



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Transportation Management Area Planning Certification Review

Federal Highway
Administration

Federal Transit
Administration

Augusta Transportation Management Area



October 6, 2020
Summary Report

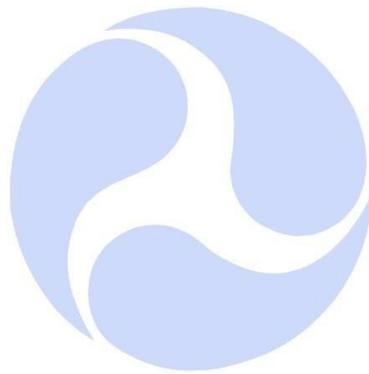




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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On August 26-27, 2020, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted the certification review of the transportation planning process for the Augusta Transportation Management Area also known as the Augusta Regional Transportation Study (ARTS). FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for each urbanized area over 200,000 in population at least every four years to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements.

1.1 Previous Findings and Disposition

On August 18-19, 2016, a Certification Review of the transportation planning process of the Augusta Transportation Management Area was conducted by representatives from FHWA and FTA. Since the last certification review in 2016, the ARTS MPO staff has made significant improvements to its transportation planning processes. During the 2016 Review, the Federal Review team found twelve notable practices and made twenty-two recommendations for improvement to the ARTS MPO planning process. See Appendix C for dispositions.

1.2 Summary of Current Findings

The current review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Augusta urbanized area meets Federal planning requirements.

Based on the overall findings in this Certification Review, FHWA and FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process of the Augusta Transportation Management Area substantially meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. There are also recommendations in this report that warrant follow-up, as well as areas where the TMA is performing very well and is to be commended. See Section 5.0

This certification will remain in effect until October 2024.



2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background/Preface

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, with a population of over 200,000. After the 2010 Census, the Secretary of Transportation designated 183 TMAs – 179 urbanized areas over 200,000 in population plus four urbanized areas that received special designation. In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a Certification Review Report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal law and regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the MPO(s), the State DOT(s), and public transportation operator(s) in the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning process. Joint FTA/FHWA Certification Review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect regional issues and needs. As a consequence, the scope and depth of the Certification Review reports will vary significantly.

The Certification Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a regional metropolitan transportation planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other stewardship and oversight activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment, including Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approval, the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), metropolitan and statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) findings, air-quality (AQ) conformity determinations (in nonattainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal interactions provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the Certification Review process.

While the Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “findings” of Certification Review are, in fact, based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Federal reviewers prepare Certification Reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA



and FTA field offices, and their content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to formal “findings” of the review.

2.2 Purpose and Objective

Since the enactment of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process in all urbanized areas over 200,000 population to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 U.S.C. 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450. In 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), extended the minimum allowable frequency of certification reviews to at least every four years.

The ARTS MPO is the designated MPO for the Augusta urbanized area and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is the responsible State agency. ARTS is a bi-state Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) covering the Augusta-Richmond County, GA; and, Aiken County, SC urbanized areas. There are four Georgia MPOs whose borders are within 90-miles of the ARTS boundary: Coastal Region MPO (CORE), the Macon Area Transportation Study (MATS), the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), and the Madison-Athens-Clarke Oconee Regional Transportation Study. In addition to the Georgia MPOs, there are five South Carolina MPOs within 90 miles of the ARTS boundary: the Anderson Area Transportation Study, the Charleston Area Transportation Study, the Columbia Area Transportation Study, the Spartanburg Area Transportation Study, and the Sumter Area Transportation Study.

Certification of the planning process is a prerequisite to the approval of Federal funding for transportation projects in such areas. The certification review is also an opportunity to provide assistance on new programs and to enhance the ability of the metropolitan transportation planning process to provide decision makers with the knowledge they need to make well-informed capital and operating investment decisions.

3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Review Process

This report details the current review, which consisted of a formal site visit using the Zoom platform. See Appendix A for agenda. Participants in the review included representatives of FHWA, FTA, GDOT and ARTS MPO staff. A full list of participants is documented in Appendix B.



The TMA Certification Review is performed as a three-step process over a series of months and includes a desk review, site visit, and the certification report.

Desk Review: In the desk review, the Federal Review Team examines the planning process to assess compliance with 23 CFR 450, using information gleaned from the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) processes and major planning products; an assessment of recent activities relevant to the TMA planning process; consideration of the findings of prior certification reviews and other oversight activities; and other observations of the TMA planning process. The desk review is invaluable to informing aspects of the review such as review focus areas, subjects to discuss at the site visit, and the findings of the review.

Site Visit: The site visit portion of the Federal Certification Review allows the Federal Review Team the opportunity to visit with agencies engaged in the TMA planning process, including the MPO, the State DOTs, and public transportation provider. During this site visit, the Federal Review Team engages with these planning entities to discuss the planning process, with a focus on priority review topics coming out of the desk review. In addition, the site visit also includes a public engagement component, to solicit feedback from the public on the planning process. The discussion and input received at the site visit and public meeting is a primary source of information to support the Certification Review observations and findings.

The certification review covers the transportation planning process conducted cooperatively by the MPO, State, and public transportation operators. Background information, current status, key findings, and recommendations are summarized in the body of the report for the following subject areas selected by FHWA and FTA staff for on-site review:

- Continuous, Cooperative, and Comprehensive Process
- MPO Structure and Agreements
- Regional Coordination
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Public Involvement
- Transit and Transportation Disadvantaged
- Congestion Management Process (CMP)
- Freight Planning
- Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP)



During this certification, the Federal Review Team conducted a nontraditional public meeting to allow the citizens an opportunity to provide input on the transportation planning process via the MPO's website. The Federal Review Team's presentation and comment sheet was uploaded to the MPO's website for feedback. Information regarding this process was disseminated to all the MPO's Boards prior to the TMA Certification Review, with the initial announcement posted on the website on August 3, 2020.

The purpose of the public engagement process is to inform the public of the Federal transportation planning requirements and allow the public an opportunity to provide input on the transportation planning process to the Federal Review Team. Members of the public were given 30 days from the public meeting to submit their comments via website, mail, fax or email their comments and/or request a copy of the certification review report. Several additional comments were received by FHWA and FTA during the 30-day comment period. See Appendix E.

The link <https://www.augustaga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13670/2020-Augusta-MPO-FHWA-Public-Presentation-Website> See attachment D for the virtual public meeting information.

Certification Report: The Certification Report documents and summarizes the review performed by the Federal Review Team as well as the observations and findings related to the TMA planning process stemming from the Federal Certification Review. Review findings are categorized as corrective actions, recommendations, and commendations:

- Commendations highlight noteworthy practices that demonstrate innovative, highly effective, or well-thought-out procedures for implementing the planning requirements.
- Recommendations concern the state of practice or technical improvements that would enhance existing processes and procedures. FHWA and FTA expect planning agencies to give due consideration to the implementation of recommended actions.
- Corrective Actions denote items that do not meet the requirements of the applicable Federal rules and regulations. FHWA and FTA expect planning agencies to address corrective actions in accordance with prescribed timelines to achieve specific outcomes.



3.2 Documents Reviewed

The following MPO documents were evaluated as part of this planning process review:

- Planning Agreements
- MPO Designation by Governor
- ARTS MTP Future Mobility 2040 and 2050
- ARTS Public Participation Plan
- Augusta Regional Freight Profile
- FY 2018-2019 Annual Obligated Project Report and List of Amendments and Administrative Modifications
- FY 2017-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- FY 2019 and FY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program for the Augusta MPO
- Augusta Regional Transportation Study Congestion Management Process 2018 Update

4.0 PROGRAM REVIEW

4.1 Continuous, Cooperative, and Comprehensive Process

4.1.1 Regulatory Basis

23 CFR 450.306 (b) instructs MPOs to conduct the metropolitan planning process in a manner that is continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services. This is often referred to as the “3C” planning process. 23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state that the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator(s) serving the planning area.

23 CFR 450.306 (a) requires metropolitan planning organizations, in cooperation with the State and public transportation operators, to develop LRTPs and TIPs through a performance-driven, outcome-based approach to planning for metropolitan areas of the State.



4.1.2 Current Status

The ARTS have a standing Policy Committee (PC), Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and South Carolina Policy Subcommittee. To achieve a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning approach, transportation planning activities must occur in a coordinated planning environment. A brief description of these committees as well as the ARTS staff below:

Policy Committee: The ARTS MPO Policy Committee meets quarterly and is responsible for prioritizing projects, ensuring that future plans are functionally sound, financially feasible, and generally conform with the goals and objectives of the state, region, and local community. The Policy Committee makes final decisions on ARTS planning and programming issues and provides guidance and leadership for implementation.

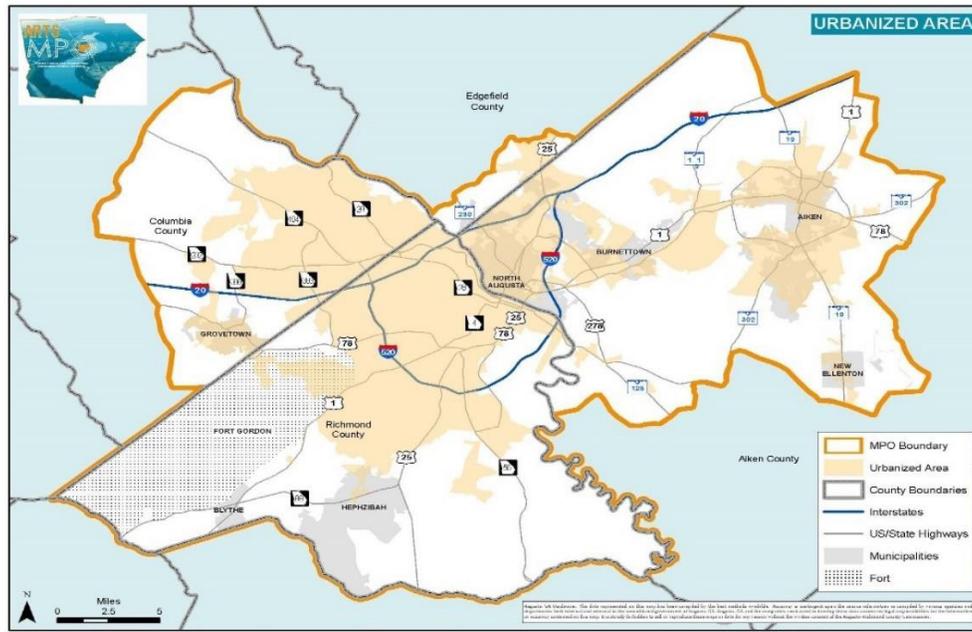
Technical Coordinating Committee: The TCC meets quarterly and is responsible for completing all technical work related to the ARTS planning process as well as serving in an advisory capacity to the Policy Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee. TCC is charged with the responsibility of reviewing the Study, furnishing progress information to the Policy Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee, and providing to the Policy Committee technical assistance in assessing the problem of implementing alternative proposals.

Citizens Advisory Committee: The CAC is comprised of citizens who are responsible for providing citizen input on all aspects of the ARTS planning process through the public review of social, economic, and environmental aspects of transportation projects.

South Carolina Policy Subcommittee: This committee provides endorsement for amendment to the ARTS TIP and MTP. They serve in an advisory capacity to the ARTS Policy Committee, and is responsible for ensuring that the South Carolina portion of ARTS is kept up-to-date. The South Carolina Subcommittee is comprised of locally elected officials (voting members), and federal, state and locally appointed personnel (non-voting members) representing the South Carolina part of the study area.

ARTS MPO: Eight employees in the Augusta Planning and Development Department serve as the ARTS MPO and are employed by the Augusta – Richmond County consolidated government.

Below is a TMA Boundary Map for Augusta Urbanized Area.



Augusta TMA Urbanized Area including MPO Boundary Area, 2020

4.1.3 Findings

During the site review, the Federal Review team inquired about the ARTS MPO 3C process efforts with South Carolina and other stakeholders. The lack of ARTS coordination, collaboration and transparency with SCDOT and the SC MPO was evident amongst the staff as well as some local officials. In an effort to improve the effectiveness of the transportation planning process, the Federal Review team, informed the MPO that they should work more diligently with South Carolina subcommittee to strengthen the 3C planning process for the TMA through a variety of means, that will provide transparency, including coordinating data collection, developing and integrating planning products across the TMA. During personal interviews with some local officials, they also informed the Federal Review team of the lack of coordination with partners and information they received as well as discussed opportunities to improve their boards through MPO 101 workshops.

The Federal Review team asked about the upcoming census and the MPO's activities thus far. The MPO stated they did not have anything in place but will wait until the census is completed to implement activities. The Federal Review Team suggested to the MPO to start looking for partnership and planning for the upcoming census including potential boundary expansion in the South Carolina.



Corrective Action 1: As a bi-state TMA, ARTS MPO needs to strengthen their 3C planning process as outlined in 23 CFR 450.314, with the South Carolina subcommittees, for example, project selection and prioritization process need to be documented to provide overall structure and transparency. This process document should clearly define and elaborate how projects are selected and ranked either through the use of designated criteria, committee reviews, and/or MPO policy documents etc. Since many projects in the MTP and TIP are selected by their consistency with MPO goals and policies, it is important to clearly explain both the quantitative and qualitative approaches that comprise the MPO's project selection process.

Recommendation 1: The Federal Review Team recommends that the ARTS MPO staff consider enhancing the MPO meeting information packets with summary materials to better inform, engage, and educate MPO committee members. This will allow more dialogue and discussion at meetings as well as to educating local elected officials and new county staff members. This increased effort in developing and disseminating information might be the catalyst to improving the process.

Recommendation 2: With the upcoming 2020 Census, the Federal Review Team recommends that the ARTS MPO start preparing for changes planning process.

4.2 MPO Structure and Agreements

4.2.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator serving the MPA. Further, 23 CFR 450.314(h) states that the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall jointly develop specific written provisions for cooperatively developing and sharing information related to transportation performance data, the selection of performance targets, the reporting of performance targets, the reporting of performance to be used in tracking progress toward attainment of critical outcomes for the region of the MPO, and the collection of data for the State asset management plans for the National Highway System.

4.2.2 Current Status

All agreements between the ARTS MPO and their partners are all up to date.



Agreement/Contract	Execution Date	Updated Date	Expiration Date
ARTS Memorandum Of Understanding	March 1995	June 9, 2016	N/A
FY 2016 ARTS Memorandum Of Agreement (SC)	2015	N/A	N/A
FY 2018 Congestion Management Process Update PI# 0015914	August 12, 2018	N/A	March 29, 2019
FY 2020 PL Contract	August 8, 2019	N/A	June 30, 2020
FY 2021 PL Contract	N/A	N/A	June 30, 2021
FY 2020 FTA 5303 (T006002)	September 25, 2019	N/A	June 30, 2020
FY 2021 FTA 5303	N/A	N/A	June 30, 2021
ARTS FY 2020 2050 MTP PI# 0016812	September 25, 2019	N/A	May 1, 2021
FTA Section 5310*	November 27, 2018	N/A	June 30, 2021

4.2.3 Findings

Recommendation #1: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MOU between the ARTS MPO and SC be revisited. There is obviously a proven record of successful coordination between these partners; however, an updated agreement will formalize the roles and responsibilities of each entity to improve coordination.

4.3 Unified Planning Work Program

4.3.1 Regulatory Basis

23 CFR 450.308 and 420 set the requirement that planning activities performed under Titles 23 and 49 U.S.C. be documented in a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The MPO, in cooperation with the State and public transportation operator, shall develop a UPWP that includes a discussion of the planning priorities facing the MPA and the work proposed for the next one- or two-year period by major activity and task in sufficient detail to indicate the agency



that will perform the work, the schedule for completing the work, the resulting products, the proposed funding, and sources of funds.

4.3.2 Current Status

The Augusta MPO adopted their Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) on March 5, 2020. The Augusta MPO's FY 2021 UPWP covers transportation planning activities for one fiscal year (FY) and contains sufficient description of the costs and activities the MPO staff plans to complete. The Augusta MPO staff work directly with Augusta Transit (AT) and Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG) in developing the work elements and budget for transit tasks in the UPWP. Augusta Planning and Development Department (APDD) advise both agencies on program transit funding to support transit planning and operations. LSCOG submits planning tasks and budgets for transit planning in Aiken County. Each work element involving FTA 5303, 5307 and 5310 funds is detailed by source and agency.

The federal funds and expenditures for the MPO are monitored monthly to develop the quarterly progress reports and reimbursement requests. All funds are also summarized in the UPWP task and overall budgets.

The MPO satisfies the regulatory requirements for the UPWP. The format of the UPWP is acceptable and the description of the work to be undertaken is thorough. The entire document may be found on their website: <https://www.augustaga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13457/FINAL-FY-2021-Draft-UPWP-03052020>

4.3.3 Findings

The MPO's UPWP substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.308.

4.4 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

4.4.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (i) and 23 CFR 450.324 set forth requirements for the development and content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Among the requirements are that the MTP address at least a 20-year planning horizon and that it include both long and short range strategies that lead to the development of an integrated and multi-modal system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation



demand. The MTP is required to provide a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process. The plan needs to consider all applicable issues related to the transportation system's development, land use, employment, economic development, natural environment, and housing and community development.

23 CFR 450.324(c) requires the MPO to review and update the MTP at least every 4 years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas, and at least every 5 years in attainment areas, to reflect current and forecasted transportation, population, land use, employment, congestion, and economic conditions and trends.

Under 23 CFR 450.324(f), the MTP is required, at a minimum, to consider the following:

- Projected transportation demand
- Existing and proposed transportation facilities
- Operational and management strategies
- A description of the performance measures and performance targets used
- A system performance report
- Congestion management process
- Capital investment and strategies to preserve transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity
- Design concept and design scope descriptions of proposed transportation facilities
- Potential environmental mitigation activities
- Pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities
- Transportation and transit enhancements
- A financial plan

4.4.2 Current Status

The MTP was adopted on September 3, 2020. The ARTS 2050 MTP includes long-range and short-range strategies and actions that lead to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system in the ARTS planning area, which covers Richmond and Columbia Counties in Georgia; and, Aiken and Edgefield Counties in South Carolina.

The MTP may be found at <https://www.futuremobility2050.com/>.



4.4.3 Findings

The general scope of the MPO's MTP substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.324.

4.5 Transportation Improvement Program

4.5.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (j) set forth requirements for the MPO to cooperatively develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Under 23 CFR 450.326, the TIP must meet the following requirements:

- Must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years.
- Surface transportation projects funded under Title 23 U.S.C. or Title 49 U.S.C., except as noted in the regulations, are required to be included in the TIP.
- Make progress toward achieving the performance targets.
- A description of the anticipated effect of the TIP toward achieving the performance targets (to the maximum extent practicable)
- List project description, cost, funding source, and identification of the agency responsible for carrying out each project.
- Projects need to be consistent with the adopted MTP.
- Must be fiscally constrained.
- The MPO must provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.

4.5.2 Current Status

The Augusta MPO TIP serves as a four-year period for the Georgia portion of the study area and a seven-year period for the South Carolina study area. The MPO TIP is approved by the ARTS Policy Committee and subsequently approved by the governors of Georgia and South Carolina. In the ARTS TIP, projects are grouped by state (GA SC) and by type of project (road, transit). The TIP also lists projects from the previous TIP that have been implemented, and identifies any significant delays in the implementation of major projects. The MPO and GDOT collaborates extensively in TIP development forum. The foundation of this process is based on regularly scheduled monthly project collaboration meetings that emphasize the discussion of TIP projects.



GDOT is heavily involved with the process of developing the TIP with the ARTS MPO. The formal collaboration begins with a meeting (s) of the ARTS Test Network Subcommittee. This subcommittee is charged with developing an update of regional transportation needs and assessing the status of projects includes representatives of the GA/SC DOTs, ARTS and transit operators and is charged with developing an update of regional transportation needs and assessing the status of projects in meeting these needs.

The MPO's TIP is included in the S/TIP by reference without modification. A current copy of the Program may be found at: <https://www.augustaga.gov/1994/Transportation-Improvement-Program>

4.5.3 Findings

The MPO's TIP's substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.326.

4.6 Transit Planning

4.6.1 Regulatory Basis

49 U.S.C. 5303 and 23 U.S.C. 134 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. Federal regulations cited in 23 CFR 450.314 state that the MPO in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process.

4.6.2 Current Status

ARTS is a bi-state MPO consisting of four transit operators serving the region: Augusta Transit (AT), Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG) (aka Best Friend Express (BFE)), Columbia County Commission Transit (CCCT), and Aiken Area Council on Aging AACOA). Augusta Transit operates nine (9) fixed routes with a fleet of 27 vehicles and 8 Paratransit Vehicles providing on-demand services. BFE operates three (3) fixed routes with a fleet of 3 vehicles. The MPO is a designated recipient of 5307 and 5339 funds. AT and BFE participates in regional transportation planning, TIP and STIP updates, and has seats on the MPO's policy board.



- Coordination in place to ensure transit is involved in the overall planning process.
- Service frequency and accessibility are major issues. Transit currently operates with 40-min headways. Direct correlation between ridership decline and headway.
- No recent planning studies to extend/expand routes to provide access to jobs, services, and airport. Per 2021 UPWP, most recent Planning Study to complete MTP, updating the Freight Plan and Bike/Ped Plan.
- UPWP highlights that ARTS will continue to administer the 5310 Formula program in FY2021, however, use of this funding has been discontinued.
- Adopted GDOT performance targets in Transit Asset Management Plan (TAM) Performance Measure Resolution.
- Planning projects aim at reducing emissions and air quality standards to protect environment and energy conservation.

4.6.3 Findings

Commendation 1: The Federal Review Team commends the MPO on the performance data collected on trips to evaluate measures in traffic trends, ridership per route, and transit delays, reported to NTD. Data collected is also included in the development of the Congestion Management Plan (CMP).

Commendation 2: The Federal Review Team commends the MPO on their Transit Development Plan (COA) which included in 2021 UPWP outlines measurable goals and objectives.

Commendation 3: The Federal Review Team commends the MPO for looking to invest in Signal Prioritization technology.

Recommendation 1: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO explore opportunities to expand transit services using feasibility studies to assess benefits.

Recommendation 2: The Federal Review Team recommends to do an assessment of routes to ensure maximum coverage in low-income and other underprivileged communities.

Recommendation 3: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO look to implement a plan to include cleaner transportation modes.

Recommendation 4: The Federal Review Team recommends the ARTS MPO to explore available funding sources, such as re-establishing the 5310 Program and Discretionary Programs aimed at planning, capital and route expansion.



4.7 Freight Planning

4.7.1 Regulatory Basis

MAP-21 established in 23 U.S.C. 167 a policy to improve the condition and performance of the national freight network and achieve goals related to economic competitiveness and efficiency; congestion; productivity; safety, security, and resilience of freight movement; infrastructure condition; use of advanced technology; performance, innovation, competition, and accountability, while reducing environmental impacts.

In addition, 23 U.S.C. 134 and 23 CFR 450.306 specifically identify the need to address freight movement as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

4.7.2 Current Status

The volume of freight that moves through the Augusta region continues to increase largely due to the growing industry in the ARTS MPO area. ARTS MPO conducted a freight study in 2008. The study provided an assessment of the freight infrastructure within ARTS MPO study area, and identified projects and policies designed to support freight movement.

Freight is a major component to transportation planning in the ARTS area and staff ensures freight goals and objectives are included in the planning documents. Both the 2020 UPWP and the 2050 MTP have task and goals related to freight movement and coordination with stakeholders.

4.7.3 Findings

Recommendation 1: With increased freight movement in the region, the Federal Review Team recommends the MPO consider updating their freight plan or study to assess current and future freight movement in the area.



4.8 Congestion Management Process

4.8.1 Regulatory Basis

A CMP applies to transportation management areas (TMAs) and is a systematic approach for managing congestion through a process that “provides for safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system, based on a cooperatively developed and implemented metropolitan-wide strategy, of new and existing transportation facilities eligible for funding under title 23 U.S.C., and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 through the use of travel demand reduction (including intercity bus operators, employer-based commuting programs such as a carpool program, vanpool program, transit benefit program, parking cash-out program, shuttle program, or telework program), job access projects, and operational management strategies.” [23 CFR 450.322 (a)]

4.8.2 Current Status

During the last TMA Certification review, the ARTS MPO did not fully address the FHWA’s eight-step framework for the development and elements of a CMP. The Federal Review Team recommended a full update of the CMP to bring in line with the guidebook. In 2018, the ARTS MPO contracted with VHB Inc. and updated their CMP. Congested routes in the MPO planning area were identified through the travel demand modeling for the 2050 MTP update in 2020.

The MPO’s dashboard incorporates established performance measures which will allow the ARTS staff to monitor and evaluate traffic congestion. The opening in 2019 of the Traffic Control Center housed in the City of Augusta Engineering Department offers another resource of real-time congestion monitoring and evaluation. With all of these resources at hand, ARTS have the ability to affordably and efficiently evaluate CMP on a system-wide basis.

The CMP Dashboard can be found here:

<https://projectapps.vhb.com/orlando/augustaTSV2.0/map.html#>.

4.8.3 Findings

The MPO’s CMP substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.322 (a).



4.9 Performance Based Planning and Programming

4.9.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 150(b) identifies the following national goals for the focus of the Federal-aid highway program: Safety, Infrastructure Condition, Congestion Reduction, System Reliability, Freight Movement and Economic Vitality, Environmental Sustainability, and Reduced Project Delivery Delays. Under 23 U.S.C. 134(h)(2), the metropolitan planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making to support the national goals, including the establishment of performance targets.

23 CFR 450.306(d) states that each MPO shall establish performance targets to support the national goals and track progress towards the attainment of critical outcomes. Each MPO shall coordinate with the relevant State to ensure consistency, to the maximum extent practicable, and establish performance targets not later than 180 days after the State or provider of public transportation establishes its performance targets. The selection of performance targets that address performance measures described in 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d) shall be coordinated to the maximum extent practicable, with public transportation providers to ensure consistency with the performance targets that public transportation providers establish under 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d). Additionally, each MPO shall integrate the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets from other performance-based plans and programs into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

23 CFR 450.314(h) states that the MPO(s), State(s), and the providers of public transportation shall jointly agree upon and develop specific written provisions for cooperatively developing and sharing information related to transportation performance data, the selection of performance targets, the reporting of performance targets, the reporting of performance to be used in tracking progress toward attainment of critical outcomes for the region of the MPO.

4.9.2. MPO Structure and Agreements

23 CFR 450.324(f) states that MTPs shall include descriptions of the performance measures and performance targets used in assessing the performance of the transportation system, a system performance report evaluating the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to the performance targets, and progress achieved in meeting the performance targets in comparison with system performance recorded in previous reports.

23 CFR 450.326(d) states that the TIP shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, a description of the anticipated effect of the programmed investments with respect to the



performance targets established in the MTP, the anticipated future performance target achievement of the programmed investments, and a written narrative linking investment priorities to those performance targets and how the other PBPP documents are being implemented to develop the program of projects.

23 CFR 450.340 states that MPOs have two years from the effective dates of the planning and performance measures rule to comply with the requirements.

4.9.3 Current Status

ARTS have met Federal requirements outlined in 23 CFR 450.326(d) that include a well detailed narrative for performance measures:

- Performance Measure One (PM-1) Safety - ARTS has adopted Georgia and SCDOT's statewide safety targets for all public roads.
- Performance Measure Two (PM-2) System Condition - ARTS has adopted the statewide pavement targets for the non-interstate NHS system and statewide 4-year targets for Interstate pavement conditions, and the statewide Bridge Condition targets for NHS bridges.
- Performance Measure Three (PM-3) Reliability - ARTS has adopted Georgia and SCDOT's statewide reliability targets for person miles traveled on the Interstate NHS system.

4.9.4 Findings

The MPO's PBPP activities substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.306 and 23 USC 134 (h) (2) (D).

4.10 Interested Parties, Participation and Consultation

4.10.1 Regulatory Basis

The requirements for public involvement for the metropolitan transportation planning process and the MPO are set forth primarily in 23 CFR part 450.316. This regulation addresses planning requirements and identifies the organizations that the MPO should provide with reasonable opportunities to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning process.



4.10.2 Current Status

The MPO utilizes multiple public participation strategies and techniques to ensure the public and other interested parties are informed about the ARTS transportation planning process, plans, and programs. These techniques are outlined in the 2017 Public Participation Plan (PPP). For example, public notices are released in the local newspaper, email, direct mail, and social media. Quarterly newsletters and brochures are widely distributed and have been deemed as successful tools used to keep the public informed. The ARTS website provides the public easy access to MPO information and opportunities to provide comments. The website also includes announcements, supporting documents, and the link to participate in upcoming Study Team and Policy Committee meetings. This is helpful for the public and committee members to easily connect to meetings and stay informed.

The ARTS 2050 MTP update focused on public outreach. The MPO used several techniques in both Georgia and South Carolina to ensure the public had opportunities to participate in the process. ARTS held several public meetings, conducted surveys, and used widespread email and mailing list. The MPO was a vendor in the Arts in the Heart Festival held in downtown Augusta in September, 2019, where they received more than 1,000 surveys for the MTP. Throughout the entire update process the MPO gathered public input that totaled over 33,000 data points.

The ARTS staff evaluates the effectiveness of the strategies, tools and techniques used as part of the ARTS PPP, however the Review Team recommends the MPO take it a step further and include a qualitative analysis to determine the effectiveness for outreach strategies. These strategies should be defined and documented by ARTS on a scheduled basis. This allows for reevaluation of techniques in the PPP and would help the MPO streamline their outreach efforts to focus on what is most successful, rather than what has always been done.

4.10.3 Findings

Recommendation 1: Though the MPO includes an objective to evaluate the public outreach efforts, the MOEs are not quantifiable. Based on these findings, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO update its formally adopted public involvement process to reflect current practices by providing clear objectives and effective, quantifiable measures to evaluate and improve the process of how the MPO determines the effectiveness of public involvement techniques



5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The FHWA and FTA review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Augusta Urbanized area meets Federal planning requirements as follows.

5.1 Commendations

The following are noteworthy practices that the Augusta MPO is doing well in the transportation planning process:

- **Transit:** The Federal Review Team commends the MPO on the performance data collected on trips to evaluate measures in traffic trends, ridership per route, and transit delays, reported to NTD. Data collected is also included in the development of the Congestion Management Plan (CMP).
- **Transit:** The Federal Review Team commends the MPO on their Transit Development Plan (COA) which included in 2021 UPWP outlines measurable goals and objectives.
- **Transit:** The Federal Review Team commends the MPO for looking to invest in Signal Prioritization technology.

5.2 Corrective Actions

- **3-C Process:** As a bi-state TMA, ARTS MPO needs to strengthen their 3C planning process as outlined in 23 CFR 450.314, with the South Carolina subcommittees, for example, project selection and prioritization process need to be documented to provide overall structure and transparency. This process document should clearly define and elaborate how projects are selected and ranked either through the use of designated criteria, committee reviews, and/or MPO policy documents etc. Since many projects in the MTP and TIP are selected by their consistency with MPO goals and policies, it is important to clearly explain both the quantitative and qualitative approaches that comprise the MPO's project selection process.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are recommendations that would improve the transportation planning process:



- **3-C Process**: The Federal Review Team recommends that the ARTS MPO staff consider enhancing the MPO meeting information packets with summary materials to better inform, engage, and educate MPO committee members. This will allow more dialogue and discussion at meetings as well as to educating local elected officials and new county staff members. This increased effort in developing and disseminating information might be the catalyst to improving the process.
- **3-C Process/ Urban Boundary**: Recommendation: With the upcoming 2020 Census, the Federal Review Team recommends that the ARTS MPO start preparing for changes planning process.
- **MPO Structure and Agreements**: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MOU between the ARTS MPO and SC be revisited. There is obviously a proven record of successful coordination between these partners; however, an updated agreement will formalize the roles and responsibilities of each entity to improve coordination.
- **Transit**: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO explore opportunities to expand transit services using feasibility studies to assess benefits.
- **Transit**: The Federal Review Team recommends to do an assessment of routes to ensure maximum coverage in low-income and other underprivileged communities.
- **Transit**: The Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO look to implement a plan to include cleaner transportation modes.
- **Transit**: The Federal Review Team recommends the ARTS MPO to explore available funding sources, such as re-establishing the 5310 Program and Discretionary Programs aimed at planning, capital and route expansion.
- **Freight**: With increased freight movement in the region, the Federal Review Team recommends the MPO consider updating their freight plan or study to assess current and future freight movement in the area.
- **Interested Parties and Consultation**: Though the MPO includes an objective to evaluate the public outreach efforts, the MOEs are not quantifiable. Based on these findings, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO update its formally adopted public involvement process to reflect current practices by providing clear objectives and effective, quantifiable measures to evaluate and improve the process of how the MPO determines the effectiveness of public involvement techniques

APPENDIX



APPENDIX A – SITE VISIT AGENDA

Augusta Regional Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization Quadrennial Certification Review August 26-27, 2020

Time	Topic	Lead
<p>Tuesday, August 26, 2020 – Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9946694292 Meeting ID: 994 669 4292 Day One Discussion 8:30am – 3:00pm <i>Break 10:00am – 10:15am</i></p>		
8:30am	Welcome / Introductions Overview of the Certification Review	FHWA
	Discussion of the 2016 Certification Review	Federal Review Team ARTS
	MPO Boundary / Planning Agreement / 2020 Census MTP Process Development TIP Development and Amendments (TIP) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Federal Review Team
LUNCH 11:30 – 12:30		
Day One Discussion Continues <i>Break 1:45pm – 2:00pm</i>		
12:30pm – 3:00pm	Congestion Management Process (CMP) Freight and FHWA Opportunity Focus Performance-Based Planning and Programming Participation Plan	Federal Review Team



	<p>Transit</p> <p>Funding Tracking (Split Letter)</p> <p>Project Programming (TIP/UPWP/LRTP)</p> <p>Transit MOU/MOA with the MPOs</p> <p>Transit Role in Congestion Relief</p> <p>Transit and the Transportation Disadvantaged</p> <p>Overall Role of Transit Operator in the MPO Planning Process</p>	<p>FTA</p>
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Time	Topic	Lead
<p>Wednesday, August 27, 2020 – Virtual: Zoom</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9946694292</p> <p>Meeting ID: 994 669 4292</p> <p>Day Two Discussion 8:30am – 11:30am</p> <p><i>Break 10:00am – 10:15am</i></p>		
8:30am	Follow-up Discussions from Day One	Federal Review Team
	Elected Official Discussion (<i>as applicable</i>)	Federal Review Team
	Federal Team Conclave	Federal Review Team
	Preliminary Review Observations Next Steps and Close-out	Federal Review Team
	Adjourn	FHWA



APPENDIX B - PARTICIPANTS

The following individuals were involved in the Augusta TMA urbanized area virtual on-site review:

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

- Tamara N Christion, FHWA Georgia Division
- Andrew Edwards, FHWA Georgia Division
- Jessica Hekter, FHWA South Carolina Division
- Yolanda Morris, FHWA South Carolina Division

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

- Aviance Webb, FTA Region 4

Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)

- Tom Caiafa
- Trang Mai
- Radney Simpson
- Ryan Walker

South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT)

- LaToya Grate

Augusta Regional Transportation Study (ARTS) MPO

- Carla Delaney
- Erik Engle
- Mariah Harris
- Marcus Holland
- Dr. Oliver Page
- Warren Richard
- Robert Sherman
- Udomekong Udoko
- Cecilia Woodruff

Augusta Engineering

- Dr. Hameed Malik

Lower Savannah Council of Government (LSOG)

- Dr. William Molnar, PC Chair

Aiken County Planning and Development

- Joel Duke
- LJ Peterson



North Augusta Planning and Development

- Libby Hodges

Columbia County Engineering

- Steve Exley

Augusta Interim Administrator

- Jarvis Sims

Augusta Commission

- Ben Hasan
- Dennis Williams

Augusta Tax Commission

- Steven Kendrick

Columbia County

- Matt Schlacter

Best Friends Transit

- Rhonda Mitchell

Augusta Transit

- Sharon Dottery

Columbia County Planning

- Danielle Bolte



APPENDIX C - STATUS OF FINDINGS FROM 2016 REVIEW

One of the priorities of each certification review is assessing how well the planning partners in the area have addressed corrective actions and recommendations from the previous certification review. This section identifies the recommendations from the 2016 certification and summarizes discussions of how they have been addressed.

Corrective Action: None

Recommendation 1: Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool (INVEST): During the 2012 Certification Review, the Federal Review Team recommended the use of the FHWA INVEST to help with selecting and prioritizing transportation projects in the ARTS MPO, but the ARTS MPO has not incorporated the use of this free tool into their process. As a result, it is still a recommendation that the MPO incorporates this tool into its process to help with selecting and prioritizing transportation projects in the Augusta region.
<https://www.sustainablehighways.org/>

Disposition 1: An in-house project prioritization tool has been developed as part of the ARTS 2050 MTP Update; it is an Excel spreadsheet based tool that utilizes the System Planning for Regions (SPR) module from INVEST's four modules. The SPR module is geared towards MPOs that perform landscape-scale planning for a metropolitan area. The ARTS in-house project prioritization tool has more than 20 performance measures addressing the 17 SPR scoring criteria, resulting in a composite score for each project which subsequently can be ranked.

Recommendation 2: Agreements/Prioritization Tool: Based on the 2012 Certification Review Status Update, it is still a recommendation by the Federal Review Team in 2016 that the GA side of the MPO utilizes a project prioritization tool to aid in the selection of projects for the LRTP and TIP. As the MPO identifies planning related activities to address this recommendation, please clearly document activities in the MPO's annual UPWP, especially when using federal funds. This documentation should include deliverables and timeline for completion and implementation.

Disposition 2: The FY 2020 UPWP emphasized performance-based planning and the application of a project prioritization tool in project selection. FY 2020 UPWP Task 4.1 Metropolitan Transportation Planning and the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update delineates a robust project prioritization tool as a deliverable. The project prioritization tool allows for customization in order to meet GDOT and SCDOT project ranking requirements which may differ



The original timeline for tool development was September – December 2019; however, due to the commencement of the 2050 MTP Update in August 2019 (and not in April 2019) the tool was developed during the first quarter 2020. Application of the tool in project selection and ranking took place during April/May 2020.

Recommendation 3: Scope of the MPO Process/Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP): It is a recommendation that during this UPWP cycle, the ARTS MPO staff coordinate with its planning partners and stakeholders to complete the FHWA Performance-Based Planning and Programming Assessment Tool to examine where this region is on implementing PBPP. This activity should be clearly identified and documented in the MPO’s current UPWP. Upon completion of the Assessment Tool, the MPO staff should share the results and next steps with its planning partners, including FHWA.

Disposition 3: Since the 2016 certification review, the ARTS MPO staff has coordinated with its planning partners and stakeholders to complete the FHWA Performance-Based Planning and Programming Assessment Tool. In 2016, MPO staff presented all of the ARTS Committees (Test Network Subcommittee, TCC, & CAC) a proposal addressing the FHWA framework of the PBPP which would align with ARTS goals. In 2017, the ARTS MPO proposed a project development process, which included performance-based planning, to the ARTS Committees, it was approved by the Policy Committee. Subsequently amendments to the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan and FY 2017-2022 TIP to include Performance-Based Planning –Safety Measures and Target setting in the ARTS MPO planning area were adopted. The ARTS Performance-based Planning process, was included in the ARTS FY 2017-2019 UPWP. Process/Performance-Based Planning and Programming is included in ARTS MPO’s current FY 2020 UPWP. Please see Work Element Task 6.1 Performance-Based Planning of ARTS UPWP FY 2020. Also, see ARTS Amendment Resolution for 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan and FY 2017-2022. April 29th and 30th, 2019, some ARTS staffers attended a 2-day training class on Performance-Based Planning and Programming in Columbia, South Carolina (SC). The two-day training course provided the staff with information about the key elements and framework of Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) to support Transportation Performance Management (TPM). The training course also helped the ARTS staff persons to become familiar with how the relationship between PBPP and TPM relate to the requirements for transportation planning and transportation system performance. The National Transit Institute (NTI) provided this training class. Upon completion of the PBPP Assessment Tool, the MPO staff provided a presentation on the results of their performance based planning process and next steps with its planning partners, including FHWA. The results of the ARTS performance based planning process and next steps presentation was done at ARTS committee meetings in FY 2018 and FY 2020. Please see FY 2018 ARTS TCC (1-11-2018), PC (2-8-2018) meeting minutes, and FY 2020 ARTS CAC-TCC Joint meeting Agenda Packet (8-14-2019) and PC meeting minutes (9-5-2019).



Recommendation 4: Scope of MPO Process/Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP): During the 2040 LRTP update, the MPO began developing Performance Measures, but upon public review, the process did not demonstrate the level of coordination and collaboration necessary to successfully implement PBPP. As a result, the FHWA suggested that the MPO place the Performance Measures Matrix in the appendix of the LRTP then continue its development during the next UPWP cycle. The Federal Review Team recommends that the ARTS MPO continue developing its performance measures. In doing so, the MPO should clearly identify activities in the current UPWP to show related tasks, responsible parties, and timeline for completion.

Disposition 4: ARTS has continued its development of performance measures through a number of activities as follows:

- A Performance Measures Matrix addressing the National Planning Factors, GDOT Goals, SCDOT Goals and ARTS 2050 MTP Goals is incorporated into the 2050 MTP Update and Technical Report #4. The performance metrics and targets are also used to score projects.
- ARTS has adopted the State Targets PM1 (Highway Safety/System Conditions and Performance) resolutions dated February 2, 2019 (Georgia) and December 9, 2019 (South Carolina) respectively.
- ARTS has adopted the State Targets PM2 (Pavement and Bridge Condition) and PM3 (System Performance, Freight & CMAQ) dated September 13, 2018 (Georgia)
- ARTS has adopted the State Targets PM2 (Pavement and Bridge Condition) and PM3 (System Performance, Freight & CMAQ) (South Carolina)
- The ARTS 2011-2017 Traffic Crash and Intersection Analysis Report (April 2019) expanded on the PM1 target setting methodology through a worked example (Appendix A of the report). The purpose of the exercise was to demonstrate the process of establishing in-house safety targets. The methodology offers an alternative for ARTS to develop and adopt localized rather than state targets.
- System Performance, Freight Movement and Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) (PM3) Performance and Targets have been used as project scoring metrics in the 2050 MTP Update. In the current FY activities relating to CMAQ performance targets have focused on maintaining awareness and exploring the EPA Advance Program as the entire ARTS planning area is in air quality compliance.
- Multimodal performance measures were developed and applied to the ARTS 2018 Congestion Management Process (CMP). Performance measures (21) were used to assess corridors in the ARTS planning area. Performance measures monitoring system performance ranged from Volume to Capacity Ratio (V/C), Level of Service (LOS), Travel Time Index (TTI) and number of fatalities etc. A product of the 2018 CMP was the



- development of an interactive performance monitoring dashboard, reporting system and user manual.
- The ARTS Performance Measures for Public Transit (2019) Report (FY 2020 UPWP Task 5.2 subtask 5) assessed local transit operators Augusta Transit (AT) and Best Friend Express (BFE) against performance measures used in the transit industry. Performance metrics in the context of Safety and Security; Service Effectiveness; and, Service Efficiency were applied to AT and BFE and each operator was compared to groups of peer transit agencies.

The completion of a Performance Measures Matrix will be finalized using input from the 2050 MTP Update. The matrix (with associated tasks) will then be added to the FY 2021 UPWP through a modification directive.

Recommendation 5: Scope of the Planning Process/Air Quality Planning: Since the Augusta region is an attainment area and the MPO staff engages the public to provide air quality awareness, the Federal Review Team recommends that this MPO explore the EPA Advance Program to see how it can further advance efforts to help this region stay in attainment. Please refer to the Advance website (www.epa.gov/advance) to view the program guidance and other resources, including current participants' plans and recent progress updates.

Disposition 5: Since the 2016 certification review, the ARTS MPO has explored the EPA Advance Program to see how it can further advance its efforts to help this region remain in attainment. This task was included in the Task 4.5 section of the UPWP. The ARTS MPO prepared a technical memorandum about the EPA Advance Program. The state of South Carolina is a participant in the Ozone and PM Advance. Communication with the EPA Outreach and Information Division in 2019 confirmed that Richmond County is eligible and welcome to join the EPA AP. Winter 2019, ARTS staff attended a 2-day training course air quality and transportation conformity at the Tennessee Air Quality Conference. The National Transit Institute (NTI) provided the training course, "Introduction to Transportation Conformity". During the 2-day training class, the ARTS Staff learned about the relationship between transportation planning and air quality planning in the context of transportation conformity. Please see UPWP FY 2020 Task 4.5 section, ARTS Memorandum Technical EPA Advance Program Report and National Transit Institute (NTI), "

Recommendation 6: Scope of the Planning Process/Freight Planning: The ARTS MPO does not have strong participation from the freight community in its metropolitan planning process. Pursuant to the planning regulation's emphasis on freight and goods movement, and the importance of incorporating freight providers and freight stakeholders in the planning process, the Federal Review Team recommends that the ARTS MPO identifies techniques and strategies to increase its outreach efforts to the freight community to get their involvement in



the MPO's planning process.

Disposition 6: Relationships have been strengthened with Augusta Regional Airport (an air freight stakeholder) through its active participation at ARTS committee meetings. This activity has led ARTS to partner with Augusta Regional Airport (FY 2021) in market research focused on the ARTS planning area. The execution of the 2050 MTP Plan Update has provided an opportunity to reach out to the freight community in the ARTS planning area and encourage participation in the metropolitan transportation planning process. Freight stakeholders have been identified through business networking, consulting with ARTS partners and participation in regional freight focused workshops. Business license records (through Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes) have been harvested from all four counties, Aiken and Edgefield Counties in South Carolina; and, Columbia and Richmond Counties in Georgia. This has resulted in more than 300+ identified stakeholders (97 Aiken County; 103 Columbia County; and, 100+ Richmond County). Representatives at the regional level from the rail industry (Norfolk Southern, CSX and Aiken Railway), though identified and invited to participate in the ARTS planning process have not responded despite several attempts.

Recommendation 7: Scope of the Planning Process/Freight Planning: During the Site Visit, the MPO staff mentioned that the link to freight and transportation planning will be identified in the update of the prioritization tool along with other performance-based planning measures. It is a recommendation by the Federal Review Team that as the MPO documents this activity in the UPWP and includes timeline and deliverables.

Disposition 7: The ARTS in-house prioritization tool (a product of the 2050 MTP Update) contains a freight scoring metric which in turn incorporates the National Planning Factors, FHWA INVEST Tool project scoring criteria, and, ARTS 2050 MTP goals. Metric #15 (Freight Volumes) addresses the needs of the local freight industry and the intermodal movement of goods via rail and truck through the analysis of freight volumes (trucks/day). The inclusion of this metric enables the project scoring of transportation projects facilitate greater coordination between land use planning and freight mobility/operational outcomes. Activities delineating the linkages between freight and transportation planning were added into the FY 2021 UPWP by way of an administrative amendment in June 2020.

Recommendation 8: Scope of the Planning Process/Security Planning: During the Site Visit interview, the ARTS MPO staff indicated that the MPO will need to reexamine how security planning is currently being addressed in this region. To build on this, the Federal Review Team recommends that the ARTS MPO improve coordination with and outreach to the various committees and jurisdictions when planning for the security of this region in the event of a disaster, natural or manmade.



Disposition 8: The execution of the 2050 MTP Update provided an opportunity to reestablish links with emergency planning stakeholders in the ARTS four county region. The 2050 MTP Update continued the coordination and outreach to various agencies and jurisdictions to determine the current state of security, emergency preparedness, and evacuation routes in the ARTS planning area. GDOT, SCDOT, Richmond County, Aiken County and Edgefield County have all adopted Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs). Columbia County has adopted a Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). These plans include guidelines for coordination between Federal, state and local agencies; and, tactical plans for use during emergencies. Acknowledging the importance of cybersecurity and infrastructure security in metropolitan transportation planning, representatives (Greg Washington & Nate Brown) from the Fort Gordon Military Reservation were invited and attended the March 2020 meeting of the ARTS Policy Committee. The Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) which includes interstates I-20, I-520, and US Highway 78, US Highway 4 and US Highway 25; represent major transportation corridors in the ARTS planning area. These routes are key to evacuating large numbers of people during emergencies. South Carolina's designated evacuation routes funnel a large portion of traffic through the ARTS planning area.

Recommendation 9: Scope of the Planning Process/Security Planning: With a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in place, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO exercise the COOP. This practice will allow the ARTS MPO staff to identify gaps and areas needing improvements to ensure continuous operations in the event of a catastrophe.

Disposition 9: Yes, ARTS MPO has a COOP adopted in December 6, 2012 and revised/updated on May 3, 2016. The COOP procedures also apply to ARTS staff working with the Aiken County Planning and Development Department (ACPD). Implementation of COOP ensures the continuity of essential office functions in the occurrence of a major event/emergency/disaster. COOP procedures were implemented during the COVID19 Pandemic (March thru May 2020). All staff worked remotely and a skeleton staff contingent rotated working in the office. Communication (both internal and external) was maintained electronically, by telephone and video conferencing.

Recommendation 10: Scope of the Planning Process/Safety Planning: The Strategic Highway Safety Program (SHSP) plays a vital role in addressing safety at the state and local level. However, the ARTS MPO staff could not demonstrate how their current safety planning process relates to both the Georgia and South Carolina SHSP process, including identifying safety related objectives and performance measures. Therefore, it is a recommendation that the MPO identify and develop activities relating to safety planning for this region in the upcoming UPWP to demonstrate coordination and collaboration between Georgia and South Carolina and the MPO regarding safety data collection, analysis, and performance measures.



Disposition 10: ARTS has addressed safety at the state and local level through various planning activities. UPWP safety activities can be found in: Traffic Crash and Intersection Analysis 2011-2016 Report. UPWP FY 2017-2018 Task 3.3 Transportation Surveys, Models and Analysis. Traffic crash analysis using data from Georgia Electronic Accident Reporting System (GEARS), Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), GDOT, SCDOT and South Carolina Department of Public Safety (SCDPS). Intersections or link segments with high numbers of crashes were identified. UPWP FY

2020 Task 3.3 Transportation Surveys, Models and Analysis. ARTS Performance Measures for Public Transit Report. UPWP FY 2020 Task 5.2 Metropolitan Transportation Planning (System Level) subtask #5 Develop Technical Staff Report on performance measures for public transit. GIS spatial analysis and mapping of traffic crashes to identify safety hotspots in collaboration with ARTS partners. UPWP FY 2020 Task 3.3 Transportation Surveys, Models and Analysis. Production of the ARTS 2011-2017 Traffic Crash and Intersection Analysis Report (April 2019). UPWP FY 2020 Task 3.3 Transportation Surveys, Models and Analysis, subtask #8 Prepare and publish final Traffic Crash Data Analysis Report. Production of the Traffic Conflicts at Highway-Railroad Crossings 2010-2019 Report (June 2020). UPWP FY 2020 Task 4.3 Intermodal Planning subtask #4 Collect and analyze traffic conflicts at railroad crossings. ARTS staff attended the “Innovative” grant workshop to ‘Develop “Innovative” Highway Safety Programs to Save Lives in Georgia,’ sponsored by the Georgia Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) in January 2020. Workshop provided guidance for nonprofits or government agencies in applying for “Innovative” grants. UPWP FY 2020 Task 1.2 Training & Employee Education. Amending the FY21 UPWP to incorporate more actionable items on safety and performance measures is also being discussed.

Recommendation 11: Scope of the Planning Process/Safety Planning: The Federal Review Team recommends that the ARTS MPO staff seek out and attend trainings on safety data collection and evaluation to become more knowledgeable in this area as the region move toward implementing performance measures.

Disposition 11: Several ARTS MPO staff members have attended GAMPO trainings and Performance-Based Planning trainings this past year, which have dealt safety data collection, evaluation and performance measures. The training courses introduced the ARTS staff to the relationship between PBPP and TPM as it relates to the requirements for transportation planning and transportation system performance. ARTS staff attended a TRB sponsored Conference on Performance and Data in Transportation Decision Making, September 15-18, 2019 in Atlanta, GA. This conference featured sessions on performance measurement, project scoring and ranking, project prioritization, and data collection and analytics. Lessons learned from the conference attendance enabled a strengthened the application of PBPP in the 2050 MTP update. Task 1.2. Moreover, during the Spring of FY 2019, April 29-30, two of ARTS staff attended a 2-day training class on Performance-Based Planning and Programming in Columbia, South Carolina (SC). The training course provided the MPO staff with information about the key elements and



framework of Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) which supports Transportation Performance Management (TPM). The National Transit Institute (NTI) provided this training class. During FY 2020 ARTS staff also completed one-on-one, online training on using data from the National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS) and Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS) for performance measurement application to congestion management. The training was provided by an official from the Center for Advanced Transportation Technology (CATT) University of Maryland College Park.

Recommendation 12: Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP): Based on the layout of each task in the UPWP, it is not clear what activities will be/are being carried out and for what fiscal year; therefore, the Federal Review Team recommends that when developing the next UPWP, the MPO staff should clearly identify and distinguish upcoming activities for the particular fiscal year and rename the, “Activity” title. An example of acceptable documentation can be found in the Chattanooga MPO’s UPWP.

Disposition 12: The FY 2020 UPWP clearly lays out what activities will be/are carried out and for what fiscal year. “Activity” titles have been assigned and will remain going forward with the development of the FY 2021 UPWP and future UPWPs. Through an amendment to the FY 2021 UPWP a task activity matrix by year will be added. This matrix will list ARTS tasks/activities by year and by frequency. The matrix will clearly identify and distinguish upcoming activities for a particular fiscal year. Within each fiscal year, tasks will be broken down by activity category, ongoing, as needed and scheduled. This will further aid in clarifying project timelines and activity completion.

Recommendation 13: Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP): It is a requirement that the UPWP includes a schedule for completing outlined activities in the UPWP, but for the most part, the ARTS MPO’s UPWP includes a very generic July 1 – June 30 planning work schedule. Based on this finding, the Federal Review Team recommends that for the next UPWP, the MPO include a detailed work schedule with deliverables for each task. Please see the above link for an example from the Chattanooga MPO.

Disposition 13: The FY 2020 UPWP clearly lays out the specific project deliverables for each task assignment. This format of laying out detailed work schedules with deliverables for each task will be implemented in the FY 2021 UPWP and going forward with future UPWPs. Through an amendment to the FY 2021 UPWP a task activity matrix by year will be added. This matrix will list ARTS tasks/activities by year and by frequency. The matrix will clearly identify and distinguish upcoming activities for a particular fiscal year. Within each fiscal year tasks will be broken down by activity category: ongoing, as needed and scheduled. The quarter the activity is expected to be completed will be added to each task. Defining UPWP tasks in this way will further aid in



clarifying project timelines and activity completion.

Recommendation 14: Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP): During the Site Visit interview, the MPO staff mentioned several activities that are occurring to address some of the 2012 Recommendations, but when asked if these activities are clearly documented in the current UPWP, the MPO staff replied no. As a result of this finding, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO staff document all planning related activities in the UPWP and provide timeline for completing work, especially when using federal funds.

Disposition 14: The ARTS MPO team is documenting all deliverables laid out by the FY 2020 UPWP. 2020 Deliverables Here. In 2017, the ARTS MPO amended its FY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) in order to document all planning related activities and provide a timeline for task completion as recommended from the previous certification review in 2016. This documented procedure is applied to the ARTS UPWP by the ARTS staff. All planning related activities and provided timelines for completion work in the ARTS UPWP are found in the work element section of the document. Please see ARTS UPWP FY 2017-2020.

Recommendation 15: Interested Parties/Public Participation: The MPO's Participation Plan does not include a process for providing additional opportunity for public comment if the final LRTP and/or TIP differ significantly from the version that was made available for public comment; therefore, the Federal Review Team recommends that the MPO update its Participation Plan to include a process for providing additional opportunity for public comment if the final LRTP and/or TIP differ significantly from the version that was made available for public comment.

Disposition 15: All comments, concerns or questions relating the MTP and TIP development processes that are received during public review periods are addressed and responses documented by ARTS staff. The current ARTS Public Participation Plan (adopted December 12, 2017) does not specify the amount of additional time for public review for comments, concerns or questions received due to significant changes in finalized MTP and TIP documents outside of their original public review periods. An extension or re-start of a formalized public comment and review period will be instituted. An amendment to the ARTS Public Participation Plan in FY 2020 UPWP will incorporate language permitting an extension of public review periods in these unique situations.

Recommendation 16: Interested Parties/Public Participation: The ARTS MPO is currently updating its Participation Plan to address the Federal Review Team's 2012 Recommendations and bring into consistency with the South Carolina public involvement requirements. The Federal Review Team requests that a copy of the draft Plan be distributed to the MPO's planning partners including FHWA and FTA for review and comments.



Disposition 16: The 2012 FHWA Certification Review recommended and the FHWA 2016 review confirmed the following in the context of public participation: 1) Look into and implement the use of online meetings; and, 2) Set realistic targets that are measurable. The current ARTS Public

Participation Plan (PPP) adopted in December 2017, provides guidance on online public forums. ARTS MPO began broadcasting its committee meetings on October 15, 2015. The link is made available to the public and there is an audio and video option. This information is also shown on the archived agenda packets. Online public forums offer members of the public an opportunity to submit comments or concerns that would be addressed by ARTS staff. ARTS PPP established goals, evaluation criteria and performance tools (quantitative) to assess the effectiveness of

public participation in metropolitan planning. Language was updated to reflect the bi-state application of the ARTS PPP and bring it into consistency with South Carolina's public involvement requirements. A draft report was reviewed by ARTS partners, FHWA and FTA and necessary revisions made before adoption of the PPP by the ARTS Policy Committee on December 7, 2017. An amendment to the FY 2021 UPWP will update the PPP and strengthen guidance on online (virtual) public forums and meetings. Despite hosting online meetings since the year 2015, the ARTS MPO has not incorporated the activity into its official PPP document but plans to amend it in the 1st quarter of FY 2021.

Recommendation 17: Interested Parties/Public Participation: When asked about measures used to verify that the multimodal access and mobility performance improvements in the LRTP and TIP comply with Title VI, the MPO staff responded that performance measures and data inventory is currently being evaluated by MPO staff and Test Network Subcommittee and final recommendations will be made to Technical Coordinating Committee, reviewed by Citizen Advisory Committee and later adopted by Policy Committee. It is not clear how these activities will demonstrate compliance with Title VI. As such, it is a recommendation by the Federal Review Team that when developing its next UPWP, the MPO should document in specific detail, measures used to verify that the multimodal access and mobility performance improvements in the LRTP and TIP comply with Title VI.

Disposition 17: ARTS is committed to ensuring that metropolitan transportation planning activities strengthen multimodal access and mobility performance improvements for Title VI an Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities. Activities in FY 2020 UPWP demonstrating this imperative are as follows:

- Community Outreach/Education (Task 2.1) - providing information to ARTS participants and the general public about the transportation planning process; to respond to requests for information from the public; and to foster valuable public input into all transportation



- plans, programs and projects.
- Environmental Justice / Title VI (Task 3.4) - A Benefits and Burdens analysis will be conducted when amendments to the 2040 LRTP and FY 2018-2023 TIP are made. 2050 MTP Update (FY 2020 UPWP Task 4.1 subtask #5 - Development of non-traditional performance measures that are applied to score projects in the context of Title VI).
- For example, Metric 20: Environmental Justice (Weight 2 percent) (Goal 6 Environmental Stewardship) measures percent of census tract exceeding MPO average for each Environment Justice (EJ) category and the number of EJ categories impacted by project.

Recommendation 18: Title VI Statement of Assurance: The Federal Review Team recommends that the ARTS MPO add a Title VI statement of assurance on all its planning products.

Disposition 18: ARTS documents, products and planning deliverables shall include a TITLE VI statement. Documents and reports completed in FY 2019 and FY 2020 where this statement is omitted either have been or will be amended to include the statement as follows: “No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and any other related non-discrimination Civil Rights laws and authorities under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” The 2050 MTP update has an updated statement on the inside covers of all documents. This statement builds on the current ARTS Title VI statement but is more inclusive and encompassing given today’s environment. Title VI statement from other MPOs were used for guidance and it reads as follows: “No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, age, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, national origin, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and any other related non-discrimination Civil Rights laws and authorities under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” Going forward all published ARTS documents, products and planning deliverables will include a Title VI statement.

Recommendation 19: Congestion Management Process (CMP): The ARTS MPO’s current Congestion Management Process does not fully address the FHWA’s eight-step framework for the development and elements of a CMP. Therefore, the Federal Review Team recommends a full update of the ARTS MPO’s Congestion Management Process to bring in line with the FHWA’s CMP Guidebook. Activities for a CMP update are included in the MPO’s current UPWP, so the Federal Review Team requests an Action Plan from the MPO detailing specific tasks/deliverables and a schedule for the full CMP update. This update should include



extensive coordination with the MPO’s planning partners, including transit and stakeholders, such as bicycle and pedestrian advocates, and the freight community. Expected completion, before the next Certification Review, which is scheduled for 2020.

Disposition 19: The 2018 ARTS Congestion Management Process (CMP) (FY 2019 UPWP Task 4.2 completed in March 2019) acknowledged and followed the FHWA eight (8) step process. The eight (8) steps are: 1) Develop Regional Objectives; 2) Define CMP Network; 3) Develop Multimodal Performance Measures; 4) Collect Data/Monitor System Performance; 5) Analysis Congestion Problems and Needs; 6) Identify and Assess Strategies; 7) Program and Implement Strategies; and, 8) Evaluate Strategy Effectiveness, guided project execution and delivery. Extensive coordination with ARTS partners and assessment of anecdotal information enabled congested corridors not in the original CMP network to be assessed, e.g., Riverwatch Parkway. CMP corridor monitoring included: roadway real time travel data; freight/goods movement; crashes; transit performance; and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. A product of the 2018 CMP was the development of an interactive performance monitoring dashboard, reporting system and user manual. The ARTS CMP Dashboard can be found here <https://projectapps.vhb.com/orlando/augustaTSV2.0/map.html#>

Recommendation 20: Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): Since the ARTS MPO’s TIP does not include a discussion of the process for updating and/or amending its TIP, the Federal Review Team recommends that during the next TIP update, the MPO insert language that discusses the process for updating and amending the TIP.

Disposition 20: ARTS MPO staff is currently working with GDOT to develop the next TIP and will include language e that discusses the process for updating and amending the TIP going forward.

Recommendation 21: Transit: The Federal Review Team recommends that the TMA staff coordinate with GDOT and public transportation operator(s) to ensure that transit projects are included in the Annual List of Obligated projects table.

Disposition 21: ARTS staff will include any known transit projects that have been obligated in the Annual List of Obligated projects table which is included in the TIP. Currently, the MPO is working closely with GDOT in developing the upcoming TIP. On an annual basis, following the ARTS UPWP Fiscal Year, the MPO coordinates with GDOT and its transit operators to develop a list of projects to be included in the Annual List of Obligated Projects within the TIP. The List of Projects are selected based on coordinated financial planning, decision making agreements between the ARTS MPO, GDOT and the transit providers in reference to proposed transportation projects from special studies, and the funding availability and projection of Federal, State and local



resources. For more information about the ARTS MPO coordination process between the MPO, GDOT and transit providers, please see ARTS UPWP and TIP-Financial Plan.

Recommendation 22: Transit: TMA staff should continue coordination efforts with transit partners when developing performance based planning requirements.

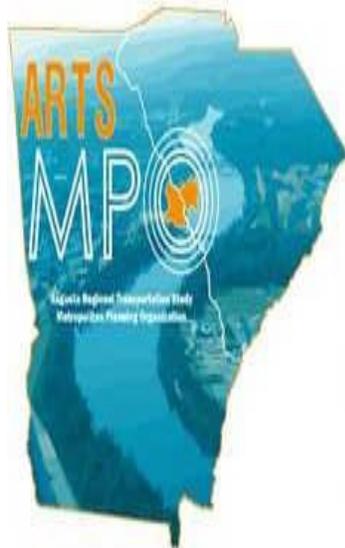
Disposition 22: ARTS MPO continues to coordinate with its transit partners (Augusta Transit and Best Friend Express) when developing performance-based planning requirements. In the fall of 2018, the ARTS MPO met with Augusta Transit and LSCOG's Best Friend Express staff

administrators to coordinate and discuss a proper written procedure (joint agreement) approach for implementing a performance-based planning process as required by the Federal Transit Administration. From these meeting discussions, the following activities were completed; ARTS MPO updated its TIP through an administrative modification process which included the current conditions of its transit provider's (APT & LSCOG) Useful Life Benchmark (ULB) and State of Good Repair (SGR) for their capital asset and its progress of setting TAM targets to their MTP and TIP documents. Agreed on a performance-based planning joint agreement process with GDOT & Transit Providers Adopted a Transit Asset Management (TAM) Performance Measure Resolution which included TAM performance measure targets from both operators.



APPENDIX D – PUBLIC MEETING WEBSITE

<https://www.augustaga.gov/680/ARTS-Metropolitan-Planning-Organization>



Certification of the Augusta Regional Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization

August 1-30, 2020

Public Feedback Requested on your experiences with Augusta
Regional Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization

Call 706.821.1796 for information

[Click for Information and Comment Submission Details](#)



APPENDIX E- PUBLIC COMMENTS

FHWA and FTA would like to thank everyone who contributed comments for the Augusta MPO TMA Certification Review. Public comments are a vital element of the certification review, as they allow citizens to provide direct input on the transportation planning process. The comments received through email are documented below.

We have reviewed all comments and have taken them into consideration throughout the writing of this report.

Citizen 1 Comment: Transit impacts every area of our life, from economics & education to healthcare & home and it is transit is that brings all these pieces of our lives together. The only way that the transit plan can best address the needs of the communities it serves is to ensure the process from planning to decision-making is both equitable and inclusive. One of my big concerns and requests for any future plans is that there be an executive summary. The document spans 198-pages, quite a sum of information to digest, especially over the short period of time allotted for comments on the plan. An Executive Summary condensed that maps out the plans for transit in the four-county region should be digestible to allow average citizens to grasp how this project will impact them and their communities. In 2018, the population of the Central Savannah River Area was estimated at just shy of 768,000. In reviewing the report and information regarding the process, my understanding is that fewer than .5% participated in the process. I don't know what past survey participation was like, but this figure tells me that the process is not inclusive. If the transit plan is to address the needs of the community, it must meet the needs of all community members. There are numerous ways the MPO can address this shortfall of participation, but chief among them must be working with community partners in the development of a public education program. One part of that program should be the creation of an equity team or committee that would consist of community leaders from across the two-state area. The committee would work to ensure that every aspect from developing educational initiatives to making final decisions would ensure that community needs are met. The transit plan should be about more than just capacity expansion. The building and maintenance of roads are expensive and only temporarily resolves issues of congestion, meanwhile, pollution continues to increase. With a \$3.1 billion budget and a third of that going towards capacity, I urge the MPO and other entities involved to reconsider prioritizing cleaner modes of transportation, like the development of EV stations throughout the area, light-rail and pedi-bike paths that connect communities across the river, and expanding park & ride and carpooling. The City of Augusta has committed to shifting to a clean energy future by 2050. Solar power and energy efficiency must be a part of that solution, but it must also include transit. The ARTS MPO transit plan could play an important roll in this transition, both in Augusta-Richmond, but also across the River in Aiken & Edgefield Counties. Lastly, we can't have a discussion about equity without a conversation on environmental justice and socioeconomics. When discussions turn to transportation and freight



in particular, a discussion must take place about the communities that are impacted by the pollution from these diesel trucks and other modes of transporting goods. Whether it's diesel trucks or cars, communities that are hemmed in by roadways and chemical plants are particularly vulnerable. The transit plan must work with an equity committee to identify communities at risk from pollution and those that have few access points for transit to determine how to mitigate concerns and ensure voices are heard. When communities are at the table, this is inclusion. Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important concern. And thanks for all the work that this represents.

Citizen 2 Comment: To the Augusta Regional Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization, Good afternoon, My name is Angela Jiang and I am the Community Organizer with the Sierra Club—Georgia Chapter, and am reaching out on the behalf of the Chapter. Our community leaders in the Savannah River Group have notified us of the comment period on the Draft 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Attached onto this email is a letter voicing concerns and potential opportunities regarding the Draft 2050 MTP, signed off by our Chapter Chair, Jeffrey Schoenberg. We urge the ARTS MPO to consider our proposals in the letter for advancing racial equity and accessibility in the City of Augusta's transit planning process and remind the MPO to center the City's 100% clean energy commitment in its planning process. We would appreciate your continued support. (Attachment on file)

Citizen 3 Comment: I am the ADA Coordinator for Richmond County, Georgia. I am concerned that there is no direct mention of the FHWA and FTA ADA requirements for the compliance of resurfaced, renovated or new bus stops, sidewalks and pedestrian crossings in the Future Mobility 2050 document. Without inclusion in the document, there is slim chance of the broken sidewalks, absent or non-compliant curb ramps and unpaved bus stops of Richmond County being improved. The GDOT ADA Transition Plan does not include any remediation input from District 2: <http://www.dot.ga.gov/PS/CivilRights/ADA> . The response of GDOT Engineers to citizen complaints about failing to remediate curb ramps is that they comprise a separate large scale project that must be planned for separately from resurfacing projects. This does not comply with the joint statement of the DOJ and FHWA regarding resurfacing triggering curb ramp remediation or installation. <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/civilrights/programs/ada/resources.cfm> After a citizen complaint to FHWA, Richmond County hired Cranston Engineering to complete an extensive ADA evaluation of the Augusta-Richmond County pedestrian and transit facilities in 2015 and identified over \$21 million dollar worth of needed remediation. It has been my experience that the state hired engineers do not include the required ADA remediation in their designs or budgets. Past, current and future road resurfacing and sidewalk projects do not include accessibility features or do not include features that are fully compliant. When roads are resurfaced, the curb ramps are not installed or remediated. When drains are present at corners, curb ramps are not installed rather than being installed next to the drain or across the street such as on the Peach Orchard resurfacing project. The current installation of new sidewalks on 15th Street in Augusta does not have curb ramps on all corners and many of the ramps that are



installed are not compliant in their slope or location. Please see the scope of this problem and the number of inaccessible bus stops and sidewalks documented in Cranston Engineering report at: <https://www.augustaga.gov/2166/Self-Evaluation-and-Transition-Plan-SETP>.

Citizen 4 Comment: I have read the ARTS report and understand the MTP is a regional blueprint and updated every five years. It is to be a guide for future transportation infrastructure. Its purpose is to improve, maintain and operate roadways, bridges, trails and public transit. Why are transit, electric bus, light rail and HOV lanes not a consideration? I would offer this plan should mention these topics.

Background Understanding

Augusta designates current area opportunity zones for future commercial development. The ARTS plan appears to bring long term private capital investment into current low income communities. Is this a Goal that is to force low income communities to move a greater distance from the downtown business that they need for food and a place to work? This obviously necessitates more change and thus adds to ARTS transportation issues. With a growing number of neighborhoods suffering from disinvestment it requires multi-modal options for residents to both find ways to get to work, to travel to find food, children to find a school and returning parents to get home at all hours of the day. All because of future commercial development opportunities for capital investments.

Evaluation of Future Mobility 2050 Plans

ARTS has done a good job of collecting information/data. I would offer that unlike the rest of the world, Americans are car crazy. Everyone wants to own one or more cars and a car is driven every day. The public may not have food but we do drive our cars. America may not have more dogs than people but we have more cars than people. As the population of our ARTS area grows, so will the number of cars and miles driven will continue to grow. One major critical "point" that I did not find in this plan so I am left to assume it was not collect was "number of accidents on every road in ARTS area". I know GA DOT does collect this information, but it needs to be added to your data base. We can safely assume SC DOT collects it, also. What I did not find is how this information was used/interpreted to reach a conclusion. Yes, we are widening the Interstate 20 Bridge over the Savannah River and Canal. I know this decision was made many years ago. You made it and it is being accomplished. Where does this report outline that issue? Yes, we can safely say five years ago, we knew Savannah Ports Authority was going to make Highway 25 a Primary Route out of Savannah to ship Container Cargo out of Savannah. What I find missing from this report is a section of this report that outlines (1) What actions has ARTS concluded are needed, (2) what actions did ARTS take up to fix, (3) What really happened over the following 5, 10, 15, 20 years as to that action, (3) did the issue ever get resolved and to what degree. Summary needed that lists what problems you took up and when and how you solved each issue.



Who are the local contacts ARTS Contacts?

The ARTS currently use local counties in its Outreach. My first concern is that it appears the ARTS does not include Citizen Groups or Volunteer Organizations. If it does, nowhere in the report did I see any identified. The ARTS Plan just mentions their makeup includes veterans, disabled and rural groups. I am a veteran and I belong to several Veteran Organization. I am not aware of any of my groups or their members have ever participated with ARTS. If I had a comment, I have no idea of how to identify a veteran's group to make a comment that is working with ARTS. I would be interested in knowing who to contact that represents me. Who are the Chairs that make up leadership of the different Citizen Advisory Committees and Sub Advisory Committees? Your Report just reads they represent Veterans. I am a Veteran. It reads they represent disabled. I have disabled friends that might wish to express an issue. What about Bikers? Have you considered Garden Clubs? We do not want flower seeds from other countries being planted along our roads. Around 10 years ago, GA DOT was caught doing that. GA DOT was buying flower seeds from Europe and planting them along GA Roads. One can only assume that someone at DOT must have thought European flowers were prettier or less expensive than our own native regional wildflowers. ARTS Plan reads it includes rural groups. Without naming specific groups that have volunteer members, what rural groups? It appears ARTS really does not have a formal role for groups to participate. How does ARTS expect you know which Citizen Group participates even though you may be one of their members? How are we to know which groups so we can contact their ARTS advisers. Your report says they represent rural groups. What rural groups? Are those the only groups to be represented? I am sure there are other groups that might care to have a voice.

Current Road congestion

Does your report cover the roads people travel in massive numbers going to work in the morning and return over in the late afternoon? I am sure it is covered, but I do not see this topic discussed. I am sure one of the biggest problem you hear the public complaining about is road congestion. I am sure your spouse tells you about that daily. I know how bad I find it every day. If nothing is done about it I do not even want to live in the CSRA in 2050. I am sure you hear that a lot. There are already hours of the day I refuse to get in my car and drive outside the small area where I live. They are roads I will not drive on in the morning and afternoon. I do not need to name all of them. I am sure you know them even though I did not find this topic nor specific roads you are studying named in this report. Question: If you do not have them identified in this year's report, how will you know in five years if you have solved any of our current road congestion problems/issues? More important is have you solved any our past congestion problems and how did you do it. Next, do you have listed in your data collection the number of cars that cause the congestion and hours the roads are congested. Are these roads getting better due to actions you have taken or are they getting worse? What year did they first become aware of the congestion? How many years have you been working on this problem and what have you done already to solve the problem for each road. Question: Fifteen years ago, did we have the same road congestion problems we still have today? If not where was there a road congestion



issue that today does not exist because of your past actions? Maybe the ARTS report ten years ago covered congested roads and you are still working on a solution? How is the public suppose to know that you are already aware of their problem with road congestion?

Last Comment on ARTS

In 2018 Mayor Hardie Davis signed on to say Augusta will join our Cities across America in support of 100 Carbon Free Electricity. He followed that up with supporting the city owning Solar Panels. There is a lot of money available for Electric Buses, that support this plan. Would it be possible and is it appropriate for ARTS to follow up with improved Modern Electric Bus Transportation?

Future Issues for Consideration

My hope is that ARTS will add to the list of what you are currently studying and add Congested Roads, Commercial Traffic Routes, HOV Lanes, Light Commuter Rail, Heavy Rail currently going through the City and Electric Car Recharge stations, and the Mayors support of the Augusta implementation of his 100 Energy Efficiency pledge.

Closing with several compliments.

I was very pleased with all of the demographics you covered. I learned a lot about the CSRA. From reading your report I now know someone really does care and looking at this issue of congested roads, and dangerous traveling conditions in CSRA besides the Police Dept.



APPENDIX F- LIST OF ACRONYMS

AQ	Air Quality
ARTS	Augusta Regional Transportation Study
CAC	Citizens Advisory Committee
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
GDOT	Georgia Department of Transportation
FAST Act	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
PC	Policy Committee
PBPP	Performance Based Planning and Programming
SCDOT	South Carolina Department of Transportation
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
TCC	Technical Coordinating Committee
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TPM	Transportation Performance Management
U.S.C.	United States Code
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation



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