Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) dba

THE COMET

TITLE VI Compliance Program Update

OCTOBER 2020

Adopted by Board of Directors-October 28, 2020

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Section 1

Title VI Policy and Procedures

Introduction

Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (The COMET) was formed by the City of Columbia, Richland County, Lexington County and City of Forest Acres in 2000 and was given the responsibility for providing local transit service within Richland and Lexington Counties as a regional transportation authority under South Carolina Code of Laws, Chapter 25. The COMET contracts for operations and maintenance of transit services with RATP Dev USA, Enterprise, Bewegen, Uber and Lyft. Staff are directly responsible for planning, capital investments, financial management, and operations oversight. The COMET is financially supported by Richland County Transportation Penny Funds, Lexington County General Funds, State Mass Transit Act Funds, fares, miscellaneous and advertising revenues, and Federal Section 5307, 5310, 5311 transit funds.

Transit services is provided throughout Richland and Lexington Counties on 35 fixed routes, five (5) rural flex routes, and an ADA complementary paratransit services. Transit services are provided throughout 1,225 square miles within Richland and Lexington Counties currently. Express routes travel to Sumter and Newberry Counties and connections are available to Fairfield County Transit System at Killian Road Walmart.

As a recipient of United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) funding, The COMET has developed the following compliance plan for meeting the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the USDOT Order on Environmental Justice.

By formal adoption of the Title VI Compliance Plan Update and the annual execution of the FTA Certifications and Assurances, The COMET hereby certifies compliance with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 USC 2000d); 42 USC 4601; 49 USC Section 5332; 49 CFR Part 21; 28 CFR part 42; FTA Circular 4702.1B; FTA Circular 4703.1; Executive Order 13166; DOT LEP Policy Guidance, and Section 12 of FTA's Master Agreement.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, protects any person in the United States on the ground of race, color, or national origin from being excluded from participation, being denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance from the US Department of Transportation.

Objectives:

The objectives of The COMET's Title VI program are:

1. To ensure that USDOT assisted benefits and related services are made available and are equitably distributed without regard to race, color, or national origin;
2. To ensure that the level and quality of the USDOT assisted public transit services are sufficient to provide equal access and mobility for any person without regard to race, color, or national origin;
3. To ensure that opportunities to participate in transit planning and decision making are provided to persons without regard to race, color, or national origin;

4. To ensure that decisions on the location of transit services and faculties are made without regard to race, color, or national origin; and
5. To ensure that corrective and remedial action is taken by The COMET as recipients of USDOT assistance to prevent discriminatory treatment of any beneficiary based on race, color, or national origin.

General Requirements

The COMET is required to submit the following information to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as part of the agency's Title VI Program. Also, The COMET's subrecipients are required to submit Title VI information on a schedule determined by The COMET.

Checklist of Requirements

- Title VI Notice to the Public, including a list of locations where the notice is posted
- Title VI Complaint Procedures
- Title VI Complaint Form
- List of transit-related Title VI investigations, complaints, and lawsuits
- Public Participation Plan
- Language Assistance Plan
- Table depicting the membership of non-elected committees and councils
- Subrecipient Monitors
- Title VI Equity Analysis (Facilities, Service and/or Fare)
- Board Meeting Minutes/Resolution - Approving Title VI Program

Requirement of all Fixed Route Transit Providers:

- Service standards
- Service policies

Requirement of Transit Providers that operate 50 or more fixed route vehicles in peak service and are located in an Urbanized Area (UZA) of 200,000 or more people: (The COMET does not meet this requirement presently

- Demographic and service profile maps and charts
- Demographic ridership and travel patterns, collected by surveys
- Service Monitoring program and report (including Evidence of Board Approval)
- Description of the Public Engagement Process
- Results of service and/or fare equity analyses conducted since the last Title VI Program submission

Prior Update

The COMET is required to update its Title VI Program every three years. The COMET's previous Title VI Program will expire on July 31, 2020. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, FTA postponed the

submission of all Title VI Programs until October 1, 2020. Also, the current program can be used up through November 30, 2020. This version covers the period from August 1, 2020 to July 31, 2023.

Title VI Notice to the Public

Title VI Policy Statement

The Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority dba The COMET is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

The General Manager, senior management and all supervisors and employees share the responsibility for carrying out The COMET's commitment to Title VI. The Title VI Coordinator is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program.

For additional information on The COMET's nondiscrimination obligations, please write to:

Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (The COMET)
Director of Regulatory Compliance/Civil Rights Officer
3613 Lucius Road
Columbia, SC 29201

Complaints must be in writing and filed within 180 days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. Complaint forms can be downloaded from www.catchtheCOMET.org or email at info@TheCOMETsc.gov.

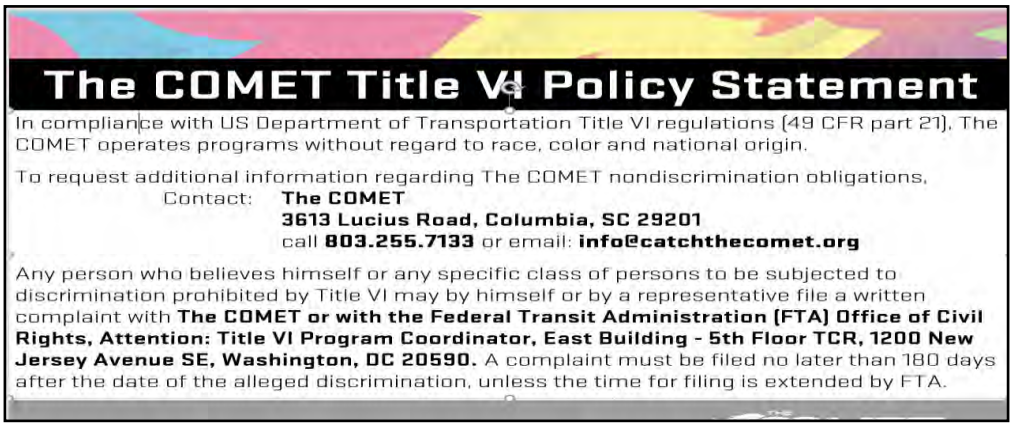
A complainant may also file directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights using the mailing address below:

Federal Transit Administration
Office of Civil Rights
Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator
East Building 5th Floor-TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Locations of Title IV Public Notices

The COMET Title Policy Statement is publicly posted on all revenue fleet vehicles, traditionally located on a card behind the operator. Figure 1 depicts the Title VI posting on The COMET's fleet vehicles.

Figure 1: Title VI Policy Displayed on The COMET Bus



The COMET Title VI Policy Statement

In compliance with US Department of Transportation Title VI regulations (49 CFR part 21), The COMET operates programs without regard to race, color and national origin.

To request additional information regarding The COMET nondiscrimination obligations,
Contact: **The COMET**
3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201
call **803.255.7133** or email: **info@catchthecomet.org**

Any person who believes himself or any specific class of persons to be subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI may by himself or by a representative file a written complaint with **The COMET or with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building - 5th Floor TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.** A complaint must be filed no later than 180 days after the date of the alleged discrimination, unless the time for filing is extended by FTA.

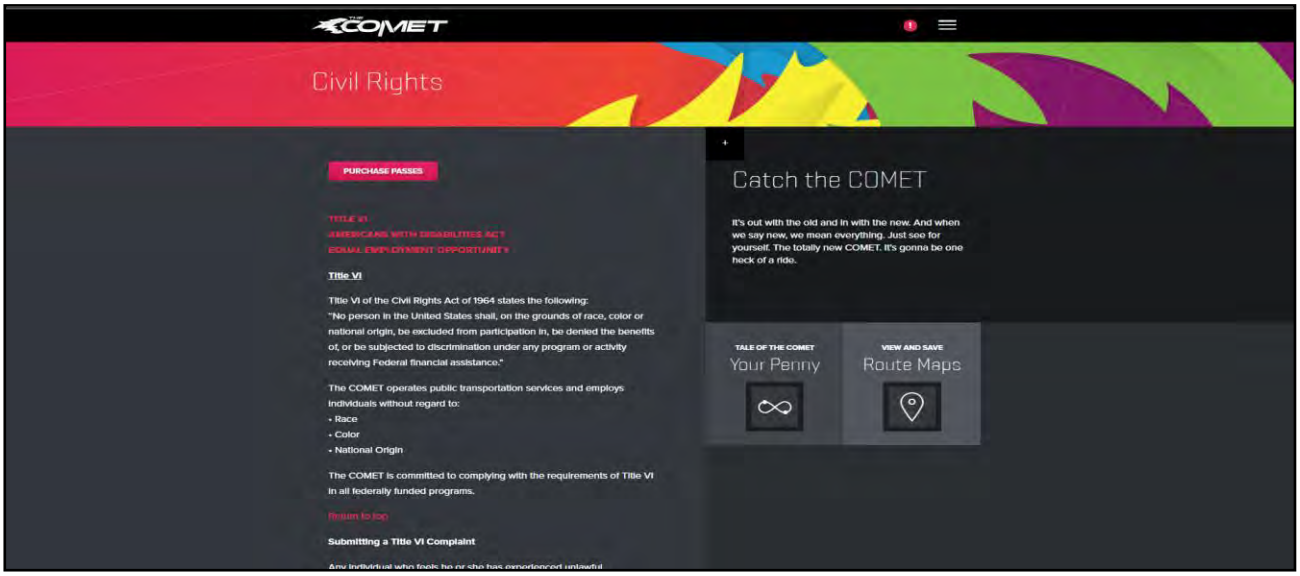
The COMET's Title VI Policy Statement is publicly posted at the THE COMET Central public transit station, The COMET's operating facility and The COMET's administrative offices.

The COMET's Transit Rider's Guide

The COMET's Title VI Policy Statement is also posted online at:

http://catchtheCOMETsc.gov/civil-rights/#title-vi

Figure 2 – Title VI on The COMET Website



VI Complaint Internal Procedures

1. Title VI Complaint Procedures

The COMET's procedures apply to complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, relating to any program and/or activity administered by The COMET or its sub-recipients, consultants, and/or contractors. Intimidation or retaliation of any kind is prohibited by law.

The COMET's procedures do not deny the right of the complainant to file formal complaints with other State or Federal agencies, or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination. These procedures are part of an administrative process that does not provide for remedies that include punitive damages or compensatory remuneration for the complainant.

a. Filing

Any person who believes that he or she or any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination or retaliation prohibited by Civil Rights authorities, based upon race, color, , or national origin, may file a written complaint to The COMET's Title VI Program Coordinator (the "Title VI Coordinator"), whom is the Director of Regulatory Compliance/Civil Rights Officer. The complaint must meet the following requirements:

1. A formal complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged occurrence or when the attached discrimination became known to the complainant (the "Complainant").

2. Complaints must be in writing, signed by the Complainant, and include full contact information (mailing address, telephone number, and email address if available).

3. Complaints must include the date of the alleged act(s) of discrimination (date when the Complainant became aware of the alleged discrimination) or the date on which the conduct was discontinued or the latest instance of the conduct.

4. Complaints must present a detailed description of the issues; include the names, job titles, and addresses of those individuals perceived as parties in the action complained against; and the names and addresses of any witnesses. The COMET Title VI Complaint Form is attached as Exhibit 1.

5. The allegation(s) in the complaint must involve a covered basis such as race, color or national origin.

6. The allegations in the complaint must involve a program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance.

7. Complainant has a continuing duty to provide the Title VI Coordinator with his/her current contact information.

b. Receipt, Acceptance and Preliminary Investigation.

1. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Title VI Coordinator will review the complaint to determine if the requirements set forth in Section 2(a)1-6 have been met.

2. Within 15 calendar days of the receipt of the complaint, the Complainant shall be informed by the Title VI Coordinator in writing that the complaint meets the requirements or informed of which requirement(s) have not been met. The Complainant(s) shall have 30 calendar days from the date of such notice to supplement, amend or refile the complaint.

3. If the complaint meets the requirements in Section 2(a), the Title VI Coordinator shall conduct a preliminary investigation. This investigation shall include but not be limited to an interview with the Complainant, interview with the person or persons named in the complaint, review of any documents provided by the Complainant, review of any audio, video or other digital evidence, or interviews with any witnesses.

4. The COMET will assume responsibility for investigating complaints against any of its sub-recipients. Complaints in which The COMET is named as the Respondent, shall be forwarded to the appropriate Federal agency for proper disposition, in accordance with their procedures.

c. Review or Action by Executive Director; Initial Investigation

1. Within 30 calendar days of the date of the determination made pursuant to (b)(2) or within 30 calendar days of the date the Complainant provides additional information specified in (b)(2), the Title VI Coordinator shall submit to the Executive Director a written report summarizing the preliminary investigation.

2. The Executive Director shall review the report within 30 calendar days of its date and shall take action accepting the report as final and submit to the FTA or take action referring the matter to an attorney other than its general counsel for further investigation.

If the matter is referred, the Executive Director shall direct that the report from the attorney be received within 60 calendar days of the date of the referral at which time the report shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee and submitted to the FTA.

d. Dismissal

A complaint may be recommended for dismissal for the following reasons:

1. The Complainant requests, in writing, withdrawal of the complaint.

2. The Complainant fails to respond to repeated requests for additional information needed to process the complaint.

3. The Complainant cannot be located after reasonable attempts.

e. Investigation of Complaints

In cases where The COMET assumes responsibility for investigation of Complaints against any of its sub-recipients, The COMET will provide the Respondent with the opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing. The COMET Executive Director will designate an investigative team responsible for evaluating the complaint, developing an investigative plan, conducting interviews, collecting and analyzing evidence, and preparing an investigative report.

The COMET's final investigative report will be submitted to FTA (or appropriate Federal agency) within 60 calendar days of receipt of the complaint. FTA will issue a final agency decision (FAD) and provide written notification of the decision to the Complainant and Respondent.

f. Appeals

If the FTA concludes that the respondent is in compliance with laws/regulations and the Complainant disagrees, the Complainant may, if dissatisfied, file an action in the appropriate U.S. District Court.

The COMET
Title VI Complaint Process and Form

The COMET is fully compliant with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and is committed to making its services are accessible to everyone. Persons who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin by The COMET may file a formal Title VI discrimination complaint within 180 days of the alleged occurrence by completing and submitting The COMET Title VI Complaint Form.

A Title VI complaint must be made in writing. If the customer requires assistance in completing the form to file the complaint, please contact the Title VI Coordinator at (803) 255-7129 to receive assistance. Submit the completed form by mail, fax, email, or deliver in-person to:

The COMET
Attn: Title VI Coordinator
3613 Lucius Road
Columbia, SC 29201
Fax: (803) 255-7113
email: info@catchtheCOMET.org

Customers may also choose to file a complaint directly with:

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights
Attn: Complaint Team
East Building, 5th Floor – TCR
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

If the complaint is submitted to The COMET, the information will be reviewed and a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to inform the customer that the complaint will be investigated appropriately. A final written determination of the outcome of the complaint will occur no later than 30 working days of receipt. If the complaint is not substantiated, The COMET will advise the complainant of his or her right to appeal.

Appeals Process
If complainant disagrees with The COMET's determination, the complainant may appeal the decision in writing with The COMET (at the address above). If the complainant believes the occurrence of the discriminatory act is in violation of federal laws, the appeal may be submitted directly to the following agencies:

Appeals must be filed **within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act** to the following:

Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights
East Building, 5th Floor – TCR
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Title VI Complaint Form

Fill form out COMPLETELY. Only complete complaints will be processed.

Section I:		
Name:		
Address:		
Telephone (Home):	Telephone (Work):	
Email Address:		
Accessible Format Requirements?	☐ Large Print	☐ Audio Tape
	☐ TDD	☐ Other

Section II:		
Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf?		
☐ **Yes. Go to Section III.**		
☐ No. If not, supply the name and relationship of the person for whom you are complaining.		
Please explain why you have filed for a third party:		
Confirm you have obtained permission from the aggrieved party if you are filing on behalf of a third party.	☐ Yes	☐ No

Section III:

I believe the discrimination I experienced related to Title VI was based on (check all that apply):

☐ Race ☐ Color ☐ Country of Origin

Date of alleged discrimination (Month, Day, Year): _____

Explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe you were discriminated against. Describe all persons who were involved. Include the name and contact information of the person(s) who discriminated against you (if known) as well as names and contact information of any witnesses. If more space is needed, please use the back of this form.

_____

_____

_____

Section VI:		
Have you previously filed a discrimination complaint with this agency?	☐ Yes	☐ No

If yes, please provide any reference information regarding your previous complaint. _____ _____ _____
Section V:
Have you filed this complaint with any other federal, state, or local agency, or with any federal or state court? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, check all that apply: ☐ Federal Agency: _____ ☐ Federal Court: _____ ☐ State Agency: _____ ☐ State Court : _____ ☐ Local Agency: _____
Please provide information about a contact person at the agency/court where the complaint was filed.
Name:
Title:
Agency:
Address:
Telephone:
Section VI:
Name of agency complaint is against:
Name of person complaint is against:
Title:
Location:
Telephone Number (if available):

You may attach any written materials or other information that you think is relevant to your complaint. Your signature and date are required below:

_____ _____

Signature Date

Please complete and return the Title VI COMPLAINT FORM to the following:

Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (The COMET)
Director of Regulatory Compliance/Civil Rights Officer
3613 Lucius Road
Columbia, SC 29201

Title VI Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits

The COMET develops and maintain records of Title VI investigations, complaints, and lawsuits, including any investigations conducted by entities other than the FTA and any lawsuits or complaints naming the recipient or subrecipient that allege discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. At a minimum, the record includes the following:

- Date of investigation, lawsuit or receipt of filed complaint;
- Brief summary of the allegation(s);
- Status of investigation, lawsuit or receipt of filed complaint; and,
- Description of any actions taken by the recipient or subrecipient in response to the investigation, lawsuit or receipt of filed complaint.

The records will be maintained for three years after the case is closed. Below is the list that is maintained in The COMET and included in the Title VI Program submitted to FTA every three years:

Record of Title VI Complaints, Investigations and Lawsuits				
	Date	Summary	Status	Actions Taken
Investigations				
1.				
2.				
3.				
Lawsuits				
1. None				
2.				
3.				
Complaints				
1.				
2.				
3.				

Section 2

Public Participation Element

Introduction

Public participation is a vital part of the decision-making process. A key pillar of the Title VI Program is the assurance of community input into the transit decision-making process. The purpose of public participation is to offer early, continuous, and meaningful opportunities for the public to be involved in the identification of decisions involving public transit initiatives.

Through conversation and collaboration with riders, prospective riders, and The COMET's Board of Directors, The COMET continually assesses the quality of its service, measures potential impacts to ensure that valuable services are provided to the residents and visitors of Richland and Lexington Counties.

Public Participation Strategies

The COMET is very much involved in and utilizes several strategies in the Public Participation Plan developed by the Central Midlands Regional Council of Governments (CMCOG). This Public Participation Plan which is included in EXHIBIT 4 lays out the steps to inform and involve customers and stakeholder in decisions affecting program, project and work activities.

The following principles have been adopted from CMCOG to support Public Participation strategies:

- **Inform** – The public must be provided with ample opportunities to learn about activities, issues, and upcoming decision making.
- **Understand** – The public must be given adequate, relevant and understandable information about an issue, including competing values, technical underpinnings, applicable standards and likely decision options.
- **Participate** – Project scheduling must allow adequate time for the public to learn about an issue and prepare responses that can be incorporated into the decision-making process at a time when such comments can influence outcomes.
- **Respond** – Subsequent planning steps must clearly demonstrate how public input influenced the final product or provide some other response to input received.

All meetings of The COMET are open to the public and publicized on the agency's website or The COMET's Facebook page at @CatchTheCOMET. Members of the public may request time on the agenda of The COMET's Board of Directors Meeting to comment on specific subjects of interest to Board Members. Meetings are held at the Lowell C. Spires Jr. Regional Transit Facility – 3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 in the Conference Room A (Large). A minimum of three weeks advance notice is given for requested agenda time.

The COMET makes all reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities to participate in the meetings. Upon request to the Administrative & Customer Service Specialist, The COMET will provide agenda materials in appropriate alternative formats, or disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, to enable individuals with

disabilities to participate in public meetings. Requests can be sent to The COMET by mail at 3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201, by fax at (803) 255-7113, or by e-mail to info@catchtheCOMET.org. For language assistance or interpreter services, individuals can contact (803) 255-7133 or 711 through the Relay Service. Para información en Español, por favor llame al (803) 255-7133.

Individuals can take The COMET to The Board of Directors Committee Meetings using Route 6 and DART. For more details, individuals are encouraged to visit www.catchtheCOMET.org or call (803) 255-7100.

Also, community forums are conducted to build relationships and provide a setting for sharing of information with interested stakeholders. Notice is provided through posting information on The COMET's website and through news releases. Public hearings are scheduled prior to any fare or service changes or enhancements to gather feedback about the potential impact of proposed transportation decisions.

The COMET makes every effort to maintain positive and effective communication with the community and various levels of government that interface with or impact the development of programs and operations at The COMET. Working relationships are established and maintained with local media, including minority-based media, in order to communicate pertinent information to The COMET's customers and stakeholders.

Section 3

Language Assistance Plan

Purpose

Presidential Executive Order (EO) 13166 - Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency is directed at implementing the protections afforded by the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related regulations. Discrimination in providing services to LEP persons is covered in Title VI under national origin discrimination.

EO 13166 states that recipients must provide LEP persons an equal opportunity to benefit from and ensure meaningful access to its programs and services that are normally provided in English. President George W. Bush affirmed his commitment to Executive Order 13166 through a memorandum issues on October 25, 2001 by Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Ralph F. Boyd, Jr. Federal agencies were directed to provide guidance and technical assistance to recipients of federal funds as to how they can provide meaningful access to limited English proficient users of federal programs.

The USDOT published revised guidance for its recipients on December 14, 2005. This document states that Title VI and its implementing regulations require that DOT recipients take responsible steps to ensure meaningful access to the benefits, services, information, and other important portions of their programs and activities for individuals who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) and that recipients should use the DOT LEP Guidance to determine how best to comply with statutory and regulatory obligations to provide meaningful access to the benefits, services, information, and other important portions of their programs and activities for individuals who are LEP.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) references the DOT LEP guidance in its Circular 4702.1A, "Title VI and Title VI-Dependent Guidelines for FTA Recipients," which was published on April 13, 2007. Chapter IV part 4 of this Circular reiterates the requirement to take responsible steps to ensure meaningful access to benefits, services, and information for LEP persons and suggests that FTA recipients and subrecipients develop a language implementation plan consistent with the provisions of Section VII of the DOT LEP guidance.

The DOT LEP Guidance recommends that all recipients, especially those that serve large LEP populations, should develop an implementation plan to address the needs of the LEP populations they serve. The DOT LEP Guidance notes that effective implementation plans typically include the following five elements:

1) Identifying LEP individuals who need language assistance;
2) Providing language assistance measures;
3) Training staff;
4) Providing notice to LEP persons; and
5) Monitoring and updating the plan.

The purpose of this plan is to establish effective guidelines adhering to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 for The COMET's personnel and contractors to follow when providing services to, or interacting with, individuals who meet the criteria of LEP.

The COMET's LEP Services Vision Statement

The COMET strives to provide effective, efficient, and equitable service to all individuals regardless of their ability to speak, read, or write English. Service delivery options (translation of publications, oral language assistance, etc.) will be developed to accommodate the needs of LEP individuals, enabling them to communicate effectively with The COMET in person, over the phone, in writing, and through electronic media.

The COMET's Four-Factor Analysis

Federal guidance provides "four factors" to consider when assessing language needs and determining appropriate steps to ensure meaningful access to services for LEP services. The "Four Factor Analysis" will place The COMET in better positioned to formalize and implement a cost-effective and appropriate mix of proactive language assistance measures. The Four-Factor Analysis is an individualized assessment that balances the following four factors:

Factor #1: The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered in The COMET's program or service area.

The decision to provide language assistance services included an assessment of the number or proportion of LEP persons from a particular language group served or encountered in the surrounding community area. The greater the number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered, the more likely language services are needed. Generally, identifying any community where the eligible LEP population equals 5 percent or more in a given language automatically includes language assistance services as a mandatory and normal part of program operation. In Richland County, the largest LEP population is Hispanic.

The 2018 ACS Census estimates indicate that Richland County has 22,051 residents who are foreign born, while Lexington County has 14,294. The Census also indicates that in both Richland and Lexington County 15% of the county's populations speak a language other than English at home. According to the Census estimates, 15,992 people or 2.4% of the county's population speak English less than 'very well'. Census data has been collected by The COMET to identify the LEP speakers in The COMET's service area. The top languages spoken in the county and the routes used by the LEP Spanish speaking community were identified using statistical data and public outreach methods.

Some of the leaders within the LEP Spanish-speaking community have identified routes 96L, 91, 76, and parts of the 801 as popular routes among Spanish speakers. It has been identified that some of these LEP individuals live in or commute to Columbia and West Columbia as seen in Figure 2. According to ACS Census estimates, of the 63,960 populations analyzed for West Columbia-Cayce there are 5,547 (8.7%) Hispanic or Latinos residing in that area; Columbia has a Hispanic or Latino community of 6,934 individuals wherein 1,980 (13%) speak English less than very well.

Figure 3 - The COMET Service Area Map

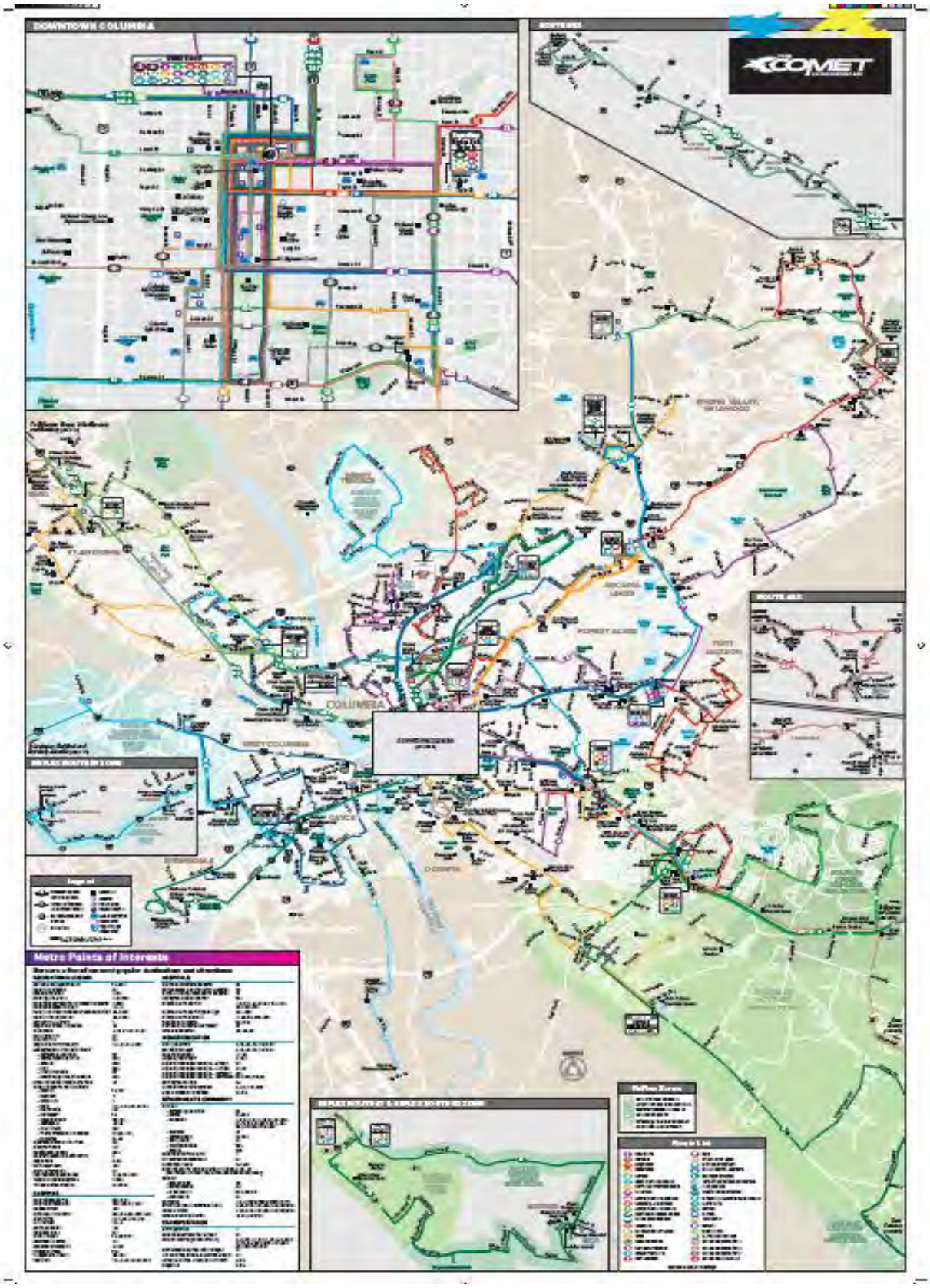


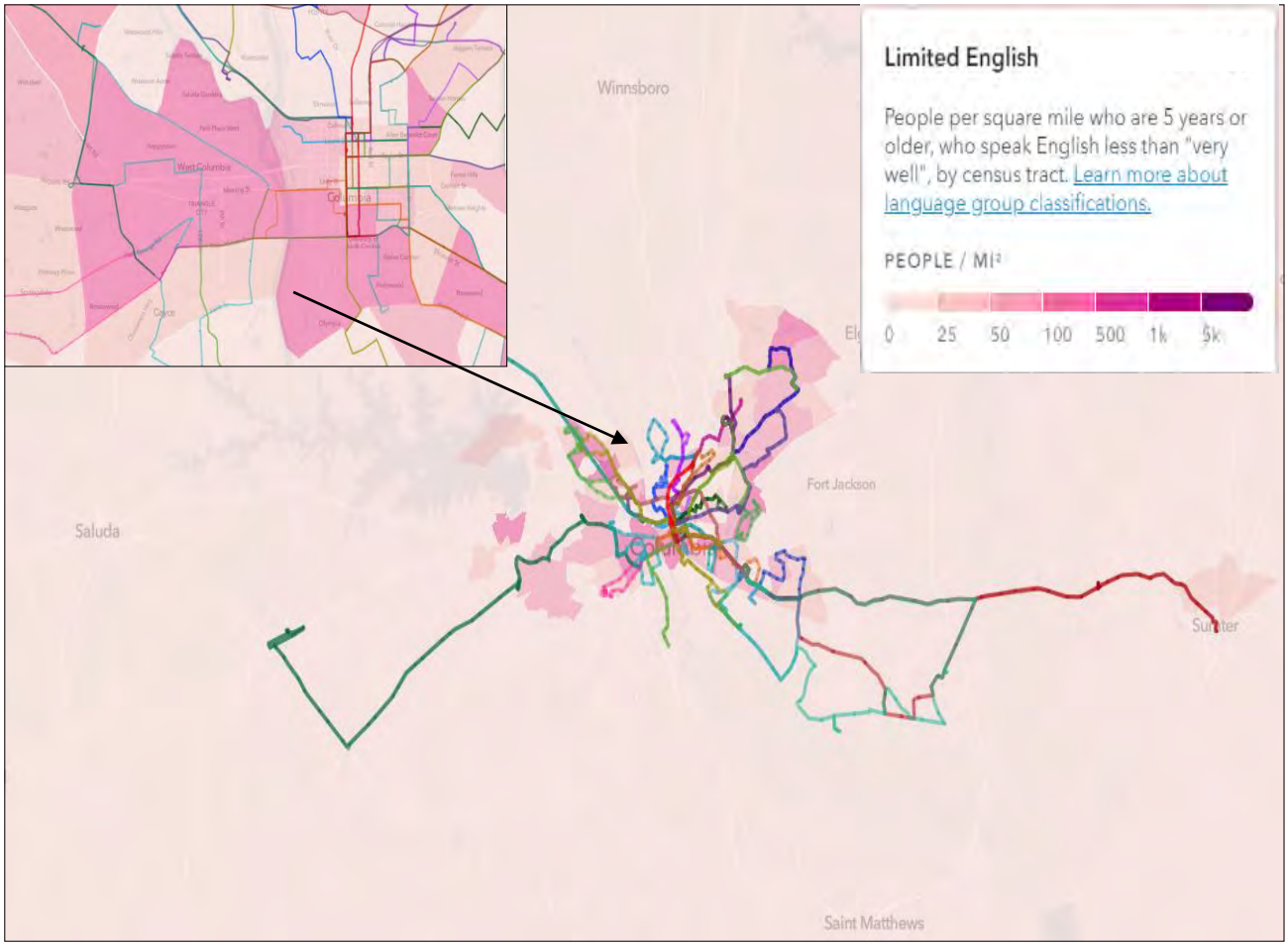
Table 1 – 2012 Census Numbers for LEP Persons Residing with the Service Area

	Richland County		Lexington County	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total:	384,410	81	269,321	64
Speak only English	351,775	1,766	250,203	864
Speak Spanish:	14,831	1,012	12,675	596
Speak English "very well"	9,847	943	6,607	526
Speak English less than "very well"	4,984	678	6,068	578
Speak other languages:	17,804	1,453	6,443	623
Speak English "very well"	11,770	1,290	4,152	468
Speak English less than "very well"	6,034	628	2,291	431
Born in state of residence:	210,737	3,383	15,7217	2,052
Speak only English	205,429	3,300	153,799	2,055
Speak Spanish:	3,375	528	2,634	340
Speak English "very well"	2,489	460	1,949	281
Speak English less than "very well"	886	282	685	234
Speak other languages:	1,933	413	784	202
Speak English "very well"	1,680	372	706	189
Speak English less than "very well"	253	118	78	69
Born in other state in the United States:	143,723	3,194	94,099	2,214
Speak only English	135,538	3,169	90,654	2,201
Speak Spanish:	4,605	582	2,481	367
Speak English "very well"	3,525	528	2,183	327
Speak English less than "very well"	1,080	300	298	181
Speak other languages:	3,580	934	964	236
Speak English "very well"	3,197	906	848	219
Speak English less than "very well"	383	135	116	61
Native; born outside the United States:	7,899	1,023	3,711	454
Speak only English	5,390	661	2,639	379
Speak Spanish:	1,785	685	908	226
Speak English "very well"	1,259	658	574	147
Speak English less than "very well"	526	198	334	170
Speak other languages:	724	272	164	79
Speak English "very well"	522	197	154	78
Speak English less than "very well"	202	132	10	14
Foreign born:	22,051	1,503	14,294	877
Speak only English	5,418	698	3,111	491
Speak Spanish:	5,066	666	6,652	509
Speak English "very well"	2,574	524	1,901	282
Speak English less than "very well"	2,492	468	4,751	512
Speak other languages:	11,567	1050	4,531	475
Speak English "very well"	6,371	887	2,444	326
Speak English less than "very well"	5,196	578	2,087	422

Factor #2: The frequency in which LEP individuals come into contact with The COMET's program or service area.

The more frequent the contact with a particular language group, the more likely that enhanced services in that language are needed. The COMET has considered the frequency of contact that riders who speak different languages may have with The COMET services. For example, frequent contact with individuals who speak Spanish and who are also LEP may require bilingual staffing. Less frequent contact with other language groups may suggest a different and less intense approach. For The COMET programs where public outreach or public involvement is central to the mission, staff will consider whether appropriate outreach to LEP persons could increase the frequency of contact with those groups, inciting a higher demand for language assistance. Based on the LEP Concentration Map in Figure 3, the majority of LEP individuals are located in the West Columbia area.

Figure 4 - LEP Concentration Map



Factor #3: The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided to enhance people lives.

Once The COMET has assessed the languages by analyzing demographic and frequency of contact, The COMET staff will look at the nature and importance of the agency's programs, activities and services that are provided for that particular population. Generally, the more important the activity, information, service or program, or the greater the possible consequences of the contact to the LEP individuals, the more likely language services will be needed. If it is evident that the denial or delay of access to services or information could have serious implications for the LEP individual, procedures will be put in place to provide language assistance to LEP persons as part of standard business practices.

Factor #4: The resources available for language assistance outreach and the costs associated with the outreach efforts.

The COMET will identify resources available to provide language assistance to LEP persons participating in the agency's programs or activities. Demographics, frequency, and importance of contact will determine the level of language services The COMET will provide. Some language services can be provided at little or no cost, such as using community volunteers, attending social events or meetings sponsored by that identified LEP community, etc. The COMET approach is to use a telephone language line which is less expensive than hiring an interpreter. In order to meet the spirit and intent of the LEP Program requirements, The COMET will carefully explore other means of delivering competent and accurate language services before deciding to limit services due to resource concerns.

The COMET will analyze the costs and benefits of translating documents for potential LEP groups, considering the expense of translating the documents, the barriers to meaningful translation or interpretation of technical transit information, the likelihood of frequent changes in documents, the existence of multiple dialects within a single language group, the apparent literacy rate in an LEP group and other relevant factors. The COMET will undergo this analysis when an eligible LEP group constitutes 5 percent of an eligible client group (for example, 5 percent of The COMET's service area) or 1,000 persons, whichever is lower.

The COMET is committed reducing barriers to access information and services by LEP persons in providing a publication of a Riders Guide in other languages, and the language line-customer service language access solution.

While The COMET does not track expenditures related to providing language assistance, this will be monitored ongoing as part of the language assistance plan.

Implementation of the Language Assistance Plan

Five essential tasks will be an area of focus during the implementation of The COMET's Language Assistance Plan.

Task 1: Identifying LEP Individuals Who Need Language Assistance

- The COMET will be examining files compiled by the Title VI Coordinator with the contractor and The COMET to determine if any requests for language assistance were received for appropriate action.
- The COMET will utilize language support materials from the Language Line Solutions contractor such as a Language ID Guide and Language ID Poster. These documents will be available at the front counter of the headquarters office, The COMET Central and on all buses.
- When drivers encounter passengers who identify with one of the languages listed on the language identification materials, they will forward the required contact information to appropriate Title VI Coordinator or The COMET Title VI staff for follow-up.
- The COMET staff and contractor employees will be surveyed on their experience concerning any contacts with LEP persons.

Task 2: Language Assistance Measures

The COMET will strive to offer various language assistance measures and make improvements on a continual and as-needed basis. The COMET has begun the process of providing vital documents translated into Spanish upon request as it is needed, the LEP language most used within its geographical service area. Other language assistance options are as follows:

- The COMET has secured an interpreter service such as Language Line and/or bilingual volunteers to provide assistance in translating and interpreting vital documents and/or to help the staff when language barriers prevent or hinder communication. The COMET also plans to utilize Language Identification Materials from Language Line Solutions and make the documents available at the front counter of the headquarters office, The COMET Central and on all buses.
- The COMET currently has staff who are able to speak and write in Spanish and French.
- The COMET will survey employees and create a list of bilingual individuals with The COMET and contractor who, when available, can provide translation services.
- As The COMET materials are translated, they will be posted in the public lobby of The COMET headquarters, at COMET Central, on buses, and on The COMET website. They are also translated upon advance request to The COMET.

Task 3: Staff Training

Information regarding LEP will be explained in orientation and training sessions for contractor and The COMET staff who communicate with LEP clients. All staff who interact with the public will be trained to follow procedure guidelines which include:

- Responding to LEP individuals in person
- Documenting LEP individuals' needs
- Responding to LEP individuals on the telephone
- Responding to written correspondence from LEP individuals

Task 4: Providing Notice to LEP Persons and Outreach

To ensure that LEP individuals are aware of The COMET's language assistance measures, The COMET and contractor will:

- Develop and post on each bus, in the headquarters office, The COMET Central, and on The COMET website, simple signage directing LEP individuals to the appropriate information.
- Continue networking and developing relationships with other organizations and individuals who serve the LEP community.

Task 5: Monitoring and Updating the Language Assistance Plan

The COMET will monitor its Language Assistance Plan annually to assess the following:

- The current LEP makeup of its service area,
- The current communication needs of LEP applicants and customers,
- Whether existing assistance is meeting the needs of such persons,
- Whether staff is knowledgeable about policies and procedures and how to implement them, and
- Whether sources of and arrangements for assistance are still current and viable.

It is The COMET's intent to continually evaluate effectiveness and based on the results, make modifications where necessary. In monitoring compliance, an assessment will be made of whether the authority's procedures allow LEP persons to overcome language barriers and participate in a meaningful way in the program activities and services. The program area's appropriate use of methods and options detailed in this LEP Plan will demonstrate their intent to comply with LEP requirements and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Section 4

Other Information

Representation on The COMET Board of Directors and Advisory Boards

The COMET's Board of Directors sets overall policy and direction for the transit system. Eleven voting Board Members consists of representatives appointed from Richland County (3), Richland County Legislative Delegation (3), City of Columbia (3), Forest Acres (1). Lexington County (1). Any political subdivision within Richland County, Lexington County, or any other county or municipality contiguous to the Service Area may become an Advisory Board Member of the Authority, with the approval of the Board.

An Advisory Board Member is non-voting and not included when determining the presence of a quorum for Board meetings. The non-voting members include one (1) representative each from the City of Cayce, City of West Columbia, Town of Springdale, Town of Irmo, Town of Chapin, Town of Eastover, Town of Batesburg-Leesville, and Lexington County Legislative Delegation.

The Board of Directors established four committees: Executive, Finance, Service, Intermodal. The racial breakdown of the board and committees are reflected below.

Table 2 - Board Composition as of June/2020

	White/Caucasian	Black/African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Asian American/ Pacific Islander	Native American/ Alaskan Native
Board of Directors	4 36%	7 64%	0	0	0
Executive Committee	2 40%	3 60%	0	0	0
Finance Committee	2 (1 advisory) 40%	3 60%	0	0	0
Service Committee	2 (2 advisory) 25%	8 (2 advisory) 75%	0	0	0
Intermodal Ad-hoc Committee	2 (1 advisory) 40%	3 60%	0	0	0
Advisory Board Member	4 50%	4 50%	0	0	0

Board of Directors/Committee Role

The purpose of The COMET is to promote transportation opportunities for all citizens within the service area which shall initially consist of Richland County and Lexington County. This shall be done by providing transportation services and encouraging the cooperation and coordination of existing transportation providers.

The officers of the Board are the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, each of whom must be a Voting Director. The Chair and Vice-Chair each must be a resident of Richland County. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall each represent a different entity appointing Voting Directors to the Board. Each officer holds a two-year term and may not serve consecutive terms. After being absent from a specific office for a two-year term, a Voting Director shall be eligible for re-nomination. The Chair and Vice-Chair are the official spokespersons for the Authority. The Treasurer serves as the Chair of the Finance Committee. The term of each officer begins on July 1 of the appropriate year.

Subrecipient Monitoring

The COMET currently contracts the fixed route, vanpool, bikeshare, subsidy and ADA paratransit services and require the contractors to follow Title VI guidelines in accordance with Federal regulations. Periodic monitoring is conducted during the life of the contract. Monitoring is accomplished through various means such as written reports, periodic meetings, and announced on-site visits.

In addition to the above general reporting requirements, FTA Circular 4702.1B requires providers of fixed route public transportation to submit additional information specific to fixed route service. Since The COMET does NOT operate fifty or more fixed route vehicles in peak service, it is subject only to the requirements for system-wide standards and policies.

Title 40 CFR Section 21.5(b)(2) specifies that a recipient shall not utilize criteria or methods of administration which have the effect of subjecting persons to discrimination because of their race, color, or national origin. In addition, Appendix C to 49 CFR part 21 establishes that no person or group of persons shall be discriminated against with regard to routing, scheduling, or quality of service on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Frequency of service, age and quality of vehicles assigned to routes, quality of stations serving different routes, and locations of routes may not be determined on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

Title VI Equity Analysis

The COMET does not have a transit related facility in the planning stages and that would soon be under construction using Federal Transit Administration funding.

Service Standards and Policies

a. Vehicle Load

   The COMET has established a Vehicle Load Factor of 1:1.25 (1 transit seat for every 1.25 passengers) for use in conducting service analyses and determining additional vehicle needs.

   Using the data collected with The COMET's electronic farebox system and soon automated passenger counters, The COMET conducts an on-going review process of all routes in

terms of the hour-by-hour passenger boardings during both peak and non-peak service times and by type of service day (e.g. weekdays, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays). to determine the numbers of passengers and average vehicle loads.

The COMET's vehicle load factor throughout the service area shall be appropriately distributed within the system as determined using the process described above.

b. Vehicle Headways

Establishment of the vehicle headways operated within The COMET's fixed route bus system is based on the on-going analysis of each route by hour, by time of day (peak and non-peak), and by type of service day. For example, The COMET operates services that are more frequent Monday through Friday on the system's routes that serve multiple trip generators/trip destinations where transit ridership has historically been heaviest and/or where new potential trip generators and destinations are being developed.

All services are grouped into typologies where they are evaluated to comparable standards. Should routes fail (below 66%) or exponentially exceed (above 133%) of their established standards, the given route will be reevaluated to add or reduce service. (See Exhibit 2).

Table 3 – Vehicle Headway Typology

Typology	Passenger Per Hour/ Trip	Subsidy Per Passenger (at or less than)	Farebox Recovery Ratio	Minimum Bus Size	Routes (As of September 17, 2018)
Corridor	18	$3.00	20%	40 Feet	101, 201, 301, 401, 501, 601, 701, 801
Local	12	$5.00	15%	35 Feet	11, 12, 26, 28, 31, 42, 45, 55, 75, 84, 88
Connector/Shuttle	8	$8.00	10%	22 Feet	1, 2, 17, 22, 32, 57L, 63, 76, 77, 83L
Rural	5	$12.00	10%	22 Feet	46, 47
Express	10 per trip	$5.00	15%	22 Feet	52X, 53X, 82X
Demand Response/ Flex	3	$30.00	10%	22 Feet	13, 62, DART

c. On-Time Performance

The COMET has established the following On-Time Performance measure: "The COMET fixed route services shall be considered On-Time when the bus passes by a timepoint from 0 minutes to within five (5) minutes after the published schedule."

The COMET has acquired and implemented a system-wide Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL) system. The AVL system provides The COMET with electronically collected and documented data on the on-time performance of both the fixed route bus and complementary paratransit services.

d. Distribution of Transit Amenities

The COMET transit amenities shall be equitably distributed throughout the system based on the on-going analysis of the levels of transit service use and needs along each of The COMET's fixed route corridors.

In the process of introducing new services, The COMET evaluates the request based on ridership and cost projections. New services should meet minimum standards within one year. Altered services shall meet minimum standards within six months (see Exhibit 2).

e. Service Availability

The COMET measures service availability in terms of the population density of the corridors surrounding fixed routes and the distances between bus stops. In the urban core and the more densely populated corridors, bus stops are closer together than in less populated corridors throughout The COMET service area. Generally, The COMET seeks to have bus stops installed no closer than 1,000 feet apart.

Table 4 – Service Availability Measures

Time (minutes)	Distance	Rate (mph)
5.0	¼ mile	3
3.8	1,000 feet	3
1.9	500 feet	3

Evaluation for changes is performed on an aggregate three-month, six-month and one year schedule. Service expansion and/or improvements are evaluated by safety, accessibility, and comfort needs. In return, the service must be convenient to support travel demands to essential locations. (see Exhibit 2).

Service Policies

a. Transit Amenities

The COMET transit amenities shall be equitably distributed throughout the system based on the on-going analysis of the levels of transit service use and needs along each of The COMET's fixed route corridors.

The COMET operates a fixed route vehicle fleet consisting of 69 units. All the current units in The COMET fleet are powered by new technology diesel engine.

Currently, the DART/Reflex fleet consist of 19 vehicles that are cutaway buses and two (2) are minivans. All vehicles, including fixed route (65) and DART (21) are equipped to support wheelchair lifts or ramps and wheelchair securement devices, including two (2) wheelchair securement stations. All services follow the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). Below is a condensed list of practices used by The COMET (see Service Availability & Exhibit 2 for more details).

- 3-inch letters for route designations on signs
- A firm, stable, slip-resistant surface for boarding and alighting
- A 5ft by 8ft, perpendicular to the roadway, boarding and alighting area (B&A)
- A space for a wheelchair will be provided completely within a shelter
- Benches will have backs

b. Vehicle Assignment:

Throughout the service area, The COMET's vehicles are assigned for service duty based on: the relative number of passengers using specific routes during specific times of the service day and the day of week that the service will be performed; and the relative availability of a specific size of vehicle based on the rotational nature of The COMET preventive maintenance/maintenance program.

c. Transit Security

All The COMET contracted vehicle operators receive security awareness training as a part of their initial employee training and at periodic safety/security meetings. The COMET uses the security awareness training materials developed by the National Transit Institute (NTI). As a part of the training, all The COMET and contractor staffs are informed that when observing suspicious activity it is essential that it be observed without regard to race, color, or national origin.

The COMET conducts monthly security and safety inspections of its facilities and all THE COMET vehicles are equipped with audio/video surveillance equipment. The COMET also contracts with the Columbia Police Department, Cayce Police Departments, and Richland County Sheriff for off duty officer/deputy support.

Evaluation of Service and Fare Changes

In the programming and planning processes for service and fare changes, The COMET will evaluate potential service adjustments and improvements to determine that the overall benefits and costs are distributed throughout the transit system service area without discrimination as defined by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Public input regarding potential service enhancements occurs through a series of informal meetings (i.e., focus groups, neighborhood association meetings, and letters to faith-based organizations) and through various communication techniques (i.e. Twitter, The COMET website, The State Newspaper, Facebook, etc.). The COMET also informs riders of pending service enhancements by placing signs on transit vehicles (car cards), fliers at The COMET Central, social networking, and email blasts to county councilman to inform them of upcoming changes that could affect riders within that particular district.

All input from public meetings is provided to The COMET board members for review prior to voting on significant service enhancements and/or adjustments. The public comments are also kept for consideration in planning and implementation of future development of transit services.

Also, public meetings are conducted at local schools and community centers to ensure that riders are aware of services and are able to voice concerns about pending service enhancements. Typically, meetings are conducted in areas that are easily accessible by public transit and are an ADA accessible facility. The community that will be affected by the transit service is made aware of service enhancements through the aforementioned methods.

Using the demographic mapping and overlays in Figure 1, The COMET will overlay proposed service adjustments and/or improvements over the demographic maps that illustrate the distribution of the socio-economic concentrations of the service area population to ensure that routes, service spans, and fare changes do not disproportionately impact the minority and low-income populations of The COMET service area.

The COMET will document the conduct of the above service evaluations and will maintain such documentation to provide verification that compliance reviews are conducted on a periodic basis.

Figure 5 – Demographic Map

Transit Service Monitoring

The COMET has adopted formal policies and procedures regarding transit service performance standards and analysis.

a. Level of Service Methodology

With staff assistance, The COMET Service Committee conducts a quarterly review and analysis of the performance of each individual route in the fixed route bus system. Since all routes are analyzed, The COMET uses the largest possible sample size to determine service performance.

Data collected through the electronic farebox system is utilized to determine the average number of passengers on board each route during each hour of its operation. The farebox data also provides for the calculation of the "average farebox recovery ration per hour of operation.

The COMET's pre-established service performance standards are: 1.) Routes identified as having an average of 15 or more passengers per hour are considered to meet the established passengers/hour performance standard; and 2.) Routes identified as having an average hourly farebox recovery ratio of 15% of the cost of operation or more are considered to meet the established farebox recovery performance standard.

The COMET routes that are identified as "not meeting" one or more of the established performance standards then undergo a more detailed review to determine how to improve the route's performance. A primary step in the closer review of underperforming routes is the review of the socioeconomic data of the traffic analysis zones (TAZ's) through which the route operates.

The COMET's process for transit service monitoring ensures that no person or group of persons are discriminated against with regard to the routing, scheduling, quality of service based on race color or national origin. Frequency of service, age and/or quality of vehicles assigned to routes, quality of facilities and locations of routes are also not determined based on race, color, or national origin. Exhibit 5 contains copies of The COMET service and fare change policies.

Exhibit 1

The COMET Service Frequencies

The COMET SERVICE FREQUENCIES BY ROUTE
As of February 2020

Route No./Name	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
6 – Eau Claire	60 Min	60 Min.	60 Min.
7 – IWC Shuttle – Inclement Weather Center	15 Min.	15 Min.	15 Min.
11 – Fairfield Road	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
12 – Edgewood	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
21 – Rosewood	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
22 – Harden	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
31 – Denny Terrace Reflex	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
32 – North Main/Hard Scrabble	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
42 – Millwood Ave	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
44X-Lower Richland Express	2 Trips	No Service	No Service
45 – Leesburg – Hazelwood	30/60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
46 – Lower Richland Blvd Reflex	90 Min.	No Service	No Service
47 –Eastover/Gadsden Reflex	120 Min.	120 Min.	No Service
53X- Killian Express	60 Min.	No Service	No Service
55 – Sandhills	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
57L – Killian/Clemson Local	60 Min.	60 Min.	No Service
61 – Shop	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
62 – Hopkins ReFlex	60 Min.	No Service	No Service
74 – Harrison/Trenholm	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
75 – Decker/Parklane	30/60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
76 – Fort Jackson	120 Min.	120 Min.	120 Min.
77 – Polo Road	120 Min.	120 Min.	120 Min.
83L – St. Andrews Local	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
84 – Bush River/St. Andrews	60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
88 – Beltline Crosstown	120 Min.	120 Min.	120 Min.
91 – Springdale/Cayce	60 Min.	60 Min.	No Service
92X – 12th Street Extension Express	One Trip	One Trip	One Trip
93X – 1-26 Express	One Trip	No Service	No Service
96L – West Columbia/Cayce	60 Min.	60 Min.	No Service
97 – Batesburg-Leesville Rural	Variable	No Service	No Service
101 – North Main	20/30/60 Min.	30/60 Min.	30/60 Min.
301 – Farrow Road	30/60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
401 – Devine Street	30/60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
501- Two Notch	30/60 Min.	30/60 Min.	30/60 Min.
701 – Forest Drive	30/60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
801 – Broad River Road	30/60 Min.	60 Min.	60 Min.
2001 – Gamecock Express	No Service	No Service	No Service
Soda Cap Connector 1	30 Min.	30 Min.	30 Min.
Soda Cap Connector 2	30 Min.	30 Min.	30 Min.
Soda Cap Connector 3	25-30 Min.	25-30 Min.	25-30 Min.
Orbit 4	30 Min.	30 Min.	30 Min.
DART- Within ¾ mile of The COMET routes	N/A	N/A	N/A

Exhibit 2

The COMET Policies

Fare Increases/Service Adjustments

CENTRAL MIDLANDS
REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Policies and Procedures

Subject: Adoption of a Policy for the Siting of Bus Stops and Associated Facilities

Policy Number: S - 40

Board Approval: April 23, 2014

Purpose: Adoption of this policy will codify the criteria, methodology, and standards for placing bus stops, shelters, benches, leaning rails and other passenger amenities.

Background: As of March 2014, The COMET does not possess any customer amenities. Shelters and benches have been placed at The COMET stops by municipal governments and advertisers without The COMET participation. The COMET will be placing updated stops and amenities beginning in 2014 according to the standards enunciated in this policy.

Policy: **Bus stops within existing infrastructure.** Bus stops are both the primary entry point for transit passengers and the most common asset of The COMET and therefore the appearance and locations of bus stops are of the highest importance. The COMET is subject to the roads, curbs, and sidewalks provided by federal, state, and local governments and has minimal control over transportation infrastructure but will, to the extent feasible, maximize existing resources and promote an improved pedestrian environment. When placing stops, The COMET will consider the location of each stop for the following in priority order: safety, accessibility, and passenger comfort:

1. Safety: stop locations will be selected in order to avoid blind curves, sight-distance obstructions, and physical hazards for the safety of bus drivers, other motorists, and transit passengers.
2. Accessibility: The COMET has a long-term goal of complete compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, but the availability of sidewalk infrastructure puts limits on current stop accessibility. Stops will be chosen

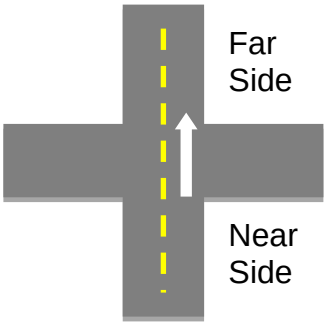
to maximize accessibility, taking advantage of existing sidewalks, curb cuts, and pedestrian crosswalks.

3. Passenger comfort: in placing stops, The COMET will take advantage of building and tree shade, existing seating options such as retaining walls and street furniture, and existing lighting to the extent possible.

Spacing. Bus stops are the locations where bus passengers access The COMET transit system. Bus stops must therefore be convenient to the places where passengers wish to go. Convenience and speed must be balanced in determining appropriate bus stop placement, as too many bus stops can slow down travel times. The COMET generally seeks to have bus stops 1,000 feet apart. For perspective, a lap around a track is one-quarter mile, or 1,320 feet. In downtown Columbia two blocks—the distance between Assembly and Sumter Streets—is 1,000 feet. Because a passenger need only choose the *nearest* stop, the walking distance would be typically no greater than 500 feet (the distance between Main and Assembly) if exactly between stops, but often fewer. The chart below shows the time it takes to walk different distances at a moderate walking speed (3 mph). A typical walking distance along a road with service to the nearest stop (500 feet) should be no longer than 2 minutes. With the exception of roads going under interstate interchanges, over bridges, or other extenuating circumstances, the maximum distance between stops will not exceed ▸ of a mile.

Time (minutes)	Distance	Rate (mph)
5.0	¼ mile	3
3.8	1,000 feet	3
1.9	500 feet	3

This target has been set with the goal of increasing travel speed for The COMET buses, and means that some existing stops may be eliminated. Passenger usage of bus stops is an important factor when considering bus stop placements or removals. Bus stops should be close enough that passengers can walk to them easily, but far enough apart to help buses move quickly. Some discretion may be applied when balancing The COMET's interest in improving service and expediting traffic flow with consideration of passengers' interests and needs.



Placement: As the illustration at right demonstrates, a stop placed after an intersection with the flow of traffic is called a far-side stop, one before the intersection a near-side stop (a stop along a street where these is no intersection is called a mid-block stop, or middle, not shown). The COMET will favor placing at near-side locations in order to facilitate passengers' ability to cross streets safely at crosswalks/lighted intersections. Far side stops will be set a minimum of 100 feet beyond the intersection. At intersections where right-turn channelization islands (commonly: porkchops) are used, the stop will be placed 100 feet after the right-turning traffic lane ends. For all stops—near, far, and

middle—the aforementioned prioritization of safety, accessibility, and comfort will be used.

ADA: A pole in the ground is acceptable under the ADA when no further equipment is used (49 CFR Part 37: "Section 10.2.1(1) does not require that anyone build a bus stop pad; it does specify what a bus stop pad must look like, *if it is constructed*. The further clarifying language in § 37.9(c) explains that public entities must exert control over the construction of bus stop pads *if they have the ability to do so*. The Access Board, as well as DOT, recognizes that most physical improvements related to bus stops are out of the control of the transit provider." Emphasis added). When The COMET improves a stop with shelters, benches, leaning rails, etc. the stop will fully comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). The requirements of the ADAAG for transit facilities are too many to list here but among the highlights are:

- 3-inch letters for route designations on signs
- A firm, stable, slip-resistant surface for boarding and alighting
- A 5ft by 8ft, perpendicular to the roadway, boarding and alighting area (B&A)
- A space for a wheelchair will be provided completely within a shelter
- Benches will have backs

Bus stops with additional infrastructure. To improve the comfort of The COMET passenger shelters, benches, leaning rails, and other related infrastructure may be placed at bus stops. As facilities are expensive and difficult to place (right-of-way restrictions, lack of sidewalks, local opposition, etc.), amenity placement will be prioritized by the number of daily boardings as follows (special attractors may warrant a shelter even if minimum boardings are not met):

Type of amenity	Minimum Daily Boardings	Special attractor
Shelter w/bench	75	Regional mall, large discount retailer, urban core (The COMET Orbit), medical, college/university
Bench	50	Retirement home, medical, shopping center
Leaning rail	25	Urban core

Other facilities such as cart corrals, bike racks, and bollards will accompany shelters as needed.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS
REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Policies and Procedures

Subject: Transit Performance Standards

Policy Number: P - 25

Board Approval: December 16, 2004
Revised January 18, 2012
Revised September 26, 2018

Purpose: Adoption of these Performance Standards will allow the Board of Directors and staff to make service decisions based on objective criteria that will provide for the efficient operation of the system.

Background: The Board of Directors will, from time to time, be asked to consider adding or deleting service to the fixed route system. As resources are limited these decisions should be made using standards of performance. The following measures that would be evaluated are:

- Passengers per hour
- Passenger per trip (Express routes only)
- Subsidy per passenger
- Farebox Recovery Ratio

Definitions:

Farebox Recovery Ratio is defined as the percentage of the cost of providing service that is recovered from fare-paying passengers.

Passengers Per Hour is defined as the number of passengers per hour of operation that are counted on a route or service.

Passengers Per Trip is defined as the number of passengers per trip of operation that are counted on a route or service.

Subsidy Per Passenger is defined as the subsidy (not counting fares) needed to cover the cost of the passenger riding the route or service.

Policy:

Transit services should be grouped into typologies which such standards would be evaluated. Should routes fail to meet their established standards, a process for improvement should be in place prior to a recommendation for route termination. These typologies should be developed based off extensive community outreach to obtain public and rider preferences for transit services. The input was complemented by a comprehensive performance assessment using quantitative analysis tools. These include GIS analysis of annual ride-check data, farebox transfer data, and origin-destination passenger information. This will eliminate the "one size fits all" service delivery model. Using typologies will allow The COMET to "right-size" transit service to the various markets within the county and maximize operating resources.

Typology	**Passenger Per Hour/ Trip**	**Subsidy Per Passenger (at or less than)**	**Farebox Recovery Ratio**	**Minimum Bus Size**	**Routes (As of September 17, 2018)**
Corridor	18	$3.00	20%	40 Feet	101, 201, 301, 401, 501, 601, 701, 801
Local	12	$5.00	15%	35 Feet	11, 12, 26, 28, 31, 42, 45, 55, 75, 84, 88
Connector/Shuttle	8	$8.00	10%	22 Feet	1, 2, 17, 22, 32, 57L, 63, 76, 77, 83L
Rural	5	$12.00	10%	22 Feet	46, 47
Express	10 per trip	$5.00	15%	22 Feet	52X, 53X, 82X
Demand Response/ Flex	3	$30.00	10%	22 Feet	13, 62, DART

Performance measures that each typology should be evaluated against includes the following:

- Passengers per hour
- Passenger per trip (Express routes only)
- Subsidy per passenger
- Farebox Recovery Ratio

In order to generate a relative comparison metric, a rating is generated by comparing average riders per revenue hour on each individual route to a cumulative value of average riders per revenue hour indexed by service type. **Routes performing below 66% (lowest-performing routes) are classified as probationary and require corrective action.** At the opposite end of the scale, ratings above 133% (highest-performing routes) may indicate the demand for additional service or capacity.

This process would be done monthly. An aggregate three-month, six-month and one year evaluation would occur as well to cumulatively review the overall performance of the routes and services.

Potential Corrective Actions

Poor-performing services failing to meet minimum productivity standards may be considered for a series of potential corrective actions, including schedule adjustments, route modifications, change of route typology or elimination.

Schedule adjustments including frequency and service span reductions can improve productivity and cost effectiveness with minimal negative impacts. Route modifications can help improve productivity and cost effectiveness in many cases.

Ridership should be closely examined at the stop level to identify unproductive segments or service gaps. Route extensions or minor realignments may improve access to destinations. Route consolidations or short-turns may reduce duplicative or excess service. Service elimination may be considered if ridership is consistently underperforming with minimal likelihood for sufficient future growth.

All alternative means of maintaining service should be considered before proposing elimination. Elimination does not preclude restoration of service at a later time; however, proven ridership demand must exist before such a step is considered.

Service alternatives may be considered in low-density areas with moderate ridership potential. Demand-responsive service may carry a small passenger market more cost-effectively than traditional fixed-route bus service. Vanpool may be a suitable alternative for feeder or connector service. Park and ride facilities at peripheral transit centers or hubs may be the only cost-effective solution to serving lower-density areas with fixed-route transit infrastructure.

New and Altered Services

The evaluation of new service proposals will take place as proposals are received or needs identified. Ridership and cost projections for new and altered services should be prepared whenever service changes are proposed. **New services should meet minimum standards within one year. Altered services shall meet minimum standards within six months.** Staff may make fine-tuning adjustments during this period within the Board approved policy. New services are implemented on a trial basis, with the length of the trial period determined at the time of implementation.

Implementation of Policy

If the above Performance Standards are not achieved, then the routes or service must be studied by staff, reviewed by the Service Committee and recommendations made to the Board for potential modifications within the established timeline. Implementation of changes in service will not occur until the public hearing process has been followed.

In the case of the implementation of new service, the above listed performance standards must be met within one year of the date of implementation of the new service. If those standards are not met, the new service will be studied by staff, reviewed by the Service Committee and recommendations made to the Board for potential modifications within the established timeline. Implementation of changes in service will not occur until the public hearing process has been followed.

Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority

Policy: Fares and Service Policy
Approved By: Board of Directors

Date Adopted: September 9, 2002
Date Revised: September 26, 2018

A. Public Hearing For Increased Fares and Changes to Service

Purpose

In order to allow for public input regarding the public transit system, the purpose of this policy is to outline the procedure of conducting public hearings on changes made by The COMET to the fare structure or service levels.

Background

As a designee of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding, The COMET will have to perform public hearings as required by FTA regulations. A written policy, and procedures for the policy, regarding the hearings is thus necessary.

Policy

The public hearing is designed to get an understanding of the public's sentiment regarding a change in the fare structure of the system or changes to the services provided by The COMET. The COMET is to allow for public input into the decision-making regarding the regulation of fares and changes to the services in accordance with FTA regulations requiring the public hearings. Public hearings will be of public record, open to all citizens of the communities where the transit system has its operations, the hearings will be held in ADA accessible facilities that are accessible by means of public transportation as well. The COMET will agree to conduct public hearings in a manner congruent with federal regulations.

Procedures

1) All public hearings must be recorded and transcripts are to be made available to the public in a timely fashion.

2) There will be a period of 15 day between the publication of the notice of the public hearing and the actual public hearing date.

3) Copies of the public hearing notice must be submitted to the area's media outlets (newspaper, radio, and television, etc.) and must include the correct date, time, location, and purpose of the hearing.

4) The location of the hearing is to be in an ADA accessible venue.

5) The location of the hearing is to be accessible via public transportation.

6) The hearing may be attended by individual citizens or by individuals who represent a group of citizens, with respect to the specific item that is the purpose of the hearing.

7) The hearing is designed to get an understanding of the public's sentiment regarding a change in the fare structure of the system or the change to a service provided by The COMET (i.e., a reduction of an entire route would require a public hearing).

There will be The COMET staff member or a designee presiding over the public hearing. The Presiding Officer (as known as the Hearing Officer) will be in charge of:

- The securing of a venue for the public hearing;
- The notification of the media outlets to publicize the hearing;
- The recording of the hearing and the availability of the minutes of the hearing to the general public;

1. Pre-hearing materials, including meeting announcements, agendas, displays that detail items that are to be discussed at the hearing, and any mailings or publicity materials that are necessary for the hearing will be furnished by the Presiding Officer;
2. And any other activities associated with the hearing that is not mentioned in the above duties.

A public hearing will be called when The COMET staff has studied and made recommendations relating to a change in service or fare structure.

The public hearing will consist of a:

1. Period of time to allow The COMET staff members to explain the nature of the changes in service, detailing the reasoning behind the decisions that have been made up until the first public hearing;
2. Period of time to allow members of the general public to express their views on the topic of the hearing.

The COMET staff will take the views expressed by the citizens who spoke at the public hearing into consideration and make its final recommendations to The COMET Board of Directors for a proper discussion and vote on the changes to the transit service.

Additional hearings or workshops may be convened at the discretion of The COMET Executive Director/CEO or designee.

B. Adoption of a Service and Fare Change Procedure

Purpose

The FTA requires that all grantees develop and adopt a procedure to follow for public comment when considering fare increases or major service reductions. The FTA also requires each grantee to develop a definition of "major service reduction".

Background

An applicant seeking FTA assistance is required to use its established administrative process to solicit and consider public comment before raising fares or instituting a major reduction of service.

Policy

Services Changes Procedures

It is the policy of The COMET Board of Directors that The COMET be responsive to the ever-changing transit service needs of the service area based on changing demographics, land use patterns and/or the roadway network. In striving to meet those changing needs, The COMET will follow the FTA requirements to review and evaluate its transit services on an ongoing basis. The types of service changes may vary from minor schedule adjustments to total route changes.

The Executive Director/CEO shall have the authority to approve minor and short-term service changes as noted below. The Executive Director/CEO when making changes less than 25% as defined below, shall provide an informational update to the Board of Directors prior to discussing the service change with the public to obtain Board of Directors feedback. Once the feedback is obtained, the Executive Director/CEO can proceed with obtaining feedback from the general public. Prior to the implementation of the service change under the Executive Director/CEO authority, the Executive Director/CEO shall evaluate all feedback received from the Board of Directors and general public and consider all factors prior to the implementation of such change. The Executive Director/CEO at the Board Meeting prior to the service change shall advise the Board of Directors the final service change recommendation with a date of implementation.

The public shall be notified in advance through a notification of at least 30 days prior to the less than 25% change in service with an opportunity for the general public to provide comment for evaluation by The COMET staff.

In an effort to provide adequate public notice and an opportunity to comment on major service changes, the following procedures shall be followed:

Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority	
Policy: Fares and Service Policy	Date Adopted: December 16, 2004
Approved By: Board of Directors	Date Revised: September 26, 2018

Type of Service or Fare Change	Executive Director	The COMET Board of Directors with Public Hearing
Percent of revenue vehicle miles or hours for a given route directly affected by change of service	< 25%	≥ 25%
New transit route or service established	----	Any
Route or service discontinuance	----	Any
Schedule changes	Any	----
Emergency changes of 90 days or less duration	Any	----
Demonstration service changes of 180 days or less duration	Any	----
Major service change	-----	≥25%
Fare increase	----	Any
Fare reduction	----	Any
Temporary fare reduction of 1 week or less	Any	----

Fare Change Procedures

It is the intent of The COMET Board of Directors that prior to adoption of any increase or decrease in fares; at least one public hearing shall be held and that any permeant changes to the fare structure is approved by The COMET Board of Directors.

Major Service Reduction Defined

A major service reduction The COMET transit operations is defined as:

a) Any permanent change which increases fares on fixed route or paratransit services
b) A 25% or greater reduction in the total number of miles operated by all vehicles in revenue service for a particular day of the week on an individual route
c) A 25% or more reduction of the number of transit route miles of a route; i.e., the total mileage covered during the one round trip by a vehicle in revenue service on a particular route.

Solicitation and Consideration of Public Comment

The COMET shall solicit and consider public comments prior to implementing a transit fare or service change in transit services in the manner provided this policy.

Exhibit 3

Language Assistance Tools

Language Line Services, Inc.
1 Lower Ragsdale Drive, Building 2 / Monterey, CA 93940 / www.LanguageLine.com
A LanguageLine[SM] Solutions Company

Dear Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority,

Welcome to Language Line Services, Inc. (A LanguageLine[SM] Solutions Company). Your account is active effective **9-24-2019**.

To access an interpreter over the phone:

- Dial: **866-874-3972**
- Enter your Client ID Number:
- Press 1 for Spanish or press 2 for all other languages (at the prompt, state the name of the language you need)

*Attached is printable Quick Reference Guides with steps on how access an interpreter over the phone.

Please note that you can access your new account on our website by signing up for MyLLS via this web address: https://My.Languageline.com and visit http://www.languageline.com/page/support_tools/ to view all the support materials available.

Below is also a link designed specifically for our clients with some of the same materials. There are various guides on best practices for accessing an interpreter, downloadable Language ID posters, and how to access our online reporting tool, MyLanguageLine:

https://www.languageline.com/client-support-center

Included on this email is your assigned account executive, **Joe Matthews**. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to her or call Customer Service at 1-800-752-6096 opt 2. Our team is here to assist you with any further questions you may have. We appreciate your business.

Best,

Miguel Butler
Account Services Representative
LanguageLine Solutions
Phone: (831) 648-7592
E-mail: MButler@languageline.com

LanguageLine Solutions

LanguageLine Solutions℠

11 Helpful Tips for Working with an Over-the-Phone Interpreter

1. **BRIEF THE INTERPRETER** - Identify the name of your organization to the interpreter, provide specific instructions of what needs to be done or obtained and let him/her know whether you need help with placing a call. If you need the interpreter to help you place a call to the limited English Proficient (LEP) customer, you may ask the interpreter for a dial-out. There is a limited amount of time allotted for placing a dial-out once the interpreter is on the phone. Therefore, it is important that you provide a brief introduction and specific instructions to the interpreter in a timely manner.
2. **SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE CUSTOMER** - You and your customer can communicate directly with each other as if the interpreter were not there. The interpreter will relay the information and then communicate the customer's response directly back to you.
3. **SPEAK NATURALLY, NOT LOUDER** - Speak at your normal pace, not slower.
   - SEGMENTS - Speak in one sentence or two short ones at a time. Try to avoid breaking up a thought. Your interpreter is trying to understand the meaning of what you're saying, so express the whole thought if possible. Interpreters will ask you to slow down or repeat if necessary. You should pause to make sure you give the interpreter time to deliver your message.
   - CLARIFICATIONS - If something is unclear, or if the interpreter is given a long statement, the interpreter will ask you for a complete or partial repetition of what was said, or to clarify what the statement meant.
4. **ASK IF THE LEP UNDERSTANDS** - Don't assume that a limited English-speaking customer understands you. In some cultures a person may say 'yes' as you explain something, not meaning they understand, but rather they want you to keep talking because they are trying to follow the conversation. Keep in mind that a lack of English does not necessarily indicate a lack of education.
5. **DO NOT ASK THE INTERPRETER FOR THEIR OPINION** - The interpreter's job is to convey the meaning of the source language and under no circumstances may he or she allow personal opinion to color the interpretation. Also, do not hold the interpreter responsible for what the customer does or does not say. For example, when the customer does not answer your question.
6. **EVERYTHING YOU SAY WILL BE INTERPRETED** - Avoid private conversations. Whatever the interpreter hears will be interpreted. If you feel that the interpreter has not interpreted everything, ask the interpreter to do so. Avoid interrupting the interpreter while he/she is interpreting.
7. **AVOID JARGON OR TECHNICAL TERMS** - Don't use jargon, slang, idioms, acronyms or technical medical terms. Clarify unique vocabulary and provide examples if they are needed to explain a term.
8. **LENGTH OF INTERPRETATION SESSION** - When you're working with an interpreter the conversation can often take twice as long compared with one in English. Many concepts you express have no equivalent in other languages, so the interpreter may have to describe or paraphrase many terms you use. Interpreters will often use more words to interpret what the original speaker says simply because of the grammar and syntax of the target language.
9. **READING SCRIPTS** - People often talk more quickly when reading a script. When you are reading a script, prepared text or a disclosure, slow down to give the interpreter a chance to stay up with you.
10. **CULTURE** - Professional interpreters are familiar with the culture and customs of the limited English proficient (LEP) customer. During the conversation the interpreter may identify and clarify a cultural issue they may not think you are aware of. If the interpreter feels that a particular question is culturally inappropriate, he or she might ask you to either rephrase the question. You may or ask the interpreter to help you to get the information in a more appropriate way.
11. **CLOSING OF THE CALL** - The interpreter will wait for you to initiate the closing of the call. When appropriate, the interpreter will offer further assistance and will be the last to disconnect from the call. Remember to thank the interpreter for his or her efforts at the end of the session.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
www.LanguageLine.com / 1-800-752-6096

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LanguageLine Solutions®

Quick Reference Guide

Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority

TO ACCESS AN INTERPRETER

1. DIAL: **1-866-874-3972**
2. PROVIDE: **509794**
3. INDICATE: **Language**

Document the interpreter name and ID number for reference.
Brief the interpreter and give any special instructions.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER – At the beginning of the call, briefly tell the interpreter the nature of the call. Speak directly to the limited English proficient individual, not to the interpreter, and pause at the end of a complete thought. Please note, to ensure accuracy, your interpreter may sometimes ask for clarification or repetition.

3-WAY CALL – Use the conference feature on your phone, and follow the instructions above to connect to an interpreter. If you are initiating the call, get the interpreter on the line first, then call the limited English proficient individual. If you are receiving a call, ask the caller to "Please Hold," and then conference in the interpreter.

LANGUAGELINE DUAL HANDSET PHONE – If you have a LanguageLine Dual handset phone, lift the handset and press the pre-programmed button to dial, then follow the prompts. Once connected to an interpreter, give the second handset to the limited English proficient individual.

CUSTOMER SERVICE – To provide feedback, commend an interpreter, or report any service concerns, call **1-800-752-6096** or go to www.LanguageLine.com and click on the "Customer Service" tab, scroll to "Provide Feedback" and complete a "Voice of the Customer" form.

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Enabling Communication in Any Situation℠ www.LanguageLine.com

MyLanguageLine

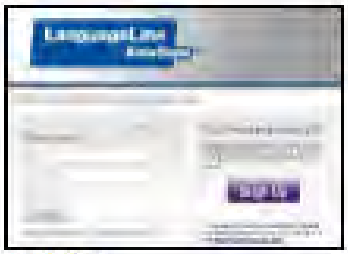
LanguageLine Solutions

Online Access to Account Information

Our innovative reporting platform, MyLanguageLine™, provides daily insight into your LanguageLine Solutions® over-the-phone interpreting account any day, any time. Easy to use, this secure, online portal offers your organization accessibility to monitor your usage, review calls placed, create, download and schedule analysis reports, and view your invoices, to help you increase productivity and manage expenses. Access: https://mylanguageline.com or click "MyLanguageLine" at the top of any page at www.languageline.com

Request Access by Authorized Contacts on an Account

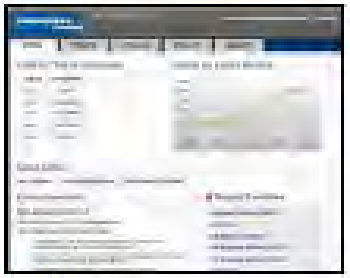
1. Click "Sign Up" on the MyLanguageLine homepage. Complete all Account Information fields. All entries are kept confidential.
2. You must use an email address already associated with this account(s).
3. Enter a password with a minimum of six characters including one number and one character for security.
4. Enter a Customer Number or Client ID associated with this account.
5. Review the license agreement, click the box to agree, and Submit. Once you complete the request, you will receive an email to confirm the email address. Click on the link in the email to confirm.
6. Customer Service will verify and approve and email your account authorization within 48 hours.
7. Once authorized, login with your email address, password and account number.



Sign Up Page

Home Screen

- View your top five language requests
- Usage Chart for the last six months
- Quick Links: View Invoices and Submit Billing Issue
- Links to Report Favorites
- Tabs to quickly access the features of the portal



Home Screen

Reports Tab

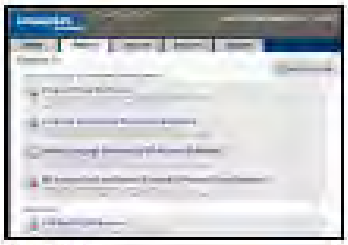
- Reports sorted by: Customer, Bill Account, and Client. Access to the reports is dependent on your set up
- Click the desired account name to access reporting for that account
- Click "Show More Clients" to view any additional accounts

Report Tab

Reports

- View current data up to the previous day
- View historical data up to six months
- Click a report, choose desired parameters and Run Report
- Click to run the report
- Submit a Voice of the Customer ticket directly from a report

See next page →



Reports Page

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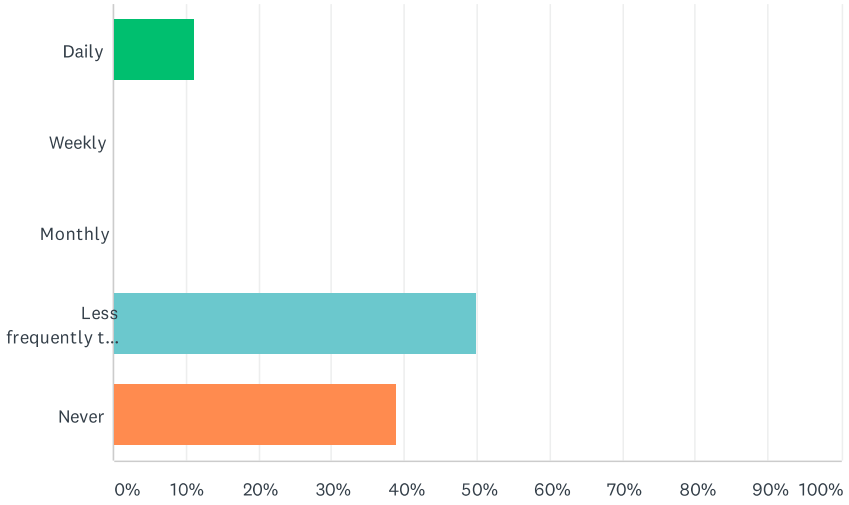
Q1 How often do you come into contact with passengers who do not speak English or have trouble understanding you when you speak English to them?

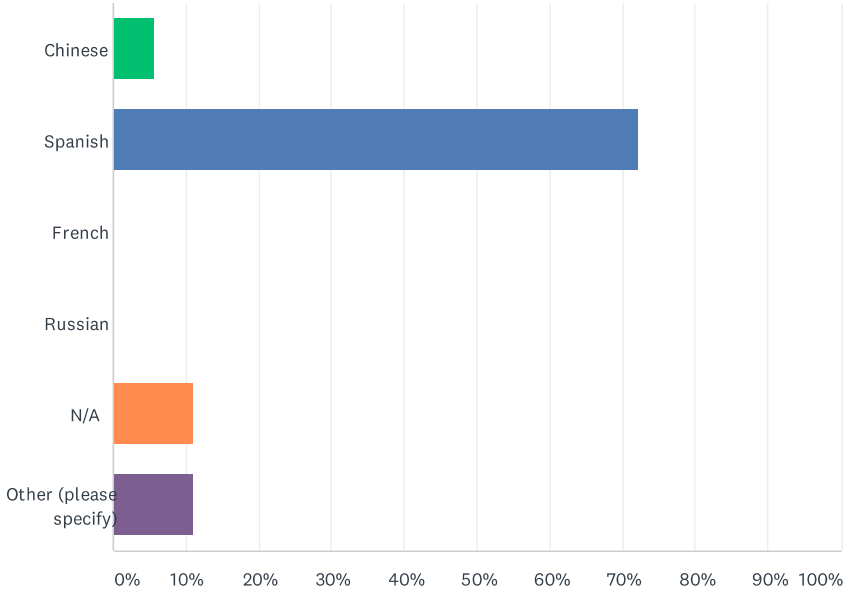
Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	11.11%	2
Weekly	0.00%	0
Monthly	0.00%	0
Less frequently than monthly	50.00%	9
Never	38.89%	7
TOTAL		18

Q2 What languages do these passengers tend to speak?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



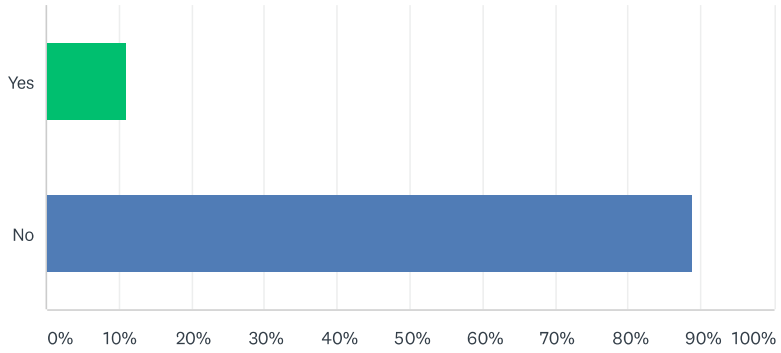
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Chinese	5.56%	1
Spanish	72.22%	13
French	0.00%	0
Russian	0.00%	0
N/A	11.11%	2
Other (please specify)	11.11%	2
TOTAL		18

Q3 What language assistance needs are encountered (e.g. assistance reading signs, understanding bus announcements, customer service complaint etc.):

Answered: 13 Skipped: 5

Q4 Do you speak another language other than English?

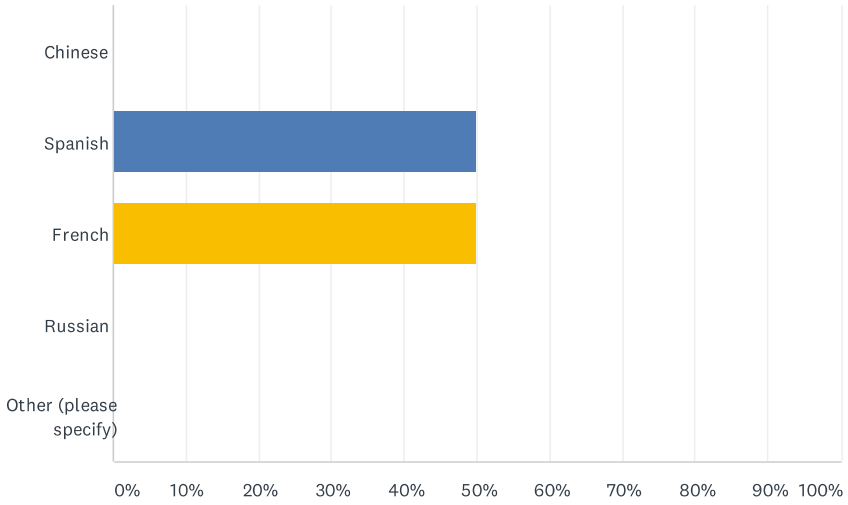
Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	11.11%	2
No	88.89%	16
TOTAL		18

Q5 What other language do you speak?

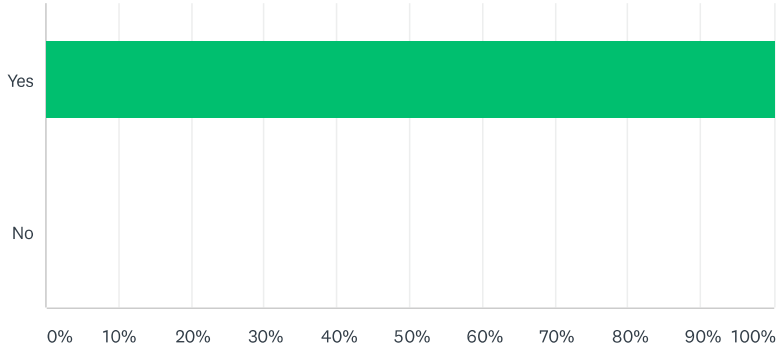
Answered: 2 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Chinese	0.00%	0
Spanish	50.00%	1
French	50.00%	1
Russian	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		2

Q6 Would you be willing to serve as a translator when needed?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	2
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		2

Outside Organization LEP Survey Form

The COMET Customer Experience Survey

1. Please identify your preferred language./Identifique su idioma preferido..

- English/Inglés
- Spanish/Español

The COMET Customer Experience Survey

We will use the information below to evaluate how well we are doing.

2. What gender do you identify as?

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female
- ◯ Other (please specify or type N/A)

3. What is your age?

4. Please specify your ethnicity.

5. Please identify the day and time of your customer experience.

Date / Time

Date Time AM/PM

-

6. Please identify the route that this survey is in reference to.

7. How often do you use this route for travel?

- ◯ More than 3 times a week
- ◯ 1-3 times a week
- ◯ 1-3 times a month
- ◯ Less than once per month
- ◯ Rarely

8. How long does it typically take to get to your destination?

- ◯ Less than 15 mins
- ◯ Between 15 - 30 mins
- ◯ Between 30 - 45 mins
- ◯ More than 45 mins

9. How would you rate the driver during your trip?

10. How would you rate your overall experience catching The COMET?

11. Please provide details on your customer experience.

12. Were the following things functioning?

	Yes	No	N/A
Ramps or bus kneeling	◯	◯	◯
Wheelchair securements (the straps that hold the wheelchair in place)	◯	◯	◯
Announcements of arrival at each bus stop	◯	◯	◯
Message indicators inside of bus	◯	◯	◯

13. How often do you attend public meetings?

- ◯ Very often
- ◯ Often
- ◯ Somewhat often
- ◯ Never

The COMET Customer Experience Survey

Usaremos la información a continuación para evaluar cómo nos está yendo.

14. ¿Hablas español bien?

- Muy bien
- bien
- menos que bien
- De ningún modo

15. ¿Con qué género se identifica?

- Masculino
- Femenino
- Otro (especifique o escriba N/A)

16. ¿Cuántos años tiene?

17. Especifique su grupo étnico

18. Identifique el día y horario de su experiencia de cliente.

Fecha / hora

Date Time AM/PM

-

19. Identifique la ruta a la que hace referencia esta encuesta.

20. ¿Con qué frecuencia usa esta ruta?

- Más de 3 veces a la semana
- 1-3 veces a la semana
- 1-3 veces al mes
- Menos de una vez al mes
- Casi nunca

21. ¿Cuánto tiempo lleva típicamente llegar a su destino?

- Menos de 15 minutos
- Entre 15 y 30 minutos
- Entre 30 y 45 minutos
- Más de 45 minutos

22. ¿Cómo calificaría al conductor durante el viaje?

23. ¿Cómo calificaría su experiencia en general sobre viajar con The COMET?

24. Brinde detalles sobre su experiencia de cliente.

25. ¿Funcionó lo siguiente?

	Si	No	N/A
Rampas o descenso eléctrico del autobús	○	○	○
Aseguramiento de silla de ruedas (las correas que la sostienen en su lugar)	○	○	○
Anuncios de llegada en cada parada	○	○	○
Indicadores de mensajes dentro del autobús	○	○	○

26. ¿Con qué frecuencia asiste a reuniones públicas?

- ○ Muy seguido
- ○ Seguido
- ○ A veces
- ○ Nunca

The COMET Customer Experience Survey

We will use the information below to improve our routes and the accessibility of goods & services.

27. What is your current employment status?

28. What is your postal code?

ZIP/Postal Code

29. How often do you interact with customer service (i.e. call in, transit center, drivers)?

- Very often
- Often
- Somewhat often
- Never

The COMET Customer Experience Survey

Usaremos la información a continuación para mejorar nuestras rutas y la accesibilidad de bienes y servicios.

30. ¿Cuál es su situación laboral actual?

31. ¿Cuál es su código postal?

Código postal

32. ¿Con qué frecuencia interactúa con servicio al cliente (p. ej., llamada, centro de tránsito, conductores)?

- Muy seguido
- Seguido
- A veces
- Nunca

Exhibit 4

Public Participation Plan/CMCOG

COATS
Columbia Area Transportation Study

Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Participation Plan

For Transportation Planning in the Columbia Metropolitan Planning Area

CMCOG
Member Jurisdictions:

Fairfield County
Lexington County
Newberry County
Richland County
Town of Winnsboro
Town of Batesburg-Leesville
City of Cayce
Town of Irmo
Town of Lexington
Town of Springdale
City of West Columbia
City of Newberry
City of Columbia
City of Forest Acres

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COLUMBIA AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

PUBLIC PARTICATION PLAN

FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

IN THE

COLUMBIA METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

Approved by the Policy Committee of the
Columbia Area Transportation Study

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List of Acronyms

CMCOG	Central Midlands Council of Government	See page 4
COATS	Columbia Area Transportation Study	See page 4
MPO	Metropolitan Transportation Organization	See page 4
LRTP	Long Range Transportation Plan	See page 5
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users	See page 5
SCDOT	South Carolina Department of Transportation	See page 5
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century	See page 5
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program	See page 5
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program	See page 5

INTRODUCTION

The Columbia Area Transportation Study (COATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) policy is to support and encourage public participation and to adhere to the principles of Environmental Justice in the metropolitan planning process. The MPO's public participation policy is designed to ensure opportunities for the public to express its views on transportation issues and to become active participants in the decision-making process.

I. BACKGROUND

The Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) is a public agency created by the Counties of Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry and Richland, and the cities of Batesburg/Leesville, Cayce, Columbia, Forest Acres, Irmo, Lexington, Newberry, Springdale, West Columbia, and Winnsboro, as enabled by state planning law. The agency was organized in 1969 and has been providing planning, management and technical assistance to its member governments and local transit service providers since its inception. CMCOG has been charged with responsibility for area-wide transportation planning since its inception and serves as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation program/project purposes.

The CMCOG Board is comprised of citizens, business leaders, state and local elected officials representing the CMCOG member governments. This Board meets regularly to establish transportation policies and evaluate transportation needs for the region. Only officials who represent the member governments located in the MPO study area are eligible to vote on MPO activities.

In addition to its own technical staff, the MPO has four standing advisory committees:

- Transportation Subcommittee
- Technical Committee
- Rail Transit Committee
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee

The Transportation Subcommittee is responsible for making recommendations on all CMCOG transportation plans and programs to the CMCOG Board. The Subcommittee is comprised of elected officials from the CMCOG member governments within the MPO Boundary and members are appointed by the local governments and affirmed by the CMCOG Board Chair. The Technical Committee serves as an advisory group to the Transportation Subcommittee. The Technical Committee is made up of State, County and City planning and engineering staff, which provide technical expertise in the development of transportation plans and programs for the MPO area. The Rail Transit Committee is composed of elected officials and citizens that are responsible for providing recommendations on transit plans and projects. Rail Transit Committee members are recommended by their local government body and affirmed by the CMCOG Board Chair. The Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee is composed of citizens that are responsible for providing recommendations on regional bicycle and pedestrian plans and projects.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee members are appointed by their respective local governments. Each Committee may also appoint ad hoc committees (working groups) to oversee MPO planning projects. The MPO staff consists of a Director, two professional Planners, and an Administrative Secretary. On a regular basis the committees, along with the MPO staff, provide recommendations to the MPO Board regarding short and long range planning, implementation of projects and related issues. The CMCOG Board and each of its advisory committees operate under bylaws approved by the CMCOG Board.

The principal responsibilities of the MPO include the development of a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), a Congestion Management Plan, a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and related planning studies and projects deemed necessary to address transportation issues in the COATS area. Local transportation needs are re-evaluated annually. Based on this evaluation, project priorities are established and made part of the CMCOG's biennial Transportation Improvement Program. This information is forwarded to the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) for inclusion into the statewide Work Program.

By Federal law, all multi-modal transportation improvement projects must be included in and consistent (to the maximum extent feasible) with the MPO's LRTP in order to be eligible for Federal funding. Therefore, the MPO LRTP is the primary plan that guides all federally funded transportation improvements in the COATS area.

II. GOVERNMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

With the passage of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998, the 15 metropolitan and 23 statewide planning factors from the old regulations were consolidated into seven (7) factors. With the recent passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005, these factors were expanded to eight (8), namely safety and security were separated into separate planning factors. In addition, the planning factor on protect/enhance the environment was expanded to include "...promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns". The eight (8) planning factors of SAFETEA-LU are:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;

7. Promote efficient system management and operation, and;
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

Additionally, MPOs are required to develop and adopt a long-range transportation plan and a transportation improvement program. In developing these documents, by federal statute, a reasonable opportunity to comment must be provided.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

A. General Guidelines

The *CMCOG Public Participation Plan* is intended to provide direction for public participation activities to be conducted by the COATS MPO and contains the vision, goals, objectives, and techniques used by CMCOG for public participation. As noted earlier, CMCOG has been designated by the federal government to serve as the regional MPO for the COATS Transportation Program. Therefore, in its public participation process, CMCOG will strive to:

1. Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects (including but not limited to local jurisdiction concerns).

2. Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the LRTP, TIP, UPWP, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects, and conduct open public meetings where matters related to transportation programs are being considered. Such access would also include, if necessary, the conversion of the key planning documents into Spanish (or any other language).

3. Give adequate public notice of public participation activities and allow time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to, the approval of the LRTP, TIP, UPWP, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects. If the final draft of any transportation plan differs significantly from the one available for public comment by CMCOG and raises new material issues, which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen, an additional opportunity for public comment on the revised plan shall be made available.

4. Respond in writing to all applicable public input. When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan (including the financial plan) as a result of the public participation process, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan.

5. Solicit the needs of those traditionally under-served by existing transportation systems, including but not limited to minorities, elderly, persons with disabilities, persons with limited English proficiency, and low-income households.

6. Provide a public comment period of 45 calendar days prior to the adoption of the *CMCOG Public Participation Plan* and not less than 15 calendar days prior to any amendments or updates for the groups listed in Item 1 above. Notice of the 45-day comment period will be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation, minority community newspapers, and various other publications prior to the commencement of the 45-day comment period and on CMCOG's website. Notice will also be mailed to the entire CMCOG mailing list prior to the commencement of the 45-day comment period.

7. Provide a public comment period of not less than 30 calendar days prior to the adoption of the LRTP, TIP, UPWP, Transit Development Plans, and not less than 15 calendar days prior to the adoption of any amendments or updates, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects.

8. Coordinate its Public Participation Process with statewide Public Participation Processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans and programs, and reduce redundancies and costs.

9. Periodically review the Public Participation Process to ensure it provides full and open access to all. Portions of the process which are found not to meet the needs of the constituency will be revised.

B. Public Participation Plan Vision, Goals & Policies

The vision for the public participation plan is that the public will be provided thorough information on transportation planning services and project development in a convenient and timely manner. To this end, the following goals and policies have been established.

Goal 1: To actively engage the public in the transportation planning process according to the policies contained in Federal and State law as well as in this Public Participation Plan.

A. CMCOG shall maintain an up-to-date database of contacts including at a minimum the following persons:

- Federal, state, local agencies responsible for planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, freight movements, land use management, natural resources, consideration, and historic preservation
- Elected Officials
- Local Government Staff
- Transportation Agencies (freight, port, airports, transit, etc.)
- Representatives of Users of Public Transportation
- Representatives of Users of Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation
- Representatives of the Disable
- Local Media
- Homeowners' Associations
- Civic Groups
- Special Interest Groups
- COATS Area Public Libraries (for public display)
- Individuals expressing an interest in transportation planning activities.

B. CMCOG shall, when feasible, electronically send and/or mail meeting announcements (invitations) to CMCOG contact list or to targeted groups for upcoming activities.

C. CMCOG shall employ visualization techniques to depict transportation plans. Examples of visualization techniques include: charts, graphs, photo interpretation, maps, use of GIS, artist renderings, physical models, and/or computer simulation.

Goal 2: CMCOG shall keep the public informed of on-going transportation related activities on a continuous basis.

A. CMCOG shall make all publications and work products available to the public via internet, staff office, and employ visualization techniques to describe transportation actions as part of the LRTP.

B. Staff shall be available to provide general and project-specific information at a central location during normal business hours and after hours at the request of groups such as homeowners' associations with reasonable notice.

C. CMCOG shall maintain a COATS section on their website.

1. The website shall be updated and maintained to provide the most current information available.
2. The website shall, at a minimum, contain the following information:
   - Current MPO Staff contact information (i.e. name, title, mailing address, phone, fax, and e-mail)
   - Meeting calendars and agendas
   - Brief descriptions of current projects
   - Work products and publications (e.g. TIP, LRTP, UPWP)
   - Comment/Question form
   - Links to related agencies (e.g. SCDOT and the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority)

Goal 3: CMCOG shall encourage the participation of all citizens in the transportation planning process.

A. Target audiences shall be identified for each planning study conducted by CMCOG, including residents, business and property owners and those traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations, including but not limited to, low income and minority households, within the study area.

B. CMCOG shall, whenever feasible, hold public meetings at a scheduled time, location, and building facility convenient to potentially affected citizens.

C. CMCOG will provide an additional opportunity for public comments, if the final LRTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was initially made available for public comment.

Goal 4: CMCOG shall strive to continuously improve public participation.

A. CMCOG shall continuously evaluate public participation techniques, according to the procedures contained in this Public Participation Plan.

B. The Public Participation Plan shall be reviewed and adopted, with revisions if necessary, at least every three (3) years.

Goal 5: CMCOG shall participate in public participation activities for individual transportation improvement projects from the planning phase through construction.

A. CMCOG shall actively assist SCDOT, local governments and transportation agencies in the development and implementation of public participation techniques for planning and other studies, including Major Investment Studies and Project Development and Environmental studies.

IV. CURRENT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

Public participation is an ongoing activity of the MPO. An effective public participation process is characterized by techniques and procedures that enable citizens to become well informed. This section contains descriptions of public participation tools of which CMCOG currently uses and proposes to use in the future. These tools are as follows:

- Annual Newsletters
- Charrettes
- Comment Forms
- Consultation
- Display Ads
- Direct Mailings
- E-mail Announcements/Internet Message Boards
- Fact Sheets
- Legal Advertisements
- MPO Master Database
- MPO Website
- Press Releases
- Public Information Meetings/Hearings
- Public Notices
- Small Group Meetings
- Surveys
- Title VI & Environmental Justice Review
- Visualization

Annual Newsletter

Description: MPO (CMCOG) staff produces an annual newsletter that is distributed to citizens, municipalities, media and other agencies. Citizens are added to the distribution list by their own request.

Opportunities to request being added to the list occur during public meetings hosted by CMCOG on the CMCOG web site and when citizens contact CMCOG staff. Each issue of the newsletter includes staff contact information, upcoming meeting schedules, the CMCOG web site address, project highlights, and current planning project status reports. When appropriate, information regarding significant transportation issues, MPO awards, and other one-time activities are also included.

Activities: The newsletter is used to report planning studies, publications and work products from the past year.

Charrette

Description***:*** Charrettes are typically intense, possibly multi-day meetings involving municipal officials, planning officials and local residents. A charrette is instrumental in identifying key issues early, promotes joint ownership of the solution and attempts to diffuse traditional confrontation between stakeholders.

Activities: Project specific meetings, corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies and workshops.

Comment Forms

Description: Comment forms are often used to solicit public comment on specific issues being presented at a workshop or other public meeting. Comment forms can be very general in nature, or can ask for very specific feedback. For example, a comment form may ask for comments on specific alignment alternatives being considered during a corridor study, or may ask for a person's general feelings about any aspect of transportation. Comment forms can also be included in publications and on websites to solicit input regarding the subject of the publication and/or the format of the publication or website.

Activities: Public workshops, open houses, hearings and other meetings, general MPO activities.

Consultation

Description: As part of SAFETEA-LU regulations in encouraging more cooperative planning, CMCOG will consult, as appropriate, with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation within the COATS area. To coordinate the planning function to the maximum extent practicable, such consultation will entail comparing LRTPs and TIPs as they are developed with the plans, maps, inventories, and planning documents developed by other agencies. This consultation will include, as appropriate, contact with the following groups: State, local, Indian Tribal, and private agencies responsible for planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, freight movements, land use management, natural resources, consideration, and historic preservation. CMCOG maintains an open consultation policy, whereby any private citizen or entity responsible for transportation in the COATS area may contact CMCOG and be included in the consultation process.

Activities: Public hearings/meetings, copies of this plan on the CMCOG website (for viewing/downloading purposes), meetings with CMCOG Staff.

Display Ads

Description: These ads are used to promote meetings that are not regularly scheduled, such as corridor study workshops. They are published in the local section of the newspaper in order to reach a larger audience than those that typically read legal ads.

Activities: Project specific meetings, workshops, open houses or hearings.

Direct Mailings

Description: Direct Mailings are used to announce upcoming meetings or activities or to provide information to a targeted area or group of people. Direct mailings are usually post cards, but can be letters or fliers. An area may be targeted for a direct mailing because of potential impacts from a project. Groups are targeted that may have an interest in a specific issue, for example avid cyclists and pedestrians may be targeted for pathways and trail projects.

Activities: Project-specific meetings, workshops, open houses, corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies or major activities.

E-mail Announcements/Internet Message Boards

Description: Meeting announcements and MPO information would be e-mailed to interested persons that have submitted their e-mail addresses to CMCOG staff. Interactive message boards would be used to facilitate discussion and solicit public comment regarding specific MPO projects or issues.

Activities: Corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies, regular meetings, public hearings, workshops, open houses, and other major MPO activities.

Fact Sheets

Description: Fact Sheets will be used to provide summary information regarding MPO policy, programs and projects. Fact sheets can be distributed at public meetings, on the CMCOG website, and in public places such as libraries and community centers. Individuals and special interest groups can request fact sheets directly from the CMCOG staff office.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub -area studies, other planning studies, project priorities process, updates to the LRTP and TIP and other MPO activities.

Legal Advertisements

Description: SCDOT requires a minimum fifteen (15) day advertisement of any public meeting where a decision could be made that would make a significant change to an existing plan or program. Ads are published to solicit public comment and/or review of the requested change or plan update. The ads provide a description of the meeting agenda, including contact information.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies, project priority process, major TIP amendments, updates of the LRTP and UPWP, and other major MPO activities.

MPO Master Database

Description: Staff maintains a master database of all contacts, both business and public, on a continuous basis. The database includes committee membership, mailing information, phone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses. The database is used for maintaining up-to-date committee membership lists, special interest groups and homeowner association contacts, and the newsletter mailing list. Membership lists generated using the database are provided to the public, municipalities and other agencies upon request. The database will be used to establish and maintain a list of e-mail contacts for electronic meeting notification and announcements.

Activities: The database is used to enhance other public participation activities.

MPO Website

Description: The MPO website is found within CMCOG's website, under the link "Transportation Planning". The site provides basic information about the services of CMCOG, the MPO process, its members, meeting times and committee and contact information. The site has been expanded recently to include information about specific projects undertaken by CMCOG and the MPO. MPO publications and work products, such as the UPWP, TIP, LRTP, and the Public Participation Plan, are available for downloading from the site. Also, citizens are able to submit comments and sign up to be added to the various distribution lists maintained by CMCOG. The site provides many links to other transportation related sites from the local to the national level. The site is maintained and updated by CMCOG staff.

The website address is www.centralmidlands.org/transplan.asp.

Activities: The site is used to promote regular and special meetings, planning studies, publications and work products.

Press Releases

Description: Formal press releases are sent to local media (newspaper, TV and radio) to announce upcoming special meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues being considered by the MPO or their committees.

Activities: Specific corridor or other planning studies, workshops, open houses, public hearings, and other special MPO activities

Public Informational Meetings

Description: These are public meetings that are generally open and informal, with project team members interacting with the public on a one-on-one basis. Short presentations may be given at these meetings. The purpose of public informational meetings is to provide project information to the public and to solicit public comment.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies, project priority process, certification review, LRTP update, and other major MPO activities.

Public Notices

Description: The MPO regularly advertises the CMCOG Board, the Transportation Subcommittee, the Technical Committee, the Rail Transit Committee and the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee meetings.

Activities: Regular monthly meetings, other public meetings.

Small Group Meetings

Description: During projects such as planning studies, meetings are held with small groups that have an interest in the project. Meetings could be with homeowners or neighborhood associations, civic groups, special interest groups, or other groups of affected or interested parties.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies, and other MPO activities.

Surveys

Description: Surveys are used when very specific input from the public is desired. A survey can be used in place of comment cards to ask very specific questions such as whether a person supports a specific alignment in a corridor study. Surveys are also used to gather technical data during corridor and planning studies. For example, participants may be asked about their daily travel patterns.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies and other planning studies.

Title VI & Environmental Justice Review

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs and activities on the basis of race, color, and national origin. Then in 1994, Presidential Executive Order 12898 directed every Federal agency to make Environmental Justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on "minority populations and low-income populations." In complying with the aforementioned federal laws and policies, the MPO's Environmental Justice initiatives will strive to involve the potentially affected public through a Public Outreach Program. This program consists of MPO staff activities designed to develop partnerships with, and enhance their participation in the transportation planning process, by groups and individuals of “traditionally underserved” communities. These communities include minorities, low income, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Staff activities include, but are not limited to, MPO staff participation in groups and coalitions serving within these communities, targeted communications with local media outlets, conducting meetings at times and locations that are accessible to transit dependant or non-driving individuals when possible, and publication of MPO documents in non-technical, accessible formats when needed. The goal of the MPO’s Public Outreach Program is to ensure that all citizens, regardless of race, color, religion, income status, national origin, age, gender, disability, marital status, or political affiliation, have an equal opportunity to participate in the MPO’s decision-making process.

Description: CMCOG will take reasonable steps to ensure that all persons, including those with a disability or language barrier, have meaningful opportunities to participate in the transportation planning and programming process, and will strive to address environmental justice issues at all stages of the planning process. This includes implementing the following strategies to reduce participation barriers for under-served groups and engage them in the decision-making process:

- Representatives of minority, disability, low-income and limited English proficiency groups will be identified and included in MPO mailings.
- Key planning documents will be translated and public notices broadcasted for Spanish-speaking populations.
- Whenever possible, meetings will be held at locations accessible to persons with disability, bus riders, and bicyclist and that are convenient to neighborhoods with a concentration of minority and low-income persons.

- Where meeting facilitators are used, CMCOG will seek to use persons that represent the diversity of the community and/or have expertise in working with under-served groups.
- Translators/interpreters will be provided for meetings, if requested.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies, LRTP update and other major MPO activities.

Visualization

Description: CMCOG recognizes that an important element to public participation is to provide the public, when possible, visual as well as written descriptions of transportation projects. Through visual imagery, the complex features of proposed transportation plans, policies, and programs can be portrayed at appropriate scales—region, local, project architecture, etc.—and from different points of view. To this end, CMCOG will utilize various visual and architectural design techniques; some of which may include: sketches, drawings, artist renderings, aerial photography, mapping, simulated photos, videos, computer modeled images, interactive geographical information system (GIS), GIS-based scenario planning tools, photo manipulation and computer simulation.

Activities: Planning studies, TIP amendments, and other MPO activities.

V. SUMMARY TABLE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICIES

Program Adoption	Public Meetings	Comment Period	Notes
Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	2 meetings prior to CMCOG Board approval	30 days	A summary of all oral or written comments will be provided to the CMCOG Board and made available for public review.
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	2 meetings prior to CMCOG Board approval	30 days	
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	N/A	30 days	
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	N/A	45 days	Will be held for updates of the PPP as needed
Amendments			
Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	1 meeting if requested prior to CMCOG Board approval. A public meeting will be held on major amendments	15 days	
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	1 meeting if requested prior to CMCOG Board approval. A public meeting will be held on major amendments	15 days	
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	N/A	15 days	
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	N/A	15 days	
Open Meetings			
CMCOG Board	Regular meetings held the Fourth Thursday of every month		
Transportation Subcommittee	Monthly Meeting are scheduled for the Second Thursday		
Technical Committee	Monthly Meeting are scheduled for the Fourth Tuesday		

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

Other techniques used for future consideration include:

Project-specific Web Sites

Description: For individual projects, such as corridor studies, that are typically performed using consulting services, project-specific web sites are often used. These sites are used when project information is too extensive to be included on the CMCOG site. Project web sites can contain study area maps, meeting announcements, descriptions of potential alternatives, comment forms, user surveys and project team contact information.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub -area studies, other planning studies and major MPO projects.

Project-specific Newsletters

Description: For individual projects, such as corridor studies, that are typically performed using consulting services, newsletters are often used to address specific project issues. These newsletters are mailed to targeted residents, elected officials representing that area, businesses and property owners in the area that are expected to be impacted by a particular study. Information regarding upcoming project meetings, alternatives being proposed in the area, and other project news is reported in these newsletters.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub -area studies, other planning studies or major activities.

Other Newsletters

Description: When project-specific newsletters are not used, articles may be prepared for publication in other newsletters produced by municipalities, homeowners' associations, church groups, civic groups, or others that may have an interest in the project. These articles are subject to the publication dates and space restrictions of the individual publishers.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub -area studies, other planning studies or major activities.

MPO Logo

Description: A logo representing the MPO is used to identify products and publications of the MPO. A logo helps the public become familiar with the different activities of the MPO by providing a means of recognizing MPO products.

Activities: A logo should be used on all MPO publications, including those developed by consultants working on MPO sponsored projects.

Formal Public Hearings

Description: These are public meetings used to solicit public comment on a project or issue being considered for adoption by the MPO. Hearings provide a formal setting for citizens to provide comments to the MPO or another decision-making body. They are recorded and transcribed for the record.

Activities: LRTP and TIP updates, corridor studies, project development & environmental studies, and other planning studies as needed for other MPO activities.

Government Access Television

Description: The local cable network provider as part of basic cable service maintains local channels of government and business advertisements. Government Access Television can broadcast rolling message scripts and regular and special meetings; both live and pre-recorded, as well as short informative programs about departmental activities or projects of interest to the entire population.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies, regular and special MPO activities.

Posters and Fliers

Description: Posters and fliers are used to announce meetings and events and are distributed to public places such as city halls, libraries and community centers for display. The announcement may contain a brief description of the purpose of a meeting, the time(s) and location(s), and contact information. Posters and fliers may be used to reach a large audience that cannot be reached using direct mailings and/or newsletters.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies, regular and special MPO activities.

VI. EVALUATION METHODS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

In order to determine the effectiveness of the public participation tools, they must be evaluated and compared to established performance goals. The typical methods for evaluating the effectiveness of public participation tools are surveys and quantitative statistical analysis. This section briefly describes evaluation methods to be used by CMCOG. For each public participation tool, performance goals and methods for meeting those goals have been identified.

Surveys

Surveys typically consist of short, specific questions regarding public participation tools that are ongoing or that were used on a specific project. Surveys can be conducted in person, by phone, mail or e-mail. Face-to-face and telephone surveys provide quick responses and can be used when a respondent's answer may lead to a follow-up question. For example, respondents may be asked if advertisements are an effective notification tool. If the response is no, the surveyor can ask the respondent why advertisements are not effective and also what other tools they would prefer. In person and telephone surveys can target specific areas or groups or can be random sampling. Mail surveys may be used to provide written record of respondent’s answers. Mail-back surveys can be distributed at meetings, inside other publications, or by mailing directly to potential respondents. Respondents can be a targeted group, such as members of special interest groups or residents of specific areas, or they can be randomly generated. Return postage for mail surveys typically can be pre-paid by the MPO, or can be the responsibility of the respondent. E-mail surveys, like mail surveys, provide a written record of responses. Unlike mail-back surveys, there is little to no reproduction or distribution cost to the MPO to send out the surveys, and little to no cost to respondents to return a response. To use e-mail surveys, it is necessary to have e-mail addresses for the targeted respondents, and random distribution is not really an option. Surveys will be used to evaluate citizens’ responses on the effectiveness of the public participation tools.

Statistical Analysis

Statistics can be used to determine the "return on the investment" of producing public participation tools. For example, the number of persons attending an activity can be compared to the number of persons that were notified of the activity. This type of evaluation can be an indicator of whether or not the tools used for public participation are actually reaching the intended audience, or which tools had a greater response rate. Statistical analysis will be used to evaluate survey responses and the results of the analysis will be compared to the evaluation measures to determine the rate of success of the public participation tools.

VII. IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

CMCOG (MPO) continually strives for improved public participation. Improvements should be made to increase public awareness and to improve the quantity and quality of information provided to the public. The decisions made by CMCOG affect the entire population, both residents and visitors. Therefore, seeking public input on those decisions is vital to the success of CMCOG as the organization responsible for transportation planning. Within one month after the completion of an activity or at milestones during an activity, evaluation of public participation tool should occur. For ongoing activities, evaluation should occur at least quarterly. Each time a public participation evaluation is performed, a list of improvement strategies should be identified for implementation. If improvement is needed for an ongoing public participation task, a reasonable completion date should be established. If improvement is needed for one-time activities, such as corridor studies, the improvement should be implemented where appropriate on future activities.

Summary Table for Evaluation Public Participation Tools

Public Participation Tool	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Goals	Methods to Meet Goals
MPO Web Site	Number of Hits	Min. of 50 hits per month, 5 % increase in hits per quarter	Use other public involvement tools to increase advertisement of the web site.
MPO Master Database	Number of returned items	Max. of 2% return rate per mailing	Make immediate corrections when items are returned.
Legal Advertisements	No Measure / Required by South Carolina Statutes	N/A	N/A
Annual Newsletter	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of returns	N/A. Return rate is addressed under MPO Master Database	Continue items that receive favorable comments and correct or improve mistakes or items that receive negative comments.
Display Ad	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of persons contacted	Min. of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw the ad. Ad formats may be modified based on specific comments received	Pursue publication in a prominent location in the paper. Increase the size or modify the layout to make ads more visible.
Direct Mailings	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of persons contacted	Min. of 15% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they received the mailing. **-OR-** Reaches a min. of 85% of persons that *are affected by a project.*	Increase/Decrease mailing list to more accurately target affected areas. Use the most up-to-date information from the respective county's Property Accessor's Office to maintain the mailing list.
Press Releases	Calls, letters, etc.	No standard. Format may be modified based on specific comments received.	Encourage publication of press releases by keeping the media informed.
Small Group Meetings	Calls, letters, etc.; Met the expectations of the group	N/A. These meetings are held at the request of affected groups.	MPO staff and any consulting staff should be available in a timely manner to hold small group meetings regarding any MPO activity or issue. The meeting should be formatted to provide specific information requested by the group and should highlight issues that are of interest to the group.

E-mail Announcements/ Internet Message Boards	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of persons reached	Min. of 5% of meeting attendees/survey respondents indicated that they saw the announcement.	Increase e-mail list by advertising the availability of email announcements using other public involvement tools.
Public Hearings	Calls, letters, etc.	3%-5% of affected population (based on study area) in attendance.	Schedule hearings at convenient and accessible times and locations. Use other public involvement tools to increase awareness of hearings.
Comment Forms	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of persons contacted	45% of meeting attendees filled out form- OR- 2% of visitors to a web site submitted a form **-OR-** 15% of mail recipients return the form.	Encourage responses by explaining the importance of receiving comments in order to improve the planning process
Surveys	Calls, letters, etc.; Number of responses	45% of contacted persons participate in the survey **-OR-** 15% of mail recipients return the survey	Encourage responses by explaining the importance of receiving feedback to improve the planning process.

Exhibit 5

Board Minutes Approving Title VI Program

The COMET ***Board of Directors Meeting Minutes*** *are prepared and presented in summary form. Audio recordings of the meetings are on file at The COMET and are part of the approved minutes. If you would like to hear the recording from the meeting, please contact Paige Jernigan at pjernigan@thecometsc.gov.*

Per SC Code of Laws, Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 30-4-80 - All public bodies shall notify persons or organizations, local news media, or such other news media as may request notification of the times, dates, places, and agenda of all public meetings, whether scheduled, rescheduled, or called, and the efforts made to comply with this requirement must be noted in the minutes of the meetings. The COMET complied with the notification of this meeting on ***Friday, October 23, 2020 at 3:15 P.M.***

Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 28, 2020 – 12:00 P.M.
3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 – Conference Room A

Members Present:
Ron Anderson*
Steve Cain*
Joyce Dickerson*
John V. Furgess, Sr.*
Mike Green*
Representative Leon Howard*
Derrick Huggins* (left call at 12:30 P.M.)
Col. (R) Roger Leaks, Jr., Chair*
Lill Mood*
Dr. Robert Morris*
Geraldine Robinson*
Andy Smith*
Allison Terracio*
B.J Unthank*
Barry Walker*
**indicates participation by phone*

Guests Present:
Pam Baker, Attorney, Burr & Forman
Katherine Cason, DPA/Grant Assistant, Lexington County
Corey Gagnon, General Manager, RATP Dev
Frannie Heizer, Attorney, Burr & Forman
Ben Limmer, Transition Manager, RATP Dev
Satara Lopez, Guest
Rob Tyson, Attorney, Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte
Corey Von Korff, Burr & Furman
Thelma Walker, Transport Care Services
Robert Young Williams, RATP Dev

Members Absent:
Carolyn Gleaton
Debbie Summers

The COMET Staff Present:
John Andoh, Executive Director/CEO
Rosalyn Andrews, Director of Finance/CFO
Leroy DesChamps, Director of Administration Operations/COO
Tanisha Gibbons, Interim Customer Experience & Contract Compliance Specialist
Paige Jernigan, Administrative & Customer Service Specialist
Arlene Prince, Director of Regulatory Compliance and Civil Rights Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM
Col. Leaks called the meeting to order at 12:04 P.M. after the determination of a quorum.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
Motion:
A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Joyce Dickerson to approve the agenda.
Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson *, Furgess*, Huggins*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*, Terracio*
Absent: Gleaton, Howard
Motion passed

3. MIDLANDS TRANSIT RIDERS ASSOCIATION UPDATE
No representation

4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC
A. INDIVIDUALS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD MUST SIGN UP PRIOR TO THE CALL TO ORDER.
B. COMMENT TIME LIMIT – TWO (2) MINUTES PER PERSON.
No representation

Mr. Walker expressed concern regarding the bus route 83L in Harbison/Irmo area that homeless people are loitering and building encampments. Mr. Andoh explained that currently The COMET is fare free and the Board will reconsider fare free in December. Mr. Andoh suggested having some law enforcement ride the route and are made aware of the encampments.

Ms. Dickerson and Mr. Green agreed with Mr. Walker regarding the routes in their areas of service.

5. PRESENTATION
A. EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH FOR RATP DEV
Mr. Andoh introduced Mr. Gagnon. He reported that he would be recognizing six (6) employees.
Mr. Gagnon stated that the RATP Dev employee of the month for August 2020 is Ms.

Lopez. Ms. Lopez began her career in transit when she was 16 years old. Since then she has displayed an excellent attitude and capable of taking on more responsibility. She is highly recommended when there is a need for an operator for special events. She is always ready and willing to lend a hand when a shift needs to be covered. She is a team player and always has a smile on her face when she interacts with the drivers. She has proven to be an invaluable asset to the operations department explained Mr. Gagnon.

Mr. Gagnon explained that Transport Care Service he would like to recognize Ms. Walker as employee of the month for August 2020. Ms. Walker started out part time as a customer service representative and a year later she was offered a full-time position. Ms. Walker has moved into the reservationist position and always goes above and beyond the call of duty to accommodate passengers and their trip needs. She treats every passenger like family and for that the passengers and TCS are forever thankful. Mr. Gagnon introduced Ms. Walker.

Mr. Gagnon continued to state that the RATP Dev employee of the month for September 2020 is Mr. Williams from maintenance. Mr. Williams began his career in transit as a mechanic several years ago. Since then Mr. Williams has displayed an excellent attitude and remarkable work history. He is always eager to volunteer when there is a need regarding special projects and even unpopular assignments. He is always ready and willing to lend a hand when a shift needs to be covered. He is a team player and always friendly and outgoing. He has proven to be a very valuable asset to the maintenance department.

Transport Care Services employee of the month for September 2020 is Ms. Thomas. Ms. Thomas started with Transport Care Services in 2017, working as a driver. She has been selected as our Employee of the Month because she exemplifies the characteristics of a real team player! She goes above and beyond to accommodate her passengers. I have never heard her grumble or complain no matter how many times her schedule changes, or what we ask her to do. She is the epitome of courtesy and professionalism. She is professional on the radio and helps her co-workers when asked stated Mr. Gagnon.

Mr. Gagnon further stated that the RATP Dev employee of the month for October 2020 is Ms. Mayes. Ms. Mayes began her career in transit about eight years ago. Since then Ms. Mayes has displayed an excellent attitude and capable of taking on more responsibility. She works well with all the operators and when the role of Operations Supervisor became available Ms. Mayes was promoted from Operator to Operations Supervisor in 2016. She is an asset to the organization and to the team.

Mr. Gagnon explained that the TCS Employee of the month for October 2020 is Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams started with TCS on July 1, 2015. He has been an asset and

pleasure to work with. He has been a loyal fixture in The COMET facility for years now. Mr. Williams has helped keep COMET Central clean and the vehicles here at The COMET clean while always keeping a pleasant attitude and smile.

Col. Leaks commended the employees and thanked them for their service.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. ADOPT TITLE VI PROGRAM

Col. Leaks introduced Dr. Prince. Dr. Prince explained that The COMET is required to implement and comply with requirements of Title VI. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act protects any person in the United States on the ground of race, color, or national origin from being excluded from participation, being denied the benefits of, or being otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity.

Dr. Prince recommended that the Board of Directors approve The COMET's updated Title VI Plan for compliance with Federal regulations after holding a public hearing. Discussion ensued regarding the change and the posting in the virtual environment.

Col. Leaks opened the Public Hearing at 12:23 P.M. Mr. Andoh confirmed there were no speakers. Col. Leaks closed the Public Hearing at 12:23 P.M.

Representative Howard joined the call at 12:24 P.M.

Caller on the public line asked about service regarding 96L route. Mr. Andoh explained.

<u>Motion:</u>
A motion was made by Ms. Dickerson and seconded by Dr. Morris to approve the presentation by Dr. Prince as presented.

Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson *, Furgess*, Howard*, Huggins*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*, Terracio*
Absent: Gleaton
Motion passed

Mr. Furgess wanted clarification regarding the public hearing procedures and notifications. Col. Leaks explained the process.

B. ADDITION OF UNIVERSITY ROUTES TO THE COMET TRANSIT SYSTEM AND ROUTE 4 CHANGES

Mr. Andoh referred to Page 107 and stated that the staff is recommending that the Board of Directors conduct a public hearing to add Routes 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20,

23, 24, 25 and 94 to The COMET Transit System and a re-route to The Orbit Route 4 to serve SC Works and approve the service change to be retroactive to September 1, 2020.

Mr. Andoh continued that The COMET Board of Directors approved a contract with the University of South Carolina (UofSC) to be operate powered by The COMET. He continued that 11 new routes were added to The COMET system fully funded by University of South Carolina (UofSC), but open to the general public. As a result of the new service that started on September 1, 2020, The Board of Directors must hold a public hearing to formally add these routes to The COMET system.

Mr. Andoh confirmed that thirty (30) days prior, flyers, advertisements, social media, newspaper and press releases were used to notify the public. He advised that we received no feedback regarding the changes.

Mr. Huggins recused himself from the hearing and the vote approximately 12:30 P.M.

Dr. Morris asked Ms. Mood whether this was vetted through the Service Committee. Ms. Mood confirmed that the Service Committee had reviewed the changes. The Board discussed the process of the public hearing.

Mr. Andoh referred the Board to page 117 of the packet to explain the public hearing policy. Mr. Andoh confirmed there was a public workshop.

Col. Leaks opened the public hearing at 12:40 P.M.
Col. Leaks closed the public hearing at 12:41 P.M.

<u>Motion:</u>
A motion was made by Ms. Dickerson and seconded Mr. Anderson to accept the recommendation and the report from Mr. Andoh as presented.

Approve:	Anderson*, Dickerson *, Furgess*, Howard*, Huggins*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*, Terracio*
Absent:	Gleaton
Abstain:	Furgess*, Huggins

Motion passed

C. DECEMBER 6, 2020 SERVICE CHANGES

Mr. Andoh mentioned that Mr. Harris has joined the meeting to help address any questions regarding the service changes. Mr. Andoh explained that the Service Committee is asking the Board of Directors to consider holding a public hearing for route changes that exceed 25% for implementation on December 6, 2020.

Mr. Andoh reminded that due to the pandemic, the Board authorized an enhanced

Saturday schedule. The purpose of these changes is to ensure that each route is performing optimally by meeting the level of demand. He referred to pages 126 – 130 that outlines the proposed changes. He confirmed that the advertising on social media and other platforms were completed and workshops were held. As a result of the workshops, the following were of concern:

1) Route 57L – to continue as is. 53X and 57L – combining routes due to low ridership.
2) Soda Cap 1 – to continue as is.
3) Better connectivity for the House of Raeford – extension of 96L.

Mr. Andoh explained the new programs for those who live outside the service area and the impact of a reduction in funding. Discussion ensued regarding the underperforming routes.

Col. Leaks opened the public hearing at 12:54 P.M.
Col. Leaks closed the public hearing at 12:54 P.M.

Motion:
A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Dickerson to accept the results of the public hearing and approve.

Dr. Morris asked for clarification of cost to currently run these routes. Mr. Andoh confirmed that the proposed reduction of seventeen thousand (17,000) service hours annually is one million, twenty-two thousand forty ($1, 220, 040). He reminded that though routes are being cut, we are also adding routes that are in demand. Mr. Andoh confirmed that the CARES Act Funding is only partial funding and we are trying to be proactive by being mindful of the budget. Discussion continued regarding the subsidy programs and review of the amount subsidized.

Ms. Terracio left the meeting at 12:59 P.M.

Mr. Anderson commended the staff for continuing to examine the service.

Ms. Dickerson called for the question and Mr. Anderson seconded.

Mr. Anderson restated his motion below:
Motion:
A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Dickerson to accept the findings of the public hearing and the route changes.

An amended motion was made by Dr. Morris to indicate that in addition to the motion, this should go to the Finance Committee to discuss looking at funds for those

individuals who would be affected by this change.

Mr. Anderson asked for clarification of the amendment. Ms. Dickerson and Mr. Anderson approved the amendment.

Restated Amended Motion:
Motion:
A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded Ms. Dickerson to accept the findings of the public hearing and the route changes and additionally this should go to the Finance Committee to discuss looking at funds for those individuals who would be affected by this change.
Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson *, Furgess*, Howard*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*
Absent: Gleaton, Huggins, Terracio
Motion passed

7. CONSENT CALENDAR: THE FOLLOWING ITEMS LISTED UNDER THE CONSENT CALENDAR WILL BE CONSIDERED AS A GROUP AND ACTED UPON BY ONE MOTION WITH NO SEPARATE DISCUSSION, UNLESS A BOARD MEMBER SO REQUESTS. IN THAT EVENT, THE ITEM WILL BE REMOVED FOR SEPARATE DISCUSSION AND ACTION.

Motion:
A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded Ms. Mood to approve the Consent Calendar as written.
Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson *, Furgess*, Howard*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*
Absent: Gleaton, Huggins, Terracio
Motion passed

8. FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE & ACTION ITEMS
A. CUSTOMER'S REQUEST FOR CASH REFUND
Mr. Smith explained the reason for requesting the refund. Ms. Smith has moved out of town and no longer has use for the pass.

Motion:
A motion was made by Ms. Dickerson and seconded by Dr. Morris that we accept the Chair's recommendation that came out of the Committee.
Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson *, Furgess*, Howard*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*
Absent: Gleaton, Huggins, Terracio
Motion passed

B. RATP DEV SUBCONTRACTING

Mr. Furgess asked if the tracking of subcontracting that is occurring for RATP Dev being done for The COMET? Dr. Prince stated that she does not have adequate data to present at this time regarding The COMET's M/DBE goal attainment. She confirmed that she would have this information next month for the Finance Committee and the Board.

Conversation ensued regarding the difference between Item 8B and Items 8C and 8D and the person that is presenting each item. Mr. Andoh confirmed that Item 8B was a request from RATP Dev and the other items fell under The COMET's Contracting Officer and went through the procurement process for 8C. Security, 8D. Landscaping and 8E. Janitorial Contracts.

Ms. Mood called Point Of Order.

Discussion continued.

Dr. Prince explained that The COMET staff has been in recent discussions with RATP DEV regarding the DBE Contract Goal for detailing, bus stop maintenance, physicals, and drug and alcohol testing.

Dr. Prince further explained that Capital Building Services was also listed in the proposal and included in the contract (Table 1) to handle vehicle detailing. After much consideration and review of all components of the work tasks, Capital Building Services determined that they would be unable to fulfill this activity. She further stated that while all the details are being worked out, Capital Building Services has agreed to handle vehicle detailing on a temporary basis until a permanent DBE is located to implement this activity. The interim agreement is set to expire on October 31, 2020.

RATP DEV has requested to replace Capital Building Services with Transport Care Services, stated Dr. Prince. Transport Care Services will then subcontract the vehicle detailing to Kare Pro Janitorial Services, a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firm certified to handle vehicle detailing. Currently, Transport Care Services is certified to wash vehicles but not vehicle detailing. RATP DEV believes that placing the washing of vehicles and vehicle detailing under one contract will provide more effective management of similar work items.

Dr. Prince continued to explain that RATP DEV is also requesting to add Ed Rush Consulting & Development Group to handle alcohol and drug testing to meet federal requirements and oversee company physicals. Ed Rush Consulting & Development Group is already an approved Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firm to work on this

project in another category.

In conclusion, Dr. Prince asked the Board to give the COMET staff authorization to proceed with approval of 1) RATP DEV subcontracting with TCS to handle the vehicle detailing via Kare Pro, a certified DBE; and 2) RATP DEV subcontracting with Ed Rush Development & Consulting to handle drug and alcohol testing, and company physicals.

Motion:
A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Anderson that the Board of Directors give the COMET staff authorization to proceed with approval of 1) RATP DEV subcontracting with TCS to handle the vehicle detailing via Kare Pro, a certified DBE; and 2) RATP DEV subcontracting with Ed Rush Development & Consulting to handle drug and alcohol testing, and company physicals.
The Board discussed the washing of the buses. Mr. Gagnon stated that there are still issues but parts have been ordered and this will be fully operational.

Approve: Anderson*, Furgess*, Howard*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*
Absent: Dickerson (no response), Gleaton, Huggins, Terracio
Motion passed

C. SECURITY CONTRACT AWARD

Mr. Andoh referred to page 178 in the packet. He continued to explain that the Finance Committee is asking for the Board of Directors to authorize the Executive Director/CEO to negotiate and upon successful negotiations, execute a contract with New Age Security to provide security guard services for The COMET facilities for a five year period with five, one year options and if negotiations are not successful, to negotiate and award to the second most responsive bidder, Strategic Security as well as schedule a meeting with appropriate law enforcement to determine if the security guards should be armed or unarmed.

Mr. Andoh stated that we released a Request for Proposal and New Age Security was the most successful bidder.

Motion:
A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Smith that the Board of Directors authorize the Executive Director/CEO to negotiate and upon successful negotiations, execute a contract with New Age Security to provide security guard services for The COMET facilities for a five year period with five, one year options and if negotiations are not successful, to negotiate and award to the second most responsive bidder, Strategic Security as well as schedule a meeting with appropriate law enforcement to determine if the security guards should be armed or unarmed.

Approve: Anderson*, Furgess*, Howard*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*
Absent: Dickerson (no response), Gleaton, Huggins, Terracio
Motion passed

D. LANDSCAPING CONTRACT AWARD

Mr. Andoh explained that the Finance Committee is recommending to the Board of Directors to authorize the Executive Director/CEO to negotiate and upon successful negotiations, execute a contract with A. James Global Services to provide landscaping services for The COMET facilities for a five year period with five, one year options and if negotiations are not successful, to negotiate and award to the second most responsive bidder, Gregg's Lawn and Landscaping.

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Smith to recommend to the Board of Directors to authorize the Executive Director/CEO to negotiate and upon successful negotiations, execute a contract with A. James Global Services to provide landscaping services for The COMET facilities for a five year period with five, one year options and if negotiations are not successful, to negotiate and award to the second most responsive bidder, Gregg's Lawn and Landscaping.

Approve: Anderson*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*
Absent: Dickerson (no response), Gleaton, Howard (no response), Huggins, Terracio
Abstain: Furgess*
Motion passed

E. JANITORIAL CONTRACT AWARD

Mr. Andoh explained that the Finance Committee recommends to the Board of Directors to authorize the Executive Director/CEO to negotiate and upon successful negotiations, execute a contract with Capital Building Services to provide janitorial services for The COMET facilities for a five year period with five, one year options and if negotiations are not successful, to negotiate and award to the second most responsive bidder, B & C Associates.

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Mood to recommend to the Board of Directors to authorize the Executive Director/CEO to negotiate and upon successful negotiations, execute a contract with Capital Building Services to provide janitorial services for The COMET facilities for a five year period with five, one year options and if negotiations are not successful, to negotiate and award to the second most responsive bidder, B & C Associates.

Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson, Furgess *, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*

Absent: Gleaton, Howard (no response), Huggins, Terracio
Motion passed

F. ELECTRIC BUS TRANSFER FROM WEGO TRANSIT

Mr. Andoh informed the Board that the Finance Committee recommends authorizing the Executive Director/CEO to send a letter of interest for receiving up to five electric buses to Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority and return to the Finance Committee and Board of Directors with the final terms of the vehicle transfer.

Mr. Andoh explained that these buses are short range and can operate up to 10 miles without a charge. The charging station would be installed to allow the bus to recharge for another 10 miles for a 10-minute period.

Mr. Andoh informed that in order to use these buses, several key factors must be taken into consideration:

- Training of bus operators to operate the bus and mechanics to maintain the bus
- Installation of a charging station at the Operations and Maintenance Facility
- Approval by SCDOT to install an overhead charger on its right of way
- Approval by the City of Columbia to install the overhead charger through its normal permit process; and
- Establishment of an account with Dominion Energy regarding use of electric buses, since additional power would be generated beyond what The COMET is generally spending under its current rate schedule. An additional meter would be needed for the overhead charger.

The staff will continue to study with Proterra to determine if these buses will work for The COMET.

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Mood to recommend to the Board of Directors authorizing the Executive Director/CEO to send a letter of interest for receiving up to five electric buses to Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority and return to the Finance Committee and Board of Directors with the final terms of the vehicle transfer.

Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson*, Furgess *, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*
Absent: Gleaton, Howard (no response), Huggins, Terracio
Motion passed

Discussion ensued regarding the buses.

G. SCHEDULE WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS VEHICLE TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. Andoh explained that the Finance Committee recommends that the Board of Directors schedule a workshop to engage in a discussion about vehicle technologies, as requested by Dr. Robert Morris related to vehicle/fuel types and options (capital cost, variable costs and environmental impact).

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Mood to recommend that the Board of Directors schedule a workshop to engage in a discussion about vehicle technologies, as requested by Dr. Robert Morris related to vehicle/fuel types and options (capital cost, variable costs and environmental impact).

The Board discussed the process of vetting these topics through the committees.

Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson*, Furgess *, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*
Absent: Gleaton, Howard (no response), Huggins, Terracio
Motion passed

9. SERVICE COMMITTEE UPDATE & ACTION ITEMS

Ms. Mood gave a brief update of the Service Committee action items.

A. SPECIAL SERVICE REQUEST WITH TOWN OF CHAPIN

Mr. Andoh explained that the Service Committee recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the operation of a shuttle for the Town of Chapin using a Soda Cap Connector Trolley from November 12, 2020 to November 14, 2020.

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Furgess and seconded by Ms. Mood to recommend that the Board of Directors authorize the operation of a shuttle for the Town of Chapin using a Soda Cap Connector Trolley from November 12, 2020 to November 14, 2020.

Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson*, Furgess *, Howard*, Leaks*, Mood*, Smith*
Absent: Gleaton, Huggins, Terracio
Abstain: Morris*
Motion passed

B. SPECIAL SERVICE REQUEST WITH COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

Mr. Andoh explained that the Columbia Housing Authority has requested The COMET help transport their senior and disabled population so that they may exercise their civic responsibility to vote in the 2020 election. The Service Committee recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the operation of a shuttle for the Columbia Housing Authority Seniors using on-demand buses from October 19, 2020 until election day on November 3, 2020 on the specified days of Monday, Tuesday and, where applicable,

Wednesday during that time period.

Motion:
A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Dickerson to recommend that the Board of Directors authorize the operation of a shuttle for the Columbia Housing Authority Seniors using on-demand buses from October 19, 2020 until election day on November 3, 2020 on the specified days of Monday, Tuesday and, where applicable, Wednesday during that time period.

Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson*, Furgess *, Howard*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*
Absent: Gleaton, Huggins, Terracio
Motion passed

Ms. Terracio rejoined the meeting.

10. MOTION PERIODS (NO ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN ON THE MOTIONS REQUESTED)

A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Mr. Anderson that the Board policy be changed to say that all appointments and hiring of key contractor staff and COMET staff be accepted without Service Committee or Board involvement if they meet the qualifications specified in the contract and/or the job description as verified by the Executive Director, and this motion be referred to the Executive Committee for consideration and recommendation to the full Board.

Mr. Furgess expressed concern with the motion regarding members of color. Ms. Mood clarified that this would go to the Executive Committee. It was explained that the motion be taken to the Executive Committee for consideration.

Motion:
A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Mr. Anderson to send motion to Executive Committee for consideration.

Dr. Morris recommended this be placed on the next Board agenda. Ms. Mood and Mr. Anderson agreed to accept this modification.

Modified Motion:
A modified motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Mr. Anderson to send the motion to the Board for consideration.

Approve: Anderson*, Dickerson*, Leaks*, Mood*, Smith* , Terracio*
Absent: Gleaton, Howard (no response), Huggins,
Abstain: Furgess*, Morris*
Motion passed

PROGRESS REPORTS – INFORMATIONAL ONLY – 2 MINUTES PER PRESENTER

A. CHAIR REPORT & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Col. Leaks gave a brief report regarding the Board's progress.

B. COMMITTEE CHAIRS UPDATE

I. COVID-19 AD-HOC COMMITTEE UPDATES

None

II. INTERMODAL AD-HOC COMMITTEE

None

C. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO REPORT

Mr. Andoh referred to the Executive Director Report in the packet.

I. COMMUNITY OUTREACH REPORT

None

II. REVIEW OF BOARD MOTIONS FROM JAN 2017 TO PRESENT

None

12. LEGAL/CONTRACTUAL/PERSONNEL (MAY REQUIRE EXECUTIVE SESSION)

A. SECTION 30-4-70 (A) (2) - THE RECEIPT OF LEGAL ADVICE WHERE THE LEGAL ADVICE RELATES TO A PENDING, THREATENED, OR POTENTIAL CLAIM OR OTHER MATTERS COVERED BY THE ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE, SETTLEMENT OF LEGAL CLAIMS, OR THE POSITION OF THE PUBLIC AGENCY IN OTHER ADVERSARY SITUATIONS INVOLVING THE ASSERTION AGAINST THE AGENCY OF A CLAIM – RICHLAND COUNTY INTEREST ISSUE (ROB TYSON)

B. SECTION 30-4-70 (A) (2) - THE RECEIPT OF LEGAL ADVICE WHERE THE LEGAL ADVICE RELATES TO A PENDING, THREATENED, OR POTENTIAL CLAIM OR OTHER MATTERS COVERED BY THE ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE, SETTLEMENT OF LEGAL CLAIMS, OR THE POSITION OF THE PUBLIC AGENCY IN OTHER ADVERSARY SITUATIONS INVOLVING THE ASSERTION AGAINST THE AGENCY OF A CLAIM – SC DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

C. SECTION 30-4-70 (A) (2) - THE RECEIPT OF LEGAL ADVICE WHERE THE LEGAL ADVICE RELATES TO A PENDING, THREATENED, OR POTENTIAL CLAIM OR OTHER MATTERS COVERED BY THE ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE, SETTLEMENT OF LEGAL CLAIMS, OR THE POSITION OF THE PUBLIC AGENCY IN OTHER ADVERSARY SITUATIONS INVOLVING THE ASSERTION AGAINST THE AGENCY OF A CLAIM – RATP DEV

D. SECTION 30-4-70 (A) (2) - THE RECEIPT OF LEGAL ADVICE WHERE THE LEGAL ADVICE RELATES TO A PENDING, THREATENED, OR POTENTIAL CLAIM OR OTHER MATTERS COVERED BY THE ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE, SETTLEMENT OF LEGAL CLAIMS, OR THE POSITION OF THE PUBLIC AGENCY IN OTHER ADVERSARY SITUATIONS INVOLVING THE ASSERTION AGAINST THE AGENCY OF A CLAIM

Motion:
A motion was made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Smith to enter Executive Session.
Approve: Anderson*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*, Terracio*
Absent: Dickerson, Gleaton, Howard, Huggins
Nay: Furgess*
Motion passed

The Board entered Executive Session at 2:25 P.M.

Motion:
A motion was made by Dr. Morris and seconded by Mr. Smith to leave Executive Session.
Approve: Anderson*, Furgess*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*, Terracio*
Absent: Dickerson, Gleaton, Howard, Huggins
Motion passed

The Board exited Executive Session at 3:21 P.M.

Motion:
A motion was made by Dr. Morris and seconded by Col. Leaks to authorize Rob Tyson and his firm to request an Attorney General's opinion on the question of the payment of interest to The COMET on its portion of the Richland County Penny.
Approve: Anderson*, Furgess*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*, Terracio*
Absent: Dickerson, Gleaton, Howard, Huggins
Motion passed

Motion:
A motion was made by Dr. Morris and seconded by Mr. Anderson to adjourn.
Approve: Anderson*, Furgess*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*, Terracio*
Absent: Dickerson, Gleaton, Howard, Huggins
Motion passed

The meeting adjourned at 3:27 P.M.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Adopted this _____, 2020

Prepared by:

_____

Paige Jernigan, Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

The Board exited Executive Session at 3:21 P.M.

Motion:
A motion was made by Dr. Morris and seconded by Col. Leaks to authorize Rob Tyson and his firm to request an Attorney General's opinion on the question of the payment of interest to The COMET on its portion of the Richland County Penny.
Approve: Anderson*, Furgess*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*, Terracio*
Absent: Dickerson, Gleaton, Howard, Huggins
Motion passed

Motion:
A motion was made by Dr. Morris and seconded by Mr. Anderson to adjourn.
Approve: Anderson*, Furgess*, Leaks*, Mood*, Morris*, Smith*, Terracio*
Absent: Dickerson, Gleaton, Howard, Huggins
Motion passed

The meeting adjourned at 3:27 P.M.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Adopted this Nov. _____, 2020

Prepared by:

_____
Paige Jernigan, Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

Approved by:

Allison Terracio
_____
Allison Terracio, Secretary