

## RRRC RURAL TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

The 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) requires the expansion of opportunities for the public to become involved in the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes. The Transportation Equity Act of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) continued the requirement for public involvement procedures and also recognized Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice.

To this end, Rural Transportation Committees (RTCs) are required to adopt and implement a proactive public involvement process that provides complete information, timely notice and full access to key decisions. This process must also support early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans and allow a comment period of not less than 45 days prior to modifying the process. TEA-21 also requires that a 30-day public comment period be provided prior to the approval or revision of any plan. In addition, RTCs must seek out and consider the needs of those individuals and groups that have been traditionally underserved by transportation systems.

The Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission RTC formally adopted its public involvement process on December 6, 2006. It was agreed on this date that the process, among other components to be added and/or adapted as needed, shall involve the following:

1. Include announcement in area newspapers (community calendar and/or legal ads, where applicable; thirty and seven day advance notice) of meetings and events.
2. Distribute press releases/encourage coverage in area newspapers of ongoing topics, meetings, and events.
3. Solicit television (e.g., cable TV bulletin boards) and radio announcements of meetings and events.
4. Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to low-income and minority households (environmental justice).
5. Invite environmental justice stakeholders to RTC meetings.
6. Target mailings to transportation and environmental justice stakeholders regarding meetings and events.
7. Have a public comment period during RTC meetings.
8. Create a web page on the RRRC website and have participating RTC jurisdictions link to this web page.

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9. Prepare and distribute informational newsletter.
10. Provide brochures and fact sheets to interested groups for incorporation/distribution in their regular mailings and newsletters.
11. Provide brochures and fact sheets to public/private transportation providers (i.e. transit and taxis) for distribution to their users.
12. Develop information display and/or kiosk with brochures and fact sheets for use at major events and rotational setup at public venues.
13. Advertise the availability of and make readily accessible at public venues any interim plans/documents that are produced during the development of the RLRP.
14. Conduct workshops and public meetings during the development of RLRP.
15. Conduct periodic surveys, particularly during the development of the RLRP.
16. Maintain constant communication and have active participation with local jurisdictions regarding their transportation issues.
17. Send notices of special meetings and events to the governing bodies of participating RTC jurisdictions and for inclusion in monthly briefing packets.
18. Review the public involvement process annually, making revisions as necessary. Poll members of the public to ascertain what public participation method was most effective in attracting them to the RTC meeting or event.