

# **Public Participation Plan**



## **Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

**Prepared by the Staff of the  
Shoals Area  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

April 2020

**Shoals Area  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**Public Participation Plan (PPP)**

For further information please contact  
Joseph E. Holt, Transportation Planning Director  
Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments  
103 Student Drive  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35661  
Phone (256) 389 – 0517  
Fax (256) 389 – 0599

Email: [jholt@nacolg.org](mailto:jholt@nacolg.org)

Website address: [http://nacolg.com/Document\\_Room/index.html](http://nacolg.com/Document_Room/index.html)

Date adopted: January 15, 2014  
Revision Draft: August 26, 2019  
Revision Final: April 17, 2020

This document was prepared as a cooperative effort of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), and local governments, in fulfillment of requirements set forth in 23 USC 134 and 135, amended by amended by the FAST Act, Sections 1201 and 1202, December 2015. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

**Shoals Area  
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

**MPO and Advisory Committee Officers**

**Fiscal Year 2020**

**Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

Kerry Underwood, Chairman  
Joe Hackworth, Vice-Chairman

Mayor, City of Tuscumbia  
Commissioner, Lauderdale County

**Shoals Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)**

Bill Batson, Chairman  
William Foster, Vice-Chairman

City of Florence  
Councilman, City of Tuscumbia

**Shoals Area MPO Staff**

Keith Jones, Executive Director  
Jesse E. Turner, Director of Planning and Transportation  
Joseph E. Holt, Transportation Planning Director  
Ryan Hayse, Transportation Planner

**SHOALS AREA  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**RESOLUTION 20-08**

**Adopting the Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the Shoals Urban Area**

**WHEREAS**, the Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the organization designated by the Governor of the State of Alabama as being responsible, together with the State of Alabama, for implementing the applicable provisions of amended 23 USC 134 and 135 (amended by the FAST Act, Sections 1201 and 1202, December 2015); 42 USC 2000d-1, 7401; 23 CFR 450 and 500; 40 CFR 51 and 93; and

**WHEREAS**, Title 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1) et al, provides that the MPOs must prepare a participation plan to describe the process to ensure all citizens have reasonable opportunities to be involved in transportation planning, defines the segments of population to be included in that process, and further describes the means, methods and formats used in providing those opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, in meeting requirements of 450.316(a)(1)(ix), the MPO agrees to periodically review the effectiveness of procedures and strategies intended to provide full and open access to all citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, consistent with the declaration of the above provisions, the Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, in consultation with the Alabama Department of Transportation, has prepared a Public Participation Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, that the Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization has reviewed its public participation procedures, hereafter referred to as the Public Participation Plan (PPP), to ensure that full and open access to the transportation planning process is provided to all citizens, to maintain consistency with federal and state requirements, and to improve and streamline the public involvement process

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee that the same body does hereby endorse and adopt said Public Participation Plan.

**ADOPTED THIS 17<sup>th</sup> DAY OF APRIL 2020**

**SIGNED:**

  
Kerry Underwood, Chairman

**ATTEST:**



# Table of Contents

Public Participation Plan (PPP) .....	i
MPO and Advisory Committee Officers .....	ii
RESOLUTION 19 - 32 .....	iii
Table of Contents .....	iv
1.0 Purpose.....	1
2.0 Metropolitan Planning Organization Structure .....	1
3.0 Regulations and Requirements .....	2
3.1 Planning Factors.....	2
3.2 Fast Act Public Participation Plan (PPP) Provisions .....	3
3.3 American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title VI – Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency .....	4
3.4 MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) Goals .....	5
3.5 Public Participation Procedures for Transportation Planning Documents .....	5
3.6 Amendment Process for the Long Range, TIP, and other Operational Plans.....	13
4.0 Meetings and Contact Information .....	14
5.0 Performance Measurement Process .....	15
5.1 Livability Principles and Indicators .....	15
5.2 Performance Evaluation.....	16
Appendices .....	18
Appendix A Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	19
Appendix B MPO Organization .....	21
Appendix C MPO Planning Area Map.....	23
Appendix D Livability Principles and Indicators Data.....	24
Appendix E Sample Sign-In Sheet for Meeting Attendance.....	25
Appendix F Sample Comment Form .....	26
Appendix G Public Notice, Comments, and Responses .....	27
Appendix H Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan.....	28

## 1.0 Purpose

The following procedures are part of the Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Public Participation Plan (PPP) required by the provisions of amended 23 USC 134 and 135 (amended by Moving Ahead for Process in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century - MAP-21 Section 1201 and 1202, July 2012); 42 USC 2000d-1, 7401; 23 CFR 450 and 500; CFR 51 and 93. The purpose of the Participation Plan is to be consistent with the intent of all federal and state rules and regulations to provide an open public participation process with free exchange of information and opportunities for public input at all stages of the transportation planning process, as well as at all scheduled meetings of MPO boards and committees.

## 2.0 Metropolitan Planning Organization Structure

The Shoals Area transportation planning process is carried out by the Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). MPO staffing and operations are carried out by the MPO Transportation Planning Department located at the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments in Muscle Shoals. The MPO Mailing and Physical addresses are:

### Mailing

P.O. Box 2603  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662

### Physical

103 Student Drive  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35661

The Shoals Area MPO is comprised of two (2) components - Policy Board and one Committee:

### MPO Policy Board

The Policy Committee serves as the official decision-making body for the Shoals Area transportation planning process. In this capacity the Committee determines how federal transportation funds are spent in the study area. The Committee's responsibilities include providing overall guidance to the planning process, review and approval of all process plans and programs, as well as appointing TCC members. The Policy Committee is composed of fourteen members, nine voting and five non-voting. This Board is comprised of elected officials from the cities of Florence, Muscle Shoals, Tuscumbia, Sheffield, the towns of St. Florian, Killen and Leighton, and the counties of Colbert and Lauderdale. The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) North Region

Engineer and the Transportation Planning & Modal Programs Bureau Chief, the NACOLG Executive Director, the FHWA Division Administrator, and the Chairman of the Technical Committee are the remaining members of the board.

### Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

The MPO Policy Board receives input and advice from the Technical Coordinating Committee on primarily technical aspects of the transportation planning process including future planning of projects, funding and implementation. This committee consists of people who work directly in a planning related capacity such as city regional and airport planning, engineering, economic development, transit services, emergency services, or public works.

### Additional Committees:

The Policy Board may seek input from additional committees at its discretion. Committee members may be comprised of persons with technical knowledge of projects, studies and plans as well as citizens from neighborhoods and communities throughout the planning area to provide advice and recommendations to the Policy Board and TCC.

## **3.0 Regulations and Requirements**

### **3.1 Planning Factors**

While the amended 23 USC 134 and 135 and 23 CFR 450 are the primary regulatory resources for MPO planning activities, the Scope of the Planning Process (formerly the SAFETEA-LU Planning Factors) provides guiding principles within which public participation takes place. The scope of the Planning Process is provided here as additional information in support of the PPP process:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns;

6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation; and
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system

### **3.2 Fast Act Public Participation Plan (PPP) Provisions**

Title 23 USC 134, as amended, emphasizes not only the need for involvement by the general public and all interested parties, it requires fundamental procedures be carried out for insuring direct public access to information and the opportunity for input into the process.

- A. **23 USC 134(i)(6)(B)** calls for a Public Participation Plan (PPP) in development of an overall Transportation Plan or Long-Range Transportation Plan and provides for the following, in part:
  - 1) Shall be developed in consultation with all interested parties.
  - 2) Shall provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment.
  - 3) Methods must include holding Public Meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times.
  - 4) Employ visualization techniques to help describe plans.
  - 5) Make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for access to public information.
  - 6) A plan must be published or otherwise made readily available by the MPO for public review, including (to the maximum extent practicable) in electronically accessible format. (ALDOT requires that plans be made available in hard copy and electronic versions).
  
- B. **23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450** interprets the provisions of 23 USC 134 and provides for the following, in part:
  1. Adequate public notice of activities and time for public review and comment.
  2. Timely notice and access to information.
  3. Employment of visualization techniques to describe plans and programs.
  4. Make information available electronically and on the internet.
  5. Hold meetings at convenient times and easily accessible venues.
  6. Consider and respond to public input in a timely fashion.
  7. Seek out and consider the needs of the traditionally underserved in the community, such as low-income and minority populations.
  8. Provide additional opportunity for public comment on all plans, and changes to plans, following initial agency and public reviews during development, especially the Long-Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program.



9. Coordination with statewide public involvement and consultation processes.
10. Periodically review procedures and effectiveness of Plan strategies.
11. Provide a summary of public comments on the draft for the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program and include those in the final documents.
12. Provide a minimum of a forty-five (45) day public comment period before finalization of a PPP Plan or an update of an existing PPP Plan.

### **3.3 American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title VI – Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency**

#### American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The American with Disabilities Act of 1990 encourages the participation of people with disabilities in the development of transportation and paratransit plans and services. In accordance with ADA guidelines all meetings conducted by the MPO will take place in locations which are accessible by persons with mobility limitations or other impairments. Further each state is required to be compliant with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the 1990 Act.

#### Title VI – Environmental Justice

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ensures that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or religion. In 1994 Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations was signed by President Clinton. This Executive Order requires that programs, policies, and activities that affect human health or the environment should identify and avoid disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and low-income populations. Environmental Justice aims to ensure that no racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group bears a disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences resulting from government programs and policies.

#### Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

As required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, and FTA Circular FTA C 4702.1B, October 2012, The MPO has completed a Four Factor Analysis of the Shoals Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) to determine the 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 transportation planning process.

The Shoals MPO has developed a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan that identifies the Limited English Proficient populations in the MPO. This plan provides guidelines for the MPO staff to help ensure that information and services are accessible to LEP persons.

The Limited English Proficiency Persons (LEP) can be found in the appendices of this document.

### **3.4 MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) Goals**

As a continuing effort by the Shoals Area MPO to provide public access and the means to engage in the planning process, the MPO has established the following goals:

- To offer opportunities for groups and individuals to participate in the decision-making process for the development of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), The Public Participation Plan (PPP), the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (BPP) and other formal planning documents.
- To provide open and continuous communication to inform the citizens of transportation planning activities.
- To provide timely and adequate public notice of hearings, meetings, events, and planning document availability.
- To offer a timely response to comments and concerns with the aim of addressing the concerns of citizens and/or educating citizens about transportation planning programs and issues.
- To consult with and encourage comments from groups and individuals belonging to minority populations, low-income populations, and other special needs populations.
- To review the Public Participation Plan (PPP) annually and update the policies as needed or as required by FHWA or ALDOT.
- To produce reports and documents understandable to the average citizen.

### **3.5 Public Participation Procedures for Transportation Planning Documents**

This section details the public participation processes and procedures for preparation and dissemination by the Shoals Area MPO of the following documents:

- Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Public Participation Plan (PPP)
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (BPP)
- Air Quality Conformity Report (AQCR)

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

The Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) guides transportation decision-making in the Shoals MPO Planning Area for a twenty-five (25) year period. The LRTP is updated every five years (four years if in non-conformity for Air Quality Standards) and serves as a conduit for public input on a broad range of transportation issues. The LRTP considers all modes of transportation from a regional perspective. The following actions will be taken to ensure that all sectors of the public are involved in the LRTP development and revision process for the draft and final documents:

- The LRTP shall be opened for a public review and comment period of a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to Shoals Area MPO Policy Board approval. The final LRTP document will be prepared after ALDOT and FHWA have reviewed and the MPO staff has made recommended changes to the draft LRTP documents.
- Maintenance of stakeholder listings shall be performed for the purpose of outreach and the generation of comments. These stakeholder listings shall include telephone numbers, emails, and addresses of groups including, but not limited to, citizen advisory committees, school and church organizations, community organizations and groups, housing authorities, chambers of commerce, and state, federal and local government agencies.
- Special outreach to low-income and minority populations within the MPO Planning Area shall be performed and shall include a listing of churches, businesses, and community leaders in areas with low and moderate incomes and minority populations.
- Meetings concerning the LRTP shall be conducted in minority and low to moderate income areas in order to seek out participation in the transportation planning process.
- Written information shall be disseminated to stakeholder groups.
- Notices and agendas of meetings concerning the LRTP shall be posted on the MPO website ([http://nacolg.com/Document\\_Room/index.html](http://nacolg.com/Document_Room/index.html)) and shall be mailed to stakeholders and interested parties ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Notices and agendas shall be provided to local media for dissemination to the local public.
- At least two (2) open public meetings shall be held to receive public comment either independently or in conjunction with regularly scheduled meetings of the Shoals Area MPO Policy Board in order to accommodate all segments of the MPO Planning Area population.

- When received, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of written or oral comments shall be included in the in the final LRTP.
- Members of the Shoals Area MPO staff shall be available to answer questions and hear comments from interested citizens at all scheduled meetings concerning the LRTP as well as at regularly scheduled MPO Policy Board meetings.
- Comment forms shall be made available at all meetings concerning the LRTP and may be presented to the Shoals Area MPO staff at any time during the thirty-day comment period.
- The LRTP shall be placed on display in the following locations: the City Halls of Florence, Muscle Shoals, Tuscumbia, Sheffield, the Town Halls of St. Florian, Killen and Leighton, and the Courthouses of Colbert and Lauderdale Counties. A digital copy may also be obtained by visiting the MPO website.
- The MPO shall consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation projects in the MPO Planning Area.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to determine the amount of public participation required to amend the LRTP.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to evaluate and update the public participation process for the LRTP as needed.
- Copies of documents or CDs shall be made available to the public by contacting the Shoals Area MPO Director, Joseph E. Holt as follows:

**U.S. Mail**

Shoals Area MPO

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

P.O. Box 2603

Muscle Shoals, AL 35662

**Phone:**

(256) 389-0500

**Fax:**

(256) 389-0599

**Email:**

[jholt@nacolg.org](mailto:jholt@nacolg.org)

*There will be a nominal fee for printing or reproduction*

**Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)**

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the short-range subset of the LRTP. It is a four-year listing of the funded transportation projects located within the Shoals MPO Planning Area. The TIP includes the federal-aid projects funded under the areas of Surface Transportation, Bridges, Highway Safety, Transit, Transportation Enhancement, and Transportation Alternatives as well as programs with other state or federal funding sources that contribute to transportation development in the Shoals MPO Planning Area. The funded projects are listed in the TIP with their specific project descriptions, levels of completion, funding by phase, and funding sources. The following actions will be taken annually to ensure that all sectors of the public are involved in the TIP development and revision process for the draft and final documents:

- The TIP shall be opened for a public review and comment period of a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to Shoals MPO Policy Board approval.
- Maintenance of stakeholder listings shall be performed for the purpose of outreach and the generation of comments. These stakeholder listings shall include telephone numbers, emails, and addresses of groups including, but not limited to, citizen advisory committees, school and church organizations, community organizations and groups, housing authorities, chambers of commerce, and state, federal and local government agencies.
- At least one (1) open public meeting shall be held to receive public comment as well as timely opportunity being given for comments on the TIP at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Shoals Area MPO Policy Board in order to accommodate all segments of the MPO Planning Area population.
- Special outreach to low-income and minority populations within the MPO Planning Area shall be performed and shall include a listing of churches, businesses, and community leaders in areas with low and moderate incomes and minority populations.
- Written information shall be disseminated to stakeholder groups.
- Notices and agendas of meetings concerning the TIP shall be posted on the MPO website ([http://nacolg.com/Document\\_Room/index.html](http://nacolg.com/Document_Room/index.html)) and shall be mailed to stakeholders and interested parties ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Notices and agendas shall be provided to local media for dissemination to the local public.
- Members of the Shoals Area MPO staff shall be available to answer questions and hear comments from interested citizens at all scheduled meetings concerning the TIP as well as at regularly scheduled MPO Policy Board meetings.
- Comment forms shall be made available at all meetings concerning the TIP and may be presented to the Shoals Area MPO staff at any time during the thirty-day comment period.
- When received, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of written or oral comments shall be included in the in the final TIP.
- The TIP shall be placed on display in the following locations: the City Halls of Florence, Muscle Shoals, Tuscumbia, Sheffield, the Town Halls of St. Florian, Killen and Leighton, and the Courthouses of Colbert and Lauderdale Counties A digital copy may also be obtained by visiting the MPO website.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to determine the amount of public participation required to amend the TIP.
- The MPO shall consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation projects in the MPO Planning Area.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to evaluate and update the public participation process for the TIP as needed.
- Copies of documents or CDs shall be made available to the public by contacting the Shoals Area MPO Director, Joseph E. Holt as follows:

**U.S. Mail**

Shoals Area MPO  
Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments  
P.O. Box 2603  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662

**Phone:**

(256) 389-0500

**Fax:**

(256) 389-0599

**Email:**

[jholt@nacolg.org](mailto:jholt@nacolg.org)

*There will be a nominal fee for printing or reproduction*

**Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the primary document in the formal, required planning document hierarchy. The UPWP outlines the work activities for the Shoals Area MPO for the upcoming fiscal year. Within each work activity listed in the UPWP, specific tasks are identified by an objective, previous work performed, a description of the task, and the desired outcome/measurement tools. The following actions will be taken to ensure that all sectors of the public are involved in the UPWP development and revision process for the draft and final documents:

- The UPWP shall be opened for a public review and comment period of a minimum of thirty (30) days following Shoals Area MPO Policy Board approval of the draft document, as well as at MPO Policy Board meetings prior to adoption of the final document.
- Comment forms shall be made available at MPO Policy Board and Technical Coordinating Committee meetings as well as on the MPO website and may be presented to the Shoals Area MPO staff at any time during the thirty-day comment period.
- Notices and agendas of meetings concerning the UPWP shall be posted on the MPO website ([http://nacolg.com/Document\\_Room/index.html](http://nacolg.com/Document_Room/index.html)) and shall be mailed to stakeholders and interested parties ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Notices and agendas shall be provided to local media for dissemination to the local public.
- Members of the Shoals Area MPO staff shall be available to answer questions and hear comments from interested citizens at all scheduled meetings concerning the UPWP as well as at regularly scheduled MPO Policy Board meetings.
- Written information shall be disseminated to stakeholder groups.
- The MPO shall consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation projects in the MPO Planning Area.
- When received, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of written or oral comments shall be included in the in the final UPWP.

- The UPWP shall be placed on display in the following locations: the City Halls of Florence, Muscle Shoals, Tuscumbia, Sheffield, the Town Halls of St. Florian, Killen and Leighton, and the Courthouses of Colbert and Lauderdale Counties. A digital copy may also be obtained by visiting the MPO website.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to determine the amount of public participation required to amend the UPWP.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to evaluate and update the public participation process for the UPWP as needed.
- Copies of documents or CDs shall be made available to the public by contacting the Shoals Area MPO Director, Joseph E. Holt as follows:

**U.S. Mail**

Shoals Area MPO

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

P.O. Box 2603

Muscle Shoals, AL 35662

**Phone:**

(256) 389-0500

**Fax:**

(256) 389-0599

**Email:**

[jholt@nacolg.org](mailto:jholt@nacolg.org)

*There will be a nominal fee for printing or reproduction*

**Public Participation Plan (PPP)**

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) outlines the processes for involving the public in transportation planning for the purpose of preparing the Shoals Area MPO's primary planning documents listed at the beginning of this section. The PPP is updated at least every four (4) years, unless directed otherwise by ALDOT. The following actions will be taken to ensure that all sectors of the public are involved in the PPP development and revision process for the draft and final documents:

- The PPP shall be opened for a public review and comment period of a minimum of forty-five (45) days prior to Shoals Area MPO Policy Board approval.
- Maintenance of stakeholder listings shall be performed for the purpose of outreach and the generation of comments. These stakeholder listings shall include telephone numbers, emails, and addresses of groups including, but not limited to, citizen advisory committees, school and church organizations, community organizations and groups, housing authorities, chambers of commerce, and state, federal and local government agencies.
- At least two (2) open public meetings shall be held to receive public comment either independently or in conjunction with regularly scheduled meetings of the Shoals Area MPO Policy Board in order to accommodate all segments of the MPO Planning Area population.
- Special outreach to low-income and minority populations within the MPO Planning Area shall be performed and shall include a listing of churches,

businesses, and community leaders in areas with low and moderate incomes and minority populations.

- Written information shall be disseminated to stakeholder groups.
- Notices and agendas of meetings concerning the PPP shall be posted on the MPO website ([http://nacolg.com/Document\\_Room/index.html](http://nacolg.com/Document_Room/index.html)) and shall be mailed to stakeholders and interested parties ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Notices and agendas shall be provided to local media for dissemination to the local public.
- Members of the Shoals Area MPO staff shall be available to answer questions and hear comments from interested citizens at all scheduled meetings concerning the PPP as well as at regularly scheduled MPO Policy Board meetings.
- Comment forms shall be made available at all meetings concerning the PPP and may be presented to the Shoals Area MPO staff at any time during the forty-five-day comment period.
- When received, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of written or oral comments shall be included in the in the final PPP.
- The PPP shall be placed on display in the following locations: the City Halls of Florence, Muscle Shoals, Tuscumbia, Sheffield, the Town Halls of St. Florian, Killen and Leighton, and the Courthouses of Colbert and Lauderdale Counties. A digital copy may also be obtained by visiting the MPO website.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to determine the amount of public participation required to amend the PPP.
- The MPO shall consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation projects in the MPO Planning Area.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to evaluate and update the public participation process for the PPP as needed.
- Copies of documents or CDs shall be made available to the public by contacting the Shoals Area MPO Director, Joseph E. Holt as follows:

**U.S. Mail**

Shoals Area MPO

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

P.O. Box 2603

Muscle Shoals, AL 35662

**Phone:**

(256) 389-0500

**Fax:**

(256) 389-0599

**Email:**

[jholt@nacolg.org](mailto:jholt@nacolg.org)

*There will be a nominal fee for printing or reproduction*

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (BPP)**

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (BPP) is developed to guide decisions as to where bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be provided to meet the demands for bicycling and walking. Appropriately located bicycle and pedestrian facilities



will give rise to bicycling and walking as viable and safe modes of transport. This plan will be updated as needed by the Shoals Area MPO, or as directed by ALDOT. The following actions will be taken to ensure that all sectors of the public are involved in the BPP development and revision process for the draft and final documents:

- The BPP shall be opened for a public review and comment period of a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to Shoals Area MPO Policy Board approval.
- Maintenance of stakeholder listings shall be performed for the purpose of outreach and the generation of comments. These stakeholder listings shall include telephone numbers, emails, and addresses of groups including, but not limited to, citizen advisory committees, school and church organizations, community organizations and groups, housing authorities, chambers of commerce, and state, federal and local government agencies.
- At least one (1) open public meeting shall be held to receive public comment either independently or in conjunction with regularly scheduled meetings of the Shoals Area MPO Policy Board in order to accommodate all segments of the MPO Planning Area population.
- Special outreach to low-income and minority populations within the MPO Planning Area shall be performed and shall include a listing of churches, businesses, and community leaders in areas with low and moderate incomes and minority populations.
- Written information shall be disseminated to stakeholder groups.
- Notices and agendas of meetings concerning the BPP shall be posted on the MPO website ([http://nacolg.com/Document\\_Room/index.html](http://nacolg.com/Document_Room/index.html)) and shall be mailed to stakeholders and interested parties ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Notices and agendas shall be provided to local media for dissemination to the local public.
- Members of the Shoals Area MPO staff shall be available to answer questions and hear comments from interested citizens at all scheduled meetings concerning the BPP as well as at regularly scheduled MPO Policy Board meetings.
- Comment forms shall be made available at all meetings concerning the BPP and may be presented to the Shoals Area MPO staff at any time during the thirty-day comment period.
- When received, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of written or oral comments shall be included in the in the final BPP.
- The BPP shall be placed on display in the following locations: the City Halls of Florence, Muscle Shoals, Tuscumbia, Sheffield, the Town Halls of St. Florian, Killen and Leighton, and the Courthouses of Colbert and Lauderdale Counties. A digital copy may also be obtained by visiting the MPO website.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to determine the amount of public participation required to amend the BPP.

- The MPO shall consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation projects in the MPO Planning Area.
- The MPO shall consult with ALDOT to evaluate and update the public participation process for the BPP as needed.
- Copies of documents or CDs shall be made available to the public by contacting the Shoals Area MPO Director, Joseph E. Holt as follows:

<p><b>U.S. Mail</b>          Shoals Area MPO          Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments          103 Student Drive          Muscle Shoals, AL 35661</p>	<p><b>Phone:</b>          (256) 389-0500  <b>Fax:</b>          (256) 389-0599  <b>Email:</b>  <a href="mailto:jholt@nacolg.org">jholt@nacolg.org</a></p>
--	--

*There will be a nominal fee for printing or reproduction*

### **3.6 Amendment Process for the Long Range, TIP, and other Operational Plans**

Amendments to formal planning documents containing project listings and funding will be carried out pursuant to sections of Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450, applicable to road and highway projects under various Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding programs and those transportation projects and funding actions under Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs.

While governing regulations are specific to the Long Range Transportation Plan (Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Regional Transportation Plan), the short range component of the Long Range, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the process is extended in Alabama to those plans with projects and funding presented in tabular or listed format, to include the Congestion Management Plan (CMP), the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and the amended project listings of the Long Range and TIP documents under the Air Quality Conformity Process.

An amendment to the Long-Range Plan, TIP, and STIP documents may take one of two forms: 1. Administrative Modification, or 2. Formal Amendment Process.

- 1) An Administrative Modification is a minor change to project costs, funding sources, or project/phase start dates. Such minor changes or adjustments do not require public involvement activities, reestablishment of financial constraint, or, in areas of air quality non-conformity, confirmation of conformity determination. Amendments of this nature are generally conducted through coordination of ALDOT Bureau of Transportation Planning and Modal Programs staff and MPO staff to minimize plan modification, documentation activities, and costs.

- 2) The Formal Amendment Process is a major change to project costs, design scope, funding amounts, project/phase start dates, or a revision approved and required in the MPO plans by the State as an adjunct to its Public Involvement process. This process requires public notice, addition to MPO monthly meeting agendas, review by the public and MPO advisory committees, reviews by federal agencies, a vote by the MPO Policy Board, and an executed Resolution of adoption. The process criteria then, under which a formal amendment occurs, is when a plan or document:
  - a. Adds a project
  - b. Deletes a project
  - c. Project costs exceed 20% of the original projected costs
  - d. Changes a project start or completion date
  - e. Changes the project design scope or termini description
- 3) Amendments to Congestion Management Plans (TMAs only) and Bicycle Pedestrian Plans (now a formal plan in Alabama) are subject to the same processes as above. However, ALDOT will generally work with MPOs to adjust these documents on a more informal basis in order to accommodate public involvement meetings and advisory committee scheduling.

## **4.0 Meetings and Contact Information**

MPOs hold Public Meetings or have Public Forums during regular MPO meetings in review of draft and final planning documents and may attend, sponsor meetings, or hold ad hoc meetings as outreach for specific proposed projects or programs.

State DOTs will hold Project Hearings as outreach or for public information and feedback. MPOs may attend or otherwise provide support for the local government projects under review.

All Shoals Area MPO Policy Board and Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) meetings are held in the Board Room of the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments (NACOLG) building unless specified otherwise in the meeting notice. MPO public forum meetings are held at various locations within the MPO Planning Area depending on meeting needs and requirements.

All MPO meetings will be advertised on the NACOLG website ([www.nacolg.com](http://www.nacolg.com)) a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the meeting date. Meeting notices and agendas will also be provided to local media sources for dissemination to the local public. Meetings called for special purposes will also be advertised in this way.

The MPO must allow for persons with special needs at selected meeting venues. Venues should be ADA504 compliant (wheelchair accessible). Meeting notices will provide a call-in number and persons requiring special assistance including language assistance to attend meetings should contact the MPO at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting date for special accommodations to be made.

All meetings of the MPO shall be opened to the public in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act 2005-40. Meetings are also subject to the provisions of Alabama Code 36-25A-1 for public access and involvement.

The Shoals Area MPO staff office is located at the offices of the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments located on the campus of Northwest Shoals Community College. Any inquiries regarding the Shoals Area MPO may be directed to the Director of the MPO, Joseph E. Holt as follows:

**U.S. Mail**

Shoals Area MPO

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

P.O. Box 2603

Muscle Shoals, AL 35662

**Phone:**

(256) 389-0500

**Fax:**

(256) 389-0599

**Email:**

[jholt@nacolg.org](mailto:jholt@nacolg.org)

## 5.0 Performance Measurement Process

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires that the Shoals Area MPO continuously evaluate the effectiveness of public involvement activities in the MPO Planning Area to ensure a full and open participation process in accordance with 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.

### 5.1 Livability Principles and Indicators

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 the UPWP. They are also outlined in the LRTP, PPP, BPP, and TIP planning documents. The Principles shown cannot be changed. However, Alabama MPOs are encouraged to employ or adapt those indicators they feel best reflect 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 documents:

- Long Range Transportation Plan
- Transportation Improvement Plan
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

- Public Participation Plan
- Congestion Management Process
- Air Quality Conformity Report (applicable to those MPOs in non-conformity status)

All planning tasks must be measured against these **Livability Principles**:

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

As a measure of sustainability of these principles, the MPO will provide the following **Livability Indicators**:

- Percentage of workforce using transit service
- Transit trips per capita
- Vehicle miles traveled per household
- Percentage of household income spent on housing and transportation
- Transportation costs per household
- Percent of housing units located within 0.5 miles of primary employment centers
- Percentage of LRTP funding that will be used to improve existing facilities
- Percent of transportation projects where more than one federal funding source is utilized
- Percentage of housing units within a 0.25 mile of retail services

The Livability Indicators data can be found in the appendices of this document.

## 5.2 Performance Evaluation

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

<u>Public Involvement Tool</u>	<u>Measures of Effectiveness (MOE)</u>	<u>Performance Goal(s)</u>
Public Participation Plan	No measure / PPP should reflect the practices of the MPO	N/A

MPO Website	Number of Hits	Minimum of twenty (20) hits per month
Public Meetings	Calls, Letters, Attendance, Number of persons reached	3 to 5 percent of the affected population
Announcements in Local Media	Calls, Letters, Attendance, Number of persons reached	Minimum of 15 percent of the meeting attendees / survey respondents who indicate they saw the notice
Project Specific Meetings	Calls, Letters, Attendance, Number of persons reached	3 to 5 percent of the affected population
Posters and Flyers	Calls, Letters, Attendance, Number of persons reached	Minimum of 15 percent of the meeting attendees / survey respondents who indicate they saw the notice
Comment Forms	Calls, Letters, Attendance, Number of persons reached	50 percent of contacted persons participating in the completion of the comment forms
Survey Forms	Calls, Letters, Attendance, Number of persons reached	At least 30 percent return
Group and Organization Meetings	Calls, Letters, Attendance, Number of persons reached	5 to 10 percent of the population

## *Appendices*

## Appendix A

### Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>3-C</b>	Comprehensive, Cooperative, and Continuing
<b>ADA</b>	Americans with Disabilities Act
<b>ADEM</b>	Alabama Department of Environmental Management
<b>ALDOT</b>	Alabama Department of Transportation
<b>APA</b>	American Planning Association
<b>AQ</b>	Air Quality
<b>BPAC</b>	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
<b>CAC</b>	Citizen Advisory Committee
<b>CAD</b>	Computer Aided Design
<b>CFR</b>	Code of Federal Regulations
<b>COOP</b>	Continuity of Operations Plan
<b>DBE</b>	Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
<b>DRI</b>	Developments of Regional Impact
<b>DOT</b>	Department of Transportation
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Agency
<b>ESRI</b>	Environmental Scientific Research Institute
<b>ETS</b>	Environmental Technical Section
<b>FAS</b>	Federal Aid System
<b>FAST Act</b>	Fixing Americas Surface Transportation Act
<b>FHWA</b>	Federal Highway Administration
<b>FTA</b>	Federal Transit Administration
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information System
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gases
<b>ITS</b>	Intelligent Transportation System
<b>LAP</b>	Language Assistance Plan
<b>LEP</b>	Limited English Proficiency
<b>L RTP</b>	Long Range Transportation Plan
<b>MAP-21</b>	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
<b>MPA</b>	Metropolitan Planning Area
<b>MPO</b>	Metropolitan Planning Organization
<b>MOVES</b>	Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator
<b>NAAQS</b>	National Ambient Air Quality Standards



<b>NEPA</b>	National Environmental Policy Act
<b>NHS</b>	National Highway System
<b>O3</b>	Ground level ozone is an air pollutant resulting from chemical reactions between nitrogen and certain volatile organic compounds (VOCs) emitted through fossil fuel exhaust and other sources.
<b>PL</b>	Planning Funds
<b>PM 2.5</b>	Pollution in the form of tiny particles or droplets in the air that are two- and one-half microns or less in width.
<b>PPP</b>	Public Participation Plan (or Process depending on use)
<b>SAFETEA-LU</b>	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy of Users
<b>SIP</b>	Statewide Implementation Plan
<b>SPR</b>	State Planning and Research
<b>STIP</b>	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
<b>TAC</b>	Technical Advisory Committee
<b>TAZ</b>	Traffic Analysis Zone
<b>TEA-21</b>	Transportation Equity Act for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century
<b>TDP</b>	Transit Development Plan
<b>TIP</b>	Transportation Improvement Program
<b>TSM</b>	Transportation System Management
<b>UPWP</b>	Unified Planning Work Program
<b>USC</b>	United States Code

## **Appendix B      MPO Organization**

### **Policy Committee Voting Members**

Chairman Kerry Underwood – Mayor, City of Tuscumbia  
Vice-Chairman Joe Hackworth – Commissioner, Lauderdale County  
Honorable Ian Sanford – Mayor, City of Sheffield  
Honorable David Bradford – Mayor, City of Muscle Shoals  
Honorable Steve Holt – Mayor, City of Florence  
Honorable Tim Tubbs – Mayor, Town of Killen  
Honorable Charles Hovater – Commissioner, Colbert County  
Mr. Curtis W. Vincent – North Region Engineer, Alabama Department of Transportation  
Mr. Keith Jones – Executive Director, Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

### **Policy Committee Non-Voting Members**

Honorable Matthew Connolly – Mayor, Town of St. Florian  
Honorable John Landers – Mayor, Town of Leighton  
Mr. Mark D. Bartlett – Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration  
Mr. D. E. Phillips, Jr. – State Local Transportation Engineer, Alabama Department of Transportation

### **MPO Technical Coordinating Committee**

Chairman Bill Batson, City of Florence  
Mr. Eric Hill, Lauderdale County Engineer  
Mr. John Bedford, Colbert County Engineer  
Mr. David Abernathy, Assistant Lauderdale County Engineer  
Mr. Rod Ellis, North Region, Alabama Department of Transportation  
Mr. Allen Teague, Tuscumbia Area, Alabama Department of Transportation  
Mr. John A. McGee, Town of Killen  
Mr. Bryan Hammond, Town of Killen  
Mrs. Melissa Bailey, City of Florence  
Mr. Michael Davis, City of Sheffield  
Mr. Brad Williams, City of Muscle Shoals  
Mr. Steve Stanley, City of Sheffield  
Mr. William Foster, City of Tuscumbia  
Mr. Jeff McDonald, City of Tuscumbia  
Mr. Tony Burns, City of Muscle Shoals  
Mr. Hal Greer, Director, Florence/Lauderdale Port Authority

### **TCC Non-Voting Members**

Mr. Mark Chamblee, Town of Leighton  
Mr. James Kasmeier, Town of St. Florian  
Mr. Tom Thornton, Town of St. Florian  
Mr. Barry Griffith, Director, Northwest Alabama Regional Airport  
Mrs. Caitlin Holland, Shoals Area Chamber of Commerce  
Mrs. Susan Gregory, Norfolk Southern  
Mr. Eddie Russell, Director, North Alabama Highway Safety Office

Mr. Michael Hora, Assistant State Local Transportation Engineer, Alabama Department of Transportation

Mr. Clint Andrews, Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Nicole Spivey, Federal Transit Administration

**Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments (NACOLG) / MPO Staff**

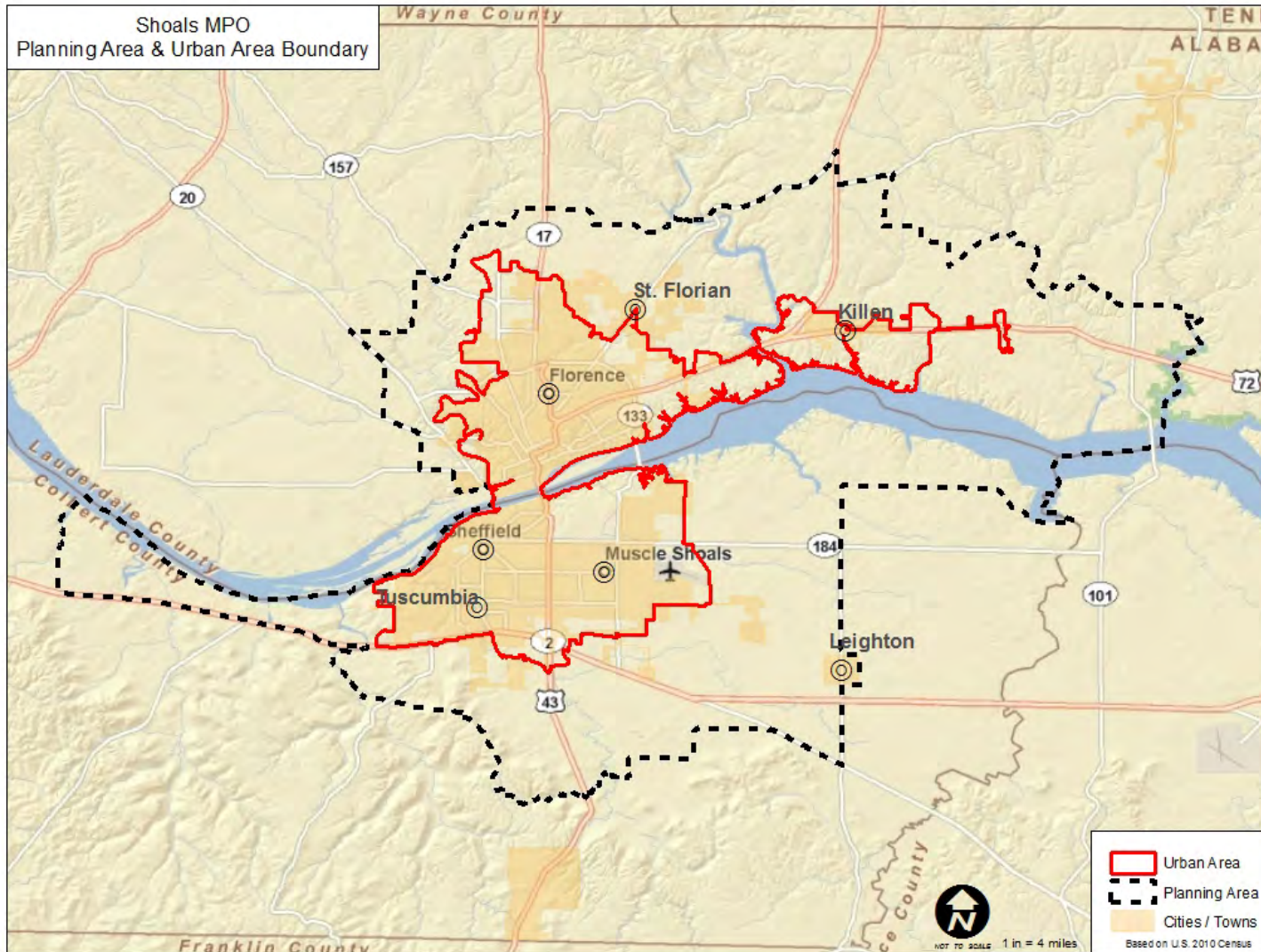
Keith Jones, Executive Director

Jesse E. Turner, Director of Planning & Transportation, Shoals Area MPO

Joseph E. Holt, Transportation Planning Director, Shoals Area MPO

Ryan Hayse, Transportation Planner, Shoals Area MPO

## Appendix C MPO Planning Area Map



## Appendix D Livability Principles and Indicators Data

### 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: 0.73%
- Transit trips per capita: 1.11
- Vehicle miles traveled per household: 20,650.44

### 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: 55.22%
- Transportation costs per household: \$13,528.26

### 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: 52%

### 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: 48%

### 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 retail services, and parks: 77%
- Automobile greenhouse gas emissions per household: 8.98 tonnes/years

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

**Appendix E Sample Sign-In Sheet for Meeting Attendance**

Shoals Area MPO  
Sign In

Name	Agency	Phone	Email

Shoals Area MPO  
Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments  
P.O. Box 2603  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662

This type of form used for all MPO meetings.

# Appendix F      Sample Comment Form

## Shoals Area MPO Public Comment Form

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Daytime Phone</b>	
<b>Street Address</b>	
<b>City/State/Zip</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Comments</b>	

Please Return to:  
Shoals Area MPO  
Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments  
P.O. Box 2603  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662

This type of form used for all planning document comments.

## **Appendix G      Public Notice, Comments, and Responses**

Attached to this document is the meeting notice concerning public involvement on the Public Participation Plan, as well as any comment forms or written responses returned during the open comment period.



**Appendix H Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan**

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

**NACOLG  
P.O. Box 2603  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35661**

## **Introduction**

This Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP) has been prepared to address **NACOLG**'s responsibilities as a recipient of federal financial assistance as they relate to the needs of individuals with limited English skills. This plan has been prepared in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq, and its implementing regulations, which state that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

## **Plan Summary**

**NACOLG** has developed this LEP Plan to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) who wish to access transit services provided by the **NACOLG**. As defined in Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English.

This plan outlines how to identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training that may be required, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available.

In order to prepare this plan, the **NACOLG** undertook the U.S. DOT four-factor LEP analysis which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served or are likely to encounter a **NACOLG** program, activity or service.
2. The frequency with which the LEP persons come in contact with **NACOLG** programs activities or services.
3. The nature and importance of programs, activities or services provided by **NACOLG** to the LEP population.
4. The resources available to **NACOLG** and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.

## **Four-Factor Analysis**

1. ***The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served or are likely to encounter NACOLG program, activity or service.***

The Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments (**NACOLG**) reviewed the 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year estimates and 220,155 individuals age 5 and over live in the five-county service area. Of those, 4,199 or 1.91% speak English "less than very well". Only Franklin County had over 1,000 residents age 5 and over speaking English "less than very well". No other county surpassed 1,000 residents that spoke English "less than very well" or exceeded 5% of residents, according to the ACS estimates for population age 5 and over. The primary language other than English in the service area is Spanish.

**2. The frequency with which the LEP persons come in contact with NACOLG programs, activities or services.**

NACOLG assessed the frequency with which staff and drivers have, or could have, contact with LEP persons. The following touch points and frequencies have been identified:

CONTACT POINTS	FREQUENCY
Bus Drivers - Demand Response	Minimum
Information Line	Minimum
Dispatchers	Minimum
Route Guides	Minimum
Reservationist	Minimum
Web Site	Minimum

**3. The nature and importance of programs, activities or services provided by NACOLG to the LEP population.**

The largest geographic concentration of LEP individuals in the NACOLG service area is in Franklin County and consists of Spanish speakers. Services provided by the NACOLG that are most likely to encounter LEP individuals are the demand response system. It is infrequent but not impossible that the NACOLG will first encounter LEP individuals in scheduling/reserving rides for demand response.

**4. The resources available to NACOLG and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.**

The NACOLG assessed its available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance and which of its documents would be most valuable to be translated if the need should arise, and taking an inventory of available organizations that the NACOLG could partner with for outreach and translation efforts. Volunteer community agencies and web based translation services are resources that can assist in reducing the cost of translation services.

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

There are five (5) areas that comprise the NACOLG LEP PLAN:

1. Identifying LEP individuals who need language assistance
2. Providing Language assistance Measures
3. Training Staff
4. Providing Notice to LEP persons
5. Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan

**1. Identifying LEP individuals who need language assistance**

How the NACOLG identified an LEP person who needs language assistance:

- Examined customer service records for language assistance that has been received in the past, either at meetings or over the phone, to determine whether language assistance might be needed for future events;

- **Results: No indication of past need, but need to prepare for language assistance to be available upon request;**
- Regularly survey drivers and other first line staff that have direct or indirect contact with LEP individuals.
  - **Results: No reports of language assistance required, but need to prepare for language assistance upon advance request;**
- When **NACOLG** sponsors an event, have a staff person greet participants as they arrive. By informally engaging participants in conversation, it is possible to informally gauge each attendee's ability to speak and understand English.
  - **Results: No reports of need for language assistance at NACOLG events, but need to prepare for language assistance upon advance request;**

## 2. Language Assistance Measures

How the **NACOLG** will assist LEP person who needs language assistance:

- Network with local human service organizations that provide service to LEP individuals and seek opportunities to provide information on **NACOLG** programs and services;
- Post **NACOLG** Title VI Notice, Complaint Procedures, Complaint Form, and LEP Plan on the agency website in English and in Spanish;
- Public notices, publications, and other printed material, including webpage content, may be made available in other languages upon request.
- Placement of statements in notices and publications that interpreter services are available for meetings, with a seven-day advance notice free of charge in other languages;
- Provide Language Identification Flash Cards onboard the **NACOLG** fleet, in Field Supervisor vehicles and at the Administrative Office;
- Utilize a web-based translation service application such as Google Translate <http://translate.google.com/> ;
- Utilize telephone translation services;

## 3. Staff Training

How the **NACOLG** will train staff on its role and responsibilities in providing meaningful access to services for LEP persons:

- Develop a curriculum and corresponding PowerPoint to educate staff on the Title VI requirements for providing meaningful access to services for LEP persons;
- Provide staff with a description of language assistance services offered by the **NACOLG**;

- Provide staff with specific procedures to be followed when encountering an LEP person, including how to handle a potential Title VI / LEP complaint;
- Instruct staff on the use of Language Identification Flash Cards

#### 4. Providing Notice to LEP Persons

How the **NACOLG** will provide Notice to LEP persons, both oral and written communications:

- Offer general information, such as operation hours, fares, etc., on the **NACOLG** customer service line;

#### PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS IN BOTH ENGLISH AND SPANISH

- The **NACOLG** Dial-a-Ride Guide which contains information on fares, accessibility, fare / ticket discount information and general riding information upon request;
- Onboard flyers containing information about route changes, rider alerts, fare increases and public hearings;
- Interior bus signage displaying cash fare cost.
- Title VI Notice, Complaint Procedures and Complaint Form.

#### 5. Monitoring and Updating the LEP PLAN

This plan is designed to be flexible and should be viewed as a work in progress. As such, it is important to consider whether new documents and services need to be made accessible for LEP persons, and also to monitor changes in demographics and types of services.

**NACOLG** will update the LEP as required by U.S. DOT. At a minimum, the plan will be reviewed and updated when data from the most recent U.S. Census is made available, or when clear and higher concentrations of LEP individuals are present in the **NACOLG** service area and/or during the process of updating Title VI Program.

How the **NACOLG** will examine and update its' LEP PLAN:

- Determine how the needs of LEP persons have been addressed;
- Determine the current LEP population in the service area and whether the need for translation services has changed;
- Determine whether local language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the need;
- Determine whether transit systems financial resources are sufficient to fund language assistance resources needed;
- Determine whether the **NACOLG** has fully complied with the goals of the LEP Plan

- Determine whether complaints have been received concerning the company's failure to meet the needs of the LEP individuals.

## **Dissemination of the NACOLG LEP Plan**

### *How the LEP Plan will be disseminated to customers and the community:*

- The LEP Plan and the Title VI Plan will be included on the **NACOLG** website, therefore; any person or agency with internet access will be able to access and download the plan. Alternatively, any person or agency may also request a copy of the plan via telephone, fax, mail or in person, and shall be provided a copy of the plan at no cost. LEP individuals may request that plans are translated in various languages which the **NACOLG** will provide, if feasible.
- Distribute the LEP Plan to human service organizations in the service area.

Questions of comments regarding the LEP Plan may be submitted to the **NACOLG**, at the following:

**NACOLG TRANSIT DIRECTOR  
P.O. BOX 2603  
MUSCLE SHOALS, AL 35661  
(256) 389-0513  
www.nacolg.com**