

## **Procedure for Considering Public Comments**

### Documentation of Public Comment and Responses

#### **General Purpose**

Transylvania County Transportation (TCT), Transylvania In Motion (TIM) shall document comments received regarding service as well as comments specific to a planning process. As a section 5310 & 5311 grantee, TC solicits and considers public comment prior to raising a fare or implementing a major reduction in public transportation service. TC and TIM shall also document how they responded to the public comments.

Transylvania County has developed a Public Participation Plan (PPP) as part of the County's Title VI Program. This document supplements the PPP by detailing how the public comments are documented and considered.

#### **Comments received:**

##### **Planning Process Comments**

Documentation of comments may be accomplished in a manner appropriate to the project and the nature of the comments. Documentation may consist of meeting minutes, files of letters/emails, files of comment cards, transcripts, PowerPoint presentations, survey results, and/or a special memo that summarizes the comments. A written summary of comments and responses shall be prepared to provide the feedback to the public. Recordings and transcripts of the major points of public meetings will be made written record. When applicable, the comments will be presented to the Transportation Advisory Board, Transportation Advisory Committee and/or Board of Commissioners for action.

In the case when TC is proposing to change fares or implementing a major service changes (see definition below), the proposal will be presented to the Transit Advisory Board before holding a public meeting. TC holds public hearing/meeting for all fare increase and major service change and publishes a notice of these hearings as specified in the TC Public Participation Plan (PPP) as part of the County's Title VI Program (two weeks before meetings outreach to the general public through stakeholders groups and publish ads in the Transylvania Times.

TC defines a "major service change" as:

- a change of 25% or more of daily route miles or hours on any individual route.
- The establishment of a new route.

- The elimination of a route.

Any “major service change”, as defined above, will require a public meeting

### Daily Comments

Comments are received by TC and TIM staff on a daily basis. These comments are documented and responded to in a timely manner. TC and TIM staff document comments on service by gathering the following formation as applicable:

- Date of comment,
- Name,
- Email,
- Phone number,
- Affiliation (business, organization or other),
- Comment Type (see chart below),
- Route #,
- Date of incident,
- Time of incident,
- Location of incident and
- Description of complaint.

| Comment Type | Definition  | Explanation  |
|--------------|---|--|
| Civil Rights | Related to any procedure or policy governed by the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.  | Comments related to race, color, or national origin, being excluded from participation or being denied the benefits or being subjected to discrimination under any program |
| ADA          | Related to any procedures or policies governed by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 | Comments related to a person with a disability being excluded from participation or being denied the benefits or being subjected to discrimination under any program       |
| EMS          | Related to any procedures or policies falling under the                                       | Comments related to any environmental impact   |

|                   |  |   |
|-------------------|--|---|
|                   | Environmental Management System  |   |
| Bus stop          | Related to any bus stop request or comment   | Comments to bus-stop location, new request, safety or furnishings (bench, shelter, trash can, bike rack, or map holder)   |
| Route Planning    | Related to future or planned service requests or route/schedule/ span of service adjustments | Comments on proposed or implemented route, scheduling or frequency changes. Request or suggested future route change. Concerning comments regarding paratransit or where disability impacts fixed-route travel. |
| Route Performance | Comments related to current service on-time performance, schedule, route or transfers        | Comments related to bus route running hot or late or no-show. Concerning early/late buses or the location of a particular bus.  |
| Customer Service  | Concerning comments customer satisfaction  | Complaints, suggestions or compliments about a person (about city staff, operations staff, drivers, other passengers, et al), policy or process that effects customer satisfaction                              |

**Response to comments:**

**Planning Process Comments**

TC and TIM staff will respond to planning process comments from the public concerning the public participation process in a timely manner. A summary analysis and report on disposition of comments may be made a part of the final plan document. Rationale for policy decisions will be available to the public in writing, if requested.

As specified in the TC Public Participation Plan (PPP) as part of the County’s Title VI Program, TC planning staff uses the input provided by the public (this includes LEP, low-income, disability and minorities individuals/advocacy groups), stakeholder groups in

developing final recommended fare and service proposals. TC planning staff then brings these recommendations to the Transportation Advisory Board which makes recommendations to the Transylvania County Board of Commissioners. With support from the Transportation Advisory Board, staff along with the County Senior Planner, may further modify the proposal before implementing operational changes. Board of Commissioner's action is needed for either service proposals having a budgetary impact and for all fare changes. In this case the Senior Planner will bring the proposal to County Commissioners, which may further modify the proposal based on public input, prior to acting on it and taking a final vote for either approval or denial by the full County Commissioners. A transit fare-change proposal may be reviewed by both the Finance Committee, which would offer opportunities for public input before they take action and send the proposal to the County Commissioners for final approval.

### **Daily Comments**

TC and ACT will respond to daily comments from the public concerning the public in a timely manner and document this response. A summary of daily comments will be presented to the Transit Committee during the monthly meetings. Rationale for policy decisions will be available to the public in writing, if requested.