“Mapping the Way”

NW Louisiana 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update

Public Involvement Plan and Proposed Schedule

Involvement Plan Statement Of Purpose

The intent of the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is to outline a course of action, or tasks, that will facilitate public awareness and the solicitation of public input into the development of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update. Further, the PIP will follow the guidelines and requirements of SAFETEA-LU.

As described in SAFETEA-LU:
MPOs must develop and utilize a “Participation Plan” that provides reasonable opportunities for interested parties to comment on the content of the metropolitan transportation plan and metropolitan TIP. Further, this “Participation Plan” must be developed “in consultation with all interested parties”. This consultation requirement is intended to afford parties who participate in the metropolitan planning process a specific opportunity to comment on the plan prior to its approval.

Notable SAFETEA-LU Requirements

i. Adds representatives of bicycle/pedestrians and disabled persons to those groups shall be provided opportunity to comment on the plan
ii. Adds requirements for a public participation plan developed in consultation with interested parties
iii. MPOs must hold convenient / accessible public meetings, use visualization techniques, make information / plans readily available electronically

LRTP Public Involvement Strategies

Based upon our past experiences with local public involvement efforts, NLCOG will utilize public participation strategies that are best suited for eliciting response from our local residents. Multiple participation strategies will be employed in order to effectively reach out to as many population segments as feasibly possible. Provided below, is a list of public outreach and involvement efforts NLCOG will employ through the LRTP Update effort.

- Community feedback survey — hardcopy and web based distribution
- LRTP information displays — various high traffic locations
- Public awareness campaign — interface with local media outlets
- Reformation and reconfiguration of the 2001 LRTP Delphi Committee — more citizen involvement

The proceeding sections of this plan will describe, in detail, the previously listed involvement strategies.

Community Feedback Survey

NLCOG has developed a survey that will collect feedback, and allow for comment/input, from all socio-economic population segments within Northwest Louisiana. The survey is configured in a manner to solicit public input on issues ranging from the condition of our existing transportation infrastructure, to the quality of transportation services. The survey provides ample opportunity for respondents to rate and/or comment on crucial local issues such as transportation funding, environmental concerns, and areas/locations that require transportation improvement(s).
From each respondent, the community feedback survey collects data in the following areas (i.e. survey objectives):

- Public awareness of NLCOG and the long range transportation planning effort
- Demographic profile of the respondent (e.g. race, age, etc...)
- Work trip travel behavior
- Other trip travel behavior
- How much travel delay do they incur
- Perception of safety/security using transportation
- Transportation and environmental awareness
- Opinion of the quality of our region's existing transportation infrastructure and service providers
- Opinion of travel and mobility within our area related to our current Long Range Plan stated goals and SAFETEA-LU's planning factors (8)
- Other significant regional transportation issues (e.g. how to fund major projects?)

Surveys are accessible through NLCOG's web presence, online at: www.nwlainfo.com/Transport/LRTP2030/LRPUpdate_SurveyForm.asp, and traditional hardcopy surveys are available at the scheduled LRTP information display sites and through mail outs. Survey responses are entered, either automatically while online or manually if it is a hardcopy response, into an MS Access (.mdb) structure database. This database structure will allow us to efficiently compile response data and provide survey results.

**LRTP Information Displays**

The intent of the information display is to increase public awareness of the LRTP process, as well as, provide background information pertaining to NLCOG’s service to the residents of Northwest Louisiana. NLCOG will create LRTP information displays consisting of small map graphics, literature describing NLCOG functions and the LRTP Update effort, and hardcopies of the community feedback survey. These displays are deployed in public, high pedestrian traffic locations such as university student centers, shopping malls, and public transit terminals so as to maximize our exposure. Further, most of the displays are staffed by NLCOG in order to personally answer any questions and to encourage the public to respond to the feedback survey. Table 1, lists the prospective locations of the LRTP information displays.

**LRTP Public Awareness Campaign**

History has shown that Northwest Louisiana’s residents are not familiar with NLCOG, let alone, the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) process. In order to increase the public’s awareness of the LRTP, NLCOG will initiate contact with the region’s primary print media outlets the Shreveport Times (Caddo Parish) and the Bossier Press Tribune (Bossier Parish). Our intent is to develop a news article focusing on the LRTP process and how the public can become involved in this process. A secondary benefit of this effort is an increased awareness of the public service provisions of NLCOG in our capacity as being the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Northwest Louisiana, as well as, an intergovernmental Council of Governments organization.

**Reconfigured/Updated Delphi Committee**

During the 2001 Long Range Transportation Plan development, a committee consisting of members from local government, academia, education, non-profit organizations, and private sector representatives (refer to Table 2) were brought together in an effort to obtain their collective perspectives concerning future population and employment growth/decline by defined sub-areas (i.e. Delphi zones) of both Caddo and Bossier parishes. The information obtained through this iterative, discussion process is crucial to formulating population and employment projections for the travel demand model.
For this update, we’ll encourage bicycle, pedestrian, and disabled citizens to participate through a reformed Delphi, or citizens transportation advisory committee, in order to meet the SAFETEA-LU participation requirements. Additionally, the community feedback survey, hardcopy and electronic versions, provide respondents with an opportunity to participate in a new advisory committee through the survey’s “I’m interested” checkbox, as well as, space for their contact information.