorities, and senior citizens.

The MPO also holds a public review and a public meeting regarding the TIP. The review extends for 2 weeks. Anyone interested in the TIP has the opportunity to visit the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) office during these periods and review the document. A public meeting is held a few weeks after the draft document is approved for public review. Legal ads are placed in the local paper.

#### **2.4.5 Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan**

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) assists the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) in the development and updating of a Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan (HSCTP) for the urbanized and non-urbanized areas. The purpose of this plan is to identify how best to enhance access to transit services for persons with disabilities, older Americans, and individuals with lower incomes through the coordination of existing and future transit services that are funded with FTA Section 5310 (Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities) funds.

In order to achieve this goal, this plan was developed to:

- Inventory existing transit services
- Identify unmet needs
- Identify ways to minimize duplication
- Recommend provisions for cost-efficient transit services

SARPC maintains a stakeholders list that is made up of providers of public transportation and known advocates of public transit from the general public. The stakeholders list has been continually updated as staff becomes aware of other service providers, advocacy groups and individuals interested in this planning process. Three public meetings were held in the SARPC Region in order to make the stakeholders and the general public aware of this plan and solicit ideas concerning the updating of this plan. One of these public meetings was held within the Mobile Urbanized Area.

#### **2.4.6 Public Participation Plan:**

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) is to ensure that the transportation planning process encourages active public participation. The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the authorized entity that was established to conduct the federally-required transportation planning process in Mobile, Alabama. The PPP describes how the MPO incorporates the public into the process. Strategies for public involvement range from a technical memorandum to an outline, which at a minimum addresses the objectives of the public participation strategy, the target communities, and the public participation techniques used. They may take the form of press releases, public notices, fliers, workshops, and outreaches. The public participation strategy is documented as part of the plan, or separately, in the scope of services document. This document requires a 45-day public review period.

#### **2.4.7 Air Quality Conformity Report:**

In the event that Mobile County is determined to be in non-conformity for ground-level ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), or any other pollutant, based on monitoring data and information provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), the MPO will be required to take the necessary steps in documenting a process for attaining Air Quality Conformity. These measures include preparing amendments to the Long-Range Plan, the existing TIP, and preparing a separate Air Quality Conformity Report, which provides pollutant estimates based on pollutant budgets from ADEM's Statewide Implementation Plan (SIP).

The documentation is supported by a public participation process, which is later published as a separate document along with the amended documents above. The document, which might be entitled Public Involvement for Air Quality Conformity (date), or similar, would provide information on all MPO public involvement efforts, such as public meetings, hearings, other outreach, mail outs, email and letter correspondence, and subsequent MPO responses to all public inquiry during the AQ Conformity process.

### **3.0 Roles and Relationships**

#### **3.1 MPO Staff**

MPO staff is provided by South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, located at 110 Beauregard Street, Mobile, (251) 433-6541, FAX 433-6009. Personnel are available during the office hours of 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday to respond to questions regarding the Mobile Area Transportation Study, either by telephone or in person. Staff is available to make presentations to the public upon request. The MPO staff handles all of the daily MPO work, organizes and conducts all of the MPO meetings, and prepares all of the MPO documents. The MPO does not have a designated public information officer but instead divides the public involvement work between the staff members. The following work tasks are the public participation activities conducted by the MPO staff.

1. Prepare the Public Participation Plan
2. Track public participation in the MPO process
3. Maintain MPO public participation records
4. Maintain MPO mail/email databases for committee members; media contacts; organizations

that work with low-income, minorities, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens; and the general public (by request)

5. Conduct MPO committee meetings.
6. Conduct MPO public meetings related to documents and programs
7. Ensure MPO meetings follow the bylaws, Public Participation Plan strategies, and ADA requirements
8. Prepare responses to public input
9. Publish MPO documents (paper and Internet)
10. Maintain the MPO website
11. Make public presentations regarding the MPO process
12. Prepare news releases
13. Prepare legal ads
14. Encourage the publication of MPO newspaper articles
15. Email blasts to keep public informed.

### **3.1.1 MPO Committees**

The Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is composed of four committees. The Policy Committee is the official decision-making body of the process. The Policy Committee is served by three advisory committees: a joint Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (BPAC).

The MPO committee meetings are an important part of the public participation process. The meetings are held as needed and are advertised through public notices, mailed and e-mailed notices, and internet postings. All MPO committee meetings are open to the public and anyone who attends an MPO meeting is allowed to participate in committee discussions.

The Policy Committee consists of elected officials as determined by the MPO Bylaws. The engineers, planners, and alternative transportation providers make up the bulk of the TCC membership. The MPO members appoint the members to the CAC. The BPAC is made up of concerned citizens as well as planners and engineers. The CAC and BPAC committees play a significant role in public participation. Their roles is to make recommendations regarding transportation plans and services to the MPO from the citizens' perspective

## **3.2 Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT)**

The ALDOT central office in Montgomery provides general oversight of the MPO program. ALDOT prepares the MPO agreements, reviews MPO documents, processes the MPO invoices, and ensures that the MPO addresses all of the federal transportation planning requirements. ALDOT also is responsible for developing the State TIP (STIP) and Long-Range Transportation Plan. The process to develop these documents involves coordinating the required public involvement activities with the MPOs in the state. The Planning Bureau has a voting member on the MPO's Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC). The second section of ALDOT involved with the MPO is the ALDOT Southwest Region. ALDOT has divided the 67 Alabama counties into nine divisions. The Southwest Regions is responsible for ten counties in south Alabama, including Mobile County. The Southwest Region has a voting member on the TCC and the Policy Committee. Regarding public participation, the Southwest Region often responds to requests for information. They also hold public hearings/meetings for individual federal-funded highway projects.

### **3.3 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**

FHWA and FTA are not directly involved in public participation, but will review all draft and final docs listed plus the BPP, PPP, CMP, and AQ Conformity Report. Of the documents, EPA will review the Long Range, TIP, and the AQ Conformity Report for MPOs designated as non-conforming. If the Mobile MPO is so designated, there will probably be a separate document required for Public Involvement for Air Quality Conformity, such as prepared by Birmingham. Each of these agencies has a voting member on the TCC.

## **4.0 Documentation**

Documentation allows the MPO to determine where it is expending its efforts in public participation, how effective the efforts have been, and where the MPO might improve.

### **4.1 Public Participation Activities and Outreach**

#### **4.1.1 Photographic and Audio Records**

Recordings of all MPO Policy Board, TCC/CAC, and BPAC meetings are made. In the past, recordings were made on cassette tape and the tapes were kept. Presently, recordings are made on a digital recorder and stored on a computer and back-up drive. During charettes or other public review meetings, photos are also taken.

#### **4.1.2 Attendance records**

A sign in sheet is kept for all meetings that are held. Meetings include public hearings as well as any committee meeting that is held.

#### **4.1.3 Summaries and Annual Reporting**

Progress reports are submitted to ALDOT biannually. This report includes information on public meetings, presentations, marketing campaigns, etc. that staff has completed. Also, public participation activities as part of a plan development (TIP, LRTP) is documented in the plan itself. The final plan states the public participation activities that were actually held, the response from the public, and the influence of public participation on the adopted plan. Annual reports of any public participation activities are developed.

#### **4.1.4 Phone Calls, Office Visits, US Mail, and Email**

In order to document contacts with the public by phone staff maintains a telephone log. Office visit logs are maintained by the SARPC receptionists at the main desk. To document contacts with the public through e-mail and U.S. mail, staff maintains an electronic or hard copy of the correspondence. Information is reported on the annual assessments of the effectiveness of public participation techniques.

## **5.0 Effectiveness of the Public Participation Process**

### **5.1 Why Assessment is Necessary**

The MPO must periodically assess the effectiveness of its public participation techniques to ensure the funds and time invested in public participation activities are successful. Informing, educating, involving, reaching out to, and improving the public participation process should be achieved as efficiently as possible. The MPO chose to set realistic objectives to monitor the Public Participation Plan. The MPO's performance objectives are to maximize the participation opportunities, to make the process as accessible and friendly as possible, and to minimize complaints regarding the process. The performance measures in section 5.3 were chosen with these ideas and objectives in mind.

### **5.2 Data Collection**

The MPO staff tracks the various inputs used by the performance measures throughout the year. Appendix C includes samples of different tracking tools.

### **5.3 Evaluation Criteria (or Indicators), Performance Objectives, and Strategies**

In order to assess effectiveness, for each public participation technique, the following should be established: evaluation criteria or indicators, a performance objective, and strategies to achieve the performance objective. The assessments are related to achieving the following objectives of public participation: informing, involving, and reaching out to the public.

### **5.4 Continuing Assessment**

The MPO staff will review the Public Participation Plan with respect to changes in local, state and federal legislation and in terms of their effectiveness in assuring that the process provides full and open access to the public. This review will be completed annually for the prior fiscal year. The current procedures will be assessed with respect to their success in meeting the performance requirements specified in the appropriate regulations pertaining to metropolitan system planning, project development, and/or certification reviews. The review will include the number of comments/responses received, citizen attendance at meetings, the number of citizens who actually review the documents distributed throughout the region, and the amount spent on public notices and advertisements. The results of this review will be summarized in a written report and presented to the MPO upon completion. If the MPO determines that the public involvement program is inadequate, additional involvement techniques will be developed and utilized; this might include alternate or new media resources. Should the MPO determine that it is necessary to revise these procedures; a 45-day notification/comment period will be given prior to MPO adoption of the proposed modifications.

The following procedures will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the methods and goals listed in this document:



**Table 1****Assessment of Effectiveness of the PI Techniques to Achieve Informing the Public Objective**

PI Techniques	Indicator	Performance Objective	Strategies to Achieve Performance Objective
1. Memo to local governments (posted for public viewing)	Number of memos posted	Increase/maintain the percentage of people who have attended a meeting as the result of seeing the memo	Determine recipient. Discuss posting location and visibility to public. Consider redesign of the memo. Determine if memo is posted in a timely manner.
2. Press releases	How many appeared in local papers and/or on radio	Increase/maintain percentage of people who have attended a meeting or event as the result of hearing/seeing a press release	Contact local news media. Discuss changes to get more air time/news space.
3. Distribution of agendas	Agenda distributed in timely manner	Increase the percentage of people who have attended a meeting as the result of receiving agendas (with or without enclosures)	Offer to add interested persons to the list of parties who receive agendas.
5. Announcements on internet	Website tracking, number of views	Increase/maintain the number of hits know when an advertisement, flier, etc. is available to post on the web page.	

**Table 2****Assessment of Effectiveness of the PI Techniques to Achieve Educating the Public Objective**

PI Technique	Indicator	Performance Objective	Strategies to Achieve Performance Objective
1. Agenda packages	Feedback comments regarding agenda packages	No negative comments	Once each year, survey MPO members and committee members regarding agenda packages. As a result of comments, take action as needed.
3. Distribution of plans and summaries	Feedback comments regarding the plans or summaries	No negative comments	Try to get “early and often” public review of draft plans and provide a comment form for responses. When final plans or summaries are distributed, include a comment form. Consider comments for development of future plans and summaries.
4. Brochures	Brochures are picked up by people	Increase in number of brochures removed from display holders	Keep brochures current. Distribute brochures in places where the public can have access to them. Periodically, check on the status of the displays and replenish the supply of brochures as necessary. If brochures are not being picked up, then consider changing design of the brochure and locations of the displays. Encourage planners to take copies of the brochure when doing presentations.
5. Web page	Number of hits	Increase the number of hits	Keep information on web page current. Re-design website.

6. Newspaper articles or quotes	Appearance of newspaper articles or quotes by TPO members, committees or staff	Increase the number of newspaper articles or quotes by TPO members, committees, or staff	Contact news media about policies regarding submission of viewpoint articles. Maintain working relationship with news media so that they know the role of the TPO in transportation planning and who to contact.
7. Responding to office visits, phone calls, E-mail and U.S. mail	Number of inquiries received through visits, phone, E-mail and U.S. mail	Increase in inquiries from citizens or remain at reasonable number consistent with topical nature of	MPO staff document number of inquiries and topic.

**Table 3****Assessment of Effectiveness of the PI Techniques to Achieve the Involving the Public Objective**

PI Techniques	Indicator	Performance Objective	Strategies to Achieve Performance Objective
1. MPO Meetings	Public attendance at MPO meetings	Increase/maintain public attendance at TPO meetings	Look at the time and location. Look at accessibility of meeting room. Review meeting announcements for timeliness, clarity, and distribution. Consider redesign of meeting announcements. Develop an e- mail distribution list for interested parties to send meeting announcements
2. Committee meetings	Public attendance at MPO committee meetings	Increase/maintain public attendance at MPO committee meetings	Canvass community groups for representatives. Ask MPO members to appoint additional CAC members.
3. Public hearings/forums	Public attendance at MPO public hearings/forums	Increase/maintain public attendance at public hearing/forums	Look at time and location. Look at accessibility of meeting room. Review meeting announcements for timeliness, clarity, and distribution. Consider redesign of announcements.
4. Workshops	Public attendance at workshops	Increase/maintain public attendance at workshops.	Look at the time and location. Look at accessibility of meeting room. Review meeting announcements for timeliness, clarity, and distribution. Consider redesign of meeting announcements.
5. Surveys or comment forms	Number of comments	Increase in the number of comments	Make sure a survey or comment form is available at every event. Keep survey forms simple and

			quick to complete. Make sure they stand out. Make a generic survey available on the website
6. Presentations at community group meetings.	Number of presentations to community groups.	Increase in number of presentations to community groups.	Send notifications to community groups by letter or e-mail. Telephone contacts of community groups.
7. Outreach events	Number of people attending outreach events.	Increase in the number of people attending outreach events.	Staff develops a network of contacts for outreach events. Staff schedule and organize outreach events in neighborhoods. Keep a sign-in sheet of attendees.
8. Charrettes	Public attendance at charrettes	Increase in public attendance at charrettes	Review announcements. Look at meeting time and location. Look at accessibility. Redesign announcements if necessary. Keep a sign-in sheet at charrette.

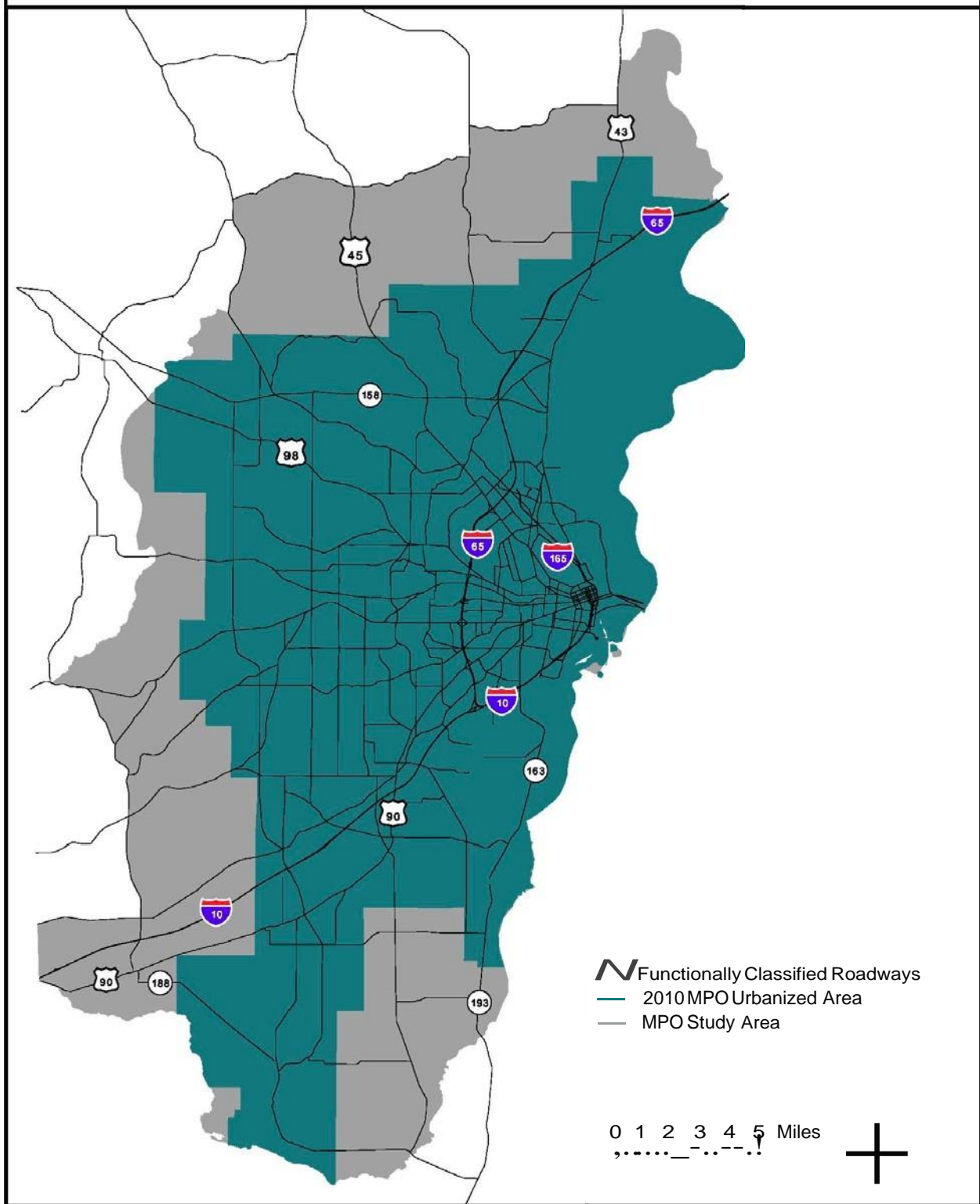


## Appendix A

### Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization Abbreviations and Acronyms

3-C	Cooperative, Continuous, Comprehensive
AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
AARC	Alabama Association of Regional Commissions
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADEM	Alabama Department of Environmental Management
ADSS	Alabama Department of Human Services
ALDOT	Alabama Department of Transportation
AMPO	Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CAC	Citizen Advisory Committee
CHSTP	Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan
CMP	Congestion Management Process
DBE	Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
DR	Designated Recipient
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERH	Emergency Ride Home
FAST Act	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GIS	Geographic Information System
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
JARC	Job Access and Reverse Commute
LRTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century
MATS	Mobile Area Transportation Study
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act 1969
NCHRP	National Cooperative Highway Research Program
OFLT	Office for Freight, Logistics, & Transportation
PPP/PIP	Public Participation Plan/Public Involvement Plan or Process
PMP	Program Management Plan
POP	Program of Projects
SAFETEA-LU	Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy of Users
SARPC	South Alabama Regional Planning Commission
SPR	State Planning and Research
TAP	Transportation Alternatives Program
TAZ	Traffic Analysis Zone
TCC	Technical Coordination Committee
TDP	Transit Development Plan
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan
TRB	Transportation Research Board
TSM	Transportation System Management
UAH	University of Alabama Huntsville
UCP	Unified Certification Plan
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled

# 2010 MPO Urbanized Area





## Appendix C

The following is a list of the sixteen (16) voting members of the Metropolitan Planning Organization:

- A. The mayors of each of the cities or town located within the Mobile Area Transportation Study (MATS): City of Mobile, City of Prichard, City of Saraland, City of Chickasaw, City of Satsuma, Town of Creola, City of Bayou La Batre, City of Semmes
- B. The Southwest Region Engineer, Alabama Department of Transportation
- C. The general manager of the Wave Transit System
- D. Two (2) representatives of the Mobile City Council, selected by the Mayor of Mobile
- E. One (1) member of the full commission of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, to be selected by the Executive Director of SARPC
- F. One (1) representative from the Mobile County Commission, selected by the Mobile County Commission
- G. The Mobile County Engineer
- H. One (1) representative of the Prichard City Council, selected by the Mayor of Prichard.

The following is a list of the non-voting members of the Metropolitan Planning Organization:

- A. The Local Transportation Bureau Chief for the Alabama Department of Transportation
- B. The Executive Director of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission
- C. The Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration, Alabama Division

## Appendix D

### Livability Principles and Indicators

#### 1) **Provide more transportation choices**

Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.

##### Indicators

- Percentage of workforce using transit service:  
Minimum: 0.17%, Maximum: 8.02%, Average: 1.56 %
- Fixed route transit trips per capita: 3.33
- Average vehicle miles traveled per household:  
Minimum: 13,740.57, Maximum: 28,660.79, Average: 19,717.61

#### 2) **Promote equitable, affordable housing**

Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.

##### Indicator

- Percentage of household income spent on housing and transportation:  
Minimum: 34.28%, Maximum: 104.42 %, Average: 56.79%
- Average transportation costs per household:  
Minimum: \$10,594.46, Maximum: \$17,812.90, Average: \$13,462.11

#### 3) **Enhance economic competitiveness**

Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.

##### Indicator

- Percent of housing units located within 0.5 miles of primary employment centers: 51%

#### 4) **Support existing communities**

Target federal funding toward existing communities – through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling – to increase community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.

##### Indicators

- Percentage of LRTP funding that will be used to improve existing facilities: 52%

#### 5) **Coordinate policies and leverage investment**

Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.

##### Indicator

- Percent of transportation projects where more than one federal funding source is utilized:  
0%

**6) Value communities and neighborhoods**

Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods – rural, urban or suburban.

Indicator

- Percentage of housing units within a 0.25 mile of major retail service areas: 67 %
- Percentage of housing units within a 0.25 mile of recreational facilities: 28%
- Automobile greenhouse gas emissions per household: 8.57 tonnes/year

\*Data Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, The Wave Transit, Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT)



## **Appendix E**

### **Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

##### **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this plan is to document how the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission integrates people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) into the transportation planning process. The transportation department of SARPC is the staff of the Mobile MPO which is the official decision-making body of the transportation planning process and determines how federal highway and transit funds are spent in the Mobile Urban Area. This plan includes an assessment of the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population and how SARPC will address the potential needs of this population.

##### **1.2 Laws and Regulations**

Entities that receive federal funding must follow Section 601 of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d. The Act states that no person shall "on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." To strengthen Title VI, Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, was issued on August 11, 2000. The order requires federal agencies that distribute financial assistance to non-federal entities to publish guidance detailing how the non-federal entities can provide meaningful access to LEP persons. The U.S. Department of Transportation released their LEP guidance on December 14, 2005.

##### **1.3 Public Involvement**

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission Board of Directors adopted the Mobile MPO Public Participation LEP Plan at their September 16, 2013 meeting.

Prior to this the availability of the draft plan was advertised through news releases to the local media and agencies and groups that work with minorities, low income people, persons with disabilities, and elderly individuals. The draft plan was published on the Mobile MPO's website From July 17, 2013 to September 4, 2013 and was also available at the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission offices during the same dates at 110 Beauregard Street, Mobile, Alabama.

The draft plan was discussed at the September 4, 2013 MPO committee meeting. The MPO accepted comments on the plan from July 18, 2013 until September 3, 2013.

Comments could have been submitted in person at the MPO offices and by postal mail, e-mail, fax, and telephone.

The LEP was updated in January of 2021 and out for public review in January and February of 2021 to be adopted by the Mobile MPO in March 2021 and the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission.

#### **2.0 Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Assessment**

The U.S. Department of Justice, in their *Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons*, published a four-factor assessment to determine a federal funding

recipient's obligation to provide LEP services. The four factors are:

- (1) The number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service population
- (2) The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program
- (3) The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program
- (4) The resources available to the recipient and costs

The Department of Justice indicated that the analysis is intended to balance meaningful access for LEP people against imposing undue burdens on small local governments.

### **2.1 The Number or Proportion of LEP Persons Served or Encountered in the Eligible Service Population**

The eligible service population figures were taken from U.S. Census Bureau estimates for Mobile County. Based on the 2019 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, there are 386,912 people in Mobile County who are five years and older. Of this group 369,094 (95.39%) speak only English. The four most common other languages spoken at home are Spanish 7,576 (1.96%), Other Indo-European languages 2,982 (0.77%), Asian and Pacific Islander languages 5,375(1.39%), and Other 1,885(0.48%). The following table provides the estimates for each of these languages and the estimates of people who speak English less than very well.

Language Spoken at Home	Estimated Number	Estimated Number Who Speak English Less Than Very Well
Spanish	7,576	2,635
Indo-European	2,982	758
Asian & Pacific	5,375	2,559
Other	1,885	634

2019 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates

### **2.2 The Frequency of Contact with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) People**

The SARPC Transportation Department has reviewed the past frequency with which it has come in contact with LEP persons. Over the past 20 years the SARPC Transportation staff has not had any contact with anyone who did not speak English very well. Over that same period, no individual or group has requested the SARPC Transportation Department to provide an interpreter or to translate a document. Future interaction with LEP people is expected to be infrequent and unpredictable.

### **2.3 The Importance of the Program to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) People**

There is a significant LEP population within the MPO Planning Area with the largest concentration being in the City of Bayou La Batre and the City of Mobile (see attached maps). The MPO provides a number of services that have the possibility of placing the staff or board members in contact with LEP persons. The most important service that the MPO provides that could bring the MPO into contact with LEP persons is the public involvement process for transportation planning. While the MPO does

not foresee significant contact with LEP persons, the possibility is still there and will need to be addressed.

## **2.4 Resources Available to the MPO Recipient and the Costs of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Services**

The SARPC Transportation Department currently has 4 full-time employees. Less than eight percent of the SARPC Transportation Budget annual work program budget is available for non-staff related charges.

### **3.0 Staff Training**

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission will provide the following training to MPO staff:

- Information on MPO responsibilities for LEP and Title VI policy
- Detailed descriptions of language assistance services provided to the public
- How to document language assistance requests
- How to handle potential Title VI/LEP complaints

This information will be given to all MPO staff members with no exceptions.

The cost to provide interpretation and translation services vary greatly depending on the frequency and volume of work as well as the methods used.

Despite its financial limitations, SARPC is committed to maintaining an open and inclusive planning process that allows LEP people to participate. The SARPC, working within its budget, will implement the most cost-effective methods for interpretation and translation work based on requests and expected demand.

### **4.0 Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Program Monitoring and Updating the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan**

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission will monitor the interaction with LEP people. If problems with the LEP Plan are discovered, the staff will recommend that the document be amended. The MPO Policy Committee can amend the plan after the public is given an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed amendment. The LEP Plan will be updated every five years.

The update will involve the following elements:

- Verification of the LEP population in the Mobile Urbanized Study Area
- Counting past encounters with LEP people
- Determination of any changes to MPO activities that might affect LEP people
- Research of new sources and methods of interpretation and translation services
- Verification of current sources and methods of interpretation and translation services
- Reviewing past interaction with LEP people to determine if changes are warranted
- Staff review of LEP plan responsibilities

### **5.0 Dissemination of the SARPC Transportation Department/Mobile MPO LEP Plan**

After the adoption of the Mobile MPO LEP Plan by the Policy Board, the document will be posted on the department website (<http://www.mobilempo.org>). Copies of this document may be obtained by contacting the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission Transportation Department:

By US Mail:

P.O. Box 1665

Mobile, AL 36633

By Fax:

(251) 433-6009

By Telephone:

(251)433-6541

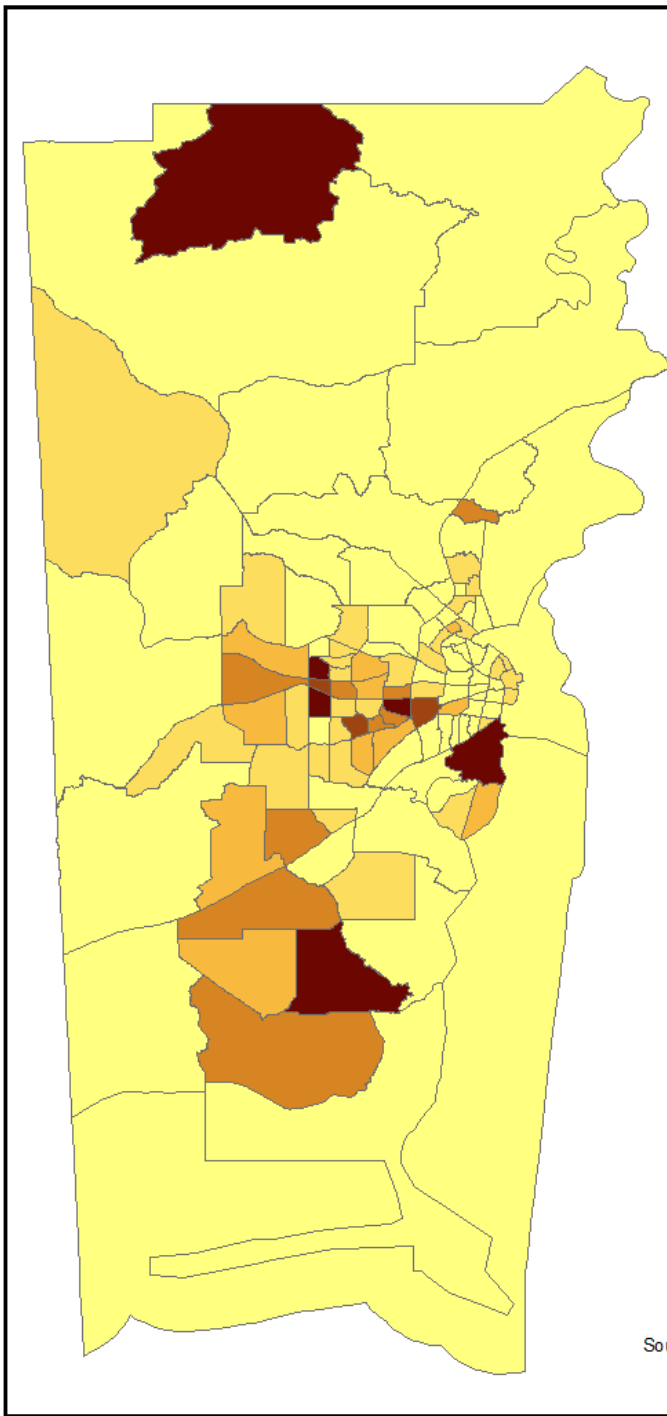
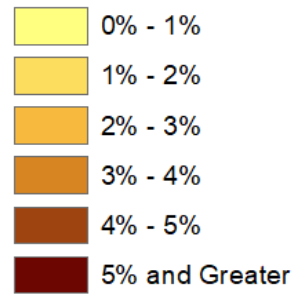
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transportation@sarpc.org

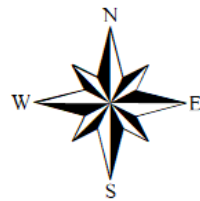


# People That Speak English Less Than Very Well

## Percentage



South Alabama Regional  
Planning Commission  
January 15, 2021



Source: 2019 American Community Survey  
5 - Year Estimates





