

DOWN EAST RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RPO)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

July 2003

Approved by Down East RPO Rural Transportation Advisory Committee, July 22, 2003.

Revised by Down East RPO Rural Transportation Advisory Committee, March 28, 2006

Lynda Clay, Chairman, Down East RPO - RTAC

Judy Hills, Interim Secretary, Down East RPO - RTAC

**Down East RPO
233 Middle Street, 3rd Floor
New Bern, NC 28560
252.638.3185**

I. Purpose

A primary goal of the Down East Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RPO) is to provide a forum for public participation in the rural transportation planning process. The purpose of the Down East RPO Public Involvement Plan (Plan) is to attain this goal by providing guidance and policy in engaging the public in the transportation planning process. Through our philosophy and in our daily practice, it will be the endeavor of the Down East RPO to actively seek comprehensive public input into our public transportation planning process. The Plan has the following objectives:

- Establish a well-informed public that contributes to transportation decision-making in a meaningful way
- Engage the public early and continuously in the transportation planning process
- Develop a public education program on Down East RPO activities
- Assist the Down East RPO in developing specific transportation projects that reflect the interest and needs of the community
- Gain the support and trust of the public
- Satisfy the requirements of N.C.G.S. § 136-212¹ regarding duties of a RPO

The Plan is not intended to preempt any public involvement activities conducted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) or any local governments within the Down East RPO region.

II. Forms of Public Involvement

A. Public Outreach

Public Outreach is the process of informing the public about the transportation planning process, specific transportation projects, and activities of the Down East RPO. Typical public outreach strategies include, but will not be limited to, the following:

¹ § 136-212. **Duties of Rural Transportation Planning Organizations.**

The duties of a Rural Transportation Planning Organization shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Developing, in cooperation with the Department, long-range local and regional multimodal transportation plans.
- (2) Providing a forum for public participation in the transportation planning process.
- (3) Developing and prioritizing suggestions for transportation projects the organization believes should be included in the State's Transportation Improvement Program.
- (4) Providing transportation-related information to local governments and other interested organizations and persons. (2000-123, s. 2.)

Identification of Stakeholders

A stakeholder is any person or group who is affected by a transportation plan, program, or project. Stakeholders may include:

- The general public
- Business/industry organizations
- Environmental organizations
- Neighborhood organizations
- Public agencies
- Civic organizations
- Transit providers
- Motor freight carriers
- Taxicab companies

Stakeholder groups will be identified and will be included on a mailing list for notices of public hearings, workshops, etc. Appendix A contains a maintained list of stakeholders.

Special Populations Inclusion

Down East Rural Transportation Planning Organization will actively seek opportunities for inclusion in the public involvement process for those groups or persons that may traditionally or historically not have been included or involved. Those groups or persons will include but not be limited to the following populations:

- Low income
- Elderly
- Disabled
- Minority
- ESL Population (Latino, among, other)
- Native American

Press Releases

Down East RPO will periodically issue press releases detailing significant actions of the RPO. These actions may include:

- Adoption of annual Planning Work Program
- Adoption of Long-Range Transportation Plan
- Election of officers
- Adoption of Project Priority Policy or other policies
- Adoption of Highway Project Priority List

All Press Releases shall be approved by either the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Down East RPO's Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) prior to issuance.

Appendix B contains a maintained list of newspaper contacts that will receive press releases.

Open Houses

Open houses will be held to provide information on transportation projects and Down East RPO activities to the public in an informal setting. Although open houses will have no fixed agendas or formal presentations, written materials will be provided and staff will give brief speeches introducing the public to technical planning concepts and the transportation planning process. RPO staff and committee members will be available to provide details and answer questions.

Posting of Draft and Final Planning Documents

Digital copies of draft and final versions of certain planning documents will be posted on the Eastern Carolina Council of Governments' website (www.eccog.org), and will be distributed to Down East RPO member governments for posting on individual county and town websites.

Notification of Meetings

Notification of Down East RPO meetings will be sent to various news media in the region. Where possible, transit companies may be used to distribute flyers/ announcements.

Appendix B contains a maintained list of media contacts that will receive meeting notification.

Presentations to Civic Organizations

Presentations will be made to interested civic organizations on Down East RPO activities, the transportation planning process in general, or specific transportation projects. Presentations will be made by Down East RPO staff and/or NCDOT staff. These organizations may include business or industry organizations, environmental organizations, neighborhood groups, or other stakeholders as identified in this Plan.

Special populations will be targeted through using minority media, key neighborhood leader interviews, social service contacts, provision of translation services, and provision of transportation, especially for the low-income, disabled or elderly populations, to reach citizens. Public Outreach activities to involve traditionally underserved populations may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Identifying areas in the Down East RPO region with concentrations of minority, elderly, and low-income populations through census data and local interviews
- Including organizations that deal directly with minority groups on the Stakeholder list
- Posting notification of meetings, public hearings, and open houses in County Health Departments and Senior Centers
- Publishing notification of meetings, public hearings, and open houses in Spanish
- Encouraging local planners or town staff to provide support to the RPO staff in communicating with civic and other organizations and special populations.

B. Public Input

Public Input is the process of gathering the views, opinions, and ideas of interested individuals and groups in the transportation planning process. Opportunities for public input provided by the Down East RPO include, but are not limited to, the following:

Public Comment at Regular Down East RPO Meetings

Down East RPO meetings are open to the public and provide opportunity for public comment. Each RPO meeting agenda shall contain a “Public Comment period” to receive comments made by persons attending the meeting.

Public Hearings

Public hearings will be held by the Down East RPO's Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) prior to taking formal action on specific planning documents. These actions may include:

- Adoption of annual Planning Work Program
- Adoption of Long-Range Transportation Plan
- Amendment to Long-Range Transportation Plan
- Adoption of Highway Project Priority List

Open Houses

Open houses will be held to provide information on transportation projects and Down East RPO activities to the public in an informal setting. The open houses also provide the public an opportunity to provide comments. Open houses will have no fixed agendas or formal presentations. Planning documents, project maps, and other transportation-related information will be displayed. RPO staff and committee members will be available to provide details and answer questions. Open houses will be publicized and will be held at times so as to accommodate the greatest number of potential participants.

Surveys

Surveys will be developed to gauge citizen opinion on specific transportation planning issues and/or projects. Surveys may also be used to gauge opinions of local transportation industry professionals, freight carriers or taxicab companies, for instance, regarding certain transportation projects. Survey content, method of distribution, and geographic target area will be dependent on the specific transportation planning issue or project.

Workshops

Workshops will be in the form of small group discussions used to gather views and opinions on a single transportation topic or project. The workshops will provide detailed information on the specific issue, and will allow for in-depth discussion by invited stakeholders, local

government officials, and citizens. Workshops will be publicly advertised and open to the general public.

III. Schedule of Public Involvement

A. Regular Public Involvement Opportunities

- Planning Documents - All documents, resolutions, meeting minutes, etc. adopted by the Down East RPO are kept at the Eastern Carolina Council of Governments (LPA) offices at 233 Middle Street, 3rd Floor, New Bern, NC. These documents will be made available for public review upon request.
- Meetings - Regular meetings of the Down East RPO's Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee (RTCC) and Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) are publicized in the media and open to the public, and will include opportunity for public comment.
- Public Hearings - Notification of all public hearings held by the Down East RPO will be sent to news media in the region.
- Press Releases - All press releases issued by Down East RPO will be sent to newspaper media in the region.

B. Public Involvement for Specific Activities

Public involvement strategies will vary depending on the particular issue or project for which public comment is desired. Typical actions for specific activities of the Down East RPO may include, but are not limited to:

1. Long-Range Transportation Plan

- Open House
- Workshops
- Regular Meetings of RTCC and RTAC
- Public Hearing
- Posting of Draft and Final Document
- Presentations to Civic Organizations

2. Prioritization of Projects for Recommendation to State's TIP

- Regular Meetings of RTCC and RTAC
- Public Hearing
- Posting of Draft and Final Document

3. Adoption of Planning Work Program

- Regular Meetings of RTCC and RTAC
- Public Hearing
- Posting of Draft and Final Document

4. Specific Projects/Issues

- Press Releases
- Workshops
- Regular Meetings of RTCC and RTAC
- Presentations to Civic Organizations
- Surveys

IV. Response to Public Input

Public involvement may be documented in a variety of ways. All comments received, both written and oral, during an official public meeting of the Down East RPO RTCC or RTAC will be included in the meeting minutes. Also, all comments received during a public hearing held by the Down East RPO RTAC will be included in the hearing minutes. Comments received during workshops, open houses, or presentations to civic organizations will be summarized, presented to the RTCC and RTAC, and kept on file. Results of surveys will be compiled, summarized, presented to the RTCC and RTAC, and kept on file.

Public comments may be included as appendices in formal documents or plans for which they were made.

The RTCC or RTAC may direct Down East RPO staff to respond directly to public comments via letter.

V. Appendices

Appendix A: Stakeholders

Appendix B: Media Contacts

Appendix A: Stakeholders

Local Governments

- Carteret County
- Town of Atlantic Beach
- Town of Pine Knoll Shores
- Town of Morehead City
- Town of Beaufort
- Town of Bogue
- Town of Cape Carteret
- Town of Cedar Point
- Town of Emerald Isle
- Town of Indian Beach
- Town of Newport
- Town of Peletier
- Craven County
- Town of Bridgeton
- Town of Cove City
- Town of Dover
- City of Havelock
- City of New Bern
- Town of River Bend
- Town of Trent Woods
- Town of Vanceboro
- Jones County
- Town of Maysville
- Town of Pollocksville
- Town of Trenton
- Onslow County
- Town of Holly Ridge
- City of Jacksonville
- Town of North Topsail Beach
- Town of Richlands
- Town of Surf City
- Town of Swansboro
- Pamlico County
- Town of Alliance
- Town of Arapahoe
- Town of Bayboro
- Town of Grantsboro
- Town of Mesic
- Town of Minnesott Beach
- Town of Oriental
- Town of Stonewall
- Town of Vandemere

Other Governmental

- North Carolina Department of Transportation
- Carteret County Community College
- Craven County Community College
- Coastal Carolina Community College
- Pamlico County Community College
- MCAS-Cherry Point
- MCB- Camp Lejeune
- Jacksonville MPO

Chambers of Commerce

- Carteret County Chamber of Commerce
- Havelock Chamber of Commerce
- Jacksonville/Onslow Chamber of Commerce
- New Bern Area Chamber of Commerce
- Pamlico County Chamber of Commerce

Economic Development Commissions

- Carteret County Economic Development Commission
- Craven County Economic Development Commission
- Jones County Economic Development Commission
- Onslow County Economic Development Commission
- Pamlico County Economic Development Commission

Regional Organizations

- Eastern Carolina Council of Governments
- Eastern Carolina RPO
- Cape Fear RPO
- Mid-East RPO
- Swiss Bear Downtown Development Corporation
- North Carolina's Eastern Region

Public Transportation Providers

- C A R T S
- C C A T S
- O U T S

Taxicab Companies

- New Taxi Service (New Bern)
- Safe Way Taxi Co (New Bern)
- Tryon Cab Co (New Bern)
- American Cab Co (Jacksonville)
- A-1 Taxi (Hubert)
- Coughlin Cabs, Inc (Jacksonville)
- Diamond Cab (Jacksonville)
- Dynamic Cab (Jacksonville)
- King Cab (Jacksonville)
- Star Taxi (Jacksonville)
- Tarheel Taxi (Jacksonville)
- Yellow Cab Co (Jacksonville)
- Onslow County Airport Taxi Association (Richlands)

Motor Freight Carriers

- Lee Way Trucking (Jacksonville)
- Roadway Express, Inc (Jacksonville)
- Southeastern Freight Lines (Jacksonville)
- White Donnie Trucking (Maysville)
- Yellow Freight System, Inc (Jacksonville)
- Continental Coast Trucking Company (Holly Ridge)
- PBX Inc (Holly Ridge)
- Barber Trucking (Maysville)
- Church's Hauling & Landscaping (Maysville)
- Williams Kenneth Trucking & Produce (Richlands)
- Kearney's Trucking (Ernul)
- P & N Trucking (Dover)
- Potter B F Trucking Co (New Bern)
- America Pie Trucking LLC (Trenton)
- Edgar Mills & Sons Farms & Trucking (Trenton)

Appendix B: Media Contacts

Radio Stations*

Public Radio East – WTEB
800 College Ct, New Bern
252-638-3434
252-638-3538 (fax)
www.publicradioeast.org

WAAE 91.9 FM American Family Radio
PO BOX 3122, New Bern 28564
252-636-3076
252-637-9821 (fax)

WANG-FM 105.1
3317 Hwy 17 E., New Bern
252-514-2220

WIKS-KISS 102 FM
207 Glenburnie Rd, New Bern
252-633-1500
252-633-0178 (fax)**

WKOQ-Kool 98.7 FM
307 Johnson Blvd, Jacksonville
910-455-5300
910-455-3112 (fax)

WMGV-V103
207 Glenburnie Rd, New Bern
252-635-1033
252-633-0718 (fax)**

WNCT FM Oldies 107.9
2929 Radio Station Rd, Greenville 27834
252-757-0011
252-757-0286 (fax)

WNOS 1450 AM Radio
116 S. Business Plaza, New Bern
252-638-8888
252-638-5848 (fax)

WRNS AM-FM
2030 Banks School Rd, Kinston
252-522-4141
252-523-4877 (fax)

WWNB-1490 AM Radio
116 S. Business Plaza, New Bern
252-633-1490

WIKS-FM
1008 Hargett St, Jacksonville
910-455-4970

WJCV Christian Radio
123-A Arnold Rd, Jacksonville
910-347-6141
910-347-1290 (fax)

WQSL-Q92
502 New Bridge St, Jacksonville
910-455-2177
910-455-0330 (fax)

WSTK 910 AM
727 Hines Farm Rd, Jacksonville
910-346-8758

*Fax notices to radio stations at least 2 weeks
in advance

**252-633-0178 is fax for 102 FM, 106.5 FM,
99X FM, and V103 FM.

Newspapers

The Carteret News-Times
PO BOX 1679, Morehead City, 28557
Ph: 252-726-7081
Fax: 252-726-6016
EM: newstimes@aol.com
EM2: production@thenewstimes.com

Havelock News
230 Stonebridge Square, Havelock, 28532
Ph: (252) 444-1999
Fax: 252-447-0897
EM: Tom7@link.freedom.com

Jacksonville Daily News
724 Bell Fork Rd, Jacksonville, 28540
Ph: 910-353-1171
Fax: 910-353-7316
EM: editor@jdnews.com

Jones Post Newspaper
PO BOX 117, Trenton, 28585
Ph: 252-448-9491
Fax: 252-527-9407
EM: ann_clark@link.freedom.com

Kinston Free Press
PO BOX 129, Kinston, 28502
Ph: 252-527-3191
Fax: 252-527-9407
EM: Jason_spencer@link.freedom.com

New Bern Sun Journal
3200 Wellons Blvd, New Bern, 28562
Ph: 252-633-8101
Fax: 252-368-4664
EM: sjwebmail@link.freedom.com
EM: sunjournal@link.freedom.com

Pamlico News
PO BOX 510, Oriental, 28571
Ph: 252-249-1555
Fax: 252-249-0857
EM: fHUDSON@pamliconews.com

Tideland News (Swansboro)
774 W. Corbett Ave, Swansboro, 28584
Ph: 910-326-5066
Fax: 910-326-1165
EM: tidelandnews@bizec.rr.com