

CATbus PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) is a guide for Clemson Area Transit's ongoing public participation endeavors. Its purpose is to ensure that CAT utilizes effective means of providing information and receiving public input on transportation decisions from low income, minority and limited English proficient (LEP) populations, as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations.

Under federal regulations, transit operators must take reasonable steps to ensure that Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons have meaningful access to their programs and activities. This means that public participation opportunities, normally provided in English, should be accessible to persons who have a limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand English.

In addition to language access measures, there are other major components of the PPP including:

- public participation design factors
- a range of public participation methods to provide information
- invite participation and/or to seek input
- examples to demonstrate how population-appropriate outreach methods can be and were identified and utilized
- performance measures and objectives to ensure accountability and a means for improving over time.

If Clemson Area Transit knows that they will be presenting a topic in a geographic location with a known concentration of LEP persons, CAT will make a concerted effort to have meeting notices, fliers, advertisements, or agendas printed in the alternative language. As well, CAT will coordinate with local community groups to have someone available who can help interpret information at the meeting. When running a general public meeting, notices are put in a geographic location that could be of potential importance to LEP persons. CAT will, to the extent possible, insert the following clause: "An interpreter will be available" in the predominant language. CAT will seek to coordinate with local community groups to have someone available who can help interpret information at the meeting. CAT will include this statement when running general public meeting notices: "Clemson Area Transit will strive to provide reasonable accommodations and services for persons who require special assistance to participate in this public involvement opportunity."

In accordance with 49 CFR Section 21.7(a), every application for financial assistance from FTA must be accompanied by an assurance that the applicant will carry out the program in compliance with DOT's Title VI regulations.

Clemson Area Transit will develop and disseminate Title VI Program information to employees, sub-recipients, contractors, consultants, and beneficiaries as well as the general public. Public dissemination may include postings of policy statements, inclusion of Title VI language in

contracts or other agreements, website postings and annually publishing the Title VI Policy Statement in newspapers having a general circulation and informational brochures. Ensure the public service announcements or notices are posted of proposed projects, hearings, meetings, or formation of public advisory boards, in newspapers or other media reaching the affected community. Ensure the full utilization of available minority publications or media; and where appropriate, provide written information in languages other than English.

CAT works to provide all residents the opportunities for meaningful participation, regardless of disabilities or language barriers. Further, CAT recognize that one should not need to be a transportation professional to understand their written and oral communications. In that spirit, CAT holds public meetings in facilities that are accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act, provide auxiliary aids or interpreters to person with disabilities or language translation barriers, and strive to communicate in plain language and provide appropriate public education materials, and use visual tools to translate detailed data into information that is more readily understood.

CAT responds to calls received at their headquarters. CAT staff also responds to all emails received with comments or questions from the public.

Public meetings on specific issues are held as needed. Materials to be discussed at CAT's public hearings are posted on CAT's social media sites and in local paper.

CAT also conducts workshops, community forums, conferences and other events to keep the public informed and involved in various high-profile transportation projects and plans, and to elicit feedback from the public and CAT's partners. CAT holds meetings in the affected areas of plan or project. Meetings are located and scheduled to maximize public participation (including evening meetings). CAT also advertises public hearings and workshops on trash can bulletins and the City of Clemson website.

Another way to keep abreast of hot topics, events and comment opportunities is to follow CAT on social media, including Facebook, twitter, and Instagram.

All of CAT's social media platforms are accessible via the home page of CAT's web site: CATwww.catbus.com.

CAT's website — www.catbus.com — is targeted to audiences ranging from transit riders seeking bus schedules to transportation professionals, elected officials and news media seeking information on particular programs, projects, and public meetings. Updated daily, the site provides information about CAT's projects and programs, the agency's structure and governing body and upcoming public meetings and workshops.

In addition to the components of CAT's public outreach program detailed above, CAT's commitment to public participation includes staff dedicated to involving the public in CAT's work. Public Information staff provides the following materials and services:

- Public Information staff can make available to the public any item on the CAT website

- CAT staff participates in region-wide community and special events, especially events in targeted ethnic and under-represented communities.

CAT uses various techniques to develop and execute specific public participation programs to inform its major decisions, such as for corridor studies and new funding policies.

CAT's Public Participation Plan is not a static document, but an on-going strategy that will be periodically reviewed and updated based on their experiences and the changing circumstances of the transportation community it serves. As part of every public outreach and involvement program, CAT will set performance measures for the effectiveness of the participation program and report on the results. These performance reports will serve to inform and improve future outreach and involvement programs, including future updates to this Public Participation Plan. This Public Participation Plan may be subject to minor changes from time to time. Any major updates will include a review by CAT's advisory committees, 30-day public comment period with wide release and notification of the public about the proposed changes (a public meeting).