

APPROVED 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan(LRTP) Public Outreach Activities

Introduction

The Community Engagement and Equity Plan (CEEP) for the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) was adopted on June 21, 2021. This document directed the public involvement activities for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act¹, also called the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, retains the following public participation requirements of MAP-21²: 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.

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) places emphasis on extensive stakeholder participation. Highlights of the CFR requirements for public participation include the following:

- Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points;
- Employing visual techniques;
- Making information accessible in various formats and means;
- Holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- Seeking out and considering needs of traditionally underserved populations;
- Coordinating with statewide transportation planning public participation and consultation processes; and
- Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies in the Participation Plan.

With public involvement being a key study element in the success of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) committed itself to pursue a proactive public outreach effort throughout the development of the Plan.

¹ Public Law 117-58 117th Congress, November 15, 2021 (<https://www.congress.gov/117/plaws/publ58/PLAW-117publ58.pdf>)

² MAP-21, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/>)

Outreach Activities

FAMPO developed an outreach plan to effectively reach both the general population and also to target those specific populations within the resources available. Public outreach efforts focused on soliciting community involvement in order to maximize awareness and provide a forum for public participation in order to build support and gain public input for the Plan. It provided early and ongoing opportunities to share information, bring together varied points of view, and obtain input from diverse stakeholders. Critical points in the study were identified to allow focused public input and gauge support for study recommendations.

As part of the effort to ensure environmental justice, special attention was given to encourage participation from a wide array of stakeholders, including representation from traditionally underserved, low-income, and minority communities within the FAMPO area. Similarly, the MPO strives to include the elderly and disabled population in planning efforts in the FAMPO Region. Input from all segments of the population and all neighborhoods in the community are critical to effective transportation planning. The specific efforts developed and implemented as part of the LRTP outreach plan are detailed below.

In the fall of 2020, FAMPO Staff worked on early outreach efforts for the 2050 LRTP. These efforts included conducting a survey, designed by the Technical Advisory Committee, Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee, and FAMPO staff. The goal of this survey was to develop the Region's new transportation goals and objectives. The survey was live from November 2020 to December 2020 and had over 330 responses. The survey was distributed via a press release, informative videos, social media ads and posts, a feature in the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) newsletter and website, over 470 emails, flyers at libraries, breweries, and cafes, in-person outreach at FREDericksburg Regional Transit (FRED) Central and on FRED buses, and lastly with a Facebook Live collaboration with Healthy Generations Area Agency on Aging's (HGAAA) FRED Travel Trainer. The goals and objectives developed from this survey were approved by the Policy Committee on February 22, 2021.

In the beginning of 2021, a survey was developed to gain an understanding of how the public was interacting with the transportation network. The FAMPO Transportation Improvements Survey was live between May 25, 2021 and June 18, 2021 and was the most successful survey effort undertaken by FAMPO. To promote the survey various tabling events were hosted at regional farmers markets and FRED Central, flyers and posters were placed on FRED buses, libraries, bars, restaurant lobbies, and distributed to the ten largest companies in the region. Additionally, the three FAMPO jurisdictions sent mass emails to their staff members to complete the survey. Lastly, the survey was promoted twice in the Free Lance Star, a local news outlet, and four times on the radio News Talk 1230am – VFVA. Overall, 1,060 participants completed the survey and the results were incorporated into the chapters of the 2050 LRTP.

In the summer of 2021, a public involvement effort was conducted for the 2050 Fiscally Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP), which is a fiscally constrained list of transportation projects expected to be implemented or constructed by 2050. The public engagement effort began in October 2021 and ended in September 2021 with FAMPO Policy Board approval of the project list. In total eight comments were received in relation to the draft list.

Contact Database

The contact database contains over 2,000 individuals and organizations throughout the FAMPO Region which consists of the counties of Stafford County, Spotsylvania County, and the City of Fredericksburg. The database included representation from all segments of the population. The contact database also includes State and Federal contacts and Title VI leaders in our Region.

Compilation Methodology

The objective of the database was to be inclusive as possible. Existing databases such as the following were compiled and expanded:

- Business organizations and councils;
- County and City planning boards, board of commissioners;
- County and City diversified mailing lists; and
- Cultural, business, and advocacy organizations

Research Techniques

A variety of local, state and federal organizations, agencies, alliances, and advocacy groups were identified using web-based searches, existing database membership lists and personal contacts within the FAMPO area. Some of the information sources include:

- Websites;
- Local mainstream newspapers;
- Chamber of Commerce;
- Ethnic grocery stores; and
- Business alliances.

Database Structure

The database features a form for easy entry and allows for a number of queries that include, but not limited to the following:

- Business, civic and community groups; and
- Environmental Justice and traditionally under-served contacts.

Future Use

The purpose of the database is not only to meet FAMPO’s immediate needs, but also to serve as a foundation for an evolving and expanding database for any FAMPO activity including future LRTP updates.

A Summary of Public Comments Draft

The 2050 LRTP Summary of Public Comments Draft was virtually distributed during the FAMPO Committee meetings.

Media Outreach

The local news media was contacted to help disseminate information.

Newspaper Articles

One newspaper article was published by the Free Lance Star.

Date	Article
February 13, 2022	GETTING THERE: Jan. 3 storm left 300,000 cubic yards of debris along Fredericksburg area roads / Future of LOCAL transportation ³

Electronic Email Notifications

Approximately 390 emails were sent to the FAMPO mailing list. The emails directed the recipients to the draft LRTP webpage for ways to provide comments and to make note of the public comment period and upcoming public hearing dates.

Public Comments

FAMPO staff received sixteen (16) public comments during the final draft stage of the 2050 LRTP of which each recipient received an appreciation e-mail.

Social Media

FAMPO utilized Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to disseminate the information. The Facebook posts were shared by various organizations.

³ ...Two years in the making, the new draft of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan has details on “our region’s long-range transportation vision” and about 350 projects that could become reality in the next few decades. Through Feb. 28, the public has a chance to send in comments that could help planners finalize the draft. The plan can be found on FAMPO’s website...

Websites

The FAMPO website is the hub of FAMPO information. A dedicated webpage was made which included the draft document, ways to provide comments, an electronic comment form, educational videos, a GIS Storybook presentation of the LRTP data, an Interactive Map of Projects, thirty (30) maps in PDF format, project lists, and information if the public needed assistance during the public hearing. News was blasted on the home page, public notices page and various other locations on the website. The George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC) website also housed the public notice. The Fredericksburg Today web newsletter posted this article on March 5, 2022:

*Fredericksburg Metropolitan Planning Organization has two public comment opportunities*⁴

Involvement of Minorities and the Traditionally Underserved Groups

The traditionally underserved are those that have greater difficulty getting to places in their community, such as jobs, schools, recreation and shopping than the population at large. Examples of the traditionally underserved include persons with disabilities, low income, minority groups and the older adult population. As part of the CEEP, a Title VI Community Resources Directory has been incorporated as a significant outreach tool for FAMPO. This Directory includes regional Title VI Community leaders of our region including persons with limited English proficiency. The draft information was sent to Title VI recipients using e-mails to church groups and setting up a table at the Lawrence A. Davies Transit Center (FRED Central).

Agency Letters

Agency letters were sent to Federal and State agencies to request comment, and received three (3) responses.

Public Hearing

Two public hearings were held during the Policy Committee meetings on February 28th and March 28th, 2022.

⁴ Fredericksburg Metropolitan Planning Organization has two public comment opportunities (March 5, 2022) https://fredericksburg.today/2022/03/05/fredericksburg-metropolitan-planning-organization-has-two-public-comment-opportunities/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=fredericksburg-metropolitan-planning-organization-has-two-public-comment-opportunities&utm_source=Fredericksburg.Today&utm_campaign=f578ea3ef2-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a9bca0da24-f578ea3ef2-362561210&mc_cid=f578ea3ef2&mc_eid=7c1888f829