

## Appendix J – GDOT 2015 Title VI Questionnaire

### *Public Input/Participation Process*

- Please confirm the presence of an MPO-adopted public participation process that meets relevant federal Title VI regulations and is reviewed frequently by the MPO.

CORE MPO is responsible for complying with the federal requirements of the Title VI program. The following documents are a part of the CORE MPO's comprehensive, cooperative and continuing transportation planning process (available on the CORE MPO website at <http://www.thempc.org/Transportation/TitleVI.htm>).

- CORE MPO Board Resolution to Adopt the Title VI Program
- Title VI Policy Statement
- Notice to Public
- Public Involvement Process
- Complaint Procedures
- Complaint Form
- Records of Complaints and Lawsuits
- Environmental Justice Document
- Limited English Proficiency Plan

Statement: MPC and CORE MPO are committed to the principle of affirmative action and shall not discriminate against otherwise qualified persons on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, physical or mental handicap, or disability in its recruitment, employment, facility and program accessibility or services. MPC and CORE MPO are committed to enforcing the provisions of the Civil Rights Act, Title VI, and all the related requirements mentioned above. CORE MPO is also committed to taking positive and realistic affirmative steps to ensure the protection of rights and opportunities for all persons affected by its programs.

For better information dissemination, CORE MPO has made it a policy to include the nondiscrimination statement as a part of all of the plans, programs, studies and reports that the MPO produces. These include the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Participation Plan (PP), the Congestion Management Process (CMP), and all of the final reports of special studies. These documents are not only available on the CORE MPO's website, but also available at the public libraries and the offices of the public review agencies.

The CORE MPO's Participation Plan outlines the MPO's public involvement process including how to engage the general public, minority, low-income, and disabled populations in the MPO's transportation planning process. The Participation Plan was adopted by the CORE MPO Board in 2002 and has been updated several times since then.

In addition, CORE MPO maintains the EJ Document and the Limit English Proficiency (LEP) Plan and work with the Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) to make sure that the transportation needs of the underserved communities are met. CORE MPO continues to evaluate the MTP, TIP, and other programs and plans for EJ and Title VI compliance, and continues to pursue partnerships with service and non-profit groups that could assist the MPO to engage minority and low income persons both through the Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT) and other forms of outreach.

CORE MPO has also developed a formal process to handle Title VI complaints, including the development of the Title VI complaint form and its translation into Spanish. As required by the federal regulations, CORE MPO maintains the complaint and response records (if any).

CORE MPO reevaluates and updates its Title VI program (EJ plans, PP, LEP, Title VI complaint procedures and forms, etc.) to ensure compliance and non-discrimination on a regular basis. The MPO is currently in the process of comprehensively updating these Title VI plans, reports and forms to reflect the MPO's revised Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and committee structure, and the latest federal planning requirements. The target adoption date is in December 2015.

- Please share any major accomplishments and/or innovative ideas that supported Title VI compliance in public input/participation during fiscal year 2015.

CORE MPO kept all of the Title VI documents up-to-date in 2015 and constantly monitored the MPO's website for possible input from all of the populations in the Savannah region.

The MPO's plan, program and project developments and updates (2040 MTP update, FY 2015-2018 TIP development and amendments, development of various studies, etc.) follow the formal public involvement process outlined in the Title VI documents. Moreover, the MPO has worked collaboratively with the public through a series of citizen driven planning processes to engage citizen groups through intensive facilitated engagement process. For example, the public meetings and stakeholder meetings for the 2040 MTP, Freight Transportation Plan, Park and Ride Lot study, US 80 Bridge Replacement scoping, Parking Matters study, etc. were conducted via facilitated processes and in locations where it is convenient for all of the interested parties to participate.

The CORE MPO's Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT) is a standing committee that provides vital input on how to meet the transportation needs of the disabled community. The Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) has its own public involvement process for its plans and projects. However, CAT often utilizes the MPO's ACAT meetings to get feedback on service changes and policy changes.

There is a lot of coordination for public involvement between MPO and CAT for development of major plans and programs such as the Park and Ride Lot Study, the Transportation Improvement Program, Transit Development Plan, etc. The MPO forwards CAT's public meeting notices to the people in the MPO Contact Database. MPO website has a link to the CAT website.

- Please discuss highlights of your MPO's stakeholder involvement activities within the MPO's public participation process related to Title VI.

CORE MPO is a non-discriminating agency. Title VI indicates that no persons shall be discriminated against which includes the general public, minority groups, disabled communities, low-income persons, and others. CORE MPO has tried several ways in the public involvement efforts to engage all of the populations in the Savannah region.

- Transportation Glossary – provide explanations of transportation terms; this is provided on the MPO web pages, to new committee members at orientation, and otherwise as needed.
- Non-technical language – staff tries not to use jargon during public meetings; acronyms are first spelled out in staff reports.
- Orientation - new members are given orientations on the MPO planning process.
- Community Outreach and Education – constant education of the public on the MPO planning process vs. state or local government working process and explanation on various documents and projects.

- Public comments – major plans and programs all have public comment periods. Comments on annual planning documents are summarized and responses are documented for the planning and program development process. The comments are incorporated into the plans and programs where appropriate. Original comments received are listed in the appendix.
- Plan Coordination - CORE MPO coordinates with federal, state and local agencies in the development of plans, programs and studies (MTP, TIP, etc.). This close working relationship ensures that input to the MPO’s planning process is comprehensive.
- Committee Composition - the MPO Board and advisory committees provide formal public involvement process. Each of these committee’s meetings are open to the public and give opportunities for the public to provide input. The Participation Plan (PP) includes a specific and separate strategy for engaging low-income and minority populations, mostly through ACAT, which is comprised of voting members from agencies serving the traditionally under-served populations. ACAT meetings put transportation users in direct contact with the transportation providers to provide input on improving services.
- Cooperation – CORE MPO and other agencies cooperate to share information and provide technical support. For example, CORE MPO and CAT coordinate with each other in developing the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan (HST), the Environmental Justice (EJ) document, the Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP), the transit surveys, etc. to better understand how to serve the transportation disadvantaged. MPO provided technical analysis to CAT on EJ route analysis. CAT provided MPO with survey data on LEP development.
- Complaint Handling - a big portion of the ACAT meeting is devoted to discussing how to improve the fixed-route and paratransit (Teleride) services. When MPO receives concerns on transit related services, staff directs the customers to the right CAT contact person to expedite the problem solving process.
- Meetings - the CORE MPO’s public involvement process consists of public notifications of meetings and workshops, having the meetings in ADA accessible and EJ locations, and staff assistance in helping participation of disabled citizens.
- Other means - interpretation of transportation data and analysis, usage of maps, graphics and videos, and other easy-to-understand means.
- If you have any additional outreach approaches which address Title VI compliance, please provide a quick overview.

CORE MPO staff contacted the school board to try to collect information on LEP children to get an idea about their needs. Staff also reached out to some church organizations who serve LEP populations.

ACAT requires large prints and cassette for minutes. CORE MPO staff sends a separate email to ACAT members (some of whom are visually impaired), with meeting materials attached as Word documents, instead of PDFs, for those whose reading software does not handle PDFs. The ACAT meeting locations was moved to the CAT office where Teleride services and fixed route services converge.

All chosen meeting locations have transit service and ramps – MPC office, church buildings, City Hall of Garden City, Community Park, etc.

The Savannah State University (SSU) is a traditionally Black College. Several students from SSU have interned with the CORE MPO to gain knowledge and working experience about metropolitan transportation planning. Some of the advisory committee members graduated from SSU.

### ***Monitoring and Review Process Related to Contracts***

- As it relates to Title VI compliance and participation by disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs), please describe how your MPO incorporates consultant monitoring and review within its Title VI processes?

RFQ/RFP issuances - CORE MPO encourages DBE/WBE participation in the RFQ/RFP issuances. DBE/WBE participation is always one of the evaluation criteria in consultant selection. CORE MPO utilizes the GDOT DBE program as a guidance to achieve DBE goals where federal funds are involved.

Contract - CORE MPO's contracts include "Notice of Contractors Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as Amended by the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 for Federal-aid Contracts" that has six clauses. The Nondiscrimination clause of the notice states – "the contractor, with regard to the work performed by it after award and prior to completion of contract work, will not discriminate on the ground of race, color, national origin or sex in the selection and retention of subcontractors including procurement of materials and leases of equipment. The contractor will not participate either directly or indirectly in the discrimination prohibited by Section 21.5 of the Regulations, including employment practices when the contract covers a program, set forth in Appendix B of the Regulations. In addition, the Contractor will not participate either directly or indirectly in the discrimination prohibited by 23 CFR 200 (b)."

DBE Tracking - CORE MPO tracks actual payments to DBEs through invoices for different tasks. Normally a DBE serves as a sub consultant. Each study is different regarding DBE participation (see examples below).

#### ***SR 204 Corridor Study – Total DBE participation is 23%***

- McMillan and Associates (MBE) - 3% for public involvement activities
- Symbioscity and Lott + Barber (WBE) - 3% for public involvement activities
- All Traffic Data (DBE) - 2% for traffic data collection
- Edwards-Pitman (WBE) - 15% for environmental services

#### ***SR 21 Corridor Study - Total MBE/WBE participation is 13.5%***

- Lott + Barber / Symbioscity (WBE) - 4.7% of project cost for Public and stakeholder involvement
- McMillian and Associates (MBE) - 2% of project cost for Public and stakeholder involvement
- Edwards-Pittman (WBE) - 6.8% of project cost for environmental services

#### ***US 80 Bridges and Road Safety Improvements – Total DBE participation is 17.5%***

- Lott + Barber, WBE, 10% of project cost (Data Collection and Evaluation of Previous Studies, Alternatives, Evaluation of Alternatives and Selection of Recommended Alternatives, Concept development, Public Involvement)
- McMillian Associates, MBE, 3.7% of project cost (Public Involvement)
- Symbioscity, WBE, 3.8% of project cost (Public Involvement)

### ***I-16 Exit Ramp Removal – Total DBE participation is 6%***

- Grice and Associates (MBE) - 4% of project cost for transportation analysis
- McMillan and Associates (MBE) - 2% of project cost for Public and stakeholder involvement- MBE

### ***Outreach***

- As part of, or in addition to, your MPO's public input/participation process, please describe how the MPO identifies the diverse and potentially Environmental-Justice (EJ) populations in the area?
  - Please share the MPO's engagement mechanisms to increase inclusion and involvement of those potential environmental-justice populations?

CORE MPO's development of the Environmental Justice document includes the identification of EJ populations (minority and low-income) as well as the disabled communities, and the elderly and children who are subject to health issues. The analysis has been conducted using the population and socio-economic data from the US Census (decennial census data and American Community Survey data). Normally a regional threshold is developed for each population segment, and then the threshold is applied to each geographic region (census tracts, census block groups or traffic analysis zones). A map is thus derived to show where the EJ concentrated locations are in the Savannah region. The detailed methodology and analysis are outlined in the EJ document.

The engagement of the EJ population in the CORE MPO's transportation planning process follows the Participation Plan and is supplemented by the EJ document and LEP Plan. For example, the transportation needs of various EJ populations are identified and these needs are correlated to the transportation plans and programs. The plans and programs then go through the MPO's public involvement process to ensure that the EJ needs are met.

### ***Limited English Proficiency***

- Please list those activities the MPO performed that demonstrated the provision of access to Limited English Proficiency populations?

CORE MPO developed a Draft LEP Plan in 2009 and has been updating it to reflect the changes. The MPO has conducted the four-factor analysis and identified the LEP groups in the Savannah area. The results from the CAT 2010 survey have been incorporated. The MPO also worked with CAT on a survey for the development of the Transit Development Plan (TDP). The survey included LEP related questions and reflected the updated transportation needs of the LEP persons. The MPO and CAT will keep on pooling resources in terms of language assistance and document translations in the future.

MPO and CAT coordinated in developing a survey about the transit service and plan to emphasize targeting LEP areas. MPO staff plans to attend church gatherings in these communities and have face-to-face talks with the community members to get input on how to address their transportation needs.

The MPO's Participation Plan, the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan and the Environmental Justice Report all document various ways to engage the traditionally under-served populations. Written and oral translations (if need) will be provided based on resource availability.

- Please share all MPO publications that are translated in another language besides English (and list the language as well).

The Notice to Public and the Title VI Complaint Form have been translated into Spanish and posted on the MPO website.

An introduction to the MPO planning process including its plans and programs has been translated into Chinese.

### ***Training***

- What Title VI training did the MPO participate in? (including online and/or webinars?)
  - If no training was completed this fiscal year, please list when the most recent training was completed?

The MPO staff participated in various formal workshops and conferences related to Title VI in the past several years that were conducted by FTA, FHWA, GDOT, AMPO and GAMPO. Staff also attended the GDOT training opportunities related to DBE. In addition, staff constantly monitors the FHWA, FTA and AMPO websites for any updates to the Title VI program and attends webinars and online courses. In the last fiscal year, CORE MPO staff attended AMPO and GAMPO conferences where Title VI was a part of the program and some FTA webinars where Title VI was the focus.

### ***Self-Monitoring***

- Did the MPO incorporate any Title VI self-monitoring activities in its operations in FY 2015?
  - If so, did the MPO identify any findings, recommendations and/or corrective actions?

Environmental Justice/Title VI/Anti-Poverty Transportation Planning is a specific task listed in the CORE MPO's FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP – sub-element 2.2). Though self-monitoring activities are not singled out, the UPWP lists activities the MPO would conduct under this program.

In 2015, the CORE MPO staff updated the MPO's Title VI program, which was adopted by the CORE MPO Board on December 10, 2014. MPO staff continued to support the ACAT Committee, and ACAT continued to provide advice and recommendations regarding transportation planning for the transportation disadvantaged.

### ***Goals of Upcoming Fiscal Year***

- Related to Title VI, what identified goals and/or actions are planned for FY 2016, including training?

MPC staff will provide staff support in the continuing functioning of ACAT. Arrange for ACAT meetings; prepare and distribute meeting agendas and minutes.

CAT staff will participate in the ACAT meetings and will monitor the operations of TELERIDE services and develop recommendations for modifications where appropriate. Provide detailed planning and updating to allow for the implementation of the recommendations in the Paratransit Plans.

TELERIDE staff will participate in the ACAT meetings and furnish information pertaining to the operations of the TELERIDE Service.