

Public Participation Plan



Decatur Urbanized Area Transportation Study (DUATS)

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DUATS**

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CHAPTER I – BACKGROUND

The Decatur Urbanized Area Transportation Study (DUATS) serves as the regional transportation planning entity for the Decatur Urbanized Area and fulfills federal and state requirements for transportation planning in urban areas with more than 50,000 persons. Today the entity fulfills the all-important role of coordinating regional coordination efforts to ensure that regional transportation activities are undertaken in a coordinated and interrelated manner. In addition, federal regulations require the incorporation of public involvement into the metropolitan transportation planning process. Components or objectives of the existing public involvement process followed by DUATS staff have been revised to incorporate elements required of a Public Participation Plan process by 23 CFR Part 450.316 pursuant to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) (Public Law 117-58)

DUATS is continuing its effort to make a concerted effort to increase and enhance its position regarding public involvement. DUATS has committed itself to proactively engaging the citizens of the County in assisting in our regional transportation planning and problem-solving activities.

DUATS intends to more adequately and fully address these principals through communication, consultation, cooperation, and community outreach. At the present time communication, consultation and cooperation are principally accomplished through information sharing and discussion between the members of the Technical and Policy Committees.

The Policy Committee that is served by policy makers from:

1. City of Decatur
2. Macon County
3. Village of Forsyth
4. Village of Mt. Zion
5. Illinois Department of Transportation District 7

The Technical Committee consists of transportation professionals from the following organizations who recommend action to the Policy Committee:

1. City of Decatur
2. Macon County
3. opens in a new windowDecatur Public Transit System
4. Decatur Park District
5. Village of Forsyth
6. Village of Mt. Zion
7. Illinois Department of Transportation District 7

CHAPTER III – PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

3.1 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENT

Notices concerning the public review and comment period for the aforementioned transportation plans and programs will be published in a local newspaper and by sending notices to any media outlet requesting such notice.

Public information related to transportation plans and programs and meeting notices of the Decatur Urbanized Area Transportation Study will be provided electronically on the World Wide Web <https://decaturil.gov/departments/development-services/decatur-urbanized-area-transportation-study-duats/>, including draft and final versions of the Public Participation Plan. The website will also provide meeting agendas and minutes, information on the purpose, programs and structure of DUATS, information on MPO planning projects and studies, and contact information for MPO staff.

Available resources, including web-based mapping, published maps and illustrations and other graphic data will be used by the MPO to visually convey information related to and improving understanding of metropolitan transportation plans and programs.

Any written or oral comments received during the public review period will be considered before adoption of the plan or program. If the final version of the plan or program would be significantly different from the draft which was made available for public review, then the revised version will be put on display for public review and comment in accordance with the aforementioned comment periods. A summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of these comments will be placed in the final draft of the report.

3.2 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public. All meetings will be held at places and times convenient to the public. Meeting rooms will be handicapped accessible. Meetings will not be held on legal holidays. All meetings will be held in accordance with the Illinois Open Meeting Act as referenced in the Illinois Compiled Statutes.

3.3 OUTREACH EFFORTS

As the regional planning agency, our community and transportation planning activities impact every resident in the Decatur Metropolitan Area. We are committed to involving everyone—including low-income, minority, elderly, and limited English proficient populations, and individuals living with disabilities—in regional discussions surrounding social, economic, environmental, community development, and transportation planning decisions.

This intent is based on the following principles:

1. Citizens should be reasonably versed on transportation issues and how transportation related decisions are made which use public tax dollars on public projects. Individuals and communities

impacted by the outcome of public projects should want to have their opinions and perspectives taken into consideration.

2. Planners cannot maintain current and relevant knowledge about regional problems without spending time listening and learning from citizens who are directly affected.
3. Better planning is accomplished through a balance between local and regional priorities.

DUATS will strive to find new and creative ways to reach and involve people in programming and planning efforts by:

1. Clearly articulating the process for public information and involvement from the outset of a project.
2. Expanding the types of opportunities for participation