



FASTRACKS STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of the FasTracks Stakeholder Participation Policy is to proactively and effectively seek and provide opportunities for stakeholder participation during the planning, final design and construction phases of the FasTracks program. The following policy has been established by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) Board to guide the FasTracks team in implementing a process for how each corridor/project team should communicate to stakeholders about the level and type of public involvement that can be accommodated during each phase of FasTracks.

Background

The FasTracks program and each individual corridor/project budget are fiscally constrained. Stakeholder participation is an important element of the program, which is established to facilitate two-way communication between stakeholders and the RTD. Public input is considered along with various other factors that are all weighed and analyzed as part of the decision-making process. Stakeholders are encouraged to be involved in the planning, design and construction of the FasTracks program. However, the input and participation change from phase to phase. Most opportunities for stakeholder involvement are provided during the planning phase of each project, as opportunities for change become limited after planning has been completed. As a result, this policy was developed to assist the RTD Board of Directors and FasTracks staff in effectively integrating and managing two issues: stakeholder participation during the phases of FasTracks; and addressing requests for changes outside of a project's scope of work.

Part 1 - Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholder participation is a valued element of the FasTracks program. However, balancing fiscally constrained budgets and providing for stakeholder participation and input can often be in conflict with each other. While two-way communication is important to RTD in the implementation of FasTracks, not all community expectations can be met when considering fiscally constrained budgets. Stakeholders should know when their input will have the most impact. It is essential to establish clarity during each phase of FasTracks on the level and type of public involvement that is important during that particular phase.

Definitions

- **Stakeholder** – any interested, impacted or engaged member of the public, including local elected officials and staff, and special interest groups.

- **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** – federal law passed in 1970 that describes a process to be used when a federal action or federal funding is being used on a project. The process includes open public involvement, consideration of alternatives, documentation of environmental impacts of a proposed action, and alternatives to that proposed action.

Planning Phase – Begins with Public Scoping meetings as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and ends with approval of a Record of Decision (ROD) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Formal and informal opportunities for stakeholder participation and input are available during the NEPA process and public input can be very broad based. Public involvement is both a requirement and a critical part of the planning phase. During the planning phase, RTD typically performs preliminary design level plans, so input often focuses on the basic elements of the project and how it integrates into the community (e.g., horizontal and vertical alignment, end-of-line, station locations, parking facilities and spaces, bridge types, environmental impacts, etc.).

Final Design Phase – Begins after approval of a ROD or FONSI and ends when construction begins, unless a non-traditional project delivery method is utilized, i.e. design-build or Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC). Stakeholder participation and input during the final design phase becomes more focused and is generally limited to aesthetic design elements. Aesthetic elements include, but are not limited to, the appearance of bridge and wall treatments, shelters, barriers, fencing, landscaping, lighting fixtures and transition plazas. RTD will work closely with the community to incorporate input in these areas into the final design process.

Design decisions relating to operations, functionality, durability, safety, and maintenance are made solely by RTD. Additional public involvement may also be needed to meet mitigation commitments in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) or ROD. Workshops will be held by the project teams to seek stakeholder participation and input in these areas. RTD will utilize various techniques (newsletters, Web site, public meetings, e-mail distributions, etc.) to keep stakeholders informed and engaged on these elements. The FasTracks Program is fiscally constrained and each individual corridor project budget is also constrained, so corridor budgets are to remain within the established commitment.

Construction Phase – Begins with the selected contractor being awarded a construction project or phase of a project and ends when passenger service begins. Stakeholder participation and input during the construction phase is very limited due to cost and schedule impacts when changes are made. During this phase, communications to the stakeholders from the project teams will be more focused on construction and schedule impacts to the community. Changes will be limited to those that potentially impact the operations, maintenance and safety of the project.

Process

The FasTracks Team will work with the Citizens Advisory Committee to develop an education campaign to help internal staff and stakeholders understand how public involvement must integrate with the phasing schedule of each project in order to

achieve maximum involvement, while adhering to the fiscally constrained budget and established schedule. The goal of this education process is to effectively address stakeholder expectations throughout the different phases – planning, design, construction – of each FasTracks corridor/project.

Part II - Refinements, Enhancements & Betterments

Recognizing that stakeholders may request changes that are outside the scope of a given project, the RTD Board has established the following policy to define and address these requests. This policy is intended to provide the flexibility to include analysis of such requests as projects progress.

Definitions

- ***Refinements*** are a no cost or minimal cost change that does not have major impacts to schedule, safety, quality, operations and maintenance. Refinements can be requested during all phases of a project.
- ***Enhancements*** are an additional element of work that is not included in the base scope of work and has been requested by an outside 3rd party that adds value to the project. Enhancements are intended to be funded by a 3rd party and can be included only if such work does not adversely impact or delay the project. Enhancements can be requested during the final design and construction phase of a project. A technical analysis will be performed by RTD to determine the feasibility and impacts to the project from the enhancement request.

Costs will be negotiated between RTD and the 3rd party. RTD has no commitment to fund any enhancements.

- ***Betterments*** are an additional element of work that is not included in the base scope of work and has been requested by an outside 3rd party where the value added is solely for the benefit of the 3rd party. Betterments are funded solely by the 3rd party and will be included only if such work does not adversely impact or delay the project. Betterments can be requested during the final design and construction phase of a project and will only be considered after a funding commitment (for all costs associated with the request) has been made to implement the betterment request. A technical analysis will be performed by RTD to determine the feasibility and impacts to the project. RTD Board of Directors approval for the betterment request may be required and an Agreement needs to be formally executed before proceeding to implement the betterment request.

Process

The FasTracks Team will follow a defined process to address stakeholder requests for changes to corridor projects. The majority of requests fall in the above three categories and will occur in the final design or construction phases of a project.

All requests should be sent in writing to the FasTracks Corridor Project Manager, who is responsible for seeking input, evaluating, processing and documenting the request. All requests will be evaluated to determine if there are any potential environmental impacts that would require additional analysis. RTD planning, design, operations, system safety and project controls staff will review and evaluate each request to determine its feasibility and possible impacts on budget, schedule, the environment, operations, safety, aesthetics and any other pertinent considerations. The results of this review and evaluation will be documented and a decision will be rendered by the Project Manager on whether or not to proceed with the requested refinement, enhancement or betterment. All betterments may be subject to RTD Board of Directors approval.