

01 Public Involvement Plan

I. Introduction

Background

In the fall of 2007 the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization initiated the Northeast Corridor Mobility Study to analyze and recommend appropriate transportation improvements within a 30 mile corridor. Recognizing the significance of the Northeast Corridor the study recommendations will provide options to serve existing and future travel markets within the context of the greater Nashville area.

To ensure that the mobility needs of the community are addressed, the project team will focus on the following issues:

- How do various growth scenarios inform demand for specific land uses such as residential, office, commercial and retail?
- What mix of transportation investments will most effectively meet the demand resulting from potential growth scenarios?
- What is the most appropriate mix of future land uses in the study area that encourage (and maximize the use of) specific transportation modes like bus rapid transit or commuter rail?
- What potential benefits and costs are there to local, state, and federal governmental entities including transit service providers?
- What are the fundamental economic connections among, and associated advantages of, land use planning, real estate development and various transportation-related initiatives such as joint development, transit-oriented development (TOD), transit-adjacent development (TAD), and other mechanisms?

Discussions surrounding these issues will lead the development of the evaluation criteria and methodology. The criteria will be based on current understanding of issues within the study area and throughout the region, and the transportation needs expressed by local decision-makers and representatives of local transit agencies.

We will develop a corridor vision that will consist of all ideas proposed by stakeholders, public and planning agencies. The study purpose and need will be crafted and screened

through a qualitative analysis in regard to their suitability and applicability. Mobility alternatives will be identified and evaluated using a two step process, an initial qualitative analysis and a final quantitative analysis.

Planning Process

Reaching a broad consensus among key stakeholders is an essential element to ensuring a successful outcome. It is important that all stakeholders who live, work and have an interest in the corridor are informed throughout the project, given many opportunities to provide input, and made aware that the project team is mindful of their issues. Providing continuous opportunities for meaningful dialogue with stakeholders, agencies, decision-makers and the public allows for collaboration and interaction between all entities.

This Public Involvement Plan outlines how and when the project team will inform and involve the public and stakeholders of the Northeast Corridor Mobility Study. It is the goal that the public's vision for the corridor be communicated to help focus on the issues, visualize the corridor's potential, evaluate alternatives in the context of market realities, and provide a menu of actions to realize plan implementation. This can be successfully achieved by techniques to engage the public and keep them informed on a continuous basis. Through committees, workshops, and various outreach methods, the project team will conduct extensive public involvement activities to ensure that input from stakeholders and the public are ongoing.

II. Level of Public Involvement

The planning team is committing to a clearly defined level of public involvement. This is important because it helps public stakeholders know how much influence they are able to have over the content of the Northeast Corridor Mobility Study. Identifying the planned level of public involvement also helps set the public participation objectives for the project. In short, committing to a specific level of involvement helps the planning team be mindful of their objective while developing the Public Involvement Plan. The goal is to identify mobility alternatives for the Northeast Corridor that reflects the community's desires, as well as the professional expertise and knowledge of the planning team.

III. Public Involvement Objectives

The following table illustrates how the planning team will involve the public during major decisions of the study. On the left side of the table is a list of decisions and direction-setting events to address while developing the Mobility Study. In the center of the table is a corresponding public

participation objective for each decision. On the right side of the table are public participation methods the planning team intends to use to achieve this objective. At each stage of the plan, we will work to achieve the corresponding public participation objective and so ensure that the public is adequately involved.

TABLE 1 - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OBJECTIVES		
Decision Event	Public Involvement Obejctives	Planned Public Involvement Methods
How to involve different stakeholder groups.	Identify the public participation mechanisms that are most suitable for different stakeholder groups. Identify preferred meeting times, locations, and structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with local staff • One on One Stakeholder Interviews • Corridor Workshop 1 and 2 • Character District Workshops/Charettes • Draft Plan Presentation
Initiation of the Northeast Corridor Mobility Study.	Increase awareness of the Northeast Corridor Mobility Study in the community. Identify and contact stakeholder representatives from major stakeholder groups. Educate stakeholders about the purpose of the Mobility Study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick Off Meeting • NE Corridor Mobility Study Website • Newspapers, Flyers & Handouts
Identify and define Character Districts and desired development types for each Character District.	Develop Character Districts that reflect the neighborhood identities of corridor residents. Educate stakeholders on urban design issues. Work with stakeholder groups to develop an urban design vision for each Character District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character District Workshops/Charettes • Small Focus Groups • Audience Response Survey (ARS)
Develop Vision Statement and Identify Community Issues and Opportunities.	Work with multiple stakeholder groups to help them articulate a long term vision, issues, and opportunities for the Northeast Corridor. Develop a sense of community ownership of the community's vision. Educate stakeholders on their responsibility in realizing the vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character District Workshops/Charettes • Small Focus Groups • Audience Response Survey (ARS) • Publicity of community vision

IV. Preliminary Stakeholder Groups and Issues

Stakeholders living and working within the corridor are the most important target audience for the project. Stakeholders and public entities will be identified and include major employers, universities, elected officials, business leaders, non-profits, and residents within the corridor. Other stakeholders that must be considered are the underrepresented populations such as disabled, minority, and low-income groups. Where the underrepresented populations live and work will be identified to best incorporate their participation in the study and allow the project team to appropriately disseminate information to them.

Stakeholder interviews will be conducted to identify the concerns of different stakeholders groups within the corridor and pinpoint the issues facing their areas. Stakeholder interviews will be identified with the assistance of the steering committee. Additional stakeholder concerns will be integrated into the Public Involvement Plan throughout the planning process. This table provides a useful preview of different stakeholder groups and will include their areas of concern.

TABLE 2 - PRELIMINARY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS AND ISSUES

Stakeholder Group	Issues of Concern	Public Participation Needs
Elected Officials	TBD	TBD
Minority Organizations	TBD	TBD
Neighborhood Groups	TBD	TBD
Major Employers	TBD	TBD
Small Business	TBD	TBD
Non-Profit	TBD	TBD
Religious Community	TBD	TBD
Seniors	TBD	TBD

V. Public Participation Methods

Summary of Meetings

A number of public meetings and workshops will be held to acquaint and inform the public and stakeholders of the Northeast Corridor Mobility Study.

Three committees will guide the study, facilitate quality input from the local stakeholders, and establish the consensus required to move the project forward:

1. Technical Advisory Committee
2. Steering Committee
3. Committee of Elected Officials

Involvement of the public and stakeholders is key to ensuring a project's success and that it meets the goals and objectives identified. Through traditional and innovative methods, the project team will utilize various tools and methods to present analysis and findings to capture the public's interest.

Outreach Tools

The following is a list of graphic tools and public outreach materials the project team will use to educate and disseminate information to the public and stakeholders:

- Character Preference Surveys will interactively engage the public audience about preferred development types, land uses, transportation options or other issues in the study corridor; including the Audience Response System (ARS).
- Character Area Boards will link a specific portion of the corridor with images of desired architectural styles, site layouts, and public realm elements.
- Before and After Images, will contrast an existing photo with a rendering of a redevelopment concept for the corridor.
- 3-D Simulation, will depict the physical, interactive relationships among buildings, open spaces, streets and people. The simulation tool will also show redevelopment opportunities. The images will be either static or animated.
- Multi-media video to showcase the familiar and unique images of the study area.
- Newsletters/news bulletins to disseminate project information and status.
- Project maps to graphically represent the data relating to the corridor including land uses, transportation nodes, demographic information, and areas of concern.
- Fact sheets will serve as a quick guide to the status of the studies technical development.
- PowerPoint presentations serve as a tool to present the technical data to stakeholders, and the public in a

format that is visual and easy to follow. The PowerPoint presentations will include interactive techniques to engage the meeting attendees.

- Poster boards will work in conjunction with PowerPoint presentations to show specific areas within the corridor in a larger scale.

Outreach Methods

In addition to key stakeholder and public meetings, all members of the community will receive information and be invited to provide input through a variety of non-meeting formats, such as:

- Traditional mailing list
- E-mail distribution list
- Telephone hotline
- Project website

To engage minority or mobility-challenged populations, specific focus groups will be set up by issue type (transportation, land use, etc.) or by minority group to provide opportunities for participation. Populations for whom English is a second language often are less comfortable attending, much less participating in English-led meetings. These populations will be identified as part of the public involvement plan with meetings set up in a familiar venue or neighborhood to solicit input.

As necessary, public outreach materials can include information in other languages for specific ethnic neighborhoods. For example, newsletters, public meeting notifications, comment cards, the website, etc., can have text in the necessary alternative languages that would instruct the reader to contact the hotline number for additional project information. Language interpreters can be made available to assist in discussions. Furthermore, outreach materials can be translated and language interpreters can be provided at the public meetings upon request.

Public outreach materials can be also be provided in large text or text only formats for the visually impaired, and sign language interpreters can assist at public meetings for the hearing-impaired. A TDD line will be listed on all outreach materials. The public meetings will be held in fully accessible facilities that are served by existing bus service.

Pro-active media relations will be undertaken when the public meeting is being conducted. News releases and media packages will be prepared. Newspaper articles and ads, as well as radio and television news spots, will be pursued; a media contact list and media clearinghouse will be maintained and updated. These media relations efforts will help to distribute

information and engage the community in the public meetings and project recommendations.

Materials and project information will also be made available at public libraries throughout the study corridor. This is to ensure that all members of the public have information available to them in a manner that is accessible.

To ensure that comments received from the study participants are addressed and incorporated into the decision-making process, a Public Comment Report will be provided and summaries will be incorporated into the Mobility Alternatives Report and the Final Report as described in later tasks. The summaries will document the outreach efforts, the comments received, and responses provided. All comments will be documented and maintained in the data and document control system.

V. Meeting Schedule

In addition, a series of nine public meetings will be held within the corridor.

1. Kick-off Meeting: November 14, 2007
2. Committee meetings: Ongoing
3. Stakeholder interview: Ongoing
4. Corridor Workshop 1: TBD
5. Field-Trip(s): TBD
6. Character District Workshops/Charettes: TBD
7. Corridor Workshop 2 : TBD
8. Draft Plan Presentation: November 1, 2008
9. Final Plan Presentation: January 12, 2009

This will ensure adequate opportunity for participation by all stakeholders throughout the corridor. Meetings to be held are as follows:

1. Stakeholder Kick-off Meeting

Timing

- Meeting held November 14, 2007.

Organizations/Departments in Attendance

- Tennessee DOT
- Local Planning Commissioners
- Local Elected Leadership
- Interested Citizens

Roles and Responsibilities

- Explain purpose of study.
- Present role in planning process.
- Lay out opportunities for public involvement.
- Introduce project goals and objectives.
- Present preliminary market analysis.

Meeting Details

- Powerpoint presentation giving overview of project and market analysis.

2. Committee Meetings

Timing

- Ongoing.

Proposed Target Audience

- Elected officials
- City representatives
- State DOT
- Chambers of Commerce

Roles and Responsibilities

- Explain the committees role in the planning process.
- Guide committee in decision making process and dissemination of information throughout their communities.
- Share presentation materials with the committee for feedback prior to public meetings.

Meeting Details

- Presentation materials and reports distributed to committee members for review and comment.

3. Stakeholder Interview Meetings

Timing

- Ongoing.

Proposed Target Audience

- Elected officials
- City representatives
- Non-profit organizations
- Chambers of commerce
- Minority organizations

Roles and Responsibilities

- Conduct up to 25 one-on-one or telephone interviews.
- Conduct fact-finding interviews with stakeholders to gather information on project issues.
- Identify organizations and individuals for interviews, with guidance from steering committee members,

- Encourage participation of stakeholders throughout process.

Meeting Details

- Preparation of questions for interviews covering area issues and concerns.
- Establish meeting dates and times convenient for stakeholder.

Media Details

- Not applicable.

4. Corridor Workshop 1

Timing

- Schedule March 25 - April 3, 2008

Proposed Target Audience

- Elected officials
- City representatives
- State DOT
- Chambers of Commerce
- Major employers
- Non-profit organizations
- Chambers of commerce
- Minority organizations
- Residents

Roles and Responsibilities

- Meet with stakeholders and the public to discuss desired outcomes of workshop.
- Prepare in detail the processes and tools to be used during the study process.
- Work interactively to present project Goals and Objectives:
 - Introduce public and stakeholders to the project.
 - Emphasize the concept of “planning for the future”
- Present trend scenario
 - Provide an overview of existing conditions in corridor.
 - Present outcomes of existing growth trends.
 - Compare past and 2030 and/or 2050 future year projections of growth on regional resources
 - Prepare visualizations of future sprawl, and general analysis of the strain on natural resources and public infrastructure
 - Future year indicators may include (VMT, acres of open space, infrastructure cost, etc.)
- Identify preliminary set of guiding principals and goals for the corridor.
 - Lead the public in discussions about their thoughts on the trend scenario predictions.
 - Facilitate an interactively discussion including graphic of corridor attribute, to answer (1) what aspects of the

natural / built environment are most important? (2) What areas should be preserved for future generations? (3) TBD

- Present Next Steps of Public Meetings
- Share the objectives of using the public's input to guide the development of a plan that reflects the land use and mobility needs of the corridor
- Present best practices of national alternative growth scenarios, share densities as they relate to streetscapes and transportation modes

Meeting Details

- Small Break-Out Groups
 - Maximum of 8-10 per group.
 - Provide leading questions to facilitate discussion.
 - Easel boards for recording participant comments.
- Workshop
 - Powerpoint presentation with overview of project and appropriate graphics.
 - Location should be conducted in a public or municipal building and ADA accessible.
 - Prepare announcements, agendas, questionnaires, and necessary graphic support and materials.

Media Details

- Newspapers
- Radio
- TV

5. Field-Trip(s)

Timing

- TBD

Proposed Target Audience

- Elected officials
- City representatives
- State DOT
- Chambers of Commerce

Roles and Responsibilities

- Organize up to two trips within the United States to tour successful transit facilities that incorporate land use and transportation developments in a manner that can be achieved in the Nashville Northeast Corridor.

Meeting Details

- TBD

Media Details

- Not applicable.

6. Character District Workshops/Charettes

Timing

- Up to 5 meetings scheduled for week of for the weeks of May 5 and May 12, 2008.

Proposed Target Audience

- Elected officials
- City representatives
- State DOT
- Chambers of Commerce
- Major employers
- Non-profit organizations
- Chambers of commerce
- Minority organizations
- Residents

Roles and Responsibilities (more detail to come)

- Facilitate meetings to:
 - Refine guiding principals and goals of corridor.
 - Elicit public's vision for growth to identify preferred land use and transportation scenarios.
- Lead interactive exercises.
 - Visioning
 - Audience Response Survey (ARS)
- Facilitate small break-out groups.

Meeting Details

- Small Break-Out Groups
 - Maximum of 8-10 per group.
 - Provide leading questions to facilitate discussion.
 - Easel boards for recording participant comments.
- Workshop
 - Powerpoint presentation with overview of project and appropriate graphics.
 - Location should be conducted in a public or municipal building and ADA accessible.

Media Details

- Newspapers
- Radio
- TV

7. Corridor Workshop 2

Timing

- Scheduled for August 25, 2008.

Proposed Target Audience

- Elected officials
- City representatives
- State DOT
- Chambers of Commerce
- Major employers
- Non-profit organizations
- Chambers of commerce
- Minority organizations
- Residents

Roles and Responsibilities (more detail to come)

- Meet with stakeholders and the public to discuss desired outcomes of workshop.
- Prepare in detail with guidance of steering committee the processes and tools to be used.
- Present in detail:
 - Results of character district charettes.
 - Demonstrate outcomes of growth scenarios identified at those charettes.
 - Build consensus for one or two preferred growth scenarios.
- Facilitate small break-out groups.
- Prepare announcements, agendas, questionnaires, and necessary graphic support and materials.

Meeting Details

- Small Break-Out Groups
 - Maximum of 8-10 per group.
 - Provide leading questions to facilitate discussion.
 - Easel boards for recording participant comments.
- Workshop
 - Powerpoint presentation with overview of project and appropriate graphics.
 - Location should be conducted in a public or municipal building and ADA accessible.

Media Details

- Newspapers
- Radio
- TV

8. Draft Plan Presentation

Timing

- Scheduled for November 1, 2008.

Proposed Target Audience

- Elected officials
- City representatives
- State DOT
- Chambers of Commerce
- Major employers
- Non-profit organizations
- Chambers of commerce
- Minority organizations
- Residents

Roles and Responsibilities (more detail to come)

- Present the draft plan and analysis findings.
- Obtain comments and feedback to be incorporated into final plan.

Meeting Details (more detail to come)

- Powerpoint presentation.
- Display boards for display at public locations.

Media Details

- Newspapers
- Radio
- TV

Meeting Details

- Powerpoint presentation.
- Display boards for display at public locations.
- Handout materials consisting of project information and findings.

Media Details

- Newspapers
- Radio
- TV

9. Final Plan Presentation

Timing

- Scheduled for January 12, 2009.

Proposed Target Audience

- Elected officials
- City representatives
- State DOT
- Chambers of Commerce
- Major employers
- Non-profit organizations
- Chambers of commerce
- Minority organizations
- Residents

Roles and Responsibilities (more detail to come)

- Present the final plan and analysis findings.
- Obtain comments and feedback to be incorporated into final plan.

Appendix A

Steering Committee

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Appendix B

Stakeholders

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