



**Capital Area  
Regional Transit Coordination  
Committee  
(RTCC)**

**Public  
Involvement Plan**

*As Modified December 14, 2010*



# RTCC Public Involvement Plan

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# Public Involvement Plan

## Capital Area Regional Transit Coordination Committee (RTCC)

### 1. OVERVIEW<sup>1</sup>

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A reliable and comprehensive public transportation network is vital to Central Texans, especially those who have no personal means of transportation. There are several providers that operate public transit or client-based transportation services. However, the current demand for services is far outweighing the resources available. Therefore, coordination of services is greatly needed.

Recognizing this issue to be crucial not only for Central Texas, but also for regions across the state, the Texas Legislature, through H.B. 3588, amended the state's Transportation Code to add Chapter 461—Statewide Coordination of Public Transportation. The intent is to ensure that resources are maximized through coordination of services. The goals of the legislation are to eliminate waste, generate increased efficiencies, and attain Texas' clean air goals.

The Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) assigned development of regional transit coordination plans in compliance with Chapter 461 to the Regional Planning and Public Transportation Study Group. The Study Group concluded that each region in the state, as defined by council of government boundaries, should develop a regional coordination plan. Each region has been instructed to develop a planning strategy, estimate the resources required to prepare the plan, and designate an agency to lead the region's efforts. The strategy was presented to the Study Group and the original plan for the Capital Area was submitted to the TTC in September 2006.

The Capital Area Regional Transit Coordination Committee (RTCC) was created in June 2005 under the combined leadership of the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Austin District. The RTCC is supported by the RTCC Executive Committee and CAMPO (which currently serves as administrative lead agency for the effort. The RTCC has also been supported by grant funding provided through the TxDOT Public Transit Division to support staff work and retention of outside consultants, where appropriate.

The goal of the RTCC is to develop a seamless transportation system that achieves efficiencies, eliminates duplication, increases coordination, and addresses service gaps. With a coordinated system, transportation programs would share resources, facilities, and information; and coordinate trip reservations, scheduling, dispatching, and passenger trips.

The area covered by the RTCC is defined by the CAPCOG boundaries and includes a ten county area located in Central Texas. The area covers Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Llano, Lee, Travis and Williamson counties. The area is about 8,480 square miles and the population from the Census 2000 population was 1,346,833. About half of this population is within the City of Austin limits.

#### **VISION STATEMENT:**

**To provide full mobility and access to healthcare, human services, employment, education, commerce, social, and community services for all persons in the region.**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

**To foster the development of a seamless public transportation system that achieves efficiencies, eliminates duplication, increases coordination, and addresses service gaps.**

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<sup>1</sup> *Source: Capital Area Regional Transit Coordination Strategy for a Regional Transit Coordination Plan*

## **2. GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES**

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These guidelines provide the overall structure in which public involvement strategies can be implemented:

- *Open meetings;*
- *Access by persons with disabilities;*
- *Subcommittee meetings;*
- *Adequate notice;*
- *Public participation opportunities at RTCC meetings;*
- *RTCC agenda items;*
- *RTCC action items;*
- *Public participation in agenda items;*
- *Public comments;*
- *Time period for public comments; and,*
- *Format of public meetings.*

### **A. Open Meetings**

All RTCC meetings will be open to the public and subject to the *Texas Open Meetings Act*. The minutes and all materials presented at these meetings will be public record and will be available for review online and at CAMPO offices. The availability of these records will be stated on RTCC's website and can be distributed on request.

### **B. Adequate Notice**

RTCC will provide adequate notice of meetings subject to the *Texas Open Meetings Act*. Meeting notices will be posted on RTCC's website as well as posted at CAMPO. If requested, a reading service for the blind will be enlisted to broadcast this information.

### **C. Public Comments**

Public comments may be provided in the following ways:

- Verbally at a public meeting (if applicable);
- During the public participation opportunity of a regularly scheduled RTCC meeting occurring within the review and comment period;
- In writing;
- By fax;
- With TTY (teletypewriter) and/or TDD (telecommunications device for the deaf); and,
- Through email.

### **D. Format of Public Meetings**

Public meetings will provide for open discussions between RTCC members and/or staff and the public.

All meetings will be on the record. The format of public meetings will generally be as follows:

- Presentation by RTCC staff and/or their consultant(s);
- Question and answer period, and discussion period;
- Summary and wrap up by RTCC staff and/or their consultant staff and information about the next steps, if applicable;
- RTCC will accept written comments following public meetings; and,
- RTCC will occasionally survey meeting attendees to gauge effectiveness of the public involvement process.

### **E. Special Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is landmark civil rights legislation ensuring equal opportunity for people with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local

government services and telecommunications. RTCC and its subcommittees are fully committed to the spirit and intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. In order to facilitate participation by people with disabilities, the following guidelines and activities will apply:

- All public meetings and RTCC formal events will be held in facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities;
- All public notices of RTCC meetings will state that accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request. One-week notice is required for provisions of appropriate auxiliary aids and services;
- All documents available to the public will be provided in alternative formats for qualified individuals with disabilities, upon request;
- The website will be in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998.
- The telephone number, email, mailing address, fax number, and website address will be included on all RTCC publications; and,
- A list of resources for auxiliary aids and services will be developed and maintained.

### **3. STAKEHOLDERS**

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When the RTCC was established in 2005, members set out to determine those most interested in and potentially impacted by public transportation coordination. Guided by knowledge of transportation issues and the geographic region, committee members identified a list of nine stakeholder groups, with 19 categories of stakeholders represented by these groups. These 19 categories of stakeholders remain the focus of planning efforts and are represented on the Regional Transit Coordination Committee, ensuring that a representative group of stakeholders guide the planning process and provide input at each stage. The number of stakeholders participating in the process can be modified based on increased interest or specific geographic area needs.

To engender public trust and understanding, the RTCC will need to communicate with a wide variety of stakeholders. Key project stakeholders can be categorized in to two groups, which include:

#### **Internal**

- CAMPO, Capital Metro, CARTS, & TxDOT Staff
- Health & Human Services Staff
- CAMPO & Capital Metro Boards

#### **External**

- Neighborhood associations
- Businesses
  - small businesses
  - large employers
- Property owners
- Non-profits
- Chambers of Commerce
- News and Community Media outlets
- Service and community organizations
- Professional associations
- Minority organizations
- State legislators
- Local elected officials

- City and County staff
- Public sector staff
- Resource agencies, (e.g., CAN, MHMRs, etc.)
- Public Information Officers (PIOs)
- Daily newspapers
- Community newspapers
- Trade publications

**TABLE 1. RTCC MEMBERSHIP AS OF SPRING 2010**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Category (number of reps)</b>	<b>Representatives</b>	<b>Exec. Committee Member</b>
General Public Transportation	Public Transportation authorities, rural transit districts, and other public transportation providers (4)	Carol Warlick, Hill Country Transit District (ex officio)	
		David Marsh, CARTS	x alt: Lyle Nelson
		Linda Watson, Capital Metro	x alt: Meredith Highsmith
		David Bartels, City of Round Rock	
	Intercity Transportation Providers (1)	Jerry Prestridge, Texas Bus Association	
	Agencies that fund public transportation for the general public (2)	Ed Collins, TxDOT Austin District	
Vanessa Owens, TxDOT PTN			
Client Transportation	HHS Medical Transportation Program (1)	Donshas (Don) Cabiness, HHSC MTP	x
	Other Client transportation Providers (3)	Jesse Colunga, Austin Parks and Recreation	
		Hector Vera, Hill Country Community MHMR	
		Joyce Lauck, Austin Groups for the Elderly	
	Recipients of TxDOT Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (section 5310) to provide client transportation (1)	Rodd Gibbs, Austin-Travis County Integral Care	
	Health and human service agencies that fund or purchase transportation for clients (4)	Yael Trevino, Worksource	
		VACANT	
Sherri E Fleming, Travis County Health and Human Services		x	
Jackie McLaughlin, Health and Human Services Commission		x	
Regional Planning	Regional transportation planning organizations (2)	Maureen McCoy, CAMPO	x alt:Stevie Greathouse
		Betty Voights, CAPCOG	x alt: David Fowler
Local Government	Elected officials, local governments (1)	Will Conley, Hays County Commissioner	

Human Service Providers	Agencies that provide services for clients who need transportation (1)	VACANT	
Advocates	Advocates for those who use or need public transportation and advocates for transit coordination (2)	John Meinkowsky, Austin Resource Center for Independent Living (ARCIL)	
		Vanessa Sarria, Community Action Network	x
Public	User of public transportation-urban (1)	VACANT	
	User of public transportation-rural (1)	VACANT	
	Interested General Public (1)	Bill Hamilton	x
Other Transportation	University transportation providers (1)	Paul Hamilton, Texas State University	
	Private sector providers (1)	Jim Connoly, Yellow Cab	
	Faith-based transportation provider (1)	Terry Nathan, St. David's Episcopal Church	x
	Sponsor of volunteer driver programs (1)	Jeanie Teel, West Austin Caregivers	
	Student Transportation (1)	VACANT	
	Business Community (1)	VACANT	

#### **4. PRE-ESTABLISHED STAKEHOLDER ISSUES & HISTORY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT EVENTS**

In 2006, the public involvement consultants for the development of the original coordinated plan, Group Solutions RJW, interviewed key stakeholders to understand their issues and determine effective ways to communicate with similar stakeholders and their constituents.

The interviews revealed communication opportunities and provided an enlightening look at transportation coordination issues. Although the interviewees had diverse opinions, safe, reliable and affordable transportation was a common interest. Also of interest was better coordination of available services. However, most interviewees representing health and human service agencies had not pursued coordinating transportation services with other agencies.

The following list summarizes ideas and issues revealed during the interviews:

- a. Communication
- b. Reliability
- c. Regulations
- d. Affordability
- e. Navigating the System
- f. Safety

In September of 2008, the RTCC hosted a Regional Public Transportation Forum on Urban Service Delivery. Participants brainstormed about strategies that could be pursued at the local and regional level to ensure adequate, equitable, and efficient provision of urban public transportation services.

#### **Strategy: Develop Regional Transit Services**

- “Connector” services and infrastructure
- Services that provide connections and not barriers urban - rural
- Connections between Austin and San Antonio
- Regional rail
- Multi-modal projects

- Express bus service and high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes
- Transit oriented design standards for roadway design and new developments

**Strategy: Research Regional Governance Options for Transit**

- Regional agency
- Set regional priorities for allocation of funds using “decision tree”
- Breakdown silos
- Organizational silos
- Geographic silos
- Funding silos
- Joint powers agreements
- Planning for a long-term model for transit planning, delivery, financing
- Land use authority/ economic development opportunity

**Strategy: Identify Additional Funding Opportunities for Regional Transit**

- Possible sources of funding other than local option sales tax
- Gas tax: Sales tax on motor fuels or Excise tax on motor fuels
- Vehicle registration fee
- Motor vehicle sales tax distributed to local
- Tolling/congestion pricing
- Development impact fees
- Transportation impact fees
- Tax incremental financing (TIF)
- Public improvement districts (PID)
- Local funds and general fund priorities
- Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) transit component (dollars for new construction)
- Funds generated from investment in transit

**Challenges to be Addressed**

- Regional funding mechanisms (find a mechanism to generate local funds for transit outside of Capital Metro)
- Restriction on use of FTA Section 5307 funds for capital (need flexibility to use funds for operating)

**Strategy: Develop Communications Tools to Improve Understanding of How to Use and Benefit from Transit**

- Public education/ travel training
- Community understanding of agencies/roles
- Branding opportunities
- Promote a regional vision for transit

**Other Strategies**

- Research policies for land use – transportation linkages
- Densification/land use
- Transit oriented development policies and best practices
- Treat transportation as a system
- Transportation demand management
- Economic development (benefits of connectivity)
- Transit oriented development

## **Strategies for response to impacts of 2010 Census**

1. Identify Additional Funding Opportunities for Regional Transit
2. Research Regional Governance Options for Transit
3. Develop Communications Tools to Improve Understanding of How to Use and Benefit from Transit

In 2009, a team of representatives from the RTCC attended the Texas Institute for Transportation Coordination workshop cosponsored by TxDOT and the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). In the workshop, RTCC representatives were tasked with designing and implementing a work plan for the following year to include a major project application. The project application, a Transportation Solutions Training initiative, involves working with area service providers to improve the information available to front line workers, including case managers, social workers, and call center staff regarding the family of transportation services in the Capital Area. The project goal is two-fold:

- 1) help people access the transportation options that currently exist, and
- 2) begin to build a comprehensive database regarding transportation gaps that need to be filled.

Additionally, several barriers to coordinating transportation services were identified by the RTCC:

- a. **Vehicle Specification:** Shared use of fleets may be difficult because the size, internal configuration, and special equipment on vehicles are tailored for the needs of different client bases.
- b. **Driver Requirements:** Different providers have different minimum requirements for their drivers such as age, driving record, and background.
- c. **Client Circumstances:** Agencies differ in eligibility criteria for clients and also may have trip purpose limitations.
- d. **Funding:** As mentioned by some of the interviewees, funding for transportation is often limited and there are restrictions associated with client type, purpose of trip, and structure for reimbursement.
- e. **Cost Structuring:** A conflict may arise when an agency is expecting a lower cost for services than a public provider can offer.
- f. **Regulations and Laws:** Regulations can impose conditions that constrain coordination. Furthermore, laws constraining cooperation can only be addressed when the legislature is in session.
- g. **Cross-Agency Concerns:** Some agencies may be reluctant to entrust the care of clients to another agency because they worry the level of service may not be the same.
- h. **Resource Constraints:** Lack of funding can inhibit the ability of agencies to develop coordination projects, especially if the project requires capital investment to permit long-term reduction in operating costs.
- i. **Reporting/Data Requirements:** Funding, client service, and operating agencies may all have specific data informational requirements. Coordinating the different types of requirements cross-agency wise may prove difficult.

## 5. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT PLAN (SIP)

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Strategic communication assumes a direct cause-and-effect relationship between an organization's communication activities and the success of the organization's mission. To that end, the RTCC Public Involvement Team has developed a strategic communication program that will support the successful implementation and completion of the RTCC work plan in a measurable way. The program will be integrated at both the programmatic and individual planning levels to ensure that a cohesive, consistent public information/involvement program is administered throughout the project. For the purposes of this project, the program will be audience-based.

**Audience-based programs** – specific programs to reach and engage key stakeholders on a consistent basis

- a. Internal Relations
- b. Public Outreach
- c. Public Involvement
- d. Government Relations
- e. Media Relations

### INTERNAL RELATIONS

#### Program-Wide Goals

- Allow the free flow of communication throughout the RTCC
- Quickly and accurately respond to inquiries (both internal and external)
- Create an informed team and facilitate effective coordination

#### Stakeholder Audiences

- RTCC Members & Executive Committee
- CAMPO, Capital Metro, TxDOT, CARTS, & Health & Human Services staff
- Boards of all involved agencies

#### Strategies

- Establish, maintain and upgrade communication channels that enhance cross-functional communication
- Plan events and communication methods to foster “one-team” culture
- Equip RTCC members with information to be effective program ambassadors

#### Tactics Toolbox

- Internet
- Internal meetings
- Processes, procedures, guidelines
- Newsletters
- E-mail communications
- Training, e.g., orientation, media, presentation
- Key message sheets
- Fact book

#### Proposed Measurement

- Web-based employee communication survey
- Message monitoring
- Informal feedback, one-on-one interviews

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

### Program-Wide Goals

- Encourage public participation during all phases of 2010-2012 Work Plan
- Present a unified public involvement approach from the RTCC

### Stakeholder Audiences

- Neighborhood associations
- Businesses (small & large)
- Property owners
- Local jurisdictions

### Strategies

- Develop communication methods that facilitate two-way communication
- Tailor communications to specific region & community characteristics

### Tactics Toolbox

- RTCC Web site
- Issue-management database/report
- News releases
- Newsletters
- Existing communication channels
- Fact sheets
- Public meetings
- Neighborhood meetings

### Proposed Measurement

Meeting attendance, response rates, focus groups, surveying, Web site monitoring

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

### Program-Wide Goals

- Raise awareness and understanding of the RTCC Mission & Goals
- Maintain public confidence in the agencies the represent the RTCC
- Communicate consistent, accurate and timely information to the public

### Specific target audiences

- Neighborhood associations
- Non-profits
- Chambers
- Media
- Service and community organizations
- Professional associations
- Minority organizations

### Strategies

- Maximize use of existing communication channels within the community
- Layer easily accessible communication methods to address communication preferences
- Tailor communications to specific region/community characteristics

### Tactics Toolbox

- News releases
- Public meetings/Presentations/Speakers Bureau

- Special events
- Web site
- E-newsletters
- Brochures
- Information kits
- Project collateral materials
- Fact sheets

#### Proposed Measurement

- Annual surveying, meeting attendance, response rates, focus groups, Web site monitoring

### **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

#### Program-wide goals

- Maintain confidence in the management and progress of the 2010-2012 Work plan
- Utilize existing communication channels to extend the reach and enhance the clarity of RTCC messaging
- Facilitate project partnerships that assist RTCC in meeting the Work plan goals

#### Specific target audiences

- TxDOT
- State elected officials
- State legislators
- Local elected officials
- CAPCOG
- Public sector staff
- CAMPO

#### Strategies

- Update elected and appointed officials, staff and agencies on a regular, proactive basis
- Provide information and messages that allow government partners to respond quickly and accurately to constituents and demonstrate support of the project
- Identify and respond to issues in a proactive, coordinated manner

#### Tactics Toolbox

- Elected officials briefings through each agency
- Contact matrix
- Meeting monitoring
- Special events
- PIO briefings
- Presentations
- Speakers bureau
- Newsletters, updates

#### Proposed measurement

Annual surveying, focus groups, feedback from briefings, feedback from agency/project staff

### **MEDIA RELATIONS**

#### Program-wide goals

- Develop and maintain proactive relationship with media representatives
- Provide accurate, timely, consistent information

- Create and maintain interest throughout life of the 2010 Work Plan implementation

#### Specific target audiences

- Daily newspapers
- Community newspapers
- Transit
- Business
- Government access channels
- Local jurisdiction newsletter article additions
- Minority media and publications

#### Strategies

- Create convenient, accessible, clear communications for media representatives
- Maintain accurate, updated media contact lists and deadline requirements
- Maintain regular communication with key local news representatives
- Craft communications to meet specific media outlet needs

#### Tactics toolbox

- News releases
- Web site
- Media kits
- Graphics; photos
- Fact sheets
- Backgrounders

#### Proposed measurement

Review level, accuracy and frequency of coverage, review media clips, annual visit feedback

The 2010-2012 RTCC Work Plan reflects two major stakeholder outreach events in addition to meetings of the RTCC, providing stakeholders with opportunities for input and review on existing conditions and needs, as well as the draft plan. Additionally, a survey will be provided for public input. This Stakeholder Involvement Plan details the specific goals of outreach efforts, overarching strategies for achieving the stakeholder goals, techniques associated with each task in the Work Plan, and the respective roles of consultants, committees, and the lead agency in implementing the outreach strategy.

#### a. SIP Goals

- 1) Identify interested stakeholders and include these new stakeholders in future coordination activities.
- 2) Inform stakeholders of transportation coordination activities and of opportunities for involvement.
- 3) Involve stakeholders in seeking new opportunities to enhance regional transportation coordination.
- 4) Monitor and evaluate stakeholder involvement activities.

#### b. Strategies Guiding Outreach Activities

- 1) Enlist the RTCC and Executive Committee to provide needed expertise, needed input, and assistance communicating with stakeholders.

- 2) Use service providers (agencies, volunteers, etc.) to help identify and communicate the needs of users and potential users.
- 3) Utilize “information relayers” (i.e., associations, groups, organizations, elected leaders, and others with access to large groups of stakeholders) to disseminate information and solicit stakeholder input.
- 4) Provide an opportunity for feedback at each project milestone.
- 5) Expand the contact database of interested and impacted stakeholders by offering the opportunity to be added to the database as a part of each outreach effort, encouraging committee members to provide interested others, and adding event attendees.
- 6) Provide materials that respond to the needs of diverse stakeholders (i.e., Spanish-speaking, visually impaired, deaf).

c. Techniques for Informing and Involving

The following are planned techniques for informing and engaging stakeholders. Primary responsibility for these tasks rests with the RTCC consultants.

*Stakeholder workshops* – A stakeholder workshop is an interactive forum that encourages information sharing and stakeholder participation. Workshops will be geographically dispersed across the RTCC service area.

*Stakeholder interviews* – Stakeholder interviews are discussions with representative stakeholders. The purpose of interviews is to obtain needed information, particularly information helpful in developing an effective stakeholder involvement plan.

*Electronic invitations* – An electronic invitation is a message sent through email announcing upcoming participation activities. The invitations include introductory comments to avoid confusion with “spam”. The invitations use simple terminology and attractive graphics to encourage reading. Invitations are followed reminders sent closer to the date of the event.

*Use of “information relayers”* – Information relayers are key agency representatives and others who are part of stakeholder networks in the community. They have agreed to forward information to their networks. The use of relayers encourages a broader dissemination of information.

*Review and comment by RTCC and RTCC Executive Committee* – As representatives of large stakeholder groups, RTCC and RTCC Executive Committee members will review and comment on transportation coordination activities as well as informational techniques.

*Telephone calls to strategic stakeholders* – These follow-up calls are made after mailing the electronic invitations and target stakeholders such as key information relayers and elected officials. The calls solicit attendance and assistance in disseminating pertinent information.

*Informational updates* – Informational updates are electronic updates that inform stakeholders of key milestones and information. They are written in lay terms designed to encourage reading. These updates include a feedback form to allow response and input.

*Technical memo* – Technical memos are formal reports of progress after completion of each task. They contain the results of analysis and stakeholder input.

Technical memos are to be posted to the RTCC website: [www.capitalareartcc.org](http://www.capitalareartcc.org).

*Comment database* – The comment database allows stakeholders to directly submit comments for review as well as to review comments submitted by others. Comments will be reviewed, and project relevant comments will be categorized and further analyzed.

*Agency survey* – The agency survey inventories current conditions to identify existing and needed transportation services, and obtains key information on operations and finances.

d. Stakeholder Techniques (By Work Plan Tasks)

The following are planned techniques for informing and engaging stakeholders as defined by Work Plan Tasks.

**Table 2. Coordination Plan Update Timeline (By Work Plan Tasks)**

	<b>Primary Technique</b>	<b>Supplemental Activities</b>
<b>Task 1:</b> Scoping—Plan outline & timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of Accomplishments</li> <li>• Literature Review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft PI Plan</li> <li>• Literature Review</li> <li>• RTCC and Executive Committee</li> <li>• Consultant Contract</li> <li>• Comment Database</li> </ul>
<b>Task 2:</b> Vision & Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency and provider survey</li> <li>• Electronic informational update (report on existing conditions) and feedback form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information relayers</li> <li>• Comment database</li> <li>• RTCC and RTCC Technical Sub-Committee</li> <li>• Technical Memorandum #2</li> </ul>
<b>Task 3:</b> Establish Existing Conditions & Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kickoff Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-Newsletter</li> <li>• Information relayers</li> <li>• RTCC and Executive Committee</li> <li>• Reports on needs &amp; resources</li> </ul>
<b>Task 4:</b> Strategies & Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Report on Transportation Strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memo on staff structure for continued coordination</li> <li>• Comment database</li> <li>• RTCC and Executive Committee</li> </ul>
<b>Task 5:</b> Draft regional transit coordination plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RTCC Meeting</li> </ul>	
<b>Task 6:</b> Public Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geographically dispersed Open House and accompanying stakeholder meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic invitation</li> <li>• Information relayers</li> <li>• RTCC and RTCC Executive Committee</li> <li>• Telephone calls</li> <li>• Published Updated RTCC plan</li> </ul>

e. Recommended Activities

Press releases and outreach to media – A press release is an announcement of stakeholder workshops and other pertinent RTCC news sent to targeted media in the ten-county area covered by the RTCC. Besides press releases, outreach to media can include media briefings as well as requests for stories.

Meeting notices published as ads in local newspapers – Meeting notices in the form of paid advertisements are tools to announce stakeholder workshops to the public and provide other RTCC information.

Flyers/posters/kiosks – Flyers, posters and kiosks all serve as mechanisms to announce pertinent news regarding task work of the RTCC. Informational flyers can easily be posted in the lobbies of agencies, and posters and kiosks can be placed where people gather to maximize information exposure. Posters on buses and flyers in kiosks at bus stops are effective tools for reaching users and potential users.

Website with web links – A project website provides a communication mechanism via computer. It enables people to give and get information when they want it. As mentioned, the CAPCOG website is already operational.

Contact database – A contact database is a repository of the identified stakeholders. A contact database can also be used to track stakeholder participation at events and other activities.

Stakeholders' council – The council is a volunteer group of interested stakeholders. Council members commit to participating in workshops, responding to requests for information, and soliciting information from their networks of transportation users.

Special outreach to users – User input is important, and will be solicited throughout the project. Special efforts to outreach to users will occur mid-project, insuring the users' ideas will be heard on ways to enhance service and increase customer satisfaction. Posters and comment cards will be placed at strategic locations including grocery stores, buses, and the offices of service providers.

Speakers' bureau – Speakers' bureau members will speak to stakeholder groups, elected leaders, and end-users about the coordination activities. Speakers will be available to meet with groups at their convenience in settings they prefer.

RTCC meeting location—The original concept behind the centralization of RTCC meetings at One Texas Center is to hold meetings in a central location with adequate access to public transportation. However, as the RTCC moves forward on the stakeholder involvement plan, meetings may be located in other areas around the region to target specific stakeholders. An open comment period will allow users to offer ideas and communicate their needs directly to the RTCC and its consultants.

Workshop/Facilitation – Facilitation of stakeholder workshops ensures a consistent, focused message and that group energies are focused on the task at hand. Facilitated meetings also help ensure effective meetings and that stakeholders feel recognized and appreciated for their contributions.

f. Roles

Effective stakeholder and public involvement is a team endeavor. The active participation of each of these groups reflects the priority the RTCC places on stakeholder engagement. Listed below are roles related to stakeholder involvement.

*Regional Transit Coordination Committee (RTCC) and Executive Committee*

RTCC – Provides direction and oversight; represents the interests and points of view of transit coordination stakeholders; encourages broad participation in the process by disseminating information to other stakeholders and encouraging participation; offers stakeholders a monthly opportunity to provide comments and review coordination activities; actively participates in stakeholder activities.

RTCC Executive Committee – Provides guidance and support on stakeholder activities; disseminates information to stakeholders and encourages their participation; provides staff support for workshops and other outreach activities. Works within the public involvement plan to ensure outreach goals are being met.

*Lead Administrative Agency*

CAMPO – Has management responsibility for outreach activities, including providing staff and facilitation for these efforts; distributes event notices and invitations; updates website; maintains contact database; and provides technical support for the comment database.

*Public Involvement Consultants*

Stakeholder Involvement Consultant (to be determined) – Follows public involvement plan as written and approved by the RTCC; provides advice on the best ways to reach out to stakeholders; makes stakeholders aware of outreach activities by preparing event invitations and notices; identifies locations for events and makes sure that facilities accommodate needs of stakeholders and the planning consultant; handles event setup; aids in preparing electronic informational updates (if approved as an outreach event).

g. Strategies and Policies Guiding Public Involvement

The following is a list of strategies that can be used to enhance and support public outreach and education in the regional transportation planning and decision-making process. As RTCC forms new relationships and bolsters existing relationships with its different constituencies, new strategies also may be adopted.

**A. Identify and Build Relationships with Stakeholders**

A stakeholder is defined as any person or group that is affected by a transportation plan, program, or project, including those who may not be aware they are affected. Stakeholders potentially include citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, public providers of transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transit, and other interested parties.

Individual stakeholders and representatives of stakeholder groups will be included in RTCC's database.

RTCC will continually work to identify new stakeholders interested in or affected by the transportation planning process. Ongoing meetings with stakeholders will be conducted to share information on a one-to-one basis about RTCC's public involvement process. These meetings will also

give stakeholders an opportunity to provide individualized feedback to RTCC's public involvement team.

### **B. Develop and Implement a Plan to Reach Non-Participating Minority and Low-Income Populations**

Particular emphasis will be put on reaching people who have traditionally not been participants in the transportation planning process. Traditional non-participants include persons who are low-income, minority, elderly, and disabled; have no vehicles; are low literate or have limited English proficiency. The Executive Committee will identify and meet with organizations and community leaders who represent these populations. The purpose of these meetings will be to build relationships with the groups and leaders as well as identify strategies for bringing traditional non-participants into the transportation planning process. The identified strategies will be implemented in cooperation with the organizations and community leaders. Detailed plans for identifying and meeting with groups and leaders and implementing strategies will be developed.

Strategies may incorporate the following:

- *having meetings in transit accessible locations or in the community for those who do not have personal transportation;*
- *holding meetings at times of the day to mitigate the elderly's safety concerns;*
- *holding meetings on days of the week or weekend when it is convenient for the public to attend;*
- *piggy-backing on existing events to reduce time away from family and work;*
- *conducting meetings and providing materials in a language that can be understood by the community.*

### **C. Develop an Outreach and Education Program**

The outreach and education program will be designed to educate the public about the regional transportation coordination process and its relevance to all stakeholders. English and Spanish materials produced as part of this program will include such tools as pamphlets and brochures which can be used in various presentations and for distribution. It will be necessary to periodically review and update the program and accompanying materials.

### **D. Publicize RTCC Activities**

Media coverage will be actively cultivated to ensure that mainstream and ethnic radio, television and newspaper outlets understand the importance of providing information on regional transit coordination activities. In addition, articles, news releases and/or media alerts will be disseminated to announce public review and comment periods for RTCC's Work Program, the Public Involvement Plans, and other major activities. In order to do so, a current list of media outlets such as mainstream and ethnic television and radio stations and newspapers, including small community based publications, will be established and maintained by the Executive Committee.

### **E. Partner with Outreach Professionals**

Establishing partnerships with member jurisdiction and agency outreach professionals will help RTCC reach a greater number of affected communities and help to promote best practices. Such professionals are often aware of local issues, have a good understanding of the various communities and community networks within their jurisdictions, and can provide interpretation and translation services. In addition, utilizing their resources to publicize activities and events will help RTCC reach a broader audience.

### **F. Establish a Speaker's Bureau**

The Speaker's Bureau will consist of RTCC members, staff, and other volunteers who can speak to civic groups, professional organizations, neighborhood associations, and other groups about the regional transit coordination process. Members of the speaker's bureau will present information in order to educate the public about the process. The availability of speakers will be marketed to interested

groups. In addition, the public will be given opportunities to educate RTCC about local issues and transportation gaps.

#### **G. Maintain a Website**

The website provides information about RTCC and its activities, including a listing of all upcoming meetings. The website will include agendas and minutes of meetings. RTCC's website should provide an opportunity for the public to provide input and formal comments on an ongoing basis through email links. In addition, a publications section is provided for additional information on national coordination activities and a "number of hits" counter should be added to the website and charted. The website will be maintained in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998.

#### **H. Produce and Distribute Newsletters**

RTCC should produce a quarterly newsletter in English and Spanish dedicated to RTCC activities including the Regional Transit Coordination process. If requested, the newsletter should be provided in a large print format. The newsletter should include information about technical issues written in layman's terms for the general public. In addition, the newsletter should provide the public with periodic updates of RTCC's activities. The newsletter should be available online and distributed to all identified stakeholders, made available at libraries, government buildings, and other locations. Additionally, specialized newsletters may be needed to provide timely information on targeted topics.

#### **I. Conduct Information Workshops**

Information workshops should be conducted on topics associated with the Regional Transit Coordination process. Such workshops should be designed to educate participants on specific topics, e.g., barriers to coordination, service expansion plans, public involvement process, air quality, etc. Information workshops provide a means for allowing participants to express their ideas and concerns in an informal setting. Information workshops will be conducted on an as-needed basis.

#### **J. Hold Open Houses**

Open houses provide an informal setting for the public to access general information on the transportation planning process. Open houses have no fixed agendas and no formal presentations. RTCC Executive Committee will be on hand to answer questions and provide details on a one-on-one basis. Open houses may precede public meetings.

#### **K. Public Input at RTCC Meetings**

RTCC holds quarterly meetings at which all formal business is conducted. At each meeting, the public is provided with an opportunity to address RTCC on any issue related to the Regional Transit Coordination. Anyone wishing to speak can sign up at the beginning of the meeting or contact RTCC's lead agency, CAMPO, prior to the meeting. The public may engage in the discussion of action and information items on the agenda at the discretion of the chair.

#### **L. Conduct Surveys**

Surveys may be used to gather information on people's perceptions, preferences, and practices. In areas where low literacy exists; surveys may be conducted in person. In areas where the public is literate, surveys may be mailed and/or distributed by using RTCC's website. Surveys may require Spanish translation services.

## **6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

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The following tools will be used to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of outreach activities.

- Workshop Evaluation Forms
- Stakeholder Comments From Comment Cards and Comment Database
- RTCC and Executive Committee Feedback
- Workshop Participation
- Response to Surveys

Consultants and the RTCC will monitor effectiveness of these public involvement activities every six months in addition to an on-going basis.

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A: TERMINOLOGY & DEFINITIONS

Planning Terms

**Target Audience** : A specified audience or demographic group for which a communication message or method is designed.

**Goal** : The identified overarching purpose(s) for any public information/involvement program, activity or message.

**Objectives** : A specific, measurable outcome that identifies the time frame, intended audience, and desired result of a communication activity.

**Strategies** : General approaches that tie specific tactics into the objectives. Strategies do not indicate specific actions to achieve objectives. There can be multiple strategies for each objective, as well as strategies that can support multiple objectives..

**Tactics** : Specific communication actions, tools and/or methods devised to deliver information and messages. *Ex: Project fact book, informative presentation, newsletters, Web site, etc.*

## APPENDIX B: FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The Federal laws and processes covering public participation in transportation planning include the following:

- *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;*
- *Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations (1994)*
- *Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (2000);*
- *The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 (Section 508); and,*
- *The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.*

### ***Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (1994)***

The basis of *Executive Order 12898* lies in *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*. It directs that “each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low income populations.”

*Executive Order 12898* defines minority populations as belonging to any of the following groups:

- *Black – a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa;*
- *Hispanic – a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race;*
- *Asian American – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands; and,*
- *American Indian and Alaskan Native – a person having origins in any of the original people of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.*

It defines low-income populations as those whose household incomes are *at or below* the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines.

The three fundamental environmental justice principles include:

- *To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations;*
- *To ensure full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in transportation decision-making; and,*
- *To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.*

***Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (2000)***

The basis of *Executive Order 13166* lies in *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*. It requires that Federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of Federal financial assistance provide “meaningful access” to their limited English proficiency applicants and beneficiaries.

***The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 (Section 508)***

*The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* mandates that public facilities be made accessible to people with disabilities and has been the basis for requiring that transit buses and street curbs be retrofitted or reconstructed with appropriate equipment and design details. *The Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (Section 504) states that “no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under” any program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance. *The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998* (Section 508) states that Federal agencies must ensure that electronic and information technology is accessible to employees and members of the public with disabilities to the extent it does not pose an “undue burden.”

***The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990***

*The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990* establishes a timetable and program to improve the nation’s air quality, emphasizes mobile source emissions, and requires the Environmental Protection Agency to invoke penalties if states fail to submit adequate plans to attain standards. Under the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency has set two National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone: the primary standard designed to protect public health; the secondary standard designed to protect sensitive vegetation, ecosystems, and public welfare. On January 6, 2010, EPA proposed to strengthen the NAAQS for ozone and to set a distinct secondary standard that recognizes the effect of cumulative, seasonal exposure on sensitive vegetation.

***Nonattainment and Conformity***

The Central Texas area has long been on the near edge of nonattainment for ozone. The region has exceeded the NAAQS, but has worked hard to restore its air quality and has never been formally designated a nonattainment area by EPA. With the range of values EPA is proposing for the revised, more protective NAAQS, the area anticipates a nonattainment designation. This brings with it a strict, federally prescribed protocol and timeline for regaining compliance. A nonattainment designation would require CAMPO to work under the constraints of Federal transportation conformity requirements.

**APPENDIX C: CAPITAL AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT COORDINATION PLAN UPDATE TIMELINE**

**Timeline**

	FY 2011											
	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A
<b>Task/Subtask</b>												
1. Scoping	■	■	■									
2. Vision and Performance	■	■	■	■	■	■						
3A. Analysis of Needs			■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
3B. Analysis of Resources			■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
4. Strategies and Partnerships							■	■	■			
5. Coordinated Plan							■	■	■	■	■	■
6. Public Involvement	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

**APPENDIX D: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT WORK PROGRAM**

[RESERVED]